

THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD • BRILL

# Doctors, Folk Medicine and the Inquisition

The Repression of Magical Healing  
in Portugal during the Enlightenment

*Timothy D. Walker*



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## DOCTORS, FOLK MEDICINE AND THE INQUISITION

# THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD

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# DOCTORS, FOLK MEDICINE AND THE INQUISITION

*The Repression of Magical Healing in  
Portugal during the Enlightenment*

BY

TIMOTHY D. WALKER



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Timothy D. Walker  
Boston, Massachusetts

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANTT	Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo
BACL	Biblioteca da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa
BNL	Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa
BPE	Biblioteca Pública de Évora
BLMD	The British Library Manuscripts Division
RSL	The Royal Society Library
WIL	The Wellcome Institute Library



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PART I

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Just over thirty years ago, noted witchcraft historian H. C. Erik Midelfort wrote, “. . . inquiries into the larger issues of witchcraft cannot, in fact, fruitfully proceed in the absence of detailed local studies.”<sup>1</sup> During the past three decades, American and European historians have invested an exceptional amount of scholarly activity in the problem of witchcraft and witch persecution during the early modern period. Recently published regional studies examine the causes and circumstances of witch-hunts in a broad cross-section of European and colonial American territories, providing indispensable insights into the historical circumstances and popular belief systems which shaped events during those turbulent times. These historians’ efforts have refined approaches to and methods of studying witch panics and provided new interpretations and theories of witchcraft practice and persecution, thereby expanding the analytical parameters of this important subject.

Because witch-hunts can be so revealing, they have been tempting fare for historians. A tumultuous community purge can display rifts in society along economic, religious and political lines. Witch-hunting patterns can speak volumes about the place of women, minorities or the poor in society, the roles in which society casts them, and how easily they could be victimized. Also, witch-hunting activity provides telling information about popular fears and folk beliefs. The witch fear that gripped great swathes of early modern Europe resulted in hundreds of periodic localized witch-hunts, each with its own causality and pattern of development. However, the very nature of these frightening episodes—wrapped in mystery, paranoia and superstition—makes them particularly difficult to interpret. The task before historians continues to be the comparison of societal reactions towards accused witches in communities across Europe

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<sup>1</sup> H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562–1684* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 2.

and America to explain why differences in persecution patterns occurred.

But the historical collage is far from complete; major gaps exist in the scholarly literature. Witchcraft historians have largely ignored Portugal, a country that experienced the vigorous scrutiny of the Inquisition. Only a handful of related books and a few specific journal articles—just one of which appears in English—address the topic. While abundant material exists on the treatment of converted Jews and Muslims at the hands of the Inquisition, until the mid-1990s no attempt had been made to write a thorough, focused, regional survey of witchcraft persecution in Portugal using methods and models employed by the most recent historians of the subject. Although this situation improved dramatically with the publication of José Pedro Paiva's fine book, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas'* (*Witchcraft and Superstition in a Country without "Witch Hunting"*): *Portugal 1600–1774*, in 1997, there was still no broad survey of Portuguese witch-hunting written in English. In 1999 Brian Levack, writing in the superb series "Witchcraft and Magic in Europe" edited by Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, said "Comparatively speaking Portugal is the country where the least is known about witchcraft."<sup>2</sup>

This study began (well before the publication of Paiva's book) as an attempt to fill that lacuna. Witch-hunters in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Portugal were not as zealous as their contemporaries in northern Europe. Can this be explained, at least in part, by the alleged "legacy of tolerance" among the Portuguese for people of divergent religions because of commercial maritime contact with non-European cultures, and did they then employ a learned cultural permissiveness at home with accused heretics and witches? Was the Portuguese state simply too preoccupied with maritime expansion to lend its resources to concentrated witch-hunting? Or, did the relative prosperity and political stability in Portugal during the early modern period, a direct result of successful overseas trade, help to create the kind of irenic socio-religious climate in which witchcraft accusations were less likely than elsewhere? One must not forget, after all, that Portugal remained stable in its faith; the country

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<sup>2</sup> Brian P. Levack, "The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions," in Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 129.

was not rocked by the Protestant Reformation, and so did not experience the kind of religious or military social turmoil that facilitated many witchcraft accusations in Germany, France and the British Isles.

Further, when “witch trials” did occur in Portugal, what, if any, social function did they perform? That is, did accusations and persecutions benefit the community by redefining moral or social boundaries; did the hunts alter, or perhaps reinforce, “normative” societal behavior? (Such eminent thinkers as Keith Thomas, Alan MacFarlane and E. E. Evans Pritchard have argued in favor of this historical/anthropological interpretation.) Or, conversely, did local “witch panics,” rare as they were, so disrupt Portuguese communities that we may term the hunts (as historians H. C. Erik Midelfort and Brian Levack have done) a product of a dysfunctional, self-destructive society? Along these lines, it is important to ask if civil or ecclesiastical authorities abused the legal system for their own ends. What did they stand to gain, materially and in other ways, as a result of a guilty verdict in a Portuguese witchcraft trial?

As part of a foundation for understanding how witch panics in Portugal progressed, I first began to construct a basic framework of commonly held Portuguese beliefs. What characterized Portuguese folkways regarding magical practitioners and how did these ideas shape witchcraft trials in that country? What were the stereotypical traits of witches and their consorts, according to common Portuguese people in the late medieval and early modern periods? My preliminary research and experience told me that beliefs in Portugal varied somewhat from the European mean, partly as a result of contact and interaction with diverse African, South American and Asian cultures, but primarily as a result of the inevitable infusion of Moorish folk beliefs during several centuries of Iberian occupation.

In March 1992, I made a preliminary investigation of resources for my project at the Portuguese National Archives, the Torre do Tombo. The complete records of Portugal’s three domestic regional Inquisition tribunals are housed there, comprising some 40,000 cases, as are document collections for more than a dozen pertinent state and ecclesiastical agencies. I began to comb through these records to find specific cases of witchcraft persecution, with a view toward explicating them and setting the trials into a broader historical context. Specifically, I hoped to uncover cases wherein the testimony of the accused, as well as the prosecutor’s line of questioning, would



reveal beliefs and issues particular to the Portuguese experience. Also, I wanted to compile enough information for a systematic statistical analysis of such matters as the economic and social status of the accused and the relationship of witch-hunts to concurrent political or social turmoil.

In time, though, as one would expect, my research project evolved, becoming far more focused. Unexpected patterns in the chronology of Portuguese witch-hunting became apparent: most Inquisition cases against magical criminals transpired after 1680, a time of growing rationalism in Europe and a date by which such trials elsewhere had virtually ceased. Further, I noticed that an elevated number of the Inquisition's victims were superstitious folk healers, peasant men and women who earned their keep in part by proffering magical remedies for common illnesses. These did not seem like the satanic witches I had expected to find.

Looking further into this matter, I began to notice that university-trained, state-licensed physicians and surgeons often took an active role in the trials against popular healers. In case after case, I found that medical professionals either gave testimony as expert witnesses or were somehow linked to the initial denunciation of the accused healer. These factors fascinated me; I resolved to investigate them thoroughly and focused my attention on the eighteenth century. Eventually, my fundamentally-changed project became the present book: "Doctors, Folk Medicine and the Inquisition: the Repression of Magical Healing in Portugal during the Enlightenment Era."

The resulting study explains the cultural and political *milieu* in which Enlightenment-era Portuguese magical crimes trials occurred. It examines the methods of Portuguese Inquisition personnel regarding practitioners of magic (considering Portuguese folk healing beliefs and practices especially), throws light on the principal participants on both sides of a Portuguese "witch-hunt," and provides some vivid pictures of the trials through excerpted court transcripts.

With this approach, I admittedly straddle the fence between what historian M. J. Kephart and others refer to as the "rationalist" and the "romantic" schools of witchcraft scholarship. "Rationalists deny that any satanic witches existed," Kephart explained in a 1980 article. "Romantics affirm that there were 'witches' of some sort around during the satanic witch-hunting period, or at least something was going on that might be interpreted by satanic witch-hunters and

modern scholars as ‘witchcraft.’”<sup>3</sup> To me, these two approaches do not seem to be mutually exclusive; indeed, their respective outlooks are complementary.

Therefore, the contributions of both historiographical schools are, for my purposes, useful in creating a stronger, multi-faceted explanation of magical crimes prosecutions in Portugal. Both schools accurately, though not fully, describe what I believe to be the necessary pre-conditions for witchcraft persecution: popular belief in and practice of magic combined with a concern—even fear—among social elites about the consequences of popular superstitious magical practices. These conditions continued to exist in Portugal in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though they had grown less acute as elitist fears regarding satanic magic subsided. Using these two historiographic approaches in combination has enhanced this study. Employing both rationalist and romantic concepts led to a more circumspect, multifaceted general explanation of the dynamics and causality behind Portuguese magical crimes trials during the Enlightenment era.

The cadence of Inquisition trials for sorcery and witchcraft in Portugal increased dramatically at the end of the seventeenth century, reached a peak between 1715 and 1760 (quite late by European standards), and dropped sharply after 1772. In this study of the circumstances surrounding those events, I have focused on the Inquisition’s role in prosecuting and discrediting popular healers (called *saludadores* or *curandeiros*), who in eighteenth-century Portugal were charged with and tried under the centuries-old laws that condemned the practice of witchcraft and sorcery. Throughout the seventeenth and much of the sixteenth centuries, cases against so-called witches rarely came to trial in Portugal. However, Inquisition cases against *curandeiros* jumped dramatically during the reign of João V (1706–1750) and continued steadily into the Pombaline epoch (1750–1777). During this period, in almost 60% of Holy Office trials in which the suspect was accused of a crime entailing the use of magic or superstitions, the culprit was actually a healer engaged in providing folk remedies to peasants in the countryside. Such cures usually relied

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<sup>3</sup> M. J. Kephart, “Rationalists vs. Romantics among Scholars of Witchcraft,” in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. Max Marwick (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 326.

on illicit acts of sorcery for their efficacy. These “witchcraft” cases reflect an increasing intolerance for folk healers among the previously indifferent inquisitors and other elites, an intolerance that resulted in a policy of systematic oppression during the eighteenth century.

Significantly, I have found that this period of witchcraft persecution in Portugal coincided with a time when university-trained physicians and surgeons, or *médicos*, were entering the paid ranks of the Inquisition in unprecedented numbers, taking up employment as *familiares* (non-ecclesiastical employees of the Holy Office who often identified deviant members of society as potential subjects for an Inquisition investigation) to enjoy the enhanced status and privileges consequent to holding such a post. I contend that state-licensed physicians and surgeons, motivated by professional competition but also by a concern for promoting rationalized “scientific” medicine, used their positions within the Holy Office to initiate trials against purveyors of superstitious folk remedies.

Therefore, I believe that the persecution of *curandeiros* and *salvadores* reveals a conflict between learned medical culture and popular healing culture in late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Portugal. This tension between popular culture and elite culture grew as the Enlightenment era advanced and rationalist ideas about medicine flowed into Portugal through unofficial channels (but frequently with the tacit consent of reactionary, orthodox state and church officials). Holy Office trials against magical healers, then, offer evidence that Enlightenment ideas about rationalized medical practices had penetrated the minds of learned elites in Portugal to such a degree that even the policies of the Inquisition changed to accommodate, and even promote, a more scientific approach to healing. In this rare instance, the Inquisition functioned as an instrument of progressive social change.

When compared to the rest of Europe, the relative lateness of this period of persecution for crimes relating to witchcraft and sorcery—in Portugal the largest sustained episode occurred entirely in the eighteenth-century—makes it a highly unusual occurrence. A few other states or territories—Poland, Estonia and Sweden, located like Portugal on the geographical margins of Europe—experienced spates of witchcraft persecution in the eighteenth century, but those episodes involved far fewer trials than in contemporary Portugal.<sup>4</sup> Moreover,

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<sup>4</sup> See Ankarloo and Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and*

the frequency of trials in most of these regions dropped sharply after the first quarter of the eighteenth century, just as the tempo of prosecutions was increasing in Portugal.

Of all the countries in Europe that witnessed trials for magical crimes in the Enlightenment era, only in Hungary did a sustained persecution occur on a scale and in a chronological framework comparable with Portugal.<sup>5</sup> Between 1690 and 1760, Hungarian authorities tried 1161 individuals for magical crimes. As in Portugal, the frequency of trials in Hungary increased markedly at the beginning of the eighteenth century; the peak years for Hungarian persecutions fell between 1710 and 1750.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, there are significant differences with the Portuguese experience. First, in an effort to extirpate diabolical agents from their society, the Hungarians executed a very large proportion of convicts: 319 persons between 1690 and 1760, or 27.5% of all persons tried. However, because the outcomes of 471 trials (40.5%) during the same period are unknown, the true number of executed magical convicts was likely much higher. Second, a particularly large percentage of the accused were women, lending a distinctly misogynistic tenor to the events in Hungary—female defendants constitute over 90% of all recorded witchcraft trials there between 1520 and 1777.<sup>7</sup> Third, the trials in Hungary occurred as loosely connected regional panics across a broad geographic area with vast differences in language, religion and systems of law,<sup>8</sup> not as the outcome of a centrally directed institutional policy in a largely homogeneous land, as in Portugal. Fourth and most importantly, witchcraft trials in Hungary were not focused on practitioners of superstitious curing. In their motivation and result, then, the abundance of trials in eighteenth-century Hungary had much more in

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*Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 77–78; Janusz Tazbir, “Hexenprozesse in Polen,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 71 (1980), pp. 280–307; Per Sörlin, “Wicked Arts”: *Witchcraft and Magic Trials in Southern Sweden, 1635–1754* (Cultures, Beliefs and Traditions, Medieval and Early Modern Peoples, Vol. 7) (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 1998), p. 20; Maia Madar, “Estonia I: Werewolves and Poisoners,” in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (London: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 257–272; and Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 134; 185–191 and 233.

<sup>5</sup> Gábor Klaniczay, “Hungary: The Accusations and the Universe of Popular Magic,” in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (London: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 219–255.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 222–225.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 228–229.

common with their sixteenth-century north-European predecessors than with contemporary trials in Portugal. Whereas the Portuguese episode seems to have been a relatively mild, enlightened response to popular superstitions and magic driven by incipient rationalist views among elites, the Hungarian incidence emerges as an anachronistic throwback to the highly destructive earlier European witch-hunts.

In terms of tone and intent if not absolute chronology or scale, then, the Portuguese experience was unique; Inquisition authorities brought over five hundred sorcerers to trial between 1715 and 1770, but they did not execute a single one.<sup>9</sup> Although some regions continued to prosecute small numbers of “witches” throughout the eighteenth century, no European country except Portugal experienced such a sizable and sustained incidence of legal trials, centrally directed according to an explicit rationalist policy, against magical criminals at such a late date.

Understanding the historical problem of eighteenth-century European witch-hunting in comparative geographical terms is important, but the chronology of magical crimes trials in Portugal, occurring as they did simultaneously with a demonstrable awakening of interest in scientific investigation and natural philosophy in that country, makes these cases particularly interesting for scholars of the confrontation between Enlightenment sensibilities and popular superstitions. Therefore, I have chosen to focus exclusively on this epoch, *circa* 1690–1780, linking the influx of Enlightenment ideas from other parts of Europe with several official policies of the Portuguese Inquisition—policies that proved astonishingly concordant with more traditionally progressive thinkers’ ideas about social change.

Most importantly, I wanted to explore the circumstances of these trials specifically because they appear to be part of a methodical suppression of popular medicine by the Inquisition—and the complicit professional physicians and surgeons who worked for the Holy Office—in Portugal during the eighteenth century. There was, it appears, a conscious, deliberate and systematic movement by licensed *médicos* to discredit popular *curandeiros* and *saludadores* in the minds of common people and sow widespread doubt about traditional forms of healing. Further, in singling out popular healers for persecution, it is evi-

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<sup>9</sup> José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), p. 209.

dent that many of these doctors were motivated by a genuine wish to effect rationalized scientific medical reforms; they were not simply trying to eliminate their professional competitors.

The evidence for these assertions is partly circumstantial but nevertheless compelling. At the same time that licensed medical practitioners were gaining strength as *familiares* within the Holy Office, that institution formulated an official policy statement (called a *parecere*) concerning *saludadores* and *curandeiros* and disseminated it among its three regional tribunals. The General Council of the Inquisition promulgated this *parecere* in 1690, just before the annual number of *processos* (trials) against popular healers began to increase after a long hiatus. This treatise, entitled *Dos Saludadores* (“On Healers”), discusses the nature and practices of superstitious folk healers and outlines how they could be recognized.<sup>10</sup> *Dos Saludadores* was copied for circulation among the functionaries of the three Portuguese Inquisition tribunals; subsequently, the text was entered into the record books of the General Council of the Holy Office in Lisbon. In 1719, Manuel da Cunha Pinheiro, *inquisidor* of the Lisbon tribunal during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, preserved this *aperecere* in a series of bound volumes containing key Inquisition documentation spanning the history of the institution.<sup>11</sup> As with all General Council *pareceres*, this policy paper amounted to solid standing orders from the Inquisition central administration regarding how the regional tribunals were to handle illicit superstitious healer cases. The document justifies why *saludadores* should be brought to trial before the Holy Office.

*Dos Saludadores* goes to great lengths to define what a *saludador* is and to explain why popular healing activities are rarely sanctioned by God. Some acts of healing are divine, the paper explains, while most others must be seen as acts of diabolical manipulation—a usurpation of power in the natural world for evil ends. The work explicitly defends licensed doctors and “true medical science,” which was “created by God as a proper usage of natural virtue.” True

<sup>10</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro* 269, fls. 15–24.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* See also Maria do Carmo Jasmims Dias Farinha, “Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício,” *Memória*, Revista Anual do Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, No. 1 (Lisbon: April, 1989), pp. 139–140; and José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 60–61.

medicine is defined in *Dos Saludadores* as the scientific application of the divine power found in medicines, placed there by God to be used by Man.<sup>12</sup> The document goes on to contend that most *saludadores*, by contrast, are necessarily charlatans and liars who corrupt natural virtue by claiming healing powers as their own. Anyone using “non-scientific” means to effect cures—herbs, lotions, blessings, unguents, incantations or the like—was consequently a false healer. *Saludadores* acted against God’s will; any supernatural healing powers they possessed must have come, the author of *Dos Saludadores* posits, through diabolical channels. On the basis of this argument, then, popular healers—*curandeiros* and *saludadores*—were subject to prosecution by the Inquisition.<sup>13</sup>

*Dos Saludadores* criticizes the methods of contemporary *curandeiros* on theological as well as scientific grounds. The efficacy of the folk healer’s cure depended not only on the correct mixing of specific ingredients, but also on the ritual blessing of the “medicine” or, indeed, of the patient. Any curative qualities of the popular healer’s prepared compound were, alone, not sufficient to work without the direct agency of the healer himself. *Curandeiros* and *saludadores* typically maintained, therefore, that their art could not be learned; rather, their capacity to cure depended on a particular, “God-given” internal quality which was acquired at birth.<sup>14</sup> These were the irrational, un-scientific characteristics of popular healing against which trained practitioners of medicine most objected—that, and the oft-stated concern that folk healers’ ritual-laden remedies lacked efficacy. Significantly, because of their blasphemous nature, these were also the very assertions that made *curandeiros* vulnerable to prosecution by the Inquisition.

*Dos Saludadores* reveals that powerful functionaries within the administrative structure of the Inquisition had developed a solid Enlightenment-era consciousness in favor of the practice of rational, scientific medicine, placing it in a position of clear superiority over traditional country healing. Further, this document recognizes and endorses some extraordinarily progressive ideas, such as the empirical method and the necessity of doctors having scientific medical training in order to enter public practice. Even so, *Dos Saludadores* is still a product of the Inquisition; Enlightenment ideas mix freely with

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<sup>12</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, fl. 15r.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, *recto* and *verso*.

<sup>14</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 60–62. See also *Dos Saludadores*, fls. 15–16.

an older sensibility that openly expected God and Satan to take an active role in the lives of mortals. The world in the early years of the eighteenth century was, in the upper echelons of the Holy Office, still conceived as a stage for the struggle between the Diabolical and the Divine. In time, licensed medical practitioners would work to change that view.

Probably the most comprehensive scholar of the past ten years on the subject of European witchcraft persecution has been Brian Levack of the University of Texas at Austin. To an extent greater than anyone else writing in the field, his work synthesizes the truly vast literature of the European witch-hunts during the early modern period. Although his narrative follows, for the most part, traditional interpretations, his most recent edition (1995) touches on alternative views that have begun to emerge through revised scholarship on the problem of explaining witchcraft trials across Europe. One of those ideas posits that opposition to popular healing has been much overlooked as a central organizing element in witchcraft persecutions across Europe.<sup>15</sup> In some regions of France, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary and in New England, recent reassessments of trial depositions reveal that many of the accused were known in their communities as cunning women, or folk healers.<sup>16</sup>

Comparable observations stand out even more strongly in the new publication edited by Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (1999), to which Levack was a major contributing author. This comprehensive book surveys research done by David Gentilcore on accused popular healers in southern Italy, and includes an essay by historian of medicine Roy Porter that considers the confluence of advancing medical technology and elites' enthusiasm for Enlightenment ideas as an important catalyst for "witch-hunting" across eighteenth-century Europe.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Press, 1995), pp. 138–139.

<sup>16</sup> In particular, Levack notes the work of Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), p. 78; William Monter, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland: The Borderlands during the Reformation* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 179; and Tekla Dömötör, "The Cunning Folk in English and Hungarian Witch Trials," in *Folklore Studies in the Twentieth Century*, ed. V. J. Newall (Woodbridge Press, 1978), p. 183.

<sup>17</sup> David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy* (Manchester, U.K.:



Roy Porter's broad-ranging essay explores the intellectual movements that changed European elite culture in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; in some locales, this altered perception of the natural world helped draw the witch-hunts to a close.<sup>18</sup> However, in other locations, the growing professional awareness of the medical estate resulted in a backlash against illicit magical healers, who continued to treat maladies of the lower classes with unscientific remedies. Porter describes a European-wide effort by trained physicians to attack and discredit "quack" popular healers, chiding them for trying to cure through superstitious but above all unscientific means. Moreover, Porter points out that licensed medical professionals began to assert an authority over diseases that resulted in symptoms interpreted during an earlier, proto-scientific age as "demonic possession". The demystification of human maladies, according to Porter, was an important factor in discrediting witchcraft belief among learned people.<sup>19</sup> In Portugal, where powerful reactionary ecclesiastical institutions kept the medical estate from modernizing its doctrines openly for most of the eighteenth century, physicians and surgeons instead worked subtly inside the Inquisition, using existing judicial means as a convenient recourse to pursue their campaign against unscientific superstitious healers.

David Gentilcore's recent study of medical culture (including that of magical healers) in the kingdom of Naples (1992) turned up cultural motifs for popular curing that parallel many folk practices in Portugal. Gentilcore examined trials for illicit healing through sorcery and witchcraft that occurred between 1563 and 1818.<sup>20</sup> According to his research, magical cures took place within the sphere of a "sacred system" that permeated most aspects of peasant life; priests and cunning women provided remedies, but ailing country folk might also turn to the Catholic saints to be healed. The range of non-conventional remedies was inter-related, sharing methods and icono-

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Manchester University Press, 1998), chapters one, four and six; and Roy Porter, "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought," in Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 193–211; 226–234.

<sup>18</sup> Roy Porter, "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought," pp. 226–235.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> David Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy*, chapters one, four and six.

graphic patterns of curing.<sup>21</sup> Gentilcore observed that, as in Portugal, the culture of popular healing displayed remarkable continuity through the centuries—such practices were deeply embedded in local folkways. Most importantly, Gentilcore drew a distinction between a popularly accepted benign use of magic for healing, which he classified as simple sorcery, and a genuinely malicious type of magic that was thought to draw on diabolical assistance for its efficacy. Gentilcore reserved the term “witchcraft” to describe the latter—true *maleficium*. As in Portugal, comparatively few magical criminals engaged in a diabolical pact or cast malicious spells; the majority were folk healers whose incantations were aimed at alleviating illness or other positive ends. However, Gentilcore reports that, because European popular beliefs generally acknowledged that the ability to heal with magic also implied the ability to harm, folk healers in southern Italy ran the risk of being accused of *maleficium* if anyone in the community should be suddenly injured or fall mysteriously ill.<sup>22</sup> This, too, is analogous to the prevailing mentality and circumstances found in contemporary Portugal.

More significantly for the purposes of the present study, Gentilcore broached the question of the role conventional medical practitioners played as accusers or instigators in trials for witchcraft or sorcery where magical healing was involved. In discussing the duties of the Neapolitan Protomedicato, the official examining and licensing board of physicians, Gentilcore reported that this body held jurisdiction for trying cases of unlicensed or illicit healing until 1752.<sup>23</sup> However, the Inquisition’s role as adjudicator of superstitious curing was far more active and important in Naples, he says, and that physicians and surgeons could be involved in these proceedings, as well. “Physicians and surgeons tended to be the ones who made such accusations [against magical healers] before the Protomedicato, *fearing illicit competition, perhaps* [italics added], and because they were most familiar with the tribunal’s functions.”<sup>24</sup> Still, Gentilcore does not consider the implications of this revelation too closely in any follow-up analysis; nor does he discuss in detail what part conventional medical practitioners took in making denunciations before the

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1–25.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161–172.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Inquisition. In a later passage, though, we learn that physicians in Naples became ever more interested in asserting and protecting their professional identity from encroachment by healers of lesser status: their propensity to denounce barbers, surgeons or apothecaries who overstepped their bounds of licensed healing competence grew as the eighteenth century progressed.<sup>25</sup> Given this conceit and their demonstrable litigiousness, we might reasonably assume that physicians may have been behind some Inquisition denunciations of illicit magical healers in Naples, too. Gentilcore's analysis does not unravel this thread.

In his most recent publication on the European witch-hunts, English historian Robin Briggs has also included a brief consideration of the impact of popular healing beliefs on persecution patterns of those individuals who became the focus of trials. In *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (1996), Briggs confirms that trials for the practice of sorcery or witchcraft in Europe frequently involved cunning men and women. Briggs draws numerous parallels between conventional and illicit curing during the early modern period, pointing out the similarity of many of the treatments in both elite and popular traditions, as well as the futility of most of these remedies, be they learned or superstitious, in actually effecting a cure. Briggs asserts that, as a bias in favor of rational science grew among elites beginning in the late seventeenth century, licensed medical practitioners were far more likely to attribute illness to natural rather than supernatural causes. He also calls attention to the ubiquity of popular healing practices—methods that mixed empirical herbal lore with superstitious ritual—among the poorer classes across Europe due to a lack of any other affordable means to address illness or injury. While noting a strong hostility toward cunning folk among contemporary licensed physicians and surgeons, Briggs' work does not delve deeply into the possibility that conventional medicine's adherents were behind a substantial number of folk healers' accusations.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77 and 79.

<sup>26</sup> Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), pp. 69–76; 115–133. See also various essays in Andrew Wear, ed., *Health and Healing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Hampshire, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 1998), pp. 17–41 and 145–169.

Finally, in a broad-ranging survey of early modern witchcraft beliefs and trials in Europe and the New World published in 2001, P. G. Maxwell-Stuart notes that, throughout the history of western persecutions for magical crimes, relatively few trials reveal details of classic stereotypical witch behavior (infanticide; feasting with the devil; an orgy). However, proportionally many more trials demonstrate the presence of curative or love magic and other forms of beneficent sorcery among the activities accused witches undertook, often for pay. Such cunning men and women also sought to heal illnesses supposedly caused by the bewitchments of others. Curing was thus central to most accused witches' magical endeavors. Though acknowledging this fact, Maxwell-Stuart does not comment on the implications of this fundamental aspect of European witchcraft for contemporary practitioners in the conventional medical estate.<sup>27</sup>

As a result of realizations gained through these new studies, witchcraft historiography has rightly begun to place a new interpretive weight on the admonition Sprenger and Kramer wrote into *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) that “witches who could cure would also know how to injure.”<sup>28</sup> One finds the belief in a neatly balanced, reflexive relationship between healing and harming reflected in poplar traditions, as well. To cite just one example, taken from Carlo Ginzburg's *The Night Battles*, a peasant woman in Modena, Italy, warned in her testimony before the Inquisition that anyone “who knows how to heal knows how to destroy.”<sup>29</sup>

What does not seem to have been done in a systematic way, however, to judge from a survey of current European witchcraft scholarship, is to check denunciation and testimony records to see who was accusing healers at different times and in different places, specifically to discern possible self-interested action originating among medical professionals. This is precisely the course the present study has taken. Rather than focus on the superstitious beliefs and practices of the accused—material that had already been thoroughly explored in works by José Pedro Paiva, Maria Benedita Araújo and

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<sup>27</sup> P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Witchcraft in Europe and the New World, 1400–1800* (New York: Palgrave Press, 2001), pp. 68–72.

<sup>28</sup> Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Springer, *Malleus Maleficarum* (New York: Dover Press, 1971), pp. 115; 134–143.

<sup>29</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), p. 78.

Francisco Bethencourt<sup>30</sup>—the current work has consciously placed an emphasis on the worldly concerns of those responsible for bringing popular healers and other magical criminals to trial. To explain Portugal's Enlightenment-era preoccupation with popular superstitions and magic, it is far more important to understand the contemporary social context, wherein turbulent intellectual changes beset Portugal during the Age of Reason, and then examine how these currents of thought affected the elites who directed policy in government, the Inquisition and the professional medical community.

Francisco Bethencourt was right to point out that magical beliefs among the general Portuguese population remained remarkably consistent for centuries, into the modern era.<sup>31</sup> What changed circa 1700 in Portugal were the conceits of the elites, who had been exposed to the new rationalist, empirical mentality; it was this that led in turn to widespread prosecutions of magical criminals.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, explicating the causality of "witch-hunting" in Enlightenment-era Portugal requires a focus on elite belief systems rather than popular ones. This book is as much a work about the history of medical science and rationalism in Portugal as it is a regional study of magic and witchcraft persecution.

The findings for Portugal linking state-licensed medical professionals to the prosecution of magical criminals in the eighteenth century, at least, are abundant, clear, and persuasive. Future scholars of European witchcraft would do well to undertake a broad review of the available legal court proceedings concerning witch-hunting, paying closer attention to the varying roles popular healers and their denouncers played in trials from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. This is not to suggest that folk healers' and licensed physicians' roles have always been the same as this study has found them to have

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<sup>30</sup> See José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas': Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Edital Notícia, 1997); José Pedro Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas... na Diocese de Coimbra (1650–1740)* (Coimbra: Minerva, 1992); Araújo, Maria Benedita, *Magia, Demónio e Força Mágica na Tradição Portuguesa (Séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994); and Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia: feiticieras, saladores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987).

<sup>31</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 421.

<sup>32</sup> Roy Porter, "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought," pp. 193–194.

been in Enlightenment-era Portugal. Rather, this statement asserts that the alleged skills of popular healers, because of their link between the physical and the spiritual worlds, have made them an inalienable though under-appreciated part of the story of the European witch-hunts. Further, it conveys the suspicion that the historiography of witch-hunting in Europe has heretofore understated the role of state-sanctioned conventional medical practitioners as accusers and prosecutors in magical crimes trials.

Two relatively recent studies about the Inquisition in Iberia, both of them focused on regions of Spain, offered some promise of comparative material that would help put the present research about Portugal into context. However, neither Spanish project focused specifically on the Inquisition's prosecution of magical healers as an historical problem. Nor did either author conceive of the persecution of folk sorcery as an elite response driven by the influx of new rationalist ideas or sensibilities in the late seventeenth century. Moreover, neither of these studies considered the role that licensed medical practitioners might have played in accusing or prosecuting illicit magical healers in Spain. Hence, the ability of these Spanish studies to provide a relevant counterpoint to the Portuguese situation in the eighteenth century is strictly limited.

The first to be published was Jaime Contreras' book, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700: poder, sociedad y cultura* (Madrid, 1982). Of 2,203 total Inquisition cases considered in this north-western Spanish district over fourteen decades, only 140 trials (6.4%) resulted from a charge involving superstition or magic.<sup>33</sup> Women made up the majority of the accused in these cases (92 female as compared to 48 male culprits).<sup>34</sup>

Contreras' specific analysis of magical crimes in Galicia takes up only the ultimate six pages of the entire book.<sup>35</sup> The author asserts that popular healers were everywhere in Galicia ("Curanderas, hechiceros y ensalmadores . . . llenaban toda la geografía de la región"<sup>36</sup>); this corresponds with findings for contemporary Portugal. But Contreras offers no concrete numbers about the frequency of trials having to

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<sup>33</sup> Jaime Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700: poder, sociedad y cultura* (Madrid: Akal, 1982), table, p. 588.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 686.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 685–691.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 685.

do with illicit superstitious healing. He cites just five actual cases that concern magical crimes, only two of which seem to involve illicit popular curing. Moreover, all of his examples of Inquisition criminals, magical or otherwise, are drawn from pre-eighteenth century trials, so Contreras' work cannot address the issues regarding elite prosecutors' changing worldviews raised by the chronological context of later Portuguese magical crimes trials.

Only the final paragraph of Contreras' book addresses Galician popular healers directly. His conclusions essentially match those of the present work: that witchcraft in the strict Satanic sense was mostly absent in the trials examined; many magical criminals were healers; and rural people relied on magical healers to treat their ailments because they had no other option for medical care. But Contreras offers no quantified data or analysis on these points. His concluding remarks acknowledge the importance of healing among magical folk practices, but he spent no time considering the implications of that realization. There is no analysis that addresses the social, professional or intellectual tensions created in the medical sphere by the onset of the Age of Reason. Further, Contreras failed to investigate the persons who filed accusations—and their possible motivations—in Inquisition magical crimes trials. In other words, Contreras' concluding remarks constitute a fundamental point of departure for the present study.

The second book about the Holy Office in Spain, *L'aministration de la foi: l'Inquisition de Tolède, XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* by Jean-Pierre Dedieu (Madrid, 1989), is also problematic as a comparative tool. To begin with, there is no mention of *curanderos* or *saludadores* anywhere in the text; Dedieu did not use magical folk healing as an analytical motif. Dedieu's quantitative figures regarding the accused in Inquisition trials tell us nothing about the presence of folk healers in early modern Toledo, nor about the number of magical criminals who might have been folk healers.<sup>37</sup> In his chapter on sorcery and magic, Dedieu refers to the subject as “an important theme,” but almost all of his examples are drawn from the period prior to 1620.<sup>38</sup> He provides

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<sup>37</sup> Jean-Pierre Dedieu, *L'aministration de la foi: l'Inquisition de Tolède, XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Madrid: Casa de Velazquez, 1989), chapter 16: Un thème important: sorcellerie et magie, pp. 309–328.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

virtually no analysis of later cases that would allow for a comparison with Enlightenment-era Portugal. The author tells us little about the accusers and their motives in these cases, so there is nothing in the text regarding a possible conflict of interests between professional physicians or surgeons and the magical criminals who provided folk cures.

In Dedieu's *tableau* 53, the clientele of one Lucia of Toledo, tried for sorcery in 1530, indicates that magical healing was one of her specialties, among other magical services.<sup>39</sup> Still, Dedieu spent no time in consideration of *brujas* as healers. Of Dedieu's thirteen categories of "actions attributed to *brujas*" in Toledo's Inquisition trials (*tableau* 54), only one category has anything to do explicitly with healing.<sup>40</sup> Most categories enumerate negative, harmful acts (*maleficia*)—a focus on purported acts of *maleficia* was a common characteristic of witchcraft trials across Europe prior to 1660. These acts became the focus of Dedieu's analysis.

Further, the chronology of magical crimes prosecuted in Toledo varies significantly from that of Portugal. *Tableau* 34 reveals that just 428 of the 9567 total Inquisition trials in Toledo between 1483 and 1820 involved crimes of magic and sorcery (that is, 4.47%). But 374 of those 428 trials occurred before 1701. The Toledo Inquisition heard only 54 magical crimes cases between 1701 and 1820, an average of one every other year. The real crisis had come between 1621 and 1700, when Toledo witnessed 235 sorcery trials, an average of three per year.<sup>41</sup> So, in stark contrast to the Portuguese experience, where interest in magical crimes increased enormously with the advent of Enlightenment sensibilities in the eighteenth century, in Toledo the Inquisitorial concern about sorcery dropped sharply with the onset of the Age of Reason. This suggests that medical professionals and Enlightenment thinkers in eighteenth-century Spain felt no threat from, and took no notice of, superstitious healing among the general populace.

Such was not the case in Portugal. Because of the frequency of and motivation for magical prosecutions, as well as the contemporary mentality of many of the literate elites who carried out these

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 313–314.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, *tableau* 54, p. 322.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239–240.



trials, Portugal presents a very different picture from Spain and the rest of Europe.

Even in the newest scholarly work about witch-hunting in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Sweden, the research reveals fundamental differences between the Swedish and contemporary Portuguese experiences. Historian Per Sörlin investigated 515 sorcery cases submitted to the Göta High Court of southern Sweden between 1635 and 1779, 374 of which occurred after 1705.<sup>42</sup> Although prosecutions were definitively on the rise in southern Sweden in the mid-1700s, as in the Hungarian scenario, Swedish trials occurred within a judicial system that was not centrally directed. Judges acted with much greater independence than the Portuguese *inquisidores* could in trying and sentencing magical criminals. One result was a significant execution rate among convicted “witches” in Sweden,<sup>43</sup> whereas the Holy Office in Portugal killed none of its magical convicts after 1626.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the overwhelming majority of Swedish trials originated in rural districts (88%) where the influx of Enlightenment currents of thought may not have penetrated.<sup>45</sup> Hence, the Swedish case is not wholly analogous to the Portuguese eruption of trials after 1715.

Perhaps most significantly, although Sörlin acknowledges “a considerable number of wisewomen and wisemen among the defendants” of Swedish witchcraft cases,<sup>46</sup> he gave virtually no significance to magical curing in the overall story of these eighteenth century trials. Licensed physicians and surgeons did not instigate trials against popular healers in Sweden; most witchcraft cases there arose out of accusations among social peers.<sup>47</sup> Further, Sörlin’s research does not demonstrate that elites were actively interested in making a cultural conquest of rural society to alter the folk beliefs that prevailed in the countryside. On the contrary, Sörlin found that elite influence in Swedish witchcraft trials was not intended to pressure the acculturation and assimilation of elite conceits into Swedish peasant soci-

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<sup>42</sup> Per Sörlin, “*Wicked Arts*”: *Witchcraft and Magic Trials in Southern Sweden*, p. 20.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19–23.

<sup>44</sup> Brian P. Levack, “The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions,” in Benkt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 78.

<sup>45</sup> Per Sörlin, “*Wicked Arts*”: *Witchcraft and Magic Trials in Southern Sweden*, p. 23.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

ety. Unlike findings for eighteenth-century Portugal, Sörlin saw no evidence of a cultural crisis or class conflict over basic cosmology.<sup>48</sup> His findings therefore portray a social context radically varied from that in which Portuguese sorcery trials occurred.

If the historian must initially define a research subject, what necessarily follows is the need to gain access to reliable documentation on that subject. In the case of witch-hunting and the persecution of popular healers in Portugal, this secondary problem is made more difficult by the slipperiness of the first. The Inquisition in Portugal prosecuted few persons strictly and simply for witchcraft. Rather, trials conducted by the Holy Office to address alleged magical activities could include a broad range of specific formal charges. These included, roughly in order of frequency, *curandeirismo* (folk healing) and *curas supersticiosas* (superstitious cures), *superstição* (superstition), *feitçaria* (sorcery), *pacto com o Demónio* (pact with the Devil), *bruxaria* (witchcraft), *benzaduras* (blessings), *sortilégio* (fortune telling), *embustes* (charlatanism), *heresia* (heresy), *apostasia* (apostasy), and *fingimento* (faking). In Portuguese magical crimes trials, these comprise the most important charges. However, this list is not comprehensive. The Holy Office charged practitioners of magic with a handful of other ancillary crimes, some of which provide an indication of the important concurrent issues that might have instigated a trial for magical practices. These will be discussed below.

Each defendant in a Portuguese Holy Office trial for magical crimes, then, would have been charged with one or more of the above offenses. Typically, two or three charges would appear in the trial dossier, but there could be as many as five. As a result of these murky variables, subsequent historians of the Portuguese Inquisition have arrived at widely differing quantitative data when assessing the problem of witch-hunting and persecutions for other magical or superstitious activities in Portugal. How does one decide what constitutes a magical crime? Different historians have drawn their research parameters in divergent ways.

In his various works on the Portuguese Inquisition (1987; 1990; 1994), Francisco Bethencourt of Lisbon's Universidade Nova provides an abundance of valuable information about Holy Office *processos* against practitioners of magic, hereafter referred to collectively as

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178–186.

*mágicos*. In his 1990 article, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,”<sup>49</sup> he reported that magical crimes constituted “a small proportion of inquisitorial activity as a whole,” citing statistics for the Évora tribunal as an example. There, only a tiny proportion of all crimes prosecuted during the nearly three centuries of that tribunal’s operation—just 2.5% (291 of 11,743)—involved magical offenses. Percentages for the Lisbon and Coimbra tribunals, he says, are the same or even lower. Hence, witch-hunting cannot be seen as a priority among Portuguese inquisitors, confirming the “low standing of witchcraft within the formal hierarchy of heresies . . .” as that hierarchy was understood inside the Holy Office of Portugal.<sup>50</sup>

Still, Bethencourt’s chronological analysis of Holy Office trials against persons guilty of magical crimes points to two obvious periods in which the Inquisition’s interest in oppressing *mágicos* rose significantly. The first was in the decade of the 1550s, just after the Holy Office began to function as an institution. From 1550 to 1560, the Évora tribunal averaged nearly five trials per year against practitioners of magic, which Bethencourt explains is attributable to the “political goal of ascertaining the extent of all types of crimes falling within the Faith Tribunal’s jurisdiction.”<sup>51</sup> Immediately thereafter, however, that average dropped to less than five trials per decade, a situation that continued steadily for a century and a half, during which time the territories of northwestern Europe experienced their most aggressive periods of witch-hunting.<sup>52</sup> Then, between 1710 and 1760 in Portugal, a period which corresponds closely to the reign of King João V and the tenure of Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello, the average of *mágico* trials in Évora jumped to between three and five per year, depending on the decade. During that half century, nearly 53% of all Évora Inquisition prosecutions against *mágicos* occurred (153 of 291), according to Bethencourt’s charts. Explaining this “greater public sensitivity towards magic” during the eighteenth century is difficult to explain, he asserted, and would “require further study.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, pp. 403–422.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 405–407.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 406.

<sup>52</sup> See Levack, pp. 21–26.

<sup>53</sup> Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” p. 406.

Of particular interest is Bethencourt's monograph about witch-hunting throughout Portugal during the sixteenth century. *O Imaginário da Magia: feitiçeras, saladores e nigromantes no século XVI* (*The Cosmology of Magic: Sorcerers, Healers and Necromancers in the Sixteenth Century*), published in 1987, is the most thorough modern scholarship available on the problem of Portuguese witch-hunting during the period immediately following the Inquisition's founding, when the energy exerted by that institution against *mágicos* reached an early peak. As such, it provides a sound basis for comparison with the exigencies and preoccupations of the Portuguese Inquisition during its later period of active witchcraft persecution in the eighteenth century. The differences are considerable and impressive, but one aspect is especially clear: in the sixteenth century, illicit superstitious healing was not a matter in which the Holy Office often intervened.<sup>54</sup>

Bethencourt divided the types of crimes with which sixteenth-century Portuguese *mágicos* were charged into four groups, arranged according to the frequency with which they appeared in Holy Office records. Sorcery (*feitiçaria*) and witchcraft (*bruxaria*) were the most usual charges, occurring in 66%, or fully two-thirds, of the trials. Following far behind came the next closest category, which included the crimes of superstitious curing (*curas supersticiosas*), seeing (*vidência*) and divination (*sortilégio*); these charges were levied in a mere 17% of the cases Bethencourt studied. Necromancy and magical arts rated third, with 10.6%, and blasphemy (*blasfêmia*) and superstition (*superstição*), with 6.4%, concluded the list.<sup>55</sup> Looking more closely at Bethencourt's published data, we can determine just how few trials involved charges stemming from popular healing activities. Seven cases against *curandeiros* and *saladores* were prosecuted in Évora; five came from Lisbon; while one lone case originated with the Coimbra tribunal, situated in the same city as the university that was the center of medical learning in Portugal. So, just thirteen cases out of ninety-four, or 13.8%, were trials against popular healers.<sup>56</sup>

It should be noted, though, that in three of the trials where the formal charge was witchcraft or sorcery, the accused person was a recognized midwife (*parteira*) by trade. Because of unavoidably high

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<sup>54</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *O imaginário da Magia: feitiçeras, saladores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 227–260.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 302–307.

infant and maternal mortality rates under difficult pre-modern medical conditions, professional midwives were particularly vulnerable to charges of misconduct, which often emerged, for lack of any other recourse on the part of an unfortunate patient or her family to obtain satisfaction in the event of an infant's or mother's death, in the form of a witchcraft accusation.<sup>57</sup>

The results of this inquiry into Bethencourt's research are unequivocal: inquisitors during the earlier period of Portuguese witch-hunting were not nearly as interested in restricting superstitious popular medicine as they would become 150 years later in the eighteenth century, when the ratio of Inquisition cases against popular healers grew many times higher, reaching at times to well above 50% of all magical crimes cases in some regions. Of those two-thirds of trials against *mágicos* in the sixteenth century where the charge was witchcraft or sorcery, the inquisitors were interested in stopping persons from engaging in *maleficia*, diabolism, sorcery, fortune telling, or other types of socially counterproductive behavior, but not healing. Further, when *curandeiros* or *saludadores* were brought to trial, their sentences reflected virtually the same range of punishments as were levied against other condemned *mágicos*: some were let off lightly, receiving only religious instruction, while others were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment and a whipping of up to fifty lashes. Curiously, more than half of all Holy Office trials relating to magic in sixteenth-century Portugal (49 of 94) occurred between 1551 and 1557, and the great majority of these cases (45 of 49) originated within the region controlled by the Évora tribunal.<sup>58</sup>

In her recent book on a closely-related subject, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (*The Inquisition in Portugal; first half of the XVIII century: The Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello*), published in 1992, Maria Luísa Braga of the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica provided the following statistics regarding Inquisition cases which involved the loosely-defined crime of sorcery (*feiticeira*). (As demonstrated above, the group of crimes that may be counted as "magical" was complex, including far more activities than just sorcery. Braga's use of the term "sorcery" to limit her data

<sup>57</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 139–140.

<sup>58</sup> Bethencourt, *O imaginário da Magia*, pp. 248–250.

search is inadequate; by doing so, she missed a significant number of pertinent cases.)

Braga divides her figures into two periods, 1682–1706 and 1707–1750 (the reigns of Portuguese Kings Pedro II and João V, respectively) and reports them separately by regional tribunal. According to her tabulation, during the earlier period, the Coimbra Inquisition tried thirty-three cases (16 women; 17 men); Évora tried eighteen (11 women; 7 men); and Lisbon tried nineteen (11 women; 8 men). In the later period, Braga's tally records 181 trials in Coimbra (119 women; 62 men); seventy-seven in Évora (44 women; 33 men); and sixty-three in Lisbon (30 women; 33 men). Taken together, these figures total 391 Inquisition trials for sorcery throughout Portugal between 1682 and 1750, involving 231 women and 160 men.<sup>59</sup> In her analysis of these trials, Braga mentions that the majority of the accused magical practitioners' activities revolved around various types of superstitious healing, which she then briefly describes, and notes that the crime of illicit healing was often coupled with additional charges relating to other superstitions or magical powers. However, she does not subject her data on this aspect of the accused *mágicos*' activities to much further or more profound investigation.<sup>60</sup>

José Pedro Paiva of the University of Coimbra, in his excellent study of witch-hunting in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Portugal, provides the most thorough statistics available for Portuguese Inquisition cases against practitioners of magic. From his doctoral thesis, published as *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas' (Witchcraft and Superstition in a Country without "Witch Hunting")*: Portugal 1600–1774 in 1997, we learn that the Holy Office in Portugal investigated some 818 cases against *mágicos* for a variety of carefully defined magical crimes during the period studied, of which the trial records for some 690 are preserved.<sup>61</sup> Paiva's tabulation demonstrates a tremendous increase in magic, witchcraft and sorcery trials between 1715 and 1760, with the peak years falling between 1720 and 1724, during which time the Portuguese *Santo Ofício* brought seventy-five *mágicos* to trial in just five years.

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<sup>59</sup> Maria Luísa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 322–331.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 175–181.

<sup>61</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 208.

The point that Paiva's statistics amply demonstrate but to which he devotes just a few pages of analysis is this: after 1700, the Portuguese Holy Office conducted a recognizably aggressive campaign of repression against popular healers. Taking into account all Inquisition trials relating to superstitious practices during the entire 174-year period of his study (1600–1774), Paiva reports that at least 58% of persons tried by the Inquisition for magical crimes were charged with some manner of illicit, superstitious, magical healing.<sup>62</sup> On this remarkable point, Paiva identifies the trend but offers little comment and no explanation.

More to the point, Paiva says that the rate of incidence of trials against healers rose markedly “during the first decade of the eighteenth century,” before which date “healers were almost never persecuted.”<sup>63</sup> (My records indicate that this trend actually began a bit earlier, at the end of the seventeenth century, after 1695.)<sup>64</sup> According to Paiva's work, the three Portuguese Inquisition tribunals combined prosecuted “only” forty-three popular healers during the entire seventeenth century. In contrast, during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century, they prosecuted nearly five times as many; Paiva identified 207 *curandeiro* trials in Portugal between 1700 and 1774.<sup>65</sup> He did not include in this tally inquisitorial convicts whose crimes had combined healing with other offenses.

Given that so much prior scholarship has approached witchcraft as a socially destructive crime and the legal persecution of witches as an attempt to suppress evil deeds, or *maleficia*—thus tending to discount the practical benefits many practitioners of magic attempted to provide for their contemporaries—that 58% or more of all magical criminals in Portugal should be well-intentioned healers is a surprisingly high frequency. In 36% of these trials (Paiva reports 250 of 690), the accused's crimes were purely those of the *curandeiro* or *saludador*; in another 18% of the trials (121 of 690), Professor Paiva identified the accused as a “healer/sorcerer”; and in a final 4% of the trials, (29 of 690), the accused was a healer but his or her charges

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 212–213.

<sup>64</sup> See tables following Chapter VIII, which compare rates of persecution chronologically for the three Portuguese tribunals.

<sup>65</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 212–213.

included another crime, as well.<sup>66</sup> Typically, these charges would include such catch-all allegations as heresy, engaging in superstitious practices or having entered a pact with the devil, additional crimes with which virtually all alleged magical practitioners in the eighteenth century were charged.

That the focus of the Inquisition's attention with regard to practitioners of magic had shifted decisively by the final years of the seventeenth century to rest more heavily on persons engaged in illicit superstitious healing is unambiguous. What remains is to explain why this shift occurred.

Despite having demonstrated in his book *O Imaginário da Magia* that *saludadores* and *curandeiros* were not a Holy Office priority in the sixteenth century, elsewhere Portuguese historian Francisco Bethencourt posits three reasons why the Inquisition might have grown keen to persecute popular healers at a later date. The primary reason, he asserts, was theological—of most importance was a concern on the part of church, Inquisition and royal authorities that, “because the body was the prime target for demoniac action . . . it was by tempting the flesh . . . that the soul was perverted and became prey to the kingdom of darkness.” Folk healers, it was thought, provided these temptations, which Bethencourt says “explains the demand for a greater ‘scientific’ and, above all, religious control over those dealing with the human body.”<sup>67</sup> Second, he cites the financial interest of the crown, which jealously controlled the medical licensing process and benefited from fees charged for the necessary qualifying examinations. But the reason Bethencourt cited first—the first explanation that came to his mind when writing this passage but the reason to which he accorded the least significance—involved the vested material interest of university-trained, licensed medical professionals. Physicians, surgeons and barbers, he noted, were resistant to any competition from unlicensed peasant *curandeiro* interlopers.<sup>68</sup>

I submit that any explanation for the eighteenth-century *curandeiro* persecutions in Portugal should reverse Bethencourt's causality entirely. True, the theological arguments Bethencourt cites might have held primacy in the minds of many inquisitors and churchmen, but left

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>67</sup> Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” p. 410.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.



to themselves they showed little inclination to provoke trials against healers. Only at the end of the seventeenth century, once the presence of medical professionals among the personnel of the Holy Office had reached a critical mass, did Inquisition trials of popular healers begin in substantial numbers. Available evidence suggests, therefore, that the primary instigators were licensed medical practitioners, and they were motivated both by material and professional interests.

The majority of Holy Office cases against *curandeiros* or *salvadores* originated with the Inquisition tribunal located in the city of Coimbra. What is more, the Coimbra tribunal's rate of persecution of popular healers began to rise sharply well before the tribunals in Évora and Lisbon began to pursue *curandeiros* more actively.<sup>69</sup> The Holy Office's eighteenth-century trend of prosecuting illicit healers, then, began in Coimbra, Portugal's seat of academic medical training.<sup>70</sup>

As Chapter V, the keystone component of my argument, will demonstrate, the Inquisition tribunal operating in Coimbra had, by the end of the seventeenth century, forged a profound and multi-faceted link with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra, not only employing trained physicians and surgeons in the Holy Office prisons, but also using professional medical practitioners widely as informants and functionaries. Several prominent instructors of the Faculty of Medicine were in fact Inquisition *familiares*, as were many of their then-current and former students. Indeed, during the eighteenth century, the chief *médico* of the Inquisition prisons in Coimbra was also typically a Coimbra University professor of one of the medical disciplines.

In Portugal, the University of Coimbra and its environs provided the place where licensed practitioners of medicine would become most conscious of themselves as a distinct professional and social group.<sup>71</sup> And yet, in this Jesuit-dominated institution where the med-

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<sup>69</sup> See tables following Chapter VIII.

<sup>70</sup> These assertions point to *curandeiro* trials conducted in Coimbra between 1710 and 1714, the half-decade immediately prior to the forty-year period I have identified as the peak years of Portuguese witch-hunting. While it is true that the Évora tribunal demonstrated a strong inclination to prosecute *mágicos*, too, during the same half-decade, 1710–1714, in none of those cases was the person tried a *curandeiro*. See tables, Chapter VIII.

<sup>71</sup> See Teófilo Braga, *História da Universidade de Coimbra*, Tomo II (Lisbon: Typographia da Academia Real das Ciências, 1895), pp. 768–812. See also José Sebastião Silva Dias, “Portugal e a Cultura Europeia: Séculos XVI a XVIII,” *Biblos*

ical curriculum had not changed in three centuries, forward-thinking physicians and surgeons found their desire for enlightened reform indefinitely stymied. By extension, then, it is logical that Coimbra would also be the location where medical practitioners would first come to see that popular healers constituted a serious philosophical, methodological and economic threat to their collective professional endeavors.

Having already established a link with the Inquisition—the strength of which kept growing as more licensed physicians, surgeons and barbers became *familiares*—medical professionals possessed a means at their disposal to act against this threat. Later, as the eighteenth century progressed and more Portuguese physicians and surgeons became aware (and enamored) of the rationalized, scientific techniques being practiced in other parts of Europe, they became motivated by more erudite reasons to discredit and drive out popular healers.<sup>72</sup> Because Portuguese *médicos* were thwarted from instituting scientific medical practices through the University of Coimbra, one of their only avenues to promote modernization lay in using the Inquisition to discredit popular healers, thereby advancing their case for the enlightenment reform of healing practices.

The body of primary source evidence employed for this study of the Portuguese Inquisition's Enlightenment-era repression of magical healers had the following parameters:

The process of selecting trials for use in this study was hampered somewhat by the inexact method with which Holy Office trials are categorized and filed in Portuguese archives. All Inquisition trials chosen for this study were assembled using both the card file system and the new Inquisition computer database of the Torre do Tombo, the National Archives of Portugal. Both of these index systems were incomplete and used varying terms to identify both the nature of the crime in question and the accused's social status, including his or her profession. Trials involving popular healers were identified either by the charge listed in the trial records index (*curas; curandeiro; curandice, benzaduras; saludador*) or by the accused's listed profession

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XXVIII (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1952), pp. 280–299; and the article by Rocha Brito e Feliciano Guimarães, “A Faculdade de Medicina de Coimbra,” *Actas Ciba*, 14 (n.d.).

<sup>72</sup> The argument describing these developments is presented in Chapter III, below.

(*curandeiro/curandeira; saludador; benzador/benzadeira; parteira; barbeiro; cirurgião*). Trials involving other magical crimes were identified by the various charges listed at the beginning of this chapter.

In conducting this study, I viewed trial records for a total of 442 accused persons whom the Portuguese Inquisition prosecuted for crimes relating to magic between 1668 and 1802, the great majority of which fell between 1682 and 1777 (only twenty-one of the cases viewed fell outside this period). The latter dates correspond to the inclusive dates for the reigns of the three Portuguese kings who ruled during the eighteenth century—Pedro II (1682–1706), João V (1706–1750) and José I (1750–1777). These dates also correspond to what can be termed the Enlightenment, especially as that concept applies to Portugal—a time during which Portuguese society was very gradually transformed by rationalist ideas that trickled into the country from abroad. The former set of dates, 1668 and 1802, correspond respectively to the earliest and latest Portuguese Inquisition trials against popular superstitious healers—*curandeiros* or *saludadores*—examined for this study. Prior to 1682, Holy Office prosecutions explicitly against folk healers were relatively few; after 1802 those types of trials were nonexistent.

In each of these trials, the accused's official crime was a magical one; at least one of the charges related to witchcraft, sorcery, superstitions, or some form of infraction involving the use of magic (for the sake of convenience and the lack of an appropriate word in English, I often refer to the accused persons collectively using the Portuguese term, *mágicos*). Of these 442 persons I discovered that, in the cases of 184 of them, the accused was definitely engaged in illicit healing at the time of his or her arrest; that is, at least one of the crimes for which the person was being tried related to the arts of a *curandeiro* or *saludador*. Considering the Portuguese Inquisition as a whole, then, my research indicates that nearly 42% of all people prosecuted for magical crimes between 1668 and 1802 actually committed crimes specifically relating to illicit healing. This alone represents more than a threefold increase of trials against illicit healers over the sixteenth-century phase of frequent Inquisition persecutions reported by Francisco Bethencourt.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Calculated according to José Pedro Paiva's statistics, this factor increases to over fourfold.

There is one additional variable. Of the 442 accused persons whom the Portuguese Inquisition prosecuted for crimes relating to magic between 1668 and 1802, fifty were tried more than once, and two of these were tried three times. Thirty-five of those fifty, or 70%, were popular healers. All told, then, this study draws on the records for 494 total trials for crimes relating to magic, 221 of which (44.73%) were conducted against *saludadores* and *curandeiros*.

This figure should in fact be considerably higher (recall that José Pedro Paiva reported that 58% of Inquisition trials for magical crimes involved illicit healing). My statistics mainly represent cases in which the accused was charged specifically with the crime of illicit curing or was identified as a *curandeiro* or *saludador* in the Holy Office trial indexes. However, in many instances which I encountered during my research, the accused *mágico* had been functioning as a popular healer but was not identified overtly as such in the indexed records of his or her case. My method was to focus on those cases where a popular healer had been identified explicitly, to see who their accusers had been, and then to read as many of the remaining trials against *mágicos* as possible in order to discover additional *curandeiro* cases which had been masked by their having been charged with other crimes. That I was not able to read all of the cases which were not explicitly identified as popular healers in the trial indexes accounts for part of the discrepancy between the number of healers Paiva reports and the number found in my data.

Another factor explaining this discrepancy has to do with the different chronological parameters of our work. In comparison with the present study, Paiva's research utilized the records for nearly two hundred additional Holy Office magical crimes cases, most of which occurred between 1600 and 1700. His records indicate that about 160 of these trials happened prior to 1682,<sup>74</sup> the point at which most of my documentation begins. (Except for one case, I did not examine any trials for non-healing magic users that occurred before 1682; similarly, only two of the popular healing cases I encountered occurred before that date.) However, my data for the Lisbon tribunal does not reach back before 1700, while the information for Coimbra begins in 1693, thus leaving out another considerable block of cases—perhaps forty—that Paiva utilized. Because of the very low incidence

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<sup>74</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 209.

of *curandeiro* cases in those tribunals for the years prior to 1700 and 1693 respectively, I elected to leave that material out of the data considered for this study. Conversely, Paiva used no trials occurring after 1774 (the date of the Marquês de Pombal's reform of the Inquisition), while the present study drew on seventeen post-1774 cases. Even so, this reckoning still leaves about fifteen trials unaccounted for in my body of documentation.

Professors Bethencourt and Paiva's work agrees with my own on this point: from the second to the sixth decade of the eighteenth century, Portuguese society experienced a sharply increased incidence of the prosecution of magical crimes. This wave of prosecutions was unparalleled in that country's history. If we narrow our window of inquiry to 1715–1755, the four most active decades of so-called witch-hunting in Portuguese history, we find that 68.77% of the total cases used for this study (304 of 442) transpired during that period. Of those 304 cases against alleged *mágicos* between 1715 and 1755, at least 127 of them (41.77%) involve popular healing practices—curative methods that were not sanctioned by the state or the medical profession in Portugal.

Moreover, if we consider only the Holy Office trials of known *curandeiros* which fell between 1682 and 1777, just under 80% (137 of 174) occurred between 1709 and 1755, a period in which the Enlightenment-influenced Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello shaped Inquisition policies to a great extent, and the period in which Portugal's first “enlightened despot,” Dom João V, was on the throne.<sup>75</sup> As a consequence of these trials against folk healers, in which little-used, centuries-old statutes against the practice of sorcery, superstition and witchcraft were virtually resurrected, “witchcraft persecution” in Portugal reached a peak in the 1720s and 1730s. That this should happen so late, quite out of step with most of the rest of Europe, requires an historical explanation.

The most intense period of “witch-hunting” in Portugal corresponds exactly with the period in which Portuguese physicians and

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<sup>75</sup> See A. J. R. Russell-Wood, “Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V,” in *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 5–35. Also, for a concise discussion of Joanine and Pombaline internal policy aimed at eclipsing any but royal authority in Portugal during the eighteenth century, see John Gagliardo, *Enlightened Despotism* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1967), pp. 34–51.

surgeons were becoming more aware of rational scientific medical techniques being developed outside of Portugal.<sup>76</sup> The period also coincides with a time in which licensed medical professionals had become firmly ensconced in the ranks of the Holy Office in substantial numbers—particularly influential physicians and surgeons in Coimbra.<sup>77</sup> I maintain that these circumstances are not mere coincidence.

On the basis of these circumstances, I submit that the proclivity of the Portuguese Inquisition to prosecute popular healers during the eighteenth century was the result of a deliberate policy on behalf of medical professionals inside the Inquisition who, in combination with their ecclesiastical colleagues, acted on their concurrent compatible vested interests to discredit popular medicine and its practitioners, with the eventual goal of eliminating superstitious folk healing from the Portuguese realm.

The present study, “Doctors, Folk Medicine and the Inquisition: the Repression of Magical Healing in Portugal during the Enlightenment,” is an attempt to prove this thesis.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> See below, Chapter III; and Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Portugal: The Role of the *Estrangeirados*” (Edinburgh, Scotland: Papers of the Third British North America Meeting, July 1996), pp. 4–11.

<sup>77</sup> See below, Chapter V; and José Viegã Torres, “Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil,” *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, Vol. 40 (Lisbon: October, 1994), pp. 109–135.

<sup>78</sup> The historical problem motivating this research project was first suggested by Francisco Bethencourt in his 1990 work, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” p. 406. The need for a thorough historical investigation to explain the sustained witch-hunts that occurred in eighteenth-century Portugal was reiterated in 1999 by Brian Levack in Ankarloo and Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, pp. 129–130.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ROLE OF THE *CURANDEIRO* AND *SALUDADOR* IN EARLY MODERN PORTUGUESE SOCIETY

Joana Baptista, a *curandeira* living in the village of São Marcos near the important regional market town of Évora, was known to her neighbors as *a Ratinha*, or “the Little Mouse.” She had moved to Évora, located on the plains of the Alentejo province in southeast Portugal, a number of years before from the far north of Portugal—near Chaves in the Archbishopric of Braga. She lived with her husband, who was a common laborer. On the day *familiares* of the Holy Office arrested her, 15 June 1747, she claimed to be above thirty years old; like most of her contemporaries, she did not know her exact date of birth.

By profession, Joana Baptista was also a recognized practicing *parteira*, or midwife. Her highly questionable methods, however, resulted in her being denounced to Inquisition authorities. The charges against her included practicing sorcery, disseminating superstitions and having entered into a pact with the devil. Before her arrest, her neighbors had provided a Holy Office evidence-gathering commission with damaging testimony about her magical healing techniques.<sup>1</sup>

Consistent with her position as a midwife, Joana Baptista’s illicit healing practices focused on the maladies of childhood. Among the superstitious curing rituals she was said to perform was the following, meant to extract sickness from patients who were, of necessity, quite small and therefore very young. Joana Baptista cured children by passing them through a special circular loaf of bread, called a *rosca*. The loaf was formed by twisting and braiding together three long strings of dough. This particular bread dough was to be made from flour provided from the households of three different woman, each named Maria. Once the dough had been baked into a big wreath or hoop, Joana Baptista would pass the ill child through this “*rosca de três Marias*” three times in an unbroken sequence, all the

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<sup>1</sup> ANTT, Inquirição de Évora, *processo* no. 6206.

while reciting a special incantation which addressed the sickness or disorder in question.<sup>2</sup>

Joana Baptista remained in the custody of the Évora tribunal of the Portuguese Inquisition, enduring interrogation and periodic torture, for over two years. According to the terms of her final punitive sentence, she was exiled for two years to the Bishopric of Portalegre, obliged to receive religious instruction, again imprisoned for an arbitrary length of time determined by the whim of her inquisitor jailers, and made to pay all costs stemming from her trial and incarceration. She was released from prison on 31 October 1749—the eve of All Saints' Day—eleven days after her public act of penance, or *auto-da-fé*, which she celebrated on 20 October 1749.<sup>3</sup> She was then dispatched to travel northward to begin her term of banishment.

In many ways, Joana Baptista's experience fits a scenario typical among popular healers in enlightenment-era Portugal. Like most other *curandeiras* and *curandeiros*, she was a member of Portugal's poorest social class, was an outsider to the community in which she resided and, at the time of her arrest—which fell during the Portuguese Inquisition's most active period of prosecuting magical criminals—was a relatively young adult. In gender terms, she also represents the mean; just over half the illicit healers brought to trial in the region under the Évora tribunal's jurisdiction were women (though this ratio was higher for the nation as a whole). Further, like nearly half of the women arrested for magical crimes in Portugal in the eighteenth century, Joana Baptista was married. Finally, as a first-time offender, her sentence was relatively light; she was not required to travel an extraordinary distance from her home (Portalegre lies just eighty-five kilometers north of Évora) and a two-year banishment was, by Holy Office standards, brief.<sup>4</sup>

What Joana Baptista's case illustrates most clearly, though, is that superstitious healing was perfectly commonplace in Portuguese peasant society, even in the middle of the eighteenth century after decades of active repression at the hands of Holy Office authorities and other elites. Although she may have worked behind closed doors, this

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> See tables of penalties provided below in Chapter VI.



*curandeira* and *parteira* employed—apparently for many years—healing methods of which a substantial proportion of the people in her village were aware and must have condoned, at least in practice if not in theory. Once denounced, however, this illicit healer’s position was revealed as vulnerable and precarious. Joana Baptista’s case illustrates that the step from being an oft-patronized and even respected local authority on remedies to being a moral criminal under prosecution by the Inquisition could be a rapid one.

Who, then, were Portugal’s popular healers, those common women and men who cured by superstitious means? What was their place in Portuguese society, and how did their neighbors perceive them? What kinds of curative services were *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* expected to provide, and who were their clients? The present chapter will examine qualitative questions such as these, leaving to Chapter VIII a more quantitatively based analysis concerning the demographics of popular healers.

*The Ambiguous Place of the Folk Healer in Early Modern Portuguese Society*

*Curandeiros* and *saludadores* provided health care services that the social groups they served—mostly rural people of commoner status—both desired and needed (though popular healers certainly worked in cities, too, and counted elites among their patrons). To that extent, popular healers must be seen, at least at the level of their client base, as being purveyors of a socially approved body of magical beliefs and practices. Borrowing from anthropologist Raymond Firth’s analysis of the different types of social functions that practitioners of magic can fulfill (productive, protective or destructive), we see that the healer’s magical art falls squarely in the realm of what Firth calls protective magic.<sup>5</sup> Protective magic is performed for the good of the community; besides curing illness, its intent is to guard property, avert misfortune, provide security while travelling or hunting, and otherwise assist the activities of the social group for which it is generated.

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<sup>5</sup> Raymond Firth, “Reason and Unreason in Human Belief,” in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. in Max Marwick (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 38–40.

Superstitious popular healing, then, had a socially positive function; its practice was not ill intentioned. On the contrary, the earnest healer performed a service meant to aid individuals in the community, as “a stimulus to [general social] effort.”<sup>6</sup> (Of course, this rules out the inevitable cynical charlatans, but the majority of Portuguese folk healers appear to have had a sincere faith in their own stated abilities.) Popular remedies by design were aimed at restoring members of a social organization—a village or neighborhood community—to their full productive capacity, not to cause harm to the social fabric. Further, a healer did not intend curative acts to be a divisive matter for elites and commoners; most *curandeiros*, in fact, reacted with indignation when accused of acts repugnant to the church.<sup>7</sup>

In *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem “Caça às Bruxas:” Portugal 1600–1774*, José Pedro Paiva has argued that healers were not at all marginalized either physically or sociologically, saying that illicit healers in fact played an important role in the day-to-day functioning of any rural community in Portugal during the early modern period.<sup>8</sup> While this statement is of course true, strictly speaking, it nevertheless requires qualification. Paiva’s sense that the *saludador* or *curandeiro* was perfectly integrated into the fabric of village or town life is based on his long association with documentary evidence which describes such folk healers residing among their peers and functioning for years as the standard—indeed perhaps the sole—health resource for peasants in any given rustic community. But because the healer’s position in such a community was nearly always an ambiguous, multifaceted one, perhaps to see the healer dualistically, as being both central and simultaneously marginalized, is the more accurate approach.

Paiva essentially argues that healers and other vendors of magical services lived and worked side-by-side with their clients. *Curandeiros* were therefore not marginalized, but rather fully inculcated in early

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>7</sup> For examples, see the following trials: ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6217, 6306, 7186, 7229, 7346, 7809, 8093, 8574 and 8899; Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516 and 372. See also the discussion concerning magical Portuguese healers in José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem “Caça às Bruxas:” Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 96–112.

<sup>8</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 168–173.

modern Portuguese community life. Certainly, he concedes, many healers were secretive, even to the point of utilizing paid intermediaries to procure paying customers for their services. Still, taking into consideration the context of the healers' work—within tightly knit corporate villages or town *bairros* and among people who missed little of what transpired among their neighbors—Paiva does not feel that casting *curandeiros* as marginalized outsiders is the proper characterization.<sup>9</sup> Up to a point, this study concurs with that point of view.

However, the fact remains that many healers, and particularly outsiders, were denounced in the end by their peasant neighbors, who cooperated willingly with elites to condemn practices in which many of them had been, as clients of the illicit healer in question, complicit. To be sure, usually those common peasants were acting in support of ecclesiastic, aristocratic or educated elites in their communities who had made the initial denunciations against a local *curandeiro*. Even so, that commoners broke ranks with their accustomed community folk healer and crossed social boundaries to side with their superiors speaks to the ambiguous nature of the relationship between a folk healer and his or her traditional clientele. The bond of loyalty between healer and common peasant was a weak one; when a healer's deeds fell under the scrutiny of elites, or were questioned or discredited by anyone in authority, his former clients could be counted upon to line up behind their social betters and provide denunciations.

Because many elites did not condone popular healing techniques and were instead inclined to denounce them as antithetical to Catholic religious orthodoxy, commoners found themselves faced with a dilemma caused by competing loyalties. Portuguese peasants found their loyalty divided between the healing skills of *curandeiros* and *saludadores*, their social peers on whom they had relied for health care since time out of memory, and their social superiors—churchmen, holders of landed estates, members of the local *câmara municipal* (town council)—who controlled the institutions on which so much depended for the peasants' continued well-being. Given these circumstances, peasants usually chose to support their employers if called to give testimony when a popular healer was denounced to the Inquisition.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Further, elite disapproval of folk healers was no secret. After all, churchmen, Holy Office *familiares* and other elites energetically gathered information about illicit healers throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and *curandeiro* methods, as well as the superstitious acts of other *mágicos*, were regularly criticized from the altar, too.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the Inquisition took sizable pains to ridicule and discredit superstitious folk healers and other practitioners of magic during public *auto-da-fé* ceremonies.<sup>11</sup>

However exalted her reputation for curing, then, the illicit healer always carried something of a stigma in the popular mind. The common peasant who might approach her for treatment did so at least reasonably aware—particularly by the first half of the eighteenth century—that the Mother Church took a very dim view of the superstitious arts *curandeiras* and *saludadores* employed. Indeed, visiting a *curandeiro* seems to have been something one did almost clandestinely; at least, many clients of popular healers who later testified against them appear genuinely ashamed of their former patronage.

Furthermore, once accused, a popular healer's social position seems to have deteriorated rapidly. Only in rare cases, as when a peasant was falsely accused of magical crimes, do we see friends and neighbors of the accused healer reacting in solidarity to put up a defense. For example, Catarina Maria dos Prazeres' case before the Évora tribunal in 1746 is an especially interesting one because the accused *curandeira* doggedly fought her persecution, hiring a *procurador* (legal advisor) to argue in her favor and gather testimonials that contradicted the assertions of her accusers.<sup>12</sup> In another instance, Clara Maria da Costa, aged twenty-six, was arrested in Coimbra in 1741 on suspicion of perpetrating superstitious acts of sorcery. Re-arrested

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 259–264.

<sup>11</sup> See Maria Luísa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 91–99 and 175–181. Also, see Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994), pp. 125–129; and José Viegas Torres, “Uma Longa Guerra Social: Os Ritmos da Repressão Inquisitorial em Portugal,” *Revista de História Económica e Social*, vol. 1 (1978), pp. 15–30. See, too, Francisco Bethencourt, “Inquisição e Controle Social,” an offprint of *História e Crítica* (1986), and José Pedro Paiva, “Inquisição e visitas pastorais: Dois Mecanismos Complementares de Controle Social?” *Revista de História das Ideias*, vol. 11 (1989), pp. 85–102. This subject will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI, below.

<sup>12</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5949.

eleven years later, she fell ill while being held in prison at Oporto. The latter third of her official Inquisition dossier consists of letters written by family members and friends, all dated from the late 1750s, petitioning for her release on the grounds that she was both innocent and in poor health.<sup>13</sup> However, these two cases are unusual; popular healers normally suffered through their trials with little recorded encouragement from friends and neighbors.

*Sources of Power—The Inalienability of Unorthodox Magical Means*

António André was a poor farmer who lived in the community where he had been born: Teixo, a village in the mountainous countryside around Viseu. *Familiars* of the Coimbra Inquisition arrested him on 1 November 1736; he was subsequently charged with performing *curas supersticiosas*, acts of sorcery and having a pact with the devil. André was something of a loner and he was becoming aged: he was over sixty-five years old in 1736, had never been married and farmed the same land his father had before him.<sup>14</sup>

The first Holy Office commission to gather denunciations against António André had met six years earlier on 11 September 1730 in a nearby village, Rondella. Most of the first twelve *diligências* were taken from local farmers and their wives. Thirteenth to testify was Padre Gregório Marquis, curate of the Church of São Tiago de Belheiros in Coimbra. The first commission gathered fifteen total denunciations.<sup>15</sup>

Three more commissions followed in 1731, as the Inquisition gathered additional information for an impending trial. The case then seems unaccountably to have been put aside for nearly five years. Then, on 14 March 1736, another commission met in the parish of Carvalho, Bishopric of Coimbra. First to testify was the Holy Office *alcaide* who would later incarcerate António André, João de Oliveira. Also testifying was Dom Francisco de Araújo Furtado, a nobleman and Lieutenant of Grenadiers who lived locally on his *fazenda*. One of the last to give a statement was Dona Bernarda, an unmarried

<sup>13</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 6299.

<sup>14</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 1234. Pages unnumbered.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

daughter of Bento da Rossa Nogueira, a physician born in and resident of Penalova parish, Bishopric of Coimbra. Finally, the Reverend Paulo Placido Pimmentel, sacerdote of the Church of São Pedro, village of Penalova, gave testimony against the accused. Inquisitors working on this case had carefully arranged for compelling testimony given by social elites to be included in the case against António André.<sup>16</sup>

Aside from the physician's daughter, there is no overt evidence of direct testimony given by a professional physician or surgeon against António André. However, an opening summary letter of denunciations written by the inquisitors for inclusion in the trial refers explicitly to the point that the accused was performing cures "... without being a Physician, Surgeon or Barber ..." ("*... sem ser Médico, Cirurgião ou Barbeiro, ...*"), a phrase which is repeated several times throughout the trial and in the final trial summary. The letter is signed by two of the senior inquisitors to sit on the panel of judges for this trial, the first cousins João Paes de Amaral and Bento Paes de Amaral.<sup>17</sup> This Holy Office internal communiqué and its provenance from the pens of these two close relatives—who were then being prepared for the highest positions within the *Santo Ofício*—reveals further evidence of a conscious effort on the part of the Inquisition to train expert prosecutors (*deputados*) who would use the Holy Office courts to systematically discredit popular healing in favor of conventionally trained, licensed medical practitioners.<sup>18</sup>

Among a variety of illicit cures and remedies which involved the burning or ingestion of many different herbs and spices, António André was accused of performing the following superstitious remedy, meant to address any general feeling of illness: Cook a chicken in white wine and honey, seasoned with salt, nutmeg, finely-ground cinnamon and aniseed (*erva doce*). The sick person was to eat a quarter of the chicken in the morning, leaving the rest in the pot to stew, and then eat another quarter at midnight. The rest was to be thrown out, and afterwards "one would know what had motivated" the sickness. António André defended these actions, saying there was

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, denunciations taken by three successive Holy Office commissions of inquiry, 1731–1736.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, unnumbered pages of the trial dossier following the *Auto de Entrega*.

nothing superstitious about them, and that any success that they enjoyed should be attributed to God.<sup>19</sup>

The incantation that followed, however, had curative importance, at least in António André's mind, and was therefore obviously objectionable to the sensibilities of the Inquisition.

Jesus, Father, Son and God the Holy Spirit  
 Help me, Jesus, in the name of Jesus  
 The most high name of Jesus  
 Jesus Christ is on the Cross  
 I believe in you, and I adore you, and  
 Much have you done to mingle with  
 And to know [the patient] in the womb  
 A mole or curls you have called for  
 Your body and blood is revered  
 His heart and curls are all twisted  
 His nerves and veins have been rejected  
 Thanks be to God and the Virgin Mary  
 Return to your wombs, darkened, your curls  
 Are yours to be, and your place, to which  
 You return to become well rested  
 Like this; like the truth that all waters run  
 To the sea, and clerics and friars are at  
 The altar, wanting to sing new masses;  
 Like the grace of God and the Virgin Mary  
 Who will come to alleviate this evil.

Amen Jesus<sup>20</sup>

This was to be repeated three times, followed by five Our Father's and five Hail Mary's. Then, the sick person was instructed to say one additional Our Father and one Hail Mary, at which point "our Lord would have mercy on the sick." Of even greater potential damage to his cause, during his interrogation, António André made an explicit comparison between his own healing powers and those of Jesus Christ, stating that "God gave [me] certain powers, like those He gave to Jesus . . . Our Lord . . . who was open [like a healer] and could save . . . and so can I . . ." <sup>21</sup>

António André's concept of "being open" points to a belief many popular healers held in Portugal during the early modern period, an

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., final pages of the trial dossier.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

idea used to explain the provenance of their healing power. To have an “open body” meant that one could channel divine power; that one’s body could function as a focal point and conduit for providential energy that could be directed specifically to heal. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Portugal, the term *corpo aberto* (“open body”) was used both popularly and by elites to describe anyone who claimed to be a medium of divine power for a variety of purposes, including healing, finding lost objects, telling the future, or attracting the affections of a desired mate. In trial dossiers of many *mágicos*, the Inquisition employed *corpo aberto* as a shorthand phrase for any of this species of superstitious crime.<sup>22</sup>

Biblical examples of Christ healing the sick are an obvious source for contemporary folk notions of *corpo aberto*. Even so, the concept of the human body acting as a kind of lens or lightning rod for extraordinary powers drawn from the divine or animated natural world recalls a much older, pre-Christian precedent.<sup>23</sup>

At the close of his trial, António André was sentenced to a two-year banishment to the environs of Guarda. Given that his residence near Viseu was so close (approximately fifty kilometers, but over very rough terrain), this was a comparatively light sentence—although it is well to remember that André was an elderly man and had probably never been far from home before. He was subject to “imprisonment at the discretion of the inquisitors” (*carcere a arbitrio dos Inquisidores*) until 15 July 1737, when he was released to fulfill the terms of his sentence. Instead of proceeding to Guarda, however, António André petitioned to have his sentence reduced. In view of his advanced age (he claimed at this time to be above seventy years old), the Holy Office, after several months of deliberation, rescinded

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<sup>22</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia: feitiçeras, saladores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 143–157; José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 112–122; and Maria Benedita Araújo, *Magia, Demônio e Força Mágica na Tradição Portuguesa (Séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), pp. 9–22. See also ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 7229, 7809, 8093, and 8574.

<sup>23</sup> In Max Marwick, ed., *Witchcraft and Sorcery* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), see the following articles: S. F. Nadel, “Witchcraft in Four African Societies” (1952), pp. 286–299; Raymond Firth; and “Reason and Unreason in Human Belief,” pp. 38–40. See, too, Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 3–5. See also Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1980), pp. 25–29.



the part of his punishment that mandated a period of exile beyond his home territory.<sup>24</sup>

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one could encounter a range of popular healers in Portugal. There were complete charlatans, charismatics who knowingly performed fantastic but false curing rituals on simple country folk. These false healers took advantage of rural peoples' pain, fear and gullibility to extract small payments in cash or kind, thus earning a meager itinerant livelihood.<sup>25</sup> Conversely, popular folkways provided an abundance of home remedies—treatments that drew on the accumulated experience of untold agrarian generations. To that extent, virtually every community included someone who attended to common human complaints, pains and ailments. Using well-known remedies, the vegetable ingredients for which were readily available, old wives and wizened men could employ their broad knowledge of plant characteristics—usually unscientifically gained but often effective—to address all manner of common maladies.<sup>26</sup> Typically, such cures would be administered in combination with a prayer, incantation, prolonged healing ritual or dietary regimen.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, there were also those *curandeiros* and *saludadores* in Portugal who firmly believed that they had been given a divine gift: an inherent healing “virtue” which empowered them with the capacity to cure humans or animals with nothing more than a touch, or with rituals and the aid of an intangible holy power. Of course, charlatans could and did make this same assertion, but Inquisition cases provide numerous examples of illicit folk healers who, when pressed or tortured, would not easily back away from their conviction that God had imbued them with a special internal restorative power.<sup>28</sup>

These were the true *saludadores*, or healers, who most concerned and challenged the ecclesiastical officers of the Inquisition. True, the

<sup>24</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 1234, final pages of the trial dossier.

<sup>25</sup> For examples, see the following trials: ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6196, 6223, 6306, 7186, 7229, 7809, 8093, and 8574; Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5111, 5921 and 6231.

<sup>26</sup> Maria Benedita Araújo, *O Conhecimento Empírico dos Fármacos nos Séculos XVII e XVIII* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992), pp. 19–26.

<sup>27</sup> See Maria Benedita Araújo, “A medicina popular e a magia no Sul de Portugal: Contribuição para o estudo das correntes mentais e espirituais (fins do século XVII a meados do século XVIII),” 3 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1988), vol. 2, pp. 293–335.

<sup>28</sup> For examples, see the following trials: ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6217, 6306, 7186, 7229, 7346, 7809, 8093, 8574 and 8899; Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 372 and 516.

attention of the Holy Office was much occupied with those *curandeiros* who applied superstitious folk remedies founded on horticultural lore, as well—physicians and surgeons within the Inquisition particularly opposed their competition—but in terms of a theological challenge to the church, *saludadores* who claimed to have a divine gift represented the greater threat. Note, too, that the assertion of possessing “divine virtue” is part of what made *saludadores* and *curandeiros* such a threat to the medical profession, as well, by discounting the value of the *médicos*’ conventional training. Claiming divine virtue, then, was one means by which a person could establish his—or, more rarely, her—status as a *saludador*.<sup>29</sup>

Antónia Pereira, for example, was a sixty-five year-old *curandeira* whose nickname, a *Galinheira*, meant “the Chicken Lady” or “Poultry Seller.” After the Coimbra tribunal arrested her on 8 October 1722, she maintained that God had bestowed a divine virtue upon her that empowered her to heal people. State-licensed medical personnel working within the Inquisition, however, confirmed that “her cures were faked.” Further, they asserted in the trial summary that Antónia Pereira’s remedies had not resulted in any healing effect, and that “such effects could not proceed from any ‘natural virtue’” which Antónia Pereira claimed to have. The attacks which she treated without medicine, the Holy Office maintained, could only have been “cured by Doctors, not by ‘divine virtue.’”<sup>30</sup>

In another trial held in Coimbra in 1724, one witness for the prosecution, a physician named João Baptista da Fonseca, complained that the folk healer Francisco Martins had claimed to cure by “divine virtue.” The *médico* had “heard it said” that the *curandeiro* could, using just words, “. . . cure both people and animals . . .”<sup>31</sup> In yet another case—this one in 1783—a licensed barber, José da Silva, explicitly stated that he had made his denunciation of the folk healer Cristovão Silva Marreiros for professional reasons. “. . . I was motivated by his occupation to denounce him,” he said; “I heard . . . diverse people tell, with admiration and respect, of [Cristovão Silva Marreiros] Divine Virtue . . .”<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 55–57.

<sup>30</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7346.

<sup>31</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 33.

<sup>32</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372.

Portuguese folk healers' often-claimed power to cure people by divine virtue is roundly ridiculed in *Dos Saludadores*, the short Holy Office instructional treatise that outlined the Portuguese Inquisition's policy and judicial strategy toward illicit popular healers.<sup>33</sup> It was written during the last decade of the seventeenth century. In subsequent trials against superstitious healers, inquisitors took the opportunity to drive home the point that folk medicine had no efficacy because God no longer provided mere mortals with healing powers. Official summaries of these trials often reiterated the language of *Dos Saludadores* almost verbatim.<sup>34</sup> Take, for example, the case of *saludador* Manuel Fernandes, arrested by the Évora tribunal in 1720. Towards the end of his *processo*, when tallying the evidence against the accused, the inquisitors noted that Fernandes:

... experimented with good effect except when the sickness was serious, because ... he did not cure grave sicknesses; he did not have the virtue he would have needed to cure them. Also, [Fernandes' assertion that he possessed virtue] is unbelievable, because the Lord is virtue. ... it is not good to imitate the power of God; [and] ... there are those [to whom] the culprit said he had His [God's] virtue to cure ...<sup>35</sup>

The above inquisitor's statement can be found in one of the trial's *forão vistos*, a formal written section found in every Holy Office *processo* wherein the judges of the tribunal summarized their findings and gave the rationale for their arguments against the accused. Compare the above language with the passage below, taken from *Dos Saludadores*:

God is a true *saludador* ... and those besides him are improper ... even those that say they have within them the virtue to cure ... are improper *saludadores*, because such virtue only results from a natural temperament, which only God gives.<sup>36</sup>

Clearly, the arguments and language are very similar. Even if he had not read *Dos Saludadores* himself, the inquisitor who wrote the summary for Manuel Fernandes' trial was obviously familiar with the line of reasoning presented in the earlier Holy Office document.

<sup>33</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro* 269, fl. 15 (*recto* and *verso*).

<sup>34</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 516, fl. 166.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, fl. 15 (*recto* and *verso*).

The judges of the Évora tribunal had absorbed the theological grounds for prosecuting popular healers asserted in the *Conselho Geral's* official directive on the matter. The Évora tribunes then reiterated that argument in the official records of the cases they adjudicated.

This raises the question of a slight variation in meaning between the words *curandeiro* and *saludador*. In common parlance at the end of the seventeenth century, the two were often used interchangeably, *saludador* being the more archaic term. The usage of *curandeiro* (or, often, simply *curador*) was more favored in the north of Portugal, and that word became more common generally as the eighteenth century progressed. In Holy Office practice, however, the distinction was more clearly drawn: *saludador* is the masculine term *inquisidores* initially used to describe persons, almost always men, who claimed to heal by divine virtue, while *curandeiro* referred more generally to persons who relied on superstitious rites and home-made concoctions to effect cures.<sup>37</sup> If indeed any fine distinction is to be drawn between the two terms, it would be on these grounds, though it must be stated that later Inquisition documents often conflate and confuse the terms, rendering any fine distinction meaningless in the long view.<sup>38</sup>

The terms *curandeiro* and *curandeirismo* carry a strong pejorative connotation in modern Portuguese; they have become words that refer to the artifice of a quack, charlatan or witch doctor. Just when that definition began to be applied, however, and by whom, is an important matter for consideration. Contemporary eighteenth-century dictionaries, including the influential volumes compiled by Raphael Bluteau for the Jesuits between 1712–1728, include the terms *curador* and *curadora*, but not specifically *curandeiro* or *curandeira*.<sup>39</sup> Popular usage, however, as is made clear by repeated references in Inquisition trial testimony, was far more broad and ambiguous. Peasants used the term to refer to any folk healer.

<sup>37</sup> See Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 55–59. Also, note the usage of the term *saludador* in *Dos Saludadores*, fls. 15–25.

<sup>38</sup> See the discussion on this matter in Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 60–62.

<sup>39</sup> Raphael Bluteau, *Vocabulário português e latino* (Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712–1728). See also *Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa, composto pelo Padre Rafael Bluteau, reformado e acrescentado por António de Moraes Silva . . .* (Lisbon: Na oficina de Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1789), pp. 355–356.

Generations of exposure to clerical remonstrances about the moral dangers of superstitious practices had, by the seventeenth century, rendered any popular healer's activities suspect in the eyes of common folk.<sup>40</sup> That notwithstanding, the circumstances of life in the countryside during the early modern period—agrarian, isolated and conservative—dictated that the services on offer from *curandeiros* and *saludadores* continued to be in broad demand. Poor rustics required relief for their health problems, too, of course; traditionally, such succor was to be found in the person of a local or itinerant healer.<sup>41</sup> In any case, licensed medical practitioners were relatively few in Portugal's rural areas during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (more on this below).<sup>42</sup> If one could be found, peasants of pitifully small financial means could rarely afford the fees an educated surgeon or physician was likely to charge. Further, merely citing peasants' inability to pay does not address the profound cultural differences that separated the medical treatment of elites from that of commoners, nor the barrier of perception that divided each group's ideas about healing. Such differences would become increasingly divergent as the eighteenth century progressed and enlightened ideas about science and healing spread through elite groups, leaving the poor increasingly outside the currents of rationalized medicine.

*Chronic Lack of Trained Licensed Doctors in the Portuguese Countryside*

Deeply entrenched folk traditions aside, one of the reasons why Portuguese peasants frequented superstitious folk healers was a prac-

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<sup>40</sup> Numerous published sermons from autos-de-fé of the eighteenth century reveal that admonishment from the pulpit regarding superstitious practices was commonplace. See, for example, Fr. Bernardo Teles, *Sermão do auto da fê que se celebrou no Rocio de Lisboa em Domingo 30 de Junho de 1709* (Lisbon: Manuel e José Lopes Ferreira, 1709), and Francisco de Torres, *Sermão no auto público da fê, que se celebrou no pateo da S. Miguel da cidade de Coimbra em 7 de Julho de 1720* (Coimbra: Real Colégio das Artes, [no date]).

<sup>41</sup> Maria Benedita Araújo, "A medicina popular," vol. 1, pp. 1–18. See also Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 60–62, and Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 55–57.

<sup>42</sup> Maria Cristina A. S. Correa de Melo, "Witchcraft in Portugal during the eighteenth century, analysed through the accusations of the Tribunal do Santo Ofício de Évora," in *Transactions of the Eighth International Congress on the Enlightenment (Bristol, 21–27 July 1991): Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 1992; pp. 573–578.

tical one: in the rural provinces, conventionally-trained health care providers were few and far between.<sup>43</sup> In theory and in law, both the church and state in Portugal had established a broad network of medical facilities reaching across the realm “for the conservation of the health of the people.” In some cases, these provisions dated from medieval times; not surprisingly, the health service installations they created often overlapped. Every *câmara municipal* across Portugal, for example, was to have employed a physician and a surgeon; a royal decree mandated this requirement beginning in the sixteenth century.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the church’s system of installations created to assist the poor, the *Santa Casa de Misericórdia* (Holy House of Mercy), extended to most towns in the interior; each was supposed to have a doctor and an assistant surgeon on hand to provide care for impecunious citizens and travellers.<sup>45</sup>

In practice, however, these systems often fell woefully short of the intended mark. A survey of rural towns in the northern Alentejo at the beginning of the nineteenth century revealed that most municipalities and *Misericórdias* lacked their required complement of *médicos*; moreover, this was far from a new trend. Throughout the eighteenth century, municipalities had appealed incessantly to the crown for help in replacing their aged or departed physicians and surgeons.<sup>46</sup> Trained physicians and surgeons who were both available and willing to stay in practice in the provinces were simply hard to come by.<sup>47</sup>

The reasons for this shortage of approved medical practitioners are many. By the late seventeenth century, a national preoccupation with plague and epidemics occasioned many doctors being drawn

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<sup>43</sup> Maximiano de Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal; Doutrinas e Instituições*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Dom Quixote, 1991), vol. 1, pp. 145–180. See also José Andresen Leitão, “Historia da Medicina em Portugal desde a Idade Média ao princípio do Século XX,” in *História e Desenvolvimento da Ciência em Portugal*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Publicações do II Centenário da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1986–1991), pp. 455–478.

<sup>44</sup> Maria Teresa Pires and Maria de Fátima Vaz, “A Medicina em Portugal no Século XVIII,” in *Comunicações apresentadas ao Congresso Internacional Portugal no Século XVIII de D. João V à Revolução Francesa* (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos do Século XVIII, Universitaria Editora, 1991), p. 167.

<sup>45</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. VI (1750–1807), pp. 444–445.

<sup>46</sup> Cited in Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. VI, pp. 444–445.

<sup>47</sup> Correa de Melo, “Witchcraft in Portugal during the eighteenth century . . .,” pp. 573–578.

from the country's interior to the port facilities along the coast, attracted by better opportunities for employment and income, as well as by crown requests for assistance in guarding the nation against seaborne disease arriving on foreign merchant ships.<sup>48</sup> The crown also provided incentives that drew physicians to the overseas colonies distributed across three continents. Although there were never enough skilled medical practitioners at work in the widely-scattered Portuguese enclaves, there seems to have been a real effort at the highest levels of colonial administration to insure that all overseas municipalities large enough to have a local governor would also enjoy the services of a trained physician and surgeon.<sup>49</sup> Such a policy, of course, siphoned off licensed healers from the pool at home.

Another issue that exacerbated the *médico* shortage in the provinces, though, was that, throughout the period covered by this study but especially following the 1720s, waves of university-trained physicians fled Portugal in fear of persecution by the Inquisition. These, of course, were the so-called New Christians, *conversos* of Jewish descent, who were a constant target for Holy Office authorities. The medical profession in Portugal attracted a large number of New Christians, many of whom earned degrees at Coimbra only to be denounced afterwards for judiazing by their Old Christian medical colleagues.<sup>50</sup> Some of the best medical minds in Iberia were thus driven into exile in the north of Europe.<sup>51</sup> As we shall see, these “foreign-influenced” (*estrangeirado*) expatriates would, as advocates for reform, continue to wield a powerful influence over medical practice in Portugal; nevertheless, as religious refugees, the skills of scores of trained physicians could not be put to use at home.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 271–272. See also WIL, *Regimento do Provimento da Saude para o Porto de Belem* (1695), EPB Supplementary Papers/POR.

<sup>49</sup> Maria Teresa Pires and Maria de Fátima Vaz, “A Medicina em Portugal no Século XVIII,” p. 169.

<sup>50</sup> See Maria Benedita Araújo, “Médicos e seus Familiares na Inquisição de Évora,” in *Comunicações apresentadas ao 1º Congresso Luso-Brasileiro Sobre Inquisição*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos de Século XVIII e Universitária Editora, 1990), vol. I, pp. 49–72.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Barnett, “Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento and Sephardim in Medical Practice in 18th-Century London,” *Transactions of the Jewish Society of London*, XXVII (1982), pp. 84–87; Edgar Samuel, *The Portuguese Community in London (1656–1830)* (London: The Jewish Museum of London, 1992), pp. 5–9.

<sup>52</sup> For examples of *converso* physicians driven into exile by the Inquisition in the eighteenth century, see the following cases: ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo*

The exile of so many New Christian physicians—their numbers are estimated to be at least two to three hundred for the eighteenth century—was especially harmful to a profession which could only produce a very limited number of new university-trained medical practitioners each year. The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Coimbra, along with the Royal Todos-os-Santos Hospital in Lisbon (which offered formal instruction in practical medicine) were the only centers of structured medical training in the country during the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>53</sup> Their output of graduates was rarely more than a dozen or so students per year. Hence, it was especially difficult for the Portuguese state to make good the loss of expatriate *converso* physicians.

To help address this problem, both municipal and royal government agencies offered *bolsas* (scholarships) to promising students—most of whom were of the growing educated urban middle class—to attend the University of Coimbra Faculty of Medicine. The rolls of professional medical practitioners who applied for employment within the Inquisition are replete with the names of young men who had received these scholarships in return for several years of service. Even with new physicians being trained by the University of Coimbra at public expense, however, chronic personnel shortages compelled the state to continue the traditional practice of licensing physicians and surgeons whose only training consisted of an apprenticeship with an established licensed *médico*. In practice, this meant that anyone who could pass a test administered by designates of two key officials (the chief physician and the chief surgeon of the kingdom)—and simultaneously pay the required fee—could legally practice medicine in Portugal.<sup>54</sup> Such a system was fraught with opportunities for corruption and resulted in the admission of medical practitioners whose quality was notoriously poor. However, the

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nos. 5129, 6426, 9728, 3553 and 8686; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6355, 6057, 7480, 163, 10098, 6312 and 7681; Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 9980, 10429, 575, 8013, 9999, 6291, 2456, 3800, 629, 5278, 10073, 515, 6054, 9776, 6375, 3689, 138, 3686, 7178 and 1912.

<sup>53</sup> Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal*, vol. 1, pp. 145–180.

<sup>54</sup> Francis A. Dutra, “The Practice of Medicine in Early Modern Portugal: The Role and Social Status of the *Físico-mor* and the *Surgião-mor*,” in *Libraries, History, Diplomacy and the Performing Arts. Essays in Honor of Carleton Sprague Smith*, ed. Israel J. Katz (Pendragon Press, Stuyvesant, New York, in cooperation with the New York Public Library, 1991), pp. 135–136.



elite demand that conventional healers be credentialed was such that, across Portugal, hundreds of individuals licensed by the state to practice medicine actually had very little formal training.<sup>55</sup> Such circumstances cannot have built much confidence in these *médicos'* abilities, nor can they have increased the prestige of state-licensed medical practitioners in the eyes of contemporary peasants, who often displayed a healthy disdain for conventional healing techniques.<sup>56</sup>

*Types of Disease Which A Folk Healer Might be Expected to Cure*

Commoners in Portugal relied on traditional folk healers for their medical care. Under what circumstances might a rustic Portuguese have called for a *curandeiro*? What services did these illicit healers provide, and what type of illnesses did they address? As we might expect, the complaints, ailments and maladies of rural peasants were legion. Living as they did in damp houses, working long hours out of doors, performing intensely physical labor, and subsisting on a nutritiously meager diet, Portugal's poor developed numerous health problems. Understandably, the desire to engage some perceived health expert to address those problems must have been frequent. But care had to be given in terms simple agrarian rustics could understand—and at a price they could afford. Portugal's rural cadre of illicit superstitious healers existed to meet this timeless, ubiquitous, persistent need.

For example, when Inquisition *familiares* searched the home of Beja resident Luísa de Cruz in 1689, they found various magical ingredients, including willow branches, a white stone, the hair of a billy-goat's beard, the jaw bone of a dog and a written incantation designed to staunch the flow of blood.<sup>57</sup> In a similar vein, before he was arrested in 1720, Spanish-born *curandeiro* Juan José Barrento cured

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<sup>55</sup> José Andresen Leitão, "Historia da Medicina em Portugal desde a Idade Média ao principio do Século XX," in *Historia e Desenvolvimento da Ciência em Portugal*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Publicações do II Centenário da Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1986–1991), p. 465.

<sup>56</sup> See Inquisition Tribunal of Évora, *Processo* No. 1445; Inquisition Tribunal of Coimbra, *Processo* No. 7346; *Forão visto*, pages unnumbered; and Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas . . . na Diocese de Coimbra (1650–1740)* (Coimbra: Minerva, 1992), p. 79.

<sup>57</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1698.

people in Portugal of rabid animal bites with a combination of special “prayers” and a concoction of wine, egg whites, honey, rose petals and the herbs rosemary and rue. This he cooked and left steaming in a breezy window or doorway to aerate the room in which the ailing person reposed.<sup>58</sup> And António Francisco, a shepherd born in a suburb of Lisbon, passed the time with his flocks by making little figurines out of laurel twigs; in 1764 the Évora tribunal arrested him for selling these models as part of a method to ward off being poisoned.<sup>59</sup>

Maladies a *saludador* or *curandeira* was called upon to cure included a broad range of common ills. The best concise systematic analysis of the types of cases early modern Portuguese folk healers generally addressed, including their varied methods of treating them, is found in the works of José Pedro Paiva. To find evidence for *curandeiro* healing methods, Paiva examined Inquisition trials, as well as denunciations and depositions given to highly placed churchmen during their periodic pastoral visitations through rural areas in the diocese of Coimbra. Most of his evidence, which is rich in descriptions of popular healing practices, dates from the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Paiva chose to focus his study on magical folk beliefs and practices within the Portuguese population. Because the present study is focused, rather, on the Enlightenment social context of Portuguese magical crimes trials and the medical elites who were often the accusers behind those prosecutions, research conducted for this project did not dwell on contemporary superstitious arts. Therefore, the passages below have been informed by, and often illustrated with, examples from Paiva’s thorough, thoughtful work.

Professor Paiva identified the following types of malady, for which commoners would summon a *curandeiro* or *saludador* to effect a remedy.

- *Ar* (“air”): Paralysis of the body or parts thereof, thought to be provoked by corruption in the air. This sickness had many potential treatments, most of which involved the recitation of special words or verses. Maria Fernandes, a *curandeira* known to her neighbors as a *Grila* (a double *entendre*, meaning both “the Cricket” and “the Harrier”), uttered the following incantation as a means to treat *ar* in 1696.

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<sup>58</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5401.

<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 4687.

By the grace of God and the Virgin Mary,  
 take here the air of night  
 and the air of the moon  
 and the air of death  
 and the air of life  
 and the air of everything decayed;  
 in the name of São Pedro and São Paulo  
 and all of the male and female saints [*e todos os santos e santas*] . . .<sup>60</sup>

Sometimes *curandeiros* used ceremonies, as well, to address this malady. In 1715, for example, Simão Martins “cut the air” using a prayer, recited “in the Holy Name of Jesus” but directed toward the “air” of water, earth and moon, and to “corrupt air.” The incantation concluded thus: “with this you will take your leave, no longer bringing harm to anyone.” The sick patient was supposed to say three Our Fathers, three Hail Marys and one Nicene Creed following the *curandeiro*’s magical words in order to ensure the efficacy of the treatment.<sup>61</sup>

Mixing the sacred with the profane was a common feature of Portuguese popular healing techniques during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *Curandeiros* and *saludadores* frequently co-opted ritual motifs they had no doubt observed while attending Catholic services. Use of familiar prayers or sacred rites lifted from the Mass lent an air of legitimacy to the services illicit healers had to offer. More importantly for the long-term efficacy of an unscientific folk remedy, the familiar rhythm and meter of oft-spoken prayers may have helped to calm a sick or injured client, thus aiding the process of healing.<sup>62</sup>

Another ceremony to address *ar*, this one from *curandeira* Margarida de Andrade in 1715, involved mixing salt with ashes and dividing or cutting the compound with a knife. Andrade accompanied this action with an incantation “banishing” the corrupt air “by the power of God, the Virgin Mary, the apostle Saint James . . .” Her healing chant included the phrase, “as waves run out to the sea, in the same way I turn the evil air out, away from your dwelling . . .”<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Cited in José Pedro Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 81–82.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> See Hilary Flegg Mitchell and J. Clyde Mitchell, “Social Factors in the Perception of the Causes of Disease,” in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. Max Marwick (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 401–421.

<sup>63</sup> Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 82.

This *curandeiro* chose always to effect his ceremonies just before mid-day, as his cure required “that it be performed during those hours when the sun was brightest, reaching its greatest splendor, and could therefore best fight the forces of darkness thought to provoke the malady—moon, night and death.”<sup>64</sup>

- *Espinhela* (“spinal disorder”): This malady could refer to back ache, stomach ache, heartburn, or any painful internal disorder, or “oppression,” in the trunk of the body or abdomen. Healers addressed this condition with a combination of medicinal preparations, rituals and prayers. One remedy called for a poultice, made with a base of honey mixed with various aromatic medicinal herbs, to be placed over the affected area. The poultice was believed to have been imbued with healing power by having been prayed over: the healer repeated nine Nicene Creeds “to raise the passion of Christ,” along with nine Hail Marys and one Our Father, all intoned over the bandages.<sup>65</sup>

Portuguese popular sensibilities held generally that honey had a distinct curative value.<sup>66</sup> In another example, *curandeira* Maria de Fonseca, of Curval in the Bishopric of Coimbra, confessed that, to cure *espinhela*, she broke a fresh egg into a bowl or drinking vessel, removed the egg white, mixed in a spoonful of honey and herbs, and then placed this mixture into a poultice which she bound to the abdomen of the victim. Afterwards, she employed a *ventosa*—a vacuum cupping glass—to “raise and remove” the sickness. To complete the efficacy of the treatment, she advised her clients to say five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys “in honor of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>67</sup>

Other treatments for *espinhela* entailed the anointing of the affected part of the victim’s body with natural secretions originating in the body of the healer. Bodily fluids *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* employed as a curative emollient could include saliva, blood (menstrual blood being esteemed as especially potent and valuable), urine and perspiration. Alternatively, bodily secretions might be substituted with

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 83–84.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>66</sup> Maria Benedita Araújo, too, mentions the supposed healing power of honey (as well as many other animal produced substance) in her book, *O Conhecimento Empírico dos Fármacos nos Séculos XVII e XVIII*, pp. 21–32.

<sup>67</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 85–86.

olive oil (*azeite*), a substance that symbolized purity in the popular mind.<sup>68</sup>

- *Quebranto* (“weakness,” also known as *trespasso*, meaning to magically hurt, wound or otherwise incapacitate): Often attributed to *mau olhado*, or the evil eye, this malady name designated a general state of indolence, apathy and sadness or depression. This indistinct set of afflictions was among those for which the services of a popular healer were most frequently sought. Generally, *curandeiros*, *benzadores* (another word for folk healers) and sorcerers cured this malady with certain words of power, prayers or incantations. The healers were widely reported to have performed remedies of this ailment only in a mumbled, barely audible voice or in a language unintelligible to their clients; curative rituals are said to have employed phrases in Latin, for example.<sup>69</sup> In so doing, popular healers ensured that the remedy could not be reproduced; more importantly, perhaps, such a secretive display heightened the sense of mystery and supernatural power surrounding the healer’s art.<sup>70</sup>

One ceremony to cure *quebranto* involved placing seven pinches of ash from the burned tips of twigs from a particular (though unnamed) woody plant in a vase or a ceramic jar; this would then be mixed with a bowl of water. The sick person was supposed to drink the resulting solution in three gulps. Between drinks, the healer passed the vessel holding the solution three times around the client’s head, repeating the necessary incantations. Any remaining portion of the solution would be discarded “in a place where one could neither return nor pass,” such as into the embers of a fire (where the solution would vanish in a cloud of steam), or into a flowing river. Since the healing solution had been thrown out in a way that ensured it could never be recovered, Paiva speculates that this part of the remedy represented a ritual cleaning or purification.<sup>71</sup>

- *Mal do Sentido* (literally, “feeling bad or poorly”): This category of malady included such common health problems as dislocated joints,

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 86–87.

<sup>69</sup> For more on the use of words of power for healing in the Portuguese tradition, see Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 55–64.

<sup>70</sup> Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 89. See also Maria Benedita Araújo, *Magia, Demônio e Força Mágica na Tradição Portuguesa (Séculos XVII e XVIII)*, pp. 15–30.

<sup>71</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 91–92.

bone fractures, sprains, as well as skin lesions. Because of the frequency of such injuries among Portuguese agricultural workers, *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* again had many methods of addressing them, conducted individually or in concert: the ingestion of formulas consisting of herbs and other ingredients; the application of lotions, ointments and unguents; the performance of certain ceremonial rites over the affected body part; or simply reciting a healing prayer or incantation.

*Curandeira* Ana Fernandes from the *freguesia* (parish) of Seia in the Bishopric of Coimbra, for example, touched her clients' ailing limbs with her foot, believing she had a divinely-provided healing "virtue," thereby transferring to the infirm person an energy which restored health. She also used a poultice made with wheat flour, juice of the elder bush (*sabugueiro*) and blood from a common animal, preferably a sheep, cat or dog. This, applied in combination with the recitation of three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity (*Santíssima Trindade*), along with five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys said in honor of Christ, was well-regarded as a cure for *mal do sentido*.<sup>72</sup>

Experts on popular herbal and plant medicines note that the sap of the *sabugueiro* bush in fact has anti-rheumatic and anti-neuralgic properties which could, if applied topically, reduce pain and stiffness in muscle, tendon and ligament injuries.<sup>73</sup> Also, the blood and flour filling of Ana Fernandes' poultice bandages could have functioned as an effective heat sink, raising the temperature of the injured area, as with a modern heating pad. Ana Fernandes' cures were, with apparent reason, renowned for their efficacy.<sup>74</sup>

- *Cobrão* ("big snake"): This malady referred to skin irritations attributed to "the passing of a repellent animal"—snakes, spiders, lizards, scorpions and the like—over or near an afflicted person's body. Popular healers addressed this illness with what anthropologists call "sympathetic magic": words to attack or thwart the animals in question. Rituals to cure this malady typically included using a knife to cut and kill an actual representative creature of the offending species;

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>73</sup> See Araújo, "A medicina popular," vol. 3, p. 210.

<sup>74</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 93–94.

however, an effigy of the animal rendered in paper or clay might also have been sacrificed.<sup>75</sup>

As with remedies for *mal do sentido*, above, curing *cobrão* entailed reciting a set number of prayers or incantations specific to the ailment. One illicit healer, Manuel Rodrigues, used the following ceremony in 1717. He would stand before the door of the afflicted person's dwelling, an iron agricultural implement in hand. In a loud voice he would hail his client and ask "*Que tens?*" ("What ails you?"). The afflicted person would respond "*Cobrão!*"—at which point the *curandeiro* would strike the doorway lintel three times, saying "With this I sever the head; with this I sever the tail." He continued, repeating the same phrases three more times, simultaneously striking the doorway threshold stone and the floor inside and outside of the house with his iron tool. Afterwards, Rodrigues drew the ceremony to a close by reciting nine successive Our Fathers and an equal number of Hail Marys.<sup>76</sup>

- *Fogo* ("fire," also known as *osagre*): Like *cobrão*, *fogo* was a complaint characterized by irritated skin which produced great burning pain. Because of this similarity, many of the treatments *curandeiros* used were the same for both types of illness.<sup>77</sup>

In 1698, for example, a popular healer treated the parish priest of Barrô, in the Bishopric of Coimbra, for *fogo* by applying olive oil; then, in a low voice, he uttered words that the priest could not understand.<sup>78</sup> Another *curandeira*, Maria de Fonseca, was reported in 1696 for treating *fogo* by using a solution made with nine "green and fresh 'eyes'" (buds) of the aforementioned *sabugeiro* plant. These were to be mixed in a pot with water and three small lumps of salt. After steeping for a while, three more "eyes" of *sabugeiro* were to be added, after which Fonseca applied the solution to the affected area, chanting the following verse:

Following the same *Osagre*  
Green *Sabugeiro*; honored green

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> For more on similar treatments used for different diseases, and on the treatment of inflamed skin in the Portuguese tradition, see Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 57–59.

<sup>78</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 98.

That under the ground were created  
 With the waters of heaven irrigated  
 You have the goodness  
 To take from this fellow  
 This *fogo* and this abrasion  
 That has burnt and abraded and affronted  
 By the power of God and the Virgin Mary, we pray.

The chant concluded with Fonseca repeating three Hail Marys.<sup>79</sup> According to historian Maria Benedita Araújo, this manner of curing *fogo* was common south of the Tagus River in the southernmost provinces of continental Portugal.<sup>80</sup>

• *Lombrigas* (“roundworms”): This illness referred to worm-like parasites that thrived and proliferated in human intestines, particularly those of children. Modern medical science has identified this parasite as the intestinal worm *Ascaris lumbricoides*. Once again, the illicit popular treatments that addressed this malady were many and varied.

Some healers used small paper slips, which they had blessed and on which they had written special verses or words of power; these were meant to be worn in a little leather sack on a string around the afflicted person’s neck.<sup>81</sup> One such *curandeiro* was Domingos Francisco, who was denounced to ecclesiastical authorities in 1718. According to testimony against him, he maintained that the bag should be sewn by a maiden named Maria. Further, she should be a chaste young woman of few sins and, if possible, a girl of slight age—this, of course, to ensure her purity.<sup>82</sup>

The verse Domingos Francisco provided against *lombrigas* ran thus:

Jesus most holy and the virgin Maria, with  
 The wisdom and prudence of God the Father  
 The cleanliness and virtue of God the Son  
 And the purity of the Holy Spirit  
 Free the sufferer, whose name is written here  
 Of all the evil of *lombrigas* that torments his body

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp. 98–99.

<sup>80</sup> Araújo, “A medicina popular,” vol. 2, pp. 154–155.

<sup>81</sup> English Protestant George Borrow, while on a missionary trip to Portugal in 1835, also encountered commoners wearing similar protective verses in small bags around their necks. See George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain* (London and New York: John Lane, 1902), pp. 28–29.

<sup>82</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 99–100.



By the honor of Our Lady and the Holy Christ  
 Who was converted in the purifying water.  
 Amen, Jesus<sup>83</sup>

• *Mordeduras de répteis e de “cães danados”* (“bites from reptiles and ‘mad dogs’”): Animal bites—certainly not limited to dogs and reptiles—were a frequent complaint in rural areas with many domesticated animals, a proportion of which inevitably carried some form of disease. Agricultural workers being very much at risk of contracting rabies or other diseases due to bites, nips and scratches received from their livestock, local superstitious healers were often called upon to treat such injuries. Indeed, the reputations of many *curandeiros* rested specifically on their proficiency in addressing this variety of ills.<sup>84</sup>

Such obvious regard for illicit healers’ skills even came through in the testimony of would-be detractors. For example, in a denunciation of *curandeira* Maria Domingas provided in 1698, one rustic villager claimed that, in contrast to what had usually occurred before her arrival in their community, “no one died who called on her shortly after being bitten” by an animal.<sup>85</sup>

Illicit folk healers used “virtuous” herbs in solution, among other preparations, to combat animal-borne diseases. One recipe for a remedy included the tooth of a “viper, . . . cured” with green *saramagos* (wild radishes), *losna* (wormwood) and *malvas* (mallows), all cooked in vinegar.<sup>86</sup> This mixture was to be administered in combination with special blessing prayers (*bençôes*). Alternatively, the “medicine” could be produced using either the spine of a frog or the tooth of a “cobra,” both “cured” with raw animal fat and *benefe* (hedge violets). This mixture was to be left to ferment for an unspecified length of time; when administered, the same special *bençôes* were to be recited.<sup>87</sup>

Note that the traditional healer in this case used ingredient body parts from animals thought to cause the malady in question. This is an excellent example of what an anthropologist might call “reflexive magic”: a spell or formula believed to tame and overcome the source

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., pp. 102–103.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> The medicinal and narcotic qualities of mallows and wormwood (the active ingredient of absinthe) are noted in Araújo, *O Conhecimento Empírico dos Fârmacos*, pp. 39–54.

<sup>87</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 103.

of the perceived evil.<sup>88</sup> Portuguese contemporaries strongly believed this type of healing to be the domain of *saludadores* or *bentos*—men who healed by touch or action, their power derived from a God-given healing “virtue.”<sup>89</sup>

- *Carne talhada ou rendida* (“cut or broken flesh;” wounds): Normally, *curandeiros* dealt with flesh wounds by applying cloth bandages, typically in a configuration representing a cross, over the affected area. Popular healers employed olive oil “with insistence” to clean and purify open wounds, or as an application to cloth dressings. Further, the *curandeiro* or *saludador* was often said to blow on the wound, warming it with his breath, or to caress it with his touch,<sup>90</sup> thus imparting a personal healing quality upon the injury. Predictably, a remedy for rent flesh almost always included the recitation of particular words of power, or prolonged incantations delivered in a low, indiscernible voice.<sup>91</sup>

- *Dores variadas e “febres”* (“various pains and ‘fevers’”): This set of maladies included toothaches, headaches and backaches, as well as various kind of fevers. The *curandeira* Antónia Nunes da Costa, “one of the most famous healers in the diocese of Coimbra,” gained a wide reputation for her ability to address these types of indisposition. Her nickname was *a Preta* (literally “the Black,” but the word was a strong pejorative term for persons of color). She was well known to church officials, her name having surfaced repeatedly during ecclesiastical visitations through the countryside in 1694, 1698, 1699, 1707 and 1712. She would endure two Inquisition trials in 1711 and 1716.<sup>92</sup> Before her eventual banishment to Brazil, da Costa travelled widely to various places across Portugal’s midland districts to treat the clients who summoned her.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> See, for example, the discussion in Bronislaw Malinowski, “Sorcery as Mimetic Representation,” in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. Max Marwick (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 240–245. Also, see Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1980), pp. 18–21.

<sup>89</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 104.

<sup>90</sup> The Portuguese verb Inquisition scribes used for both of these actions was *befejar*.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104–105.

<sup>92</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 106.

To treat a headache, for example, Antónia Nunes da Costa would “apply the hot entrails of a male sheep, opened, at the base of [the victim’s] neck, and put milk from the breast of a woman into [the patient’s] ears, along with some small sprigs of wormwood, increasing the amount until a good result is achieved.”<sup>94</sup> Or, for toothache, she applied hot embers from the hearth fire soaked in wine, affixed inside the mouth, above the jawbone and teeth of the sufferer.<sup>95</sup>

To cure back pain, the *curandeiro* Manuel Gomes Reis was, in 1738, said to have recommended digging worms from beneath an orange tree and catching two small spiders from the tree (or only one, should the spider be large). The spiders and worms, “while yet living,” were to be fried in olive oil. The resulting unguent was then to be spread on “a piece of skin of a male sheep,” and then affixed while warm to the region where the pain originated. José Pedro Paiva speculates that the natural venom of certain spiders, when diffused in oil and applied topically, could have had an anesthetic effect.<sup>96</sup>

- *Cura de “feitiços”* (“curing ‘enchancements;’” breaking spells): Portuguese folkways held that, to resolve the effects of negative sorcery, or *maleficia*, a *curandeiro* or *curandeira* should be summoned. That is, the dispelling of destructive magic believed to have been directed at an individual by a perceived enemy (who either cast the spell personally or was thought to have contracted to have it done) was also within the purview of the folk healer. *Maleficia* included any case in which one felt “enchanted” or “hexed” with an act of magic meant to cause illness, pain, impotence, or any other incapacity. In this realm, of course, only a practitioner of magic could be of service—such maladies were well beyond the talents of conventional *médicos*, who usually lacked the necessary training and cosmological orientation to address them.<sup>97</sup>

This type of quasi-malady was perhaps the most complex for a folk healer to address. Not only is the range of possible bewitchments virtually unlimited—the variety of evils or discomforts attributable to magic are limited only by the victim’s imagination—but

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<sup>94</sup> See Araújo, *O Conhecimento Empírico dos Fármacos*, pp. 39–54.

<sup>95</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 106.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106–107.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107–108.

the “proper” means to address such complaints were similarly open to innovation.

To assess the correct method of annulling an incident of malignant magic, the first step of any treatment, necessarily, was to discover the party responsible for casting the offending sorcery. No spell could be counter-acted until the perpetrator’s identity was known. Folk healers used a variety of ceremonies, common to other methods of divining, to decide who was the culpable individual.

Once the perpetrator’s identity was known, the most usual way to dispel the magic was to attempt to invert the original ceremony that had established the “hex;” that is, the healer would conduct a reverse ceremony to remove the spell. Folk healers employed other methods to dissolve or deflect magic intended to cause harm: curative potions and powders; amulets or written prayers of protection worn on a necklace; even the recovery of a personal belonging or organic material (hair; nail clippings) thought to have been used as an integral empowering part of the malicious spell.<sup>98</sup> Success rates depended on the actual cause of any given client’s symptoms, of course, but also to a high degree on the client’s level of confidence in the power of the chosen healer.

- *Controle da natalidade* (“birth control methods,” including abortion): *Parteiras* (midwives) and cunning women in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries possessed accumulated experience far superior to what contemporary medicine taught concerning contraception and abortion. Practitioners of folk medicine employed a range of methods—magical, mechanical and medicinal—intended to prevent pregnancy (or facilitate it, for that matter). These included the wearing of special amulets, the performing of particular rituals, and the ingestion of herbal or mineral preparations.<sup>99</sup> One well-known method common across Europe was to place a knotted cord or piece of leather under one’s sleeping place; this was thought to cause infertility in a female, though it was also used maliciously to provoke impotence in a male.<sup>100</sup>

More documentary evidence is available, through Portuguese Inquisition sources dating from the sixteenth century, which confirms

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109–111.

<sup>99</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 64–66.

<sup>100</sup> Russell, *A History of Witchcraft*, p. 18.

the existence of a solid popular understanding of how to induce abortion. To be sure, some of the means *curandeiras* are known to have used certainly put their clients' lives in danger; even so, female folk healers' skills were such that abortions were performed successfully and with some regularity. The exact chemical composition of beverages drunk to induce a miscarriage is difficult to assess, but reported ingredients of uterine "purgatives" include camphor, almond, pennyroyal, rue, and a substance called *marbejas*, which may have a mineral provenance.<sup>101</sup> The efficacy (and hazards) of pennyroyal, at least, in achieving the desired result of this treatment has been demonstrated by modern pharmacology.<sup>102</sup>

By the late seventeenth century, the Portuguese state had begun to certify and license *parteiras*. Practical training manuals especially for midwives, written in Portuguese, began to circulate in manuscript at least as early as the mid-eighteenth century, though not widely. An example produced during the second half of the eighteenth century included nearly 150 technical questions with didactic responses concerning female anatomy, giving birth, and the proper midwife's procedure for every stage of childbirth. Such manuals were produced for consultation while working, but illiteracy among *parteiras*, no doubt, reduced the effectiveness of these unillustrated handbooks. Still, extant copies indicate that the level of obstetrical knowledge among midwives in enlightenment-era Portugal was, at least potentially, quite high.<sup>103</sup>

### *Other Services Offered by Popular Healers*

Someone calling himself a *curandeiro* might also willingly perform other rites from the range of services magical practitioners provided.

<sup>101</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 457; cited in Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 64–65.

<sup>102</sup> For the use of pennyroyal in Portuguese folk medicine, see Araújo, "A medicina popular," vol. 3, p. 206. For the use of pennyroyal in illicit abortions, see Varro Tyler, *The Honest Herbal; A sensible Guide to the Use of Herbs and Related Remedies*, 3rd ed. (New York: Pharmaceutical Products Press, an imprint of Hayworth Press, Inc., 1993), pp. 243–244.

<sup>103</sup> *Guia de parteiras por perguntas e respostas*, (unsigned, unpublished manuscript; Continental Portuguese: eighteenth century) (Inventory of Richard Ramer, Rare Book Dealer; New York: Catalog Eight, 1996), p. 83.

However, an assertion like this could indicate that such a *mágico* was merely a charlatan, a cynical fake who took advantage of the gullible by performing superstitious rituals only for material gain.

By all appearances, however, many popular healers genuinely believed that their capacity to heal came from God's hand, and that such "divine virtue" did not empower them to do anything else. Indeed, Holy Office personnel seemed to have been the most agitated—even unnerved—when they occasionally encountered *saludadores* who asked for no specific sum in return for their services, asserting that it was unseemly for a man of God to solicit remuneration. Such was the case with popular healer Francisco Martins; according to the licensed physician who testified against him in front of the Évora tribunal, this *saludador* claimed to cure by divine virtue, and "would accept no payment except what clients wanted to give."<sup>104</sup> The *inquisidores* were on firmer legal and religious ground when confronted by cases they could classify as straightforward charlatanism. "True" *curandeiros*, though, who typically did not indulge in fortune telling, love magic, or any practice other than the healing of human or animal bodies, caused a problem, especially if they refused to accept any but voluntary donations for their work. Such behavior, modeled on the lives of Christ and the Saints, raised the unwelcome possibility in the minds of churchmen and inquisitors that the *saludador's* claim to possessing divine virtue might not be false.

Portuguese Inquisition records are full of examples of *curandeiros* who also performed other functions unrelated to curing. Popular healer Manuel António, for example, a thirty-year-old wanderer from Lagos in the Algarve, was arrested by the Évora tribunal on 21 July 1760. At one time he had been a licensed surgeon, but he had fallen on hard times. He was unmarried, had no fixed residence and had taken to performing superstitious cures. Although the Holy Office classified him as a *curandeiro*, he earned additional income by divining future events on demand and giving people supernaturally-derived advice about where to seek hidden treasure.<sup>105</sup>

Another part-time healer was Maria da Assunção, whom the Évora tribunal incarcerated on 16 March 1738 when she was forty-three years old. She had been born in Beja in the southern Alentejo and

<sup>104</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 33.

<sup>105</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5433.

was married to a tailor. The inquisitors charged her with having a pact with the devil and performing acts of sorcery, including superstitious cures and prayers. Among the illicit healing activities cited in her trial dossier were curing body “malformations” and improving her clients’ faulty vision through superstitious means. Beyond her skill as a *curandeira*, though, she was also known as a purveyor of love magic, having performed spells to solve marital problems and to help young people attract and hold the attentions of a desired mate.<sup>106</sup>

The case of Maria da Conceição, a folk healer over fifty years of age who was married to a common laborer, provides yet another example. Even though she was from Alcácer do Sal, in the western Alentejo seventy kilometers southeast of Lisbon, her nickname was *a Vasca* (“the Basque”). The Holy Office arrested her for the first time on 11 June 1728, but she was arrested again for relapse on 4 May 1741, after evading her initial sentence—a four-year banishment northward to Viseu. Maria da Conceição, too, was not strictly a *curandeira*; she also “effected marriages through magic” and made “lost objects become apparent.”<sup>107</sup>

Finally, consider this service, offered by at least two *curandeiras* whose tenure as healers was separated by wide geographical and temporal gaps. Yet another Maria da Conceição, this one known by her nickname *a Maravilha* (the Marvel), was arrested at her home in Beja in 1716. An earlier *curandeira*, Luisa Barreiros, had been born near Avis but was arrested in Sousel, twenty-two kilometers away, in 1697. Beja and Sousel are separated by more than one hundred kilometers of sparsely populated, arid pasture and scrub land.<sup>108</sup> Both women provided ritual remedies, but they also claimed to be able to divine—from a great distance, without the need to see or examine the subject—the state of health of a family member or friend.<sup>109</sup> Such information must have been in high demand in the days before rapid, or even regular, communication between the various regions of the Portuguese empire. In practical terms, these women performed a service which no doubt provided a welcome comfort to people

<sup>106</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 4569.

<sup>107</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6731.

<sup>108</sup> *Atlas de Portugal* (Lisbon: Selecções do Reader’s Digest com Cartas do Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral, 1988), p. 17.

<sup>109</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 7587 and 7336, respectively.

whose relatives and loved ones were serving far from home, at sea or in the colonies.

*Fees: The Costs of Folk and Official Medical Care Compared*

In Portugal, there are ample known examples of illicit popular healers charging a fee or taking payment in kind to assert that, when compared to the fees licensed physicians and surgeons charged, *curandeiros* were cheap. To be sure, no healer, licensed or popular, used a rigidly fixed schedule of fees; rather, compensation for treatment depended largely on the patient's ability to pay, as well as on the relative difficulty of the cure and the reputation of the healer. Bargaining and even barter was an expected part of every transaction, as the case remains across the Straits of Gibraltar in nearby North Africa today.

The fees that popular healers collected from their peers were, of necessity, quite modest. This was, after all, an exchange between poor people. Payment might typically have been made in kind: enough food (bread, cheese or wine) to keep body and soul together for a few days and usually little more. Or, less frequently because of the relative rarity of circulating coined money in the provinces, a healer would request cash remuneration. In 1711, a *curandeiro* in the port of Aveiro asked for half a *tostão* (a tiny coin of little value) for each cure.<sup>110</sup> In 1693, an ill patient in the archdiocese of Seia paid off the cunning woman who treated him with six *vinténs* (another type of small coin), together with "some chestnuts and some walnuts."<sup>111</sup>

In 1722 Catarina Pereira, a seventy year-old widow from Oporto whom the Inquisition officially identified as a *curandeira*, was recorded as charging a wide range of prices for her services. This seems to have been a cause of irritation to her clients, and may have been part of the reason she was denounced: "... to some she said they had to give her just one *cruzado*, to others it was twenty, or eighteen . . . and [clients would] pay the same into her hand, separately or all together . . ." [meaning, presumably, on credit over time or in full]. So long as she had travelled to meet with a client, Catarina

<sup>110</sup> Cited in Paiva, *Bruçaria e Superstição*, pp. 107 and 170.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*



Pereira expected to be paid; whether she merely advised her patient or actually performed a curative ritual did not matter. The Holy Office record also cited Catarina Pereira for failing to pay a supplier who had advanced her some “little relics of the Saints from the Tombs of Salamanca” on credit. These she had wrapped in “little papers inscribed with healing prayers and tried to sell, asking twelve *centimes* for each one.”<sup>112</sup>

Another widow, the fifty-year-old Francisca de Araújo, known to her neighbors as *a Folha* (“the Leaf”), was arrested at her home near Guimarães on 22 July 1727. In exchange for performing a cure, she typically requested the payment of between four and ten chickens; clients had the option of substituting a grown chicken with a larger number of young chicks. Further in-kind payments might include a suckling pig or a bottle of holy water taken from a church. On other occasions, Francisca de Araújo would ask for “a certain sum of money,” the amount of which was variable, but always decided upon in advance of the application of the cure.<sup>113</sup>

Another case that sheds light on the question of payment is that of José Gonçalves da Viegas, an Old Christian physician born in Quintela de Lampaças, a village near Bragança in the extreme northeast of Portugal, in about 1700. Da Viegas’s story is notable because the Inquisition tried him for heresy and superstitious practices. His trial records provide us with some rare information not only about how much a physician or *curandeiro* might expect to earn, but also the distance a physician might be expected to travel in order to treat a valued patient. Further, the case shows that, under certain circumstances, an Old Christian doctor could be as vulnerable as anyone to prosecution for superstitious practices.

By the late 1730s, José Gonçalves da Viegas had established a solid reputation as a surgeon and physician in the northeast corner of Portugal. His renown even extended beyond the border; he seems to have developed the habit of crossing into Spain, “walking from land to land,” to attend to patients. Because this region was (and remains) exceptionally rural, that he was one of a very few medical professionals practicing in the area is likely. In late 1739 or early 1740, da Viegas was “summoned to a place called Copos, in the

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<sup>112</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7136.

<sup>113</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 9555.

*freguesia* of Olalhas” near Tomar, to treat one António Nunes, who had a canker on his lower lip.<sup>114</sup> Nunes was apparently a man of some wealth and substance. Though the nature of his professional relationship with da Viega is not clear, it was enough to induce the doctor to travel a great distance. Tomar lies approximately 275 kilometers in a strait line from Bragança; the intervening landscape is difficult and there were no easy direct routes. Travelling overland, this journey must have taken two weeks to complete. Nevertheless, da Viega arrived and operated successfully on *Senhor* Nunes. Another surgeon, Manuel de Andrade, was on hand to assist the doctor. (Andrade would later denounce da Viega to the Inquisition, but he signed a written statement attesting to the effectiveness of da Viega’s technique—the patient, he said, had been cured.) In return for his services, Nunes gave the doctor “a gold coin.” Even a small gold coin would have been a substantial sum: the smallest unit of Portuguese currency in minted gold at the time was the quarter *escudo* (also called a *cruzado*), a coin worth 400 *reis*, at least enough to buy a supply of simple food for a week.<sup>115</sup> We cannot, of course, assume that da Viega received a *cruzado*, or indeed any Portuguese coin; money from many countries circulated throughout early modern Europe. A safe supposition, however, is that the doctor had been paid handsomely, even after deducting the expenses for his journey.

Perhaps it was jealousy over such a hefty payment, or da Viega’s failure to divide the sum with him, that prompted Manuel de Andrade to denounce da Viega to the Holy Office tribunal at Lisbon. Andrade alleged that he had overheard da Viega speaking blasphemous words: asserting loudly that he had already travelled through Hell and spoken with the devil there. These superstitious practices were sufficient for the Holy Office to order da Viega’s arrest on 18 July 1740. Probably in the hope of winning a light sentence, the accused doctor eventually confessed to every allegation, but defended himself by saying that he “was always drunk when he spoke the blasphemies and heresies.” On 15 June 1741, he was paraded with other penitents through Lisbon’s central square, the *Rossio*, in a public *auto-da-fé*.

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<sup>114</sup> Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 3690.

<sup>115</sup> See currency value calculations in Charles R. Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 354–357. See also A. J. R. Russell-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa de Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550–1755* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 376–382.

He was condemned to be whipped through the streets of Lisbon and then exiled for five years to a penal asylum at Castro Marim, on the southern Algarve coast.<sup>116</sup>

Healers who requested no payment for conducting a healing ritual constituted the greatest threat to the *inquisidores* and Holy Office doctors. When confronted with *saludadores* who asked for no specific sum in return for their services, Inquisition judges entered difficult theological territory.<sup>117</sup> The Inquisition's own policy statement about illicit healers, *Dos Saludadores*, advanced the argument that God could, and sometimes did, invest humans with the power to cure illnesses simply through touch, or even through the medium of a healing gaze. This document drew a distinction between genuine divine healers who required nothing but their bodies to effect cures and those fallen mortals who had to rely on superstitious rituals, as well as the false use of herbs or potions, to heal diseases. The latter group, the inquisition *aperecere* asserted, always drew their power ultimately from diabolical influences. Both divine and diabolical healers were to be distinguished from trained "scientific" physicians and surgeons who, *Dos Saludadores* maintained, had learned "through study" to apply the divine healing virtues with which God had invested some plants and other medicinal substances.<sup>118</sup> The Inquisition thus confirmed its approval of state sanctioned, conventional medical training while delineating carefully between sacred healers invested by God with divine virtue and superstitious miscreants who required power from Satan to effect cures.

Some popular healers presented themselves as genuine providential healers, asserting that they were men of God who should not stoop to solicit remuneration for performing remedies by means of "divine virtue." By refusing payment, these healers raised the prospect that their claims to being chosen *saludadores* of God might actually be true. Such healers refrained from performing lesser magical arts, like fortune telling or love magic, and viewed any practice other than the healing of human or animal bodies as beneath them. These cases presented a theological conundrum for inquisitors, who did not wish to support the cause of the *curandeiros*, but who also did not

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<sup>116</sup> Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 3690.

<sup>117</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 33.

<sup>118</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro* 269, fls. 19–21.

want to deny at least the theoretical possibility of divine intervention for purposes of healing. Some trials of this type could trigger protracted exchanges between the Inquisition judges and outside theologians (conducted through correspondence that was then bound into a trial record), wherein they debated the merits of an accused healer's claim to being a divine *saludador*.<sup>119</sup>

For example, in the 1727 trial of *curandeiro* João de São Francisco in Coimbra, a considerable section of the trial dossier is given over to a theological debate between two clerics about the nature of a popular healer's power and whether or not God would ever use a mortal to intervene in matters of human health. Three letters from the correspondence between Inquisitor Cristovão da Cruz of Coimbra and another un-named deputy of the Holy Office, all commenting on the subject of *curandeirismo* as it related to João de São Francisco's case, are included in the trial dossier. These letters proceed in the manner of the Inquisition policy statement *Dos Saludadores*, arguing generally that, while God has the power to intervene in some cases to heal illnesses, most *curandeiros* are either charlatans or, if truly empowered, their efficacy must necessarily come through contact with the devil.<sup>120</sup>

*Inquisidore* Cristovão da Cruz, a priest of the local *Colégio de São Jerónimos*, wrote two letters stating his opinion on the facts of the accused healer's case. Da Cruz makes an explicit comparison between popular healers—whose practices he considered to be fraudulent—and trained, licensed physicians, to whose methodical scientific training he clearly attributed real value. In his first, most detailed letter, he states:

As the circumstances of this case are observed, based on the facts that I have, I propose in favor of the presumption that this man [the accused João de São Francisco] does not cure by Virtue, as he says in his deposition, but by intervention of the Devil . . .<sup>121</sup>

Da Cruz continued, asserting that João de São Francisco had to be in league with the devil because his healing techniques did not match the practices of a true divine *Saludador*:

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<sup>119</sup> For an example, see Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8899, fls. 88–105.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 88r.

... because the *Saludadores* cure with their breath, with the voice, with saliva, with their touch, and other similar things, without using the Remedies that this one [João de São Francisco] uses, ... [and] because the *Saludadores* also may not use in their cures remedies made from herbs, and purges, ... and as this man does not cure [only] certain determined maladies, but every class of them, he certainly may not be of the Apostles of Christ ...; for which I find, when I speak of his virtue, I presume that the cures he does are done with help from the Devil ...<sup>122</sup>

... [it is] fundamental that, ... [for a *curandeiro*] to say that [he can] cure all infirmities, without being familiar with their aspects, [or] the virtues of their remedies, nor to have ever assisted with a Physician, or Surgeon, who would know and who would teach him; that [the *curandeiro*] performs [cures] because he had come to believe that he knew how to apply [medicines], but without knowing how.<sup>123</sup>

The implication, of course, in Cristovão da Cruz's observation is that the capability to cure all manner of illnesses, gained without learning or an apprenticeship with a conventional healer, could only have been achieved through interaction with satanic forces. Again, the argument is consistent with the ideas advanced in *Dos Saludadores*. True *saludadores*, according to the theologians, received divine power only to heal specific maladies.

To counter the damning nature of Padre Cristovão da Cruz's letters, an observer sympathetic to João de São Francisco wrote to the inquisitors who adjudicated the case to enter a statement of his own. In part, the letter from this apologist for the accused healer reads:

When the effects are marvelous and rare, it is most difficult to truly prove if they [non-conventional cures] stem from a natural cause, be it either from God or from the Devil ...<sup>124</sup>

In response to this attempted defense of João de São Francisco's illicit healing practices, the inquisitors opined:

... it is said that this person [João de São Francisco] today cures by experience that he has acquired, and by natural remedies, and by means he has come to know, and by which terms he may accomplish cures, even if the first instruction of the said remedies may have come by revelation or teaching from the Devil, and consequently that he should not be prohibited from curing; to this we respond, that it does

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., fl. 88v.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., fl. 90.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., fl. 99r.

not matter that this person has ceased to have further revelations, or to desire them; this is not a persuasive reason; to say that he does not have them [new revelations], or to promise that he will not use them, should not be given credit; nor can we have any assurance that he will not go back on his word . . . that which is certain is that he cures with his [diabolically-inspired] experiences, and if he does not have new revelations, it does not excuse the scandal from which his cures may have originated.<sup>125</sup>

It is well to remember that this commentary was written in 1737, over forty years after the first circulation of *Dos Saludadores* among functionaries of the Holy Office. By this date, the Holy Office repression of popular healers was running at full tide. The comments of Inquisitor Cristovão de Cruz make clear that the concepts initially expressed in *Dos Saludadores* were still current and being referred to almost verbatim four decades after it was written. *Dos Saludadores* was, in fact, the Portuguese Inquisition's most potent tool for persecuting popular healers; its logic would be used to justify a condemnation in these types of trials even after the Pombaline reforms of 1774.<sup>126</sup>

*Efficacy: The Quality of Folk and Official Medical Care Compared*

Historian Charles Boxer's speculative observation that folk healers maintained their popularity with commoners precisely because they did not resort to the lancet, draining the blood of patients to restore the balance of their "humors" (as was the practice among most trained physicians, surgeons and phlebotomists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), is an astute one.<sup>127</sup> Methods *curandeiros* employed were rarely painful to their clients—unsavory, time-consuming and complex, perhaps, but not pain-inducing. Hence, when given a choice between receiving treatment from an illicit popular healer whose cosmology, which included recourse to the supernatural,

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 105v.

<sup>126</sup> See the testimony of the licensed barber José da Silva against an accused *curandeiro* in 1784; ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372.

<sup>127</sup> Charles R. Boxer, "Some Remarks on the Social and Professional Status of Physicians and Surgeons in the Iberian World, 16th–18th Centuries," *Jornal da Sociedade das Ciências Médicas de Lisboa*, Tomo CXXXVII, Nos. 4–5: 287–306 (Lisbon, 1974), pp. 3–4.

was essentially the same as that of his peasant clients, or from a trained, licensed medical practitioner whose distant, incomprehensible “scientific” treatment made little reference to traditional healing and, furthermore, coupled both physical pain with high cost, the decision to see a *curandeiro* was, for most rural Portuguese subjects, a simple one.

Maria Benedita Araújo focuses much attention on this issue, as well. After surveying the salient pharmacopoeia of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and assessing contemporary popular healing practices, she observed that, in Portugal, professional medical theory and practice of this age was still preoccupied with astonishingly ancient concepts regarding the proper treatment of human maladies. Araújo detailed a conventional healer’s worldview that attributed curative qualities to all manner of bodily secretions, which could be gathered and re-administered as medicines to balance humors in the *corpus humani*. Toward the same end, bleeding a patient was a universally accepted method among licensed conventional practitioners.

Such practices echo medieval and far older ideas at work; Galen’s influence, for example, and that of Greek medicine generally, is clearly recognizable. She also provides lists of local animals—certain fish, lizards, frogs, mollusks and insects—which both popular healers and licensed physicians believed (with justification in some cases), to have medicinal powers if properly prepared for ingestion or topical use.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, conventional doctors themselves were not above resorting on occasion to superstitious means if they thought such acts might help cure a patient. Luís de Pina’s study of state-sanctioned medical publications in early modern Portugal reveals that, even during the eighteenth century, vestiges of magical arts were still to be found embedded in official Portuguese medical books.<sup>129</sup>

Araújo’s work provides the overall impression that conventional medical practice in Portugal was, except for the relative handful of doctors with a more cosmopolitan outlook, strikingly inward-looking and insulated well into the eighteenth century, and changed only slowly as an appreciation for more rationalized medicine spread. While the present study maintains that she overstated her case, her

<sup>128</sup> Araújo, *O Conhecimento Empírico*, pp. 23–26.

<sup>129</sup> Luís de Pina, “A Magia dos Livros Médicos Portugueses do Século XVIII,” in *Actas do 1º Congresso de Etnografia e Folclore* (Lisbon: Biblioteca Social e Corporativa, 1963), vol. II; pp. 9–42.

point is nevertheless an important one. It supports the notion that Portuguese commoners in the eighteenth century would have had little reason to believe that the health care they would receive at the hands of a licensed physician or surgeon was likely to be any better than the remedies offered by an illicit folk healer.

Actually, numerous Inquisition cases from the eighteenth century provide instances where *curandeiro* patients stated explicitly that they had no faith in sanctioned conventional medical professionals. In 1743, for example, João Carrilho of Castelo de Vide unintentionally instigated a Holy Office *processo* against Manuel Rodrigues Leandro, a popular healer summoned because Carrilho had, as the Inquisition later learned, “absolutely no confidence in doctors” (*desconfiada por Médicos inteiramente*). One of Carrilho’s neighbors, who did not know this peripatetic *curandeiro* personally, denounced Leandro to the Évora Inquisition.<sup>130</sup> Twenty-one years earlier, in 1722, inquisitors from the Coimbra tribunal had recorded in *curandeira* Antónia Pereira’s trial summary that “she performed extraordinary and reprehensible cures on infirm people, whom she found to have no confidence in Doctors.”<sup>131</sup> Earlier still, in 1708, Maria Candosa described in her accusation of *curandeira* Isabel Dias the circumstances under which this popular healer might be summoned: “. . . if there was some person gravely ill and with no confidence in physicians, then [Isabel Dias] would come to see the infirm person, to assess the gravity of the illness . . .”<sup>132</sup> Professional medical practitioners then as now had to cope with a popular lack of faith in their methods.

The reasons for this popular crisis of confidence in the skills of elite healers may have been rooted in a very real problem: licensed healers’ training was poor and inadequate at best. During the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries, medical instruction at Coimbra was profoundly encumbered by a medieval scholastic sensibility that focused on the traditional Galenic system of medical instruction.<sup>133</sup> Even as late as the second quarter of the eighteenth

<sup>130</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1445.

<sup>131</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7346.

<sup>132</sup> Testimony given during a pastoral visitation in the Diocese of Coimbra, 1708; cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 79.

<sup>133</sup> Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal*, vol. 2, pp. 145–168. See also Rocha Brito Guimarães and Feliciano Guimarães, “A Faculdade de Medicina de Coimbra,” in *Actas Ciba*, No. 14 (Lisbon, n.d.), pp. 555–556.



century, many professional physicians trained at Coimbra, if they did not follow medical developments abroad, simply had little exposure to new ideas from outside this antiquated tradition, whether those innovations came from the Asian colonies or from empirical scientists like Harvey, Malpighi, Van Leeuwenhoek, Haller and Boerhaave, who worked mostly in the north of Europe.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, Coimbra-trained doctors were also frequently Old Christians in the employ of the Inquisition, an organization that was notoriously resistant to change and which distrusted ideas originating beyond the frontiers where Catholic orthodoxy reigned. Innovative medical techniques contended with an Old Christian mentality which saw any experimental changes in methodology as having a suspicious “*estrangeirado*” (foreign influenced) taint or, worse, carrying the stigma of being “Jewish medicine.”<sup>135</sup> Even at the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital in relatively cosmopolitan Lisbon, a teaching hospital which during the eighteenth century was somewhat more open to innovations of surgical technique and applied medicines, there is little indication that doctors there succeeded before the 1760s in instituting any profound qualitative changes across the medical profession in Portugal, particularly among those physicians practicing in the provinces.<sup>136</sup>

To make the point clearer, consider this example of the state of the art in Portuguese medical publishing at the turn of the eighteenth century. In 1704, Dom Caetano de Santo António, an Augustinian monk and druggist originally of the Monastery of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, published the first *farmacopeia*, or pharmaceutical guide, written wholly in the Portuguese language. At that time he lived cloistered in Coimbra, and his initial book, *Pharmacopea Lusitana*, shows the influence of his having worked in this highly insulated community. The author intended that his work would, because it

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<sup>134</sup> José Sebastião Silva Dias, “Portugal e a Cultura Europeia: Séculos XVI a XVIII,” in *Biblos XXVIII* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1952), pp. 280–281 and 368.

<sup>135</sup> Timothy Walker, “The Role of Licensed Physicians in the Inquisition and at Court during the Reign of João V,” Mediterranean Studies Association Conference, *Discovery, New Frontiers and Expansion in the Luso-Hispanic World* (Lisbon, Portugal; May 1998), pp. 3; 23–27.

<sup>136</sup> Mário Carmona, “O Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos,” offprint of *Boletim Clínico dos Hospitais Cíveis de Lisboa*, vol. 18, Nos. 3 and 4 (Lisbon, 1954), pp. 535–560. See also Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal*, vol. 2, pp. 133–144 and 169–180.

was written in the native language of Portuguese physicians, help avoid mistakes stemming from their reading technical medical manuals in Latin or other languages. Dom Caetano did not try to be innovative; *Pharmacopea Lusitana* is provincial and archaic, as only a medical text sanctioned by the Augustinians in Coimbra around the turn of the eighteenth century could be. Nothing that was new to science outside Portugal in the late seventeenth century was included in this text; in fact, de Santo António's writing still represented a level of science and medical technology virtually unchanged since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The *Pharmacopea Lusitana*, like the curriculum of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra, reflected an orientation to human physiology and healing traceable to that which Galen and his followers had taught in the second century C.E. Dom Caetano de Santo António's first *farmacopeia* still emphasized bloodletting and purgatives (laxatives and emetics) as a means to keep the corporeal humors in balance.<sup>137</sup>

Further, when assessing the efficacy of *curandeiro* remedies among Portuguese commoners, rustic or urban, it is important to take into account the positive effect of belief in one's care-giver—the kind of placebo effect resulting from the patient's confidence in the healing methods employed.<sup>138</sup> Modern medical science is only beginning to grasp the power and importance of psychosomatic variables in human healing, with the influence of one's attitude, disposition, and faith or confidence in the healer's skills being recognized increasingly as important elements impacting recuperation. When an ailing Portuguese farm laborer called on a known *curandeira* because he suffered from muscle, joint or back pain (*espinhela*), for example, the patient's belief in the power of the folk healer's chosen ritual usually had as much to do with the success of the cure as the pharmaceutical qualities of whatever herbal-based ointment might have been placed in a poultice on the patient's abdomen. Such socially determined dynamics in popular healing have been long documented by ethnographers and anthropologists in various world cultures; there is no reason to

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<sup>137</sup> Sousa Dias, p. 23.

<sup>138</sup> See passages of Wade Davis' *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997) regarding Australian aborigines who died after being the target of a gesture that they believed could kill. He also recounts other well-documented examples of the psychosomatic efficacy of gestures, such as the evil eye, and placebos; see pp. 136–138.

assume they were not a factor in disease resolution among the Portuguese peasantry in the early modern period, as well.<sup>139</sup>

Traditionally conservative agrarian peoples preferred to continue to patronize folk healers who employed magic, then, because they believed in the power of the fantastic remedies *curandeiros* and *saludadores* offered. From time out of memory, such had been the done thing to address sickness; in comparison, conventional medical practitioners did not present an attractive alternative. Confidence in the folk healer alone, at a time when university-trained physicians and surgeons could employ, at best, only the most primitive medical science, gave illicit folk healers a psychological advantage among commoners when curing disease. Part of the likely explanation for why certain traditional healers enjoyed a favorable reputation based on the high success rates of their cures can be attributed to this dynamic.<sup>140</sup>

Conventional medical practitioners in Portugal, as elsewhere, labored under the combined handicaps of professional conservatism, the fixed habits of the unlettered general population and the slowness of scientific innovation. The result, from the common poor rural person's point of view, was that the perceived benefits of consulting a trained licensed physician in the eighteenth century were still negligible.

### *The Prominence of Men as Folk Healers in the South of Portugal*

In early modern Portugal, particularly in the southern reaches of the realm, the practice of folk healing arts was almost evenly distributed between women and men. Among those Portuguese folk healers whom the Inquisition brought to trial, just over forty percent were men, while women accounted for just under sixty percent, counting all Holy Office tribunals.<sup>141</sup> To do so, however, distorts the actual

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<sup>139</sup> In Max Marwick, ed., *Witchcraft and Sorcery* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), see the following articles: S. F. Nadel, "Witchcraft in Four African Societies" (1952), pp. 286–299; J. R. Crawford, "The Consequences of Allegation" (1967), pp. 314–325; and especially Hilary Flegg Mitchell and J. Clyde Mitchell, "Social Factors in the Perception of the Causes of Disease" (1980), pp. 401–421. See also the discussions in Robert D. Anderson, "The History of Witchcraft: A Review with some Psychiatric Comments," in *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 126 (1970).

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* For positive reputations of *curandeiros* and *saludadores*, see Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, pp. 99–106.

<sup>141</sup> On this score, Dr. Paiva reports a larger ratio of men to women: forty-two percent and fifty-eight percent, respectively. See *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 162.

historical landscape, because the three Portuguese Inquisition tribunals persecuted *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* at greatly varying rates. In Lisbon, for example, cunning men were in the majority among those the Holy Office prosecuted, outnumbering cunning women thirteen to nine, or 59.09 percent compared to 40.91 percent (which may illustrate an apparent preference among Lisbon's residents for male healers). In Évora, however, the ratio was nearly even, with a total of thirty-four female folk healers tried during the period in question, compared to thirty-two males (51.51 percent versus 48.48 percent). Only in the northern part of the country was this trend markedly different. The Holy Office tribunal of Coimbra prosecuted a far larger percentage of women healers: *curandeiras* accounted for 69.79 percent of the trials against popular healers, while *curandeiros* made up only 30.21 percent (sixty-seven women and twenty-nine men were tried for illicit healing in Coimbra during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries).<sup>142</sup>

Note that none of these figures is necessarily representative of the actual gender ratio of popular healers functioning at large in contemporary Portuguese society. It is feasible, for example—though virtually impossible to prove—that inquisitors in Coimbra were specifically targeting female healers for arrest. However, in the north of Portugal, as elsewhere in the northern Iberian Peninsula, women played a stronger social role as folk healers than they did in the south. Modern scholarship has indicated that women shaped and controlled the general expression of popular culture paradigms in northern Portugal and Galicia to an extent far greater than did men.<sup>143</sup> Such circumstances may explain the elevated number of arrests among female healers by the Coimbra Inquisition tribunal.

Nevertheless, the masculine folk healer was a well-entrenched figure in Portuguese peasant society. Of the twelve *saludadores* and *curandeiros* whom the Portuguese Inquisition arrested in the sixteenth century, as documented by Francisco Bethencourt, ten were men.<sup>144</sup> But the tradition of men acting as folk healers in the south of Portugal

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<sup>142</sup> See the tables at the end of Chapter VIII, below, which provide data about the gender of accused folk healers.

<sup>143</sup> Jaime Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700: poder, sociedad y cultura* (Madrid: Akal, 1982); see the discussion on pp. 571–579 and pp. 685–687.

<sup>144</sup> Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia: feitiçeiros, saludadores e nigromantes no século XVI*, pp. 177; 302–307.

was at least as old as the six-hundred-year Moorish occupation of the Iberian Peninsula, beginning in the eighth century C.E. North African Muslim society generally placed men in the position of being agents of healing, even at the popular level; this seems to be the historical genesis of the Portuguese practice south of the River Tagus, and in the southern provinces of Spain, as well.<sup>145</sup>

In his only work on Portuguese witchcraft trials to appear in English, in fact, Bethencourt refers to folk healing as virtually an exclusively masculine activity; he calls all Portuguese healers at the popular level “cunning men.”<sup>146</sup> It is well to remember, too, that the Inquisition referred to popular healers exclusively in the masculine form in its policy statement, *Dos Saludadores*. So, clearly, elites in Portugal were accustomed to thinking of folk healers in masculine terms. This conceit does not seem to have been so prevalent in the north of the country, where the incidence of prosecuted male healers was far less.<sup>147</sup>

*The Race Factor: Luso-African Healers and Mystique as a Power Source*

*Familiars* of the Évora Inquisition arrested the *curandeira* Maria Grácia on 7 October 1724. The crimes alleged against her were many: pact with the devil, sorcery, superstitions, sacrilege, and “practicing false arts.” This accused healer was a slave, born in Angola; she is described in the trial record as being unmarried, forty years old and *preta retinta* (“pitch black”). Her master was Felipe Rodrigues Vitória, a wool contractor who lived in Évora. Because she had been taken from Angola when she was very young, the trial record explains, the accused did not know the name of her parents. Maria Grácia was taken into custody in the dispensary house of the Évora Inquisition palace—she was not incarcerated with white offenders in the official prison.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Anwar G. Chejne, *Islam and the West: The Moriscos: A Cultural and Social History* (Albany: State University of New York, 1983), pp. 115–131. See also Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 182–183 and Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 159–160.

<sup>146</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 410–411.

<sup>147</sup> See tables in Chapter IX, below.

<sup>148</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 4333.

Maria Grácia was said to cure the malady of *quebranto*, and the “malady of the moon,” which she achieved with the following superstitious chants:

I bless you, [name], the bewitched one; sun, fire and moon  
 In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit  
 Here is the way of the Truth  
 In this way, take the evil from this creature  
 Jesus gives birth to Santa Ana  
 Santa Ana gives birth to Jesus  
 Here is the way of the Truth  
 In this way, take the evil from this creature.<sup>149</sup>

At other times, Maria Grácia conducted a remedy that involved the use of simple sorcery and mechanical healing methods. She would employ the following chant, using a cup of cool, clean water that she had blessed:

When the Virgin, Our Lady, walked through the world curing  
 She cured with a cup of cold water.  
 Jesus gives life to Santa Ana  
 Santa Ana gives life to Jesus  
 In the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.<sup>150</sup>

Additionally, in order to cure carbuncles, she would exclaim:

I bless you, carbuncles, in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit!  
 When the Virgin, Our Lady, passed by here, snakes and lizards were killed  
 In this way I beg God and the Virgin Mary for that which has begun to go back!<sup>151</sup>

Maria Grácia only “completed her confession of guilt” after being tortured on 10 September 1725, nearly a year after her date of arrest. She performed her *auto-da-fé* on 16 December 1725, after which she was banished to Faro for three years.<sup>152</sup>

Statistically, persons of African descent make up only a small percentage of the total cadre of folk healers encountered in early modern Portugal. At most, the Portuguese Holy Office tried only fifteen

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

or twenty Luso-Africans as *curandeiros* during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, amounting to less than ten percent of all prosecuted contemporary folk healers.<sup>153</sup> Yet blacks were some of the most renowned and notorious purveyors of superstitious remedies in the country. Healers of African origin seem to have been surrounded by a mystique that benefited their commerce in folk remedies. Many whites accorded black healers respect and power based on their singular exoticism, assuming that their origins in Africa or Brazil had provided them with healing knowledge to which white *médicos* or *curandeiros* did not have access.

This dynamic is especially true regarding black women. Of the twelve positively known cases where the Portuguese Inquisition prosecuted blacks as healers, two-thirds were women. Four of the twenty-two popular healers tried in Lisbon—two women and two men—were of African descent (though most had been born in Brazil). The Évora tribunal tried five Luso-Africans; this number is higher because the southernmost Algarve province, where the black population was greater, was in Évora's jurisdiction.

Part of the popular esteem given to black women as healers is attributable to enduring North African influences on Portugal's past.<sup>154</sup> Folk tales of mysterious, alluring *mouras encantadas* (enchanted Moorish women) originated during the medieval *Reconquista*. Such stories abounded in early modern Portugal; they spread powerful images that resonated in the popular mind. Beautiful dark women from Africa were said to entrance, seduce or spirit away lone travellers in the Portuguese countryside. Peasants commonly believed these *mouras encantadas* were ageless; they had been left behind to guard treasures hidden by the retreating Muslims.<sup>155</sup> Such women were said to have uncommon powers to charm and to heal Christians. In context, that unlettered rustics should project the powers of characters in folk tales on to living Luso-Africans is not so difficult to understand.

One of the most famous *curandeiras* in the diocese of Coimbra, for example, the above-mentioned Antónia Nunes da Costa, was almost

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<sup>153</sup> Certain cases include ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 2362, 7199 and 7807; Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 372, 4333, 5940, 6390 and 7759; Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 252, 437, 2355 and 4260.

<sup>154</sup> Chejne, *Islam and the West; The Moriscos*, pp. 115–131. See also Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia*, pp. 182–183.

<sup>155</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 159–160. See also Chejne, *Islam and the West; The Moriscos*, pp. 115–131.

certainly a black or mulatto woman. Her nickname, *a Preta*, was and remains a pejorative term for people of African descent.<sup>156</sup> Still, she had earned a widespread notoriety for her ability to address many types of illness. In order to care for the numerous clients who summoned her, da Costa would travel great distances on foot to various communities scattered across Portugal's midlands. Her long and well-documented career lasted at least from 1694 to 1716.<sup>157</sup> She was joined in the Coimbra district later in the century by two other *curandeiras* of color. In 1731, the Inquisition arrested forty-year-old Joanna Baptista, resident of a village outside Oporto; she was described as a *parda* (woman of mixed-race or mulatto).<sup>158</sup> Also, in 1754–1755 the Holy Office tried one Maria Teresa, who lived in the city of Oporto. She was described as *mulata*—her father was a priest and her mother was a black slave owned by another priest.<sup>159</sup> All of these women were accorded respect as healers in part because of the color of their skin.

Luso-African folk healers held a particular fascination for the cosmopolitan community living in the Portuguese capital city well into the next century. Historian of medicine Augusto da Silva Carvalho, writing in the early twentieth century, has provided us with the following vivid example of a notorious *curandeiro* active in Lisbon during the first quarter of the nineteenth century: the “*Barão de Catanea*.”<sup>160</sup> (Taking contemporary Brazilian slang into account, this pseudonym was apparently a mischievously clever quadruple-entendre, connoting simultaneously “The One-Horned [Libidinous] Baron of Medicinal Roots and Rude Insults.”<sup>161</sup>)

There was a man well-known in the town; tall, stooped, gaunt of face, humbly dressed in a black jacket, trousers of cotton duck, and a high silk hat, mounted on an old hack, who would go about the streets of Lisbon practicing “*clínica*” or visiting his devotees whose state of health did not permit them to consult him at the house where he resided. This was a palace in ruins at the foot of Rua de São Francisco de

<sup>156</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, cited in Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas*, p. 106.

<sup>158</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7807.

<sup>159</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 2362.

<sup>160</sup> Augusto da Silva Carvalho, *Médicos e Curandeiros* (Lisbon: Tipographia Adolphe de Mendonça, 1917), p. 52.

<sup>161</sup> Franz Wimmer, dir., *Michaelis Illustrated Dictionary, Vol. II* (Portuguese-English) (São Paulo, Brazil: Edições Melhoramentos, 1961), p. 261.



Paulo, where over the gate was ostentatiously displayed the device of a *curandeiro*, which read: *Soli Deo, honor et gloria*.

In this house you would find crowded together a bunch of *pretas* of all ages, mixed up with a great number of animals, of which the most prominent were parrots and monkeys. All of these constituted the sonorous elements of a macabre symphony, which accompanied the consultations of “the Baron.”

The common people put great faith in him, and not only the darker part of the population; he was considered very able in healing various ailments (he was often called on for child-birthing), but also the better part of the city called upon his services not a few times. Further, he was certain to have crews of the English ships that visited our port; seamen and officers of the highest rank constituted the largest part of his clientele [for treatment of venereal disease?].

It was said that he disembarked in Lisbon, coming from Brazil, but his origins, just like his [true] name, were unknown.<sup>162</sup>

The arts of popular healing were abhorrent both to the inquisitors and university-trained *médicos*, but for different reasons. Both groups within the Holy Office—licensed physicians or surgeons working as *familiares* and *inquisidores* occupying the upper echelon of power—sought a policy of repression against illicit folk healers during the first half of the eighteenth century. Superstitious practices and heresies committed by illicit healers were anathema to inquisitors because such behavior clashed with the church orthodoxy they had pledged themselves to uphold. On those grounds alone, Portuguese Inquisition authorities felt justified in persecuting folk healers.

Licensed physicians and surgeons, meanwhile, who worked within the institution of the Holy Office, harbored an additional double-edged grievance against the purveyors of folk remedies. *Curandeiros* and *saludadores* represented an obstacle to the conventional health practitioners’ trade, insofar as many commoners preferred to patronize popular instead of state-sanctioned healers. Moreover, for those conventional *médicos* whose professional outlook included innovative, rationalized medicine as it was beginning to be practiced in northern Europe—and my research suggests that there were many *familiares* who matched this description within the Holy Office—an additional benefit to persecuting folk healers was that the discrediting of popular healing methods thus opened the door to the practice of enlightened, scientific medicine at all levels of Portuguese

<sup>162</sup> Silva Carvalho, *Médicos e Curandeiros*, p. 52.

society. To these forward-looking conventional *médicos*, convincing the general populace of the futility of superstitious healing was just one facet in a comprehensive program of long-term medical reform in Portugal.

Each of these groups within the Inquisition's corporation—ecclesiastical administrators and the professional medical practitioners who served as functionaries under them—had a clear set of motives for their antagonism toward *curandeiros* and *saludadores*. Together, *médicos* and *inquisidores* acted cooperatively, fashioning a policy of widespread, systematic repression against illicit folk healers in Enlightenment-era Portugal.

The following chapters explain the social and political context within eighteenth-century Portugal—a state suspended in the broader changing intellectual culture of contemporary Europe—which contributed to the realization of the Inquisition's policy against illicit folk healers. Later chapters will detail many characteristics of the trials resulting from this policy and relate the demographic traits of the people involved.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ENLIGHTENMENT INFLUENCES: THE MOVEMENT TOWARD MEDICAL REFORM IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PORTUGAL

The repression of popular healing in Enlightenment-era Portugal cannot be understood in isolation from the climate of intellectual change then current in that land. Physicians and surgeons instigated widespread prosecutions of *curandeiros* for reasons above and beyond material self-interest: they were also deeply concerned about the poor, unscientific quality of superstitious folk healing.

To comprehend these licensed healers' actions, it is first necessary to appreciate the social turbulence caused by the influx of rationalist concepts into Portuguese medical circles. Enlightenment advocacy gradually became widespread in Portuguese elite culture during the eighteenth century, but the Age of Reason had already made significant inroads to the medical profession by 1710. Physicians and surgeons, if they kept current with developments outside Portugal, were among the most active proponents of this new, open mentality; their profession was one that felt the impact of empiricism earliest and strongest. In context, that many members of this social group were galvanized into action against their perceived competitors by an intellectual movement makes perfect sense. Without the context of a spreading medical awakening in Portugal, however, the concurrent persecution of popular healers—justified on scientific grounds—is unintelligible.

Trials *médicos* initiated against *curandeiros* are an important part of the advent of the Enlightenment to Portugal. Such repression constitutes a comprehensible backlash by the harbingers of a new intellectual paradigm against some of the most visible (and vulnerable) adherents of the old paradigm. Indeed, until rationalism became more widely accepted by ruling elites in the church, government and universities, progressive-minded conventional healers were largely restricted from most other proactive strategies to promote their ideas.

In trying to assess the impact of Enlightenment sensibilities on the practice of medicine in Portugal for purposes of determining its place in the causality of simultaneous *curandeiro* persecutions, the reign of

Dom João V (1706–1750) offers a tangled picture. In an era when cosmology and *mentalité* were in profound transition, the existence of antithetical world views among contemporaries—not only between people of different socio-economic classes, but even among those positioned by birth and education at the same social level—was inevitable. Further, that contradictory notions about the nature of the world— notions pitting the imperatives of faith against those of reason—might exist simultaneously in the mind of a single person was, in this epoch of transition, an inevitability, too. Therefore, we must begin this chapter with a look, for comparative purposes, at the mixed cosmological outlook of licensed physicians and surgeons, the elite counterparts of the popular healers we have just considered.

First, it is important to acknowledge that two levels of medicine, popular and elite, functioned side-by-side throughout this period. Elite physicians, trained according to centuries-old doctrines at the nation's premier university, yet to varying degrees aware of profound developments in their profession taking place elsewhere in Europe, felt torn between these somewhat suspect foreign influences and the traditional, largely theoretical curriculum their respected Coimbra mentors taught.<sup>1</sup> The attitudes of conventional medical practitioners were bound to evolve under these pressures, and evolve they did as the century wore on. Reactionary policies in the Jesuit-controlled universities were tempered by the advent from abroad of concepts supporting empirical scientific medicine—ideas which found purchase among broad-minded physicians and other elites working beyond the Jesuits' immediate direction and, in some cases, under their very noses.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> José Sebastião de Silva Dias, "Portugal e a Cultura Europeia: Séculos XVI a XVIII," *Biblos XXVIII* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1952), pp. 292–295; and António Simões Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, Lda., 1994), p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Portugal: The Role of the *Estrangeirados*" (Edinburgh, Scotland: Papers of the Third British North America Meeting, July 1996), pp. 2–6; and Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences" (Delphi, Greece: Papers of the conference, "The Transmission of Scientific Ideas to the Countries of the European Periphery during the Enlightenment," July, 1995), appendices, network charts 1–4. See also Francisco J. Calazans Falcon, "A Época Pombalina e as Luzes," in *Comunicações apresentados ao Congresso Internacional Portugal no Século XVIII de D. João V à Revolução Francesa* (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos do Século XVIII, Universitaria Editora, 1991), pp. 141–144.

During this age of transition, other seemingly contradictory developments came to pass concurrently within the country, as well. The Inquisition's power grew under the "enlightened" Dom João V; in the 1720s, Holy Office persecutions of Jewish physicians increased even as the king founded progressive new institutions like the Royal Academy of History.<sup>3</sup> Philosophical salons flourished in the sanctuary of private aristocratic households, their members—many of them influential courtiers of the Portuguese ruling class—debated the most recent assertions of rationalism<sup>4</sup> even as officials of the Royal Censorship Board invaded Lisbon book shops and confiscated banned texts from northern-European merchant ships.<sup>5</sup> And, in an apparent contradiction, many of the individuals most interested in disseminating enlightened ideas in Portugal, if they were middle-class Old Christians, actively sought, simultaneously and for reasons of status or personal gain, employment with the Holy Office, the very institution that was responsible for quelling the influx and spread of progressive rationalist notions within the realm.<sup>6</sup> The first half of the eighteenth century in Portugal was a time that gave rise to such contradictions. This was partly due to the complex power structure within Portuguese society, shared as it was between ecclesiastical and secular authorities. As the century progressed, the country grew increasingly polarized between two fundamental philosophies, one basically religious and reactionary and the other based more on modernist concepts like reason and experimentation.

Above all, it is important to realize that eighteenth-century Portugal was not nearly so backward a country as northern European contemporaries often supposed. Immense fermentation bubbled under a crusty surface of official church and state regulations meant to control intellectual inquiry and development.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the intellectual

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<sup>3</sup> Silva Dias, "Portugal e a cultura Europeia," pp. 364–366; Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas*, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 5–7; and Silva Dias, pp. 307–308.

<sup>5</sup> Silva Dias, "Portugal e a cultura Europeia," pp. 292–297.

<sup>6</sup> Many were licensed physicians and surgeons, the two most notable being Manuel Gomes de Lima and João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, whom will be discussed later in this chapter. Chapter V, below, deals with the legion of doctor/*familiars* who attacked popular healers as a means of promoting scientific medicine.

<sup>7</sup> Rui Bebiano, *D. João V, Rei-Sol* (Coimbra: Faculdade de Letres, 1984), pp. 111–121. See also Kenneth Maxwell, "Eighteenth-Century Portugal: Faith and Reason, Tradition and Innovation During a Golden Age," in *The Age of the Baroque*

climate within Portugal could be characterized, on one hand, as eminent historian of the Portuguese Enlightenment J. S. da Silva Dias has done, thusly:

Simply put, the Inquisition and Crown created, with their actions, an environment of dread, inconfidence and inhibition, hostile to the work of thinking. Under this influence, our [intellectual] medium became eventually more adverse to the spirit of renewal than [that of our] northern brothers.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, there was still enough sustained contact with Enlightenment currents to stimulate a growing culture of rationalism inside the kingdom of Dom João V. As J. S. da Silva Dias goes on to say:

The preventative action [of censorship] was greater than the coercive action . . . [and] determined thinkers certainly managed to obtain and circulate books.<sup>9</sup>

This dynamic—the dichotomy between conservative and modernizing forces—was nowhere so apparent as in the field of medicine. The cosmology of eighteenth-century Portuguese society in general represented a diverse world, not separated neatly between an elite and a popular view, but spread across a broad spectrum of world views ranging from the wholly mystical and superstitious to the rigorously rational, with more persons grouped around the center of the range rather than at the extremes. However, for the elite medical practitioners within that spectrum, this period saw their outlook shift increasingly away from the roots of their ancient and medieval training toward a more scientific, empirical approach to medicine.<sup>10</sup> Even though Galen and Aristotle still served as the basis for virtually all medical instruction at the University of Coimbra until 1772,<sup>11</sup> other sources of technical information regarding pharmacology, anatomy, physiology and surgery slowly made inroads into the consciousness of medical professionals through a variety of conduits.<sup>12</sup>

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in *Portugal*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 109–111.

<sup>8</sup> Silva Dias, “Portugal e a cultura Europeia,” p. 297 (author’s translation).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 296–297.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 292–294; 301–302.

<sup>11</sup> Rocha Brito and Feliciano Guimarães, “A Faculdade de Medicina de Coimbra,” *Actas Cibas* 14, pp. 555–56; cited in Silva Dias, “Portugal e a cultura Europeia,” p. 368.

<sup>12</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 2–6 and appendices,

Those professional, licensed practitioners who had access to modern medical texts from the north of Europe or who corresponded with colleagues abroad, found themselves in a phase of transition from a pre-rationalist to a scientific professional awareness. This transition period began gradually, but gained momentum as the century progressed, culminating in a thoroughgoing modernization of the standards of Portuguese medical training at the time of the Pombaline reforms in the 1770s.<sup>13</sup> In so doing, the gulf separating the mentality of the university-trained physicians and surgeons of the social elites from the cosmology of popular *curandeiros*—who lacked formal training and systematic access to the learned corresponding societies or printed works which were the sources of rational medicine—grew enormously, resulting in increased tension between the two groups and an eventual backlash as licensed physicians grew intolerant of unscientific popular methods.<sup>14</sup>

To better understand this growing divergence, consider the varying experience of three contemporary licensed doctors who, at the same time the Inquisition was prosecuting *curandeiros* in Portugal, were also pursuing the healing arts, but from an entirely different point of departure. Even so, in some fundamental ways, the popular and elite spheres intersected, displaying methods that were nearly in common with one-another. The following glimpse into the realities of eighteenth-century medical care helps to illustrate the differences of worldview that separated an elite doctor from a popular healer during the early phase of medical modernization in Portugal. Such insights also show how very little difference there could sometimes be between these two approaches to medicine.

In 1715, licensed physician Manuel Gonçalves Teixeira was near the end of a lengthy, noteworthy medical career. A native of Santarém, an important river port and market town northeast of Lisbon, Teixeira had earned a reputation as a physician of the first quality. Within professional medical circles, however, his renown was based more

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network charts 1–4; see also Silva Dias, “Portugal e a cultura Europeia,” pp. 293; 296–297; 301–302.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 11–12; 102–105.

<sup>14</sup> José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: 1600–1774*, (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 86–94; 207–224; Francisco Santana, *Bruxas e Curandeiros na Lisboa Joanina* (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1996), pp. 5–9.

on his expertise in the realm of pharmaceuticals; his peers valued his knowledge of medicinal plants, animal-based drugs, and his mastery in preparing and writing about complex blended medicines.<sup>15</sup> This provincial doctor, trained in the Galenic tradition at Coimbra, nevertheless took an active interest in medical progress being made in northern Europe, particularly in the Netherlands and France. When he died on 4 October 1717, he left behind an impressive body of written work. This included several books, well-known French pharmaceutical handbooks from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which he had personally translated into Portuguese. Among them were Nicolas Cherneau's *Theoria Pharmaceutica*, Nicolas Lemery's *Novo Curso Chymico*, and a collection of practical cures by one Madame Fongult. He also left behind a number of his own manuscripts, treatises on medicines and the pharmacists' art. Teixeira had circulated these texts among his professional associates, thereby raising their awareness of medical advances outside Portugal while spreading specific knowledge of new medicinal substances and techniques.<sup>16</sup>

The experience of Manuel Gonçalves Teixeira was far from unique. Increasingly throughout the eighteenth century, physicians within Portugal began to look for texts that would convey more effective medical techniques than could be learned in the ancient texts and theoretical lectures of the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine. For example, another contemporary Portuguese physician, José Ferreira da Moura, also produced significant medical discourses in his lifetime.<sup>17</sup> Born in 1671 in Torres Novas, he trained in surgery at the Todos-os-Santos Hospital in Lisbon before serving as a Portuguese army regimental surgeon during the War of Spanish Succession. Afterwards, he settled into a practice in Lisbon, where he produced a massive 656-page tome on theoretical and practical surgery. The first 568 pages of this volume were a translation of a Spanish text originally published in Latin by Juan de Vigo, but Ferreira da Moura augmented this work with professional materials of his own. He included

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<sup>15</sup> BACL, Augusto da Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos e Cirurgiões Portugueses ou que Estiveram em Portugal" (unpublished 32-volume typescript with manuscript notations) (Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1949?), Volume 3, p. 251.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria do Dom João V, *livro* 40; BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," Volume 3, pp. 113–114.



his personal observations about “modern cures for illness and injury” which he had learned through his experience as a military practitioner. Mostly, these concerned poisons and venereal disease—and the effects of mercury used as a “panacea.” Following this material was a catalogue of medicinal preparations: recipes for new medicines and prescriptions for their application.<sup>18</sup>

Sometimes, though, even licensed medical practitioners saw fit to mix superstitious practices with their sanctioned conventional methods. Recall that José Gonçalves da Viega, an Old Christian licensed surgeon from a village near Bragança, was found guilty of magical crimes by the Inquisition. In 1740, da Viega went to a village near Tomar to treat a canker on a wealthy patient’s lower lip. Da Viega’s devotion to his patient must have been great: he travelled almost three hundred kilometers by foot to perform an operation; in payment he took a gold coin.<sup>19</sup> His treatment, though successful, had been most irregular in the eyes of the local people, to whom he was, of course, a stranger from the north. Da Viega had used frightening assertions, boasting that he “had already been in Hell, speaking with the Devil,” and had thereby derived a greater power to cure. Whether this was done out of a genuine belief in the efficacy of such a feat or was intended simply as a harmless way to appeal to the conceits of the patient in an attempt to bring about a swifter cure is difficult to assess, but da Viega’s behavior does demonstrate that a surgeon’s license alone did not exclude one from engaging in the exploitation of popularly-held superstitions.<sup>20</sup>

These three persons, all practitioners of the medical arts yet separated by distinct differences in their approaches and training, when viewed next to contemporary illicit popular healers, underscore the impression that a broad spectrum of medical care was available in Portugal during the advent of the Enlightenment. While some of this treatment might be characterized as quite conscious of modern notions of rational science, in practical terms much of the available conventional medicine was ineffective and even counterproductive. However, even by contemporary European standards, Portuguese medical practice at the turn of the eighteenth century, mired as it was in medieval traditionalism and encumbered by the reactionary

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 3690.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

weight of Holy Office or Jesuit controls on education that hindered the free flow of ideas, was notoriously backward.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, as the century wore on and technological advances elsewhere in Europe widened the gap between the state of the physician's art in Lisbon and, say, London or Antwerp, Portuguese medical practitioners became increasingly conscious—indeed, self-conscious—of their own deficiencies.<sup>22</sup> Many physicians and surgeons would take steps over time to improve their skills and knowledge, but this effort would be impeded by intellectual conservatism, distance from intellectual centers and poor communications, as well as what the Portuguese even today call “lack of conditions” (*falta de condições*)—a dearth of money, materials, tools and willful leadership to effect meaningful change.<sup>23</sup>

Given the patterns of power and resource distribution in the early modern Portuguese state, it should be recognized as axiomatic that the process of establishing a new mentality in Portugal toward science generally and medicine in particular would be, in the end, intimately linked to politics.<sup>24</sup> Few scientific initiatives were furthered without the benefit of patronage from a powerful member of the aristocracy. Such a dynamic was characteristic of many states in *ancien régime* Europe at the beginning of their scientific awakening, but in Portugal this practice persisted far longer, even into the modern era. Indeed, fundamental reforms could not have been effected in Portugal without the benefit of patronage at the highest level, as evidenced by Pombal's thorough restructuring of the university education system in 1772, undertaken only at his insistence as an official state initiative. To recognize that a reliance on patronage gave the process of scientific change a particular character is important: in Portugal, inconsistent patronage caused an irregular rhythm—an ebb and flow in the adaptation of rationalistic principles within professional medical culture and the other learned professions, as aristocratic champions of science gained favor, fell out of favor or were forced into exile.<sup>25</sup> These circumstances did not create the most

<sup>21</sup> Silva Dias, “Portugal e a cultura Europeia,” pp. 280–292; 301–302.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, and Maximiano de Lemos, *História da Medicina em Portugal; Doutrinas e Instituições*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Dom Quixote, 1991), vol. 2, pp. 155–170.

<sup>23</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, ed., *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. V (1640–1750), pp. 418–420. See also Silva Dias, “Portugal e a cultura Europeia,” pp. 280–281.

<sup>24</sup> Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 5–9.

<sup>25</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 368–369.

fecund or efficient of environments for the introduction, dissemination and consolidation of the Scientific Revolution; on the contrary, before Pombal's reforms, such steps were achieved only piecemeal and with little resolve.<sup>26</sup>

*Enlightened Beginnings: The Conde de Ericeira and his Circle*

Much of the responsibility for the earliest dissemination of Enlightenment ideas among influential Portuguese elites must be attributed to several exclusive, secretive salons organized by a few educated aristocrats who had been influenced by foreign travel or correspondence with learned colleagues in other parts of Europe. Beginning in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, discussion groups meeting in the private homes of powerful noblemen—where they enjoyed immunity from interference by Inquisition officials—explored the parameters of novel concepts in the sciences, natural philosophy and politics.<sup>27</sup> Many of those present in these salons—called “academies” to evoke the idealized institutions of classical learning—were young aristocrats wishing to challenge the rigid conservatism of the established curriculum in the Jesuit-controlled colleges and universities. (The Society of Jesus, by long-established privilege reinforced with royal patronage, exercised a near-monopoly on higher education in Portugal until 1759. The Jesuits in effect controlled the admissions process for students entering the University of Coimbra; further, they executed a profound *de facto* authority over that institution's faculty and curriculum).<sup>28</sup> The leaders of these innovative groups were usually older gentlemen whose stake in educational reform and a more open society was more than purely intellectual. Their motives were patriotic, too; they wished to see Portugal keep pace with other European powers in such fields as natural science, philosophy and medicine.<sup>29</sup>

For examples of foreign-influenced thinkers, or *estrangeirados*, advocating a reform of the prevailing Portuguese *mentalité*, one may point

<sup>26</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 296–297.

<sup>27</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 155–170; Silva Dias, pp. 307–308 and Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 5–8.

<sup>28</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>29</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 320–338.

to such early Enlightenment figures as the diplomat Luís da Cunha, his disciple Alexandre de Gusmão and Dom Francisco Xavier de Meneses, the fourth Count of Ericeira. Meneses and his circle of friends and protégés constituted a genuine *avant garde* in Portugal which, by the closing years of the seventeenth century, had provided a new paradigm for learning through their activities: discreet meetings, debates and even controversial publications through which some Portuguese elites became acquainted with the innovative ideas emanating from centers of learning in northern Europe.<sup>30</sup> The gatherings organized in Ericeira's residence (and others like his) took on the character of revolutionary cells where a handful of broad-minded men discussed "daring" and "subversive" ideas, including questions of empirical method, logic, criteria for the scientific proof of knowledge, a critical consideration of traditional ancient and medieval authorities and the very notion of progress.<sup>31</sup>

In effect, the Ericeira circle and others served to recast the nature of intellectual discourse in early modern Portugal.<sup>32</sup> Such groups initiated a systematic, rational approach to learning that was lacking under the Jesuits' reigning scholasticism. These informal academies and salons posited a bottom-up approach to learning, challenging the ancient authoritarian model. Hence, they constituted a complete reconfiguration of the relationship between the Portuguese and their traditional knowledge-producing and disseminating institutions.<sup>33</sup>

Within his group of progressive-minded elites, Ericeira gathered an even more rarefied inner circle of older men who were committed to bringing Portugal into step with developments elsewhere in Europe. Foremost among them were Rafael Bluteau, who wrote one of the earliest dictionaries of the Portuguese language, and such court nobles as Dom Manuel Caetano de Sousa and Dom Luís Caetano de Lima. This circle maintained connections with Enlightenment figures outside of Portugal, as well: the French abbots d'Estrées and Morney participated in some of the erudite conferences in Lisbon, while other well-known thinkers corresponded from Paris, Leiden,

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 296–298.

<sup>31</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 5–7 and Silva Dias, pp. 307–308.

<sup>32</sup> For evidence of learned salons and societies that met in other locations in Portugal during this period, see Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, pp. 428–431.

<sup>33</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," p. 7.

London, St. Petersburg, Madrid, Rome and Amsterdam. Ericeira himself was invited to become a member of the Academy of the Arcades in Rome, as well as the Royal Society of London.<sup>34</sup> As we shall see, Ericeira was an instrumental proponent of medical education reform in Portugal, serving as the liaison between King João V and expatriate *Cristão Novo* Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, a distinguished physician who worked in London. In the 1730s, the king sought Castro Sarmiento's council regarding the reorganization of state-sanctioned medical studies in Portugal.<sup>35</sup> Other correspondents of Ericeira's learned circle included António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches (another New Christian expatriate physician), Pierre Bayle (a progenitor of the French *philosophe* movement) and, in Italy, Ludovico Muratori, the founder of modern Italian historiography.<sup>36</sup>

The Count of Ericeira dissolved his private academy only when he believed that an appropriate public institution would serve to take its place. The Academia Real de História (Royal Academy of History), founded in 1720, was such a facility. Ericeira was one of the original members; he also helped to write this groundbreaking institution's governing statutes. By founding the Royal Academy of History, King João V sought to embrace the ideals of Enlightenment; the institution was meant to foster a freer exchange of ideas and information about the Portuguese past.<sup>37</sup> The creation of an official space explicitly to protect some measure of intellectual freedom was entirely new to Portugal; the move was celebrated as a great improvement, encouraging elevated expectations from intellectuals and reform advocates. Contemporaries saw the Academy's founding as a watershed moment in Portuguese history, presaging a new era of openness and modernization. Its impact, however, was to be more modest and restricted. Internecine political conflicts between the church, the Jesuits in the universities, the Inquisition, and members of João V's own government, combined with a persistent conservatism in all of these

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Barnett, "Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento and Sephardim in Medical Practice in 18th-Century London," *Transactions of the Jewish Society of London* XXVII (1982), p. 87.

<sup>36</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 5–9; and Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," appendices, network charts 1–4.

<sup>37</sup> José Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, 8 vols. (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1993), vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, pp. 425–430. See also Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas*, p. 148.

institutions, mitigated the Royal Academy's effectiveness as a forum for or conduit of innovative culture.<sup>38</sup>

*The State of Medical Teaching in Coimbra at the Beginning of the  
Eighteenth Century*

... We have come to a period in which the history of medicine in Coimbra, and especially that of anatomy, cannot be known for anything except that it was decadent . . . During this long period, of more than a century, the medical sciences slept through a long dream, enveloped in the densest possible ignorance . . .<sup>39</sup>

In the 1600s, professors of medicine at Coimbra were reduced to intoning abject, undeviating commentary on the writings of the ancient and medieval medical authorities: Galen, Hippocrates, Rhazes, and Avicenna. Even after the Restoration of the Portuguese crown in 1640, when pedagogical modifications following an eighty-year period of Spanish influence might have been expected, the teaching curriculum in the *Faculdade de Medicina* remained, with very few changes, virtually as it had been throughout the 1500s.<sup>40</sup>

Until Pombal's reforms of 1772 revitalized medical instruction at Coimbra, there was little in the way of practical training; medical lectures remained theoretical, as they had been for centuries. Even in the mid-eighteenth century, instructors performed human dissections extremely rarely (*raríssimamente*) because of the taboo associated with desecrating a Christian cadaver.<sup>41</sup> Bodies for educational dissection, when they could be obtained, usually had to be those of condemned criminals, preferably those of non-Catholics or known heretics.

At least one Portuguese medical reformer spoke out in apology for those who had to work within this archaic system. João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, a doctor of the Alentejo province who corresponded

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<sup>38</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, 6 vols. (Porto: Livraria Figuerinhas, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 14–15. See also Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, pp. 426–428.

<sup>39</sup> Maximiano Correia, *Subsídios para a História da Anatomia em Coimbra*, (Coimbra: n.d.), pp. 12–13.

<sup>40</sup> Brito and Guimarães, "A Faculdade de Medicina," *Actas Cíbas* 14, pp. 555–56; cited in Dias, "Portugal e a cultura Europeia . . .," p. 368.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

with *estrangeirados* and would later help create the uniquely progressive Royal Medical Academy of Oporto, excused the reactionary teaching habits of his colleagues at Coimbra, arguing in 1756 that “if they defend Galen and Avicenna, it is not because of their own inability or lack of better training, but out of, rather, an observance of the Law and reverential respect for its statutes.”<sup>42</sup> The universities did harbor some men of science whose inclinations toward rationalized medicine were ahead of prevailing conservative sentiments in the upper echelons of the church, Inquisition, and state, but instructors still had to acquiesce to regulations set by the Jesuits governing what they could teach. Indeed, Maximiano Lemos, Portugal’s preeminent historian of medicine, has asserted that the state of medical science was more advanced outside the university, because of scientific treatises provided surreptitiously by Jewish physicians who had emigrated to other parts of Europe, and because of information sent by colonists and missionaries overseas.<sup>43</sup>

It is not an inconsistency or contradiction, therefore, to suggest that innovative, enlightened Portuguese *médicos* should have been trained during the eighteenth century at the pedagogically conservative University of Coimbra. Nor should we think it strange that such broad-minded physicians and surgeons should have joined the ranks of the Inquisition. Other exigencies were at work at the time. Even after having been trained under outmoded Jesuit principles, Coimbra graduates were still subject to exterior professional influences. Some corresponded with *estrangeirado* physicians; others were members of foreign learned societies; many read medical publications from France, Holland or England that demonstrated the effectiveness of scientific medicine. All of these activities were in keeping with the contemporary spirit of the *Época das Luzes* (Age of Light), of which many of these medical professionals—despite their archaic official training and insulated situation within Portugal—were active participants.

Even men who held posts on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine could hold rationalist medical principles in high esteem, though they

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<sup>42</sup> João Mendes Sachetti-Barbosa, *Considerações Médicas doutrinais sobre a metodo conhecer, curar e preservar as Epidemias, ou Febras Malignas Podres, Pestilenciaes e contagiozas, Parte 1* (Lisbon: Oficina de José da Costa Coimbra, 1758), p. xxvii (author’s translation).

<sup>43</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 59–154.

were restricted by the powerful Jesuits from teaching such concepts openly within the University. As we shall see in Chapter V, examples were numerous of Coimbra graduates—and even some *Lentes de Medicina* (medical instructors)—who clearly favored (and often wrote about) progressive medical developments outside the official University curriculum. This was particularly true during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, as the political and cultural mood across Portugal began to display more openness.<sup>44</sup>

All the while, many of these same men became Holy Office functionaries, the valuable benefits from holding a *familiar's* post being highly desirable and frequently sought. For doctors influenced by *o Iluminismo* (the Enlightenment), working for the Inquisition evidently resulted in no professional impediment. Further, some of these licensed medical practitioners were, again in concordance with the rationalist philosophy they espoused, engaged in the persecution of illicit healers. Yet they still were bound to respect the ancient traditions of their *alma mater*, together with the more compelling royal laws that enforced the continuation of Coimbra's outdated curriculum.

The intellectually constrained situation within the *Faculdade de Medicina* would not change until the period between 1759 and 1772, when Pombal was powerful enough to suppress the Jesuits and reorganize the universities. Only at that time was every discipline taught at Coimbra thoroughly recast and given a state-prescribed curriculum, methodology and examination standards based on the most modern principles.<sup>45</sup> In the medical field, this would entail the re-introduction of human dissection as the basis of anatomical study, as well as the adoption of up-to-date medical doctrines, including Harvey's teaching regarding blood circulation, Albinus' in anatomy, van Sweiten's in pharmacology and Boerhaave's in pathology. The study of hygiene as a preventative health care measure would, in accordance with Pombal's wishes, also be introduced at Coimbra in 1772.<sup>46</sup> Before that date, however, many practicing licensed *médicos*

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<sup>44</sup> For notable examples, see BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 2, p. 203 (Casimir de Costa Caetano); vol. 3, p. 24 (António Dias Inchado); vol. 3, pp. 113–114 (José Ferreira da Moura); vol. 5, p. 152 (Manuel Mendes de Sousa Trovão); vol. 6, p. 47 (António Nunes); vol. 8, p. 90 (Bernardo Silva e Moura); and vol. 8, pp. 170–171 (Inácio do Valle). See also Chapter V, below.

<sup>45</sup> Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. VI (1750–1807), p. 268.

<sup>46</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal*, p. 102; Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 185–197.



across Portugal had already begun to follow the currents of change from abroad that managed to reach their peripheral country.

Prior to Pombal's reforms (and after them, as well), the knowledge of disease diagnosis or of the pathology of illness was, among the general Iberian medical community, extremely primitive. Before the late eighteenth century, there was for most maladies simply no available body of systematic data derived from clinical observation that would have allowed for a scientific assessment of possible treatments. Another hindrance was the simplicity of contemporary scientific instrumentation—basic tools like microscopes, stethoscopes and thermometers were still in the infancy of their development.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, during the middle 1700s, medical theorists in Portugal as elsewhere were only beginning to develop an understanding of the importance of sanitation and proper hygiene to good health.<sup>48</sup>

As we have seen, the quality of trained physicians and surgeons left a lot to be desired. How one approached treating illness was, in this era, largely socio-economically determined, and the two worlds of elite and popular medicine rarely met on the same ground. State-licensed healers typically did not share a common cultural approach to healing with their prospective patients among the peasantry. They invariably resorted to the lancet to draw quantities of blood, a painful and debilitating means to cure illness. Moreover, conventional practitioners of medicine were, for rural people with access to little ready money, expensive. In the eyes of a rustic tenant farmer and his family, it must have seemed that the odds of being cured by a *curandeiro* or *saludador* were no different from those derived from treatment a licensed surgeon or physician could provide. So, common people had little incentive to patronize the few licensed doctors and surgeons they were likely to encounter in the countryside or provincial towns. Given that most country doctors had been crudely, archaically trained, this peasants' prejudice was probably well placed.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Arturo Castiglioni, *A History of Medicine* (New York: Jason Arunson, Inc., 1975), pp. 350–351; 700–701. See also Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 59–154.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 637–646.

<sup>49</sup> See Charles R. Boxer, "Some Remarks on the Social and Professional Status of Physicians and Surgeons in the Iberian World, 16th–18th Centuries," *Jornal da Sociedade das Ciências Médicas de Lisboa*, Tomo CXXXVII, Nos. 4–5: 287–306 (Lisbon, 1974), pp. 3–4; Maria Benedita Araújo, *O Conhecimento Empírico dos Fármacos nos Séculos XVII e XVIII* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992), pp. 21–32; and José Pedro Paiva, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas . . . na Diocese de Coimbra (1650–1740)* (Coimbra: Minerva, 1992), pp. 77–119.

Exacerbating the problem of poor medical training within Portugal further, publications containing what little high-quality medical information existed in the rest of contemporary Europe were often stopped at the border. The Portuguese government tried to impede all types of unorthodox ideas and sentiments from crossing into Portugal, using censorship as a means to keep unwanted doctrines out of the cognizance of the people. The crown called on the Holy Office in the seventeenth century to help administer this effort, empowering Inquisition employees to search ships and homes for prohibited materials. During the early stages of the Enlightenment, the Inquisition increased its vigilance, initiating trials not just against persons holding heretical religious texts, but also people of learning who dared question the (largely Jesuit-determined) educational *status quo*.<sup>50</sup>

For the medical profession, the impact of this policy was to severely restrict most professional Portuguese physicians' access to the invaluable new theories and practical knowledge emanating from centers of medical learning in Holland, France and Britain. Still, as Enlightenment historian José Sebastião Dias has noted, "determined thinkers . . . managed to obtain and circulate books."<sup>51</sup> A great irony, in fact, in the history of Portuguese medical modernization is that, beginning approximately in the 1720s, many of the most ardent and active advocates for reform were themselves employees of the Inquisition, who used their privileged positions to gain access to banned medical and scientific texts.<sup>52</sup>

### *The Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital in Lisbon*

Propitiously located near the Praça do Rossio in central Lisbon, the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital also played an important role in training Portuguese surgeons and physicians. Particularly for medical professionals coming from the environs of Lisbon, but also for

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<sup>50</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 292–295.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> José Pedro Sousa Dias, "Equivocos sobre a Ciência Moderna nas Academias Médico-Cirúrgicas Portuenses," *Medicamento, História e Sociedade* (Nova Série, Nº 1; July, 1992), pp. 2–9. See also BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. II, p. 212; vol. III, pp. 165; 168–70; vol. IV, 153–154; 194–195; and ANTT, *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, *maço* 111, no. 1874.

novices sent from the provinces (often supported by scholarships provided by the municipal councils of their communities or the crown), the Hospital of All Saints was the main practical training facility for the medical arts in Portugal during the late seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century. Perhaps sixty percent of the physicians practicing in and around Lisbon during the middle half of the eighteenth century had trained at Todos-os-Santos, with the balance having learned the skills necessary to pass their licensing exams either at the University of Coimbra or through a private apprenticeship with a licensed surgeon or doctor.<sup>53</sup>

Typically, medical trainees would complete what can appropriately be called a residency, lasting from one to two years, wherein they would have a chance to practice such skills as surgery and diagnostic medicine. Coimbra graduates, too, would occasionally attend for shorter periods to gain some practical clinical experience before being examined in the capital by a panel of physicians chosen and supervised by the chief physician and chief surgeon of the realm (respectively, the *Físico-Môr do Reino* and *Cirurgião-Môr do Reino*). Only upon passing this exam—and paying a substantial fee—would a prospective physician or surgeon receive an official *cartão do médico* (medical license) allowing him to begin a private practice within Portugal. Such a system, of course, was woefully susceptible to corruption.<sup>54</sup>

By the standards of the day, then, Todos-os-Santos can accurately be called a teaching hospital, and its position as such was unique in the nation. Further, it was there that the most innovative official medical teaching in Portugal occurred until the end of the reign of Dom João V. Modest as those efforts were, the All Saints Royal Hospital in Lisbon did have some strikingly forward-looking attributes, resulting primarily from its position as the crown's premier hospital in what was, despite the closed nature of Portuguese intellectual

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<sup>53</sup> This unscientific impression was gained from a lengthy, thorough examination of Silva Carvalho's "Dicionário dos Médicos" at the BACL.

<sup>54</sup> Francis A. Dutra, "The Practice of Medicine in Early Modern Portugal: The Role and Social Status of the *Físico-mor* and the *Surgião-mor*," in *Libraries, History, Diplomacy, and the Performing Arts: Essays in Honor of Carlton Sprague Smith*, ed. Israel J. Katz (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press in cooperation with the New York Public Library, 1991), pp. 162–166. See also Francisco Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 410.

life, still a wealthy cosmopolitan European imperial capital. These attributes included a permanent association with the chief surgeon and physician of the kingdom, each of whom usually served on the hospital staff (in addition to their respective duties of tending to the king's person). In addition, the Royal Hospital of All Saints benefited from the residency of a series of exceptionally skilled foreign-born medical practitioners who had been brought to Portugal by members of the royal family or the diplomatic corps precisely because of their superior knowledge of the healing arts. Also—and this was quite an enlightened attribute for the time—the hospital boasted of a separate ward built and staffed especially for the mentally ill.<sup>55</sup>

Although much of the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital was destroyed by fire in 1750 and again following the disastrous earthquake of 1 November 1755, earlier in the century Dom João V had taken steps to improve healing facilities in the premier medical institution of the nation's capital. In so doing, the king followed the marked inclination toward innovation that he displayed as a young monarch. However, one must bear in mind that this ambitious program to improve Todos-os-Santos was begun when Lisbon was newly flush with a veritable flood of gold from Brazil; the eventual reality fell far short of the hospital's planned renovation.<sup>56</sup>

A *Regimento do Serviço dos Médicos*, promulgated by the crown in 1715, increased the authorized number of interned patients of all types at Todos-os-Santos to six hundred, allowed for the construction of new buildings to contain them and, for their care, augmented the number of trained nurses (*enfermeiros* and *enfermeiras*) permanently attached to the staff. Patients were to be divided into wards according to their respective illnesses; there were wards specifically designated to care for wounds, fevers, skin diseases, and the insane. In addition, one corridor was set aside especially for illnesses particular

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<sup>55</sup> Mário Carmona, "O Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos," offprint of *Boletim Clínico dos Hospitais Cívicos de Lisboa*, volume 18, Nos. 3 and 4 (Lisbon: 1954), pp. 498–507. See also Maria Teresa Pires and Maria de Fátima Vaz, "A Medicina em Portugal no Século XVIII," in *Comunicações apresentadas ao Congresso Internacional Portugal no Século XVIII de D. João V à Revolução Francesa* (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos do Século XVIII, Universitaria Editora, 1991), p. 168; and *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reynos de Portugal. Ordenado por mandado do Ilustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor Bispo Dom Francisco de Castro, Inquisidor Geral do Concelho de Estado de Sua Magestade* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640), *Livro II, Titulo XVII*, § 1–2.

<sup>56</sup> Mário Carmona, "O Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos," pp. 498–507.

to women, while another dealt exclusively with male maladies. Each was to have its own specialized nursing staff person. Further, certain members of the staff were designated to promote preventative medicine (*enfermeiras de prevenção*), along with those who worked with the general *convalescentes*.<sup>57</sup>

Todos-os-Santos could boast of two other unusual innovations for the time. The hospital had a ward devoted to fevers and other maladies which Portuguese colonial administrators, soldiers and merchant travellers had picked up in the tropics (though treatment remained largely based on European and not colonial practices). Another ward, heralded for its novelty and utility, specialized in treating the dementia of patients suffering from advanced syphilis. To keep its patients isolated from the rest of the inmates, this facility was apparently built well apart from the main hospital buildings.<sup>58</sup>

One of the foreign-born medical experts who came to Lisbon after receiving superior medical training abroad was an Italian physician named Bernardo Santucci. A native of Cortona, Santucci had studied medicine in Rome before being attracted to Portugal by a royal salary in 1732. Dom João V invited Santucci to Lisbon specifically to teach anatomy and surgery at the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital. During his residence in Lisbon, Santucci produced a human anatomy textbook of the first quality.<sup>59</sup>

Santucci's appointment to Todos-os-Santos was made in the wake of a major yellow fever epidemic in Portugal that, in 1730, had overtaxed the capitol's medical resources. There had not been enough qualified physicians to treat the hundreds of ill citizens who flocked to Lisbon's royal hospital for care. The following year, therefore, crown patronage created a formal course at Todos-os-Santos to train new surgeons.<sup>60</sup>

A respected surgeon and court favorite named Isaac Elliot, thought to have been an Englishman, was provided with a royal stipend to train young men by instructing them in a practical course of surgery

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<sup>57</sup> Maria Teresa Pires and Maria de Fátima Vaz, "A Medicina em Portugal no Século XVIII," p. 168.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Bernardo Santucci, *Anatomia do corpo humano, recopilada com doutrinas medicas, chemicas, filosoficas, mathematicas, com indices, e estampas, representantes todas as partes do corpo humano* . . . (Lisboa Occidental: António Pedrozo Galram, 1739).

<sup>60</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, p. 420.

which was to meet twice a week. This was the first such program organized in Portugal and represents a marked departure from the scholastic methods employed at Coimbra. Shortly thereafter, however, Elliot was involved in a sensational trial for the murder of his young wife.<sup>61</sup> Santucci was summoned to take Elliot's place; the surgery course, along with a stipend of 300,000 *reis*, was entrusted to him. Regular staff surgeons of the Lisbon hospital earned one hundred *reis* per day in the 1730s and 1740s, paid by the king. In return, they were obliged to give an account of their clinical experiences in special seminars, wherein they were to describe their most effective cures.<sup>62</sup>

Bernardo Santucci served the Portuguese crown until 1747. During his tenure he influenced scores of young surgeons and physicians who interned with him. As a testament to his skill, a royal provision issued in 1738 required that no one who had trained in surgery at Todos-os-Santos could be certified to practice their profession in Portugal without first being certified by Santucci or one of his associates.<sup>63</sup>

#### *The State of Medical Publishing in Eighteenth-Century Portugal*

Throughout the eighteenth century, the more enlightened Portuguese physicians whose ears were attuned to changes occurring outside the country were actively publishing their own innovative works on presses both domestic and foreign. This activity, despite the vigilance of the Inquisition-led Royal Board of Censorship, contributed to the more sophisticated professional medical culture which medical historian Maximiano Lemos says existed away from the Jesuits of the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine.<sup>64</sup> Some of these works were eminently practical in their intent. For example, Gabriel Grisley, a French physician resident in Lisbon, published *Desengano para a medicina, ou botica para todo o pai de familia* ("Design for medicine, or pharmacy for every

<sup>61</sup> Bill M. Donavan, "Crime, Policing and the Absolutist State in Early Modern Lisbon," *The Portuguese Studies Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2, (1997), pp. 65–66.

<sup>62</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, p. 420.

<sup>63</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria do Dom João V, *livro* 131, fl. 132; cited in BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 5, p. 189.

<sup>64</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 59–154.

family father”) in 1714.<sup>65</sup> A few years earlier, in 1710, expatriate physician Francisco da Fonseca Henriques had written *Medicina Lusitana e socorro delphico aos clamores da natureza humana para total profligação de seus males* (“Lusitanian Medicine and Delphic assistance for the clamorings of human nature and the total profligation of those ill.”). For its time, the work was so original and controversial that it had to be published by a Portuguese-language press in Amsterdam and then smuggled into Portugal.<sup>66</sup>

Some published compositions were inspired by controversial pamphlets and lectures in the natural sciences presented in Lisbon in the 1720s. An enthusiastic interest in natural philosophy quickly spread to medicine, inspiring such works as “A Discourse over the illnesses that exist in the city of Lisbon,” published in 1726 by Simão Félix Machado and, in the same year, a treatise by Francisco da Fonseca Henriques on the therapeutic qualities of hot springs and other *aguas naturais*.<sup>67</sup> Nine years later, in 1735, Marques Correia would publish “A Treatise on the Circulation of the Blood;” the work was highly derivative of Harvey’s work in England, but it was one of the earliest publications on this subject based on empirical evidence and printed in the Portuguese language. At about the same time, another well-travelled, enlightened Portuguese physician, José Rodrigues de Abreu, published his voluminous *Historiologia Médica*, which had been informed and shaped by the innovative principles of George Ernst Stahl, Hermann Boerhaave and other medical leaders of northern Europe.<sup>68</sup>

Among the better-known, highly influential Portuguese publications on medical subjects completed during the middle years of the eighteenth century, the following works are notable for their far-reaching, national influence and their international notoriety. Several were produced by expatriate physicians who, in time, have come to be recognized as the guiding figures of the Portuguese Enlightenment. Through these works, professional medical men who had been ostracized and driven out of Portugal submitted their ideas for not just

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<sup>65</sup> Gabriel Grisley, *Desengano para a medicina, ou botica para todo o pai de familia* (Lisbon: Felipe de Sousa Vilela, 1714).

<sup>66</sup> Francisco da Fonseca Henriques, *Medicina Lusitana e socorro delphico aos clamores da natureza humana para total profligação de seus males* (Amsterdam: Miguel Diaz, 1710).

<sup>67</sup> Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas*, p. 151. The title in Portuguese is “Arquilegio Medicinal em que se dá notícia das águas de caldas, fontes, rios [. . .].”

<sup>68</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 329–330.

the reform of, but indeed the reinvigoration of educational and intellectual culture within their beloved home country. Although the earliest of these publications came out during the first half of Dom João V's reign, the reform vision expressed collectively within such works would not be realized until the Marquês de Pombal enacted his modernization measures during the 1760s and 1770s.

In 1726, Brás Luis de Abreu, a Coimbra-trained physician, published one of the first pro-rationalist, reform-minded tracts, called *Portugal médico ou monarchia medico-lusitana* ("Medical Portugal, or the Lusitanian Medical Realm"). Published in Coimbra, this work was cautious and tentative in its approach to the new empirical science; nevertheless Abreu's advocacy is manifest in the text.<sup>69</sup> Brás Luis de Abreu was not an expatriate; he came from a distinguished Old Christian family in Coimbra, one with many connections to the Faculty of Medicine and the Holy Office. He received his license to practice medicine in 1710; ten years later he moved to Aveiro, a port town on the coast north of Coimbra, and received an annual cash supplement from the crown.<sup>70</sup> On 7 January 1724, two years before the publication of his book, Brás Luis de Abreu became a *familiar* of the Inquisition.<sup>71</sup>

The Abreu family was large and active in the medical circles of Coimbra, as well as in the local Holy Office. Brás Luis de Abreu had a number of contemporary relatives at work in this town, home to a university and a tribunal—their interconnectedness is telling. Coimbra Inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu, for example, was one of that tribunal's two most active prosecutors of popular healers during the first half of the eighteenth century. Another relative, Manuel de Abreu Bacellar, functioned as a jailer (*alcaide*) of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons between 1707 and about 1718. Manuel de Abreu Bacellar received his Holy Office credentials after he had been trained at the University of Coimbra and become a licensed physician.<sup>72</sup> Manuel de Abreu Bacellar's father, Doctor António de Abreu Bacellar,

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<sup>69</sup> Brás Luis de Abreu, *Portugal médico ou monarchia medico-lusitana* (Coimbra: Joam Antunes, 1726).

<sup>70</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de D. João V, *livro* 72, fl. 257; cited in BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 22.

<sup>71</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício; cited in BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 22.

<sup>72</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 839; cited in BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 27.



was a respected professor of surgery at Coimbra, a *familiar* of the Holy Office since 1699 and the official *médico* of the Inquisition prisons.<sup>73</sup> The Abreu family illustrates that Portuguese medical professionals of their day combined progressive science with Inquisition service as a matter of course.

The illustrated human anatomy text produced by Bernardo Santucci, the Italian physician whom Dom João V had invited to Lisbon in 1732, was one of the most important Enlightenment-influenced medical books published in Portugal during the eighteenth century.<sup>74</sup> *Anatomia do corpo humano, recopilada com doutrinas medicas, chemicas, filosoficas, mathematicas, com indices, e estampas, representantes todas as partes do corpo humano . . .*<sup>75</sup> was published in Lisbon in 1739. This anatomy guide was not theoretical; it drew on Santucci's consummate skill and long experience with human dissection and autopsy. The numerous illustrations—executed by another foreign-born expert who resided in Portugal by royal invitation, French master engraver Jean Baptiste Michel le Bouteux—provide detailed views of the skeletal, muscular and circulatory systems, as well as the major organs and a fetus *in utero*. Its publication was controversial, of course, because of the realistic detail and the obvious fact that, to produce the book, human beings had been dissected. Even so, at the time physicians, surgeons and intellectuals recognized it as the best practical work on anatomy available in Portuguese, and a vast improvement over its predecessors.<sup>76</sup>

Another of the most important Portuguese Enlightenment-era medical authors, Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, was a *converso* physician from the rural Alentejo who received his medical training at Coimbra. He produced his most important work, *Matéria Médica: Physico-Histórico-Mecânica*, in 1735 while living as a religious refugee in London. In 1731, Castro Sarmiento had received an envoy from the Portuguese king, Dom João V, seeking advice about ways to improve medical training and the skills of doctors in Portugal. *Matéria Médica* was

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<sup>73</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838; BACL, Silva Carvalho, “Dicionário dos Médicos,” vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Santucci, *Anatomia do corpo humano* (Lisbon: 1739). See Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, p. 420.

<sup>75</sup> In English: “Anatomy of the human body, compiled with medical, chemical, philosophical, and mathematical doctrines, with indexes and prints, representing all of the parts of the human body.”

<sup>76</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 99–124. See also Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, p. 420.

Castro Sarmiento's response, much more far-reaching than the king had envisioned. The work, a product of a polymath's mind, introduced and explicated an ambitious, comprehensive reform program not only for the medical curriculum, but for Portugal's entire education system. Because of this book and his other medical projects, Castro Sarmiento became known as one of the preeminent thinkers of the Age of Reason in Portugal.<sup>77</sup> His life and further works will be discussed below.

Alongside the name of Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, that of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches stands out as one of the most important Portuguese enlightened medical innovators. He was an active advocate, too, for crown measures directed toward opening Portugal's intellectual environment in the eighteenth century. Two of his influential publications addressed the problem of Portugal's backwardness in the field of medicine. The first was *Tratado do conservação da Saude dos Povos* (. . .) (in English, "Treatise on the conservation of the Health of the People: A useful work, and equally necessary to the Magistrates [of Lisbon], General Captains, Captains of War or Sea, Prelates, Mothers Superior, Doctors and Fathers of Families . . .").<sup>78</sup> Printed in Paris 1756 but offered for sale immediately thereafter in Lisbon, this work dealt with the health problems which had arisen in the aftermath of the enormous earthquake which destroyed much of that city on 1 November 1755. Ribeiro Sanches used this publication as a vehicle for disseminating the latest enlightened ideas about health care then current in Paris, London and Leiden. The main intent, of course, was to bring relief to the author's stricken country. The Portuguese Prime Minister, Pombal, noted and appreciated the contribution of his ideas at the time of its arrival in Portugal. Three years later, Ribeiro Sanches expanded his reformist themes in "Letters about the Education of Youth."<sup>79</sup> Finally, in 1763, when Ribeiro Sanches published his *Método para Aprender a Estudar Medicina, ilustrado para estabelecer uma universidade real* ("The Method to Learn to Study

<sup>77</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," p. 8.

<sup>78</sup> António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, *Tratado do conservação da Saude dos Povos: obra útil, e igualmente necessaria a os Magistrados, Capitaens Gerais, Capitaens de Mar e Guerre, Prelados, Abbadessas, Medicos, e Pays de Familia: com hum Appendix. Consideracoins sobre os Terremotos . . .* (Paris: 1756). See also T. D. Kendrick, *The Lisbon Earthquake* (New York and Philadelphia: The J. B. Lippencott Company, 1957), pp. 95–98.

<sup>79</sup> António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, *Cartas sobre a Educação da Mocidade* (Paris: 1759).

Medicine, illustrating how to establish a royal university”), the government administration in Lisbon took official notice. This work would become one of the foundations for Pombal’s reorganization of the Coimbra University medical curriculum.<sup>80</sup>

Far less broadly influential, but important among *médicos* nonetheless, were works by Manuel Gomes de Lima, a talented young surgeon from Oporto and one of Portugal’s most active non-expatriate medical reformers in the mid-eighteenth century. His was the primary motivating force behind the founding in 1749 of a methodologically progressive school of surgery in Oporto. Gomes de Lima was also a prolific writer. He published his medical guide, *Receptuário Lusitano Chymico-Pharmaceutico, Medico-Chirurgico ou formulario de ensinar a receitar em todas as enfermidades que assaltam ao corpo humano* (. . .), in Oporto in 1749, to coincide with the inauguration of his surgical academy. Two other important publications would follow between 1756 and 1762.<sup>81</sup> Both addressed new surgical techniques and their use, in combination with other remedies, for the treatment of diseases common to Portugal.

All of Gomes de Lima’s published work celebrated Enlightenment principles learned from physicians like Hermann Boerhaave in Leiden, who pioneered a systematic synthesis of empirical medical knowledge in Europe during the eighteenth century, helped to frame the modern western medical curriculum, and taught a generation of European physicians his method of bedside observation for the diagnosis of disease. To prepare for medical practice, Boerhaave recommended that students have a solid founding in natural science, anatomy, physiology, pathology and, in particular, prolonged practical clinical training. He was celebrated across Europe as the pre-eminent mentor of iatromechanics.<sup>82</sup> In accordance with Boerhaave’s principles, Gomes de Lima’s works defended experimental, scientific clinical practice as the best means to ensure high professional standards among surgeons and other *médicos*.

<sup>80</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “Constructing Knowledge,” p. 13.

<sup>81</sup> See *O Practicante do Hospital Convencido. Dialogo Chirurgico Sobre a Inflamação fundado nas doutrinas do incomparavel Boerhaave, e adornado de algumas observações chirurgicas* (Oporto: Oficina Episcopal do Captão Manuel Pedroso Coimbra, 1756); and *Memorias Chronologicas e Criticas Para a Historia da Cirurgia Moderna* (Oporto: Oficina Episcopal Do Captão Manuel Pedroso Coimbra, 1762).

<sup>82</sup> Charles Coulston Gillispie (ed.), *The Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1970), Vol. II, pp. 224–227.

Another important figure in the medical realm of the Portuguese Enlightenment, the country surgeon João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, also became a champion of the movement for medical reform without leaving his home nation. As an Old Christian, he was not persecuted for his faith. He never lived abroad, but he did correspond regularly with many learned individuals and societies outside Portugal. Writing during the decade following the mid-century ascent of Dom José I, Sachetti Barbosa published two important works advocating a turn toward rationalism. The title of the first, published in Lisbon in 1753, translates as “Letters, in which are given news of the origin and progress of the sciences . . .”<sup>83</sup> His most important work, however, was “Medical Considerations: doctrines concerning the method to recognize, cure and prevent Epidemics, or Powerful Malignant Fevers, Pestilences and Contagions,” published in Lisbon in 1758.<sup>84</sup> This book, also a product of the post-earthquake concern for controlling disease in Lisbon, drew on Sachetti Barbosa’s broad correspondence with learned physicians outside Portugal and showcased innovative thinking about containing disease-causing contagions.

Beyond these relatively well-known, high-profile theoretical medical works, common Portuguese physicians and surgeons wrote and circulated scores of other texts during the early eighteenth century, the majority of which may be characterized as practical descriptions of curative techniques. Many of these had been influenced by contact with Enlightenment thinkers. For example, in 1712, Manuel Moreira Teixeira wrote, with support from the crown, a medical account of an epidemic he had treated in Lamego, a rural town in north-central Portugal.<sup>85</sup> The physician had treated the disease effectively using innovative techniques developed abroad. Crown patronage of this publication is indicative both of the king’s eagerness to disseminate useful new medical knowledge within his territory, as well as the paranoia with which the chronically ill Dom João V regarded outbreaks of disease.

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<sup>83</sup> The title in Portuguese is “Cartas, em que se dá noticia da origem, e progresso das sciences, escritas ao doutor José da Costa Leitão por hum seu amigo a dadas à luz pelo mesmo para utilidade dos curiosos” (Lisbon: Oficina de Miguel Manescal da Costa, 1753).

<sup>84</sup> João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, *Considerações Médicas*; in Portuguese, the full title is “Considerações Médicas: doutrinais sobre a methodo conhecer, curar e preservar as Epidemias, ou Febras Malignas Podres, Pestilenciaes e contagiozas.”

<sup>85</sup> BACL, Silva Carvalho, “Dicionário dos Médicos,” vol. 5, pp. 223–224.

Manuel Moreira Teixeira is not to be confused with the surgeon Manuel Gonçalves Teixeira, an expert pharmacist living in Lisbon. When Gonçalves Teixeira died in 1717, he left a variety of manuscripts and translated medical texts from abroad; these he had circulated among his colleagues.<sup>86</sup> In 1735, physician António Dias Inchado, who had served as a Coimbra professor of medicine, published a treatise on the merits and qualities of *Águas da Inglaterra*, the patent medicine produced in England (using South American *chinchona* bark) by expatriate physician Jacob de Castro Sarmiento; the admixture was exported to Portugal as a treatment for malaria.<sup>87</sup> Finally, before he died in 1738, surgeon Francisco da Fonseca Figueiroa circulated two books in manuscript concerning experimental surgical techniques and his own application of them.<sup>88</sup>

In an exceptional example that underscores the relative openness of the Holy Office toward medical matters during the reign of Dom João V, physician Jeronimo Moreira de Carvalho published a series of innovative medical guides and books on the history of medicine that were vehicles for veiled criticism of the “lamentable state” of medical teaching at the University of Coimbra. He first began to publish these works during the 1720s. Carvalho was the Chief Physician of the Realm and a favorite at court; his publisher was the official printing office of the Inquisition!<sup>89</sup>

Further, it is apparent that many practicing physicians read and used these innovative circulating manuscripts and publications. Inquisition inventory lists of confiscated libraries owned by convicted *converso* doctors include numerous medical books and papers, many of which the Holy Office Censorship Board did not approve.<sup>90</sup> Old Christian doctors generally could possess banned texts with impunity, though not officially. In practice, Old Christian *médicos* ran a very low risk of having their homes searched by Inquisition functionaries, especially if the doctors were themselves *familiares*.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, p. 251.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, p. 24.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, p. 144.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., vol. 5, p. 221.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., vols. 1–8. Silva Carvalho lists medical books owned by numerous eighteenth-century physicians and surgeons, Old and New Christians alike. In the latter case, these books had been inventoried by the Inquisition; in the former instance, the books appear in wills as part of household estate inventories.

Part of the literature licensed medical practitioners produced in Enlightenment-era Portugal included specific denunciations of illicit superstitious healing practices. Even as early as 1680, a Portuguese physician (who also had taken clerical orders) published a work critical of irrational magical medicine practiced among the peasant class. Freire Manuel de Azevedo published his attack on popular healers in Lisbon. The title in English is “Correction of abuses introduced against the true method of medicine, a medical guiding light for doctors, surgeons and pharmacists . . .” The second part of the work was divided into three treatises, the first of which was about “enchantment, the evil eye or *quebranto* . . .”<sup>91</sup> His main point, predictably, was that folk healing methods constituted an affront to true scientific medicine. This publication was intended to denounce folk healing techniques and retard what he regarded as false, superstitious malpractice.

During the eighteenth century, other Enlightenment-influenced physicians in Portugal would continue to write tracts or pamphlets which specifically criticized *curandeiro* and *salvador* practices. The *médico* Bernardo Pereira published his polemical work, part of the title of which translates as “Medical-Theological Summary . . . pointing out the signs . . . by which you may evaluate those attacks treated with *maleficia* and demonology, commonly called sorcery . . .,” in 1734.<sup>92</sup> Another physician, José Henriques Ferreira, published his “Critical discourse, in which is demonstrated the evil which is done to the sick, and to the progress of medicine . . . not only by charlatans and vagabonds but also by the doctors who imitate them . . .” in 1785.<sup>93</sup> Both works called for the rigorous oppression of popular

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<sup>91</sup> Fr. Manuel de Azevedo, *Correcçam de abusos introduzidos contra o verdadeiro methodo da medicina, e favol medicinal para médicos, cyrurgioens e boticarios. II parte em tres tratados: o primeiro da fascinação, olho ou quebranto (. . .)* (Lisbon: Diogo Soares de Bulhões, 1680).

<sup>92</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 380. The title in Portuguese is: “Anacephaleosis medico-theologica, magica, juridica moral e politica, na qual em recompiladas dissertações e divisões se mostra a infalivel certeza de haver qualidades maleficas, se apontão os sinais por onde se possuem conhecer e se descreve a cura assim em geral, como em particular de que se devem valer nos achaques precedidos das ditas qualidades maleficas e demoniacas, chamadas vulgarmente feitiços” (Coimbra: Francisco de Oliveira, 1734).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378. The title in Portuguese is “Discurso critico em que se mostre o danno que tem feito aos doentes e ao progresso da medicina em todos os tempos a intrudução e uso de remedios de segredo e composições occultos não só pelos charlatões e vagabundos mas também pelos médicos que os tem imitado” (Lisbon: Filipe da Silva e Azevedo, 1785).

healers and magical medicine on professional grounds. Pereira and Ferreira urged that, because folk healers falsely imitated licensed medical practitioners without having the benefit of conventional training, they should be restricted from performing their customary activities.<sup>94</sup>

Pereira and Ferreira's works were an explicit attempt to justify an Inquisition policy that was already well underway (other Enlightenment-influenced medical publications, of course, implicitly justified a policy of *curandeiro* oppression, as well). Simultaneously, however, they serve to show that, despite the existing crack-down, folk healing remained a serious concern for Portugal's licensed *médicos*. Their advocacy of a program of persecution corresponds with the period in which the Holy Office frequently brought folk healers to trial, and during which the devotion to scientific principles among licensed Portuguese physicians and surgeons continued to grow stronger. Even so, such developments failed to extirpate popular healers from the topography of Portuguese folkways; superstitious remedies remained in high demand, and new illicit healers continuously arose to meet that demand.

On the other end of the spectrum, the Coimbra-trained physician João Curvo Semedo offers an unusual look at a doctor who held some regard for the techniques of folk medicine. Though a licensed medical practitioner, Semedo revealed himself to be open to some *curandeiro* methods. In his text, *Polyanthéa medicinal; Noticias galenicæ e chymicæ repartidas em três tratados*, first published in Lisbon in 1697 and again in 1716 (ironically, by the same printer who put out Bernardo Santucci's anatomy tome), Semedo argued that "the knowledge of old women should be taken into account."<sup>95</sup> Semedo represents, therefore, a rare spirit of sympathy for folk remedies among licensed doctors. This might be considered to be enlightened, too, insofar as he acknowledged some of the shortcomings and limitations of his profession. However, another view of Semedo's work maintains that he held opinions "contrary to all that was new, including science."<sup>96</sup> *Polyanthéa medicinal*, according to J. S. da Silva Dias, took a dim view of rationalized, empirical science. Semedo's work conveys the senti-

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with medical historian Dr. José Pedro Sousa Dias, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, 18 February 1997.

<sup>96</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 298–299.

ment that the systematic study of anatomy and pharmacology were below the dignity of a physician trained in the Galenic tradition.

To be sure, for every enlightened medical text published in Portugal during the eighteenth century, there were others of a remarkably antithetical outlook. Licensed physicians and surgeons in Portugal were capable of advocating perfectly fantastic remedies that mixed the methods of their Coimbra training with incantations and rituals reminiscent of their *curandeiro* rivals. Works of this genre were so numerous that one contemporary researcher, anthropologist Luís de Pina, has written a study of magical arts he encountered embedded in Portuguese medical books published during the eighteenth century.<sup>97</sup>

The picture that emerges from an inquiry into the state of eighteenth-century Portuguese medical practice, then, is mixed and contradictory. However, this image is perfectly consistent with what one might expect within a society undergoing a slow, profound cultural and intellectual paradigm shift. Contradictory notions about the nature of the physical world— notions pitting the imperatives of faith against those of reason— could and did exist simultaneously in the minds of some practicing licensed physicians. In this epoch of transition, such divided minds were an inevitability. Oversimplified, we might see the world of Portuguese conventional medicine at the advent of the Age of Reason as being split into two groups: those forces advocating progressive empirical science and rationalism set against those reactionary forces favoring a maintenance of traditional practices based on the venerable ancient and medieval authorities. The true picture, naturally, was less cleanly divided; during this period of transition and proto-science there existed a spectrum of practice and belief among physicians and surgeons, ideas often in conflict within the same person.

As the Enlightenment era progressed, doctrines of empiricism and rationalism, promoted by an array of catalysts inside and outside Portugal, gradually won more converts among practitioners of conventional medicine and across many other elite social groups, as well. Their numbers reached a critical mass during the third quarter of the eighteenth century, at which point the Portuguese government

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<sup>97</sup> Luís de Pina, "A Magia dos Livros Médicos Portugueses do Século XVIII," in *Actas do Iº Congresso de Etnografia e Folclore* (Braga: 1956) (Lisbon: Biblioteca Social e Corporativa, 1963), vol. II; pp. 9–42.



instituted broad enlightenment-inspired reforms, including a restructuring of university-level medical training and education. Two points must be noted here. First, popular healers—indeed the peasantry in general—took little or no part in this new Enlightenment culture or mentality. Second, within the Inquisition, the number of elite *médicos* who opposed folk healing (whether for intellectual or economic reasons) reached a critical mass far sooner than did the values of the Age of Reason in the population at large. Hence, amid this far more focused group, *médico/familiares*, the systematic Holy Office program to purge Portugal of popular healers was begun closer to the turn of the eighteenth century, not nearer to the time of general reforms over seventy years later.

We will now turn our attention to Enlightenment influences directed toward Portugal by agents beyond the borders of this small peripheral state.

*Influences of Foreigners and Expatriates: A Milieu of Intellectual Exchange*

Portuguese historians have spoken self-consciously of the European-wide image of Portugal as the “cadaverous kingdom” in the early- to mid-eighteenth century, closed to innovation and, in stark contrast to other regions touched by the spirit of the Enlightenment, living in an intellectual shadow. In this historiographical tradition, the *estrangeirados*, or foreign-influenced intellectuals, existed as a species of loyal expatriate patriots, seeking to be the “saviors” of their homeland by serving as conduits for technology, information, and a more open vision of learning. They stand as one indispensable factor that helped to build the kind of irenic intellectual environment in Portugal in which a truly enlightened approach toward medicine could take root and where, eventually, Pombal, a fellow *estrangeirado*, could impose his reforms.<sup>98</sup>

More recent scholarship, anxious to defend Portuguese achievements by those innovative thinkers who remained at home, has somewhat defensively pointed out that the *estrangeirados*’ long residences abroad, where they worked, published and died, kept their influence

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<sup>98</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, pp. 414–415.

within Portugal to a minimum.<sup>99</sup> In the face of abundant evidence of correspondence circulating between Portuguese citizens living abroad and their colleagues at home, however, this assertion appears overstated. While to say that the *estrangeirados* were the only source of innovation flowing into Portugal from northern Europe is a clear distortion of circumstances, their role and exceptional authority among policy-makers at the highest levels may be amply illustrated. One need only look to the lives of a handful of key figures. Though relatively few in number, the strength of their connections with rulers and administrators at the top of the Portuguese government gave these *estrangeirados* extraordinary influence.

*The London Community of Portuguese Doctors: A Conduit for Enlightenment Ideas*

London, England, was one of the most important destinations for Portuguese New Christians who emigrated out of fear of Inquisition persecution. There, along with co-religionists from Spain and Italy, these religious refugees were able to practice Judaism openly and build a tightly knit community within London's relatively tolerant intellectual environment.<sup>100</sup> Portuguese Jews first began to live in England during the early sixteenth century; they settled in London and Bristol as agents of the Portuguese spice trade. By Elizabeth I's time, the community had grown to a dozen families of merchants, some of whom were also trained in medicine. One, Rodrigo Lopes, was appointed a physician at England's oldest hospital, St. Bartholomew's, and became the Queen's personal doctor.<sup>101</sup>

Catherine of Bragança's marriage in 1662 to the Stuart king Charles II and her subsequent thirty-year residence in London proved to be a great stimulus to New Christian emigration from Portugal. Queen Catherine's entourage included several New Christians, among them her personal physician, Fernando Mendes. The Jewish population in London, which had declined following Elizabeth's reign,

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 415–416; this passage provides a glittering example of this view.

<sup>100</sup> Edgar Samuel, *The Portuguese Community in London (1656–1830)* (London: The Jewish Museum of London, 1992), pp. 2–12.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.

expanded from just four to over eighty families during Queen Catherine's time (1662–1692). By the late seventeenth century, the community numbered some three thousand souls.<sup>102</sup>

Queen Catherine's physician, Fernando Mendes, is notable for a number of reasons. First, he served as chief medical doctor to the English sovereign, Charles II. Further, he was brother-in-law to the most successful Jewish merchant in London, thus giving evidence of the importance, centrality and connectedness the Portuguese Jewish community quickly gained in seventeenth-century England.<sup>103</sup> More importantly for underscoring the contributions of expatriate Portuguese doctors to Enlightenment medicine, in 1681 Mendes became the first physician in England to use quinine to control or cure tropical fevers, especially malaria. Mendes recognized the potential of this medicine for reducing the terrible attrition rates of colonists sent out to Portuguese territories in tropical Africa, South America and India. He therefore experimented with a recipe for a stable preparation of this drug, which could be sold commercially, and in the 1680s began exporting a quinine solution to Portugal under the name *Águas da Inglaterra*. The recipe for these "Waters of England" remained a secret but, after his death, Mendes' business continued to flourish under the above-named Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, who knew Mendes as an old man and collaborated with him to improve—some say appropriate—the solution's formula.<sup>104</sup>

Jacob de Castro Sarmiento was one of the most influential Portuguese thinkers to facilitate the flow of medical information into Portugal from northern European countries during the eighteenth century. He spent over forty years, from 1721 until 1762, in England, but during the whole of that time he maintained strong links with a group of progressive-thinking Portuguese intellectuals in his home country: doctors, officials and nobles who advocated more open policies toward learning and medical practices.<sup>105</sup> Correspondents such as these served as conduits for scientific data and new methodologies. Beyond that, though, sophisticated and erudite letters written from abroad by Castro Sarmiento and other *estrangeirados* spread the impression at

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<sup>102</sup> Douglas L. Wheeler, *Historical Dictionary of Portugal* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1993), pp. 60–61; Samuel, pp. 5–9.

<sup>103</sup> Barnett, "Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento," p. 88.

<sup>104</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. 5, p. 497; Barnett, p. 88.

<sup>105</sup> Barnett, pp. 84–114.

home that, in terms of knowledge about science and technology, Portugal lagged behind the rest of Europe.<sup>106</sup> When they read such letters, Portuguese physicians, both New and Old Christians alike, understood the limits of their own knowledge.

Such revelations must have been a powerful inducement to change. Moreover, Castro Sarmiento's articles, circular letters and books were calculated to encourage an opening of intellectual life in Portugal, specifically by advocating a reduction of the Holy Office's power over matters of conscience, the free flow of information and institutions of learning. Until those changes came to pass, Castro Sarmiento and other New Christian doctors like him could not venture home. Castro Sarmiento would die in self-imposed exile in 1762.<sup>107</sup>

Castro Sarmiento did not spend his exile alone, however; London of the eighteenth century was alive with talented cosmopolitan expatriate Jews from Catholic Europe, many of whom were engaged in exploring novel scientific techniques (often with medical applications) which were unknown or discouraged in their homelands. Foremost among them was the brilliant rabbi David Nieto, trained as a physician but summoned from Italy to preside over the new London synagogue opened at Bevis Marks in 1701. His congregation included other stars of letters and the Enlightenment: Daniel Lopes Laguna, who while in London in 1720 published a Spanish verse translation of the Psalms; Manuel Mendes da Costa, who trained in medicine and rose to become Secretary of the Royal Society in London, thereby facilitating the printing of correspondence which furthered the scientific exchange between England and Portugal; Diogo Lopes Pereira, the future Baron of Aguilar, who came to London in 1722 and left twenty years later to become a financier of the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa (sharing her attention at the Viennese court with the Portuguese ambassador, the future Marquês de Pombal); and Solomon da Costa Atias, who provided a Hebrew library for the incipient British Museum.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 301–302; 325–328.

<sup>107</sup> Rómulo de Carvalho, *Portugal nas Philosophical Transactions nos séculos XVII e XVIII* (Coimbra: Tipografia Atlântida, 1956), pp. 26–27. For more on Sarmiento's correspondence with physicians in Portugal, see BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Medicos," vol. I, p. 112.

<sup>108</sup> Gonçalves Rodrigues, "A correspondência científica do Dr. Schetti Barbosa com Emmanuel Mendes da Costa, Secretário da Sociedade Real de Londres," *Biblos*, XIV (Lisbon: 1938), pp. 396–397; Barnett, p. 84.

Prominent among Castro Sarmento's colleagues were numerous medical practitioners, such as David de Chaves and the aforementioned Fernando Mendes. Most notably, there was the brilliant António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, who came to London in 1726 and stayed for a short time before moving on, furthering his medical studies in Paris and Leiden before becoming the personal physician of Czarina Catherine II of Russia. Sanches would wield a powerful influence on the movement for Portuguese medical reform, too, which he exercised from Paris, Saint Petersburg and other locations in northern Europe. Sanches' uncle, the *médico* Samuel Nunes Ribeiro, was also living in London, as was his cousin, Isaac de Sequeira Samuda, another active medical researcher.<sup>109</sup>

Samuda had escaped from renewed widespread Inquisition attacks against suspected Jews in Portugal and fled to London after graduating in 1720 from the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine.<sup>110</sup> As a young boy in 1706, the Lisbon tribunal of the Inquisition had sentenced Samuda, along with other members of his family, to perform a public *auto-da-fé*.<sup>111</sup> Once in England, he gained admission to the Royal College of Physicians and also became a Fellow of the Royal Society. Eminent Portuguese historian Rómulo de Carvalho referred to Samuda as "one of the brightest, most important components of the Portuguese community in London."<sup>112</sup> Jacob de Castro Sarmento valued him as a mentor and friend; they collaborated on a variety of medical research projects.<sup>113</sup>

As an *estrangeirado*, Samuda had studied for two years at Bordeaux and Leiden. Returning to London, he became the physician to the Portuguese embassy there. In that capacity, he served as the personal doctor and counselor of Dom João de Almeida de Mello e Castro, then the ambassador to England. He also came to know the future Marquês do Pombal, advising him on a plan to dispatch Old Christian doctors, at Portuguese crown expense, to England to improve their knowledge of medicine, thereby contributing to the modernization of medical practice at home. Samuda provided advice on the best manner to organize and administer the instruction of these physi-

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<sup>109</sup> Barnett, p. 84.

<sup>110</sup> Rómulo de Carvalho, *Portugal nas Philosophical Transactions*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>111</sup> Barnett, p. 96.

<sup>112</sup> Rómulo de Carvalho, *Portugal nas Philosophical Transactions*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>113</sup> Barnett, pp. 84, 86–87.

cians and surgeons. The scheme, unfortunately, did not come to fruition. In time he would be designated *médico extraordinário* to the heir apparent of Portugal, Dom José.<sup>114</sup>

Samuda's case deserves special attention, as he is recognized as another progenitor of the scientific exchange between England and Portugal during the middle years of the eighteenth century. Beginning in 1724, even before Castro Sarmiento had begun his reform campaign, Samuda began to place notices regarding advances in medicine and other topics in the Royal Society's oracle, *Philosophical Transactions*, copies of which circulated clandestinely in Portugal.<sup>115</sup>

The importance of this intellectual exchange should not be underestimated. From the point of view of Portuguese historian Amorim Ferreira, Samuda's role in initiating a continuing Portuguese presence within the publications of the Royal Society was central to a growing awareness within Portugal of scientific achievements occurring elsewhere in the world: "Beginning in 1724, the scientific relations between Portugal and Great Britain became constant and intense; and it may be said that, until the end of the century, there is not a volume of *Philosophical Transactions* that does not contain communications from Portuguese scientists or those working in Portugal."<sup>116</sup> But Rómulo de Carvalho points out that this is an exaggeration: between 1724 and 1800, the Royal Society of London issued fifty-seven volumes of *Philosophical Transactions*. Of these, twenty-three, well less than half, contained scientific information from correspondents in Portugal.<sup>117</sup>

Even so, that does not diminish the fact that *Philosophical Transactions* achieved a wide distribution inside Portugal, and Portuguese correspondents made significant contributions to its pages. After all, Portuguese physicians and natural philosophers were well-represented among the membership of the Royal Society. This was particularly so beginning in the 1740s, when Royal Society Secretary Manuel Mendes da Costa and Portuguese ambassador Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo in London, in combination with member João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa in Elvas (a town in Portugal's Alentejo

<sup>114</sup> BACL, Silva Carvalho, *Médicos e Curandeiros*, pp. 180–183.

<sup>115</sup> Amorim Ferreira, *Relações científicas entre Portugal e a Grã-Bretanha* (Lisbon: 1943), p. 8.

<sup>116</sup> Ferreira, p. 8.

<sup>117</sup> Rómulo de Carvalho, *Portugal nas Philosophical Transactions*, pp. 16–17.

Province) made sure that copies of *Philosophical Transactions* enjoyed a high level of circulation among Portuguese *médicos* and other men of letters.<sup>118</sup>

The impact of Portuguese exposure to, and indeed participation in the production of *Philosophical Transactions*, was of great significance in this small country that otherwise experienced a restricted internal discourse on matters of science and natural philosophy. The availability of this journal in Portugal, even if limited by the work of the Royal Board of Censorship, helped acclimate some thinkers' minds to the disciplined approach required of empirical science. *Philosophical Transactions* helped prepare the ground for future policy reforms concerning medicine, education and publishing within the Portuguese kingdom.

Throughout his professional life in London, then, Jacob de Castro Sarmiento moved in or communicated with an influential circle of individuals who were themselves sympathetic to the idea that Portugal needed to modernize its medical capabilities; these included such thinkers as the Count of Ericeira, the *Alentejano* doctor João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa and, most importantly, the *cavalheiro* Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Portuguese royal ambassador in London from 1739 to 1743 and in Vienna from 1745 to 1749.<sup>119</sup> Under King João V's son and successor, Dom José I, Carvalho e Melo would become the controversial autocratic Prime Minister Pombal. Because of his close contact with the future Marquês during their time together in London—Castro Sarmiento served throughout Carvalho e Melo's ambassadorial term as physician to the Portuguese diplomatic mission in London and spoke at length with him about the need for medical reform in Portugal—Castro Sarmiento's role as a catalyst to Pombal's thinking was substantial indeed.<sup>120</sup>

In the words of his biographer Richard Barnett, Jacob de Castro Sarmiento's "remarkable talents" empowered "his self-appointed vocation as a disseminator of scientific knowledge of all kinds, but especially medical knowledge."<sup>121</sup> But how did he come to wield

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<sup>118</sup> Gonçalves Rodrigues, "A correspondência científica do Dr. Sachetti Barbosa," pp. 396–397.

<sup>119</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, p. 4.

<sup>120</sup> Barnett, pp. 88–89; Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, pp. 10–13.

<sup>121</sup> Barnett, pp. 85 and 95.

such influence in Portugal's highest circles of power, living abroad as he did?

Castro Sarmiento was born in 1691 into a New Christian family from Bragança in northeast Portugal. The year following his father's conviction by the Inquisition for *judaismo*, he managed to enroll in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra. There, between 1711 and 1717, he completed his medical studies.<sup>122</sup> In 1721, fearing his own arrest by the Holy Office, he took ship to London.<sup>123</sup>

In England, Castro Sarmiento was welcomed into London's Jewish congregation of Bevis Marks. For purposes of his medical career this was of crucial importance, as his healing prowess became known in London first through his treatment of patients within the Jewish community. Moreover, he acted swiftly to establish himself in the London community of theoretical medical thinkers. Upon his arrival to England in 1721, he published "A dissertation on the method of inoculating the Smallpox," a forty-page work which gave a favorable assessment of this then-innovative and controversial technique. The treatise was printed first in English but subsequently saw several editions printed on the continent in Latin. Castro Sarmiento is credited with helping smallpox inoculation gain a wider acceptance in England and for encouraging the introduction of inoculation in Portugal.<sup>124</sup>

His wider acceptance within the London medical community came rapidly. In 1725, the Royal College of Physicians approved him as a member, which allowed him to practice medicine throughout Britain without restrictions. Five years later, in recognition of his experimental work with new drugs and treatments, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Further, Castro Sarmiento augmented his academic credentials while resident in London: Marischal College of the University of Aberdeen granted Castro Sarmiento a doctorate in 1739. He was thus the first Jew in the United Kingdom to attain such an elevated academic degree, which he earned by correspondence upon the payment of a fee and the submission of evidence of his intense scientific research and writing.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Barnett, p. 84.

<sup>123</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 7–8; Barnett, pp. 84–85.

<sup>124</sup> Barnett, p. 85.

<sup>125</sup> The famous Dr. Samuel Johnson held a low opinion of this practice and quipped that some Scottish universities "grew wealthy by degrees." See Samuel, pp. 10–11.



Beginning in the 1730s, Castro Sarmiento began to campaign in earnest to insure that medical innovations would gain currency in Portugal. Drawing on the dual advantage of his residence in London, where as a member of the Royal Society he was continually exposed to many of the most important contemporary discoveries in European medical science, and of his growing number of contacts with medical colleagues as well as influential state officials in Portugal, Castro Sarmiento sought to lobby directly for increased openness toward foreign scientific breakthroughs on the part of the Portuguese crown, Inquisition and the Coimbra teaching faculty. By means of letters, personal meetings and, most importantly, through a series of Portuguese-language publications on medical topics, Castro Sarmiento began to intervene directly in Portuguese affairs, desiring not only to effect medical reform, but also to ease the way for his own return to Portugal.<sup>126</sup> The date of this activity is significant, as it corresponds with the simultaneous efforts of other *estrangeirados*, such as Ribeiro Sanches and Luís António Verney, toward the same end.<sup>127</sup> Importantly, this period also corresponds with an intensification of anti-Semitic activity throughout Portugal and, between 1730 and 1735, a general Inquisition crack-down which reinforced the role of the Holy Office in controlling the activities of New Christians.<sup>128</sup> The climate in Portugal for medical reform, therefore, especially as advocated by perceived vagabond Jews, would not be ripe for many years to come, until the Inquisition's power had been curbed.

Of course, this was not apparent to Castro Sarmiento at the time, so he continued to prepare the ground for scientific amelioration. In 1730, he initiated a correspondence with the Marquês de Alegrete, an influential founding member of the recently formed Portuguese Royal Academy of History who was known as a scholar and progressive thinker. This communication resulted in a proposal, which Alegrete submitted for the consideration of his fellows at the Academia Real de História, to create a botanical garden at the University of Coimbra. Castro Sarmiento offered to provide rare seeds from the Chelsea Physic Garden in London; almost all of the plants he intended to have cultivated in Coimbra had a medical application. Castro

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<sup>126</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 292–295.

<sup>127</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, p. 11.

<sup>128</sup> Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas*, p. 152.

Sarmiento continued to push for this plan the following year in a letter to Dom Francisco Carneiro de Figueiroa, Chancellor of the University of Coimbra.<sup>129</sup>

Although his botanical garden initiative took years to come to fruition, it rapidly brought Castro Sarmiento's name and ideas to the attention of some of Portugal's influential high nobility—many of whom were intellectually predisposed to be sympathetic to his cause. But Castro Sarmiento did not stop there. In a further bid to ingratiate himself to the ascendant Portuguese regime, he dedicated a lengthy allegorical poem to King João V.<sup>130</sup> This work, called *Variadas*, had originally been conceived by his friend and colleague Isaac de Sequeira Samuda. The theme involved Portugal's emergence as a modern enlightened nation alongside its northern European neighbors. Castro Sarmiento finished the poem after Samuda's death and planned to have it published in his native language for distribution in Lisbon.<sup>131</sup>

This project had its desired effect. The king noted Castro Sarmiento's efforts in medical science and, in 1731, sent an envoy to solicit Castro Sarmiento's views on curriculum and pedagogical reform measures at Coimbra's Faculty of Medicine.<sup>132</sup> Dom João V's choice of delegate reveals volumes about the king's level of interest and seriousness: the task went to Dom Francisco Meneses, the Count of Ericeira, whose activities as a facilitator and conduit of Enlightenment ideas we have already seen.

In forging an association with the Portuguese crown through the Count of Ericeira, Castro Sarmiento hoped to use his role of scientific and pedagogical advisor to further the cause not only of Enlightenment ideas, but also of expatriate Jews living abroad in fear of the Inquisition. He presented himself as a loyal subject and nationalist, concerned for the intellectual and physical welfare of his country but forced by circumstances of religion to live abroad. Castro Sarmiento and other

<sup>129</sup> Barnett, pp. 87–88.

<sup>130</sup> For a discussion of the system of clientage and patronage expressed through dedication of publications in early modern Portugal, see José Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, pp. 386–389.

<sup>131</sup> Barnett, pp. 87–88. See also António d'Esaguy, *História da Medicina. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento; Notas Relativas à Sua Vida e à Sua Obra* (Lisbon: 1946), pp. 22–23.

<sup>132</sup> A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Edições Ágora, 1972), vol. 1, pp. 552–553.

*estrangeirados*, by sending information to their homeland, were in pursuit of two inseparable goals: the reform of restrictive Inquisition policies toward New Christians and “foreign” methods of learning, and a broadening of scientific knowledge among Portuguese elites.<sup>133</sup>

Castro Sarmento’s enthusiastic response to the Portuguese king’s request for advice does not appear surprising for a man of his epoch and training. Aware that the ossifying effect of the Inquisition on intellectual life was symptomatic of a systemic commitment to outmoded, limited forms of teaching and thought, Castro Sarmento proposed the radical measure of introducing the Portuguese to a heretofore unsanctioned system of intellectual inquiry: empirical observation. Castro Sarmento intended to introduce these principles directly through the translated works of Francis Bacon, believing that to circulate Bacon’s body of thought in Portuguese would open thinking people to the spirit of rational science—experimentation and demonstrable patterns of experience being the basis for all knowledge.<sup>134</sup> Castro Sarmento therefore began immediately to produce a translation of Bacon’s principle works in Portuguese, which was to be printed and distributed in Portugal under crown authority. The primary text for this project was Bacon’s *Novum Organum*, supplemented by other seminal writings.<sup>135</sup> The Count of Ericeira enthusiastically backed this plan, advocating at court for Castro Sarmento’s return to Lisbon under crown protection, but his efforts were frustrated by the power of the Jesuits and agents within the Holy Office, all of whom still held João V’s ear. In the end, the king disassociated himself from Castro Sarmento’s publishing initiative, apparently out of fear of the subversive notions within Bacon’s texts that deviated from traditional orthodox teaching about causality in the natural world. Great patron of letters or not, João V was not courageous enough to allow such a rapid shift in the officially sanctioned tenets of education. The king vetoed the project, citing its costliness as a factor in his withdrawal of royal support.<sup>136</sup>

Though discouraged by this setback, Castro Sarmento continued to chip away at Portugal’s backwardness by circulating Bacon’s ideas in his letters to colleagues. Then, in 1735, he produced the first vol-

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<sup>133</sup> Barnett, p. 87.

<sup>134</sup> Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 7–8.

<sup>135</sup> Barnett, p. 87.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

ume of his most important work. *Matéria Médica: Physico-Histórico-Mecânica* encapsulated Castro Sarmento's entire reform program for Portugal. *Matéria Médica* reveals Castro Sarmento's dual strategy for fostering medical reform: the circulation of innovative ideas written in the Portuguese language combined with the cultivation of patronage among powerful Portuguese aristocrats known to be of sympathetic disposition toward Enlightenment ideas. In making strong overtures to elements of the Lisbon power establishment, Castro Sarmento played upon existing tensions within the regime between progressive, rational influences and criticism coming from beyond the frontiers and xenophobic, reactionary attitudes emanating from the most conservative elements within Portugal: the Inquisition, aristocracy, church and the universities.<sup>137</sup>

Perhaps by way of compensation for having stifled Castro Sarmento's wish to publish Bacon's works in Portuguese, King João V responded to the physician's letters, which attested to his loyalty, by granting Castro Sarmento a ten-year patent on *Matéria Médica*, hence protecting its copyright within all Portuguese territorial possessions.<sup>138</sup> Beyond this element of royal protection, which appeared prominently on the title page of the volume's first edition, Castro Sarmento added another: he dedicated the work to the Portuguese Minister Plenipotentiary in London, Marco António Azevedo Coutinho. In so doing, Castro Sarmento demonstrated to skeptical readers in Portugal that his novel ideas from abroad enjoyed the backing of powerful men in the Portuguese state hierarchy, thus lending to their prestige and credibility. The king's patent, along with this dedication, sent a strong message to the Inquisition, as well, that the book was not to be censored, and that progressive science could not be kept out of Portugal for much longer. Castro Sarmento spoke directly to this problem in his book's dedication, stating flatly that, through the ambassador Coutinho, he hoped to enjoy protection from "detractors and false misrepresentation by the ignorant."<sup>139</sup> He closed his dedication with a further testament of his loyalty to and love for

<sup>137</sup> Silva Dias, pp. 300–305; Barnett, pp. 88–89.

<sup>138</sup> Barnett, p. 88.

<sup>139</sup> Jacob de Castro Sarmento, *Matéria médica físico-histórico-mecânica. Reino mineral. Parte I. Edição nova, corrigida e repurgada, e que se acrescentam (. . .) os reinos vegetal e animal. Part II* (London: Guilherme Strahan, 1735).

Portugal, and of his “singular and ardent” desire to serve the best interests of his homeland.

That the king and his most important ambassador—the London station was by far the most prestigious of Lisbon’s diplomatic assignments—should consent to support Castro Sarmento’s work reveals an exceptional friendliness at the highest levels of Portuguese government to Enlightenment ideas, and a recognition that many experienced men felt that these ideas should be incorporated into intellectual life within Portugal. Such recognition represents a notable and propitious transition from the mentality of the monarch of just a generation before, and it prepared the ground for later reforms.<sup>140</sup>

The connection of medical reform to the Marquês de Pombal is an important one, and Castro Sarmento must be included in this link, as well. Shortly after the publication of *Matéria Médica*, Castro Sarmento’s name appears in official correspondence between the ambassador Azevedo Coutinho and the English Foreign Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, praising the expatriate doctor’s healing prowess. After 1738, Castro Sarmento was attached to the Portuguese ambassador’s delegation as the official physician, a member of Coutinho’s household staff. This position gave Castro Sarmento diplomatic privileges and protection.<sup>141</sup>

More importantly, he was well placed to work with the next Portuguese ambassador to England, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, better known to history as the Marquês de Pombal. Carvalho e Melo’s tenure in London began in 1739; in the six years of his residence, he and Castro Sarmento had ample time together to discuss Portugal’s need for reform. Carvalho e Melo in London was a man steeped in experiences that honed his Enlightenment sensibilities. He became a member of the Royal Society in 1740, consorted with exiled *converso* reformers and other intellectuals and possessed in his library books that the Inquisition had banned at home. In short, he became a thoroughgoing rationalized *estrangeirado*. Moreover, he became convinced that the only way for Portugal to become a stronger state internally was to modernize all aspects of society through a program of enlightened reform.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 9–11.

<sup>141</sup> Barnett, p. 88. See also British Library Additional Manuscripts, 20: 953 (ff. 214–220).

<sup>142</sup> Maxwell, “Eighteenth-Century Portugal: Faith and Reason, Tradition and

Carvalho e Melo left London in 1745 to serve in Vienna as ambassador to the Austrian Habsburgs,<sup>143</sup> but there is ample evidence that he carried the effect of his conversations with Castro Sarmento with him. He continued to correspond with Castro Sarmento and other *estrangeirados* on topics of scientific innovation and during his tenure in Vienna he attracted talented physicians to his retinue. One of these, a Swiss whom the Portuguese called Pedro Defau, was so valuable that Carvalho e Melo brought him to Lisbon as his personal doctor when he returned in 1749. Defau was named to the Chair of Anatomy at the Todos-os-Santos hospital; he went on to publish learned treatises on bone structure.<sup>144</sup>

Of course, the most convincing proof of Castro Sarmento's lasting influence on Carvalho e Melo is that, as the Prime Minister Pombal, he implemented the very policies which Castro Sarmento and his co-religionists most strenuously advocated: the reduction of the Jesuits' and the Inquisition's power and the reform of the educational curriculum at Portugal's universities. However, during Pombal's diplomatic assignment in Vienna, he had witnessed a successful episode of medical reforms that also impressed him deeply. In 1745, Empress Maria Teresa recalled her subject Gerhardt van Sweiten from the University of Leiden, where he had been studying with Boerhaave. (At Leiden, van Sweiten also became acquainted with expatriate Portuguese physician António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches.)<sup>145</sup> Maria Teresa charged van Sweiten with the dual tasks of modernizing the medical education curriculum at the University of Vienna and of putting Austrian public health services on a more sound, scientific footing. In the event, his reform program was so effective that his ideas about clinical medicine (many of them gleaned through his association with Boerhaave) were adopted throughout Habsburg Europe.<sup>146</sup> Van Sweiten's work served as an example for Pombal's own later reforms.

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Innovation During a Golden Age," p. 108. See also Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, pp. 10–20 and 87–109.

<sup>143</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, p. 8.

<sup>144</sup> BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Medicos," Vol. III, pp. 41–42.

<sup>145</sup> Cited in Maxwell, "Eighteenth-Century Portugal: Faith and Reason, Tradition and Innovation During a Golden Age," p. 109.

<sup>146</sup> Arturo Castiglioni, *A History of Medicine* (New York: Jason Arunson, Inc., 1975), pp. 617–618.

*The Contribution of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches*

Alongside the work of Jacob de Castro Sarmiento must be placed that of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, another expatriate *converso* whose ideas and writings contributed enormously to the elite movement that supported Enlightenment-era medical reform in Portugal. Ribeiro Sanches, also a physician and advocate of rationalized education in Portugal, was one of the leading figures among expatriates who, while abroad, used a network of Portuguese intellectuals to push for changes at home.<sup>147</sup>

Born on 7 March 1699 in Penamacor, a small rural town in north-eastern Portugal, Ribeiro Sanches studied medicine at the University of Coimbra but did not complete his degree there. He left Portugal for Spain, completing his doctorate in medicine at the University of Salamanca.<sup>148</sup> In 1726, he travelled to London, where for a year he joined the sizable community of resident Iberian Jews and studied English philosophy. He next embarked on a journey of medical investigation, moving from one center of learning to another—he studied in Paris, Marseilles, Montpellier and Bordeaux. Eventually he settled in Leiden, where for two years he was a protégé of Hermann Boerhaave and made his living as a tutor. While in the Netherlands, he also attended lectures by Gerhardt van Sweiten, who later so impressed the Marquês de Pombal.

In 1731, Ribeiro Sanches went to Moscow to practice medicine at posts he gained through his association with Boerhaave. He first served as a physician to the Senate in Moscow; later, in 1734, Ribeiro Sanches moved to Saint Petersburg and became the chief physician of the Russian Royal Chancellery and the Imperial Army. He travelled widely throughout Russia in his military capacity, learning a great deal about the treatment of wounds, as well as the fevers and diseases to which pre-modern soldiers on campaign were prone. During this time, he maintained correspondence with his learned colleagues in Western Europe, passing on observations about his medical experience. He was also named a member of the Académie des Sciences de Paris. Most importantly, Ribeiro Sanches began a

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<sup>147</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 7–9 and “Constructing Knowledge,” appendices, network charts 1–4.

<sup>148</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. 5, pp. 434–435.

systematic exchange of scientific books and other learned texts between imperial libraries in Russia and certain university and royal libraries in Portugal.<sup>149</sup>

Ribeiro Sanches was forced to leave the Russian Empire in 1747, when the political fall of his patrons left his position untenable. He spent the rest of his life in Paris, where he continued to write about and practice medicine. There he became personally acquainted with the most renowned intellectuals of his time. Diderot and d'Alembert requested that he write an article about venereal disease for their *Encyclopédie*. In time, he would be favored with pensions from the Portuguese monarch, José I, and the Russian Czarina Catherine II, both in recognition for his past service.<sup>150</sup>

As a physician practicing outside of Portugal, Ribeiro Sanches endeavored to introduce medical innovation—the ideas of William Harvey and Hermann Boerhaave, especially—into his native land by means of his own publications and numerous correspondents. Two of his primary concerns, which he expressed nationalistically with a view toward improving the situation in Portugal, were medical education and personal hygiene, both of which he deemed essential if enlightened nations were to control disease among their people. Ribeiro Sanches wrote about the need for governments to provide and maintain high standards of sanitation in cities, particularly sewers and latrines; he also worried about the health risks of burying corpses inside churches or urban churchyards. Further, Ribeiro Sanches opposed the commonly accepted practice of letting blood as a treatment for most illnesses, and he maintained that *médicos* should perform surgical operations only as a last resort.<sup>151</sup>

Ribeiro Sanches' main influence in the field of Portuguese medicine stemmed from his writings and the fact that many of his influential associates, like the Portuguese Prime Minister Pombal, were powerful government figures. Ribeiro Sanches' publications were widely read among the intellectual circles of Europe, particularly in the countries where he had resided: France, England, Russia and Portugal. Following the earthquake that devastated Lisbon in late 1755, Ribeiro Sanches submitted his patriotically motivated "Treatise on the

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<sup>149</sup> Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. VI, pp. 240–241.

<sup>150</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," pp. 12–13.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*



Conservation of the Health of the People,” intended to help the overburdened Portuguese authorities implement policies to avoid widespread disease. Of greater impact, though, was his “Method to Learn to Study Medicine,” written in 1763 in direct response to Pombal’s request for advice about the reshaping of the Coimbra University Faculty of Medicine curriculum.<sup>152</sup> Pombal used this work as one of the templates for enduring root-and-branch reform in 1772.<sup>153</sup>

Because of his many international connections with luminaries of European science and letters, Ribeiro Sanches was well integrated into the circles of *estrangeirados* who wielded great influence in Portugal during the *Época das Luzes*. He corresponded regularly with a variety of well-placed advocates of the Enlightenment within Portugal, as well. Further enhancing his intellectual cachet, Ribeiro Sanches remained an active participating member of, in addition to the Académie des Sciences de Paris, the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg, the Royal Society of London, and the Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa.<sup>154</sup>

As a catalyst for Enlightenment-era reforms to the philosophical underpinnings of education in Portugal, Ribeiro Sanches’ significance can hardly be understated. Pedagogy was one of his particular passions, as is demonstrated by his other major publication, “Letters about the Education of Youth” (*Cartas sobre a Educação da Mocidade*), brought out in Paris (though written in Portuguese) in 1759. This work, too, resonated with domestic reformers in Portugal; it was a fundamental text directing the creation and development of the experimental College of Nobles between 1761 and 1768, and for the reform of the non-medical departments of the University of Coimbra.<sup>155</sup>

### *Luís António Verney and his “True Method of Study”*

The Enlightenment came to Portugal, as we have seen, in fits and starts. Luís António Verney was another *estrangeirado* who contributed

<sup>152</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, “Eighteenth-Century Portugal,” p. 122.

<sup>153</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. 5, pp. 435–436.

<sup>154</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “Constructing Knowledge,” pp. 12–13. See also Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 8–10.

<sup>155</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, pp. 84, 106 and 163. See also the article by Luís de Pina: *Verney, Ribeiro Sanches e Diderot na História das Universidades* (Porto: Centro de Estudos Humanísticos, 1955).

to this process. Because of his unique vision as an educator and his will to direct his efforts toward the improvement of his homeland through applied rationalist principles, he is remembered today as one of the most influential figures of the Portuguese Enlightenment.<sup>156</sup> His importance in introducing rationalist principles into public discussion in Portugal is noteworthy, but his particular influence can be seen in the way his ideas, as expressed in his signature publication, *O Verdadeiro Methodo de Estudar* (The True Method of Study), found their practical application in the Marquês de Pombal's reform program of the 1760s and 1770s.<sup>157</sup>

Verney was a true *Lisboeta*, born in the Portuguese capital on 23 July 1713 and schooled there in the Jesuit College of Santo Antão. Early on he became influenced by the Oratorians, studying with them in Lisbon from 1727 to 1729. He then studied theology and philosophy at the University of Évora. When he was twenty-three, he left his native land for Rome to take up the study of theology and canon law. Eventually, he would earn a doctorate in philosophy and a master's degree in theology.<sup>158</sup> From 1768 to 1771, he served as the secretary of the Portuguese diplomatic delegation in Rome. The chief envoy, Francisco de Almada e Mendonça, was related by marriage to the Marquês de Pombal.<sup>159</sup>

Verney became a disciple, first of Italian Enlightenment thinkers, and then of the broader European advocates of the movement. He read Locke, Descartes, Bacon and Newton, incorporating their ideas concerning natural law and the physical world into his own cosmology. Later he would read Voltaire's works when Italian editions became available. Through his ample learned correspondence, Verney was also aware of experiments in natural philosophy done across Europe and America; Benjamin Franklin's work on the nature of electricity, for example, was known to him.<sup>160</sup>

Reflecting on his own country, Verney became deeply concerned about the negative effects of the Jesuits' grip on educational institutions

<sup>156</sup> Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, pp. 430–433.

<sup>157</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. 6, pp. 271–279. See also Luís de Pina, *Verney, Ribeiro Sanches e Diderot*.

<sup>158</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 7–9; and Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," network charts 1–4.

<sup>159</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, "Eighteenth-Century Portugal," p. 110.

<sup>160</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 8–9; and Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," network charts 1–4.

and of Inquisition policies that forbade the free practice of religious faith in Portugal. He published his most important work anonymously in 1746: *O Verdadeiro Methodo de Estudar*.<sup>161</sup> In it, Verney advocated a drastic reduction of the Holy Office's power, with particular reference to the Inquisition's attacks on New Christians. His strident condemnation of the scholastic tradition and outmoded Jesuit pedagogical ideas, combined with his championing of rationalist, empirical approaches to learning, created a sensation within Portugal. The reform of medical education and practice was one of the book's primary concerns. At its root, though, *O Verdadeiro Methodo de Estudar* was an enlightened pedagogical guide—a recommended program of general study meant to produce a liberally educated class of men who would lend their talents to state service.<sup>162</sup>

Verney won supporters in all quarters of Portuguese society, including among those serving within the Inquisition. It is symptomatic of the decline of the Inquisition's institutional power after the ascent of Dom José I to the throne in 1750—and the concurrent rise in the prestige accorded to rationalist thought—that, in 1751, a Portuguese inquisitor was responsible for the clandestine reprinting of *O Verdadeiro Methodo de Estudar*. Verney's text was highly critical of clerical dissembling and obfuscation regarding the spread of Enlightenment ideas within Portugal. The Inquisition had confiscated and destroyed copies of Verney's first edition whenever they could after 1746. By 1751, however, after Dom João V's death and the sea change in royal administration, the offending inquisitor who re-issued *O Verdadeiro Methodo de Estudar* received only a mild reprimand as punishment. Just five years after its initial publication and subsequent ban by the Inquisition Board of Censorship, functionaries of the Portuguese Holy Office felt strongly enough about the text's message to publish it illegally—perhaps even with the tacit approval of royal advisors like the Prime Minister, Pombal.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Joel Serrão, ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. 6, pp. 271–279.

<sup>162</sup> Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 7–9; and Simões, et al., “Constructing Knowledge,” network charts 1–4.

<sup>163</sup> António Alberto de Andrade, *Verney e a cultura de seu tempo* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1905), pp. 462–463; cited in Charles R. Boxer, *The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion, 1440–1770* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 92.

*Networks of Other Portuguese Doctors Abroad in the Eighteenth Century*

Portugal's community of doctors and other thinkers abroad and at home who participated in the Enlightenment, though limited in number, was remarkably interconnected. As Ana Simões and her collaborators at the University of Lisbon have demonstrated in a series of studies concerning the Portuguese Enlightenment and the role of foreign-influenced *estrangeirados* in bringing about enlightened reform within Portugal, circles of expatriate associates and their domestic correspondents disseminated information, served as conduits for ideas, and eventually created a critical mass of thought among influential Portuguese in favor of rationalized approaches to knowledge.<sup>164</sup>

Consider, as an example, the Marquês de Pombal: the multifaceted connections he forged as a foreign diplomat profoundly shaped his thinking. He knew the physician António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches personally, which put him into indirect contact with other medical thinkers like João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, Manuel Gomes de Lima, Teodoro de Almeida and Jacob de Castro Sarmiento. He knew Luís António Verney and Dom Francisco Xavier de Meneses, the fourth Count of Ericeira. Further, he served two reigning monarchs directly in positions of exceptional power and influence. These connections served him and his country well when, as the Prime Minister, he instituted social and educational reforms.<sup>165</sup>

The tables below are reproduced from "Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences," written by Ana Simões and her colleagues. These tables clearly and succinctly demonstrate many of the most important human links, both domestic and international, which facilitated an influx of Enlightenment ideas to Portugal during the reigns of Dom João V (1706–1750) and his son, Dom José I (1750–1777).<sup>166</sup>

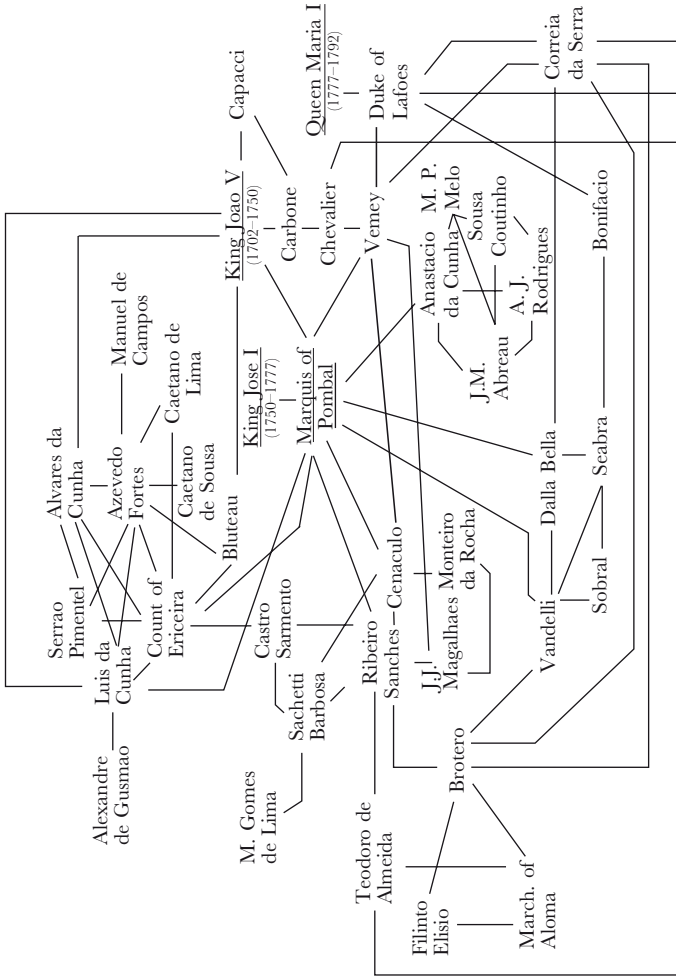
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<sup>164</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," pp. 2–6 and network charts 1–4.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, appendices: network charts 1, 2 and 4.

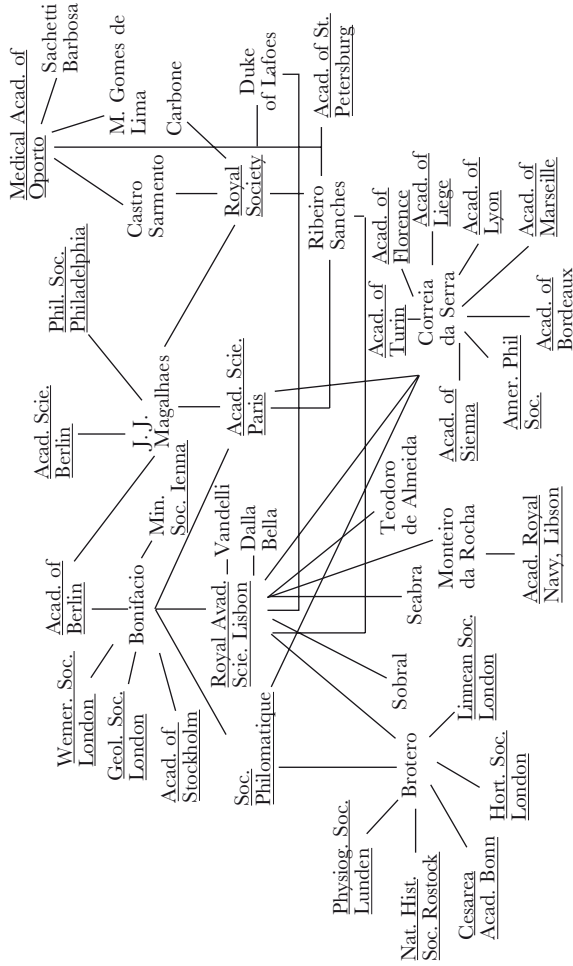
Chart 3.1 Internal Connections: Portuguese Intellectuals



Adapted with permission from Ana Simões, et al., “Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences,” (Delphi, Greece: Papers of the conference, “The Transmission of Scientific Ideas to the Countries of the European Periphery during the Enlightenment,” 23–27 July, 1995), appendices, network chart 1.



Chart 3.3 Portuguese Membership in European Learned Academies



Adapted with permission from Ana Simões, et al., “Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences,” (Delphi, Greece: Papers of the conference, “The Transmission of Scientific Ideas to the Countries of the European Periphery during the Enlightenment,” 23–27 July, 1995), appendices, network chart 4.

*Domestic Connections: Sachetti Barbosa and his Circle of Correspondents*

Though he never left Portugal, frequent and long-standing correspondence with many of the learned physicians of Europe profoundly influenced the *Alentejano* doctor João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, making him a virtual *estrangeirado*, well positioned to assist in bringing about substantive changes in the Portuguese approach to teaching the medical arts. Perhaps more than any other medical practitioner resident within Portugal during the middle years of the eighteenth century, Sachetti Barbosa is responsible for spreading information among his peers about scientific developments beyond Portugal's frontiers. His links through correspondence to Castro Sarmiento, Ribeiro Sanches and the Marquês do Pombal are strong, and he was active in several learned societies across Europe.<sup>167</sup> His primary contribution to the Portuguese Enlightenment was to act as an intermediary between émigré Portuguese physicians, other European thinkers, and Portuguese crown authorities, particularly during the process of instituting Pombal's education reforms at the University of Coimbra.<sup>168</sup>

Born in Estremoz in 1714 to commoner parents, Sachetti Barbosa's keen intellect attracted the attention of his teachers and won him a scholarship to study medicine at Coimbra, where he was considered the most capable student of his time. He practiced in several small Alentejo towns, finally settling in Elvas in 1743. His experience with military medicine led to his appointment as physician at the Royal Hospitals of Elvas and Campo Maior, two important fortified garrison towns along the Spanish border.<sup>169</sup>

Sachetti Barbosa was of Old Christian ancestry and, like many ambitious physicians of his day, he looked upon employment with the Holy Office as a means to greater status and opportunity in Portuguese society, particularly in the rural Alentejo. Following the path of his brother, António Mendes Sachetti, who was the chief

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<sup>167</sup> RSL, letters of João Mendes Sachetti-Barbosa to Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, *Philosophical Transactions*, 49 (London: 1756). See also Gonçalves Rodrigues, "A correspondência científica do Dr. Sachetti Barbosa," pp. 396–408.

<sup>168</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," pp. 8–9, and Gonçalves Rodrigues, "A correspondência científica do Dr. Sachetti Barbosa," pp. 396–408.

<sup>169</sup> Maximiano de Lemos, "Amigos de Ribeiro Sanches," in *Estudos de História da Medicina Peninsular* (Porto: Tipografia Enciclopédia Portuguesa, 1916), pp. 288–295.



treasurer of the Cathedral at Elvas and a commissioner of the Inquisition Tribunal of Évora, he applied to become a *familiar* of the Holy Office. Sachetti Barbosa received his letter appointing him an employee of the Inquisition on 12 March 1756.<sup>170</sup> Within two years, he had been named a physician of the Royal Household, a doctor of Prince Manuel's personal chambers and a Knight and Peer of the *Casa Real*. In 1759, he was made a Knight of the Order of Christ, an extraordinarily prestigious honor for a rural physician of common stock. From humble beginnings, this reform-minded country doctor rapidly came to enjoy royal favor.<sup>171</sup>

It was also during this period that his reputation as a man of science grew. Sachetti Barbosa published his most important work, *Considerações Médicas sobre o metodo de conhecer, curar e preservar as Epidemias, ou Febres Malignas Podres, Pestilenciaes, Contagiozas* ("Medical Considerations about the method to recognize, cure, and prevent Epidemics, or Powerful Malignant Fevers, Pestilences and Contagions") in 1758. Widely circulated in the wake of the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, *Considerações Médicas* dealt with the origin, prevention and treatment of contagious diseases. In it, Sachetti Barbosa embraced the empirical dictums of the famous Dutch physician Hermann Boerhaave, as well as the rational scientific principles (such as observation and experimentation) practiced by Isaac Newton.<sup>172</sup> Specifically, through his contact with Boerhaave's student António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, Sachetti Barbosa had assimilated Boerhaave's signature systematic clinical method. That is, Boerhaave taught that any medical diagnosis should be based on an examination of the patient and his diseased organs, rather than on the study of classical theory or authoritarian texts.<sup>173</sup> Advocating the critical empirical method still proved controversial in mid-eighteenth century Portugal, particularly within the conservative ecclesiastical community and the Jesuit-dominated institutions of higher learning. However, the author's position as an Inquisition employee and physician of the Royal Household protected him while ensuring the broad distribution of his ideas. Finally, it is worth noting that Pombal's policy of disenfranchising

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<sup>170</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 111, no. 1874.

<sup>171</sup> Lemos, "Amigos de Ribeiro Sanches," pp. 288–295.

<sup>172</sup> João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, *Considerações Médicas*.

<sup>173</sup> Arturo Castiglioni, *A History of Medicine*, pp. 615–618.

the Jesuits and banishing them from Portuguese territories began the year following *Considerações Médicas*' publication.<sup>174</sup>

Sachetti Barbosa's best known published work built upon a long-established association and correspondence with some of the leading figures of the Portuguese *estrangeirado* medical community.<sup>175</sup> He had been a confirmed advocate of the Enlightenment well before his employment with the Inquisition, and had cultivated contacts with foreign scientific societies throughout the 1740s and 1750s. In 1747, he was voted a member of the Royal Medical Academy of Madrid. He began his correspondence with Jacob de Castro Sarmiento in London in 1748; two years later he commenced a long correspondence with António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches. These associations brought Sachetti Barbosa into contact with the two leading expatriate Portuguese advocates of education reform and positioned him to be a conduit for their ideas, as well as for the scientific information they passed to him from other parts of Europe.<sup>176</sup>

In 1749, when Manuel Gomes de Lima founded the Royal Medical Academy of Oporto, intended as an institution to instruct surgeons according to the new methods of rationalized medicine, Sachetti Barbosa emerged as one of the most energetic supporters. His influence brought both Ribeiro Sanches and Castro Sarmiento into this organization as corresponding members and set the tone for the program of study to be carried on there. Sachetti Barbosa enlisted numerous other members, too, from the Alentejo—a group of physician known as the “Évora Circle.” Such organizational activities helped to spread concepts of rationalized science and medicine during the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>177</sup>

Following the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, Sachetti Barbosa was again a key intermediary between Enlightenment thinkers abroad—both Portuguese expatriates and non-nationals—and the Portuguese government and education establishment. His efforts brought rationalist

<sup>174</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, pp. 82–84.

<sup>175</sup> RSL, letters of João Mendes Sachetti-Barbosa to Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, *Philosophical Transactions*, No. 49, pp. 409–411. See also Gonçalves Rodrigues, “A correspondência científica do Dr. Sachetti Barbosa,” pp. 396–408, and “Cartas, em que se dá notícia da origem, e progresso das sciencias, escritas ao doutor José da Costa Leitão por hum seu amigo a dadas à luz pelo mesmo para utilidade dos curiosos,” (Lisbon: Oficina de Miguel Manescal da Costa, 1753).

<sup>176</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution,” pp. 8, 25.

<sup>177</sup> Sousa Dias, “Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna,” p. 7.

ideas to the attention of government ministers in Lisbon, the hierarchy of the Inquisition, and learned societies in Portugal, thus increasing the momentum of the movement toward educational reform.<sup>178</sup>

Sachetti Barbosa's correspondence with Castro Sarmiento lasted until the latter's death in 1762. Ribeiro Sanches continued to exchange letters with him until 1772, when a disagreement over Pombal's steps to reform medical studies at the University of Coimbra led to their mutual falling out. Sachetti Barbosa is said to have played a decisive role in the Coimbra reform process, as well, being credited by some with having written the new statutes for the Faculty of Medicine. Apparently, Ribeiro Sanches did not agree with the framework Sachetti Barbosa ultimately created, and this was the cause of their broken friendship.<sup>179</sup>

Sachetti Barbosa also corresponded with other members of the Royal Society in London. One of these was Manuel Mendes da Costa, the Portuguese-born Secretary of the Royal Society who also had trained in medicine at Coimbra before fleeing to London out of fear of the Inquisition. As Secretary of the Royal Society, Manuel Mendes da Costa facilitated the inclusion of scientific correspondence in *Philosophical Transactions*, which in turn furthered the exchange of rationalist ideas between Britain and Portugal.<sup>180</sup>

The letters Sachetti Barbosa exchanged with Mendes da Costa are particularly telling, as they neatly characterize the type of intellectual exchange being conducted by correspondence between *estrangeiro* physicians or other men of science and their contemporaries back in Portugal. In one letter, dated 20 March 1763, Sachetti Barbosa related from Portugal that "medicine in this kingdom is in a lamentable state . . . not only . . . in the respect of science, but also in the way it promotes emigration . . ." He told his correspondent in London not to worry about his (Sachetti Barbosa's) personal safety or religious freedom and reassured the recipient that, as an Old Christian working for an army garrison, he felt secure from Inquisition

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<sup>178</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 125–126. See also RSL, letters of João Mendes Sachetti-Barbosa to Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, *Philosophical Transactions* No. 49, pp. 409–411.

<sup>179</sup> RSL, letters of João Mendes Sachetti-Barbosa to Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, *Philosophical Transactions*, No. 49. See also Barnett, p. 94.

<sup>180</sup> Gonçalves Rodrigues, "A correspondência científica do Dr. Sachetti Barbosa," pp. 346–408.

interference. Sachetti Barbosa went on to describe a demonstration of a thermometer, which he had witnessed in Portugal, and discussed the novel instrument's effect and utility.<sup>181</sup> He closed the letter with an explicit comment reiterating his long support for medical reform in Portugal:

... as is certain to continue ... this unhappy decadence of medicine, outside of being reformed, and at last it is said [that reform is imminent]—and we hope for it to happen; I do not know what form reform will take, but I intend, if possible, to recommend some of the ideas of my good friend Doctor António Ribeiro Sanches ...<sup>182</sup>

In a subsequent letter, penned on 11 March 1764, Sachetti Barbosa inquired if the Royal Society would like to publish a “communiqué” about the natural qualities of palm trees in Portuguese India, written by a Jesuit who had lived there many years. This letter went on to request some scientific instruments from London and provided information about medical experiments the author was in the process of conducting in Portugal.<sup>183</sup> Manuel Mendes da Costa replied to Sachetti Barbosa on 29 May 1764; he requested the article about Indian palm trees for review and possible publication in *Philosophical Transactions*, and he related summaries of various experiments in many fields underway in London at that time.<sup>184</sup>

In Sachetti Barbosa's response to this letter, dated 3 August 1764, he enclosed seeds from a “famous” Portuguese medicinal plant “to see if they could be made to grow in an English climate,” and revealed that he had resolved to send his oldest son to London, where he hoped the boy would receive a “freer and more solid education than at Coimbra.” However, he worried that he would have to travel to Lisbon to have crown officials approve this plan. Later in the letter, Sachetti Barbosa requested a specific type of thermometer from an instrument-maker in London, mentioning that Ribeiro Sanches in Paris had worked with a similar one to good

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<sup>181</sup> BLMD, Additional Manuscripts 28:534, fl. 164v, João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa to Manuel Mendes da Costa, 14 January 1763.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> BLMD, Additional Manuscripts 28:534, fl. 165–166, João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa to Abbade Magalhães (another Portuguese resident in London), 11 March 1764.

<sup>184</sup> BLMD, Additional Manuscripts 28:534, fl. 167, Manuel Mendes da Costa to João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, 29 May 1764.

effect; the letter then launched into a detailed discussion of the many uses of such an instrument.<sup>185</sup> Five months later, on 1 January 1765, Sachetti Barbosa wrote to Manuel Mendes da Costa again, this time requesting particular books available in London concerning botany and anatomy. He also quoted a long passage from an earlier letter he had received from Ribeiro Sanches; the passage included observations about the symptoms of a patient suffering from “a cancer,” and described Sanches’ treatment of the disease. Sachetti Barbosa commented favorably on Sanches’ prescribed treatment.<sup>186</sup>

Connections such as these amply demonstrate that Sachetti Barbosa, though living in relative geographic isolation in the Portuguese interior, nevertheless maintained an active participation in a wider world of exchanged ideas. Sachetti Barbosa’s correspondence provided conduits for concepts that had taken shape beyond the Portuguese frontier to enter the country; this country doctor with broad horizons then served as an important catalyst, disseminating these ideas to his circle of colleagues throughout Portugal.

*Experimental Teaching: The Royal Medical Academy of Oporto*

An important indication of the growing strength of the movement to modernize medical education within Portugal can be found in the creation of several academies of medicine in Oporto during the 1740s and 1750s. A group of forward-looking physicians, surgeons and pharmacists, along with a few nobles and aristocrats, in the absence of a definitive initiative on the part of the government to force reforms at Coimbra or any of the other Jesuit schools, sought to create a forum where a new generation of physicians could teach and practice innovative medical techniques.<sup>187</sup> A youthful surgeon, Manuel Gomes de Lima (1727–1806), was the primary motivator of this project. In the course of eleven years, from 1748 to 1759, he attempted to found four separate institutions in Oporto for the instruction of surgery, pharmacy and general physician’s skills. The first of

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<sup>185</sup> BLMD, Additional Manuscripts 28:534, fl. 168–169, João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa to Manuel Mendes da Costa, 3 August 1764.

<sup>186</sup> BLMD, Additional Manuscripts 28:534, fl. 170–172, João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa to Manuel Mendes da Costa, 1 January 1765.

<sup>187</sup> Sousa Dias, “Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna,” pp. 2–9.

these he founded as an enthusiastic young Coimbra graduate, just twenty-one years of age. His most successful venture was the second, though it began in 1749 and survived only until 1752. In that brief time, however, Gomes de Lima attracted some of the finest reform-minded physicians of the era to the Academy's membership. More importantly, he succeeded in gaining royal support and protection for the project, thus lending a level of prestige to the Academy's activities that it otherwise would not have enjoyed, and attracting the attention of medical practitioners across Portugal and abroad.<sup>188</sup>

The initial statutes governing the work of the *Real Academia Médico-Portopolitana* (Royal Medical Academy of Oporto) were approved by vote of an assembly of members on 14 April 1749, although the institution had actually commenced its activities during January of that year. The statutes bore the signature of the Archbishop of Braga, Dom José de Bragança, brother of King João V.<sup>189</sup> Of immense importance to the Academy's prospects, Dom José had agreed to act as patron and protector of the fledgling academy. That the king's own brother, a clergyman near the zenith of the church's hierarchy in Portugal, would take this group of iconoclast physicians and scholars under his wing points out the extent to which a realization of the need for medical reform had touched the highest levels of Portuguese government.

While João V had solicited Castro Sarmiento's opinions about medical reform seventeen years before, only to postpone action upon them because of pressure from conservative ecclesiastical and professional medical quarters, the king showed late in his reign that he still adhered to principles of modernization. His indirect support of the new academy at Oporto through his brother is but one further proof that, even though the king was not consistently an enlightened absolutist, he was persuaded of the benefits of scientific medical modernization for his nation and people. Dom João V, after all, had founded Lisbon's Royal Academy of History in 1720; he liked to think of himself as a proponent of the Enlightenment, even if he was simultaneously a steadfast defender of the Catholic faith and traditional rule.

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<sup>188</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina*, vol. 2, pp. 160–163.

<sup>189</sup> Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," p. 3; Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. V, pp. 446–447.

On the other hand, we must consider that the king was nearing the end of his reign—he lived only until the following year. Medical reformers and court insiders, sensing João V's growing infirmity and waning power, may have used these circumstances to their advantage and established their new school with the king's blessing as one of his final benevolent acts. Or, the foundation of an innovative medical facility near the end of João V's life may indicate that would-be reformers sensed a coming shift in Portuguese intellectual culture, and saw no reason to delay. Promises of support from the king's son and heir apparent, Dom José, may have emboldened their actions, too. In any case, in retrospect, 1750 would mark a propitious threshold for the forces favoring enlightenment reform in Portugal.

Gomes de Lima and his followers were conscious of their role as pedagogical innovators within the Portuguese medical community. Nothing illustrates this better than the original statutes of the Academy, which founding member João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa elucidated in January of 1749 at the institution's inaugural address. Sachetti Barbosa described the goals and vision of the Academy at length, citing plans for a comprehensive program of medical instruction according to the most modern scientific principles. These, significantly, focused on the doctrines of two men, Isaac Newton and Hermann Boerhaave, whose respective teachings were just beginning to circulate among the more learned Portuguese.<sup>190</sup> Central to their work, of course, was the then-controversial idea that scientific inquiry in general and medicinal practices specifically must be conducted according to a rational, methodical system. The members of the Academy publicly embraced the spirit of rational science and explicitly rejected the dictums of Galen and Aristotle at the institution's inauguration.<sup>191</sup>

The notoriety of the Academy's membership, too, made this an institution that would come to influence the broader Portuguese community of medical practitioners—some of Portugal's finest physicians were founding supporters of this innovative school. Besides Gomes de Lima and Sachetti Barbosa, such luminaries as António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches and Jacob de Castro Sarmiento enthusiastically backed the school's mission.<sup>192</sup> These men's names lent intellectual weight

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<sup>190</sup> Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," pp. 4–5.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," p. 8; Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," pp. 4–5.

to de Lima's youth and relative obscurity, thus increasing the cachet and influence of the Academy's agenda throughout Portuguese medical, governmental and educational circles.

From the outset, groups of doctors and surgeons who supported the Academy met in most major Portuguese cities. In Lisbon, the highly respected physician José Rodrigues de Abreu, *Médico da Câmara* to King João V and a Knight of the Order of Christ, led a group of fourteen founding members of Oporto's new surgical Academy.<sup>193</sup> Significantly, Abreu was also an employee of the Inquisition; he had been a *familiar* of the Holy Office in Lisbon since 1716.<sup>194</sup>

He was not alone: fellow Academy founding member Manuel Freire da Paz, one of the directors of the Royal Hospital in Coimbra (his title was *Médico de Relação e do Senado de Câmara*), a contender for a teaching post on the University Faculty of Medicine and future Knight of the Order of Christ (1751), had become a *familiar* of the Holy Office in Coimbra on 27 February 1743.<sup>195</sup> In Évora, Sachetti Barbosa, who in 1749 organized the circle of Academy members from that city, would become an Inquisition tribunal employee himself a few years later.<sup>196</sup> Even the Academy founder, Gomes de Lima, was a Holy Office *familiar*. Clearly, these physicians saw no contradiction in working for two institutions with such differing approaches to scientific innovation. (For that matter, it is fair to say that, ever since the promulgation of *Dos Saludadores*—a document which provided an unequivocal endorsement of empiricism and reflected the growing influence of enlightened *médicos* within the institution—the Inquisition itself experienced a growing identification with advocates of progressive medicine. The Inquisition campaign against *curandeiros* provides further evidence of that orientation.) Nor did Old Christian Academy members chafe at the prospect of any professional interaction with men like Ribeiro Sanches and Castro Sarmiento, New Christians who had fled Portugal out of fear of Holy Office persecution. The Medical Academy of Oporto was an enlightened professional association in which a member's religious affiliation was less important than his interest in or ability to contribute to science.

<sup>193</sup> Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," p. 7.

<sup>194</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 23, no. 373.

<sup>195</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 126, no. 2227; Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," p. 8.

<sup>196</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 111, no. 1874.



The Royal Medical Academy of Oporto, though intended to be a teaching institution, was more significant for its role as a forum for the dissemination of ideas and technical information. Through its well-travelled and connected membership, Portugal's medical community profited from established links with other learned societies in Europe. Castro Sarmiento was an active member of the Royal Society in London, as were Sachetti Barbosa and Ribeiro Sanches. Additionally, as noted above, Sachetti Barbosa had become a member of the Royal Medical Academy of Madrid in 1747. These links connected the Academy in Oporto with a world of outstanding medical thinkers, as well as important Portuguese politicians like the future Marquês de Pombal.<sup>197</sup>

The Royal Medical Academy in Oporto stood in sharp contrast to older conservative institutions like the University of Coimbra where, despite physicians' interest in scientific advances outside Portugal, the pedagogically conservative Jesuits determined that medical practitioners would be trained in the traditional medieval manner. Despite the relatively brief life of the Academy and the very limited scope of its functions and publications, the impact of its founding principles within the Portuguese medical community was significant. Word of the Academy's polemical activities rippled outward through Portugal's community of physicians and surgeons, helping to establish rational experimentation as a basis for scientific medicine. The several circles of influential, licensed medical practitioners who made up the founding membership of the Academy served as venues where licensed medical practitioners discussed and disseminated innovative medical techniques.<sup>198</sup> These doctors led by example, helping in turn to create through their influence a larger body of professionals who supported a modernization of medical teaching methods in Portuguese universities.<sup>199</sup>

*In Sum: A Watershed Change in Thinking by Mid-Century Among Elites*

The weight of evidence in favor of a revised view of Portugal's alleged scientific backwardness, then, is compelling, particularly with reference to medical professionals. Clearly, for elites inside Portugal

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<sup>197</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina em Portugal*, vol. 2, p. 124.

<sup>198</sup> Lemos, *História da Medicina em Portugal*, vol. 2, pp. 162–163; Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna," p. 7.

<sup>199</sup> Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge" p. 8 and appendices, network 4.

who had established connections abroad or physicians and surgeons with an international, *estrangeirado* view, rationalism was an important, influential movement. Portugal in the first half of the eighteenth century was not nearly the closed, provincial nation often portrayed in histories that look only at official crown censorship policy, the Coimbra University curriculum, or Inquisition pogroms against New Christians. Under the surface of these reactionary manifestations of *ancien régime* power, a vibrant, energized network of enlightened thinkers flourished. Moreover, beyond the physicians and surgeons who lobbied for reform of medical practice within the realm, some of Portugal's most powerful and influential nobles and state officials participated in this current of ideas, fully convinced of the utility of opening Portugal to practices current in other parts of Europe.

So long as Dom João V remained on the Portuguese throne, all the entrenched conservative interests that maintained their hegemony during his reign would not be moved beyond the reforms that the king had promulgated during the first half of his rule. However, with the king's death in 1750, the intellectual climate in Portugal shifted markedly. When Dom José I rose to power, he opened the way for a new class of administrators and officials who had been exposed to Enlightenment culture and who genuinely valued the promise of rationalism for improving the human condition.

Professor Ana Simões and her colleagues neatly sum up this dynamic in the conclusion of their fine paper, "Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences":

. . . long before Pombal's reforms there was an awareness of the "new sciences." In the final decades of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, some Portuguese showed signs of interest in modern ideas, thereby starting a process that came to full fruition in the second half of the eighteenth century. . . . As is typical of peripheral countries, the emphasis was not on the production of knowledge but rather on reproduction and propagation of novelty.

On the whole, the process of establishing a new mentality in Portugal was intimately linked to politics. One finds often among those who engaged in this process diplomats, administrators and politicians, who actually never pursued a scientific career.

The reception of the Scientific Revolution in Portugal was not led by a coherent scientific community. Initially, the leading actors were mainly dilettantes and polymaths, who were later followed by professional men of science.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," pp. 35–37.

Similarly, in *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: 1600–1774*, José Pedro Paiva recognized that, within Portuguese culture and society, “rationalism invades the field,” as he put it, by 1750.<sup>201</sup> However, with the change of regimes in 1750, the official (though largely tacit) recognition of rationalism under King Dom José I was just that: merely official, at the highest levels of government administration. In fact, by 1750, the rationalist invasion of Portugal was already beginning to appeal to its third generation of followers.

This chapter has demonstrated that rationalism had been making steady inroads, with and without official recognition, at least since the 1690s. Without this contextual information, the renewed persecution of popular healers and other magical criminals in Portugal during the Enlightenment Era, after a century and a half of benign indifference, is incomprehensible. It is important to recognize that a necessary corollary to the growth of rationalism in Portugal was an increased impatience among elites with irrational superstitions among the common people. Although tolerated for much of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ancient superstitious folkways, such as divining and love magic, but in particular illicit healing practices that relied on acts of sorcery for their efficacy, became anathema to elites who had assimilated rationalist principles into their worldview. Under these circumstances, a cultural rift between elites and commoners was inevitable. Therefore, the groundwork for a physician-led backlash against superstitious healing in Portugal had been laid by the time *Dos Saludadores* was composed in approximately 1690, at which point Inquisition prosecutions of popular healers began to get underway and gain momentum.

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<sup>201</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 86–91.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MONARCH AND INQUISITOR GENERAL: TWO PERSONALITIES WHO SHAPED THE HOLY OFFICE CAMPAIGN AGAINST POPULAR HEALERS

This chapter is a study of two personalities: that of Dom João V, the ruler of Portugal from 1 December 1706 until his death on 31 July 1750, and Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello, Inquisitor General of the Portuguese Holy Office from 6 October 1707 until his death on 15 December 1750. The purpose of this chapter is to set these contemporary personalities—the Portuguese king and his Chief Inquisitor—into the context of a pan-European Enlightenment mentality that was developing concurrently in Portugal. In so doing, the influence of these men over the ambient intellectual mood of the institutions they oversaw will become more apparent, thus adding to an understanding of the policies those institutions pursued regarding *mágicos* and folk healers during the first half of the eighteenth century.

Further, this chapter seeks to demonstrate that, because of their upbringing, education and values, both the king and the Inquisitor General were predisposed to be sympathetic to a program designed to discredit popular healing and magic. In their respective capacities as monarch and Inquisitor General, these two men facilitated a systematic Holy Office campaign against *curandeiros* and *saludadores*. Because they supported this campaign's implicit rationalist intellectual goals, the Portuguese monarch and his Chief Inquisitor helped perpetuate the conditions that sustained fifty years of prosecutions.

As the lone individuals at the top of the ruling hierarchy within, respectively, the Portuguese imperial realm and Holy Office, these men set the cultural and intellectual tone for the organizations they led. In Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello's case, this influence was narrowly focused within the power structure and policies of the Inquisition, while the monarch João V's influence extended more broadly to the entire nation he ruled and beyond. It is fundamental to note, however, that these two men held remarkably similar, positive views regarding the innovative concepts being disseminated

across Europe during the Age of Reason. In both men, one can easily identify strong inclinations toward the modernist values of rationalism that were then incipient within contemporary elite Portuguese society.

The king and Inquisitor General held the greatest concentrated influence over the one institution which was most responsible for—which effected—a program of oppressive prosecutions against folk healers and other magical criminals in Portugal during the first half of the eighteenth century. The single most aggressive period of “witch-hunting” in Portuguese history—a deliberate campaign designed to attack and ostracize practitioners of common folk magic—transpired while these two men were in charge of the very institution that carried out that campaign. Under their direction, the Holy Office undertook a kind of social engineering project that attempted to discredit popular superstitious practices in favor of a more logical, rational approach to the human understanding and manipulation of the natural world. For the Portuguese lower social orders, adopting this new cosmology would entail a turn toward empirical science and medicine, developments which a growing number of Portugal’s cosmopolitan and educated elites hoped to facilitate.

The Inquisition’s policy to oppress and discredit magic, then, reflects an attempt to change the mentality of a nation—an attempt to make the turn toward rationalism general across Portuguese society. That this policy was put into effect while two men who were enamored of Enlightenment values led the Portuguese state and Holy Office seems wholly consistent and telling. Even if they were not the progenitors of this policy—that distinction falls to professional physicians and surgeons employed within the Holy Office—the king and Chief Inquisitor were certainly sympathetic to the implicit goals of *curandeiro* repression. Hence, seen in context, their presence assumes a place in the general causality of the persecution of popular healers and other magical practitioners during the Enlightenment era in Portugal.

From a purely administrative point of view, as the supreme director of the Portuguese Holy Office, Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello must bear a substantial share of the responsibility for the actions of this institution while it was under his command. The Inquisitor General was aware of the upsurge in cases against *mágicos* and folk healers—his subordinates in the regional tribunals sent regular reports of their proceedings to the *Conselho Geral* in Lisbon

for administrative review.<sup>1</sup> Further, the internal position paper which addressed popular healers as a social problem within Portugal, *Dos Saludadores*, had been promulgated by the General Council in 1690 or shortly thereafter. That this *parecere* might have missed the new Inquisitor General's attention is extremely unlikely; he would have been aware of its argument and of the aggressive policy it recommended to prosecute known purveyors of magical or superstitious remedies. That this document was officially entered into the permanent records of the General Council in 1719 confirms that it met with Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello's approval.

King Dom João, meanwhile, had appointed Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello to head the Inquisition precisely because of the cosmopolitan intellectual qualities this man possessed. The king's selection of his new Inquisitor General was based, at least in part, on a certain kindredness of spirit: the broad academic training he had undergone, the natural open curiosity of his mind, and his predisposition for modernist ideas founded on reason.<sup>2</sup> This was a man with whom, Dom João V well knew, he would have to work closely during his reign; therefore it was propitious that he should find an Inquisitor General closely matched to his intellectual outlook.

However, royal confidence in the Inquisitor General did not prevent the young monarch, in an age that expected royal absolutism, from putting his hand firmly and often on the administrative functioning of the Holy Office in an attempt to check its power and autonomy.<sup>3</sup> The General Council of the Portuguese Inquisition met in Lisbon, not far from the royal residence; the records of this body reveal numerous instances of crown oversight of—or direct intervention in—Holy Office policy. Dom João V, to an extent far greater than most Portuguese monarchs, maintained a high degree of official interaction with his appointed inquisitors.<sup>4</sup> Books of “Consultations” (*Consultas*) compiled by the General Council between 1682 and 1791 include scores of royal communiqués bearing Dom João V's rubric—

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<sup>1</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994), pp. 56–71.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Luisa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 27–30.

<sup>3</sup> See Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 199–201; 205.

more than for any other monarch—received during the four and a half decades of his rule. These *consultas* relate the king's directives regarding fiscal policies within the corporate Inquisition structure, promotions of Holy Office personnel, and policies toward the treatment of his subjects while in Inquisition custody.<sup>5</sup>

Dom João V, therefore, certainly was aware of the ongoing, systematic prosecution of those of his subjects who spread superstitious beliefs and practices among the general peasant population within his realm. After all, he attended and assisted in the ceremony at most public *autos-de-fé* staged in Lisbon during the course of his long reign, and took a keen interest in the fate of penitent Holy Office convicts as they paraded before the royal pavilion in the capital's *Praça de Rossio* or *Terreiro do Paço*. In fact, noted Portuguese historian of the Inquisition Francisco Bethencourt points out that Dom João V's contemporaries often remarked upon his unusually close relationship with the Portuguese Holy Office, manipulating that institution to further his own agenda for governance.<sup>6</sup> So, even if he did not launch a program of oppression against Portuguese illicit folk healers, the king obviously approved of this initiative. Though fully aware of the Inquisition's steady persecution of *curandeiros* and *saludadores*, he took no steps to stop it. After all, the policy was in complete accord with his own elitist worldview, simultaneously favoring (in an apparent contradiction) both the values of the Age of Reason and elements of traditional Catholic orthodoxy over the heretical superstitions of the peasant class. Such an evident contradiction is consistent with the man and his times; the king's mixed personal cosmology made sense in a nation that was undergoing a slow transition from a pre-modern to a modernist mentality.

A. J. R. Russell-Wood has written of Dom João V's rule that "the imprint of the monarch was felt on every facet of his nation's life . . . [and] internationalism was a strong feature of Portugal during his reign."<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Kenneth Maxwell has referred to Dom João V as "a would-be *roi soleil*" and "a surprisingly eclectic, proto-scientific, even open-minded monarch intent in his genuine piety and

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<sup>5</sup> ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, Livro 381: *Consultas*, 1682–1791.

<sup>6</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 199–201; 205.

<sup>7</sup> A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V," in *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 15.

with his great wealth on building a new Rome on the [River] Tagus.”<sup>8</sup> These views certainly are consistent with the man described above, but run surprisingly contrary to the impression eighteenth-century Portugal left on many contemporary Europeans. Visitors to the country inevitably saw the Portuguese as a backward, provincial people mired in medieval religious traditionalism.<sup>9</sup>

However, Dom João V as a young man had become captivated by the richness, dynamism and promise of rationalized intellectual culture beyond the confines of his small peripheral country. He longed to be a part of that culture and, to the extent that he was able given the practical political conditions that limited his freedom to introduce radically new ideas, Dom João V tried to bring some of its innovative luster to Portugal during his reign.<sup>10</sup>

By the time he ascended the Portuguese throne on 1 January 1707, after the death of his father Dom Pedro II a month before, Dom João V had been steeped in a broader European culture which caused him to look beyond Portugal for intellectual reference points and nourishment. His mother was Maria Elizabeth, daughter of the Elector of Palatinate-Neuburg. His wife would be Maria Ana, princess of Austria. Dom João V spoke and read French, Spanish and Italian, and became a devoted connoisseur of the art, music and literature produced in those linguistic traditions.<sup>11</sup>

More to our present purposes, the young king had long been an ardent student of the sciences and mathematics. His correspondences on matters of science and practical applications of mathematics for purposes of military or civil engineering were varied and extensive. Ana Simões has linked the king either directly, or through his ambassadors Luís da Cunha and José Sebastião de Carvalho e Melo, to most of the key progressive intellectuals of the Portuguese Enlightenment.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, “Eighteenth-Century Portugal: Faith and Reason, Tradition and Innovation During a Golden Age,” in *The Age of the Baroque in Portugal*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> See accounts of northern Europeans in Portugal in the eighteenth century in David Francis, *Portugal, 1715–1808; Joanne, Pombaline and Rococo Portugal as Seen by British Diplomats and Traders* (London: Tamesis Books, Ltd., 1985); and Castelo Branco Chaves, *O Portugal de D. João V Visto por Três Foresteiros*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> Russell-Wood, “Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V,” pp. 15–20.

<sup>11</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. V (1640–1750), pp. 234–236; 407–448.

<sup>12</sup> Ana Simões, et al., “The Scientific Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Portugal:



In time, Dom João V would even be named a corresponding fellow of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, a learned society in Rome.<sup>13</sup>

Further, during his reign Dom João V sought knowledgeable technicians and theorists from diverse corners of Europe and wooed them to Portugal so that his realm and subjects could benefit from their expertise.<sup>14</sup> For example, the king commissioned Johann Friederich Pfeffinger to publish a treatise on the military architecture of France, Holland, Spain and Italy. Crown patronage also provided the impetus for the organization of a museum of natural history (filled with specimens sent at the king's request from the Portuguese colonies in Asia, Africa and South America), as well as the composition of a thorough written natural history of continental Portugal. Both projects were completed under the direction of a Swiss physician named Merveilleux. To further the study of mathematics in his realm, the king brought three Italian mathematicians to Portugal, Pe Francesco Musarra, Domenico Capaci and Giovanni Battista Carbonne (the latter two trained members of the Jesuit Order), along with their finely-manufactured and calibrated instruments.<sup>15</sup>

One episode in particular illustrates the erudite quality and ambition harbored in the Portuguese king's mind. In 1716, the twenty-seven-year-old Dom João V suffered from a spate of depressions brought about when it became apparent that he could not realize one of his chief aspirations: to undertake a grand tour of Europe, seeing all the capitals and cultural centers he had come to know vicariously through books, diplomatic reports and visitors to his court. His was a bitter disappointment. The youthful monarch had spent weeks reviewing travel literature and drawing up prospective itineraries, only to be thwarted in the end by his advisors, who represented to him that Portugal could not afford to support a monarch's entourage abroad, nor could the realm be governed from the road. The king felt the need to retire to his country estate in Vila Viçosa for several weeks to recover from the blow.<sup>16</sup>

There can be little doubt that Dom João V's cosmopolitan interests and precocious intellect led him, in the competitive context of

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The Role of the *Estrangeirados*" (Edinburgh, Scotland: Papers of the Third British North America Meeting, July 1996), network charts 1 and 2.

<sup>13</sup> Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V," p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, vol. V, pp. 407–417.

<sup>15</sup> Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V," pp. 17–18.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

his times, to desire that the Portuguese monarchy be modeled on that of the French Sun King. By emulating Louis XIV and underwriting extraordinary creative projects, he helped to compensate for the failure of his plans to travel across Europe. To assuage his disappointment, the king patronized the arts, sciences and public works. When prohibited from visiting Europe's wonders, he built wonders up around himself at home. The sovereign in Lisbon was fortunate in his timing. Brazilian gold and diamonds, and nothing else, gave Dom João V the wherewithal to realize his ambitions.<sup>17</sup> Had South American income been lacking from the national treasury, the *Época das Luzes* in Portugal would have been much less bright.

In short, Brazilian gold and diamonds fueled the Portuguese Enlightenment. Innumerable projects by architects, artisans and baroque plastic artists in eighteenth-century Portugal received the patronage of a state made wealthy by South American resources. These works, completed side-by-side with similarly-funded initiatives conducted by authors, scientists and natural philosophers—devotees of the Age of Reason all—helped fulfill Dom João V's desire and ambition to be the Iberian *rei sol*.<sup>18</sup> Without the nearly inexhaustible riches of Brazil, the Portuguese Enlightenment era would not have fallen out as it did. Royal patronage and largesse, by design, stimulated an outpouring of creative energy and innovation that has no parallel in the Portuguese past.

One of Dom João V's most public Enlightenment-influenced acts was the founding in 1720 of the Royal Academy of Portuguese History (Academia Real de História Portuguesa). Inspired by the creation of similar institutions in France (the Académie Française) and Spain (the Academia Española), the Portuguese monarch hoped with this initiative to place his own nation nearer to the same cultural level of rival kingdoms in Europe. The new institution was charged, first, "with recounting the ecclesiastical history of the realm" and then, afterwards, "to record all matters pertaining to the kingdom and its conquests."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Maxwell, "Eighteenth-Century Portugal," pp. 105–106. See also Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, vol. V, pp. 307–320.

<sup>18</sup> See Rui Bebiano, *D. João V, Rei-Sol* (Coimbra: Faculdade de Letres, 1984), pp. 111–121.

<sup>19</sup> Charter of the Academia Real de História Portuguesa (Lisbon: 1720), cited in Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, vol. V, p. 426.

The Academia Real de História Portuguesa was meant to act as a stimulus to research into bygone Portugal, to venerate the ancient Lusitanian race, and to celebrate the great acts of the nation's men, both on the Iberian Peninsula and in winning the overseas colonies.<sup>20</sup> The king expected the Academy to cast Portuguese history in the guise of a plan enacted by divine will, thereby justifying the absolutist monarchy Dom João V hoped to create. Yet its basic tenets were predicated on Enlightenment-inspired values—contemporaries celebrated the spirit of greater openness and systematic inquiry expressed in the Academy's charter. Regarding the founding of the Royal Academy of Portuguese History, Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão has written, "The environment was propitious for Dom João V to transplant to his realm these currents of the new [Enlightenment] mentality."<sup>21</sup> It is evident that, with his creation of this institution, the young king hoped to stimulate a movement toward greater reliance on reason and intellect in matters of public policy.

At about the same time as he chartered the Academia Real de História Portuguesa, interest in promoting the arts in Portugal prompted Dom João V to found and fund the Academy of Portuguese Fine Arts (*Accadèmia di Belle Arti Portoghese*) in Rome. The king established this institution to provide a haven for promising Portuguese artists, to whom the crown provided stipends to study with established masters in Italy. The painter Francisco Vieira de Matos (better known abroad as Vieira Lusitano), the sculptor José de Almeida, and the musicians João Rodrigues Esteves, António Teixeira and Francisco António de Almeida all travelled to Italy under royal patronage to hone their respective skills.<sup>22</sup> Dom João V also attracted talented artists to Portugal. The best known was undoubtedly the composer Domenico Scarlatti, from Naples, who made his home in Lisbon from 1720 to 1729. During his residence he directed the choir of the royal chapel; in time he would also head the musical seminary organized after the *Capela Real* became a Patriarchate.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout his reign, Dom João V devoted great efforts to the acquisition of books and manuscripts, most of which he ordered to be purchased abroad and returned to Portugal, there to be incul-

<sup>20</sup> Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, vol. V, pp. 426–428.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 426.

<sup>22</sup> Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V," p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

cated into libraries that the king had either founded or patronized. The great library that the king established at the Convent of Mafra in 1735, for example, grew to contain wonderfully diverse holdings, but it was initially conceived as a compendium of the works considered essential to a well-educated European mind during the Age of Reason. From the Vatican libraries in Rome, Dom João V ordered that manuscripts concerning Portugal be copied and sent to Lisbon; these were eventually collected into a two-hundred-twenty-two-volume set now housed at the Palácio da Ajuda library in Belém. Books purchased on royal warrant by diplomats in Paris, London, Amsterdam and Rome were assembled into a library of twenty thousand tomes kept in the “Salon of the Ambassadors” in the king’s residence at Lisbon. More than just a bibliophile; the king collected maps, sheet music, atlases, engravings and prints, as well, to round out his royal library holdings.<sup>24</sup>

King João V was also the patron of various projects that produced seminal works in Portuguese letters. For example, Rafael Bluteau wrote his *Vocabulário Portuguez e Latino*, one of the first dictionaries of the Portuguese language, with royal support between 1712 and 1721. A laudatory history of Portugal published in Paris in 1700 by the French historian Lequien de Neufville drew grateful recognition from the Portuguese crown in the form of an appointment for the author to the prestigious Order of Christ. Other Portuguese publishing projects—guides to Italian and Dutch grammar and a groundbreaking Anglo-Portuguese translation dictionary—reflect Dom João V’s worldly interest in promoting knowledge of foreign languages among his subjects, thereby facilitating trade and diplomacy.<sup>25</sup>

Royal patronage also extended to specific initiatives meant to improve conditions of medical training and practice inside Portugal. For example, as we have seen, Dom João V invited the Swiss physician Merveilleux to Lisbon, mainly to advise as a naturalist on matters of colonial and domestic flora and fauna. He owed his skills, of course, to his medical training and acumen.<sup>26</sup> Further, in 1730, the king sent a well-placed *fidalgó* advisor, the fourth Count of Ericeira—

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<sup>24</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, vol. V, pp. 407–408.

<sup>25</sup> Russell-Wood, “Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V,” p. 16.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

a follower and disseminator of rationalist thinking—to London to consult with Jacob de Castro Sarmiento. Although Castro Sarmiento was a New Christian who had left Portugal to avoid the Inquisition, the king overlooked this stigma to take advantage of his medical knowledge. Dom João V sought what he knew Castro Sarmiento advocated: a plan for the reform of medical education in Portugal's Jesuit-controlled universities. Ultimately, the king decided that Castro Sarmiento's plan would have to wait for a more propitious moment; the Jesuits were still too strong to be displaced, even by a crown initiative.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, this episode demonstrates the presence of a royal will to reform the medical profession in Portugal along rationalist, scientific lines.

Finally, to improve the quality of medical training available in Lisbon, Dom João V invited the celebrated Italian physician Bernardo Santucci to take up residence at his court. Two of Santucci's best students, Caetano Alberto and Santos Gato, went on to teach in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra. After exposure to Santucci's empirical methods, they become reform advocates themselves.<sup>28</sup>

Even with the king's great power and will to bring progressive changes to the nation he ruled, however, there were practical limits on the royal capacity—and desire—to attempt any rapid modernization of his subjects. *Realpolitik* in Portugal limited what the king could expect to accomplish during his reign. The legacy of the counter-Reformation was still too strong in Portugal for Dom João V to abrogate with a free hand the power of the church, conservative inquisitors or the ancient noble houses of the realm.<sup>29</sup> Powerful conservative countervailing forces would first need to be placated—Dom João V was not at liberty to undermine church authority by recognizing unorthodox beliefs originating in Protestant Europe. Nor did he wish to; as an advocate of divine-right monarchy, Dom João V understood that the church justified and upheld his own authority to rule. The values of a north-European Age of Reason, therefore, could not simply be imposed on the country; they would have

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<sup>27</sup> Richard Barnett, "Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento and Sephardim in Medical Practice in 18th-Century London," *Transactions of the Jewish Society of London*, XXVII (1982), p. 87.

<sup>28</sup> Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World in the Age of Dom João V," p. 18.

<sup>29</sup> Carvalho dos Santos, "O Século XVIII e o Absolutismo Português," p. 63.

to be introduced piecemeal.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, during the reign of Dom João V, we see clear evidence of Enlightenment values gaining a foothold on the Portuguese intellectual landscape.

*The King's Personal Secretary Alexandre de Gusmão*

Enlightenment inclinations in the royal administration of Portugal during the first half of the eighteenth-century came not only from the king, but also from some of his closest advisors. One figure in particular bears mentioning. Alexandre de Gusmão was one of the primary proponents of the new ideas then circulating in other European capitals. He became a favorite of Dom João V and spent almost his entire working life in the service of the Portuguese crown. Gusmão was the king's personal secretary (*Secretário do Rei*) for nearly a quarter-century, from 1728 until Dom João's death in 1750.<sup>31</sup> Today he is remembered as a man of great political vision whose view encompassed the whole of the Portuguese overseas empire, as well as the state's dealings with the other European powers. As the closest secretary to the monarch, Gusmão played a very important role in making internal policies for the realm; he held great influence over the King's decisions.<sup>32</sup>

Alexandre de Gusmão had been born to a middle-class family in Brazil in 1695, but he came to Portugal to study law at the *Universidade de Coimbra* from 1708 to 1710; he would later finish his education in Paris with a bachelor's degree in law from the Sorbonne. In 1714, Dom João V nominated Gusmão, then aged nineteen, to serve as secretary to the ambassador on a special Portuguese diplomatic mission to the French court at Versailles. The purpose of this mission was to resolve a treaty dispute with Spain over territories in South America bordering on Brazil. While in France, Gusmão moved in the highest diplomatic and social circles, learning statecraft, but also

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<sup>30</sup> José Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, 8 vols. (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1993), vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, pp. 287–299; 341–360.

<sup>31</sup> Carvalho dos Santos, "O Século XVIII e o Absolutismo Português," p. 74.

<sup>32</sup> Maria Inácio Colaço Santinho Cunha, "Alexandre de Gusmão: Diplomata e Secretário de D. João V," in *Comunicações apresentados ao Congresso Internacional Portugal no Século XVIII de D. João V à Revolução Francesa* (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos do Século XVIII, Universitaria Editora, 1991), p. 521.

absorbing the heady ideas of the incipient Age of Reason then current at Versailles. One of his particular mentors was Dom Luís da Cunha, one of the most important Portuguese diplomats of the era who, during a lifetime of service abroad, had cultivated a spirit of openness toward innovative modes of *Iluminismo* thinking, so different from the reactionary currents that prevailed in his homeland. Gusmão returned from Paris a thoroughgoing *estrangeirado*, steeped in such early Enlightenment values as open inquiry and empirical knowledge.<sup>33</sup>

In long assignments abroad that saw him serve as “Agent of the [Portuguese] King” in both France (1717–1719) and the Holy See in Rome (1721–1728), Gusmão proved himself an able proponent of royal and state interests. In 1733 he began to handle all negotiated treaties having to do with Brazil, and in 1743 Dom João V appointed him to the top administrative body of the empire, the *Conselho Ultramarino* (Overseas Council).<sup>34</sup> This was, of course, during the period of colonial Brazil’s unparalleled ascendancy in Portuguese state finance; enormous diamond and gold exports supported all crown expenditures, which in turn made every act of international negotiation regarding Brazil a matter of extraordinary importance.<sup>35</sup> Gusmão, after finding a solution to an impasse with the Spanish that had lasted for years, negotiated the final version of the landmark 1750 Treaty of Madrid, definitively establishing the boundaries of Brazil.<sup>36</sup>

Alexandre de Gusmão enjoyed an exceptionally close relationship with the king and had his every confidence. He used this position to advocate for programs that would put into practical motion some of the enlightenment-era concepts he had gleaned during his time living abroad. For example, in order to strengthen the state in relation to European rivals, Gusmão advocated a comprehensive program to develop internal manufactures, agriculture and education in continental Portugal. Gusmão also wished thereby to countermand what he saw as a debilitating dependence on luxury goods and labor imported from abroad. He criticized the readiness with which the Portuguese nobility and aristocracy became dependent on foreign-

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 521–522.

<sup>35</sup> Godinho, “Portugal and her Empire, 1680–1720,” pp. 533–536.

<sup>36</sup> Cunha, “Alexandre de Gusmão,” p. 522.

produced commodities, an attitude which Gusmão worried permeated the country.<sup>37</sup>

*The Inquisitor General: Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello*

During Dom João V's entire long reign, one name in particular is associated with the leadership of the General Council of the Portuguese Inquisition. For more than forty years, the Inquisitor General was Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello.<sup>38</sup> More than any other man, he shaped Inquisition policies during the first half of the eighteenth century—his ideas and personal conceits set the tone for the peak years of Portuguese “witch-hunting” by the Inquisition that included an unprecedented persecution of peasant folk healers.

Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello was, above all, a man of a world in the midst of a profound transition; his own intellect spanned the gap between a medieval mindset, with its virtually unquestioned spiritual faith in the church, and the Enlightenment's requirement that all assertions have demonstrable proofs. By experience, too, he lived in both spheres; though the chief officer of the Inquisition, the guardian of Catholic orthodoxy and tradition, he maintained friendly, reciprocal links with some of the most outspoken Portuguese advocates of enlightenment-era rationalism and intellectual openness. Internally, he must have grappled with these two worlds often during his long tenure leading the Holy Office in Portugal.

Dom Nuno was inspired by the spirit of Enlightenment rationalism that emerged during his youth among Portuguese elites. It is easy to become convinced of a scenario wherein Dom Nuno, the Inquisitor General, influenced by the many respected trained physicians and surgeons working within the Holy Office, would willingly, even enthusiastically, approve of a policy aimed at ridding Portugal of the undesirable, backward practices of peasants who continued to engage in magic. Among that group, popular healers were singled out as a particular priority, not only because of the clear and present vested interests of *médicos* who worked for the Holy Office, but

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



because the Inquisitor General was himself educated and socialized to have a powerful bias against illicit popular healers.

The evidence to support these claims is chiefly inferential but powerful nonetheless. Within five years of Dom Nuno's appointment as *Inquisidor Geral*, the rate of Holy Office trials against *mágicos* and *curandeiros* began to rise. Forty years of the most intensive witch-hunting in Portuguese history followed, a very large proportion of the victims of which—some historians say a majority<sup>39</sup>—were unlicensed folk healers. All of this activity occurred during Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello's tenure. Moreover, Inquisition trials against *mágicos* and *curandeiros* diminished abruptly after the appointment of his successor.<sup>40</sup>

During his tenure as Chief Inquisitor between 1707 and 1750, Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello was complicit, or at least cooperative, in an organized Inquisition crackdown on popular healers. One motive was to reduce the influence of unlicensed superstitious healers among the general Portuguese populace. A reconstruction of the details of his education and intellectual influences helps to explain his actions and policies as *Inquisidor Geral*.

He was born on 8 December 1664 into an illustrious noble family, the Cunhas, whose Spanish and Portuguese branches had been providing sons to the highest royal offices at home in Iberia and in the colonies for generations.<sup>41</sup> He was the third son of Luís da Cunha de Ataíde, seventh Lord of Povolide, Castro Verde and Paradela, although he lived with his family in the region of Coimbra. Dom Nuno's father was also a Knight of the Order of Christ and an approved *familiar* of the Holy Office. Consequently, in his youth Dom Nuno was perpetually in contact with important courtiers. He was raised and educated in an environment of nobility, being groomed for an elevated government or ecclesiastical position.

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<sup>39</sup> Review statements to this effect in Francisco Bethencourt's *O Imaginário da Magia: feitiçarias, saladores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 176; 302–307. See, too, José Pedro Paiva's *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas': Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Edital Notícia, 1997), p. 208. Dr. Paiva's earlier work, *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas . . . na Diocese de Coimbra (1650–1740)* (Coimbra: Minerva, 1992), is also instructive on the question of how many accused magic users were practitioners of superstitious remedies.

<sup>40</sup> See Paiva's tables in *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 208–213. Also see the argument and tables below, presented in Chapters VIII and IX.

<sup>41</sup> Braga, p. 25.

From age sixteen to twenty-one, Dom Nuno was educated at the Royal College of São Paulo in Coimbra, the preparatory academy which young men frequented before taking university examinations or matriculating to a university-level course of study. Dom Nuno was apparently an accomplished student; he passed his baccalaureate exams at the University of Coimbra in 1685, shortly after leaving the Royal College of São Paulo. With an undergraduate degree (*licenciatura*) in the liberal arts, Dom Nuno was free to continue at Coimbra in pursuit of a second degree in canon law, which he completed in 1691. Meanwhile, in 1688 at the age of twenty-four, he accepted the post of canon, an administrative assistant to the bishop at Coimbra's cathedral, or *Sé*.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, Dom Nuno's upbringing and educational training were, because of his exposure to well-travelled nobles and a curriculum of the classics at school, as cosmopolitan and broadening as Portuguese domestic society could offer at the time. Still, as a young man, his intellectual formation was also influenced by the rigid framework of orthodoxy-bound codified church canons, as well as by the position within the church hierarchy which he had assumed. This dichotomy would set a pattern for his life, and for the decisions he would later make as the chief administrator of the *Santo Ofício* regarding questions where faith and orthodoxy clashed with the exigencies of Enlightenment rationalism.

Later in 1691, another event occurred which exercised a major influence on young Dom Nuno's thinking. His paternal uncle, the Count of Pontéval, was made a special royal envoy and, in the wake of the Glorious Revolution that brought William of Orange and Mary Stuart to the British throne, sent to London. Dom Nuno, at twenty-seven years of age, travelled abroad for the first time, acting as his uncle's assistant. He accompanied the Count overland as far as Paris, where the envoy was to encounter the displaced Queen Catherine of Bragança, Portuguese wife of England's Charles II, and escort her back to Lisbon. The journey had an immediate and lasting effect on Dom Nuno. At the Parisian court, he met—or became familiar with the ideas of—some of the most prominent thinkers of northern Europe and felt for the first time the influence of a greater intellectual openness that prevailed outside his own country. From

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

this point forward, he took a marked interest in the currents of thought flowing through other parts of Europe. These he kept abreast of in part through relationships and correspondences founded on this trip.<sup>43</sup>

While he was away, Dom Nuno's petition to become a *familiar* of the Holy Office had been granted.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, upon his return to Portugal, Dom Nuno entered the service of the Inquisition. The Inquisitor General at the time, Dom Veríssimo de Lancastre (who had, as a young priest, officiated at Dom Nuno's baptism), personally requested Dom Nuno's services, naming him a *promotor*—a prosecuting legal advisor—of the Coimbra tribunal.<sup>45</sup> He would remain at this post only a short time, until 1692, when he resigned to return to the cathedral in Coimbra, assuming an administrative position under the bishop. The following year, however, he was called to Lisbon to fill a vacancy in the Holy Office's central administrative body, the General Council (*Conselho Geral*), working as a deputy on Inquisitor General Dom Veríssimo de Lancastre's staff. (Recall that, at this time, the *paracere Dos Saludadores* was a fresh document, having been promulgated by the General Council only two years before.)

During the next seven years Dom Nuno worked in the Portuguese capital, all the while becoming better known in Lisbon society and at court. In 1696 the king, Dom Pedro II, publicly recognized Dom Nuno's service and value to the crown by conferring upon him a knighthood in the Order of Christ.<sup>46</sup> This was a lofty honor, and reveals the degree to which Dom Nuno had penetrated into the consciousness and confidence of the Portuguese court. Four years later, on the Ides of March, 1700, Dom Nuno was tapped to fill the junior third chair of the Holy Office tribunal functioning in Lisbon. He was promoted steadily over the succeeding five years, from third to second to first chair, all the while learning his role and function at increasingly higher planes within the Inquisition hierarchy.<sup>47</sup>

His correspondence for this period shows, however, that Dom Nuno was careful to maintain ties with his friends in Coimbra (particularly with those of the academic community at the University)

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 1, no. 12, fl. 1.

<sup>45</sup> Braga, p. 28.

<sup>46</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria da Ordem de Cristo; *livro* 60, fls. 163–164.

<sup>47</sup> Braga, pp. 28–30.

and among the learned diplomats and courtiers he had met abroad. These letters demonstrate that Dom Nuno felt an internal tension, as he gradually became an integral part of the far-reaching Inquisition machine, between the learned world that he had touched upon in Paris, whose enlightened ideas were just beginning to be felt inside Portugal, and the highly regimented, tradition-bound administrative system of the Holy Office.<sup>48</sup> Equally certain, though, is that he found the means to reconcile this potential conflict within himself, as his next six decades of service to his state and church are marked by a balance struck between the official actions required by his leadership position within a reactionary institution and his simultaneous pursuit of personal intellectual interests within the pan-European elite culture of rationalism and Enlightenment.

With the ascension of Dom João V to the throne following King Pedro II's death in 1706, Dom Nuno, like all courtiers in Portugal, maneuvered for recognition under the new regime. His efforts were rewarded on 6 October 1707, when King João V made Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello his choice for Portugal's new Chief Inquisitor, filling the vacancy left by the death of Dom Frei José de Lancastre (*Inquisidor Geral* from 20 October 1693).<sup>49</sup> Dom Nuno, at forty-two years of age, began a period of service to the Holy Office that would last forty-three years.<sup>50</sup>

In time, he would also be named to a variety of other important government or advisory posts. Among the most important of these are the following: In 1707, he was made Councilor of State and Prime Minister of *Despacho* (Customs and Port Duties), positions wherein he was responsible for administering policies regarding commerce and crown revenue—one of the most important fiscal posts of the realm. Five years later, in 1712, he was designated one of Portugal's national cardinals, charged with travelling to Rome to vote in the selection of a new pope.<sup>51</sup> He undertook this journey in 1721, giving him a further opportunity to explore his intellectual interests outside Portugal. The following year, after he had concluded his duties with the College of Cardinals in Rome, King João V

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha, *Os Arquivos da Inquisição* (Lisbon: Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, 1990), p. 302.

<sup>50</sup> Braga, pp. 31–32.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

dispatched him to Paris on a mission of state diplomacy. There he had an audience with Louis XV and the Duc de Orléans.<sup>52</sup>

Along with his administrative duties to the Holy Office, Roman Church and Council of State, Dom Nuno the Cardinal and Chief Inquisitor was known among his peers for his active participation in learned discussions with acquaintances at court. For example, the *Gazeta de Lisboa* noted in 1715 that, at a conference organized at the palace of the Apostolic *Nuncio* in Lisbon to discuss the Heresy of Nestor at Constantinople in 431, Dom Nuno joined with great interest in the discussions held by a rarefied academic assembly.<sup>53</sup>

In court circles it was also known that he corresponded with friends serving abroad as diplomats, requesting information about prevailing intellectual currents beyond Portugal, as well as copies of the new books that explored these rationalist trends. The range of subjects of Dom Nuno's bibliophilic inquiries was as diverse as his correspondence with persons knowledgeable about his many political, scientific and cultural interests. Because they were important to the execution of his role as an advisor to the crown, but also because of his natural curiosity, Dom Nuno kept abreast of developments in European diplomacy, military technology, political theory and practice, theology and divergent religious ideologies, as well as matters of science and culture across Europe. Further, he was capable of exchanging letters dealing in extraordinary detail with the arcane issues of these fields. Through carefully cultivated contacts, Dom Nuno was able to explore and maintain his own interest in these subjects.<sup>54</sup> However, as Dom Nuno's biographer Maria Luísa Braga notes incisively:

During the eighteenth century generally, and specifically during the reign of D. João V, the tenor of debates and discussions continued to exhibit a theological form, and the intense religiosity of the epoch quelled the diffusion of or interest in new interpretations. It was of course natural that the Inquisitor General would want to maintain a distance from all disturbing ideologies, in order to avoid any alteration of official Catholicism.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39–48.

<sup>53</sup> Cited in Braga, p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* (author's translation).

Still, the Chief Inquisitor/Cardinal is known to have maintained correspondences with a range of people who subscribed to a spectrum of Enlightenment perspectives that the prevailing wisdom at court considered too progressive for broad consumption in Portugal during the first half of the eighteenth century. Consequently, these views were, if available in print outside Portugal, carefully controlled within Portugal, and not generally available for circulation within Portuguese society at large. Fittingly (though with some irony, given the Chief Inquisitor's intellectual interests), it was the Holy Office that held responsibility for the censorship of printed materials entering Portugal; Inquisition *familiars* of the Royal Censorship Board regularly boarded foreign ships and entered private homes looking for banned texts.<sup>56</sup>

In his capacity of Inquisitor General, Dom Nuno was expected to request information about and copies of potentially dangerous books; the Holy Office was responsible for compiling lists of banned texts and controlling their entry into the country. Dom Nuno, however, used his position to obtain and read such texts; he even complained privately that such books could not be had in Lisbon.<sup>57</sup> Through such behavior and comments, Dom Nuno displays the remarkable duality of his intellectual life brought on by his professional circumstances. As an enlightenment-era thinker, Dom Nuno delighted in the intellectual stimulation that rationalist ideas provided but, as a proponent and agent of both crown and Inquisition policy, he willingly enforced laws restricting broad access to those ideas because he thought that they could prove disruptive to continued church and state control within Portugal. Further, his persistent interest in allegedly dangerous foreign doctrines reveals a clear (and common) elitist bias: what he felt he could read without danger to the *status quo* in Portugal differed substantially from what he would have allowed commoners to read. Dom Nuno considered elites to be, apparently, too restricted by their social and professional positions to use subversive modern concepts to disrupt the hierarchy of power within Portugal.

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<sup>56</sup> Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe; Studies in Sources and Methods* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), pp. 89–90. For Portuguese Inquisition record collections that document these nautical visitations, see Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha, *Os Archivos da Inquisição* (Lisbon: Archivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, 1990), pp. 206, 251 and 291.

<sup>57</sup> Braga, pp. 36–37.

The one exception to Dom Nuno's practical elite bias seems to have come in the field of medicine, where rationalist ideas could be employed to increase the status of conventional physicians, thus reinforcing the social hierarchy while improving the health of the Portuguese citizenry. For this reason, perhaps, he permitted the Holy Office to pursue prosecutions against illicit popular healers during his tenure of office.

That Dom Nuno should have contact with perpetrators of unorthodox ideas appeared in the eyes of some members of the court mildly scandalous. In 1735, for example, another of Dom João V's advisors surreptitiously notified the king of the ongoing "good relations" between the Chief Inquisitor and Alexandre de Gusmão, the king's personal secretary.<sup>58</sup> Gusmão, his outlook shaped by Enlightenment openness, supported the reform of Portuguese society on all fronts, from a reduction of the power of the Inquisition to attack converted Jews, to a liberalization of the censorship laws, to a proscription of the Jesuits' oppressive power over the curriculum at the University of Coimbra.<sup>59</sup>

Inquisitor General Dom Nuno was revealed to have maintained a long correspondence with Gusmão, and to continue to receive him regularly as a guest in his home. Of course, the warning to Dom João V was superfluous; this association was well known to the crown. The effect of this friendship was to give Gusmão a certain immunity in the face of frequent attacks on his character or intellect by his many enemies, especially those within the Holy Office who sought to silence Gusmão's strident advocacy for reform by accusing him of being a crypto-Jew. For the Cardinal and Inquisitor General, this exchange provided a valuable source of information about learned developments abroad—filtered as it was through the prism of Gusmão's widely divergent views—as well as the pleasure and stimulation of conversation with a man possessed of a first-rate, well-informed and well-travelled mind.<sup>60</sup> In addition, Gusmão functioned as an important conduit between the king and the Chief Inquisitor, exchanging

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>59</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge: Eighteenth Century Portugal and the New Sciences," (Delphi, Greece: Papers of the conference, "The Transmission of Scientific Ideas to the Countries of the European Periphery during the Enlightenment," 23–27 July, 1995), pp. 6–8.

<sup>60</sup> Braga, p. 53.

information and helping to coordinate policy between the crown and Holy Office.

Another of Dom Nuno's controversial friends was Dom Francisco Xavier de Meneses, Fourth Count of Ericeira.<sup>61</sup> Ericeira was fortunate to be a royal favorite; he advised the king on many matters regarding state initiatives in education and the sciences during the first half of the eighteenth century. One of Ericeira's particular concerns was the reform of medical education within Portugal. To that end, as mentioned above, Dom João V sent him to London in 1731 to confer with expatriate physician Jacob de Castro Sarmiento.<sup>62</sup> Although Dom Nuno had contact with the Count primarily in constrained court society, Ericeira's thinking nevertheless influenced him. In his diary, Ericeira fondly remembered dining and conversing with the Inquisitor General.<sup>63</sup>

Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha, then, can be linked through Gusmão, Ericeira and King João V to most of the important personalities of the Portuguese Enlightenment. In a literal sense, the Inquisitor General himself was at the center of the movement for intellectual modernization in what non-Portuguese contemporaries often assumed to be the most backward country in western Europe. For example, Dom Nuno da Cunha consorted with people who knew the above-mentioned Luís da Cunha and Luís António Verney. The Chief Inquisitor was also only one or two degrees of separation removed from all the important reforming physicians noted in the previous chapter: Castro Sarmiento, Ribeiro Sanches, Sachetti Barbosa and Manuel Gomes de Lima. It is almost inconceivable that the ideas of these medical advocates did not influence Dom Nuno, improving his disposition toward medical reform<sup>64</sup>

Another circle of the Inquisitor General's acquaintances can be established within the Holy Office's organizational structure. Dom Nuno da Cunha was never more than one degree of separation from the very men who were most directly involved with prosecuting popular healers. For example, the head of the Holy Office would have

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<sup>61</sup> Simões, et al., "Constructing Knowledge," pp. 7–8.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Barnett, "Dr. Jacob de Castro Sarmiento," p. 87. See also A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Edições Ágora, 1972), vol. 1, pp. 552–553. See also Chapter IV, below.

<sup>63</sup> Braga, p. 55.

<sup>64</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution," network charts 1 and 2.



had regular professional interaction with Inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu, who served on the Holy Office tribunals established both in Lisbon and Coimbra. António Ribeiro de Abreu led the panels of inquisitors who adjudicated dozens of *curandeiro* cases between about 1712 and 1732.<sup>65</sup> Through him, the Chief Inquisitor can be linked to contemporary physician António de Abreu Bacellar, a professor of medicine at the University of Coimbra, Holy Office *familiar* and the official *médico* of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons. Inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu and António de Abreu Bacellar worked together in Coimbra beginning in 1718, but they had known each other since childhood. (For that matter, they had probably known the future Inquisitor General Dom Nuno as a young man, too, since they were all contemporaries and peers in the same small city).<sup>66</sup> Moreover, António de Abreu Bacellar's son, Manuel de Abreu Bacellar, also a Coimbra-trained licensed physician and *familiar*, was at the time serving as the jailer of the same Holy Office prisons where his father held a post. This state of affairs endured from approximately 1707 to the 1730s, precisely at the time when the tempo of Inquisition prosecutions against illicit folk healers reached its highest pitch.<sup>67</sup>

That Dom Nuno da Cunha was both aware of contemporary advancements in medical technology in northern Europe and sympathetic to the need for reform in this field within Portugal is made clear by the following episode. During the period 1740 to 1745, Dom Nuno da Cunha was extremely concerned with the health of the king and supported a decision to send him north to the spa town of Caldas da Rainha to take the waters there. The Inquisitor General even volunteered to accompany him on the journey. His diary relates that King João V had resolved, prompted by his own illness, to send some Portuguese university graduates to Paris to learn surgery. Dom Nuno's diary reveals that he had discussed this proposal with the king and had championed the idea. Dom Nuno sug-

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<sup>65</sup> Inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu participated as a judge in at least twenty trials conducted by the Coimbra tribunal against sixteen different accused popular healers, four of whom were tried twice, between 1718 and 1736. See ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 33; 6305; 6315; 6515; 7135; 7136; 7300; 7346; 7779; 7827; 8307; 8699; 8899; 9545; and 10011. See Chapter VI, below.

<sup>66</sup> Coimbra's population in the beginning of the eighteenth century was approximately ten thousand souls. See Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, vol. V, p. 352.

<sup>67</sup> More details regarding these tight interconnections can be found in Chapters VI and VIII, below.

gested that, to make the best public use of the project, the surgeons should be attached to the University of Coimbra Faculty of Medicine upon their return, and that the University was to provide for their support and maintenance while they were away. The driving need behind this idea was to train someone for the Chair of Surgery at Coimbra, which at that time lacked the services of any instructor capable of filling it.<sup>68</sup>

In her recent history of the Portuguese Inquisition, Maria Luísa Braga characterized the role of the Chief Inquisitor in relationship to the crown in these words:

In sum, Dom Nuno da Cunha was trained in theology but lived in the world of absolute monarchy, a system that he supported and was bound to uphold. He lived in an age of conflicts between Enlightenment rationalism and the exigencies of protecting the state religion and church through the policies of Inquisition control. He controlled the Inquisition, but was also deeply involved through his other appointments with the functioning of the state . . . It appears fair to confirm that the Inquisition was *not* an instrument of king João V, but that there existed beforehand a situation of compromise between the Inquisitor General and the king, inside the framework of absolute monarchy, with the force to impede that which could affect the unity of the realm.<sup>69</sup>

Upon a closer consideration of this chief administrator of the Holy Office, then, a picture emerges of a man who was conditioned by his social position and educational training to be intolerant of the healing tradition which *curandeiros* and *saludadores* represented. Naturally, as a Catholic of steadfast faith trained in canon law and bound by his position as Chief Inquisitor, Dom Nuno would conduct any program of oppression against healers from within the bounds of church orthodoxy, finding abundant grounds for the Holy Office to prosecute healers in existing ecclesiastical law. These regulations had been outlined in the official Inquisition by-laws then in force, the *Regimento* promulgated in 1640.<sup>70</sup>

Together with his deputies and the corps of *familiares* who worked for them (many of whom, of course, were trained, state-licensed

<sup>68</sup> Cited in Braga, p. 56.

<sup>69</sup> Braga, pp. 65–66.

<sup>70</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reynos de Portugal. Ordenado por mandado do Ilustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor Bispo Dom Francisco de Castro, Inquisidor Geral do Concelho de Estado de Sua Magestade* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640), Livro III, Título XIV, §§ 1–9.

medical practitioners), Dom Nuno's administration developed a substantially consistent, uniform policy toward popular healers during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. One may argue that this was merely a *de facto* policy—not premeditated; just the product of convergent circumstances. But the fact remains: either by design or merely in effect, the Holy Office under Dom Nuno's direction implemented a policy which resulted in the suspension of a one-hundred-fifty-year period of relative tolerance, albeit un-proclaimed and unofficial, on the part of the Inquisition toward folk healers. This was replaced by a fifty-year period of markedly increased prosecutions against practitioners of folk remedies, nearly the whole of which occurred during Dom Nuno's tenure as *Inquisidor Geral*.

Further, the apparent purposes of this policy are absolutely consistent with the outlook of an enlightened *Inquisidor Geral* and his learned subordinates who had been influenced by the tenets of rationalism, but who nonetheless found themselves conflicted by their adherence to Catholicism's strict orthodoxy regarding magic and superstitious practices. Their goals, therefore, were twofold: the persecution of popular healers was an attempt not simply to eliminate *curandeiros* for the spiritual threat they posed to good Catholics, but had the additional purpose of trying to eliminate a threat to empirical truth and good science, as well.

For the licensed physicians, surgeons and barbers working as *familiares* within the Holy Office, popular healers constituted a more worldly immediate concern. To them, *curandeiros* represented professional competition—a subversive long-term threat to their material well-being—as well as an anti-intellectual philosophical threat to the newly-rationalized theoretical underpinnings of their profession. In either case—and these motivations are, in the end, inseparable—practitioners of conventional medicine correctly identified folk healers as an impediment to the successful growth and development of the state-authorized, scientific medical profession, as well as the acceptance of that profession among the Portuguese populace. On those grounds, *médico/familiares* endeavored to discredit popular medicine and eliminate its practice within the Portuguese Inquisition's jurisdiction. Because this strategy was consistent with—and reconcilable to—the Enlightenment-influenced dispositions of both the monarch and Inquisitor General, lower-echelon *familiares* met with no opposition to their stratagem within the Holy Office.

To a practicing Catholic of the elite classes, even during the Enlightenment era, *curandeiros* were considered dangerous for two reasons. First, a vulgar healer's methods were repugnant to Christians because, according to prevailing orthodox theology, he must by definition draw on diabolical power in order for his cures to have any efficacy.<sup>71</sup> To continue to allow such activities to go unchecked inside Portugal's towns and across the countryside ran counter to the most basic purpose of the Holy Office, however enlightened. Practitioners of magic, whether the inquisitors believed them to be genuinely motivated by Satan or not, threatened to tempt, mislead, or at best distract, the Catholic faithful among the peasantry from their relationship with the mother church. By extension, purveyors of magical spells and remedies, be they merely superstitious charlatans or true representatives of the devil on earth, could disrupt a Christian's path to God's kingdom. Sorcerers and witches were therefore a cancer in the body of Christendom. True Christians lived under a perpetual biblical mandate to eliminate witches from their midst.<sup>72</sup>

Apart from extirpating alleged diabolical agents from Portuguese society, the more circumspect and perspicacious Inquisition officials may have seen that a series of trials against popular healers could have another salutary effect: discrediting a *curandeiro's* wrong-headed healing methods in the mind of any peasant inclined to be his patron would, many inquisitors certainly hoped, alter the commoners' bias in favor of a modern, rationalist worldview. This point is made explicit in Portuguese Inquisition documents which denigrate popular healing practices, wherein the inquisitors argue that they favor the official state- and church-sanctioned "scientific medicine" taught by elites at Coimbra precisely because its phenomenological progress, they assert, had been revealed and directed by God.<sup>73</sup> The best expression of this official attitude is the Holy Office policy essay *Dos*

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<sup>71</sup> This point is well-defined in the Portuguese Inquisition policy statement on popular healers: *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *Livro* 269, pp. 15–24. The theological justification for this position is much older, however, dating to the middle ages. See Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Press, 1995), pp. 138–141.

<sup>72</sup> References found in Leviticus 20:6 and Exodus 22:18. See Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1980), pp. 52–54; and Levack, pp. 105, 113 and 122.

<sup>73</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *Livro* 269, fls. 15–24.

*Saludadores*. Not incidentally, by 1719 when this document was entered into the Holy Office General Council records (just as healers and other *mágicos* was being tried with renewed vigor), a significant percentage of the Inquisition's employees had been trained in—indeed practiced as their primary vocation—conventional rationalized medicine.<sup>74</sup> Their numbers within the institution continued to expand throughout the eighteenth century.

A final word regarding the two individuals in question and the chronology of folk healer prosecutions in Portugal: If we consider only the Holy Office trials of known *curandeiros* which fell between 1682 and 1777, nearly eighty percent of them occurred between 1709 and 1755, the period in which Inquisition policies fell under the direction of Inquisitor General Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello. (Although he died in 1750, a successor was not named until 1758; therefore, many of his policies continued to be in force for years after his death.) The reign of Portugal's first "enlightened despot," Dom João V, also deeply colored the first half of the eighteenth century. From 1707 to 1750, the king's values and interests profoundly shaped Inquisition policies.<sup>75</sup> In this chapter we have seen that the character and training of these two all-important men were perfectly consistent with a deliberate program to suppress popular superstition in the hope of supplanting it with a rational, modernist approach toward medicine and the other sciences. This was a policy to which the monarch and the Inquisitor General would not have objected; on the contrary, they obviously condoned the practice and may even have helped to shape it, once Holy Office prosecutions of *mágicos* were underway.

This chapter has been a study in two key personalities because, in a way, the whole of Portuguese history, even to the present day, can be expressed in terms of the influence of a small inter-connected group of individuals. Portugal is a diminutive nation. In the eighteenth century, a core of noble families numbering no more than a few thousand souls ruled a population of two to three million. Of those in the nobility, the number who were active at court or in

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<sup>74</sup> See José Viegas Torres, "Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, vol. 40 (Lisbon, October 1994), pp. 109–135.

<sup>75</sup> See Maxwell, "Eighteenth-Century Portugal . . .," pp. 103–133. See also Russell-Wood, "Portugal and the World . . .," pp. 5–15.

institutional positions of power—secular, ecclesiastical or both simultaneously—numbered in the low hundreds, generously reckoned. A handful of well-placed people, therefore, could exercise national influence. As the following chapter will demonstrate, this was as true at the level of the educated middle class—referring to the licensed physicians and surgeons whom the Holy Office employed—as it was of the members of the nobility and aristocracy who exercised a broader influence on national government policy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### INTERCONNECTIONS: THE INFLUENCE OF LICENSED PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS IN THE INQUISITION AND AT COURT DURING THE REIGN OF DOM JOÃO V

In 1670, the Coimbra-trained surgeon António Ferreira first published his medical treatise entitled *Luz Verdadeira, e recopilado exame de Toda a Cirurgia* (True Light, a brief examination of All Surgery). He dedicated the 1705 edition of this work, which had become widely known across Portugal and helped to establish Ferreira's reputation as one of that country's most skilled and recognized medical professionals of the seventeenth century, to the "august and royal majesty, the King Dom Pedro II." That he should do so comes as no surprise, as the king was his immediate patron and benefactor. The 1705 title page of his treatise identifies the author as a university graduate (*licenciado*), surgeon both of the king's chambers and to his elite guard, as well as a surgeon of the Royal Hospital of Todos-os-Santos in Lisbon.<sup>1</sup> Without a pause, the description goes on to say that Ferreira was a surgeon of the prisons of the Holy Office and *familiar* of that institution, and a surgeon of the *Tribunal da Relação*, one of the supreme judicial councils of the royal court. Final among his enumerated laurels was his membership as a "professed Knight of the Order of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ferreira had risen into very privileged ranks, indeed.

The experience of surgeon António Ferreira was by no means unique. Though he is a relatively early example of the trend, he typifies what in the eighteenth century would become a common occurrence. Increasingly, university-trained physicians and surgeons simultaneously held important posts at court, took up influential positions within the Inquisition, and maintained ties with an elite

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<sup>1</sup> A facsimile of the title page is found in Francis A. Dutra, "The Practice of Medicine in Early Modern Portugal: The Role and Social Status of the *Físico-mor* and the *Surgião-mor*," *Libraries, History, Diplomacy, and the Performing Arts: Essays in Honor of Carlton Sprague Smith*, ed. in Israel J. Katz (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press in cooperation with the New York Public Library, 1991), p. 162.

class of surgeons and doctors with whom they practiced and discussed ideas for change within the medical profession. During the reign of Dom João V, a handful of broadly connected medical men assumed key positions of far-ranging authority and simultaneous tri-lateral influence. These circumstances help to explain two concurrent eighteenth-century themes in Portuguese history: the effort to bring about substantive modernization of the medical profession, and the Inquisition's markedly increased persecution, using centuries-old statutes against the practice of witchcraft, of unlicensed popular healers. These circumstances are not mere coincidence.

This chapter will document the expanding role and influence of trained, licensed physicians and surgeons within the Portuguese Inquisition and at the royal court during the reign of João V (1706–1750). The period in question saw a significant influx of university-trained doctors and surgeons into the paid ranks of the Inquisition, where they worked as *familiares*—non-ecclesiastic employees, informants and lower echelon functionaries—and as resident physicians and surgeons in the Inquisition's prisons (where one of their concurrent functions was the supervision of interrogation sessions conducted with the use of torture). Particularly telling are the cases which come to us from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra and the Royal Hospital of Todos-os-Santos in Lisbon, where doctors trained at or even teaching medicine in those institutions maintained very close links with the Inquisition, often holding important positions within both organizations simultaneously. During the same period, professional physicians from Coimbra or the Todos-os-Santos Hospital held significant, potentially influential positions at court, serving as personal doctors or surgeons to the royal family or to specific noble houses. These physicians, too, were also frequently in the employ of the Inquisition.

### *The Role of Licensed Medical Practitioners within the Inquisition*

Trained physicians and surgeons found a comfortable place within the hierarchy of the Holy Office, where their particular skills were essential to the day-to-day functioning of Inquisition business. Their numbers within the organization were always relatively small, limited by the few official medical posts open to them, until the late seventeenth century, when employment as a *familiar* became more



fashionable among ambitious men of the growing learned professional class in Portugal.<sup>2</sup> The earliest association of medical professionals with the Inquisition stemmed from the need to have a doctor resident in or attached officially to the Inquisition prisons. Each regional tribunal in Portugal—Lisbon, Évora and Coimbra—maintained its own facilities for the incarceration of prisoners awaiting trial or exile, or for the imprisonment of those serving sentences after being convicted of a wide variety of crimes. Prisons being notoriously unhealthy places, and the Holy Office being in some measure sensitive to its responsibility for the health of persons held under its jurisdiction, the need for approved medical personnel attached to the Inquisition *cárceres* was manifest.

The 1640 *Regimento* of the Portuguese Inquisition, the primary manual of regulations which governed every function of that organization for 134 years, until 1774 (when the *Regimento* was revised in accordance with Pombaline reforms), provided specifically for the appointment of designated professional medical Inquisition staff: one doctor, one surgeon, and a barber in each city where a tribunal of the Holy Office resided (though in practice inquisitors might call for medical expertise on any other licensed healers who were *familiars*).<sup>3</sup> Medical officials were chosen according to the rigorous standards applied to any Inquisition employee—all physicians, surgeons and barbers who wished to work for the Inquisition first had to submit to the process of becoming a *familiar* of the Holy Office. Such a vetting process involved an intensive background check to verify that the applicant was of pure blood, untainted by that of ancestors who had been converted to Christianity. Further, the applicant had to be of sound moral and social standing; to ascertain this, the Inquisition took depositions from friends and professional associates who vouched for the character of the applicant. Candidates endured an obligatory investigation of their sources of income, mental stability, civic virtue and moral reputation. Moreover, the wives or fiancées, parents and

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<sup>2</sup> See José Viegas Torres, “Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil,” *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 40: 109–135 (Lisbon, October 1994), pp. 127–135.

<sup>3</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reynos de Portugal. Ordenado por mandado do Ilustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor Bispo Dom Francisco de Castro, Inquisidor Geral do Concelho de Estado de Sua Magestade* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640), *Livro I, Titulo 1, § 1.*

grandparents of would-be Inquisition functionaries had to undergo similar examinations to prove, in accordance with the “purity of blood” requirement, that their lineage was free of any New Christian taint.<sup>4</sup>

Working inside the Inquisition prisons, of course, implied access to and knowledge of Inquisition methods; strict secrecy always shrouded the internal functioning of the organization, and all employees were bound alike by the terms of their positions to maintain a unified front against prying outsiders.<sup>5</sup> *Familiars* were paid generally by the day or on a fee basis for their services. Professional medical personnel, however, drew an additional salary, the amount of which was set at the time of their appointment and seems to have varied according to the personal circumstances of each appointee.<sup>6</sup>

From the physicians’ point of view, initiating an association with the Holy Office was especially desirable for other reasons. Becoming a *familiar* brought many tangible social benefits. Employees of the Inquisition were exempt from military service, general taxation, and from the requisitioning of their lodgings by the government for the use of troops or officials. *Familiars* were shown special favor in the distribution of fundamental consumer goods, such as bread, meat, fish, olive oil, wood and coal. Moreover, Inquisition functionaries lived beyond the reach of royal jurisdiction; they were answerable only to the law courts of the Holy Office. This was true whether an Inquisition employee was the accused or the plaintiff in a criminal trial, or if he were a defendant in a civil lawsuit.<sup>7</sup> These extraordinary perquisites annoyed the common citizenry, who protested Inquisition privileges steadily over the years of the Inquisition’s activity.

Perhaps it was this popular resentment that prompted the issue of a revised *Regimento* pertaining only to *familiars* in 1694. This brief statement, printed for public distribution (possibly as a handbill), further defined and restricted the rights of Inquisition civil employees with an explicit view toward minimizing friction between them and

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<sup>4</sup> Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies on Sources and Methods* (Dekalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), pp. 83–84.

<sup>5</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Titulo I*, § 7. See also “Regimento dos Familiares do Santo Officio” (Lisbon: Oficina de Miguel Manescal, 1694), British Library Manuscripts Division, Add. 20: 953, fls. 173–174.

<sup>6</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro II, Titulo XX*, § 4; *Livro II, Titulo XXI*, § 5. See also “Regimento dos Familiares do Santo Officio,” fls. 173–174.

<sup>7</sup> Henningsen and Tedeschi, p. 84.

the general public. Written prominently into the opening paragraphs is a caveat for *familiars* against immodest comportment and dress that “might result in prejudice against the *Santo Ofício*.” Inquisition employees were warned not to “aggravate or vex any person, on the pretext of [Holy Office] privileges . . . lest [that person] shall have hatred” for such behavior.<sup>8</sup> In particular, this publication warned that *familiars* could not receive special discounts from merchants or favors from royal officials who might have other business with the Holy Office. Beyond that, the document stipulated that *familiars* “could not accept any item, even if it be of little value” from members of the public, lest someone expect special consideration in return. For a *familiar* to do so would be to risk suspension from duty—and the consequent cessation of the privileges of office.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, such castigation did not reduce the demand for posts within the Holy Office; indeed, the opposite was true. Among *letrados*—educated elites such as lawyers, scholars and, of course, physicians—desire to become a *familiar* grew steadily, expanding enormously during the century from 1670 to 1770.<sup>10</sup> According to a valuable recent study by José Viegas Torres, the number of *familiars* employed by the Inquisition during this period grew by a factor greater than 4.5 times. During the decade from 1661 to 1670, there were a total of 478 *familiars* attached to the three tribunals of Lisbon, Évora and Coimbra; by contrast, 2252 *familiars* worked for the Holy Office during the decade 1761–1770.<sup>11</sup> Using the same decades, twenty-nine of the Inquisition’s 478 *familiars* were *letrados* during the earlier period; one hundred years later the number had grown to 260. In the period 1741 to 1750, the last decade of Dom João V’s reign, fully 11% (182 of 1639) of *familiars* were identified professionally as *letrados*, a sizable proportion of whom were *médicos*.<sup>12</sup>

Torres argues that the rising middle class in Portugal grasped the utility of a *familiar’s* credentials as a way to enhance their social status and gain practical social advantages. Increasingly, he says, the Inquisition became an institution that promoted the interests of the Old Christian bourgeoisie: learned professionals, state bureaucrats

<sup>8</sup> “Regimento dos Familiares do Santo Ofício,” fls. 173–174.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Torres, pp. 127–135.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

and urban merchants alike. Professional medical practitioners followed this trend like so many of their social peers, seeking to increase their status, participate in the Inquisition network and gain the perquisites of office consequent to being a *familiar*.

To lend a further dimension of understanding to this matter, consider the statistically significant number of all Portuguese physicians and surgeons who worked for the Inquisition in varying capacities during the reign of Dom João V. Portuguese historian of medicine Augusto da Silva Carvalho's massive eight-volume work, "*Dicionário dos Médicos e Cirurgiões Portugueses ou que Estiveram em Portugal*," an unpublished typescript with manuscript annotations completed in about 1940, lists alphabetically an estimated 12,000 medical practitioners who were active in Portugal between the thirteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. An examination of these volumes yielded approximately 2,100 listings for the period between 1690 and 1760. Of these, there were 1948 entries containing enough detailed information about the life of the named physician or surgeon to ascertain accurately whether or not he was a functionary of the Holy Office. Nearly 8% of those entries (150 of 1948) had acquired credentials as *famíliares* of the Inquisition.<sup>13</sup> While this cannot be considered a complete listing and we must allow for a sizable margin of error, these figures are reasonably consistent with those Torres offers for the number of *letrados* who became *famíliares* of the Inquisition during this period when the overall number of *famíliares* was also expanding. For a further check to give insight into this subject, a survey of the indexes for records of applications to the Holy Office, the *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, reveals that only approximately 4% of all those wishing to become *famíliares* during the first half of the eighteenth century were either licensed physicians, surgeons, barbers, phlebotomists or pharmacists. However, the great majority of these—better than 95%—were ultimately approved for service.<sup>14</sup>

The Inquisition quite naturally sought to fill its ranks with the best possible candidates, men of unquestioned reputation and moral standing, but also of notable skill in their work. Indeed, the 1640 *Regimento*

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<sup>13</sup> Augusto da Silva Carvalho, "*Dicionário dos Médicos e Cirurgiões Portugueses ou que Estiveram em Portugal*" (unpublished 32-volume typescript with manuscript notations) (Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa), volumes 1–8.

<sup>14</sup> Research conducted in the ANTT, Lisbon; *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, vols. 1–32.

stipulated that Inquisition medical staff should be “persons worthy of great confidence, and the best informed individuals of the town.”<sup>15</sup> And of course, because of the benefits derived from Holy Office employment, the best eligible Old Christian medical practitioners sought positions there to further enhance their own social status. In fact, as José Viegas Torres suggests, the Inquisition functioned increasingly during the eighteenth century as something of a fraternal trade organization where members “networked,” developing social and professional contacts.<sup>16</sup> Membership usually brought increased status, true, but facilitated real material benefit, as well. It should come as no surprise, then, that the Holy Office drew to its ranks some of the best-known physicians and surgeons of the day, and that, because of their renown, these were often exactly the same men who were tapped to fill posts both at the royal court and at hospitals and the university (Coimbra) supported by the crown. Plurality of office was, as elsewhere in Europe, quite common in eighteenth-century Portugal, and the number of qualified physicians and surgeons was always relatively small.

It is for this reason that a modestly-sized group of elite medical professionals could come to exercise a significant influence over several key Portuguese institutions just before and during the reign of João V; many of the same surgeons and physicians simultaneously held posts in the Inquisition, at court, in the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital in Lisbon (important as a teaching hospital), and in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Coimbra. Moreover, because such posts were often lifetime appointments, these men held their positions typically for decades at a time, throughout the most important, productive years of their careers. Hence, this central corps of medical professionals exercised an influence at the core of the Portuguese *ancien régime* that was marked by great consistency and continuity. Many of the key faces stayed the same for much of King João V’s reign.

Once approved, an Inquisition *médico* could expect to carry out a variety of duties. Significantly, in addition to the inmates of the Inquisition prisons, the physician and surgeon of the three regional Holy Office tribunals were obliged by the terms of their appoint-

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<sup>15</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Titulo XX*, § 1.

<sup>16</sup> Torres, pp. 109; 122–123; 131–132.

ment to care for the officers of those tribunals, as well as for members of these inquisitors' respective families. It was for this reason that the Inquisition supplied a salary to its medical employees, according to the 1640 *Regimento*.<sup>17</sup> Hence, the administrative personnel of the Holy Office were provided with their own in-house health care service, staffed by first-rate licensed professionals.

The working interaction between these two classes of Inquisition employees should have been wholly amicable. This was, after all, a relationship between peers; both physicians and upper-level inquisitors were social elites who enjoyed a great deal of status due to their positions as educated professionals, as well as for their association with the Holy Office. These men were, generally speaking, drawn from a similar stratum of society and shared kindred background experiences: Old Christian families, usually of equitable economic means; long association with the church; similar educational training; possible patronage from a noble or aristocratic family; and a particular consciousness born of belonging to an elevated social class in relation to most other people in early modern Portuguese society.

What principal duties occupied the time of a physician or surgeon assigned to oversee an Inquisition prison? Squalid, ill lit and poorly ventilated, the *cárceres* of the Holy Office, like any early modern prison, provided a propitious environment for disease.<sup>18</sup> Because accused persons often remained incarcerated for months and even years—awaiting trial or undergoing preliminary interrogations—many inmates succumbed to illness. The *Médico dos Cárceres*, along with the surgeon and barber, were charged with maintaining, to the best of their abilities, good health among the prisoners. Toward this end, they were required to make regular rounds, bleeding inmates whose humors were clearly out of balance, prescribing changes in diet, and dispensing medicinal preparations, usually at the prisoner's expense.<sup>19</sup>

Beyond treating inmates for the inevitable maladies which arose from their unfavorable living conditions, Inquisition physicians and

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<sup>17</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Titulo XX*, § 3.

<sup>18</sup> Those interested in the state of Inquisition prisons can read accounts published in English by merchants arrested for freemasonry, such as John Coustos, *The Sufferings of John Coustos for Free Masonry and for Refusing to turn Roman Catholic in the Inquisition at Lisbon*; . . . (London: W. Strahan, 1746) and Hippolyto Joseph da Costa Pereira Furtado de Mendonça, *Narrative of the Persecution of Hyppolyto Joseph da Costa Pereira Furtado de Mendonça* . . . , 2 vols. (London: W. Lewis, 1811), pp. 138–139.

<sup>19</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Titulo XX*, §§ 2–4.

surgeons examined prisoners to see if they were fit enough physically to undergo torture sessions. That the prisoner be able to endure prolonged pain and remain conscious to give testimony was essential to the interrogation process. If the physician or surgeon judged the prisoner to be of a sound constitution, that medical practitioner would also attend the torture session to supply a professional opinion about the state of the prisoner as the session progressed. The physician or surgeon could determine if the treatment should proceed, or whether torture had begun to endanger the life of the accused.<sup>20</sup> Inquisition records clearly show many cases where torture sessions were halted because, in the attending medical practitioner's view, the victim's threshold of pain had been passed, after which point the prisoner ceased to be a valuable witness.<sup>21</sup>

Occasionally the *Médico dos Cárceres* would be summoned to attend an especially grave case, either at the request of the chief jailer or of the prisoner's family. And occasionally this system of responsibility broke down. For example, in Coimbra in 1741, Clara Maria da Costa, aged twenty-six, was arrested for suspicion of perpetrating superstitious acts and sorcery. Re-arrested for a relapse of her objectionable ways eleven years later, she fell gravely ill while in the regional Bishop's prison at Oporto. The latter third of her official Inquisition dossier is full of letters, written by family members or friends and dated from the late 1750s, petitioning for her release on the grounds that she was both innocent and in poor health. Although the physician of the Royal Arsenal at Oporto examined her and certified that she was gravely ill, the *alcaide* in charge of the prison would not release her without the consent of surgeon Manuel Martims Freire, who was the official *Médico dos Cárceres* in Coimbra and a *familiar* of the Inquisition. For some unspecified reason, probably because of the distances and time involved, Freire never travelled to Oporto to examine the accused prisoner. As late as 1771, Clara Maria da Costa remained incarcerated, appealing her case.<sup>22</sup> In that year she was approximately fifty-six years old and had spent better than twenty years in prison.

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<sup>20</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Título XX*, § 3; *Livro II, Título XIV*, § 6.

<sup>21</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 9545 and 7346; Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516 and 2602.

<sup>22</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 6299.

If a convict or one of the accused became mentally unstable while incarcerated, the chief jailer and inquisitors would call upon the prison medical staff to address the prisoner's madness. Judging from the explicitness with which "insanity" was addressed in the 1640 *Regimento*, this problem, whether feigned or real, was not uncommon. And no wonder: then as now, being judged mentally deficient worked to the accused's advantage. Legal proceedings against the suspect were suspended and the prison physicians were ordered to restore the inmate to his senses with "all possible means," including whatever medicines they thought necessary. If in the physicians' opinion the prescribed remedy could not be administered effectively within the *cárceres*, the prisoner would be interned at the Todos-os-Santos Hospital in Lisbon, which had a special ward to treat madness. The 1640 *Regimento* further provided that, should the patient still not regain his senses, he would be released to the care of his relatives until such time as he was judged able to stand trial, if at all.<sup>23</sup>

Occasionally doctors of the Inquisition would be called to testify during a trial, where they were expected to give a professional opinion in cases against popular healers or sorcerers. In a sworn statement, the physician would provide an opinion about why, from the viewpoint of scientific medicine, the accused was a charlatan. Statements such as these range from the perfunctory to ones of exceptional detail, with the *médico* giving a lengthy explanation of why the *curandeiro's* methods were unsound. For example, in 1714, Doctor Gonçalves de Ferreira testified against the accused healer Maria Álvares, describing specifically the maladies for which she had been consulted and saying with all the weight of his medical authority that her treatments were ill matched to the symptoms her patients displayed.<sup>24</sup> Or consider another case, this one against a male healer named Paulo Simões, in 1700. After an initial statement given by one Manuel Luís, a merchant of Coimbra, accusing Paulo Simões of being in the habit of performing cures with blessings (*costuma curar com benções*), there follows a statement from Doctor António Teixeira Álvares, surgeon and "Doctor of the Algarve, instructor of the University of Coimbra and *Promotor* [prosecutor] of the city." He essentially confirmed and supported the case against the accused by reiterating the charges,

<sup>23</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro II, Titulo XVII*, §§ 1–2.

<sup>24</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8698.



his very presence affirming that the healer's methods were medically unsound.<sup>25</sup>

Inquisition doctors and surgeons were also instrumental in the mandatory investigations that followed the death of any prisoner held in the Holy Office prisons. The 1640 *Regimento* governing the Inquisition required that the remains of a deceased prisoner be examined "before the body is removed from the room wherein he died" by "two notaries and one of the physicians of the Holy Office" so that these officials could ascertain whether the death had been the result of violence or natural causes. (Murder among inmates of Inquisition prisons was apparently not unknown.)<sup>26</sup> For example, during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the physician Manuel dos Reis e Sousa was called upon several times during his tenure as *médico* of the Inquisition prisons in Coimbra to certify the cause of death when a prisoner expired while in custody. In a signed *Acto do Morte*, the doctor affirmed that the prisoner had succumbed to natural causes and was not the victim of undue ill treatment or foul play.<sup>27</sup>

An Inquisition physician might also have been called in to examine a prisoner for medical evidence of being a crypto-Jew. Diogo Nunes Brandão, a New Christian born in Lisbon in 1671, had trained in medicine at the University of Coimbra. He was arrested on 3 August 1702 by the Inquisition of Lisbon and charged with *judaismo*. As part of the initial investigation into his case, Inquisition authorities arranged to have him undergo a physical examination conducted by the *médico* Manuel de Pina Coutinho and a surgeon, António de Figueiredo, both *familiars* of the Holy Office. The two medical practitioners, apparently called in to give a second opinion on an earlier examination, declared that a scar which the accused had next to what they termed his "gland" was the result of horseback riding and specifically not the mark of a circumcision. Despite this evidence in his favor, Brandão confessed to all his beliefs and practices as a Jew and proceeded to denounce more than one hundred of his co-religionists in both Portugal and Spain. He was con-

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<sup>25</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 9711.

<sup>26</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro II, Título XVIII*, § 1.

<sup>27</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 7300, 6315 and 6218.

demned to perform penances and serve an indefinite imprisonment at the discretion of the inquisitors on 3 October 1704.<sup>28</sup>

Clearly, physicians and surgeons were central to the internal bureaucracy of the Holy Office. In addition to attending to the health of incarcerated offenders, they also participated in each stage of a *processo* from beginning to end: examining the accused person during an initial investigation, providing testimony as expert witnesses, overseeing torture sessions and, in cases against popular healers, submitting statements about the efficacy of the accused's healing practices.

Because they also tended to the illnesses of the inquisitors themselves and their families, and because these learned professionals interacted frequently on a social plane that was more or less level, physicians and surgeons were uniquely placed to influence Holy Office policies regarding popular healers. After all, it was the *médicos*, their families or subordinate colleagues—*sangradores* and *barbeiros*—who initiated many of the trials against *curandeiros* by denouncing them to the Holy Office. The immediate effect of the Inquisition's persecution of *curandeiros* during this period was to serve the interests of professional medical practitioners.

Persecuting healers also served the interests of the inquisitors who directed the Holy Office. However, interests at the top of the institution were substantially different from those of contemporary doctors within the lower ranks of the Inquisition. By bringing popular healers to trial, high ranking inquisitors hoped to assert and perpetuate the role of their institution within Portuguese society. Naturally, the Inquisition's mission was to confront heresy or apostasy in any of its manifestations, and to compel orthodox behavior among Catholics living in regions under its jurisdiction. Therefore, to pursue cases of superstitious healers who, in the eyes of the church, relied on nefarious ungodly powers for their efficacy was clearly consistent with the original purpose of the Inquisition.

Further, such ecclesiastical policing justified the continued existence of the Inquisition at a critical moment when that institution was being criticized by persons inside and outside of Portugal who charged that the Holy Office, an anachronistic, reactionary body,

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<sup>28</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 15292 and 2361; see also Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 6, pp. 72–73.

was retarding Portugal's progress among the other nations of a modernizing Europe. The propaganda war against the Inquisition, conducted by *estrangeirado* expatriates and Protestants from northern Europe, was at full tide during the middle years of the eighteenth century.<sup>29</sup> A prolonged campaign against supposed agents of Satan (and, not incidentally, against Jews, who also found themselves more vigorously persecuted during this period) demonstrated that the need for continued vigilance in the face of demonic activity had not abated. Finally, a strong stance against the spiritual enemies of the Catholic Church reinforced the Inquisition's reputation and position in the popular mind as protectors of the faith, guarantors of the common people's salvation. For the majority of the Portuguese people, persecutions of Jews and heretics remained a popularly supported crusade; therefore, such trials, even if they drew criticism from intellectuals abroad, represented a net public relations victory for the Inquisition.<sup>30</sup> Still, we must remember: in the case of *curandeiros*, these benefits accrued to the Holy Office only as a secondary effect of the doctor/*familiares*' initial actions.

Hence, we have an extraordinary situation in which two bodies of individuals within the same institution—the *médicos* and the inquisitors—were working toward widely divergent ends by pursuing the same course of action. By bringing popular healers to trial and charging them with crimes against God—superstition, sorcery and witchcraft—medical professionals sought to reinforce their own position, both economically and authoritatively, within the medical field. Moreover, by discrediting popular healers, progressive-minded doctors simultaneously sought to further the cause of rational scientific medicine within Portugal. The inquisitors, conversely, attempted to reinforce their position as guardians of the faith by insisting on the maintenance of a *status quo* in medicine which had existed in Portugal for four hundred years: the subordination of medical training under a framework consistent with church orthodoxy, as characterized by Galenic teaching. This view included the continuance of the orthodox position that assumed that all popular healers necessarily derived

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<sup>29</sup> See the writings of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, among other key works, *Origem da Denominação de Cristão-Velho e Cristão-Novo em Portugal* (1756), as well as John Coustos, *The Sufferings of John Coustos* (London: 1746).

<sup>30</sup> See Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994), pp. 230–248.

illicit powers from diabolical sources, a view which more than justified their persecution. The Holy Office had nothing to gain by introducing the population at large to medical innovations; on the contrary, the church had a long record of resisting scientific discoveries that contradicted orthodox teaching precisely because science undermined the church's institutional authority.

Even so, as the Inquisition recognized implicitly by employing *médicos* as *familiares*, trained doctors could be very useful in ferreting out dangerous *curandeiros*. It was a most contradictory relationship. Healers, for their part, were caught in the middle: not only were they undermining the professional authority of scientifically trained doctors; they were also challenging the church's spiritual authority either implicitly or explicitly by claiming powers of healing which, under orthodox thought, should rightly come only from God. In so doing, *curandeiros* became targets for persecution from both groups. Inquisitors and *médicos* therefore combined against popular healers, each for their own reasons. Although science and religion embarked on increasingly divergent paths as the Enlightenment wore on, for the moment, agents of both camps could still work together before separating, with doctors removing healing from the spiritual realm and placing it firmly in the scientific realm.

That Portuguese Old Christian doctors had previously used the Inquisition to attack their professional competitors has already been demonstrated, though the cases they initially brought were typically against New Christian medical practitioners, not popular healers. Maria Benedita Araújo, in her article entitled "*Médicos e Seus Familiares na Inquisição de Évora*," refers exclusively to New Christians and their relatives who were persecuted within the jurisdiction of the Évora tribunal of the Inquisition—the Algarve and Alentejo regions—during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>31</sup> She reports that, in many cases, Old Christian doctors went to officials of the Holy Office and denounced New Christian physicians and surgeons as crypto-Jews, often when the latter were young and just starting out in the medical profession.<sup>32</sup> Her findings reveal a pattern of

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<sup>31</sup> Maria Benedita Araújo, "Médicos e seus Familiares na Inquisição de Évora," in *Comunicações apresentadas ao 1º Congresso Luso-Brasileiro Sobre Inquisição*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos de Século XVIII e Universitária Editora, 1990), vol. I, pp. 49–72.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

persecution, too, but at a time when there were far fewer *médicos* at work in the Holy Office ranks. Nevertheless, this practice constituted a powerful precedent for Old Christian doctors, demonstrating a way that Inquisition regulations could be put to use for their own purposes. This phenomenon was also known within the jurisdiction of the Coimbra Holy Office tribunal. Knowledge of these cases helps to explain why scores of New Christian *médicos* left Portugal during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to take up residence abroad, becoming thereby the very “*estrangeirados*” who would so strongly influence thought about medical reform in their home country.

*Interconnections: The Dual Influence of Médicos within  
the Inquisition and at Court*

Now let us turn our attention to the physicians who served the royal court. First, a bit of clarification and explanation are in order. The term *médico* referred loosely to any medical professional but, strictly speaking, was meant to denote a physician rather than a surgeon. Early modern medical terminology drew an important distinction between these two professions. In general, physicians cured internal diseases while surgeons dealt with external ailments. This distinction had important consequences for the relative status and prestige persons practicing under each respective title enjoyed.

For reasons which go back to the medieval conceits of Galen and even before, physicians were held in higher esteem than were surgeons, who, because they cut, drained, stitched and otherwise addressed maladies which could be seen, always had the reputation of being mere artisans or medical technicians. Physicians, on the other hand, addressed internal imbalances; their art was more mysterious—closer to the spiritual—and therefore more greatly valued.

Unlike the medical licensing system in contemporary Spanish domains, in early modern Portugal there was no established body akin to the *Protomedicato*. No formal board of medical examiners existed in Portugal until the end of the eighteenth century. Before that time, two key officials governed medical practice: the chief physician (*físico-môr*) and chief surgeon (*cirurgião-môr*) of the kingdom. Together, they had the authority to examine and license anyone wishing to practice medicine or effect cures in Portugal, and each had a fairly well-defined professional jurisdiction over his subordi-

nate colleagues. In theory and with few exceptions, no one could legally practice medicine in Portugal without having first been approved under the authority of one of these two men. In addition, these men were attached to the royal household, acting as the head physician and head surgeon to the sovereign and his family.<sup>33</sup>

In practical terms, this meant that the chief surgeon supervised barbers (*barbeiros*), phlebotomists (bloodletters, or *sangradores*), midwives (*parteiras*), as well as other surgeons, while the chief physician had ultimate jurisdiction over other physicians, apothecaries (*boticários*, though the *cirurgião-môr* assisted in this duty, as well) and, to some extent, because custom dictated that the chief physician be accorded superior status, over the chief surgeon, too. This caused a good deal of resentment among surgeons toward physicians in Portugal, especially as the practice had evolved in the sixteenth century of appointing a physician to the post of chief surgeon, hence prohibiting surgeons from rising to the peak of their profession and drawing attention to their subordinate status.<sup>34</sup>

In practice and in popular parlance, however, there was much gray area. After all, a *sangrador* and a *barbeiro* provided much the same services as a *cirurgião*, which did not help the social standing of surgeons, and all contemporary medical practitioners let blood as part of their treatment, including physicians. (In fact, historian Charles Boxer ventured that it was precisely because *curandeiros* did not usually indulge in the painful bleeding of their patients that these unlicensed popular healers continued to be in such high demand.)<sup>35</sup> Physicians, whose educational level and professional standards tended to be higher (all licensed physicians were required to hold a university degree), were usually better paid than surgeons, so for that reason alone they enjoyed higher social esteem. Moreover, barber-surgeons often were working class artisans rather than professional men, so even highly trained surgeons' reputations suffered by association.<sup>36</sup> In any case, all of these licensed medical practitioners fell

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<sup>33</sup> Dutra, pp. 153–164.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153–158.

<sup>35</sup> Charles R. Boxer, "Some Remarks on the Social and Professional Status of Physicians and Surgeons in the Iberian World, 16th–18th Centuries," *Jornal da Sociedade das Ciências Médicas de Lisboa*, Tomo CXXXVII, Nos. 4–5: 287–306 (Lisbon: 1974), pp. 3–4.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

under the authority of the *físico-môr* and *cirurgião-môr*, both of whom resided at court.

Research for this project has turned up literally several scores of doctors and surgeons who, during the first six decades of the eighteenth century, held important positions at the royal court while serving simultaneously as paid functionaries of the Inquisition, sometimes simply as *famíliares*, but often holding far more elevated posts. The following examples, proceeding chronologically from a long roster of apt candidates, illustrate the broad influence and connections of these court medical practitioners.

António de Figueiredo was born in the village of Farminhão, near Viseu in north-central Portugal, in about 1644. He established himself in Lisbon, interning as a surgeon at the Royal Hospital of Todos-os-Santos. Apparently a very capable student, he subsequently began to teach surgery at Todos-os-Santos and, as his reputation grew, he was named successively as the chief surgeon of the Royal Hospital, surgeon of the *Casa da Suplicação da Relação*, and finally of the *Senado da Corte*, one of the sovereign's primary advisory councils. On 7 April 1698, Figueiredo became the surgeon of the Inquisition prisons in Lisbon. These latter positions he held until his death on 3 August 1717.<sup>37</sup> All told, António de Figueiredo spent nearly forty years tending to the ailments of persons in high power, and had himself risen to a place of no mean influence.

José Rodrigues Frois studied medicine at the University of Coimbra, where he was supported by a crown stipend, and attained the exulted degree of *Mestre* of medical arts. He took up residence in Lisbon, practiced medicine, and became a *familiar* of the Inquisition on 3 December 1701. Eventually he was named personal physician to Prince Dom Francisco, and became one of the "*Médicos do Número*" of the royal household under King Dom João V. In 1729, he accompanied the royal entourage to the Spanish border for Crown Prince Dom José's wedding to Dona Mariana Vitória, daughter of King Philip V of Spain. As late as 1742, he was still in favor at court and practicing medicine, having been named physician of the *Hospital dos Lázaros* with a royal commission.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 3, pp. 122–123.

<sup>38</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 11, no. 203; Carvalho, vol. 7, pp. 210–211.

António Silva served for two years as a physician of the *Santa Casa da Misericórdia* in Lisbon before moving to the Todos-os-Santos Royal Hospital in 1710. He practiced medicine there until his death in 1737. During that time, however, he also served as *médico* of the Inquisition prisons in Lisbon, and was the long-time personal physician of Prince Dom António, one of King João V's legitimized sons borne by a French mistress. In 1730, Silva gained additional royal favor when he was officially recognized for assisting in the treatment of an illness that threatened the life of Prince Dom Carlos, Dom António's younger half-brother.<sup>39</sup>

Manuel da Costa Pereira, a *fidalgo* of the royal household, was born in Lisbon circa 1670. He trained in medicine at the University of Coimbra, supported by a crown stipend. He returned to Lisbon where, on 19 April 1692, he was made a *familiar* of the Holy Office. Not long thereafter, Costa Pereira was also made a knight of the Order of Christ. Throughout his life he held a variety of important medical posts; among them were *médico* of the Inquisition prisons in Lisbon and, most importantly, *Físico-Môr do Reino*, or Chief Physician of the Realm, the highest medical position in Portugal. Clearly, this physician was a man of great substance and influence. He died on 5 April 1740, having served the crown, Inquisition and the medical profession for nearly fifty years.<sup>40</sup>

One of the Portuguese court's most influential doctors in the eighteenth century was José Rodrigues de Abreu. Originally from Évora, Abreu, a *fidalgo* of the royal household, moved to Lisbon and entered the service of the Inquisition as a *familiar* on 17 February 1716.<sup>41</sup> Eventually, he would assume an important position at court as Dom João V's *Médico de Câmara*, a role that put him in frequent personal contact with the king. A man possessed of an inquiring intellect—in 1733 he authored the treatise *Historiologia Médica*—and a close colleague of João Mendes Sachetti Barbosa, the reform-minded physician and *familiar* living in the Alentejo, Abreu may well have discussed his progressive ideas concerning medical reform with the monarch and his ministers. His abilities were certainly held in high esteem,

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<sup>39</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 31, fl. 132; *livro* 42, fl. 69. Also Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1982), vol. V (1640–1750), p. 448.

<sup>40</sup> *Gazeta de Lisboa*, 9 April 1740; cited in Carvalho, vol. 2, p. 212.

<sup>41</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 23, no. 373.



as evidenced by his being confirmed a Knight of the Order of Christ. Most importantly for our purposes, in 1748–1749 Abreu served as the leader of the Lisbon circle of physicians who, together with doctors and surgeons from other regions of Portugal, founded the Royal Medical Academy of Oporto, an institution devoted to modern, scientific principles of medical training.<sup>42</sup> José Rodrigues de Abreu, then, represents one of the clearest links between the royal court and progressive-thinking physicians who actively sought medical reforms in Portugal during the middle of the eighteenth century.

Beginning in about 1710, the *médico* Manuel Duarte Teixeira was attached to João V's court as a *Médico do Número*. Born in Lisbon in 1679, he was graduated with a degree in medicine from the University of Coimbra. On 13 October 1721 he was granted his certificate making him a *familiar* of the Inquisition. Five years later, on 26 August 1726, he became a member of the prestigious Order of Christ. After 1740, however, he was named physician of the State Council of the Exchequer (*Conselho de Fazenda*), a post he held until his death in 1749.<sup>43</sup> For nearly four decades, then, he had been in frequent contact with the some of Portugal's most powerful officials.

The Spanish-born surgeon Tomás José Santa Maria trained in medicine at the Royal Academy in Seville before moving to Portugal in 1722; he completed his medical studies at Coimbra. He practiced in Vialonga, a suburb of Lisbon, but his skill as a healer soon brought him enormous popularity at João V's court, where he was "often called to cure many despised ailments."<sup>44</sup> After having been associated with the royal court for nearly two decades, Santa Maria became a *familiar* of the Inquisition on 16 March 1752. Among his other duties, he worked with the Holy Office *Mesa de Censura*, or Censorship Board, where he was responsible for reviewing medical books to determine which ones should be admitted for use within the kingdom.<sup>45</sup>

Born in Coimbra in 1714, Francisco Lopes Teixeira was one of the few physicians in the eighteenth century who went on to earn

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<sup>42</sup> José Pedro Sousa Dias, "Equívocos sobre a Ciência Moderna nas Academias Médico-Cirúrgicas Portuenses," in *Medicamento, História e Sociedade*, Nova Série, No. 1 (July, 1992), p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livros* 69, 90 and 98; cited in Carvalho, vol. 8, p. 153.

<sup>44</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 80, fl. 1.

<sup>45</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 147, no. 1503.

a doctoral degree in medicine. This he accomplished at Coimbra on 8 May 1740; the following year, on 21 September 1741, he became a *familiar* of the Inquisition. Although he remained resident in Coimbra, Teixeira often served as an advisor to the crown: he was a deputy and counselor on several royal commissions. Additionally, he was the designated *médico* both of the Coimbra tribunal of the Inquisition and the local *Santa Casa da Misericórdia*. Finally, from 1740 to 1756, he held a teaching chair on the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Coimbra.<sup>46</sup> In recognition for his service to the realm during an epidemic in 1741, Teixeira was rewarded with a royal decree and given the right to wear the habit of the Order of Christ.<sup>47</sup>

Another notable physician during the reign of João V was Manuel Lopes. Born near Braga in the north of Portugal in 1715, Lopes came to Lisbon in the late 1720s already having some medical training; he served as a adjutant to the surgeon Manuel Vieira at Crown Prince Dom José's wedding in 1729. He continued to train to become a certified "anatomical surgeon," working at the Todos-os-Santos Hospital with the renowned Italian anatomist Bernardo Santucci. According to the practice of the time, he was examined by the chief surgeon of the realm and *Físico-Môr* Doctor Francisco Xavier, who on 8 February 1739 granted Lopes his license to practice medicine. Lopes became a surgeon of the royal chambers, personally attending to the needs of members of the royal family, and continued in this capacity after the death of King João V in 1750. In 1754, when the position of surgeon and phlebotomist for the Holy Office prisons became vacant, Lopes sought this post. Accordingly, he was made a *familiar* of the Inquisition on 17 October 1755 and immediately assumed his duties. Lopes's greatest merit, though, lay in publishing: in 1760 he authored a masterful treatise on bone anatomy and the treatment of skeletal afflictions. Portuguese medical historian Augusto da Silva Carvalho has termed this work "among the most important books for the history of surgery in Portugal during the eighteenth century."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 61, no. 1182; Carvalho, vol. 4, pp. 194–195. See also Maximiano de Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal; Doutrinas e Instituições*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote/Ordem dos Médicos, 1991), p. 166.

<sup>47</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 6, fl. 1.

<sup>48</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 97, fl. 18v; Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 166, no. 1737; Carvalho, vol. 4, pp. 153–154.

In at least one extraordinary case, the royal influence of an important court medical doctor was not sufficient to keep him beyond the reach of the law, though the physician in this case was not an employee of the Inquisition. The *médico* Isaac Elliot was João V's personal physician and a member of the Order of Christ. He also taught at the Royal Hospital of Todos-os-Santos, instructing apprentice doctors in surgical techniques. An innovative course in surgery had been established there under Elliot's direction after the hospital staff had been overwhelmed by a yellow fever epidemic in 1730. So many sick individuals arrived at Todos-os-Santos that year (34,000, as compared to the usual annual average of less than five thousand patients) that treatment was provided based on a lottery system. So, in order to increase the pool of available surgeons, Elliot was given a royal stipend to train young men, teaching a practical course which met twice a week. This was the first such program organized in Portugal and represents a marked departure from the scholastic methods employed at Coimbra.<sup>49</sup>

Though not high born, while in the crown's service Elliot had married well, to Antónia Joaquina Xavier Inácia, daughter of the royal *Desembargador* (chief magistrate) Francisco Lopes Ribeiro and Dona Maria Caetano Veloso, both of influential noble families. That the bride's parents had provided the couple with a handsome dowry was public knowledge.<sup>50</sup> In 1731, when Antónia was just sixteen, Elliot brutally murdered her in public, stabbing her more than twenty times. During the attack, which occurred during broad daylight, Elliot also killed Antónia's cousin, a cleric named Guilherme, shooting him to death moments before setting upon his own young wife. According to eyewitness accounts, Antónia died protesting her innocence.<sup>51</sup>

The doctor first checked his wife's pulse to make sure she was dead, then fled to the chapel of the French community in Lisbon, where he claimed sanctuary. Public outrage at the killing was so intense, however, that the king was forced to breach the traditional sanctity of the church and take Elliot into protective custody. Once

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<sup>49</sup> Serrão, vol. V, p. 420.

<sup>50</sup> Cavaleiro de Oliveira, *Recreação Periodica*, (Lisbon, 1922), II: 168–170; “Diario de Ericeira,” *Biblos*, p. 590. Cited in Bill M. Donavan, “Crime, Policing and the Absolutist State in Early Modern Lisbon,” *The Portuguese Studies Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2, (1997), pp. 65–66.

<sup>51</sup> Donavan, pp. 65–66.

apprehended, Elliot quickly claimed immunity from normal prosecution, due to his membership in the Order of Christ. More importantly, he alleged that Antónia had been involved in an adulterous relationship with Guilherme, a strategy that would have given him solid legal grounds to defend his actions. If acquitted of a justifiable crime of passion due to his wife's infidelity, Elliot could legally keep her dowry, the possession of which, it soon emerged, he had secretly taken measures to safeguard.<sup>52</sup>

This was to be the most notorious legal case of Dom João V's reign, one in which popular passions ran high and allowed the king to establish a reputation as a champion of law and order. More than seventy people, many of them courtiers and witnesses to the murder, offered testimony, both for and against Elliot, or on behalf of the victims' reputations. Eventually Elliot was found guilty and sentenced to death. Upon the scaffold before his execution, he confessed that greed had been his only motivation.

Elliot's trial illustrates, among other things, the extraordinary importance and value of physicians at court. As historian Bill Donovan points out, "Had the murder not been so public, or had the victims come from a lesser known or lesser connected family, Elliot never would have been executed. According to the Count of Ericeira, the king first sought to exile Elliot. Indeed, João complained about losing a physician with Elliot's skills and the difficulty he would encounter in finding a replacement."<sup>53</sup> Clearly, the supply and demand of medical expertise in Portugal dictated that, under normal circumstances, the crown would go to great lengths to protect a valued court doctor.

The final physician whom I will use to demonstrate the importance of *medicos* at court was perhaps the most impressive and broadly influential. Domingos de Freitas Mendes was born in 1686 and grew up in Oporto, where as a youth he was apprenticed to a local surgeon, Pantaleão de Sousa Coelho. Examined in the customary way by two approved royal surgeons and a physician, Mendes passed and received his practitioner's license on 14 October 1711. He remained in Oporto most of his working life, joining the ranks of the Inquisition as a *familiar* on 26 March 1734. An energetic advocate of improved medical training within Portugal, he co-founded

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

the Royal Academy of Surgery in Oporto in 1747, becoming that institution's first elected president. In recognition of this achievement, he was named Chief Surgeon (*Cirurgião-Mór*) of the Realm beginning in 1749. These events led to his being made a surgeon of the royal chambers in 1750, as well as a member of several foreign learned academies, with which he kept up an active correspondence. On 20 December 1762, Freitas Mendes died, still in office as president of the Academy of Surgery.<sup>54</sup>

These are just some of the doctors and surgeons who held important positions at court and with the royal family while serving as *familiars* of the Inquisition. Research conducted in the records of the *Academia das Ciências* and the *Arquivo Nacional* indicates that there were dozens of trained licensed physicians who were active in the court of Dom João V. Men generally of long tenure at their posts, contemporaries at the University of Coimbra, social peers, and professional colleagues—even often related by birth or marriage—these medical practitioners constituted an interconnected network. Further, these were men who, because of their close interaction with the nobility and court officials, were well placed to influence crown policies regarding medical reform. Not all of them used their positions toward that end, but enough court physicians maintained correspondences with progressive colleagues abroad to add to the general awareness of new ideas about medical practice. As the eighteenth century wore on and such knowledge began to circulate more widely, the corps of court physicians facilitated the implementation of innovations in the medical field even before such efforts culminated in the epoch of Pombaline reforms.

*The Case of Coimbra: Ties Between the Faculty of Medicine  
and the Inquisition*

Let us now take up the case of physicians and surgeons with professional attachments both to the Inquisition and the University of Coimbra. Frequently these professional medical men concurrently held teaching posts on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine as well as

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<sup>54</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 38, fl. 18v; Carvalho, vol. 3, pp. 168–170.

jobs with the local Inquisition tribunal. As such, they were necessarily at the epicenter of learning for doctors in Portugal and, conservative as the medical profession of the day might have been, were certainly aware of innovative medical techniques coming from abroad, ideas which created, in turn, pressures for reform at home. Therefore, these men of multiple connections—for they often maintained, either formally or informally, substantial links to the court in Lisbon, too—had exceptional potential to influence policy and promote reform in the several institutions with which they interacted.

Because Coimbra was in effect the only academic teaching facility for medicine in Portugal during Dom João V's reign, these men, most of whom were of old prominent Coimbra families, formed a network of associations which had far-reaching influence, both within their chosen profession and, I believe, in Inquisition policies affecting popular folk healers whose activities threatened the professional interests of university-trained physicians and surgeons. Of all the Holy Office locations in Portugal, the Coimbra tribunal was most influenced by medical practitioners, not only because of its proximity to the Faculty of Medicine, but also due to the participation of a large number of Coimbra-trained physicians and surgeons among its rank and file *familiares*. That the Coimbra tribunal initiated by far the most cases against popular healers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, therefore, is only to be expected.

The following examples of well-connected and influential Coimbra medical professionals, drawn from numerous candidates who also served in the Inquisition, will serve to illustrate my assertion.

Doctor António de Abreu Bacellar was born in Coimbra. An outstanding medical student, he graduated into a position as *lente de medicina* (lecturer or instructor of medicine) in 1692, specializing in techniques of surgery. On 2 March 1699 he became a *familiar* of the Coimbra Inquisition. Bacellar held his position on the Faculty of Medicine until 1706. Shortly thereafter, on 15 March 1707, he assumed the duties of *médico* of the Holy Office prisons in Coimbra. But Bacellar's horizons extended beyond central Portugal; he corresponded on matters of medical practice with Portuguese doctors abroad, including Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, the well-known New Christian expatriate and advocate of medical reform.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838; Carvalho, vol. 1, p. 26.

António de Abreu Bacellar also exemplifies another common feature of the experience of physicians in the Coimbra area: their interconnected professional network often included men from two or more generations of the same family. His son, Manuel de Abreu Bacellar, also trained in medicine at Coimbra, joined the Inquisition three months after his father became the designated physician of the Inquisition prisons.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, the *médico* Amaro Rodrigues da Costa, who served on the staff of the Royal Hospital of Coimbra and was a *Vereador* (Councilor) of the University during the 1720s and 1730s, was the son of Doctor Simão Fernandes, a long-time instructor on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine.<sup>57</sup> The practice of medicine from generation to generation within certain families was quite common in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Coimbra.

Sometimes professional connections were reinforced by marriage. Doctor Manuel de Carvalho became an instructor of medicine at the University of Coimbra in 1727;<sup>58</sup> he was approximately thirty-six years old, having been born in Coimbra in 1691. He continued for many years to teach at Coimbra, where he was referred to as the “resident *familiar*” of the Holy Office, a position he acquired on 17 July 1731. He eventually became the official physician of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons, though it is not clear when, or whether he continued to teach after being named to that post.<sup>59</sup> What is certain is that his daughter, Bárbara Maria Antónia Xavier de Carvalho e Sousa, married another local doctor, a man of simultaneous three-fold influence within the University, the Inquisition and at court: none other than the above-named Francisco Lopes Teixeira.<sup>60</sup>

A contemporary of Manuel de Carvalho was Manuel Simões Pinheiro, also born in Coimbra in 1691. The son of a *procurador* to prisoners of the Inquisition, Pinheiro served as a *lente de medicina* of the University of Coimbra from 29 August 1732 until 16 May 1752. For the great majority of that time he was also an Inquisition *familiar*, having been confirmed in that position on 2 March 1734 at the age of forty-three. During his career, Pinheiro assisted at the Royal

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<sup>56</sup> Carvalho, vol. 1, p. 27.

<sup>57</sup> Carvalho, vol. 7, p. 205.

<sup>58</sup> Lemos, *História de Medicina em Portugal*, p. 166.

<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 67, fl. 156; Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 101, no. 1873; Carvalho, vol. 2, p. 115.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Hospital in Coimbra and served as a deputy on the *Junta da Fazenda* of the University.<sup>61</sup>

Two final examples of influential Coimbra physicians were men whose lengthy careers virtually mirrored the chronology of João V's reign. Their long service underscores the idea that a very few professional men, part of a core group, even if they were not high-born, could come to wield great influence over major institutions in a relatively small early modern state like Portugal.

Doctor Inácio do Vale attained extraordinary influence in his profession and won high praise from the crown for his long service. Born in Coimbra in 1666, he earned a doctorate of medicine at the University, working as a substitute lecturer for several of the chairs of medicine while finishing his degree. On 18 August 1706 he was named *lente* of surgery. Eleven years later, on 21 June 1717, he took over the chair of anatomy. His rise to the post of chief physician of the Faculty of Medicine at Coimbra (*Lente de Prima*) was celebrated by a congratulatory royal letter, dated 18 January 1728, from Dom João V.<sup>62</sup> Because do Vale had also been a Knight of the Order of Christ since 1689, perhaps this prominence and recognition was nothing more than was expected of him.

For over a decade, Inácio do Vale remained a much-admired head of the Coimbra medical faculty. Although he relinquished this post to pursue other matters in 1738, he continued to practice and teach medicine until his death in 1752 at the age of eighty-six.<sup>63</sup> During his long career, he wrote various works—medical texts on such topics as the treatment of fevers and the use of anesthesia—that he circulated in manuscript among his friends and colleagues. He was also active in city politics: beginning in 1710, he held a seat on the *Camara Municipal de Coimbra*. Finally, it must be noted that Inácio do Vale served as a *médico* of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons for nearly forty years, having become a *familiar* of that tribunal on 15 March 1706, five months before being named instructor of anatomy at the University.<sup>64</sup> During his tenure as a Holy Office functionary, he provided professional testimony that was critical of

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<sup>61</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 106, no. 1954; Carvalho, vol. 8, p. 111.

<sup>62</sup> ANTT, Chancelaria de Dom João V, *livro* 75, fl. 37.

<sup>63</sup> *Gazeta de Lisboa*, 1752, p. 603.

<sup>64</sup> Carvalho, vol. 8, pp. 170–171.



popular healing methods in several Inquisition cases against popular healers.<sup>65</sup>

Only one physician served longer than Inácio do Vale, and with nearly as great distinction, during the reign of Dom João V. This was *Doutor* Manuel dos Reis e Sousa, who earned his doctorate of medicine at Coimbra, his native city, on 20 April 1704 at the age of twenty-four. Two years later, on 11 August 1706, he was made an instructor of the Faculty of Medicine. Manuel dos Reis e Sousa taught at the University of Coimbra for forty-seven years, from 1706 to 1753, ascending through the hierarchy of the various chairs of medicine: *Lente de Anatomía* (1720–1735); *Lente de Vespera* (1735–1738); and *Lente de Prima* (1738–1753). And, like his predecessor, he also combined his University work with that of the Holy Office; on 22 September 1714, he became a *familiar*. To round out his professional activities, beginning in 1706, he served as the physician of the Convent of Santa Cruz, also located in Coimbra.<sup>66</sup>

So, again we see that agents of the Inquisition were intimately involved in the functioning of another important Portuguese institution, this one of primary importance to the medical profession. While it is impossible to know the true extent to which Coimbra instructors of medicine took part in the activities of the Holy Office, we may fairly conclude that crossover between the two institutions was extensive. Augusto da Silva Carvalho's *Dicionário* lists over two dozen Coimbra *lentes da medicina* who held Holy Office credentials during the first half of the eighteenth century, a period when the total number of medical professors did not amount to twice that figure. Further, this reckoning does not include the many scores of student *familiars* who passed through the University during the same five decades.

In concluding this chapter, it is important to recognize not only the interconnected nature of the professional activities of licensed medical practitioners within the Inquisition, royal court and the University of Coimbra, but also the implications of this network of professional links for determining the policies of these institutions during the first half of the eighteenth century. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of these findings is just how interrelated the three

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<sup>65</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8899.

<sup>66</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 78, no. 1512; cited in Carvalho, vol. 7, p. 142.

groups surveyed were. While it should come as no surprise that the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine, the royal court and the Inquisition should draw from Portugal's small pool of physicians the most talented and prestigious practitioners available to administer to their needs, nevertheless the collective influence of this relatively modest body of medical professionals is striking. Not high born but exceptionally well placed, these men ultimately used their positions to pursue their best interests, not simply to initiate a repression of their unlicensed professional rivals, popular healers, but also to genuinely promote reform.

Simultaneously active in medical education, the administration of cases against popular healers (not to mention New Christian doctors with whom there existed a natural rivalry), involved intimately as the personal physicians of powerful inquisitors, and in frequent contact with the high nobility and the royal family at court, this group of medical men exercised real influence over policies of the institutions which they served. Further, these men either participated in or had access to the correspondence of their co-practitioners abroad who denigrated Portuguese medicine for its backwardness while exploring new scientific ways of combating illness.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, in many cases these are the same Portuguese physicians who were beginning to publish their own treatises advocating innovative medical techniques, promoting in this way the controversial idea of medical reform within Portugal. In short, at least in the restricted field of medicine, this small connected group constituted the grass roots of a smoldering intellectual revolution in Portugal—but one which would not reach fruition until the Pombaline reforms effected during the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

We turn our attention now to the particulars of the Holy Office's methodical pursuit of popular healers in Portugal—a deliberate program of oppression that our Enlightenment-influenced *médicos* helped to engineer. In the second part of this work, three successive chapters analyze the methods by which the Inquisition discovered *curandeiros* and *saludadores*, the means by which they were brought to trial,

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<sup>67</sup> Ana Simões, et al., "The Scientific Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Portugal: The Role of the *Estrangeirados*" (Edinburgh, Scotland: Papers of the Third British North America Meeting, July 1996), pp. 5–11.

and the punitive outcome of these trials. Further, the following chapters provide a systematic analysis, beginning at the close of the seventeenth century and continuing over the threshold of the nineteenth century, of the demographic characteristics of the people the Portuguese Inquisition tried for magic and folk healing.

PART II

THE REPRESSION OF MAGICAL HEALING



## CHAPTER SIX

### A DELIBERATE POLICY OF OPPRESSION: PORTUGUESE INQUISITION TRIALS AGAINST POPULAR HEALERS FOR MAGICAL CRIMES, *CIRCA* 1690–1780

We will move now to an analysis of the case data described in the introduction, examining it according to the charges the three domestic Portuguese Inquisition tribunals used to prosecute persons in magical crimes trials. These tribunals sat in Lisbon, Coimbra and Évora. The Coimbra tribunal handled cases which arose in the northern half of Portugal; Évora covered the south, and Lisbon dealt with the area surrounding the capital city and a strip of central Portugal, as well as Brazil, west Africa and the Atlantic island holdings.<sup>1</sup> By viewing the data of each tribunal individually, significant differences emerge in persecution patterns of magical crimes across Portugal.

Specific criminal charges in Inquisition trials against *mágicos* included the following:

*Curandeirismo* (folk healing) and *curas supersticiosas* (superstitious cures) together comprise the group of charges on which this study is focused. For obvious reasons, the Holy Office charged no one who was not a healer with either of these offenses. Surprisingly, though, even folk healers were rarely prosecuted for these explicit infractions. In the Inquisition records—archival indices and trial dossier cover pages that record basic criminal information—a *curandeiro*'s healing activities are usually obscured by references to different general crimes (most magical criminals were tried under charges of practicing sorcery or harboring superstitious beliefs). Of the 184 folk healers ultimately identified for this study, all endured an Inquisition trial, but only fifty-two of them (28.26%) were actually charged with illicit

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<sup>1</sup> Two additional domestic tribunals had originally been constituted in the sixteenth century at Oporto and Lamego, but they were moribund by the time the present study commences. Another contemporary tribunal in Goa, India, covered the entire eastern maritime empire, but its activities lie beyond the scope of this study. Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994), pp. 45–46.

healing. Twenty-one of these cases came from the Coimbra tribunal, Évora accounted for twenty-seven and Lisbon provided four. The rest of the popular healers identified in this study were prosecuted for other magical crimes.

*Superstição* (superstition). A catch-all crime, encountered more frequently than any other single charge. In 291 of the 442 Inquisition cases reviewed, accused practitioners of magic faced prosecution for this crime (a rate of 65.83%). If we distinguish between healers and non-healers, we see that 63.58% of the folk healers (117 of 184) were tried for this crime, while the Holy Office charged 67.44% of non-healers (174 of 258) with having superstitions. Practically speaking, this charge could cover virtually any type of activity that authorities deemed to be magical or supernatural.

*Fetiçaria* (sorcery). A very close second to harboring superstitions, practicing sorcery was a charge levied in 65.38% of all cases viewed for this study (289 of 442). Divided between healers and non-healers, the Inquisition charged 61.41% of healers with practicing sorcery (113 of 184); while 68.21% of non-healers (176 of 258) were tried under this charge. Besides folk remedies, examples of this type of magic would include conducting a rite to attract a desired mate's attention, to find lost property, or to foretell the future.

*Bruxaria* (witchcraft) was a substantially more serious charge, levied relatively rarely after 1682. Throughout the 130-year period under study, the Holy Office charged only forty-six persons (24 women and 22 men) with the specific crime of witchcraft, a rate of less than 10% for all trials, *mágicos* and *curandeiros* combined. This offense was usually reserved for someone whose acts had truly been malicious, rather than simply conducting sorcery for relatively harmless or well intentioned ends. Deliberately performing an act or ritual meant to physically harm a person or their livestock might result in such a charge, though usually the accused person was perceived (either by denouncers or the inquisitors) as being objectionable or dangerous in other ways, as well. For example, social outsiders—newcomers to a community, as well as blacks, mulattos, and foreigners—stood a greater chance of being accused of witchcraft. Two-thirds of those charged with witchcraft can be classified as outsiders (30 of 46). Further, penalties in these cases tended to be heavier. Condemned witches could typically expect a minimum period of two to three years of domestic exile, though there are exceptions which are both more extreme and more lenient. Also, there appears to be an age

bias associated with the crime, just as there was in some other European countries; on average, accused witches tended to be older than persons facing trial for other magical crimes. Note, too, that the charge of witchcraft in early modern Portugal was not a sex-specific crime; almost as many men as women faced this charge. The tribunal at Évora had the lowest percentage of witches among the *mágicos* it tried (6 of 184, or 3.26%), while the Lisbon tribunal had the highest (40%, or 22 of 55). Finally, almost exactly the same number of healers was charged with witchcraft as non-healers (24 and 22, respectively).

*Pacto com o Demónio* (pact with the Devil). In a highly revealing set of statistics, we see that non-healers were twice as likely as *curandeiros* to be charged with cultivating a pact with the Devil. Despite the vehemence with which they pursued trials against popular healers, medical practitioners and their inquisitor allies were apparently more reticent to prosecute them in terms that would confirm a link between folk medicine and diabolism. Conversely, folk healers were far less likely to assert a reliance on Satan to effect their cures; on the contrary, *curandeiros* and *saludadores* maintained that the power to heal came from God, the Virgin Mary or the Saints. Among non-healers, the three tribunals convicted 121 persons for having made a pact with the devil between 1668 and 1802. Évora, the most theologically reactionary and provincial tribunal, led the field with eighty-three convictions while Coimbra had thirty-six; cosmopolitan Lisbon, meanwhile, charged only two detainees with this crime.

The picture with folk healers is much different. Coimbra's tribunal was, perhaps understandably given the strength of the medical profession in that city, the least enthusiastic about tying healing to diabolism; only eighteen of ninety-six cases charge *curandeiros* with taking satanic vows. Évora was much more aggressive, charging forty-four of sixty-six healers (fully two-thirds) with having a *pacto com o Demónio*, but this is still only half as many as the figure for non-healers. Only Lisbon used this charge more against folk healers than other *mágicos*: four cases contain a pact-with-the-devil charge—double the figure for non-healers.

*Heresía* (heresy) and *apostósia* (apostasy) were very rare charges in Holy Office magical crimes cases. Among folk healers these charges appear exactly twice; once in a trial in Coimbra and once in Évora. They were far more common among non-healers. Because of the theological similarity of these offenses—though apostasy was a far



more serious matter—tribunals often levied the two charges together. Inquisitors charged non-healing *mágicos* with heresy twenty times between 1682 and 1777 (five times in Coimbra, twelve times in Évora and three times in Lisbon). Among the same group of offenders, apostasy appears eight times (four times in Coimbra; twice each in Évora and Lisbon).

*Benzaduras* (blessings) constituted, at times, another type of illicit healing through prayers, but a *benzadeira* or *benzadeiro* could also offer protection, luck or other services through blessings that had nothing to do with improving a client's health. This crime was known mostly in rural Portugal. During the period in question, the Coimbra and Évora tribunals combined charged eight popular healers with conducting blessings as remedies for illness. Among non-healers, only one person, who went to trial in Évora, was charged with this crime.

*Embustes* (charlatanism) or *fingimento* (faking) functioned as crime qualifiers; they were either appended to another charge or left as an independent crime. These qualifiers could refer to popular healers, but they were also appended to a spectrum of other magical crimes, like fortune telling and having holy visions. Typically, Inquisition prosecutors would employ these charge qualifiers when they felt that the offender had not been practicing their magical arts sincerely, but instead were cynically trying to exploit the naiveté of the rustic peasantry for money. Two added benefits of these charges, from the point of view of the Catholic establishment, is that they implicitly denied the efficacy of the criminal activity in question; hence, they highlight the superiority of the “one true faith,” Christianity. For all of this, charlatanism and faking remained highly unusual charges. The Coimbra tribunal alone used charlatanism as a crime, applying it in three total cases—twice against healers; once against a non-healer. Similarly, the tribunals at Évora and Lisbon used the terms “faking” or “feigning” to indicate the same illicit behavior. Lisbon inquisitors levied the charge once (against a *curandeiro*); Évora officials charged one folk healer and three non-healers with this offense.

*Sortilégio* (fortune telling) was a charge unique to Évora. Thirteen non-healers faced this charge there between 1682 and 1777, but only three healers were similarly charged during the same period. Discovering exactly why this infraction was not a preoccupation in other regions of Portugal is a subject for another study, but on the surface this data should reinforce the impression that Évora was the more provincial, theologically reactionary of the three Holy Office district courts.

A handful of other charges bear mentioning before we continue. Because they were very rare, are not common to all three tribunals, and are not specific to trials for magical offenses, they were left out of the above groupings of crimes. During the period in question, the Évora tribunal charged one *mágico*, a male non-healer, with sodomy; he was given an exceptionally severe sentence upon his conviction. The Coimbra tribunal, meanwhile, tried another *mágico*, also a male non-healer, for bigamy. Inquisitors in both Coimbra and Évora charged defendants with blasphemy—in Évora this occurred six times, while in Coimbra it happened on just a single occasion among *mágicos*. In none of these seven cases was the accused person a *curandeiro*. Finally, healers and non-healers in Évora stood a slight chance of being charged with causing *maleficia*, or harmful, evil deeds. This charge was applied thrice; as might be expected, in all three cases it was combined with a witchcraft or pact-with-the-devil charge.

Although these last charges were exceedingly rare, their rate of incidence does shed some light on the prosecutorial mood of the Inquisition regarding practitioners of magic, and popular healers in particular. The infrequency of these charges indicates that, regarding magical crimes, during the eighteenth century Inquisition officials remained focused on widespread practices like sorcery or superstitious healing, to the exclusion of other types of offenses.

We will next consider the statistical significance of Portuguese Holy Office trials conducted specifically against popular healers. This analysis will proceed by separating the trial data by regional tribunal—Coimbra, Évora and Lisbon—to highlight differences in persecution patterns of popular healers across Portugal.

The records of the Inquisition tribunal at Coimbra provided ninety-six cases of accused *curandeiros* (29 men and 67 women). These were culled from a body of 203 total cases compiled by the Coimbra tribunal between 1693 and 1796 in which the accused's crime was magical. Hence, in 47.29% of these cases, the accused's crime related to illicit healing. 70.83% of these cases (68 of 96) came to the attention of the Inquisition between 1715 and 1755. Comparing healer cases with other magical crimes, we find that of 43.03% (68 of 158) of the Coimbra trials against alleged *mágicos* for the period 1715–1755 in some way involve popular healing.

The records of the Inquisition tribunal at Évora provided sixty-six *processos* against accused *curandeiros* (32 men and 34 women). These were drawn from a body of 184 total cases conducted by the Évora

tribunal between 1668 and 1802, in which the accused's crime was a magical one. Therefore, 35.86% related to illicit healing. For the period 1715–1755, we find that 36.60% (41 of 112) of the trials against alleged *mágicos* in Évora relate in some way to popular healing. Moreover, 62.12% of all *curandeiro* cases tried in Évora (41 of 66) occurred between 1715 and 1755.

Twenty-seven of the sixty-six Évora *curandeiro* trials include overt testimony against the accused healer from trained, licensed medical professionals. An additional eight cases include depositions or denunciations which, if not explicitly identified as having come from a trained physician, surgeon or other licensed healer, were clearly informed by a professional medical point of view. So, in thirty-five of sixty-six cases against popular healers in Évora (53.03%), professional medical opinions or arguments were employed to prosecute and condemn the accused *curandeiro*. In addition, nineteen further cases that featured no overt professional medical contribution to the evidence against the accused did feature one or more inquisitors acting as judge who was a veteran of numerous earlier illicit popular healing cases, at least one of which had included a professional licensed healer's testimony.

In Coimbra, thirty-seven of the ninety-six *curandeiro* trials include overt testimony from trained, licensed medical professionals. An additional nine cases include witness statements that were clearly informed by a professional medical point of view, even if not explicitly identified as having come from a trained physician, surgeon or other licensed healer. So, in forty-six of ninety-six cases against *curandeiros* in Coimbra (47.09%), professional medical opinions or arguments were employed openly to prosecute the accused popular healer. Even more striking is the following statistic: in thirty of the remaining fifty trials which featured no overt professional medical contribution to the evidence against the accused, at least one inquisitor (and often two or three) who judged the case was a veteran of several earlier illicit popular healing trials, various of which had included a professional *médico's* testimony.

These findings alone constitute powerful evidence of cooperation between professional medical practitioners and the inquisitors to persecute illicit folk healers in the Portuguese countryside during the eighteenth century. However, additional evidence confirms that this practice also existed in Portugal's most cosmopolitan environment, the capital city Lisbon.

From the records of the Inquisition tribunal in Lisbon, research extracted twenty-two cases against accused *curandeiros* (13 men and 9 women), all of them occurring after 1700 and before 1770. Eighteen of these, or nearly 82%, transpired between 1715 and 1755. The twenty-two healers were culled from a body of fifty-five witchcraft or sorcery trials conducted by the Lisbon tribunal between 1690 and 1790. Thus, 40% of the total number of Lisbon *mágico* trials address reported acts of illicit healing. For the period 1715–1755, we find that nearly 53% (18 of 34) of the trials in Lisbon against alleged *mágicos* relate in some way to popular healing.

Of the original thirty-three Lisbon witchcraft cases viewed in which the denunciation was for a crime other than healing, a clear majority (27 cases) masked other issues. One was a dispute between two women over a man (probably the husband of one of the denunciates) that deteriorated into witchcraft accusations; another involved a street huckster who was obviously a charlatan; in a third, the miscreant was accused of metamorphosing into a werewolf.<sup>2</sup> Fully one-third of these cases (9 of 27) never went to trial; the inquisitors in Lisbon dismissed such cases for lack of evidence.

When compared to the Holy Office *mesas* that functioned in Coimbra and Évora, then, the Lisbon tribunal seems to have been relatively more savvy and cosmopolitan in matters involving sorcery and witchcraft accusations, particularly as the eighteenth century wore on. After 1749, when it became apparent that a change in royal administration was imminent, the Lisbon Inquisition grew more reluctant to try those who had been accused, perhaps frivolously, of crimes involving magic. The exception is the crime of *curandeirismo*; every case against an accused popular healer was prosecuted fully in eighteenth-century Lisbon.

Subtracting the nine trials that the inquisitors threw out, then, twenty-two of forty-six prosecuted magical crimes cases in Lisbon between 1700 and 1770 (47.82%) were against *curandeiros*. More than half (12 of 22) included testimony or a denunciation by a trained, licensed medical professional.

Whatever the varying philosophical motivations distinct groups within the Holy Office—*médico/familiares* and *inquisidores*—possessed which favored the persecution of popular healers, a systematic analysis

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<sup>2</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 54, 1079 and 2238, respectively.

of the accused *curandeiros*' social and financial status indicates that there could be no material motivation on the part of the Inquisition to prosecute them. This contrasts sharply with the material circumstances of the *conversos*, or New Christians, who for two and a half centuries were the primary focus of persecution under the Portuguese Inquisition, which suspected them, often with little justification, of being crypto-Jews.<sup>3</sup> Over 90% of all Portuguese Inquisition trials during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century were conducted against so-called "New Christians" charged with judaizing.<sup>4</sup> Many of these *conversos* were persons of status and means within Portuguese society—often they were wealthy merchants or professionals with fine, comfortable households. When the Holy Office confiscated all of the goods of a condemned New Christian, the Inquisition stood to make a tidy profit. Much of the Holy Office's institutional wealth, in fact, derived from confiscations of wealthy *cristão novo* households, the proceeds of which accrued solely to Inquisition coffers until the late eighteenth century and were used to offset the operating expenses of the organization.<sup>5</sup> Confiscations financed virtually all Inquisition operations after the 1680s; hence, the continuation of a policy of confiscation was essential to the fiscal well being of the institution.<sup>6</sup>

In stark contrast to wealthy New Christians, the work and household means of the average Old Christian peasant—the class to which most popular healers and *mágicos* belonged—were among the lowest in the Iberian social hierarchy. There was simply no substantial fiscal benefit in pursuing cases against persons as poor as *curandeiros* and other *mágicos* tended to be. The Holy Office as an institution could not have profited, let alone covered its operating costs, by relying on the assumption of such meager estates as the typical folk healer or practitioner of magic possessed. While it is true that the sentences

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<sup>3</sup> António José Saraiva, *Inquisição e cristãos novos* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1985), introduction.

<sup>4</sup> See Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe; Studies in Sources and Methods* (Dekalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), pp. 90–91.

<sup>5</sup> See Tereza Pinto Leite, "Inquisição e Cristãos Novos durante da Época do Dom João V" (unpublished Master's thesis; Universidade Clássica de Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras, 1961), pp. 22–34.

<sup>6</sup> See L. M. E. Shaw, "The Inquisition and the Portuguese Economy," *Journal of European Economic History*, vol. 18 (Fall, 1989), pp. 425–426. See also Carl A. Hanson, *Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal, 1668–1703* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), pp. 75–85.

of condemned popular healers and *mágicos* frequently included a punitive fine in the form of a bill for payment of the costs of their trial, only very rarely, and under certain specific circumstances, did a sentence include the additional penalty of confiscation of all one's goods. In fact, among all 492 Holy Office trials against *curandeiros* and *mágicos*, there are only thirteen cases (2.64%) where the condemned party's goods were confiscated and absorbed into the Inquisition's assets.<sup>7</sup> Nine of these were women; four were men. Non-healers were slightly more likely to have their worldly goods confiscated; only four of the above victims of property seizure were popular healers.<sup>8</sup>

Confiscation of a condemned *curandeiro's* or *mágico's* goods only occurred when the offender had been sentenced to a long period of forced labor in the Royal *Galés* ("Galleys"—originally meaning oared ships, but by the eighteenth century also signifying a shipyard or work camp), or to a long term of exile abroad to one of the Atlantic colonies. In other words, in the case of poor *mágicos*, the Inquisition made use of confiscation only when the condemned person was unlikely to ever need their goods again. The ordeal of forced labor or banishment to tropical Africa was known by long experience to be so harsh as to prove fatal in most cases, and the terms of these sentences were in any case quite long, averaging four years. So, the Holy Office followed a practical course by taking control of the condemned person's property, what little there was of it.<sup>9</sup>

Of course, the real victims of such confiscations were the convicts' families, particularly dependent women. The Holy Office seems to have taken this into consideration, though, because in only three cases did inquisitors take the goods of a married man. The rest of the convicts who suffered confiscations were all either women (most of whom were older widows or unmarried) or, in one case, a single man, all of whom presumably were not responsible for supporting any dependents. All but four of these confiscations occurred before 1720; it seems that, during the peak period of *curandeiro* and

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<sup>7</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1610, 2089, 2210, 2229, 2408, 3899, and 6506; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 57, 2537, 8307, and 8338; Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 1377 and 1894.

<sup>8</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 2089, 3899, and 6506; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8307.

<sup>9</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1610, 2089, 2210, 2229, 2408, 3899, and 6506; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 57, 2537, 8307, and 8338; Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 1377 and 1894.

*mágico* persecutions, the Holy Office administration well understood that there was no appreciable financial benefit to taking their victims' meager property.<sup>10</sup> Hence, the motivation of the Inquisition in persecuting popular healers, as well as practitioners of other magical crimes, lay outside the fiscal realm, at least so far as the institution was concerned. Individual Holy Office employees—namely, medical professionals—may have had a financial incentive to prevent *curandeiros* from practicing their healing craft, but conducting trials against impecunious superstitious peasants solved none of the Inquisition's financial problems.<sup>11</sup> (However, in two rare *mágico* cases where the Inquisition did confiscate personal property, the accused culprits were also New Christians of some means, thus providing the Holy Office with a possible financial incentive to bring them to trial.<sup>12</sup>)

Judging from the typical *curandeiro*'s employment, it is possible to speculate on what the value of their total household goods might have been (demonstrating, by extension, the reason why the Holy Office would not have been interested in those goods). By far, the majority of persons prosecuted for proffering magical remedies were peasants involved in the most basic types of agricultural labor. Either they were themselves tenant farmers, herders of sheep or goats, or farm laborers paid on a daily basis, or they were connected by marriage to someone who matched that description.<sup>13</sup> Accounts of peasant hovels in Portugal during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries universally speak to the general poverty of the common rural people.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> For an analysis of the work, wealth and social status of popular healers, see Chapter IX, below.

<sup>12</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 1377 and Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 57.

<sup>13</sup> See tables in Chapter IX, below, regarding the professions of the accused or their next of kin.

<sup>14</sup> Many traveller's accounts from the early modern period attest to this fact. See, for example, three eye-witness accounts from the eighteenth century in Castelo Branco Chaves, *O Portugal de D. João V Visto por Três Foresteiros*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1989), pp. 38–39; 55–60; 156; 193–217; 272–280, and the two-volume travel account by Arthur William Costigan (pseudonym), *Sketches of Manners and Society in Portugal* (London: 1787). Also, see Charles Brockwell, *The Natural and Political History of Portugal* (London: T. Warner, 1726). In addition, there is the famous account by English expatriate William Beckford, called *Italy with sketches . . .*, published at about the same time as the Costigan account.

Therefore, their material possessions would have been few and of the meanest quality. For the Inquisition to confiscate the household goods of anyone from this level of society would hardly have been worth the effort.<sup>15</sup>

*The Legal and Social Basis for Prosecuting Magical Criminals*

At this point, it will be useful to consider the legal basis on which the Holy Office prosecution of *curandeiros* and other practitioners of magical crimes in Portugal rested. In general, we will focus on two main factors: a body of pre-existing European traditions regarding witches and sorcerers, of which the inquisitors were the inheritors, and regulations in the official by-laws, or *regimentos*, of the Portuguese Inquisition which prohibited those activities while empowering the Holy Office to address them.<sup>16</sup>

When the Holy Office became active in Portugal in 1536, the bull of Pope Paul III authorized the *inquisidores* to prosecute people who, instigated and assisted by the Devil, committed “heretical sorcery.” Because the first two *regimentos* of the Portuguese Inquisition (published in 1570 and 1613, respectively) made no mention of magical crimes, until 1640 all Holy Office action against sorcerers, witches and superstitious healers rested on the authority of the above bull, and on policies toward magical criminals articulated in two official letters of the Inquisitor General (and future Portuguese king), Dom Henrique, in 1546 and 1560.<sup>17</sup>

In fact three judicial systems, one secular and two ecclesiastical, were empowered to prosecute magical crimes in early modern Portugal. All three had overlapping jurisdiction to punish magical infractions, as well. The secular justice system, composed of the reigning monarch’s legal apparatus, relied on royal law codes that pre-dated the Inquisition for its authority against magical criminals. The *Ordinações Alfonsinas*

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<sup>15</sup> A more detailed consideration of the professions and socio-economic standing of magic users and popular healers prosecuted by the Portuguese Inquisition appears below in Chapter IX.

<sup>16</sup> Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Press, 1995), pp. 68–84.

<sup>17</sup> José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), p. 193.



of 1446, codified under King Alfonso V, and the *Ordinações Manuelinas* of 1512, compiled under King Manuel “the Fortunate,” both established state ordinances against diabolism, sorcery and divining. Little is known about magical crimes trials held in Portuguese secular tribunals, however, because almost all of the relevant court documentation has been lost. According to the state judicial system, persons denounced to judges established in the various administrative districts of continental Portugal (*comarcas*) could be tried for sorcery or superstitious curing. However, by the eighteenth century, this aspect of the secular justice system had most likely fallen into disuse because of the high-profile presence of ecclesiastical authorities with concurrent jurisdiction for magical crimes.<sup>18</sup>

Cases in which there was a clear indication of heresy were, in theory, the unique domain of the Holy Office.<sup>19</sup> Magical crimes, of course, usually fell under this category. The Portuguese Inquisition had four principle mechanisms with which it could intervene in the lives of citizens and pursue its program of religious homogenization across the realm: visitations through national regions and towns; public lectures or broadsides posted on the doors of churches; through networks of commissioners, or local ecclesiastical agents, of the Inquisition; and through public *autos-de-fé* held in the three cities where the tribunals were quartered.<sup>20</sup> The Portuguese Inquisition, because of careful record keeping by functionaries within its hierarchy, has preserved more vestiges of its activities than the other two judicial systems in the realm. That alone should not lead us to assume that the Holy Office necessarily judged the majority of magical crimes cases in Portugal. Much documentation from the other judicial systems has not survived.<sup>21</sup>

The Episcopal justice system, pertaining to Portugal’s bishops, actually engaged in the persecution of magical practitioners more regularly, and with a heavier administrative presence in the rural provinces, than did the Inquisition. Because of pastoral visits conducted through-

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<sup>18</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’*, pp. 192–196. See also Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994), pp. 38–56.

<sup>19</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’*, pp. 191–206.

<sup>20</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições: Portugal, Espanha e Itália*, pp. 167–251; Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’*, p. 198.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197–198.

out the countryside by the bishops or their nominees, the Episcopal tribunals collected denunciations and information about superstitious infractions more consistently than did the Holy Office's networks of *familiares* until the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> While conducting a periodic regional visitation, if a sufficiently grave case came to the attention of the bishop's agent, the *visitadore*, he could issue a proclamation assigning guilt and penalty to the accused magical practitioner. Exceptionally grave cases could be referred for a hearing at the Board of the Bishop (*Mesa do Auditório Episcopal*).<sup>23</sup> Thus, the *Tribunais Episcopais* were more vigilant in some regions than the Inquisition, but because they provided a quicker form of justice, they left less of a paper trail. In practice, information and denunciations about sorcerers and healers would often be turned over to the Holy Office for prosecution. Eighteen percent of all Inquisition trials for magical crimes originated with denunciations gleaned on Episcopal visitations through the countryside.<sup>24</sup> However, like the records of Portuguese secular tribunals, the rich archival collections of the Episcopal visitations have been mostly lost or discarded over time.<sup>25</sup>

For the sake of context, it must be remembered that, even at the height of *curandeiro* repression in the eighteenth century, sorcery and witchcraft investigations did not absorb the Inquisition's energies in Portugal at a rate approaching that of other social infractions. At most, magical crimes constitute just 3% of all Portuguese Inquisition cases from 1536 to 1821. Rather, the Holy Office in Portugal preoccupied itself primarily with crypto-Judaism; cases against *cristãos novos* account for over 90% of Inquisition trials.<sup>26</sup> *Processos* against persons who spoke heresies, bigamists, Muslims, Protestants, Masons, homosexuals and a handful of other types of malefactors make up

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 205–206.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>26</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (London: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 403–422. See also Maria Luisa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal: primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 151–156; and Maria Cristina A. S. Correa de Melo, "Witchcraft in Portugal during the eighteenth century, analysed through the accusations of the Tribunal do Santo Ofício de Évora," in *Transactions of the Eighth International Congress on the Enlightenment (Bristol, 21–27 July 1991): Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 1992; pp. 573–578.

the balance of the cases.<sup>27</sup> Even so, after Judaizers, magical healers and sorcerers make up the second largest criminal group that the Portuguese Inquisition pursued during the eighteenth century.<sup>28</sup> By contrast, the Spanish Inquisition prosecuted magical criminals at a rate of 7% during the period 1540 to 1700 (statistics for earlier and later periods have not been calculated). Judaizers made up only 10% of Inquisition trials in Spain; *Moriscos* account for 24%, while the largest group to draw the attention of Spanish inquisitors was composed of heretics and blasphemers (27%).<sup>29</sup>

The development of inquisitorial procedure in continental European jurisprudence during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had specific ramifications for trial practices conducted by the Holy Office in Portugal through the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries. Officers of the Inquisition and other constituted courts were empowered to initiate cases and determine their outcome, independent from the participation of private individuals as legal contestants, as had been the case before and continued to be common practice in England. Inquisitorial procedure provided that a panel of judges and their subordinates would gather and assess evidence to determine guilt and thus resolve an alleged crime. In practice, this generally meant gathering separate testimony from accusers and the accused. The system established carefully structured rules of evidence that had to be met in order to pass a guilty sentence. The new system was thus institutionalized, self contained, and armed increasingly with a set of codified rules by which it could act independently to address criminal activity.<sup>30</sup>

Standards of proof, however, did tend to be far more rigid under continental inquisitorial procedure than they did under English com-

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<sup>27</sup> Maria Luísa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII . . .*, pp. 200–207.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153–156; 200–207.

<sup>29</sup> Jaime Contreras and Gustav Henningsen, “Forty-four thousand cases of the Spanish Inquisition (1540–1700): Analysis of a historical data bank,” in Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe; Studies in Sources and Methods* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), p. 114.

<sup>30</sup> See John Tedeschi, “Inquisitorial Law and the Witch,” in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (London: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 83–115; Edward Peters, “The Medieval Church and State on Superstition, Magic and Witchcraft From Augustine to the Sixteenth Century,” in Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 187–238; Brian Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 71–75.

mon law. To prove guilt, Inquisition courts required either two independent statements from eyewitnesses to the event verifying that the crime had been committed, or the Inquisition had to obtain a confession from the alleged perpetrator him- or herself. No other form of proof was deemed sufficient; without one of these elements of evidence, the accused party could not be convicted.<sup>31</sup> Obviously, to confirm certain allegations in the prosecution of largely intangible magical activities, finding authentic eyewitnesses was highly problematic. In Portugal, as elsewhere, the Inquisition was able to produce abundant witnesses who could swear to having seen suspect activities—rituals performed or incantations spoken—but because Holy Office tribunals remained skeptical about the true efficacy of such rituals, testimony about them generally fell short of proof that an actual magical crime had been committed. Thus, establishing proof devolved to the necessity of obtaining a confession from the accused. Torture, justified initially by the severity of the threat magical activities posed to the church, therefore became the primary recourse of inquisitors who sought to stop demonic encroachments in their Christian communities.<sup>32</sup>

Another primary difference in the new inquisitorial system that had great consequences for alleged *mágicos* was that, unlike in the legal system that preceded it, accusers were shielded from retaliation in the event of a false accusation. The new system therefore removed any procedural restriction to denunciations motivated by factors unrelated to the alleged crime (like an ongoing feud between neighbors, for example), or a disincentive to accuse based on the difficulty in obtaining solid proof (as was previously the case in alleging magical crimes).<sup>33</sup>

Specific Inquisition jurisdiction against cunning men and women had been established in 1586 by a papal bull, *Coeli et terrae*, issued in Rome by Sixtus V.<sup>34</sup> This proclamation asserted Inquisitorial authority and competence to prosecute superstitious crimes even in cases where suspicion of heresy was absent. In effect, Sixtus V's bull broadened the Holy Office mandate to address popular superstitions

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<sup>31</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, p. 75.

<sup>32</sup> Tedeschi, "Inquisitorial Law and the Witch," pp. 97–104.

<sup>33</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 74–75.

<sup>34</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas'*, p. 193.

like healing and divination even when those activities did not explicitly draw on diabolical aid for their efficacy.<sup>35</sup> The 1613 *Regimento*, or by laws of the Portuguese Holy Office, was thus the first that might have reflected this expanded Inquisition role over popular healers, but significantly it did not.<sup>36</sup> Only with the 1640 *Regimento* did the Portuguese Inquisition acknowledge the judicial authority vested within it by *Coeli et terrae*.

In practical terms, *Coeli et terrae* was largely superfluous to established Portuguese Holy Office policies against cunning men and women; by 1586, abundant precedent had already made the matter a moot point in Portugal. Earlier in the sixteenth century, Portuguese inquisitors had exercised their authority over crimes involving diabolical collaboration to bring popular healers to trial, even in cases when a satanic alliance was not alleged. From 1550 to 1560, the Évora tribunal averaged almost five trials a year against practitioners of magic, at least seven of whom were *saludadores* and *curandeiros*. The tribunals in Coimbra and Lisbon also tried a handful of illicit magical healers at this time.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the absolute judicial need for Sixtus V's bull as a prerequisite for prosecuting magical healers was unclear in 1613, when mention of *Coeli et terrae* was absent from the *Regimento* of that year.

The specific document that empowered the Portuguese Inquisition to pursue practitioners of magic during the period of the present study was the *Regimento* of 1640. This set of by-laws regulated the Holy Office during the entire span of Portugal's most active period of witchcraft persecution; it was promulgated shortly after the restoration of Portuguese independence, when political power was decisively wrested from Spanish control.<sup>38</sup> This *Regimento* remained in force until 1774, when it was substantially revised under the direction of the Marquês de Pombal, his motive being to reduce the Holy Office's

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193 and 195.

<sup>36</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos reynos de Portugal recopilado por mandado do Illustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor, Dom Pedro de Castilho Bispo, Inquisidor Geral, e Viso Rey dos Reynos de Portugal*. Impresso na Inquisição de Lisboa por Pedro Craesbeck. Anno da Encarnação do Senhor de 1613.

<sup>37</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *O imagario da Magia: feiticeiras, saludadores e nigromantes no seculo XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 302–307.

<sup>38</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reynos de Portugal. Ordenado por mandado do Illustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor Bispo Dom Francisco de Castro, Inquisidor Geral do Concelho de Estado de Sua Magestade* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640).

independent power and subjugate that body more thoroughly to crown authority.<sup>39</sup> For our purposes, the 1640 *Regimento* is far more important than the 1774 revised edition.

In the 1640 *Regimento*, Title XIV of Book III establishes the penalties for those found guilty of perpetuating magical crimes, including sorcery, fortune telling, divination, pact with the devil and “any others of the same species,” which of course covered illicit superstitious healing, as well. Other crimes that were related to the conduct of magic, such as heresy, were dealt with in different sections of the by-laws.<sup>40</sup> In practice, penalties for such activities, where the infractions could be multiple, were cumulative; one could suffer penalties for, say, performing acts of sorcery and promulgating heresies if the inquisitors determined the accused party was guilty of both.

Title XIV of Book III in the 1640 *Regimento* mandates that persons found guilty of magical crimes who did not repent their behavior, or who were found to be guilty of the heresy and apostasy consequent to making an explicit pact with the devil, were to be treated in the same way as other heretics and apostates. That is, they were subject to execution under secular justice, as well as excommunication, the confiscation of their goods, and a range of other spiritual punishments. However, penalties were far less severe for confessed, repentant *mágicos*, or for those whose pact with the devil was deemed to have been implicit or unintentional.<sup>41</sup> These persons could expect exile, a public whipping, the confiscation of their goods and the same range of spiritual punishments as above, but not excommunication or execution. In practice, the Holy Office handed down variations of this sentence to the vast majority of convicted *mágicos* and *curandeiros* during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Those condemned for magical crimes almost never received a sentence mandating their execution, though most everyone endured spiritual punishments, exile and a period of imprisonment; relatively fewer had to face a public whipping or the confiscation of their goods.

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<sup>39</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reinos de Portugal, organizado com o Real Beneplácito e Regio Auxilio pelo Eminentissimo, Reverendissimo Cardeal da Cunha, dos Conselhos de Estado, e Gabinete de Sua Magestade, e Inquisidor Geral nestes Reinos e em todos os Seus Domínios* (Lisbon: Oficina de Manuel Manescal da Costa, 1774).

<sup>40</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição* (1640), *Livro III, Título XIV*, §§ 1–9.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

Title XIV of Book III in the 1640 *Regimento* goes on to outline penalties for magical criminals who relapse into their former offenses, for those who committed magical crimes under “aggravated circumstances,” and also includes special provisions for nobles, clerics or other “people of quality”—they could not be whipped or sent to penal asylums and work camps, but were instead more likely to be banished to one of the Atlantic colonies.

The point to keep in mind is that, in 1640, the Holy Office was empowered to deal with magical crimes as an extension of Christian heresy, the implication being that conducting magic necessitated contact with demonic forces. Even though this belief had diminished substantially among elites both outside and inside Portugal by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Portuguese Inquisition—and by extension the Portuguese medical community—still had an explicit set of rules in force with which they could prosecute alleged magical activity. Elsewhere in Europe, laws against magical crimes began to change as the motive for pursuing such trials had faded with the coming of the Age of Reason. But in Portugal, the turn of the eighteenth century was not accompanied by a concomitant intellectual freedom to pursue rational science. The 1640 *Regimento* remained in effect for 134 years because of the independence of the Holy Office, its position reinforced by the oppressive power of the church. By the early eighteenth century, however, the mentality and worldview reflected in the 1640 *Regimento* were out of step with new outlooks shaped by the Enlightenment among many private individuals. Still, the old by-laws proved useful, not only for Inquisition officials who may have still believed in their principles, but for more enlightened elites who could turn the by-laws to their own ends—as medical professionals did in pursuit of popular healers.

By contrast, the composition of the regulations controlling the activities of magical practitioners in the 1774 *Regimento* demonstrates that, by the third quarter the eighteenth century, the mentality of a broader cross-section of elites had been changed definitively as a result of spreading rationalist ideas, to the extent that real reforms could be implemented. After Pombal’s reorganization, the Inquisition by-laws regarding sorcerers, fortunetellers, healers and the like no longer recognized the reality of diabolical power as the source for the efficacy of human magical capabilities. Rather, the reformed Holy Office dismissed such practitioners’ activities officially as “inven-

tions . . . and faking,” but continued to persecute offenders as promulgators of charlatanism and base superstition.<sup>42</sup>

The 1774 by-laws represented a model of enlightened thinking. In a radical departure from its earlier position, the Inquisition’s new *Regimento* asserted that intangible crimes like making a pact with the devil could not be proven, and that trials for such crimes which the Holy Office had pursued in the past were the result of “mistakes committed by powerful persons” or the consequences of “souls profoundly effected by the study of metaphysics, and the beliefs held by ignorant and superstitious mentalities.”<sup>43</sup> However, despite this line of reasoning which denied the reality and efficacy of magic, offenders who continued to practice false arts after 1774—illicit healers are a good example—could still be brought to trial for their actions, which continued to be illegal.

By 1690, the probable date of the composition of *Dos Saludadores*, several other factors had combined to create the conditions necessary for a comprehensive Holy Office policy of oppression against *curandeiros*. First, large numbers of trained, licensed medical professionals had been approved to work as Holy Office *familiares*, thus becoming an integral part of the Inquisition’s nation-wide network of information gatherers and functionaries. Second, such enlightened concepts as rationalism and intellectual openness had begun to seep into Portugal from abroad, giving educated Portuguese gentlemen the impression that their country was becoming increasingly backward in comparison to other European societies. Third, in the document *Dos Saludadores* the Inquisition had in place a fully articulated, codified policy against popular healers, the roots of which stretched back over a century to earlier expressions of natural philosophy and theological arguments against those who claimed to have an ability to cure without the benefit of formalized training.<sup>44</sup> Fourth, because of the proliferation of Holy Office jobs—positions as *familiares* and

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<sup>42</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Ofício da Inquisição* (1774), *Livro III, Título XI, Cap. 1*, § 6. See also José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’* . . . , pp. 88–89, for a discussion of this change in perspective, which incorporated a rationalist worldview.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> ANTT, *Dos Saludadores*, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro 269*, fls. 15–24; Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição* . . . , pp. 60–61. See also the Bull of Sixtus V; Rome, 9 January 1585.



Holy Office commissioners—during this period, especially among educated professional men who increasingly held these posts, and the consequent extension of the Inquisition's presence to the smaller towns and villages of the Portuguese countryside, the Inquisition's web was broader and stronger in the eighteenth century than it had ever been before.<sup>45</sup> Such *letrados* typically would have had little sympathy for the crude, superstitious healing methods of their social inferiors; the growing class differences between Inquisition employees and the targets of their vigilance no doubt serves to explain part of the dynamic that led to an increased volume of persons tried for crimes relating to magic during the first half of the eighteenth century. Finally, we must not discount the significance of having, in the two most important figures responsible for the oversight of the Holy Office, persons who had been influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment, broadly defined.<sup>46</sup> The *Rei* Dom João V and the *Inquisidor Geral* Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello represented an interest in the application of science and reason in Portugal greater than that country had ever known. Their attitudes colored the institutions they supervised. With regard to *curandeiros*, their widespread, high profile presence helped create the kind of social climate that made the persecution of popular healers far more likely.

However, it was the increase of medical professionals among the *familiar's* ranks that accounts most for the dramatic growth in Inquisition cases against *saludadores* and *curandeiros* in Portugal during the reign of João V. Such medical professionals had a twofold interest in seeing popular healers oppressed and their activities curtailed. The first was purely a matter of trade competition. Official, state-sanctioned medical practitioners stood to gain financially if they could drive popular healers out of business through sustained Holy Office per-

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<sup>45</sup> See João Viegas Torres, "Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 40: 109–135 (Lisbon: October 1994), pp. 127–135, and Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 207–214.

<sup>46</sup> See the work on João V by Rui Bebião, in which he compares the Portuguese monarch to Louis XIV, the French Sun King: *D. João V, Rei-Sol* (Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 1984). See also José Sebastião de Silva Dias, "Portugal e a Cultura Europeia: Séculos XVI a XVIII," *Biblos XXVIII* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1952), pp. 203–498. For enlightened attitudes held by Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello, see Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, pp. 28–48 and Chapter IV, above.

secution. True, members of the lower social orders were generally not willing, let alone able, to pay the rates professional licensed healers charged for their services but, for a certain level of medical practitioner—country barbers, blood-letters and surgeons—there was a promising trade to be absorbed if rustics could be weaned away from their traditional cunning men and women. Further, licensed conventional healers at all levels of the profession stood to improve their strategic position as health care providers if they could discredit popular healing methods in the eyes of the general public. Beginning around the turn of the eighteenth century, then, licensed medical practitioners in Portugal lost their willingness to live with the contradiction of two separate, unequal, methodologically incompatible healing traditions in their country.

Still another factor facilitated trials against folk healers: it was Holy Office policy to nominate and assign special deputy inquisitors—*deputados*, or specialist personnel—to certain types of cases. *Deputados* became expert at prosecuting a specific type of crime, of which *curandeiro* cases provide a good example. In this field of jurisprudence, *deputados* found abundant employment. Deliberating inquisitors considered opinions solicited from expert deputies to be more than simply consultative; their views influenced the outcome of a trial, and officials at the three tribunals relied on them for assistance in prosecuting the arcane matters of superstitious healing.<sup>47</sup> *Deputados* typically rose in the Inquisition hierarchy to become inquisitors themselves.

The delegation of special prosecutors also abrogated the need for much correspondence to pass between the *Conselho Geral* and the regional tribunals. *Deputados* arrived at their posts knowing how to try particular crimes; they had learned Inquisition policies codified in the current *Regimento* or explicated in the pertinent Holy Office *pareceres*. Because so much of the basic trial procedure had become standardized by the eighteenth century, with tribunal operations prescribed by the *Conselho Geral*, little deliberative correspondence was necessary. Correspondence passed between the central Council and the provincial tribunals, therefore, typically consisted of mundane

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<sup>47</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio* (Lisbon: 1613), *Titulo V*, Cap. 24, fl. 28v. Also, *Regimento do Santo Officio* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640), *Livro I*, *Titulo V*, § 6; cited in Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe*, p. 82, notes 18 and 19.

administrative details—bare factual updates on the status of pending cases—and little more.<sup>48</sup>

During the middle decades of the eighteenth century, *curandeiro* cases were frequent enough, and the inquisitors few enough, that a reliance on deputies was sure to develop. Even so, because of the high volume of these cases, the issues involved in *curandeiro* trials must have been part of most inquisitors' working knowledge. Once a Holy Office official had absorbed the tenets of *Dos Saludadores* and heard the objections to the superstitious healing arts by a few university-trained, licensed *médicos*, additional expert testimony from physicians or surgeons during subsequent trials may have become, like opinions sought from superior inquisitors in the *Conselho Geral*, superfluous.

Also, in trials where no doctor served directly as an expert witness, it was quite usual for a medical professional's family members to denounce a *curandeiro*. For example, in the trial of *curandeira* Juliana Martins, held in Coimbra in 1736, the first letter of denunciation came from Angelica de Matos Mascerais, wife of the physician Manuel da Fonseca Telles of Oporto. Later, she was the first to testify for the Holy Office commission sent to gather depositions; her two daughters, Ana and Guida, aged sixteen and thirteen respectively, followed immediately after. The good doctor, their husband and father, did not testify, though he was certainly in attendance at the trial.<sup>49</sup> In the jurisdiction of the Évora tribunal, much the same situation can be found in the case of José Gomes Nicole, a *curandeiro* brought to trial in 1760. Of the thirteen people who testified before the pre-trial commission, five were either dependents or family relations of João Azevado, a licensed surgeon from Faro, a port in the Algarve. Holy Office commissioners took depositions from Azevado's brother, sister-in-law (his brother's wife), niece (their daughter), his own daughter, and a household slave. All gave critical testimony against the accused folk healer. João Azevado, perhaps out of a desire to screen his involvement in José Gomes Nicole's prosecution, did not provide a statement.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> See, for example, the following correspondence books of the Inquisition: ANTT; Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livros* 362, 363, 372, 373, 375, 377, 379, 380 and 381; Inquisição de Coimbra, *livros* 29, 30, 31, 32, 39 and 44; Inquisição de Évora, *livros* 17, 18, 41, 42, 43, 44, 59, 60, 61 and 62; and Inquisição de Lisboa, *livros* 20, 21 and 22.

<sup>49</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7107.

<sup>50</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5436.

In such cases, the inquisitors might also produce another university graduate, or *letrado*—typically a government administrator or church official—who would testify against the accused, as well. Barring that, frequently a local *fidalgo*—an aristocratic landowner, knight in one of the holy orders, or noblewoman—might provide a deposition.<sup>51</sup> Such damning testimony could echo with themes shaped by an appreciation of rational science, but just as frequently the denunciation would dwell on the *prima facie* merits of the accused's superstitious actions and assertions. Either way, a statement from a university graduate or other member of the elite class lent weight to the Inquisition's case. More importantly, accusations and condemnations proffered by the *curandeiros*' social superiors reinforced an invisible but ubiquitous ceiling in the social hierarchy, pitting the conceits of an elite culture (which patronized educated, licensed healers) against the sensibilities of a popular one.<sup>52</sup>

A brief look at the working relationship between one veteran inquisitor, António Ribeiro de Abreu, who as a *deputado* adjudicated dozens of *curandeiro* trials in Coimbra and Lisbon, and António de Abreu Bacellar, a licensed physician who held the credentials of an Inquisition *familiar*, will provide a good picture of how close the relationship between these two types of elite professionals could be.

António Ribeiro de Abreu and António de Abreu Bacellar worked side-by-side in Coimbra between approximately 1718 and 1730, during the middle phase of the Inquisition's long sustained period of trials against *curandeiros*. António Ribeiro de Abreu was one of the Coimbra tribunal's most active inquisitors in cases against popular healers, serving as a judge in more trials—at least twenty-four—than any other inquisitor except his contemporary, Bento Paes de Amaral.<sup>53</sup> António de Abreu Bacellar, meanwhile, had earned a doctorate, was a professor on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine, had been a *familiar*

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<sup>51</sup> For examples of this type of scenario, see ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 7107; 7136 and 8820, as well as Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5436 and 5949.

<sup>52</sup> See Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 15–17 and 81–94. Also, see Araújo, *Magia, Demónio e Força Mágica*, pp. 17–21; 25–30.

<sup>53</sup> Inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu participated as a judge in at least twenty trials conducted by the Coimbra tribunal against sixteen different accused popular healers, four of whom were tried twice, between 1718 and 1736. See ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 33; 6305; 6315; 6515; 7135; 7136; 7300; 7346; 7779; 7827; 8307; 8699; 8899; 9545; and 10011.

of the Holy Office since 1699 and, beginning on 15 March 1707, was an official prison *médico* of the Coimbra Inquisition.<sup>54</sup> He held this post into the 1730s, through the period of António Ribeiro de Abreu's tenure as an inquisitor in Coimbra. Moreover, as an indication of his philosophical outlook, António de Abreu Bacellar was personally acquainted with the progressive expatriate physician Jacob de Castro Sarmento, who advocated for rationalist medical reform in Portugal. Abreu Bacellar would correspond with Castro Sarmento, once the latter became an expatriate living and practicing medicine in London.<sup>55</sup>

One product of António Ribeiro de Abreu and António de Abreu Bacellar's long collaboration as functionaries of the Inquisition was a string of Holy Office trials which, taken together, amount to a campaign of persecution against popular healers. What evidence supports this claim to their cooperative effort? First, the two were more than contemporaries; they were old colleagues. They had lived and worked together at the University of Coimbra for most if not all of the first decade of the eighteenth century. António Ribeiro de Abreu earned a doctorate in canon law and was named to several high administrative posts at the university, including *vice-conservador* (vice-provost or vice-rector) and coordinator of the professors in his discipline.<sup>56</sup> During the same time, António de Abreu Bacellar was serving as a professor of surgery at the university, and in 1702 he also undertook the duties of an alderman (*vereador*) for the city of Coimbra.<sup>57</sup> António Ribeiro de Abreu was confirmed as a *familiar* of the Inquisition in 1712. Shortly afterward he was posted to the Lisbon tribunal as a prosecutor and deputy; he returned to Coimbra as an inquisitor in 1718.<sup>58</sup> António de Abreu Bacellar's career with the Holy Office had begun sooner; he was made a *familiar* of the

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<sup>54</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838; and BACL, Augusto da Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos e Cirurgiões Portugueses ou que Estiveram em Portugal" (unpublished 32-volume typescript with manuscript notations) (Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 1949?), vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>55</sup> BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>56</sup> Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha, "Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício," *Memória*, Revista Anual do Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, No. 1 (Lisbon: April, 1989), p. 136.

<sup>57</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838; BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>58</sup> Farinha, "Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício," p. 136.

Holy Office on 2 March 1699.<sup>59</sup> The two then worked within the Coimbra tribunal simultaneously between 1718 and 1731, years of very heavy *curandeiro* prosecutions. So, these two men shared some very close ties, but there is one further connection. In all probability, the two shared a common family link; strong evidence suggests that António Ribeiro de Abreu and António de Abreu Bacellar were cousins, thus providing an additional context for their cooperative working relationship.<sup>60</sup>

Hence, the lives of António Ribeiro de Abreu and António de Abreu Bacellar were tightly interwoven and their working relationship was important for explaining the causality of *curandeiro* trials in Portugal, but their experience was far from unique. Medical professionals and career inquisitors frequently worked together in tight-knit institutions like the Holy Office or the University of Coimbra. As members of a middle-class educated urban elite, a group of decidedly modest size, such was simply their common experience; the institutions that trained them were small and the administrative positions open to them were relatively few. Is it any wonder, then, that these two contemporaries (and others like them) should have worked together in the Holy Office toward the same end—bringing *curandeiros* to trial (though, to be sure, probably for divergent reasons)? Because of the existence of numerous inter-linking relationships like theirs, the human and professional connections necessary to make a planned suppression of popular medicine possible were firmly in place within the institutional structure of the Holy Office.

As has been demonstrated, some Inquisition personnel functioned as experts in the prosecution of popular healer cases. Time and again, Holy Office records provide the same names of individuals who advised the panels of inquisitors that adjudicated *curandeiro* cases. A tally correlating the names of known *deputados* with Holy Office trials pursued against known popular healers reveals that just a handful of men sat in judgment on the great majority of these cases between 1715 and 1760. As in so many other episodes of Portuguese history, the key players in the arena of conflict that pitted doctors

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<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838; BACL, Silva Carvalho, “Dicionário dos Médicos,” vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>60</sup> Their exact relationship is difficult to ascertain. Available sources point to their being distant cousins. See Farinha, “Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício,” p. 136; and ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 33, no. 838.

and inquisitors against folk healers were part of a rarefied, interconnected cadre.

For example, the trial of *curandeira* Antónia Pereira, begun in 1722, illustrates how licensed healers were cooperating with the Inquisition to attack folk healers. In a striking show of their solidarity with professional medical practitioners, the inquisitors who deliberated on this case even went to substantial pains in one of the final trial summaries, the *forão visto*, not only to mention but to explicate the professional opinions of surgeons and physicians who had delivered expert testimony severely criticizing the inefficacy of the accused's illicit remedies.<sup>61</sup> Their incisive medical assessments quite naturally struck first at the folly of a *saludador's* remedies from the point of view of rational scientific medicine and only touched on the possibility of a healer's methods being a threat on theological or spiritual grounds as a secondary consideration. Consider, for example, this representative passage:

... she performed extraordinary and reprehensible cures on infirm people, whom she found to have no confidence in Doctors, using superstitious actions and ceremonies of no effect, and [which were] totally disproportionate to the ends she wanted.<sup>62</sup>

We should not be surprised that the inquisitors held up state-sanctioned scientific medicine as the desirable alternative to folk healing methods—their bias is of course a given. What is striking, though, is the degree to which the records give primacy of place to the debased nature of popular remedies and healing techniques, arguing stridently that these be the grounds for which the crime should be prosecuted, rather than referring most strongly to the spiritual degradation likely to result from dabbling in superstitious healing. Although part of the argument against the accused acknowledged at least the theoretical possibility of diabolical intervention as a means to empower extraordinary human healing powers . . .

She had, by her method of curing, presumed a pact, which she had made with the Devil, either expressly or tacitly, showing herself to be a general master of the arts of sorcery, and using these principles for her cures in all her ceremonies, she procured herbs for certain remedies, the effects of which no one could see . . . She could only have

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<sup>61</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7346; *forão visto*.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

performed these cures with the art of the Devil. Any other person using the remedies she used could not cure with them, nor obtain any improving effect among the sick on whom she experimented . . .<sup>63</sup>

. . . the argument of the case summary closed with a strong statement which underscored the primacy of scientific medicine:

The Inquisitors verify that the cures were faked; that the cures did not result in a healing effect, and that such effects could not proceed from any “natural virtue” for remedies [which Pereira claimed to have], which she did not understand, and those [remedies] which she used could not have been proportionate [to effect a cure] for the attacks that she treated without medicine, and that these could only be cured by Doctors, not by “divine virtue.”<sup>64</sup>

Among the inquisitors who adjudicated this case was *deputado* António Ribeiro de Abreu, by that time a veteran of over twenty cases against *curandeiros*.

Although this was far from an isolated case of mixing medical with theological opinion in the official summary of a Holy Office trial, that inquisitors would in effect divest themselves of some of their authority in this forum by deferring to the work of medical professionals demonstrates the extent to which the two professional groups had come to function conjointly. Further, the case demonstrates the striking extent to which a concern for scientific rationalism had invaded the field of conventional medicine in Portugal by the 1720s. Even though another generation would pass before a Portuguese crown administration would be moved to institute reforms in domestic medical education and practice by divesting the Jesuits of their power over the teaching curriculum at the University of Coimbra, Antónia Pereira’s case makes clear that the issue was present in the minds of practicing physicians and surgeons at a far earlier date.

Other clear examples demonstrate that the Holy Office maintained a specific interest in persecuting popular healers, and that they carried out this persecution systematically with the help of licensed *médicos*. Consider that, during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, one of the primary inquisitors on the Évora tribunal who was responsible for adjudicating *curandeiro* cases was *deputado* José de Almeida

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.



do Amaral.<sup>65</sup> In two early *curandeiro* cases which occurred in 1720, we have an example of key inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu working closely with José de Almeida do Amaral to prosecute illicit folk healers.<sup>66</sup>

José de Almeida do Amaral (a relative of fellow inquisitors, and cousins, João Paes de Amaral and Bento Paes de Amaral, whose significance will be discussed below)<sup>67</sup> was responsible for conducting more trials against popular healers in Évora during the first half of the eighteenth century than almost any other inquisitor assigned there.<sup>68</sup> He alone helped to adjudicate nearly half (44%) of all *mágico* trials conducted before the Évora *mesa* during the entire period under study. During his career (1720 to 1747), he had a hand in almost every folk healer case with which his tribunal dealt (24 of 30). His certainty that folk healers should be prosecuted must have been acute.

And no wonder: there is very good evidence that suggests José de Almeida do Amaral was also a trained medical professional, or at least very influenced by them, to the extent that he vigorously pursued the prosecution of popular healers for illicit curing. The evidence comes from the first trial he served on as a member of the Évora Holy Office tribunal. He began adjudicating his first case as an inquisitor (Évora tribunal number 516) in June, 1720. This case charged Manuel Fernandes, a married rural laborer, with being a *curandeiro*. However, the year before, José de Almeida do Amaral had been the first of three men to write letters to the Inquisition denouncing Manuel Fernandes. The other two men, Paulo Fernandes Banha

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<sup>65</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516 (twice—once for relapse), 517, 521, 745, 1445, 1446, 2602, 3096, 3753, 3862, 3898, 4569, 4975, 5401, 5949, 6206, 6371 (twice—once for relapse), 6389, 6390, 6539, and 6543. His signature appears on almost every important popular healing trial document throughout the era. According to the fashion of the time, his first name was usually rendered “Joseph.”

<sup>66</sup> The cases are Évora numbers 516 and 5401; the alleged offenders were Manuel Fernandes and Juan José Barrento. These were the first *curandeiro* trials Amaral judged during his career.

<sup>67</sup> Their exact relationship is difficult to ascertain. He was either their uncle or another cousin. See Farinha, “Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício,” pp. 137–138.

<sup>68</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516; 517; 521; 745; 1445; 1446; 2602; 3096; 3753; 3862; 3898; 4569; 4975; 5401; 5949; 6206; 6389; 6390; 6539; 6543; and 6731. Three of these cases also have a relapse trial.

and Baltazar Afonso Banha (who were probably brothers), were identified in the Inquisition record as doctors. All three men denounced Manuel Fernandes on the grounds of his unsound and superstitious healing practices.<sup>69</sup> Later in the *processo*, once José de Almeida do Amaral had been nominated to help adjudicate the case, the trial record noted that “a *médico* had come in to act in the capacity of judge in this trial.”<sup>70</sup>

One other bit of evidence lends weight to the argument that José de Almeida do Amaral took part in this trial as an advocate of conventional medicine, and that this case set a precedent for his future work, prosecuting *curandeiros* over the next twenty-seven years. Near the end of the trial dossier, when tallying up the evidence against the accused, the inquisitors state that:

... because the effects that the culprit obtained with his cures were not consistent, it is only proven that it is said that [the symptoms] improved with the cures that the culprit did, as consistently as those that the same culprit confessed to; for this reason we say that he experimented with good effect except when the sickness was serious, because then he did not cure grave sicknesses; he did not have the virtue he would have needed to cure them. Also, it is unbelievable, because the Lord is virtue. He who goes forth to cure, goes to create, as well as to heal, the curable sickness as well as the incurable sickness, and it is not good to imitate the power of God; for certain infirmities, there are those that the culprit said he had His [God's] virtue to cure...<sup>71</sup>

This speech reiterates the language of *Dos Saludadores*, which had been circulated among the inquisitors and which was available as an *aperecere* for consultation. Further, the inquisitors' statement paraphrases one of the core arguments of *Dos Saludadores*, which asserts that popular healers are dangerous precisely because they falsely claim divine power to cure humans. According to this *aperecere*, such powers, if *curandeiros* demonstrate them at all, must necessarily come

<sup>69</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 516; *diligências*.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, *fôro visto*.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166. The text in Portuguese is “... *Sojuração não consista dos efeitos das curas que o Reo obtava, e só o testado dissem melhorava com a cura que o Reo lhe fez, consta porem pellas confessem do mesmo Reo, por isso dis que não curar que fazia experimentava bom efeito excepto quando o mal grande, porque então não tinha cura a mal; nao obteste a vertude tinha de curarse. Tambem hé incrível porque o dom, e virtude. Quem da á de curar, ai criaturar, tanto curar, o mal curavel, como o mal incuravel, e não bem de imitado o poder de Deos, são para certos enfermidades, como o Reo disse, tinha à sua virtude de curar...*” (Author's translation).

from the devil because, as *Dos Saludadores* asserts, God would not bestow them on a common mortal.<sup>72</sup> The first inquisitor to sign this statement was the newest member of the tribunal, José de Almeida do Amaral.

Moreover, it is essential to note that José de Almeida do Amaral was of the same family as two other senior inquisitors who sat on the Coimbra tribunal at that time, the cousins João Paes do Amaral and Bento Paes do Amaral.<sup>73</sup> As a *deputado*, Bento Paes do Amaral helped judge approximately forty trials against popular healers during his long tenure with the Coimbra Inquisition. His cousin João adjudicated at least half that number, both in Lisbon and at Coimbra. José de Almeida do Amaral sat in judgment on at least twenty-four cases of popular healers during his term of service in Évora, accounting for well over half of all *curandeiro* trials there between 1716 and 1755.<sup>74</sup> But José de Almeida do Amaral had worked in the Coimbra and Lisbon offices of the Inquisition, too. In 1703, he began his Holy Office career as a young deputy to the Coimbra tribunal. At that time, he was also apparently a medical student at Coimbra University. He moved to Lisbon, the city of his birth, in 1711, working as a *promotor* with the Lisbon tribunal. Only in 1718, after another two years in Coimbra, did he move to Évora, when he was appointed an inquisitor of that city's tribunal.<sup>75</sup> He was still serving there nearly three decades later.

Inquisition personnel were obliged to communicate officially, sharing information concerning the cases they adjudicated. The problem for historians, of course, is that this correspondence rarely included substantive discussions of the judicial rationale behind cases. Typically, such communication consisted only of a routine exchange of case summaries and practical information about the accused, accusers, and Inquisition personnel working on the case.<sup>76</sup> Blood relatives work-

<sup>72</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro* 269, fls. 15–16.

<sup>73</sup> Their exact relationship is difficult to ascertain. He was either their uncle or another cousin, I believe. See Farinha, “Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício,” pp. 137–138.

<sup>74</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516; 517; 521; 745; 1445; 1446; 2602; 3096; 3753; 3862; 3898; 4569; 4975; 5401; 5949; 6206; 6389; 6390; 6539; 6543; and 6731. Three of these cases also have a relapse trial.

<sup>75</sup> Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha, “Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício,” *Memória*, Revista Anual do Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, No. 1 (Lisbon: April, 1989), p. 137.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, the following correspondence books of the Inquisition: ANTT;

ing within the Holy Office might have engaged in informal communication about their work, as well, but no letters of this type are known to survive. Among themselves, they surely discussed their activities, impressions and experiences as judges in cases against *curandeiros*; with great facility, they could also have agreed to coordinate popular healer prosecutions. Such associations provided the opportunity for the development of a conscious, organized effort among inquisitors to discredit popular healing in favor of conventionally trained, licensed medical practitioners. However, after the promulgation of *Dos Saludadores* by the General Council in 1690, an informal conspiracy in the provinces was hardly necessary; the rationale for such a campaign had been provided by the central Inquisition authorities. For the same reason, the need for most deliberative internal correspondence regarding illicit magical healers had also been eliminated.

So, the Holy Office maintained a policy of assigning specific expert deputy inquisitors (like José de Almeida do Amaral) to trials involving popular healers whenever practical.<sup>77</sup> Part of the impact of that policy can be seen in the sharply elevated number of cases against illicit folk healers between 1709 and 1755, since the mere presence of specialist judges of *curandeirismo* ensured that criminals in their area of expertise—illicit curing—stood a stronger chance of being prosecuted.

To return to *deputado* António Ribeiro de Abreu: tellingly, he was one of the inquisitors who adjudicated João Baptista de São Miguel's case in Lisbon in 1731. As a Holy Office official, he normally served with the Coimbra tribunal. Abreu's presence in Lisbon is unusual but not unique; nearly ten years earlier the Coimbra Inquisition had provided the Lisbon tribunal with similar expert personnel for two *curandeirismo* trials. In March of 1722, João Paes do Amaral and Manuel de Matos, two inquisitors experienced in prosecuting superstitious curing cases, travelled from Coimbra to hear José Ribeiro's trial and that of Padre Francisco de São José.<sup>78</sup>

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Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livros* 362, 363, 372, 373, 375, 377, 379, 380 and 381; Inquisição de Coimbra, *livros* 29, 30, 31, 32, 39 and 44; Inquisição de Évora, *livros* 17, 18, 41, 42, 43, 44, 59, 60, 61 and 62; and Inquisição de Lisboa, *livros* 20, 21 and 22.

<sup>77</sup> Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies on Sources and Methods* (Dekalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), p. 82, notes 18 and 19.

<sup>78</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 275 and 851.

António Ribeiro de Abreu served as an inquisitor on at least two other Lisbon trials against known *curandeiros* in 1731: those of Manuel António de Évora and of Domingos Martins.<sup>79</sup> Further, he was in Lisbon once again in 1734 to preside at the first trial of the *curandeira* Maria de Conceição.<sup>80</sup> All this after having personally supervised and judged at least eighteen trials conducted by the Coimbra Inquisition against popular healers between 1718, the year he was named to the Holy Office tribunal in Coimbra, and 1730.<sup>81</sup>

While working in Lisbon in 1734, Abreu received a promotion to the second-highest level of the Inquisition hierarchy; in recognition of his service, he was raised to the level of a deputy on the General Council of the Holy Office.<sup>82</sup> After returning from Lisbon, he would oversee two more *curandeiro* trials in Coimbra in 1735 and 1736.<sup>83</sup> António Ribeiro de Abreu's colleagues and protégés would continue to prosecute *curandeiros* as he had done for more than a generation after his confirmation to the *Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício*.

This close participation by experienced inquisitors from other tribunals reveals the General Council's interest in insuring that *curandeiro* cases be supervised by Inquisition personnel who knew how to deal with this type of criminal activity. Prior to José Ribeiro's case, the Lisbon tribunal had prosecuted one prior *curandeiro* in the eighteenth century, but that trial had transpired eighteen years before. A slave named Jacques Viegas, sent from Brazil in 1704 to stand trial for illicit curing, became the only other popular healer to be prosecuted by the Lisbon tribunal between 1690 and 1722.<sup>84</sup> That the General Council would provide seasoned advisors from another region to assist the Lisbon inquisitors is therefore perfectly understandable. However, the very presence of an expert prosecutor may have increased the likelihood that *curandeiros* would be brought to trial: during its brief association with António Ribeiro de Abreu, the Lisbon tribunal experienced its most active period of prosecuting popular healers, holding at least six trials in four years.

<sup>79</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* nos. 1817 and 782, respectively.

<sup>80</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 7987.

<sup>81</sup> António Ribeiro de Abreu was made an Inquisitor of the Coimbra Tribunal on 7 January 1718. See Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha, *Os Arquivos da Inquisição* (Lisbon: Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo, 1990), p. 326.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311. The appointment was confirmed on the same day he was nominated, 7 September 1734.

<sup>83</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6305 and 8899.

<sup>84</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 2355.

*Procurement of Victims: Denunciation and Pre-Trial Hearing*

The Coimbra tribunal trial against the *curandeira* Isabel de Silva is one of the earliest and richest to be found in terms of damning testimony provided by professional licensed medical practitioners or their families. Moreover, the case serves as an excellent example of how the Holy Office commonly procured magical suspects. This trial demonstrates how denunciations and pre-trial hearings were carefully organized for the benefit of the prosecution. This case also provides a further illustration of the collusion of Inquisition officials, who worked closely with medical professionals to bring *curandeiros* to trial.

A widow in her late fifties who had remarried, Isabel de Silva was first arrested in Oporto on 20 November 1702 and charged both with conducting acts of sorcery and promulgating superstitious beliefs. She endured her trial, torture (on 14 December 1703) and year-long imprisonment, subsequently performing an *auto-da-fé* in late 1703 or early 1704. She then spent three years as an exile in the crown penal asylum at Castro Marim. Then, more than five years later on 3 July 1709, the Holy Office arrested her again for relapse. At this time, she was sixty-six years old. The Inquisition dealt with her much more severely in her second trial, sentencing her to a three-year banishment in Brazil. She died in prison, though, before she could complete the terms of her sentence.<sup>85</sup>

Isabel de Silva's massive double *processo* held abundant ethnographic detail. The case that the inquisitors and de Silva's neighbors made against her is notable for the prosecution's heavy reliance on what modern jurisprudence would call tainted testimony. In the first trial, two early sets of denunciations, dated 24 November 1698 and 3 December 1698, include testimony from a range of persons who, because of their openly expressed special interests, could not have been considered impartial witnesses.

For example, in the earliest set of depositions, the second and third people to testify were priests, while the eighth was a surgeon. The first priest to testify against Isabel de Silva was the Reverend Padre Luís Pacheco: sixty years old; *Commissário da Sancta Guarda* in Oporto; born in and resident of Oporto. His neighbor (or possibly

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<sup>85</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 6223.

house-mate), Padre Manuel da Rocha, a simple cleric, followed, stating his own denunciations. Then, a surgeon born near Vieira in the Archbishopric of Braga but living in Oporto, Domingos Ramalho, testified eighth. The surgeon, true to his profession, complained that the accused healer did not have the proper training to cure sick people. Further, he stated that the powers she claimed to possess were “feigned.” As a practicing medical professional, he made his bias against folk healers plain. Lastly, the tenth citizen to make a statement against Isabel de Silva was Maria de Almeida, the widow of Doctor Sebastião Pinto de Azevedo, a *médico* of Oporto. Her testimony is not stridently technical or even preoccupied with illicit medicine, *per se*; the widow Azevedo complained about the accused healer’s superstitious practices more than anything else, but her position as a well-known physician’s widow would have carried significance and weight in a trial against a *curandeira*. The balance of the depositions came from local commoners who labored in agricultural or artisan jobs within the community.<sup>86</sup>

The two earlier sets of *diligências* mentioned above follow a later set; they were bound into the trial in reverse chronological order. There were seventeen total denunciations given to a second evidence-gathering commission in the case of Isabel de Silva, which met on 12 October 1702 in Oporto. The Coimbra Inquisition tribunal’s official list of approved denunciates in Oporto includes a pharmacist, Domingos Pinto de Miranda, his wife and grown daughter, and a state-licensed healer named Francisco Soares, who is alternatively identified both as a barber and a *sangrador*. The denunciates also include a *familiar* of the Holy Office and a sacerdote in holy orders. Finally, there is a statement from one Doctor Joseph Pereira da Cruz, identified as the *Vigairo Geral* (Vicar General) of Oporto. All of the testimonials given by persons connected officially with the medical trade made disparaging comments about the accused *curandeira*’s methods of curing, comparing them unfavorably with sanctioned, learned techniques. Clearly, the inquisitors wanted to make a very strong case against this popular healer.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., first bound section of *diligências*, dated 12 October 1702; fls. 1–35 (page numbering pertains only to this section of denunciations and does not continue consistently throughout the trial dossier).

A “girl” (*moça*) referred to as Comba, the twenty-two year-old daughter of Domingos Pinto de Miranda, the pharmacist, was the fifth to testify. Her statement alleged that Isabel de Silva would attempt to effect cures by “making marks in the form of a cross on the palm of her own hand” and then “uttering some words from God” which de Silva asserted gave her the power to heal. Comba described how the accused would put wide, thick leaves from certain plants into the mouths of her patients as part of a healing ritual. Comba identified herself in her statement as the child of a *boticário* (pharmacist); it is clear that she thought of herself as one who well knew the difference between a proper scientific remedy and the superstitious practices of a charlatan.<sup>88</sup>

Sixth to testify was thirty-eight year-old Francisco Soares, identified here as a *sangrador*, not a barber. In an exceptionally long statement, he revealed his preoccupation with Isabel de Silva’s healing practices, pointing out rituals of hers that he said had no medical merit. For example, she would, according to Soares, say certain prayers at midnight over pieces of nuts and apples that she had cut, which were to be consumed by a sick person to effect their cure. The licensed *sangrador* referred to the *curandeira*’s methods bluntly as so much sorcery and superstition, and recounted how persons who had put themselves in her care had died. He recalled, too, that she would misuse holy water, and alluded to the idea that her supposed healing powers, if real, could only be the result of a pact with the devil.<sup>89</sup> Either the barber-phlebotomist Francisco Soares really believed these things, or he was telling the Holy Office Commissioner who deposed him everything he thought the inquisitors would need to hear in order to guarantee the condemnation of Isabel de Silva.

Twelfth to testify was the wife of the pharmacist Domingos Pinto de Miranda, Catarina Ferreira, a resident of Oporto who, in 1702, was fifty-five years old. In her brief statement, she recalled vaguely that Isabel de Silva was known to have tried to cure fevers in children. Catarina Ferreira went on to repeat only clipped versions of her husband’s opinions, saying that Isabel de Silva did not know much about healing, nor how to read or write, and “that [her] husband [Ferreira’s] said everything she [de Silva] does is a

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., fls. 15v–17v.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., fls. 18v–23r.



fake.”<sup>90</sup> Repeated phrases such as these are signs that indicate this testimony had probably been abundantly coached.

Two points need to be stressed about these three groups of denouncers, points that can be made about virtually any group of Portuguese subjects on which the Inquisition drew to give testimony in cases involving magical crimes. First, membership in these groups of witnesses was largely pre-determined and ultimately approved by officials of the Holy Office. That is, a list of persons wishing to give a statement against an accused *mágico* or *curandeiro* was in most cases approved at the tribunal level before a regional commission met to collect the depositions used in a trial. This roster typically included a list of prescribed questions, as well, to be put to those giving testimony.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, witness lists always reflected the bias of the prosecution. (This is one reason why accused persons found it so difficult to get inquisitors to enter contradictory statements from their own supporters as trial evidence.)

In assessing witness testimony, then, it is important to remember that Inquisition authorities preparing to arrest a suspected healer or other type of criminal often compiled lists of approved witnesses before a Holy Office commission was sent out to collect depositions. Such lists unfailingly included persons sympathetic to the prosecution—persons on whose allegiances elites of the Holy Office and, by extension, the Roman church and Portuguese state, could depend to give damning testimony. However, such obvious bias was not problematic in an early modern courtroom; what a modern defense lawyer would protest as witness tampering, the *promotores* of the Holy Office considered normal and valid practice. Indeed, in cases involving culprits whom some of the more conservative and traditional inquisitors still supposed to be, even in the eighteenth century, genuine diabolical agents, weighting the prosecution with a list of sympathetic witnesses was thought to be not only fair play, but a necessary strategy to defeat the ubiquitous machinations of Satan.

Further, the initial compilation of a witness list required a high degree of cooperation at the local level between church and Inquisition

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33r–34r.

<sup>91</sup> Some prescribed questions had their origins in lists provided in the *pareceres* circulated by the *Conselho Geral*, or in special guides that instructed how specific crimes were to be prosecuted. See *Conselho Geral livro 47*, “*Modo de processar nos casos que pertencem ao Santo Oficio conforme ao Regimento.*”

authorities, as well as with any private individuals—like medical professionals and their families—who would arrange to meet for the purpose of denouncing a person who was, however objectionable, usually a neighbor. Such cooperation required not only group consensus on the question of the accused party's guilt, but also a singleness of purpose in seeing the prosecution through. In an age where peace authorities across Europe often found that the gathering of evidence in other types of criminal cases (poaching, smuggling, and banditry, among others) could break down in the face of an unwillingness among rural people to implicate their neighbors or expose them to punishment, the effectiveness of the Inquisition in uniting citizens against perceived harmful outsiders—witches and sorcerers, Protestants, false healers, Jews—is remarkable. Hence, it should come as no surprise that such a high proportion of accused *mágicos* and *curandeiros* were ultimately outsiders—relative newcomers to the communities that combined against them.

This idea is related to the second point: groups of approved witnesses, in most cases, knew one another, and typically quite well, within a closed corporate social context. They were long used to daily interaction in their small communities, carrying on relationships as neighbors or professional peers. Their shared, inter-related histories provided them with the social cohesion necessary to carry out an act as traumatic as persecuting someone who dwelt in their midst. However, groups of denouncers were almost always led by a core group of social elites, one of whom usually held the responsibility for making an initial denunciation. If elites in Portugal were bound to act together against a perceived communal threat by a collective consciousness of their elevated social position inside a social framework which, moreover, required elites to initiate action for the good of the community, then commoners who followed them in giving denunciations did so out of a long-conditioned sense of deference to their social superiors. With regard to the compilation of lists of sympathetic witnesses to be used in Holy Office trials against folk healers and practitioners of magic, the scenario which emerges is one of social elites making initial denunciations, followed by a phase in which they worked with local Inquisition and church officials to line up support for their case among family, social peers, and social inferiors (who may have been dependent on them for work, land rent, or any of the myriad obligations incurred in a paternalistic, near-feudal social system). This witness list would then be submitted

to the regional tribunal for approval. The group of witnesses outlined in the trial above neatly exemplifies this dynamic.

The trial of Isabel de Silva demonstrates how the Inquisition cooperated with local elites and exercised substantial premeditation in identifying and interviewing witnesses who would be sympathetic to the prosecution of an accused offender. In cases against popular healers, Holy Office functionaries often sought to collect testimony from persons who could speak directly to the technical effectiveness of a *curandeiro's* healing methods. To make a case watertight, witness lists often included Holy Office personnel, members of the clergy and licensed medical practitioners or their family members. Through these methods, the possibility of entertaining any contradictory testimony was all but excluded. Isabel de Silva's two trials make clear that the inquisitors and medical professionals would go to exceptional lengths to build a strong case against a healer when they could, and that the number of picked star witnesses could be considerable.

To hone the point further, it is helpful to underscore that a physician, surgeon or barber, working inside the Holy Office organization but drawing on his extended network of professional medical associations, would have been especially well-placed to facilitate the process of selecting witnesses for a *curandeiro* trial. Alternatively, these licensed medical men were of course perfectly situated to initiate cases themselves.

Additional evidence of professional medical complicity in the prosecution of *curandeiros* comes through strongly in many of the sets of depositions that Holy Office officials collected. In some trial dossiers, a section of denunciations might begin on a page headed *Rol das testemunhas que não de proquntivo* ("Role of testimonies which were not questioned").<sup>92</sup> That is, the depositions therein recorded were not given to the commission under face-to-face questioning but were separately composed and submitted in writing by the denouncers. This was not unusual; because they did not need to dictate their statements to a scribe, it was normal (and possibly more convenient or efficient) for literate witnesses of the elite classes to enter their testimony in this way. (Most general supporting witnesses, however, were illiterate commoners who required the services of an official Holy Office scribe.)

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<sup>92</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199, unnumbered pages in the trial dossier's second section of denunciations.

Of course, submitting a written, sworn statement presented a greater opportunity for elites, or any person with an ulterior motive, to formulate a detailed premeditated attack on the subject of the denunciation. This opportunity to exercise a hostile bias was far more difficult to detect than it would have been under direct questioning by an inquisitor. Moreover, because Inquisition trial procedures never permitted an opportunity for the accused party to cross-examine any detractor, detainees were denied one primary means of exposing unsubstantiated attacks on them.<sup>93</sup> In practice, though, Portuguese Holy Office personnel usually sought to free victims who had been denounced for genuinely spiteful reasons or with patently false allegations.<sup>94</sup>

The genesis of such testimonials worked in several ways. Whenever some neighbors or acquaintances of an illicit healer—typically but not necessarily elites—decided to denounce that person, they would initiate an investigation by informing the Holy Office of the healer's activities. *Familiars* and commissioners would then make a preliminary investigation. If the inquisitors of the regional tribunal felt there was sufficient evidence to warrant a trial, the accused healer would be arrested. However, the converse was also true: *familiars* of the Inquisition, upon deciding independently—without receiving an outside denunciation from a private individual—to pursue a case against a known popular healer, could easily have identified medical professionals or their family members to denounce or testify as a private individual against a *curandeiro*. This scenario became more likely as the number of trained, licensed medical professionals working for the Holy Office increased.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Press, 1995), pp. 69–76.

<sup>94</sup> Beyond the relative handful of trial records that reveal cases where an accused *mágico* was set free for lack of evidence, it is well to remember that the great majority of denunciations did not lead to a trial. Each of the thousands of denunciations that the Holy Office received—and José Pedro Paiva has calculated a figure approaching twenty times the number of actual trials in the Coimbra district alone—was carefully screened to ensure its validity. See José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas': Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), p. 208.

<sup>95</sup> Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, pp. 69–80; and Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 197–204.

Finally, church officials from an episcopal tribunal could also denounce folk healers and other *mágicos*, whom the Inquisition frequently arrested on the basis of their official denunciation. Knowledge of this practice helps to confirm the impression that there was frequent cooperation between church and Holy Office functionaries in bringing community undesirables to trial in Portugal. Between 1600 and 1774, 68% of the denunciations of all magical practitioners came from private individuals, while a considerable 18% originated with episcopal tribunals. 9% of *mágico* cases originated with spontaneous confessions of the guilty parties themselves, while secular authorities generated the remaining 3% of cases.<sup>96</sup>

For an example of a *familiar* who was instrumental in the incarceration of *curandeiros*, consider the case of Manuel de Abreu Bacellar, who functioned as a jailer of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons between 1707 and about 1718. Among his other duties, he was responsible for recording the arrival of prisoners to the Inquisition jails, and he may have played a role in the actual arrest, as well. Manuel de Abreu Bacellar received his Holy Office credentials on 8 June 1707, after he had been trained at the University of Coimbra and become a licensed physician.<sup>97</sup> Even more telling, Manuel de Abreu Bacellar was the son of Doctor António de Abreu Bacellar who, as noted above, was a respected professor of surgery at the University, a *familiar* of the Holy Office and the official *médico* of those same Coimbra Inquisition *cárce*res where his son was employed.<sup>98</sup>

Between father and son, the two Abreu Bacellar doctors worked directly on more than a dozen Inquisition cases conducted against popular healers in Coimbra between 1709 and 1718, the nine years immediately following the influential Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello's appointment as Inquisitor General.<sup>99</sup> As the physician and jailer, respectively, of the Holy Office prisons in Coimbra, they would

<sup>96</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 198.

<sup>97</sup> ANTT, *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, *maço* 33, no. 839; cited in BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 27.

<sup>98</sup> ANTT, *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, *maço* 33, no. 838; BACL, Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos," vol. 1, p. 26.

<sup>99</sup> See ANTT, *Inquisição de Coimbra*, *processo* nos. 175, 1556, 6223, 7199, 8491, 8503, 8622, 8625, 8698, and 9682. Three of these cases (7199, 8503, and 8698) have relapse trials in which Manuel de Abreu Bacellar was also involved as a *familiar*.

have seen every one of the approximately sixteen *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* whom the Inquisition prosecuted during that seminal period.

The elder Abreu Bacellar began his tenure with the Holy Office almost simultaneously with the appointment of the new Inquisitor General, who had also been born and raised in Coimbra. Because they were contemporaries and social peers, the two had undoubtedly become acquainted while youths in Coimbra's restricted elite social circles. Given the similarity of their personal conceits and their simultaneous institutional connection within the Inquisition, it is not unreasonable to assume that the two found common cause in attempting a suppression of unscientific, superstitious healing.

A later Coimbra doctor who worked in collusion with the Holy Office was Manuel de Carvalho, who served in the Inquisition prisons during the 1720s. This Coimbra-born physician and *familiar* also held the title of Instructor of Medicine at the University of Coimbra, a position no one achieved without being well integrated into the highest circles of the Coimbra medical community.<sup>100</sup> Between 1727 and 1731, Manuel de Carvalho worked as a jailer and *familiar* in at least half a dozen trials against people accused of performing magical or superstitious cures.<sup>101</sup> In effect, he was duplicating the work done by the Abreu Bacellars between ten and twenty years before.

During the period of Manuel de Carvalho's tenure, António de Abreu Bacellar remained at his post as the official Inquisition prison *médico* in Coimbra. Moreover, both physicians were concurrently working under the supervision of Coimbra inquisitor António Ribeiro de Abreu, one of that tribunal's two most active prosecutors of popular healers. Nor were they the only *médico/familiares* involved, of course. Dozens of highly placed, prominent Coimbra-trained doctors and medical students worked for the Inquisition during the first half of the eighteenth century. Supervising them simultaneously for more than twenty years was António Ribeiro de Abreu's colleague, the Inquisitor Bento Paes do Amaral, himself responsible for adjudicating about forty *curandeiro* trials in Coimbra between 1717 and 1741.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> ANTT, Habilitações do Santo Ofício, *maço* 101, no. 1873.

<sup>101</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6444; 7807; 8309; 9546 and 9555 (tried twice; once for relapse).

<sup>102</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 33; 1234; 6210; 6212; 6218; 6240; 6297; 6305; 6306; 6307; 6308; 6315; 6402; 6444; 7107; 7135; 7136; 7175; 7300; 7333; 7360; 7508; 7636; 7807; 8307; 8309; 8532; 8582; 8587; 8699; 8899; 9546;

All of these men, medical professionals and career inquisitors, worked together toward the same ends in a tightly-knit institution, repeating the legal machinations required to try *curandeiros* scores of times over the years. Clearly, the professional connections necessary within the Inquisition to make a premeditated persecution of folk healers possible were very much in place.

While this information does not provide absolutely concrete evidence that these physician/*familiares* were responsible for initiating cases against *curandeiros*, it does demonstrate that very influential doctors were in the thick of the Holy Office's prosecution process over a long and significant period. Moreover, these three men were no common physicians; they were either instructors of the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine or their immediate heirs. As professors of medical science at Coimbra they had achieved, by one measure, the zenith of their profession. Their opinions and actions, therefore, carried weight well beyond Coimbra, serving as an example for other Portuguese medical professionals, and for other Holy Office tribunals, as well. While their true level of devotion to rational medicine is very difficult to assess with the available evidence, their employment with the Inquisition attests to their willingness to assist with the incarceration and prosecution of practitioners of popular medicine.

### *How Portuguese Magical Crimes Trials Progressed*

No *curandeiro* trial followed a perfectly standard format. Each case fell out differently according to the widely varying characteristics of the people involved and had its own idiosyncrasies. Still, some generalizations can be made.

The majority of the accused healers in these cases were poor, uneducated and dwelt in the countryside or rustic villages. Conversely, their primary accusers—those who initiated trials with a preliminary letter of denunciation to authorities of the Holy Office—were usually social elites. Themselves often officials of the church or Inquisition, but nearly always from the lettered class of middle-ranking state or ecclesiastical administrative functionaries, this incipient bourgeoisie

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9555; 9768; 9807; 9828 (twice) and 10011. See also Farinha, "Ministros do Conselho Geral do Santo Oficio," pp. 137–138.

showed little tolerance for the popular magic that their neighbors of the peasant class so esteemed. Middle class tolerance for supernatural solutions to common daily problems like illness, misfortune, infertility, or attracting a desired mate began to erode in Portugal, as elsewhere in Europe, in the middle of the seventeenth century, as Enlightenment principles of rationalism filtered into the country.<sup>103</sup>

Inquisition prosecutorial procedures did not seek to destroy the lives of their victims so much as to forcefully correct them along orthodox principles—convicts in Portuguese magical crimes cases received relatively light punishments designed to discredit and reform the transgressors rather than eliminate them. Guilty practitioners of magic were hardly ever executed; rather, they were typically humiliated in public and banished to another part of the realm for periods of one to three years.

Bound Inquisition trial dossiers include, on the opening pages of the case, a record of a *curandeiro's* arrest and incarceration, as well as all letters or depositions denouncing the accused offender.<sup>104</sup> After the initial denunciation and arrest of an Inquisition victim, however, how might a trial have been conducted? Typically, the machinery of the Holy Office moved slowly, but with a certain legalistic efficiency and strikingly meticulous record keeping. In cases of magical offenders, the average duration of an Inquisition *processo*, from the arrest to the release of an accused person, was slightly over fourteen months.<sup>105</sup> Every interaction between the accused and his or her captors—initial hearing; subsequent interrogations; what transpired during a torture session; documents relating to her conviction, sentencing and terms of release—was carefully transcribed or bound into the trial record. So, what might an imprisoned *mágico* have experienced, officially, while in the hands of the Holy Office?

Waiting and uncertainty were the salient features of life for the accused. Typically, a prisoner might be interrogated two or three

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<sup>103</sup> See the discussion in Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. V (1640–1750), pp. 407–434.

<sup>104</sup> In Portuguese, the section of denunciations and depositions is usually referred to as the *Termo do Juramento*. The record of arrest and imprisonment, which provides the names of the arresting *familiar* and the Inquisition jailer, is called an *Acto de Entrega*, or simply *Planta*. See Adma Muhana, *Os Autos do Processo de Vieira na Inquisição* (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 1995), introduction and pp. 37–46.

<sup>105</sup> José Pedro Paiva puts the figure at fourteen and a half months, but my data reduces that figure slightly. See Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 199.



times in the course of his or her trial, but there was no predetermined number (in the mid-seventeenth century, for example, the Jesuit priest António Vieira was “examined” twenty-nine times in the course of his long trial).<sup>106</sup> Such sessions might last a number of hours—two to four at most—on one, two or several successive days. In between, though, prisoners were kept behind bars with little to occupy their time. Contemporary accounts from Inquisition detainees describe conditions in the Holy Office prisons in sobering detail: months of poor food; inadequate clothing; and the development of a paranoid madness from being held *incommunicado*. Prisoners were generally not allowed to have contact with their families, unless persons on the outside could bribe an Inquisition official, at considerable risk of their own arrest.<sup>107</sup>

Inquisitorial methods of interrogation are well known; in this arena, Portuguese Holy Office procedure conformed with the practices of their Spanish and Italian contemporaries. During their periodic audiences with officials of the Inquisition, prisoners were required to respond to a series of leading questions designed to extract a confession of guilt.<sup>108</sup> Members of the tribunal convened prior to the prisoner’s interrogation to decide which questions to ask and in what order; these decisions were recorded in a document called the *Termo do Juramento*, or “Terms of Judgment.”

Because prisoners were usually only arrested once a strong case had been compiled against them through denunciations, their guilt was presumed; it remained only for the Holy Office to confirm this guilt through a confession. Hence, Inquisition methods of interrogative entrapment, in context, seemed justified to contemporaries in the Inquisition hierarchy. As historian of the Spanish Inquisition Henry Kamen has insightfully pointed out, “The sole task of the

<sup>106</sup> Adma Muhana, *Os Autos do Processo de Vieira na Inquisição*, pp. 11–12.

<sup>107</sup> See John Coustos, *The Sufferings of John Coustos for Free-Masonry, and for his refusing to turn Roman Catholic, in the Inquisition at Lisbon; . . .* (London: W. Strahan, 1746), pp. 6–79. See also the first-hand account of being held and tortured by the Portuguese Inquisition in Mendonça, *Narrative of the Persecution*, pp. 137–139.

<sup>108</sup> For Brian Levack’s discussion of what he calls “suggestive questioning,” often conducted while torturing the victim, see his *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 81–82. For examples, see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983), pp. 1–13; 137–141; Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 142–144; 168–182; and Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 38–44; 94–98.

Inquisition was to obtain from its prisoner an admission of guilt and a penitential submission. . . . The main task of the tribunal . . . was to act not as a court of justice but as a disciplinary body called into existence to meet a [perceived] national emergency."<sup>109</sup> His assertions are just as valid for the Inquisition in Portugal. By design, then, a "trial" was not meant to be an opportunity for an accused party to present a defense; from the point of view of the inquisitors, after an arrest had been made the outcome of a *processo* was a forgone conclusion.

Still, a striking feature of an Inquisition trial, at least to a modern reader accustomed to western jurisprudence, is that the accused was given so little opportunity to present a defense, let alone that one finds no concept of a defendant being considered "innocent until proven guilty." Rather, because the structure of a *processo* was so heavily front-loaded with hostile testimony, the opposite was true. Universally, Inquisition records refer to an alleged criminal or accused prisoner as the "*réu*" ("*ré*" in the feminine form), automatically from the beginning of a case. Although this term can be translated loosely as "suspect," its commonly understood usage carried a distinctly negative connotation: culprit, convict or guilty party.<sup>110</sup> Holy Office scribes always employed this term at the beginning of any trial procedure; the guilt of an accused person, from the moment of his or her initial denunciation, was simply assumed. Even in those rare cases where a defendant was absolved, within the *Termo de Segredo* of the trial records (an essential document found near the end of any Inquisition trial which bound the accused to secrecy regarding all Holy Office internal proceedings—a prisoner's release depended on his signing this statement), the vindicated victim was still referred to as the *réu* or *ré*.<sup>111</sup>

Periodically throughout a *processo*, and typically following an interrogation session or an additional set of denunciations, the inquisitors

<sup>109</sup> Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain*, p. 178.

<sup>110</sup> Raphael Bluteau, *Vocabulário português e latino* (Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712–1728), vol. II, p. 322.

<sup>111</sup> See ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 814 (this is an early trial, dated 1610); 7489 (the accused, forty-three year-old Mariana Gomes of Évora, was lightly admonished and sent away without being condemned in 1719); 6032 (also in 1719; the accused, twenty-six year-old Tereza Oliveira, originally of Lisbon, was denounced by her sister but dismissed after her initial hearing without further action). See also ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 414; 4647 and 4581.

would insert a summary of the case to date. This document, beginning with the words *Forão visto* (essentially, “As it has been seen up to now”), would record the main charges and evidence against the prisoner, the latest procedural developments in the *processo*, as well as any pertinent observations or deliberations on the part of the judges trying the case. Regional tribunals forwarded such summaries as informational memos to the General Council in Lisbon; they were used to brief Holy Office personnel who were unfamiliar with the case. Note that this correspondence did not, as a rule, result in an exchange of substantive opinions, or even advice about how a particular case should be tried—that procedure had been established in the *Regimento do Santo Ofício*, or in the *parecere Dos Saludadores*.<sup>112</sup>

If a prisoner refused to confess, or if the inquisitors determined that a prisoner had not been completely forthcoming with a confession, the prisoner might be sentenced to undergo a torture session. However, the accused was given a final chance to confess in a special audience with the tribunal called the *Admoestação antes do Tormento*, or “Admonishment before Torture.” If a prisoner still did not confess, there followed the *Termo do Tormento*, or record of the torture session.

Only after the Holy Office had exhausted its attempts to obtain a confession from the accused would the prisoner be informed of the charges being levied against her. This was done in a session called the *Libelo de Justiça* (literally, “Liability of Justice”), or indictment. Then, if a prisoner or legal adviser elected to present evidence in defense of the accused, this information—typically depositions from sympathetic acquaintances—was included in a section called the *Termo de Defesa* (“Term of Defense”) or *Requerimento do Procurador* (“Requirement of the Legal Advisor”).

When standing trial under the jurisdiction of the Holy Office, to defend one’s self or assert one’s innocence too stridently was demonstrably counterproductive. Repeatedly, in such cases, the inquisitors rapidly grew frustrated during interrogation sessions when their accusatory assertions were contradicted or their manipulative questions rebuffed. Moreover, accused *mágicos* and *curandeiros* actually dam-

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<sup>112</sup> However, insofar as there is extant documentary evidence recording the personal opinions of inquisitors regarding *curandeiro* and *saludador* cases, this material is best sought in the *forão visto* sections of the trial dossiers, or in the final *acordão* section at the end of the case.

aged their chances of receiving light treatment by hiring a legal advisor to organize a proper defense before the Holy Office tribunal.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, Holy Office victims did attempt to defend themselves occasionally, though seldom with any degree of success. Indeed, here too the opposite was true; to gather counter-testimony in favor of an accused healer or alleged magical criminal virtually guaranteed a far longer trial (with the consequent prolongation of time spent in prison during the deliberations) culminating with a more severe sentence.

For example, when Catarina Maria dos Prazeres was tried for illicit curing in 1746, her *procurador*, the university graduate Inácio Murteira de Fontes, presented documentation and depositions from her neighbors to, in the view of the Inquisition scribe who noted these developments, “contradict” the denunciations against her. The scribe’s choice of words is significant—he did not write “contest,” for example—and implies that the Holy Office considered its position as indisputable. Catarina Maria dos Prazeres’ petition had no effect except to irritate her captors and prolong her trial. To obtain a confession, the tribunal ordered that she be tortured. In March 1747 she was banished to Leiria for three years, an uncharacteristically long sentence for a first offense.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, the *curandeira* Caterina de Jesus, who performed a public *auto-da-fé* on the same day as Catarina Maria dos Prazeres, retained the same legal advisor to coordinate her defense. The process of protesting her innocence, however, obliged her to languish in prison for an extra year.<sup>115</sup>

Only in exceptional cases was a defense effective. Maria Tomé, a free mulatto widow whose deceased husband had been the slave of a *fidalgo*, earned her living as a midwife and through begging. When she was arrested for being a witch and sorceress on 23 April 1743, she fought her denunciation with the help of *procurador* José Madeira de Castro, a Coimbra University graduate. She apparently put her fate in capable hands; de Castro managed to secure her release, with only a warning, on 30 April 1744, though she still had to pay the costs of her year in prison.<sup>116</sup> In another case at the beginning of

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<sup>113</sup> See legal advisors’ unsuccessful attempts to defend accused *mágicos* in ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5949; 5951; 6390 and 9221.

<sup>114</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5949.

<sup>115</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5951.

<sup>116</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6390.

the eighteenth century, a *mágica* named Isabel Lopes fought her denunciation from prison for three and a half years. She had the benefit of legal counsel, who prepared “contradictions” testifying to the impossibility of her being guilty of her alleged crimes. Eventually, she was let off with a light sentence: a one-year banishment from her home village. Still, she lost nearly five years of freedom in the pursuit of this small victory.<sup>117</sup>

The final outcome of a case, including the sentencing, was written in a document called the *Acordão*, or “Judgment.” A full account of the Inquisition prosecution—evidence used against the accused—was presented in a document called the *Prova de Justiça*, or the “Proof of Justice.” These are found bound into the trial dossier either before or following the *Acordão*, but it was this statement which was later read aloud publicly at the convict’s *auto-da-fé* in a ceremony called the *Publicação da Prova* (“Publication of Proof”). Inquisition trial judges occasionally used the *acordão* as a forum where they could expand their commentary on the circumstances of a case or the nature of the crimes addressed therein. Although judicial opinions and observations about any given case can generally be found in the *acordão*, such observations typically mirror the language of pertinent Inquisition General Council guides or *apereceres*.

Following the final judgment of the prisoner (now convict), there remained the documents relating to the offender’s *auto-da-fé* and release from prison. These would include a signed abjuration (*Termo de Abjuração*), which had two levels of severity—“light,” for relatively minor, first-time offenders who showed contrition, and “vehement,” for more serious or repeated offenders. Next, the Holy Office required that all prisoners complete a document binding them to total secrecy regarding their treatment and experiences while in Inquisition custody (the aforementioned *Termo de Segredo*); this would be signed a few days before the victim’s release. Finally, a case was officially closed with the *Termo de Saída*, or “Exit Term,” which provided for the prisoners’ release and transport to their places of banishment.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 9221.

<sup>118</sup> Adma Muhana, *Os Autos do Processo de Vieira*, pp. 11–12; and Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 196–222.

*The Role of Torture in Obtaining a Conviction*

The role of the use of torture by the Portuguese inquisitors seems to differ markedly from that in other European nations. While the role of torture in Inquisition trials remained important as a means to obtain convictions through confessions, this role seems to have changed substantially over time in Portugal. Compared to their northern European neighbors, the Portuguese in the sixteenth century seem to have used torture very sparingly against practitioners of magic, thus reinforcing, apparently, the popular notion that Lusitanians are in all things a people of “mild customs” (*brandos costumes*).<sup>119</sup> Portuguese historian Francisco Bethencourt pointed out in 1990 that “torture was seldom used in cases of illicit magic during the sixteenth century, although an increase in its use was recorded in the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century.”<sup>120</sup> While their proclivity to resort to physical torment demonstrably increased in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Portuguese inquisitors still seem to have used torture only reluctantly.

In a substantial proportion of cases against *curandeiros* and other *mágicos* in the eighteenth century (project research indicates an estimated rate of occurrence to be as high as 25%), the knowledge of impending torture was enough to make a prisoner appeal for mercy and confess to more crimes. The inquisitors, no doubt, relied on this reaction, for they carefully described the method of slowly binding a prisoner in a special chamber, the *camara de tormento*, in full sight of the instruments of torture, to extract the information they wanted.<sup>121</sup> Many prisoners who had been sentenced to undergo torture, then, never actually underwent a “session,” as these periods of premeditated, scripted torment were euphemistically termed. In the end, relatively

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<sup>119</sup> There are similar assertions found elsewhere in Europe. Alfred Soman, for example, has argued that torture was used sparingly by the French high court in Paris. See two works by Alfred F. Soman: *Sorcellerie et Justice Criminelle: Le Parlement de Paris (16–18 siècles)* (Paris: 1991), introduction; and “Decriminalizing Witchcraft: Does the French Experience Furnish a European Model?” *Criminal Justice History* (10, 1989).

<sup>120</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 405.

<sup>121</sup> Alfred Soman reports a similar experience in France. For comparison, see Soman, *Sorcellerie et Justice Criminelle: Le Parlement de Paris*; and “Decriminalizing Witchcraft: Does the French Experience Furnish a European Model?”

fewer prisoners than has commonly been supposed actually reached the stage where they were, to use the inquisitors' icy expression, "perfectly tied"—that is, tortured to the extreme limits of the victim's endurance, so that they not only confessed to the crimes the Holy office accused them of but also named further complicit co-conspirators.<sup>122</sup>

The mere threat of torture, then, was frequently enough to extract a confession from a terrified prisoner. Indeed, inquisitors provoked a substantial number of confessions during the lengthy process of preparing a prisoner to be "attached" to one of the machines that agents of the Holy Office used to inflict pain, thereby compelling cooperation in providing self-incriminating testimony. It is easy to imagine that prisoners, when confronted by the immediate threat of excruciating pain, would have provided their confessions spontaneously. The high frequency of such episodes made the lives of prisoners and inquisitors alike easier. After long exposure to contemporary trial records, however, one gets the impression that formal, choreographed pre-torture procedures were calculated to achieve just that: the extraction of information without recourse to torture.

Inquisition documents describe accused *mágicos* being conducted to the *camara de tormento* with grim ceremony. This room was usually located in an isolated inner chamber of the Inquisition's facilities, to keep the consequent sounds of torture from reaching the streets outside.<sup>123</sup> Typically, a prisoner would be accompanied by two inquisitors, two *familiares*, a physician and a scribe. It was the physician's responsibility to certify that the prisoner's constitution was sufficient to endure the prescribed torture and, as the session progressed, to judge whether the prisoner had reached a point of pain-induced delirium, after which his testimony ceased to be reliable.<sup>124</sup> The scribe

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<sup>122</sup> This expression emerges repeatedly in trial *Actos do Tormento*. For examples, see ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6223; 7346; 7539; 7807; 7809; 8819 and 9495. See also Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1648; 1698; 1937; 2602; 3753; 4333; 4761 and 5436.

<sup>123</sup> Mendça charges that the Holy Office kept torture and other frightening internal activities hidden within the palace of the Inquisition in order to "exhibit to the world the deceitful appearances of moderation, weakness and mercy." See Hyppolyto Joseph da Costa Tereira Furtado de Mendonça, *Narrative of the Persecution of Hyppolyto Joseph da Costa Tereira Furtado de Mendonça . . .*, 2 vols. (London: W. Lewis, 1811), p. 137.

<sup>124</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio* (1640), *Livro I, Titulo XX*, § 3; *Livro II, Titulo XIV*, § 6.

kept a detailed record of the proceedings, including the comments of all Holy Office officials present, even if they were not taking a direct role in the interrogation of the captive.<sup>125</sup>

The prisoner would sometimes be shown a table on which various hand-held instruments of torture had been arranged. The unfortunate victim's arms and legs would then be slowly bound, all in sight of larger devices, such as "the rack" or "the pulley," used to dislocate a prisoner's limbs and cause painful tissue damage. Finally, a prisoner would be given an ultimate chance to confess his or her transgressions before being subjected to the torture regimen. In approximately one quarter of the cases reviewed, the prisoner cracked under this psychological strain, before ever being subjected to actual physical duress. That the Holy Office preferred to employ physical abuse only as a final resort seems indisputable.<sup>126</sup>

The accused *curandeira* Maria Fernandes, for example, evaded the rack through a timely confession. This elderly mendicant, nicknamed a *Maracujá* ("the Passion Fruit"), convinced her jailers in Évora in 1699 that she had "concealed some of her guilt." Her trial record states that ". . . only after the threat of torture did she complete her confession."<sup>127</sup> In another case, Guiomar Rodrigues, thirty-four years old and single, was arrested on 24 April 1718 because of his alleged illicit and superstitious practices. Rodrigues was taken to be tortured on 9 January 1720, but ". . . in the torture room, before the beginning of the session, he confessed more crimes." Satisfied, the inquisitors relented.<sup>128</sup> Adriana Luiza of Coimbra complained pitifully and pleaded physical weakness when she was sentenced to torture in 1718. The summary of her trial states that consulted doctors and midwives reported that the accused *curandeira* could not bear up to torture. The inquisitors decided that her confessions and other evidence

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<sup>125</sup> See ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 6223; 7346; 7539; 7807; 7809; 8819 and 9495. See also Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1648; 1698; 1937; 2602; 3753; 4333; 4761 and 5436.

<sup>126</sup> For passages describing several accused healers' confessions in the torture chamber, see the following Inquisition *processos*: ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra no. 9545; Inquisição de Évora nos. 2210; 2408; 8038; 8154; 9221; 5436; 5941; 5949. In the latter three examples, the prisoners began to confess only after Holy Office *familiars* had begun to secure them to the torture table, or rack. The term for this machine in Portuguese is *o pólio*.

<sup>127</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 8038.

<sup>128</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 8154.



against her were sufficient to issue a condemnation.<sup>129</sup> Isabel Lopes, too, avoided torture when she was imprisoned at Évora in 1701 for practicing sorcery and spreading superstitious beliefs. Even though (or perhaps because) she had mounted an admirable defense, providing statements through a representative that cast doubt upon the denunciations against her, she was taken to the torture chambers on 10 January 1705, after more than four years in prison. Lopes “. . . was seated on a bench when she saw the instruments of torture,” at which point she decided to confess to further crimes.<sup>130</sup>

Holy Office prosecution methods in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, therefore, left virtually no chance for an accused person to escape conviction. By arranging for nearly all evidence and testimony to originate from witnesses known to be hostile toward the accused *mágico*, and by having recourse to torture should the chosen denunciations not provide sufficient evidence, inquisitors and medical professionals had little problem building cases against popular healers that were, from the point of view of obtaining a conviction, foolproof.

Having considered Inquisitorial trial procedures against *mágicos*, in the next chapter we will examine the process of assigning punishments to those found guilty of committing magical crimes.

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<sup>129</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 9545.

<sup>130</sup> ANTT, Inquisition Tribunal of Évora, *processo* no. 9221.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CASE STUDIES: PROSECUTIONS OF *CURANDEIROS* AND *SALUDADORES* IN SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PORTUGAL

Strictly speaking, this is not merely a collection of case studies culled from original research and assembled into a chapter to illustrate the main arguments of this book. These cases also serve to frame and further some of the most important assertions of this project. Such arguments are better understood in context, where the circumstances of a case often give the arguments an immediacy and a personal quality they would lack if presented in a different way.

For example, these cases explore the role of Holy Office personnel who were experts in the prosecution of popular healer cases. Time and again, we see the same individuals chairing panels of inquisitors who adjudicated *curandeiro* cases. Correlating the names of known trial experts, or *deputados*, with Inquisition *processos* against known folk healers demonstrates that a mere handful of men judged the heavy majority of these cases between 1715 and 1760. Moreover, these men knew one another socially, corresponded amongst themselves regarding official Inquisition business, and even collaborated occasionally on the same *curandeiro* trials. As in many other areas of Portuguese history, the core elite actors on stage when the interests of doctors, folk healers and the Inquisition collided were part of a select, highly inter-related group. These cases help to effectively illustrate those interconnections.

The assertion that *médicos*, *curandeiros* and *inquisidores* were each part of a tightly related group is one result of the research done in primary documents for this study, but information supporting that conclusion was slow to surface. It had to be coaxed out, literally on a case-by-case basis, by recording details about the various personalities involved in each individual trial and then discovering the links that bound these people and cases together.

The following case studies, arranged chronologically by tribunal, were selected because they illustrate the means by which professional licensed medical practitioners in Portugal, along with their families,

associates and friends, worked in cooperation with clergymen—whether members of the Holy Office or church hierarchy—to bring popular healers to trial. These cases reveal the collusion of doctors, surgeons and barbers, concretely and irrefutably; they were deeply involved in the business of suppressing popular healing activity in early modern Portugal.

Beyond establishing the collaboration of medical professionals in *curandeiro* trials, though, these cases also reveal the broad spectrum of motivations behind elite denunciations of popular healers. While testimony makes clear that doctors and surgeons objected to their peasant competitors on the grounds that popular methods were not scientific, trial statements by licensed professional healers and their family members also indicate that material concerns, as well as issues of social prestige, motivated their attempts to quash the activities of *curandeiros* and *curandeiras*.

*Prologue:* Tribunal: Évora Case: 6231  
 Name: Manuel Fernandes Date: 15 November 1668

The earliest trial against a popular healer to be reviewed for this study was that of Manuel Fernandes, whom the Inquisition tribunal of Évora arrested on 15 November 1668. Fernandes was young—just twenty years old—and unmarried when Holy Office *familiares* picked him up and charged him with conducting *benzaduras* (“blessings,” usually intended to heal), harboring superstitions and making a pact with the devil. Ominously and significantly, he was accused of falsely wearing the habit of a *familiar* of the *Santo Ofício*, as well.<sup>1</sup> Although this trial occurred well before the period the present study intends to highlight, it does provide insight to the origins of motifs and practices found in later trials against *curandeiros* and *salvadores*.

In a rare show of concern for the type of crime prosecuted within the records of a particular trial, contemporary Holy Office functionaries identified Fernandes explicitly as a *salvador* on the cover page of his trial dossier. Later in the *processo*, he was referred to derivatively as a *benzadeiro*.<sup>2</sup> In an attempt to discredit his reputation, the

<sup>1</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6231.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, one who heals with blessings, but understood also to mean “quack doctor” who relies on spoken blessings or incantations to cure his patients. See Raphael Bluteau, *Vocabulário português e latino* (Coimbra: Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1712–1728), vol. I, p. 179.

Holy Office took unusual steps calculated to label Fernandes as a false, ineffectual healer.

Although he was listed as having been born in Évora and maintaining his residence there, Manuel Fernandes was evidently something of a wanderer: about half of the trial's *diligências* (denunciations) came from persons living in the village of Arraiolos, in the central Alentejo, where the accused had practiced his ritual healing arts before moving the twenty or so kilometers back to Évora.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the first denunciations against Fernandes prominently mention his habit of impersonating an Inquisition *familiar*. Masquerading as a *familiar* was not an uncommon crime in early modern Portugal; usually the culprit in this offense intended to defraud an unsuspecting victim of money—or to simply rob the victim outright.<sup>4</sup> Fernandes' case is markedly different, however: this popular healer sought explicitly to legitimize his medical folkways and sell his curative services by associating them with the positive reputation of the Holy Office. Nothing could have been more infuriating to the inquisitors.

In the first numbered denunciation of the case, Diogo de Oliveira Limpo, the Holy Office *solicitador* of the accused healer's home parish, cited the complaint of a local *médico*, Pedro Alvares, a surgeon living in Évora. Alvares is reported as saying that the accused boy was infamous locally for his attempted cures, and that Fernandes kept materials for these remedies around his house.<sup>5</sup> Limpo's denunciation is followed by statements by Manuel de Barros, an official of the Inquisition tribunal in Évora, as well as depositions from Manuel Rodrigues Madeira and António Pires Cabeça, both *famíliares* of the Holy Office in Évora. All of these Inquisition officials pointed to illicit healing as one of Fernandes' crimes, in addition to calling attention to his infraction of wearing a *familiar's* habit.

The crimes against Manuel Fernandes are carefully enumerated in the *forão visto*. As part of their concluding statement, the inquisitors charged with judging this popular healer stated:

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<sup>3</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6231, and *Atlas de Portugal* (Lisbon: Selecções do Reader's Digest com Cartas do Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral, 1988), pp. 28–29.

<sup>4</sup> Maria Luísa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 187–189.

<sup>5</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6231. Pages unnumbered.

... It appears to all of the [inquisitors on the panel of judges], by the indications given against the offender, that he has a pact with the Devil, and through his [the Devil's] power is able to cure wounds with words that have not been approved by the Church, and ... with ceremonies, superstitions, saying that [the power to cure] comes from the water, [he heals] ... in human bodies, interior attacks, and that those he cures with extraordinary remedies, *without knowing how to read nor write nor having learned any science* [author's emphasis] ...<sup>6</sup>

This *processo* document goes on to accuse Manuel Fernandes of being a fortune teller, a charlatan, and even berates him for lying to the inquisitors when he reneged on a promise to confess once they had threatened him with torture. For that disrespectful act, the inquisitors sent him to the torture chamber a second time, "... so that he could suffer under the doctor and the surgeon [italics added] and at the discretion of the inquisitors, and at the satisfaction of this, ... the present case can finally be closed."<sup>7</sup>

Three things are important to note about these passages. First, the inquisitors expected prisoners to be fully cooperative and submissive; moreover, Holy Office personnel were capable of being vindictive if offenders wasted their time. Second, the passage provides an example of the role of official Holy Office *médicos*—who must necessarily have been *familiares*, as well—during torture sessions, when they were charged with assessing the ability of the prisoner to endure pain and still provide reliable information. Finally and most importantly, the passages demonstrate that, as early as 1668, the Holy Office was becoming concerned about popular healers practicing medicine unscientifically, without any conventional training, and that functionaries of the Inquisition had already begun to rely on expert medical testimony to make a case against *curandeiros*. In 1668, young Manuel Fernandes faced a doctor and a surgeon who had been brought before the Inquisition board to testify against him. They did so effectively; on 16 June 1669, after only eight months in prison,

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. (author's translation). The text in Portuguese runs thus: "... *Aparese a todas os votos, que pellos indicos, que resultão contra o Reo, de ter pacto com o Demonio, e por seu meio curar com palavras sem serem aprovados pella Igreja de feridas, e ... com ceremonias, supersticiosas, dizendo que via na agua, ... e nos corpos humanos os achaques interiores, e que os curava com remedios extraordinarios, sem saber ler nem escrever nem aprender sciencia alguma ...*"

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. (author's translation). The original text reads "... *levantado lhe o Lugar do Libello podendo o sofre aquiso do médico e cirurgiaão e arbitrio dos Inquisidores, e que satisfeito a este ... o processo em mesa por ser despachar a final ...*"

Fernandes was condemned and performed a public *auto-da-fé*. Afterwards, he was banished from continental Portugal for two years and sent to Brazil, an extraordinarily heavy punishment for a magical practitioner at that time.

A. *Tribunal: Coimbra*

Case: 7199

Name: *Antónia Nunes da Costa*

Date: 20 July 1708

and 1 August 1713

Between age forty-five and fifty, Antónia Nunes da Costa twice faced trial by the Holy Office tribunal in Coimbra for being a *curandeira*. Her case provides a fine example of a woman prosecuted as a popular healer, only to be tried again for relapse. Da Costa's ordeal began just two years after Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello's appointment as Inquisitor General. Her experience highlights, therefore, the beginning years of the Inquisition's eighteenth-century crackdown on folk healers and practitioners of magic, and also the transitional moment when physicians and surgeons, because of their burgeoning numbers within the ranks of Holy Office *familiars*, began to wield greater influence within that institution.<sup>8</sup>

Antónia Nunes da Costa had been born in Galicia, Spain. At the time of her first arrest, she lived in Loureiro, Vila de Nogueira, in the Minho region of northern Portugal.<sup>9</sup> Forty-five years old in July 1708, she had been a widow but had remarried. Her husband's occupation is not recorded, but she was neither affluent nor an elite. She came from an Old Christian family. After having been denounced as a *curandeira*, the Inquisition arrested her on 20 July 1708; she was charged with performing acts of sorcery, holding superstitious beliefs and, specifically, conducting illicit cures.<sup>10</sup>

Manuel de Abreu Bacellar, a warden (*alcaide*) of the Coimbra Inquisition prisons, signed an official receipt for the prisoner (the *Auto da Entrega*, or "Induction Act") when she was brought in by other *familiars* who arrested her.<sup>11</sup> This jailor, of course, was a licensed

<sup>8</sup> See Chapter V, above, and the article by José Veiga Torres: "Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 40: 109–135 (Lisbon: October 1994), pp. 127–135.

<sup>9</sup> *Atlas de Portugal* (Lisbon: Selecções do Reader's Digest com Cartas do Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral, 1988), p. 19.

<sup>10</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199. Pages unnumbered.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, *Auto da Entrega*.

physician and the son of the Inquisition's official *médico*—who also happened to be a professor on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine.<sup>12</sup>

Further evidence of professional medical complicity in the prosecution of Antónia Nunes da Costa comes through strongly in the depositions that Holy Office officials collected on 4 September 1712 at Vila de Velho in the Bishopric of Coimbra. This section of denunciations were separately composed and submitted in writing by the denouncers.<sup>13</sup> That is, social elites wrote their accusations outside the bounds of a formal deposition. Hence, one of the inquisitors' traditional means of checking on the veracity of such denunciations—the comportment of the person giving testimony under direct questioning—was lost.

The first two depositions against Antónia Nunes da Costa were sent by Manuel Francisco, a licensed barber from a village near the accused healer's place of residence, Vila de Torrozello, and João Correira, a *familiar* of the Holy Office who lived in the same village. There followed testimony from three people of the same family: João Alveres Brandão; his wife Joanna de Unhão; and her brother, Padre Manuel Rodrigues Unhão, a local priest. The similarity of this group of prominent witnesses' testimony suggests a strong element of premeditated cooperation to bring Antónia Nunes da Costa to trial.<sup>14</sup>

Inquisition officials recorded a summary of their testimony in the case *acordão*. Nunes da Costa's detractors alleged that she was guilty of "curing without science or training," that her illicit magical remedies were "totally inadequate to achieve the ends she intended," and that she gained customers' confidence by asserting that she was possessed of a "divine soul" which allowed her to effect cures when she conducted superstitious ceremonies. Further, the witnesses complained that she would "lie [to her patients] about curing diseases unknown to her" and, even more rankling, she "on occasion tried to heal certain sick people who did not have confidence in [conventional] doctors . . . and she persuaded them that doctors' cures could not be effective

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<sup>12</sup> ANTT, *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*, *maço* 33, no. 838; Augusto da Silva Carvalho, "Dicionário dos Médicos e Cirurgiões Portugueses ou que Estiveram em Portugal" (unpublished 32-volume typescript with manuscript notations)(Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa), vol. 1, pp. 26–27.

<sup>13</sup> ANTT, *Inquisição de Coimbra*, *processo* no. 7199, unnumbered pages in the trial dossier's second section of denunciations.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

because they would not be natural.”<sup>15</sup> These statements reveal a dual concern on the part of the witnesses for both the material and intellectual interests at stake regarding popular medical practice. Linked as they were to the medical profession, these witnesses’ statements neatly articulate the reasons that licensed medical practitioners found popular healers’ activities objectionable.

Nunes da Costa’s first trial concluded with her condemnation as an illicit healer. She abjured publicly in an *auto-da-fé* performed on 21 June 1711. As a first offender, her sentence was relatively light: she was exiled for one year to Miranda-do-Douro. In addition, she was made to serve a further arbitrary term of imprisonment.

In Nunes da Costa’s second trial, the established pattern of collaboration between state-sanctioned medical practitioners and church officials continued. The Holy Office arrested her for relapse on 1 August 1713—the physician and *familiar* Manuel de Abreu Bacellar again served as her jailer. By the standards of modern jurisprudence, the trial she received was hardly a fair one conducted by impartial, disinterested peers. The commissioners who collected testimony against her, as well as many of the inquisitors who deliberated in her case, were the same men she had faced a few years before. At the time of her second arrest, she was forty-nine years old and had not completed her first term of banishment; she was living in the village of Carvalhal, near Penalva do Castelo. Her new home lay 150 kilometers from her original residence, and 200 kilometers from Miranda-do-Douro, where she had been exiled two years before.<sup>16</sup>

The first person to testify against her during the second trial was the Reverend André Colónio Pinheiro Ribeiro, prior of a nearby town church. He provided an exceptionally long (eleven pages), heavily annotated testimony in which he immediately brought up *curas* as the basis for Nunes da Costa’s crime. Most impressive in this testimony is the length at which he continued to describe the methods by which a *curandeiro* could be tried.<sup>17</sup> His statement makes evident that Prior Ribeiro had given a great deal of thought to the problem of prosecuting folk healers, since he laid out detailed comments on Inquisition trial procedures and the types of evidence needed for a

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<sup>15</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199; final *acordão*.

<sup>16</sup> *Atlas de Portugal*, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7199; testimony of Reverend André Colónio Pinheiro Ribeiro.



successful prosecution. Much of his commentary mirrors the language and tone of the contemporary Holy Office *parecere*, *Dos Saludadores*. For example, Ribeiro wrote of the need to compare an illicit folk healer's remedies with those of a licensed *médico* to demonstrate the *curandeiro*'s lack of scientific efficacy. He cautioned the *inquisidores* that the reception of God's "divine virtue" to heal by an earthbound mortal was a miracle not of the present but of a past age, suggested interrogation questions to draw out the healer's guilt and reviewed the passages of the 1640 Holy Office *Regimento* which set the parameters for intervention in superstitious crimes.

Immediately following this remarkable testimony is a statement provided by Doctor João Henriques do Mattos, "the licensed physician of that village [Vila de Velho] and resident in the same." Doctor Mattos' deposition is a straightforward complaint from a medical professional, decrying on technical grounds the accused's practice of trying to cure sick persons without any proper training. He pointed out that Antónia Nunes da Costa would use improper quantities of herbal ingredients in her remedies, that she "would switch ingredients if she didn't know" the right ones to use, and that she "did not use ingredients real doctors use" to cure their patients. Near the close of his statement, he warned that the accused *curandeira*'s remedies could actually do harm to her customers and that she had persisted with her practices even when cautioned about their danger.<sup>18</sup> With this testimony, we see a licensed *médico* simultaneously showing concern for the scientific methodological integrity of his profession while, by the act of his cooperation with the prosecution of a *curandeira*, tacitly protecting his own material wellbeing. This pattern, clearly evident in this early trial against a popular healer, would continue through the next half-century of *curandeiro* prosecutions.

Acting on such accounts from highly esteemed elite witnesses, the Coimbra tribunal had little difficulty in finding Antónia Nunes da Costa guilty a second time. As a relapsed *curandeira*, her sentence was, predictably, far more severe than her initial one. She performed a second public *auto-da-fé* on 17 May 1716, after which she was obliged to leave continental Portugal for three years' exile in Brazil.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, testimony of Doctor João Henriques do Mattos.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, final *acordão*.

*B. Tribunal: Coimbra*

*Case: 7136*

*Name: Catarina Pereira*

*Date: 18 February 1722*

One of the more interesting trials of a *curandeira* involving hostile testimony provided by licensed medical professionals and their families is that of Catarina Pereira, conducted by the Coimbra tribunal in 1722 and 1723. Two of the key Inquisition officers who adjudicated the case were António Ribeiro de Abreu and Bento Paes de Amaral. By this date, these Holy Office officials were well into their most prolific, aggressive phase of folk healer persecutions, bringing no fewer than twelve *curandeiros* to trial between 1721 and 1725.<sup>20</sup>

Catarina Pereira had been a life-long resident of Oporto. When Inquisition *familiares* came to arrest her on 18 February 1722, she was an aged widow, seventy years old. Her profession, according to her trial dossier, was healing; the scribe who recorded her initial hearing noted that she made her living as a *curandeira*. Like most other persons whom the Inquisition investigated for committing magical crimes, she was an Old Christian. After several important persons in Oporto's social hierarchy denounced her as an illicit folk healer, the Coimbra tribunal charged her with believing in superstitions and practicing sorcery.<sup>21</sup>

The commission sent to gather denunciations for the case met on 11 November 1721 at the mother church of Oporto. Over several days, thirty-seven persons provided *diligências*. First to testify was Maria Pereira (who was not related to the accused woman), the wife of the Royal Customs Commissioner in Oporto, José da Sousa.<sup>22</sup> He was responsible for royal duties levied on all goods shipped to and from Brazil, among other destinations. Because his position in this commercial port city was an all-important one, the appearance of his wife as a witness in Catarina Pereira's case suggests a high level of interest on behalf of Oporto's social elites in suppressing the use of illicit folk remedies in their community.

Two other prominent Oporto wives, both married to licensed medical professionals, followed Maria Pereira in providing statements

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<sup>20</sup> See tables in Chapter VIII, above, comparing numbers of trials by half decade in the three Portuguese tribunals.

<sup>21</sup> IANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7136, pages recording Pereira's initial hearing.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, trial *diligências*.

concerning the accused *curandeira*. Tereza da Sousa, the widow of João dos Santos (she may have also been the sister of José da Sousa, the customs commissioner mentioned above), was the fourth person to give a statement. João dos Santos, a resident of Oporto all his life, had been a well-known and respected barber. Tereza da Sousa's statement includes allegations that the accused *curandeira* would use "little papers with words, and different colored powders" to cure the sick, sometimes having her patients eat the papers on which she had written magical encantations, but that "these things had no effect; . . . to the . . . sick people who had attacks, she gave them only words in their mouths . . ." She went on to say that Catarina Pereira blasphemed by using the name of God and several of the saints in her remedies. Finally, she found fault in the healer's prices: ". . . to some she said that they had to give her a *cruzado*; to others [the price was] twenty, or eighteen . . ."<sup>23</sup> Once again, the mixing of financial with professional medical concerns is evident in the testimony of this deeply interested party.

A little while later, Tereza Moreia became the tenth person to testify against Catarina Pereira. Tereza Moreia was the wife of Manuel Rodrigues, a licensed surgeon, also born in and resident of Oporto. Tereza Moreia sharply attacked the folk healer for her superstitious "blessings and cures," calling her "nefarious" because of the acts of sorcery that she attempted, and dangerous because she "claimed to have received her blessings and powders from a woman who had permission [from the Inquisition] to cure." She went on to recount how Catarina Pereira would give a client "a can of 'tonic'—the water from three countries of the [Catholic] Church—and say that five different herbs should be soaked in this water, and then use it to wash the body of a sick person."<sup>24</sup> To Tereza Moreia, this remedy was so much quackery—it had no efficacy, which was her primary concern when she testified to the Holy Office commission.

Late in the proceedings, José Luís de Fonseca, a thirty-one-year-old surgeon of the University of Coimbra, gave a statement against the accused *curandeira*. In fact, many people from the Fonseca family gave depositions that day—statements obviously informed by a professional *médico*'s perspective—which were critical of Catarina

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., testimony of Tereza da Sousa.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., testimony of Tereza Moreia.

Pereira's illicit healing activities. At least four testimonies originated from this clan, all of them people who were related to the licensed surgeon by either blood or marriage; all echoed similar sentiments that derided Pereira for lack of medical sophistication and learning. The similarity of their testimony is suspicious; that they had spoken about this matter at length together is probable. Likely, too, is that they had absorbed some of their opinions from the university-trained medical professional with whom they shared a name.<sup>25</sup>

For his part, the surgeon José Luís de Fonseca made the following detrimental observations about the healing skills of his untrained peasant rival. First, he illustrated the inefficacy of the folk healer's methods by citing how she would write her patient's symptoms on a piece of paper along with a healing prayer, or blessing, and then throw them into a fire with some undetermined herbs, expecting that the patient would thereby be purged of his illness. Other of Catarina Pereira's illicit remedies, he continued, were "incompatible with the sickness her patient had," being "completely different from that which a scientifically trained physician would do" when faced with the same symptoms. Referring to one specific patient whose illness Catarina Pereira had treated, the surgeon asserted that he "would provide nothing like" the remedy the *curandeira* had used. José Luís de Fonseca concluded his statement with a remark that clearly showed his medical professional's bias: "At least, [the surgeon] wants the Inquisition to know that he has seen the clients of *curandeiros* and *benzadoras* suffer, but that *médicos* and [medical] professors do not cause [such suffering]."<sup>26</sup>

After six months in prison, Catarina Pereira had undergone numerous interrogation sessions regarding her activities as a healer and practitioner of magic. Still, the inquisitors were not satisfied with her responses. In order to compel her to, in the euphemistic phrase Holy Office records employ, "complete her confession," the Coimbra tribunal decided to have her "tormented" on 12 August 1722. Probably due to her advanced age, Catarina Pereira took a very long time to recover. She confessed to further offenses, but her trial was not concluded until March of the following year. On 14 March 1723, she abjured in Coimbra's main thoroughfares with other Inquisition

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., testimony of José Luís de Fonseca.

convicts in a public *auto-da-fé*. Her sentence was average, but heavy for her age. The Holy Office obliged her to serve a three-year banishment to the Bishopric of Viseu, along with an additional term of arbitrary imprisonment.<sup>27</sup>

C. Tribunal: Coimbra

Case: 33

Name: Francisco Martins

Date: 6 November 1724

On 24 June 1724, Francisco Martins presented himself voluntarily before the Coimbra tribunal of the Inquisition. He was at that time under suspicion of being a *curandeiro*: two months before, the Holy Office had received a letter from a reliable source stating that Martins was guilty of conducting illicit remedies involving superstitious practices. Martins, aware that the Holy Office was collecting evidence against him, decided to take preemptive measures; his appearance before the inquisitors to plead his case was designed to demonstrate his innocence, but may also have been a bid for clemency.<sup>28</sup>

A licensed physician wrote the initial letter of denunciation against Francisco Martins, dated 22 April 1724. The author, thirty-six-year-old doctor João Baptista da Fonseca, was a *médico* trained by the University of Coimbra. He had also been born in Coimbra, where he remained a resident, associating with other members of the elite professional medical community that revolved around the University. In his letter Fonseca charged that, in his professional medical opinion, Martins' healing methods lacked any curative effect. The licensed doctor regarded this *curandeiro* as a medical fraud whose superstitious assertion of an inherent skill for healing was a dangerous subversion of Fonseca's own authority as a conventionally trained professional. When the Holy Office opened a commission the following month to collect witnesses' testimony about the case, João Baptista da Fonseca was the first to offer a deposition.

The commission met on 16 May 1724 in Lamego, where the accused folk healer made his home. João Baptista da Fonseca began the proceedings by reiterating statements he had made in his letter of denunciation. He went on to say that he had "heard it said" that the *curandeiro* Francisco Martins could "cure both people and animals

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., *acórdão*.

<sup>28</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 33, unnumbered pages recording Martins' initial hearing.

with words,” and “that others he cured with herbs of a type of attacks,” but that some of his patients had died. The physician complained that this folk healer claimed to cure by divine virtue, and that he “would accept no payment except what clients wanted to give.”<sup>29</sup> This last remark is revealing; the professional physician’s implicit complaint, essentially, is that a folk healer working for gratuities would undermine the payment system conventional physicians used, a system based generally on predetermined fees for prescribed services.

João Baptista da Fonseca went on to remonstrate against Martins’ lack of “training to practice medicine.” Nor did Martins have, according to the physician, any “familiarity with diseases, nor had he undergone the proper exams, thus [he] could not have cured the attack as he [the healer] had testified.”<sup>30</sup> These are the words of an indignant trained and licensed doctor, defending his status and profession against a dangerous upstart.

This same physician, however, had no qualms about mixing theology with science while denouncing his rival healer. Early in his testimony, as a means of explaining Francisco Martins’ success as a healer, Fonseca accused him of having made a pact with the devil. João Baptista da Fonseca may have been an advocate of rational medicine, but he was also a product of his changing times. Held over in his worldview was the idea that Satan could still intervene in the human sphere, and he apparently lived easily with that ambiguity. Fonseca’s statement to the Inquisition tribunal closed by charging that the folk healer was simultaneously “a liar, a fake, and a user of arts of the Devil.”<sup>31</sup>

After his initial hearing before the inquisitors, Martins was released on his own recognizance. Six months later, on 6 November 1724, the Inquisition had him arrested. Only twenty-three years old in November 1724, he may have irritated the tribunal by evading further audiences with them, or for taking too long to present himself when summoned to return to the Holy Office *Mesa*. Or, the inquisitors may have been afraid that he would flee; Martins was a Spaniard, born in Galves, near Seville. He was an Old Christian, married to a Portuguese woman. His work, though poorly paid, in fact kept him in close contact with the clergy in his district—he was the *ermittão*

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., testimony of Doctor João Baptista da Fonseca.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

(“hermit”) in charge of a small, secluded hermitage chapel outside Lamego. It was this situation, perhaps, that gave Francisco Martins opportunities to conduct his illicit cures among country people who visited the rustic chapel, beyond the supervision of his superiors. Once he was safely in prison, the inquisitors in Coimbra, two of whom were Bento Paes de Amaral and António Ribeiro de Abreu, detailed his crimes: *curas supersticiosas* and suspicion of making a pact with the devil.<sup>32</sup>

Condemned on the basis of the above depositions and further interrogations at the hands of his captors, Francisco Martins received a very stiff sentence for a first-time offender: he was exiled to the *couto* (penal colony) at Castro Marim for five years. The Holy Office officials may have felt compelled to deal harshly with one who, as the keeper of a chapel, had been in a position to set an example for common church parishioners. On the other hand, their severe treatment may also have been a manifestation of anti-Spanish sentiment, found in all levels of Portuguese culture. In one respect, the tribunal did show Martins clemency: his term of arbitrary imprisonment lasted only one day. He performed a public abjuration in an *auto-da-fé* held in Coimbra on 10 June 1725. The following day he was released from prison, instructed to put his local affairs in order and prepare for his five-year term of forced labor in the Algarve.<sup>33</sup>

D. Tribunal: Lisbon Case: 18  
 Name: João Baptista de São Miguel Date: 26 September 1731

On 26 September 1731, one João Baptista de São Miguel, an Old Christian, appeared before the *Mesa* of the Holy Office tribunal in Lisbon. His exact age is disputed in the records; most likely he was between twenty and twenty-three years old. He held no job or social position and was referred to in the Inquisition documents as “Joãozinho,” or little João.<sup>34</sup> He had been born in Lisbon, continued to reside in the capital city, and was the unmarried son of a goldsmith. Although the official charges leveled against him are for believing in superstitions and practicing sorcery, the trial documents

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., unnumbered pages recording Martins’ initial and second hearing.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., unnumbered *Jorão visto, acordão* and *Termo de Saída* bound near the end of the trial dossier.

<sup>34</sup> Francisco Santana, *Bruxas e Curandeiros na Lisboa Joanina* (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1996), pp. 107–116.

make clear that his objectionable activities included illicit healing. João Baptista de São Miguel had become widely known in Lisbon as a *curandeiro*; he was explicitly tried for curing people without the benefit of conventional medical training or holding a state license.<sup>35</sup>

Part of the final judgment against him reads, “João Baptista de São Miguel . . . has performed various cures, which he affirmed were miraculous, . . . and showed how he was familiar with the interiors of all creatures, which was scandalous; a grand abuse of true devotion, and of the Christian faith . . .”<sup>36</sup> No Holy Office commission met to collect depositions from the prisoner’s accusers; nearly all of the initial denunciations against João Baptista de São Miguel were submitted voluntarily by letter directly to the Lisbon tribunal.

Twelve denunciations appear in the trial record. Most came from uncommon, educated people (*letrados*)—neighbors and acquaintances of the accused, but persons of middling elite status in Lisbon’s social hierarchy. For example, one of the first letters bound into the trial dossier is signed by the brothers Joseph and Manuel Corrêa, the former a cleric and the latter a licensed surgeon, who lived together in central Lisbon. The letter begins with complaints about the accused’s lack of faith and his scandalous spiritual shortcomings, but the second part of the missive raises specific concerns about João Baptista de São Miguel having misrepresented himself as a healer. One of the brothers remembered that:

. . . there was a certain person promised by him [João Baptista de São Miguel] to do a certain thing [perform a cure] for free, to be paid later; with another person it was the same thing, but I tell you he never did anything without the [patient] first paying the sum that he said . . .<sup>37</sup>

The letter goes on to decry in detail the serious depravity of the accused *curandeiro*’s medical knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

More denunciations from licensed professional healers or their family members follow. The eighth person to testify was Dona Maria Antónia da Silveira, the wife of a prominent *médico* of the royal court in Lisbon. Her testimony is brief—only two pages—but telling; it is exactly what one might expect from the wife of a court physician

<sup>35</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 18.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 235(v).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 16v.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, fls. 14–17.



under these circumstances. She began by stating that she supports her husband's statements (which are entered earlier in the records and considered below) about the accused popular healer, João Baptista, whom she identified scornfully as an *homem sem letra*: one without education. She said she had encountered him many times, chanting in the street near her house, and heard him often at night reciting *orações* for the purpose of healing the sick.

Dona Maria recounted several examples of João Baptista's strange behavior: he had tried unsuccessfully to cure a blind man and had attempted to work acts of healing by drawing strange designs on small pieces of paper. Her most significant recollection of João Baptista, though, involved an episode wherein he approached her and insulted her husband's skill as a physician, saying:

... that he [João Baptista] had seen the whole world, and had been to the bottom of the sea, and that he had in time come to have a clear understanding of all the plants and their virtues, and how to make divine works with them . . . and that he would pass by [her house] quite late, so that my husband could try to cure the infirm [with these plants], and that he could instruct my husband about them . . .<sup>39</sup>

The indignant physician's wife ended her testimony by saying defensively that she never believed any of the things João Baptista said—she always found him to be unpleasant and full of pride.

Dona Maria's deposition complements that of her husband, the physician Francisco Martins de Oliveira. In a statement filling some nine leaves of the trial dossier, Doctor Oliveira discussed the accused *curandeiro's* medical techniques at length, systematically discrediting the efficacy of his popular cures. The *médico* compared João Baptista's knowledge of medicinal substances unfavorably to that of a trained pharmacist; he spoke of the accused falsifying remedies, relying on sham drugs like "black stones" (*pedras negras*), and recounted stories of several people living in various neighborhoods of Lisbon whom the accused tried to cure:

João Baptista broke [his patients]; it is said that he makes infamous cures; . . . With a woman of the Alfama [a Lisbon neighborhood], whom he found bloated and in a deplorable state, he said he could always

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 93v. The complete testimony of Dona Maria Antónia da Silveira appears on folios 93–94.

improve her constitution by saying blessings, or by causing black vomiting [*vomitas negras*]; to cure her he told her this, and sent for those remedies to take to her . . .<sup>40</sup>

In fact, the physician asserted, the *curandeiro's* “remedies” made his patients’ illnesses worse. At one point, the esteemed court doctor declared with indignation, “João Baptista’s manner of addressing health runs counter to my own training.”<sup>41</sup> In sum, the physician provided a pointedly critical professional opinion of the accused *curandeiro's* ability to heal the sick. The deposition is that of an expert witness called upon to shed light on an arcane subject.<sup>42</sup>

One of the inquisitors who adjudicated João Baptista de São Miguel’s case was António Ribeiro de Abreu, a Holy Office official who normally served with the Coimbra tribunal. Such close participation by an inquisitor from another tribunal of the Inquisition indicates an interest on the part of the General Council, the highest level of the Holy Office in Portugal, in insuring that cases against popular healers were supervised by Inquisition personnel who had experience in dealing with this type of crime. The Lisbon tribunal had, until 1722, very little experience in living memory with prosecuting *curandeiros*. Their most recent trial against a popular healer—indeed, the only prior one to occur during the period from 1690 to 1722—had occurred in 1704, eighteen years before, when a slave named Jacques Viegas was sent from Brazil to stand trial for illicit curing.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, that the General Council should provide the Lisbon tribunal with seasoned advisors from another region is perfectly understandable. Nor should there be any surprise in noting that the Lisbon tribunal experienced its most active period of prosecuting popular healers—holding at least six trials in just over four years—during the time when António Ribeiro de Abreu was resident there.

In the end, João Baptista de São Miguel was condemned for his crimes by the Holy Office and, in 1732, the year following his incarceration, he was made to perform a public *auto-da-fé* in Lisbon’s Rossio Square, appearing in a penitent’s habit bearing devices which

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., fls. 45v–46r.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., fl. 46. The complete testimony of Dr. Francisco Martins de Oliveira appears on folios 41–49.

<sup>42</sup> See the commentary on Dr. Francisco Martins de Oliveira’s testimony in Santana, *Bruxas e Curandeiros na Lisboa Joanina*, p. 110.

<sup>43</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 2355.

marked him as a sorcerer. As part of his sentence, he was obliged to continue wearing this habit in public “into perpetuity.” Further, he was to be whipped through the streets of Lisbon, after which he was forbidden ever to enter the confines of the city again. Additionally, he was exiled for five years, during which time he was obliged to serve as a rower in His Majesty’s galleys.<sup>44</sup>

Young João Baptista de São Miguel may not have survived this arduous experience. If he did, either he was sufficiently impressed by his ordeal to cease his activities as an illicit healer altogether, or at least he managed to avoid future detection by Inquisition authorities: following his *auto-da-fé*, Holy Office documents provide no further mention of “little João.”

*E. Tribunal: Évora*

*Case: 1445*

*Name: Manuel Rodrigues Leandro*

*Date: 26 September 1743*

This case originally came to the attention of the Inquisition when one João Carrilho of Castelo de Vide, finding himself sick and “having absolutely no confidence in doctors” (*desconfiada por Médicos inteiramente*), sent a message to the village of Seda, some sixty kilometers away, to request the services of the accused healer, Manuel Rodrigues Leandro. When Leandro arrived to perform the cure, a witness named Maria Dias, who had not known this *curandeiro* previously, decided to denounce him to the Inquisition. Functionaries of the Évora tribunal arrested Leandro on 26 September 1743.<sup>45</sup>

Obviously, because a client sixty kilometers away desired his skills, Manuel Rodrigues Leandro had earned a wide reputation as a healer. In fact, like the Spaniard Juan José Barrento more than twenty years before, he was so well known for his skills that his neighbors usually referred to him simply as *o Salvador*. He had been born in the village of Segura, in the Bishopric of Guarda. However, he had since moved, making his home in 1743 about 215 kilometers further south in Vila de Seda, in the Bishopric of Elvas. His age is not recorded, but it is known that he was married, an Old Christian, and worked as a *jornaleiro*, or common laborer for daily wages. He seems to have earned a substantial part of his income, though, by his skills as a *curandeiro*.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Timothy J. Coates, “Exiles and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550–1720,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota Graduate School, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 80–87.

<sup>45</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1445. Pages unnumbered.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, and *Atlas de Portugal*, pp. 16–17.

Although they had on file three letters of denunciation against him dating from 13 November 1741, the Évora tribunal did not have Manuel Rodrigues Leandro arrested until nearly two years later. At the time of his arrest, he was charged with being a *curandeiro*, and was specifically identified as such in the court proceedings.<sup>47</sup>

Denunciations of Manuel Rodrigues Leandro came from several persons whose professional vested interest put them at odds with superstitious folk healers. Further, several of these people only came forward at the prompting of the Holy Office commissioners sent to gather evidence in the case. Padre Manuel Pires Gião, for example, was the first to give a deposition, but he was nominated by the commission to give testimony. Gião, forty-two years old and benefice of the mother church of the village of Monte Argil, was a prominent clergyman in his community. Also selected by the commissioners to give testimony was the third denouncer, Padre Antonio Fieira de Oliveira, who had been born in Monte Argil and remained a resident there. Fourth and fifth to be deposed were Cipriano Galvão, a local landowner of some standing who lived on his nearby *fazenda* (country estate), and his wife Ana Fieira. A medical professional was the sixth person to offer evidence in favor of the prosecution: Luis Nogueira Farto, a forty-six year-old state-approved surgeon born in and resident of Monte Argil.

In giving his denunciation, Luis Nogueira Farto was careful to delineate Manuel Rodrigues Leandro's crimes in terms that would resonate with inquisitors and medical professionals alike. The surgeon spoke of specific cures Leandro had performed, dismissing them as mere sorcery, illicit blessings and heretical incantations. He related that the accused *curandeiro* commonly defended his right to heal by claiming that the Évora Inquisition tribunal had "given him permission to perform cures." Farto went on to state that the son of the accused healer had grown "pugnacious" when he heard that the village surgeon was going to denounce his father, further prejudicing the healer in the tribunal's eyes. Farto continued, asserting that the people of Monte Argil village "knew [Leandro] as a man of Virtue;" that is, that the common people thought of this vulgar folk healer as a man blessed with healing powers by God, thus underscoring the *curandeiro's* moral danger to the people.<sup>48</sup> All of these damning

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<sup>47</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1445.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, denunciations.

charges follow motifs that were quite usual in *curandeiro* denunciations, especially those coming from elite medical practitioners. Such allegations from a respected source carried substantial weight and influence in a folk healer's trial; these accusations alone, if corroborated by one other witness, would have been enough to condemn Manuel Rodrigues Leandro.<sup>49</sup>

The inquisitors, however, wanted for no corroborating evidence in this case. A second group of twenty denunciations, given at a later date, contains the opinions of more elites: local landowners and their wives, a lawyer, an army officer, a prominent merchant, another clergyman—all persons of important social standing within the accused *curandeiro*'s community. Presiding over the trial was José de Almeida do Amaral, the veteran inquisitor who had already tried a score of popular healers. Collectively, they were able to construct an irresistible case against the popular, well-known *saludador*.

In October 1744, José de Almeida do Amaral and the other inquisitors of the Évora tribunal found Manuel Rodrigues Leandro guilty of *curandeirismo*. At his sentencing, Leandro was exiled for two years to Silves, in the far south of Portugal, and given an additional unspecified term of imprisonment. He performed a public *auto-da-fé* on 18 October 1744 and was released from prison shortly thereafter, at which point he was dispatched to the Algarve to complete his term of exile.

F. Tribunal: Évora

Case: 5949

Name: Catarina Maria dos Prazeres

Date: 25 April 1746

The case of Catarina Maria dos Prazeres—also from the Évora tribunal records—provides another example of medical professionals who collaborated with church and Inquisition officials to eliminate the ideological and material threat posed by a local popular healer. Holy Office functionaries apprehended her on 25 April 1746 for performing acts of sorcery, having a pact with the devil and, specifically, performing superstitious cures. She was married to André Gonçalves, a tailor, with whom she resided in Odemira on the southern Algarve coast. Her birthplace, however, was far to the north; she came originally from either Serpa or Beja—the trial dossier sources equivocate

<sup>49</sup> *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição dos Reynos de Portugal. Ordenado por mandado do Ilustrissimo e Reverendissimo Senhor Bispo Dom Francisco de Castro, Inquisidor Geral do Concelho de Estado de Sua Magestade...* (Lisbon: Manoel da Sylva, 1640), Livro III, Título XIV, §§ 1–9; and Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, p. 75.

on this fact. At the time of her arrest, she was twenty-five or twenty-six years old.<sup>50</sup>

In the opening phase of the trial—her *apresentação* (hearing) before the tribunal sought any testimony from witnesses—Catarina Maria dos Prazeres was accused of meeting other witches (*bruxas*) in the secluded Vale dos Cavalinhos, of travelling there magically in “very little time” (*muito pouco tempo*), of having a pact with the devil and of talking with demons. But before any of those allegations, the crime first mentioned on this list of accusations was for harboring superstitions linked to, specifically, curing.<sup>51</sup>

Catarina Maria dos Prazeres’ is an especially interesting case because the accused *curandeira* fought her persecution vehemently, hiring a *procurador*, or legal advisor, to defend her and gather testimonials which contradicted the assertions of her detractors. These tactics significantly prolonged her trial. After considering the identity and motivations of the persons responsible for bringing the above charges against her, a possible explanation for her tenacity begins to emerge.

The Holy Office had received its first and most damaging denunciation of Catarina Maria dos Prazeres during the previous year, on 29 May 1745. This statement came in the form of a letter from Angelica Maria do Sacramento, the literate, thirty-three-year-old unmarried daughter of Cristovão Rapozo, a local licensed barber. Father and daughter both were born in Odemira, where they continued to live, alongside their neighbor, the accused healer. In an adjoining letter to the Évora tribunal of the Inquisition, Padre Manuel Ferrão, a priest in Odemira, recorded that Angelica came to him “outside of confession”—an important distinction, as it meant the priest was not bound to keep the information she disclosed to him a secret—to “discharge her conscience” about the existence of a *curandeira* in the midst of their community. Later, in the commission hearings called to collect denunciations against Catarina Maria dos Prazeres, Angelica Maria do Sacramento was the first to testify. The commissioner whom the Évora tribunal appointed to take these depositions was none other than the above-named Padre Manuel Ferrão, priest of the mother church of Odemira, the Igreja de Santa Maria.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5949. Pages unnumbered.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, unnumbered letter pages from the Évora tribunal of the Holy Office directing commissioners to gather depositions for the case against Catarina Maria dos Prazeres in Odemira.

The first Holy Office commission charged with gathering denunciations against Catarina Maria dos Prazeres met in Odemira during the summer of 1745. Second to testify, after the licensed barber's daughter Angelica Maria do Sacramento, was her sister, Julia do Empáro, twenty-seven years old and also single. Third to testify was their seventeen year-old brother, António Simões de Matriz. Marcelina Batista de Conceição testified next; she was a widow who lived with Lucas Rapozo—apparently the barber's brother. During this phase of the commission's work, Cristovão Rapozo, the licensed barber himself, acted as an official witness and signed off on each of the seven total testimonials.<sup>53</sup>

In the trial dossier, records of these testimonies precede those given to another commission that met in Odemira on 19 December 1745. Manuel Pinheiro da Silva, identified as a university graduate, led the summer commission. All of Cristovão Rapozo's family relations mentioned above testified a second time. In addition, the fifth person to give a statement was Maria Madaléna Luiza de Souza, daughter of the local licensed pharmacist, Joseph Gomes Alveres. After her testimony came a denunciation from Maria Rapozo, who appears to have been the young daughter of one of Cristovão Rapozo's slaves. Two other persons who gave statements were identified as friends of Cristovão Rapozo's daughters.<sup>54</sup>

The various members of the Rapozo family all provided denunciations of Catarina Maria dos Prazeres that discussed her sub-standard and dangerous healing practices; these, the Rapozos maintained, were both false and ineffective. The witnesses also took issue with the accused's character, which they universally found objectionable.

Among the healing incantations the accused was said to have used as a remedy was the following, to be employed against any unspecified internal or respiratory corruption:

Your body has thirty-three limbs, like mine  
 There, your heart and your lungs  
 And all that appear ugly and black as pitch  
 And only in you do they appear  
 Beautiful, like a rose . . .<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, unnumbered pages in the trial dossier's first section of denunciations.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, unnumbered pages in the trial dossier's second section of denunciations.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

The accused healer must have realized how heavily the evidence against her was weighted. She engaged the services of Inácio Murteira de Fontes, a university graduate in law, and had him collect depositions in her favor to, in the words of the Holy Office scribe recording the fact, “contradict the denunciations against her.”<sup>56</sup> These depositions were nevertheless admitted as evidence to the Inquisition court. However, the presence of this counter-evidence seems only to have incensed the inquisitors. In order to compel her to admit her guilt, they ordered Catarina Maria dos Prazeres to be tortured. On 14 December 1746, after having already been imprisoned for nearly nine months, she was placed on an expandable rack to be stretched. After enduring only a brief period bound to this machine she, in the chilling euphemism of another Holy Office scribe who witnessed the event, “was perfectly attached [stretched to the capacity of the victim’s endurance] . . . [and] . . . completed her confession.”<sup>57</sup>

Considering the irritation that she appears to have caused the inquisitors by mounting a determined defense, the sentence Catarina Maria dos Prazeres received from them was not especially heavy. She was banished for three years to the city of Leiria, located 120 kilometers north of Lisbon in west-central Portugal, after which time she was free to return home or live wherever she pleased. Following a public *auto-da-fé* with several other *curandeiros* and *mágicos* in Évora on 19 March 1747, her arbitrary prison term lasted another nine days. She was released and dispatched to complete her term of exile on 28 March 1747.<sup>58</sup>

G. Tribunal: Évora

Case: 11700

Name: Ana Mendes Barguilhas

Date: 4 June 1769

Even after the period of Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello’s tenure as Inquisitor General, the Inquisition continued to conduct trials against popular healers with the help and cooperation of licensed physicians, though the practice dropped off sharply after 1760. The case of Ana Mendes Barguilhas, whose trial occurred in 1769, provides an illuminating example of a later *curandeira* persecution. One highly unusual aspect of this case is that three different physicians

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., unnumbered *forão visto* and other unnumbered pages bound near the end of the trial dossier.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.



from the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine made the long trip to Évora to participate in the trial as expert witnesses. However, that each made explicit statements in the proceedings highlighting their collective interest in furthering rational medicine by discrediting a *curandeira* and disparaging her folk remedies is not unusual. On the contrary, their actions neatly summarize the aggregate efforts of many of their fellow physicians over the preceding half-century.

Ana Mendes Barguilhas had been born and raised in Castelo de Vide, a fortified mountaintop village near the Spanish frontier in the upper Alentejo. She was still a resident there when Inquisition functionaries apprehended her on 4 June 1769. At that time, she was approximately fifty years old. It was the second time in a year that she had been arrested for the same crime; convicted in May, she was supposed to have departed Castelo de Vide to serve out her term of exile just fifty kilometers to the south in Campo Maior, another fortress town on the Spanish border. Significantly, Ana Mendes Barguilhas was a poor widow with very limited income—her husband had been a soldier in the Castelo de Vide garrison regiment. One of her means of support was to attempt to heal people with incantations and prayers, in combination with herbal medicines that she prepared herself. In this instance, she had been denounced anew to the Holy Office after she had tried to cure an “important person,” one *Doutor* João Centeno Mexia (who was not identified as a physician; rather, he was probably a member of the rural gentry and the title “doctor” a sign of having attended a university). The remedy, unfortunately, had gone badly awry and the patient, according to the testimony of witnesses, had fallen into a stupor and nearly died. Soon afterwards, the Inquisition incarcerated Ana Mendes Barguilhas, charging her with conducting acts of sorcery.<sup>59</sup>

The three University physicians, doctors André do Rego Galvão Bernardo, Baltazar Rodrigues Português and João de Viera da Fonseca, travelled over 330 kilometers from Coimbra to Évora just to testify in this case. Their presence is perhaps an indication of the elevated social status of Ana Mendes Barguilhas’ victim. Additionally, their willingness to provide testimony could be a measure of the importance professional *médicos*, as well as Inquisition authorities, placed on quashing illicit healers and their craft by the latter third of the

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<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 11700.

eighteenth century. By 1769, after all, the movement for medical reform along rationalist lines in Portugal among trained physicians had been underway for two generations or more. Hence, the active participation of these three Coimbra medical dons in a provincial *curandeira* trial at this time can be seen as a further expression of that reform movement, which compelled professional physicians to assert the superiority of conventional medicine over rustic folk healing. In any event, their overt participation indicates a marked departure from the role physicians took in Inquisition trials earlier in the century. The prestige and social position of these representatives of scientific medicine had been enhanced as a result of a greater general acceptance of rational science; the assertiveness of the physicians' testimony reflects this broader social change.

In assessing the significance of the heavy-handed nature of Ana Mendes Barguilhas' prosecution, it is well to remember that, at precisely the time of this trial, the Holy Office itself was being made to undergo profound institutional changes at the insistence of Portugal's enlightened though autocratic prime minister, the Marquês de Pombal. In 1768–1769, Pombal was in the process of enacting measures to secularize and weaken the Holy Office, which had come to enjoy enormous privileges during the preceding century, much of it under the sympathetic rule of King João V. During the year before Ana Mendes Barguilhas' arrest, however, Pombal had stripped the Inquisition of many of its policing powers, investing these instead in a new office, the Intendant General of Police, which functioned under direct crown control.<sup>60</sup> At the same time, the Holy Office ceased to have authority over banned printed matter; Pombal placed this authority in a newly created Royal Board of Censorship. Then, in 1769, Pombal struck directly at the constitution of the Inquisition, eliminating its ability to function as an independent judicial structure, subordinating it thoroughly to government authority, and taking control of its financial lifeline by mandating that all confiscated goods acquired through prosecutions would become Crown property. Further, Pombal's reforms eliminated public *autos-de-fé* and abolished the legal distinction between Old and New Christians, a move which hampered

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<sup>60</sup> A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *History of Portugal*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), Vol. 1, p. 402. See, too, Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 213–214.

Inquisition efforts to attack supposed crypto-Jews. Finally, Pombal appointed his own brother, Paulo de Carvalho, as Inquisitor General, insuring that the Prime Minister's policies toward that institution would be enforced.<sup>61</sup> After 1769, then, the Holy Office became a profoundly different institution in its intent and purpose; its far-ranging privileges and powers had effectively been curtailed, its former prerogatives subsumed under state authority.

Returning to the case of Ana Mendes Barguilhas, it is also unusual that the two inquisitors who adjudicated the case and questioned the physicians and other witnesses, Padre Annes Fernão and Diogo Maria da Fonseca, both sacerdotes in the habit of São Pedro, were themselves highly educated, each holding a doctorate in canon law. The quality of these Inquisition officials reflected the professionalism Pombal attempted to instill in the institution after 1769, when he began to rein in the Holy Office's power. His new policy also charged the Inquisition with operating under more enlightened, rational principles. The culmination of these reforms was the new *Regimento* of 1774, a revised set of operating procedures that strongly reflected Pombal's Enlightenment-era values.<sup>62</sup>

According to the trial record of his testimony, Coimbra physician André do Rego Galvão Bernardo "certified that the 'molestations' which [the accused healer, Ana Mendes Barguilhas] performed were in fact sorcery, and noted that she applied 'internal remedies' made with olive oil and various herbs, the names of which she was ignorant." Doctor Bernardo further stated that the *curandeira's* medicine "had no useful results." Rather, far to the contrary, after ingesting such a mixture "death would follow so hastily," he said, "that [the victim] would not be able to partake of the Blessed Sacrament"—that is, to be given the last rites by a priest. Finally, Bernardo noted to one of the Holy Office commissioners, Padre João Bernardo Pereira (who also

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<sup>61</sup> Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal, Paradox of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 91. See also two articles which bear on this subject by Tereza Sena: "O Irmão do Futuro Marquês de Pombal Deputado do Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício," in *Comunicações apresentadas ao 1º Congresso Luso-Brasileiro Sobre Inquisição*, 3 vols. (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos de Século XVIII e Universitária Editora, 1990), vol. 3, pp. 1167–1189; and "A Família do Marquês de Pombal e o Santo Ofício (Amostragem da importância do cargo da Familiar na sociedade portuguesa setecentista e oitocentista)," in *Actos do Colóquio Pombal Revisitado*, vol. 1 (Lisbon: 1984), pp. 338–385.

<sup>62</sup> Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment*, pp. 90–98.

provided a damning denunciation of Ana Mendes Barguilhas), that he “was certain that the offender always conducted her life in this way.”<sup>63</sup>

Similarly, Baltazar Rodrigues Português said in his testimony that “he knew that it was said publicly in this village [Castelo de Vide] that Ana Mendes Barguilhas had cured João Centeno Mexia . . . who then went into a stupor with sickness because of it [the remedy].” Português went on to state that Mexia “appeared to be ‘cooked’ with *maleficia*, and with [Barguilhas’] remedies,” and added that “he will have to be restored to his former health,” implying that this could only be done through conventional medicine.<sup>64</sup> Regarding the compound that the *curandeira* had used to treat Mexia, the physician could only speak with contempt:

Home curing done with concoctions used by [Ana Mendes Barguilhas], made of various herbs and olive oil from which she made a paste, utterly ignores the qualities of the herbs; . . . the remedy referred to was meant to last a long time, the principal effects of which she did not know; . . . it is certain that the result of her feigning would be the death of the patient, so quickly that he could not receive the Sacrament . . .<sup>65</sup>

He continued in this vein to disparage the accused healer’s arts, saying that “near to the time of administering the remedy there occurred various chance incidents, which the culprit used to console her patient, saying they were prognostications of the improvement for which they hoped . . .”<sup>66</sup> Such testimony cast the accused healer’s intentions in a very dim light.

In addition, an earlier statement given by António de Torres, a prominent resident in Castelo de Vide, brought further details of this suspected bewitchment to light and corroborated the physicians’ version of events:

. . . the culprit arrived in the most recent month of October to perform a cure of the infirmity, which she did, which the [Coimbra] Physicians certified to have caused a stupor and not a remedy; which they did not try to rectify because they were persuaded it was caused by evil acts [“*maleficios*”]; and, going to the culprit, and because she affirmed then that she had bewitched [the sick man], and seeing that it was certain that she would have to cure him, to restore his former

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<sup>63</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 11700.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 10.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, author’s translation.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, author’s translation.

health . . . which she attempted, . . . and commenced to cure . . . she went to find . . . herbs and prayers and other things in the fields, the names of which she was ignorant; and with olive oil she reduced them to an unguent, and oil, with which she undid the enchantment of [her patient] the afore-mentioned Doctor [João Centeno Mexia].<sup>67</sup>

At the conclusion of the trial record, the Inquisition tribunal gave its final impression of the case. That they had been convinced by the weight of hostile testimony toward the accused *curandeira* is evident. But equally apparent is that the Évora inquisitors were not completely swayed by the rational worldview regarding illicit healing which the arguments by the physician Baltazar Rodrigues Português had posited:

In our view, the offender performed the cures of which she is accused, and she is noted to be a much-reputed sorceress, not only for the certain reason of having been punished for that which she does through superstition, but also for the perseverance with which she persuades the sick that the molestations which trouble them are the result of wicked acts which they have done, affirming the time and the method in which they did these wrongs, and predicting to them the effects of their sins, which has caused a major scandal.<sup>68</sup>

Seen in its proper chronological context, then, Ana Mendes Barguilhas' case demonstrates that some officials within the Évora tribunal continued to believe in the efficacy and reality of magic, even late in the eighteenth century. Conversely, the case also illustrates the continuation of a long-established practice within the Holy Office across Portugal: resorting to university-trained doctors to give testimony in favor of rational medicine against that of popular healers and their remedies.

*H. Tribunal: Évora*

*Case: 372*

*Name: Cristovão Silva Marreiros*

*Date: 1784*

Inquisition records describe Cristovão Silva Marreiros as an *homem pardo* (a black or mulatto man); he was either a free man or former

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 2 (v), author's translation. The original Portuguese transcript reads “. . . a Ré parece era no mez de Outubro proxima passado para effeito de occurar da infirmitade, que padeira, que os Medicos certificavão ser estupor e no curativo, delles não experimentou meliores, para que se persuadio ser causada de maleficios, e vindo a delata, e vendo-o affirmou então maleficiado, e vindo e que tivesse a certeza de que o havia de curar, e restituir a sua antiga saude . . . que pertendia, . . . e começou a cura mandando buscar . . . ervas e raizas e outras ao campo, que ignora os deus nomes, e com azeite as reduzia a unguento, e oleo, com que untava o ditto Doutor . . .”

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, fls. 25–26, author's translation.

slave who had been manumitted by his master.<sup>69</sup> He lived in the Algarve, a region that, at the time of his arrest in the late eighteenth century, still had a substantial population—approaching ten percent, both slave and free—which was of African descent.<sup>70</sup> Such demographic circumstances were a cause of tension within the established social hierarchy in the Algarve, because of the seeming paradox that free blacks and mulattos existed alongside those who remained enslaved. One window into this world is a series of Inquisition cases against Luso-Africans who were prosecuted for magical crimes. These cases allow for an assessment of the discomfort whites felt at the social paradox they had created through legal manumission, and they also highlight the role of the Holy Office in addressing magical crimes perpetrated by non-whites.

What emerges is a picture of Inquisition jurisprudence being used to reinforce both the institution of slavery and the idea of the social superiority of whites over free blacks. Further, these cases reveal the vulnerability of free blacks who, without the “protection” of their white masters, fell outside the established social parameters the institution of slavery had created for persons of African ancestry. Deprived of a place or allies in white society, free blacks typically received far more severe penalties than did their enslaved counterparts. Slaves, the evidence suggests, were too valuable to be sent into exile. (Moreover, banishing a slave would have created other social problems. How, for example, would the Inquisition accommodate a slave who had been sent away from her or his master? For that matter, would a master have to be compensated for the loss of a slave? Or, conversely, could a master be held responsible for a slave’s behavior?). Cristovão Silva Marreiros’ case is an excellent example of the dynamic that made free Luso-Africans vulnerable to exceptionally heavy penalties under Holy Office prosecution.

Folk healer Cristovão Silva Marreiros was born in Lagos, but he lived in Figueiras, near the village of Monchique. Both communities are in the Algarve, but the former is a coastal port while the latter is situated in a low chain of mountains, about twenty-five kilometers inland.<sup>71</sup> He was married to a woman named Ana whose race

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<sup>69</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372. Pages unnumbered.

<sup>70</sup> Michael Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 14–15.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, and *Atlas de Portugal*, p. 32.

and last name, like her husband's age, are unknown. He was unemployed (*sem ofício*), but did earn some money to live on by performing cures among the local peasant population.<sup>72</sup>

The earliest denunciations of Cristovão Silva Marreiros came by letter, lodged by the Inquisition commissioner of the village of Tavira, António de Almeida Pereira Guevarra de Macedo, on 10 August 1783. Shortly thereafter, the Évora tribunal desired to question Marreiros. The accused healer was very uncooperative at first, refusing to appear before the Inquisition when summoned to Évora to give an account of himself.<sup>73</sup> Because his appearance implied a northward journey of more than 300 kilometers, his reticence is understandable.<sup>74</sup>

There followed the establishment of a Holy Office commission to collect depositions from witnesses who could speak about the accused *curandeiro*'s alleged crimes. This commission met on 22 March 1784 and recorded six initial *diligências*. Curiously, the commission met only in Évora, far from Cristovão Silva Marreiros' home. Most of the witnesses do not seem to be his neighbors. Manuel Estanislau Fragoso de Barros was the commissioner and José da Silva Rego served as the scribe; José da Cunha Couto and Alberto Colhaço observed the proceedings and signed as witnesses to the testimony.<sup>75</sup>

The first denunciation came from a licensed barber, José da Silva, thirty-eight years old, born in and a resident of Évora. José da Silva explicitly states that he made the denunciation because of his profession, asserting his frustration with the folk healer by saying: "... therefore I denounced him by motive of his occupation; in diverse houses of this city, I heard in some of them, diverse people tell, with admiration and respect, of his Divine virtue . . ."<sup>76</sup> He then named and physically described the accused, and went on to recount how Marreiros was well known, and often summoned to perform cures on people. Next, da Silva stated that, several times in his barbering practice, he had come into competition with Cristovão Silva Marreiros. Finally, da Silva named other "angry" citizens, another barber among them, who would corroborate his denunciation.

<sup>72</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Atlas de Portugal*, p. 17.

<sup>75</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, testimony of José da Silva. In Portuguese, "... entrando elle Denunciante por motivo da sua occupação; em diversas casas desta cidade, ouvido em algumas dellas, contar a diversas pessoas, com admiração e respeito, a virtude Divinatoria . . ."

One of the citizens José da Silva mentioned was the well-known Évora merchant Francisco José Cordeiro, who testified fifth, and whose sister, a forty-something spinster, was the third to testify. Because they had never lived in the same community, how these persons had come to know Cristovão Silva Marreiros is unclear. In any case, their testimony is thoroughly damning; it dwells heavily on the inadequacies of the accused as a healer. As a result of this testimony, the Inquisition finally had Cristovão Silva Marreiros arrested on 20 May 1784.

Évora's tribunal reached a decision in the case within three months. Cristovão Silva Marreiros abjured as a condemned *curandeiro* at a public *auto-da-fé* celebrated in Évora on 3 August 1784. As a free black man and first-time offender, he had received a very heavy sentence. He was to be banished for six years to the royal *galés* and whipped through the public streets of Évora.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps part of the severity of this judgment was due to the offender's initial uncooperativeness when summoned to Évora. Still, his punishment is consistent with that which other free blacks received during this era following their first Holy Office conviction.<sup>78</sup> Whether undesirable as an illicit healer, a free black person or both, an Inquisition trial and sentence were starkly efficient means to control those elements of Portuguese society which elites found objectionable.

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<sup>77</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 372, final *acordão*.

<sup>78</sup> See ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 2229; 2615; 4745; 5940; 7075; and ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 538.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PUNISHING MAGICAL CRIMINALS: MILD CUSTOMS (*BRANDOS COSTUMES*) AND SOCIAL CONTROL

For all of the diligence of Portugal's inquisitors and *familiares* in bringing popular healers and other *mágicos* to trial during the Enlightenment era, the Holy Office's treatment of convicted magical criminals was comparably light. Indeed, relative clemency is the salient feature of Portugal's "witch hunting" experience in the eighteenth century. The Inquisition publicly humiliated sorcerers, witches, diviners and illicit superstitious healers and drove them away from their homes to live in exile under very difficult circumstances, but it almost never had them killed. Certainly by the standards of other European regions during the previous three centuries, when being found guilty of a magical crime generally meant suffering some form of capital punishment, Portuguese sentences, lethal in only the rarest of circumstances, were comparatively benign.

Curiously, this was almost as true in the sixteenth century as it was in the eighteenth; during the nation's first major period of "witch-hunting" during the 1550s, the Portuguese executed only six of more than ninety convicted *mágicos*, but these sentences were passed in civil courts in Lisbon, not by Holy Office tribunals.<sup>1</sup> During the entire period of the present study, the Portuguese Inquisition condemned only two magical criminals to death (and these sentences were commuted to lesser penalties), while civil courts condemned none. From 1600 to 1800, the total number of *mágicos* executed—"relaxed to the secular arm of justice" in the language of the institution—was just four persons.<sup>2</sup> (Ecclesiastical authorities were not permitted to take a human life; condemned prisoners were handed over to civil

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<sup>1</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *O Imaginário da Magia: feitiçeiros, saluadores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 250–254. See also Bethencourt's "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 218–221. Inquisition procedure required that, for a *mágico* to suffer capital punishment, the accused had to twice assert, during two separate interrogation sessions, that he maintained an explicit pact with the devil.

authorities for execution.)<sup>3</sup> Although the vast majority of Portuguese magical crimes trials transpired after 1700, the last sorcerer to be executed as a result of an Inquisition *processo* was tried in 1626.<sup>4</sup>

For comparison, during the period 1682–1750 alone, out of perhaps seven thousand New Christians tried for *judaismo*, the Holy Office turned over approximately 170 convicted crypto-Jews to government authorities to be burned at the stake in Lisbon; another fifty-one were burned at Coimbra and at least six died similarly in Évora. Concurrently, the combined tribunals had condemned a further ninety-seven *conversos* to death by incineration, but these had either died in prison or fled their impending arrest; the Inquisition burned them anyway, in effigy.<sup>5</sup>

Why were more *mágicos* not killed for their crimes? Today, popular Portuguese notions on this issue maintain that people of Lusitanian descent created a nation of “mild customs” on the edge of the Iberian peninsula. Modern Lusitanians often resort to this idea to explain any number of incidents or developments in the Portuguese past, including the Portuguese Holy Office’s alleged moderation displayed toward its victims in comparison to, say, that of the Spanish Inquisition. The following passages will examine the penalties for magical crimes in Portugal, and suggest some further explanations for why customary sentences for convicted *mágicos* may have been so mild.<sup>6</sup>

By the second decade of the eighteenth century, many elites within the Inquisition simply no longer believed in the efficacy of most magical crimes. Of course, many of those elites were serving as *familiares*: skeptical physicians, surgeons and other educated *letrados* who early on had been influenced by the principles of rationalism.<sup>7</sup> As historian of medicine Roy Porter has observed, medical professionals across Europe were some of the first to doubt supernatural causality for bewitchments and even basic magical efficacy:

<sup>3</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 196–222.

<sup>4</sup> Brian P. Levack, “The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions,” in Benkt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 78.

<sup>5</sup> Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, pp. 142–152.

<sup>6</sup> For a valuable extended discussion on this matter, see Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 331–360.

<sup>7</sup> This point has been demonstrated in previous Chapters III and V.

In practice, faced with the clinical realities of suffering and treatment, physicians everywhere were extracting themselves from demonology by the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

Other skeptics were churchmen who took as their cue the fact that ecclesiastical jurisprudence elsewhere in Europe no longer gave much credence to the reality of magical crimes. Although publications arguing against the reality of diabolical witchcraft do not appear in Portugal until after the death of Dom João V (prompting some Portuguese historians to fix the date of the arrival of a rationalist mentality in that country at 1750),<sup>9</sup> and although the by-laws of the Inquisition were not changed to reflect rationalist principles until the enlightened Prime Minister Pombal forced the issue in 1774, many persons within the Holy Office had already re-oriented their ideas, questioning magic and popular healing on scientific grounds early in the eighteenth century. Perhaps the best evidence of scientific awareness among Holy Office personnel appears in the *aperecere Dos Saludadores*. We will take up the contents of this document in a moment.

*Dos Saludadores* notwithstanding, if some high-ranking officials of the Holy Office did continue to give credit to the notion that common sorcery could have genuine power—and numerous examples of trial interrogation questions indicate that some inquisitors clearly did—lessons learned by witch-hunters elsewhere in Europe during the previous two centuries had convinced them of the futility of executing persons convicted of magical crimes.<sup>10</sup> The Portuguese themselves could clearly see that a death threat served as no deterrent; throughout the realm, *curandeiros* and *mágicos* continued to practice in large numbers. Moreover, in an environment of growing rationalism in the realm of law and jurisprudence, magical infractions were crimes for which Holy Office prosecutors could produce little empirical proof of satanic assistance. Hence, unless an accused *mágico* actually confessed to having made a pact with the devil—an act to which rustic peasants proved, despite being tortured, extremely resistant—it was very

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<sup>8</sup> Roy Porter, “Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought,” in Benkt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 230–231.

<sup>9</sup> See Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 86–91.

<sup>10</sup> Benkt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, introduction, pp. vi–vii.

difficult to make such an allegation stick.<sup>11</sup> Enlightenment-era sensibilities regarding punishment, too, had entered the Portuguese Inquisition's consciousness at several levels. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not only were execution rates for *mágicos* extraordinarily low, but Inquisition tribunals gradually reduced the average distance that convicts were made to travel to complete their terms of forced banishment.<sup>12</sup>

This is not to say that superstitious sorcerers and healers were to be dismissed lightly. Because of their non-conformist, anti-orthodox, independent ways, *mágicos* remained a dangerous, potentially disruptive force, and a threat to the Catholic faith. Passages from the Inquisition's then-current *Regimento* indicate why the Holy Office were convinced that *mágicos* should be punished, but not necessarily by taking their lives:

... the crimes of sorcery, fortune telling and divination, and whatsoever others of this same species, may only be known to inquisitors when, in them, they include manifest heresy; [but], with all of these crimes, *per* the Bull of Sixtus V, you are committed to recognize that, *it can be that they may not be heretical* [italics added]; even so, just as we do not wish to ignore the suspicion of heresy, it is the same with superstition; because they are both contrary to the Christian Faith."<sup>13</sup>

That is, the Holy Office had come to understand that superstitious practices could occur on two levels: one motivated by contact with pure evil, the ends of which were genuinely those of the heretic and apostate; and one, far less nefarious, motivated primarily by ignorance. The two levels were very different, theologically, and were not to be punished in the same way. A peasant could, within this construct, be led to attempt to heal or tell the future by calling on divine assistance—this was the result of a grave misunderstanding of church orthodoxy, but such actions did not necessarily imply the intercession of satanic forces.

With specific regard to popular healers, this position was made explicit and clarified in the Holy Office policy statement *Dos Saludadores*. An individual's claimed "innate virtue" that empowered him to heal could have multiple sources, not all of which were efficacious (the

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 354–356.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>13</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição* (1640), *Livro III, Título XIV*, §§ 1. Author's translation.

claimant could, after all, be a charlatan), and not all of which were inspired by contact with the devil. The key passages run thus:

God is a true *saludadore* . . . and those besides him are improper . . . even those that say they have within them the virtue to cure . . . are improper *saludadores*, because such virtue only results from a natural temperament, which only God gives.

There are two types of *saludadores*: the first are those that cure by virtue of the divine; the second are those that cure by natural human virtue. Those that cure by the divine virtue of God, the good Angels, the Saints and servants of God, [cure] by His commission for the remedy of our maladies. Those that cure by natural human virtue are the men . . . who manipulate the natural elements . . . as is right, and in their time cure those human attacks which occur according to nature; but outside of these ways that give health, there are no others which may be used.

. . . this ability of divine virtue to give health . . . no one doubts. . . [but] natural human virtue . . . may be used by Devils to cure . . .

These qualities by which men cure, or by a virtue which is given to them at birth, which they call specific to the individual; these are the men that commonly call themselves *saludadores*, or by virtue of medicines and their elementary qualities, *and others among us which are a mixture thereof, which call upon everything of substance [to cure]; these are Doctors, which by the science of medicine acquired by conjectural arts, and demonstrated experience, curing by the use of many medicines, and all of them very cautious in their art* [italics added].

The Devil may cure by any of these many ways—by virtue given at birth, investing the body with those qualities necessary to a *saludador*, and by virtue of medicines applied actively . . . the Devil, with his great knowledge and experience [can manipulate men].

It is just, I suppose, for us to try to understand if we may have *saludadores* by birth who, by personal virtue, can help others in some way, and afterwards we will see how to recognize them, and distinguish those who are not as they seem.<sup>14</sup>

By the end of the seventeenth century, church orthodoxy and secular jurisprudence across Europe generally accepted that the age of God's miracles had passed.<sup>15</sup> Theological symmetry demanded that this

<sup>14</sup> ANTT, *Dos Saludadores*, Conselho Geral do Santo Oficio, livro 269, fl. 15 (*recto* and *verso*).

<sup>15</sup> See Roy Porter, "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought," pp. 199–201. See also the valuable discussion, equally applicable for early modern Catholic Europe, in David D. Hall, "A World of Wonders: The Mentality of the Supernatural in Seventeenth Century New England," in *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, vol. 63: 239–274 (Boston: 1984), pp. 240–242.

reduction in the incidence of divine intervention in the human realm be matched by, if not attributed to, a similar reduction in satanic activism in human affairs. Thus, the Portuguese inquisitors were predisposed to reject the reality of most *saludadores*' claims to having an innate healing virtue, whether divinely given or acquired through contact with the devil. Under such circumstances, the Holy Office acknowledged the need to proceed with great caution when trying and sentencing illicit popular healers. The result was far fewer executions. (Secular authorities, too, recognized that magical crimes needed to be approached with greater caution. Louis XIV's edict of 1682 abolishing witchcraft prosecutions in French secular courts, for example, reflected the rationalist cosmology that had begun to take root in royal courts across the continent, but also demonstrates how absolutist centralization of power could abrogate the danger of uncontrolled witch hunts in the provinces.)<sup>16</sup>

Recall that the *Regimento* asserting this fine dichotomy had been written in 1640, when a stark fear of witches was still abroad in most of northern Europe. By contrast, the contemporary Inquisition in Portugal was more circumspect where magical crimes were concerned. While these regulations certainly provided for the execution of apostate, heretical *mágicos*, remarkably, Portuguese *inquisidores* resorted to such harsh measures only in the rarest of cases. It was always within their discretion to apply less severe alternatives.

Recommended alternate penalties for magical crimes were comparatively light—including such options as a brief period of exile or public abjuration—especially when the convict displayed open repentance, or if the inquisitors determined that an alleged perpetrator had not engaged in genuinely heretical activity. The 1640 *Regimento* actually gave Holy Office judges enormous latitude to decide if an accused *mágico* was in fact practicing heretical witchcraft, or if the person was merely ignorant of, or confused about, Catholic orthodoxy, or if the accused's main guilt was of harboring superstitions. In practice as well as in the strict letter of the regulations, then, Portuguese inquisitors were not bound by narrow, strictly prescriptive penalty options.<sup>17</sup> Their system of sentencing was remarkably flexible, which the tables of penalties, below, amply demonstrate.

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<sup>16</sup> Roy Porter, "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought," p. 211.

<sup>17</sup> BNL, *Regimento do Santo Officio da Inquisição* (1640), *Livro III, Título XIV*, §§ 1–9.

Sentencing of convicted *mágicos*—indeed, of any Holy Office criminal—occurred just before the performance of the *auto-da-fé*.<sup>18</sup> A sentence would always have several punitive components, some minor and some of considerable gravity. For example, almost universally, the Holy Office sentenced guilty *mágicos* to an additional, arbitrarily decided term of imprisonment (usually given at the discretion of the inquisitors who had judged the case), the performance of “spiritual penitences,” and required an act of either “light” or “vehement” abjuration. This was in addition to the *auto-da-fé*, which could at the discretion of the inquisitors be a public or private ceremony. Further, most sentences also required that convicts pay the costs incurred by the tribunal for their trial and imprisonment; other judges stipulated that the guilty party “receive instruction in the mysteries of the Faith,” or wear a penitent’s habit for a specified length of time (either life, or the duration of the term of exile). As an extra humiliation, a judge could require that a *mágico* be “whipped through the public streets” of the town in which the tribunal sat (though this element of a sentence was always qualified to exclude any spillage of the convict’s blood).<sup>19</sup> The last public whipping of a convicted magical criminal in Portugal was carried out in 1785.<sup>20</sup>

Because arbitrary prison terms had no set length, such punishment provided an additional element of psychological torment. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, almost all *mágicos* and *curandeiros* suffered this treatment: in more than 90% of the cases reviewed for the present study, the Holy Office required that convicts serve further indefinite incarceration. In practice, additional prison time rarely lasted more than a few weeks (usually it was a matter of days) before prisoners were released and dispatched to complete the principal terms of their sentences—typically a period of exile, time laboring in the galleys, or a stint in the penal asylum at Castro Marim. Still, prisoners and their families had no way of knowing when they

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<sup>18</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 196–222; Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 218–221.

<sup>19</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, “Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition,” p. 407.

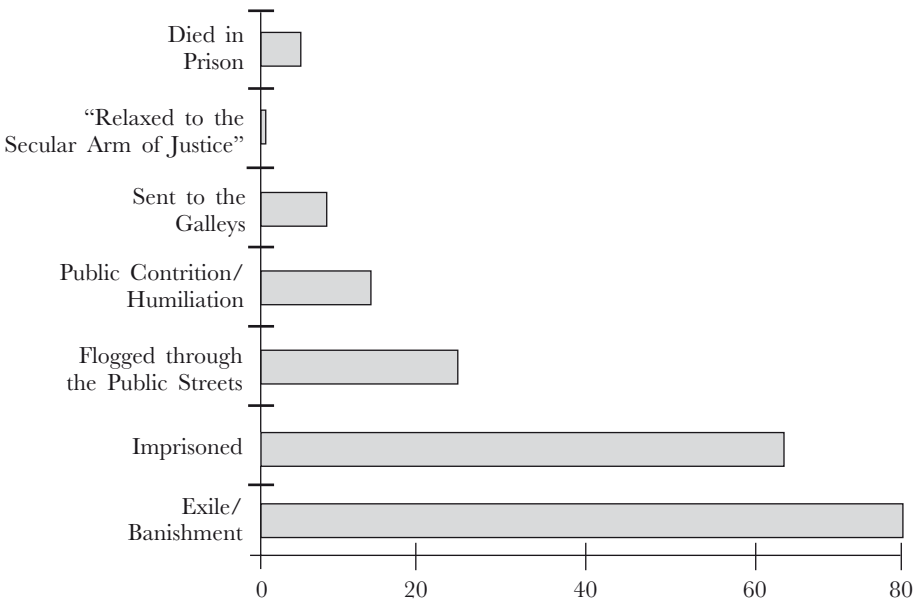
<sup>20</sup> Maria Cristina A. S. Correa de Melo, “Witchcraft in Portugal during the eighteenth century, analysed through the accusations of the Tribunal do Santo Ofício de Évora,” in *Transactions of the Eighth International Congress on the Enlightenment (Bristol, 21–27 July 1991): Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 1992; pp. 573–578, cited in Benkt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, introduction, p. 214.

were to be released from the Inquisition's jails until just before the event occurred. Many prisoners must have suffered terribly, in despair at the uncertainty of their circumstances.

A typical severe sentence might have read like the following example, which *Deputado* António Ribeiro de Abreu and other judges of the Lisbon tribunal handed down to the *curandeiro* João Baptista de São Miguel in early July, 1732. Though arduous, it includes most of the components of a standard sentence for *mágicos*:

Exiled five years to the Royal *Galés*; abjuration “in form;” to perform an *auto-da-fé* wearing a *corocha* [mitre-like hat, painted with designs indicating the penitent's crimes] and sign reading “sorcerer;” to be whipped through the public streets of Lisbon; permanent expulsion from the city of Lisbon; perpetual imprisonment and wearing of a penitent's habit; spiritual penitences; pay court costs.<sup>21</sup>

Graph 8.1 Punishments in Inquisition Sentences, 1600–1774  
(by percentage)

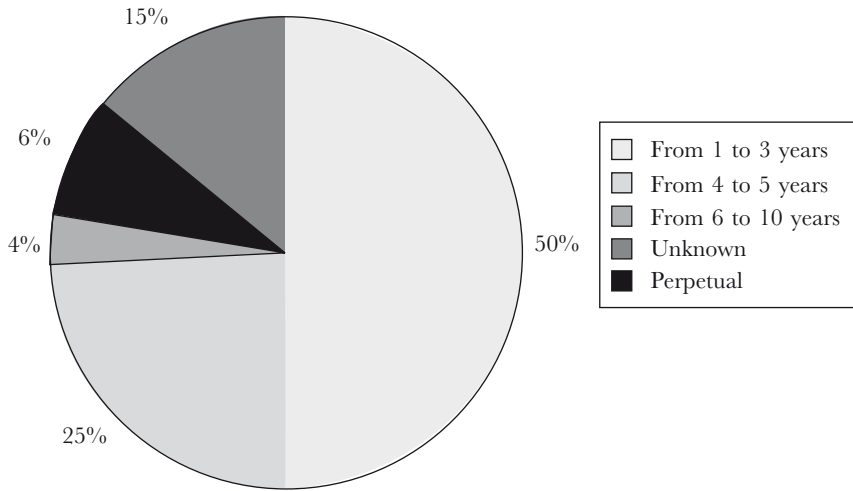


The graphs on this and the following page are adapted with permission from José Pedro Paiva's *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas': Portugal 1600–1774*, (Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 218–221.

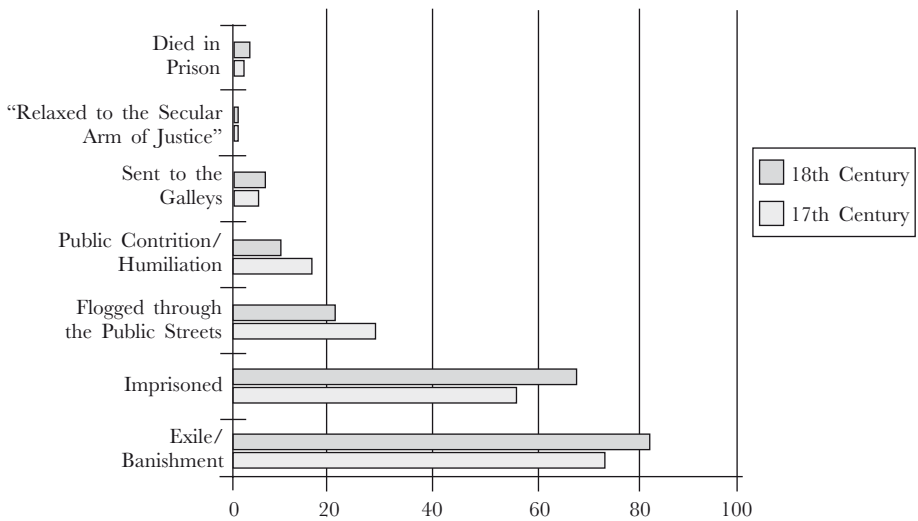
<sup>21</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, *processo* no. 18.



Graph 8.2 Duration of Punishments in Inquisition Sentences, 1600–1774



Graph 8.3 Punishments in Inquisition Sentences, 17th and 18th Centuries (by percentage)



The graphs on this page are adapted with permission from José Pedro Paiva’s *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774*, (Lisboa: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 218–221.

The main component of almost any sentence, the part that really gave teeth to the process of castigation, was the penalty of banishment. Banishment from one's community constituted the primary component of the great majority of sentences of convicted *mágicos*—healers and non-healers alike—during the period covered by this study. The Holy Office employed two basic types of banishment as punishment for magical crimes: internal, to a location within continental Portugal; and external, to one of the Atlantic colonies.<sup>22</sup>

During the seventeenth and, more frequently, eighteenth centuries, the Holy Office sent particularly odious or recalcitrant magical criminals to one of Portugal's overseas colonies for a fixed number of years. Periods of colonial exile averaged four to five years; sentence terms were rarely for less than three, nor more than six years.<sup>23</sup> To bear in mind that banishment to the tropics was an invitation to contract an incurable disease, though, is important. Because of poor health conditions prevailing in the colonies, as well as the expense of a homeward voyage, few common *degradados* (exiled convicts) ever returned to metropolitan Portugal after being banished to the overseas enclaves.<sup>24</sup> Also, note that no *mágicos* were ever required to leave the Atlantic rim; none were sent east to the *Estado da Índia*. Instead, most were sent to Angola, but a handful also received sentences that required them to relocate to Príncipe, São Tomé, or Brazil.<sup>25</sup>

These overseas enclaves, in the view of imperial administrators, were perpetually in need of more European-born male soldiers or laborers, as well as European-born women to be their wives. External banishment, then, was used as a form of forced colonial emigration. Because of chronic shortages of continental Portuguese citizens in the colonies, the crown encouraged the Inquisition's policy of colonial banishment for unrepentant criminals. Indeed, the secular state penal system maintained virtually the same policy for its own convicts, and had since the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup> The Portuguese hoped through these policies to give their precariously small colonial communities

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<sup>22</sup> See the tables of penalties, below, in this chapter.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Timothy J. Coates, "Exiles and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550–1720," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota Graduate School, 1993), pp. 97–103.

<sup>25</sup> See the tables of penalties, below, in this chapter.

<sup>26</sup> Coates, "Exiles and Orphans," pp. 73; 147–149.

greater internal stability—an increased security based on numbers of European residents alone. Colonial administrators wanted to improve the ability of the overseas enclaves to resist either local uprisings or invasions from other European powers, leaving aside the issue of the quality and character of the residents such policies provided.

Internal exile entailed either being banished *to* a specific city or ecclesiastic region (typically a bishopric), or being exiled *from* a specific city or bishopric (typically the convict's home district). In either case the criminal, with only portable resources, was forced to shift for her- or himself as a stigmatized stranger in an unfamiliar environment for a specified number of years. During the period scrutinized in this study, the Portuguese Holy Office used some thirty cities or towns, bishoprics, archbishoprics and regions across continental Portugal as internal banishment destinations for persons convicted of magical crimes.<sup>27</sup> The duration of internal banishment sentences for *mágicos* generally fell between three and four years; healers' sentences were on average slightly longer than non-healers'. The longest internal exile period was ten years, but sentences could be as brief as one year; those longer than seven years were exceedingly rare.<sup>28</sup>

An additional type of internal banishment involved forced labor. Male and female convicts could be sentenced to a type of prison camp: either the penal asylum (*couto*) of Castro Marim in the Algarve, where toiling in the local salt pans was one of the few means of making a living available to a convict, or, for men only, the royal shipyards (*galés*) in Lisbon, where they would be compelled to perform arduous manual labor. Inquisition tribunals might sentence convicted *mágicos* to either location for a fixed number of years. Few, it seems, survived the latter ordeal.<sup>29</sup>

Of those *curandeiros* and *saludadores* whose sentences are known, 80.23% (138 of 172) received some form of banishment as punishment for their first offense. Among all other *mágicos* whose sentences are known, the rate of banishment for a first offense was 78.38% (185 of 236). Being sent overseas for a first offense was relatively

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<sup>27</sup> These were the Algarve region; the Archbishoprics of Braga and Évora; the Bishoprics of Coimbra, Elvas, Guarda, Lamego, Leiria, Miranda, Portalegre and Viseu; and the cities or towns of Alcoutim, Beja, Braga, Bragança, Castro Marim, Coimbra, Elvas, Évora, Faro, Guarda, Lagos, Lamego, Leiria, Mértola, Miranda, Monsaraz, Portalegre, Silves and Viseu. See tables of penalties and exile destinations, below.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Coates, "Exiles and Orphans," 84–87.

rare. Only 2.17% of all illicit healers (3 of 138) were mandated by the terms of their first convictions to live in the African or Brazilian colonies. Non-healers had it harder: 8.64% (16 of 185) were banished to the Atlantic enclaves for their first offense.

For a second offense, however, healers and non-healers suffered a similar fate: the Holy Office sent one hundred percent of repeat offenders (*relapsados*) into exile. Most of these were domestic banishments for longer periods of time, or to harsher locales, than had been stipulated in the convicts' previous sentences. However, overall, the Inquisition banished a much higher proportion of second-time convicts to colonial destinations overseas. Moreover, this burden did not fall evenly on healers and non-healers: the Inquisition exiled fully one third of relapsed *curandeiros* to the Atlantic colonies (9 of 27), but the same fate awaited only one sixth of relapsed non-healing *mágicos* (2 in 12, or 16.66%).<sup>30</sup>

Different tribunals sent their relapsed *mágicos* overseas at rates that varied greatly depending on whether they were healers or not. In Lisbon, for example, not one relapsed non-healing *mágico* was sent abroad, but every one of the four relapsed *curandeiros* were. The Coimbra tribunal had six of each; it sent none of its relapsed *curandeiros* into external exile, and only one of its six non-healing *mágicos*. The Évora tribunal sent about the same proportion of its healers and non-healers into external exile for a second offense—about 29% and 25%, respectively.<sup>31</sup> Of all the tribunals, Coimbra sent the greatest actual number of individuals, both *curandeiros* and other types of *mágicos*, into overseas exile. Seven healers and nine non-healers were sent from Coimbra to the Atlantic colonies between 1690 and 1790.

What were some of the preferred exile locations for each tribunal? For the domestic banishment of healers, the Coimbra *Inquisidores* favored Guarda, Castro Marim and the Bishopric of Miranda, all three particularly forbidding destinations because of their climate and isolated locations. Of the eighty-six total *curandeiros* sentenced to internal exile by the Coimbra tribunal between 1690 and 1790, fourteen went to Guarda, eleven to Castro Marim and ten to the Bishopric of Miranda. The Évora tribunal, too, sent six of its forty total healers to Castro Marim, while the next largest group (five *curandeiros*) went to Guarda. Lisbon's tribunes made similar use of Castro Marim,

<sup>30</sup> See tables of penalties, below.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

sending five of their eleven illicit healers to the penal asylum there. Of overseas destinations, both Coimbra and Évora showed a preference for Brazil, while Lisbon employed only Angola as a banishment locale for healers.

For non-healers, inquisitors in Coimbra sent their magic-using convicts to Guarda, as well as to the Bishoprics of Lamego and Leiria (accounting for thirteen, nine and eight of seventy-five *mágicos*, respectively); though climactic conditions at the latter destination district were not exceptionally arduous. Terms of internal banishment handed down by the Évora tribunal were likely to be to Miranda; fifteen of fifty-three common *mágicos* ended up there after their trials. The Lisbon tribunal sent three of its seven total non-healers to Castro Marim. For overseas banishment, Lisbon again used Angola exclusively. Coimbra sent seven of its nine total overseas *mágicos degredados* there, as well. The Évora tribunal sent seven common *mágicos* overseas: two each to Brazil, São Tomé and Príncipe, and one to Angola.

Despite these tendencies to favor particular locations, the various tribunals actually made use of a very broad range of exile locales. Coimbra, for example, used twenty-two different exile locations within continental Portugal for their convicted magical criminals during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; external exile locales were in three Atlantic colonies on two continents. Similarly, Évora made use of twenty-one domestic and four colonial banishment destinations. The Lisbon *inquisidores*, meanwhile, limited their options to only one overseas and five domestic exile destinations.<sup>32</sup>

Of the three Portuguese Holy Office tribunals, which was the most lenient or forgiving? The Évora inquisitors earned that distinction, based on the fact that they simply reprimanded a considerable number of accused magic users and commanded them to return home. This outcome occurred in nineteen cases against non-healing *mágicos*; another nine *curandeiros* received the same treatment. Further, the Évora tribunal completely absolved another three non-healing *mágicos* and one *curandeiro*. So, of 184 total cases against magical criminals in Évora, the trials of thirty-two of them (17.39%) ended with no real penalty or further action on the part of the regional inquisitors. Neither of the other two tribunals can come close to matching this record of clemency. Note, however, that inquisitors across Portugal were far less likely to treat healers with leniency.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

*Grouping Together of Popular Healers at Public Autos-de-Fê*

In European countries where the Inquisition operated, a public *auto-da-fê* was a social event of considerable importance. Large crowds would gather to see the miserable condemned prisoners, marching in single or double files with illustrations indicating the nature of their crimes marked on their clothing or affixed to signs that they carried.<sup>33</sup> This spectacle's purpose, of course, was one of double-edged social control: condemned offenders were to be chastised through public humiliation and atonement, but the general populace, too, was expected to be strongly reminded of the parameters of moral behavior required of them by the church.<sup>34</sup>

Barefoot, carrying a long burning yellow or green taper and dressed in a painted rough linen "habit," or penitent's frock, the convicted offenders would process through a main public square or in the streets of each city where the Holy Office maintained a tribunal. Important public figures—in Lisbon even the king himself—would gather on specially constructed platforms to view the ceremonies. Commoners crowded around, too, some no doubt hoping to see their family members or friends, news of whom was usually not forthcoming once they were in the custody of the Holy Office.<sup>35</sup>

Inquisition *familiares* began to form *auto-da-fê* processions in the pre-dawn hours. In many cases, prisoners only found out the substance of their sentences shortly before being made to exit the prisons, typically for the first time in months, to openly demonstrate their remorse for the acts of which they had been accused. After the procession, an inquisitor would read aloud the crimes and conviction of each prisoner assembled before him. Upon hearing her sentence, the prisoner was expected to respond accordingly. A public display of

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<sup>33</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 210–215 and 228. For illustrations of these costumes, see the engravings reproduced on pp. 213; 323; 326–327. For an eyewitness account, see Chaves, *O Portugal . . . Visto por Três Foresteiros*, pp. 168; 177–179.

<sup>34</sup> Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 127–129. See also José Viegas Torres, "Uma Longa Guerra Social: Os Ritmos da Repressão Inquisitorial em Portugal," *Revista de História Económica e Social*, vol. 1 (1978), pp. 15–30. See, too, Francisco Bethencourt, "Inquisição e Controle Social," offprint of *Historia e Crítica* (1986), and José Pedro Paiva, "Inquisição e visitas pastorais: Dois Mecanismos Complementares de Controle Social?" in *Revista de História das Ideias*, vol. 11 (1989), pp. 85–102.

<sup>35</sup> Consider Francisco Bethencourt's masterful chapter in which he discusses the production, theatre, and significance of an *auto-da-fê* in *História das Inquisições*, pp. 195–251.

contrition was an all-important part of the spectacle of an *auto-da-fé*, as the comportment of an offender was one basis on which the inquisitors determined that convict's sentence: the "arbitrary" term of imprisonment and period of banishment. Any semblance of defiance could be punished with a prolonged term of incarceration or exile; extreme contempt for these solemn proceedings was punishable by death.<sup>36</sup>

Portuguese Inquisition trial records show that Holy Office authorities sought to collect groups of *curandeiros* in the Inquisition-administered prisons where, during and after their trials, they would be kept with other condemned offenders, waiting to abjure publicly. These healers would then be forced to perform their humiliating *auto-da-fé* collectively, alongside convicts of other types of crimes on dates that were set aside for that purpose.<sup>37</sup> By parading condemned groups of *curandeiros* together through public squares and streets, Inquisition authorities hoped to impress upon the general population the folly of the unsound superstitious medicinal techniques popular healers employed. For common people to see groups of *curandeiros* reduced to such an unenviable condition at the hands of the inquisitors would serve to discredit the tenets of popular medicine.<sup>38</sup> The Inquisition policy of punishing most *curandeiros* with lengthy banishment from their communities was the first step of a broader public ostracism. For the Holy Office to do so was to attack a system of local medicine which common folk had relied on for centuries. By forcing groups of condemned *curandeiros* to submit to a ritualized public display of contrition, the Holy Office sought to reinforce the status of officially sanctioned, licensed physicians and surgeons, with whose practices Inquisition authorities hoped to supplant folk remedies.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 218–220.

<sup>37</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, p. 213.

<sup>38</sup> Maria Luísa Braga points out that the great majority of *mágicos* were forced to perform public *autos-de-fé*, not private, not only in an attempt to discredit them publicly, but also for the didactic potential of the ceremony for the general population. See her *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1992), pp. 91–99 and 175–181.

<sup>39</sup> For a wider discussion of this issue, refer to Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 125–129. See also Torres, "Uma Longa Guerra Social," pp. 15–30. See, too, Bethencourt, "Inquisição e Controle Social;" and Paiva, "Inquisição e visitas pastorais," pp. 85–102.

*Examples of Curandeiro Autos-de-Fé*

Such obviously premeditated public spectacles involving popular healers—highly organized and choreographed *auto-da-fé* ceremonies to put groups of *curandeiros* on display—began in Coimbra early in the eighteenth century. This should come as no surprise. Inquisition authorities of the Coimbra tribunal maintained a close working relationship with physicians who taught on the Coimbra Faculty of Medicine; as we have seen, these *médicos* often held joint appointments with both institutions. For example, on 18 December 1701, the Inquisition paraded three popular healers and two other *mágicos* through the streets of Coimbra, along with a much larger number of condemned New Christians. This scene would be repeated numerous times during the peak years of *curandeiro* persecution in Portugal: the Coimbra tribunal staged nineteen large public *autos-de-fé* between 1708 and 1755.<sup>40</sup> Convicted popular healers appeared in groups at virtually all of these religious spectacles.

As should be expected, larger groups of folk healers and *mágicos* abjured publicly during the years of greatest persecutory activity. In 1716, on 17 May, four *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* joined the procession of penitents forced through the streets by Holy Office functionaries; with them were three other *mágicos*. An equal group processed on 9 May 1728. Fourteen *mágicos* filed through Coimbra's streets in the *auto-da-fé* held on 14 March 1723; six of these were illicit healers. Two groups of eight *mágicos* each celebrated their *autos-de-fé* on 5 December 1734 and 8 July 1742; seven of the sixteen total had been found guilty of performing superstitious cures. The largest single group of *mágicos* to abjure together publicly did so on 30 June 1737; they numbered some sixteen souls, seven of whom were *curandeiros* and *curandeiras*.

In Évora, such exhibitions started later but achieved greater proportions, at least in terms of the number of popular healers sent out to abjure publicly at any one time. The first instance there of a collective *auto-da-fé* for *curandeiros* occurred on 21 September 1732, when forty-five year-old Luzia Mendes was sent out to abjure publicly with fifty-four year-old Maria Martins. Both had been charged with harboring superstitions and conducting sorcery, but Mendes faced the

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<sup>40</sup> Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, p. 90.



more serious additional charge of making a pact with the devil. Luzia Mendes had been in prison since Christmas Eve of 1730, while Maria Martins' term of custody had begun more than ten months later, on 4 November 1731.<sup>41</sup> Although they had been born in separate villages in southern Portugal, both had moved to the same village, called Beringel, located near the Alentejo town of Beja. It was here that they were denounced and arrested. Martins had been twice widowed (most recently to a common laborer named Luís Vidigal), but Mendes was married to a shepherd; she was known locally by the less-than-flattering nickname *Vaca Loura*, or "Blond Cow." The two women undoubtedly knew one another, but their punishments obliged them to go to distantly separate regions of the rustic Portuguese interior. Maria Martins was banished for three years to the disagreeably cold northern mountain city of Guarda,<sup>42</sup> while Luzia Mendes' term of exile took her to the isolated town of Portalegre, near the Spanish border in the northernmost Alentejo, for two years.<sup>43</sup>

Twelve years later, on 18 October 1744, the Évora Inquisition again sent a group of condemned popular healers out into the streets to demonstrate their contrition in front of their fellow citizens. This time there were at least four *salvadores*, three men and one woman, as well as one other female *mágico* who had not been charged specifically with healing, but certainly had been suspected of such.<sup>44</sup> Among the band of convicts was Manuel Rodrigues Leandro, a married *trabalhador* (laborer) from a village near Guarda who had been arrested on 26 September 1743; he was subsequently banished to Silves, in the Algarve, for two years.<sup>45</sup> Languishing even longer in prison was Manuel Gonçalves, an unmarried shepherd from the environs of Covilhã who had been arrested on 28 January 1743; his term of exile sent him further north, across the Serra da Estrela mountains to the town of Viseu, for three years.<sup>46</sup> The condemned *curandeiro* Manuel Colaço, an unmarried goat herder from Monforte,

<sup>41</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 6539; 6543.

<sup>42</sup> The cathedral city of Guarda is popularly referred to as *feia, farta, fria, forte e fiel*, which, to maintain the effect of the alliteration, may be translated as "foul, affluent, frigid, formidable and faithful."

<sup>43</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 6539; 6543.

<sup>44</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1445; 1446; 3096; 6389. The case against the *mágico* is no. 6388.

<sup>45</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1445.

<sup>46</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1446.

twenty-five kilometers south of Portalegre,<sup>47</sup> had been incarcerated over ten months, since 8 January 1744; he was banished to Guarda for three years.<sup>48</sup> Last to be arrested was the lone woman, Maria da Encarnação, held in the Holy Office prisons in Évora since 20 May 1744. She was described as an indigent wanderer, the widow of a soldier, more than forty years old, and originally from a village near Elvas called Alandroal. Her sentence included a three-year term of banishment in the far north, to the river town of Miranda-do-Douro on the frontier with Spain.<sup>49</sup>

The Inquisition practice of staging collective *autos-de-fé* for folk healers reached a peak on 19 March 1747. At least nine condemned *curandeiras* or *curandeiros*—four women and five men—along with four other *mágicos* who had been found guilty of different supernatural crimes, were marched through Évora's public squares and narrow streets. This episode represents the largest single group of practitioners of popular medicine to perform an *auto-da-fé* collectively in Portugal.<sup>50</sup>

As a group, they ranged between the quite young—in their late teens or early twenties—to fifty-five years of age. The men were older on average, being mostly in their mid-thirties to mid-fifties, though the youngest to be arrested in this group was a shepherd lad of less than eighteen years. The women's ages ran from twenty-five to about fifty; one was thirty and another was in her forties. Two of the women were widows.<sup>51</sup>

Individuals of this group came from broadly different social backgrounds. Fifty-five year-old António Rodrigues Coelho, for example, was a soldier, a grenadier serving in his hometown regiment from Estremoz. Coelho's regiment was part of the garrison force of Elvas, an important fortified town on the Spanish border. He had been in the army most of his life. By contrast, Maria Gomes, who was in her late fifties at the time of her arrest in 1745, had once been married to the influential Lisbon merchant João de Silva, on whom King

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<sup>47</sup> *Atlas de Portugal* (Lisbon: Selecções do Reader's Digest com Cartas do Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral, 1988), p. 13.

<sup>48</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 3096.

<sup>49</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6389.

<sup>50</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 745; 521; 516; 517 to 526; 3862; 5949; 5951; 10865. Cases of *mágicos* who were not tried specifically for healing but who participated in the same *auto-da-fé* include the following Évora Tribunal trials: 1980; 7189; 3698; 5952.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

João V had bestowed the title Marquês de Minas. She had left him, however, to return to her first husband in the Alentejo, for which she had endured an earlier Holy Office trial for bigamy in 1721–1722.<sup>52</sup> At the time of their arrest, however, all the individuals of this group were persons of the most base social circumstances, drawn from the least wealthy and influential class of society.

The time they had each spent in prison undergoing trial and sentencing differed dramatically, ranging from eleven months, as was the relatively fortunate experience of Catarina Maria dos Prazeres, to over three-and-a-half years, in the case of Manuel Fernandes. The average time, however, was about eighteen months. Significantly, six of these nine condemned *curandeiros* had been arrested in a period of less than two months, between 29 August and 26 October 1745; of these, four persons were arrested at once, on 29 August and 1 September.<sup>53</sup> The Évora inquisitors had apparently planned a systematic roundup and purge of suspected popular healers and other *mágicos* in their area, to be followed by an impressive public *auto-da-fé* for the moral edification of the general public.

Like a great many other condemned *curandeiros*, the majority of these popular healers—all but one, in fact—had been denounced and arrested in communities or regions far from where they had grown up. Eight of nine had moved their residences to entirely new communities, usually several days' journey apart. Four had moved truly substantial distances, across regional boundaries to a different administrative territory within Portugal. As such, these persons appeared as outsiders to the residents of the provincial agrarian societies in which they came to reside, or through which they happened to be passing when they came under the scrutiny of the Holy Office. For example, Caterina de Jesus, nicknamed *a Maça* (“the Apple”), had moved her residence south from Odemira, a village on the plains of the Alentejo, to the coastal town of Alfezur in the Algarve, a distance of roughly 240 kilometers. Manuel Francisco, a shepherd from the north-central village of Trancoso in the Bishopric of Viseu, had moved nearly 250 kilometers south to the environs of Évora. Others, like Catarina Maria dos Prazeres, the wife of a tailor, and the aging infantryman António Rodrigues Coelho, had moved their homes less

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<sup>52</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 3862 and 10865.

<sup>53</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 745, 521, 517–526, 3862, and 5951.

dramatic distances, from Beja to Serpa (about twenty-five kilometers) and from Estremoz to Elvas (about forty kilometers) respectively.<sup>54</sup>

True to the Inquisition's usual practice, most of this group of condemned healers became banished outcasts (*degradados*) inside continental Portugal; the average period of their banishment was for three years. Two persons were exiled for periods of two years, three individuals for three years, and one term each was handed down for periods of four, five, and six years. The offenders were sent to towns as far away from Évora as Braga in the far north, or as near as Beja, a mere two-day trip of less than forty kilometers by foot.<sup>55</sup> The *curandeira* sent to the location farthest from her last place of residence was the widow Silvestre Coelho, who had to travel to Braga for five years. Although she had no fixed residence at the time of her arrest, Silvestre Coelho was from a village near Loulé in Portugal's southernmost province, the Algarve. She had been arrested in the nearby village of Paiva, where she had been conducting cures and from whence came most of her denouncers. Braga lies approximately 600 kilometers north of Loulé. The lightest sentence fell to Manuel Francisco; a married man, he was made to serve a mere two years in Beja, just a couple of days' journey (about fifty-five kilometers) from his home.<sup>56</sup>

Repeat offenders, however, received by far the most severe sentences. Manuel Fernandes, who had first been convicted of performing superstitious cures twenty-four years earlier in 1723, was upon his second conviction sentenced to be publicly whipped through Évora's streets and then banished for six years to the exceptionally isolated border town of Alcoutim, in the Algarve. Worse still was the plight of Maria Gomes, nicknamed a *Bandoga* ("the Big-Bellied"). Convicted once for bigamy in 1722 (which resulted in her four-year banishment to Guarda), her sentence as a condemned *curandeira* in 1747 required her to travel to the African colony of Angola for seven years. Hers was an exceedingly rare and harsh sentence; she was the only popular healer or *mágico* of this group to be exiled to a place outside of continental Portugal. As she was already nearly sixty

<sup>54</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5951, 517, 5949, and 3862. Also, *Atlas de Portugal*, p. 17. For a more systematic development of this dynamic, see Chapter VIII, below.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 745 and 517. Also, *Atlas de Portugal*, pp. 16–17.

years old and in poor health, this sentence was virtually certain to result in her death.<sup>57</sup>

Crimes these nine popular healers were charged with included, in all cases, superstitious curing; four were charged additionally with having made a pact with the devil; two were charged with practicing sorcery, and one woman was charged additionally with outright witchcraft. Five of the nine folk healers were charged solely with performing illicit superstitious cures.<sup>58</sup> By contrast, the four *mágicos* who were not condemned that day explicitly for illicit curing had all faced charges of practicing sorcery and making a pact with the devil.<sup>59</sup>

The final group of three *curandeiros* and two *mágicos* to perform a public *auto-da-fé* in Évora did so on 27 April 1755. A look at the case details of each of the three popular healers who displayed their contrition that day will provide a valuable insight into their world, two-and-a-half centuries ago.<sup>60</sup>

In 1754, Inês de Carmo was a recently-freed slave from Tavira, a fishing town and trading port on the southern Algarve coast. She had gained her freedom when her owner, an Anglo-Portuguese sea captain named John Pires, died; the terms of his will provided for her manumission. Inês de Carmo was an illegitimate child but, because her mother had been a slave to the same master, Inês was possibly the daughter of her owner. At the time of her arrest, she was forty-eight years old and married to a local mariner. Among her neighbors she was known as *a Palita* (“the Toothpick”) or *a Viva* (“the Lively”).

Although she was arrested in 1754, the first set of denunciations against Inês de Carmo had been collected in 1738. Over a period of fifteen years, the Évora Inquisition tribunal collected testimony about her activities as a *curandeira* from dozens of residents in Faro and Tavira. The first denunciation from a medical professional, though, came on 4 June 1753, when João de Deos, a *sangrador* and *barbeiro* of Faro, gave evidence against Inês de Carmo. He was followed by João Baptista Marçal, licensed in the same professions but

<sup>57</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 516 and 10865.

<sup>58</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 745; 521; 516; 517 to 526; 3862; 5949; 5951; 10865.

<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1980; 7189; 3698; 5952.

<sup>60</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5921; 5940; 7266. Cases of *mágicos* who were not tried specifically for healing but who participated in the same *auto-da-fé* include the following Évora Tribunal trials: 1702 and 5941.

practicing in Tavira.<sup>61</sup> That year the inquisitorial commissioners interviewed twenty-eight people over nearly two months (30 May to 25 July, 1753), building a solid case against the accused folk healer.

Among other things, Inês de Carmo was accused of pronouncing the following superstitious incantation, employed in the curing of a neighbor's child:

Fly, fleas! Fly, fleas!  
Return to your own place!  
Don't you see that jumping so  
Will tire you out?<sup>62</sup>

Apparently, she was attributing the youngster's illness figuratively to invisible jumping fleas. Given that illnesses at this time were frequently attributed to an invasion of foreign entities—spiritual or physical, representing either a real or imagined type of creature—that Inês de Carmo would have singled out fleas to blame should not be considered unusual.<sup>63</sup> (Nor can this means of treating an ailment be considered completely bereft of curative power. Modern healers who use self-actualization techniques assert that equating a malady with an easily imagined creature gives the ill person something specific on which to focus in order to drive the illness from the body. Some scholarly assessments of alternative medicine or aboriginal curative techniques attribute genuine physiological efficacy to such methods.)<sup>64</sup>

In the *acordão*, or summary of deliberations at the end of the trial, the inquisitors paid especially close attention to Inês de Carmo's conduct in her role as a *curandeira*. Many of the accused healer's methods are recorded, along with editorial comments on behalf of the inquisitors, who were clearly informed by a trained medical opinion. For example, after citing the colloquial name for a physical problem, the inquisitor refers to the malady by its Latin name, "as it is known among *físicos*, or *médicos*."<sup>65</sup> There is in fact throughout

<sup>61</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5940, fls. 63v–65v.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Inquisitors' final summary of the trial.

<sup>63</sup> Maria Benedita Araújo, *Magia, Demónio e Força Mágica na Tradição Portuguesa (Séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), pp. 17–30. See also Francisco Bethencourt, *O imaginário da Magia: feitiçarias, saluadores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova, 1987), pp. 55–63.

<sup>64</sup> Wade Davis, *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997), pp. 136–138.

<sup>65</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5940.

the trial summary a running comparison between Inês de Carmo's techniques and that of licensed physicians, a strong indicator that a trained, licensed *médico* was working on the case. One purpose of this ongoing comparison, of course, was to discredit the popular healer's methods and to show that her work was dependent on supernatural intervention or superstitious beliefs.

For a first-time offender, Inês de Carmo received a surprisingly severe sentence. Besides being whipped through the public streets of Évora, she was exiled for four years to Viseu, 240 kilometers to the north, and was forbidden to ever again enter Tavira or its environs.<sup>66</sup> What accounts for this?

The death of Captain John Pires, her master, had left her vulnerable; the Holy Office had been reluctant to prosecute and banish her while Pires was alive, hence denying an owner of a valuable slave. To both public and Holy Office authorities, however, a newly freed, master-less ex-slave constituted a different matter entirely. The *curandeira* Inês de Carmo, released from her bonds of servitude, presented a twofold threat to the social order. First, her presence was a reminder to other local slaves both of the arbitrary nature of their condition, and of the precedent—inconvenient and certainly unpopular among whites—John Pires had set by freeing her. Second, of course, she placed herself in jeopardy by conducting superstitious cures, a practice with which local state-licensed healers and the Holy Office would not abide. In 1754, therefore, local residents, licensed healers and the Inquisition authorities combined to act decisively against Inês de Carmo, shackling her once again with the stigma of an Inquisition condemnation—and a sentence that would guarantee that she would cause them no further trouble.

The second popular healer to perform an *auto-da-fé* in Évora on 27 April 1755 was sixty-year-old Margarida Gomes, who was known, possibly derisively, as *a Bela* (“the Beautiful”). She was a widow from São Marco do Campo, a village near the southern Alentejo town of Monsaraz, and had been arrested a year and a day earlier on 26 April 1754. As in the case of Inês de Carmo, above, the inquisitors took careful note of Margarida Gomes' behavior in her role as a *curandeira*, transcribing into the trial record many of the incantations she used for healing. But Margarida Gomes had been reticent to admit

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<sup>66</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5940. Also, *Atlas de Portugal*, pp. 16–17.

to the charges against her—practicing sorcery, harboring superstitious beliefs and having a pact with the devil. Just a week prior to her *auto-da-fé*, she had been tortured to obtain a full confession of her guilt.<sup>67</sup>

Although no professional medical personnel provided testimony against her overtly, an initial letter denouncing her as a *curandeira* was signed by two functionaries of the Inquisition, the notary José Ramalho Paulos Mendes and a *familiar* named Vicente Godinho. A single man from the accused's village, one Bras Mendes, initiated this letter. Judging from his incisive, medically informed comments, he seems to have been a local physician or surgeon.<sup>68</sup> In any event, the Évora tribunal by 1754 was well used to prosecuting popular healers; the tribunal had many seasoned *deputados* with the expertise to do so. Therefore, a licensed physician's presence as a witness at this point would have been almost superfluous.

First to testify against Margarida Gomes was one of her neighbors, Maria das Neves, an Old Christian and wife of the worker Paulo Mendes, who later became the tenth to give denunciation testimony. Their son had been one of the children cured by the accused *salvadora*, only to fall ill again. In a telling statement, Maria das Neves justified why she had decided to denounce her neighbor: “. . . the main reason that she testified was that she had her suspicions about the sorcery practiced by the accused . . . Many times through the years, when she found herself gravely ill, only to be cured by Physicians, and Midwives, and always through their diligence; no one else managed to better them . . .”<sup>69</sup> These statements are followed by similar declarations from other neighbors, including another couple whose child Margarida Gomes had “cured:” Manuel Vicente, a cobbler, and his wife, Damiana dos Anjos. They too took on the tone of protective parents whose child has been put in danger by the inept methods of a charlatan.<sup>70</sup>

From the inquisitors' point of view, such witnesses vindicated the purpose of bringing *curandeiros* to trial. Here were common people who had relied on folk healers' superstitious skills and found their services wanting. Medical professionals, too, should have been gratified to hear these couples' testimony. As the personification of an argument

<sup>67</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5921.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 10v.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, fl. 21r; author's translation.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*



that average peasants minds' could be changed through exposure to "true" scientific healing, Maria das Neves and Paulo Mendes cut a fine example.

Margarida Gomes received a relatively light punishment. She was banished for three years to Silves, just a few days' journey from her home. Her benign treatment might be attributed to her physical and social condition. Because she was aging—she was over sixty—and had no husband to support her, perhaps, she was sent to a nearby southern port city where the year-round climate and relative abundance of food, at least, would have provided for her comfort with a minimum of additional expenditure.

The final *curandeiro* who publicly demonstrated his contrition on 27 April 1755 was forty-year-old Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca, a licensed *sombreireiro*, or maker of umbrellas, parasols and sun hats. He was an outsider, having moved to the environs of Évora from the mountainous north, near Viseu. He was married, and he was locally known by the name *o Pinhão* ("the Big Pine").<sup>71</sup> For asserting that he had the power to cure infirmities and bless afflicted persons, he was arrested on 8 October 1754.

The case against Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca was initiated by letters of denunciation that the Holy Office received from two prominent clergymen, Padre José Claudio da Guerra and Freire Manuel da Boa Morte, who lived in or near Montemor-o-Novo, the same town as the accused healer. The latter cleric was a confessor at the village church and, based on the technical nature of his testimony, he seems to have had some training in medicine, as well, possibly as a *sangrador*. In any case, it is notable that a village clergyman would base his denunciation of a popular healer's activities primarily on the medical merits of those techniques, and then proceed to comment knowingly on current conventional healing practices.<sup>72</sup> His denunciation is followed by depositions given by six nuns of the Convent of Santa Caterina, located in Évora. The testimony of these sisters-in-orders shows that some of them knew about conventional medical practices, possibly from having had some practical nursing training for dealing with the poor and sick. Like Padre Manuel da Boa Morte before them, most of the nuns commented specifically on

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<sup>71</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 7266.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, fls. 9–10.

the *curandeiro*'s healing techniques, criticizing their efficacy.<sup>73</sup> None of Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca's denouncers seems to have been a full-time licensed medical practitioner, however.

During his trial, this accused *curandeiro* twice endured more than nine hours of continuous torture without confessing to having committed any crimes. When the inquisitors asked their standard formulaic leading questions, he merely replied that he had nothing to add, or that he had no statement to make in response to the questions put to him. This clearly frustrated, if not to say infuriated, the *inquisidores* present, who continued to "torment" the accused until (as the scribe himself records) the scribe expressed concern for the well-being of the criminal. Eventually the physician and surgeon present intervened to halt the proceedings.<sup>74</sup>

In April of 1755, Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca was sentenced to a three-year period of exile to the Bishopric of Guarda. However, on 31 May 1762, he was again arrested for being a relapsed *curandeiro*. This time his sentence was more severe, but not as brutal as it might have been if he had lived a generation before. On 16 January 1763, after a relatively brief second trial, he received as punishment a five-year banishment to Miranda-do-Douro. He was obliged to wait more than ten months in prison before beginning the term of his sentence, being sent to Miranda only on 7 November 1763. Such treatment probably reflects the inquisitors' frustration with the prisoner for having been uncooperative and relapsing into his practices, thereby showing contempt for their moral authority over him.

#### *Tables of Sentences Based on Years of Domestic and Colonial Exile*

The following tables require a brief note of explanation. Why do they reflect more sentences than persons sentenced? Because these tables account, in many cases, for more than one penalty per sentenced individual, the number of sentences is greater than the number of convict cases in each category. For example, research for this study indicates that the Lisbon tribunal tried only twenty-two healers between 1690 and 1790, yet the table of penalties for healers tried

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., fls. 40–44.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

in Lisbon lists thirty total sentences. There are several reasons for such discrepancies, which exist in all the table categories.

The first and most obvious reason is that the tables include sentences for relapsed magical criminals, so some cases have been counted two and even three times. The second reason is that many convicts received two simultaneous penalties worthy of note in the tables. For example, while most culprits were exiled to a specific location for the duration of their banishment, some were additionally required to remain outside their home districts for still longer periods—extending even to the duration of their lives. The tables record such instances.

## TABLES OF PENALTIES

*Exile Destinations, Duration and Number of Sentences Passed*Table 8.4: Coimbra Tribunal; Healers (*Curandeiros*), 1693–1796

<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Brazil		
5 years:		2
3 years:		2
• São Tomé		
5 years:	2	
• Príncipe		
3 years:		1
<i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• The Algarve		
6 years:		1
5 years:	2	2
3 years:		1
• Archbishopric of Braga		
3 years:	1	
• Archbishopric of Évora		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Elvas		
5 years:		1
• Bishopric of Guarda		
6 years:	1	
5 years:	2	
4 years:	1	
3 years:	6	
2 years:	4	
• Bishopric of Lamego		
5 years:	1	
3 years:	3	1
2 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Leiria		
4 years:	1	
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Miranda		
5 years:	1	
4 years:	1	
3 years:	4	

Table 8.4 (*cont.*)

	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
2 years:	1	
1 year:	2	
• Bishopric of Oporto		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Portalegre		
4 years:	1	
3 years:	2	
2 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Viseu		
3 years:	3	
2 years:	4	
• Outside Archbishopric of Braga		
2 years:	2	
1 year:	1	
Perpetual:	2	
• Outside Bishopric of Coimbra		
2 years:	4	
• Outside Bishopric of Lamego		
2 years:	1	
• Outside Bishopric of Oporto		
2 years:	2	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
3 years:	1	1
2 years:	3	
1 year:	1	
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
8 years:	1	
5 years:	5	1
4 years:	1	1
3 years:	2	
• Évora (Alentejo)		
3 years:	2	
• Faro (Algarve)		
5 years:		1
2 years:	1	
• Miranda (Trás-as-Montes)		
1 year:	1	
• Silves (Algarve)		
6 years:		1
4 years:	1	

Table 8.4 (*cont.*)

<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• “Instructed in the Mysteries of the Faith”	1	
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	4	
• Confined to Home Parish		
3 years:	1	
• “Spiritual Penitences” Only	3	
• “Arbitrary Imprisonment” Only	3	
• Public Abjuration in Home Parish	1	
• Sent to Royal “Galleys” (Ship Yards)		
10 years:		1
• No Penalty Recorded	2	
• Penalty Absolved Post-Mortem	6	
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
117	100	17

Table 8.5: Coimbra Tribunal; Non-Healers (*Mágicos*), 1693–1796

<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Brazil		
5 years:	1	
• Príncipe		
5 years:	1	
• Angola		
7 years:	2	
5 years:	4	1
 <i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• The Algarve		
5 years:	3	1
4 years:		1
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Archbishopric of Braga		
2 years:	1	
• Archbishopric of Évora		
4 years:	2	
3 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Guarda		
4 years:	4	
3 years:	6	
2 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Lamego		
3 years:	3	
2 years:	6	
• Bishopric of Leiria		
6 years:		1
5 years:		1
3 years:	4	
2 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Miranda		
3 years:	3	
2 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Portalegre		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Viseu		
3 years:	5	
2 years:	3	
• Outside Archbishopric of Braga		
3 years:	1	
1 year:	1	
Perpetual:	1	

Table 8.5 (*cont.*)

	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Outside Archbishopric of Évora		
3 years:	1	
• Outside Bishopric of Coimbra		
2 years:	2	
1 year:	1	
• Outside Bishopric of Lamego		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	2	
• Outside Bishopric of Oporto		
2 years:	2	
1 year:	1	
• Outside Bishopric of Viseu		
2 years:	2	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
2 years:	1	
Perpetual:	3	
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
5 years:	2	1
• Évora (Alentejo)		
3 years:	1	
• Guarda		
1 year:		1
• Leiria		
2 years:	1	
• Portalegre		
3 years:	1	
• Silves (Algarve)		
4 years:	1	
• Viseu		
3 years:	1	
<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	4	
• "Spiritual Penitences" Only	9	
• "Arbitrary Imprisonment" Only	2	
• Sent to Royal "Galleys" (Ship Yards)		
10 years:	1	
5 years:	3	
• No Penalty Recorded	1	
• Penalty Absolved Post-Mortem	3	
• Absolved	2	
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
118	112	6



Table 8.6: Évora Tribunal; Healers (*Curandeiros*), 1668–1802

<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Brazil		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Príncipe		
3 years:	1	
• Angola		
7 years:	1	
<i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• Bishopric of Elvas		
4 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Guarda		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Miranda		
4 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Portalegre		
2 years:	2	
• Bishopric of Viseu		
4 years:	1	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	2	
1 year:	1	
Perpetual:	5	1
• Alcoutim		
6 years:	1	
• Beja		
2 years:	1	
• Braga		
5 years:	1	
• Bragança		
4 years:		1
3 years:	1	
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
4 years:	1	1
3 years:	3	
2 years:	2	
• Elvas		
2 years:	1	
• Faro (Algarve)		
3 years:	1	
• Guarda		
4 years:	2	
3 years:	2	
2 years:	1	

Table 8.6 (*cont.*)

	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Lagos		
3 years:	1	
• Lamego		
4 years:	1	
• Leiria		
3 years:	3	
2 years:	1	
• Mértola		
3 years:	1	
• Miranda (Trás-as-Montes)		
6 years:		2
5 years:		1
4 years:	1	
3 years:	1	
• Portalegre		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	2	
• Silves (Algarve)		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Viseu		
4 years:	1	
3 years:	2	
<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>		
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	9	
• Confined to Home Parish		
2 years:	1	
1 year:	1	
• Public Abjuration in Home Parish	1	
• Sent to Royal “Galley” (Ship Yards)		
6 years:	1	
5 years:	2	
• No Penalty Recorded	4	
• Penalty Absolved Post-Mortem	1	
• Absolved	1	
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
80	74	6

Table 8.7: Évora Tribunal; Non-Healers (*Mágicos*), 1668–1802

<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Brazil		
6 years:	1	
5 years:	1	
• São Tomé		
6 years:		1
4 years:	1	
• Príncipe		
3 years:	2	
• Angola		
5 years:	1	
<i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• Bishopric of Elvas		
2 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Lamego		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Leiria		
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Miranda		
5 years:	1	
3 years:	1	
• Bishopric of Viseu		
4 years:	1	
• Outside Archbishopric of Évora		
2 years:	2	
1 year:	1	
• Outside Bishopric of Elvas		
2 years:	1	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
3 years:	2	
2 years:	6	
1 year:	6	
Perpetual:	8	
• Beja		
3 years:	1	
• Bragança		
6 years:	1	
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
5 years:	1	
3 years:	2	
2 years:	2	
• Coimbra		
2 years:	1	
• Elvas		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	

Table 8.7 (*cont.*)

	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Guarda		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Lamego		
5 years:	1	
3 years:	2	
• Leiria		
6 years:		1
3 years:	1	
• Miranda (Trás-as-Montes)		
7 years:		1
6 years:	1	1
5 years:	3	
4 years:	2	
3 years:	5	
• Monsaraz and Environs		
2 years:	1	
• Portalegre		
4 years:	1	
3 years:	2	
2 years:	1	
• Silves (Algarve)		
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Viseu		
4 years:	2	
3 years:	4	
<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• "Instructed in the Faith"	2	
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	19	
• Confined to Home Parish	3	
• "Spiritual Penitences" Only	3	
• "Arbitrary Imprisonment" Only	2	
• Public Abjuration in Home Parish	1	
• Sent to Royal "Galley" (Ship Yards)		
5 years:	2	
3 years:	1	
• No Penalty Recorded	12	
• Absolved	3	
• Executed	1	
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
131	127	4

Table 8.8: Lisbon Tribunal; Healers (*Curandeiros*), 1690–1790

	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>		
• Angola		
5 years:	1	
<i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• The Algarve		
6 years:		1
5 years:	1	1
• Bishopric of Miranda		
1 year:	1	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
Perpetual:	2	1
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
10 years:		1
5 years:	1	
3 years:	3	
• Évora (Alentejo)		
4 years:	1	
• Lagos (Algarve)		
10 years:	1	
<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>		
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	3	
• Confined to Home Parish	2	
• "Spiritual Penitences" Only	2	
• Sent to Royal "Galleys" (Ship Yards)		
5 years:	1	
• "Condemned"—No Explicit Penalty	6	
• Executed		1
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>		
30	<i>First Offense</i> 25	<i>Relapse</i> 5

Table 8.9: Lisbon Tribunal; Non-Healers (*Mágicos*), 1690–1790

<i>COLONIAL EXILES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• Angola		
6 years:	1	
3 years:	1	
<i>DOMESTIC EXILES</i>		
• Bishopric of Coimbra		
3 years:	1	
• Outside Archbishopric of Lisbon		
3 years:	1	
• Outside Convict's Home Bishopric		
3 years:	1	1
2 years:	1	
Perpetual:	3	
• Castro Marim (Work Camp)		
5 years:	1	
3 years:	1	
2 years:	1	
• Évora (Alentejo)		
5 years:	1	
• Miranda (Trás-as-Montes)		
5 years:		1
<i>OTHER PENALTIES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
• "Instructed in the Mysteries of the Faith"	2	
• Reprimanded and Returned Home	4	
• Confined to Home Parish	2	
• "Spiritual Penitences" Only	2	
• Sent to Royal "Galleys" (5 years)	1	
• "Condemned"—No Explicit Penalty	5	
• "Seclusion" in a Monastic House	1	
• Deported (Foreigner)	1	
• No Penalty Recorded	9	
<i>TOTAL SENTENCES</i>	<i>First Offense</i>	<i>Relapse</i>
42	40	2

*Banishment as a Punishment in a Closed Agrarian Society*

Banishment was a grave form of punishment for someone of the lower social orders in early modern Portugal. To be sent into exile from one's accustomed community required, for the convicted criminal, an extraordinary personal effort to face and survive. Banishment added significantly to the normal trials and tribulations consequent to everyday life on the margins of society. Though non-violent in the physical sense, banishment by design entailed other, more subtle forms of violence: impoverishment and isolation. Banishment not only drained convicts' meager wealth, but also cut them off from their most basic personal human resources: their families and clientele. To anyone receiving such a sentence, it constituted a heavy individual burden.<sup>75</sup> The great majority of *mágicos* shared this experience, healers and non-healers alike.

Banishment required the physical removal of one's residence to an unknown territory (and the concurrent arduous journey, either by ship, with attendant maritime perils, or overland along a very primitive and dangerous roads system).<sup>76</sup> Banishment also implied the consequent separation from any kind of family or clan support network that an individual might have maintained at their place of residence through the course of the trial. For *mágicos* used to receiving payments in cash or in kind for their services, this meant leaving any group of clients or patrons cultivated in their home region. For that large percentage of convicts who were already outsiders in their places of residence, banishment meant starting all over again in yet another new locale. (On this note, case evidence suggests that few outsiders ever returned to the communities where they were first denounced. Although documentation is slight, convicted outsiders subsequently arrested for relapse tend to have been apprehended while living in a new location, neither their birthplace, nor their home at the time of their first arrest, nor their place of exile.)<sup>77</sup> All of this had to be done, of course, under the additional handicap of being stigmatized as a convict of the Inquisition.

<sup>75</sup> For an excellent discussion of this topic, see the third chapter of Timothy J. Coates' doctoral dissertation, "Exiles and Orphans," vol. 1, pp. 73–112.

<sup>76</sup> Travellers' accounts are full of stories of banditry and fear on rural Portuguese roads during the eighteenth century. See Costigan, *Sketches of Manners and Society in Portugal*, and George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain* (London and New York: John Lane, 1902), pp. 12–33 and 36–41.

<sup>77</sup> See ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1763, 6731, 7759 and 7972;

Perhaps it was precisely because of the element of non-violent torture—the mental stress and physical trial of a long unwilling journey to take up residence among strangers—that the Holy Office preferred banishment as its primary type of punishment for magical crimes. After all, banishment provided the ideal circumstances—an extended period of isolation—to encourage deep reflection about the consequences of one's actions, exactly the kind of contemplation the inquisitors might have hoped would result in the return of a reformed and redeemed soul after the convict's period of exile was done. Further, the exercise was meant to be an independent endeavor, analogous to the Biblical account of Christ's self-imposed period of soul-searching in the wilderness. Convicts whom the Inquisition exiled within Portugal travelled alone; they received no official support or, in most cases, supervisory escort. Inquisition resources did not extend to such services. *Degradados* were charged merely with presenting themselves to local *familiares* or other ecclesiastical officials upon arrival to the assigned region of their exile.

Rural Portuguese peasant households contained relatively few possessions, so a forced relocation for them should not be thought of in terms of the burdensome task of moving house in modern times. In many cases, denunciation and an Inquisition trial would also have undermined conditions for a convict's continued presence in their place of residence; this would have been true particularly of those who were already outsiders to the community. For some convicted *mágicos*, therefore, exile may have presented an opportunity for a new beginning, despite its immediate inconvenience. In any event, the Holy Office recognized that banishment was a heavy burden requiring considerable preparation. There are many recorded cases of convicts being allowed time (typically one month but sometimes as much as four months) to put their affairs in order and prepare for their period of exile.<sup>78</sup>

External exile to the colonies provided an additional set of challenges. Relocation to the tropics entailed a long uncomfortable sea passage, physical acclimation to an unfamiliar environment, learning how to live and perhaps participate in agricultural labor in a radically different type of ecological system, as well as the expected necessities

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Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 3458, 7199, 7257 and 7258; and Inquisição de Lisbon, *processo* nos. 1377, 5069 and 7258.

<sup>78</sup> For examples, see ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 4760 and 4761; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 10087 and 10089.



of adapting to life alongside novel native cultures and languages. Further, exiles in the tropics ran enormous risks of contracting disease, a factor that cut many of their lives short.

Although *degradados* were not required to pay for their passage outbound to the colonies, transport being arranged by colonial administrators aboard regular merchant or military shipping to destinations in the Atlantic sphere, they would have been wise to lay in their own stocks of food, as well as supplies for their continued well-being upon their arrival. Very little seems to have been done to organize or regulate their activities once they had been delivered to their assigned enclave; colonial policy assumed that these forced immigrants would take up positions within the existing European community, filling empty jobs and performing necessary, though locally defined and coordinated, work. In practice, *degradados* often became a nuisance in the colonies as well, continuing to perpetrate crimes and refusing to perform the work expected of them.<sup>79</sup>

The Portuguese Inquisition relied on the public display and humiliation of convicted *mágicos* to exert social control over them; that is, the Holy Office used non-lethal negative reinforcement to coerce convicted criminals—and the general public, too—into adhering to expected social norms of behavior regarding the use of magic. Church officials and other social elites established these norms of behavior, which stemmed naturally from values such elites held—values hostile to irrational superstition, a sentiment many commoners did not share. José Pedro Paiva refers to this type of social coercive punishment as “penalties of shame or disgrace” (*penas infamantes*). He calculated that Inquisition judges included such punishments in about 11% of Inquisition sentences handed down to *mágicos* between 1600 and 1774.<sup>80</sup>

Such humiliations included the public use of—either “perpetually” or for a pre-determined length of time—a *corocha* (a special head-dress painted with symbols identifying the bearer as a magical convict); the obligatory wearing of a magic-using convict’s habit (a specially-decorated robe); being whipped through the public streets of the city where the convict’s trial had taken place; being forced to stand by the door of the convict’s home church on a feast day holding a sign stating his or her magical crimes; and, of course, the

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<sup>79</sup> Coates, “Exiles and Orphans,” pp. 139–154.

<sup>80</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 218.

public performance of the *auto-da-fé*, an “act of faith” confirming a culprit’s contrition. More than 90% of convicted *mágicos* were required to *sair* (literally, “to go out”) in a public *auto-da-fé*, while about 23% percent of magical criminals received a whipping in public as part of their sentences.<sup>81</sup>

Obliging magical criminals to stand by their home parish church door, typically on a high holy day (when church attendance was at its peak) with a sign identifying their transgressions, was a particularly effective way to discipline any offender whose crimes were not malevolent and who was otherwise generally compliant to Catholic orthodoxy. This practice may be compared to the role and function of a public pillory in Britain and New England, except that humiliation before one’s peers was not accompanied by any form of overt physical torture.

By forcing a convicted illicit healer, fortuneteller or diviner to appear before his community bearing a sign depicting his transgressions in pictures and in prose, the Inquisition compelled offenders to admit their guilt to their peers. Simultaneously, if only implicitly, such a public display of contrition served to allow an offender to implore his neighbors for forgiveness so that he could be allowed to re-enter both the spiritual and civic community. Hence, the Inquisition provided for a kind of short, sharp spiritual exile which transpired completely within the offender’s home community—the ritual required no actual term of banishment—and had as its expected outcome the cathartic re-assumption of the offending individual back into the parish church congregation, thus reinforcing orthodox, uniform behavior within that spiritual community. In a tightly knit, closed agrarian community that was largely inward looking, such punishments must have exerted a tremendous amount of coercive force on the offender to correct his deviant behavior.

Although this form of punishment was much more common in the sixteenth century, such cases of combined castigation and coercion continued to be known two hundred years later. For example, near the turn of the eighteenth century, when the Évora tribunal convicted the *mágico* Apolónia Afonso for committing such sins as blasphemy, heresy and making a pact with the devil, the inquisitors stipulated that she have her sentence read aloud to the congregation

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 218–219.

in her home church in the Alentejo village of Serpa. Even though she was exiled for one year outside the environs of Serpa in 1697, elites of that community stipulated that she had to appear publicly to be shamed into conformity with the standards and expectations of the church.<sup>82</sup>

Eighty years later, on 10 December 1779, the laborer and “false healer” João Grilo celebrated a public *auto-da-fé* in Évora. Grilo had been arrested for practicing as a *curandeiro* in the village of Cabeção, in the Bishopric of Elvas, where he had been born and continued to live. After his trial, Grilo, a single man, was prohibited from leaving his home village for two years without the express permission of the inquisitors. Further, he was required to attend the mother church of the Holy Office, his village church in Cabeção, and several other churches in neighboring districts to hear his sentence read before all the parishioners—his neighbors and daily associates.<sup>83</sup>

Earlier that same year, another *mágico*, nineteen year-old Sebastião Ramos, had been required by the terms of his sentence to be carried on a chair to each church in his district and have his guilt proclaimed by the priest while the young convict knelt before him holding a candle. His crimes were engaging in superstition and witchcraft; his *auto-da-fé* was held on 14 December 1778. Following his various acts of public contrition, he was exiled for two years outside his home parish, the *freguesia* of Santa Ana do Mata near the Alentejo village of Coruche.<sup>84</sup>

Sebastião Ramos’ is a very unusual sentence, made all the more so because it was promulgated shortly after the Inquisition’s re-founding following Pombal’s reforms in 1774. However, King José had just died in February 1777 and his controversial prime minister, who had been so instrumental in curbing the Inquisition’s power during the preceding decade, was out of power by December 1778. Therefore, this sentence appears to be an attempt by conservative elements in the Évora tribunal to reassert their diminished authority.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5110.

<sup>83</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 3048.

<sup>84</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5636.

<sup>85</sup> Joaquim Verríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. VI (1750–1807), pp. 80–83; 461. Also, for references to the resurgence of the Inquisition following Pombal’s fall from power, see Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal: Paradox of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 90–98.

In Coimbra, the local tribunal's practices were slightly different. For instance, in November 1739, the Coimbra inquisitors convicted the fifty-year-old widow Joana de Araújo for performing acts of sorcery, believing in superstition and having a pact with the devil. She had to perform her *auto-da-fé* wearing a sign reading "sorceress;" this she continued to wear as she was whipped ("without the effusion of blood") through the public streets of Coimbra.<sup>86</sup> Contrary to the cases in Évora, though, these criminals were not meant to be re-integrated into their communities. Most were unrepentant persons convicted of serious crimes who were bound for Africa or the royal galleys to work as convict laborers. The Holy Office therefore did not necessarily intend, by marking these particular persons with signs indicating their transgressions, to use public humiliation as a means to shame them into reforming their behavior.<sup>87</sup> Instead, the thrust of this display was directed at the spectators. The inquisitors expected that the general public would take from this spectacle a sense that superstition, magic and illicit healing were things to be ridiculed and derided as foolish or unsophisticated. At its most fundamental level, then, a public *auto-da-fé* had a dual purpose. Beyond shaming participating convicts into conformity with orthodox norms of behavior, it was intended to intimidate observers into giving up their own deviant beliefs or activities, in the hope of avoiding similar treatment at the hands of Inquisition authorities.

#### *Clemency and Appeals for Lighter Punishment*

Contrary to the image that exists in the popular imagination, the Portuguese Holy Office was, at times, quite capable of leniency and a surprising degree of compassion, a quality that domestic Portuguese historiography takes quiet pleasure in pointing out by way of furthering the impression that the Portuguese are a people of mild customs.<sup>88</sup> Many are the trial dossiers in which the final pages contain a condemned *mágico's* petitions for a reduction of her sentence. Most

<sup>86</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 2537.

<sup>87</sup> In some cases, though, these persons were shown clemency and given lighter sentences which may have eventually allowed them to return home. See ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 2537; 8307, 8338; and 10013.

<sup>88</sup> See Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 268–290; and Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 331–354.

striking is the frequency with which the humbled supplicant met with success. In cases where the offender was aged, infirm, or displayed obvious signs of contrition and cooperation, the convict stood a high chance of having the original disciplinary measures commuted to a lighter punishment. Most commonly, this amounted to changing the condemned person's place of exile, which had been determined at the time of sentencing, to another location, milder in climate and closer to home. Sometimes, though rarely, the term of banishment was eliminated altogether.<sup>89</sup>

For example, on 26 January 1728, convicted folk healer Domingas João had her five-year sentence commuted from exile on São Tomé to the same number of years in southern-most Portugal. We may be sure that, for this eighty-two year old *curandeira*, the Algarve offered a far more comfortable destination, as well as a better chance of survival, than an island off the disease-ridden tropical coast of Africa.<sup>90</sup> Or, consider the experience of the shepherd Bento Soares, convicted by the Évora tribunal in March 1747, for practicing sorcery and having a pact with the devil. Even though Soares was supposed to serve two years of banishment outside the Bishopric of Elvas, where he lived, this sentence was eventually commuted after he made a plea for clemency. In fact, his term of exile was entirely rescinded; he served only a brief term of imprisonment.<sup>91</sup>

A systematic, comprehensive study of the clemency question as it relates to Portuguese Inquisition cases remains to be done. Still, using the incomplete data on this issue gathered for the present study as a sample of the whole, some statistically reliable observations can be made. Among those granted clemency in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, women outnumbered men by a factor of better than five to one. Moreover, mercy from inquisitorial courts was more than twice as likely to fall to non-healing practitioners of magic as it was to *curandeiros*. This observation lends fuel to the argument that the Holy Office—or at least the professional *médicos* working within its structure—remained focused on making a particular example of folk healers in order to discredit their methods and bring their activities to a halt.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> For examples, see ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 1747; 8307; 8698; 8338 and 10013; and Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 1698; 1763; 1980 and 2615.

<sup>90</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8307.

<sup>91</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1980.

<sup>92</sup> As a parting comment on this topic, it is worth noting that Portugal's two

*High Incidence of Healers being Re-Arrested for a Relapse of Crimes*

An analysis of the Inquisition's repeat offenders reveals a telling pattern with regard to popular healers, who were statistically much more likely to be arrested and brought to trial a second time. Whether *curandeiras* and *curandeiros* were driven by a greater economic need to continue proffering illicit remedies—and so tended to disregard the risks of further persecution involved in continuing to cure the sick—or whether Inquisition *familiares* and other authorities, including *médicos*, watched known healers with greater vigilance, or whether other practitioners of magical crimes simply found it easier to give up their offensive ways, is a matter of some speculation. The available evidence, however, which includes continuing denunciations of previously convicted individuals, suggests that Inquisition officials and watchful members of the elite citizenry observed the activities of convicted folk healers with extraordinary rigor after they had completed their initial penal sentences. Elevated repeat offender conviction rates for *curandeiros* (compared to *mágicos* who did not attempt to cure illness) underscore the conclusion that discrediting popular healing methods and, in particular, restricting practicing healers from plying their craft became a priority of Holy Office officials during the eighteenth century.

Overall, the rate of relapse for *mágicos* of all types in Portugal during the period in question was 11.31%. Fifty of the 442 persons studied are known to have been tried a second (or, in a few rare cases, a third) time for the crimes addressed in their original trials. (Being tried by the Inquisition for a completely different type of crime did not qualify as relapse; this occurred twice within the test group.) At least thirty-five of those fifty relapsed individuals, however, were convicted folk healers. Folk healers, then, account for 70% of all relapse cases among *mágicos*. That such a disproportionate number of *salvadores* and *curandeiros* were denounced, arrested and brought to trial a second time adds to the impression that Inquisition officials of all types displayed an exceptionally vigilant posture in persecuting illicit healers

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leading authorities on the Holy Office in Portugal, Francisco Bethencourt and José Pedro Paiva, have both expressed their surprise, as well, at the high frequency of approved clemency petitions among Inquisition trials involving magical crimes. Private interviews/discussions in Lisbon and Coimbra about material for the preparation of this research project, May 1995 and November 1996. See also Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 221–222.

during the Enlightenment era. Such evidence highlights these events as evidence of growing friction between contemporary elite and popular culture in Portugal concerning the advent of rationalist ideas. Further, this evidence frames one controversial subject—medicine—on which commoners and elites tended to disagree as Portuguese society made the slow transition toward a modern, rationalist worldview.

This trend is most pronounced in Lisbon, where seven out of eight total *relapsia* cases (87.5%) involved convicted healers. Lisbon's overall rate of *relapsia* among *mágicos* was 14.54% (8 of 55 cases). However, 31.81% of the capital city's *curandeiros* (7 of 22) became repeat offenders. By comparison, only one of the thirty-three other convicted *mágicos* processed by Lisbon's tribunal endured a second trial, a rate of just 3.03%.

The Coimbra tribunal saw its convicted *mágicos* accused a second time in the greatest real numbers. Thirty-one out of 203 *mágicos* became repeat offenders, a rate of 15.27%. But more than two-thirds of them—twenty-one of thirty-one (67.74%)—were popular healers. While only 9.34% of all non-healing *mágicos* (10 of 107) were arrested for relapse, 21.87% of all folk healers (21 of 96) suffered through a second trial, more than double the rate for those convicted for other magical crimes.

In Évora the picture was not so stark. This tribunal, operating in the spacious, sparsely populated Algarve and Alentejo regions of southern Portugal, arrested only eleven convicted *mágicos* for relapse between 1668 and 1802, a rate of just 5.97% (11 of 184 persons). Still, seven of those individuals (63.63%) were popular healers. Those seven accounted for 10.60% of the total number of persons (66) tried for practicing illicit healing arts inside the jurisdiction of the Évora tribunal during this period, nearly three times the rate of relapse cases among non-healers, which stood at a mere 3.70% (4 of 118).

Penalties for relapse were severe for healers and non-healers alike. Those who were caught a second time could expect a doubling of their initial sentence and certain banishment from their community. Relapsed magical criminals were prime candidates, too, for deportation to the African colonies or Brazil (though in practice such dire consequences were sometimes commuted to a more benign domestic penalty).

In Coimbra, for example, several relapsed *mágicos* suffered a more severe sentence after their second conviction. One such person was Domingas Cardoso, whom *familiares* of the Coimbra tribunal first arrested on 16 June 1693 and charged with superstition, sorcery,

and having a pact with the devil. Though she made her living in part as a *curandeira*, the charges against her did not mention the specific crime of healing. She was single, an Old Christian, and in her late fifties at the time of her first incarceration. The sentence resulting from her initial trial was fairly standard; she was exiled for three years to the Bishopric of Guarda and given a brief term of arbitrary imprisonment. However, after she was arrested for relapse on 2 December 1701, her subsequent sentence reflected the severity with which the Holy Office viewed a repeated offense. In March of 1704, after more than two years in prison, the inquisitors exiled Domingas Cardoso to Brazil for a period of five years. Still, the Holy Office was capable of clemency. On 18 August 1704, the Holy Office honored the twice-convicted Cardoso's petition and commuted her sentence to five years' exile in Faro, a port town in southern Portugal.<sup>93</sup>

Another case involved Maria Domingues, whose first date of arrest was 12 September 1722. At the time, she was aged about fifty and was a married Old Christian; her nickname, *a Pequena*, meant "the Little One." Her crimes were superstition and sorcery, but she was also a professional *curandeira*. Maria Domingues' initial sentence saw her exiled for four years to the Bishopric of Portalegre and given a term of arbitrary imprisonment. After being arrested seven years later, on 30 March 1730, for a relapse of her crimes, as well as for not completing her original punishment, the Holy Office sentenced Maria Domingues to confinement on the island of Príncipe, west Africa, for three years, following an arbitrary period of imprisonment.<sup>94</sup>

The case of Maria de Jesus, arrested by the Coimbra tribunal on 16 March 1741 for harboring superstitions and conducting acts of sorcery, provides yet another example of the severity with which the inquisitors viewed relapse. When she was first denounced and imprisoned, Maria de Jesus, was a sixty-nine year-old widow. Like the individuals above, she was an Old Christian, but she was not identified as having been tried for healing. At her first sentencing in 1742, the Holy Office exiled her to the Bishopric of Miranda for three years, following a brief but arbitrary imprisonment. Ten years later, on 12 July 1752, the eighty-year-old Maria de Jesus was arrested for relapse and for not fulfilling the original terms of her punishment. In July

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<sup>93</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 1747.

<sup>94</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 7175.



1753, the Coimbra inquisitors exiled her for six years to the Bishopric of Leiria.<sup>95</sup>

A final example from the Coimbra tribunal is that of the sixty-year-old day laborer Manuel Gonçalves, another non-healer, who was arrested on 22 May 1755 for promulgating superstitions and sorcery. This twice-married Old Christian was known as *o Cangalheiro* (“the Funeral Hearse or Wagon Driver”). His first trial sentence banished him for three years to Viseu and obliged him to serve a term of imprisonment. Six years later, on 14 August 1761, Manuel Gonçalves was arrested for relapse. At that time, he was approximately seventy years of age. For his second sentence, in addition to the usual penalty of an arbitrary term of imprisonment, the inquisitors exiled him for five years to the Bishopric of Leiria and had him whipped through the streets of Coimbra. He performed his second *auto-da-fé* on 16 October 1762.<sup>96</sup>

The Évora tribunal, too, was known to treat repeat offenders with elevated severity. On 11 June 1728, for example, the Évora inquisitors had a *curandeira* named Maria da Conceição arrested; her alleged crimes were practicing sorcery, harboring superstitions and having a pact with the devil. Nicknamed *a Vasca* (“the Basque”), she was about fifty years old and married at the time of her arrest; her husband was a common laborer. Maria da Conceição’s first sentence was a hard one: the Évora tribunal, after forcing her to endure a torture session, banished her to Viseu for four years; she also had to serve the usual indefinite term of imprisonment at the discretion of her jailers. However, her sentence became harder still after she became a fugitive, evaded her initial prescribed punishment and was arrested for relapse. Astonishingly, she had remained free for more than ten years; her second apprehension occurred on 4 May 1741. Following her second trial and *auto-da-fé*, she was exiled for six years to the penal colony at Castro Marim; further, she was publicly whipped through the streets of Évora.<sup>97</sup> Given her advanced age, it is unlikely that she could have survived such a sentence without being given some form of reprieve. No evidence indicates that the inquisitors who adjudicated her case afforded her any clemency, however.

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<sup>95</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 5400.

<sup>96</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 1628.

<sup>97</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 6731.

The case of Maria Pereira, a fifty-year-old widow and Old Christian *mágico*, offers an extreme example of the penalties associated with relapse. Arrested on 30 September 1742, the charges against her involved performing acts of sorcery and having a pact with the devil; no occupation or profession was recorded for her, so her primary means of support may well have been magical and therefore meager. After her first trial, she was exiled for four years to Lamego, following her term of indefinite imprisonment. Nearly ten years after her first incarceration, though, on 10 January 1753, she was arrested for relapse. Following a second *auto-da-fé* on 27 April 1755, the Évora tribunal exiled Maria Pereira to an isolated river town, Miranda-do-Douro, for six years and had her whipped through their city streets and plazas. However, Pereira received one kindly break; her sentence was shortened for reasons of ill health.<sup>98</sup>

Her good fortunes did not last, though: Inquisition *familiares* arrested her for relapse a third time on 25 September 1757. By this date she would have been approximately sixty-five years old. Évora's inquisitors banished Pereira for six years to the island of São Tomé and again had her whipped through Évora's *ruas públicas*. Remarkably, after three trials, the inquisitors maintained their capacity to show mercy to an un-reformed *mágica* like Maria Pereira; most likely because of her age and health, her sentence was commuted to six years' exile to Leiria.<sup>99</sup>

Another relapsed folk healer tried in Évora was Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca. This *curandeiro*, who also made parasols and sun hats, was arrested at the age of forty on 8 October 1754. Charges against him included having a pact with the devil and spreading superstitious beliefs. His first sentence exiled him for three years to the Bishopric of Guarda following his obligatory arbitrary imprisonment. After a hiatus of eight years, he was arrested for relapse on 31 May 1762. Manuel Rodrigues da Fonseca celebrated his second *auto-da-fé* on 16 January 1763. Inquisitors in Évora then banished him to Miranda for five years following a public whipping through the streets of Évora and further prison time. Fonseca was released from jail on 7 November 1763 and sent north to complete the terms of his punishment.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 1763.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 7266.

A final example, folk healer Baltasar Gomes' case, transpired relatively late in the chronology of magical crimes in Portugal. The Évora tribunal arrested him on 10 October 1766 when he was fifty years old. Because he lived in the village of Barbacuna in the Bishopric of Elvas, he was known to the tribunes as *o Saludador de Barbacuna*. However, an accident or birth defect inspired his other coarser nickname: *o Maneta* ("the One-Handed"). He was single and an Old Christian. By profession he was a *curandeiro*, but his enumerated crimes were that of witchcraft, superstition and making a pact with the devil.<sup>101</sup>

Upon the conclusion of his first trial, Baltasar Gomes served a term of arbitrary imprisonment and was exiled for three years to Leiria. Six years later, on 3 February 1773, Holy Office functionaries again arrested Gomes, then reportedly aged fifty-nine, for relapse and failing to complete his original sentence. After a speedy trial (he celebrated his second *auto-da-fé* on 9 March 1773, just thirty-one days after his arrest), he received a sentence that was, for the time, remarkably severe. The Évora inquisitors exiled Gomes to Miranda-do-Douro for six years, had him whipped through the streets of Évora, and forbade him from entering his home district—the Bishopric of Elvas—ever again. On top of this, he was obliged to pay the costs of his trial and imprisonment.<sup>102</sup>

Arresting an Inquisition convict for *relapsia*, then, required a heightened effort on behalf of Holy Office *familiars* to keep track of those criminals after they had served their sentences. Their efforts were aided in the countryside, no doubt, by Portugal's very low rural population density in most areas,<sup>103</sup> which rendered the activities of individuals much easier to monitor. The social dynamics of closely interwoven agrarian communities in which no one could truly be anonymous helped *familiars* to perform their vigilant duties. Once condemned by the Holy Office, common peasants carried a permanent stigma and reputation, even if the inquisitors had not required the perpetual wearing of a penitent's habit under the terms of their

<sup>101</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 4688.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> See the population tables and figures provided in José Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, 8 vols. (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1993), vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, pp. 54–66.

sentence.<sup>104</sup> Even in cosmopolitan Lisbon, the number of Inquisition trials was low enough to make a convict's situation remarkable among neighbors; residents who dwelt in every district soon became aware if *familiars* took someone from their own *bairro* into custody, or if a newcomer came to live suddenly among them as an exiled convict.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> See Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 290–311 and Bethencourt, *História das Inquisições*, pp. 227–238.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER NINE

### DEMOGRAPHICS AND GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY OF POPULAR HEALERS PROSECUTED BY THE PORTUGUESE INQUISITION, 1682–1802

Having examined patterns of castigation for convicted *mágicos* in early modern Portugal, we will now turn our attention to a demographic analysis of the types of people involved in these magical crimes trials—both prosecutors and defendants—as well as their geographic mobility within Portugal.

#### *Demographics of Magical Criminals in Enlightenment-Era Portugal*

##### *Gender*

Taking into consideration all of the 442 Inquisition dossiers viewed for this study, one of the most striking aspects to emerge is the high percentage of men whom the Holy Office prosecuted for magical crimes between 1662 and 1802.<sup>1</sup> Men were arrested in surprisingly large numbers, not only for such crimes as conducting acts of simple sorcery and divining the future, but also for curing illness. By European-wide standards, men made up a very large proportion of the popular healers in Portuguese society, particularly in the southern region of the country. This is clearly reflected in the ratio of men to women among *mágicos* across the whole of Portugal, including both healers and those accused of other magical crimes: 41% male to 59% female.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the data tables (sex; age; date of arrest; civil status) provided at the end of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> See demographics tables at the end of this chapter, below. In *Bruxaria e Superstição*, Paiva supplies only marginally different figures for a substantially different chronological period: 61% women and 39% men. José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem ‘Caça às Bruxas’: Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), p. 162. Maria Luísa Braga, in *A Inquisição em Portugal; primeira metade do séc. XVIII: O Inquisidor Geral D. Nuno da Cunha de Athayde e Mello* (Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de

Compared to most other European countries, this is a very high male ratio. According to the compiled statistics of other national witchcraft studies, “the percentage of female witches exceeded seventy-five percent in most regions of Europe, and in a few localities, such as Essex County, England, and the county of Namur (in present-day Belgium), it was more than ninety percent.”<sup>3</sup> Alfred Soman reports that the rate of persecution for women was also very high in central France.<sup>4</sup> Notable exceptions to this rule include Finland, Estonia and Russia—all, like Portugal, on the peripheries of western Europe—where the percentage of women prosecuted for witchcraft dropped as low as 51%, 40% and 32%, respectively.

On the Iberian Peninsula, 57% of the 159 witches tried in the kingdom of Aragon between 1600 and 1650 were female. Castile, however, tried 456 witches between 1540 and 1685, of whom females accounted for 71%.<sup>5</sup> In Galicia, women were the victims in 66% of Inquisition magical crimes trials (92 of 140) between 1560 and 1700.<sup>6</sup> In the district of Toledo, the average percentage of women prosecuted for magical crimes between 1531 and 1820 was 62.65%. However, between 1561 and 1620, that figure dropped to just 52.7%.<sup>7</sup>

Across Europe, men were persecuted in numbers approaching or exceeding those of women principally in areas where witch paranoia and accusations escalated beyond the tight administrative control of authorities, or where men from the elite classes resorted to witchcraft as a means to achieve political ends. This does not seem to have been the case in eighteenth-century Portugal. Rather, the high incidence of males being tried for magical crimes had more to do with cultural norms and conventions largely inherited from North Africa: traditionally in rural southern regions of Spain and Portugal, men were just as likely to be village healers as were women, if not

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Investigação Científica, 1992), reports that she also found forty-one percent men and fifty-nine percent women among the magical crimes trials she studied, which all occurred between 1682 and 1750 (tables; pp. 322–331).

<sup>3</sup> Brian P. Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Press, 1995), pp. 133–134.

<sup>4</sup> Alfred F. Soman, *Sorcellerie et Justice Criminelle: Le Parlement de Paris (16–18 siècles)* (Paris: 1991), introduction.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, table; p. 134.

<sup>6</sup> Jaime Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700: poder, sociedad y cultura* (Madrid: Akal, 1982), p. 686.

<sup>7</sup> Jean-Pierre Dedieu, *L'administration de la foi: L'Inquisition de Toléde, XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 1989), tableau 41, p. 256.

more so.<sup>8</sup> In addition, Portuguese practitioners of popular magic, such as fortunetellers, finders of lost objects and visionaries, were not so clearly defined by their gender as they were in most other European countries. Apparently, a larger proportion of males practiced magic in rural Portugal; at least, such would be one implication, based on the numbers of men prosecuted for such crimes across Europe during the two centuries preceding the period in which Portuguese authorities showed their greatest intolerance for magic.<sup>9</sup>

Elsewhere in Europe, the number of convicted male witches tended to climb particularly where the courts linked magical crimes with other types of heresy. This idea more closely describes the Portuguese experience, but not for the same reasons. A large proportion of the active participants in persecuted heretical sects, such as the Waldensians prior to the fifteenth century, were male. A charge often used to prosecute them was witchcraft; this factor drove up the number of males tried for conducting magical crimes. In Portugal, however, rather than being arrested for participating in any organized heretical sect, far more people of both sexes were prosecuted for the general crimes of sorcery and having a pact with the devil. If proven, both were heretical, because the efficacy of the first crime depended largely on the existence of the second. That is, for a sorcerer's rite to have any effect, the church officially maintained that said sorcerer must necessarily be the beneficiary of powers conveyed from Satan through a diabolical pact, be it implicit (and so possibly an unconscious transgression) or explicit. Such orthodox views are at least as old as the writings of Saint Augustine, but they were broadly disseminated in Europe after 1486, with the publication of Sprenger and Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum*.<sup>10</sup> In Portugal in the eighteenth century, this idea was still very much *em vigor*. In fact, it is precisely this conceit which figures prominently in the argument asserted against superstitious folk healers in the Holy Office policy treatise, *Dos Saludadores*.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For more on this subject, see Chapter II, above.

<sup>9</sup> And yet, Keith Thomas' book, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin Books, 1971), might be used to argue otherwise. In chapters 8 and 14, he convincingly shows that being a "cunning person" in the British Isles had little to do with being a woman or a man. See pp. 252–301 and 517–559.

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion on European beliefs that connects the efficacy of human magic with a diabolical contract, see Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 35–39.

<sup>11</sup> *Dos Saludadores*, ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício, *livro* 269, fls. 15–24.

Among Portuguese folk healers specifically, research for the present study indicates that 40.3% were men, while women account for 59.7% overall, combining the figures for all three tribunals.<sup>12</sup> To do so, however, distorts the true historical picture, since the three tribunals prosecuted *curandeiros* and *curandeiras* at widely varying rates. In Évora, for example, the ratio was nearly even, with a total of thirty-four female folk healers tried during the period in question, as compared to thirty-two males (51.51% and 48.48%, respectively). In Lisbon, cunning men outnumbered cunning women thirteen to nine, or 59.09% male as compared to 40.91% female (figures which neatly reverse the national male-to-female ratio for all *mágicos*, and indicate an apparent predisposition of Lisbon's residents to favor male healers). Conversely, the Holy Office tribunal of Coimbra prosecuted a far larger percentage of women healers: *curandeiras* account for 69.79% of the trials against popular healers, while *curandeiros* make up only 30.21% (sixty-seven women and twenty-nine men were tried for illicit healing in Coimbra during the period this study covers).

Figures for the gender ratios of Portuguese non-healing *mágicos* differ significantly from those of accused healers, indicating important variances in persecution patterns between these two groups. Overall, women non-healers outnumbered men 151 to 107. That is, of a total of 258 persecuted non-healers, 41.47% were men and 58.52% were women. By European standards, this still represents a strikingly large proportion of males who endured a trial for magical transgressions.

In no region of Portugal did a tribunal prosecute a majority of male non-healers. Among this group, the male-to-female ratio was closest in Coimbra, where 44.85% of the non-healing magical crimes cases involved men; women accounted for 55.14% of those cases. Recall that the tribunal of Coimbra, of the three regional Portuguese Inquisition courts, prosecuted by far the highest percentage of female healers. That is the reverse of their record for non-healers; Coimbra inquisitors prosecuted the lowest percentage of female non-healers. This finding is notably unexpected. The Coimbra tribunal was responsible for trying magical crimes perpetrated in the north of Portugal, where women dominated the motifs and ceremonies of popular

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<sup>12</sup> On this score, Dr. Paiva reports a larger ratio of men to women: 42% and 58%, respectively. See *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 162.



culture. Therefore, the rate of prosecutions against female *mágicos* in Coimbra should also have been correspondingly high.<sup>13</sup> Évora's *inquisidores*, meanwhile, prosecuted the fewest males; just 38.13% of non-healing *mágicos* were men, while 61.86% were women. (Again, this reverses that tribunal's record for healers; Évora prosecuted the highest proportion of male healers.) Lisbon's proportion of prosecuted non-healing *mágicos* fell in between these two: 57.57% women and 42.42% men.

What do these figures signify? Only that there are no easy patterns to the persecution of magical crimes in Enlightenment-era Portugal. That may be the most significant lesson. As revealed in the records of the relative flood of trials against *mágicos* between 1715 and 1755, Lusophone elites in the eighteenth century lost their long-standing tolerance for *all* types of peasant beliefs that ran contrary to reason. As lettered and cultured Portuguese grew gradually more influenced by the rationalistic culture that prevailed among elites in other parts of Europe, popular practices that relied on superstitious rituals and had no basis in rational science became increasingly distasteful to them. Conventional medical practitioners, however, motivated by a desire to spread Enlightenment principles but spurred additionally by material and professional interest, became instrumental in initiating a new campaign of repression against *mágicos*—persecutions began anew in Portugal when *médicos* started to denounce popular healers to the Coimbra tribunal at the end of the seventeenth century.

The broad and even distribution of prosecutions against all types of magical practitioners, regardless of their gender or specialty, indicates that elites were more concerned with curbing the superstitious beliefs and practices themselves—because of their fundamental irrationality—than with furthering a more subtle and sinister gender-based (or, for that matter, economic-based) agenda. Generally, accused practitioners, male or female, went to trial and suffered equally. Elites had nothing to gain by persecuting one sex over another. To have done so would have risked discrediting the basic point of the prosecution in any trial for magical crimes: that no common mortal could possess supernatural, extra-human powers.

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<sup>13</sup> See the discussion in Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700* . . . , pp. 571–579 and 685–687.

*Age*

A cursory examination of the data tables that relate the age of magical criminals in Portugal indicates that, as with the question of *mágicos*' gender, there are no quick and easy lessons to be gleaned about the significance of a magical criminal's stage in life at the time of her or his arrest. In practice, Portuguese Inquisition detainees for magical crimes represented the entire spectrum of age groups.<sup>14</sup> Of course, the Holy Office was duty-bound to arrest transgressors irrespective of their level of maturity. This the inquisitors seem to have done, investigating anyone, regardless of age, about whom they received denunciations. Of greater interest, really, is that persons who provided testimony against *curandeiros* and *mágicos*—commoners as well as elites; medical professionals, clerics and artisans—showed little compunction about denouncing persons of any age, provided they were perceived to be culpable and therefore, at some level—ideological, methodological, theological or economic—a threat to elite cultural values and beliefs.

If we accept thirty-five years as an average life span in Europe during the early modern period, and then use that somewhat arbitrarily chosen age to divide prosecuted *mágicos* between what might be considered the first and second halves of an actual life, the data from the different tribunals provide a mixed picture. Magical crimes in Portugal were age-related but not age-determined; no perfectly clear patterns emerge. Nor are there any easy generalizations to be made about a connection between age and gender among those prosecuted. As the tables below make apparent, the broad distribution of ages of those arrested for *curandeirismo* is remarkably even and equitable among men as well as women.

In Évora, for example, of forty-one popular healers whose ages at the time of their arrest are known, fourteen were aged thirty-five or below, leaving twenty-seven aged thirty-six or above. However, because twenty-five of the healers' ages are unknown, the potential margin of error is so great as to make the extrapolation of any conclusions from the existing information precarious. Of those healers whose ages are known, the average age was approximately forty-one years and six months. This figure reflects the fact that the largest concentration

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<sup>14</sup> Please refer to the data tables (sex; age; date of arrest; civil status) provided at the end of this chapter.

of known ages—twelve—fell in the group aged forty-three to fifty years. Fourteen persons were younger than thirty-five at the time of their arrest. Also, even though Évora's average age for prosecuted folk healers is higher than Lisbon's, the Évora tribunal also prosecuted one of the youngest *curandeiros* encountered in the Inquisition records: a boy of fourteen, arrested in 1697.<sup>15</sup>

In Lisbon, where information about the ages of all twenty-two prosecuted healers was available, youthful offenders predominated, but only by a thin margin. Thirteen of twenty-two *curandeiros* who went to trial under the Lisbon tribunal were thirty-five years old or less; nine were over thirty-five. However, among the younger set, the largest concentration of offenders fell in the late teen-aged range, from fifteen to twenty years old. In the older set, six of nine were aged fifty or below. So, the average age for prosecuted healers in Lisbon was fairly low: approximately thirty-three years old.

Only in Coimbra was there a clear division based on age, with older persons making up a sizable majority of accused folk healers. More than three quarters of the accused healers tried in Coimbra were thirty-six years old or over. The largest single concentration—twenty-three persons—was between forty-three and fifty years of age at the time of their arrest. Also, the Coimbra tribunal prosecuted the three oldest healers on record in Portugal, all of whom were men: an octogenarian, a nonagenarian and even a centenarian said to be (and officially recorded as) 112 years old.<sup>16</sup> The result of these circumstances is that the average age among persecuted *curandeiros* in Coimbra was quite high: more than forty-nine and a half years.

Average ages for Portuguese persons accused of other magical crimes, too, is possible to assess, but not without some uncertainty. In Évora, the ages of fifty-two prosecuted non-healers went unrecorded; this factor, out of a total group numbering 118, throws any estimate of average age into considerable doubt. Nevertheless, calculating with the data available, the average age at arrest of *mágicos* who were not *curandeiros* in Évora was just under thirty-four years, the lowest average age in this category of Portugal's three tribunals. Forty-two persons of the sixty-seven in this group were aged under thirty-five, twenty-one of them being between twenty-one and twenty-seven years old.

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<sup>15</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5111.

<sup>16</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 8491, 9711 and 9682, respectively.

The ages of the non-healers whom the Lisbon tribunal prosecuted were comparable to those tried in Évora. Of the twenty-eight non-healing *mágicos* in Lisbon whose ages are known, twenty-one were under thirty-five years of age. Just seven were over thirty-five at the time of their arrest, while five had no recorded age. Averaging the ages for these persons provides a value of thirty-four and one half years, roughly on par with the average in Évora.

The Coimbra tribunal once again provides the standout exception; non-healing *mágicos* prosecuted there were on average more than fifteen years older than those tried by the other two tribunals. Among this group, the average age at the time of arrest was forty-nine and one third years, about the same age as Coimbra's healers, revealing that the persons whom the Inquisition brought to trial in Coimbra were typically of a surprisingly advanced age. Only twenty persons of a total of 103 whose ages are known were under thirty-five years old, but a mere seven of those were under twenty-eight. Eighty-three persons were above thirty-five, with twenty-two of those, the largest single group, falling in the forty-three-to-fifty age range. Seventeen persons were aged between fifty-nine and sixty-five; ten were older than seventy-three. In only four cases was the accused's age not recorded.

Cross-referencing age with sex we find that, seen as a single collective group, women's and men's ages were largely equitable among those prosecuted for magical crimes in Enlightenment-era Portugal. That is, the Inquisition's victims of either sex were drawn from a broad and, for the most part, evenly distributed range of ages. However, there are some evident gender-based disparities of age based on marriage status, with younger men and older women being prevalent among those who were single, and older women disproportionately represented among those who had been widowed. These distinctions will be discussed in greater detail below.

How do Portuguese age figures for persecuted sorcerers, witches and cunning people compare with those from the rest of Europe? Portuguese persons tried for magical crimes tended to be much more youthful than their counterparts in other parts of the European continent and on the British Isles. Despite the prevailing idea that "witches" would usually be old crones, spinsters or decrepit old men living on the margins of society, those who found themselves charged for practicing magic in Portuguese courtrooms did not, in most cases, conform to this stereotype.

Various historians who study witchcraft persecutions have compiled data to support the notion that, according to the popular image, at least, witches in Europe and colonial America were universally thought of as older men and women.<sup>17</sup> According to records of five major witch hunts conducted in diverse locations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in every case but one, more than half of all accused witches were above fifty years of age. For some episodes of European witch hunting, the proportion of victims aged over fifty years mounted to 75% and even, in the extreme case recorded in the county of Essex, England during the Civil War, 87% of all accused individuals.<sup>18</sup> So, in nearly all locations in Europe, a solid majority of accused witches were over fifty years old.

In Portugal, by contrast, only in Coimbra did the average age of persecuted magical criminals approach fifty years of age, and even there the proportion of persons aged over fifty was only about 40%. Further, despite a number of trials against persons of very advanced age, the average age of accused *mágicos* in Coimbra, among both healers and non-healers alike, still fell slightly below fifty years. In the other tribunals, accused *mágicos* were typically in their early thirties; in the single exceptional group, healers in Évora, the average age was still a relatively young forty-one, well below what was typical across other European territories. The low average ages for Portuguese persons accused of magical crimes, then, varied notably from the European mean.

Therefore, in Portugal we are not dealing with a population persecuted primarily because they had become a social liability due to their advanced age and lack of productivity. No; youthful Portuguese practitioners of magic were charismatic and clever at fending for themselves. The problem, rather, was that elites found their *beliefs* objectionable—a fact borne out again and again in the transcripts

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<sup>17</sup> See, for example, the following works: Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), Alan MacFarlane, *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England: A Regional and Comparative Study* (London: Routledge, 1970), Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice, 1550–1650* (Oxford, U.K.: Basil Blackwell Press, 1989), H.C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562–1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1972), E. William Monter, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland: The Borderlands during the Reformation* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1976).

<sup>18</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 141–144.

of Inquisition denunciations. *Mágicos* became a social liability in Enlightenment-era Portugal because their outmoded conceits clashed with the new dominant paradigm of elite Europe, a rationalized culture with which Portuguese elites wanted their nation to participate. In an attempt to bring the peasantry into step with a modern rejection of superstition, Portuguese elites in the Age of Reason embarked on a program to discredit an element of popular culture which they found most objectionable: a tenacious capacity to believe in magical powers, particularly as employed to heal human maladies.

A further explanation of this difference in the average ages of accused magical practitioners between Portugal and the rest of Europe may have to do with the fact that, strictly speaking, magical criminals in Portugal in the eighteenth century were seldom prosecuted as witches. Recall that in only about 10% of Portuguese trials against *mágicos* was “witchcraft” (*bruxaria*) charged as a specific crime. Rather, judicial authorities in Portugal saw practitioners of magic as simple sorcerers and illicit healers, crimes distinctly removed from full-blown witchcraft.

Europeans of an earlier era understood that witches’ skills were inherent; the ability of a witch to perform acts of *maleficia* did not depend on the manipulation of tools or substances for the evil deed to have an effect. It was this inherent quality of the witches’ power which separated them from popular magicians and the simple sorcery they employed.<sup>19</sup> A sorcerer’s spells, by contrast, required props—powders, potions, incantations, hair or nail clippings from an intended victim, or the preparation of a cooked confection—and a particular ritual carefully conducted in order to have any efficacy.<sup>20</sup> Even though many Portuguese healers claimed to have a God-given internal power—a “divine virtue” which enabled them to effect cures—they nevertheless tended to perform elaborate rituals in order to heal their clients. Such contrivances led inquisitors to classify Portuguese healers’ crimes as sorcery.

Earlier European witch hunts were typically fueled by accusations lodged by commoners, who often let their actions be driven by fears

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<sup>19</sup> Jeffrey Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans* (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1980), pp. 42–53; 63–66.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* See also Raymond Firth, “Reason and Unreason in Human Belief,” in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. Max Marwick (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 38–40.

of a pre-existing idea of what a witch should be—how she would appear, sound and comport herself during her daily activities. An individual's outward conformity to the stereotype a witch's appearance, then, could result in an accusation. Indeed, the inherent nature of a witch's power meant that an accusation had to be made on suspicion and conformity to the witch stereotype alone, without any tangible indication that she had ever engaged in magical acts. This dynamic helped to keep the average age of witches very high throughout most of the early modern period in Europe.

In eighteenth-century Portugal, such stereotypes came into play much less frequently; rather, the inquisitors were bound by Holy Office prosecutorial guidelines to seek evidence of tangible participation in acts of sorcery or superstitious healing. Because elites in eighteenth-century Portugal sought to quash specific activities, they sought individuals whose participation in acts of sorcery was demonstrable. To be sure, many of the inquisitors still prosecuted Portuguese offenders as dangerous spiritual criminals who formed a pact with the devil, but by the early Enlightenment era, when witchcraft trials had fallen out of practice virtually everywhere else in continental Europe, in Portugal the stereotypical image of an aged witch seems to have lost its compelling quality, too.

Indeed, there is some question as to whether the concept of a witch resonated with Portuguese elites at all after the idea had been discredited elsewhere in Europe. As the principal historian of magical beliefs in a country which, he says, did not experience witch hunting, José Pedro Paiva has pointed to evidence of widespread elite doubt—both secular and ecclesiastical—about the concept and validity of witchcraft in eighteenth-century Portugal. Such criticism was invariably informed by rationalist principles and shaped by developments in other regions of Europe, where witch-hunting had ceased, for the most part, because authorities no longer found reason to believe in the reality of the transgression.<sup>21</sup>

The best evidence for asserting that many Portuguese elites had begun to discount the validity of magical efficacy and satanic witchcraft is found in the records of the Inquisition itself. Secular elites, and especially educated professionals, commonly focused their testimony

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<sup>21</sup> See Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 86–91. Also, by the same author, see *Práticas e Crenças Mágicas . . . na Diocese de Coimbra (1650–1740)* (Coimbra: Minerva, 1992), pp. 53–57.

on the irrationality and illiteracy of *mágicos*, mentioning their pretensions to magical power only as a secondary consideration or ignoring the issue altogether.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the Holy Office rarely charged magical criminals with the specific crime of witchcraft and, with only four exceptions, did not put magical criminals to death. Hence, magical crimes were no longer important enough to warrant such drastic penalties.

Thus, Portuguese folk *mágicos* who worked spells and performed superstitious remedies made themselves vulnerable to denunciation at *all ages*, from youthful adolescents to gnarled elders. These people were not “witches” in the traditional sense at all, but peasant practitioners genuinely trying to make a living by performing what they saw as a benign public service. Therefore, patterns of prosecution reflect the arrest of many more young offenders in Portugal who, because their crime was not witchcraft, were not expected to conform to the stereotyped age of a witch.

Persons engaged in simple sorcery aimed at providing cures in Portugal were of no specific, stereotyped age—they could and did practice folk healing during every season of life. Although Brian Levack wrote, in reference to witch hunting undertaken primarily in northern Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that “some witches were also wise women and folk healers, persons who were old almost by definition,”<sup>23</sup> no such assertion may be applied to Portuguese folk healers—or any other type of magical practitioner—in the eighteenth century. Portugal abounded with youthful *curandeiras* and *curandeiros*. More than a quarter of all folk healers whom the Inquisition arrested were under thirty-five years old (26.08%) and the majority of those were aged less than twenty-seven (15.76%). Some of these seem to have relied on their youth and freshness as part of the justification for their divinely inspired healing skills.

For example, consider the boy healer Bento Assunção, arrested by Évora tribunal *familiares* at age fourteen on 9 July 1697. Master Bento, who had been born in the village of Punla, Bishopric of

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<sup>22</sup> See, for examples, the testimony of medical professionals and state administrators in the following cases: ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5433, 4569, 11700, 5401, 5940, 745, 6731, 6231, 516, 8038, 1445, 1446 and 6543; Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 9713, 9555, 9711, 9613, 33, 1234, 8899, 7199, 7107, 7346, 7258, 7136, 6223, 7636, 6210, 8503, 8622, and 8698.

<sup>23</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, p. 142.



Coimbra, was accused of feigning magical power, having a pact with the devil and promulgating superstition. In his defense, he claimed to have been taught to cure by visions of several saints and the devil, saying:

... three times a week he spoke with *nossa Senhora*, on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays; she appeared in a cloud with her blessed son, and revealed many things, and indicated people who could be, and could not be freed from their infirmities, and the way in which to cure them . . . And, [Bento said] that *nossa Senhora* carried him to Heaven, where he saw many beautiful things, and to Hell, where he also saw many people in the fire . . . and the Devil appeared to him many times.<sup>24</sup>

Obviously, such an assertion did not help his case, though he probably would not have made this statement if it had not helped him to secure clients in the past. Eventually he was exiled for three years to the penal colony in Castro Marim. Further, he was forbidden to ever again enter the environs of Estremoz (the town where he had been arrested) and ordered to pay the costs of his trial.<sup>25</sup>

On 29 November 1736, another fourteen-year-old *curandeiro* found himself in the custody of the Coimbra tribunal. João de São Francisco's crimes included superstitious curing and, most interestingly, claiming to have received permission from the Holy Office to perform healing rituals. Young João lived in the mountains around Viseu. He was a foundling, and seems to have relied on his youth and social circumstances to attract the compassion (and clientage) of adults, many of whom should have known the Inquisition would never have sanctioned the boy's healing practices. Eventually, the Coimbra tribunal released João de São Francisco without convicting him, but he was reprimanded and warned not to return to his habit of false healing.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, there is the well-documented case of Geraldo Nobre Ferreira, a handsome twenty-one-year-old theology student at Coimbra and a cleric in minor orders. When he was arrested on 2 June 1720, he had been denounced for superstitious curing, but he had also been accused of employing sorcery on the maidens of Coimbra for "illicit ends." Ferreira clearly relied on his charm and youth to attract customers for his remedies, but he apparently spent too much time

<sup>24</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5111, fl. 114.

<sup>25</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 5111.

<sup>26</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8899.

employing those same attributes to make amorous advances on the young women of the town. His trial was mercifully short—only two months—but for his sins he was banished to Castro Marim for five years.<sup>27</sup>

Portuguese elites, then—churchmen, Inquisition officials, aristocrats and medical professionals—in the eighteenth-century were not seeking witches at all, at least as that idea was understood in Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the contrary, they prosecuted many persons who did not conform to the classical definition of a witch. Elite preoccupations had shifted to tangible activities that had a direct impact on intellectual, spiritual and economic life in Portuguese society. This was especially true of *curandeiros*, whose activities rankled a specific group of elites: licensed medical professionals whose work inside the Inquisition positioned them particularly well to take action against illicit healers. Even though *curandeiros* were lowly, common healers, their activities nevertheless represented an important measure of the professional competition that licensed physicians, surgeons and barbers faced.

### *Marital Status*

The marital status of accused *mágicos* lends itself to more straightforward analysis. Beginning with those who were not arrested for healing, and combining the total figures for all three Portuguese Inquisition tribunals, we find that barely more than half (50.93%) of the women arrested for non-healing magical crimes (whose marital status is known) were married at the time of their arrest. Another 21.11% were single, while better than a quarter—a statistically weighty 27.95%—were widows.

Among the males who were arrested for magical crimes other than healing (whose marital status is known), a relatively small number were listed as widowers at the time of their arrest; only 6.54% had lost their wives and not remarried. In contrast to the experience of the women in this group, a far larger proportion of men were single: 44.85% had never been married before their arrest, according to Inquisition records. Married men accounted for just under half of non-healing *mágicos*: 48.59%, a rate almost on par with their female counterparts.

<sup>27</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8018.

A similar statistical analysis for folk healers reveals the following data: among all female healers tried by the three Portuguese tribunals whose marital status is known, 45.45% were married at the time of their arrest. A further 28.18% of *curandeiras* were widowed. As with the rate of prosecution of their widowed counterparts among non-healing women, this figure is striking. Single women, then, made up better than a quarter of prosecuted *curandeiras*: 26.36%.

Male healers, when divided by marital status, were prosecuted at very different rates than female healers. Overall—combining the figures from Coimbra, Évora and Lisbon—single men were far more likely to suffer prosecution for healing than were single women. 42.46% of all *curandeiros* whose marital status is known were single. As with their married counterparts among non-healing *mágicos*, married *curandeiros* were tried at about the same rate as married *curandeiras*: 47.94%, or slightly less than half of the total. Finally, widowers made up a small proportion of prosecuted male healers, just as had been the case with widowers among male non-healers. Only 9.58% of *curandeiros* had lost their wives and not remarried.

Combining accused healers and non-healers, we see that, among males, roughly 8% were widowers, 48% were married, and about 44% were single. Among all female magical criminals, however, the proportions of single and widowed women are strikingly different from the male experience. Well over a quarter of accused women were widows, and nearly one quarter were single. Interestingly, though, the proportion of married women was almost the same of that of married men—just under half.

Among both healers and non-healers, a slight majority of the accused *mágicos*—be they men or women—were unmarried at the time of their arrest. Unattached individuals—free agents unbound by the social conventions imposed on persons held within the bonds of marriage—represented a multi-layered threat to traditional pre-modern societies. The circumstances of civil status, however, carried different implications, depending on the age and sex of the individual.

Single men arrested under suspicion of illicit healing or for conducting other crimes involving magic, for example, tended quite naturally to be far younger than their married or widowed counterparts. While youth is of course to be expected among single people (as opposed to those who were married or widowed), the issue requires further explanation because of the disproportionately high rate at which the Inquisition prosecuted single men. Moreover, single men

tended to be much younger on average than the single women whom the Holy Office tried for similar crimes.

What caused young single men to be perceived as a threat in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Portugal? In part, the impression of danger single men conveyed had to do with their existence outside the confines of any social institution constituted to lend stability to society, such as a marriage or their parents' household. Young adult males with little supervision from family or relatives enjoyed liberties that most members of traditional Portuguese society did not exercise. Because of their relative freedom from family obligations, they could travel or, away from their closed agrarian communities, engage in illicit behavior without fear of familial judgment or repercussions from relatives. Also, any explanation of this matter must account for the chronic problem linking single male indigents and crime. For these reasons, single men created a disproportionate burden on charitable social institutions like the *Santa Casa de Misericórdia*, or Holy House of Mercy.<sup>28</sup> Further, single men were more prone than married or otherwise supervised men to engage in illicit sexual relations, thus increasing the likelihood of perpetuating out-of-wedlock childbirths. This was especially true if these single males were not part of any other institution that might have exerted strong control over their behavior, such as the priesthood or the army. Because of their status as members of an organization that subordinated them to the immediate authority of a superior officer or cleric, men in uniform or holy orders did not usually constitute the same social threat that other free-roving males, or even gainfully-employed single men with a stable address, did.

Single males prosecuted for magical crimes in Portugal were not, with few exceptions, members of other regimented, hierarchical institutions. Just seven of all accused male *mágicos* were in the military and eight were priests. For contrast, consider the frequency with which the Portuguese Inquisition received denunciations of wandering mendicants, a group whose unsupervised condition positioned them, at one level, as polar opposites to males in highly structured groups. Unlike the experience of priests and soldiers, a more significant proportion of prosecuted male *mágicos* earned their bread, at least

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<sup>28</sup> For references on the preponderance of single men aided by the Santa Casa de Misericórdia, see Joaquim Verrissimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, 10 vols. (Lisbon: Editora Verbo, 1996), vol. V (1640–1750), pp. 164–166.

part of the time, through wandering and begging: a minimum of twenty-six persons accused of magical crimes depended on charity for their livelihood.<sup>29</sup>

In Évora, of the twenty-four prosecuted single male *mágicos* whose ages are known, only five were older than thirty-five, while fifteen were under twenty-seven, the majority (nine of fifteen) being young unmarried adults in their early-to-middle twenties. The same was true of Lisbon, where only four of seventeen single males whose ages are known were over thirty-five; most single males were well under thirty. Curiously, single *curandeiros* in Lisbon were on average very young: four of eight had lived twenty or fewer years. Only in Coimbra was the average age of accused single males higher than thirty-five, but not by much. Of thirteen cases, six men were under thirty-five and seven were thirty-six or older. Even so, single *curandeiros* were, as in Lisbon, typically younger in Coimbra, with four of six being between the ages of fourteen and twenty-seven (the other two were in their middle sixties).

By contrast, as should be expected, married and widowed men were on average much older than accused single males. The Coimbra tribunal provides the strongest example: only four of the forty-eight married men whose ages are known were under twenty-eight years old, while thirty-eight of them were over thirty-six years old. In Évora, ten of fourteen married men were over twenty-eight years old. Only one married man tried for magical crimes in Portugal was under twenty-one. Lisbon, where five of seven married men of a known age were under thirty-five, provided the exception. All but one of the fourteen widowers tried in Portugal were over fifty (the single exception being forty-five years old); younger widowers usually remarried soon after the death of a spouse, as was expected and socially accepted throughout Europe at the time.

Single (never-before-married) women, as we have seen, were also prosecuted in high numbers (representing between a quarter and a fifth of all women tried for magical crimes), but the demographics of this group are quite different from that of their male counterparts—the average age of single women *mágicos* was significantly older. Overall, twenty-nine of the fifty-six single females whose ages are known

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<sup>29</sup> See the tables, below, which detail the occupations of healers and non-healers persecuted for magical crimes in Portugal.

were over thirty-five years old at the time of their arrest; eighteen of these were over forty-three years of age. Eight more single women were older than twenty-eight. However, the figures for the Coimbra tribunal, in which twenty-five of thirty-four women were older than thirty-five, distort this impression. In Lisbon and Évora, a solid majority of the single women (eighteen of twenty-two) were younger than thirty-six. Still, with at least eighteen of fifty-six single women over the age of forty-three, the average age of single women was substantially older than the average age of single men, among whom only eleven of fifty-four were over forty-three years old.

Older single women may have been perceived as a threat in Portuguese society because of their independent status, stereotyped concerns about their aggressive sexuality, or both. Various historians of witchcraft have shown that older women were thought to prey on younger males in early modern Europe.<sup>30</sup> Older unattached females were rumored to be sexually insatiable, so their corruptive influence on younger men was a preoccupation among authorities. Also, older single women could threaten the established social order by demonstrating their ability to live independently, free from a male guardian. Conversely, a single woman who became a burden to her neighbors because of her inability to derive a living through conventional means also upset the social order.<sup>31</sup> Cases found in the records of the Portuguese Holy Office encompass all these circumstances.

The average age of widows, as might be expected, was older still. As in other regions of Europe, widows suffered levels of persecution for magical crimes at a rate higher than their numbers in society at large. Impecunious widows in early modern Europe tended to suffer denunciations at a time in their lives when advanced age, combined with a lack of steady income from a socially acceptable source, made them vulnerable to recrimination from their neighbors.<sup>32</sup> In Portugal, just nine widows of the fifty-four whose ages are known were younger than thirty-five (a rate of 16.66%); five of these were quite young, aged twenty-one to twenty-seven. By contrast, though, twenty-nine

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<sup>30</sup> See discussion in Edward Bever, "Old Age and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe," in Stearns, ed., *Old Age in Pre-Industrial Society* (New York, 1982), pp. 175–182.

<sup>31</sup> For the classic discussion of this topic, see Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, pp. 652–680.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 670–673.

widows (53.70%) had reached the age of fifty or above when they were arrested.

Finally, married men and married women shared a fairly equitable age distribution between the Évora and Lisbon tribunals. As a group, the median age at their time of arrest was in the late thirties for males and females, among both healers and other *mágicos* alike. The Coimbra tribunal, however, displayed a higher average age among its married victims, who were approximately forty-seven years of age, men and women combined. Of the 107 married *mágicos* prosecuted in Coimbra whose ages are known, sixty-six were over forty-three years of age; half of those were over fifty.

Comparing these statistics with those of other European countries, we find that the Portuguese experience was, in most regards, similar to that of the rest of Europe. A survey of work by historians of other regions across Europe, for example, reveals that most accused witches were single or widowed, sometimes by a margin as large as 75%.<sup>33</sup> The average figure for unmarried alleged witches was lower, approaching 55%, which is consistent with the evidence in Portugal. So, a cross-section of accused witches in early modern Europe indicates that single, unattached persons were appreciably more vulnerable to accusation. That is, the percentage of single persons accused of magical crimes was markedly larger than the percentage of single people in the general population.

Women in particular felt their position simultaneously enhanced and compromised by these demographics; the greater numbers of their sex in the population at large increased their relative power, thus upsetting traditional societies in Europe and making women more vulnerable to witchcraft accusation. In Europe generally during the early modern period, the proportion of women in society grew in relation to men (though it fluctuated according to time and place). Women were able to enter social roles they had not formerly—or formally—held. Lengthy visitations of lethal diseases, prolonged periods of warfare, and voyages of exploration and colonization carried off a disproportionate number of men, leaving a surplus of women in western European nations still tightly organized around rules and

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<sup>33</sup> The figure quoted is for women in Kent, England, during the period 1560–1700; cited in Adrian Pollock, “Social and Economic Characteristics of Witchcraft Accusations in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Kent,” in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 95 (1975): 41, Table 3.

traditions which depended on a patriarchal hierarchy. For example, in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War in the Germanic territories or an ordeal of plague in London, the dearth of men induced unattached females to engage in trading ventures on their own, albeit on a small scale. Widowed or orphaned women increasingly asserted their ability, if not their legal right, to assume the functions of their deceased male guardians. Authorities complained but were at a practical loss to prevent such innovations by women, given the sparse availability of males to assume responsibility for many households or enterprises where the patriarch had died.<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, the social institutions which had traditionally absorbed this natural surplus of European women—convents and charitable hospitals—had been reduced in number, having been dissolved or seen their membership decline due to the Reformation. While this process occurred only in Protestant Europe and was not a factor in devout eighteenth-century Portugal (in fact, an unusually large number of the entire Portuguese population—men and women—was in holy orders),<sup>35</sup> there still had arisen a situation in Enlightenment-era Portugal where the proportion of unmarried and unattached women was much greater than it had been during the Middle Ages.<sup>36</sup> This circumstance was certain to produce social tension.

Like the fears associated with an abundance of single men, traditional societies preferred not to give single women at any level of maturity the latitude of movement or amount of responsibility accorded to married, established males. Yet the numbers of unattached females grew in the Portuguese countryside, particularly in the north, despite popular and elite fears of the outcome. Women remained unmarried longer but, more significantly, in some regions over a quarter of women never married at all, choosing to remain, to use the traditional contemporary phrase, “definitively celibate” all their lives. One indirect result, as the statistics below indicate, was that many

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 147–148.

<sup>35</sup> See Carl A. Hanson, *Economy and Society in Baroque Portugal, 1668–1703* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), pp. 27–31. See also David Francis, *Portugal, 1715–1808; Joanine, Pombaline and Rococo Portugal as Seen by British Diplomats and Traders* (London: Tamesis Books, Ltd., 1985), pp. 7–66.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Rowland, “Sistemas matrimoniales en la Península Iberica (siglos XVI–XIX)—uma perspectiva regional,” in *Demografía Histórica en España*, ed. David Rehr (Madrid: 1989), pp. 72–137; cited in José Mattoso, director, *História de Portugal*, 8 vols. (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1993), vol. 4: *O Antigo Regime*, p. 59.



single women forced by demographics to function alone into middle age and fend for themselves in a male-dominated world paid for their circumstances with time in the Inquisition prisons. Single women and widows made up a majority of the females the Holy Office prosecuted for magical crimes, even though they made up less than a third of the entire Portuguese female population.<sup>37</sup>

The Portuguese experience regarding married culprits prosecuted for magical offenses compared with the general European picture in the following ways. Although documentation is scant, Portuguese historians are able to assert population figures and statistics for marital status in Portugal during the nineteenth century, just following the period this study addresses. Such work allows for a rough comparison between the percentage of married persons in Portuguese society at large during the nineteenth century and the proportion of married persons accused in Inquisition trials fifty to one hundred years before.

Figures for the north of Portugal compiled by Robert Rowland place the number of women in the nineteenth century who married during their lives at approximately 75%, while men who married represented about 72%.<sup>38</sup> This region was under the jurisdiction of the Coimbra tribunal, which prosecuted married healers at a rate of 46% and 55%, respectively, of the total number of accused women and men. Married non-healers were prosecuted at a rate of 49% and 73% for women and men, respectively. Only married male non-healers, then, were tried in Coimbra at about the same rate as their numbers in society at large. All other married groups were accused at rates well below their proportion in the general populace.

During the same epoch in the south of Portugal, the number of persons who married during their lives stood at about 88% for women and 92% for men.<sup>39</sup> Southern Portugal was under the jurisdiction of the Évora tribunal, which prosecuted married healers at a rate of 44% for women and 43% for men. Married non-healers were prosecuted at a rate of 64% and 31% for women and men, respectively. In all categories, married *mágicos* were denounced at rates far below their proportion in the general population. Single persons, be they widowed or never-wed, thus made up a solid majority of the victims of denunciation and trial by the Inquisition.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

In the central Portuguese region, which the Lisbon tribunal supervised, the general rate of marriage among women was 82%, while just under 79% of all men married during their lives.<sup>40</sup> Among *curandeiros* whom the Inquisition tried in those districts, 44% of women and just 38% of men were married. Marriage rates among non-healers were even lower; only 31% of women and a mere 21% of men were married when the Lisbon tribunal tried them. Lisbon, then, had the lowest rates of prosecuted married persons of all the Portuguese tribunals.

Obviously, these rates of marriage among Inquisition victims were far out of proportion with the much higher rate of marriage in the general population, signifying that single and widowed persons were also being tried in numbers far larger than might have been predicted based on a strict statistical average of the populace at large. To that extent, the Portuguese experience among both men and women is consistent with accusation patterns other witchcraft historians have observed in countries across Europe.<sup>41</sup>

*Social and Economic Position: Birth, Wealth and Occupation*

During the early modern period, magical practices flourished in the Portuguese countryside, beyond the constant vigilance of church officials or state authorities and removed from modernizing currents of thought that circulated through larger towns. Popular healing in particular was a rustic craft (though certainly not exclusively so), thriving in poorer isolated areas. There, popular healing practices were most needed, both because of the chronic dearth of trained physicians—whose very scarcity tended to pitch the price of their care beyond the pocket of the average pastoral peasant—and the timeless tendency among rural people to rely on their own resources for their most fundamental needs.<sup>42</sup> Historians of this subject agree: the majority of Portugal's persecuted *mágicos* in the eighteenth century came from rural backgrounds and held occupations typical of agricultural areas.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> See analysis and tables in Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 145–148.

<sup>42</sup> Francisco Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 410–411; p. 421.

<sup>43</sup> In addition to Bethencourt's work cited above, see Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*,

Of course, part of the explanation for this finding lies in the highly rural nature of Portuguese society throughout that nation's history, even to the present day. During the period in question, except for a few densely populated regions, the great mass of people were spread relatively thinly across the land. While Portuguese demographers report that, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, their nation was relatively urbanized by the standards of Europe, with approximately 43% of the population living in incorporated towns, one must remember that the majority of those settlements were small rural communities of less than 500 or 800 hearths, where most of the residents spent much of their time farming fields in the surrounding countryside. Further, during the course of the eighteenth century, the average urban population in Portugal actually dropped marginally, so that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, 42% of Portuguese subjects lived in small, agriculturally oriented incorporated towns.<sup>44</sup> With such a high proportion of the total population of Portugal living in the countryside and engaged in agriculture, we should expect that the proportion of poor rustic *curandeiros* and other *mágicos* would also be high.

However, despite the impecunious circumstances of most common rural agrarian workers across Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were other reasons why those prosecuted for magical crimes tended to be poor. The lowest orders were the most vulnerable to accusation because they were positioned at a social disadvantage, having the fewest resources—money, education, connections, status—to defend themselves. Moreover, because of their chronic economic marginalization and lack of education, the poor were most likely to resort to providing magical services to their neighbors as a means of earning a meager income.<sup>45</sup>

Of the 444 instances where Holy Office authorities noted a magical criminal's professional occupation, only a relative handful were known to be employed in learned or lettered endeavors, or in positions which placed them above all but the most common laborer's conditions. Such occupations included sea captains, small merchants, military

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pp. 103–104; Maria Benedita Araújo, *Magia, Demónio e Força Mágica na Tradição Portuguesa (Séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994), pp. 9–26; and Maria Luísa Braga, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, pp. 175–177.

<sup>44</sup> Mattoso, pp. 61–63.

<sup>45</sup> Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, p. 150.

officers, lawyers, church sextons, scribes or clerks in provincial government administrative offices and even a few pharmacists and surgeons, but these professionals represent rare cases, with only one or two persons in each category. Together, the number of persons whose occupations placed them above the level of a “rude mechanical” numbered just forty-six, barely a tenth of all accused *mágicos* whose jobs are known.<sup>46</sup> Further, while the odd landed gentleman occasionally found himself accused of sorcery (the Inquisition tried three for magical crimes during the period of the present study), the other lettered occupations listed above were distinctly middle class professions. These individuals usually received fixed salaries in return for their work, but the status of their emerging social class did not guarantee them immunity from prosecution in an Inquisition court.

Overwhelmingly, though, the victims of Portuguese Inquisition magical crimes trials were of more vulgar stock. True, some were relatively skilled laborers, like the thirteen carpenters, eleven tailors, ten blacksmiths, three butchers, a baker and one parasol maker whom the Holy Office put on trial. But these were still artisans of low social station who did piecemeal work or collected wages; many of the carpenters were actually journeymen who hired themselves out by the day. Far more numerous were the sixty-six general laborers, the forty-nine tenant farmers, the sixteen itinerant beggars and the equal number of slaves whose cases (or those of their dependents) filled the Inquisition court dockets.<sup>47</sup>

Nearly 90% of all illicit magic trials—those for healing and other magical crimes combined—were against either semi-skilled or unskilled laborers. Only 10% of the prosecuted persons whose occupation (or that of their guardian and provider) is known had what can be described as comfortable, middle-class employment. The rest worked long hours with their hands for little pay. In fact, this ratio among popular healers is lower still. Only seventeen of 243 *curandeiros* held good jobs (a rate of just 7%), which speaks to the extremely reduced social condition of illicit healers generally. Other *mágicos* and their providers, by contrast, held good jobs at more than twice that rate: 14.42% (29 of 201).

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<sup>46</sup> See the tables, below, which detail the occupations of healers and non-healers persecuted for magical crimes in Portugal.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

Having considered all this data, a picture emerges of the Inquisition, an institution staffed in the eighteenth century primarily by lettered men of the upper and middling classes, censuring poor and vulnerable peasants to promote an intellectual value system—rationalism—that was largely class-determined. Where infractions for practicing magic are involved, this seems to have been the case.<sup>48</sup>

Once again, the Portuguese experience was consistent with those accused of magical crimes in other European countries.<sup>49</sup> Across early modern Europe, persons tried for practicing witchcraft and sorcery were typically among the poorest and least powerful members of society. Portugal was no exception: early modern magical criminals were overwhelmingly illiterate rustics living in poverty, often desperate for some small material gain that would move them away from the margins of society.<sup>50</sup>

### *Geographic Mobility of Mágicos and Médicos*

One distinction shared by Lusophone *mágicos* is just how mobile they were as a group. Detailed demographic data collected for this study allows for new observations about the general geographic mobility of Portuguese peasant magic users, as well as for the contemporary middle-class physicians who frequently opposed them in Inquisition courts. This data reveals important statistical information about the members of these groups, such as who moved their residence significant distances during their working lives and how far away they tended to relocate.

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<sup>48</sup> See the discussions of this issue in the following articles by José Viegas Torres: “Uma Longa Guerra Social: Os Ritmos da Repressão Inquisitorial em Portugal,” *Revista de História Económica e Social*, vol. 1 (1978), pp. 15–30; “Uma Longa Guerra Social: Novas Perspectivas para o Estudo da Inquisição Portuguesa a Inquisição de Coimbra,” *Revista de História das Ideias*, vol. 8 (1986), pp. 59–70; and “Da Repressão Religiosa para a Promoção Social: A Inquisição como Instância Legitimadora da Promoção Social da Burguesia Mercantil,” *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, vol. 40 (Lisbon: October 1994), pp. 109–135.

<sup>49</sup> See Russell, *A History of Witchcraft*, pp. 110–112; and Levack, *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 149–152.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

Table 9.1 Occupations of Healers

COMPOSITE: All Tribunals					
OCCUPATION	MEN	WOMEN	(Husband)	(Father)	TOTALS
Benzadora	0	4	0	0	4
Curandeira	0	55	0	0	55
Midwife	0	7	0	0	7
Prostitute	0	0	0	0	0
Weaver	0	0	0	0	0
Bailiff/Porter	0	0	0	1	1
Baker	0	0	0	0	0
Barber	2	0	0	0	2
Beggar/Wanderer	6	0	1	0	7
Benzadeiro	1	0	0	0	1
Blacksmith	0	0	4	1	5
Butcher	0	0	1	0	1
Carpenter	1	0	2	3	6
Cattle Breeder	0	0	0	0	0
Curandeiro	26	0	1	0	27
Cook	0	0	0	0	0
Digger/Hoer	2	0	1	0	3
Farmer (Tenant)	8	0	2	8	18
Farmer (Yeoman)	0	0	0	0	0
Fisherman	0	0	1	1	2
Gentleman	1	0	0	0	1
Goatherd	1	0	0	0	1
Innkeeper	0	0	0	0	0
Jailer	0	0	1	0	1
Laborer	9	0	13	4	26
Merchant	0	0	0	1	1
Military Officer	1	0	0	0	1
Miller	1	0	2	2	5
Muleteer	1	0	1	4	6
Musician	0	0	1	0	1
Olive/Fruit Presser	0	0	0	0	0
Painter	0	0	0	0	0
Pan Maker	0	0	0	0	0
Parasol/Sunhat Maker	0	0	1	0	1
Pharmacist	1	0	1	1	3
Priest	3	0	0	1	4
Sailor	0	0	4	0	4
Scribe/Clerk	0	0	0	1	1
Sea Captain	0	0	0	0	0
Servant	0	0	0	0	0
Sexton/Church Clerk	3	0	0	0	2
Shepherd	4	0	1	0	5
Shoemaker	3	0	0	0	3
Slave	7	0	1	1	9
Soldier	2	0	2	0	4
Solicitor/Lawyer	0	0	0	0	0
Stonemason	1	0	1	2	4
Street Paver	0	0	0	0	0
Student	1	0	0	0	1
Surgeon	4	0	0	0	4
Tailor	3	0	3	2	8
Tanner	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployed	5	0	1	0	6
Weaver	0	0	0	1	1
Wig Maker	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	97	66	46	34	243

Table 9.2 Occupations of Non-Healers

COMPOSITE: All Tribunals					
OCCUPATION	MEN	WOMEN	(Husband)	(Father)	TOTALS
Benzadora	0	0	0	0	0
Curandeira	0	0	0	0	0
Midwife	0	0	0	0	0
Prostitute	0	1	0	0	1
Seer/Visionary	0	2	0	0	2
Weaver	0	0	0	0	0
Bailiff/Porter	3	0	1	0	4
Baker	1	0	0	0	1
Barber	0	0	1	0	1
Beggar/Wanderer	7	0	0	2	9
Benzadeiro	0	0	0	0	0
Blacksmith	4	0	1	0	5
Butcher	1	0	1	0	2
Carpenter	5	0	0	2	7
Cattle Breeder	1	0	0	0	1
Curandeiro	0	0	0	0	0
Cook	2	0	0	0	2
Digger/Hoer	0	0	0	0	0
Farmer (Tenant)	19	0	4	8	31
Farmer (Yeoman)	2	0	0	0	2
Fisherman	1	0	0	0	1
Gentleman	2	0	0	0	2
Goatherd	0	0	0	0	0
Innkeeper	1	0	0	0	1
Jailer	0	0	0	0	0
Laborer	11	0	19	10	40
Merchant	3	0	0	2	5
Military Officer	1	0	0	1	2
Miller	2	0	2	0	4
Muleteer	0	0	4	0	4
Musician	1	0	0	0	1
Olive/Fruit Presser	2	0	0	0	2
Painter	0	0	1	0	1
Pan Maker	1	0	0	0	1
Parasol/Sunhat Maker	0	0	0	0	0
Pharmacist	0	0	0	0	0
Priest	5	0	0	1	6
Sailor	0	0	2	1	3
Scribe/Clerk	3	0	0	0	3
Sea Captain	1	0	0	1	2
Servant	6	0	0	0	6
Sexton/Church Clerk	3	0	0	0	3
Shepherd	3	0	0	0	3
Shoemaker	5	0	1	1	7
Slave	7	0	0	0	7
Soldier	5	0	3	1	9
Solicitor/Lawyer	1	0	0	0	1
Stonemason	0	0	3	1	4
Street Paver	0	0	1	0	1
Student	0	0	0	0	0
Surgeon	0	0	0	3	3
Tailor	1	0	1	1	3
Tanner	0	0	0	1	1
Unemployed	3	0	1	0	4
Weaver	2	0	0	0	2
Wig Maker	0	0	1	0	1
TOTALS	115	3	47	36	201

*Illicit Popular Healers*

By comparing the place of birth and initial childhood residence (*lugar de naturalidade*) of magical criminals with their place of residence (*residência*) at the time of their arrest (information which Inquisition scribes meticulously recorded when an accused suspect was incarcerated in the Holy Office prisons), it is possible to create a basic index of *mágicos'* mobility during adulthood.

Combining the *curandeiras* and *curandeiros* from all three Portuguese Inquisition tribunals, just above half (about 51%) made significant changes in their residence during their adult lives, moving to another community outside of their childhood home parish over distances exceeding twenty kilometers. Fifty-five were women; thirty-nine were men. 70% of these mobile *curandeiros* moved their residences away from the Portuguese state administrative districts (*comarcas*) where they had grown up, while only a few (about 5%) relocated relatively shorter distances of twenty to forty kilometers away from their childhood homes. Over half of all mobile popular healers made residential relocations of between 50 and 150 kilometers, while approximately 35% moved between 150 and 300 kilometers away to live. About 8% of adult popular healers made residential moves of 300 to 500 kilometers; the remaining 2% moved further still. All of those surveyed who had been born within continental Portugal stayed within that country's confines, while most *curandeiros* born in Angola or Brazil had, before their arrest, moved intercontinentally during their adult lives.

Predictably, the Lisbon Holy Office tribunal had the highest percentage of mobile *curandeiros*; nearly 68% of popular healers tried in the capital city had changed their residences over long distances. The cosmopolitan nature of Lisbon and its environs, with a sizable population of poor transients, suggests that this would be so, but this mobility figure is heavily augmented by slave convicts whose origins were in Angola or Brazil—their mobility, of course, was not a function of choice. To round out this picture, the tribunals in Évora and Coimbra arrested high-mobility *curandeiros* at rates of 53% and 46%, respectively.

*Non-Healing Magical Practitioners*

Among all non-healing *mágicos*, the mobility figure for men and women combined was almost exactly the same as for folk healers. Just over half (about 51.5%) changed their residence significantly during their



adult lives, moving to another community outside of the parish where they had been born and raised, over distances in excess of twenty kilometers. Seventy-six of these were women; fifty-seven were men.

About 61% of those mobile non-healing *mágicos* left the Portuguese government administrative districts (*comarcas*) where they had grown up, a figure nine percentage points lower than the figure for *curandeiros*. Conversely, a far larger proportion (about 15%) of those who moved their residences relocated them shorter distances—only twenty to forty kilometers from their childhood homes. However, nearly 60% of all mobile non-healing *mágicos* made residential relocations of between 50 and 200 kilometers, while about 18% moved between 200 and 300 kilometers away to live. Approximately 7% of non-healing *mágicos* made residential moves of 300 to 500 kilometers during their adult lives; the remaining 1% moved even greater distances. Only one person in this group left continental Portugal, moving her home to Spain.

Among non-healing magical criminals, the Lisbon tribunal again tried the highest percentage of those who were mobile; nearly 78% of persons in that category who were arrested in the capital city had moved their residences substantially away from their birthplace. Once again, this figure is partly the result of the high incidence of slave convicts from Angola and Brazil—they comprised 45% of the Lisbon detainees held for non-healing magical crimes who displayed high geographic mobility, involuntary as that mobility may have been. By comparison, the tribunals in Évora and Coimbra arrested high-mobility non-healing *mágicos* at rates of 49% and 46%, respectively.

### *Medical Professionals*

Data to create a similar demographic mobility index is also available for medical professionals who became *familiares* of the Holy Office. As part of the Inquisition's employee vetting process, the birthplace and residence of anyone wishing to be a Holy Office functionary were entered into the record of their applications (the *Habilitações do Santo Ofício*). Remarkably, educated medical professionals showed almost exactly the same rate of demographic mobility—just above half—as their contemporary *mágicos* who came from a lower social class. However, middle-class doctors and surgeons tended to move much further when they relocated.

Such very high instances (and distances) of geographic mobility

displayed by trained surgeons and physicians in early modern Portugal is less surprising, perhaps, than the figures for the poorer magical criminals, but the data is nevertheless striking. Although certainly set apart by their status as part of a rising professional middle class, *médicos* at this time often came from simple origins themselves. As members of a class of people who traditionally were bound to a specific region by custom and family obligations, historically they did not tend to move their households from place to place.<sup>51</sup> Not until they had entered the medical profession, that is, at which point their mobility quotient increased remarkably.

The 243 medical professionals—physicians, surgeons and barbers—surveyed for this study had all become Inquisition *familiares* between 1690 and 1778. All served the Holy Office during some stage of the peak years of Inquisition prosecutions against popular healers and other *mágicos*. Over half of those men (about 52%) made significant changes in their residence during their adult lives, moving to another community outside of their childhood home parish over distances exceeding twenty kilometers. Of those, more than three-quarters moved their residences surprising distances of more than 150 kilometers. The larger part of those moved between 150 and 300 kilometers (with most situated toward the high end of that scale), but nearly one-third moved distances of more than 500 kilometers.

While less highly trained barbers tended to stay closer to home, physicians and surgeons at this time tended to move long distances across Portugal or to the colonies during their working lives. This reflected contemporary labor circumstances; opportunities awaited physicians and surgeons born in the Portuguese interior if they were willing to move to communities on the coast or relocate to the overseas colonies. 78% left the Portuguese *comarcas* where they had grown up, a rate higher than that for either group of *mágicos*. Only a relative few (about 18%) relocated shorter distances of less than thirty kilometers. Surgeons' and physicians' initial moves usually occurred when they left home to study medicine at Coimbra or in Lisbon but, afterwards, they frequently relocated far from their homes to set up a practice in areas perceived to be in need of a medical professional.

Twenty-four *médicos* of the mobile group (19%) moved their residences internationally. Most were born in Portugal and went abroad

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<sup>51</sup> Mattoso, pp. 64–66.

to work in the colonies; they went to Brazil, primarily, but three went to Angola and Príncipe. Another handful had been born in Brazil; these travelled to Portugal to study medicine and decided, with two exceptions, to stay. Three other *médicos* came to study in Portugal from the Atlantic islands, one from Madeira and two from the Azores. One of those from the Azores remained in Lisbon, but the other two returned home to the islands after living several years in the metropolis.

*High Incidence of Accused Healers being Outsiders to their Communities*

In her study of prosecution patterns of the Portuguese Inquisition during the first half of the eighteenth century, Maria Luísa Braga observed that she encountered a larger percentage of slaves, freed slaves, Africans, Gypsies, mulattos and indigents as defendants in cases for crimes involving magic than in trials for any other type of crime.<sup>52</sup> To that list should be added otherwise average Portuguese peasants who were nevertheless outsiders or relative newcomers to the communities where they were accused and arrested; that is, the accused victims had been born and raised away from their place of residence at the time of their arrest and had only moved there in adulthood, brought by a marriage or for economic or professional reasons. In the early modern Portuguese experience, a very large percentage of accused *mágicos* came from a relatively small percentage of society—that portion of citizens which was either culturally marginal or domestically mobile, or both.

As Braga confirms later in her work (though she does not discuss the matter in detail or emphasize its significance), according to her research, a majority of accused *mágicos*—healers and non-healers alike—were living or travelling far from their homelands when they were denounced to the Holy Office.<sup>53</sup> As such, an important, necessary cognitive step toward clarifying our understanding of how practitioners of magic were persecuted in early modern Portugal is to interpret *curandeiros* and other *mágicos* as, in a slight majority of

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<sup>52</sup> Braga, pp. 177; 200–207. Braga organized the Inquisition trials she examined into eight different criminal categories; they are, in order of the frequency of their incidence: Sorcery, Bigamy, Blasphemy, Acts against the Functioning of the Holy Office, Perjury, Heresy, Visionary Prophesying and Sodomy.

<sup>53</sup> Braga, p. 178.

the cases, relative strangers within the communities that denounced them. Theirs was not a familiar, life-long presence in the conservative provincial communities in which most of them lived, and this circumstance in isolation made peripatetic folk healers, fortunetellers, and diviners somewhat more vulnerable. This is especially true in cases where an initial denunciation came from a commoner, or from a member of an elite group who was not a doctor—say, a clergyman or other *letrado*.

It is important to recognize that the purported skills of a magic user were not necessarily anathema to the commoners who provided evidence against them; local peasants might have relied on similar care from known area residents who used illicit folk methods to address their neighbors' ills. At the root of most of these denunciations, instead of a distaste for all magical practices, *per se*, seems to have been an element of xenophobic intolerance for perceived interlopers who did not naturally belong to the community.

Taking into consideration birth and residence data for all persons persecuted for magical crimes, the number of outsiders constitutes a bare majority of cases: just 50.9% (225 of 442). However, broken down by crime, regional tribunal and by the gender of the accused, the data takes on more nuanced and useful patterns.

In general, healers were slightly more likely than non-healers to be outsiders to the community in which they were denounced. Ninety-six of 184 folk healers—the combined total for all three tribunals—can be classified as outsiders (52.17%). Among non-healers, the rate of accused persons being newcomers was an even 50%—129 of 258 qualify as outsiders in the communities where they were arrested. However, viewed by tribunal, we see that, in the area supervised by the inquisitors of Évora, 63.63% of healers brought to justice were outsiders (42 of 66). In Lisbon, where the regional population was most transient, the rate of outsider persecution was just 59.09% (13 of 22)—surprisingly low, given the circumstances.

In the Coimbra region, the rate was lower still: only 43.74% (42 of 96) of prosecuted folk healers lived as newcomers in their communities. How can this be explained? Coimbra's lower persecution rate for outsiders can be used to argue that the tribunal in that city, influenced as it was by the community of physicians and surgeons surrounding the University Faculty of Medicine, was genuinely more serious about prosecuting all illicit medical practices, regardless of the identity of the perpetrators. Because a far higher percentage of

locally-born resident healers were brought to trial by the Coimbra inquisitors, often denounced and convicted by the testimony of local medical professionals (aided by their families and neighbors), the Holy Office authorities demonstrated that they were less content to prey simply on newcomers and transients in the communities within their jurisdiction, as the inquisitors in Évora and Lisbon were statistically more prone to do.

While it is true that the districts policed by the Évora and Lisbon tribunals were more likely to be frequented by a higher percentage of transient people, this factor alone does not account for the inflated number of trials involving otherwise unremarkable poor working people who were set apart from their fellow villagers not so much because they believed in magic, but because they had transplanted themselves into that community.

In matters of health, country people were usually more comfortable dealing with a healer whose character and personality were known in the region. Hence, some outsiders were denounced quite soon after moving into a new community and making claims about their capacity to effect cures. This dynamic can be seen at work particularly in the frequent cases of beggars, wanderers, and vagabonds who found themselves in the custody of the Inquisition after they had tried to earn a little money or food by claiming to have extraordinary, divinely inspired, healing skills.<sup>54</sup>

Far more numerous, however, were cases of folk healers who had been living in a community for a while, perhaps performing folk remedies a period of several years before being denounced by neighbors or a member of the local elite. Situations such as these strongly reinforce the impression that common people did not necessarily, or even typically, find illicit, superstitious folk healing objectionable. Rather, over time, if the efficacy of the newcomer's healing methods should be found wanting or if a number of beloved neighbors had expired while under the new healer's care, dissatisfaction and resentment in the community would naturally increase. It was at that point that a newcomer's vulnerability became apparent. Community cohesion might have prevented or postponed the denunciation of a locally-born folk healer; life-long familiarity could mitigate a negative response

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<sup>54</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* no. 8902; ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* nos. 5111; 5401; 5703; 6389; 6537.

by neighbors toward a native *curandeiro* whose healing practices had gone awry or fallen into disfavor.

At the very least, local rustics would have been quicker to shield “one of their own” from the negative results of an intervention from elite authorities in the church or Inquisition. An outsider to the community, however, could not expect the same level of forgiveness or protection. Hence, Portuguese peasants were moved to denounce outsiders—or, more likely, to support a community elite’s denunciation of an outsider with additional corroborating testimony—at an elevated rate. This rate differed from place to place within Portugal, however. In some regions, being an outsider seems to have carried greater liability, significantly increasing a magical practitioner’s chances of denunciation; in other regions, a newcomer’s status seems not to have mattered much at all.

Of course, because of their bias in favor of popular medicine and magic, peasants were less likely to initiate an Inquisition investigation into the activities of a *curandeiro* unless they had been specifically harmed by a healer’s actions—such action was generally the reserve of the elites in any given community. The fact that elites initiated denunciations against *mágicos* much more frequently than peasants did, and that they did so with a pre-existing bias (largely determined by their socio-economic circumstances and level of education) which was characteristically antagonistic to popular medicine and magic, also helps account for the increased number of outsiders charged with conducting illicit remedies. Simply put, newcomers stood out. We may reasonably expect that elites as well as commoners would have, out of plain curiosity, watched persons who were new to a community more closely, marking any behavior that seemed strange or suspicious. Thus, an outsider’s novelty made her vulnerable. Moreover, commoners are likely to have been more inclined to complain to persons in authority about a newcomer, thus starting a chain of events that often led to a trial by the Holy Office.

A word here about foreign folk healers will be instructive. In few early modern professions was it of more utility to be a non-Portuguese outsider—at least initially. And herein lies a paradox: the very thing that made outsiders vulnerable over time to xenophobic peasants—their foreign strangeness—could also make them, upon first sight, attractive.

The healing arts have always been akin to the mystical. Even as rational medicine began to dominate elite Portuguese medical practice,

among common folk the practice of medicine retained its mystique. Hence, we can better understand the ease with which quack doctors of all types exploited common ignorance about healing, turning it to their own advantage. Then as now, exotic foreign remedies held a certain magnetic power in the popular imagination. If one lacks a basic understanding of human physiology, the more fantastic the proposed cure for any ill—the more inflated the promised results of a novel treatment—the better it sounds to one who is desperately ill or in pain. Therefore, an exotic *estrangeiro* (foreigner) with an unusual, highly touted remedy could hold an initial psychological advantage over practitioners of known methods, particularly if the success rate of those familiar sanctioned cures was known to be moderate to bad, or in any case painful. So, despite being, for example, a Spaniard or an African, peripatetic *curandeiros* newly arrived in a rural settlement (or even cosmopolitan Lisbon) did have certain factors working in their favor when they offered their services to the locals.

Among non-healers, rates of prosecution for outsiders tell a different, mixed story. As might be expected, given the cosmopolitan, highly mobile nature of the population in the city and colonial regions that this tribunal supervised, outsiders comprised a much higher percentage of non-healers prosecuted in Lisbon than in the more provincial tribunals. Lisbon's proportion of outsiders whom the Inquisition tried for magical crimes was 72.72% among non-healers. Coimbra, on the other hand, tried outsider non-healers at almost exactly the same rate as outsider *curandeiros*: 43%. Évora's toll, meanwhile, fell exactly on the overall average; 50% of the *mágicos* tried in Évora, if they were not folk healers, lived as outsiders in communities which ostracized them through a denunciation to the Holy Office.

Women who were outsiders, be they popular healers or practitioners of other types of magic, were significantly more likely to be accused than men. Or, at least, accused female outsiders were far more numerous than accused male outsiders. Only among popular healers in Lisbon did male outsiders outnumber female ones (seven to five); in all other categories, women outnumbered men by a wide margin. Among newcomers, *curandeiras* outnumbered *curandeiros* in both Évora and Coimbra; in the former case, 57.12% of outsiders were women, while in the latter case the figure was 71.42%. In all three tribunals, women were more numerous than men among simple *mágicos* who were outsiders—women accounted for 56.52% in Coimbra and 62.49% in Lisbon, but only 50.84% in Évora, where the Inquisition tried only one more woman than man in this category.

*New Christians Prosecuted for Magical Crimes and Illicit Healing*

Although Maria Luísa Braga maintains that no New Christians were prosecuted or punished for magical crimes, in fact, new research has turned up several such trials of *conversos* that the Coimbra and Lisbon tribunals conducted during the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>55</sup> The Coimbra tribunal tried eight *cristãos novos* for performing magic; the inquisitors in Lisbon tried one. Even though they represent only a relative handful of total cases, the experience of these individuals demonstrates how—and suggests why—the Holy Office tried and exiled *conversos* for their guilt in propagating magical crimes, including illicit healing.

In Coimbra, the Holy Office tribunal brought eight New Christians to trial for magical crimes during the period studied. All of these cases arose between 1702 and 1737, but six of the eight trials took place during an eighteen-year period between 1719 and 1737, corresponding therefore with the peak years for Portuguese witch-hunting. These prosecuted *conversos* were divided evenly between women and men. Of the five whose ages are known, four were between fifty-three and sixty years old; the fifth was thirty-eight. The largest group—half of those accused—came from the region around Coimbra. Three of the remaining New Christians resided in the vicinity of Braga, an area noted for harboring communities of New Christians and crypto-Jews.<sup>56</sup> The last lived in the environs of Lamego.<sup>57</sup>

Sentences for condemned New Christian *mágicos* in Coimbra were no more severe than those of their Old Christian counterparts. Four of the eight were exiled to specific locations within Portugal—Guarda, Lamego, Miranda and Évora—for periods ranging from three to four years, while two were banished from Coimbra, their home district, each for two years.<sup>58</sup> The lightest sentence which the Coimbra inquisitors meted out to a *converso* was simply to perform “spiritual penances”—tantamount in practice to a stern warning—while the most severe penalty saw the condemned culprit whipped through the streets of Coimbra, deprived of all his goods (which the Holy Office

<sup>55</sup> Braga, p. 177.

<sup>56</sup> See Maria José Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Os judeus em Portugal no século XV* (Lisbon: Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1982), pp. 43–107.

<sup>57</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 56, 57, 2531, 3371, 8825, 8845, 9782 and 10087.

<sup>58</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 56, 2531, 3371, 8825, 9782 and 10087, respectively.



confiscated) and exiled for five years to Angola, where he was to be kept perpetually imprisoned and forced to wear a penitent's habit.<sup>59</sup>

Only two of these eight cases saw the accused New Christian charged specifically with illicit superstitious healing. Curiously, both of their trials occurred very early in the eighteenth century, in 1702 and 1705, before king João V's nomination of Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello as Inquisitor General. However, given the chronological context in which the Holy Office in Coimbra tried the remaining six *conversos*, it is probable that at least some of their crimes did involve conducting magical remedies, even if such charges were not reflected in the specific transgressions mentioned on the trial dossier.<sup>60</sup> All six were arrested, held, and made to perform an *auto-da-fé* with convicted healers at a time when elevated numbers of magical healers were being brought to trial annually.

Similarly, the lone *converso* prosecuted for magical crimes in Lisbon was arrested and brought to trial on 11 September 1712, just as the great increase in cases against popular healers was beginning. The victim was a woman from rural Beja, Antónia Maria, aged about thirty, whose crimes were a mixture of those traditionally levied against *mágicos* and *judeus*: superstition, sorcery, heresy and apostasy. She was found guilty the following spring and performed an *auto-da-fé* in Lisbon's Rossio Square on 9 July 1713. Officials of the Lisbon tribunal must have found her behavior especially odious, because the sentence they handed down to her was remarkably harsh. She lost all her worldly goods to the Inquisition (indicating, perhaps, that she possessed some valuable goods to forfeit), was whipped through Lisbon's streets, forbidden to enter her home district ever again, and banished to Angola for three years.<sup>61</sup>

Whatever her objectionable transgressions, an indication of Antónia Maria's tenacity and pique is that she was arrested nearly seven years later in Pernambuco, Brazil, for lapsing into her old ways. Shipped back to Lisbon for her trial in 1720, this time the Holy Office sentenced her to perpetual imprisonment in Miranda, an isolated town in northern Portugal, near the Spanish border.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 8845 and 57, respectively.

<sup>60</sup> Recall that Paiva asserted in his *Bruxaria e Superstição* that illicit healing was a factor in up to fifty-eight percent of all cases involving *mágicos* (p. 208). Braga agrees in her work, *A Inquisição em Portugal*, asserting that persons tried for magical crimes were "most usually" healers (p. 175).

<sup>61</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisbon, *processo* no. 1377.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

These cases notwithstanding, Maria Luísa Braga's initial assertion about New Christians is essentially correct—the Holy Office was, generally speaking, not interested in pursuing suspected crypto-Jews for crimes relating to magic. Of the composite group of *mágico* trials surveyed for the present study, the nine *converso* cases detected account for a mere 2.03% of the whole. As such, they represent an anomaly in Inquisition practices. To be sure, the Holy Office in Portugal was keenly interested in extirpating *judaismo* within Portuguese society—indeed, this mission was the Inquisition's top priority, accounting by some estimates for nearly 95% of all trials during the three-hundred-year period of that institution's activity.<sup>63</sup> Encouraged by broad popular antipathy toward Jews and the official ambivalence of the crown, the Holy Office continued its policy of persecuting alleged crypto-Jews during the first half of the eighteenth century. In fact, this policy actually took a sharp upturn between 1730 and 1735, when Holy Office prosecutions against suspected crypto-Jews increased dramatically across Portugal.<sup>64</sup> The great majority of all trials inquisitors initiated between 1700 and 1760, therefore, continued to be against *conversos* for secretly practicing Judaism.<sup>65</sup>

That the nine cases against New Christians mentioned above were conducted on charges other than for practicing Judaism suggests that the individuals who originally denounced these New Christians to Inquisition officials may not have felt they had sufficient evidence to bring a case against them for *judaismo*. On a practical level, winning a conviction by alleging magical crimes, such as performing acts of sorcery or having a pact with the devil, was after all somewhat easier because those crimes required less tangible evidence—indeed, *could not* provide more tangible evidence—than could the factual practice of Judaism. Therefore, a would-be prosecutor may have deemed it easier to prove magical crimes to the satisfaction of the inquisitors serving in the regional tribunals than *judaismo* in these specific cases. The possibility exists, too, that this may have been a legal strategy Holy Office functionaries themselves adopted, once the inquisitors found

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<sup>63</sup> See Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe; Studies in Sources and Methods* (Dekalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), pp. 90–91. See also Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," pp. 407–408, and João Lúcio de Azevedo, *História dos Cristãos-Novos portugueses*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Livria Clássica Editora, 1975), pp. 487–490.

<sup>64</sup> António Simões Rodrigues, ed., *História de Portugal em Datas* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, Lda., 1994), p. 152.

<sup>65</sup> Bethencourt, "Portugal: A Scrupulous Inquisition," p. 407.

themselves with these New Christians in their custody but without sufficient evidence of *judaismo* to win a conviction against them.

All nine of the New Christian in question were charged, like other *mágicos*, either with having a pact with the devil, conducting acts of sorcery, or both—something that was never done in cases alleging the crime of *judaismo*. However, in four of these cases, all involving women, the accused New Christians faced additional charges which were consistent with those typically levied against suspected crypto-Jews, but which appear relatively rarely in cases against *mágicos*: apostasy, heresy and blasphemy.<sup>66</sup> Such revelations reinforce the impression that, in rare cases, Inquisition prosecutors may have used magical crimes as a convenient way to convict suspected Jews when stronger evidence establishing their criminalized religious faith was lacking.

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<sup>66</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Lisbon, *processo* no. 1377; ANTT, Inquisição de Coimbra, *processo* nos. 57; 9782; 10087.

*Demographic Tables: Date of Arrest, Age at Arrest, Sex and Civil Status*

Table 9.3 Composite Totals (Healers and Non-Healers; All Tribunals)

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
1681-1685	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
1686-1690	2	1	0	3	0	0	6
1691-1695	1	0	0	0	1	0	3
1696-1700	2	9	1	2	0	1	15
1701-1705	2	3	2	1	4	2	15
1706-1710	0	5	2	3	0	0	10
1711-1715	4	11	1	4	3	1	24
1716-1720	7	20	12	9	12	2	62
1721-1725	3	9	3	4	18	0	37
1726-1730	8	13	6	6	3	1	37
1731-1735	7	10	6	5	5	0	33
1736-1740	7	7	4	3	10	2	33
1741-1745	5	11	12	9	7	3	47
1746-1750	4	6	1	5	3	0	22
1751-1755	6	10	6	3	6	2	33
1756-1760	1	4	4	3	4	0	16
1761-1765	1	2	3	4	2	0	8
1766-1770	0	1	2	3	2	0	3
1771-1775	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
1776-1780	0	1	0	4	0	0	5
1781-1785	0	4	0	1	3	0	8
1786-1790	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
1791-1802	0	0	0	3	0	0	1
TOTALS	63	134	66	79	87	14	442

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
15 to 20	4	2	0	11	1	0	18
21 to 27	15	9	5	13	10	0	52
28 to 35	8	23	4	11	12	0	58
36 to 42	11	18	7	5	12	0	53
43 to 50	8	37	9	3	14	1	72
51 to 58	3	8	2	2	5	1	21
59 to 65	6	10	12	2	10	1	37
66 to 72	0	6	8	2	2	3	20
73 to 80	1	0	5	2	1	5	14
81 to 90	0	0	3	0	1	1	5
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
Age Unknown	7	23	12	25	18	0	85

Table 9.4 Composite Healers (All Tribunals)

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
1681-1685	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
1686-1690	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1691-1695	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
1696-1700	1	4	0	1	0	1	7
1701-1705	1	1	1	1	2	2	9
1706-1710	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1711-1715	1	2	0	2	2	1	8
1716-1720	3	6	5	4	5	0	23
1721-1725	2	3	2	1	6	0	14
1726-1730	3	6	4	1	1	0	15
1731-1735	3	5	3	3	2	0	16
1736-1740	3	3	0	3	3	1	13
1741-1745	3	4	7	4	4	1	23
1746-1750	2	1	0	2	2	0	10
1751-1755	2	6	3	0	1	1	13
1756-1760	0	0	2	1	2	0	5
1761-1765	1	1	1	2	1	0	6
1766-1770	0	0	2	1	1	0	4
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1780	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
1781-1785	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
1786-1790	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
1791-1802	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	29	50	31	31	35	7	184

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
15 to 20	1	0	0	6	1	0	8
21 to 27	4	4	1	5	5	0	19
28 to 35	3	7	2	3	4	0	19
36 to 42	5	4	4	1	7	0	21
43 to 50	5	21	5	3	4	1	39
51 to 58	3	2	2	1	2	0	10
59 to 65	5	4	4	2	3	1	19
66 to 72	0	4	6	1	1	2	13
73 to 80	1	0	3	0	0	1	5
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Age Unknown	2	4	5	7	7	0	25

Table 9.5 Composite Non-Healers (All Tribunals)

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	1	1	0	3	0	0	5
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1696-1700	1	5	1	1	0	0	8
1701-1705	1	2	1	0	2	0	6
1706-1710	0	4	1	3	0	0	8
1711-1715	3	9	1	2	1	0	16
1716-1720	4	14	7	5	7	2	39
1721-1725	1	6	1	3	12	0	23
1726-1730	5	7	2	5	2	1	22
1731-1735	4	5	3	2	3	0	17
1736-1740	4	4	4	0	7	1	20
1741-1745	2	7	5	5	3	2	24
1746-1750	2	5	1	3	1	0	12
1751-1755	4	4	3	3	5	1	20
1756-1760	1	4	2	2	2	0	11
1761-1765	0	1	2	2	1	0	6
1766-1770	0	1	0	2	1	0	4
1771-1775	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
1776-1780	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
1781-1785	0	3	0	0	2	0	5
1786-1790	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1791-1802	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
TOTALS	34	82	35	48	52	7	258

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
15 to 20	3	2	0	5	0	0	10
21 to 27	11	5	4	8	5	0	33
28 to 35	5	16	2	8	8	0	39
36 to 42	6	14	3	4	5	0	32
43 to 50	3	16	4	0	10	0	33
51 to 58	0	6	0	1	3	1	11
59 to 65	1	6	8	0	7	0	18
66 to 72	0	2	2	1	1	1	7
73 to 80	0	0	2	2	1	4	9
81 to 90	0	0	3	0	0	1	4
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Age Unknown	5	19	7	18	11	0	60

Table 9.6 Coimbra Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1691-1695	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1696-1700	1	2	0	0	0	1	4
1701-1705	1	0	1	0	2	2	7
1706-1710	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1711-1715	1	1	0	2	2	1	7
1716-1720	2	4	1	1	1	0	9
1721-1725	1	3	2	0	6	0	12
1726-1730	3	2	3	0	0	0	8
1731-1735	3	4	2	0	1	0	10
1736-1740	2	2	0	3	3	1	11
1741-1745	2	3	2	0	1	1	9
1746-1750	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1751-1755	1	5	2	0	0	0	8
1756-1760	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1761-1765	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
1766-1770	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1780	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1781-1785	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1786-1790	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
1791-1802	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	21	31	15	6	16	6	96

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
15 to 20	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
21 to 27	3	1	0	2	2	0	8
28 to 35	2	6	1	0	2	0	11
36 to 42	3	3	2	0	4	0	12
43 to 50	4	13	3	0	3	0	23
51 to 58	3	1	1	0	2	0	7
59 to 65	5	4	2	1	1	1	14
66 to 72	0	3	4	1	1	2	11
73 to 80	1	0	2	0	0	1	4
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Age Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 9.7 Évora Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
1681-1685	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
1686-1690	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1696-1700	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
1701-1705	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1706-1710	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1711-1715	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1716-1720	1	1	4	2	3	0	11
1721-1725	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1726-1730	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
1731-1735	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
1736-1740	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1741-1745	0	1	4	4	3	0	12
1746-1750	0	3	0	1	2	0	6
1751-1755	1	1	1	0	1	1	5
1756-1760	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
1761-1765	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
1766-1770	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1780	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1781-1785	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
1786-1790	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1791-1802	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	5	15	14	17	14	1	66

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
15 to 20	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
21 to 27	1	2	0	2	2	0	7
28 to 35	0	1	1	2	1	0	5
36 to 42	2	1	1	1	2	0	7
43 to 50	0	6	2	2	1	1	12
51 to 58	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
59 to 65	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
66 to 72	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
73 to 80	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age Unknown	2	4	5	7	7	0	25



Table 9.8 Lisbon Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1696-1700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1701-1705	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1706-1710	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1711-1715	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1716-1720	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
1721-1725	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1726-1730	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
1731-1735	0	1	0	2	1	0	4
1736-1740	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1741-1745	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
1746-1750	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
1751-1755	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1756-1760	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1761-1765	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1766-1770	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1780	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1781-1785	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1786-1790	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1791-1802	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	3	4	2	8	5	0	22

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 to 20	1	0	0	4	1	0	6
21 to 27	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
28 to 35	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
36 to 42	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
43 to 50	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
51 to 58	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
59 to 65	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
66 to 72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
73 to 80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 9.9 Coimbra Non-Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1696-1700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1701-1705	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
1706-1710	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
1711-1715	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
1716-1720	0	3	0	0	4	2	9
1721-1725	0	4	1	0	12	0	17
1726-1730	5	5	1	1	1	0	13
1731-1735	1	3	3	0	3	0	10
1736-1740	3	4	4	0	7	1	19
1741-1745	1	2	3	2	1	2	11
1746-1750	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
1751-1755	2	1	1	1	3	1	9
1756-1760	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
1761-1765	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1766-1770	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1776-1780	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1781-1790	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
1791-1796	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1796-1802	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	13	29	17	7	35	6	107

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 to 20	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
21 to 27	2	0	0	0	2	0	4
28 to 35	1	6	1	1	4	0	13
36 to 42	5	6	1	4	4	0	20
43 to 50	3	8	2	0	9	0	22
51 to 58	0	3	0	1	3	1	8
59 to 65	1	2	7	0	7	0	17
66 to 72	0	2	2	0	1	1	6
73 to 80	0	0	2	0	1	3	6
81 to 90	0	0	2	0	0	1	3
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Age Unknown	0	1	0	0	3	0	4

Table 9.10 Évora Non-Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	0	1	0	3	0	0	4
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1696-1700	1	5	0	1	0	0	7
1701-1705	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
1706-1710	0	1	0	3	0	0	4
1711-1715	2	6	1	2	1	0	12
1716-1720	4	11	7	5	3	0	30
1721-1725	0	1	0	2	0	0	3
1726-1730	0	2	1	4	1	1	9
1731-1735	1	2	0	2	0	0	5
1736-1740	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1741-1745	1	5	2	2	2	0	12
1746-1750	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
1751-1755	1	2	2	1	2	0	8
1756-1760	0	3	1	0	1	0	5
1761-1765	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
1766-1770	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
1771-1775	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1776-1780	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
1781-1785	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1786-1790	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1790-1802	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	11	47	15	30	14	1	118

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 to 20	1	1	0	4	0	0	6
21 to 27	4	5	3	7	2	0	21
28 to 35	0	9	1	2	3	0	15
36 to 42	1	7	1	0	1	0	10
43 to 50	0	6	2	0	1	0	9
51 to 58	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
59 to 65	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
66 to 72	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
73 to 80	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age Unknown	5	16	7	16	7	0	51

Table 9.11 Lisbon Non-Healers

Date of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
1668-1680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1681-1685	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1686-1690	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1691-1695	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1696-1700	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1701-1705	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1706-1710	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1711-1715	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1716-1720	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1721-1725	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
1726-1730	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1731-1735	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
1736-1740	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
1741-1745	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1746-1750	2	2	0	1	1	0	6
1751-1755	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
1756-1760	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
1761-1765	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
1766-1770	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
1771-1775	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
1776-1780	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
1781-1785	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1786-1790	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
1791-1802	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	10	6	3	11	3	0	33

Age of Arrest	Women			Men			TOTALS
	Single	Married	Widowed	Single	Married	Widowed	
9 to 14	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
15 to 20	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
21 to 27	5	0	1	1	1	0	8
28 to 35	4	1	0	5	1	0	11
36 to 42	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
43 to 50	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
51 to 58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
59 to 65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
66 to 72	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
73 to 80	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
81 to 90	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
91 to 100+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age Unknown	0	2	0	2	1	0	5

*Tables: Types of Crimes and Charges*

Table 9.12 Healer Crime/Charges

CRIME/CHARGE	TRIBUNAL			Totals
	Coimbra	Evora	Lisbon	
Sorcery	69	33	11	113
Witchcraft	10	3	10	23
Pact with the Devil	18	44	4	66
Superstitions	73	34	10	117
Benzaduras (Blessings)	5	3	0	8
Superstitious Cures	21	8	1	30
Heresy	1	1	0	2
Apostasy	1	1	0	2
Charlatanry	2	0	0	2
Feigning/Faking	0	1	1	2
Fortune Telling	0	3	0	3
Beliefs of a Folk Healer	0	2	0	2
Folk Healing	0	19	3	22
Maleficia	0	2	0	2
Totals	200	154	40	394

Table 9.13 Non-Healer Crime/Charges

CRIME/CHARGE	TRIBUNAL			Totals
	Coimbra	Evora	Lisbon	
Sorcery	91	70	15	176
Witchcraft	9	3	12	24
Pact w/ the Devil	36	83	2	121
Superstitions	90	67	17	174
Benzaduras (Blessings)	0	1	0	1
Superstitious Cures	0	0	0	0
Heresy	5	12	3	20
Apostasy	4	2	2	8
Charlatanry	1	0	0	1
Feigning/Faking	0	3	0	3
Fortune Telling	0	13	0	13
Beliefs of a Healer	0	2	0	2
Bigamy	1	0	0	1
Sodomy	0	1	0	1
Blasphemy	1	6	0	7
Totals	238	263	51	552

## CHAPTER TEN

### CONCLUSIONS

A sustained, systematic repression of popular healing activity transpired in early modern Portugal during a period when several distinct but related circumstances coalesced: Dom João V, a monarch recognized as being sympathetic to some enlightenment principles (particularly aspects of rationalized science and medicine that could provide a clear benefit to the society he governed), held the throne. His crown-appointed Inquisitor General, the liberally trained and “foreignized” Dom Nuno da Cunha de Ataíde e Mello, supervised the Holy Office, the institution that held primary responsibility for bringing folk healers to trial. Expatriate physicians in London, Utrecht, Paris and elsewhere were increasing their lobbying efforts toward the Portuguese crown, advocating reforms of medical education and practices in Portugal. This expatriate-led movement for enlightened medical reform was in turn influencing university-trained and licensed doctors and surgeons, Old Christians who were increasingly infiltrating the ranks of the Inquisition, serving as *familiares* (informants and low-level functionaries), prison physicians and expert witnesses in trials. Finally, the Holy Office policy statement on popular healers, *Dos Saludadores*, was written and put into circulation among top Inquisition personnel shortly before this time. By 1715, then, circumstances were exceptionally fecund for an organized repression of popular healers.

By the final quarter of the eighteenth century, however, trials against popular healers in Portugal had become so rare as to be virtually unknown. During the 1780s and 1790s, a handful of cases cropped up in the provincial regions under the jurisdiction of tribunals sitting in Évora or Coimbra, marking a brief, weak resurgence of Inquisition authority following the Marquês de Pombal’s fall in 1777. By and large, however, the period of rationalist reforms enacted during the reign of Dom José I brought “witch hunting” in Portugal to a close, while Pombal’s new Holy Office *Regimento*, promulgated to the largely unwilling *inquisidores* of the General Council in 1774, made prosecuting magical crimes more difficult than ever. Only eight popular healers were made to stand trial in Portugal after

1771 (the last one in Évora in 1802—after a twelve-year hiatus in which no healers had been tried in that city); these form the minority among a group of twenty-two total magical criminals prosecuted by the combined Portuguese tribunals during the same period.

How can we explain this shift? The average annual number of *mágico* trials across Portugal during the last fourth of the eighteenth century was far less than one (0.76 per year, in fact), having dropped from an annual average of 2.88 during the preceding quarter-century. Between 1721 and 1750, the average had been nearly seven trials per year, almost sixty percent of them against popular healers.<sup>1</sup>

A big part of the explanation involves the advent of Pombaline reforms in the 1760s and 1770s. The interests of enlightened doctors made a great leap forward when Pombal promulgated his reform plan for the University of Coimbra in 1772. With the expulsion of the Jesuits and their archaic curricula, physicians and surgeons no longer had to make their fight for rationalized medicine primarily in the countryside among poor commoners whose world view remained mired in the conceits of popular superstition. Portugal's Enlightenment-influenced medical community became free to teach empirical science in the universities, shaping new generations of conventional medical practitioners at the very center of state-sanctioned medical training. For *médicos* inclined toward Enlightenment-era methodologies, Pombal's educational reforms meant that the focus of the struggle for the introduction of a new intellectual paradigm in Portugal would shift decisively toward Coimbra University and away from Portugal's country villages.

At almost the same moment, the Portuguese Holy Office—the very institution that physicians and surgeons had used for more than seventy years as the agency for their deliberate program of oppression against practitioners of popular medicine—experienced a marked decline in its prestige and power. Pombal's reforms subordinated the *Santo Ofício's* power definitively to that of the state. Administration of the institution fell increasingly to a series of hand-picked Inquisitors General who severely limited the power of their functionaries to target and oppress specific groups of people for non-spiritual crimes.

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<sup>1</sup> José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição num País Sem 'Caça às Bruxas': Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997), pp. 207–213. Also, see the tables provided with Chapter VIII, above.

Further, the new 1774 *Regimento* governing the Holy Office made the conviction of an accused magic-user—proving his or her guilt when denunciations included allegations of Satanic intervention—more difficult, resulting in a decrease in cases.<sup>2</sup> The revised by-laws showed the mark of rationalist thought; they asserted that pacts with the devil could not be empirically proven. Further—and remarkably—the 1774 *Regimento* criticized earlier Holy Office policies as backward, stressing that prosecutions which the Inquisition had conducted against magical criminals in the past had been the result of “errors committed by powerful people,” or the consequences of Inquisition personnel having been profoundly affected by the study of metaphysics, or even that magical crimes trials had been a logical outcome, given the mentality of older generations with their ignorant and superstitious beliefs.<sup>3</sup> Pursuing convictions against peasants who remained stubbornly ignorant, the 1774 *Regimento* implied, was hardly worth the trouble:

In the present enlightened century, it would be incompatible with the gravity, the wisdom and the decorum of the Board of the Holy Office to undertake voluminous trials, seriously and with judicial formalities, with respect to the fantastic ideas of some criminals, with such consequences that the same seriousness with which one makes treaties would be accorded to those who endeavor to win the beliefs of most of the common people; for in them multiply so many followers of the doctrines contrary to true existence, those beliefs which are marked by errors and impostors; and so many are the ignorant fools and cowards that eventually, on the contrary, ridiculed and despised, these beliefs will in time be extinguished, as was the experience already shown among the more refined nations of Europe.<sup>4</sup>

Hence, after 1774, physicians and surgeons found one element of their multifaceted medical reform strategy thwarted; they could no longer hope to discredit magical healing methods in the popular mind by working within the Inquisition to convict *curandeiros* or *saludadores* and force them into exile.

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<sup>2</sup> *Regimento do Santo Ofício da Inquisição dos Reinos de Portugal, organizado com o Real Beneplácito e Regio Auxílio pelo Eminentíssimo, Reverendíssimo Cardeal da Cunha, dos Conselhos de Estado, e Gabinete de Sua Magestade, e Inquisidor Geral nestes Reinos e em todos os Seus Domínios* (Lisbon: Oficina de Manuel Manescal da Costa, 1774), Livro 3, Título XI, Capítulo 1, § 6.

<sup>3</sup> Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> *Regimento do Santo Ofício da Inquisição dos Reinos de Portugal* (1774), p. 122; author's translation.



As José Pedro Paiva observed, in the rare trials conducted against healers after 1770, the idea that their healing ability could come through the power of the devil disappeared completely. In its place was the idea that only God or scientific medicine had true curative powers and that those reprobates who practiced “superstitious cures” needed only “instruction in the faith” to convince them to cease their “faking” ways.<sup>5</sup> During the interrogation of Manuel Antunes in 1795, for example, this sentiment was clearly at work. Inquisitors of the Lisbon tribunal asked the accused *curandeiro* “. . . if he knew whether the virtue to cure maladies came from God, or miraculously, or by way of the same virtue communicated to the plants and other [medicinal] materials, administered by the hand of professors [professional medical teachers]?” Satanic influences were never mentioned. The devil, it is clear, had lost the power to heal.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps, too, conventional *médicos* had begun to realize that, despite hundreds of *mágico* prosecutions, their Inquisition-based strategy to discredit superstitious popular healers was not working. The circumstances which had given rise to the popularity of magical healing among common rustic people had not diminished, nor had the relative number of conventional *médicos* in the Portuguese countryside grown substantially. Even after several generations of oppression, the popular appetite for superstitious remedies proved too deep-seated for even the energetic moral fastidiousness of the Holy Office to extirpate. Judging by evidence of subsequent illicit folk healer activity in the countryside, demand for a *curandeiro* or *saludador*'s services remained as prodigious as ever.<sup>7</sup>

Further evidence of the failure of the Holy Office campaign against popular healers began to mount almost as soon as fear of Inquisition prosecution abated. By the last decade of the eighteenth century, *curandeiros*, emboldened by the knowledge that *familiares* and *médicos* would no longer denounce or arrest them, began to advertise their services openly in the streets of Lisbon.<sup>8</sup> Several *curandeiros* even went

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

<sup>6</sup> ANTT, Inquisição de Évora, *processo* no. 9735; cited in Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, p. 89.

<sup>7</sup> See George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain* (London and New York: John Lane, 1902), pp. 28–29. Also, see Paiva, *Bruxaria e Superstição*, pp. 209, 215 and 223.

<sup>8</sup> See Augusto da Silva Carvalho, *Médicos e Curandeiros* (Lisbon: Tipographia Adolphe de Mendonça, 1917), p. 52.

so far as to take out advertisements in the most important Portuguese newspaper at the time, the *Gazeta de Lisboa*. Typically, these notices would provide a list of specific services on offer, as well as an account of the healer's successful curative work.

For example, the *Gazeta de Lisboa* of 30 June 1792 carried an advertisement from a *curandeira* known as *a Ingleza* ("the English woman") who held consultations in her residence on Rua do Norte in Lisbon's Bairro Alto. The notice asserted that this *curandeira* had healed a man who had been nearly blind for eight years. Just over a year later, on 20 July 1793, the *Gazeta de Lisboa* ran another publicity notice from the same woman saying that she had changed her residence. The advertisement also recounted the new healing successes *a Ingleza* had accomplished. Another specialist in addressing infirmities of the eyes, a *curandeiro* called "Padre" Manual de Jesus, placed an advertisement in the *Gazeta de Lisboa* on 2 February 1793. He had originally come from Madeira but was then living in Lisbon. One of his cures involved making a solution of rosemary extract, to be used as eye-drops to treat cloudy vision. According to the announcement, the "Padre" had enjoyed great success with this remedy.<sup>9</sup>

By the early nineteenth century, as we have seen, a Brazilian-born *curandeiro* in the capital who called himself the "Barão de Catanea" had grown so bold as to openly display a sign on his residence drawing attention to the magical healing practices he conducted there. Significantly, his clientele was not limited to commoners; Portuguese elites and foreigners were also known to frequent his chambers of consultation. Perhaps because of those circumstances, no authorities in Lisbon, either of the state or the Inquisition, seem to have taken any steps to curb his activities.<sup>10</sup> Then again, perhaps popular healers had once more become simply an accepted part of the cultural landscape.

After an effort lasting nearly one hundred years, the Portuguese Holy Office lost its long war of social control against popular healers. In the end, the common people's appetite for magical cures proved too resilient for even the vigilance of the Inquisition to expunge. In fact, Portuguese folkways are so resistant to change that, to the present day, illicit superstitious healing continues to thrive. In

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98–100.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Lisbon toward the end of the twentieth century, for example, engaging the services of a *curandeira* or *benzador* remained far easier than, say, paying one's quarterly bill at the state-monopoly telephone company.

Superstitious healing remains so popular, actually, that every year a village in the rural Trás-os-Montes region of northeast Portugal, Vilar de Perdizes, hosts a "Convention for *Medicina Popular*." Hundreds of people, including scores of *curandeiros*, attend annually. Many of the magical cures and incantations touted at this convention are virtually unchanged from remedies early modern healers would have used. Times have changed, though, even if the remedies have not: the gathering is organized by a Catholic priest, Father Lourenço Fontes.<sup>11</sup>

As recently as the winter of the year 2000, a *curandeiro* from the Azores Islands was brought to trial for endangering the health of his clients with illicit, unorthodox remedies. Manuel Dinis Pimentel, known as "the *Curandeiro* of Pico" (an island in the Azores archipelago), appeared before a modern legal tribunal on São Jorge in February 2000, accused of eight counts of homicide and twenty-one counts of attempted homicide.<sup>12</sup> "Remedies" Manuel Dinis Pimentel had employed included a special ointment made with medicinal herbs, but also including, according to laboratory tests, toxic herbicides and rat poison. He was known to apply this emollient "directly to the illness" through cuts that he opened in his clients' skin with a knife. Eight of his patients, suffering from such diseases as cancer and diabetes, died while under his care.<sup>13</sup>

Some of Senhor Pimentel's most ardent defenders, however, were his clients, who swore that, through the *curandeiro*'s salubrious attention, they had been cured of a variety of lesser afflictions. Manuel Dinis Pimentel had been active as a healer on three of the Azorean islands—Pico, São Jorge and Faial—over a period of at least twelve years; in that time he had treated hundreds of patients.<sup>14</sup> Such was the level of tolerance for his activities, however, that local authorities did not intervene for over a decade; he was not placed under arrest until 1998.

The arts of popular healing had been abhorrent to both the inquisitors and university-trained *médicos* during much of the seventeenth

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<sup>11</sup> *Time* (New York: 27 September 1993), p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> *Público* (Lisbon: 21 February 2000), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Público* (Lisbon: 22 February 2000), p. 1.

and eighteenth centuries, but for different reasons. Two groups working within the Holy Office—licensed physicians or surgeons working as *familiares*, as well as the *inquisidores* who occupied the upper echelons of power—sought a policy of repression against illicit folk healers between about 1695 and the early 1770s. Inquisitors believed that superstitious practices and heresies committed by illicit healers were anathema because such behavior clashed with church orthodoxy, which the Holy Office was pledged to uphold. On those grounds alone, Portuguese Inquisition authorities felt justified in persecuting folk healers. Still, left to themselves, the inquisitors did not systematically pursue trials against illicit folk healers; that action required the presence of licensed conventional medical personnel working within the Holy Office.

State-licensed practitioners of conventional medicine, who served the institution of the Holy Office as functionaries with varying levels of responsibility, maintained an additional two-sided antagonism toward illicit purveyors of folk remedies. First, *curandeiros* and *saludadores* represented an obstruction to the conventional health professionals' trade. Simply put, most commoners maintained their preference for popular curative methods, rather than for the state-sanctioned medical care offered by and for elites. In addition, though, for those conventional physicians and surgeons whose professional world view included scientific, empirical medicine as it was beginning to be practiced in northern Europe—and my research suggests that, within the Holy Office, there were dozens of *familiares* who matched this description—the discrediting of popular healing methods was an additional benefit to persecuting folk healers. In so doing, professional *médicos* hoped to make the way clear to impose enlightened, rational medical practices at all levels of Portuguese society. To these forward-looking conventional medical practitioners, convincing the common people of the backwardness and futility of superstitious healing was just one element in a comprehensive long-term program of medical reform in Portugal.

Each of the groups mentioned within the Inquisition's corporation—ecclesiastical administrators and the professional medical practitioners who served as functionaries under them—had a set of clear motives for their antagonism toward *curandeiros* and *saludadores*. Between 1695 and 1774, *médicos* and *inquisidores* acted with increasing cooperation to fashion a far-reaching policy of systematic oppression against common practitioners of magic and superstition. Chief among

them were illicit folk healers, who bore the brunt of the vigilance from Holy Office elites during the Enlightenment era in Portugal. The rationale that drove and justified this program of oppression against healers was codified and disseminated late in the seventeenth century, after 1690, in the internal Holy Office document, *Dos Saludadores*. According to *Dos Saludadores*, popular healers were dangerous because they practiced unscientifically; consequently, their illicit remedies could have no efficacy. Immediately after the promulgation and circulation of this document, the rate of trials against folk healers in Portugal increased dramatically.<sup>15</sup> Hence, in this rare instance, it appears that the Holy Office in effect became an agency that supported progressive scientific ideas and worked actively to implement them.

The marked increase in *mágico* trials in Portugal during the eighteenth century is evidence of that country's long, difficult transition from a pre-modern to a modern state. *Curandeiro* prosecutions may have highlighted conflicts between elite and popular culture, true, but such trials were also manifestations of a conflict among elites over what the dominant intellectual paradigm in Portuguese society would be—pre-modern or modern? Spiritual or rational? Intuitive or deductive? Would older organizations like the church and Inquisition continue to monopolize power over secular Portuguese institutions, or would a new rational order shape Portuguese society and government? These were the larger questions being contested within Portugal during most of the eighteenth century. The intellectual history of the Enlightenment era in Portugal, as elsewhere in Europe, is the story of the working out of these macro-ideological forces. The advent of the Enlightenment was such a slow process in Portugal in part because this traditional society found concepts like rationalism and empiricism so profoundly divisive.

Exploring differences between popular and elite approaches to healing has revealed a deep cultural conflict between Portugal's social classes. The cosmology of many elites, influenced by Enlightenment sensibilities, had changed fundamentally during the first half of the eighteenth century. As the century wore on, rationalism would win more aristocratic and middle class converts. This changed worldview widened the gulf of shared experience between elites and commoners—the peasantry retained pre-modern attitudes about magic, providence,

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<sup>15</sup> See tables at the end of Chapter VIII.

fate and natural causality. As Portuguese society moved slowly from a pre-modern to a modern state, the citizenry, in terms of their basic *weltanschauung*, increasingly inhabited two different worlds—worlds which tended to be determined by class and level of education.

The conflict between folk healing and conventional medicine is but one manifestation of the stresses caused by divergent popular and elite worldviews. That professional *médicos* were preoccupied primarily with folk healers' lack of scientific medical consciousness demonstrates forcefully that the doctors' motivations for attacking popular healers ran deeper than simple material considerations. For the most part, the repression of popular healers was not done simply to eliminate licensed medical practitioners' chief economic competition. Instead, these physicians and surgeons' grievances transpired within a broader cultural conflict between high and low culture, with the former trying to impose its elite cosmological paradigm on the latter.

The cultural conflict explored throughout this book has been manifestly one contested between a learned elite and an illiterate popular culture. Inquisition trials for magical or superstitious crimes were an arena for the dueling cosmologies found in the disparate social strata of Enlightenment-era Iberia. No other set of incidents from the early modern period rivals this extended episode of "witch-hunting" as a better illustration of the kinds of social divisions—intellectual, religious, socio-economic—that had developed between commoners and the ruling elites—be they middle class or aristocratic—in eighteenth-century Portugal. So, at the most fundamental level, we see reflected in these trials the continental Portuguese nation engaged in a gradual, drawn-out transition from a pre-modern to modern state. However, because modern Portugal is still a land where the old ways continue side-by-side with the most modern of cosmological perspectives, whether that transition can rightly be said to be complete is ultimately a matter for further historical consideration and interpretation.



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*Livro:* 60

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	16	17
18	20	21	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
32	33	34	35	36	38	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58
60	61	63	64	65	66	67	69	70	72	73	74
75	76	77	78	79	81	82	83	84	85	86	87



88	90	92	94	95	96	97	98	100	101	103	104
106	109	110	111	114	115	118	120	123	125	126	129
130	131	132	134	135	137	138	139	142	143	144	146
147	152	157	158	159	166	167	168	174	176	179	185
187	199	201	204	214	216	230	232	241	244	266	

#### Inquisição de Coimbra

• Trial (*Processos*) Numbers: 203 Total Cases; 95 Healers.

(Italic trial numbers represent *cuandeiro* cases.)

33	56	57	175	253	254	379	414	712	729	953	1234
1465	<i>1566</i>	1572	1627	1628	1650	1684	<i>1747</i>	1795	2065	2145	2156
2168	2275	<i>2362</i>	2531	2537	2700	3137	3144	3197	3208	3227	3322
3328	3371	3458	3504	3528	3552	<i>3561</i>	3562	3567	3677	3751	3753
3754	3951	4327	4581	4621	4647	4817	4862	5041	5116	5118	5174
5197	5284	5400	5418	5419	<i>5833</i>	5918	6137	6174	<i>6196</i>	6197	<i>6210</i>
<i>6212</i>	6213	6215	6216	<i>6217</i>	<i>6218</i>	<i>6223</i>	6228	<i>6231</i>	<i>6240</i>	<i>6297</i>	<i>6299</i>
<i>6305</i>	<i>6306</i>	<i>6307</i>	<i>6308</i>	<i>6315</i>	<i>6376</i>	<i>6380</i>	6399	6401	<i>6402</i>	6407	6413
<i>6436</i>	<i>6444</i>	6447	6466	<i>6470</i>	<i>6515</i>	<i>6524</i>	6526	6975	6997	7008	<i>7052</i>
<i>7107</i>	<i>7135</i>	<i>7136</i>	<i>7175</i>	<i>7186</i>	<i>7199</i>	<i>7229</i>	7235	7238	<i>7257</i>	<i>7258</i>	<i>7260</i>
7298	7299	<i>7300</i>	<i>7333</i>	<i>7346</i>	<i>7360</i>	7361	7362	7483	7486	7507	<i>7508</i>
<i>7539</i>	7541	<i>7625</i>	7630	<i>7636</i>	7679	7680	<i>7681</i>	7686	7688	7689	7691
7692	7693	<i>7779</i>	<i>7793</i>	<i>7807</i>	<i>7809</i>	<i>7827</i>	7840	<i>7864</i>	7866	<i>8018</i>	8022
8023	8029	<i>8093</i>	<i>8307</i>	<i>8309</i>	8338	<i>8491</i>	8492	<i>8503</i>	<i>8574</i>	<i>8581</i>	<i>8582</i>
<i>8587</i>	<i>8622</i>	<i>8625</i>	<i>8698</i>	<i>8699</i>	<i>8819</i>	<i>8820</i>	<i>8825</i>	8845	<i>8860</i>	8885	<i>8896</i>
<i>8899</i>	<i>8902</i>	9073	9076	9078	9444	<i>9532</i>	<i>9545</i>	<i>9546</i>	<i>9555</i>	<i>9613</i>	<i>9682</i>
<i>9711</i>	<i>9713</i>	<i>9768</i>	9782	<i>9807</i>	<i>9828</i>						
<i>10011</i>		10013		10029		<i>10087</i>		<i>10089</i>			

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#### Inquisição de Évora

• Trial (*Processos*) Numbers: 183 Total Cases; 65 Healers.

(Italic trial numbers represent *cuandeiro* cases.)

314	<i>372</i>	<i>516</i>	<i>517</i>	<i>521</i>	<i>745</i>	<i>747</i>	808	<i>929</i>	946	1084	<i>1279</i>
<i>1445</i>	<i>1446</i>	1591	1610	1625	1648	<i>1698</i>	1702	1763	1881	1937	1980
<i>2089</i>	2112	2148	<i>2185</i>	2210	2229	<i>2267</i>	2408	2423	2593	<i>2602</i>	2603
2606	2607	2609	2615	2630	2631	<i>2632</i>	2912	<i>2933</i>	3023	<i>3048</i>	<i>3096</i>
3168	3297	3348	3641	3691	3698	<i>3753</i>	<i>3862</i>	<i>3898</i>	<i>3899</i>	3901	3905
<i>3906</i>	<i>4092</i>	4106	4133	4216	4245	<i>4333</i>	4478	4483	<i>4527</i>	<i>4534</i>	<i>4569</i>
4630	<i>4687</i>	<i>4688</i>	4745	4758	4760	<i>4761</i>	<i>4764</i>	4768	4901	<i>4975</i>	5110
<i>5111</i>	5337	5380	5383	<i>5401</i>	5418	<i>5433</i>	<i>5436</i>	5516	5620	5636	5697
5699	<i>5703</i>	<i>5761</i>	<i>5765</i>	<i>5921</i>	5929	<i>5940</i>	5941	5942	<i>5949</i>	<i>5951</i>	5952
6030	6031	6032	6075	6111	6112	<i>6206</i>	<i>6231</i>	<i>6321</i>	6324	6326	6388
<i>6389</i>	<i>6390</i>	<i>6506</i>	<i>6537</i>	<i>6539</i>	6540	6542	<i>6543</i>	6577	6691	<i>6731</i>	<i>6881</i>
7189	<i>7266</i>	<i>7336</i>	7487	7488	7489	7539	7540	7541	<i>7587</i>	7616	<i>7759</i>
7972	<i>8038</i>	8039	8040	8100	8148	8150	8151	8154	8182	8550	8671
8672	8673	8834	9068	9221	9236	<i>9438</i>	9443	9447	9448	9450	9642
9698		10062		<i>10115</i>		10116		10211		10370	
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- Trial (*Processos*) Numbers: 54 Total Cases; 20 Healers.  
 (Italic trial numbers represent *curandeiro* cases.)

<i>18</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>213</i>	<i>252</i>	<i>254</i>	<i>275</i>	<i>348</i>	<i>437</i>	<i>506</i>	<i>510</i>
538	593	631	676	734	735	782	851	868	928	1079 1082
1129	1294	1377	1477	1481	1562	1817	1826	1894	1962	1964 2238
2279	2355	2475	2632	2659	2696	2702	2797	2799	2827	2905 2909
2914	4260	5069	6210	7987	11774	15713				

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## GLOSSARY OF PORTUGUESE TERMS

<i>alcaide</i>	jailer; bailiff; warden
<i>apostasia</i>	apostasy
<i>auto-da-fé</i>	“act of faith”; public ceremony to announce Inquisition sentences and for those convicted to display contrition
<i>azeite</i>	olive oil
<i>barbeiro</i>	barber (a licensed healer in early modern Portugal)
<i>benções</i>	blessings; prayers of healing
<i>benzedor/benzedora</i>	one who performs magical blessings (healing, etc.)
<i>benzeduras</i>	blessings; prayers of healing
<i>blasfêmia</i>	blasphemy
<i>bolsa</i>	purse or pocket; figuratively, a grant for education
<i>botica</i>	pharmacy
<i>boticário</i>	pharmacist
<i>brandos costumes</i>	mild customs; motif of Portuguese historiography
<i>bruxaria</i>	witchcraft
<i>câmara municipal</i>	town or city council
<i>cartão</i>	card; official license to practice a profession
<i>cárceres</i>	jail; prisons
<i>Casa Real</i>	royal household
<i>cirurgião</i>	surgeon
<i>Conselho Ultramarino</i>	Overseas Council; directorate of the maritime empire
<i>consultas</i>	consultations
<i>converso</i>	former Jew, converted to Christianity
<i>corocha</i>	painted headdress with symbols identifying the wearer as a convict of the Inquisition
<i>couto</i>	penal colony or asylum
<i>cristão novo</i>	new Christian; a converted Jew or descendant thereof
<i>curador/curadora</i>	healer; practitioner of illicit folk medicine
<i>curandeirismo</i>	practice of illicit folk medicine
<i>curandeiro/curandeira</i>	healer; practitioner of illicit folk medicine
<i>curas supersticiosas</i>	superstitious cures or remedies
<i>degredado</i>	convict exiled as a form of punishment
<i>denúncias</i>	denunciations; accusations
<i>deputado</i>	deputy; specialist Inquisition prosecutor or judge
<i>diligências</i>	collected testimony of denunciations or accusations
<i>embustes</i>	faked magical practices; charlatanism
<i>enfermeira</i>	nurse
<i>Época das Luzes</i>	Age of Light; Enlightenment
<i>escravo/escravas</i>	lave
<i>Estado da Índia</i>	Portuguese eastern empire, Mozambique to Macau
<i>estrangeiro</i>	foreigner
<i>estrangeirado</i>	foreign-influenced; expatriate Portuguese
<i>familiares</i>	civil employee of the Holy Office
<i>feitiços</i>	spells; sorcery
<i>feitiçaria</i>	sorcery
<i>fidalgo</i>	aristocrat or noble



<i>fingimento</i>	faked magical practices; charlatanism
<i>forão visto</i>	summary of an Inquisition trial
<i>freguesia</i>	parish
<i>Galés Reais</i>	Royal galleys; forced labor in shipyards or oared ship
<i>Habilitações do Santo Ofício</i>	application dossiers of Holy Office employees
<i>heresia</i>	heresy
<i>Iluminismo</i>	Enlightenment; Age of Reason
<i>inquisidor</i>	inquisitor
<i>Inquisição</i>	Inquisition
<i>jornaleiro</i>	common laborer for daily wages
<i>lente</i>	university-level instructor
<i>letrado</i>	lettered person; literate
<i>licenciatura</i>	university degree; bachelor of arts
<i>losna</i>	wormwood
<i>mau olhar</i>	evil eye
<i>mágico</i>	practitioner of magic or superstitious healing
<i>médico</i>	practitioner of medicine; surgeon or physician
<i>mulato/mulata</i>	mulatto; mixed-race person (African and European)
<i>moura encantada</i>	enchanted (or enchanting) Moorish woman
<i>orações</i>	orations; magical incantations; prayers
<i>pacto com o Demónio</i>	pact with the Devil
<i>pardo/parda</i>	mixed-race person (African and European)
<i>parecere</i>	Holy Office General Council directives/instructions
<i>parteira</i>	midwife
<i>processo</i>	trial or trial dossier
<i>procurador</i>	lawyer; legal adviser
<i>promotor</i>	lawyer; legal adviser
<i>relapsado</i>	relapsed criminal; repeat offender
<i>réu/ré</i>	defendant; suspect; culprit; convict
<i>Regimento</i>	official by-laws of the Holy Office
<i>réis</i>	plural of <i>real</i> ; basic unit of Portuguese currency
<i>saludador</i>	healer; practitioner of illicit folk medicine
<i>sangrador</i>	blood-letting; phlebotomist
<i>Santo Ofício</i>	Holy Office
<i>sortilégio</i>	fortune telling
<i>superstição</i>	superstition
<i>trabalhador</i>	worker; manual laborer
<i>vidência</i>	seeing; fortune telling

## ILLUSTRATIONS





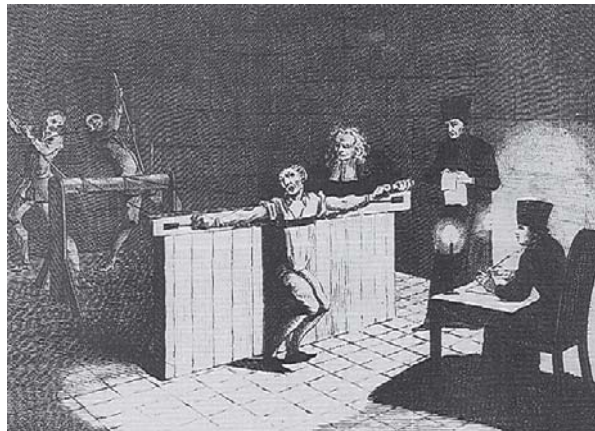
1. Arms of the Portuguese Inquisition. Palace and Prisons of the Inquisition; Évora, Portugal. Decoration above Inquisition palace entrance; seventeenth century (first quarter).



2. Pharmacoepa Lusitana. Cover; Dom Caetano de Santo António, *Pharmacoepa Lusitana: Método Prático de Preparar, e Compor os Medicamentos na Forma Galenica com Todas as Receitas Mais Usuais*. Coimbra: Monastery of Santa Cruz de Coimbra (Press of João Antunes), 1704. This was the first pharmaceutical guide written wholly in the Portuguese language. Library of the Colégio do Ordem dos Farmacêuticos, Lisbon, Portugal.



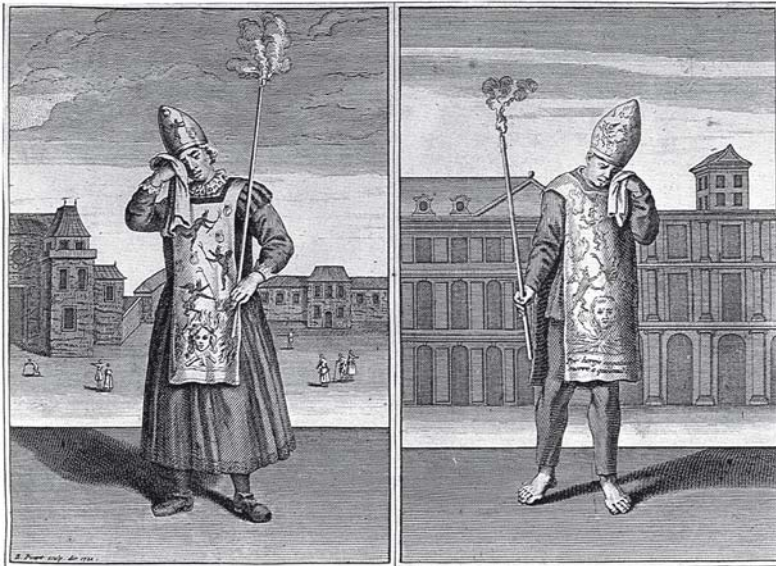
3. Pharmacy medicine storage jar; typical of the 17th-18th centuries. Glazed ceramic, bearing the emblem of the Company of Jesus, thus indicating production for use in a Jesuit institutional pharmacy. Collection of the Associação Nacional das Farmácias, Lisbon, Portugal.



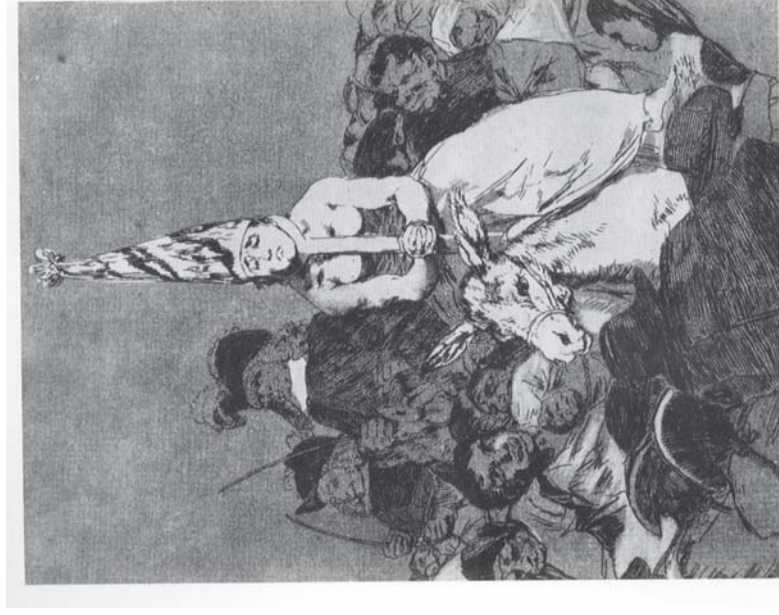
4. Torture Session; Portuguese Inquisition. The victim's arms are being stretched using a windlass and pulley system. Note the examining Inquisitor, the scribe, and the attending physician. Engraving by Boitard, published in *The sufferings of John Coustos for Free-Masonry, and for his refusing to turn Roman Catholic, in the Inquisition at Lisbon*. London: W. Strahan, 1746.



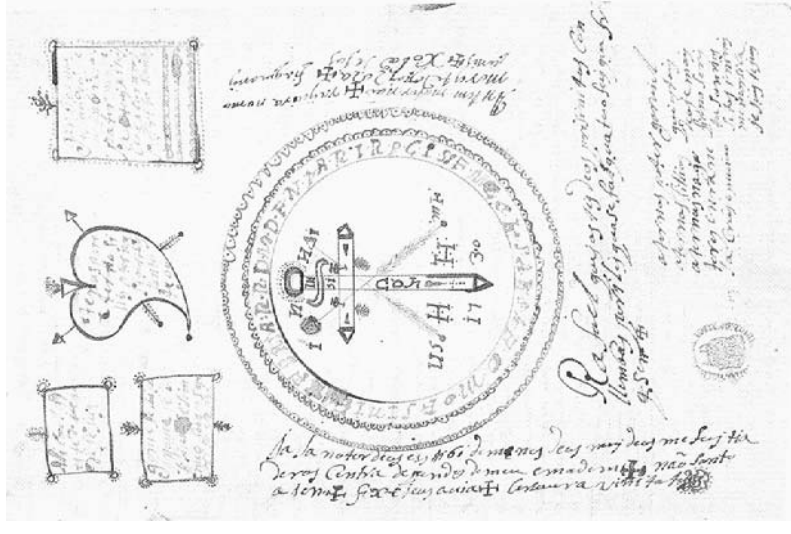
5. Interrogation session of the Portuguese Inquisition. The subject has been denounced and imprisoned. Note the examining Inquisitor, left, and the scribe, center, carefully recording the proceedings. Engraving by Pierre-Paul Sevin, published in *Relation de l'Inquisition de Goa*, by Charles Dellon, Paris, 1688.



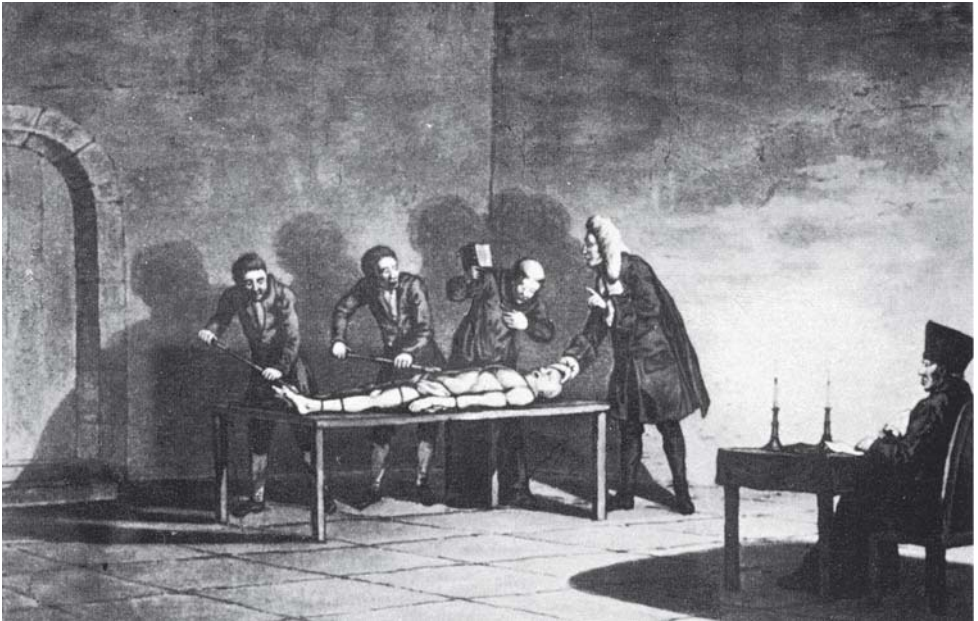
6. Condemned Inquisition penitents participating in an Auto da Fé. Note the mitre-like *corocha* headdress and the penitent's habit, each painted with symbols denoting their status as Inquisition convicts. Engravings by Bernard Picart, published in *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* (tome II), Amsterdam, 1723.



7. Condemned Inquisition penitent, mounted on a burro, being paraded through public streets. The Inquisition intended public contrition and humiliation to discredit those guilty of spiritual transgressions. Design by Francisco de Goya. Spanish; nineteenth century (first quarter). Museo del Prado, Madrid.



8. Diagrams for popular magical rites. Page from the Inquisition trial dossier of José Francisco, a slave accused of superstitious crimes and healing in Lisbon in 1731. Such designs mixed sacred and profane iconography and were an integral part in many Portuguese folk rituals. Arquivo Nacional do Torre do Tombo; Inquisition Tribunal of Lisbon; trial 11774.

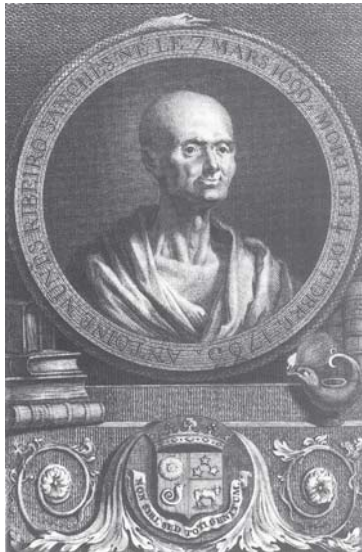


9. Torture Session; Portuguese Inquisition. The accused is being squeezed using a constricting strap and lever system. Note the examining Inquisitor (holding a book), the scribe, and the attending physician, who appears to be assessing the victim's endurance. Eighteenth century illustration published in José Lourenço de Mendonça and António Joaquim Moreira, *História dos Principais Actos e Procedimentos da Inquisição em Portugal*. Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional/Casa de Moeda, 1980.





10. Satiric scene depicting a surgeon about to administer an unspecified treatment. Methods such as these made commoners understandably reticent to engage the services of conventional medical practitioners. Portuguese tile (*azulejo*) panel; Lisbon; eighteenth century (first half). Museu Nacional do Azulejo, Lisbon.



11. Portrait of António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches (1699-1783). A Coimbra-trained New Christian physician who fled prosecution for *judaismo* by the Portuguese Inquisition, he had an illustrious medical career in England, Russia and France. As an *estrangeirado*, Ribeiro Sanches advocated strongly for rationalized medical reform in his native land, but died in exile. Engraving; eighteenth century. Biblioteca Nacional de Medicina, Portugal.

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