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### **Authors**

Restall, Matthew  
Sigal, Pete

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**"May They Not Be Fornicators  
Equal to These Priests":  
Postconquest Yucatec Maya Sexual Attitudes<sup>1</sup>**

**Matthew Restall and Pete Sigal**

*ten cen ah hahal than cin ualic techex hebaxile a uohelex  
yoklal P<sup>e2</sup> torres p<sup>e</sup> Dias cabo de escuadra P<sup>e</sup> granado  
sargento yetel p<sup>e</sup> maldonado layob la ma hahal caput  
sihil ma hahal confisar ma hahal estremacion ma hahal  
misa cu yalicobi maix tan u yemel hahal Dios ti lay ostia  
licil u yalicob misae tumenel tutuchci u cepob sansamal  
kin chenbel u chekic ueyob cu tuculicob he tu yahalcabe  
manal tuil u kabob licil u baxtic u ueyob he p<sup>e</sup> torrese  
chenbel u pel kakas cisin Rita box cu baxtic y u moch kabi  
mai moch u cep ualelob ix >oc cantul u mehenob ti lay box  
cisin la baixan p<sup>e</sup> Diaz cabo de escuadra tu kaba u  
cumaleil antonia aluarado xbolonchen tan u lolomic u pel  
u cumale tutan tulacal cah y p<sup>e</sup> granado sargento humab  
akab tan u pechic u pel manuela pacheco hetun p<sup>e</sup>  
maldonadoe tun>oc u lahchekic u mektanilobe uay  
cutalel u chucbes u cheke yohel tulacal cah ti cutalel u ah  
semana uinic y xchup ti pencuyute utial yoch pelil p<sup>e</sup>  
maldonado xpab gomes u kabah chenbel Padresob ian u  
sipitolal u penob matan u than yoklalob uaca u ment utzil*

*maçeuale tusebal helelac ium cura u >aic u tzucte hetun lae tutac u kabob yetel pel lay yaxcacob tumen u pen cech penob la caxuob yal misa bailo u yoli Dios ca oc inglesob uaye ix ma aci ah penob u padreilobi hetun layob lae tei huninia u topob u yit uinicobe yoli Dios ca haiac kak tu pol cepob amen ten yumil ah hahal than.*

I, the informer of the truth, tell you what you should know about Father Torres, Father Díaz, squad corporal, Father Granado, sargeant, and Father Maldonado: They say false baptism, false confession, false last rites, false mass; nor does the true God descend in the host when they say mass, because they have stiff penises. Every day all they think of is intercourse with their mistresses. In the morning their hands smell bad from playing with their mistresses. Father Torres, he only plays with the vagina of that really ugly black devil Rita. He whose hand is disabled does not have a disabled penis; it is said he has up to four children by this black devil. Likewise Father Díaz, squad corporal, has a woman from Bolonchen called Antonia Alvarado, whose vagina he repeatedly pokes before the whole *cah*, and Father Granado bruises Manuela Pacheco's vagina all night. Father Maldonado has just finished fornicating with everyone in his jurisdiction, and has now come here to carry out his fornication. The whole *cah* knows this. When Father Maldonado makes his weekly visit, a woman of Pencuyut named Fabiana Gomez provides him with her vagina. Only the priests are allowed to fornicate without so much as a word about it. If a good *macehual* does that, the priest always punishes him immediately. But look at the priests' excessive fornication, putting their hands on these whores' vaginas, even saying mass like this. God willing, when the English come may they not be fornicators equal to these priests, who only lack carnal acts with men's bottoms. God willing that smallpox be rubbed into their penis heads. Amen. I, father, the informer of the truth.<sup>3</sup>

### Postconquest Maya Documentation

It is not surprising that the explicit and unambiguous language of the above petition, submitted in Yucatec Maya to the Spanish authorities in 1774 and eventually ending up in the files of the Holy Office in Mexico City, shocked the Inquisition official whose task it was to translate the document into Spanish. He was, it seems, so offended that he added his own opinion to the translation, condemning the allegations of the petitioner as "scathing, audacious," and "grossly excessive," especially in view of the fact that the clergy treated the natives with "respect and veneration."

Certainly this document could be looked at from the perspective of a concern for veracity, or an interest in Maya-clergy relations. Taking these viewpoints, one might investigate the nature and extent of complaints against clergy in Spanish America as a whole; or, more specifically, the petition might productively be placed in the analytical context of the series of petitions drawn up by Maya municipal councils (*cabildos*) throughout the colonial period accusing parish priests of violence, sexual misconduct, and malpractice. However, the study of such petitions tells us less about the quality of priests in Yucatan (for example), less about the acceptance of the Church and of Christian values by the Maya, and more about the skill with which the Maya (like the Nahuas) exploited the insecurities and preoccupations of Church officials while working the Spanish legal system to their advantage.<sup>4</sup>

In the end, we cannot ignore the fact that a document such as this petition of 1774 was authored by the Maya in their own language. Whereas not so long ago the *Spanish* translation of such a document would have been treated as a source for the study of relations between clergy and Indians in a colonial province, today we must take the opportunity to use *native* language material to penetrate aspects of indigenous culture after the Conquest. This chapter therefore places the above petition in the context of other Maya-language colonial-era notarial material dealing directly or indirectly with indigenous sexuality.

The broader context of the study is the full body of postconquest Maya documentation, whose genres and constructive features are discussed in Chapter 2 of this volume. Suffice to remark here that within a generation after the conquest of Yucatan (1542), the Maya elite had adapted a pre-existing writing tradition and begun writing their own language in the Roman alphabet, producing notarial documentation for local, ecclesiastical, and legal purposes--usually within Spanish genre formats such as testaments and bills

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cen ah hahal than cin ualie techax hebaxili auohelix yoxlal...  
 Das cabode escuadro de granad sargento y vel p mal dinsti lay obla mahahal...  
 p set sibil ma hahal confisar mahahal...  
 ran nyem el hahal Dios vi lay as rta...  
 cepob sansamal kin chanbet u cheki uyob...  
 cil ukabob liil ubaxric untyob...  
 box cu baxric y untyob...  
 lay box cisim la...  
 aluarado xbolenchetan ulolomiu...  
 anada sargento hum ar akabran upochi...  
 onede e cum Des ulab choxic umex...  
 ulasal cah in cu calob nah semane...  
 lil p malonado x pab gomes ukabat...  
 chob maran untyak yoxlalob ua...  
 cura u daic untyak he run lac...  
 men u pencech pen obla ca xuob...  
 ix maei ah penob u padre il...  
 niobe yob Dios ca farax kek...  
 en yumil ah hahal chax

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 MEXICO

Figure 1: anonymous 1774 petition against four priests.



of sale. This tradition soon settled on a single key official in the Maya cabildo, the *escribano* (notary). The irony of postconquest Maya literacy is that it enabled native cabildos to advance their interests in the Spanish courts even at the expense of individual Spaniards. Furthermore, Franciscan friars initially taught the Maya alphabetic writing, ironically giving the Maya a weapon with which to attack the clergy--as in the 1774 petition.

Notarial documents, particularly petitions and testaments, can often speak somewhat indirectly to a study of sexual norms. Petitions may relate sexual misconduct. They more often talk about crimes against the community, excessive tribute demands, and Spanish social and economic norms, but even these complaints can have indirect sexual import, showing the processes of social change within the community. Testaments always relate to a discussion of kinship, and they also often demarcate the process of social change. Within Maya society, the kinship structure relates directly to sexuality as this structure establishes who is and who is not an appropriate sexual partner. We shall refer below to testaments in general and make specific use of the 1774 petition as well as two additional Maya petitions of the 1580s.

In addition to the *escribano*, a native church official, the *maestro*, seems often to have been literate himself; either he or the notary were also responsible for the writing of unofficial documents intended solely for local consumption. Such sources are concerned not with the detailed business of daily life but with broad statements of ideology; they include, in particular, historical texts, fables, and codices. The Maya used these documents to state their own understandings of the world and, therefore, to set norms for society. The examples used in this chapter are the Books of Chilam Balam from Chumayel and Tizimin.

The purpose of this study is to form a picture of Maya sexual attitudes by examining both official and unofficial Maya notarial documents. In looking at the 1774 petition above we are concerned with the following questions: Is this document a deviant genre? How do its references to sexual activity differ from such references in other Maya notarial sources? Does the document reflect Maya sexual attitudes revealed directly or indirectly in unofficial material? What do these attitudes tell us about how the Maya used sexuality, and what role did sexuality play in power relations within Maya communities and between Maya and non-Maya people?

## Sexual Theory

Information on postconquest Maya sexuality (by which is meant sexual characteristics and activities beyond the sphere of gender roles) is sparse. If sexuality is a subject with which Latin American scholars have had little experience, the topic has only partially been undressed with respect to indigenous peoples and remains an undoubted virgin in the case of the Yucatan. Scholars have often shied away from talking about sexuality, even within a Western context. Despite the lack of prior scholarship, we find that we can study Maya sexual behavior. Most importantly, and most fundamentally, we find that, despite a relative scarcity of documents, the Maya *did* actually talk about sex, both directly and indirectly. A linguistic analysis of Maya documents presents us with the meaning of the language used and the importance of that language to a discussion of Maya sexual acts.

Historians of early Latin America have just recently begun to study sexuality. For the past twenty-five years, many historians of the period have researched social history, attempting to uncover various facets of people's daily lives. This research has given us a much broader understanding of early Latin America, allowing us to discuss social and ethnic differentiation within society.<sup>5</sup> It has also led scholars to more recent focuses on indigenous groups and on women.<sup>6</sup> Despite the many attempts at understanding people's daily lives, few scholars have tried to research sexuality. Those who have studied sexual behavior often have either focused on the pre-conquest period or have based their conclusions on Spanish chronicles and other documents of relying variability.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, two recent collections of articles edited, respectively, by Asunción Lavrin and Sergio Ortega, as well as full length works by Ramón Gutiérrez, Louise Burkhart, Carmen Castañeda, and Irene Silverblatt, all of which deal with sexual themes, have begun to fill the gap.<sup>8</sup>

In many ways scholars studying Europe and the United States seem further ahead in their understanding of sexuality, particularly regarding the importance of sexuality to history and to theory. They have accurately stated that sexuality does not have a given nature with no historical variation, but rather that it is a changing ideological construct, developed by society and by historical circumstance. Society implements sexual norms and penalties for transgressing those norms. Most importantly, society does not construct sexuality primarily through penalties for transgression of

norms, but rather through a discussion which promotes a division of behaviors into deviance and normality.<sup>9</sup> Society delves into the human unconscious and regulates sexual behavior through a perception of "choice."

Sexuality, as a socially and culturally constructed form of power relations, develops control over the individual conscious and unconscious, not by some set of natural urges, nor by a group of legal prohibitions, but rather by a form of rationalization of particular sexual behaviors that any one society promulgates through a complex series of discourses.<sup>10</sup> In modern Western societies, for example, religion, science, feminism, and various sectors of sexual identity politics all promote a variety of views around sex that lend to these societies' constructions of sexual options. In arguing for this type of analysis of the relationship between sexuality and power, Michel Foucault notes that, as opposed to sexual repression, his study shows that "power in modern societies has not governed sexuality through law and sovereignty," but has rather governed sexuality through "a veritable 'technology' of sex, one that is much more complex and above all more positive than the mere effect of a 'defense' could be."<sup>11</sup> Here we should not confuse Foucault's concept of power with some sort of conspiracy theory. Rather, social and cultural constructs develop power relations which affect and even determine the unconscious. In this chapter we discuss the ways in which the Maya constructed people's sexual behaviors--the ways culture and society constructed Maya thoughts about sex.

### The Petition of 1774

The 1774 petition with which this chapter opens may present a unique insight into Maya sexuality. Its placement in New Spain's legal archives, its petitionary nature, and its prosaic language, all label the document as notarial. Yet its anonymity means it lacks the other defining hallmarks of Maya notarial material referred to in Chapter 2: opening and closing formulas; names of the *cabildo* officers, witnesses and the notary himself; stated provenance and date.<sup>12</sup>

Another unusual feature of the petition--the partial cause, no doubt, of its anonymity--is its tone. Notarial documents usually fulfilled specific purposes within the Maya community, or the Spanish legal arena, or both. Maya testaments, for example, recorded a ritual declaration of material status witnessed by the principal men of the *cah* (Maya community) that served to defuse



potential conflicts among surviving relatives; at the same time they satisfied the requirements of the Spanish ecclesiastical authorities. Similarly, Maya petitions took prescribed Spanish legal forms in an attempt to advance local native interests. The 1774 petition, however, seems only indirectly to be concerned with local interests; its assault upon the reputation of the four accused priests is not only done with utter contempt, but with such apparent relish, as to suggest that the attack was intended in part to amuse the petitioners.

Modern ethnographies of the Maya detail a vivid and pervasive culture of sexual humor.<sup>13</sup> This humor is linguistically intensive (that is, it turns on puns and *double entendres*), which are not (to our knowledge) in evidence in this petition. Yet this culture of sexual expression implies a signal lack of prudery, among the modern Maya at least. If this existed in the late-eighteenth century, the 1774 petition would represent an ironic exploitation of the repressed sexual values of Catholic dogma by the Maya as a weapon against the perpetrators of that dogma--all the while providing the Maya a potentially humorous opportunity to send sexually explicit written material into the heart of the Spanish church. Speculation this may be, but it sits most comfortably with the indirect evidence.

Let us now look at some of the elements of interest to us from a linguistic standpoint, and then summarize the importance of these elements in understanding Maya sexuality. An analysis of the meanings of several words related to sexual norms shows that the Spanish and the Maya themselves reinterpreted many of these words during the colonial period. Moreover, some words reveal much about Maya sexuality.

The first mention of sex in this petition states that the priests say mass while they have "stiff penises." This is a literal translation of the Maya *tutuchci u cepob*. Clearly the writer means that the priests say mass with erections, yet he does not use the Maya word that apparently means erection, *thech*.<sup>14</sup> As we will see, the author chooses to describe sexual acts. He often does not use shorthand terms even when they exist in Maya. The petition later states that a priest "pokes" the vagina of a woman. The Maya *u lolomic u pel* represents the phrase "pokes her vagina." This seems to clearly mean intercourse, but again the author writes out a description of the act, despite the availability of several words for the act itself.<sup>15</sup> An accompanying Spanish translation does not help as it simply uses *joder* ("to fuck") for *lolomic*. This translation

uses *joder* for several sexual terms, and in no case does the translation seem entirely accurate. The next line also substantiates this point. Here another priest "bruises" the vagina of a certain woman. The Maya *u pechic u pel* is likely slang for having intercourse, but it could also refer to rape or to some sort of violent sexual encounter. The Spanish translation does suggest slang, using *apretar* ("to screw") for *pechic*, but we cannot tell if this is accurate. At this point, we can just appreciate that the writer of the petition describes actions, as opposed to giving us the Maya term for the action itself. We cannot determine the precise nature of what it means to "bruise Manuela Pacheco's vagina." Toward the end of the petition, the author objects vehemently to anyone who has "carnal acts with men's bottoms." Even these priests don't do that. This extended description clearly refers to sodomy, but the author does not use the Maya words for sodomy.

The various extended descriptions suggest that the author, despite a knowledge of the terms that could have shortened his statement, believed that he needed to delineate the exact nature of each priest's sexual violation. This may suggest that the Maya often used sexual descriptions instead of particular terms to differentiate between many sexual actions. We could also argue that the author used these extended descriptions in order to maximize the insult to the priests. Here, we clearly need more documents to pinpoint the accurate interpretation.

On several occasions, the author uses the word *chekic* or one of its derivatives. We have translated *chekic* as "intercourse." While we do believe this is the closest translation of the word in this context, the *Diccionario Maya* contains several other translations, the relevant one here being "to cover a male and female animal in order to make them fruitful and reproduce." We also find a phrase *ah chek* translated as a "stud of any species of animal," *ah* being a masculine agentive, meaning "one who does" something.<sup>16</sup> The word *chek* thus appears to have changed from a reference to human sexual acts to a reference to sexual acts among animals or vice versa. A Spanish translation attached to the petition again simply translates *chekic* as *joder*. Without more research, we cannot determine with any precision the linguistic development of this word. Likewise, the word we translate as mistress comes from *uey*, which could mean mistress, concubine, or girlfriend. We can see that sexual matters may be confused in translation, as, without context, *uey* might be seen as a non-sexual reference from one person to

another, despite the fact that the word clearly implies some sort of sexual importance.<sup>17</sup>

The author goes on to seem disgusted by "the bad smell" of the priests' hands from "playing" with their mistresses. The word for play, *baxtic* or *baxtah*, can also mean to "handle" or to "paw."<sup>18</sup> If we take all of these interpretations together, we can suggest that *baxtic* signifies some type of play that involves pawing at somebody or handling them. The author also uses *baxtic* in the very next line of the petition, saying that one priest plays only with the vagina of a black woman. It seems likely that the first quote refers to a stench which the author perceives as coming from the vagina. He sees this smell as particularly disgusting, and he also believes that the smell proves the validity of his petition.

The reference to the "very ugly black devil, Rita" says much of the author's racial views. Here it seems that there is little worse than a priest having sex with a black woman. Rita could represent the temptation of evil demons who tempt society's leaders, particularly religious people, to have sex with them. The Africans thus are seen as somehow evil, and their evil is connected to sexual temptation, a theme very familiar to U.S. historians who study the slavery period.<sup>19</sup> We could also interpret this reference as a critique of interracial sexual relations, similar to the critique by Huaman Poma of Spanish sexual practices which he states led to the creation of an evil mestizo population. Racial views thus play a role in our author's views on sexual behavior.

We also find that Fabiana Gomez provides Father Maldonado with her vagina. This may or may not suggest some form of prostitution. The Maya word *och* translates as "provide," and it carries the image of providing food for someone for his or her sustenance.<sup>20</sup> Here the author feels comfortable using the word for a woman providing her vagina to a man, possibly implying some relationship between a woman serving a man his food and a woman providing sexual service for a man.

For the last portion of the document, the author uses the word *pen* to describe the sexual acts of the priests. In each case where the writer uses *pen* he refers to fornication in general, rather than discussing specific acts, where he either uses an extended description or the word *chek*. *Pen* may have thus implied an abstraction of the immediate act, while *chek* and the descriptions clearly evoked a sense of the immediate situation. The Maya word *pen* does present some problems in translation. The dictionaries translate *pen* as "the sin of lust," "to fornicate," "the sin of

sodomy," "the nefarious sin," "to sin one man with another," and "to prostitute oneself."<sup>21</sup> While we do not know the accuracy of these translations, the context here does convey "to fornicate." The variety of meanings may suggest that the Maya at some earlier point did not distinguish clearly between sexual acts between men and sexual acts between men and women. Further, as we find later in the document, this author describes the priests as *ah penob*, translated here as "fornicators."<sup>22</sup> The word for sodomite, *ix pen*, simply switches the feminine agentive, *ix*, for the masculine agentive, *ah*. This again suggests the lack of a clear distinction between male-male sexual acts and male-female sexual acts. We should not, though, interpret such terminological similarity to suggest tolerance for male-male sexuality.<sup>23</sup> As we have seen, the author ends his petition with a strong note against male-male sexual activity, suggesting that the only thing worse than the priests' excessive fornication is sodomy.<sup>24</sup>

The final statement regarding rubbing smallpox into the priests' penis heads points out the use of body parts within this petition. The extensive descriptions often refer to particular body parts. The author sexualizes penises, vaginas, men's bottoms, and hands; all appear as sexual organs. Body parts seem sexualized. The author sees the individual as perverted, as the priests perform sexual acts in an illicit ritual context. Thus, the author mentions and sexualizes the individual as well as body parts. He does not mention or sexualize the body itself. The body only plays a role as divided among its parts and as part of the larger entity, the individual.<sup>25</sup>

We can also see the entire document as both an attack on priestly privileges and an attempt to keep the priests in line with their own declarations of celibacy. Our author uses the power of Church ideology against itself in an attempt to maintain particular standards of conduct supported both by the Church and by indigenous standards of conduct for religious leaders. The author thus reins in the power of certain priests.

### The Petition of 1774 and Other Postconquest Maya Documentation

Elsewhere in the notarial record we find two pieces of evidence to suggest that Maya sexual language was imbued with levels of nuance and euphemism that we may not fully grasp. Both sources date from the late sixteenth century: One is a 1589 petition against a parish priest by a group of five Maya communities



(*cahob*); the other is a complaint by a Maya noble against his *batab*, or municipal governor.

Three-quarters of the 1589 petition is taken up with introductory and reverential phrases to the addressee, an Inquisition commissioner, including the typical expressions of faith in the addressee's able commitment to the protection of the *cahob*. Not until the end do the nobles and officers produce their ace:

*hahilae he tilic u >aic confesar ti chuplalobe tilic yalic  
ua matan a >ab aba tene matan y >ab confesar tech lay  
licil u payic chuplalti matan u >ab confesar ti ua matan u  
talel chuplal tamuk u pakic u keban chuplalob matan u  
>ab confesarti lay u hahil tulacal baix u coilob tu >acan  
chuplal*

This is the truth: When he gives confession to women, he then says, "If you don't give yourself to me, I won't confess you." This is how he abuses the women: He won't confess them unless they come to him, unless they recompense him with their sins. This is the whole truth about how the women are so disturbed.<sup>26</sup>

Those few lines may represent the archetypal anti-clerical complaint; the abuse of the confessional, the proximity of priest and female parishioner recounting her sins, was one of the prime causes of the creation of the confessional box.<sup>27</sup> Part of what makes this example noticeably Maya is the rhythm of the language, with *chuplal*, "woman," acting as a marker of repetition that simultaneously emphasizes that precious aspect of local (*cah*) society under attack. Yet the terminology to describe exactly what is transpiring between priest and penitent is idiomatic, largely euphemistic, seemingly vague, albeit notably varied for such a brief passage: *>abab*, "to give oneself;" *pay*, "to pull, extract, borrow, deprecate, call;" *tal*, "to come;" *pak*, "to recompense, repair;" and the final phrase *u coilob tu >acan*, which literally translates as "they are poisoned with madness." The similarity between these terms and those used in contemporaneous petitions in Nahuatl suggests a style common to this petitionary subgenre that is not exclusively Maya; a 1611 complaint from Jalostotitlan, for example, accuses the priest of seizing the *alcalde's* daughter in church and "wanting to have her."<sup>28</sup> Either this style is common to the Nahuas and the Maya as a possible Mesoamerican culture trait;<sup>29</sup> or the influence is



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Petition written in original Maya

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Dios canan n'ceth. hi man vlag skimil a thcoya yumtite  
 wothel te coayti huloon. hi minaxeyenal al mesen don ju  
 sing. n'aytical. caix hi yalay tvon. akubent banil  
 tabalag tie. eta maacool. cati uyag yupil atlan. cii  
 than tabic dig. avthol. h'ul avon n'coon. hextson ta  
 alah. hi al medena. hi yalay non. tulacal. Bai taholag  
 tie. hevae. ofist ba cacay tie. jochal dig. avon tvon  
 hi bay h'ul a valice. vatab a tan a huucuk emic. caixie  
 vhaqlay vbeel. padre. mexia. h'evbeel tie. hi caq. baylicie  
 avubie. vcomile. hevae dib te h'unt' lacuyum hi padre  
 f'ei hex nado de supueta. caqhae. vbeel tie. hi ballic  
 calic yohol. padre la. h'agix. tulacal h'uyicool. caix  
 avatab hi y'gil avuun. cabal cabac. h'unt'ul juex.  
 f'ay le humonel. hevae tie caq'ian cethy umel. caix  
 avit te y'gil avuun ti. saba coon hi vbat missa vax tie  
 minace. vax maatex. yax oc coon hi xpi anioie vax  
 lay na faz vhalal. h'ul vohic cabatek. caqoc kuhex  
 vlag cethy gume. vax on yan tie minace. benel  
 cacay hi ox h'uccon. peru. taz piv. ti bal. vax on  
 yan yere canu otob. Rayli tac dib taz tie hi  
 vhalal. Domingo. vax. caix asab. avit gume  
 hupad simic cabines hi holag. hic canuetic  
 vaxi. caix avit te. vhalie. atlan. cubi  
 x'hibi. lae h'ulic. vaxie con fesar hi sup' labo  
 filie galic. vamatam. avab aba tene. matam avab  
 confesor taly lay h'icil vaxie v'uplati matam avab  
 anfe laz hi. vamatam. v'atlee v'uplat. tomuk v'palcie  
 v'eban. v'uplabo. matam. v'ab confesartie  
 lay av'ab'it. tulacal. baix. v'votob tuzacon v'uplat  
 ion. v'conan te' dig tie x' moxul v'kimie v'ebcoya  
 me

Apalilon hi don juicool Don francisco  
 7. abal de 1693. peru. fah sing.  
 tulacal

Figure 2: 1589 petition by five Maya communities against a parish priest.

Spanish, presumably (ironically) clerical. We tentatively suggest the latter in this case.

In a complaint of c. 1580 filed by a Diego Pox in connection with a lawsuit against his *batab* (municipal governor), this largely euphemistic language becomes more vivid. After detailing a number of objections to the actions of the *batab*, the petitioner states that:

*U lobil u beel uicnal can muc u kuchul ychil u otoch u chochopayte in chuplal u pakic keban yetel u kati ti lolob maix tan u >ocabal yolah*

the worst of his deeds was that four times he came inside my house to grab my wife by force to have intercourse with her. He wished it in vain. His desire was not fulfilled.<sup>30</sup>

The verb *pay* in the previous example, where the best translation seems to be "abuse," in this example becomes *chochopay*, a more explicit "grab by force." The phrase *u pakic u keban*, which in the context of a confessional and of the tone of the 1589 petition seems best glossed as "recompense with sin," in the context of a man trying to rape another's wife in her own home seems best read as "fornicate." This ambiguity is possible because Maya notaries did not diacritically indicate when a *k* was glottalized--*pak* means "recompense" (and *k'eban*, "sin"), but *pak' k'eban* is "fornicate."<sup>31</sup>

All three examples of sexual language are used to describe sexual activity in circumstances that are offensive to the authors. Diego Pox's complaint, however, is straightforward almost to the point of being dispassionate--after all, the alleged rape attempts were unsuccessful. The description of the 1589 petition is veiled, influenced perhaps by the prudish concerns of the Spanish clergy. The petitioners must shock the Inquisition into investigating and hopefully removing the priest accused, but at the same time they must avoid offending the addressee. In this comparative context the 1774 petition is even more outrageous, in that it was clearly intended to be just that. In going beyond the boundaries not only of veiled reference but of normal description, the document openly flouted any official or unofficial clerical prohibitions on vulgar expression--all in the cause of an attack on priests in a document addressed to a priest.

In the sixteenth-century examples the victimized women are in the Diego Pox case the petitioner's wife, and in the 1589 case the women of the five Maya communities responsible for the document. The cultural context is that of the role of prominent males in Maya society as protectors--in particular husbands and cabildo officers. Maya communities functioned in part through a system of paternalistic representation, whereby the batab represented the cabildo who represented the entire community, just as the senior male in a household or clan (patronym group) represented the group through nominal ownership of that group's landholdings. Duties of protection accompanying roles of representation are reflected in the linguistic imagery of rulership in Maya documentation.<sup>32</sup> By the same token, this system of representation is also one of authority--it is a determinant of power relations in the Maya community. Thus when Diego Pox's batab attempts to rape Pox's wife he is asserting his power over Pox and his wife within the sociopolitical structure of the cah, and when Pox objects before the Spanish courts he is asserting his power as protector of his family.

The objections of the sixteenth-century petitions, therefore, are not necessarily derived from prudish sensibilities or moral opposition to sexual activity on the part of the Maya; they are based on a concern to protect specific women, Maya women of the petitioners' own communities, foremost among whom may be their own wives. In contrast, the 1774 petition is concerned with no such thing. The women in question are not of the petitioners' community and in fact appear to be mestizas and mulattas rather than Maya. Far from being the object of protective Maya designs, these women are insulted along with the priests with whom they are seen; they are, in other words, accomplices to the alleged sexual crimes. The concerns of the 1774 petitioners seem to relate not to the interests of specific victims, but to the moral safety and high standards of the entire community--a position that is not entirely convincing in view of the language employed. The petition also represents an assertion of power by its author (possibly a cah) over outsiders, both Spanish clergy and non-Maya women.

The accusations in all three documents may well be exaggerated if not contrived: Maya officers were certainly aware of the kinds of tactics and accusations that aroused Spanish interest and action. Yet veracity is of minimal relevance. What is significant is the dialectic between the priorities of Maya cabildos and the sexual values of Maya society. A Maya woman enjoyed the protection of her cabildo, her community officers; where that system failed

her, she could fall back on the social values of the *cah* and rely on her husband to protect her through the Spanish courts (in possible contrast to the modern-day situation in which a Maya woman alone, even on her own property, is susceptible to rape without recourse<sup>33</sup>). Yet women who were not Maya, such as those described in the 1774 petition, and certainly not of that *cah*, were not subject to the protection of the *cabildo* and were thus an appropriate subject for lewd discussion and moral condemnation--possibly made in an ironic and humorous spirit. The fact that these women were named (unlike those in the other examples), and their home towns identified, highlighted their location on the wrong side of the Maya social fence.

Turning now to the broader body of Maya notarial documentation we find of relevance two corpora of testaments, those from mid-seventeenth-century *Cacalchen* and eighteenth-century *Ixil*. With respect to women, Maya wills indicate a division of labor by gender, a male-dominated hierarchy in politics and land tenure, and the use of marriage as a formalization of links between clans. The female position in society was defined, often dignified, not always equal.<sup>34</sup> Yet the social status of a woman was not necessarily tied to that of her father or husband. Widows do not seem to have been economically disadvantaged; unmarried women received property more or less evenly with their brothers, property that could be used to support them should they not get married.

Nor was a woman apparently disadvantaged by an extramarital relationship with a man. Pedro Mis of *Ixil* provides in his will for a woman and her child, both of whom he claims to have adopted. It is clear that the woman is his mistress: Pedro Mis' wife is still alive, and the mistress' child has his mother's name; there is no question of charity, as the woman was a *Pech*; and the use of "adoption" to cover extramarital relationships occurred likewise among the *Nahuas* of central Mexico.<sup>35</sup> We can only guess at the dynamics here, but the existence of other wealthy men bearing their mother's patronyms implies that it was socially acceptable to form an extramarital sexual union, at least under the circumstances on record (i.e., union between individuals from prominent families leading to the birth of a son). Another *Ixil* testator, a woman, has a son who bears her patronym, implying that he was born out of wedlock. A third testator from this *cah*, Juan de la Cruz *Coba*, fails to mention his father's name--it was customary to do so in that *cah*--and bears his mother's patronym. If he was illegitimate, it is significant that his will shows him to be a wealthy man



by Ixil standards, with some of that wealth inherited from his mother.<sup>36</sup> There is, in fact, nothing in the Maya record that justifies the use of a word as loaded as "illegitimate." The use of "adoption" to give extramarital union a respectable veneer might have been a smokescreen to avoid Spanish ecclesiastical condemnation, but may also have been a device that the Maya considered normal, not deceptive, particularly as such relationships would have been public knowledge within the cah.

### The Books of Chilam Balam

The Books of Chilam Balam are anonymous historical/mythological Yucatec Maya documents.<sup>37</sup> Munro Edmonson often seems to think of the Books as vast riddles that the Maya produced. Yet, if we look closely at them, they clearly have tremendous interest in conflicts between nobility, between small areas that we may identify as cahob, and between three larger groups: the Itza, the Xiu, and the Spanish. In other contexts, historians of early Latin America have successfully analyzed similar statements of ethnic and social norms.<sup>38</sup> In this study we analyze portions of the Chilam Balam texts that relate to sexual behavior. In many cases, we find that the Maya, as in the 1774 petition, use sexual statements in attempts to define their power relative to outsiders. They use sexual imagery to denigrate outsiders as well as to tell cosmological stories and to interpret the meaning of daily sexual behavior.

Statements in the Chilam Balams regarding sexual norms largely fall into three categories.<sup>39</sup> First, sexual fables tell of leaders and eras destroyed by excessive sex. They also tell of the ritual importance of sexuality. Second, many riddles relate sexuality to other elements of Maya society. They particularly discuss the relationships between sex, food, and nobility. Finally, by far the most common use of sexual terminology is the insult. The Books extensively use sexual insults to denigrate some gods, former leaders, and people the authors determine as outsiders to the community.

We need to understand both Books as historical texts. They contain much discussion of calendrical systems, but primarily they relate events important to Maya history. Within this historical discussion, the Books talk about sexual acts as they believe these acts relate to history. Thus, we cannot simply deduce from these Books a complete understanding of Maya sexuality, but rather we



can attempt to understand the historical place of sex within Maya thought.

Both Books extensively utilize the imagery of flowers to represent a variety of things. The Chumayel states: "As they were two-two day people, infinitely crazy and lustful, the young in the end did not look, and shamed the prudent people among the youth in the flowers" (*Licil ca ca kin uinicil tucal coil tz'itz'i mehenil t u xul ca satmail ylil y etel subtalil cux y ol ca mehenob t u nictteob*).<sup>40</sup> Here, the flowers seem to represent sexual acts. The youth, not prudently thinking about the future, became very lustful and had inordinate amounts of sex. Flowers also often represent war and sacrifice in these texts, suggesting some linguistic similarity between these elements and sexual acts. The Maya word for flower, *nic*, has alternative meanings including "mountain," "to end," and "to destroy." The word used in the Books for flower has an additional *te* on the end, forming *nictte*, which in modern Maya translates as a particular type of flower. In colonial Maya, *nictte* translated as the "vice of the flesh and the mischief of women," clearly relating the term to sexual behavior.<sup>41</sup> Roys translated the ending, *te*, as a Maya patronymic related to trees and wood.<sup>42</sup>

We clearly need to further explore the linguistic relationship between flowers and sex. Studying the modern Maya, William Hanks has determined that, within ritual discourse, "the body is made up of the same elements as is the rest of the material world."<sup>43</sup> Moreover, he finds that Maya discussion of sex often uses a variety of metaphors, some related to the earth.<sup>44</sup> Within the Books of Chilam Balam, the Maya viewed sex as somehow related to flowers, possibly relating sexual behavior to the reproductive capacities of the earth and of sun and rain. Still, we should not allow ourselves to be misled by the relationship between flowers and sex. Such a relationship does not suggest that the Maya automatically saw sex as a beautiful and natural element of life. In the case of this quote, the authors of the Chumayel clearly condemn youthful excessiveness. Their excessive lust led them to the flowers--to sex. The text then goes on to say how bad times returned and the Maya began to kill each other, rejected the Christian God, and almost ended up destroying Maya society.<sup>45</sup>

Another example of Maya use of flowers comes from the Tizimin, which states an extensive fable about the downfall of an era caused by the sins of the lords:

*Amayte Kauil u u ich t u canil ti y ahaulil hopic ci u  
tz'ocol u toppol ix bolon y ol nicate nicateil uah nicateil haa y  
aal tz'am lic u hal ach uinicil bal cah tz'am lic ah kin  
tz'am lic ah bobat ma mac bin u toc u ba t u halal can y  
ahaulil ti u u ich y etel u pucsikil i hunac tzuc ti cab ppen  
cech cal pach y an i ti pulan y oc t u lalac i la u tucul ti  
akab u keban kin u keban akab u munal u pucsikil hal ach  
uinicob ah bobatob ti u y ekabtuc u che y etel u tunich ix  
ma na ix ma yum i chaan u ba xaxak y oc*

Amayte Kauil was the face of the sky of the lordship who enflamed and ended the germination of the nine-hearted flower, the painted-heart flower, flowery tortillas, and flowery water. He worked as the provincial leader of the world, worked as a sun priest, and worked as a prophet. Nobody will escape from the true conversation of the lordship which is the face and the heart: The land was very lustful, abundant adultery existed, which was carried and taken everywhere. Such was the thought in the day, such was the thought in the night. The sin of day, the sin of night softened the hearts of the provincial leaders, the prophets. They blackened the trees and the stones. Those without mothers, those without fathers, they saw themselves in disarray.<sup>46</sup>

Such a fable seems to represent Maya concerns with excessiveness. Excessive sex could lead to the downfall of society. The false prophet and leader, Amayte Kauil, promoted this excessive sexual behavior, and thus the people would later overthrow him.<sup>47</sup>

The use of flowers in this fable appears to not directly represent sex. The flower has nine-hearts, a painted-heart, and it is related to food and water. The flower here seems to represent life. The heart, food, and water all maintain life. Amayte Kauil destroys the flower, thereby destroying life, through excessive sex. The flower and excessive sex thus negate each other, a seeming contradiction from the above-stated role of the flower. Yet, while excessive sex negates the flower, sex in moderation might relate positively to the flower. It seems clear from the above that the flower relates to sex in a variety of complex ways.

As others have mentioned, the flower maintains a symbolic identity in many areas of Mesoamerican thought. Among the Nahuas, the flower appears to have represented production and

reproduction. It also appears to have had a complex relationship to sexuality. The *Florentine Codex* shows a man and a woman sitting across from each other with a flower in between them. The caption to this picture reads "the sodomite."<sup>48</sup> Miguel León-Portilla and others also show that the flower relates to Nahuatl origin myths, philosophy, and war as well as sexuality.<sup>49</sup> It certainly appears that Mesoamerican cultures gave the flower many qualities related to life and death.

This passage also touches on the relationship between sex and sin in Maya thought. The sins of day and night relate back to the "abundant adultery." The word for sin, *keban*, seems related to feelings of uneasiness rather than the commission of actions defined as wrong by religious authorities.<sup>50</sup> Here, the wrong done could be the feeling of uneasiness among the population because of the excessive nature of the sexual behavior. We need to further investigate the development of *keban* in order to analyze the role of sin in Maya sexuality. This statement seems to find most objectionable the amount of lustful thought occurring in the period. It seems worthwhile to closely analyze the phrase here used for "abundant," which was also used in the 1774 petition to mean "excessive." The Maya is *pen cech*. Edmonson translates the phrase as "there was lust."<sup>51</sup> As stated above, we can translate *pen* as lust, but *cech* has several meanings, including "you who are," and many meanings related to deception.<sup>52</sup> The *Diccionario Maya* translates the phrase *pen cech* as "excessive" or "abundant."<sup>53</sup> This term for "excessive" obviously relates to the word *pen*. The Maya seem to have clearly related excessiveness to sexuality as two of four words used to mean "excessive" derive from *pen*. In fact *pen cech* seems to simply be a restatement of the phrase *pen cach*, also meaning excessive. The Maya probably simply decided to make the vowels agree. *Cach* has several meanings, the relevant one being "only."<sup>54</sup> If we translate *pen* as "to fornicate," then *pen cach* means "only to fornicate." The Maya then used this word as a general word, "excessive." Believing in moderation, the Maya probably used such a definition to condemn those believed to have too much sex.

This passage, or fable, goes far toward showing Maya concern with excessive sex, but we should not take it as an accurate portrayal of the period. The authors probably wrote this fable after the downfall of this particular leader as an effort to explain his ruin to later generations. They simply wanted to blame sex. The text has more value as one which tells Maya people the difference between right and wrong forms of sexual behavior. The fable, like

the 1774 petition, clearly presents excessive lustful thoughts and excessive adultery as wrong.

What is the correct form of sexual behavior? The Book from Chumayel contains many riddles that appear designed to make fun of the selection process of nobility.<sup>55</sup> In each case, the authors describe the scenario as an older noble asking a younger one a riddle which the younger one needs to answer appropriately. Should the younger one answer the riddles correctly, he would become accepted as a noble with true lineage. Should he fail to answer the riddles, society would assume him a commoner. These riddles suggest an attempt by the nobility to make fun of themselves and their tests of consanguinity and kinship. Many of the riddles have telling sexual connotations. The current lord says to the new:

*Mehen e tales t en ah canan colob noh xibob hun tuch u tal  
u choon e y etel y atan e t ix mumil chac tal e cex uay e y  
etell ix ah canan col ch'upllob e bin çaclah ch'upllob e  
t en ix bin luksic u picob y okol e ca tun in hante lay  
chicam e*

Son, bring to me the field guards, the grown men who have navels that come down to their pubic hair, and their wives are very soft, bring them over here and also the guards of the fields of young women. The girls will be white-faced that I will free them from their skirts. Then I will eat them. This is gourdroot.<sup>56</sup>

We again find sex and the human body related to food. The riddle suggests peeling the gourdroot as similar to a man taking off a woman's clothes (probably representing the Maya wrap-around skirt). Sex is likened to eating. Nobles here make fun of commoner men and women, particularly emphasizing the relationship of their bodies to food; commoner men are so fat that their navels come down to their pubic hair. The riddles also make fun of nobles, including the actors within the riddles. The authors discuss several cases where the lord takes off the clothes of a noblewoman and then eats her, again connecting sex and the female body with food.<sup>57</sup> Noble men do not escape such humor either, as the riddles often discuss their anatomy, also looking at their bodies as food, sometimes suggesting a relationship between male to male sex and eating.<sup>58</sup> We find clear relationships between the body and food as well as between eating and having sex.



The Books of Chilam Balam also use sexual terminology in the form of sexual insults. Here, we will give but a few examples of the many insults used. The Chumayel states that a certain pre-conquest era ended because of the misdeeds of two lords, *kak u pacal* and *tecuilu*.<sup>59</sup> *Kak u pacal* means "the ascending fire." *Tecuilu* comes from the Nahuatl *tecuilonti*, meaning "sodomite."<sup>60</sup> The insults clearly treat these lords as inferior leaders who destroyed the society. The authors use the word "sodomite" to insult the memory of the lords. The use of the Nahuatl could stand as a further insult, suggesting that the lords went beyond the linguistic construction of Maya sodomy into a different linguistic construct (one which the Maya could further denigrate), Nahua sodomy. While the above is the only mention of sodomy in the Chumayel, the Tizimin mentions it several times. The authors of the Tizimin focus on a period in which people had "overflowing anuses" (*u cucul it*).<sup>61</sup> This passage mentions "sons of the anus" (*u mehen tzintzin*), again using a derivative of a Nahuatl term for anus, *tzintli*,<sup>62</sup> and very likely referring to sodomy. The passage goes on to state the insanity (*coil*) of such "sons of the anus."

Sexual insults do not limit themselves to sodomy. The Books also use prostitution, adultery, fornication, pederasty, and more obscure elements of sexuality as insults. The Tizimin, insulting the Itza, say that under Itza leadership, *t u kin y an tzintzin bac toc*: "In that sun, there were robbers of children's anuses."<sup>63</sup> Note again the use of Nahuatl, "tzintzin," to refer to the anus. The Books so often use Nahuatl to describe the anus, that the Maya must have understood some connection between Nahuatl speakers and the anus. The Books, like the 1774 petition, thus attempt to insult outsiders by using what the Maya would have considered a sexually derogatory image.

The Tizimin also states that those who illegitimately covet the lordship are "children of the road to a good time" or "children of a loose woman" (*yal ti ti be*).<sup>64</sup> More often the meanings of the sexual insults themselves are elusive. In one case in the Tizimin, the authors insult a ruler because he does not know his mother or his father, and because he was born "through the nose and the tongue" (*tu ni y ak tz'etz'ec e*).<sup>65</sup> While we can understand this as an insult, we cannot know to what, if any, sexual act the "nose and tongue" refers.<sup>66</sup>

We should not understand the use of sexual insult in the Books of Chilam Balam to imply Maya hostility toward sexuality or toward any specific act. Although sodomy, prostitution, and ped-



erasty are used as insults, it seems that, in each case we can interpret those insults as condemnations of excessive sexual behavior. The fables, riddles, and insults of the Books condemn excess, not moderation. In fact, the riddles often make fun of sex, but clearly show that a wide variety of sexual acts, like a wide variety of foods, are good and important to maintain life within the proper context. The context to which the riddles refer seems to suggest that sex should have a ritualized element, and that people should only have moderate amounts. Excessive non-ritual sex would lead to the destruction of society--the death of the social body.

## Conclusions

What can we say in general about Maya sexuality from these documents? The Maya petitions and testaments discussed earlier back up some of the Chilam Balam statements on sexual activity and contradict others. The clearest of such statements is the condemnation of sexual excess. The Books appear to define this excess by looking at the categories of lust, adultery, sodomy, pederasty, and prostitution. The relationship of the words for excess, *pen cach* and *pen cech*, to sex seems clear, and suggests that many struggles took place among the Maya over controlling excessive sexual behavior. While the Books of Chilam Balam never give us a clear idea of what the Maya would have determined excessive, the petitions of 1589 and 1774 do help with this problem. There, excessive sexual behavior seems to be that which interferes with the religious connection between the people and the deity, specifically when priests fail to control their own sexual proclivities. In the Chilam Balams excessive sexual behavior leads to disaster: the destruction of a society or the overthrow of a leader. They imply that these disasters occurred because of the dissatisfaction of the deities with the state of existence of the Maya people. This dissatisfaction stemmed both from the sexual indulgences of the priests and from the excessive sexual behavior of the society as a whole. The people could not communicate with the deities because their minds and the minds of the priests were occupied with constant sexual thoughts.

The Books of Chilam Balam do not condemn all sexual activity. The relationship between flowers and sex suggests a Maya interpretation of sexuality as something natural and connected to the earth as well as to the cosmos. The Maya see both the allure and the danger of the flowers, similar to the allure of sex but the dan-

ger of excessive amounts of sex. The riddles also seem to suggest that people should have moderate amounts of sex. Indeed, the petitions condemn not sexual activity per se, but what the Maya perceive as undesirable sexual variants--priests' public sexual activity, sexual relations between priests and Maya women, the sexual relations of non-Maya women, rape, sodomy, and digital sex. The 1774 petition appears to condemn even moderate amounts of sodomy and digital sex, no doubt--due to its anti-clerical intent--a reflection of greater Christian influence.<sup>67</sup> The Books of Chilam Balam do not mention digital sex and give sodomy a relatively minor role.

In a study based on field work in the Maya community of Hocaba in the 1970s, Barbara Holmes seems to suggest that Maya men and women live in very different sexual cultures, with ribald humor being a strictly male preserve.<sup>68</sup> If this was the case in the colonial period--and one might speculate that it was, considering the frequency of a gender division in sexual humor--it is significant that document production was also a male preserve. In other words, the Maya-language notarial evidence, while offering great insight into the role of women in Maya culture, reflects male concerns and offers us a male perspective on many aspects of that society. This perspective ranges from the sexual humor of an anonymous and highly explicit denunciation of Spanish priests as licentious perverts, to the practice of representational and protective roles by husbands and male community officers, to the different ways in which the Maya used sexual language when the women involved were from outside the Maya community--from outside the world of the *cah*.

We can begin to see sexuality as evidenced in extant Maya-language texts as a formulation of male power. Still, the evidence suggests that sexuality for the Maya held much more than this. The sources of this study well illustrate the view of sexuality as an indicator and expression of power relations in general. Some Maya men discussed sexual activity in order to assert their power over other men and women within the community. The author of the 1774 petition attempted to use sex in order to empower the Maya *cah* over people perceived as outsiders. Maya nobles used sexual perceptions as insults against Nahuatl-speaking people, clearly another attempt to assert the power of the Maya people against non-Mayas. The only exception to this rule is the treatment of the English: a group of outsiders whom the Maya author of the petition could not have known. A male member of the community discussed sexual violence both to assert his "benevolent" power

over "his" woman and to challenge the power of the *batab*. The woman's physical resistance also challenged the power of that *batab*. A series of jokes within the Books of Chilam Balam turned the power dynamic between nobles and commoners upside-down, if only for a moment. The Maya connected food, excess, and sexual activity in order to assert a variety of power relationships. Maya nobles created sexual insults against various Maya leaders (probably reflecting inter-cahob rivalries) to cut down the power of those leaders. The Maya clearly developed varied discourses on sexual activity which they used in both official and unofficial notarial documents in order to consciously or unconsciously assert power.

For us to come to further conclusions about the ways in which the Maya understood and performed sexual activities, we need to engage in more research. First, other scholars should stop shying away from the study of sexual behavior. We have shown how such a study is a legitimate form of historical inquiry. Second, historians need to study a wide variety of documents, and not become discouraged by the paucity of documents talking directly about sexual activity. Research into more Maya official and unofficial notarial documents, the pictorial and hieroglyphic codices, and criminal trials and Church records would help further our understanding of Maya sexual norms. It seems that sodomy, other male-male sexual activity, female-female sexual activity, rape, incest, adultery, intercourse, concubinage, and pederasty all took place in Maya society as in most other societies. Yet there is more to be learned of the meaning the Maya gave to such behaviors, of their perception of the relationship between sexual norms and gender and social stratification, and of the influence of Christianity on Maya sexual acts and attitudes.

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## Notes

1. This chapter originated in separate papers given by Restall and Sigal at the 1992 Salt Lake City meeting of the American Society for Ethnohistory in a panel entitled "Indigenous Sexuality in Latin America." The broader research contexts of the chapter are Restall 1992 and Sigal forthcoming.

2. This abbreviation stands for "padre." We have attempted to keep everything as in the original text, leading to the following notes and abbreviations (in order of appearance): "y" is an abbreviation for *yete*; and

">" stands for the glottalized Maya "ts," written in colonial documents as a backwards "c."

3. AGN-I, 1187, 2, 59-61. We are grateful to Kevin Terraciano for finding this document in the AGN and passing on a copy to Restall; it was initially translated by Restall, James Lockhart and Marta Hunt, but Restall and Sigal are fully responsible for the above version. An earlier version can be found in Restall 1992.

4. Maya petitions against priests are discussed by genre, as well as in the context of all colonial-era Maya petitions, in Restall 1992: 49-79.

5. See Bakewell 1971; Brading 1971; Lockhart 1968; Schwartz 1973; and Taylor 1972.

6. For strong works on Indians using indigenous language sources, see: Bricker 1981; Burkhart 1989; Cline and León-Portilla 1984; Karttunen 1985; Karttunen and Lockhart 1976; Lockhart 1992; Restall 1992; Roys 1933, 1939, 1965; Schroeder 1991; and Thompson 1978. Also important to the present study, but using Spanish documents, are Farriss 1984; Gibson 1952, 1964; Gutiérrez 1991; Taylor 1979.

7. For the former, see: Hidalgo 1979; López Austin 1984; and Quezada 1974. For the latter see, for example, Guerra 1970.

8. Burkhart 1989; Castañeda 1989; Gutiérrez 1991; Lavrin 1989; Ortega 1985; Silverblatt 1987. Clendinnen 1982 is a partial attempt to approach Maya sexuality through Landa's (1982 [1566]) comments on Maya women. The only two works on same-gender sexual relations in colonial Latin America include Serge Gruzinski, "La Cenizas del Deseo: Homosexuales Novohispanos a Medios del Siglo XVII," in Ortega 1985; and Spurling 1992.

9. Weeks 1985; Foucault 1978; and D'Emilio and Freedman 1988.

10. For one of the most articulate enunciations of this theory, see Foucault 1985.

11. Foucault 1978: 90.

12. The year date is indicated on the Spanish translation; the provenance could presumably be easily deduced by Spanish officials at the time from the visita records of the accused priests. A longer definition of notarial documentation is Restall 1992: Chap. 2.

13. Hanks 1990; and Burns 1991.

14. DM Part I: 782.

15. DM Part II: 78.

16. DM Part I: 88.

17. DM Part I: 921.

18. DM Part I: 42-43.

19. Unfortunately there has been little work done on Africans in colonial Latin America, and none for the Yucatan.

20. DM Part I: 593-594.

21. DM Part I: 686-687.



22. Note that *ah penob* could easily be translated as "carnal sinners, lustful sinners" or even "villains." DM Part I: 687. We have used "fornicators" to establish consistency, and because we believe this to be the most accurate translation in the context.

23. Here, we do not mention female-female sexual activity because we do not find any mention of such activity in the documents used. Obviously, such activity did exist, but because of the nature of these probably male-written documents, they do not discuss female-female sexuality.

24. This petition also contains a place name which has sexual meaning. Father Maldonado has sex with a woman from Pencuyut, which has several possible sexual translations, including the "fornicating coyote," "the lustful coyote," and the "sodomizing coyote." This place does exist in Yucatan (it is in the Mani region), but the author may have used it in this petition in order to make a particular point (or joke): that lustful women come from oversexed communities.

25. For further elaboration, see Sigal forthcoming.

26. AGN-I, 69, 5, 277.

27. Bennassar 1979; Christian 1981: 253, n. 37; González 1985.

28. Reproduced with translation in Anderson, Berdan, and Lockhart 1976: 166-173.

29. Many others are suggested by Nahua-Maya similarities presented in Restall 1992: 421-25 et al.

30. Tabi collection, folios 32-33, in T-LAL.

31. DM Part I: 619, 626.

32. See Restall 1992: 142-45, 268-69, 405-10 et al.

33. This is according to Holmes 1977: 245.

34. Restall 1991a; 1991b; 1992: chap. 5.

35. The Pech were the dominant clan (patronym group) in Ixil (Restall 1992: chap. 5); on the adoption of mistresses by Nahuas, James Lockhart personal communication.

36. Ixil wills 30, 36, 51 in Restall 1991a.

37. CBT; CBC; Roys 1933.

38. See, for example, Burkhart 1989; Schroeder 1991.

39. In this chapter, we restrict our discussion to the two most important books, the Chumayel (CBC) and the Tizimin (CBT). (There are at least three additional smaller Books, and fragments of nine possible others.) While they have clear differences, these two Books do present a cohesive Maya history and ideology.

40. CBC: lines 661-666. Note that on many occasions our translation varies somewhat from that of Edmonson.

41. DM Part I, 569-570.

42. DM Part I, 782.

43. Hanks 1991: 86.

44. Hanks 1991: 120-122.



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45. CBC: 79.
46. CBT: lines 1349-1382.
47. CBT: 63.
48. Dibble and Anderson 1961: illustration 61. We thank Lisa Sousa for pointing out this and other illustrations in the *Florentine Codex*.
49. León-Portilla 1961.
50. DM Part I: 392-393.
51. CBT: 62.
52. DM Part I: 308.
53. DM Part I: 687.
54. DM Part I: 279.
55. Burns 1991.
56. CBC: lines 4525-4534.
57. See, for example, CBC: lines 4271-4296 and lines 4639-4650.
58. See, for example, CBC: lines 4111-4120 and lines 4519-4524.
59. CBC: lines 298-299.
60. Fray Alonso de Molina translates "*tecuilonti*" as the active partner in sodomy. The passive partner is translated as "*cuiloni*." Molina 1992 Part II: 93, 16.
61. CBT: line 2788.
62. CBT: line 2803.
63. CBT: line 1958.
64. CBT: line 3838.
65. CBT: lines 1089-1090.
66. Of course, this could be an oblique reference to oral sex. Without further evidence, though, we are not willing to suggest that conclusion.
67. While we normally are not willing to impute particular assertions to either pure Christian influence or pure indigenous influence, in this case the intent of the petition seems clear: its author wants to use Christian morality against Christian clergy. Given this intent, it seems that we can credit much Christian influence to the ideas expressed in this particular petition. No doubt, though, this is also a Maya response to Christian influence.
68. Holmes 1977: chap. 6.

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