

CRYPTO-JEWISH IDENTITY

IN THE INQUISITION OF

MEXICO CITY

by

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## ABSTRACT

## Crypto-Jewish Identity in the Inquisition of Mexico City

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The Spanish Inquisition was an aggressive Roman Catholic Church court that operated throughout the Spanish Empire beginning in the sixteenth century and was antagonistic toward all forms of religious practice that it defined as heretical. It was because of the influence of this court system that the Jews of Spain were forced to convert to Roman Catholicism or flee the Kingdoms of Spain in 1492. Often, those that converted secretly practiced Judaism. These secret practitioners are called Crypto-Jews. The Holy Office of the Inquisition considered the secret practice of Judaism to be heretical and sought out Crypto-Jews to try them for heresy in Inquisition courts. The plethora of records that exist for Crypto-Jewish heresy attest to the fact that the Office of the Inquisition was diligent and effective at finding Crypto-Jewish heretics.

Many Crypto-Jews escaped the first waves of prosecution and ended up in the Spanish colonies in the Americas. The Inquisition also traveled across the Atlantic and continued to search for and prosecute secret Jews. The communities that Crypto-Jews formed were often found and tried in their entirety. Two of these Mexican communities were tried in 1595 and 1647 and are the subjects of inquiry for this thesis.

This thesis uses the records of these two Crypto-Jewish communities to recreate a Mexican Crypto-Jewish identity showing that this identity was an amalgamation of Spanish, Catholic, colonial, and Jewish cultures and customs. In 1595 and 1647, two separate Crypto-Jewish communities were brought before the Inquisitorial court and tried for heresy. The community of 1595's Inquisition records include a man named Manuel de Lucena and the Carvajals, an entire family of Crypto-Jews. The community of 1647's includes two women named Antonia Núñez and Margarita Moreira. This thesis argues that this Mexican, Crypto-Jewish community created a unique identity and it was a result of many cultural and systematic influences, including Spanish, colonial, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and early medieval gender norms. Together these created a unique Mexican Crypto-Jewish identity and the recreation of this identity influenced religious practice, gender ideals and the formation of racial systems.

(110 pages)

## PUBLIC ABSTRACT

## Crypto-Jewish Identity in the Inquisition of Mexico City

Suzanne E. Skinner, Master of Arts

This thesis studies identity among a group of Roman Catholic converts and accused heretics in Mexico City, called Crypto-Jews. The areas of identity that were examined in depth were, religious identity, gender identity, and racial identity. The records that exist for Crypto-Jews in Mexico City are limited but can be found among the records of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.

In order to study the documents of the Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City, I had to travel to the University of California, Berkeley's Bancroft Library. I was supported in this endeavor by the History Department at Utah State University during the Spring semester of 2017. While there, I found primary sources written by the Holy Office of the Inquisition that contained the Inquisition trial records of many accused Crypto-Jews. This thesis uses five Inquisition documents from the trials of Manuel de Lucena, Isabel de Carvajal, Leonor de Carvajal, Margarita Moreira, and Antonia Núñez. Other primary sources include a translated copy of Luis de Carvajal's memoir.

Through the study of these Inquisition documents, I have concluded that Crypto-Jewish identity was an amalgam of many cultural influences including Spanish, colonial, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and early medieval. The combination of these cultural influences was processed by Crypto-Jews to form a unique identity. This identity was specific to the people whose records I was able to study and is a unique contribution to the historical study of Crypto-Jews.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In February of 1596 Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo was on his last walk, a parade through the town center, or more accurately his *auto de fe*. After one previous incarceration by the Mexican, Holy Office of the Inquisition, this second incarceration, which lasted a year, was going to end at the stake. His mother and his sisters had preceded him on the walk to execution and the priests that were delivering Luis to his fate gave him one final chance to confess his sins. One sin was of particular importance to the Inquisitors and that was that Luis was a convicted, Judaizing heretic. Although Luis had admitted to practicing many Jewish traditions and had asked for forgiveness during his first incarceration, he had never fully confessed or asked for pardon during this second period in the secret prisons of the Inquisition of Mexico City. Luis' ancestors had been Jews in Spain and Portugal and his family had secretly been practicing Judaism for four generations after it was forced to convert to Roman Catholicism in 1492. This Jewish heritage was extremely important to Luis. He was one of the few people whose personal memoir and letters were preserved by the Inquisition and it is clear through his own writing that he was dedicated to practicing Judaism. His Jewish faith was an integral part of his identity. Would he deny this part of himself at the last moment? Would he confess to heresy when he did not believe that his Jewish faith was contrary to God's commandments?

The formation and preservation of identity under the threat of the Spanish Inquisition is the focus of this thesis. I will argue that the formation of a distinct Mexican, Crypto-Jewish identity was the result of many cultural influences, including Spanish,

Roman Catholic, Jewish, colonial and European cultures. These cultures combined together to create a unique Crypto-Jewish identity among the Mexican communities of 1595 and 1647.

The Iberian Peninsula contains the countries of modern day Spain and Portugal, but in the fifteenth century it was a group of regionally ruled kingdoms. The two largest kingdoms, Castile and Aragon, were united when Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon were married in 1469. This new, connected kingdom was the setting in which the Spanish Inquisition began and operated for centuries. The Holy Office of the Inquisition was a branch of the Roman Catholic Church that prosecuted and punished baptized Catholics, who either distorted or apostatized from Catholic canon law. The Holy Office of the Inquisition had operated in Spain since the twelfth century as an extension of Roman Catholic hegemony in Western Europe, but the vigor with which the Inquisitors pursued their mandate to find, prosecute, and punish heretics ebbed and flowed.<sup>1</sup>

Ferdinand and Isabel sought many ways to consolidate their power in their lands. One of them was to control the religious practices of their subjects. In an effort to regulate the religion practiced by the subjects of their kingdoms, Ferdinand and Isabel asked Pope Sixtus IV for permission to establish and operate an Inquisitorial Office independent of Rome, which the pope granted in a bull in 1478. The Spanish Holy Office quickly and efficiently began to prosecute heretics.<sup>2</sup>

Ferdinand and Isabel's political authority was closely tied to their intimate relationship with the Roman Catholic Church; therefore, when the power of the Church or Inquisition was strengthened, the power of the monarchs increased as well. The Office

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: The New American Library, 1965), 35.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 1.

of the Inquisition's authority did not extend to Ferdinand and Isabel's subjects who were not Roman Catholics. The Jews were a group that did not fall under the authority of the Inquisition. So, Ferdinand and Isabel sought to further the Inquisition's power through the expulsion order of 1492, which required all Jews to either leave Spain or convert to Catholicism. If these Jews chose to convert to Catholicism and stay in Spain, they came under the authority of the Inquisition and could be tried for heresy, particularly if they maintained Jewish practices. These individuals were called by many names: *conversos*, Judaizers, Marranos, and Crypto-Jews.<sup>3</sup> The expulsion order simultaneously gave more power to the Office of the Inquisition and to Ferdinand and Isabel because their political authority was intertwined with their authority over Roman Catholicism in their realm, which after 1492 included much of the Americas.

A significant factor that influenced the reach of the Inquisition was Spain's colonization of the Americas. The Inquisition spread from Spain to Mexico and Peru, where the Inquisition established offices in the viceroyalty capitals of Mexico City and Lima.<sup>4</sup> The Inquisition did not immediately begin with the first colonization of the New World in the late fifteenth-century, but the Inquisition was eventually established in Peru in 1570 and in Mexico in 1571.<sup>5</sup> However, the Inquisition had limited jurisdiction in the colonies of Spain. It was only allowed to find and prosecute heretics that were of Spanish descent (including those with partial Spanish ancestry and African heritage) and the

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<sup>3</sup> The differences between these names is discussed on pages 11 and 12.

<sup>4</sup> Stacey Schlau, *Gendered Crime and Punishment: Women and/in the Hispanic Inquisition* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 7.

<sup>5</sup> Martin A. Cohen, *The Jewish Experience in Latin America: Selected Studies From The Publication of The "American Jewish Historical Society,"* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1971), 1: XXIV.

Inquisition was only established in the strongest colonial capitals of Mexico City and Lima after a firm political and bureaucratic structure was firmly set.

I argue that the religious, gender, and racial identities of the Crypto-Jews of Mexico City are an amalgamation of the dominant Spanish and Catholic culture, colonial systems and ideals, and remembered Jewish traditions. Recreating Crypto-Jewish religious, gender and racial identities is an important historical pursuit because they were crucial players in the history of Spain and its new colonies. The history of these accused heretics deserves to be told from their own perspective because historians like the renowned Inquisition scholar, Henry Kamen and Helen Rawlings often simply view the accused for the role they played in the formation and operation of the Inquisition as well as their role in the strengthening of the Spanish State.<sup>6</sup> To be able to study accused heretics from their own perspective would help to round out the historical picture of the Spanish Empire and its institutions. It is also a worthy pursuit to understand the suffering and persecution of an entire people, not to mention every individual who was tried by the Inquisition. However, the only substantial body of records that exists from the time period are from Inquisitorial trials. Therefore, out of necessity, historians must use these records to recreate parts of an accused heretic's identity. The religious, gender, and racial identities of certain Mexican *conversos* can be recreated through careful study of their Inquisition records. The expulsion order of 1492, which ordered all Jews to convert to Roman Catholicism or leave the Spanish realm, amplified the power of the Inquisitorial Office by creating a new population of heretics (*conversos*) which the Office could prosecute. Therefore, Crypto-Jewish culture and religious, gender and racial identities were partially

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 15; Helen Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 7.

formed by the Inquisition. This makes the study of Inquisition records important to the recreation of Crypto-Jewish identity in Mexico. Although some scholars have discussed religious, gender, and racial identities through the Inquisition records of accused heretics, this study will discuss these elements in the context of two very tight-knit and intertwined communities in Mexico City.<sup>7</sup>

This thesis argues that the religious, gender and racial identities of these Mexican Crypto-Jews was created by a myriad of factors. The most important influences on the formation of Crypto-Jewish religious identity were the secrecy of their Jewish practice and their outward and forced practice of Catholicism. These factors created an entirely new religion—a hybrid of Judaism and Catholicism, or Crypto-Judaism. The formation of gender identity among these Mexican Crypto-Jewish communities was also impacted by the secret nature of their Crypto-Jewish religious practices and resulted in the defiance of the early modern era’s gender norms. However, Crypto-Jewish gender identity did not always defy the prescribed standards for gender of the era, but often displayed them in uniquely Crypto-Jewish ways. The establishment of a Crypto-Jewish racial identity was a

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<sup>7</sup> Some of the literature that discusses these facets of Crypto-Jewish identity are: (religious identity) David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996); Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1932); Ronnie Perelis, *Narratives from the Sephardi Atlantic: Blood and Faith* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016); (gender identity) Stacy Schlau, *Gendered Crime and Punishment: Women and/in the Hispanic Inquisition* (Boston: Brill, 2013); Mary E. Giles, ed., *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); (racial) María Elena Martínez, “Interrogating Blood Lines: ‘Purity of Blood,’ the Inquisition, and *Casta* categories,” in *Religion in New Spain* ed. Susan Schroeder and Stafford Poole (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Ilona Katzew and Susan Deans-Smith eds., *Race and Classification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009) and Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew D. O’Hara eds., *Imperial Subjects: race and identity in colonial Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

process that took place over a long period of time starting in 1492 and continuously changed over the course of the Spanish Inquisition's existence. The new Spanish

came to develop the idea of race as it confronted new peoples in the Americas.<sup>8</sup>

The development of the idea of race was influenced by an old Spanish blood purity system called *limpieza de sangre*, which equated Judaism to impurity.<sup>9</sup> Each of these topics will be discussed in greater depth in the subsequent chapters.

### **Context of Jews in the Inquisition**

The Crown's motive in targeting Jews and creating an independent Spanish Inquisition seems to have had many motivations, two of which were to destroy heresy and to create a homogenous population. This population was to be Roman Catholic and was to subscribe to certain religious, gender, and racial norms.<sup>10</sup> These norms were implicit in the crimes and the actions of the people that the Inquisition chose to prosecute.<sup>11</sup> So as the Inquisition fulfilled its mission to find and punish heretics, ridding itself of dissenters, it educated the rest of the population about what a good Spanish Catholic did, said, ate, looked like, and believed. The Inquisition records are filled with discoverable information about the religious, gender, and racial norms that both the Inquisitors and the heretics that they tried, subscribed to.

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<sup>8</sup> María Elena Martínez, "Interrogating Blood Lines: 'Purity of Blood,' the Inquisition, and *Casta* categories," in *Religion in New Spain* ed. Susan Schroeder and Stafford Poole (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 199.

<sup>9</sup> Gregory B. Kaplan "The Inception of *Limpieza de Sangre* (Purity of Blood) and its Impact in Medieval and Golden Age Spain," in *Marginal Voices: Studies in Converso Literature of Medieval and Golden Age Spain*, ed. Amy I. Aronson-Friedman and Gregory B. Kaplan (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 19.

<sup>10</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 36.

<sup>11</sup> Some examples of this might be that a large majority of men were tried for sexual crimes such as bigamy and bestiality—crimes that defied male responsibilities as patriarchal head of the household. Women were tried for crimes such as illuminism and witchcraft, which challenged their subordinate role in the political, societal, and religious patriarchy.

Ferdinand and Isabel's motivations for establishing an Inquisition were multifaceted and not all of them are relevant to this study. However, some of these motivations will help to establish the central role that Jews and Judaism played in the ongoing mission of the Inquisition. One of Ferdinand and Isabel's motivations for creating the Inquisition and signing the expulsion order of 1492 was that the Reconquista had ended in the same year. The Reconquista was a crusade to drive the Moors (Muslim inhabitants) from the Iberian Peninsula. This mission had been going on in Spain since the twelfth century. The effort to drive the Moors from Iberia started because the ecclesiastical and political leaders of Iberia saw that many laypersons were leaving the Peninsula to fight in the crusades of Palestine. This left the Moors to reclaim political dominance in Iberia. This was unacceptable to the Christian rulers of the regional kingdoms of Spain, as well as the Roman Catholic leaders of Iberia and Rome. So they decided to make pilgrimage sites in Spain, the most important of which was Santiago de Compostela.<sup>12</sup> In Compostela, crusaders could visit the holy site of Santiago (St. James) and then start their crusades early, by driving the Moors from Spain.<sup>13</sup> When the last Moorish Kingdom of Granada fell to the Catholic Monarchs in 1492, the monarchs lost a great tool for unifying the Spanish people, fighting the Moor.<sup>14</sup> Therefore in an attempt to create a new adversary for the Spanish people to fight against, the Jews were expelled from Spain, or forced to convert to Catholicism. The well-publicized expulsion order

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<sup>12</sup> Marta Gonzalez Vasquez, "Women and Pilgrimage in Medieval Galicia," in *Women and Pilgrimage in Medieval Galicia*, ed. Carlos Andres Gonzalez-Paz (Santiago de Compostela: Ashgate, 2015), 45-46.

<sup>13</sup> Patrick J. O'Banion, "What has Iberia to do with Jerusalem? Crusade and the Spanish route to the Holy Land in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of Medieval History* 34 (2008) 392-394.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Elizabeth Perry, *The Handless Maiden: Moriscos and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 2-3.

gave the Spanish people a new foe to combat—the heretic. As the overabundance of Inquisition documents attests, the Spanish people were motivated and effective at uncovering heresy among their neighbors.

Another motivation for the expulsion order and the reinvigoration of the Inquisition might have been economic. The Jews of Spain had become a particularly powerful section of the middle class.<sup>15</sup> Their occupations were generally that of financiers, doctors, and lawyers.<sup>16</sup> Among this population were groups of Jews that were intimately connected to the Crown. Because this middle class was so economically (and politically) powerful, the nobility of Spain felt threatened. When the expulsion order was signed, it effectively rid Spain of this middle class. It is unclear why the monarchs would have wanted to eradicate the middle class, particularly the financiers who handled the Crown's money, but perhaps the nobility of the kingdoms pressured the monarchs into signing the expulsion order. Whatever the case may be, the expulsion order did not enrich Spain's economy—it led to a much less stratified economy by putting money in the hands of a few nobles, who were ill-educated in finance. The Holy Office of the Inquisition was not enriched by the expulsion order either. The Inquisition often did not even gain enough money through property confiscations of heretics to pay all of the bureaucrats that it needed to run the Inquisitorial Office.<sup>17</sup>

### **Sources**

This thesis will use Inquisition records from the New World Inquisitorial Office of *Nueva España*, or Mexico City, located in the archives of the University of California,

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<sup>15</sup> Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 48.

<sup>16</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 15-17.

<sup>17</sup> Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 42-43.

Berkley's Bancroft Library. Inquisition records contain detailed minutes of every accused heretic's trial from their first arrest and arraignment to sentencing. Although these records include a lot of information, including witness statements and Inquisitor commentary, it is important to note that the accused did not have the benefit of knowing all this recorded information because these records were solely for Inquisition use and were kept secret.

The records I will use are from two different waves of persecution in Mexico City. The first wave of persecution was in 1595 and the second was in 1645. This fifty-year span between trial records will help demonstrate some of the changing features of Crypto-Jewish identity, as well as the continuities. The members of these communities that I will discuss are Leonor de Carvajal, Isabel de Carvajal, Luis de Carvajal, Manuel de Lucena, Antonia Núñez and Margarita Moreira.

All of these records have been transcribed and translated by this author, with the exception of Luis de Carvajal's letters and memoir. The letters and memoir of Luis de Carvajal have been transcribed and translated by previous scholars. This thesis will use Seymour B. Liebman's translations of Luis' writings.<sup>18</sup> The translations I have done of Leonor Carvajal, Isabel de Carvajal, Manuel de Lucena, Antonia Núñez, and Margarita Moreira's records are as close to the original Spanish as possible, but syntax might have been changed for the sake of clarity.

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<sup>18</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal* trans. Seymour B. Liebman (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1967).

## People

Isabel de Carvajal and Leonor de Carvajal were sisters who lived in Mexico City in the 1590s. The Inquisition arrested and tried them along with their mother, brother, and two other sisters, Catalina and Mariana, on two separate occasions in 1589 and 1595.<sup>19</sup> Their brother, Luis has become famous among Crypto-Jews because after his first incarceration he wrote a memoir (or *Vida*) detailing his personal convictions about Judaism. Also, during his second incarceration, he was able to write letters to his family members, who were also in prison as well. The Inquisition preserved Luis' writings in his Inquisitorial record. Luis' *Vida* and letters were stolen from the Mexican archive in 1932, but not before they were transcribed and translated by Alfonso Toro and Seymour B. Liebman.<sup>20</sup> A supposed copy of Luis de Carvajal's letters and *Vida* were recently sold to the British Library, but after it was discovered that they were Luis' original writings, they were returned to their rightful home in Mexico.<sup>21</sup> This paper will utilize some of Luis' translated writings, especially the letters that he wrote to his sisters Isabel and Leonor. In 1595 the Inquisition arrested and tried Manuel de Lucena, a member of the Carvajal's Crypto-Jewish community. It was Manuel's confession that exposed the Carvajals as relapsed heretics and subjected them to the scrutiny of the Inquisition for the second time. Manuel's name is mentioned extensively in Isabel and Leonor's Inquisition trial records.

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<sup>19</sup> This chapter relies on Inquisition records from Isabel and Leonor's second trial before the Holy Office of the Inquisition. The author has transcribed and translated all of these records from their original form.

<sup>20</sup> Alfonso Toro, *The Carvajal Family*, translated by Frances Hernandez (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 2002) and Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal* trans. Seymour B. Liebman (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1967).

<sup>21</sup> Ronnie Perelis, *Narratives from the Sephardi Atlantic: Blood and Faith* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 32; Natasha Pizzey, "Secret Mexican diary sheds light on Spanish Inquisition," BBC News, June 4, 2017, accessed April 11, 2018, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-40029453>.

The reverse is also true, as Manuel's record repeatedly mentions Isabel, Leonor, and the rest of the Carvajal family.

From these sources a more complete picture emerges of the way Crypto-Jews thought of themselves and constructed their identities. Because of the antagonistic nature of the Inquisition some might question whether or not these men and women were actively Crypto-Jews. However, Luis de Carvajal personally wrote about Crypto-Judaism with detail and conviction. He and the rest of the Carvajal family were observant Jews. The legitimacy of their Jewish identity extends to other individuals who lived and worshipped in the Carvajal family's Crypto-Jewish community, namely Manuel de Lucena.

This thesis also utilizes the trial records of Antonia Núñez and Margarita Moreira, both of whom were Jews. Antonia Núñez was a minor who was brought before the Inquisition at the same time as her family. Not much is known about her or her family except for the information that can be found in her Inquisition trial record. It is possible that she belonged to the Crypto-Jewish community of Tomás Treviño de Sobremonte, but it is not entirely clear.<sup>22</sup> The Inquisition tried both Antonia and Margarita during a wave of increased hostility toward anyone suspected of being a Crypto-Jew in 1647.<sup>23</sup> Information about Margarita is also limited to her trial record.

*Conversos*, Crypto-Jews, *Marranos*, or Judaizers were all names for one group of heretics who were special targets of the Inquisition. *Conversos* were Jews that were either forced or chose to convert to Catholicism. Forced conversion to Christianity happened in

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<sup>22</sup> David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 58, 116.

<sup>23</sup> Solange Alberro, *La Actividad del Santo Oficio de la Inquisicion en Nueva España* (Mexico: Fuentes para la Historia, 1981): 39-40.

Spain even before the expulsion order of 1492. In 1391 there were a series of pogroms in which many, possibly even thousands, of Jews were killed or forced to save themselves in the baptismal font.<sup>24</sup> Some of these *conversos* still practiced Judaism in private, even though they were now baptized Roman Catholics. Many new *conversos* continued to practice Judaism after the expulsion order of 1492 as well. Crypto-Jew is a modern term that describes these individuals and refers to the covert nature of their worship. *Marrano* is a derogatory term that Christians used during the Inquisition and Judaizer is the term that the Inquisitors used most often in their records to refer to this group of people.<sup>25</sup> This study will use the terms *converso*, Crypto-Jew and Judaizer.<sup>26</sup> The 1492 expulsion order created a larger group of *conversos* and suspected heretics for the clergy to bring before the Inquisition.<sup>27</sup>

### **Historiography**

Both the history and the study of the Spanish Inquisition are complicated, partly because the Spanish Inquisition lasted for over three centuries and partly because so many different kinds of people from different locales were brought before the Tribunal. Its depth and breadth are evidenced by the vast amount of literature that seeks to address the subject. From the start one can see this in the four-volume work of H.C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*.<sup>28</sup> This seminal work was written in 1906 and is the

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<sup>24</sup> Renee Levine Melammed, *A Question of Identity: Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 13.

<sup>25</sup> Norman Roth, *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 4.

<sup>26</sup> The author will try to use these terms as literally as possible. Because of the derogatory nature of the term *marrano*, it will not be used.

<sup>27</sup> The Crown's goal in signing the expulsion order might have been to bring the remaining "Jews" (now *conversos*) under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition.

<sup>28</sup> H.C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain vols. I-III* (London: MacMillan Company, 1906).

foundational work with which many subsequent historians converse.<sup>29</sup> One of the most important revisions of Spanish Inquisition history was written in 1965 by Henry Kamen. His revision of Inquisition scholarship proposed that the Office of the Inquisition was not formed solely by a fanatical Catholic society but was formed because of many religious, social, and economic reasons.<sup>30</sup> From Lea and Kamen's works onward, Inquisition studies have branched out in a variety of directions. Some Inquisition scholars research the daily lives of Spaniards and colonial residents through the lens of Inquisition records.<sup>31</sup> Others have narrowed their studies by researching specific heresies or certain cities that the Inquisition operated in.<sup>32</sup> Specific scholarship on Crypto-Jewish religion, gender, and race in New Spain will be outlined in each respective chapter. The scholarship in each of these areas is extensive and has direct correlation to the arguments made in each chapter.

### **Inquisition Trial and Process**

The way in which the Inquisition operated will be of some importance to the examination of Crypto-Jewish identities because its procedures were designed to summon confessions—a goal which the Inquisition achieved in all of the records that will be examined here. These confessions will be the basis for much of the analysis of Crypto-

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<sup>29</sup> Cecil Roth, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: the Norton Library, 1964); Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: The New American Library, 1965); Benzion Netanyahu, *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain* (New York: Random House, 1995); Joaquin Perez Villanueva and Bartolome Escandell Bonet, *Historia de la Inquisicion en Espana y America* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos: Centro de Estudios Inquisitoriales, 1984-2000).

<sup>30</sup> Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 8.

<sup>31</sup> James Maxwell Anderson, *Daily Life During the Spanish Inquisition* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> Julio Caro Baroja, *Vidas magicas e Inquisicion* (Madrid: Taurus, 1967); Solange Alberro, *Inquisicion y sociedad en Mexico, 1571-1700* (Mexico: fondo de cultura Economica, 1988).

Jewish identity. The Holy Office only tried heretics that had multiple accusers, or had sufficient evidence laid against them. When there was ample evidence, the heretic was arrested and brought to the Inquisition's secret prisons—a name given to them because of the undisclosed nature of Inquisition trials. The heretics were not told what they were being tried for until after they were given the chance to confess their sins. In addition to not being told the charges, the names of the accused's deponents were also kept secret. This was done in an effort to avoid the accused heretic knowing the charges by virtue of knowing who testified against them; it was also done like this to protect the deposer from retribution. At the beginning of a trial the accused could produce a list of "mortal enemies," and if the deposer was on this list, the trial was dismissed.<sup>33</sup>

The main objective of the Inquisition was to have the accused heretic confess his or her sins and the Inquisitor's motive to gain a confession from the heretic informed all of the actions of the Inquisitors, including torture.<sup>34</sup> Accused heretics were presumed guilty and even though they were given a defense attorney, this lawyer was employed by the Office of the Inquisition. His job was to encourage the accused to confess. As mentioned above, torture was a part of Inquisition trials, but it was only used in a minority of cases and always in an effort to get a confession.<sup>35</sup> The Inquisition's rules about torture were strict. Torture was administered by a professional jailer and was supervised by two Inquisitors and a scribe. Any confession given under torture had to be endorsed by the accused after the day that the torture was administered.<sup>36</sup> The trial was conducted in a series of court appearances called *audiencias* which included two

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<sup>33</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 152.

<sup>34</sup> H.C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* vol. II, 570.

<sup>35</sup> Rawlings, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 33.

<sup>36</sup> Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 172.

Inquisitors, the prosecution lawyer, the defense lawyer, a police officer and one or more scribes.<sup>37</sup> The accused was sentenced in a special *audiencia* called an *auto de fe*, which could be public or private depending on the severity of the crime. Sentencing was threefold, “spiritual, financial and occupational.” Every heretic was sentenced to offer spiritual penance, which could be many things such as wearing a special garment (called a *sanbenito*) that marked the accused as a heretic or could be something as routine as offering confession at every high, holy holiday.<sup>38</sup> The financial punishment that every accused heretic suffered was that their property was confiscated and went to the Holy Office of the Inquisition for the maintenance of the accused’s dependents, and the cost of the investigation. The final penance that prisoners received was occupational in nature and only happened if he or she was released from prison. The occupational penalty required the released prisoner to fulfill certain occupational services.<sup>39</sup> For example, after Luis de Carvajal was released from prison after his first trial in 1589, he was forced to be a scribe for a monastery outside of Mexico City.<sup>40</sup> The majority of heretics that were accused for the first time and confessed their sins, were given a less severe punishment. Those that were found guilty of severe heresy or those that were brought before the Inquisition for a second time were “relaxed” into the government’s care. The Inquisition did this because government could commit condemned heretics to be burned at the stake, and the Inquisition, as a Church body, could not carry out capital punishments.<sup>41</sup> These

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph Pérez, *The Spanish Inquisition: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 112-113.

<sup>38</sup> Norman Roth, *Conversos*, 222.

<sup>39</sup> Martin A. Cohen, *The Jewish Experience in Latin America*, XXVI.

<sup>40</sup> Luis De Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 61.

<sup>41</sup> Norman Roth, *Conversos*, 221; Richard Greenleaf and Victor Villela, *Zumárraga y la Inquisición Mexicana, 1536-1543* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), 6. Greenleaf and Villela state that because of the intertwined nature of Church and State in Spain, the

were the threats under which Crypto-Jews continued their Jewish traditions and practices. These are also the circumstances under which this thesis will examine and extract elements of Crypto-Jewish identity.

These antagonistic circumstances in which Inquisition documents were created, provide a host of theoretical problems for historians who use them to understand the lives of Crypto-Jews. For example, an accused *converso* might not have been a practicing Crypto-Jew, but because of the immense pressure of the Inquisition he or she confessed to being a Crypto-Jew. This accused heretic could then have gone on to describe practices that he or she heard rumors about or read about but were not true practices of Crypto-Judaism. Another possibility is that an accused heretic, Crypto-Jew or not, indicted others of more heinous heresies to lessen the pressure on themselves. These people and heresies could have been true Crypto-Jews and Crypto-Jewish practices, or they could have been fabrications. These are just a few of the possible problems come from using Inquisition documents to recreate Crypto-Jewish identities. However, even though Inquisition documents can be difficult to decipher and interpret they are the best and sometimes only records available. This thesis will not ignore the often-hostile circumstances in which the accused found themselves but will use the records of the Inquisition and interpret them as carefully as possible.

### **Outline**

Both Inquisition procedures and Crypto-Jewish beliefs informed the way in which Crypto-Jews shaped their identities. Chapter one will discuss Crypto-Jewish religious identity and in particular the way in which Catholicism changed their Judaism. This

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difference between heresy and treason was very vague. Heretics threatened the spiritual well-being of the populace and this was tantamount to social revolution, an executable offence.

Crypto-Judaism became a religion separate from traditional Sephardic Judaism. Four of the most distinct practices and traditions that informed the Crypto-Judaism of the Carvajals were community, prayer, circumcision, and Catholicism. Each of these will be analyzed in the first chapter.

Chapter two argues that the gender identities of Crypto-Jews were formed by the practice of their religion, as well as the overarching gendered language and norms that were brought to Mexico from early modern Europe. Traditional Jewish holiday practices were often carried out in the home, and as such, became vital to the identity of Crypto-Jewish women. The language that both the Inquisitors and the accused used in these Inquisition trials also illuminates aspects of Crypto-Jewish men's and women's identities. The familial roles of Crypto-Jewish men and women are also prominent in these Inquisition records. Each of these aspects of gender has both commonalities and differences with the larger social mores of the time period.

Chapter three argues that the development of Jews as a race developed from Iberian cultural norms and new cultural clashes with Indians. The role of the institution of *limpieza de sangre*, or cleanliness of blood was the first step toward identifying Jews as a race in Spanish culture. This fear of unclean blood and the clash of Spanish and Native American cultures led to the development of race and caste as definitive categories in colonial Mexico. This change happened over time and is clearly seen in the Inquisition records of 1595 and 1647.

Crypto-Jewish identity in the Mexican Inquisition was formed by Spanish, Catholic, colonial, and Jewish culture and systems. While it would be impossible to give an absolute definition of Crypto-Jewish identity, it is possible to define some of tenets

and parameters that comprise a Crypto-Jewish identity. The religious, gender, and racial identities of Crypto-Jews varied across time and location, but by analyzing the Inquisition records of Mexican Crypto-Jews in 1595 and 1647, some of the variability of time and location can be mitigated. It is clear through analysis of the records of the Carvajals, Manuel de Lucena, Antonia Núñez, and Margarita Moreira that Spanish and Catholic culture, the Spanish colonial system and inherited Jewish traditions combined to make up a distinctly Crypto-Jewish identity in Mexico City.

## CHAPTER 2

### RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

#### **Introduction**

The Crypto-Judaism that Leonor, Isabel, Luis, Manuel, Antonia, and Margarita practiced was a religion separate from Catholicism and Judaism. Both Catholicism and Judaism gave distinct, critical contributions to their Crypto-Jewish religious identities. The culture created by the Inquisition strongly encouraged all members of society to observe behavior and evaluate it for sacrilege. This meant that any Jewish practice had to be done in secret. The religion that these *conversos* outwardly practiced was Catholicism. Therefore, the secret nature of their Jewish practice, along with the Roman Catholicism that they practiced in their public lives, influenced the form of Judaism that developed in Mexico City during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> The distance in time from formal Judaism also meant that the religion that the Carvajals' community formed became a hybrid form of Judaic practice. So, as Crypto-Judaism developed, it became separate from normative Judaism. Crypto-Jewish practices became imbedded in the identities of the *conversos* that practiced it.

The Carvajal's Crypto-Judaism was distinct to their community. This community consisted of a variable number of persons, but according to the Carvajal sister's and Manuel de Lucena's Inquisition records, it consisted of around 35 people.<sup>2</sup> Versions of

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<sup>1</sup> David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 99.

<sup>2</sup> "Leonor de Carvajal," Tribunal de la Inquisición en México 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 4 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 3-5. The members of the community did not reside in a specific area, as it would have been much easier for the Inquisitors to find and root out Crypto-Jewish heretics who stayed in an insular and segregated community.

Crypto-Judaism would have varied from person to person, and from community to community; in short, there was no normative Crypto-Judaism in the Spanish Empire.<sup>3</sup> Which Jewish practices were abandoned altogether, which ones were modified, and which practices were elevated in importance, are all sub-themes of this chapter. The religious practices of the Carvajal family and Manuel de Lucena would have been very similar because they worshipped together in the same community. The religious identity of the Carvajal's Crypto-Jewish community was influenced and formed by Spanish, Catholic and Jewish traditions. These influences created a new, Crypto-Jewish religion, one that was distinct to the Carvajal's Mexican community. Since Antonia's and Margarita's records do not contain much information about their Crypto-Jewish beliefs or practices, discussion of their records will not be presented in this chapter.

### **Historiography**

Understanding Crypto-Jewish religious identities is foundational to understanding the other elements of Crypto-Jews' gender and racial identities. Religious identity is also the most obvious element of identity formation among the Crypto-Jews of the Inquisition and has been studied and written about by many Inquisition scholars. *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* is one of the most comprehensive works of scholarship that delineates many of the Crypto-Jewish tenets of faith.<sup>4</sup> This volume is also an anthology of Inquisition sources and combines the records and research of many scholars to give a comprehensive view of Crypto-Judaism. Some scholars have written about

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<sup>3</sup> Cecil Roth, "The Religion of the Marranos" *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 22, no. 1 (July 1931): 2; Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1932), 169.

<sup>4</sup> David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996).

various tenets of Crypto-Judaism including specific Crypto-Jewish beliefs and others have even written about Luis de Carvajal's Crypto-Jewish beliefs.<sup>5</sup> However, scholars have written about the Carvajal and Lucena Crypto-Jewish community as a cohesive unit, nor have they discussed how each Crypto-Jews' beliefs would have informed and influenced each member of the Crypto-Jewish community. These are the unique contributions that this thesis will bring to the historiographical discussion of Crypto-Judaism in Mexico City.

### **Community**

Community was an important feature in Judaism, but not all aspects of traditional community could be integrated into Crypto-Jewish practice. In Judaism, particularly after the diaspora, Jews tended to congregate into insular communities in whichever city they ended up in. One of the most famous examples of this during the medieval and early modern period was the Jewish Ghetto in the city of Venice.<sup>6</sup> A physical community could not be realized for Crypto-Jews in the era of Inquisition because they would have been found out and accused of heresy very quickly. However, many Crypto-Jews still knew who practiced the "Law of Moses," and kept their community alive through extensive communication. Community was a fundamental feature of Jewish life because contained

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<sup>5</sup> Seymour B. Liebman, *A Guide to Jewish References in the Mexican Colonial Era: 1571-1821* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964); Seymour B. Liebman *The Jews in New Spain* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1970); Martin A. Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal: A Secret Jew in sixteenth-century Mexico* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973); Alfonso Toro *The Carvajal Family* (El Paso, TX: The University of Texas at El Paso, 2002); Anna Lanyon, *Fire and Song: The Story of Luis de Carvajal and the Mexican Inquisition* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Roberto Bonfil, *Jewish Life in Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 70-71. Other insular communities could be found in Amsterdam and Salonika.

in these communities were the places that kept Jewish tradition alive.<sup>7</sup> For example, the synagogue was a central place for Jews because of its importance to worship, and someone like a kosher butcher was important to the Jewish community because he provided a service that was central to maintaining correct Jewish eating practices—the laws of *kashrut*.<sup>8</sup> The synagogue was no longer a sanctioned space in Spanish and colonial society, so homes became Crypto-Jewish synagogues and the community continued to congregate together in this space. The occupation of kosher butcher was no longer a possibility.

The community in which the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena lived and worshipped was integral to their practice of Crypto-Judaism because it carried on Jewish traditions and knit the community together through worship. Crypto-Jewish practice was kept alive through community memory that passed on practices and acceptable behavior.<sup>9</sup> This became one of the significant factors that led to such large groups of Crypto-Jews being accused of heresy. Once one member of a community had been accused of heresy, and because the specific charges and specific informants were kept secret, often the entire community ended up being implicated, guilt by association.<sup>10</sup> This was the case with Manuel de Lucena and the Carvajals. However, without the community's memory, Crypto-Judaism likely would have petered out centuries before Manuel's and the

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<sup>7</sup> Elisheva Baumgarten, *Practicing Piety in Medieval Ashkenaz: Men, Women and Everyday Religious Observance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 22; Ronald L. Eisenberg, *Jewish Traditions: A JPS Guide* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 363.

<sup>8</sup> *Kashrut* will be discussed in depth in Chapter 2, Gender Identity.

<sup>9</sup> Ronnie Perelis, *Narratives from the Sephardi Atlantic: Blood and Faith* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> Roth, *A History of the Marranos*, 147. Roth gives various examples of martyrs, who led their Crypto-Jewish communities, but after they were denounced to the Inquisition, their communities were decimated by the Holy Office.

Carvajals' trials. The community in which the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena practiced their Crypto-Judaism is well documented through their Inquisition trial documents.

The importance of the community in the Carvajals and Manuel's Crypto-Judaism was illustrated in their celebration of Jewish holidays.<sup>11</sup> Isabel de Carvajal mentioned one particular occasion during which she kept Passover and then she listed all of the individuals that were in the house with her. She named all of her family members and thirteen other people that "kept the Passover" holiday with them (including Manuel de Lucena).<sup>12</sup> Manuel talked about observing the holiday of Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, with the members of the Crypto-Jewish community and, like Isabel, he named his family as well as six other people that observed the holiday in his home.<sup>13</sup> It is clear that the community was integral to Crypto-Jewish worship, but the Inquisition documents are not very interested in analyzing why the community was so important in influencing Jewish and Crypto-Jewish behavior.

Many scholars argue that community was important to Judaism and to Crypto-Judaism, but they do not answer the question of why community played such a major role in religious practice. David M. Gitlitz discusses the role that the synagogue played in Judaism as the center of communal worship, but because Crypto-Jews could not worship in synagogues after the expulsion order, it would make sense that the communal nature of

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<sup>11</sup> Many of the intricacies of Jewish holidays will be discussed in the second chapter about Crypto-Jewish gender identity.

<sup>12</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," Tribunal de la Inquisición en México 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 4 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 359 (recto) lines 7-13; 359 (verso) lines 1-9.

<sup>13</sup> "Manuel Lucena," Tribunal de la Inquisición en México 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 2 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 343 (recto) lines 16-21; Manuel also talks about observing Yom Kippur solely in the company of the Carvajals 452 (recto) lines 2-12.

Jewish worship would have declined, but it did not disappear. Gitlitz states that many Crypto-Jews actually continued communal worship by dedicating rooms in their homes as synagogue-like spaces for worship, prayer, and holiday celebrations.<sup>14</sup> Thus we see the importance of community to the continuation of Jewish practice. The role of the community might have also been more important in Crypto-Judaism because of the community's power to remember. Essentially, the more people involved in remembering and keeping a tradition, the more likely it is to survive.<sup>15</sup> There is also a power in belonging to a community that values a shared past, particularly under such antagonistic circumstances such as the Inquisition. Often this shared past helps to solidify identity.<sup>16</sup> The Carvajal's and Manuel de Lucena's religious identities would have been strengthened by the memory of the community.

Community was a key part of the theology of Judaism and it became an integral part of Crypto-Jewish theology as well. Judaic salvation is not an individual endeavor, but a communal one. One of the earliest pieces of evidence of this comes from Cain's question to God, "Am I my brother's keeper?"<sup>17</sup> The obvious answer is yes, precisely because individuals were to look out for each other. After the introduction of the Abrahamic covenant, in which God promises Abraham and all of his descendants (the Jews) that they will be His chosen people, God addresses the nation of Israel collectively. God did not address covenant individuals, but the covenant people. The entire purpose

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<sup>14</sup> Stephen Haliczer, *Inquisition and Society in the Kingdom of Valencia: 1478-1834* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 213; Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 508-509.

<sup>15</sup> Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 181.

<sup>16</sup> Cubitt, *History and Memory*, 133.

<sup>17</sup> Genesis 9:4

for the Law of Moses was to save the Nation of Israel together.<sup>18</sup> This is evidenced on the Day of Atonement, when the sacrifices were carried out in order to take away the sins of the whole people, “and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins.”<sup>19</sup> The redemption of the children of Israel happened as a community, and this communal sensibility was transmitted from antiquity to medieval Judaism, and later to Crypto-Judaism.

### **Circumcision**

Circumcision is a powerful symbol in Judaism of the relationship between man and God. As a result, many in the Mexican Crypto-Jewish community were circumcised. Circumcision, from the time of its inception in the Tanakh, was a signal of an individual being a member of the Jewish community.<sup>20</sup> Circumcision is traditionally performed when a Jewish baby boy is eight days old. Therefore, after the Spanish monarchs’ expulsion order of 1492, circumcision became a tradition that marked an individual as a Judaizer in Spain. The practice of circumcision was especially dangerous for an individual who fell into the hands of the Inquisition because torture was performed while a person was naked.<sup>21</sup> The evidence of an individual’s commitment to Judaism was made obvious. It was almost impossible to find a Crypto-Jew who was circumcised as an infant

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<sup>18</sup> Haim Beinart, *Records of the Trials of the Spanish Inquisition in Ciudad Real 3:1512-1527* (Jerusalem: Israel National Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1981), 42; Roth, *A History of the Marranos*, 13; Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 110.

<sup>19</sup> Leviticus 16:21

<sup>20</sup> Genesis 17:10

<sup>21</sup> Cecil Roth, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: The Norton Library, 1964), 96-98; Yosef Kaplan, “Wayward New Christians and Stubborn New Jews: The Shaping of a Jewish Identity,” *Jewish History* 18, no. 1/2 (1994): 27-41. This article discusses how *conversos* that left Iberia were still reticent to be circumcised because they knew if they went back to Iberia, this would mark them as Judaizers to the Inquisition.

after the expulsion order and very rare to find a Crypto-Jew who was circumcised after infancy.<sup>22</sup> However, circumcision remained a powerful symbol of a Crypto-Jewish man's conviction to the "Law of Moses," and Luis de Carvajal discussed it in his memoir and Manuel de Lucena talked about it in his trial record as well.

Manuel de Lucena argued that Circumcision was a salvific practice and also defined circumcision as an integral element of Crypto-Jewish belief and identity. In Manuel de Lucena's Inquisition trial, he argued that Roman Catholicism was wrong to claim baptism as a practice leading to salvation. Being classified as a Judaizer by the Inquisition often only required a person to refute the tenets of Christianity, without holding any Jewish beliefs at all.<sup>23</sup> However, Manuel indeed held many Jewish beliefs and with such vehement denial of Catholic doctrines, it seems that Manuel, like the Inquisitors, also considered his repudiation of Catholic precepts a vital part of his Crypto-Jewish practice. One of Manuel's many arguments against Roman Catholicism was that the holy sacrament of baptism was not the key to the salvation of men. The core of his argument as he stated it, was that "except with circumcision no one can be saved."<sup>24</sup> It is unclear whether Manuel himself had complied with completing this self-declared requirement for salvation, but his belief that circumcision was the everlasting symbol of God's covenant people is an important feature of his Crypto-Jewish identity. It is also important to note that Manuel's belief in individual salvation was in contrast to the Jewish belief of communal salvation. Manuel's explanation of circumcision is an

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<sup>22</sup> Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos*, 20. Roth mentions that some new *conversos* still circumcised their infant children, even under threat of the Inquisition.

<sup>23</sup> Roth, *A History of the Marranos*, 171; Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 137.

<sup>24</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 661 (recto) line 3.

interesting syncretism with the Roman Catholic belief in the sacraments and individual salvation.<sup>25</sup>

For Luis, circumcision was not a clear tenet of Judaism or his practice of Crypto-Judaism until many years after his introduction to his family's secret Jewish faith. In his memoir, Luis described the terror that he felt upon reading in Genesis 17 that those who were not circumcised would be "erased from the book of the living."<sup>26</sup> With the threat of damnation looming, Luis decided to circumcise himself and complete his own "sacrament of circumcision," which he immediately carried out.<sup>27</sup> Later, Luis was with his brother Baltasar and after Luis' doctrinal explanation of circumcision, they decided to circumcise Baltasar. Luis talked about Baltasar's circumcision and said that "the pains were merits in expiation of Baltasar's past sins."<sup>28</sup> This statement seems to echo the early Roman Catholic saints' efforts to rid themselves of their sinful natures through self-flagellation. Luis and Manuel clearly believed that circumcision was a talisman that could be presented at the gate of heaven to signify that they were keepers of the Jewish faith, and therefore, were worthy of entrance into heaven. Both the idea of expiation of one's own sins and sacraments being required for salvation are distinctly Roman Catholic ideas. Luis and Baltasar's belief in the saving power of circumcision is another demonstration of how Roman Catholic theology corrupted traditional Judaic practice.

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<sup>25</sup> Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 111, "Overall, this conflation of the Jewish idea of righteousness through obedience to the Law and the Christian idea of salvation through belief is the single most powerful example of syncretism in the crypto- Jewish religion;" Cecil Roth "The Religion of the Marranos," 5-6, Cecil Roth also mentions that confessions which mentioned gaining salvation through the Law of Moses, were a betrayal of true Jewish belief.

<sup>26</sup> Luis de Carvajal. *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo*, trans. Seymour B. Liebman (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1967), 57.

<sup>27</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 57.

<sup>28</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 62.

## Prayer

From its very inception, prayer has been a part of Israelite worship, but its practice has changed over time in both Judaism and Crypto-Judaism. According to *Encyclopedia Judaica* there are 85 prayers in the Tanakh and over 60 Psalms that can be classified (at least in part) as prayers as well.<sup>29</sup> For example, in first chapter of the Book of Samuel, Hannah offers a prayer of supplication to the Lord to bless her with a son.<sup>30</sup> The Lord does so, and in the next chapter she offers another prayer but this time it is a prayer of praise to the Lord for fulfilling her prayerful petition.<sup>31</sup> In Psalm 120, the language denotes the language prayer when the author states, “In my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he heard me.”<sup>32</sup> However, there is only one prescribed prayer in traditional Judaism. This prayer was offered by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement.<sup>33</sup> This changed dramatically over time, and by the medieval Jewish era there were many liturgical prayers that were recited on Sabbath and feast days. After the expulsion order of 1492 the Inquisition destroyed Jewish literature of all kinds: the Hebrew Bible, the Mishnah, the Midrash, and all sorts of Rabbinic commentaries that explained to the Jewish people how their lives were to be lived and how their liturgy was to be practiced. Therefore, the prayers, recitations, and songs that were found in Crypto-Jewish religious practice only existed in corrupted forms, if they existed at all.<sup>34</sup> However, many Crypto-

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<sup>29</sup> Martin A. Cohen, “Introduction,” in *The Jewish Experience in Latin America: Selected Studies from the Publications of the “American Jewish Historical Society,”* ed. Martin A. Cohen (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1971), XXIX.

<sup>30</sup> 1 Samuel 1: 10-12.

<sup>31</sup> 1 Samuel 2: 1-10.

<sup>32</sup> Psalm 120: 1.

<sup>33</sup> Leviticus 16.

<sup>34</sup> Cecil Roth, “The Religion of the Marranos,” 15. Roth states that the number of Marrano prayers is pathetically meager and, “does not fill more than forty printed pages.”

Jews still knew the times of day, the times of the week, and the times of the year when special prayers should have been offered, recitations uttered, and songs should have been sung.<sup>35</sup> They only knew about the performance of these traditional religious practices because they were passed on orally, from one Crypto-Jew to another. Crypto-Jews often continued in these traditions most successfully when the information surrounding them was in the Old Testament. If it was in a prayer book, or the Talmud, or any of the Rabbinic writings, it could only be learned through oral, inherited tradition. The prayers which Luis de Carvajal offered were most likely learned through his personal study of things Judaic, including the Roman Catholic Old Testament. There is some evidence that Luis was aided in his study by a Jewish doctor, who immigrated to Mexico City and spoke with Luis about Judaism.<sup>36</sup> Because Crypto-Jewish traditions were mostly transmitted from person to person through oral communication, it is unlikely that there was a normative Crypto-Judaism. However, it is logical to assume that traditions and practices varied from community to community and their practices were based upon normative Jewish customs.

Inquisition trial records indicate that Roman Catholic views of prayer infiltrated the beliefs of Crypto-Jews and came to be a part of the prayer practices of the Carvajal's Crypto-Jewish community. There is an extended section of Manuel de Lucena's trial record that informs the Inquisitors about Lucena's views and experiences with prayer in his Crypto-Jewish community. In the first discussion of prayer that appears in this section Manuel stated that he knew the four types of Roman Catholic prayer.<sup>37</sup> In Judaism there

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<sup>35</sup> Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 100. The Inquisition records of the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena called these prayers and recitations, *canticos* which literally means chants.

<sup>36</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 56.

<sup>37</sup> Manuel 662 (recto) line 33.

are no prescribed categories into which prayer falls, but the four types of Roman Catholic prayer include adoration, contrition, petition, and thanksgiving.<sup>38</sup> It is unclear why the Inquisitors note this aspect of Manuel's Christian knowledge because it neither shows Jewish belief, or a denial of Roman Catholic beliefs, which as noted earlier, were the primary pieces of information that the Inquisitors were looking for to punish Judaizing heretics. Perhaps Manuel's comprehension of this doctrine made him more culpable of wrongdoing in the eyes of the Inquisitors. If Manuel understood this Roman Catholic doctrine but practiced Crypto-Jewish prayer anyway, he was an even more heinous heretic. It is impossible to know why the Inquisitors believed this information was significant, but it was likely that Manuel's knowledge of Roman Catholic beliefs about prayer would have informed his Crypto-Judaism and led to more syncretism between the two religions that he practiced.

A tenet of Crypto-Jewish prayer was that prayer was often performed in a community setting, which emphasized the Jewish doctrine of communal worship and salvation. Manuel listed the various occasions that he went to the Carvajal home and found his friend Luis, Luis' mother, Francisca, as well as Luis' sisters Isabel, Leonor, Catalina and Mariana praying together.<sup>39</sup> Isabel and Leonor also mentioned how they prayed often in their family and in other groups of Crypto-Jews.<sup>40</sup> This supports the idea that there was a Crypto-Jewish tradition of worshipping in communities. It also illuminates the reality of how the home became like a synagogue to Crypto-Jews.

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<sup>38</sup> Harald Buchinger, "Early Eucharist in Transition? A Fresh Look at Origen," in *Jewish and Christian Liturgy and Worship: New Insights into Its History and Interaction* eds. Albert Gerhards and Clemens Leonhard (Boston: Brill, 2007), 217.

<sup>39</sup> Manuel 450 (verso), 451 (recto), 451 (verso), 452 (recto), 453 (recto), 453 (verso), 454 (recto), 475 (recto), 475 (verso).

<sup>40</sup> Isabel 332 (verso) line 14; Leonor 120 (recto) lines 8-9.

Images would have been forbidden in a Jewish synagogue or home, however, even though the majority of the Crypto-Jewish practice of prayer was Jewish in origin, many tenets of Christianity had encroached into its practice as well. Manuel notes that the Carvajals prayed in a room with the doors closed, and when the Inquisitors asked him if there were images in the room, Manuel said that he did not remember. Then, Manuel revised this statement in his next audience with the Inquisitors where he said that yes, there was an altar with images of Christ.<sup>41</sup> By stating that he did not remember, Manuel might have been attempting to stall the Inquisitors because he was not certain whether sacred Jewish spaces should have images. Or perhaps he simply could not remember whether the room had Christian iconography. When Manuel revised his statement, he might have been attempting to make this room seem like a room that could be found in the home of a Christian. Dedicated Crypto-Jewish rooms should have been devoid of “Christian iconography [because they] would have profaned the religious nature of the site.”<sup>42</sup> However, this might be another example of how Roman Catholic practice had encroached upon the Crypto-Jewish community of Manuel de Lucena. Considering the amount of times that Manuel entered the Carvajal’s home, and that specific room, it seems very implausible that he did not remember if it contained any Christian decorations (particularly considering the Crypto-Jewish disdain of all iconography, which they often described as idols and a violation of the second commandment). The answer to why Manuel spoke of the placement of images in the room might be found in the delay that Manuel created when giving his answer to the Inquisitors. Perhaps Manuel knew that a room without any images of Christ, in which worship happened, would get the Carvajals

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<sup>41</sup> Manuel 452 (verso) lines 12-20.

<sup>42</sup> Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 512.

into further trouble with the Inquisition. Possibly there were images in the room, but they were distinctly Jewish images or maybe Manuel simply needed more time to consider whether or not to tell the truth.<sup>43</sup> Whatever the explanation, it is clear that even though the majority of the Crypto-Jewish practice of prayer was Jewish in origin, many tenets of Christianity had encroached into its practice as well.

In this room, iconography present or not, the prayers that were offered and the manner in which they were offered were distinctly Crypto-Jewish. Manuel said that the Carvajals addressed God with the word, “Adonay,” which is the Hebrew term meaning Lord. Jews used this word to avoid mentioning the divine name of Jehovah or Yahweh.<sup>44</sup> Then Manuel described how the Carvajals kneeled, faced the east, and after Luis said the words of the prayer, the women would repeat them.<sup>45</sup> Because Luis led the prayers, he appears to have taken on a rabbinic role in the community. Kneeling has no particular Jewish or Catholic etymology and in both religions it can express deference to God and the intensity of prayer. At first it might seem curious that Crypto-Jews in this time and place did not invoke the practice of davening, which is praying while standing, and is done in most modern orthodox Jewish traditions. But it must be remembered that Crypto-Jews were following Sephardic Jewish traditions and davening is Ashkenazi.

Facing the east, or facing Jerusalem and the temple at Jerusalem, was a Jewish tradition in the diaspora which continued in the Crypto-Judaism of the Carvajal’s religious community.<sup>46</sup> The women’s repetition of the prayer seems to be an amalgamation of Jewish and Catholic traditions. In medieval, Sephardic tradition the

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<sup>43</sup> Jewish images will be discussed in the next section.

<sup>44</sup> Manuel 451 (recto) lines 24-25.

<sup>45</sup> Manuel 450 (verso) 14-22.

<sup>46</sup> The tradition of facing toward Jerusalem is called *mizrah*.

prayers in a synagogue were said by the congregation, and occasionally the rabbi or cantor (which could be any adult, male member of the congregation) repeated certain prayers and sections of the liturgy for the congregation.<sup>47</sup> In Ashkenazic synagogue traditions, there is often a cantor called a *hazzan* that leads the congregation in liturgical prayer. He sings portions of the prayer, which the congregation then repeats. However, the congregation, rarely, if ever, chants or sings in unison. In fact, chanting in unison is actively discouraged.<sup>48</sup> This tradition developed a continent away from Sephardic tradition, and it is not plausible that the Carvajal community, descendants of the Sephardic tradition, would have known about this Ashkenazi prayer practice. In Catholic tradition the congregation repeats certain parts of the mass given by the priest. Manuel's account of prayer in the Mexico City Crypto-Jewish community was likely intended to reflect Jewish traditions, but it more closely resembles Roman Catholic practice.

Part of what made the Carvajals' and Manuel de Lucena's prayers Crypto-Jewish was the manner in which they offered them. The prayers that Luis offered were most often taken from the Psalms.<sup>49</sup> Psalms were perfectly acceptable Roman Catholic prayers and recitations, but what made them Crypto-Jewish in the eyes of the Inquisitors was the fact that there was no Gloria Patri at the end of the prayer.<sup>50</sup> The Gloria Patri is a statement of praise repeated at the end of most Roman Catholic prayers that translates from Latin to, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in

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<sup>47</sup> Eisenberg, *Jewish Traditions*, 363; Reuven Hammer, *Jewish Prayer: A Guide to Personal Devotion* (New York: Schocken, 1994), 19.

<sup>48</sup> Abraham Millgram, *Jewish Worship* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1971), 520.

<sup>49</sup> Leonor 120 (recto) lines 6-9; Manuel 450 (verso), lines 16 and 18, 475 (recto) line 7.

<sup>50</sup> Renee Levine Melammed "Judaizers and Prayer in Sixteenth-Century Alcázar," in *Iberia and Beyond: Hispanic Jews between Cultures*, ed. Bernard Dov Cooperman (Newark, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1998), 279.

the beginning, and now and ever shall be, world without end.” Manuel outright condemned Crypto-Jews who said the Gloria Patri, most likely because it invoked the Trinity.<sup>51</sup> The Trinity was particularly offensive to most Jews because they often felt it implied the existence of multiple Gods, an idea forbidden in Judaism by the first commandment in Exodus 20.<sup>52</sup>

Although many aspects of Crypto-Jewish beliefs about prayer connect to Roman Catholicism, there are also elements of prayer which seem to solely connect to Judaism. Manuel does not name the psalms that Luis recited, but the Inquisitors record one, non-psalm prayer in its entirety and it has powerful resemblance to Jewish Passover prayers. Luis offered this prayer on the Day of Atonement: “Lord God all powerful for love of your holy name and for this great day that you constituted for fasting in thee with repentance of our sins, forgive [our sins] of us.”<sup>53</sup> The phrase “Lord God all powerful,” has striking similarities to the traditional Jewish language found in the Passover service, called the Haggadah, which says, “Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, Ruler (or King) of Universe.”<sup>54</sup> This phrase is repeated many times in the Haggadah, and Luis’ prayer seems to contain the Crypto-Jewish reflection of this saying, “Lord God all powerful.”<sup>55</sup> Later,

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<sup>51</sup> Manuel 660 (verso) line 23.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Zaas, “Symposium on the Shema,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 48, no. 3 (2017): 145, 133-147, accessed October 11, 2018, <http://journals.sagepub.com/home/btba>; Shael Herman, “The Acre Bible: Recasting Hebrew Scripture for Crusaders and the Christian Flock,” *Tulane University Law School: The Tulane European and Civil Law Forum*, New Orleans, LA, 2018, [https://www.lexisnexis-com.eri.lib.byu.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=160146&sr=AUTHOR\(Herman\)%2BAND%2BTITLE\(The+Acre+Bible+Recasting+Hebrew+Scripture+for+Crusaders+and+the+Christi an+Flock\)%2BAND%2BDATE%2BIS%2B2018](https://www.lexisnexis-com.eri.lib.byu.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=160146&sr=AUTHOR(Herman)%2BAND%2BTITLE(The+Acre+Bible+Recasting+Hebrew+Scripture+for+Crusaders+and+the+Christi an+Flock)%2BAND%2BDATE%2BIS%2B2018).

<sup>53</sup> Manuel 450 (verso), line 25, 451 (recto), lines 1-4.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Tabory, David Stern, *The JPS Commentary on the Haggadah: Historical Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2008), 17.

<sup>55</sup> Manuel 450 (verso), line 25, 451 (recto), lines 1-4.

the Inquisitors recorded that Luis recited prayers with happiness, joy, and with tears. Luis' tears inspired his mother and sisters to greater devotion and their own tears as well.<sup>56</sup> This is another reflection of a tenet of Jewish prayer—that the location or specific words of a prayer do not matter as much as the effort that goes into prayer and the intent of the heart, which can often lead one to devotional crying.<sup>57</sup> These components of Crypto-Jewish prayer have direct connections to the ancestral Judaism that the Carvajals' and Lucena's progenitors practiced. All of these elements of prayer, whether they were tied to Roman Catholic or Judaic practice, were important to the religious devotion and identity of the Carvajal and Lucena Crypto-Jewish community.

### **Catholic Appropriation**

This section will argue that Manuel de Lucena and the Carvajals appropriated certain Catholic beliefs and traditions that had no, or very tenuous, Jewish equivalents for various reasons, the most important being that Catholicism was such a large part of their daily lives. It is only logical that some Catholic beliefs or practices would have been incorporated into the Mexican Crypto-Jewish community in the late sixteenth century because of the large span of time between the expulsion order and their own personal practice of Crypto-Judaism. Knowing which, of all the many practices of Catholicism, were not part of normative Judaism would have been impossible without liturgical resources or rabbis. This thesis also opines that some Roman Catholic doctrines simply appealed to the individuals in the Carvajal community. In every aspect of Crypto-Jewish religion that has been discussed, there has been a significant mixing of liturgical elements

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<sup>56</sup> Manuel 451 (verso) lines 9-16.

<sup>57</sup> Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jew: High Middle Ages, 500-1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 15.

found in Roman Catholicism and Judaism, however this section will be different as it will only analyze the doctrines that do not relate directly to Judaism.

Limbo is a Roman Catholic doctrine that has no corresponding doctrine in Judaism. Manuel used limbo to make an argument in favor of Jewish practice during his trial. Manuel stated that if the Messiah had truly come in the form of Jesus of Nazareth, the latter would have declared Abraham rescued from limbo when he came to the earth.<sup>58</sup> According to Medieval, Catholic belief, limbo was a place where saints who died before Jesus Christ's coming waited to be liberated until after Christ's death and resurrection.<sup>59</sup> This suggests that Manuel's understanding of the role of the Messiah in Crypto-Jewish tradition was to fully reward or fully forgive individuals who practiced Jewish law. In the case of Abraham, the Messiah rewarded him for fathering and perpetuating the Abrahamic covenant—a covenant that all Jews inherited. Although Manuel does speak about Abraham, the father of Judaism, limbo is an idea without any Jewish equivalent.

Another major Catholic tenet that Crypto-Jews appropriated was the cult of saints. This is evidenced quite extensively in the letters that Luis de Carvajal sent to his sisters and the memoir that he wrote.<sup>60</sup> Luis mentions the names of a plethora of saints: Job, Jeremiah, Isaac, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Tobias, Esdras, Hananiah, Mishael,

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<sup>58</sup> Manuel 660 (recto) line 28.

<sup>59</sup> Limbo is not a sanctioned Catholic belief but was widespread among Medieval and Early Modern Christians. Limbo, in addition to being a place for saints, was thought to be a place where unbaptized infants went. It was not a place of punishment, like purgatory, but a place in between purgatory and heaven where there was no suffering. At the Council of Trent there were many differences of opinion on the truth and specific doctrines of limbo. *The Council of Trent, Session 5*, <http://www.thecounciloftrent.com/ch5.htm>.

<sup>60</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 68, 71, 90, 92, 95, 107, 109, 112, 114, 120, 122.

Azariah, Susanna, Anna, Esther, Judith, Miriam and Deborah.<sup>61</sup> Interestingly, many of these saints are from the Apocrypha, which is only contained in the Roman Catholic version of the Bible, not the Jewish Tanakh.<sup>62</sup> Luis was careful to only name saints from the Old Testament, but apparently Luis was ignorant of the fact that Jews do not consider Apocryphal writings to be canonized scripture.<sup>63</sup> It is a widely accepted tenet of Judaism that Jews do not ask Hasidim (Holy Ones, the Jewish equivalent of saints) to intercede for them, nor do “saints” or their relics acquire in Judaism the level of veneration that Christian saints do.<sup>64</sup> The destruction of all Jewish literature after the expulsion order of 1492 meant that Luis had to use Roman Catholic scripture to study anything concerning his ancestral faith. The Bible known as the Latin Vulgate helped to create and inform Luis’ understanding of Crypto-Judaism. There are very few, if any, records from contemporary Jews during the late 1590s, particularly in Spain and the Spanish Empire, because of the threat of the Inquisition.

Even though the cult of saints was a Catholic tradition, many of its functions became Crypto-Jewish in Luis’ writings. According to Luis, one function of these saints

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<sup>61</sup> Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*, 116-117; Cecil Roth, “The Religion of the Marranos,” 6-7; Martin A. Cohen, “Introduction,” XXXI. The saints that are from Apocryphal writings are: Tobias, Esdras, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, Susanna, and Anna.

<sup>62</sup> Moshé Lazar, “La plus ancienne adaptation castillane de la Biblia.” *Sefarad* 22, no. 2, (January 1962) 251-295; José Llamas, “Nueva Biblia Medieval Judía e inédita, en Romance Castellano,” *Sefarad* 9, no. 1, (January 1949) 53-72. The only example of Apocryphal writing appearing in the Tanakh in any Spanish biblical literature is a rare translation of the Bible called the *Escorial I*. In this Spanish translation, the Book of Maccabees appears.

<sup>63</sup> Eisenberg, *Jewish Traditions*, 369. The Tanakh is an abbreviation of the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible, which includes the Torah, Nevi’im, and the Ketuvim. The Jewish scripture canon only includes the books of: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Pslams, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Daniel.

<sup>64</sup> Shon Hopkin (PhD Hebrew Studies – Focus on Medieval Hebrew, Arabic, and Spanish literature) conversation with author, November 2018.

was to give “them[selves] as an example” for various praiseworthy Crypto-Jewish actions such as having, “consented to be torn into pieces in cruel torments rather than eat prohibited food or even pretend they ate it.”<sup>65</sup> Luis also said that they needed saintly examples because God would “test us as He tested our saints.”<sup>66</sup> Although the example of refusing to eat non-kosher foods is distinctly Crypto-Jewish, it is an entirely Catholic notion that saints exist to set a righteous example for regular men and women.<sup>67</sup> Through Luis’ word choice it seems most likely that Luis used the example of saints simply because it was a doctrine that encouraged him in difficult circumstances. Since Luis was using saints as an example of worthy conduct in his personal writings, it is not likely that he was using them as a logical or rhetorical strategy against Roman Catholicism in any way.

Another function of saints was to serve as intermediaries between men or women and God.<sup>68</sup> During Luis’ first Inquisition trial in 1589 he wrote that he heard a voice tell him that the “saints Job and Jeremiah pray fervently for you.”<sup>69</sup> In the Tanakh, the priests of the tabernacle and temple functioned as intercessors in absolving the Children of Israel from sin, but these men were alive and living among the Jewish congregation. Jews had never needed an intercessor for prayer and particularly not a dead man or spirit intercessor. Apparently, Luis had appropriated the Roman Catholic function of saints as an intermediary between the living person and God in opposition to his ancestral Jewish faith.

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<sup>65</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 71.

<sup>66</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 120.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Robert Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 80.

<sup>68</sup> Peter Robert Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, 6, 56, 125.

<sup>69</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 68.

The religious objects surrounding saints were extremely important to their function in the Roman Catholic Church, but these objects were not part of Crypto-Jewish appropriation because they were equated to idol worship in the Carvajal's community. The worship of saints created pilgrimage sites where the relics of certain saints could be found. Yet, according to Luis, Manuel, and Leonor, iconography was the equivalent of idol worship.<sup>70</sup> The prohibition of idol worship is extensively outlined in the Tanakh.<sup>71</sup> In fact, Leonor seems to equate Christian iconography to polytheism, that is to say, that because of their use of icons, Christians worshipped many "strange" gods.<sup>72</sup> Although the Crypto-Jewish community believed in the importance of saintly examples, they did not accept the relics and objects that surrounded them as holy.

In addition to full appropriation of Roman Catholic concepts, there are some interesting quasi-adoptions of Christian theology, one of which concerns Jesus Christ. The prominence of Jesus Christ in the theology and narrative of Christianity is obvious, but the prevalence of Jesus Christ in this small community of Crypto-Jews is surprising. All Crypto-Jews whose records are used in this particular study had heard of Jesus and knew about his role in Christianity as the Messiah. Crypto-Jews did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah come to earth, and yet narratives about him became part of their

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<sup>70</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 63, 69, 70, 71; "Manuel de Lucena," 660 (verso) lines 25-30; "Leonor de Carvajal," 119 (verso) lines 3-9.

<sup>71</sup> One very prominent example of the prohibition of idol worship is the second commandment in Exodus 20: 4.

<sup>72</sup> "Leonor de Carvajal," 119 (verso) lines 5, 9. Another example can be found in, Bernardino Llorca, "La Inquisicion española y los conversos judíos o 'marranos'," *Sefarad* 2: 134. "The *conversa* Donosa Ruiz, who was tried in Teruel in 1484, was reputed to have prayed every day to God 'to protect her from her enemies, by whom she meant the Christians, idolaters who worship three Gods instead of one'"

own personal narratives. For instance, Luis wrote letters to Isabel and Leonor and in them he spoke about matters that seem to be lifted from the pages of the New Testament.

New Testament stories were so prominent in the Roman Catholic culture in which the Carvajals lived that it infiltrated their communication among their own Crypto-Jewish community members. Luis wrote a letter during his 1595 incarceration where he told his sister Isabel that he “dreamed for six successive nights that [he] walked on the waters of the sea and that only [his] feet were wet.”<sup>73</sup> This account bears a striking similarity to a New Testament story where Jesus walked on the Sea of Galilee to reach his disciples in their fishing boat.<sup>74</sup> Luis told Isabel that God revealed to him that the sea was the prison and a sea of temptations, and God told him to fly high above them like a bird.<sup>75</sup> While Luis’ interpretation deals directly with his own circumstances brought about by the Inquisition, it would be a mistake to say that Christian and even New Testament narratives did not make their way into the outlook of these Crypto-Jews. Luis would have known that this was a reflection of a New Testament narrative and it might seem odd that he used it. However, Luis might have chosen this clearly Christian story to describe his own circumstances to make light of the New Testament story, implying to his sister that events such as walking on water only happen in dreams; or maybe he used it to attach a Messiah-like theme or characteristic to his own persecution story.<sup>76</sup> There have been many Jewish and Crypto-Jewish men who have claimed Messiahship, from Jesus of

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<sup>73</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 96.

<sup>74</sup> Matthew 14: 24-32.

<sup>75</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 96.

<sup>76</sup> Roth, *A History of the Marranos*, 146-148. Roth mentions at least three different Crypto-Jewish men that claimed to be a Messiah for their people or were deemed to be a Messiah from the other members of their religious community.

Nazareth's own time period down to Luis'.<sup>77</sup> For Luis to claim Messiahship directly or indirectly is an almost common experience in Jewish culture but to do it through adoption of New Testament literature is Crypto-Jewish.

Another semi-adoption of Catholic theology is the symbolism of human blood as a redemptive agent. Luis wrote a letter to Leonor in which he stated, "Oh, my captive ones, if I could only free you with all my blood!"<sup>78</sup> Blood as an agent of redemption, or blood as payment, is clearly part of Jewish theology. The entire sacrificial system in the Tanakh was rooted in blood redemption. The blood of the bulls, goats, and lambs freed all of Israel from the captivity of their sins. Luis, being well versed in the Bible, might have been using blood sacrifice as an example of a redeeming agent from his Jewish perspective. However, the use of blood as an agent of redemption or as a liberating instrument is also a Christian notion. In Roman Catholicism, Jesus Christ's blood, if properly invoked and believed in, frees humankind from death and sin. According to the doctrine of transubstantiation, the elements of the Holy Communion literally become the flesh and blood of Christ when the officiating priest consecrates them in the Mass. In Judaism, human blood cannot save or offer freedom; in fact, human blood makes women impure during and after their menstruation and the eating of blood is definitely outlawed in the Law of Moses.<sup>79</sup> Because human blood is a forbidden element in Judaism and Manuel is offering his own blood to free his sisters, perhaps Manuel is viewing redemptive blood through a Roman Catholic lens. Another possibility is that Luis was literally offering his blood to his sisters through the torture or execution of the

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<sup>77</sup> Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18.16.

<sup>78</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 93.

<sup>79</sup> Leviticus 12: 4-5, 7; Leviticus 3:17.

Inquisition. However, this explanation seems less likely to be what Luis meant because he had been incarcerated by the Inquisition before and he knew the process. Every individual in Luis' association, particularly his religious associations, would be questioned and he and his sisters, as practicing Crypto-Jews, would be implicated in indisputable heresy. This was not their first offense against the Church, and forgiveness for continuing to practice Crypto-Judaism was almost an impossibility.

### **Conclusion**

The Inquisition records and writings of the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena clearly support the idea that religious identity was very important to the members of the their Crypto-Jewish community. To understand the nature of their religious identity it must be emphasized that Catholicism was so pervasive in their society that it was difficult to repudiate all Catholic beliefs in favor of Jewish beliefs. In addition, it would have been impossible to maintain pure Jewish traditions and beliefs because of the antagonism displayed toward its practitioners and the lack of traditional Jewish texts.<sup>80</sup> This antagonism meant that the community had to practice any Jewish traditions in secret, and this secrecy led to the Jewish traditions themselves becoming corrupted or at least, diluted. These factors meant that the religion practiced by the Carvajal family and by Manuel de Lucena took on the distinct Crypto-Judaic form. The practices shared among the Carvajal and Lucena community were most likely different from the way that other Crypto-Jewish groups practiced their religion. The Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena worshipped and practiced their Crypto-Judaism together in a community and by mining

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<sup>80</sup> Cecil Roth, "The Religion of the Marranos," 15.

their writings and Inquisition records, a picture emerges of what their Crypto-Jewish religious identity looked like.

Elements of Crypto-Judaism such as community, circumcision, and prayer were Jewish beliefs that took on many Roman Catholic components in the Carvajal-Lucena community. However, because of the pervasiveness of Roman Catholicism in the daily lives of these individuals, some of their Crypto-Jewish beliefs were simply elements of Roman Catholicism that took on a Jewish flavor. All of these tenets of Crypto-Judaism are replete throughout the records and writings of the Carvajal-Lucena community. It is clear in these records that religion was integral to their identity and the way that they lived their lives.

## CHAPTER 3

### GENDER IDENTITY

#### **Introduction**

The Catholic Church considered Crypto-Jews to be dangerous because they defied religious norms, however, Crypto-Jews also defied gender norms. The Inquisitors deliberately prosecuted Crypto-Jews for religious heresy, but Inquisition documents reveal quite a bit about gender, and because of this, gender has become an important topic of analysis for Inquisition studies.<sup>1</sup> Most scholars who examine the role of gender in the Inquisition discuss it broadly.<sup>2</sup> Historians who have researched accusations of heresy have found that gender played a significant role in certain heretical crimes. Stacy Schlau's *Gendered Crime and Punishment: Women and/in the Hispanic Inquisition* argues that certain crimes were brought before the Inquisition because they defied accepted Spanish gender norms.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars focus their study of gender by choosing to concentrate on a particular region or heretical crime and study those in depth.<sup>4</sup> This

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<sup>1</sup> The various stages of the Inquisitorial process, as well as the practice of torture are discussed in the introduction of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The first and most influential book that discusses the Mexican Inquisition is, H.C. Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies* (London: MacMillan Company, 1908). Others have followed like, Richard E. Greenleaf, *The Mexican Inquisition of the Sixteenth Century* (Albuquerque NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1969) and Stanley M. Hordes, *To the End of the Earth: A History of the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Stacy Schlau, *Gendered Crime and Punishment: Women and/in the Hispanic Inquisition* (Boston: Brill, 2013). Another good example of a broad study of gender in the Inquisition would be Mary E. Giles, ed., *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Mary Elizabeth Perry, *Gender and Disorder in Early Modern Seville* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); *The Handless Maiden: Moriscos and the Politics of Religion in Early Modern Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Renee Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel?: The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Lisa Vollendorf, *The Lives of Women: A New History of Inquisitorial Spain*, (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2005).

chapter combines these approaches by applying a microhistorical method to a gendered analysis of both Crypto-Jewish women and men who stood before the Inquisitorial tribunals of Mexico City.

Gender, because of its pervasiveness within the identity of individuals, including Crypto-Jews, crosses paths with many other types of identity and forms of analysis. In addition to analyzing the role of gender in Crypto-Jewish identity, this chapter will also evaluate the roles of food ways, domestic practices, Sabbath worship, language, religious doctrine, sexuality, power, authority, and familial relationships. Gender played an important part in each of these portions of Crypto-Jewish identity and understanding the gender identity of the Mexican Crypto-Jewish community could not be fully realized without consideration of each of these elements of identity.

This chapter also informs the analysis of masculinity in the Inquisition. In Inquisition studies masculinity has not received much attention from scholars. A few scholars study masculinity in the Spanish Empire through the lens of art history, violence, or sexuality in the Iberian world.<sup>5</sup> However, studies of gender as an indicator of certain heretical crimes do not exist nor do studies of masculinity through the lens of Inquisition records. This chapter will use Inquisition records to analyze what the Inquisitors and Crypto-Jews believed about which ideas and actions made a man honorable. This male, Crypto-Jewish identity was influenced by Jewish theology, but was mostly informed by Spanish gender ideals.

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<sup>5</sup> Charlene, Villseñor Black, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph: Art and Gender in the Spanish Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Scott K. Taylor, *Honor and Violence in Golden Age Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Edward Behrend-Martinez, "Taming Don Juan?: Limiting Masculine Sexuality in Counter-Reformation Spain," *Gender & History* 24 no. 2 (August 2012), 333-352.

This chapter will contribute to the scholarly study of gender by looking at how Crypto-Jews defied Spanish-Catholic gender norms through their domestic and culinary cultures, through the gendered language that they used, and the family roles and responsibilities they fulfilled. Analyzing these elements of Inquisition documents will help to reconstruct the how Mexican Crypto-Jews gender identity was a complicated mix of Jewish and Spanish gender ideals. In many ways Crypto-Jews challenged the gender norms of their society by doing such things as condemning the Virgin Mary's immaculate conception, however, they also subscribed to many gender norms like believing male honor was based upon honesty no matter the hazard. Reconstructing the gender identities of Crypto-Jews is important to the study of the Inquisition because Crypto-Jews were the first and primary target of the Holy Tribunal, and their gender identities should be of interest to scholars of both Crypto-Judaism and the Inquisition at large.<sup>6</sup>

The culture and lives that Crypto-Jews created independent of the Inquisition is also worth understanding but because the majority of the records for the study of Crypto-Jews are Inquisition records, the voices of the Inquisitors are an important feature of this chapter. The Inquisitors' opinions about gender are the most prominent points of view found in these records, but the Crypto-Jews' reactions to the Inquisitors' views and accusations and their own testimonies will be the focus of analysis. Through these records it is clear that the gender identities of the Mexican Crypto-Jewish community were a blend of Jewish and Spanish gender customs.

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<sup>6</sup> H.C. Lea, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies* (London: MacMillan Company, 1908); Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965); Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel?*, 9; Giles, 2.

## Culinary and Domestic Practices

Food consumption and domestic practices were often indicators that a *converso* still practiced Jewish rites and traditions. Because of this, Inquisitors often questioned an accused person about their food consumption and domestic practices. Both Catholic and Jewish women engaged in such domestic activities as the preparation and consumption of food, care of clothing, and the care of the home. However, these activities became an important feature in determining if a *converso/conversa* was secretly practicing Judaism because the food they ate (or did not eat) was unusual for the normal, everyday Spaniard.<sup>7</sup> Also, Jewish women cleaned their homes and their clothes at certain times of the week and year, for reasons distinctly tied to the Jewish faith, such as the Sabbath and the high, holy holidays of Passover and Yom Kippur.<sup>8</sup>

Isabel de Carvajal as an observant Crypto-Jew obeyed certain Jewish food laws, which flouted the Inquisition's religious and gender norms. In Jewish custom, to be considered ritually observant, various foods were prohibited at times and not just during religious holidays. As the matriarch of the household, it would have been Isabel de Carvajal's responsibility to make sure that prohibited food stuffs were not permitted in the house. This gendered archetype is clearly demonstrated in Isabel's Inquisition record. Her record extensively details the food that she avoids and in more than one instance, the

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<sup>7</sup> Renee Melammed, "Maria Lopez: A convicted Judaizers from Castile," in *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary E. Giles (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 56. Rabbit, hare, eel, conger eel, octopus, and spotted dogfish are some of the foods that Crypto-Jews did not eat but were part of most Spaniards' diets.

<sup>8</sup> Julia R. Lieberman, *Sephardi Family Life in the Early Modern Diaspora* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2011), 103, 197.

Inquisitors make special note that Isabel does not eat “fat, nor things of pork.”<sup>9</sup> These prohibitions are outlined in portions of the Mosaic Code, specifically the law of Kashrut (what is kosher or allowed) recorded in Leviticus 11. This chapter of scripture describes forbidden foods and practices by stating that, “and the pig, because it has a cloven hoof that is completely split but will not regurgitate its cud; it is unclean for you. You shall not eat of their flesh, and you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.”<sup>10</sup> The responsibility of keeping a kosher home was an obligation that Isabel clearly knew and took very seriously. If she did not adequately fulfill her matriarchal duty to keep her home kosher, she would have been responsible for making everyone in the household ritually unclean or impure.<sup>11</sup>

The observation of Passover and eating Passover food helps define the gender roles to which the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena subscribed. Most Jewish festivals and feasts are marked by distinct eating practices. Yom Kippur and Passover are the holidays mentioned most often in Inquisition records because of their importance as the holiest holidays in Judaism.<sup>12</sup> These holidays required special preparation, and these preparations were the duty of the women of the home. The festival of Passover and Unleavened Bread is a springtime Jewish celebration that marks the end of the Israelites’ captivity in Egypt.

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<sup>9</sup> “Isabel de Carvajal.” Tribunal de la Inquisicion en Mexico 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 4 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 332 (verso); 342 (recto). Pork and butter were foods that Spaniards typically ate.

<sup>10</sup> Leviticus 11:7-8. The law also states that consuming milk and meat products together is forbidden.

<sup>11</sup> A ritual category outlined in Mosaic Code found in the Hebrew Bible or Christian Old Testament. This category is separate from the law of Kashrut.

<sup>12</sup> Yom Kippur, also known as the Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the year for Jews. This day, celebrated every fall, commemorates the day on which God took away all of the sins of the Jewish people. It was observed by a complete twenty-four hour fast. In the Inquisition records, the Crypto Jews celebrated this day without eating and food was only eaten after the first star came out in the sky. “Isabel de Carvajal,” 333 (recto).

Passover required special preparation, which began weeks in advance of the actual weeklong holiday. To celebrate it, Jews ate roasted lamb, marked their lintels with blood and ate things such as bitter herbs to remember the harshness of Egyptian enslavement. A kind of unleavened bread called matza had to be baked and eaten and all the leaven removed from the house—a very extensive process of house cleaning. The absence of leaven was a reminder that the Israelites did not have time to let their bread rise as they fled from Egypt.<sup>13</sup> The bitter herbs and unleavened bread are distinct Jewish food items. Leonor, Isabel, and Manuel admitted to observing these holidays by stating “and by ceremony they ate unleavened bread and roasted chicken.”<sup>14</sup> Because they prepared and ate these foods, the Inquisitors named the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena Judaizing heretics. Food preparation and consumption were important features in Jewish ritual and because of this, scholars have posited that women were disproportionately accused of being Judaizers.<sup>15</sup> Whether or not this is true, it helps to define the gender roles and identities that Crypto-Jews subscribed to. Women were the cooks, and good Crypto-Jewish women prepared kosher food for the household. Good Crypto-Jewish men ate kosher food.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> “Manuel Lucena.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 2 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 661 (verso); 662 (recto); 663 (recto); 450 (verso).

<sup>14</sup> “Isabel de Carvajal,” 358 (recto) lines 19-21.

<sup>15</sup> Schlaug, 13-14. This type of disproportionate accusations of women ties closely with other early modern trends, such as witchcraft, where women were excessively accused of being witches because of its ties to things like the deaths of children. Children were the responsibility of women, and their deaths often happened at the birthing bed, a distinctly female space see: Bengt Ankarloo; Gustav Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001); Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Boston: Houton Mifflin, 2007). Witchcraft also carried with it an accusation of sexual lasciviousness, which early modern individuals claimed happened at satanic rituals with the devil himself, see: Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 169.

<sup>16</sup> Mishna, Ketubot 5:5.

The Inquisition records that discuss Jewish holiday celebrations illuminate masculine gender norms that existed in Crypto-Judaism. Men also had a role to play in Jewish festival celebrations. In Orthodox Jewish tradition, men go to the synagogue to worship on holidays. After the Jewish expulsion order, they would not be able to worship in a synagogue, but they still would have led the family's home worship with the reading of the *Haggadah* (the Passover program), and other blessings and prayer portions of holidays. This tradition did not change in the Mexican Crypto-Jewish community. In fact, the records of Manuel and Isabel mention Sabbath and holiday songs, chants, and prayers and they often indicated that Luis de Carvajal sang or said them.<sup>17</sup>

In the Inquisition records, Crypto-Jews made it clear that the home and the care of the home were part of a Crypto-Jewish woman's gendered responsibility. The home was a woman's domain in as far as her preparation for holidays made such celebrations possible as well as her religious responsibility. Crypto-Jews often spent Yom Kippur and Passover in groups. Members of the religious community would gather at the home of another member of the community and sing, pray, and eat together.<sup>18</sup> When the accused persons talked about such celebrations they exclusively referred to the home of the host as the home of the woman. For example, Manuel observed a holiday with a group of Crypto-Jews and they gathered together at the home of "his woman, Catalina Enríquez."<sup>19</sup> This pattern holds true throughout his and the other Inquisition documents. When the community celebrated at Isabel de Carvajal's home, her husband was never

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<sup>17</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," 49 (recto) line 14, 379 (recto) lines 13 and 17; "Manuel de Lucena," 660 (verso) line 5.

<sup>18</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," 332 (verso); "Manuel de Lucena," 663 (recto).

<sup>19</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 343 (recto); 539 (verso) lines 21-22.

mentioned, nor was Anna López's husband (another member of their religious community).<sup>20</sup>

The only other occasions that the home was mentioned in the Inquisition records refers to the home as a male-run sphere. The male ownership of the home was a sixteenth-century paradigm that these Crypto-Jews subscribed to on all other non-holiday occasions. The Inquisitors asked Manuel where he grew up and he responded that he grew up in the house of his father, a tailor.<sup>21</sup> Manuel's father was the patriarchal head of the household, and his occupation made the household possible. The only other mention of the house is during Manuel's explanation of Crypto-Jewish prayer services. Manuel said that these services happened in Luis de Carvajal's house.<sup>22</sup> This indicates that when the home was being used as a synagogue-like space, for something like prayer services, it was a masculine-dominated space, just as a synagogue would have been.

Sabbath day practices in Crypto-Judaism were tied to the roles of women. Traditional Sabbath worship for Jews had long included going to the synagogue, but after the expulsion order of 1492, this was no longer a possibility. Jewish synagogues no longer existed as recognized physical buildings in Spain, and the Crown did not permit synagogues to be established in Mexico.<sup>23</sup> Some of the activities Crypto-Jews continued to engage in for Sabbath worship included not lighting candles or doing any other forms of work.<sup>24</sup> However, in Isabel, Leonor, and Manuel's records there is only one distinct Sabbath day practice—wearing clean clothes. In these Inquisition records each individual

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<sup>20</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 343 (recto) line 26.

<sup>21</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 663 (recto) line 12.

<sup>22</sup> "Manuel de Lucena" 450 (verso) line 8.

<sup>23</sup> After the expulsion order, Rabbis who did not leave the Kingdom, no longer had a job, but their role as a community and religious leaders most likely would have remained intact.

<sup>24</sup> Melammed, "Maria Lopez," 55-56.

wore their cleanest and best clothes from Friday evening until Saturday at sunset (the mandated time period of the Jewish Sabbath).<sup>25</sup> The records never state who cleaned these clothes; however, in works like *The Perfect Wife*, a conduct manual written for women in the sixteenth-century, the author Friar Luis de Leon discussed the duties of Spanish women: to provide all the family's meals, to be industrious—particularly in cleaning and provisioning the family home.<sup>26</sup> These practices were delineated in the Inquisition records of the Carvajals. Because this was a conduct manual, not a diary, it might not describe the typical Spanish women's domestic practices, however, many conduct manuals of the time period describe similar expectations for women.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable that these conduct manuals describe the societal customs of the day.<sup>28</sup> It is logical that the food, holiday, and domestic practices contained in these Inquisition records were the work of women.<sup>29</sup>

Servants of Crypto-Jewish households were often the informers in Judaizer's Inquisition cases because of the servant's proximity to Crypto-Jewish domestic practices. These servants would report seeing their employers doing "Jewish things" like wearing clean clothes on the Sabbath and preparing kosher and holiday foods. They would then report their employers' actions to the Inquisition.<sup>30</sup> The Spanish Inquisition advertised

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<sup>25</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," 332 (verso), 379 (recto); "Manuel de Lucena," 661 (recto).

<sup>26</sup> Luis de Leon, *The Perfect Wife*, trans. L.H. Hubbard (Denton, TX: The College Press Texas State College for Women, 1943) 34, 39, 53, 72.

<sup>27</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," 332 (verso), 379 (recto); "Manuel de Lucena," 661 (recto).

<sup>28</sup> Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: a Sixteenth-Century Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> Merry E. Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 48.

<sup>30</sup> Gretchen Starr-Lebeau, "Mari Sánchez and Inés González: Conflict and Cooperation among Crypto-Jews," in *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary E. Giles (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): 25.

these domestic practices as Jewish throughout the Spanish Empire and as mentioned previously, reporting incidences of Judaizing was as much about the reporter's salvation, as it was about the accused's salvation.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, when servants reported their employers doing things like wearing clean clothes on Friday evenings until Saturday, they understood them to be Judaizing traditions, and they reported them as a matter of religious piety.

When the practice of Judaism became the practice of Crypto-Judaism and moved from the public sphere into the home, its ritual practices were much more observable in the work of women. Food preparation practices and domestic responsibilities such as hosting holiday celebrations and cleaning clothes for Sabbath day worship were important features of Crypto-Jewish women's gender identities. Crypto-Jewish women held central roles in some of the most important rituals that took place in *converso/conversa* culture. These practices gave women power over many Crypto-Jewish practices, but this did not make them the ultimate authorities over Crypto-Jewish doctrine. Although men no longer served as rabbis, or as official Jewish authorities, they often still served as doctrinal authorities for the Crypto-Jewish faith.

### **Gendered Language**

Because Manuel de Lucena used gendered rhetoric it is probable that he subscribed to the prevailing early modern gender norms about male and female honor. The reason that Manuel used this gendered language was to gain power over the Inquisitors by emasculating them and attacking the honor of Jesus Christ and Mary, whom the Inquisitors believed were the most honorable man and woman to ever live.

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<sup>31</sup> Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1932), 100-102.

Any study of the Inquisition is a study of power relationships on a grand scale.<sup>32</sup> The most obvious power relationship was between the Inquisitors and the accused, where the balance of power heavily favored the Inquisitors. Honor was the most important characteristic for Spanish men and women and the basis for masculine honor in Spanish society was honesty. Whereas the basis for feminine honor was chastity. Manuel used these gendered constructions and accepted gender norms to try to empower himself during his trial by attacking the honor of Jesus Christ and Mary.

Manuel used early modern Spanish honor constructions to attack the honor of Jesus Christ because he subscribed to the Spanish definitions of male and female honor. For a man to be considered honorable in the early modern Spanish Empire, he had to be trustworthy and honest, and Manuel used these assumptions about male honor to attack Jesus Christ.<sup>33</sup> Manuel stated that Jesus Christ was the ultimate deceiver and as a liar he was the epitome of a man who lacked honor. According to Manuel, Jesus lied about the nature of God by making himself equal to God. Jesus lied when he claimed to be a king, when he was really just a carpenter.<sup>34</sup> Luis de Carvajal offered a similar critique of Jesus in his memoir when he stated that Jesus was “a swindler, impostor, and hanged man.”<sup>35</sup> Manuel might have used this inflammatory rhetoric to feel powerful over the Inquisitors, even if the result of using such language meant that the Inquisitors convicted him of

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<sup>32</sup> Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *The American Historical Review* 91 no. 5 (Dec. 1986): 1053-1075. Scott’s article was instrumental in pointing out that gender analysis is often marked by power relationships, and in her article she calls for more scholarship that understands this and implements power relationships into its analysis.

<sup>33</sup> Scott Taylor, “Credit, Debt, and Honor in Castile 1600-1650,” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 7, issue 1 (2003): 8-27. Spanish constructions of honor would have been the same throughout the Empire.

<sup>34</sup> “Manuel de Lucena” 660 (verso) lines 10-14.

<sup>35</sup> Luis de Carvajal. *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo* trans Seymour B. Liebman (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1967) 41.

heresy. Edward Behrend-Martínez notes that Church and government institutions often emasculated foreign men to accentuate the differences in honor between foreign and Spanish men.<sup>36</sup> Manuel, in his discourse about Jesus seems to be using the same strategy—by stripping Jesus of honor, Manuel accentuates his own honor. Because Jesus lies, he is man without honor, and because Manuel tells the truth, even at the peril of his own life, he is honorable. It is also conceivable that Manuel knew he would not be forgiven and he wished to express his doctrinal beliefs as honestly as he could.

Manuel's attack on Jesus continued in an effort to discredit the Inquisitors through their belief in such an ignominious God. Manuel said that Jesus was a “deceiver, thief and sorcerer,” and if Jesus was anything, he was the anti-Christ about whom Christians always talked.<sup>37</sup> Manuel mocked the Inquisitors' belief that God was the literal father of Jesus, because such doctrine painted God as a lustful being.<sup>38</sup> In a clear reference to the New Testament Christmas story in Luke 2, Manuel stated that Jesus was born between an “ox and a donkey.”<sup>39</sup> Manuel used this story to mock the origins of Jesus—he was born among the filth of animals. Manuel believed that if Jesus had been a king (like the Messiah was prophesied to be) he would have been born to a king.<sup>40</sup> This lustful, bastard-born God was the deity of the Inquisitors, and Manuel's attack on Jesus' origins is clearly

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<sup>36</sup> Edward Behrend-Martínez, “Spain violated: foreign men in Spain's heartland” *European Review of History European Review of History* 22, number 4 (2015): 580-581. This article also says that Spanish ideals of male honor took some very different routes. Honorable men could be “fearless and ruthless *conquistadores*, stoic and incorruptible missionaries, and disciplined administrators [that went] into the virgin wilderness of the New World.”

<sup>37</sup> “Manuel de Lucena,” 660 (verso).

<sup>38</sup> “Manuel de Lucena,” 660 (verso).

<sup>39</sup> “Manuel de Lucena,” 660 (verso).

<sup>40</sup> “Manuel de Lucena,” 660 (recto).

meant to reflect on them. Because the Inquisitors believed in such a dishonorable deity, it made them dishonorable by association.

Manuel's Crypto-Jewish honor was tied to his knowledge of the doctrines surrounding the coming of the Messiah. Manuel argued that as an honorable, Crypto-Jewish man he would know if Jesus Christ had been the Messiah. Manuel explained that in "keep[ing] the law of Moses," he was a member of God's chosen people and as such, God would have made himself manifest to His people.<sup>41</sup> Manuel would know if the Messiah had come. Before the Messiah's coming, God also would have sent Elias and Elijah to the earth to convert the world to Judaism.<sup>42</sup> Had Jesus Christ been the Messiah, the world would be Jewish. In being faithful to his Jewish roots, Manuel was keeping the true religion alive and readying the world for the Messiah. As a Crypto-Jewish man, Manuel was responsible for studying the law and the prophets in the Tanakh and knowing the doctrines within it.

Another example of Manuel's use of early modern gender norms to disparage the honor of the Inquisitors came when Manuel offered a critique on the honor of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in which he implied that Mary was sexually impure. Sexual purity was the basis for the early modern view of women's honor.<sup>43</sup> In fact, many of the conduct manuals of the sixteenth-century use very strong language to discuss the importance of a woman's chastity. Juan Luis Vives was a theologian who wrote a conduct manual dedicated to Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII's daughter, Mary. In the manual he

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<sup>41</sup> Manuel de Lucena," 661 (recto) lines 21-24.

<sup>42</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 660 (recto).

<sup>43</sup> Weisner-Hanks, *Women and Gender*, 48. Weisner-Hanks also makes the argument that language, or what other people, neighbors, clients, etc. said about a man and his family determined his honor.

admonished unmarried girls “to preserve integrity of the body, much care must be expended... or to put it more correctly, total vigilance.”<sup>44</sup> In the early modern era it was a woman’s personal duty to make sure that she stayed a virgin. Any “woman who allow[ed] herself to be defiled by a man,” or had sex with a man before marriage, lost her honor.<sup>45</sup> The Inquisitors record that Manuel “put his damned and perverse tongue to the purity and cleanliness of the most holy Virgin Mary, Queen of the angels and mother of Jesus Christ our Lord.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, Manuel told the Inquisitors that Mary had defiled herself with sex and was not a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus. This was an unequivocal attack on Mary’s honor. Manuel’s speech about Mary implied that the Inquisitors, who believed in Mary’s sexual purity and honor, were either deceived by this doctrine or deceivers by propagating this doctrine.

Manuel’s attack on Mary’s virginity and sexual purity is a reflection of his awareness of sixteenth-century female gender constructions and Catholic doctrine. Manuel’s speech about Mary is so offensive to the Inquisitors that they say his words were “blasphemies unworthy to be read or published between Catholics and faithful Christians.”<sup>47</sup> Mary’s virginity is a concept with deep theological roots. Mary was the embodiment of female honor—a virgin and the mother of the Savior of the world. The early Catholic theologian, St. Augustine, praises Mary and offers her as the ultimate example of a woman. In juxtaposition to Mary, Augustine gives the example of Eve, the

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<sup>44</sup> Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, 82.

<sup>45</sup> Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, 81. Scott K. Taylor, “Women, Honor, and Violence in a Castilian Town, 1600-1650” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, issue 4 (2004): 1079-1097.

<sup>46</sup> Manuel de Lucena,” 661 (recto) lines 14-16.

<sup>47</sup> “Manuel de Lucena” 661 (recto) lines 17-18. Luis de Carvajal simply refers to Mary as “Marifernández,” which seems to be an attempt on his part to claim that Mary was just an ordinary woman, Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 41.

original sinner who introduced sexual sin into the world by tempting Adam. It is not likely that Manuel would have been well versed in the theological writings of St. Augustine. However, symbolism of Mary was everywhere in sixteenth-century Catholicism. Statues and representations of Mary's motherhood and purity would have dominated the cultural landscape of the Roman Catholic Spanish Empire.<sup>48</sup> Manuel would have understood the Roman Catholic doctrine that Mary was sainted because of her sexual purity. Manuel was using this gendered slander as an attack on Mary's honor, and her worthiness to be a Saint, effectively making her a sexual, unworthy, Eve-like character. By attacking Mary's sexual purity, Manuel was also casting doubt on the character of Jesus. If Mary bore a child, there was no doubt in Manuel's mind that Jesus was either illegitimate or simply the child of two humans—Mary and Joseph. The Inquisitors and every Roman Catholic's belief in the Virgin Mary and Jesus was proof, to Manuel, that they believed in impure and unworthy Gods and Saints.

Through Manuel's doctrinal explanations and use of gendered language, part of Manuel's gender identity can be reconstructed. Manuel quite obviously believed in the Spanish construction of male and female honor and used these constructions to highlight his own honor and attack the honor of the Inquisitors. These conceptions about honor would have been a significant part of Manuel's gender identity. The idea that the rest of Manuel's Crypto-Jewish community subscribed to similar gender paradigms is very likely.

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<sup>48</sup> Stina Fallberg Sundmark, "The Rosary and the wounds of Christ. Devotional images in Relation to Late Medieval Liturgy and Piety," in *Images and Objects in Ritual Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Northern and Central Europe* ed. Anu Mand and Krista Kodres (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 54.

The Inquisitors' gender constructions and biases are apparent in the language they used to refer to women. It seems that only a man's opinion on the subject of doctrine was valid to the Inquisition. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the Inquisitors recorded (and asked) Manuel to expound on doctrine and did not ask Leonor, Isabel, Margarita, or Antonia doctrinal questions. This bias against women as independent thinkers and actors was also evident when the Inquisitors referred to women. The Inquisitors made sure that whenever a woman was addressed or referenced they were in apposition to their husbands.<sup>49</sup>

The Inquisitors' gendered language toward women reflects the prevailing culture of women being subordinate to men. While explaining the origins of the Crypto-Jewish fast of Esther, the Inquisitors referenced the biblical story of Esther. In the story, Esther's husband is the king. When the Inquisitors refer to him, he is not the "man" of Esther, but her "husband."<sup>50</sup> These examples are a clear indication that the dominant culture viewed women as subordinate to men, possibly even belonging to men. This is ironic given that the Inquisition tried women individually. This is a confusing amalgamation of gender-based ideas and values within the prevailing Catholic culture. Perhaps this paradigm suggests that this gendered view of men possessing women was so integrated in the wider culture that Jewish women subscribed to it as well.

Luis de Carvajal's memoir corroborates the suggestion that women in Judaism were subject to the legal authority of men. Luis often mentions the financial and

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<sup>49</sup> "Isabel de Carvajal," 378 (recto) lines 1-2.

<sup>50</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 661 (verso) line 11; 664 (verso). Martin A. Cohen, "Introduction" in *The Jewish Experience in Latin America: Selected Studies from the publication of The American Jewish Historical Society vol. 1* ed. Martin A. Cohen (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1971), XXX. The Crypto-Jewish fast of Esther was different from the Jewish festival of Purim.

emotional distress that his father's death had on the Carvajal family, but when he uses the word "orphan," he only uses it in reference to his sisters.<sup>51</sup> This confirms that his sisters, as women, were the only members of the family left without the legal protection that a father offered.<sup>52</sup> However, this does not seem to apply to the legal system of the Roman Catholic Church. All women were tried individually by the Inquisition and canon law never explicitly differentiates between men and women, it simply refers to the accused as a person or perpetrator.<sup>53</sup> So, although the Church did not legally distinguish between men and women, individual Inquisitors clearly treated women according to the tenets of the prevailing gender culture of the sixteenth-century.

Inquisitors tried Christian women as heretics such as *ilusas* or *alumbradas* because they were independent women who did not restrict themselves to subservient roles under the control of men. *Alumbradas* challenged the patriarchy and the leadership structure of the Roman Catholic Church by claiming to be spiritual visionaries and leaders outside the sanctioned space of convents and male control. The Inquisitors often destroyed *alumbrado* writings because they were the opposite of saintly women's writings or *vidas*, which included explicit deference to male authority.<sup>54</sup> One paramount example of a saintly woman's writing is that of Saint Teresa de Ávila, who had visions and although she expressed some displeasure and frustration with the restrictions of the

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<sup>51</sup> Luis de Carvajal. *The Enlightened*, 60-61, 99.

<sup>52</sup> Grace E. Coolidge, *Guardianship, Gender, and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Routledge, 2011) 2.

<sup>53</sup> Code of Canon Law, *The Subject Liable to Penal Sanctions*, Book VI, Part 1, Title III, Canon 1321.1, Accessed April 13, 2018, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_\\_\\_P4W.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/___P4W.HTM). "No one is punished unless the external violation of law or precept, committed by the person, is gravely imputable by reason of malice or negligence."

<sup>54</sup> Schlau, 66-67.

convent, always deferred to the authority of the Church to regulate the convent.<sup>55</sup>

However, a contemporary and friend of St. Teresa was a nun named María de San José Salazar who was imprisoned on two occasions for defiance of her superiors. She was released from both imprisonments and restored to her status and post as abbess. It seems her actions outside of Church authority were viewed as less of a threat than *alumbrada* women, perhaps because her authority and defiance could not extend outside the confines of the convent.<sup>56</sup> María de San Jose Salazar's situation diverged from *alumbrada* women whose actions, like Crypto-Jewish women's actions, happened outside of the normal boundaries of early modern patriarchal authority, and Catholic clerical authority. This was intolerable to the Inquisition.

### **Familial Responsibilities**

The Inquisition record of Antonia Núñez shows some important divisions in the familial responsibilities of Crypto-Jews. Antonia was tried about fifty years after Manuel de Lucena and the Carvajals, however, the patriarchal system upon which law and government were based during the early modern period had not changed.<sup>57</sup> This patriarchal system also existed in families. The man was the head of the household in early modern society, but women still had important responsibilities, particularly

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<sup>55</sup> Alison Weber, "'Mute Tongues Beget Understanding': Recovering the Voice of Maria de San Jose" in *Reaching Other Voices: Women and Religion in Early Modern Europe* ed. Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 167. This article is primarily about Maria de San Jose, a contemporary and pen pal of St. Teresa de Avila. Maria de San Jose was a nun and abbess, but she was imprisoned on two separate occasions for not keeping silent when it came criticism of her superiors. She was released from prison on both occasions and given back her post as abbess. Her status

<sup>56</sup> Weber, "Mute Tongues," 18, 167.

<sup>57</sup> The Carvajal's and Manuel de Lucena were tried in the 1590s and Antonia was tried in the 1640s.

regarding the home and children. These divisions are clearly seen in Antonia's Inquisition trial record and will be examined in depth here.

When the Inquisitors brought underage youth into the secret prisons, they did so to gather information about the child's family's Crypto-Jewish practices, and not to convict them of heresy. Antonia was underage according to canon law, but the Inquisitors still imprisoned her and brought her before the tribunal on many occasions.<sup>58</sup> Because of Antonia's underage status, the Inquisitors brought Antonia before the tribunal to find out what her family and her parents in particular had taught her about Crypto-Judaism.<sup>59</sup> The only questions that the Inquisitors asked Antonia dealt with what she learned from and observed her family members doing, not about what she believed and had practiced when it came to Crypto-Judaism. This was a deviation from the questions that the Inquisitors asked of other accused heretics. Although other heretics were asked what their family and Crypto-Jewish community members believed, the majority of the Inquisitors' questions were about their personal practices and beliefs. Because of the Inquisitor's policy about children testifying against their parents, it is logical that Crypto-Jewish parents waited to teach their children *converso* practices until they were older (usually in their early teens) and could keep a secret. This has been equated to the Jewish tradition of Bar Mitzvah,

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<sup>58</sup>“Antonia Núñez.” Tribunal de la Inquisicion en Mexico 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 4 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 1 (recto) line 28; 1 (verso) lines 29-30; 3 (verso) line 8; 4 (verso) lines 5, 8, 33, 36; Code of Canon Law, *The Subject Liable to Penal Sanctions*, Book VI, Part I, Title III, Canon 1324.1, Accessed April 13, 2018, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_P4W.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P4W.HTM). “The perpetrator of a violation is not exempt from a penalty, but the penalty established by law or precept must be tempered or a penance employed in its place if the delict was committed: 4/by a minor who has complete the age of sixteen years.”

<sup>59</sup> This paper will not utilize the Inquisition trial records of Antonia's parents, because of access issues, but they do exist.

which generally happened when a boy or girl turned 13 years old.<sup>60</sup> This, however, did not stop Inquisitors from asking underage children about their family's Crypto-Jewish practices and finding out about them.

The Inquisitors also probed the children of Crypto-Jews to expand their set of heretical acts and to gain secure convictions of Crypto-Jews. During her first round of questioning about the activities of her family, Antonia said that she had not seen anything except her father praying in the corridor.<sup>61</sup> The Inquisitors then asked her to reflect on her memories more and sent her back to her cell. After several more periods of interrogation Antonia came before the tribunal and tearfully said that her father taught her the "black law of Moses": he observed fasts, festivals, prayers, all from the law of Moses.<sup>62</sup> Then she gave a somewhat bizarre account of seeing her father and other kinsmen take an image of Jesus Christ and do "Jewish acts" to it.<sup>63</sup> However, the specific "Jewish Acts" are never enumerated. On another occasion Antonia said that her father and brothers whipped an image of Christ and called Jesus a liar.<sup>64</sup> Antonia might have been telling the truth about seeing her father and brothers perform this act, or she simply might have been repeating what she thought the Inquisitors wanted to hear, or she might have even been coached by her lawyer to tell this story about her father and brothers. The reason that Antonia's story might be a fiction is because it has remarkable similarities to a long-

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<sup>60</sup> Ronnie Perelis, *Narratives from the Sephardic Atlantic: Blood and Faith* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016) 37. Perelis quotes a section of Luis de Carvajal's memoir and states that it is unclear if waiting to tell children about their family's Crypto-Jewish practices was akin to bar-mitzvah, but it is a possibility. Luis found out about his family's Crypto-Judaism around the time that he was thirteen years old during Yom Kippur.

<sup>61</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 1 (recto) lines 13-14,

<sup>62</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 2 (recto) lines 15-19; 2 (verso) lines 25-26.

<sup>63</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 2 (recto) lines 20-21; 4 (recto) lines 7-12.

<sup>64</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 4 (recto) lines 7-12.

standing European tale about host desecration, where Christians claimed that Jews stole the Eucharist from churches, or they claimed that Jews defiled and mangled the host out of malice. In one tale of host desecration, the Eucharist even bled.<sup>65</sup> There is no evidence that Jews actually engaged in host desecration, but in certain areas of Europe this tale played a very important role in Christian-Jewish relations.<sup>66</sup> Manuel's record also contains rhetoric that shares similarities to host desecration, Manuel stated that the Eucharist was simply a piece of bread, and eating it could not be sufficient to enter into "the door of salvation."<sup>67</sup> It is likely that Manuel used this language to further anger the Inquisitors, perhaps vying for martyr status among Crypto-Jews. Whatever the reason for telling such tales, the Inquisitors would have used this anecdote as evidence against Antonia's father and brothers.

The Inquisitor's goal was the reformation, rather than the conviction, of younger heretics. In addition to being underage according to canon law, it appears that the Inquisitors deemed Antonia young enough to reform, and they did not interrogate her actions. A similar thing happened to Isabel and Leonor's youngest sister, Anica. Anica was brought before the Inquisition to testify against her brother and sisters, but then she was sent to live with a good Catholic family where the Inquisitors hoped she would learn how to become a good Catholic herself.<sup>68</sup>

Antonia's trial record provides important information about the gendered responsibilities of mothers and fathers. The Inquisitors seem much more interested in

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<sup>65</sup> Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 85.

<sup>66</sup> R. Po-chia Hsia, *Trent 1475: Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>67</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 661 (recto) line 25.

<sup>68</sup> Luis de Carvajal. *The Enlightened*, 75.

what Antonia says about her father's teachings, rather than her mother's teachings, which would have most likely been in the realm of domestic duties.<sup>69</sup> This reinforces the argument that the Inquisitors believed that men were the authorities on doctrine, and Antonia's document would suggest that it was not only the expectation of Christian society that men would understand the religious doctrine they followed, but they would teach it.<sup>70</sup> This is also consistent with Orthodox Jewish practice that requires men to be versed in the Torah and Talmud, and stipulates that only men are to teach from the Torah and Talmud in synagogues. Men were expected to be the head of the family, and women, the heart of the family. It was not the women's responsibility to teach the doctrine and tenets of their faith. Antonia's record reinforces this belief when she declares to the tribunal that, "her mother had [kept] and [observed] the law of Moses and... her Father taught her."<sup>71</sup>

However, the clear lines of familial roles can be complicated by the lived experience of other historical actors, such as Luis de Carvajal.<sup>72</sup> It is probable that Luis learned about his Jewish ancestry and his family's Crypto-Jewish traditions and practices from the women in his family, his older sisters and his mother.<sup>73</sup> The Carvajal women's significant role in teaching Crypto-Judaism to Luis was a role that existed outside the

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<sup>69</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 4 (recto) line 17.

<sup>70</sup> Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, 195.

<sup>71</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 3 (recto) lines 23-26.

<sup>72</sup> Scholarship being produced by Alyson Poska and Grace E. Coolidge also complicates our understanding of early modern Spanish gender ideals of men being the teachers and women being the homemakers: Alyson Poska, *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Grace E. Coolidge, *Guardianship, Gender and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Grace E. Coolidge, "Neither dumb, deaf, nor destitute, of understanding?: Women as Guardians in Early Modern Spain," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30, number 3 (2005): 673-693.

<sup>73</sup> Anna Lanyon, *Fire and Song: the story of Luis de Carvajal and the Mexican Inquisition* (Crows News, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2011) 40.

lines of the gender norms of the time period. However, there are examples from Luis' memoir that fit the gendered norms of the time period. When Luis wrote about learning the tenets and doctrines of Judaism later in his life, he discussed the guidance of a Crypto-Jewish doctor, Manuel de Morales, who traveled with the Carvajals from Spain.<sup>74</sup> In addition to this, in Luis' letters to his sisters and mother during their second imprisonment, Luis tried to teach and expound scriptural truth to comfort to them. He seemed to do this as the patriarchal head of the family.<sup>75</sup> So although the gendered roles of women and men in Judaism are often described as fixed and clear, in the lives of Crypto-Jews these roles were less static.

### **Conclusion**

One of the implicit purposes of the Spanish Inquisition was to regulate the acceptable religious, racial and gender norms for every member of the Spanish colonial world. The surviving Inquisition documents of the Carvajal sisters (Isabel and Leonor), Manuel de Lucena, Antonia Núñez, and Margarita Moreira reveal many Catholic and Crypto-Jewish gender norms. By looking at culinary and domestic practices, gendered language used by both the Inquisitors and the accused, as well as the separation of familial responsibilities, a part of Crypto-Jewish gender identity can be reconstructed.

These documents show that domestic and culinary practices of Crypto-Jewish women were, like the Inquisitors believed, integral to the celebration of Jewish festivals and Sabbaths. Food preparation and care of the home were also important to the gender identities of Crypto-Jewish women. The gendered language that Manuel de Lucena used when the Inquisitors questioned him about his doctrinal beliefs displays a Crypto-Jewish

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<sup>74</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 56-57.

<sup>75</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 89-122.

compliance with early modern male constructions of honor. The Inquisitors also used gendered language, which presented a view of women as possessions of their husbands, a belief that the *conversos/conversas* on trial seem to confirm. Antonia's Inquisition document verifies the Crypto-Jewish gender construction that men were responsible for understanding and teaching Jewish doctrine.

## CHAPTER 4

### RACIAL IDENTITY

#### **Introduction**

Race is a complicated concept when applied to Spain and its colonies during the period that this study examines. It is particularly complicated when it comes to the *conversos*. In the modern era Jews can be and have been categorized in a variety of ways, as a member of a religion, as a person with a particular ancestral heritage, as a participant in a culture, or as a member of a race.<sup>1</sup> This variety of definitions of what constituted “Jewishness,” was also applicable during the period in which the Crypto-Jewish communities of 1595 and 1647 existed, with the notable exception of race. Race, as a concept, did not exist. The development of race, and particularly Jews as a race, came about as Europeans colonized the Americas. Particularly as the Spanish Conquistadors, and later settlers encountered different types of people, including *Indios* (or Native Americans), Africans, and people of mixed ancestral heritages. During the time period from 1595 to 1647 the concept of race gained traction and acceptance as an easy way to categorize people, and Jews eventually became known as a race.

This chapter argues that the idea of race did not exist in the early colonization of the Americas, but because of the Spanish cultural system of *limpieza de sangre*, which defined Jews (and people with Jewish ancestry) as people possessing dirty blood, the Spanish people had a paradigm which helped them define new types of people such as *Indios* and Africans. This paradigm developed over the first 150 years of colonization

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<sup>1</sup> Leo Trepp, *A History of the Jewish Experience* (New York: Behrman House, Inc. 1973), 1-3; Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer, *What is a Jew* (New York: Collier Publishing, 1978), 3-6.

into the concept of race or caste. This colonial caste system defined Spaniards, *Indios*, Africans, and Jews all as separate races.

### **Historiography**

Scholars of Spain and the Spanish Empire debate often about when and how the concept of race developed in the Spanish Empire. María Elena Martínez has argued that race clearly developed out of the Spanish institution of *limpieza de sangre*, which was a tool that Church and government bodies used to make sure that their members or subordinates were not tainted by heretical blood, and in particular, Jewish blood. Martínez argues that out of *limpieza de sangre*, ideas like *casta* or caste grew, but they never strayed very far from their religious roots. *Casta*, and later *raza* (race), were always connected to the idea of religious heritage.<sup>2</sup> This chapter agrees with Martínez's argument, that race was always connected to its Jewish roots. However, Martínez ends discussion of Jews as a separate *casta* category when they reach the New World—it is as if Jews disappear after they have jumpstarted social consciousness of the concept of race. This study will push analysis further by continuing to look at Jews as a separate *casta* category in colonial Mexico during the turn of the sixteenth century.

Much of the historiography about race in Spanish America focuses on a later time period in which race and caste had become important features in both society and the legal system. Scholars such as Ann Twinam discuss the influence of race well into the

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<sup>2</sup> María Elena Martínez, "Interrogating Blood Lines: 'Purity of Blood,' the Inquisition, and *Casta* categories," in *Religion in New Spain* ed. Susan Schroeder and Stafford Poole (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007); María Elena Martínez, "The Language, Genealogy, and Classification of 'Race' in Colonial Mexico," in *Race and Classification* ed. Ilona Katzew and Susan Deans-Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009) and María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

nineteenth century, and how the power of racial restrictions caused Spanish subjects to purchase whitening decrees from the government.<sup>3</sup> Whitening decrees were official government papers which declared a person (only males) to be racially white. This occurred only when a person was of mixed ancestry and generally happened when a male was seeking an employment opportunity only afforded to members of the white caste. According to Twinam many scholars cite whitening decrees as evidence of the progressive nature or benevolence of the Spanish caste system. Twinam rejects this argument because the amount of whitening decrees that were sought by Spanish subjects, and granted by the government, were so insignificant that the whitening decrees cannot reveal anything conclusive about the Spanish caste and racial system as a whole.<sup>4</sup> The development of race is also discussed with a perspective toward different geographical regions. Stanley Hordes often writes about the New Spain frontier, the northern Mexican region, or what modern geography would call the U.S. Southwest.<sup>5</sup> Other scholars focus on regions like the Caribbean and Peru.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015). There are also various anthologies about race in the Spanish Americas such as, Ilona Katzew and Susan Deans-Smith eds., *Race and Classification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009) and Andrew B. Fisher and Matthew D. O'Hara eds., *Imperial Subjects: race and identity in colonial Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness*, 410.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley M. Hordes, "Between Toleration and Persecution: The Relationship of the Inquisition and Crypto-Jews on the Northern Frontier" in *Religion in New Spain* ed. Stafford Poole and Susan Schroeder (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Rachel Sarah O'Toole *Bound Lives: Africans, Indians, and the Making of Race in Colonial Peru* (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012). Another approach to the subject of race comes from Colin M. MacLachlan and Jaime E. Rodriguez's book *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: A Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) which talks about race as less of a Spanish construction and discusses the development of race from the Native American perspective.

Eventually, in colonial Mexico a term emerged to describe both the mixing of *Indio*, African, and Spanish cultures and races. This term was creole or *criollo*. The study of creole culture and identity is historiographically significant to the study of race in colonial Spain.<sup>7</sup> Scholars like Herman Bennett delineate the emergence of creole identity and culture using both legal and Inquisition trial records.<sup>8</sup> While others such as Peter B. Villella argue that Native peoples must be incorporated into the interpretation of creole identity as independent agents.<sup>9</sup> These works discuss creoles solely as those members of society with a mix of *Indio*, African and Spanish heritage. I argue that the first creole identity in colonial Mexico was Crypto-Jewish.

This chapter argues that the institution of *limpieza de sangre*, the fear of Jewish conversion among the Inquisitors of Mexico City, and the clash of Spanish and Native cultural systems were precursors to the emergence of Jews as a caste category. Spanish, Roman Catholic, and colonial cultural systems blended together to create a unique creole racial identity among the European colonial immigrants of Jewish descent. This progression of Jewish racial identity is observable in the Inquisition trials of the Carvajals, Manuel de Lucena, and Antonia Núñez. The emergence of the word caste took place during the time period between the Carvajals trial in 1595 and Antonia's trial in 1647. The trials that took place in 1595 and 1647 were the two largest groups of Inquisition trials in Mexico City. There does not appear to be any significant set of

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<sup>7</sup> Linda M. Heywood, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Milagros Ricourt, *The Dominican racial imaginary: Surveying the landscape of race and nation in Hispañola* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Herman L. Bennett, *African in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness 1570-1640* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003) 3.

<sup>9</sup> Peter B. Villella, *Indigenous Elites and Creole Identity in Colonial Mexico, 1500-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 5-6, 13, 15.

Inquisition trials to study in the interim, therefore, this study assumes that the word caste is absent from Inquisition records before 1647.

### **Limpieza de Sangre**

*Limpieza de sangre* existed in Spain to exclude Jews from government and Church institutions, but its existence did not always facilitate action. *Limpieza de sangre*, or cleanliness of blood, began as early as 1449 in Toledo as a way to make sure that people entering into government service were not tainted by heretical ancestry—Jewish ancestry in particular.<sup>10</sup> *Limpieza de sangre* was popularized and spread to all regions of the Iberian Peninsula and all government and Church institutions during the late sixteenth century. Eventually any applicant to Church or State positions had to pay for an investigation to verify that all four of his (and his wife's) grandparents were not stained with heretical, Jewish ancestry. If any "impurity" was found, the Church or State denied the position to the applicant.<sup>11</sup> *Limpieza de sangre* regulations also banned travel to the Americas for anyone with impure blood, and for persons of impure blood to become lower nobles, or *hidalgos*.<sup>12</sup> In the early seventeenth century, when *Moriscos* were subjected to their own expulsion order, the institution of *limpieza de sangre* was modified to include *Moriscos* as a tainted bloodline.<sup>13</sup> *Limpieza de sangre* should have restricted the Carvajal family in many ways. They should not have been allowed to immigrate to Mexico and they should not have been able to participate in government and Church

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<sup>10</sup> Juan Franco Hernandez, *Sangre Limpia, Sangre Española: El debate sobre los estatutos de limpieza (siglos XV-XVII)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Maria Elena Martínez, "Interrogating Bloodlines: 'Purity of Blood,' the Inquisition, and *Casta* Categories," in *Religion in New Spain* eds. Susan Schroeder and Stafford Poole (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007) 199.

<sup>12</sup> Martínez, "Interrogating Bloodlines," 203.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Pérez, *The Spanish Inquisition: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 44-45, 49.

institutions, however, they did immigrate to Mexico and had family members that worked in Church and government institutions.

Through *limpieza de sangre*, the government's goal was to rid Spain of Judaism in all its forms, however, the implementation of these ideals was neither consistent nor rigid. *Limpieza de sangre* was a mechanism for regulating society, much like the Inquisition regulated gender and religious norms.<sup>14</sup> While the Office of the Inquisition sought the homogenization and regulation of gender and religious customs in all strata of Spanish society, *limpieza de sangre* sought to regulate society at the top of the social strata. Working in tandem, the institutions of the Inquisition and *limpieza de sangre* sought to eradicate the perceived taint of Jewish religious, gender, and blood heritage from Spanish society. However, this did not always happen in practice.

Government and church officials did not always exclude *conversos* with impure blood from government or Church positions, or from immigration to New Spain, which is clearly seen in the records of the Carvajals. Luis, Isabel, and Leonor had a brother named Gaspar and their great, great grandparents were the first Jews to convert to Christianity in the Carvajal family. In other words, Luis, Isabel, Leonor, and Gaspar's blood was impure. Because of this heritage, Gaspar should not have been allowed into any Church positions, however, he joined the Church and became a priest of the order of Santo Domingo.<sup>15</sup> No information exists in Luis, Isabel, or Leonor's records about how or when

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<sup>14</sup> Martínez in "Interrogating Bloodlines," states the "the questionnaires used by *comisarios* [regulators of *limpieza de sangre*] helped to construct and reproduce a particular cultural model, one that was not only premised on the imagined Christian genesis of Spanish society but also promoted certain religious, social, and sexual practices, notions of honor and most all loyalty to Crown and faith."

<sup>15</sup> Alfonso Toro, *The Carvajal Family*, translated by Frances Hernandez (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 2002).

Gaspar joined the priesthood, but Luis did write that Gaspar never mentioned his family's Judaizing, or heretical practices to the Church. Gaspar probably edited his speech among the Church because he did not wish to reveal his own Jewish heritage and tainted blood.<sup>16</sup> However, according to another scholar, Gaspar told his father that he became a friar because the *limpieza de sangre* condition was meant only for those people of Jewish ancestry that were going to revert back to their ancestral Jewish faith.<sup>17</sup> Never mind that Gaspar couldn't have known if he would choose to practice Judaism at a later point in his life like his mother and siblings.

It is possible that the Roman Catholic Church did not inquire into Gaspar's ancestry because Gaspar occupied other social spheres that gave him credibility with the Church, such as coming from a well-connected Spanish family. According to scholar Robert Schwaller, there were "domains of difference" woven into the fabric of Spanish society, and these domains marked individuals and gave them social capital. Only one of these domains included *limpieza de sangre*. Schwaller names these domains as socioeconomic, ethno-religious, and ethno-geographic. The socioeconomic domain dealt with wealth and class statuses, and having wealth and status also meant that an individual possessed moral capital. The ethno-religious domain dealt with blood and heritage, or *limpieza de sangre*. Lastly, the ethno-geographic domain dealt with the place of birth and citizenship of an individual.<sup>18</sup> Having clean blood and being born in the right place also gave an individual social capital, and honor. The ethno-geographic domain would

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<sup>16</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal* trans. Seymour B. Liebman (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1967) 64.

<sup>17</sup> Ronnie Perelis, *Narratives from the Sephardic Atlantic: Blood and Faith* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016) 39.

<sup>18</sup> Schwaller, *Generos de Gente*, 20-23.

become increasingly important as more people of Spanish descent were born in the colonies. Gaspar was born in the Iberian Peninsula, his Uncle was a respected military hero, and these characteristics gave Gaspar social capital.

Socioeconomic, ethno-religious, and ethno-geographic domains help illuminate why other members of the Carvajal family were not beholden to the restrictions that *limpieza de sangre* should have placed upon them. The Carvajal's uncle, Luis de Carvajal the elder overcame *limpieza de sangre* restrictions through his success in the Spanish navy. After winning an important naval battle in the Caribbean, he was made a *hidalgo* (a lower noble), and the governor of Nuevo Leon (in modern day Mexico).<sup>19</sup> Nuevo Leon was the frontier of New Spain in the late sixteenth century and because of Luis de Carvajal the elder's military prowess and despite his Jewish descent, he was made governor. His military success also elevated his masculine honor because conquest had become imbedded in the Spanish masculine ideal.<sup>20</sup> However, Luis the elder's military success was likely only one of a combination of factors that led to him becoming governor. The fact that Luis the elder was a natural born Spaniard and possessed wealth would also have been important reasons that he became governor. None of the Carvajal's records explicitly state that Luis the elder had political connections, but it is likely that he was offered patronage because he had connections with powerful politicians.

The institution of *limpieza de sangre* held strict ideals about the exclusion of people of Jewish descent from immigration to the Spanish colonies, but the implementation of *limpieza de sangre* involved more factors than the simple element of

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<sup>19</sup> Toro, *The Carvajal Family*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Edward Behrend-Martínez, "Spain violated: foreign men in Spain's heartland" *European Review of History European Review of History* 22, number 4 (2015): 580.

whether a person was of pure blood. When Luis de Carvajal the elder received his governorship in New Spain he could bring any passengers that he wanted with him. Luis the elder brought a doctor, the doctor's family, a trusted military advisor, as well as his sister and her family. Luis the elder's sister, Doña Francisca de Carvajal's children, who came with her to Mexico, were Isabel, Leonor, and Luis de Carvajal. The doctor, the military advisor, and Francisca's family were all of Jewish origin.<sup>21</sup> This is another example of how the rules of *limpieza de sangre* were straight forward, but its implementation was not. Perhaps the government officials that should have investigated Luis de Carvajal the elder's fellow passengers simply did not take the time to investigate properly. The investigation of ancestral heritage was an arduous and time-consuming process. To complete it properly might not have been feasible in this situation. The investigators might have also chosen to trust Luis the elder's choices of companions because of his elevated status as a military hero.

These revelations about the implementation of *limpieza de sangre* beg the question whether or not the institution of *limpieza de sangre* had any real influence. The Inquisition sources of the Carvajals and Manuel reveal that although they may not have been restricted by *limpieza de sangre* policies during their immigration, there was a far-reaching cultural belief in blood being a product of one's ancestors, and blood influencing an individual's morality. These beliefs influenced the way in which race and caste developed in the New World.

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<sup>21</sup> Toro, *The Carvajal Family*, 28-29.

## Jewish Conversion

The government's implementation of *limpieza de sangre* was lacking in Spain and its colonies and possibly could have died out before the idea of race was ever established. However, the Church and even those of Jewish heritage played an important role in keeping concern for Jewish ancestry alive. The Inquisition often viewed those with Jewish heritage as suspect because they believed that *conversos* were subversively trying to convert all Christians to Judaism. Conversely, the Crypto-Jews of the Mexico City community in the 1590s, specifically Manuel and Luis, felt that their duty was not to convert Christians to Judaism, but to keep their Jewish ancestry alive through their own worship. Any other conversion efforts Manuel and Luis engaged in were directed toward finding and re-converting those with Jewish roots. Although Spanish Church and government officials viewed those with Jewish ancestors as lesser than those of pure Christian heritage, the Crypto-Jews in this study were often proud of their Jewish blood.

Manuel often remembered his ancestors and their Judaism, and his concern for his ancestral heritage helped the *limpieza de sangre* system's ideals to endure in the Spanish Colonies. When Manuel spoke to the Inquisitors about his personal justifications for following the Law of Moses, Manuel often invoked the names of his ancestors. When talking about the rites and traditions of the Jewish faith, Manuel stated that he was "following the law of his ancestors."<sup>22</sup> And later, when Manuel discussed the law of Kashrut, or kosher food laws, he stated that he was simply remembering the law of his ancestors, who, in turn, were remembering the law of their ancestors, the Children of

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<sup>22</sup> "Manuel de Lucena." Tribunal de la Inquisición en México 1593-1817, Mexican Inquisition documents: BANC MSS 96/95 m vol. 2 (Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA): 660 (recto) line 16.

Israel.<sup>23</sup> Being a product of one's ancestors and remembering them seems to have been an important feature of both Judaism and Crypto-Judaism. It was certainly important to Manuel that he worship in the way that his predecessors had worshipped, and if Manuel had been unconcerned with the faith of his ancestors, he would not have engaged in Crypto-Judaism. Manuel's concern for his Jewish ancestry was tangentially related to the *limpieza de sangre* system's ideals of blood purity. Although both Manuel and the *limpieza de sangre* system acknowledged Jewish blood heritage, Manuel was honored by his blood where the *limpieza de sangre* system viewed his Jewish blood as impure, even heretical. So, even though Manuel did not agree with the restraints and conclusions of the *limpieza de sangre* system, he inadvertently kept blood heritage at the forefront of people's minds.

The Inquisition also played a role in the perpetuation of *limpieza de sangre* and the development of race because of the Church's deep-seeded concern that unclean blood would taint the Christian body as a whole. Embedded into the institution of *limpieza de sangre* was the fear that if people of Jewish ancestry became a part of the Church or the government, their tainted blood would somehow affect the people around them and if the people around them became tainted by Jewish blood, the Church and the government would become infected as well. Evidence of the fear of infection can be seen in Manuel de Lucena's Inquisition trial. At the end of all of the testimonies and inquiries in an Inquisition document, the accused person was read the record of the trial and asked whether the account was true or not. In these pages of the Inquisition document the scribe recorded the response of the accused person. In Manuel's document he was asked

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<sup>23</sup> "Manuel de Lucena." 662 (recto) line 33.

whether the scribe's account was true and then Manuel was asked a few additional questions about the people in the record, specifically those that attended certain religious ceremonies and fasts with Manuel. During this questioning, the Inquisitors wanted to know who converted Manuel to "the dead Law of Moses?"<sup>24</sup> This seems to be an attempt by the Inquisitors to figuratively find "patient zero," or who was responsible for the web of heretical converts that had been revealed throughout the course of Manuel's Inquisition trial. Had Manuel interacted with Andrés Rodríguez, Manuel Gómez, or Gregorio Ruíz, or in other words had Manuel been converted to Judaism through interacting with them? Manuel answered that he interacted with these individuals, but that he converted himself. Though this line of questioning failed to find "patient zero," perhaps it affirmed the Inquisitors worst fears that it wasn't the active missionary work of others that spread Jewish heresy, but Manuel's own blood which had made him into a heretic. It was Manuel's Jewish blood that betrayed his Catholic baptism and the reason that he reverted to the faith of his ancestors.<sup>25</sup> The Inquisitor's belief in the taint of Jewish blood was likely confirmed and increased by Manuel's account of personal conversion.

Crypto-Jews also believed in the power of their Jewish blood but believed that their primary role was to keep their blood untainted from Christian influence. While the Inquisitors were worried about *conversos* trying to preach to, and convert Christians, Crypto-Jews saw themselves differently: not as relapsed Christians, but as Jews concerned with keeping their faith alive. Many believed that finding relapsed Jews and reconvertng them to their ancestral faith was of utmost importance. In Luis de Carvajal's

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<sup>24</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 332 (recto); 325 (recto); 661 (verso) lines 26-27, 31-33. Manuel is also accused of converting the other members of his family to the "dead law of Moses."

<sup>25</sup> "Manuel de Lucena," 539 (verso) lines 6-17.

memoirs, whenever he spoke about the proselytizing efforts of himself, his family, or his friends, he wrote of finding “one of our own nation” and bringing them back to the true faith.<sup>26</sup> In addition to preserving the Jewish faith, it is likely that Crypto-Jews only proselytized to those of Jewish ancestry because they needed to keep their Crypto-Jewish worship secret.<sup>27</sup> Another evidence that Crypto-Jews did not wish to convert Christians to Judaism can be found in Luis’ account of his circumcision. Luis praised God for compelling him to circumcise himself because it would stop him from marrying any non-Jewish woman. The implication being that a Christian woman would either find his circumcision appalling or would be forced to report his circumcision to the Inquisition, which in turn, would compel Luis to try and convert her before she could report him to the Inquisition. However, it seems that Luis did not even wish to proselyte Judaism to a figurative, Christian wife. Although Crypto-Jews did not want to preach Judaism to Christians, the conservation of their own Jewish blood was very important to them. This eagerness to keep their Jewish heritage alive in their memory helped to sustain the *limpieza de sangre* system, a system, which in turn, would lead to the development of caste and racial systems in colonial Mexico.

### **Emergence of Jews as a Caste**

After the Reconquista ended, the *limpieza de sangre* system that existed in Spain changed very little over time but was eventually transformed by the societal challenges that occurred in the Spanish colonies. When the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabel drove out the last of the Moors from Granada in 1492, the Moors that remained in Spain

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<sup>26</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 65.

<sup>27</sup> Luis de Carvajal, *The Enlightened*, 92. There is one non-Jewish exception to Luis’s missionary efforts, which was his cellmate during his first incarceration. Significantly, secrecy was a not factor for Luis during his attempt to convert his cellmate.

were eventually aggregated into the *limpieza de sangre* system and were listed as an impure bloodline because of their Islamic faith. This happened in every region of Spain by 1609, when the *Morisco* expulsion order was signed by the Monarchy. After this, there was not any reason to change the system of *limpieza de sangre* because the most common religious impurities and bloodlines of Jews and Muslims were accounted for. However, the blood discrimination of the *limpieza de sangre* system was challenged as the Spanish established American colonies and by 1647, the term caste was a part of the Office of the Inquisition's vernacular and those of Jewish ancestry were incorporated into this new caste system.

The change from the *limpieza de sangre* system to the caste system took place over an extended period of time and was a direct result of the cultural clashes that happened during the first two centuries of colonization. The *Indios* or Native Americans of the new Spanish Colonies were not easily integrated into the *limpieza de sangre* system because they did not belong to the ternary religious system consisting of Roman Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam. The *Indios* were “pagans,” but never having had the opportunity to know and convert to Christianity, the government and the Church did not believe that the Natives were automatically religiously impure. The Church, particularly after an incident with a group of Franciscan Friars subjecting recently converted Natives to persecution for heretical practices, decided that the Natives needed time to convert and be educated in the truths of Christianity.<sup>28</sup> Even with this religious exception for the *Indios*, Spaniards did not believe themselves to be equal to Natives. Nor were Natives

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<sup>28</sup> Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 75-77, 109. This incident was shocking—Franciscan missionaries tortured over 4,500 *Indios*, killed 158, and many were left crippled.

allowed into Church or government positions even though, according to the *limpieza de sangre* system, their blood was not tainted with Jewish or Muslim ancestry. It seems that Spaniards believed that Native blood was tainted in some other, not-yet-defined way. As Spaniards dealt with their belief in their own superiority over Natives, many Spanish Conquerors married into Native royal families and had children, and many other Spaniards had relationships with *Indios* that resulted in children. These children were called *mestizos*. To add to the disruption of the Spanish categorization system, very soon after the establishment of Spanish Colonies, African slaves were brought to the Americas, and they had children of mixed blood heritage with Spaniards and Natives as well.

The established *limpieza de sangre* system and the developing racial or caste categorization system in the Spanish colonies evolved further as gender and familial issues compounded the religious concerns of the colonizers. As more Spanish women came to the Colonies in the early sixteenth century, Spanish men were not marrying Native women as often or having as many *mestizo* children. Many Spanish women did not want ambiguity to arise concerning things like inheritance, so they exerted their influence to curb the rights of Indians and children of mixed blood.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, as more women began to emigrate from Spain, they sought to restore the social order that they were used to. Part of the restoration of social order would have included reestablishing gender norms, which included the chastity of women, but also the appearance of the chastity of men, particularly inside the home.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: regulating desire, reforming practice* (New York: Routledge, 2000) 148.

<sup>30</sup> Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, 112; Grace E. Coolidge, “‘A Vile and Abject Woman’: Noble Mistresses, Legal Power, and the Family in Early Modern Spain,” *Journal of Family History* July (2007): 195-214). In early modern Europe as long as men’s sexual infidelity

In other words, Spanish women did not want Spanish men having *mestizo* children, and if *mestizo* children did exist, Spanish women did not want them acknowledged as children of Spanish men. Because the acknowledgment and legitimization of *mestizo* children did not become the norm and developed into a more exceptional event, the children of previous Spanish and Native relationships were not believed to be equal to the children of pure Spanish men and women. Over the first century of colonization, this opinion was formed in part because of *mestizo*'s non-Christian heritage. It also encapsulated the idea that *mestizo* children's parents were not all of pure Spanish blood, therefore, the inferior blood heritage that *mestizo* children possessed was also tied to national heritage. However, the offspring of these Spanish and Native (and sometimes African) unions did have some Spanish blood so their blood was not entirely corrupt. All of these factors were tied to the *limpieza de sangre* system's ideals about pure blood but were not officially incorporated into the *limpieza de sangre* system. These clashes of culture were the beginnings of a new categorization system based upon race or caste.

Slowly, while reconciling the multiplicity of factors that existed in creating and maintaining social capital, the legal caste system developed. As mentioned previously, when a person had wealth that meant that they also possessed moral capital. Many *mestizo* children's parents were very rich and powerful within colonial society.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, these children were not completely devoid of social and moral currency, and the people that lived in the Spanish Colonies were beginning to categorize the offspring

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was sheltered from the view of women, in the hidden sphere of brothels, it was considered acceptable.

<sup>31</sup> Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, 148-149.

of mixed blood relationships as possessing a small measure of moral and social capital. Because these norms were developing in society, eventually the legal system encountered violations of societal norms, and new laws had to account for the societal structure and standards that had developed. By the nineteenth century a legal categorization system had been created to account for blood heritage down to .015% of blood ancestry.<sup>32</sup> This blood ancestry was not associated with religious heritage, but with the amount of Spanish blood that a person possessed.

However, before the codification of caste, when Antonia and Margarita were tried by the Office of the Inquisition in 1647, the term *casta* was being used freely in Inquisition records, and Jews were a distinct category in the caste system. The Inquisitors in Antonia's trial opened her *audiencia* with a list of what appeared to be preliminary questions: did she know why she was there, did she know why her parents were there, how old was she, and so forth. One question that Inquisitors asked was, what caste did Antonia belong to?<sup>33</sup> Antonia responded that she was "of the caste of Jews."<sup>34</sup> In the interim period between the trial of the Carvajals in 1595 and Antonia's trial in 1647, the idea of caste had developed enough that both the Inquisitors and Antonia knew what the term caste meant, and that it was a significant part of Antonia's identity. Therefore, Antonia's caste should be established and recorded by the Inquisition. It is unclear how Jews became known as a distinct caste in colonial Mexico, but caste seems to simultaneously refer to religious heritage and European heritage (or the lack of European heritage). As María Elena Martínez states, to be identified as a person having caste meant

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<sup>32</sup> Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-Century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) 66.

<sup>33</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 1 (recto) line 35.

<sup>34</sup> "Antonia Núñez," 2 (recto) line 2.

that you were being identified as impure.<sup>35</sup> The only persons without caste were Spaniards. As Antonia was both a Spaniard and a Jew, it seems that the inferior, Jewish blood she possessed was what the Inquisitors and colonial system chose to recognize.

The idea that Jews were a caste, in and of themselves also complicates the literature that discusses caste as the precursor to race. In the later epochs of the caste system in New Spain, the term race would become almost interchangeable with caste. If Jews were a caste, and later, a race, then racial ideologies that say racial categorization was based upon visual appearance, skin color, or other physical features are not wholly correct. In a visual type of classification system Spanish Jews would have been considered “white,” and without caste or race. A myriad of complicated social factors led to the development of the term caste, but its association with *limpieza de sangre* which encapsulated ideas of religion, blood, and morality cannot be dissociated from it. It was Antonia’s ancestral blood and religion as well as the immorality that these associations carried with them, that led to her being classified as a person with caste.

Antonia’s distinct identity resulted from Spanish, Indian, and Crypto Jewish people and cultures blending together in Mexico. This distinct Crypto-Jewish racial identity was one of the first creole identities to exist. Not only were Crypto-Jews pivotal in the inception of racial ideas with the institution of *limpieza de sangre*, but they played a major role in the solidification of racial ideas. Crypto-Jews were the result of mixed blood, mixed religion, and mixed culture—being creoles in Spain, but unnamed and undefined as such until the clash of Mexican cultures and people brought it into societal consciousness.

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<sup>35</sup> Martínez, “The Language, Genealogy and Classification of Race,” 27, 30.

## Conclusion

As the early modern era progressed, the Spanish constructions of caste and race began to take clear shape. Often when caste and race systems are discussed in colonial New Spain, Jews appear at the beginning of the tale, but their role in the tale ends quickly. The Jewish position in forming the idea of race and the classification system of caste is well established among scholars, but Jews are not often discussed as having a part in the established racial and caste systems of the mid seventeenth century. It is my contention that Jews did have a place in the formation of the caste system and they also had a role in the eventual race and caste systems of colonial Mexico. Because of these roles, caste should be considered as an important feature of Crypto-Jewish identity.

Jews played an integral role in creating the *limpieza de sangre* institution, which became a precursor to the colonial racial and caste systems. This *limpieza de sangre* system had a profound effect on the ways in which Crypto-Jews defined themselves. Because the system put such importance on blood ancestry it became a significant feature in the formation of racial identity. The role of blood ancestry also had a significant effect on the Inquisition. The Inquisition's fear of Crypto-Jews was compounded by their belief that the impure blood of *conversos* would infect the people around Crypto-Jews. Blood ancestry was also important to Crypto-Jews, but not because of their fear of blood heritage, but because of their desire to honor their Jewish blood through Crypto-Jewish worship. The *limpieza de sangre* system in combination with a host of other factors, eventually led to the creation of a caste system in New Spain, which accommodated other historical actors, such as *Indios*, African slaves and mixed-blood children. When the

formal caste system formed, Jews were integrated into this system. Jews were also critical to the conceptualization of creole identity.

## CONCLUSION

In 1595 after his second incarceration in the secret prisons of the Inquisition, Luis de Carvajal finished his walk to the stake. It was during this walk that Luis was given one final chance to confess his Crypto-Judaism and ask for forgiveness for the sin of maintaining Jewish practices. It might be shocking to know that the Inquisitors recorded that Luis did confess his Judaizing sins at the final moment. They recorded that Luis denied Crypto-Judaism and wished to be a full Roman Catholic Christian while he burned. It is unlikely that the Inquisitors would record this confession, if it did not happen, because they would not have wished Luis to be pardoned and spend less time in purgatory that he truly deserved. The reason for such a confession after so much deprivation, hardship, and possible torture is impossible to say for certain. Luis could have been taking precautions to secure eternal salvation by practicing Crypto-Judaism throughout his adult life and confessing Christianity at the end of it. The amount of fear that Luis suffered at the prospect of being burned at the stake could not have been insignificant either and to confess in the hopes of being saved at the last moment might have been impossible to resist. Whatever the reason for his confession, to say that this negated Luis' Crypto-Jewish identity would be foolish. Luis had lived his Crypto-Jewish beliefs under the harsh circumstances of the Inquisition since he was told about his ancestry at the age of 12 or 13. He had suffered the Inquisition's deprivation during his first trial in 1590 and still continued to practice Crypto-Judaism until his second incarceration. Truly Luis had lived and acted as a Crypto-Jew.

Without the existence of Jews in early modern Spain, the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabel, never would have signed the expulsion order of 1492 nor is it likely

that they would have established the Inquisition. The power that many middle-class Jews had gained in the State had become alarming to the Catholic authorities of Spain and the expulsion order and the establishment of the Inquisition were the Spanish authorities' response to this powerful set of Jewish merchants, financiers, and doctors.<sup>1</sup> However, the expulsion order did not rid the Iberian Peninsula of Jewish practices. It forced Jews to convert to Catholicism but did not guarantee a change in new *conversos* religious practices. The political and religious authorities in Spain still considered *conversos* suspect and "other" and now that these people were technically Catholic, the Holy Office of the Inquisition could put them on trial for being heretics. Because the Inquisition's forced conversion of many Jews, they were compelled to redefine their culture and identity. This was especially true for *conversos* who wanted to continue to practice Judaism. This Crypto-Jewish culture had to operate in secret, and because of this, it became a different entity from mainstream Judaism. This new Crypto-Jewish identity is worth studying and understanding. Perhaps it is appropriate, or simply ironic that the only way to study Crypto-Jewish culture and identity is to study it through the documents of the Inquisition, the body that forced *conversos* who wished to practice Judaism to create Crypto-Judaism.

The Mexican Crypto-Jewish communities created a unique identity in the eras of 1595 and 1647. This syncretic identity combined Spanish, colonial, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and late medieval gender cultures. These cultural factors were influential in the creation of Crypto-Jewish religious, gender and racial identities. The religious identities of Crypto-Jews were swayed by the dominant Catholic culture and their attempt to keep

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<sup>1</sup> Kamen, 15, 28-29.

Judaic practices alive in secret. These factors influenced the ways in which the Mexican Crypto-Jewish communities of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth were able to implement the Jewish religious tenets of community, circumcision, and prayer. The Roman Catholicism that existed in their everyday lives also caused Crypto-Jews to adopt many Roman Catholic theological doctrines into their practice of Crypto-Judaism.

As the Inquisitors began to try *conversos* as heretics, a new set of powerful, societal disruptions came to light. The gendered practices of the Crypto-Jews were comprised of a combination of Jewish, Roman Catholic, and gendered ideals that existed in the early modern period. The study of Crypto-Jewish gender identity stemmed from the disorder that the Holy Office of the Inquisition simultaneously created and discovered. The reconstruction of Crypto-Jewish gender identity is important to the scholarship that analyses Crypto-Jewish identity as a whole.

Racial identity was a Spanish concept that developed under the influence of the *limpieza de sangre* system during the same period that the Carvajals and Manuel de Lucena were tried. By the time of Margarita and Antonia's trials a half century later, caste was a firm concept in Spanish culture. The Spanish colonial development of race and caste was directly influenced by the existence of Jews in Spain and cannot be separated from them. The records of the Carvajals, Manuel, Antonia, and Margarita are particularly well-suited to understanding the development of race and caste because of their placement in time and because of their identity as Crypto-Jews.

The Mexican Crypto-Jewish communities of the sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries are important to the study of Crypto-Jews in the Inquisition. Their identities are worth excavating from the Inquisition trial documents and records that Luis de Carvajal

was able to write. The translation of these documents and the analysis of their content forms an original contribution to our understanding of Crypto-Judaism in a unique time and place.

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