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Delgado, Karem Lissette

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
IRVINE

Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
The Carvajal Women and Other CryptoJews
In Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Mexico

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Spanish Literature

by

Karem Lissette Delgado

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Jacobo Sefamí, Chair
Distinguished Professor Emeritus, UCLA Teófilo Ruiz,
Professor Viviane Mahieux

2022

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DEDICATION

To

My parents who love to say the Shema

in recognition of their worth

Shema Israel

Adonai Eloheinu

Adonai Echad

Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuto

Leolam Vaed

(Jewish Prayer)

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I would also like to thank my committee members, Distinguished Professor Teófilo Ruiz and Professor Vivianne Mahieux. I will be forever indebted to professor Ruiz, for his never-ending support. Thanks to his letter of recommendation, I received an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Institute in Spanish Paleography Fellowship that enabled me to read the sixteenth century Inquisition documents I have used for my dissertation. In addition, Professor Ruiz was instrumental in preparing for doctoral exams. For his humbleness, generosity, wisdom and guidance, I will be forever indebted, especially for taking the time to help me in my dissertation even while he was away in Italy. I would like to also thank Professor Mahieux for being on the committee and helping me edit—even while she was on Sabbatical and on vacation. She holds a special place in my heart for being one of my first professors at UCI. I would like to thank her for being such a dedicated professor. Thanks to her dedication and wisdom, I learned how to present a paper more effectively.

But most importantly, I would like to thank my parents Marlene and Alberto, my sister Mitzy, and my brothers Jeremy and Gustavo, and my niece Gabrielle and nephew Jeremy, because without their support all these years in college—both as an undergraduate and graduate—I would not have been able to reach my doctorate goal. For their unending support, love, friendship, and inspiration, I will never be able to thank them enough. And to my friends Marlyn, Blanca, Jeanny, Linda, Gil, Ale, Jeanie and many others along the way like Martha Torres and David Fuchs, through whom I met professor Teófilo Ruiz, I will be forever grateful. Thank you for coming to my dissertation exam—I will never forget your support! And a big thank you to Linda Truong Le and Courtney Cathleen Hemenway. Thanks to their support, I was able to complete all the necessary requirements and filing process. It is thanks to the support of my family, friends and administrative assistants in the Spanish Department that I finished my program. Thank you both so much!

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Karem Lissette Delgado

EDUCATION

2002 B.A. in Spanish and Portuguese, University of California, Los Angeles

2014 M.A. in Spanish and Portuguese, University of California, Riverside

2022 Ph.D. in Spanish, University of California, Irvine

HONORS AND AWARDS

2021 Chancellor's Club Fund for Excellence Fellowship

2021 Schaeffer Graduate Fellowship

2021 Graduate Division Completion Award Fellow

2020 National Podcasting Institute at the National Humanities Center Summer Fellow

2020 UCI DTEI Summer Pedagogical Fellow

2020 UCI Humanities Out There Summer Fellow

2019 Teller Chair in Jewish History Dissertation Research Summer Award

2018 UCI Center for Jewish Studies Grant

2018 UC Mexus Grant

2018 The Humanities Commons Research Grant

2017 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Institute in Spanish Paleography Fellowship

2017 GAANN (Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need) Program Fellow at UCI

2016 Summer Language Study Award for the Hebrew Language School at Middlebury College

2015 Regents Fellowship Award at UC Irvine

PUBLICATIONS

Delgado, Karem. *Sephardic Horizons Journal*, 11, no. 1 (2021). <https://www.sephardichorizons.org/Volume11/Issue1/Delgado.html>.

Delgado, Karem. "Juan Gelman: "la batalla"." *Hispan mica*, 147 (2020): 119-122.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Latin American Literature

Gender Studies

Mexican Studies

Early Modern Mexican History

Transatlantic Studies

Latin American Studies

Spanish and Latin American Jewish Literature Medieval and Early Modern Spanish Literature

PAPERS PRESENTED AT CONFERENCES

"*The Jewish Erotic Turn in Gloria Gervitz' Migraciones: Subversion or Affirmation?*". LAJSA XIX International Research Conference of the Latin American Jewish Studies Association. Virtual, June 29, 2021.

"Inclusi n y subversi n del juda smo y del cristianismo en Migraciones de Gloria Gervitz". University of California (UC) Mexicanistas Conference. University of California, Irvine, May 4, 2019.

"Clowning Around with Judaism: Inclusion and subversion in Gloria Gervitz' Migraciones". PAMLA (Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association). San Diego. November 16, 2019.

COURSES TAUGHT

Elementary Spanish Language Courses levels 1A, 1B, and 1C (University of California, Riverside, University of California, Irvine)

Intermediate Spanish Language Courses 2A and 2C (UCI) (University of California, Irvine)

Advanced Heritage Learners Spanish Language Course 3H (UCI) (University of California, Irvine)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Served as a member of UCI's Humanities Center Graduate Liaison Network. I help create new activities and centers on campus to benefit Humanities Graduate students academically and ethically, by offering volunteer and internship opportunities with the local community. I also served on the DECADE Council as a student representative for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

Served minority, underrepresented groups, women, and first generation students for the UCI initiative called DECADE (Diverse Educational Community And Doctoral Experience) as a

panelist for undergraduate students in Know-How-Sessions. I shared my experience with applying to Graduate schools and navigating the application process.

Gave a workshop about Task Based Language Learning for German high school and college teachers at the University of California Language Department for UC German Day.

Helped organize the Jewish Presence in Mexico Conference and the UC Mexicanistas Conference at UCI.

Helped lead the Spanish Film Forum at UCI Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Course Design Certificate Program (CTEI, UCI)

Heritage Learners Practicum (Department of Spanish and Portuguese, UCI)

Activate to Captivate (Graduate Division, UCI)

Introduction to Teaching with CANVAS (Graduate Division, UCI)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

I worked with the Orange County Environmental Justice Organization to inform, educate, and advocate for the Hispanic community of Orange County who are most affected by environmental injustices in Orange County.

LANGUAGES

Native in Spanish

Fluent in English

Proficient in French

Elementary in Hebrew

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
The Carvajal Women and Other CryptoJews
In Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Mexico
by
Karem Lissette Delgado

Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish
University of California, Irvine, 2022
Professor Jacobo Sefamí, Chair

This dissertation focuses on the Inquisition trials of cryptoJews in New Spain. In 1589, Francisca de Carvajal, her son Luis and daughters Catalina, Leonor and Ysabel, were arrested in Mexico City for keeping Jewish traditions. On Sunday, December 8, 1596, they were burnt at the stake in the city market. Francisca de Carvajal was a descendant of Portuguese Jews that converted to Christianity in 1496.

While it is true that convert identities were diverse, I claim that Francisca, her family and friends were cryptoJewish (secretly Jewish) because they passed on a Jewish memory. In the medieval period, this was done through liturgy (prayers, songs and texts) and rituals (holidays and extra fast days). By examining the minutes of the hearings, and the comments of the inquisitors on the margins, the confessions of converts and accusations of their friends and

family, I study with great detail the cultural and identity features of this persecuted minority group in New Spain.

Chapter one examines the Jewish holidays of the Sabbath, Passover, and Yom Kippur that conversos (converts) observed, and the extra fast days they also identified as Jewish. Examples of the liturgy include Luis' cryptoJewish siddur (prayerbook) based on Jewish texts extracted from a Christian Bible, and Leonor's recital of the Song of Moses before inquisitors. Chapter two looks at the abstention from pork and pork products (when possible), food preparation for the Sabbath, and knowledge of ritual slaughter as cryptoJewish identifiers. For example, Francisca defatted and bled her meat. Chapter three analyzes the secret languages, prayers, texts, and songs that Francisca, her family and friends used as part of their liturgy. While some of the prayers and songs were Sephardic in origin, others were cryptoJewish renditions composed by Luis de Carvajal, appropriated from Christian texts. Chapter four identifies the moment conversos learned about their secretly Jewish identity and began to receive instruction as their Bar/Bat Mitzvah event (which differed greatly from the celebration in normative Judaism). They not only waited—for example—for the Messiah but believed that the Messiah would come and free them from their captivity in the lands of idolatry. In conclusion, this dissertation argues that conversos preserved some Jewish liturgy and rituals, created new ones, and utilized Christian sources for a true cryptoJewish experience.

Introduction

“In the city of Mexico Sunday eight days of the month of December of one thousand and five-hundred and ninety six years while at the Plaza Mayor of the city in regards to the cases of the town hall making and officiating a public auto-da-fé a lawsuit and sentence was read against doña Leonor de Carabajal... she is ordered to be given over to the secular justice and arm for recurrence... and condemn her to be taken throughout the public streets of this city, a rider on a beast of burden and with the voice of the town crier to manifest her crime be taken to San Ypolito’s Street Market and in the part and place that is assigned for this be given garrote until she dies naturally and later be burned in living flames, until she turn into ashes and of her may there be no memory” (my translation).¹

¹ All translations in this dissertation are mine, unless indicated in the text. “en la ciudad de mexico domingo ocho dias del mes de diçiembre de mill y quinientos y noventa y seis años estando en la plaza mayor della e^ los casos del cabildo haçiendose y çelebrandose auto publico de la fe...fue leyda una causa y sentençia contra doña leonor de carabajal...se manda relajar a la justiçia y braço seglar por relapsa...y condeno a q^ sea llebada por las calles publicas desta ciudad, caballera en una bestia de albarda y con voz de pregonero que manifieste su delicto sea llebada al tianguez de san ypolito y en la parte y lugar que para esto esta señalado se le de garrote hasta que muera naturalmente y luego sea quemada en vibas llamas de fuego, hasta que se convierta en çeniça y della no haia ni quede memoria”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 318.

The Story

The first Jews to arrive to New Amsterdam (present-day New York) in 1654, were Sephardic (Spanish and Portuguese) Jews. But there are earlier arrivals, if we consider the secretly Jewish community of New Spain (present-day Mexico). Here's a case study about a member of this cryptoJewish community that is not very well known. Her name was Francisca de Carvajal. In 1589, she was arrested in Mexico City for keeping Jewish traditions. After many months of torture in the secret jails of the Inquisition (the policing arm of the Catholic Church), Francisca confessed, repented and was released a year later, but arrested again in 1595 for the same charge. This time she was convicted in the Plaza Mayor (Main Square) at a public hearing known as an auto-de-fe.² She was burnt at the stake at the city market, in a place set aside for this purpose, on Sunday, December 8, 1596, along with her son Luis and daughters Leonor, Ysabel and Catalina.³ At another auto-de-fe in 1601, Mariana was burnt at the stake.⁴ And on April 11, 1649, more than fifty years after the first members of her family were sentenced to

² I will follow scholar Renée Levine Melammed's definition of judaizing as: "faithfulness to Judaism". Renée Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 6.

³ "Luis de Carvajal the Younger died around seven o'clock in the evening of Saturday, December 8, 1596. He was thirty years and a few months old. His mother and his sisters Isabel and Catalina preceded him in death, and his sister Leonor followed him." Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal. A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 253.

⁴ "On March 25, 1601, four and a half years after the holocaust that consumed her mother, brother, and three sisters, Doña Mariana Núñez de Carvajal followed them to the stake." Ibid, 259.

death, Ana de Carvajal, the youngest of the Carvajal family, was burnt at the stake in the so-called Great Auto-da-fé.⁵

While we know that since the Mexican Revolution, Mexico has reevaluated its past and admitted many injustices against its indigenous populations, not many people know about conversos (converts) and what the Inquisition did to them. Francisca de Carvajal was one of many descendants of Portuguese Jews that converted to Christianity in 1496. Unlike the Spanish expulsion in 1492, the Portuguese Jewish community was not given the choice to leave Portugal, but were forced to convert. Many of these new converts like Francisca and her family, traveled to the Americas. Mexican painter Diego Rivera (1886-1957) depicted two individuals at the stake in his “The History of Mexico” mural (1935) painted on the walls of the National Palace of Mexico City. On the left-hand side of the stairwell of the National Palace, Rivera depicted a man and a woman tied to wooden stakes, next to flames of fire. They were Luis on the left and one of Francisca’s daughters (possibly Ysabel or Leonor on the right). Diego Rivera included them in his “History of Mexico” mural, because he himself was a descendant of the Carvajal family.⁶

⁵ “As a result of such testimony, Justa Méndez Núñez was posthumously charged with a relapse into heresy and was condignly sentenced to be relaxed in effigy. The sentence was executed on April 11, 1649, at the end of the so-called Great Auto-da-fé, where over a hundred prisoners were involved and fifty-seven were sentenced to relaxation in effigy...Luis’s sister Ana, now a dowager of close to seventy, was also among the victims of this auto-da-fé”. Ibib, 267.

⁶ “En 1936, Diego Rivera (quien decía descender de judíos conversos portugueses) ilustra la edición de los poemas de Berliner titulada Shtot Fun Palatzn (La ciudad de los palacios), dedicados a ciertos recorridos por los barrios bajos de la ciudad de México (Tepito es uno de ellos)”. (In 1936 Diego Rivera (who said he descended from Portuguese converso Jews) illustrates the edition of Berliner’s poem’s titled Shtot Fun Palatzn (The City of Palaces), dedicated to some visits to the poor neighborhoods in the City of Mexico (Tepito is one of them). Jacobo Sefamí and Matthias Lehmann, “XIV La experiencia judía en México: apuntes introductorios”, *iMex Revista*, 7, no. 14 (2018):10-11, accessed 14 december 2022, https://www.imex-revista.com/wp-content/uploads/0_JS_ML_Editorial_iMex14.pdf.

The Rivera family, particularly the Rivera sisters, were other converts who have been studied at length by Silvia Hamui Sutton.⁷

Existing Scholarship

Some scholars argue that converts like Francisca and her family genuinely converted to Christianity and were falsely accused of practicing Jewish traditions.⁸ Others maintain that converts were religious hybrids that incorporated both Christian and Jewish customs.⁹ Still others suggest that they were in disconformity with both religions.¹⁰ A last group affirms that converts remained secretly Jewish.¹¹ The reality is that all the expressed views are correct, for

⁷ Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitorial de las Rivera: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010).

⁸ See Benzion Netanyahu, *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain* (New York: Random House, 1995).

⁹ See Gretchen D. Starr-Le Beau, *Living in the Shadow of the Virgin*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), and Yirmiyahu Yovel, *The Other Within the Marranos Split Identity and Emerging Modernity*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4 and 5, and 78.

¹⁰ In “La ficción marrana”, Ricardo Forster refers to Uriel da Costa as an example of a Portuguese converso who ended up not believing in Christianity nor in Judaism: “He had been born a New Christian in Oporto at the end of the sixteenth century. The continual torture of a religion of resigned suffering was unsustainable. He fled. He returned to the Ancient Law and was, twice, excommunicated. Twice he was reconciled. He was persecuted by his own, and for them, publicly humiliated. At the end, he did not believe in anything”. “Había nacido cristiano nuevo en Oporto en las postrimerías del siglo XVI. La tortura perenne de una religión del sufrimiento resignado le era insostenible. Huyó. <<Retornó>> a la Ley Antigua y fue, en ella, dos veces anatomizado. Dos veces se reconcilió. Fue perseguido por los suyos, y, por ellos, públicamente humillado. Al final, no creía ya en nada.” Ricardo Forster, “La ficción marrana,” in *El judaísmo en Iberoamérica*, ed. Reyes Mate and Ricardo Forster (Madrid: Editorial Trotta S. A., 2007), 246-247.

¹¹ Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain Vol. II from the Fourteenth Century to the Expulsion* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961).

among conversos, there were sincere Christians, those who identified with both Judaism and Christianity, those that became discontent of both religions, and cryptoJews.

My Thesis Question

From a different historiographical position of those scholars that argue that conversos became authentic Christians, discontent of both religions, or that they incorporated both Christian and Jewish customs as part of their hybrid identity, I claim that Francisca, her family and friends were cryptoJewish because they passed on a Jewish memory. In the medieval period, Jewish memory was passed on through liturgy (prayers, songs and texts) and rituals (holidays and extra fast days).¹² Similarly, Portuguese conversos like Francisca preserved a form of Jewish memory, and manifested it through their particular use of language, details, and perspectives on Jewish holidays, extra fast days (not part of normative Judaism), texts, prayers, songs (some of Sephardic origin while others were created by conversos and extracted from Christian sources), and Jewish eating practices. Even though Inquisition trial documents were highly mediated texts where inquisitor secretaries wrote what converts confessed under arrest and under physical as well as psychological torture, I propose that their use of language, details and perspectives exposed their cryptoJewish identities, rationale and beliefs.

Methodological Framework

Data Collection

¹² Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 101.

For my investigation, I collected data from Inquisition trials from four archives: the General Archive of the Nation of Mexico (AGN), the UC Berkeley Bancroft Library Special Collections, National Historical Archive of Spain (AHN), and the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS). Except for loose folios (pages) of Inquisition trial documents, at the AGN in Mexico City, the Inquisition trial documents were mostly available on microfilm. I visited the archive and collected the trials of Francisca de Carvajal and her children's first Inquisition trial documents of 1590, as well as trials of other Portuguese conversos in their community, like Francisco and Ana Vaez.

Using large spools to roll out cartridge covered film, I was permitted to take pictures of each folio using my phone camera. The Bancroft Library sent me the microfiche of Leonor and Ysabel's second Inquisition trials of 1595 through the UC Interlibrary Loan system, where I was able to see the microfiche on special scanner computers and I was able to copy these files onto a USB drive. I travelled to the AHN to look up Inquisition trial documents of other Portuguese conversas—I specifically researched the trials of women—during similar time period of the Carvajal's first and second trials. Unable to take photos, I took notes directly from the Inquisition trial documents of Portuguese conversas like Maria Francisca Henriquez de Fonseca and Blanca Manuel.

Methodological and Critical Framework Analysis

For each Inquisition trial, I analyzed the copies of the minutes of the hearings of the Inquisition, and the comments of the inquisitors on the margins, the confessions of converts and

accusations of their friends and family (who for the most part were also Portuguese converts). Trial documents often included letters. Among the trial documents, letters were the most unmediated, written by and for Portuguese conversos, instead of inquisitors scribes. Like other repressive institutions, the Inquisition was meticulous about its trial process. It all began with an arrest warrant, confiscation of goods warrant, depositions of the accused and witnesses, relaciones or personal life stories, and other correspondence.

But before trials would begin, inquisitors published and declared an Edict of Grace. It included the word grace because supposedly, the Inquisition showed mercy if converts voluntarily accused themselves. It was also a pedagogical tool because though it, inquisitors instructed Christians of Jewish traditions and customs to identify in their converso friends and neighbors. After the edict would expire—the Inquisition would begin to utilize the information they had gathered during the period of grace, and then arrests of conversos would take place, followed by the charge. Some scholarship claim that conversos were never read the charge against them. Notwithstanding, what we do know is that the crime was included in Inquisition trial documents, beginning with the first folio.

Once conversos were arrested, they would be sent to the Inquisition's secret Jails. There, in theory, accused conversos remained secluded from their family and friends that had not been arrested as well as those who had been arrested. However, in praxis, trial documents actually show that conversos readily saw and spoke to other inmates. In the Lima Inquisition, conversos even received visits from friends and servants. Once conversos were arrested, inquisitors would receive voluntary and involuntary testimonies relatives and friends of the accused who were free. Inquisitors also demanded inmates to testify against other inmates, through involuntary

testimonies. If the Inquisition believed the person giving testimony was keeping the ‘truth’ from them, they would send them to the torture chamber. In this way, conversos would sometimes oscillate between giving testimony and going to the torment chamber, or vice versa).

After the accused, their family and friends gave their testimonies, the accused had the opportunity to reply to accusations. Surprisingly, conversos were assigned a lawyer for their trial. However, since they themselves were inquisitors, we can surmise that they did not work for the welfare of the accused, but for the benefit of the Inquisition alone. Still, the Inquisition gave accused conversos the chance to disqualify witnesses with revocations (cancellations), imperfections (tachas) and disqualifications (recussas).¹³ Luis de Carvajal, for instance, revoked the testimony he had given where he had accused many family members and friends of being Jewish. Furthermore, conversos could also revoke their testimony against themselves or others. Or, they could identify a testimony as imperfect because the testimony lacked something. In such a case, the accused may have claimed that a given testimony was untruthful. And finally, a converso may not have wanted to accept the testimony on the grounds that that witness was their mortal enemy. If it was so, that witness’ testimony was unreliable and should have been excluded from their trial.

According to Inquisition protocol, the next step was defense, where the Inquisition would verify if the given witness was indeed the mortal enemy of the accused. Justa Mendez, for instance, denied having any feelings of animosity against the Carvajal family, and instead, spoke

¹³ *Diccionario de Autoridades- Tomo VI (1739)*, “Tacha”, A definition for tacha is: “Falta, nota, ù defecto, que se halla en alguna cosa, y la hace imperfecta”, Accessed on December 19, <https://apps2.rae.es/DA.html>.

Ibid, “Recusar”, A definition for recussas is: “No querer admitir o aceptar alguna cosa”, Accessed on December 19, <https://apps2.rae.es/DA.html>.

of their intimate friendship. After the defense and giving their responses, the accused were read the accusations against them and made to sign. This signature step demonstrated that the Carvajal sisters— Leonor and Ysabel —were literate. In the sixteenth century, only few men could read and write, let alone women. We can thus ascertain that the Carvajal women belonged to the wealthy class of New Spain. To conclude, inquisitors would decide on a verdict and write their final decision. If many converts were condemned (say for example, fifty), the Inquisition would share their decisions in a grand spectacle known as an Auto de Fe. Ana Schaposchnik explains that Autos de fe were mechanisms of control, where, although few in number, had a powerful effect on society, spreading dread of the Inquisition.

My reading:

The Nuances of Language

The Inquisition extracted testimonies from converts, families and friends through voluntary or involuntary means, in order to condemn converts of heresy for following Jewish practices. Yet my reading of Inquisition trial documents analyzes cryptoJewish perseverance in following the Law of Moses despite persecution through the nuances of language, details about Jewish customs and traditions —when, how and why— and the acquisition of a cryptoJewish identity, rationale and beliefs. After investigating the details of what Francisca, her family and friends testified in their Inquisition trials and looking at the wording they used, I identified markers of a secretly Jewish identity in specific parts of their depositions and dialogues.

For instance, a witness against Francisca and her daughters noticed that they never mentioned Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary, but would always refer to the One G-d. In addition,

while inquisitors called the Law of Moses ‘the dead Law of Moses’, Luis de Carvajal redefined it as ‘the Law that G-d gave Moses’. By omitting the Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, icons of Christianity, and instead, using the term ‘One G-d’ Francisca and her daughters identified as Jewish. Judaism emphasizes the oneness of G-d —as opposed to Christianity that emphasizes the trinity of G-d. Secondly, instead of describing the Law with the adjective dead, Luis inserted G-d as the subject, the Law as his object, and Moses as his indirect object in the sentence. In so doing, Luis elevated the status of the Law of Moses as that which belonged to G-d.

Such nuances of language are subtle indications of cryptoJewish identity, as are the details of Jewish holidays. Although edicts were read aloud to teach Christians about Jewish traditions—so that they could denounce whoever would do them—what convinced me that Francisca, her family and other Portuguese converts really observed Jewish holidays were the details about how, when and why they celebrated them. Francisca and her family celebrated the Jewish holiday of Passover, for instance, around the Christian Holiday of Easter, by eating unleavened bread (matzah) and chicken. They kept the Passover because it was when G-d freed Israel from slavery in Egypt. At first glance, there is nothing alarming about eating chicken. Yet around Easter, Christians do not eat meat. Thus, meat in addition to matzah easily attested to their cryptoJewish identity. Another important detail in the confession was that they knew the reason for the holiday. Anyone could have admitted, under torture, of celebrating the Passover if that is what inquisitors wanted to hear. Likewise, anyone could have accused someone of carrying out a certain Jewish holiday. However, no one could have explained the meaning of the holiday —unless they had learned of its importance previously.

Converts acquired a cryptoJewish identity around puberty; ages eleven through thirteen, just as young boys and girls have a Bar Mitzvah/ Bat Mitzvah at ages thirteen and twelve respectively in normative Judaism. And as for their rationale, we have just seen that Francisca and her family knew the meaning of Jewish holidays, like the Passover. Another example is a conversation between Francisca, her daughters, and Costança Rodriguez. They claimed that, “The Law of Moses was the good Law and the one in which men were to be saved”. Like Luis’ insertion of G-d in the phrase, these cryptoJewish women inserted the adjective ‘good’ in place of the inquisitor’s adjective ‘dead’ to describe the Law of Moses. Furthermore, the use of the word salvation recalls the Christian’s term of salvation. Affirming that the Law of Moses was for men to be saved, countered the Christian belief that argued the Law of Jesus Christ was to save. To conclude, beliefs such as this one opposed Christian beliefs and strengthened the cryptoJewish identity of conversas.

Present-day CryptoJews in the North of Mexico and in New Mexico

Francisca de Carvajal and her family did not come to New Spain alone. Originally from Portugal, they settled in Spain, and came from there as a large group led by then Governor of Nuevo León (the area now known as Monterrey). Of the 100 passengers of the ship, more than 75% were Portuguese, many of whom were relatives and friends of the governor. Only two members of the Carvajal family—Miguel and Balthasar—escaped the Inquisition and fled to Italy, where they joined Sephardic Jewish communities. As for other converts, some of them escaped the Inquisition by fleeing north (present-day New Mexico) when the Carvajal family

began to testify against many of them.

What's Next

Curiously, although they remained Catholic, many— even today—refrain from eating pork (forbidden in the Law of Moses) and they light candles on Friday night (a Sabbath tradition). Converts have clearly left a mark in New Mexican culture. Along these same lines, what of their cryptoJewish memory, traditions, and rationale have converts left in Mexico's Christian society or in Sephardic communities in countries like Italy, Germany, Holland and France founded in large part by Portuguese ex-converts?

The Carvajales and Other Portuguese Conversos

Francisca and her daughters are examples of Portuguese women accused and condemned to death by the Inquisition for being cryptoJewish in Colonial Mexico. And while Michelle Hamilton and Emily Colbert Cairns have written about Leonor more recently, the Carvajal family has been better known for one of its other members.¹⁴ The *Autobiography of Luis de Carvajal el Mozo*, her brother, written between the years 1591 or 1592 and 1594, is the earliest known autobiographical novel written in the New World.¹⁵ Yet, Leonor and her family were not

¹⁴ See Michelle Hamilton, "La poesía de Leonor de Carvajal y la tradición de los criptojudíos en Nueva España", *Sefarad* 60, no. 1 (2000): 75-93, and Emily Colbert Cairns, "Esther among Crypto-Jews and Christians: Queen Esther and the Inquisition Manuscripts of Isabel De Carvajal and Lope De Vega's La Hermosa Ester." *Chasqui* 42, no. 2 (2013): 98-109.

¹⁵ "He began to compose this unusual autobiography around 1591. It was a swift-moving and suspenseful narrative in the third person, in the manner of some fictional memoirs written in Spain." Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal. A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 204.

the only Portuguese conversos to be sentenced to death in Mexico for keeping Jewish traditions. Stanley Hordes explains that, “Between 1589 and 1596 almost two hundred persons were tried for the crime of judaizante. During this period, the most notable and celebrated campaign by the Holy Office was directed toward Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo, his family and associates”.¹⁶

Although Spain annexed Portugal in 1580-1640, the Portuguese continued to be considered immigrants in Spanish Colonial Mexico. José María Ots y Capdequi examines how the Portuguese were viewed by Spain and its colonies: “The Portuguese are as strangers as the subjects of other monarchies. Even during the time in which it was joined politically with Spain, they were as foreign as other subjects of the Spanish Empire that were not native to the Kingdoms of Leon and Castile”.¹⁷ Many Portuguese were targeted by the Inquisition in New Spain. Alicia Gojman de Backal writes that: “The Portuguese judaizers were the target of inquisitors and when they imprisoned them they seldom did it individually, rather they would

¹⁶ Stanley M. Hordes, “The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish Community in Colonial New Spain and New Mexico” in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 208.

¹⁷ “Los portugueses son tan extranjeros como los súbditos de las otras monarquías. Incluso durante el tiempo en que estuvo unida políticamente a España, fueron tan extranjeros como los otros súbditos del imperio español no naturales de los reinos de León y Castilla”. Lucía García de Proodian, *Los judíos en América: sus actividades en los Virreinos de Nueva Castilla y Nueva Granada S. XVII*. (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1966), 43-44.

arrest the entire family and sometimes not only the members of the family but friends of the family that lived in their cities, and they would accuse them of participating in a ‘complicity’”.¹⁸

Vincent Parolee suggests that, ‘complicity’ meant a community of cryptoJews or secret Jews: “But what exactly do we understand by the term “complicity”? In everyday language, the word refers to deliberate involvement in an offense, misdeed or crime committed by another and, by extension, to a deep, spontaneous and often unspoken friendship among a number of individuals... Yet the word “complicity” also ties in with a very precise concept in inquisitorial law, a mixture of common and canonical law. It refers to a group of accomplices who are guilty of a very specific offense—heresy and apostasy— and who must be severely punished by society”.¹⁹ Alicia Gojman de Backal researched Guillen de Lampart, a protestant man who witnessed the severity inquisitors unleashed on conversos accused of complicity.

In 1650, Lampart wrote a formal complaint against the atrocities suffered by some sixty Portuguese converso families he personally met in prison—for he too was incarcerated in the Inquisition’s secret jails.²⁰ In a nineteen page account titled “Querrela contra los Inquisidores”

¹⁸ “Los judaizantes portugueses eran el blanco de los inquisidores y cuando los apresaban casi nunca lo hacían individualmente, sino que toda la familia era aprehendida y a veces no sólo miembros de la misma sino amigos de ella que vivían en una población, a los cuales se les acusaba de participar en una “complicidad”.(Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 13, 15.

¹⁹ Vincent Parello. “Inquisition and Crypto-Judaism: The ‘Complicity’ of the Mora Family of Quintanar de la Orden (1588-1592)” in *The Conversos and Moriscos in late medieval Spain and beyond. Volume One Departures and Change* ed. Kevin Ingram (Boston: Brill, 2009), 188.

²⁰ Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 5, 6, 8, 13, 26.

and addressed to King Phillip IV of Spain, Guillen de Lampart had his complaint delivered to the Viceroy of New Spain. Even though his complaint never reached the King, Lampart documented how inquisitors treated Portuguese conversos with cruelty and unfairness. Lampart expressed that “In addition he was appalled at how they treated these inmates, “they do horrific things—he said— with women, men, they leave them thin and handicapped and take from them their possessions without anyone to defend them without access to appeal the law”.²¹

Martin Cohen emphasizes that, in their first Inquisition trial of 1589, Ysabel was the first to be arrested from her immediate family. “On Monday evening, March 13, 1589, she [referring to Ysabel] had been suddenly arrested by the Inquisition”.²² Professor Gojman de Backal provides statistics on the women to be sentenced at the auto-da-fé of 1596. 68% of the accused were judaizers, of which 16 were women and 16 were youth.²³ Indeed, the Inquisition readily charged women like Leonor, her mother and sisters for keeping the Law of Moses. Yet while Ysabel and her family may have been the aim of the Inquisition for being Portuguese immigrants, they were targeted all the more for being conversos.

²¹ “Además se escandalizó de como éstos trataban a los reos, ‘hacen horrores-decía- con mujeres y hombres, los dejan flacos y desvalidos y los despojan de sus bienes sin nadie que los defienda, sin recurso de ley...’” Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No. 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 29.

²² Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal. A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 7.

²³ Alicia G. Backal, *Raíces criptojudías de Nuevo León, Cuaderno de Investigación No. 6.* (Ciudad de México: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazi de México, 1996), 23.

Although Lampart wrote his complaint in 1650, some fifty years after Leonor, her mother and siblings were incarcerated in the secret jails of the Inquisition, it specifically denounced inquisitors that charged and sentenced Leonor, her mother, and siblings in 1596. One of those inquisitors was Juan Saenz de Mañozca. This Mañozca was present at many of the hearings against Leonor, her mother, siblings and friends, and often signed his name to their trial documents. Lampart accused him of confiscating all the possessions of conversos.

Gojman explains that, although don Guillen de Lampart's "querella" never reached the King of Spain as he would have wished, after he was burnt at the stake at the Auto de Fe of 1659, his trial documents copies were sent to Spain, where denunciations were made against the inquisitors in New Spain. Lampart also accused Alonso de Peralta, whose name also appears in their trial documents as the inquisitor who led many of the hearings of Leonor, her family and friends. His wrongdoings were later extended to all his companions, and included making a business of his position and profiting of it, and denying appeals, as well as having inmates bow when he visited the jail cells: "The Inquisitor Alonso de Peralta was accused and resulted in an accusation extended to all his companions; of him it was said that "he hired like he was a merchant, taking advantage of his position for business; that he denied appeals...and made prisoners bow their knees whenever he visited the jails".²⁴

²⁴ "Al Inquisidor Alonso de Peralta lo acusaron y resultó que esa acusación se extendió a todos sus compañeros; de él se decía que "contrataba como si fuese mercader, valiéndose de su oficio para el negocio; que negaba las apelaciones,...y hacia que los reos se hincasen de rodillas cuando visitaba las cárceles". Alicia Gojman Backal, Cuaderno de investigación No. 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 25.

Origins of Portuguese Conversos

Leonor and her family were Portuguese immigrants that arrived to Mexico, and as we mentioned earlier, were descendants of Portuguese Jews. While in our postmodern age, we may think that these coercive conversions were not binding, in the early modern period, conversions by force were definitive. Renée Levine Melammed explains that: “Baptism was an irrevocable act, and even conversions by force were binding; the possibility of permitting so many newly baptized individuals to revert to their former religion was unthinkable, for it would make a mockery of the Catholic Church and its dogma”.²⁵

To further explain the peculiarity of the Portuguese Jewish community that converted in mass, Melammed uses the words of another scholar. Josef Haim Yerushalmi proposed that: “Apart from its social consequences, the simultaneous conversion in Portugal of the entire Jewry of the land must have had an equally profound impact on the self-image of the converts...Here conversion was normative for the entire Jewish group. This was now “Jewry”; there was no other. It is that very corporate nature of conversion in Portugal which invested the New Christians with the solidarity of having shared a common destiny from the very outset. To a degree not paralleled by the Spanish New Christians, those of Portugal possessed a genuinely historical group character of which even Portuguese state and society showed an instinctive awareness”.²⁶

²⁵ Renée Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4.

²⁶ Renée Levine Melammed, *A Question of Identity Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective*, (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 62.

Perhaps it was due to this cohesiveness that Leonor's uncle, Luis de Carvajal the Elder went to Spain to look for his Portuguese converso family and friends to move to New Spain and settle the lands he was to oversee as Governor²⁷. Alicia Gorman de Backal expounds that, "The group that arrived with the Governor Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva was above all of Portuguese origin, in other words, they had strong roots in Jewish orthodoxy. Of the 100 passengers of the ship, a percentage greater than 75% were of this origin. Among them was his sister, his brother-in-law Rodríguez de Matos, and all of his children among who was Luis de Carvajal the Younger".²⁸

For their solidarity, many Portuguese conversos that lived in Mexico were continuously suspected of judaizing. Melammed discloses that: "Every converso and conversa was a potential judaizer, or believer in the Law of Moses. While observance of Judaism (by a Jew) is not heresy in the eyes of the Catholic Church, observance of Jewish traditions, rites, or beliefs is heretical if practiced by the baptized. The New Christian would be most apt to judaize and apostasize, for the mere presence of Jewish blood in that individual was seen as creating a

²⁷ Regarding the lands he was to oversee as Governor, scholar Samuel Temkin explains that "el último día de mayo de 1579, Felipe II otorgó en Toledo una capitulación referente a las Indias¹ —la penúltima de su reinado— a un hombre llamado Luis de Carvajal de la Cueva... Por medio de esa capitulación, el Rey le cedía un territorio de enormes proporciones, llamado el Nuevo Reino de León, que hoy cubriría gran parte de varios estados de la República Mexicana y de dos estados de la Unión Americana". Samuel Temkin, "Miguel Núñez, sponsor of the colonization of Nuevo Reino de León", *Signos Históricos*, xxi, no. 42 (2019): 10.

²⁸ El grupo que llegó con el Gobernador Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva era sobre todo de origen portugués, es decir, tenían muy arraigada la ortodoxia judía. De los 100 pasajeros de su nave un porcentaje mayor al 75% era de este origen. Entre ellos se encontraba su hermana, su cuñado Rodríguez de Matos y todos sus hijos entre ellos Luis de Carvajal El Mozo" Alicia G. Backal, *Raíces criptojudías de Nuevo León, Cuaderno de Investigación No. 6*. (Ciudad de México: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazi de México, 1996), 18.

proclivity to undermine the Church and its dogma”²⁹. Although Melammed referred to Spanish conversos, Portuguese conversos were also seen as potential judaizers—and for their unique nature of forced collective conversion, even more so.

No one was exempt from scrutiny. Despite that she was the niece of the governor of Nuevo León, Leonor de Carvajal was charged with following the Law of Moses. Henry Tobias explains that Leonor’s uncle—Luis de Carvajal the Elder—was, “A conquistador and colonizer, Carvajal became governor of an enormous tract called Nuevo León centered around present-day Monterrey and stretching from Tampico to the vicinity of present-day San Antonio. Having created this sub empire, Carvajal invited his extended family to join him. The terms of his contract with the crown did not require the customary proof of Old Christian lineage”.³⁰

We can imagine that a wealthy and powerful governor who was a Portuguese New Christian may have acquired enemies who wanted his demise because of his Jewish lineage, Portuguese origin, but also for his political position. Martin Cohen explains that Governor Carvajal quarreled with the Viceroy concerning the jurisdiction of some lands. Governor Carvajal took the matter to court and won “full possession of the lands in question” in 1582.³¹ Nevertheless, the next viceroy, Don Álvaro Manrique de Zúñiga, “determined to wrest Governor Carvajal from his position. To that end he decided to find Carvajal’s Achille’s tendon. He managed to enlist the aid of a Franciscan friar from the region of Huasteca. The priest was part

²⁹ Renée Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7.

³⁰ Henry J. Tobias, *A History of the Jews in New Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 14.

³¹ Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal. A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 110.

of the governor's entourage and hence in a position to find out sensitive information. Apparently because he was aware of the suspicious activities of some of the governor's relatives in New Spain, the priest began to doubt his story about his ancestry...early in 1589...the viceroy ordered Carvajal's arrest".³²

While motivated by political reasons, the viceroy utilized Governor Carvajal's Jewish lineage to imprison him. We can thus assume that Leonor, her mother, sisters and brother were subsequently arrested precisely because they were the governor's family. As mentioned earlier, in their first trial of 1589, Ysabel de Carvajal was sent to the Inquisition's secret jails on March 13. On May 9, Francisca and Luis de Carvajal the Younger were taken to the Inquisition's secret jails.³³ Leonor and Catalina were arrested on December 4.³⁴ Mariana was imprisoned on December 12, and because Anica was young, she was only called in for questioning on January 19, 1590.

Governor Carvajal indeed held a position of wealth and honor in New Spain, but there were many Portuguese conversos who were also targets of the Inquisition for their economic status. Protestant Guillen de Lampart, who shared the secret jail of the Inquisition with Portuguese conversos, included details of the Portuguese converso community of New Spain. Through Guillen de Lampart's complaint, we learn that nearly all of the Portuguese conversos

³² Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal. A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 110.

³³ *Ibid*, 146, 148.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 171.

were international merchants, involved in international trade.³⁵ Alicia Gojman de Backal explains that those who were “Portuguese sea merchants generally belonged to the new merchant class, Christians from Lisbon whose Jewish families, in past generations, had been forced to convert. They readily maintained good relations with the Jewish community of Amsterdam, whose members were Portuguese exiles”.³⁶ In addition to commercial trade, some “dedicated themselves to retail, that often times, as we have commented, was managed by their wives. Their development in just a few years was astonishing and their economic capacity was very strong...don Guillen insists that by capturing all of those families meant the ruin of New Spain, since the commerce of the city was in their hands, many people were left unemployed and many stores were closed and people could not acquire indispensable products for daily life”.³⁷

The “corporate nature of conversion” of Portuguese conversos that Yerushalmi pointed out, and their resulting New Christian solidarity, may have been the secret to their strong economic capacity as merchants. And yet, their cohesiveness also had a disadvantage. Many witnesses accused the Carvajals of keeping Jewish traditions, including members of her own family, friends and maidservants. Friends of the Carvajal family, for instance, knew them well enough to provide detailed accusations. Many of these witnesses were themselves Portuguese conversos on trial for judaizing. The incentive of a lighter sentence may have prompted witnesses to testify against Leonor, her mother, and siblings. Another motivator was pain. While

³⁵ Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 13.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 12-13.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 19.

at the torment chamber, these conversos—both witnesses and prisoners—may have betrayed the Carvajals and informed against them either to escape torture, or to make the suffering cease. Whatever the motive, the truth of these accusations against conversos in general has been discussed at length by scholarship.

As we have previously seen, some scholars argue that Christians falsely accused conversos of judaizing even though they genuinely converted to Christianity. Other investigators maintain that conversos were religious hybrids that incorporated Christian customs alongside their Jewish traditions. In that case, the accusations could be true, but would not mean they remained faithful to Judaism, for they also practiced Christianity. Another group of researchers suggest conversos were cryptoJews who maintained Jewish practices and traditions. If that were true, then conversos would have judaized. Even other scholars maintain that some conversos were in disconformity with Christianity and Judaism. As such, they would not have carried out Jewish traditions.

Given the plurality of identities, it would be hard to ascertain whether the accusations against Portuguese converts were true or false, considering the xenophobia against Portuguese immigrants in Colonial Mexico, and the motivation of imprisoned conversos to assist the Inquisition and ameliorate their sentence. Were the accusations against Leonor, her family, and friends true? Were they cryptoJewish? As we examine Inquisition trial documents, we should remember the nature of testimonies, and in the words of Silvia Hamui Sutton, analyze what is “Hidden behind each word, that has to do with the intention of he/she who expresses it, and the

meaning that it acquires according to the context in which it is inserted”.³⁸ As I have claimed earlier, I contend that their particular language (or the way in which they expressed or explained Jewish customs with specific words) and perspectives on Jewish holidays, eating practices, texts, prayers, and songs, exposed the cryptoJewish identities and rationales of Leonor, some of her family members, and friends. But before we examine cryptoJewish holidays and religious observances of Portuguese conversos in Colonial Mexico, we should first want to know more about Inquisition trial documents.

³⁸ Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitorial de las Rivera: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 11.

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Trial Documents Content

Known as procesos, Inquisition trial documents included warrants of arrest, hearings, depositions, relaciones or written testimonies, memoirs, writings, letters and other correspondence³⁹. Luis de Carvajal for instance, was given paper and ink in his cell to write about what he remembered about others. He also wrote letters to his mother Francisca and his sisters Ysabel and Leonor. The inquisitor notary wrote: “and upon exiting the torment chamber the mentioned Luis de Caravajal asked for a sheet of paper to write what he could remember and ink and pen and so he gave him as ordered by the mentioned sirs inquisitors marked by me the mentioned secretary and given the message to write it happened before me Pedro de Manozca secretary”⁴⁰.

³⁹ I include quotes extracted from paleography from the actual trial documents of Francisca, Leonor, Ysabel, Catalina, and Mariana. I use the original manuscripts, including the abbreviations used in the exact writing, for both Spanish, Portuguese, Latin and transliterated Hebrew, and I translate them into English. Since manuscripts consist of variants in spelling of names, I include them as well. For this reason, instead of using Isabel, I use the term Ysabel, and Susana Galban is sometimes Galvan, and Carvajal is at times Caravajal or Carbajal. In addition, since capital letters were used at random and not as they are today, I only use lowercase letters in my quotations so as not to distract the reading of the text.

⁴⁰ “y al salir de la camara del tormento el dh^o luis de caravajal pidio un pliego de papel para escribir lo que se le acordare y tinta y pluma y assi se le dio por manda de los dh^os señores inquisidores rubricado de mi el dh^o secretario y recaudo de escribir passo ante mi pedro de manozca secret^o”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 86.

Leonor gave the jail warden Gaspar de los Reyes a letter she wrote to Luis as well.⁴¹ Gaspar de los Reyes testified that, “~and he said that having been ordered by the Lords inquisitors to take two papers of four that he exhibited on Wednesday twenty and four of this present month and he given them the order that was demanded of the mentioned doña Leonor who in response to them with craftiness and carelessly gave him two papers.⁴² Besides letters written in jail among prisoners like Leonor and Luis, trial documents also included letters from abroad. Away on business in Spain and unaware that his wife Leonor de Carvajal was in prison, Jorge de Almeyda wrote her a letter, that was included in Leonor’s trial documents. We can be sure that it was written by Almeyda himself because it was written with a different penmanship than the other pages written by inquisitors, and the writing matched Jorge d’Almeyda’s signature at the end of the letter.

Delivered to the prison’s doorman and secretary Pedro de Fonseca by a young boy that did not give his name, the letter informs us that Leonor had planned to join her husband in Castile. She was to leave on a ship during the month of September in 1595. Almeyda writes: “I received a letter with another one from Luis de Carvajal and some papers the 24th of June I see through it that you are determined to come to Castile on a fleet that is over there and is to come to Castile

⁴¹ Another example is the comment made on the margins of Leonor de Carvajal’s trial document, that says: “e^bio con este a su her^no dos papeles cubiertos”, referring to the alcaide or jail warden Gaspar de los Reyes, how he informed inquisitors of the letters that Leonor wrote to her brother Luis and how she asked the warden to give Luis two sheets of paper. Ibid, folio 41.

⁴² Gaspar de los Reyes testified that, “~ y dixo que habiendole mandado los señores inquisidores llebar dos papeles de quatro que exhibio el miercoles v^te y quatro de este presente mes y el dadolos la orden q^ se le mando a la dh^a doña leonor la qual en respuesta de ellos con disimulaçion y al descuido le dio dos papeles”. Ibid, folio 41.

around September of this year 95”.⁴³ Almeyda wrote to dissuade his wife Leonor from getting on a ship and joining him in Spain. On the one hand, he warned Leonor of boarding and later not have money to pay for her fare, and on the other, he argued that respectable women did not travel by ship: “and one room for you and your people to be secluded and in effect, not be able to pay for the same reason do not come because it is not fitting for honest women to come on ships with its seclusion”.⁴⁴

As her husband, Jorge de Almeyda would have known that Leonor did not have funds to cover traveling expenses—perhaps he had not sent her any money for some time. Nevertheless, Almeyda also knew that Leonor was a learned woman, who could read and write. As part of high society, she was too respectable to travel by ship, secluded with all her family in a single room. Nevertheless, despite Almeyda’s advice, Leonor was determined to join him in Castile. If not for the fact that she was taken prisoner for the second time by the Inquisition on May 17, 1595, Leonor would have probably joined him in Spain. Her arrest was made manifest in the following document: “in the city of Mexico Wednesday seventeen days of the month of May of one thousand five hundred and ninety five years I Pedro Fonseca notary of the secrets of the Holy Office of the Inquisition of this New Spain as commanded by the lords inquisitors doctor Lobo Guerrero and after the arrival of don Alonso de Peralta I went to arrest doña Leonor de

⁴³ “resebi una carta con otra de luis de caravajal y unos papeles a 24 de junio veo por ella estar des determinada de venir vos a castilla en la flota que esta alla y a de venir a castilla por setiembre deste ano de 95”. Ibid, folio 158.

⁴⁴ “y una camara a que vengais recogida vos y vra jente y en defeto de no tener con que poder pagalla por el mismo caso no vengais porque no conviene a mugeres honrradas venir en navios con su recogimy^to”. Ibid, folio 158.

Carabajal wife of Jorge de Almeyda and neighbor of Mexico and I brought her as prisoner to the secret jails of this Holy Office”.⁴⁵

Most of the text of Inquisition trials were written by Inquisition scribes, notary publics and secretaries, like this document written by secretary Pedro de Fonseca. Few trial documents included the actual writing of conversos—as is the case with Jorge de Almeyda, Luis’ letters to his mother and sisters, and Leonor de Carvajal’s letters to Luis. As such, the writings of Inquisition trials were highly mediated, for they were not word for word transcriptions of what conversos, their relatives, friends and acquaintances testified, but what the scribes wrote—that included their interpretations. In addition to this second layer of mediation, inquisitors added important information and comments on the margins, and words were underlined to emphasize importance. Silvia Hamui Sutton emphasizes the different layers of inquisitor readings and comments written on the margin when she writes that “The information that is inscribed in the margins is necessary for inquisitors or any other reader to easily identify the document among other archives...the inclusion of later references, although during the same period of repression, makes us see that the testimony has been penetrated by another gaze, another authority that

⁴⁵ “en la ciudad de mexico miercoles diez y siete dias del mes de mayo de mill y quis y noventa y cinco años yo pedro de fonseca notario de los secretos del sancto officio de la ynquision desta nueva españa por mandado de los señores yquí^res doctor lobo guerrero y lle^do don alonso de peralta fui a prender a doña leonor de carabajal mujer de jorge de almeyda y vecina de mexico y la truxe presa a las carceles secreptas del dicho sancto off^o”. Ibid, folio 3.

ratifies and approves the narration, that condenses the relevant points according to the dominant ideology, fragmenting the narrative”.⁴⁶

For example, in Leonor de Carvajal’s trial documents, margins include the age of the witnesses, the Jewish traditions Leonor and her family were accused of keeping, specific names of those that carried out these activities, or were in a certain home on a certain date, and specificities of the depositions. Let us take, for instance, her first hearing. On the margin, the title “First Hearing” is written in the margin. Next to the first paragraph that mentions the date, the name of the inquisitor, and the oath to tell the truth—the document does not reveal her name yet—the comment on the margin reads “Oath”. When Leonor is asked her name, where she is from, her age, her profession, and the name of her parents, the margin reads: “age XXI years”.⁴⁷

In such a way, the margins included important information disclosed in the body of the document. Other information included were the Jewish traditions Leonor and her family were accused of keeping, specific names of those that carried out these activities, the places where these traditions were observed, and specificities of the depositions. In addition, comments like, ‘this declaration was taken from Luis de Carvajal’s trial documents’ written on the margin let

⁴⁶ “La información que se inscribe en los márgenes es necesaria para que los inquisidores o cualquier otro lector identifiquen fácilmente el documento de entre los demás archivos...La inclusión de referencias posteriores, aunque en la misma época de represión, nos hace ver que el testimonio ha atravesado por otra mirada, otra autoridad que ratifica y aprueba la narración, que condensa los puntos relevantes según la ideología dominante, fragmentado el discurso”. Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitoriales de las Riveras: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 31.

⁴⁷ “Pr^a Au^a”; “juram^{to}”; “hedad XXI as^o”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 117.

inquisitors know that this declaration was originally from Luis de Carvajal's trial document, but was included as evidence against Leonor de Carvajal in her trial documents. Yosef Kaplan warns of "how careful one must be in drawing conclusions about the behavior and motives of New Christians and Marranos only from examination of Inquisition dossiers is liable to prove insufficient, because new details from other sources can always appear and change the picture".⁴⁸

Indeed, Silvia Hamui Sutton echoes Kaplan's critique. She calls to our attention that Inquisition dossiers are full of doubts and distrust: "As much as the recuperation of the past through written testimonies, as the search for explanations imposed, are impregnated with distrust, with doubts, with muted holes of what was not said, shadows that accompany the words, but in trying to provoke them, give birth to a *construct* of a truth that partially explains the past and the present".⁴⁹ As extensive as the trial documents are, I recognize the limitations of this corpus of literature that was mediated by inquisition secretaries and notary publics, who wrote what conversos said under psychological and physical duress. Notwithstanding, there will never be enough of the 'right' kind of texts about a historical figure because all references about historical characters are subjective, as are all sources on any topic. For some historical characters like Leonor, her family, and friends, the only known sources available are the trial

⁴⁸ Yosef Kaplan. "Cristóbal Méndez, alias Abraham Franco de Silveyra: The Puzzling Saga of a Seventeenth-Century Converso", in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 22-23.

⁴⁹ "Tanto la recuperación del pasado por medio de testimonios escritos, como la búsqueda de explicaciones impuestas, están impregnadas de desconfianza, de dudas, de huecos mudos de lo no dicho, sombras que acompañan a las palabras, pero que al tratar de provocarlas, engendran un *constructo* de verdad que explican parcialmente el pasado y el presente". Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitorial de las Rivera: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 17.

documents of the Inquisition.⁵⁰ Hamui Sutton also concedes by proposing: “The archive then is there to be read, consulted, interpreted, worked, and to reveal actions that occurred in the past, to rescue the memory of an event”.⁵¹ For this reason, despite its limitations, we can analyze Inquisition documents to identify the cryptoJewish identity of conversos like Leonor, her family, and friends, the Jewish practices—or practices they considered Jewish—and their rationales for carrying out these practices.

⁵⁰ Yosef Kaplan. "Cristóbal Méndez, alias Abraham Franco de Silveyra: The Puzzling Saga of a Seventeenth-Century Converso", in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 22-23.

⁵¹ “El archivo entonces está para ser leído, consultado, interpretado, trabajado, y para revelar los actos que sucedieron en el pasado, para rescatar la memoria de un acontecimiento”. Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitorial de las Rivera: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 19.

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Protocol: Edict of Grace

Before the Inquisition emitted a warrant to arrest conversos and put them on trial, inquisitors would first publicly read and publish an edict of grace—a period of time where people could willingly confess any judaizing activity to the Inquisition. David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson explain that whoever assisted the Inquisition, “would have their willingness to cooperate taken into consideration as the investigation proceeded”.⁵² Henry Kamen specifies that, “If they came forward within the ‘period of grace’—usually thirty to forty days— they would be reconciled to the Church without suffering serious penalties”.⁵³ Kamen adds that after the year 1500, “edicts of grace against judaizers had served their purpose”.⁵⁴

They were replaced by ‘edicts of faith’, which omitted the period of grace and instead invited denunciation of this guilty of a detailed list of offenses”.⁵⁵ During the late sixteenth century in New Spain, the relatives, friends, neighbors and maidservants of the Carvajal family must have heard lists of offenses that consisted of Jewish customs from the same edicts of grace read in Peninsular Spain. As Gitlitz and Davidson delineate, “To aid in the identification of Judaizers, comprehensive lists of Judaizing customs were published. These compilations

⁵² David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 3.

⁵³ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 174.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

advised citizens to be on the lookout for any activities which indicated that *conversos* were continuing to observe the Jewish Sabbath or festivals”.⁵⁶

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Protocol: Arrest, Charge, Secret Jails, Testimonies, and Torture Chamber

The district attorney of the Inquisition in New Spain who oversaw the trials of the Carvajal family and of other converso relatives, friends and acquaintances was Martos de Bohorquez. In Leonor de Carvajal’s trial, he is identified in the first folio (page) of the trial as follows: “~The doctor Martos de Bohorques district attorney of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in the city of Mexico states and provinces of New Spain”.⁵⁷ As a representative of the Inquisition, district attorney Bohorquez formally denounced and filed a complaint against doña Leonor de Carvajal. He brought the following charges against her: “denounce and complain against doña Leonor de Carvajal, daughter of Francisco Rodriguez de Matos Portuguese and doña Francisca de Carvajal reconciled by this Holy Office...and say that by informations that are in the number of the records of this Holy Office that I present documentation that the aforementioned after having been reconciled by this Holy Office has kept the Law of Moses its rituals and ceremonies...

⁵⁶ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 3.

⁵⁷ “~El doctor Martos de bohorques fiscal del s^to off^o de La inq^on de La çuidad de mex^o estados y provinçias de La nueva esp^a”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal.* Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 1.

having fallen in the crime of relapse turned to keep the Law of Moses...and because of this she must be punished”.⁵⁸

Bohorquez called for the Inquisition to her arrest and confiscate all her belongings, and for her to be placed in one of the Inquisition’s secret jails. The inquisitors in turn, granted Bohorquez’ request and promised justice for this case.⁵⁹ The district attorney carried out this same procedure with the rest of the Carvajal family, their relatives, friends and other conversos in New Spain during this same time period. He and other inquisitors personally benefited from the incarceration and condemnation of conversos. Gojman de Backal presents Guillen de Lampart’s complaints against inquisitors. Lampart wrote in his “querella” (complaint) to his Majesty the King of Spain, arguing that inquisitors imprisoned conversos to take their goods and divide the loot: “the cause of the prison had been above all the confiscation of their goods that the inquisitors of New Spain divided amongst themselves”.⁶⁰

For their part, once conversos were arrested, they were advised to confess the “truth” about themselves and others. Historian Henry Kamen expounds on the Inquisition’s strategy to make accused conversos confess: “Instead of accusing the prisoner, the inquisitors approached him

⁵⁸ “denunçió y me querello de doña Leonor de caravajal hija de fran^co Rodriguez de matos portugues y de doña fran^ca de caravajal reconçiliada por este sancto off^o....y digo que por informaçiones que estan en El num^o de los registros de este s^to off^o de que hago presentaçion consta la susdh^a despues de haber sido reconçiliada por este s^to off^o haber guardado la ley de moysen sus ritos y ceremonias...haber caído en el crime^ de la relapsía tornado a guardar la dh^a ley de moysen...y porque debe ser castigada”. Ibid, folio 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, folio 1.

⁶⁰ “la causa de la prisión había sido sobre todo la confiscación de sus bienes que los inquisidores en la Nueva España se repartieron entre sí”. Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 20.

and gave three warnings, over a period of weeks, to search his conscience, confess the truth and trust to the mercy of the tribunal”.⁶¹ Catalina de Carvajal for example, was admonished to tell the truth at one her hearings: “And being present it was said to her if she had remembered something in her negation she should say it and the truth on account of the swearing that she has made...it would be good for her to say the whole truth”.⁶² Even though inquisitors demanded for “the truth”, their real aim was for the accused to testify against themselves and other conversos. Alicia Gojman de Backal reveals that, “inquisitors used known methods like isolation, intimidation, promise to be benevolent if they discovered their accomplices, and lastly, torture”.⁶³

For the purpose of isolating the accused, district attorney Bohorquez requested that Catalina, her mother, sisters and brother live in the secret jails of the Inquisition during the duration of their trial, as was customary for all the accused. And while their imprisonment isolated conversos from the outside world, inside the secret jails, inmates could hear each other and speak to other conversos in neighboring cells. Francisco Rodriguez, witness number eight against Ysabel de Carvajal, reported to inquisitors of a conversation he saw and overheard between Ysabel and someone else, after Ysabel returned to her cell from one of her hearings:

⁶¹ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 193.

⁶² “Y siendo pres[^]te le fue dicho si ha acordado alguna cossa en su neg[^]o la diga y La verdad so cargo del juram[^]to que tiene fecho...Le estaria muy bien dezir entram[^]te La verdad”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 205.

⁶³ “los inquisidores usaban métodos conocidos como el aislamiento, la intimidación, la promesa de ser benévolos si descubrían a sus cómplices y en último término, la tortura”. (Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 15.

“he said that in order to unload his conscience that he saw and heard a certain person speak to doña Ysabel de Andrada Carvajal from a certain part and place that he declares”.⁶⁴ On the margin, an inquisitor wrote that Francisco had seen and heard “from the jail of the mentioned witness”.⁶⁵

Based on this comment, we can assume that from his jail cell, Francisco could see and hear a conversation Ysabel had in her cell. Thus, the cells of the secret jail in New Spain were situated in such a way that prisoners could see and hear neighboring inmates. Moreover, the fact that Francisco could hear and see Ysabel indicated that the Inquisition did not separate male prisoners from female prisoners. Though isolation was a strategy of the Inquisition, Francisco’s testimony reveals that conversos were not very isolated at all, but communicated through the walls of the secret jails. Alicia Gojman Backal points out that, according to Guillen de Lampart’s account, conversos accused of judaizing and held under arrest in the secret jails of the Inquisition communicated with each other through knocks on the walls where each knock signified a letter of the alphabet: “These communicated with each other through the walls of the jail with certain

⁶⁴ “dijo que por descargo de su conciencia que vio y oyo a cierta persona hablar con doña ysabel de andrada caravajal desde cierta parte y lugar q^ declare” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 252.

⁶⁵ “desde su carcel del dicho testigo”. Ibid, folio 252.

strikes that each one of them signified a letter of the alphabet. Guillen deciphered and understood perfectly what some were advising to others”.⁶⁶

Conversos not only advised each other, but also testified against one another, as part of the Inquisition’s methodology we discussed earlier. The trial document’s opening pages contained the names of all the witnesses who testified against a given converso on trial. For instance, the following witnesses testified against Leonor de Carvajal: Susana Galban, Luçia Chichimeca, Anna de la Cruz, Justa Mendez, Luis de Caravajal, doña Françisca de Caravajal, Manuel de Luçena, Gaspar de los Reies Plata jail warden of the Holy Office, Andres Rodriguez and doña Ysabel de Andrada.⁶⁷ Following that list was a second list of the people against whom Leonor testified. This list was comprised of more conversos than the first list. Leonor testified against doña Mariana de Caravajal, Manuel de Luçena, Pedro Henriquez, Diego Henriquez, Luis de Caravajal, doña Françisca de Caravajal, doña Ysabel de Carvajal, Françisco Vaez, Xorge Vaez, doña Catalina de Leon, Justa Mendez, doña Anna de Carvajal, Sebastian Rodriguez, Costança Rodriguez, Catalina Henriquez, Clara Henriquez, Anna Lopez, Leonor Diaz, Pedro Rodriguez, Manuel Rodriguez, Antonio Henriquez, Xorge Alvarez, Anna Vaez, Manuel Gomez Navarro, Sebastian de la Peña, Antonio Diaz Marquez, Thomas de Fonseca El de Tasco, Andres

⁶⁶ “Estos se comunicaban uno con otros a través de las paredes de la cárcel con ciertos golpes, que cada uno de ellos significaba una letra del alfabeto. Guillen lo descifró y entendió perfectamente lo que unos a los otros se estaban aconsejando”. (Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No, 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 8.

⁶⁷ *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal.* Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 2.

Rodriguez, Manuel Rodriguez Hilguero, Hector de Fonseca, Manuel Rodriguez Navarro, Domingo Cuello, Cristobal Gomez portugues and Manuel Gil de la Guardia.⁶⁸

With the exception of non-converso witnesses—Lucía Chichimeca was an indigenous maidservant, and Anna de la Cruz was a black slave—this list includes Leonor’s Portuguese converso family and friends. The entire community got involved—not to testify on Leonor’s behalf, but against her—according to the mechanisms of the Inquisition. Speaking about the Inquisition, David Gitlitz highlights that, “In 1478 Pope Sixtus granted Fernando’s and Isabel’s request that the Spanish crown be permitted to appoint Inquisitors to attack the heresy they said was rife in Andalucia”.⁶⁹ Henry Charles Lea affirms that Torquemada, the founder inquisitor, taught inquisitors to interrogate the family of accused conversos in the following manner:

“Therefore, that the inquisitors ask particularly to the people that give their confessions what they know of their parents and siblings and relatives and of other persons whosoever about the particularities that are required so that afterwards they may not take refuge in ignorance and what they may say about others may it be written in books of registry of office besides the mentioned confessions”.⁷⁰ The interrogations of Leonor’s family, friends, acquaintances, and even servants produced the desired result for the Inquisition, for they testified against her. Notwithstanding,

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ David Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 18.

⁷⁰ “Item, que los inquisidores pregunten particularmente á los personas que dieren sus confesiones lo que saben de sus padres y hermanos y parientes é de otras personas cualesquiera por las particularidades que se requieren porque despues no se puedan escudar por ignorancia, é lo que asi digeren de otros se asiente en los libros é registros de oficio aparte de las dichas confesiones.” Henry Charles Lea, *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2011), 580.

Leonor also testified against many of them too. Leonor even testified against conversos that she only knew indirectly. Pilar Huerga Criado clarifies that: “the interexchange of information among judaizers about those that were recognized as such allowed them to, given the moment, include among the accused individuals that they had never known but whom they knew by hearsay that they were observant of the Law of Moses”.⁷¹

Witnesses against conversos were often themselves on trial for judaizing. Catalina Enriquez, for example, was witness number sixteen against her own mother and siblings. Catalina’s *Relacion del Testigo* or the information about her as witness, declares: “This witness was imprisoned testified and accused of having kept the dead Law of Moses and of having favored and hidden others that kept it”.⁷² And still, despite the many days of incarceration—from several weeks to several months—those accused would usually not disclose any incriminating information about themselves or others—at least not at first.

Initially, Catalina refused to speak against herself or others— known as being “negativa”— during her first hearing, which took place fifteen days after her arrest, in Mexico City, on Thursday, January 12, 1595. However, in subsequent hearings, Catalina Enriquez testified against herself and others like Ysabel de Carvajal. The inquisitor scribe wrote: “And negating in

⁷¹ “el intercambio de información entre los judaizantes sobre los reconocidos como tales permitía que, llegado el moment, incluyeran entre los delatados a individuos con los que nuncio habían tenido trato, pero de quienes sabían <<de oídas>> que eran observantes de la ley de Moisés”. Pilar Huerga Criado. *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 203.

⁷² “esta test[^]o, fue pressa testificada y acusada de aver guardado La ley muerta de moissen y de aver favorecido y encubierto a otros que la guardavan”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 204-205.

the first hearing that she had with them, in the rest she began to confess about herself and other persons that kept the Law of Moses its rituals and ceremonies...responding to the chapters of hers she said and testified against doña Ysabel Rodriguez de Carvajal Andrada widow”.⁷³ The text demonstrates that only after the inquisitors read some chapters—or accusations against her—did Catalina speak out against her friend Ysabel.

We can infer that when Catalina responded to the chapters, she was clarifying what Ysabel had said about her (even though inquisitors did not identify the witnesses, the accused readily knew and even named who had testified against them because of the context of the accusation). Indeed, Catalina testified against Ysabel de Carvajal on Friday, August 6, 1596. Although at first she had been “negativa” or refused to testifying against anyone, she spoke out against Ysabel when inquisitors informed her that a third publication of proofs against her was about to be published—what this meant was that inquisitors would disclose the evidence they had against her.

Henry Kamen gives the following explanation: “When a prisoner was finally accused he was given a copy of the evidence against him in order to help him prepare a defence. This publication of the evidence was by no means as helpful as it might seem. In the first place, as we have seen, the names of all the witnesses were suppressed”.⁷⁴ According to inquisitors, it was in her best interest to say the truth: “And being present it was said to her if she has remembered

⁷³ “y estando negativa en la primera audien[^]a, que con ellos estuvo, en las demas fue confessando de si y de otras perss[^]as que guardavan la ley de moissen sus ritos y çeremonias... respondiend^o a los capitulos de ella dixo y depuso contra dona ysabel rodrig[^]z de carvajal andrada biuda”. Ibid, folio 205.

⁷⁴ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 194.

something in her negation to say it and the truth given her pledge that she has made ~she said that she has nothing more than what she has already said, ~it was said to her that the public prosecutor of this Holy Office want to ask for a third publication of testing overcome against her, and before it is done it would be good to say the whole truth”.⁷⁵

In this manner, when accused were read what unnamed witnesses said about them, they would often respond to those allegations and declare details about the Jewish identity, beliefs and practices of their converso family, friends and acquaintances—even though they had been unwilling to testify against others before. In the case of Catalina Enriquez, the Inquisition used what Ysabel testified against her to extract a testimony from Catalina against Ysabel. The psychological torture was continuous as conversos were constantly scrutinized and questioned by inquisitors and told to confess the “truth”.

In reality, the Inquisition turned conversos against one other— anyone could report on anyone else— and testify about something, even if it was false. Henry Kamen explicates that, “it was the testimony of the community—of, that is, neighbors, enemies—that the accused most dreaded”.⁷⁶ “Prisoners would also testify more frequently when inquisitors would give them false hope that if they cooperated with the Inquisition, then they would be shown greater mercy.

Inquisitors also led the accused to believe that if they testified against others and themselves,

⁷⁵ “y siendo pres[^]te le fue dicho si ha acordado alguna cossa en su neg[^]o la diga y la verdad so cargo del juram[^]to que tiene fecho, ~dixo q[^] no mas de lo que tiene dh[^]o, ~fuele dh[^]o que el promotor fiscal deste s[^]to off[^]o quiere pedir terçera publicaçion de provança sobrevenida contra ella, y antes que se hisiesse le estaria muy bien dezir enteram[^]te la verdad”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 205.

⁷⁶ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 175.

they would be spared from going to the torture chamber. Nevertheless, even after the accused provided testimonies, inquisitors readily sent conversos to the torture chamber, in order to extract even more information from them. In the torment room, they would be undressed, tied with ropes, and tortured with the turning to ropes, or with water, the rack, or other devices the Inquisition had at its disposal.

Inquisitor scribes wrote down what transpired in the torture chamber, because conversos would readily denounce others under torture. At one of those hearings, a scribe wrote: “they descended to the torment chamber of the inquisitor lords Lobo Guerrero and lawyer Alonso de Peralta doctor don Jhoan de Çervantes ordinary after finishing completing the third hour of the afternoon they ordered the mentioned Luis de Carvajal alias Joseph Lumbrosso to be brought from his jail ~and being present next to the rack an dressed it was said to continue with his confession and declaration saying entirely the truth as charged by the pledge he has sworn”.⁷⁷

Guillen Lampart criticized the cruelty with which inquisitors tortured conversos, by describing their typical day at work. Alicia Gojman de Backal writes his criticism by stating that, “Inquisitors would arrive in the morning acting as if they had a lot of work but the only thing they would do was chat and drink. After calling them to the first hearing and subsequently tormenting them, if they suffered a health problem, they would send a doctor to cure them, who

⁷⁷ “vaxaro^ a la camara del tormento los dh^os señores inquisidores doctor lobo guerr^o y liçen^do don alonso de peralta doctor don jhoan de çervantes ordin^o luego acavado de dar las tres oras de la tarde adonde mandaron traer de su carçel al dh^o luis de carvajal alias joseph lumbrosso ~y siendo pres^te arimado al potro y vestido le fue dh^o prosiga su confision y declaraçion diziendo enteramente verdad so cargo del juram^o q t^e sso^” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folios 85-86.

would sometimes prescribe a medication that they would never give them”.⁷⁸ The more often the accused were sent to the torture chamber and the greater the torment, the more confessions they would declare.

Inquisitor secretaries and notaries would descend to the torture chamber, prepared to write what the confessions of the accused. The prisoner, in turn, said anything just to avoid being tortured, or to make the torment stop. Luis de Carvajal, for example, reported on his own little sister, Annica, after being tortured with four turns of the cord. An inquisitor's scribe documented that: “~and having given him up to the fourth turn of the cord he said that he wanted to say the truth. ~and that Anica keeps the Law that G-d gave Moses even though as a child, she is incapable of understanding what is convenient she does not keep it perfectly this now and the said mother doña Francisca and his sisters doña Ysabel doña Catalina doña Mariana and doña Leonor but believes she keeps the Sabbaths and out of observance of the Law that G-d gave

⁷⁸ “Los inquisidores llegaban en la mañana aparentando tener mucho trabajo, pero lo único que hacían era platicar y beber. Después de llamarlos a la primera audiencia y posteriormente atormentarles, si sufrían un problema de salud les enviaban a un médico a curarlos, el cual a veces recetaba un medicamento que nunca les daban.” Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No. 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazi de México, 2000), 30.

Moses she has kept them and awaits the promised Messiah and that he has not seen her fast because she is little and sick”.⁷⁹

Just like Luis testified against his own sister, so many conversos accused their own family members. In fact, the Inquisition in New Spain made it a common occurrence. Referring to his denunciation, Gojman de Backal adds that, “Guillen confirmed that inquisitors forced the wife to denounce her husband and the children to testify against their parents or siblings and the despair was such that some would die there because of the torments or abuse and that others committed barbarism to avoid being denounced, like what one of the Blancas did with her daughter whom she killed in the jail”.⁸⁰ While no one in the Carvajal family killed a member to keep them from testifying against them like the Blanca family, the Carvajal family was made to denounce each other: Francisca testified against all of her children, and her children in turn, testified against her and against each other.

⁷⁹ “~y habiéndosele dado hasta la cuarta vuelta del cordel dijo que quería decir la verdad. ~y que Anica guarda la ley que dio Dios a Moysen aunque como muchacha porque no tiene capacidad para entender que es lo que le conviene no la guarda con la perfección que éste y las dichas su madre doña Francisca y hermanas doña Ysabel doña Catalina doña Mariana y doña Leonor pero que cree la guarda de los sábados y por guarda de la ley que dio Dios a Moysen los ha guardado y espera al Mesías prometido y que ayunos no le ha visto éste hacer como pequeñuela y enferma”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 73. Please note that I will be using G-d instead of the Name of the Creator, as is customary in Jewish tradition.

⁸⁰ “Guillen confirmó que los inquisidores obligaban a la esposa a delatar a su marido y a los hijos que hablaran en contra de sus padres o de sus hermanos y que era tanta la desesperación que alguno moría allí por los tormentos o los malos tratos y que otros cometían barbaridades para evitar ser delatados, como lo hizo una de las Blancas con su hija que mató en la cárcel”. Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No. 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 30.

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Protocol: Conversos' Reply to Accusations

When witnesses testified against others, they were given a number to hide their identity from the accused—although the accused would identify these unknown witnesses based on the context of the accusation, as we have seen previously. Moreover, inquisitor scribes wrote down the witness number and the name of the witness on the margins, next to the paragraphs where witnesses would testify. Each accusation was given chapter numbers, and also written on the margins. Each witness could have many chapters, a chapter for each accusation. The accused were given the opportunity to reply to each witness' chapters. For example, in Ysabel de Carvajal's trial documents, chapter eighteen is the accusation of witness number four—identified as Justa Mendez in the margin.⁸¹ In her eighteenth accusation, Justa accused Ysabel, her mother and siblings of fasting for the Great Day of the Lord (Yom Kippur).⁸² Ysabel responded “to the eighteenth chapter, she said, that she says that never did such a thing happen”.⁸³

⁸¹ On the margin and underlined, it reads “Adición del t^o 4^o Justa Mendez”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 267.

⁸² “y que vio que la dicha doña ysabel antes de la reconsiliación y despues de reconsiliada de los tres años aca que volvio a la ley de moyssen ayunava los dichos tres dias para la preparación del dicho dia grande del s^r.” Ibid, folio 273.

⁸³ “C.º18. Al dezimo octavo capitulo,
Dixo, que ella dize, que nunca tal le passo”. Ibid, folio 280.

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Protocol: The Assigned Lawyer

In addition to the prosecuting inquisitors, conversos on trial like Ysabel had to bear the condemnation of their own lawyers. The Inquisition provided defendants with lawyers who would echo the inquisitor's demands to say the truth and unload their conscience. At a hearing with her lawyer, inquisitor Dionyssio de Ribera Florez told Ysabel, "the dangerous state of her criminal trial, and that what was convenient for her was to say the entire truth and unload her conscience, that for the love of G-d, have pity for her soul".⁸⁴ With such an admonition, conversos would find discover in their advocate another prosecutor. Historian Henry Kamen expounds on these lawyers by stating that: "by the mid-sixteenth century the prisoners' advocates or abogados de los press were recognized as officials of the Inquisition, dependent upon and working with the inquisitors".⁸⁵

⁸⁴ "el peligrroso estado de su causa, y que lo que le convenia era dezir enteram[^]te la verdad y descargar su conçiencia, que por amor de dios se duela de su alma". Ibid, folios 298-299.

⁸⁵ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 194.

Methodological and Critical Framework

Inquisition Protocol: The Chance to Disqualify Witnesses

While the Inquisition demanded “the truth”, that is, accusations against others, conversos had to approve their testimonies and sign, before the Inquisition published their declarations. Hamui Sutton identifies this step as one of the last steps in the trial: “A last part that is observed in the writings of the Inquisition archive is that after narrating in writing the declaration of the prisoner...the signature of the accused appears to corroborate what was said, that affirms their testimony”.⁸⁶ Three days after testifying against his friends and family while in the torment room, Luis de Carvajal denied his initial statements against his mother, sisters, relatives and friends. Next to his negation is a comment from an inquisitor that reads *revoca* (revokes): “~he said that he already protested before about the torment that for the love of G-d his lordship not force him to say lies and that is so in all that he has said he has lied from the hour in which he was given torment and thus to clear his conscience he declares it wanting to die in the torment than go to hell”.⁸⁷ Luis revoked his testimony because, rather than “the truth”, his statements

⁸⁶ “Una última parte que se observa en los escritos del archivo de la Inquisición es que después de narrar por escrito la declaración del preso...aparece la firma del acusado(a) que corrobora lo dicho, que afirma su testificación”. Silvia Hamui Sutton, *El sentido oculto de las palabras en los testimonios inquisitorial de las Rivera: judaizantes de la Nueva España* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 30.

⁸⁷ “~dixo que ya el protesto antes del tormento que por amor de dios su señoría no le obligase con el a dezir mentiras y que assi en todo quanto ha dh^o ha mentido desde la ora en que se le començo a dar el torm^o y assi por descargo de su conçiencia lo declara queriendo antes morir e^ltormento q ir al infierno” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 87.

were lies. And yet, Luis declared himself innocent of these lies. Instead, he blamed the inquisitors, because, in his words, they forced him to say lies.

One of his sisters, Ysabel Rodriguez de Andrada, identified him as her mortal enemy by assigning him a *tacha* (imperfection) at her hearing. In fact, Ysabel assigned a *tacha* to all of her siblings: “she said that she employed a *tacha* and did not admit her sisters for being mortal enemies, doña Leonor, doña Mariana, doña Anna, doña catalina. And likewise she disqualified (“*recussava*”) her brother luis de Caravajal for being her mortal enemy and the reason for the *tacha* and disqualifying them is based on having condemned them in this Holy Office when they tormented her that they were Jewish and kept the Law of Moses”.⁸⁸ Ysabel also assigned a *tacha* to Justa Mendez, because they had a dispute over thirty pesos Ysabel had given Justa’s brother—Gabriel Enriquez. Apparently, Gabriel never paid Ysabel back so she asked Justa for the money. Based on the *tacha*, we can assume that neither Gabriel nor Justa paid Ysabel her thirty pesos. These *tachas* or imperfections, and *recussas* or disqualifications allowed Ysabel to question the testimonies of enemies or people with whom she had a dispute, and perhaps sway inquisitors to question them too. After all, as mortal enemies, they may have falsely accused her out of contempt. Historian Henry Kamen explains that the accused “could call favorable witnesses, [and] disable hostile witnesses by proving personal enmity”.⁸⁹ As proof of her enmity

⁸⁸ “dixo que tachava y recussava a todas sus hermanas por enemigas capitales, doña Leonor, doña Mariana, doña Anna, doña cat^a. Y assimismo recussa por su enemigo capital a su hermano luis de Carvajal y la razon de la *tacha* y recussa^on es y se funda por averlos condemnado en este s^to offo, quando le dieron torm^to de que eran judios y guardavan la ley de Moyssen”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 299.

⁸⁹ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition An Historical Revision* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 195.

towards them, Ysabel provided the names of two other witnesses. But whether imperfections and disqualifications influenced inquisitors to exclude the testimonies of these witnesses is unlikely.

Under the part of the trial documents titled *defensas* (defenses), inquisitors would question witnesses to see if there was indeed enmity between the accused and other witnesses, that would warrant a disqualification. When inquisitor Lobo Guerrero called Justa out of her jail cell to testify, Justa denied having ever quarreled with Ysabel. Instead, Justa admitted that she was a very good friend of the Carvajal family, and that she admired Ysabel most of all, for her devotion to the Law of Moses.⁹⁰ Rather than disqualification, Justa's testimony was likely evidence that ultimately led to Ysabel's death sentence.

Pilar Huerga Criado concurs with Israel Salvator Révah on the intention of the Inquisition. According to these scholars, inquisitors were only interested in knowing what Jewish rituals conversos practiced, how often and for how many years, as proof that conversos committed the crime of being a "judaizer", defined in other parts of trial documents as "keeping the law of

⁹⁰ "preg[^]da si ha tenido esta alguna pessadumbre mohina con doña ysabel de caravajal, Dixo q[^] no, antes la quiere bien y le tiene amistad como la tiene a la dha su madre y hermanas, y esta las tenia por unas sanctas quando esta guardava la ley de moyssen por veer que la guardavan ellas con tanta perfection y particularm[^]te, tenia por sancto a la dh[^]a doña ysabel y por esta razon la queria y amava mas que a la dha su madre y hermanas y le tenia mucha amistad y le rogava la encomendasse a dios." Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 300.

Moses its rituals and ceremonies” .⁹¹ But depositions, accusations and confessions can tell us much more. The trial documents of Ysabel, her mother and siblings can indeed help us discover other facets of cryptoJewish identity based on language, foods, prayers and songs. Yet, the most significant aspect we can extract (upon which all expressions of their cryptoJewish identity were based) not readily analyzed by scholarship was their cryptoJewish rationale—or so I propose. Based on it, Portuguese conversos on trial like Ysabel, some of her family members, and certain friends acquired a cryptoJewish identity that led them to think of themselves as Jewish. It also allowed them to explain the meaning behind Jewish traditions—or customs they identified as Jewish—and some of their deeply held Jewish beliefs.

Overview of Chapters

In chapter one, we will examine the Jewish holidays—or holidays they identified as Jewish—of Leonor, her mother, siblings, and friends. Some of these holidays included the celebration of the Sabbath, Passover, and the observance of Yom Kippur. Leonor, her family and friends included Jewish elements as well as new cryptoJewish rituals and sources, and even extra holidays like extra fast days. For each holiday we analyze their adherence to normative Jewish practices, their incorporation of Christian sources for Jewish observance.

⁹¹ Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 240.

The first page of Leonor de Carvajal’s second inquisition trial of 1595 includes the charge against her as judaizer: “~iudaiçante relapsa“, and in a later page, the inquisitor Martos de Bohorquez spells out the charge as: “having kept the law of Moses, its rituals and ceremonies”: “haber guardado la ley de moysen sus ritos y ceremonias”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, front folio [unnumbered] and folio 1.

But first, we will recognize how it was that Portuguese cryptoJews like Leonor, her family and friends crafted a Jewish memory based on the medieval Jewish memory of her great-grandparents—quite possibly the last Portuguese Jews in her family—in order to celebrate these holidays in the first place. Leonor and other Portuguese conversos crafted a memory selecting specific parts of biblical historiography in order to understand their present. For instance, they recalled the Exodus from Egypt to explain their life in lands of ‘captivity’—lands where Jews could not live openly as Jews. As part of their Jewish memory, Leonor and her family also used liturgy that mirrored Jewish liturgy as well as created a cryptoJewish liturgy, often borrowing from Christian texts to observe Jewish holidays. Examples of that liturgy was Luis’ cryptoJewish siddur (prayerbook) based on Jewish texts extracted from a Christian bible, and Leonor’s recital of the Song of Moses before inquisitors.

In chapter two, we will analyze the Jewish eating practices of Portuguese conversos in New Spain like Leonor, her mother, and siblings. Utilizing testimonials from Inquisition documents, we relate the timing of food preparation with specific Jewish culinary practices for the Sabbath, for instance, as well as the specific types of foods eaten on specific days—that sometimes conflicted with Christian eating practices—like eating meat on Friday. As we distinguish how these foods were prepared—at least in theory—according to Jewish custom, like in the case of animal slaughter for meat consumption, we discern between what Portuguese conversos like the Carvajal family knew about, and what they actually carried out. For example, the Francisca defatted and bled her meat, even though she did not slaughter nor ordered her chickens to be slaughtered in Jewish custom—despite knowing about ritual slaughter.

We discover the difference between clean and unclean foods, such as chicken and pork, and what Jewish food staples Leonor and her family ate on Jewish holidays. For instance, on Passover, they ate matzah or unleavened bread or tortillas. So we sketch out a metaphorical food map of Mexico and identify the regions where the Carvajal family would have eaten corn tortillas and where flour tortillas on Passover, to weigh the options between the Carvajal's home in Mexico City or Governor Carvajal's newly founded Nuevo León to the North. We conclude that the Jewish eating practices of Leonor, her family, the rest of the cryptoJewish community in New Mexico contrast with Christian society and similarities with conversos in Portugal, peninsular Spain, Spain before the expulsion, and the Sephardic communities at large. Nevertheless, Leonor and her family's culinary expressions of their Jewish identity constantly waver between theory and praxis, between knowing what clean animals to eat, but eating unclean animals—at least sometimes—for fear of the Inquisition.

In chapter three, discover the secret languages, texts, prayers and songs Leonor and her family used in their liturgy. Starting with prayers, we should want to know if these cryptoJewish prayers were Sephardic in origin. And we should want to ask how conversos learned and transmitted, for while these cryptoJewish prayers and songs were recited in Hebrew and in Romance (Spanish or Portuguese), and readily translated Psalms and other texts into Romance from Latin—the Christian language. If they translated Psalms and other Jewish texts from the Christian language, did conversos appropriate Christian prayers?

In chapter four, we will analyze an aspect not readily discussed by scholarship: the cryptoJewish identity, rationales and beliefs of Portuguese conversos in New Spain. When did conversos acquire their cryptoJewish identity? Although the exact age varied among conversos,

many learned about their secretly Jewish identity when they were young and began a figurative type of Bar/BatMitzvah. Declarations of being Jewish usually followed their Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience and prepared them for a cryptoJewish way of thinking or rationale. Portuguese conversos like Leonor and her family established a cryptoJewish reasoning through the Law of Moses that allowed them to observe Jewish holidays and traditions with intent or kavanah. They not only waited—for example—for the Messiah, but believed that the Messiah would come and free them from their captivity in the lands of idolatry (as we have already seen, this was the term used by Sephardic communities to identify lands where Jews were not allowed to live openly as such). But first let us begin with their Jewish memory.

Chapter 1

Holy Days and Religious Observances

Perhaps the time has come to look more closely at ruptures, breaches, breaks, to identify them more precisely, to see how Jews endured them, to understand that not everything of value that existed before a break was either salvaged or metamorphosed, but was lost, and that often some of what fell by the wayside can become, through our retrieval, meaningful to us.

Yosef Haim Yerushalmi.⁹²

New Christian Jews

The Inquisition—the policing arm of the Catholic Church— was relentless in accusing Francisca de Carvajal, her daughters Leonor, Ysabel, Catalina, Mariana, and her son Luis of being Christians on the one hand while persistently Jewish on the other. For instance, in 1596, Ysabel de Carvajal was described in her second trial manuscript as being “of generation of new christian jews” or a New Christian of Jewish descent.⁹³ According to the inquisitor Martos de

⁹² Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 101.

⁹³ “de generacion de xpianos nuevos de iudios”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 1.

Bohorquez, Ysabel had “fallen in the crime of relapse turning to keep the law of Moses from which she had pretended to be detached”.⁹⁴

Ysabel and her family were not the only Portuguese New Christians or conversos tried for judaizing. Renée Levine Melammed explains that: “Every converso and conversa was a potential judaizer, or believer in the Law of Moses. While observance of Judaism (by a Jew) is not heresy in the eyes of the Catholic Church, observance of Jewish traditions, rites, or beliefs is heretical if practiced by the baptized. The New Christian would be most apt to judaize and apostatize, for the mere presence of Jewish blood in that individual was seen as creating a proclivity to undermine the Church and its dogma.”⁹⁵ Indeed, prior to the expulsion of Spanish Jews from Spain by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492, Jews in Spain were not criminalized by the Catholic Church for observing Judaism.

Only conversos—former Jews now turned New Christians through baptism—were prohibited from practicing Jewish traditions and upholding Jewish beliefs. After the expulsion of 1492, there were no more Jews in Spain. The Catholic Monarchs wrote the expulsion edict on March 31, 1492, and gave Spain’s Jewish community three months to leave their homes. Henry Charles Lea cites part of the edict in the following manner: “You know well and should know how we for some just causes that moved us in this regard to comply with the service of G-d and our welfare and common good of our kingdoms and our subjects and natives among them, we

⁹⁴ “caido e^lcrime^ de la relapsía tornando a guardar la dh^a ley de moysen de que fingidamente dixo estar apartada”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 2.

⁹⁵ Renée Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 7.

order by our letters signed with our names and sealed with our seal, that the Jews and dwellers and those present in the mentioned our kingdoms and estates to leave them from her to the end of the month of July first”.⁹⁶ After July 1, 1492, every Spanish subject was a baptized Christian (whether Old or New), under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church and its ordinances against heresy—that specifically prohibited observing Jewish traditions and beliefs. And while it is expected that religions require absolute commitment from their followers—we should want to ask the reason for this specific prohibition against expressions of Judaism.

Perhaps the answer lies in the origins of Christianity, which arose many centuries after Judaism. Jane Berger proposes that the relationship Christianity shares with Judaism is based on a paradox where Christianity must negate Judaism, while at the same time depend on it in order to exist. In Berger’s words, “After all, the Church had emerged directly out of the synagogue in the first century, and Christianity would never totally disassociate itself from its Jewish origins. On the contrary, Christian apologists argued the supremacy of their belief over Judaism by making recourse to promises and predictions in the Hebrew scriptures. In a sense, then, early Christians could be said to have defined themselves in terms of the religion they rejected”.⁹⁷ Based on this premise, the Catholic Church in Spain emphasized that converts abandon any form of Jewish expression when they became New Christians.

⁹⁶ “Bien savedes et deveis saber como nos por algunas justas cabsas que a ello nos movieron complideras al servicio de Dios e nuestro e bien e pro comun de nuestros Reynos e nuestros subditos e naturales dellos, mandamos por nuestras cartas firmadas de nuestros nombres et selladas con nuestro sello, que los Judios et moradores y estantes en los dichos nuestros Reynos e Señorios salgan dellos de aqui ha en fin del mes de Jullio primero”. Henry Charles Lea, *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2011), 569.

⁹⁷ Jane Gerber, *The Jews of Spain* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 6.

But who could have been familiar with Jewish traditions and beliefs? Only former Jews of course! While unknown to Old Christians, these New Christians would naturally have known Jewish traditions, rites and beliefs. Perhaps that is why an individual's Jewish descent—as Melammed points out—was seen as a predisposition to heresy by the Catholic Church and its policing and judicial arm: the Inquisition. Although Melammed specifically refers to New Christians in peninsular Spain, conversos that immigrated to Spanish colonies of the Americas like New Spain (Colonial Mexico), were also seen as potential judaizers.

While some scholars like Benzion Netanyahu argue that New Christians sincerely attempted to live as devout Catholics, others like Yitzhak Baer and Haim Beinart propose that conversos remained inwardly Jewish while maintaining an outwardly Christian façade.⁹⁸ In between these polarized viewpoints is the stance of others like Yirmiyahu Yovel and Gretchen Starr-Le Beau who understand conversos as a socially variable group that carried out Jewish traditions alongside Christian ones.⁹⁹ In the case of the Carvajal family, I argue that Ysabel, her

⁹⁸ See Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain Vol. II from the Fourteenth Century to the Expulsion* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), and Benzion Netanyahu, *The origins of the Inquisition in fifteenth century Spain* (New York: Random House, 1995). According to Gretchen D. Starr-Le Beau, “Other scholars, particularly Benzion Netanyahu, Norman Roth, and more recently Henry Kamen, have argued that New Christians were entirely assimilated until Christians hostile to Jews used the Inquisition to fabricate converso devotion to Judaism. Netanyahu has argued that the Inquisition was the product of a fundamentally racist society”. Gretchen D. Starr-Le Beau, *Living in the Shadow of the Virgin*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 4.

⁹⁹ See Gretchen D. Starr-Le Beau, *Living in the Shadow of the Virgin*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 4 and Yirmiyahu Yovel, *The Other Within The Marranos Split Identity and Emerging Modernity*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4 and 5, and Yirmiyahu Yovel, *The Other Within The Marranos Split Identity and Emerging Modernity*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), 78.

mother and sisters were cryptoJewish or secretly Jewish, in the sense that they identified as Jewish and performed rituals and practices they understood to be Jewish.

In order to identify in which category Ysabel and her family belonged, I examine the testimonies of relatives, friends, acquaintances and servants of the Carvajal family (not to mention the Carvajal's own confessions), that the Inquisition collected using psychological conditioning and sometimes physical torture. Testimonies were highly mediated narratives since conversos often confessed in order to avoid imprisonment, torture, and death for themselves or their family. Thus, while under duress, their confessions readily included false accusations against others (even against themselves) that invalidated whatever 'truth' they revealed—especially while in the torment chamber. Luis de Carvajal, for example, asked inquisitors to stop torturing him because it prompted him to tell them lies: “he said that he had already complained before the torture that for the love of G-d your lordship do not force me to tell lies and as such in everything he has said he has lied from the moment he began to be tortured”.¹⁰⁰

Even so, confessions included details which suggested the veracity of some of the information disclosed. Some witnesses against the Carvajal family, for example, accused them of keeping the Sabbath. But observing the Sabbath day of rest was a common [false] accusation

¹⁰⁰ “dixo que ya El protesto antes del tormento que por amor de dios su señoria no le obligase con El a dezir mentiras y que assi en todo quanto ha dh^o ha mentido desde la ora en que se le començo a dar El torm^o”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 87.

because it was a widely known Jewish practice—even in New Spain’s Christian society.¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding, their testimonies became more believable when they included particulars about Jewish customs, like facing the East and covering one’s head when praying.¹⁰² And while the Inquisition in New Spain— just as the Inquisition did with conversos in peninsular Spain— used these testimonies to condemn the Carvajals of judaizing, I analyze them to identify the Jewish rituals and practices (or rituals and practices they understood to be Jewish) Ysabel, her mother and sisters performed, and the important role they had in their cryptoJewish community. My approach to examining testimonies is akin to Haim Beinart who wrote about the Inquisition’s use of depositions and the use of scholarship: “Testimony of their relationship was enough for the court to condemn Juan Martínez de los Olivos as a judaizer and heretic, but to us it appears as a clear indication of his Judaism.”¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Referring to Jewish customs, Henry Charles Lea writes in *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III*: “the slightest adherence to any of the ancestral customs of Judaism, whether of religious significance or not, sufficed, and lists of these observances were carefully drawn up for the guidance of the inquisitors. The more obvious, such as the avoidance of pork and lard, the removal of fat from meat, the observance of the Sabbath by changing linen, lighting lamps and abstaining from work, the killing of fowls by decollation, the keeping of stated fasts, eating meat in Lent and the like, were known of all men, and perpetual watch was kept by Old Christians on the households of Conversos, so that all such lapses were eagerly reported to the tribunals, as required by the Edicts of Faith.” Henry Charles Lea, *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2011), 232.

¹⁰² See Manuel de Luçena’s testimony against the Carvajal family in Ysabel de Carvajal’s second trial manuscript found in: *Bancroft Library Special Collections Mexican Inquisition Documents: mss., 1593-1817. 61v. BANC MSS 96/95 m. Negative Number 2841. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 176-177. See also Justa Mendez’ accusation in the same manuscript mentioned above, folio 17-18.*

¹⁰³ Haim Beinart, *Conversos On Trial: The Inquisition in Ciudad Real*, trans. Yale Guilado (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1981) 222.

And in terms of reading the trial documents of Ysabel, her mother Francisca, and her sisters Leonor, Catalina and Mariana, I agree with Emily Colbert Cairns' argument when she affirms that, "Inquisition manuscripts reveal that crypto-Jewish cultural and textual traditions... became constructions of female power".¹⁰⁴ Moshe Lazar also corroborated that Inquisition documents highlight the importance of conversas: "The women's role as activists in the dissemination of Jewish customs and prayers, and their outstanding courage in proclaiming their faith and accepting martyrdom at the stake, are corroborated during the centuries by trial records from Portugal, the Canary Islands, Mexico, Peru, and Brazil".¹⁰⁵ Indeed, the Carvajal women were leaders within their community as they learned and taught the Torah (The Law of Moses), and performed normative Jewish rituals like observing the Sabbath. They also observed new cryptoJewish rituals like extra fast days (by extra fast days, I am referring to the converso tradition of fasting Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays).¹⁰⁶

In Toledo, Spain, the Inquisition trial manuscript of a Portuguese conversa named Doña Antonia Enrique Acosta includes an accusation against her, her father, and her uncle of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays. As in New Spain, conversos seem to have fasted on Mondays, and Thursdays. Nevertheless, Portuguese cryptoJews in New Spain were unique because they also

¹⁰⁴ Emily Colbert Cairns, "Esther among Crypto-Jews and Christians: Queen Esther and the Inquisition Manuscripts of Isabel De Carvajal and Lope De Vega's La Hermosa Ester." *Chasqui* 42, no. 2 (2013): 100.

¹⁰⁵ Moshe Lazar, "Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The "Jewishness" of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)" in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 180.

¹⁰⁶ See Spain's National Archive: Archivo Histórico Nacional, *Inquisición*, Legajo 130, expediente 4.

fasted on Wednesdays. In addition, Ysabel Carvajal's sister Leonor sang cryptoJewish liturgy like the Song of Moses.¹⁰⁷ In fact, the Carvajal women incorporated Christian elements to both normative Jewish and new cryptoJewish rituals and liturgy, not with the intention of Christianizing—or so I propose—but as a result of living in a Christian space as New Christians, removed from Jewish communal life. I suggest that Ysabel, her mother, sisters and brother created a cryptoJewish identity in New Spain (Modern-day Mexico), based on these rituals and liturgy, as a way to preserve a form of Jewish memory.¹⁰⁸

Women At Reinventing Jewish Memory

Given that Francisca de Carvajal's grandparents were most likely the last Portuguese Jews in her family, it should not be surprising that she retained a medieval Jewish memory similar to that of Portugal's Jewish community before 1497. From the time king Manuel forced the entire Portuguese Jewish community to convert in 1497 up to the Carvajals' second trial in 1596, nearly a century had passed or approximately three or four generations of Carvajals (which were actually Rodriguez de Matos if we use Francisca's husband's last name) that lived as New

¹⁰⁷ Leonor told inquisitors that: “the said Luis de Carvajal her brother said ~~another~~ in a four-line stanza the entire Law of Moses and this one and the mentioned doña Ysabel and doña Mariana his sisters went along responding because they also know it by heart just like the mentioned nine songs. (el dho Luis de Carvajal su hermano dezia ~~otra~~ en copla toda la ley de Moyssen y esta y las dhas doña Ysabel y doña Mariana sus hermanas yban respondiendo porque tambien la saven de memoria como los dichos nueve canticos)”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 126.

¹⁰⁸ See more in chapter three on secret languages, texts and prayers about how cryptoJewish women taught men prayers and songs about the Torah.

Christians.¹⁰⁹ What little Jewish memory Francisca and her children had in 1596, came from her grandparent's fifteenth century Jewish memory. What I mean by a medieval Jewish memory is not actual memory, but that the ways in which Portuguese cryptoJews like Francisca created a memory was similar to the ways in which memory was crafted by medieval Portuguese Jews.

Josef Haim Yerushalmi points out that during the Middle Ages, this Jewish memory consisted of selecting specific parts of biblical historiography in order to understand their present, in such a way that: "What had happened long ago had determined what had occurred since, and even provided the fundamental explanations for what was still transpiring."¹¹⁰

Isolated in large part from openly Sephardic communities while living in New Spain, Portuguese cryptoJews like Francisca and her children understood their lives— or so I propose— in connection to the events narrated in the Bible (albeit a Christian Bible) about events that happened long ago in Jewish history.

¹⁰⁹ Yirmiyahu Yovel explains in *The Other Within The Marranos Split Identity and Emerging Modernity* the waves of conversions by stating: "Spanish Marranism burst into existence in two waves of mass conversions (1391-1414 and 1492)". Yirmiyahu Yovel, *The Other Within The Marranos Split Identity and Emerging Modernity* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009), xi. Yosef Haim Yerushalmi refers to the forced baptisms of the Portuguese Jewry in 1497 in *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, "When, in 1497, the death knell sounded for open Jewish life in Portugal, it came in the form of a sudden and total conversion by force of all Portuguese Jewry...In Portugal, conversion and the extinction of open Jewish life occurred simultaneously." Yosef Haim *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 5. In Francisca de Carvajal's first trial, she is described as: "doña françisca de caravajal biuda de fran^co rodriguez de matos portugues natural de la v^a de magadorio en portugal" (doña Francisca de Caravajal widow of Francisco Rodriguez de Matos Portuguese native of the village of Magadorio in Portugal). Archivo General de la Nación de México (AGN), *Lote Riva Palacio*, 207431, vol 1488, folio 1.

¹¹⁰ Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 34.

Luis de Carvajal for instance, compared his mother and sister's weeping on the Sabbath to that of the Israelites who returned from captivity in Babylon (recorded in the book of the prophet Nehemiah), in order to validate their behavior before his cryptoJewish friend Manuel de Luçena.¹¹¹ It seemed odd to Luçena to find Francisca, Leonor, Ysabel, and Mariana in tears, when invited to the Carvajal home for a Shabbat celebration: "it seemed wrong, that on a festive day full of songs of praise such as the Sabbath day, they would cry and he answered that he was mistaken, and alluded to the prophet Ezra who did not mind that Jews cried when he read to them the Law of G-d on a given Saturday upon their return from Babylonian captivity and that when he and his mother doña Francisca, his sisters doña Ysabel, doña Mariana and doña Leonor, and having cried had been in observance of Saturday and in keeping with the Law that G-d gave to Moses".¹¹²

The prophet Ezra —according to Luis— allowed the Babylonian exiles to weep when they heard him read the Torah ("Law of G-d") upon their return to Jerusalem, so it was fitting for

¹¹¹ I will refer to Luis de Carvajal the Younger as Luis throughout this dissertation and I will refer to his uncle the conquistador as Luis de Carvajal the Elder.

¹¹² "pareçia mal, que en dia de fiesta y de alavanças Como era el dho dia sabado llorasen Y este le respondio que no tenia razón alegando aquel passo e istorial de la vuelta del cautiverio de Babilonia en que no paresçio mal al prophets Esdras que los judios llorasen en un sabado que les leyo la ley de Dios, y q el rezar la dha oraçion de alavança, este y las dhas su madre doña fran^ca. doña ysabel, doña Mariana, y doña Leonor sus hermanas, y aver llorado, avia sido por observança del sabado y guarda de la ley que dio Dios a Moyssen". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 131.

Francisca, Ysabel, Mariana and Leonor to cry on the Sabbath.¹¹³ (see chapter four for a more detailed explanation). And although Luis de Carvajal's Jewish memory of this historiographic event was inaccurate (Ezra did not condone the weeping of the exiles, but instead encouraged them to eat and rejoice on such a sacred and happy day), what is important is the connection Luis made between the cries of the exiles and that of his mother and sisters from this narrative.¹¹⁴

For Luis, tears were a logical consequence of physical and figurative captivity and exile. Like the Babylonian exiles, his mother and sisters endured a physical exile (from Jerusalem and more tacitly, from Portugal and Spain) while in New Spain, and more significantly, a metaphorical exile from normative Sephardic Judaism, and for their metaphorical captivity in the "Lands of Idolatry" as New Christians.¹¹⁵ Luis' (mis)reading of the weeping of the Babylonian exiles served to validate his mother and sisters' "captivity" and "exile" in New Spain. Yet Jewish memory during the Middle Ages was also passed on through the performance of rituals like Passover and Shavuot (Feast of Tabernacles) and extra fast days, according to Yerushalmi. Through the creation of liturgy like selihot (forgiveness) prayers in preparation for Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), siddurim (prayer books) and haggadot or narrations of Passover, and

¹¹³ According to Leonor, her brother would read to her, her mother and sisters from the Psalms in the vernacular (Spanish or Portuguese) from a Christian Bible (written in Latin). She confessed to inquisitors that: "el dicho su hermano Luis de Carvajal leía los sábados a ésta y a su madre doña Francisca de Caravajal, doña Ysabel, doña Mariana los psalmos de David en Romance que él había sacado de la biblia que estaba en el colegio de Santiago de Tlatilulco". *Bancroft Library Special Collections Mexican Inquisition Documents: mss., 1593-1817*. 61v. BANC MSS 96/95 m. Negative Number 2491. Volume 2, Reel 1, folio 123.

¹¹⁴ See Nehemiah 8.9-12

¹¹⁵ "Lands of Idolatry" refer to "Iberian domains". See David Graizbord, "A Crisis of Judeoconverso Identity and Its Echoes, 1391 to the Present", in *Religious Changes and Cultural Transformations in the Early Modern Western Sephardic Communities*, ed Yosef Kaplan (Boston: Brill, 2019), 3-4.

through the establishment of extra Jewish holidays like “Second Purims” (Jewish festival commemorating Queen Esther), medieval Jewish communities transmitted memory.¹¹⁶

In a similar fashion, the Inquisition manuscripts of the Carvajals reveal that Francisca and her children preserved a Jewish memory within their cryptoJewish community of New Spain. Luis, for example, wrote a prayer book in vernacular for Yom Kippur that included prayers for forgiveness which he translated from a Christian text in Latin. “who came to ask for a book from luis de caravajal where he had written prayers in romance that were prayed on that day to pray them in company of the mentioned persons he declared”.¹¹⁷ While vernacular (romance) could very well have meant Spanish, there is a possibility that Luis wrote the prayers in Portuguese given that the Carvajal family spoke Portuguese, and that the cryptoJewish community in Spain was overwhelmingly of Portuguese origin. The witness did not specify which vernacular language it was in his declaration (see more on languages in chapter three).

A second example of how the Carvajals preserved a Jewish memory were Leonor’s extra cryptoJewish fast days. She was so invested in this ritual that she fasted more than the rest of her family members, according to her sister Ysabel: “and she not only fasted the usual fast that the law of Moses commanded like the Great Day of the Lord that the aforementioned fasted without eating all day until night when the star had come out because she said it was the day in which G-d forgave sins...but also fasted on Mondays and Wednesdays and Thursdays eating until midday

¹¹⁶ Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 40-48.

¹¹⁷ “el qual vino a pedi un libro al dh^o luis de caravajal donde tenia scriptas e^romañe las oraciones que se rezaban aquel dia para rezarlas en compañia de las dh^as personas que ha declarado”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m, Volume 2, Reel 1, folio 58.

against her will so as to not be noticed”.¹¹⁸ Moreover, a third example is cryptoJewish liturgy: Leonor de Carvajal’s Song of Moses.

Essentially, it was cryptoJewish Sabbath liturgical poem that her brother Luis taught her. Over the course of several days, she in turn sang this poem to her inquisitors during her depositions. An almost word for word extract of Torah passages, this song became part of the evidence inquisitors used to condemn her to death (read more about Luis’ prayer book and Leonor’s Song of Moses in chapter three). The following are the rituals and liturgy through which Francisca de Carvajal and her children preserved Jewish memory and forged a cryptoJewish identity in New Spain during the late-sixteenth century. But first, we should want to begin with the foundational source for all Jewish and cryptoJewish rituals and liturgy: The Law of Moses (Torah).

Torah

The Law of Moses— known as Torat Moshe in Hebrew, or as simply, the Torah— was important to the cryptoJewish community. In their second trial, Luis de Carvajal confessed that except for his sister Catalina, he had persuaded his sisters Leonor, Ysabel and Catalina to return

¹¹⁸ “y no solamente ayunaba los ayunos ordinarios que mandaba la ley de moysen como el dia grande del señor el qual la suso dh^a ayunaba sin comer en todo el dia hasta la noche salida la estrella porque dezia hera dia en que dios perdonaba a los pecados...pero tambien ayunaba los lunes y miercoles y jueves comiendo al medio dia contra su voluntad por no ser notada”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 65.

to the Law of Moses (Torah).¹¹⁹ The inquisitor secretary wrote Luis' confession in the secret jails of the Inquisition while in the torture chamber, in the following manner: "this one [referring to Luis] and the mentioned his mother and sisters kept and believed the law that G-d gave Moses and that there was no need for this one to persuade them and teach them because in Medina del Campo the mentioned doña Catalina knew it before this one and she helped teach this one when he was small when they jointly taught it in Medina del Campo his mother of this one doña Francisca de Carvajal and Balthasar Rodriguez his brother of this one relaxed in effigy by this holy office".¹²⁰

Luis explained that Catalina did not need to be persuaded nor taught to follow the Law that G-d gave Moses because she already knew the Law of Moses (Torat Moshe) before he did. According to Luis, Catalina learned the Torah when she was young from their mother Francisca and older brother Balthasar, and when she was older, Catalina taught the Law of Moses to Luis. With this recounting of his childhood spent in Medina del Campo, Spain, (although they were originally from Portugal), Luis informed inquisitors that Torah was first transmitted in his family

¹¹⁹ In addition to "The Law of Moses" ("Torat Moshe" in transliterated Hebrew) as the Mosaic Law or simply as Torah throughout this text.

¹²⁰ "este y las dha^s su madre y hermanas guardaban y creian la ley que dio dios a Moysen y que no habia nevezidad que este se la persuadiera y enseñara porque en medina del campo la sabia la dh^a doña Catalina antes que este y se la ayudo a enseñar a este siendo pequeño quando juntamente se la enseñaran en med^a del campo su madre de este doña franc^ca de Carvajal y balthasar rodriguez su hermano de este relaxado en estatua por este s^to off^o". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 137-138.

by his mother.¹²¹ Antonio Diaz Caçeres, Catalina’s husband, was Jewish and had also learned Torah from his mother in his native Portugal, according to Luis’ testimony.¹²² Whether or not these women taught their children the Law of Moses in Portugal from Jewish texts like a siddur (prayerbook) or a Christian Bible is unknown.

What we do know is that from 1591 to 1598—roughly about the same time that Francisca de Carvajal and her family were put on trial in Mexico City—Blanca Manuel, another Portuguese conversa, was accused in Toledo, Spain of using prayerbooks in accordance to Jewish Law in her Inquisition trial.¹²³ Blanca’s trial documents suggest that Portuguese conversos in Spain had access to siddurim, and if so, it is highly likely that conversos in Portugal also possessed them. By contrast, in New Spain, the only prayerbooks that are mentioned in the trials of the Carvajal family are those that are written by Luis de Carvajal, which consisted of translations of texts in Latin extracted from Christian Bibles into Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the testimonies do not specify which). By whatever means—whether from

¹²¹ Since the establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal in 1536, many Portuguese conversos like the Carvajal family moved to Spain. See Alicia Gojman de Backal, *Las mujeres judías en la historia de México: Anna Vaez: una vida de idealismo y perseverancia en el siglo XVI* (México: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México), 2004.

¹²² “En portugal conoçia al Señor y que su m[^]e que es difuncta le habia enseñado la dh[^]a ley” (in Portugal he knew the Lord and that his mother had taught him the mentioned Law). Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 156.

¹²³ Refer to the trial documents of Portuguese conversa Blanca Manuel found in the National Archive of Spain, where Ana Mendez Diaz de Melo accuses Blanca Manuel of praying from a prayerbook of Jewish law. See Archivo Histórico Nacional, *Inquisición*, Legajo 164, expediente 8.

Jewish prayerbooks or from Christian texts—the trial documents attest that Portuguese cryptoJews learned the Law of Moses, and that the chain of knowledge was matriarchal.

Unlike in normative Sephardic communities where only male rabbis taught the Torah, Francisca, Catalina and Antonio’s mother instructed boys in the Law of Moses in Luis’ narratives.¹²⁴ While the public, male-gendered spaces like Hebrew schools and synagogues vanished after the expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492, and the forced conversion of Portuguese Jews in 1497, the home—the private sphere associated with women—remained the same. Melammed points out: “women had never been dependent upon a center outside of the home, nor were they overly dependent upon books...the center of their lives was always the home, and when all the other institutions disappeared, they did not undergo a major transition. Thus, whereas the men lost their center of Jewish life, the women continued, albeit under extenuating circumstances.”¹²⁵

With caution, cryptoJewish women like Antonio’s mother and Francisca made sure their servants cleaned the sheets before each Sabbath, attempted to abide by Jewish dietary laws, and

¹²⁴ “Judaism is a male-oriented religion... The Jewish male trains his son by means of example; the son accompanies him to the synagogue or *beit midrash* (house of study). There, additional activities also take place, such as the ongoing study of the Torah, the Commentaries, the Prophets, Midrash, Talmud, and other sacred writings.” Renée Levine Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel? The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 31-32.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 32.

went beyond overseeing these matters to teaching their children the Law of Moses.¹²⁶

Furthermore, Luis' previous testimony against his sister Catalina demonstrates that girls also learned the Law of Moses in the cryptoJewish community of New Spain (Colonial Mexico). In contrast to normative Judaism where only boys learned Torah in the sixteenth century, conversas (converso women) were both students and teachers of Torah.

Not only in Spanish colonies but also in Peninsular Spain, Converso women played an important role in promoting Jewish customs. Haim Beinart highlights the story of María Díaz, a conversa from Ciudad Real who, after the massacre of many within her converso community of Ciudad Real in 1474, fled with other converts to the nearby city of Palma. From the inquisition manuscripts of Ciudad Real, we learn that María was one of the community leaders who, like the town's rabbi (the community managed to find a rabbi to be their spiritual leader during their stay in Palma), knew the Law of Moses and encouraged community members to carry out Jewish practices.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ The term kosher, in the words of Stanley Waterman, “is a litany of do’s and don’ts concerning which foods are permissible and which are forbidden to Jews to eat and drink and how such foods should be prepared. In common parlance, these are referred to as the laws of *kashruth*—from the Hebrew word *kasher*, meaning “fit” or “proper” (for consumption). The concept [of *kasher* (kosher)] is hard to pin down...Although the words *kashruth* and *kasher* are usually understood in the context of foods, they can equally well be used to describe other religiously fit items such as a *sukkah* (a temporary living and eating booth used by religious Jews to celebrate the autumn Festival of Tabernacles) or a *mezuzah*, an icon affixed to doorposts.” (Stanley Waterman and Stanley Brunn, “The Changing World Religion Map : Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics.”, in *Eating, Drinking and Maintenance of Community: Jewish Dietary Laws and Their Effects on Separateness*, Dordrecht : Springer Netherlands : Springer, 2015: 2869. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9376-6_150.) See more on keeping kosher in chapter three.

¹²⁷ See Haim Beinart, *Conversos On Trial: The Inquisition in Ciudad Real*, trans. Yale Guilado (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1981): 70, 226, 205.

She even said the Sabbath blessings over the wine and bread (which would have customarily been said by the rabbi or Sancho de Ciudad, one of the leading male figures). If, as Beinart put it, “Her status among the Conversos equaled that of Sancho de Ciudad; indeed, she may well have inspired even greater admiration and respect than he”, María was evidently a cryptoJewish leader in the likes of Sancho de Ciudad— a converso who, “Even in their company [referring to non-Jews] he did not refrain from behaving as a Jew and was careful to avoid eating eating non-kasher food in their presence”.¹²⁸

Jewish Rituals and Liturgy: Shabbat

What María had been for the conversos of Ciudad Real in Spain, Francisca de Carvajal and her children were for the cryptoJewish community in New Spain, and the Carvajal home was used as a space for cryptoJewish rituals and liturgy. In her second trial, Leonor admitted to keeping the Sabbath and even explained to inquisitors when the holiday began. In accordance to normative Jewish ritual, she confessed that she and her family began their observance at sundown on Fridays: “and on Fridays at the setting of the sun, that began the keeping of Saturdays the mentioned Luis de Caravajal would sing to this one [referring to Leonor] and to the mentioned her mother doña Francisca and her sisters doña Ysabel and doña Mariana a

¹²⁸ Haim Beinart, *Conversos on Trial : the Inquisition in Ciudad Real* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press Hebrew University, 1981), 205.

song”.¹²⁹ Leonor added that their Sabbath celebration began with a liturgical song she referred to as the Song of Moses (as mentioned previously) that her brother Luis de Carvajal would sing for the whole family, and that Leonor learned by heart and sang to inquisitors at one of her hearings (see more in chapter three).

The inquisition used their influence to extract information from the accused (especially under arrest and vulnerable), servants, neighbors and even fellow converso friends and relatives. Manuel de Luçena— Luis de Carvajal’s previously mentioned cryptoJewish friend— reported to inquisitors what took place on Saturdays at the Carvajal home. This he knew firsthand because he was a Sabbath guest, and just as in normative Jewish custom, the Carvajals hosted guests for their Sabbath celebrations. Hayyim Schauss examines the changing customs of the Sabbath throughout the centuries, and points out that during the Middle Ages, “Everyone sought to have a special guest with him at the table on the Sabbath”.¹³⁰ Here too, as in their Jewish memory, Francisca and her children, retained certain medieval customs like the Sabbath ritual of sharing this day with guests.

Shabbat Rituals: Clean Sheets and Elegant Attire

¹²⁹ “y los viernes a puesta del sol, que comenzava la guarda de los sábados cantava el dh^o Luis de Caravajal a esta y a las dha^s su madre doña Fran^{ca} y sus hermanas doña Ysabel y doña Mariana un cantico”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folios 123-124.

¹³⁰ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 18.

Unfortunately for the Carvajals, this guest and friend testified against Ysabel de Carvajal and implicated the entire family in what the Inquisition considered a punishable crime. In Manuel de Luçena's words, Francisca, her daughters Ysabel, Leonor and Mariana and her son Luis prayed dressed in clean and festive attire: "in the same bedroom he found the mentioned Luis de Caravajal, doña Francisca his mother, doña Ysabel doña Leonor and doña Mariana his sisters well dressed and clean and like of a party praying on their knees facing the East".¹³¹ Like with Manuel de Luçena, inquisitors collected testimonies from Susana Galvan—another Portuguese conversa and friend of Francisca de Carvajal and her daughters. Inquisitors asked Susana to investigate if Francisca and her family "throw on clean clothes on Fridays on the bed and dress with clean clothes and keep Saturdays by putting on their best party dresses".¹³² With this motive in mind, Susana followed one of the Carvajal's servant, Luçia the Chichimeca.

The Chichimecas were one of the Indigenous tribes that Luis de Carvajal the Elder—Luis de Carvajal's uncle—had been charged with subduing for the Spanish Crown. The contract between Luis de Carvajal and the Spanish Crown (King Phillip II) authorized Luis to discover, pacify, and populate (with Spaniards) the regions northeast of New Spain. Samuel Temkin explains that, "from the times of the Conquest carried out by Hernán Cortés and his companions, the northeastern frontier of New Spain had not extended beyond the Pánuco River, due to the

¹³¹ "en el mismo aposento hallo al dh^o Luis de Caravajal, doña Fran^ca de caravajal su madre, doña ysabel doña Leonor y doña mariana sus hermanas bien vestidas de limpio y como de fiesta rezando hincadas de rodillas hazial oriente". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 176-177.

¹³² "hechan Ropa limpia Los Viernes en la cama y se la visten y si guardan los sabados poniendose los vestidos mejorados y de fiesta". Ibid, folios 6-7.

resistance of Indigenous peoples that lived in that region. No less important to the Crown were the settlements that the Spanish had founded in that conquered region, which were constantly attacked by Indigenous still “not pacified”. These reasons propelled the viceroy Martín Enríquez to strongly support Carvajal’s proposal to discover, pacify and populate (with Spanish) those regions.¹³³

Perhaps as a direct result of this “pacification” of the Chichimecas, Luçía the Chichimeca was now served Francisca and her family as a maidservant in their home. In *La familia Carvajal*, Luis de Carvajal the Elder is described as a type of conquistador who goes to the present-day Mexico to subdue the Indigenous population: “for the best understanding of the personality of this character, we will say that he belonged to the social class of daring and brave noblemen, that would come to the Indies in search of honor and riches, willing to break in a fortune, relying solely on the strength of their arm. Conquistadors half warriors, half merchants, that made the world their homeland, and would just as easily fight with angry indians to dispossess them of their goods and enslave them, than exploit mines”.¹³⁴ Susana saw that on

¹³³ “desde los tiempos de la conquista efectuada por Hernán Cortés y sus compañeros, la frontera noroeste de la Nueva España no se había extendido más allá del Río Pánuco, debido a la resistencia de los indígenas que habitaban esa región. . . . No menos importante para la Corona eran las poblaciones que los españoles habían fundado en la región ya conquistada, las cuales eran constantemente atacadas por indígenas aún “no pacificados”. Esas razones impulsaron al virrey Martín Enríquez a apoyar fuertemente la propuesta de Carvajal para descubrir, pacificar y poblar (con españoles) aquellas regiones.” Samuel Temkin, “Miguel Núñez, sponsor of the colonization of Nuevo Reino de León”, *Signos Históricos*, xxi, no. 42 (2019): 11-12.

¹³⁴ “para la mejor comprensión del carácter del personaje, diremos que pertenecía a aquella casta de hidalgos osados y valientes, que venían a las Indias en busca de honores y riquezas, dispuestos a domeñar fortuna, ateniéndose sólo al esfuerzo de su brazo. Conquistadores mitad guerreros, mitad traficantes, que tenían por patria el mundo, y lo mismo guerreaban con indios bravos para despojarlos de sus bienes y esclavizarlos, que explotaban minas”. Alfonso Toro, *La familia Carvajal*, (Mexico City: Editorial Patria, S.A., 1977), 25.

Fridays, Luçia, the Chichimeca, servant of the Carvajals, carried wet sheets (probably hand washed at a nearby river), on top her head (likely in a basket). On Saturday, Susana paid a visit to Francisca and saw these same sheets—now dried—on top of the beds of Francisca, Leonor, Ysabel and Luis.

Shabbat Rituals: Head Covering

Extracted from her own trial, Justa Mendez, a Portuguese conversa and friend of the Carvajal family, testified that on a certain Friday evening at the Carvajal home, a person prayed standing with his head covered (we can assume this person was Luis because she mentioned this person wore a “sombrero” or hat). Justa’s account gives us a glimpse of the wide range of Sabbath rituals observed by the Carvajals and other members of the cryptoJewish community in New Spain. For while Francisca and her children prayed kneeling when Manuel de Luçena joined them for the Sabbath, when Justa was invited, everyone in the room prayed standing, in line with normative Jewish custom. Another important Jewish ritual extracted from Justa’s narrative is that Luis covered his head when praying.

Although the wearing of a head covering is mentioned in the Torah and the Talmud, Claire Soussen argues that the Jewish practice of wearing a head covering was developed over

time.¹³⁵ She explains that in Biblical times, only the Cohanim (priests) wore head coverings, and that in the Talmudic era, only pious men wore them. In the Code of Jewish Law, the Shulchan Arukh (Set Table), by Joseph Karo, the obligation for men to cover their head while praying is implicit in the following statement: “There are those who say that it is forbidden to mention [G-d’s name] with an uncovered head”.¹³⁶

Although Joseph Caro wrote the Shulchan Arukh in Safed in 1563, and originally published it in Venice in 1565, the laws in this Code of Jewish Law or Halakhah (Jewish Law or more literally, “the way to go”), have been around for centuries in texts like the Talmud (Mishnah and Gemara), the writings of Maimonides and other sacred Jewish writings. Speaking about Joseph Caro’s Shulchan Arukh, Claire Soussen points out that, “In the XVI century the Shulchan Arukh, a moral text and guide of practices written by Joseph Caro, recommends the wearing of a *kippah* by all and at all times and that it was important that no man walk with his

¹³⁵ On the tradition of wearing of a head covering, Claire writes: “Pour ce qui est de son origine, contrairement à ce que l’on pense parfois, elle n’est pas biblique ni même talmudique. La Bible, en Exode 28.4, prescrit le port d’un couvre-chef uniquement pour les prêtres, les Cohanim... À l’époque talmudique, le port d’un couvre-chef se généralise pour les hommes pieux” (In regards to its origin, contrary to what is perhaps thought, it is not Biblical nor Talmudic. The Bible, in Exodus 28.4 prescribes the wearing of a head covering to priests, Cohanim alone... in the Talmudic era, only pious men wore a head covering). Claire Soussen, “Les objets rituels des Juifs à la fin du Moyen Âge, catalyseurs des sentiments antijuifs ou fédérateurs des identités ?”, *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 4 | 2014, 686, <https://doi.org/10.4000/rhr.8326>).

¹³⁶ Josef Karo, “ Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayim 9”, Sefaria.org, Accessed on 1 December, 2021, https://www.sefaria.org/Shulchan_Aruk%2C_Orach_Chayim.91.3?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en.

head uncovered for more than four cubits, thus reiterating the Talmudic recommendation”.¹³⁷ It is plausible that conversos like the Carvajal family knew and practiced these laws and traditions, given that the *Shulchan Arukh* is a recompilation of Jewish laws and traditions that were well known and practiced by Spanish and Portuguese Jews, even before 1563. If so, we can conjecture that Luis’ Sabbath prayer ritual—which involved blessing the name of G-d— included covering his head with a hat—in absence of a *kippah*. (See a further analysis of the prayer in chapter three.)

Independent of their prior knowledge of normative Judaism, the Carvajal family may have reinforced their knowledge of Halakhah, through the narratives of an Italian Sephardic immigrant, Francisco Rodríguez. Alfonso Toro specifies that, “In his conversations Rodríguez would talk as much about the peaceful life lived over there, as about the perfection with which the liturgy was carried out, carrying on with long and detailed descriptions of the synagogues and the Jewish rituals and ceremonies celebrated there with extreme abundance and solemnity”.¹³⁸ Rodríguez described the Sabbath rituals and liturgy carried out in the synagogues of Italy in

¹³⁷ Speaking about Joseph Caro’s *Shulchan Arukh* in “Les objets rituels des Juifs à la fin du Moyen Âge, catalyseurs des sentiments antijuifs ou fédérateurs des identités ?”, Claire Soussen explains that, “C’est au XVI^e siècle que le *Choul’han Aroukh*, ouvrage de casuistique et guide de pratiques rédigé par Joseph Caro, prescrit le port de la *kippah* pour tous et tout le temps et précise que nul homme ne peut marcher tête nue sur une distance dépassant quatre coudées, reprenant ainsi la recommandation talmudique”. Claire Soussen, “Les objets rituels des Juifs à la fin du Moyen Âge, catalyseurs des sentiments antijuifs ou fédérateurs des identités ?”, *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 4 | 2014, 686, <https://doi.org/10.4000/rhr.8326>).

¹³⁸ “En sus conversaciones hablaba Rodríguez, tanto de la vida tranquila que allá se llevaba, como de la perfección con que se practicaba el culto, extendiéndose en largas y detalladas descripciones de las sinagogas y de los ritos y ceremonias judaicas que en ellas con el mayor lujo y solemnidad eran celebrados.” Alfonso Toro, *La familia Carvajal*, (Mexico City: Editorial Patria, S.A., 1977), 205.

detail, including the attire of the men in the congregation by stating: “the men seated in the high chairs for prayer, with their black capes, their long and pointed beards, their extremely white and starched collars, with heads covered with white wool or silk shawls, decorated with gold tassels”.¹³⁹ Although this description of their covered heads with a shawl of wool or silk points to a tallit or prayer shawl, men may or may not have worn a kippah under their tallits.

Yet Luis may have also covered his head with a hat in response to the Christian custom of uncovering the head when entering a Church. Claire Soussen proposes that the mandate for Jewish men to cover their heads may have arisen from a direct opposition to Christian ritual. She divulges that: “Jews well versed in polemics incidentally justify this obligation as the assumed desire of Jews to distinguish themselves from Christians who undo their head covering whenever they enter a sacred place”.¹⁴⁰

Similarly, David Nirenberg argues that Spanish Jews, Christians and Muslims during the Middle Ages fashioned their own identity in relationship to the others. Speaking about Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Middle Ages, Nirenberg argues that all three religions were, “interdependent, constantly transforming themselves by thinking about each other in a fundamentally ambivalent form of neighborliness” and that, “By neighbors in thought I mean that believes in all three faiths defined (and define) themselves and their place in this world and

¹³⁹ “los hombres sentados en las altas sillas de la oración, con sus capas negras, sus luengas barbas puntiagudas, sus blanquísimos y almidonados cuellos, teniendo la cabeza velada con chales blancos de lana o seda, adornados con borlas de oro”. Ibid, 205.

¹⁴⁰ “Les polémistes juifs justifient d’ailleurs parfois cette obligation par la volonté assumée des Juifs de se distinguer des Chrétiens qui, eux, se défont de leur couvre-chef lorsqu’ils entrent dans un lieu consacré.” Claire Soussen, “Les objets rituels des Juifs à la fin du Moyen Âge, catalyseurs des sentiments antijuifs ou fédérateurs des identités ?”, *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 4 | 2014, 686, <https://doi.org/10.4000/rhr.8326>.

the one to come by thinking in terms of the other faiths”¹⁴¹ Though not in the Middle Ages, Luis distanced himself from the ruling religion of sixteenth century New Spain by covering his head when praying on the Sabbath.

Shabbat Liturgy: Prayers

Although today all that remains is the Kotel (Western Wall), it is normative Jewish custom— and it was Jewish custom in the sixteenth century—to pray to G-d facing towards where the Temple once stood. The ritual has origins in the Tanakh (Jewish Bible) where it is recorded in the book of Melachim I (I Kings) that when king Solomon built the Temple, it was located in Jerusalem and it faced the East. When Solomon dedicated the Temple, he implored G-d: “That Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place which You said, 'My Name will be there’; to listen to the prayer that Your servant will pray toward this place. And You shall listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel that they will pray toward this place; and You shall hear in heaven, Your abode, and You shall hear and forgive.”¹⁴²

The great Spanish-Jewish thinker and rabbi Maimonides (Rambam) reiterated the importance of facing the East in his commentary on the Talmud, the Mishneh Torah, where he

¹⁴¹. David Nirenberg, *Neighboring faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and today*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 4, 6.

¹⁴² "Melachim I- I Kings Chapter 8" Chabad.org, The Judaica Press. 1993-2021 [Chabad-Lubavitch Media Center. https://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/15892/jewish/Chapter-8.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/15892/jewish/Chapter-8.htm)

explained that the way in which one should pray was: “With face turned towards the Temple. Anyone outside Palestine turns his face towards the land of Israel and recites the prayer. One who is in the Holy Land turns towards Jerusalem. One who is in Jerusalem turns towards the Temple”.¹⁴³ Even though Francisca and her children prayed toward towards the East on Saturdays in consonance with normative Judaism, they performed this ritual in a Christian body posture, “hincadas de rodillas”, or kneeling.¹⁴⁴

Jerome Friedman highlights that in early Modernity, “Most records indicate that New Christians were convicted of being secret Jews because they abstained from pork, used olive oil rather than lard, changed sheets every Friday, called their children by Old Testament names, prayed standing rather than kneeling, or turned to face a wall when hearing of a death.”¹⁴⁵ Praying “standing rather than kneeling” was a practice that indicated that New Christians were secret Jews because it is a Jewish custom to stand to pray, while it is a Christian custom to kneel instead. But rather than standing—the body position indicative of cryptoJewish identity—Francisca and her children are recorded to have knelt when they prayed on the Sabbath, according to Manuel.

¹⁴³ Moshe ben Maimon (Maimonides), ”Mishneh Torah, Prayer and the Priestly Blessing 5”, Sefaria.org, Accessed on 1 December, 202, https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh_Torah%2C_Prayer_and_the_Priestly_Blessing.5.1?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en.

¹⁴⁴ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios176-177.

¹⁴⁵ Jerome Friedman, “Jewish Conversion, the Spanish Pure Blood Laws and Reformation: A Revisionist View of Racial and Religious Antisemitism”, *The Sixteenth Century Journal, The Journal of Early Modern Studies*, 18, No. 1 (Spring 1987): 15.

In the words of Emily Colbert Cairns, given “the hybrid Catholic/crypto-Jewish environment in which the Carvajal family lived” it is not surprising that Francisca and her children would incorporate a Christian modality to their Sabbath prayers.¹⁴⁶ Alicia Gojman de Backal explains that due to the constant dangers of the Inquisition, conversos would educate their children in Christian precepts in order to pretend adherence to Catholicism. But in this religious syncretism, Christian and Jewish precepts were sometimes confused with each other. This explains why some conversos knelt to read Psalms in accordance to the Law of Moses.

Alicia Gojman de Backal writes that “Conscious of being in constant danger pressured them to create a special way of life, of educating one of their children within the bosom of the Church to be able to disguise or to be distant from openly Jewish communities, provoked a religious syncretism. Sometimes a Jewish precept was confused with a Christian one or the Psalms of the Law of Moses would be recited while kneeling”.¹⁴⁷ And yet kneeling could have also been used as a form of protection from policing eyes that could report their Sabbath observance to the Inquisition. If anyone saw them— just as it really happened with Manuel— they would only see a woman praying in Christian custom along with her children. Indeed, Manuel testified that the Carvajals knelt while they prayed, and this important detail could have

¹⁴⁶ Cairns, Emily Colbert. “Esther among Crypto-Jews and Christians: Queen Esther and the Inquisition Manuscripts of Isabel De Carvajal and Lope De Vega's *La Hermosa Ester*.” *Chasqui* 42, no. 2 (2013): 100.

¹⁴⁷ “La conciencia de estar en constante peligro los presionaba para crear una forma de vida especial, de educar a uno de los hijos dentro del seno de la Iglesia para poder disimular o de estar alejados de comunidades abiertas de judíos, lo que provocaba un sincretismo religioso. A veces se llegaba a confundir un precepto judío con uno cristiano o se rezaban los salmos de la Ley de Moisés de rodillas.” Alicia G. Backal, *Raíces criptojudías de Nuevo León, Cuaderno de Investigación No. 6*. (Ciudad de México: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazi de México, 1996), 21.

weakened the charge of judaizing against the Carvajal family— or so they hoped.

Shabbat Liturgy: Songs

Justa Mendez also related the Sabbath liturgy of prayers and songs at Francisca's home. Although Justa did not mention Luis, his mother or sisters by name in her declaration, we can assume she was referring to the Carvajals since her declaration served as testimony against Ysabel de Carvajal and was included in Ysabel's second trial. The inquisitor scribe wrote that, "Justa Mendez staying over to sleep one Friday night in a certain house that she declared at eight or nine hours of the night the mentioned Justa Mendez in a certain bedroom that she named with the mentioned certain person and others that she declared that for doubts were six the persons that were shut up one of which that she mentioned began to pray a prayer...standing in a low voice with his hat on...and having finished the prayers began to sing nine songs in four-line stanzas and the mentioned certain person and another two that she named responded with another four-line stanza".¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ "quedandose la dha Justa Mendez un viernes en la noche a dormir en çierta casa que declaro a las ocho o nueve horas de la noche se ençerro la dha Justa Mendez en çierto aposento que nombro con la dha çierta persona y otras que declaro que por dudas heran seis las personas que estavan ençerradas una de las quales que nombro empeço a rezar una oraçion...en pïe con boz baxa puesto su sombrero...y acabadas otras oraçiones començo a cantar nueve canticos en copla y la dha çierta persona y otras dos que nombro respondían con otra copla." Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 17-18.

Shabbat Rituals: Feasting

Asked to spy on the Carvajal family in order to discover if they kept the Sabbath, Susana also informed to inquisitors that on Yom Shabbat (Saturday), Francisca and her daughters dressed in party attire— as Manuel and Justa also testified— and awaited guests with food prepared and the table set. Susana declared that: “and entered in another palace or living room where the table was set and the mentioned doña Leonor dressed in festive clothing seated on a cushion with clothing of black velvet and this one[referring to Susana] saw a pot on the fire full of meat and she thinks there was also chicken in it too and the mentioned doña Francisca de Carvajal said to this one asking her if she would eat or have lunch because the table was set and there were outside guests she responded that it was lunch and food”.¹⁴⁹

Shabbat Liturgy: Readings

Without access to the Tanakh (Jewish Bible) or siddurim (Jewish prayer books), another aspect of cryptoJewish Shabbat liturgy was the mining for Psalms and Jewish texts out of Christian sources. Leonor told inquisitors that her brother Luis would read the Psalms he had translated in the vernacular (Spanish or Portuguese, she does not specify) from a Christian Bible

¹⁴⁹ “y entró en otro palacio o sala adonde estaba la messa puesta y la dh^a doña leonor vestida de fiesta sentada en un cugin con una ropa de terçiopelado negra y vio esta que tenían una olla en la lumbre llena de carne y le pareçe que tambien habia en ella gallina y la dh^a doña fran^ca de caravajal dixo a esta preguntandole que si habia de comer o almorçar pues que estaba puesta la messa y habia huespedes de fuera respondió que hera almuerzo y comida”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 6.

(written in Latin) on Saturdays as part of keeping the Shabbat: “And the mentioned brother Luis de Carvajal would read on Saturdays to her[referring to Leonor] and her mother doña Francisca de Carvajal, doña Ysabel, doña Mariana, the Psalms of David in Romance, that he had taken out of the Bible that was in the College of Santiago de Tlatilulco.¹⁵⁰ (In chapter three, I take a closer look at this text source).

Shabbat Rituals: Hidden Sabbath

The body posture and direction taken to pray, the prayers, songs, elegant clothing, clean bedsheets, abundance of food, and Psalms taken out of a Christian Bible (that Manuel, Ysabel, Justa, Susana and Leonor mentioned in their confessions before inquisitors), were part of the ritual and liturgical elements of the Carvajal family Sabbath celebrations in their home. Hayyim Schauss paints a similar picture to the Carvajal Sabbath observance—but naturally exempt from the Christian elements—where in the Middle Ages, “After the Friday evening meal, the entire household sat about the table and sang z’miros, table songs, in honor of the Sabbath. The Pay’tonim—the liturgical poets of the Middle Ages— not only enriched the Sabbath prayers with their poetical insertions but they also created hymns and poems to sing at the table.”¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ “Y el dho su hermano luis de carvajal leya los sabados a esta y a su madre doña Fran^ca de Carvajal, doña Ysabel, doña Mariana, los psalmos de David en Romance, que el via sacado de la Biblia que estava en el collegio de s^tiago de Tlatilulco.”, Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio123.

¹⁵¹ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 18.

Analogous to the Jewish liturgical poets (which were, in large part, Spanish-Jews), Luis wrote songs based on the Jewish Bible excised from the Christian Bible and other Christian texts. The Carvajal Sabbath observance thus recalls normative Erev Shabbat (Friday evening) and Yom Shabbat (Saturday) observances in public and private spaces. The prayers toward the East (kneeling and sometimes standing) and the reading of Psalms in the Carvajal home are analogous to Friday evening and Saturday services in the public sphere of the synagogue, while the festive meal evokes Erev Shabbat dinners in normative Jewish homes. Despite their differences, the Sabbath is considered as the day of rest both in normative Judaism as well as in cryptoJudaism.

Already before the Common Era (beginning in the Babylonian exile), “The strict Sabbath rest became incorporated into the laws of the Priestly Code, which the Jews had adopted at the Great Assembly and had sworn solemnly to observe in future generations. The Sabbath became the holy day of the Lord, a day of complete cessation from all work”.¹⁵² Although Francisca, her daughters and son kept Shabbat explicitly with elaborate clothing, feasting, singing and guests, as contradictory as it sounds, they also kept the Sabbath day of rest implicitly with work. At one of his hearings, as was the strategy of the Inquisition, Francisca’s son Luis was given the opportunity to respond to the testimony of an unnamed witness about how he celebrated the Sabbath on a particular occasion.

After the testimony was read, he immediately identified the unnamed witness as Justa Mendez, and agreed with her narrative: in addition to dressing up, reading from the book of Tobit (found in the Christian Bible), singing a redondilla—a rhymed poem consisting of eight syllable verses—and dancing (this he added) on Friday evening, he went to work at the school of

¹⁵² Ibid, 9.

Santiago Saturday morning.¹⁵³ But in his version of the narrative, Luis' work at the school of Santiago was not in opposition to Sabbath observance, for even though he labored, he affirmed that he also kept the Sabbath in his heart. Not only did Luis acknowledge an inward Sabbath observance and outward labor for himself, but he implicated his mother and sisters in this antithetical Sabbath ritual: "this one [referring to Luis] and the mentioned his mother doña Francisca doña Ysabel, doña Mariana, doña Leonor kept the mentioned Saturday in their hearts because she does not remember if they did any physical work because this one had gone to the college like he has said the ordinary was to work the mentioned his mother and sisters the Saturdays for not being heard".¹⁵⁴

In the words of Luis, he and his mother and sisters consistently engaged in physical labor on the Sabbath, and only so as not to be heard, kept the Sabbath in their hearts. Just like the Christian body posture of kneeling to pray discussed earlier, the Christian custom of working on Saturday (given that Christians do not keep the Sabbath), was adopted by cryptoJews like Francisca and her children as a way to keep the Sabbath secretly. And just as the Carvajal family rendered a special meaning to the carrying out of physical labor on the Sabbath, so they attended mass to conceal their real intentions of keeping the Sabbath.

¹⁵³ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 53.

¹⁵⁴ "este y las dha^s Su madre doña françisca doña ysabel, doña Mariana, doña Leonor guardaron El dh^o sabado en su coraçon porque no se acuerda si hizieron algun trabajo corporal porque este habia ydo al colegio como tiene dh^o y lo ordin^o hera travajar Las dha^s Su madre y hermanas Los sabados por no ser sentidas". Ibid.

Luis explained it in the following manner: “it is true that Saturday the mentioned his mother doña Francisca doña Ysabel doña Mariana, doña Leonor they were cleanly dressed for the observance of Saturday because as they would go to Mass on Saturday to conceal the observance of them [Sabbaths] and not be forced to work staying at home to not violate them [Sabbaths]”.¹⁵⁵ Francisca, Ysabel, Mariana and Leonor went to Mass so that they could dress up, remain outside their home, not be obligated to carry out any housework on the Sabbath, and most importantly, so that they could hide their Sabbath observance.

So far we have focused on Shabbat, the first of Jewish holy days, and examined how Francisca and her family, in the company of other Portuguese cryptoJews of New Spain, kept the day with rituals and liturgy, but there were other Jewish holidays the Carvajal family observed. Of all the eyewitnesses and secondhand accounts, Leonor de Carvajal’s testimonies were particularly informative in that she condensed the bulk of cryptoJewish identity into a selective number of rituals, liturgy and most importantly, a rationale (see more on cryptoJewish rationale in chapter five). Leonor’s accounts exist by chance for us today, because they almost never happened.

Having initially said she had nothing to add to her declaration during her hearing, Leonor broke down and confessed upon being “admonished to say the truth and unload her conscience of all she has done or seen done in offense of our G-d Lord and his holy Catholic faith by

¹⁵⁵ “es verdad que el dh^o sabado las dha^s su madre doña françisca doña ysabel doña mariana, doña leonor estaban vestidos de limpio por la guarda de el sabado porque como yban los sabados a missa por disimular la guarda de ellos y no obligarse a travajar estando en cassa por no quebrantarlos”. Ibid, 54.

keeping and observing the Law of Moses its rituals and ceremonies”.¹⁵⁶ Inquisitors wrote “she confesses” in the margins to identify this part of the trial as the place where she had revealed the core of her cryptoJewish identity (or so she led her inquisitors to believe), which consisted in: “that she waited for the promised Messiah in the Law...fasted in keeping of the Law of Moses Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays every week from sun to sun without eating all day until night, and that she kept the Sabbaths...that she not eat bacon, lard, nor things of pork and that she fasted the Great Day of the Lord that Jews call of penitence, and that she took the grease and fat from meat in keeping of the mentioned Law and that she believe in one only G-d and to entrust Him alone...the sacraments of the Church and its mysteries that they celebrated were things of air”.¹⁵⁷

Leonor alleged that her brother Luis had prompted her to return to the Law of Moses, which he summarized in the series of rituals and rationale recorded above. Here we find the cryptoJewish rituals of extra fasts (which are not part of normative Judaism), Jewish dietary food restrictions (see more in chapter two) and three axioms of crypto-Jewish rationale (see more in chapter four). The only two Jewish holy days mentioned are Shabbat and Yom Kippur (contrary

¹⁵⁶ “amonestada diga la verdad y descargue su conciencia de todo lo que huviera hecho o visto hazer en ofensa de dios nuestro s[^]r y de su s[^]ta fee catholica, en guarda y observancia de la ley de moyssen y sus ritos y çeremonias”. Ibid, 122.

¹⁵⁷ “esperasse al messias prom[^]o en la ley...ayunasse en guarda de la ley de moysen los lunes, miercoles, y jueves de todas las semanas de sol a sol sin comer en todo el dia hasta la noche, y que guardasse los sabados...que no comiesse toçino, manteca, ni cosas de puerco, y q ayunasse esta el dia grande del señor que llaman los judios de penitencia, y que quitasse el sebo y la gordura de la carne por guarda de la dha ley y que creyesse en un solo dios a quien solam[^]te le avia de encomendar...los sacramentos de la yglesia y sus misterios que celebra eran cossa de ayre”. Ibid, folios 122-123.

to Leonor's claim, it is called Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement instead of Day of Penitence) perhaps because these were the two holidays most observed by cryptoJews in New Spain.

Another of Leonor's testimony was also uttered by chance, when disrupted from singing the Song of Moses—a liturgical song she and her mother, sisters and brother sang on the Sabbath (for more on this song, go to chapter three). After many stanzas, the inquisitors asked her to shorten her recitation of the song for the sake of brevity. Leonor replied that she could only speak about the poem if she sang its verses in meter. Thus, she stopped singing the song of the Law of Moses before the inquisitors altogether. Leonor's trial transcript then changes the subject abruptly. Although the trial does not specify who the speaker was, the manuscript reads as if she was asked to briefly explain the Jewish holidays she and her family observed.

The trial document lists Yom Kippur, Passover and Sukkot, with a brief description of each celebration, as follows: “the celebration of the Passover of the lamb with unleavened bread without yeast that lasts for seven days. The fast of the Great Day of the Lord that they call of penitence where G-d judges the sins and forgive the souls, the observance of Passover of the little huts”.¹⁵⁸ In summation, by observing these Jewish holidays and composing liturgy as needed for these rituals, the Carvajal family (mostly consisting of women), helped preserve a Jewish memory in New Spain. They fashioned a cryptoJewish identity that placed women at the

¹⁵⁸ “la celebración de la pasqua del cordero con pan çençeno sin lebadura, cuya guarda es de siete dias, el ayuno del dia grande del señor que llaman de penitençia en que dios juzga a los pecados y perdona las almas, la guarda de la pasqua de las cavañuelas”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 236.

forefront of religious and cultural expression in this Christian space of early Modernity.

Jewish Rituals and Liturgy

Yom Kippur: The Ten Days of Repentance

Yom Kippur is a day of fasting that culminates a month of teshuva (repentance) when God judges humanity, and as Hayyim Schauss puts it—the fate of every person is inscribed in heaven.¹⁵⁹ Although in normative Judaism, specifically in Sephardic communities, selichot (prayers for forgiveness) are said throughout the Hebrew month of Elul, the ten days leading up to Yom Kippur are specially focused on repentance and forgiveness and known as the Ten Days of Penitence.¹⁶⁰ It is believed that by doing teshuva, saying selichot prayers in synagogue and

¹⁵⁹ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 149.

Concerning Yom Kippur, Maimonides explained in his book *Mishneh Torah* that: “*Yom Kippur* itself atones for those who repent, as it is written: “Atonement shall be made for you on this day” (Leviticus 16:30).” Moises Ben-Maimon, *Maimonides’ Mishneh Torah* ed. Philip Birnbaum, (New York: Hebrew Pub. Co. 1967).

In regards to repentance or teshuva, the Mishneh Torah affirmed that: “Yom Kippur is a time of *teshuva* for everyone, for the individual and for the public, and it is the end of [the time for that's year's] forgiveness and pardoning for Israel. Therefore, all must do *teshuva* and confess on Yom Kippur.” Sefaria Community Translation, “Mishneh Torah, Repentance 2:7”, Sefaria, February 3, 2021, <https://www.sefaria.org/search?q=Yom%20Kippur&tab=text&tvar=1&tsort=relevance&svar=1&ssort=relevance>

¹⁶⁰ “The first ten days of Tishri, which include both Rosh Hashonoh and Yom Kippur, are known as the “The Ten Days of Penitence”. Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 149.

giving charity, a person removes the evil decree. During these ten days, the most pious fast until noon.¹⁶¹

In a similar manner, Luis de Carvajal explained to inquisitors that he and his sisters fasted all day and only ate at night during the first seven days prior to the “Great Day” and on the last three days, they would not eat at all: “now declares that the mentioned fast was three days in the following form that if the mentioned Great Day fell on Friday ten days before the mentioned day would come they fasted like a prisoner the seven days not eating the whole day until night, and the three days there are from Wednesday until Friday they did not eat a bit by night nor by day until they ate the mentioned Friday night and in all the ten days they would carry out prayer the mentioned prayers that he has declared except that the three days before the keeping of the mentioned Great Day they would pray without stopping in all of them and the eve that was Thursday they would stay up that night in prayer without laying down”.¹⁶² With the exception of a more rigorous fast until evening rather than until noon, and fasting continuously on the last three days, Luis and his sisters observed the Ten Days of Awe as in normative Judaism. And

¹⁶¹ “But Repentance, Prayer and Charity avert the evil decree”; “The very pious fast till midday every day of this period, with the exception of the Sabbath and the day before Yom Kippur, days on which it is forbidden to fast”. Ibid,148-149.

¹⁶² “agora declara que el d^ho ayuno hera de tres dias en la forma siguiente que si el d^ho dia grande caia en viernes dies dias antes que llegase el d^ho dia ayunaban a reo los siete dias no comiendo en todo el dia hasta la noche y los tres dias que ay desde el miercoles hasta el viernes no comian bocado de noche ni de dia hasta que çenaban el d^ho viernes en la noche y en todos los diez dias se exerçitaban en rezar las d^has oraçiones que ha declarado salbo que los tres dias de la guarda de el d^ho dia grande rezaban sin çesar en todos ellos y la vispera de el que hera el jueves velaban aquella noche y estaban en oraçion sin acostarse”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 62.

while he did not name these days as the Ten Days of Awe, Luis identified them as the days prior to “the aforementioned Great Day”.

In normative Judaism, Yom Kippur is also called the “Great Day”. Schauss sheds light on this phrase by affirming that: “Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, comes on the tenth day of Tishrei, and is observed everywhere as a fast day, as the Great Day of the year”; “*The Great Day*...During the latter period of the second Temple Yom Kippur was already the holiest day of the year for all Jews. “The Great Day” or, more simply, “The Day”.”¹⁶³ Luis explained to inquisitors how he observed the ten days leading up to the Great Day with an example, supposing that Yom Kippur occurred on a Friday, for in actuality, the day varies.

Yom Kippur: Date of Observance

Unlike the Sabbath, which begins at sundown on Friday evening and ends at sundown on Saturday evening, the rest of Jewish holidays take place on specific days on the Jewish calendar. Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, for instance, is observed on the tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei. While “It is to be presumed that in pre-historic times, when Jews were still nomadic shepherd tribes in the wilderness, they reckoned time entirely by the moon, as did all nomadic peoples...Jews figured their calendar—the month, the year, and the festivals—entirely by observation, by testimony offered that the moon had appeared and been seen...In later

¹⁶³ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 112, 125.

times...the astronomical calculation of the calendar became so precise that the practice of hearing witnesses was discarded. The Jewish calendar was established in every detail”.¹⁶⁴

Even without access to a Jewish calendar, one could attend synagogue and hear the announcement of Rosh Chodesh (New Moon), in order to know the name of the new month and when it would begin. Yet without an openly Jewish community and corresponding synagogue to attend for services, it was difficult for cryptoJews to know the exact date Yom Kippur fell in the secular Gregorian calendar. According to Cristóbal Méndez— a Spanish converso of Portuguese descent who spent seventeen years in Western Europe living as a Jew, but who returned to Spain on business and was arrested by the Inquisition in 1661—Yom Kippur occurred in September.¹⁶⁵ Apparently, Cristóbal believed Yom Kippur always fell in September, because when he confessed to inquisitors all he knew about Jewish holidays, described: “the great fast that is called Kippur, which falls in the month of September”.¹⁶⁶

Other Portuguese conversos that lived in Spain around the same time period as the Carvajals in New Spain claimed that Yom Kippur occurred sometime in the month of September, or more specifically, on the tenth of September. Yosef Kaplan writes about Gonzalo Luis— a Portuguese crypto-Jewish teenager— who shared that when he was ten or eleven, his grandfather had instructed him about his crypto-Jewish identity and observances, and “his said grandfather had warned him to fast “in particular on a certain day at the beginning of September, known as

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 114.

¹⁶⁵ Yosef Kaplan. "Cristóbal Méndez, alias Abraham Franco de Silveyra: The Puzzling Saga of a Seventeenth-Century Converso", in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 25, 38.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 37.

“the great day”. He had observed the fast once in Braganza, because his said aunt had told him to fast on that day, and had done so herself”.¹⁶⁷ In addition, Gonzalo Luis’ brother, Manuel Alvares, “developed a Jewish consciousness in the year 1629 whilst on a visit to Portugal...and initiated him into the secrets of the law of Moses”, that included: “his duty to keep the fasts, which were to be commenced in the evening and kept up until the same hour on the next day, above all the fast of 10 September which was styled the “great day”.¹⁶⁸

In New Spain, Francisca de Carvajal believed that Yom Kippur fell on the fourteenth of September. On Thursday, August 31, 1595, Francisca was brought in before inquisitors because she had requested a hearing to confess the traditions of the Law of Moses she kept, among which was “the fast of the Great Day of the Lord fell on when it falls on the fourteen of the moon of September”.¹⁶⁹ Yet perhaps Francisca misspoke and conversos in New Spain observed Yom Kippur on the tenth. Luis de Carvajal, for instance, informed inquisitors that his sister Catalina had observed a Yom Kippur that had fallen on the tenth of September: “also he said that the mentioned doña Catalina his sister fasted three years ago more or less in the house of Santiago de Tlatilulco a Great Day of the Lord that fell ten days of the moon of September in keeping and

¹⁶⁷ Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 39.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 43-44.

¹⁶⁹ “el ayuno de el dh^o dia grande de el señor caia a lo que cae a catorze de la luna de septiembre”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folios 96-97.

observance of the Law of Moses in the company of this one [referring to Luis]”.¹⁷⁰ In addition, Sebastian Rodriguez—one of the witnesses against the Carvajal family—pointed out that Yom Kippur took place on the tenth of a certain month. Through the deposition of Sebastian de la Peña, “the mentioned Sebastian Rodriguez told him that one should fast and keep it that Sunday that was the tenth of the moon”.¹⁷¹ The references of these conversos—both in New Spain, peninsular Spain and Portugal—to the tenth of September, or of a certain month reminds us that indeed Yom Kippur occurs on the tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei. If conversos had convened to treat the secular month of September as if it was the Jewish month of Tishrei, then September the tenth became the Great Day in cryptoJewish thought.

We know that some Portuguese conversos in Spain, however, four decades after the Carvajal’s trial, had access to Jewish calendars, like Isabel Luis who told inquisitors that: “In 1639 they had organized ‘the great fast’ in Santa Cruz on 8 October, which was, in point of fact, the exact date of the Day of Atonement”.¹⁷² Josef Kaplan analyzed this deposition and commented that: “One might well wonder how it was these crypto-Jews, for all practical

¹⁷⁰ “~yten dixo que la dh^a doña cat^a su hermana ayuno abia tres años poco mas o menos e^la cassa de santiago tlatilulco un dia grande del señor que cayo a diez dias de la luna de sept^e en guarda y observançia de la ley de moysen e^comp^a deeste”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 133.*

¹⁷¹ “el dh^o sebastian rodriguez le dixo que se habia de ayunar y guardar aquel domingo que heran diez de la luna”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 169.*

¹⁷² Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 32-33.

purposes cut off from the Jewish world, were able to ascertain the proper dates on which the Jewish festivals fell. From the testimony deposed by Manuel Sarmiento (see above) we discover that Manuel Alvares' brother Santiago Luis (already known, within the intimacy of his family, as Isaac) possessed a Jewish calendar, 'in which were noted all the festival dates of the Law of Moses'".¹⁷³

Another Spanish converso named Juan L. Morales, owned a siddur— a Jewish prayerbook—known as libro de la reça (more on siddurs in chapter three). Besides the prayers included in it, the book also included a Jewish calendar that listed holidays and dates when they were to be observed. According to Juan, he received this book from certain Jews from Sancti Spiritus, Cuba whom he encountered when he lived in Bayonne, France. Another converso who possessed such a siddur was Juan Méndez de Molina. He would tell his family and friends when Jewish holidays took place.¹⁷⁴

Pilar Huerga Criado argues that, "since the Jewish calendar was too complicated to pass on orally, conversos calculated the lunar months based on the solar calendar. Notwithstanding, only a minority knew the dates of Jewish holidays, who in turn, would inform the rest of conversos. In cryptoJewish circles, those who knew the dates were constantly approached in

¹⁷³ Kaplan cites the actual deposition: "evidence deposed on 23 Dec. 1639: 'Isac Luis alias Santiago Luis...tiene un calendario en guarismo en que tiene sentadas todas las fiestas de la ley de Moysen y a este confesante se le mostro en oración que le dixo que si queria ver todas las fiestas que tenian los de la naçion hebrea...'" Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 32-33.

¹⁷⁴ Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 180-181.

order to know the exact date when a Jewish holiday occurred”.¹⁷⁵ In Pastrana, Spain, Conversos asked Rufino López, who knew about the moons, and who was in charge to informing everyone when a celebration was coming up.¹⁷⁶

While in New Spain Leonor de Carvajal did not have a Jewish calendar, she knew a woman who knew when Yom Kippur occurred. She reported to inquisitors that according to her brother Luis, Costança Rodriguez knew the hour when Yom Kippur began: “Costança Rodriguez his wife who knew with much curiosity the hour in which the mentioned fast should start”.¹⁷⁷ Although “ora” can be translated as hour, it could also mean “time”, as in the time period when Yom Kippur took place.¹⁷⁸ But if in general, it was a challenge for conversos to know the exact date for Yom Kippur, knowing this information while inside the Inquisition’s secret prisons must have been nearly impossible.

Yet despite the obstacles, Ysabel de Carvajal was able to indicate to Francisco Rodriguez, another converso inmate in the cell above hers, when the tenth of Tishrei occurred. Assuming she told Francisco about Yom Kippur the accurate secular date when Yom Kippur occurred—after all, all we have is Francisco’s testimony against her—how did she receive this information

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 183.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 184.

¹⁷⁷ “costança rodriguez su muger la qual sabia con mucha curiosidad la ora en que se habia de enpeçar El dh^o ayuno”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 75.

¹⁷⁸ In the *Diccionario histórico de la lengua española (1726-1739)*, ora is defined, among many other definitions, as time: “en poca de ora ‘en poco tiempo”. “Fichero General de la Real Academia Española”, *Diccionario histórico de la lengua española*, Versión 1.1, February 2, 2022, <https://apps2.rae.es/fichero.html>.

while incarcerated? In Ysabel de Carvajal's second trial document, inquisitors noted that Luis de Carvajal would tell his mother and sisters the dates on which a holiday took place: "because this one [referring to Luis] would tell the mentioned doña Francisca his mother and sisters doña Ysabel doña Mariana doña Catalina doña Leonor when they fell".¹⁷⁹ In fact, inquisitors allowed, and even encouraged the Carvajal family to communicate with each other inside the secret jails, in order to gather evidence of judaizing against them.

For instance, Gaspar de los Reyes—the alcaide or ward of the Inquisition's secret jails in Mexico City—told inquisitors about the letter contraband among the Carvajal family. When he told them that he had discovered that Luis de Carvajal, his sisters and mother hid letters inside fruit they sent to each other, the inquisitors instructed Gaspar to provide Luis de Carvajal with ink and paper: "opened the mentioned banana and took out the bulge that was in it and seen what it was they saw a paper wrapped in a canvas and it was half a sheet of paper made into four pages written in three and half pages and that for the mentioned Luis de Carvajal to be able to write seeing that he wrote in an aguacate seed he left him ink carelessly as ordered by the mentioned lords inquisitors".¹⁸⁰ In a similar fashion, but in Lima, Perú, Ana Schaposchnik

¹⁷⁹ "porque este dezia a las dh^as doña françisca su madre y hermanas doña ysabel doña Mariana doña cat^a doña Leonor el quando caian". *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 135.*

¹⁸⁰ "abrio el dh^o platano y saco el bulto que en el habia y mirado lo que hera vieron un papel enbulto en un lieñco y hera medio pliego de papel heh^o en quatro hojas escriptas las tres hojas y media y que para que el dh^o luis de caravajal pudiese escribir visto que escriuia en hueso de aguacates le dexo un tintero muy al descuido por mandado de los dh^os señores inquisidores". *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 28.*

argues that despite the isolation, alienation and secrecy in the secret cells, Crypto-Jews communicated with each other. According to Schaposchnik, “inmates and personnel in charge of maintenance and their assistants, and also slaves, saw each other almost every day, and perhaps more than once a day...It is reasonable to think that the chores required for maintenance offered windows for interactions between inmates and those charged with guarding and maintaining them”.¹⁸¹ Perhaps Luis communicated with Ysabel while in prison, and informed her what day she was to observe Yom Kippur.

At one of her trial depositions, Francisca de Carvajal highlighted her dependance on Luis in order to keep Yom Kippur— the Great Day of the Lord that Jews call the Day of Fasting in her own words— by sharing that previously, she had fasted on the wrong date because Luis had left Mexico on a trip. She stated that, “a year ago in keeping the Law of Moses not being at home the mentioned Luis de Caravajal that had gone out of Mexico this one [referring to Francisca] fasted and kept the Great Day of the Lord that Jews call the day of penitence in which G-d judges the souls and she asked G-d to forgive her and save her soul...and not knowing this one [referring to Francisca] then that the fast of the mentioned Great Day of the Lord fell where it falls on the fourteen of the moon of September she did not fast nor keep it in the mentioned

¹⁸¹ Ana Schaposchnik, *The Lima Inquisition: The plight of Crypto-Jews in Seventeenth Century Peru* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), 137.

month of September but in another month that she does not remember well”.¹⁸² Francisca knowingly fasted on a different month and day, because Luis was out of the country and unable to provide her with the accurate date for Yom Kippur that year.

We can see that in general, conversos knew or tried to know the date when Yom Kippur occurred each year. And even if they did not know the exact date, as we have seen with Francisca, they still observed a day of fasting and repentance in remembrance of Yom Kippur. For while the date was important for cryptoJews, what mattered most was to preserve a form of Jewish memory through the ritual of fasting.

Yom Kippur CryptoJewish Rituals: Fasting, Weeping, Penance and Contrition

Compelled by her need to keep Yom Kippur, Francisca fasted—albeit on the wrong date. Apparently, Yom Kippur was as important for her children as it was for Francisca. Her daughter Ysabel informed her fellow inmate Francisco Rodriguez that Yom Kippur was a day of fasting, shedding many tears, penance and contrition: “the mentioned doña Ysabel told this one [referring to Francisco] that at so and so of September fell the fast of the Great Day of the Lord that they called of much penitence and one had to fast with many tears, contrition and seclusion fasting all

¹⁸² “abia un año que en guarda de la d^ha ley de moysen no estando en cassa el d^ho luis de caravajal que habia ydo fuera de mex^o ayuno y guardo esta el dia grande de el señor que llaman los judios el ayuno y dia de penitencia en que dios juzga las almas y le pidio a dios le perdonase y salvase su alma...y no sabiendo esta entonçes que el ayuno de el d^ho dia grande de el señor caia a lo que cae a catorze de la luna de septiembre no le ayuno ni guardo en el d^ho mes de septiembre sino en otro mes que no se acuerda bien”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folios 96-97.

day without eating until night”.¹⁸³

Yom Kippur Ritual: Weeping

While Yom Kippur is indeed a day of fasting, preceded by ten Days of Teshuvah (repentance, or literally, return), Ysabel’s emphasis on shedding “many tears” is more fitting on the fast of Tisha B’Av (the ninth of the month of Av, a day to mourn the destruction of the First and Second Temple).¹⁸⁴ Indeed, the Talmud speaks about Tisha B’Av as a day of collective weeping.¹⁸⁵ Why then, did Ysabel cry on Yom Kippur and what destruction did she lament? Beyond the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem and the subsequent exilic experience as Diaspora— incidentally, the expulsion of Jews from Spain also occurred on the ninth of Av—cryptoJews like Ysabel surely mourned their inability to live openly as Jews in New Spain.¹⁸⁶ It was fitting for

¹⁸³ “la dha doña ysabel le dixo a este, que a tantos de setti^e caya el ayuno del dia grande del señor que llamauan de mucha penitencia y se avia de ayunar con muchas lagrimas, contriçion y recogimi^o ayunando todo el dia sin comer hasta la noche”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 159.

¹⁸⁴ “Tisha B'Av, or the 9th of Av, is a 25 hour fast that usually falls July or August. Marked by the abstention from food, drink, washing, sexual relations, and wearing leather, it is a day of lamentation for the loss of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem.” “Tisha B’Av”, Sefaria.org. 4 January, 2022. <https://www.sefaria.org/topics/tisha-bav?tab=sources>.

¹⁸⁵ The Sotah tractate of the Talmud 35a:11 states: ““And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried” (Numbers 14:1). Rabba says that Rabbi Yoḥanan says: That day was the eve of the Ninth of Av, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, said: On that day they wept a gratuitous weeping, so I will establish that day for them as a day of weeping for the future generations”. “Tisha B’Av”, Sefaria.org. 4 January, 2022. <https://www.sefaria.org/topics/tisha-bav?tab=sources>.

¹⁸⁶ “The expulsion of the Jews from Spain happened to come on Tishoh B’Ov”. Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 97-98.

them to cry on Yom Kippur, because as New Christians, conversos knew they could not fulfill teshuva— return to G-d—as it is expected on Yom Kippur.¹⁸⁷

Nevertheless, Ysabel’s description of Yom Kippur as a day of fasting and weeping also recalls Ta’anit Esther (the Fast of Esther), when Mordecai and all Persian Jews fasted after hearing the news of an edict of death against them. Megillat Esther (Scroll of Esther) describes the fast in the following manner: “Now when Mordecai knew all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and he came even before the king's gate; for none might enter within the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes”.¹⁸⁸

And although Esther’s account is not explicitly mentioned by Ysabel, her mother or siblings, when referring to a Yom Kippur as a day of fasting and weeping, Esther’s story was well known among conversos in inquisitorial Iberia.¹⁸⁹ Lynn Gottlieb explains how conversos (she uses the term marranos), specifically, “The women of the Marrano communities thought of

¹⁸⁷ “The Hebrew Bible sees teshuvah as principally a return to G-d. "Come, let us return to the Lord," the prophet Hoshea (14:2) tells the people of Israel... Traditional rabbinical commentators have interpreted this to mean that teshuvah requires confessing your sins to G-d. Part of achieving intimacy with Him involves His knowing your sins. And only in that way can you return to Him.” Mirsky, Jehudah. “The Jewish Experience”, Brandeis University, 2022. 4 January, 2022. <https://www.brandeis.edu/jewish-experience/holidays-religious-traditions/2021/september/atonement-yom-kippur-mirsky.html>

¹⁸⁸ “Esther Chapter 4”, Mechon-Mamre, 23 January, 2022, <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt3304.htm>.

¹⁸⁹ Emily Colbert Cairns, “Esther in Inquisitorial Iberia and the Sephardic Diaspora”, *Hispanófila*, no. 175 (2015):183-200.

themselves as Queen Esther, living a secret existence very different from the reality perceived by the outside world. Living as Christians, they knew themselves as Jews...because of their lack of knowledge about the Jewish tradition, women did assume major leadership roles in the community”.¹⁹⁰ Gottlieb highlights that conversos related to Queen Esther in that, “Esther finally declared herself a Jew, the Marrano women shared their Jewish secret among themselves”.¹⁹¹ As we will see in chapter four, conversos made it a point to identify as Jews within the cryptoJewish community. In her poem inspired by women conversas, Gottlieb adds:

Esther our queen
in the passing of the generations
we have inherited your suffering
we have come to possess your woe
for in the house of a strange king
you hid your race and birth.¹⁹²

Speaking directly about another poem based on Queen Esther’s story, Emily Colbert Cairns points out that “the poem directly links the shared experience of persecution experienced by the converso population in Iberia with the ancient story of the persecution of Jews in Persia”.¹⁹³ If indeed the Carvajal family based their Yom Kippur rituals on the fast observed in the book of Esther, then the weeping, wailing and laying in sackcloth were yet other aspects of cryptoJewish memory where the historiographical narrative explained the Carvajal family’s

¹⁹⁰ Lynn Gottlieb, “The Secret Jew An Oral Tradition of Women”, in *On Being a Jewish Feminist A Reader*, ed. Susannah Heschel, (New York: Schocken Books, 1983) 274.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 274.

¹⁹² Lynn Gottlieb, “The Secret Jew An Oral Tradition of Women”, in *On Being a Jewish Feminist A Reader*, ed. Susannah Heschel, (New York: Schocken Books, 1983) 275.

¹⁹³ Emily Colbert Cairns, “Esther in Inquisitorial Iberia and the Sephardic Diaspora”, *Hispanófila*, no. 175 (2015):190.

present.

Yom Kippur Ritual: CryptoJewish Sackcloth Adaptation

Moreover, dressing in sackcloth when fasting was not an isolated event. Hayyim Schauss explains that in ancient times, in the days of the Jewish kingdom in Palestine, Jewish fasting consisted of wailing and dressing in sackcloth, as demonstrated in the books of the prophets Jeremiah and Joel.¹⁹⁴ Whether the Carvajals based their actions on the book of Esther or on the books of the prophets—found in the Bible—what is apparent is that Ysabel and several of her siblings adapted the “lay in sackcloth” ritual for their Yom Kippur observance. Indeed, three years prior to their second trial and incarceration, on the tenth of the moon of September, Ysabel and her siblings wore a Christian rendition of the Jewish sackcloth on Yom Kippur. Luis de Carvajal testified before inquisitors that his sisters Catalina, Ysabel, Mariana and Leonor fasted,

¹⁹⁴ “*Fasting in Ancient Times*...Fasting is an old institution among Jews. Even in the days of the Jewish kingdom of Palestine, it was customary to proclaim a fast day in a time of distress...Old and young would then join in a wailing procession to the sanctuary, dressed in sackcloth and covered with ashes; they would prostrate themselves before the altar and cry and moan while they prayed to G-d”. Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 98.

wore a metal cilice, or spiked belts on their backs and read the seven penitential psalms on the Great Day of the Lord.¹⁹⁵

According to Luis' account, "likewise he said that the mentioned doña Catalina his sister fasted and kept three years ago more or less in the house of Santiago Tlatilulco a Great Day of the Lord that fell on ten days of the moon of September in keeping and observance of the Law of Moses in company of this one [referring to Luis] and of the mentioned his mother doña Francisca de Caravajal doña Ysabel doña Mariana and doña Leonor not eating all day until night eating things of fish and all doña Catalina doña Ysabel doña Mariana and doña Leonor and this one [referring to Luis] had on cilice of bristles over their backs at the base of their flesh except doña Francisca that did not have on cilice but her blouse was off".¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ According to the dictionary, cilicio was: "Vestidura áspera que se utilizaba antiguamente como penitencia", "Cilicio", Wordreference, 2022. 9 January, 2022. <https://www.wordreference.com/es/en/translation.asp?spen=cilicio>; and see the translation of this word as: "spiked belt or metal cilice", "Cilicio", Wordreference, 2022. 9 January, 2022, <https://www.wordreference.com/definicion/cilicio>. Cilicio is also defined as: "Vestidúra corta; tosca, texida de cerdas: por cuya asperéza la usan inmediata al cuerpo las persónas penitentes, eligiendola más ò menos ancha, segun la parte que quieren mortificar. Tambien se hace de cadenillas de hierro enrexadas, con puas". "Cilicio", Diccionario histórico de la lengua española, Real Academia Española, 1729, 9 January 2022, <https://apps2.rae.es/DA.html>.

¹⁹⁶ "iten dixo que la dha doña cat^a su hermana ayuno y guardo abia tres años poco mas o menos en la cassa de santiago tlatilulco Un dia grande del señor que cayo a diez dias de la luna de sept^e en guarda y observançia de la ley de moysen en comp^a de este y de la dha su madre doña fran^ca de caravajal doña ysabel doña mariana y doña leonor no comiendo en todo El dia hasta la noche que comieron cossas de pescado y todas doña Cat^a doña ysabel doña Mariana y doña Leonor y este tenian çiliçios de cerdas sobre los lomos a raíz de la carne excepto la dha doña françisca que no tenía çiliçio sino quitada la camissa". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 134-135.

Known as Christian penitential belts, this metal cilice included metal spikes that would surely cause bleeding, pain, and torment.¹⁹⁷ With these belts on (Francisca by the way, did not wear them), Luis allegedly read from the book of Melachim I (1 Kings) the narrative about King David when he sinned against G-d and put on sackcloth—although King David’s narrative about when he put on sackcloth is actually recorded in Divrei HaYamim I (1 Chronicles) rather than in Melachim I (1 Kings)— to his sister and mother: “and everyone together...prayed saying this one [referring to Luis] first and then they [referring to his sister and mother] responded the seven penitential Psalms because it was a day of penitence...that before they began the mentioned Psalm...he told them this one [referring to Luis] that the story of the second of the Kings that when holy David committed that sin of counting the people...and choosing the plague of pestilence, put on sackcloth over his kingly flesh he and nine of the old judges”.¹⁹⁸

Although there is a vast chasm between the wearing of sackcloth and this Christian adaptation, Catalina, Ysabel, Mariana, Leonor and Luis fastened them on their backs as part of their cryptoJewish Yom Kippur ritual. As in earlier historiographical narrations, the Carvajal

¹⁹⁷ “Now when Mordecai knew all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and he came even before the king's gate; for none might enter within the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.” “Esther Chapter 4”, Mechon-Mamre, 23 January, 2022, <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt3304.htm>.

¹⁹⁸ “y todos juntos...rezaron diziendo este prim^o y luego respondiendo ellas los siete psalmos penitenciales por ser dia de penitencia...que antes de come^çar el dh^o psalmo...les conto este que la historia del segundo de los reyes que quando el s^to david hizo aquel pecado de contar el pueblo... y escogiendo la plaga de pestilençia poniendose çiliçio sobre sus reales carnes el y nueve de los viejos juezes”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 134-135.

family explained the Christian penitential belts they wore in direct relationship to King David's sackcloth.¹⁹⁹

Yom Kippur Liturgy: Prayers

While putting on sackcloth on Yom Kippur was directly related to Israel's ancient past, the Carvajal family's communal prayers on Yom Kippur were analogous to present-day Jewish communal prayers. Identified by the Inquisition as witness number one against Luis in his second trial, Manuel de Luçena reported that Luis said the following prayer for Yom Kippur: "the mentioned Luis de Carvajal would say a prayer that began in the following manner, ~Lord G-d Almighty for love of your holy Name and for this Great Day that you established so that fasting in it with repentance of our sins you may forgive them and let there be mercy for us".²⁰⁰ For the sake of His Great Name, this collective prayer asked G-d to forgive their sins and have mercy on them using first person plural pronouns in "our sins" and "have mercy on us". Leonor de Carvajal corrected Manuel de Luçena by claiming the actual prayer went like this: "~Lord of the worlds Emperor of the heavenly armies G-d of Abraham, G-d of Isaac G-d of Jacob that with

¹⁹⁹ "And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces." "1 Chronicles Chapter 21", Mechon-Mamre, 23 January, 2022, <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt25a21.htm>.

²⁰⁰ "el dh^o luis de carvajal dezia una oraçion que comiença de la manera siguiente, ~señor dios todo poderosso por amor de tu s^to nombre y por este dia grande que constituiste para que ayunando en el con arepentim^o de n^ros pecados nos los perdones y ayal misericordia de nosotros" *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817*, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 68.

your many mercies chose and marked this day alone in the year to have mercy on your servants that in it we present ourselves humbled with fastings and prayer and repentance of our sins etc”.²⁰¹ Leonor’s version was similar to Manuel’s version, but addressed G-d as “Lord of the worlds” and “G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, and defined Yom Kippur as a day for G-d to have mercy on his servants who come to him in humility, in repentance, in prayer and fasting.

In the Yom Kippur morning service according to the custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, in the Amidah (Standing) section, the congregation prays: “Our G-d, G-d of our fathers, on (*this Sabbath day of rest*), this Atonement Day, this day of pardoning sin, this day of holy convocation, pardon our sins and blot out and remove our transgressions from before Thine eyes”.²⁰² The similarities between the cryptoJewish prayer and Yom Kippur prayers according to the Spanish and Portuguese tradition are evident.

To start, both prayers are communal prayers uttered by the entire community, using the plural pronouns “our” and “us”. In the cryptoJewish prayer, G-d was addressed directly either as the “All-Powerful G-d” or “Lord of the worlds”—which is strikingly like the Aramaic expression Ribonó shel ‘olam, meaning Lord of the universe, used during the Arbit (Evening) Prayers of

²⁰¹ “~señor de los mundos emperador de los exercitos celestiales dios de abraham, dios de ysac dios de jacob que con tus muchas piedades escogiste y señalaste este dia solo en l año para haber misericordia de tus siervos que en el nos presentamos humillados con ayunos y oraçion y arepentimiento de nr^os pecados ett^a”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817*, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 86.

²⁰² *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, ed. and trans. David de Sola Pool (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 156.

Penitence.²⁰³ Leonor’s version—as opposed to Manuel’s version—specifically identified G-d as the “G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, just as is done for Shacharit (Morning) Prayers.

During the Amidah section, the congregation recites aloud: “Blessed art Thou, Lord our G-d, G-d of our fathers, G-d of Abraham, G-d of Isaac, G-d of Jacob”.²⁰⁴

In Leonor and Manuel’s cryptoJewish prayer versions, Yom Kippur is referred to as “this Great Day which You have established” or as “this only day of the year”. And while we have seen that since the second Temple period Yom Kippur was called “The Great Day” or, more simply, “The Day”, in the Spanish and Portuguese tradition, Yom Kippur is known as the Day of Atonement.²⁰⁵ Despite this difference, both prayers ask G-d to forgive, show mercy and compassion on this day to the entire community. The main idea of Leonor’s version greatly resembles that of normative Judaism in that it considers this day to be a day when G-d shows mercy to his servants. While Yom Kippur is important because, as Leonor de Carvajal put it, “is a day for G-d to have mercy on his servants” the Spanish and Portuguese Amidah prayer beckons G-d to “This day show us Thy mercy and grant us redemption. Lord our G-d, remember us this day for good”.²⁰⁶

²⁰³ In the Yom Kippur prayers of penitence, one prayer is: “Lord of the universe! This night as the watches end I bare my sins both light and great.” In the Hebrew, it is read Ribono shel olam רבונו של עולם. Ibid, 55.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 5.

²⁰⁵ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 112, 125.

²⁰⁶ *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, ed. and trans. David de Sola Pool (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 44.

Yom Kippur Liturgy: Fate is Sealed on Yom Kippur

Just as Leonor's Yom Kippur prayers echoed Evening and Morning Prayers in the Spanish and Portuguese tradition, her sister Ysabel's prompting recalled the hope to be sealed for life on Yom Kippur.²⁰⁷ And for Ysabel and Francisco, sealed for life meant to be freed from jail. Their desire to be freed conformed with a blessing during the Evening Prayers. The "Blessing for Those Held Captive" states: "He who blessed our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, may He bless, help, keep and preserve all our brethren held captive and bound. May the Ruler of the universe bless the, grant them merit, hearken to their voice of prayer, and bring them out from darkness to light. May He grant them saving release that they may again take refuge under the divine wings. May He fulfil for them the Biblical promise, "To proclaim to those who are bound 'Come forth', and to those in darkness 'Show yourselves'." May this be the will of G-d, and let us say, Amen".²⁰⁸ As a captive—a prisoner in the secret jails of the Inquisition—Ysabel also hoped to be freed on Yom Kippur. She urged another fellow prisoner Francisco that if he fasted on this day, G-d would free him from prison:

²⁰⁷ "All are judged on Rosh Hashonoh and their fate is sealed on Yom Kippur," are the words attributed to Rabbi Meir". Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 156.

"Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement (known also as the Sabbath of Sabbaths) is considered by many to be the holiest day of the year. It is a day spent fasting and praying for G-d's forgiveness at the start of the new year." "Yom Kippur", Sefaria.org. 5 January 2022, <https://www.sefaria.org/topics/yom-kippur?tab=sources>. Reform Judaism explains "'G'mar chatima tovah,'" which means, "May you be inscribed (or sealed) for good [in the Book of Life]" "What Greetings are Appropriate on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur?", reformjudaism.org, 2022 Union for Reform Judaism, <https://reformjudaism.org/learning/answers-jewish-questions/what-greetings-are-appropriate-rosh-hashanah-and-yom-kippur>

²⁰⁸ *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, ed. and trans. David de Sola Pool (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 30.

“bringing for this many authorities of Prophets of the Old Testament and of the holy David and Job, and that if this one [referring to Francisco] fasted the mentioned day like she told him he would see how G-d would take him out of the prison he was in”.²⁰⁹ Citing from the Tanakh—The Old Testament, in Francisco’s words—Ysabel claimed that those who obeyed G-d’s Law would enjoy G-d’s mercies and benefits.

According to Ysabel, G-d could not fail at his word, and as proof, spoke about how G-d had sent Moses to the people of Ysrael to free them from slavery in Egypt: “likewise he said that the mentioned Ysabel told him that G-d could not fail at his word that he had given his servants, which she told him because of the fast of the Great Day, saying that those who kept his Law would enjoy the benefits, and mercies that He had promised, for which she brought authorities of prophets and that Moses had come to the people of Israel and had taken them according to his understanding out of the captivity of Egypt”.²¹⁰ Just as Ysabel recalled how G-d had freed the nation of Israel from slavery by referencing the Tanakh, so does Hai Gaon’s poem remember G-d’s intervention in history. Included in the Evening Prayers, the following are verses that declare what G-d did for Israel as a nation, Moses, and Daniel: “Thou didst answer Thy people in Egypt

²⁰⁹ “trayendole para ello muchas autoridades de prophetas del testam^o viejo y del sancto david y de job, y que si este ayunava el dicho dia como ella se lo dezia veria como dios le sacava de la prison en que estava”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 159.

²¹⁰ “Yttem dixo que la dha doña Ysabel le dixo a este que Dios no podia faltar en su palabra que avia dado a sus siervos, lo qual le dixo aproposito del ayuno del dho^o dia grande, diziendo que los que guardavan su ley gozarian de los beneficios, y m^{rds} que les avia prom^o, pa lo qual traxo autoridades de prophetas, y que moyssen avia venido con el pueblo de ysrrael, y sacadolo segun entendio del captiverio de egipto”. Ibid, folio 159.

and led them to freedom from crushing bondage...Thou didst answer Moses at Mount Sinai, and in Thy grace Thou gavest him redemption's good tidings... Thou didst answer Daniel in mercy, and Thy angel saved him from lions".²¹¹

As in this Sephardic hymn by Hai Gaon, but also as in medieval Jewish memory, Ysabel selected the exodus from Egypt as a specific part of biblical historiography to explain her present. Given that she and her family, as well as other conversos like Francisco were under "captivity" in the Inquisition's secret prisons, it should not be surprising that cryptoJewish memory would include G-d's deliverance by the hand of Moses from Egypt. Ysabel understood her incarceration as "what was still transpiring" in relation to Israel's captivity in Egypt, and her hope for a good year on Yom Kippur was to be delivered from her current bondage.²¹²

Yom Kippur Ritual: Duration and After the Fast Dinner

Witness number nine— identified by Luis de Carvajal as his sister Leonor—reported on someone that had observed Yom Kippur (referred to as the Great Day of the Lord) at the Carvajal residence by not eating from the eve of the day before until the next day when the star came out: "that a certain person that she named was in the mentioned Luis de Caravajal's house for the keeping and fasting of the mentioned Great Day of the Lord not eating from the eve of the day

²¹¹ *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, ed. and trans. David de Sola Pool (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 30.

²¹² Yerushalmi, Yosef Hayim. *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982: 34

prior until another day when the star came out”.²¹³ Aside from the single star mentioned here— instead of the three stars in normative Judaism to identify the end of the Sabbath or other holiday —to signal the end of the fast, the duration of Yom Kippur for the Carvajal family is identical to the duration in normative Judaism.²¹⁴ Similarly, Ysabel described a fast that began on the eve and ended the following evening, with a break the fast dinner, as in normative Judaism.

According to Francisco’s account, Ysabel instructed him to fast from that evening until the following night, and eat fish for the after Yom Kippur meal: “and saying to her this one [referring to Francisco] when the mentioned fast fell, she responded the mentioned doña Ysabel that she would tell him, and from then to twelve or fifteen days later she called this one [referring to Francisco] the mentioned doña Ysabel, and told him, this night you should not dine a bite until nighttime...and you should not dine except thing of fish”.²¹⁵ Among the many dishes served for the after Yom Kippur fast meal, fish is a popular course for Portuguese Sephardim, and for

²¹³ “que çierta persona que nombro se hallo en cassa de el dh^o luis de caravajal a la guarda y ayuno de el dh^o dia grande del señor no comiendo desde la vispera del dia antes hasta otro dia salida la estrella”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal.* Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 57.

²¹⁴ “Shabbat and all the holidays begin at sunset, the earliest possible definition of nightfall, and end when three stars appear in the sky the next evening, the latest definition of nightfall.” “The Jewish Day”, Chabad.org, 24 January, 2022, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/526873/jewish/The-Jewish-Day.htm.

²¹⁵ “y diziendole este que quando caya el dho ayuno, le respondio La dha doña Ysabel que se lo diria, y de alli a doze o quinze dias le llamo a este la dha doña ysabel, y le dixo, esta noche no aveis de çenar bocado, porque mañana es el ayuno del dia grande del señor y en todo el no aveis de comer bocado hasta la noche...y no aveis de çenar sino cosa de pescado”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal.* Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 159.

Ysabel, it was an essential main dish.²¹⁶ But there are explanations for eating fish after Yom Kippur (and extra fast days explained shortly). Pilar Huerga Criado argues conversos could have abstained from meat in order to avoid eating meat that was teref —non-kosher. But they could have also eaten fish rather than meat after fasting in accordance to Christian tradition, that mandates eating fish when doing penance: “With the aim to avoid transgressing the norm, in order to not eat pork nor <<tafef>> meat, they eliminated whatever type of meat, eating only eggs, fish and vegetables. They forgot the origin of this custom and that’s how they consider the abstinence of meat to be part of the ritual. They constantly repeated in their depositions that in those days of fasting they could not have meat, that is how they had been taught, that is how they practiced it and saw it practiced by other judaizers. Perhaps this distortion of tradition was not foreign to their Christian environment, where the abstinence of meat was part of penitential rituals. Establishing a parallelism between one and another penitence, perhaps they copied the

²¹⁶ Referring to David Gitliz’ and Linda Kay Davidson’s *A Drizzle of Honey: The Lives and Recipes of Spain’s Secret Jews*, Linda Morel writes that for the after Yom Kippur fast meal, “In Aragon, Spain, and in Portugal, fish and fowl were the preferred foods on this occasion.” Linda Morel, ”Breaking the fast, Sephardi style”, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, August 4, 2009. 2022 Jewish Telegraphic Agency. 4 January, 2022. <https://www.jta.org/2009/08/04/lifestyle/breaking-the-fast-sephardi-style>.

form to practice it, assuming as their own the connection between abstinence and sacrifice”.²¹⁷

Yom Kippur Liturgy: Texts

Even though the date, time and duration of the fast, the weeping and sackcloth adaptation — albeit a Christian rendition— the prayer, the after fast dinner, and her hope to be inscribed for good could all be rituals in observance of Yom Kippur, the liturgical texts stray vastly from Judaism. As previously mentioned, on Yom Kippur day, Luis read to his mother and sisters a narrative from the book of Chronicles II. After reading this text— no doubt from a Christian Bible that Luis had taken from the school where he taught—Catalina, Ysabel, Mariana, Leonor and their mother Francisca recited King David’s Psalms identified as the Seven Penitential Psalms (6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129, 141) by the Catholic Church.²¹⁸ It is highly likely that they read

²¹⁷ “Con el fin de evitar transgredir la norma, para no comer cerdo ni carne <<trifá>>, eliminaron cualquier tipo de carne, alimentándose en esos días de huevos, pescados y vegetales. Llegaron a olvidar el origen de esta costumbre y de ahí que consideran que la abstinencia de carne formaba parte del ritual. Constantemente repitieron en sus testimonios que en esos días de ayuno no podían probar la carne, que así se lo habían enseñado, así lo practicaban y lo veían practicar a los demás judaizantes. Quizás no fuera ajena este desvirtuamiento de la tradición la influencia del entorno cristiano, en el que la abstinencia de carne formaba parte de los ritos penitenciales. Estableciendo un paralelismo entre una y otra penitencia, quizás mimetizaron la forma de practicarla, asumiendo como propia la vinculación de la abstinencia con el sacrificio.” Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 187.

²¹⁸ M.I. Toro Pascua and J.Sanz Hermida write an unedited version of Psalm 6, 31, 37, 50, 101, 129 and 141 as the seven penitential Psalms of the King and prophet David by fray Hernando de Jesús. M.I. Toro Pascua and J.Sanz Hermida, “Una edición desconocida de la *Exposición de los siete psalmos penitenciales del real prophet David*, de fray Hernando de Jesús (Salamanca: Antonia Ramírez, 1614): noticia y edición del texto”, *Via spiritus* 5 (1998): 209-233.

them in Latin (the language of Christianity), because Luis referred to one of these Psalms in Latin: “the mentioned psalm that begins with Lord, rebuke me not in thy indignation etc”.²¹⁹

The reading of the seven psalms appropriated by Christianity make sevident the great extent to which the Carvajal family was removed from normative Jewish liturgical texts. Rather than observe Yom Kippur with a customary Machzor (prayerbook for the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) readings and prayers of like Kol Nidrei (All Vows) on Yom Kippur Eve and Avinu Malkenu (Our Father, Our King), and Megillat-Yonah (the book of Jonah) on Yom Kippur Day, Francisca and her children created their own liturgy by reading portions of the Bible that reinforced their own Yom Kippur rituals. The passage of King David, for example, narrates King David’s sin of taking a census and then confessing his sin to G-d, as is done on Yom Kippur.²²⁰ When Luis read to his mother and sisters the part where King David emphasized that he was the one who had sinned, they wept loudly, as if they too had sinned: “and telling

²¹⁹ “el dh^o psalmo que enpieça domine ne in furore tuo etts^a”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. *Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 69.

²²⁰ “And David said to Joab and to the princes of the people: 'Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring me word, that I may know the sum of them.' And Joab said: 'The LORD make His people a hundred times so many more as they are; but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of guilt unto Israel?'...And G-d was displeased with this thing; therefore He smote Israel.And David said unto G-d: 'I have sinned greatly, in that I have done this thing; but now, put away, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of Thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.’” “1 Chronicles Chapter 21”, Mechon-Mamre, 23 January, 2022, <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt25a21.htm>.

them that he asked for himself the plague saying I alone am the now who sinned everyone cried a great cry”.²²¹

After that reading, Luis would read to them king David’s sin with Bathsheva, they would cry and ask G-d to forgive them for their faults: “told the story of the sin with Versave and Natan’s message they said it with many tears asking G-d for forgiveness of their faults”.²²² Through these two readings, which were part of their cryptoJewish liturgy, the Carvajal family acknowledged their sins before G-d and sought His forgiveness, as is customary on Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur Eve and Day synagogue services include prayers like Viddui (Confession), Ashamnu (We Have Transgressed), and Al Chet (For Our Sins). In each prayer, the congregation acknowledges their sin collectively.

Here are just a few of the confessions made: “So this day let the power of Thy mercy be manifest by removing the guilt of Thy people who in confession before Thee declare:— Of us all judged together as one we avow that we have been guilty and have dealt falsely and dishonestly. We have spoken evil and perverted the right. We have been vicious, arrogant and violent...May it be Thy will, Lord our G-d, G-d of our fathers, to deal with us in mercy, forgive us all our wrongdoing, pardon and condone all our sins, and help us atone for all our transgressions”.²²³ In

²²¹ “y diziendoles que el pedia p^a si la plaga diziendo yo so soy el que peque lloraro[^] todos un grande llanto”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 135.

²²² “contada la historia de el pecado con versave y mensaje de natan lo dixeran con muchas lagrimas pidiendo a dios perdon de sus culpas”. Ibid, folio 135.

²²³ *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, ed. and trans. David de Sola Pool (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 164.

a similar manner, Francisca, Ysabel, Catalina, Leonor, Mariana and Luis read Psalms used for penance in Catholicism, and historiographical excerpts of King David from a Christian Bible, not out of a Christian devotion— or so I argue— but out of a cryptoJewish necessity to appropriate Catholic texts to observe the Yom Kippur Jewish ritual of acknowledging sin and seeking forgiveness.

In addition and in accordance to the society in which she lived, Ysabel used Christian saintly titles to identify Jewish historical figures. According to Francisco, when Ysabel attempted to convince Francisco of observing Yom Kippur, she told him about Moses and King David and called them saints. As Ysabel shared with Francisco the historiographical account about King David and how he sinned and wore sackcloth, she referred to King David as “Sancto David” or Saint David. And apparently, the entire Carvajal family employed this Christian title with other Jewish heroes. Luis attributed this title to Moses, turning him into “sancto moysen” at one of his hearings, when he testified that his sisters believed in the Law of Moses.²²⁴

Emily Colbert Cairns has written about the Carvajal women and how they appropriated the Catholic use of saint when speaking of Queen Esther as Saint Esther.²²⁵ No doubt the word “saint” in front of these Jewish heroes’ names made them all the more palatable to inquisitors’ ears. But most importantly, Moses, King David and Queen Esther are undeniably great Jewish heroes through which G-d saved the nation of Israel. Perhaps the Carvajal family’s appropriation

²²⁴ *Bancroft Library Special Collections Mexican Inquisition Documents: mss., 1593-1817. 61v. BANC MSS 96/95 m. Negative Number 2841. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 134.*

²²⁵ Emily Colbert, “The Other Sephardic Diaspora: Feminine Representations of Sephardic Identity in the Early Modern Atlantic World”, Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish Literature, 2012, 169.

of the title of saint was a way of addressing them with the honor, and bestowing homage to them with the highest of titles within Christian society.

In addition to the readings just mentioned, witness number nine against Luis de Carvajal — whom he identified as his sister Leonor— testified that on Yom Kippur Day, Luis and those close to him would read nine songs about the commandments and statutes and the Law of Moses: “and the next day they would once again say the confusion and to pray the same prayers and in place of Psalms they would pray not sing the mentioned nine songs commandments and articles of the Law of Moses in meter”.²²⁶ Although the Carvajal family and their guests usually sang these nine poems written in verse on the Sabbath, along with the Song of the Law of Moses (see more in chapter three). Yet the Carvajals must have included them in their Yom Kippur liturgy— read, not sung, because of the somberness of the occasion— because one of the main themes of these poems was repentance.

The Collective Experience of Yom Kippur

And while the Carvajal home— often mentioned in trial documents as the home in Santiago Tlatilulco—served as a makeshift synagogue for Yom Kippur services, the crypto-jewish community of New Spain observed the Holy Day in different homes. Witness number nine, identified as Leonor de Carvajal, disclosed that while she and her family observed Yom

²²⁶ “y el dia siguiente bolbian a dezir la confusion y a rezar las mismas oraçiones y en lugar de los psalmos dezian rezados y no cantados los dh^os nueve canticos mandamentos y articulos y ley de Moysen em metro”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 59.

Kippur in her home, Yom Kippur was also observed at Justa Mendez' home. Leonor said that someone went to her house to borrow Luis' book that contained specific prayers for that day, in Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, Justa did not specify): "Who came to ask for a book to the mentioned Luis de Carvajal where he had written in romance the prayers that were said on that day to pray them in the company of the mentioned persons that she has declared".²²⁷

Confronted with this accusation, Luis responded that Francisco Vaez was the person who came to his house while he, his mother doña Francisca, and his sisters doña Ysabel, doña Mariana and doña Leonor kept Yom Kippur, called "The Great Day" of the Lord by the Carvajal family—which, as we have seen, is also another name for Yom Kippur within normative Judaism.²²⁸ Francisco asked for the book on behalf of Manuel de Luçena who was in Mexico at the home of his daughter, Justa Mendez: "Response ~he[referring to Luis] said that the person that the chapter says entered in his home of this one [Luis] fasting and keeping this now and the mentioned his mother doña Francisca and sisters doña Ysabel doña Mariana and doña Leonor the Great Day of the Lord was Francisco Vaez that entered and asked this one [Luis] on behalf of

²²⁷ "el qual vino a pedir un libro al dh^o luis de carvajal donde tenia scriptas en romance las oraciones que se rezaban aquel dia para rezarlas en compañia de las dh^as personas que ha declarado". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 58.

²²⁸ "The Great Day...During the latter period of the second Temple Yom Kippur was already the holiest day of the year for all Jews. "The Great Day" or, more simply, "The Day". Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 125.

Manuel de Luçena who was in Mexico at the home of Justa Mendez the book that the chapter says”.²²⁹

From Leonor’s testimony, we can infer that among the cryptoJewish community, there were men who travelled and were not always in Mexico City to observe the fast of Yom Kippur, like Manuel de Lucena (Justa’s father). Notwithstanding, when Manuel was present on that particular Yom Kippur, he kept it in his home with his wife Clara Henriquez and in the company of their daughter Justa Mendez as well as a guest— Francisco Vaez—and borrowed Luis’ book to read for the occasion. Through this book—which contained Christian prayers in Latin translated into Spanish about sin and asking for forgiveness—interchange, we can deduce that Yom Kippur was observed, as seen previously, with Christian texts for Jewish observances.

But more importantly Francisco Vaez’ visit indicated that Yom Kippur was kept in community. Leonor also told inquisitors about other conversos who observed Yom Kippur, like Sebastian and Costança Rodriguez: “and that the mentioned Luis de Carvajal had said that they kept the same Great Day Sebastian Rodriguez and Costança Rodriguez his wife”.²³⁰ Not only did they observe Yom Kippur, but Sebastian and Costança Rodriguez also helped Leonor,

²²⁹ “Respuesta ~dixo que la persona que el cap^o dize que entro en su cassa de este ayunando y guardando este y las dh^as su madre doña françisca y hermanas doña ysabel doña mariana y doña leonor el dia grande del s^r. fue fran^o vaez que entro a pedir a este de parte de manuel de luçena que estaba en mex^o en cassa de justa mendez el libro que el cap^o dize”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 58.

²³⁰ “y que el dh^o luis de carvajal habia dh^o que guardaban Ee mismo dia grande sebastian rodrigz y costanç rodriguez su muger”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 75.

Ysabel, and Sebastian de la Peña alias de Cardoso— a fellow Portuguese converso and prisoner in the secret jails of the Inquisition—observe Yom Kippur correctly. According to Sebastian de la Peña, Sebastian Rodriguez helped him, Leonor and Ysabel observe Yom Kippur, which fell on a Sunday that given year. When Sebastian de la Peña, Leonor and Ysabel fasted two days before at the Carvajal residence, Sebastian Rodriguez explained to them their error and invited them to observe Yom Kippur with him at his home, on the tenth of that lunar month.

Sebastian de la Peña told inquisitors that: “this one [referring to himself] and the mentioned doña Leonor and doña Ysabel fasted on a Friday September of last year the Great Day of the Lord in the house of the mentioned doña Francisca and the Sunday following he fasted and kept it also in the house of the mentioned Sebastian Rodriguez like he has confessed because the mentioned Sebastian Rodriguez told him that one had to fast and keep that Sunday that was the tenth of the moon and that this one [referring to himself] had been mistaken in fasting and keeping it the mentioned Friday”.²³¹ Assuming that the lunar month was the Hebrew month of Tishrei, Sebastian helped Leonor and Ysabel observe Yom Kippur correctly. As a collective but divided into small groups in the homes of certain Portuguese conversos like the Carvajals, Henriquez (Clara Henriquez was Justa Mendez’ mother), and the Rodriguez residence, New Spain’s community of cryptoJews observed Yom Kippur, shared their resources— albeit Christian sources—and shared their knowledge of the Jewish calendar. Understandably fearing the Inquisition, they did not observe the fast together in one place, but in different places

²³¹ “este y la dh^a doña leonor y doña ysabel ayunaron un viernes que hizo este sept^e que passo un año el dia grande de el señor en cassa de la dh^a doña fran^ca y el domingo siguiente el ayuno y guardo tambien en cassa de el dh^o sebastian rodriguez como tiene confesado porque el dh^o sebastian rodriguez le dixo que se habia de ayunar y guardar aquel domingo que eran diez de luna y que este habia errado en ayunarle y guardarle el dh^o viernes”. Ibid, folio 169.

throughout Mexico.²³²

Yom Kippur Shavuot-style

The Carvajal women observed Yom Kippur with extreme rigor by staying up all night until the first star came out the next day. When she was questioned by inquisitors, Leonor explained how she and her family observed Yom Kippur by saying that: “for the Great Day they were sung but said the mentioned nine songs commandments and article and the Law of Moses in meter and that the entire day and a half that she has declared they did not sleep nor laid down instead they were standing from twelve in the day until the next day at the coming our of the star without eating nor drinking and when someone of the mentioned doña Francisca doña Ysabel doña Mariana Luis de Carvajal and this one [referring to Leonor] felt tired they would get close to a wall or they would kneel all in the keeping and observance of the mentioned fast and that when they would dine they dined eggs and things of fish like they used to do at other times in

²³² Leonor de Carvajal’s second trial explains this by stating: “fran^o vaez Le dixo a este como ayunaba El dh^o dia grande del señor en compañía de Los dh^os Manuel de luc^a y justa mendez en cassa de clara henriqz su m^e.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 58.

other fasts”.²³³ According to Leonor, on Yom Kippur, neither she nor her mother or siblings sleep or even sat. When they grew tired, they leaned against a wall or knelt, for the entire Day of Atonement.

Rather than a normative Yom Kippur observance, Leonor’s description recalls Shavuot, another of the major Jewish holidays. Shavuot commemorates G-d’s giving of the Torah. On Shavuot, Moses came down from Sinai with the Ten Commandments. It is believed that on the first Shavuot, the nation of Israel was sleeping. To amend this, Jewish communities stay up all night studying Torah.²³⁴ In a figurative fashion, by staying awake the entire night on Yom Kippur, the Carvajal women tried to amend their error of being New Christians.

Jewish Rituals and Liturgy: Pesach (Passover)

Date of Observance and Length of the Holiday

While Yom Kippur occurs on the 10th of Tishrei, Pesach occurs on the 15th of Nissan, in the Jewish calendar. Although Ysabel de Carvajal’s trial documents do not mention how she

²³³ “para el dia grande no se dezian cantados sino rezados los dh^os nueve canticos mandamientos y articulos y ley de moysen en metro y que todo el día y medio que ha declarado no dormian ni se acostaban antes estaban em pie desde las doze del dia hasta otro dia salida la estrella sin comer ni veber y quando se sentia alguna de las dh^as doña françisca doña ysabel doña mariana luis de caravajal y esta cansados se arimaban a la pared o se hincaban de rodillas todo en guarda y observançia del dh^o ayuno y que quando habian de çenar cenaban huebos y cossas de pescado como lo solian hazer otras vezes en otros ayunos”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 72-73.

²³⁴ “Joseph Karo 1488-1575”, Jewish Virtual Library, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE), Accessed on January 1, 2021, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/joseph-karo>.

knew when this date occurred in the secular calendar, they do include several references about celebrating Passover from several Portuguese conversos. Ysabel herself admitted before inquisitors that she observed Passover for seven days with her family, by stating that she “kept the Lamb’s Passover that took seven days in the company of her mother doña Francisca, doña Catalina, doña Leonor and Luis de Caravajal whenever he was in Mexico”.²³⁵

Witness number six explained that Passover lasted for seven or eight days, when she accused Catalina Enrriquez—a Portuguese conversa and friend of the Carvajal family—of having observed the first night of Passover with her aunt Clara Enrriquez, and the second night with the Carvajal family and other guests: “And before they had kept and celebrated the mentioned Catalina Enrriquez and a person close to her because it lasts for seven or eight days starting on Holy Thursday”.²³⁶ Witness number six was correct in saying that Passover is indeed a Jewish holiday that lasts for seven days— or eight in the Diaspora.²³⁷ However, Passover does

²³⁵ “guardava la pasqua del Cordero que hera de siete dias en compañia de las dhas su madre doña fran^ca, doña Catalina, doña Mariana, doña Leonor y Luis de Caravajal quando se hallava en Mex^co”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 334.

²³⁶ “Y antes la avian guardado y çelebrado la dh^a catalina enrriquez y su conjunta persona por que dura su guarda siete, o, ocho dias empeçando desde el jueves sancto.” Ibid, folio 208.

²³⁷ “Passover begins on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Nissan. It is the first of the three major festivals with both historical and agricultural significance (the other two are Shavu’ot and Sukkot). Agriculturally, it represents the beginning of the harvest season in Israel. The primary observances of Passover are related to the Exodus from Egypt after 400 years of slavery as told in the biblical Book of Exodus from chapters 1 to 15. Passover lasts for seven days (eight days outside of Israel). The first and last days of the holiday (first two and last two outside of Israel) are days on which no work is permitted. Work is permitted on the intermediate days, referred to as *Chol Ha-Mo’ed*.” “Passover - Pesach: History & Overview” 1998 - 2022 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, February 1, 2022, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/passover-history-and-overview>.

not always coincide with the Christian Holiday known as Holy Thursday, as this witness wrongly assumed.²³⁸

Instead, we can infer that a particular Passover was mentioned in the inquisition documents of Ysabel de Carvajal and Catalina Enrriquez that occurred four years prior, that began on Holy Thursday. Catalina Enrriquez informed inquisitors about that specific Passover by echoing witness number six: “this Holy Week to come will be four years...on the night that they started to celebrate it was Holy Thursday”.²³⁹

Pesach (Passover): The Seder

Among conversos in New Spain, Pesach was known as the Lamb’s Passover. Catalina Henrriquez was a conversa who testified against Ysabel de Carvajal. She assured inquisitors the Carvajal family celebrated Passover because she herself was invited to the Carvajal’s Passover Seder or celebration that year. Catalina Enrriquez said that she and her husband Manuel de Luçena, along with Justa Mendez and Thomas de Fonseca celebrated Passover with the Carvajal

²³⁸ Although in the beginning of Christianity, Easter was based on the Jewish calendar, and the 14th day of Nissan, or Passover Eve, as of 325 CE, the Christian holiday began to depend on the full moon on or just after the vernal equinox. In “Easter and Passover: On Calendars and Group Identity”, Eviatar Zerubavel explains: “According to the Gospel, Christ was crucified on Friday, the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan (that is, on Passover Eve), and resurrected on the following Sunday...in A.D.325... The full moon which coincided with, or fell next after, the vernal equinox officially replaced Nisan 14 as the critical temporal reference point immediately preceding Easter Sunday.” Eviatar Zerubavel, “Easter and Passover: On Calendars and Group Identity”, *American Sociological Review*, 47, No. 2 (1982): 285-286.

²³⁹ “esta semana sancta proxima que passo hizo quatro años...a la noche del dia que la començaron a çelebrar que fue jueves sancto”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206.

family: “and all of them, this one [referring to herself] Justa Mendez, doña Francisca de Carvajal, doña Ysabel, doña Catalina, doña Mariana, doña Leonor, Annica, Luis de Carvajal brother of the aforementioned and the mentioned Thomas de Fonseca and Manuel de Luçena husband of this one kept and celebrated the mentioned Passover of the Lamb that Friday at the home of doña Francisca”.²⁴⁰

Witness number six (Ysabel de Carvajal) against Catalina Enrriquez gave a first-hand account of the Passover meal she and her family shared with the Carvajal family. According to this witness, they ate tortillas and chicken (see more about Passover foods in chapter two). When asked to reply to this witness’ accusation, Catalina described the festive meal they shared, which included unleavened bread and chicken. “Catalina Enriquez and a person close to her went to the house of the other ones to keep and celebrate the Passover of the Lamb and all the aforementioned and the mentioned owner of the house and other people very close to him celebrated it and altogether ate tortillas without leaven and chickens”.²⁴¹

Pesach (Passover): A CryptoJewish Sephardic Variation?

Unleavened bread (or tortillas) and chicken are fitting dishes for a Passover Seder meal. And yet, Ysabel pointed out that she and her family did not observe Passover as was the norm, because they did not eat lamb: “And they did not kill a Lamb nor do any of the ceremonies that

²⁴⁰ “Y todas, esta, Justa Mendez, doña fran^{ca} de Carvajal, doña Ysabel, doña Catalina, doña Mariana, doña Leonor, Annica, Luis Carvajal hermano de las susodhas y el dho Thomas de fonseca y Manuel de Luçena marido desta guardaron y çelebraron la d^{ha} pasqua del Cordero aquel dia viernes en cassa de la dicha doña fran^{ca}”. Ibid, folio 206.

²⁴¹ “catalina enriq^z y su conjunta persona fueron a cassa de otras a guardar y çelebrar la pasqua del cordero. y todos susodh^{os} y el dh^o dueño de la cassa y otras sus muy conjuntas personas la çelebraron comieron todos juntos tortillas sin levadura y gallinas”. Ibid, folios 205 y 206.

are laid out in the aforementioned law for fear of being heard but they kept the aforementioned Passover in their hearts prayed the Psalms that she has mentioned in order to keep and observe the mentioned Law of Moses".²⁴² The Carvajal's Seder meal lacked a lamb dish, with is a traditional Sephardic fare—contrary to Ashkenazim, who do not eat lamb for Passover.²⁴³ This explains why Ysabel— of Portuguese origin—pointed out an anomaly of her Seder meal. In the words of Ysabel, her family did not butcher a lamb to serve on Passover, for fear of being discovered.

Pesach (Passover): A Collective Experience

Despite the risks of celebrating the Jewish holiday of Passover, testimonial accounts indicate that Portuguese conversos celebrated the Passover meal with their extended family. Catalina Enriquez testified against herself and explained that four years prior, she celebrated the first night of Passover with her aunt Clara Enriquez at her home in Mexico City, along with her aunt's husband Manuel de Luçena and her cousin Justa Mendez: "this coming Holy Week will be four years that passed that this one [referring to Catalina] staying at the house of Clara Enriquez her aunt in Mexico, with Manuel de Luçena her husband and the mentioned Clara Enriquez and

²⁴² "Y no matavan Cordero, ni hazian las demas çeremonias q^ se disponen en la dh^a ley por no ser sentidas, mas de guardar la dha pascua en su coraçon rezar los psalmos sue tiene dh^o por guarda, y observançia de la dha ley de Moissen". Ibid, folio 334.

²⁴³ "Sephardic Jews, those whose ancestors settled in the Iberian peninsula prior to the Spanish Inquisition, often do eat lamb at Passover. According to Rabbi Torchio, "The Sephardic community interprets this differently as they are re-enacting that last evening before the Jews left Egypt, and are literally ingesting the narrative of the Exodus from Egypt toward becoming a nation." The one caveat being that while you can eat lamb meat, you must not roast a whole lamb, per Jewish law". Bonem, Max, "Who Eats Lamb at Passover?", Food and Wine, April 8, 2019, <https://www.foodandwine.com/holidays-events/passover/how-to-cook-simple-passover-meal-easy-fast>.

the mentioned Justa Mendez began to keep and celebrate the Passover of the Lamb in observance of the Law of Moses and on the night of the day when they started to celebrate it was Holy Thursday.”²⁴⁴

However, that evening, she received a visit from Catalina Carvajal (identified as doña Catalina muger de Antonio Diaz de Caçeres), who was staying at a friend’s house where she could not celebrate Passover.²⁴⁵ Faced with this predicament, Catalina de Carvajal invited Catalina Enrriquez and her family to celebrate the second night of Passover (celebrated only in the Diaspora) at her mother Francisca’s home in Santiago: “ and thus they convened to go and celebrate the Passover the following Friday at the home of the mentioned mother of doña Catalina in Santiago”.²⁴⁶ Through Catalina Enrriquez’ account, we find that the cryptoJewish community in New Spain celebrated the first and second night of Passover, with family but also as a larger collective, at the home of converso friends.

Pesach (Passover): A CryptoJewish Passover Maggid (Narration)

As in normative Judaism, the Carvajal’s Passover Seder consisted of a reading of the Passover narrative. However, without a Haggadah text from which to recount the Exodus,

²⁴⁴ “esta semana sancta proxima que passo hizo quatro años q^ esta possando en mexico en cassa de clara enrriquez su tia, començo juntam^te con manuel de luçena su marido y la dicha clara enrriquez Y la dha justa mendez a guardar y çelebrar la pasqua del cordero por observançia de la ley de moissen y a la noche del dia que la començaron a çelebrar que fue jueves sancto”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, folio 206.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, folio 206.

Passover guests would listen to Luis read about Passover from a Christian Bible. Justa Mendez, one of the guests at the Carvajal's Seder, explained that they: "dedicated themselves to listening to Luis de Carvajal read in a Bible things concerning the Law of Moses and in particular remembers it was about the aforementioned Passover of the Lamb and how one was to eat the aforementioned Lamb that she has been asked about standing with staffs in hand and loins girded and eating unleavened bread".²⁴⁷

Luis de Carvajal's reading of the Exodus, and the instructions G-d gave Israel through Moses, recalls the Maggid — or narration— during the Seder meal that recounts the first Passover. It is tradition for children to ask four questions, so they learn about the Exodus, and pass this legacy on to future generations. One of the four questions children ask at the Seder table cites the Torah. In *A Sephardic Passover Haggadah* Rabbi Marc Angel writes: "The Torah speaks in reference to four children: the wise, the wicked, the naive, and the one who does not know how to ask. What does the wise child say? "What are the testimonies, statutes, and laws which the Lord our G-d has commanded you" (Deuteronomy 6.20).²⁴⁸ Although the Haggadah includes excerpts like these from the Torah, it does not include the instructions in regard to the Lamb to be eaten. Beyond excerpts from the Tanach in reference to the Exodus, the Haggadah includes Talmudic discussions and analyses, explanations of the Seder plate's symbolic foods and traditional Sephardic songs while the Carvajal family limited itself to the historiographical

²⁴⁷ "se ocuparon en oir al dho^ Luis de Caravajal leer en Una biblia cossas de la ley de moysen y en particular se acuerda trato de la dha^ pasqua de El cordero y como se habia de comer el dho^ Cordero de que se le ha preguntado estando em pie con vaculos en Las manos y los lomos çeñidos y que habiendo de comer El pan sin levadura". Ibid, folio 34.

²⁴⁸ Rabbi Marc Angel, *A Sephardic Passover Haggadah* (New Jersey: KTAV Publishing House, 1988), 29.

biblical narrative.

Pesach (Passover): Passover Instead of Holy Friday

As we have seen earlier, Leonor recited in verse and then in prose, a song she called The Song of Moses, about the Holy Days she should observe. Passover, Leonor explained, was “the celebration of the passover of the lamb with pure bread without yeast whose observance is for seven days”.²⁴⁹ Like Leonor de Carvajal, Catalina Enrriquez demonstrated her cryptoJewish identity before inquisitors at the risk of losing her life. Catalina was so emphatic about keeping Pesach instead of the Christian holy day, that she corrected the testimony of witness number six that claimed that she went to a Christian procession.

Rather, Catalina Enrriquez insisted that she and her cousin Justa Mendez, Catalina de Carvajal, Manuel de Lucena, Thomas de Fonseca, Luis, Francisca, Isabel, Mariana, Leonor and Annica celebrated Passover at Francisca’s home, and did not leave that house: “Responses ~she said that she adheres to what she has said and that the witness does not correctly say that they went to see the procession of the burial on Holy Friday, because as she has said all were there, this one [referring to Catalina Enrriquez], Justa Mendez, doña Catalina Manuel de Luçena Thomas de Fonseca, Luis de Carvajal at the house of his mother doña Francisca, and in her company and of the mentioned doña Ysabel doña Mariana doña Leonor and Annica they kept

²⁴⁹ “la çelebraçion de la pasqua de El Cordero con pan sençeño sin lebadura cuia guarda es de siete días”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56.

and celebrated the said Passover of the Lamb and did not go out of the house the entire day.”²⁵⁰

Even though attending a Christian event such as “the procession of the burial” may have helped Catalina Enrriquez gain favor before inquisitors, she corrected unnamed witness number six. She let her inquisitors know that she and her family and friends did not partake of the Christian holy day, but rather, that they stayed at home all day to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Passover, despite the consequences this correction may have had in her trial.

CryptoJewish Ritual: Extra Fast Days

We have already discovered that conversos in New Spain, fasted on Yom Kippur— fast that occurs on the tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei. But in contrast to Tisha B’Av or the Ta’anit Esther (the Fast of Esther), or other regularly ordained Jewish fast days, Ysabel for instance, fasted on a weekly basis: from midday on Sunday to Monday night; then from Tuesday morning until Tuesday night, and finally from Wednesday until Friday night: “the mentioned doña Ysabel fasted every week from Sunday midday keeping this order. that she would eat on Sunday at noon and fasted until Monday at night that she would have dinner. and later she would fast on Tuesday not eating until night and then she would fast on Wednesday without eating a

²⁵⁰ “Respuestas ~dixo q^ se remite a lo que tiene dho^ y que no dize bien el testigo que el viernes sancto fueron a veer la proçession del entierro, porque como tiene dho^ estuvieron todos, esta, justa mendez, doña catalina manuel de luçena, thomas de fonseca, luis de carvajal en cassa de su madre doña fran^a, y en compañia de ella y de las dhas^ doña ysabel doña mariana doña leonor y annica guardaron y çelebraron la dha passqua del cordero y no salieron en todo el dia de cassa”. Ibid, folio 209.

bite until Friday at night”.²⁵¹ And she was not alone, for it appears the entire Carvajal family and other conversos regularly fasted on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. An unnamed witness against Ysabel de Carvajal reported to inquisitors that she and others close to her fasted on these days and that he himself joined them in these fasts: “and [the unnamed witness] knew that they fasted in observance of the Law of Moses on Mondays Wednesdays and Thursdays which they fasted jointly with the aforementioned and they would not eat from sunset until the next day when the star would come out”.²⁵²

Like Leonor de Carvajal and her siblings who fasted on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, Portuguese conversos in Bragança, Portugal, also fasted on Mondays and Thursdays. Claude B. Stuczynski refers to a conversa named Francisca Lopes who confessed to inquisitors “stereotypical beliefs and rituals of “crypto-Judaism” known and diffused by the Inquisition through the “Edicts of Faith”, such as: the belief in one “G-d of heaven”, the belief in salvation through the “Law of Moses”, the expectation of the Messiah, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, in addition to the fasts of Queen Esther and of the “great day” in September (“Quipur”);

²⁵¹ “la dicha doña ysabel todas las semanas ayunava desde el domingo a medio día llevando este orden. q^ comia el domingo a medio dia y ayunaba fasta el lunes. en la noche. q^ cenaba. y luego ayunaba el martes no comiendo hasta la noche y luego ayunava el miercoles sin comer bocado hasta el viernes en la noche.” Ibid, folio 263.

²⁵² “y sabia que ayunaban en guarda de la ley de moysen los lunes miercoles y jueves el qual ayunava juntam^te con todos los susodichos y no comian desde en anochesiendo hasta otro dia salida la estrella”. Ibid, folio 262.

abstaining from eating blood and unclean animals; household cleaning on Friday, the Sabbath rest, and so forth”.²⁵³

Likewise in Spain, Maria Rodriguez testified against Blanca Manuel—a Portuguese conversa and resident of Madrid— whose Inquisition trial (1591-1598), also coincides with the Carvajal family second trial (1595-1596). Maria told inquisitors that: “she has seen her fast Mondays and Thursdays and keep Saturdays since it is one of the Laws of Jews”.²⁵⁴ Yosef Kaplan mentions the testimony of a Portuguese-descent cryptoJewish young man living Spain by the name of Manuel Alvares, who in 1641 told inquisitors that: “in the course of the year fasts were to be observed a number of times on Mondays and Thursdays”.²⁵⁵

Speaking about Portuguese and Spanish conversos in Spain, Portugal and the New World, Moshe Lazar explains that to “fast on Mondays and Thursdays” was one of the “specific “Judaic” beliefs, practices, and customs [extracted from the confessions of Anussim and accusations against them found in their trial documents] by which a Judaizing converso could be detected (observance of one of them being sufficient to be brought before the Tribunal of the

²⁵³ Claude B. Stuczynski. “Not Hybridity but Counterculture: Portuguese New Christian Judaizers Confronting Christianity and Islam in Bragança, XVI c.”, in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 62-63.

²⁵⁴ “la a visto ayunar los lunes y jueves e guardar los savados enlo ser unas de la ley de loss judios”. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Inquisición, Legajo 164, Expediente 8, folio 6.

²⁵⁵ Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 44.

Holy Office)”.²⁵⁶ From these accounts, we can infer that the cryptoJewish community in New Spain fasted more than other conversos in Spain, Portugal, and other colonies. In *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, Sue Levi Elwell explains that, “A communal fast has great power to both create and sustain community. Just as sharing food is an essential tool for bringing people together, a sense of shared intention in eschewing food can forge connections between people. Eating together brings individuals to a shared table, and once together, not only food, but also ideas are shared. This dynamic is enhanced and extended in a communal fast. When individuals commit themselves to a shared fast, there are three clear opportunities for connection: gathering for a shared meal to prepare for the fast, gathering for mutual support and perhaps commiseration during the course of the fast, and coming together once again to conclude or break the fast”.²⁵⁷

Inquisitors defined the weekly fasts of the Carvajal women as fasts according to the Law of Moses or Jewish custom, but were these fasts really Jewish in nature? In Judaism, there are three types of fasts, which include the fast of Yom Kippur as outlined in the Torah, fasts decreed by rabbis as outlined in the Talmud, and private fasts.²⁵⁸ And though as Hayyim Schauss reminds us, fasting is an old Jewish institution, and that, in ancient times, “it was customary to

²⁵⁶ Moshe Lazar, “Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The “Jewishness” of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 182.

²⁵⁷ Mary Zamore, *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 447.

²⁵⁸ “The first Monday and Thursday, and the following Monday after Passover and Sukkot (Tur and Sh. Ar., OH, 492).” “Jewish Holidays: Fasting & Fast Days”, Jewish Virtual Library, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE), Accessed on May 5, 2021, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/fasting-and-fast-days#6>.

proclaim a fast day in a time of distress...impromptu penitential fasts, decreed for this or that special occasion”, the Carvajal’s fasting was excessive, because while they did not conform to normative Jewish fasts, they included an extra fast day beyond what was customary among conversos.²⁵⁹

Notwithstanding all their efforts in observing Jewish holidays, dread of the Inquisition compelled conversos to observe them in different and even forbidden ways, like eating forbidden foods (more in chapter two). One of the witnesses against Ysabel de Carvajal commented that on Passover and Sukkot, her sister Leonor and others who were part of her social circle, touched and ate pork during these feasts for fear of the inquisition.²⁶⁰ Like other cryptoJews in New Spain, Ysabel knew that she was a target for the Inquisition. Having already, endured prison, torture, and condemnation and punishment by the Inquisition in a first trial in 1589, Ysabel was especially fearful of falling prey to the Inquisition for her cryptoJewish identity. For this reason, even when observing Jewish holidays, Ysabel, her family and other converso friends forced themselves to eat pork, knowing full well Jewish Law forbids eating teref (unfit) animals.

²⁵⁹ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 98.

²⁶⁰ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. *Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 100.

Chapter 2

Jewish Eating: When, How, Do's and Don'ts

The Mexican Ruy Díaz Nieto used to prepare on Friday afternoon a Sabbath meal of “chickpeas, eggs, salt fish, fresh fish, and tuna, all stewed together,” portions of which he sent to his friends.²⁶¹

When

Before we identify what foods were forbidden and permitted for conversos, we should first want to know when foods were prepared and shared. As we have seen previously, one of the Jewish holy days that conversos in New Spain preserved as part of their cryptoJewish identity was the Sabbath. While food is central to every Jewish holiday, on the Sabbath, foods must be prepared beforehand. As a guest at the Carvajal home, Justa Mendez knew the important role timing played in Sabbath cooking.

According to her account, the food they ate on Saturday was cooked on Friday in order to keep the Law of Moses that forbids work of any kind on the Sabbath. Justa recalled that, “the food that they ate the aforementioned Saturday was cooked the previous Friday for not cooking it

²⁶¹ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 93.

on Saturday to keep it [the Sabbath] with greater accuracy”.²⁶² But the rigor with which the Carvajal women tried to keep the Law of Moses contrasted with the practices of Justa’s own mother— Clara Henriquez. For while Francisca and her daughters had their food prepared before the Sabbath, Clara cooked on Saturday. Mariana or Leonor—according to Justa—claimed that her mother Clara did not fear G-d because she cooked on this day: “and that she remembers that one of them she does not know if doña Mariana or doña Leonor told her that they enjoyed to keep the Sabbath in our house than at the house of your mother because your mother does not fear God cooking like she cooks on Saturday that should be observed and not work on food”.²⁶³

Indeed, the Jewish custom of not cooking on the Sabbath is rooted in the time when G-d provided a special bread in the desert. Although the Israelites were to gather this bread on a daily basis, they were to gather twice as much on Friday in preparation for the Sabbath day of rest. In Exodus 16, we read that:

On the sixth day they gathered double the amount of food, two omers for each; and when all the chieftains of the community came and told Moses, he said to them, “This is what יהוה [God] meant: Tomorrow is a day of rest, a holy sabbath of יהוה. Bake what you would bake and boil what you would boil; and all that is left put aside to be kept until morning.

²⁶² “ la comida que comieron el dh^o sabado se guiso el viernes antes por no ocuparse el sabado en guisarla para guardarlo con mas puntualidad”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 19.

²⁶³ “y que se acuerda que una dellas no sabe si doña Mariana o doña leonor le dixo a esta mas gustamos de guardar El sabado en nr^a casa que en la vr^a porque vr^a madre no teme a dios guisando como guisa en El sabado que se a de guardar y no trabaxar la comida”. Ibid, folio 19.

So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered; and it did not turn foul, and there were no maggots in it. Then Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a sabbath of יהוה; you will not find it today on the plain. Six days you shall gather it; on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none. And יהוה said to Moses, “How long will you all refuse to obey My commandments and My teachings?” Mark that it is יהוה who, having given you the sabbath, therefore gives you two days’ food on the sixth day. Let everyone remain in place: let no one leave the vicinity on the seventh day.²⁶⁴

In addition to what is written in the Torah of Moses, other foundational Jewish texts like the Talmud expand on G-d’s prohibition of baking on the Sabbath to a prohibition of cooking altogether on this day.²⁶⁵ By informing inquisitors when food was prepared at the Carvajal home, Justa Mendez implicitly suggested that Francisca and her family knew the Jewish prohibition of cooking on the Sabbath, and also observed it by preparing food beforehand (on Friday before the sun set). Whether or not Justa claimed her mother did not keep the Sabbath with as much accuracy as Francisca to protect her mother from the Inquisition cannot be ascertained. Nevertheless, by testifying that her mother Clara cooked on Saturday while Francisca abstained and cooked beforehand, Justa inferred that the Carvajal family observed Jewish eating practices for the Sabbath day of rest.

²⁶⁴ “Exodus 16 The Contemporary Torah, JPS, 2006”, Sefaria, 30 August, 2022, <https://www.sefaria.org/Exodus.16.29?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>.

²⁶⁵ “The Forbidden Work of Cooking”, Halacha Yomit, 30 August, 2022, <https://halachayomit.co.il/en/default.aspx?HalachaID=2791>.

Instead of the term “kashrut or kosher”, I borrow the phrase “Jewish eating practices” from David Kraemer.²⁶⁶ For while, as Mary Zamore explains, “The foundation of the laws of kashrut[kosher] are found in the Torah... [and] That foundation is argued, clarified, commented upon, and greatly expanded throughout the generations of Jewish sacred texts that follow the Torah... In fact many of the laws of kashrut continue to be in flux through the sixteenth century”.²⁶⁷ Since our focus is on the Carvajal family and the wider cryptoJewish community of New Spain in the late sixteenth century, we can expect a limited observance of many kosher laws that are readily practiced today. For this reason, I employ the more inclusive term of Jewish eating practices to explain the culinary expressions of Jewish identity of the Carvajal family and other conversos in early modernity.

How

Awareness of Jewish Ritual Slaughter

While one of the Carvajal’s Jewish eating practices consisted of knowing when to prepare their Sabbath meals, it is also possible that they knew how to slaughter an animal according to Jewish law (*sh’chitah*)—at least in theory. In one of Luis’ confessions, the inquisitor scribe wrote: “in the house of this one [referring to Luis] they never killed birds because from the Monastery of Santiago fray Pedro Hoco and fray Rodrigo de Santillan and fray Diego Cordero

²⁶⁶ While David Kraemer uses the phrase “Jewish eating practices” to explain the culinary expressions of Jewish identity throughout history, I will employ this phrase to speak about the Jewish eating practices of conversos during early modernity. David Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

²⁶⁷ Mary Zamore, “An Overview of Ritual Kashrut” in *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, ed. Mary Zamore (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 123.

would send chicken to his mother and sisters cooked and grilled birds and even though they had birds at home they did not kill them for fear of being heard and they were only good for eggs”.²⁶⁸ Luis explained to inquisitors that even though his family raised chickens on their property, a church supplied them with chicken meat. Cooked chicken spared the Carvajal family from being heard slaughtering their chickens. But why was the Carvajal family afraid of being heard? Perhaps the slaughter according to Jewish law (*sh’chitah*) sounded differently than when Christians slaughtered their chickens.

John Winston and Gersh Lazarov explain that “The *sh’chitah* procedure itself consists of a rapid transverse incision with an instrument of surgical sharpness, called a *chalaf*, which severs the major structures and vessels at the neck (*simanim*)”.²⁶⁹ And while this instrument must be precise, the Shulchan Aruch—a compilation of Jewish laws and customs recorded by Sephardic rabbi Josef Caro in 1563—excludes the use of an axe, hatchet nor guillotine.²⁷⁰ After making the incision, “Out of respect for the slaughtered animal and its life, tradition dictates that the *schochet* [ritual slaughterer] is obligated to cover the blood with earth and recite a blessing

²⁶⁸ “en cassa deste nunca se mataban abes porq^ de el monasterio de santiago tlatilolco fray p^o hoco^z y fray R^o de Santillan y fray di^o cordero les enbiaban a su madre y hermanas de este aves coçidas y asadas y aunque tenian en cassa aves no las mataban por no ponerse en ocazion de degollarlas y ser sentidos y solo servían para huebos”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 45.

²⁶⁹ John Winston and Gersh Lazarov, “Blood, Sweat and Tears The Making of a Reform Shochet” in *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, ed. Mary Zamore (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 268.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 269.

acknowledging the life that was taken”.²⁷¹ Luis’ confession before inquisitors revealed that his family refrained from slaughtering their birds, “for fear of being heard”. Interestingly, in sixteenth-century Spanish—the Romance language used in these Inquisition trial documents—the word for heard was “sentidos” from the verb sentir. The Diccionario de Autoridades defines sentir as: “Particularly it is understood as to hear or perceive with the sense of the ear”.²⁷² While the meaning of the verb sentir in modern Spanish has changed to “to feel”, in the Romance language of Sephardic or Spanish and Portuguese Jews, sentir still retains its original meaning ‘to hear’. Let us return to the Carvajal family’s fear of being heard slaughtering a chicken. We can interpret this fear in light of the blessing acknowledging the life that was taken. Beyond the actual slaughtering of the bird, I am inclined to conclude that the Carvajal family feared their neighbors might hear the blessing they would have recited during the *sh’chitah*.

Why was the Carvajal family wary that their neighbors might hear the blessing? Spanish subjects learned about Jewish practices from Edicts of Faith published and read aloud by the Spanish Inquisition. These edicts would explain Jewish practices so that Christians could identify them and testify against those who carried them out. In 1624, the Edict of Faith of Cuenca, addressed all its inhabitants in the following manner:

²⁷¹ Ibid, 271.

²⁷² “Particularmente se toma por oír, ò percibir con el sentido del oído”. Lat. *Audire. Auditū percipere*. HORTENS. Paneg. pl. 247. De *sentir* los passos de un Dios mui severo, huye un hombre solo, que habia en el Paraíso. “Sentir”, Diccionario de Autoridades - Tomo VI (1739), 5 June, 2022, <https://apps2.rae.es/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getdoc&DocId=47717&Index=C%3a%5cinetpub%5cwwwroot%5cDA%5fINDEX&HitCount=1&hits=1+&mc=0&SearchForm=%2fDA%5fform%2ehtml>

[E]xhort you and require that if any of you knows, or has seen or heard say that any person, living or absent or dead, has done or has said or has held any of the heretical ideas against the Holy Mother Roman Church...if any of you has seen or heard say that any person or persons have kept any Sabbaths in honor or observance of the Law of Moses...Or who have forged or deveined the meat they are preparing to eat, soaking it in water to remove the blood, or who have removed the sciatic vein from a leg of mutton or from any other animal. Or who have cut the throat from one side to the other of any animals or birds which they are going to eat, saying “Blessed be the Lord who has commanded us to slaughter [in this fashion],” first testing the knife on a finger nail to see if it has a sharp edge, and then covering the blood with earth.²⁷³ Since it was likely that their Christian neighbors knew these Jewish eating practices specifically the blessing recited when slaughtering an animal—the Carvajal family feared being heard and ultimately abstained from slaughtering their chickens.

Bleeding and Defatting Meat

Despite this abstention, the Carvajal family knew—or so I propose—how to slaughter animals according to Jewish law. Furthermore, the Carvajal family knew how to remove blood, the sciatic nerve, and fat from their meats. Just as we saw in chapter one with Francisco Rodriguez, visits from former conversos now living as normative Jews in Italy reinforced these Jewish eating practices. According to Anna Lanyon, some of Luis de Carvajal’s siblings lived in Pisa: “On 9 February 1595, he instructed Díaz, on his release, to go to the house in Santiago

²⁷³ David Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 626.

Tlatelolco where the Carvajal family had been living, and retrieve two notebooks hidden there. Luis wanted Díaz to wrap them ‘as if they were a parcel of letters’ and send them to his brothers in Pisa”.²⁷⁴ David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson document the arrival of Ruy [Rodrigo] Diaz Nieto to New Spain from Ferrara, Italy, with his son Diego in order to raise money to “ransom from the Turks various new-Christian captives, including two of his sons”.²⁷⁵

While in New Spain, Ruy met with the principal members of the crypto-Jewish community, and his son Diego “significantly upgraded the traditional practices of Mexican crypto-Judaism by regaling his Mexican friends with details of Jewish observances in Italy. He taught them to wash and salt their meat and which parts of the animal were forbidden to eat”.²⁷⁶ Diego’s Inquisition trial that began in 1596 was concurrent with the second trials of the Carvajal family, and it is possible that Ruy and Diego met with them before their incarcerations. Diego’s instructions may have helped the Carvajal family bleed their meat—which is achieved by salting meat and soaking it in water—remove parts of the animal forbidden to eat, such as the sciatic nerve and the fat.

Indeed, Susana Galban’s testimony corroborates that the Carvajal family knew how to prepare their meats according to Jewish eating practices. In particular, Susana testified about how Francisca bled her meat. Susana visited Francisca de Carvajal’s home often, and reported observing meat being drained from its blood on several occasions: “moreover she said that at

²⁷⁴ Ilan Stavans, *The Return of Carvajal A Mystery* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019), 66.

²⁷⁵ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 93.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

times when she has entered the house of doña Francisca she has seen the meat that they are to eat
bled over an earthenware bowl in water and they do the same with liver they air the meat to
dry”.²⁷⁷

David Kraemer explains the mandate to drain meat of its blood in the following manner:

To begin with, it will be recalled that the Torah’s eating laws do not begin and end with the list of pure and impure animals. Rather, the first of these laws is the blood prohibition, a prohibition deemed so important that it is incumbent upon all of mankind, not just upon Israel. It is enunciated, in fact, near the beginning of the Torah, on the occasion of Noah’s exit from the ark. There, God revises the vegetarian diet of Eden to permit, for the first time, the consumption of animal flesh. But God adds: “You must not, however, eat flesh with its life-blood. For your life-blood too, I will require a reckoning. Whoever sheds the blood of man, for that man shall his blood be shed...” (Gen 9:4-6). Eating flesh with blood is compared to shedding blood—to taking life. In fact, in the opinion of Leviticus, the blood *is* the life. As the text specifies, “And I say to the Israelite people: you shall not ingest the blood of any flesh, *for the life of all*

²⁷⁷ “~ytem dixo que algunas vezes que esta ha entrado e cassa de la dh^a doña fran^ca ha visto la carne que han de comer desangrada echada e un lebrillo en agua y lo mesmo hazen en el higado la qual carne ponen al ayre para que se seque”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 7.

I also used the translation for lebrillo from: “Lebrillo”, wordreference.com 2022, Accessed 5 September, 2022, <https://www.wordreference.com/es/en/translation.asp?spen=lebrillo>.

flesh is its blood...” (17:14, emphasis added).²⁷⁸

For this reason, blood must be drained from a clean animal as soon as it is slaughtered. Zamore explains that, “the primary goal is to carry out a quick slaughter; the second goal is to drain the blood from the animal, collecting it and covering it with dust as commanded (Lev. 17:13); Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Dei-ah 28:1, 28:5)”.²⁷⁹ Despite the Carvajal family abstained from ritually slaughter—to avoid being discovered by others—they did drain their meat from blood, as required by Jewish eating practices.

Susana Galban may very well have learned that bleeding meat was a Jewish custom from an Edict of Faith. We should recall that these edicts would explain Jewish practices so that Christians could identify them and testify against those who carried them out. For instance, the Edict Faith of Cuenca of 1624 that we have mentioned previously—shortly after the Carvajal’s execution at the stake—exhorted all the residents and inhabitants of a given city, town or village to report anyone “who have forged or deveined the meat they are preparing to eat, soaking it in water to remove the blood”.²⁸⁰ Notwithstanding, Susana was from the city of Braga, Portugal. Her life account is included in Leonor de Carvajal’s trial documents, because as we have seen in previous chapters, she was one of the witnesses that testified against Leonor. The inquisitor scribe wrote: “~Susana Galvan wife of Martin Perez Portuguese cutler neighbor of this city of

²⁷⁸ David Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 15.

²⁷⁹ Mary Zamore, “An Overview of Ritual Kashrut” in *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, ed. Mary Zamore (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 129.

²⁸⁰ David Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 626.

Mexico age fifty native of the city of Braga in the kingdoms of Portugal”.²⁸¹ If she was a *conversa*, then she likely learned Jewish eating practices firsthand from her own Jewish heritage.

In addition to bleeding meat, that the Carvajal women also removed fat. Leonor de Carvajal for instance, told inquisitors some of the eating practices she needed to abide by as part of her belief in the Law of Moses. Among many other Jewish eating practices such as “fast in keeping with the Law of Moses on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each week from sun to sun without eating all day until night and to keep the Saturdays and to no eat bacon lard nor things of pork and to fast the great day of the Lord that Jews call of penitence”, her brother Luis urged her to—among other customs—to take the grease and fat off the meat in keeping with the Law of Moses: “believe in the Law of Moses as before she was reconciled and to wait for the promised Messiah in the Law and he told this one [referring to Leonor] to fast in keeping with the Law of Moses Mondays Wednesdays and Thursdays of all the week from sun to sun without eating all day until night and to keep the Sabbaths and to not eat pork lard nor things of pork and for this one to fast the Great Day of the Lord that Jews call or penitence and to take the grease and the fat from the meat for keeping the aforementioned law and to believe and in one G-d and

²⁸¹ “~susana galana muger de martin perez portugues cuchillero vezino deesta çudad de mex^o de hedad de çinquenta años natural de la çudad de braga e^ los reinos de portugal”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 4.

entrust oneself to Him alone”.²⁸² By including defatting of meat in cryptoJewish practices, Leonor identified these food prohibitions with her cryptoJewish identity.

As much as she needed to keep the Sabbath, and fast on Yom Kippur, it was essential for her to defat the meat she ate, if she was to follow the Law of Moses. Mary Zamore explains that In addition to the blood, a specific type of fat is also prohibited for consumption. This commandment appears in a section of the Torah in which God is giving Moses many commandments concerning the sacrifices: You shall eat no fat of ox or sheep or goat. Fat from animals that died were torn by beasts may be put to any use, but you must not eat it. If anyone eats the fat of animals from which offerings by fire may be made to the Eternal, the person who eats it shall be cut off from kin. (Lev. 7:23-25).²⁸³

²⁸² “cree e la ley de moysen como antes que la reconçiliaran y que esperase al messias prometido e la ley y le dixo a esta que ayunase en guarda de la ley de moysen los lunes miercoles y jueves de todas las semanas de sol a sol sin comer en todo el dia hasta la noche y que guardase los sabados y que no comiese toçino manteca ni cossas de puerco y que ayunase esta el dia grande de el señor que llaman los judios de penitençia y que quitase el sebo y la gordura de la carne por guarda de la dh^a ley y que creyese e un solo dios a quien solamente se habia de encomendar”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 50.

²⁸³ Mary Zamore, “An Overview of Ritual Kashrut” in *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, ed. Mary Zamore (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 129.

Do's

Sabbath Staple

Just as the Carvajal women knew when to prepare their food for the Sabbath, and how to prepare their meats by removing the sciatic nerve, bleeding and defatting it, they also knew what to eat on Jewish holidays. In effect, the Carvajal family prepared meat for the Sabbath, as we have seen in chapter one. Susana Galban reported to inquisitors that on a particular Saturday, the Carvajals elegantly set their table and prepared to eat meat and chicken that had been warmed in a pot by the fire. While this festive meal on Saturday strongly suggested that the Carvajal family and their guests observed the Jewish Sabbath, the foods they shared were also indicators of their Jewish religious and dietary customs. David Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson refer to the trial documents of several conversos that included identifiable references to Jewish holiday cooking. For instance, another conversa, María González “confessed in 1513 in Toledo to eating “fried sardines stuffed with hard-boiled eggs” on Friday, even though the consumption of eggs on Friday violated the dictates of the Church”.²⁸⁴

What Church mandates made eating meat, chicken, or eggs unmistakably Jewish? As Gitlitz and Davidson explain, “The days in which Christians fasted or exercised abstinence were many. For example, meat was banned every Friday, in commemoration of the crucifixion”.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 99.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

Thus, the meat, chicken and the hard-boiled eggs the Carvajals and María González ate for the Sabbath—which began with a Friday evening meal—were definitive Jewish foods that contrasted with the Christian dietary custom of not eating meat on Fridays.

Passover Icons

The Carvajals, like other cryptoJews, also followed the Jewish dietary customs of eating matzah on Passover. Gitlitz and Davidson explain that,

For crypto-Jews, matza essentially defined the Passover, a fact reflected in many of the names commonly given to the holiday. Among Spanish speakers it was *Pascua del pan cenceño*...Most matza, such as the *pan de la aflicción* (bread of affliction) prepared by Antonio Cardoso, of Barajas (Madrid) in the 1650's, was simply a plain sought of flour and water, mixed without salt or yeast. Beatriz Enríquez described to Mexican inquisitors in 1642 the care with which her mother prepared matza using the same simple ingredients.²⁸⁶

Based on Luis de Carvajal's first trial document, Gitlitz and Davidson further note that, "Luis de Carvajal told the Inquisition there in 1589 that on Passover "because he did not have unleavened bread he ate corn *tortillas*, since they have no yeast".²⁸⁷ During the Carvajal's second inquisition trial of 1596, however, Catalina Enrriquez—a fellow conversa and guest of the Carvajal family—informed inquisitors that on Passover, the Carvajal family served unleavened bread and chicken: "And for the ceremony they ate unleavened bread and ate broiled

²⁸⁶ Ibid, 286.

²⁸⁷ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 293.

and grilled chickens which they did in keeping the Law of Moses in remembrance that God freed the people of Israel from the power of Pharaoh and took them out of captivity in Egypt”.²⁸⁸

In truth, Catalina Enrriquez testified against Ysabel only after inquisitors read to her the testimony against her of an unnamed witness. According to this witness, Catalina had gone with individuals close to her, to the home of a certain person to celebrate Passover. The witness’ account changed only slightly, from bread to tortillas: “they celebrated all together and ate unleavened tortillas and chickens”.²⁸⁹

Eating unleavened bread or matzah— a must-have and staple at a Passover Seder— identified Catalina Enrriquez, her cousin Justa Mendez, the Carvajal family, and other guests as cryptoJews. If, in place of unleavened bread, the Carvajals ate corn tortillas out of necessity, then we can speak of Sephardic dietary customs. For while Ashkenazic Jews do not eat beans, rice nor other vegetables during Passover, Sephardic Jews do include them. Gilda Angel explains that, “During Passover, Sephardim will use many fresh vegetables including peas, green beans and fava beans”.²⁹⁰

Although Talmudic law does not forbid eating such vegetables during the holiday, Ashkenazic Jews developed the custom of not consuming these legumes known as *kitniyot*. Some Sephardic groups also eat rice on Passover, but others do not. (See Maimonides’ Mishneh

²⁸⁸ “Y por çeremonia comieron pan çençeno sin levadura y comieron gallinas cozidas y assadas, Lo qual hizieron por guarda de la ley de Moissen en memoria que Dios Libro el pueblo de Ysrael del poder de Pharaon y los saco del captiverio de Egipto”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206.

²⁸⁹ “çelebraron y comieron todos juntos tortillas sin levadura y gallinas”. Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Gilda Angel, *Sephardic Holiday Cooking* (New York: Decalogue Books, 2004), 155.

Torah, laws of Hametz and Matza 5:1; and the Tractate Pesahim, 35a.)”.²⁹¹ According to Justa Mendez, the Carvajal women— Francisca, Isabel, Leonor, Mariana, Catalina and Anica — celebrated the Passover (called the Passover of the Lamb) and: “everyone together ate tortillas without yeast and chicken”; but “said that they did not eat any lamb”.²⁹²

In addition, Gitlitz and Davidson cite Catalina de Rivera’s testimony against Juan de León—another converso from New Spain. In 1642, Catalina reported that one Passover Juan de León ate “corn *tortillas*, fish, and vegetables” with his crypto-Jewish friends”.²⁹³ While Gitlitz and Davidson claim that, like Juan de León, the Carvajals ate corn tortillas (for lack of unleavened bread), it is also likely that they ate flour tortillas if they celebrated Passover in northern Mexico. As Sergio Serna-Saldivar explains, “Today, wheat flour tortillas are especially popular in northern Mexico, where many Spaniards settled”.²⁹⁴

Francisca de Carvajal along with her husband Francisco Rodriguez Matos and their children came to New Spain thanks to Francisca’s brother Luis de Carvajal the Elder, who founded the province of Nuevo León, in northern Mexico. Historian Henry Tobias explains, “A conquistador and colonizer, Carvajal became governor of an enormous tract called Nuevo León

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² “comieron todos juntos tortillas sin levadura y gallinas”; “dixo que no comieron ningun cordero” *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 34.*

²⁹³ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 293.

²⁹⁴ Sergio O Serna-Saldivar, *History of Corn and Wheat Tortillas*, (St. Paul: AACC International Press, 2015), 24.

was located in present-day Monterrey and stretching from Tampico to the vicinity of present-day San Antonio. Having created this sub empire, Carvajal invited his extended family to join him. The terms of his contract with the crown did not require the customary proof of Old Christian lineage”.²⁹⁵ Although Martin Cohen affirms that in 1589, “except for his[Luis’] brother Baltasar, whom he left in Veracruz, the entire family was in Mexico City”.²⁹⁶ Notwithstanding, if Francisca and her family were living in Nuevo León when they celebrated Passover, then it is likely that they used flour tortillas in place of matzot—unleavened bread.

According to Catalina Enrriquez, her friend Catalina de Carvajal invited her to celebrate Passover at her mother’s home—referring to Francisca de Carvajal—in Santiago. Speaking about herself and Catalina de Carvajal, Catalina Enrriquez informed inquisitors that “and so they agreed to go and celebrate the aforementioned Passover the following Friday at the home of doña Catalina’s mother in Santiago”.²⁹⁷ While in modern-day Monterrey, Nuevo León, there is a city called Santiago, scholars have always identified this Santiago in Mexico City. Writer Anna Lanyon, for instance, located Santiago in Tlatelolco and its plaza as the one described by Bernal Díaz del Castillo in his *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, as “the great plaza which is called “Tlatelulco we admired the great multitude of people and merchandise

²⁹⁵ Henry J. Tobias, *A History of the Jews in New Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 14.

²⁹⁶ Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 7.

²⁹⁷ “y assi conçertaron de yr a çelebrar la dha pasqua el Viernes siguiente a casa de la dha su madre de la dh^a doña Catalina a Santiago”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206.

there and the great sense of harmony and order in everything”.²⁹⁸ Lanyon situated Catalina’s mother’s home in Santiago where, “Luis said it stood close to the Church of Santiago that still dominates Tlatelolco’s great plaza”.²⁹⁹

Martin Cohen agrees with Lanyon by adding that after their first trial in 1589 and release in 1590, Jorge de Almeyda “influenced the inquisitor to change the contemplated plan. He had Doña Francisca, Isabel, Catalina, Mariana, and Leonor released from the convents where they had been assigned and arranged for them to live together in a house near the Indian market in the district of Santiago Tlatelolco, within easy view of the Franciscan monastery”.³⁰⁰

Notwithstanding, whether in Nuevo León to the North, or in Mexico City to the South, what matters most is that the tortillas the Carvajals and their guests ate in Francisca’s home in Santiago—made of corn or flour—were “without yeast”. Every witness that testified about the Carvajal’s family Passover meal described their bread or the tortillas as unleavened. The emphasis of unleavened bread (matzah) or tortillas attest that the Carvajal family and their guests abided by Jewish dietary laws, particularly the commandment of eating bread without yeast on Passover.

Yet eating chicken was also an identifiable marker of their cryptoJewishness. According to Catalina’s account, that particular Passover occurred on the Christian Holiday of Holy Thursday, and that on Friday, she celebrated the second night of Passover at Francisca de

²⁹⁸ Anna Lanyon, *Fire & Song The story of Luis de Carvajal and the Mexican Inquisition* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2011), 124.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 125.

³⁰⁰ Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 196.

Carvajal's home. Gitlitz and Davidson explain that during Christian Holy Week, it is forbidden to eat meat, so instead, Christians eat fish: "Lent, the forty days before Easter, required abstinence from meat".³⁰¹ Contrary to Christian dietary customs, Catalina explained that the Carvajals did not eat fish, but ate chicken and meat to celebrate the Passover. In addition, Catalina stressed that the Carvajals ate meat every week, even in holy week: "and that they always ate chickens and meat in the holy weeks like in the days of Passover".³⁰² In so doing, Catalina was succinctly calling to attention the fact that the Carvajal family did not adhere to Christian dietary restrictions, but instead, ate meat when celebrating weekly Sabbath and Passover holidays—even when they coincided with Christian holy days that required the consumption of fish.

The Carvajal family's custom to eat meat on holidays resemble Sephardic eating, where meat dishes are a staple. For instance, some Sephardic communities even eat meat meals during the Shavuoth holiday, when it is customary to eat dairy meals instead. Referring to Sephardic holiday cooking, Gilda Angel explains, "In numerous communities, it is customary to eat dairy meals on Shavuoth, even though meat meals are also permitted [instead of dairy meals]. This custom is reminiscent of the Biblical praise of the land of Israel as a land flowing with milk and honey".³⁰³

³⁰¹ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 99.

³⁰² "y q^ siempre comian gallinas y carne, assi en las semanas sancta como en los dias de la pasqua". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 208.

³⁰³ Gilda Angel, *Sephardic Holiday Cooking* (New York: Decalogue Books, 2004), 229.

Before and After Yom Kippur Eating

The cryptoJewish community in New Spain also cooked specific foods before and after the Yom Kippur fast. For instance, Salomón Machorro [aka Juan de León] was sentenced to eight years of labor in the Gran auto de fe on April 11, 1649—fifty-four years after Francisca de Carvajal and several of her children were condemned to death at another auto de fe. Gitlitz and Davidson write about the following declaration included in Leon’s trial documents: “Before Yom Kippur, Juan de León and his friends went to the bathhouse in Mexico City, and “after bathing [they] ate roast eggs, bread, and cheese, which they washed down with wine. They roasted the eggs in the coals”.³⁰⁴ Gitlitz and Davidson also refer to other conversos in Mexico like, “Gaspar Váez [who] broke his 1640 Yom Kippur fast with “eggs, salad, pies, fish, olives, and chocolate,” and Blanca Enríquez and her mother, who broke the fast with “stewed fish, salad, fish pies, and boiled eggs”.³⁰⁵

Eggs, it seemed, was a staple for the cryptoJewish community in New Spain, both before and after Yom Kippur. Standing before her inquisitors, Leonor de Carvajal explained what she and her family ate after Yom Kippur and after other fasts by stating that: “and when they were to have dinner, they ate eggs and other things of fish like they used to do in other fasts.³⁰⁶ While

³⁰⁴ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 72.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 103.

³⁰⁶ “y que cuando habían de cenar cenaban huevos y cosas de pescado como los solían hacer otras veces en otros ayunos”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 73.

fish and eggs were eaten by cryptoJews like the Carvajal family, these dishes were also a staple among Holland's Sephardic community—founded by Portuguese conversos.³⁰⁷ In fact, one of the after the fast dishes mentioned in Gilda Angel's Sephardic recipes compilation—*Sephardic Holiday Cooking*—is Haringsla, a herring potato salad made of herring fish and hard-boiled eggs.³⁰⁸ Moreover, fish is also a staple for the Sephardic community of Rhodes, where the after Yom Kippur meal calls for “pescado frito” or fried fish.³⁰⁹

Gitlitz and Davidson note the similarities of Portuguese conversos with Spanish conversos from Aragon, and their difference with a rabbi from Aragón. They point out that,

Although in Castile Judaizers might “break their fast with fowl and other meat,” in Aragon, Portugal and the colonies, fowl and fish seem to have been the preferred foods...Gabriel Gomes Navarro in Lisbon in 1673 reported that his family would break the Yom Kippur fast with anything except meat: grapes, fruit, fish, bread, or wine. In Mexico, Tomás Treviño de

³⁰⁷ “Historians of the [Amsterdam] community also differ over dating the actual founding of the community. One claims that the first merchants to arrive came in the 1580's, emanating mainly from Portugal and Hamburg and that “the earlier known official document concerning one of them, Emanuel Rodrigues Vega, is dated 1595.” Another insists that there were none present until 1595. All agree that one Portuguese merchant received the right of residence in 1597, although his religious status was not part of the deal...the Portuguese established their first congregation, Beit Ya'akov, between 1602 and 1604; a second, Neve Shalom, in 1608; and yet a third, Ets Haim, in 1618...Essentially, these conversos had never experienced life in a Jewish community and had to create their own without having any past experience from which to draw...As far as they were concerned, the details of recognition and Judaism itself could be worked out at a more convenient time, or learned from brethren in places such as Venice, Salonika, or even Leghorn; these were the communities that supplied them with knowledge and rabbis”. Renée Levine Melammed, *A Question of Identity Iberian Conversos in Historical Perspective*, (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 72-73.

³⁰⁸ Gilda Angel, *Sephardic Holiday Cooking* (New York: Decalogue Books, 2004), 64.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 70.

Sobremonte declared to the Inquisition in 1624 that on Yom Kippur eve he and his mother and her friends ate “some fish dish, which was required because it was a ceremony of said Law.

The practice of eating fish for the break the fast of Yom Kippur was apparently common among conversos in Spain. For instance, “Isabel Rodríguez, an eighty-year-old illiterate conversa from Toledo, allegedly broke her Yom Kippur fast in 1677 with “trout, fruit, chickpea stew, olives, honeyed pastries, and chocolate with biscuits”.³¹⁰

Don'ts

Pork and the Aztec Dog Xoloitzcuintli, Among Other Unclean Animals

While the Carvajal family celebrated the Sabbath and other Jewish holidays as noted above with Jewish food staples, they were also forced to consume foods they knew were unfit for their consumption as cryptoJews. Luis de Carvajal admitted that he and his mother and sisters did not keep these holidays correctly, because they touched and even ate bacon.³¹¹ Referring specifically to Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Feast of Weeks), and Sukkot (Booths), the inquisitor scribe wrote:

and also in Passovers of unleavened bread, of first fruits, and of booths because this one

[referring to Luis] would tell the aforementioned doña Francisca his mother and sisters

³¹⁰ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 103.

³¹¹ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal. Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 70.

doña Ysabel doña Mariana doña Catalina and doña Leonor when they fell they would pray the aforementioned Psalms of praise and this one [referring to Luis] would read the pertaining stories regarding those days and in regards to the foods for fear of these prisons and fearful of the punishments by force and against the total will of the heart crying living tears before the aforementioned doña Francisca doña Ysabel doña Catalina doña Mariana and doña Leonor for not having freedom to serve God did not do it as they should have eating bacon and touching it.³¹²

Using expressions like “against the total will of the heart”, and “crying living tears”, Luis explained the circumstances that forced him, his mother and sisters to eat bacon when observing Jewish holidays. But why was eating pork so heart wrenching, and more specifically, during Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot? The answer lies in Luis’ implicit comment that he, his mother and sisters did not keep the Jewish holidays “as they should have”. In theory, the Carvajal family “should have” not eaten bacon. By pointing out that eating bacon was incorrect, Luis was implicitly expressing his family’s adherence to a Jewish identity despite being New Christians—hence the observance of Jewish holidays—that included loyalty to Jewish dietary laws. There were other conversas who also adhered to Jewish dietary laws and thus resented eating bacon.

³¹² “y tambien elas pasquas de los panes, azimos de las primiçias y de las cabañas porq[^] este dezia a las dha[^]s doña françisca su m[^]e y hermanas doña ysabel doña mariana doña catalina y doña leonor el quando caian rezaban los dh[^]os psalmos de alavança ley[^]ed este las historias pertenesçientes a aquellos dias y en lo que toca a las comidas por miedo de estas prisiones y temerossos castigos por fuerça y contra la voluntad total del coraçon llorando este lagrimas vivas delante de la dh[^]a doña françisca doña ysabel doña cat[^]a doña mariana y doña leonor por no tener livertad para servir a dios no lo hazian como debian comiendo toçino y tocandolo”. Ibid.

Justa Mendez told Luis about a friend of hers named Ysabel Rodriguez, who was dismayed at having to eat pork at her brother Simon's home. Luis, in turn, when asked to report anyone who followed the Law of Moses in the torture chamber, reported Ysabel Rodriguez to inquisitors. He explained:

ysabel rodriguez wife of the mentioned manuel diaz sister of simon rodriguez merchant resident of mexico keeps the law that God gave Moses because the mentioned Justa Mendez told her it must be two years ago, more or less that crying the mentioned ysabel rodriguez told her newly arrived from Castile and staying at the home of the mentioned her brother simon rodriguez what will become of me that I eat bacon at the house of that dog brother of mine.³¹³

By crying, Ysabel Rodriguez expressed her disapproval of eating bacon at her brother Simon's home in Mexico City. Her disappointment suggested that pork was not part of their diet.

Perhaps her family abstained from eating pork because they followed Jewish eating practices.

While Ysabel did not specify the reason for Simon's sudden incorporation of pork in his diet now that he lived in New Spain, her tears demonstrate a deep sorrow at having to eat bacon at his residence. Ysabel was also thoroughly disheartened because she was impotent—she had just arrived from Castile, evidently had no other place to go, and could not purchase her own food.

She was also worried about her future in New Spain. Her rhetorical question “what will become

³¹³ “ysabel rodriguez muger del dh^o manuel diaz hermana de simo^ rodrigz mercader vezino de mex^o guarda la ley que dio dios a moysen porque la dh^a justa me^dez conto a esta debe de haber dos años poco mas o menos que llorando la dh^a ysabel rodriguez le dixo recién benida de castilla y posando e^ cassa de el dh^o su hermano simo^ rodriguez que sera de miy que como toçino en cassa de aquel perro de mi hermano”. Ibid, folio 75.

of me that I eat bacon” implied that she knew eating bacon transgressed the Jewish dietary laws that her family had kept in Castile.

On the other hand, there were other conversos who knew about Jewish eating practices but instead, ate unclean foods. When speaking about his brother-in-law Antonio Diaz de Caçeres (Catalina’s husband), Luis criticized him for never avoiding “dirty” foods. Rather, Antonio: “neither keeps the Sabbath nor Passover nor does he keep from dirty foods that I believe he knew and knows about”.³¹⁴ By employing the word “dirty”, Luis was calling the food unclean. Mary Zamore explains the term unclean in the context of Jewish dietary law: “One way to view kashrut is that all food is divided into two categories: *kasher* (kosher or fit) and *t’reif* (unfit). Appearing in the Bible, the word *kasher* is not used for food laws; rather food sources are described as *t’horah/tahor*, meaning “clean,” or *tamei/tamah*, meaning “unclean”.³¹⁵ Just as in Jewish tradition, Luis identified certain foods that Antonio ate as dirty or unclean.

In *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, David Kraemer comments that “Over the course of history, pork was, from the perspective of the Jew (and often from the perspective of the neighboring gentile), a non-Jewish food. A Jew who ate pork in private was a transgressor and in public, in the company of non-Jews, an apostate”.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ “ni guarda sabado ni pasqua ni se guarda de comidas suzias lo qual creo sabia y sabe”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 156.

³¹⁵ Mary Zamore, “An Overview of Ritual Kashrut” in *The Sacred Table Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, ed. Mary Zamore (New York: CCAR Challenge and Change Series, 2011), 124.

³¹⁶ David Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3.

The reason for pork's non-Jewishness lies in the Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible). Kraemer explains:

“The Laws pertaining to permitted and prohibited animals, as spelled out in Leviticus, chapter 11, are these: These are the creatures that you may eat from among all of the quadrupeds on the land: any quadruped that has hoofs, with clefts through the hoofs, and that chews the cud—such you may eat. The following, however, of those that chew the cud or have hoofs, you shall not eat: the camel—although it chews the cud it has no hoofs: it is impure to you; the rock badger—although it chews the cud, it has no hoofs; it is impure to you; the hare—although it chews the cud, it has no hoofs; it is impure to you; and the pig—although it has hoofs, with the hoofs cleft through, it does not chew the cud: it is impure to you”.³¹⁷

The Torah's prohibition against eating impure animals like pork is such that even touching them is forbidden: “And you shall not make yourselves impure with the following— whoever touches their carcasses shall be impure until the evening, and whoever carries any part of their carcasses shall wash his clothes and be impure until evening—every quadruped that has hoofs but without clefts...”³¹⁸ Leonor reiterated these commandments when she sang the Song of the Law of Moses to her inquisitors. In her own words, the commandments prohibited eating “the food of the impure animal like pork and those that have no cleft hoofs nor chew the cud and

³¹⁷ Ibid, 11.

³¹⁸ David Kraemer, *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages*, (New York: Routledge, 2007), 12.

of fish without scales nor animals that drag their chest on the ground and that eat other animals and black colored, four-footed animals”.³¹⁹

As Leonor explained Jewish dietary laws, she mentioned the prohibition of eating animals that lack cloven hooves and chew the cud. However, the Torah does not explicitly mention black, four-legged animals. Was Leonor referring to the black Iberian pig consumed readily by the Christian society of New Spain? Perhaps. We know that Spaniards introduced the black Iberian pig to New Spain upon their arrival, because it was a staple food for Christians. Perhaps Leonor used the term “black, four-legged animals” as a synonym for the Iberian pig.

Or perhaps, Leonor was referring to the Aztec dog with this description. Xoloitzcuintli dogs are dark colored and can be identified as black, four-legged animals which were eaten by indigenous groups in Colonial Mexico. Since dogs do not chew the cud and do not have split hooves, xoloitzcuintlis are also unclean animals forbidden for consumption according to Jewish eating practices. Whether dog or pig, Leonor and her family were evidently aware of Jewish dietary prohibitions. While they tried to keep Jewish eating practices, they ate bacon for fear of the Inquisition, as Luis explained in his confession. And yet, sometimes, they actively avoided eating pork.

Luis also admitted to inquisitors that his mother Francisca hid some bacon between two pieces of bread to avoid eating them during a dinner with the jail keeper and his wife: “it is true

³¹⁹ “la comida de el animal inmundo como el puerco y de los que no tienen la una hendidá ni rumian la comida y de el pescado sin escama y de los animales que arrastran el pecho por la tierra y se sustentan de otros animales y de los animales de color negro de cuatro pies”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56.

that before the previous warden of this holy office arias de Valdes and his wife Mary nuñez eating in his house the aforementioned doña françisca his mother with great desire to not offend God in those meals before all the aforementioned doña ysabel, doña catalina doña mariana and doña leonor put away the bacon in her plate between two slices of bread”.³²⁰ Luis’ testimony did not provide any more detail about this incident so we do not know if Francisca was successful in refraining from eating the bacon she was served on that occasion, or if she was discovered by the prison warden and his wife and forced to eat it.

But what is important is that, despite the risk involved, rather than eat the bacon in her plate, Francisca hid it between two slices of bread. While the Inquisition’s jail warden and his wife could have easily reported her avoidance of pork as proof of her judaizing (carrying out Jewish practices), Francisca was adamant about not eating bacon—at least on that occasion. Francisca’s aversion to eating bacon echoes the repulsion of another conversa, Isabel Núñez from Ciudad Rodrigo—a Spanish town that bordered Portugal. In 1621, she was accused by one of her late husband’s sons of being: “committed to Jewish cooking, and that she koshered her meat by salting it and soaking it. The boy added that she could not stand the taste, sight, or even the smell of salt pork”.³²¹

³²⁰ “es verdad que delante del alcayde pasado de este sancto offiçio arias de Valdes y de su muger Mari nuñez comiendo e su cassa de este la dh^a doña françisca su madre con gran deseo de no ofender a dios en aquellas comidas delante de todas la dh^as doña ysabel doña Cat^a doña mariana y doña leonor guardo el toçino de su plato entre dos revanadas de pan”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 70.

³²¹ David M. Gitlitz, and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 91.

Just as Isabel Núñez, Francisca de Carvajal demonstrated her abhorrence of pork. For instance, Francisca ordered her servants to serve her friend Susana Galban fried eggs cooked in lard, but to cook her own eggs in oil. Susana testified before inquisitors that:

“the aforementioned luis de caravajal must have asked his mother if they cooked the eggs for her with lard or oil and the mother replied that with lard because she must have ordered it so she entered the kitchen with the eggs fried with lard the first ones of all because the aforementioned doña francisca hurried that they bring her the eggs for the guest with loud voices bring the guest’s eggs and later they brought them eggs fried with oil it seemed to her”.³²²

Like hiding a piece of bacon between two slices of bread, the different ways fried eggs were prepared were the subtle ways conversas like Francisca adhered to the Jewish eating practices.

Susana Galban was apparently not the only woman close to Francisca de Carvajal who testified about her avoidance of lard and other pork products. Francisca Lopez said she heard a Chichimeca servant of Francisca de Carvajal say that neither Francisca nor her daughters ate lard nor any pork products. In the words of Susana Galban, “a neighbor of hers whose name is

³²² Susan Galban testified that “le debio de preguntar el dh^o luis de caravajal a su madre si le guisaban a esta los huebos con manteca o aceite y la madre respondio que con manteca porque lo debio de mandar assi quando entro e la cocina con los huebos que se habian de guisar para esta y ellos y luego le trajeron a estos los huebos fritos con manteca los primeros de todos porque la dh^a doña fran^ca daba priesa que truxesen los huebos para la huespeda dando voces trahe los huebos de la huespeda y después les truxeron a ellos huebos fritos con azeite al parecer de esta”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 7.

Francisca Lopez that a Chichimeca servant of the aforementioned doña Francisca was going around saying that the aforementioned doña Francisca and her daughters did not eat lard or things made from pork but oil and beef fat”.³²³ Whether in theory or in praxis, Francisca and her daughters, like other conversas of Portuguese descent, adhered to the Jewish eating practice of not consuming pork or pork products.

³²³ “una vecina suia que se llama fran^{ca} lopez que una chichimeca criada de la dh^a doña fran^{ca} andaba diziendo que no comia la dh^a doña fran^{ca} y sus hijas manteca ni cossas de puerco sino aceite y manteca de vaca”.Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 7.

Chapter 3: Secret Prayers, Songs, Texts and Languages

תורה צוה לנו משה

“Torá tsiválanu Moshe”

Moses commanded the Torah to us.³²⁴

(Song that is sung when the Torah
Scrolls are put away at synagogue)

Origin of CryptoJewish Prayers and Songs

In addition to Jewish eating practices, Portuguese conversos like Francisca and her family recited to cryptoJewish prayers and songs. And when we speak about cryptoJewish prayers and songs, we should want to ask if they were different or similar to that of Sephardic communities.³²⁵ Moshe Lazar argues that in the Iberian Peninsula, cryptoJews—or Anussim—knew important Sephardic prayers. “From the surviving quotations and fragmentary texts it is possible to state without equivocation that the Anussim knew the most important prayers of the Sephardic ritual, the daily prayers as well as those used for the Sabbath, the holidays, and for special occasions (blessings before and after a meal, before sleeping and after awakening, before leaving on a journey by land or sea; rules and precepts for certain ceremonial customs; etc.)

³²⁴ “Moshé nos ordenó la Torá”, *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 333.

³²⁵ Although conversos were a heterogeneous group in terms of their religious identity—that included sincere Christians, those who remained Jewish in their hearts, those who incorporated both Jewish and Christian traditions, and those who became skeptical of both religions altogether—in this chapter, I use the term cryptoJew and converso to identify the Carvajal family and other Portuguese families whose ancestors converted to Christianity, but who maintained a Jewish identity. In addition, I use the Hebrew term Anussim (forced converts) as Professor Moshe Lazar uses in his text below.

including some texts of cabbalistic origin which were not in use among non Sephardic worshippers”.³²⁶ If Anussim or cryptoJews knew Sephardic prayers, then we can infer that they used these prayers on a regular basis.

For instance, in 1494, many conversos within the community of Molina, in the kingdom of Aragón (Guadalajara), were accused of saying prayers in Hebrew. Leonor Zoraya Montes explains that: “According to the accusations of the prosecution witnesses and the confessions of the accused themselves, many of the Conversos from Molina...frequently recited Hebraic prayers”.³²⁷ A century later and in a similar vein to conversos in Spain and Portugal, the prayers of the Portuguese cryptoJewish community in New Spain resembled Sephardic prayers. In Ysabel de Carvajal’s second trial of 1595, she recited the beginning of a prayer that recalls an *Arbit* (evening) prayer and the *Shema* prayer before going to bed.

While in the Sephardic *Siddur*, both the *Arbit* and *Shema* prayers begin with “Ribono Shel Olam” (Lord of the Universe), Ysabel’s prayer began with: “Lord of the World”.³²⁸ Essentially, Ysabel’s cryptoJewish prayer started with the same wording as the Sephardic prayers. Diego

³²⁶ Moshe Lazar, “Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The “Jewishness” of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 191.

³²⁷ Leonor Zozaya Montes, “A Thorn in the Community”, in *The Conversos and Moriscos in Late Medieval Spain and Beyond: Volume One Departures and Change*, ed. Kevin Ingram.,(Boston: Brill, 2009), 165.

³²⁸ “Señor del mundo yo vengo delante de ti etc.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 263. In the Sephardic *Siddur*, the prayer is transliterated as: “Ribonó shel ‘olam”. “Rezo Diario de Shajarit” *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 203.

Diaz Nieto accused Ysabel, her sisters Leonor, Catalina and Mariana, her brother Luis and her mother Francisca of saying a Sabbath prayer that began this way: “Bendicho tu nr^o dios Adonay que bives sobretodo” (Blessed are You our G-d Adonay that lives over all).³²⁹ With the exception of the order of the name of G-d, the beginning of this prayer recalls many Jewish prayers in Hebrew, that begin with Baruch Atah Adonay Eloheinu (Blessed are You Lord our G-d).

Concerning cryptoJewish songs, Michelle Hamilton explains that the CryptoJewish songs Leonor de Carvajal and her family sang—songs she shared with inquisitors during her trial hearings—were Spanish and Portuguese Jewish songs. Hamilton writes, “Leonor was the first to recite before the Inquisition Sabbath prayers and songs of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish communities of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, that appear transcribed in the trial documents of all the Carvajals”.³³⁰ According to Justa Mendez—a friend and witness against the Carvajal family—Francisca, Isabel and Mariana de Carvajal danced to the following song on the Sabbath:

cantemos con alegria	let us sing with happiness
alabanças al señor	praises to the Lord
que a todo que en el confía	for whoever trusts in Him

³²⁹ “Bendicho tu nr^o dios Adonay que bives sobretodo.” (Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 200)

³³⁰ Referring to Leonor de Carvajal, Michelle Hamilton writes: “Leonor fue quien recitó por primera vez ante la Inquisición las oraciones y canciones del sábado típicas de las comunidades judías españolas y portuguesas de los siglos XV y XVI, que aparecen transcritas en los procesos de todos los Carvajal.” Michelle Hamilton, “La poesía de Leonor de Carvajal y la tradición de los criptojudíos en Nueva España”, *Sefarad* 60, no. 1 (2000): 78.

no le falta su favor etts^a.³³¹ will not lack his favor etc.

This redondilla or four verse poetic stanza with eight syllable verses and assonant rhyme ABAB (the first verse rhymes with the third verse and the second verse rhymes with the fourth verse) consisted of an estribillo (a refrain) in the last two verses. According to Michelle Hamilton, this refrain is included in many prayers of Portugal's contemporary Jewish Community. Concerning the refrain, Hamilton explains: "The refrain of two verses <<for whoever trusts in Him will not lack his favor>>, is likewise documented in Portugal's modern Jewish prayers".³³²

Transmission of CryptoJewish Prayers and Songs

Though not the ample Jewish prayers and songs of the Iberian Anusim, in New Spain, Ysabel's prayer starter shared similarities with Sephardic Arbit and *Shema* prayers, and the refrain of the song we have previously seen is still used by Portugal's contemporary Jewish Community. A second question we should want to ask is how these prayers and songs were transmitted. For instance, did cryptoJews pass on these Sephardic prayers and songs orally or in writing? Or stated another way, did Portuguese conversos in New Spain have access to Jewish

³³¹ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 25.

³³² "El estribillo de dos versos, <<que nadie que en Él confía/ no le falta su favor>>, se documenta asimismo en oraciones judías modernas de Portugal." Michelle Hamilton, "La poesía de Leonor de Carvajal y la tradición de los criptojudíos en Nueva España", *Sefarad* 60, no. 1 (2000): 83.

texts or did they rely solely on oral transmission? In order to answer this question, we have to start at the beginning.

In addition to deceiving all Portuguese Jews to convert in 1497—let us not forget that Portuguese Jews were ordered to leave Portugal but later prevented from leaving, and ultimately given the choice between forced conversion or death—King Emmanuel of Portugal ordered Jewish texts to be burned that same year.³³³ Moshe Lazar draws on Rabbi Abraham Saba’s personal experience of the dramatic events that took place that year: “Then the anger of the Lord burnt against his people, so that all the Jews who were in Portugal were ordered by King Emmanuel (G-d blot out his name and memory!) to leave the land. Nor was this enough...he ordered that all books should be seized. So I brought all my books into the city of Porto in obedience to the royal decree”.³³⁴ Even though it had been proclaimed that: “every Jew who might be found with a book or with phylacteries in his possession would be put to death”, Rabbi Abraham Saba goes on to explain that he hid several Jewish texts (a Commentary of the Law which he himself had composed, as well as a commentary on the treatise Ethics of the Fathers, and one on the Five Torah Scrolls) under an olive tree. “So straightaway, before I entered the

³³³ In *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III*, Henry Charles Lea relates how in 1497, Portuguese Jewry were expelled from Portugal under false pretenses, for the ships that were supposedly to arrive never did so. Instead, they were forced to remain in Portugal and days of detention with no food or water, were given the choice of baptism or slavery and were all baptized in mass. Henry Charles Lea, *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2011), 237.

³³⁴ Moshe Lazar, “Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The “Jewishness” of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 180-181.

quarter outside the city, I took these books in my hand; two brothers went with me and dug a grave among the roots of a blossoming olive tree; there we buried them”.³³⁵

For some Portuguese Anussim, the censorship and destruction of Jewish writings did not stop them from possessing these holy texts. Despite the repression, “The knowledge of traditions and rituals was also preserved through smuggling in from abroad books printed in Italy and the Netherlands, especially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”.³³⁶ In the words of Moshe Lazar, the Anussim had Jewish texts, which included “books of prayers and other texts in the Spanish language, smuggled in from Ferrara and Amsterdam in the sixteenth century”.³³⁷ Conversos had access to Jewish texts through the shared intercontinental relations in terms of trade, literature, and culture between Sephardic Portuguese Jews and conversos during this time period.

Censored books also reached Mexico City, despite the double approval books shipped to New Spain had to receive in Sevilla and Veracruz. For even though the king of Spain ordered books to be approved as of 1550, the order was not heeded until 1583. Moreover, the Inquisition tribunal complained that the reality was that foreigners from Flanders and Portugal smuggled

³³⁵ Ibid,180-181.

³³⁶ Ibid, 180.

³³⁷ Ibid, 180-181.

forbidden books to New Spain.³³⁸ And yet, while censored books readily entered New Spain, the Inquisition trial documents of the Carvajal family—of Portuguese descent—do not make mention that they possessed Jewish texts. One could argue that, given the vast distance from Ferrara and Amsterdam, Portuguese Anussim in Mexico City were more isolated than their counterparts in Peninsular Spain and Portugal.

Yet contrary to this opinion, research has documented that Portuguese Jews and conversos shared intercontinental relations in terms of trade, literature, and culture during this time period. José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim points out that Portuguese conversos and their Portuguese Jewish family members maintained close ties, even when living far apart from one another. Conversos who lived in Portugal, or its colonies communicated with Sephardic Portuguese who lived in cities like Amsterdam or Livorno.³³⁹ How then, can we explain why the Portuguese cryptoJews in New Spain lacked Jewish texts?

Moshe Lazar argues that since Portugal's Jewish community was forcibly converted and their Jewish texts were by and large outlawed and burned, instead of Jewish holy writings, Portuguese cryptoJews retained a Jewish memory passed on through oral transmission:

³³⁸ “Tal decreto no limitó el comercio de libros aunque, a veces, lo hizo más difícil, porque el contrabando, no sólo de los impresos en España sino también en otros países, tuvo gran auge. En 1608, por ejemplo, el Tribunal de la Inquisición se quejó de que “los navíos que llegan al puerto [del Callao] de extranjeros, así de Flandes como de Portugal y tras partes [...] en pipas y otras cajas traen libros y cosas prohibidas”. Ignacio Osorio Romero, *Floresta de gramática poética y retórica en Nueva España (1521-1767)*, (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1980), 21.

³³⁹ José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim. “A “world” in motion: Jews, Conversos and the Portuguese and Dutch Empires” in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 162-164.

While the Anussim of Spain between 1391 and 1492 maintained close contacts with those who lived openly as Jews and had no major difficulties in obtaining prayer books, biblical, rabbinical, and Jewish-philosophical texts, special ritual objects, and kosher food products, the Anussim of Portugal were more dependent on their memory and oral transmission, on symbolic observance of traditional rituals, and on occasional contacts during business trips with former Anussim now living as Jews in Italy and the Netherlands.³⁴⁰

Moshe Lazar's depiction of Portuguese Anussim could explain why the Portuguese cryptoJewish community of New Spain relied on oral transmission and occasional visits from former conversos rather than Jewish texts for Jewish prayers, songs and culture. For example, one of the guests of the Carvajal family was Francisco Rodriguez. A possible family member—let us not forget that the Carvajal family patriarch was called Francisco Rodriguez de Matos — Francisco lived openly as a Jew in Italy, and told them about the synagogue he attended and the Jewish rituals and holidays he observed there. In his text *La familia Carvajal*, Alfonso Toro writes: “In his conversations Rodríguez would talk, as much about the easy going life that he led over there as about how the customs were carried out with perfection, he would carry with long and detailed descriptions of the synagogues and the Jewish rituals and ceremonies that were

³⁴⁰ Moshe Lazar, “Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The “Jewishness” of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 177.

carried out and celebrated with the utmost luxury and solemnity”.³⁴¹ Francisco’s account informed the Carvajal family of Jewish culture in Italy that included the customs and rituals in synagogue—an experience unknown to them as cryptoJews in New Spain—and possibly shared songs and prayers for the Sabbath and other holy days.

CryptoJewish Prayers

Other Prayer Starters

Still, without Jewish texts, Portuguese conversos like the Carvajal family resorted to memory and orality more than occasional visits from ex-conversos like Francisco to pass on prayers and songs. While we have already seen one cryptoJewish prayer starter, Leonor explained to inquisitors how other prayers started, like “our King Fortress of Jacob”.³⁴² Another prayer began with: “Blessed our G-d King of the Universe”.³⁴³ In a general sense, this prayer starter is almost a word for word translation of *Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam*, the beginning of the blessing over food, drink, healing, and other life necessities in Judaism.

³⁴¹ In his text *La familia Carvajal*, Alfonso Toro writes: “En sus conversaciones hablaba Rodríguez, tanto de la vida tranquila que allá se llevaba, como de la perfección con que se practicaba el culto, extendiéndose en largas y detalladas descripciones de las sinagogas y de los ritos y ceremonias judaicos que en ellas con el mayor lujo y solemnidad eran celebrados.” Alfonso Toro, *La familia Carvajal*, (Mexico City: Editorial Patria, S.A., 1977), 205.

³⁴² “~nr^o Rey fuerte de Jacob etts^a” (Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56).

³⁴³ “bendito nro^ Dios Rey del mundo etc.” Ibid, folio 263. For this quote, I use G-d to avoid using the Name of the Creator, in accordance to Jewish custom.

Another important prayer starter commonly that Leonor recited before inquisitors was our “G-d and G-d of our fathers”.³⁴⁴ After being read the prayer that witness number eight—identified by Leonor as Manuel de Luçena—accused her and her family of praying, Leonor corrected the testimony and explained that the prayer actually began with: “Lord of the worlds, emperor of the heavenly armies G-d of Abraham, G-d of Isaac G-d of Jacob”.³⁴⁵ What make these prayer starters so interesting is not only that it is used in Jewish liturgy, and that the Creator is described as the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—just as He identifies Himself in the Bible— but that by beginning her prayer in this manner, Leonor identified herself—as all who are Jewish—as a descendant of these patriarchs by calling Abraham, Isaac and Jacob “our fathers”.

The *Shema*

Notwithstanding the importance of these prayer starters, the Carvajal family demonstrated to know entire Jewish prayers. In one of the letters Luis de Carvajal wrote to his sister Ysabel, he instructed her in regards to the *Shema* (Hear)—the most important prayer in Judaism—and the commandments, saying: “Look when you say the *Shema* and you get to the part where it says and you shall love, say all of the ten holiest commandments”.³⁴⁶ Ysabel was asked by inquisitors to reveal what her brother Luis de Carvajal had written to her—we should not forget that since inquisitors were Christian, they did not know Hebrew—because they did not

³⁴⁴ “~y otra que comienza nr^o dios dios de nr^os Padres etts^a”. Ibid, folio 56.

³⁴⁵ “~Señor de los mundos emperador de los exerçitos celestiales dios de abraham, dios de ysac dios de jacob”. Ibid, folio 86.

³⁴⁶ “que diga declare, que quiso dezir a esta el dh^o Luis de Caravajal quando le escribe Mira quando dixeres, Sema, y llegares ado dizes amaras di todos los diez sanctissimos mandamy^tos que significa sema, y quales son los mandamientos” Ibid, folio 247.

understand what the *Shema* meant. Although in his letter, Luis instructed Ysabel that when she got to this part about loving G-d, (known as the *Ve'ahavta* in Hebrew), she needed to recite the ten commandments, Ysabel denied knowing the *Shema*.³⁴⁷

Yet Ysabel de Carvajal was admonished by her brother to recite the Ten Commandments within the *Shema* prayer, for a greater emphasis on mitzvot (commandments). For although the *Shema* prayer mentions placing the words of G-d on our hearts —“These words which I command you on this day shall be upon your heart”— referring to the Ten commandments, and is later followed by Torah excerpts about obeying the commandments, the ten commandments themselves are not explicitly verbalized.³⁴⁸ Luis was not the only member of the Carvajal family to admonish the learning of the Ten Commandments. Mariana de Carvajal taught her sister Leonor some commandments of the Law of Moses. One of the commandments was: “I am Your G-d and Lord that with infinite power freed you from Egypt where you lived with pain and were

³⁴⁷ “Love your Lord your G-d, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. These words which I command you on this day shall be upon your heart. Teach them diligently to your children, speak of them when you're sitting in your house, when you're on the road, when you're lying down, and when you're rising up. You shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be a symbol between your eyes. Write them on the doorposts of your house, and upon your gates.” “Ve'ahavta”. Transliterated and trans. George Jakobovits Hebrew Songs, 2022 Jewish World Life Online, <http://hebrewsongs.com/?song=veahavta>.

³⁴⁸ “Ve'ahavta”. Transliterated and trans. George Jakobovits Hebrew Songs, 2022 Jewish World Life Online, <http://hebrewsongs.com/?song=veahavta>.

harshly afflicted, you shall not have false gods before the reverence that is owed to Me, nor shall you make anything in the likeness of the ornaments with which I adorn the firmament”.³⁴⁹

In fact, while Ysabel denied knowing the *Shema* nor any of the commandments, her sister Leonor not only admitted familiarity with the *Shema*, but even recited it and translated it to her inquisitors. The inquisitor scribe transliterated the beginning of this Hebrew prayer using the Spanish alphabet in the following manner: “Sema Ysrael Adonay Eloim Paro Sem que voz malcuto eloin bael oye ysrael aadonay tu dio bendito bendito nombre de honra de su reyno para ansigo y siempre”.³⁵⁰ The English transliteration would be: *Shema Israel, Adonay Eloheinu, Adonai Echad. Baruch Shem kevod malchuto leolam vaed* and the translation is Hear O’ Israel, the Lord is our G-d, the Lord is One. Blessed is the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.³⁵¹ Although the scribe’s transliteration is flawed, it conveys the fact that Leonor said this quintessential Jewish prayer in Hebrew. And yet, she was not the only member of the Carvajal

³⁴⁹ Leonor admitted to her inquisitors that “Dixo q la razon que le movio^ fue aver oydo dezir a su hermana doña Mariana, unos mandamientos de la Ley de Moysen, que ella refería que son, ~Yo soy tu Dios y señor que con poder infinito te liberte de Egipto donde vibias con dolor y asperamente aflito, no tendras Dioses agenos ante mi acatamiento, ni haras algunos tropheos, semejança de los arreos con que horreyo el firmamento” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio119).

³⁵⁰ “Sema Ysrael Adonay Eloim Paro Sem que voz malcuto eloin bael oye ysrael aadonay tu dio bendito bendito nombre de honra de su reyno para ansigo y siempre” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56.

³⁵¹ “The *Shema*”, My Jewish Learning, Accessed January 12, 2021. <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-shema/>

family that knew and said the *Shema*. An unnamed witness claimed Leonor, her mother, sisters and brother said the *Shema*.³⁵²

This unnamed witness was not the only one to testify against the Carvajal family. Rather, Francisca and her children testified against one another under duress. Luis de Carvajal testified as soon as he stood in the torture chamber next to the potro—a wooden device where the accused sat and was forced to testify by the Inquisition, defined by the *Diccionario de Autoridades* as: "It is also called a certain machine made of wood upon which they sit the prisoner and torture the delinquents that are negatives, to make them confess or declare the truth about what they are being asked".³⁵³ Erika Prado Rubio provides additional information: "In the potro, the extremities are tied with ropes. These were controlled by the executioner that would make them tighter with several turns that would cause them to bite the flesh of the accused".³⁵⁴ Such a machine of torment instilled such fear in the accused that Luis confessed that his mother Francisca de Carvajal said the *Shema* with his uncle Gonçalo Perez Ferro even before the

³⁵² Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 92.

³⁵³ "Se llama tambien cierta máchina de madera, sobre la qual sientan y atormentan a los delinquentes que están negativos, para hacerles que confiessen o declaren la verdad de lo que se les pregunta", "Potro", *Diccionario de Autoridades* - Tomo V (1737), 5 May, 2022, <https://apps2.rae.es/dtSearch/dtisapi6.dll?cmd=getdoc&DocId=63222&Index=C%3a%5cinetpub%5cwwwroot%5cDA%5fINDEX&HitCount=1&hits=1+&mc=0&SearchForm=%2fDA%5fform%2ehtml>

³⁵⁴ "En el potro, las extremidades del reo eran atadas con cuerdas. Estas eran controladas por el verdugo que las iba apretando con varios giros que provocaban que mordieran la carne del acusado". Erika, Prado Rubio, "El tormento inquisitorial y la representación audiovisual de la tortura judicial", *Revista de la Inquisición. Intolerancia y Derechos Humanos*, 2: 120, accessed 4 December, 2022, https://www.boe.es/biblioteca_juridica/anuarios_derecho/abrir_pdf.php?id=ANU-I-2019-10010700125

tortured began.³⁵⁵ Luis recited the prayer as Leonor did, but he also explained what the words in Hebrew meant and even included the body position taken when saying the Shema. : “Rezaba con su madre de este doña Fran^{ca} El Semha ysrael que quiere dixer oye ysrael adonay tu dio uno solo es y al mentar adonay se humillaban las caveças y ponian la mano hisquierda sobre la frente y la derecha sobre el coraçon y esto passo en medina del campo” ([He] prayed with his mother doña Francisca the Semha ysrael that means hear ysrael adonay your g-d is one and when saying adonay they would humble their heads and put the left hand over the forehead and the right over the heart and this happened in medina del campo,).³⁵⁶ While it is customary in contemporary Judaism to cover one’s eyes when saying the *Shema*—and Francisca and Gonçalo achieved this by covering their foreheads—it is not customary to put a hand over the heart. Perhaps Francisca put her hand over her heart when she got to the part of the *Ve’ahavta* that says: “Love your Lord your G-d, with all your heart”.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁵ Here is the definition of potro in Spanish: “Aparto de madera en el cual sentaban a los procesados, para obligarles a declarar por medio del tormento.” “Potro”, Diccionario de la lengua española, Real Academia Española, 2022, <https://dle.rae.es/potro>.

³⁵⁶ In regards to Luis, the inquisitor scribe wrote that: “~y siendo presen^{te} arimado al potro y vestido le fue dh^o prosiga su confisión y declaraçion diziendo enteramente verdad so cargo del juramente que tiene fec^o...y habiendo dh^o que si habia escripto lo que se habia acordado...y que agora las yra declarando que son las siguientes, ~gonçalo perez ferro marido de doña cat^a de león su tía de este...Rezaba con su madre de este doña Fran^{ca} El Semha ysrael que quiere dixer oye ysrael adonay tu dio uno solo es y al mentar adonay se humillaban las caveças y ponian la mano hisquierda sobre la frente y la derecha sobre el coraçon y esto passo en medina del campo” (Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, 150).

³⁵⁷ “Ve’ahavta”. Transliterated and trans. George Jakobovits Hebrew Songs, 2022 Jewish World Life Online, <http://hebrewsongs.com/?song=veahavta>.

The *Amidah*

While Leonor and her family knew the *Shema* witness testimony indicated that she may have also known another pivotal Jewish prayer: the *Amidah* or standing prayer in Hebrew. Andrés Rodríguez testified against Leonor de Carvajal and told inquisitors that Leonor had taught him several prayers, including the prayer. He defined the prayer as the *Amidah* —its Hebrew name— and recited part of it, by saying: “Adonay Adonay mis labios abriras etts^a que llaman la amida” (Adonay Adonay you will open my lips,).³⁵⁸ Indeed, according to a present-day Sephardic *Siddur* or Prayerbook, the *Amidah* prayer begins in a similar manner. While in Hebrew, the word for G-d is Adonay, the Spanish rendition is: “Oh Señor, abre mis labios para que mi boca relate tu alabanza (O Lord, open my lips, so that my mouth may declare your praise,).³⁵⁹ While the words are not exact, Andrés Rodríguez correctly identified the *Amidah* Prayer, and it is very likely that Leonor had indeed taught him this prayer.

Yotzer Or

In addition to the prayer starters, *Shema* and the *Amidah*, Leonor and her family were accused of saying other prayers. Witness number eight—or Manuel de Luçena according to Leonor— accused Leonor, her mother, sisters and brother of saying a prayer on a given Saturday that began like this: “~En l nombre de El Señor adonay bendito El nombre de El Señor adonay

³⁵⁸ “Adonay Adonay mis labios abriras etts^a que llaman la amida”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 108.

³⁵⁹ “Recitación de la Amidá: Oh Señor, abre mis labios para que mi boca relate tu alabanza (Tehilim 51:17)”. *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 318.

para siempre amen que trae la luz de la mañana y de la noche y de la noche al alba y de la alba a la mañana etts^a.” (In the name of the Lord Adonay Blessed be the Name of the Lord Adonay for ever amen that brings the light of the morning and the evening to the sunrise and the sunrise to the morning, etc.).³⁶⁰ This prayer is similar to *Yotzer Or* or Creator of Light in Hebrew which starts with: “Blessed are You Lord Our G-d, King of the universe who has formed light and created darkness, and makes peace and creates everything that exists”.³⁶¹ Just as Leonor and her family said this prayer on Saturday, this prayer is said during morning services at synagogues on the Sabbath, but also on every morning service of the week, where the congregation thanks G-d for being the Creator of light and darkness. Leonor admitted to saying this prayer, but just as with the *Amidah* prayer, she corrected Manuel’s version, by stating that the prayer actually began with “Blessed is the Name of the Lord A. that brings the light of the morning, etc.”.³⁶² Leonor’s rendition resembled *Yotzer Or* to a greater extent, since both prayers begin with “blessed” and emphasize the title of the prayer: Creator of Light or that brings the light in Leonor’s version.

³⁶⁰Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 87.

³⁶¹ “Bendito eres Tú, Eterno, Dios nuestro, Soberano del universe, que ha formado la luz y ha creado la obscuridad, y hace la paz y crea todo lo que existe.” “Rezo Diario de Shajarit” *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 55.

³⁶² “bendito El nombre de El señor A. que trae la luz de la mañana etts^a.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 87.

CryptoJewish Songs

Sabbath Songs

Luis de Carvajal testified that while on the one hand he, his mother Francisca and his sisters Ysabel, Leonor, Mariana and Catalina kept the Sabbath, they carried out unlawful activities on the Saturday like lighting a fire, cooking and pretending to work, out of fear of the Inquisition. Nevertheless, they knew the following poem Leonor identified as a copla or four-line stanza (although in this case it consists of five verses) that taught these precepts:

En todas vuestras moradas	In all your dwellings
fuego no encendais	light no fire
en el sabado q^ holgais	on the Sabbath in which you rest
por q^ seran condenadas	because the souls will be condemned
las almas si tal obrais. ³⁶³	if you do such a thing

Through this song, we learn that on the Sabbath, one is to rest: “en el sabado q^ holgais” and not labor in cooking, which implies kindling a fire: “fuego no encendais”. Although the Carvajal family knew this poem, food was cooked on the Sabbath in their home to avoid raising suspicion. The song was a reminder of how to keep the Sabbath even though it was impossible to keep in Colonial Mexico because of the ever-present fear of the Inquisition. Nevertheless, in order to ameliorate this direct violation of the Sabbath, Francisca would abstain from eating any food cooked on that day, according to Luis’ testimony. His sister Leonor de Carvajal also admitted to

³⁶³ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 263.

inquisitors that “the aforementioned doña Francisca her mother was the person that did not eat anything that had been taken to the fire on Saturday”.³⁶⁴

Leonor sang other Sabbath songs at her trial hearings that an inquisitor scribe recorded as *canticos* or songs one through nine. Michelle Hamilton argues that, since Leonor merely indicated who led, who sang, and who did not know the songs, they could not have been composed by Luis or any of the Carvajal women, rather, they must have been part of the cryptoJewish oral tradition.³⁶⁵ Indeed, with themes central to Judaism such as exile and repentance, some of these songs may have very well been used before 1497 by the Portuguese Jewish community, and passed down as liturgy by Portuguese conversos after their forced conversion in 1497. This hypothesis seems feasible, especially when we consider the refrain we examined earlier, which is still part of the Portuguese Jewish community’s liturgy to date. The first poem recalls the communal prayers of Yom Kippur by acknowledging the sin of disobedience of the entire community. In addition, the song describes the diaspora experience after the exile from Jerusalem.

And while the poem combines Jewish motifs of repentance and desire to return to the homeland, these themes also describe the specific converso existence of the Carvajal family and

³⁶⁴ “la dha doña fran^ca su madre era la persona que no comia los sabados cossa que huiesse llegado al fuego” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 99.

³⁶⁵ “Cuando la familia interpretaba esos poemas, Luis solamente dirigía la interpretación pero no era su autor. La propia función de esos poemas dentro de las ceremonias criptojudías de la comunidad así como el hecho de que Leonor jamás haga referencia a su autor, limitándose a observar quién habían memorizado o no cierto texto, indica que estas composiciones provenían de la tradición oral de los anussim.” Michelle Hamilton, “La poesía de Leonor de Carvajal y la tradición de los criptojudíos en Nueva España”, *Sefarad* 60, no. 1 (2000): 85.

other conversos in New Spain. And if so, it is possible that this song was composed by cryptoJews after 1497. For conversos also regretted living in exile—far from openly Jewish communities—unable to carry out Jewish practices and customs. According to Leonor, her brother Luis would sing the following song to her mother, sisters and herself on Friday evenings, after the sun would set, in observance of the Sabbath: “and on Fridays at the setting of the sun, that began the keeping of the Sabbaths the mentioned Luis de Carvajal would sing to this one [referring to Leonor] and the mentioned her mother doña Francisca, her sisters doña Ysabel, doña Mariana a song that began in the following manner”.³⁶⁶ Whether it was written by the Portuguese Jewish community or by conversos after the forced conversion, what is true is that this song, along with the other eight, were part of the cryptoJewish liturgy that Leonor and her family sang on the Sabbath. Unlike the rest of the songs—where the inquisitor scribe only transcribed the first stanza—the entire poem (51 lines) was written down: “And this is the entire song that the mentioned her brother sang and likewise he sang another eight songs and because they are lengthy only the first verse of each one is said and they begin in the following manner”.³⁶⁷

1. Cantico.

si con tanto cuidado cada dia	if each day we would carefully
cantassemos loores al señor	sing praises to the Lord

³⁶⁶ “y los viernes a puesta del sol, que començavan la guarda de los sabados cantaba el dh^o Luis de Carvajal a esta y a las dh^{as} su madre doña Fran^{ca}, y sus hermanas doña Ysabel, doña Mariana un cantico que comiença desta manera.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 123.

³⁶⁷ “Y que este este es el un cantico entero de los que cantaba el dh^o su herman^o Luis de Carvajal, Y assimismo cantava otros ocho canticos que por ser prolixeros no se dizen mas de la primera copla de cada uno y comiençan desta man^a”. Ibid, folio 124.

como el tiene de darnos alegria
y en todas n^ras cossas su favor
no fueran n^ros males tan continuos
no durara tan grande adversidad.
de sus bienes todos nos hiziera dignos
y de poblar su s^ta çiuudad.
en la qual fueran largos n^ros años
exemptos de peligros y de daños
confiesso que por ser inobedientes
fuimos de nuestra patria deshechados
vibimos entre inçircunçissas gentes
con hombres y con guerras afrentados
todos con crueldades diferentes
fuimos de n^ra patria desechados
volbamos al s^or que el es piadosso
que el hara nuestro spiritu gozosso
cantemos su loor en este dia
del señor escogido y regalado
ensalçemos su recta y s^ta via
pues solo a nos lo ha encomendado
de quantas generaçiones criado avia
tomo la de Ysrrael por mayor grado
multiplicando su generaçion
mas que las estrellas q^ en el çielo son
no a de ser en vano la esperança
que no puede faltar lo prometido
muy presto gozaremos de vonansa
si inclinamos a bien n^ro sentido
porque aquel que en Dios espera
todo alcança,
Si del bien esperar no es movido
el señor haga q^ siempre en el esperemos
y que toda su s^ta ley guardemos
prometido ha el S^r si nos tornamos
a la ley de su s^ta voluntad
y si de coraçon y alma assentamos
a ver de executar su voluntad
si con just^a por favor clamamos
estando en la mayor adversidad
nos volvera a juntar en esse instante
de norte sur, poniente y de levante
que mas señal, o muestra pretendemos
para reconosçer la obliga^on

just as He gives us happiness
and in all our things His favor
our evils would not be so continuous
such great adversity would not last.
He would make us worthy of his goods
and of populating His holy city.
our years would be long in it
exempt from dangers and harm
I confess that for being disobedient
we were expelled from our land
we live among uncircumcised people
faced with men and war
all with different cruelties
we were expelled from our land
let us return to the Lord that He is merciful
that He will make our spirits glad
Let us sing His praise this day
the only chosen day by the Lord
Let us exalt His straight and holy way
For He has only commanded it to us
of the many generations He had created
He took Israel's for it pleased Him more
multiplying his generation
more than the stars of the sky they are
our hope shall not be in vain
what was promised cannot be lacking
very soon we will enjoy tranquility
if we incline our senses to good
for He who trusts in G-d
reaches everything
If he is not swayed by waiting
May G-d make us always wait on Him
and may we always keep his holy Law
The Lord promises that if we turn
to the Law of His holy will
and if we believe with our heart and soul
that we will see His will executed
if we call out with justice please
being in the utmost adversity
He will gather us up in that instant
from the north, south, west and east
what more sign or proof do we ask for
to recognize the obligation

que de santificar tal dia tenemos
con toda alma y todo coraçon
pues el S^or nos veda que busquemos
en el mantenimi^to y provisión
gastemoslo cantando los loores
del s^r que nos da tantos favores. ³⁶⁸

we have to sanctify that day
with all our soul and heart
for G-d forbids us to look
for our maintenance and provision
let us spend it singing praises
to the Lord that gives us so many favors.

While Leonor's trial document only contained the first stanza of the second cantico or song, we know it was an octave (made up of eight verses), and we can identify similarities with some Tehillim or Psalms.

2. Cantico,

Si ay razon de estar siempre loando
mi lengua al S^r que la ha hecho
y con himnos y psalmos ensalçando
al que gobierna el ascondido pecho etts^a.
si ay razon de estar siempre enseñando
los que no siguen termino derecho
ella lo sabe bien que lo ha leydo
los ojos mios mejor que lo han sentido, etts^a.³⁶⁹

If there is reason to be always praising
my tongue to the Lord Who has made it
and with hymns and psalms exalt
He Who governs the hidden chest, etc.
if there is reason to be always teaching
those who do not follow a straight end
she knows it well for she has read it
mine eyes even better who have heard it,
etc.

Just as this song employs the tongue as a synecdoche (a part of the body to represent the entire person) in Psalm 35.28, King David also refers to his tongue to identify himself by writing: "And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long."³⁷⁰

While on the one hand, the poetic voice 's tongue openly praises the Creator as in Psalm 35.28,

³⁶⁸ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 123-124.

³⁶⁹ Ibid, folio 124.

³⁷⁰ "Book of Tehillim (Psalms): Chapter 35," Jewish Virtual Library, JPS Electronic Edition Copyright © 1998 by Larry Nelson, All Rights Reserved, 1998 - 2022 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. Accessed June 20, 2022, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/tehillim-psalms-chapter-35>

the poetic voice’s chest—which can be a metaphor for heart—is hidden. Even though the idea that G-d governs over what is hidden can be found in other Tehillim, the emphasis on what is secret could be a metaphor for the cryptoJewish identity of many conversos.³⁷¹

The third song continues with the image of a heart, mentioning it explicitly in the following octave.

3. Cántico,	
sobre mi corazón tengo esmaltado	over my heart I have varnished
El n ^e del s ^r s ^{to} y vendito ett ^a .	the name of the Lord Holy and Blessed etc.
y tanto que me siento desmayado	to such an extent that I feel faint
en solo pensar en el se alegra mi spiritu ett ^a .	just in thinking of Him my spirit is happy
acuerdame del tp ^o en q [^] enseñarme	remind me of the time in which teaching me
fue para libertarme del Egipto	was to free me from Egypt
y en ver que el que era entonces es agora	and to see that he who was is now
espero por momentos mejor ora, ³⁷²	For the moment I wait on a better hour

The poetic voice’s heart is varnished with the name of the Creator. While this song was part of the converso liturgy for the Sabbath, its use of adjectives and theme are markedly Jewish. For instance, the adjectives “holy” and “blessed” to refer to G-d recall the Sephardic custom of addressing the Creator as the Hakadosh Baruch Hu (the Holy One, blessed be He). Furthermore, as the poetic voice recalls in first person how G-d “freed me” from Egypt, the song adheres to the Jewish mandate to always remember the Exodus from Egypt. Notwithstanding this Jewish motif and way of addressing the Creator, the ending verses can be associated with the hope of conversos to be freed from their present situation. The poetic voice hopes for a better hour

³⁷¹ “G-d would surely search it out, for He knows the secrets of the heart.” Psalms 44.21 Sefaria.org, JPS, 1985, <https://www.sefaria.org/Psalms.51.11?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>.

³⁷² Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 124-125.

because the same G-d that freed him from Egypt is the same G-d who is with the poetic voice at present. Although the song does not specify the poetic voice's present situation, these verses could easily refer to the imprisonment endured by many conversos like Leonor and her family.

The fourth Sabbath song Leonor sung before her inquisitors is based on the last portion of the *parasha* (Torah reading) Beshalach from Exodus 13.17-17.16.³⁷³ In this passage, the nation of Amalek fights against the nation of Israel in the mountain of Rephidim. Israel's troops led by Joshua win the battle because Moses lifts up his hand. All but two of its verses are hendecasyllabic, with an assonant rhyme of ABABABCC.

4. Cantico

Sobre el mas gracioso y alto otero
del Monte raphadi, orando estava
el mas s[^]to Propheta y el prim[^]o
aquel por quien la ley de Dios fue dada ett[^]a.
y en quanto el valeroso cavallero
Jhosue con el enemigo peleava
en aquel tiempo josue vençia
quando Moysen al çielo las manos erguia.³⁷⁴

Over the most lovely and tallest hill
of Mountain Raphadi was praying
the first and most holy prophet
through whom the Law of G-d was given
and as far as the courageous soldier
Joshua fought with the enemy
Joshua won at the time
when Moses raised his hands to heaven

The song's Jewish essence is evident in that it is based on a Torah reading (so that by the end of the year on the Jewish calendar, the entire Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy) is read, the Torah is divided into sections, and one of these passages is Beshalach). But more important than its biblical source is how Moses is described. With the adjectives "first" and "holy", and the superlative "most", the poetic voice transmits the utmost respect for the prophet "through whom

³⁷³ "Parashat Beshalach", Hebcal.com, Accessed on June 22, 2022, <https://www.hebcal.com/sedrot/beshalach>.

³⁷⁴ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 125.

the Law of G-d was given”. The poetic voice’s high esteem aligns with how Moses and the Torah (the Law of G-d) is identified in Jewish tradition. For being G-d’s greatest prophet, Moses is referred to Moshe Rabenu (Moses our Rabbi), and in synagogue services, the Torah is lifted up and identified as “This is the Torah that Moses set before the people Israel”.³⁷⁵

The Torah is foundational in Judaism. One of its important functions is to lay out G-d’s commandments. If followed, the Creator promises blessings, and curses if they are disobeyed. The fifth and sixth songs for the Sabbath center on these blessings and promises found in the parasha Re’eh (Deuteronomy 11.26-16.17), explicitly in song number five and implicitly in song number six. Blessings are pronounced on Mount Gerizim—written by the inquisitor scribe as Garraçi—and curses are pronounced on Mount Ebal. While both poems are octaves and have consonant rhymes ABABABCC, the fifth song has hendecasyllabic verses (except for one verse) and the sixth song consists of ten, eleven and twelve-syllable verses.

5. Cantico

en garraçi estaban lebandados	In Garraçi they were standing
seis tribus de Ysrrael que respondian	six tribes of Israel responded
con clara voz y a gritos levantados	with a clear voice and shouts standing
a los levitas que los vendizian	to the Levites that were blessing them
y en Eval estaban apartados	and in Eval they were set aside
los otros seys que a voces consentian	the other six that conceded with loud voices
en que fuesse maldito el viviente	that the living be cursed
que a tal S^or Dios fuesse inobediente.	who disobeyed the Lord G-d.

6° Cantico

cuan suave cossa es quan deleytossa	how gentle a thing how enjoyable
muy mas que nayde save ymaginar	much more than anyone can imagine

³⁷⁵ “Ésta es la Torá que Moshé puso delante de los Hijos de Yisrael.” “Rezo de Shajarit Para Shabat y Festividades” *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 333. The English translation was taken from: Rabbi Mordechai Levin, “This is the Torah that Moses Set Before the People Israel”, “rabbilevin.net”, Accessed on 23 June 2022, <https://rabbilevin.net/this-is-the-torah-that-moses-set-before-the-people-israel/>

seguir aquella via muy gloriosa	to follow that very glorious past
por donde Dios nos manda caminar	where G-d commands us to walk
toda la ley de Dios es muy sabrossa	the entire Law of G-d is delicious
y aquel que la ossare blasfemar	and whoever dares to blaspheme it
blasfemado sera en aquella vida	will be blasphemed in that life
adonde no ay t^po çierto ni medida ett^a. ³⁷⁶	where there is no certain time nor measure

Leonor and her family kept the Sabbath, albeit differently than in normative Judaism.

Openly Jewish communities went to synagogue and sang songs using their *siddurim* (prayerbooks), but conversos in Mexico City gathered secretly at the Carvajal's home and sang this poem to remind themselves of the blessings G-d offers to those who keep the Sabbath and the rest of His commandments, but also of the curses that befall those who disobey G-d's commandments. Conversos were caught between a rock and a hard place, between the blessings—for keeping the Sabbath as best they could—and the curses—for disobeying G-d's commandment of not having any other gods before Him as New Christians.

The seventh song expounds on the importance of coming together as a community, even in times of hardship. The poem's consonant rhyme is ABABABCC and most of the verses are hendecasyllabic.

7° Cantico

pues mi s^r te agradan nuevos cantos	well my Lord new songs please you
como haz^r nuevas obras cada dia	like doing new works each day
halla en el ayuntami^to de tus s^tos	find in the gathering of your holy ones
alavare tu nombre cada dia	I will praise Your Name each day
acava poderosso nro^s llantos	put an end to our tears o powerful One
juntanos ya en tu s^ta compania^	gather us in Your holy company
y no nos des segun q^ mereçemos	and do not give us according to what we deserve
pues nr^a confiança en ti tenemos ett^a.	because we put our trust in You.

³⁷⁶ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 125.

Even though the octave begins with the premise that G-d is pleased with new songs and the gathering of His holy ones, the poetic voice describes the present situation of a collective we with “tears”. The hardship faced by the community interferes with the praise of the poetic voice although the poetic voice is determined to “praise Your Name each day”. What hardships were so grave as to turn the joy of the Sabbath into tears? The persecution of the Inquisition complicated the lives of conversos in New Spain, especially the much sought-after Portuguese New Christians. When Leonor and her family sang this poem on the Sabbath, she may have related the hardship and tears of the poetic voice to her imprisonment and Inquisition trial. In any case, the theme of this Sabbath song highlights the importance of coming together as a community but also emphasizes the sorrow brought about by current difficulties.

Although Leonor sang the eight song on the Sabbath, it could better be described as a song for Rosh Hashanah (New Year), because its theme is about improving in the new year by not letting herself be deceived anymore. Essentially, the poem is a declaration of intent for the new year, a reflexive poem where the poetic voice speaks to herself but also to the entire community. This poem contains verses of varying length with an assonant rhyme of AAAAAABB. Although at first glance, the rhyme is undone by one of the verses that uses the feminine adjective “engañada” (deceived) instead of the masculine “engañado”, we can conjecture that in the original song, the poetic voice was masculine, and that Leonor adapted this adjective to correspond with her female identity when she sang it.

8° Cántico~

en mi corazón tengo asentado
 desde el principio deste nuevo año
 de no dexarme mas ser engañada
 del enemigo del buen estado humano

in my heart I have written down so I do not forget
 from the beginning of this new year
 to not let myself be deceived anymore
 by the enemy of the well being of humans

antes con el favor del ensalçado	rather with the favor of the exalted One
omnipotente s [^] to y soberano	omnipotent holy and sovereign
espero proçeder con tanto tiento	I hope to procede with prudence
que en nada desatine el pensamiento , ett [^] a. ³⁷⁷	may nothing disturb my thoughts etc.

If the fifth and sixth songs described the predicament of conversos, this last poem provides the cryptoJewish signs of identity.

“9° Cantico~

mi flaco aliento esfuerça y fortaleşçe	my thin spirit make strong and strengthen
mi ronco pecho aclara y da alegria	my hoarse chest clear and give happiness
mi entendimy [^] to alumbray esclareşçe	my understanding light up and brighten
toca mi alma lengua y alvedrio	touch my soul, tongue and free will
y el coraçon tambien porq [^] comieņçe	and the heart too so that it may begin
con nueva fuerça y nuebo poderio	with new strength and new ability
a pedirte socorro y a llamarte	to ask for help and to call on You
Dios para saver glorificarte, ett [^] a”. ³⁷⁸	G-d to know how to glorify You

The poetic voice has a thin spirit, a hoarse chest. A thin spirit could indicate that the poetic voice is feeble and discouraged because of this weakness, and we can infer that a hoarse chest could mean, excessive coughing caused by damaged lungs or even a broken heart. Although this Sabbath song was sung by the Carvajal family before and in between Inquisition trials and subsequent imprisonment, we can almost identify a converso in the secret jails of the Inquisition who is weak and sick because of the lack of food, hygiene, low morale, and most importantly, under constant psychological and physical torture. In lieu of this hardship, the poetic voice asks

³⁷⁷ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 126.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

G-d for a strong spirit, a clear chest, an enlightened understanding, a strong soul, tongue, disposition and heart, to be able to pray to G-d and to glorify Him. We can reframe a converso identity as such: despite the physical and mental and spiritual frailty, what matters most is honoring G-d. For Portuguese cryptoJews like the Carvajal family, this meant keeping their Jewish traditions and beliefs while being a part of New Spain's Christian society.

The Song of the Law of Moses

In addition to reciting part of the nine Sabbath songs, Leonor defined the next poem as the entire Law of Moses in copla (four-line stanzas).³⁷⁹ Just as with the nine Sabbath songs, Leonor explained that she and her siblings knew this song and also sang it on the Sabbath (usually on Friday evenings, or on Saturday if there was an impediment). The fact that this poem was sung is the interruption of the inquisitors who stop Leonor from singing the song in verse, and order her to sing the rest of it—not included here—in prose, for the sake of brevity.³⁸⁰ The poem contains octosyllabic verses with consonant rhyme that varies in style, such as ABBAB for its first five verses and CDCDD for the following five verses.

~A ti S ^r Dios clamamos	We call out to You Lord G-d
con voces y alaridos	with voices and cries
por vernos tan afligidos	for seeing us so afflicted
atiende a que desmayamos	hear because we faint
si no somos socorridos	if we are not rescued
ho llas crianças perdidas	O the lost children

³⁷⁹ Leonor told inquisitors that: “el dho Luis de Caravajal su hermano dezia ~~otra~~ en copla toda la ley de Moyssen y esta y las dhas doña Ysabel y doña Mariana sus hermanas yban respondiendo porque tambien la saven de memoria como los dichos nueve canticos”. Ibid.

³⁸⁰ “Y por ser cossa muy larga y prolixa el prosigo en metro toda la leyde Moyssen y ofresciendose a dezirla en prosa se le mando la diga para mayor claridad y por evitar prolixidad”. Ibid, folio 128.

os horfanos desamparados
 os buidas afligidas
 hos donzellas combatidas
 os horfaos desamparados
 y otros peor librados
 en muy asperas prissiones
 y de claridad privados
 con tormentos aleyjados
 y con asperas prissiones
 andan nuestros coraçones
 tan cobardes de temor
 das continuas afliçiones
 y fortes tribulaçiones,
 que esqueryçemos tu amor
 no nos tarde el tu fabor
 S^r Dios del firmamento
 da remedio a nosso door
 aplaquesse el tu furor
 pereçeu prometimiento
 no te lembre nosos erros
 pues a ti nos convertimos
 que aynda que te erramos
 mutas vezes cada dia
 por S^r te confessamos
 y tu nombre invocamos
 siempre de noche y de dia
 pessosanos de haver peccado
 mas haremos penitençia
 no mires a lo passado
 ussa señor de clemençia
 como siempre, as, acostumbrado

like helpless orphans
 like afflicted widows
 like surrendered young ladies
 like helpless orphans
 and others worse off
 in harsh prisons
 and deprived of light
 crippled from tortures
 and with harsh prisons
 are our hearts
 so cowardly with fear
 of the continuous afflictions
 and strong tribulations
 that we forget Your love
 may your favor towards us not tarry
 Lord G-d of the firmament
 give remedy to our pain
 placate your fury
 the promise perishes
 do not remember our errors
 for we convert to you
 while we still err
 many times each day
 we confess You to be our Lord
 and we call on your name
 always at night and in the day
 we regret having sinned
 but we will do penitence
 do not look at the past
 lord use your mercy
 as you have always done.³⁸¹

The poem resembles a prayer of repentance, a recurrent motif of the Sabbath songs one through nine. As for this song of the Law Moses, this initial part of the poem consisting of thirty-seven verses, echoes the selihot (forgiveness) prayers El Nora Alila (G-d of Great Deeds), Adon Haselihot (Lord of Forgiveness) and Aneinu (Answer us) said in preparation for Yom

³⁸¹ Ibid, folios 126-127.

Kippur.³⁸² In the same manner that these selihot prayers include verses like “find us forgiveness”, “Lord of forgiveness...we have sinned before you, have mercy on us” of and “answer us, the one who answers in times of trouble, answer us”, the poetic speaker of the song of the Law of Moses repents, acknowledges having sinned, and seeks G-d’s mercy. We can imagine that Leonor, her family and other cryptoJews lived in a constant state of trouble. They faced repeated imprisonment, trials, and judgement by the Inquisition for keeping Jewish traditions and practices. For this reason, it was reasonable that even on the Sabbath, the Song of the Law of Moses would share similarities with selihot prayers.

Another important characteristic of this first part of the poem that can also be found in the rest of song is its use of Portuguese. Although the inquisitor scribe transcribed the poem in Spanish, he included words and phrases in Portuguese—albeit with misspellings—like “crianças” (children), “os horfaos” (the orphans), “aleyjados” (crippled), “fortes” (strong), “esquereycemos” (forget), “nosso door” (our pain), “pereceu” (perished), “lembre nosos erros” (remember our errors), “aynda” (still) and “mutas” (many). Although these words are few, the second part of the poem below utilizes many more Portuguese words. In fact, the second part of the poem uses so many words in Portuguese that we can infer that the poem was originally written and sung in that language. While Leonor recited the Song of the Law of Moses, the scribe transcribed—sometimes in Portuguese, other times in Spanish—as he was able. Given the grammatical errors when he wrote in Portuguese, we can assume that his

³⁸² Adon Haselihat “הסליחות” Community Engagement for Israel and Diaspora, Masorti, 25 July, 2022; Rabbi Moshe Ibn Ezra, “El Nora Alila”, Piyut North America, 25 July, 2022. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/513b9fc4e4b0b5df0ebd941d/t56ae307920c64718e8ba2e48/1454256249901/El+Nora+Alila.pdf>; “Aneinu”, Zemirot Database, 25 July, 2022. https://www.zemirotdatabase.org/view_song.php?id=560

knowledge of Portuguese was limited. Notwithstanding, there is yet another reading of this poem. Given the wide use of Portuguese words, the poem may have been written in an old form of Portuguese of that time period. If this were the case, then the words written down by the scribe may have been correctly spelled.

Although Leonor described the entire poem as the Song of the Law of Moses, the inquisitor scribe identified the rest of the poem with a side note on the margin: “aqui comiençan los mandamy^tos de la ley de Moyssen” (here begins the commandments of the Law of Moses). Indeed, this second part of the poem resembles the *parsha* (Torah portion) Yitro, and more specifically, Exodus 20.3-20.17.

~Yo soy tu dios y señor
que con poder infinito
te liberte del Egisto
donde vibias con dolor
y asperamente aflito.
~No tendras dioses ajenos
ante meh catamento.
ni faras alguos trophies
semellança dos arreos
con que horre o firmamy^to
~Nada de esto adoraras.
ni les daras algun honor
a mi so, por Dios tendras
que soy fuerte zelador
en quantas cossas veras
~ Meu nome no juraras.
sobre alguna vanidad.
sin muta necessidad
bien castigado seras
si fizieres tal maldad
~ Lembrate sanctificar
a meu dia señalado
os seys podes travallar
en lo que mais te agradar
ho septimo te he vedado.

~I am your G-d and Lord
that with infinite power
I freed you from Egypt
where you lived with pain
and severely afflicted
~You shall not have strange gods
before my gaze
nor shall you make things
in the likeness of ornaments
I adorn the firmament
~nothing of this shall you worship
nor shall you give them any honor
to me alone, you shall have as G-d
because I am strongly zealous
in which things you shall see
~You shall not swear by my name
about any vain thing
without much need
you shall be punished greatly
if you do such wickedness
~remember to sanctify
my appointed day
the six you can work on
in what is most pleasing to you
I have forbidden the seventh

~Porque en seis dias criou
 todas has cosas criadas.
 en el septimo descanse
 por esso sanctifique
 seguiras suas pissadas
 ~Tu pay y may honrraras
 y viviras largam^te,
 siempre alegre y contento
 hea terra que poseeras
 por mano do omnipotente,
 ~Fuge da alguien matar
 quarte da fornicaçon
 y de alli no furtar
 y ao proximo lebanar
 testim^o de trayçion
 ~Nao desege la cossa agena
 ni ta'poco ha mulher
 ni hao esclavo que tuviere
 Boy, o a suo cossa fea.
 la qual o señor nao' quere.
 ~Todo o poblo, oveu las voces
 del poderosso señor
 de ante su grande resplandor
 y de las demas cossas que oveo
 se aparto con gran temor
 ~Todos a Moyssen dixeron
 que elhe les relatasse
 Eo que eo Señor le mandasse
 que elhes obedeçerian
 temendo que hos matasse,
 ~Elhe dije nao' temais
 que esto fez nosso señor
 para vos provar no mais
 si de le tendes temor
 vindo y a tantas señaes
 feytas en vosso fabor, etc.

~Because in six days [I] created
 all things created
 on the seventh [I] rested
 for this reason I sanctified
 you shall follow His footsteps
 ~Your father and mother you will honor
 and you will live long
 always happy and content
 in the land you will possess
 by the hand of the omnipotent
 ~Flee from killing someone
 keep from fornication
 and from stealing there
 and do not testify against a person close to you
 a testimony of betrayal
 ~Do not want what is not yours
 nor the woman
 nor to the slave that [he] may have
 of good appearance or his ugly thing
 which the lord does not want
 ~All the people heard the voices
 of the powerful lord
 before his great splendor
 and of the rest of the things [the people] saw
 [the people] stayed back with great fear
 ~Everyone said to Moses
 for him to tell them
 That which the lord commanded them
 that they would obey
 fearing that [He] would kill them,
 ~He said do not fear
 for this the our lord does
 is only to test you
 if you fear Him
 seeing so many signs
 done on your behalf.³⁸³

All the cryptoJewish songs we have seen have so far appeared in the trial documents of
 the Carvajal family and other Portuguese conversos who testified against them in the late

³⁸³ Ibid, folios 126-128.

sixteenth century. Witnesses—most of whom were also on trial for judaizing and were imprisoned in the secret jails of the Inquisition—generally identified the Carvajal family with these songs. Testimonies often singled out Luis as the person who sang, played the harp and the guitar, danced, and taught them these songs.³⁸⁴ And while it is true that the Carvajal family women also knew the songs and joined Luis when he sang, other conversos outside of the family sang along as well. Leonor pointed out that she and her sisters and brother knew the entire Law of Moses by heart. “the mentioned Luis de Carvajal her brother would say in verse the entire Law of Moses and this one [referring to Leonor] and the mentioned doña Ysabel and doña Mariana her sisters would respond because they also knew it by heart just like the other mentioned nine songs”.³⁸⁵ Duarte Rodriguez—witness number thirteen against Ysabel de Carvajal, from Cabillana, Portugal and husband to Clara Henriquez—informed inquisitors of other conversos that knew the songs. According to Duarte, when Luis would sing the cantic:

Cantemos con alegría	Let us sing with happiness
alavanças al señor	praises to the Lord

³⁸⁴ Manuel de Lucena, claimed that Luis de Carvajal played a harp, while Diego Diaz Nieto claimed that Luis played a guitar and sang. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 179, 200).

³⁸⁵ Leonor pointed out that she and her sisters and brother knew the entire Law of Moses by heart. “el dicho Luis de Carvajal su hermano dezia en copla toda la ley de Moysen, y esta y las dichas doña Ysabel y doña Mariana sus hermanas yban respondiendo porque tambien la saven de memoria como los dichos nueve canticos”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 126.

Manuel Rodriguez Navarro (the merchant from China who returned to the Philippines) and Thomas de Fonseca (a miner at the Tasco mines) joined Francisca de Carvajal and her daughters Ysabel, Mariana, Leonor and Annica, in singing the estribillo (refrain)

puetodo el que en el confia for everyone who puts their trust in Him
no le falta su favor.³⁸⁶ do not lack His favor

And yet, there were some witnesses who claimed sheer ignorance—on their behalf and of others— of these songs. Witness number nine against Luis de Carvajal reported to inquisitors that on a certain Friday evening, the Carvajal household had guests stay over their house and that some guests knew the songs Luis de Carvajal sang, while others just listened because they did not know the songs: “the mentioned Luis de Caravajal begun to sing the mentioned nine songs in verse and the mentioned certain person and two others close to him that [witness number nine] mentioned would respond to the mentioned Luis de Caravajal with another song and the other two persons that [witness number nine] declared one of the persons close to the mentioned Luis de Caravajal would listen and not respond because they did not know the mentioned songs by heart”.³⁸⁷ While there could have been other conversos that did not know the songs—many

³⁸⁶ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 193-194.

³⁸⁷ “començo el dh^o Luis de caravajal a cantar Los dh^os nueve canticos en copla y la dh^a çierta persona y otras dos sus conjunctas que nombro respondian al dh^o Luis de caravajal con otra copla y otras dos personas que declaro La una de Ellas conjuncta de El dh^o Luis de caravajal oian y no respondian porque no sabian nada de memoria de los dh^os canticos”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 56.

witnesses claimed that Luis de Carvajal had taught them these songs—witnesses could have also denied any knowledge of these songs for fear of the Inquisition (let us not forget that most of these witnesses had pending trials for judaizing themselves). Whatever the case, if, indeed, other Portuguese conversos outside of the Carvajal family knew the songs, then we can infer that these songs, as Michelle Hamilton has argued, were originally sung by the Portuguese Jewish community, and that conversos transmitted these songs orally.

CryptoJewish Texts: Appropriation of Christian Prayers and Texts

And while The Song of the Law of Moses that Leonor sang before inquisitors was a Portuguese rendition of the commandments found in the Torah, her brother Luis also used Christian texts. Their identity—outwardly Christian while inwardly Jewish—drove them to appropriate Christian texts for their cryptoJewish observance. Witness number nine—that Luis identified as his sister Leonor—testified that on Yom Kippur, Luis de Carvajal said the prayers, psalms and songs according to the Law of Moses, and also included a prayer extracted from the book by Fray Luis de Granada titled *Guía de pecadores*. Leonor told inquisitors, “after the confession they would say the mentioned prayers that [she] has declared in keeping of the mentioned Great Day the Psalms of David the mentioned nine songs commandments and articles

and the Law of Moses in meter would be said and not sung”.³⁸⁸ And when her confession was read to Luis at an Inquisition hearing, he recited the prayer which began with: “~Lord G-d Almighty my soul is afflicted from seeing and understanding the serious punishment that for my wickedness and sins and abominations against your precepts and commandments I have committed etc”.³⁸⁹ Thus, while On Yom Kippur, Luis de Carvajal said prayers and songs according to the Law of Moses he also included a confession written by a friar.

Notwithstanding its undeniable Christian origin, Luis’ prayer also recalls the Vidui (confession) prayer said in preparation for Yom Kippur included in Sephardic *siddurim* (prayer books) in the shacharit or morning prayer, the mincha or afternoon prayer, in the *Shema* prayer at bedtime, and in the Machzor (prayerbook for the High Holy Days) that includes the following verses: “For we are not so arrogant nor hard-headed to tell you, O Eternal One, Our G-d and G-d of our ancestors, that we are righteous and have not sinned. No, we have sinned, committed iniquity and intentionally transgressed, us and our fathers and the members of our household”.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ Leonor told inquisitors that: “después de la confision rezaban las dh^as oraçiones que ha declarado se rezaban en guarda de El dh^o dia grande y todos los psalmos de david y El dia siguiente bolbian a dezir la confision y a rezar las mismas oraçiones y en lugar de los psalmos dezian rezados y no cantados los dh^os nueve canticos mandamientos y artículos y ley de Moysen em metro”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 58.

³⁸⁹ “~Señor dios todopoderosso my anima atribulada de veer y entender El grave castigo que por Las maldades y pecados y abominaçiones que contra tus preceptos y mandamientos he cometido etts^a”. Ibid.

³⁹⁰ “Pues no somos tan insolentes ni tan duros de cerviz como para decirte, oh Eterno, Dios de nuestro y Dios de nuestros padres, que somos justos y que no hemos pecado. No, sino que hemos pecado, hemos cometido iniquidad y hemos transgredido intencionalmente, tanto nosotros como nuestros padres y los miembros de nuestra casa.” “Rezo Diario de Shajarit” *Sidur Bircat Shelomó*, trans. Aryeh Coffman (México D.F.: Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001), 207.

Given the similitude of the Vidui (confession) prayer and Luis de Granada's prayer, we can understand why the Carvajal family—influenced by New Spain's society which was forcibly Christian— used Granada's Christian prayer on Yom Kippur.

CryptoJewish Texts: *Haggadah, Mahzor, and Siddur of Their Own*

Haggadah (Passover Text)

Indeed, while Portuguese conversos like the Carvajal family passed on Jewish prayers and songs orally and used Christian texts to celebrate Jewish holidays, they created their own cryptoJewish prayer books that incorporated these Jewish and Christian sources. Catalina Enrriquez, witness 16 against Ysabel de Carvajal, confessed to having celebrated Passover at Francisca de Carvajal's home in Sanctiago, Mexico. In particular, she recalled that “The aforementioned Luis de Carvajal ordered doors to be locked and read to everyone from a handwritten book things about the Law of Moses particularly of the celebration and significance of the aforementioned Passover of the Lamb and it took more than an hour to read”.³⁹¹ Indeed, the Carvajal family used their own Haggadah (Passover text).

Mahzor (High Holy Days Prayerbook)

³⁹¹ “el dho Luis de Carvajal mando çerrar las puertas y leyo a todos en un librito escrito de mano cossas de la ley de Moissen particularm^te de la çelebraçion y significaçion de la dha^ pasqua del Cordero y duraria el leer mas de una ora”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206-207.

Inquisition trial testimonies also demonstrate that the Carvajal family used their own High Holy Days prayer book (*Mahzor*). A certain witness told inquisitors that while Ysabel de Carvajal and others close to Ysabel observed the Great Day of the Lord (Yom Kippur), someone came looking for a book that contained all the prayers for that day in Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the witness did not specify). “In company of the mentioned doña Ysabel and the other persons close to her...a certain person on the mentioned Great Day of the Lord in the afternoon...came to ask for a book where the prayers to be said on the day were written in Romance”.³⁹² The witness stated that Luis de Carvajal included in this book Christian prayers taken from books of devotion that he translated into Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the witness did not specify). “They began the confession that a certain person that [the witness] declared composed and translated and compiled from the mentioned books which were written in a certain book that [the witness] declared”.³⁹³

³⁹² “En compañía de la dicha doña ysabel y de otras sus conjuntas...çierta persona El dicho dia grande del s^r por la tarde...q vino a pedir un libro donde estaban escritas las oraçiones que se rezan aquel dia en romance.” Ibid, folio 261.

³⁹³ “Enpesavan la confission q^ conpuso çierta persona q^ declaro q^ tradujo y recopilo de los dichos libros la qual tenia escrita en çierto libro q^ declaro.” Ibid, folio 262.

Siddur (Sabbath and Daily Prayerbook)

In addition, Luis de Carvajal, was accused of using his own *siddur* (prayer book) on the Sabbath. According to witness number four, identified as Justa Mendez, on a particular Friday evening at eight or nine o'clock, Luis de Carvajal observed the Sabbath by using a book. While Luis read and sang from this text, his sisters Ysabel, Leonor, and joined him in song.³⁹⁴ These texts functioned as *Haggadah*, *Mahzor*, and *Siddur*, even though they were written by conversos, in Romance (vernacular Spanish), and incorporated Christian prayers in some instances.

CryptoJewish Languages: Hebrew, Latin, Portuguese and Romance (Vernacular Spanish)

Hebrew

While their written texts were not Jewish, the Carvajal family did pass on an oral tradition that was definitively Jewish (as we have already seen with their cryptoJewish prayers and songs). Part of this oral tradition included their cryptoJewish vocabulary that aligned with normative Jewish concepts. For instance, the Carvajal family used a name for G-d commonly used in Jewish liturgy and recited the *Shema* to their inquisitors. While inquisitor scribes poorly transliterated what they heard in Hebrew, their trial documents demonstrate that the Carvajal family prayed the *Shema*. Pilar Huerga Criado explains that even though conversos lacked Jewish writings in Hebrew and had to rely on the Christian Bible in order to read Jewish texts

³⁹⁴ While Justa Mendez did not provide exact names, the trial document contains the names of the Carvajal family on the margin. “En El aposento de cierta persona q^ declaro conjunta de la dicha doña ysabel la qual començo a Rezar y cantar por un libro que tenia oraciones y canticos de la Ley de Moysen...todas se avian juntado para guardar El sabado”. Ibid, folio 267.

like the Psalms of King David, the name of G-d “Adonai” was the only word in Hebrew that remained in their vocabulary.³⁹⁵

Latin

Indeed, instead of a Tanakh (Jewish Bible), Luis and Ysabel de Carvajal extracted Jewish texts from a Christian Bible. After their release from prison in the first trial, the Carvajal family celebrated the Sabbath, and Luis read prophecies from the Bible and translated the text from Latin into Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the witness did not specify). “in keeping the mentioned Sabbath the next day reading the mentioned person after every eight verses would say a prophecy declaring from Latin into Romance”.³⁹⁶ Likely from the Bible her brother Luis took from the school of Santiago de Tlatelolco where he taught, Ysabel read Psalms in Latin: “the mentioned Luis de Carvajal her brother would read on Saturdays to this one [Leonor] and to their mother doña Francisca de Caravajal, doña Ysabel, doña Mariana the Psalms of David in Romance that he had taken from the Bible that was in the College of Santiago of Tlatilulco”³⁹⁷ Not only did she read Psalms in Latin but knew them by heart. In the second publication of witnesses against Ysabel de Carvajal, dated October 1595, Francisco Rodriguez—a prisoner in

³⁹⁵ Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 180-181.

³⁹⁶ “por guarda del dicho sabado dia siguiente leyendo la dicha çierta persona al cabo de cada ocho octavas una propuesta declarando el latin en romañçe”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 267.

³⁹⁷ “y el dho su hermano luis de carvajal leya los sabados a esta y a su madre doña fran^ca de carvajal, doña ysabel, doña mariana, los psalmos de david en romañçe que el avia sacado de la biblia que estava en el collegio de sago^ti de taltilulco”. Ibid, folio 123.

the Inquisition's secret jails, known as witness number eight, who we can assume to be a different Francisco from the one who lived in Italy and visited the Carvajal family in Mexico City— swore and ratified his testimony against Ysabel de Carvajal about what he saw and heard her say to another inmate.³⁹⁸

According to Francisco, after Ysabel returned to her jail cell from an Inquisition tribunal hearing, she boasted that she argued with inquisitors by quoting Psalms in Latin. He heard: “that the mentioned doña Ysabel had gone up to the tribunal and had argued with inquisitors and had spoken in Latin and the attorney had scolded her because the mentioned doña Ysabel wanted to speak to him of everything who boasted this said person that she gave to inquisitors with the Psalms and that they had placed an accusation”.³⁹⁹ Based on this account, we can be certain that Ysabel recited Psalms in Latin to inquisitors— the language of Christianity— showcasing her knowledge of the Psalms and her ability to speak Latin as a learned woman. She was indeed an insightful young lady who—at a time when many men were illiterate— signed her own name in

³⁹⁸ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 252.

³⁹⁹ “le dijo la dicha doñay ysabel q^ avia suvido al tribunal y q^ avia disputado con los inquisidores y que avia hablado en latin y q^ la avia reprehendido el letrado porque la dicha doña ysabel se lo queria hablar todo la qual se jactaba a la dicha cierta persona que daba a los inquisidores con los psalmos y q^ avian puesto la acusacion”. Ibid.

her trial documents.⁴⁰⁰ Yet surprisingly, rather than admire Ysabel, her attorney—who was an inquisitor as well—reprimanded her.

Did he rebuke Ysabel because the Psalms she quoted spoke favorably of the Law of Moses (Torah)? After all, Psalms are Jewish liturgical poetry. Or were inquisitors against Ysabel's use of Latin because she was not Christian clergy and more specifically, she was a woman? (we should not forget that all inquisitors were men). Were they upset because a convert dared to use their Christian language to argue against them? Perhaps Ysabel's comment about this incident can clarify the reason for their displeasure.

During the part of the trial known as Juramento (swearing), when Ysabel was asked to respond to the charges that witnesses brought against her, she defended herself from Francisco Rodriguez' accusation. She explained to inquisitors that all she had done was to speak some Latin before the tribunal and that her attorney had bid her to be silent: “she said that she had said some things in Latin before the lord inquisitors and because her attorney had told her to be quiet, and that is all”.⁴⁰¹ Since Ysabel stressed her use of Latin over the meaning of her words, we can

⁴⁰⁰ We can see Ysabel's own signature: “dona isabel” throughout her trial document. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 258. “Literacy among Judeo-Convertos was high, reaching 72% in the case of men. This is an extremely high figure as compared to the mere 34% among Old Christians.” (Mercedes García-Arenal, “Reading Against the Grain, Readings of Substitution: Catholic Books as Inspiration for Judaism in Early Modern Iberia”, *Jewish History*, no. 35 (2021): 253, Accessed 27 March, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10835-021-09423-1>).

⁴⁰¹ “dixo que ella avia dho alg^a cosas en latin delante de los s^ers inq^res y como el letrado le avia dho a esta que callase, y que no ay mas”. *Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal*. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 255.

assume that Ysabel's use of Latin is what bothered inquisitors— or at least, it was one of the main contributing factors.

And yet, while Ysabel and her brother Luis knew Latin, they were careful to distance themselves from Catholicism when using this Christian language. For example, Luis admitted to inquisitors that after he read psalms— in Romance because he himself translated them from Latin into Romance—he omitted the Catholic additions in the Latin translations that mentioned Jesus Christ: Luis “leia psalmos de alavança en Romança sin dezir mas que gloria sea a dios solo excluyendo a Jesuxp^o y a espu^o Sancto” (read psalms of praise in Romance without saying more than glory to G-d only excluding Jesus Christ and Holy spirit.⁴⁰² In effect, Luis and his sisters had been raised to distance themselves from Christian concepts like the belief of Jesus Christ.

Romance (Vernacular Portuguese or Spanish)

And yet, despite Luis' hidden Jewish identity that distanced him from Christianity—even while being a descendant of New Christians—Luis read the Catholic Bible in Latin. And Luis was not the only one in his family to read in Latin. Ysabel and Mariana also translated Psalms in Latin into Romance (Spanish of the period) to read to their mother and sisters. In addition, Cathalina De Leon's son (Cathalina was Leonor de Carvajal's aunt)—possessed the book of Deuteronomy in Romance. When Gonçalo Perez Ferro—Cathalina de Leon's husband—visited his son at the convalescent hospital the Holy Office sent him to as penitence, and told him to

⁴⁰² Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 70.

beware of the devil, “this one [his son] responded that he still had the Deuteronomy in Romance and that in that he understood”.⁴⁰³ The preference for Romance over Latin hinged on the fact that Romance was a neutral language— what I mean is, it was free from Catholic association, while Latin, as we have seen, was the language of the Christian Bible. For this reason, the Carvajal family translated Psalms into Spanish or Portuguese of the period.

Nevertheless, the Carvajal family was a Portuguese Converso family and as such, also used Portuguese. Leonor admitted to her inquisitors, “she said that the reason that she was moved was having heard say to her sister doña Mariana some commandments of the Law of Moses, that she referred that are, ~ I am your G-d and Lord that with infinite power delivered you from Egypt where you lived with pain and [were] harshly afflicted you shall not have strange gods before my gaze nor shall you make things in the likeness of ornaments I adorn the firmament”.⁴⁰⁴ These commandments —as we have seen earlier— are verses from The Song of Moses. When Francisco scolded his son Luis as mentioned earlier, they communicated in Portuguese. Luis explained to inquisitors that “going with his father and his uncle whose names he does not know if he declared to him from the village of Mogodorio that is in Portugal to a fair he had asked his father in Portuguese in this manner lord father this must be a host (religious wafer in Christianity) and to this the father raised his hand and slapped him so that it reached the

⁴⁰³ When Gonçalo Perez Ferro—Cathalina de Leon’s husband—visited his son at the convalescent hospital the Holy Office sent him to as penitence, and told him to beware of the devil, his son responded: “este le respondio que todabia tenia el deuteronomio en Romance y que en esto entendia”. Ibid, folio 87.

⁴⁰⁴ Leonor admitted to her inquisitors that “dixo q la razon que le movio^ fue aver oydo dezir a su hermana doña mariana, unos mandamientos de la ley de moysen, que ella refería que son, ~yo soy tu dios y señor que con poder infinito te liberte de egipto donde vibias con dolor y asperamente aflito, no tendras diosses agenos ante mi acatamiento, ni haras algunos tropheos, semejança de los arreos con que horreyo el firmamento”. Ibid, folio 119.

other side telling him in portuguese dog apostate you do not see that they love to beg the wafer they make of beaten fare which must want to mean to say flour and that since then his father had taught him the Law of Moses”,⁴⁰⁵ Words like “pay (pai)”, “em” “caon (cão), “nao (não)”, “fillo (filo)”, “suplicações (suplicações)”, “fare (farinha)” clearly attest to the use of Portuguese between father and son.

Likewise, as we have seen earlier in the Sabbath songs one through nine and the Song of the Law of Moses, Leonor used verbs like “Lembrete (remember), criou (created), oueu (heard), travallar (worked)” and pronouns like “meu (my), sua and suo (his), lhe (to him)” definite articles like “o, os, and as (the)”, prepositions like “ao (to the)”, adverbs like “aynda (still)”, nouns like “mulher (woman)” and negations like “nao’(no). Despite the inquisitor scribe’s misspellings, we can identify all of these as Portuguese words. The use of Portuguese by Leonor, demonstrated by the transcription of the Inquisition scribe, attests to her Sephardic Portuguese identity. Indeed, the language the cryptoJews of New Spain knew and spoke was predominantly Portuguese. For instance, Clara Henriquez, a friend of the Carvajal family, commented “por e nao sabe o señor mentir” (because the Lord does not know how to lie) in

⁴⁰⁵ “yendo con su padre y con un tio suio cuios nombres no sabe si le declaro de la Villa de Mogodorio que es e^ portugal a una feria le habia preguntado a su p^e em portuges de esta man^era señor pay esta deve em ha hostia y a esto el padre alçada la mano y dadole un bofeton que dio con el de el otro lado diziendole em portuges caon, arrenegado nao ves tu que son filloos que son suplicações, o obleas que fazen de batido de fare los que debe de querer dezir harina y que desde entonçes le habia eseñado el dh^o su padre de la ley de Moysen” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal. Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 125-126.

Portuguese, after hearing Luis read about the coming of the Messiah in the book of the prophet Joel.⁴⁰⁶

Nevertheless, Pilar Huerga Criado reminds us that although Portuguese conversos spoke Portuguese in the home, they used Spanish in their prayers for it was perceived to be the cultured language of the period.⁴⁰⁷ Frederick Bouterwek further explains that “the Portuguese, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, cultivated the language and literature of Spain, along with their mother tongue and the learning of their own country...in the first half of the sixteenth century...it was a custom, and indeed a high style of fashion in literature for Portuguese poets to write verses in Castilian as well as in their mother tongue”.⁴⁰⁸ In addition to the Portuguese inclination to include Spanish in their literature, living in New Spain must have further influenced the Carvajal family to translate the Psalms in New Spain.

And yet, their exposure to Spanish began before their arrival to New Spain. While it is true that the Inquisition trial documents identify the Carvajal family as Portuguese New Christians and that Francisco Rodriguez de Matos was from Benavente, a town in Portugal, with possible roots in Mogodorio Portugal (based on Luis’ recounting of his travels with his father and

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid, folio 143.

⁴⁰⁷ “Tampoco en portugués, que era la lengua familiar. El español era la lengua culta y, como tal, nunca fue abandonada, manteniéndose también su uso para la oración.” Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 181.

⁴⁰⁸ Frederick Bouterwek. *History of Spanish and Portuguese Literature Vol. II*, trans. Thomassina Ross (London: Boosey and Sons, Broad Street, 1823), 51-52.

uncle), Francisca and several of their children were born in Benavente, Spain. In Leonor de Carvajal's second trial documents, the inquisition identifies her parents origin by stating that Francisca de Carvajal was that she was the "widow of Francisco Rodriguez de Matos Portuguese relaxed in statue by this Holy Office for keeping and observing the dead Law of Moses native of Venavente in the kingdoms of Castile and that she is the age fifty and five and that she sustains herself from her needle and work".⁴⁰⁹ Moreover, before moving to New Spain, the Carvajal family lived in Medina del Campo, Spain for an extended period of time. Considering their ties to Spanish literature both as Portuguese and Spanish, it is not surprising that Mariana, Luis and Ysabel opted to translate Psalms from Latin into Spanish or Portuguese of the period.

Romance Anyone?

Justa Mendez read the commandments handwritten by Luis in Romance —vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, she did not specify. "[S]he said that it is true that she has asked for this hearing to say and manifest that one year ago from this september that passed that Luis de

⁴⁰⁹ In Leonor de Carvajal's second trial documents, the inquisition identifies her parents origin by stating that Francisca de Carvajal was: "biuda de fran^co rodriguez de matos portugues relaxado en estatua por este sancto off^o por la guarda y observancia de la ley muerta de moysen natural de venavente en los Reynos de castilla y que es de hedad de cinquenta y cinco años y que se sustenta de su aguja y trabajo". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folios 99-100. Ysabel, Leonor and Luis were born in Benavente, Spain like their mother. Luis de Carvajal testified that he lived in Medina del Campo, Spain as a child, and that when he was younger, he visited Mogodorio, Portugal with his father and uncle. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 125-126.

Carvajal gave to this one (referring to Justa) some commandments of the Law of Moses in Romance from his own handwriting of the mentioned Luis de Carvajal and told her to take that which he had extracted out of the Bible that was in the library of the friars of Santiago of Tlatilulco and jointly included the mentioned commandments the articles of the Law of Moses and he told this one to read them and keep them”.⁴¹⁰ The use of Romance was an alternative to reading the commandments in Latin from Christian bibles. Why learn the mitzvot in (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese) rather than in Latin? Perhaps to distance themselves as far as possible from the Latin language associated with Christianity. Torah study was another important ethical element for conversas in New Spain. Further along in the trial, this same Justa—close friend and fellow Portuguese conversa testified against all the Carvajal women by stating that: “and her mother doña Francisca de Caravajal, doña Isabel, doña Leonor, doña Mariana y Anica were listening to the aforementioned Mariana that read Psalms in Latin directed to the Law of Moses and would declare them in Romance”.⁴¹¹

Although the reading of Psalms in Latin rather than in Hebrew could be considered a Christian practice, Justa Mendez asserted that Mariana—another of the Carvajal sisters—read the Psalms in a manner that conformed to the Law of Moses. According to this accusation,

⁴¹⁰ “~dixo que es verdad que ella a pedido esta au^a para dezir y manifestar que este septiembre q^ passo hizo un año que luis de carvajal le dio a esta unos mandamientos de la ley de moyssen en romance de su letra del dho luis de carvajal y le dixo que tomasse aquello q^ avia sacado de la biblia que estava en la libreria de los frailes de santiago de tlatilulco y juntament^te venian en los dhos mandamientos los articulos de la ley de moyssen y le dixo a esta que los leyeses y guardas”. Ibid, folio 14.

⁴¹¹ “y su m^e doña francisca de caravajal doña Isabel doña leonor doña mariana y anica estaban oyendo a la dha^ mariana que lei-a psalmos en latin endereçados a la ley de moyssen y los declaraba en romance”. Ibid, folios 32-33.

Mariana's intent was to read the Psalms with a Crypto-Jewish lens in accordance to the Law of Moses. The trial document does not provide any more information that could corroborate Mariana's alleged reading of the Psalms except that this reading took place on the Sabbath. But Mariana's translation of the Psalms into Romance attests to the importance of not only the text being read aloud, but the language in which it was read. Stemming from the Middle Ages, when king Alfonso X The Wise established the school of translators, Jewish scribes would translate Greek texts that had been translated into Arabic into Romance, and from Romance into Latin—the language of the king Alfonso's Christian kingdom. Isolated from normative Sephardic Jewish communities like that of Constantinople where ladino (Romance Spanish of Sephardic communities, that is heavily influenced by Portuguese) in Hebrew script was used in the Torah (the first five books of Moses) printed in 1547 by Eliezer Soncino, Crypto-Jewish women like Mariana could only read the Torah from a Christian Bible in Latin. Still, Mariana distances herself from Latin by translating the Psalms she read in Latin into Romance and 'reading' the Psalms in Romance out loud to her sisters, mother and other Conversas gathered in her home.

Mariana's reading in (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the witness did not specify) is also the same language many Conversos who had escaped the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal read the Ferrara Bible of 1553, translated from the Hebrew into Spanish printed by Abraham Usque and published by Yom Tob Attias. Lacking the formal Jewish education in Hebrew, Conversos did not know how to read in Hebrew, like the Sephardic communities. Mariana's translation of the Psalms and the Ferrara Bible demonstrates that Romance (vernacular Spanish or Portuguese, the witness did not specify) was the language Conversos used to read the Jewish

Bible. And Crypto-Jewish women like Mariana resorted to reading a translation from Latin and then translating the text into Romance, even if it meant using Christian sources.⁴¹²

While texts were an important part of liturgy that helped fashion the cryptoJewish memory of conversa like Mariana, her mothers, sisters and other conversas in the wider community of New Spain, what really distinguished them were their markers of identity. And like any identity, it started early in life, with a cryptoJewish Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

⁴¹² Díaz Más, Paloma. *Los sefardíes: historia, lengua y cultura*. Riopiedras. Barcelona. 1997.

Chapter 4

Crypto-Jewish Identity, Rationale and Beliefs

Lord, fulfil our prayer for the sake of those slain and burnt alive in sanctifying the unity of Thy name.⁴¹³

(Prayer for the Day of Atonement)

A Crypto-Jewish Identity

When Antonio Diaz Marquez fell ill on one occasion, he reasoned that his sickness was because he was not being a perfect, heartfelt Jew. Luis de Carvajal, his mother Francisca and sisters Ysabel and Mariana visited Antonio when he was sick in bed. Speaking about Antonio, Luis reported to inquisitors that “being sick in bed he had drenched his mattresses with tears looking to the sky and crying his sins which he believed and understood he had for without a doubt it was for eating bacon with his wife and not keeping Saturdays nor Passovers as a perfect, heartfelt Jew”.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ *Prayers for the Day of Atonement According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews*, trans. and ed. David de Sola Pool, (New York: Union of Sephardic Congregations, 1998), 187.

⁴¹⁴ “estando enfermo e^ la cama habia pasado los colchones con lagrimas mirando al cielo y llorando sus pecados los quales cree y entiende y lo tiene por sin duda era por comer toçino con su muger y no guardar los sabados ni las pasquas como perfecto judio de corazon”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 77.

Luis went on to say that Antonio would often blame himself for not keeping the Law of Moses publicly as other Jews saying that: “many times the mentioned Antonio Diaz Marquez had told this one [referring to Luis] how much he accused himself to G-d and he regretted not being able to keep the Law of Moses like he believed it and with the perfection of Jews who have freedom keep it outwardly”.⁴¹⁵ By contrasting his own state with that of Jews who had the freedom to keep the Law of Moses openly, and desire to be like them, regret Antonio was implying that he too was Jewish—albeit in secret. And because he was cryptoJewish, he and his wife behaved as Christians outwardly by eating bacon and not keeping the Sabbath nor Passover. And while Antonio’s lack of freedom may have been a valid excuse for these shortcomings, he was convinced he was ill because he did not keep the Law of Moses. His tears and gaze toward heaven demonstrated his contrition.

Antonio’s reasoning—that he was Jewish but was different from other Jews—was an important aspect of his cryptoJewish rationale. Antonio knew he was a Jew, and that his beliefs contrasted with that of Christians—who, for instance, had no qualms about eating pork—but he also knew he was different from other Jews who had the freedom to live openly as such. And although Antonio did not keep Jewish holidays like the Sabbath or Passover, his Jewish identity was not part of a distant past consisting of Jewish parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents. The cryptoJewish community of New Spain were New Christians that thought of themselves as

⁴¹⁵ As in Jewish tradition, I will use the term G-d out of respect for the Name of The Creator. “muchas vezes el dh^o antonio diaz marquez le había dh^o a este quanto se acusaba a dios y le pesaba por no poder guardar la ley de moysen como la creia y con la perfection que en lo exterior la guardaban los judíos que tienen livertad.” Ibid, folio 77.

fully Jewish, with a small but important variance from other Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora— they were secret Jews because they lacked religious freedom.

A CryptoJewish Bar/BatMitzvah

By contrast, the Carvajals' cryptoJewish identity propelled them to celebrate Jewish holidays, eat according to Jewish custom, say prayers and sing songs based on the Law of Moses. Although the exact age varied among conversos, many learned about their secretly Jewish identity when they were young. Luis de Carvajal, for example, told inquisitors that the start of his Crypto-Jewish identity began with a conversation he once had with his father on his way to a fair with an uncle from Magadorio, Portugal.

Speaking in Portuguese, Luis commented to his father about the Host (the bread in the celebration of the Eucharist) at a fair. Upon hearing this, Luis' father slapped him across the face and replied in Portuguese that the Host was only made of flour, and from that day on, Luis' father taught him the Law of Moses. The inquisitor scribe related Luis' narrative, interjecting his own interpretation at times, by writing the following: "Lord Father this must be the host and upon saying this the father raised his hand and gave him a slap that made him end up on the other side, telling him in Portuguese renegade coward do you not see that they are the sources of supplications or thin sheets of flour and water that they make of beaten bran that must mean flour and that from then on he taught him his aforementioned father the Law of Moses."⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁶ "Señor Pay esta debe en ha hostia y a esto El padre alçado La mano y dado un bofetón que dio con El de El otro Lado diziendole en portugues, caon arrenegado nao ves tu que son filloos que son suplicacoes o, obleas que fazen de batudo de farelos que debe de querer dezir de harina y que desde entonçes le habia enseñado El dh^o Su padre La ley de moysen". Ibid, folio 60.

This passage indicates that prior to this day at the fair, Luis had been exposed to Christian symbols like the Host, but from that day on, Luis learned the Law of Moses from his father. Despite the harsh physical reprimand he received from his father—after all, Luis was not to blame for knowing Christian icons like the Host—we can relate the event to a Bar Mitzvah. Literally, “the son of the commandment”, a Bar Mitzvah is a Jewish coming of age ritual that occurs when boys turn thirteen. For just as boys are recognized as adults and hence, become official members of the Jewish community on their Bar Mitzvah, so does Luis realize that his true identity was cryptoJewish on that day. In effect, we can understand that day as the start of his was his cryptoJewish Bar Mitzvah —or so I propose.

By contrast, Martin Cohen and Anna Lanyon identify a particular Yom Kippur day when Luis was told by a sibling about his secret Jewish identity and told to fast on that day.⁴¹⁷

According to Lanyon

Many years later, when Luis began to write his book of miracles, he said that his introduction to the Law of Moses took place in Medina del Campo one September, ‘on a special day we call the Day of Pardon...Luis said that it was his mother, his brother, his sister and his cousin who revealed God’s truth to him.

Cohen’s text expounds

⁴¹⁷ “Many years later, when Luis began to write his book of miracles, he said that his introduction to the Law of Moses took place in Medina del Campo one September, ‘on a special day we call the Day of Pardon...Luis said that it was his mother, his brother, his sister and his cousin who revealed God’s truth to him”. Anna Lanyon, *Fire & Song The story of Luis de Carvajal and the Mexican Inquisition* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2011), 33.

Jewish tradition holds that a boy of thirteen, around the age of puberty, attains responsibility for the fulfillment of Judaism's commandments. The New Christians Judaizers of ten waited until the time of puberty to inform their sons and daughters of their heritage and obligation as Jews... Though the responsibility naturally devolved upon the parents, they occasionally delegated it to an older son or daughter, perhaps trying in this way to minimize the child's shock at learning of his true identity... Baltasar was the sibling chosen to tell Luis about his origins... After his startling revelation, Baltasar went on to inform his brother that the day of induction into Judaism had not been randomly chosen. It was a very special day. It was the holiest day of the Jewish year. That September 10 happened to be the "Day of Pardon".⁴¹⁸

While they rely on Luis de Carvajal's memoir, I base my assumption on declarations that Luis himself shared in his depositions before inquisitors. Although one source is not better than the other, they explain why we can identify Luis' cryptoJewish Bar Mitzvah on different occasions.

Luis learned the Law of Moses from his father from that day of their conversation on their way to the fair, just as a boy is taught to read the parsha (the Torah portion for that Sabbath)

⁴¹⁸ "Jewish tradition holds that a boy of thirteen, around the age of puberty, attains responsibility for the fulfillment of Judaism's commandments. The New Christians Judaizers often waited until the time of puberty to inform their sons and daughters of their heritage and obligation as Jews... Though the responsibility naturally devolved upon the parents, they occasionally delegated it to an older son or daughter, perhaps trying in this way to minimize the child's shock at learning of his true identity... Baltasar was the sibling chosen to tell Luis about his origins... After his startling revelation, Baltasar went on to inform his brother that the day of induction into Judaism had not been randomly chosen. It was a very special day. It was the holiest day of the Jewish year. That September 10 happened to be the "Day of Pardon". Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 32-33.

in Hebrew, so that on his Bar Mitzvah, he could read it before the entire synagogue. And although Luis did not specify how old he was when he went to that fair with his father, we do know that he arrived with his family to New Spain in 1580.⁴¹⁹ And if we take into account that in 1595, he told inquisitors that he was about thirty, we can assume that he was younger than fifteen when he had that conversation with his father. “Asked what is his name where he is from age and what profession he has ~he said his name is Luis de Carvajal native of the village of Venavente in the kingdoms of Castille resident in Mexico single young man son of Francisco Rodriguez Matos relaxed in statue by the Holy Office and of doña Francisca his wife reconciled in it for keeping the Law of Moses of age thirty more or less and that he does not have any

⁴¹⁹ “At the beginning of June 1580 the entire family, except for the governor, boarded Our Lady of Light at Seville... When the governor arrived, the ship was laden with its human cargo and proceeded to Sanlúcar, where it was certified for departure... Four weeks and a day later, on August 25, they reached the port of San Juan de Ulúa, off the mainland at Veracruz”. Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 66, 69.

Luis de Carvajal de la Cueva—Francisca de Carvajal’s brother—arrived in New Spain in order to pacify the chichimecas (natives), conquer them and colonize the northern part of New Spain to be called the New Kingdom of León. Luis was allowed to bring with him to New Spain 100 families in order to populate that land. Seventy-five percent of these families were cryptoJewish. Alicia Gojman de Backal explains: “la fundación del Nuevo Reino de León por un converso llamado Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva, apodado “el Viejo”, el cual participó en la conquista y colonización del norte del país, ayudando a la pacificación de los chichimecas. Después de informar de sus hazañas a la Corona, ésta le concede un territorio de 200 leguas cuadradas para fundar el Nuevo Reino de León y se le permite traer cien familias españolas para poblar estas tierras. De ellas, un setenta y cinco por ciento fueron de origen converso judaizante.” Additionally, Gojman de Backal specifies that among those that came with Luis de Carvajal de la Cueva was his sister, his brother-in-law, and their children: “El grupo que llegó con el Gobernador Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva era sobre todo de origen portugués, es decir, tenían muy arraigada la ortodoxia judía. De los 100 pasajeros de su nave un porcentaje mayor al 75% era de este origen. Entre ellos se encontraba su hermana, su cuñado Rodríguez de Matos y todos sus hijos entre ellos Luis de Carvajal El Mozo” Alicia G. Backal, *Raíces criptojudías de Nuevo León, Cuaderno de Investigación No. 6*. (Ciudad de México: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazi de México, 1996), 12, 18.

profession whatsoever”.⁴²⁰ Ilan Stavans writes that Luis “was born in Benavente, in northwestern Spain, in 1566 as Luis Rodríguez Carvajal. He traveled to what would become Mexico (he calls it “Occidental India”) at the age of fourteen with his family, including his maternal uncle, Luis de Carvajal the Elder”.⁴²¹ If Luis indeed travelled to Mexico at age fourteen, then it is highly plausible that Luis was thirteen when he began to acquire a cryptoJewish identity through that conversation he had with his father. Whatever his age, there is no question that it was a critical moment in Luis’s life—at which Luis became a son of the commandment—by learning Torat Moshe—the Law of Moses.

By contrast, if a child was too young, they were not introduced to their cryptoJewish identity. Anica Carvajal was the youngest member of the Carvajal family. According to Luis de Carvajal, she was not taught the Law of Moses because of her young age. Luis comments that he would not say the name of G-d in Hebrew when Anica was present: “and that to Anica this one [referring to Luis] did not teach the aforementioned Law of Moses because she was a young girl except that in the company of this one and the aforementioned his mother and sisters she sang the aforementioned songs and prayed the aforementioned Jewish prayers...and as such when in the aforementioned prayers the name of G-d was pronounced in Hebrew name [he] would not

⁴²⁰ “~Pregado como se llama de donde es natural que hedad y offo t^e. ~dixo que se llama luis de caravajal natural de la v^a de venavente e^ los reinos de castilla residente en mex^o moço soltero hijo de fran^co rodrig^z matos relaxado en estatua por este sancto offo y de doña fran^ca su muger recoçiliada en el por la guarda de la ley de moysen de hedad de treinta años poco mas o menos y que no tiene offo ninguno”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 125.

⁴²¹ Ilan Stavans, *The Return of Carvajal A Mystery* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019), 2.

say it in Hebrew out of love for the aforementioned Anica. “And that to Anica this one [referring to Luis] he did not teach the mentioned Law of Moses because she was a young girl except that in the company of this one [referring to Luis] and that of the mentioned his mother and sisters she sang the mentioned songs and said the mentioned Jewish prayers...and thus when in the mentioned prayers the name of G-d in Hebrew was mentioned, this one did not say it in Hebrew out of love for the mentioned Anica”.⁴²²

Children as young as Anica would not hear Hebrew spoken in prayers and would have a limited knowledge of the Torah. She would sing along with her mother and sisters but would not be aware of her Jewish identity because she was too young. One can assume that Anica was not yet twelve—age in which girls were considered adult women. While during Early Modernity, this age was not yet instituted as the age for girls to become Bat Mitzvah (daughter of the commandment) in the same manner that boys become Bar Mitzvah at age thirteen, it was still a

⁴²² “y que a anica este no le enseñó la dh^a ley de moysen por ser muchacha mas de veer que en compañía de este y de las dh^as su madre y hermanas cantaba los dh^os canticos y rezaba las dh^as oraçiones judaicas... y assi quando en las dh^as oraçiones se mentaba a dios en nombre hebrayco no lo dezia este en hebrayco por amor de las dh^a anica”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 45.

coming of age for girls where they would have joined the community as full-fledged members.⁴²³ In addition, perhaps Anica was not taught the name of G-d in Hebrew in order to protect her from the Inquisition. Luis implicitly referred to this protection when he admitted that “out of love” he purposely omitted saying the name of G-d in Hebrew when Anica was present. A third possible reason for not teaching Anica the name of G-d in Hebrew was distrust. Due to her young age, Luis may have feared that Anica would not keep their identity a secret and consequently be discovered and arrested by the Inquisition—which unfortunately occurred, despite his precautionary measure.

Declarations of Being Jewish

Once conversos were old enough to learn about their cryptoJewish identity, they communicated this identity to others in their community. However, they did not identify as conversos who were cryptoJewish, but simply as Jewish, and surprisingly, this identity was upheld by Jewish law during the sixteenth century. Matt Goldish draws attention to this fact by stating that “Iberian *conversos*, many of whom felt themselves to be Jews in some spiritual sense if not in practice. Jewish law declares that “a Jew, though he or she sins, remains a Jew.”

⁴²³ “The term bat mitzvah occurs only once in the Talmud (BK 15a), in reference to the time a girl becomes subject to the obligations of Jewish law incumbent on adults. While Avot 5:21 asserts that 13 is the age of adult responsibility, Niddah 5:6 rules that the vows of a girl who is 12 and one day are deemed valid, as are the vows of a boy who is 13 and one day...It is not until the 19th century that indications of ceremony or public recognition come from Italy, Eastern and Western Europe, Egypt, and Baghdad...Bat mitzvah as a female ceremony equivalent or identical to the male bar mitzvah is not found until the middle of the 20th century and is an American innovation.” Encyclopaedia Judaica, “Jewish Practices & Rituals: Bar/Bat Mitzvah”. Jewish Virtual Library, The Gale Group, 2018, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/bar-bat-mitzvah>.

Escaped *conversos* now living as Jews also took this very much to heart”.⁴²⁴ In his testimony against his brother-in-law, Antonio Díaz de Cáceres, Luis told inquisitors, “I know that he is Jewish and that he keeps and believes in the aforementioned Law of G-d Antonio Diaz de Caçeres my brother in law because...he declared himself to me and with my mother doña Francisca de Carvajal Balthasar Rodriguez and with my aforementioned sisters doña Ysabel and doña Catalina his wife doña Mariana and doña Leonor and amongst ourselves we discussed when we had declared ourselves in his home in this city...how we took for idols all the images of the Christians and we believed G-d to be one and not triune and the Messiah not yet come”.⁴²⁵

Sometimes entire converso families declared their identity with each other. Costança Rodriguez described how her aunt and cousin declared their identity with the Carvajals, by telling inquisitors that they “communicated and declared with one another how they were Jewish and kept the Law of Moses which was the good Law and the one in which men were to be saved”.⁴²⁶ The declarations of these two families, as well as that of Antonio with the Carvajals

⁴²⁴ Matt Goldish. *Responso on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period*, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press), 2008, 99-100.

⁴²⁵ “yten se que es judio y que guarda y cree la dh^a ley de dios Ant^o diaz de caçeres mi cuñado porque.. se declaró conmigo y co^ mi madre doña fran^ca de carvajal balthasar rodríg^z y con las dh^as mis hermanas doña ysabel y doña cat.^a su mujer doña mariana y doña leonor y entre todos tratamos quando nos declaramos e^ su cassa en esta çudad...como teniamos por ydolos todas las ymagenes de los xpi^anos y creiamos ser dios uno y no trino y no haber benido el messias”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 92.

⁴²⁶ “communicaron y declararon uno con otros como heran judios y guardaban la ley de moysen la qual era la ley buena y en que los hombres se habian de salvar.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 189.

can tell us a great deal about their cryptoJewish rationale (and here I mean their reasoning for keeping a Jewish identity and practices, as well as cryptoJewish rituals they understood to be Jewish).

To begin with, they admitted their secret Jewish identity only when there was reciprocity. Luis was certain that Antonio was Jewish because Antonio had confided in Luis, his mother, sisters and brother. In turn, Antonio knew that Francisca and her children were Jewish because they had shared their Jewish identity with him. Costança had apparently witnessed her cousin Justa and aunt Clara declare to the Carvajals that they followed the Law of Moses, and they in turn, had reciprocated the declaration. Only after they declared their Jewish identity or that they followed the Law of Moses to each other did they share their common belief about the oneness of G-d and disbelief of Christian images, that the Law of Moses was the good one and the means by which one would be saved.

Like a continuation of their cryptoJewish Bar/Bat Mizvah, these declarations allowed conversos to be recognized by others in the converso community as Jewish. Pilar Huerga Criado explains this need for community in the following manner: “Since any exteriorization of their loyalty to the Law of Moses was extremely dangerous, they reduced it noticeably, but did not quit sharing them, always in the sphere of secrecy. The secret with which they protected each other defined a closed space that bordered on the outskirts of comradeship, in whose interior they communicated, giving each other mutual affirmation of their faith and reassertion of it. They

called this act <<declaring to each other>> and with it, they renewed day by day their commitment to belong to the Mosaic community”.⁴²⁷

These declarations also enabled conversos to express their cryptoJewish understanding of G-d, the Messiah, and the images that Christians worshipped (more on these topics in the next subsection titled CryptoJewish Beliefs). In accordance to Jewish reasoning, G-d is one. Conversos could have readily learned this concept from the *Shema*—a Jewish prayer that declares the oneness of G-d, found in Deut. 6:4—as we have seen in the previous section. As for the Messiah, Luis declared the Messiah had not yet come in agreement with Jewish understanding, even though this reasoning stood in opposition to Christian claims that the Messiah had already come, and that it was Jesus. And lastly, Luis identified Christian images as idols, in agreement with the Jewish understanding of the Torah, specifically, the Ten Commandments where G-d forbids making images of any kind.⁴²⁸

Declarations also permitted conversos to give meaning to their actions. Josef Kaplan, for instance, writes about how Gonzalo Luis and Manuel Sarmiento (who by the way, were also

⁴²⁷ “Como cualquier exteriorización de su fidelidad a la ley de Moisés entrañaba un grave riesgo, las redujeron notablemente, pero no renunciaron a compartirlas, siempre en el ámbito de la clandestinidad. El secreto con que se protegían delimitaba un espacio cerrado y marginal de sociabilidad en cuyo interior se comunicaban, dándose mutuo testimonio de su fe y reafirmando así en ella. A ese acto lo llamaban <<declararse>> y con él renovaban día a día el compromiso de pertenecer a la comunidad mosaica”. Pilar Huerga Criado, *En la raya de Portugal: Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1993), 188.

⁴²⁸ “I יהוה am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage: You shall have no other gods besides Me. You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth.” “Exodus 20 The Contemporary Torah, JPS, 2006”, Sefaria, accessed on 3 november, 2022, <https://www.sefaria.org/Exodus.20.4?lang=bi&with=About&lang2=en>.

relatives, just like Antonio with the Carvajal family) fasted first and verbalized their identity afterwards.⁴²⁹ If we interpret this fast to be the Yom Kippur fast, or the cryptoJewish fasts conversos readily performed, then Gonzalo and Manuel declared their cryptoJewish identity after carrying out a Jewish custom (or one they understood to be Jewish). Whether declarations occurred first as it happened with Antonio and the Carvajal family, or after carrying out a cryptoJewish practice, like Gonzalo and Manuel, conversos manifested their secretly Jewish identity with each other. Kaplan observes that, “they each acknowledged to the other that they were observers of the Law of Moses.’ Such was, indeed, the normal procedure amongst many Spanish and Portuguese crypto-Jews. In moments when they were alone and conscious of their intimacy, they would pour out to each other the substance of the faith that they kept locked away in their hearts, thereby strengthening each other’s resolve by mutual revelation of their hidden identity”.⁴³⁰

While declarations of Jewish identity were common, declarations of how they kept the Law of Moses was sometimes preferred. Francisca, Luis, Ysabel, Mariana Catalina and Leonor de Carvajal shared how they followed the Law of Moses with Clara Henriquez and Clara in turn, shared with the Carvajal women how she kept it. By exchanging the ways each one followed the Law of Moses, the Carvajal's and Clara expressed their Jewish identity through their actions. “~Asked [referring to Clara] how they declared themselves the mentioned doña Francisca de Caravajal Luis de Caravajal doña Ysabel doña Mariana doña Catalina and doña Leonor ~she said

⁴²⁹ Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 39.

⁴³⁰ Kaplan, Josef. *From Christianity to Judaism The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*. (Oregon: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. 2004), 39.

that they did not say more to this one [Clara] about how they kept the Law of Moses, and this one [Clara] told them how she also kept it”.⁴³¹

An Implied CryptoJewish Identity

Although Conversos spoke of identifying another converso by explicitly telling each other that they were Jewish, that they followed the Law of Moses, or how they followed the Law of Moses, sometimes conversos spoke of an implicit understanding. When asked by inquisitors if a group of conversas had told each other that they followed the Law of Moses, Luis de Carvajal said it was not necessary to tell each other of their identity.

~Asked what other things of the Law of Moses occurred between this one [referring to Luis] and the mentioned his mother Francisca de Caravajal, doña Ysabel, doña Mariana doña Catalina doña Leonor and Annica his sisters and Clara Henriquez and Justa Mendez her daughter and Constança Rodriguez and if it was declared how the said Law of Moses was kept and how did each one of them keep it and believe and were Jewish. ~he said that nothing more than what he has said happened and that he does not remember that they told each other how they were Jewish and kept the Law of Moses in particular be

⁴³¹ “~Preguntada como se declararon las dh^as doña fran^ca de caravajal luis de caravajal doña ysabel doña mariana doña cat^a y doña leonor ~dixo que no dixeron mas a esta de como guardaban la ley de moysen y esta les dixo como la guardaba tanbie^”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 183.

cause there was no need of more declarations since they were all Jewish women and kept the Law of Moses and this one [referring to Luis] knew it before for having declared himself with them and they with him...and between Jews no other declaration is necessary than having been known as such and have discussions with each other so that even a discussion about some step of the Law that G-d gave to Moses would be enough for a declaration like it occurs among Christians that discuss with each other about the Law of Jesus Christ it is not necessary for them to say expressly that they are Christians in order to be understood.⁴³²

Luis explained to inquisitors that sometimes, declarations were unnecessary—all that was needed was to have a conversation about the Torah—in order to know who was Jewish (let us recall that conversos like Luis identified as Jewish). Sometimes all it took was knowing a story from the Torah (Law of Moses). Luis de Carvajal for example, identified Domingo Cuello, an

⁴³² “~Preguntado que otras cossas pasaron mas de la ley de moysen entre este y las dh^as su m^e doña françisca de caravajal doña ysabel, doña mariana doña catalina doña leonor y annica sus hermanas y clara henriq^z y justa mendez su hija y costança rodriguez y si se declaro^ como se hazia aquello en guardar de la dh^a ley de moysen y las unas con las otras como la guardaban y creian y eran judías. ~dixo que no passo mas de lo que tiene dh^o y que no se acuerda que en particular dixesen las unas a las otras cómo heran judías y guardaban la ley de moysen porque no habia neçezidad de mas declaraçion pues todas eran judías y guardaban la ley de moysen, y lo sabia este de atras por haberse declarado con el y el con ellas...y entre los judíos no es menester mas declaraçion de haberse conosçido por tales y tratadose para que aunque se trate de algun passo de la ley que dio dios a moysen vaste para declaraçion como aconçeçe entre los xpi^anos que trando unos con otros de la ley de jesux^po no es menester para que se entienda que son xpi^anos que lo digan ellos con palabras expressas”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 79.

impoverished Portuguese converso, as Jewish because he shared the story of Joseph with him while Luis de Carvajal in turn, shared Psalms 102 and 103 with Domingo. “[A] certain Portuguese Domingo Cuello was also there native of Braga as he understands it [a] poor man who knows he is Jewish and keeps the Law of Moses because they both declared it to each other...~he said that Domingo Cuello told this one [referring to Luis] some reminders of when Joseph was sold by his brothers and this one [referring to Luis] told him Psalm 102 and 103 in rhyme.⁴³³

Indeed, many conversos knew the Torah (Law of Moses) and utilized their cryptoJewish rationale to understand it in a manner that differed from the way conversos who were not secretly Jewish interpreted the Torah. Let us investigate a conversation between Francisca de Carvajal and her friend Susana Galvan. In her second trial, an acquaintance of Francisca de Carvajal— Susana Galvan— testified against her, saying, “that she has noticed that she never mentions Jesus Christ nor Our Lady but one G-d...it has also happened to her that talking about the incarnation of our Lord that she would look at her shaking her head and she would not say a word”.⁴³⁴

⁴³³ “estaba tambien allí un domingo cuello portuges natural a lo que entiende de braga hombre pobre el qual domingo cuello sabe este que es judio y guarda la ley de moysen porque se declararon ambos...~dixo que el domingo cuello dixo a este algunos apuntamientos de quando joseph fue vendido por sus hermanos y este le dixo los psalmos çiento y dos y çiento y tress en metro”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folios 148-149.

⁴³⁴ “yten dixo que ha reparado esta que nunca nombra a Jesuxpo^ ni a nra^ s^a sino a un solo dios...ha aconteçido tambien a esta tratando de la encarnaçion de nro^ señor que la miraba meneando la cabeça y no le respondian palabra”. Ibid, folio 6.

Francisca mentioned “one G-d” to Susana because she believed in the oneness of G-d according to her cryptoJewish reasoning—which aligned with Jewish thought, as previously mentioned. Her declaration of “one G-d” recalled the *Shema* prayer: “Hear O’ Israel, the Lord is our G-d, the Lord is One”—from Deut. 6:4 (see more on the *Shema* prayer in chapter three).⁴³⁵ On the other hand, Susana Galvan’s reaction to Francisca’s adherence to “one G-d” and her critique that Francisca would never mention “Jesus Christ” nor “Our Lady” demonstrated that she understood Deut. 6:4 differently than Francisca. For Susana Jesus Christ and Our Lady were both objects of worship, and the idea of Francisca’s “one G-d” was apparently foreign to her.

Building a Crypto-Jewish Rationale

Through Explicit Instruction

A cryptoJewish rationale was pivotal for secret Jews like Francisca and her family, because it was the means through which they understood their world (or more accurately, how they the Jewish traditions and cryptoJewish practices they perceived as Jewish). While many conversos in New Spain were Portuguese and acquired a cryptoJewish identity when they were children in Portugal or Spain (around Bar Mitzvah age, as we already mentioned), some continued to forge this identity by developing a cryptoJewish rationale. After repeated visits to the torment room where he was tortured, Luis de Carvajal confessed the names of all the people he knew for certain or that he suspected kept the Law that G-d gave Moses in New Spain. When

⁴³⁵MJL. *The Shema*. My Jewish Learning. 2002-2020.<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-shema>. Accessed 2 Feb. 2020.

Luis de Carvajal spoke about Antonio, the brother of Sebastian Rodriguez, he pointed out that Antonio continued learning the Law of Moses at the Colegio Santiago (Tlatilulco School).

According to Luis, “a brother of the mentioned Sebastian Rodriguez who is called Antonio that drowned this one [referring to Luis] affirmed him in the Law that G-d gave Moses at the Colegio de Santiago Tlatilulco in private because he was already somewhat learned in the mentioned Law and by the instruction of the mentioned Sebastian Rodriguez his brother and his wife Costança Rodriguez”.⁴³⁶ Since his first Inquisition trial in 1590, Luis worked at the Colegio as part of his sentence, and taught native Mexicans to read, among other tasks.⁴³⁷ Cohen explains “Fray Pedro told the family that he would have Luis permanently removed from the convalescent hospital and transferred to the Colegio de Santa Cruz. There Luis would serve as a teacher of the Indians and as Fray Pedro’s personal secretary, helping him with his sermons and research.” But most importantly, at the Colegio, Luis had access to Jewish texts like Maimonides’ Thirteen Articles of Faith.

Then Fray Pedro asked Luis to prepare a collection of illustrative material from the fa

⁴³⁶ “un her^no de El dh^o sebastian rodriguez que se llama antonio que se ahogo al qual antonio le afirmo este e^ la ley que dio Dios a Moysen en el colegio de santiago tlatilulco a solas porque ya el estaba algo instruido e^ la dh^a ley y por ensenança de el dh^o sebastian rodriguez su hermano y su mujer costança rodriguez”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 75.

⁴³⁷ “Fray Pedro told the family that he would have Luis permanently removed from the convalescent hospital and transferred to the Colegio de Santa Cruz. There Luis would serve as a teacher of the Indians and as Fray Pedro’s personal secretary, helping him with his sermons and research.” Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 198.

mous sixteenth-century commentary to the Pentateuch written by Dominican Jerome Oleaster and first published in its entirety in 1569...a distinctive feature of this commentary is its reliance on posbiblical Jewish sources. These included Moses Maimonides' Thirteen Articles of the Faith, "unknown and unheard of in lands of captivity," as Luis was to say, referring to the territories where Judaism could not be openly professed.⁴³⁸

Stavans affirms that Luis wrote his autobiographical text while teaching at the Colegio de Santiago. "Luis wrote the original in tiny letters in a small black notebook measuring 9x15 centimeters (approx. 4x6 inches), while teaching at the Franciscan College of Santiago de Tlatelolco between 1590 and 1595".⁴³⁹ Antonio already knew the Law of Moses—we can assume he had a cryptoJewish Bar Mitzvah like Luis—and he advanced in his knowledge of Torah at the School of Tlatilulco. Despite it was a Christian institution (as were all institutions in New Spain), it became a type of secret Talmud Torah (Torah School). Martin Cohen expounds on the Colegio de Santiago as a place for Jewish learning: "Luis had all the freedom he could

⁴³⁸ "Then Fray Pedro asked Luis to prepare a collection of illustrative material from the famous sixteenth-century commentary to the Pentateuch written by Dominican Jerome Oleaster and first published in its entirety in 1569...a distinctive feature of this commentary is its reliance on posbiblical Jewish sources. These included Moses Maimonides' Thirteen Articles of the Faith, "unknown and unheard of in lands of captivity," as Luis was to say, referring to the territories where Judaism could not be openly professed." Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 201-202.

⁴³⁹ "Luis wrote the original in tiny letters in a small black notebook measuring 9x15 centimeters (approx. 4x6 inches), while teaching at the Franciscan College of Santiago de Tlatelolco between 1590 and 1595". Ilan Stavans, *The Return of Carvajal: A Mystery* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019), 65.

wish for in the colegio. He could entertain visitors at the school and travel almost at will within a generous radius from Mexico City...But the greatest wonder was the way in which, under Luis's guidance, the colegio became the underground headquarters for the secret Jews of New Spain. Many of the leading Judaizers of the colony came to visit him there, including his old friends Manuel de Lucena and Antonio Díaz Márquez, and his cousin, Gonzalo Pérez Ferro; and they brought along many other Judaizers for Luis to meet and counsel".⁴⁴⁰

Luis' testimony allows us to understand how cryptoJews like Antonio developed a cryptoJewish rationale. Antonio first learned the Law of Moses from his brother Sebastian and sister-in-law Costança, and when Antonio died, he continued to learn from other conversos like Luis. The fact that Costança taught Antonio alongside her husband Sebastian indicates that cryptoJewish women both possessed and passed on a cryptoJewish rationale to others.

Building a Crypto-Jewish Rationale Through Song

While some conversos advanced in their cryptoJewish reasoning for keeping Jewish traditions (or cryptoJewish practices they understood as Jewish) from direct instruction like Antonio, others developed it from songs. Luis admitted to teaching his mother a song that prompted her to abstain from eating anything cooked over a fire on the Sabbath (for more information on the song, see chapter three): "it is true that the mentioned doña Francisca his

⁴⁴⁰ Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 204.

mother for greater devotion did not want to eat on that day anything that would have gone to the fire for having this one [referring to Luis] told all of them this precept in the following four-line stanza”.⁴⁴¹ Through this song, Francisca and her daughters learned—or at least were reminded—that it was forbidden to light a fire on the Sabbath because it was a day to rest.

A CryptoJewish Rationale

The *Shema* Prayer

More important than Leonor’s actual execution of Jewish practices was the rationale she gave for carrying them out. Her reasoning was in a sense, comparable to Kavanah, or the sincere intention one must have when performing Jewish rituals.⁴⁴² As seen in chapter four, Leonor recited the *Shema* prayer in Hebrew to her inquisitors.⁴⁴³ She explained that the prayer said:

⁴⁴¹ “es verdad que la dh^a doña françisca su madre por mas deboçion no queria comer aquel dia cossa que hubiese llegado al fuego por haberles este dh^o a todas este precepto en esta copla siguiente.

~en todas vra^s moradas

fuego no ençendais

^l sabado que holgais

porque seran condemnadas

las almas si tal obrais”.

Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 70.

⁴⁴² “Kavvanah”. Enelow, in: Studies... K. Kohler (1913), 82–107; Scholem, in: MGWJ, 78 (1934), 492–518; Weiss, in: JJS, 9 (1958), 163–92; A.J. Heschel, Torah min ha-Shamayim be-Aspaklaryah shel ha-Dorot, 1 (1962), 168–9. 1998 - 2020 American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/kavvanah>. Accessed May 1, 2020.

⁴⁴³ Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56.

Hear Israel, your G-d's name is blessed forever and ever. Even though she did not translate the main part of the prayer, which is that G-d is One, the part that she did translate into Spanish illustrated that she knew what she was saying when she prayed in Hebrew. Most importantly, she expressed the meaning she assigned to the prayer by informing inquisitors that, "G-d commands [that they should] put their hearts in Him and not in idols".⁴⁴⁴ When Leonor said the *Shema*, she understood it as a useful reminder to choose G-d over idols.

A CryptoJewish Rationale

The Law of Moses

What inquisitors called the "dead law", referring to the Law of Moses, Luis defined as "the Law that G-d gave to Moses". He redefined the Law of Moses when admitting "doña Catalina and doña Leonor he knows that the mentioned Antonio Diaz Marquez keep the mentioned Law of Moses".⁴⁴⁵ If G-d gave Moses this Law, then it was G-d's law, and as such, deserved to be honored with the highest of distinctions. For this reason, in another deposition, Luis used a superlative to describe the Law: "in keeping of the most holy Law that G-d gave

⁴⁴⁴ "e^ la qual oraçion encarga dios y manda pongan sus coraçones en el y no e^ los ydolos". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 56.

⁴⁴⁵ "doña cat^a y doña leonor sabe que guarda el dh^o ant^o diaz marquez la dh^a ley que dio dios a moysen". Ibid, folio 141.

Moses”.⁴⁴⁶ Because it is G-d’s Law, Ysabel, in turn, reasoned that knowing the Law of Moses was equivalent to knowing G-d. When asked to testify what she knew about Antonio Díaz Márquez, she described him as “Jewish and [he] kept the mentioned Law of Moses and knew G-d”.⁴⁴⁷

Moreover, the Law of Moses was also understood to have a saving value in cryptoJewish thought. In her second trial, Leonor explained to inquisitors that she had returned to the Law of Moses because her brother Luis had persuaded her to return, insisting that she keep “believing in one G-d and in his Law given to Moses which was the true and good one and the one in which she would be saved and not the one of Jesus Christ”.⁴⁴⁸ Luis contrasted the Law of Moses with the Law of Christ, and argued that since the Law of Moses was the right one, it was the only one that could save.

The idea of salvation is a Jewish concept found throughout the Tanakh (The Bible). Let us take for instance, Hannah’s prayer—also included in Siddurim (Prayerbooks)— where she speaks of receiving G-d’s salvation: “I can now answer my enemies with my mouth full, for the entire reason for my happiness is the salvation that I have received from You”.⁴⁴⁹ Nevertheless,

⁴⁴⁶ “en guarda de la sanctissima ley que dio dios a moysen”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 68.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, folio 113.

⁴⁴⁸ “creyendo e^ un solo dios y e^ su ley dada a moysen que hera la buena y verdadera y la que se habia de salvar y no e^ la de jesux^po”. Ibid, folio 312.

⁴⁴⁹ “Ya puedo responder a boca llena a mis enemigos, pues toda la causa de mi alegría es la salvación que he recibido de ti.” Antebi, Ariel. *Siddur Bircat Shelomó*. Editorial Jerusalem de México, 2001, pg. 15.

Leonor and Luis' emphasis on the redemptive power of the Law of Moses over the Law of Christ was a cryptoJewish response—or so I propose—to the Christian claim on salvation.

David Nirenberg proposes that different faiths influence one another, as each faith creates the imaginary of the other faith, and defines its own faith in relation to the neighboring faith. Speaking about Judaism, Christianity and Islam during the Middle Ages, he described "a world in which the three religions are interdependent, constantly transforming themselves by thinking about each other in a fundamentally ambivalent form of neighborliness."⁴⁵⁰ Similarly, in Early Modernity, the cryptoJewish rationale that identified the Law of Moses as the true and only Law that saved emerged from a reaction against Christianity's view of salvation. Thus, if Christians claimed salvation could be gained through Jesus Christ's Law, then in cryptoJudaism, one could be saved by believing in one G-d alone and in the Law of Moses.⁴⁵¹

A CryptoJewish Rationale

The Sabbath

Inside the inquisition's secret jail, Ysabel de Carvajal provided a reasoning for keeping the Sabbath to another inmate she knew — Francisco Rodriguez—who was also a Portuguese and also accused of following the Law of Moses. Francisco, in turn, reported this to inquisitors: "she said that doña Ysabel said to him that [on] Saturday G-d rested from his works of creating

⁴⁵⁰ David Nirenberg, *Neighboring faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and today*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 4.

⁴⁵¹ "The concept of salvation is central to Christianity. From a historical perspective, the experience of Jesus as savior is the basis from which the Christian movement sprang. This religion arose and continues to exist because people experience Jesus as a bringer of God's salvation". Roger Haicht, S.J. "Jesus and Salvation: An Essay in Interpretation" *Theological Studies* 55, (1994): 225.

the world and that Saturday should be kept, and this is how he should keep it, and that he should keep it starting on Friday evening and this doña Ysabel told him because he wanted to sew a shirt that he had torn, doña Ysabel told him not to do it that it was not a night for this because the next day was Saturday and it should be kept starting Friday evening”.⁴⁵² After explaining that G-d rested on Saturday after creating the world and therefore, Ysabel reasoned that he should rest and not sew his torn shirt on Friday night (because the Sabbath was observed starting on Friday evening). Ysabel passed on her cryptoJewish rationale— which is also one of the reasons for observing the Sabbath in normative Judaism— or keeping the Sabbath to Francisco that day.

Hayyim Schauss points out that in normative Judaism, the Sabbath is analogous to circumcision: “Just as circumcision is, according to the Priestly Writings, the sign by which G-d made a covenant with Abraham, so the Sabbath is the external sign by which G-d made His eternal covenant with Israel, through Moses at Mount Sinai. Even G-d Himself submitted to the law of the Sabbath and rested on the seventh day when He created the world”.⁴⁵³ G-d’s Sabbath rest then, becomes the Sabbath rest for every Jewish person, because G-d and Israel share a covenant (a close relationship). Therefore, whatever G-d does, the Jewish community must also

⁴⁵² “dixo que la dha doña ysabel dixo a este que el sabado descanso dios de las obras de la creacion del mundo. Y que se avia de guardar el dh^o dia del sabado, y q^ assi lo guardasse este, y que la guarda del sabado avia de ser desde el viernes en la noche, y esto se lo dixo a este la dha doña ysabel a propossito que queriendo este coser el viernes en la noche su camisa que la tenia rota, le dixo la dha doña ysabel, que no lo hiziesse que no era noche de esto porque el dia siguiente hera sabado y se avia de guardar desde el viernes en la noche”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 160.

⁴⁵³ Hayyim Schauss. *Guide to Jewish Holy Days History and Observance*. trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1938), 8.

do. And since cryptoJews identified as Jews, Ysabel kept the Sabbath in conformity with priestly outlook.

A CryptoJewish Rationale About Christian Texts

Paradoxically, the Carvajal women would read Christian books for cryptoJewish inspiration (read more on cryptoJewish texts in chapter three). While the Inquisition deterred conversos from following the Law of Moses with incarceration, trials, and guilty verdicts that sometimes included the death sentence, the fact was that Christian texts celebrated Jewish historical characters for keeping the Law of Moses. For instance, according to Justa Mendez, the Carvajal women would listen to a reading of the life of Thobias—a late Jewish text found in the Catholic Bible.⁴⁵⁴ Tobit is described as an observant Jewish man who lived in exile but was careful to do good deeds and abstained from eating the food of the gentiles.

He runs into misfortune by turning blind and losing his fortune, but in the end, receives help from an angel and both his sight and fortune are restored. Besides the *Book of Tobit*, Mariana de Carvajal would read books on the lives of the prophets and of Queen Esther to encourage herself and other conversas like Justa Mendez and her sister Ysabel. She insisted that they also “look at the lives of those saints and miracles that G-d had done for those who kept his

⁴⁵⁴ Crawford Howell Toy, *Book of Tobit*, The Copelman Foundation, 2002-2011, Accessed on 1 September, 2022, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14422-tobit-book-of>.

Law”.⁴⁵⁵ Just like Tobit, the prophets and Queen Esther—all Jewish historical characters— so too Mariana, Justa, and Ysabel—cryptoJewish women—faced hardships but hoped to experience G-d’s miracles because they too followed G-d’s law.

A CryptoJewish Rationale

For Passover

While the members of the Carvajal family usually explained why they celebrated Jewish holidays, sometimes other conversos provided a rationale—which suggests that these conversos were also cryptoJewish. In Ysabel de Carvajal’s trial, Catalina Henriquez explained that Ysabel and her family celebrated Passover, “for keeping the Law of Moses in memory of [how] G-d freed the people of Ysrael from the power of Pharaoh and took them out of Egypt’s slavery”.⁴⁵⁶ Her explanation recalls G-d’s command to observe the Passover, “so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live”.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁵ "mirasse las vidas de aquellos sanctos y los milagros que dios avia hecho por los que guardavan su ley". Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 14.

⁴⁵⁶ “lo qual hizieron por guarda de la ley de moissen en memoria a que Dios libro el pueblo de ysrael del poder de pharaon y los saco del captiverio de Egipto.” Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 206.

⁴⁵⁷ “Exodus 16 The Contemporary Torah, JPS, 2006”, Sefaria, accessed on 3 november, 2022, <https://www.sefaria.org/Deuteronomy.16.3?lang=bi&aliyot=1>.

While memory, according to Henriquez, was the reason for the holiday, we should want to know what purpose memory served. Yosef Yerushalmi suggests that, “ancient Israel knows what G-d is from what he has done in history. And if that is so, then memory has become crucial to its faith and, ultimately, to its very existence”.⁴⁵⁸ If we can apply the importance of memory in Judaism to cryptoJudaism, then Passover allowed the Carvajal family to remember that G-d is a deliverer. Celebrating the holiday reminded them that G-d delivers from powerful oppressors like Pharaoh, and from slavery. As cryptoJews, this memory gave them hope that aG-d could deliver them from the Inquisition—though unfortunately, most of the Carvajal family were burned at an Auto de fe.

CryptoJewish Beliefs About The Messiah

Because the cryptoJewish community could not live openly as Jews in New Spain, they understood their existence as captivity. They saw themselves as slaves— forced to live as Christians—and were hopeful that the Messiah would come and free them from their bondage. On one of the many occasions Luis de Carvajal was sent to the torture chamber, he admitted to sharing about the coming of the Messiah with his mother Francisca, his sisters Ysabel, Catalina, Mariana, Leonor and Anica, as well as Clara Henriquez and her daughter Justa Mendez and also Costança Rodriguez. Speaking about these women conversas, the inquisitor scribe wrote: “they

⁴⁵⁸ Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 9.

heard well and agreed with what this one [referring to Luis] would tell them of the coming of the Messiah by whom and through whom G-d would liberate the people of Israel from slavery this one [referring to Luis] wrote the chapter of Joel".⁴⁵⁹

Although messianic expectation is a part of normative Judaism, the cryptoJewish women in New Spain were especially hopeful that what the prophet Joel wrote about the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of Israel would happen in their lifetime. This expectation was so well known that in an Edict of Faith—a document written by the Inquisition that instructed Christians about cryptoJewish beliefs so they could report anyone who performed such practices — it identifies those “Who wait for the Messiah or say that the Messiah promised by the Law has not come but is coming and who wait for him to remove them from the captivity in which they say they find themselves and who will take them to the promised land”.⁴⁶⁰

Seventy years after Francisca and several of her children were burnt at the stake by the Inquisition, this expectancy was still shared by some conversos in Spain. José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim notes that in 1666, conversos in Granada and Málaga, Spain, received news from France, Amsterdam and Livorno about the coming of the Messiah—Shabbatai Tzvi—from the Sephardic community of Smyrna.⁴⁶¹ Shabbati Tzvi was also regarded as the Messiah descending

⁴⁵⁹ “oian bien y concedian e^ lo que este les dezia de la benida de el messias para cuio efecto y que por medio suio habia dios de librar de captiverio al pueblo de ysrael leyo este el dh^o capitulo de joel”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 79.

⁴⁶⁰ David Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 625-627.

⁴⁶¹ José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, “A “world” in motion: Jews, Conversos and the Portuguese and Dutch Empires” in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 166-167.

from King David among the Sephardim in Morocco in 1675, while José ben Sur, as the Messiah descending from Ephraim.⁴⁶²

Rodriguez da Silva Tavim explains that “Noticeably all Moroccan *anussim*, i.e. the Jews forcefully converted to Catholicism in Spain and in Portugal, and their descendants... [had a] strong adhesion...to this Messiah”.⁴⁶³ Like conversos and Sephardic ex-conversos now living openly as Jews in 1666 and 1675, Francisca de Carvajal, her daughters, and other conversas in their community, were intensely hopeful that the Messiah would come and free them from the bondages of Christian New Spain. While Antonio Diaz Marquez expressed his sorrow for not being free to live as a Jew, these conversas expressed their hope that the Messiah would soon arrive and allow them to live openly as Jewish women.

CryptoJewish Beliefs

About Idols

Although Sephardic Jews take pride in their Spanish and Portuguese ancestry, in Early Modernity, they considered Spain and Portugal to be “lands of idolatry”. David Ruderman refers to the term “lands of idolatry” when he examines some conversos who return to them. “[S]o-called converso renegades who, after fleeing the Iberian Peninsula to the relatively free regions of the Netherlands and southern France, opted to return to the “lands of idolatry”—that is, to

⁴⁶² Ibid, 168.

⁴⁶³ Ibid, 168-169.

their places of origin...to Spain and Portugal”.⁴⁶⁴ Yosef Kaplan refers to ‘terras de idolatria’ as the name given by the members of the Sephardic Diaspora to the Iberian Kingdoms, and indeed to all the Catholic countries where Judaism was prohibited”.⁴⁶⁵ Jews were not able to (re)settle and live freely as Jews in these lands or their colonies. Moreover, the name “lands of idolatry” imply that many idols were worshiped in these lands.

Living under bondage—as New Christians—in the Spanish land of idolatry called Mexico, Francisca had an altar with the images of Christ, Mary and Magdalene. Nevertheless, she did not believe in what they represented. According to her cryptoJewish reasoning, these images were idols and she only believed in the G-d of Israel: “she would kneel to pray in the said altar but not believing that worship and reverence were owed to the said images nor what they represented because she took them for idols and she only called on the G-d of Israel”.⁴⁶⁶ Leonor—Francisca’s daughter—echoed her belief in one G-d alone. Leonor explained that for herself and her sisters, the statues of Christian Saints they owned were idols, and though she sometimes knelt before them because it was a requirement, in her heart, she only prayed to the G-d of Israel. “[A]nd that this one [referring to Leonor] and the mentioned her mother and sisters as idols that

⁴⁶⁴ David Ruderman. *Early Modern Jewry A New Cultural History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 35.

⁴⁶⁵ Yosef Kaplan. "Cristóbal Méndez, alias Abraham Franco de Silveyra: The Puzzling Saga of a Seventeenth-Century Converso", in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Firenze: Casa Editrice Giuntina, 2015), 20.

⁴⁶⁶ “se hincaba de rodillas a rezar en el dh^o altar pero no creyendo se debiese adoración y reverencia a las dh^{as} ymagenes ni a lo que representaban porque las tenia por ydolos y solamente se encomendaba a dios de ysrael”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 96.

were on the altar and if they prayed in it it was out of obligation praying to only one G-d of Israel in the innermost part of the heart”.⁴⁶⁷

Antonio Diaz Marquez whom we have read about previously in this chapter, confided in Luis and Balthasar—the Carvajal brothers— that he only believed in one G-d. When he went to church and bowed, he would tell himself that he did not believe in idols, rather, he only believed in the G-d of heaven. “~[A]nd the mentioned Antonio Diaz Marquez told this one [referring to Luis] and the mentioned his brother Balthasar Rodriguez that he believed in one only G-d and that when he went to Church as he knelt his knees he would say I do not worship nor believe in idols only in You G-d of heaven calling what Christians call the consecrated Host and the images that were in the Church idols”.⁴⁶⁸ Antonio, Francisca and Leonors’ declarations presented a duality between worship of idols and the G-d of Israel. Their cryptoJewish reasoning made it easy to choose: they opted to worship the G-d of Israel, while outwardly worshipping Christian statues.

⁴⁶⁷ “y que tenia esta y las d^has su madre y hermanas por idolos a las ymagenes que estaban e^ l d^ho altar y si rezaban en el hera por cumplimiento rezando a solo dios de ysrael e^ lo interior de el coraçon”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Segundo Proceso de Isabel de Carvajal Second Trial of Isabel de Carvajal. Negative Number 2841, BANC MSS 96/95m. I-5668, Volume 4, Reel 1, folio 64.

⁴⁶⁸ “~y el dh^o ant^o diaz marquez le dixo a este y al dh^o su hermano balthasar rodriguez que en un solo dios creia y que quando yba a la yglesia al hincar de las rodillas dezia no adoro ni creo en ydolos sino en ti dios de el çielo diziendo ydolos a la hostia consagrada que llaman los xp^ianos y a las ymagenes que estaban en la yglesia”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 76.

Conclusion

"With this ring, you are consecrated to me according to the law of Moses and Israel".⁴⁶⁹

In conclusion, while it is true that convert identities were diverse, Francisca and her family's Inquisition documents demonstrated that they were cryptoJewish (secretly Jewish) because they passed on a Jewish memory. Like the Portuguese Jews of the Middle Ages, Francisca de Carvajal, her family and friends preserved a form of Jewish memory through the performance of rituals, the creation of liturgy and prayer books, and the establishment of extra fast days. In chapter one, we identified some of these rituals like the Sabbath, Passover and Yom Kippur. Despite their disconnect from Judaism as New Christians, they strove to celebrate on the right day according to the Jewish calendar, with proper attire, traditional foods—except on Yom Kippur, where food was only eaten before and after the fast—and prayerbooks containing liturgical songs and prayers for the specific holiday. While many times conversos did not succeed in celebrating on the right day, their *kavanah* (intent) with which they tried to keep Jewish holidays is what mattered. By examining the minutes of the hearings, and the comments of the inquisitors on the margins, the confessions of converts and accusations of their friends and family, this dissertation studies with great detail the cultural and identity features of this persecuted minority group in New Spain. We can conclude that conversos preserved some

⁴⁶⁹ Aaron Philmus, "Jewish Wedding Rituals and Traditions", *Sefaria*, Accessed on 15 November, 2022, <https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/218421.34?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>.

Jewish liturgy and rituals, created new ones, and mined Christian sources for a true experience of cryptoJewish Judaism.

Francisca, her family and friends also established extra fast days on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Portuguese conversos in New Spain even added a day—Wednesday — compared to Spanish and Portuguese conversos in peninsular Spain that held extra fast days only on Mondays and Thursdays. And although identified these extra fasts as Jewish rituals—or in their words, in keeping with the Law of Moses—they were not part of normative Judaism. Other elements not part of normative Judaism were Christian texts and prayers. And yet, Francisca, her family and friends did not read the Christian Bible for the sake of religious syncretism—as I have argued—but in order to have read the Jewish writings found in the Christian Bible. Using Bible narratives, Portuguese conversos selected specific parts of biblical historiography in order to understand their present, just as the Jews of the Middle Ages. We saw, for instance, how they used the exodus from Egypt, and the return of the exiles from Babylon, to understand their present as cryptoJews in New Spain, where they had to live as New Christians. That being said, Luis de Carvajal did not use a certain Christian text on Yom Kippur because of its Jewish writings, for it contained none. Instead, he resorted to the prayers of this but because of their theme of repentance. Thus, while some Portuguese converso liturgy mirrored Jewish liturgy, others were newly created cryptoJewish liturgy that included Christian texts.

In chapter two, we identified cryptoJewish identities and rationales based on the choice of food preparations and food types—at least in theory more than in praxis. Yet fear of the Inquisition prevented Portuguese conversos in New Spain to adhere to Jewish eating practices.

Thus, while they knew what clean animals to eat—like those that chew the cud and have split hooves—they often ate unclean animals instead, primarily pork meat and products. Likewise, I argue that they knew about Jewish ritual slaughter but that they refrained from slaughtering their chickens out of fear of the Inquisition. There were, however, Jewish eating practices that the Carvajal family did, like bleeding and defatting their meat. Despite the constant fluctuation between keeping a Jewish eating practice or not for fear of the Inquisition, we can see that in general, Ysabel and her family knew them. And although they could have learned about these Jewish eating practices from the edicts of faith, another possibility is that as descendants of Portuguese Jews, conversos learned about these practices at home.

In chapter three, we identified the possible Sephardic origins of cryptoJewish prayers and songs, through examples from Spain, Portugal. We established that their transmission almost certainly was oral since there was no evidence that Ysabel and her family owned Jewish texts nor if they were transmitted among New Spain's cryptoJews. We continued with specific examples of cryptoJewish prayers like "Yotzer Or", the Shema, the Amidah and Yotzer Or as well as Sabbath songs like the nine canticos. Most importantly, we analyzed The Song of the Law of Moses. And although cryptoJewish prayers and songs bore a strong resemblance to Jewish texts—we saw this in their use of the Hebrew word for G-d—they also translated Christian texts from Latin into Romance (Portuguese or Spanish of the period).

Yet, the most significant aspect we have extracted from the trial documents of Francisca and her children was their cryptoJewish rationale, upon which all expressions of their identity was based. In essence, their cryptoJewish rationale was their reasoning for keeping Jewish identity and practices, as well as for keeping cryptoJewish rituals and liturgy they understood to

be Jewish—even though some of these rituals and liturgy were not part of normative Judaism. While not readily analyzed by scholarship, their cryptoJewish rationale is what led them to think of themselves as Jewish. It also allowed them to explain the meaning behind Jewish traditions—or customs they identified as Jewish—and some of their deeply held Jewish beliefs. As we have seen in chapter four, conversos acquired a cryptoJewish identity near and around Bar/Bat Mitzvah age.

During this coming of age period, conversos learned about their secretly Jewish identity and public declarations of being Jewish usually followed (and here I mean that they shared their Jewish identity with each other; among other cryptoJews within the converso community). Their Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience prepared them for a cryptoJewish way of thinking or rationale, because from that point on, they were instructed in the Law of Moses—which included observance of Jewish rituals and their corresponding liturgy. And not only did they keep Jewish rituals like the Sabbath, Passover and Yom Kippur with their corresponding liturgy, but they knew the reasons for observing them. They knew, for instance, that G-d rested on the seventh day, so they too had to rest, and that the Passover served to remember how G-d freed Israel from captivity in Egypt, and that Yom Kippur was the day when G-d forgave the sins of all Israel. This reasoning allowed them to observe Jewish holidays and traditions with intent or *kavanah*. Moreover, this rationale allowed them to explain their Jewish beliefs. For instance, they not only waited for the Messiah, but believed that He would come and free them from their captivity in the lands of idolatry (as we have already seen, this was the term used by Sephardic communities to identify lands where Jews were not allowed to live openly as such).

While we have analyzed how Francisca de Carvajal and her family, as well as other Portuguese conversos in New Spain, preserved a form of Jewish memory through rituals and liturgy, identity and rationale, we have not come across Jewish life cycle rituals. Except for the various versions of cryptoJewish Bar and Bat Mitzvah we determined in previous chapters, the Inquisition trial documents do not describe a brit milah or circumcision, a mikvah for purification, a huppah for a wedding ceremony, or a shiva or seven-day mourning ritual. When asked by inquisitors what else Leonor, her mother doña Francisca, and her sisters doña Ysabel, doña Mariana, and Anica did in observance of the Law of Moses, Justa Mendez replied that they did not perform any rituals because they were in captivity.

According to Justa:

~she said that because in captivity and to not be heard by the people of the house they did not do ceremonies of the Law of Moses that this one [referring to Luis] and his mentioned mother and sisters wanted but only the ones they could do well without being noticed like keeping the Sabbath in observance of the mentioned Law and sing the mentioned songs and pray the mentioned Jewish prayers locked up in the room of this one and the mentioned his mother doña Francisca doña Ysabel doña Mariana doña Leonor and Anica his sisters for which this one went in person to close with a lock the door of

the street”⁴⁷⁰.

Since their maids—or anyone else who came to their home—could denounce them to the Inquisition, Francisca, her son and daughters did not perform any life-cycle rituals. Justa’s rationale attested the Inquisition’s control over the lives of Portuguese conversos like Francisca, her family, and even herself. Charles Lea identifies the Inquisition’s control and argues that Spanish Jewry who became conversos, while appropriating Christianity, also gave the Inquisition jurisdiction over their lives.⁴⁷¹ While Lea referred to Spanish conversos in Spain before the expulsion of 1492, the same is true for the Portuguese Jewish community who was forced to convert in 1496, and their descendants, like Francisca and her family. In effect, Francisca and her family had reason to fear the Inquisition. For while Francisca, Luis, Leonor, Ysabel and Catalina were burnt at the stake in 1596, Mariana and Anica were sentenced to death in later years. After the death of her mother, brother, and three sisters, Martin Cohen presents a

⁴⁷⁰ “~dixo que como en captiverio y por no ser sentidos de la gente de cassa no hazian las ceremonias de la ley de moysen que este y las dh^as su madre y hermanas quisieran sino solamente las que buenamente podia hazer sin ser notadas como hera guardar los sabados en guarda de la dh^a ley y cantar los dh^os canticos y rezar las dh^as oraçiones judaycas encerrados en su aposento de este, este y la dh^a su madre doña fran^ca doña ysabel doña mariana doña Leonor y anica sus hermanas para lo qual yba este en persona a cerrar con candado la puerta de la calle”. Tribunal de la Inquisición en México. Mexican Inquisition Documents, Bancroft Library Special Collections, 1593-1817, 61v, Proceso de Leonor de Carvajal Trial of Leonor de Carvajal. Negative Number 2491, BANC MSS 96/95m. Reel 3, folio 44.

⁴⁷¹ The Spanish inquisition is founded in 1478 . It was proved by the Pope and Torquemada, Isabella’s personal priest, became in charge of heading the institution. In A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies., Charles Lea explains that in 1484, King Ferdinand wrote a letter to Torquemada, vesting the Inquisition with absolute power in Spain, making the Inquisition the power of the land. Henry Charles Lea, *A history of the inquisition of Spain and the inquisition in Spanish dependencies. Book III* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2011), 573.

Mariana that is no longer cryptoJewish, but a sincere Catholic. Notwithstanding, the Inquisition accuses her of relapsing into Judaism again, and sentence her to be burnt at the stake at the auto-de-fe of 1601. And as for Anica, Cohen identifies her as a secretly Jewish conversa, who, after having lived a long life, is again arrested and tried for judaizing. Anica was the last of the Carvajal family to suffer the Inquisition's jurisdiction. She is burnt at the stake like her mother and five of her siblings.⁴⁷² The Inquisition was thus feared because it sent a formerly cryptoJewish young lady turned a sincere Catholic to her death just as easily as a secretly Jewish sick and elderly widow.

And yet, we should not undermine the strength and cohesiveness of the Portuguese converso community in New Spain. For while the Inquisition was relentless at targeting Portuguese converso families like Francisca's—even if they truly adopted Christianity like Mariana—Stanley Hordes points out that, in 1634 and 1635, conversos maintained Jewish burial

⁴⁷² “On March 25, 1601, four and a half years after the holocaust that consumed her mother, brother, and three sisters, Doña Mariana Núñez de Carvajal followed them to the stake. She too was converted and garroted before her body was set afire, but in her case the conversion had been unimpeachably sincere...When her judgement was restored, Mariana later claimed, she returned wholeheartedly to the church. She regularly recited the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the credo, and the Hail Holy Queen and dutifully fulfilled all her obligations as a Catholic....By May 1600, after numerous inquiries and depositions had pointed to her recovery, the inquisitors proceeded to try Mariana on the charge of having relapsed into Judaism after her reconciliation to the church...Unmoved by Mariana's mental ordeals and unmindful of her sincere conversion and exemplary Catholic life since she regained control of her faculties, the Inquisition proceeded to sentence her to relaxation.” As for Anica, Cohen writes that, “Luis's sister Ana, now a dowager of close to seventy, was also among the victims of this auto-da-fé. After her reconciliation in 1601 she had married a merchant named Cristóbal Miguel. The couple had six children: Gaspar de Sosa, Tomás, Catalina, Mariana or María, Juana and Ana...in 1643 Ana had been arrested as a relapsed Judaizer. She languished in her cell for six years, adhering to her secret faith through prayer and fasting, unaware that spies were carefully observing her every move”. Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 259-261; 267-268.

practices. “Upon the death of a member of the community, the body was prepared for burial in the traditional manner whereby it was bathed, dressed in a shroud, and then placed in virgin soil”.⁴⁷³ And if they prepared the bodies according to Jewish custom, what was to stop them from observing a shiva or the seven-day Jewish mourning?

Alicia Gojman concurs with Stanley Hordes and affirms that the cryptoJewish community in New Spain possessed all the elements of Jewish living. They had a chavrah kadisha (fraternity to bury the dead), another group to visit the sick, and yet another for tzedaka (charity for the needy). Gojman specifies that, “Despite the nearly 150 years, after the expulsion from Spain, these Portuguese lived in a community with all the Jewish characteristics. In this way they had a group in charge of washing the dead and burying them, another to visit the sick, another to collect charity for the needy, etc. to the point of hiring a Rabbi that came from Italy from the city of Pisa and Livorno and that ended up being arrested by the Mexican Inquisition. In Inquisition documents there are references that in 1622, there was a synagogue in the Street of Donceles”.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷³ Stanley M. Hordes, “The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish Community in Colonial New Spain and New Mexico” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 211.

⁴⁷⁴ “A pesar de casi 150 años, después de la expulsión de España, estos portugueses vivían en una comunidad con todas las características judías. Así tenían un grupo de personas que se encargaba de lavar a los muertos y de enterrarlos, otro de visitar a los enfermos, otro de recabar donativos para los necesitados, etc. al grado de haber contratado a un rabino que llegó de Italia de la ciudad de Pisa y Livorno y que acabó siendo apresado por la Inquisición en México. En documentos de la Inquisición hay referencias, en 1622, de una Sinagoga en las Calles de Donceles.” Alicia Gojman Backal, *Cuaderno de investigación No. 9: La Inquisición en Nueva España vista a través de los ojos de un procesado Guillen de Lampart. Siglo XVII* (Mexico: Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí de México, 2000), 23.

In fact, notwithstanding the Inquisition's attack on Portuguese conversos in New Spain, and near annihilation of the Carvajal family—the only surviving Carvajal member in New Spain was Gaspar, a Catholic priest, and in Italy and Saloniki, Baltasar and Miguel, who lived openly as Jews, far from the 'lands of captivity'—Hordes points out that some of the converso community managed to escape the Inquisition.⁴⁷⁵ “There appears to be some strong historical evidence to substantiate the hypothesis that New Mexico was the locus of converso settlement... in the 1580's and 1590's several entradas, both official and unsanctioned, were initiated northward into New Mexico. There are indications that at least three of these expeditions might have been designed to allow crypto-Jews from central Mexico and Nuevo León to escape from the inquisitorial persecutions that centered on the Carvajals and their coreligionists”.⁴⁷⁶

The converso community knew that in 1589, the Governor was arrested, and his sister's family were first put on trial for following the Law of Moses. Therefore, Hordes highlights that “The following year, Carvajal's lieutenant governor, Gaspar Castaño de Sosa, led a hastily organized and unauthorized expedition of some 170 men, women and children northwestward out of Nuevo León, to the Pecos River, and upriver into northern New Mexico. Castaño's

⁴⁷⁵ “Luis de Carvajal's brothers also survived the holocaust of 1596. Fray Gaspar remained on in New Spain and was sufficiently well regarded by the Inquisition to be consulted on the future of his niece, Leonor. Baltasar and Miguel, alias David and Jacob Lumbroso respectively, were safely in Europe. Sometime before Luis was arrested as a relapsed heretic, he had received a letter from Baltasar informing him that Miguel “had gone to Salonika, near Constantinople, the city of the Turk, to study, and that he had become a great scholar in the Law of Moses and that he was a saint.” Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal: A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 265.

⁴⁷⁶ Stanley M. Hordes, “The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish Community in Colonial New Spain and New Mexico” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 213.

mission did not receive the authorization of the royal officials in Mexico City, and thus was considered to be illegal”.⁴⁷⁷ In 1590, the year in which this unauthorized expedition took place by Carvajal’s lieutenant governor, the Inquisition released Francisca, her son and daughters—albeit with sentences that included loss of all assets, house arrest, wearing a Sambenito or punishment garment, among other punishments.⁴⁷⁸ Since Gaspar Castaño de Sosa and the 170 men, women and children of Nuevo León likely knew that when the Inquisition persecuted Portuguese New Christians, it targeted the entire Portuguese converso community, they fled northwestward. In retrospect, we know that Castaño made the right decision, because in 1595, the Carvajal family was arrested for a second time, and sentenced to death for following the Law of Moses.

However, some members of the Portuguese converso community that fled to New Mexico must have survived, so that, in Hordes’ words, “Today, in the former Spanish frontier province of Nuevo México, it appears that a small remnant of these crypto-Jews is just beginning to emerge from the shroud of secrecy that has protected it for two dozen generations. Stories of

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ As an example of the punishments given, Martin Cohen writes rhetorically about Luis’ sentence: “Luis knew what lay in store for him if he were arrested by the Inquisition. His possessions would be sequestered. He would be thrown into its prison to wait for his case to be brought to trial...If he repented and abjectly renounced his Judaism, he would be sentenced to undergo the usual onerous penance. Attired in a sleeveless, knee-length yellow penitential cloak known as a sambenito, or “holy sack,” he would be marched from the inquisitorial prison to the cathedral for the ceremony of sentencing, piously called an auto-da-fé, or act of faith. There he would doubtless hear a tripartite sentence imposed upon him. It would include a fine involving a considerable percentage of his residual estate after the cost of the imprisonment and the trial. It would entail a spiritual penalty, such as marching in religious processions barefoot and in his penitential garb. And almost certainly all this would be accompanied or preceded by a period of labor, perhaps even at the galleys.” Martin Cohen, *The Martyr Luis de Carvajal A Secret Jew in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 9-10.

Hispanic Catholic residents in diverse parts of the state refraining from eating pork, lighting candles on Friday nights, and marrying only within certain families who perform the same customs have appeared with such regularity that they cannot be dismissed out of hand as anomalies”.⁴⁷⁹

If indeed these Hispanic Catholic residents of New Mexico keep the Jewish eating custom of not eating pork, and usher in the Sabbath by light candles on Friday nights—then we can affirm that the Portuguese conversos of New Spain succeeded in transmitting their cryptoJewish identity. Today, the descendants of those in the converso community that escaped the Inquisition by fleeing northwestward, are preserving a form of Jewish memory through rituals, despite the imprisonment and torture, loss of honor, assets, and life of other members of the community in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, like Francisca, Luis, Ysabel, Catalina, Leonor, Mariana, and Anica. May their memory be a blessing.

Though scholars have increasingly published on specific conversos in New Spain, like the Carvajal, and Rivera families, as well as individual stories of conversas like Justa Mendez Leonor de Carvajal, and Anna Vaez, there remain many other conversas who beckon discovery through their trial documents and other documentation. And while we have an idea of the large transatlantic community of conversos that reached China and Italy, as well as New Spain, we should want to know the extent of this network. Recent scholarship has followed the trail of the conversos brought to Nuevo León by governor Carvajal by investigating the escape to New

⁴⁷⁹ Stanley M. Hordes, “The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish Community in Colonial New Spain and New Mexico” in *Cultural Encounters The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 213.

Mexico of some of them, and analyzing the customs of their descendants. Along these same lines, we should want to ask what footprint, if any, have conversos left in Christian and Jewish communities. That is, what of their Jewish memory, their cryptoJewish customs, their cryptoJewish identity, rationale, and beliefs left a mark in New Spain's Christian society and in the Sephardic communities of Italy, Germany, Holland and France founded in large part by Portuguese ex-conversos. And we should want to know what historical, literary, musical and visual texts keep cryptoJewish marks of identity alive in the world.

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