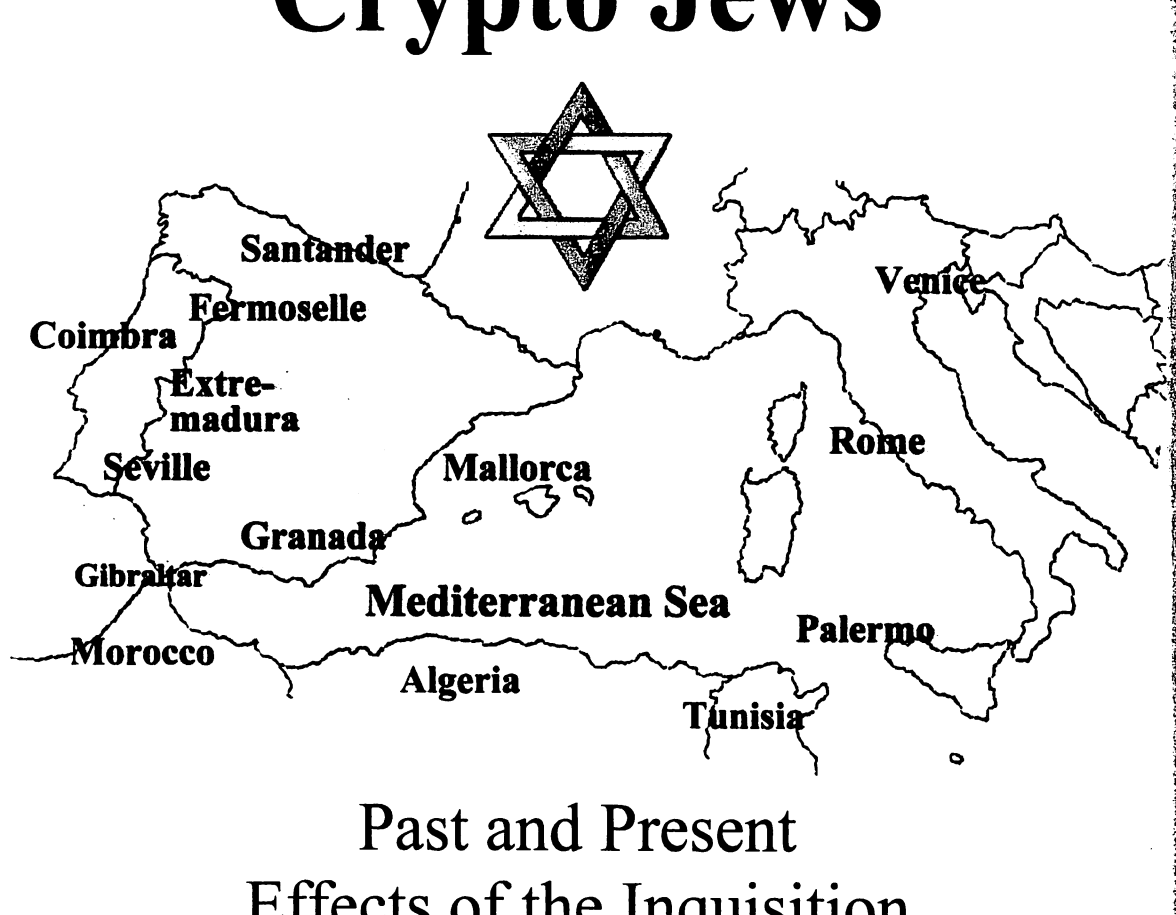
Journal of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Crypto Jews



Past and Present Effects of the Inquisition

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Welcome to Volume 4 of the...

Journal of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Crypto Jews, also known as ***JOSPIC-J***, a non-profit academic journal published annually by the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Florida International University, Miami, Florida, U.S.A.

JOSPIC-J's goal is to encourage and publicize scholarly research about the crypto Jews of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, and their many descendants today. We publish peer-reviewed articles and research reports, book reviews, and other academic literature.

Much appreciation is expressed to Dr. Kenneth G. Furton, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. John F. Stack, Director, School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), and Dr. Rod Neumann, Chair, Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies, for their support. Special appreciation also is expressed posthumously to Martin Sosin of the Martin Sosin-Stratton-Petit Foundation of Santa Monica, California, for his and their generous support. *JOSPIC-J* is co-sponsored by the Society for Crypto Judaic Studies, and much appreciation is expressed to the Society for its support and cooperation.

JOSPIC-J brings together, for the first time in a refereed academic journal, research on secret Jews in the three countries whose historic Jewish communities, each predating the Inquisition for centuries, suffered from, and were largely destroyed by, the Inquisition. In addition to Spain and Portugal, Italy is also included because it was under Spanish control. We continue to cover numerous geographical locations where crypto-Jews and their descendants have lived or live today. The crypto Jewish diaspora is large, and *JOSPIC-J* truly is an international journal. We are pleased to help further Florida International University's international global emphasis.

We continue our goal of having at least one bilingual article in each issue. This year, Milgrom's article, in Spanish and English, is a fascinating report on her research in the small town of Fermoselle, Spain, across the Douro River from Portugal. She traces her direct maternal line back fifteen generations to Fermoselle, and documents the presence of a pre-Inquisition Jewish community there.

Sephardic Jews and Muslims lived together in Iberia for almost 800 years, from the heights of the "Golden Age" to the depths of the Inquisition. Often Jews had more interactions with Muslims than with Christians, but so far this is a neglected part of crypto Judaic studies. Lavender and Aburadi use the culture, economics, and geography to

Personal communications:

Trans-Atlantic "Hebrew" and *Converso* Networks: Conquistadors, Churchmen, and Crypto Jews in the Spanish Extremadura and Colonial Spanish America

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Introduction

When Dr. Sabastian de Alarcon, the president, and judges of the *Real Audiencia* in the Andean city of La Plata received a letter on March 1, 1638, from King Felipe IV, they could not have been surprised by its contents and its claims. Within it, the king noted that an unnamed Inquisitional official had reported:

> In the Province of Tucuman [northern Argentina] there are many and innumerable Hebrews. They evaded [the official] before and now do so in growing numbers in these parts. Not only are they infected with their evil faith, but also defile our faith. And with boldness and great harm they have desecrated one of the churches and its religious images (ABNB, 1638, f. 1).

Accordingly, Felipe IV ordered, "The most efficient remedy to this rot and these actions is to establish a Tribunal of the Inquisition in one of the cities of the province" (f. 1). The king's instructions were clear – identity and eliminate the Jewish threat that now demeaned his Andean kingdom.

Among those royal officials in receipt of the monarch's correspondence was Dr. Juan de Carvajal y Sandi, a prominent emigre from Spain whose noble family of knights had served the Castilian crown since the Christian reconquest of Islamic Sevilla in 1248 (Fernandez, 1627, pp. 37-38; Garcia Carraffa, 1926, pp. 268-269). Carvajal's clan had radically redesigned itself during the early 15th century from lower noble knights into an elite contingent of royal administrators and ecclesiastical leaders through their intermarriage and intensive collaboration with other rising families, such as the Santa Marias of Burgos, Spain.

Charged with the responsibility of routing out Jews in colonial Bolivia and Argentina, Carvajal and his fellow administrators knew that the king's reference to "Hebrews" was a conventional euphemism for Portuguese *conversos*, or Jewish converts to Catholicism,

who had immigrated to and were conducting business in South America (Dominguez Ortiz, 1978, pp. 132-133). However, what Dr. Juan de Carvajal y Sandi nor other members of the *Real Audiencia* would publically admit was that king had addressed his letter to another group of Hebrews – many members of royal government. According to the normative beliefs of the period, Carvajal's clan was simultaneously a Catholic one in the public sphere, as well as a Jewish one in their private world. Here resides the dilemma of the history of Spain and the Sephardic Jews, with the added dimension of the destructive New World conquest. A surface interprettation leads one to conclude that the Carvajals lived as Catholics, but an intensive investigation into the panorama of their family relations, economic activities, and religious affinities suggests the clan continued to perceive of themselves as *conversos* (Jewish converts to Catholicism) whom were highly cognizant and attentive to their Jewish identities.

Interestingly, the Andean government, which would be led by Carvajal in less than ten years, responded to Felipe IV's instructions in the well-documented Spanish American administrative tradition of "I obey but I do not comply," by doing nothing. Exploring the significance of Felipe IV's conclusion that Jews needed to be flushed out from among the faithful in Charcas, and the *Real Audiencia's* decision not to implement an Inquisition, entails three tasks. These are: (1) understanding late medieval and early modern mentalities pertaining to the resilience of Jewish identities within *converso* populations, (2) conclusively establishing the genealogical ancestries of the Carvajal family and its affiliates in Spain and colonial Spanish America, and (3) evaluating the Carvajals' activities within the context of the Inquisitions' investigations of the clan. Not only will this process reveal that in most cases elite *conversos* successfully shielded and obscured their Jewish familial relations from prying Inquisitorial eyes, but they lived among and brushed shoulders with *Old Christian* (that is, Catholics with no Jewish or Muslim ancestors) elites.

Contextualizing Jewish and *Converso* Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods

During the last thirty years a new scholarship on the nature of identity and new details on the multifaceted nature of Spanish Jews and *conversos* has emerged. Stepping in the world of the *conversos* involves a careful disassembly of twenty-first century perspectives of what it means to be an individual and the role of group identities in defining a person's identity. By no means did "individuals" exist in

any recognizable form during this period – the medieval world did not surrender when Isabel and Ferdinand consolidated the disparate kingdoms into Spain nor when Cristobal Colon entered the Americas. Arriving in the world of the early 15th century places us definitely in the realm of strictly-defined religious identities that will subsequently fragment into hybrid notions of identity. Rather, Spanish social and religious norms transformed, tentatively, as the 16th century unfolded and in unexpected manners as Spaniards became increasingly embedded into the Americas.

Although it is difficult to ascertain exactly when and why *conversos'* social and religious position in society deteriorated, it likely was due to a series of mid-15th century events that began to cast them as outsiders in Castilian society. Those who considered themselves be Old Christians (*cristianos viejos*) increasingly viewed *conversos* as fundamentally different from themselves, and disparagingly referred to them as New Christians (*cristianos nuevos*). Elite *conversos* in particular became the focus of the wrath of Old Christians, especially when King Juan II relied on this group to implement unpopular measures, such as his efforts to raise taxes to fund the war with Islamic Granada. In 1448, when King Juan II turned to his *converso* advisor Alvaro de Luna to oversee the collection of 1,000,000 *maravedis* from the city of Toledo for the Andalusian war, the city's leaders and inhabitants revolted (Roth, 2002, p. 89). Not only did Pedro Sarmiento, the *Alcalde Mayor* of Toledo, lead the charge against Alvaro de Luna's hand-selected *converso* tax collector, Alonso Cota, but the mayor and an "angry mob" burned Cota's house down (p. 89).

Furthermore, from the mid-to-late 1400s, *conversos* became the focus of new forms of societal and institutionalized discrimination. In the aftermath of the 1449 riots in Toledo, the local city council implemented new blood purity (*limpieza de sangre*) ordinances to exclude *conversos* from prominent and profitable offices (Roth, 2002, p. 89; Gerber, 1992, p. 127).

Rising to the defense of his family and other *conversos* during this era was Bishop Alfonso de Cartagena He was the brother of Gonzalo Garcia de Santa Maria (former Bishop of Plasencia). Alfonso was a powerful voice for the fair treatment of *conversos*, arguing in a letter (known as *In Defense of Christian Unity* or *Defensorium Unitatis Christiane*) to King Juan II that not only were all Jews and Christians part of a common humanity, but that Jews who converted to Christianity were fully sanctified by the act of holy baptism (Cartagena, 1943, pp. 43-52). *Relator* Fernan Diaz de Toledo,

a fellow *converso* and royal secretary, extended the line of these arguments in his 1449 letter to his friend, Lope de Barrientos, Bishop of Cuenca (p. 343-356). Fernan Diaz stated that "sacred law" dictated that *conversos* and Old Christians were "brothers" (pp. 343-356). He further argued that Castilians held misguided positions on blood purity because Old Christian and Jewish families had heavily intermarried in the preceding decades.

During the 16th century these elite *converso* families used this religious ancestry issue as a mechanism to limit their competitors' aspirations. This was especially evident in the case of Cardinal Francisco Mendoza y Bobadilla's sensational text, *El Tizon de la Nobleza: O Maculas y Sambenitos de sus Linajes* (*The Stain of the Spanish Nobility: Or The Blemishes and Disgraces of Its Lineages),* a memorial published in 1560 that was a form of *converso* fratricide. After learning that his nephew would be denied the honor of entry into any of the three leading Christian military orders due to his Jewish ancestry, the cardinal penned *El Tizon de la Nobleza* as an indictment of the hypocrisy of the nobility (Mendoza y Bobadilla, 1880, p. 12). In the opening of his memorial, directed to King Philip II, the cardinal claimed that

> ...the knights, dukes, counts and marquises of the republic, those that illuminate the republic and who are the petals of the rose that all can see...in these noble hearts there is infamy and backbiting and scandal that separates them from the people (p. 57).

The ignobility that separated the nobility from the commoners was the "pollution" of most of the nobility with Muslim and Jewish ancestors. Accordingly, and now as the "sworn enemy until death" with those that denied his nephew, the cardinal proceeded to name the countless lineages that descended from Jews and Muslims (p. 12, 59). Among them were Extremaduran noble families such as the Dukes of Bejar (the Estuniga), sworn enemies of the Carvajal-Santa Maria family, and the Counts of Oropesa (the Alvarez), a lineage that the Carvajals intermarried with (p. 107, 121) in the 1400s. No noble family was spared as the cardinal methodically named most living high and minor nobles and added particularly inflammatory commentary that attacked every aspect of their status with entries such as, "The descendants of Ines Hernandez Estevez, the daughter of a Jewish convert and shoemaker" (p. 77). The cardinal's language aggressively sought to expose the humble and religious origins of everyone in his path. With this understanding of 15th century perspectives on religion

and ancestry, it is possible to enter into a discussion of identity during this era.

What is often absent from the retelling the history of the Sephardic Jews and *conversos* is a growing consensus among early modern historians about the fundamental shifts in social organization and personal identities during the late 15th and 16th centuries. In short, these social transformations were revolutionary because they shattered medieval religious identities (i.e. Jewish versus Christian), and replaced them with multilayered and overlapping categories (i.e. *converso*). During these centuries, "group" identity constructions fractured into "individualized" identities. Stephen Greenblatt, author of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, argues that the realm of the individual came to fruition and that in 16th century Europe "There were selves and they could be fashioned" (1980, p.1).

Greenblatt presents a compelling position that clarifies how the monotony of medieval group identities, such as Christian or Jewish ones, could birth new individual identities. Put simply, individuality created opportunities for great variability in identity. But, it would be inaccurate to suggest that any member of the Carvajal clan was by any means an "individual" as it is understood in this 21st century. Rather, the idea of individuality was far more nuanced and unusual than one imagines. Jacob Burckhardt, who authored the seminal text, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (1878)*, initiated historians' discussion of the issue of identity. He contended that early modern persons perceived themselves, unlike their medieval counterparts, as "spiritual individuals" distinctly separate from social groups. Greenblatt clarifies that these were not "expressive individuals", but rather persons that existed as "cultural artifacts" and who were fashioned by social institutions. In the case of the Carvajal family, they were an artifact generated by unique historical circumstances (i.e. Christian violence against Jews) and institutions, such as the Inquisition. In other words, *conversos*, who practiced hybridized Jewish and Christian beliefs, were a direct byproduct of these convoluted events.

Operating within the observations of Greenblatt and Burckhardt on the emergence of early modern identities, the Spanish *converso* issue is still unsatisfactorily resolved because of Spain's single-minded focus on group religious indentities. Perhaps due to the inflammatory language of the Catholic reconquest against Islam in southern Iberian, and persistent discrimination against Jews, the descendants of Spanish Jews were still confined by their religious ancestry. David Nirenberg reminds scholars that the period from 1391 to 1415 in Spain was characterized by mass Jewish "massacres,

conversions, forced disputations, and segregations,...[that] produced a violent destabilization of traditional religious identities." As a result, he posits that these events prompted Jews, Christians, and *conversos* to employ, "lineage as one means of reestablishing the integrity of religious categories of identity" (Nirenberg, 2002, p. 6).

Jane Gerber, an authority on the history of Sephardim, adds more complexity to the issue by arguing that the *converso* issue even engendered issues of race. She offers:

> Eventually, it became clear that the *converso* issue in Spain transcended lines of class, ideology, or religious faith. Even by the middle of the 15th century, there was simply no easy answer to the question of who was a Jew or a Christian. But for most of the population, the conviction began to spread that Jewish ancestry or 'race,' not professed religious belief, defined who was a Jew (Gerber, 1992, p. 127).

It is at the intersection of race, ancestry, and religion that we can begin to understand the perplex issue of Jewish cohesion after the Sephardic diaspora as well as the complicated reality of their descendants, the *conversos*. As the Sephardic community splintered, starting as early as the 1390s with the Spanish anti-Jewish pogroms, so did the traditional medieval Jewish group identity that itself was succumbing to broader social forces in Europe. By the opening of the 16th century, Sephardic Jews were no longer a homogenous group, but rather a collection of disparate and nascent social constructs. The Carvajals were a consequence of the unfolding of this multiplicity of identities.

Exposing The Ties that Bind: The Trans-Atlantic *Converso* Carvajal Family

An investigation of the Spanish Extremadura reveals that the Carvajal surname was one of the primary surnames utilized by a collection of interrelated *converso* families with mixed Old Christian and Jewish ancestries. The ties that integrated the Carvajal and Santa Maria families, perhaps the most important two clans in this network, is one that prior scholars have not documented and as such represents a significant finding that exposes the extent to which prominent Jewish lineages were successfully hidden within lesser noble Old Christian families. New evidence suggests that not only was there an intricate family confederation that directly interconnected the Carvajal and Santa Maria families, but this was a core hub of a robust *converso* network that originated from the Spanish Extremedura during the early 15th century. Key members of this amalgam of church leaders,

royal administrators, and knights turned conquistadors were the Almaraz, Alvarez, Bejarano, Burgos, Cabrera(o)s, Camargo, Cartagena, Carvajal, Cervantes, Fernandez, Galindez, Gutierrez, Maluenda, Sandi, Santa Maria, Trejo, Ulloa, Vargas, Villalva and Villalobos clans.

From the perspective of late medieval and early modern Spaniards, family and religious affiliations defined the mixed ancestry of the Carvajal-Santa Maria confederation. The Carvajals most likely hailed from Old Christian roots clearly identifiable from the Extremaduran towns of Plasencia, Trujillo, and Caceres during the 13th century, later expanded into Talavera de la Reina and eventually Sevilla near the 15th century. However, there are indications that arms of the Carvajal clan may have been very early Jewish converts to Catholicism as indicated by Yucef Carvajal, a member of the Jewish community in Burgos who in 1429 confirmed to Bishop Alfonso de Cartagena the rights of the local Jewish community in return for payment of religious poll taxes (AHCB, 1429, f. 424). This may have been the first encounter, familial or fraternal, of the rabbinic Ha-Levis of Burgos who would adopt the name Santa Maria (and Cartagena, Burgos, among other surnames) with their conversion to Catholicism in the late 14th century. The Santa Marias were the most influential ecclesiastical and royal bureaucratic families of the era and their reach extended well beyond Burgos — to the eastern peninsula (the community of Cartagena) and to the western frontier of the Extremadura (the town of Plasencia).

Plasencia and the Spanish Extremadura

Cementing an intricate family partnership as early as 1406, the Carvajals and Santa Marias shared family relations through intermarriage, as well as through shared extended relatives in the Spanish Extremadura. Collectively, during the 15th century the families operated as one, defending each other's economic interests, co-residing in personal homes, transferring property to-and-from each other, and sharing and hoarding ecclesiastical posts in the Cathedral of Plasencia for their two families and descendants (Martinez, 2008; 2009).

Native to the city of Plasencia were the Old Christian Carvajal clan. Spanish nobility genealogies argue that the Carvajal family of Plasencia was descended from the line of King Bermudo II of Leon (982-999) and through these noble origins they entered into knightly service (BRAH, n.d., f. 204v). Archival records at the Cathedral of Plasencia demonstrate that the Carvajals resided in the city as early as the end of the 14th century (ACP, 1406, no folio). But, according to

Friar Alonso Fernandez, a 16th century local historian of Plasencia, the Carvajals' arrived in the early 13th century. Specifically, Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal and his father resided in Plasencia and were in the service of King Ferdinand III (1217-1252). The two men participated in the king's military campaigns against the Iberian Muslims and reportedly attended to the king's mother, Dona Berenguela, as her stewards (*mayordomos*) (Fernandez, 1627, pp. 37-38; Garcia Carraffa, 1926, pp. 268-269). Further, after the reconquest of Sevilla (1248), Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal and his father retired to Plasencia where the family continued to reside as a minor noble clan of modest means up through the 14th century (Sanchez Loro, 1982, pp. 37-38).

During the 15th century, the Carvajals transformed themselves from lesser knights (*caballeros*) into influential church leaders and royal advisers, first serving Castilian King Juan II (r. 1406-1454) and later the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabel (r. 1474-1504) (BRAH, 1630, f. 1; BRAH, n.d., f. 212-212v). The Carvajal family implemented their clan restructuring in pursuit of enhanced status in the Castilian world by successfully utilizing the tools of family confederations, religious endowments, wealth preservation, and occupational patronage. Prominent members of the Plasencia family during this era of change (1400s to 1450s) were Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal, a local knight and city councilmen; Gonzalo Garcia de Carvajal, the first clansman to join the church and later serve as the Archdeacon of Plasencia and Bejar; and Dr. Garci Lopez de Carvajal, who served as a judge in King Juan II's royal courts and as a local city councilman.

Distinct from all other notable families in Plasencia were the first generation Jewish converts to Catholicism, the Santa Marias. Prior to 1406, the family does not appear in the Cathedral of Plasencia's archival documentation. The chain of events that brought the Santa Marias from their ancestral lands in Burgos to Plasencia commenced about 1390, the year Rabbi Solomon Ha-Levi converted to Catholicism and became Pablo de Santa Maria. (Serrano, 1942, p. 52, 62; Cantera Burgos, 1952, p. 304). Throughout the first three decades of the 15th century, Pablo was an ever-present force in the court of King Juan II. First, he was the young king's tutor and subsequently was his Senior Chancellor (*Chanciller Mayor*). The king also named him the Bishop of Cartagena (1403-1415) and the Bishop of Burgos (1415-1435). Pablo de Santa Maria's *converso* siblings, children and relatives assumed various Castilian surnames including Santa Maria, Burgos, Garcia, Cartagena, Rodriguez de Maluenda, Gutierrez de la Calleja, and Fernandez de Cabreros. While many elected to stay in Burgos, others routinely traveled to Plasencia, with some settling

there permanently. (Figure 1: The Santa Maria Family in Plasencia, Spain (14th – 16th Centuries).

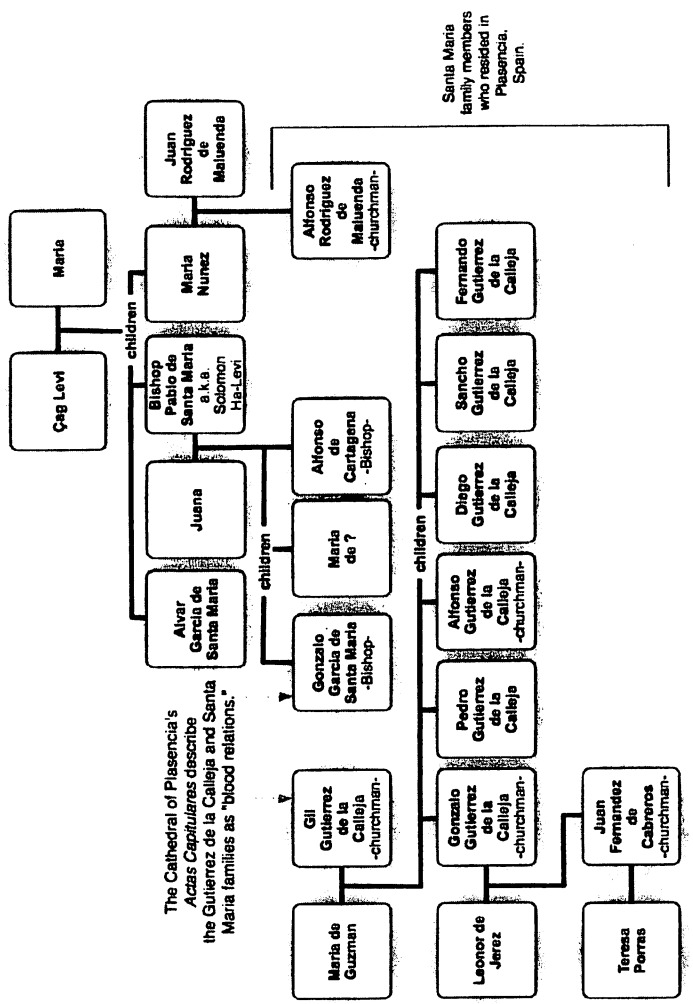
The most prominent of the clan in Plasencia and the Extremadura were Pablo de Santa Maria's son, Gonzalo Garcia, and his brother, Alvar Garcia (pp. 60-61). From the 1420s through the 1440s, Gonzalo Garcia de Santa Maria served as Plasencia's bishop. Pablo's brother, the treasurer and royal chronicler Alvar Garcia de Santa Maria, traveled to the Extremadura in the 1430s on court affairs. However, neither of these men were the first Santa Marias to settle in Plasencia. In 1406, Church Prebendary Gil Gutierrez de la Calleja, married to Maria de Guzman, is the first documented Santa Maria to come to Plasencia (ACP, 1399-1453, f. 29-29v; ACP, 1406, no folio). Multiple church records verify the relationship of the Gutierrez de Callejas to the Santa Marias, specifically referring to Gil Gutierrez and his sons (Alfonso, Diego, Pedro, Fernando, Sancho) as the "family" and "blood relations" of Gonzalo Garcia de Santa Maria (ACP, 1399-1453, f. 46-46v, 99-100v, 105, 116, and 161).

Gil Gutierrez was the first Santa Maria family member to find a position in the Cathedral of Plasencia's leadership chapter. In 1407, he appeared to be a well-established and respected member of the church hierarchy. The chapter acknowledged his continued services as one of its prebendaries (*racioneros*), and more importantly, it elected him to repeated terms as its Dean (f. 29-29v). In addition to Gil, another relative, Juan Gonzalez de Santa Maria, was married to Maria Gomez de Almaraz, the daughter of the caballero family of Diego Gomez de Almaraz (ACP 1430; ACP, 1406).

Conclusive evidence of the direct intermarriage of the Old Christian Carvajals and the Jewish convert Santa Marias, an important element of the intermixing of religious and family identities, is documented by the mid-to-late 15th century. The Carvajals appear to have sought integration with the Santa Maria lineage via its previously undocumented Gutierrez-Fernandez-Cabreros line that resided in Plasencia. Reviewing the archival records of the Cathedral of Plasencia indicates that no other families, Old-Christian or New Christian, utilized the Gutierrez and Cabreros surnames in this region of the Extremadura except for this *converso* one.

For example, in the village of Caceres in the 1470 disposition of the family estate of Mencia Alvarez de Carvajal and Diego Garcia de Ulloa, it is noted that that Juan de Carvajal "The Elder" is the spouse of Mariana Gutierrez de Alvarez, a significant beneficiary of the estate (AHNSN, 1470, f.1, 4v9).

Figure 1:
The Santa Maria Family in Plasencia, Spain
(14th – 16th Centuries)



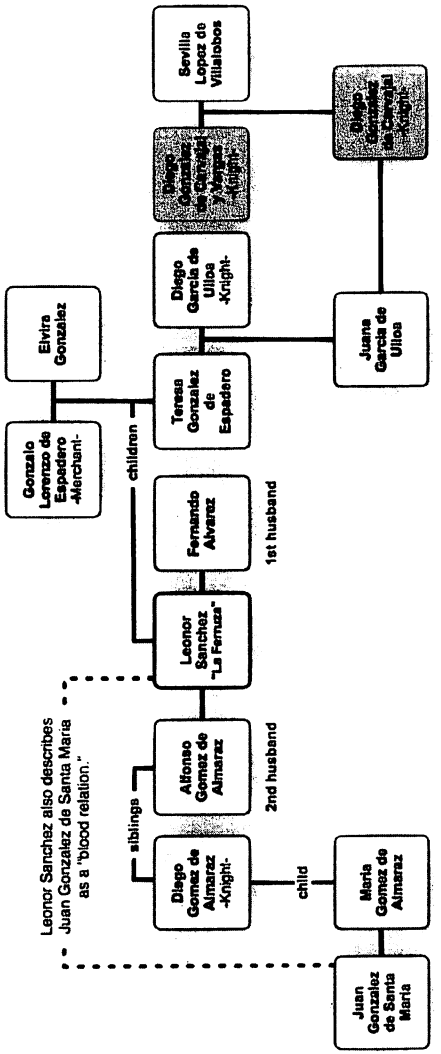
Another beneficiary recorded was Juan de Sande, one of the individuals who formed one of the genealogical trunks linking Plasencia to colonial Bolivia, alongside of his spouse, Teresa de Alvarez (p. 9, 10, 17). The Sande-Carvajal lineage also appears in 1505 in Caceres (AHNSN, 1505, f.1). In 1511, the continuity of an integrated network of families, both geographical and professionally, is epitomized in the person of Dr. Bernardino de Ulloa Carvajal, who not only was the Archdeacon of Najera in the Church of Calahorra, but also a canon in the Cathedral of Plasencia (AHNSN, 1545, f. 1).

The Jewish and *converso* practice of endogamy is also revealed via the Carvajal-Gutierrez lineage. Specifically, three individual manuscripts document two Carvajal-Gutierrez intermarriages during the 15th century. This is an unusual occurrence as almost all Gutierrez and Santa Maria testaments, dowry letters, and other family documents for Plasencia appear to have been purged at an early date. This stands in strong contrast to the bountiful collection of personal legal documents for the Carvajals in Plasencia's cathedral archive. In an accounting of property holdings, a later Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal was named one of the patrons of the memorial chapel for his relative, Juan de Carvajal "The Elder" and Mariana de Gutierrez. (ACP, 1497, no folio). Similarly, Mariana's relative, Elvira Gutierrez de Trejo of Plasencia, was married to this Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal of Plasencia (ACP, 1499, no folio).

While earlier family intermarriages of the Carvajals and Santa Marias are more difficult to pinpoint, the clans' close collaboration is apparent in 1421, when the Carvajals willingly rose in defense of the Santa Maria family in a local property dispute in Plasencia (ACP, 1406, no folio). A collision of family interests pitted Leonor Sanchez against her niece, Maria Gomez de Almaraz, who was the spouse of Juan Gonzalez de Santa Maria. At issue was the property known as *El Corral del Medio* that Leonor Sanchez had donated to the cathedral as compensation for her future memorial masses. In return for this customary land donation, the cathedral assured her that ten masses a year would be said in her memory. (See Figure 2: Early 15th Century Extended Family Relations.)

Unfortunately, according to Maria Gomez, the corral was not Leonor Sanchez's to give; Maria Gomez claimed that her father, Diego Gomez de Almaraz, had left it to her. In a defining moment in the resolution of the dispute, Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal, along with Maria Gomez's spouse Juan Gonzalez de Santa Maria, testified that indeed, "more or less thirty years ago," Diego Gomez gave the corral to his daughter, Maria (ACP, 1406, no folio).

Figure 2:
Early 15th Century Extended Family Relations



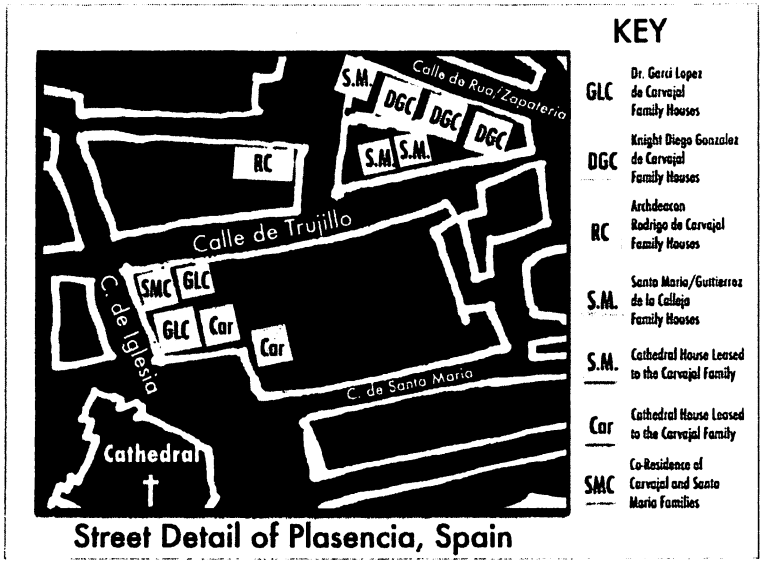
Diego Gonzalez's testimony effectively placed the Santa Marias' needs above those of his wife's aunt, Leonor Sanchez. From a lineage perspective, Diego's responsibility was to protect who appeared to be his closest extended clan relation, the Sanchezes. Yet, Diego threw his support behind Maria. From this point forward, the Plasencia Carvajals displayed a faithfulness to the Santa Maria clan that seldom existed between two families and is indicative that the Carvajals intermarried with the Santa Marias at many junctures. Conclusive evidence of these earliest family relations appear to have had been successful destroyed by the clan to protect their identities in the anti-Jewish environment of the era. Diego Gonzalez's decision to support Maria Gomez and the Santa Marias most likely indicates an intensive internal unity and loyalty that trumped the Carvajal's more immediate kin relation with the Sanchezes.

Another revealing intermarriage that ties the Carvajal line to a Jewish ancestry is that of Miguel de Carvajal, the 16th century Spanish Golden Age playwright from Plasencia. Miguel was paternally descended from Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal (just mentioned) and maternally descended from Fulana Lopez and Diego Gutierrez, who were "noteworthy New Christian" (Gitlitz, 1974, pp. 146-148; ACP, n.d.a, f. 282v-285; ACP, n.d.b., f. 10v-11). Perhaps, Miguel's direct lineage was connected to Diego Gutierrez de la Calleja of the Santa Maria clan. (See Figure 1, as previously shown). In addition to loyalty bonds, the Carvajal-Santa Marias often lived in close proximity to each other in Plasencia.

When appropriate, these families also chose to co-reside with each other. The Carvajals, Santa Marias, and unrelated Jewish clans all lived in a collection of closely clustered homes near the Plaza Mayor, in between *Calle de Rua/Zapateria* and *Calle de Trujillo*. Residing in these homes were *Caballero* Diego Gonzalez de Carvajal (previously identified in Figure 2), Cathedral Treasurer Gonzalo Gutierrez de la Calleja and his sons (a Santa Maria family), and Archdeacon Rodrigo de Carvajal (ACP, 1461; ACP, 1399-1453, f. 116, 174, 197v, 223v-225v; ACP, 1406; Hervas, 2001, pp. 96-97).

Deeper into the Jewish quarter, along *Calle de Rua/Zapateria*, several Santa Maria clansmen resided in another three homes. This residential zone included a large housing complex rented by Diego Jimenez de Burgos, the nephew of Bishop Santa Maria, and two other housing contracts transferred from Treasurer Gonzalo Gutierrez de la Calleja to his kinsman, Ruy Garcia de Salamanca (ACP, 1399-1453, f. 391v-392v, 393-394, 394-395v). (See Figure 3, two-tone color boxes labeled "S.M." along *Calle de Rua/Zapateria*).

Figure 3: Interlinking Residential Patterns of the Carvajal-Santa Maria Family Confederation in Plasencia, Spain (mid-15th century)



Other members of the Santa Maria and Carvajal families resided along *Calle de Trujillo* and close to the Cathedral of Plasencia, at the periphery of the Jewish quarter. Included in this area were homes owned by Dr. Garci Lopez de Carvajal and other houses leased by Archdeacon Alfonso Garcia de Santa Maria, all of which were across the street from the cathedral and on *Calle de Iglesia* (f. 208v-209, 217v-219, 252-256, 284v-297). Alfonso likely leased these homes from Garci to provide residences for immediate or extended family as he would have had access to church properties, to rent at a profit to unrelated persons, as a member of the cathedral chapter.

The bonds between the Carvajals and Santa Marias were so secure that during the 1430s the elderly Archdeacon Gonzalo Garcia de Carvajal resided in a home with Alfonso Garcia (f. 208v-209, 217v-219). (See Figure 3, two-tone color boxes labeled "SMC" along *Calle de Iglesia*.) While two churchmen residing in the same home would not be an exceptional occurrence, when one views the immediate proximity and nestling of the families' houses, it then appears that the joint residence was more akin to home within a larger, extended family compound in this neighborhood in Plasencia.

In summary, the city of Plasencia provided the Carvajal-Santa Maria family confederation a one hundred year window to build a robust and functional network that was in many manners well-tuned to the close of the 15th century.

Just as religious intolerance of Jews and *conversos* began to reach epidemic proportions, Cristobal Colon entered the Americas in 1492. Perfectly positioned in the royal administration of Ferdinand and Isabel, key family leaders like Cardinal Bernardino Lopez de Carvajal, Dr. Lorenzo Galindez de Carvajal (royal judge and member of the *Consejo de Indias*), Juan Suarez de Carvajal (future Bishop of Lugo and member of the *Consejo de Indias*), harnessed their political and religious access and authority to open the doors of the Americas to their extended family (AGI, 1514; BRAH, 1534, f. 265; BRAH, 1543, f. 57v, 77; BRAH, n.d.b., f. 53-53v; BRAH, 1523, f. 553; BRAH, n.d.c., f. 135-137v.)

These new family leaders, such as Lorenzo, were consummate creatures of the Spanish royal court and Roman Catholic Church, who, while ambitious, never overextended their roles as loyal servants to the Spanish crown. During the 1510s, Dr. Lorenzo Galindez shouldered the task of serving the Spanish Monarchs, while also advancing the interests of the Plasencia Carvajals. In his capacity as an advisor to the Catholic Monarchs, the doctor would standardize and mediate the Castilian royal chronicles, such as the *Anales Breves de los Reyes Catolicos*, *Cronica de Juan II,* and *Cronica de Enrique IV*, into an official state history that, for example, involved redacting Jewish ancestries from noble genealogies (BNE, n.d.; BRAH, n.d.d., f. 256-296v; BNE, 1787; Torres Fontes, 1946, pp. 9-24). As the *Correo Mayor* of the *Consejo de Indias,* Dr. Lorenzo Galindez de Carvajal would help define early Spanish-American policies and promote the placement of his own family into key exploration and conquest roles in the Americas (RAH, n.d.e., f. 29, 152, 269-270, 293v; BRAH, 1543, f. 5; BRAH, 1544, f. 82; RAH, n.d.f., f. 5-5v, 10-10v, 12v, 15v, 17v, 20, 24, 26, 27-27v, 46v-48.) The moment was not too soon as the Carvajal lineage had remained a carefully guarded consortium of many *converso* families where Jewish ancestries were laundered inside the Old Christian Carvajal surname.

New World Families in *Nueva Espana* (Mexico)

Expressly prohibited from entering the Americas, elite *conversos* quickly utilized their royal administrative access, ecclesiastical connections, and military expertise to participate in the Spanish conquest

and settlement of the Americas. Although Emperor Carlos V's 1522 decree stated "not one new convert to our Catholic faith, no Moor, no Jew, nor their children, are allowed to pass into the Indies," the Carvajal family rapidly spread throughout the Caribbean, Mexico, and South America (Garcia de Froodian, 1966, p. 21).

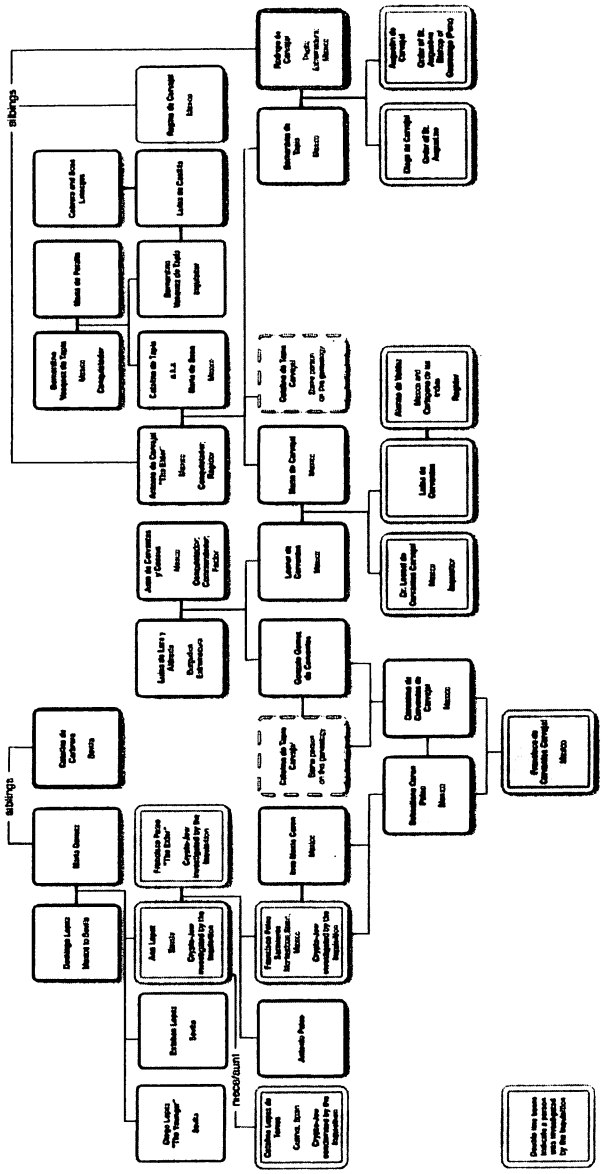
After Cristobal Colon's entry into the Americas, the Spanish's primary conquests focused on the dismemberment of the Aztec Empire, centered in present-day Mexico, and the Incan Empire, located in the Andean highlands of Peru and Bolivia. Going with Hernan Cortes' invasion force were the *converso* Carvajals, represented by "first conqueror" and conquistador Antonio de Carvajal "The Elder", reportedly from Zamora, Spain, but whose brother (Rodrigo) indicated the family originated from the clan's ancestral stronghold of Trujillo (approximately 80 kilometers south of Plasencia) (AGN, 1618, f. 384; AGN, 1616, f. 263; AGI, n.d., f.1.). (See Figure 4: New World Carvajals and Their Problematic Jewish Relations in Spain, 15th – 17th Centuries.) Although Antonio's paternity cannot be exactly calculated, it is probable that he and his siblings, Rodrigo and Regina, were directly related to the Plasencia Carvajals via the Alvarez (*Senores de Oropesa*) and Carvajal intermarriages in Talavera de la Reina (AHNSN, 1749).

On the other hand, Antonio's spouse, Catalina de Tapia, was the daughter of Maria de Peralta, a family well known for its role in the persecution of the crypto-Jews in the Mexican Inquisition, and conquistador Bernardino Vaquez de Tapia. The Vazquez clan was intermarried with the *converso* Ines de Cabrera and Juan Alonso de Sosa lineages of Cordova (AGN, 1592, f. 385 azul).

Another fountainhead of the interlinking families in Mexico were the conquistador Juan de Cervantes y Casaus and his wife, Luisa de Lara y Adrada, from Burguillos in the Spanish Extremadura (AGN, 1618, f. 386). From these families emerged multiple documentable intra-clan marriages.

These marriages included Catalina de Tapia Carvajal and Gonzalo Gomez de Cervantes, and Leonel de Cervantes and Maria de Carvajal (AGN, 1572, f. 29-29v). The Carvajals entered into Mexico as conquistadors, but they quickly populated the royal administrative world, primarily as *regidores* and churchmen. For example, Dr. Leonel Cervantes de Carvajal, the grandson of Antonio, served as archdeacon and headmaster of the School of Santa Fe in Mexico City, as well as a distinguished member of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Other grandsons of Antonio would serve as bishops.

Figure 4: New World Carvajals and Their Problematic Jewish Relations in Spain, 15th – 17th Centuries



Grandson Diego de Carvajal was the the Bishop of Guamanga in Peru, and grandson Augustine de Carvajal was a member of the Order of St. Augustine and the Holy Office of the Inquisition (AGN, 1618, f. 385). In this manner, the clan held the reins to key church institutions that during the 16th and 17th centuries repeatedly returned to investigations of the family's religious pedigree and practices.

One such occurrence that may have exposed the family's *converso* roots was a formal inquiry launched by the Holy Office in Cartagena de las Indias in 1616. An investigation into Leonel's *limpieza de sangre* was initiated after genealogical questions arose relating to his sibling, Luisa de Cervantes who was a resident of Cartagena, and his first cousin, Friar Augustin de Carvajal, at the time Bishop of Guamanga in northern Peru (f. 382-384). Two years later, the Holy Office in Mexico City took up the matter of the investigation and began what amounted to a routine, but also revealing, proceedings to record the maternal ancestry of Leonel.

The Inquisitional commission collected themselves on the morning of January 17th and at their meeting the members set about the task of mapping and verifying the family's pedigree via testimony from knowledgeable persons.

Testifying first was Baltasar de Latadena, who at the time was eighty years old and had lived in Mexico City for four decades and thus was in an excellent position to know a great deal about the family. His testimony was not extraordinary. It simply confirmed that he knew that Leonel's parents were Leonel de Cervantes and Maria de Carvajal, both born in Spain. Likewise, Maria's parents were Antonio de Carvajal "The Elder," the first conqueror, and Catalina de Tapia Carvajal, both from Spain as well. All were of "old Christians without the stain of either the Moorish or Jewish *converso* race...nor castigated or penanced by the Holy Office of the Inquisition" (f. 387v-388).

Other details on the extended relations of Leonel came into focus, especially the broader reach of the Carvajals, from the witness, Hernando de Laserna (f. 389-389v). Hernando relayed that the Carvajals had long held ties in Panuco, where Leonel's paternal grandfather Juan de Cervantes y Casaus was a *commendador* and *factor*. His maternal grandfather, Antonio, was a *regidor* in Mexico City. The witness also asserted that Leonel's ecclesiastical connections flowed from his mother's side of the family and that he was a first cousin to Bishop Augustin de Carvajal of Guamanga (f. 390v). The bishop was originally from Spain and had travelled with his order, the Order of St. Augustine, first through Panama and later to Guamanga (Peru). The

record also highlights that Augustin's brother, Diego de Carvajal, would also serve as Bishop of Guamanga during his lifetime (f. 417v).

Others that were officially questioned added the Leonel's family "was not only a clean, Old Christian one, but also of a lineage of hidalgo caballeros," yet none of these witnesses knew from where in Spain the Carvajals had come — this seemed to be an unknown or omitted detail that no one could answer (f. 408). For such a well-known and royally-connected family, this important piece of their lineage was never fully explored for Leonel, which is indicative of the family's effectiveness in shielding more prominent clansman from sustained inquiries.

Given that the Carvajal clan in the Americas was the byproduct of extensively intermarried lower noble families of the Spanish Extremadura, additional Inquisitional inquiries can be found during the opening of the 17th century. Those investigations exposed undesirable details about the *converso* Carvajals. For example in the regions of Toledo and Talavera de la Reina, a focal point of the Carvajal-Toledo-Cervantes intermarriages, the Holy Office encountered a problematic Jewish past. In February 1632, a chip in the elite *converso* Carvajals' genealogical background finally exposed a Jewish heritage just three generations into the past (AHN, 1632, no folio). This occurred when Mexican inquisitors opened an inquiry of Francisco de Cervantes Carvajal, a native of Mexico City, who was a second cousin of Leonel. The Holy Office initiated the investigation after a fellow churchman had publically called Francisco, "a Jew." The records of the inquiry indicate multiple witnesses were of the opinion that Francisco's maternal great-grandmother, Ana Lopez, "was not an Old Christian" and that his great grandmother, Maria Gomez, was a Jewish convert (f. 12v, 24v, 38v). In the manuscript, adjacent to marginalia directing the reader to "bad" findings, the inquisitors captured scant, yet substantial details of Ana Lopez's pedigree. Witnesses such as Juan Gomez de Ocana revealed that Ana Lopez was "not of a clean lineage, that the family was not clean, but that they did not know or understand the basis of this bad opinion" (f. 12v, 24v, 38v). Another called to testify, Melchor Lopez stated, "People speak vulgarly and think badly of the quality and cleanliness of Ana Lopez's blood" (f. 29v). Others expanded, such as Gregorio Paxua Ramirez, adding that Ana Lopez's family "was descended from Jews...and condemned or penanced by the Holy Office with San Benito garb [penitential gown of a reconciled crypto-Jew]" (f. 17v).

Broader familial relationships soon appeared – linking families in Montealban and Cuerva (in vicinity of Toledo, Spain). Ana Lopez's

niece, Catalina Lopez de Torres, had also been previously investigated and incarcerated by the Holy Office for crypto-Jewish beliefs (f. 20-20v). Demonstrating how damaging family testaments could be to a clan intent on obscuring its full lineage, the Holy Office was able to use a personal will to discover that another accused relative, Francisco Palao, was also known as Francisco Palao Sarmiento (f. 29v-30). These findings only lead to further questions from the Inquisition.

During a fourteen year investigation of Alvaro de Cervantes y Loaysa and Elena de Cervantes of Talavera de la Reina, married first cousins, the Holy Office learned that multiple families members were reconciled Catholics who had practiced Judaism (AHN, 1610-1624). Alvaro claimed ties to the Carvajals via his grandmother, Isabel Giron de Carvajal, a perceived Old Christian, and his grandfather, Rodrigo de Carranza, whose family originally came from Burgos, Spain. This connection to Burgos is telling as it was a heartland of the Santa Maria family, as well as where Alvaro's great-great uncle Pedro de Carranza, a medical doctor, had confessed to being a practicing secret Jew. Later, inquiries into Carvajal lineages often found their way back to the Extremeduran and Sevillian Cabrera(o)s family, specifically, Catalina de Cabrera of Sevilla who was a convicted secret Jew, further indicating the web-like connections of the extended Carvajal and Santa Maria families (AHN, 1632, f. 51, 55v).

The most problematic and perplexing element of the Carvajal family relates to the infamous case and execution of Luis de Carvajal "The Younger" in Mexico City in 1596 (Cohen, 1973). In late 16th century Mexico, the Carvajals found it progressively more difficult to shield themselves and their relations from the suspicious eyes of other Catholics. After the meteoric rise of Dr. Leonel Cervantes de Carvajal, the family suffered politically and socially when Luis de Carvajal "The Younger" was sentenced to death for practicing Judaism.

While Luis and most of his family members received the death penalty in 1596, the Holy Office and one of the family's defense attorneys, Dr. Garcia Figueroa de Carvajal, placed Luis' surviving sister, Mariana, into protective custody of the Vazquez de Tapia family in Mexico City (Cohen, 1973, 259; HL, 1601). Martin A. Cohen notes that the Vazquez de Tapia family was once connected to the Inquisition's community of *familiars*. However, unknown to Cohen and other scholars is the new, unsettling finding that the Holy Office did not place Mariana into a home of Catholic strangers, but instead into the protective custody of the *converso* Carvajal-Santa Maria lineage that hailed back from the Spanish Extremadura. In 1596, Mariana resided in the home of Luisa de Castilla, who was Inquisitor

Dr. Leonel de Cervantes Carvajal's great aunt and *Conquistador* Antonio de Carvajal "The Elder"'s sister-in-law. (See Figure 4: New World Carvajals and Their Problematic Jewish Relations in Spain, 15^{th} – 17^{th} Centuries.) Thus, the reconciled crypto-Jewess, Mariana, was to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into Catholic society by the *converso* Carvajals, who had their own checkered religious past. From this unusual incident it seems highly plausible to conclude that Mariana was an extended relation of the *converso* Carvajals and that while the clan was unable to save all members of its crypto-Jewish arm, it did initially shield Mariana from a deadly *auto de fe* in 1596. However, four years after this affair, the Holy Office returned to Mariana's case and determined that she had relapsed into the practice of Judaism, and thus, paid her religious debt to the Inquisition with her life. Neither Leonel nor Garcia acted a second time to protect Mariana. Therefore, it appears that the *converso* Carvajals would participate in the elimination of those distant relatives that jeopardized the survival and success of the extended clan.

Concealing and destroying evidence was another strategy that the *converso* Carvajal family employed in Mexico City, especially after the series of Inquisitional investigations into its lineage and the executions of the crypto-Jewish Carvajals in the 1590s. Leonel's own career in the Holy Office was negatively colored by his effort to conceal an Inquisitional record that he did not want others to know about. In 1642, at which time Leonel was now an elder, established member of the Mexico City community of local elites, problematic details about his professional practices came to the attention of his colleagues. In a sworn statement taken in Guatemala, an anonymous informant reported on what he had overhead in the personal house of the Bishop of Guatemala, Bartolome Gonzalez (AGN, 1642, f. 526). The informant, a servant or resident in the bishop's home, had clandestinely listened to the bishop and Juan Saenz, an Inquisition official, discussing how Leonel had manipulated records of the Holy Office. The informant stated the bishop and the official spoke of:

> [the doctor who] seized and embargoed papers from the records of the Holy Office. Within these papers, he changed various names of persons as well as their contents under the pretense that he was searching for errors (f. 526-526v).

What exactly the doctor removed from and destroyed in the Inquisitorial files was impossible for the Holy Office to determine, but Bishop Gonzalez and Juan Saenz agreed that all officials should search for any missing investigation files, guard them, and return them to the Holy Office. The colleagues of Dr. Leonel Cervantes de

Carvajal in the Mexican Inquisition never followed up with a review of the doctor's actions even though the Holy Office was concerned about the recovery and protection of its records. This event suggests that Leonel, as a senior member of the Inquisition, could operate without fear of professional recriminations or further discussions of his actions. It also exposes how a local Inquisition and its leaders could elect to avoid contentious issues that might incriminate their own members and families. For example, Alonso de Peralta, the inquisitor who had signed off on execution of the crypto-Jewish Carvajals, was a close relative of Leonel via the Vazquez de Tapia-Peralta lineage (AGN, 1657; BRAH, n.d.g., f. 243v-244).

In theory, it seems plausible that Leonel's motivations for destroying and manipulating records was tied to a personal effort to suppress evidence relating to his or an extended family member's ancestry and *limpieza de sangre*. An ancestry that he was certain to know was polluted with a Jewish lineage and that would, at best, preclude his retention of position as headmaster of the Cathedral School of Santa Fe and as a member of the Holy Office in Mexico City. At worst, further investigations might provoke a more thorough evaluation of the Catholic religiosity and orthodoxy of the family. In light of the 1596 execution of Luis de Carvajal "The Younger" and other immediate family members, Leonel's destruction of case records begs the question of what types of evidence may have existed that linked the Carvajal clan, and its noble interrelations in Mexico City, to secret Jews.

New World Families in Charcas (La Plata and Tucuman)

Unlike their experiences in Spain and Mexico City, the *converso* Carvajal family in *Charcas* (present-day southern Peru, Bolivia, and northern Argentina) experienced little harassment from the Holy Office of the Inquisition as the church failed to institute a commission in the region. With the benefit of little Inquisitorial pressure, during the 16th and early 17th centuries the *Charcas* Carvajals instead generated an image as a respected and powerful clan in military, royal bureaucratic, and religious affairs.

The earliest arms of the South American family include Garci Lopez de Carvajal; Diego de Vargas Carvajal; and Francisco "The Demon of the Andes" Carvajal, who served under Francisco and Gonzalo Pizarro in their conquest of South America (Altman, 1989, p. 45, 49, 188, 234; Vaquez, 1984, p. 211). After an unsuccessful attempt to explore the South American coast in 1524, Francisco Pizarro

regrouped in Toledo in 1529, taking with him Garci Lopez de Carvajal and 180 men into Incan Peru (Kamen, 2003, p. 106). Francisco Carvajal can later be found in South America in 1546 as the Field Marshall to Gonzalo Pizarro (p. 261). Francisco also served as Gonzalo's henchman during the Spanish civil wars of Peru of the 1540s (p. 11, 238). Diego, the son of Dr. Lorenzo Galindez de Carvajal (*Correo Mayor* of the *Consejo de Indias*), married Gonzalo Pizarro's sister, Ines Rodriguez. Diego served as a conquistador and partook in the siege of Cuzco in 1536. Participating in the Spanish endeavors to evangelize the indigenous population in Peru, Bolivia, and Tucuman, was the Dominican Friar Gaspar de Carvajal, who in 1549 was named an official "protector" of the Native Americans (Egana, 1966, p. 73, 109). In this manner, the Carvajals operated at the military and religious vanguard of the Spanish invasion of South America.

After the initial conquest, the family secured territory, political posts, and economic benefits, in spite of the fact that their Jewish past should have denied them entry into the Americas. For example, in 1539 Lic. Illan Suarez de Carvajal reported from Cuzco to Emperor Carlos V that Francisco Pizarro was in route to Kollasuyu and Charcas to found new cities (Mendoza Loza, 2005, p. 97). Participating in the 1540 foundation of La Plata, the royal administrative city for *Charcas*, was Juan de Carvajal who was granted a "solar", or a land parcel to situate his noble home (Mendoza Loza, 205, p. 43).

The Carvajals also imbedded themselves in the process of economic use of the Americas. In 1556, Diego Huallpa, an indigenous man from the *repartamiento* of Lic. Benito Suarez de Carvajal in Cuzco, informed the Spanish about mining potential of "Cerro Rico", the silver-laden mountain in Potosi, Bolivia (Fuertes Lopez, 2010, pp. 81-82). Soon thereafter, Diego de Vargas Carvajal in 1561, and another Francisco de Carvajal in 1573, were participating in the exploitation of indigenous labor and resources in Potosi and La Plata (p. 95, 105). Concurrently, the Spanish began to explore and found the province of Tucuman in northern Argentina. Under the direction of Viceroy Garcia Hurtado de Mendoza, the province of Tucuman was populated by the Cabrera, Carvajal, Gutierrez, Sosa, Suarez, and Vazquez families (Levillier, 1945, 24; Linzondo Borda, 1942, 95-97, 105, 106, 113, 124). Diego de Villarreal founded its first town, San Miguel de Tucuman, in 1565, and eight years later *converso* Jeronimo Luis de Cabrera settled Cordoba (Ricci, 1967, 15). Cabrera was a descendant of none other than Cardinal Francisco Mendoza y Bobadilla, the author of *El Tizon de La Nobleza*, and Andres de Cabrera,

the first Marques of Moya (Mendoza y Bobadilla, 1880, p. 190; Rabade Obrado, 2006, p. 173).

There are strong indications that the Plasencia-based Cabreros family was related to the Cabrera clan from Cordoba, Spain, because both intermarried with the Porras and Gutierrez lineages (ACP, n.d.c., no folio; Rabade Obrado, 2006, 197). Reassembling these relationships is difficult to accomplish because *converso* families were highly cognizant of the need to cleanse records pertaining to their ancestry. This is exactly what 15th century Bishop Francisco de Cabrera of Ciudad Rodrigo did when he altered his testament to eliminate references to his relatives in Toledo and Segovia (Rabade Obrado, 2006, p. 197).

Initial archival research exposes a robust interrelated *converso* community in *Charcas* at the end of the 16th century and well into the 17th century, which included the Gutierrez, Ulloa, Cabereros, and Carvajal families. For example, during the 1580s and 1590s *Factor* Ventura Gutierrez made two trips back to Spain, Pedro de Ulloa was managing "the business of war" and "pacification" of the "frontiers", Lic. Antonio Gutierrez de Ulloa was investigating a case of bigamy, Christobal de Mendoza y Cabreros was securing rights to new lands in the Tucuman, and Luis de Carvajal was overseeing the silver mines in Potosi as its *Alcade Mayor* (ABNB, 1581; ABNB, 1588a; ABNB, 1588b; ABNB, 1590; ABNB, 1587, f. 295-296). In many cases, such as in the operations of the mines, Ventura Gutierrez and Luis de Carvajal collaborated (ABNB, 1587, f. 295-296).

In the ecclesiastical realm, during the 1590s *conversos* participated in the focal point of Catholic religious life in *Charcas*. Pedro Gutierrez de Oropesa served as a member of the chapter of the Cathedral of La Plata and as its vicar to La Paz (Garcia Quintanilla, 1999, p. 19). Furthermore, Carvajal clansman like Dr. Diego de Trejo made significant inroads into leadership roles in the Cathedral of La Plata. First entering the cathedral chapter in 1590s, Diego graduated from *Chantre* to its *Provisor* and *Vicario General* by 1605 (p. 19, 27). An extended family relation from Mexico joined soon thereafter. In 1609, Alonso de Peralta, from Mexico City and related to the Mexican lineage of Carvajal inquisitors and conquistadores, came to serve as *Charcas'* new bishop (p. 27).

Spaniards also left the guarding of the Catholic faith in *Charcas* to *conversos* related to the Carvajal family. While there was no formally established Holy Office of the Inquisition in *Charcas*, there were high-level inquisitors circulating among the elite colonial population. Directed by the king in 1592, Lic. Antonio Gutierrez de Ulloa

relocated from Lima to La Plata with the instructions that the *Audiencia* not "disturb or impede" his work (ABNB, 1592, f.1). Once in the area, Antonio was not a particularly aggressive inquisitor. Antonio was a descendant of the Carvajal-Santa Maria confederation of Plasencia, and there is no indication that he ever sought to investigate Jewish heresies in the region. Rather, cases of bigamy and failed business agreements (which did not seem to be connected to issues of faith) seemed to have occupied his time (CaCH, 1594). In the 1590s and early 1600s the Inquisition in the region floundered due to the absence of inquisitional officials (Enciso Contreras, 2005, p. 62).

The Carvajals found their strongest footing in the Andean highlands in the 1620s under the aegis of Dr. Juan de Carvajal y Sandi. A direct descendant of the Carvajal-Santa Maria family confederation of Plasencia, Juan was a member of the king's Sevilla-based *Consejo de Indias* and an official visitor and member of the *Real Audiencia of La Plata* (ABNB, 1639). In 1648, ten years after King Felipe IV had called for the creation of an Inquisitional commission in colonial Argentina due to the presence of "Hebrews" in Charcas, Juan ascended to the position of President of the *Audiencia* (ABNB, 1648). As a capable royal administrator, the doctor had earned the vigorous praise of his contemporaries, such as the Andean chronicler, Lic. Pedro Ramirez del Aguila. In his 1639 text, *Noticias Politicas de Indias y Relacion Descriptiva de la Ciudad de la Plata*, Pedro highlighted what most contemporary Spaniards cared about – the production of precious metals from *Cerro Rico* in Potosi. According to Pedro, the doctor had advanced mining efforts and commerce in Potosi by channeling multiple water sources into a more effective waterway (Ramirez de Aguila, 1639, pp. 81-82). It is within this political and economic development context that Spanish history remembers Dr. Juan de Carvajal y Sandi and not his *converso* origins, which the Carvajals did their best to hide from public scrutiny.

One element of the religious lives of the *converso* Carvajals that is difficult to interpret was their role in the creation and participation in religious brotherhood known as the *Cofradia de Vera Cruz* in Potosi. As it was founded sometime before 1612 and in connection with the Convent of St. Francis, several prominent ecclesiastical and lay *conversos* initiated the special devotional organization that at the same time integrated related family members as well as promoted their social status in colonial society. Among its more public activities was a special religious procession that occurred on Holy Thursday preceding the celebration of Easter (p. 2). Those members that may have been related to the broader Carvajal family network were Vicar

Diego Zanbrana de Villalobos, Diego Cavallero, Bartolome Martinez de Tapia, Dr. Bartolome de Cervantes, Diego de Vargas, Pedro Osorio, and Alonso Cotel Carvajal (ABAMT, 1612, f.1, 3v, 5, 9v, 38). Even though there is some evidence to suggest that Spanish religious brotherhoods were utilized by *conversos* to practice their prior Jewish faith in private, there is no immediate indication that this occurred within the *Cofradia de Vera Cruz*.

On the other hand, the *cofradia's* actions were an overt public display of Catholic religiosity. Just as the *converso* Carvajals had utilized religious foundations (chapel masses, chapel endowments, monastic foundations) to bolster their Catholic credentials in 15th century Plasencia, so did members of the *cofradia* in Potosi (Martinez, 2008, p. 202). C*ofradia* provided the ideal public venue for colonial elites, many of them *conversos*, to communicate their Catholic religiosity in an overt manner. In sum, like their predecessors in Plasencia and their contemporaries in Mexico City, the Andean Carvajals consistently practiced a public Catholicism as revealed by the *Cofradia de Vera Cruz,* but knew they were descended from Sephardic Jews.

Conclusions

The archival record from Spain, Mexico, and the Andes demonstrate (1) the Carvajal family was of *converso* origins, (2) it retained knowledge of its Jewish ancestry deep into the 17th century, and (3) it acted to shield this familial truth from outsiders because of the persistent Spanish belief that Judaism was a blood-based faith and identity. Thus, in 1638, King Felipe IV was correct in his determination that Hebrews resided in the province of Tucuman in Charcas, however it is unlikely that he understood he had instructed his "Jewish" administrators in the *Real Audiencia de Charcas* to institute an Inquisition. And as indicated by their actions, these *conversos*, who lived with the ramifications of their Jewish ancestry well into the 17th century, had no interest in investigating themselves.

Thus, these elite *conversos*, because of their incredibly effective endeavors of hiding in plain sight, represent an understudied community in the New World. This research demonstrates that elite Jewish converts to Catholicism not only survived the anti-Jewish sentiment and prohibitions of the late medieval and early modern periods, but also aggressively sought and expanded their political, ecclesiastical and economic opportunities, especially in colonial Mexico and the South American Andes. Archives reveal that *conversos*, careful to guard their hidden genealogical pasts from Old Christians, steadfastly

fostered and nurtured their Old World extended family and filial relationships with a certain level of impunity. And, these *converso* networks operated across thousands of miles of ocean and three continents, inter-linking Spain, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina.

Religiously, the evidence suggests that *conversos* continued publically to promote familial Catholic piety so as to limit their exposure to contemporary Inquisitional inquiries. Due to their efforts to conceal their identities, it is very difficult for modern scholars to ascertain these *conversos*' religious beliefs. Surprisingly, although *conversos'* official positions and personal fortunes were subject to loss due to their minority religious ancestries, these *conversos* were relatively unsympathetic and not above the exploitation of politically weak indigenous populations. Particularly, the Carvajals' wealth-building efforts in Mexico and Bolivia/Peru centered around the mining of precious minerals that often resulted in problematic human and environmental impacts on the indigenous population. The Carvajals and their clan associates remained elites intent on guarding and promoting their status in colonial Spanish America, regardless of the outcomes for indigenous peoples.

Conversos remained vulnerable to Inquisitional inquiries. In most cases Andean *conversos* could outmaneuver the distant Holy Offices in Lima and Cartagena de las Indias, but encountered more difficulties and deadly outcomes in Mexico City. While alienated from their Jewish past, *conversos* had not forgotten their Jewish roots and actively promoted intragroup connectivity. Even if *conversos* lacked Jewish fundamentals in terms of the strict daily practice of Judaism, they highly valued protective and collaborative filiation. When family members jeopardized the larger kin networks' prosperity and survival, *conversos* did make efforts to shield them, but the clan was equally ready to oversee their elimination and deaths.

In sum, the convoluted history of the Carvajals is reflective of the religious and status preoccupations of the late 15th through early 17th centuries in Spain and the Americas. *Conversos* adeptly utilized the same institutions intended to exclude them from public and religious life to advance their interests and wellbeing. Their history adds to a more comprehensive explication of the Jewish and *converso* diaspora after the *Edict of Expulsion* of 1492. Essentially, Jews converted and concealed as they moved west, and in some extraordinary manner, they seem to have followed Moses Maimonides' twelfth century advice to convert temporarily and flee to safety so that they might live another day. The Carvajals seem to have heeded this advice and paid homage to those Jewish elements of their identity, but with the added

caveat that the early modern period offered them no return path to Judaism. Instead, their future would be a convoluted existence as Catholics and Jews. Further, colonial Spanish America offered them a temporal and geographic reprieve. No longer able be secure a future in Spain, the Carvajals and their extended family relations departed with forward momentum into the Americas.

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