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Iberian Antecedents

The ideal of *convivencia* – the cooperative coexistence of peoples of different faiths within the "republic" of a city or town – gradually collapsed in late medieval Christian Spain. Looking backward in time, this was a slow and progressive development, which began with persecutions and forced conversions in 1391 and continued on until the peninsula's last free Muslim had been converted to Christianity in 1526. A period of negotiated tolerance extended this period until 1566, when the Crown began a crack-down on private-sphere Islam (addressed in Chapters 2 and 3) with severe results.

This chapter traces Christian subjects' growing intolerance toward Jews and Muslims in their communities. One of the best-known consequences of this wave of intolerance was the breakdown of medieval *aljama* culture and the forced conversion of the peninsula's religious minorities. As a product of the forced conversions and foreign-policy issues that were beyond the monarchy's control, Christian authorities of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries faced a wave of new challenges. The unification of the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon (1479) and their transformation into an exclusively Christian monarchy under the Trastámara (1369–1516) and later Habsburg (1516–1700) dynasties led to significant new expectations of subjects living on the peninsula.

The Crown's perception that the health and survival of the empire depended on the Christianization of its subjects led it to grant increasingly more responsibility to the institutional Church. The period of combined rule under Queen Isabella of Castile (1474–1506) and King Ferdinand II of Aragon (1479–1516) witnessed the establishment of a permanent Inquisition tribunal (ca. 1480) that persecuted new convert communities.

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At the same time, certain Spanish dioceses also made the first incipient steps toward elaborating guidelines for educational outreach in their jurisdictions. This trend would continue under the first Habsburg king, Charles I (1516–1556), who as Holy Roman Emperor (Charles V) countenanced the fracturing of the Catholic world under pressure from the Protestant Reformation. His son and successor, Philip II (1556–1598), upped the ante, empowering a generation of activist bishops, who, with royal support, shaped a whole generation of ecclesiastical policy around Christian education, beginning in the 1560s. Empire-wide reforms required the improved training and hiring of priests, the mandatory education of children in the Christian catechism into their early teen years, and adult education through weekly sermons. The motivation for the new mid-century policies emerged from a growing awareness that a society built around Christian values was not necessarily organically self-perpetuating. This chapter examines policies around rights, privileges, education, and enfranchisement from the medieval period up until the 1550s.

1.1 THE MEDIEVAL LEGACY OF CONVIVENCIA

Medieval Spain was famously known as the Land of Three Religions. The period stretching from the Christian conquest of Toledo (1085) to the conquest of Granada (1492) is often spoken about in terms of *convivencia*. Christians, Muslims, and Jews coexisted in numbers not reproduced anywhere else on the continent. Idealists have waxed poetically about idyllic coexistence.[1] More skeptical scholars have rushed to point out that though members of the three religions found ways to live together during the age of the crusades and beyond, day-to-day life was punctuated by recurring confessional violence, often timed around meaningful dates on the Christian calendar.[2] Nevertheless, the peace generally held and interspersed throughout the years were moments of real religious harmony.

The fabric of religious tolerance began to tear in the wake of the Black Death in the fourteenth century. Villainized for their imagined connection

[1] Perhaps the best-known publication in this vein is María Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2003).

[2] See Maya Soifer, "Beyond Convivencia: Critical Reflections on the Historiography of Interfaith Relations in Christian Spain," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 1:1 (2009): 19–35; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

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to the plague, Jews in fourteenth-century Castile suffered harassment from the Christian community. In 1355, more than 1,000 Jews in Toledo died, targeted by enemies of the monarch during a civil war in Castile.[3] Anti-Jewish sentiment played out repeatedly in urban struggles between 1355 and 1390.[4] In 1391, Christians across Castile led a particularly violent wave of anti-Jewish violence. In order to save their lives or to protect their welfare, thousands of Jews converted to Christianity under duress. After the hostilities, many Jewish *aljamas* (semi-autonomous ethnoreligious governmental councils whose legitimacy was recognized by Christian authorities) ceased to exist.[5]

Despite the massive destruction of the pogroms, they did succeed in forcing two segregated social groups to interact in ways they had not before. *Conversos* (new converts) entered numerous Christian professions that previously had been denied them.[6] While laws continued to restrict Jews from almost all municipal, royal, and ecclesiastical posts in mainstream Christian society, *conversos* entered them freely. And in fact, some recent converts from Judaism held very visible ecclesiastical careers, such as the friar Juan de Torquemada, bishops Pablo de Santa María (Burgos) and Alonso de Cartagena (Segovia), as well as innumerable canons, monks, and priests.[7]

While persecution seemed to attenuate in the following decades, it did not abate. In 1412, the Kingdom of Castile published legislation prohibiting Jews from holding office, possessing titles, or changing their residence (though some scholars doubt whether the legislation was enforced). The legislation also prevented them from socializing with Christians, entering a number of trades (grocer, carpenter, tailor, or butcher), or wearing lavish clothing. In a clause meant to deprive them of public honor, the decree prohibited them from employing Christians or bearing arms in public.

In 1449, social conflict in Toledo – one of the peninsula's wealthiest and most diverse cities – developed new characteristics that would have a lasting

[3] Joseph Pérez, *Historia de una tragedia. La expulsión de los judíos* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1993).

[4] Juan Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna: puritate sanguinis* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1996), 29.

[5] Angus MacKay, "Popular Movements and Pogroms in Fifteenth-Century Castile," *Past & Present* 55 (May 1972): 33–67; Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 12; Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América* (Madrid: Istmo, 1971), 17.

[6] Many saw the label *converso* as an offensive imposition and fought against its usage: Yosi Yisraeli and Yanay Israeli, "Defining 'Conversos' in Fifteenth-Century Castile: The Making of a Controversial Category," *Speculum* 97:3 (2022): 609–648.

[7] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 17.

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impact on Spanish politics. Unrest over heavy taxation in wartime and violation of the city's privileges (*fueros*) touched off a municipal repudiation of royal authority. Rioters directed their anger against the Jewish community, which paid its tribute directly to the king's coffers and thus was seen as at least indirectly responsible for their financial woes. But in a new twist, rioters targeted not only Jews but also the city's *conversos*, not coincidentally a number of whom were royal tax collectors.[8] In some ways, the 1449 ethnic violence in Toledo seemed like a predictable progression following earlier waves of anti-Jewish pogroms. But, in an additional twist, the conflict between rioters and converts became almost a proxy for the conflict between plebeians (rioters) and the court (converts).[9]

The angry rioters would justify their actions as motivated by a grievance against what they saw as a newly coalesced social faction. In their eyes, the wave of conversions beginning at the end of the fourteenth century had created a pool of "New Christians," whose language, dress, family ties, and social mores set them apart from the rest of society. And importantly, they saw this group as having gained too much power. Having labeled the convert community derisively as "New Christians," it was only appropriate that they began to identify themselves as "Old Christians" in contrast.[10]

The Church policies that coalesced in the wake of such political confrontations typically recognized as Old Christian those individuals who could demonstrate evidence of Christian birth and Catholic orthodoxy through their grandparents' generation (the so-called *cuatro costados*). The rationale drew from the disquisitions of Church father St. Augustine and the famed Scholastic St. Thomas Aquinas, who had postulated that sinners' world-views might realistically infect two, and perhaps three subsequent generations of family members.[11] Church philosophers assumed that because a child could be "infected" by the heretical ideas of a parent or grandparent, an individual's genealogy had the power to indicate his or her potential for activity that might threaten the good of society.[12]

[8] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 52–54.

[9] Sicroff, *Los Estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 56.

[10] David Nirenberg, "Conversion, Sex, and Segregation: Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain," *American Historical Review* 107:4 (2002): 1065–1093.

[11] Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, 47–50. The Biblical passages that polemicists and canon lawyers commonly cited for this issue were Exodus 20:5 and Deuteronomy 5:9.

[12] Ecclesiastics and statesmen who saw forced baptism as an opportune method to speed along the cure of the "infection," often cited the theologian Duns Scotus to justify their opinions. While acknowledging that forced baptism's short-term effects (in terms of heartfelt conversion) were often negligent, Duns Scotus advocated forcibly baptizing children on the assumption that by the third or fourth generation, their descendants would be

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In the midst of this struggle between "Old" and "New" Christians, the town assembly proclaimed the *Sentencia Estatuto*, the first *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity) statute in Spain. Justifying their decision with a patchwork of civil and canon law, the members of the town council mandated that all *conversos* should be blocked from all public and private positions of public trust in the city of Toledo and its jurisdiction. Old Christian leaders accused the *conversos* of heresy and of having joined the Church and ascended its ranks merely in order to destroy the Catholic faith. At this moment, the *conversos* became the target of insults that in earlier generations had traditionally been lodged against the Jews.[13] Eager to restore order to his wealthiest city, the king signed the *Sentencia Estatuto*, which in theory made Jews and their descendants permanently ineligible for public office in Toledo.[14]

The struggle unleashed polemics. Scripture and patristic sources were the preferred weapons. Old Christians celebrated their descendance from Mediterranean Gentiles, former pagans who recognized the divinity of Christ, while vilifying Jews (and by insinuation, New Christian *conversos*) because their precursors had rejected Jesus' divinity.[15] Meanwhile, proponents of integration between Old and New Christians argued that Scripture identified baptism as the great equalizer.[16] Additionally, they pointed to precedent in secular and canon law. In canon law, the Council of Basel (1431) had both conceded to New Christians all the same rights as enjoyed by Old Christians and offered for their protection. Meanwhile, proponents also pointed out that in Spain, protection for the *conversos* was written into the *Siete Partidas*.[17] Such arguments swayed the papacy,

integrated and indistinguishable from other good Christians. Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, "Mudejares y repobladores en el Reino de Granada (1485–1501)," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* 13 (1992): 68; Isabelle Poutrin, *Convertir les musulmans. Espagne, 1491–1609* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2012).

[13] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 53–56.

[14] Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, 28–30.

[15] According to Sicroff, the passages polemicists focused upon were Ephesians II, 14–18; Romans II, 10–12; Romans X, 11–12; Galatians VI, 15; and Gratian's compilation of the Fourth Council of Toledo (CE 633).

[16] Alonso Díaz de Montalvo, *El fuero real de España* ... (Salamanca, 1569) as cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 57.

[17] "No debe lanzarse oprobio sobre ningún judío convertido al catolicismo y que éste puede acceder a todos los honores y cargos que pueden ejercer los demás cristianos." *Siete Partidas*, parte VII, tít. XXIV, línea 6 and *Siete Partidas*, parte VII, tít. XXV, línea 3. The Bishop of Burgos, Don Alonso de Cartagena, made the point that these protections had been re-affirmed by Castilian kings Enrique III and Juan II: Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 74.

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when invoked as an arbiter. Pope Nicholas V in 1449 pronounced an anathema against the "schismatic tendencies of the anti-*converso* statute."[18]

The Pope professed worry about the splintering of the Christian community in a multi-confessional society. He wrote that "good Christians" (*buenos cristianos*) should be admitted to all, "ministries and benefices … with the same rights as Old Christians."[19] In 1449, Jewish and Muslim communities, governed by their own *aljamas*, still coexisted with Christians.[20] But a century later, after all the Jews and Muslims in Castile had been forced either to convert or to emigrate, the two categories in the Pope's formulation – "good Christian" and "Old Christian" – would come to represent the two competing standards for enfranchisement within Castilian society.

In the wake of the events of 1449, the combined efforts of the king, the papacy, and the pro-*converso* faction only proved able to restrain the prejudice against *conversos*, not to stymy it altogether. In the following decades, other municipal uprisings occurred. In Toledo, powerful *conversos* were again chased out of the city, only to return to their positions two years later.[21] Similar struggles were repeated elsewhere in the peninsula. In 1473, violence erupted in Córdoba between Old Christians and New Christian converts. Religious and economic issues intertwined as Old Christian artisans and agriculturalists in town for a religious festival attacked *converso* city-dwellers, whom noblemen joined in support.[22] The scene soon thereafter repeated itself in Palma, Écija, Jérez, Adamuz, Montoro, La Rambla, Cabra, Jaén, Úbeda, Baez, and Almodóvar del Campo.[23] The pilgrimage town of Guadalupe became ensnarled in ugly social conflict during Holy Week of 1476.[24] And in 1478, Seville's Old Christian population rioted against *conversos* they accused of practicing Jewish rituals and ceremonies.[25]

[18] As cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 83.

[19] As cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 84. Italics mine.

[20] See, for example, laws 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, and 90 in Díaz de Montalvo, *El fuero real de España*.

[21] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 26; Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 88; Angus MacKay, "Popular Movements and Pogrom in Fifteenth Century Castile," 33–67.

[22] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 27.

[23] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 88–89; Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 27. These were small and medium-size municipalities in Andalucía.

[24] Starr-Lebeau, *In the Shadow of the Virgin*, 125–128.

[25] Davide Scotto, "Theology of the Laws and Anti-Judaizing Polemics in Hernando de Talavera's *Católica impugnación*," in *Polemical Encounters: Christians, Jews, and*

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The serious accusations of Judaizing in Seville, and the riot that followed, so concerned the Catholic Monarchs that they appealed to the papacy for inquisitors to investigate. A papal bull approving the establishment of the Inquisition arrived later that same year.[26] After announcing the need for an inquisition, the Catholic Monarchs let it lie dormant until mid-1480, when it began to operate. Since the practice of Judaism and Islam were still permitted on the peninsula, its targets were only those "bad Christians" who, after conversion, still practiced their prior faith. Even so, a great many people fell victim to its persecution. In its first decade, the Inquisition may have condemned 2,000 people to death, and "reconciled" 15,000 others accused of minor heresies.[27]

During this crucial decade of the 1470s and 1480s, the renowned royal confessor and future archbishop of Granada, Hernando de Talavera, preached widely to *converso* audiences. Though evidence suggests he sympathized with the Inquisition prosecutions, he made an effort to channel popular fervor away from ethnic resentment and toward Catholic theological commitments. As part of that effort, he wrote a tract fulminating against Judaizing *conversos* and Jews. One of the polemical tract's most memorable lines denied that Jews any longer belonged to the biblical "people of Israel." But his writing also seemed to urge reconciliation between Old and New Christians in Spain, as had Pope Nicholas V's affirmations in response to the events of Toledo in 1449. On a conciliatory note, Talavera wrote that following Christ's revelation, though Jews had been replaced as God's chosen people, their replacements included "'good' Christians of both 'old' and 'new' lineage."[28]

Despite such efforts, ethnic resentment did indeed fester. The most important impact of the Inquisition was that it gave an official ideology to sentiments that had been gathering in isolated locations across the peninsula. Old Christians, who had at first supported the collapse of Jewish autonomy and the inclusion of converts within Christian society, became angered when they saw individuals imperfectly assimilated into Christian culture achieve respected positions within Christian society. The Inquisition provided a canonical basis – formal procedures in the place of

Muslims in Iberia and Beyond, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018), 120.

[26] Scotto, "Theology of the Laws," 120–127; Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 43–52.

[27] Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 59. Estimations differ.

[28] Scotto, "Theology of the Laws," 139–141.

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the angry intuitions of Old Christian peasants – for punishing those *conversos* who enjoyed Christian privileges while not participating full-heartedly as Christians.

In this atmosphere of fear and distrust, the issue of *limpieza de sangre* appeared again. Municipal conflict brought the Inquisition into the town of Guadalupe, ruled by the Hieronymite order in *señorio*, in the 1480s. When investigations discovered that some priests continued to practice Jewish rituals, the prior of the friary asked Pope Innocent VIII to approve a *limpieza* statute for the order prohibiting *conversos* and their descendants from the offices of prior, vicar, and confessor, based on recent evidence of heresy among their ranks.[29]

Though the Crown's attitude toward Jews seems to have been benevolent, the monarchs seemed convinced that the "*converso* problem" that continued to resurface had no answer as long as Jews remained in Spain. The monarchy's concern about the continued interaction between Jews and *conversos* had already led to the Jews' forced relocation from lower Andalusia in 1483, and from parts of Aragon in 1486. In April 1492, the Jews received an official order of expulsion from the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, with four months to liquidate their belongings and collect their debts. Perhaps 50,000 Jews (roughly one-fifth of the total population) chose conversion over expulsion.[30]

1492 was also famously the year when Christian forces finally overcame the defenses of Granada, the last standing Islamic emirate in Iberia. Many among the combined Christian armies celebrated the wealthy and populous conquered city as a "New Jerusalem."[31] In its negotiated surrender, the fallen Nasrid dynasty of Granada managed to safeguard the estates of its former subjects, as well as the survival of their Islamic legal system (the so-called *xara y çunna*) for the resolution of disputes among Muslims.[32] Yet less than a decade had passed when

[29] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 106. In 1495, the Hieronymite limpieza statute gained pontifical ratification. In order to save the young order from dishonor, the Spanish pope (Alejandro VI) consented that no one within the fourth generation of descent of neophytes could be admitted into it.

[30] Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 17–19; Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 39–45; Norman Roth, *Conversos, Inquisitions, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995).

[31] Davide Scotto, "'Neither through Habits, nor Solely through Will, but through Infused Faith': Hernando de Talavera's Understanding of Conversion," in *Forced Conversion in Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Coercion and Faith in Premodern Iberia and Beyond*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal and Yonatan Glazer-Eytan (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 295.

[32] For a masterful analysis of this period, see: Poutrin, *Convertir les musulmans*.

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the Crown used an uprising in the Albaicín (a Muslim neighborhood in Granada) in 1499–1500 as a pretext to renege on the capitulation agreement that had guaranteed *granadinos* religious freedom. Ultimately, all Muslims in Castile were given the same choice: conversion or expulsion. After 1501, unity in the Christian faith became a legal fact (albeit not a cultural reality) in the kingdoms ruled by Castile.

In subsequent decades, not satisfied by the mere disappearance of institutional Judaism and Islam, a number of Castilian institutions began to generate prejudicial bylaws against descendants of Jews and Muslims. In general, the Crown defended the right of private institutions to observe prohibitions stipulated by a founder at their foundation.[33] However, under the Catholic Monarchs (Ferdinand and Isabella) and Charles V, the monarchy continued to employ *conversos* in its service and sometimes acted to curb or repeal statutes proposed by religious orders and cathedral chapters.[34]

The expulsions of Jews (1492) and Muslims (1501) from Castile deprived the two parties of their status as subjects of the king and as citizens (*vecinos*) of their municipalities. Conversion was necessary to safeguard their status and avoid their disenfranchisement. As the sixteenth century began, whether a New Convert or a Christian "since time immemorial," being Christian sufficed to exercise rights and privileges at the municipal level. However, the depredations of the Inquisition formed part of a politics, encouraged by the "Catholic Monarchs" Ferdinand and Isabella, that gradually began to chip away at that equality.

Punishment by the Inquisition for heresy was widely stigmatized, leaving a record that could disqualify an immediate descendant from ecclesiastical and municipal offices. Leadership roles in society were reserved for "good Christians." The Catholic Monarchs instituted a law in Granada, denying to "heretic, or son, or grandson of anyone condemned by the Holy Inquisition . . . public offices."[35] In the secular sphere, these policies may have been innovative, but they did adhere to established norms of canon law (law of the Church) long observed throughout Europe. Generally, throughout their realms, the Catholic Monarchs applied the traditional canon law restrictions, basing restrictions not directly on ethnicity, but whether an individual had been convicted by a church

[33] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 119–129.

[34] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 122–123; Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 48–51.

[35] *Nueva recopilación de las leyes de España*, Libro VIII, tit. III, ley 3.

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court of heresy. Such prohibitions banned from royal service sons and grandsons of heretics and apostates in the male line, and sons only in the feminine line.[36] The Crown's restrictions applied to the positions of "royal councilor, high court magistrate, secretary, municipal judge, constable, steward, treasurer, or any other honorable position or office."[37] Such individuals were also banned from passing to the Indies, wearing silk, and seeking degrees in the top universities.

But these bans were not absolute, extending only two generations, with potential for royal dispensation. In fact, King Ferdinand explicitly provided for *composiciones*, or rehabilitation, for those found to be ineligible because they had been punished by the Inquisition. In return for 20,000 ducats, in 1508 the king restored goods the Inquisition had confiscated from those convicted in Seville; he took 40,000 ducats in 1509 to permit *conversos* from Seville to go the Indies; he took 80,000 ducats in 1511 to approve that same group for all classes of public offices, except *corregidor* and municipal judge with criminal jurisdiction.[38] The *limpieza* statute of the cathedral chapter in Seville (1515), which applied the same restrictions of canon law as mentioned above, has been identified by the historiography as an insidious portent.[39] Pope Leo X approved the cathedral's statute blocking heretics in 1516; Pope Clemente VII extended the interdiction to grandchildren of heretics in 1532 and Pope Paul III to their great-grandchildren in 1546.[40] But given the evidence of the potential for *composiciones*, the successive iterations of the statute likely did little to block anyone's entrance into the cathedral chapter. Perhaps more suggestive is an undated letter from Lorenzo Galíndez Carvajal, jurist and member of the *Consejo Real*, most likely penned in the late 1510s or early 1520s. The purpose of the letter was to provide short biographical data to the Emperor Charles V on the backgrounds of the fifteen members of the *Consejo de Castilla*, the royal government's most important branch. According to Galíndez Carvajal, three members were known *conversos*, a fourth was suspected, and the grandfather of *fiscal* (attorney general) Doctor Prado had been publicly penanced as a heretic.[41]

[36] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 80.
[37] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 50.
[38] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 50–51.
[39] See Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 120.
[40] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 120.
[41] CODOIN (*Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*), vol. I (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1842), 122–127.

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By the 1520s, though the Inquisition still prosecuted a steady trickle of cases against Judaizing, its anti-Jewish fervor appeared largely spent. Nevertheless, the question of lineage and eligibility for service in public offices continued to be a subject of public discussion. The *Cortes of Segovia* of 1532 asked the emperor to clarify what Old Christian meant because "according to the statutes and customs of certain religious orders, colleges, and confraternities, it was a necessary condition, in order to join the institution, to prove one's *calidad* . . . ." The representatives suggested that proving that one's parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents should be sufficient and that any proof to the contrary should come from reliable witnesses or writings. The emperor apparently declined to respond to the request.[42] When representatives in the 1542 *Cortes de Valladolid* requested that individuals whose parents or grandparents on either the male or female line had been punished by Inquisition be denied access to city council positions, Charles V closed his eyes and likewise refused to entertain the petition.[43]

The interaction between the king and the *cortes* represents a faithful portrait of the citizenship discourse at mid-century. Certain elitist institutions had adopted *limpieza* statutes, making distinctions that went beyond heresy and orthodoxy, barring applicants on a quasi-racial basis. But those cases were limited, and not supported by the Crown.[44] Heresy, within the canonical statutes, continued to be grounds for disenfranchisement, but even that could be overcome. Charles V pursued a complex strategy. Though allowing private religious institutions to enact *limpieza* statutes,[45] the emperor created opportunities for New Christians to secure important administrative posts in civil society. In practice, studies of Castile at the municipal level have shown that the prejudice against

[42] Manuel Colmeiro, *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y Castilla*, t. 5 (Madrid: Impresores de la Real Casa, 1903), 165.

[43] Colmeiro, *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y Castilla*, 201.

[44] This is the position taken by Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 235. Many others, focusing on the content of religious polemic, view the reach as much greater: Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*; Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*; Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*. Hernández Franco takes a middle road, suggesting that concern over *limpieza* was widespread, but that existing laws were often not exercised, or were ignored. Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*.

[45] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 57, 82. Sicroff notes that the emperor's stance was typically to honor the original constitutions provided by founders of private institutions. Thus, in 1537, he reprimanded some *colegios* for excluding New Christians in 1537 because the original bylaws made no mention of such exclusion. Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 123.

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descendants of Jewish converts was real and enduring, but it was nowhere close to universal. The anti-*converso* discourse, and laws and bylaws supporting it, would fade for years, perhaps even decades at a time, only to re-emerge when its employment could affect or restore the balance of power between warring municipal factions.[46]

1.2 LIMPIEZA, MUNICIPAL POLITICS, AND THE CHURCH IN THE MID-SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The well-studied case of municipal politics in Murcia offers an example of the complexities of mid-century ethnic politics in Habsburg Spain.[47] Throughout the final decades of the fifteenth century, and the first half of the sixteenth, numerous *conversos* attained positions of importance on the city council that governed the city. The process of renunciation allowed urban oligarchs to pass their city council seats to relatives or other individuals of their choosing. When Diego de Lara, member of an ascendant *converso* family, pledged his allegiance to the new Emperor Charles V in the 1510s, the emperor guaranteed Lara the right to pass on his office to another, as long as that person was not a foreigner or *infame*. Lara married the Old Christian Beatriz de Soto, member of one of two powerful clans who controlled the city.[48] In 1543 and 1544, the Crown offered many *concejo* seats in Murcia for sale, part of a plan to provide much-needed revenue for foreign wars.[49] This was not confined to Murcia or to those years in particular; instead, it characterized the final decades of Charles V's reign. Municipal offices were attractive because they did not require genealogies or *probanzas*. In the end, many *conversos* acquired municipal offices that they passed down for generations via *renunciation*.[50] During this same period, the doors of nobility also opened to upwardly mobile *conversos*. In 1553, Bishop Suárez de Carvajal,

[46] Jaime Contreras, *Sotos contra Riquelmes: regidores, inquisidores y criptojudíos* (Madrid: Anaya & M. Muchnik, 1992); Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*; Linda Martz, A *Network of Converso Families in Early Modern Toledo: Assimilating a Minority* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

[47] J. B. Owens, *Rebelión, monarquía y oligarquía murciana en la época de Carlos V* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1980); Jaime Contreras, *Sotos contra Riquelmes*; Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*.

[48] Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*, 49.

[49] Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*, 51.

[50] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 59–60. *Renunciation* allowed an officeholder to abdicate an office, while conceding it to a person of his choosing.

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president of the *Consejo de Hacienda*, proposed the sale of 175 noble titles (*hidalguías*) to *conversos* for the substantial sum of 3,000 ducats apiece – "since farmers would not be able to afford them . . . ."[51]

Despite the symbolism of the overtures from the monarch, some Old Christians remained hostile to New Christians. Others merely recognized the inherent power, given the punitive reach of the Inquisition and the shadows it could cast on reputations, of accusations of Judaizing against professional adversaries. Each of these groups made an appearance in a memorable case in mid-century Murcia.

When an activist dean undertook a reform of the cathedral of Murcia, he ran into opposition from obstinate chapter members unwilling to relinquish their concubines or their participation in civil affairs. In order to undermine the dean and stymy his reform plans, the chapter members invited the Inquisition to investigate the Judaizing of one of the dean's close allies. The strategy worked. The dean was slowly removed from power.[52]

In 1541, a new bishop arrived – Juan Martínez Silíceo. Emperor Charles V had hand-picked Silíceo, who had been Prince Philip's personal tutor, to lead a reform of the cathedral.[53] The brilliant Silíceo came from a humble background of Old Christian commoners, and throughout his career he displayed a hatred and distrust of New Christians.[54] In 1544, Silíceo took advantage of his new position as bishop to revive a dormant *limpieza* statute that had been drafted but never enacted. At that point, the cathedral began a strict observance of the *limpieza* statute, at least until Silíceo's promotion to the archbishopric of Toledo in 1546, at which point its enforcement became more sporadic.[55]

The application of the *limpieza* statute within Murcia's cathedral chapter reflected the relationship between Old Christians and *conversos* more generally in mid-century Habsburg Spain. The prejudice against descendants of Jewish converts was real and enduring, but it was nowhere close to

[51] "Puesto que los labradores no podían pagarlas . . . ." 1553 memorial from Carvajal to Eraso, as cited in Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 59. It is important to note the implication here that *labradores* were Old Christians. The general perception, which Henry Kamen at times has tried to challenge, was that *conversos* were overwhelmingly urban-dwelling, including many *bourgeois*, and that few, if any, formed part of the rural agricultural workforce.

[52] Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*, 43–46.

[53] Geoffrey Parker, *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 15.

[54] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 127.

[55] Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*, 40–60.

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universal. The anti-*converso* discourse, and laws and bylaws supporting it, would fade for years, perhaps even decades at a time, only to re-emerge when their employment could affect or restore the balance of power between warring municipal factions.

In the following decade, animosity between the two major factions of the oligarchy in Murcia burst into public confrontation. Strategic accusations of Judaizing upended the balance of local politics. Over the course of investigations lasting nearly two decades, the Inquisition revealed evidence of heresy and apostasy, executing at least 165 people. But accusations circulated that inquisitors were partial and that the Inquisition had pushed numerous wearied and frightened witnesses to manufacture testimony. Only the outbreak of the War of the Alpujarras (1568), and the recognition of a new, shared, exterior enemy (the *moriscos* of Granada, in open rebellion) put an end to the local holocaust.[56] As the dust began to settle, King Philip II convinced Pope Pius V to authorize the Grand Inquisitor (and the king's top minister) Diego de Espinosa to absolve the surviving individuals who had been implicated, punishing them with only spiritual exercises.[57] In the end, accusations of crypto-Judaism had served as a powerful and dangerous tool for oligarchs seeking to settle scores. Yet after 1570, numerous *conversos* still remained in positions of power in the city.

In 1546, the ambitious and opinionated bishop Silíceo was promoted to the archbishopric of Toledo (see Map 1.1), the *sede primada* of Castile and the kingdom's most prestigious ecclesiastical post.[58] He brought confrontational *limpieza* politics with him. When the Pope assigned to the cathedral a new canon whose father was a heretic convicted of Judaizing, Silíceo took advantage of the perceived insult from the Vatican to call a secret meeting of the cathedral chapter, which decided to establish for the very first time its own *limpieza de sangre* statutes.[59] Silíceo wailed that the admission of "*tal casta*" would expose the Church to applications from all ranges of people, making the *sede primada de*

[56] Jaime Contreras, *Sotos contra Riquelmes*; Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna*, 43–55.

[57] Domínguez Ortiz, *Los judeoconversos en España y América*, 58.

[58] Toledo was the richest see on the peninsula, in addition to enjoying a principal place among all other dioceses. This honorific position, which was tied to the diocese's antiquity and could be traced back to the fourth century, made Toledo the representative of Iberian Catholicism.

[59] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 130–136. Almost immediately, Silíceo's opponents denounced the secret condition of the vote.

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MAP 1.1 Map of sixteenth-century Spain (courtesy of Ben Pease)

España into a "second synagogue." It was important, he argued, that the cathedral of Toledo, as the representative of Spanish Christendom, should admit only the most superlative candidates.

A majority of the chapter members supported Silíceo's proposal, but interpreting the motivations of those who voted with him is difficult. It is likely that some, like him, held longstanding distrust of the *conversos* for personal reasons. At the same time, the papal nomination seems to have violated both a sense of national autonomy within the Spanish Church – the 1523 grant of (limited) royal patronage that Charles had won from the

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Pope had seemed a safeguard against the nomination of such unpalatable candidates[60] – and canon law itself. Canon law, as a reminder, denied the direct descendants (sons) of heretics access to the priesthood.[61] This particular confluence of issues may have given Silíceo the support that he needed in order to secure a positive vote.

Silíceo's move was widely interpreted as a power-play, meant to seriously diminish the power of the nobility within the Church. Many noble families had Jewish roots. The newly authored statutes stated that even its most humble members should be noble, well-educated, and "have no stain of Jewish, Moorish, or heretical blood in their lineage . . . without *limpieza de sangre*, nobility and letters are of no value . . . ."[62] Bans would only apply to future admissions to prebends or dignities, but all currently employed *conversos* would be frozen in their current positions. The statute set off a firestorm, led at first by the dignitaries within the cathedral who saw their positions threatened.

The conflict soon took on both national and international dimensions. The elite University of Alcalá, founded a few decades earlier by Archbishop Cisneros, threw its full support behind the dissenting members of the cathedral chapter.[63] Two archdeacons, sons of the powerful duke of Infantado, decried the statute as contrary to law, synodal decree, and papal bulls. They added that it was an injustice to take the tithe from both Old and New Christians but allow only Old Christians to participate in Church governance. The confrontation spurred such violent confrontations that Prince Philip, regent of Castile (and future king), had to send to Toledo a royal magistrate, who ordered those promoting the statute to renounce putting it into effect. The two parties appealed, albeit to different authorities. The *conversos* went directly to the Pope, while the Old Christians went to Emperor Charles V.[64]

[60] Kamen, *Spain 1469–1714: A Society of Conflict*, 188.
[61] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 120.
[62] As cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 133 and 166.
[63] The faculty at Alcalá also advised the dean how to conduct his argumentation against the archbishop, in eloquent prose: "Cristo concedió la nobleza a todos aquellos que le siguieran y que tomaran su nombre llamándose *cristianos*. La verdadera nobleza está implantada en el verdadero cristiano, sea de origen gentil, judío, negro, o cualquier pueblo monstruoso. Solo el que no sigue a cristo es un plebeyo y un infame al que hay que cerrar las puertas de la Iglesia terrestre y celeste. Pero todos los que vienen a Él, toman su Nombre y olvidan el de la nación de donde vinieron, de tal suerte que, gracias a la Pasión, no queda más que un solo rebaño y un solo Pastor." As cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 135.
[64] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 136–139.

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The emperor refused to countermand the *cédulas* that Prince Philip had sent to Silíceo, ordering a stay on the legislation. Yet he did allow the archbishop permission to appeal to Rome. Charles V also ordered the dissenters to take their case before the *Consejo Real*. Pope Paul III, after submitting the issue to discussion at the Vatican high court, signed a brief against the statute.[65] Meanwhile, the *Consejo Real* reaffirmed Philip's decision, and upheld the refusal of the statute.[66] In September 1548, Prince Philip reaffirmed his position, reiterating that the statute should not be enacted.[67]

Though official rulings had been made, the case was not closed. Silíceo seems to have continued applying the statutes informally, while at the same time continuing to lobby at the Vatican. When the violently anti-Jewish former *nuncio* in Spain, Gian Pietro Caraffa, became Pope Paul IV in 1555, he almost immediately confirmed the *limpieza* statute that Silíceo had sought for the cathedral of Toledo. Surprisingly, upon becoming king in 1556, Philip II revoked his prior interdiction against the statute, allowing it to take effect. In Philip II's explanation of his volte-face to the military orders, he blamed the extension of "heresy" in Spain, France, and Germany on the unorthodox proselytization of New Christians.[68] The cathedral that formed the center of Iberian Catholicism would henceforward have a *limpieza de sangre* statute.

1.3 CONCLUSION

After mid-century, two broad, recognizable factions had begun to emerge in society, each pushing for a particular triangulation between religion, law, and ethnic politics in Habsburg Spain and its empire. Though, fifteenth-century political rivals in Toledo likely never expected as much, the fifteenth-century neologisms – Old Christian and New Christian – that arose out of their conflict would provide the frame through which Spaniards thought about difference for centuries to come.

[65] Silíceo claimed that Pope Paul III afterward removed the issue from the court's competence, and gave it to a panel of three cardinals, who ruled the statute "santo y justo." Following that act, Paul III would have signed a secret decree approving the statute. Sicroff, however, says there's no evidence such a bull existed. Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 140–141 and 169.

[66] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 140–141.

[67] Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 169.

[68] As cited in Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 172.

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Limpieza partisans, who argued that legitimate leadership within society could only rest in the hands of Old Christians whose purity of conscience was an inherited attribute, clashed against others who argued for a more open society. While Castile's most liberal faction would once have argued for inter-faith religious tolerance, by mid-sixteenth century fewer and fewer individuals voiced such an opinion publicly.[69] Nativist Old Christians in Castile and Aragon constantly militated for the adoption of *limpieza de sangre* statutes that would bar New Christians and their descendants (through varying generations) from cathedrals, *cofradías*, *colegios*, universities, and religious and military orders. Partisans of *limpieza* first sought to exclude converts – primarily from Judaism, but later also from Islam – from these positions in Iberia.

As Chapter 3 will illustrate, proponents of Tridentine Catholic reform, perhaps surprisingly, formed the majority within the bloc that countered partisans of *limpieza*. Over the preceding decades, the political center had shifted far enough that a great majority within society assumed that being a "good Christian" ought to be the basis for political enfranchisement. *Limpieza* proponents portrayed that identity as a racial one, inherited through biology. Proponents of Tridentine reform, on the other hand, were much more likely to view "good Christian" identity as cultural and thus teachable. The reforms of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) not only gave clarity about religious orthodoxy in very uncertain times, but in the form in which they were adopted in the Spanish kingdoms also wildly expanded the ability of the Church to teach the citizenship that the Crown demanded of its subjects.

[69] Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

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