

Conversos: Targets of The Inquisition

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Spring 2014

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The date, March 31, 1492; the place, Spain; Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella of Castile set in motion one of the most decisive Spanish policies in the country's history. The Edict of Expulsion expelled Spanish Jews from all of Spain.¹ Until this point, Spanish Jewry flourished, both under Moorish and Catholic rulers. Roots of Spanish Jewry were said to date back more than one thousand years; however, this change in official Spanish attitudes toward Jews were triggered by charges of Jewish and conversos² perversions of the Christian faith. In 1480, Jews were officially separated from all forms of public life, including separate juderias.³ Failing to fix the problem of Judaizers, the King and Queen of a newly unified Spain commissioned an Inquisition to investigate and eradicate these charges of crypto-Judaism among Catholics, old and new.⁴ This paper will discuss the history of Spanish inquisitions, as an institution, from the Roman Empire through the Middle Ages; as well as trace the lives, and changes within those lives, of Jews. It will explain the Spanish Inquisition, and its form, as well as consider the feelings of the Spanish people, as well as Ferdinand and Isabella, toward Jews and the motives that prompted the Inquisition and culminated in their eventual expulsion. The paper will illustrate that the notion of crypto-Judaism, although believed, was simply a fear among Catholics at the time. The Spanish Inquisition's want to eradicate this perceived crypto-Judaism was no religious fervor; but rather was indeed racial fanaticism against Jews. The early Spanish Inquisition targeted conversos, not

¹ The "Edict of Expulsion" was also known as the "Alhambra Decree;" this was Spanish law until revoked in 1968.

² Recent converts to the Catholic faith.

³ Jewish quarters within Spanish cities.

⁴ Crypto-Judaism is the practice of privately adhering to Judaism while professing Christianity as one's faith, publicly.

because they had committed any kind of heresy or perversion, but rather simply because they were conversos.⁵

⁵ For a detailed outline of the Inquisition's organization and operation during the Inquisition see, Henry Charles Lea, *The Inquisition of the Middle Ages, its organization and operation* (New York, Citadel Press, 1954). Another source, that looks exclusively at the origins of Spain's Inquisition see, Benzion Netanyahu, *The Origins of the Inquisition in fifteenth century Spain* (New York: Random House, 1995). For a detailed tracking of Spanish Jewry through time and its dispersion, until the recent past, see, Jane S. Gerber, *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1992). For a detailed snapshot of Spanish Jewry from the Middle Ages to their Expulsion, see, Joseph Perez, *History of a Tragedy: the expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, trans. Lysa Hochroth (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007). For a source that explains the roles of Conversos and makes distinctions between Conversos between the centuries see, Norman Roth, *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/jmulibrary/docDetail.action?docID=10217078> (accessed April 11, 2012). For a source that traces the Inquisition's relationship with popular society and culture see, Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985). For a source that looks at the Spanish Inquisition exclusively using Hebrew sources as well as a Jewish frame of reference see, Benzion Netanyahu, *The Marranos of Spain, from the late XIVth to the early XVIth century, according to contemporary Hebrew sources* (New York, American Academy for Jewish Research, 1966). For a source that exclusively traces how the Reconquista and the Inquisition affected Moriscos of Spain see, Henry Charles Lea, *The Moriscos of Spain: their conversion and expulsion* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968). For a source that looks at how gender affected the Inquisition's actions, in Seville, see, Mary Elizabeth Perry, *Gender and disorder in early modern Seville* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990). For an article that looks at the economic power and influence the Inquisition had attained through their procedural confiscations see, Henry Kamen, "Confiscations in the Economy of the Spanish Inquisition," *The Economic History Review* 18 (1965), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2592562> (accessed April 11, 2012). For an article regarding senior Inquisitor Diego Rodriguez Lucero, of Cordoba, and his activities as an inquisitor see, Henry Charles Lea, "Lucero The Inquisitor," *American Historical Association* 2 (1897), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1833979> (accessed April 11, 2012). For a description of Morisco women's attempts to halt the confiscation of written Morisco texts in Valencia in attempts to preserve Morisco culture in Spain see, Ronald E. Surtz, "Morisco Women, Written Texts, and the Valencia Inquisition," *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 32 (2001), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/view/2671740> (accessed April 11, 2012). Primary sources that deal with Spanish Inquisition and the treatment and zeal of Jew in Spain include a law that passed through the Toledo Cortes on June 15, 1480. This law enacted the segregation of the Jews from the Christians and ended the Spanish convivencia, see, Cortes de Toledo, "Legislacion Historia de Espana." Ministerio de

Educación, Cultura y Deporte,
<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/lhe/Consultas/mostrarTitulo.jsp?titulo=040301> (accessed April 11, 2012). For a source is a source that explains the changes made to daily Jewish life by a council of Spanish Rabbis in 15th century Castile. The ordinances put forth relate to many forms of daily life. One of the headings relates to the progression and continuation of Jewish learning in Castile, another about the appointment of judges and court proceedings, a third about penalties, another regarding taxes, and a final section regarding clothing. These ordinances could be enforced due to the fact of Jewish communities' semi-autonomous nature in early modern Spain see, Louis Finkelstein, "Medieval Sourcebook: [SEP]Synod of Castilian Jews, 1432." Internet History Sourcebooks Project, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1432synod-castile-jews.asp> (accessed April 11, 2012). This source is an anthology of sources that is organized thematically, as well as loosely chronologically. The source looks at inquisitorial trials and their proceedings, including the personnel, the history, the punishments, and the prosecution. It looks at the Inquisition from multiple standpoints including Moors, Conversos, people accused of witchcraft, and Protestants see, Lu Ann Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: an anthology of sources*, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2006). For a source that is a royal charter to the city of Tereul by Alfonso II of Aragon, that appropriated certain equal rights to Jews Christians and Muslims within the city. It entails information about baths, lawsuits, as well as contracts. It also explicitly states that Jews are serfs of the king and any harm to them would result in just compensation due to the royal treasury see, Elka Klein, "Medieval Sourcebook: [SEP]Jews and Christians in Tereul: The Fuero of Tereul, 1176 CE." Internet History Sourcebooks Project, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1276teruel.asp> (accessed April 11, 2012). For a source that is a set of laws in Gothic Spain, written between 649 and 652 by Kings Chintasvintus and Recesvintus. It reveals early conceptions of Spanish and Catholic ideas toward Jews, most notably in book 12 entitled "Concerning the Prevention of Official Oppression, and the Thorough Extinction of Heretical Sects". The preface states that the Spanish Church at the time was independent of the Pope and did not recognize the Vatican's dominance. During the Moors' rule of Spain, laws not conflicting with the Moors' laws were to be enforced. When Ferdinand III conquered Cordoba, the Visigothic Code became the legal prescription in his domain. The Visigothic Code appears to be an important foundation for anti-Semitism in Spain and the Spanish Inquisition see, S.P. Scott, "The Visigothic Code (forum Judicum)," Library of Iberian Resources Online, <http://libro.uca.edu/vcode/visigoths.htm> (accessed April 11, 2012). For a source that is the earliest known reference to Jews as a race connected by blood, and not rituals. It is a racist law that exemplifies the fear of conversos' quick rise in status as well as "old Christians" fears of Jews. These laws would quickly make conversion efforts via pogroms, offering salvation, insignificant if conversos could not hold certain offices see, Wolf, Kenneth B, "Sentencia-Estatuto de Toledo, 1449," Claremont Colleges-Medieval Texts in Translation, http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1043&context=pomona_fac_pub&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3Dsentencia-

The earliest forms of inquisitions were simply investigations and trials for public crimes in third century Rome. Because the burden of proof lay upon the courts, confessions usually were sought by magistrates to corroborate their charges. As the Roman Empire officially converted to Christianity, these inquisitorial practices were not only directed at criminals, but to heretics as well. Justinian's codification of Roman law preserved inquisitorial practices throughout Europe.⁶

The earliest Jews in Spain can be traced back to, at the least, Titus's reign in Rome, around 70 CE. Under Roman rule, Spanish Jewry flourished in conjunction with other religious communities. Despite their activity in Roman society, many still begrudged Jews for their exclusivity in their communities. This exclusivity allowed for Jews to build status and wealth in the Jewish community, as well as in the secular community in attempts to assimilate themselves. However autonomous and important, both culturally and economically to the empire, some pagan Romans viewed Jewish monotheism as disloyalty to the empire.⁷

After Constantine's conversion, in 312, Roman rule in many places in the West, Jews became very restricted. Christians within the Roman bureaucracy felt contempt toward Jewish communities because of their own very real religious zeal.⁸ In Roman law heresy was seen as treason against God. The severity of treason in Rome was extremely high, and because this severity, the early Church's role and

[estituto%2520de%2520toledo%25201449%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D3%26ved%3D0CD4QFjAC](#) (accessed April 11, 2012).

⁶ The Corpus Juris was the codification of Roman law by Justinian I in 529.

⁷ "Introduction" in Homza, xi-xii; Gerber, 5-6.

⁷ Gerber, 2-6; Perez, 5-6.

⁸ After Constantine's conversion, much of the Roman legislation drafted had very apparent anti-Semitic undertones.

inquisitorial powers quickly increased with a greater determination to combat heresy. Many of these restrictions stemmed from a fear of Jewish influence that had been very apparent during the Roman Empire's height and decline. This influence was especially by Christians within Spain.⁹

As the Middle Ages progressed, the sophistication of the Inquisition in Europe progressed and became uniform across Christendom. As The Catholic religion further encroached upon secular law and life; clerical jurisdiction of crimes of heresy, as well as other crimes, increased and became much more organized and centralized. The Inquisition in the Middle Ages was centered on Papal authority divided among Bishops ordered to uncover heresy using interrogation. As the Inquisition continued to become more sophisticated and evolve, the scope of charges of heresy, as well as interrogation techniques and the punishments possible began to expand.¹⁰

In Gothic Spain, Jews were extremely restricted by the Visigothic Codes.¹¹ The Visigothic Codes were attempts to ensure Catholicism among their subjects. Their laws restricted life for Jews both socially as infidels, with little or no secular legal presence or power; religiously, they were unable to practice, as well as having

⁹ Some Rabbis were considered extremely influential in local politics in Spain. Gerber, 3-5, 6-8.

¹⁰ Punishments could simply be a person must perform a Pilgrimage, the confiscation of property continuing in severity to the possibility of excommunication and a death sentence. Lea, *Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, 8-10, 158-160; "Introduction" in Homza, xiii.

¹¹ Set of laws written between 649 and 652 by Kings Chintasvintus and Recesvintus in Gothic Spain; Jews were not under the jurisdiction of the papal inquisition.

limited mobility within the country as well as between the nation-states.¹² These restrictions show a harsh reality of how early Christianity perceived Jewry, as a perfida¹³ of Christianity. Despite many of the restrictions on Jewish life under the Visigoths, Jewish communities still very much existed semi-autonomously, having Jewish courts that decided local civil matters. These Visigothic Codes continued to be present in Spanish law for centuries. In 1236, the conquering Ferdinand III, of Castile, adopted the laws to be followed in Cordoba. However, Ferdinand's translation of the Codes from Latin to Spanish resulted in mistranslations and misinterpretations that changed much of the enforcement of the Codes. In 1788, Charles III affirmed these laws by stating they had not been repealed.¹⁴

The expanding Muslim world eventually encountered, and expanded into Christendom through the Moorish conquest of the Mediterranean. Islam's expansion allowed for Judaism's revival in Spain.¹⁵ Jews viewed the Moorish conquerors as liberators from the Visigoths; the incoming Moorish rulers employed Jews as paramilitary militia while simultaneously allowing Jews, and the remaining Christians, to maintain their respective religious practices.¹⁶ The Jews' ability to assimilate under Muslim rule allowed their status to rise considerably. Jews began

¹² Jews, according to the Visigothic Codes, could not practice their dietary laws and many holidays and ceremonies including religious weddings.

¹³ "Perfida" means perversion. Many early Church officials had deemed Judaism a perversion of Christianity, because they did not want to dissociate completely from Judaism.

¹⁴ Gerber, 3-5, 6-8; Scott, Visigothic Code, Preface, Book XII: Title I, II, III; Perez, 6-8, Lea, *The Inquisition* 194.

¹⁵ These Moorish conquerors formed the Caliphate of Cordoba.

¹⁶ The "djizya" was a poll tax that non-Muslims paid to Muslim rulers as tribute to ensure Jewish and Christian communities' semi-autonomy in public life, in accordance with the Pact of Umar.

to specialize in money lending, as well as dominate the slave trade, and the trade of other goods, throughout the Mediterranean world. Muslim rulers also assigned Jews to various political posts, including tax collectors, diplomats, and viziers; the Muslim public resented many of these Jewish office holders.¹⁷ Jews, although thriving religiously autonomously, embraced Arabic and Muslim culture. The multilingualism, legal standardization, and cohesiveness of Jewish communities throughout the Muslim world ensured Jewish prominence in international trade and intellectual discourse, and their religious autonomy allowed Jews to maintain their own collective identity.¹⁸

Attempting to force back the Muslim infidels, Christendom's Reconquista is said to have begun at the Battle of Tours in 732, where Frankish warriors halted the Muslim advance into southern France, along the Pyrenees mountain range. The victory at Tours quickly stunted the Moors' military momentum. Under Alfonso I, King of Asturias, Spain began an almost 800 year long campaign in an attempt to recapture Iberia. Slowly, but steadily, Spain's Christian kings began to recapture Spain. Jews migrated northward, into Catholic Spain in 1147, when the Almohad Muslims invaded Spain from Morocco to displace the current Moorish rulers.¹⁹ As the Moors began to lose more and more of their European foothold, life became more and more restrictive in Muslim Spain. During the Reconquista; Jews, once

¹⁷ "Viziers" were political advisors and ministers in Muslim courts. Muslim religious doctrine denotes non-Muslims as inferior and unable to have authority over Muslim believers.

¹⁸ Many Jews adopted Arabic as their primary language and embraced Arab advancements and knowledge brought with Spain's Moorish conquerors, as well as embracing parallel histories and laws. Gerber, 17-23, 29-30, 32-38, 54, 74; Perez, 8-12.

¹⁹ Almohads were fundamentalist Berber Muslim dynasty from Morocco. Many Jews migrated to avoid massacres and forced conversions from the new Muslim regime.

again played important roles. As Arabic speakers, they acted as ambassadors and interpreters to the local Muslim populations. In Christendom, Jews acted militarily in battle as a part of the Reconquista, as well as having important bureaucratic posts as rewards for Jews' necessary financial backing of Spain's Reconquista.²⁰

Under the early Catholic monarchies, Jews maintained legal semi-autonomy within their own ranks with their own judges, penalties, and taxes, similar to Christian localities. At first, many Jews participating in the Reconquista, whether financially or militarily, were welcomed into newly conquered lands with an explicit notion of royal protection to these Jewish communities. Jews began to receive royal appointments as administrators and tax collectors; laws were drafted that protected Jews' property and lives; and Jews began selling in the bazaar, side by side with Catholic vendors.²¹

Despite the appointments, concessions, and assimilation afforded to them, the Jewish community still valued its autonomy and differences. They wanted the ability to practice as well as enjoy secular roles that increased social status.²² As early as 1081, papal orders restricted Jewish posts in Catholic bureaucracies; however, because of the lack of enforcement and legislation, Spain remained a sanctuary that allowed widespread Jewish, and in turn Spanish, prosperity until the Jews' expulsion from Spain. As the fourteenth century began, famine and inflation

²⁰ This financial backing ensured posts that included tax and revenue collecting posts, as well as financiers and financial advisors to the Catholic monarchies. Gerber, 17, 57, 80-81, 93-94, 97, 295-297; Perez, 12-13, 32, 48, 69.

²¹ Jews sought political stability within Spain to ensure their own communities' well being. James I offered protection, land grants and tax incentives to Jews to settle in newly conquered lands. Perez, 11, 19-21; Gerber, 95-97; Klein, Fuero of Tereul.

²² Royal protection and privilege afforded to Jews angered the noble Catholics as well as Christian authorities in Rome.

struck Spain, and as the century progressed, insurrection ensued between the monarch, Pedro I, and much of the nobility. Most Jews knew that a change in royal power would most likely spell misfortune for them.²³ Revolts in Navarre made Castile and Aragon sanctuary to displaced Jews. These revolts resulted in a special distinction of Jews as property of the monarch, under his protection.²⁴

Catholic Spain's Reconquista was not only territorial, but also a very religious endeavor. After Spain began to secure its borders, the Church began preach zeal toward Jews, most notably Ferran Martinez of Seville who incited fear within the masses.²⁵ Fearing expulsion, loss of status, as well as violence, many began to convert to sidestep any possibility of the two. Many Jews were compelled to convert to Catholicism, willingly as well as by duress and coercion.²⁶ In Cordoba and Valencia, *juderias* were overrun with Catholic influence in attempts to baptize entire communities.²⁷ Pogrom like crusades occurred all throughout the country.

Conversion appeared to be the motive; however, the language and actions depict a

²³ Throughout Europe Jews had been blamed as responsible for spreading financial inequity among people as well as being blamed for Christ's death, and had been expelled from other countries including England in 1290 and France in 1182. The "Fuero of Tereul" exemplified the Spanish monarch's value of the Jews' loyalty, stating any harm brought to Jews in Tereul, would result in a fine from the monarch.

²⁴ Isabella stated, "All the Jews of my kingdoms are mine and under my shelter and protection, and it is up to me to defend and protect them and to maintain their rights," in 1477, in Trujillo, quoted in Gerber, 129. Perez, 18-21, 32-34; Gerber, 92-93, 95-97, 129; Klein, Fuero of Tereul.

²⁵ Juan I attempted to block the hateful sermons by Archdeacon of Ecija, Ferran Martinez, beginning in 1378, by simply stating that Jews ought to be treated with respect, despite they are in fact "evil and perverse." Ferran Martinez was a relatively low ranking Castilian priest with great rapport among the lower classes.

²⁶ Pope Gregory I had established canon law that stated no baptism could be forced upon someone.

²⁷ *Juderias* were Jewish communities in Spain; while many Jewish communities already lived together, this limited any possibility cohabitation and comingling in public life.

very real hatred and anti-Semitism among Spaniards. Although these mass conversions were very much enforced to revile Judaism many still retained and gained posts of importance. The Jewish elite was the most likely to convert. A quick conversion by the Jewish elite afforded those individuals access to offices and posts previously denied to them. Paul of Burgos, a former chief rabbi of Burgos, was one of these elite members of Jewish society who converted out of sincerity. He quickly ascended in his employment with the Catholic Church in Castile.²⁸ He climbed the clerical ladder in Spain and had significant influence in Papal business throughout Europe.²⁹

Despite many conversos', such as Paul of Burgos and others, very real faith in Catholicism, and even anti-Jewishness in Spain, many still feared their converted brethren as heretics whom had not truly adopted Christianity.³⁰ Many were in fact serious about their new faith and used their new status as full citizens to further their personal success in life, such as Paul of Burgos. Many anti-converso Christians claimed that conversos' high number of clerics was in direct correlation of their plan to overtake and infiltrate the Catholic Church.³¹ The unification of Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella was quickly met with the new goals to ease this fear of crypto-Judaism, and ensure religious and social confidence in their domain. They

²⁸ Paul of Burgos was originally Solomon ha-Levi, chief Rabbi of Burgos.

²⁹ Perez, 43, 49, 51; Roth 12-13, 26-27, 126, 204; Netanyahu, *Origins*, 129-130, 165-167, 170-174; Lea, *The Moriscos*, 12.

³⁰ Much of the hostility toward conversos was due to their relatively quick social successes and standing.

³¹ By the mid-sixteenth century much of the Spanish clergy in Rome was of converso origin.

attempted to consolidate their power by answering the question of crypto-Judaism by answering it with expulsion.³²

Thus, as the Reconquista began to come to a close, heresy began to become a main concern of the Spanish crown and clergy. Spanish Jewry had been an important intermediary between Islam and Catholicism, both culturally as well as politically for centuries. However, religious fanaticism soon exploded and violence ensued. Catholic sermons took on zealous tones toward Jews. Despite the crown's attempt to censor these sermons, they turned public opinion against Spanish Jews. Attempts to remove any trace of Judaism in daily life followed. Jews were continuously demonized and removed from the bureaucracy. As time went on, more and more severe restrictions were being placed upon Jews. In 1480, the Toledo Cortes restricted the dwellings of Jews to individual *juderias* to stop what they saw as the perversion of Christianity. Other places, including Seville and Valladolid, as well as others, quickly followed suit to end, what many said was the Jewish influence on Catholic dogma.³³ Converts continued to pour in from Judaism. The majority of the conversions that occurred were mostly out of fear of what would happen if they did not convert.³⁴

The original Spanish Inquisition, formed by a papal bull in 1179, was in the Kingdom of Aragon-Catalonia. That inquisition's purpose was solely to investigate

³² Netanyahu, *Origins*, 170, 208, 367-384; Perez, 50-52, 76-77, 84-86; *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 285-289; Netanyahu, *The Marranos*, 29, 204-205. "Introduction" in Homza, xvi, "Document 2" 10; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 22; Roth, 126.

³³ In 1483, Andalusia the region expelled all Jews.

³⁴ Gerber, 99, 120, 130; Perez, 43, 45-46, 85; Netanyahu, *Origins*, 85-86, 129-131, 145; Cortes de Toledo, Article 76; *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 285-289.

Christian heretics.³⁵ The early modern Spanish Inquisition was formed, also by a papal bull, in 1480 and remained active until 1834. Unlike the Medieval Inquisition, this was under direct royal control.³⁶ Rather than simple heresy, in reality the Spanish Inquisition was a distinct anti-Semitic entity; it was formed to combat the judaizing of otherwise decent Catholics and conversos. Those who supported the actions of the Spanish Inquisition called Jews, crypto-Jewish conversos, and even earnest conversos, such as Paul of Burgos who excelled in and even enjoyed his service to the Church as a converso, “natural enemies” of Catholicism and Spain and viewed with a cloud of suspicion. Beginning in the sixteenth century, racist tendencies among Catholics became codified and regular practice in daily life. Judaism, according to popular Spanish belief at the time, was no longer a religion one practiced, but rather a race one was born into. The Sentencia-Estatuto de Toledo, of 1449, was the first law in Spain to limit, and differentiate conversos in public life.³⁷ In distinguishing old and new Catholics, descendants of Jews were denied posts of influence in the army, the university, the Church and in municipal bureaucracies. In an attempt to salvage some Papal authority, a bull was submitted that urged more secret reconciliations to avoid “lasting infamy” for the tribunals’

³⁵ The Papacy had no jurisdiction over Jews.

³⁶ Pope Sixtus IV had immediately tried to regain control of the Inquisition fearing that the inquisitors would have political loyalty overreaching their religious loyalties.

³⁷ To gain public appointments, one would need “blood purity.” The law was quickly invalidated by Pope Nicholas V, stating, “all Catholics are one in body,” meaning that race did not determine one’s Catholicism.

targets.³⁸ Before their expulsion, Jews were employed by the Inquisition to spy on conversos and testify against them.³⁹

The Spanish Inquisition was exemplified by its uniformity in all of its aspects, through each tribunal, across the newly united country. The main targets in the early years of the Spanish Inquisition were “judaizing” Catholics who were suspected either of attracting others, or practicing a form of crypto-Judaism. The greatest feats of the Inquisition were its secrecy and the amount of fear it instilled in the public. Defendants were presumed guilty, a written, as well as the possibility of a public, confession removed any sentence and lead to treatment with mercy.⁴⁰ The Inquisition was orderly and half-heartedly supported a fair trial for the accused. The Inquisition was supposed to be run by impartial inquisitors who were not to charge individuals without proof. The inquisitors were to allow for adequate defense testimony; have speedy, uniformed trials, and keep meticulous records. Each tribunal would have many uniformed trials and therefore needed uniformed personnel among them. Each tribunal had two inquisitors present at each trial, a prosecutor and a theologian. The Inquisition employed a variety of professionals including individuals who acted as wardens, notaries, secretaries, bailiffs, and a

³⁸ Converso opposition had sky rocketed as tens of thousands of conversos had been killed, exiled, or bankrupted by Castilian tribunals, with little protest from old Christians until the tribunal expanded its scope of searching for heresy to non-conversos as well.

³⁹ Roth, 203; “Introduction” in Homza, xiii, xvi-xvii, xxvi; Perez, 41; Gerber, 127-128, 130; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 49-51; Wolf, *Sentencia-Estatuto*.

⁴⁰ Despite this mercy, many conversos’ first instinct was to flee at the sign of a charge of heresy, during the early proceedings of the Inquisition. There was a very apparent misuse, exploitation and creation of evidence to better convict conversos, as well as corruption among inquisitors.

receiver to handle finances at the monasteries, where tribunals were held, to ensure the fluidity of the Inquisition.⁴¹

The uniformity of the trials, as well as the targeting of conversos was aided by royal support. In 1484, Ferdinand stated that the worst form of heresy in Spain was the deviation of “the Faith” and judaizing otherwise good Christians. He also alluded to conversos as a “certain malignant people” that will be punished for their heretical depravity.⁴² His royal decrees compelled individuals to assist local Inquisitions in any way they may need assistance.⁴³

The trials had uniformity in structure with regard to interrogation of the accused. In 1484, the early years of the Spanish Inquisition, conversos such as Pedro de Villegas of Ciudad Real was charged with heresy in his home. He was a Christian of converso lineage. He was accused of heresy and participating in Jewish religious practices. Because of the real order and codification of the Inquisition, as a whole, allowed targets to overcome these charges if one was organized and truthful. Villegas denied the claims; he stated the charges against him were false; his denial was coupled with his witness testimonies that place him as a “truly good Christian.” The targeting of conversos continued throughout the Inquisition, and was the main target of the Inquisition.⁴⁴

⁴¹ *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 286; “Introduction” in Homza, xxii, “Document 7” 64-74; Lea, *The Inquisition*, 127; Kamen, “Confiscations,” 518, Kamen, *Inquisition*, 142, 161; Lea, “Lucero,” 611.

⁴² Because the Church could not shed blood, the government would take custody and perform certain sentences.

⁴³ Homza, “Document 2” 10-12; *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 286; Roth, 221; Lea, “Lucero,” 611.

⁴⁴ *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 286; Homza, “Document 4” 17-26, “Document 7” 64.

The most uniformity in the Inquisition was the charges brought against people during the early Inquisition. The earliest crimes of heresy were directly linked to the charge of *judaizing*.⁴⁵ Most trials contained a simple outline of charges that remained almost identical between trials. They consisted mainly of fasting, preparing meat similar to Jewish dietary laws, generically following the “Law of Moses,” and keeping the Sabbath. In the early years of the Inquisition, tribunals simply named names and blindly charged the accused; forcing the burden of proof upon the accused. Despite often possessing what the Inquisition considered conclusive evidence, many tribunals refused to divulge the charges brought against them. As the Inquisition and time proceeded, more and more charges began to be asserted.⁴⁶

The Inquisition’s trials were dependent on the confessions of the accused; it became known for gruesome means of gaining confessions and extracting names of accomplices to heresy. Torture was extremely effective as a tool of gaining confessions. Confessed heretics usually had lesser sentences than those found guilty of heresy. To some, like Maria Gonzalez of Ciudad Real, the idea of being tortured was enough to confess and point out her apparent accomplices, whether truthfully or not. Gonzalez was charged and confessed to heresy but had not named accomplices. As the prospect of torture approached she quickly began naming

⁴⁵ Judaizing was the practice and adherence to Jewish laws and customs in private, while adhering to Christianity publicly. Luis de Santangel, son of the converso statesmen in Isabella’s court and financier of Columbus’s first voyage, was convicted of judaizing in 1491.

⁴⁶ Homza, “Document 3,” “4,” “5,” “6,” 13-60; Roth, 218; *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 286; Gerber, 130; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 178, 185; Lea, *The Inquisition*, 103, 105.

accomplices, apparently out of fear.⁴⁷ The aggressive fervor for the truth, or what appeared to be truth, by inquisitors was supposed to be unwavering regardless of the situation in order to protect the Faith.⁴⁸

Many Spanish Jews thought the marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella in 1469, would help stabilize the increasing chaos ensuing as well as consolidate royal power.⁴⁹ Early in their reign, Ferdinand and Isabella were politiques who supported and protected Jews throughout their domain. Aragon's monarch saw the economic boom the mercantile Jews brought to the marketplace. As Ferdinand came to power in a united kingdom, eager for continued order and a consolidation of power, he appointed wealthy and well-to-do conversos and Jews as trusted advisors and ministers. The Spanish monarchs continuously reaffirmed royal power, over the nobility, after their marriage. They continued to seek asylum for their Jewish subjects as well as trying to halt attacks against them.⁵⁰ Continuing to defend their subjects, Ferdinand and Isabella's other subjects became impatient with the lack of dealing with what the much of the public saw as a very real problem.⁵¹

For Spain, 1492 was a very decisive year. The Reconquista had ended and Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to discover the New World.

⁴⁷ Her confessions, after more torture were recanted as perjury.

⁴⁸ Roth, 218; Homza, "Document 5" 50-60; Lea, *The Inquisition*, 63, 103, 105 126-127; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 161-163.

⁴⁹ The marriage between the two monarchs was very much set up and financed by Jews and conversos of Aragon's and Castile's courts, especially tax collector of Seville Abraham Seneor. They sent betrothal gifts, as well as set up meetings between the two before their marriage.

⁵⁰ In 1490, two years before the Edict of Expulsion, the monarchs' position of support for their Jewish subjects was echoed as a decree stated, throughout Spain, "the Jews are tolerated and accommodated..."

⁵¹ Gerber, 128-129, 136; Perez, 58-60; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 14, 17; Roth, 126-127.

These feats thrust a united Spain into position to become a truly global power. Columbus's voyage, sponsored by the Spanish monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, marked the beginning of the Age of Exploration and colonization for Spain. The conquest of Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, marked the end of Spain's Reconquista and the beginning of a unified Catholic nation. Hoping for a return to stability, Jews celebrated along with Catholic Spaniards. After Granada's fall, public support did not return favor for the Jews of Spain. Like Kings before him, Ferdinand appeared to be supportive and did his best to protect his Jewish subjects until their expulsion. He placed Jews and conversos in his court, and intervened against anti-Jewish violence. Ferdinand's main motives for supporting the Jews' expulsion was his want to quell any public animosity and possible threats that could hurt his sovereignty. It is said that much of the force behind the expulsion was Isabella and Tomas de Torquemada, the first Grand Inquisitor, aggravating public opinion against the Jews with the case of the Holy Child of La Guardia.⁵² It has been argued that expulsion was necessary to combat a Catholic fear of crypto-Judaism as well the perceived need to remove the Judaism from Spain to not tempt "bad Christians."⁵³

Almost three months after capturing Granada, March 31, the Alhambra Decree was issued by the Catholic monarchs of Spain. The decree was issued and distributed throughout Spain to all royal subjects, in plazas, in all towns and villages. It states that Spain has attempted to be hospitable to its Jewish subjects, but Jews

⁵² The Holy Child of La Guardia was the first case of the Inquisition's jurisdiction over Jews. It was claimed that Jews crucified a young child in the village of La Guardia as a Jewish ritual murder. Earlier in their reign, in 1477, Isabella and Ferdinand had affirmed their support for fairness and protection of the Jewish people in Spain.

⁵³ Gerber, 129, 133-134, 137; Perez, 83; Netanyahu, *Origins*, 1041, 1162; *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 286.

and crypto-Jewish conversos have become a “detriment” to the Catholic faith. The decree stated that all Jews had four months to leave the Spanish kingdom. In the allotted time, under royal protection and supervision, they had to sell all their belongings and estates.⁵⁴ It can be argued that this zenith of anti-Semitism in Spain, resulting in expulsion, happened at this point because of the Crown’s very real need for income. The decree states all belongings of Jews that are not sold will go to the monarch’s treasury.⁵⁵ Although it is not certain, it is surely plausible that the income and assets gained immediately after the Jews’ expulsion and Inquisitional confiscations helped the Crown fund the Inquisition, the military, as well as marine voyages to the New World.⁵⁶ It is doubtful that, almost immediately, the lack of Jewish contributions to the economy was not felt throughout the Spanish economic ladder because of the very real impact the mercantile, as well as elite Jewish classes played in the economy of Spain. However, as the Inquisition raged on, so did the treasury; between 1541 and 1543, in Granada alone, the Inquisition confiscated money and property totaling over 19 million maradevis. The decree also stated the

⁵⁴ They were allotted four months to leave so they could collect any outstanding debts, sell any belongings and estates, and procure transport out of the country. Communal lands and belongings, such as synagogues were to be sold to support the poor’s exit. They were unable to leave with any precious metal or coinage, but could have letters of credit and belongings.

⁵⁵ Enthusiastic about Columbus’s voyage as well as Spain’s Reconquista into Granada, Don Isaac Abrabanel and other Jews, loaned money to the crown. They were expelled before the debts could be repaid in addition to having much of their assets confiscated.

⁵⁶ The papal bull that formed the Spanish Inquisition was unfunded. The monarch’s had to pay for their standing military. Christopher Columbus’s first voyage set sail just three days after the expulsion took effect. Isabella only decided to back Columbus’s voyage after it was affirmed he would bring riches back as well as gain territory in Spain’s, and Christianity’s name. Columbus’s voyage was directly financed by converso Luis de Santangel.

apparent attempts by Jews to lure away faithful Christians away from their faith by educating them in Jewish practices. Many Jews simply converted. Other Spanish Jews fled in many directions. Some found temporary sanctuary in Portugal, Italy, and eventually the Ottoman Empire or Holland; others went to Navarre; and many also went to North Africa and parts of Eastern Europe.⁵⁷ This marked the end of Jewry in most of Iberia for centuries to come as well as the beginning of the flourishing of Judaism in the Muslim world, once more.⁵⁸

Spain's expulsion of the Jews marked the pinnacle of the Spanish Reconquista and Catholic unity in Spain. The Spanish Inquisition began as a tool to fight heresy; however, religious zeal and racism allowed the heresy to simply become dependent upon blood. The Spanish Inquisition quickly became an easy way to consolidate power and religious adherence among Spaniards, as well as line the treasury with spoils. As the Inquisition started, it became clear that conversos were not targeted because they were any less Christian in practice; but because they were still seen as Jews to much of the public. As conversos began to rise in prominence, the old hatred of Jews was quickly replaced by the new hatred of conversos as crypto-Jews. The Inquisition marked the end of Spanish monarchs' reigns as politiques with regard to religious tolerance, and marked the beginning of a move toward absolutist rule in Spain. The Spanish Inquisition marked the beginning of using religious fanaticism as

⁵⁷ The Portuguese let affluent exiled Jews in, only to be exiled by John II's successor, Manuel I, to align himself with the Spanish monarchs. In Navarre, influence from France as well as Spain forced the eventual conversion of all that went there.

⁵⁸ Despite the success much of the expelled Jews had in other parts of the world, such as the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and present day Israel, many still would have returned if afforded the opportunity. *The Edict of Expulsion*, as quoted and translated in Gerber, Appendix 1, 285-289; Gerber, xvii, 135, 137-144, 164; Perez, 41-42, 85-86, 90; Kamen, "Confiscations," 511-514; Netanyahu, *Origins*, 1041; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 21-22.

a basis for blame; this has since begun a long tradition of Jewish scapegoats throughout history. Rather than religion simply pointing out slight differences, the Inquisition set the precedent to assert guilt among an entire race.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Gerber, 127, 135-137; Perez, 41, 59; Netanyahu, *Origins*, 1041; Kamen, "Confiscations," 518; Kamen, *Inquisition*, 155.

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<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/lhe/Consultas/mostrarTitulo.jsp?titulo=040301> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This source is a law that passed through the Toledo Cortes on June 15, 1480. This law enacted the segregation of the Jews from the Christians and ended the Spanish convivencia. It is an early attempt to institutionally separate Jews and Christians and disconnect the Jewish influence from Christian life. This source allows one to see how the Cortes, people in the city, actually felt about Jews on the eve of the Inquisition's formation.

Finkelstein, Louis. "Medieval Sourcebook: "Synod of Castilian Jews, 1432." Internet History Sourcebooks Project.

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1432synod-castile-jews.asp> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This source explains the changes made to daily Jewish life by a council of Spanish Rabbis in 15th century Castile. The ordinances put forth relate to many forms of daily life. The headings relate to the progression and continuation of Jewish learning and Jewish life in Castile, including subjects of the appointment of judges and court proceedings, about penalties, another regarding taxes, and a final section regarding clothing. These ordinances could be enforced due to the fact of Jewish communities' semi-autonomous nature in early modern Spain. This source shows that although being Jewish in Spain had hurdles, people still sought to preserve their traditions.

Homza, Lu Ann. *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: an anthology of sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2006.

This work is an anthology of sources that is organized thematically, as well as loosely chronologically. The source looks at inquisitorial trials and their proceedings, including the personnel, the history, the punishments, and the prosecution. It looks at the Inquisition from multiple standpoints including Moors, Conversos, people accused of witchcraft, and Protestants. The source allows one to see the origins of the Inquisition, as well as how it is carried out, and its results in early modern Spain.

Klein, Elka. "Medieval Sourcebook: Jews and Christians in Tereul: The Fuero of Tereul, 1176 CE." Internet History Sourcebooks Project.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1276teruel.asp> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This source is a royal charter to the city of Tereul by Alfonso II of Aragon that appropriated certain equal rights to Jews Christians and Muslims within the city. It entails information about baths, lawsuits, as well as contracts. It also explicitly states that Jews are servants of the king and any harm to them would result in just compensation due to the royal treasury. This source shows us how the Spanish monarchy, through centuries, felt that their Jewish constituency was vital to their

success and consolidation of power.

Scott, S.P. "The Visigothic Code (forum Judicum)." Library of Iberian Resources Online. <http://libro.uca.edu/vcode/visigoths.htm> (accessed April 11, 2012). This source is a set of laws in Gothic Spain, written between 649 and 652 by Kings Chintasvintus and Recesvintus. It reveals early conceptions of Spanish and Catholic ideas toward Jews, most notably in book 12 entitled "Concerning the Prevention of Official Oppression, and the Thorough Extinction of Heretical Sects". The preface states that the Spanish Church at the time was independent of the Pope and did not recognize the Vatican's dominance. During the Moors' rule of Spain, laws not conflicting with the Moors' laws were allowed to be enforced. When Ferdinand III conquered Cordoba, the Visigothic Code became the legal prescription in his domain. The Visigothic Code appears to be an important foundation for anti-Semitism in Spain and the Spanish Inquisition. The laws were still seen as active in 1788, when Charles III ruled Spain. The laws show the anti-Semitism, and the application of the laws, through time, seem to indicate a continuous feeling toward Jews throughout Spain's history, even as the monarchs, traditionally, held Jews as favorable.

Wolf, Kenneth B. "Sentencia-Estatuto de Toledo, 1449." Claremont Colleges-Medieval Texts in Translation. http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1043&context=pomona_fac_pub&seiredir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3Dsentencia-estatuto%2520de%2520toledo%25201449%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D3%26ved%3D0CD4QFjAC (accessed April 11, 2012).

This source is the earliest known reference to Jews as a race connected by blood, and not rituals. This is a racist law that exemplifies the fear of conversos' quick rise in status. These laws would quickly make conversion efforts via pogroms, offering salvation, moot points if conversos could not hold certain offices or be a witness. This source allows one to see that many feared conversos' judaizing, in practice, but this is the first notion of judaizing simply through one's lineage.

Secondary Sources:

Gerber, Jane S. *The Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1992.

This book tracks the history of Spanish Jewry, from their earliest origins (possibly as early as the Babylonian captivity), through the Muslim conquest of Spain, their expulsion and the various destinations including the New World, Europe, and Muslim lands including the Ottoman Empire and North Africa, and all the way through Jewry's resurgence in Europe in the modern era. The appendices contain an English translation of the "Edict of Expulsion," immigration tables depicting the dwindling amount of Jews in Muslim countries in the modern era, and maps depicting the Reconquista's success through time. This source allows one to trace

Jews in Spain, from their beginnings to their dispersion, and where they ended up, with both general, as well as very specific information.

Kamen, Henry. "Confiscations in the Economy of the Spanish Inquisition." *The Economic History Review* 18 (1965), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2592562> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This journal article is about the confiscations of the Inquisition. It is meant to begin to assess the economic power and influence the Inquisition had over Spain, at large. It is meant to see the extent to which the Inquisition's economic power spread as well as how the Inquisition gained that economic power.

_____. *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

This book describes what much of life was like during the Inquisition. This source allows you to understand the Inquisition's organization, procedures, and its progression through time; as well as situate the Inquisition, politically, socially and historically.

Lea, Henry Charles. *The Inquisition of the Middle Ages, its organization and operation*. New York: Citadel Press, 1954.

This book tracks the history of the European Inquisition. It begins at its origins, earliest trials and causes for its creation. It proceeds to outline all aspects of how the Inquisition worked. It outlines the organization, the evidence and its standards, the defense, as well as the sentencing and confiscations of the early Inquisition. This work allows one to learn about the actual functioning of the Inquisition.

_____. "Lucero The Inquisitor." *American Historical Association* 2 (1897), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1833979> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This journal article is about a senior Inquisitor of Cordoba, Diego Rodriguez Lucero. The article tracks some of his activities as an Inquisitor through Granada, as well as his other travels and payment and confiscations. This source allows one to see the progression of Lucero's endeavors as the Inquisitor of Cordoba.

_____. *The Moriscos of Spain: their conversion and expulsion*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968.

This book traces how the Reconquista disrupted Moorish life that had existed, without pressure, in Spain for over 700 years. It outlines, solely, how the Reconquista affected Moors; their conversions and eventual expulsion from Spain. The appendix contains documents in Spanish, Latin, and English. This source allows one to compare the Jewish and Muslim experiences through the Inquisition and in Spain.

Netanyahu, Benzion. *The Marranos of Spain, from the late XIVth to the early XVIth century, according to contemporary Hebrew sources*. New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1966.

This book describes the Spanish Inquisition and its progression from Hebrew sources. The point of reference allows a historian to see the Inquisition from the point of view of the targets of the trials. The book argues that most Marranos were not crypto-Jews but rather targeted by racism and anti-Semitism. The book contains appendices that attempt to gather an accurate number of Marranos in Spain, the destinations of those who fled Spain.

_____. *The Origins of the Inquisition in fifteenth century Spain*. New York: Random House, 1995.

This book is a source that tracks the origins of the Inquisition in Spain by exploring its historical context as well as the Catholic build up of discontent with conversos and the beginning of their distress in Spain. The source allows you to trace the Inquisition's context through background information.

Perez, Joseph. *History of a Tragedy: the expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. Translated by Lysa Hochroth. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007.

This book tracks the Jews of Spain from their contributions during the Middle Ages until their expulsion. The book also outlines the problems conversos posed for Spain's Catholic rulers. This source is a change of pace for much of my research because it opposed many authors' blanket statements of Jews referring to all Jews, stating that within the Jewish communities of Spain, just as with any other communities, there was inequity and social divisions, not uniform prosperity.

Perry, Mary Elizabeth. *Gender and disorder in early modern Seville*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.

This book outlines how the Seville Inquisition was not only a religious ordeal that was to stop Crypto-Jews from practicing in secret; but also a way to ensure that men and women maintain the "natural order" of gender hierarchy in accordance with Catholic tradition and to combat the Reformation in Spain. This book sheds light on early Catholic ideals of women's roles in life.

Roth, Norman. *Conversos, Inquisition, and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995.

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/jmulibrary/docDetail.action?docID=10217078>
(accessed April 11, 2012)

This book presents the centuries leading up to the expulsion of the Jews and their increasing conversions and roles and Christendom. It looks at the question of conversion of Jews in centuries before and claims many were willing to convert. The source is abundant in information regarding the actual lives of conversos in Spain.

Surtz, Ronald E. "Morisco Women, Written Texts, and the Valencia Inquisition." *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 32 (2001),

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/view/2671740> (accessed April 11, 2012).

This article outlines the Valencia Inquisition's encounters with Morisco women. The source states that Morisco women in Valencia's attempts to halt the confiscations of

their goods and texts. This source examines the important role women played in preserving Morisco culture in Spain.