

NEW WORLD JEWRY, 1493-1825:

Requiem for the Forgotten

SEYMOUR B. LIEBMAN



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Twenty years of research in the original Inquisition documents in the Vatican archives and the national archives of Spain, Portugal, and Latin American nations resulted in this first full-length book on the Marranos, or secret Jews, of Latin America and the Caribbean Islands up to 1825. This fascinating account explores the social history and religious aspects of the lives of the Jews who lived in Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina in the threatening shadow of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions.

Flamboyant leaders, daring exploits, communal relationships, superstitions, sex customs and food habits pursuant to rabbinical injunctions, and religious observances and prayers are revealed in narrative form. The relationships with the Jews of Italy, Turkey, and other places are included in this remarkable revelation of an until now unknown segment of Jewish history.

Other Books by the Author

A Guide to Jewish References in the Mexican Colonial Era
(University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965)

The Enlightened, with preface by Allan Nevins
(University of Miami Press, 1967)

The Jews in New Spain: Faith, Flame and the Inquisition
(University of Miami Press, 1970)

The Great Auto de Fé of 1649 in Mexico
(Coronado Press, 1974)

Exploring the Latin American Mind
(Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1976)

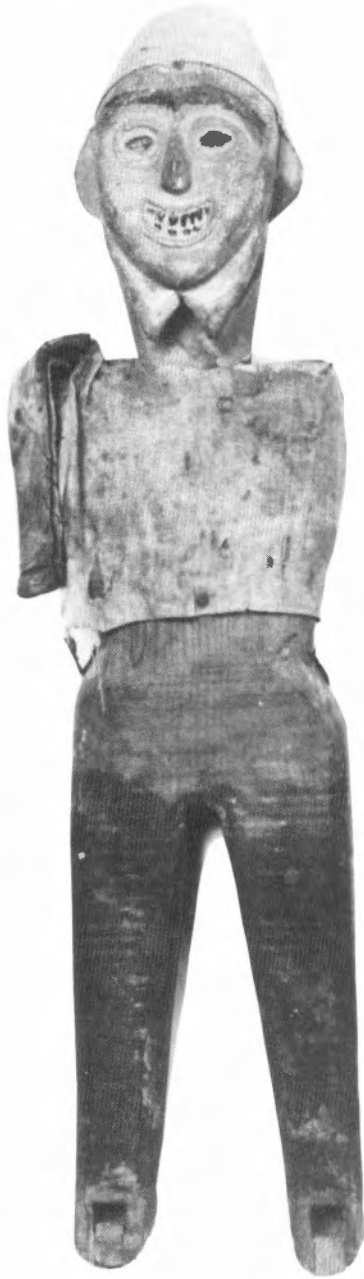
The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World
(University of Miami Press, 1975)

Los Judíos en México y America Central
(Siglo XXI Editores de Mexico, 1971)

Valerosas Criptojudías en América Colonial
(Biblioteca Popular Judía, 1975)

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A prisoner who escaped or died prior to the *auto da fé* in which he was to appear was represented at the *auto* by an effigy. The effigy was carried on a pole in the Parade of the Green Cross and was put to the stake. The original of the effigy in this illustration was acquired by the author in Spain many years ago and is believed to be the only example that has survived.

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SEYMOUR B. LIEBMAN

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On the cover: The burning of Marianna
de Caravajal in 1601.

Dedicated to
Nicholas H. Morley, benefactor of scholarship
and patron of Jewish history.

Where no man was equal, the Jews were the most unequal of all.

—Samuel J. and Edith Hurwitz
*The New World Sets an Example
for the Old*

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Needless to state, my deepest gratitude goes to my devoted wife, Malvina. This work, as in the case of all my prior books, was given precedence over her own writing and research during the process of editing and polishing the manuscript. Her help and inspiration are immeasurable.

Abbreviations

AGN	Archivo General de la Nación de Mexico—Ramo de la Inquisición
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid
AJA	<i>American Jewish Archives</i> (semi-annual journal published by Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio)
B.C.E.	Before the common era, the Jewish equivalent of B.C.
C.E.	Common era, the Jewish equivalent of A.D.
EJC	<i>Enciclopedia Judaica Castellana</i> (Mexico, 1948, 10 vols.)
GAA	Geemente Archief of Amsterdam (the municipal archives)
HAHR	<i>Hispanic American Historical Review</i>
Heb.	Hebrew
JE	<i>Jewish Encyclopedia</i> (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 10 vols. 1907–1910)
JPS	Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, Pa.
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSS	<i>Jewish Social Studies</i> (a quarterly)
PAJHS	<i>Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society</i> , more recently named <i>American Jewish Historical Quarterly</i>
Pen.	The Pentateuch, the Five Books of Moses, the Bible, or as termed by Christians, the Old Testament
REJ	<i>Revue des Etudes Juives</i> (journal published in Paris, France)
Rios.	Spanish abbreviation for Rodríguez
Rois	Portuguese abbreviation for Rodrigues, also spelled Rodriguez
Ruiz.	Spanish abbreviation for Rodríguez as per Hermann Kellenbenz
TJHSE	<i>Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England</i>

Perspectives

OFFICIAL government and church attitudes toward the Jews, abetted and encouraged by large segments of the population, have resulted in a history which is colorful, dramatic, and profoundly tragic. Discrimination, persecution, and death have been the tolls paid by the descendants of Abraham for fulfilling their covenant with God. In every time and era, the non-Jewish world has rationalized its treatment of Jews through the use of fear, prejudice, and superstition.

The history of Jews in Latin America, which began in the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world of Europe, is a story of Jewish perseverance, ingenuity, courage, and sustaining faith despite inquisitorial hounding. The flames of the *autos da fé* have long since been quenched, but the embers of ignorance, superstition, and prejudice are still smoldering in many parts of the Spanish-speaking world. The more rural and illiterate the population, the more common are the old beliefs.

The association of the Jew with the devil was made obvious to this writer during travels in southern Mexico, the mountains of Guatemala, and the outskirts of Arequipa in Peru. On three different occasions when I said, "Soy un judío" [I am a Jew], the spontaneous reaction of my auditors was to stare at my forehead to see the horns. Unabashed, I asked them why they were looking at my head. Two admitted surprise at not finding horns and one replied with embarrassment, "No sé" [I don't know].

More surprising is the acceptance of prejudice as fact in the respected halls of Academe. The *Diccionario Manual* of the Spanish Royal Academy (2d ed. Madrid, 1950, p. 813) includes in the definition of *hebreo*, *mercader* (merchant) and *usurere* (usurer). *Judío* includes *avaro* (miser) and also *usurere*.

Judiada is defined as *accion inhumana* (inhuman action) and *lucre excesivo y escandaloso* (disgraceful and excessive profiteer). *Sinagoga* is followed by the definition, *reunion para fines ilicitos* (meeting for illicit ends).

Sloan, Neuman, and Baretti's *Spanish Pronouncing Dictionary*, edited by Velasquez (New York, 1852), defines *judío* as a word of contempt used by angry persons. *Diccionario Enciclopedico Illustrado la Lengua Española* (3 vols. Barcelona, 1959, 2:np) supplies an excellent definition and brief historical account of *hebreo*, but falls back on *avaro* and *usureo* as definitions of *judío*.

It is distasteful, even harmful, when non-Jews form attitudes toward Jews based on ignorance or prejudice. Also, it is sad and self-defeating when Jews base attitudes and religio-ethnic self-concepts on incomplete information and understanding of their own history.

For several years after the birth of the State of Israel in 1948, many Israeli youths believed that Jewish life had been suspended from 135 to 1948. For them, the self-immolation of the Jews at Masada in 73 C.E., the last revolt led by Bar Kochba in 135, and the Roman decree exiling the Jews from the province of Judea, was the beginning of a hiatus which lasted until 1948.

Some Orthodox Jews in modern times have little interest in secular Jewish history. They concern themselves with the study of Torah and the commentaries thereon. From Flavius Josephus in the first century until Heinrich Graetz (1817–1891), Jews were not disciples of Clio. Tales of martyrdom, persecutions, and pogroms comprise scattered accounts of events involving Jews from the second to the nineteenth century. These constitute tragic and repetitive listings of the persecutors and persecuted that differ only in the names of places, the leaders of the groups, and the numbers of those who died for the sanctification of the name of the Lord.

The absence of Jewish historiography may have been due to a statement by the twelfth-century philosopher Maimonides, who is reputed to have said that to occupy oneself with history was a "useless waste of time."¹ Lionel Kolchan clarifies and elucidates Maimonides' reference to history.² Maimonides af-

firmed the gradual conquest of the truths of Judaism. He “rejected the kind of history ‘found among the Arabs, books of the generations, the customs of kings . . . books in which there is no wisdom and no practical benefit but purely a waste of time’ (Commentary to Mishnah Sanhedrin, x, 1).”

Maimonides understood history to be a process of enlightenment, begun by the biblical patriarch Abraham, which led to the truth that vanquished idolatry and error. The conquest by truth was continued by Isaac, Jacob, and, above all, Moses. The prophetic functions exercised by Moses showed man how to serve God and the dire consequences for those who were not followers of His truths.

Kolchan supplies an exposition of how the people of Israel regarded history. His exposition covers what many pious Orthodox Jews still believe. He asks why Jewry did “not interest itself in its history, despite the historical nature of its God; the answer is—precisely *because of* that God’s historical nature” (emphasis in the original).³

For the Jews, history was a record of divine revelation, so that a knowledge of God and the understanding of history are inseparable. The Talmud supplies a knowledge of the past and the promises for the future. The revelation at Mount Sinai included the divine statement that through Israel, all the families of the earth will be blessed. The Bible, in Numbers and Deuteronomy, related the curses and blessings that would follow deviation from or adherence to the divine laws. The Scriptures supplied all historical knowledge, commencing with the origins of Israel and ending with the ultimate events at the end of time with the coming of the Messiah. Until the nineteenth century, many Jews disdained secular studies since they believed that the Torah contained the most important truths and there could be no “further meaningful history.”

Since Jews have ignored large areas of their own history, there should be no criticism of non-Jewish historians who have done likewise. Historians have also ignored other, larger groups. Bruce Skolnick, for instance, commented about “the lack of emphasis on Portugal, Portuguese expansion . . . and

on early Brazilian history.”⁴ He declared that most historians of Latin America (at least in the United States) “know a little about Portugal and Brazil.” Since the Jews were only a minority group in those places, any oversight of their existence is understandable.

Although many American Hispanists have overlooked the existence of the Jews in the New World during the colonial period (1493–1825), it is surprising that six eminent historians at the Hebrew University make no reference to any Jewish presence or community in Latin America prior to 1900 in their *History of the Jewish People*, except for a few lines about Brazil, in the period from 1631 to 1654.⁵ Alan M. Kirshner, in his review of *The Jews in New Spain*, wrote that “ethnic minorities and marginal groups, the pariahs of society, are generally overlooked when the historian composes his narrative.”

There are, literally, millions of pages of documents, primary sources, that refer to Jews and Jewish communities in the New World. Most of these records are of the tribunals of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, which were established in the viceroyalties of New Spain (Mexico, Central America, and the Philippines) and Peru (all of South America except Brazil) in 1569. Another tribunal was established in Cartagena in 1610. Men such as José Toribio Medina make innumerable references to Jews in their books based upon Inquisition documents. Medina wrote seven books on the activities of the Inquisition in the New World. His works and those of a few others refer primarily to the role of the Jews in the economic realm and as victims of the nefarious institution dedicated to ferreting out heresy in the Spanish domains.

Christian historians had little or no interest in the religious and communal life of the Jewish communities or the commercial relationships among the Jewish communities extending from the New World to Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Hermann Kellenbenz is almost the only one to disclose information about these relationships.⁶ He places many of the traders and merchants in family categories. This expands our knowledge of one aspect of Jewish societal life from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.

Is there an underlying thesis to the structure of Jewish history? Modern Marxists and revisionists advance materialism as the motivating force of Jewish life over the centuries. A non-Jew can strive to become a Maecenas without any stigma attaching to it. The Jew, however, who desires to attain financial security (often in order to have the means of placating enemies who seek to drive him out or worse) is stereotyped as a money-grubber. Also, the brand of materialism is sometimes placed upon the Jews by their coreligionists.

Others have believed that Jews were *luftmenschen*, dreamers or unrealistic idealists, who immersed themselves in the study of the Torah, which became the *elixir vitae* of Jewish existence. There are other theories which include martyrdom, survival, and continuity—the religious urge to carry on for the sake of future generations. The Jewish people have lived in time and space and in existential cognition.

For every answer that may be found, there will be two new questions. Is there some phoenix-like ingredient in Judaism or Jewish history that brings to life a new community, not necessarily from the ashes of the old, but from something not too distant and which has similar characteristics and may or may not include some people of the extinct community? Answers to some questions will be offered, but more important is awareness of the larger significant movements in Jewish history and their implications. George Santayana wrote that a people who forgets its history is doomed to repeat it. Jews appear to be unaware of this adage or its prophecy.

Many modern historians have moved from writing the history of the elites and elitism to writing of the people. This book will follow that pattern. The fact that there are only a few notable names or figures should not diminish the importance of the history of the masses. Color may be lost but the drama remains. With rare exceptions, the history of the Jews during the colonial period in the New World is devoid of larger-than-life figures. There are, however, a few individuals who capture the imagination and who will be discussed later.

The past which a historian studies is not a dead past. The historian resuscitates and revives it by illuminating the roles of

the participants of bygone years. While it is impossible to psychoanalyze the dead, the historian can interpret what the record reveals. E. H. Carr, in his collection of essays in *What Is History?*, attributed to Pirandello the remark that “a fact is like a sack—it won’t stand up unless you put something into it.” Historians give meaning to facts of history by interpreting the primary sources.

The colonial New World history is a sequel to events in the Iberian Peninsula beginning in the late decades of the fifteenth century. The establishment of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Spain in 1478, the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, and the admission of almost 100,000 Spanish Jews into Portugal are backdrops to the colonial history. Spanish and Portuguese Jews intermarried in Portugal. Their descendants were completely bilingual. The term “Portuguese Jews” was used by the inquisitors in the New World after 1528 for all Jews—even in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—despite the fact that many had been born in Spain decades after the expulsion.⁸ The Jews of Latin America and the Caribbean islands of this century are not the descendants of the Sephardi colonial Jews. They are mostly Ashkenazim who migrated to the New World beginning in the 1880s and at an accelerated pace after 1890. There are some descendants of the colonial Jews, but they are now Catholics or Protestants. Many admit to having Jewish ancestry.

Neither Ashkenazim nor Sephardim form a monolithic group. James Finn recognized variations among Jews in his work on Sephardim.⁹ He distinguished between the Sephardim in Granada and those from Castile in the fourteenth century. He wrote: “In Spain . . . the Sephardim acquired a degree of nationality not found in other countries and this again assumed peculiar diversities of circumstances under the three great ascendancies of the Goths, the Arabs and the inquisition.”

While Hebrew was the language of correspondence among the rabbis of the various countries during the Middle Ages, and religion the tie that bound all Jews together, the differences in

nonreligious mores were effects that stemmed from the surrounding ethnic groups. These ethnic influences were secular. The religious rites and customs of the scattered Jewish communities had few dissimilarities except for the dissimilarities between Sephardim and Ashkenazim. The history of the Jews in the New World from 1500 to 1825 would be quite different if the majority had come from Germany or Poland. The Hispanic Jew was *sui generis*.

As a prelude to understanding Spanish history, Américo Castro observed that “the history of Spain has for centuries consisted—among other things—of a tendency to live in disagreement with itself.”¹⁰ This discordance is highly visible among the Iberian Jews. If there were such a person as *the Spaniard*, the Jew would be that Spaniard in every sense of the word. He possessed all the virtues and vices of the Hispanic people. Salvador de Madariaga made this point in writing of the Jews of 1492. He wrote that the Jews “left behind a deeply judaized Spain; and they went abroad no less hispanified.”¹¹

The question of whether anti-Semitism is necessary for the survival of Judaism is often raised in connection with the dissolution or disappearance of Jewish communities. It is a valid question to apply to the New World colonial Jewish communities and groups.

Stephen Sharot writes that “the major cultural difference between the Jew and his non-Jewish neighbor has historically been a religious one.”¹² Where the religion of the dominant group is tolerant of other faiths, the members of the minority faith are more susceptible to acculturation and assimilation. Where the faith of the dominant group, i.e., Islam or Catholicism prior to the nineteenth century, is doctrinaire or insular, it causes the members of the minority faith to evaluate the validity and “superiority” of their own faith. Determining that their own faith is preferable, they then seek a greater dedication to it and insulate their religious lives.

A dominant group with a syncretic faith, i.e., Confucianism or Brahmanism, permits minority societies and faiths, many of which succumb to acculturation if not assimilation. Another

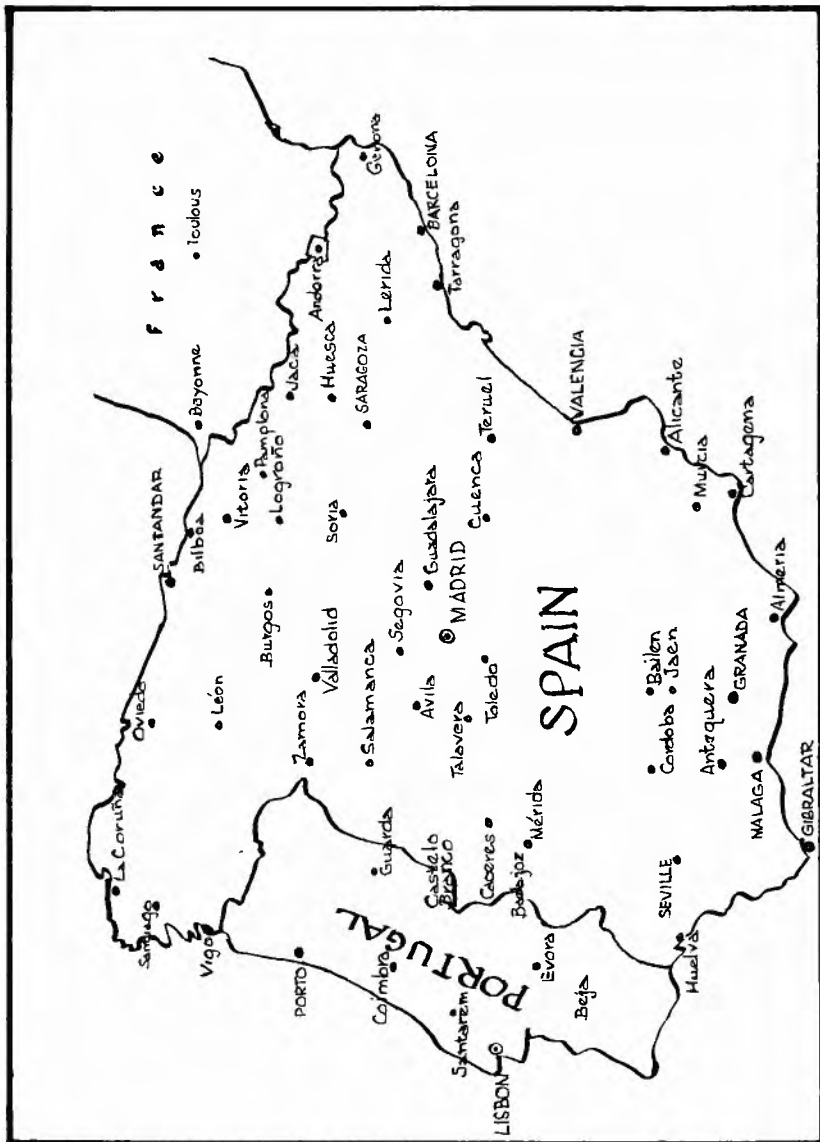
factor that contributes to the tendency to acculturate to a dominant faith is the size of the minority group. Sharot comments that “Comparatively small numbers and a lack of communication with other Jewish communities . . . make a community particularly malleable to its cultural and social environment . . .” This is a partial explanation of the decline of Judaic practices and Jewish communities in Mexico, Central America, and South America from 1710 to 1825.

The ascendancy of the Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne and the preoccupation of the Inquisition with Protestantism caused a diminution of attention to the presence of Jews. This reduced attention and pressure affected the intensity of religious observance of the Jews. Inevitably, small communities assimilated and disappeared.

Abraham A. Neuman noted that the Spanish Decree of Expulsion came “midway between medievalism and modernism, holding in its grasp the Inquisition and the discovery of the New World.”¹³ The Jews of the Iberian Peninsula were, more than any other people, affected by the discovery and the Inquisition. The following chapters depict the lives of those whose fatherlands were Spain and Portugal and who sought to sink new roots in the New World. This account deals with their faith, their tenacity in their beliefs and mores, and why they were what they were and why they ceased to be. Their concept of a historical Messiahship was one of their pillars of faith.

Selected topics have been assigned to Appendix A. Among them are: Who should be considered Jews in the New World during the colonial period? What are Jews and Judaism? and, What are the distinctions among the terms *judaizante*, “crypto-Jew,” “New Christian,” and “Marrano”? At this juncture, because understandings of some words may enlarge and clarify the concepts pertaining to the colonial era and the Jews and their customs and value systems, we urge reading Appendices A and B. Among the words defined are *mala amistad*, *tienda*, *mercachifle*, and *farda*.

The use of *de* rather than *da* in *auto da fé*, an “act of faith,”



The Jewish Communities in the Iberian Peninsula, Sixteenth Century

occurs when *de* is part of the name of a particular *auto* in Spain or in any of the Spanish colonies. The Spaniards use *de*, and the Portuguese use *da*. The Portuguese word is now accepted generally.

Accent marks over many Spanish words and names have been omitted except when they appear in the primary sources, which is quite rare. Spelling of names is also consistent with the usage in the colonial period and in the primary sources. Some names, such as Enriquez, were sometimes spelled with one *r* and at other times with two. We use only one *r*. The names Enriquez and Henriquez or Henriques (the Dutch spelling) appear in the Spanish records. We follow the more common usage and spell the name Enriquez unless the name is Dutch and despite the appearance of an occasional *H* preceding the name.

The Portuguese and the Dutch substituted *s* for *z* in names that end in Spanish with *ez*, such as Lopez, Perez, and Mendez. Despite the commonly accepted myth among modern Jews, Spanish names that end in *ez* were not necessarily names of Jews.

• 2 •

The Jews as a Religio-Ethnic Group in the New World

THE identification of the Jews as an ethnic group or race has been discussed by anthropologists and ethnologists for over a century. The peoplehood of the Jews is undeniable. Their status as an ethnic group is clear since they possess a religion that outlines the daily routines of life, a history, nationalistic beliefs, a culture, indigenous customs, a language (Hebrew), and a pattern of behavior that has been socially transmitted for millennia. They are not a race. They are a religio-ethnic group.

There are subgroups within the major group that have secular traits held in common with non-Jewish surrounding ethnic groups. Iberian Sephardic Jews are indistinguishable from their Iberian Christian neighbors. Only the activities involved in the practice of religion identified them as Jews. The differences or divisions among the Jews result from the differences in place of national origin, family traditions, folklore, and subgroup history.

Jews are divided into two principal groups: Sephardim and Ashkenazim. The former inhabited the Iberian Peninsula, and the latter, Eastern Europe, parts of Germany, and northern France. Communities of both groups were to be found in other places, but these communities were only fragments of their groups. There are legends that the Sephardim inhabited the

Iberian Peninsula during biblical times. Unquestionably they were there at least from 70 C.E., when Titus exiled 50,000 Jews from Judea to Sefarad, the biblical name for what is now Spain. Between 1391 and 1492, many Iberian Jews fled to North Africa because of the religious persecutions instigated by Ferran Martinez and Vincent Ferrer. After 1492, the year of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, and 1497, the year of the expulsion from Portugal, many established themselves in large numbers in parts of Italy and in the Ottoman Empire, which then included Greece and Rhodes.

There were other Jews in the Middle East and Far East who were termed Levantine Jews, Persians, and even Chinese (there are no known survivors as Jews from the last-named group). These Jews bore some similarities to the Sephardim in their rituals and customs. From 1493 to 1890, the great majority of the Jews in the New World were Sephardim. From 1890 to the present, Ashkenazim have constituted between 75 percent and 80 percent of all the Jews in Latin America and the Caribbean islands.

There are differences between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim in the observances of their faith and in their mores. These, however, are less significant than the disparities between the groups in their value systems and the psyches of their members. There are several subgroups in each of the major divisions. The extended family had, and still has, greater importance to the Sephardi than to the Ashkenazi. This kinship was important in the development and conduct of international trade from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, prior to the rise of Protestantism and capitalism in the mid-seventeenth century. Although Werner Sombart has exaggerated the importance of the Jews in the development of modern capitalism, it is true that the extension of credit and bills of exchange were introduced by Sephardi Jews. The Lombards and other Christian usurers followed the Jews.

Usury was the term for money-lending at any rate of interest, including the legal rate. The Roman Catholic Church forbade lending money even at the rate permitted by the

rulers. It is unfortunate that “usurer” is still applied to Jews in the Middle Ages who loaned money at the legal rate and to whom the monasteries and prelates of the Church came for funds.

Endogamy, marrying within one’s group, was practiced by all Jews. In the days of the Inquisition, endogamy was a *sine qua non* for the secret Jews in Spain, Portugal, and their colonies. Marriage to a non-Jew would have disclosed to the spouse the practice of Judaism and thereby risked the report of such practices to a priest during confession.

Jews have maintained their religio-ethnicity by adherence to the tenets of their faith. Separateness, or the maintenance of distinctive mores, is necessary for the survival of any minority group. Emancipation and the assimilation of the culture of the dominant group is the *coup de grâce* for any minority. (We distinguish between assimilation, the abandonment of one’s own mores, and acculturation, the adaptation to new cultural patterns.) Assimilation by a group includes the loss of distinctiveness. Eric Kahler stated, “There exists a very real Jewish ‘consanguinity’ and yet this consanguinity is not purely physical, not a mere ‘blood relationship’ which flows from the fact that Jews are an ethnic group, but one that differs from national groups around it by having a religion of its own and being deeply rooted in its religion.”¹

Judaism has no dogma except the belief in the unity of God. The belief that the Messiah has not arrived and is yet to come is one of the reasons for its survival. This messianic conviction includes denial of the messiahship of Jesus. Messianism sustained the Jews in their determination to remain within the faith. Lacking such conviction, they would have apostasized.

While all peoples are a constellation of complexities, there is a facet of the complex psyche of Iberian Sephardim that is noteworthy. The Spanish Jew was loyal to the language and culture of his native land even after his expulsion. He also remained true to his faith. Américo Castro wrote, “The Jews expelled from their fatherland, that is Spain, in 1492, felt themselves . . . as Spanish as the Christians.”² This love of

their fatherland was part of the heritage that they bequeathed to their children and grandchildren. Spanish or Portuguese was more the mother-tongue than Hebrew. Their vernacular, Ladino, was almost 90 percent pure Castilian. Christian Spaniards who heard it apparently did not recognize it as different from Spanish. This becomes evident in reading the Inquisition trial proceedings when the Jews use Ladino words and are not requested to define them. The Sephardim who came to the New World in the late Middle Ages elected this residence despite the necessity for secrecy and the danger of living in the shadow of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. They preferred to live among those who shared their secular ethnicity.

Many of those who elected to live as secret Jews after Ferdinand and Isabella directed them to convert or leave, converted but continued to be true to their ancestral faith. This may be a form of schizophrenia, but the duality existed and cannot be gainsaid. Dr. J. Meijer stated, "A divided human being, as are all Marranos." Dr. Meijer was a leading intellectual in Surinam and wrote *Pioneers of Pauroma*, which was published in Paramaribo, 1954, p. 11.

Castro also wrote, "The people who felt the scruple of purity of blood were the Spanish Jews. . . . The minority Jew had always lived on the defensive in the face of the dominant Christian; but as a consequence of the persecutions in the fifteenth century, he became still more acutely aware of his exclusive particularism."¹ During an interview with a Sephardi in Latin America, I sought clues to the dichotomy of his existence, which was somewhat analogous to that of the crypto-Jews. His answer was, "I am a Mexican from the time that I leave my home at 8 A.M. until I return at 7 P.M. I speak as a Mexican, I think as a Mexican, and I comport myself as a Mexican. When I return at night and I close my door, I am a Jew. My home is Jewish. My children are reared as Jews, and I scrupulously observe the rituals of my faith to the best of my ability."

This response was reminiscent of the account of Francisco

de Caceres as related by Américo Castro,⁴ who borrowed it from Fritz Baer's *Die Juden im Christlichen Spanien*.⁵ Caceres, a Spaniard, had left but returned in 1500, and outwardly accepted Christianity pursuant to the Decree of Expulsion. He was arrested by the Inquisition because he continued Judaic practices. When asked why he had left and then returned, he replied: "If the King, our Lord, should order the Christians to become Jews or else to leave his realm, some would become Jews and others would leave; and those who left, as soon as they saw their sad plight, would become Jews so that they could return to their native place and they would be Christians and deceive the world. They would think that they were Jews, and inside, in their hearts and wills, they would be Christians."

Jews were present in Hispaniola (now Santo Domingo and Haiti) and other Caribbean islands as early as 1495. There were at least six Jews with Columbus on his first voyage. Some Jewish soldiers went with Narváez in 1519 to capture Córtes in Mexico. Narváez was defeated and his troops joined Córtes, who completed the conquest of the Aztecs in 1521, thereby beginning the Spanish colonization in the new hemisphere.

Based on years of research on the history of the Jews in the Americas during the colonial era, I have concluded that the social contacts between the Jews and their Christian neighbors in the New World were not marred by the religious intolerance of the Spanish Church symbolized by the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Many Catholics knew that their neighbors and friends were Jews, but they neither reported this to Inquisition officials nor mentioned it to their confessors.

The hostility of the Spanish Catholic Church and the Spanish throne to Judaism drove the Jews to the secret practice of their faith. The factors of hostility and secrecy played a vital role in their group life. If they had elected not to live as Jews, they would have suffered no impediments since they were not only integrated into the Spanish colonial society but were easily assimilated.

There are four main reasons for the survival of the Jewish

ethnic group in the Americas from 1550 to 1700 despite powerful opposition by the dominant authorities. The motivating and supportive factors were:

1. Messianism and strong religious beliefs and practices
2. Endogamy and the role of the Jewish female
3. *Farda* and its contribution to the revival of indigenous culture
4. Spiritual oppression with its effect upon Judeo-Spanish stubbornness

This chapter will not deal in depth with the foregoing four factors. Many aspects will be treated in subsequent chapters when they serve as illustrations and explanations of the acts of some Jews.

According to Hans Kohn, "Messianism is primarily the religious belief in the coming of a redeemer who will end the present order of things, either universally or for a single group, and will institute a new order of justice and happiness" (*Encyclopedia of Social Science*, X:356).

If it were not for the belief in the coming of the Messiah, who will release Jews from oppression throughout the world and inaugurate a reign of peace for all mankind, Jews long ago would have abandoned Judaism. As a concomitant of this hope for surcease from persecution, Jews denied the "messiahship" of Jesus. They saw throughout the civilized world some seventeen centuries after his demise that peace had not come, that his disciples were warring against each other, and that man's inhumanity to man was still prevalent. Catholicism did not seem to be aware that Jews viewed this situation as an anomaly in the Catholic position.

Although Catholicism preached that the Mosaic laws had been fulfilled and completed by the crucifixion and the resurrection, Jewry continued the practice of the "old laws," because they were convinced that the Messiah, as foretold in the prophetic writings, had not come. Both faiths believed in the prophetic writings, but Catholic theologians chose to show, by exegesis and mistranslation of selected passages from the prophets, that Jesus was the one foretold and could not be

separated from the condition that would prevail if and when he came.*

The Spanish throne divided its New World colonies into viceroalties. The first two were Mexico and Peru, or, as they were known officially, New Spain and New Castile. (The names “New Spain” and “Mexico” will be used interchangeably in this book except when Mexico City is referred to.) Mexico consisted of what is now the southwestern United States, all of Mexico and Central America, the Spanish islands in the Caribbean, principally Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and, in the Far East, the Philippines. Peru originally consisted of all South America except for Brazil and Panama. In 1717, New Granada, an *audiencia* since 1610, was carved out of Peru. It included modern Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, and Ecuador. The viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata was formed in 1776 and included Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Technically, Latin America does not include most of the West Indies, but because Barbados, Jamaica, and Curaçao had important relationships with the Spanish and Portuguese New World colonies, they are included in this history. Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico consider Spanish their native tongue; Haiti and Martinique use French; and the Netherland Antilles and Surinam recognize Dutch as their official language. Papamientto is the vernacular in Surinam and parts of Curaçao, but it is not the official language. The other West Indian islands use English.

The Portuguese discovered South America in 1500. Soon after the discovery, many Jews came to the West Indies (all known islands were under Spanish sovereignty from the earliest days) by illegal means and then proceeded to the mainland, called *Tierra Firma*. Spain barred all Jews and their descendants to the fourth generation from coming to the New World.

*Catholics have translated the Hebrew word *almah* in Isaiah 7:14 as “virgin,” so that the verse reads: “Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: a virgin is with child, and she will bear a son, and will call him Immanuel.” In the New English Bible (1970), the translation “young woman” has been adopted, as the Jewish philologists have contended.



The Spanish Viceroyalties

Portuguese Jews often served as sailors on the ships that smuggled Jews into the New World.⁶

As early as 1493 and as late as 1802, Spain issued decrees barring Jews and Moors from the Spanish colonies. Descendants of those penanced by the Inquisition were specifically mentioned. (Hitler used the Spanish rules of exclusion for his Nuremberg laws.) The fact that the decrees were constantly reissued indicates that they were being ignored and that the illegal presence of Jews was repeatedly revealed.

Jews were present in the West Indies and undoubtedly aided the English and the Dutch in the capture of these islands from Spain. The Jews introduced sugar and tobacco and produced “statesmen, tradesmen, and governors. They founded newspapers and became social leaders.”⁷

From the discovery of America, the right to emigrate to the New World was reserved, except for a short interval under the emperor Charles V, to peninsular Spaniards. . . . The preparation of forged licenses became a profession in itself, and when the punishment was made more severe the principal effect was to increase the price of these papers and develop the ingenuity of brokers and buyers. Unlicensed Spaniards as well as foreigners got over secretly as sailors, soldiers, stowaways, would-be merchants.⁸

Professor Clarence H. Haring also wrote that despite the decrees for the exclusion of the Jews or reconciled heretics, Jews and New Christians, both Spanish and Portuguese, “were found in the Indies [the generic term for all the New World] in increasing numbers.”⁹

Other stratagems were employed by Jews who sought “legitimate” means for immigration. One method was to go to a cemetery fifty or more miles from Cadiz, the headquarters of La Casa de Contratación, which issued the licenses, and there find and permanently adopt the name of a recently deceased person. The second means was for one Jew to secure a license and then take ten or fifteen others with him as members of his family and his household servants. No licenses were required for servants or members of one’s family.

The Holy Office of the Inquisition

IT IS beyond the scope of this book to render a detailed account of the history of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and its tribunals. The surviving Holy Office records in Mexico and in lesser numbers in Peru, Argentina, the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid, and the Archivo de las Indias in Seville, supply most of the information about the Jews in the New World during the colonial period. Many original records have been lost by pilferage, fire, mishandling, and other causes. The archive in Madrid contains many *relaciones*, or summary accounts, from the New World tribunals, which although secondary in nature, fill many lacunae. The Arquivo da Torre do Tombo in Lisbon is another invaluable source for the data for Brazil. (See also the 1979 article by Charles Amiel.)

From the early days of the Catholic Church, its bishops had the power to try all heretics within their dioceses for matters of faith. This authority included the power to administer capital punishment to heretics. The Church also believed that once a Catholic, always a Catholic. Thus, to countenance apostasy would be a profanation of the Holy Chrism, the oil, used to baptize the adherents.

During the period 1208–1230, the Church was engaged in a holy war to exterminate the Albigensians, Waldensians, Anabaptists, and the Cathari in Southern France. These sects denied the supremacy of the pope. Some of the sects believed that baptism should be administered only to those who were sufficiently mentally mature to understand the significance of

baptism; others believed in the Manichaean dualism of good and evil; and some asserted that Jesus lived only in semblance. When the Dominican order came into being, its monks became the Militia of the Church. They were directed to seek out and try the heretics. The Episcopal Inquisition was then supplanted for these trials by the Holy Office of the Inquisition. The tribunals became formal institutions which could be established only by the pope.

Ferdinand and Isabella, under the prompting of her confessor, Tomás de Torquemada, grandson of a Jewess, requested Pope Sixtus IV to establish the Holy Office in their kingdoms. The pope complied with the request in 1478, but withdrew his permission when he heard of the abuses that were occurring in Spain. He reinstated it in 1480 on receipt of a sizable contribution for his other activities.

Ferdinand and Isabella regarded Jews as a discordant element in their kingdoms. They sought a homogeneous population, and homogeneity included religion and culture. To achieve their aims, they sought the establishment of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Kenneth Moore writes that the Inquisition was an “institution of cultural purity which acted to eliminate *all* and *any* foreign elements, anything which was deemed non-Spanish and non-Christian” (emphasis in the original).¹

The Holy Office in Spain was independent of the Spanish church. It had its own officials, the chief of whom was the Inquisitor General. Torquemada was the first to serve in this capacity. The full title of the body was Consejo de la Suprema y General Inquisición. It became known by one word, the Suprema, and it will be so referred to herein. The New World tribunals of the Holy Office were subject only to the authority of the Suprema. There was a provision, never exercised in the New World, that appeals could be taken to the pope if the Suprema had acted improperly.

The original purpose was to spy on converted Jews and Moors who might have relapsed to their original faith. It ultimately evolved into a thought-police corps from which no

Spaniard was secure. Through its self-made rules, the Suprema declared its right to consider as a heretic anyone who expressed doubt about the virginity of the Holy Mother, the Immaculate Conception, the resurrection of Jesus, and the Trinity.²

In 1506, King Ferdinand acquired from the Holy See the right to withhold any papal pronouncements, including the publication of bulls, if he so desired. Furthermore, no bishops could be appointed without his approval of three nominees, one of whom could then be designated as a bishop in the New World.

In 1569, King Philip II decreed the establishment of tribunals of the Holy Office in Mexico and Peru. Reports had been sent to the king and his father, Charles I (also served as Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire), about Jews swarming into the New World. These reports had come as early as 1508. In fact, the first *auto da fé* in Mexico had been held in October 1528, with Fray Vicente de Santa Maria presiding. Two Jews were burned at the stake, and two others were reconciled. Richard E. Greenleaf writes that “illegal immigration of Jews was the general rule during the first three decades of the sixteenth century.”³

After Jews came with Cortés and Pánfilo de Narváez, the group grew to a sizable community by 1536, and according to Greenleaf, “the colony continued to grow and prosper through the sixteenth century.” Francisco Fernández del Castillo, an authority on the Inquisition in Mexico and director of the Mexican National Archives, wrote that in the 1550s in the Spanish colony of Mexico City there was a Grand Rabbi and more Jews than Catholics.⁴

The records of the trials of the Holy Office are known as *procesos*. The hearings are called *audiencias*, some of which are recorded in question-and-answer form. At other times, the secretary digested or summarized the testimony as it was given. Each amanuensis had his own code of abbreviation or shorthand. Not until about 1620 did the Suprema establish a uniform system of abbreviations. (The science of deciphering

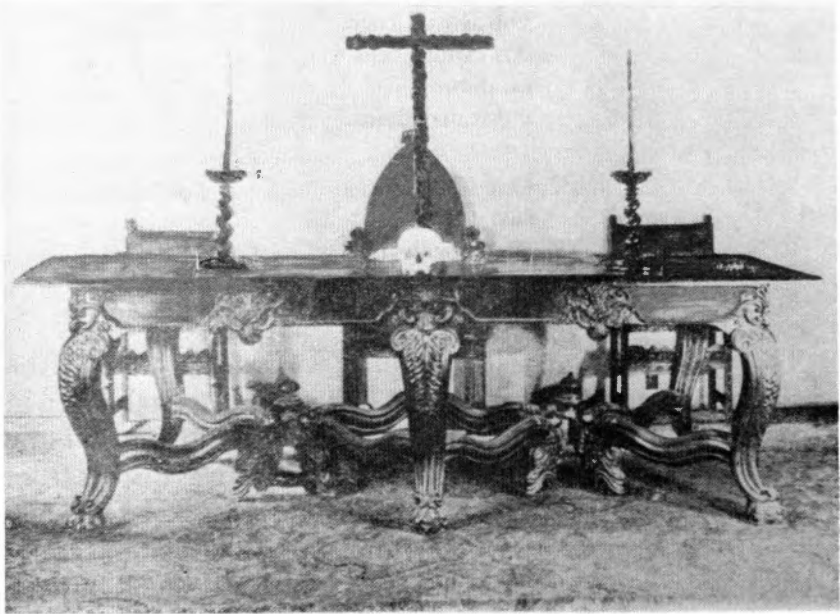
manuscripts and original records into understandable form in modern language is known as paleography.)

The hearing room was quite bare of furnishing. Usually only one or two inquisitors were present. A couplet was used in Mexico to describe the scene:

Un Santo Cristo
dos candelabros
un pobre
y dos majaderos.

One Holy Christ,
two candles,
one poor devil,
and two scoundrels.

The jurisdiction of each tribunal was as extensive as the viceroyalty in which it had its seat. The tribunal established in Cartagena on July 25, 1610, preceded the creation of the viceroyalty of New Granada since Cartagena was distant from Lima and the roads from it to the capital were very hazardous. With rare exceptions, the inquisitors, who were Dominicans as well as prelates of the Church, rarely traveled through the vast areas over which they reigned in spiritual matters. Their staffs included, among others, *comisarios*—agents who operated in important large centers of population. *Comisarios* had the power to arrest and to set bail. As odd as it may appear, some prisoners in Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile were released on bail and ordered to report to the Holy Office in Lima, to which the prisoner traveled unaccompanied. This author found only one such case in New Spain. A prisoner was arrested in Oaxaca, bailed, and directed to report to Mexico City. The prisoners did ultimately report. There is a group of cases that arose in Buenos Aires between 1618 and 1625, when the Franciscans supplied the bail for Jews who had come from Rio de Janeiro and were required to present themselves in Lima. The Jews never reported to Lima, but the Franciscans



The inquisitors' table in the House of the Inquisition, Lima, Peru.

were reimbursed for the forfeiture of the bail made by the Dominican *comisario*. The reimbursement was made by the secret Jewish communities in Tucumán and/or Córdoba.

At the outset, the tribunals operated with one or two inquisitors, but by 1580, the usual number was three. Sometimes they divided their work or rotated responsibilities so that only one inquisitor conducted an *audiencia*. The final verdict, however, was made by a trio consisting of a *calificador* (legal counsel on the sufficiency of the evidence) and two or more representatives of the cathedral. The same group acted when the question of the administration of torture was raised.

There were several fringe benefits to being employed by the Holy Office, not the least of which was exemption from arrest or trial by any secular authority and from the payment of taxes. *Familiars* were secular inquisition officials whose primary activity was investigation. The *fiscal* was also the prosecuting official for the inquisitors. Guardians were appointed for prisoners under twenty-five years of age. The guardian's function was to choose an attorney for the defendant. All defendants had a choice of attorney—from one of three men designated by the inquisitors. It appears that the main duty of the defendant's counsel was to convince the defendant to plead guilty to all the charges and then throw himself on the mercy of the inquisitors. The burden of proof of innocence was on the defendant since the presumption was that the defendant was guilty. This presumption still exists in modern Mexico.

The nature of the charge was not revealed until the formal accusation (similar to the modern indictment) was filed. Neither the defendant nor his counsel ever knew the names of those who testified against him, nor did his counsel ever have an opportunity to cross-examine them. The only defense that could be offered was that the witnesses were probably mortal enemies of the prisoner or that the entire matter was a fabrication. Although the Suprema's rules specified that the defendant had the right to call witnesses in his behalf, I have found no permitted exercise of this right in any of the three New World tribunals, although there were Jews who requested the calling of witnesses to corroborate their innocence.

Torture was less frequent than is popularly believed. It never occurred at an early stage of the proceedings. The prisoners were advised prior to torture that broken arms or legs might result from their failure to admit the truth (that is, what the inquisitors chose to regard as the truth), and that failure to confess made the prisoner responsible for any injuries he might incur. Torture was administered when, after being given several warnings and opportunities to confess, the prisoner persisted in his protestations of innocence or refused to reveal the names of those who had participated in the observance of Jewish ritual. The inquisitors knew that Jews were gregarious in their ritual practices.

The most common form of torture in the New World was the use of the *potro*. This was a bedlike frame with straps from side to side upon which the nude prisoner was placed. Bands of leather were then placed around each leg, thigh, and arm and tightened by the turns of a wheel. The excruciating pain that resulted was often sufficient to bring a confession after the first turn of the wheel. It was a rule that there could be no more than six turns of the wheel and that the torture should not be administered more than once. The inquisitors circumvented the latter rule by suspending the torture after the fourth or fifth turn and then commencing again a few days later. It is understandable that any person who did not confess after six turns of the wheel was regarded by the Jewish community as having been divinely blessed.

Another form of torture was administered by placing a silk scarf in the prisoner's mouth and then pouring water into his mouth in huge quantities so that his stomach became distended and unbearably painful. This procedure was rare after 1615.

All persons not sentenced to the stake were to be *reconciliado* (reconciled) and taken back into the bosom of the Church; their funds were confiscated and they were required to wear a *sanbenito* and perform certain spiritual penances; e.g., fasting on certain days, attending mass, reciting certain prayers, counting the rosary, etc. At the *auto da fé*, *reconciliados* carried candles in their hands, were dressed without girdles about

their waists, and wore no caps. Their habits were of yellow cloth on which were two red bands forming a Saint Andrew's cross. They abjured, either *de levi* or *de vehementi*, then knelt during the reading of a short catechism comprising the Creed and replied, "Yes, I believe" to each statement of a dogma of the faith.

Reconciliados received sentences ranging from mild punishment to lashes, the scourge (*vergiienza*), or consignment to serve as an oarsman on the galleys between New Spain and Spain or between Acapulco and the Philippines. Not only were they deprived of the right to hold public office but they also could not be grocers, apothecaries, physicians, surgeons, bleeders, brokers, merchants, notaries, scribes, or advocates. After 1650, sentences might be to serve in a hospital or in some distant military outpost.

Abjurations (denials or disavowals) were impressive ceremonies. To abjure *de levi*, the accused, facing a large cross with his hands on the Gospels, swore that he accepted Catholicism as the sole, true faith and that he pledged eternal allegiance to the faith and obedience to the pope. He promised to denounce and persecute any who opposed Catholicism and vowed "to fulfill with all his strength" any penance imposed upon him.

To abjure *de vehementi*, the oath was couched in stronger language. The abjuration was in writing and was signed by the prisoner. The accused agreed to be treated as a "relapsed one" if he ever swerved from his oath, which meant that he would go to the stake for a second offense.

Women were usually sentenced to serve without pay in hospitals or houses of correction. A few were assigned to serve as servants in monasteries. Women were often sentenced to be lashed. Lashes for men and women were administered on the day following the sentence. Lashes were to be not less than 100 or more than 400. Those to be lashed were stripped to the waist, seated on a burro with their hands tied behind their backs, and marched through the public streets with a notary behind each penitent counting aloud the number of lashes administered. Imprisonment was usually "permanent," but jail

confinement was rarely more than a year since the prisoner had no funds to pay for room and board.

The death sentence was never administered by the Holy Office since it avoided having “the effusion of blood on its hands.” The death penalty was read by the *brazo secular* (secular authorities), who also were responsible for igniting the pyre.

Prisoners had to state their genealogies, and they invariably claimed to be descendants of *Católicos viejos* (Old Catholics), so that their presence in the New World was legal. Most were asked to recite the *Pater Noster*, *Ave María*, *Credo*, and *Salve Regina*, and they usually could. Many could not recall exactly when or where they had gone to communion and confession.

The illegal immigration was so great and continuous that as late as September 16, 1802, the Spanish authorities were still issuing decrees barring Jews from the New World.⁶

Among the oddities or anachronisms of the Inquisition procedures are the following:

1. Simultaneous with the arrest, all of the prisoner's property was sequestered and held by the Inquisition pending the outcome of the case. In the seventeenth century, as many as seven years elapsed from the time of arrest to the pronouncement of the sentence. The prisoner was charged a daily fee for meals and rent while incarcerated.
2. Prisoners were permitted to take from their property a change of clothing, a bed, mattress, and two changes of bed linen. Women were granted a greater latitude in clothing than men, but even for the men the changes of clothing were adequate. Other charges were made for barber services, laundry, tobacco, medicines, and even the fees for those who administered torture.⁷
3. If the prisoner's property was insufficient to pay all the charges as they accrued, the property was sold at auction and the proceeds applied to his debt.
4. In Lima and Mexico City, the first lying at sea level and the other on the bed of a lake, cells were above ground but the windows were small. (In this century, the cells of the House of the Inquisition in Mexico City were converted into *viviendas* [low-cost apartments]. The House of the Inquisition became the Royal School of Medicine after 1821 and still stands although the medical school has long been moved.)

In 1659, Dr. Pedro de Medina Rico, *visitador* (examining officer) for the Suprema, reported that the inquisitors had agents who, at the auction sales, bought the prisoners' property at a fraction of its cost because the other bidders knew who the agents represented and thought it expedient not to compete.

The charges for food, rent, etc., varied according to the wealth of the prisoner even though the cells were almost alike and the food identical. Pedro Fernandez de Castro, a Jew, was charged two-and-a-half reales a day while he was in the cells in the Casa de Picasso. (The regular cells in the House of the Inquisition were filled by the mass round-up of Jews in the 1640s. This caused the inquisitors to rent private homes and a convent in the vicinity of the Casa de la Inquisición to house the prisoners.) Juana Enriquez, wife of Simon Vaez (also spelled Baez) Sevilla, one of the wealthiest men in New Spain, was charged two-and-a-half pesos a day. (Eight reales equaled one peso.) Juana's sister, the wife of Sebastian Cardoso, of the lower middle class, was charged four reales.

Sebastian Cardoso had food brought to him from the outside for twenty-one months of the four years that he was in prison. He filed a claim for a refund. His claim was allowed and the jailer ordered to make a refund to Cardoso after he was sentenced.

A pungent phrase found in many of the accusations filed by the *fiscales* was that the prisoner "was like a dog which returned to its vomit." Lucien Wolf, president of the Jewish Historical Society of England over eighty years ago, found the identical phrase in inquisitorial proceedings in other Spanish colonies.⁸ The phrase was used in the twelfth century by the archbishop of York, who became furious when a convert repented and returned to Judaism.⁹

The Edict of Faith or the Edict of Grace was periodically nailed to the church doors in most towns. The edicts listed the customs of Jews, Moors, and, later, Lutherans, so that people could recognize the heretics. There were great lapses of time between proclamations of the edicts. In Peru, twenty-three



NOS LOS INQUISIDORES

Contra la Heretica Pravedad, y Apostasia en esta Ciudad, y Arzobispado de Mexico, Estados, y Provincias de la Nueva-Espana, Nueva-Galicia, Goathemala, Nicaragua, Yucatan, Vera-Paz, Honduras, Islas Filipinas, sus Districtos, y Jurisdicciones. Por Authoridad Apostolica, &c.



Todos los Vecinos,

y moradores, estantes, y residentes en todas las Ciudades, Villas, y Lugares de nuestro Distrito, de qualquier Estado, Condicion, Preeminencia, o Dignidad, que sean, exemptos, o no exemptos, y cada uno, y qualquiera de Vos, a cuya noticia viniere lo contenido en esta nuestra Carta en qualquiera manera, salud en NUESTRO SEÑOR JESU-CHRISTO,

The Edict of Faith.

years once elapsed between postings. The edicts stated, among other things, that bestowing a Hebrew name on a newborn child was an indication of being a Jew. Torquemada and Cardinal de Cisneros, the first and third Inquisitors-General for Castile, promulgated the basic rules for the Holy Office. (Cisneros also was a descendant of a Jew through his maternal line.) Both men ignored the fact that King Enrique II (1369–1379) had prohibited Jews from bestowing Christian names on their offspring.

Don Isaac Abrabanel (also spelled Abravanel) wrote in the introduction to his commentary on Genesis that he led 300,000 Jews from Spain. They had elected expulsion rather than conversion. Some Jews sincerely chose apostasy. Some 100,000, as stated previously, entered Portugal under the agreement with King John.¹⁰ In 1497, Jews in Portugal were ordered to leave or convert, but children were prohibited from leaving. They were to be forcibly converted. Most parents opted to convert in order to retain their children. These people are known as the *anusim* (Heb., forced ones). Many of the *anusim* or their descendants ultimately migrated to the New World. They had relatives and friends among those who went with Don Isaac. Those who remained used these contacts in the New World to establish the commercial and social relationships that flowered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Not until 1537 were the efforts of the “New Christians” to bar the Inquisition from Portugal doomed to defeat. The Portuguese and Spanish institutions operated independently, although for many years after 1580 the Spanish inquisitors officiated in Lisbon. Prisoners from Brazil were tried in Portugal. There never was a tribunal in Portuguese Brazil.

The *auto da fé*, or act of faith, was intended to be an enactment of the Last Day of Judgment. Medina quoted a letter from one of the inquisitors who served in Mexico in the 1640s that the 1649 *auto*, “Servira de ejemplo a las Indios recién convertidos y de terror a los hebreos” [it will serve as an example to the recently converted Indians and strike terror into the Hebrews].¹¹ Not all heretics were sentenced to be burned.

In fact, the number so sentenced was comparatively small. Only *negativos* and those who had been previously reconciled and then relapsed went to a fiery end. If a *negativo* indicated contrition and promised to be a good Christian, he became a *reconciliado*. His property was confiscated and he was barred from holding public office, carrying a sword, riding a horse, and wearing fine clothing.¹²

Female heretics could not wear jewelry or garments of silk. If the proof of heresy was not sufficiently strong or convincing to the *calificador*, the case might be suspended and the prisoner would sign an *abjuration de levi*, a lighter abjuration. If a man was sentenced to serve as an oarsman in the galleys, the minimum sentence was three years and the maximum time was ten years. Gregorio Marañón reported that there is no known record of any prisoner living to complete his sentence. The inquisitors ruled that the men serving in the galleys were to do so *sin sueldo* (without pay)!

Those who doubt the validity of the records of the Holy Office should read the comments of Salo W. Baron:

As the perceptive French scholar Pierre Chaunu has observed, the insights offered by this vast documentation into the thought processes of both prosecutors and victims, on the conscious and subconscious levels, furnish students unparalleled opportunities for understanding the working of their minds. It is far from certain that our own period will leave behind for posterity documentation of equal value for study in depth of behavioral patterns and for a global psychoanalysis of society.¹³

An extension of Baron's statement is that made by Marcel Bataillon, "La severidad misma de represión inquisitorial es interpretada fuera de España como señal de que los españoles necesitan violencia para ser cristianos" [The same inquisitorial severity of repression is interpreted outside of Spain as a sign that the Spaniards required violence in order to be good Christians].¹⁴

Luis de Carvajal el Mozo, prior to his execution at the December 1596 *auto da fé*, lamented: "O, mal haya el tribunal del Santo Oficio qui se no hubiera en este reino, yo contara los

cristianos por estos dedos” [Oh, how evil is the tribunal of the Holy Office. If not for it, I could count the Christians in this kingdom on my own fingers].¹⁵

The task of piecing together the scattered fragments of the Holy Office *procesos* which constitute the major sources for the history of the Jews in Latin America during the colonial period is comparable to fitting together a multitude of pieces of an intricate jigsaw puzzle. The problem is exacerbated by the search for missing pieces which may contain additional facts or explanations. No *proceso* of any single individual reveals a complete account of even that individual. To collate and interpret the details that have been located requires certain judgments. Are the interpretations based on the facts at hand sufficiently firm so that they need not be modified if some additional facts be located in the future? The answer to this question is probably yes.

There was a marked change in the Holy Office’s attitude toward the Jews after 1665. There was also a decrease in the severity of punishments meted out to Jewish heretics. Four reasons may be advanced for the changes:

1. Protestantism became a greater threat to Catholicism than Jews and Judaism. Protestants developed missionaries who aimed to convert pagans as well as Catholics. Jews sought only to be left alone.
2. The Holy Office served more as a political arm of the Spanish throne than as a defender of the faith.
3. The report of the Visitador Pedro de Medina Rico disclosed the venality of some of the inquisitors in all the New World tribunals.
4. There was a notable decline in the value of the confiscations by the tribunals, which meant that there were less funds available for the operation of their activities and to line their pockets. The decline in the amount of the confiscations was due, in part, to the flight of the wealthy secret Jews to the English and Dutch possessions in the Caribbean. This will be discussed at length in Chapter 8.

The number of penitents in the *autos da fé* of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was small; jail sentences were short; and fines never included total confiscation of the prisoner’s property.

The inquisitors were concerned not only with the frequency of Jewish acts by an individual but also with the time when the performance of the acts commenced. The date of the commencement determined the time from which the accused's property was valued for confiscation. This explains why so many accuseds admitted only infrequent acts and only during recent times or only when he or she was a child under parental control.

When the inquisitors fixed the date for valuing the property to be confiscated, any person to whom the property had passed was obliged to surrender such property or its value to the Holy Office even though the person had bought and paid for the property in good faith.

As a final note to this chapter, we quote from C. R. Boxer: "Although the Spanish Inquisition has achieved the greatest historical notoriety, the Portuguese Inquisition was regarded as being more rigorous and cruel by those unfortunate enough to have had the experience of both institutions."¹⁶

• 4 •

Life in the Colonial Period: 1521–1659

UNDOUBTEDLY, the struggle for economic survival and advancement was among the motivations for the migration of Jews to the New World during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Except for the papal states in Italy, some Italian dukedoms, and the Ottoman Empire, all of civilized Europe was closed to the Jews during the more than two hundred years of that period. Spain was not the first to exile its Jews. England expelled them in 1290 and did not reopen its doors until 1656 as a result of Menasseh ben Israel's talks with Oliver Cromwell. The Dutch rabbi convinced the Great Protector that there could be no second coming of Jesus unless the Jews resided in every land. France evicted the Jews in 1309 and 1396. German dukes barred them. The Low Countries were under the hegemony of the Holy Roman emperor, who coincidentally was also the king of Spain. Portugal exiled them in December 1496, but many submitted to conversion because King Manuel would not permit those under fourteen years of age to leave.

Despite the need for economic survival, Jews treasured their faith more than material wealth. Heinrich Heine aptly stated, "The Jews trudged around with it [their Holy Scriptures] all through the Middle Ages as with a portable fatherland." In the long chronicle of suffering and death, the martyrdom of the Sephardi Jews during the era of the Holy Office is as permanently emblazoned as that of those who perished in the Holocaust, although their number is not comparable.

The Jews under Hitler had no choice. They died because they were Jews. They were not offered conversion as an alternative. Apostasy was futile under the Germans. The Sephardim who lived under the shadow of the Inquisition did have a choice. They could have abandoned allegiance to Judaism and become Catholics as they had outwardly professed to be. They, however, chose to remain Jews despite the risks, of which they were aware. Some were caught, tried, and then “reconciled” by promising to be true Christians. In their abjuration, they agreed that they would not be given a second chance if they “relapsed.” Despite this, they persisted in observing the rites of Judaism and taught their children to do likewise. They circumcised their sons (sometimes waiting until the boys were thirteen) and saw to it that their daughters married Jewish men. They were religiously observant to the greatest extent possible under the circumstances. The degree of observance at least equaled that of the majority of contemporary Jews in America, England, France, all of Latin America, and even Israel.

Most people believe that the word “holocaust” came into usage because of the genocidal assassination of six million Jews by the Nazis because they were Jews.

Henry C. Lea, in *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies* (1908), p. 432, reported the brutal treatment of the Jews apprehended between 1634 and 1639 by the tribunal in Lima and wrote: “The holocaust had been duly offered to a Savior of love and mercy; the martyrs had sealed in flame and torment their adherence to the Ancient Faith, and the mob had its spectacle.”

The Jews in the Spanish New World were known as crypto-Jews; *hebreo-cristianos* (Hebrew Christians); *conversos* (converts); *nuevos-cristianos* (New Christians); and Portuguese. The Holy Office officials never used the word “Marrano.” Meyer Kayserling, a rabbi-historian at the end of the nineteenth century, wrote that the number of Jews who settled in America was so great that Spain considered it necessary to take steps against them as early as October 5, 1511.¹ He continued, “The Marranos, New Christians, or Secret Jews . . . with astonishing tenacity, nay with admirable obstinacy . . . for centuries clung

to the faith of their fathers; it was not coincidence that the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the martyred Jews sanctified the Sabbath in a most conscientious manner. They also celebrated the Jewish festivals, observed the Quippur (*sic*) as a Day of Atonement; married according to Jewish customs, etc. . . .”

Two caveats must be inserted at this point. The first pertains to the acceptance of “Portuguese” and “Jews” as synonymous. While, in the eyes of the Holy Office and most residents of the New World, the words were synonymous, the fact remains that there were Christian Portuguese in the New World. An unawareness of this fact has caused some writers to err. Pablo Link wrote in his *Manual Enciclopédico Judío*, p. 270, that there were 6,000 Jews in Peru in 1630. It is likely that Link took the figure from Ricardo Palma’s *Anales de la Inquisición de Lima* (pp. 38–39), wherein appears the statement that the viceroy Pedro de Toledo, Marquis de Mancera, was ordered to issue an edict in 1646 that all Portuguese should present themselves with their arms and then leave the viceroyalty. Palma declares that 6,000 did present themselves. They paid a large sum and obtained a revocation of the edict. There never was any similar decree in 1630. Palma does not indicate whether the 6,000 were all Jews. The probability is that there were some Christian Portuguese among them; the possibility is that more than half were non-Jews. Even if there were 3,000 Jews in all Peru, there would, doubtlessly, have been more than the one place of worship in the home of Manuel Bautista Perez.

The leadership and inspiration of rabbis is one of the reasons advanced for the survival of Judaism in Eastern Europe. The Sephardim in the New World were without spiritual leaders. Is anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism necessary for the survival of Judaism? Since Judaism survived for almost two centuries in the Spanish colonies while the Inquisition was active, may the decline after two centuries be attributed to the change in the role of the Holy Office from a religious organ to a political organ concerned with the preservation of the Spanish monarchy?

The Holy Office did not succeed in exterminating Judaism

in the New World any more than it did in the Iberian Peninsula. But what the Inquisition failed to do, Jews themselves did. This occurred through omission rather than commission. Neglect of study, lack of teachers, amassing of wealth, and the absence of oppression were among the factors that caused Judaism to degenerate to a few superstitious practices. The amassing of wealth was accompanied by marrying out of the faith. By the fourth generation after 1640, the majority substituted pseudo-Jewish and Catholic superstitions for basic Judaism.

Henry C. Lea made the point many years ago, in his *A History of the Inquisition in Spain*, that their Catholic majesties and the Spanish Church erred in procuring papal consent for the establishment of the Holy Office in order to achieve religious homogeneity in their kingdoms. Events proved that the institution “backfired” and resulted in bringing many apostates back into Judaism. Lea believed that full religious liberty without molestation of any kind for fifty years would have caused the Jews to assimilate and abandon Judaism. The French sociologist Georges Friedmann wrote that “Assimilation can become total only when anti-Semitism ends.”² Lea’s opinion was stated earlier by Alexandre Herculano in his *History of the Origin and Establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal*: “This tolerance would have been fatal to Judaism, whereas the fires of the Inquisition served only to strengthen it by the most prolific of all the agencies in any belief,—whether political or religious—the blood of martyrs.”³

Julio Jiménez Rueda served as director of the Mexican National Archives (AGN) in the 1920s. He studied the *procesos* of the Inquisition which are in the Ramo de la Inquisición, the Inquisition branch. Based on his studies, he wrote that the end of the sixteenth century witnessed a veritable exodus of Jews from Spain and Portugal to New Spain and New Castile. In his foreword to José Toribio Medina’s book on the Inquisition in Mexico, he stated that the pages of the Inquisition records reveal “the history of our religious heretics as well as the history of ideas, morals and economy in Mexico” during the

three hundred years of colonization.⁴ Of significance is Jiménez Rueda's statement that "such trial proceedings record meticulously with a care which makes each an inexhaustible fount of political and social life."

J. Horace Nunemaker adds to the comments of Jiménez Rueda in his statement:

. . . thumbing through all the lists of the Inquisition are the ever recurring cases of the Jews, whose presence in America seemed almost a mystery to the Ministry of the Indies in Spain. . . . The Inquisition tracked them down in whole families, member by member, but could never seem to wipe them out or convert them all.⁵

Jews came to Mexico with Cortés in 1519. From 1521 to 1580, they came either singly or in small groups, but the stream of arrivals was a steady one. The first *auto da fé*, in October 1528, included four Jews. Hernando Alonso, one of the conquistadors with Cortés, and Gonzalo de Morales went to the stake. Gonzalo's brother, Diego de Morales, and Diego de Ocaña were reconciled and ordered exiled to Spain. Only Diego de Ocaña returned to Spain. Bishop Zumárraga penanced nineteen Jews during his tenure as apostolic inquisitor, 1536–1543. In 1569, King Philip decreed the establishment of the tribunals of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in New Spain and New Castile with their seats in Mexico City and Lima respectively.

The period from 1580 to 1642 marks the "golden age" of the Jews in the viceroyalty of New Spain.⁶ Except for the *autos da fé* of 1596 and 1601, there was little harassment by the Inquisition until the beginning of the mass arrests in 1642. The Bull of Pardon granted by the pope in 1603 and the royal approval appended in 1605, exonerating the backsliding New Christians and allowing them two years to return to the bosom of the Church, together with the economic depression that was accentuated by the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, stimulated the Jews to migrate to the New World.

The new settlers began large commercial enterprises, and the international trade that they engendered resulted in an

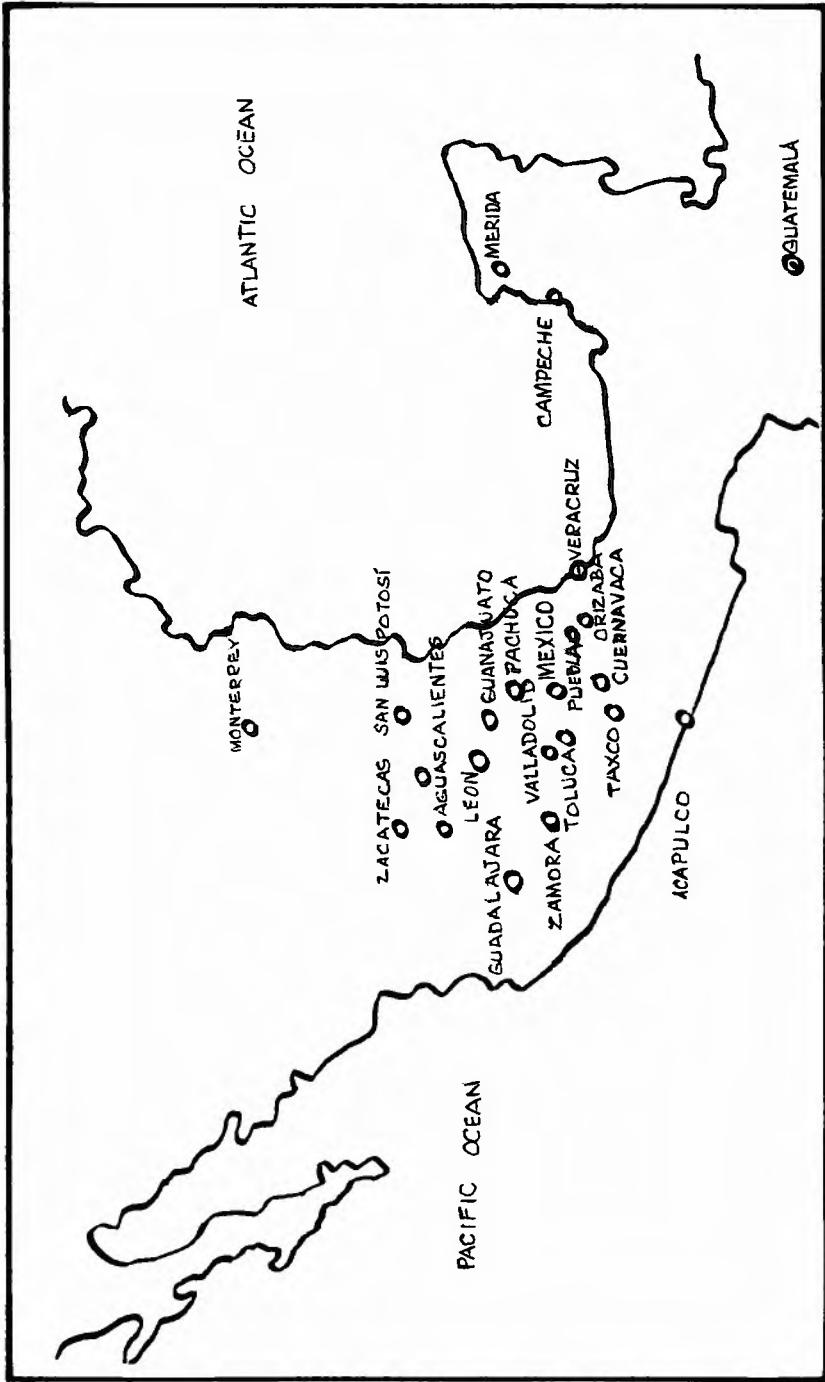
economic bonanza for the upper classes. Although the Jews maintained their religious observances secretly, it is clear that many of their Christian neighbors were aware of the religious identity of the secret Jews, yet few Christians appear in the list of witnesses in the trials of Jews. Those who do appear are an occasional slave or commercial competitor. (Many slaves are referred to as *ladino*. In this context *ladino* means a Negro slave who could speak Spanish understandably.)

The golden age is considered to have reached its zenith about 1642, when Jewish international traders had their own ships plying the seven seas and were trading in far-flung ports as distant as the Far East. The period came to a close with the “Great *Auto de Fé*” of April 11, 1649, a tragic milestone for the Jews and the inauguration of a general economic depression.⁷

When Spain assumed dominion over Portugal in 1580, many of the descendants of those who had sought refuge from Spain in 1492, as well as Jews whose Portuguese ancestry went back for centuries, left Lisbon, Coimbra, and dozens of towns and villages in the central part and along the eastern border of the country. They went to Seville, Málaga, and other places in the central and southern parts of Spain, from which places, beginning about 1601, some migrated to the New World. More Jews departed from Spain than from Portugal. Many remained in southern Spain, making Seville the largest Jewish center in the country. Some fled to the northwestern ports of Portugal, where they embarked on ships owned and manned by Jews who plied the Atlantic. The Jewish captains knew all the New World secret coves where illegal passengers and goods could be landed.

Julio Caro Baroja writes that in Madrid, Seville, and Granada, “functionaron durante la época de Felipe III (1598–1621) y Felipe IV (1621–1665) servicios secretos que, si no eran verdaderas sinagogas, se les parecían bastante” [during the reigns of Kings Philip III and Philip IV, secret services were conducted, and this was sufficient even though there were no true synagogues].⁸

Those Jews who remained in Spain became agents for over-



Principal Locations of Jews in Mexico, Seventeenth Century

seas families in the New World and Far East as well as for European traders. The Holy Offices in Mexico, Lima, and Cartagena labeled all Jews who were apprehended as Portuguese despite the fact that many were of Spanish descent and mores. The prayers recited in Spanish selected by Caro Baroja and included in his three-volume history are of the same genre as those that appear in the New World.⁹ These prayers appear below in Chapter 6.

The concept that the Jews in Spain were isolated from Jews in other nations is not true.¹⁰ The Spanish Jews and those in the New World were in contact with Jews all over Europe. Although there were no books to educate the crypto-Jews, “a seventeenth century Marrano . . . could, while reading non-Jewish books, and without danger to himself, glean much more Jewish information than might be suspected in a Spain devoid of open Jewish life since 1492.”¹¹ Anti-Jewish literature was capable of yielding substantial information about the doctrines and practices of Judaism.¹²

The Jews in the New World prior to 1580 were of a different breed from their coreligionists who followed them. The earlier Jews were hardy, adventurous individuals giving maximal attention to survival and having minimal attachments to the observances of Judaism.¹³ The later immigrants were more dedicated to the establishment of Jewish communal life and religious observance.

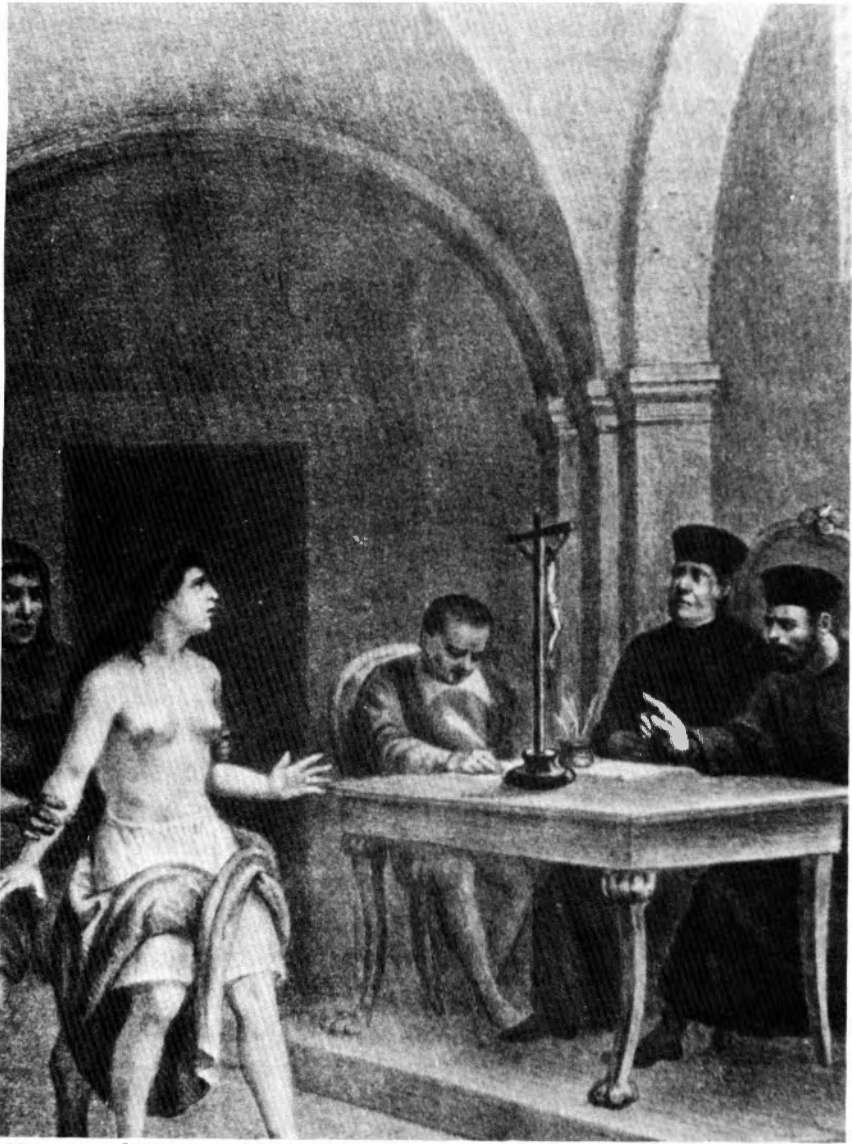
The New World’s economy, prior to 1580, suffered from a too sparse population. The ranks of the Indians had been decimated by the millions, as appears in the works of Woodrow Borah and Shelburne Cooke. New diseases, e.g., smallpox and measles (but not syphilis), were gifts of the Spaniards. The Indians had no resistance to European illnesses. The slavery imposed on the Indians by the Spaniards, who came, ostensibly, for “God, gold, and greed” (actually in reverse order), also contributed to the decline of the Indians. Compulsory work in the silver mines also took its toll. Marian Picón-Salas characterized the Spanish Christians in the early days of the New World as “low, hardened types given to every kind of vice and sin . . .

gangs of commoners, and distasteful to him [the Spaniard] were purely commercial motives.”¹⁴

The early arrivals had learned that one could not easily get-rich-quick. Because of the dire need for a population, especially for colonizers who would till the soil and raise cattle, etc., the Spanish authorities began to close their eyes to the qualifications of the colonizers in matters of faith. Richard Konetzke states that “in 1594, the officials of Seville permitted the passengers and their wives and children to go to Rio de la Plata without requesting any information [about] *limpieza de sangre*”;¹⁵ i.e., about purity of blood, meaning that all ancestors to the fourth degree were Old Catholics.

On May 13, 1579, Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva, a Catholic who was a descendant of a Jewish grandmother, signed a contract with the King of Spain, drawn up by Antonio Pérez (a philo-Semite if indeed not a secret Jew), which stipulated that Luis de Carvajal (hereafter referred to as the governor) was to rule an enormous area in New Spain that extended north from Tampico to what is now San Antonio, Texas, and 200 leagues (600 miles) westward from the Gulf of Mexico. His title of Governor-General was to be hereditary. The Governor was obligated to subdue the Chichimecs (a nomadic, warlike group) and “christianize” them within eight years, and colonize the area to be known as El Nuevo Reino de León, the New Kingdom of León. It was to be under the jurisdiction of the viceroy of New Spain. The modern Mexican state of León was part of this kingdom.

The governor’s wife did not accompany him when he sailed in 1580. She was a secret Jewess, as was the family of the governor’s sister, Francisca. Francisca was married to Francisco Rodríguez de Matos, a Jew. They had nine children, who were adults or adolescents when they and over two hundred others (most of whom were not Jews) embarked with the governor. Gaspar, the oldest son of Rodríguez de Matos, was a Dominican and did not know of his family’s true faith until 1589. The Rodríguez de Matos family, except for two daughters, assumed the name Carvajal. This was a Spanish custom



Francisca de Caravajal before the inquisitors.

when families had a patron. The governor, being childless, convinced his brother-in-law to accompany him by promising to make his nephew, Luis, son of Francisco and Francisca, his successor.

The story of the Carvajal family, especially that of Luis el Mozo, is found in detail in several books.¹⁶ This family and about thirty other Jews (not one hundred as some have erroneously reported) introduced a new type of Jewish family—one which observed Jewish rites. Here were the seeds of a Jewish community that mushroomed into three communities in Mexico City and others in Puebla, Veracruz, and Guadalajara.

Luis el Mozo is considered the first Jewish writer in the New World. Fortunately, his writings have been preserved. (Some writers, unfamiliar with New World history, have credited Rabbi Isaac Aboab of Amsterdam and Brazil with being the first Jewish writer. Aboab was in Brazil from 1642 to 1654, and he wrote after his return to Holland.) There was a writer prior to Luis el Mozo, Juan Bautista Corvera. Alfonso Toro wrote that Juan was charged with suspicion of being a Jew because he circumcised Indian children with his fingernail.¹⁷ Alberto María Carreño reported that he was charged with being *hereje judío*, a “heretical Jew,” and that he was fined twenty gold pieces by Bishop Zumárraga.¹⁸

We know little of Juan’s personal life or genealogy except that he was born in Toledo or Seville. Alfonso Toro published copies of his sonnets and verses. They could not have been written by a sincere professing, practicing Catholic, and there were no Protestants in the New World in 1540. The following is part of a very long poem. It illustrates, I believe, the man’s concepts:

Acuerdome que leí
en la escritura sagrada,
como a Moisés le fué dada
en la Monte Sinai,
leí por Dios autorizada,
y Dios bajó de su silla,
que fué muy gran maravilla

decir el divino rey,
no vengo a quitar la ley;
sino a guardalla y cumpilla.

I remember that I read in the Holy Writing how it was given to Moses on Mount Sinai and how God had taken it from under His seat—which was a very great miracle—and the divine king [meaning Jesus] did not come to abrogate the law but only to guard it and comply with it.

A study of Corvera's sonnets and verses indicates that he was anti-Christian, cultured, and acquainted with the New Testament. In the absence of more substantial evidence of Judaism, Corvera should not be considered the first Jewish writer in the New World. It is possible that his verses undermined the hold of the Church on some of its disciples in Mexico. Corvera was arrested again in 1564 and was tried this time by Bishop Pedro de Yaala in Guadalajara. He had many friends and it appears that his case was never closed.

Luis el Mozo was a God-intoxicated mystic. His father, as a deathbed wish, had instigated Dr. Manuel de Morales to teach him about Judaism. Luis read the Bible, especially the Book of Genesis, zealously. He circumcised himself at the age of seventeen after reading Genesis 17:14, which states, "And the uncircumcised male . . . shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken My covenant." His brother Baltazar did likewise in 1588. Luis, Baltazar, and Miguel changed their patronymic to Lumbrozo, which means "Enlightened."

Dr. Morales translated Deuteronomy from Latin into Spanish so that one of the oldest Jewish men of the community would have something to read and console himself while he was bedridden.

Luis, his mother, and his sisters Leonor, Isabel, and Catalina were burned at the stake in Mexico City on December 8, 1596. Another sister, Marianne, was declared insane by the inquisitors in 1596, but by 1601 she was presumed to have regained her sanity, and she met her fate in the *auto* of March 21, 1601. The youngest sister, Ana, affectionately called Anica, was



The burning of Marianna de Caravajal in 1601.

released because she was a child. Later she married a secret Jew and bore four children. She was then known as Ana de Leon. Her husband died and she became poverty-stricken. She was also known as “the Saint” because she was very pious and was a member of the illustrious Jews known as the Carvajal family. Wealthy Jews contributed to her support by donations to pray for the souls of the deceased members of their families. She died in an Inquisition cell in 1647. Her bones were disinterred and were burned in the Great *Auto de Fé* of 1649.

Luis’ brothers Baltazar and Miguel escaped. One became a physician in Venice and the other a chief rabbi in Salonica. (Attempts to ascertain in which of the thirty-eight synagogues in Salonica, Greece, David Lumbroso served as chief rabbi met with no success. Each of the thirty-eight synagogues had its own chief rabbi. Most of the synagogues were named after towns in Spain from which the founders came.)

The 1596 *auto* was the high-water mark of the persecution of the Jews at the end of the sixteenth century. All public *autos* were intended to instill fear in the observers, and this was the largest and most grandiose *auto* held in the New World until that time.

A general or public *auto* was always held on a Sunday or other holy day. The *auto* began with a parade of the monks (usually Dominicans), leading royal officials, and members of the nobility then present in the area and those to be penanced. The parade was called the Parade of the Green Cross because the Green Cross was the emblem of the Holy Office and was used by the Dominicans, the Militia of Christ. It was carried at the head of the parade. Green denoted hope for the salvation of the souls of those about to be penanced. The *mayordomo* of the *Cofradia* (brotherhood), who assisted the inquisitors, carried a large white cross.

The proceedings began at sunrise, and if there were long sentences and many penitents, it sometimes continued into a second day. Those to be burned at the stake carried green candles and wore *corazas*, a headcovering similar in size and shape to the traditional dunce cap. The word *coraza* has also

been defined as a miter similar to that worn by bishops. Those to be burned or scourged wore halters about their necks.

All of the penitents wore *sanbenitos* (sometimes spelled *sambenitos*). There were four classes of *sanbenitos*, but all were made of coarse cotton and were sacklike in form and worn over the penitent's clothing. Those to be relaxed wore a black *sanbenito* with pictures of flames and sometimes demons pushing the heretic into hell. Those to be reconciled and merely flogged wore a simple *sanbenito* with two bars crossing and a green cross. Those to abjure *de vehementi* wore garments with one bar in the back and one diagonal bar in the front. Negative penitents (those who refused to admit the crime of being a Jew) wore garments with flames and demons on a yellow background, and they also wore hoods.

A *reconciliado* was almost invariably required to wear the *sanbenito* while in public for whatever period of time was deemed appropriate for the offender. Ricardo Palma wrote that "people fled from him as if he were a pestilence."

The sentences were read aloud. The reading was an intrinsic part of the drama being enacted. Sentences were either *sin meritos* or *con meritos*. The former indicated a very brief report or the reading of a brief statement of the offense for which the accused was appearing in the *auto*. *Con meritos* meant that a review of the entire trial would be read aloud, with special stress upon the misdeeds of the culprit.

There were forty-five Jews in the *auto* of December 8, 1596. Nine Jews were burned, five of whom were females. Children were compelled to watch their parents being sacrificed through the bigotry of men "dedicated to serve God."

Padre Contreras accompanied Luis el Mozo to the stake. He tried to persuade Luis to kiss the cross as a sign of conversion so that he would receive the beneficent kindness of having the garrote applied prior to the lighting of the pyre. In his report to the Holy Office, Contreras wrote:

He was always such a good Jew and he reconciled his understanding, which was very profound and sensitive, with his highly inspired Divine



A sanbenito.

determination to defend the Law of God—the Mosaic—and to fight for it. I have no doubt that if he had lived prior to the Incarnation of our Redeemer, he would have been a heroic Hebrew and his name would have been as famous in the Bible as are the names of those who died in defense of their law when it was necessary.

Two decrees and a papal bull in the first decade of the seventeenth century played a great role in producing a large immigration of Iberian Jews to the New World. In 1601, the New Christians (read Jews) paid 200,000 ducats to King Philip III for irrevocable permission to go to Spanish and Portuguese colonies. The “irrevocable permission” was withdrawn in 1610.

Many who sought sanctuary in the New World as a consequence of the papal pardon and the king’s approval were townsmen or relatives of secret Jews in Mexico and Peru. Clarence H. Haring wrote that the *converso* Jews were found in increasing numbers and “comprised the class most likely to possess the aptitude and capital needed to develop colonial trade and industry.”¹⁹ Dr. Pedro de Medina Rico, who was in Mexico during the 1640s examining the Holy Office records as *visitador* for the Suprema, reported to it in a letter that “se iba aumentado (como se ha visto) el judaismo. El reino todo estaba en poder de judaizantes, se prendió a los 13 de julio [1642] gran numero de ellos en esta ciudad, criollos, hijos, nietos de reconciliados y relejados por esta Inquisición y nacidos en España y Portugal.” [Judaism has increased as can be [readily] seen. The kingdom is in the possession of judaizers, those who were arrested July 13th [1642]. A great number of them are native-born and the children and grandchildren of those who have been reconciled or relaxed by this Inquisition and were born in Spain or Portugal.]²⁰

The sources for the history of the Jews in the New World during the colonial period are the records of episcopal, apostolic, and Holy Office trials. The records in Mexico are richer in detail and greater in number, although there are many lacunae. One of the reasons for the paucity of the *procesos* of the Jews in Peru is that they were dispersed in 1881 when Lima

was occupied by the Chilean army. While the Mexican records are more numerous, the absence of a significant number is attributed to the burning of over 4,000 by Pancho Villa, who used them for a victory bonfire in Querataro in the early 1900s during the Revolution.

We do know that within twenty years after Pizarro conquered the west coast of South America, there were some Portuguese Jews in Peru. They continued to arrive, but in small and inconspicuous numbers. There are no records of episcopal trials of Jews. The first appreciable number of trials came in the *auto de fé* of December 17, 1595, twenty-five years after the establishment of the Holy Office in Lima. In this *auto*, there were ten Jews, of whom four were relaxed. In 1592, the clergy in Peru presented a memorial to the Inquisitor-General complaining about the vicious and dishonest commissioners and familiars of the tribunal in Cuzco, Potosí, Popayán, and elsewhere in the viceroyalty.

The Suprema requested King Philip III in 1620 to establish another tribunal in Buenos Aires because the arrests made in Lima “showed the country to be full of Portuguese Judaizers” (Lea, p. 337). The presence of the Jews in Lima is attested by the Casa de Pilatos, the former palace of Manuel Bautista Perez, more of whom anon, and the street called “Calle de Judíos,” across from the Plaza de Pizarro. Less than a half-mile away is “Calle de Matajudíos” (Death to the Jews). Jews entered Peru from Brazil, Mexico, and ports on the west coast, but not through Callaó, Paraguay, by San Pablo; and Puerto Bello.

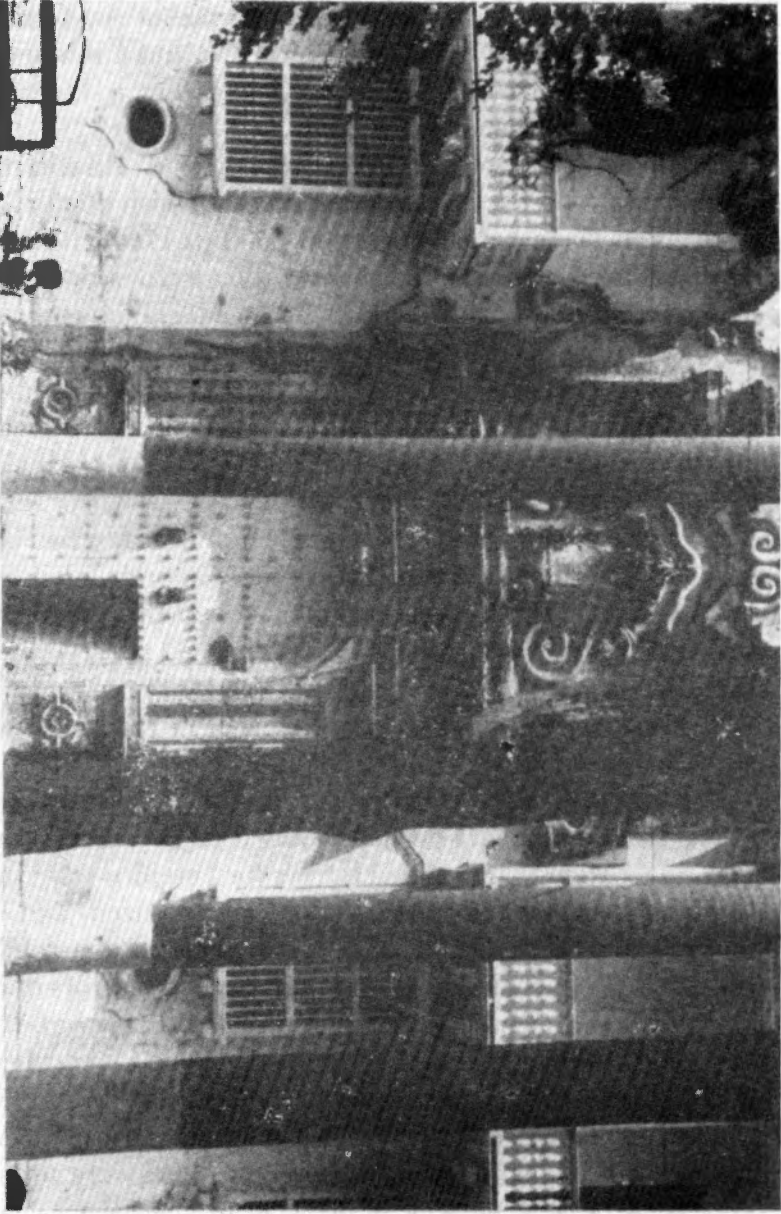
From 1605 to 1633, no Jews were involved in any Inquisition proceedings in Peru. Except for the *auto* in 1635, the Jews in Mexico enjoyed a respite from 1605 to 1642. The arrests in Lima beginning in 1634 and in Cartagena and even the *auto* of 1635 in Mexico failed to alert Mexican Jewry to the revival of Inquisition activities. These activities will be discussed in the following chapter.

The development of silver mines in Potosí (Peru), Zacatecas, Pachuca, and elsewhere in Mexico brought Jews into these

areas. The demise of the king, the influence of the Duke of Lerma during the reign of King Philip IV, and a munificent payment to the Duke and “his whore,” according to Henry C. Lea, brought some relief to the Jews.

An analysis of the *procesos* of the three New World tribunals supplies some vital background data on the Jewish population. The trials in Lima reveal that from 1600 to 1750, the major birthplaces of the Jews who came to the viceroyalty of Peru were Lisbon, Seville, and Guarda (Portugal) and its environs, all in the bishoprics of Guarda, Braganza, and Torre de Moncorvo. Several were born in the New World, i.e., Pernambuco (Brazil), Popayán, Quito, and Tunja. The majority resided in Lima. The others were dispersed in Potosí, Cuzco, Huancavelica, and Cartagena. There were a few who were born or reared in France prior to migrating to the New World. A few had been married in Bordeaux, France. Two of those apprehended were from Mexico. Of the 164 cases studied, thirty-three men were tortured and thirty-four others were sentenced to serve on the galleys between the New World and the Philippines. In the AHN Libro 1031, fs. 42–45, there is a list of 110 prisoners who were “in the conspiracy” which began in April 1635. Manuel Bautista Perez and several others who were in the January 1639 *auto* are not included. The list shows that two men, Diego Arias and Christoval Perez de Herrera (or Pereira), were from Panama. Two were from Lisbon, one from Cuzco, and one from France. There were two tailors, two artisans, one soldier, a constable, a shoemaker, a grocer, and two proprietors of dry goods stores. Three men have the comment *mercader rico*, “rich merchant,” after their names. Garci Mendez de Ducnos testified in 1623 that he and Francisco de la Pena had been in San Juan de Luz and Bordeaux, where prayers were recited in Hebrew. Of 155 men, twelve of those examined were circumcised. Not all males were examined for circumcision.

The sixty-three *procesos* of Jews before the tribunal at Cartagena indicate that all were born in Portugal, but only a few came from the bishopric of Guarda. Two of the men had traveled widely in Europe. Baltazar Araujo Coronel had been



The Palace of the Inquisition in Cartagena.

in five or six synagogues in Amsterdam and France. Manuel de Fonesca had attended a like number of synagogues, two of which were in Italy. Most resided in Cartagena. There are one each from Mexico, Guatemala, Jamaica, Sta. Cruz de Dinamarca, Rio de la Hacha, Bogotá, Antioquía, Tolú, and Zaragoza, and two from Caracas and Tunja. Nine of the men were circumcised. Nine were tortured, and only one was assigned to the galleys sailing between Puerto Bello and Spain.

Since the records of the tribunal in New Spain are exceedingly more numerous than those of the other tribunals, it is clear that they provide a better sample.²¹ Of the 1,243 cases analyzed for birthplaces, residences, etc., 1,005 involved males, and 238 involved females. All except 171 had been born in Portugal. Castelo Branco (spelled Casteloblanco by the Inquisition secretaries) produced sixty-four; Guarda and environs over a hundred; Oporto and other places in the north some twenty-one; and Lisbon thirty-three. Eighty-seven were from places in Portugal not specifically identified, and twenty-two were from unspecified places in Spain. Seville and its adjoining towns were the birthplaces of sixty-six; Benaventa and Madrid accounted for ten each; Llerena, eleven; and Cuenca and Priego, nine each. Southern Spain is credited with some fifteen, ranging in locale from Jérez de la Frontera to Granada, Córdoba, and Valencia. Only one was from Majorca and one from the Canaries.

Thirteen had resided in European countries: Holland, France, Italy, and Turkey. Of these, seven were born in France, and one was married in a “Jewish ceremony” in France; two were born in Barbary and two in Tangiers and Tetuán. It is interesting to note that 80 percent of those from Portugal had lived close to the border with Spain. That may explain the bilingualism of the Portuguese in the New World. They spoke Spanish in public and Portuguese in their homes.

The majority of Portuguese and Spanish Jews had been exposed to Judaism in Europe prior to migrating or even while residing in Mexico. There are over one hundred known cases of Jews who had been in France, Amsterdam, and Italy, where

they attended synagogues. Some studied Judaism while abroad, at least two of them were circumcised, and a few either found Jewish spouses or arranged for marriages of relatives with Jews.

The great majority took up residence in Mexico City, Guadalajara, Zacatecas, Tepeaca, Puebla, Veracruz, Pachuca, and Campeche. In each place, there were at least ten or more Jews. Since New Spain included the Philippines in its jurisdiction, we learn that fifteen Jews lived in Manila. Scattered in forty places between what is presently Texas and Nicaragua were thirteen from Caracas-Maracaibo, one from Cartagena, thirty-five from Guatemala, five from Nicaragua, and three from Havana. Over fifty were born in New Spain in towns and villages from Yucatan to Guadalajara. Seven were born in Lima and one in Popayán.

Fifty-seven men who were examined were circumcised; twenty-two were tortured and eighteen sentenced to serve on the galleys. Denunciations came from Lima, Cartagena, and Llerena, Spain. These denunciations were actually parts of the testimony of Jews who confessed in other tribunals. Very few Christians testified against Jews. Relatives, sometimes under torture, disclosed the presence of kin in various parts of the New World. All the tribunals exchanged information gleaned from testimony. Even the Spanish ambassadors to nations that permitted freedom of religion would pass on to Madrid the names of wealthy Jewish merchants engaged in international trade. It was presumed that such Jews also traded with merchants in the Iberian Peninsula. In the New World, over one hundred arrests were made in the seventeenth century as a result of confessions made in Madrid, Panama, Cartagena, and Lima.

The mothers of twenty-three residents of New Spain had been before tribunals: in Evora (four), Mexico (one); Coimbra (two), Toledo (one), Seville (two), Llerena (four), Lisbon (four), and unnamed (six). The fathers of twenty-four were tried by other tribunals: Llerena (four), Córdoba (one), Evora (three), Mexico (one), Lisbon (three), Seville (four), Toledo (one), un-

named (three). Fourteen others had relatives before tribunals in Spain and Portugal and one in Goa. Finally, eleven had been tried in Cuenca, Seville, Lima (four), and Lisbon, and one in an unnamed tribunal.

Kenneth Moore was concerned with the problem of the survival of an ethnic group when he worked on the study of the Chuetas of Mallorca. He noted that one of the most extraordinary attributes of the Jews is their capacity for persistence in inhospitable areas. He comments, “Those who bring with them a strong ideological principle as the basis of group cohesion will persist even when their traditional social organization is dysfunctional. They will reorganize, creating a new system of relationships which provide for both ideological purity and functional utility in an urban environment.”²²

These comments also apply to the secret Jews in the New World. They were compelled to be urbanized for economic reasons and also because of the presence of Indians, some of whom were hostile, in the rural areas. Spaniards (read Caucasians) were barred by law from living in Indian villages.²³ The Jews adjusted to their new environments by maintaining endogamy, as did the Chuetas of Mallorca, and by paying lip service to the religious culture of their neighbors. Their church attendance was minimal.

One of the problems in grasping a comprehension of the difference in the depth of religious conviction and observance of Spanish and Portuguese secret Jews is that writers have failed to distinguish between the two groups. Yerushalmi states that “one must assume an *internal* difference in the very genesis and character of the two New Christian groups.” His research indicated that the crypto-Judaism of the Portuguese was sufficiently virile to survive for centuries.²⁴ Research in the Inquisition files in Mexico, Lima, Madrid, Seville, and elsewhere leads to agreement with this thesis. Yerushalmi writes,

In terms of sheer numbers, it may well be that more Jews had been converted in Spain than in Portugal. But the essential difference be-

tween conversion in the two countries was not quantitative, but qualitative. . . . a converted Portuguese Jewry retained, at least initially, much of the vital force and solidarity of the [Jewish] community itself. . . . Lusitanian Jewry had not suffered the slow debilitating process of erosion which their Hispanic brethren had endured from 1391 to 1492. . . . what was of decisive import in Portugal was the fact that there the *community itself* was converted, *in toto*, whereas in Spain the community had remained throughout. . . . outside the fall of conversion [emphasis added, pp. 3–6].

Circumcision was not rare, observance of Jewish dietary laws and *kasbrut* was common, and contributions to the support of the Jewish communities in the Holy Land were made through *shelichim*, or messengers, who came from the Holy Land to teach and make collections, pursuing the custom known as *farda*. The circumcisers came from Amsterdam, Pisa, and the Provence.

The period from 1580 to the middle of the seventeenth century saw flourishing Jewish communities (albeit secret) in Mexico City, Guadalajara, Veracruz, and Puebla in New Spain; Puerto Bello, Popoyán, Tunja, Santa María, and the Medellin area in New Granada; Lima, Potosí, Tucumán, and Córdoba in Peru. The latter two cities later became part of the viceroyalty of La Plata, which included Buenos Aires and Rosario. In addition, practically all of the non-Spanish Caribbean islands had Sephardic communities which were in close contact with their coreligionists in the Spanish territories. The Jewish settlements in Barbados and Jamaica date from the mid-seventeenth century, which marks the loss of these islands by Spain to England, and the Dutch loss of Brazil to the Portuguese in 1654. The Jewish Caribbean settlements mentioned do not represent the total number. There were other small settlements spread over the New World, but none of them had any religious officiants or persons knowledgeable in Jewish religious matters.

In the seventeenth century, contributions were made by the Jews for overseas brethren, especially for the purchase of the freedom of Jews captured by the Barbary pirates. Contribu-

tions were also made to help Holland wage war against Spain and to free the viceroyalty of Peru from Spanish dominion.²⁵

When commercial matters were going well in Dutch Brazil, 1634–1642, the Jews there contributed generously to the Holy Land. For this activity, Congregation Tzur Israel was blessed by the Amsterdam rabbis on the eve of Kol Nidre.²⁶ Kol Nidre is the prayer that inaugurates Yom Kippur, the most awesome Jewish holy day.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Portuguese New Christians were termed *homens de negocios*, “men of affairs,” because they were involved in business and commerce. Extended family relationships created an international network of commerce. Credits between members of families in Brazil, Peru, Mexico, Leghorn, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and, under assumed names, with families and agents in the Iberian Peninsula facilitated trade.

Louisa S. Hoberman writes that “New Christians of Portuguese origin were influential in commerce during the first half of the seventeenth century in the peninsula and the Indies.”²⁷ They are thought to have constituted the essential part of the merchant class in Portugal and in at least the northern half of Brazil. Two-thirds of the Lisbon bankers and wholesalers were New Christians.²⁸

According to Spain’s mercantile policy, goods from La Plata and Chile had to go through Lima to and across Panama and then to Spain. This was the “Flota System.” Despite Spain’s policy, there was a substantial amount of illegal trade directly between Brazil, Buenos Aires, and Europe. After 1620, two ships a year were permitted to make the round-trip between Buenos Aires and Spain. Contraband trade between Brazil and the Rio de la Plata area resulted in political rivalry and occasional warfare.

The Jews in New Spain traded, in the main, with the Jews of northern Italy, especially Leghorn (Livorno). Hermann Kellenbenz has produced data that explain many facets of the trading, legitimate and illicit, that was carried on at the commencement of the seventeenth century in the New World. The

erudite researcher and historian shows that there were Italian, German, French, and Dutch agents in the Spanish colonies who made arrangements for large-scale imports and exports.²⁹ These agents were stationed in Bahia and other places in Brazil and in Veracruz. From Brazil, they bought sugar and the famous brasilwood. From New Spain, they bought silver (which was illegal) and the rough cloth woven by the Indians and slaves working in the *obrajes*, the Spanish version of the sweatshop.

Kellenbenz writes that the fourth group of foreign traders was composed of Portuguese, the greatest part of whom were *cristaos-novos*, *da gente de nacao*, "New Christians of the people of the [Hebrew] nation." Many of them came from or were established in the Recife-Olinda area and in Bahia. They were most important in the trade between South America and Europe. New Christians, now Jews, were in Hamburg and Holland. Many of these owned or operated their own or leased ships. There were representatives of *la colonia sefardi en Hamburgo*, "the Sephardi colony in Hamburg."³⁰ Trading included the Antilles and Central America.

The vast amount of details listed by Kellenbenz, including names of persons, ships, companies, and a mass of pertinent matter, shows that most American and Latin American historians writing of the colonial period have not tapped the sources that can fill many lacunae in the history of the trade and commerce between the New World and Europe in the colonial period.

The Portuguese enjoyed great advantages over non-Iberian Europeans in conducting trade with the New World. Henry H. Keith reports that more Portuguese entered the Spanish West Indies until 1640 by illegal means than by legal means.³¹

During the period from 1597 to 1649, there was significant movement of Jews in the New World. There were numerous migrations from Rio de Janeiro and other Brazilian ports to Buenos Aires, but leaving was difficult. Buenos Aires was a closed port. One could enter, but the reverse was difficult since the attempt to depart without official clearance was risky.

Going overland from Buenos Aires meant encounters with hostile Indians. A journey from Lima to Brazil was a physical impossibility since the Andes and the Brazilian terrain were virtually insurmountable barriers. This explains why the interior of Brazil to its western borders was not developed except for the attempts in this century.

While the Dutch were in Brazil, there was little incentive for the Jews to leave because they had more religious freedom than any Jewish community in the world except the one in Amsterdam. However, there was no discernible movement of Jews from the Spanish New World to Brazil at any time. The major movement of Jews, beginning in 1634, was from the viceroyalty of Peru to New Spain.

Being a tradesman was the major economic role of the Jews during the colonial period. Peruvian Jews had more diversified economic activities. They ranged from peddlers to great merchants. In New Spain, they traded in the mining centers, such as Sultepec, Pachuca, Taxco, Tlalpujagua (east of Michoacan), Guadalajara, Queret aro, and Zacatecas.³² In Peru, there were at least three physicians, and at least two physicians and an actor in Mexico. There were *asentistas*, slave contractors or brokers, who brought Negroes from Africa and participated in the purchase and sale of the slaves. Most *asentistas* were Dutch. (The word “nigger” stems from the Dutch word *nikker*, which means “black.”)

The most active Jewish communities that developed in New Spain were in Guadalajara, Puebla, and Mexico City. In Mexico City three communities evolved, differing in the degree of their observance. Also, there were then, as always, unaffiliated Jews. The most orthodox group was led by Thomas Trevi o de Sobremonte between 1632 and 1643. Their orthodoxy is evidenced in the total abstinence from eating prohibited foods, the use of two sets of dishes, one for dairy foods and the other for meat, and the observance of the Sabbath and holidays. For a longer period, those who were less orthodox were guided by Simon Vaez Sevilla, an entrepreneur whose activities spanned the globe. He owned seagoing ships and served as a banker and

investor for many who entrusted their funds to him. He was also one of the largest importers of the cacao bean from Caracas and Maracaibo. Those who were almost assimilationists were led by Sebastian Vaz Acevedo.

Both Simon and Sebastian (unrelated) appear among the members of the *consulado*, the merchants' guild, of Mexico City in 1635. Sebastian Vaz was also appointed *proveedor general* (commissary general) of the Armada de Barlovento. Later, he was appointed to head an infantry company.

Although the leading merchants in Mexico and Lima were judaizers, not all of the colonial commerce was in their hands. Several had fortunes of 200,000 pesos or more. Three of them were electors: Sebastian Vaz Acevedo, Simon Vaez Sevilla, and Antonio Burgos.

In the transcript and translation of the *proceso* of Thomas Treviño de Sobremonte made by A. J. Barker and now in the Archives of the Library of Congress, Barker wrote, "The proceedings in the trials of Thomas Treviño de Sobremonte . . . are the most important relating to Jews in the seventeenth century."

Treviño is an epic figure whose biography runs the gamut of adventure and human emotions. He feared no man. His amatory escapades might not rival in number those of Don Juan, but he did know the straw pallets of Indian women in the mountains of Oaxaca, including the daughter of an Indian chief, as well as the fine linens and silk sheets of such women as the wife of the marquis of the city.

Each of the three leaders had important connections either in Mexico or in Spain. Treviño de Sobremonte and Simon Vaez Sevilla knew whose palms to cross with silver in Madrid and Mexico. Sebastian Vaz Acevedo's wife's family served as his source of influence in Mexico.

Sebastian Vaz (also Baez and Vaez) Acevedo was born in Lisbon, where both his parents had been penanced by the Inquisition. This was unknown to his wife's family. His wife, Lorenza, was the daughter of Francisco de Esquivel Castaneda, one of the most politically powerful and wealthy mer-

chants in Mexico City. A relative was a minister in the Holy Office. According to Hoberman, Sebastian's connection with the Christian community "was so close that Inquisitor Juan Saenz Manozca accused his colleagues . . . of being Baez' clients."³³

Sebastian's trade and religious connections extended to Panama, Cartagena, and Lima. Luis Valencia testified in his trial before the tribunal in Lima that he and his son, Juan de Acosta, went to Mexico in the 1630s and had a room in the home of "Sebastian Vaez de Acevedo, another Portuguese *judiazante*, and that the house was on the street Santa Teresa and that father and son stayed with Sebastian for a month and a half." During their stay, they fulfilled all the Sabbath requirements, i.e., wearing clean clothing, etc. The father and son were acting as commercial agents for Manuel Bautista Perez in their dealings with Sebastian Vaz Acevedo (AHN Inq. leg, Lima 1647, No. 12, fol. 40).

A peculiarity or deviation from Jewish law appears in the testimony of Valencia; they fasted on Fridays before the beginning of the Sabbath.

Sebastian's punishment by the Holy Office was the lightest of the three Jewish leaders. He had been tortured because at the beginning of his hearing he had protested that he was of Old Catholic lineage. He was reconciled, ordered to wear a *sanbenito* in public, and fined 2,000 ducats. This sum was to be deducted from his property, which had been sequestered, and the balance of his property was to be returned. He wrote his last will and testament about 1651, and it became part of Pedro de Medina's report to the Suprema in 1666.³⁴ In addition to the will, there was also a codicil which was executed in 1658 when he was in the hospital, where he died shortly thereafter.

The opening paragraphs of the will are quite similar to the requirements of wills executed in most American states. Sebastian entrusted his soul to Jesus. He ordered the return to Lorenza of the dowry which he had received under a prenuptial agreement. However, there was to be deducted that part which his mother-in-law was to contribute but had never paid.

Lorenza had divorced him after the sentence adjudging that he was a Jew. (I have not attempted to locate the divorce proceedings, but I am of the opinion that there was an annulment, which could have been procured easily since marriage to a Jew was void *ab initio*.) They had no children. The will reveals that Sebastian's commercial transactions went from the Far East to Angola and parts of the New World. Prior to 1642, he had given forty boxes of indigo to the Viceroy Marquis de Villena, who was also the Duke of Escalona, and his associate, Captain Lopez de Fonseca. Sebastian bequeathed 1,000 pesos to the Inquisitor Estrada y Escobedo and 400 pesos to Eugenio Saraiva, the secretary of the Holy Office, a man as venal as his superiors.

At the time of writing the codicil, Sebastian had not yet received an accounting of his property from the inquisitors. The only directive that could be effectuated was his order to free a Negro slave and her child.

Simon Vaez Sevilla was born in Castelo Branco (not Santiago as sometimes reported). He married Juana Enriquez, the daughter of Antonio Arias Maldonado and Blanca Enriquez. The Arias Maldonados came to New Spain in the first decade of the seventeenth century. Antonio had family in several parts of the New World and connections in Seville. Blanca was treated almost as a saint because she had withstood the Inquisition torture while imprisoned in Seville without implicating any Jews. She was released. Such fortitude and her knowledge of Judaism made her the matriarch of the largest Mexico City Jewish group.

The date of Simon's arrival in Mexico is not clear. He had been in Seville and may have met Arias Maldonado there. He married Juana about 1620. They had seven children, but only two were alive in 1642: Gaspar, eighteen years old, and Ana, about seven. Many believed that Gaspar would be the Jewish Messiah, who would reveal himself about 1648. (In the seventeenth century, both Christians and Jews believed that the time for the advent of the Messiah was due.) Gaspar, as were all his paternal ancestors, was of the tribe of Levi, the biblical priestly

class second only to the *Kobanim*.^{*} Gaspar was arrested but never fulfilled the expectations of the Jews of his father's community. (The hopes of the Jews then focused on the child expected by Ines Pereira, the niece of Thomas Treviño. She bore a child in the Inquisition cells.)

All of Simon's property was sequestered when he was arrested. His brother Francisco in Seville was the liaison between Simon and the authorities in Madrid. Simon's incarceration halted the flow of money to Francisco for bribing the right people. Both brothers became bankrupt. Simon had been previously apprehended in 1635 by the secular courts because of a dispute with the then viceroy about a commercial matter but was freed in a few days. He held for investment hundreds of thousands of ducats which had come to him from Spain and Mexico. The investors included high military officers, regimental treasurers, church prelates, monastery administrators, etc. The investors lost almost all their funds after the sequestration of Simon's property. The property was sold at auction, and only a small fraction of the true value was realized since the successful bidders were agents of the notoriously corrupt inquisitors.

The three inquisitors who served from 1642 to 1650 were the most venal. Josephine Yocum McClaskey wrote that Sáenz de Manozca was fined and suspended for nine years, "punishment that mattered little because he had already been appointed Archbishop of Havana."³⁵ The punishments came in 1660. Estrada y Escobeda was fined and suspended for four years. Higuera y Amarilla was fined and suspended for two years and ordered "to get rid of the Negress slave with whom he had lived for twenty years and by whom he had numerous (8) children."

Thomas (or Tomas) Treviño de Sobremonte was born in Medina de Rio Seco, in old Castile. He came to Mexico with a brother in 1616 or 1617. While they were en route to Peru, Thomas changed his mind and let his brother proceed alone.

^{*}The *Kobanim* are the descendants of Aaron, the first high priest. They were the principal functionaries in the divine services in ancient Israel.

He remained in Oaxaca, where he became a shepherd and rancher. He was a gay blade and became involved in an affair with the wife of the marquis. In 1619, his mother and another brother were apprehended by the Holy Office in Portugal. They were tortured and sent to the stake. During the torture session, one of them gave Thomas's address to the inquisitors. Thomas learned about this long before the inquisitors in Mexico City received the information. How this was accomplished is an enigma. By 1624, Thomas had become a rich merchant in Oaxaca. The preliminary report on him by the local *comisario* was that "he is charitable, attends mass regularly and the sermons, although paying too much attention to women as is a common weakness of these times . . ." He was arrested in Oaxaca in 1624 and ordered to report to Mexico, an order with which he complied.

At his first hearing he was asked if he knew the reason for his arrest. His answer was that it might be due to the fact of his having had sexual relations with an Indian chief's daughter, who later gave birth to twins and stated that he was their father. He gave some other noncommittal answers and then told about his affair with the marquesa. She was then in her sixth month of pregnancy and all attempts to have her abort had failed. He then stated, matter-of-factly, that his arrest might be due to the convictions of his mother, Leonor Martinez, and his brother for being Jews, and that he, too, was a Jew. He was sentenced to a year in jail, but as a result of all sorts of shrewdly contrived artifices, he only slept in his cell at night and on weekends. He was free during the day so that he could earn funds to pay for his prison upkeep. His cellmate was Antonio Vaez, brother of Simon Vaez.

Thomas learned a great deal about Judaism during the time that he shared the inquisition cell with Antonio, who circumcised him. He married Maria Gomez in 1629. Maria was an orthodox Jewish woman and the daughter of Leonor Nunez, a most dedicated Jewess. Leonor and her daughter ate only food prepared by women who observed the laws of *kasbrut*, Jewish dietary laws. Thomas also adhered to orthodox practice from

the time of his marriage. He studied Jewish lore and law every night.

His Spanish protectors, the recipients of his bribes, are unknown. We do know that about 1632, seven years after being reconciled, he received a complete pardon from the Suprema. This permitted him to carry a sword, ride a horse, and wear fine clothes. When he was haled before the *fiscal* of the Holy Office in Mexico City for violating the prohibitions imposed on all *reconciliados*, he rode up to the office and delivered the pardon. He then contemptuously apologized to the inquisitors for not delivering the pardon earlier and gave them 100 pesos for having been a bother to them.

He contended to the end that he could have acquired his freedom from the secret cells in the 1640s if he had told the inquisitors where he had concealed fourteen ingots of silver. He was a devoted husband and a concerned parent. He accumulated great wealth, largely as an importer of Far Eastern goods. He sold “Chinese” manufactured kimonos for 100 pesos each. His incarceration was the result of the testimony of Margarita Rivera, who informed the inquisitors that he and Antonio Vaez were Jews and were circumcised. She knew because she had had sexual relations with Antonio Vaez and Thomas. Her relations with Thomas occurred prior to his marriage. She proves the adage that hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. She had expected that Thomas would marry her. Her disappointment turned to revenge.

Thomas refused the garrote on April 11, 1649, and was burned alive. He and his mother-in-law were two of the thirteen to be burned. As he was being tied to the iron pole, he shouted, “Look, let us see the mother of the Maccabees!” He also called for more wood and said, “Throw more wood on the fire! It is my money that you burn.” He shouted to the other Jews, until he was gagged, to remain steadfast in Judaism.

There were many other individuals from whose *procesos* much is learned concerning the condition of the Jews, their activities and fate. A few such individuals follow.

There do not appear to have been any commercial or social

relationships among the three or four leading Jewish merchants in Mexico. Simon Vaez had branches or consignees selling his goods in Queretaro and Zacatecas. Treviño de Sobremonte traded between Mexico City and Guadalajara and Acapulco. Vaz Acevedo operated between Mexico City and Veracruz, but almost exclusively as a wholesaler. The presence of foreign agents in New Spain, as in South America, may have directed the places of trading in Europe. It is known that the Jews in Mexico sent considerable amounts of merchandise to Spanish and Portuguese Jews in Hamburg and Aleppo. From these places, the goods were then shipped to Holland and Zealand.

Manuel Bautista Perez of Lima was one of the wealthiest and most cultured Jews in the New World. He was also a great public figure: a patron of the University of San Marcos, the owner of an extensive library, and regarded by Christian churchmen as well-versed in theology. Several university publications were dedicated to him with words of adulation.

He was born in Seville in 1593, although the inquisitors reported that he was born in 1590 in Portugal. His wife, also a Sevillano, his first cousin, and his three children came to Lima in 1620. It is not known how he began the accumulation of wealth though it is likely that he received considerable capital from Jews in Spain to invest on their behalf in New World ventures. His financial aptitude led to success that produced extensive landholdings, much of it in agriculture; mining interests in Potosí and Huancavelica; mule trains operated by Jews; and banking interests. He brought several members of his family from the Iberian Peninsula to Peru, where his brothers-in-law acted as his agents in some of his enterprises.

Perez was called *capitan grande*, a title usually denoting a governor or a person in some high office. At the time of his arrest, his fortune has been estimated, in modern values, to have been over two million dollars. At the auction of his property following his incarceration, his coach brought 30,400 reales.

The inquisitors reported to the Suprema that he was "held as an oracle by the Hebrew Nation, it being understood that he is

foremost in the observance of the Law of Moses.” He was the spiritual leader of the Jewish community of Lima and, by extension, of all the Jews in the viceroyalty of Peru. He remained a *negativo* until the end. He and his two brothers-in-law were among the eleven burned at the stake on January 23, 1639.

Also among the eleven at the stake was Francisco Maldonado de Silva, a surgeon from Tucuman and a member of the staff of the royal hospital in Concepcion.³⁶ His parents were New Christians, and he and his two sisters had been reared as devout Catholics. He did not learn until he was over twenty years of age that his father had been reconciled by the Inquisition in 1605 after confessing to practicing Jewish rites. He learned about his father’s true faith after reading *Scrutinium Scripturarum*, by Pablo de Santa Maria of Burgos. This author, an apostate from Judaism, was originally named Solomon Ha-Levi and was the chief rabbi in Burgos. He converted to Catholicism about 1405 and rose rapidly in the Church to become a bishop and co-regent for the young Infante. He wrote *Scrutinium* as a polemic against Judaism and to prove that Christianity was the only true faith. When young Maldonado de Silva read the book more than two hundred years after it was published, it had the opposite effect to that which Pablo de Santa Maria intended. Francisco, whose curiosity was aroused by what he read, turned to his father with questions. He then learned about his father’s experience with the Holy Office and that he, Francisco, was, in fact, a Jew. Father and son studied about Judaism, and in time the son became a God-intoxicated disciple of Judaism.

Francisco, inspired and moved by his new faith, wanted to convert his sisters. One of them, a devout Catholic, informed her priest, who instructed her to relate to the officials of the Holy Office all that she knew about her brother. She followed his instructions. This led to her brother’s arrest in 1626. While imprisoned, Francisco circumcised himself and changed his name to Eli Nazereno. He once fasted for eighty days until he was skeletal and could not even turn on his cot. He was then

force-fed. Requesting ears of corn in their husks, he used some of the husks on which to write commentaries on his new faith and used the rest to make a rope by which he lowered himself to the floor below his cell where other Jews were awaiting trial. He pleaded with them not to abjure their faith and to remain true to Judaism.

The inquisitors sent many theologians to debate with him in his cell, but none could shake his indomitable faith. He marched to the stake with his writings tied about his neck. As the flames were to be applied to the pyre at his feet, a strong wind rose and overturned the cupola where the entire assemblage of church dignitaries and others awaited the climax of the bloody spectacle. The thirty-three-year-old Eli Nazareno cried out, "This has been ordered by the God of Israel so that we would be face-to-face and from the heavens." Isaac Cardoso termed him "the great preacher," and his fame spread to all the Jewish communities in Europe.³⁷

The Great *Auto da Fé* of 1639 in Lima involved only two females, Dona Mayor de Luna and her daughter, Dona Isabel Antonia. Dona Mayor was married to Antonio Moron. She was imprisoned as *judia judaizante*, "a Jew practicing Jewish rites." This was the same charge made against her daughter, her sister Mencia de Luna, and the eleven men who went to the stake. Mayor admitted the charge and was condemned to perpetual prison, to wear a *sanbenito*, and to receive one hundred lashes. The lashes were punishment for writing secret notes (intercepted by the prison wardens) to other Jews in the inquisition cells. Her notes, like those of Maldonado de Silva, exhorted the other prisoners to remain steadfast.

Mencia de Luna was married to Enrique Nunez de Espinosa. Enrique's arrest by the Holy Office was his second. He had been imprisoned in 1623 for being a Jew but his case was then suspended. In 1639, he was sentenced to serve ten years in the galleys. His wife, Mencia, then twenty-six years old, died in the torture chamber on the second turn of the *mancuerda*, the cord. Contrary to the usual custom of the Holy Office, Mencia's bones were not disinterred and included in the Parade of

the Green Cross to the *quemadero*. The bones of one man had been disinterred for the occasion, and the bones represented the eleventh “man” at the stake.

Mayor de Luna’s daughter, Isabel Antonia, was married to Rodrigo Vaez Pereyra. She was twenty years old when she received the same sentence as her mother. Her husband, Rodrigo, was burned at the stake. According to the account of the *auto*, Mayor was sixty years old, but she contended during the trial that she was only forty. She and the other women in her family and several others in Peru and New Spain were the proverbial “Women of Valor” as described in Proverbs 31:10–31.

Only passing mention has been made of the women in New Spain and then only as part of their husband’s families. However, Justa Mendez and Juana Enriquez are the subjects of a lengthy monograph.³⁸ These women were stalwart defenders of their faith and bulwarks of strength to their husbands. If one were to measure degrees of orthodox observance, unquestionably the females would scale the highest.

Although the number of individuals discussed is necessarily limited, Antonio Rodriguez Correa must be especially noted. The proceedings of his trial show the existence of Jewish rites and customs in Peru prior to the seventeenth century. Antonio was a peddler of toys and trifles and traveled over much of the viceroyalty. He was accused of reciting the Psalms of David without adding “*Gloria Patri*”; he observed the Jewish Sabbath by not working on that day; he owned a Bible in the vernacular; on a trip to Huancavelica, he recited some prayers which, he told his fellow-travelers, warded off all dangers; he aided in concealing the presence of Jews and helped others to escape. In addition to these charges, he was cited for celebrating *El día grande del Señor* (“The Great Day of the Lord”; i.e., Yom Kippur), during which he sang psalms; he ate fish cooked only in oil; and at other times (Passover), he ate bread made without yeast (*matzoth*).

Antonio was sentenced to the stake in the *auto* of 1605, but his sentence was commuted at the last moment because he

showed great contrition. He was sentenced to serve only three years in prison and to wear a *sanbenito* after his release. After the conclusion of his jail term, he requested asylum in a monastery because people fled from him when he walked the streets wearing the *sanbenito*. He worked in the kitchen of the monastery and, it is alleged, also wrote a book entitled, *Comó el Santo Oficio de Lima convirritó un venerable a judío* [How the Holy Office of Lima Converted an Aged Jew]. The book was published in 1861. In another book published in 1692, *Díos prodigioso en el judío mas obstinado*, mention is made of the miracles of Antonio Rodriguez Correa, who became the Venerable Antonio de San Pedro.

Pedro de Medina Rico charged that the Inquisitor Villadiego of the Cartagena tribunal had many Jewish friends from whom he received gifts and loans and that the inquisitor used Jews to sell goods for him. Except for the select top few, those in North and South America, Jew or Christian, who desired to amass wealth had to engage in smuggling and know all the artifices in order to avoid the payment of taxes.

While there were many Jews in Cartagena and its environs and they were quite visible, the Holy Office was more involved in disputes among the inquisitors than in ferreting out heretics and Jews. When the inquisitors were not fighting among themselves, they were engaged in disputes with the secular authorities.

The Spanish population in Cartagena at the beginning of the seventeenth century did not exceed five hundred. The city was always bustling with trade and ships coming from Spain or leaving for the Old World. After the sporadic attempts of the inquisitors to perform the functions of their office between 1625 and 1636, the Portuguese Jews feared unpredictable persecutions and found it expedient to move to the Caribbean islands or to the neighboring English and Dutch colonies in order to conduct business. The individuals apprehended by the Holy Office in Cartagena are named in the section on New Granada in this author's *The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World*.

Some of those apprehended were circumcised. Several were world travelers, a number of them knew Hebrew, and several had come from Brazil. Luis Gomes Barreto had been in Africa and Brazil and had accumulated sizable funds. He purchased the post of *depositario general de Cartagena*. He was arrested and later absolved. It may have been his position plus some munificent bribes that brought about his acquittal. His good fortune lasted ten years. He was rearrested in 1648 pursuant to the order of the Suprema. It had taken the Suprema ten years to review the record of his first trial. He was ultimately released from prison at the age of eighty-two.

Pedro de Campos was born in Villafior, Portugal, in 1599. He went to Brazil in the 1620s and traded there. He shifted his affairs to Caracas, where he became an exporter of cacao to Mexico. Then he returned to Madrid, where he and his brother together administered “the collection of custom duties and other royal rents.”³⁹ Another brother controlled the distribution of chloride and quicksilver in Mexico.⁴⁰ Pedro returned to Campeche, which was an important area for Jews and illicit trade. There he was arrested by the Inquisition *comisario*. He appeared in the *auto* of 1649 and was sentenced to a fine of 2,000 ducats for “extraordinary expenses of the Holy Office.”

Juan Cardoso, alias Gabriel Peregrino, according to his *proceso* of 1643–47, was fifty-five years old, but in the receipt given for him by the captain of the ship that was to transport him to Spain he was fifty-five years old in 1651. He had been born in Simide, Portugal, was single, circumcised, and resided in Orizaba, New Spain, where he was a merchant. Prior to migrating to New Spain, he had resided in Amsterdam, where he was a practicing Jew. He knew the prayers and owned a *tallit* (this word appears in the *proceso*), a prayer shawl. He was sentenced in the *auto* of January 23, 1647, to abjuration *de vehementi*, confiscation of all his property, jail for six months, and exile. With all the foregoing against him, why was the sentence so comparatively mild? Why was he not released prior to being placed on board the ship for Spain in 1651? Despite the distance of more than 175 miles from Orizaba to Mexico

City, he was active among the Jews in the capital. He shared his Jewish knowledge with many. Of course, he never arrived in Spain and is one of the seventy-eight who didn't.

Manuel Alvarez Arellano, born in Yelves, Portugal, was either forty-three or fifty years of age, single, and circumcised. He was the mortician for the Jewish communities in Mexico and traveled a great deal between Spain, France, and New Spain. He brought linen for shrouds from Rouen and earth purportedly from the Holy Land for burials. He was a bon vivant and had at least two illicit affairs, one with Isabel de Espinosa, niece of Juana Enriquez, and the other with Rafaela Enriquez, Juana's sister. He, like Juan Cardoso, was reconciled in the 1647 *auto* and sentenced to jail for a year, abjuration, *sanbenito*, confiscation of all property, and exile. He also was to board the ship in 1651 with the other seventy-seven exiles. The same questions apply to his case as to the case of Juan Cardoso, above.

When the Holy Office ordered the more than a hundred Jews convicted in the *autos* in Mexico of 1646 to 1649 to serve prison sentences in Spain, they were turned over to the ship's captain in Veracruz. Since fingerprinting was then unknown, the captain was required to give a receipt which included a physical description of each of the seventy-eight prisoners.⁴¹ The following are two descriptions: "*Dona Juana Enriquez* [only she and four others of the twenty-two women are identified as Dona]; forty years of age, more or less; wife of Captain Simon Baez Sevilla; born in Seville; somewhat dark-complexioned; round face; of good appearance; black eyes; good body." "*Leonor Baez*; born Casteloblanco, Portugal; thirty years old; good body; white face; brown eyes; aquiline nose; black hair; widow of Agustine Roxas, who hung himself in the cells and whose effigy was burned at the stake."

The physical descriptions of the men do not reveal the extraordinary stamina and strength of many of them. These characteristics are indicated by the persistence and vigor required to operate mule trains over the Andes in South America and from Mexico City to Acapulco or to Veracruz. They were

able to ride horses for days on end and to battle with the Indians. Jews, especially in the viceroyalty of Peru, sought trades that involved wide mobility and little ownership of land or fixed assets. Among such vocations was that of muleteer and conveyor of goods over long distances and difficult terrain. In addition to earning a good income, the Jewish muleteer carried news from one community to another and, to a certain extent, engaged in espionage. Espionage involved learning of plans and activities of the Inquisition and what the climate was, in government circles, with regard to Jews.

In addition to those who owned ships and sailed them as captains or as members of crews, some Jews traveled widely for a variety of reasons. An example of such travelers is Tomas Mendez, who was born in Camino, Portugal, about 1604 and taken by his parents to Pernambuco, Brazil. His parents had been penanced in Lisbon. Subsequently, he went to Loanda, Angola, a Portuguese colony in Africa. He stated at his trial that during his travels he observed all Jewish days of fasting and learned the locations of all the Jewish communities in Europe, Africa, and the New World. He finally settled in Veracruz. He and his wife were convicted in 1647 of being *judío, observante de la ley de Moyses*, “a Jew and observer of the law of Moses.” She received 100 lashes and he 200. Both were sentenced to perpetual prison. Prisoners usually served only two or three years when sentenced to perpetual prison.

Women, as well as men, traveled. Juana del Bosque testified that she was born in Cartagena and had come to Mexico with her aunt and several other women from that city. The mass arrests of Jews in 1635 in New Granada was most likely the reason for the exodus from Cartagena. Juana and her aunt were in the *auto* of 1646. Each received 100 lashes and a six-month jail sentence plus loss of all her property.

The events leading to the *autos da fé* of 1646, 1647, 1648, and 1649 are discussed in the following chapter. One result of these *autos* was the collapse of the commercial empires created by the three most prominent Jews. The lives of hundreds of innocent women and children were devastated, and the pattern of their

existence as Jews, and as members of closely-knit families where love and affection were showered upon the children, was terminated. The children became wards of the Holy Office, which assigned them to members of the staff. The foster-parents were obligated to feed and clothe the children, indoctrinate them with Catholic dogmas, and teach them to abhor anything Jewish and despise all Jews. They were taught that the Jews “killed our Lord,” as a result of which the Jews were cursed and had been sentenced to perpetual wandering.

Of those who were to serve life sentences in Spain, only two ever appeared there. This was confirmed on August 24, 1965, by Dra. Pilar León-Tello, then senior archivist of the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid. The other prisoners found refuge on Caribbean islands where the ship, en route to Spain, stopped for victuals and water and where other Jews had already settled. These Jewish prisoners were ransomed secretly. In his report to the Suprema, the captain claimed that they had been washed overboard during a storm. This claim was credible since passengers slept on the deck.

Many Jews roamed through Mexico from 1650 to 1659, often not wearing the *sanbenitos* they had been ordered to don in public. As one testified, “How could I, a dueling master, obtain pupils if I wore the garment?” According to Dr. José Ignacio Rubio Mañé, a Yucatecan and former director of the Mexican National Archives, many found refuge in Yucatan and others established themselves in and around Monterrey. Monterrey was destroyed after the imprisonment of Luis de Carvajal, the governor, but rebuilding started between 1596 and 1600.

The most notable case of the 1650 *auto* was that of young Juan Pacheco de Leon, whose testimony concerning Jewish practices in Italy and Mexico is significant.⁴² In the *auto* of October 8, 1659, the most notable case was that of Francisco Botello, husband of Maria Gomez, who was made to witness his burning at the stake. Diego Diaz, another Jew, when the priest told him to kiss the cross so that he might obtain salvation, answered, “Quité, padre, que un palo a nadie salve”

[Leave off, Father, it is a piece of wood that can save nobody]. He and three other Jews were burned alive.

Günther Friedlander reports that in the records of 132 cases before the tribunal in Lima, information concerning the occupations of Jews penanced was as follows: twenty-two merchants, trades not specified, seven shopkeepers with stores on the streets of the merchants and seven more doing business in passageways, seven shopkeepers in the provinces, five employees of merchants, seven doctors, one lawyer, five learned men and writers, four shoemakers, four silversmiths, four confectioners, one shield maker, six miners, four public employees, four slave traders, two gamblers, one grocer, two mariners, one soldier, and one administrator. The occupations of the others were not determined.

During the reign of Luis Velasco, marquis de Salinas, as viceroy of Peru (1596–1604), Spain's weakness as an international power was evident to all. The Dutch determined to invade Peru in 1599 and almost captured Callao. The wealth of the Peruvian silver mines whetted the appetites of many who wanted to share in the bounty. The serenity of the vicerealty was further disturbed by the arrival of the *Peruleiros*, Portuguese Jews from Brazilian territory. Bernard Moses wrote that the secular authorities were powerless to "hinder the invasion of Jews." Friedlander also notes that many Jews worked in the mines. They are not included in the above enumeration because many escaped prior to arrest. The number of Jews was so great (prior to the mass arrests beginning in 1634) that the Lima inquisitors protested the naming of a Portuguese as a *comisario* because, they claimed, he would obstruct the work of the Holy Office. One of the most important mercury mines in Huanavelica was named "*de los santos*." It was owned by Pedro de Contreras, a Jew. He died in the *auto da fé* of December 17, 1595.

After the inquisitor Juan de Manozca was transferred from Cartagena to Lima, he learned of the great importance of the Portuguese Jews in the commercial affairs of that city and that Jews were in Cartagena in substantial numbers. One of the first

victims in Cartagena was Blas de Paz Pinto, “a man who was beloved and esteemed by the whole city.” On the third turn of the wheel in the torture chamber, he confessed that he was a Jew. Eight days later, on February 19, 1637, he died following the amputation of his toes. His body was broken and mutilated, and lockjaw and gangrene had set in.

As a result of confiscation and “by other means” (not identified by Professor Bernard Moses), the Cartagena tribunal acquired a balance of 430,414 pesos over expenses. The Cartagena tribunal had jurisdiction over a vast area which included the bishoprics of Cartagena, Panama, Santa Marta, Puerto Rico, Popayan, Venezuela, and Santiago de Cuba. Its inquisitors and officials were engaged in more feuds with the governor and other secular officials than any other tribunal. In addition to these quarrels, there were constant disputes between the Dominicans on one hand and the Franciscans, Augustinians, Mercadores, and Jesuits on the other. Pulpits were used to denounce each other. This unclerical conduct contributed to the breakdown of Church influence.

The trials of four men by the Cartagena tribunal reveal facts of Jewish history and culture. Manuel Alvarez Prieto was arrested in Cuba and brought to Cartagena for incarceration and trial.⁴³ Cuba was under the jurisdiction of the Holy Office in New Granada, as were all the Spanish West Indies islands. Alvarez Prieto refused to involve other Jews in the practices of Judaism which he observed. He stated repeatedly, “el es [*sic*] judio y quiere morir en la ley de Moysen” [he is a Jew and wishes to die in the law of Moses].

In addition to the close family and commercial relationships that existed between the New World Jewish communities and those of Europe, there were many interesting personal relationships. Salo W. Baron writes of the numerous Portuguese Jews who had far-flung international contacts and says that the “Amsterdam Jews . . . were in frequent contact with the secret Judaizers in South America.”^{44*} He sums up the role of the

*Baron uses the terms “New Christian,” “secret Jew,” and “Marrano” interchangeably in the work cited. He explicitly states that “some New Christians were genuine Christians but the majority doubtless were secret Jews.”

Jews from Amsterdam and Brazil as follows: “By their influence on Europe’s major money markets and emporia in Antwerp, Amsterdam, Hamburg, London, Leghorn and Venice, Jews and Marranos opened up new opportunities for their own participation in the mainstream of European politics and economics. Nor should we underestimate the importance of their interrelationships with the masses of Sephardi coreligionists . . . in the countries of Islam.”⁴⁵

Antonio de Fonseca had five brothers residing in the Canary Islands, Pernambuco, Lisbon, and France. Baron writes, “The Fonseca-Pinas family thus offers another illustration of the frequent interterritorial dispersal of New Christian families, a factor which aided them in developing international trade.”

Hermann Kellenbenz refers to “clans” as one of the forms of Sephardi organization.⁴⁶ He criticizes the Marxist revisionists who contend that economic gain is the underlying structure of Jewish history. Kellenbenz writes that in the wanderings of the Jews after 1492 and 1536 (the latter from Portugal), they sought places of economic enterprise. “Tolerance and economic flowering are the two factors under which the wandering must be viewed. Neither the one or the other alone determined the whole happening.”⁴⁷

Manuel Tejado Fernandez ridicules Américo Castro and others who aver that Jews sought asylum from the Inquisition in the New World.⁴⁸ Pierre Chaunu takes Tejado to task in a lengthy article which served as a polemic review of the subject.⁴⁹

Curiously the historian again meets in the Inquisition papers the people known as conversos, or nuevo cristianos, meaning Jews of the Iberian diaspora who paraded under a false front and about whom there is so much correspondence in the Casa de la Contratacion. As business men they controlled more than one-half of the commerce of the mainland [Spanish New World]. They were Portuguese and came after many adventures or hardships to seek what they believed to be an asylum in the Indies. Regardless of what Tejado Fernandez says, asylum was their principal goal and not primarily an avenue to economic power. The Jew of the diaspora was first of all looking for refuge and gold so that he could buy police and the conscience [of those who had the power to make them

flee again]. The Jew wanted gold and obtained it for such purposes and not, as others, for the prestige it conferred or for the pleasure and enjoyment or domination.

Lucia García de Proodian adopts the theories of Tejado Fernandez in her book *Los Judíos en América*, apparently unaware of Chaunu's critique. She accuses the Jews of coming to the New World exclusively for the acquisition of wealth. The shortcomings of her book and evidence of her anti-Semitism appear in the reviews of her work.⁵⁰

The importance of the international activities of the Jews in the seventeenth century has not received, until recently, the recognition it deserves. Untapped sources in many European and New World archives exist. Pierre Chaunu, in the above-cited article, states, "Les procesos d'Inquisition constituent en effet des documents tels qu'il n'en existe peut-être pas d'équivalents exacts pour aucun autre espace et pour autre civilisation" [The Inquisition *procesos* constitute, in essence, documents that are unlikely to be found in any other place or civilization].⁵¹

Because Alvarez Prieto refused to denounce others, he was put to torture on November 29, 1646. Under torture, he named two colleagues and testified about the Cofradia de los Judios de Holanda, the "Brotherhood of the Jews of Holland," which operated via cells. There were usually three to five men in each cell, one serving as the treasurer. The treasurer was the only one who knew their superior. Funds were collected to aid the Dutch in their fight against the Spanish Catholic kings and to aid the Jewish communities in the Holy Land. The funds that were raised from the Jews in the region of the cell were transmitted to the Jewish community in Venice, which sent the proceeds to the Jewish communities in Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias. Part of the funds were retained in Venice to augment the money required to ransom Jews captured by the Barbary pirates. Funds came from many groups in Peru, New Granada, and other parts of South America.

Members of the Cofradia agreed that, if apprehended by the Inquisition, they would confess quickly that they were Jews,

that they observed the Law of Moses, and that they wished to live and die as Jews. Medina wrote that Manuel Alvarez Prieto was “que de todos . . . sin duda el mas notable” [without doubt . . . the most important of all]. He died in his cell and was burned in effigy in the *auto* of April 15, 1653.

Sebastian Rodriguez was born in Lisbon.⁵² The extent of his travels in the seventeenth century was not as unusual as might be supposed. Many others traveled as widely. He had been in Spain, Angola, Jamaica, Mexico, Chile, Peru, and Panama before coming to New Granada. He attended a synagogue in Panama and there he read “heretical and Jewish books.” The *fiscal* of the Holy Office referred to him as a *judio, judaicante oculto*. The use of *oculto*, “secret,” is unique in the Inquisition records. It again points up the nonuse of “Marrano” by the Holy Office.

Professor Dr. Alberto Osorio O. of Panama writes that the city of David, the third largest city in Panama, was founded in 1602 by Juan López de Sequeira. Based upon several factors, Osorio came to the conclusion that López was a Jew. He reports that he discussed his theory with Dr. Morales Padron, professor of American history at the University of Sevilla, and that Morales Padron agreed with his findings.⁵³ Further information about Jews in Panama may be found in *The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World*.⁵⁴

Sebastian Rodriguez was born in Famalicao, not far from Braga, which was under the jurisdiction of the Duke of Braganza. Sebastian’s mother, Antonia Fernandez, was also a native of Famalicao. Sebastian bore the same name as his father. Both his parents were Jews, and he had been circumcised. He had been in Spain, Angola, Jamaica, and Mexico, where he had a store from 1624 to 1628. He then went to Chile, Peru, Panama, and New Granada.

While in Panama, Sebastian operated a general store in the house of Santiago de Anchieta, a member of the Municipal Council of Twenty-Four. Sebastian could speak Latin, French, English, Spanish, and the languages of the Aymara of Peru and the Aztecs of Mexico. I am indebted to Professor

Osorio for presenting me with a copy of the manuscript of his book, *Judaismo y la Inquisición en Panama Colonial*, to be published by the Panama-Israeli Cultural Institute. Professor Osorio supplies some data about the synagogue which Sebastian Rodriguez attended in Panama: "The synagogue was situated on the Street Calafates which was near the Cathedral and was in a populous area. It was close to the gate to the area and to the cove of the Point of Judas. The surgeon, Antonio de Avila, had a small barber shop in the front of the synagogue in order to conceal the presence of the place of worship" (my translation).

While there does not appear to have been a large permanent Jewish population in Panama in the seventeenth century, Jews were always there because of the commercial importance of the old city of Panama, Portobelo, and Nombre de Dios. The Isthmus of Panama was the link between the Atlantic and Pacific and the means of bringing all exports and imports of the Old World from and to the west coast cities of the New World. The slave markets of the aforesaid cities were among the largest in the world during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Panama was under the jurisdiction of the Holy Office tribunal in Lima from 1569 to 1610 and was transferred to the jurisdiction of Cartagena in 1610. Sebastian was arrested on January 23, 1642, by the order of the Cartagena tribunal, but he was not the first Jew to be arrested in Panama. That distinction belongs to Salvador Mendez Hernandez, who was arrested on San Juan's Day in 1569 in Nombre de Dios as an escapee from the Holy Office in Seville, where he had been burned in effigy after his escape. (I have been unable to determine the outcome of his case.) It appears that the Inquisitor Servan de Cerezuela was primarily concerned with the ease with which escapees from Spain entered the New World by fraudulent means and with the connivance of ship captains and masters who went unpunished.

Sebastian's *proceso* contains other important matters. One of the witnesses, Rodriguez y Avila, testified that Jews had various means of indicating their faith which could be understood only by other Jews. The gesture of recognition, which appears only in this *proceso*, was the placing of the right hand over the

heart during a conversation. The words in the *proceso*, “levar al pecho la mano del interlocutor” (AHN Inq. leg., 1620 exp. 12).

Sebastian was reconciled in the *auto* of May 24, 1648. He was fined 200 pesos for extraordinary costs of the Holy Office, had half of his property confiscated, received 200 lashes, and was to be exiled from the New World and Spain.

Osorio discusses Pedro Arias de Avila, known as Pedrarias, in *Judaismo y la Inquisición*. Pedrarias was a key figure in the conquest of Panama and in Balboa’s discovery of the Pacific.

Pedro Lopez was born in Castelo Branco.⁵⁵ His uncle, Garci de Lucena, had resided in San Vicente de Beira and was also known as Gaspar de Silva and was a brother of Manuel de Lucena of Mexico. Manuel was a close friend of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo, and both went to the stake in Mexico City on December 8, 1596. Garci de Lucena had another brother, Baltazar, who resided in Potosí. Garci was burned alive in Lima on December 10, 1600.

Pedro Lopez was arrested in 1625 in Zaragoza, in the province of Antioquia, now part of Colombia. His mother and aunt had been penanced by the Inquisition in Lisbon. Pedro attended school for seven years. There is a controversial belief or legend that Antioquia was the residence of crypto-Jews during the colonial period.⁵⁶ There are some verbalisms and gestures common to Medellin, Antioquia, and Monterrey, Mexico, where many secret Jews resided, which are not commonly used in other places.

Pedro had been in Cuba, Lima, Pisco, the Alto Plano, and Panama prior to settling in Zaragoza. He was associated with Baltasar de Araujo Coronel, who lived in Santa Antioquia, was circumcised, and had been to five or six synagogues in Europe before migrating to the New World.

Miguel Arias Valle was born in Utrera, Spain, and had been in Seville and Malaga and resided in Tenerife, Canary Islands, for many years.⁵⁷ He was arrested in Maracaibo in 1663. His *proceso* states: “mano [*sic*] de la mano derecha” [right hand deformed or lost]. While in Malaga, he received a letter and funds from Juan Curiel of Hamburg. Juan was an agent of the Duke of Braganza. The letter referred to a transaction for wine

and directed that Miguel should go to Hamburg. En route, he stopped off in Amsterdam, where he met some Jews. He explained that he had consented to be circumcised because of a gift of 2,000 ducats. Papers and letters found among his belongings showed that there was an interrelationship between the Jews in Seville, Malaga, Teneriffe, Salonica, and Amsterdam and the Jews in Mexico, Cartagena, and Peru. Many of the passages were in Hebrew or in code. He also testified that most of the English in Teneriffe were Jews. Lucien Wolf's research in private and Inquisition records in the Canary Islands and in England confirms this.⁵⁸

Simon Osorio, previously mentioned, is a deviant from several of the generalities made about Jewish males. He had two aliases, Simon Rodriguez and Francisco de Caceres. He was born in San Combadan, Portugal, and came to Peru as a young man about 1620. He administered the *obrajes*—sweatshops where slaves and prisoners, chained to the work tables, wove cloth and made dresses and other apparel for the Duchess of Lerma. Simon and his two brothers invested their funds in the *Compañía de Olanda*. When they received any honor in the synagogue, they did as the Jews in Amsterdam. They pledged funds not only for *Terra Santa* and the *cautivos*, the captured ones, but also for a memorial fund for their families. The Inquisition hearings reveal that Simon wore curls and perfume. There are two paintings of him extant. In one, he is depicted as a woman. After making complete confession, he was reconciled in Lima in the Great *Auto* of 1639, given 100 lashes, and sentenced to serve six years as an oarsman on the Spanish galleons without pay.

Antonio Fernandez was also known as Antonio de la Palma and, in Mexico, as Antonio de Victoria and Antonio Sanchez, and in Lima and Cuzco as Salazar. He also confessed, "Soy un judío" [I am a Jew]. He was also reconciled in the 1639 *auto*, lost all his property, and was sentenced to wear a *sanbenito*.

Juan de Acosta was born in Pernambuco when Brazil was yet a Portuguese colony. At the age of twenty-three he was one of the *Peruleiros* who came from Brazil to Lima. He sought to

find fortune and a bride. The Holy Office found him first. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in Seville. He was one of the sixty-one Jews in the 1639 *auto*.

Just as the highest compliment that could be paid to a man was to state that he was “a great Jew,” so the highest compliment for a female was to be termed *una judia judaicante*, “a Jewess who observed Jewish rites and ceremonies.” The outstanding woman to receive this compliment was Leonor Nunez, daughter of Justa Mendez and wife of Duarte Leon de Jaramillo. She bore him six children. She was one of the thirteen sentenced to the stake in the Great *Auto* of 1649.

Manuel Bautista Perez communicated with his brothers-in-law in code as reported by the inquisitors, and references are made to the code in his *proceso* but the code does not appear.

There were a few other allusions to codes. The British Museum, Manuscripts Division (additional 29,868, Jewish inscriptions), contains notes written in 1677 and 1678 by E. Mendes da Costa. The notes are biographical, written in Portuguese, and contain the types of cipher writing used by Mendes da Costa’s forebears for correspondence with Jews in various parts of the world. The following are reproduced as they appear in the original manuscripts:

	1	2	3
	A K T	B L U	C M W
I.	4 D N X	E O Y	5 F P Z 6
	7 G Z	H R	I S 9
		8	

	1	2	3
	E N O	D P Y	C Q P
II.	4 S T B	I K L	5 M X Z 6
	7 F W	G U	A H L 9
		8	

III. e m a n u e l = Emanuel
 ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

Despite impressions which may have been gathered to the contrary, Jews were not concentrated in Mexico City and two or three other urban areas in New Spain. Jews were in Guadalajara, Yucatan, Campeche, and along the Caribbean coast. The area that appears to have had no Jewish inhabitants is the Pacific coast south of Acapulco extending to what is now Nicaragua.

With respect to the presence of Jews on the Yucatan Peninsula, the book written by Ricardo Ossado, alias el Judío, is referred to in two books, *Apuntes que servirán para la formación de "La Flora Yucateca"* (Merida, 1889) and Maximine Martinez, *Las Plantas Medicinales de Mexico* (Mexico, 1933, parte quarta). The latter book discusses the plants of Yucatan mentioned in *la Obra de el Judío*.

Some have questioned whether Ricardo Ossado was a Jew and base their doubt on the fact that in Yucatan in the eighteenth century any person who possessed knowledge about the medicinal properties of herbs and plants was called *un judío*. But no one has explained how or why the word "Jew" came into use if there were no Jews at any time in Yucatan. Ricardo Ossado lived in Valladolid, Yucatan, about 1750. It is said that he was an Italian and that his original name was Juan Francisco Mayali. He fled Yucatan because he feared the Inquisition. José Rubio Mañé subscribes to this theory of the cause of Ossado's flight.

There are several Inquisition *procesos* of Jews who resided in Campeche in the seventeenth century. The brothers of Luis de Carvajal went there to await the ships owned and manned by Jews who used secret ports to bring coreligionists to New Spain and to pick up those who wished to depart.

Earlier in this chapter, the statistics giving the birthplaces of the Jews in the three viceroyalties were supplied. In a more general study of the testimony given to the inquisitors, it appears that there were proportionately more in Peru than in Mexico who had resided in France. This may account for the greater degree of religious observance in Lima. While their number was small, they played a role in the dissemination of knowledge about Judaism. One case deserves special mention.

At the Archivo Historico Nacional in Madrid (Inquisition libro 1030, fol. 367), there is an account of a private *auto de fé* held in the chapel of the Inquisition in Lima on February 27, 1631. The penitent, Alvaro Mendez, was born in Davera in the bishopric of Lamego, ca. 1589. He had a store in the port of Pisco, Peru, from 1624 until his arrest. From 1609 until 1624 he had been in France, where he celebrated *la pasqua de los bollos cenceños*, “the festival of the unleavened cakes,” in the house of the mother of Diego Gomez, a *reconciliado*. They ate fish, lettuce, and celery prepared in a stew pot, omitting all foods containing yeast.

They observed the laws of Moses secretly. They drank “some glasses of wine while reclining according to the ceremony of the Law, in remembrance of the departure made by the children of Israel.” In the observance of the Sabbath, they recited *dos amidas con los pies juntos*, “two *amidas*, standing, with their feet together.” On other days, they recited only one *amida*. (The *amida* is a lengthy series of benedictions.) He also commented on the marriage of Pedro Alvarez to a Christian woman although he was circumcised and was *de la nacion Ebreá*, “of the Hebrew nation.”

Alvaro testified to many other aspects of Jewish life, among them that Jews do not take usury from other Jews because it is prohibited by the Law of Moses and that Passover is celebrated for eight days. He had once secreted two Jews from *la juderia de Venecia*. His prayers were taken from the Davidic psalms and he prayed three times a day. During the Fast of Queen Esther, he recited 100 prayers that had been taught to him by his parents. He habitually fasted on Mondays and Thursdays. On July 17, 1630, he was reconciled and sentenced to life imprisonment. But the first six years of the sentence was to be spent as an oarsman in the galleys sailing from Callao. He died on June 2, 1631.

ADDENDA

I have estimated that the Jews constituted about ten percent of the total non-Indian population in all of New Spain, or about 2,500 Jewish souls.

Two of the Jewish communities in Mexico City were quite large. Most of the crypto-Jews were affiliated with the group under the leadership of Tomas Treviño de Sobremonte or the one led by Simon Vaez Sevilla. The *proceso* of Micaela Enriquez contains several reports and conversations indicating knowledge by her, her friends and family of the existence of other coreligionists in the city.

Jews tended to group themselves on the basis of places of origin in Spain or Portugal or family relationships. The Jews did not segregate themselves but were scattered throughout the city. When a special meeting of the adherents of Simon Vaez's group was to be held, a household Negro was sent through the streets garishly dressed and beating a tambourine. Meetings were often held in a warehouse. Rather than arriving in attention-attracting numbers, they came in pairs or small groups.

• 5 •

La Complicidad Grande and Complicidad Judaismo

(The Great Conspiracy and the Conspiracy of the
Jews)

AMONG the sources for detailed accounts of *La Complicidad Grande*, the Great Conspiracy, are José Toribio Medina, Salo W. Baron, and this writer.¹ The result of the exposure of this conspiracy was the great *auto* in Lima on January 23, 1639, in which there were sixty-one Jews, of whom twelve were burned, including two who had died previously and were represented by their bones, which had been disinterred.

There were several reasons for the failure of the Spanish authorities to take heed of the actions of the Jews in the New World. There were too many bureaus and bureaucrats, with little exchange of information among them; too many cries of “wolf” by Holy Office officials and viceregal aides; and a preoccupation with international problems and potential internal revolt fomented by the Catalans and Basques. Spain should have become suspicious, or at least have known, of the activities of Iberian Jews on behalf of England and Holland as early as 1604. Engel Sluiter reported an interesting case from the Audiencia of Santo Domingo:

Three Portuguese Jews—Simon de Herrera, Manuel Cardozo and Juan de Riberos—had been apprehended for possessing two passports, one from Maurice of Nassau and one from Queen Elizabeth, authorizing them to take a ship . . . from Santa Domingo, to the Netherlands and England. Among Simon de Herrera's confiscated effects . . . were found account books, bills of lading and letters which connected him with foreign commercial interests.²

Information about communications between Jews in New Spain and co-religionists in Mexico and Guatemala came to the attention of the Suprema several times between 1596 and 1621. When Manuel Gomez Navarro was arrested for *judaizante*, a letter from Holland was among his effects.³ Manuel had been a soldier, serving in Cartagena, Guatemala, and Pachuca. The *procesos* against Manuel Diaz Enriquez and Pedro de Silva Saucedo reveal that three Portuguese Jews had fled from the Inquisition agents in Brazil in 1621 and escaped to Guatemala.⁴ Diaz Enriquez also had letters from Holland. Caro Baroja writes about the correspondence between the New World Jews and the Dutch Jews.⁵

Ricardo Palma gave the following version of the conspiracy in Peru:

A few months before August 11, 1635, the inquisitors had arrested more than 100 Portuguese Jews accused of gathering together in the House of Pilate. . . . The real crime against these and the 2,000 Lusitanians residing at that time in the country was that they made great fortunes as a result of honest effort. . . . there was imputed to them a plot to seize the kingdom of Peru from Spain. This was a political pretext and a religious pretext! There was no escape: [they were bound to be caught] either as Jews or as revolutionaries.⁶

Henry C. Lea asserted that the mass arrests in Peru and later in New Spain were the result of disclosures made in torture chambers in Spain between 1625 and 1640. During those years, a determined effort had been made in Spain and Portugal to exterminate all judaizers. Lea, in mentioning "La Complicidade Grande in Peru," wrote that the existence of a "plot" was a deduction made from the fact that many Jews had

entered Peru from Brazil, Mexico, New Granada, and Panama, thereby increasing “the numerous band of compatriots and becoming masters of the commerce of the Kingdom.”⁸ By 1630, they comprised at least a quarter of the Buenos Aires population.

Concerning Peru, the account is similar. “The Merchants’ Street is almost theirs; the Merchants’ Lane is all theirs, as are most of the retail booths. . . . the Spaniard who does not have a Portuguese as a business associate appears to have no chance for success.”⁹

The existence of a conspiracy or plan was brought to the attention of Philip IV by the Council of Portugal, which told him that the capture of Bahia in Brazil by the Dutch in 1624 was “not so much to make themselves masters of the sugar in Brazil as of the silver in Peru.”¹⁰ The attachment of the Jews to Peru was very strong. Peru had become, according to Medina, *la tierra promisa [sic]*, the Promised Land. They regarded Spanish Christians as interlopers because the Spaniards’ interest was the extraction of silver, and the Spanish way of life represented the intrusion of a foreign element in the land.¹¹

Huancavelica was on the edge of the three largest mercury mines in the world. Life in the town was described as “secular with gambling rife, sexual promiscuity widespread, lascivious dancing, and corruption rampant.”¹² Jews brought food and other staples to Huancavelica as well as to Potosí, the site of the principal silver mines.

In a letter to the Suprema, the Inquisitors Francisco Verdugo and Andres Juan Gaytan wrote in 1622 that “the city of Potosí is filled with Portuguese . . . and that generally they are all of the Hebrew nation . . . and that they observe the Jewish ceremonies and that the city has a Spanish *comisario* although it has not been possible to learn if he is Jewish. . . . Most of them enter through Buenos Aires and their ultimate destination is Potosí.”¹³ The letter requested the king to decree that all foreigners should be expelled from the kingdom (vicerealty) of Peru, especially the Portuguese.

The Jews aided the Dutch with funds and personnel because

they knew that they could not oust the Spaniards by themselves. The Netherlands had accorded the Jews religious liberties and freedom from persecution. Better, the Jews thought, to live under Dutch hegemony than under that of Spain. One of the factors in support of the existence of the plot is the report of Captain Esteban de Ares Fonseca to the Suprema. He wrote that the Amsterdam Jews were working against Spain and were maintaining a constant correspondence with their spies residing in the New World in the guise of merchants.¹⁴

Another factor that supported the conspiracy theory was the role of Cardinal Richelieu's dealings with the Portuguese in fomenting the revolt in Evora.¹⁵ Frequently overlooked is the existence of the *Cofradia de los judios de Holanda*, the "Brotherhood of Dutch Jews," also known as the *Compania* or *Cofradia de Olanda*. In addition to the testimony of Manuel Alvarez Prieto, further information is gathered by piecing together bits of other testimony including that from Brazil elicited during the two Holy Office visitations in 1591 and 1618. The visitation record included not only the material adduced during the visitation but also more that had accumulated before and after the first examination.

Elias Lipiner writes that "some New Christians" were denounced because "they had ordered funds from the Jews of Santarém who sent them money to be used for certain purposes."¹⁶ Lipiner also records that it was well known in Olinda, Brazil, that João Nunes and Joane Mendes "had the funds of the Jews."

Nunes was known as "the Rabbi of the Law of the Jews in Pernambuco." Lipiner believes that the title was an epithet that was used in denigration of the judaizers in the area. There is no doubt that Nunes was the treasurer of the *esnoga* (synagogue). The existence of this synagogue appears in the denunciation of Ambrosio Peixoto de Carvalho on August 20, 1591. This synagogue and several others were really groups of Jews who came to particular large houses to pray on the Sabbath and other holy days. The homes of Diogo Lopez, Ilhoa, Rui Teixeira, Antonio Thomas, and Dinis D'Andrade, a doctor, were

such synagogues. When Rui Teixeira went to Lisbon on business, the Jews met in the home of Gomes Fernandes.

The synagogue of Matoim was the most commonly reported synagogue in Bahia. The denunciations of 1591 mention it as having been in existence for twenty years. In the 1618 hearings, it was revealed that the Sabbath was announced by the ringing of bells and by the appearance of the rabbi wearing a white garment over his clothes.

Although João was a close friend of Duarte de Sá, the oldest councillor in Olinda, de Sá denounced Nunes to the Inquisition, but Nunes won his freedom. The denunciations against him included “usury,” making fun of the Inquisition, keeping a cross in an improper place, and taking publicly as a mistress a married woman for whose husband he had arranged a trip to Lisbon and then to Angola (shades of David and Bathsheba!). More than once appears the statement that he “had the funds of the Jews.” As Lipiner states, “Nunes was a scapegoat for the eternal hatred of the practice of tax farming . . . and of the envy inspired by his wealth and exceptional talents.” There can be little doubt that his wealth greased the palms of Inquisition officials, thus enabling him to avoid conviction.

Returning to the conspiracy, it is clear that Jews were taking advantage of the antagonism between “creoles” and Europeans to foster their own interests. Dislike sprang from two basic factors: jealousy of those born in Europe, and resentment of the favoritism shown them by the Crown.¹⁷ In the highlands, where the population was less cultured and more provincial attitudes prevailed, the greatest hostility existed.

Don Simon Osorio, alias Simon Rodriguez, was penanced in the 1639 *auto*. He was born in Portugal and reared in Flanders. He then migrated to Quito. During his trial, he admitted that he sent 8,000 ducats to Brazil for “la Compania de los olandes contra su majestad.”¹⁸ This was not the Dutch West India Company. La Compania was a separate Jewish organization. In an Inquisition document translated by Henry C. Lea appears the statement that the rich Jews of Dutch-occupied Brazil gave their money to the West India Company, “a Brazilian

Company,” and that among such Jews “who are in secret with Holland” is Bento Osorio, alias David Osorio.¹⁹ Don Simon Osorio was sentenced to abjure *de vehementi*, receive 100 lashes, and serve six years as a galley slave without pay.²⁰

As late as 1652, the existence of the Brotherhood appears in the testimony of Luis Gomez Barreto.²¹ He told the inquisitors that contributions were made to the Cofradia de Olanda so that war could be waged against the Catholic majesty, the same testimony as was given earlier by Simon Osorio. Gomez Barreto was born in Viseo, Portugal, was circumcised, had resided in Angola, then went to Brazil and Cartagena. He was arrested in the last-named place.

Ricardo Palma quoted Pelliza Tovar, famed Aragonese chronicler, to the effect that “on the day that the Spanish authorities took possession of the letters and correspondence of the resident Portuguese they found keys and letters in code and they discovered that the synagogues of America were in intimate relations with the Jews of Holland.”²² Armando Herrera wrote that in 1640 there appeared an article in *Seminario Erudito* of Madrid stating that in 1639, “se habia descubierto que leaban correspondencia seguide y en cifras crecidos auxilios pecunarios a diferente sinagogas” [it was discovered that a continuous growing correspondence in code was being carried on with different synagogues concerning financial aid].²³ In the Simancas document translated by Lea, previously mentioned, there appeared, “In 1640, the tribunals of Lima and Cartagena reported that in recent autos da fé, it has been discovered that many Judaizing Portuguese in the colonies had correspondence with synagogues in Holland and the Levant assisting the Dutch and the Turks with information and money.”

In addition to contributing to a war chest against Spain, contributions were also made for the support of the Jews in the Holy Land. These funds were funneled to them through the Dutch. The monies were also used to ransom Jews who were being offered for sale by Muslims and the pirates.

THE GREAT CONSPIRACY IN NEW SPAIN

There is no relationship between the two conspiracies. It is probable that the “round-up” of Jews in Mexico was precipitated by the trials in Lima from 1634 to 1639 but there were other catalysts. The material on the plot in Mexico is quite vast and much of it appears in published articles.²⁴ The interesting feature of the accounts is that almost each writer has a different theory. Most, however, agree on the story that two servants heard four Portuguese speaking one night in a Mexico City street and stating that if there were four more men as courageous as they, fire could be set to the House of the Inquisition and the inquisitors would burn. This tale may be discounted as a total fabrication. No prisoner examined in the Holy Office after 1642 was ever asked about such a plot. The inquisitors entitled their report to the Suprema in 1646, “Relacion de las Causas que estan pendientes in este Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisicion de Mexico, pertenecientes a la Presente Complicidad de que el se conoce desde al año de 1642” [Account of the cases pending in this tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition pertaining to the present conspiracy of which we have known since the year 1642].²⁵

Many reasons existed for inquisitorial activity. The inquisitors saw the opportunity to use the Jews as a scapegoat. The battles between Bishop Juan de Palafox and the Marquis de Villena had created great unrest in addition to the economic unrest due to general conditions. The successful uprising of Portugal in breaking away from Spain in 1640 made all Portuguese suspect. The inquisitors also saw a source through which they could enrich themselves through the confiscation of the wealth of the Jews. Josephine McClaskey refers to the “Great Conspiracy” and states that “It appears more probable that this so-called conspiracy was merely another spur to the persecution of the Portuguese [read Jews] begun at this time for political and economic reasons.”²⁶

González Obregón’s account deserves reading. He narrates that the arrests of the Jews that began between May and July

1642 resulted “from the Portuguese conspiracy . . . that was almost exclusively that of individual *hebreos* and of their descendants of that nation.”²⁷ Lea and Medina contend that the inquisitors saw the opportunity of “enriching its [Holy Office] treasury and purifying the faith,”²⁸ but they impute financial greed for personal enrichment.²⁹

González Obregón adds some background about conditions in Mexico in the early 1640s: religion was in a state of discord; many churches were without clergymen; the clergy was dissatisfied with its state of vassalage to the Crown and to the Holy Office; pestilence and sickness were rampant; meat was lean, inferior, and in short quantity; fruits were few and expensive; and the viceroy was profligate, indolent, and overly partial to the Portuguese.³⁰ González Obregón relates that with regard to the great number of *judíos portugueses* imprisoned, the King had the best agency, the Inquisition, to eradicate them and *la conspiración de los portugueses*, “the Portuguese conspiracy.” He believed that the Inquisition was serving as a political instrument to suppress any possible revolt that might be engendered by the Jews.

Vicente Riva Palacio was very familiar with the *procesos* in the Mexican National Archives. He commented that the 1,402 cases recorded between 1601 and 1700 were primarily against *judíos y judaizantes*, many of whom were principals in the *complicidad de los portugueses*. Instead of describing the plot, Riva Palacio stated that the accused observed the law of Moses and that all declarations of the accused were against their accomplices and witnesses because “they knew and observed the rites and ceremonies of the Jews.”³¹ The plot, therefore, was to preserve Judaism! There is no indication of any other conspiracy or plot.

The *proceso* of Gaspar de Robles provides further reason for activity against the Jews. He acted as an informer against several important Jews in Mexico City as well as his own aunts and uncles. Prior to coming to Mexico City, he lived in California, where he became very ill. He believed that a priest, Father Naba, had saved his life. He confessed his true faith to the

priest, who convinced him that he should go to the Holy Office in Mexico City and relate everything to the inquisitors. In a series of secret meetings in the home of Eugenio Saraiva, the secretary of the Holy Office, Gaspar gave detailed evidence of the rites and practices of the Jews, particularly of those whom he implicated.³² The meetings were held in Saraiva's home so that no Jewish spy would learn what was transpiring. Gaspar's testimony, as much as any other factor, brought down the wrath of the Inquisition on the Jews.

The accusation of a conspiracy may also have served as an expedient to remove Jews as competitors and economic and commercial rivals of the new class of entrepreneurs arising among the *mestizos* and *criollos*, born in the New World of Spanish-born parents. In an unpublished doctoral dissertation, "Marchands et Inquisition au Mexique au XVIIIème Siècle" (Université Paris X Nanterre, Department d'Etudes Historique, 1977), Dominique Varagne writes that the majority of the merchants in New Spain in the seventeenth century were Jews. Based on the *procesos* in the Archivo Historico Nacional de Madrid, she has an imposing index in which are listed in chronological order the merchants haled before the Holy Office. Of the 107 merchants tried by the inquisitors, eighty-one were Jews.

The eradication of Jews and Judaism in Peru and New Spain was a constant desire of the Spanish authorities. The desire was a heritage of the late-sixteenth-century papacy. The popes of that era undertook a multifaceted program designed to encourage conversion by the Jews. This policy appears in a tract, *De Judaeis et Aliis Infidelibus* of Marquardus de Susannis, published in Venice in 1558. Kenneth R. Stow describes the policy in great detail in his book *Catholic Thought and Papal Jewry Policy, 1555–1593*, pointing out the material advantages of conversion.

The Holy Office was also concerned with the eradication of Judaism. Technically, the Holy Office had jurisdiction only over baptized heretics. Among the maneuvers to circumvent this exclusion, the inquisitors ruled that any person who de-

famed Jesus or Mary or denied the Trinity or the Immaculate Conception or any other basic dogma of the Church was subject to the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. The inquisitors also utilized for their ends a Church rationalization that had been enunciated centuries earlier. Professor Salo W. Baron explains this:

Mankind as a whole is but the mystic body of Christ. In this corpus Christi are included not only Christians but also infidels. In it each corporate group, each *universitas* has a special function as of a special organ within the human body. The Jewish community, also a member of this universal body, must be maintained as such a *universitas*, apart, with as much separation and segregation . . . as possible. . . . This formula is the more remarkable, the more uncontested the general theory and practice of intolerance became in the Christian world.¹¹

That there were inconsistencies between old beliefs and new concepts was of little concern to the Suprema. If it could not dispose of Jews and Judaism by one ruse, it would try another. Jews were violating the formula cited by Baron by living among Christians and associating with them. They were not ghettoizing themselves.

The history of the Spanish New World colonies after the two great *autos* of 1639 and 1649 confirms that the attempts to destroy Judaism met with failure, as all similar attempts did elsewhere. If it were not for the alleged conspiracies, there might never have been the mass arrests, and the compilation of the names of thousands of Jews and of their rites in North, Central, and South America would never have been disclosed.

During the period 1642–1649, following the arrests because of the conspiracies, the Jews in cells in the House of the Inquisition as well as in convents, monasteries, and rented homes used code names when they communicated with each other by striking the walls or by having their Negro servants carry messages from one set of cells to another. The servants had secured menial jobs for the inquisitors and therefore had access to the cells. Some of the names were *Bergamotu* (pear or a kind of snuff), *Tabaco*, *La Chokolatara* (“chocolate” is an Aztec

word), *Paloma Grande* (great dove), *Paloma Chica* (small dove), *Jarro* (a pot with only one handle or a pitcher), *Pecador* (sinner), *La Gorda* (the fat one) for Juana Enriquez, *El Burro Grande* (the great burro) for her husband, *El Burro Chico* (the small burro) for her son, *Agua* (water), and *La Malinche*. The last name deserves mention because La Malinche was the Indian princess who aided Cortés in his conquest of Mexico. La Malinche is understood to designate a turncoat or traitor.

Secular and Religious Customs and Beliefs*

WHEN LEONOR, the twelve-year-old-daughter of Juana Enriquez and Simon Vaez, was on her deathbed, she requested utensils to wash her mouth and teeth. The child knew that she was about to die. She explained the reason for her request by saying that she was about to kiss God. She expired shortly thereafter, and those in the house announced, “She is now an angel.” Mourners at deathbeds and at interments often proclaimed that they had visions of the deceased entering heaven. No mention is made of any deceased entering the nether regions.

Pieces of coin or a broken pearl or other jewel or a few seeds of grain were put into the mouth of the cadaver or thrown into the coffin. Dr. S. R. Driver, the English Bible commentator, wrote about Deuteronomy 26:14, “If the rendering ‘nor given thereof to the dead’ be correct, then the allusion will be, most probably, to the practise, which was widely prevalent among the ancient nations and was in vogue also among the Jews, of placing food in the grave with the dead, and for the use of the departed spirit on its journey to the underworld.”

Mathias de Bocanegra, S.J., labeled as superstitions many Jewish customs. He wrote in the account of the 1649 *auto* that Justa Mendez “turned her face to the wall and was expected to

*Information about the customs of Spanish Jews prior to the fifteenth century is contained in *Los Judíos en México y América Central*, pp. 418–445. These pages are a paleographed copy of the document acquired by the Royal Danish Library ca. 1721. It has been authenticated as an Inquisition document. It came to my attention after the publication of the English edition of my book.

hold this position until she died.”¹ Bocanegra may have taken the reference to facing the wall from a document supposedly written by a rabbi from Toledo, Miguel Gutierrez de Toledo.² Two learned rabbis, Moses Mescheloff of Chicago and S. Swirsky of Miami Beach, have reported that the Talmud (*Ketubot* 103) states that if one dies with his face toward people, it is a good sign for the deceased, but if toward the wall, it is a bad sign. Swirsky considered Bocanegra’s comment “the last revenge” because Justa had refused to kiss the cross that had been proffered to her by the priest. She not only refused the cross but caused it to fall to the floor.

Some superstitions were derived from the *Kabbala*, the source of Jewish mysticism since the twelfth century.³ Throwing soil on the coffin while it is being lowered into the grave is still practiced. The use of virgin soil, especially if it came from the Holy Land, is believed to prevent the soul from returning to the earth and to encourage its ascent to heaven. Some believed that the soul does not wish to depart this terrestrial sphere. *Aveluz* refers to standing at the side of the grave and awaiting a vision of the soul entering heaven.

The inquisitors ordered a physical examination only in cases of *negativos*, those who made only a partial confession or would not reveal the names of those with whom Judaic rites were practiced. The majority of those who were examined had been circumcised. Circumcision is traditionally made by a circular incision of the prepuce so that part of the foreskin is removed. A few circumcisions consisted of longitudinal incisions. These few men had been circumcised in the New World. We believe that it represented an attempt to deceive Christians who might see the Jew in the nude. Those with this covenantal mark admitted that it was the result of a religious act.

In the seventeenth century, there was a common use of *Santo*, “saint,” as a title for Moses and several Jewish prophets. This is an old Spanish custom and not the result of acculturation from Christianity, as were some other customs. Pregnant women were excused from fasting on the Jewish holy days that called for fasting: i.e., Yom Kippur and the ninth day of the

month of Ab (usually falls in July). Juana Enriquez detested fasting. She had had three miscarriages and often ate on fast-days, claiming that she was pregnant. There are a few other instances similar to this.

Throwing a piece of the bread dough into the fire before it was shaped for baking was a widespread custom among the Jewish women. It is a universal practice of Orthodox women who bake their own bread. There is a statement in the *Mishna*, the book of commentaries and interpretations of the Torah, *Bame Madlikin*, to the effect that a woman may die for any one of three transgressions. One is for "failing to separate the *challah*." The act of throwing a piece of dough into the fire is symbolic of the sacrifices during the time of the Temple in Jerusalem. Another transgression for which women might die is failing to light candles on the Sabbath and holy days. The Jewish women in the New World followed the command to light candles. Many did this covertly; i.e., placing the candles under a table or covering the windows with a black cloth. Both ruses were intended to prevent non-Jewish passers-by from noticing the candles. Since Sabbath candles cannot be extinguished, some Jews did not extinguish their candles on week nights in order to hide the significance of the Sabbath observance.

Many Jews attended mass and communion and a few went to confession. The few who confessed never revealed to the priests that they adhered to Judaism. They avoided looking at the Host when it was elevated. At communion, when the wafer was placed in their mouths, they expectorated it after leaving the church. The hostility to Catholicism was evidenced by beating figures of Jesus and the Christian saints. In some places, the beatings were part of a ritual. The discovery of such actions precipitated the onset of mass arrests of Jews in Peru.⁴ There are a few references to this practice during the colonial period. Many of those who did not beat the figures kept them turned to the wall except when they had Christian guests.

It is conceivable that Jews attributed their perils to Jesus and his apostles and that the beatings served as a catharsis for the

frustrations of people deprived of liberty of conscience. It does not appear that the Jews knew that Jesus was a Jew and that he had made the statement that he had not come to change a jot or tittle of the Law. Some storekeepers placed a cross under the threshold of their stores. Whoever deliberately stepped on the threshold when entering received a discount. Among themselves, and in some prayers adapted from Christianity, Jews substituted innocuous names for Jesus and Mary. Their detestation of the inquisitors was shown by the use of obscenities and vile names in reference to them. *Horkos* was a word used for Christians. *Horkos* refers to a string or rope of onions.

There were two parts to the theological concepts of the majority of colonial Jews. The positive and nourishing aspect was the belief in the coming of the Messiah, at which time they and all Jews would be saved and would live in peace, practicing their faith freely. They did not resent that all non-Jews would enjoy the same peace and freedom. The Messiah, they said, would come for all people. It was upon this ground that they rejected Jesus as the Messiah. His coming had not resulted in peace for the world, even for the Christians, since they were fighting and killing each other.

The negative aspect, which had a unifying effect, was the conviction that Jesus was not the Son of God and that there had not been an immaculate conception. They knew the biblical declaration of the *Shema*, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God, the Lord is One” (Deuteronomy 6:4), which is a contradiction to the concept of the Trinity as the Godhead. These views were expounded in a few *procesos* of Jews.

A further negative concept was enunciated by Friar Diogo da Asuncão. He was burned at the stake in Lisbon on August 3, 1603, for maintaining that Jesus was not an anointed king (Christ means “anointed”) and that he was criticized for “assuming the name [Christ] and that Mary was not a virgin.” The arguments expounding the positive and negative concepts were published. The list of rites observed by the friar were identical with those practiced by New World Jews. The reasons for the friar’s death “caused wonder in the world,” and the

inquisitors, regretting that they had published the conclusions to which Diogo had come, gave orders that the death sentence not be made public. Their order, however, came too late to prevent it. The knowledge of the crypto-Jews of the friar's account of his beliefs, attitudes, and practices must have been a major influence in retaining within Judaism those of weak faith or irresolute adherence to the faith.

The medieval belief that rabbis and great scholars could effect cures by the recital of blessings or some portion of the Torah was part of Jewish culture. Superstition was relied upon for the treatment of some illnesses and was an important factor in daily customs. Among the common illnesses were *jaqueca* and *acaque* (headache and migraine headache) and *tarbadella* (sunstroke). The home remedies were tobacco, sweets, and hot chocolate. Blanca Enriquez taught her daughter a prayer for curing headaches. It may have been in Hebrew since her daughter claimed that she never understood it and had forgotten it. The use of liquid chocolate virtually amounted to an addiction in the general population. Juana Enriquez was famed for her ability to make the best chocolate drink. When, in 1640, the wife of the Spanish governor of China (China was the name for all the Far East) visited Mexico while en route from the Far East to Spain, the viceroy sent her to Juana's home to taste the chocolate.

The position of Juana and her husband in the social sphere is indicated by the comments of Gregorio de Guijo in his contemporary diaries, the only existing eyewitness account of the times.⁶ He wrote that he was amazed to see Juana and her husband, Captain Simon Vaez, in the parade of penitents in the *auto* of April 11, 1649, because they were leaders in the city and were visited by all important dignitaries as if they were the noblest of people in the kingdom.

Superstitious beliefs and practices were common to all Jews, but some indulged in by the crypto-Jews were indigenous to the New World or to the villages in Spain or Portugal from which they or their parents had come. Fingernails and toenails were cut and the clippings were wrapped in paper and burned.

(My own grandparents treated my nail clippings in the same manner when I stayed at their home as a child.) Reference to this custom appears in Appendix B of *Los Judíos en México y América Central* under “Del Enterrar o quemar las uñas” [Of burying or burning the nail clippings]. Thomas Treviño de Sobremonte testified at his second trial that he and members of his family followed this custom. Also, nails were not cut on the day of the new moon. One man had his servants shave his armpits and around the genital area when he bathed on Friday prior to the onset of the Sabbath. According to Haim Beinart in *Conversos on Trial*, p. 278, the Talmud, in *Nidah* 17a and *Moed Katan* 18a, states that there are three things that have been said concerning nails: he who burns them is pious; he who buries them is righteous; he who throws them away is wicked.

Some Jews ate only chickens that were all brown or all black; there had to be a total absence of even one feather of another color. A bed had to be made tidily with the sheets pulled straight. If the sheets were not pulled tight, the souls of the dead might lie upon them and torment the sleeper. The hair of an unmarried woman had to be dried well after washing and put into buns or no gentleman would woo and marry her. A girl could capture a man by giving him a powder made either of a toasted swallow or the brains of a cow.

A piece of *matza* (unleavened bread associated with Passover but which may be eaten at any time) placed on the head could cure a headache. A piece of *matza* was sometimes carried in a small pouch suspended from the neck as an amulet. Clothes worn inside-out would bring misfortune. (East European Jews in the twentieth century had a similar belief.)

Fasting was often observed in groups to comply with the religious requirement of the presence of ten men, a *minyan*. This quorum is necessary for the recital of group prayers, including the *kaddish*, the prayer recited by a son or other male members of the immediate family following a funeral. The prayer is said three times a day for eleven months. A *minyan* is also required for the reading of the Pentateuch on the Sabbath

and holidays. There is no Jewish law that requires a *minyan* for fasting. Many fasted in expiation of sins and as an expression of thanks to the Lord, especially if there had been an escape from danger. Fasts were also indulged in to avert an ominous event or when there was a feeling of foreboding.

Many of the customs and rituals are enumerated in the Royal Danish Library document. It may be safely assumed that the contents of this as well as other Inquisition documents were known to the Jews. Through bribery and other means, they managed to infiltrate the Holy Office and secure copies of the contents of its files.

The following summarizes the religious beliefs of the Jews of the late sixteenth and most of the seventeenth century. Most of the items originate in the Bible:

1. The law of Moses is the true law and is better than the law of Jesus.
2. "The law that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai" was written by God with His finger on the tablets that He gave to Moses.
3. One should love only God and not venerate any images since this is prohibited by the Commandments of the Law.
4. One must not eat pork or anything of the pig. Only flesh of animals that chew the cud is permitted. Fish without scales are prohibited. All fowl must be decapitated and the blood drained from them and from all animals to be eaten. No animal blood or suet may be eaten.
5. *Pacua de ceceño*, the Festival of Unleavened Bread, falls on March 14. (Actually, Passover never falls that early. There is no specific secular date because of the Jewish use of the lunar calendar for religious observances.) To deceive Christians, the word *Phase* was substituted for the name of Passover.
6. The Sabbath was observed from the setting of the sun on Friday until after sunset on Saturday. Two people testified that one must see three stars in the heavens on Saturday night before the Sabbath was considered terminated. (This is still regarded as correct.) Clean shirts must be worn on the Sabbath "similar to the custom of the Christians on Sunday." The Sabbath is a reminder of the creation of the world and that God rested on the seventh day after completing His work. Therefore, during the Sabbath, no kind of work might be performed. Some shopkeepers opened their stores on the Sabbath to avoid suspicion of being a Jew, but they made no

sales and accepted no money. Psalms of praise should be sung on the Sabbath, no fires should be lit, and only those foods prepared prior to the advent of the Sabbath might be eaten.

7. On the Great Day of Pardon (Quipur), God judged all humans. This day falls on the 10th day of September. (This is another incorrect date. When Manuel de Mello in Guadalajara wanted the community to observe Quipur on a date approximating the correct Hebrew date, a great fight ensued between his followers and those who insisted on using September 10. This date appears in Inquisition document 1254 in the Archivo Historico Nacional de Madrid.) Quipur should be observed by fasting and praying for twenty-five hours. No one should sleep.

Some of those who prayed did so with outstretched arms or with arms crossed over the chest or, when seated, with hands overlapping on the lap. During a recital of the *Shema*, the left hand was used to cover the eyes and the right was placed over the heart. Everyone faced east toward Jerusalem. (This is a universal custom except for those east of Jerusalem, who face west.)

At least two men who led the group in prayer on Quipur stood on bricks. There is an Orthodox rabbinic rule that the leader in prayer should not move his feet. By standing on bricks, the leader could not move his feet without falling. Jorge Rodriguez Tabara, considered “a great Jew,” was one who stood on bricks.

Jews observed the Fast of Judith, the woman who slew Holofernes (Judith 12:13). This fast has no modern counterpart. The custom of sending one son, usually the eldest, into the Church was followed by Spanish but not by Portuguese Jews. This son was usually unaware of the true faith of his family.

Juan Rodriguez Juarez was married to his wife “in the Jewish manner,” which is not described.⁷ Marriage arrangements were often made by mothers who were religious and sought to maintain endogamy at all costs. Micaela’s mother sought “with particular care for persons who observed the law” (of Moses). Love was secondary to the faith of the prospective bridegroom.

There was one man in the 1630s who traveled regularly between the New World and Italy to seek eligible spouses for secret Jewesses. One of the first tests in determining whether the candidates were Jewish was to ascertain where their parents were born. Castelo Branco, Portugal, was an important place. Jews from this town and general area were found in all parts of the New World as well as in the Canaries.⁸ The rabbi or *chazan* (cantor) in the Canaries and Mencia Vaez of Santiago de Chile, among others, were from Castelo Branco.

Divorces were rare. There were at least two, although there is no information on how they were effectuated. The interesting case is that of Juan Mendez Villaviciosa, who was a Jew “since he had the ability to reason.”⁹ He was the professional mourner for the community of Simon Vaez. He was divorced by his wife, Ana Juarez, on grounds that he was impotent and they were childless. Ana and her parents initiated the divorce so that she could marry a new arrival from Spain, Francisco Lopez de Fonseca, whose reputation for religiosity preceded him.

Religion in colonial times was not the inspiration for ethics, morality, and love of fellowmen. Margarita de Rivera testified about the sexual morality of the Jews. It was not considered a sin for a man and woman “who observed the law of Moses,” both unmarried, to cohabit without the benefit of marriage nuptials. Adultery, however, was a sin. It was not a sin for a Jewish male to have sexual relations with a non-Jew, but it was a sin for a Jewish female to have relations with a Christian male.

There are legends and myths about a group called “Mexican Indian Jews.” They are discussed in an article by this author.¹⁰ The people referred to are neither Indians nor Jews. They are *mestizos* who have adopted “Judaism.” They base their claims on the myth of Jewish women cohabiting with the Indians, but this is an aspersion on the Sephardi women of the colonial era. The story of a similar group in Chile was discredited by the Israeli ambassador in 1964. Günther Böhm, chairman of Judaic Studies at the University of Santiago, disclosed the fabrication and self-delusion of these people in an interview in *El*

Mercurio of Santiago, January 14, 1979. The interview was part of the article, “Judíos o Cristianos?”

Prayers and blessings were heavily relied upon for solace, warding off evil, and the sustenance of the faith. Several prayers were taken from the Dominican Book of Psalms. They were sung to the Church liturgy but references to Jesus and Mary were eliminated. No prayers recited by the secret Jews made any derogatory references to Christianity or its sacred personages.

On the eve of Yom Kippur, all members of the family and friends requested forgiveness of those whom they might have offended during the year. Another custom took place after the completion of the meal preceding the fast of the Great Day. Each person, in descending chronological order, went on bended knee to the family matriarch, mother or grandmother, to receive her blessing. For the males, it was, “May the Lord bless you and make you like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” For the females, “May the Lord bless you and make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.” Candles were lit after the blessings. In several households, a candle was lit for each individual present. More often, only three candles were lit; one for God, one for the mistress herself, and the third for the family.

Caro Baroja supplies numerous prayers recited by New Christians in Portugal.¹¹ He writes that the “Portuguese Jews” recited the Davidic Psalms in their own vernacular. The following prayer, as it appears in the Inquisition *proceso*, is almost identical with one recited in the New World: “Alabad sea el Señor que me amanecido bivo y sano y seguro y en paz de la tiniebla de la noche; me da su luz y vida y gracia que le serva. Amen.” [Praised be the Lord who has let me live to the morning healthy, in peace, and secure from the darkness of the night; [who has given] me His light and life and grace so that I will serve Him. Amen.]

Cara Baroja states that about the middle of the seventeenth century in Spain there was a progressive return to orthodoxy due to the invigorating relationships of the secret Jews with those residing in other countries. The first signs of the new

“Portuguese Jews” appeared in Bayonne, France, on the border with Spain. There may be a connection between the rise of orthodoxy among the Iberian crypto-Jews and the decline of immigration of Jews to the Spanish colonies in the New World. There was no Holy Office in Bayonne. The proximity to Spain was desirable and, at the same time, Jewish rites could be freely practiced. One could readily learn all that was transpiring in Spain and be of aid to one’s coreligionists who were there. J. Amador de los Rios wrote that David Abenter Melo reported that the Inquisition cells were the school “where one was taught the knowledge of God.”¹²

The secret Jews of Belmonte were discovered in 1917 by Samuel Schwarz.¹³ He compiled a collection of prayers recited by the descendants of the Jews in Belmonte. These descendants had preserved the prayers for almost four hundred years, although after the lapse of so much time they were linguistically vulgarized. Amilcar Paulo, in his article “The Secret Jews of Belmonte,” avers that he has studied these people for over thirty years.¹⁴ He also cites prayers that are almost identical with those recited in the New World in the seventeenth century. He confirms that the women were the guardians of the faith and that they assumed the obligation of transmitting the prayers and rituals.

Teenagers were taught the prayers after they were told that they were Jews and were sworn to secrecy. The following prayer, translated (and edited) by Col. David Fergusson from the *proceso* of Gabriel de Granada, was taught to the youth after his thirteenth birthday:

Lord, my soul called upon Thee to deliver me from the fire and flame that I may not be burned or scorched. Here I am in this desert turned into a plant where great trouble shall overtake me. They shall cast me into thick darkness where neither brother nor cousin can aught avail me. I ask of Thee, my God, one thing—that Thou remember my soul and deliver it at the mouth of the cave and going out at a door, and that I may not amuse myself counting the stars of heaven or throwing water into the sea.

The references to fire and flame are patently clear, as also are parts of the traditional liturgy. “Desert” appears in several prayers and refers to Spanish territory where Jewish practices were prohibited. “Cave” and “door” were the exits to places such as Italy and Holland to which Jews hoped to go as soon as they amassed some wealth.

Prayers were recited primarily in Spanish interspersed with words in Ladino. The few Hebrew words that appeared most often were *Adonay* (Lord), *Adonay Tzevuot* (the Lord of Hosts), and *Shema Yisroel, Adonay Elobenu, Adonay Echod* (Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One). There were some who knew much more Hebrew.

Some other Hebrew words that appear are *tallit* (the prayer shawl worn by men when praying), *tref* and *trefe* (animal food deemed unclean and not to be eaten by Jews because slaughtering had not been done according to prescribed ritual or because of some abnormality in the entrails or because the animal was of a species on the proscribed list), and *tefila* (prayer). When the inquisitors asked for the meaning of *tefila*, it was translated as *misa de los Hebreos*, “the Jewish mass.” *Tefila* is a general term for prayer.

Jorge de Almeyda and Diego Diaz Nieto, among others, knew the entire *Shimona Esray*, the Eighteen Blessings, a lengthy and solemn prayer recited daily in silence. They also knew the prefatory words, which they recited in Hebrew for the inquisitors, “O Lord, open Thou my lips and my mouth shall declare Thy praise.” This sentence is from Psalm 51:17. The lips of the person praying had been figuratively sealed through sinning and thus praise of the Lord would have been blasphemous. If God opened his lips and he were permitted to praise the Lord, it would be a sign that he had been pardoned. A sense of guilt obsessed many crypto-Jews because they did not emigrate to lands where they could live openly as Jews. On Saturdays, a shorter version of the Eighteen Blessings is used.

Both sexes recited all the prayers. I have not come across anything that would indicate a segregation of the sexes while

praying as occurs in modern Orthodox congregations. The men wore caps or some other head covering and the women wore mantillas. Some Jews of both sexes prayed thrice daily.

A denunciation was filed with the Holy Office in 1622 informing it that there was a synagogue on Calle de Santo Domingo in Mexico City where Jews congregated on Saturdays and that passers-by could hear them praying. The Inquisition records fail to reveal any attempt to verify the facts. The denunciation also stated that there were about five hundred Jews in the city. Captain Antonio Vaez, brother of Simon Vaez, was the sexton or beadle (*muñidor* in Spanish) for his brother's community. The captain's son was nicknamed *El Cachopo*, "the zealous observer."

There are nuns in Mexico and in Lima in modern times who, without knowing the origin of the custom, light candles on Friday nights and place them under a table covered by a long cloth, so that the flame is not visible. I had the good fortune of interviewing some nuns in both cities in 1964 and 1965. I promised the person who arranged the interviews that I would not reveal to the nuns the origins of the custom. To my question, "Why do you do this?" their reply was that their mothers had instructed them to do this. They added that the obligation to light the candles rested most heavily upon the oldest daughter.

I have learned about and seen candlesticks that passed from mothers to daughters to be used only on Friday nights. Again, the recipient of the candlesticks was the oldest daughter. Another inheritance in the possession of a few is a vial for tears. The owners of the glass vials were the younger daughters, and they knew nothing about the use of this container except the name ascribed to it by their mothers. The few women who owned such vials were either from Colombia or were descendants of maternal forebears who came from Colombia or Venezuela.

The Argentine-born Rabbi Isidoro Aisenberg believes that there is a legend about a vial for tears. The legend stems from an old prayer which is still included in the closing section of the

prayers recited on Yom Kippur, “O Thou who hearest all weeping, hear Thou us and do Thou pour our tears into Thy heavenly urn.” The rabbi added that the legend concerns the existence of a goblet in heaven which is being filled with the tears of Jews; the Messiah will arrive when the goblet is filled.

Psalm 56:9 states, “Thou hast counted my wanderings; put Thou my tears into Thy bottle.”

Because the method of transmittal was oral, the passing of time brought changes in the pronunciation of many words. This is reflected in the spelling. A few typical prayers have been selected from the *procesos*. They are penitential in nature and include no mention of any holy day. Personal supplications and expressions of humility are the principal themes. The lack of prayer books necessitated the oral transmittal.¹⁵

When Catalina Enriquez, at age sixty, was questioned in 1644 by an inquisitor about what she believed, she replied, “I believe only in *Adonay*” (a Hebrew name for the Lord). She recited a prayer taught to her by her husband. She and two others testified that their husbands had taught them much about Judaism while in bed. Such circumstances provided a sense of privacy and safety from prying non-Jewish ears. Prayer II is very similar to that recited by Diego Diaz Nieto in 1596.¹⁶

I.

Senor Dios nuestro
no traigais en escarnio perpetuo
por birtud de buestro nombre
a buestro pueblo.

Lord, our God,
do not keep Thy people in perpetual mockery
for the sake of Thy name.

II.

O alto Dios de Abraham
Dios fuerte, Dios de Israel

Tu que oiste a Daniel
Oye me oracion
Tu que las grandes alturas. Apiadate Senor
sin ayuda de me
trastorno no mi lloro? Por cantar a Ti,
abre mi corazon para que siempre te loe
mi alma no caye.

O high God of Abraham
Almighty God of Israel
You who listened to Daniel
You who dwell in high places
Have pity on me, Lord,
Without my deserving it.
Transform my weeping into a song for Thee.
Open my heart so that I may always praise Thee,
Let my soul be silent.

The above prayer is found in several *procesos* between 1596 and 1644. The translation is by Dr. Richard D. Abraham.

III.

Leonor de Caceres recited the following prayer at her trial in 1601 when she was fourteen years of age. She repeated the same prayer at her third trial in 1652. She recalled that she had been weaned a short time prior to *el dia del ayuno dia grande*, “the day of the fast of the Great Day,” and that her parents made her fast even though she was “dying of hunger.” The age of *quitaba de teta*, “leaving the breast,” does not appear. She was taught this prayer shortly after weaning.

Inclina Señor Tus ojos y
oyeme porque pobre y necesitada,
etc.

Let your eyes gaze upon me and
hear me because I am poor and in need of help,
etc.

These lines are from Psalm 86:1, except that the psalm has “ear” instead of “eyes.”

IV.

Leonor was the daughter of Catalina Carvajal de Caceres and the niece of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo. The following is the grace she recited before meals:

Señor Dios verdadero hacedor que en los desiertos nunca
habitados no falta Tu favor.

O Lord God, the true creator who never fails to provide [for
those] in the desert.

The reference to the desert is similar to the prayer of Gabriel de Granada. We believe that it refers to places where Jews could not practice their religion freely.

V.

The first two stanzas of the following appear in the 1596 *proceso* of Justa Mendez. The complete prayer is in the *proceso* of Leonor de Caceres in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Cantemos con alegría
Albanzas al Señor
Que nadie que en él confía no le falta
Su favor.

Let us sing praises to the Lord.
Those who trust in Him will never lose His favor.

VI.

The following was taught to Francisco Lopez Blandon by his mother, Leonor Nunez. He was reconciled by the inquisitors.

She was burned at the stake in the *auto* of April 11, 1649. Leonor had learned the prayer from her mother, Maria Rodriguez, who had been a Holy Office prisoner in Toledo, Spain.

Look at me, O Lord, with eyes filled with pity and mercy. Keep me in the grace which Thou hast bestowed upon me. Guide my soul, keep me in Thy paths, test my deeds. Fulfill Thy promises and let my heart be consumed with holy thoughts; pardon my past sins and help me correct the present ones and protect me from those who will assail me in the future. Hold me worthy to receive Thy blessings from heaven, Thou who are my God and in whom I trust.¹⁷

VII.

The following is from the *proceso* of Juana Tinoco. The brief account of her marriage indicates that the Jews had double-ring wedding ceremonies. It appears that Juana's husband was converted to Judaism as a condition of the marriage. She taught him the prayer.

Con las armas de Adonai
Ando armado
Con la capa de Abraham
Ando cobijado,
la fe de Daniel
Traigo en mi corazon;
Por donde fuere y andare
Malos y buenos hallare,
Los malos se me iran
y los buenos se me llegaron;
Para que no tema
Ninguna vara de justicia,
Ni de alcalde ni de Medina,
Ni me puedan prender ni mal hacer;
mas que por Amansa
amor de Cher;
mas que por agotar
goteras de la mar
mas que para cantar
estrellas de cielo . . .

I go forth armed with the arms of the Lord
I walk covered with the cape of Abraham [this may refer to a
prayer shawl of her intended husband since in medieval times
the *tallit* was regarded as a protection from evil for the wife]
I have Daniel's faith in my heart
I will encounter good and evil wherever I go
The evil will depart from me
and [only] good will assail me;
Therefore I will fear no rod of justice nor judge nor state [temporal
power];
Even though the love of close relatives fails or diminishes
even though the gutters of the sea run dry
and even though each star of heaven is named . . .

I am indebted to Professor Sanford Shepard for the above translation.

VIII.

Micaela Enriquez testified in 1644 that the following was recited on Quipur. The beginning is similar to a prayer recited by modern children.

Agora nos acostamos
y a Dios nos encomendamos
a Dios, mi Señor
que no hay otro mejor
ni le hubo ni le habra
bendito aquel que vida nos da.

Now I lay me down to sleep
and pray the Lord to keep [me];
there is no one greater than the Lord
that we had or ever will have;
blessed be He who has given us life.

Other than the prayers extracted from the psalms, the prayers used in the two viceroyalties were dissimilar in words but were similar in content: protestations of humility and humbleness and requests for forgiveness and peace.¹⁸

Two customs were observed in all the vicerealties. Jews, even as today, refrained during Passover from using dishes and utensils made of earthenware and other porous material that were used during the rest of the year. Since earthenware dishes were common in the seventeenth century and were frequently replaced because of breakage, new ones were bought for Passover without arousing suspicion about the buyer's reasons for the purchase. The use of these dishes after Passover is permitted. A second custom was the acquisition of new clothing for the entire family prior to the commencement of the Jewish New Year, which begins with Rosh Hashana, ten days prior to Quipur. Even the poorest families scrimped and saved so that new attire could be bought for each member of the family. Some people still maintain this custom in the United States and Israel.

Some went to pitiful extremes in lying and interspersing unimportant truths with fabrications. One woman denied knowing Hebrew (true) and Portuguese (a lie). She stated that her mother, then dead, had taught her many prayers but that she could recall only one, "O Almighty God of Israel, who gives health to Your own, give health to me, my husband and son." Ultimately she remembered several others, including the blessings given to Isaac and Jacob. She had a special prayer for headaches, but the inquisitors did not ask her to recite it.

The religious practices generally observed in the New World are very similar to those noted by the late I. S. Revah in his article on the Portuguese Marranos and the Inquisition in the sixteenth century.¹⁹ In the following summary, the letters "ISR" indicate rites or beliefs that also appear in Revah's article. This indicates a continuum of many identical practices for over a century and confirms the strength and tenacity of Judaism despite the necessity of the *sub rosa* existence of its adherents.

THE SABBATH

Men abstained from work on this day (ISR). Many men abstained from handling money and collecting debts.

Women changed bed linens, cleaned the house prior to the Sabbath, and donned clean attire, as did all the members of the family (ISR).

After cleaning the candlesticks, women lit candles prior to sunset on Friday. The candles were permitted to burn out. They were never made of animal fat.

Women baked bread on Friday.

Single men lit Sabbath candles in their domiciles if there were no women in the household.

Juana Enriquez sliced the bread and cut the meat into bite-size pieces prior to the Sabbath so that the use of a knife would not be necessary on the Sabbath. She criticized another woman for brushing her teeth on the Sabbath because she considered this “work.”

KASHIRUT

Fowl were decapitated with a special knife that was first examined to be sure that it had no nicks (ISR).²⁰ The fowl were then hung by the feet so that the blood could flow out into a pan of water. The contents of the pan were then emptied onto the ground (cf. Deuteronomy 12:23–24). Maria Gomez’s mother faced east, toward Jerusalem and recited a special blessing before the decapitation.

Animals were ritually slaughtered by men. The meat was soaked in warm water to draw off the blood. The thigh vein and surrounding suet was always removed. The removal of the vein was called *landrecilla* (porging). This practice often resulted in the exposure of a Jew. Hindquarters were discarded.

The biblical injunction against eating fish that have no scales, pork, and pork products was followed (ISR).

Cooking was done in olive oil. Animal fats were studiously avoided.

A liquid chocolate was prepared from the cocoa bean and made frothy by the use of a swizzle stick twirled between the palms of the hands. This was the favorite liquid in New Spain and was used for *kiddush*, the blessing for the inauguration of the Sabbath and festivals. Wine made by Jews was common in

Peru. There is a reference to wine kept in special *botijas* (oil jars) in the *proceso* of Francisco de Fonseca.²¹ It may be inferred that this was sacramental wine that he kept only for religious use, i.e., the *kiddush*. His *proceso* reveals how food containing pieces of pork was put into one pot when Christian guests were present for dinner. A second pot was maintained ritually clean and the hosts and Jewish guests were served from this pot.

FOODS

El ani, also known as *adafina* and as *puchero* in New Spain, was a thick stew. A variation of this dish was adapted by the Ashkenazim and called *cholent*. *El ani* was prepared on Fridays and kept in the oven and eaten on the Sabbath.

The meal before the fasting consisted only of eggs, vegetables, fish, cheese, and olives. The first meal after the fast was of a like nature. Fruit was eaten at all meals (ISR).

Pan cenceño (*matzot*) were eaten on Passover. There is an account of a Jewish doctor in Lima who prescribed unleavened bread for patients with stomach disorders throughout the year so that he could eat *matzot* on Passover without arousing suspicion of more than a stomach complaint.

Most women did their own baking. When they prepared the unleavened bread, they washed their hands thoroughly before kneading the wheat flour and water. They used only new utensils and bowls. Three *tortas*, round *matzot*, were made first and baked over red hot coals in the hearth or fireplace. These three *tortas* were used on the table as the symbols during the *seder*, the meal inaugurating the Passover.

By 1625, there were Jewish bakers in Mexico City. The *pan cenceño* were called "the bitter bread of affliction which the children of Israel ate in the desert." At the supper on the first night of Passover, each person ate a morsel of the unleavened bread together with some herbs, such as parsley, to symbolize the experience of the Israelites. They ate in a reclining position and men wore a head covering. *Matzot* were placed in napkins

and sent to friends and relatives. Lamb was roasted for the Passover meal. Many men did not work on the first and last days of Passover. Many observed the festival for eight days, and some observed for only seven days.

HOLY DAYS AND FAST-DAYS

Passover or Pesach was known as Pascua de Cordero, “the Festival of the Lamb” (ISR used the French translation). Although there was no known *baggadab*, a book relating the story of the exodus from Egypt, crypto-Jews read directly from the Vulgate translation of the Hebrew Bible. The *proceso* of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo, records how the story was enacted.²² The *seder* meal was preceded by eating lettuce, radishes, and bitter herbs. The reader wore a white garment over his clothes with a belt tightened over his waist. He paced back and forth as he read aloud, with a staff in his left hand and the Bible in the other.

Yom Kippur, the most awesome day of the year, was known in Spanish and Portuguese as Quipur (sometimes with two *p*'s), as El Dia del Perdon, “the Day of Pardon,” and as El Dia de Gran Ayuno, “the Day of the Great Fast” (ISR). Many of the prayers recited on that day were repeated several times. It was observed on the “tenth day of the September moon.” There was a long recess from prayer on the afternoon of Quipur during which many men made themselves visible in public so as to allay the suspicions of agents of the Holy Office and any other potential searcher for Jews. Some men in Mexico City took a walk in the Alameda, the large park, with toothpicks in their mouths to give the impression that they had eaten.

Jews who came from Madrid or Seville knew that when they landed at Veracruz, they were to go to the home of Fernando Rodriguez. They would stay with him for a few days and then go to Mexico City, where they would be received by “a rich Jew” (Simon Vaez). Tomas Lopez Monforte testified that meetings were held in Simon’s home “as in a synagogue.”

Margarita de Rivera, born in Mexico City in 1610, was a

dogmatista who reconverted many to Judaism. She related how Jews in the Treviño group were called to prayer or for special meetings. A Negro was dressed in a red suit and went through the streets playing a tambourine. This was the signal to congregate for prayer or other community purpose.

Purim was the third most important holiday in the annual calendar of the secret Jews (ISR). The Book of Esther is the story of this festival. It was not celebrated in the New World as the happy holiday known to other Jews. The crypto-Jews compared themselves to Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews who lived under the rule of the Medes and Persians and who were threatened with annihilation because of the machinations of Haman. The king of Persia did not know that his wife, Esther, was a Jewess. Esther fasted for three days before interceding with the king on behalf of the Jews. Many Jews observe Taanit Esther, the Fast of Esther, fasting only from sunrise to sunset. The secret Jews felt that the inquisitors were the counterparts of Haman and that the Lord symbolized the king. They, however, believed that the threat to them had not yet passed.

The Hebrew edition of the Book of Esther states that Esther prayed during her fast but it does not supply the contents of her prayers. Henry C. Lea wrote that the youngest female in the Carvajal family could recite the Prayer of Esther and the Davidic Psalms “backward” (an error).²³ The prayers are contained in the Christian edition of the Book of Esther. St. Jerome included such prayers in his translation of the Vulgate edition of the Apocrypha, which had been adapted from the Greek Septuagint.

An excerpt from Esther’s prayer has been included here because it indicates the reason for its special meaning to New World Jews: Esther reminds God that she has not “eaten at the table of Haman nor honored the banquet of the king.” This symbolizes a reminder to the Lord that the Jews have refrained from eating the biblically prohibited foods at the table of non-Jews. (Some did eat such foods while guests in Christian homes, but upon returning to their own homes, put their fingers in their mouths and regurgitated. Others indulged in

other artifices to avoid the consumption of prohibited foods.) Esther also says, “Neither have I drunk the wine of libation.”

Shavuot was known as Pascua de la Primicias, “Festival of the First Fruits,” and the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. It is known to Christians as Pentecost.

Rosh Hashana, the New Year, ten days prior to Quipur, received scant attention.

Tisha b’Ab, the fast of the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Ab (usually falls in July), memorializes the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem. It is believed that the destruction took place on the same month and day of the years 586 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. The three weeks preceding Tisha b’Ab are known as Las Semanas Tragicas, “The Unfortunate Weeks.” New World Jewry abstained from eating meat or fowl during the three weeks and fasted on Tisha b’Ab.

Succot was known as Pascua de Cabañuelas, “The Festival of the Little Huts.” The observance of this festival disappeared from the *converso* religious calendar by the mid-seventeenth century.

Hanukah, “Dedication,” the eight-day celebration also known as the Festival of Lights, memorializes the victory of the Maccabees and the cleansing of the Temple in 165 B.C.E. It is rarely mentioned in the *procesos*. It is the usual custom to have a menorah with eight candle-holders and to light one candle on the first night and add one candle each night until eight are lit. Reference is made in some documents to lighting ten candles. I have received two explanations for this. A rabbi from Aleppo stated that this was an old practice of the Jews from Aleppo. Rabbi Dr. Alan D. Corré cited the *Mishna Torah* by Maimonides (*Hil. Hanukah* 4:2) which is “to light one candle for each member of the household, so if there were ten members, on the first night one lights ten candles.” Professor Corré adds that “this is conjecture.” My own theory is that ten candles were lit on the first night as a memorial to the ten menorahs that used to be in the Temple before it was defiled by the Assyrians.

Fasting was probably the most frequent means of seeking expiation for the sins of nonobservance. Fasts were preceded

by a fish meal and were broken with a similar meal. It was also the easiest form of religious observance. It was covert, and many reasons for it could be advanced if the practice were noted and inquiries made. Many fasted half-days on Mondays and Thursdays. If a visitor came on a fast-day, the guest was offered *un podo de dulce*, "a pot of something sweet," or cake or chocolate. If the guest accepted, the presumption was that he or she was a Christian; if refreshments were refused, the presumption of being a Jew arose. Other tests were also employed. The most common was to innocuously recite or say something from the Catholic hymnal and omit the *Gloria Patria*. If one's attention were called to the omission, the visitor was probably Christian. If no comment was made, it would strengthen the possibility that the visitor was Jewish.

MOURNING PRACTICES AND OTHER CUSTOMS

Upon the demise of a family member, the cadaver was doused thoroughly and dressed in a shroud of new linen, preferably from Rouen, France. After 1620, linen from Holland was considered equal to that of Rouen. The choice of the particular places for the manufacture of the linen originates with the biblical injunction against wearing material made of more than one kind of fiber. Rouen had Jewish linen manufacturers as did Holland when it became an alternate source, and their products were considered pure.

Hard-boiled eggs were eaten without salt by the immediate family after returning from the interment of the deceased. Eggs represented the cycle of life and salt was omitted so as not to remind the family of the bitterness of their loss. Hands were washed in cold water prior to eating the eggs and ablutions were performed outside the house. Many modern Jews still observe these customs.

The immediate family observed mourning for seven days. They sat on the floor or low stools. All jars of water in the house of the deceased were emptied to remove any evil spirits, and

mirrors were turned to the wall. All meals were brought to the family by friends and relatives during the mourning period, called *shiva* in Hebrew. Fish was the staple food. It was most frequently fried or pickled (*escabeche*). Eggs were eaten fried or *en alubar*. Cheese, olives, and salads were supplements.

Mathias de Bocanegra, in his *relación* (account) of the 1649 *auto*, wrote that Maria Gomez “tried to make her children perfect in that which their father and grandmother taught them.” He leveled his accusation against her because she showed no concern that her children knew no Catholic prayers and “were taught only Judaic prayers.” Further, he wrote that she did not permit her children to eat “bacon or anything cooked in lard, or fowl except that which she herself decapitated in the Jewish manner; or meat which she had not eviscerated herself and let the blood off.”

Of her husband, Bocanegra wrote, “After eating, this perfidious Jew washed his hands in cold water because he did not want to remain *trefa*, contaminated. Having been with his wife the first night [wedding night], he desisted from sexual relations the following six nights, but he saw her on the seventh. This is in accordance with the precept of the misguided rabble, namely, that a Jew who married a maiden refrain from cohabiting with her between the first and seventh nights in order to give her time to be cleansed from the first blood and so that she remain not unclean.”

The accounts of the *autos da fé* of 1639 in Lima and 1649 in Mexico refer to a “kiss of peace.” Medina referred to the exchange of *el osculum pacis judayco* (*sic*), “the Judaic kiss of peace,” in 1639 between Manuel Bautista Perez and his brothers-in-law without the inquisitors being able to stop the embrace while the men were on the *quemadero*, the platform on which the stake was erected.

Mathias de Bocanegra, S.J., official historian of the 1649 *auto*, wrote that Maria Gomez attempted *a dar el osculo de paz al modo judaico* (*sic*), “to give the kiss of peace in the Judaic manner,” to her mother, Leonor Nunez, when they heard their sentences. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* suggests that the practice of

the early Christian church “was derived from Jewish ritual.”²⁴ The kiss of peace is said to be given by God to the departing soul, according to the Talmud *Baba Batra* 7a. There is reference to “the kiss of peace . . . being a formal institution of the synagogue.” In both of the above instances, the kiss of peace took place adjacent to the site of the stake.

Juan Pacheco was arrested in 1643 and remained in the cells until 1650. He was asked at one of his hearings about the difference between the religious practices of Mexico and those of Italy, where the Jews lived freely. He discussed Judaism in Ferrara and Pisa, where he had pursued Jewish studies in *yeshivot* (parochial schools). Although the method of slaughtering animals in Italy and Spain was identical, there were differences in the examination of the entrails. In Italy, if there were spots on the lungs, the animal was considered *tref*, which he defined for the inquisitors as “unclean,” but minor spots were overlooked in Mexico. When asked what happened to the unclean carcasses, he replied that they were given to the Christians. One can only surmise the outrage the inquisitors felt. They may have given expression to their anger through the sentence imposed upon Juan. On July 11, 1650, he was sentenced to 300 lashes, *abjuration de vehementi*, and service without pay in the galleys sailing from Veracruz to Spain. He did not survive his sentence.

Juan Pacheco had relatives in Italy, Amsterdam, and Leghorn. In the course of his testimony, he defended Pedro Tinoco before the Holy Office. The inquisitors were under the impression that Pedro, who had testified that he was an observant Jew, was lying, because it was found that he had studied on Quipur. Juan explained that studying the Torah was always in order and did not violate the prohibition against work.

Conversations in the presence of strangers had to be guarded and, at times, interspersed with cryptic words. A newcomer to Mexico, “Fulano” (means “name unknown”) Paez, was visiting Isabel Correa and was being lionized by his hostess. A woman invited to a reception in his honor asked about the man’s identity. The reply was, “He is a very good man and comes

from those parts.” From this, the questioner understood that the man was a Jew and that he came from a place where Jews lived in freedom and that he had been born and reared there. The place was not identified further. Another response was that “he was going to return,” which meant that he was going to return to the place where he could profess Judaism openly and that he wanted to live according to the Law.

When Juana Enriquez was on the *potro* and the cords had been turned once, she listed several of the veiled words and expressions used by the Jews to ascertain the religious identity of a stranger. “If he knows something?” “Is he afraid of God?” “Does he have a good heart?” and even “Is he observant?” or “Does he observe the Law?” were all inquiries to determine whether the person was Jewish (“he” was used for both sexes).

There was recognition of varying degrees of piety. Many contributed to the Jewish indigent immediately prior to Quipur. There was no discrimination among the poor by reason of the extent of their religious observance. However, when funds were distributed for the purpose of having the recipient pray for the soul of a recently departed, the recipient had to be noted for piety. The same criteria applied when funds were given to someone in the event that the grantor was unable to fast on Quipur.

One was not supposed to go to bed on the night of Quipur. When not praying, people walked about the home. If, by chance, they saw their own or another person’s headless shadow, it was considered an omen that such a person was doomed to die within the year. The onset of widowhood was marked by tearing or cutting the woman’s waist or the man’s shirt. The woman donned a black taffeta veil. In Mexico City, many people were buried in the Convent of Carmen in San Angel, on the outskirts of the city. Females were dressed in the garments of the order when they were placed in the coffin.

Ruy Diaz Nieto and his son, Diego, came from Italy to Mexico. They were arrested in 1596, at which time Diego testified that he had been circumcised and educated in Ferrara. He said that there were three Jewish communities in that

city—Portuguese, Italian, and German—each of which had its own religious customs. The inquisitors termed Ruy a “Pharisee” and a concealer of Jews. Since he had been baptized, the application of the term “Pharisee” indicated that he was a traitor to his faith, Catholicism. Diego’s description of some aspects of the Jewish services in Ferrara was repeated in the 1640s by Juan Pacheco de Leon and Pedro Fernandez de Castro. Although not germane to this history, it is noteworthy that the Inquisition *procesos* contain material pertinent to the history of the Jews in other parts of the world.

Jorge Jacinto Bazan, alias Jorge Jacinto Baca, was born in Malaga. His parents moved to Marseille, France, when he was a youth. He was circumcised there by a Florentine *mohel* (ritual circumciser). He came to Mexico in 1637 because his marriage to Blanca Juarez had been arranged by a Mexican-Jewish marriage broker. He and Blanca were married shortly thereafter. Jorge brought with him a letter from a “famous rabbi,” unnamed. He was reconciled in the *auto* of 1648 and sentenced to 200 lashes and life imprisonment in Spain. In a receipt for the seventy-eight Jewish prisoners, he is described as follows: “thirty-nine years of age, good body, slightly dark complexioned, black beard, some gray hair, black eyes and well-featured.”²⁵ He was aboard the ship which was to convey the prisoners to Spain, where they were to present themselves to the Suprema within thirty days after landing. Of course, Jorge never appeared.

The next reference to him appears in the records of the Jewish community of Leghorn. Cecil Roth reported that “Jorge Jacinto Bazan (Baca), son of Diego Nunez Baca and Helena Rodriguez, who was reconciled in Mexico in 1648, visited the synagogues of Pisa and Livorno during his travels to Marseille, where his parents lived. He then went on to Salonica.”²⁶ There is no mention of his wife. In the late Joseph Nehama’s five-volume *Histoire des Israelites de Salonique* (vol. 4), Jorge Jacinto’s presence as a Jew in Salonica was noted with the added comment that he was penanced “en Brasil.” During our correspondence, the illustrious Greek-Jewish historian acknowledged that he had erred.

In the same article, Roth wrote that Pedro Fernandez de Castro was also in Leghorn. Pedro was the son-in-law of Simon Vaez Sevilla, having married Simon's "natural" daughter, Leonor, in Pisa. Pedro had gone to Mexico to collect his dowry from Simon. The inquisitors learned that he had been circumcised although he denied being a Jew. His explanation for the circumcision was that he had been going with a Jewish girl in Ferrara, Italy, and she refused to have sexual relations with him unless he bore the "Mark of the Covenant." He complied with her demand and had himself circumcised. It appears that the inquisitors placed little credence in this tale.

It is difficult to trace a family or its individual members since rarely did siblings bear the same patronymic. Husbands and wives usually did not bear the same family name. Children often used the maiden name of a maternal grandmother. This custom had been in existence for more than a century and originated in Spain. Haim Beinart writes in his *Records of the Spanish Inquisition in Ciudad Real* (vol. 1, p. 449) that as early as 1480 there was "the Converso practise of adopting the surname of a maternal or paternal grandfather or grandmother."

The account of the wedding of Thomas Treviño de Sombremonte and Maria Gomez is the only one that includes a few details of the event. Maria's mother, Leonor Nunez, was a very orthodox woman. She slaughtered the chickens for the wedding. Jewish women in the New World slaughtered the fowl. Talmud *Hulin* la reports that "anyone may slaughter and his slaughter is considered kasher, save the deaf, the insane, and minors.

Leonor first checked the special knife to be sure that there were no nicks in the blade. She then faced east, toward Jerusalem, and recited this prayer, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the cutting of the throat." After she decapitated the chickens, she said, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the covering of the blood."

In addition to the chickens served at the wedding feast,

lekach, honey cake, was on the menu. Thomas refrained from any sexual relations for seven days after the wedding night. This is in accordance with Talmudic injunctions.

At the beginning of this chapter, it is stated that Justa Mendez turned “her face to the wall” when she was about to die according to Mathias de Bocanegra’s account of the 1649 *auto*. It is more likely that her face was turned to the wall *after* she expired. Haim Beinart wrote in *Conversos on Trial* (Jerusalem, 1981) that the Jewish burial officials in Spain turned the cadaver “to face the wall.” Baruch Braunstein wrote in *The Chuetas of Majorca* (p. 57) that “when death occurred among them, they turned the corpse to the wall, washed it with warm water, dressed it in a new shroud, placed coins in its mouth, and emptied all the water standing in jars.” Identical Jewish practices prevailed as well in Spain and the New World.

Brazil and the Peruleiros

AS A RESULT of the Spanish expulsion in 1492, King John II of Portugal (1481–1495) had permitted approximately 100,000 Spanish Jews to enter his kingdom upon the payment of eight cruzados for each adult. Children at the breast were exempt from the payment. Artisans of certain categories (those needed by the nation) had only to pay one-half of the entrance fee or tax. Payment could be made in four installments if the immigrant was unable to pay in a lump sum. The Spanish Jews were permitted to remain in the country for only eight months, except for some six hundred families whose stay was extended because each of these families paid 100 cruzados of gold for the privilege.

The king promised to supply ships at the expiration of the eight-month period, but each person was to pay his own passage. During the eight-month period, many Jews who had not paid the entry fee or who were illegal immigrants were caught and sold as slaves. Many young children, especially those whose parents had been sold as slaves, were deported to the island of San Tomé, then a recent Portuguese discovery off the coast of Africa.¹

Most of the children were between three and ten years of age. In San Tomé, they were reared as Catholics. The bereaved parents prostrated themselves at the feet of the king on a Sunday as he was leaving church and implored him to withdraw the decree of exile. Graetz wrote that the king had them “dragged from his path and compared them to ‘bitches who had their whelps torn from them.’”²

King John was succeeded by his cousin and brother-in-law, Manuel (1495–1521). One of Manuel’s friends was Abraham

Zacuto, a Jew and famous astronomer. It may be due to this friendship that King Manuel freed the Jews who had been sold into slavery. He also ordered the return to Portugal of those children who had survived and were in San Tomé.³ Manuel refused a gift of money offered to him by the Jews for his gracious acts.

Shortly thereafter, the king sought the hand in marriage of Isabella, the widowed daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. The royal consent to the marriage was given on the condition that Manuel also expel the Jews. A marriage contract was signed on November 30, 1496. Less than a week later, on December 4, 1496, Manuel decreed that all Jews, native-born as well as immigrants, had to leave Portugal by October 1497, under penalty of death and confiscation of all their property. However, there were no constraints on what could be taken by those electing to depart. He also stipulated that all Jewish children under fourteen years of age were to be taken from their parents, converted, and raised as Catholics at the expense of the king.⁴

The provision of the decree which forced baptism was opposed by some members of the royal council and by Bishop Ferdinando Coutinho.⁵ The bishop took the position that "baptism received by force may have the appearance of the sacrament but the essence is lacking and stabbing a person in the breast is not the only form of violence which invalidated a conversion."⁶ Years later (1531), the bishop ordered the release of a New Christian apprehended for practicing Judaism because he was not really a Christian since he was one of the forced converts.

The enforced baptism in 1497 caught many Jews by surprise. It began on March 19, 1497, the first day of Passover. Many parents went to the baptismal font with their children. Others killed their offspring by throwing them into wells and by other means, following which they committed suicide. The majority submitted to enforced baptism so that they could retain their children. Pope Alexander VI, upon hearing of the cruel, compulsory conversions, took the Jews under his protec-

tion. King Manuel then decreed, on May 30, 1497, that all New Christians were to remain undisturbed for twenty years and that no proceedings could be brought against them by any secular or religious authority for the crime of heresy.⁷ This decree was later extended for another twenty years. But all such protection expired in 1537, when the struggle between the New Christian community in Portugal and the victorious clergy ended with the establishment of the tribunal of the Holy Office in Lisbon. The proponents of the Holy Office were, in the main, the masses infused with hatred of the Jews by the lower echelons of the clergy and by some bishops as well as some Dominicans and the Jesuits.⁸

Yerushalmi writes that “the simultaneous conversion of the entire Jewry of the country must have had an even deeper impact on the self-image of the Conversos themselves. . . . Here conversion was, in the real sense, normative for the corporate Jewish group. This was now ‘Jewry’; there was no other. It is that very corporate character of conversion which invested the Portuguese converts with the cohesion and solidarity of having shared one destiny from the very outset.”⁹ Yerushalmi’s view is similar to that pronounced by Pope Clement VII in his Bull of Grace of April 17, 1533.¹⁰

Yerushalmi stresses this difference between the descendants of Spanish converts, who might speculate on whether their forebears had been baptized individually, almost voluntarily, and the descendants of Portuguese Jews, who could safely presume that their ancestors were baptized under duress. “Thus, to a degree not paralleled by the Spanish New Christians, those of Portugal possessed a genuinely historical group character. . . . In terms of sheer numbers, it may well be that more Jews had been converted in Spain than in Portugal but the essential difference between conversion in the two countries was not quantitative but qualitative.”¹¹

The first census in Portugal took place between 1527 and 1532.¹² The census showed the population to be between one million and one and a half million. Aveirò and Braga were important urban centers. Twenty-nine out of thirty-seven

towns with more than 500 hearths (families) lay south of the Tagus. Exact figures for the number of Jews this included do not appear. Jews were organized in *communus* (communes) wherever their number in any particular community exceeded ten families.¹³ Lisbon, Porto, Lamego, Santarém, Evora, and Benevente each had more than one commune. Each commune operated as a municipal corporation under the supreme secular authority of an *arrabi-mor*, or grand rabbi, appointed by the king.

Jews lived in *juderias*, originally by their own volition. A *habam*, or spiritual leader, served more than one *juderia* if they were not too large.* The voluntary segregation into *juderias* was an attempt by the Jews to prevent exogamy with Christians. The Jews knew that their faith made them different in many respects from their Christian neighbors and that these differences often bred anti-Semitism. By living within their own areas, their religious mores would not be visible to the non-Jew and the allures of the dominant culture would not be a constant attraction for their youth. Many Jews considered the culture of their Christian neighbors inferior to their own.

There were three *juderias* in Lisbon during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but the population of each can only be conjectured by strolling through the *alfama*, the old city, counting the stories in each house and averaging at least two families for each story, and attempting to estimate the Jewish population in other parts of the city where Jews lived. Jews replicated Christians in their secular lives. Jewish occupations ranged from banker and financier to craftsman, tailor, goldsmith, blacksmith, and shoemaker. A small minority were poor or indigent. Religiously and culturally, they were Sephardic.

One rarely finds explanations for the differences between

**Habam* means "wise man" and rabbi means "teacher." The only distinction between the words is that most Sephardim use *habam* to designate their spiritual leader and Ashkenazim use the term *rabbi*. Their roles and functions are identical. The word *rebbe* is used by Hasidic Jews, but the *rebbe* holds a different place within his group. There were no Hasidic Jews in Brazil until the twentieth century.

the Portuguese and Spanish psyches. Hubert Herring wrote that “the differences are elusive but substantial” despite the Spanish proverb, “Strip a Spaniard of all his virtues and you have a Portuguese.”¹⁴ Why was there Portuguese indifference to the fate of the Spaniards generally, and specifically in the latter’s battle to evict the Moors from their lands? The people of both countries were Catholic; both had been invaded by the Moors; and their languages stemmed from a common root. Although the Moors were driven from Portugal in the thirteenth century, it took the Spaniards more than two hundred years to complete the Reconquista in 1492. Significantly, the Portuguese admired racial heterogeneity while the Spaniards sought homogeneity.¹⁵

Charles R. Boxer wrote that “The close association between God and Mammon formed the hallmark of the empire founded by the Portuguese” in the East as well as in Brazil.¹⁶ The Portuguese kings favored the policy of mixed colonials marrying with natives because “a family man made a better colonist than did a gay bachelor. . . . A single married man was worth ten bachelors since the latter only thought of moving on whereas the former sought to cultivate the land and build a homestead.”¹⁷ The Englishman, in the name of his God, shot his Indians, while the Portuguese, with a slight nod to his God, slept with his Indians, according to German Arcinegas. One reason for cross-breeding was the scarcity of Portuguese females among the immigrants. The Spanish pattern was to extract from the New World as much as possible and to convert and enslave the Indians.

The Crown’s policy of encouraging mating with the natives was “nothing more than the result of historic necessity . . . and special decrees were issued to further the aims of the Crown.” Portugal, unlike parts of Spain, did not have a surplus population. This may be a partial explanation for Portugal exiling Jews to Brazil rather than consigning them to the stake as was done in Spain. The mating with pagan women “christianized” by a “lax, ignorant and immoral clergy” resulted in a dilution of the Catholicity of the offspring. Catholi-

cism for the Portuguese was “less harsh and more humane than it was in Spain.”¹⁸ This tolerance was extended to Jews and later to New Christians. To a considerable extent, it was New Christians who developed Brazil for more than two centuries. Their zeal, technical knowledge, and capital were potent ingredients in the country’s progress. Sugar and sugar cane and the red dyewood, *brasil*, were the principal exports.

There were New Christians among the early settlers. Some of them had been found guilty of judaizing in Portugal. Those found guilty were exiled to Brazil along with the *degredados* (criminals) who were given their freedom in the New World. Many *degredados* were merely dissenters and nonconformists. The Jews (this includes the New Christians) in Brazil represented a cross-section of Portuguese Jewry. A majority of these Jews came from rural areas in their mother-country rather than from urban centers. This majority was familiar with the arduous tasks of farming. They adapted well to their new environment. They also adhered steadfastly to their faith.

Although the *conversos* of both Spain and Portugal were known as New Christians, there were other differences in addition to those heretofore noted between the secret Jews of these nations. The differences in their political and religious experiences contributed to differing self-concepts and responses to New World conditions. Although both groups were Sephardi, there were differences among them in ritual and in communal organization. The grand rabbi of the Spanish Jews, an appointee of the king, was a secular officer with no spiritual authority except that which he achieved by reason of his learning and capabilities. The Portuguese grand rabbi, however, was a spiritual leader as well as national spokesman for the Jews.

Portuguese Jewry was not subjected to pogroms such as those which occurred in Spain in 1391 and 1412.¹⁹ There were no Portuguese counterparts to Ferran Martínez, whose crusade against the Jews culminated in the holocaust of 1391, or Vincent Ferrer and his crusade of 1412. The papal and royal commands for disputations between representatives of the

Jews and the Catholic standard-bearers (usually led by an apostate) had no counterparts in the Lusitanian nation. The Jews rarely fared as badly under the Portuguese as they did under the Spaniards. (The account of the Portuguese Inquisition has been definitively related by Alexandre Herculano.) “Mammon” was one of the reasons Manuel sought the establishment of the Holy Office.

Kings Manuel and John III sought to have the Holy Office in their realm as a new weapon in the effort toward royal centralization,²⁰ although neither Protestants nor Jews posed any serious menace to religious unity in the country. According to Olivera Marques, there were no more than 60,000 New Christians in Portugal in 1542, and by 1604, perhaps only half that number.²¹ After the establishment of the Holy Office, the inquisitors soon found that the charges of sodomy, bestiality, witchcraft, idolatry, etc., did not supply sufficient cases. They then began actions against New Christians who practiced Judaism secretly. The inquisitors “created a true ghetto and kept it [Judaism] alive, instead of extinguishing it. The integration of the New Christians was thus artificially stopped and their case maintained for two hundred years.”²²

In 1570, the New Christians in Portugal secured or “bought” a papal bull for 240,000 cruzados which halted the confiscation of the property of those arrested by the Holy Office.²³ Later, from 1649 to 1659, New Christians again secured immunity for their property in the event that they were sentenced. This leniency included the transfer of sequestered property from the Inquisition to the state.²⁴ These acts resulted from the financial support for Portugal from Jews in Holland, Germany, and elsewhere in its struggle for independence. Prior to 1640, the great majority of Jews in Holland were Portuguese either by birth or by descent, and Portuguese was the language in Congregation Etz Chaim and other Sephardi synagogues in Amsterdam, England, Curaçao, and later in New Amsterdam.

In its early years, Brazil was built by Negro slaves (400,000 between 1570 and 1670) and the acumen, hard work, and calculating perseverance of the Jews. The Portuguese slave

trade was in the hands, by royal grant, of *contratadores*, many of whom were “Portuguese” or New Christians. The original settlers in Brazil included many Portuguese or Spanish Jews who had migrated to Portugal in 1492.

The title of “mother-country” of New World Jewish communities properly belongs to Brazil because it was there that the first openly professing Jewish communities in the New World were founded. Immigrants from northeastern Brazil were among the founders of Curaçao,²⁵ to which the title of “mother-country” has been accorded by some writers. Jewish Brazilian emigrants founded several other Jewish communities in the New World; i.e., Coro, Tucacas in Venezuela, and Surinam.

The entry of Jews into Brazilian history begins with its discovery in 1500 by Pedro Alvares Cabral and his pilot Gaspar de Gama. Legend states that Gaspar de Gama was a Polish Jew who had gone to India with Vasco de Gama. He adopted the name “de Gama” when he was compelled to convert to Christianity. Brazil became a Portuguese colony by virtue of the June 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas between Spain and Portugal, which modified the longitudinal line under the earlier award of Pope Alexander VI. The new line divided the New World between Spain and Portugal and resulted in awarding, unknowingly, what is known as Brazil to Portugal.

The Lusitanian crown had difficulty in populating its new colony, although, unlike Spain, it did not prohibit descendants of Jews to the fourth generation from migrating to the New World. It did not incorporate into its agreements with leaders of colonizing expeditions that all potential settlers had to possess certificates of *limpieza de sangre* (“clean blood”; read “non-Jewish or non-Moorish for four generations”). Portugal was busy extracting profits from its East Indian colonies and paid little attention to Brazil for almost four decades.

The first substantial group of settlers, some six hundred in number, was brought by Duarte Coelho, one of the original twelve captains appointed by the king, on March 10, 1534, to colonize Brazil. There were many New Christians among the

six hundred. Coelho became the governor of Pernambuco and “contracted with Jews to build sugar mills.”²⁶ In a book published in 1779, the Jews are credited with bringing sugar to Brazil from Madeira.²⁷ Wiznitzer quotes the historian Manuel Oliveira de Lima to the effect that “trained foremen and skilled workers . . . from Madeira and San Tomé who were brought to Brazil were mostly Jews who were the best economic element of the time.”²⁸ The Jews also promoted the production of manioc, a food staple borrowed from the Indians.

The contracts obligated the *donatários*, or concessionaires of tracts of land, to enlist settlers to promote farming and trade. The king entered into a lease in 1502 with Fernão Loronha, also known as Fernando de Noronha, a “Jewish merchant” representing a consortium, covering Terra de Santa Cruz (Brazil’s original name) for twenty years upon receipt of 20,000 ducats and other payments. There are divergent views among writers as to the terms.²⁹ Egon and Frieda Wolff question whether Noronha was a Jew. He was a *cavaleiro da casa real*, “knight of the royal household,” as early as 1494, and compulsory baptism began in 1497. Noronha had express permission to have New Christians in his group of settlers.

The establishment of the Holy Office in Lisbon in 1536 promoted many Jews to believe that it was expedient to emigrate. Brazil was chosen by the Portuguese because Goa and other East Indian colonies were in an economic decline. By 1536, as a result of deportations from Portugal, the presence of the Noronha settlers, and some new immigrants, there were a few clandestine Jewish settlements in Brazil.

Boleslao Lewin quotes Solidonio Leite Filho: “. . . as late as the second half of the [sixteenth] century it was well-known . . . that the Jews of Bahia had a synagogue in the house of a ‘neo-Christian,’ Heitor Antunes, and that their rabbi was named Jorge Dias de Caia or Caja.”³⁰ The Wolffs state that Jorge lived in Olinda, State of Pernambuco, where he died in 1589, and that “Heitor was a resident of Matuim, near Salvador.” Leite and the Wolffs differ only on the place of the synagogue. The idea of the establishment of a tribunal of the

Holy Office was anathema to the local people. Thomé de Souza wrote that an army would be required to maintain the Holy Office in Brazil. There never was a joinder of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions. Pope Gregory XIII rejected Philip's plea for a union. Despite the grant of full powers, the Inquisition *comisarios* (agents) and a *visitador* confined their activities to Bahia in 1591, Pernambuco in 1593, and Salvador (also known as Bahia) in 1618. The dispatch of an Inquisition *visitador* to Brazil in 1591 and 1618 precipitated a migration of Luso-Brazilian Jews to Buenos Aires, Tucumán, and Peru, where they sought refuge.³¹

Gordon Merrill is among those who distinguish between Spanish and Portuguese Jews. He claims that the distinctions are important for an understanding of the people. The Portuguese New Christians, he writes, "were capable of maintaining the Judaic faith for centuries in the face of trial and persecution."³² He adds that the Sephardim were "archly conservative in outlook" and that this conservatism has been preserved to modern times, as indicated by their "instinctive preference for an unchanging simplicity of service in the synagogue."³³ An eighteenth-century Barbadian wrote that although Dutch, French, and Portuguese Jews had come to Barbados by the mid-1660s, the majority were Portuguese, which "is the highest order among them," and the "Portuguese Jews came to us, either direct from the Brasils [*sic*] or through Surinam."³⁴

Sugar cane was introduced into Brazil not only from Madeira but also from the Canary Islands, and "the Jews may have played a part in this matter since there were Jewish planters on these islands at that time."³⁵ Although the majority of the Jews resided in the urban areas, the Inquisition records of the eighteenth century disclose a large number of persons of real or alleged Jewish origin in rural districts. One explanation for this is that the original and early inhabitants became plantation owners. These plantations originally grew sugar cane, but later tobacco and cotton supplanted the sugar. The Inquisition officials would have found it difficult to arrest Jews on the plantations both because of their immense size (one was larger than

Portugal itself) and because the Negroes and Indians were, for the most part, friendly to the Jews.

Many New Christians came from Aveiro, Madeira, and the Azores after 1550, but more important than the place of origin were the extended family relationships. Jews of Pernambuco and Bahia had relatives in Amsterdam. According to Engel Sluiter and the notarial records in the GAA,³⁶ international trading was in full swing as early as 1596. Sluiter wrote of the number of Portuguese Jews in the United Netherlands who had married into Dutch families and had intimate commercial connections in Portugal which made possible the Dutch-Brazilian trade. The relationships between the Brazilian Jews and those in Amsterdam was a factor in the decision of the Dutch West India Company to occupy northern Brazil. The company counted on the loyalty and support of the Jews in Brazil. When Olinda de Pernambuco was occupied in 1630, the High Estates-General of Holland approved, on September 27, 1630, an order guaranteeing religious and economic freedom for all those who openly professed Judaism.

There had been an earlier capture of Bahia in May 1624 by the great Dutch admiral Piet Heyn. This capture was *not* facilitated by the treachery of the local New Christians as averred by many Portuguese and Brazilian writers. Boxer relies on the official Dutch reports, which were confirmed by Jesuit sources. He writes, "The allegations of New Christian treachery were made fairly early, this being the most obvious excuse of those who had fled."³⁷ When the Portuguese recaptured the city a year later, five Jews were put to death for alleged sympathy for the Dutch. In the Dutch conquest of 1630, three Jews did play a role; Alvarez Franco and Manuel Fernandez Drago participated in the strategy, and Antonio Vaez Henriquez, alias Moses Cohen, was part of the conquering expedition. Portugal regained Bahia within a year after the 1624 loss.

The Council of Portugal had informed Philip IV that the real intention of the Dutch was "not so much to make themselves the masters of the sugar of Brazil as of the silver of Peru."³⁸

This belief is fortified by the unsuccessful attempt of the Dutch to capture Callao, the port for Lima, Quayaquil, and by the subsequent acts of the Jews in Peru.

The Jewish participation in the Dutch capture of northern Brazil in 1624 was minor. The Jews, however, did aid aggressively in the events of the Dutch victory in 1630. Wiznitzer relies on the account of Duarte de Albuquerque Coelho, Marquis de Basto, which indicates that Antonio Dias Paparobalos served as a guide for the Dutch military force of three thousand which landed near Recife.³⁹ The Dutch were fortunate to have in Holland Sephardic Jews, refugees from Spain and Portugal (many actually born in France or who had arrived in Holland after a long stay in France), who spoke Ladino, Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Dutch and were able to serve as interpreters. Some had even been in Brazil as crypto-Jews and were also available as guides for the invading Dutch military forces. Many of these Sephardi Jews fought as members of the Dutch army and navy contingents.

As a result of the Estates-General's proclamation of January 9, 1634, guaranteeing religious freedom for Jews and Catholics "without the investigation of their conscience or their home," Jews came from Hungary, Poland, Turkey, the Barbary states, Spain, Portugal, and Germany. Jews who spoke both Dutch and Portuguese were in great demand, especially as translators, because all documents submitted to the government had to be written in Dutch.

There is a report that "Brazilian Hebrews" were in correspondence in 1636 with Rabbi Chaim (also spelled Haim) Sabbathai of Salonica, then part of the Ottoman Empire. Advice was sought by members of Congregation Tzur Yisroel of Recife on a liturgical question.⁴⁰ The letter is important because it indicates that Salonican Jews were living in Brazil. Salonican Jews are Sephardi, but there was (and still is) a difference between the liturgies of Western and Middle Eastern Sephardim. The Turkish Jews, being a small minority, had to yield to the customs of the Dutch, or Western, Sephardim and were probably seeking advice or information from their respected source.

There were other differences among the Sephardim. One of the great disputes was between Congregation Tzur Yisroel (“Rock of Israel”; founded in Recife in 1637) and Congregation Magen Abraham (“Shield of Abraham”; founded in Mauricia on Antonio Vaz Island), which was supposed to be a branch of the former. The dispute included the question of autonomy and other relationships between the two congregations. The outcome was in favor of Tzur Yisroel.⁴¹

An aloofness existed between the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim who arrived in Brazil in the seventeenth century. The former looked down upon the latter, who were considered to be at a lower cultural and economic level. The Ashkenazim were apt to be despised also by the Gentiles.

At least two hundred Jews came from Amsterdam under the leadership of Rabbi Isaac Aboab and Moses Raphael de Aguilar in 1641. With them were also Haham Jehosua Velozinos and the teacher Samuel Tarazão. Communal and synagogue life were patterned after that of Etz (also Ets) Haim (“Tree of Life”) and the Amsterdam Sephardi community. The minute book of the Recife congregation, written in Portuguese, has been preserved in Congregation Etz Haim. Interspersed in the text are many words and phrases in Hebrew and Ladino. The minute book has been translated by Arnold Wiznitzer and published by the American Jewish Historical Society as *The Records of the Earliest Jewish Community in the New World*.⁴² It covers the period from November 1648 to 1654, and is invaluable not only as a record of the history of the Recife Jews but also for aspects of the history of the Jews in Venice, Salonica, and pre-expulsion Lisbon. The forty-two regulations for Recife are based on those of the cities mentioned, with some modifications due to new circumstances of time, place, and other conditions.

Among the regulations enacted by the two New World congregations were one forbidding Jews to defame any other religion and another prohibiting any Jew from leaving Brazil without the payment of a certain sum to his congregation. The congregations had taxing powers that ranged from one quarter of 1 percent on the sale of sugar, tobacco, and houses to 3

percent on money, gold, silver, and jewelry and 4 percent on all other merchandise.

The Ashkenazi newcomers, called Tudescos, developed petty trades and brokerage. They were treated as second-class people by the Sephardim and could not attain equality even by marriage with a Sephardi. Because they were not permitted to pray with the Sephardim, they had to establish their own synagogue. (This exclusionary rule was also enacted in London after 1670 and survived for almost one hundred years. There, marriage of a Sephardi with an Ashkenazi brought excommunication from the Sephardi Bevis Marks Congregation unless the Mahamad—the communal executive board—consented in advance to the marriage.)

The Sephardi spiritual leaders ruled that secret Jews who had been baptized and professed Catholicism prior to 1630, even though circumcised, had to wait a year after public profession of Judaism before becoming eligible for election to the Mahamad. The waiting period was imposed to afford time for them to become more familiar with Judaism. The exclusion of the Tudescos from the Sephardi synagogues is offered as proof by I. S. Emmanuel that the regulations of Tzur Yisroel, adopted in 1648, were not signed by any Ashkenazim, although some writers have claimed that a few of the names attached to the *bascamoth* (rules and regulations) were those of Ashkenazim.

Most Hispanists deride Raphael Patai's statement that by 1640 fully half of the civilian European population in Dutch Brazil was Jewish. The Jewish population at that time and thereafter was about fifteen hundred souls.³³ (Professor Merrill writes that there were alleged to be more Jews than Christians in Recife in 1640.)³⁴ The large majority of this number were former crypto-Jews of Iberian descent who had now openly embraced Judaism. Their children, whose place of birth had been Dutch Brazil, could not be considered heretics. This rule was often circumvented by the Holy Offices in Lisbon and Madrid by alleging that an accused had spoken against the Virgin Birth, the Trinity, or Jesus as the Messiah.

The economic activities of the Jews, especially in Dutch Brazil, ran the gamut of all the economic activities of the colonial era. Most of the physicians in Bahia in the early seventeenth century were New Christians. The Sephardim were tax farmers, agriculturists, and plantation owners. The Ashkenazim participated in the commercial fields. Sixty-six Christian merchants complained to the Estates-General in 1641 that the Jews controlled the sugar trade and gave all the best positions to their newly arrived co-religionists.

I. S. Revah wrote, “Les cristãos-novos constituaien l’essential de la classe marchande portugais; leur importance économique était également grande du Brasil” [The New Christians constitute the base of the Portuguese merchant class and their economic importance is equally great in Brazil]. Revah then quoted from a letter sent in 1645 by Martim Soares to King John IV stating that “*Os Judeus* [the Jews] will be the masters of the most and the best positions in the *capitanias*,” the grants of land that had been made originally to the *donatarios*, who had economic and political privileges as well as responsibilities.⁴⁵

Jews owned some of the best plantations in the river valley of Pernambuco. Owners of sugar plantations and mills were known as *Senhores de engenho*. Jews were also among the leading slave-holders and slave-traders. There were some Jewish engineers and prospectors and at least one lawyer, Michael Cardoso.⁴⁶ Wiznitzer writes that Jews were not dominant as *Senhores de engenho* but played an important role as financiers, brokers, and exporters of sugar and suppliers of slaves.⁴⁷ Wiznitzer claims that Jorge Homen Pinto, the wealthiest *Senhor*, was not, despite the claims of some writers, a Jew.

If any man was present at the right time in the right place and did all the right things, that man was Johan Maurits van Nassau. At the age of thirty-six, he had attained the rank of general in the Netherlands army, climaxing a successful military career. Although born in Germany, he had enlisted in the Dutch army to fight for the Protestant cause. When the Committee of 19 (*Heeren XIX*), which administered the affairs of the Dutch West India Company in Brazil, offered him the post of

governor-general of Dutch Brazil for a period of five years, he accepted. His term was later extended for two more years (1637–1644). The Estates-General confirmed his appointment as governor, captain, and admiral-in-chief of the territory conquered or to be conquered. His emoluments were 6,000 florins for clothing and equipment, 2 percent of all booty, a monthly salary of 1,500 florins, and an allowance for living expenses. The charter under which he was to govern stipulated (article 32) that there was a guarantee of protection for persons of the Jewish and Catholic faiths.

Johan Maurits built the town of Mauricia (Mauritsstad) as well as bridges to connect Recife with the mainland. His primary concern was the maintenance of discipline and order in the colony. He governed a heterogeneous population: Indians, Catholic Portuguese, Jews of Portuguese, Spanish, and several other descents, Negro slaves, Portuguese New Christians (this included secret Jews and apostasized Jews), and Dutch Calvinists. His army included mercenaries and adventurers of many nationalities. He overcame the apparent difficulties and within a brief period instilled a sense of security in all the inhabitants.

A devout Protestant, Johan Maurits did all within his power to make the Reformed religion the dominant faith without depriving the Catholics and Jews of the rights granted to them under the charter of the colony. His announced goals were to dissuade the Indians from their pagan beliefs and superstitious customs and to persuade Catholics to abandon belief in the supremacy of the pope. He also believed it necessary “to destroy the deep-rooted pretention of the Jews to observe the Mosaic Law and to wait for the restoration of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. They must be persuaded that Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, was the promised Messiah, who has already arrived, and to revere and believe in him.” Despite the power of official encouragement, the efforts of the Calvinist evangelists succeeded only with the Indians.

Johan Maurits was a most popular governor, and his fame

spread throughout Europe. He permitted *vrijuiden*, or free Jews, to enroll in the militia and to perform all duties. They were exempt from guard duty on the Sabbath, for which they paid a fee. Wiznitzer asserts that one of the four companies of militia was composed only of Jews.

Although Jews had undoubtedly held services in private homes since 1630, the first mention of a synagogue in official documents appears in 1636. As a result of the benign rule of Johan Maurits, Jews had become so numerous that two synagogues conducting public services came into existence within a year after his arrival and there is mention of a third in Paraiba.

The two synagogues were closed in 1638 pursuant to an order of the Classis, the Executive Committee of the Protestants, operating under the governor. A compromise was subsequently reached; the synagogues were to be reopened on the condition that they would have no noisy celebrations on Purim and on Simhat Torah, the festival that comes thirteen days after Quipur. They were also to refrain from other obtrusive activities.

The Jews were said to have offered 600,000 florins for the Castle of Vriburg, which they hoped to convert into a new synagogue.⁴⁸ The deal was vehemently opposed by the Christians.

During Johan Maurits's seven-year administration, Jewish immigration reached its peak and Jewish wealth and economic power made vast gains, although he curbed one activity of the Jews by ordering that two-thirds of all brokers had to be Christians. After the Dutch capture of northeastern Brazil, the area was called New Holland. When the Estates-General, on January 9, 1634, guaranteed Jews and Catholics the right to practice their respective faiths, many theretofore secret Jews began to profess Judaism openly, and many crypto-Jews in Spain left that country and migrated to Brazil.

One of the irritants to Johan Maurits was the refusal of the *Heeren XIX* to grant more troops for the defense of New Holland. The Dutch West India Company was in need of funds

and claimed that his administration was too costly. The year 1642 saw the apex and decline of the general expansion and prosperity of Dutch Brazil. The poor sugar harvests in three successive years, 1642–1644, brought ruin to many.

At the termination of Johan Maurits's tenure as governor, the Jews offered to give him an annual stipend of 3,000 florins if the Dutch authorities approved the extension of his term. He departed on May 22, 1644. In a letter, called his political testament, he recommended tolerance in all religious matters. There were, however, limits to his tolerance. His recommendations included barring Jews from marrying Christian women or having Christian concubines, prohibiting them from converting Christians to Judaism, and turning children born of intermarriages over to Christian relatives upon the death of a parent.

Relations between Protestant Christians and Jews in Dutch Brazil were not as amiable as they were in Amsterdam. The Christians resented the recognition of the Jews as equals of the Catholics and almost the equals of the Protestants. As early as 1649, the Jews reported to the leaders of the Amsterdam Jewish community that they were surrounded by enemies. This was due, in part, to the fact that the Jews were more visible in New Holland since they formed a larger percentage of the European population than they did in Amsterdam. Another reason for the strain was that the Portuguese Catholics resented both being under Dutch Protestant dominion and the fact that Jews, who to Catholics were an inferior people, held posts of importance and were treated as equals of the Catholics. Some Protestant missionaries wanted to expand their flocks through conversions, but they could not invade Jewish plantations to proselytize the Negro slaves and the Indians. They also resented the religious freedom granted to the Catholics and reasoned fallaciously that if the Jews had not been granted religious freedom, the Catholics also would have been denied such freedom. Many New Christians had relations with the government and many held administrative posts.

By 1654, there was hardly a Jewish family in Holland that did not have a son, brother, son-in-law, cousin, or at least a business partner in Brazil. Commencing on December 1, 1645, Brazilian Jewry came under the protection of the Estates-General by virtue of its order to protect and help the Jews without distinguishing between them and other residents in any way.⁴⁹ This special regard referred specifically to the “Jewish nation in Brazil.” Government authorities were instructed to favor and assist the Jewish nation on all occasions “as its loyalty and courage deserve.” This historic document, the *Patenta Onrossa*, is the first charter of equality that any sovereign state conceded to the Jews in the New World.

The Portuguese Catholics formed a group to wrest Brazil from the Dutch. André Vidal, one of the leaders of the revolutionary group, accused the Jews of aiding Holland by disclosing the Portuguese plots. They executed thirteen Jews who were regarded as special friends of the Dutch. The Jesuits, by rationalization, justified the slaying by stating that the end justified the means.

The ultimate fall of Brazil, or New Holland, to the Portuguese in 1654 was the result of bad economic conditions, the earlier drought, the inability of the Dutch West India Company to send soldiers and military material, and the Catholic desire to rid themselves of the Protestant yoke, aggravated by their detestation of the Jews and the liberties accorded them. The tax-farming by Jews did not endear them to the Christians. Although this occupation has been termed a “traditional” Jewish trade because they had been barred from most other occupations, Jews appear not to have learned that they could abstain from it when there were other trades and occupations open to them as there were in Dutch Brazil. The size of the tax-farming is illustrated by the purchase of the right to collect taxes on sugar in the Pernambuco area in 1638 by Moises Navarro for 5,400 florins and by Benjamin de Pino’s purchase of the region of San Antonio Popica and Serinhaim for 4,300 florins. (According to Will Durant, the purchasing power of one florin equaled that of \$12.50 in 1960.)

Boxer includes some pertinent statements about Portuguese anti-Semitism in his article on Antonio Vieira.⁵⁰ He contends that

Jewish unpopularity was more due to religious bigotry than to anything else, for it seldom assumed dangerous proportions as long as the government or the clerical hierarchy did nothing to encourage it. Jews or persons of real or alleged [Jewish] ancestry, were often employed by the Portuguese kings as tax farmers, tax collectors, monopolists, etc. As is the way with short-sighted human kind, the hatred aroused by exactions of these crown agents was vented against them and their race rather than on the monarchs and ministers who originated or sanctioned such burdensome imposts.

Revolutionary activities had begun as early as 1646 in Recife but failed. Jews fought as members of the Dutch militia and supplied the funds to carry on the defense. The ultimate Dutch surrender in 1654 was preceded by negotiations with the Portuguese General Francisco Barreto. The negotiations included a search for the means of securing indemnification for all the inhabitants—Protestant and Jew—for goods left behind after their anticipated departure, and for the right of the Jews to remain unmolested for three months after the actual surrender and then to leave unharmed. General Francisco Barreto, who negotiated the terms of surrender, must have been impressed by the Dutch insistence on the protection of their Jewish citizens. He agreed that they were to have certain rights and subsequently exhibited a rigid compliance with the terms of the treaty of surrender. No Jews were molested and most left in accordance with the treaty. Barreto was appointed governor of the regained Portuguese territory and, in later years, was greatly esteemed by the Jews for his impeccable adherence to the terms of the treaty.

The fate of those Jews who did not leave and were captured by the Portuguese was to be “most brutally tortured.” Holland’s protests were to no avail. One of those apprehended in Portuguese Brazil prior to 1654 was Isaac de Castro, about whom much has been written.⁵¹ His parents, born in Braganza,

Portugal, escaped to France and then went to Amsterdam, where Isaac was born. (Some ascribe France as his birthplace.) He went to Dutch Brazil in 1641, when he was sixteen years of age. A divinely intoxicated Jew, he left in 1644 for Portuguese Brazil to teach Judaism to the secret Jews there. He was recognized by a Christian as one who had attended synagogue in New Holland and was denounced to Dom Pedro de Silva, the deputy of the Portuguese Inquisition.

He first lied about his true faith and gave an alias but later confessed and was sent to Lisbon to stand trial. His determination to sacrifice his life for his faith was fulfilled when he was condemned to the stake on November 17, 1647. The execution of the sentence took place on December 15, 1647, when he and thirty-four other Jews shared this *auto da fé*. Isaac was offered the garrote if he would kiss the cross and thereby embrace Catholicism prior to death. He refused and was burned alive. The French diplomatic agent, Monsieur Lasnier, then in Lisbon, attempted to aid the youth because of the possibility that he had been born in France. In correspondence with Mazarin, he wrote that Isaac remained firm in his Judaism and “screamed his last words in a loud voice, *Ely, Adonai Sababot*, ‘God, Lord of Hosts,’ ” in Hebrew.

Isaac de Castro’s case became a *cause célèbre* in the Protestant world (shades of the Black Legend) as well as in the Jewish areas. A mass mourning was held for him in Amsterdam. He was immortalized in poems and books written in Hebrew and Spanish.

Of the 150 Jewish families who left Brazil in 1654 for Amsterdam, many returned to the New World to found new Jewish communities or to join other Jews who had gone to Surinam and other places after leaving Brazil. Some twenty-three arrived in New Amsterdam to found the first Jewish community in that Dutch colony under the governorship of the anti-Semitic Peter Stuyvesant. The Dutch ceded the colony to England in 1664 and New Amsterdam became New York.

Professor Merrill reports that the Portuguese Brazilian Jews

“were innovators of change in the British Caribbean colonies during the 17th century. They brought trading skills, slaves, and much needed sugar cane agriculture at a critical time in the development of the colonies.”⁵² Guadeloupe became known as “Petit Brazil” as a result of the influx of Brazilian Jews. Among those whose arrival in Barbados wrought economic expansion were Dr. Abraham Mercado and his sons, Isaac and David-Raphael (alias George Nunes). David had a talent for engineering. England granted permission to the Mercados to settle in Barbados on April 20, 1655. The Mercados perfected the *engenho*, the sugar plantation and mill, and introduced it in Barbados. The sugar industry became an important factor in the Caribbean. “It is worth emphasizing that the invitation to settle and establish sugar plantations on the ‘Wilde Coaste’ was directed to the Hebrews.”⁵³ By 1679, David-Raphael was the largest taxpayer in Barbados.

Jews from the Rio de Janeiro area and parts farther south that had always been under Portuguese rule had migrated to the Buenos Aires area as early as 1615. Many left subsequently for Tucumán, Córdoba, Potosí, and Lima. These migrants became known as *Peruleiros*. Lewis Hanke writes, “One indication of the presence of Spaniards in Brazil may be seen from the fact that *peruleiros*, or silver merchants from Peru, have been considered responsible for naming Copacabana in Rio de Janeiro after the ancient shrine of this name on the island in Lake Titicaca in Upper Peru.”⁵⁴ He prognosticates that “the relationship between Peru and Brazil in the colonial period will be a significant segment of the history of Portuguese-Spanish interaction in America when fully known.”

Hanke’s comment on the authorship of the name “Copacabana” permits indulgence in the theory that the secret Jews who went overland from Brazil to Buenos Aires and were among the *Peruleiros* may have bestowed the name “Maquebo” or “Macabeo” on a village through which they passed. The Maccabees were the victorious Jews who expelled the Syrians under Antiochus IV from Jerusalem and the Temple during the war from 168 to 165 B.C.E. Of course, the name of the

village may be a homophone with that of the Maccabees and nothing more.

Hanke notes that the Audiencia of Charcas was instructed to “move against the Portuguese who have entered the Indies through Buenos Aires, of whom many are to be found in Potosí.” When Spain decided to investigate the presence of the Portuguese in Potosí after Portugal regained its independence in 1640, it was learned that twenty of the sixty Portuguese listed were very wealthy. Hanke apparently hesitates to mention that many of them in Peru were Jews. Although José Toribio Medina supplied the charges and some of the evidence to support the proof of their faith, Hanke reports that only two were arrested *por judío judaizante*. Hanke’s quotation from Medina omitted Medina’s statement that a street in Potosí was known as “The Street of the Jews.” (It is interesting to recall that in Oaxaca, Mexico, there was also a “Street of the Jew”; see Appendix D.)

The destination of many of these Peruleiros was Potosí, the rich mining center which was then part of the viceroyalty of Peru. (It is now in Bolivia.) The route from Buenos Aires to Tucumán was used for illicit trade from Brazil and Europe. The celebrated bishop from Tucumán, Francisco de Victoria (also spelled Vitoria), of Jewish parentage, made his return to Spain from a Brazilian port. He “openly boasted that he had organized trade and commerce between Peru and Brazil through the officially closed port of Buenos Aires.”⁵⁵

The provinces of Rio de la Plata, Paraguay, and Tucumán were frequented by wealthy Portuguese Jewish refugees from the Inquisition who secured for themselves not only most of the local trade but also many of the government administrative posts.⁵⁶ The dispatch of Inquisition commissioners to Brazil in 1591 and 1618 resulted on each occasion in an influx of Luso-Brazilian Jews seeking refuge in Buenos Aires and towns in Peru. Not only was it understood in Europe and in Spanish territories that “Portuguese” and “Jew” were synonymous, but the statement was made that all Peruleiros were commonly credited to be *de casta y generación de judíos*.⁵⁷

The discovery of lead and sulphur mines in the 1640s had caused an influx of Jews to the interior of Brazil, especially the western parts of what are now the states of Minas Gerais and São Paulo. Later gold and diamond mines were discovered in these parts.

The leaders, lay and spiritual, in Dutch Brazil established Jewish schools and the full range of Jewish communal institutions; i.e., cemeteries, social and welfare societies, and provisions for the poor and aged. On Tisha b'Ab, which commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem, a person was elected as the *Gabai da Terra Santa* (warden for the Holy Land), with the responsibility of collecting funds for the Jews in the Holy Land. This custom was similar to *farda*, practiced by the Spanish Jews, except that there was no messenger from the Holy Land. The Brazilian Jews sent the collection to Amsterdam, from where it was dispatched to the Jewish communities in Palestine. The establishment of the Jewish institutions had a salutary effect upon the Brazilian Jews.

There had been bred in them so great a strength of belief and of dedication to Jewish survival that when they became pioneers in new lands, such as the Caribbean islands, their first task was to establish Jewish communal institutions. The Talmud Torah and yeshiva in Recife were duplicated in several other places. What the Jewish leaders may have lacked in authority to maintain discipline in Jewish affairs was supplied by the Supreme Council in Holland. The Council ruled in 1644 that new synagogues could not be built, that marriages between Christians and Jews were barred, and that concubinage between Jews and Christians was prohibited. These rules confirmed the edicts of the governor. Endogamy was not only a religio-ethnic Jewish characteristic but was enforced now by secular authorities.

After the Dutch Estates-General protested to Portugal the treatment of the Jews who had been captured after the 1654 capitulation, those Jews born in Germany, Poland, and Holland were released. Three Jews born in Portugal remained in the hands of the Holy Office.

It is significant to retrace some chronological movements in this history. There arose from the ranks of the Jesuits a young man who has been declared by Charles Boxer to be the third greatest Portuguese in history, Antonio Vieira, S.J., who came into prominence in 1640. His advent to power came as early as 1645. The literature about him is quite extensive. Smith's opening statement in his article bears repetition because it expresses Vieira's view that Jews could improve Portugal's economy:

Few stereotypes of Luso-Brazilian history have endured more tenaciously than the concept of the merchant as Jew, crypto-Jew, or foreigner. The association of the mercantile profession with New Christians has been particularly strong for the seventeenth century with terms *burguesia* and *cristãos-novos* often being used interchangeably in works about that period. . . . As commerce became ever more linked in the popular mind with the despised crypto-Jew, fear of guilt by association increased the aversion of all Christians to the mercantile arts, ultimately leaving Portuguese trade in the hands of New Christians.⁵⁸

Vieira befriended the New Christians and Jews not because he loved them but because he loved his country. The strength of his friendship and concern for Jews is moot. I. S. Emmanuel states that Arnold Wiznitzer failed to touch upon the friendly relations between the Jesuit and various prominent Amsterdam Jews, especially the brothers Jeronimo Nunes da Costa and Lope Ramirez, known in the synagogue as Moseh and Daniel Curiel.⁵⁹ In fact, Vieira bought their frigate for 11,331 florins to add to the Portuguese fleet and help Portugal regain Brazil.

Antonio Vieira was born in Lisbon in 1608 and died in Brazil in 1697. He was taken to Brazil as a child and went to Amsterdam in his youth to study maritime science but changed his studies and became a monk. After his return to Lisbon in 1640, he so impressed King John IV by his character, charisma, and eloquence that he was made a member of the Royal Council. From this seat of influence he advocated reform of the Holy Office. This gained him many powerful enemies.

In the context of Jewish history, his major contribution was

his plan for the formation of the Brazil Company. Vieira planned to form a large chartered company patterned after the Dutch West India Company. The capital for the company was to come from “New Christian” (read crypto-Jewish) financiers in France and from Portuguese Sephardic Jews who had fled to northern Europe. He also suggested that the only condition under which “these oppressed classes and exiles” would invest was a guarantee that they and their capital would be free of any Inquisition activity. King John strongly supported the project. The company was to have a monopoly on the export of wine, cereals, olive oil, and codfish. It would also be able to levy a tax on the imports of sugar, tobacco, cotton, and hides.

The royal support increased the hatred of those who made *cristão-novo* an opprobrious epithet and believed that Jewish men menstruated like women, exuded a foul odor, and had a stump of a tail at the end of their vertebrae.⁶⁰ (The stump-of-a-tail concept resulted from the teaching that the Jew was a devil.) The Jesuits supported Vieira, and this support aided the king in issuing the *alvara* on February 6, 1649, wherein the monarch stated that he “deems it well and it pleases me that the goods and property of that nation [New Christians] of whatever quality they may be . . . both native born and foreigners, who should be arrested or condemned by the Holy Office for the said crimes of heresy, apostasy, or Judaism, shall not be sequestered . . . at the time of arrest.”

David G. Smith’s caveat that it is often a mistake to think of Portuguese merchants in terms of Old or New Christians is well taken. Smith, however, fails to understand why five familiars of the Inquisition were members of the Brazil Company’s *junta*, or board of directors. It should be obvious that their appointment was an act of appeasement. These five hoped to be able to track down secret adherents of Judaism who were not protected as investors in the company but whose identity might be revealed through associations and friendships with the New Christians covered by the *alvara*. Vieira believed that Jews might be more readily assimilated if their finances were free.⁶¹ The padre’s belief is reminiscent of the belief of Pope

Gregory the Great almost one thousand years earlier, later repeated by Alexandre Herculano and Henry C. Lea, that total equality for Jews would spell the abandonment of Judaism.

Vieira's plan and the company withstood papal pressure for over two years. The king, however, ultimately bowed to the threats and pressure of the Holy See. Not until the ascent to power of Marquis de Pombal, who ruled the kingdom as prime minister from 1751 to 1777, were Jews again safe. Jews experienced more than half a century of persecution before Pombal. The anticlerical marquis first began to whittle away the power of the Holy Office by declaring that its conduct of trials had to follow the judicial pattern of the secular courts and finally decreed its abolition. Among his other acts were the banishing of the Jesuits from Portugal and all its colonies in 1759 and moving the capital of Brazil from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro. Brazil, however, for almost one hundred years, enjoyed the "salutary neglect" of the mother country. The *fazenderos*, or large plantation owners, similar to the *latifundistas* in Spanish America, ruled the colony.

The eighteenth century witnessed a resurgence of the Inquisition in Brazil on a scale theretofore unknown. Prisoners were sent for trial to Lisbon, where some were sentenced to prison in Portugal, some to prison in Brazil, and some to the stake. Prior to that time, the Jews made significant contributions to Brazilian culture. The first poem written in Brazil, published in Lisbon in 1601, was *Prosopopeia*. The author was Bento Teixeira, also known as Bento Teixeira Pinto, who was condemned to life imprisonment by the Inquisition in Lisbon. Ambrosio Fernandes Brandão wrote *Dialogos das Grandezas de Brasil*, one of the best works on Brazil. Jacob de Andrade Velosino, who was born in Pernambuco and migrated to Antwerp and the Hague, gained fame for his medical cures. A philosopher in addition to a physician, he wrote a polemic against Baruch Spinoza. Lagarte resided in Itamarca and wrote *Ohel Yacov* [Tent of Jacob] in Hebrew, which has been lost. The first Brazilian genius of Jewish origin to pay for his ancestry with his life was the

playwright Antonio José da Silva, who was born in Rio de Janeiro and became an illustrious and popular poet and dramatist. He went to the stake on October 17, 1739. His fate was shared by hundreds of other Jews in the decades prior to his death and for two decades after his demise. Hundreds received jail sentences and some were exiled to Brazil.

Francisco de San Jeronimo, during his tenure as bishop of Rio de Janeiro (1707–1711), sent five hundred prisoners to the Holy Office in Lisbon. The majority of these prisoners were Jews. The Lisbon *auto da fé* of 1711 included 102 Jewish penitents. Lucio J. Azevedo, no friend of the Jews, lists some twelve Brazilian Jews convicted *por judaismo* in the *auto* of June 30, 1709; seventy-eight in the *auto* of October 14, 1714. Some historians include the *autos* listed by Azevedo although they do not include all the individuals named by him. One reason for the omission is that many Jewish penitents were females who did not possess property.⁶² One compilation, consisting of an inventory of the property of New Christians, lists 246 New Christian penitents in twenty-five *autos* in Lisbon between 1704 and 1761.⁶³

George Alexander Kohut reported that the *auto* in Lisbon on October 10, 1723, included the following Jews from Rio de Janeiro: Diego Lopez Simon, miner, twenty-six years old, executed; Joseph Gomes de Paredes, a student, twenty-four years of age, and his older brother, Francisco de Paredes, both sentenced to life imprisonment; Catalina Marques, previously sentenced October 12, 1712. For the *auto* of February 16, 1716, he lists Matheo de Moura de Fogaca (*sic*), a brother-in-law of Joseph de Barros in the *auto* of 1717, and Joseph Gomez Paredes.⁶⁴

When the Portuguese unsuccessfully attempted to recapture Recife in June 1646, there was a long siege prior to the acceptance of failure by the Portuguese, during which hunger ravaged the besieged city. “A capitulation would have been proposed by the Dutch if the Jews had not used all their influence and entreaties to induce the governors to hold out.”⁶⁵ It was this near-calamity that inspired a rabbi to write, after returning to

Holland, *Zecher Rab*, a poem that gave a stirring account of the siege. Rabbi Aboab had ordered special days of fasting as a means of propitiating God so that He would crown the Dutch with success. Although the Dutch defense, at that time, met with success, the pleas of the Jews to hold out did not endear them to the non-Jews in the city.⁶⁶

Charles R. Boxer writes that the Portuguese characterization of Brazil in the second half of the seventeenth century was, “A hell for Blacks, a purgatory for Whites, and a paradise for Mulattoes.”⁶⁷ The Brazilian economy was based on Negro slave labor used to produce the sugar and tobacco. As a result of the slave labor from Africa, the only labor of the whites was to issue orders to the slaves “without whom Portuguese America was not viable.”⁶⁸ The embarkation point for the slaves was Luanda, Africa, where there were Jews who served as slave-brokers. During the entire colonial period, which ended in 1822 with independence, Portugal continued to send Brazil its criminals, impoverished expatriates, and peasants from Vienne, Porto, and Lisbon. They were shipped to Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, and Bahia. Some came from Beira (an old Jewish center), as well as several other Jewish centers in northern and central Portugal.

Many immigrants became *lavadores*, or share-croppers, on the larger sugar plantations. They did little work other than supervise a few slaves. The traditional role of the Jew as a merchant was chosen by some of the new Jewish immigrants. The Brazilian Portuguese had an antipathy for the merchant class which Boxer attributes to the fact “that in the Portuguese speaking world a high percentage of the successful merchants were of crypto-Jewish or ‘New Christian’ origin largely because all other avenues of advancement were officially closed to them.”⁶⁹ Boxer cites a letter, dated April 7, 1674, from Gaspar de Freitas de Abreu to Dom Pedro, the Prince Regent, stating that “Só nós os Portugueses ficamos com o nom de Judeus ou marrano entre todas as nações” [Only we, the Portuguese, among all other nations, use the word Jew or Marrano interchangeably].⁷⁰

Jews receive scant notice in Brazilian histories after 1654. From the second half of the seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth century, Brazilians were concerned with many internal problems. Among these were the “War of the Mascates,” governmental jurisdictional quarrels in the Recife-Olinda and Pernambuco areas, and the ongoing battle between Paulistas and foreign intruders in the gold and other mines of Minas Gerais. Those Jews who remained in Brazil ceased to be visible as Jews.

After 1654, although Jews were apprehended by agents of the Holy Office, the local population concentrated on their more personal problems. There is an adage that “A people who has no history is a happy people.” This applies to the Jews in Brazil, except those incarcerated by the Inquisition. Not all the Jews departed openly in 1654. Some “converted” to Catholicism but continued to practice Judaism secretly—a repeat performance of what transpired in the Iberian Peninsula and in the Spanish colonial empire.

The ambivalence of the Portuguese and the Holy Office appears in two divergent aspects that are summarized by Robert Southey:

One great cause of its [Pernambuco’s] prosperity was that it was a place of safety for the New Christians, a race that was persecuted with such devilish cruelty and inconceivable impolicy in the mother country and Spain. Much as the Brazilians abhorred a Jew, and suspected all of the Jewish race, they were by no means willing to have a Holy Office established in their country; the attempts of that execrable institution to extend itself here had been successfully resisted, and Brazil has always been exempt from that which has been at once the opprobrium and the curse of Portugal. The New Christians were a despised race; they were habitually patient under contempt, and it is characteristic of the race to which they were allied to be alike disregarding of obliquy or danger where there is a sure prospect of gain. In the early part of the seventeenth century, many of them in that city were worth from 60 to 100 thousand crowns, and there were some of greater opulence; but no wealth could purchase the respect of their bigoted countrymen. Nine or ten years were sufficient at this time for realizing a fortune in Bahia.⁷¹

The other ambivalent behavior of the Holy Office was evidenced when, occasionally, the Inquisition itself brought Jews from Brazil to Lisbon for trial and then, after convicting them of practicing Judaism, exiled them to Brazil. Such sentences appear in the *autos* of 1682, 1707, and after 1708. In time, many of these Jews assimilated and many apostasized.

George A. Kohut's "Martyrs of the Inquisition in South America" includes an appendix entitled "Marranos Exiled to Brazil by the Inquisition in 1687 and 1707," based on Michael Geddes's *A View of the Court of the Inquisition of Portugal*. The following were sentences in the *auto* of May 10, 1682:⁷²

1. Joan (*sic*) Alexis, forty-eight years, merchant, New Christian, born in Spain, reconciled in Seville in 1672 for "False Judaism," relapsed and sentenced to perpetual *sanbenito* and five years in prison in Brazil.
2. Luis de Mattos Couto, fifty-one years, New Christian, resident of his own estate on Spirito Santo in Brazil. Prison during pleasure (*sic*).
3. Simão Henriques, seventy-five years, New Christian, "Farmer of the Revenue," had abjured *de vehementi* for "Crimes of Judaism" in 1656 *auto da fê*; relapsed and sentenced to five years imprisonment in Brazil.
4. Theresa Maria de Jesus, twenty-seven years, maiden "more than half a New Christian," daughter of Antonio Serrao (convicted of Judaism in 1682), *sanbenito* and seven years in Brazil.
5. Francisco de Almeida Negraen, New Christian (mariner), abjured *de vehementi* for fault of Judaism; prison during pleasure (*sic*) three years in Brazil.

In addition, the *auto da fê* of November 6, 1707, included Donna Theresa Barrera, twenty-one years, native of Olinda, bishopric of Pernambuco, perpetual imprisonment and *sanbenito*.

Despite the continuing arrests and convictions of Jews from Brazil, secret Jews continued to come to that country. Not all convicted of Judaism were exiled. The *auto* of 1723 included some who were burned at the stake. The *auto* of 1739 included the dramatist Antonio José da Silva among the victims.

The cases of Brazilian Jews tried in Lisbon and Evora after 1654 number several hundred. Between 1648 and 1748, sixteen Brazilian Jews were executed by the Inquisition in Lisbon.⁷³ Among the cases not involving the stake were several from the province of Minas Gerais. Because of the gold which had been discovered in several places in the province, Brazil witnessed a gold rush comparable to that in California in 1849. In 1729, several Jews were apprehended by the Holy Office in Minas Gerais and taken to Portugal for trial.

Other than the three trials involving Antonio José da Silva and his mother, there are only two cases that have an unusual interest. The first is that of Catherine Soares Brandao (she was the informant, not a defendant), who was on a visit to Rio de Janeiro from Portugal and, as a house guest, was invited to a wedding that was joining two important Jewish families. Catherine was an Old Christian and the only non-Jew present at the wedding. Because of certain toasts made at the celebration, she realized who the other guests were. Upon returning to Portugal in 1706, she denounced fifty-five guests and, later, an additional twenty-four Jews in Rio de Janeiro. Of the men convicted, two were owners of mills and factories, two were physicians, one was a judge, three were substantial merchants, and one was a pharmacist.

The second case was that of a nun, Donna Ventura Isabel Dique. She was the daughter of a sugar mill owner, João Dique de Sousa of Rio, who was burned at the stake. The nun testified against her three brothers but was also convicted as a judaizer; she was sentenced to jail and perpetual *sanbenito*, and remanded to the convent of the Congregação São Bernardo. The abbess first refused to accept her but finally had to accede to the order of the Holy Office.

In the end, the forces of assimilation proved stronger than the zeal for Judaism. Assimilation was facilitated by the 1733 decree of the Marquis de Pombal, which abolished the distinction between Old and New Christians. Jews *qua* Jews then disappeared until modern times. Not until more than sixty years after independence do Jews appear as a factor in Brazilian

history. Many modern Brazilian Christian families acknowledge Jewish ancestry.

CUSTOMS OF THE JEWS IN BRAZIL

As previously noted, the differences between the Spanish and Portuguese cultures and value systems were greater than the differences in religious customs between Spanish and Portuguese Jews. Essentially, since both groups were Sephardim, their prayer books show few variations. The necessity of “going underground” after 1496 did not weaken or dilute the dedication of the Portuguese Jews to their faith and their practices. Comments have already been made on why Portuguese Jewry had a greater religious inner strength than the Spanish Jews.

This section is set apart from the discussion of Spanish customs because the customs included here stem from Brazilian sources. The following are some of the practices revealed in the Admonitions (methods by which to detect Jews) of the inquisitor general’s office in Lisbon, November 1536. They were repeated on several occasions one hundred and more years later.

1. Jews observe the Sabbath garbed in their best clothing.
2. Jews do not work, cook, or clean their houses from Friday afternoon to after sunset on Saturday.
3. Jews light new candles on Friday evenings which they permit to burn to the end.
4. Animals are slaughtered by cutting their throats and covering their blood with earth (see Deuteronomy 12:24).
5. Jews may be detected by observing that they fast on Mondays and Thursdays as well as the Fast of Queen Esther (Purim).
6. They use new dishes for the Festival of Unleavened Bread and observe the Festival of Booths (Succot), the Festival of the Ram’s Horn, and Rosh Hashana.
7. They move their heads up and down when they pray and attach leather straps to their arms and forehead (phylacteries).
8. When they are in mourning, they eat only fish, eggs, and olives behind doors and dine at low tables.

9. The cadavers are garbed in linen garments under the shroud, the nails are cut and buried, and all are placed in deep graves in virgin soil.
10. A pearl or a piece of gold or a silver coin is placed in the mouth of the deceased.
11. All water from jars, etc., in the house of the deceased is emptied lest the soul of the deceased bathe in it or the Angel of Death wash his sword in the water. (Water was brought from the houses of neighbors until the burial.) This practice is found in *Yoreh De'ab* 399, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 4:486. See also Luis Camara Cascudo, "Jewish Roots in Brazilian Folklore," *Comentario* (Argentina) No. 51 (November 1966).
12. They place their hands on the heads of their children when blessing them but do not make the sign of the Cross. (This was the basis for the conviction of Ana Roiz, who was taken to Lisbon, convicted there, and burned at the stake in 1593.)
13. Children are circumcised at birth, and Jewish names are given to them but kept secret. They wash off the baptismal oil from the heads of children.

Luis de Camara Cascudo, in his article (see item 11 above), refers to a comment made by a Brazilian governess to children who became drowsy from the recital of countless rosaries, "Keep your heads straight, children, you look like a Jew." This comment is derived from the numerous Inquisition admonitions that Jews prayed with swaying and nodding movements.

Although the crypto-Jews practiced dissimulation in order to deceive neighbors and others about their true faith, many orthodox practices were followed behind closed doors. In the trial of Juan Rodriguez Messa, testimony was adduced that there came to Cartagena learned persons—learned in the Law of Moses—who taught the people about the intricacies of their faith.⁷⁴

Juan Rodriguez Messa (also spelled Mesa) was convicted in Cartagena of being *judío judaizante* because he recited the *Amidah* (the Sabbath version of the weekly Eighteen Benedictions) as well as the *Shema*, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God, the Lord is One," which is from Deuteronomy 6:4–9. When Juan recited the *Amidah*, he stood "juntos los pies y abrir los brazos y

extender las palmas de las manos” [with his feet close together and he opened his arms and extended the palms of his hands]. Jews do stand with their feet close together when reciting the *Amidah*, but the extension of the arms and opening of the palms is unknown in modern times. However, the reference to the arms and palms is almost identical to the practices of the observant Jews in Mexico during the seventeenth century.

Another interesting feature of Juan’s trial is the admission that his house was a synagogue and that there were nine other men with him when he prayed, constituting a *minyán*. The *proceso* contains all the evidence, making the proceedings equivalent to a compendium of Jewish rites, including the menus and lists of permitted and prohibited foods.

A part of the *proceso* includes the accusation against Blas de Paz Pinto. Blas de Paz’s house also was used as a synagogue, and he, too, had at least ten men for services in his home. The services appear to have been held almost daily and in the afternoons. Jews assemble twice a day in countries where they may practice their faith freely. Services are held in the morning and, usually, in the late afternoon, when they recite the afternoon prayers followed, at the onset of dusk, by the evening prayers. The inquisitors asserted that Blas de Paz was a rabbi.

The work of Elias Lipiner is based upon his studies of the activities of the Holy Office in Portugal as they pertained to Brazil. Much of the following is drawn from Lipiner’s work.

Among the practices were acts showing a lack of reverence for Jesus or the Host, standing or sitting in the church when one should be kneeling, murmuring qualifying phrases such as, “I believe what I believe,” or “I enter this church but I adore neither wood nor stone, nor bread nor wine,” or “I come only to adore the living God of Moses.”

The duplicity of their religious lives led to combining opposites in the two irreconcilable creeds. In this, they had much in common with the Indians who practiced *Santidade*, the practice of assigning Christian names of the apostles to the Indian gods. The name of the chief god was replaced by Jesus, but the spiritual entity was still the Indian divinity. (Many Cubans to

this day are disciples of *Santería*, not strictly analogous to *Santidade* but sharing many aspects of that religious custom.)

Although the practice of *landrecilla*, the Spanish word for “porging,” the removal of the thigh vein in animals in order to make the meat suitable as food, does not appear in the Portuguese *procesos*, the removal of the vein is mentioned in the *proceso* of Doña Caterina Mendes in Brazil. Denounced on August 5, 1591, she confessed that she did remove the sinew when roasting beef but maintained successfully that Antonio Alvarez, the cook of the queen of Portugal, had taught her this practice.

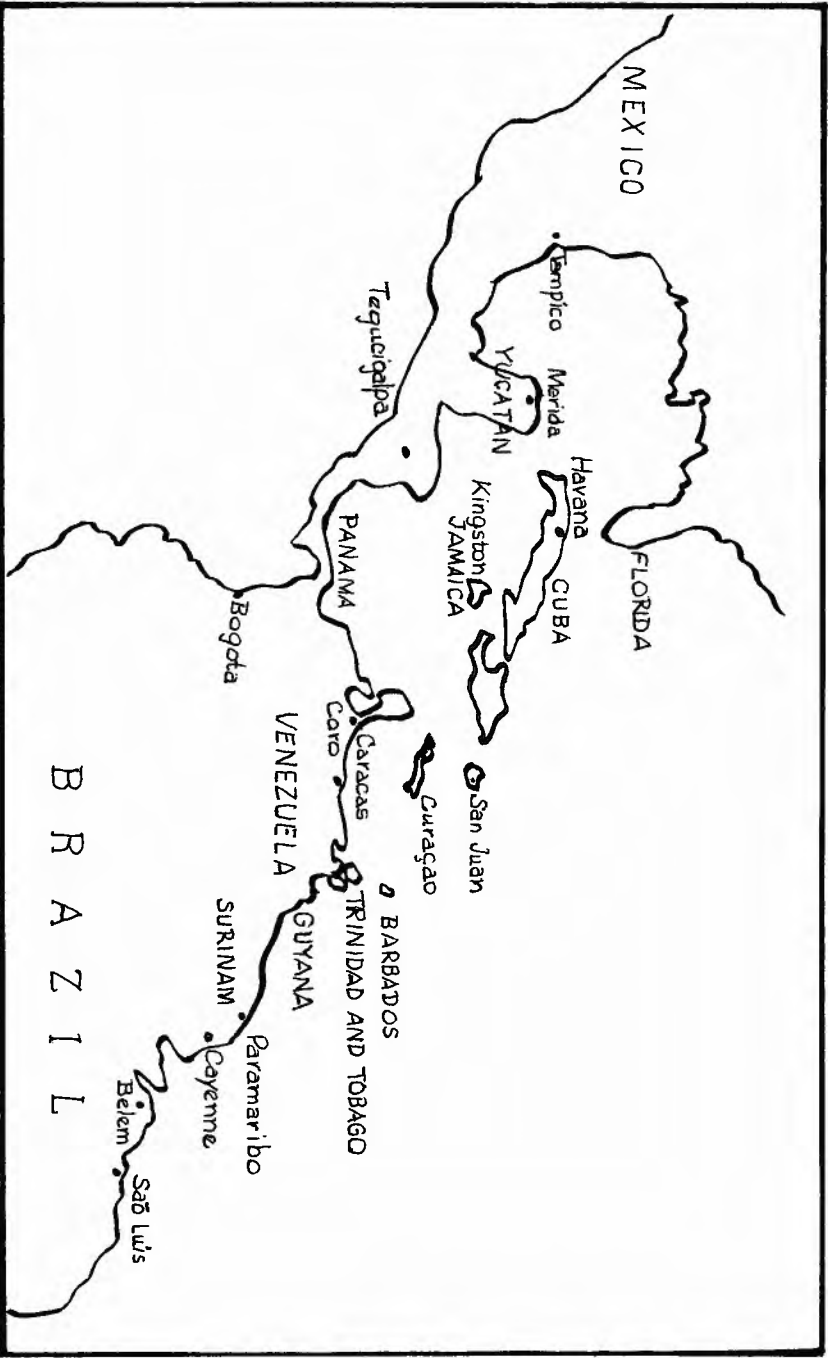
Quipur is referred to in the denunciation of Felipe Cavalcante, who testified about the Jews having a synagogue in Camaragibe, which was about four or five leagues from Olinda. He then stated that the Jews of Olinda went to Camaragibe on the first day of the new moon of August (Quipur never falls in August) “to celebrate their holy day of the fast of Quipur”! The month of Elul, usually August, begins, for the Orthodox, forty days of repentance that end with Quipur.

In 1618, Manuel Roiz Sanchez, a planter, was denounced for showing too much enthusiasm for certain information imparted by his clerk, Luis Alvares. Both were “of the [Hebrew] nation.” Alvares had been in Flanders for many years and was quite knowledgeable in Jewish practices. The informer, while a guest at the home of Manuel Rois Sanchez, heard his host and his clerk discussing Jewish prayers, customs, and ceremonies. Among the items he recalled, they said that the congregation responded “Amen” when the rabbi recited a certain prayer and jumped up when saying “Cadox, Cadox, Cadox,” which, he asserted, meant, “Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus. Dominus Deus Sabaoth.” *Cadox* is a corruption of the Hebrew *Kadosh*, which means “holy.” During the recital of the word three times, Jews do rise on their toes, and then they say, *Adonay Tzvaoth*, “The Lord God of Hosts,” words from the prophet Isaiah.

The Spanish Jews had reading matter quite different from that of the Portuguese Jews, except for the Psalms. The literate Brazilian Jews made popular *Diana*, a pastoral romance, Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, *Euphrosina*, a prose comedy, and *The Ballads of*

the Shoemaker of Trancoso, “whom they call Bandarra.” Elias Lipiner explains that the author of the last-named book, Goncalo Eanes Bandarra, was a poet-shoemaker of the sixteenth century whose writings were interpreted by the New Christians as having messianic import. Padre Antonio Vieira, in his work *Esperanca de Portugal* [The Hope of Portugal], commented on the writings of Bandarra, correlating them with scriptural texts. The book was banned because, among other reasons, Bandarra was involved in the case of Luis Dias, the Messiah of Seyubal.

Lipiner (chap. 6) writes that forbidden books were common in the colony and circulated freely among the crypto-Jews and New Christians.



The Caribbean and Adjoining Areas with Jewish Settlements

The Caribbean Area

JEWs made a more positive contribution to the development of the Caribbean area than to the southern continent, where they were haunted by the presence of the Holy Office and its agents. In the vast reaches of the viceroyalty of Peru, personal survival and the survival of Judaism and of Jews as a religio-ethnic group were of paramount importance and were the motivating force for all religious activities. Mere survival, however, must be considered a negative goal. In the northern areas, free of the threat of the Inquisition, the Sephardim contributed significantly to economic developments. The Netherland Indies, Barbados, Jamaica, and Surinam were the central points of Jewish activity, both secular and religious, from 1650 to 1810.

VENEZUELA

Little mention has been made previously of events in what is now Venezuela. The areas developed by the Portuguese and Jews in Venezuela were off the beaten track in the sixteenth century and part of the seventeenth. Caracas is thousands of feet above sea level. Maracaibo, on the other hand, is at sea level, at the head of the Gulf of Maracaibo, with a ready outlet to the Gulf of Venezuela and the Caribbean Sea. Although almost all historians attest that in the seventeenth century in the New World, "Portuguese" was synonymous with "Jew," there were non-Jewish Portuguese in Venezuela in greater numbers than in any other part of the Spanish colonial empire.

The importance of the Venezuelan area to the Jews is set

forth by the Venezuelan historian Miguel Acosta Saignes.¹ The condition of the Jews in Portugal itself at that time and for several years thereafter was subject to “ups and downs.” In 1601, King Philip III (Spain then ruled Portugal) granted permission to all those who desired to emigrate to leave with their families, without the requirement of previous licenses.

The volatile conditions under which the Jews lived prompted many to leave the Lusitanian nation and migrate to the New World. This, writes Acosta Saignes, made America *la tierra de salvación*, “the land of salvation,” for the Portuguese Jews.² In 1640, Portugal regained its independence. In 1649, by royal decree of King John IV of Portugal, the *Compañía General de Comercio* was formed for the purpose of trading with Brazil. Many New Christians were among the stockholders. After the loss of New Holland in 1654, many Jews left Brazil and went to New Granada, the Antilles, and Lima. (Lafuente Machain does not include Lima as the destination of the departees, but Acosta Saignes does.)

Jews were in almost every settlement stretching across the northern coast of South America, from Cartagena eastward to the Guianas.³ They came with ships carrying African blacks to be sold as slaves. The traffic in slaves was a royal monopoly, and the Jews were often appointed as agents for the Crown in their sale. When the king granted Pedro Gomez Reinal the exclusive right to import slaves into the colonies, the contract contained a clause permitting Gomez to have on his ship two Portuguese who would be in charge of the sale of the Negroes and do anything else necessary “among the people of the sea.”

Among the men who created a feeling of nationalism and an early desire for independence among the Venezuelans were Pedro Gomez de Acosta, Domingo de Mederos and his son Blas, Manuel Fernandez, Melchor Luis, and Diego Diaz Bado. All of these men were Portuguese. The presence of so many Portuguese, Christian and Jewish, in pre-independence Venezuela, undoubtedly influenced the legislators to name one of the provinces of the new nation “Portuguesa.”

DUTCH AND ENGLISH COLONIES

Barbados, a 166-square-mile island, and Jamaica, 4,400 square miles, were English colonies. Curaçao, 173 square miles, and Surinam, on the mainland, were Dutch possessions. Until almost the close of the seventeenth century, the Sephardim were the only Jews in these parts of the New World. They came with similar backgrounds and most were from Brazil and Amsterdam. Differences developed between the Jews under the British flag and those under the Dutch West India Company, which governed Holland's colonies in the New World. Curaçao was the most important and permanent Jewish New World settlement until the nineteenth century, when it was supplanted by the American settlements. Curaçao was considered the mother of American Jewish communities.

The Dutch Jews centered their lives about their synagogue. They did not emigrate in appreciable numbers after accumulating wealth. Jews, as well as Christians, in the English islands left for London after amassing their fortunes. Wilfred S. Samuel wrote that "a proper understanding of the London Sephardi community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was necessary since its members derived much of their social prestige and revenue from their Caribbean connections."⁴ Many Barbadian and Jamaican Jews apostasized in England. They became more English than Jewish and assumed more secular than religious and Jewish communal posts. Curaçaoan Jews were respected on the whole and, to a considerable extent, were integrated into Dutch insular society without abandoning or stifling the Jewish aspects of their lives. Acculturation affected both groups, but some of the differences in the effects of acculturation and the degree thereof are attributable to the attitudes and value systems of the non-Jewish populace.

The Jews of Curaçao and Surinam had a different relationship with Holland than did the British Jews with the mother-country. Amsterdam was known as "little Jerusalem," and it was the religious capital for all European Sephardim except the

English. The Mahamad, the secular executive of Etz Haim of Amsterdam, served as spokesman and protector of the overseas Jews and aided them by dispatching rabbis, other religious officiants, and teachers, and by supplying ritual objects. Analogous differences between the Dutch colonial Jews and the secret Jews in the Spanish colonies are indicated by Zvi Loker in his unpublished paper read on October 17, 1978, at the University of Florida symposium on the Caribbean. He contends that under the Dutch there was one center of an organized, structured community, while the crypto-Jews were marked by dispersion and consequent atomization, and in some cases by partial or complete alienation from the mainstream of Judaism.

There were reciprocal obligations between the Amsterdam community and the New World communities. Those in the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam had to accept the pronouncements of Amsterdam on religious matters, and the personnel sent by Amsterdam had to be accorded all the honors and respect due to them as spiritual leaders, teachers, and other religious functionaries.

New World Jewry was expected to act as directed, but also to aid in succoring less fortunate Jews wherever they might be. For almost two hundred years in Curaçao and Surinam, it was the custom to make donations and contributions for several causes, most importantly to ransom Jews captured by the Barbary pirates and Arab marauders to prevent them from being sold into slavery, to aid the Dutch in wars against Spain, and to pay bribes for the release of Jews held by the Inquisition. Another fund was created for personal benefits. The Amsterdam community would hold funds in trust for individuals and invest them, so that if, as, and when the individual required money for whatever reason, it was available.

From 1631 to 1654, the Dutch Brazilian Jews contributed to these causes, and the secret Jews in Peru did likewise until 1635.

Sir Alan Burns, commenting on the religious fanaticism in the British colonies in the seventeenth century, asserts that

although the British colonists had left England to escape persecution for their religious beliefs and to worship in their own manner, they, when in their ascendancy, persecuted others. “Such were the Puritans . . . and members of the Church of England who went to Barbados when the Puritans became dominant. . . . Irish Catholics, English Quakers and Jews (many of whom were fugitives from Portuguese persecution) further complicated the position, and religious animosities played a large part in the politics of the West Indian communities.”⁵

For many centuries, Catholic theologians asserted that they were the descendants of Israel and that the Jews had been cut off from that descent because they had refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah. The masses of Catholics were not made aware that they were “Israelites.” The Church hierarchy did not wish to confuse the masses, who were illiterate serfs and slaves without time or inclination for learning and philosophic thinking. With the rise of Protestantism, a new era emerged in Christian-Jewish relationships.

The Christian rationale and the Jewish position are outlined by Jacob Katz. Jews, he wrote,

are regarded as the descendants of biblical Israel. While this fact is common ground to both Jews and Christians, the evaluation of it by each is wholly conflicting. For the Jews it implies that they alone are in possession of the whole revealed religious truth. They are a party to the biblical Covenant between God and Noah, which was enjoined upon all humanity. . . . For the Christians . . . the descent of the Jews from biblical Israel signified nothing more than a physical fact. Their evaluation of its spiritual import was a negative one. For, according to Christian conception, the biblical Covenant with Israel ceased with the appearance of Jesus and was perpetuated in those who accepted the Messiahship of Jesus. Furthermore, the Jews, who rejected the Messiahship, had drawn upon themselves the curse pronounced upon those who broke the Covenant.⁶

The Anglican historian-minister James Parkes, quoting from the Synoptic Gospels and other New Testament sources, writes,

It was inevitable that Paul should claim that the promises now belonged exclusively to the Church, and that therefore Israel was, at any rate so long as it persisted in refusing to accept Christ, excluded from them. The promises of God could not lapse. The failure of the Jews could not make the word of God ineffective. . . . The Gentiles, accepting Christ, became the true inheritors of them. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel."⁷

This was one of the problems in creating a *modus vivendi* between Jew and Christian in the New World.

The Dutch had no religious fanatics comparable to the aforesaid English. The Netherlands had no nobility on the scale of the British, nor did the Dutch nobility wield the power and command the social status of the English lords, dukes, and other titled gentry. Dutch society was more egalitarian.

An important reason for the emigration of Jews from Barbados was the anti-Semitism of the influential Christians. These attitudes are reflected in the laws of the House of Assembly. On August 2, 1705, the House resolved that "a tax be levied on the nation of Jews" in the sum of £1,000; on February 12, 1707, it was resolved that "no Jew or Mulatto, Negro or Indian shall have any vote at any election of members to serve in the Assembly in this island." Jews presented a petition to reduce the tax to £750 because of Jewish financial losses. This was granted. The planter class complained that the Jews were engaged in retail trade instead of being planters.

BARBADOS

Barbados was captured by the English in 1605, but the first settlement of publicly acknowledged Jews came in 1656. Robert Schumburgk gives 1628 as the date of the arrival of the first Jews.⁸ These were necessarily secret Jews since Jews had been expelled from England in 1290 and, theoretically, none were permitted on British soil until 1656. The first openly professing Jews were the Mercados, father and son.

Other arrivals in Barbados included Dutch, French, and Portuguese Jews. The majority were Portuguese, which "is of

the highest order among them, and who in London need neither unite in the same synagogue or burial ground; and here, however, they must coalesce from the paucity of numbers.”⁹ When Britain ceded Surinam, some Dutch Jews migrated to Jamaica because they had prospered under the English while they held Surinam. Ten Jewish planters with 322 slaves left Surinam. Lewis Dias, a Portuguese-Jewish plantation owner and friend and protector of all the Jews on the island, was among those who migrated from Surinam. The time required to negotiate this move was seven and one-half years. Four of those who made the move bore the name Silva, and the others were Prada, Mesa, Gouia, Baruch, and de Silva. Variations of these names survive to this day in the West Indies.

In April 1661, Benjamin de Caseres, Henry de Caseres, and Jacob Fraso applied to the king for permission to live and trade in Barbados. The first two were related to Simon de Caceres, who had been on an assignment to Jamaica for Cromwell. The three men were actually living on the island and now sought legitimacy of residence. They were considered Danish citizens, and their petition was granted on the recommendation of the commissioner, who reported that the men “have behaved themselves well and with general satisfaction many years in Barbados.”¹⁰

By 1671, it was believed that there were only sixteen Jews without denization in Barbados. Jews had refused to take the oath of abjuration on the New Testament and to receive the sacrament as originally prescribed by law. When these conditions for denization were rescinded, the Jews of Barbados applied for letters of denization. There were five single householders. The mean number of white persons per Jewish *family* was 3.4, and the mean number of persons of these Jews was 6.4, with slaves running 3.0 per family. It is unfortunate that the congregational records were lost when the synagogue was destroyed in the hurricane of 1832.

The first congregation was appropriately named Nidhé Israel (“Dispersed of Israel”) and was founded about 1650. On the Feast of Tabernacles (Succot), which commences five days after Quipur, Jews paraded around the interior of the syna-

gogue carrying an *etbrog* (citron) and the *lulav* (made of palms and three other greens). Both traditional ritual objects were grown locally. When the Jews required one or more servants they went to the synagogue, where there were lists of quite a number of Jewish poor and improvident who were available for work as servants. Jews owned about 150 slaves. There were few Jewish plantation owners since the plantations remained in the possession of the original owners. The refusal of the owners to sell their landholdings did not prevent them from assailing the Jews for not being plantation owners. In another almost analogous instance, Jews were barred from performing certain civic duties but were more highly taxed than Christians because they did not participate in them.

Jews could not import goods, nor could they take Christian debtors to court unless the Jew was denized or naturalized by birth. Three Jews presented a petition in 1675 on behalf of all Jews in Barbados for an exemption from taking an oath on the New Testament. Lord Willoughby admitted that the judges did not accept the testimony of "Hebrews" in court since they would not swear on the Christian Bible. The petition was not granted until 1780. In order to circumvent the discrimination and impediment against securing justice, Jews employed Christian clerks who could testify in court and prove the debts due to the Jew and the terms of contracts. The cost of denization was £60, which was a great sum.

Raw brown sugar, called *moscavado* in Portuguese, was the principal export of Barbados. Clayed sugar was a major industry in which Jews were more involved than in *moscavado*. Jews were the principal importers of Madeira wine, a great favorite among the English planters. Jews served in the local militia and paid taxes at a higher rate than their Christian neighbors, but were not accepted by the masses, either socially or in business. Jews who loaned money, whether at the same rate of interest as Christians or at a lower rate, were called usurers. Christians who engaged in this activity were known only as money-lenders.

Many of the wills prepared in the English colonies in the

middle of the eighteenth century were written in Portuguese even though the testator had been a resident of the British islands for many years or was native-born. Many of these wills are contained in the 163 Will Books in Jamaica. Some are also to be found in Somerset House in London.

Many people failed to distinguish between Spanish and Portuguese Jews. Henry Whistler, writing about his expedition to the island in 1655, said that it was populated with “all sorts: English, French, Dutch, Scots, Irish, Spaniards, they being Jews . . .” By 1680, there were 351 householders in Barbados, of whom fifty-four were Jews.¹¹

By the eighteenth century, among the three hundred known Jews, there were some from England, Denmark, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Guadeloupe. Most lived in Bridgetown and the rest in Little Bristol, later named Speightstown. One of the four wealthy Jews was Daniel Bueno Henriques, son of Pedro Henriques of Medina del Rio Seco, the birthplace of Thomas Treviño de Sobremonte and many other Spanish secret Jews.

Between 1656 and 1757, many Jewish families from Belgrade in Serbia, Bordeaux and Bayonne in France, Spain, and Italy settled in Barbados. David Sarfatty de Pina, a rabbi in Barbados, came from an Italian family that had earlier migrated to Holland.¹² When the Jews were expelled from Martinique under the Code Noire after the death of Colbert, some who had been smugglers settled in Barbados. Their departure from the French island resulted from anti-Semitism.¹³ Barbados became the new seat of their smuggling operations, which were carried on with the Spanish mainland people.

JAMAICA

Jamaica has a longer and more colorful history than Barbados. Despite the geographical closeness of the two islands and the British dominion of both, the Jews of these colonies had little in common.

There were Jews in Jamaica before any other Caribbean

island—some say as early as 1530. According to Richard Hill, Clarendon in his *State Papers* tells us that around 1668 the Spanish secretary informed the Duke of Buckingham, then the British ambassador to Spain, that in 1623 Jamaica was “being colonized by the Portuguese. The Braganza branch of Columbus’ family had given them there asylum,”¹⁴ because they were fleeing the Inquisition.

One of the provisions made in the grant by Queen Isabella to Columbus was that no branch of the Holy Office was to be established in the lands under his dominion. Because of this exclusion, Jamaica was never placed under the jurisdiction of the bishopric of Cuba. “Several Jewish families . . . were the progenitors of families still living who commenced that nucleus of Jewish influence. . . . The Jewish families who remained Portuguese [1655] laid the foundations of the trade and traffic in Jamaica.”¹⁵ The proprietary rights of Columbus’ family to Jamaica were recognized in 1506 and 1538 and passed to the Braganzas when Columbus’ granddaughter married into that line. “The friendship that existed between Columbus and the Jews continued with his descendants. . . . unavowed Jews were enabled to live in Jamaica in comparative safety, even during the Spanish period.”¹⁶

A Jew was mayor of Kingston, Jamaica, when it was yet a Spanish possession. When the British captured the island, the Jews lost all rights and privileges except those accorded the Jews in London.

The Jamaican Jews thereafter did not engage in any activity with the Spanish colonies except for illicit trade with what is now Central America. Rosita Kalinka quotes from an article by Luis Diez Navarro to the effect that Jamaican Jews and the people of Cartago in the province of Costa Rica did extensive business twice a year in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁷ The Jamaicans exchanged their sugar for cacao and coffee from the Central American area. The two occasions were celebrated as part of the fairs of the Day of San Juan and the Day of the Nativity.

CURAÇAO

Curaçao is an island situated in the Caribbean Sea about thirty-eight miles from the coast of Venezuela. It is rich in salt, timber, and other natural resources. It belonged to Spain from 1527 to 1634, when the Dutch captured it. Samuel Cohen (also spelled Coheno), a Dutch Jew, was the interpreter for the conquering expedition. He became the first governor and served for several years. He was succeeded by Peter Stuyvesant, who left in 1650 to become the governor of New Amsterdam, which became New York after 1664, when the English acquired it from Holland.

In 1650, twelve Dutch families arrived as the first Jewish residents. The Council of Holland sent them for the purpose of promoting the commerce and welfare of the island. The then governor, Matthias Beck, was ordered to give the Jews sufficient land as well as Negroes, horses, cattle, and implements, etc., "in order that they may pursue agricultural occupations which had been neglected by the Dutch settlers who had found the contraband trade with the Spanish Main more lucrative and more to their taste."¹⁸ Later, the directors of the Dutch West India Company wrote to the governor about a contract made with a Jew, Jan de Illan. Jan, born in Portugal in 1609, was the original leader of the small group. He had acquired agricultural skills in Brazil. It was said that he intended to bring a considerable number of people and that they expected to trade from there to the West Indies and the Main instead of settling and cultivating the land.¹⁹

Governor Beck abided by the orders and, on February 22, 1652, awarded a large tract of land to Joseph Nuñez da Fonseca, also known as David Nassi (also spelled Nassy). There were, however, infringements placed on the civil rights of the twelve families. Even though they had equality in Holland, they were looked upon as foreigners in Curaçao. They were not permitted to remain in Willemstadt, the fortress, after 9 P.M. and were subjected to other restrictions. (Willemstadt was

later known as the Jewish Quarter.) Word of these restrictions was conveyed to the authorities in the Netherlands, and, understandably, other Jews rejected attempts by the Council to have them migrate.

The loss of Brazil by the Dutch and the deportation of the Jews brought many evacuees to Curaçao. Most of them had their own funds, and they were permitted liberties theretofore denied to the original twelve families. In 1656, the Jews from Brazil took over the tract given to the twelve families and converted it into a cemetery, called Bet Haim (“House of Life”), the traditional name for Jewish cemeteries.

A synagogue, Mikve Israel (“Hope of Israel”), was created in 1654, and services were held three times daily. There was no rabbi until 1674, when Haham Josiao de Pardo arrived.²⁰ A second synagogue, founded in 1697, was erected on one of the main streets. The original religious leadership was in the hands of some laymen and David Raphael Lopez de Fonseca, a cantor.

When Haham Lopez came in 1693, he found laxity in communal affairs and much dissension between the general community and the *parnassim*, the all-powerful and autocratic communal leaders, who were excommunicating Jews from participation in all religious activities, including burials. During that year, a deadly epidemic swept the island, causing some Jews to flee to Tucacas while others left for Venezuela. These, for the most part, were Italian Jews who were among the 152 who had originally left Oran, ca. 1658, for Leghorn. They were compelled to leave Leghorn in 1659 because of a serious economic depression in the city and the inability of the Jewish community to support them. The duke would not grant any aid or enlarge the Jewish ghetto. Thus, they left for the New World on the ship *Monte del Cisne* and ultimately landed at Cayenne. However, when the French captured Cayenne in 1664, the French commander ordered them to leave. Some went to Surinam, and others went to the Venezuelan coastal area, where Jewish enclaves had already been established.²¹

The congregation there was known as Santa Irmandade (“Holy Brotherhood”).

Coro was another site settled by the Jews from Curaçao and Surinam. In 1722, David Senior, a Jew, was sent by the Curaçaoan authorities to Coro on a quasi-political mission. The Dutch governor believed that Senior might secure the aid of his co-religionists in recovering Curaçaoan property that had been confiscated by the Spanish.

In Curaçao, between 1746 and 1749, during the tenure of Haham Raphael Samuel Mendez de Sola, several altercations among Jews took place. Jews from Congregation Shalom of “Otra Banda” were quarreling with those from Mikveh Israel over the jurisdiction of the latter congregation over the former. Personality conflicts also existed. Both congregations used the Hebrew calendar for dating all events, and they recorded that the first truce took place in the year 5510 (1749–50 according to the Gregorian calendar).

An important aspect of communal life resulted from the edict of the Mahamad, the executive committee of the community, which directed that all Jewish children receive a prescribed, thorough religious education. There were thirteen yeshivot.²² Except for the school Ets Haim, the oldest, the others were founded in the eighteenth century, most of them in the first decades of the century.

The Mahamad was composed of a committee of three: a president, a vice-president, and a *gabay* (treasurer). They were elected by the twelve councillors, who were in turn elected by the *yehidim*, the general community. Quite often, the Mahamad became too autocratic and dictatorial. Internecine disputes were frequent and disruptive of peace within the community. However, the Curaçao Island Council, the governing body, often manned by anti-Semites, enacted legislation that caused the Jews to forget their own disputes and join in a common front against the council.

Since the Dutch West India Company owned and governed the island, its employees and representatives administered all

affairs. Among them were bureaucrats and judges who were not as honest and judicious as those of the motherland.²³ In addition to speaking Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish, the islanders also had to know Papamiento and, in the synagogue, Ladino. Ladino is the vernacular that became important as a unifying influence after the 1492 expulsion. It is almost 90 percent pre-1492 Castilian. Ladino was used in the synagogues of Curaçao three times a year, on Passover, Shavuot, and Succot, in the reading of the prophetic portions.

There were “sister” relationships between Curaçao and Holy Land congregations. Mikveh Israel was linked to Yeshiva Honen Dolim in Hebron as its “sister” community. The latter sent messengers to diaspora Jewish communities to raise funds for the Jews of Hebron. Because of this relationship, Haham Raphael Isaac Carigal came to Curaçao from Hebron. He was related to wealthy Amsterdam Jews. At the time of his visit, there was a vacancy in Mikveh Israel’s pulpit. Carigal agreed to serve as spiritual leader until such time as Amsterdam could send a permanent rabbi. Carigal served from 1762 to 1764, during which time he imposed strict regulations on the ritual slaughterers of meat and their supervisors. He was an extraordinary man and a great talmudist.

Prior to 1920, there was never more than a handful of Ashkenazim on the island at any one time. The few Ashkenazim who did come, usually doctors, soldiers, or merchants, were from Holland. The Ashkenazim did not attain the social status of the Sephardim nor were they integrated into the general community. The Sephardim played a very important role as traders with the Spanish colonies in the purchase of tobacco and cocoa, and while they did not attain the highest governmental posts, they were often found in the secondary and tertiary echelons.

Eliau Namias was the wealthiest Jew in Curaçao during the 1690s. His family conducted a lively trade with Portugal through Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Rotterdam. In order to carry on the trade with Portugal and the Spanish dependencies, each member of the family had to assume an alias. For

unknown reasons, his family had a strong predilection for the Spanish language although they had resided in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Curaçao since 1656. Another important group was the Senior family, whose relatives were Namias's business associates in Venice and Salonica.

Trading and serving as merchants included owning warehouses with inventories to outfit the largest sailing vessels and to make ship repairs. The Jews were the largest ship chandlers in the entire Caribbean region, where the shipping business was mainly a Jewish enterprise.²⁴ The Jews were the principal purveyors to the government, although there never were more than two thousand Jews in Curaçao. It is conservatively estimated that the Jews owned about two hundred vessels during the first sixty years of their settlement in Curaçao. The Jessurin family alone owned over one hundred ships sailing the seven seas in the 1800s.

Shipping and trading did not lack difficulties. A good part of the trade with the Spanish possessions was clandestine. The Jews armed their vessels to defend themselves against pirates and privateers. The ships were not only owned by Jews, but were manned by Jewish crews and sailed under the command of Jewish captains. Emmanuel's Appendix 3 of eighty-one pages supplies the name of the ships and the years acquired, the owners, the value of the ships (stated in pesos), the names of the captains, and other pertinent information.²⁵ Many of the ships were engaged in bringing slaves from Africa to the Thirteen Colonies, the British islands in the Caribbean, and the Spanish colonies.

There was considerable trading between the Jews of Curaçao and Coro, on the mainland, fifty miles southwest of Curaçao. Dr. Melvin H. Jackson wrote, "Although centering in Curaçao, the Jews spread through most of the West India islands, French, English, and Spanish, as well as Dutch. Offshoots of the Curaçao congregation even established themselves at Caracas and Coro, in Venezuela, and laid the groundwork for a commercial network and a means of transferring capital, which was of importance in the spread of Dutch influ-

ence and the rise of the Caribbean sugar industry.”²⁶ As early as 1661, the trade between Curaçao and Spanish Venezuela was so great that the governor of the province of Venezuela sent a critical note to Madrid.²⁷

Isidoro Aizenberg writes that “The Venezuelans took an active part [in the illegal trade]. . . . The governor in Venezuela had to accept the fact that unless he allowed local products to be shipped in Dutch ships, they would never reach Europe. A large proportion of these ships were owned by Jews who became active participants in the trade between Venezuela and the Old World.” Aizenberg’s article, “Efforts to Establish a Jewish Cemetery in Nineteenth Century Caracas,” is based upon the articles of notable Venezuelan historians and scholars.

The Jews sold their merchandise on credit to the Spanish colonials and exchanged manufactured goods for tobacco, hides, coffee, powdered gold, and cocoa. In 1722, the businessmen of the Spanish Main owed the Curaçao merchants one million guilders. Jews lived not only in Coro but also in Santa Marta as early as 1690 and in Tucacas, also known as Puerto Lopez, Colombia.²⁸

Runaway slaves from Curaçao found refuge in Coro. About 490 slaves fled between 1729 and 1796, 112 of them belonging to Jews. Because the Curaçaoan Jews were the principal traders with Coro, the Dutch governor most often appointed a Jew to go to Coro to discuss the matters at hand.

The Jews of Curaçao were Orthodox, at least in the synagogue and publicly, in the profession of their faith. The Reform community did not come into being until 1864, beyond the time span of this history.

The original congregation, founded in 1654, built a synagogue in 1656, which was replaced by a larger one in 1681. Both were outside of Willemstadt, the fortress and town. The Jews had earlier realized that they could not subsist in an economy devoted to, and dependent upon, agriculture in the particular climatic conditions of tropical Curaçao. They gradually abandoned their original home sites and moved into the

town proper. The first “city” synagogue was built in 1674 and was later demolished because it could not accommodate all the parishioners. A larger one, built in 1703, was in time also found inadequate. The present imposing structure was consecrated on the eve of Passover, April 1732.

The Jewish community maintained several benevolent societies which served not only the Jewish poor but also the indigent of other faiths. Several of these societies and fraternal groups were known as *bermandades* (brotherhoods). An esoteric contribution of the Portuguese Jews was the national language of Curaçao, Papamiento. The early Jews came at about the same time as the Africans, who were brought to the island as slaves. The daily contact between the plantation operators and the Negroes produced a language which is composed of words from African tribal languages, Portuguese, Dutch, and English.

Many Italian Jews and some who originally went from Oran to Leghorn thought they had finally ended their travels when they reached Cayenne. When they were ordered to leave Cayenne in 1664, they went to Curaçao. In 1693, most of the survivors of this group left Curaçao for Venezuela, joined the small number of Jews in Tucacas, and established a flourishing settlement. In 1720, they applied to Curaçao to purchase a *Sefer Thora* (i.e., a *Sefer Torah*, a scroll of parchment on which is written the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses, and from which a portion is read on each Sabbath and festival in the synagogue). This is another example of how Curaçao served as the “mother” of the New World Jewish communities.

In 1825, when all of Latin America had achieved independence from Spain and about nineteen new nations came into being, a royal decree was issued in the Netherlands granting equal rights of citizenship to the Jews of Curaçao.

SURINAM

Surinam, also known as Dutch Guiana, on the northern coast of South America, was originally an English possession. It was

taken and held by the Dutch for six months in the 1650s, and recaptured by the English. They finally ceded it to Holland under the Treaty of Breda of 1667, which required Holland to cede New Amsterdam to the English in exchange. The name has been spelled Sarinan, Sarinhao, Serenam, Surinamme, and Serrinao. It has been mistaken for Essequibo, Demarary, and Berbice, which are part of what became known as British Guiana. These territories, together with French Guiana, were also known as the “Wilde Kust.”

The word “Surinam” stems from the name of the original Indian inhabitants, the Surinense, who called their area Surina. It remained a Dutch possession until 1948, when it became sovereign except in foreign affairs.

David Nassy, together with his family and companions, had agricultural training in Brazil and had become acclimatized to the heat. There was a mania in Europe in the seventeenth century to form colonies in the New World. Nassy, therefore, had little difficulty in securing a grant from the Dutch West India Company to found a colony on the island of Cayenne. After the French took the island in 1664, Nassy and others went to the mainland and founded the first Jewish colony in Surinam, miles down the river in the midst of a forest. Sephardi Jews had been in Surinam as early as 1639.²⁹

David Nassy, the *patrón* (sponsor and master) of the colony, gives 1650 as the founding date of what became known as Joode Savaane or Joden Savaane, the “Jewish Meadow.”³⁰ Joden Savaane was many miles down the river from Paramaribo. The main occupation there was sugar planting. When the Jews abandoned the town a few decades later, they left a cemetery with over four hundred graves and a brick synagogue building. (After almost three hundred years, the cemetery grounds have been cleared of underbrush, etc. The remains of the building are still to be seen.) Richard Gottheil related that the first settlers, according to an early account, were fugitives from persecution and received permission from Holland in 1632 to settle upon what is the “Joode Savaane” but a few years elapsed before the settlement. Professor Gottheil quotes a statement in

the original privileges: “. . . we have found that the Hebrew nation now already resident here, have, with their persons and property proved themselves useful and beneficial to this colony.”³¹ The grant provided for complete equality with the British citizens previously resident in Surinam.

Gordon Merrill sets 1644 as the date of the arrival of the first Jews in Surinam, but he agrees with Gottheil’s statement about the privileges granted to the Jewish settlers.

About forty to fifty Ashkenazim came to Surinam in 1690. They prayed with the Sephardim until January 16, 1734, when they formed the Ashkenazi Jewish congregation, known later in Hebrew as *Nevé Shalom*. (Another source states that the founding took place in 1716.³² One date may refer to the founding of the congregation and the other to the dedication of the synagogue building.)

P. A. Hilfman supplies many details about the names in the colony and lists all the rabbis of the Dutch Portuguese congregation from 1642 to 1757.³³ Heading the list of the rabbis is Abraham David Pardo, who served in that capacity in 1642. The fifth rabbi was David Pardo, his great-grandson, who dedicated the synagogue building in 1685. The building, except for size, is a replica of the Amsterdam *Ets Haim*. Rabbi David Pardo served as rabbi until his death in 1713. He also founded *Honin Dolem* (“Help for the Poor and Oppressed”). The Pardos, an old Spanish family, were originally from Turkey.³⁴

Another name famed in Surinam and Newport, Rhode Island, is Jacob Touro, a wealthy plantation owner and communal leader. The Newport, Rhode Island, synagogue, an American historic national landmark, is the Touro Synagogue, to which President George Washington sent a letter that has become a classic document decrying bigotry and advocating tolerance, which he hoped would be characteristic of the new nation.

Jacob R. Marcus wrote that “The History of Surinam Jewry is the story of one of the greatest Jewish communities in the New World of the 1700’s.”³⁵ The departure of the Jews from

Cayenne to “Surinam, Jamaica and Barbados” is also chronicled by Thomas Southey (1:95).

In May 1667, an inventory was made of the area of Surinam known as Thorarica, which consisted of nine plantations for raising sugar cane with 233 slaves, 55 sugar kettles, 106 head of cattle, and 28 men plus an additional six plantations with 181 slaves, 39 sugar kettles, and 66 animals. All these plantations were owned by eighteen Portuguese Jews. In 1694, there were in this area ninety-two Sephardic and twelve Ashkenazi families. By 1730, Jews owned 115 plantations out of 400. There were 650 mulattoes and free Negroes.

From 1658 to 1666, there was another Jewish settlement inland near Surinam. The colony, Nova Zeelandia, was in what was then known as Essequibo, on the Pomeroon River. Dutch-Portuguese Jews were the original settlers, and their colony flourished for the short period of eight years. They were joined by the 152 Jews from Salee and Oran in Morocco who arrived on the ship *Monte del Cisne*, which had embarked from Leghorn. They arrived in Guiana in July 1660. The colony was destroyed in 1666 by the English under Major John Scott.³⁶

The early settlers in Surinam included Jews from Leghorn and Hamburg via Amsterdam. They, and all the others, spoke Spanish. Although most early Jews in the New World were called Portuguese and spoke Portuguese, those in Surinam and West Guiana were different.³⁷ In passing, it should be noted that the Jewish community affairs of Leghorn were recorded in Portuguese and Spanish from the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. The Jews in Leghorn were so parochial in their language that the Italians had to learn to speak Spanish in order to converse with them. Spanish was known as the mother-tongue of the Jews in Surinam, West Guiana, and Coro. The varied sources of Jewish immigration to the New World resulted in the acculturation of Jewish communities composed of Jews who differed in geographical origin, mores, psyche, and religious observance.³⁸

TOBAGO AND THE “WILDE CUST”

In May 1660, some Jews from Brazil, Surinam, and West Guiana founded a colony in Tobago, just north of Trinidad, which islands were Spanish colonies. In 1712, Joseph Addison wrote, “They [Jews] are so disseminated through all the trading parts of the world, that they are becoming the instruments by which the most distinct nations converse with one another and by which mankind are knit together in general correspondence. They are like the pegs and nails in a great building, which, though they are but little valued in themselves, are absolutely necessary to keep the whole frame together.”³⁹

In 1654, Holland made grants of immunity and other privileges “To the People of the Hebrew Nation that are to go to the Wilde Cust.” England had granted *privilegia*, chartered rights, which the Dutch continued, although there is a difference of opinion as to which nation made the first grant and whether the English copied the Dutch grant to the Jews who were going to Curaçao. The *privilegia* conceded some exemptions to Jews as an ethnic minority and extended certain immunities and privileges which included all the rights of Dutch burghers. The Jews lived in Surinam as an autonomous religio-cultural enclave. The *privilegia*, whether of English or Dutch origin, enunciated the most liberal laws ever promulgated for Jews in the Christian world.

The English version, which follows in abridged form and with spelling modernized, was slightly less liberal than the Dutch grant (Egerton Mss. No. 2395, fol. 46 in British Museum):

Grant of Privileges to the People of the Hebrew Nation That Are To Go To The Wilde Cust [*sic*]

1. That they shall have the liberty of conscience with exercise of their laws and rites and ceremonies according to the doctrine of their Ancients without any prohibition, and that they shall have a place appointed for the building of their synagogue or synagogues and schools and also such ground for their burying in a separate

- place according to their fashion that they do possess in Amsterdam.
2. That on the day of their Sabbath and the rest of their festival days, they shall not be obliged to appear in court upon any suit of law or cause . . . and they shall be excused of going to the Guard, except if (which God forbid) should be urgent necessary.
 3. That all Jews shall be admitted for burghers as the people of the province of Zeeland . . .
 4. [Autonomous in conduct of synagogues.]
 6. [Hebrews shall have the right to have two representatives at all general meetings and of the Lord's commissions and right to express opinions at the meetings.]
 8. [All Jews in the Jewish community are to be bound by communal regulations.]
 9. [That no one may be oppressed or put to law for debts caused in Brazil or other kingdoms . . .]
 14. [Exemption from taxes and customs for seven years and if one becomes a sugar plantation owner with fifty Negroes shall enjoy twelve years of freedom from taxes, customs and duties, but with a plantation of oxen with thirty Negroes, then a nine year exemption.]
 16. [Right of free immigration.]

In 1782, the white population of Paramaribo numbered 2,000 souls, of whom 615 were Portuguese Jews and 430 were German Jews.⁴⁰ In the capital of Paramaribo, the Jews became a middle class of shopkeepers, professionals and merchant-shippers dealing with Curaçao and North America. The Jews constituted one-third to one-half of the white population. The Protestants resented them and often were virulent in expressing their resentment.

For many years there were two distinct Jewish communities: Ashkenazim and Sephardim, then a third community developed composed of the Jewishly reared mulattoes. This third congregation survived for over seventy-five years when it finally succumbed to the blandishments and persuasions of the Christian missionaries. The Ashkenazim, who originally had prayed with the Sephardim, continued most of the Sephardic rites in their own synagogue which was founded in 1716. The name of the Ashkenazi congregation was *Nevé Shalom*. The first Sephardi synagogue was named *Berakhah we-Shalom*,

(“Blessing and Peace”). Its building was erected in 1685. It is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, existing Jewish congregation in the New World. The building, though smaller, was patterned after Congregation Ets Haim in Amsterdam.

The communities were very cultured and literate. There were extensive privately owned libraries with books in Dutch, French, Spanish, and Portuguese which circulated freely among friends and acquaintances of the community.

In 1680, Isaac Neto was called to Surinam as the first spiritual leader. By this time, the Dutch regarded the area from Surinam to Cartagena as open to settlement by both Christians and Jews. Cartagena was still part of Spanish New Granada. The area opened by the Dutch included Tucacas. This explains the existence of Jews there and is also the reason that some who left Curaçao later in the seventeenth century went to Tucacas. The presence of a ritual slaughterer of meat and fowl in Santa Marta, New Granada, indicated that there were a substantial number of Jews in the area. When there were just a few Jews, women usually acted as slaughterers of fowl. One or two men of the community slaughtered the larger animals.

Philip Henriquez, a Dutch visitor to Cartagena in 1698, was entertained by the Spanish governor and also received a letter of recommendation from the bishop of Santa Marta. He returned for another visit in 1699 and was incarcerated by the Inquisition because he prayed in Hebrew before his ship’s crew and because “he slaughtered chickens according to Jewish ritual.” He denied the slaughtering charge and, during the course of his testimony, revealed the existence in Tucacas of a *shochet*, a rabbinically approved slaughterer of fowl and meat. He was freed from the Holy Office by an order from the director-general of the Royal African Company, an agency of the Spanish throne.⁴¹

About 1765, there was a rise of hostility toward the Jews. It became so overt that the creation of a ghetto for Jews in Paramaribo was proposed in 1767. Jews were even barred from the theater. They countered by building their own, but within a few years, a new tolerance set in.

The Colonial Decline, 1660-1825

THE YEARS between 1660 and 1825 were characterized by revolution; political, psychological, and moral. Attitudes on freedom and the right to participate in one's own destiny found expression in the revolts of the New World colonies and the seizure of power by the French masses. The philosophy of Erasmus, the powerful currents emanating from the Renaissance, the new humanist philosophy, and the growth of nationalism contributed to the growing dissatisfaction with the status quo and the lessening of governmental control of the colonies.

Among the "irreligious" ideas advanced by Charles le Secondat, Baron de la Brede et de Montesquieu, in 1721, was his statement that "The Jewish religion is an old trunk that has reproduced two branches that have covered the earth; I mean Mohammedanism and Christianity. Or rather, it is a mother that has borne two daughters who have inflicted a thousand wounds upon her." Although this shocked the Western world, there were no threats to excommunicate or ostracize Montesquieu. The narrow, rigid interpretations of faith were giving way to the tolerance of another statement: ". . . to love and observe one's religion, it is not necessary to hate and persecute those who do not observe it."

Voltaire, the deist, gave short shrift to the codified, priest-authorized rituals called religion. When told that God Himself was the first inquisitor and had provided the garments (*sanbenitos*) worn by Adam and Eve when they were expelled from the

Garden of Eden, Voltaire responded to the rationalizing statement by saying that he doubted that God was the first inquisitor but it did prove that He was the first tailor. Voltaire's diatribes against Paramo,² a luminary of the Holy Office at the end of the sixteenth century, did little to enhance the reputation of the Inquisition as a legitimate institution.

Voltaire wrote, "All men resemble Louis [Ludovicia] de Paramo when they are fanatics."³ Paramo's account of the *auto da fé* of December 8, 1596, and of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo, contains several errors that were repeated by Henry C. Lea and copied by Cecil Roth in his *History of the Marranos*.

Preserved Smith wrote that the Catholic Church has always asserted that the idea of freedom of conscience for all people was "madness flowing from the most foul fountain of indifference."⁴ Smith pointed out that Luther was a liberal in his early days but an intolerant persecutor when he attained a position of power.

Despite the Church's claim of infallibility and righteousness in the procedures and goals of the Holy Office, it was not unaffected by the European wave of humanism and the growing nationalism.⁵ The perspectives of the Holy Office were changing, however slowly and subtly. Two cases give evidence of these changes. The first case involved David de la Mota, who was born in Velez, Spain, about 1739.⁶ His grandfather had been relaxed by the Inquisition and his parents penanced by it. As a youth, David went to the Virgin Islands, then under Denmark's sovereignty. He was circumcised in St. Eustatius, where he married a Jewess and earned his living as a silversmith. In 1789, he went to Cartagena. As a result of stating publicly on several occasions that he was a Jew, he was arrested by order of the Holy Office, which then informed the Suprema of its action.

The Suprema instructed the inquisitors in Cartagena to release de la Mota immediately since he was a Danish citizen. The Suprema feared that reprisals would be taken against Catholics residing in Denmark if Spain punished a Danish citizen, albeit a Jew. In addition to this recognition of national

sovereignty and power, the Inquisition neither confiscated de la Mota's property nor exacted a statement of contrition.

In the second case, Don Agustin de Espinola, a merchant in Mexico, went to Kingston, Jamaica, in 1778 and, while there, attended the synagogue. This was reported to the tribunal in Mexico City, and the inquisitors had him arrested when he returned "for suspicion of being a practitioner of Jewish rites." Although there is nothing to indicate that he denied attending the synagogue, he was released and the case never proceeded to a conclusion.⁷

While there are other reasons for the actions of the inquisitors, there is evidence in the original Inquisition records that the works of Voltaire and other books on the Index of prohibited reading matter were being circulated in the New World and were having an influence on ideas and attitudes. At a time when even the Bible could not be read except in the presence of and with the guidance of a priest, Flavius Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*, Basnage's *History of the Jews*, and many other "heretical" books appear in the Inquisition records as the property of people apprehended by the Holy Office. In most cases, the confiscation of the books, sometimes accompanied by the imposition of a fine, was the only punishment.⁸

The year 1660, although itself undistinguished, marked a watershed in the history of colonial Latin America and that of the Jews. From that year to the achievement of independence (1810 to 1825 for all the new nations in Latin America), the sources for the history of the Jews decline in quantity and quality. One reason for the paucity of the change is the length of the trials. In prior times, it was not enough for a prisoner to simply confess that he was a Jew. He was compelled to involve others who observed Judaism with him or whom he knew as Jews, and he had to prove that he was a Jew by narrating customs, prayers, etc. As a result of such testimony, many trials produced the rich sources of data and information that have been utilized in writing this account. The trials after 1660 became short, *pro forma*, routine questions and answers followed by the statement of punishment, many times a pecu-

niary punishment consisting of a percentage of the prisoner's property—never total confiscation.

The following must be considered among the reasons for the change in the amount of available information.

1. As previously mentioned, the report of Pedro de Medina Rico excoriating the New World inquisitors and their failure to abide by the rules and regulations of the Suprema. The repercussions of his report may have induced later inquisitors to believe that doing little was more expedient than being overzealous. Speedy trials and monetary fines became standard procedure in cases involving Jews. Maybe the inquisitors hoped that more Jews would enter the colonies and risk capture if they thought that the worst punishment would be a fine instead of jail and the loss of all their property.

2. Another factor that accounts for the lack of historical sources for this period is the loss by fire, theft, and unexplained disappearances of Inquisition documents. Part of the tribunal records in Peru were stored in the Biblioteca Nacional, which suffered two fires, the second in 1943. Not all the documents were lost. Fortunately, those in the Archivo General de la Nación in the Palacio Justicia are still available, although poorly catalogued. Pancho Villa is alleged to have taken *procesos* from a church in Queretaro, Mexico, where they had been placed by church officials, and used them for a victory bonfire ca. 1912. In Spain, some fourteen carts transporting Holy Office records from Simancas to Seville disappeared. Thefts of Inquisition papers were common during the past 150 years. The forty-seven volumes at the Henry E. Huntington Library in San Marino, California, were acquired as a gift from Walter Douglas, who bought them in 1907 from a dealer on Calle Gante, Mexico City. The Thomas E. Gilcrease Institute, Tulsa, Oklahoma, bought many papers (unfortunately some were only parts of the *audiencias* of an individual) from Mexican dealers, who either pilfered them or acted as agents for Mexican officials who “borrowed” them from the National Archives. G. R. G. Conway, a Canadian, bought and distributed many parts of *procesos*. Washington State College (now the

University of Washington) bought many papers. Many Inquisition papers are still privately owned. Colonel David Fergusson had fourteen trunks of Mexican Inquisition documents stored in a warehouse in Seattle, where they were destroyed by a fire in 1890.

3. Protestants, called Luteranos as a generic term for all Protestants, were now regarded as a greater menace to Catholicism than the Jews and Judaism.

4. The Holy Office had become more a political force to protect the monarchy than a religious force to defend and further the faith.

5. The search for prohibited books by Inquisition agents attained a high priority in Holy Office activities. The *aduana* (customs house) was adjacent to the House of the Inquisition. As early as 1622, the inquisitors Veradugo and Gaytan in Lima wrote to the inquisitor-general about the smuggling of prohibited books into the colonies by the Dutch and the English.⁹

Many Jews were commercial traders or smugglers in the New World Spanish territory but lived in non-Spanish lands to avoid the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. The attitude of the colonials toward the Jews softened because of the financial advantages accruing to the local people. Spain's domestic problems and the losses of its ships on the high seas were bankrupting the country. Its taxation of the colonies by the *alcabala*, a value-added tax placed on each transaction from the time that the products arrived in the New World until they reached the ultimate consumers, made the cost of Spanish imports prohibitive. This encouraged competition and the sale of smuggled goods.

6. Spain's decline as an international power appeared in the treaties that it was forced to sign with England and the Netherlands, which permitted their ships to enter New World Spanish ports for purposes of trade with the colonists.

7. Portugal's break from Spanish dominion in 1640 and Aragon's breakaway a few years later to join France contributed to the diminution of Spain's position in Europe. The loss of much of the Low Country lands, especially the indepen-

dence of the Netherlands and its rise to power, undermined the power of Spain in northern Europe and elsewhere.

8. The War of the Spanish Succession (1700–1714) resulted in the assumption of the Spanish throne by the Bourbon dynasty. The Bourbons were not as antagonistic to the Jews as had been the Habsburgs.

9. The new bases for smuggling, i.e., Barbados, Curaçao, Coro, Barcelona, Santa Marta, Rio Hacha, and, after 1726, Buenos Aires in Rio de la Plata, and what is now Uruguay, were blows to the Spanish economy.

Another reason for the decreasing Jewish presence in the Spanish New World was the decline in the birth rate of Jews even prior to 1660 and the effects of what may be termed excessive in-breeding. The decline in the birth rate is attributable to two factors.

The first is the great number of bachelors in the population because of the shortage of Jewish females. Noting the caution exercised by Jews in selecting a mate, the Jew who was committed to practicing the rites of his faith required a spouse who was Jewish. The problem of finding suitable women resulted in at least one man serving as a marriage broker. He traveled to the Jewish quarters in Pisa, Florence, and Ferrara to seek Jewish women who would accompany him to Mexico, where, he assured them, eligible mates were waiting. Few girls accepted his offers since it meant making a blind match, being away from one's family, and living under a potential Sword of Damocles—the Inquisition.

Efforts were also made to bring Jewish girls from Peru to New Spain. There was some success in this attempt. It may be coincidental, but in at least three marriages of women from Peru to Mexican men, the brides were “natural” (illegitimate) children. The fathers of these women were Jews, as appears from the testimony adduced at their trials and the trials of their daughters. The faith of the mothers of the girls, or even their identity except in one case, is unknown. It is possible that the father had taken his “natural” daughter to New Spain for fear of the stigma attached to illegitimacy in Peru or because finding

a suitable Jewish husband in Peru may have been difficult. The migration from the southern viceroyalty north exceeded the reverse migration. It was ascertained that one woman who bore a “natural” daughter who was later married in Mexico was Jewish.

There is an old Yiddish adage, “Wie es christelsich so es Yiddelt sich” [As the Christian does, so does the Jew]. The morality of the Spaniards in the New World during the colonial period would be condemned by their respective religions—Christian or Jewish. Concubinage was as common among the Jews as it was among the Christians. There is one exception: Jews did not practice bigamy as did the Christian Spaniards. One reason is that the Jewish men, unlike the Christians, did not come to the New World to find a fortune, leaving their wives behind and expecting to return in a short period. The Jews who migrated either were single or brought their wives with them because they were fleeing from the Holy Office and seeking a permanent abode of safety.

An oddity involving married couples in the New World was the number of childless couples. The almost zero population growth is a condition contrary to the usual fecundity of the Sephardim. There are some who attribute the small number of offspring or the many childless couples to the great amount of in-breeding. Judaism does not prohibit marriages between uncles and nieces and between first cousins. Jews, as is common with most ethnic groups, lived within the orbit of their group. The orbit narrowed when Jews were considered interlopers by the dominant group, as were the Jews in the Spanish New World. In such cases, the Jews first sought not only other Jews but Jews whose birthplaces were the same as their own. The new arrivals tended to establish themselves among kinsmen and, if they were not available, among countrymen. The German word *landsman* or the Italian *paisano* better describe whom they sought—the people from their small town or village.

Generations of living in small enclaves of fellow-townsmen resulted in most members of such communities being related.

It is thought that in-breeding over a period of two or three generations will result in infertility or will produce offspring with marked deficiencies. The blood relationship among the New World Jewish couples was extremely high. The theory has been advanced that many couples deliberately sought to be childless because they were living in the shadow of the Inquisition. There is a coincidence between the low birth rate of the Jews and what was happening among the Spaniards in the home country. Edward Potts Cheyney wrote, "We know now . . . that Spain was a hollow shell. After the reign of Charles V (1516–1556), *the population stood stationary or declined*, and wealth decreased. . . . she wasted her peculiar opportunities by driving from her borders the enterprising Jews and the industrious Moriscos" (emphasis added).¹⁰

The decline in Inquisition activities is attested by the decrease in the number penanced in the *autos da fé* of the three tribunals. Although there were fifty-two *autos* in New Spain after 1659, many involved fewer than five Jews and some had none. The Peruvian Holy Office conducted twenty-two *autos* after 1648, with the total number of Jews being fifteen. In Cartagena, there were thirty-eight *autos* after 1657, and only eighteen Jews were participants.¹¹

Medina confirms that the Rio de la Plata Inquisition activities were more often motivated by political considerations.¹² The arrest of Juan Rodriguez Estela and a few others represented a feeble attempt to drive all Jews out of the Rio de la Plata province. Rodriguez Estela was sixty years old and had been reconciled and jailed in Lisbon. He fled from prison to Brazil and then went to Buenos Aires, where he married a non-Jewish woman and raised a family. He was arrested in Tucumán, and his punishment was exile.

After 1660, there were few relationships between the Jewish communities of New Spain and northern South America and those in the southern part of South America. Likewise, relationships between the groups on the east coast of South America and those on the west coast were almost nonexistent.

The Jews who left New Holland and the other parts of

Brazil founded new communities or joined small existing settlements in the Antilles and New Granada. The cities of Porto Belo, Cartagena, and Antioquia became the center of large groups of *hebreas* according to Lafuente Machain.¹³ The flourishing commerce of these places and the opportunity of trading in ports to which the galleons from Spain came were lures to the refugees who had to start life anew. In addition to the places named by Lafuente Machain must be added Rio de la Hacha, Santa Marta, and Cartagena. These places, together with Curaçao and, to a lesser extent, Barbados and Surinam, constituted a commercial unit, although there were no political or social ties among them. What is now Argentina, Chile, and Peru remained worlds apart from these enterprises.

RIO DE LA PLATA

The presence of Jews in Buenos Aires was noted as early as March 12, 1597, when the agent of Gutierrez de Ulloa, the viceroy of Peru, reported that the Portuguese controlled the commerce in the provinces of Rio de la Plata and Tucumán. The agent had been sent to Buenos Aires to combat the traffic in contraband. He wrote that the contraband brought into the area included tobacco, sugar, and liquors. The exports included wheat, dried meat, bread, gold and silver. The *contrabandistas* (smugglers), he stated, were “converted Jews, and, I believe, that they are even professing Jews.”¹⁴

In 1606, the governor of Rio de la Plata ordered the deportation of all Portuguese. The local Spaniards opposed the edict because the economy of the area depended upon Jewish industry and trade. The area had no natural resources; there were no Indians or slaves to perform all the necessary work; and the indolence of the Spaniards blinded them to the presence of foreigners, even if they were Jews.¹⁵ In the seventeenth century, the Jews formed about one-fourth of the total white population of Buenos Aires¹⁶ and were the merchants, manual workers, artisans, and agriculturalists. Bishop Martin Ignacio de Loyola, an agent of the Inquisition, joined the opposition to the edict. Among his reasons were the facts that the Portuguese

had been in the city for a long time and were engaged in mechanical trades and agriculture, and their departure “would mean the decline of the city,” which would displease the king. He suggested a delay of the order until a directive from Spain arrived. In the bishop’s letter is the statement made by colonial officials, “Obedezco, pero no cumplo” [I obey but I do not execute].¹⁷

Although petitions and letters from this area requesting the establishment of a tribunal were sent from 1606 to 1769, all went unanswered. Rio de la Plata and Tucumán did not have sufficient resources to support a tribunal, and the confiscation of Jewish property would have been insufficient to meet all the expenses.

In 1677, the town council of Buenos Aires requested the king to send ships with Negroes, workers, and farmhands. Opposition to the Portuguese had ceased many years earlier because their roles were disdained by Spaniards.¹⁸ An Argentine historian, Lucas Ayarragaray, wrote that in Argentina “many artisans, hucksters, builders, and money-lenders were *sefarditas*.”¹⁹ Antonio Leon de Pinelo wrote in his *Memorial* (1623) that “the residents of Rio de la Plata must engage in commerce; it is useless to place hindrances and obstacles because necessity knows no law.”²⁰

Efforts to oust the Jews and bar their further entry into the city continued until 1768, but without success. In 1768, there was a port facing Buenos Aires that was held by Portugal from 1768 to 1776. This port, Colonia del Sacramento, was an important center for contraband traffic. The *porteño* officials feared that it would be used as an embarkation point for a Portuguese attempt to capture Buenos Aires. Many Jews settled in Colonia and were not molested by the Portuguese authorities because not many other people were willing to live under such precarious conditions. The Jews were tolerated in the absence of any other population. When orders came from the mother country to expel the Jews, some went to Montevideo and others to Buenos Aires, entering these places clandestinely.

There might be a question about the legitimacy of applying

the term “Jew” to those in these areas because of the constant intermarriage for almost 150 years. It is not known whether there were any Jewish women among those who entered Rio de la Plata during this period or how many came with the original Jewish men. Several historians comment that the men intermarried with the daughters of the Spanish conquistadors and the wealthy. These Spanish women were, obviously, not Jewish, and according to *halacha*, Jewish law, their children would not be Jews. If the women knew that they were marrying Jews, heretics, their Catholicism could not have been deeply ingrained.

Several writers and historians apply “Jew” to people in Latin America without defining who and what a Jew is. This is especially true during the colonial period. In many instances, the proof of their faith stems from contemporary non-Jewish sources. In a letter written in 1754, Father Perro (*sic*) Logu stated that the arrivals from Portugal, Brazil, and Colonia del Sacramento are “the dregs . . . and [they bring with them] not a little of that old yeast of Judaism [which is] corrupting the masses of Christian Spaniards. . . . For several years now certain signs have been observed on certain nights. These indicate assemblies during the day or at night in the synagogue.”²¹ The designation of these people as Jews would fall into non-halachic definitions as indicated in Appendix A.

There was a provision in the 1713 treaty between Spain and England that permitted non-Catholics aboard English ships to enter New World ports and land there provided that they refrained from conducting religious services publicly.²² Later, when Charles III opened the colonial doors to world trade, Jews were permitted to enter freely. One of the reasons that the colonial Spaniards wanted the Portuguese to remain in the area was that almost all the *medicos* were Portuguese Jews. If they had been compelled to leave, there would have been no medical services available. The Spanish Catholic doctors disdained going to the New World, where they believed that they would be treating the primitive and indigent and would be without the social amenities they enjoyed in Spain.

The Jews were active in the battle of the *porteños* for Argentine independence. Lucas Ayarragaray wrote, “There were some prominent native-born [*criollos*] Israelitas of Spanish ancestry in the beginning of our [Argentina’s] independence, and they were present as leaders in the diverse and rough stages of high politics.”²³

Boleslao Lewin claims that the Jews in seventeenth-century Rio de la Plata sought the native-born daughters and granddaughters of conquistadors, wealthy landowners, or cattle barons because a wife of such ancestry or parentage was security against molestation by the Inquisition.²⁴ It is doubtful that the offspring of such marriages, and especially the grandchildren, would continue Jewish practices. They, at best, would be Jews only in name, and the name, *ipso facto*, was sufficient to attract condemnation. Bishop Malavar of Buenos Aires reported that there were “perpetrators of the crimes of Protestantism, heresy, and Judaism” in Rio de la Plata, and this is also reported by the Argentine historian Romulo D. Carbia.²⁵ No writer lists the performance of any positive acts of Judaism.

The founding of Montevideo in 1726 came coincidentally at a time when assimilation among the Jews in the Rio de la Plata area began. There was no apostasy because the secret Jews were already accepted as Catholics. Despite the drops of Jewish blood coursing in the veins of these Jews, Judaism could not survive on the inheritance of blood or on mere professions of faith. Jewish prayers must be recited and rituals must be practiced, covertly if necessary, but affirmative action must take place.

Among the reasons for the onset of assimilation was the cessation of Jewish immigration, the end of religious observance, and the revival of the appointment of Holy Office agents. By 1762, a Jesuit was appointed as the first *comisario* in Montevideo. He was replaced in 1767, when the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish colonies pursuant to the decree of Charles III. The presence of a successor to the Jesuit caused the Jews to believe that the search for them might begin. The Jews were not aware that the appointment of *comisarios* was merely nomi-

nal and that they would do nothing. In addition, in 1774, there were rumors in Lima and Santiago of a *nueva complicidad de judaismo*, a “new Jewish conspiracy.” Other than a few arrests, with several of the apprehended being subsequently freed, nothing much happened. However, the fear which was generated sufficed as a reason for many to cast off their few remaining links to Judaism.

In addition to fear, the lack of teachers and learning, and the lack of the infusion of new Jewish blood that occurs with the arrival of new immigrants, the former sustaining belief in the coming of the Messiah was weakened by the fiasco of the Sabbatai Zevi affair. Sabbatai Zevi had proclaimed himself the Messiah in 1648. Tens of thousands of Jews believed him and there was a great turmoil throughout Europe. Many abandoned their homes and businesses and followed him to Constantinople in 1665, where he confronted the sultan and demanded the return of the Holy Land to the Jews. When the sultan offered him the choice of conversion to Islam or death, he opted for conversion. As Nahum Sokolow wrote, “the pivotal point of Marrano resistance to full conversion to Christianity was their belief that the Messiah had not yet come. . . . If the Messiah had come, all their suffering would have been in vain.”²⁶

As a result of the great disappointment and disillusionment with Sabbatai Zevi, the messianic bubble burst and many left Judaism. In the eighteenth century, the Jacob Frank fiasco was another disappointment. He was another self-proclaimed Messiah. Western Sephardism did not receive any reinforcement from the Hispano-Levantine communities. The secret communities lacked the medieval sense of Judaism, and the tenuous relationships among the secret Jews in the New World were not a bulwark against the strains on their fundamental belief.

Professor Thomas F. Glick aptly described a major development in crypto-Judaism:

Cultural disintegration is a process whereby the mechanisms which cultures utilize to preserve their “boundaries” (that is their cultural

integrity) are subject to stresses from within and pressures from without which finally cause their breakdown. The corollary of cultural disintegration is assimilation which, in terms of the assimilated group, are admitted to the dominant culture as individuals but not as a cultural entity.²⁷

Archbishop Cragnon, in his sermon to the Jewish penitents at the *auto da fé* of September 6, 1705, in Lisbon, called them “miserable relics of Judaism! Unhappy fragments of the synagogue; last remnants of Judea! Scandal of the Catholics and detestable objects of scorn to the Jews, for you are so ignorant that you cannot observe the very law under which you live.”²⁸

Rabbi Professor Alan D. Corré, in his review of a book on the history of the Jews in Barbados, wrote that the Jewish community in Barbados, had, for all intents, become extinct because:

Jewish communities cannot live in isolation. *Habruta or mituta* (fellowship or death) applies to them as individuals. When Barbados was prominent on the commercial map and Jews maintained their ties with their co-religionists, they prospered. When these ties were cut, they withered. Secondly, the community apparently developed no tradition of Jewish culture and learning. . . . Added to assimilation, emigration and lack of cultural increase, these factors spelled the death of the community.²⁹

Eduardo Weinfeld, a Latin American writer and historian, wrote, “Los escritores judios de la region del Caribe son una demonstracion aislamiento. El *minyan*, el quorum de diez varones, tiene sentido social a la vez que religiosa. Donde falta al grupo y la cohesion con otros grupos, el judaismo degenera y se pierde.” [The Jewish writers from the Caribbean area are obvious proof that Jewish life cannot be preserved, in a cultural sense, in isolation. A *minyan*, a group of ten men, acts together in a social sense in addition to that of religious purpose. Where the group or *minyan* is missing and cohesion or affiliation with other [Jewish] groups is nonexistent, then Judaism disintegrates and is lost.]³⁰

The name of Jorge Isaacs is listed among the Jews who have

made literary contributions to Latin America. Jorge's father was a Jew, but his mother was Catholic and, Weinfeld points out, Jorge was baptized, so that he was not a Jew either by birth or by choice. The fact that he idolized his father and wrote of his father's faith "as the immortal race" and made other philo-Jewish comments does not justify classifying him as a Jew. Many other so-called Jewish literary figures were children of intermarriages. Hugo Lindo of El Salvador, Otto d'Sola of Venezuela, Pereira Mendez, the Panamanian publicist, and the Dominican Federico Henriquez y Carvajal, author of *La hija del hebreo*, are all Christians despite having one Jewish parent.

Jacob Lagarto was the *babam* of the Jewish community of Tamarica in Brazil in 1680. He wrote *Tienda de Jacob* [Jacob's Tent]. He was also a famous talmudist and was the first collector of talmudic aphorisms in South America. There is some confusion about whether his book in Spanish is the same as his book in Hebrew entitled *Obel Yacob* [The Tent of Jacob].

Although there were Jews in most parts of the Spanish colonies, the practice of Judaism had degenerated to a few rites and superstitious beliefs. The Franciscan monk Gil Rodriguez illustrates the low level of knowledge and practice to which Judaism had fallen. Raphael Cristiano Gil Rodriguez, while in the Franciscan order, was revealed to be a Jew. He was reconciled after showing contrition and was sentenced to be confined to his monastery. In 1795, his last will and testament was found, and in it he requested that he be buried in accordance with Jewish ritual. The sole remnant of Judaism was a request for a burial rite! Gil Rodriguez was sentenced to be burned in 1795, but at the last moment the inquisitors commuted the sentence to life imprisonment in the secular jails. He was freed in 1821 when the new Mexican Army released him.

In numerous interviews in several Latin American countries with modern Christians who are descendants of colonial Jews, the question was asked, "Do you know why your ancestor converted or abandoned Judaism?" In each instance where an answer was proffered, the reason was invariably the same. "My ancestor, as the family relates, married a Christian, and since it

seems that religion was more important to the non-Jewish spouse than to my Jewish ancestor, an accommodation was made for the sake of love.”

Less than forty years after the discovery and conquest of the western coast area of South America, Jews formed numerous nuclei of settlements. Rodrigo Orgonos was one of several Portuguese New Christians who were among Almagro’s conquistadors.³¹ The conquistadors having received grants of land, a number of the Jews began enterprises that led to wealth. Many of these men departed from Judaism. Several of them brought their townfolk and relatives to what is now Chile and Peru, where the Jewish population was not equal to that of New Spain.

After 1660, Chile and Peru had an even smaller Jewish population than prior to 1639. The arrests that began in 1635 had caused many to leave the southern continent, except for a few who remained in New Granada. Most went to Panama or further north and then had to flee again after arrests began in Mexico in 1642.

Not many notable figures from Peru or Chile emerged after 1660. One person who has achieved notice is Francisco Moyén because a book was written about him.³²

Don Francisco Moyén, born in Paris in 1720, was a liberally educated and accomplished musician. He turned to commerce and traveled to Brazil, Peru, Córdoba, and finally to Jujuy (in present Argentina). He was very garrulous and, while in his cups, would utter heresies against the popes to the muleteers. They referred to him as a Jew. Evidence was being accumulated against him by a *comisario* in Jujuy. After he left Jujuy and arrived in Potosí, the order for his arrest caught up with him. He was incarcerated in Potosí for three years and then brought to Lima to stand trial. There does not appear any positive evidence of his observance of any Judaic practices. He was found guilty because of his heretical statements, although the verdict stated *judaismo*. He was sentenced to ten years in jail, exile, and the loss of one-half of his property.

Manuel Enrique, a Portuguese Jew, was burned in Lima on

January 28, 1664. The bones of Mencia Luna were disinterred and also burned. Mencia had died in the Inquisition cells in 1638.

Maria Francisca de Castro was burned on December 21, 1736 for *judío judaizante*. She was born in Toledo, Spain, married, and was seventeen years of age at the time of her arrest. Palma states that she was so beautiful and elegant that she could have passed for (or actually was) a most elegant courtesan who sold her favors only to the viceroy or the richest of nobility. She remained a *negativo* throughout the trial, and three sessions of torture did not produce a confession of being a Jew. Her property, confiscated by the Holy Office, was valued to be in excess of 24,000 pesos.

It was at this time that two inquisitors, Calderon and Unda, high churchmen, were found guilty of having sexual relations with two sisters, the daughters of the jail warden. Calderon and his mistress had three children who were being educated at the Monastery of Catalinas and were nicknamed "The Inquisitors" by their peers.³³

Lea wrote that "if the number [of Jews] is so scanty, this must be attributed to the lack of judaizers and not to indifference of the tribunal."³⁴ The formal persecution of judaizers ended in 1774, except for thirteen pending cases of judaizing which, the inquisitors admitted to the Suprema, had no basis.

The Chilean Jews never created a Jewish ambience or formed any religious groups or centers. They were Jews by profession rather than by practice. Their descendants were quickly absorbed by the dominant Catholic population although some retained a family awareness of having Jewish roots.³⁵

The battle of the colonials for independence in the early decades of the nineteenth century under Simón Bolívar, Bernardo O'Higgins, Francisco de Miranda, and José de San Martín had the financial and physical support of Jews who fought under the flags of the liberators.³⁶ David Castillo Montefiore was among those who financed Bolívar.

The names of some who played important roles in the battles

of the Spanish colonials for independence include the Brandão (also Brandon) family, members of which resided in every part of the Spanish colonies and in the Caribbean area; the families of Joshua Piza (1772–1852) and Alvaro Correa, whose genealogies are as distinguished as those of any nobility, and whose descendants are found throughout the Caribbean area, Panama, and the northern parts of South America; and the illustrious de Sola family. General Juan Isaac de Sola (1795–1860) fought in Colombia and Venezuela with Generals Pinango and Paez and played a major role in the battle of Caraboboque. Descendants of the de Sola family have held important government posts in Venezuela and remained Jews until recent times, when some of them intermarried and either converted or permitted their children to be raised as Christians. The family stems from old Dutch Jews and is related to the famous David Ricardo, one of the early modern economists and the father of important economic theories.

Simón Bolívar entrusted his sister to the de Sola family when it appeared that the war for independence might end catastrophically for the colonials. Bolívar was a friend of the de Solas and knew their faith. The genealogy of this family reads like a “Who’s Who” of South America. The influential, wealthy, and highly cultured Sephardi families intermarried, as was the custom of European royalty in the Middle Ages and for centuries thereafter. These families include the Capriles, the de Limas, and the de Leons among several others.

In Peru there is another myth, but unlike the Mexican “Indian Jews.” The Peruvian legend stems from the city of Celendín in the department of Cajamarca in north-central Peru. Celendín is important in Peruvian history because Atahualpa was assassinated there by Pizarro after the Inca chief had accumulated a room full of gold. The perfidious Spanish conqueror had set that amount of gold as a ransom for Atahualpa’s release from prison but reneged on his promise. Celendín is regarded as the first city founded by the Spaniards in Peru, and Portuguese Jews are said to have been among the founders.

The physical appearance of some of the present inhabitants is unique and is not to be seen in any other part of the country. In Celendín, there are people of white skin and green eyes. Jews are said to have been the progenitors of these people. One falls back on the Spanish question, "Quien sabé?" [Who knows?].

Dr. Dunbar Ellen Temple, noted Peruvian historian and president of the Peruvian Historical Society, informed me that she knew of the belief. While we were discussing the matter in her home in August 1979, Dr. James Barrants Becerra, a sociologist from Cajamarca, the province where Celendín is located, coincidentally visited Dr. Dunbar. He stated that the belief is a fact, not a legend. The original Jews now have Christian descendants but they are still endogamous. Their number is quite small, and they are engaged primarily in cattle raising and selling. Celendín was known originally as Chilico, then Chilendrin, and then Celandrin.

A distinguishing factor in the Jewish settlements, such as Surinam and Curaçao on one hand, and Barbados and Jamaica on the other, is that in the case of the first two the Jews were invitees, but in the second pair, the Jews came only by permission and were not accorded various rights, including the right to practice their faith, until a considerable time after their arrival. The invitees of the first two places were permitted to and did establish communal Jewish organizations and institutions almost simultaneously with their arrival.

Thus, the founding of a Jewish settlement is not necessarily coincidental with the founding of a congregation, etc. There is a similarity in the procedure of the Jamaican and Barbadian Jews in establishing places of worship and other communal components and that of the secret Jews in the Spanish colonies. Some Jews came to the English islands, landed without permission, and later applied for permission to stay. (The secret Jews never made any application.) The Jews later sought not merely sanctuary but whatever rights were accorded the local Christians. Indeed, the time between the arrival and the semblances of an integral and integrated Jewish community varied from one to several decades.

Except in Curaçao and Jamaica, not until the first decades of the eighteenth century were there fully organized Jewish communities in the Caribbean area. Curaçao and Jamaica had communal institutions within a few months after settlement. By 1800, there was a period of consolidation. Adjustments were constantly being made, in varying degrees, by the local authorities or pursuant to orders from England, granting the Jews more rights, especially civil rights, than they had had. Simultaneously there was a strengthening of Jewish rites and customs.

At a time when there was an ascendancy toward equality for the Jews and they were winning acceptance by the Christian majority, there began, after 1820, a decline in the religiosity of the people who had fought for that acceptance. Within one hundred years, Jewish communities which had been flourishing became decadent. It has been said that Judaism thrives on persecution. When anti-Semitism ceases to be a factor, many Jews assimilate.

* * * *

The first chapter notes the relationship between the Jews and the devil as pronounced by the Church for almost fifteen hundred years. Trachtenberg, in his classic *The Devil and the Jews* (p. 20), wrote:

The two inexorable enemies of Jesus then, in Christian legend, were the devil and the Jew. . . . In fact, the association of the two in Christian polemic appears quite early: John, definitely hostile to the Jews, says of them that they are of their “father the devil” (8:44), while Revelation (2:9 and 3:9) curtly calls a Jewish house of worship “a synagogue of Satan . . .”

Eusebius of Alexandria, in his sermons, claimed that the devil referred to the Jews as “his old friends,” and that “the synagogues of the Jews are the homes of idolatry and devils” (James Parkes, *The Jews in the Medieval Community*, pp. 160 and 164).

The constant repetition of such canards left a permanent impression on the Christian mind. The Christian masses were

convinced that Satan existed and spoke to the saints of the Church. As a result, Christians were (and many still are) prepared to believe anything derogatory about the Jews. The Age of Enlightenment, the freeing of the minds of men from enslaving doctrine, achieved only partial success.

Alejandro Fuenzalida Grandon, a cultured Chilean student of sociology and philosophy, wrote of the Jewish fondness “for commerce and profit and their predisposition for business and saving.” He then states that these may be the characteristics of any intelligent person, but when mercantilism is called “a Jewish tendency,” the expression is a pejorative. Whatever the Jew does is a vice, even though the same act is considered a virtue when performed by a non-Jew.³⁷

Writers such as the Spaniards Tejado Fernandez and Lucia García de Proodian predicate their works on preconceived notions, on flimsy evidence, or on generalizations based on the actions of a few. This is also a result of Church teaching, to wit, that all Jews are guilty of what one Jew or a few Jews may do, e.g., the deicide.

In answer to my inquiry about the omission of any reference by him to the presence of Jews in colonial Latin American history, a distinguished American historian replied that the absence was due to “in part ignorance and in part the necessity of synthesis and accordingly compression.” We hope that in the future “ignorance” will no longer be available as a reason for the omission of the Jews in the histories of Latin America.

Appendix A

Jewish Identity, Judaizantes, Marranos, and Revisionism

Some writers deny the status of Jew to many in the New World during the colonial period. One writer altered his position in a letter to this author but has been quite erratic in the terms used in his writings and editorship. In referring to this group of secret Jews, he used “Jew” fairly consistently in an article and in a book that he edited, as well as “secret Jews” and other phrases, such as “reverted to Judaism.”¹

The few writers in this group predicate their position on the grounds that the practices of the Jews in the New World were different from those now observed. They hold that the New World people should not be considered Jews “because they do not follow ‘traditional’ Judaism.” These revisionists ignore the differences that traditionally have existed in Jewish ritual, even among those accepted as Jews by all. Raphael Patai illustrates the myriad variations in ritual and nondogmatic beliefs among Jews.² Just as the Sephardi customs of the Aleppo Jews differ from those of Morocco, the Ashkenazi customs of the Galician (Austrian) Jews differ from those of the Russian Jews, especially between Hasidic Jews and *Mithnagdim*, nonbelievers in Hasidism.

Modern Reform Judaism accepts differences among its own congregations, as do Conservative Judaism and Neo-Orthodoxy among theirs. Some Orthodox Jews contend that Reform Jewry is not Jewish. The Israeli rabbinate does not accept conversions to Judaism performed by Conservative and Reform rabbis.

Those who question the status of Jews as Jews in the New World, based on the position that they “were not religious,” might themselves be similarly judged by other Jews. Since

Judaism has no dogmas, there are no strictures on how or how much of ritual any Jew has to observe.

Judaizante is usually defined as “one who observes Jewish rites.” The Inquisition charge against the secret Jews was *judaizante*. The final verdict of the inquisitors, however, was usually *judío judaizante* or *ser judío*, “a Jew observing Jewish rites” or “being a Jew,” or *observante de la Ley de Moysen*, “an observer of the Mosaic law.” Research in the Spanish and New World archives confirms that most of those convicted as Jews were Jews and were accepted as such when they migrated to where Jews exercised their faith publicly.

Edward Glaser, late professor of Romance Languages at the University of Michigan, wrote extensively on the sermons delivered at the Portuguese *autos da fé*. He wrote that the preachers vilified “the Judaizers . . . who were Christians by mouth, Jews at heart.”³ Glaser also treated “Crypto-Jew” and “Neo-Christian” as synonyms. Apropos of the conditions in Portugal after 1497, he wrote that due to the decree of expulsion of King Manuel in December 1496, “A sincere conversion was out of the question and, as a result of the decree of expulsion, only a handful of devout Jews left while many *Judeos fingidos* (Crypto-Jews) remained behind.”⁴ Glaser, in his article “Referencias Antisemitas en la literatura Peninsular de la Edad de Oro,” used *Judios*, *Marranos*, and *Christianos Nuevos* synonymously.⁵

Boleslao Lewin, the Argentinian writer and paleographer, in his works on the colonial period in the New World, states that the Portuguese and the Irish were the only non-Spaniards who were tolerated, and the *cristianos nuevos*, *Marranos*, or *criptojudios*, “the New Christians, Marranos or secret Jews,” secretly guarded the Jewish rites.⁶ Henry C. Lea used the phrases “Jewish New Christians”⁷ and “Judaizing New Christians” and then just “Jews.”⁸ Licenciado Traja of Buenos Aires used “Jews” in his seventeenth-century letter to the Holy Office in Lima. He wrote, “We know for certain . . . that many Jews who are fleeing [from the Inquisition] are Jews from Spain and Brazil who are entering this port with ease and we cannot stop

them since they are all Portuguese and each one covers up for the others.”⁹

I. S. Revah, former director of Latin American Studies at the Collège de France, wrote that the Portuguese colonial commerce was in the hands of the New Christians, and that these crypto-Jews were in great numbers in Spanish commercial centers and overseas, where “the name Portuguese was often synonymous with New Christian and most often with secret Jew.”¹⁰

Gerson D. Cohen, in his review of B. Netanyahu’s *The Marranos*, declared, “The historian is not at liberty to restrict his definition to one laid down by rabbis or their adherents. . . . no matter how christianized the Marrano way of life may have become . . . they need not—and apparently did not—cease to be a Jewish group historically, sociologically, or even religiously.”¹¹

WHAT ARE THE JEWS AND JUDAISM?

The questions “Who is a Jew?” and “What is Judaism?” have been injected into the history of the Jews in Latin America as indicated at the beginning of this appendix. Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer wrote that it is difficult to find a single definition of a Jew.¹² He supplies a series of definitions divided into religious, cultural, and practical. His religious definition is that a Jew is one who accepts the faith of Judaism.

Salo W. Baron gives two definitions. The first is that of Jewish law: anyone born of a Jewish mother, and proselytes who have undergone formal ritual procedures.¹³ He then adds a caveat that due to the processes of history, objective criteria are no longer exclusively valid. Baron accepts as a Jew “one who by conscious will has adopted Judaism and joined the membership of the Jewish community.” Melville J. Herskovits wrote that “A Jew is a person who calls himself a Jew or is called a Jew by others.”¹⁴ In “Who Are the Jews?”, he concludes that “A word can mean many things to many people; and no word means more things to more people than the word ‘Jew.’”

Jews are not a monolithic group. Jews have acculturated and integrated into the cultures of many countries. The degree of integration depends upon the liberties permitted to them as a minority religio-ethnic group. Patai put it succinctly, “A Yemenite Jew bore a greater resemblance to a Yemenite Muslim than to a German Jew.”¹⁵

The fact that during the seventeenth century “Portuguese” and “Jew” were synonymous in the New World as well as in northern Europe does not mean that there were no Portuguese Christians in the Spanish colonies. They, however, were in the minority.

MARRANO

Marrano, meaning “hog” or “swine,” is included in government records as early as 965. Antonio Domínguez Ortiz reports that in the thirteenth century it was a criminal offense punished by a fine and jail to call a person a *marrano*. Malkiel states that the original meaning, “swine,” and the later meaning, “faithless convert,” are linguistically unrelated.¹⁶ By the late fourteenth century, the word assumed a pejorative sense. By the fifteenth century, it was applied *by* Jews to other Jews who became sincere converts to Christianity. In Hebrew, voluntary apostates are *meshumadim* (pl., the singular is *meshumad*). Involuntary converts—those under physical duress or fear, etc.—are *anusim*, literally “forced ones.” The distinction was very important to many rabbis in determining whether those who came from Spain or Portugal during the reign of the Holy Office to communities where religious freedom existed should be accepted as Jews without any ceremony.¹⁷

The letter of a sixteenth-century writer must be accorded great weight because he was a contemporary of those whose status as Jews might be questioned. Alvarez de Costa (1527–1602) resided in Constantinople. In a letter of thanks he wrote to Queen Elizabeth of England, we find the following: “the most striking and prominent personality among the Crypto-Jews or Marranos as the New Christians who secretly kept their faith were called in Spain . . .”¹⁸

Charles Singer, professor emeritus of University College, London, defined Marrano as “a professing Catholic (many baptized) but a secretly practising Jew.”¹⁹ Rabbi Dr. Solomon Schechter wrote, “Solomon Molko was born in Portugal about 1501 as a crypto-Jew or Marrano.”²⁰ H. Ben-Sasson wrote of “The New Christians, i.e., the Marranos.”²¹

Yosef H. Yerushalmi differentiates between Spanish and Portuguese Marranos. He contends that “Crypto-Judaism among the New Christians of Portugal was to prove hardy enough to survive for centuries. What was of decisive import in Portugal was the fact that there *‘the community itself’* was converted *in toto*, whereas in Spain the community had remained . . . outside the pale of conversion” (emphasis in original).²² In a letter to me dated 3 March 1973, he wrote, “I thoroughly agree that one cannot generalize about Marranos. The situation differs in time and place, and the phenomenon betrays an entire gamut of variations. . . . In general, I have argued for a radical distinction between Spanish and Portuguese Marranism in my book.”

Antonio José Saraiva is among the few who deny the classification “Jew” to those convicted by the Holy Office as Jews.²³ He admitted that he did no research in the Portuguese archives. He entitled chapter 8 of his book “A Fabrica de Judeus” and claims that this was a stratagem of the inquisitors to confiscate the funds of wealthy people on the pretext that they were Jews. This writer has never read a *proceso* that would confirm Saraiva’s thesis.

B. Netanyahu’s claim that Marrano Judaism was a myth was derided by Albert A. Sicroff. In commenting on Netanyahu’s hope “for additional enlightenment” in his book *Marranos of Spain*, Sicroff writes, “When we turn to the non-Hebrew sources of the period, these sources have already been examined to a considerable extent by those who labored in the [Spanish] archives and they unanimously contradict Netanyahu’s thesis that Marrano Judaism was a myth.”²⁴

The hardiness and dedication of some crypto-Jews are attested by the survival of prayers recited from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Günter Böhm includes a section on

“Religious Beliefs and Religious Literature of the Conversos” and writes of *los oraciones criptojudias*.²⁵ He states that the prayers were in Spanish and are not the same as the modern Hebrew prayers. He adds, however, that among the *oraciones judias*, the *conversos* preferred the Psalms of David. (Modern Jews have the same preference.)

The Mexican historian Vicente Riva Palacio deserves to have the last word on this topic. He discussed the activities of the Inquisition over a period of 150 years following the expulsion as they appear in the Holy Office documents and trial proceedings in the New World. The Jews involved in the *autos da fé* in New Spain were not the original expellees. The Holy Office’s tribunals did not commence to operate in New Spain and Peru until 1570 and 1571. Most of the cases cited by Riva Palacio arose in the 1640s. He used the word “Jew” innumerable times when discussing those charged with *judaizante* or *judío*. He vindicated the ultimate findings of the Inquisition by showing that the prisoners demonstrably knew the rites and beliefs of Jews and Judaism. Torture, he wrote, could not place in the mind of a person on the *potro* (the torture bed) the calendar of the Jewish holidays, the times of the fast-days, the ceremonies for the Sabbath and for Quipur (Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year for Jews, with its twenty-five-hour fast and appropriate prayers), and other aspects of the ritual.²⁶

Riva Palacio deplored the treatment of the Jews by the Holy Office. He affirmed that the Catholics in the seventeenth century did not know about their own faith and, consequently, did not know about Judaism. Catholics until this century were not permitted to read either the Jewish or the Christian Testaments without the presence of a priest. A study of the questioning of the prisoners reveals that they were not asked what lawyers call leading questions and that the inquisitors and the *fiscal* avoided making any statements that might be presumed to be putting words into the mouths of the prisoners.

Appendix B

Mala Amistad; Other Definitions; the Jewish Oath

MALA AMISTAD

The inquisitors used the term *mala amistad* as an alternative to “in concubinage.” *Mala amistad* literally means “bad friendship.” The relationship is not a subjective judgment by the parties to the relationship but rather a societal objective judgment. The words raise the question of how marriages were performed in the shadow of the Holy Office. I have not come across any relationship of concubinage that involved one of the parties being married to another. Only single persons were involved in such affairs.

Marriage ceremonies performed by a Catholic priest would not sanctify a marriage for Jews according to Jewish law. However, according to rabbinic law, no religious officiant is necessary to sanctify a marriage. A contract signed by both prospective spouses with two attesting witnesses for each fulfills the requirements of Judaic regulations. The marriage contract, which is called a *ketubah*, states that the parties have pledged themselves according to Mosaic law.

Research to date has failed to turn up any *ketubah*. There are references to marriage ceremonies but no description except in the case of Maria Gomez. In the description of her wedding (1629), no details are given of the marriage ceremony itself. There is a description of how her mother slaughtered the chickens, first making sure that the knife had no nicks, then facing east—toward Jerusalem—and reciting a blessing of gratitude, and then slitting the throats of the fowl as indicated by Jewish law. The blood was drained into a pan of water by suspending the carcass by its legs. Honey cake was served at

the meal to celebrate the marriage. When Maria Gomez was asked by the inquisitors in 1635 whether she was married, her reply was not a simple *si*, “yes.” Her answer was *casada feliz*, “happily married.” For almost three hundred years, Jews in the New World, with the exception of those married in Holland, France, or Italy, were being married and, sometimes, divorced, but there is no clue to the manner of legitimatizing the marriages and divorces.

OTHER DEFINITIONS

Farda

Jews contributed funds for the support of schools and other institutions in the Holy Land during the Middle Ages, and they continue to do so in modern times. Communities such as Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias were the recipients of financial aid during the period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. The funds were raised by messengers from the Holy Land communities who were learned men and served as teachers to the secret communities. This custom was known as *farda*. Ruy Diaz Nieto and his son Diego were among such messengers to the Mexican Jewish communities between 1590 and 1601. References to *farda* are found in several *procesos*.

Mercachifle

Mercachifle is not a common modern Spanish word. It is defined as a peddler or hawker of merchandise of little value. Many Jews were labeled *mercachifles* by the inquisitors. Some of these peddlers traveled into the hinterlands of the New World and sold goods acquired on consignment or as salesmen for proprietors of *tiendas*. Robert Ricard stated that among the occupations of the “Portuguese Jews,” tradesmen dominated (see Chapter 4, note 32). He adds that they were “great merchants” and petty peddlers who did business in Mexico City and such mining centers as Sultepec (east of Mexico), Pachuca, Taxco, Tlalpujagua (east of Michoacan), and Zacatecas. Between 1580

and 1595, there were two Jewish physicians, an uncle and nephew, Manuel and Antonio Morales.

Tienda

During the colonial period and until modern times, there were no supermarkets, department stores, or oversized emporia in any part of the New World. The Latin American *tienda* may be envisioned as resembling what in the frontier areas and small towns of the United States became known as the general store. The available records make no distinction between small and large *tiendas* and do not indicate what was meant by the word *mercador* (merchant). We know that some stores were associated with a *bodega* (warehouse) and that some proprietors of *tiendas* were importers and exporters. They bought and sold products to and from Spain and China. Their capital ran into hundreds of thousands of pesos and ducats. A few merchants owned ships that sailed the seven seas and, as stated by José Toribio Medina and Henry C. Lea, they sold everything from “cumin seeds to diamonds and the finest brocades.” The concept of a store must be enlarged to take into consideration a vastly broader establishment.

THE JEWISH OATH

The following oath was administered to Diego Diaz Nieto by the inquisitor in Mexico City. This was a second trial, and he had admitted that he was a Jew and would not take a Christian oath.

Do you swear by the Creator, who made heaven and earth and the sea and the sands, and wrote His name in four letters, *Yud, Hay, Vav, Hay* [these four Hebrew letters are pronounced *Adonay* by Jews but *Yahveh* by Christians], and took the children of Israel out from the land of Egypt, and parted the sea, and gave them the manna, and gave the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai, and brought the Children of Israel through the desert and afterwards took them to the Promised Land, to tell the truth in answer to the questions which may be propounded to you by the Holy Office—all other oaths which you may have taken to the contrary

notwithstanding—whether the said questions refer to persons now living, and are either present or absent, or to persons who have departed this life?

The prisoner answered, “I do,” and then the inquisitor continued,

If you do so, may the Creator have mercy upon you, and confer upon you all the promises made by the Prophets to the people of Israel. But if you fail to do so, may the Creator destroy you as He destroyed the people of the Flood in the time of Noah, and Sodom and Gomorrah in the time of Abraham, and may you be confounded like Korah and his companions Dathan and Abiram were confounded in the desert, and may all the curses set forth in the fifth book of the Law of Moses, and in the Psalms of David in the fifth book of Elohete and Lociategras [*sic*] fall upon you, and may no son who inherits your name be born in your house. You must state the truth, without adding to it or taking from it anything at all, and must not fail to do so either because of love or kinship, or for the sake of peace or because of gifts given to you or interest of any kind. All that you may say must be said and explained in such a way as to permit its being put down in writing and understood, and conformed and ratified at all times as the expression of the truth. And you must not pay any attention to any threat or any consideration of fear because our Lord will deliver you from all evil if you say the truth and nothing but the truth *baruthic sinc aruthic* [*sic*] blessed [?].

And then the said Diego Diaz said the “Amen.”

Diego Diaz Nieto was the son of Ruy Diaz Nieto, who had come to Mexico from Italy via Spain. The father was very orthodox and observed the Jewish dietary laws while he was incarcerated. He ate no Inquisition food and ate only that which was brought to him from the outside—bread, cheese, and eggs. (For a full account of Diego cf. *Jews in New Spain*, pp. 191–197.) An interesting bit of esoteric testimony by Diego was that he had been taught that Jesus was *un hombre docto*, “a learned man,” but not a son of God.

Appendix C

Wills and Demographic Data from Barbados

Lucien Wolf listed forty-two wills filed in Barbados between 1695 and 1736. With the exception of fourteen in English, one in Spanish, and one in French, the others were in Portuguese (*TJHSE*, vii, p. 49). Some contain esoteric and fascinating data. Among them are:

Recorded in Speightstown—all with Hebrew and English dates

Sarah Israel Dias had a sister in Amsterdam, 1695.

Joseph Mendes had a son in London and a niece in Holland. He requested that his son recite *Kaddish*, the mourner's prayer, for eleven months, 1707.

Menasseh Mendes stated that all his funds were in Amsterdam, 1716.

Abraham Nunez had resided in Curaçao and Jamaica, 1735.

Recorded in Bridgetown—all with Hebrew and English dates

Aaron Navarro had resided in Brazil, Amsterdam, and Surinam. He acknowledged the paternity of the children of his Negro slave, 1685.

Rachell Baruch Louzada had a brother in London, Isaque Gomez, 1703.

David Costello owned a home in Amsterdam, 1711.

Aron Baruch Louzada requested that his son recite *Kaddish* for twelve months, 1693. (This period is not in accordance with Jewish custom.)

Raquel Nunez Carvallo had a son in Jamaica, 1718.

Eleazar Valverde designated a friend in Curaçao as a legatee, 1722.

Jacob Franco had a brother in London, 1724.

Jacob D'Fonseca, Sr., had a son in London, 1728.

Mordechay Burgos had a nephew in London and cousins in Holland, 1736.

David De Acosta had a niece in Livorno, 1684.

Nine of the testators were denized. Jael Dias had Rowland Gideon as a witness to his will. The real name of the witness was Abudiente. Rowland died in London in 1720. His son, Sampson, is famous in English financial circles and English history for his enormous loans to England and charitable bequests. He was made a baronet and raised his children as Christians. Upon his death, it was revealed that he had paid his dues to Bevis Marks. When he died, he left a gift of £1,000 to Bevis Marks so that he might be buried in Bevis Marks cemetery as a Jew.

The following is copied from *Calendar of State Papers—Colonial America and West Indies*, 1675–1676, vol. 58, p. 419, being a letter from Governor Sir Jonathan Atkins to the Lords of Trade and Plantations dated July 4, 1676—*Barbados*, at p. 422:

Not above thirty Jews families of Dutch extraction from Brazil; many are very poor, but the better sort have been made denized; they are very quiet and submit to this government, religion excepted.

In vol. 90, 1681–1685, p. 70, is the following, dated June 11, 1681—*Barbados*. It is Sir Richard Dutton's answers to the heads of inquiry respecting Barbados.

The true Christian religion as established by law in England prevails in this island, and its service is held in all the Churches. The Quakers come next, not comparable in number to the Anglicans; but they are often very rich and have such influence on one another that few die without bequeathing something to their faction and worship. There is also a small parcel of Anabaptists, but inconsiderable and dwindling. There are about 160 Jews, men, women, and children, either born on the island or made denizens by royal letters patent.

Appendix D

The Street “El Judi6” in Oaxaca

The following letter was received by the author in response to an inquiry about the “Jewish Street” in Oaxaca, Mexico. Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are as in the original.

UNIVERSIDAD “BENITO JUAREZ” DE OAXACA.
Esq. Av. Independencia y Macedonio Alcalá
Apartado Postal Núm. 76
OAXACA, OAX.

a 6 de enero de 1962

Mr.
Seymour B. Liebman
Calle Tolstoy 18 (201)
México (5), D. F.

Dear Gentreman:

I have received yor letter of January 1st. contents of which has been duly noted. It is very true that in this city was a street “El Judi6”; but regretfully here is not tradition about is name; neither specific dates— respect of jews, neocristianos or hebreo cristianos in—Oaxaca during the colonial periodo.

Anything it is know respect this matter about the Fenochio family, of italian stock; but there is not documentary proof.

Very truly yours
/s/ Jorge Fernando Iturribarria.
Director

Appendix E

Books Possessed by Crypto-Jews in the New World

The following is a copy of part of the *proceso* of Luis Mendez Chavez, also known as Luis Chavez, as found in the Archivo Historico Nacional in Madrid, Inquisition libro, fols. 240v–241, and printed in Lucia García de Proodian, *Los Judíos en América*, p. 478. It is an account of the books found in the possession of Luis Chavez. (Spelling is as it appears.)

- 7º Otro libro . . . el titulo dice: “Horden de los cinco tahananiot de el año sin boltar de una a otra parte, los quales son, tahanit de tebet, el de Ester, el de 17 de thamuz, el de ab y el de guedlaliah. Estanpado por orden de los sres. Efrain Bueno y Jonah Abrabanel en cassa de Menassech ben Yisrael, Amsterdam, año de 5390.”
- 8º . . . Orden de oraciones de mes arrio. S. Sin boltar de una a otra parte, con el ayuno del solo, y las demas cossas ocurrentes en todo el año. Y la horden dehanucah, purim, y pasquas de pesah, sebu oth y sucoth, y dia octavo yosanot con mucha diligencia enmedada conforme a lo que se dice en el K. K. de talmutora de Amsterdam. Estanpado por industria y despeça de Jona Abrabanel, Efrain Bueno, en casa [de] Nicolas de de Rabestein, ao sincomill quatrocientos y uno” (5401).
- 9º Otro libro de quartille en 629 fojas intitulado: “Thesouro dos diminim que oposito de Yisrael he obrigado saber e observar. Com. duas taboadas mui copiosas. Dedicado aos mui nobres, magnificos e prudentes senhores Pornacina de este Vinerarel. Kaal Kados. Conposto por Menassech Bin Ysrael. Estanpado en casa del Viahu aboab, año de 1445.”
- 10 . . . “Horden de los cinco tahananiot de el año . . . El tahananiot de tebet, el de Ester, el de 17 de Tammuz, el de ap. y de guedaliah. Estanpado . . . (same as 8 above) año cinco mill trecento y noventa.”
- 11 . . . “Horden de Ros hasanah y Kipur. Traslado en español y de nuebo enmendado y añadido el Selioth; el qual se dice quarenta dia antes de Kipur en las madrugadas. Talmud, Torahbet y aahkob. Estapando por industria y despeça de David Avenatar Mello a primero de siban de 5377 en Amsterdam.”

12. Ytem otro libro mui pequeño numerado hasta 547 fojas, y luego se sigue otro numero de fojas desde primero hasta 23; “Orden de las oraciones del mes con lo mas necessario y obligatorio de las tres fiestas de el año, como tambien lo que lo toca a los alunos Hanucah y Purim con sus advertencias y notas para mas facilidad y clareca. Industria y despega de Menassech ben Israel, Amsterdam, a primero de hesuam, cinco mill trecientos noventaísiete.
- 13 Yten, un confisionario intitulado: “Orden del selioth, de harbith y confesion de el maleut,” en siete fobas.

In addition to the books above named, Sebastian Rodriguez testified (AHN leg. 1620n No. 12 and Inq. lib. 1021) that “Ya yo tengo libros demos principios a esta santa casa” [I have the books for this holy house (referring to the synagogue)]. The books were printed in Amsterdam, and among them were the prayer book and the special books for the three important festivals, Passover or Pesach, Shavuot (the Festival of Weeks, commemorating the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai), and Succot (the Festival of the “Little Huts”). There was also the special *mabzor* for the High Holy Days.

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. Raphael Patai, *The Jewish Mind*, p. 30.
2. Lionel Kolchan, *The Jew and His History*, pp. 20–21.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
4. Bruce Skolnick, "The Discovery and Early Settlement of Brazil and the Spanish Caribbean," *Revista do Instituto Historico e Grafico Brasileiro*, pp. 170–182.
5. H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People*.
6. See Hermann Kellenbenz, *Sephardim an der Unteren Elbe*.
7. A new Jewish community arose in Babylon in 586 B.C.E. when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. This remained a vital community until the eleventh century. After the expulsion of the Jews from Castile and Aragon in 1492 and from Portugal in December 1496, new Jewish communities arose in the New World.
8. Seymour B. Liebman, "The Great Conspiracy in Peru," p. 179 and fn. 13.
9. James Finn, *History of the Jews in Spain and Portugal*, p. vi.
10. Américo Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 10.
11. Salvador de Madariaga, *The Fall of the Spanish Empire*, p. 226.
12. Stephen Sharot, *Judaism*, p. 2.
13. Abraham A. Neuman, "The Paradox: Fate of a Jewish Medievalist," *JQR*, 1967, pp. 398–408.

CHAPTER 2

1. Eric Kahler, *The Jews Among the Nations*, p. 8.
2. Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, p. 466.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 525.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 467.
5. Fritz Baer, *Die Juden im Christlichen Spanien* (2 vols.). The two-volume *The Jews in Christian Spain* by Yitzchak (formerly Fritz) Baer, vol. 1 trans. by Louis Schoffman and vol. 2 by Haim Beinart, is not a translation of the original German work cited. The books in English are a narrative account.
6. Henry H. Keith, "The New World Interlopers: The Portuguese in the Spanish West Indies from Discovery to 1640," p. 361.
7. Henry Erzatty, "The Jewish Heritage in the West Indies," p. 13.
8. Clarence H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, pp. 198–199.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

CHAPTER 3

1. Kenneth Moore, *Those of the Street*, p. 114.
2. William H. Rule, *History of the Inquisition* (2 vols.), 1:366–367 and 2:269–289.
3. Richard E. Greenleaf, *Zumárraga and the Mexican Inquisition*, p. 89.
4. Francisco Fernández del Castillo, *Libros y Libreros del siglo XVI*, p. 584; Rafael Heliodor Vallé, "Judíos en México," *Revista Chilena de Historia y Geografía*, p. 225.
5. For an excellent account of the Church and the Holy Office, cf. *The Roman Catholic Church in Latin America*, pp. 1–15, 31, 164–176; and Frances V. Scholles, "An Overview of the Colonial Church," p. 128.
6. For this and earlier decrees, *Collección de documentos ineditos del Archivo de las*

Indias, series II, vol. 5:133–134 and vol. 21:23; and Seymour B. Liebman, *Guide to Jewish References in the Mexican Colonial Era*, p. 89, entry 967.

7. Trial of Luis de la Cruz in “Inquisition Papers of Mexico,” *Research Studies of the State College of Washington*, vol. 15, p. 17.

8. Lucien Wolf, “Crypto-Jews in the Canaries,” p. 112.

9. Joseph Jacobs, *The Jews of Angevin England*, pp. 105 f. The archbishop of York said, “He returned to Jewish depravity, like a dog to his vomit.”

10. Alexander Marx, *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore*, p. 77. His chapter VII discusses the accounts of the number of Jews who chose exile in 1492 and the number of those who opted for Portugal.

11. José Toribio Medina, *Historia del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en México*, ampliada por Julio Jiménez Rueda, 1952.

12. For further details about the operations of the Holy Office and its *autos da fé*, cf. Henry C. Lea, *History of the Inquisition in Spain* (4 vols.); idem, *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies*; Seymour B. Liebman, *The Jews in New Spain*.

13. Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (16 vols.), 15:270.

14. Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, p. 60.

15. Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Bibliografía Mexicana del Siglo XVI*, p. 449.

16. Boxer, *The Church Militant and Iberian Expansion, 1440–1770*, p. 86.

CHAPTER 4

1. Meyer Kayserling, *Christopher Columbus and the Participation of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries*, p. 128; idem, “Colonization of America by the Jews,” p. 73.

2. Georges Friedmann, *The End of the Jewish People?*, p. 241.

3. Alexandre Herculano, *History of the Origin and Establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal*, p. 30.

4. Julio Jiménez Rueda, *Herejías y Supersticiones en la Nueva España*, but the quotation is taken from his introduction to Medina’s *Historia de la . . . Inquisición en México*, p. 7.

5. J. Horace Nunemaker, “Inquisition Papers of Mexico,” p. 6.

6. J. I. Israel, *Race, Class and Politics in Mexico*, p. 12.

7. Seymour B. Liebman, *The Great Auto de Fé of 1649*.

8. Julio Caro Baroja, *Los Judíos en España Moderna y Contemporánea* (3 vols.), 1:421.

9. *Ibid.*, 1:423–431.

10. Yosef H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, p. 274.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 296.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

13. Greenleaf, *Zumárraga and the Mexican Inquisition*, chap. 6.

14. Marian Picón-Salas, *A Cultural History of Spanish America*, p. 3.

15. Richard Konezke, *La Emigración española al Río de la Plata durante el siglo XVI*, p. 53.

16. Seymour B. Liebman, *The Enlightened: The Writings of Luis de Carvajal, el Mozo*; idem, *The Jews in New Spain* and the Spanish edition, *Los Judíos en México y América Central*; other books by Pablo Martínez del Río, *Alumbrado*; Alfonso Toro, *La Familia Carvajal* (2 vols.); Martin Cohen, *The Martyr*.

17. Alfonso Toro, *Los Judíos en la Nueva España*, pp. 131, 181 ff.

18. Alberto María Carreño, *Don Fray de Zumárraga*, p. 208.

19. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, p. 189.

20. Medina, *Historia . . . de la Inquisición en México*, p. 217.

21. Liebman, *The Jews in New Spain*, pp. 305–340, has all the *autos*, 1596 to 1648.

22. Moore, *Those of the Street*, p. 17.
23. Magnus Mörner and Charles Gibson, "Diego Muñoz Camargo," pp. 558–568.
24. Yerushalmi, op. cit., p. 5.
25. Liebman, "The Great Conspiracy in Peru."
26. I. S. Emmanuel, "New Light on Early American Jewry," p. 304 and Appendix D.
27. Louisa S. Hoberman, "Merchants in Seventeenth Century Mexico City," p. 496.
28. Ibid.
29. Hermann Kellenbenz, "Mercaderes Extranjeros en América del Sur a Comenzos del Siglo XVII," pp. 381, 385, 388, 392, 395, 401.
30. Ibid., p. 387.
31. Keith, "The New World Interlopers," p. 361.
32. Robert Ricard, "Pour une étude du judaïsme portugais au Mexique pendant la période coloniale," pp. 516–517.
33. Hoberman, op. cit., p. 499.
34. AHN Inquisition legajo 1738, exp. 1.
35. Josephine Y. McClaskey, "The Trial of Luis de la Cruz," pp. 3–4.
36. Bolelao Lewin, *Mártires y Conquistadores Judíos*, pp. 208–215; idem, *El Santo Oficio en América*, pp. 171–186, contains the summaries of the trials of the Jews in the 1639 auto; Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:51–52, 84, 86, 114, 123, 134, 136, 143; Ricardo Palma, *Tradiciones Peruanas Completas*, 1218, 9; Günter Friedlander, *Los Heroes Olvidados*, has summaries selected by the author.
37. Seymour B. Liebman, *Valerosos Criptojudíos de la América Colonial*.
38. Lewin, *Mártires y Conquistadores Judíos*, pp. 177–207; idem, *La Inquisición*, pp. 173–175; Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:55, 93, 96, 118.
39. Stanley M. Hordes, "The Crypto-Jewish Experience in New Spain."
40. AGN 430, exp. 5.
41. AGN 416, exp. 43.
42. The comparison of the ritual and observances in Italy and New Spain is discussed at length in S. B. Liebman, *The Jews in New Spain*, pp. 267–272.
43. Proceso of Manuel Alvarez Prieto, AHN leg. 1620 No. 15.
44. Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 15:326.
45. Ibid., 15:250.
46. Kellenbenz, op. cit., pp. 462, 467.
47. Ibid., p. 467.
48. Manuel Tejado Fernández, "Un Foco de Judaísmo en Cartagena de Indias durante el Seiscientos," pp. 55–72.
49. Pierre Chaunu, "L'Inquisition et Vie Quotidienne dans l'Amérique Espagnole au xvii^e Siècle," p. 233.
50. Seymour B. Liebman, review of *Los Judíos en América*, in *JSS*, pp. 63–67.
51. Chaunu, op. cit., p. 230.
52. Proceso of Sebastian Rodriguez, AHN leg. 1620 No. 12; AHN lib. 1021.
53. Alberto Osorio O., *Historia de la Ciudad David*, pp. 70–77.
54. Liebman, *Inquisitors and Jews*, Acknowledgments.
55. AHN 1029.
56. James J. Parsons, *Antioqueña Colonization in Western Colombia*, pp. 2, 62, 211 fn. 6. Professor Parsons notes that of 767 *procesos* in the Cartagena tribunal, sixty-eight involved Jews, but none were from Antioquia. The circumcised Jew Pedro Lopez died prior to sentencing. He testified about other Jews in the area. The *proceso* of Manuel Arias Valle (fn. 52) supplies the names of others who lived in Antioquia;

see also Eduardo Weinfeld, "El Semitismo de Antioquía," pp. 169–176; Itic Croitoro Rotbaum, *De Sefarad al Neosefaradismo*, p. 48 fn. 2, 50–53.

Manuel Tejado Fernandez summarized the trial proceedings of several Jews who appeared before the tribunal of the Holy Office in Cartagena in his article, "Un Foco de Judaismo en Cartagena de Indias durante el seiscientos." One of the Jews, Baltasar de Araujo, resided in Antioquía. At p. 63, Tejado wrote, "nació en Bayona (Galicia) y toda su vida fué un verdadero peregrinar en busca de los lugares donde, libremente, poder practicar la religión de Moisés. Descendiente de hebreos y, por su madre—según tradición familiar—, de la tribu de Judá, cuando Araujo tenía sólo diez años se formó una verdadera caravana, compuesta por el abuelo la madre . . ." [Baltasar was born in Bayona (Galicia) and spent all his life seeking places where he could practice his religion freely. He was a descendant of Hebrews and, through his mother—according to their tradition—of the tribe of Judah. When he was ten years of age, he was part of a caravan his maternal grandmother organized . . .]. José M. Estrugo, in *Los Sefarditas*, p. 45, has another quotation from Tejado Fernandez's "La Vida Social en Cartagena de Indias" in which Baltasar's travels are listed as follows: fleeing the Inquisition, to Salonica via Flanders, Venice, Cairo, Constantinople. While in Venice, he was circumcised in the Portuguese synagogue. After Salonica, he went to Spain and then the New World, where he was apprehended in Antioquía. Tejado Fernandez regarded Baltasar and his friends and family among the greatest stalwarts of Judaism in that part of the Kingdom of New Granada.

57. Proceso of Miguel Arias Valle, AHN leg. 1620, No. 11.

58. Lucien Wolf, "Crypto-Jews in the Canary Islands," pp. 97–112.

CHAPTER 5

1. Liebman, "Great Conspiracy in Peru," pp. 176–190; Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:145; Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 15:304.

2. Engel Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry in the Caribbean," p. 174.

3. Proceso of Manuel Gomez Navarro, ÁGN 151 exp. 6.

4. Proceso of Manuel Diaz Enriquez and Pedro de Silva Saucedo, AGN Guatemala.

5. Caro Baroja, *Los Judíos en España Moderna y Contemporánea*, 2:341.

6. Ricardo Palma, *Tradiciones Peruanas Completas*, p. 363. Palma wrote that Fernando Montesinos, author of the Relación of the 1639 *auto*, termed it the "punishment of the Portuguese." Medina credits Montesinos with calling the *auto* an *auto grande* (2:144).

George Alexander Kohut, in "Jewish Martyrs of the Inquisition in South America," p. 115, quotes from B. Vicuña Mackenna's *Francisco Moya; or, the Inquisition As It Was in South America*, pp. 103, 174, 179, 180, 208, which refers to a payment of 200,000 ducats for which the Conde de Chichon sold permission of residence to 6,000 Portuguese "also Judaizing because they were rich . . ."

7. Henry C. Lea, *Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies*, p. 415.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 229, where appears: "the New Christians, who secretly adhered to the ancient faith, increased and prospered, accumulating wealth through the opportunities of the colonial trade which they virtually monopolized."

The role of the Jews in the trade between what is now Central America and the Caribbean islands is summarized in Rosita Kalinka de Pizsk, *Sefaroditas en Costa Rica Antes y Despues del Siglo XIX*, pp. 2–13.

9. An excellent account about the Portuguese Jews in Peru is in Harry F. Cross, "Commerce and Orthodoxy: A Spanish Response to Portuguese Commercial Pene-

tration in the Viceroyalty of Peru, 1580–1640,” pp. 151–167. See also the letter of the bishop of Puerto Rico to the Consejo, AHN, Inq. libro 1937 fs. 62 and 191.

10. Charles R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola*, p. 55.
11. Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:134.
12. Arthur P. Whitaker, *Huancaavelica*, p. 13.
13. Letter dated May 4, 1622, AHN Inq. leg. 1648 fs. 417v–418v.
14. José Toribio Medina, *Historia del Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Chile*, p. 365; idem, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:45, 145; Lea, *Spanish Dependencies*, pp. 347, 425.
15. David Ogg, *Europe in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 358 and fn. 155.
16. Elias Lipiner, *Os Judaizantes de Nas Capitanias de Cima*, pp. 55 f. and chap. 11.
17. John Preston Moore, *Cabildo of Peru*, p. 44.
18. Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . de Lima*, 2:115.
19. Friedlander, *Los Heroes Olvidados*, p. 159; Simancas, Council of Inquisición Libro 48, f. 4.
20. Baron, op. cit., 15:330, Friedlander, loc. cit.
21. Proceso de Luis Gomez Barreto, detailed in Liebman, *Inquisitors and Jews*, p. 159.
22. Palma, op. cit., p. 1218.
23. Armando Herrera, “Un judío limeño del siglo xvi,” p. 85.
24. Lea, *Spanish Dependencies*, p. 219; Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . en México*, p. 189; Luis González Obregón, *Rebeliones Indígenas y Precursores de la Independencia Mexicana*, p. 220; Liebman, “The Great Conspiracy in New Spain,” pp. 18–31; Vicente Riva Palacio, *México a través de los Siglos* (5 vols.), 2: chaps. 12 and 14; Julio Jiménez Rueda, *Herejías y Supersticiones en la Nueva España*, p. 122.
25. AHN Inq. lib. 426, fs. 534–557.
26. McClaskey, “The Trial of Luis de la Cruz,” p. 4.
27. González Obregón, op. cit., p. 222.
28. Lea, *Spanish Dependencies*, pp. 229, 234.
29. Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . en México*, pp. 211–212.
30. González Obregón, op. cit., p. 209.
31. Riva Palacio, op. cit., 2:703.
32. Procesos Gaspar de Robles, AGN fs. 369–377 and AGN 391 exp. 1. The *tomos* should be read in reverse order because the earlier testimony is in 391.
33. Baron, op. cit., 2:45–46.

CHAPTER 6

1. Liebman, *The Great Auto de Fé of 1649*, p. 218; Moore, *Those of the Street*, p. 29, states that after the establishment of the Inquisition in Mallorca, a custom of the secret Jews was “At death, the body of the deceased was turned to the wall.” The Mallorquena Jews were Sephardim, as, presumably, was Manuel Gutierrez de Toledo. We have not been able to confirm the existence of a rabbi with that name in Toledo in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The possibility exists that he was an apostate and wrote about the customs of the Jews for the inquisitors. Rabbi Mescheloff conferred with Dr. Leonard Mishkin, historian and lecturer on medieval history, and with a Sephardi rabbi in Chicago. Both told Rabbi Mescheloff that they knew of no such custom as turning the body of a deceased to the wall.

2. AHN Inq. lib. 888 fs. 326–388.
3. Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, p. 18.
4. Ricardo Palma, *Tradiciones Peruanas Completas*, 1218–1219. Beatings were administered in the home of Manuel Bautista Perez. He was referred to among the

Jews in Lima as *el gran rabino de la sinagoga*. He was convicted in 1639 of *judío judaizante* and was one of the eleven martyrs in the *auto* of January 23, 1639. The Perez home still stands. It is now known as La Casa de Pilatos and is the office of the Department of Culture of the Peruvian government. It is off the Plaza Pizarro.

5. L. D. Barnett, "Two Documents of the Inquisition," p. 215.
6. Gregorio de Guijo, *Diario, 1649-1664*, p. 121.
7. Proceso of Juan Rodriguez Juarez, AGN 392, 399, 425, 584; Moore, op. cit., reports that the secret Jews of Mallorca were married in church and then, in the home "or cemetery of their ancestors . . . sealed the transaction with a Jewish oath," but Moore does not supply the oath.
8. Wolf, "Crypto-Jews in the Canaries," p. 103.
9. Liebman, *Inquisitors and Jews*, pp. 106, 181.
10. Seymour B. Liebman, "The Mexican Mestizo Jews," pp. 145-174.
11. Caro Baroja, *Los Judíos en España Moderna y Contemporanea*, 2:243 ff.
12. J. Amador de los Ríos, *Estudios*, p. 52.
13. Samuel Schwarz, *Os Christãos Novos em Portugal*.
14. Amílcar Paulo, "The Secret Jews of Belmonte," pp. 6-18.
15. D. A. Jessurun Cardozo wrote a note to an article by Eric Werner, "The Oldest Source of Synagogal Chant," p. 231: "I think it is most unlikely . . . that a Marrano in Spain would have taken the enormous risk to write down a Hebrew melody. Writing down a Hebrew prayer or hymn by a Marrano would practically mean signing his death warrant. . . . Marranos could not use prayer books. We know that prayers were 'handed down' by word of mouth. They were mostly in Spanish but included some well-known Hebrew phrases . . . became 'mutilated' and were given some semblance of Spanish words." Cardozo disputes the statements by Louis Newman and Cecil Roth that the Marranos had no liturgy. He wrote, "But I happen to know about a dozen manuscripts similar to this one."
16. AGN 412, exp. 3. It appears in full in Liebman, *Jews in New Spain*, pp. 155-156.
17. AGN 378, exp. 2.
18. Liebman, *Jews in New Spain*, pp. 154-157, 242, 261, 262.
19. I. S. Revah, "Les Marranes Portugais et l'Inquisition au xvi^e siècle," *Sephardi Heritage*, vol. 1, pp. 479-510.
20. The following is verbatim from the *proceso* of Blanca Mendez, AGN 413. It reveals the manner in which fowl were slaughtered and some customs in connection with Quipur (q is the abbreviation for que, b equals y, and u equals v):

y que las Gallinas q Comiesen se hauian de Degollar con cuchillo no torsiendoles la cauesa. Por q se desangrasen bien. Y q La carne se auia de deseuar Y echar en rremojo antes se asarlo o Comerlo. Y q se auian de hazer algunos ayunos Solemnes en observancia de la dicha le Y en especial a los dies días de la luna de septiembre se hauia de hazer al ayuno del día Grande bañandose el día antes a las bisperas Y bistienosa Ropali pia poniendola En las Camas Y Measas Y senando la dicha Vispera. Pes escando y legumbres Y no carne Y estando todo el día sigviente sin Comer ni beuber Hasta la noche salida la estrella Y q se hauian de bestir.

And they had to decapitate the fowl that they were to eat with a knife and not by twisting the neck. They also drained the blood very thoroughly. . . . The meat had to be soaked well before they roasted and ate it. Those who fasted for solemn occasions in observance of such days, especially the tenth day of the September moon, the Great Day, bathed before sundown and dressed in short jackets with a double sleeve. They replaced bed sheets and table cloths. They ate fish and vegetables but no meat and then fasted [from sundown] and all the following day until the star appeared at night and they neither ate nor drank.

21. Processo Francisco de Fonseca, AGN 425, exp. 8.
22. Liebman, *The Enlightened*, pp. 44.
23. Lea, *Spanish Dependencies*, p. 203. Cecil Roth repeats the error in his *History of the Marranos*.
24. *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 7:515–516.
25. *Memoria de los reos*, AGN 416 exp. 43.
26. Cecil Roth, “Notes sur les Marranes de Livorno,” pp. 1–27.

CHAPTER 7

1. A. H. de Olivera Marques, *History of Portugal* (2 vols.), 1:242; Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (6 vols.), 4:371; São Tomé, also known as Ilha Peridada, the Lost Island, became a sugar plantation and served as a model for Brazil, according to Stuart B. Schwartz.
2. Graetz, op. cit., 4:371; some Jewish writers, including Meyer Kayserling (*EJC* 10:349), give varying ages ranging from four to twenty years; Alexandre Herculano mentions twenty years.
3. Graetz, op. cit., 4:372.
4. Olivera Marques, op. cit., 1:213.
5. Alexandre Herculano, *Historia da Origem e Estabelecimento da Inquisição em Portugal* (3 vols.), trans. John C. Banner, p. 252 in English edition.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 253.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, p. 59.
9. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, p. 7.
10. Herculano, op. cit., pp. 329–330, where he wrote, “As for the Jews, the wording of the Bull is inaccurate and misleading in the highest degree. They had not departed from the Law of Moses; they had been brutally torn from it. Though practicing, they were not returning to Judaism; they simply remained unchanged in their belief.”
11. Yerushalmi, op. cit., p. 7.
12. Olivera Marques, op. cit., 1:166.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
14. Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America*, p. 218.
15. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean* (2 vols.), p. 1416. Braudel thinks that the search for homogeneity was a pretext.
16. C. R. Boxer, *Four Centuries of Portuguese Expansion*, p. 14.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
18. German Arciniegas, *Latin America: A Cultural History*, p. 99. The translator errs in the translation of *abjuration de levi*, which means a light oath, in contradistinction to *abjuration de vehementi*, a most serious oath. *Abjuration de levi* does not mean “recantation of Levi.”
19. Herculano, op. cit., wrote of “the hatred of the populace, stirred up by the sermons of the friars, especially the Dominicans”; cf. fn. 44 and p. 264 fn. 52. The Jesuits attacked the Jews and served the Inquisition, according to Herculano, p. 287. A. Vieira and a few others were exceptions.
20. Olivares, op. cit., 1:206, 215. He contends that Manuel’s desire for the Inquisition was “for political rather than religious purposes.”
21. *Ibid.*, 1:287.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, 1:311.

24. *Ibid.*, 1:330.
25. *EJC*, 2:350; Isidoro Aizenberg, "Efforts to Establish a Jewish Cemetery in Nineteenth Century Caracas," p. 224.
26. Rollie E. Poppino, *Brazil*, p. 60 fn.; *EJC* 2:351; Arnold Wiznitzer, "The Jews in the Sugar Industry," *JSS*, 18, July 1956, 189–197, at p. 191.
27. Arnold Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, p. 9.
28. Wiznitzer, "Jews in the Sugar Industry," p. 191.
29. Poppino, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 116, 120; *EJC*, 2:350; Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, p. 10.
30. Boleslao Lewin, "The Struggle Against Jewish Immigration into Latin America in Colonial Times," p. 215.
31. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, p. 81; José Toribio Medina, *La Inquisición en Río de la Plata*, pp. 155 ff.
32. Gordon Merrill, "The Role of Sephardi Jews in the Caribbean Area During the Seventeenth Century," pp. 32–35.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
34. "The Lucas Mss. Volumes," *Barbados Museum Historical Society*, p. 84.
35. Herbert I. Bloom, "A Study of Brazilian Jewish History of 1623–1654," p. 52; Merrill, *op. cit.*, p. 38, where he writes that opinion rather than evidence accompanies such claims. He admits that some Jews were actively engaged in the sugar cane industry; Wiznitzer, "Jews in the Sugar Industry," p. 189; Thomas Southey, *History of the West Indies* (2 vols.), 1:103, where appears: "The Portuguese Jews transplanted the sugar from the island of Madeira to Brazil."
36. I. S. Emmanuel, "Seventeenth Century Brazilian Jewry," pp. 32–33. The GAA is an invaluable primary source. Dr. Simon Hart, the former director, catalogued the notarial records for years, and Elie Koen wrote a series of articles for *Studia Rosenthaliana*. The notarial records reveal much about the commercial, religious, and social life of the Dutch Jews at home and abroad; Engel Sluiter, "Dutch Maritime Power and the Colonial Status Quo," p. 35.
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38. Liebman, "Great Conspiracy in Peru," pp. 176–190.
39. Arnold Wiznitzer, "The Earliest Jewish Community."
40. I. S. Emmanuel, "New Light on Early American Jewry," p. 5. He believed that the first Jewish community was established in Brazil in 1633–34 and that two synagogues existed by 1637.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 15.
42. American Jewish Historical Society, 1954.
43. Egon Wolff and Frieda Wolff, *A Odesseia dos Judeus de Recife*; for estimate of Recife population at end of 1648, p. 294.
44. Merrill, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
45. I. S. Revah, "Les Jesuits Portugais Contre l'Inquisition," p. 29.
46. *EJC*, 2:358.
47. Wiznitzer, "Jews in the Sugar Industry," p. 194.
48. *EJC*, 2:358.
49. Bloom, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 95.
50. C. R. Boxer, "Padre Antonio Vieira, S. J., and the Brazil Company," p. 482.
51. Cecil Roth, "An Elegy of João Pinto Delgado on Isaac de Castro"; Arnold Wiznitzer, "Isaac de Castro: Brazilian Jewish Martyr," pp. 63–75; *EJC*, 2:365.
52. Merrill, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

54. Lewis Hanke, "The Portuguese in Spanish America with Special Reference to the Villa Imperial de Potosí," p. 15.
55. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, p. 75.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
58. David Grant Smith, "Old Christian Merchants and the Foundation of the Brazil Company," pp. 133–159; Boxer, "Padre Antonio Vieira, S.J."; and Revah, *op. cit.*
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60. Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, *passim*.
61. Lucio J. Azevedo, "Notas sobre o Judaísmo e a Inquisição no Brasil," p. 67.
62. Anita Novinsky, "Inquisição." *Inventarios de bens confiscados a cristãos novos*.
63. *Ibid.*
64. Alexander Kohut, "Martyrs of the Inquisition in South America," pp. 101–187. The article has brief biographies of Antonio José da Silva and his mother.
65. Novinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 117, 106, and 160 respectively.
66. Robert Southey, *History of Brazil*, 2:645.
67. Boxer, *Golden Age*, pp. 1–2.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
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71. Southey, *op. cit.*, 2:165.
72. Kohut, *op. cit.*, pp. 171–174.
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74. AHN Inq. lib. 1020 fols. 476, 480, and 1021 fols. 9, 14.

CHAPTER 8

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2. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
4. Wilfred S. Samuel, "Review of the Jewish Colonists in Barbados," p. 2.
5. Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, p. 284.
6. Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, pp. 3, 4.
7. James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, p. 54.
8. Robert Schumbergk, *History of the Barbados*.
9. P. A. Farrar, "The Jews in Barbados," *Journal of the Barbados Museum*, vol. ix, November 1941, p. 130.
10. N. Darnell Davis, *Notes on the History of the Jews in Barbados*, p. 129.
11. Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, p. 77.
12. Bernard Postal and Malcolm H. Stern, *Jewish History in the Caribbean*, p. 19, give 1660 as the year, naming Luis Diaz as the organizer and Elias Lopez as the first rabbi, and stating that Lopez later went to Curaçao.
13. Seymour B. Liebman, "Anti-Semitism in the 17th Century in Martinique," p. 41.
14. Richard Hill, *Eight Chapters in the History of Jamaica*, p. iv.
15. Max J. Kohler, "Jewish Activity in American Colonial Commerce," p. 59, quoting from Hill, *Light and Shadow in Jamaica History*.
16. Jacob A. P. M. Andrade, *A Record of the Jews in Jamaica*, p. 1.
17. R. Kalinka de Pizsk, *Sefaroditas en Costa Rica Antes y Despues del Siglo XIX*, p. 5, and Lewis Diez Navarro, "Informes sobre la Provincia de Costa Rica o Oresentado

al Capitan General de Gūatemala en 1744," *Revista de Archivos Nacionales*, año III, n.º 11, 12. Sep.–Oct. 1939, p. 58.

18. Joseph Corcos, *Short History of Curaçao*, p. 7.
19. C. Herbert Cone, "The Jews of Curaçao," p. 150.
20. I. S. Emmanuel, "Jewish Education in Curaçao," p. 216.
21. Corcos, op. cit., p. 19.
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23. I. S. Emmanuel and A. S. Emmanuel, *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands Antilles* (2 vols.), 1:112.
24. *Ibid.*, 2:681.
25. *Ibid.*, 2:681–746.
26. Melvin H. Jackson, "Salt, Sugar and Slaves," p. 11.
27. I. S. Emmanuel, *The Jews of Coro, Venezuela*, p. 5.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
29. Philip A. Samson, "The Authority of the Trustees of the Ashkenazi Hoogduitische Congregation in Paramaribo," p. 48.
30. *Historical Essay*, p. 29.
31. Richard Gottheil, "Contributions to the History of the Jews in Surinam," p. 137.
32. *Ibid.*
33. P. A. Hilfman, "Some Further Notes on the History of the Jews in Surinam," p. 9.
34. *Idem*, "Notes on the History of the Jews in Surinam," p. 185.
35. *Historical Essay*, p. ix.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
37. Samuel Oppenheim, "An Early Jewish Colony in Western Guiana," pp. 95–286; *Anales of Guiana*, 1:132, which is Rodway and Watts, *History of the Discovery of Guiana*.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
39. Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*.
40. *Historical Essay*, p. 141.
41. Emmanuel and Emmanuel, *Jews in the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:182.

CHAPTER 9

1. Peter Gay, ed., *The Enlightenment*, pp. 126, 132.
2. Ludovicía Paramo, "De origine et Progressu Officii Sanctae Inquisitionis."
3. Gay, op. cit., p. 251.
4. Preserved Smith, *The Social Background of the Reformation*, pp. 175–176.
5. J. H. Huizinga, *Dutch Civilization in the 17th Century*, p. 53 fn., defines "humanism" as used herein. He wrote, "I use the word 'humanism' to refer to the intellectual phenomenon that appeared towards the end of the Middle Ages and that reached full maturity in the first half of the sixteenth century."
6. José Toribio Medina, *Historia del Tribunal . . . Cartagena de las Indias*, p. 359.
7. Procemo of Agustin de Espinola, AGN 1130 f. 420.
8. Seymour B. Liebman, *Guide to Jewish References in the Mexican Colonial Era*, pp. 84–89.
9. Letter in AHN Inquisition lib. 1038 fs. 411–411 vta.
10. Edward Potts Cheyney, *European Background of American History*, p. 67; see also Salvador de Madariaga, *The Fall of the Spanish Empire*, chap. 15.
11. Liebman, *Inquisitors and Jews*, pp. 206–208.
12. Medina, *La Inquisición en el Río de la Plata*, p. 110.

13. R. de Lafuente Machain, *Los Portugueses en Buenos Aires*, p. 52.
14. Boleslao Lewin, "The Struggle Against Jewish Immigration into Latin America," p. 223.
15. Idem, *El Judío en la época colonial*, pp. 86, 91 ff.
16. *EJC*, 1:432.
17. Lewin, "Struggle Against Jewish Immigration." p. 224.
18. Lafuente Machain, op. cit., p. 107.
19. Lucas Ayarragaray, *La iglesia en América y la colonización española*, quoted by Lewin, *El judío*, p. 87.
20. Lafuente Machain, op. cit., p. 110, quoting León Pinelo.
21. Medina, *La Inquisición en el Río de la Plata*, Appendix xxx, p. 391.
22. Romulo D. Carbia, *Historia eclesiástica de Río de la Plata*, p. 233.
23. Lucas Ayarragaray, *Estudios históricos políticos y literarios*, chapter on Jewish immigration cited by Lewin, *El Judío*, p. 112.
24. Lewin, *El Judío*, chap. IV, supplies numerous non-Jewish sources about the role and number of Jews in Argentina prior to independence. See pp. 114 ff. Lewin quotes Arturo Capdevila to the effect that "he who is an Argentine for even seven generations must have some drops of Jewish blood in his veins" (p. 116).
25. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
26. Jakob Petuchowski, *The Theology of Habam David Nieto*, p. 253.
27. Thomas F. Glick, review of Netanyahu's *Marranos of Spain*, in *Speculum*, p. 401.
28. Moses Mocatto, *The Inquisition and Judaism*, p. 1.
29. Alan D. Corré, review of *History of the Jews in Barbados*, pp. 165–166.
30. Eduardo Weinfeld, ed., *Tesoro del Judaismo America Latina*, p. 11.
31. Günther Böhm, *Los Judíos en Chile*, pp. 17–21.
32. B. Vicuña Mackenna, *Francisco Moyén: The Inquisition as It Was in South America*.
33. Palma, op. cit., pp. 1243–1244; Liebman, *The Inquisitors*, p. 168.
34. Lea, *Spanish Dependencies*, pp. 436–437.
35. M. Senderey, *Historia de la Colectividad Israelita de Chile*, p. 11.
36. Itic Croituro Rotbaum, *De Sefarad al Neosefaradismo*, p. 35. Rotbaum cites Alfred Hasbrouck, *Foreign Legionnaires in the Liberation of Spanish South America*, p. 360, and on this page appear the names of two Dutch Jews.
37. Alejandro Fuenzalida Grandon, *La Evolucion Social de Chile*, p. 37.

APPENDIX A

1. Martin A. Cohen, "Antonio Diaz de Caceres, pp. 169, 172, 173, 181, etc., and *The Jewish Experience in Latin America*, 2 vols. (reprints from *PAJHS*) Ktav Publishing House, 1970.
2. Raphael Patai, *The Tents of Jacob* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.), 1971.
3. Edward Glaser, "Invitation to Intolerance," pp. 352, 358.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 377.
5. Idem, "Referencias Antisemitas en la literature Peninsular de la Edad de Oro," pp. 39–62.
6. Boleslao Lewin, *Como fué la inmigración judía a la Argentina*, p. 12.
7. Henry C. Lea, *History of the Inquisition in Spain*, 3:213.
8. *Ibid.*, 3:267.
9. José Toribio Medina, *La Inquisición en Río de la Plata*, p. 158, where the letter is printed *in extenso*.
10. I. S. Revah, "Les Marranes," pp. 27–77.

11. Gerson D. Cohen, review of *The Marranos*, *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 29, 1967, p. 181.
12. Morris N. Kertzer, *What Is a Jew?*, p. 17.
13. Salo W. Baron, *History and Jewish Historians* (Philadelphia, 1964), pp. 12, 21.
14. Melville J. Herskovits, "Who Are the Jews?" pp. 1489, 1496.
15. Patai, *Tents of Jacob*, p. 157.
16. Yaacov Malkiel, "Hispanic-Arabic *Marrano* and Its Homophone," p. 181.
17. Isadore Epstein, *Studies in Communal Life in Spain*, 2d ed. (New York, 1969), p. 30.
18. Franz Kobler, *Letters Through the Ages*, 2:380.
19. Herskovits, op. cit., p. 1409.
20. Solomon Schechter, *Studies in Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1908), p. 222.
21. H. Ben-Sasson, ed., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 569, 579.
22. Yosef H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, p. 45. On p. 22, Yerushalmi discusses the strength of Portuguese Judaism after the forced conversions of 1496.
23. Antonio José Saraiva, *Inquisição e cristãos-novos* (Porto, 1969), p. 175.
24. Albert A. Sicroff, review of *The Marranos of Spain*, *Midstream*, vol. 12, October 1966, pp. 71, 75.
25. Günter Böhm, *Los Judíos en Chile*, pp. 89–96.
26. Vicente Riva Palacio, *México à través de los Siglos*, 2:703.

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This is a selected bibliography. It does not include all the material consulted or all the primary sources studied. A few of the books and articles are marked by an asterisk which indicates that they contain errors or theories with which this author disagrees. They have been included because they are frequently cited by others.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Mexico

The Archivo General de la Nacion, Ramo de la Inquisición (referred to as AGN) has the *procesos* of the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition except for those that have been stolen or sold. Many of the missing *procesos* and many of the parts of the trials of individuals are at the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California; the Thomas E. Gilcrease Institute, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and the Henry C. Lea Memorial Library of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; an unknown number are still in private collections of Mexicans.

All numbers of the following *procesos* or documents are in the AGN, and the number after each slash is the number of the document in the *tomo* (volume). The letter *a* after the name is the abbreviation for "alias." I have listed only a sampling of the important cases—important for this study.

Alvarado, Diego, a. Muñoz. 645/3; 673/40; reference to this case is also in the Archivo Historico Nacional (hereafter AHN) in Madrid, Inquisición legajo 1731/36.

Alvarez de Arellano, Manuel. 405/1; 417 fol. 549; 433 fol. 612; AHN 1738/1.

Ayallin, Juan de. 414 fol. 282; 415 fol. 101.

Bautista, Juan. 471/11, 28.

- Bazan, Jorge Jacinto, a. Baca, Jorge Jacinto.* 392/3; 12, 13, 16; 503/70; additional parts are in the Henry E. Huntington Library.
- Botello, Francisco.* 404/4; 412/1; AHN 1738/1.
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- Enriquez, Catalina.* 399/11; 405/1; 414/10; 433/7; additional parts at the Henry E. Huntington Library.
- Enriquez, Isabel, a. Huerta, Isabel de la.* 391/10; 393/3; 404/5; 414/3; 415/2, 6; 418/10; 425/12.
- Enriquez, Juana.* 381/7; 390/11; 400/1; 488/5.
- Espinosa, Jorge, a. Serrano, Jorge.* 406/1; 416/41.
- Fernandez, Enrique.* 392/17; 404/1; 405/9; 415/5. Most of the *proceso* is at the Thomas F. Gilcrease Institute.
- Fernandez Correa, Rodrigo.* 399/12; 419/41.
- Gomez, Maria.* 381/5, 9; 426/10.
- Jacinto.* See Bazan, Jorge.
- Juarez, Ana.* 410/1; 414/7.
- Leon Jaramillo, Duarte.* 381/5; 426/7; 453 fol. 129; 495/14.
- Lopez Diaz, Francisco, a. Chato.* 393/10; 404/1, 3; 405 fol. 587; 413 fols. 101–104; 414/6, 6A, 8; 453 fol. 65.
- Mella, Manuel de.* 399/9; 403/2; 405/3, 9; 413 fols. 141–147; 414 fol. 280; 415 fols. 41, 371, 508; 543 fol. 150.
- Mendez, Justa.* 154/1; 156/3; 277/60; 366 Texoco; 373/28; 393/6; 415/2; 417/16; Riva Palacio Collection 20/2.
- Montero, Simon.* 381/5; 404/4; 426 fol. 525.
- Morera, Margarita.* Entire *proceso* at Huntington Library.
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AHN; his testimony from Mexico in the *proceso* of Gaspar Nunez Suarez, AGN de Peru, Grupo C10, ano 1636–1639, leg. 61.

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Arias Valle, Miguel. leg. 1621/11 fol. 256 and leg. 1620.

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Cartas de Lima. lib. 1064–1067 (1569–1693).

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Consulta 1644 sobre judíos en Holanda y daños que hacen. Inq. lib. 292, f. 4.

Ritos y ceremonias de judíos. Inq. lib. 888 f. 326.

Ayunos, pascuas y oraciones de los hebreos. Inq. lib. 1254 f. 153.

Ayunos, pascuas y ritos de judíos. Inq. lib. 1259 f. 216.

613 preceptos de la ley de Moisés. Inq. lib. 1328 f. 21.

Letter from Inquisitors Verdugo and Gaytan of 4 May 1622. lib. 1038, fs. 417v–418v.

Letter from Bishop of Puerto Rico to Consejo. lib. 1937.

Most *relaciones* of the Lima *autos de fé* are in the AHN.

*Archivo General de la Nacion de Peru (AGNP) and the Peruvian
Biblioteca Nacional*

The AGNP and the Biblioteca Nacional are both in Lima. The AGNP is in the Palacio de Justicia. There are Inquisition documents in both places. The AGNP has the greater number

and the more important. The Biblioteca suffered two fires, the second in 1943. Many documents were burned and others mutilated. Dr. Ellen Dunbar Temple authored a series of articles for *Boletín de la Biblioteca Nacional*, año 1, Nú. 1, commencing October 1943. The article listed those papers which had been salvaged.

Classifications of the documents in the AGNP were changed in 1962. The cataloguing leaves much to be desired. The new system is used herein.

Perez, Manuel Bautista. Concurso de bienes, 2nd parte, AGNPC 10, año 1636–1639, over 3,000 pages. Legajo 62 has “bienes de *Francisco Rodriguez Arias*”^{*} (named by some writers as Francisco Ruiz Arias); there is an additional listing of Perez’s property. Legajo 64 has testimony of Maria Velasco, widow of Rodriguez Velasco, and against the widow of Perez.

Rodriguez Osorio, Simon, a. Osorio, Simon, and the proceso of *Gaspar Nunez* are in legajo 61 as well as the testimony of Perez against *Melchor* and *Andres* and testimony of *Simon Vaez Sevilla* of Mexico against *Gaspar Nunez Suarez*.

Henry C. Lea Memorial Library at the University of Pennsylvania

Henry C. Lea purchased some original inquisition documents about 1895 from a dealer in such documents on Calle Gante in Mexico City. There is little doubt that the *procesos* had been stolen from the Mexican National Archives. It must be acknowledged that many documents were then (and possibly still are) owned by individuals. Pursuant to Lea’s will, his papers, books, documents, and library furniture, including the wall paneling of his library, were bequeathed to the University of Pennsylvania. The present Henry C. Lea Memorial Library is housed in the library building of the university.

Some of the *procesos* of the trials of Jews by the Holy Office

^{*}I believe that Francisco Rodriguez Arias of Lima was the brother of Antonio Rodriguez of Mexico, the husband of Blanca Enriquez, the famous *dogmatista rabina*, so named by the inquisitors of the Holy Office in Mexico. Blanca Enriquez was the mother of Juana Enriquez, who was the wife of Simon Vaez Sevilla and the mother of Gaspar, who was thought at one time to be the Messiah.

are listed below (the University, at the suggestion of this writer, donated microfilms of these to the AGN).

Isabel de Montoya. Two separate documents, one 114 pages and the other 150 pages. They cover her trial from 1652 to 1661. They are only parts of her trial. The remainder are at the AGN.

Isabel Rodriguez. A *proceso* of 114 pages. She was the wife of Manuel Diaz. This is also only a part, the balance being at the AGN. She was sentenced to life imprisonment in the *auto da fé* of December 8, 1596.

Manuel Diaz. *Proceso* of 115 pages. He is husband of above Isabel. He was born in Fondon, Portugal, an important center of Jews. Burned at stake 1596.

Sebastian Rodriguez. He was born in San Vicente d’Aveira (sometimes appearing in Holy Office documents as Davera and d’Beira). He, as Manuel Diaz, was a merchant in Mexico City and was married to Constanza Rodriguez. (Not all wives bore their husband’s name, especially among the Jews in the New World.) He and his wife were penanced in the *auto* of December 8, 1596, and were sentenced to life imprisonment, directed to wear *sanbenitos*, and all their property was confiscated. The part of his trial at the University of Pennsylvania consists of 178 pages. The balance of his hearings are at the Archivo General Nacional in Mexico.

Great Britain

The Public Records Office in London is a most important center for all classes of information on the Jews in the Caribbean beginning with the seventeenth century. Among the records to be researched carefully are the *Calendar of State Papers: Colonial Papers and Domestic Papers*, which include official correspondence. There are also petitions; i.e., that of February 26, 1703 of Antonio Gomez Serra and others which shows that the Jews settled and were naturalized in Jamaica under the Act of 1683 and their plea to be relieved of the extra tax imposed upon them.

There is the statement that there were fifty Jewish families and of these only twelve were able to contribute for “the extraordinary tax.”

The Colonial Entry Books have indices for the separate islands under British rule.

The British Museum, Manuscript Division, has Egerton Mss. #2395, "Privileges Granted to the People of the Hebrew Nation that are to go to the Wilde Cust."

Barbados

The Department of Archives has Population Records C2 and B2. Legislation of 18 February 1674, "Act appointing how the testimony of the people of the Hebrew Nation shall be admitted in all Courts and causes" (Text: Hall's Laws No. 61, p. 94). The Act of 9 September 1786, "Act for absolute repeal of and declaring void the Act entitled, 'An Act appointing how the testimony of the people of the Hebrew Nation . . .'" (Text: Moore, No. 40. pp. 266–268).

The Netherlands

The Geemente Archief, the Amsterdam Municipal Archives, is a valuable source for the history of the Jews in the New World. The records of the Dutch West India Company, the Rijsarchief, the State Archives at the Hague, and the Geemente Archief in Middleburg and the Oud-Archief must be consulted. This does not exhaust the field in Holland.

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The Plaza de Santo Domingo in Mexico City, where *autos da fé* were held for over 100 years, with the House of the Inquisition, where the trials and tortures took place, on the right under the arrow, as rendered by John Phillips.