

* THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD *

An Invisible Thread

*Heresy, Mass Conversions, and the Inquisition
in the Kingdom of Castile (1449–1559)*

Stefania Pastore



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The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World

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By

Stefania Pastore

Translated from Spanish by

Consuelo López-Morillas



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Abbreviations

ACC	Archivo de la Catedral, Cordoba
ADC	Archivo Diocesano, Cuenca
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
ARSI	Archivium Historicum Societatis Iesu, Rome
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid
BUGR	Biblioteca Universitaria, Granada
CL	Cambridge University Library
CT	<i>Concilium Tridentinum, Diariorum, Actorum, Epistolarum, Nova collectio</i> . Freiburg: Societas Görresiana, 1901–1961.
DBI	<i>Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani</i> . Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia italiana, 1961–2020.
MHSI	<i>Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu</i> . Rome-Madrid: Istituto Storico Societatis Iesu, 1894–2009.
WA	<i>D. Martin Luthers Werke</i> . Weimar: Böhlau Akademische Druck, 1964–2001.

Prologue

I first wrote this book in Italian in 2004, and later revised it for an expanded Spanish edition in 2010. For a long time, I debated whether it made sense to translate it into English. I wondered how to incorporate the rich scholarship on a variety of related subjects that has appeared in the meantime, not to speak of how to engage with those who have addressed my own concerns. Part of my hesitation also stemmed from the difficulty of translating, both literally and conceptually, academic controversies that have taken different shapes on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the end, the realization that this monograph had contributed to a broader set of collective debates on early modern Iberian and European religious history, and the so-called *converso* problem in particular, persuaded me that there was a place for it in English. My fundamental contribution was and remains a double bind: I insist on the exceptionalism of the Iberian religious experience – an experience defined by the mass baptisms of Jews and Muslims – but argue that to recognize the peculiarities of Iberian history should not lead us to isolate it from that of the rest of the European continent. On the one hand, I demonstrate that a number of specific traits of the religious and intellectual life that emerged in Castile during the fifteenth century and flourished during the sixteenth, such as a more direct relationship between believers and God than the one advocated by the Roman Catholic Church, were not derivative of the teachings of Erasmus or Luther, but were rather autochthonous developments and responses to the societal crisis created by the mass conversion of former Jews and Muslims. This reading has an important corollary argument: while other scholars regard the new emphasis on inner spirituality as exclusive of recent converts alone, I show that it was a distinctive feature of the period's broader ecology – the legal changes, theological debates, and social conflicts engendered by forced conversions over more than two centuries. On the other hand, I bring to the fore a thick web of personal and intellectual connections linking Spanish devotional practices and the most radical forms of dissent that emerge north of the Pyrenees after Luther's break from Rome. In so doing, I do not mean to point to the existence of a direct causal relation between the two phenomena but simply stress the need to analyze the religious and intellectual life of sixteenth-century Spain alongside that of the European Reformations. I believe these insights remain valid and still hold considerable potential for expanding current lines of investigation.

The original version of this book was an entirely solo effort. In the following two decades, my thinking has developed in dialogue with a number of colleagues who share my preoccupations and work in different countries.

A multi-year project titled “Conversions, Overlapping Religiosities, Polemics and Interactions” (CORPI), led by Mercedes García-Arenal and financed by the European Research Council, has been especially stimulating.¹ I joined its advisory group in 2013 together with David Nirenberg, Felipe Pereda, Fernando Rodríguez-Mediano, and Gerard Wiegers. In the course of the following six years, a great many seasoned and junior scholars joined forces to probe old questions and offer new answers to them. My collaboration with García-Arenal has grown out of this project and enriched my research on the causes, consequences, and manifestations of religious dissent.

Here I wish to highlight three scholarly outputs of CORPI that expand on several insights of this book. *After Conversion: Iberia and the Emergence of Modernity*, an edited volume published in 2016, centers on the legacy of mass conversions on the emergence of Western modernity.² In my contribution, I highlight the importance of fifteenth-century Spain for the history of European skepticism. More specifically, I describe how the existence of multiple faiths and therefore diverse beliefs in divine revelation fostered a widespread incredulity and, in some instances, anticipated theoretical reflections on religious comparativism that are generally dated to the outbreak of the wars of religion in sixteenth-century France.³

A second edited volume, *From Doubt to Unbelief*, maps the forms that popular and philosophical doubt and unbelief took in Iberia after mass conversions and their influence early modern European culture.⁴ Lastly, *Visiones imperiales y profecía: Roma, España, Nuevo Mundo* gathers essays by specialists on messianic prophetism and shows that it cut across religious and confessional lines.⁵ As I did in this book, the volume stresses the importance not only of Italian Renaissance prophetism but also its Iberian borrowings and metamorphoses in the sixteenth century. At the same time, it goes much further in illustrating the cross-religious nature of religious messianism and articulating the need to understand it as a byproduct of the coexistence of, and conflict between, multiple religious groups and powers in the Mediterranean and the global expansion of the Iberian empires.

The following pages reflect a double effort to preserve the original core of the book and take stock of the debates and contributions that have since appeared.

1 <http://www.proyectos.cchs.csic.es/corpi/en/home>

2 García-Arenal, *After Conversion*. Several essays in the volume explore the pervasive effect of a novel genealogical mentality on every aspect of Spanish politics and culture. See also Nirenberg, “Mass Conversion.”

3 Pastore, “Doubt in Fifteenth-Century Castile.”

4 García-Arenal and Pastore, *From Doubt to Unbelief*; and Pastore, “Pyrrhonism and Unbelief.”

5 Pastore and García-Arenal, *Visiones Imperiales y profecía*; and especially Pastore and García-Arenal, *Introducción* to the volume.

With this goal in mind, I wrote a new introduction and added a closing chapter (chap. 7), which situates my research in relation to the historiographical debates of the last hundred years but devotes particular attention to those that have developed after the appearance of the Italian and Spanish editions of my monograph. I also updated many of the bibliographical citations in the footnotes. In some cases, I abbreviated the body of the text or reorganized the narrative to render it more accessible to Anglophone readers. I also translated all citations but kept the original language of salient passages from original documents and from scholarly works for which no English translation is available.



This book builds on its earlier Italian and Spanish versions and has benefitted, once again, from the suggestions of many colleagues, mentors, and friends. I would like to single out Massimo Firpo for his unfailing generosity and brilliant insights, as well as Adriano Prospero and the late Michele Olivari.

The translation was made from the Spanish edition of the book, which owed a great deal to James Amelang, Ricardo García Cárcel, María Luisa Cerrón, Mercedes García-Arenal, and Felipe Pereda.

Consuelo López-Morillas translated the text from Spanish and Lisa Haltunen assisted me in preparing the expanded manuscript in English. Generous funding was made available by an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council (“CORPI”) and a project financed by the Italian Ministry of Education, University, and Research (“Books in Motion: Circulation and Construction of Knowledge between Italy and Europe in the Early Modern Period”). Two anonymous referees offered helpful feedback. At crucial turns, I was able to count on the advice of Mercedes García-Arenal and Stefania Tutino. Marcella Mulder at Brill has been a model of professionalism. I wish to express my gratitude to all of them.

Introduction

In 1529, Pedro de Cazalla, a scion of a prominent family of Jewish converts to Christianity from Toledo, claimed that no more than “a thread” connected men with God and that any mediation by the Church was unnecessary. This book explores the manyfold ramifications of this idea. It stems from the conviction that during the early modern period, the Iberian world was at once exceptional and paradigmatic. It was a laboratory of religious, juridical, and intellectual experimentation where, beginning in 1391, waves of mass conversions compelled not only intellectuals but also ordinary women and men to reflect on the mechanisms of inclusion in Christian society. Because of its long history of violence, conquest, and assimilation, which began with the forced baptisms of Jews in 1391 and continued throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, early modern Iberia had to confront both the possibilities and the limitations of welcoming newly baptized Christians in its fold more than any other European region. Incidentally, here I use the term “assimilation” purposefully, even if it is technically anachronistic because it normally refers to the aftermath of emancipation, that is, the granting of full civic and political rights to religious minorities in the modern nation-state. For reasons that will soon become clear, I treat baptism as a form of emancipation. In pre-modern Europe, when the rights and obligations of any subjects of a political entity varied depending on their religious affiliation, the conversion of non-Christian minorities – regardless of whether it was voluntary or forcibly imposed – granted those who accepted baptism formal legal equality and new possibilities of upper social mobility.

During the Middle Ages, the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon were the only areas in Europe in which three religions and cultures (Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim) coexisted – not on an equal footing but due to a complex system of privileges, partial legal recognition, and special status. (For example, Jews were treated as *servi regis* or “the king’s treasure” in exchange for paying taxes and tributes to the sovereign.) Outbursts of violence, however, recurrently disturbed this coexistence and encroached on the limited autonomy gained by minorities. Beginning in 1391, this precarious equilibrium was forever altered by a series of violent conversions that reshaped the Iberian social and confessional landscape.¹ Until then, there had been more or less frequent pogroms

1 For a detailed narrative and study of the ‘constitutional implication’ of the pogroms and assaults that led to the forced baptisms of 1391, see Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths*, 75–88; Gampel, *Anti-Jewish Riots*. For a focus on historians’ differing positions regarding the impact

and looting, promoted by preaching of Franciscan and Dominican mendicant friars. Now, a new idea emerged: that Jews could and should be integrated forcibly into Christian society via mass baptisms.²

Compulsory conversions from one religion to another generated an array of reactions, ranging from anger and confusion to peculiar phenomena of religious and cultural hybridization. But they also abruptly destroyed the social and religious barriers that in all pre-modern societies of orders allowed the demarcation of separate groups, each with its own place in the hierarchy of people and corporate entities.³

What did it mean to enter by baptism into the Christian community? In what terms did more or less recent converts belong to the Christian community, and what principles of equality or hierarchy animated their inclusion? In principle, the Church made no distinction between people who had been baptized. Passages from Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Corinthians stated that baptism erased all previous differences and that all members of Christian society were equals before men and God.⁴ In practice, the presence of large numbers of recent converts to Catholicism placed this theology into discussion.

In early modern Iberia, as well as elsewhere in Europe, contentious debates emerged regarding the inclusive force and legal consequences of baptism, which, as the *converso* politician and bishop Alonso de Cartagena wrote, 'opened wide the doors' of Christian society (chap. 1). Baptism raised not only theological and canonistic problems but also burning social and legal dilemmas. Becoming a

of forced baptisms on the Jewish community, see Nirenberg, "Enmity and Assimilation." For a perspective that tends to downplay 1391 as a watershed in the history of Jewish-Christian community relations and the Iberian peculiarity itself, see Tartakoff, "Testing Boundaries." The traditional perspective that sees the history of Iberian Jews after 1391 as an inexorable economic and cultural decline until expulsion, has been challenged by local and detailed studies of individual communities, see, e.g., Meyerson, *A Jewish Renaissance*. A wonderful example of entangled focus on an urban mixed community can be seen in Ruiz, "Identity and Liminality."

2 Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews and Living Letters of the Law*, Ravid, "The Forced Baptism of Jews." On the apocalyptic beliefs that animated the mendicant orders, see Lerner, *The Feast of Saint Abraham*. For a theological and comparative analysis of forced baptisms and an updated bibliography, see García-Arenal and Glazer-Eytan, *Forced Conversions*. On conversion narratives, see Szpiech, *Conversion and Narratives*.

3 This idea is explored at length in García-Arenal, *After Conversion*.

4 "For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (Paul, *1 Corinthians* 12:13); "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Paul, *Galatians* 3:27–28).

Christian, whether by forced baptism or as a result of external pressure, meant the ability to access a range of previously unattainable civil and religious offices. A violent act that was supposedly related to the personal and religious sphere therefore acquired legal significance of inestimable social weight. In this respect, forced baptisms can be seen as analogous to nineteenth-century emancipation. In both contexts, religious frontiers were above all social and legal frontiers, because membership in one religious community as opposed to another opened or closed doors to a plethora of privileges and rights; baptism was thus a requisite for what today we call citizenship.

In post-1391 Iberia, both forced and voluntary baptisms demolished the barriers and differences that had hitherto kept Jews apart from Christians, resulting in an immediate perceived “erosion of Christian privilege” by the Christian community. For a long time, however, converts still lived in close social, cultural, and physical proximity to their former coreligionists.⁵ Paradoxically, from then on, the key problem of Iberian society and culture was how to restore the differences that forced baptism had dismantled. As the writers who espoused the cause of the newly baptized pointed out, the fault of creating heresy and schism within the cohesive body of Christian society fell upon the proponents of forced baptisms, who believed neither in the theological efficacy of baptism nor in a society in which all new converts should receive equal treatment (chap. 1). A new obsession took hold of Iberian society and culture: how to undo the consequences of a violent act of assimilation and homogenization, and restore the barriers that could re-establish the old order among established political and social groups. The identification and stigmatization of the descendants of Jewish converts, and the creation of new obstacles to their inclusion in the Christian commonwealth, was the most common solution to this problem.⁶

After forced baptisms expanded the boundaries of Christian society by erasing all differences between Christians and Jews and creating a new social entity of converts, in the fifteenth century the efforts of many turned to restoring demarcation lines so as to identify recent converts by using new social and religious stigmas. While this book focuses on the intellectual and cultural aftermath of the forced and semi-coerced baptisms of Jews, it is important to note

5 Nirenberg, *Conversion, Sex, and Segregation*, 111–2.

6 On the long-standing debate around these issues, see García-Arenal and Pereda, *Sangre y Leche*. Francesca Trivellato’s book on Jews and capitalism shows the degree to which the fear that Jews’ invisibility, that they ceased to be identifiable and recognizable, weighed on European economic thought between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries and generated stereotypes that are inseparable from the birth of early modern capitalism. See Trivellato, *The Promise and Peril of Credit*.

that the same violent practice was later adopted with the Muslim population of the kingdom of Granada in 1502, with the Muslims of the region of Valencia in 1525, and with the indigenous people in the Americas. All this helps explain why the status of recent converts, their descendants, and their role in Christian society shaped every intellectual and theological debate, becoming the central problem of Iberian culture and society.

The book begins in medias res, analyzing the theological and legal reactions to the least sophisticated but most tragically successful reversal of the legal equality conferred by baptism: the purity of blood (*limpieza de sangre*) statute issued in the town of Toledo in 1449. The statute was issued at the end of a rebellion of some urban elites who felt threatened by the social and political rise of recent converts and their encroachment into municipal government. Crude as it was, the statute broke the unity of the Christian community by distinguishing between new and old converts and declaring that only the latter could obtain the privileges of public office. The *limpieza de sangre* statutes were harshly condemned by the Roman authorities, who branded them contrary to canon law – that is, contrary to all the norms and principles that had governed the Christian community up to that time. A large section of the Spanish Church also expressed reservations.

This theological and canonical debate over the status of recent converts soon infiltrated every realm of Iberian social and political life. The theological reflections concerning the position of so-called New Christians, and the ways in which it might be possible to prevent them from being considered equal to Old Christians, called into question both traditional definitions of the boundaries of the Christian community and the relationship between the Old and New Testament. As part of these fierce discussions, a number of scriptural passages on the subject were evoked and made available to an audience that extended beyond the theologians, canonists, and experts who were directly engaged in solving the problem.

Such was the case in the response by Alonso de Cartagena, bishop of Burgos. Alonso was a prominent figure in fifteenth-century Castilian politics and the son of one of the most important rabbis of the time, Salomon Ha-Levi. In his reflections on the religious texts concerning the converts' passages to Christianity and the modalities to access and preserve one's Jewish past, Alonso borrowed from the Gospels and Paul's *Epistles* to insist on the equality of all Christians and the regeneration created by baptism. He thus put into circulation a textual tradition that stressed the revolutionary nature of conversion and baptism. Alonso was particularly drawn to those texts that privileged divine light and illumination as vehicles for entering the Christian body. In the same way as sun light touches all creatures indistinctively, so divine light

renders “old” and “new” Christians equal to each other. By recourse to this metaphor, Alonso placed the cognitive experience of enlightenment at the center of his meaning of Christianity.

From then on, many other pro-*conversos* apologists, such as Alonso de Oropesa and Hernando de Talavera, repeatedly mentioned these passages in their treatises. The metaphor of conversion and passage as light and enlightenment gained enormous traction in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain and opened up a new way of thinking about the individual Christian’s relationship with God – a relationship that was not mediated by the social and ritual constraints of the institutional church. The passages first unearthed by Alonso de Cartagena and others were discussed again and again in the history of Spanish spirituality. While we need to stress the specificities of the context in which it was born, we should also recognize that this spirituality in many ways anticipated Lutheran and Reformed idea about the Christian’s freedom and the revolutionary nature of a person’s religious experience.

This is the starting point of this book, which seeks to offer a new reading of Iberian cultural, religious, and intellectual history from the mid-fifteenth century to the mid-sixteenth century. Through a series of forced conversions, Iberia was transformed from a society in which three religions and cultures had to coexist into a mono-confessional society. My analysis insists on the elements of continuity as much as the rupture between the biblical literalism of the new converts in the fifteenth century, the prophetic and messianic phenomena of the early sixteenth century, the *alumbrado* phenomenon (a radical and highly individualistic heresy that was unique in the European landscape of the period), and the so-called Spanish Lutherans of the 1540s and 1550s.

The book also examines the debates and resistance that followed the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478. It is little known today that many contemporaries regarded the creation of the new, centralized inquisition as an anti-judicial act – an abuse of power by the crown and the church that allowed clergymen to investigate an individual’s inner beliefs. Such prerogative was no foregone conclusion. Many medieval canonists embraced the slogan according to which “the Church cannot judge what is hidden in the interiority of people’s conscience” (*Ecclesia de occultis non iudicat*). In the decades between the forced baptisms of the 1390s and the formation of the Spanish Inquisition, debates regarding the status of recent converts overlapped with those concerning the autonomy of individual conscience. These debates also questioned the relationship between the Christian believer and the Church, and specifically the individual’s power of resistance in the face of a coercive authority such as the Spanish Inquisition, which limited dramatically the already minimal autonomy of individual conscience.

My premise is that the confessional violence unleashed after 1391 – the forced assimilation and the erasure of visible and legal differences between religious minorities after they accepted to be baptized – explains much of the theological and intellectual history of the period. I also wish to foreground a counterintuitive parallelism between the rise of monoconfessionalism in early modern Spain and the breakdown of the unity of Christianity in post-Reformation Europe, a point to which I will return.

Rather than a sweeping overview, this book offers individual sketches of the life and thought of men and women who put forth very different ways of thinking about inclusion and diversity. The figures on whom I focus are rather heterogeneous. There are well-known names such as the first archbishop of Granada Hernando de Talavera (chap. 1), Juan de Valdés (chap. 5), and Saint Juan de Ávila (chap. 6); high court dignitaries whose brilliance and power was extinguished by the Inquisition, such as Juan de Lucena (chap. 2); names that today no longer ring a bell, such as that of the Toledo priest Pero López de Soria (chap. 3); *alumbrados* whose import has yet to be appreciated, such as Juan del Castillo and Juan López de Celain (chap. 4); figures such as the imperial preachers Juan Gil and Constantine Ponce de la Fuente, who have always been portrayed as close to the Lutheran heresy of the 1540s-50s (chap. 6); and extraordinary women who faced the Inquisition with courage and lucidity, such as Petronila de Lucena or the nuns of the monasteries of Santa Isabel and Santa Paula in Seville (chap. 6).

While centering my analysis on these figures, I have considered both high and low culture, combining intellectual history and cultural history and examining not only the great theological controversies but also their popular fallout. To do so, I have made use of a wide range of documents: treatises authenticated and screened by their authors (as in the case of Alonso de Cartagena, Alonso de Oropesa, and Hernando de Talavera), works published anonymously, as in the case of Juan de Valdés, and letters and correspondences. In some cases, I have sought to reconstruct gaps left in the primary sources, as in the case of the treatise against the Inquisition written by the protonotary Juan de Lucena (the actual text is lost, but I was able to reconstruct its contours from a surviving polemical work by one of his detractors). Inquisitorial trials and documents shed light on lost works and characters such as Pero López de Soria or the extraordinary Petronila de Lucena, sister of the *alumbrado* Juan del Castillo, who tried in vain to save him from the stake by declaring him insane (chap. 4). In chap. 6, I focus on two leading voices of religious dissent in Seville, Juan Gil and Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, in order to offer a new reading of the heretical tendencies that swept across the city in the 1540s and 60s. As we will see, even a celebrated saint like Juan de Ávila played a role in these circles.

These are not unknown figures to specialists. Part of my contributions consists in lifting the voices of the nuns of the Sevillian monasteries of Santa Paula and Santa Isabel from inquisitorial records and show how they partook of these heretical movements. Their interpretation of Matthew's well-known passage about the "gentle yoke of Christ" [Matt. 11,30], according to which Christianity required no effort or constraint, differed from that of male preachers and theologians. They dreamed of being able to call back to life their sisters who had died in order to acquaint them with that doctrine and relieve them of the burdens of religious rituals and daily life that they had to endure.

Many of these figures were *conversos*, and almost all of them crossed paths with the Inquisition. Most importantly, all of them had to reflect on the room for individual freedom granted to them by Spanish society in different situations, at a time when religiosity was increasingly controlled and codified.

Their way of being *conversos* manifested in different ways: from the Judaic syncretism of "the ebionite" opposed by Talavera; to the eclectic syncretism of *conversos* such as Juan del Castillo or the well-known theologian Miguel Servet; to the intense Paulinism of figures such as Talavera and Juan de Ávila, which was built around the value of charity and reflection in Paul's letters. But we should not overstate their differences; all these men were united by the context in which their various experiences were born. This was a context in which questions about the relationship between the Old and New Law, the possible forms of peaceful coexistence between Old and New Christians in spite of the Inquisition and the *limpieza de sangre* statutes, and the margins for freedom of thought (or at least an inner spiritual Christianity that shed the external constraints of ritual devotions) were unavoidable. The need to grapple with these questions was profound and widespread among all social categories; it affected both men and women, regardless of whether they were descendants of *conversos*. This cultural ecology was uniquely Iberian: the byproduct of the ubiquitous sense of suspicion created by the Inquisition, the heated debates around the *limpieza de sangre* statutes, and the forced integration of Jews and later Muslims in the ever-narrowing grids of Catholic orthodoxy.

Conformity was far from the only response available to those confronting this landscape. In fact, these strictures engendered many ways of thinking about man's salvation in the afterlife and a culture of doubts set in open defiance to Catholic orthodoxy. The theological and soteriological (that is, pertaining to salvation) constructions of Juan López de Celain and Juan del Castillo exemplify this trend. Both articulated a doctrine of salvation that embraced all "faithful and unfaithful, good angels and bad angels," words that explicitly echoed the *alumbrados's* denial of the existence of hell (chap. 4). In Juan del Castillo's words, salvation was open to all, baptized and unbaptized alike.

This position was heretical, but it recognized that the Iberian empire had expanded its borders to new lands and new peoples and now ruled over infidels other than Jews and Muslims. For these heterodox thinkers, Christian revelation became one among many possible revelations, a path that led to good living on this earth but was no more nor less valid than the revelation of Mohammed. From such a perspective, religious beliefs and doctrines became irrelevant. Everyone could save themselves, or was already saved, by their own faith; it followed that there was no place for discrimination in Iberian society. This radical theory would later be developed most famously by Miguel Servet and small groups of European anti-trinitarians and deists. But it also infiltrated popular culture, taking hold among the Spanish *moriscos* (converts from Islam to Catholicism) as well as ordinary Spaniards on both sides of the Atlantic, as shown by Stuart Schwartz.⁷

In short, the protagonists of this book are not the newly baptized, and not even all the *conversos*, who have often been treated as if they belonged to a homogenous sociological group. Rather, my subject is everyone who felt compelled to reflect on the consequences of the forced conversions that revolutionized the Iberian world.⁸

I do not believe it is possible to speak of *conversos* as a sociological category. If we wish to speak of radical modernity with regard to the history of early modern Spain (and I believe these terms are warranted), it is not because of the experience of individual or even collective conversion, but rather because of the legal changes, theological debates, and social conflicts that forced conversions brought about. In other words, the figures on whom I focus did not

⁷ Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved*.

⁸ I hasten to note that this book was first written before Yirmiyahu Yovel published, in 2009, a successful book, *The Other Within*, which identifies the Marrano experience as a path to modernity. (Marrano is an originally derogatory term that scholars have adopted for former Jews who accepted to be baptized, along with their descendants.) For Yovel, all these converts had a “split identity.” But he turns this idea of a divided self of baptized Jews into a conceptual category, on the assumption that the experience of all recent converts is codifiable and is characterized by the need to simulate forms of collective belonging that anticipate the birth of modern consciousness. Yovel was not the first to essentialize the experience of *conversos*. His argument builds on a long line of influential studies harking back to Américo Castro’s ideas about *vivir desviviéndose* (that is, living in denial of the self or living in agony), Israël Salvator Révah’s theory about the crypto-Judaism of Portuguese New Christians, and, more recently, Yosef Kaplan’s notion of Amsterdam “new Jews” and their modernity. See Castro *The Structure*, 344–5; Révah, “Les Marranes”; Kaplan, *An Alternative Path to Modernity*; Yovel, *The Other Within*. I will elaborate on these historiographical trends in the last chapter of this book, which I have updated since the original versions published in Italian and Spanish to address the rich literature that has since appeared on the Marrano diaspora in Europe and the religious minorities in the Iberian empire.

articulate new ways of living their relationship with God because they were *conversos* but because they were embedded in a society that the problem of converts and forced conversions had entirely reshaped. The cases of Juan Lopez de Celain, *vizcayno* (that is, from the Basque province and therefore an Old Christian par excellence), and the astonishing case of the Old Christian Bartolomé Sánchez, the Messiah of Cardenete (studied by Sarah Nalle) demonstrate this. Insistence on the distinctiveness of *conversos* overlooks the permeability of ideas that develop in a context that extends even to 'Old Christians' and transcends genealogical affiliation, an Iberian context that Bodian has sharply called the 'hidden ecosystem of dissent.'⁹ The fact that these transformations occurred in Iberia, rather than elsewhere, requires some further consideration, to which I will return briefly.

I also do not believe in the hermeneutical validity of the categories devised by Inquisitors to describe those whom they prosecuted. Throughout the book, I have deliberately avoided using the inquisitorial terminology of "Lutheranism," "erasmianism," or "alumbradism," and have thus eschewed the debate that polarized historians for decades about how best to map various forms of heresy in Spanish. The terminology problem is methodologically complementary to that of the essentialization of *conversos*. Inquisitors and historians pursue different tasks. Inquisitors had an interest in simplifying the heterogeneity of heterodox beliefs, if only to establish a taxonomy on the basis of which to formalize an accusation. But this taxonomy inhibits rather than facilitates our readings of the past. As my work shows, these categories do not capture the complexity that historians wish to uncover.

The incongruity of inquisitorial taxonomies is especially evident with regard to *alumbradismo*, which is arguably the most elusive and potentially distortive of all the inquisitorial categories adopted by historians. None of the *alumbrados* defined as such by any inquisitor recognized themselves in the tribunal's definition of them. At any rate, *alumbradismo* was a negative definition, in the sense that it described an absence rather than specific traits: it stressed the anti-institutional commitments of those who supposedly adhered to this belief instead of trying to identify the content of their beliefs. As a result, the accusation of *alumbradismo* could apply to any forms of religiosity that aimed to bypass ecclesiastical mediations, insisted on individual enlightenment, and allowed for the possibility of salvation of non-Christians. This is the conclusion I reached by analyzing the thought of those accused of being *alumbrados* rather than adopting the inquisitorial categories, or following the findings of

9 Nalle, *The Messiah of Cardenete*; Bodian, "Entangled Discourses," 349.

scholars who had analyzed *alumbradism* up to that point, including Antonio Márquez's rigid definitions.¹⁰

My last consideration is historiographical in nature. It concerns the relations between Iberia and Europe in the early modern period with regard to both the Sephardic diaspora and the impact of the Reformation, religious dissent, and the radical Reformation. Much has been written in recent years about the history of religious minorities in the Iberian Peninsula, and especially about Marranos. More and more scholars have looked to the Sephardic diaspora as a fertile ground for the emergence of tolerant and radical cultures in an age of confessionalism and intolerance. In this respect, however, Spain and Europe represent two distinct and parallel histories. The general consensus still depicts Spain as the land of the Inquisition, intolerance, and obscurantism. This suggests that the self-identity mythology developed in Spain and the so-called Black Legend formulated by European Protestants have largely succeeded in erasing all traces of conflict and outbursts of resistance from the history of sixteenth-century Spain, making reality and imagination coincide. This consensus elides the traumatic passage that led to the birth of the Inquisition and a mono-confessional Spain. It is on this traumatic passage that I turn my inquiry, seeking to capture the incredulous gaze of those who experienced it, the readings and proposals that many put forth at the time, and the voices of those condemned during inquisitorial trials.

It was in the course of this traumatic transition from a multi- to a mono-confessional Spain that the proposals of the *alumbrados* matured, with their insistence on individual religiosity and inner enlightenment as a means to gain freedom from the new confessional politics that denied such individual freedom. This, then, is the Spanish heresy that provided the title for the Italian and Spanish editions of this book. It was branded as heresy by the Spanish Inquisition, and it was born as a response to specifically Iberian problems, which shaped new forms of spirituality and the relationship with the divine. We do not find here any institutionalized processes such as those that gave rise to the various Reformed confessions in Europe. The galaxy of ideas that can be bracketed under the phenomenon of *alumbradismo* was never formalized in theological and legal terms, if only because such validation would have been impossible given the repression set in motion by the Spanish Inquisition. However, those ideas remained alive and forceful, and even produced a coherent and unified proposal that permeated sectors of Spanish culture during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

10 Márquez, *Los Alumbrados*; Homza, "The Merits of Disruption," 231.

As I show in chaps. 6–7, it is imperative to place this Spanish context in a broader perspective. This perspective encompasses the European world of the Reformation and its religious denominations as well as the entire Iberian empire, whose geographical vastness turned the problem of assimilation, conversion, and control (as I have defined it) into a global problem. Thus, the book closes by trying to intuit the potential that these undercurrents had outside of Spain – the infinite possibilities that the discovery of individuality and inner religious experience disclosed even in a repressive and censorious institutional framework. Only by releasing Spain from the historiographical isolation in which previous scholarship on the *converso* problem has confined it can we finally appreciate the European and global importance of the alternative vision of Christianity that emerged in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain – a vision that anticipated, paralleled, and sometimes even intersected with the Reformed confessions.

I hope to have demonstrated that we can no longer think of Spanish heterodox religious thought as ideologically dependent on and subordinate to the great European reform movements.¹¹ The sophisticated theological and legal reflection that arose from the social and legal consequences of forced baptisms included an alternative vision to that of the Reformed confessions. Perhaps we can go even further and acknowledge that the *alumbrados* articulated a need for an intimate and direct relationship with God whose contours were specific to the Iberian context but whose reverberations were much broader. Their insistence on charity and forgiveness, as well as a heightened soteriological optimism, gave rise to a new theological proposal that was removed from both the Catholic and Lutheran orthodoxies. The kernel of this new theology was Matthew’s “gentle yoke,” which fascinated the diverse protagonists of this book and was transformed into the conviction that, as Pedro de Cazalla said, “between man and God there was but a thread.”¹²

11 This point is further elaborated in the introduction to García-Arenal, *After conversion*. For a series of objections, see Bodian, “Entangled Discourses.”

12 I will discuss Pedro de Cazalla’s idea in detail in chap. 4.

The Weight of the Old Law: The *Converso* Tradition and Hernando de Talavera (1487)

1 Toledo, 1449

A profound divide separates the two halves of the fifteenth century in Castile. In 1449 Castilians were making continuous forays southward into Muslim-held al-Andalus,¹ while suffering frequent attacks from the east as Navarre and Aragon sought to expand their kingdoms. In early January of that year, a small army under Prince Alonso of Navarre probed almost one hundred kilometers into Castile without resistance. Such incursions often resulted from pacts between the Muslim kings of Granada and the Navarrese ruler. They exposed the weakness of Castile's military defense, caused panic among the people, and further debilitated the already tenuous authority of the Crown.² Even so, Álvaro de Luna, King John II's favorite and chief adviser, waited until after the Navarrese raid in January to deal with the situation. His solution was to demand "extraordinary service" from the cities of Castile to raise an army sufficiently powerful to defend the eastern frontier and mount a military campaign against Aragon.

Toledo, which after its latest rebellion against the monarch had been placed under the authority of Pero Sarmiento (chief butler to John II of Castile and governor of the city's fortress), refused to accept Luna's call, claiming that it contravened the privileges granted to the city by the king. To bypass the problem, the royal tax collector Alonso Cota and other *conversos* of Toledo advanced the necessary sum. When rumors of those loans began to circulate on January 27, some residents rose up in revolt. A mob led by a maker of wineskins (who would enter Spanish folklore through sayings like *Soplará el odrero y alborotado se ha Toledo*, "The wineskin maker will call and Toledo is in turmoil") rang the church bell and invaded Cota's house and the *converso* neighborhood, La Magdalena. Despite meeting stiff resistance, the rioters prevailed; a large number of houses were burned and some of the richest and best-known residents were hanged in the public square. The incident was just one of many tax revolts in Castile during the last years of John II's reign, which

1 Cartagena, *Defensorium*, 276–77.

2 Pérez de Guzmán, *Crónica de don Juan segundo*, chap. x.

were marked by Álvaro de Luna's limitless authority and the hunger for power of Henry, the heir to the throne. But it would soon be known that the wine-skin maker had been spurred on by some of the local authorities and by Pero Sarmiento himself.

A contemporary chronicle described Toledo as "the city that is the first to sense the slightest unrest occurring in the kingdom and like a salamander in the fire, attracts the food of rivalries to itself and cannot live without feasting upon the poison of discord."³ This was not the first time Toledo had risen up against the king, but the present moment was especially grave. At the time of the insurrection, the king of Navarre had invaded Castile and reached Cuenca, and Prince Henry, who was in open opposition to his father, had made a secret agreement with Sarmiento.

During the long months of the Toledan resistance against the royal authorities, other significant incidents occurred. On June 5, 1449, Sarmiento declared that all New Christians of Jewish descent and their offspring were ineligible for any public office; he also dismissed fourteen city councilmen (*regidores*) who were *conversos*. With these calculated acts he rid himself of adversaries, dealt a death blow to the city's *converso* oligarchy, and legitimized the rebels' pillaging and seizure of property. He justified the measures by arguing that *conversos* were "unreliable in their faith in Our Lord the Redeemer" and that their ancestors, the Jews of Toledo, had betrayed their Christian neighbors many times, from the time of the first Muslim invasion up to the present.

Marcos García de Mazambrós, whom his enemies insultingly called "el bachiller Marquillo," gave legal cover to the decree against employing *conversos*. First he drew up a long list of the acts of treachery that Jews had committed against the city, from the arrival of the Arabs to the latest revolt. Then, "following the spirit and form of legal and sacred decrees,"⁴ he based the exclusion of the *conversos* on two documents: a canon from the Fourth Council of Toledo, compiled by Gratian in the *Decretum*, and a privilege granted to the city by a King Alfonso of Castile and León. (He did not specify which of the many kings of that name had issued it.)

3 "[L]a ciudad que siente antes que ninguna los más ligeros trastornos ocurridos en el reino y, como salamandra en el fuego, recoge en sí el pábulo de las rivalidades y no sabe vivir si no se alimenta con el veneno de las discordias": Palencia, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, 3: 395. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

4 "[S]iguiendo el tenor y forma del derecho y de los santos decretos." See Benito Ruano, "La 'Sentencia-Estatuto,'" 279; I recommend this work for its details on the discussion generated by the decree. It was clear from the first that the supposed royal privilege was a falsification by "Marquillo."

Since the late fourteenth century, Spain had been racked by periods of anti-Jewish violence. During the pogroms of 1391, maddened crowds had destroyed synagogues, razed entire neighborhoods, and forced tens of thousands of Jews to be baptized. More than 50,000 of these baptisms were in Valencia and Castile, spurred on by the fiery preaching of Saint Vincent Ferrer, “the angel of the Apocalypse.”⁵ In 1412 the anti-Jewish decrees issued by the the Queen-Regent, Catharine of Lancaster – who was advised by both Ferrer and the *converso* bishop of Burgos, Pablo de Santa María – sharply limited the traditional political and economic privileges that the Jews of Castile had long enjoyed. The famous disputation of Tortosa, during which the most prominent Jewish and Christian theologians had dueled for over two years using their respective Scriptures and syllogisms, ended with a victory for the Christians under the recently converted Jerónimo de Santa Fe.⁶ Society was increasingly unwilling to tolerate Jews, but *conversos* seemed to find greater freedom of action. As a result, voluntary conversions began to occur alongside forced ones. Solomon Ibn Verga, author of *Shevet Yehudah*, remarked on the slow and inexorable decline of the Jewish communities of Castile and the simultaneous and swift economic and social rise of the converted, both at court and in municipal governments.⁷

Unexpectedly, however, the equilibrium achieved after 1391 began to break down in the late 1430s. Conflicts between Old and New Christians became one of the gravest social problems in Castile for the rest of the century, and many episodes of anti-*converso* violence like the one in Toledo took place, causing serious problems of public order.

In this atmosphere, the decree that “Marquillo” issued in Toledo would change the terms of the traditional polemics between Christians and Jews – terms that had underlain the disputation of Tortosa and inflamed the impassioned writings of recent converts. From this point onward the debate shifted to the very heart of Christianity, and a new reading of the Scriptures would explore their meaning, their validity, and how they should function within the Christian community.

5 Baer, *A History of the Jews*, 2: 95ff. On the complex relationships between Christians and “minorities” in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths*.

6 Baer, *A History of the Jews*, 2: 170–243.

7 Ibn Verga, *La vara de Yehudah*; Márquez Villanueva, “Conversos y cargos concejiles”; Gutwirth, “The Expulsion from Spain”; Cohen, *A Historian in Exile*.

2 Alonso de Cartagena

The first response to Pero Sarmiento's statute came immediately and boldly from Alonso de Cartagena, one of the most powerful and influential *conversos* in Castile. A humanist and translator, he was bishop of Burgos and had represented the Castilian Church at the Council of Basel, though he was not entirely in sympathy with the Council's theses. He belonged to one of the most well-known families of Spanish Jews to have converted to Christianity. His father, Solomon Ha-Levi, had been chief rabbi of Burgos before becoming a Christian in 1390, a year before the violent wave of forced baptisms. Naturally, his conversion shook both the Christian and Jewish communities profoundly. Adopting the baptismal name Pablo de Santa María, he required his family, including his five-year-old son Alonso, to convert as well.⁸ Only the rabbi's wife, whom he abandoned to embark on a spectacular career in the Church, remained faithful to Judaism.

As chief rabbi, Solomon had founded a flourishing school of Biblical and Talmudic studies, reinvigorating a Hebrew tradition that had been in decline. As a Christian he earned a doctorate of theology from Paris and became chaplain to King Henry III of Castile, nuncio to the anti-Pope Pedro de Luna, and chancellor to King John II before returning to Burgos as its bishop. Some of his written works, particularly his annotations to the *Postillae* by Nicholas of Lyra and the anti-Jewish treatise *Scrutinium Scripturarum*, circulated widely in Europe and wielded considerable influence in Luther's Germany.⁹

To those who would see the Inquisition's birth forty years later as a sign of how Castilian policy toward the *conversos* had regressed, it was clear that the Santa Marías had managed to remain united and defend a position of unusual privilege. In the midst of the polemic over the purity-of-blood statutes, even Fernán Díaz de Toledo recalled that the family was linked to the most important

8 See Cantera Burgos, *La conversión del célebre talmudista*; Serrano, *Los conversos*. Only Netanyahu, without convincing evidence, places the family's conversion in August 1391: *The Origins*, 168. See Fernández Gallardo, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 16. This monograph is fundamental for reconstructing the political and ideological influence of both father and son, and for its general view of the important figure of Alonso de Cartagena. On Cartagena as *converso* intellectual, see the seminal analysis of Rostenstock, *New Men* and "Alonso de Cartagena."

9 Luther drew extensively on Santa María for his *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (WA 53, S. 417–552) references to the text are from A. Malena's Italian translation and commentary: Luther, *Degli ebrei*, esp. 6–7, 67, 129. For how those ideas spread in humanist Florence and were used by Ficino in his *De christiana religionis* Vasoli, "Guillaume Postel," 217 and "Quasi sit Deus." For the work of Nicholas of Lyra in Castile and its surprising influence on the history of Spanish architecture, see Pereda, "Le origini dell'architettura cubica."

lineages¹⁰ and had assumed the highest offices in the political world of Castile. By the end of the fifteenth century both bishops, father and son, were regarded as the height of *converso* nobility: both Fernán Pérez de Guzmán in *Generaciones y semblanzas* and Fernando del Pulgar in *Claros varones de Castilla* portray them as exemplary figures.¹¹ While Pablo had helped conclude one of the most important phases of a fanatical, violent anti-Jewish polemic through his determined theological opposition, Alonso – a skilled politician – chose to reinterpret the Scriptures under the banner of unity and equality.

Alonso de Cartagena begins with the obvious continuity between the Old and New religions. He sees Biblical history as a single itinerary proceeding from Adam and Moses to Jesus – that is, as the Chosen People’s long road toward the ultimate goal of Christianity. With a sure command of passages from Scripture, he showed that dwellers of the New Jerusalem were a single nation that lacked internal divisions; just as Isaiah had prophesied, they were united and guided by the light of God.

The metaphor that structures Alonso de Cartagena’s vision is precisely of the new faith as illumination; he makes it the key to all his proofs of the unbreakable unity of the nation of Christ. In almost scientific fashion he considers the different kinds of light known to man, concluding with a faith that is like the noonday sun: it lights the whole world to even its farthest northern reaches, fills the breasts of the apostles in southern lands with charity, and melts the paralyzing ice that surrounds the infidels of the north. It is the most classic of all images in the Gospel of John: “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”¹² The verse, one of the most quoted among the *alumbrados* of Castile, ordered Cartagena’s religious universe and underlay the most important proof in his *Defensorium unitatis fidei*.

That work proposes four brief theorems that their author calls “Biblical flour made into bread”; together, they define his total vision of the Church.¹³ The first two explain that the Jews, just like the Gentiles, have the opportunity to redeem themselves through baptism and grace.¹⁴ The third, which Cartagena considered the most important, shows that any distinction between peoples, lineages, and bloodlines disappears in Christianity; once within it, Jews and Gentiles are the same. This would be the true meaning of Isaiah 11:6–7

10 Fernán Díaz de Toledo, “Instrucción del relator para el obispo de Cuenca” in Cartagena, *Defensorium*, appendix 11, 352–4.

11 Pérez de Guzmán, *Generaciones*, 94–5; Pulgar, *Claros varones*, 113–21.

12 John 1:9; Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 133; Cartagena, *Defensorium*, 88.

13 Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 141; Cartagena, *Defensorium*, 93.

14 Cartagena, *Defensorium*, part 11, theorems 1 and 2.

(“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid...”).¹⁵ Cartagena argues that Israel cannot be sanctified by divisions but rather by the eventual union of the Sons of Jacob and all other nations under “one king [and] one shepherd who is Christ, in order to form a single people, a single language, and a single flock.”¹⁶

The fourth and final theorem concerns the ancient, noble history of the Jews and how its people might recover it if, after a long period of stumbling in the dark, they converted to the new faith. But this postulate barely nods to the radical freedom of Saint Paul, since its clear political position is not in favor of absolute equality but rather of unifying and equalizing the two peoples under the Law of Christ. The egalitarian spirit of the Biblical passages that Cartagena cites recedes toward the end of his treatise. His position is difficult to separate from his personal situation, since he posits that the convert would retain the same titles, privileges, and nobility that he possessed before.¹⁷

For Cartagena, any other argument about the relations between Gentile-descended and Jewish-descended Christians is simply heresy, intended to question the freedom inherent in the New Law, the regenerative virtue of baptism, and a Church tradition reaching back to patristics, Gratian’s *Decretum*, and even the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso the Wise.¹⁸ He asserts that the canons from the IV Council of Toledo, which Marcos de Mazambrós had applied in the Toledan case, did not refer to persons of Jewish blood and their descendants but to those who followed the Old Law “in spirit.” The canons penalized those who abandoned the true meaning of the Christian faith not by their ethnicity, which was determined by the laws of nature, but by their own choice. Mazambrós and citizens of Toledo who followed his new doctrine incarnated

15 Cartagena, *Defensorium*, theorem 3, chap. iv; Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 201. Isaiah’s prophecy is taken as proof of the indivisible unity of all Christians.

16 “[U]n solo rey, un solo pastor, que es Cristo, para formar un solo pueblo, una sola lengua y una sola grey”: Cartagena, *Defensorium*, theorem 3, chap. III; Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 199.

17 “A continuation of the fourth theorem that shows how those who arrive at the Catholic faith from one side or the other recover and acquire the right to obtain once more all the superiority, nobility, and other merits that they had at first, so long as it does not go against the principles of Church hierarchy” (“Continuación del cuarto teorema que hace ver como los que llegan a la fe católica, tanto de un lado como del otro, recobran y adquieren el derecho de conseguir de nuevo toda la superioridad, nobleza, u otros méritos que primeramente tenían, con tal de que no vaya en contra de los principios de la jerarquía de la Iglesia”): Cartagena, *Defensorium*, chap. vi, theorem 4; Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 213.

18 Cartagena, *Defensorium*, part III.

a new apostasy, that of “judaizing”: they might be ethnic Gentiles, but even an illiterate servant could accuse them of being “Hebrews in spirit.”¹⁹

Cartagena’s concise refutation offered the clearest and most brilliant rebuke to the racist doctrines promulgated in Toledo. This plain-spoken treatise would become a reference point for many later responses. Its author had subtly and skillfully set out the basic principles for replying to the theological-juridical attack by Marcos de Mazambrós. As we see from these citations, the *Defensorium* is not a full, learned work of theology but an intelligent handbook of passages that could be wielded in the controversy. Cartagena the pragmatist had adapted Biblical texts to the needs of Castilian society as he saw them.

His efforts did not conclude there, however; he went to battle on other fronts. On 24 September 1449, Pope Nicholas v issued the bull *Humani generi inimicus*, which proposed the immediate excommunication of all “sowers of discord.” This was proclaimed with unusual speed through the direct influence of both Alonso de Cartagena and Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, who had already persuaded the pope not to receive the delegation sent by the city of Toledo to defend the statute.²⁰ But Cartagena also took a particular interest in Álvaro de Luna’s political ambiguity in dealing with *converso* affairs.

Luna faced a stark dilemma. He wanted the allegiance of a city that had strong anti-*converso* sentiments but without losing the support of the Jewish communities, who were increasingly marginalized by figures like Cartagena. He calculated that the Toledo revolt and the discrimination allowed by the statutes would rid him of the *conversos* who held high office under John II and enjoyed the king’s confidence; therefore he chose to reverse the support that he had been offering the Castilian *conversos* for more than two decades. For that he paid the ultimate price: his life. His meteoric career ended with his public beheading in Valladolid in 1453. This left such an imprint on Castilian history and thought that Luna became the exemplar of the instability of Fortune.²¹ His last words from the scaffold were for his bitterest enemy, Alonso de

19 Cartagena, *Defensorium*, part II, chap. xxvi; Verdín-Díaz, *Alonso de Cartagena*, 308. On this point, also highlighted by Oropesa, see n. 81 below.

20 For more on this episode and its immediate consequences, see Benito Ruano, *Toledo en el siglo xv*, 33–81; Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza*, 51ff.; Netanyahu, *The Origins*, 332. All the bulls of excommunication are listed in Beltrán de Heredia, “Las bulas de Nicolás v,” 21–47.

21 He appears in stanza XXI of Jorge Manrique’s “Coplas a la muerte de su padre”: “And that great High Constable,/ commander and noble favorite, whom we knew,/ we ought not to speak of him,/ but will say that we witnessed/ his beheading,/ His vast wealth and immense domains,/ villages and estates,/ his command,/ what were they to him but grief?/ What were they but pain and sorrow/ when he left them?” (“Pues aquel grand Condestable,/ maestre que conoscimos/ tan privado,/ no cumple que de él se hable/ sino

Cartagena, whom he accused of leading the Castilian *conversos* in plotting his downfall.²²

Throughout the second half of the fifteenth century, in a political atmosphere that was increasingly hostile to tolerance, tensions grew not only between Old and New Christians but also between Jews and *conversos*. There were always individuals in the pro-*converso* faction who believed that New Christians could be defended only from an anti-Jewish position. This perspective was foreign to theologians like Juan de Torquemada, who wrote in Rome under Nicholas V and was therefore removed from Castile and its internal struggles. But it would triumph after 1449 among all the *converso* theologians, from Cartagena to Oropesa and ultimately Hernando de Talavera. Conflicts between Old and New Christians in Castile had entered the terrain of political warfare, and Cartagena's arguments in his *Defensorium* had become efficient Biblical clichés, deployed on many occasions as the polemic developed.

The Franciscan Alonso de Espina accompanied Álvaro de Luna in his last hours and heard his accusations about the *converso* plot that had brought him down. In 1454, Espina embarked on an anti-Jewish and anti-*converso* campaign. Inspired by the Observant branch of his order (which included Bernardino of Siena, John of Capistrano, and Bernardino of Feltre), he preached virulent sermons from Valladolid to Segovia, claiming that heresies and crimes were endangering Old Christians. While accusing Jews and *conversos* alike, he called for the establishment of an Inquisition like that of France, engendering the greatest wave of anti-Jewish feeling that Castile had ever known.²³

Espina was the first to bring to Castile the accusation of ritual murder. In a series of homilies in Valladolid, he accused Jews of the city of having killed a

solo que lo vimos/ degollado./ Sus infinitos tesoros,/ sus villas y sus lugares,/ su mandar/
¿qué le fueron sino lloros?/ ¿Fuéronle sino pesares/ al dexar?"): Manrique, *Poesía*, 162–3;
Grossman, *The Golden Age*, 23–5. See also below the lines that Juan de Lucena devoted to
Luna in *De vita beata*.

22 Round, *The Greatest Man Uncrowned*; Pastor Bodmer, *Grandeza y tragedia de un valido*.
On the alliance against Cartagena and in favor of Castilian Jews, see also Netanyahu, *The
Origins*, 681–708.

23 Netanyahu, *The Origins*, 659ff.; Vidal Doval, 'Misera Hispania.' On Espina's *Fortalitium* and
its third book "The Fortress of Faith," see Mehuyas Ginio, *De bello iudaeorum*; Echevarría,
The Fortress of Faith, 47ff. (esp. for the Muslim situation). Pereda has linked this episode
to one of the most anti-Semitic paintings in Spanish art, "The Fountain of Life": Pereda,
Images of discord, part 1. He goes on to explore the Franciscan's theory about sacred
images. On Espina's role in the conflicts of the fifteenth century and the early Spanish
Inquisition, see Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 12–19; on his relations with Germany, see
Carlebach, *Divided Souls*, 49–50; on the circulation of anti-Jewish legends in Europe, see
Rubin, *Gentile Tales*.

Christian child, and he encouraged their persecution. Captured and tortured by the secular authorities, the Jews eventually confessed to all sorts of crimes; although the king later set them free, their denunciation by the Franciscan friar echoed throughout the kingdom.²⁴ In Segovia his influence caused many Old Christians to wear the word “Jesus” prominently on their hats, to distinguish themselves from *conversos*.

Thirty-two years later, in 1486, a notary from Segovia, Antonio Sánchez de Lozoya, recalled Encina’s malevolent sermons – and the story of the hats – in his testimony at the Inquisition trial of a high official of the royal treasury, Diego Arias Dávila. He related how that famous and indomitable *converso* had denied payment to anyone who appeared before him wearing such a hat or anything else meant to set them apart from the others. The witness repeated rumors that Arias Dávila had bribed a group of cloistered monks to contradict Espina publicly. Arias’s enemies would eventually accuse him and other *conversos* at Henry IV’s court of having poisoned the Franciscan, who died in 1496 under circumstances that remain unclear to this day.²⁵

Espina’s long experience in Castile is summed up in his best-known work, *Fortalitium fidei*, which combines his personal reminiscences with a collection of anti-Jewish legends gathered from all over Europe. The treatise was widely read and went through several editions in Germany.

3 Scripture and Perfection: Alonso de Oropesa and the Hieronymite Tradition

Alonso de Oropesa’s thought matured in this context of rising tension and narrowing space for compromise. It is summarized in his *Lumen ad revelationem Gentium*, one of the most important theological treatises of fifteenth-century Spain. A monk of the Order of Saint Jerome, he began to write a few months after the Toledo revolt of 1449, determined to end the conflicts between Old and New Christians inside his own establishment, one of the leading religious houses of Spain. Although the struggle already existed within the order, the matter gained urgency after Pedro Sarmiento’s promulgation of the purity-of-blood statute. By 1451 Oropesa had written forty chapters, but in the same year he was named prior of the Talavera monastery and embarked on a series of prestigious posts – chaplain and trusted representative of Henry IV, then General of the Hieronymite order in 1457 – that interrupted his progress.

²⁴ Espina, *Fortalitium*, fols. 19off.

²⁵ See *Proceso inquisitorial contra los Arias Dávila* (nos. 42, 122, 138), 145–6.

By the time he returned to the *Lumen* eleven years later, the situation had deteriorated badly.²⁶

Oropesa inherited the leadership of the pro-*converso* faction from Alonso de Cartagena, who died in 1457, during unsettled times. While the Toledo rebellion had been quashed, clashes between Old and New Christians spread throughout Castile, dominated sermons from both sides, and reached the court of Henry IV. In this atmosphere of open conflict and mutual denunciation, Oropesa strove to maintain a moderate position against that of Espina's Observant Franciscans. He put an end to the Franciscan proposal of an Inquisition structured along apostolic-medieval lines, suggesting instead one composed of bishops, with broader responsibilities.²⁷ He took a similar position in 1461 when Archbishop Antonio del Carrillo of Toledo called on him to calm the renewed confrontation between *conversos* and Old Christians in that city.²⁸ Oropesa punished and called "heretics" the members of either side who refused to believe in the unity and equality of all Christians and the regenerative virtue of baptism. After all the confrontations between Oropesa on one hand and Espina on the other,²⁹ King Henry IV put his trust in the Hieronymites and the pro-*converso* faction, expelling the most radical of the Observant Franciscans from his court. The chief historian of the Hieronymite order could therefore claim that this event was the first Inquisition to take place in Castile.³⁰

Oropesa would not finish his *Lumen*, which he dedicated to Archbishop Carrillo, until 1464. During the fifteen years since its inception, he had devoted himself to Castilian politics and the quarrels between Old and New Christians. The work marked a high point in the controversy over the purity-of-blood statutes. While explaining his own position as head of the pro-*converso* side, it also tried to bring the large *converso* majority into line. In the nearly one hundred years of the Hieronymite order, this was the first treatise written by one of its members; it was the only product of a new Order that played a special role in the Old-vs.-New Christian conflict, whose fortunes were closely tied to those of the *conversos* throughout the fifteenth century in Spain.

The Order of Saint Jerome was founded in 1373. It arose as a Castilian expression of a long European (and especially Italian) tradition that defended

26 See Díaz y Díaz's introduction to Oropesa, *Luz*, 7–8; Kriegel, "Alonso de Oropesa."

27 For a reconstruction of the Franciscan-Hieronymite disputes over what inquisitorial model to adopt in Castile, see Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 7–52.

28 On the artistic and architectural consequences of these events and the relevant positions of Carrillo and Oropesa, see Pereda, "La Puerta de los Leones."

29 Enríquez del Castillo narrates an eloquent example in *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chap. LIII, 206.

30 Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden*, 1: 432–35.

asceticism, preached a return to the Scriptures, and proposed the perfectibility of laymen under the banner of a renewed cult of Saint Jerome.³¹ Giovanni d'Andrea of Bologna, a specialist in canon law, had revived the saint's doctrines and writings by compiling the *Hieronymianus* or *De laudibus sancti Hieronymi* between 1334 and 1336. The work comprised biographical information, testimonies, tales of miracles, and a sort of anthology of works by Jerome. D'Andrea's avowed intent was to renew devotion to the saint, whose letters had reached laymen and clerics, men and women, the educated and the unschooled; the Italian jurist encouraged worship of him through a carefully chosen iconography.³² His success surpassed all expectations. The hitherto indistinct figure of Saint Jerome was transformed into an ascetic and spiritual director *par excellence* in a Europe seething with spiritual fervor, lay congregations, and circles of Beguines, Beghards, and pious women who sought salvation and aspired to perfection. Jerome's letters to Paula and Marcella encouraged a gentle rule that seemed to push even laymen and women toward a search for perfection – the same yearning that had inspired noble Roman women in the East to follow the saint into the desert.³³

During the second half of the fourteenth century, five congregations adopted Jerome as their patron saint. One was a group of Italian and Spanish heretics who, after a period of meditation and solitude in rural Castile and Sierra Morena, eventually consolidated around Tomasuccio da Foligno.³⁴ This Franciscan tertiary had preached in Tuscany and Umbria that the Holy Spirit would descend to earth in Spain. Although his prophecy drew an accusation by the Inquisition, he managed to encourage his followers, including some Castilians, to gather together in that country.³⁵

31 On the birth of the order, see Castro, "Espiritualismo y conversos," 66ff.; Revuelta Somalo, *Los Jerónimos*; Highfield, "The Hieronymites in Spain" (somewhat imprecise); Starr-LeBeau, *In the Shadow of the Virgin*. For the Hieronymites' contributions to Spain's cultural history, see the pertinent articles in the collected vols. *Studia Hieronymiana*.

32 On the various medieval traditions of "pseudo-Jeromes" and the new hagiography launched by one who often styled himself "Giovanni Andrea di San Girolamo," see Rice, *Saint Jerome*; and esp. Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie* 60–5.

33 Burton-Christies, *The Word in the Desert*; Laurence, *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminin*. See also (though on a later period) Saint Saens, *La nostalgie du désert*, 48–52.

34 Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 69. On Tomasuccio, see the articles collected in Pazzelli, *Il beato Tomasuccio da Foligno*; Rusconi, *L'attesa della fine*, 148–55; Montefusco, "Tommasuccio da Foligno." On the Spanish and Portuguese hermit movement and its links to Joachimism in Italy, see Freitas Carvalho, "Joachim de Flore au Portugal," 418–21.

35 Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 69–70. On Tomasuccio's trial, see Sigüenza's description in *Historia de la orden* 1: 59–60; on his overcoming of a trial by fire and the spiritualist implications of the episode that Sigüenza narrates see Olivari, "La Historia," 576–7.

The Hieronymite order, then, arose out of a wide variety of experiences. It encompassed the first clergy and even high officials who had fled the cities under the violent reign of Peter I of Castile, seeking solitude and salvation; Catalan Beguines and Beghards who were seeking perfectibility, like many others in Europe at the time;³⁶ and heterodox Italian movements connected to Franciscan Joaquinism and its prophetic inclinations. In Sigüenza's admiring account, these early anchorites combined nobility – several were, in fact, aristocrats who had deserted their rank – with manual labor and constant study of the Scriptures, traits that clearly distinguished them from traditional spirituality.

At the beginning, all these men realized that they would be denied a monk's habit and accused of heresy and Beghardism.³⁷ Yet their spirituality was profound: they believed it possible to live intensely and redeem themselves even outside the institution of the Church and its conventional expressions of devotion. The importance they assigned to working with one's hands clearly distinguished them from the mendicant orders. They were convinced that man could seek God and pray to Him anywhere, achieving salvation through a layman's life devoted to manual labor: an early Hieronymite hermit, Francisco, claimed that "any place will serve for prayer, because God is in every spot where His servants search for Him."³⁸ This view by Francisco, a shoemaker, was shared by the monks of Guadalupe, a community largely made up of "lay brothers" even after the order was institutionalized by the pope.³⁹

Rome confirmed the order in 1373, following a prophecy by Saint Bridget of Sweden. The Spanish Hieronymites received the rule of Saint Augustine simultaneously with Gerard Groote's Brethren of the Common Life, another movement that would be accused of Beghardism. Like the Hieronymites, the Brethren had been advised in vain by Pope Gregory IX to follow a rule derived from Saint Jerome's life and correspondence. Nonetheless, about sixty years later, Fray Lope de Olmedo revised and systematized the earlier rule by

36 The definitions of "Beguines" and "Beghards" come from Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden* 1: 75–6. On Beghardism in Catalonia, see Pou i Martí, *Visionarios, Beguinos y Fraticelos*.

37 "Because of the holy words they spoke and the high affairs of Heaven that they expressed with simplicity, since their souls were free of guile, men seized the occasion to defame them as no more than heretics" ("De las palabras santas que les decían y de las cosas altas del Cielo que comunicaban con ellos sencillamente, como tenían las almas sin dobleces, tomaban ocasión de infamarlos, no más que de herejes"): Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden*, 1: 75.

38 "[P]ara orar cualquier lugar es bueno, porque Dios está en todo lugar que le buscaren sus siervos": *Historia de la Orden*, 2: 227.

39 *Historia de la Orden*, 2: 226.

imposing a more rigid one that did reflect passages from Jerome's letters, creating an Observant branch of the order that found acceptance in Castile and to a lesser degree in northern Italy.⁴⁰

The Hieronymites of fifteenth-century Castile achieved a success unparalleled even by that of similar movements in Italy, where the penitential aspect prevailed through lay congregations like those of the Gesuati. In the Iberian Peninsula, in contrast, the contemplative strain triumphed. In spite of the rule imposed by the pope, Spaniards took as their model and teacher the Jerome who was a pilgrim, penitent, and great Biblist. His qualities as a holy philologist, translator, and possessor of a library in the desert inspired Hieronymite religiosity, whose central experience was the continual reading of and meditation (*ruminatio*) upon scripture. The early hermit Rodrigo the Logician, "teacher of a king's children," wove straw baskets without ever raising his eyes from the Bible;⁴¹ another hermit, Diego de Herrero, "knew all of Saint Paul's Epistles the way another man knows the Hail Mary." In Hieronymite monasteries the monks replaced the sung offices with Biblical passages, followed by a *lectio divina* and meditation on Holy Scripture. Novices retired to their cells to study the Bible except when they attended lectures on Biblical exegesis.⁴²

The deep Hieronymite Biblical tradition was assigned even greater weight in Lope de Olmedo's reforms. While promoting strict asceticism and even greater anti-intellectualism (Olmedo quoted Jerome's *scientia inflat*), they made a return to Scripture the first imperative. Even a century later, Protestant polemicists would remark on the outstanding evangelical spirit that reigned in the reformed monastery of San Isidoro in Seville: while the Church in the city was lost in sophisms, the Bible ruled within the monastery walls as the only source of daily spirituality and devotion.⁴³ Late fruits of Olmedo's rigorous reform were the "Protestant" Bible translations of Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera, two of the twelve Hieronymite monks who fled from Seville to Geneva early in 1558. The monastery was decimated by the escapes and subsequent executions; it returned to obedience to the mother house in 1567.

40 Alcina, "Fray Lope de Olmedo."

41 Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden*, 1: 300–3.

42 These references are from D'Allerit, "Hiéronymite," 457. For the training of novices and how they were encouraged to reflect constantly on the Bible, see Olivari, "La *Historia*," 574. Sigüenza devotes vol. 1, chaps. XXI–XXX of his history to the education of novices. For more on readings by the monks of Guadalupe, see Vizuete Mendoza, "La biblioteca de Guadalupe"; Starr-LeBeau, *In the Shadow of the Virgin*.

43 Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, (see especially the martyrology of Garci Arias), 361–9 (245–51).

In 1941, in some of the most effective pages he ever wrote, Américo Castro called attention to the enormous significance of the Hieronymite order in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain.⁴⁴ He was replying to Bataillon, who had connected the construction of an intimist religiosity to the enthusiastic reception of Erasmus in the sixteenth century. Castro, after searching for traces of that “imprecise attempt at interior Christianity” that was Erasmianism in Spain, discovered the fifteenth-century Hieronymite phenomenon with its insistence on internalized religion and its focus of all contemplative activity on the reading of Scripture. Even his bitter opponent Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, on reconsidering the “historical enigma” of medieval Spain, acknowledged the role of the Hieronymites: in a Spain obsessed with “the epic,” conquest, and an active and militant religion, their contemplative vocation represented “the lyric.” But he also wished to diminish the attraction exerted by the order under the Trastámaras of Castile, attributing it to a loss of influence by the Franciscans and Dominicans, who had been too loyal to the previous reign of Peter I.⁴⁵

While the Hieronymites’ success lacked popular origins and did not depend on preaching in the public square, the order was clearly able to gather and assimilate the most pervasive needs and feelings of the fourteenth century in Spain. The great chancellor Pero López de Ayala – who held high office in the court of John II of Castile and shone in both politics and literature – grew close to the new order, where he found an intimate and personal current opposed to the “theological talk” (*hablar en teología*) that he censured in his *Rimado de palacio*.⁴⁶ Many other Castilian nobles felt something similar, seduced by the stark, essential spirituality that preached a return to the life of the early desert fathers. Furthermore, it did not exclude laymen but rather welcomed them in a complex system of tertiaries, “lay brothers” who could pursue their calling outside the monastery. The chancellor was a prominent member of the Mendoza family, which never ceased to support the new order both morally and economically.⁴⁷ It is no coincidence that the Mendozas helped found the monastery of San Bartolomé de Lupiana near Guadalajara in the Alcarria region, just where the *alumbrado* heresy would arise in the early sixteenth century. At the

44 Castro, “Espiritualismo y conversos,” 66ff.

45 Sánchez Albornoz, *España. Un enigma histórico*, 342–4.

46 E.g., López de Ayala, *Rimado de palacio*, 1: 29, 139. On the expression “hablar en teología” Castro, “Espiritualismo y conversos,” 55–6. One of the hermits who founded the order in Spain, Fray Pedro Fernández Pecha, wrote *Los soliloquios*, and his editor, Vega, claims that López de Ayala must have seen a copy; Vega published the work, which could not have been known to the Hieronymites because not even Sigüenza mentions it, in 1962. See Fernández Pecha, *Los soliloquios*; Lapesa, “Un ejemplo de prosa retórica.”

47 On this aspect, see Nader, *The Mendoza Family*, 95, 136–7.

dedication of that house the psalm *Lumen ad revelationem gentium et gloriam plebis tuae Israel* was sung⁴⁸ – the one that supplied the title for Alonso de Oropesa’s treatise (“a light to lighten the Gentiles...”) and was his inspiration for his theoretical formulation of the Hieronymite experience.

The priority given to Scripture therefore became an unmistakable trend, a necessity that affected all of Castilian society. Even Fernando del Pulgar recounts King John II’s delight “on hearing readings and learning statements and secrets of Holy Scripture,” leading him to grant a bishopric to the great theologian Alonso de Madrigal “el Tostado,” author of an extended work on the Bible.⁴⁹

Many *Biblias romanceadas*, or versions of Scripture translated into the vernacular, had been circulating since the late thirteenth century among both Jews and Christians.⁵⁰ But the fifteenth century saw new translations that aspired to a high degree of fidelity to the original text, and Christian versions actively sought out interpretations that came from the Hebraic tradition. In 1422 Luis de Guzmán, master of the Order of Calatrava, commissioned Rabbi Moshe Arragel of Guadalajara to produce a direct translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew, in hopes of obtaining an accurate rendering. As he wrote to the rabbi, “You who are so wise in the Law of the Jews, know that we desire a Bible in Romance, glossed and illustrated; and we are told that you are wholly capable of making one. Two things moved us to ask for this: first, that today’s Bibles are found to contain very corrupt Romance; and second, that we badly need glosses for the obscure passages.”⁵¹

In his letters to Luis de Guzmán, Rabbi Arragel remarked on the difficulties of the project and noted the considerable differences between the Hebrew Bible and the Vulgate. But he had seen Latin versions in Castile that were close to the Hebrew text: “in Madrid and in Cuéllar in our own kingdom of Castile there are two Latin Bibles that conform much better to the Hebrew than the

48 Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden*, 1: 91.

49 Pulgar, *Claros varones*, 124.

50 Rodríguez de Castro attempts to catalogue them in *Biblioteca española*. See also articles by Llamas in *Sefarad*: “La antigua Biblia castellana,” and “Nueva Biblia medieval,” and “Antigua Biblia judía”; Morreale, “Las antiguas Biblias hebreo-españolas”; Rodríguez Porto, “Forgotten Witnesses.”

51 “Sabed muy sabio en la ley de los judíos que avemos cobdiçia de una Biblia en rromança, glosada e ystoriada, lo qual nos dizen que soys para la fazer assy muy bastante. E a la asy demandar nos movio dos cosas: una, que las Biblias de oy sson falladas el su rromança es muy corrupto; segunda, que los tales como avemos mucho neçesario la glosa para los passos obscuros”: Sicroff, “The Arragel Bible,” 175. See Paz y Meliá’s introduction to *Biblia Antiquo Testamento*; Llamas, “La antigua Biblia castellana,” 232–3; Fellous, “La Biblia de Alba”; Gutwirth, “Rabbi Mose Arragel”; Rodríguez Porto, “Forgotten Witnesses.”

one now commonly used in the Church.”⁵² Guzmán was clearly aware of the significance and scope of the project he had assigned to the rabbi, whom he also urged to include in his translation not only commentaries by Christians but “glosses by your modern scholars that Nicholas of Lyra never saw.” As a result, commentaries by Maimonides, Ibn Ezra of Tudela, and Nachmanides of Girona were included in Arragel’s Bible, which eventually replaced Nicholas of Lyra’s *Postilla literalis super totam Bibliam*; to the latter’s exegesis by Rashi were added glosses derived from the great Hebrew tradition of Spain.⁵³

For eight years Arragel labored in the town of Maqueda, producing in 1430 one of the most important translations of the Bible into Castilian.⁵⁴ At the insistence of the Master of Calatrava, it includes 325 illustrations that constitute one of the richest and most interesting series of rabbinically inspired miniatures in existence. They also display the work’s profound connections to both the Christian and the rabbinical worlds.⁵⁵ Just a year earlier, in 1429, the former rabbi and current bishop of Burgos Pablo de Santa María – moved by the same impulse as Luis de Guzmán and the rabbi from Guadalajara – had ordered that copies be made of his renowned *Additiones ad postillam Magistri Nicolai de Lyra super Bibliam*. In them he criticized the excessive weight given to Rashi’s glosses in Lyra’s work and defended the commentaries by rabbis of the Spanish tradition. Besides those of Arragel, Maimonides, Ibn Ezra, and Nahmanides, he mentioned those of Raimon Martí, the Dominican and Pau Crestia who had dueled so fiercely with Nahmanides in the Disputation of Barcelona in 1263.⁵⁶

At about the same time, in the 1430s, Íñigo López de Mendoza, the Marquis of Santillana and a leading political and intellectual figure in Castile, commissioned the physician Martín de Lucena “el Macabeo” to translate the New Testament and the Epistles of Paul into Castilian.⁵⁷ Lucena, a *converso*, translated directly from the Greek, though his nickname “the Maccabee” leaves no doubt that he could also have done so from Hebrew (which helps explain

52 “[E]n Maydrit e en Cuellar de la nuestra Castilla, son falladas dos en latin Biblias muy mas conformes al ebrayco que la que oy es en la Egleja vulgar”: *La Biblia de Alba*, 177.

53 On this issue, see the analysis by Asensio, “Exégesis bíblica en España,” 244–5.

54 Sicroff, “The Arragel Bible,” 75. *La Biblia de Alba* is a limited facsimile ed. of the manuscript.

55 On these miniatures, see Nordström, *The Duke of Alba’s Castilian Bible*.

56 For more on the disputation, see Chazan, *Barcelona and Beyond*. On Pablo de Santa María’s *Additiones*, see Serrano, *Los conversos*, 109–14; Asensio, “Exégesis bíblica,” 246–7; Yisraeli, “From Christian Polemics.”

57 Only some portions of the translation survive, see Rodríguez de Castro, *Biblioteca española* 1: 439; Morreale, “Apuntes bibliográficos,” 92. On Martín de Lucena, see also Baer, *A History of the Jews*, 2: 345–6; Sáenz-Badillos, *La filología bíblica*, 25.

why his patron chose him). The Marquis of Santillana owned one of the richest and most select libraries in the kingdom and enjoyed close contacts with the humanists of Florence. The Lucena translation from that library must have been the one read by Santillana's son Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, the first Duke of Infantado, who "studied Holy Scripture, reading the Church Fathers, the commentators, and the glosses."⁵⁸ A few years later in Toledo, Martín de Lucena and his son Juan would establish one of the most important printing presses in the Peninsula, famous for the quality of its publications in Hebrew and the beauty of its typography.⁵⁹

Although the great Castilian families were the patrons of these translations and commentaries, rediscovery of the Bible was not confined to such circles. According to Arragel, several versions circulated in Toledo in the 1420s and 1430s. Luis de Maluenda, a *converso* from Burgos, mentioned in his will a "a large Bible that cost me three thousand two hundred fifty *maravedís*"; his uncle lamented the loss of a Hebrew Bible that had been lent to a Jew and not returned. Studies of fifteenth-century wills in Hebrew reveal a fairly widespread interest in the Scriptures, even by people who owned few books.⁶⁰ To appreciate the breadth of the phenomenon, we need only point out the frequency of Biblical quotations not only in religious literature but in fifteenth-century poetry collections (*cancioneros*).⁶¹ The wide circulation of the Biblical text is further confirmed by a burning of heretical books and "false Bibles" in Toledo in 1490, and the frequent Inquisition censorship of versions "in Romance."⁶² Not all the available Bibles were translations – some were in Latin but simply differed from the official Vulgate.

The most striking feature of the Hieronymite order, however, was its relationship to newly converted Christians.⁶³ In the spiritual and religious history of fifteenth-century Spain, Hieronymite monks are a nexus of convergence between Christians and former Jews. Américo Castro even admitted that "the combination – so famous in the case of the Hieronymites – of Christian,

58 "[E]studió la sagrada Escritura, leyendo los padres, los expositores y glosas": Layna Serrano, *Historia de Guadalajara*, 2: 10.

59 See the documentation in Serrano y Sanz, "Noticias biográficas." Lucena will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

60 Cantera Burgos, *Álvar García de Santa María*, 136, 241; Cabezedo Astrain, "La judería de Epila," 104–5, cited in Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 174–5.

61 For more information, see Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 175–6.

62 Enciso Viana, "Prohibiciones," 535; Asensio, "El erasmismo," 49, 54. Morreale, in "Apuntes bibliográficos," collects very useful data as well as references in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century literature to editions that have not survived. For an Italian perspective see Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, with specific references to Spain at 86–7.

63 An excellent review article (with bibliography only to 1991) is Coussemacker, "Convertis et Judaïsants."

Islamic, and Judaic forms of spirituality was one of the starting points for my effort to reconstruct Spain's internal history."⁶⁴ Close connections among these forms of spirituality remain to be demonstrated, both in the Hieronymite case and in other hypotheses by Castro. But it is significant that this historian devoted so much attention to the order just as he was beginning to design his great panorama of Spain's unique history and the shift from a nation of three religions to a nation in conflict.

The Order of Saint Jerome was the *converso* order *par excellence*. There, converted Jews found an open, tolerant attitude wholly free of the anti-Jewish preaching that was common in the mendicant orders, especially after the Chapter of 1437 insisted on its complete and unconditional welcome to *conversos*. Within the order, Christian spirituality and *converso* sensibility and interests fused into the common pursuit of a complex, ambitious project. Still, after 1485 the first Inquisition trials against its monks violently laid bare a world of heterodox adaptations. The *converso* Alonso de Toledo, for instance, was accused of having joined the order because its rules allowed so much freedom to study and pray. He was also accused of not having abandoned Judaism. He proudly replied, "Among us, no one knows how anyone is praying." Some witnesses claimed that Alonso "reads the Bible a great deal, and said once that he knew all the Bible stories in Romance because his father had taught them to him when he was little."⁶⁵ Fray Diego de Burgos was described by witnesses at his trial as an introverted, ill-tempered man who barely participated in community life, always retiring to his cell to study the Bible in private. A second-generation *converso*, he had responded that "he wished he could have been a Jew for six or seven years so as to learn some Hebrew,"⁶⁶ the better to carry out his studies. He died during the trial and was absolved and rehabilitated after his death.⁶⁷

64 "[L]a contextura, barruntada en el caso de los jerónimos, entre las formas de espiritualidad cristiana, islámica y judaica, fue uno de los puntos de partida para mi ensayo de reconstrucción de la historia interior de España": *Aspectos del vivir hispánico*, 157.

65 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 185, 6.

66 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 137, 22.

67 *Ibid.* Inquisition trials against Hieronymite monks formed an important chapter of the history of the Holy Office ever since Luis de Páramo, the first historian of the Inquisition in the seventeenth century. See, e.g., remarks by Lea, *History of the Inquisition*, 1: 153, 2: 286, 3: 427, 447–8; Contreras and Dedieu, "Estructuras geográficas del Santo Oficio," 27–8. The first scholar to take note of those trials was Beinart, "The Judaizing Movement"; but since he wishes simply to demonstrate the movement's existence in Castile, he records only the accusations against monks and omits lengthy defense statements and the evidence that would have the cases annulled. See Rábade Obradó, *Los judeo-conversos en la corte*, 161–77 and *Una élite de poder*, 67–8. For more on this topic see Pastore, "False Trials."

In the hagiographies that conclude his *Historia de la Orden*, José de Sigüenza stresses the energy and enthusiasm of many *conversos*. He tells stories like that of Fray Pedro de Madrid, a Jew who was converted by Saint Vincent Ferrer: “a man learned in the Scriptures, a teacher in his former synagogue, well versed in the law.”⁶⁸ These New Christians brought to the order their competence and devotion to their adopted faith, seeking to show that “Christ had not come to destroy the law written on stone tablets but to perfect it...and that there was not the slightest element of those ancient ceremonies that could not be applied in this fortunate age, full of charity and grace.”⁶⁹ Many Hieronymites devoted their lives in the order to studying the passage from the Old religion to the New. Many even applied their knowledge of Hebrew to reading the Old Testament; in this they followed the example of their patron Saint Jerome who, after struggling to learn Hebrew, had embarked on the even more arduous task of translating the Old Testament. He had paid close attention to the Hebrew original, the *hebraica veritas*, which alone – like the Greek original of the New Testament – could banish doubts and restore the purity of the text.⁷⁰ But other *converso* monks, like many later accused of judaizing, had simply sought in the warm, protective atmosphere of the monastery their own personal path to reconciling the Old and New faiths.

Oropesa’s *Lumen ad revelationem*, beginning with its title, positions itself as a dialogue with the recent Hieronymite past. It is much longer than Cartagena’s treatise, and while dealing in principle with the present moment, it eventually adopts a certain distance, laying the groundwork for the order’s traditional tolerance toward the recently converted. Oropesa did not produce his work in the heat of the polemic but reconsidered and revised it during his years as head of the order, finding time amid the many political missions assigned to him. He composed slowly and thoughtfully, noting nuances and specifying cases. In the course of the narrative he returns to the arguments that had carried the most weight for Cartagena but rejects the latter’s *vis polemica*; instead, he offers long explanations of the meaning of Christian life, with extended asides on the Old religion and the promise of the New.

The treatise was born out of the need to refute the new heresy of those who imposed division and discrimination on Christian society, establishing an

68 Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 2: 194.

69 “[A]quella ley escrita en tablas de piedra...no habia venido Cristo a destruirla, sino a perfeccionarla, y que no habia cosa tan menuda en aquellas ceremonias antiguas que no respondiese acá en esta edad dichosa, llena de caridad y de gracia.” Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 2: 194.

70 *Ep[ístola]* 102–2, cited in Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 17.

arbitrary “limit to Christ’s mercy and grace” and “not accepting that all believers must share and inherit grace equally with them.”⁷¹ That was his real motive for entering the tangled forest of the Law, sorting through its intertwined branches, and piling proof upon proof based on innumerable Biblical quotations and references to doctrine.⁷² Oropesa converts Cartagena’s succinct allusions to the text of the Bible, his commentaries on the “true light” in the Gospel of John, and the words of Saint Paul into the pillars of a more complex structure. The passage from the Old to the New Law had allowed a perfect Church to arise, one based on the equality of all believers:

The Church, understood in this way, is none other than the multitude or congregation of all the faithful, joined together by faith and charity from which come a mystical body and spirit of many members joined together, such that anyone who departs from it cannot live a life of grace.⁷³

Within this perfect community, which formed a whole with the Savior himself, Christ’s virtues were transmitted to every individual member; therefore everyone who joined with Christ in the mystical body of the Church was illuminated by grace.⁷⁴ All Christians were called upon to form this “Church of saints.” From this point of view the New Law had freed mankind from the burdens and slavery of the Old;⁷⁵ it offered perfection and “plenitude of grace,” for Christ’s coming had removed all imperfections. And nothing could illustrate Christians’ new state of grace better than Paul’s Epistles, the source that Oropesa quotes most often in his *Lumen*.

Quoting liberally from the Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans, the Hieronymite speaks of Christians’ new freedom, the “total liberty and perfection of those faithful to the New Testament.”⁷⁶ This is why any attempt to return to the now-surpassed Law of Moses must be condemned. But one must equally reject any hope of “a more perfect state with a higher law or a clearer revelation of the faith,” since “the state of Holy Mother Church already exists,

71 Oropesa, *Luz*, 761. Quotations are from the Díaz y Díaz translation of *Lumen*, which does not include the Latin text.

72 Oropesa, *Luz*, 763.

73 “La Iglesia entendida de esta manera no es otra cosa que la multitud o congregación de todos los fieles, ligada por la fe y la caridad de los que se hace un cuerpo místico y un espíritu como de muchos miembros unidos, del cual quien se separa no puede vivir la vida de la gracia”: Oropesa, *Luz*, 109.

74 Oropesa, *Luz*, 113–4.

75 Oropesa, *Luz*, 215–6.

76 Oropesa, *Luz*, chap. XXI.

through Christ, in all its possible perfection.”⁷⁷ That current state of perfection implied firm rejection of any return to Judaism and the Old Law, but also of millenarian hopes for a more perfect Church or a new age of the spirit. Here the original Joachimite roots of the Hieronymite order disappeared entirely. The arrival of the Holy Spirit in Spain that was predicted by Tomassuccio and his followers was seen as completed in a community united by the bonds of faith and charity, representing the only possible state of grace. This unique, cohesive community had to be defended against any effort to disrupt or divide it.

For Oropesa, anyone who brought hatred and division into the perfect community of Christians was destroying the bonds that joined all members of the mystical body and thereby opening the door to schisms and heresies. It could not be otherwise: he quotes Saint John Chrysostom to the effect that heresies are born of envy and lack of charity.⁷⁸ Although one must be severe and intransigent with Jews who would not convert – they were not part of the mystical body of the faithful and therefore must be distanced from the community of Christians – the newly converted should be received with open arms into Christ’s perfect “Church of the saints.” Those who sought to exclude descendants of Jews from public and religious office could be called the real judaizers, since they were lowering the Church to the level of the synagogue:

... from which one could clearly deduce that these men were destroying the Gospel while wishing to defend it, and debasing Christ’s Church to the level of the synagogue. Just as there the priesthood, dignities, and offices were assigned under the Law to certain persons among the Jews, even to a particular tribe and family, and granted to them and not to others, which was a great imperfection, so also these men would reduce the Church of Christ to the same narrowness and servitude. And they do not see how much damage they do and how they are judaizing ...⁷⁹

77 Oropesa, *Luz*, 219.

78 Oropesa, *Luz*, 60.

79 “De donde claramente se deducía que estos hombres destruían el evangelio queriendo defenderlo y rebajaban la Iglesia de Cristo al nivel de la sinagoga: de tal modo que, así como allí el sacerdocio, las dignidades y los oficios se asignaban por la Ley a determinadas personas de los judíos, incluso aún a determinada tribu y familia, y a ellos se les conferían y no a otros, lo que era una gran imperfección, así también éstos reducirían la Iglesia de Cristo a esta estrechez y servidumbre. Y no ven en ello cuánto daño hacen y cómo judaizan...”: Oropesa, *Luz*, 63–4. Oropesa returned several times to the “judaizing” of the *convertos’* enemies, e.g.: “Within the Church all should be received equally when they come to the faith, and they should be considered of the same order, for to do the opposite would

Such men proved that they did not believe in the New Testament's message of liberation, the perfect message that had reached the Christian people with Christ's coming and his sacrifice; they did not accept that it was founded on an intangible unity. Establishing differences within Christian society was the same as denying the perfection of the new Law and returning to the imperfection of Judaism. Therefore the true sinners were those who hurled themselves against the *conversos*: believing that they were defending the Church, they were actually destroying it "like a wild boar," since their actions broke "the bonds of charity and faith" that united all its members.⁸⁰

Although Oropesa's arguments followed the same Biblical cycles as Cartageña's, they assumed a much broader perspective, the chief difference being the Hieronymite's transition from the unity of faith to the perfection of the Church and the New religion. Cartagena insisted chiefly on the unity of the Church and the regenerative power of baptism, while Oropesa, with his characteristically Hieronymite search for perfection, stressed the power of grace and Christ's sacrifice. The mystical body as a metaphor for Christian society thus became an occasion to focus not just on its unity but on its perfection. Beyond the infinite possibilities offered by Christ's New Law lay Christ's sacrifice and the virtues he had transmitted through his Passion to the members of the mystical body.⁸¹

be judaizing in the ancient manner, which would not be proper for the Church of Christ" ("Dentro de la Iglesia se debía recibir a todos por un igual al llegar a la fe y considerarlos en el mismo orden, ya que hacer lo contrario sería judaizar según la situación antigua, lo que no sería propio de la Iglesia de Cristo"): Oropesa, *Luz*, 339. On the uses of this topic see Nirenberg, "Discours of judaizing."

80 "...[N]i ninguno dellos comprende que como jabalí salvaje extermina la Iglesia, es decir, la pone fuera de sus términos al romper entre los fieles los vínculos de la caridad y de la fe." Oropesa, *Luz*, 64.

81 There has been wide discussion of Oropesa's meaning and his use of evocative images such as that of the Christian community as a "mystical body." In a 1981 article Sicroff took ideas from Castro and Bataillon to the extreme, adopting Oropesa's reflections on the community of the faithful as a unified mystical body to create the dubious and fruitless category of "pre-Erasmianism": "Anticipaciones del erasmismo." The mystical body as an Erasmian category had already been debated hotly in Spain in the 1950s: see at a minimum Maravall, "La idea de cuerpo místico"; Asensio, "El erasmismo"; and of course, Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*. I find it essential not to separate Oropesa's work from its context: it belongs in the framework of the disputed purity-of-blood statutes, the characteristically Hispanic call to reflect on the relations between the Old and New religions, and the personal and intellectual histories of many Jews who became Christian. That personal journey encountered – but only at its end – the analogous European rediscovery of the New Testament, as well as an internal religiosity that Bataillon and Fevre identified as a typical feature of sixteenth-century thought. I am much more interested in Olivari's analysis of Oropesa's possible influence on spirituality in the first decades of the sixteenth century: in this view the *Lumen* is the ideal culmination of a longstanding wish for perfection,

The controversy over the purity-of-blood statutes thus became the best occasion for meditating on the state of the perfect Church, defined by charity and the total equality of the faithful in the life of grace. Oropesa's basic argument, later adopted by many *conversos*, insisted on the prophetic mission, the declared perfection of Christ's Church and the New Law, and the unity and equality of all people of Christian faith. This is how the spiritual lexicon of the time absorbed a series of Gospel passages that marked a significant moment: aside from providing tools for defending the *conversos*, they also presented the possibility of regenerating and reviving the New Law.

The Salamancan writer Lucas Fernández, in one of the finest examples of early Spanish drama, recalled the prophecy of Isaiah (much discussed by Cartagena and Oropesa). Following the Hieronymite's example closely, he demonstrated the categorical perfection of the Christian community:

Believe me, oh believe me,
The world is now freed
From its burden and restored...
The lamb and the wolf
Will graze in one meadow
And the lion and the sheep
Will walk together in peace.⁸²

A dialogue between an Old and a New Christian returns to the notion of total equality in Christ, and the existence of one people born in the same parcel of earth:

Gil: Ah, a curse on you and your relations!
Bonifacio: Do you have better ones?
Gil: We all come from the same plot of land –
Lowborn, highborn, and the highest,
The poor, the rich, and the lords.⁸³

beginning with the reliance of Beguines and pious women on Jerome in medieval spirituality and reaching the *alumbrados* of Castile. See Olivari's keen insights in "La Historia" esp. 565–6.

82 "Creedme, creedme ya/ que hoy el mundo es ya librado/ del tributo restaurado/...el cordero y el lobo/ han de pacer en un prado,/ Y ha de andar apacentado/ el león con la oveja": Castro, "Mesianismo," 27.

83 "Gil. A, ruin seas tú y tus parientes!/ Bonifacio. Tienes tú otros mijores/ Gil. Todos somos de un terruño,/ bajos altos y mayores,/ pobres ricos y señores." Castro, "Mesianismo," 27.

The polemic between Old and New Christians drew constantly on the New Testament passages that Cartagena had compiled. This corpus became a source that transcended theological debate and took root in Castilian culture and thought in the second half of the fifteenth century. Quotations from Saint Paul, so frequent in Oropesa, were brought to bear in many different contexts. Many spiritual writers of the first half of the following century, from the Erasmist archdeacon of Alcor to the *alumbrados* of Toledo, gave great weight to the suggestions of Paul “the liberator”; the chronicler Diego Enríquez del Castillo, in his interpretation of Paul’s verses, gave them an egalitarian slant. He wrote a letter to Isabella the Catholic in which (while threatening to abandon the court because it did not pay well enough) he quoted Saint Paul:

The passion and death of the Son of God, with which we were once redeemed for the health of our souls and redeemed again for eternal spiritual and bodily freedom...Saint Paul, in the Epistle he sent to the Galatians [5:1], says: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” Which means: Our Savior, being in the form of God, put on the robe of humanity, so that captive man through His divine liberty might be free of that diabolical captivity, as from the tyrannical servitude of the world, so that no one without daily effort may be compelled to serve against his will.⁸⁴

The *bachiller* Palma, *converso* author of a treatise against the purity-of-blood statutes in Toledo,⁸⁵ also seems to adopt Oropesa’s thoughts on the importance of Christ’s virtues and sacrifice. In his *Restitutio* he advances a dangerous interpretation of the doctrine on the value of good works: “Let us have recourse only to God our Redeemer, and to his sacred Passion; for he granted us salvation not according to the works we performed but according to his mercy, and by grace.”⁸⁶ With this position Palma advanced a step further than Oropesa. This suggests how far Oropesa’s doctrine might have developed in Castile, where Savonarola’s writings were welcomed with enthusiasm and the ghost of Luther already hovered around the thought of the *alumbrados*.

84 Castro, “Mesianismo,” 25.

85 On Palma’s treatise, preserved in the cathedral archive in Toledo, see González Ruiz, “El Bachiller Palma.”

86 “[A] Dios solo nuestro Redentor y a la su sagrada pasión ayamos recurso, ca non segunt las obras que fezimos, mas segunt su misericordia, e de gracia, salvos nos fizo”: Palma, *Divina retribución*, 88. Castro comments on this passage from a different perspective in “Mesianismo,” 23–4. On Palma see also Gómez Redondo, “La *Divina Retribución*.”

Clearly in this difficult period of conversion and adaptation to a new faith, when old certainties were mingling with new ideas, religious controversy spanned a gamut of possibilities. Individual responses varied greatly and could turn in unexpected directions. The meditations of Cartagena and Oropesa marked an important moment in Spanish spirituality: they offered a broad range of ideas, images, and illustrative quotations on which the *conversos* of Castile could draw.

At this point we should turn our attention to an important category forged in the course of the polemic: that of “Jews in spirit.” Both Cartagena and Oropesa borrowed this discriminatory category only to confine it to the legalist and anti-evangelical spirit of the Old Christians. In its place they offered New Christians a chance to construct their own *converso* identity in opposition to the one they had left behind. Based on certain passages of Paul and the Gospel of John and on the notion of faith as a supreme illumination that annuls any distinction introduced by man, they offered the newly converted the possibility of a radical rebirth, while providing them with spiritual tools to counter the racist intransigence of some Old Christians.

Although the solution was designed to defend Castilian *conversos* against indiscriminate accusations of judaizing and to combat a strong wave of anti-Judaism, it ended by assimilating the postulates and theories of Castilian anti-Judaism. This shifted its target and victimized the Jewish, not the *converso*, community. Even so, the path that Oropesa suggested was crucial in the religious and cultural history of Castile: it gave life and energy to an interior, radical form of Christianity. That movement would find enormous success in sixteenth-century Spain through the contributions of the *conversos* who followed Erasmus and the revolutionary doctrines of Luther.

For some new converts, as for Luther, the Jews became the touchstone of their spiritual project and the counterexample for the creation of a new religiosity. The anti-Judaism of Erasmus and Luther was far from the narrow, forced anti-Judaism of Cartagena and Oropesa. But in at least some features, like the common investment in a living spirituality that was at odds with that of the “Jews in spirit,” the paths of these four men appear to coincide.⁸⁷

87 Oberman, *Roots of Antisemitism*, esp. 43 for the close connection forged between Pauline theology and the ideological legitimization of anti-Semitism. On the theological and linguistic significance of the Jews in Christian hermeneutics, see Nirenberg, “Une société face à l’altérité” and *Anti-Judaism*.

4 Christian-Judaic Syncretism and Heterodoxy

During the two decades prior to the creation of the Spanish Inquisition, the religious landscape in Castile was incredibly diverse. The inward-looking and anti-Jewish Christianity embraced by many *conversos*, especially those who belonged to the higher circles in the court, was not the only possible solution. In fact, it is reasonable to assume that many Jews who underwent baptism tried to remain faithful to the religion of their ancestors by continuing to believe in the precepts of Judaism and to adhere to its requirements in matter of conduct. Overall, the manifestations of religion and spirituality that can be observed in this period spanned the entire gamut between these two extremes. It is thus not surprising that the first Inquisitors in Toledo encountered several forms of eclecticism and contamination between the Judaism and Christianity. Fernando del Pulgar refers to them in his *Crónica*, describing the “litigious chaos” that prevailed in many Toledan families:

In the city of Toledo were found certain men and women who performed Jewish rites in secret, and who out of great ignorance and in peril to their souls kept neither one law nor the other. For they were not circumcised like Jews as is required in the Old Testament, and although they kept the Sabbath and fasted on some Jewish fast days they did not keep every Sabbath or fast on every fast day; if they performed one rite they did not perform another, so they prevaricated in both one law and the other. It was learned that in some houses the husband performed some Jewish ceremonies while the wife was a good Christian, while one son and daughter were good Christians and another followed Jewish opinion. And inside one household there might be different beliefs, with some members concealing things from others.⁸⁸

88 “Se hallaron en la çibdad de Toledo algunos onbres e mugeres que escondidamente fazían ritos judaycos, los quales con grand ynorancia e peligro de sus ánimas, ni guardavan una ni otra ley; porque no se çircunçidaban como judíos, segund es amonestado en el Testamento Viejo, e aunque guardavan el sábado e ayunavan algunos ayunos de los judíos, pero no guardavan todos los sábados, ni ayunavan todos los ayunos, e si façían un rito no façían otro, de manera que en una y en la otra ley prevaricavan. E fallóse en algunas casas el marido guardar algunas çerimonias judaycas, y la muger ser buena christiana, e el un jijo [*sic*] y hija ser buen christiano, y otro tener opinión judayca. E dentro de una casa aver diversidad de creençias, y encubrirse unos de otros”: Pulgar, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, 210.

Many Jews, having converted to Christianity, decided not to abandon their ritual practices and ancient customs, which were often related to food. In most cases it was women who adhered to the old beliefs, since the rituals were part of domestic life passed down from mothers to daughters.⁸⁹ Pulgar, who rejected in general the first measures that the Inquisition adopted in Seville, pointed out the profound injustice of a repression that fell upon “more than ten thousand young Andalusian women” who had never even left their homes.⁹⁰

On the other hand, behind the ritual syncretism of many *conversos* lay opinions that crossed dogmatic barriers: they believed that, beyond any clash of doctrines, salvation was guaranteed to all men. A large number of Inquisition trials involved individuals who – without blind adhesion to either Jewish or Christian dogma – had declared that one could be saved through any of the three religions.⁹¹ Many others maintained that “in this life there is only living and dying,” that “we merely are born and then die, like animals.” Hell was only a fable invented to frighten people, as when parents warn children that “the bogey-man is coming.” That last formulation became widespread, even among *alumbrados* such as Isabel de la Cruz and Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz.⁹²

89 For a summary, see Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel?*.

90 See Pulgar's famous letter to Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza; the best ed. is in Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 307–8.

91 A systematic study of (Jewish) *converso* beliefs in the Kingdom of Aragon is Marín Padilla, “Relación judeoconversa.” Some individual cases of syncretism are particularly revealing. One Aragonese *converso* claimed to believe in Christ, Moses, and Mohammed, although “he cared less for Mohammed than for the others.” Luis de Santangel, a jurist from Teruel imprisoned in Zaragoza, “was in anguish, saying, ‘I do not know in which law I am dying’; and having said that he turned to the wall and died, breathing his last”: Marín Padilla, “Relación judeoconversa,” 305–306, 310. See also Márquez Villanueva, “Sobre el concepto del judaizante,” 526, and, for a broader perspective, Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved*.

92 Baer was convinced that Averroist skepticism was the dominant view among the upper echelons of Spanish Jews and *conversos* in the fifteenth century. See Baer, *A History*, 2: 253–9, 274. Today, his thesis is generally discarded. Among a larger body of literature, see Lasker, “Averroistic Trends.” Márquez Villanueva returned to the notion of “only living and dying” in “Nasçer e morir” and “Sobre el concepto de judaizante.” Especially interesting are the Sevillian Inquisitors' accusations against the Benadeva family: while the women were denounced simply for practicing Jewish rituals, the men were condemned for defending skeptical-Averroist ideas. All were sentenced for having relapsed: see Ollero Piña, “Una familia de conversos.” For more information on “*converso* skepticism,” see also Edwards, “Religious Faith”; Pastore, “Doubt in Fifteenth Century Iberia”; García-Arenal and Pastore, *From Doubt to Unbelief*. On Alcaraz's and Isabel de la Cruz's positions on hell, see below. The oft-repeated phrase about hell and the bogey-man appears, for example, in the trial of Diego de Barrionuevo before the Soria tribunal in 1494: Carrete Parrondo, *El Tribunal de la Inquisición*, 125 n. 288.

These were complicated positions. Many people, when pressured to reconcile different traditions and practices in daily life, preferred to deny membership in either community. A cruel anti-*converso* libel, *El Alboraique*, published in Llerena in 1488 and widely circulated, was directed at many *conversos* whose religious identity was uncertain. Its title refers to al-Buraq, the mythical hybrid steed on which the Prophet Mohammed ascended to heaven. The term *alboraycos* was applied to the *anussim*, Jews who had been forcibly converted during the pogroms of 1391 and their descendants. Considered neither Jews nor Christians, they were rejected and persecuted by both communities. Not surprisingly, then, the authorship of *El Alboraique* has been in dispute: long thought to be the work of a Spanish Jew, it was more likely composed by a Dominican friar from the Santa Cruz monastery in Segovia who was close to the Inquisitor General Tomás de Torquemada.⁹³

5 Hernando de Talavera and his *Católica impugnación*

The most important document of these attempts at cross-fertilization or osmosis between Christianity and Judaism was a pamphlet, now lost, that circulated in Seville around 1478. It was refuted at length by one of Castile's most important personalities under the Catholic monarchs, the Hieronymite monk Hernando de Talavera. Talavera never denied his *converso* origins.⁹⁴ Born in 1428, he may have been an illegitimate son of the Count of Oropesa but was more probably related to Alonso de Oropesa, the general of the Hieronymite order and a touchstone for his religious and spiritual ideas. Talavera entered the Order of Saint Jerome at the advanced age of thirty, and after completing his seven-year novitiate was named prior of the El Prado monastery in Valladolid. He was soon summoned to court by the powerful Pedro González de Mendoza, however. Acting as confessor to Isabella the Catholic from 1474, he took an active role in the complex political and administrative reorganization of the monarchy and was assigned to difficult posts of great responsibility. With the *Declaratorias de Toledo*, for example, he had to annul the many privileges

93 Baer, *A History*, 2: 390ff.; Caro Baroja, *Los judíos*, 1: 292–3. The pamphlet's text was published by López Martínez, *Los judaizantes castellanos*: 391–404; see also Mehuyas Ginio, "Aspiraciones mesiánicas"; Kimmel, "Conversion and Apocalypse."

94 On Talavera's early years see Domínguez Bordona, "Algunas precisiones"; Azcona, *Isabel la Católica*, 226–9; Iannuzzi, *El poder de las palabras*. See also Márquez Villanueva's introduction to Talavera, *Católica impugnación*.

granted by Henry IV and reclaim an annual sum of thirty million *maravedís* for the crown.

In Seville in 1478, Talavera represented Ferdinand and Isabella at the assembly of Castilian bishops charged with deciding on significant Church reforms. There he challenged the author of the anonymous pamphlet, a local judaizer, in what may have been the last battle between two different ways of interpreting *converso* identity. The opportunity for open discussion was closing, destined to be crushed by the monarchs' creation of the Inquisition. Talavera's wish for dialogue failed in the face of extremist positions that would weaken the moderate stance of many *conversos* at court; it recalls the impassioned railing of the *converso* Pulgar against the "blind stupidity and stupid blindness" of judaizers in Seville.⁹⁵

The pamphlet was written after Talavera gave a series of homilies in Seville in 1478. Cardinal Archbishop Pedro González de Mendoza, one of the most prominent royal counselors, had planned a massive preaching campaign against the spread of the judaizing heresy among the newly converted. Talavera's own sermons and those of Alfonso de Solís, bishop of Cádiz, explored deeply the most important steps in the passage from the Old to the New Law. His homilies, based on Saint Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Hebrews,⁹⁶ called Judaic law "an old, rotten rock" and insisted on the perfection and absolute virtue of the New. The campaign concluded with an edict obliging all families to keep sacred images in their homes so as to "inspire devotion" in *conversos* of uncertain faith.⁹⁷ The edict provoked an unusually strong and negative response from the judaizers of Seville.

Nonetheless, this controversial decree was the most definitive attempt to impose a policy of moderation on the conflicts among judaizers in the kingdom. In fact, assigning indoctrination and control of those groups to Church authorities was intended to remove the matter from the hands of the mendicant orders, beginning with the Dominicans. They were calling for the establishment of a special Inquisition, an idea whose history in Castile went back to

95 The phrase ("neçedad tan çiega y la çeguedad tan neçia") occurs in a letter from Pulgar to Archbishop Pedro González de Mendoza of Seville: Cantera Burgos, "Fernando del Pulgar," 306. He describes in almost the same terms the stubbornness of the Sevillian judaizers at the beginning of the Inquisition in the city: "their stubbornness was such stupid blindness and such blind ignorance": Pulgar, *Crónica*, 335.

96 For a description of the arguments deployed in that cycle of sermons see Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 118–9 (chap. XVIII).

97 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 186–9 (chap. LIII). On the controversy over image worship in Spain and Talavera's position on the matter see the important study by Pereda, *Images of Discord*.

the preaching of the Franciscan Alonso de Espina. Not only was public opinion firmly opposed to such a tribunal, but many important persons spoke openly against the Crown's establishing one of its own. Among these were some of the monarchs' chief *converso* courtiers: the royal secretary and counselor Fernán Álvarez de Toledo, the chronicler Fernando del Pulgar, and the queen's confessor Hernando de Talavera. Other opponents came from the highest ranks of Old Christians, for example Archbishop Pedro González de Mendoza of Seville, known as "the third monarch of Spain," and Archbishop Alonso de Carrillo of Toledo. Both prelates saw the creation of an Inquisition under royal jurisdiction as a grave threat to their episcopal authority.⁹⁸

Talavera's campaign in Seville, therefore – fully supported by Cardinal Mendoza – was a crucial test for the *converso* faction and for all those who fought openly against the Crown's proposal. Nonetheless, in November 1478 the monarchs, in strictest secrecy, obtained the pope's permission to create a special Inquisition against judaizers, to be led by clerics of the Crown's own choosing. The famous bull of Pope Sixtus IV that officially established the Spanish Inquisition was not, however, put into practice until September 1480. It was during that brief two-year period of delay and indecision in 1478–1480 that the anonymous pamphlet contesting Talavera's sermons was published. He must have written his refutation, *Católica impugnación*, between September 1480 and 1481, just as the Inquisitors in Seville were beginning to act.

The idea behind the anonymous author's proposals was not a return to Judaism in the strict sense. Rather it was a complex mixed system, a broad syncretism that allowed *conversos* to inject Jewish rites and beliefs into an essentially Christian matrix. Talavera referred to this anonymous author as "the ebionite," calling him a heretic. The term "ebionite" conjured up "the heresy of the Pharisees" and equated him with those who in Apostolic times had argued that "not only should Christians be circumcised but they should also keep the Law of Moses together with the Holy Gospels."⁹⁹

According to the pamphlet's author, a revelation had inspired him to look deeply into "the root of the religion called Christian." Still, his work – which Talavera described as a dangerous mixture of truth and falsehood, combining real passages from the Gospel with errors and lies – showed the essential continuity between the Old and New Testaments¹⁰⁰ and argued that a goodly

98 Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*.

99 "[N]o solamente debían los cristianos de ser circuncidados, mas que debían de guardar toda la ley de Moisés, juntamente con el Santo Evangelio": Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 70. On this point see also Rosenstock, *New Men*, 90–2.

100 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, chap. XII.

portion of Mosaic Law survived in Christian Scripture. For this writer the “law of the Father” or the Old Law of the Jews was not only in harmony with that of the Son but substantially agreed with it. He therefore claimed that *conversos* should be respected above all others because they strove to obey both. This argument annihilated the *conversos*’ supposed inferiority as descendants of Jews – the very object of the purity-of-blood statutes. This definition of the true root of the New Christian faith proved the Jewish people superior to the Gentiles based on their traditions, customs, intrinsic rationality, and the “almost” natural quality of their obligatory rituals: the writer found it no coincidence that Christ was the first convert. Meanwhile the Gentiles had brought to Christianity no more than pagan ceremonies that corrupted the true faith. At this point the treatise embarked on a radical and savage criticism of Christian society. Having applied himself to reading the New Testament, “the ebionite” pointed out that the religiosity defended and promulgated by the Church hierarchy had no connection to the revolutionary spirituality preached in the Gospels. He denounced the Church’s lack of charity, its ambiguous interpretation of the Christian doctrine against swearing,¹⁰¹ and its perverse use of ancient Gentile forms of worship such as devotion to images and adoration of the Trinity.

The author’s heresy combined defense of Jewish ritual with radical censure of Christian practice so effectively that it is no surprise it found favor outside *converso* and judaizing circles. In fact, the same arguments reappeared (in somewhat modified form) among the *alumbrados* of the 1520s and 1530s. But what really frightened his readers was the deeply anti-institutional trend of his spiritual project. For instance, he adopted a doctrine – widespread in Europe from Huss to Wycliffe and apparently introduced to Castile through Pedro Martínez de Osma – that denied wicked clergymen any power to “bind and loose” or absolve sinners.¹⁰²

Thanks to his education with the Hieronymites and especially the teachings of Alonso de Oropesa, Talavera rebutted the pamphlet’s arguments with utter conviction. It was easy for him to return to the themes of his Seville homilies and to invoke Oropesa’s work in demonstrating the perfection of the New religion of the Gospels. These, in his opinion, had surpassed and annulled every precept of the Old Testament. Fully persuaded of the “very great superiority of the Holy Gospel, the light of grace and truth, over the Old Law of shadows and

101 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 156.

102 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 221. For more on Osma’s heresy, see López de Salamanca and Martínez de Osma, *La confesión y las indulgencias*; Talavera was a member of the commission charged with judging Osma’s errors.

appearances," he attributed to Saint Paul the first refutation of the Ebionite heresy, perhaps the earliest to arise in Christianity. Following this line of thought, he contrasted the rigid ceremonial and legal precepts of Mosaic Law to the freedom of the new evangelical age, the light requirements of the New Testament to the heavy burdens of the Old, and Jews' external rites to Christians' inward spirituality.

Talavera's arguments, through continual quotations from the Epistles of Paul, went beyond simply impugning the anonymous Sevillian's heresy. They broadened into an impassioned description of the new era of grace. True faith did not come from "ancient custom,"¹⁰³ as the judaizer had suggested, but from an inscrutable and merciful choice. It was an "inherent faith that, as the Apostle Saint Paul says, is a gift given mercifully by God to whomever He wills."¹⁰⁴ Only a man illuminated by faith through grace could truly know the New Law, which was written on men's hearts and not carved on tablets of stone. Unlike the Jews, who were reduced to slavery, Christians illuminated by the new faith experienced true freedom, learning to overcome the "acting through fear" and "servitude" that characterized the Old Testament.

The passages from John about faith through illumination, already cited by Cartagena and Oropesa, acquire in Talavera such a deep and radical meaning that several scholars have detected his influence on *alumbrado* thought in the early sixteenth century.¹⁰⁵ Other less controversial works by Talavera support that opinion and also insist on the notion of faith as a bottomless gift from God. His treatise on the mass, *Tractado de lo que significan las ceremonias de la misa*, invokes the purifying power of grace and the virtues of Christ's Passion in vanquishing all sin, while his *Confesional* affirms that anyone who argues about faith or thinks he can explain it through reason is committing a mortal sin.¹⁰⁶

What was especially difficult for Talavera to attack was the central core of the pamphleteer's heresy: a call for a radical reform of Christianity based on a critique of Christian society and a denunciation of superstitions and "Gentile practices" linked to the traditional worship of images. Talavera must have sympathized with some of the anonymous writer's claims about superstitious practices by Old Christians. Although he deplored the Sevillian's excesses, he also condemned the "mockeries and falsehoods" that underlay ostentatious

103 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 81.

104 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 79.

105 Andrés Martín, "Tradición conversa y alumbramiento"; Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*. See also below.

106 Talavera, "Tractado de lo que significan," 82 and "Breve forma de confesar," 4.

image worship. He reproved “those who hold trivial beliefs that they should not believe, and those who place their faith and devotion in images or temples”¹⁰⁷ and denounced the “moneygrubbers” who took advantage of such practices.¹⁰⁸ In his *Confesional* he even included among mortal sinners those who ignore “licensed doctors and surgeons” and instead “seek cures with talismans or go in search of saints’ relics.”¹⁰⁹ In *Católica impugnación* he was responding to a whole world of friars, bulls, relics, and popular superstitions, sparing no criticism of those who – unlike the Apostles or Hieronymite monks – lived not by the fruit of their labor but by preaching fawning sermons before the powerful.¹¹⁰

From this perspective, when the anonymous author attributed the Turks’ victory in Constantinople to the Christians’ sin of idolatry, Talavera’s only possible response was to allege not idolatry but clerical corruption. He was forced to walk a fine line. Still, in his “Breve forma de confesar,” he had complained bitterly about the corrupt clergy of his time and urged a thorough reform of the Church in Castile. At the time he had been inspired directly by Saint Paul; he wrote that a bishop was in mortal sin if he ordained priests who lacked the thirteen requisites of a good clergyman that Paul listed in his Epistle to Timothy. “Here,” wrote Talavera without mincing words, “we have the key to all the evil that exists in the ecclesiastical state.”¹¹¹

In *Católica impugnación*, however, refuting “the ebionite,” he insisted over and over on the need for a religion based on love and charity, going so far as to condemn the use of force and coercion in matters of faith. “What is done through fear and under pressure...cannot last long, while what is done through love and charity will last forever,”¹¹² he argued in denouncing the forced baptisms performed in Castile. Even more explicitly, he claimed in the *Confesional* that priests who baptized Muslims and Jews without giving them at least

107 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 197.

108 “It is true that there may be, and in fact is, much trickery and much moneygrubbing in this” (“Verdad es que puede aver y de hecho hay en esto muchas burlas y mucho sacadinerio”): Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 189–90. He repeats the same expression in regard to image worship, in Talavera, “Breve forma de confesar,” 21: “They also commit sacrilege who remove images from their storage chests and display them openly to the people to be kissed, and place them here and there as a good way to make money” (“Item, cometen sacrilegio los que sacan las reliquias de las arcas donde están, y descubiertamente las muestran al pueblo y ge las dan a besar, y ge las ponen por acá y por allá por buen sacadinerio”).

109 Talavera, “Breve forma de confesar,” 22.

110 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, chap. XIII.

111 Talavera, “Breve forma de confesar,” 16.

112 “Lo que se hace por miedo y como por fuerza...no puede mucho durar, como dura y es perpetuo lo que se hace por amor y por caridad”: *Católica impugnación*, chap. XIII.

eight months of prior religious instruction were committing a mortal sin.¹¹³ Although his chief task was the utter refutation of the pamphleteer's heresy, he also criticized the term "Marranos" for converted Jews and the indiscriminate accusations of heresy that believers hurled at each other. In the name of the New Law of love and charity he condemned, like Oropesa before him, any split or division within the community of Christians:

Nor do true Christians feel any enmity toward Christians converted from Judaism; for if they felt that, it would be a grave sin and they would not be true Christians, that is, disciples of Jesus Christ. He wished that in this we should be his followers: that we should love each other just as He loved us all....But even then, good and true Christians desire and seek – with great charity, not with enmity – to correct and improve the newly baptized, as one should do with any other Christians who fall short and err with sins of any kind.¹¹⁴

In his dedicatory letter to the Catholic monarchs at the beginning of *Católica impugnación*, Talavera claimed to have replied to the judaizer out of a conviction that "heresies must be extirpated, confounded, and punished not only with blows and lashes but also, according to the teaching of the holy Apostles, with Catholic and theological arguments." His next sentence made it clear that he was referring to Paul's Epistles to Titus and Timothy, which gave bishops the authority to correct and punish any heretical departure within the Christian community: "Investigation [*inquisición*] of this detestable crime, the greatest of all crimes, was reserved for the jurisdiction of the Church [and] prohibited and forbidden to secular justice."¹¹⁵

This letter, probably written in 1480 or 1481, shows Talavera's clear dissent from the policy of the monarchs, who had assigned the investigation of heresy

113 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, chap. xxxi.

114 "Ni los cristianos verdaderos tienen enemiga ninguna a los cristianos convertidos del judaísmo, ca si la toviesen pecarían muy gravemente en ello y no serían verdaderos cristianos, que quiere decir discípulos de Jesucristo, el qual quiso que en esto fuésemos conocidos por sus discípulos: en que nos amásemos como Él nos amó a todos....pero, aun entonces, los buenos y verdaderos cristianos quieren y procuran con mucha caridad y no con enemiga la corrección y enmienda de los nuevamente bautizados, como se debe procurar la de otros cualesquiera cristianos, que delinquen y yerran en cualesquier pecados": Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 147–8.

115 "[L]a inquisición de este crimen detestable y mayor de todos los crímenes, fue reservada a la jurisdicción eclesiástica, prohibida y vedada a la seglar": Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 68.

to a mixed body that depended largely on the Crown. The *converso* Fernando del Pulgar expressed similar feelings in an open letter to Pedro González de Mendoza in 1481, noting ironically that the two first Inquisitors in Seville, Merlo and Medina, had not created “with their fire such good Christians as the bishops Don Paulo and Don Alonso did with their water. And not without reason: for our Redeemer Christ chose the latter two men to baptize, while our Chancellor chose the first two men for other reasons.”¹¹⁶ Moved by Inquisition persecutions that had already taken place, Talavera denounced the injustice of considering all *conversos* to be potential heretics, and he defended the large number of “good Christians” found among the *conversos* of Andalusia and the futility of employing force in matters of faith.

The circumstances of the time probably prevented this refutation by Talavera, one of the most famous churchmen of his era, from being published until six years later, in 1487. By then the protests against the Inquisition’s founding had weakened and the original objections to it had been overcome; the Holy Office was a strong, consolidated reality within the Church structure in Castile. The work suffered a *damnatio memoriae* and dwindled to a ghostly presence in the Spain of the Inquisition. It was included in the first Index of forbidden books in 1559 but had already been subject to implicit censorship in Castile; outside of small circles of devotees, it was shared with great caution. Even before its listing in the Index we find no explicit references to the book, with the sole exception of allusions by José de Sigüenza (who had already rescued and cited large portions of Oropesa’s *Lumen* in the late sixteenth century).¹¹⁷ Suffice it to say that the modern-day edition of *Católica impugnación* (1961) had to be based on the only known copy, kept in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome, because in Spain not a single one had survived.¹¹⁸

116 “[No habían conseguido] tam buenos christianos con su fuego como hizieron los obispos don Paulo y don Alonso con su agua. E non sin caussa; porque a éstos escogió nuestro redemptor Christo para aquello, y á éstos otros escogió el licenciado nuestro chançiller para esto otro”: Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 309–10. Pulgar’s letter was circulated deliberately and brought a swift reaction from the Inquisition’s defenders. The two bishops mentioned are respectively Pablo de Santa María and Alonso de Cartagena, father and son, both *conversos*.

117 Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 1: 350–51.

118 On the history of that book, see Pastore, “Presentación.”

The New Inquisition on Trial: The “Errors” of Juan de Lucena, Apostolic Protonotary (1493)

1 De Vita Beata

Juan de Lucena returned to Castile in about 1463 after a long sojourn in the courts of Naples and Rome.¹ He had traveled to those cities years previously, upon joining the mission of Íñigo López de Mendoza, who was named Henry IV’s ambassador in 1454–1455. Lucena brought with him the fruits of rich experience.

The new king’s first embassy to Italy had gone to the brilliant humanist court of Alfonso V of Aragon and Naples, where Enea Silvio Piccolomini was already serving as the papal legate. Upon Piccolomini’s move to Rome, Lucena parted ways with López de Mendoza and followed the future Pope Pius II. In 1462 the pope named him a canon at Burgos and asked that the rents deriving from the post be remitted to him in Rome; he alleged that his “favorite son, familiar, and constant table companion” remained a member of the papal curia and thus continued to serve the pontiff.² The years that Lucena spent at the papal court gained him the title of apostolic protonotary (a privilege that he tried in vain to deploy when the Inquisition began to inquire on him later in his life) as well as a direct acquaintance with Italian humanism.

Lucena wrote his best-known work, *De vita beata*, toward the end of his stay in Rome and in his early years back in Castile. This was considered an outstanding example of Spanish humanism and an important linguistic

1 On Lucena, see Alcalá, “Juan de Lucena”; Maravall, *La oposición política*, 120ff.; Di Camillo, *El humanismo castellano*, 244–65; Gil Fernández, *Panorama social*, 234–8; Ynduráin, *Humanismo y Renacimiento*, 459–63; Vian Herrero, “El libro *De vita beata*”; Carrete Parrondo, “Juan Ramírez de Lucena”; Cappelli, *El humanismo romance*. There has been a lively debate regarding his Italian years (whether or not he was at the court in Naples, his hypothetical contacts with the Italian humanists), but in the absence of new documentation I have nothing further to add. See Conde López, “El siglo XV castellano”; Medina Bermúdez, “El diálogo *De vita beata*” and “Los *inagotables misterios*”; Gómez Moreno, *España y la Italia de los humanistas*. For a survey of his family, see the genealogical tree in Carrete Parrondo, “Juan Ramírez de Lucena” and Diago, “El Protonotario Lucena.”

2 Pius II’s bull, which the canons of Burgos contested, appears in Serrano, *Los conversos*, appendix XX, 313.

forerunner of mature Golden Age prose. It is an adaptation of a dialogue on happiness (*De humanae vitae felicitate*) written by Bartolomeo Facio, a humanist from Liguria whom Lucena had probably met at Alfonso V's court.³ Facio's dialogue consisted of a vigorous polemic with Lorenzo Valla.⁴ In Lucena's version, Facio's Stoic and Senecan interpretation of the theme of true beatitude contrasts with Valla's Epicureanism; Lucena seized the occasion to introduce a series of Italian themes and topics into Castile.

With his translations of Seneca's works as *De vita beata* and *De providentia*, Alonso de Cartagena had already reminded his contemporaries of the importance of Seneca's thought.⁵ As he pointed out in his dedication to John II, Seneca was from Spain. More than any other Classical writer, he knew how to reach the hearts of his readers and steer them away from the world and its pleasures.⁶ Cartagena's many glosses to the original text showed the benefit of reading him in "the subject tongue," i.e., Castilian. And in Seneca's correspondence with Saint Paul – undocumented, but firmly believed to have existed in fifteenth-century Castile – the Roman had shown how to adapt the best of Classical literature to the New Testament.

The Stoics' insistence on renouncing the world and enduring evils and misfortunes with equanimity – all while assuming equality among men and lineages – must have been welcome to the *conversos* and the bishop of Burgos. Cartagena also applied the Senecan disdain for money to Castilian society: when Seneca praises those who are satisfied with success without seeking material gain, Cartagena adds slyly, "Apply this to preaching friars and minor mendicants, those who claim to disdain money but still beg for it." A little later he adds, "It is intolerable to [both] demand monies and disdain them."⁷

3 Studies of *Dialogo de vita beata* (or *De vita felicit*) include Morreale, "El tratado de Juan de Lucena"; Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*; Vian Herrero, "El libro *De vita beata*"; Medina Bermúdez, "El diálogo *De vita beata*"; Cappelli, *El humanismo romance*. I have consulted Bertini's 1950 edition and compared it with that of Paz y Meliá in *Opúsculos*. See also Lucena, *De vita felicit*.

4 Gaeta, *Lorenzo Valla*; Celenza, *The Intellectual World*. On the polemic, see the data collected by Valentini, "Le invettive." There is an updated bibliography in Viti, "Bartolomeo Facio"; Alberese, *Studi su Bartolomeo Facio*.

5 The first printed edition of Cartagena's translations, *Cinco libros de Séneca*, appeared in Seville in 1491, but they had already circulated widely in manuscript form. Later editions were Toledo 1519 and Alcalá 1530. See Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 185–6; Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 50. On Seneca's works in Spain, see Blüher, *Séneca en España*; Round, "Perdóneme Séneca"; Martínez Romero, *Un clàssic entre clàssics*.

6 Cited in Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 186.

7 "[H]aze esto contra los frayles predicadores y menores mendicantes, los que les dizen que menospreçian el dinero y lo piden"; "cosa es que no se puede sufrir demandar dineros y menospreçiarlos": Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 187.

The Hieronymites would undoubtedly have approved the sentiment. When Hernando de Talavera counseled María de Mendoza to “arrange your time so that it is well spent,” he too was inspired by “the Catholic philosopher Seneca.”⁸ Juan Álvarez Gato, who would have seen the Castilian translation of Seneca in manuscript, draws on it for many of his themes; this *converso* poet was closely connected both to Talavera and to the circle of his father-in-law, the royal secretary Fernán Álvarez de Toledo.⁹

Cartagena’s translations enjoyed extraordinary success. In the midst of violent civil strife in Castile, they reintroduced its subjects to “our moral Seneca,”¹⁰ the glory of Spain. He still needed to be discovered in a country that was struggling to create a new identity and new roots distinct from those left over from the medieval period with its three religions. But Seneca was also a moral guide whom Cartagena offered to a particular audience, the Spanish *conversos*, knowing that they could apprehend such guidance in the messages he slipped between the lines.

With the ground thus prepared, Lucena’s translation and adaptation of Facio’s dialogue could not fail to succeed. It is true that, in returning to Seneca and to Boethius’s *De consolatione philosophiae* – another cardinal text in fifteenth-century Spain – he was dealing with works and authors that were already widely read. But he provided a rereading in the light of the heightened Italian debate, becoming the bearer of important humanist concepts; he helped Castilians to perceive the distant Italian world through some of its most elevated works.¹¹ Within this framework Lucena dealt with a great variety of themes. Although his humanist dialogue – which should have unfolded through learned disquisitions on the nature of the supreme good – devolves into sterile philosophical disputes, it still in many ways offers a splendid portrait of fifteenth-century Castile. To discourse on the topic of the supreme good, Lucena chose three men who were close in time and especially suited to the task: the poet Juan de Mena, the Marquis of Santillana Íñigo López de Mendoza, and the bishop of Burgos Alonso de Cartagena. He calls these

8 Talavera, “De cómo se ha de ordenar el tiempo,” 95.

9 See Márquez Villanueva’s detailed and brilliant analysis in *Investigaciones*, especially on the poet’s Senecan education, 185–9.

10 The phrase is Fernán Pérez de Guzmán’s. See *Cancionero castellano del siglo xv*, 1: 608.

11 Two Spanish thinkers became especially fascinated by Italian humanist culture, and Lucena makes them protagonists of his *Diálogo*: the Marquis of Santillana Íñigo López de Mendoza, and Alonso de Cartagena. For more on Santillana’s library and his contacts in Florence, see Nader, *The Mendoza Family*, 96–97, 181. Di Camillo, in *El humanismo castellano*, defined the features of so-called Spanish humanism and the role that Cartagena played in it. For an update, see Di Camillo, “Fifteenth-Century Spanish Humanism.”

emblematic figures of the century “three Petrarchs, only recently buried” and “three mortals worthy of immortal remembrance.”

Lucena’s protagonists, very different from Facio’s polished, elegant ones, come to life in his writing. The great poet Juan de Mena, described as pale and gaunt of face, voices a passionate lament for the chivalric life he was never able to lead; Íñigo López de Mendoza, though strong and fierce, trembles as he speaks of battles and can barely contain his tears on recalling his dead son.¹² The great *converso* bishop Alonso de Cartagena acts as their foil: severe and distant, he is quick to puncture the “garlanded poet’s” grandiosity with an ironic phrase and to remind the Marquis that what he had sought in life would not necessarily bring him happiness.

Even so, the dialogue proceeds along fairly traditional lines.¹³ It is skillfully structured so that Mena and Santillana discuss the supreme good “as if they were arguing in life,”¹⁴ while the bishop, who had faced reality with cynicism all his life and spread Seneca’s ideas in Castile, reminds them implacably that human happiness is unattainable. Juan de Mena begins with a long discourse on the happiness of kings and princes, then of the favorites and counselors who choose to “follow the palace.” Cartagena responds with famous counterexamples from Antiquity but also much more recent ones, citing such dramatic cases as that of his worst enemy, Álvaro de Luna:

Álvaro de Luna, the Great Constable, who in all Spain was even more feared than the king – I will not lie to you, you know it well: in the end justice’s executioner beheaded him in Valladolid. If you read his sentence you will see what he did. Some of these favorites, if they are raised up for little reason and controlled with less, fall down very rapidly. They never think about who they once were, only about who they can become; thinking about where they will go, they forget from whence they came.¹⁵

Mena is described as consumed by study but unwounded in face or body: “his flesh worn away by long vigils over a book, but not hardened or callused by sleeping in the open,” “his face pale, wasted by study but not gashed or stitched together from encounters with a lance.” Still, he asks the bishop to consider the triumphs brought by military and chevalric life. Here it is the Marquis of

12 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 120, 165. On the poet, see Lida de Malkiel, *Juan de Mena*. On López de Mendoza, see Layna Serrano, *Historia de Guadalajara*, vols. 1 and 2; Nader, *The Mendoza Family*, esp. 78–9, 93–5, 138–40.

13 Vian Herrero, “El libro *De vita beata*,” studies Lucena’s use of dialogue and character.

14 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 198.

15 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 117–8.

Santillana, one of the greatest knights of his day, who contradicts him. In a lyrical passage he waxes emotional over the names of battles and dead heroes, and speaks at length of the horrors of war (often interrupted by observations from Cartagena). A warrior-writer, he suggests an alternative world of books in which poets and churchmen live in freedom. With a touch of sarcasm he also considers the felicity of the ecclesiastical life, enjoyed by “those who carry the keys to our souls and guard the doors of our sins”: “free of royal taxes and exempt from common payments, they contribute to the king with *Dominus vobiscum* and to the commonweal with *cum spirito tuo*.”¹⁶

At this point the dialogue becomes a corrosive attack on corruption in the Church, from the lower clergy through bishops and cardinals to the pope himself. At the first criticism of the pontiff, Lucena inserts himself into the dialogue, speaking as a detractor who is familiar with the papal court in Rome. He includes a dizzying array of characters and details: the “priest from Somosierra,” canons, deacons, archdeacons, abbots, benefice holders, chaplains, bishops, and archbishops, all in pursuit of wealth and power. At the end he brings in the frenetic Roman world of “partialities and affections”: factions embroiled in continuous clashes and lawsuits, cardinals who flatter the pope at one moment and wish him dead at the next, “hoping to be [pope] in the next round.”

In Lucena’s discourse, criticism of churchmen is broader than in Facio’s Italian original and a central focus of the work, joining Spain’s strong tradition of anticlericalism. As Margherita Morreale has shown, his position was enriched by elements from his Italian experience, the caustic attacks of Poggio and Valla, and of course his own “concerns as a *converso*.”¹⁷ Though Santillana’s “jests” about fat friars and ignorant village priests draw on a rich medieval tradition, the same tradition lies behind Cartagena’s long soliloquy on the proper role of bishops. This introduces a much more complex discourse. In contrast to the deplorable example of contemporary prelates, notably the “alchemist” Archbishop Alonso del Carrillo of Toledo, Cartagena offers the ideal bishop of Saint Paul’s Epistle to Titus¹⁸ – citing the same text that Talavera quoted over and over in his complaints about corrupt clergy. In Lucena’s case it is clear that behind his severe criticism and constant comparisons of the evangelical ideal with the shameful daily reality of Castilian society lies a hope of returning to the pure early Christianity that Paul described. Lucena’s modulated, sensitive

16 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 146.

17 Morreale, “El tratado de Juan de Lucena,” 7.

18 “The good prelate should be a good shepherd: his staff in his hand, always guarding his sheep. Not full of ire, not ambitious, not showy, not grandiloquent; chaste, mild, educated, and just as the apostle writes to Titus”: Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 149.

De vita beata stands as a worthy predecessor to the dialogues of Alonso de Valdés, which combined vivid descriptions, an abundance of details, and biting irony with a belief in a renewed Christendom.¹⁹

In this dialogue by the *converso* Lucena, censure of the clerical class is only the first step toward a bitter reflection on the problems of Castilian society as a whole. Instead of moving forward as one people toward new conquests in the name of the Faith, it was riven by conflicts and rivalries. Thousands of clerics wandered about, free of the exhausting work performed by laymen, wasting time, money, and fortune in a narrow reality marred by laziness and obscure resentments. They would be better employed in forming an army to conquer Granada or launch a crusade against the Turks.²⁰ The *converso* problem was the clearest indication of this lack of unity. When Juan de Mena reminds Cartagena of his Jewish ancestry, the bishop's reply is eloquent:

Do not imagine that you offend me by calling the Jews my forefathers. That is what they are, and that is what I wish. If nobility consists of age, who is older [than the Jews]? If it means virtue, who comes closer? Or if in Spain the condition of an *hidalgo* depends on riches, who was richer in their time? God was their friend, their lord, their legislator, their consul, their captain, their father, their son, and finally their redeemer. Oh immortal God! All censure is now transformed into glory, and glory into insult.²¹

This is the only time that the usually prudent Cartagena is carried away by “melancholy” and vigorously attacks the ever more frequent custom of calling the new converts “Marranos”:

And as for infidel idolatrous Gentiles, who have no God, no law, no religion, for whom sin is only what our common mother Nature forbids, as if they were beasts...Now if someone descends from them...no matter how

19 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 668, compares Lucena's anticlericalism to that of Valdés. I believe that another point of contact between the two is their reliance on the authority of Paul.

20 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 148.

21 “No piense correrme por llamar los ebreos mis padres. Sonlo, por çierto, y quiérol; ca si antigüedad es nobleza ¿quién tan lexos? Si virtud ¿quién tan cerca? O sy al modo despaña la riqueza es fidalguía, ¿quién tan rico en su tiempo? Fué Dios su amigo, su señor, su legislator, su cónsul, su capitán, su padre, su hijo, y al fin su redemptor. ¡O immortal Dios! Todos los oprobios son ya trasmutados en gloria, y la gloria contornada en denuesto”: Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 132.

vicious, he is a gentleman, almost like Apollo; and if [someone descends] from the Davidites [?], the Levites, the Maccabees, or the twelve tribes of Israel, no matter how virtuous and far from vice he may be, well, he is a *marrano*, lying lower than the dust.²²

All those who think this way are “faithless Christians,” Lucena continues. Using almost the very words of the *Defensorium*, he concludes Cartagena’s harangue: “They implicitly reverse the truth of the Gospel, saying that the True Light does not illuminate those who come to it.”²³ At the end of the discourse, an astonished Juan de Mena declares that he had never seen the bishop “so angry and so eloquent in asserting your nobility.”²⁴ Cartagena replies that in the midst of the discussion he had been overcome for the first time by “melancholy” on thinking of the deeply unjust treatment of *conversos*, which distracted him from his usual clear reasoning about the supreme good.²⁵ This sentiment is significant in *De vita beata*. The character of Lucena draws special attention to it in another passage in which Cartagena again condemns those who foment internal division among Christians,²⁶ harking back to the controversy over the purity-of-blood statutes. According to Lucena, Castile could grow and prosper only by setting its sights on conquest, to which the Catholic monarchs should bend all their efforts in the coming years. Here the wish for a crusade to conquer Granada combines with the hope for a complete assimilation of the converted into Christian society:²⁷ “Why ‘our own’ or ‘the others’? One law, one faith, one religion, one ruler, one nation, one sheepfold, and one shepherd shall be for all.”²⁸

22 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 133.

23 “Contrastan callando la verdat evangélica, diciendo que la vera lux no illumina los venientes a élla”: Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 133

24 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 135.

25 On the bitter discourse on “melancholy” in Spanish and Portuguese literature Bataillon, “¿Melancolía renacentista o melancolía judía?.” See also Castro’s classic remarks on the theme in *España en su historia*, 538–50.

26 The bishop retorted, “Let them not quote you [the proverb] ‘What comes from one’s own people is welcome’ (Bien paresçe qui de los suyos tiene)”: Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 161. In the ms. copy in the BNM an anonymous reader has glossed, “That is: since you are a convert, they will say that you agree with me because I am a convert” (“*Qui delos* etc., quasi diga: siendo tú de los convertidos, dirán que apruebas lo que yo dixere por que soy convertido”): see Morreale, “El tratado de Juan de Lucena,” 8 n. 29.

27 Castro saw these imperial aspirations as a projection of Hispano-Hebraic messianism in the fifteenth century: *Aspectos del vivir hispánico*, 23.

28 “¿Quáles suyos, ni cuáles ajenos? Una ley, una fe, una religión, un rey, una patria, un corral y un pastor es de todos”: Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 161.

Toward the end of the dialogue, Cartagena's "melancholy" seems to have invaded everything: the foundations of Castilian society were rotten, the future was black, and no one of any condition could expect a "happy and blessed" life. In the Stoic-Christian tradition one would expect the piece to end in praise of the afterlife, but instead Lucena casts doubt on the immortality of the soul: he speaks of the "new opinion" that had arisen "against Gentiles and Catholics, who say that their souls are in themselves immortal." His allusion may be less an echo of the Italian debate than a reflection of the Averroist skepticism that was widespread among Spanish Jews. His contradictory statement, seemingly meant to dispel doubt, ultimately supports the "new opinion." Cartagena comes to the obligatory conclusion about the Christian felicity to be achieved in heaven, but it fails to conceal the accompanying suspicion that "in life there is nothing but living and dying."

2 The Two Juan de Lucenas

Lucena's biography is still so obscure that it is difficult to determine how far, as a *converso*, he distanced himself from Jewish culture. We have good sources only for his residence in Italy – where his appointment as apostolic protonotary shows the respect accorded him by Popes Calixtus III (a Spaniard) and Pius II – and his later brilliant career at the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Some scholars believe he was the son of Martín de Lucena, personal physician to Íñigo López de Mendoza; the clue is a brief reference in *De vita beata*, where the Marquis of Santillana calls his character "the son of my foster son" and Lucena replies to "the friend of my father."²⁹ The elder Lucena, known as "the Maccabee," was a converted Jew with deep knowledge of the Scriptures; as we have mentioned, at mid-century Mendoza commissioned him to translate the Gospels and the Epistles of Saint Paul.

Alcalá identifies him as the *converso* printer Juan de Lucena, who founded one of the most important Hebrew presses in Toledo.³⁰ But this latest, highly interesting suggestion is hard to reconcile with what we know of the more famous Lucena. Lucena the printer, once described as "a well-read man who treated faith with great irony,"³¹ traveled widely; around 1475 he had imported from Italy the Hebrew type that would make his press so famous. He had fled

29 Bertini, *Testi spagnoli*, 155.

30 Alcalá, "Juan de Lucena," 19–21. See also the interesting documentation in Serrano y Sanz, "Noticias biográficas," 256–60, 282–95 and González Castaño, 'Cleanse me from my sins'.

31 Testimony by Diego Fernández, given in Seville for the Inquisition trial of Teresa de Lucena in Toledo, 25 August 1481: Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 282.

from Toledo in 1467 after clashes between Old and New Christians, and settled in Seville; there he was widowed and, entrusting his six daughters to a local family of *conversos*, left once more, probably for Italy.³² On his eventual return to Castile he settled in La Puebla de Montalbán, a small town near Toledo whose residents were almost all *conversos*.

La Puebla is best known as the birthplace of Fernando de Rojas, the *converso* author of *La Celestina*. It later became notorious for its constant visits from the Inquisitors of Toledo; in 1525 one resident, Rojas's father-in-law, claimed that "there is scarcely a person here who has not been reconciled."³³ Around 1476 Lucena, having brought his daughters from Seville, established his press in the more receptive atmosphere there. But the establishment of the Inquisition in Spain forced him to escape once more, this time permanently, to Rome.

While the Holy Office collected a number of testimonies against him in Seville, Segovia, and Toledo, his flight saved him from being arrested and tried. After he left Spain, his family unraveled. His daughters Catalina and Teresa, who had remained at home and helped in the printing business, appeared voluntarily before the Toledo tribunal when the 1485 Edict, the first in the city, was proclaimed. They confessed to having "helped [their father] to make printed books in Hebrew."³⁴ In 1530 Teresa, by then seventy years old, underwent a second trial, accused of continuing to perform Jewish rites and reading "the Bible in Romance";³⁵ she testified that her father had died in Rome. Attached to the trial transcript was a letter written from Lisbon by her sister Leonor, who lamented the family's altered fortunes and claimed to live in fear, no longer knowing "when it is day and when it is night."³⁶

There are certainly many coincidences in the lives and fortunes of the two Lucenas. It is possible that they were related; the printer's flight may even have been assisted by friends of the protonotary.³⁷ But the Juan de Lucena who was forced to escape from Toledo to Seville and Rome cannot be the prominent

32 Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 258.

33 Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 258, in the trial of Álvaro de Montalbán. On hearing a priest say, "See how fleeting are the pleasures of this world – all we have enjoyed has passed and all is vain except gaining eternal life," Montalbán replied, "I want my good things here, since I don't know if there is anything in the beyond." When the priest insisted, "Do you not know that in our faith, he who does good shall attain eternal life?," he answered, "We see what is here, we know nothing of what is there." For more on La Puebla de Montalbán at the turn of the sixteenth century, see Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas*.

34 Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 258–9.

35 Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 259.

36 Serrano y Sanz, *Noticias biográficas*, 287.

37 Serrano y Sanz seems to suggest this theory in *Noticias biográficas*, 259, but does not offer a definite answer.

courtier who was entrusted with diplomatic embassies and missions. Alcalá's hypothesis that they were the same person is cast into doubt by the fact that the protonotary's fierce polemic with Alonso Ortiz, a canon of Toledo, took place in the 1480s; by that time the printer Lucena had already left for Rome.³⁸ The large Lucena family of Toledo is an element to consider in relation to the life of the author of *De vita beata*, but in the absence of more precise information I prefer to set the issue aside. On the other hand, we know that the protonotary was an intimate friend of the king's secretary Fernán Álvarez de Toledo. That friendship and the steady protection of the Mendozas introduced him to the group of *conversos* around Queen Isabella and led to assignments of some prestige: between 1482 and 1492 he led an embassy to England, and he once replied in the queen's name to a delegation from Burgundy.³⁹

His *Epístola exhortatoria a las letras*, dedicated to his "beloved" Fernán Álvarez,⁴⁰ shows him fully integrated into "palace" life and an ironic critic of courtly ways. He sarcastically describes the deplorable ignorance of Latin in Castile among both literary men and commoners, suggesting that Castilians might overcome their ignorance only because the queen had decided to learn the language:

Do you not see how many have begun to study out of admiration for her Royal Majesty? What rulers do, be it good or bad, we all try to do. If it is good, to please ourselves; and if it is bad, to please them. When the king gambled we were all gamblers, and now that the queen is studying we are all students.⁴¹

38 For the polemic, see below. Ortiz claims that the protonotary was reconciled in Cordoba between 1480 and 1492. Though the exact date cannot be established with the available documents, this is one more piece of evidence against Alcalá's theory: see Alcalá, "Juan de Lucena."

39 Lapesa mentions the speech in "Sobre Juan de Lucena," 289.

40 Alcalá does not accept that Fernán Álvarez de Toledo was the *Epístola's* dedicatee, claiming that the royal secretary "would not have tolerated a reversal of his noble name": "Juan de Lucena," 117. I find this explanation inconsistent. Fernán descended from Catalina de Zapata on his mother's side, and members of the Álvarez de Toledo and Zapata families often assumed the female surname: one sibling, the Hieronymite García de Zapata, retained it. There are also several documents in which the king's secretary figures as Fernán Álvarez de Toledo y Zapata. Further, the intimate friendship between Fernán Álvarez de Toledo and Juan de Lucena is unquestioned: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 87.

41 "¿Non vedes cuántos comienzan á aprender admirando a su Realeza? Lo que los reyes hazen, bueno ó malo, todos ensayamos de hacer. Si es bueno, por aplacer á nos mesmos; y si malo, por aplacer á ellos. Jugaba el rey, éramos todos tahures; studia la Reina, somos agora estudiantes": Lucena, *Epístola exhortatoria*. Weissberger, *Gendering Spain's Humanism*.

In the same dedication to Fernán Álvarez de Toledo, he rails against those who garble their Latin and repeat random phrases without understanding their meaning: “They hear Bible stories and fail to comprehend them, and do not know if God or the Devil is speaking; they neither bray nor pray; they do not understand each other and I do not believe that God understands them.”⁴² Lucena suggests that a faith based on no more than repetition and habit is unacceptable. Most of the faithful heard Latin as a series of empty, inappropriate, or invented words: a man had once asked him to explain who were “Santo Ficeto” [*santificetur*] and “Doña Bisodia” [*da nobis hodie*] in the Lord’s Prayer.⁴³ When a man draws near to God his language should be very different and should be understood by all because it is “the speech of the heart, shared by all men and all the angels. We all wish to speak one language and no other, with which we understand ourselves. God understands this one, not the one that comes from our lips.”⁴⁴

Lucena was proposing not spoken prayer – consisting of useless formulas recited mechanically without understanding – but mental prayer, which is a sign of a close personal relationship with God. Here his position appears very close to that of Talavera’s circle. He balanced his corrosive criticism of external devotion, composed of empty rites and meaningless phrases, by defending an active faith whose signs were intimate and spontaneous. Therefore, to combat the corruption of the clergy and the degeneracy of the Church, he proposed imitating the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul.

3 A Treatise against the Inquisition

Lucena would have one more chance to defend his vision of the Church and Christian society. He did so in a long letter or treatise addressed to the Catholic monarchs, in which he reiterated his doubts about both the legitimacy of

42 “Oyen las sacras historias, y no las entienden, ni sienten si habla Dios, ó si habla el diablo; nin roznan, ni rezan, ni ellos se entienden, ni yo entiendo que Dios los entiende”: Lucena, *Epístola exhortatoria*, 213.

43 Castro mentions these two distortions, which also occur in Lucas Fernández and Juan del Encina, in “Espiritualismo y conversos judíos,” 157–8; see also Gil Fernández, *Panorama social*, 129–30. Gillet suggests that they may originate in Sacchetti’s *Trecentonovelle*, novel no. 11: “Doña Bisodia y Santo Ficeto.” In effect, they reappear in Italy among the beliefs of Gramsci’s Aunt Grazia: Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, 2: 101–2; Beccaria, *Sicuterat*, 33.

44 “[L]a habla del corazón que es una a todos los omes y a todos los ángeles. Todos hablamos en la voluntad un lenguaje, y no más, por el cual nos entendemos a nós mesmos. Éste entiende Dios y no el de los labios”: Lucena, *Epístola exhortatoria*, 213.

the Inquisition's scrutiny of inner beliefs and the repressive structures that the monarchs instituted in 1478. It was a risky claim, although it was made on the basis of his interpretation of the Scriptures, and a brave religious proposal that he had already advocated in non-controversial works such as *De vita beata* and *Epístola exhortatoria a las letras*.

No copy of Lucena's treatise has survived because Inquisitorial censorship made every effort to suppress it. But we do have a lengthy refutation of it by Alonso Ortiz, a canon from Toledo, published in a collection of Ortiz's writings that was printed in Seville in 1493.⁴⁵ Ortiz explains that after having debated the Inquisition with Lucena a number of times over the years, he has decided to put his arguments into writing. The edited volume is prefaced by a letter to Tomás de Torquemada, prior of the monastery of Santa Cruz and the first Inquisitor General; there is also a dedication to Ferdinand and Isabella.

Ortiz claims that Lucena's treatise was a "prolix letter" that its author, having overturned the classic interpretation of the Scriptures and the Church Fathers, had published – "with ingenious use of the authorities of Holy Writ" and "stealing from sacred authorities like a pirate" – as "something accepted by your Royal Highnesses." Although Canon Ortiz had urged him not to spread his ideas, Lucena had done so anyway, feeling protected by his privileged position at court:⁴⁶

He should take care in this more than in any other matter: not to publish his letter throughout your kingdoms as something accepted by your Royal Highnesses. Many copies of it have been made, in benefit of his pride and in defiance of warnings made to him earlier about certain passages that are not properly written. In spite of those it is divulged more widely every day.⁴⁷

Lucena's brief epistolary treatise had made an impact. Although many copies were in circulation, demand for more increased daily. The polemic had spread so swiftly that, as Ortiz acknowledged, "it has given such an opportunity to

45 On Ortiz, see Bertini, "Un diálogo humanístico."

46 The date of Lucena's letter has always been in doubt; as I explain below, on internal evidence I place it between 1480 and 1482.

47 "Esto deviera mirar este mas que todas las otras cosas non publicar su carta por vuestros reynos asy como cosa acepta por Vuestras reales Altezas y della son trasladadas muchas copias en vana gloria suya y menosprecio de algunas reprehensiones a el antes hechas de algunos passos della non sanamente escritos, y non embargantes aquellas se divulga mas de cada dia": Ortiz, *Los tratados* fol. iv.

speak against everyone, both the good and the bad, that it is no wonder that the people blaspheme without reason or discretion.”⁴⁸

In Ortiz’s quotations from the treatise we recognize Lucena’s lively and ironic style. He enjoys using chiasmus and antithesis, and reaches his readers’ emotions through keen and vivid imagery. With a characteristic phrase, “I do not know how to speak but I cannot be silent,” the protonotary begins one of his bravest warnings against the decision by the monarchs – whom he had hitherto supported without reserve – to found the Spanish Inquisition. He quotes Saint Paul, “For there must be also heresies among you” (I Corinthians 11:19), to remind the rulers that heretical beliefs had been ever-present in the history of mankind and of the Church: “Falling into heresy is not something of today; it is an old story. Heresy is as old as Adam and spreads in every age.”⁴⁹ In fact, everyone since Adam and Noah, except for Abel, had fallen into heresy;⁵⁰ even Abraham had been guilty of it twice.⁵¹ Since heresy was the inevitable companion of the institutional Church, it was futile to try to force a person’s conscience. No heretic should ever be compelled by violence to change his ideas, because force could not persuade a man who was entrenched in his own opinions. And needless to say, burning at the stake would not make the heterodox repent or save their souls. Fire might, at best, dry up someone’s “tears of penitence,” and the Inquisition’s sentences could only worsen an already bad situation. It was absurd to put out one fire by lighting another:

If torture cured sin I would keep silent, like one who submits to being cauterized if it will save his life. But one thing only increases the other. It would be better to put out two bonfires than to light them. Those blinded by the smaller one will cast themselves into the larger one.⁵²

48 Ortiz, *Los tratados* fol. iv.

49 “No es de agora caer en heregia, vieja cosa es. La antigüedad de la heregia trae desde Adam y por todas las edades la asparze [*sic*]”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error v.

50 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error vi.

51 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, errors vii–viii. Lucena’s claim that “*Abraham infedelizo por dos vezes*” plunges Ortiz into a dense polemic about the Old Testament that takes up a large portion of his treatise.

52 “Si el tormento quitase el detrimento callar me ya como el que por salvar la vida sufre cauterizarse. Mas lo uno es mas aumento de lo otro. Mejor seria por cierto a matar dos fogueras que encenderlas. Ciegos de la una menor se van a lanzar en la otra mayor”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error 11: “Fire dries up the tears of penitence and mercy makes them flow” (“Enjuga el fuego las lagrimas de penitencia y la piedad las faze manar”).

With his metaphor of the two bonfires, Lucena castigates the Inquisitors' indiscriminate sentences of excommunication, which brought the death penalty to those who wavered in their faith. He concludes, almost paradoxically, that "with this Inquisition, the damage to people's souls is greater than the torture inflicted on their bodies."⁵³

The protonotary defended the notion of freedom in one's faith and the need to fight error with persuasion according to the teachings of the New Testament. Returning to an argument widely deployed in the debate over the purity-of-blood statutes, he explained that after the servitude of the Old Law, the New Law liberated mankind: in inviting all to come unto him, Jesus had said, "my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30). In his reply, Ortiz accused Lucena of giving this quotation an ingenious interpretation meant to show that neither infidels nor heretics could be made to embrace Christianity; on the contrary, he affirmed, "infidelity and heresy are best cured by blows from God, and thus they will be cured."⁵⁴ He suggested that a more appropriate passage for heretics was from Luke: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many... will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."⁵⁵ Lucena, with arguments that Talavera was making at the same time in his *Católica impugnación*, believed in a free and voluntary faith, stripped of the empty rites and obligatory acts that he had described in *Epístola exhortatoria*. Faith was a kind of internal light that illuminated every Christian, a wholly personal experience that could not be produced by coercion. He particularly condemned any act of violence meant to impose the new faith. Talavera had said much the same, although Lucena's conclusions went further. Citing Duns Scotus, he even considered baptism invalid if it had been performed by force. By that standard, as he informed his king and queen, every baptism in Castile since 1391 had been illegitimate.⁵⁶

One of the most significant points of Lucena's treatise was his discussion of the phrase "my yoke is easy" from the Gospel of Matthew, in which he attacks the Church's use of excommunication. Lucena considers the practice one of the core strategies in the repressive structure of the Church: the axis of the Spanish

53 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error II, fol. LVI. Ortiz replied that excommunication was a medicine given "to purge, not to kill." He also pointed out that the medical metaphor could easily be reversed: justice dispensed by human laws was a type of "medicine for the body politic," since punishment for one man could dissuade others from committing the same crime.

54 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error III, fol. LVIII.

55 Luke 13:24; Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error III, fol. LIX.

56 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XIV, "which is divided into three errors," fols. LXXIVff. Azcona was the first to note the extreme radicalism of Lucena's treatise on this point of forced baptism: Azcona, "La libertad religiosa," 36–8.

Inquisition's coercive power. About forty years later, Erasmus would quote the same verse to criticize the *fulmen excommunicationis* and other charges that were leveled arbitrarily at Christians.⁵⁷ And the same words eventually fascinated the *alumbrados*, who interpreted them as the promise of a faith freed from the ties of the institutional Church and the Inquisition's ideology. But the strength of Lucena's reasoning actually lies elsewhere. He contrasts "Christ's easy yoke," which "submits easily to reason," with Luke's "striving to enter in." While the latter passage was widely quoted in Spain, where the conversion of infidels was still the main religious issue, Lucena drew on Talavera's teachings in Granada to renounce the traditional interpretation of the verse and propose a different understanding of it. It would not be long, however, before the forced baptisms of Muslims in Granada and then Valencia, the military and spiritual conquest of America, and above all the massacres that accompanied the conversions of Granada and the New World, gave new meaning to the polemic between Lucena and Ortiz.

In Reformation Europe, Erasmus's adoption of Matthew's verse in 1519 set off an anti-institutional movement against the increasing effort to control people's consciences. In Spain, Juan de Lucena's insistence on the "easy yoke" became one basis for discussing the acceptance or rejection of conversion by force, and the Inquisition's control of the recently converted.

Lucena and other *converso* dignitaries of high standing approved absolutely of Ferdinand and Isabella's conquest and unification of Spain, yet they considered the monarchs' unwavering support for the Inquisition an unpardonable tactical error. This group included Fernán Álvarez de Toledo and Talavera, who had effected highly unpopular reforms, as well as intellectuals such as Pulgar and Lucena who had helped forge the myth of a Spain newly unified by the almost messianic advent of its two young rulers. All of them met the Inquisition's founding with determined opposition. These men, who had worked so hard to exalt the Catholic monarchs, now spoke out in a single voice against the new religious policy. Even Ortiz was scandalized by the tone in which Lucena had rebuked his king and queen: he claimed that Lucena had asserted the right to judge the actions of a superior⁵⁸ and had not acknowledged that the monarchs acted irreproachably in approving the Inquisition's birth. For Lucena, on the other hand, their reign had brought truth and justice

57 "Vere blandum est iugum Christi et levis sarcina, si praeter id quod ille nobis imposuit, nihil imponetur ab humanis constitutiunculis": *Erasmus' Annotations*, 53–6.

58 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error 1.

to the monarchy but still lacked one of the fundamental components of royalty, which is clemency:

What your great Majesty has provided is truth and justice: one you have taken from earth, the other from heaven. I do not claim that truth obscures or that justice does not shine; but I do say that between them, clemency must not be extinguished. That is why it was placed in the middle, to be the spirit of the other two; if it is removed, one of them is insane and the other would be furious.⁵⁹

Princes “should bestow more mercy than justice,”⁶⁰ he continues (quoting Saint Augustine), but the Catholic monarchs had ignored the maxim, perhaps not properly understanding the nature of justice: they had allowed the sentences in Seville to move forward. They had, in fact, forgotten the saint’s wise advice that when a sin is widely shared, the proper response is not punishment but clemency: “A sin committed by many is usually unavenged; a large number of sinners requires greater mercy than the harshness that a single sin demands. Un-Christian, cruel, and proud is the response that afflicts many and punishes few.”⁶¹ Lucena did not deny that Augustine’s attitude toward the Donatist heresy had become more rigid over time, but he noted that even in one of the saint’s last, most severe letters, he had maintained that no heretic should be sentenced to death.

Ortiz could not contradict a Father of the Church. He could only show that the quotation was insufficient, patiently explaining the difference between the times and persons. “If this man really understood Saint Augustine,” he wrote, “he would not apply his words to the actions and procedures that Your Highnesses require of the Inquisitors,” because “the Church vanquished the early heretics without having to burn much wood.” In a later and more developed age, however, the Church needed the efforts of the monarchs if it was to overcome the judaizing heresy. Canon Ortiz ended this section by citing the same passage that Lucena had interpreted as open praise of tolerance: the parable

59 “Lo que Vuestra grand Magestad ha sublimado son verdad y justicia que la una aveys sacado sotierra y la otra aveys traydo del cielo. No digo yo que la verdad escurezca, que no resplandezca la justicia, mas digo que entre medias dellas no se apague la clemencia por esso la puso en medio, porque sea spiritu de las otras la qual partida de entrellas una es loca la otra seria furiosa”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error X, fol. LXVv.

60 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XI, fol. LXVIII.

61 “Sin vengança suele quedar el pecado de los muchos porque muchos pecadores mas de clemencia piden, que de cruexa un solo pecado demanda. Sacrilega, cruel y superba es la disciplina que muchos hostiga y castiga pocos”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XII, fol. LXVIIIv.

of the wheat and the tares. (Sébastien Castellion, too, would later make it a centerpiece of his thought.⁶²) But for Ortiz, wherever the tares could be clearly distinguished from the wheat, as with the Spanish judaizers, they should be torn up without hesitation. Therefore heretics should be fought in both the religious and the secular spheres; that is, with the Church's spiritual weapons and the rulers' temporal ones.⁶³

It is clear that Lucena's long letter was shaped by specific polemical goals. He did not generally condemn the new Spanish Inquisition and its methods. He denounced both its excessive harshness in imposing sentences and the greed of the first Inquisitors: since their salaries depended on goods confiscated from the condemned, they showed more zeal for seizing victims' riches than for saving their souls. He made it clear that the Holy Office had acted in haste and without due caution, and above all without papal authorization,

showing that it has proceeded with harshness and without pity and mercy. Also, through avarice and greed [it has acted] to gain large sums rather than the souls of its fellow men, and further without the permission of the Church and too hastily for counsel. Therefore he urges Your Highnesses to address the Vicar of Christ and ask his advice; let them not be ashamed to reveal their leprosy to the curer of lepers, and let him not delay until it is incurable.⁶⁴

62 On the significance of the parable of the wheat and the tares in sixteenth-century religious history, see Bainton, "The Parable of the Tares," Prosperi, "Il grano e la zizzania,," Kimmel, *Parable of Coercion*, 11–2. On the use of this and other Bible passages in the history of tolerance in Europe, see Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 1: 38–9. One of the most debated passages of Erasmus at the Valladolid conference in 1527 was his commentary on this portion of Matthew. He explained that "the servants who wish to gather the tares too soon are those who find it necessary to remove pseudo-apostles and heresiarchs, wounding and killing them, even though the head of the house does not wish to eliminate them but to tolerate them, in case they repent and the their tares become wheat; and if they do not repent let them wait for their judge, to whom they must answer at the proper time" ("[L]os siervos que quieren recoger la cizaña antes de tiempo son los que consideran que hay que quitar de enmedio a los susedoapóstoles y heresiarcas, hiriéndolos y matándolos, si bien el padre de familia no quiere eliminarlos, sino tolerarlos, por si acaso se arrepienten y su cizaña se convierte en trigo; y si no se arrepienten, resérvense a su juez, a quien darán cuenta en su momento"). Avilés Fernández, *Erasmus y la Inquisición*, 58, 89–92.

63 Ortiz, *Los tratados*. error XII, fols. LXXff.

64 "[M]ostrando que con rigor y sin piedad y clemencia se ha procedido. Item que por avaricia y cobdicia mas de ganar muchos cuentos que las animas de los proximos. Otrosi que sin autoridad de la yglesia y con precipitacion de consejo y por tanto exorta que requieran vuestras altezas al vicario de Cristo y le demanden consejo que no hayan verguença

An indignant Ortiz immediately pointed out that “leprosy,” in Lucena’s letter, did not mean the judaizing heresy but “the errors...the Inquisitors have made that bring harm and scandal to the Church.”⁶⁵ Faced with this situation, Lucena was asking the Holy See to solve the problem:

by which it appears that he wishes the Vicar to be consulted to uncover the errors made in the trials...also that he acknowledge the great arrogance they have shown in wanting to separate the grain indoors before bringing it to the threshing floor, meaning that they separate out the bad without distinguishing them from the good and that the heresy should be punished in a milder way.⁶⁶

Here we find an important clue to the date of Lucena’s letter: I believe its composition and circulation should be placed in 1481, during the months of anguished debate that followed the actions of the first Inquisitors in Seville.⁶⁷ Since he is trying to reverse the course of events, to allow the pope to reconsider the permission that had been sought without heed to the terrible consequences it would bring, he must have been writing at a time when an alternative outcome still seemed possible. That could only have happened between September 1480, when the Inquisition took its first steps in Seville, and the publication of the bull *Numquam dubitavimus* on 29 January 1482. In that document Pope Sixtus IV stepped back from the ample powers he had granted the Inquisitors and accused the Catholic monarchs of having distorted his order and founded the Inquisition using tricks and half-truths. Above all, he expressly forbade the Inquisitors to pursue any further inquiry, citing the many protests from Spain.⁶⁸ The document shows the influence of Lucena’s arguments and even seems to allude to the same juridical-doctrinal confusion that, according to the protonotary, marked the acts of the first Inquisitors.

descobrir su lepra al fisico de los leprosos y no la deffiera tanto que se faga incurable”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XII.

65 Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XI, fol. LXVI.

66 “[P]or donde parece que la nueva consultacion que amonesta que se faga al vicario es que descubra los errores de los processos fechos...otrosi que confiese la arrogancia grave de que han usado queriendo alimpiar los panes en la pieça antes de los traer a la hera, dando a entender que sin diferencia de los buenos trillan los malos y que de otra manera mas tibia se avia de castigar la heregia”: Ortiz, *Los tratados*, error XI.

67 We should note that 1493, the year in which Lucena’s letter is said to have been written, also saw the publication of Ortiz’s five treatises, although those would have been written at different times.

68 *Bulario de la Inquisición*, 88.

Lucena's initiative was by no means isolated. Fernando del Pulgar, the court secretary and chronicler, had written a letter to Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza in early 1481 that spoke of the first Seville trials in the same terms and using identical arguments. That missive too, which circulated throughout Castile, was answered by an anonymous polemicist. Pulgar answered his "hidden friend" with a second letter that clarified his stance while refuting defenses of the Inquisition. In writing to Cardinal Mendoza, he had claimed that the new Tribunal attacked the heart of one of the Gospel's central messages, that of forgiveness. Pulgar, steeped in the characteristic *converso* spirituality that made charity the most basic of virtues,⁶⁹ opined that the actions of the first Inquisitors were vicious in their very form. Against their strategy of suspicion and terror, he adduced Jesus's words that one must pardon "seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22), as well as Augustine's letter about the relapsed Donatist heretics.⁷⁰ Above all he recalled Paul's Epistle to Timothy, which outlined with utmost clarity the proper way to correct and punish those who fell into error, adding that "if it were not so, no amount of fuel would suffice":

But the heart of the matter is how this is carried out by the [Church's] ministers. For, as your Lordship knows, there should be one course of action for just a few relapsed persons, and another for many: punishment is proper for the few, but to the degree that it is good for the few it is dangerous and even difficult for the many. Saint Augustine says that the judge should act toward them as Our Lord acts toward all of us: although he knows that we will sin again seven times seventy, he has mercy on

69 As an example of the strength of this sentiment, see Pulgar's letter to his twelve-year-old daughter as she was about to enter a convent: Pulgar, *Letras*, 119–20, no. XXIII.

70 Cantera Burgos claims not to have identified the exact passage in Augustine's letter: "Fernando del Pulgar," 307 n. 2. Gil declares that "Saint Augustine never wrote the letter in question, nor were there any relapsed Donatists: rather the 'lapsed,' or apostates, lived at the time of Saint Ciprian, whose works contain passages that somewhat resemble those espoused here": Gil, *Los conversos*, 1: 75. In fact Llorente had commented extensively on Pulgar's missive, including long passages from the relevant letter by Augustine: "Memoria histórica," 83–5. The decision by both Pulgar and Lucena to cite Augustine (and not Ciprian) and the struggle against the Donatists is highly significant, both for Augustine's objection to the violent measures against heretics and for the content of the polemic itself. The Bishop of Hippo argued, against the Donatists and all claims about the Apocalypse, that until the End of Days no one could know who would be saved or damned, and that only Christ could separate the "wheat" from the "chaff." The latter was another anti-Inquisition reference that Pulgar did not explain, leaving it to his readers to grasp its deeper meaning. On the anti-Apocalyptic motif in the quoted passage, see Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, and Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination*, 259.

us as he awaits our repentance. This comes in a letter that he writes to Emperor Martian about the relapse of the Donatists, advising him to pardon them and not grow weary of persuading them; and as an example he tells how many times the people who came out of Egypt relapsed and how many times God granted them his mercy. And as Saint Paul writes to Timothy that he should “preach..., reprove, rebuke, exhort” the masses, he claims it should be done “with all patience and doctrine”; for if it were not so, no amount of fuel would suffice.⁷¹

For Pulgar the monarchs’ decision, besides departing from a Catholic tradition of mercy and forgiveness, was a bad political move: quoting the same passage of Augustine as Lucena, he insists that a sin committed by a few should be dealt with differently than one committed by many. Aside from theological and exegetical observations he makes wholly pragmatic ones, such as predicting that *conversos* would flee *en masse* from Seville and all Andalusia – as in fact they did (he later recorded this in his *Crónica*⁷²). He also stressed that the problem of heresy in Seville was not restricted to New Christians, so that instead of persecution there should be a plan for general oversight and indoctrination of the whole Christian community.⁷³ That was the sort of plan that Talavera, encouraged by Cardinal Mendoza, had carried out in the Seville archdiocese in 1478.

71 “Pero en el *comodo fiat istud* por sus ministros, ba todo el fecho. Porque, como vuestra señoría save, una forma se á de tener con los pocos rrelasos y otra con los muchos: en los pocos bien asienta la puniçion, y tanto quanto bien está en los pocos, tanto es peligroso y aun deficile en los muchos. Con los quales dize Sant Agustín que se á de aver el juez como se á nuestro Señor con cada uno de nosotros; el qual, aunque nos conoçe rreincidir *seties septuagesis* [*sic*] esperando nuestra reduçion, nos apiada. Tráelo en una epístola que escribe al emperador Marçiano sobre el rrelapso de los donatistas, amonestándole que los perdone y no cansen de los rreduçir; e trae por exemplo cuántas vezes rreincidió el pueblo salido de Egipto y cuántas vezes Dios ynfundió sobre ellos su misericordia. E aun aquel *argue, insta, obsecra, increpa*, que sant Pablo escribe a Thimotheo que faga a la muchedumbre, *in omni patientia et doctrina* dize que lo debe fazer; ca de otra manera no abría leña que bastase”: Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 307–8. Pulgar’s last sentence seems almost like an ironic reply to a saying by Bernáldez that soon formed part of the Inquisition’s propaganda: “the fire has now been lit and will burn until it runs out of dry wood” (“pues el fuego está encendido, que quemará hasta que halle cabo al seco de la leña”): Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, 1: 143.

72 Pulgar, *Crónica*, 332.

73 “I believe, sir, that there are some people there who are bad and others, the majority, who follow those bad ones and would follow good ones if there were any. But just as the Old [Christians] there are bad Christians, the New ones are good Jews” (“Yo creo, señor, que allí hay algunos que pecan de malos, y otros, y los más, porque se ban tras aquellos malos,

Fernando del Pulgar, like Lucena, did not scruple to point out the Catholic monarchs' grave error in protecting the Inquisition. Also like the protonotary, he was reproached by his anonymous opponent for addressing the rulers too freely. In his reply he demonstrated – as Maravall has remarked⁷⁴ – that as a critic he was wholly free of the servility shown by those who came after him: “I do not say that they [the Inquisitors] err in their proceedings, nor the queen in her charge, *although Her Highness might have erred in charging them* and they in acting, neither party out of ill intent but based on harmful information received from others.”⁷⁵ At this point he makes a clever play on words, introducing a reference to King John II's good intentions when, “thinking he was doing good,” he put Pero Sarmiento in charge of Toledo. He also refers to how Isabella's good faith in Martín de Sepúlveda was betrayed when, having received the fortress of Nodar from her, he ceded it to the king of Portugal. He concludes in a sarcastic tone, “So, sir critic, it is not surprising that Her Highness might have erred in making her charge, thinking that she was acting rightly; and they might have done the same in the trials, believing that they were well informed; although I did not say either of these things and I do not affirm them now.”

These words come from an open letter to the “great Cardinal” Pedro González de Mendoza who, like many other prelates, praised it. Far from reproaching Pulgar for his attack on the first Inquisitors, Mendoza recognized the letter as politically opportune and accepted the theology that underlay its arguments.⁷⁶ Others valued it as well. Pulgar knew that he could count on the support of the queen's counselors and the two *converso* members of her chancellery, Alonso de Ávila and Fernán Álvarez de Toledo, neither of whom had concealed his opposition to the new Tribunal of the Faith. In another satirical letter against the purity-of-blood statutes in Guipúzcoa, Pulgar mentions those two men

y se irían tras otros buenos, si los obiese. Pero como los viejos sean allí tan malos cristianos, los nuevos son tan buenos judíos”): Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 308.

74 Maravall, *La oposición política*, 122.

75 “Ni yo digo que ellos yerran en su oficio, ni la Reyna en su comisión, aunque posible sería su alteza aver errado en ge lo cometer, y aun ellos en el proceder, y lo uno ni lo otro no por malas intenciones tuyas, mas por dañadas informaciones ajenas”: Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 326, emphasis added.

76 In his second letter, his response to the “hidden friend,” Pulgar answers the accusations by claiming that “[Cardinal Mendoza] never criticized it [his original letter] in person or in writing, nor did other prelates who saw it.” His cordial correspondence with the cardinal and others had never been affected by his anti-Inquisition missive; on the contrary, “his Lordship and other gentlemen and scholars” had continually solicited his opinions and sought to correspond with him: Cantera Burgos, “Fernando del Pulgar,” 324.

together as if they made up a common front against the anti-*converso* policy.⁷⁷ And he also enjoyed the sympathy of Juan de Lucena, who at that time and in those circles was quoting the same texts and authorities.

With the data available to us, we cannot know whether Lucena's treatise and Pulgar's letter were connected. It is likely that both the protonotary's learned disquisition and Pulgar's brilliant epistle reflect ideas that were common among Queen Isabella's circle of *converso* courtiers. They share a rediscovery of Augustine of Hippo but with a meaning far different from the one assigned to him in the Middle Ages and still expressed by Alonso Ortiz.⁷⁸ And they both defended a free, internal, unforced faith and the supreme virtue of charity. In this they continued a long tradition that had originated in opposition to the purity-of-blood statutes. It was now given new life by the charismatic example of Hernando de Talavera in Granada and accounts of his gradual and "marvelous" conversions.

4 The Inquisition Trials

The anti-Inquisition polemic conducted by Pulgar, Lucena, and Talavera was one of the most difficult and intrepid protests of the Catholic monarchs' reign. In a Castile that was slowly submitting to the Inquisitorial yoke, it was perhaps the most open display of disagreement. This systematic opposition was carried out by the tight group that surrounded Fernán Álvarez de Toledo, the royal secretary, and Hernando de Talavera, whose firm institutional prestige was backed by the powerful Mendoza family and, on occasion, by Isabella. Their offensive almost succeeded in making Castilian society react against the tyranny of the Inquisition.

Its leaders failed in the end, however, most of them brought down by the very Inquisitorial machine that they had confronted. Between 1481 and 1492 Lucena was forced to recant in Cordoba "before many prelates and masters of theology"; he was reconciled with the Inquisition, probably in private. His misfortunes with the Holy Office did not end when his treatise/epistle was publicly denounced.⁷⁹ Pulgar was expelled from court in the years immediately

77 Cantera Burgos, "Fernando del Pulgar," 297–302.

78 On this issue. see the interesting analysis by Lecler, *Tolerance and the Reformation*, 1: 72.

79 Ortiz announced at the end of his own treatise that Lucena's work had been censured by the Inquisition: "In Cordoba before many prelates and masters of theology he was reconciled to the Church, and his letter and treatise was publicly condemned": Ortiz, *Los tratados*, fol. cv.

following the polemic, possibly at the same time as Lucena's reconciliation.⁸⁰ Fernán Álvarez de Toledo disappears from official records after 1497, the very year in which the policy of the Catholic monarchs took a new direction.⁸¹

It is generally accepted that Ferdinand, after the death of his first-born son and heir Prince John, seized the occasion to replace the *conversos* close to Isabella with men who were loyal to himself.⁸² This occurred while Charles VIII of France was invading Naples and Ferdinand was seeing the end of his hopes of continuity for his dynasty; he had also decided to give his policies a pro-Aragonese slant. Isabella was detached from power: between 1497 and her death in 1504 she fought and lost a series of battles and was progressively weakened by illness. In this situation Ferdinand was able to form a sort of Aragonese party that would eventually assume the most important positions at court, displacing members of the queen's circle of *conversos*.⁸³ Álvarez de Toledo and Talavera were the first victims of a slow decay that began with the Inquisition's founding and culminated in Isabella's death. The royal secretary retired to Toledo in 1497. In 1498 the chief Inquisitor of Cordoba, Diego Rodríguez de Lucero – backed by the Inquisitor General Diego de Deza and protected by Ferdinand himself – sought to extend his authority to the archdiocese of Granada. In doing so, he provoked an unusually violent clash with Talavera that brought about the latter's persecution by the Inquisition and ended with his defeat. As the Inquisition officially entered Granada in 1499, the conversion of the *moriscos* was entrusted to the court's rising star, Francisco de Cisneros, who forcibly baptized fifty thousand Muslims in just a few days. In this atmosphere it is no wonder that Talavera's policy of tolerance was utterly rejected, even though it was supported by Granada's first Captain General, Íñigo López de Mendoza, second Count of Tendilla and brother of the great Cardinal Mendoza.⁸⁴ At that moment, the Cordoba Inquisition led by Lucero brought its first cases against the judaizers of Granada. A chain of events over only a few years put an end to the *conversos*' influence.

80 That is the opinion of Carriazo in his introduction to Pulgar, *Crónica*, xxxviii. Cantera Burgos dissents in "Fernando del Pulgar," 328–9, claiming that there is insufficient documentation in 1477–1480 to prove his dismissal from court, especially since "being absent from the court, if there is no proof, does not mean that the absence was forced."

81 See Rábade Obradó, *Una élite de poder*, 56–8, 82–5.

82 On Isabella's last years, see Azcona, *Isabel la Católica*, 709ff.

83 I share the opinion of Fernández Albaladejo, *Fragmentos*, 29. On the so-called Aragonese party, made up of *conversos* who were close to Ferdinand, see Giménez Fernández, *Bartolomé de las Casas*.

84 I reconstructed this scenario in Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 113–7.

In the waning months of 1503 Hernando de Montemayor, the Inquisitor of Zaragoza, accused Juan de Lucena and his brother of judaizing. On 26 December, Juan wrote a long letter to Ferdinand, denouncing that accusation and claiming that the Inquisitor had clearly violated existing norms: among other things, he had not respected the immunity granted to the entire Lucena family by the Holy See. His appeal on the basis of papal privilege brought his case to the attention of the Inquisitor General Diego de Deza, with whom he felt he was on good terms.⁸⁵

A year later, the Count of Tendilla claimed that the Cordoba Inquisition had tried everyone in the city of Granada: “there is not a single person left in the city whom one can speak to,” he wrote, and since there were no *conversos* left, “seeing whom they arrest, perhaps they will start arresting Basques.”⁸⁶ These trials were the direct result of the ones that had ravaged Cordoba between 1502 and 1504.

In that city in 1502, Lucero opened a case against the jurist and city councilman Juan de Córdoba and his nephew Antonio de Córdoba (known as “the *bachiller* Membrequé”), setting off a chain of events that reached unimaginable proportions within a few short months. The two were accused not only of judaizing and of openly mocking Christian rituals by staging false processions and profaning the crucifix, sacred images, and the Eucharist; they were also accused of conspiring against the monarchs “in order to put an end to the Inquisition.”⁸⁷ “Prophetesses” among the women of their household were said to have announced the imminent coming of Elijah, who would free the *conversos* and convey them to “the promised land.” These women held gatherings in which one woman would fall into a trance. “Membrequé” attended one such event dressed in a costume made of “thin metal scales and with wings like an angel’s.”

Many city residents, not just *conversos*, were accused of having been present at the meetings with Membrequé and the prophetess and of believing their messianic predictions. One by one, the most prominent citizens were imprisoned on the basis of false declarations, often extracted under torture. The city’s leaders were often forced to testify against them. In December 1504 Lucero ordered one hundred twenty victims to be burned at the stake. With

85 Llorente published and commented on Lucena’s letter to Ferdinand in *Anales de la Inquisición*, 1: 288–97.

86 “[N]o queda en la çibdad persona casi a quien pueda onbre hablar....pués aún no sé, segund los que prenden, si ha de llegar la cosa a prender viscaínos”: *Epistolario del Conde de Tendilla*, lxxxix.

87 Azcona, “La Inquisición española,” 94.

the precedent of Cordoba, in which a whole city had become a “house of martyrdom,” it was easy to extend the suspicion of Jewish messianism to the *conversos* who surrounded the archbishop of Granada.

Between 1504 and the summer of 1505, forty-six persons were imprisoned in Granada, and the Inquisition touched even members of Talavera’s family. Among the prisoners were most of the financial associates of the Captain General. These included Juan Álvarez Zapata, son of Fernán Álvarez de Toledo; some relatives of the powerful *converso* Hernando de Zafra, another royal secretary; the royal treasurer, Alonso de Morales; the licenciado Illescas, a member of the royal council; the secretaries Ruy López and Alonso del Mármol; the accountant Alonso de Baeza; and several of the archbishop’s servants. All were imprisoned in Cordoba in August 1506, together with Talavera’s sister and her children and the dean of Granada Cathedral, Francisco Herrera. In his formal charge, Lucero claimed that judaizing friends of Talavera’s had met in the archbishop’s palace under the archbishop’s leadership, joined by the suffragan bishops of Almería and Jaén and by Herrera, Juan Álvarez de Toledo, López, Zafra, and the administrator Padilla. He added that the archbishop’s sister and her two daughters María and Constanza had founded a prayer circle modeled on that of the prophetess from Cordoba, which acted in parallel with the men’s group. The objective of both, according to Lucero, was to send preachers around the kingdom to announce the coming of the Messiah and incite Christians to convert to Judaism. The headquarters for the judaizing conspiracy, which was intended to spread throughout Castile, was the home of Fernán Álvarez de Toledo: there “on the Sabbath” the prophetesses of the sect gathered, wearing golden crowns.⁸⁸

In an astonishing spiral of false accusations, Lucero’s “fables, not infantile but infernal”⁸⁹ led to the investigation of the leading *converso* families, and of others as well. In October 1505 the Inquisitor General Diego de Deza opened similar cases in Valladolid and other Castilian cities. The many accused there, most of them members of urban political and economic oligarchies, were imprisoned in Toro. The Álvarez de Toledo family was, of course, the main objective of inquiries into circles of judaizers. One trial was initiated against the memory of the royal secretary, who had died in the fall of 1504. Another

88 The records of Talavera’s trial have not been located, but it is described in some detail in letters by Pedro Mártir de Anglería, who was very close to him: Anglería, *Epistolario*, 2: 120. Herrero del Collado, “El proceso,” 690, cites a description of the trial preserved in the cathedral archive in Cordoba. For a different reading of the accusations against Talavera placed in a wider context, see Popkin, “Jewish Christians and Christian Jews.”

89 In the phrase of the humanist Pedro Mártir de Anglería, Anglería, *Epistolario*, 2: 239, ep. 385.

pursued his brother Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, a canon of Toledo Cathedral, who had already been falsely accused in the Toledo trials of 1486; it ceased only when Deza was dismissed and replaced by Cisneros, a protector of Francisco's.⁹⁰ While Juan Álvarez Zapata's trial was proceeding in Granada, his brother Luis was accused along with his family.⁹¹ Finally in 1506, in a tense political atmosphere, Deza petitioned Rome for permission to try the archbishop of Granada. Ferdinand supported the request with enthusiasm, declaring himself guilty of allowing the grave situation revealed by the trials in Castile.⁹² They had brought to light, he wrote, "such great crimes and abuses that if I, or any other prince, had failed [to act] in the matter there would be such a great schism and heresy in God's Church that it would be greater than the Arian, and Your Holiness should give thanks that it has been discovered in my time so that it may be punished and repressed."⁹³ By then, however, Talavera's defenders and a delegation from Cordoba had already presented an appeal to the pope.⁹⁴

Suddenly, the imminent arrival of Philip the Fair in the Iberian Peninsula suggested that this state of affairs could change.

90 On this figure, see below.

91 His wife and daughter were also put on trial: see Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 144–5.

92 Rodríguez Villa, *Don Francisco de Rojas*, 448.

93 Letter cited in Cotarelo Valledor, *Fray Diego de Deza* ap. 3, 350.

94 Azcona, "El tipo ideal del obispo," 54–60; Herrero del Collado, "El proceso," 690–701.

Profetism and Criticism of the Inquisition: The Visions of Pero López de Soria (1519)

1 Castilian Cities against the Inquisition

A single summer was enough to reverse all expectations. King Philip the Fair was supported without reserve by members of Isabella's original party and by *conversos* incensed by the current rash of Inquisition trials. His sudden arrival in Spain did have positive effects; there was an immediate suspension of the *auto-da-fé* that Lucero and the Cordoba Inquisitors had planned for June 1506, which would have seen 160 victims burned at the stake, and a halt to all trials then in progress. But Philip's unexpected death in September crushed the hopes of Castilian *conversos* once again.

In Cordoba, both the city council and the cathedral chapter hoped that the protests that had placed Joanna I of Castile on the throne would be resolved in the spirit of her dead husband, Philip, rather than that of her father, Ferdinand. They presented her with a petition that listed the Inquisition's outrages against the people of Cordoba over many years: accusations based on false witness, claims that Jewish prayers were taught to prisoners, and stories of persons who had begun poor and now commanded "great estates" through collaboration with the Inquisitors.¹ While the petitioners suggested remedies, they also held out a threat by recalling an earlier occasion when, at an especially dangerous moment for the city, it had sought support elsewhere in Andalusia against the Holy Office:

And in like manner, in the city and its diocese, we became aware and prepared ourselves and took up arms and sent to seek and ask and request from the other cities and the grandees of Andalusia, especially Jerez with which we have an ancient fraternal alliance, that they join us and give us their favor and help.²

1 The petition is undated although it was drawn up immediately after Philip's death. It is addressed to Queen Joanna and found in AGS, *Patronato Real* 28–40. It was first studied by Azcona, "La Inquisición española."

2 "Y asy mismo en la cibdad y su obispado nos aperçebimos y adresçamos y pusymos en armas y enbiamos a pedir y rogar y requerir de las otras cibdades y grandes del Andalusia y

Clearly there was an attempt in Andalusia to form a confederation of cities against the overweening power of Deza and the Inquisition. The document complained of the violation of urban privileges and charters and the replacement of the monarch's authority by the "tyrannical hands" of the Inquisitor General.³ In an extraordinary allegation, the petitioners added that under these conditions they had the right to resist: Ferdinand, through his policies and his establishment of the Inquisition, had openly infringed on existing pacts with Andalusian cities and therefore was no longer owed special fealty.

Inquisitor General Diego de Deza began by denouncing the petition, which scorns and declares illegitimate Your Highness, your purveyors of justice, and the laws and charters of these kingdoms, thus preventing Your Highness's natural subjects from seeking justice from your court; of this and all other things we complain to Your Highness with deepest sorrow.⁴

His retaliation was swift. He ordered the Toledo Inquisition to arrest Alonso de Toro, who was on his way to court to speak publicly about the protests by the city and cathedral of Cordoba.⁵ For the council members and canons, this action, so typical of Deza's policies (which were assured of Ferdinand's full support) justified their taking up arms and seeking alliance with other Andalusian cities and *grandees* from the region.

It is remarkable that city representatives felt so confident in invoking an alliance with the Andalusian aristocracy: since that group had formed one of the chief obstacles to the policies of the Catholic monarchs, the danger of a new confederation was real. Only a few months later, in March 1507, an armed assault on the Inquisition's prisons in Cordoba freed more than four hundred prisoners, with the tacit compliance of the Count of Cabra and the Marquis of Priego. In August the Marquis placed himself openly on the rebels' side, taking charge of the city and refusing to accept the authority of the king's newly appointed *corregidor*. In 1508 the rebellion against the Inquisition trials and

señaladamente de Xerez con quien tenemos antigua hermandad y alianza que se junten con nosotros y dandonos favor o ayuda": AGS, 28-40, fol. 3.

3 The phrase is Gonzalo de Ayora's. See the speech by Ferdinand the Catholic on 15 september 1507 in Azcona, "La Inquisición española," 124.

4 "[M]enospreçia y desacata mucho a Vuestra Alteza y sus justiçias y las leyes y fueros destos reynos ynpidiendo por fuerça que sus subditos y naturales de Vuestra Alteza no vayan a pedir justiçia a su corte, de lo qual y de cada cosa nos quexamos a Vuestra Alteza con entrañable dolor": Azcona, "La Inquisición española," 124.

5 AGS, *Patronato Real* 28-40 fols. 2v, 5r.

their main instigator, Diego Rodríguez de Lucero, had to be quelled by an army of veterans of the Italian campaigns that Ferdinand dispatched for the purpose.⁶ As the chronicler Bernáldez wrote, most grandees from Andalusia “seemed not to love King Ferdinand,” so it is no surprise that he made them the principal target of his campaign in the region during the summer of 1508.⁷

Two factions had formed as a consequence of the trials in Cordoba, Granada, Toledo, and Valladolid: the Crown and the Inquisition on one side; and the nobility, the urban oligarchies, and the cathedral chapters on the other.⁸ In Cordoba the whole city was affected by the trials: its representatives claimed that Lucero’s accusations had affected the nobles, Old Christian families, and even priests, monks, and nuns who were free of any taint. A contemporary report claimed that the Inquisitors, not content to “make such infamous accusations against people of this innocent nation,” had extended their net to capture “Old Christians of long standing, prelates, knights of the Realm, friars, clerics, nuns, and citizens of every rank, degree, and condition.”⁹ Much the same had occurred in Granada, Toledo, and Valladolid. The situation was so chaotic than even a dispassionate observer such as the Duke of Nájera admitted that any reconciliation between Ferdinand and the combined nobility and city governments would necessitate an immediate change in the Inquisition trials that had produced the breach.¹⁰ The Duke’s position was so popular and widespread that Ferdinand was forced to accept it, in one of the first decisions he made on his return to Castile in late August 1507.¹¹

6 Edwards, “La révolte” and Edwards, “Politics and Ideology,” 296–7; Yun Casalilla, *Crisis de subsistencia*, 281–3.

7 See the analysis by Fernández Albaladejo, *Fragments*, 37ff.

8 On the *conversos*’ participation in these events, see Márquez Villanueva, “El problema de los conversos,” 55 n. 10: he mentions the dense population of *conversos* in urban centers and the plan to form a confederation of Andalusian cities in opposition to Lucero’s actions in Cordoba and the regency of Ferdinand the Catholic in 1506–1507.

9 “[P]oner tanta infamia contra las personas desta nación sin culpa....contra los cristianos viejos de nación, preladados, cavalleros dignidades del Reyno, frailes, clerigos, monjas, ciudadanos y de todos los otros estados y suertes y condiciones”: ACC, caja I, leg. 7, no. 295, cited in Yun Casalilla, *Crisis de subsistencia*, 232.

10 Fernández Albaladejo, *Fragments*, 38.

11 It is useful to recall Ferdinand’s movements during this turbulent period. On 13 July 1506 he had to leave Castile for Aragon; on 4 September he embarked in Barcelona for Italy, where he remained in Naples until 4 June 1507 when he sailed for Aragon. He spent 20 June to 11 August in Valencia, leaving for Castile from there; from late August to late October he stayed in Santa María del Campo, halfway between Burgos and Palencia, where he met representatives of the Castilian cities. Finally, from late October 1507 to September 1509 the “new” king of Castile resided continuously in Burgos: Azcona, “La Inquisición española,” 99.

On 15 September a delegation from cities of Castile and Andalusia – including Cordoba, Granada, and Toledo, those most affected by the trials – met the king at the monastery of Santa María del Campo. The first to speak was Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, who was the chief preaching canon of Toledo Cathedral, a religious judge, and brother of the former royal secretary Fernán Álvarez de Toledo. His family had suffered greatly ever since the first Tribunal of the Faith was established in his city in 1485.¹² He himself had undergone two trials: one of the first ones in 1485 and a second in 1504–1505, in which he was absolved thanks to the intervention of Cardinal Cisneros. He declared in his typically decisive and direct manner:

We now offer our hearts and our thoughts, which were always filled with love and the desire to serve you: we entreat your Royal Majesty to accept them and to employ all those whom you find capable of service, without any distinction of persons or lineages, for we are all of one faith and one church and one religion.¹³

“One faith, one church, one religion”: with those words, Álvarez de Toledo explicitly cited the Gospel verses that, in the mid-fifteenth century, had justified the *conversos*’ full integration. In the century’s last decades, they still inspired those who believed in Ferdinand and Isabella’s reforms. From Alonso de Cartagena to Juan de Lucena, the phrase had been a sort of battle cry for Castile’s *conversos*. With his head high, Álvarez de Toledo now spoke it before the king in the presence of his coreligionists and representatives of the urban oligarchies who had supported their resistance. He was reminding the king of his broken promises but also proposing a new agreement and a return to normality. That would require rejecting the discrimination imposed by Ferdinand himself and inherent in the Spanish Inquisition. Francisco claimed: “We do not doubt that some, with evil intent, seek this division; realizing that they cannot

12 For more on the trial of Francisco’s brother, the Hieronymite monk García de Zapata, and the repeated accusations against the Álvarez de Toledo family, see Pastore, “Nascita e fortuna di una leggenda.” On García de Zapata’s influence on Toledo’s religious and cultural life, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 189 and 476, and also below.

13 “Agora ofreçemos los coraçones y pensamientos, que siempre se ocuparon en amor e deseo deste mismo serviçio: suplicamos a Vuestra real Maguistad [*sic*] lo açebte e se sirva de todos los que allare ábiles para servir, syn distençion de personas ni linajes, pues todos somos de una fee e de una yglesia y de una reliçion.” The document, preserved in RAH, Colección Salazar A-12, fols. 195r–198v, appears in the appendix to Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 404–13.

create heretics, they hope to make enemies of those who serve Your Highness.”¹⁴ All were aware, he admitted, of the voluntary and deliberate breach that had been opened, but there was still time to repair it.

The idyll between the monarchy and the *conversos*, however, had long since come to an end. The good relations between the king and some Castilian *conversos* had been soured by the controversial succession to the throne, by Ferdinand’s harsh break with Isabella’s *converso* courtiers, and by his use of the Inquisition as a weapon against his enemies. The king felt justified because many *conversos* in Castile had supported Philip the Fair rather than himself as Isabella’s successor to the throne; he reminded those present that

I have always intended that good men be preserved and honored and bad ones be punished...and after the Queen’s death I persisted in my wish, although I was told that this generation told slanders about me and tried to do me ill, and even I saw some of that.¹⁵

The king’s speech combined vague protestations of innocence and good faith with a proud insistence on his own authority. He recalled the “good old times” with Isabella:

As God is my truth and my witness, when the Queen was alive I always wished for this matter to appear true and open, and I would give my blood to avoid such things happening in these kingdoms – and she felt it even more than I. And we always employed these people, like others, without distinction of persons, and they served us very well.¹⁶

But he also hinted that some of the *converso* elite of Castile could hinder his plans and should be resisted with the weapon closest to hand, the Tribunal of

14 “Que non dudamos que algunos con malos deseos procuren esta división que, quando an visto que no pueden hazer herejes, quieren hazer enemigos del servicio de vuestra alteza”: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 404–13.

15 “[M]i yntençion syempre fue y es que los buenos fuesen guardados y honrrados y los malos castigados...y después que la Reyna falleció tove siempre este mismo deseo, y puesto que me dixerón que esta generacion dezían males de mi y procuravan deservirme y aun yo bi algo dello”: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 409.

16 “Dios es verdad y buen testigo que en vida de la Reyna yo siempre deseé que la verdad y linpieza deste negoçio apareçiese y diera mi sangre porque en estos reynos no oviera cosas destas, y ella muy mejor que yo, y sienpre nos servimos desta gente commo de los otros syn aceçion de personas, y ellos nos sirvieron muy bien”: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 409.

the Faith. In the face of that danger it mattered little whether Deza had gone too far in the risky implementation of a new policy or whether the Inquisition had condemned many innocent people, including “some for whom His Highness would undergo a good torture or two if only they had not been arrested and if their blood was clearly pure.”¹⁷

The discussion must have grown very tense. Ferdinand maintained a benevolent expression “as if he were an angel from paradise” while hearing a diocesan judge from Granada describe how “Lucero had people demonstrate Jewish prayers in the prisons of Cordoba.”¹⁸ But the worst insult came from Gonzalo de Ayora, a representative from Cordoba:

Ever since Your Highness took into your hands the reins of government in Spain, all your important public acts have been praised by all nations and by Moors, Jews, pagans, and Christians without reproach. But with this act, Your Highness should know that your reputation and honor have been and are in great disrepute.¹⁹

He was inviting the king to change course for his own good, since his popularity had fallen lower than ever before. “Your Highness came here to find a remedy for these kingdoms in other matters, but on this issue you need a remedy for yourself.”²⁰

17 “[A]lgunos por quien su Alteza sufriera un par de buenas disciplinas porque no le prendieran y su limpieza fuera manifiesta”: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 409.

18 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 411. This observation was erased from the final draft of the report on the meeting.

19 “Después que Vuestra Alteza tomó en mano las riendas de la gobernación de España, todas sus obras públicas y principales an seydo alabadas de todas naciones y de moros y judíos y paganos y christianos y sin reproche, pero ésta crea Vuestra Alteza que su reputación y honra an estado y están en grand disputa”: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 411.

20 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 412. Ayora used the same tone in a letter to the secretary Pérez de Almazán in July 1507, in which he criticized Ferdinand’s policy harshly: “As for the Inquisition, the method was to rely heavily on the archbishop of Seville and Lucero and Juan de la Fuente, so that they brought infamy on all these kingdoms and destroyed so much of them without God and without justice, killing and robbing and forcing maidens and married women in a great outrage and insult to the Christian religion” (“En lo de la ynquisicion el medio que se dyo fué confyar tanto del S. arçobispo de Sevilla y de Luzero y Juan de la Fuente, con que infamaron todos estos Reynos y destruyeron gran parte dellos syn dios y syn justicia, matando y robando y forzando donzellas y casadas, en gran vituperio y escarnio de la Religion christiana”): Fernández Duro, “Noticias de la vida,” 448. Ortí Belmonte, “Biografía,” is still the only biographical sketch of Ayora, who was a humanist, court chronicler, city representative of Cordoba, and harsh critic of

The meeting with representatives of the cathedral chapters of Toledo, Cordoba, and Granada ended with the symbolic presentation to Ferdinand of Talavera's last words, spoken on his deathbed on 14 May 1507. In a sort of spiritual testament the archbishop, after rejecting accusations of judaizing that had led to the arrest of "his brother, nieces and nephews, employees, and members of his household," begged

our lady the queen [Joanna] and her respected Council and her most serene father [Ferdinand] whom we hope will be the governor of these kingdoms, and all their grandees and prelates...to defend the honor of God and their own and that of these kingdoms, and not let such a great evil be hidden.²¹

Talavera's last will ended with harsh criticism of the discriminatory policy that the Inquisition had adopted with Ferdinand's direct support, which seemed to be evolving into an effort to exterminate the *converso* minority:

And note that the licenciado Lucero and his accomplices wished to cast a great blot on the holy Church of these kingdoms by ensuring that there would be no converts, which is manifestly counter to the holy Catholic faith which wishes to make no distinction between Jew and Greek, so that no matter where they live they may be received and treated as one people and like those who have one faith and one baptism; and that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ *est lapis qui feçit utraque unum et paries medius auferens materie dibisionem*.²²

Ferdinand's policies. Also of interest are Maravall, *Las Comunidades*; Olivari, *Fra trono e opinione* 134; and Ferrer García, "Reyes y soldados."

21 "[A] la reyna nuestra sennora y a su mui alto Consejo y a su serenísimo padre gobernador que se espera destos reynnos, y a todos los grandes y perlados dellos...que defiendan la honra de Dios y la suya y destos reynnos, y no dexen pasar tan gran maldad so dismullación": Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 412.

22 "Y miren que el licenciado Luzero y sus cómplizes querían dar una gran manzilla en la santa Yglesia destos reynnos procurando que no obiese conversos, lo que es manifesto contra la santa fee católica que quiere que no aya distención de judío ni de griego, y que donde quiera que bivieren sean reçebidos y tratados commo un pueblo y commo aquéllos que tienen una fee y un bautismo, y que nuestro sennor y salvador Ihesuchristo est lapis qui feçit utraque unum et paries medius auferens materie dibisionem": Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 412–3. The Latin phrase quotes from Ephesians 2:14.

By the express wish of the representatives of Castilian cities, that paragraph – “the last words that the archbishop of Granada spoke in his life” – was added to the speeches of Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, Gonzalo de Ayora, and the delegate from Granada *de bervo ad verbum*, that is, literally word for word.²³

2 The Prophecy of the Bat: Fray Melchor and Francisco de Cisneros

From his temporary exile in Naples, Ferdinand analyzed the situation and then acted cautiously. He requested and received Deza's resignation; that is, he accepted the loud petition from the city of Cordoba, an act that seemed to be a *sine qua non* to recover his battered authority. In June 1507, probably with gritted teeth, he named Cisneros as Inquisitor General. Cisneros was already regent of Castile, a post to which he had been elected in the autumn of 1506; his new position avoided a seemingly intractable crisis born of the enmity between *Fernandinos* and *Felipistas*. There the Franciscan operated with great skill, building a network of loyalists to Ferdinand even while the latter's authority was weakening.²⁴ His appointment as Inquisitor General, together with his elevation to cardinal, were the clearest sign of an alliance between two individuals who had shown no particular affinity before. Their agreement, however, bore fruit.

Seeking to put an end to the perilous situation that had arisen from the trials in Cordoba and Granada, Cisneros hastily convoked a meeting of representatives of the clergy together with the president and eight members of the Royal Council. During forty sessions held between 1 June and 16 July 1508, the twenty-two delegates studied the performance of Inquisitors during the Cordoba trials that had begun in 1502. They clearly appreciated the gravity of the issue: the royal councilman Galíndez de Carvajal, in his opening address to the group, called it the “most serious and arduous matter...since the coming of Jesus Christ,” while a more realistic Martín de Azpeitia described it as the one that had most “obfuscated and confounded this Holy Office.”²⁵ Some of those present, including Galíndez, were confident that it was possible to reform the Inquisition's procedures.²⁶ Cisneros, however, skillfully limited their task to a

23 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 412.

24 On the crisis that Ferdinand and his new group of loyalists faced from at least 1503, see Keniston, *Francisco de los Cobos*, and the summary by Fernández Albaladejo, *Fragments*, 29ff.

25 Azcona, “La Inquisición española,” 108.

26 Azcona, “La Inquisición española,” 109.

partial review of the Cordoba trials and blocked any discussions of altering the institution's legal and formal structure. The final result – as he had hoped – was the dismissal of a few Inquisitors (including the infamous Lucero) and an admission that some of the wildest accusations had been false. In closing, he expressed complete confidence in the Tribunal of the Faith and urged it to continue its work. The first and only formal challenge to the Inquisition in its history, forced upon it by long-standing public opinion, ended in deep disappointment.

Cisneros's plans for Castile were actually very different. Since 1506 he had been pressuring Ferdinand to convince Henry VII of England and Manuel I of Portugal to organize a great anti-Muslim crusade; together they would fight the Turks from the Balkans to Egypt and eventually make a triumphant entry into the Holy Land. But none of this had happened yet. The only relevant surviving document is a reply from the Portuguese king to Ferdinand, which suggested how much resistance Cisneros's ambitious project was likely to meet.²⁷

The idea was not a new one in Castile. Lucena had already advanced the notion of an African crusade in *De vita beata*, envisioning it as a way to distract Christendom from the conflict between Old and New Christians. A war against external enemies, with wider aims, would keep coreligionists together. At this difficult moment, a crusade must have seemed the only possible solution, though it wasn't an immediate one.²⁸ That, at least, is what we deduce from a long letter that Gonzalo de Ayora – whom we last saw criticizing Ferdinand in person over the Inquisition – wrote in 1507 to Almazán, the king's personal secretary. It proposed that the chief goals of Castilian policy in the future should be reform of the Inquisition, a continued crusade against the Moors, and relief from fiscal demands.²⁹ Cisneros achieved two of these objectives: at the head of a small army that included Gonzalo de Ayora he sailed to Africa, met no resistance, and conquered Oran in just a few days. Although the feat was far from fulfilling Ferdinand's more grandiose scheme, it could be portrayed as a victory of great symbolic significance.

27 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 52–3. See also García Oro, *La cruzada del cardenal Cisneros*, and, especially for its documentation, Doussinague, *La política internacional*.

28 Milhou, "Propaganda mesiánica" and *Colón y su mentalidad mesiánica*, provides a detailed analysis of the messianic impulses and political projects of Ferdinand's followers in these years. For the Crown of Aragon in particular, see Durán and Requesens, *Profecía i poder*, and the two classics Castro, "Mesianismo" 21ff., and Maravall, *El pensamiento político*. A suggestive study of the circulation of prophecies and messianic hopes on both shores of the Mediterranean is García-Arenal, "Un réconfort."

29 The letter appears in Fernández Duro, "Noticias."

Cisneros entered the Muslim stronghold to the singing of Psalm 115: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*.³⁰ The crossing had been blessed with especially favorable winds: “It seemed clear that our lord cardinal had the wind in his sleeve, as the sailors said openly,”³¹ wrote Juan de Cazalla, adding with a quote from Saint Augustine that the wind had been the Spirit of God breathing on the Castilians.³² Other amazing portents had attended the expedition: a crucifix appeared on the horizon as the Spanish ships entered the Bay of Oran, and while thousands of Muslims retreated before the tiny Christian army, a dark cloud enveloped them and vultures swarmed over their heads.³³

Because Spain had been dominated for centuries by the idea of a crusade, nothing was easier than to reignite the stimuli that had impelled the Reconquest of Granada. Isabella’s dying words had urged a wider war against Islam, so the taking of Oran seemed like the first sign of a unity reformed after the queen’s death. For Ferdinand, the African expedition was a chance to fortify Aragon’s presence in the Mediterranean;³⁴ for Cisneros it was a clearly thought-out political strategy, but one that arose from a profound sense of religious mission.

Early stories about the victory circulated under the regent’s watchful eye. Cisneros penned two short accounts, now lost, of a success “that surely came about more by mystery than by force of arms”;³⁵ but he entrusted to his chaplain Juan de Cazalla, an eyewitness, the more detailed description. That was followed by a rich stream of letters, narratives, and brief histories in Castilian that were soon translated and transmitted throughout Europe. Baltasar del Río, a *converso* who was unpopular in Castile but made a brilliant career in Rome,³⁶ translated one such account into Italian. Hernando Colón, son of the

30 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 53. For more on the conquest of Oran, see the long analysis in García Oro, *El cardenal Cisneros*, 1: 211–3, and esp. 2: 532–67.

31 See the letter about the conquest of Oran by Juan de Cazalla, Cisneros’s chaplain: “Carta del maestro Caçalla,” published in Hernández González, *El taller historiográfico*, 51.

32 Hernández González, *El taller historiográfico*, 48.

33 “There were great mysteries and miracles on this blessed voyage”: Hernández González, *El taller historiográfico*, 51.

34 Fernández Albaladejo believes that Ferdinand consented to the mission as a “means of distraction and potential satisfaction for the noble class” at a time when his relations with the Spanish nobility were poor: *Fragmentos*, 40.

35 Cited in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 53. On the operation of historical propaganda for the conquest of Oran, achieved through circulation of letters about the event, see Hernández González, *El taller historiográfico*; Cátedra, *En los orígenes*.

36 See Fragnito’s entry in DBI, and accounts on the difficulties faced by *conversos* from Seville in returning home in Gil, *Los conversos*, 107ff.

discoverer of America and one of the greatest bibliophiles of his age, acquired in Toledo in November 1511 a work significantly titled *Historia de la conquista de Orán y de Jerusalén*. This optimistically predicted that Cisneros's victory over the Turks would take him straight on to Jerusalem. The sentiment was echoed by the *beata* María de Santo Domingo, a follower of Savonarola protected by the cardinal; after having prophesied the African triumph, she considered the conquest of the holy city a foregone conclusion.³⁷

It was in France, however, in the circle of Lefèvre d'Étaples, that news of the conquest was most enthusiastically received. These French reformists had grown close to Cisneros by 1505, when Lefèvre d'Étaples was editing the works of the Majorcan philosopher Ramón Llull. The cardinal had supported the project and overseen the recovery of his writings, which were steeped in occultism, mysticism, and prophetism. In 1505–1506 Cisneros had welcomed to Toledo Charles de Bovelles, one of Lefèvre's most promising disciples, who returned to Paris with some of Llull's manuscripts and a firm conviction of the Franciscan's messianic role. While in Toledo he had predicted that in the following twelve years a total reform of the Church would take place, along with the reconquest of Jerusalem and the triumph of Christianity throughout the world. On hearing of the victory in Oran, Bovelles encouraged Cisneros to plow more deeply until all the furrows of Africa were sowed with the divine seed: the time had now arrived, under the aegis of the cardinal.³⁸ In 1512, in his commentary on the Epistles of Paul, Lefèvre d'Étaples would describe Spain as the nation that had most enhanced the glory of Christ. The atmosphere was saturated with prophecies and messianic hopes. Signs of decadence were apparent all over Europe, and Christendom, fractured by internal wars, was on the verge of a schism – but Castile, guided by the great Franciscan, seemed to

37 See Beltrán de Heredia, "Las corrientes," 529–30; Bilinkoff, "A Spanish Prophetess." In 1948 Manuel Blecuá discovered and published María's *Oración y contemplación de la muy devota religiosa y gran sierva de Dios sor maría de sancto domingo*, see Giles, *The Book of Prayer*. On the relevant trial, see also Sastre, "Proceso de la Beata de Piedrahita." On relations with Italian Savonarolism, see Benavent, "El 'Tratado de milagros'" and "Las reliquias." For a global overview of early modern prophetism, see Pastore and García-Arenal, *Visiones imperiales y profecía*.

38 Bovelles's exalted letters to Cisneros are appended to his *De intellectu*. Cisneros's reply to Bovelles after the conquest of Oran is published as an appendix in García Villoslada, *La Universidad de París*, a useful work for the relations between Lefèvre d'Étaples's circle and the Castilians. On the philo-Jewish messianism of Cisneros's circle, see Popkin, "Jewish Christians and Christian Jews."

have rediscovered its old impulse toward Christian conquest. It was the only ray of light to be seen.³⁹

Not all of Cisneros's seeds of prophecy fell into the furrows he had prepared, however, nor did all the mystical sowing in Castile bear fruit years later in the direct, orthodox manner the cardinal desired. His talents as a mediator, and his capacity to seize on the demands and feelings of others and make them his own, could not heal the wounds of Castile nor guide the torrents of anxiety, insecurity, and tension into an officially recognized messianism.

In 1512, when a schism in the Church seemed imminent, a friar called Melchor held all of Spain in thrall with his revelations. He had traversed the country from north to south before fleeing to France. Rumors of his prophecies must have been reported to Cisneros very cautiously, since Fray Melchor had declared that the Castile of Cisneros and Ferdinand was not living in the Age of the Spirit (as might be assumed after the conquest of Oran) but in the dark Age of Expectation, in the hands of a tyrant and a future anti-pope. Fray Andrés, a Franciscan from the Lupiana monastery, was the first to inform Cisneros about Melchor: circumspectly, and unwilling or unable to judge whether "this doctrine was poisonous or salutary," he told the cardinal how the mysterious friar, the son of wealthy *converso* merchants from Burgos, had achieved much success, especially among his coreligionists.⁴⁰ One of his followers was actually a close friend of the cardinal's who had not only believed Melchor's prophecies but helped him to interpret their meaning, while receiving him at his home in Guadalajara.

The mysterious friend whom Fray Andrés left unnamed was the Franciscan Juan de Cazalla, Cisneros's chaplain, who was meanwhile composing his own version of events. His letter, while much more detailed, was ambiguous on certain points – its author confessed that he should have written it months before but had decided to delay.

Both accounts clearly showed the fascination that Fray Melchor exerted. After a long stay at the English court, this mysterious Spaniard had decided to cross to Africa to convert its Muslims, but divine Providence interrupted his journey in Spain. There Melchor had jumped from one religious order to another, thinking it the best way to spread his revelation, and everywhere he

39 Minnich, "The Role of Prophecy," 115–7, for more on the complex cabalistic prophecies of Cardinal Bernardino López de Carvajal, who predicted the imminent, definitive overthrow of Islam. He was almost elected anti-pope at the council of Pisa-Milan.

40 The letter, preserved in AHN, *Universidades*, Libro 1224, is quoted in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 62.

had touched the hearts of the regular clergy.⁴¹ But in all the monasteries he had visited, regardless of their order, he had found only degradation and corruption: friars who, as Erasmus had said, served “not God but their own belly.”⁴² He had even assumed the habit of Saint Francis, inspired by the words of the visionary María de Santo Domingo, the Dominican tertiary whom Cisneros loved and protected.⁴³ María had revealed to him the marvelous conquests that God planned for the Franciscans: first Africa, then Jerusalem, then victory over Islam and the simultaneous baptism of one hundred thousand infidels.⁴⁴

Nonetheless, according to Fray Andrés, for Fray Melchor the order of minor friars was nothing but “a circle of demons and congeries of vices.” There he had sunk to the depths before being born again. Melchor added that for him to be renewed, the whole fabric of the Church needed to be destroyed. It had been revealed to Melchor in England that he was the stone the “builders” had rejected, the brick that brought down the entire edifice, so that from the ruins he could become the cornerstone of a magnificent new building. Knowing that he would be censured and humiliated, he still formed the kernel of discord that, insinuating itself into the corrupt interior of the old Church, explored its darkest corners and most hidden vices. That leap in the dark had led to a new period of illumination. His own mutable identity seemed to confirm his dual mission of slow destruction on the one hand and unexpected rebirth on the other. Melchor was a bat that flew in darkness, a humble and gentle nocturnal animal that suddenly showed a face whose light would make all men bow before it.⁴⁵

Fray Andrés’s interpretation failed to mention – or preferred to ignore – one important fact: the bat was not a simple nocturnal creature but the savior of the world, one of the forms in which the longed-for universal monarch had revealed himself.⁴⁶ In the well-known prophecy by Arnau de Vilanova, *Vae mundo in centum annis*, a bat would arise in Spain to devour all the mosquitoes (i.e., expel the Muslims from Spain) and go on to conquer Africa. Here the prophecies about the universal monarch were applied in Spain for the first time, and they subordinated the conquest of the world to the conquest of all of Spain. In the Catalan-Aragonese dynasty the bat was identified with Peter II and Peter III “the Ceremonious”; it was later associated with Henry II of the

41 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 62.

42 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 62.

43 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 63.

44 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 63.

45 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64 n. 12.

46 Milhou, “La chauve-souris.”

Castilian Trastámaras and finally with Ferdinand the Catholic.⁴⁷ Now, however, Melchor cleverly arrogated to himself, in opposition to the two tyrants, the role of savior of the world.

Both letters demonstrate the degree to which the charismatic Melchor had dazzled their writers. Fray Andrés's missive swings continually between harsh accusation and irrational emotional attachment. He wrote that Melchor penetrated the heart of each person with his glance and made his meaning clear with a single word. Anyone who heard him and gazed on the nobility and splendor of his face could not doubt that every king in the world would bow down to him.⁴⁸ Such was his passion when he spoke of God that the hairs of his head and beard would stand on end and even nearby inanimate objects were enlivened by his mysterious energy.⁴⁹

Cazalla, likewise, wrote to Cisneros about the supernatural fascination that Melchor exerted as he claimed to be God's chosen one. Melchor lived in a continual state of joy and exaltation, and it was a privilege to have heard God's word, sweeter than honey, issue from his mouth.⁵⁰

The chaplain did not deny that he had been disturbed by those unexpected illuminations and the warning to defend himself against the devil's wiles, but he had reminded Melchor of the doctrine of Jean Gerson and other learned theologians: that it was difficult to achieve *discretio spirituum* (the discernment of the spirits) or to find one's way along a path frequented by demons who appeared as angels of light. Melchor accepted the Franciscan's initial skepticism with humility and continued the tale of his life, from his sojourn in England – where the king had wanted to keep him by his side – to his decision to go to Africa, and the unexpected revelations that had convinced him of his mission. A long list of women and *beatas* from England, Spain, and the Kingdom of Naples, famous for their sanctity and prophetic gifts, confirmed the accuracy of his predictions and the urgency of his messianic task. In Spain his mission had been blessed by Sor María de Santo Domingo, Mother Marta, and a rising star in the *beata* firmament, a certain Francisca de Salamanca.⁵¹ Mother Marta, the first to hear from Cisneros about the victory at Oran, had written a

47 See Durán and Requesens, *Profecía i poder*, 11ff.

48 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64 n. 12.

49 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64 n. 12.

50 The quotation is from Psalm 119:103: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Bataillon quotes Cazalla's letter in part in his *Erasmus y España*, 62–8.

51 This was probably Francisca Hernández, who would later attain great and sudden fame. Cazalla presents her as a still-unknown but very promising figure. Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 67 n. 19.

long letter to Cazalla about Melchor's spiritual virtues. Having learned of them while in a state of ecstasy, she had confirmed them through careful study and the extensive questioning he had undergone.⁵²

As Cazalla related the most compromising aspects of Melchor's prophecies, his attitude became more and more reserved, and the persons he named as witnesses were closer and closer to the cardinal. The predictions echoed the classic prophecies of Saint Bridget, Saint Catherine of Siena, and Saint Vincent Ferrer, but Cazalla added that they also recalled "the fantasies, or rather ravings" that Cisneros had heard from the Frenchman Charles Bovelles in Toledo. Like Bovelles, Melchor predicted the conquest of Jerusalem, the imminent conversion of the whole world to Christianity, and a special mission, carried out by apostolic and spiritual men, "for a marvelous reform of the Church."⁵³ Melchor's caution and humility contrasted strongly with Bovelles's noisy exaltation – of which Cisneros nonetheless seemed to approve. The friar had insisted on Cazalla's absolute discretion and a promise to reveal his beliefs to no one who was not illumined by grace.

In his letter to the Inquisitor General in defense of Fray Melchor, Cazalla failed to mention his most significant prophecy: this concerned not Europe or the Holy Roman Empire, but Castile, Cisneros, and the Inquisition. This prophecy had been explained and interpreted for Fray Andrés, who in spite of his doubts had conveyed it to the cardinal. Attributed to Saint Francis, it spoke of an obscure period of abuse and violence in which the world was ruled by a tyrant named Frederick and a pseudo-pope whom he appointed "against all form of law."⁵⁴ It was a widely known prophecy, often applied to the Empire and the coming of a new Charlemagne, which in the voices of Melchor and Cazalla acquired disturbing overtones. The great tyrant Frederick now stood for Ferdinand the Catholic, while the pseudo-pope who would usurp Peter's throne was a member of the minor orders, obviously meaning Cisneros. While both of them had caused great harm to the Church, the bat would bring a total, long-awaited renovation and rebirth.⁵⁵ This was the true, core meaning of Melchor's prophecy: with a clear judaizing slant, it predicted the creation of a new Church in Jerusalem, a "translation of Europe into Syria and Judaea."⁵⁶ Although Fray Andrés's informant (that is, Juan de Cazalla) had

52 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 67 n. 19.

53 Fray Andrés's description contained many more details of Melchor's prophecies about the End of Days: Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64–5 n. 13.

54 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64–5 n. 13.

55 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 64–5 n. 13.

56 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 66 n. 15.

harbored some doubts about the last point, he fully shared the opinion that the bat would come to the aid of a Church mired in difficulties and unable to bear its innumerable wounds. Who could forget that Lucero had gained his bishop's miter through the Inquisitors' robberies and ravages and by condemning thousands of innocents to the stake?⁵⁷

In fact, Lucero was never made a bishop, but Melchor's allusion to the rumor of his supposed scandalous promotion is highly significant. It reflects a period of misunderstandings and protests, injuries and resentments, that neither the meeting in Burgos nor Cisneros's ambiguous mediation had allayed. At the root of Fray Melchor's prophecies was an unquestionably *converso* element – or “judaizing,” as the Inquisitors and Cisneros would say. The predictions were also aimed at wholly recognizable targets, and the “dark age” was obviously the present time of the Inquisition. While Cazalla did not refer to these themes in his letter to Cisneros, he had revealed to Fray Andrés how closely Inquisitorial Spain resembled the shadowy, violent world of Saint Francis's prophecy. And he knew whereof he spoke: a *converso* from Palma del Río, halfway between Cordoba and Seville, he himself was the son of parents whom the Inquisition had punished for judaizing.

In Fray Melchor, Cazalla found someone who shared his own feelings: the Messianic hopes he had indulged during the conquest of Oran and his desire for a renewal of Christianity. He responded to Melchor's savage criticisms of the Inquisition as well as to the cultic atmosphere of his prophethood – which could be revealed only to those illumined by grace – and to the compelling image of the bat that flew by night.

Shortly afterward, Cazalla began to preach to “his” illumined ones, the *alumbados* of Guadalajara. In his most famous treatise in 1529, *Lumbre del alma* (“Light of the soul”), he characterized the “good judge” as the polar opposite of the Lucero/Lucifer whom the *conversos* knew so well. In a statement that was all the more courageous after the Inquisition's persecution of the first *alumbados* in Toledo, he wrote: “The judge of human actions should be pious and show great mercy; he should not take revenge but know how to wait, for it is better to save a man than to condemn him.”⁵⁸ This theme of the judge responded to

57 “Sed sive vera essent, quae a Melchiore dicerentur, sive falsa (se namque etiam interdum non credere) laboranti et plagas jam sustinere non valenti qua vellet via subveniret. Cum multa indigna pati eam, tum inquisitorum rapinam et saevitiam non ferendam: Luciferum et illum Cordubensem, qui tot hominum milia ignis dedisset, Episcopum nunc pro poena, ut esset fama, creatum.” Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 66 n. 14.

58 “El juez de las humanas obras conviene que sea piadoso, y de mucha clemencia, porque no tome venganza, mas que sepa esperar, pues es mejor salvar al hombre que condenarle”: Cazalla, *Lumbre del alma*, 81. On the treatise. see the introduction by Martínez de Bujanda,

the deep impression caused by the Cordoba trials and was also a sort of generational *topos*, favored especially by such *converso* authors as Dr. Villalobos and Antonio de Guevara.⁵⁹

It was in *converso* circles that Melchor enjoyed his greatest success, becoming a charismatic leader, a *dux*. Although Cazalla tiptoed around the issue in his letter to Cisneros, Fray Andrés wrote that Melchor had become no less than the head of a sect composed largely of *conversos*. Melchor covered all of Spain in his travels: from Lupiana he went to Salamanca, then on to Toledo and Guadalajara. After a stay in Andalusia he returned to Toledo, set out for Aragon, and finally disappeared into France. In every monastery he visited he left his mark and the monks continued to speak of him.⁶⁰

In his wake he left a trail of debates and polemics, but also enthusiastic followers. Some of his “fantasies” took root among the restless Spanish Franciscans, among them Juan de Cazalla, who became one of his most ferocious defenders.

For Cazalla, Melchor, and most of the *conversos* who followed the friar, it was the Spain of the Inquisition that required reform – the nation in which the trials in Cordoba, Granada, and Valladolid had aroused indignation that was far from being allayed. Meanwhile the urban protests against the Tribunal of the Holy Office showed no signs of dying down. In 1510, representatives of Granada presented a brief to the Cortes in Madrid listing all the accusations of excesses committed by the Inquisition. The document explained that the trials that had ensnared the city’s best-known citizens and merchants had also dealt a death blow to its economy, because all those not imprisoned had fled. In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, Granada had welcomed thousands of *conversos* who were fleeing the Inquisition in Castile, particularly Toledo⁶¹ – so many that the Cordoba Inquisitors sarcastically called the city “little Judaea.” But now it was dead and deserted, its inhabitants refusing to return:

Also, Your Highness already knows that when the licenciado Lucero was Inquisitor in this archdiocese of Granada and the diocese of Cordoba he ordered the arrest here in the city of Granada of more than eighty persons,

who explains that much of it originates with the fifteenth-century Catalan philosopher Raimundo Sabunde’s *Teología natural*. By contrast, Olivari relates Cazalla’s original construction and his doctrine of mankind’s free will to the Spanish spirituality of the 1510s and *alumbrado* thought: Olivari, “La spiritualità spagnola,” 219ff.

59 Guevara spoke of the pious judge in a letter to the new Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique in 1523; Guevara, *Epístolas familiares*, 251–4.

60 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 69.

61 Martz, “‘Toledanos’ and the Kingdom of Granada.”

and that they were all rich merchants and other important citizens and churchmen....And this city was badly harmed and expected to be more so in the future if there was no remedy, because it was very depopulated and every day became less populated, and there was no business or trading there, which is what it chiefly relies on for its sustenance....And the insult to this city and its inhabitants was so great that the said licenciado Lucero and his family and followers used to call it "little Judaea."⁶²

In 1512–1513, representatives from Cuenca described a similar situation, also provoked when the local Inquisition tribunal began to conduct trials against *conversos* and leading citizens. The struggles of Castilian cities against the Holy Office, supported by city councils and cathedral chapters, were unceasing. Many petitions for reform of the tribunals were presented directly to Cardinal Cisneros, while Castilian and Aragonese representatives appealed to the Cortes.⁶³ The Cortes of 1510–1512 in Barcelona and Monzón were specifically charged with debating the Inquisition, among other matters. There, representatives from Aragon openly called for reform of the most odious aspects of the trials, such as the secret nature of the proceedings and the fact that Inquisitors' salaries were paid out of the goods they confiscated. The petitions continued in the Cortes of Valladolid in 1518, and the last ones were held before the revolt of the *Comunidades* in La Coruña in 1520. The terrible aftermath of the latter had been augured in many different ways.⁶⁴ In 1521 the city of Cordoba, laboring under the cloud of Lucero and menaced with a revolt like the one in Toledo, managed to impose some limits on investigations by the Inquisition.⁶⁵

62 "Yten, que ya su alteza sabe que siendo ynquisidor el liçençiado Luzero en este arçobispado de Granada e en el obispado de Córdoba mandó prender e se prendieron en esta çibdad de Granada ochenta personas e más, e que todos eran mercaderes ricos e otros onbres prinçipales e de la Yglesia...que esta çibdad reçibió mucho daño e en lo por venir lo esperaba mucho mayor sy no se ponía remedio, porque estava muy despoblada e cada día se despoblava más, y que no avía en ella trato ni negoçiaçión, ques lo que prinçipalmente tiene para su sustentaçion....e la disfamia desta çibdad e vezinos della era tanta que comúnmente el dicho liçençiado Luzero, e sus familiares y secuazos la llamavan Judea la Pequeña": AGS, *Patronato Real* leg. 10, fol. 45, cited in Carretero Zamora, "Representación política," 200.

63 See, e.g., the many protests from the period 1505–1520 preserved in AGS, *Patronato Real* 28–34, 28–35, 28–38, 28–41, and 28–42, as well as those presented by representatives of Granada to the Cortes: AGS, *Patronato Real* 10–45, studied by Carretero Zamora, "Representación política." A proposal for reform was published by Meseguer Fernández, "Documentos históricos," 2: 184–90. I dealt with this issue in greater depth in Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 120–31.

64 Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*.

65 Edwards, "Trial of an inquisitor," 205, Redondo, "Le discours d'exclusion," 31.

One element of the generalized protest was the prophetic-messianic strain that *conversos* had constructed in resistance to the Inquisition. An eloquent example was the messianic movement that developed around the turn of the sixteenth century in the vicinity of Herrera del Duque, a town at the southernmost point of the Toledo diocese between western Andalusia and southern Extremadura. Its protagonist was a young *conversa* named Inés who assembled a considerable group of believers; the movement spread north as far as Almodóvar del Campo and south as far as Chillón in Cordoba.⁶⁶ After informing her followers that she had been transported several times to paradise, Inés announced the imminent coming of the prophet Elijah to save the *conversos* and take them to the “promised land.” The report about her specifies that when she “arose into heaven she saw angels, people who had died, and those who had been burned as heretics sitting on chairs of gold, and Elijah preaching, and he would come in a cloud to preach in the land of the *conversos*.”⁶⁷ It is clear that in these *converso* messianic movements, the Inquisition’s image was one of extreme violence. One of Inés’s female disciples predicted that Elijah would come on his cloud to rescue the *conversos*, leaving the Old Christians to fight over the goods that remained on earth:

Elijah would come in a cloud and emit a loud thunderclap with which he would transport all the *conversos* to the promised land.... Their estates would remain here and there would be many disputes among the Old Christians and they would kill one another.⁶⁸

Fray Melchor’s prophecies, however, existed on a higher plane and were directed more strongly against the Inquisition, since they were intertwined with a defense of radical reform of the Church. Thus they seemed to be formulated almost in opposition to the hopes and desires of the many *converso* clergy

66 About thirty documents survive from the trials of Inés and her followers. On these events, see Edwards, “Elijah and the Inquisition,” 82–84; Carrete Parrondo, “Mesianismo/sionismo”; Beinart, “The Prophetess of Extremadura”; Melammed, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel?*, 45ff. and *A Question of Identity*, 186.

67 “[S]ubía al cielo y veía los ángeles y los muertos y a los quemados por herejes en sillas de oro y a Elías a predicar, y que había de venir en una nube a predicar en tierra de conversos”: Carrete Parrondo, “Mesianismo/sionismo,” 485. The myth of Elijah in an anti-Inquisition context would resurface in the fascinating case of the “Old Christian” Bartolomé Sánchez, “the Messiah of Cardenete”: see Nalle, *Mad for God*.

68 “Avía de venir Elías en una nuve y que daría un trueno muy grande con el qual llevaría a todos los conversos a tierra de promisión...se avían de quedar acá las haziendas e que entre los christianos viejos se avían de aver mucha cuestión y se avían de matar”: Carrete Parrondo, “Mesianismo/sionismo,” 485.

who lived in Cisneros's Castile. A few years later, however, an obscure priest from Toledo named Pero López de Soria would create a personal synthesis of both visions in which both the high and the low – that is, judaizing messianism and the Church reform sought by *conversos* – would combine into a ferocious censure of the Inquisition tribunals.

The phenomenon endured and broke out at intervals, drawing on persistent opposition to the Spanish Inquisition. Not far from the regions where Membréque, Inés, and perhaps Pero López de Soria had prophesied, a new “Messiah” arose: David Reubeni, who claimed to have been chosen to unite the Jews of Europe and lead them to Arabia. He attracted a receptive group of followers in the late 1530s and was burned as a judaizer in 1538.⁶⁹ Ten years later the same apocalyptic hopes and Inquisitorial persecutions reappeared in the sermons of Juan de Ávila, who now sought to guide *conversos* – victims of renewed and brutal repression by the Holy Office – toward the blessedness of martyrdom.

We still have no thorough study of the prophetic and messianic phenomenon in Spain from 1500 to 1520, just as we have no detailed political analysis of the transitional period that preceded the revolt of the *Comunidades*. A global view, taking both aspects into account, can be built on the trials conducted from 1502 to 1507, which offer new information about the connections between politics and prophecy. Once more we must attend to the unbroken series of protests directed toward the Inquisition Tribunal. The life histories of figures such as Gonzalo de Ayora and Francisco Álvarez de Toledo reveal how much of the political struggle of those years was played out on the chessboard of the Holy Office. Special attention must be paid to the thoughts of the *conversos* of Talavera's orbit after their fall from grace and separation from power. At a less intellectual level, we must bear in mind the *converso* component of the complex political prophetism that unsettled Spain during that time of transition.

These strains merged into a powerful current that included messianic hopes, attempts at reform, perspectives opened by political instability, and a millenarianism that was nourished by the latest geographical discoveries.⁷⁰

69 See Foa, *The Jews in Europe*, 142–8; Popkin, “Jewish Christians and Christian Jews.” On his death sentence by the tribunal of the Faith in Badajoz, see Rodríguez Moñino, “Les judaïsants à Badajoz”; Révah, “David Reubeni.” Sestieri published his diary as *David Reubeni*; the English translation has just been published as Verskin, *Diary of a Black Jewish Messiah*.

70 Sarraute, “La vie franciscaine en Espagne,” is still useful in this regard, together with Bataillon's overview in *Erasmus et l'Espagne*. For more on the Franciscans in the late fifteenth century, see Milhou, *Colón y su mentalidad*; on the thinking inspired by the discovery of America, see Prosperi, *América e Apocalisse*; Pastore and García-Arenal, *Visiones imperiales y profecía*.

In those years Castile was thick with friars, especially Franciscans, who spouted prophecies about the future of the Church and openly preached reform of its hierarchy. In 1512 Fray Antonio de Pastrana told Cisneros about a contemplative monk who, after a spotless life spent in prayer, wrote to Mother Juana proposing to impregnate her with a prophet who would save the world. "Inspired by the darkness of Satan," he had received a vision that told him to "engender a child with a holy person, for it was necessary that it be born during this time."⁷¹ All over Europe, stories circulated in predictions and handbills⁷² about monstrous children whose birth announced recent or imminent disasters, or who as the offspring of monks and nuns incarnated the Antichrist. "And I think this one was worse than the one whose picture they brought from Rome,"⁷³ Pastrana concluded about the new Messiah.

Always tolerant of talk about "marvels," Cisneros did not ignore such portents; he was happy to foment an atmosphere of exalted devotion among the Observant Franciscans and in the reformed monastery of La Salceda. He was also a staunch supporter of the new forms of spirituality that flourished around charismatic figures such as the *beata* Mother Marta, with whom he corresponded, and Sor María de Santo Domingo.⁷⁴ As Inquisitor General and regent of Castile, he navigated skillfully through the waves of prophetism and desire for reform. As the cases of Fray Melchor and Pero López de Soria will show, however, he was unable to suppress upheavals and protests completely. Both men were able to join a much broader movement while maintaining their anti-Inquisition and anti-Cisneros stance. They described the cardinal not as the angelic pope predicted by the prophecies but as a destroyer of the Church and the anti-pope of a dark age; they therefore became the spokesmen for all those who, persecuted by Ferdinand's new Inquisition policy, found in Cisneros not a protector but an accomplice of the King of Aragon.

Between 1516 when Ferdinand died, and 1517 when Cisneros followed him, the latent prophetic-millennarist fire flared up. Antonio Maravall was the first historian to point to the series of political predictions and prophecies that emerged between those two years and the outbreak of the *Comunidades*

71 Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz," 2–3. The case is famous because it has long been considered a precedent for *alumbradismo* in Toledo.

72 Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*; Niccoli, *Prophecy and People*, 47–87; Vega Ramos, *Los libros de prodigios*.

73 Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz." 1512 was also the birthdate of the "monster of Ravenna," mentioned by (among others) the chronicler Bernáldez and Pedro Mártir de Anglería; Niccoli, *Prophecy and People*, 52ff.

74 Sarraute, "La vie franciscaine en Espagne, 211ff.; Sainz Rodríguez, *La siembra mística*, 36–7.

rebellion.⁷⁵ Joseph Pérez noted the essential role played by rebellious monks (“*moines frondeurs*”) in the protest movement, as they preached sermons that cleverly combined evangelical exhortation with political dissent.⁷⁶ One example was the loud opposition voiced in many cathedral chapters against the collection of *décimas*, the special tax imposed by the Catholic monarchs to finance the conquest of Granada. Many years later, Pedro Mártir de Anglería, who had appeared at court representing Granada Cathedral, remembered the events clearly:⁷⁷ all over Castile, church doors were closed and divine services suspended in protest against the new tax. In Valladolid a Franciscan preached openly against the new rulers of Castile, claiming they had betrayed Isabella’s policies and the conditions of her will when they abandoned plans for a crusade once pursued by the Catholic monarchs and Cisneros himself.⁷⁸ Bishop Pedro del Campo of Útica, a canon of Toledo and first rector of the University of Alcalá, was suspended from office over the virulent sermons he preached in 1517–1518 “in favor of freedom for the Church and for the good governance of this city.”⁷⁹ Among men such as Gonzalo de Ayora and Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, who saw the *Comunidades* revolt as the natural result of the urban protests of 1507, the anti-Inquisition and pro-*converso* winds were blowing with renewed strength. But the same was true for others who preferred to reform the Inquisition by negotiating with the court in Flanders, which was wholly unacquainted with the Spanish mentality.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, in an atmosphere dense with auguries and interpretations, new prophecies announced imminent changes.⁸¹ On 24 May 1517, a bizarre

75 Maravall, *Las Comunidades*, 183–6. His suggestion was later expanded by Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*.

76 Pérez, “Moines frondeurs.”

77 Pérez, “Moines frondeurs,” 28. Anglería’s letter to the Marquis of Los Vélez and Mondéjar, written 13 September 1517, appears in his *Epistolario*, 2: 358.

78 Pérez, “Moines frondeurs,” 26.

79 Pérez, “Moines frondeurs,” 29ff.

80 In 1516 a group of Castilian *conversos* gave Sauvage, the new chancellor, and Chièvres eight hundred thousand ducats to initiate a reform of Inquisition procedures. Those efforts, now directed to the *Comunero* leader Juan de Padilla, continued after Sauvage’s death and during the *Comunidades* revolt. See Serrano, “Primeras negociaciones,” and Gutiérrez Nieto, “Los conversos,” 211–2. I analyzed these various attempts at Inquisition reform in Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 125–31.

81 See those collected by Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*. In Aragon and especially in Valencia, the link between the *germanías* and prophetism was especially clear in the early sixteenth century. For more on how the prophetic atmosphere facilitated the use of the *encubierto* during the revolt in Valencia, see Durán and Requesens, *Profecía i poder*.

apparition frightened inhabitants of the arid plains of La Mancha:⁸² a cloud enveloped the town of Peñas de San Pedro, hiding it from view. It had been preceded by predictions, signs, and monstrous births that seemed to announce the imminent end of the world. As a large crowd watched, the cloud rolled along the ground until it reached a wooden cross that had been erected two years earlier to ward off a plague of locusts. Suddenly a lightning bolt split the sky, and three flames sprang from the top of the cross. After at least fifty of those present had sworn to a notary about what they had seen, the miracle was repeated, with the cross now bearing five flames. “Weeping and begging for God’s mercy,” the crowd grew; the ringing of a nearby church bell attracted more than two hundred people, including the notary, priests, and Franciscan friars. The flames illuminated the naked sword of a believer who knelt in prayer before the cross, one of many who adopted this posture as if under divine order. After two hours the fire flickered out, but it revived just before midnight. As the knights continued to pray on their knees around the cross, the five flames were reflected once more on their unsheathed swords.⁸³ A chapel was later built next to the wooden cross “to preserve that relic for memory”⁸⁴ and became the destination for long processions of penitents.

Fear and prayers consumed the residents of that village in La Mancha. A certain Juan López was delegated to make a detailed investigation and prepare a report on the unprecedented miracle; his three pages, written in an exalted tone, were sent directly to the court of the new Emperor Charles v.

3 Pero López de Soria (1519)

The career of the visionary Pero López de Soria also began with the sudden apparition of a fiery cross,⁸⁵ this time in Cabeza del Buey, a village near the point where Toledo, Cordoba and southern Extremadura meet. This was close to Herrera del Duque, where Inés and her *converso* disciples had awaited Elijah in his chariot of fire. We have little information about the incident, but López de Soria seems to have considered it the first sign of his prophetic vocation, and his declaration before the Inquisitors confirms its authenticity.

82 BNM, 1517, “Relación hecha al emperador Carlos V”: published in Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*, 94–7.

83 Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*, 96.

84 Alba, *Acerca de algunas particularidades*, 97.

85 This apparition is very similar, in both its developments and the surname of the corroborating witness, to the one in Peñas de San Pedro, a relatively short distance away (southeastern Toledo, toward Albacete). It is an interesting coincidence.

Witnesses involved in Pero's accusation differ in their accounts. Some swore that Pero had been interrogated and condemned by the Inquisition immediately after the apparition. Another testified that the appearance of a crucifix in a chapel in Seville provoked Pero's first encounter with the Holy Office, and that his first trial had taken place in that city. All agreed, however, that the episode and his subsequent unjust arrest had produced his hatred of the Tribunal of the Faith. Before the Inquisitors, Pero claimed not to remember where he had been arrested, but he did supply the details of his initial vision, all essential to the prophetic construct he was defending before the Holy Office in Toledo:

A new light would come to enlighten and reform the Church, and the pope would come to this city of Toledo; and since he was the head [of the Church], Rome ought to be here. And when he [Pero] was in a village called Cabeza del Buey a crucifix had appeared that bore [Christ's] wounds, and the bells had rung, and during a procession the cross had given forth a great shining light. And for that he had been arrested, he does not remember where.⁸⁶

The *translatio ecclesiae* from Rome to Toledo – the New Jerusalem – was a central theme of the prophecies of Tomasuccio da Foligno and the first group of Spanish hermits,⁸⁷ who thereby guided the currents of reform toward the west. And a *translatio prophetica* had preceded Columbus's journey, the culmination of a "return to the East by way of the West" that radically inverted the prophetic geography of Europe.⁸⁸ López de Soria might have adopted these suggestions consciously but might also have absorbed them in a simpler way, perhaps

86 "Avia de venir una luz nueva que alumbrase la Yglesia y la reformase y que el papa avia de venir a esta çibdad de Toledo y que como hera cabeça Roma avia de estar aqui y que estando en un lugar que se dize cabeça del buey avia parecido un crucifixo con sus plagas y se avian tañido las campanas y faziendo una proçesion la cruz avia dado muy gran resplandor y claridad y que sobre ello abia estado preso no se acuerda en que lugar": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 21 [my foliation]. I do not know of any earlier study of Pero López de Soria's case.

87 See above, and also the suggestive observations of Freitas Carvalho on Iberian Joachism: "Joachim de Flore," 420.

88 On this inversion of the itinerary of prophetic geography and the ever-growing hopes for creating a new Church in the West, see Prosperi, *America e Apocalisse*, 61; Maravall, "La Utopía político-religiosa"; Olivari, "Fra geografia e Apocalisse." Luis de León, Francisco de la Cruz, and Campanella, contemplating the decline of the empire, all took up the prophecy that the Christian Church would be transferred to the New World, while Pedro Fernández de Quirós, aware of the new discoveries in the Pacific, placed the *translatio ecclesiae* in the new "Australia of the Holy Spirit." See also Pastore and García-Arenal, *Visiones imperiales y profecía*.

because they brought a distant vision into contact with everyday reality. In any event, the chief accusation in his first arrest was that he had expected and desired a New Jerusalem in Toledo, to follow on a previous profound reform of the corrupt Church.⁸⁹ His first appearance before the Holy Office and his imprisonment marked him forever, convincing him that the degeneracy of the Church in Castile rested on the existence of the Tribunal of the Faith. In fact, a few years later his judges established that his entire complex of prophecies had evolved so as to make the Holy Office their principal object.

In December 1518, the Toledo Inquisitors issued the order for Pero's arrest. He was the chaplain of Polán, a small village on the outskirts of the city, and for a few hours he managed to evade the officers. His flight ended, however, when he was found under the bed of a neighbor. This neighbor was an elderly priest, who in his first interrogation confessed to being the son of parents who were "*conversos* of Jewish ancestry." His father, a merchant of Burgos, had been in the jewelry trade.⁹⁰

The first charge against López de Soria was supported by the testimony of a priest and concerned an *auto-da-fé* in Toledo that the secular authorities had forced Pero to attend. The witness described the chaplain's dramatic reaction to the macabre spectacle: enraged, he waved his arms and shouted "it's burning, it's burning...those who burn them are even greater heretics."⁹¹ Everyone in the city knew of López de Soria's hatred of the Inquisition. Many attributed his feelings to his first imprisonment; they added that often, when the subject of those condemned to death for Judaism arose, Pero displayed "great sorrow and emotion" and claimed that "some of them burned people unjustly and to steal their estates."⁹² He had told many witnesses that he rejected the Inquisition's death sentences, saying that nothing in Christian doctrine could justify burning a heretic: "God did not decree the death of anyone, for those were creatures of God and it would have sufficed to give them a different punishment."⁹³

89 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, 2, fol. 21. One witness testified that López de Soria had been arrested once before by the Inquisition in Seville: "They had imprisoned him unjustly, and [this witness] believes he [Pero] had told him that they had held him prisoner in Seville because after a crucifix had appeared to him in a chapel, and also a shining cross, the Inquisitors had told him that it was the devil deceiving him": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 16.

90 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 3.

91 Witness 1: "y el dicho capellan respondió a esto con henojo que quema que quema dando del brazo y diciendo mas herejes son los que los queman o los que los fazen quemar": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 24.

92 Witness 7: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 19.

93 "Dios no mandava que matasen a nadie que aquellas eran criaturas de Dios, que otra pena que les diesen bastava": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 13. The accusation is repeated in every account, e.g., fol. 20: "Pero López said that God had not ordered anyone to be burned, for it was not good to burn heretics but rather to impose another punishment."

Pero adopted arguments by Saint Augustine that Lucena and Pulgar had already cited. Insisting that the divine plan was omnipotent and inscrutable, he was convinced that every heretic should be given a chance to repent and convert at any moment: “They should not burn anyone, for God made use of every living person and those who were burned might have converted.”⁹⁴ Every effort should be made to convert the heretic, but the Church in Castile with its Inquisition seemed to have forgotten that. Therefore, those condemned as heretics should be thought of as martyrs, having been put to death against every precept of the Gospels:

Speaking about the Inquisition he said that all those whom they burned were burned unjustly and based on false witnesses, and that those... they burned were martyrs who did not deserve it; and that those who ordered the burning were more deserving of being burned, because they did not keep the commandment that God gave us. For God decreed that they should kill no one and God had not ordered the killing of anyone, and they were doing what God did not command and those who ordered them burned were more deserving of being burned.⁹⁵

The Church in Castile was corrupt because it had forgotten the most important virtue, charity; and its members, violating their vows of poverty and chastity, rode fine mules, amassed riches, and kept mistresses. These were sufficient reasons to ensure that “a great persecution of the Church would come, for there was no charity, and those who have mules and mistresses would be those who deserved to be burned and punished.”⁹⁶

The reference to a lack of charity was by no means irrelevant in Inquisition Spain. In a country that prioritized its ferocious defense of the purity of faith – to the extreme of seeking it in purity of blood – the value of charity in Christian

94 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 21.

95 “Fablando sobre cosas de la ynquisicion dixo que todos los que quemavan que quemavan injustamente y con falsos testigos y que los...que quemavan eran martires que no lo mereçian y que mas mereçian ser quemados los que los mandavan quemar porque no guardavan el mandamiento que Dios nos dio. Que Dios mandava que no matasen a nadie y que Dios no habia mandado matar a nadie y que ellos hazian lo que Dios no mandava y que mejor mereçian ser quemados los que los mandavan quemar”: Witness 2, AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 11. Gilman, “Matthew V,10,” notes that in the literature of the time much attention was paid to the verse “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.”

96 “[A]via de venir grand persecuçion por la yglesia que no abia ninguna caridad y que los que tienen mulas y mançebas seran los que mereçian ser quemados y castigados”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 24.

society became a principal theme of the pro-*converso*, anti-Inquisition polemic. An attack against the Church would make the institution disappear, because it would eliminate the “vices” and “evil ones” and would include its radical reform and the total eradication of present injustices. A new spiritual light would shine on a future of equality that would know no differences of lineage and no discrimination, in which “every clergyman would be equal.” These assertions of López de Soria’s, like those of many earlier *conversos*, rested on the passage from John 10:16 about “one shepherd”:

He had been heard to say at that time, speaking about matters of the Church, that there would be a reformation and a light to illuminate every one...here we all walk in darkness, and a time will come when all of us clergy will be equal. And when he said that a different, new light would come he quoted an authority that said “*Yter...veniet [sic]...unus pastor erit.*”⁹⁷

This was the same verse on which Alfonso de Valdés would base a new form of political messianism whose center was the new Emperor Charles V. The same words were quoted in Lucena’s *De vita beata* and discussed at length in the polemic about the purity-of-blood statutes. Once more the words of John fed the dreams of a *converso*. In some witness accounts, López de Soria’s prophecies contain a vein of radical pauperism: Church corruption and wealth would be devoured by the great “persecution,” reducing the Church’s internal divisions and differences to insignificance.

The proposed reform would also affect rites and ceremonies, and thus attain the true evangelical freedom that Saint Paul had preached. A chaplain at the church of San Pedro de Ventas in the town of Peña Aguilera heard Pero say in the course of a religious ritual, “Although we are singing here we all are walking blind, and a time will come when all of us clergymen will be equal.”⁹⁸ Another witness added that when the canonical hours were sung, Pero would erupt in rage and invoke the light that would end everyone’s blindness. That light, the radical reform of the Church, would free them from every constraint: “He heard him say many times during the [canonical] hours and at other times

97 “Le avia oydo dezir en el dicho tiempo fablando de las cosas de la Yglesia que avia de venir una reformation y una luz para alumbrar a todos...aquí todos andamos ciegos y tiempo a de venir que todos los clerigos hemos de ser yguales y quando dezia que avia de venir otra luz nueva alegava una autoridad que dize yter...veniet...unus pastor erit”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 19.

98 Testimony of the “Frenchman” Giraldo, chaplain of San Pedro de las Ventas: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 19.

too, 'We are all blind until a light comes to reform the Church'; and when someone asked him why, Pero López would say that it was to overthrow all those tyrannies."⁹⁹ The Church's formal and ceremonial "tyrannies," which bound all Christians and fell particularly hard upon priests, are strikingly similar to the "bonds" (*ataduras*) to which the *alumbrados* refer. It is therefore possible that some *alumbrado* notions reached Pero López's ears so that he identified himself with them and later included them in his own prophetic vision.

Other statements of Pero's were particularly intolerable to the Inquisitors: for example, his insistence on the Church's lack of charity and on the anti-evangelical nature of the sentences for the condemned. Worst of all was his prediction of a light that would illuminate a world radically different from the one created in Castile in the previous twenty years. Pero's visions included a sharp political critique and harsh judgment of the pro-Inquisition, anti-*converso* decisions of Ferdinand the Catholic and Francisco de Cisneros. Soon after the king's death, he told a courtier in Toledo, who had always been faithful to Ferdinand, that "he [Pero] had seen his [the king's] soul in great torment and ill fortune." He repeated the sentiment after the death of Cisneros, claiming he had been in touch with the Beyond and seen the cardinal amid the flames of hell. He added sarcastically that the ex-Inquisitor General and regent of Castile would have done better to live like any other mendicant friar, on what would fit into his saddlebags:

He [the witness] said that when King Ferdinand of glorious memory died, he heard [Pero] say that he had seen his soul in great torment and ill fortune. And that he also heard him say, after Cardinal Francisco Jiménez [de Cisneros] died, that he had seen his soul in great torment and that he should have kept to his saddlebags.¹⁰⁰

López de Soria objected to nine of the ten accusations against him, declaring them false.¹⁰¹ He admitted only the ninth, which concerned his prophecy

99 "[L]e oyo dezir muchas vezes estando diziendo las oras y otras vezes fuera: todos estamos ciegos fasta que venga una luz para reformar la yglesia y cierta persona le dezia que para que, el dicho Pero Lopez respondia que para tirar todas esas tiranias": Witness 5, AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 26.

100 "Dixo que le oyo dezir quando morio el rey don Fernando de gloriosa memoria que avia visto su anima en mucha tribulacion y mala ventura y que tambien le oyo dezir despues que morio el cardenal don fray Francisco Ximenes que abia visto su anima en mucha tribulacion y que le valiera mas andarse con sus alforjas": testimony of Alonso Núñez, AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 16.

101 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fols. 29–30.

about the new light that would illumine the Church. In his refutation, he stated that he awaited it so that the institutional Church could be reformed and purified of its evils and “vices.” He added that his first vision of the cross had convinced him that the light was about to arrive:

To the ninth witness he replied that he had spoken about the light of the Church because God would be sending it to reform its evils and vices. And he also said that the crucifix had appeared in La Peña del Sordo, and that he saw it and saw that the bells rang on their own, and that was what happened in La Peña del Sordo.¹⁰²

In his formal response to the tribunal, Pero wrote that none of the opinions falsely attributed to him – showing compassion for those condemned to the stake, declaring that many clergy were actually tyrants and sinners, and claiming that such things should be reformed – constituted proof of heresy:

Saying that persons of the Church were tyrants and were involved in vices and sins and needed to be reformed is neither a crime nor an act of heresy nor even a mortal sin. I believe that the witnesses testify about many things that, even if I had said them (and I did not), were not and are not heresy.¹⁰³

Pero's defense did not convince the tribunal, however. He was declared a “creator of heretics” and follower of “scandalous doctrines,” and condemned by unanimous vote.¹⁰⁴ He received a fairly harsh sentence: expulsion from the priesthood – to which he had belonged for more than forty years – and confiscation of all his goods to pay the costs of life imprisonment. His estate must not have been large, because in 1521, only two years after the sentencing, the Toledo tribunal asked the Supreme body to authorize his release from prison for two or three days a week. He needed to beg for alms “to support himself,

102 “Al nono testigo dixo que en lo de la luz de la yglesia que lo dixo para que Dios la avia de enviar para reformar los males y vicios y que tambien dixo que aparecio el crucifixo en la Peña del Sordo y que este confesante le vio e vio que se tañeron las campanas de suyo y que asy es pasado en la Peña del Sordo”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 30.

103 “Deçir que las personas eclesiasticas eran tiranos y estavan metidos en vicios y pecados y avia neçesidad que fuesen reformados no es crimen ni delito de heregia ni aun pecado mortal lo que crey de que los testigos deponen de muchas cosas que aunque yo las hubiera dicho, que no dixen, no eran ni son eregia”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 31.

104 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 34.

because otherwise he would suffer great hunger and need."¹⁰⁵ The petition was granted. We last hear of López de Soria in 1523: while he was still a prisoner and permanently indebted to his jailers, a small property of his, previously not inventoried, was seized. Even then, his heirs were obliged to pay a debt related to his sentence, amounting to twelve thousand *maravedís*.

Pero López de Soria's case exemplifies the atmosphere of prophetism that dominated Castile at the time. Like Fray Melchor, he interpreted the hoped-for reform of the Church as a reform of its Inquisitorial function and a rejection of all the ways in which Spanish *conversos* were persecuted. His imprudent statements in Toledo placed him in the same world of predictions and prophecies that the mysterious Melchor had handled without risking his daily existence as a *converso*. That strategy caused all responsibility for the Inquisition and its injustices to fall onto Cisneros and Ferdinand. Fray Melchor equated them, respectively, with the terrible tyrant and the anti-pope of the pseudo-Franciscan prophecy and gathered a like-minded consensus around him. Meanwhile, López de Soria's visions promised, in a much more direct way, that both men were paying for their sins in the fires of hell.

Although López de Soria was a secondary figure who combined old and new dissatisfactions, he was a *converso* who had absorbed the broad lines of argument laid down by the great critics of the Inquisition from Pulgar to Lucena. Above all, he had learned Hernando de Talavera's lesson about the importance of conversion. He echoed the fear of change that permeated Spanish society, the constant unease of those who felt betrayed by Ferdinand and Cisneros, and the messianic hopes of the judaizers of Toledo and Extremadura. Out of these strains he crafted a wholly personal and individual discourse. In his vision there was a place for the Inquisition-less Spain that Talavera and Lucena had imagined—a Spain that allowed New Christians to convert gradually and those who were in error to repent and reform. This was the *alumbrados'* vision of a Spain without "bonds" that freed the individual from external conformity and returned him to the exultant world of internal freedom described by Saint Paul. The new light that Pero prophesied was the response that all of them had been awaiting: it would shine upon a world based on true equality among Christians, radical reform of the Church, and greater justice for the *conversos*. In short, it was the world described in the Gospel of John for which the Spanish *conversos* so ardently longed.

Pero López de Soria spent at least five years in prison in Toledo after his Inquisition trial. During that time he probably heard from his guards about

105 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 80, fol. 38.

the indignation of the respected Bishop Campo, who defended “ecclesiastical liberty,”¹⁰⁶ and the broad approval of his preaching. Pero was in prison when the great rebellion of the *Comunidades* swept through Toledo in 1520–1521—it was probably one reason why his trial was so brief. He remained there during the outbreak of the *alumbrado* phenomenon, which spread the notion of the multiple “tyrannies” that were suffocating good Christians. Both cases fulfilled his predictions that Toledo would be the “head” or the heart of a new world, a world turned upside down.

4 The Talavera Legend

The protests against Ferdinand’s Inquisition policy also took more subtle forms. They grew gradually around the frustrated sainthood of those who, like the archbishop of Granada, had become the chief victims of that reckless policy, and continued for decades under different guises.

For Talavera’s contemporaries, his scandalous trial marked the end of an era. It certainly did so for his own circle; Cisneros’s rise meant the loss of their own political power, and the same was true for a generation of *conversos* who, after Isabella’s death, were helpless witnesses to the fall of their political champions. For a brief moment it seemed that a light had shone on a space in which the Church hierarchy rejected discrimination against new converts and the destructive machinery of the Inquisition—but that light was quickly snuffed out. The *converso* priest Pero López de Soria had prophesied the light and thought it would return to illuminate the Christian Church and destroy the Inquisition that “burned martyrs”; Cisneros had been so responsible for those flames that he had ended in hellfire next to the even guiltier Ferdinand the Catholic.

In the cultural history of Spain in the first half of the sixteenth century, Talavera’s greatest legacy was one of ideas and sensibilities. Despite the evident failure of his political and cultural project, we must examine the legend that grew up around him if we wish to grasp his impact fully. The “sainted archbishop” of Granada entered almost immediately into myth, a myth that was heavy with meaning.¹⁰⁷

106 On Pedro del Campo, one of the chief instigators of the revolt in Toledo among the clergy through his sermons calling for *libertad eclesiástica*, see Pérez, “Moines frondeurs.”

107 For more on the influence of the Talavera myth in the sixteenth century, see Olivari, “Hernando de Talavera,” 42.

Collection of documents, data, and biographical information about him began even during the years of his trial, as a response to the offensive launched by Deza, Lucero, and Ferdinand. Shortly before the pope received the first request to initiate Talavera's trial, Juan Torres, a canon of Granada, sent the first biography of him to Rome. It was a vibrant hagiographic sketch that preserved for posterity the most typical features of this charismatic man who had conquered the soul of the queen and, simply by raising a wooden cross, prevented thousands of Granadan Muslims from rebelling against Cisneros's forced baptisms. Talavera was the teacher chosen by the grandees of Spain as a mentor for their sons; he was the founder of colleges and the great instructor and educator of laymen and clergy. But above all he was the tireless preacher who had unlocked the meaning of Holy Scripture for everyone and guided new converts to the true Faith. In his impeccable academic Latin, Canon Torres painted a picture of a saint who at the age of eighty still crossed the wildest reaches of his diocese on foot in search of new conversions and baptisms, still following in the steps of the Apostles after a long life of fasting and prayer.¹⁰⁸

The canon's narrative exalts Talavera above all as the founder of a new Church, constantly recalling the temples, monasteries, and seminaries that he had established. The author evokes the passionate vocation of the clergy who worked in Granada after the Reconquest, inspired by the Epistles of Paul to Titus and Timothy. Those passages meant so much to Talavera that he made them the cardinal principles of his priestly mission. Every young clergyman in Granada, whether a simple priest or a graduate of the archbishop's college, had to memorize the Epistles. And every month the spiritual leader would comment on the texts with "marvelous depth," exhorting his hearers to follow them in their own lives.¹⁰⁹ In fact, their knowledge of those works "by heart" was the subject of the first examination of ecclesiastics and prebendaries in the Granada diocese, all of them chosen directly by Talavera with royal backing.

108 For the biography of Talavera preserved and copied in many mss., see, among others, Saitta, "Dal regno moro di Granada," 543–5. For more on the figure of the "ideal bishop" that Talavera represented, see Azcona, "El tipo ideal de obispo," 21–44. More recently Scotto, "Como en un resplandeciente."

109 Not only Torres but later biographers stress the importance of the archbishop's monthly lessons to the clergy: e.g., Fernández de Madrid, *Vida de Fray Fernando*, 86. Talavera had called the clergy's ignorance and a bishop's lack of firm control "the key to all the evil that exists in the ecclesiastical state," adding that it was a grave failing for bishops not to oversee the ability and "knowledge" of their subordinates, "especially if the priest they ordain does not possess the thirteen conditions that the Apostle describes in the third chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy, on which he should be examined first of all": Talavera, "Breve forma de confesar," 16.

In Granada, a kingdom seized from the Arabs, the first archbishop's actions were perceived from the outset as the charismatic traits of a bishop of the early Church. As such, they fulfilled long-standing messianic expectations. Just as Saint Paul formed the basis for Talavera's thought and the axis of all disputes about the converted, the Apostle was also the organizing principle for the new diocese and the reference point for Granada's image in the outside world. It has been noted repeatedly that Talavera's significance in the religious history of the sixteenth century rests not only on his views on the central theological issues of the fifteenth but also on his role as a saintly moral exemplar. Ever after, Talavera has been the indefatigable preacher to *moriscos* and *conversos*, the educator of children and impassioned catechist, and above all the ideal bishop at the helm of a new Church, using the lessons of the Apostle Paul as the foundation of all activity within a diocese.

Therefore the launching of an Inquisition trial against Talavera – the very act to which Torres was objecting – blackened his halo of sanctity. Still, the unjust accusations proved to be the clearest signs of his saintliness: they produced a martyrdom that he faced with dignity and courage, because – as he explained with another image from Paul's Epistles – they were a persecution of the spirit by the flesh, the triumph of Cain and Esau.¹¹⁰ While the current virtue and enthusiasm recalled the early days of the Gospels, the persecutors were new, and so was the scandalous martyrdom carried out by the Tribunal of the Faith. The poet Juan Álvarez Gato, who was close to Talavera and part of Fernán Álvarez de Toledo's circle, wrote in these terms about Talavera's trial, deliberately employing the language of many *conversos* who accused the Inquisition of creating new martyrs:

Oh famous martyrdom, richly deserved! How it has come to his ears that they wish to seize him as a heretic, and with a happy face, freed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, he receives it with thanks, and I believe that out of his great charity and good spirit he prays to Our Lord for them, because of His example on the cross! ... Under the tortures he endured he was another Saint Macarius; when they comfort him, he replies as an example to us that all cannot be good in this world, holding that victory

110 This image must have moved the spiritualist Sigüenza powerfully, as he devoted fervent pages to the Hieronymite martyrs of the Inquisition. His history culminated a series of writings on the Talavera legend that flourished throughout the sixteenth century, creating a lasting historiographic portrait: Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 2: 313–53. On the success of Sigüenza's biography and the "ingenuous" use made of a supposedly impartial portrait, see Edwards, "Christian Mission."

comes from battle and the crown belongs to the victor. Burning with the knowledge and grace that God gave to His elect, the Apostles, knowing who they were He wished them to undergo the battle of martyrdom, as He allows a spiritual martyrdom for this holy man...¹¹¹

The poet was writing while Talavera was still alive but his persecution by the Inquisition had begun; the letter ends with an eloquent prayer “that [God] may free him and every other faithful Christian from false witnesses, Amen.”¹¹²

Talavera died a few days before his exoneration was announced in Rome, and the first proofs of his sanctity came immediately upon his death. The royal chronicler Pedro Mártir de Anglería, one of the archbishop’s partisans, wrote to the Count of Tendilla describing the packed crowd that attended the funeral in Granada, their desperate attempts to obtain a relic of Talavera’s body, and the first miraculous cures (of whose truth he was obviously convinced).

A notary collected testimonies about miracles attributed to the archbishop, together with declarations by persons who had known him. Perhaps he believed that a canonization process would ensue. It never did, however, because Talavera’s fame as a “martyr of the Inquisition” lay outside the traditional paths to sainthood. His story served two purposes at once: to cast a disturbing shadow over the legitimacy of the Inquisition’s methods, and to act as an attractive symbol for *convertos* and any others who sought to reform the Holy Office. His case remained alive far into the sixteenth century, a forceful reminder nourished by every kind of anti-Inquisition stance.

The biography of Talavera by Gerónimo de Madrid is particularly significant. It coherently summarizes the information and commentaries that the letters of Torres, Álvarez Gato, and Anglería had put into circulation during Talavera’s trial. Gerónimo was the son of a *converso* accountant who had been invited to Granada by Talavera and Tendilla; his brother was the more famous Archdeacon of Alcor Alonso Fernández de Madrid.¹¹³ Gerónimo was steward to Talavera and abbot of Santa Fe, a post connected to the cathedral chapter of Granada. He enjoyed the archbishop’s full confidence, having managed his palace

111 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 395–6, appendix xvii: “En loor de la santa vida del Reverendísimo sennor Arçobispo de Granada y contra los...en fama de heregia.”

112 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 396.

113 In the opinion of Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, which I find convincing. See also the dissent by Arroyo, *Alonso Fernández de Madrid*, 68–72: he believes that Gerónimo de Madrid was simply close to the family and to Juan Fernández de Madrid, one of the archdeacon’s brothers.

administration and financial affairs as well as negotiations with the court; he stayed at Talavera's side during the trial and was present at his deathbed.¹¹⁴

Gerónimo's portrait in defense of Talavera's memory and teachings shows their closeness through intimate details and personal anecdotes. The biography is spontaneous rather than structured, and explains and defends Talavera's encounter with the Inquisition openly, without fear of censorship. This work, titled *Breve Suma*, was never printed, but it was widely circulated even beyond Hieronymite circles, proof of its power to evoke its subject. In fact, most biographies of Talavera composed in the sixteenth century¹¹⁵ refer to that of Gerónimo de Madrid and not the more developed one by the Archdeacon of Alcor. The most famous account, that of José de Sigüenza, quotes long passages from Gerónimo de Madrid while achieving an intelligent cultural revision of the history of the fifteenth century and recovering forgotten texts.

Gerónimo's brother, Alonso Fernández de Madrid – a convinced Erasmist – occupies a different plane. Five years after his controversial translation and publication of Erasmus's *Enchiridion*, he placed the complex figure of Talavera into a more acceptable framework, offering his teachings to a Spain that was beginning to accept Erasmian thought. Drawing on features brought out by previous biographers, especially his brother Gerónimo, he stressed the positive aspects of the catechist, teacher, and perfect bishop while minimizing the most radical ones. In the penultimate chapter, devoted to "his patience in the face of adversity," the Erasmist cleverly diverted the portrayal of Talavera as the Inquisition's first martyr toward a more benign interpretation—one that emphasized his saintliness, as evidenced by his infinite patience and resignation. Alonso focused his profile not on radical passages from Paul's Epistle to the Galatians but of the Book of Job.¹¹⁶ Perhaps for this reason, the biography by the Archdeacon of Alcor is the only one that found its way into print: it promoted the image of the "ideal bishop," first among Erasmists and later at the Council of Trent.

114 See correspondence by Pedro Mártir de Anglería on issues of benefices and on Talavera's last hours and death, where there are references to Gerónimo de Madrid, his position as an accountant (*ecónomo*), and his having circulated a letter dated 13 May 1507 describing "eloquently his tranquil and happy death": the letter was addressed to Herrera, dean of Granada Cathedral and Talavera's nephew. Anglería, *Epistolario*, 1: esp. nos. 313 and 345, 148–9 and 193–4.

115 "Breve suma de la sancta vida del religiosísimo y bienaventurado Fray Hernando de Talavera" is the final text in the ms. of Álvarez Gato's works, RAH Cod. 114. See the analysis and philological study by Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 325–9.

116 Fernández de Madrid, *Vida de Fray Fernando*, chap. xxv, "De su paciencia en las adversidades."

Bataillon was the first to reconstruct the Talavera phenomenon and how it later circulated within what he defined as a reformist Erasmian current. He stressed the fascination produced by that “ascetic life, the life of an Apostle that shone with saintliness, the life of a good shepherd as if told in the Golden Legend, whose witnesses still live.”¹¹⁷ In a way, Talavera’s example informed the idealized portraits of Juan Maldonado’s *Pastor bonus* and the bishop in the *Dialogue of Mercury and Charon* by Alfonso de Valdés.¹¹⁸ But Talavera’s influence was felt, above all, in his moralizing prescriptions that inspired the reform of bishoprics in several dioceses of the Spanish Church.¹¹⁹ It is to these that we now turn.

From the late 1520s to the 1540s, hagiographies of the archbishop and editions of his works were accompanied by attempts to strengthen the prerogatives of bishops. The archdiocese of Granada was the most dramatic case. While the court resided in the city in 1526, a group of theologians charged with studying the Morisco situation decided to pursue several of Talavera’s projects related to clerical education and the catechization of children. Supported by many of his associates, Charles V was promoting episcopal reform and proved his sincerity by naming Pedro de Alba, a loyal follower of Talavera’s, as archbishop of Granada. Alonso Manrique, the archbishop of Seville and new Inquisitor General, welcomed the appointment; he had found in Talavera’s diffuse “school” a solid grounding for his plans and an example worthy of imitation by his own archdiocese.

The year 1530 saw the publication of Bernal Díaz de Luco’s instructions for priests, *Avisos de curas*, and two other short treatises, one by Rodrigo de Santaella and the other by Talavera himself.¹²⁰ Meanwhile, Bishop Francisco de Mendoza of Zamora ordered the *Breve doctrina*, the catechism that Talavera had composed and employed in Granada, to be printed for use throughout his own diocese. At that time the prelate’s secretary was Diego Gracián de Alderete, a humanist, translator, and Erasmist who was very close to the Archdeacon of Alcor and the Valdés brothers.

117 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 337.

118 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 398.

119 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 338–9.

120 On Díaz de Luco, see the profile by Tellechea Idígoras, *El obispo ideal*, 47–65, and the introduction to Díaz de Luco, *Avisos de curas*. To place this bishop of Calahorra and his catechizing and missionary activities in context we must consider his long service on the Council of the Indies (1531–1545): there he was responsible for evangelizing and sending missionaries to America, bringing him into contact with such figures as Vasco de Quiroga and Bartolomé de las Casas. Díaz de Luco, *Avisos de curas*, 5; Pizarro Llorente, “Los consejeros de Indias.”

The diocese of Palencia presented a unique situation as the home of Alonso Fernández de Madrid, Archdeacon of Alcor and a central figure in the city's cultural and religious life. Four members of the Fernández de Madrid family of Granada were canons in the cathedral chapter. Two of them were the archdeacon and his brother Pero Hernández, who in 1527 took part in the unsuccessful *alumbrado* "mission" of Medina de Rioseco. The Inquisition was so suspicious of the cathedral's reformist spirit that it declared every canon of Palencia a member of the "Lutheran faction." The list was drawn up after an *alumbrado* priest betrayed the network of alliances and supporters of the heresy in Castile. Only Pero Hernández managed to flee to Rome after the trials of *alumbrados*, Erasmists, and Lutherans, but he returned to the chapter around 1536.¹²¹

In that year, Luis Cabeza de Vaca had become bishop of Palencia. His career resembled Alonso Manrique's and those of many of Talavera's *converso* followers who had supported Philip the Fair in opposition to his father-in-law, Ferdinand. Cabeza de Vaca left Castile during Cisneros's regency and returned upon Charles v's accession, rising rapidly in the Church. In 1530, as bishop of Salamanca, he had asked the translator of the *Enchiridion* to compose a life of Hernando de Talavera. Once at the head of the Palencia diocese and with the support of the cathedral chapter, he took a number of editorial initiatives meant to keep the archbishop's spirit and unique vocation alive.¹²²

It is difficult, however, to determine Talavera's influence on the restless spirituality of Castile in the second and third decades of the sixteenth century. While many studies of Cisneros have established his more-or-less orthodox predecessors and connections, Talavera remains as indistinct now as he was forty years ago.¹²³ Still, his thinking – vague and therefore open to any external suggestion – became an example to be imitated. Talavera's

121 See below for more information about him.

122 Bataillon was the first to call attention to the important "Talaveran" group centered on the chapter of Palencia Cathedral and its bishop. For more on Cabeza de Vaca's historical-cultural project in Palencia, see in particular the lucid analysis by Avallé Arce, "Sobre fray Hernando de Talavera," esp. 274–9. Arroyo, *Alonso Fernández de Madrid*, seems unaware of this context and even of Avallé's article; he devotes most of his book to the Archdeacon's *Silva palentina*. On Pero Hernández, see below.

123 See the work of Asensio, Bataillon, and Márquez Villanueva. Asensio's "El erasmismo" has the merit of calling scholars' attention to the Pauline-*converso* current of the fifteenth century, its relations with Erasmianism, and its later developments in the sixteenth. Since the first publication of this book and my emphasis on the concept of Paulinism as a new key to understanding relations between Jews, conversos and Christians, many authors have reflected on the category. See, for example, Stuczynski, "Converso Paulinism"; García-Arenal and Pereda, "A propósito de alumbrados."

preachings from the Apostle Paul and his defense of a Christianity devoid of ceremonial excess – one that could best attract *moriscos* and *conversos* – provided a focus for all the tensions that battered Castile from the late 1520s onward. They were the point of departure for the new reformist tendencies that came from the North, whether from Luther or from Erasmus.

“True Peace” and Universal Salvation: The Revelation of Juan del Castillo and Juan López de Celaín (1526)

1 “Calling a Black Man John White”: *Alumbrados*, Inquisitors, Interpreters

In his effort to define *alumbradismo*, Antonio Márquez suggested tracing a circle with a compass. Its point would rest on the palace of the Dukes of Infantado in Guadalajara, and its radii would reach Valladolid to the north, Madrid to the west, Toledo to the south, and Cuenca to the east.¹ He believed that this imagined circumference enclosed the geographic limits of the *alumbrado* heresy and that no heretics existed in either Ávila or Salamanca. With this expeditious device, Márquez solved years of polemics on the subject² regarding the supposed *alumbradismo* of figures such as María de Santo Domingo and the controversial Francisca Hernández, source of all the denunciations of the *alumbrados*. In like manner and with Marcelino equal conviction, this scholar set the chronological limits of the heresy that Menéndez Pelayo had defined as “originally and persistently Spanish”: 1525 to 1559. It would have lasted, then, from the year of the first Inquisitorial decree against the *alumbrados*, to the year in which Melchor Cano produced his poisonous censure of Bartolomé deArch’s *Catecismo*. By that time, *alumbradismo* (as Cano wrote) was a distant but not entirely “suffocated” memory.³

It is not surprising that Márquez – author of the first monograph on the *alumbrado* heresy/philosophy – was obsessed with defining its boundaries.

1 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 61.

2 See, e.g., the dispute between the Dominican Beltrán de Heredia and the Jesuit Llorca: Llorca, *La Inquisición española y los Alumbrados*; Llorca, “La beata de Piedrahita, ¿fué o no alumbrada?”; Beltrán de Heredia, “Las corrientes de espiritualidad,” 525–31; Beltrán de Heredia, “La beata de Piedrahita no fué alumbrada.” For a general overview see Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism*; for an update on *alumbrado* studies, see Hamilton, “The Alumbrados”; García-Arenal and Pereda, “A propósito de los alumbrados.”

3 Caballero, *Melchor Cano*, 551: Cano’s lengthy attack appears an appendix to the work, sec. 58, 536–615. It passed into posterity as one of the most important and revealing documents on Spanish spirituality in the first half of the sixteenth century. Márquez has analyzed it – particularly as it concerns *alumbradismo* – in his “Origen y caracterización del iluminismo.”

Never has a term been so slippery and generic, nor so open to redefinitions. As an Inquisitorial category, it could be defined only by what it was not. To Inquisitors and censors, *alumbrado* or *iluminado* seemed to mean everything that was anti-institutional and everyone who preferred the spontaneity of individual enlightenment to the restrictions of the official Church, deciding to “abandon the North Star of reason in order to sail on the sea of faith” (in Melchor Cano’s brilliant phrase).⁴ Cano himself, in the grip of anti-institutional and vaguely mystical feelings, traced *alumbradismo*’s genealogy from the first Beghards down to the Lutherans of Seville and Valladolid. At the same time one of his fiercest enemies, Archbishop of Toledo Bartolomé de Carranza, denounced how the term *alumbrado* had degenerated in just a few years. Its original elevated, evangelical meaning had devolved into an accusation of heresy, even a reason to suspect any spiritual person. This bitter conclusion – reached just a few days before Carranza was arrested while preaching what came to be known as “the sermon of mercy” – showed that his fear was justified. The Inquisition’s linguistic and ideological confusion about both the name and the nature of the *alumbrado* heresy had come to be deployed against Castilian Lutheranism as well.⁵

Even those who were tried for *alumbradismo* found it hard to recognize themselves in this category. They would never have defined themselves as *alumbrados* or believed that their religious and spiritual experiences could be confused with those of the other targets of the Holy Office. Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz – a lay preacher and father of ten who, with Isabel de la Cruz, was one of the first to be arrested for *alumbradismo* after the decree of 1525 – firmly refused to be identified with the *alumbrados*. For him the term applied only to the Franciscans of Escalona who formed a circle around Juan de Olmillos: they experienced ecstasy, visions, and revelations⁶ and people called them by that name “as a mockery and insult.”⁷ Alcaraz insisted throughout his interrogations that his own spirituality was totally different; his asceticism and inward religiosity were a rejection of Olmillos’s sensationalism. Seeing the latter’s dishonesty, the credulity of his followers, and the sympathetic tears of the Franciscan provincial Fray Andrés de Écija “on seeing him [Olmillos] in a

4 Caballero, *Melchor Cano*, 546.

5 Carranza’s sermon, preached in Valladolid in August 1558, appears in Tellechea Idígoras, *El arzobispo Carranza y su tiempo*, 229–75.

6 On the violent nature of these Franciscans’ prophecies, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185–6, and also below.

7 *Proceso Alcaraz* fol. 9. Cited in Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 124.

mystical trance,” Alcaraz felt “as if his heart were being eaten by dogs.”⁸ This was not the first time that he had separated himself from those *alumbrados*, most of them Franciscans: he had earlier denounced them openly to the Holy Office, so of course he now indignantly denied being one of their number.

Juan de Vergara, a humanist who corresponded with Erasmus, reacted with the same disdain when accused of *alumbradismo*. Because he had been studying in Louvain when the heresy was taking root in Castile, Vergara dismissed the association out of hand. In his defense, he argued that “the errors and notions of perfect idiots like the *alumbrados*” could not possibly affect a university-trained scholar like himself. His classical and humanist education was wholly incompatible with the ideas of a self-taught “accountant” like Alcaraz; his sceptical irony, his form of dress, and his prestigious official post all distanced him from the spontaneous piety of the *alumbrados*. Besides, there was his remote relationship with God. Unlike the *alumbrados*, who were in a state of continuous prayer, Vergara confessed that he turned to Him chiefly at moments of difficulty or anger:

Also, in light of my status, conversation, and way of life, there cannot be a single person in the world who sees in me the demeanor and habits of the *alumbrados*, whether in deeds, words, the behavior of others toward me, my companions, or my pursuits, because I have always associated with men of my own kind. I have always held my shoulders in their proper place without raising them to my ears. I have always said “by God” or something stronger rather than “God be praised,” something I regret. I dress neatly, not like a Beguine. My way of speaking and my leisure activities are like everyone else’s; I neither avoid things nor cultivate special habits. In speaking I don’t sound holy or devout; in fact, some think that I incline to a bit of gossip. I believe that the world has seen no greater enemy or anyone more suspicious of these vanities of silly women than myself. Truly there can be no one in the kingdom who knows me who would not declare that calling Dr. Vergara an *alumbrado* is like calling a black man John White.⁹

8 “[Y] a mi me parecía que el corazón me comían perros”: Serrano y Sanz, “Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz,” 5.

9 “Item considerada mi condicion, conversacion e forma de vida, no avra en el mundo persona que en mi pueda aver notado conformidad ninguna con el trato y maña de alumbrados, en obras ni palabras ni en el tratamiento de mi persona ni en mi compañia ni exercicios, porque yo siempre he andado como los hombres de mi maña. Mis ombros siempre los he traido en su lugar sin subirlos a las orejas. En mi boca antes por Dios y aun mas adelante que bendito sea dios, de lo que pesa. Mi vestir antes curioso que beguino. La conversacion e pasatiempos

In this marvelous self-portrait offered to Vergara's Inquisitors, we see his indignation at being included among those he considers his inferiors. When he denies any resemblance to the "Beguines" and their "vanities of silly women," his scorn is comparable to Melchor Cano's.¹⁰ Later he directed his penetrating criticism to the Inquisitors' method of gathering testimony, and the doctrinal confusion they created by allowing different accusations gathered in one edict to be attributed to separate cases.¹¹ María de Cazalla would speak in the same vein at her trial in 1532: she subtly and lucidly rebutted the Inquisitors' accusations point by point, revealing how ambiguously the tribunal used the term *alumbrado*. Her almost philological criticism reminds us of Carranza's attack

a lo comun de todos sin esquividad ni singularidad ninguna. En las platicas no santerias ni devociones, antes (al parecer de algunos) un poquillo de murmuracion. Pues destas vanidades de mugercillas no creo que ha avido mas capital enemigo en el mundo, ni mas sospechoso de sus cosas que yo. Verdaderamente creo que no avra en el reyno hombre que me conozca, que no juzgue que dezir al doctor Vergara alumbrado es llamar al negro Juan Blanco": Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 31–32: 335–6. In addition to Longhurst's works on Vergara, see Homza's important *Religious Authority*. The Vergara Trial, henceforth referred to as *Proceso Vergara*, is now digitized and fully accessible in Pares: <http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/description/4568312?nm>.

- 10 It is worth citing the text in which Cano criticizes with ferocious irony the increasingly popular practice of inward prayer: "... this is clearly typical of *alumbramiento*, for it is meant to show that if one gives himself over to prayer God will show him everything in the heavens and the earth, and even the ability to act in ways that can be learned from no school or craft or devotion to letters or counsel of men. And if this, which some have advised me to practice, is true, then let us close our books and even our schools, let our universities perish, let all study die, and let us all devote ourselves to prayer" ("[E]sta proposición tiene magnifiesto de alumbramiento, pues significa que a quien se da a la oración dios le da noticia del cielo y de la tierra. E aun prudencia para obrar más que ninguna escuela ni trabajo ni ejercicio de letras ni consejo de hombres se puede aprender. E si esto es verdad, como alguno a mi me aconsejó que lo hiziese, cerremos los libros, e aun ciérrense los generales, perezcan las universidades, mueran los estudios, e démonos todos a la oración": cited in Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 118.
- 11 During his trial Vergara condemned the Inquisitors' improper practice of instigating denunciations and then offering denouncers false charges to claim: "[I]t happened that Francisca Hernández was arrested ... and remained there ... without making any accusation, [until] specific opinions of *alumbrados* were presented to her; then as she paged through those papers reading point after point, she would make accusations without regard to time or place" ("[S]ucedió que Francisca Hernandez fue traída presa...donde estovo...sin denunciar cosa alguna [hasta que] seríanle declaradas particularmente las proposiciones que tenían los alunbrados [y ella] así como yba por el cartapel delante proposición por proposición así lo iba todo denunciando sin respecto de tiempo ni lugar"): Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 31–32: 326, 324, and 332. Vergara's entire lucid defense reveals how the Inquisitors handled accusations and how they operated in general: Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 31–32: 322–56. *Proceso Vergara*, fols. 257r–291v.

on the polysemy of the word, which in his opinion invalidated its use as an Inquisitorial category.¹² As a result it has been extremely difficult, both then and today, to mark the limits of the *alumbrado* heresy. And if it is hard for modern historians, it was even more so for the Inquisitors themselves; they strove for more than twenty years to disentangle the threads of a multifaceted heresy whose appearance changed along with the characters who represented it.

At the time, no one wished to delimit clearly the boundaries of *alumbradismo*. Consequently, this label was applied to a wide array of phenomena, including the *maravillosismo* (fantastic and prophetic visions) of the Franciscan friars from Pastrana, spiritual circles that formed around charismatic female leaders (*beatas*), and spiritual, mystical searches for inward guidance by individuals who rejected the mediation of the institutional Church and sought personal salvation.

Taking this situation for granted, Marcel Bataillon formulated one of the most famous definitions of Spanish *alumbradismo*. Following the same method that led him to turn Erasmianism into a wide interpretive category embracing the breadth of Spanish religious history, he spoke of "iluminismo" (in Spanish). In so doing, he incorporated what others had so far called *alumbradismo* into a broader range of European reformist movements that were rooted in the *devotio moderna* of the late Middle Ages.¹³ Endorsing Bataillon's interpretation, Lucien Febvre described all forms of *alumbrado* spirituality as a "christianisme intériorisé," an expression that he adopted to suggest the possibility of integrating the idiosyncrasies of Spain's religious experience in a broader European context.¹⁴ Under such light, *alumbradismo* traversed all schools, doctrines, and personalities; it was an amorphous meeting ground between the Franciscan spirituality of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and Erasmianism.

Between Europe's *devotio moderna* and the great mystics on one hand, and Cisneros's Castile on the other, the *alumbrado* movement was born "with dialectical dependence"¹⁵ in the restless atmosphere of reform among the Observant

12 "Furthermore the said witness was speaking from hearsay, and it does not follow that because he takes me for an *alumbrada* I should be one, nor does he give any other reason. Besides, both now and when this witness was deposed the name *alumbrado* is applied to anyone who appears more modest than others or refrains from associating with wicked people, as is well known. So easily was this name blindly imposed on me, and on others who are better and more virtuous than I." Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 209.

13 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185.

14 Febvre, *Au coeur*, 106

15 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 110. Márquez also reproduces the summary of Isabel de la Cruz's trial for heresy, in which an Inquisitor states: "[O]nce Isabel de la Cruz had initiated

orders, which were full of apostate mendicant friars¹⁶ and defenders of an imminent renewal of the Church. It arose in the effervescent atmosphere of the “open cloisters,” where the search for perfection was shared by laymen.¹⁷ It also emerged in Cisneros’s Alcalá, where in just a few years, the cardinal’s “sowing of mysticism” produced an impressive harvest of devotional and mystical texts in the vernacular.¹⁸ As Asensio has reminded us, it was preceded by the great *converso* tradition of the fifteenth century, the simultaneous rediscovery of the Bible, and a striving toward perfection that had already reached its peak among the Hieronymites when Cisneros adopted and intensified it.

2 *Alumbrados and conversos*

There can be no doubt about the *converso* nature of the phenomenon that the Inquisition faced.¹⁹ Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, the layman whom the Marquis of Villena had invited to preach in Escalona, was a *converso*; so was Isabel de la Cruz, the Franciscan tertiary who attracted the first group of the “illuminated” into her orbit. Others included the priest Gaspar de Bedoya from Guadalajara, one of the first to be condemned by the Holy Office; Juan and María de Cazalla, children

dexamiento [“abandonment of the self”] Pedro Alcaraz and Bedoya were swayed only by her, an ignorant and proud little woman; and she, though at first influenced by some foolish and perhaps heretical friars, was later contradicted by her friars and constrained by her prelates not to communicate with lay people. But she ignored [the friars’] good counsel and disobeyed the prelates to spread her mistaken doctrine. Furthermore, though it might be proved that *recogimiento* [“withdrawal from the world”] had begun with some friars of La Salceda it is not shown that *dexamiento* came from there; rather, Isabel de la Cruz seems to have infected Fray Diego de la Barreda and others.” Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 101. On the vexed question of the relation between *recogimiento* and *dexamiento*, see at a minimum Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 166–76, and many studies by Andrés Martín, who places the Inquisition’s distinction between them at the heart of his own theory, which seeks to show that there was a rigid separation between orthodox and heterodox Franciscans. See, at a minimum, Andrés Martín, *Los recogidos*.

- 16 Many cloistered Franciscans refused to accept the reformed rule that Cisneros had imposed in 1506, preferring to leave their order; these “apostate” brothers would be satirized in the literature of the time. See Bataillon, *Erasmus y España* 4–6, and Sarraute, “La vie franciscaine,” 359–60.
- 17 See the observations by Olivari, “La spiritualità spagnola” esp.181–7.
- 18 The expression is the title of a study by Sainz Rodríguez, *La siembra mística*.
- 19 It escaped no one that practically all those accused of *alumbradismo* were *conversos*. See the opinion of Juan de Maldonado in his *De felicitate cristiana*: “Fertur eorum plaerosque Tyrones et Proselytos fuisse”: Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 181. Archbishop Silíceo had made use of the fact in the polemic provoked by his imposition of the purity-of-blood statute in Toledo Cathedral.

of parents accused and condemned as judaizers by the Inquisition in Seville;²⁰ the Vergara brothers (*conversos* on their mother's side); the humanist Juan, an eminent churchman and canon of Toledo Cathedral; the Hellenist Francisco of the University of Alcalá; and Isabel and Bernardino de Tovar. The Toledan priest Luis de Beteta, who declared to his Inquisitors that he was a *converso* "on all four sides," endured a prolonged trial that began in 1538; and three members of the *converso* Lucena family of Toledo were accused of *alumbradismo* by the Inquisition.

The Inquisitors soon discovered that all these people were deeply hostile to the Tribunal of the Holy Office. A sarcastic saying circulated among the *conversos* of Castile, which Juan de Vergara and Bernardino de Tovar liked to quote: in Spain there were two saints (*santas*) too many, the bull of the "Holy Crusade" (*santa cruzada*) and the Tribunal of the "Holy Inquisition" (*santa Inquisición*).²¹ In her testimony before the Inquisitors, Francisca Hernández recalled the moment when Pedro de Cazalla, a relative of Juan and María, confided to his wife – in the privacy of his home – his rage against the emperor's new Inquisitorial policy:

[He said] that we had not a king but an idiot, and that the devil had brought the empress to Castile, for she was a serpent like her grandmother, who had brought this disaster of an Inquisition to Castile, and she supported it. Might it please God that wars would come from France, or that the *Comunidades* would continue so as to destroy the Inquisition, which had been the ruin of everyone.²²

Francisca added that after the first inquiries into the *alumbrados*, Pedro and his wife had hidden silver and other goods that might be seized by Inquisitors.

Pedro de Cazalla believed that no more than "a thread" connected man with God and that any interference by the Church was unnecessary. The first arrests must have caused him great anguish. His brother-in-law Lope de Rueda must have felt something similar when he decided to remove María de Cazalla from Guadalajara and take her to Orche. Pedro de Cazalla, in dark despair, made a lucid analysis of the part the empress played in the Inquisition. During the

20 See María de Cazalla's testimony in Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 101.

21 Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 27: 131. *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 60v.

22 "Que no teníamos rey sino un bobo, e que el diablo avía traydo a la emperatriz a Castilla, que era una bívora como su abuela la qual avía traydo esta mala ventura de Inquisición a Castilla e que ella la sustentava. Que pluguiesse Dios que viniesen de Francia guerras o que duraran las comunidades para que destruieran la Inquisición, que los tenía echados a perder a todos." See Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 90–1.

long absences of the “idiot” Charles v, the empress’s “Portuguese faction” was working, in effect, to strengthen the Council of the Inquisition to the detriment of the Inquisitor General Manrique, using the *alumbrado*-Erasmist menace as a political weapon.²³

Almost thirty years later, members of the Cazalla-Vivero branch of the family gave rise to a new heterodoxy. This rounded out the heretical history of the Cazallas, protagonists of more than fifty years of Spain’s religious history. Their worst fears were realized when two of their sons, Juan and Pedro, were severely punished, and their third, Agustín, was put to death. Agustín was burned together with the remains of his mother Leonor, “the matriarch of all heretics.”²⁴ The Inquisition razed their palace to the ground and sowed the ruins with salt.

Many people must have shared Pedro Cazalla’s views, and they certainly could not have respected a tribunal that regarded their very ancestry as a source of suspicion. In many families, members were reconciled or forced into penitence by the Holy Office. All of them belonged to “the first Inquisitorial generation”²⁵; from the penitential garments (*sambenitos*) their parents and grandparents had been forced to wear, they had learned caution and dissimulation despite themselves. In general, however, apart from the barbs of the Vergara brothers and Cazalla’s honesty, resentment against the Inquisition – a symbol of the “bonds” and servitude to which Christians were reduced – was cautious and discreet.

Although the Inquisitors looked hard for traces of Judaism in *alumbrado* doctrines, they could find nothing to reproach. The movement’s convictions seemed closer to those of the “Church of the saints” and Oropesa’s *perfectos* than to judaizers’ messianic preachings. The light of their beliefs was directed toward opening new paths in the present, not projecting expectations into the future.²⁶

23 On the struggles between Alonso Manrique and the Castilianist-Portuguese party, and how that party deployed the *alumbrado*-Erasmist-Lutheran threat to shore up the Inquisition and the Council’s power to undermine the Inquisitor General, see Avilés Fernández, “El santo oficio,” 463–4, and Martínez Millán, “Las élites de poder.” The empress’s clashes with Manrique were severe.

24 On the Cazalla-Viveros and the Valladolid trials of 1558–1559, see Tellechea Idígoras, *Tiempos recios*, 53ff.

25 The notion comes from Gilman, “A Generation of *Conversos*,” but see also Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 129.

26 Only one figure seems to have approached the Messianic prophetism of Fray Melchor and López de Soria: Gaspar de Villafaña. Francisca Hernández testified that this priest, a close associate of Tovar, believed that “the light was beginning to come”: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*. 84.

The licenciado Angulo, the prosecutor of the Toledo tribunal, interrogated the first person accused of *alumbradismo*, Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, at great length, asking about his eating habits and whether he knew and observed Jewish rites. Alcaraz affected not to understand: accused of having dined on *adafinas*, the dish traditionally prepared on Friday to be consumed on Saturday (“according to Jewish ceremony and to keep the law of Moses”²⁷), he claimed not to know what *adafinas* meant. Alcaraz might have been exaggerating, but Angulo was forced to accept that judaizing ceremonies and temptations were wholly foreign to the *alumbrados*.²⁸ Proofs of their Jewishness could come only by demonstrating their direct descent from converted Jews, sometimes scornfully termed *confesos*. Still, that was sufficient in Angulo’s opinion:

These new errors and heresies...are all designed to defend and shelter a false belief in the religion of Moses and destroy the religion of the Gospels. And because simple people and rustics have been instructed... and cannot easily be fooled and attracted by heretics and false dogmatists to keep and observe the faith of Moses, Alcaraz and his accomplices did not dare to preach this openly, but instead stole from Catholics the ceremonies of the Gospel faith.²⁹

That essential religiosity and rejection of ceremony had to come from their identity as *conversos*. For Angulo, they meant to destroy Christianity and then spread the precepts and ceremonies of “the perfidious Jews from whose lineage and blood they come.”³⁰ The prosecutor’s almost obsessive search for those connections betrayed an unhealthy attitude toward everything Jewish. The Spanish Inquisition rooted its “heresiological” culture – that is, its own historical identity – in the judaizing heresy of the *conversos*, to which it invariably returned. Everything was related to the judaizing heresy, beginning with the term *conventículas*: first applied to closed family circles of judaizers, it now denoted gatherings of *alumbrados*.

27 Cited in Selke, “El iluminismo de los conversos,” 623.

28 Selke, “El iluminismo de los conversos,” 623.

29 “Estos nuevos errores y herejías ... todos se ordenan a deffensión y amparo de la falsa creencia de la ley de Moysén y a destrucción de la ley evangélica. Y como esto no osava dogmatizar claro, porque ya los symples plebeyos rústicos están instructos ... que no pueden facilmente de los hereges y falsos dogmatistas ser engañados y atraydos a la guarda y observancia de la ley de Moysén, por esso tomó el dicho Alcaraz y sus cómplices quitar a los catholicos las cerimonias de la ley evangelica”: Selke, “El iluminismo de los conversos,” 623.

30 Selke, “El iluminismo de los conversos,” 264.

But Angulo had hit the nail on the head when he identified the *alumbrados'* anti-ceremonialism with a heretical *converso* deviation. The convictions of Isabel and Alcaraz were like those of the *conversos* who, with their inward faith, sought to differentiate themselves from “Hebrews in spirit” and shunned the empty rites by which Old Christians defined their religion. All those accused of *alumbradismo* – from the group of Isabel de la Cruz and Pedro de Alcaraz in Guadalajara, arrested in 1524, to María de Cazalla, Juan del Castillo, Tovar, and Celáin – displayed a scornful rejection of ceremony or external display—the sterile rituals that marked the faith of Old Christians.

In them we see, greatly increased, Juan de Lucena’s disdain for those whose arid religion required them to do no more than move their lips and repeat the same automatic gestures. In the sixteenth century, Christians seemed to express their faith only by praying aloud, standing while the Gospel was read, and beating their breast; as Gaspar de Bedoya put it, to the *alumbrados* this was just “playing with the body.”³¹ In a Spain where for both Old and New Christians, gestures proved the depth of one’s faith, the scorn that the *alumbrados* heaped on traditional rites was inevitably seen as a scandalous display of dissent.

Other resonant themes and feelings came from the anti-Inquisitorial and “Talaveran” *converso* tradition. Melquíades Andrés, who writes from an orthodox perspective about the Franciscans of the 1520s and 1530s, has stressed the close resemblance (even in terminology) between the edict of 1525 and the judaizing thought that Talavera had refuted, but also its likeness to some of Talavera’s own ideas. From this point of view, the archbishop’s attacks on pagan-like elements in Christianity and the idolatry of Christian image worship brought him close to the *alumbrado* movement. We can see this in some of the passages that Talavera devotes to the intimate, personal discovery of an unbreakable faith thanks to the “enlightenment” (*alumbramiento*) of the Holy Spirit.³² We may even suggest that a matrix for the spirituality of those years – and especially for the *alumbrado* phenomenon – should be sought within the

31 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 157–8.

32 See above and below. Andrés noted how in Talavera’s text the terms “perfection, rest, and repose” (*perfección, descanso y holganza*) occur in relation to the perfection of the religion of the Gospels. These are, in any event, key words that were significant in the conceptual baggage of many *alumbrados*: see Andrés Martín, “Tradición conversa y alumbramiento,” 390. But see also Olivari, “La spiritualità spagnola,” 207–10: through an analysis of texts of “autonomous” spirituality like Talavera’s “Breve forma de confesar” (as opposed to his militant and controversial ones like *Católica impugnación*), the author explores the points of contact between Talavera’s thought and a sort of “Andalusian pre-*alumbradismo*.”

“*converso*-Talaveran” current, as well as, of course, in the more obvious ones of Franciscan mysticism and Cisneros’s reformism.

Márquez Villanueva has written about the spirituality of the *converso* poet Juan Álvarez Gato, who was an intimate of Talavera and close to the Hieronymite order. Villanueva stresses his frequent use of terms related to divine illumination – an *alumbramiento* that chooses the New Testament as the direct source of a “doctrine of the Gospels” typical of the most superior souls. The poet’s verses speak of the boundless value of charity—the highest virtue that gives life to all the rest. The passage in the Gospel of John (3:16) about God’s love for the world and the value of love is a fundamental tenet of *alumbrado* thought. It is the same passage that, in a Europe that justified itself through faith, inspired bodies of work that achieved notable success, such as that of Juan de Valdés.

Many themes in Álvarez Gato find parallels among the *alumbrados*. In a spiritual letter, he suggested that a Christian, “after praising God in his prayers,” should devote the rest of the day to meditation, combining repentance and tears for his sins, with joy and the hope of future salvation. Only through this kind of *ruminatio* could the Christian let his soul “give itself fully to its Maker in all its works until it relinquishes its free will to Him.” In another letter he pondered this abandonment, which meant “renouncing love of the world, the flesh, and one’s own will and giving up free will for the love of God, to the point of transforming oneself into Him and becoming one with Him.” In his “Sonnet to the Crucified Christ” he explained that the illuminated soul, when in a state of perfect charity and “in its own intimacy, without fear or doubt,” was so close to God that it needed neither to entreat nor to desire.³³

Behind Álvarez Gato’s letters and poems, with their emphasis on divine “enlightenment” (*alumbramiento*), annihilation of free will, the importance of charity, and the “sweetness” of the soul inflamed by faith and the divine presence, we sense the traces of a spiritual path from the Spain of Talavera to that of the *alumbrados*. This continuum grows in importance within Hieronymite spirituality and *converso* sensibility, but it shares elements of the Franciscan tradition forged by Cisneros. Márquez Villanueva has established the presence of “Paulist and Senecan” *conversos* such as Pedro Díaz de Toledo at the ducal court of the Mendozas, and the excellent relations that the dukes maintained with the Hieronymite monks of San Bartolomé de Lupiana.³⁴ According to

33 Quotations from letters and sonnets of Álvarez Gato, housed in the Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, appear in Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 281.

34 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 279–82. Olivari returned to and expanded these ideas in “La spiritualità spagnola,” 209.

Márquez, the narrow boundaries of the *alumbrado* heresy coincided with the area of the recently founded Franciscan monasteries, the University of Alcalá, and the Mendozas' Renaissance court; but we should include within this circle one of the most important Hieronymite monasteries, Lupiana, which the Mendozas helped found and continued to support.

The *conversa* María de Cazalla was accused for having referred to the "Judaism" of certain ceremonies – explicitly citing Erasmus's *Enchiridion*³⁵ – by saying, "it is a new kind of Judaism to be content with external, visible works without regard to what they mean internally." María was consciously joining a fifteenth-century tradition that depended on contrasting the religion of Moses, anchored in rites and prescriptions, and the new faith that brought an incandescent freedom of the spirit. Alonso de Oropesa had warned many times of the risk of falling back into Judaism: avoiding this involved a desperate search for orthodoxy and an insistence on the correct practices of Old Christians. This same reasoning could be found in the pages of the *Enchiridion*, a book that María had read and absorbed. It is no coincidence that it had been translated into Spanish by Alonso Fernández de Madrid, who began his career in Granada with Talavera and whose father had collaborated closely with the archbishop.

The result was no mere translation, however, but a free and elegant adaptation of the Erasmian text. The archdeacon had omitted especially compromising passages, such as the one on oral confession, but he had also added sections and explanations. In accommodating Erasmus to the mentality of his Spanish readers, he interpolated his own reflection on the mission and Epistles of Paul, "that excellent liberator and maintainer of the spirit," precisely because the Apostle had "drawn the Jews away from their confidence in external works

35 María actually corrected the basis for her accusation: "And where it says that everything I saw looked to me like Jewish ceremonies, it is false, for I never said that nor meant it in that way. And if I spoke about this topic it must have been in reference to Erasmus, in the fifth rule of his *Enchiridion* which is translated into Romance, as I have heard, by permission of the Most Reverend Cardinal Archbishop of Seville, the Inquisitor General; which would be that it is a new kind of Judaism for man, and to be content with these external, visible works without regard for what they mean internally to attain the fruit for which they were set down" ("Y en lo que dize que todo quanto mirava me pareçia çerimonias judaycas, es falso que nunca tal dixe ni a este propósyto. E sy yo hablé algo en esta materia, sería refiriendo a Erasmo, en la quinta regla de su *Enchiridon* [sic] questá en romance trasladado, según he oydo, con autoridad del Rmo. Sr. Car[denal] Arçob[isp]o de Sevilla, Ynq[uisid]or Mayor, que sería que es nuevo género de judaysmo para el hombre y contentarse en estas obras exteriores y visybles syn tener ojo a lo ynterior que significan para conseguir el fruto para que fueron establecidas"); Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 217.

and persuaded them to benefit from spiritual matters."³⁶ He insisted that growing in Christ meant abandoning rites and ceremonies, and he chastised the coarseness of those who, flaunting their total ignorance of the Gospel "which is wholly spiritual," ended by "virtually giving themselves up to a [form of] Judaism."³⁷

The extraordinary success achieved by the *Enchiridion* in the Peninsula is not surprising. Erasmus's treatise rediscovered the impassioned teachings of Paul, defended a spirit that could overcome the "letter" and the "Judaism" of a religiosity mired in ceremony, and offered the metaphor of the mystical body of the faithful united by a charity that sparked the belief of each individual. In this way it seemed to embrace the tradition of Spain's fifteenth century from a new perspective. The same tradition had inspired Talavera's *Católica impugnación*; in attacking the "ebionite" tendencies of the convert from Seville, it celebrated the joyful transition from the Old to the New Law. I believe that we cannot read María de Cazalla's lucid testimony without recalling Talavera's reference to ceremonies that "never, no matter how strictly observed, gave anyone admission to the kingdom of heaven,"³⁸ or his subtle discussion of image worship, which cites the God of the Gospel of John. God "is essentially spirit" and wishes to be worshipped "not on this or that particular mountain but in spirit and in truth"; only because "we are corporeal beings" and "not everyone can worship Him in spirit" does He "make allowances for our weak and gross nature, and accepts being served and worshipped in certain places."³⁹

36 See Dámaso Alonso's excellent 1932 edition and its equally useful long introduction by Bataillon, in which the portions added by the archdeacon are indicated in italics: Erasmus, *El Enquiridión*. There is also a recent edition: Erasmus, *El Enquiridión o manual*. On the archdeacon's adaptation of Erasmus's work, see, in addition to the introduction just mentioned, Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 190–205. Seidel Menchi, "La fortuna di Erasmo in Italia," 31, argues that Spaniards, especially the archdeacon, "betrayed" Erasmus's work.

37 Erasmus, *El Enquiridión*, 257–9, and Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 200–1.

38 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 111. See Andrés Martín's important article on this subject, "Tradición conversa y alumbramiento."

39 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 195. On Talavera's difficult stance vis-à-vis the worship of images, see Pereda, *Images of Discord*. María de Cazalla was accused of having said, "O Lord, what blindness is this, or what blindness exists in the world, that they decide in what places You are to be found, though You are infinite? People seek you in a temple built of stones and neither seek nor find you in themselves, who are living temples. The laws force us to do the first thing but have nothing to say about the second" ("O Señor, qué ceguedad es esta o que ceguedad está en el mundo que te determinan lugares donde estás siendo ynfñiro [*sic*], que te busquen las gentes en un templo de cantos y que en sí que son templos bivos no te hallen ni te busquen y que a esto nos obliguen estas leyes y estotro que nadie le mire"): Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 169. In her defense María did not

To understand the depth of Talavera's influence on the *alumbrado* movement we must appreciate every facet of his theology, which was steeped in the writings of Paul. This was the final product of a Spain where reading and debating Saint Paul was fed by the same impulse that led fifteenth-century Biblical scholars to defend just and harmonious relations between Old and New Christians. For those scholars the issue of external rituals had already been debated and unequivocally linked to the need to prove the superiority of the New Testament. At the same time, the Pauline texts stressed the absolute equality of Christian believers in the exultant experience of each man illuminated by faith. Throughout the fifteenth century, Gospel verses concerning divine illumination were invoked repeatedly in order to condemn the distinction between Old and New Christians. This appears to be the point at which impulses toward reform, new currents of intimate spirituality, and Erasmianism came together. Adopting the Pauline views so typical of the fifteenth century, these intersecting trends merged the ancient (and unending) problems of Spain's religious life and the new ideas that arrived with Charles v's imperial court.

Talavera's Christianity, which minimized dogma and ritual to make the message of the Gospels more transparent and comprehensible to newly converted peoples, seemed to reflect a diffuse striving toward reform. A fragment of the *Breve suma* shows him preaching about "marvels of the faith" while inserting many quotations from Holy Scripture (which he always carried).⁴⁰ His explanations were particularly lucid when he was addressing recent converts. Gerónimo de Madrid wrote that his sermons "seemed so plain that some said he was conversing rather than preaching." His use of sacred or liturgical texts in the vernacular to bring the truths of the faith to believers was noted by those who considered this the best method of teaching.⁴¹ But others criticized this

deny the accusation but revised what she had said, adding the pertinent verses from the Gospels: Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 219.

40 "He never preached a sermon that did not touch on marvels of the faith, and since many newly converted Moors and Jews were always listening it was necessary to do so, especially for the Jews; to whom he always explained very clearly that their religion was the form and shadow of the holy Catholic faith, proving it to them through the Holy Scriptures, which he had at his fingertips. So even if they were hardened he softened them, and in truth I doubt there are any better Christians of this nation in the whole kingdom": Talavera, "Breve forma" fol. 152r. Cited in Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 114 n. 33. Note that he speaks not of Jews but of converts, that is, those "hardened" ones on whom, elsewhere in Spain, the full weight of the Inquisition fell.

41 See penetrating remarks by Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 44–9, and Asensio, "El erasmismo," 49–55

preference. Cisneros sneered that it was like “casting pearls before swine,”⁴² and it would become one of the chief accusations against Talavera.

The archbishop’s dedication not only to convert Muslims and Jews but also to educate their children in the new faith (“watering tender young plants,” as the archdeacon of Alcor put it) revealed aspirations that were shared by many others, as the experience of the *alumbrados* would confirm.

These impressions blossomed in the cultural and religious ferment of the 1520s, when the search for individual perfection and a direct, unmediated relationship with God combined with a need to spread the Gospel and open the individual soul to the divine light. Preaching to the Christian flock became one of the chief pathways to a much-desired reform of the Church. The ideal of spreading and propagating the Gospel, though it had arisen from the need to convert Jews and Muslims, came to include the whole community of the faithful in its quest to remake Christendom.

3 “The Trumpet and Fife of True Reformation”: Juan López de Celain

In the second part of his study *Los alumbrados*, Márquez mapped the doctrinal limits of the *alumbrado* phenomenon with the same specificity that he had used to draw its geographical boundaries. In defining the philosophical corpus on which it rested, he put aside all its messianic and reformist aspects and claimed that the *alumbrado* heresy lacked not only an eschatological dimension but also any project of ecclesiastical reform.⁴³ Instead he defended the movement’s elitist and aristocratic nature, even defining it as a “mystical, non-cosmic, and ahistorical Platonism.”⁴⁴ He employed a wide range of references. *Alumbrado* philosophy, uprooted from its specific context, appears in an ahistorical framework that runs from Neoplatonism to Pascal; it is not viewed within the Spain of its time as a diffuse heresy, a sort of intrinsic sin, or a stubborn falling into the vortex of Spanish spirituality (to recall Bataillon’s evocative phrase). Although Márquez’s trimmings and adjustments supply *alumbradismo* with a stable doctrinal scaffolding, they end by reducing it to no more than the circle of Alcaraz and Isabel de la Cruz.

The two extraordinary figures of Juan Lopez de Celain and Juan del Castillo, through whom I want to redefine the phenomenon of *alumbrados*, would not fit in Márquez’s rigid and abstract definition. Far from representing an abstract

42 Quoted in Cotarelo Valledor, *Fray Diego de Deza*, 216.

43 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 205–6.

44 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 220.

and ahistorical thought – a “non-cosmic Platonism,” as Marquez puts it – these two men were fully immersed in sixteenth-century Spain and their thought voiced some of the most burning issues of the period: the spiritual conquest of the Americas, the problem of assimilation and the relationship with ethnic and religious minorities, and the reform of Christian society.

I do not share Márquez’s opinion that the *alumbrado* movement was a dense philosophical system that drew on Neoplatonism, as opposed to the result of conflicts and problems intrinsic to Spanish society. Nor am I convinced that one can place such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon within a rigidly doctrinal frame, considering its constant flux and inspiration from different stimuli and modes of thought. It is more important to explore the realities of how the *alumbrado* doctrine was communicated and spread. The view of *alumbradismo* as a heresy that was born and died inside closed, isolated circles is too one-sided.⁴⁵

The story of Isabel de la Cruz’s life reveals that her search was much broader than for mere personal salvation. Her rebellion against her family as the “black sheep” who left her parents’ house, her criticism and later rejection of the rules of the Franciscan circle around Alcaraz and Bedoya in Guadalajara, and her creation of parallel *conventículos* in Pastrana and Cifuentes (in an area that expanded under the influence of Guadalajara) are stages in a wholehearted mission. Her fame reached Toledo and Alcalá, from the Mendozas’ ducal court to the placid towns of the Alcarria region, into the heart of Spanish religious and political life and into one of the liveliest and most innovative universities in Europe.

Isabel gladly assumed her role of teacher, seeking out humanists and university professors while guiding and instructing novices herself. The new doctrine of *dejamiento*, abandonment of the self, began to spread around 1512, the year in which Isabel and Alcaraz probably began preaching. Through Alcaraz’s lay sermons, it passed from Guadalajara to Escalona (where the Marquis of Villena had his castle), reached the Franciscans of several Observant monasteries, and seeped silently into the groups of women who clustered around Isabel – young ladies to whom she taught not only embroidery but new forms of prayer. Through Isabel’s meetings with the Cazallas, the doctrine developed in a variety of ways.

In the course of his trial, Alcaraz explained to the Inquisitors that he carried a “fire in his bosom” that he could not hide – a Biblical expression

45 Recently, in her “Assembling alumbradism,” Jessica Fowler has suggested that we treat *alumbradismo* as a global phenomenon. I fear that the only way to do so would be to replicate the categories devised by inquisitors, lumping together diverse religious and spiritual experiences. My approach goes in the opposite direction.

(Proverbs 6:27) that perfectly summed up his desire to proselytize.⁴⁶ Residents of the Alcarria region and Guadalajara took *alumbrado* as a synonym for a fervently devoted person. In both Pastrana and Guadalajara, *alumbrados* were readily recognized by their dress, language, and gestures; the epidemic was so visible that the Inquisitors had to react more quickly and severely than ever before. That, at least, is what one assumes from the careful manner in which Manrique gathered information and called a Franciscan provincial Council to discuss the matter, and above all from Charles V’s decision to form a committee (*junta*) of theologians to analyze and seek solutions for *alumbradismo*. By then it was seen as a mass movement that ranked in importance with the conversion of the *moriscos* of Valencia and Granada.⁴⁷

Those “great servants of God” Francisco Ortiz, Juan de Cazalla, Alcaraz, and Isabel de la Cruz were asked to preach in Pastrana “through the intercession of the town officials.”⁴⁸ The *bachiller* Medrano told his Inquisitors that his *alumbrado* vocation was born when he heard a sermon by Juan de Cazalla, whom Bishop Alonso del Castillo of Calahorra had invited to preach in his diocese in 1526.⁴⁹ On holidays, groups often formed in the evening to read the Bible, especially the Epistles of Paul, in Spanish, and to hear commentaries by leaders such as Isabel de la Cruz and María de Cazalla.

In his written defense before the Inquisition, Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz described the atmosphere of those meetings and singled out Juan de Cazalla’s fervent homilies as the real cause of the *alumbrado* contagion:

The bishop would say in his sermons that he professed the light that was given to the blessed Saint Paul, and that all people could be illuminated (*alumbrados*); thus he persisted in his fervor and his hearers in their admiration. On most days he had two sermons, in the evening and the morning, the evening one taking the form of a lesson. People began to hold meetings and those who gathered for that purpose were called *alumbrados*, causing scandal; and later the bishop began another practice, reading in his own home from Holy Scripture in Greek.⁵⁰

46 Cited in Selke, *Algunos aspectos*, 127.

47 See the analysis by Avilés Fernández, *El santo oficio*, 462ff. See also below for more on the committee created to address the matter of the Valencian Moriscos.

48 Selke, “Vida y muerte,” 141; the quotation is from Francisco Ortiz. Ms. of the Halle University Library fol. 42r.

49 Fernández, “Iñigo de Loyola,” 599 and 616–7; Pérez Escobedo, *Antonio de Medrano*, 528.

50 “Y el obispo diciendo en sus sermones quel declarava la lumbre que fue dada al bienaventurado Sant Pablo, y que todos podian ser alumbrados, continuando en aquello su cobdiçia y los oydores en aquellas admiraciones, aviendo dos sermones suyos, a la tarde y a la mañana los mas días, siendo los de la tarde a manera de leçon, començo de aver juntas,

But the individual's inward spiritual renewal was not the only object of Cazalla's preaching. Alcaraz accused him directly of spreading the "bad seed" through criticisms that proposed a reform of the institutional Church: "I heard him say sometimes in his sermons that the Church was more burdened with strictures and excommunications than ever, and that it cared more for these things than for the salvation of souls."⁵¹ For Cazalla, Erasmus's critique—that the Church was weighed down by useless practices and deployed spiritual weapons to stifle the freedom of the faithful—joined old ideas from Fray Melchor and López de Soria. These were the same ideas to which Juan de Lucena had alluded in his treatise against the Inquisition and the improper use of excommunication. Like them, Cazalla had called for urgent reform of the Church. This was not surprising, since this former chaplain of Cisneros and strong admirer of Fray Melchor would hardly have abandoned his hopes for ecclesiastical renewal.⁵²

The enthusiasm created around Isabel de la Cruz and María de Cazalla spread in private homes known as houses of *recogimiento*, such as the one endowed by Brianda de Mendoza. She was a daughter of the second Duke of Infantado and a follower of Isabel de la Cruz.⁵³ The house that she founded aimed to receive pious women and maidens, and María de Cazalla planned to place her own daughter there, refusing to consign her to the "whoredom" that the regared nunneries to be.⁵⁴ In the house's rule Brianda chose not to include "very strict or severe prescriptions," believing that "the service of Our Lord Jesus Christ is improved not so much by great strictness or mortification of

y aquellos que se juntavan asy por aquello, llamarlos alumbrados, y asy aver escandalo; y después el obispo tomó otro modo de leer en griego en su casa la santa Escritura": Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz," 16.

- 51 "[Y] así le oy algunas vezes en sus sermones desir que la Yglesia estava mas cargada de mandamientos y de descomuniones y otras cosas que nunca, y que mas cuidado se habia en esto que en la salvación de las animas": Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz," 14.
- 52 The edict against the *alumbrados* cited, among others, their claim that "the end of the world will come twelve years from now." The proposition seems to originate in Fray Melchor's prophecies and reveals a prophetic-eschatological vein within the *alumbrado* movement. Ortega Costa attributes this proposition, number 46 in the edict, to Olmillos or Ocaña, or perhaps to Txeda. Márquez analyzed it in detail because it broke the framework that he had constructed; faced with its possible attribution to Cazalla he first denied any influence by Fray Melchor in Castile – a highly improbable circumstance – and then left Juan de Cazalla out of his "system" of *alumbrados*. See Ortega Costa, "Las proposiciones" p. 35, and Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 205–207.
- 53 Layna Serrano, *Historia de Guadalajara*, 3: 42–5. On the charter that Brianda granted to her foundation, which was meant to house twenty pious women (*beatas*) and ten maidens (*doncellas*), see Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 308 and 338–339.
- 54 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 171. Her intention is recorded among the written accusations against María de Cazalla.

the body as by practice of the inward virtues." But she insisted that the Gospels and other "good books" be read in Spanish, even to those who could not read themselves.⁵⁵

Such public readings seem to have been fairly common, at least judging from the testimony of another noblewoman of the Mendoza household who testified in favor of María de Cazalla during her trial. The noblewoman declared that in spiritual circles, not only in Guadalajara but elsewhere, too, it was "well known that literate women read from Lives of the saints and the Gospels to others who are unable to read."⁵⁶ This was an important argument for the defense given that the accusations against María stressed the performance of these readings as much as her own preaching the Gospels and Paul's *Epistles* to other women. Many witnesses at her trial recalled the sermon she had given to at least twenty women on the passage *Quoniam Abraham duos filios habuit, unum de ancilla et unum de libera* from the *Epistle to the Galatians* (4:22). This text bore special significance for *alumbrado* spirituality.⁵⁷ One of María's paramount concerns was to find appropriate reading matter for girls who were ignorant of Latin, so she arranged the translation of some of Erasmus's *Colloquia* for the use of the Countess of Saldaña, Isabel de Aragón, and the group of women that she herself led.⁵⁸ She also recommended, even to her own daughters, Valdés's *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* as the best work for one's spiritual initiation.

The preacher Juan López de Celaín is another figure who was nourished at the court of the Duke of Infantado.⁵⁹ We know very little about his life. Some of his contemporaries referred to him as "evasive." Inquisitorial records speak of him as a man who "was programmed to make mistakes" ("aparejado para herrar").⁶⁰ Nonetheless, his charisma and powers of persuasion brought him to the verge of carrying out an *alumbrado* "mission" to the lands of the Admiral of Castile, Fadrique Enríquez.

55 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 308.

56 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 327. On public readings of the Gospels by pious women, see also remarks by McKendrick and MacKay, "Visionaries and Affective Spirituality," 100-1.

57 The incident took place at the home of a woman called "La Cereçeda." Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 250-4.

58 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 80 and 94 n. 46, where it is suggested that the translator of the *Colloquia* may have been Isabel de Vergara, the sister of Juan de Vergara and stepsister of Bernardino de Tovar.

59 In 1523 he was in the service of Alonso del Castillo, chaplain to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Duke of Infantado: Selke, "Vida y muerte," 139.

60 This is how the Toledan priest Luis de Beteta described him: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 139.

Born in Guipúzcoa in 1488, López de Celaín was a Basque (*vizcaíno*, “Biscayan”), a status that in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain was a near synonym with being an “Old Christian.” Indeed, extant documents never once describe him as a *converso*. This suggests that he may have been the sole Old Christian among those accused of *alumbradismo*. The only other exception was Rodrigo de Bivar, with whom Celaín spent his early years (from 1523 onward) at the Mendoza court in Guadalajara. Many who were later accused of being *alumbrados* also had connections there. Isabel and Alcaraz were at the court before moving to the Marquis of Villena’s palace, as were María and Juan de Cazalla, Pedro de Rueda, and Bivar, the duke’s minstrel.⁶¹ Celaín maintained excellent relations with Villena through Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz and especially Antonio de Baeza, governor of the fortress of Escalona and translator of Gerson’s *De probatione spirituum*.⁶² It may even have been Baeza who put him in touch with the Admiral of Castile, brother-in-law of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who would ultimately confide in the *vizcaíno* “to ease his conscience.” This encounter was beneficial to both men, and Fadrique Enríquez invited Celaín to move into his palace.

Fadrique, who may have been Jewish on his mother’s side, was first cousin to Ferdinand of Aragon. The Castilian chroniclers, particularly Pulgar, describe him as a difficult and stubborn man, so proud that he clashed with Queen Isabella, who exiled him to Sicily.⁶³ His later career unfolded conventionally but not brilliantly, at least until the revolt of the *Comunidades*. After that, he achieved prominence and was named governor of the kingdom, a post he shared with his cousin Íñigo de Velasco, the constable of Castile, and with Adrian of Utrecht. Though he was a favorite target of satirical rhymes in the *Cancioneros*, he was strongly drawn to musical and literary composition, usually with unfortunate results.⁶⁴ In the years under discussion he was deservedly famous as a patron of music and literature, but there was more: his personal

61 But other members of the court were also implicated in Inquisition trials, e.g., Vega, Espinosa, and Campuzano: Selke, “Vida y muerte,” 140; Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 126.

62 López de Celaín himself, in his confession during Medrano’s trial, recalled his intimate friendship with Baeza and Baeza’s sister Juana: Pérez Escohotado, *Antonio de Medrano*, 14; Selke, “Vida y muerte,” 142.

63 See the full and detailed biography of the Admiral in Avalle Arce, *Cancionero del Almirante*, 13–269, and on this particular episode 30–64; also Macpherson, “The Admiral of Castile,” 97.

64 Antonio de Velasco’s portrait of him is not flattering: “He sounds more like a cat/ the higher the note he sings;/ from the waist up he is a male monkey/ and from the waist down a female one./He has sideburns like a billy-goat/ and legs like a swallow,/Something of a rabbit/ and much of a dove”: Macpherson, “The Admiral of Castile,” 95. On his protection of the poet Juan Boscán and the composer Gabriel de Mena, see Macpherson, “The Admiral of Castile,” 102–3.

secretary and confidant was the brother of Francisco Ortiz, the Franciscan arrested in 1530 for having preached against the Inquisition in defense of Francisca Hernández.⁶⁵

The Admiral was a man of restless spirituality in whom the *alumbrados* and other seekers found a safe haven.⁶⁶ He did not seem much concerned when the Inquisition brought a verdict of *infamado* ("defamed, dishonored"). Francisco Ortiz remained his confessor even after his notorious trial, and Isabel de la Cruz frequented his palace after her sentencing in 1529. Nine years later, under interrogation by the Inquisition regarding Luis de Beteta – a priest from Toledo also accused of *alumbradismo* – she acknowledged having seen him five years before in Enríquez's palace, where she had gone "to negotiate with the Admiral."⁶⁷ After the failed reform mission to his lands in Medina de Rioseco, Fadrique Enríquez founded a Franciscan monastery there.

The Franciscan Luis Escobar recorded the Admiral's vaguely *alumbrado* religious feelings in his *Cuatrocientas respuestas*, published after the latter's death. This summarized the dialogues that the two had maintained for decades. Years after Enríquez's death, Escobar edited the questions in verse along with the Admiral's replies. To question number 235, on the best way to attain salvation, the latter responded with a ten-line poem called a *décima*:

There are several opinions
on how we may be saved:
Some say it is prayers,
others that in our hearts
we should surrender wholly to God;
Others give gifts
of alms and charity,
others make sacrifices,
others say it is different exercises
and pious works.⁶⁸

65 On Francisco Ortiz, see Selke, *El Santo Oficio*, appendix V, 385–93, which contains a long letter from him to the Admiral.

66 For a preliminary analysis – which could certainly be deepened and expanded – of *alumbradismo* and its support among the great families of Castile, see Andrés Martín, "Implicaciones señoriales," esp. 18ff.

67 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 158; Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185.

68 "Hay diversas opiniones/ En la forma de salvarnos/ Unos dicen oraciones,/ otros que en los corazones/ a Dios del todo dexarnos;/ otros hacen beneficios/ de limosna y caridad,/ otros hacen sacrificios,/ otros que otros ejercicios/ y obras de piedad." See Avallé Arce's most recent edition of Fadrique Enríquez's poetry, based on Escobar's various editions: *Cancionero del Almirante*, 450–2. On the attribution of the *Cuatrocientas respuestas* to

Escobar's reply focused on how dangerous it could be to "surrender" (*dexarnos*) "if God does not wish to illuminate you by a very special grace."⁶⁹ In the 1530s this was the required response. But the fact that the Admiral wanted to offer his vassals proof of a truly *alumbrado* Christianity suggests that he believed the real way to salvation was, in fact, surrender to God.

López de Celaín arrived in Medina de Rioseco in 1525 or 1526⁷⁰ and immediately gained the sympathy of his patron Enríquez, who called him "such a good man."⁷¹ The two became so close that the preacher was soon able to interest the Admiral in his plan: "the said Juan López put it into the Admiral's head that he should reform all his lands, so that [the people] would live in a good Christian way."⁷² Twelve preachers would be chosen among the best and most inspired in Castile, and through them the landlord, like a new Messiah, would convert his vassals to true Christianity.⁷³ In a letter that Bataillon dated in 1525, Celaín openly invited Enríquez to raise the banner of God and take the lead in reforming the whole Christian world:

Therefore, if Your Lordship should wish to take up the banner of God and carry it forward with whatever grace and strength that same God may give you, I will be the trumpet and the fife, though for my sins I can do it but poorly; and thus all will be called to the banner and Your Lordship can begin the Reformation of true Christendom.⁷⁴

the Franciscan Luis de Escobar, see Gendreau-Massaloux, "Des 'Quincuagenas' aux 'Cuatrocientas respuestas'."

- 69 *Las cuatrocientas respuestas* question 291; cited in Andrés Martín, "Implicaciones señoriales."
- 70 Bataillon prefers 1525, relying on the date of the letter from Celaín that Pey Ordeix cites in his work. But Juan del Castillo, in his long testimony of 1535, refers to the event as occurring eight or nine years earlier, i.e., in 1526 or 1527. Based on Castillo's information I believe it must have taken place in the spring of 1526. For Castillo's confession, which with the aforementioned one by Francisca Hernández is one of our chief sources, Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 101–3.
- 71 For Castillo's confession, which with the aforementioned one by Francisca Hernández is one of our chief sources, Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 101.
- 72 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 101.
- 73 On the mission to Medina de Rioseco, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 183–4; Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 27: 120; Longhurst, "The Alumbrados of Toledo," 237–9; Selke, "Vida y muerte," 143–50.
- 74 "Por esto si Vuestra Señoría quisiera tomar la vandera de Dios y con ella seguir con la gracia y fuerzas que ese mismo Dios le diere, seré yo el trompeta y el pyfaro, y aunque por mi maldad arto astroso: y asi todos los llamados acudirán a la vandera, y desta manera podrá Vuestra Señoría ser principio de la Reformación de la verdadera cristiandad": Pey Ordeix, *El padre Mir e Ignacio de Loyola*, 195.

Celaín, as the Admiral of Castile's trumpet and fife, assumed the role of awakening the world to the true faith and gathering a new army under God's standard. S. Pey Ordeix, in a visionary but justifiable claim, saw traces of Celaín in Ignatius of Loyola: he argued that the connection between the elusive and evanescent *alumbrado* heresy and Ignatius's solemn meditation on banners could be found in Celaín's exalted, militant religiosity.⁷⁵ In any case, the messianic tone that Celaín adopted in drawing Enríquez toward a true reform of Christendom is alien to the non-cosmic, ahistorical *alumbrado* movement that Márquez defended, devoid as it was of eschatological or prophetic content. In demanding radical and far-reaching change, Celaín appears as the champion of *alumbrado* militancy; the trumpet that would rally the Christians reminds us of the Last Judgment and the imminent End of Days. He was the figure of whom the Franciscans preached in the New World, the one who was expected "twelve years from now," according to a declaration included in the Inquisitorial edict of 1525. Celaín and his longed-for mission added to the heady spirit in Castile, which looked to its overseas empire with the idea that the End Times were at hand.

The choice of twelve "apostles" for Medina de Rioseco was more than a flattering analogy to convince the Admiral of Castile, for it echoed a more promising endeavor. In October 1523, based on a request from Hernán Cortés in Mexico and the urging of the emperor himself, the Franciscan general Quiñones sent twelve friars to the New World. There were exactly twelve because "*hic fuit numerus discipulorum Christi pro mundi conversione*" and because their proselytizing among the newly discovered peoples would be as successful and splendid as that of the first Apostles. Quiñones wrote that the eleventh hour had already come, the last one that would be lived by the toilers called to labor in the vineyard of the Lord.⁷⁶

The departure of the Franciscan missionaries, most of them from the Reformed province of San Gabriel in Extremadura,⁷⁷ was an epochal event. The emperor and the pope, who had issued a bull approving their mission, trembled with emotion with all of Spain as they followed the apostles'

75 Pey Ordeix was a learned former priest turned Modernist and ferociously anti-clerical journalist, see Botti, *España y la crisis modernista*, 174–95.

76 On Quiñones's discourse and the apocalyptic implications of the discovery of America, see Prospero, *America e Apocalisse*, 32–3.

77 They were Reformed Observants of the province of San Gabriel in Extremadura whom even other Franciscan Observants persued for their radicalism; see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 9 and 819. On the "twelve apostles" and the first attempts at evangelization in Mexico, see, at a minimum, Sarraute, "La vie franciscaine," and Ricard, *La conquista espiritual de México*, 83ff.

departure and received the first letters describing the success of their preaching. Scarcely a year had passed since their famous expedition and, in speaking with Fadrique Enríquez about “twelve apostles,” Celaín was already playing skillfully on the hopes that the great event had aroused.

There was no doubt about the name of Celaín’s personal mission of *alumbradismo*. In Toledo, in Alcalá, and in all the subsequent Inquisition trials, it was called the mission “of the twelve” or “of the Admiral’s apostles,” in suggestive reference to the famous twelve Franciscans in Mexico; the name also deliberately called attention to its prophetic nature. The *alumbrados* close to the Admiral of Castile chose the same parable from Matthew that Quiñones had cited, adapting it to other encouraging examples of good news.⁷⁸ Juan López de Celaín was convinced that the role of his own twelve apostles, called to awaken true Christianity in Medina de Rioseco, was at least as important as that of their Franciscan forerunners. He eagerly awaited the pope’s issuance of a bull that would confirm the importance of their mission, as had happened with Fray Martín de Valencia and his companions.

The Admiral wrote to Celaín promising to give the effort both moral and economic support. He donated a building near the center of his lands to house the apostles, and granted each of them an annual salary of twenty thousand *maravedís*; then Celaín set out to recruit them from Toledo and Alcalá. He roamed over Enríquez’s lands on a mule given to him, along with money for expenses, by Diego del Castillo.⁷⁹ Diego del Castillo, a merchant from Burgos, was one of his first converts and later accompanied him to Granada with Diego López de Husillos. Celaín also enjoyed the full backing of Juan del Castillo, Diego’s cousin and a professor of Greek at the college of Santa Catalina in Toledo. Juan in turn attracted students such as Luis de Beteta and Pedro Ortiz, as well as his colleagues Gutierre Ortiz and Alejo de Venegas, a well-known humanist. But Bernardino de Tovar, to whom Celaín had hoped to entrust the mission’s organization, seemed wholly indifferent to it, at least at first; perhaps, as his good friend Juan del Castillo would say nine years later, “he considered Juan López a man of poor judgment.”⁸⁰

78 See below for the commentary that Petronila de Lucena made on the same Gospel passage during her Inquisition trial.

79 See Francisca Hernández’s testimony in Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 93.

80 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 102. Nonetheless, Francisca Hernández’s testimony takes a very different view of Tovar’s supposed indifference. According to her, everyone wanted Tovar to take charge of the enterprise and Tovar himself would not have rejected the offer. All involved had encouraged each other with the saying “You are God and God is you,” which is proposition no. 4 of the edict: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 89.

Celaín met some initial difficulties at the University of Alcalá, where Tovar held sway over the *alumbrados*. Only Juan del Castillo went with him on his first trip to Medina de Rioseco, but rumors about the mission of “the twelve” continued to spread through Alcalá and Toledo. Luis de Beteta later told the Inquisitors that in his decision to join the effort the most influential factor – beside the fact that “many people” were talking about it – was the decision of Celaín and the Admiral “to include persons prominent in letters and in their exemplary lives, preachers and clerics and friars.”⁸¹ A later adherent was Gaspar de Villafaña, an *alumbrado* priest from Toledo fully convinced that “the light was beginning to dawn”⁸² and that perhaps this mission was taking place at the best moment to enlighten the world. Little by little others joined: Miguel de Eguía,⁸³ owner of the most important printing press in Alcalá; Pero Hernández, a canon of Palencia and brother to the archdeacon of Alcor;⁸⁴ and Tomás de Guzmán, perhaps the most eagerly awaited apostle after Tovar. This famous Dominican from the Mendoza family gave the enterprise an undeniable luster. Beteta would recall under interrogation that his strongest incentive to go to Medina de Rioseco, aside from the twenty thousand *maravedís*, was the chance to meet illustrious figures such as Fray Tomás de Guzmán. In a clever boost to his defense, Beteta argued that Guzmán’s presence was the strongest guarantee of the expedition’s virtue and orthodoxy.⁸⁵

81 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 115.

82 Francisca Hernández gave her testimony during the trial of Luis de Beteta, see Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 84: “[S]he said that she had spoken to Villafaña only once, when she took him a letter from Bernardino de Tovar who had commended him to her as a fine person and man of great merit. On that occasion he told her that he never said the liturgical prayers, and she learned from him that he was a heretic because he said that the light was beginning to dawn, giving her to understand that he was awaiting it, and awaiting our Redeemer who had not yet come. And this witness was told by Doña Mencía of Baeza and her sister Doña Juana that the said Villafaña was not a Christian ...”

83 On Eguía, see Goñi Gaztambide, “El impresor Miguel de Eguía.” The printer had left everything behind to join the twelve apostles. Hernández testified that he was then directing the El Prado printing business, one of the oldest in Spain, founded by Hernando de Talavera and connected to the Hieronymites, and that “he left it all to one of his servants without telling him where he was going; and while he was away many people were asking for him, and many asked this witness [Hernández].” Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 85.

84 Pero Hernández was the younger brother of Archdeacon Alonso Fernández de Madrid of El Alcor, the man who translated the *Enchiridion* and wrote one of the most brilliant biographies of Talavera: see Arroyo, *Alonso Fernández de Madrid*, 60–8. After word came out about the scandalous *alumbrado* mission to Medina de Rioseco Pero Hernández fled to Rome to obtain “a dispensation for having heard certain sermons by Juan López, who was burned in Granada”: Arroyo, *Alonso Fernández de Madrid*, 121–2 and 290.

85 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 115. Beteta had described himself to the Inquisitors as a “poor priest” who “would have nothing to eat if I did not seek it out.”

Guzmán, who had preached since 1516 at the college of San Gregorio in Valladolid, had been one of Juan Hurtado de Mendoza's most enthusiastic companions and one of the strongest defenders of the radical reform carried out by the Dominican order. He was taught by Dominicans strongly influenced by Savonarola, and Juan del Castillo remembered him as a "very fine (*muy gentil*) preacher."⁸⁶ This coded language suggests *alumbrado* leanings. After the failure of the Medina de Rioseco mission, he moved to Ocaña where, supported by the Marquis of Villena, he founded a new Dominican institution based on absolute poverty: for a long time the friars lived in caves in conditions of bare subsistence. He came to be known as an outstanding theologian and was appointed provincial of his order.⁸⁷ We cannot be sure whether the Admiral's Franciscan confessor Francisco Ortiz eventually joined this group of preachers or whether, having learned more about Celaín, he warned his penitent about him; but as months passed and Celaín waited in vain for a papal bull to legitimize his apostles, key members of the mission began to desert him and the Admiral grew increasingly "lukewarm."⁸⁸ In Francisca Hernández's later account, someone suddenly opened his eyes by telling him that it was all "the work of the devil."⁸⁹

It is hard to believe that such an assortment of individuals could have agreed on how to achieve "the reformation of true Christendom" in the Enríquez domains. It is equally difficult to imagine the arrival of a papal bull in support of the mission; it is possible that Celaín was using a pretext to gain the loyalty of the Admiral and other sceptics. But the "house of repose" that had been put at their disposal became, if only for a few months, the meeting place for various original thinkers who were united in their desire to reform the Church and find a way for each individual to experience Christianity. There Guzmán's asceticism and Savonarolism met Venegas's radical Erasmianism, while Pero Hernández's Talaverism encountered different forms of extreme *alumbradismo*. The only tie that bound this disparate group of characters, ideas, and destinies was the search for the most authentic Christianity, one lived intimately without ceremonies or visible rites. They (with the exception of the "Biscayan" Celaín) may also have been united by their *converso* origins and consequent rejection of Old Christians' discrimination and definitions of identity. This feeling was so

86 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 103.

87 Beltrán de Heredia, "Las corrientes de espiritualidad," 541–2.

88 Juan del Castillo gave details in his confession about the waiting period for the bull "*ad apostolen*" from the pope, and about the Admiral's ever-greater coldness toward the project: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 102.

89 The accounts of Francisca Hernández and her "servant" Mari Núñez agree on this point: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 95.

strong that Venegas later wrote, "[M]ay God's infinite mercy save me from ever lying down at night in the blasphemous belief that ancient blood counts for more than the divine virtue granted by holy baptism."⁹⁰

In his *Apología de los linajes* (1556), Domingo de Valtanás recalled how Fray Tomás de Guzmán, a descendant of the Santa María and Mendoza families, spoke clearly and publicly at Court against the purity-of-blood statutes. Valtanás offered the example of Pablo de Burgos "whose grandson was Fray Tomás de Guzmán who, when preaching to the princes of Spain from the pulpit said straight out and unequivocally, 'my lord Don Pablo was of the same opinion.'"⁹¹

The kingdom of Granada and the laboratory of tolerance that Hernando de Talavera created there were the setting for the case of Pero Hernández, brother of the famous Archdeacon of Alcor; Alonso Fernández de Madrid; and the Hieronymite monk Gerónimo de Madrid. The three brothers were of *converso* origin, sons of Pedro González de Madrid, the royal treasurer and a close collaborator of Fray Hernando. They had lived in Granada just after its reconquest and studied in the school that Talavera founded.⁹² Alonso and Gerónimo each wrote a biography of Talavera – perhaps the best ones of all – in which they highlighted his apostolic vocation and missionary zeal, and the problems that his *converso* identity caused for the Inquisition. It is likely, therefore, that the *alumbrado* Pero Hernández brought to his fellow apostles the firsthand experience and direct testimony of one of the clearest pro-*converso* and anti-Inquisitorial efforts of Golden Age Spain. Pero fled to Rome in about 1530 to avoid a probable Inquisition trial and secure a papal dispensation; he then returned to the cathedral chapter at Palencia, led at the time by Alonso Fernández de Madrid and a fourth brother, Francisco de Madrid. By 1541 he was the "familiar" of the new bishop of the diocese, Luis Cabeza de Vaca, a firm Talaveran. With him and with his two canon brothers, he plunged into an ambitious attempt to vindicate Talavera's example of holiness and relaunch the episcopal reform that the first archbishop of Granada had planned.

In the end, very little was achieved in Medina de Rioseco except for long conversations between the apostles and the visionary Juan López de Celaín.

90 "[P]lega a la inmensa misericordia de Dios que nunca permita que yo me acueste una noche con el pensamiento de tanta blasfemia cual es tener en más la antigüedad de la sangre que la virtud divina que se da en el sacro bautismo": Venegas, *Primera parte de las diferencias* 1, III, chap. IX.

91 Valtanás, "Apología de los linajes," 154–5.

92 There are biographical notes in Alonso Fernández de Madrid's biography of Talavera (for which, see above); see also Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 328–9; Arroyo, *Alonso Fernández de Madrid*, 19–35.

It was clear to Francisca Hernández that the twelve sought “to pervert the whole world into accepting their errors” by imbuing the Admiral’s vassals directly with the *alumbrado* heresy:

What they should preach among other things was that there was no purgatory, and they doubted that there was a hell; and that priests should not recite the canonical hours; and that they did not pray during mass, and counseled others not to pray...and that prayer and fasting were superstitions...and that praying aloud was not necessary and that mental prayer was enough because God paid no heed to the vocal kind; and that it was coercion to pray in church; and that they disapproved of the offering; and that it was not necessary to confess one’s wicked thoughts...; and that Luther was a great servant of God and his writings were very holy and good and Catholic, praising him as a good man, especially in what concerned bulls and indulgences, saying that those things were laughable and did no good and that the pope could not grant them, and that they were only made to rob the world; and that God entered the soul of man more fully than in the consecrated host, for the host was just a bit of dough and man was made in His image, and that confession was not a holy duty...and that the love of God in man is God; and that he who loves God is God; and those who weep for their sins are penitents, caring only for themselves, weepers, and that God wanted nothing like that but rather a good will; and that external acts of worship are not to the purpose and not needed.⁹³

This witness claimed that the *alumbrado* apostles greeted each other loudly with the phrase “you are God and God is you.”⁹⁴ It is more probable, however, that they exercised caution and, at least in public, performed their catechizing work more subtly.

The Inquisitors learned of the attempted mission “of the twelve” when it was already too late. López de Celaín was arrested in Granada in December 1528 and sent to the stake in July 1530, but there is no sign that he was ever interrogated about the mission. It was Francisca Hernández’s voluble confession in September 1530 that alerted the authorities, placing those involved into

93 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 122–3, with accusation no. IV drawn up by the prosecutor. It was based entirely on a statement by Francisca Hernández that listed the errors of the *alumbrados*, among them denial of the power of excommunication, ecclesiastical censure, and “the ceremonies that take place in the mass.”

94 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 89.

a painful state of alert. Tovar, to whom Celaín had assigned the role of "captain," was arrested at the same time. At once a feverish search began for Juan del Castillo, the second most important "apostle."

4 "Such an Easy Yoke": Juan del Castillo

Juan del Castillo was born in Toledo at the end of the fifteenth century.⁹⁵ He was the nephew of Juan de Lucena, the prothonotary, son of Juan's brother Carlos de Lucena. In the only trial records that have reached us – those of his sister Petronila – the Inquisitors omitted the formality of a genealogy; they already knew the family because Petronila's brothers Juan and Gaspar had been arrested before her. But the family had been heavily affected by the Inquisition even earlier, and through papers and confiscation documents we know that while the Zaragoza Inquisition was investigating Juan de Lucena and his brother, his mother Catalina Ramírez was convicted post mortem of Judaism and her property seized. In 1510, Carlos requested and obtained its release and then moved to live in Alcalá de Henares with his second wife, María del Castillo. Gaspar de Lucena, his son, had also fallen into the clutches of the Inquisition and his property was seized and put up for auction before 1530.⁹⁶

The Lucenas were a wealthy family of *conversos* who had fairly extensive holdings around Alcalá de Henares. They also had a country house, "La Garena," in which *alumbrado* "apostles" occasionally assembled. The record of Petronila's trial shows us a strongly united family consisting of two brothers, Juan and Gaspar (the latter married to a rich *conversa* named Ana from Alcalá), and two sisters, Petronila and Ramírez. Ramírez was married to an

95 His Inquisition trial records have not survived, but fragments were included in the trials of María de Cazalla and the Toledan priest Luis de Beteta; we also have some information from the trial of Juan de Vergara. Most of what we know about his thought, however, comes from the trial of his sister Petronila de Lucena, in which the only extant testimonies were supplied by Castillo himself and Diego Hernández. We should note that the prosecutor based his accusations against Petronila on the ones he had previously directed against Juan del Castillo. For more about the Castillo-Lucenas, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 180–9; Longhurst, "The Alumbrados of Toledo." For the mission to Medina de Rioseco in the lands of the Admiral of Castile, undertaken together with the *alumbrado* Juan López de Celaín, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 182–5; Selke, "Vida y muerte." Petronila de Lucena's trial records are preserved in AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 11, exp. 14.

96 Diago, "El Protonotario Lucena, 255 n.19. Gaspar de Lucena's trial, like that of his brother Juan, has not been preserved. But we do have a litigation on the purchase of Gaspar's property that was seized by the Inquisition in 1530. So Gaspar's trial took place before 1530 and was for Judaizing.

“unpolished” notary from the town. A cousin on their father’s side, Diego del Castillo, was a well-known book merchant; he did business in Flanders and Burgos and had contacts with the humanist Juan Luis Vives and with Erasmus himself in Louvain. During the 1520s, it was Diego who supplied the latest publications to Juan de Vergara and Tovar in Alcalá, together with many forbidden books that circulated freely among Erasmists and *alumbrados*.⁹⁷ We also know that in 1520–1521, Juan del Castillo was enrolled at the University of Paris⁹⁸ and that two years later, thanks perhaps to Diego’s prominent connections, he moved to Louvain, home to a famous trilingual college.⁹⁹

In 1523, just after Juan returned to Spain, Alonso Manrique – chosen that year as archbishop of Seville and Inquisitor General – made him head of Seville’s doctrinal college. Two years later, in 1525, he accompanied Manrique to Toledo. At his trial in 1538, Luis de Beteta claimed to remember exactly when Castillo had arrived in the city: the image of Manrique and Castillo surrounded by schoolboys they had brought from Seville was engraved on his memory because the occasion was the first time that Charles V and his new Inquisitor General officially visited Toledo.¹⁰⁰

Castillo adapted easily to the cultural and spiritual life of the city. In the year 1525 he was ordained a priest and receive his doctorate in theology, granted

97 *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 15r: “Because Dr. Vergara was absent, this witness was in charge of his booksThis witness wrote to a certain Diego del Castillo in Burgos who had some business in Flanders asking him (because at that time books arrived here only with great difficulty) to send to Flanders, because he knew people there, to have them buy certain books of Catholic scholars”: quoted in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 438–9 and 215. Gilly has shown that Oecolampadius’s commentaries on Isaiah were sent to Tovar and Juan de Valdés from the Vergaras’ library: Gilly, “Juan de Valdés traductor” esp. 110–1. Paz y Meliá notes that the names of Diego and Juan del Castillo appear in the correspondence of Gracián de Alderete, which I have been unable to consult: Paz y Meliá, “Otro erasmista español,” 623.

98 García Villoslada, *La Universidad de París*, 401, though he cannot confirm that the Castillo registered in 1520–1521 is the *alumbrado* Juan del Castillo. But there is solid evidence that the latter was at the university at the time, because in Toledo in 1525 Castillo would be granted a doctorate in Theology by a committee of “Parisians,” Luis Núñez Coronel and Juan de Quintana.

99 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 513 n. 17. The hypothesis was confirmed by Bataillon in his “Addenda et corrigenda,” in *Erasme et l’Espagne*, 2: 71.

100 The imperial court remained in Toledo from 27 April to 27 August of that year. See Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 98 n. 105 and 112–6: “when my Lord Archbishop of Seville, the Inquisitor General, came to this city ... the said Master Castillo came with him; that was when they brought some of the children that Master Castillo taught in Seville, and he came with them.”

by a committee of three: Luis Núñez Coronel, an Erasmist who was secretary to the Inquisitor General;¹⁰¹ a professor from Alcalá named Gonzalo Gil; and Dr. Quintana.¹⁰² In that year he was also named professor of Greek at the college of Santa Catalina, one of the city's most important institutions. Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, head preaching canon of the cathedral, had sought as early as 1485 to raise it to a university/*studium*, years before Cisneros had decided to found his humanist university in nearby Alcalá.

The year 1485, when this institution became a *studium*, coincided with the Inquisition's establishment in Toledo and the opening of a series of vengeful trials against its most prominent *conversos*, including the Álvarez de Toledo family. The college of Santa Catalina, because it represented the cultural hegemony of the *converso* community,¹⁰³ seemed to stand against the attacks by the Holy Office. Francisco was a brother of the royal secretary Fernán Álvarez de Toledo and also of Fray García de Zapata. Zapata was a former prior of the Hieronymite monastery of La Sista; in one of its cleverest falsifications, the Inquisition had made him a symbol of the judaizing menace that supposedly threatened the religious orders.¹⁰⁴ He was an intimate of Pedro González de

101 Luis Núñez Coronel had studied in Paris with John Mair at Montaigu before being called to Charles v's court in Flanders. He had been one of the strongest supporters of Erasmus in Spain. From 1525 until his death in 1531 he served as Manrique's personal secretary: García Villoslada, *La Universidad de París*, and esp. Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 134, 137–138 *et passim*.

102 Beteta confessed to some uncertainty about Quintana's presence: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 113. Quintana was one of the most admired theologians of his day. He was confessor to the emperor and during his years in Ratisbon had tried to approach Melanchthon. He wrote one of the first censures of the *alumbrados*, and Miguel Servet had been a page and secretary in his household. For more on his participation in trials of *alumbrados*, see Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 15–19, and appendix II, 239–40; also Ortega Costa, "Las proposiciones del edicto," 25. On his years in Ratisbon, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 411–3.

103 On its library, see Cátedra, "La biblioteca de la Universidad de Toledo." Márquez Villanueva is correct to insist on the important role that these *converso* foundations played in the cultural history of Spain. He mentions in this connection the college founded by Rodrigo de Santaella in Seville, which formed the original nucleus of the university, and that of Juan de Ávila in Baeza, on which more below. Márquez surmises that there was even a strong *converso* imprint in the college at Sigüenza, founded by Archdeacon Juan López de Medina of Almazán, who together with Francisco Álvarez de Toledo had been vicar of the archdiocese of Toledo while Cardinal Mendoza was archbishop: Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 95–6. See also Pastore, "False Trials."

104 I reconstructed the history of his fabricated trial and the Inquisitorial legend about him in Pastore, "False Trials." See above for his role as representative of the city of Toledo against Ferdinand the Catholic.

Mendoza and one of Cisneros's closest collaborators. He underwent two Inquisition trials, championed the protests of Castilian cities in the Lucero years, and played an essential part in the revolt of the *Comunidades*, especially during the long months of resistance led by María Pacheco and Mendoza in Toledo. He died in 1521 as a “*comunero* and an impenitent,” as Archbishop Silíceo of Toledo would later recall in a document meant to delegitimize the political and cultural regime of the Álvarez de Toledos in the city.¹⁰⁵ For a long time the family was able to choose teachers at the university and direct its cultural politics, helping to create a sort of *converso* cultural enclave in a city riven by the conflict between Old and New Christians. After Francisco's death, leadership of the college was assumed by his nephew Bernardino de Alcaraz, one of the fiercest opponents of the purity-of-blood statute promulgated by Silíceo.¹⁰⁶ Alejo de Venegas, an admired preacher and subtle Erasmist, was a teacher at the college; later, faced with a rising tide in favor of the cathedral's purity-of-blood statutes, he wrote openly against Toledo's discriminatory policies.¹⁰⁷

The college must have been a strong center for the dissemination of *alumbrado* thought. We know that Castillo's introductory classes on Greek grammar and texts were among the best attended and served as a meeting point for many *alumbrados*. Luis de Beteta, who attended them faithfully, recalled that his fellow students included Miguel Ortiz and Master Gutierre Ortiz, who taught at the same institution.¹⁰⁸ A few months later all of them, along with Venegas, were involved in preparations for the *alumbrado* mission to the lands of the Admiral of Castile.

Juan del Castillo found a welcoming atmosphere in Toledo. He must have been in close contact with the Vergaras – Francisco, a colleague from the University of Alcalá who shared his passion for Greek, and Juan. The latter had very cordial relations with the Castillos, although during the Inquisition trial he claimed not to know them. The ties between Toledo and Alcalá rested on

105 Silíceo's memoir is contained in BNM ms. 11207. On Francisco, “the schoolteacher who was called ‘the Lame,’ who was for a long time a prisoner of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and latter died in prison in Valladolid as a *comunero*,” see BNM ms. 11207, fol. 251r. See Pastore, “Nascita e fortuna di una leggenda” esp. 98–99.

106 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones*, 96.

107 See above. On Venegas, see, at a minimum, Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 565–71, and Eisenberg's introduction to Venegas, *Primera parte de las diferencias*, with its accompanying bibliography.

108 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 114; he states that Miguel Ortiz was a follower of Francisca Hernández and one of Juan de Vergara's attorneys during the latter's Inquisition trial: 98–99.

family connections. Petronila, at her Inquisition trial, recalled her bond with Isabel de Vergara, but she ultimately withdrew when Isabel proved incapable of understanding how Petronila's thinking had changed under her brother's careful guidance. When news arrived of Castillo's arrest in Bologna and his transfer to Barcelona, Juan de Vergara wrote from prison to his brother Bernardino de Tovar, informing Tovar how thoroughly he had been compromised by "your conversations with these devils" – and, above all, how deeply implicated was his sister Isabel.¹⁰⁹

It was Bernardino de Tovar who personally opened the gates of the *alumbrado* world to Castillo in 1525. They must have enjoyed an intense friendship and spiritual affinity based on exchanging books, ideas, and plans; they also shared an almost visionary mysticism. Castillo spoke openly of Tovar before the Inquisitor General as he tried to describe his religious and spiritual education. It was Tovar, he claimed, who had gained him access to the rich humanist library of his stepbrother Juan de Vergara and introduced him very early into Castilian circles of *alumbrados*. Through Tovar, Castillo had come into contact with the Cazallas and Francisca Hernández, although his relations with the latter were sporadic.¹¹⁰ His meeting with María de Cazalla, however, was decisive, and he thought of it as his true moment of transformation:

At that time, just before Holy Week when classes were to be suspended, Tovar suggested that I go for a week or two to rest in Guadalajara, where I would see many servants of God and be consoled by them, and I did so. There I met Bishop Cazalla and his sister and Isabel de la Cruz and Bedoya and Vega and a minstrel of the duke's whose name I do not know, and they told me things that I cannot describe; they advised me not to be so desirous in matters of God but to let God act, for He knew what was right for us. And that I should weep for myself and seek consolation only in the cross of Jesus. So a week after Easter I returned to Alcalá with an anger I could barely control, scorning Tovar and all the rest who seemed to me to have no spirit, to be ignorant of the truth, and to live heedlessly.

109 *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 118v: "Item velit scire if these conversations were *aliquando coram sorore* [Isabel de Vergara] and if she took part in them": cited in Ortega Costa, *El proceso de la Inquisición*, 517.

110 Francisca Hernández herself, whose testimonies provided most of the charges against *alumbradismo* during these years, could allege nothing against Castillo. She mentions him only among the "disciples" of Tovar who had been sent to her from Alcalá, recalling also that she had had only one brief encounter with him just after the failed mission to Medina de Rioseco: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 80 and 84.

I began to live austere and avoid conversation where before I had conversed easily and pleasantly, and to read the Scriptures according to what they had taught me there: that I should take whatever God gave me and not seek anything more.¹¹¹

Castillo wrote this when he had full faith in his protector Alonso Manrique and believed that he could control the direction of his own trial. Though only a fragment, it suggests all that we could have learned about *alumbradismo* from the reams of confessions that Castillo's trial produced. His analysis shows his need to untangle the intricate net in which he was caught; or perhaps it was a less innocent attempt to present doctrines such as *servo arbitrio*, which had grown more dangerous over the years, as forms of Franciscan and *alumbrado* spirituality.

In any event, his meeting with María de Cazalla had affected him deeply. It led him to withdraw from his almost symbiotic relationship with Bernardino de Tovar and submit to examination a faith that had seemed unshakable. His mutual understanding with María was profound and intense. Diego Hernández remembered how they argued passionately about texts from the Gospels and laughed about the "anathemas" that the pope would have pronounced on them. Castillo found in Guadalajara not only a rarefied, cultured atmosphere of Bible readings in Greek like the ones Juan de Cazalla had organized, but also a state of exalted and emotional piety. That less intellectual milieu, which sought to spread *alumbrado* spirituality through long sermons by Juan de Cazalla and María, seemed to resonate with Castillo's early vocation as a catechist.¹¹²

During his stay, Juan del Castillo must have attended the (almost royal) court of the Duke of Infantado. Diego Hernández who remarked how Castillo had told him that the duke himself "was concerned with general salvation." Aside from this scarcely credible claim, it is significant that the Castillos kept close ties with the Mendozas of Guadalajara. In 1531 Maldonada, the duke's second wife, wanted to summon Petronila de Lucena for comfort in her final days.¹¹³ By then Juan del Castillo was far away as a fugitive in Europe, but Petronila, whom

111 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 397. The text is the written confession that Castillo presented to the Inquisitor General Manrique (see below) and that would appear later in María de Cazalla's trial.

112 See Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 179.

113 On "la Maldonada" and her controversial role at the ducal court, see Layna Serrano, *Historia de Guadalajara*, 3: 117–24. On the circles of women in the Mendozas' orbit, see Giordano, *Apologetas de la fe*, 208–14.

Juan had often held up as a model of intelligence and sensitivity, seemed to unite her gifts as a miracle worker with her brother's spiritual virtues.

Between his lives in Toledo and Guadalajara, Castillo stopped teaching children and became a teacher of spiritual seekers. He developed a personal theory that combined his humanist education, an intense spirituality, and an optimistic sense of the divine presence in the world. Everything indicates that he soon recovered from the rupture caused by his meetings with the group in Guadalajara; he adopted original, independent positions that he shortly began to disseminate through spiritual letters and discreet preaching. The New Testament promised freedom, in the most revolutionary sense, to all men without exception. Castillo believed that a real understanding of Christ's presence would lead anyone who accepted the good news without reserve to free himself from the "bonds" and "petty fears" that, according to María de Cazalla, kept Christians from the true doctrine of the Gospels.¹¹⁴

Five letters express Juan del Castillo's *alumbrado* doctrine. Sent from Valladolid and Medina de Rioseco, they were addressed to Petronila and eventually handed over to the Inquisitors by Diego Hernández, who was so conscious of their significance that he reread their transcriptions several times to correct errors in the Latin before presenting them. He explained to the tribunal that he had copied them in "La Garena," the Lucena family's country house, in June 1528;¹¹⁵ he had worked hard to transfer them to several small notebooks, then sent one to María de Cazalla and another to the abbess of the convent of Clares in Guadalajara, of which he was the chaplain.¹¹⁶ He kept a copy for himself

114 See, e.g., Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 77.

115 During her trial Petronila tried to say as little as possible about the content of the letters. She explained that her brother had written them after his ordination, and insisted that he had not publicized them but had made them available to anyone who wished to read and copy them: "[S]he said that when Master Juan del Castillo was here in this city of Toledo after being ordained to say mass he wrote some letters to this witness, and she does not remember if he wrote them from Valladolid but it may be that he did, and that he has not written to her for four years Asked if she had all the letters that her brother had written her she said that there may be some other letter in the witness's house but that she knows nothing now of those letters or where they are; asked if she had shown anyone the letters that her brother used to write to her from Alcalá or elsewhere, she replied that she showed them to the people who used to copy them and wished to read them": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14.

116 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, fol. 4r: "I copied them in my own hand and I have them all on a sheet of paper so as to make use of them *mutatis mutandis* ... and I sent them from Santarem, one to María de Cazalla and another to the abbess of Santa Clara."

to reread at leisure and experience that “tranquil and joyous feeling” which, according to those who had heard Castillo, his words always inspired.¹¹⁷

On surrendering the letters, Hernández warned the Inquisitors not to jump to conclusions after a single reading; they should study and analyze them attentively to understand their true import. Most of them had a double meaning, especially “those that did not come from a reliable messenger”:¹¹⁸

These letters I present should be looked at – for the love of God – very carefully, for they are coded and have a double meaning; they conceal great evil, like the rhetorical syllogisms of Erasmus, for he is a great Sophist who appears to be a Christian but is not; for he undoes what the Church, the bride of Christ ruled by the Holy Spirit, ordains.¹¹⁹

Raising the specter of Erasmus prepared the Inquisitors to read between the lines, to draw out the hidden meaning of the words and discover the aberrant doctrine within. In any case Diego Hernández had preserved the letters well, keeping them together with “some reminiscences” of Tovar’s and a “loving” letter from Francisca Hernández,¹²⁰ all trivial in comparison with Castillo’s deceptive words.¹²¹ While he claimed to have destroyed them as soon as he

117 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 5v.

118 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 5r.

119 “Estas cartas que presento mirensen por amor de Dios mucho que son muy çifradas y tienen muy doblado sentido y encubren harto mal como las retoricadas silogismas de Herasmo es muy sofista aparentes et non existentes cristianus [*sic*] pues dehaze lo que la Yglesia esposa de Iesu Christo y regida por el espiritu santo ordena”: AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 5r.

120 “[A]lso, with those five letters of his she gave me another from Francisca Fernández, I do not know for whom because it contained nothing of note except that it was a very loving letter; and the closing and end of this letter said ‘May our Lord preserve us all and He will have mercy on all His blessed ones,’ and the line above the signature said ‘May our great Lord God give you everything that your soul desires and more, Francisca Fernández.’ I remember nothing more about this letter and I think that I was asked to transcribe it like the other five”: AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 5v.

121 “[A]nd I tore up all these letters in Guadalajara the day I learned that they had arrested the *bachiller* Bernardino de Tovar, thinking only of the fact that I had confessed to him ... so that, because I had these letters of Master Castillo and some reminiscences of Tovar your worships should not claim that they came from them and ... I tore them all up” (“y todas estas cartas rompí en Guadalajara el día que supe que predieron al *bachiller* Bernardino de Tovar que yo no pense sino porque me avía confesado con el...para que porque de las cartas que yo deste maestro Castillo y de unas memorias de Tovar que tenia no me arguyesen vuestras merçedes que heran dellos y...ellas ronpilas todas”): AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 5r.

heard of Tovar’s arrest, he obviously managed to locate the copy that he used in his denunciation.

Certain phrases and expressions are repeated in Castillo’s five letters. The first and last open with almost identical words, “May the Holy Spirit be with you, lady, in a new way,”¹²² and with the prediction of finding “renewed strength” to encounter God.¹²³ There is constant reiteration of absolute newness and radical change, with almost obsessive insistence on the “new ways” and “new forces” that will lead to the discovery of “ineffable sweetness” and the “enormous peace that overwhelms every other feeling”:

May the Holy Spirit be with you, lady, in a new way, so that ever in the sacrifice of praise and the purity of our souls we may offer ourselves continually to our blessed Father so that He, with ineffable sweetness and the enormous peace that overwhelms every other feeling, may send us his only begotten Son Jesus Christ to dwell in our souls forever.¹²⁴

Laying great emphasis on the role of Jesus as mediator – an emphasis that he seemed to find also in the lessons of Juan and María de Cazalla¹²⁵ – Castillo invited his reader to discover Christ’s new teachings and pursue the new religion under “such an easy yoke” as to reach that peace “that passeth all understanding (*quae superat omnem sensum*).”¹²⁶ In this Pauline language he was encouraging a race to find a path toward God, a radiance that implied a return

122 “May the Holy Spirit be with you and give you a new way of feeling *quam suavis est dominus diligentibus* [Hernández had the Inquisitors correct this phrase, which had been written as *delinquentibus*] *eum*, for it is a very great thing that He often promises us, that if we love him He will enter us and dwell in our hearts” (“El espíritu santo sea con vos y os de nueva manera de sentir *quam suavis est dominus diligentibus eum* que muy grand cosa es lo que muchas vezes nos promete que si le amaremos verna en nosotros y morara en nuestros coraçones”): AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, letter no. 5.

123 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, letter no. 1.

124 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, letter no. 1: “El espíritu santo sea con vos señora de nueva manera para que siempre en sacrificio de alavança y en linpieça de nuestras animas nos ofrezcamos siempre a nuestro bendito padre para que el con suavidad inexplicable y con soberana paz que sobrepuja a todo sentido nos envíe su unigenito hijo Iesu Christo para que more en nuestras animas siempre.”

125 His declaration reproduced in Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 397. Neither Castillo’s own thinking nor this latest avowal matches the classic description of *alumbradismo* as a doctrine based on acute theocentrism; see Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 150–152 and 256; Selke, “El iluminismo de los conversos,” 635.

126 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, letter no. 2: “let us walk with this so easy yoke, and let us run with great speed through its religion until we reach that peace of God that *superat omnem sensum*.”

into oneself, “*ab intus*,” to discover that “our soul is a home and a temple where God would like to dwell forever, at each moment in a new way.”¹²⁷

This was an invitation to give oneself up entirely to Christ, to erase one’s own will and have faith only in God’s “so that, making an end to our works which are those of death, He may work in us those of eternal life.” Before the Inquisitors, Hernández explicitly pointed out this passage about human works as “works of death,” telling them that in the copies he had shared he had deliberately omitted it. It was a lesson of love, security, and ardor that could be learned by anyone who truly understood and accepted the promises of the New Law. This was the revolutionary face of Castillo’s project: his conviction that the “life of the angels” that Saint Paul had experienced in his ascent to paradise could be lived by any soul that relinquished its will and its “works of death” and brought Jesus to live in their place.¹²⁸

In his *Brevecito modo para venir en alguna manera en conocimiento de Dios* (“Brief method to arrive somehow at knowledge of God”), a few pages added to his *Lumbre del alma* (“Light of the soul”) of 1528, Juan de Cazalla had explored the different ways in which a soul could reach God. He named eleven different degrees of meditation—“solitary, private, intuitive, clean, high, clear, certain, inventive, infused, persevering, guiding.” These culminated in the highest degree, the one Cazalla called “joyful” (*alegre*) “because the soul feels within itself the presence of God.” Three heavens would still separate the soul from perfect contemplation of God, Who had reserved two of them for Moses and Saint Paul, but such contemplation, though rare, was denied to no one. “And if you should ask for it you also will see it,” Cazalla concluded, proving once again that all persons could be *alumbrados*, illuminated by the same light that Saint Paul had received.¹²⁹ In just two pages Bishop Cazalla had collected, summarized, and adapted to the needs of his followers the complex hierarchies of medieval mysticism,¹³⁰ in notes that were read and discussed during his meetings with *alumbrados*. And it was just that “joyful” meditation, later stigmatized by Melchor Cano, that suffused the mysticism of Juan del Castillo,

127 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, letter no. 2.

128 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, letter no. 4: “Life of [the] angels’ as the Apostle Saint Paul says of himself, finding himself filled with this eternal life and perfect joy. ‘Nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me’ [Galatians 2:20].” Many religious tracts about Saint Paul’s ascent to paradise circulated at the time, claiming that men could likewise reach perfection; see the anonymous example published in Seville in 1494, reprinted in Valencia in 1495 and (significantly) in Toledo in 1525. See *La revelación de San Pablo*.

129 Cazalla, “Brevecito modo para venir en alguna manera en conocimiento de Dios,” appendix to his *Lumbre del alma*, 170.

130 Martínez de Bujanda, introduction to Cazalla, *Lumbre del alma*, 38.

who was happy to assure his sister that the soul "in which God dwells is peaceful, satisfied, joyful, intimate, magnificent, great, full of every good, wise, prudent, chaste, whole, holy, loving, gentle, and hopeful of infinite mercies."¹³¹ His early vocation as a catechist existed alongside his impatience to preach "the very gentle religion" and "the sweet yoke" of Jesus, and to spur the faithful to that rapid race toward the "admirable peace through which God leads His people."¹³² Bataillon has noted the overtones of "good news" and "the early years of the Gospel" in these letters, which are among the few direct witnesses to the so-called *alumbrado* movement before it was forced into the Inquisition's narrow conceptual framework.

If the proposed mission to Medina de Rioseco had succeeded, the Christians living on the lands of the Admiral of Castile might have experienced the "sweetness" of Castillo's new faith. Perhaps they would have been dazzled by the simple message to which the Gospels were reduced, the ease of achieving salvation, and the "gentleness" of an idea that, as Erasmus had predicted and Juan de Lucena had announced in his treatise against the Inquisition, flung aside the burdens imposed by the official Church and stressed the directness of the Gospel. It is likely too that the Admiral's vassals would have been amazed – like the people of Seville twenty years later – by the lightness of Jesus's yoke once it was freed from the Church's innumerable strictures. This scenario transported them to a world free of any Inquisition with its excommunications, betrayals, and written confessions, or any Church with its bulls, tithes, and crusades. But that would come later, when Juan Gil would preach to his faithful followers in Seville the "gentle" new faith that he had learned as a student at Alcalá.

Of course, we do not know how much of what Juan del Castillo taught his "very virtuous" sister Petronila reached the vassals of Fadrique Enriquez. He would probably have preached to them more discreetly, careful not to trouble the souls of simpler folk or to cross the lines laid down by an ever more suspicious hierarchy. Castillo was an attentive evangelizer; he had honed his oratorical skills with the Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique. Perhaps his letters, written and sent during months spent between Valladolid and Medina de Rioseco while the mission of the twelve apostles was taking shape, were a new departure. They could stress the message of liberation and exalted

131 "...donde Dios mora ser pacifica, gozosa, alegre, confiadora, magnifica, grande, llena de todos los bienes, savia, prudente, casta, entera, santa, amorosa suave esperadora de infinitas mercedes": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, letter no. 3.

132 Bataillon, "Introduction," 38.

individual conviction without entering into more difficult and dangerous doctrinal questions.

The truth was that, as Diego Hernández had warned, Juan del Castillo's plan concealed far more radical beliefs. The trial of his sister Petronila, which began in September 1534, tells us more about the doctrine that fascinated the Spanish *alumbrados*, the doctrine that led the Toledo tribunal to search frantically for Juan all over Europe and bring him back to the prisons of the Holy Office.

Among the trial documents are thirteen propositions extracted from one of Castillo's confessions before the Inquisitors in Toledo.¹³³ Transcribed directly from testimony at Castillo's trial, they fleshed out the accusations against Juan's sister Petronila and brother Gaspar de Lucena. They are thus the only surviving information, aside from the five spiritual letters, that allow us to dig deeper into Juan del Castillo's world of *alumbradismo*.

The propositions contain a rejection of the "precepts" and ceremonies of the Church, a fundamental element of *alumbrado* spirituality. Castillo, a priest, claimed to despise vocal prayer, to omit reciting the canonical hours, and to have celebrated many masses "without praying."¹³⁴ He did not believe that indulgences granted by the pope were effective,¹³⁵ and even thought that if the pope were in a state of mortal sin he would lose all his authority.¹³⁶ After claiming eloquently that he had been "so outspoken and free that anything I am supposed to have said, although I may not remember it, I will believe that I did say," Castillo stated that he had also denied the usefulness of the sacraments.¹³⁷ He had concluded from Oecolampadius's commentaries on Isaiah, which had circulated widely from Juan de Vergara's library among the faculty at Alcalá, that the words spoken in consecrating the Host were merely symbolic, "for *yvi non erat verum corpus christo [sic]* but rather *verba illa dicebantur mystice et figurative*."¹³⁸ Other propositions contained a denial of free will, particularly

133 "It also appears in a confession that Master del Castillo, a resident of Alcalá de Henares, gave and presented in the city of Toledo in the audience chamber of the Holy Office before the most illustrious and reverend Lord Inquisitor General": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8r. The confession, dated 6 May 1524, is extrapolated from the trial of Gaspar de Lucena and served as the Inquisitors' proof against both his brother and his sister.

134 "Further, he held that we are not obliged to observe and keep the precepts of the Church, nor is it a sin to ignore them; also, that priests are not obliged or required to recite the canonical hours and so he normally did not pray, and said mass without praying, believing that he committed no sin in doing so": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8r, props. VIII-IX.

135 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, prop. XI.

136 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8v, prop. XII.

137 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, prop. XIII.

138 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8v. On Juan de Vergara's library, see Laspéras, "La librería del doctor Juan de Vergara" and Pérez Martín, *Las bibliotecas del doctor Juan de Vergara*.

in the third letter: "that there was no free will but that all things arose from necessity, so that Saint Peter had necessarily denied Jesus Christ and Judas had necessarily sold Him."¹³⁹

This question had been discussed intensively in *alumbrado* circles and elsewhere.¹⁴⁰ Diego Gracián de Alderete described in these terms how popular it had become to deny free will:

A prophetess named Francisca Fernández, who appeared in Salamanca, affirmed that all man's actions are determined by the divine spirit, much as certain ancient philosophers gave a role in everything to fate, an unfounded opinion that Cicero mocked in his marvelous treatise *De Fato*. Many men and priests of considerable standing, of those called *iluminados*, have followed this Medusa and seem to be well versed in this matter.¹⁴¹

Earlier the theologian Quintana, charged with composing a reasoned account of the *alumbrado* heresy, had identified the question of free will as the core of its doctrine. He did so after having summed up in a single chapter all the statements that explicitly denied the existence of free will.

This seems to have been one of the issues most debated among both laymen and the "well versed" priests "of considerable standing" who were fascinated by the "Medusa" Hernández. Many were well-known humanists who corresponded with Gracián de Alderete himself. One was Miguel de Eguía, who in 1525 in Alcalá printed Erasmus's *De libero arbitrio diatriba sive collatio* together with the *Precatio dominica* and the *Paraphrasis in tertium Psalmum*.¹⁴² Another was Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, the humanist who had studied in Bologna; his response to Luther, *De fato et libero arbitrio contra Lutherum*, was published the next year. Even Juan de Cazalla, in his *Lumbre del alma*, had offered an early response to the question with a reference to Ramon Sibiuda, the

¹³⁹ *AHN Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, fol. 8r, prop. VII.

¹⁴⁰ Much has been written about the similarity of the doctrine of *dexamiento* to that of *servo arbitrio*. See esp. the positions of Selke, *Algunos aspectos*, 70ff.; Redondo, "Luther et l'Espagne," 141ff.; Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, 17–27; Nieto, "El espectro de Lutero y las máscaras de Erasmo"; Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 28: 108–10; Olivari, "La spiritualità spagnola," 189–94.

¹⁴¹ "Apareció en Salamanca una profetisa llamada Francisca Fernández, que afirmava que todas las acciones del hombre se determinavan por espíritu divino, al modo que ciertos filósofos antiguos hacían intervenir en todo el hado, opinión insubstancial de que se burló Cicerón en su precioso tratado *De Fato*. A esta Medusa le han seguido mucho hombres y sacerdotes de bastante autoridad, de los que llaman *iluminados*, y que parecen muy instruidos en esta materia": Paz y Meliá, "Otro erasmista español," 131.

¹⁴² Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, LVIII n. 566 and 163.

fifteenth-century Catalan philosopher whom Michel de Montaigne and Jean Bodin would make famous. In so doing, he rediscovered the Hispanic roots of a mystical humanism that stressed the role of man illuminated by God and the infinite possibilities that man enjoyed in the world.¹⁴³

At some point between 1525 and 1530, Martin Luther's treatise on the subject, *De servo arbitrio*, reached the Iberian Peninsula.¹⁴⁴ Juan del Castillo probably consulted the edition published in Wittenberg in 1525; in his dramatic confession, extracted under torture in January 1535 (and therefore after the propositions collected at his trial in 1534), he admitted obtaining Luther's work and lending it to a friar named Alonso Biernes.¹⁴⁵ Interest in the book went beyond the basic, controversial question of free will. Master Castillo must have found there a tone that was very congenial to his own spirituality, along with mystical accents that he could accept: total surrender to the will of God, open condemnation of Erasmian scepticism in the face of the overwhelming certitude of faith,¹⁴⁶ insistence on a pure religiosity, and the return to a notion beloved of Spanish *conversos*: an interior faith as opposed to that of the "Hebrews in spirit."

The circulation of *De servo arbitrio* in Castile before 1530 has not yet been discussed in any study of Lutheranism or of the dissemination of heterodox books, but it demonstrates once again the clear differences between Erasmus and Luther. In the receptive atmosphere at Alcalá, reformist ideas were pondered in full knowledge of their nuances, differences, and proximity to heresy.

143 See Cazalla, *Lumbre del alma* and Martínez de Bujanda's introduction; also Olivari, "La spiritualità spagnola," 219–26.

144 The circulation of *De servo arbitrio* in the Peninsula can be confirmed by the declarations that Juan del Castillo made under torture on 8 and 11 February 1535, included in the trial of Luis de Beteta: Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 100. I consider it a crucial and fundamental issue for clarifying the vexed question of the propagation of Luther's works and Lutheranism in Spain, and one about which I have failed to find evidence in the many studies dedicated to the topic. See, for example, Longhurst, *Luther's Ghost in Spain*; Redondo, "Luther et l'Espagne," although at the end he discusses Castillo's "Lutheranism"; Nieto, "El espectro de Lutero"; Gilly, "Juan de Valdés traductor," who devotes ample space to how Luther's work circulated among the *alumbrados*. On the other hand I am convinced that the spread of an essential text like *De servo arbitrio* is not sufficient proof in itself of anyone's Lutheranism, an opinion that contradicts the tendency of most scholars to attribute the positions of Spanish heretics to their readings. The case of Juan del Castillo – to say nothing of the more famous one of Juan de Valdés – shows how very reductionist this point of view can be.

145 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 100.

146 "If God works in us, then our will, altered and gently touched by the breath of the Holy Spirit, again wishes and strives for pure disposition and propension, and that spontaneously, without coercion": WA 18, 634.

One indication is the estrangement between Petronila and Isabel de Vergara, which came about because Isabel was too “Erasmic.” In the secret correspondence that Juan de Vergara maintained years later with his imprisoned brother Tovar, he wrote:

I have always desired greatly to know whether your conversations with these devils were simply consultations ... or if there is more than this. You have been prejudiced for a long time by certain superstitions that are commonly held to be a religion; this was a tolerable but, in such delicate times, not a light affair. *Tamen multum refert* if the matter has to do with Erasmus or with that dog Luther, *quod Deus avertat*.¹⁴⁷

But Castillo was far from embracing Luther’s proposals *tout court*. His case again shows that the position of the *alumbrados* and Erasmists of Alcalá was complex but consistent: they consciously resisted uncritical allegiance to new books and ideas. Reading Oecolampadius had convinced Castillo that Christ’s body was not actually present in the Eucharist; he also read Luther’s *De servo arbitrio* avidly but in an independent spirit, and he reworked doctrinal elements adapted from both writers. In his second confession to the Inquisitors he explained that all his claims had to be seen in the framework of his own personal theory. At the core of his worldview stood a universal salvation guaranteed to all: “The good and the bad, the faithful and the unfaithful, even fallen angels have been and will be saved.”¹⁴⁸ There are echoes of Origen’s apocatastasis in this assertion that a universal redemption allows even fallen angels to see God.¹⁴⁹ That is what Castillo claimed as the origin of his conviction that sin did not exist and that there was no need “to do good works, since works will not lead us to heaven.” It was the origin of most of the propositions attributed to

147 “Mucho siempre he deseado saber si vuestras platicas con estos diablos eran solamente conferencias ... o si ay mas que esto asi que os oviesedes alargado en perjuizio de algunas supersticiones vulgatas que se tienen por religion, era cosa tolerable aunque en tal delicadez de tiempos no ligera tamen multum refert si va la cosa a fuer de Erasmo o a fuer del perro de Luthero quod Deus avertat”: *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 118v. Vergara’s letters to Tovar are published by Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 517.

148 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, fol. 8v, prop. I: “First the aforesaid Petronila de Lucena, as well as other persons ... like extreme Lutheran heretics – all men good and bad, faithful and unfaithful, even fallen angels have been and will be saved.”

149 One cannot assume that a subject has read a given source based on one sentence that may have been spoken hyperbolically or only to offer an example; but Castillo might have had indirect knowledge of the works of Origen, who achieved a certain fame in the sixteenth century via Erasmus. See Godin, *Erasme lecteur d’Origène*.

him: “*Omnia confundebam divina et umana* with that entirely mistaken notion I had that *omnes salvabuntur*.”¹⁵⁰

This radical and ecumenical vision combined different stimuli and influences. These might include considered and complex theological views such as Origen’s; elegant pious treatises such as *De immensa Dei misericordia*, available in Spanish translation since December 1527; or the conviction, common among New Christians of both Jewish and Muslim origin, that in the end each person could find salvation by adhering to his own religion. In the Spain of the three faiths – above all, in the Spain of expulsions and forced conversions – this last belief might have been the greatest hope. It could sustain the daily lives of divided communities and families, and later those of recent but not entirely sincere converts who were trying to forge new connections with their ancient beliefs.

It was also the secret that seemed to nourish the *alumbrados*. In her first deposition against Isabel de la Cruz, Mari Núñez recalled that

[she was] reading one day from a book that she thinks is called *Doctrina mayor de San Buenaventura* about how Our Lord punished and condemned souls for eternity. And this witness felt pity and said, “Oh dear Lord, they will lack Your presence forever and they will be tormented.” Then she saw and heard how the said Isabel de la Cruz replied, “Be quiet, silly girl, there is no hell.” And this witness said, “Jesus says all this.” And Isabel de la Cruz responded, “They say it to frighten us, just as we tell children, ‘Look out for the bogey-man!’” And she said it with such conviction to this witness that at first she made her believe it, before her reason took hold and refused to consent.¹⁵¹

150 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. III, exp. 14, fol. 8v.

151 “[U]n día leyendo en un libro que cree que se dize doctrina mayor de san Buenaventura como Nuestro Señor punya y castigava las anymas para syenpre y este testigo se compadecio diziendo o señor mio y que an de carecer de tu presencia para syenpre y an de ser atormentadas y que a esto sabe e vio e oyo como la dicha Ysabel de la cruz dixo calla bova que no ay infierno y este testigo dixo Jesus dize lo todo y que entonces dixo la dicha Ysabel de la cruz dizenlo por espantarnos como dizen a los niños evati el coco y que tan afirmadamente dixo las dichas palabras a este testigo que el primero movimiento se lo hizo creer antes que consyentese [*sic*] la razon la qual no consintió.” The transcription of Mari Núñez’s testimony appears on fols. 39r-41r of the trial of Alcaraz: Longhurst, “La beata Isabel de la Cruz,” 281. This was a partial return to the common belief, which the Inquisitors considered judaizing and some modern authors call “Averroist scepticism,” that hell was no more than a fabrication meant to frighten people, much as children were threatened with the “bogey-man” who would come to punish them. For the *conversos*, however, lack of belief in hell was connected to a denial of the afterlife rather than to the notion of universal salvation.

Later Isabel told the Inquisitors that she knew Mari Núñez had accused her of denying the existence of hell. Overcome with rage, she had seized Mari's hand and threatened her, "If I believed there were no hell I would have had my revenge on you." In any case, Isabel explained – in words that affirmed rather than denied the charge – that perhaps "her bad words and her pride and interference caused someone to say that about her concerning hell."¹⁵² In a later statement from April 1526, Mari Núñez confirmed Isabel's belief about hell with two other episodes.

In the first instance, she described Isabel's scorn upon seeing a workman kneeling before a crucifix, beating his breast and weeping. Isabel had addressed him as "You miserable creature." This, in Mari Núñez's testimony, meant that "the workman did not know his own dignity, according to the position of the *alumbrados* which is that every person born is free and that God does not punish our sins, believing that there is no hell or purgatory."¹⁵³ The second instance, which the Inquisitors must have taken very seriously, involved a conversation between Isabel and another *alumbrada* from Guadalajara. The two women were looking out a window onto a patio when Isabel's companion had a sudden vision. On coming to herself, disturbed and agitated, she described her divine revelation "that all peoples would be saved, and she had seen the souls of all the blessed." Isabel had covered the woman's mouth with her hand and told her, "Be quiet, you traitor, that is the secret."¹⁵⁴ This second woman, "one from Écija," while under interrogation by the tribunal in January 1528, confirmed Mari Núñez's account but offered an entirely different explanation. Giving the story a clever orthodox twist, she claimed to have fallen into a half-sleeping, half-waking state during which she was overcome by a sense of God's infinite love for his creatures; Isabel had then warned her that it was better to keep silent and tell no one of her experience.¹⁵⁵

Antonio Márquez has dismissed Isabel's ideas about hell and salvation as "apocalyptic" and "messianic" dreams¹⁵⁶ and excluded them from his own

152 Longhurst, "La beata Isabel de la Cruz," 289.

153 Longhurst, "La beata Isabel de la Cruz," 296.

154 Longhurst, "La beata Isabel de la Cruz," 296–7.

155 "[S]he said that she remembers that while speaking with Isabel de la Cruz one day this witness fell into a kind of sleep, and when she recovered she said, 'Oh, how God loves His creatures!'. Then Isabel told her, 'Be quiet and say nothing,' but that was all that happened": Longhurst, "La beata Isabel de la Cruz," 297 n. 24.

156 "Apocalyptic dreams do not enter – logically, they could not enter – into the illuminist doctrine as it had developed in Guadalajara. The only messianic passage from a fragment of Isabel de la Cruz's trial has been misinterpreted in this regard: Isabel is said to have claimed that the salvation of all peoples was universal and imminent. In fact Isabel's interpretation, like that of the Church, is that the place and time of the peoples' salvation is a divine secret or mystery": Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 210–1. This last sentence

reconstruction of *alumbrado* philosophy. But they are an important reference point, the tip of the iceberg of a soteriological doctrine that *alumbrados* shared with many Spanish *conversos*. The question of salvation could form a separate chapter of *alumbrado* philosophy, especially in the more evolved and mature doctrine of figures such as Juan del Castillo and Juan López de Celaín.

In the summary prepared by the theologian Quintana, one section reveals Alcaraz's concern for relations among the three monotheistic religions and minimizes the role of Scripture as a source of truth and liberation. The lay preacher's reflections were based on his reading of a passage from Paul's Epistle to the Romans, which affirms that all doctrinal and preceptive issues are intended only to preserve the hopes of the believer. Alcaraz applied this notion of Paul's to the Quran and to any revealed scripture, no matter how good or bad it might be:

He was explaining that passage from Paul's Epistle to the Romans 15, which said that every Scripture was made so that in following it we should maintain patience and consolation, and this was to be extended to all doctrinal authorities and all Scriptures, even of Muhammad's Qur'an and all other Scriptures, whether good or bad.¹⁵⁷

Castillo constructed an entire doctrine on these barely thought-out ideas. In a world in which salvation was guaranteed to all – good and bad, believers and unbelievers – distinctions of faith were bound to disappear. Castillo claimed that religion had been given to all Christians not as a set of rules or a difficult path to salvation but “so that we could live in peace.”¹⁵⁸ Religion was a positive right meant to regulate the shared life of men on earth, not a series of prescriptions for imposing a choice of salvation. It was not intended to be the cause of division: “The law of Our Lord God was given *ut viverimus in pace* and not so that we might be saved thereby, for those who live by it are saved just the same as those who do not.”¹⁵⁹ In Castillo's view this was why God chose to reveal the

is a forced overinterpretation: Márquez added the adjective “imminent,” which occurs nowhere in the testimony, and in this sense even Isabel's supposedly orthodox version is an elaboration constructed by Márquez to support his argument.

157 *Sumarios, Proceso Alcaraz*, AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 106, no. 5, fol. 415r. Also cited in Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 97. For reasons he does not specify, Márquez believes, erroneously, that this is the “only universalist or ecumenical text in all the European religious literature of the time” (98).

158 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8, prop. 4.

159 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8, prop. 4

truth to Mohammed as well, making him a prophet like Christ: "Our Lord God revealed this to Mohammed, for he [too] said that all would be saved."¹⁶⁰

Based on this thinking, any division based on faith and doctrine would disappear, thanks to the extraordinary and comforting truth that linked the destinies of all men. Even the Church as an institution, with all its rules and precepts, became a secondary factor. The typically *alumbrado* rejection of rules, rituals, and ceremonies, which the Inquisitors detected clearly in Castillo's ideas and actions, was based on a radicalism that invalidated any gesture of recognition or belonging. Castillo's position seemed to extend to a theism that rethought and reframed Hispanic themes and problems.

His openness to the Muslim element is especially significant and is atypical of Spanish theological thinking, which tended toward confrontation with the Jewish world. Any Muslim would readily agree that Christ and Mohammed had received the same Revelation, since Jesus is named as a prophet in the Quran. Particularly in Iberia, where Muslims had always coexisted with Christians and Jews, theological and philosophical thinking was bound to highlight these common aspects.

In a document called *Desputa de la unidad o de los kristianos*, which had apparently been circulating in the Peninsula since the fourteenth century, Hispano-Arabic polemicists offered an interpretation of Christian-Muslim relations that was still remembered by *moriscos* throughout the sixteenth century. It postulated that the original unity of the one Revelation and the one faith had been shattered when Christians adopted the doctrine of the Trinity. Christians thus appeared as corrupters of an original perfection in which Christ's revelation was a precedent for the second revelation made to Mohammed. In a legend attributed to Ibn 'Abbas, one of the Prophet's first companions, "Paul the Hebrew" had perverted Jesus's original teachings, which made no mention of the divinity of the Son or the dogma of the Trinity. At that point Christians had departed from the truth.¹⁶¹ While this belief had faded among *moriscos* persecuted by the Inquisition,¹⁶² it was based on the logical notion that there were commonalities among the great revealed religions and that salvation was possible for all.

160 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 8, prop. 5.

161 See analyses of this and other Aljamiado texts in Cardaillac, *Moriscos y cristianos*, 149–53.

162 The accusation of having claimed that salvation was possible in both religions was common in all the Inquisition trials against *moriscos* during the sixteenth century. The Morisca Catalina de Quesada told her Inquisitors in Granada in 1556 "that God was the creator of all things and that He had given the law to Christians and Moors and Jews," that He had granted the law to the Christians with one hand and to the Muslims with the other, and that they merely wrote them differently: AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 4519–3, exp. 13, ddd.

Juan del Castillo did not espouse an anti-Trinitarian position, nor was he accused of such heresy by the Inquisition. His theism was quite different from the anti-Trinitarian monotheism of the Aljamiado manuscripts that the *moriscos* read, and from the individualistic stance that Miguel Servet would develop in the next twenty years.

The anti-Trinitarian Servet had been born in an Aragon thickly populated by *moriscos* and shaped in the service of Juan de Quintana, who had provided the first condemnation of *alumbradismo* – but Servet and Castillo seemed to be tormented by the same doubt. Servet's two treatises accepted and assimilated Castillo's curiosity about the Quran, and also sought the true essence of Christianity in contrast with the two other great revealed religions. In *De trinitatis erroribus*, published in 1531, Servet invited reflection on the words of the Quran that took Jesus to be "the greatest of prophets, spirit of God, breath of God, soul of God" while indicating that "apostles and evangelists and early Christians were excellent men and wrote true things, and they did not believe in the Trinity, intended as three divine persons, but all that was added later."

He would expand these thoughts twenty years later in the *Restitutio*, demonstrating the need to return to a Christianity uncorrupted by the dogma of the Trinity and closer to the other revealed truths. He supported his position with long passages from the Quran, the same ones that had impressed Castillo and fed Morisco hopes of a reconciliation between their faith and the new Christian beliefs.¹⁶³

Any analogies between the Aragonese anti-Trinitarian Servet and the Castilian *alumbrado* Castillo go no further than this. In my opinion, however, reading revelation in light of a continuity between the two religions is one of the most significant features of heterodox thought during this period in Spain. It was the key to Castillo's view of the world. And it happened during the years that Castillo spent within Manrique's orbit, first as a catechizer and later as a preacher. At that time, the integration and genuine conversion of the Granadan and Valencian *moriscos* was being debated in two committees (*juntas*) by the Inquisitor General and leading theologians of the day.¹⁶⁴

We cannot be sure to what extent the idea of a common religious revelation influenced the intellectual views of the selective *alumbrado* community.

163 Servet, *Christianismi restitutio*, 35–6; Spanish trans. Servet, *Obras completas*, 6.

164 On the composition of the *Juntas*, see Avilés Fernández, "El Santo Oficio," 460–70. For a detailed description of the one on the Valencian *moriscos*, and the resistance it met among the local nobility, see Redondo, *Antonio de Guevara*, 222ff. The only documentation from its meetings in Madrid in February and March 1525 is contained in Inquisition papers from 1561 and was published by Boronat y Barrachina, *Los moriscos españoles y su expulsión*. See also Benítez Sánchez-Blanco, *Heroicas decisiones*, 76–89.

Though Castillo's theses might have circulated, they probably did not show the radically philo-Muslim cast that Castillo revealed to his Inquisitors. They definitely underlay the prosecutor's accusation in the trial of his sister Petronila and brother Gaspar de Lucena, because Castillo mentioned in his confession to Manrique that both of them shared those mistaken views. He renounced them in part to try to save his sister Petronila, who was then in prison, when he was summoned before the tribunal to confirm the accusations. He alleged that he was "so agitated before your most reverend Lordship that he did not pay full attention to what he was saying."¹⁶⁵ Petronila survived, however, not so much through her brother's retraction as through her own exceptional insight and understanding of the Inquisition's procedures.

She denied absolutely all the propositions that the Inquisitors had extracted from her brother's trial: that she believed "everyone would be saved," that "the law of Our Lord God was laid down *ut vivemus in pace* and not for our salvation, since those who lived by it were saved just like those who did not," and above all that "Our Lord God had revealed this to Mohammed, for he [too] said that all would be saved." With suspect candidness she confessed to the judges that she had been assailed with doubts about the possibility of universal salvation, admitting that she had confided them in all innocence to Diego Hernández. Those doubts had arisen, she said cleverly, while she meditated on the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16). In this parable, all received the same hire (wages), although some had worked much longer than others. That had made her consider "how it said that their hire would be the same, and if it said so because we would all be saved, both good and bad Christians." She even acknowledged her "arrogance" in having thought for a time "that God should not show more mercy to good people than to bad." Petronila was admitting that she had believed in universal salvation, but she did it so cleverly that, in her version, her error came directly from the account in the Christian Gospel; therefore it could not be considered a radical departure from accepted doctrine. Perhaps on just that point, the *alumbrados* could agree.

When Francisca Hernández repeated for the Inquisitors the opinions that she understood as Lutheran, she mentioned that both Bernardino de Tovar and Miguel Eguía had claimed to be certain that purgatory did not exist, and that they harbored serious doubts about the objective reality of hell.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, she said, Eguía declared "that he believed in his heart that there was no hell but he would not say that to others, he merely kept it to himself."¹⁶⁷

165 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fols. 9r–9v, in testimony given on 6 October 1534.

166 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 87.

167 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 89.

She added that Gaspar de Lucena had told Diego Hernández that the Duke of Infantado, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, “was ... *gentil* and that he believed that [the duke] agreed with Luther in the matter of universal salvation, for he did not disagree when he heard it.”¹⁶⁸ The testimony of Antonio de Medrano against Juan de Cazalla followed the same line: when Cazalla was called to preach by the bishop of Calahorra in 1526, he insisted on the need for all men to be saved and perhaps even deified (employing a witty culinary metaphor).¹⁶⁹

5 Juan López de Celaín in Granada

Juan del Castillo’s opinions resurfaced, in all their philo-Islamic radicalism, in those of his old missionary companion Juan López de Celaín. We have a hint of this in the summary of de Celaín’s trial, in a notion similar to Castillo’s but less explicit: “no one should judge Mohammed as he is, but simply leave him to God.”¹⁷⁰

Although Angela Selke associated this statement with the utopian view that “all peoples should be saved,”¹⁷¹ it can be explained better if viewed through the thinking of Castillo, Celaín’s intimate friend. Castillo may even have been his first inspiration on the topic, although López de Celaín would later frame it in a less optimistic way. Celaín’s God was remote and inaccessible to human reason: the gulf between man, “pure evil,” and God, “pure good,”¹⁷² made it impossible to understand Him. One of Celaín’s refuted propositions described a Being wholly indifferent to the fate of mankind¹⁷³ and part of a mystery unintelligible to humans. Nevertheless his aim, like Castillo’s, was to convey a message of security and hope to those who abandoned the laws of human logic and reasoning and, renouncing their “evil” will, placed all their faith in God.

168 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, 14, fol. 2v.

169 “God in His mercy decreed that in men’s passing from this life they should be in the state that they willed, and as was proper to His service. And as to how all men should be saved, he offered a comparison: when a man wanted to eat a fowl he waited until it was seasoned and roasted to perfection, and once roasted, the fowl seemed to say to him, ‘Eat me, and transform me into yourself, and yourself into Christ, and we all shall enjoy Him who created us;’” cited in Fernández, “Iñigo de Loyola,” 599. For a similar metaphor, see Pérez Escotado, *Proceso inquisitorial*, 42 and *Antonio de Medrano*, 509.

170 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 35.

171 Selke, “Vida y muerte,” 159. This author, unlike Márquez, does speak of the importance of the doctrine of universal salvation in Alcaraz, Isabel de la Cruz, and Celaín; she does not mention Juan del Castillo, however.

172 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 5.

173 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 21.

Celaín claimed that salvation lay precisely in accepting man's state of total abjectness and surrendering to the divine will. That was the only way, because Christ's sacrifice had erased all sins: "Jesus Christ was once offered as a sacrifice for us, and this was sufficient for our redemption. Therefore there is no need to say mass or fast or do good works, for at the one time that God offered Himself for us, all sins were pardoned."¹⁷⁴

The most basic principle for Celaín was the certainty (as dear to him as the principle of universal salvation was to Castillo) that "true, invincible, and ineradicable peace can be attained in this world."¹⁷⁵ This was why God had "converted [him] just like Saint Paul," opening his eyes to the truth. It allowed him, like a new Messiah, to guide men toward "true peace" even in this life; he could show them the avenues of hope open to all who prepared to follow him. No one could claim to know true blessedness if he had not first known "true peace."¹⁷⁶ López de Celaín expanded on these themes in three treatises that have not survived.¹⁷⁷ He lost none of the earlier religious exaltation that had led him to recruit apostles for the mission to the lands of the Admiral of Castile.

In 1527, at the invitation of Fray Pedro de Alba, he moved to Granada, which the imperial court then considered frontier territory. In the previous year, during the court's long residence in the Alhambra, Charles v and his councilors had seen the deplorable state of the Church in Granada. The emperor charged Gaspar de Ávalos and the Franciscan Antonio de Guevara to investigate the effects of the *moriscos'* conversion. After traveling the entire kingdom, the two reported that its religious condition was lamentable: the *moriscos* were "as much Moors as ever," while the Old Christians were also detached from the true essence of Christianity.

The conversion of the *moriscos* had already been dealt with by an *ad hoc* committee – similar to the *junta* called to discuss the *alumbrado* heresy – which agreed on serious measures for episcopal reform. Even so, Charles v and his advisers immediately realized the urgent need to revive Spain's missionary vocation, considering Granada a territory ripe for spiritual conquest. The emperor wrote to the Franciscan and Dominican provincials, urging them to send twelve of their most qualified friars to be distributed among the kingdom's

174 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 40. Celaín even denied the existence of purgatory. Like Castillo, he developed a vision in which Christ and His sacrifice regained all the centrality they were denied in the classic image of *alumbrado* theocentrism.

175 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 1.

176 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, no. 52–2, prop. 3.

177 See the summary of Celaín's trial sent on 17 January 1575, AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 2604, nos. 52–2.

four dioceses.¹⁷⁸ These missionaries would be thought of as new “apostles,” just like Fray Martín de Valencia. The challenge was less exotic than the one being carried out in Mexico, but the effort would be no less.

Because the newly named archbishop, Fray Pedro de Alba, was a humble Hieronymite friar from outside the world of ecclesiastical elites and palace intrigues, many saw his accession as a return “to the good times of the sainted Archbishop [Talavera].”¹⁷⁹ The change was heavy with symbolism, announcing clearly the need to return to the missionary spirit of earlier times and to undertake genuine episcopal reform. Harking back to Talavera at that moment was the key to a new politics of assimilation. At court, the myth that surrounded the first archbishop of Granada was kept alive thanks to influential figures such as Pedro Mártir de Anglería.

Juan López de Celaín, with his undeniable experience of “apostles,” was brought to Granada at the height of these events. His condemnation by the Inquisition came in 1530, while he held the post of “chaplain of the royal chapel.” (This is what Rodrigo de Bivar, his intimate friend since their days at the Duke of Infantado’s court, told the Inquisitors, although some maintain that he was *provisor*, i.e., vicar, to the archbishop.) The case is not entirely clear, and Bataillon may be correct that he served as vicar from his arrival until Alba’s death in June 1528, at which point he was named chaplain of the Royal Chapel.¹⁸⁰ This hypothesis is supported by the testimony of a person who was close to Celaín during his whole heretical career.

Celaín arrived in Granada with Diego López de Husillos, a fellow *alumbrado* and inseparable companion since the planned mission to Medina de Rioseco.

178 Redondo, *Antonio de Guevara*, 282.

179 Note the warm recollection by Archdeacon Alonso Fernández de Madrid of El Alcor: “I knew Don Fray Pedro de Alba first as a clergyman and later as a visitor to part of the archbishopric. There he put on the habit of Saint Jerome, so as to resemble his Lord more closely. He was so prominent in letters and in the virtue of his life that, after having been chosen as prior of his monastery, when after a few days the archbishop’s place fell vacant he was put into the very seat of the Archbishop, becoming the successor to the same man whose servant he had been”: Fernández de Madrid, *Vida de Fray Fernando de Talavera*, 120–1.

180 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 436 n. 10. Hamilton, *El proceso de Rodrigo de Bivar*, 51 (an interrogation that took place in June 1539): “the fact is that about nine or ten years ago, when I came from Guadalajara to Alcalá, I stayed in the house of Miguel de Eguía, where I met a certain Juan López, a Basque priest ... of whom I had heard many good things and who had been vicar in Granada, and so I wished to see him. I spoke to him, sirs, and enjoyed his company for all the reasons I have said.”

López de Husillos was also condemned in 1530, though to a lighter sentence.¹⁸¹ They were joined there by Diego del Castillo, Juan's cousin, another of the "apostles" and a fervent admirer of Celaín. He too was sentenced by the Inquisition in Granada shortly afterward.¹⁸² Yet another "apostle," Pero Hernández, was also in Granada and in close contact with important families and institutions. At least one-quarter of the original twelve destined for Medina de Rioseco, therefore, were present in the city. If Celaín really held the post of Alba's *provisor*, he would have been in the archbishop's confidence and in a position to make a significant mark on Alba's plans for reform. One can imagine scenarios involving the survival of the Medina de Rioseco dream and unsuspected alliances formed in the episcopal curia in Granada. We do know that the yearning for conversion and universalism that had guided the "apostle" Celaín in Castile found sympathy there. As one of his refuted propositions makes clear, the Morisco problem – the most serious one in the archdiocese – led him to reformulate Castillo's consoling notions. This was not the only occasion for interracial and interconfessional confrontation; as he told his friend Rodrigo de Bivar, he also knew of a Jew, a guest in the archbishop's palace, whom theologians of Granada had tried to convert. First they argued at length about Holy Scripture; then they resorted to stronger methods:

Juan López told of a dispute that certain theologians of Granada had with a Jew. When they could not convert him with authorities from Holy Scripture or with sound reasoning, growing angry with the Jew they impugned his honor; and the Jew, seeing himself insulted, said, "You are even less likely to convert me with your example than with your words."¹⁸³

This case of the Jew who was alienated by the Christians' poor example recalled sayings by Talavera about tolerance: the proverbial "give us something of your customs and take something of our faith." When Celaín told this anecdote, he added that he was sorry not to have run after the man to convert him.

181 Selke, "Vida y muerte," 139; Hamilton, *Heresy and Mysticism*, 81, 86; also 47 (but there Hamilton confuses the Toledan priest Diego de Husillos with Bovadilla, abbot of Husillos and a friend of Cazalla's).

182 Bataillon mentions a royal warrant signed by the empress on 7 December 1535 that refers to Diego del Castillo's sentence: "I have been told that Diego del Castillo, a resident of Burgos, by order of the venerable Inquisitors in the city and kingdom of Granada was reconciled to our holy Catholic faith for the crime of heretical depravity and apostasy, his goods being confiscated to our vault and treasury": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 246, fol. 129v. Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 479.

183 Hamilton, *El proceso de Rodrigo de Bivar*, 35.

The event became the occasion for a long Sunday conversation with Miguel de Eguía and Bivar himself. The latter described to two witnesses the long day they had spent together. People in Alcalá were astonished by Celaín's success in Granada, placing himself in the best possible institutional position to reform "true Christendom." Bivar either did not know how to, or did not wish to, answer two witnesses who inquired about Celaín's whereabouts. When they asked reproachfully how he could have spoken to Celaín for a whole afternoon (since the Basque had been away from the city for a long time) without asking about his movements, Bivar answered simply that "they had spoken about such elevated matters that they had almost singed their wings." One friend muttered to the other that it would have been better if they had burned their beaks, not their wings.¹⁸⁴

6 The Inquisition's Repression, and Escapes

More than one shadow fell over Bivar's account of his pleasant Sunday lunch with his old friend. Since by then Celaín had escaped from prison in Granada for a second time, the two witnesses' questions to Bivar were not casual, nor were their sharp observations about the spiritual flights of the three careless *alumbrados*. Celaín had been arrested in December 1528. At that time the new archbishop of the city was another firm "Talaveran," Gaspar de Ávalos – a close associate of Manrique's but also the first critic of the *alumbrados*.¹⁸⁵ In fact, his participation in the case opened against Celaín by the recently established Tribunal of the Holy Office would be decisive and tireless.

184 "And the said Bivar told him that he had talked and eaten with him, but had not cared (though they spent a day together) about where we was going or where he came from. And this witness asked him, 'But how is it that in all that time together you did not ask about his comings and goings?'. And Bivar replied, 'We did not speak about places.' And this witness asked him, 'But how could you talk for a whole day without asking him where he was going?'. And Bivar claimed that they spoke about such elevated matters that they almost singed their wings, and then the cleric Francisco de Sandoval said in this witness's ear, 'It would have been better if they had burned their beaks, not their wings'" ("Y le dixo el dicho Bivar que avia hablado con él e comido, pero que no le pesando (aunque estuvieron un dia juntos) donde yva o donde venia. E este testigo le dixo: 'Pues ¿que podiades hablar todo un dia si no le pediades donde yva?'. Y dixo el dicho Bivar que hablaban tan alto hasta que se quemavan las alas, y que entonces dixo a este testigo al oreja Francisco de Sandoval, clerigo: 'Mejor fuera que se quemaran los picos que no las alas'"): Hamilton, *El proceso de Rodrigo de Bivar*, 2.

185 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 230.

The accused escaped twice from the Inquisition's prisons. The first flight was brief; after only a few hours the Inquisitors found him in a house that Diego López de Husillos maintained in the city. The second seems to have been better organized, allowing him to return triumphantly to his former companions of Medina de Rioseco. After his second capture in March 1530 he was transferred to Granada where, in July, his trial was concluded in spite of his petitions for recusal and appeal. He was defrocked and relaxed to the secular arm.

Celaín's arrest marked a turning point in the Inquisition's repression of *alumbrados* and initiated a chain of detentions. In the spring of 1529, Isabel de la Cruz, Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, and Gaspar de Bedoya were forced to parade on muleback, wearing the *sambenito*, through the Castilian towns where they had most often preached. Holding lighted tapers in their hands, the prisoners renounced their errors during repeated *autos-da-fé* from Guadalajara to Escalona, at the gates of the Marquis of Villena's fortress, and from there to Pastrana and Toledo. At that time Francisca Hernández, who had gathered a large group of *alumbrados* around her, was being thrown into prison in Toledo.

During that spring Castillo was in Louvain.¹⁸⁶ He may have decided that, after Celaín's arrest, it was more prudent to leave the scene and go to Flanders. There must have been much talk about him in the Peninsula at the time, since he was a well-known figure admired by both *alumbrados* and humanists. Gracián de Alderete, who had left Paris for Louvain at the same time as Castillo, wrote at about this time to a certain "Castellus," whom he called his teacher, saying that he had spoken to the archbishop of Seville about him and the trouble he was going through. Heartbroken Manrique wondered why Castillo was in Leuven and had not instead returned to him, where he would find love and protection.¹⁸⁷

186 I register here my disagreement with Longhurst on this detail of Castillo's biography; I agree partially with Bataillon, although with differences as to chronology. See Longhurst, "The Alumbrados of Toledo," 243–4, and Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 478–9 and 513. Longhurst denies that Castillo traveled to Louvain, believing that the "Castellus" of whom Alderete speaks must be his cousin Diego del Castillo. But Alderete's long letter speaks of a person close to the Inquisitor General Manrique, who would have to be Juan and not Diego. If we accept this, it clarifies another obscure detail of Castillo's biography; his reconciliation with the Inquisition as early as 1532. Longhurst suggests that the Sorbonne had decreed his reconciliation during Castillo's flight. This conjecture does not convince if we consider that the correspondence between the Inquisition's Supreme Council and Ayerbe shows that Castillo had managed to escape even though the summary of the accusations against him had been sent to Paris. Besides, Vergara had already pronounced him reconciled before the Sorbonne intervened: see below.

187 Quoted in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 153. Gracián de Alderete's letter is in the private collection of the Duke of Alba.

If Manrique's explanation was sincere, we can see how isolated he was within the Council of the Inquisition over which he presided. We can sense also the profound differences and political battles that arose around the trials at that time.

Alderete's letter assured Juan del Castillo that he had obtained from Manrique a safe conduct for his return to Spain that would even protect him as he crossed through France.¹⁸⁸ Following this advice, Castillo set out for Seville, the city to which the empress had consigned Manrique. By August 1529 he was in La Garena, where he gave his sister Petronila a forbidden book written in Latin.¹⁸⁹ Later, at her trial, she would explain that he spent only a few days there on his way to Cordoba and Seville. On this occasion Manrique was able to reconcile one of his favorite preachers; it was one of the last times that he managed to have his way. Still in 1529, not without effort, Manrique had Valdés's *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* approved; in the same year, in Bruges, Juan Luis Vives dedicated his *De pacificatione* to Manrique, mentioning his generosity and protection toward, among others, the humanist Juan del Castillo. But from that point onward his interventions in the many cases brought against persons close to him, even his direct associates, proved entirely fruitless.¹⁹⁰

During Lent of 1530, Castillo was once again at La Garena,¹⁹¹ where he made sure that Petronila destroyed the book he had given her. The noose began to tighten around the necks of *alumbrado* "apostles" and others. In July of that year the Inquisition in Granada condemned Celáin to be burned at the stake; Diego de Husillos, his closest companion, was likewise found guilty but given a lighter sentence. Francisca Hernández had been imprisoned since March 1529, and the testimony she gave between July and September 1530 allowed the Inquisition to enlarge its inquiries considerably and focus on the group of

188 Gracián de Alderete's words seem to refer to investigations about Castillo that the Inquisition was carrying out: "*Visum est nobis omnibus ad te scribi, quamprimum ad nos veniter, si rebus tuis prospici velis, quum alioqui in aula nulla absentis ratio habeatur*": *Erasmus y España*, 153.

189 In his testimony given on 9 May 1534: "She said that about four years ago when she was in the property at La Garena near Alcalá her brother, Master Juan del Castillo, gave her a book small in size like a book of hours, printed in Latin ... and it was when the said Master Castillo was on his way to Cordoba and Seville." Hearing Petronila's curiosity and her questions about why she should keep the book without showing it to anyone, Juan told her "that it was forbidden and she should tear it up." Petronila confessed to the Inquisitors that she did not do so for six months, keeping it during that time, and she added that "the writing ... was Castilian although she did not understand it and could not read it well": AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 12v

190 Vives, *Obras completas* 2: 256; Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 188–9.

191 AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14, fol. 12v.

alumbrados around Bernardino de Tovar. At that point it discovered the potential dangers of enterprises such as the mission of the twelve apostles.

After September 1530, the *alumbrado* group at the University of Alcalá disbanded. Juan de Valdés and Mateo Pascual, the rector of the university, decided to flee to Rome together. The papal city must have seemed like the safest refuge, since absolution was guaranteed by the Apostolic Penitentiary. They were joined there by the Granadan *alumbrado* Pero Hernández. He had left Palencia in 1530 and was also in search of a papal dispensation. But Juan del Castillo chose to go first to Paris, like Manuel Miona, Ignatius of Loyola's Portuguese confessor, and Miguel de Torres, then vice-rector of the Trilingual College at Alcalá.¹⁹² Both were future Jesuits and close friends of Bernardino de Tovar.

The friends and relatives who stayed behind in Toledo and Alcalá viewed the flight of the *alumbrados* and the movements of the Inquisitors with great concern. Juan de Vergara, perhaps the best placed among them because he was protected by Archbishop Fonseca,¹⁹³ undertook a risky anti-Inquisition spy operation. He had already helped inspire those flights. He had written to Juan de Valdés urging him to leave Spain as his brother Alfonso had done. He had also urged Mateo Pascual and probably Juan del Castillo to follow suit. The testimony of Cristóbal de Gumiel, who was trying to prove himself innocent of the charges against him, reveals the dense network of informers that surrounded Dr. Vergara:

The licenciado Gumiel said that he knew of no one who had tried to persuade Dr. Vergara to flee; rather, Dr. Vergara informed and told the licenciado Gumiel on one occasion that he regretted that in communicating with the gentlemen of this council of the Inquisition he had learned that they suspected that he had caused Mosén Pasqual to leave these kingdoms. And he swore by Our Lord God that it had never crossed his mind, rather he tried to keep Mosén Pasqual in Toledo with the archbishop after Tovar was arrested. And if he knew where he was he would try to bring him back at his own expense. ... And he thought of Castillo the same way and he swore to Our Lord God that he never knew anything about him

192 On Miguel de Torres, Tovar's intimate friend who was vice-rector of the Trilingual College at Alcalá and would later join the Company of Jesus, see the information in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 213, all of it from the Vergara trial. We now have the fascinating autobiographical letter published by Gilly, "Juan de Valdés traductor," 122-4, in which Torres relates his adventures in France and Basel.

193 Shortly after Tovar's arrest Archbishop Fonseca had a long conversation with Mexía, the Inquisitor of Toledo, in which he expressed himself "rather harshly": *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 269r. Cited in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 440 n. 9.

or wrote to him or cared for him in his life, and that they also suspected him because someone named Juan or Pedro de Villafaña had fled ... and that he believed that if Dr. Vergara were at fault in this he would have said so ... although perhaps he would not have, because he was discreet and secretive, but Dr. Vergara had said only one thing to Dr. Gumiel, asking him if by chance he had written to Valdés to persuade him to leave these kingdoms. And he swore to God that he had not dared to do that, but that the said Valdés had written him a general letter from Murcia or Cartagena fearing it might go astray, but such that even if it went astray no one could assume anything from it, [saying] that it might be good to go where his brother was to serve the king, since in Castile there was no staying [in safety] with the archbishop of Toledo; and [the letter] was so general that one could not assume from it whether he should leave or remain in Castile, simply that Valdés should do what he pleased.¹⁹⁴

It was through Gumiel that Juan de Vergara had managed to bribe certain members of the Toledo tribunal, so it was natural that he might want to deflect any suspicions of his role and the harm resulting from information leaked from the secret workings of the Holy Office.

Vergara's coordination of the various flights and returns was decisive, however. He held many conversations with Gaspar de Lucena about the safest destination for Juan del Castillo, one of those most actively sought by the Inquisition in Toledo. In 1531 Vergara had already given Lucena two or three letters that his brother had sent from Paris.¹⁹⁵ In the following year, 1532, he learned that a brief summary of accusations in Latin had been sent from Spain to the Sorbonne, where Castillo had probably found employment. Vergara informed Castillo at once, also via Lucena, and Castillo was able to escape in time.¹⁹⁶

194 Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 29–30: 281ff. *Proceso Vergara*, fols. 238rff.

195 See Longhurst, "The Alumbrados of Toledo," 236 n. 15, and Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 31–32: 352, with Vergara's response to the accusation against him, taken from the trial of Gaspar de Lucena. *Proceso Vergara*, f. 280r.

196 It was Gaspar de Lucena who, under torture, mentioned for the first time that Vergara had warned Castillo of a summary against him that had been sent to Paris. When pressed by the Inquisitors Vergara confirmed the fact, but disguised it as an attempt to make Castillo return to Toledo to testify before the tribunal of the Faith. On this occasion he explained that he was already reconciled: "This witness said several times to Gaspar de Lucena that he should make his brother return, and Lucena would reply that he was fine where he was; then this witness said to Lucena that certain information in Latin against Master Castillo had been sent, and since he was already reconciled he should satisfy what honor required and show himself and not seem to be in flight. And Lucena told him that he was better off where he was, and that it was true about the reconciliation": Longhurst,

He decided to go to Rome to join Valdés and Pascual. There, like so many other Spanish exiles, he was welcomed in the home of Quiñones, an ex-general of the Franciscans now made Cardinal of Santa Cruz. Although Quiñones had condemned the doctrines of Alcaraz and Isabel de la Cruz in the provincial Council of 1524, he still seemed to support many *alumbrado* adherents.¹⁹⁷

One year later Vergara, who was in close contact with Valdés and Pascual, told the small exiled community that Rome was no longer a safe haven.¹⁹⁸ The group disbanded and Pascual returned to Spain where, thanks to Manrique's generous mediation, he was able to negotiate a light sentence. In any case, few accusations could be made against him; one was having doubted the existence of purgatory – something the Inquisition did not seem to consider very serious – and the other was having facilitated the publication of Valdés's *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*.¹⁹⁹ Castillo moved to Bologna, where he found work at the university as a professor of Greek. That city also harbored a large Spanish community, and it was the Spanish college of San Clemente that first gave notice of the heretic's presence in the city. Both the Inquisitors and the members of the Supreme Council had a trusted collaborator there: the Aragonese Martín Pérez de Oliván, who had been a student at the college of San Clemente and

“Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos,” 28: 148–9, and *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 128r. This detail confirms, in my opinion, the hypothesis that Castillo had had a first reconciliation, probably in secret, in Seville in the presence of Manrique.

197 In April 1532 Quiñones wrote to the *comendador* of the city of León: “I, sir, usually spend five hundred ducats every month to support poor Spaniards. And not relatives or acquaintances, for I swear to Your Lordship that of every one hundred who are with me, I do not know ninety. But since I came to Rome at a time when Spaniards were lurking in the shadows of roofs, I had to shelter them under mine” (dated in Rome, 12 April 1532: AGS, *Estado*, leg. 319, fol. 12.) This explanation may have been conditioned by the Supreme Council's attempts to locate Castillo and the discovery that he had stayed for a time in the cardinal's own house. See the letter from the Council of the Inquisition to Aguinaga in June 1532: “In the matter of that person about whom we wrote you and you replied that he is not to be found, hearing of what the ambassador spoke of with His Holiness, it became known here that he had been in Paris and went from there to Bologna, and then lord of Ayerbe wrote to this Council that he had learned that he was in that court and had joined the household of the Lord Cardinal of Santa Cruz”: AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 321, fol. 63. Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 478.

198 *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 354r: “and Vergara also told this witness that Juan de Valdés and Master Pascual were in Rome too, and that perhaps they would leave together and that God would have mercy on them. And that the said Dr. Vergara would write to Pascual and Valdés to tell them that they should leave that place”: quoted in Bataillon, “Introduction,” 90.

199 On Pascual's return to Spain, see documents among the Inquisition papers reproduced by Bataillon in *Erasmus y España*, 476–7. Pascual would later return to Rome, where he died in 1553.

was brother-in-law to the Supreme councillor Juan García. He was destined for a brilliant career with the Inquisition.²⁰⁰ Meanwhile Valdés had thought of joining his brother in Vienna, but went first to Mantua and later to Bologna, from where he wrote to Juan Dantisco in January 1533. He probably coincided there with Castillo one last time before the latter's arrest a few days later, in February; after that he spent a few more months in Rome.

News of Juan del Castillo's arrest reached the Peninsula in pieces. Vergara referred to his presumed capture in four of the six letters that he sent to his stepbrother Bernardino de Tovar in prison.²⁰¹ It was said that he had disembarked in Barcelona, but the information was confused: "I informed you the day before yesterday about Master Castillo that there is a letter from Bologna of 22 February saying that he was arrested there by the Inquisition by an order from here and by order of the pope and the emperor, who was there at the time, and that I thought he would be brought here, etc. So it is not known if Castillo has come here or not, and I prefer that we not know it."²⁰²

This correspondence was written with invisible ink and orange juice on the paper wrappings of some foods sent to the prisoner. The last letter that Tovar received offered hope for the fate of the fugitives and the prisoner. Dated on 17 May 1533, it stated: "The main thing reported is of how they arrested a certain Master Castillo, brother of Lucena, in Bologna by order of the pope, urged by the emperor *quorum uterque ibi tunc aderat*. I do not know if you are acquainted with him. I thought that they had brought him to that prison (it's a joke, he has not come to Spain)."²⁰³ But Vergara's optimism was groundless;

200 Bataillon, "Honneur et Inquisition," 13–4, and *Erasmus y España*, 479, with mention of a letter from the Supreme Council of 4 February 1533 to Hugo Urriés, lord of Ayerbe, the Inquisition's prosecutor in Italy: "In a separate letter we have written to you about how useful it would be to God's service for Master Castillo to be arrested and sent to the Inquisition in Barcelona or Valencia, that he might be brought here from there. We know by some accounts that he is at the University of Bologna and teaches Greek." Martín Pérez de Oliván had been a student at San Clemente in Bologna from 1525 to 1533. Shortly afterward, probably because of services rendered to the Supreme Council, he was named Inquisitor of Navarre, Cordoba, and Zaragoza. He was a friend and correspondent of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, his fellow student at San Clemente in Bologna. See more information about this figure in Losada, *Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda* and Pérez Martín, *Proles Aegidiana*, no. 716, 663–4. On his participation in Inquisition trials against the school of Juan de Ávila, see Pastore, "Tra conversos, gesuiti e Inquisizione," 225–31, and on his juridical treatises Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 224–7.

201 They are published in an appendix by Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 515–8.

202 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 517.

203 Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 517. Tovar would die a prisoner of the Holy Office on 14 February 1534: Ortega Costa, "Tribulaciones de un tribunal," 544, note.

the Inquisition had intercepted his most recent letters and was preparing his arrest on new grounds. In addition to the many damning facts arrayed against him were grave charges of acting as an "impeder" of the Holy Office, corrupter of officials, and "creator of heretics."

Castillo landed in Spain as a prisoner the following June, along with the emperor and his train. It was then that he wrote the long confession of his heretical history to his former protector Alonso Manrique, who had gone to Barcelona to meet the emperor and court after their four years' absence. Later he repented of his action, declaring that he had written "more than he should" and accused himself "more than he needed to." He obviously hoped at the time that a frank, spontaneous confession would have a positive effect on his case, as had happened before. He was soon disappointed. During his transfer from Barcelona to Toledo, perhaps realizing that he had already lost, he attempted suicide. He would make more attempts during his long months of imprisonment in Toledo.

In a desperate effort to save him, Petronila insisted throughout his trial that her brother was insane, citing his many suicide attempts; this persuaded the Inquisitors to suspend the proceedings, but only for a short time. Many witnesses could confirm his condition, for the story had spread throughout Toledo and Alcalá.²⁰⁴ Petronila could only state it before the tribunal, insisting that her brother was sincere, open, and generous, but also fragile and easily led. She alleged that wicked friends had exerted a bad influence on him.

204 Interrogation of 3 September 1535: "This witness said she had been told that her brother Juan del Castillo was out of his mind, and that when he was being brought as a prisoner to this Inquisition he had already done mad things, and had done the same while in prison ...; whom did she hear this from [?]; she does not know; ... where [?]... she said that she heard it spoken in Alcalá and Toledo, and she has not heard it said that her brother Master Juan del Castillo was mad except for what he had done during the journey, like a man out of his senses. When asked what he had done or said she said that she was told he had wanted to kill himself, and she does not know who told her. She claimed to have heard it said by others" ("Dixo que porque se lo avian dicho a esta declarante que el dicho Juan del Castillo su hermano estava fuera de seso y que trayendole preso quando le traxeron a esta Ynquisiçion avia hecho locuras y despues que esta preso avia hecho lo mismo...; a quien lo oyo deçir; no lo sabe;...donde:...dixo que en Alcalá y en Toledo lo oyo dezir esta declarante y esta declarante no a oydo dezir que el dicho maestro Juan del Castillo su hermano estuviese loco salvo que el dicho maestro avia fecho por el camino cosas de hombre fuera de seso; preguntada que cosas son las que hazia o dezia, dixo que le dixerón que se avia querido matar y que no sabe quien se lo dixo. Dixo que lo avia oydo dezir a otros"); AHN, *Inqu.*, leg. 111, exp. 14.

Petronila's lucid behavior during the trial exempted her in part from the accusations against her, but it had no effect on her brother's case. That continued, amid wrenching sessions of torture and proclamations of new charges, until it concluded with a death sentence at the end of 1536. Castillo, who had never expressed doubt or showed repentance, was consigned to the secular arm. Declared an impenitent heretic, he was burned alive at the stake on 18 March 1537.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ See Selke, "Vida y muerte," 136. This author modifies the date given in Longhurst, "The Alumbrados of Toledo," 249, of "some time during the early months of 1535," based on a bill of payment from the bishop who had conducted Castillo's formal defrocking. Further, during Petronila's trial, which took place entirely in 1535, references to her brother describe him as still alive.

In Talavera's Shadow: Juan de Valdés's *Diálogo de Doctrina Christiana* (1529)

1 Cuenca (1491–1512): Conversos and Inquisitors¹

Alfonso and Juan de Valdés were born in Cuenca into a large, wealthy family of *conversos*.² They were homozygotic and monoamniotic twins and they were born wrapped in the caul (amniotic sac), a rare event which is considered a very good omen.³ Their father Hernando de Valdés, councilman (*regidor*) of the city and its representative (*procurador*) before the Cortes of Castile, was one of the most prominent members of Cuenca's *converso* oligarchy. With his old friend and distant relative Andrés Cabrera, first Marquis of Moya, he formed part of the powerful group that had grown around the bishop of Cuenca, Lope de Barrientos; Hernando's father, Andrés de Villanueva, had lived in Barrientos's household.⁴ The bishop, a leading actor in the politics of fifteenth-century Castile, had joined Alonso de Cartagena in vigorous protest against the purity-of-blood statutes promulgated in Toledo.⁵

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- 1 For an overview of Cuenca at this period, see Nalle, *God in La Mancha*. On city strife and the city's centers of power, see Quintanilla Raso, "Política ciudadana."
 - 2 The earliest reliable documentation on the Valdés family was collected by Caballero, *Alonso y Juan de Valdés*, and by Montesinos in his introductions to A. Valdés, *Diálogo de las cosas ocurridas* and *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón* and J. Valdés, *Cartas inéditas*. See also Meseguer Fernández, "Nuevos datos"; Martínez Millán, *Los hermanos conquenses*; Donald and Lázaro, *Alfonso de Valdés*. I particularly recommend Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," for its depth of detail; this scholar has dug deeply into Cuenca's Inquisitorial and municipal archives and made maximal use of a revealing document first identified by Bataillon: the *Ejecutoria de hidalguía*, obtained by Andrés de Valdés from the Cancillería of Granada in 1540. He has also studied the trial records of Juan Alonso de Valdés, nephew of Juan and Alfonso and son of Andrés, from 1578, allowing him to correct many earlier false statements. See also Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," and "Los hermanos Valdés."
 - 3 An Inquisitorial trial says that Hernando, their father, kept the caul with great joy and pride. Jiménez Monteserín, "Los hermanos Valdés."
 - 4 In 1511 a witness testified that he "had seen Andrés de Villanueva, the father of Hernando de Valdés, living with Bishop Lope de Barrientos as a confidant, squire, and *hidalgo*": Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," 51.
 - 5 On Barrientos and the report that Fernán Díaz de Toledo wrote at his behest, see Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza*, 59–60.

The Cabrera and Valdés families, together with most of the city's wealthy *conversos*, had allied themselves with Barrientos when Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, a royal official (*guarda mayor*) in Cuenca, questioned the bishop's authority in 1447. In the following years, as tensions grew between the pro- and anti-*converso* factions, this alliance was strengthened and supported by Barrientos's successors, Fray Alonso de Burgos and Alonso de Fonseca, both of whom favored the *conversos*. The bishops of Cuenca, particularly Fonseca, provided Hernando de Valdés with firm support, especially in the early years of the Inquisition trials.⁶

Andrés Cabrera enjoyed a rapid rise and brilliant career. After moving to court and being named a royal steward (*mayordomo*), he was granted the Moya title with the support of Beltrán de la Cueva, Master of the Order of Santiago, and the Marquis of Villena. His place at the court of the Catholic monarchs was assured by his marriage to Beatriz de Bobadilla, an intimate of then-Princess Isabella, and by his support for Isabella during the civil war.⁷ Hernando de Valdés must also have had access to the court for some time; around 1482 he was named a councilman of Cuenca. Likewise at least three of his sons—Andrés (the oldest), Francisco, and Alfonso—enjoyed the support of the Marquis of Moya in their early forays into political life.

In 1486 Hernando attended the Cortes in Tordesillas as representative for Cuenca, and twenty years later he was present at the Cortes of Valladolid-Salamanca where the succession to the throne was decided. Like most *conversos* of his generation, he sided with Philip the Fair against Ferdinand of Aragon; upon Philip's sudden death, he openly declared himself for Queen Joanna and against a co-regency with her father. His opposition to Ferdinand was so brazen that the city council of Cuenca recalled him and revoked his authority.⁸

During the years of the succession crisis, the Valdés family followed the path of many prominent *conversos* who, having ascended in society through loyal service to the Catholic monarchs, were sidelined by Ferdinand's new policies. By fighting Ferdinand's succession to the throne of Castile at the tumultuous Cortes of 1506, Hernando found himself in the same position as virtually all

6 In one of the many cases opened against *conversos* between 1506 and 1513, a witness told the Inquisitors that "at that time, all those mentioned in his recent statement were so close to Bishop Alonso de Fonseca that the Inquisitors did nothing but what he ordered; and this witness, seeing that the bishop belonged entirely to the Inquisition and that those persons were so much on his side, did not dare to say anything": ADC *Inq.*, leg. 50, exp. 767, fol. 27r. Cited in Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," 61.

7 See the profile of Cabrera in Rábade Obradó, *Una élite de poder*, 173–226, and the accompanying bibliography.

8 Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," 56.

conversos who had prospered in Isabella's orbit. They had supported the cause of Philip the Fair in the face of Ferdinand's limitless power, the ever-growing influence of Cardinal Cisneros, and the shameless deployment of the Holy Office. When their plan was frustrated, they continued to work for Joanna's succession.

In Cuenca, unlike in other cities, the initial activities of the Inquisition tribunal scarcely affected the *converso* oligarchy – perhaps because the bishop's faction had been so strong, so *pro-converso*, and so opposed to the Tribunal throughout the second half of the fifteenth century. At least this is what we infer from the testimony of a witness after trials of the most distinguished *conversos* had begun in earnest: he claimed that the same accusations had already been made and ignored in 1490–1491.⁹

Hernando de Valdés was almost implicated in one of those early trials. His wife's brother Hernando de la Barrera was condemned and burned at the stake in 1491, but the Inquisitors deliberately ignored accusations of judaizing practices against Valdés. We know from testimony offered in 1526 that Hernando had attended "Jewish gatherings" (*conventículos judaicos*) at the home of Pero Suárez de Toledo, a prominent fellow townsman and *converso*.¹⁰ He had also drawn on his friendship with Bishop Fonseca to ensure that some of his relatives could be reconciled from their judaizing activities without involving the Inquisition:

[The witness] also said that about forty years ago, he and councilman [H]ernando de Valdés and councilman Alonso Álvarez had come riding up to the bishop's door. When they arrived Alonso Álvarez went in first; and [Hernando] de Valdés said to this witness, "Excuse me, sir, I am going with Alonso Álvarez to see Bishop Fonseca." And this witness asked why they were going, and Valdés replied, "My mother has done some things that I regret, and we are going to the bishop to find a remedy." And this witness heard at home that Valdés's mother-in-law had also been reconciled with the bishop.¹¹

9 See above note 5.

10 ADC, *Inq.*, leg. 90, exp. 1325, fols. 533r-533v, "Proceso de Diego de Alcalá"; and ADC, leg. 50, exp. 767, fol. 52v, "Proceso de Pero Suarez de Toledo." Cited in Jiménez Montesión, "La familia Valdés," 59.

11 "Item dixo que habrá cerca de cuarenta años que un día venían este confesante y Fernando de Valdés, regidor, y Alonso Alvarez, regidor, cabalgando fasta la puerta del Obispo y llegando allí el dicho Alonso Alvarez se entró delante, que tenía arrendado el obispado del obispo Fonseca, y el dicho Ferrando de Valdés dijo a este confesante: 'Señor, perdóneme vuestra merced, que yo voy con Alonso Alvarez al obispo Fonseca.' Y díjole este confesante

Very little happened in consequence, and the *converso* elite of Cuenca was unaffected by the early Inquisition trials. But this was only a brief pause; Cuenca simply lagged behind cities such as Cordoba, Granada, and Valladolid.

In 1501, Cuenca's town council sent an appeal to the monarchs on behalf of those condemned by the Inquisition, asking that they be allowed to remove the *sambenitos* they had been forced to wear as a sign of their guilt.¹² Tensions between the council and the tribunal increased with the 1509 arrival of Inquisitor Antonio del Corro, an intimate of both Cisneros and King Ferdinand, to launch a new and much more violent series of trials. The following year Hernando de Valdés, a royal official and councilman, and the city's representatives to the Cortes of 1510 urged Cisneros and the other members to instruct the Cuenca Tribunal to proceed with greater "justice" and with "all pity and mercy" in its trials.¹³

In 1511 the city council sought an exemption from paying for the Inquisition's *auto-da-fé*, and in September of that year it complained to the court about the town's poor financial situation. Plague and hunger had forced many citizens to move elsewhere, but it was above all the Inquisition that brought Cuenca to ruin. Fear of arbitrary trials and persecutions had led many to flee, and even after the plague and famine eased, the city was slow to regain population. The council insisted that no economic growth was possible so long as the Inquisitors continued to extort money from persecuted *conversos*.¹⁴

The protest was similar to the one presented by Granada in 1510. Residents there had complained in the same terms about the Holy Office's negative effects on the economy of their city and its region. There were clear parallels between what was happening in Cuenca and what had already occurred in Granada and Cordoba, where Deza and King Ferdinand himself had encouraged Lucero to initiate trials; residents could only watch helplessly as the Tribunal of the Faith became an instrument of political power. A short time later, the tribunal received a petition on behalf of Alonso Carrillo y Mendoza, a recently condemned citizen of Cuenca, asking that his reputation be restored. The petition accused the Inquisitors of making false accusations and explicitly

que a qué iban. Y el dicho Valdés le respondió: 'Ha fecho mi madre algunas cosas que me pesa dello y vamos al obispo a remediallo.' Y que también oyó decir en su casa este confesante que se había reconciliado la suegra del dicho Valdés con el Obispo." This confession was offered on 18 November 1530 by Íñigo de la Muela during his Inquisition trial: ADC, *Inq.*, leg. 57, exp. 846, fol. 125r, cited in Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," 62.

12 ADC, leg. 216, exp. 1, fol. 115v: "Petición sobre los hábitos que traen los reconciliados." Cited in Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xxxiii.

13 Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xxxiii.

14 Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xxxiii.

referred to Lucero and events in Cordoba. The appeal claimed that, unjustified by theology, the tribunal used the term *conventículo* as a political weapon against *converso* urban elites that opposed Ferdinand openly:

Your Reverences should give no credit whatever to those witnesses nor to anyone who has spoken about these so-called *conventículos*, because Your Reverences know that these so-called *conventículos* were invented ... as people did in Valladolid and Cordoba in Lucero's time, against all the good and prominent people of this city.¹⁵

Among the broad range of urban protests against the Inquisition were actions by some of the most prominent families in Cuenca, including Hernando de Valdés and his son Andrés. In 1512, while Hernando was away at court pleading the cause of the city's *conversos*,¹⁶ his son tried to intimidate the local Tribunal of the Faith by bursting into the building with a group of armed men. As an Inquisitor would later complain,

I denounce and accuse Andrés de Valdés, a resident of this city of Cuenca here present, and I state that he, showing no fear of God and in order to insult and offend this Holy Office and dishonor and shame its ministers, with intent to impede its administration of justice, with other persons did maliciously enter this audience chamber to present a complaint not based on any cause or reason, which contains many ugly and scandalous matters And he entered the chamber shamelessly, and though the Inquisitor ordered him to a chair on one side he ignored the order maliciously and refused it, going to sit next to the Inquisitor. And he swaggered and boasted elsewhere in the city about what he had done: he came into the chamber armed, leaving outside armed men who had come with him and the others ... And he also said many times and in many places that the leaders of this Holy Office do many false and bad things, and that the Inquisitors inflict great and harsh punishments and make prisoners confess things that they never did, menacing them with

15 "Vuestras Reverencias no deben dar crédito ninguno a los dichos testigos ni a todos los que más han dicho sobre estos que dicen conventículos, porque saben Vuestras Reverencias que estos que dicen los inventó ... como hicieron los de Valladolid y Córdoba en el tiempo de Lucero contra todos los buenos y principales desta ciudad": Jiménez Montesión, "La familia Valdés," 62.

16 In Pedro Mártir de Anglería's first mention of Alfonso de Valdés, he introduces him as "a very promising young man" whose father was well known at court: Anglería, *Epistolario* 4: ep. 689 (16 September 1520).

black figures and masks, and that they frighten women and strip them and slash their undergarments from top to bottom with their swords And he said that Inquisitor Corro was a villainous rogue and a thieving ruffian, who was starving when he took on this office and now is rich and overflowing with goods he has stolen; and that if it were not for his position he would lay hands on him. And that [Corro] was more of a heretic than the people he burned, and had committed two thousand dishonest and evil acts. Also he boasted of having sent a letter to his father [Hernando] de Valdés at court which, if its contents were known, would show that [Corro] deserved burning. Also he said that the Inquisitors were greedy sacristans and if it were not for their present jobs they would die of hunger; in order not to leave here they manage to find heretics where none exist, and they make witnesses confess by force, subjecting them to torture. And that they summon those who had been reconciled and make them betray innocent people...¹⁷

In calling Corro a thief, a ruffian, and a greater heretic than those he was burning at the stake, Andrés was quoting Pero López de Soria's favorite accusations. He also claimed that the Inquisitor was exploiting the privileges of his office so that no one in the city could lift a hand against him. Resentment against the "greedy sacristans" who fed off denunciations and persecutions of *conversos* was reaching dangerous proportions, and Andrés hinted at the contents of a letter that could condemn Corro himself.

It may have been on this occasion, or slightly later, that Corro and Mexía were recused. As one might expect, little was gained by the protests from Cuenca and the correspondence between father and son. In May 1513 the Supreme Council of the Inquisition – moved perhaps by pressure from Hernando de Valdés but certainly by that of more influential figures – ordered an "Inquisitorial visit" to the city, a sort of inspection of the local tribunal. An external commission was charged with analyzing the current cases and the actions of their judges. It seems to have found no irregularity in the conduct of the two Inquisitors. Shortly afterward, Hernando and Andrés de Valdés were arrested by the Inquisition and found guilty of being "makers of heretics" and "impeders of the Holy Office"; both were required to declare their offenses at a public *auto-da-fé* in 1513.

17 ADC, *Inq.*, leg. 107, exp. 1513, fols. 3r-3v. Cited in Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xxxi.

We sense an unfocused reflection of these painful events in the writings of Alfonso and Juan de Valdés. Born between 1494 and 1496, they grew up amid the struggles among *conversos*; their adolescence and early adulthood were marked by tensions in the city and the arrest and trial of their father and older brother. Neither Alfonso or Juan ever publicized his *converso* status, unlike their uncle Hernando de la Barrera who, “when his neighbors said that he was a converted Jew,” replied proudly, “let those rascals say what they like – I swear to God that the best thing I have in my body is my *converso* streak.”¹⁸ Their brother Andrés, too, declared in 1513 that he “would not leave off being a *converso* for anything, because that was what made him a generous man who could earn his bread and own an estate.”¹⁹ For many centuries the only detectable sign of the brothers’ *converso* origins was Alfonso’s bitter polemic with Baldassar Castiglione, with its allusions to honor lost “before my birth” and his leanings toward “Hebrew matters rather than Roman ones.”²⁰ The brothers’ attitude was that of someone who, through a process of sublimation, embraces a religiosity in which faith in Christ and the name “Christian” can remove any barriers erected between men on earth.

The first hint comes in the invective that opens Alfonso’s *Dialogue of Mercury and Charon* (*Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*), which deplores the custom of establishing differences between “lineages.” Significantly, the paragraph was omitted from one manuscript:²¹ “In many places I found people censured for stressing differences in lineages, with some thinking themselves better than others, and I came to understand that the only true nobility is that which is obtained through virtue, and on the other hand that vileness is that which

18 ADC, *Inq.*, leg. 5, exp. 106, cited in Jiménez Monteserín, “La familia Valdés,” 69 n. 84.

19 Jiménez Monteserín, “La familia Valdés,” 69 n. 84.

20 “Respuesta del conde Baltasar Castiglione, nuncio en España, a la carta de Valdés de agosto de 1529,” in Valdés, *Obras*, appendix III (quotations at 563 and 549 respectively). Juan and Alfonso’s reputation as *conversos* must have continued to grow in Castile. Fray Domingo de Rojas was condemned to death for “Lutheranism” in Valladolid in 1559; in trying to defend his former teacher Bartolomé de Carranza, accused of having connived with Juan de Valdés, Rojas expressed his incredulity that an experienced theologian like Carranza “would have gone as an apprentice to a declared cape-and-sword layman asking for guidance in studying Holy Scripture”: cited in Tellechea Idígoras, “Juan de Valdés y Bartolomé de Carranza,” 412.

21 This passage was excised from Escorial ms. N II.24, on which Alcalá based the critical edition I am quoting from. The passage appears in A. de Valdés, *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, 17 and (in English) *Dialogue of Mercury and Charon*, 11.

is possessed by vice.”²² These are almost the same words and tone used by Hernando and Andrés de Valdés in their complaint to the Holy Office in Cuenca in 1513: they rejected the Inquisitors’ habit of stirring up doubts about “lineages,” and denounced practices that encouraged hatred among Christians and suspicion of all New Christians.²³

In the corrupt world that Mercury describes to Charon, there was a land of recent converts, but they had been ruined by the terrible example given by those who should have accepted and strengthened their faith: “I went to a kingdom recently conquered by Christians, and the newly converted uttered to me a thousand complaints, saying that from the Christians they had learned robbing, stealing, engaging in litigation, and deceiving.”²⁴ The allusions to recent converts and their complaints against the Christians take us back to the Spain of the three religions, and seem almost to invoke the “New Kingdom” of Granada, where the Imperial court had recently found deplorable conditions.

In this work by Alfonso, the watchful and obsessive eye of an anonymous Inquisitor of the Supreme Tribunal identified traces of the *conversos*’ simmering anger against the Holy Office. When Dr. Vélez wrote his censor’s report on the *Diálogos*, someone added in the margins that the author was “a person better versed in humanism than in Holy Scripture, for in speaking of it he proves

22 “En muchas partes hallaba reprehendidos los que hazian diferencia de linajes, teniéndose en más los unos que los otros, dando a entender ser verdadera nobleza solamente la que con virtud se alcança, y, por el contrario, vileza la que de vicios es poseída”: Valdés, *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*, 17.

23 “Also, with the enmity that Your Reverences hold against the prisoners and their families you have caused, and cause, doubts about lineages, by joining together and collecting opinions and oaths by persons who are enemies and opponents of the prisoners and their families, treating them with great partiality ... and what is worse, causing division and separation within our Holy Faith between groups and individuals, against all justice and truth” (“Item con la dicha enemiga que vuestras reverencias tienen a los dichos presos y a sus parientes han fecho y hacen disturbios de linajes, juntándose y tomando pareceres y votos de personas enemigas y contrarios de los dichos presos y sus parientes, teniendo mucha parcialidad en ellos ... y lo peor, haciendo división y apartamiento en nuestra Santa Fe de gente a gente y de personas a personas, contra derecho y verdad”): quoted in Jiménez Monteserín, “La familia Valdés,” 68.

24 “Fuime a un reyno que diz que nuevamente avían los cristianos conquistados, e diéronme dellos mill queexas los nuevamente convertidos, diziendo que dellos avían aprendido a hurtar y robar, a pleytear y a trampear”: Alfonso de Valdés, *Obras*, 374. Here the readings of the Escorial ms. and the “Gothic” one used by Montesinos coincide; *Dialogue of Mercury and Charon*, 15.

himself undevout and even scandalous," especially at a time when "all people, even women, consider themselves theologians,"²⁵

For it seems that he cautiously says "wolves" for ministers of the Holy Office (whom *conversos* usually call wolves), and even thieves. And because he says that it never occurred to them that it is commonly said among the *conversos*, and because he says that they try to condemn [people] as heretics without any other judgment than that of the Holy Office.²⁶

Juan de Valdés, who lived through the persecution of both the *conversos* and the *alumbrados*, found the real world his brother alluded to in Charon's hell even harder to accept. Even so, among his *One Hundred and Ten Divine Considerations* (*Ciento diez divinas consideraciones*), we find his conviction that no one should be forced in matters of faith. "I ought to guard myself as from fire, against persecuting any one in any manner, pretending in that way to serve God."²⁷ In his commentary on Saint Paul, he laid out a path of tolerance and progress that, while revealing a strong *alumbrado* esoterism, can also be read in the context of the Inquisitorial Spain that he was forced to abandon after 1529.

Both Alfonso and Juan had firmly opposed the standard Old Christian faith that consisted of empty words. Faced with judges or with neighbors who might become witnesses, Christians performed ostentatious rites and externalized their devotion – acts that the brothers rejected even though their father had fallen back on them when accused of judaizing practices.²⁸

25 "[P]ersona bien docto en las cosas de humanidad mas que en la Sagrada Escritura y en lo que cerca della habla se muestra yndevoto y aun escandaloso todos presumen de theologos hasta las mugeres": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520-1, exp. 4. Quoted from the original document; it is also edited by Paz y Meliá as an appendix to Valdés, *Obras*, 589-94.

26 "Porque paresçe que cautelosamente dize lobos por los ministros del Santo Ofiçio a los quales suelen los conversos llamar lobos y aun rrobadores y porque dize que nunca le passo por pensamiento que es comun platica entre los conversos y porque dize que le procuran de los condenar por hereges no aviendo otro juizio para esto sino lo del Santo Ofiçio": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520-1, exp. 4.

27 "[D]ebo cuidarme como del fuego de perseguir a ningún hombre de cualquier manera, pretendiendo servir a Dios con esto": Consideration LXXVI, "What constitutes offence, and in what manner Christians ought to regulate themselves in relation thereto," Valdés, *One Hundred and Ten Divine Considerations*, 440-1.

28 A citizen of Cuenca claimed to have seen Hernando de Valdés praying "ostentatiously" on a high rock where everyone could see him. The witness, probably prodded by the Inquisition, added that Hernando had not swayed back and forth while praying as judaizers did, but might have been speaking in Hebrew: Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," 65-6.

An anticipated political change opened new perspectives to the Valdés family. In early 1516, Andrés was in Flanders as the Marquis of Moya's representative to pay homage to the new Emperor Charles v.²⁹ The death of Ferdinand the Catholic and the accession of Philip the Fair's son had initiated a new era for many members of Philip's party, and Spanish *conversos* were swept by a wave of optimism. A delegation of *conversos* had already sent a petition for reform of the Holy Office to chancellor Jean Sauvage, who had agreed to it.³⁰ The Valdés family, too, shared a feeling of hope with others who had suffered from Ferdinand's rule. These included the diffuse *converso*-Talaveran faction that had formed around Isabella; those who eventually threw in their lot with Philip the Fair; and all the *conversos* who, though despising Ferdinand's policies, had been forced to accept the last ten years of his reign in Castile in the name of a daughter whom he had declared mad.

Jiménez Monteserín has speculated³¹ that Ramírez de Villaescusa, Bishop of Cuenca, introduced "his countryman" Alfonso de Valdés to court, but Alfonso might have arrived there solely on the strength of his father's connections. Still, even indirect support from the bishop might explain the protection that the court chronicler, Pedro Mártir de Anglería, extended to Alfonso from the beginning. The notion that Pedro Mártir could have been Alfonso's first tutor is suggestive but highly improbable.³²

As the extensive correspondence between Anglería and Villaescusa makes clear, the two had been friends since their days in the orbit of Hernando de Talavera in Granada, to whom both had been very close.³³ There they had served as, respectively, canon and dean of the cathedral chapter; they then joined the court of Prince John³⁴ and, on his death, entered the service of Joanna and Philip of Burgundy. The crisis that began in 1506 found them by the couple's side as their active defenders and collaborators. Both remained with Joanna, hoping to the end that she would ascend immediately to the throne. Anglería describes in letters how the "triumvirate" of himself, Diego de Muros, and Ramírez de Villaescusa accompanied the body of Philip the Fair and his

29 Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xli n. 103.

30 Serrano, "Primeras negociaciones de Carlos V." I discussed this topic in Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*: see more specific bibliography there on the period of reforms attempted by the Inquisition Tribunal of 1516–1520.

31 Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xlviii–xlix.

32 Valdés, *Obras*, xii.

33 On their "Talaverism" and its ideological and political implications, see Olivari, "Hernando de Talavera" esp. 41–2.

34 On this period, see the detailed article by González Novalín, "Pedro Mártir de Anglería."

young, distraught widow Joanna; this was a metaphor for a political faction that was already disintegrating.³⁵

Villaescusa and Anglería kept a low profile during the years of Ferdinand and Cisneros, though Anglería never ceased to criticize the Franciscan for his uncharitable nature. He disapproved of the opportunism of Villaescusa, who managed to complete his *cursus honorum* under the patronage of both men.³⁶ Hernando de Valdés shared the two friends' anti-Ferdinand and anti-Cisneros views, and all three hoped that when the Flemish dynasty acceded to the throne, reform of the Inquisition would follow.

By around 1520 the storm had abated. The tense period of the *Comunidades* revolt gave the Valdés family a chance to consolidate their strong position. In 1506, by a decree from Philip the Fair, Hernando had ceded the office of *regidor* to his first-born, Andrés, and the son spent the years 1516 to 1520 in the new Flemish court. Because Cuenca had wavered in its policies during the revolt, the loyalty of its city council could be questioned; but having been exiled by the rebels, father and son appeared unshakable in their fealty to the emperor and maintained their privileged status.³⁷ Another son, Francisco, had been named a page (*contin*). Alfonso entered the emperor's service and became famous for a long letter to Pedro Mártir de Anglería in which he described the Lutheran situation in Germany. Anglería made sure that it was widely circulated.

I do not share Crews's belief that the youngest son, Juan de Valdés, sympathized with the *comuneros* under the protection of the Marquis of Villena.³⁸

35 Anglería used the term "triumvirate" himself: *Epistolario*, 2: 170 (ep. 329). For an overview of the different power groups and political alliances during those years, see Giménez Fernández, *Bartolomé de las Casas*, and Martínez Millán, "Las élites de poder."

36 Anglería, *Epistolario* 2: 279ff. (ep. 413) and 293ff. (ep. 421); 3: 221ff. (ep. 568) and 251ff. (ep. 581).

37 On Cuenca's ambiguous stance during the *Comunidades*, see Pérez, *La revolución* esp. 424–5. Jiménez Monteserín, "La familia Valdés," interprets the revolt as a prolongation of the interfamily wars that had begun in the second half of the fifteenth century. See also the interpretations by Gutiérrez Nieto, *Las Comunidades*, 188, and Haliczzer, *The Comuneros*, 70–2.

38 Crews, "Juan de Valdés and the Comunero Revolt." While the first part of his argument is generally convincing and agrees with my own view, his notion of Valdés as a *comunero* is inconsistent. It is based on the supposed pro-*comunero* leanings of the Marquis of Villena (an assumption widely refuted in studies of the revolt), arising from an unfounded conviction that Juan de Valdés was in Escalona in 1520 and the assumption that Valdés made his "protector's" ideas his own. Crews makes a series of very doubtful inferences: I believe it is an over-generalization to assume a connection between *alumbrados* and *comuneros* simply because they shared a desire for "liberty," with the sole purpose of enrolling Valdés among the former. It is ingenuous to claim that Valdés, in his Italian period, believed in a "civic humanism" based on a generic and ill-defined Italian republicanism. Valdés's ironic

I hold, rather, that the success of the Valdés family was firmly linked to the Hapsburg cause from 1516 onward. This was the year when Andrés suggested adding the imperial eagle on a field of gold to the family escutcheon, as a symbol of adherence to the future emperor.³⁹ His brother Alfonso would later help forge the myth of Charles V as the emperor of peace and the savior announced by centuries of prophecies.⁴⁰

In creating this myth, Alfonso wove together political and religious themes that he associated with an ideal of Spanish hegemony, Christian unity, and reform. The report that he wrote the day after the victory at Pavia, which was also widely read, ended with a prophetic vision:

It seems that God has miraculously granted this victory to the emperor not only so that he may defend Christendom and resist the power of the Turk if he should dare to challenge it, but so that once these civil wars are concluded (for we may call them so, being between Christians) he may search out the Turks and Moors in their own lands and, exalting our holy Catholic faith as his ancestors did, recover the empire of Constantinople and the holy places of Jerusalem, which [the Turk] for our sins now occupies. So that, as many have prophesied, all the world may receive our holy Catholic faith under that most Christian prince. And that the words of our Redeemer may be fulfilled: *Fiet unum ovile et unus pastor* ["And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd": John 10:16].⁴¹

mention, in his *Diálogo de la lengua*, of the saying "Soplará el odrero y levantaráse Toledo" does not in any way mean that he felt "sympathy for a civic patriotism which held the rights of the republic as being equal to the rights of the crown" (Crews, "Juan de Valdés and the Comunero Revolt," 243–244). In Toledan folklore the *odrero* was associated with a bloody assault on *conversos* by New Christians in that city in 1449, and the promulgation of the first purity-of-blood statutes; all this was very far from "civic humanism."

39 *Testamento de Andrés de Valdés* fol. 4r; cited in Jiménez Monteserín, "Introducción," xli n. 103.

40 The "messianization" of Charles V has been the topic of many studies, especially since Menéndez Pidal's reply to Brandi and Rassow: Menéndez Pidal, *Idea imperial de Carlos V*, with a viewpoint later adopted by Castro in his "Antonio de Guevara." On Gattinara's special view, see Headley, "Rhetoric and Reality." On the prophecy of Charles as the second Charlemagne, see the classic Yates, *Astraea*; Niccoli, *Prophecy and people*, esp. 222ff. On Ferdinand of Aragon, see Durán and Requesens, *Profecía i poder*, 29.

41 "Parece que Dios milagrosamente a dado esta vitoria al emperador para que pueda no solamente defender la cristiandad y resistir a la potencia del turco si ossare acometerla, mas assossegadas essas guerras civiles, que ansi se ven pues son entre cristianos, yr a buscar los turcos y moros en sus tierras y ensalzando nuestra sancta fe católica como sus pasados hizieron cobrar el imperio de Constantinopla y la casa santa de Jerusalem que por nuestros pecados tiene ocupada. Para que como de muchos esta profetizado debaxo

The conquest of Jerusalem and the struggle against the Turk, together with the rebirth of the Crusades and Christendom under a single sovereign: Valdés knew how to pluck the strings of old passions that had fed the dreams of Ferdinand and Isabella and been reborn with the conquest of Oran. But he also knew how to exhort Europe to rally around Charles v just when the Turkish menace was increasing. On the eve of the fall of Budapest and the sack of Rome, Alfonso articulated the hopes for peace and unity expressed in the Gospel of John. At the same time, between the lines, he suggested a new opportunity for those who – like the Spanish *conversos* and Cartagena, Lucena, and López de Soria – interpreted Jesus's words as a promise of equality. Two years later, the sack of Rome and his two *Diálogos* allowed Alfonso to explore the other avenue already opened by Juan de Lucena in his own invective *Diálogo*: Spanish anticurialism.⁴²

2 Alcalá

During Alfonso de Valdés's brilliant ascent through the imperial chancellery under the protection of the Italian humanist Pedro Mártir de Anglería, his younger brother Juan was taking his first tentative steps among the nobility of Castile. In about 1523 he arrived in Escalona to enter the service of the Marquis of Villena, Diego López Pacheco, a well-known protector of *conversos* and spiritual seekers (*espirituales*). The Marquis's fortress, which had passed from Álvaro de Luna to Diego's ancestor Juan Pacheco, became the center of an intense religious life.

The Observant Franciscan friars under Villena's direct protection had attracted the attention of all Castile through the prophecies, visions, and ecstatic states that burgeoned behind their monastery's walls. In the year of Juan de Valdés's arrival, Fray Francisco de Ocaña had preached the urgent necessity of Church reform, calling on his hearers to expel its leaders "like swine."⁴³ The friar declared himself the head of an ecclesiastical reform that would be led by Villena and also include Juan de Olmillos, the Franciscan prior of Escalona, and Francisca Hernández. This movement assigned the Marquis

dese cristianissimo principe todo el mundo reciba nuestra sancta fe católica. Y se cumplan las palabras de nuestro redemptor: Fiet unum ovile et unus pastor": *Relación de las nuevas de Italia*, in Caballero, *Alonso y Juan de Valdés*, appendix, and Valdés, *Obras*, 37–46. See the commentary by Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 226–8.

42 Longhurst, *Erasmus and the Spanish Inquisition*; Firpo, *Dal sacco di Roma all'Inquisizione*; Bollard de Broce, "Authorizing literary propaganda."

43 "Como puercos": Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185–6.

the task of proposing one of the two Franciscans for the papacy, while the *beata* from Salamanca was to undertake a complete revision of the Bible.⁴⁴ By 1524, Fray Francisco was predicting the defeat of Francis I of France, while Olmillos attracted large crowds who came to Escalona every Sunday to witness his states of ecstasy.⁴⁵ Although Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, who had been proselytizing in Escalona since 1519 at Villena's request, disapproved strongly, the Franciscan order and its provincial fully supported the dubious miracles of "the Marquis's saints."

An important but controversial piece of evidence placed Juan de Valdés at the Escalona court attending the lay sermons of Ruiz de Alcaraz, principal teacher of the *alumbrados*. This was the testimony of Alcaraz's wife, who twice during the trial urged the Inquisitors to question that "subordinate of the Marquis" because "from what he has said I believe that the intent of my husband's statements would become clear."⁴⁶ Another witness cited Juan as one of those who, persuaded by Alcaraz, attended mass "without praying aloud or bowing their heads at the name of Jesus Christ."⁴⁷

44 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185–6.

45 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185–6 and Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz," 4–5. On the Franciscans of Escalona, see Sarraute, *La vie franciscaine*, 211–4.

46 Serrano y Sanz, "Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz," 129–30. All Valdés scholars have examined carefully the testimony given by Alcaraz's wife.

47 Nieto has relied on Acevedo's deposition to place Juan de Valdés's birthdate in 1509, to justify his being called a boy or a youth (*muchacho*): Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, 170–2. But he has neglected to read Acevedo's testimony in full, and it does not support the claim that the *muchacho* is Juan de Valdés: "I did not think it right to communicate such things to unsuitable persons, like women and youths [*mochachos*]; and the persons with whom I spoke the most were my lord Marquis, and my lady, and Soria and Cuevas and Mari Ángel, my lady's waiting women, and Antonio de Baeza and his wife Doña Francisca, and Sebastián Gutiérrez, and Juan de Ayala, and San Román and Valdés and Marquina and Nogueroles and little Zurita and the widow of Espinosa, and a nurse of the *corregidor* Pedro de Barrios. And all those I have named I later saw after they had heard from Alcaraz at divine services, kneeling without praying aloud or bowing their heads at the name of Jesus Christ" ("Me pareció mal del comunicar semejantes cosas con personas yncapazes, como eran mogeres y mochachos; e las personas que yo supe con quien mas comunicaba eran el Marques mi señor, e mi señora, e con Soria e Cuevas e Mari Angel, mugeres de mi señora, e con Antonio de Baeça, e su muger doña Francisca, e con Sebastian Gutierrez, e con Juan de Ayala, e con San Roman e con Valdés e Marquina e Nogueroles e Çurítica e la de espinosa, viuda, y una ama del corregidor Pedro de Barrios; e a todos estos que he dicho les vi despues que comunicaron con Alcaraz estar en los divinos ofiços quando se hincavan de rodillas syn rezar exteriormente ni ynclinar la cabeça al nombre de Ihesu Christo"). It is also very doubtful whether, as Nieto assumes, Alcaraz's doctrines would make an especially deep impression on Valdés's mind while he was a mere adolescent. See, for example, Firpo's 1972 review ("Recensión") of Nieto. Jiménez Montesión showed

The years spent in Escalona, and Alcaraz's teachings, were fundamental to Juan de Valdés's spiritual education. He included the doctrine of *dexamiento*, "surrender of the will," in his first *Diálogo*, associating it with Luther's commentary on the Lord's Prayer. And he reworked Alcaraz's exultant conviction that "in man, the love of God is God" in a more gentle tone but with an equal belief that the Holy Spirit dwells in the man who is illuminated by faith. Like Alcaraz, Valdés rails against scholars (*letrados*) who could boast only of their "knowledge," not of any "experience" in "the business of Christianity." Against them Valdés sets up the possibility, or rather the duty, of perfection that any Christian can attain. A "spiritual man" is not a "friar or priest" but "one who feels and enjoys spiritual things and delights and reposes in them ... he who has placed all his love in God and is revived and preserved by the grace of the Holy Spirit, whether he is a lad, a married man, a cleric, or a friar."⁴⁸ At the same time Alcaraz incarnated the ideal of a lay, discreet, private religiosity, rooted in a conviction that shunned both the superstitions of the faithful and the fanatical, unbridled spectacles of the Franciscan *alumbrados* or the revelations of Francisca Hernández. This ideal left a deep impression on both Valdés brothers. We see it projected onto the good paterfamilias in Juan's *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* and the perfect layman in Alfonso's *Diálogo de Mercurio y Carón*.

We lose sight of Juan de Valdés between late 1524 and 1526. At the latter date he reappears among the students who studied Greek with Francisco de Vergara in Alcalá. He might have been avoiding the Inquisition trials of the Escalona group, or like his father Hernando, he might have joined the imperial court. He could have met his brother Alfonso there, since they certainly went together to Andalusia to the wedding of Charles V and Isabella of Portugal. In 1526 he may have been in Seville in March and Granada in the summer.⁴⁹ If that is so, the Granadan setting and the meeting with Pedro de Alba from his *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* would have drawn on episodes from his own life. What is

Nieto's hypothesis to be impossible through a complicated calculus of María de Barrera's fertile period. Further, as Márquez warned in his day in "Juan de Valdés," by Nieto's criterion Antonio de Baeza would have been only eleven when he was named governor of the Escalona fortress.

48 "... [E] que gusta y siente las cosas espirituales y en ellas se deleyta y descansa ... el que tiene puesto en Dios todo su amor y lo vivifica y conserva la gracia del espíritu santo, agora sea mancebo, casado, clérigo o frayle": Valdés, *Diálogo*, 48. For more on the relationship between Valdés and Alcaraz, see Selke, "Algunos datos nuevos"; Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*; Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, esp. 68–123; Firpo, *Juan de Valdés*, 13–6. For the polemic against *letrados*, see also Kinder, "Ydiota y sin letras."

49 The hypothesis is Bataillon's: *Erasmus y España*, 46–8.

known is that in the fall of 1526 he was enrolled at the Complutense University in Alcalá, where he was warmly welcomed by acquaintances of his brother Alfonso. His correspondence with Erasmus placed him at the epicenter of European cultural life, while granting him privileged status among his Spanish correspondents such as Francisco and Juan de Vergara and Diego Gracián de Alderete.

With the last named, a figure close to Juan del Castillo and the Hellenist circle in Alcalá, Juan de Valdés exchanged humorous letters about “matters that we need not read with a straight face.”⁵⁰ Their protagonists were ignorant clerics, like the one who preached that the archdeacon of Alcor, who had translated Erasmus’s wicked *Enchiridion* (“el Chicharrón”), had been swallowed up by the earth. Valdés countered that while this was true, the earth had regurgitated the man in Palencia, safe from that “deplorable group of friars.”

Juan also enjoyed an intimate relationship with the Vergara family of Toledo: with Francisco, the Hellenist at Alcalá, and with Juan, who kept his friend informed about the Inquisition’s activities. There were more dangerous friendships as well: with Bernardino de Tovar, the third Vergara brother, and with Juan del Castillo, whom Juan de Valdés would meet again years later in Rome and Bologna. The fruit of these encounters was his *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*, encouraged by the circle in Alcalá. In it, Juan wove a dense tapestry from all the Spanish spiritual currents of the previous fifty years, while suggesting new models and new interlocutors.

3 Valdés’ *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*

Juan de Valdés’s first work was the only one published in his lifetime, albeit anonymously. Its complex and controversial structure has caused impassioned debate among Hispanists, who have identified the influence of Erasmus, Luther, and even the *alumbradismo* of Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz.⁵¹ The work is

50 Letter from Diego Gracián de Alderete to Juan de Valdés, dated 10 January 1528: Paz y Meliá, “Otro erasmista español,” 130.

51 Bataillon’s Erasmian hypothesis was disputed by Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, though in a somewhat confusing manner; Nieto stresses the influence of *alumbradismo* and Alcaraz’s teachings in Valdés’s formation. While Bataillon was preparing his “Addenda et Corrigenda” for a new edition of *Erasmus et l’Espagne* he acknowledged in a long note a strong influence of Luther’s *De libertate christiana* on passages related to the opposition between the Law and the Gospel in Saint Paul. Luther’s treatise had been translated into Spanish 12 years earlier by Francisco de Enzinas and Bataillon suggested that Valdés might have read it, although for the *Diálogo* he censored – either consciously or at the behest of his

a catechism with three protagonists: two fictional ones, Eusebio and Antonio – who seem lifted directly from an Erasmian dialogue – and a well-known historical one, Fray Pedro de Alba, who was archbishop of Granada from 1526 until his death in June 1528. In the book, the archbishop's role is to lead the other two toward the truths of the faith and educate them “in those things that are necessary for instructing others.”⁵²

Valdés's *Diálogo* borrows its explanation of the Creed from one of Erasmus's most famous colloquies, the *Inquisitio fidei*. It goes on to explicate the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the four cardinal virtues, the three theological virtues, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the five precepts of the Church. This traditional arithmetic of Christian morality acquires an exquisitely spiritual tone as the author suggests, for every ritual precept and its literal interpretation, its true Christian meaning. The catechism concludes with a long and very personal commentary on the Lord's Prayer – the only one that should guide Christians toward a more authentic relationship with God – and with a brief, soteriological excursus on Biblical history. The final section offers the readings that are most to be recommended for good Christians, and ends with a paragraph about Church reform. After the dialogue has ended and its speakers have dispersed, Valdés adds to his catechism the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Gospel of Matthew as the only sure guide for shaping the ethics of a true Christian.

In 1922, Marcel Bataillon found a copy of the *Diálogo* in the National Library in Lisbon: the sole survivor of a book that the Spanish Inquisition had pursued with special zeal. The Inquisition had ordered the book withdrawn in 1531 and renewed its listing in the Index in 1551 and 1559. Bataillon felt that the *Diálogo*, with its broad Erasmian outlook, represented the meeting of Spanish Erasmianism and *alumbrado* illuminism.⁵³ He felt that it lacked the formal perfection of the later *Dialogue on Language* (*Diálogo de la lengua*), but found it deeply influenced by Erasmus's dialogues and a doctrine that he defined it as “moderately Erasmian,” showing early signs of the complex thought of Valdés's maturity. Certain especially radical passages, such as the commentary on the

first reader, Hernán Vázquez – the most explicitly Lutheran portions. Bataillon, *Erasme et l'Espagne* 2: 125–8, and also his studies “Acerca de la influencia de Erasmo,” “Nuevas consideraciones sobre Juan de Valdés,” and “Juan de Valdés nicodémite?”

52 Cited in the Ricart ed.: Valdés, *Diálogo*, 17.

53 See his ed. of the *Diálogo*, with a far-reaching introduction and a textual analysis that is in many ways still fundamental today. There is also an anastatic ed. with an introduction by Ricart published in Paris in 1981, from which I quote. Almost 50 years later Bataillon reread the work and explained what the discovery of the *Diálogo* had meant for his own intellectual journey: Bataillon, “Nuevas consideraciones.”

Lord's Prayer with emphasis on the phrase "Thy will be done," made Bataillon doubt how Erasmian the *Diálogo* really was,⁵⁴ but later readings and solid philological analyses have expanded the list of references that Bataillon proposed. In 1970, for example, Nieto insisted so strongly on Alcaraz's influence on Valdés's thought that Antonio Márquez, in his review of the book, suggested ironically that Nieto had made Valdés into a "theologian of the *alumbrados*."⁵⁵

In moving Valdés's birthdate from 1496–98 to 1509 and basing his theory on Alcaraz's wife's testimony, Nieto has him shaped spiritually by the Spanish *alumbrados* and Alcaraz's teachings in Escalona, with no European influence. His Valdés is a precocious and privileged scholar whose *Diálogo* summarized the *alumbrado* sermons he heard in Escalona, using the Erasmian dialogue framework to disguise Alcaraz's more dangerous doctrine, which was publicly condemned by the Inquisition in 1529. More recently Carlos Gilly, applying a careful philological analysis, found in the *Diálogo* a number of quotations from Luther's *Explanatio orationis dominicae* and *Decem praecepta*; he also identified references to Oecolampadius's commentaries on Isaiah and suggested that Valdés was "masking" his use of Reformist texts.⁵⁶ Since then the argument about Valdés's Lutheranism has increased, fed by *ad excludendum* disputes that, in my opinion, prevent us from placing the *Diálogo* in its proper framework.

In this regard I do not share the obsession with "Luther's ghost," nor do I believe in the psychology of the mask championed by Nieto and Gilly⁵⁷ as the key to interpreting such a text: it simplifies the problem by subordinating and excluding its complexity. Rather, I feel that the mutual presence of Erasmus and Pedro de Alba suggests a conscious and voluntary eclecticism that draws on ideas from Luther that had already been expressed by many others, from the Reformist Pauline-Talaverans to Erasmus himself.⁵⁸

54 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 351.

55 Márquez, "Juan de Valdés, teólogo de alumbrados": the review corrects many of Nieto's misleading and erroneous statements.

56 Gilly, "Juan de Valdés, traductor y adaptador." A longer version of the article, which was translated from German, is Gilly, "Juan de Valdés, traductor de los escritos." Nieto disputes Gilly's hypothesis in "La imagen cambiante," with a summary of the long and bitter polemic waged by Valdés scholars in reviewing each others' books.

57 Longhurst was the first to speak of "Luther's ghost" in the context of Diego de Uceda's trial; the notion was later adopted by Nieto, who made it the real key to his "cultural and socio-spiritual vision" of Spanish history. See Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, and his earlier "El espectro de Lutero y la máscara de Erasmo."

58 Firpo, in his introduction to Valdés's *Alfabeto* esp. XLI–XLII and in "Il problema storico della Riforma," also speaks of his syncretism and his ability to rework a variety of authors and opinions and combine them in the *Diálogo*.

Several types of references and semantic levels are interwoven here: influences of Erasmus, Luther, and Alcaraz, but also of the hybrid forms typical of *alumbradismo*. The same complexity appears in this early work as in Valdés's more mature thought.⁵⁹ On the one hand, the notes on the Lord's Prayer that he offered his Castilian readers – who were both discerning and avid for Lutheran novelties – were an almost literal transcription of Luther's *Praecatio dominica*;⁶⁰ on the other, his tone is reminiscent of works by Celaín and Juan del Castillo, evoking the trusting “abandonment” that the latter urged on his sister Petronila. But as Margherita Morreale, a keen observer of the Valdesian world, has suggested, it is risky to draw analogies or identify debts and borrowings too rigidly when dealing with Western theological texts as fundamental as the Lord's Prayer.⁶¹

Rather than constituting a direct influence, hidden references to Luther are signs of a willed eclecticism (already visible in Castillo), independence of mind, and an effort to reshape different ideas and thoughts within a specific framework. Castillo was another who stated plainly how his theological thinking had evolved while reading books that circulated in Alcalá, such as Luther's *De servo arbitrio* and the commentaries on Isaiah by the Hellenist Oecolampadius that Diego del Castillo had brought to Spain. But Valdés's horizons were much broader, based on a conviction of man's universal salvation; while accepting Reformist doctrines, he also read them in a new way. Many years later Pietro Carnesecchi, during his trial, would recall the complex relationship of Valdés's circle to the writings of Luther, because

even if [Luther] was correct in many things and interpreted many points of Scripture properly, one could not conclude that he possessed the spirit of God, except to the degree that God had granted it to him for the benefit and edification of His elect; and so they chose only a few points of his doctrine “as if picking bits of gold out of the manure and (as they say) returning the rest to the cook.”⁶²

59 In this regard, see Firpo's reflections in “Ioanne Valdessio è stato heretico pessimo,” 18ff.

60 Gilly, “Juan de Valdés traductor y adaptador,” 88.

61 Morreale, “Juan y Alfonso de Valdés,” 426.

62 “[S]e bene haveva detto bene in molte cose et interpretato bene molti luoghi della Scrittura, non si poteva per questo concludere che avesse lo spirito di Dio, se non quanto Dio li havesse concesso a beneficio et edificatione de' suoi eletti; et così pigliavano alcune cose della dottrina sua *tamquam aurum ex stercore colligentes et caetera (ut aiunt) reddebant coquo*”: quoted in Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, 13. See also his analysis of the Luther-Valdés relationship during the latter's Italian period.

In my view it is more relevant to stay within the *Diálogo's* range of readership and establish the area where such a complicated catechism could flourish. We cannot say with certainty that Valdés's only work composed in Spain was conceived with a pastoral purpose in mind. Rather, in the insight and boldness of many of its proposals, it fits into the elitist spirituality of his Neapolitan period. Further, its daring play of quotations and references, from Erasmus to Luther and Oecolampadius, made it a very dangerous work to promote. This first work by Valdés, who at the time of writing was a brilliant Latinist in Alcalá, is a clever dialogue in the vernacular, written in a Spanish that is elegant but "natural" and easy to read.

This complex work was conceived for a public broader than the narrow circle of the university. María de Cazalla claimed to have recommended it to her own daughters, even though she had hidden it "at the bottom of a chest" after hearing the heated sermons of the Franciscan Pedro de Medina.⁶³ The Inquisitor of Calahorra, Sancho de Carranza, was so impressed by it that he ordered several copies to be distributed in Navarre.⁶⁴ The catechism seems to have been designed to attract enthusiastic readers. A pleasant dialogue in an Erasmian style, it also used one protagonist, the deceased bishop of Granada Pedro de Alba, to hint subtly at the Talaveran tradition that lived on in those who had witnessed it.

The work had excited great interest while still in manuscript form; it was published in January 1529 by Miguel de Eguía, who was close to the Erasmist university circle in Alcalá and to the more radical group of Juan López de Celaín and Juan del Castillo. Before sending it to the press, the author sought the opinion of Hernán Vázquez, a theologian at the Complutense University; after correcting a few redundancies and expressions that displeased him, Vázquez defended its relevance and orthodoxy.⁶⁵ Vergara felt that Valdés had been too quick to declare it finished, since he believed it needed moderation

63 See Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*, 118.

64 On this point see the testimony of Juan de Medina in Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos," 28: 115 (*Proceso Vergara*, fol. 182rv) but also the defense of Juan de Vergara himself in *Proceso Vergara*, f. 203r: "He had heard from Dr. Miranda that it was a very good book and that he had bought many [copies] of it and sent them to his home region. But later, reading it carefully, one found things in it that were not well said; about these the doctor said that at another time they had passed unnoticed, but that they could easily be corrected" ("Havia entendido del doctor Miranda que era muy buen libro e que avía comprado muchos dellos y embiadolos a su tierra, salvo que despues diz que leyendole sobre aviso se hallaban en el cosas no bien dichas, las quales dezia el dicho doctor que en otro tiempo passaran sin que nadie las notara, mas que se podian fácilmente enmendar").

65 See *Proceso Vergara* fol. 181r; Bataillon, "Introduction," 68–9.

of its more extreme views,⁶⁶ but he asked two theologians, Alonso Sánchez and Juan de Medina, to edit the work in a way that would negate the need for censorship as much as possible so as to ensure a second edition. As Bataillon noted, behind Juan de Vergara one must assume the approval of Archbishop Fonseca of Toledo.⁶⁷ Valdés approached Juan de Medina and discussed aspects of the *Diálogo* with him, assuring him that it was a wholly orthodox catechism and begging him not to censure any of its propositions.

By then, however, many were prepared to defend the young man from Cuenca against any accusations of heresy that might threaten the *Diálogo*. Years later, Juan de Medina recalled that Canon Sancho Carranza de Miranda, the Inquisitor from Seville who was close to Cardinal Manrique, had joined a group of theologians assembled by the Inquisition to censor the work but called for moderation:

Then, before the opinion was sent to the Council, Canon Dr. Miranda from Seville (God save him) came to this city and entered the faculty of theology. And there he said to the theologians that he [came] from the lord cardinal archbishop of Seville, the Inquisitor General [Alonso Manrique], and he persuaded them that when they sent their opinion they should not censure the propositions in the book *Doctrina christiana*; rather, they should arrange for the book to be corrected and printed again in improved form. He told them that this was the will of the archbishop, and that is why those theologians issued such a mild opinion.⁶⁸

66 *Proceso Vergara* fols. 284r–284v; see Longhurst, *Erasmus and the Spanish Inquisition*, 43ff. Gilly notes in “Juan de Valdés traductor de los escritos,” 94 that during his trial Vergara claimed not to have read the *Diálogo* – having read it would be an important accusation against María de Cazalla – to avoid being questioned about his relations with Valdés and the book’s sources. The section in the *Diálogo* on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit was based on Oecolampadius’s commentary on Isaiah, a book that Vergara had had Diego del Castillo bring him from Flanders; Tovar had lent it to many other people including, most probably, Valdés himself. With this in mind it is easy to understand why Vergara did not want Valdés to publish promptly: even a quick examination could lead the Inquisitors to Vergara’s library and the forbidden book that his stepbrother had recklessly circulated. Bataillon, “Introduction,” 115 and *Erasmus y España*, 361; Gilly, “Juan de Valdés traductor de los escritos,” 110–1; *Proceso Vergara*, fols. 15r–15v (testimony of Bernardino de Tovar).

67 Bataillon, “Introduction,” 69.

68 “Despues antes que se enbiase el dicho parecer al dicho Consejo el doctor Miranda cano-nigo de Sevilla que dios aya vino a esta villa y entro en la dicha facultad de theologos e dixo alli a los dichos theologos como [vino] por parte del señor cardenal arzobispo de Sevilla inquisidor general persuadiendoles que en el parecer que oviesen de enbiar no calificasen las dichas proposiçiones del dicho libro de doctrina cristiana syno que diesen maña como el dicho libro quedase corregido e se tornase a ynprimir sanamente diciéndoles

Manrique's directives were clear. There would be no rigorous censorship—only discreet, general observations that would allow the catechism to be corrected, so that the *Diálogo* could be reprinted and distributed “without causing scandal.” Mateo Pascual and Pedro de Lerma, respectively rector and chancellor of the university,⁶⁹ approved the plan. Meanwhile the humanist Luis Núñez Coronel, Manrique's private secretary, kept an eye on the theologians' assembly from the outside and never concealed his support for Valdés. His enthusiasm was such that much later, Juan de Vergara confessed that he had never actually read the *Diálogo*; he knew of it only from discussions with Núñez Coronel and Carranza, who quoted it in the warmest terms.

Juan de Valdés must have had a particularly strong connection to Sancho de Carranza. The latter's nephew Bartolomé de Carranza, the future archbishop of Toledo, recalled Valdés years later as a neighbor and a good friend who frequented his uncle's house. Bartolomé's “slight” contact with Alfonso's brother, who at the time was a young student of Latin,⁷⁰ went back to the time when plague had ravaged Valladolid. The *Diálogo*'s admirers undertook to circulate it throughout Spain, but cautiously, especially after 1531 when the Supreme Tribunal warned its local tribunals about the book's dangers. Condemnation of the *Diálogo* must not have been official at that date; in 1532, when María de Cazalla was accused of having read it, she insisted that it had never been prohibited – it had even been approved by the Inquisitor General himself in the *Junta* of 1529.

que esta era la voluntad del dicho señor arzobispo y esta fue la causa por que los dichos theologos dieron el parecer tan blando”: Longhurst, “Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos,” 28: 115. *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 182r.

- 69 The commission (*Junta*) was made up of Mateo Pascual, Pedro de Lerma, Hernán Vázquez, Medina, Alonso Sánchez, Francisco de la Fuente, García de Loaysa, Diego de la Puente, Bernardino Alonso, and Vargas; the list appears in Juan de Medina's deposition in *Proceso Vergara*, fol. 181r; Domingo de Santa Teresa, *Juan de Valdés*, 87. See also Bataillon, “Introduction,” 66–9.
- 70 Carranza was obliged to recall these connections during the years of the trial in Rome. In a deposition of 1568 he stated cautiously that he had “never been a friend” of Juan de Valdés, only “a slight acquaintance.” That had been in 1526–1527, when he had been forced to flee the plague in Valladolid and lodge with his uncle Sancho de Carranza in Alcalá: “and a certain Valdés, Juan by name, was a neighbor of my uncle's when I was living with him; at the time he was young and studied the Latin language. During the few days I spent there he visited my uncle, who at the time was Inquisitor of Calahorra.” He added that he had seen Valdés one other time, on going with his brother Alfonso to meet him at the college of San Gregorio in Valladolid “because he had seen me in Alcalá at my uncle's house.” At that time the Inquisition in Rome was studying the works by Valdés that Carranza owned: Tellechea Idígoras, “Juan de Valdés y Bartolomé de Carranza,” 307.

4 "Think, Sir, that you Hear Him and not Me": Juan de Valdés's Granada

Valdés's catechism opened with a dedication to his former protector Diego López Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, and an eloquent tribute to the grandees of Spain who, "to their cost," had undertaken to catechize their young subjects. It was not a hollow statement, for many people had enjoyed Villena's patronage. He had helped found the monastery of the Observant Franciscans and had called Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, a lay preacher and spiritual leader, to his court and always defended him. To the last, even in 1526, he tried to obtain his release.

In 1527 Francisco de Osuna, one of the greatest mystical writers of sixteenth-century Spain, had dedicated his *Tercer abecedario espiritual* to Villena; it was an elaborate effort to distance himself from the most heterodox forms of *alumbradismo* and promote the mystical practice of *recogimiento*.⁷¹ Two years later, Villena decided to promote the religious foundation of the Dominican Tomás de Guzmán, a former "apostle" from Medina de Rioseco. When Valdés dedicated his catechism to Villena, he was not just fulfilling the duty of a former "servant" to his protector, nor paying homage to the man who had sheltered the lay preacher in Escalona. Rather, he was recognizing that the Marquis would grasp its spiritual subtleties and accept its possible pastoral implications. Villena was, in short, an important supporter and protector whom Valdés hoped to add to the many who had already acted in defense of his book in Alcalá.

In my opinion, this search for consensus and new interlocutors who might share his ideas underlines the only option open to Valdés in the *Diálogo*. He takes his readers back to a stifling summer day in Granada and seats them on the patio of the San Jerónimo monastery to hear the lessons of Pedro de Alba and his teacher Hernando de Talavera. By choosing this *locus amoenus*⁷² and making Pedro de Alba a protagonist, Valdés not only invoked an authority who was free of any suspicion of heresy but found a Reformist current. In this way he folded his revolutionary proposal into a movement that was finding favor even among members of the Church hierarchy.⁷³

71 Osuna, *Tercer abecedario*; Andrés Martín, *Los recogidos*.

72 The San Jerónimo monastery in Granada was completed in 1519 and enlarged from 1528 onward by Diego de Siloé, one of Spain's greatest architects: see a full description of it in Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden* vol. 2, 50–6.

73 Nieto devotes a single line to Valdés's making Pedro de Alba the spokesman for a true Christian doctrine: he was "a famous historical figure that Valdés introduces into the *Diál[ogo de la] Doc[trina]* to allay suspicion of it": *Juan de Valdés*, 198. His book makes no

By this time the Talaveran school as a political group was scattered, but it remained influential and enjoyed the backing of Archbishop Manrique in the face of increasing attacks by the Portuguese faction and the Supreme Tribunal.⁷⁴ Some prominent clergymen were members of this group. The archdeacon of Alcor recalled the names of many companions from Talavera's circle, including Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, successively bishop of Cordoba, Palencia, Burgos, and Rossano;⁷⁵ García de Quijada, designated bishop of Guadix; Diego Ramírez de Villaescusa, bishop of Málaga and Cuenca and head chaplain to Prince John and Queen Joanna; Antonio Ramírez, who occupied the sees of Ciudad Rodrigo, Pamplona, and Segovia; Gómez de Toledo, bishop of Plasencia; and Pedro de Toledo and Juan de Ortega, respectively bishops of Málaga and Almería. There were also Fray Pedro de Alba and Gaspar de Ávalos, who succeeded Talavera in the bishopric of Granada, and the very influential Francisco de Mendoza, son of the second Count of Tendilla Íñigo López de Mendoza, who was bishop of Jaén and chaplain to the emperor.⁷⁶

The emperor's supporter Pedro Mártir de Anglería promoted the myth of the "sainted archbishop" Talavera and his reputation for holiness, and spread it discreetly during the court's sojourn in Granada. Among the Erasmists, the archdeacon of Alcor and his brother, the *alumbrado* canon Pero Hernández, had tried to associate him with Erasmus's Reformist ideals. While the court was in Granada in 1526, the issue of conversion arose acutely once more and must have helped to recall the role of Hernando de Talavera. When Charles V named Pedro de Alba archbishop of Granada at that same time – although the candidate initially declined the post – the step was warmly received as a return

reference to Talavera, not even in naming catechisms that preceded Valdés's, although Valdés explicitly recalled some that Talavera had written.

- 74 It is illuminating to see the makeup of the commissions charged with facing the Inquisition's greatest challenges, from the *moriscos* of Valencia to the witches of Navarre to the circulation of works by Erasmus: see Avilés Fernández, "El Santo Oficio," 460–70. Manrique's closeness to Talaverans like Pedro de Alba and Gaspar de Ávalos would be even clearer in matters related to control of the ethnic minorities in his archdiocese; I analyzed Manrique's political and ideological links to the Talaveran group in Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 137–41.
- 75 He was a favorite of Ferdinand the Catholic. When Juan Maldonado described how a "good bishop" (*Pastor Bonus*) should act, he was criticizing the power Rodríguez de Fonseca had acquired and his excessively luxurious tastes: Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 329–31. See also the biography in Robres Lluch, *San Juan de Ribera*, 73–4, and on his political career Pizarro Llorente, "Los consejeros de Indias."
- 76 On Francisco de Mendoza, see González Palencia and Mele, *Vida y obras de don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza* 1: 38ff.; on his candidacy to the archbishopric of Toledo with *comunero* backing, and his sister María de Pacheco, see Pérez, *La revolución de las Comunidades*, 318–25.

to the age of the "sainted archbishop." Alba had grown up in the Granadan school founded by Talavera, and like his mentor wore the Hieronymite habit; he was firmly linked to him both ideologically and spiritually. In short, many details confirm the extent to which Valdés had the Granadan situation in mind; perhaps he had experienced it firsthand at court in 1526.⁷⁷

Bataillon believes that the *Diálogo* might be based on an actual conversation between Valdés and Fray Pedro de Alba, just as the author suggests within his "fictional" work. Charles V resided in Granada from May to December 1526, and though there is no documentation, Juan could have traveled there with his brother Alfonso after leaving the Marquis of Villena's service. While the work contains no contemporary references, two clues to the city and Fray Pedro de Alba allow us to fix the exact date of the conversation: Saint John's Day [24 June], 1526.⁷⁸

The dialogue assumes a relationship between Alba and Talavera, which Alba stresses on several occasions. He mentions his "sainted" predecessor's example in the matter of ecclesiastical income, recalling that Talavera would not grant his sister a dowry greater than that of any other orphaned young woman in the archdiocese; the argument supports Alba's view that "the Church's rents should not be used to uphold worldly privileges."⁷⁹ Another case involves teaching the catechism to children: Valdés has Alba recall his own Christian education in Talavera's school and recommend the catechism written by his mentor as a remedy for the ignorance of the faithful.⁸⁰ Here, once more, Talavera is brought to life as the ideal bishop and vividly recalled by Fray Pedro de Alba. He is the same revered figure whose parsimonious spending in the new Granada diocese caused tension between his successors and the court;

77 In the *Diálogo* Eusebio explains why he decided to move to Granada and how warmly he was received by the prelate, who had retired to a Hieronymite monastery, "because I was an acquaintance of his": Valdés, *Diálogo*, 18.

78 Nieto, interpreting from a purely "Alcazarian" perspective and denying any connection to the milieu of Alcalá, surmised that the *Diálogo* might have been written during its author's time in Escalona: Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, 177–8. In my opinion the presence of Pedro de Alba, who became archbishop of Granada in 1526, is not a trivial factor; and if we bear in mind the precise references to Granada and the episcopal reforms that this prelate carried out, the catechism must have been written after 1527.

79 "[L]as rentas de la Yglesia no son para mantener honrras mundanas": Valdés, *Diálogo*, 87.

80 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 110. This was the *Breve y muy provechosa doctrina* (which Mir omitted from his edition of Talavera's works). It was edited twice in Granada by 1530 and reedited under the auspices of Francisco de Mendoza, bishop of Zamora. At that time Mendoza's secretary was Diego Gracián de Alderete, a friend of both Valdés and the archdeacon of El Alcor, who was conducting a parallel revival of Talavera's thought: see above and also Infantes, "De la cartilla al libro"; Resines, *La catequesis en España*, 144.

who had refused to channel part of the bishop's income into his niece's dowry, instead devoting the funds to the education of his flock; and who had become legendary after Pedro Mártir de Anglería had described him. His rectitude found an echo in Valdés. Talavera, in his "Breve forma de confesar," had scorned bishops who ordained priests without first examining them closely, thereby granting the power of apostolic preaching to ignorant and useless men. Valdés repeats the same notion in the *Diálogo* and recommends maintaining strict control over the education of the clergy.

Talavera's teachings and the historical figure of Pedro de Alba emerge most clearly in the last section of the *Diálogo*, "On the reform of the Church." Alba is scandalized because Antronio was ordained despite his ignorance of Latin; such a thing could never have happened in his own archdiocese, where all clerics had to undergo a rigorous examination.⁸¹ Immediately afterward he takes his leave, saying that he must attend to his pastoral duties and to "certain matters about the college that I am beginning to found."⁸² These are references to the reorganization of the archdiocese of Granada, which had grown stricter beginning in 1526. After early inquiries found deficiencies in the religious and social integration of the *moriscos*, the archbishop's powers over the supervision and instruction of regular and secular clergy were expanded considerably.

The last significant reference to these matters comes at the end of the *Diálogo*. Valdés addresses the reader directly to stress Fray Pedro's efforts at reform in Granada, "which the other prelates of these kingdoms should take as their model to do the same in their own dioceses, thus to ensure that great good is done in a large part of Christendom."⁸³ He laments that death had overcome Alba so soon. The passage evokes a reform that was once possible but was later frustrated, which could have found a solid basis in the Talaveran school and in Pedro de Alba.

Valdés ingeniously draws the reader into the fiction of the *Diálogo* by speaking in Pedro de Alba's voice rather than his own. Not only Valdés but also the real Talavera speak through Alba, the most beloved pupil of his teacher and predecessor. The first archbishop of Granada would have appreciated Alba's and Valdés's scorn of those who sow division between Moors and Christians by noting whether they rest on Sunday or fast during Lent—or those who define the essence of true Christianity not by the aspirations of the Sermon on the Mount but by conformity to "the ceremonies and statutes of the Church."⁸⁴

81 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 114.

82 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 116.

83 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 118.

84 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 120.

The discussion between another protagonist, Eusebio, and the archbishop follows polemics already pursued by Erasmus; as we know from the Castilian translation of Erasmus, those ideas were well-known in fifteenth-century Spain.

The similarity goes no further, however. Talavera, unlike Valdés, had insisted on the importance of ceremony and liturgy and sought to impose an ascetic order on the daily lives of the faithful. We see this in his curious treatise "On dress and footwear" (*De vestir y de calzar*), in which he rails against the late-fifteenth-century fashion of extravagantly pleated bodices and skirts that "made women look like bells."⁸⁵ He drew up detailed rules for running his episcopal palace in Granada,⁸⁶ so strict that Sigüenza likened them to those of a Hieronymite monastery.⁸⁷ Even so, his concept of the perfect Christian bore no resemblance to those "false," "superstitious," and "ceremony-mad" Christians that Valdés describes in his *Diálogo*.⁸⁸

Valdés's work follows the *Enchiridion* in calling for an internalized Christianity into which all the commandments can be distilled. Talavera, too, had sought to explain to the faithful that Church ceremonies were external symbols and representations of internal acts, and that all their manifestations were metaphors for the Christian's intimate approach to God. In words that Valdés could have approved, Talavera argued that the priest's white stole should inspire the Christian to ask God to "clean and whiten our soul and our habits with the soap of His holy grace and the merits of His precious Passion."⁸⁹ His *Católica impugnación*, written to defend Christian practices against accusations of idolatry hurled by an anonymous heretic from Seville, taught the same lesson: while worship was a matter of the "spirit," it sometimes had to adjust to men's "weakness and grossness."⁹⁰ Valdés and Talavera shared a lively spirituality and a firm belief in an illuminating faith that extended far beyond man's understanding. "It is better not to probe into [God's] will, for which no one should require a cause or a reason," Talavera wrote.⁹¹ In "Breve forma de confesar" he considered it a mortal sin to speculate about faith or try to explain it in rational terms.⁹²

85 Talavera, "De vestir y de calzar," 76.

86 Domínguez Bordona, "Instrucción de Fr. Hernando de Talavera."

87 Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden* vol. 2, 327.

88 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 64.

89 Talavera, "Tractado de lo que significan las cerimonias de la misa," 82. Of special interest in this regard are Azcona, "El oficio litúrgico,;" Talavera, *Oficio de la toma de Granada*.

90 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, chap. LV, esp. 195. See also our analysis in Chap. 1.

91 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 195.

92 "He also sins who believes the teachings of the holy Church not because God said them and orders us to believe them, but by natural reasoning.... He also sins who with that

Talavera's vision had returned to shape Valdés's thought: an ideal Church made up of perfect and sainted men united by faith in Christ, a vehicle for charity, a blessing bestowed by Christ to bring new life and new freedom to mankind – the same vision that Oropesa had synthesized in his image of the mystical Pauline body. These features – a universal call to perfection, insistence on Christ's blessings, the Christian's transformation through an authentic faith, and the importance of charity – connected Valdés to the Hieronymite tradition of the late fifteenth century.⁹³ That tradition fitted perfectly into Valdés's religious worldview, and would develop in new ways during the years of debate about the doctrine of justification by faith and growing knowledge of Lutheran and Reformist thought.

Several scholars have noted that using the Granadan Hieronymite Pedro de Alba as a symbol of this particular tradition might have been an astute strategy. The connections are not natural or spontaneous, but points of contact undeniably existed. Through them the reader could recognize familiar patterns of thought that could aid the acceptance of new spiritual ideas. Including these common elements could make the *Diálogo* more readily received and assimilated without compromising the radicalism of its conclusions.

One feature that has been especially debated is the readings that the *Diálogo* recommended to its audience.⁹⁴ Whereas many of his contemporaries called for complicated "imaginings" (*imaginaciones*), Valdés favored a continuous meditation on God's word as the only form of contemplation.⁹⁵ This "rumination" on the divine teachings was strongly reminiscent of the Hieronymites' daily exercise of meditation on, and internalization of, the Scriptures. The late fifteenth century saw the publication of hundreds of spiritual or contemplative "booklets," and it was not by chance that José de Sigüenza, the historian of the Hieronymite order whose fervent spirituality was very close to Valdés's, recalled the solid sanctity that underlay the order's Biblism in the fifteenth century. Oropesa had also taught that to follow Saint Jerome's teachings was to turn one's eyes to the crystalline waters of the Bible.⁹⁶ Sigüenza regarded

[natural reasoning] wishes to prove or affirm that the Catholic faith can be properly submitted to proof." Talavera, "Breve forma de confesar," 4. In the list of sins against the First Commandment, the sin of "rationality" comes immediately after the sin of heresy.

93 On this point, see Olivari's remarks on the possible influence of Oropesa on early-sixteenth-century spirituality: Olivari, "La *Historia de la Orden*," 567.

94 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 111–113.

95 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 111.

96 Sigüenza described Oropesa's lessons as follows: "His constant reading and meditation centered on the religion of Our Lord. I have seen that when clergymen took greatest care in reading Holy Scripture they grew in sanctity much more than today, and it was a solid

this period with bitter nostalgia and longing; he had seen the proliferation of those “imaginings,” the “contemplative booklets” that left the soul “very cold and dry,” as Valdés put it.⁹⁷ Witnesses at Sigüenza's Inquisition trial claimed to have heard him rail against a “sterile” Scholasticism and the devotional booklets of Alonso de Madrid, Fray Luis de Granada, and Teresa of Ávila.⁹⁸

Fifteenth-century Spain had rediscovered an immediate, essential, and direct faith under the banner of Saint Jerome, the desert ascetic and translator of the Bible. This required reading and meditating on the Scriptures within a strict and sober spirituality. Oropesa adopted this vision and transmitted it in his principal work, intertwining a subtle argument with lengthy Biblical quotations and references to Saint Paul. Talavera based his preaching in Granada on it and made it the fulcrum for his slow but deliberate policy of conversion. The sermons he preached in his simple and direct style explained the words of Scripture and the promises of the New Testament to the newly converted. In addition to his catechism, songs and pious rhymes helped to spread the Gospel message through his diocese and make it accessible to everyone. His priority was to make Scripture available to the Christian faithful and the former Muslims of Granada.

Talavera's ambition was of long standing. As prior of the El Prado monastery in Valladolid, he had founded one of Spain's first printing presses. In Granada he called on three “German” printers (they were brothers, and actually Polish) for a series of texts to evangelize the newly converted and provide spiritual

sanctity. In our time when there are so many booklets, and more people read them, we do not see such a benefit. For although they are good and holy they are no more than brooks, and do not give us to drink such pure, clear water, nor possess such power as that of God's word, which touches one's heart to the quick” (“Su lección y meditación continua era en la ley del Señor. Echado he de ver, que cuando los religiosos se dieron a la lección de la Santa Escritura con más cuidado, florecieron en santidad mucho más que ahora; y era una santidad maciza. En estos tiempos en que bullen tantos librillos, y se dan más a lección de ellos, no parece tanto fruto, porque aunque sean buenos y santos, son al fin arroyos, y no se bebe el agua tan pura, ni tan clara, ni tienen dentro la fuerza que trae consigo la palabra divina, que toca el vivo del corazón”): Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 1: 428.

97 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 111–2.

98 See, e.g., the interesting testimony of Fray Justo de Soto, again indicating how Sigüenza followed in Oropesa's footsteps: he recalled how Sigüenza's Inquisitors wondered “how he would conduct himself in spiritual exercises of prayer and meditation; when they named some devotional books on the subject like those of Fray Luis de Granada, Master Arias, and Mother Teresa de Jesús and Alonso de Madrid's *Arte de servir a Dios*, he heatedly invited them to put those aside and “read the Gospels with humility and devotion; if one has faith, Our Lord will enlighten him to do what is most pleasing to Him”: Andrés, *Proceso inquisitorial del padre Sigüenza*, 154.

tools for all the faithful.⁹⁹ By the end of the fifteenth century, Spanish translations of the New Testament and the Psalms had been printed for the *moriscos* of Granada.¹⁰⁰ It seems that Talavera was even prepared to have the Bible translated into Arabic, but he met with total opposition by Cisneros. The long tradition of Bible studies that Valdés came to know in Alcalá had followed its own singular path in Granada, moving outside university halls to reach the people and the newly converted.¹⁰¹

Hernán Núñez, “the Greek *comendador*,” also resided in Granada during these years. He was one of Spain’s leading Bible scholars and would later become a renowned professor at the Complutense University. Called upon by the Count of Tendilla, he plunged into the study of the sacred texts and showed special devotion to Saint Jerome, whom he considered an exemplary man and teacher. Long before moving to Cisneros’s Alcalá, Núñez was inspired by the saintly example of the Hieronymite Talavera and his renewed focus on study and propagation of the Bible; in the tranquillity of Granada, Núñez was able to follow in the steps of his master. “[I]n love with the fasting and watching of the most blessed father Saint Jerome, he almost never let his book leave his hands; and wishing to take on his most sainted habits, on every night of the year (no matter how long) he refrained from eating supper.”¹⁰²

When Valdés was a student in Alcalá, he must have been fascinated by this Hieronymite tradition in Granada. His *Diálogo* bears many traces of it. It is set in the peaceful confines of the San Jerónimo monastery and hangs on the words of Pedro de Alba, one of the most charismatic Hieronymites in Spain. Among the readings it recommends are Saint Jerome’s letters, Erasmus’s *Enchiridion*, the *Contemptus mundi* “said to be by Gerson,” and the *Libro de las epístolas y evangelios y sermones del año* – of which Alba says, however, that “neither do the sermons content me nor is the rendering of the rest as it should be.”¹⁰³ Valdés concludes the work with a translation of Matthew 5, 6, and 7, following closely the one made by Erasmus from Greek;¹⁰⁴ these chapters, he felt, were the most important for a true Christian’s education. Years later he plotted a definitive journey of reflection and meditation through the Scriptures, in a

99 Romero de Lecea, *Hernando de Talavera y el tránsito*. On Talavera’s policy of conversion and its depiction in art, see Pereda, “Isabel I señora de los moriscos.”

100 Bataillon, “Introduction,” 189.

101 For more information on Valdés’s student years in Alcalá, see Asensio, “Exégesis bíblica en España.”

102 The quotation is recalled by Alonso de Herrera in his *Breve disputa*, and cited in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 24. See also *Biblioteca y epistolario de Hernán Núñez de Guzmán*.

103 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 112.

104 See Morreale, “Juan de Valdés come traduttore.”

pedagogical itinerary that proceed from the Psalms to the Gospel of Matthew to the Epistles of Paul, always keeping close to the text. Not even in his full maturity in Naples, however, did he lose his fascination with the early Church Fathers: he recommended to Giulia Gonzaga that she read Saint Jerome's letters and Cassian's *Collationes*.¹⁰⁵

In the monastery courtyard that sheltered the *Diálogo's* protagonists against the summer heat, the presence of Pedro de Alba suggested many things to Spanish readers. Behind him hovered the figure of his teacher who, haloed in his legend of saintliness, called for the union of diverse political factions, a return to earlier norms of Church governance, and an end to martyrdoms by the Inquisition. These ideas associated Valdés with those who still saw Talavera as the failed saint of a Spain destroyed by the Holy Office. Talavera had preached tolerance, and the fame of his catechism and sermons ran counter to Cisneros's policy of forced baptisms. His vocation had been nurtured by Saint Paul, who had called for a transition from the Old Testament to the New "without irritating the Jews";¹⁰⁶ he insisted that "those who are strong in their faith must embrace him who is weak in the faith, and must not scorn him nor think he is far from Christ or unworthy of conversing with Him; rather they should draw him into that dialogue with love in order to strengthen his faith, not asking him hostile questions about whether he is virtuous or sinful [but] treating him like one who is convalescing from an illness."¹⁰⁷ These arguments, by which Talavera encouraged converts to take their first steps into Christian society, Valdés would later apply to his "Church of the perfect."

A true conversion to Christianity had to be made with total freedom, spontaneously, and as a result of accepting the promise of the Gospels. The prelate's task was to "attract them to and make them love the doctrine of the Gospels, helping them to understand that *its yoke is easy and its burden is light*,"¹⁰⁸ as Alba proclaims in the *Diálogo*, adopting one of his master's most idealized points of view. Every Christian should make the teachings of Matthew 5, 6, and 7 his own because they contain the highest essence of Christian doctrine. The work ends as Fray Pedro de Alba assumes direction of the school his master

105 Valdés, *Alfabeto*, 92. Olivari first called attention to this paragraph in "La Historia," 572.

106 "[S]in irritar a los del judaísmo": Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, 49–50.

107 "[L]os fuertes en la fe recojan i alleguen a sí el flaco en la fe, que no le menosprezien ni le tengan por ajeno de Cristo ni por indigno de su conversación, pero que lo apliquen a ella amorosamente, i esto para fortificarlo en la fe, no haziendo con él exámenes contenziosos sobre si haze bien o si haze mal tratándolo propriamente como a uno que va convaleziendo de una enfermedad": Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, 266.

108 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 23 (emphasis added). The three chapters of Matthew are translated in an appendix to the work.

founded and invites readers to reflect on the Sermon on the Mount and the passage “my burden is light” [Matthew 11:30]. These same texts had nourished the Spanish spiritual world from Juan de Lucena to Juan del Castillo.

In short, a series of currents were gradually coming together. Significantly, in about 1527 Pedro de Alba designated Juan López de Celaín as a judge (*provisor*) of the archdiocese of Granada. We must bear in mind that the Kingdom of Granada was considered one of the areas most open to the spread of the “Lutheran” heresy, a land where “no great spark is needed to start a fire”: there, in 1525, Venetian merchants had tried to unload a large number of books “by Luther ... so many that each person could have one.”¹⁰⁹

Could the revolutionary notion that the twelve “apostles” of Medina de Rioseco were called to preach the true religion have found a new source of support, or new opportunities for evangelization, in Andalusia’s hostile soil? Probably not. But we should note that around 1527 some scattered factions of the *alumbrado* movement flourished in Granada. After López de Celaín’s first arrest in late December 1528, three of those apostles were condemned by the city’s tribunal; one of them, Pero Hernández (brother of the archdeacon of Alcor), had grown up there. His father had been a member of the group closest to Talavera, and Pero retained property, support, and friendships in Granada.

Scholars of the *alumbrado* phenomenon have largely ignored the Granada connection, in spite of its importance. But the trail of *alumbradismo* left by the apostles of Medina de Rioseco leads us to that city, giving special significance to Juan de Valdés’s dedicatory words to the “great ones” who attracted preachers to evangelize the people there. It was also home to the Erasmist milieu of the archdeacon of Alcor, translator of the *Enchiridion*, who was close to Gracián de Alderete and Alfonso and Juan de Valdés, as well as to the court frequented by the great Italian humanist Pedro Mártir de Anglería.

An undeniable fascination emanated from Talavera, and his influence on the spread and reception of the *Diálogo* among self-proclaimed “Talaverans” such as Manrique, Fernández de Madrid, and Francisco de Mendoza is undoubted. But there was also the mysterious role played by his pupil Fray Pedro de Alba; the call for Celaín, López de Husillos, and Diego del Castillo to come to Granada; and the repeated requirement that ignorant priests in

109 See a letter from Martín de Salinas to Prince Ferdinand (8 February): “y esta vez cargaron [los venezianos] con mucho daño, en que su mercaderia era traer mucha suma de libros del Lutero; y diz que tantos que bastavan para cada uno el suyo. Y por lo mejor emplear, acordaron de venir en un puerto en el reino de Granada donde no es menester muy gran centella para encender el fuego”: quoted in Bataillon, “Introduction,” 119–20. This episode provoked the edict of April 1525 against Lutheran books and ideas.

the archdiocese should be taught by those who could guide them in Christian perfectibility.¹¹⁰ Note that the few death sentences from the third decade of the sixteenth century fell without exception on persons who enjoyed strong institutional support, because they were perceived as more dangerous. They had left their *conventículos* (which historians now often associate with the *alumbrados*) for an adventure that was risky but not without its safe spaces, social consensus, and political backing.

If only for a few years, both Castillo and López de Celaín were prophets who found an audience, followers, and powerful protectors. Though there is much that we still do not know about the period, they undoubtedly had institutional backing. We know that Archbishop Manrique played a role in approving Valdés's *Diálogo* and protecting Castillo; that great Castilian families such as the Mendozas, the Marquis of Villena, and the Admiral of Castile provided support; and that even the wavering Franciscan general Quiñones sheltered Pascual, Valdés, and Castillo himself in his palace.

The four years between 1525 and 1529 seem to have been an exceptional time. During this handful of years when the Inquisition failed to wield its power, a few movements existed within a narrow space: the mission of the twelve apostles from Medina de Rioseco, Juan de Valdés's revolutionary pastoral appeal, Juan del Castillo's fervent preaching, and Juan López de Celaín's invitation to Granada. It appears that during those years in Spain *alumbradismo*, broadly interpreted, was "anything rather than a spiritual aberration or an esoteric doctrine for a few circles of initiates."¹¹¹ And it was Talavera who had tried to outline one of the paths it might have followed and given it his institutional support.

A single idea emerged strongly from this unsettled period: that Church reform, whether approved by the institution or openly called heretical, should begin with the education and re-catechization of the faithful. These were the years when Fray Martín de Valencia and his brothers were bringing the Gospel to the Americas; Charles V sent twelve friars into Granada's remotest mountains; the Admiral of Castile selected his twelve "apostles"; and Ignatius of Loyola lived in Alcalá with his companions, among them Diego de Eguía, brother of Miguel, the frustrated "apostle" from Medina de Rioseco.¹¹²

110 This point is significant when placed in the context of Juan López de Celaín's role as *provisor* and the presence in Granada of other "apostles." Valdés refers twice to someone who was in the archbishop's confidence, could remedy Antronio's ignorance, and "will be able to instruct and lead you very well" ("os sabrá muy bien instruir y gobernar"): Valdés, *Diálogo*, 115.

111 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 185.

112 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 214.

This idea for Church reform was, perhaps, the most characteristic feature of a Spain that was devoting itself to conversion and evangelization. The clearest proof of the desire for a neverending spiritual conquest was the image of twelve believers who were sent to convert the infidel, stiffen the resolve of new converts, and attract Old Christians to a new faith. The legacy of tolerance cannot be attributed entirely to Talavera, but it could grow only in the atmosphere of his disciples' idealized memory of him. From the legend surrounding Talavera came a lesson that Inquisitorial Spain would long remember, even when its strength had dwindled into anecdotes such as the proverb "Give us your customs and take our faith." Many preachers and missionaries adopted that as their slogan, though their rebellious instincts weakened as they adapted to new developments in the Inquisition.

This exemplary lesson, founded on an episcopal model, tried to perform a radical experiment that combined the conversion of neophytes with a Pauline spirit of reform. The young Juan de Valdés tried to teach this lesson, together with his own spiritual innovations, in the cloister of the San Jerónimo monastery; he suggested borrowings and analogies that invited the reader to imagine the Hieronymite Archbishop Pedro de Alba speaking, and through him his legendary teacher.

Juan López de Celaín was arrested in Granada in late 1528. Only a few weeks later, in January 1529, Miguel de Eguía printed the *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*: the last portrait of a complex and unquiet world, formed out of surprising alliances and convergences and paused at the threshold of the Inquisition's greatest repression.

“Such a Gentle Religion”: A Sevillian Perspective

1 The Crest of the Valdés Wave

The approval of Valdés’s catechism in 1529 marked the high point of the influence exerted by Juan de Vergara’s group of theologians in Alcalá, Sancho de Carranza, and the Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique himself. In the following years the circle suffered a slow and unstoppable decline. Several members, such as Juan de Medina, were interrogated and forced to review before the tribunal every detail of the approval process of January 1529: Juan de Vergara’s pressure, the Inquisitor General’s manipulation from a distance, and Sancho de Carranza’s intrusion into the theologians’ discussions. Their circle was taken apart bit by bit. The Inquisition waited patiently until all those who had expressed dissent – supported by an Inquisitor General whom the Council had now pushed aside – appeared before it. The unmistakable sign of change was the accusation against the previously untouchable Juan de Vergara. From that point onward, many made hasty escapes in the wake of Juan de Valdés and Mateo Pascual, leaving the University of Alcalá decimated.

Francisco de Vargas surrendered his post as reader in moral philosophy in 1532. At about the same time, Juan Gil (known as “el doctor Egidio”), rector of the College of San Ildefonso, renounced the even more prestigious Santo Tomás chair, probably for the same reasons as Vargas.¹ Constantino Ponce de la Fuente disappeared mysteriously in 1530, only to reemerge in Seville in 1533 as a preacher in the cathedral chapter, then led by the elderly Sancho de Carranza. The Inquisitors bided their time: Pedro de Lerma fell into their hands only eight years later, in 1537. He was perhaps the most prominent figure of all, and as university chancellor had presided over the famous session that approved Valdés’s book. His arrest was shocking: a man of advanced age with a brilliant career, respected as one of the finest theologians in Spain, he had lived and studied for many years in Paris, rising to the position of dean of theology at the Sorbonne before returning to the University of Alcalá.²

1 Redondo, “El doctor Egidio,” 579–81.

2 See Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 243–62, for Lerma’s training in theology and his brave defense of Erasmus’s orthodoxy during debates in Castile in the 1510s, and for his Inquisition trial 481–2. See Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 112–4; he draws on evidence offered by Bataillon (but to demonstrate that Lerma was not an Erasmist) and by Enzinas’s *Memorias*.

While no record of Lerma's trial has survived, we have a vivid description of these events in the profile written by his nephew Francisco de Enzinas (another notable fugitive to Protestant Europe); this is one of a series of verbal portraits of martyrs pursued by the Inquisition. Enzinas traces the arc of Lerma's case from popularity and success to the ignominy of his trial. Lerma denied the Inquisitors' authority and asked that "outside" judges be present, but his trial ended in a guilty verdict; the great theologian was forced to abjure and retract his opinions in every public place where he had preached them as truths of the faith.

By his nephew's account, Lerma suffered such indignity that he resolved to leave Spain, "where, as he often said, learned men could not live in the presence of such persecutors of knowledge." Renouncing his fortune and ecclesiastical posts, he made a dangerous journey to Flanders and then back to Paris, where he was welcomed and honored.³ A Franciscan friar in Bruges later showed Enzinas one of the propositions that his uncle had been forced to renounce, to the effect that "the law was not made for just men."⁴ Enzinas – author of a fine translation of the Greek New Testament into Spanish and thoroughly acquainted with the works of Saint Paul – had replied saying "*ut iacet*," the sadly famous formula of censorship employed by the Inquisition. Even Saint Paul himself could have been condemned for heresy.

This document is the only one of eleven propositions imputed to Lerma that has come down to us; Enzinas remarked ironically that the Inquisitors were ignorant of "the first and most dangerous one."⁵ But it is sufficient to show that the Alcalá milieu of the 1520s – where the university's Biblism merged with Erasmianism and *alumbradismo* – tended toward a fervent Paulinism. Lerma seems to have followed a strictly literal interpretation, finding in Saint Paul's teaching on grace an opportunity for deeper reflection. The doctrine of impeccability or sinlessness, which Lerma was explicitly accused of espousing, showed how deeply *alumbradismo* influenced the rich Castilian spirituality of the 1540s.⁶ Debates about readings and interpretations of Holy Scripture attracted theologians educated at the University of Alcalá, home of Cisneros's Polyglot Bible. While Lerma's trial was intended to establish limits to the free

3 Enzinas, *Memorias*, 272–3. See also his highly interesting *Epistolario*; García Pinilla, "On the Identity of *Juan de Jarava*"; Kinder, "Spanish Protestants"; García Pinilla and Nelson, "Una carta de Francisco de Enzinas (Dryander)"; Bergua, *Francisco de Enzinas*. On his edition of the New Testament, see Nelson, "Solo Salvador."

4 Enzinas, *Memorias*, 274.

5 Enzinas, *Memorias*, 274.

6 Nieto sees instead the charge as adherence to the doctrine of justification and to the debate over faith and works. Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 114–5

interpretation of sacred texts, it was actually proof of a much wider phenomenon that had not yet run its course.

Two years after these events the Dominican Bartolomé de Carranza, nephew to the Erasmist Sancho de Carranza and a future archbishop of Toledo, brought to Spain from Rome a book about reading and meditating on the Scriptures. He had just been named a professor of theology and, after an interval in Rome, was returning to his teaching post at the College of San Gregorio in Valladolid. Though his ostensible subject was Saint Thomas, he began another cycle of Biblical readings on Saint Paul. Many years later, in Bartolomé de Carranza's Inquisition trial, witnesses recalled how their teacher would allude to the thoughts of a Spaniard resident in Naples who knew Scripture minutely and was well versed in its reading and interpretation. This man was, of course, Juan de Valdés, who taught that the Bible should be read without reference to Church authorities, purely on the basis of one's personal powers of prayer and contemplation. According to trial testimony those lessons circulated widely at the time, with marginal glosses by Carranza that clearly distinguished his own additions from Valdés's quoted words.

The text in question was actually one of Valdés's *Considerazioni*: number 54 in the Basel Curione edition of 1550, and number 65 in the Spanish printing that Juan Sánchez would soon circulate among the spiritual seekers of Valladolid. During his trial in Rome in 1567, Carranza tried to exclude or at least mitigate the work's most compromising aspects, arguing that it was a "notebook" (*cartilla*) given to him by one of Valdés's Spanish disciples – one of many who had traveled to Rome to witness Carranza's investiture as a master of theology.⁷ He claimed that the glosses were no more than notes he was preparing as a basis for public discussion, and denied that they proved his closeness to condemned heretics.

This *Consideración* had reached a wide audience, and not only among the pupils at San Gregorio College. Conveyed from hand to hand, it passed from university circles in Salamanca to spiritual ones in Valladolid. Fray Luis de la Cruz, a Dominican follower of Carranza's, had transcribed and circulated it; he was so closely identified with the heterodox group in Seville that its Inquisition Tribunal sought his arrest.⁸ He was an active cultural promoter who specialized in summarizing different kinds of texts, like the devotional writings of

7 This Spanish disciple of Valdés remains unidentified; if what Carranza said was true, it would be interesting to find him and study his unusual proselytizing campaign. See Carranza's testimony in his Inquisition trial in Tellechea Idígoras, "Juan de Valdés y Bartolomé de Carranza," 418–25, esp. 419.

8 Tellechea Idígoras, "Fray Luis de la Cruz ... ¿hereje?."

Fray Luis de Granada and the letters of Juan de Ávila,⁹ and passed them around in manuscript form.

The full text of Valdés's *Considerazioni* was known in Spain from 1550. It had been brought there by Carlo de Seso, a mysterious figure who owned both the Spanish version and an Italian one, probably by Celio Secondo Curione. A copy "from the hand of Juan Sánchez," mentioned in Carranza's trial, was seized from the Belén monastery in Valladolid in 1558.¹⁰ Where Valdés's thought made its greatest impact and his catechism was most warmly received, however, was in Manrique's Seville and among the canons of Alcalá. In 1529 Sancho de Carranza, dean of the Seville Cathedral chapter and one of Valdés's most fervent admirers, sent several copies of his *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* to Navarre, where he served as Inquisitor.

Manrique placed special emphasis on the education of youth in his archdiocese. In 1524 he named Juan del Castillo as head of his school, and a year later he brought the pupils from the *Colegio de la Doctrina* with him to Toledo. The catechizing continued even after Castillo was accused of heresy and condemned; Manrique continued to support him absolutely, always walking the fine line between orthodoxy and heresy. Through these circumstances the *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*, together with the more orthodox proposals of Fernando de Contreras and Juan de Ávila, became a model text in the vibrant Sevillian milieu.

It was probably Sancho de Carranza who urged Manrique to appoint Juan Gil as a teaching canon of the cathedral, and Gil played a decisive role in keeping alive both Valdés's lessons and the experience of those impassioned years in Alcalá.¹¹ He was joined by Francisco de Vargas, one of the theologians who had approved Valdés's catechism, whom we meet again in Seville in 1535 as a

9 Tellechea Idígoras, "Fray Luis de la Cruz ... ¿hereje?" and Tellechea Idígoras, "Fray Luis de la Cruz ... y los protestantes."

10 See *Las ciento diez divinas consideraciones*. Tellechea considers the Spanish text a translation of the Italian ed., *Considerazioni*, printed in Basel by Curione in 1550; but Ricart, "El texto auténtico," believes that Juan Sánchez's is Valdés's original work and not a translation from Italian. Tellechea further affirms that the Spanish version was made by an Italian, possibly Carlo de Seso himself: see his introduction to Valdés, *Las ciento diez divinas consideraciones*. For more on the issue, see Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, chap. 3, esp. n. 57.

11 Gil took possession of his canonry on 20 December 1534 and preached his first homily on 2 February 1535: Hazañas y La Rúa, *Maese Rodrigo*, 373ff., and Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 581. The Index of 1551 shows that Valdés's work was known in Seville by that date: Révah, "Un index espagnol inconnu," but also see below. For more information on the circulation of the Biblical text and its various editions, see Tellechea Idígoras, "Biblias publicadas fuera de España."

reader of Holy Scripture.¹² In 1543, Constantino Ponce de la Fuente included the *Diálogo* in his *Suma de la doctrina cristiana*, one of the most successful catechisms of sixteenth-century Spain; fifteen years later it became the main instrument for spreading Valdés's doctrine throughout Spain and the New World. It had also been designed as a textbook for the *Colegio de la Doctrina Cristiana*, one of the most famous religious institutions in Seville since Manrique's time.

In 1542–1543, Gil de Fuentes endowed the College with all his goods to found a chair of Biblical studies. Significantly, he named as his executors Canon Juan Gil and Francisco de Vargas, professor of theology. A special clause required that, in the event of an impediment, the funds should be transferred to a school for poor students, to be overseen by Juan Gil and the Hieronymite prior Garci Arias.¹³ In 1546 the College received another large bequest from Blanca de Guzmán, Manrique's niece and wife of the first Duke of Bailén. Two of her sons, Diego de Guzmán and Juan Ponce de León, were closely associated with the school's two groups of clergymen: Diego with the catechizers and priests linked to Juan de Ávila, and Juan (who would be condemned to death in 1559) with the canons and preachers close to Juan Gil. Leadership of the school at this time fell to the latter group, who were joined by well-known local preachers such as Luis Hernández del Castillo, Juan Pérez de Pineda, Gaspar Ortiz, and Fernando de San Juan. The Inquisition initiated a severe proceeding, whose text is now lost, against all of them.

The rector of the College during the 1540s was Juan Pérez de Pineda, an intimate friend of Juan Gil who fled to Geneva after an order was issued for his arrest; there he would publish Juan de Valdés's commentaries on Saint Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians.¹⁴ He was succeeded in his post by Fernando de San Juan, who was condemned to death for Lutheranism in 1552, after which the College was placed under the orthodox direction of the Jesuits.¹⁵

2 Spiritualism and Impeccability: Juan Gil, "el doctor Egidio"

The origins of the heretical movement in Seville are shrouded in mystery. A work titled *Artes aliquot* was one of the first martyrologies of heterodox

12 On this still little-studied figure, see Wagner, "La biblioteca del dr. Francisco de Vargas."

13 Wagner, "Los maestros Gil de Fuentes y Alonso de Escobar."

14 Kinder, "Juan Pérez de Pineda"; Kinder, "Two Previously Unknown Letters."

15 On the *Colegio de la Doctrina* in Seville Hazañas y La Rúa, *Maese Rodrigo*; Sala Balust, "Introducción," 60–3.

Spaniards and an early source of the Inquisition's "black legend": it cites as the kernel of the evangelical trend in Seville a shadowy figure named Rodrigo de Valer.¹⁶ This Andalusian gentleman was condemned by the Holy Office as an "apostate and false apostle of Seville who claimed to have been sent by God."¹⁷ It can be deduced from *Artes* that he converted to "heresy" in the 1520s and was tried by the Inquisition in 1540–1541.¹⁸

His case was not unusual. Both *El Crotalón* and *El viaje de Turquía* testify to how often false prophets in Castile claimed to be new apostles of God and roamed the countryside collecting funds and recruiting followers.¹⁹ Leaving aside possible opportunists, we should consider the enormous wave of messianism that pervaded western Andalusia and southern Extremadura around 1540.

In 1538, David Reubeni was accused of judaizing and arrested in Badajoz. By posing as an ambassador from Israel, he had already been received by Giles of Viterbo, Pope Clement VII, John III of Portugal, and Charles V himself; he had now brought his messianic-Zionist preaching to the *conversos* of Extremadura. For a short time he revived the hopes of *conversos* who lived in the triangle formed by western Andalusia, southern Extremadura, and the archdiocese of Toledo. In Úbeda during the same period, the Cordoba Inquisition found a large group of judaizers who expected the Messiah to arrive in 1540. Thirty-one of them were arrested and sent to the Inquisition's prison in Cordoba in 1540 and 1541. Their trials, which multiplied rapidly and often rested on the testimony of a single witness, provoked such opposition that the cases were transferred to the Seville tribunal.²⁰ It is clear that Valer's prophetic pronouncements fell on

16 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 377–85. On the identity of "Reginaldo Montano," the pseudonymous author of *Artes aliquot* believed by many to be Casiodoro de Reina, see Vermaseren, "Who was Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus?." For a detailed and ultimate discussion about the book and its authors Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 1–27.

17 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 385.

18 Nieto, following Jones's unpublished dissertation on Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, suggests that Valer's "conversion" occurred in 1525 under the possible influence of Juan López de Celain: *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 175. It seems to me more likely, if only on geographical grounds, that Juan del Castillo played a greater part; in the absence of new data the geographic and temporal proximity were already noted by Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos*, 2.

19 The thesis is Redondo's, based on his study of society in Toledo: "Folklore, referencias histórico-sociales y trayectoria narrativa."

20 I studied these issues in Pastore, "Tra conversos, gesuiti e Inquisizione." The transcripts of the first thirty-one trials, which were located later and which I could not cite in that article, are attached to the Inquisition Tribunal of Seville.

fertile soil and that his trial, followed by a long polemic against the Inquisition, took place in a climate of heightened protests and tensions.

Both *Artes aliquot* and Cipriano de Valera, a Hieronymite monk who fled the Holy Office in 1557, agree that Juan Gil's encounter with Valer transformed him from a cold, insensitive theologian into a preacher inspired by God.²¹ Valer was tried in 1540 but freed on grounds of insanity; nonetheless, *Artes* relates that in a second trial shortly afterward he was sentenced to wear the *sambenito* and to life in prison.²² Rich and influential, of an "honourable family" and possessed by a "sort of divine delirium," Valer devoted himself to the study of Holy Scripture; although his education had been secular and he knew little Latin, he learned the texts by heart and made them the basis for his radical conversion to God.²³ He began his preaching career in Seville dressed in rags and confronting theologians of repute—"spawn of the Pharisees" who denigrated his knowledge and he said that "his wisdom did not flow from their reservoirs, which were by now quite polluted, but came through the benefit of the Spirit of God."²⁴

To judge by *Artes aliquot*, Juan Gil was converted by the divine inspiration of a man whom the entire city considered insane. His sudden illumination led to the collapse of his "earthly wisdom" and led him to a "a new and different path of wisdom" previously so foreign to him that he did not even know its "alphabet."²⁵ The account, often steeped in Valdesian terms, interpreted the conversion of this respected theologian from Alcalá in the context of the intense, profound spirituality that would later characterize the community in Seville. Gil had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, not by the empty theology he had absorbed in Alcalá; his new vision had destroyed the edifice of human "prudence" and "rationality."

The few surviving Inquisition documents – no more than a pair of letters from the Supreme Tribunal to the one in Seville – give much less importance to Valer's role than *Artes* attributes to him. But it is remarkable that Juan Gil mounted such a courageous defense of him in the face of the Holy Office.

21 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 377; Valera, *Tratado del papa y de la misa*, 242–6.

22 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 383–5. The text mentions an imprisonment 26 years earlier (i.e., between 1540 and 1541), and a second one in the church of San Salvador in Seville and later in that of Sanlúcar. The second arrest does not appear in Inquisition documents, however.

23 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 379.

24 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 380–1.

25 Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 376–7.

The Inquisitors, aided by theologians brought in from outside, discounted Valer's insanity and gave him a light sentence for his few "errors" and for having pronounced "offenses and insults ... against the ministers of the Holy Office."²⁶ The latter was the truly serious accusation—not even the outside theologians had considered his "errors" to be heretical. The judges, seeing the accused's "humility and repentance," pronounced a light sentence and forbade him to communicate with his former followers. But in a subsequent letter the members of the Supreme Council dissented from this decision; for them the real problem lay in the support that prominent figures such as Juan Gil and Francisco de Vargas had given to Valer in the face of the Inquisition. Such men should be sent a strong warning, but one that respected their standing in life:

At the same time that the trial of Rodrigo de Valer took place in this Council, it appeared that Dr. Egidio and Dr. Vargas and other persons approved and authorized the words of Valer and the offenses and insults that he had pronounced against the ministers of the Holy Office. And it is proper that certain legal steps be taken against those persons who gave him this opportunity, and that they be assigned a penance appropriate to their station.²⁷

These events took place in 1542, the same year in which the Inquisition in Seville thought of opening a case or, at least, a brief "report" (*información*) against Juan Gil. Such steps paled in comparison to what would happen to him seven years later.

Nothing written by Gil has come down to us, but we know from Inquisition documents that his followers collected his homilies and sermons, often transcribing and distributing them. Even after the sentence that forbade him to preach, he wrote many spiritual letters that sustained the faith of his disciples. During his long and complicated trial, which lasted from 1549 to 1552, he often

26 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 574, fol. 71r: Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 583. Huerga has a different opinion about Valer, linking his heresy to Gómez Camacho, founder of the Congregación de la Granada and chief inspiration for *alumbradismo* in Seville in the early seventeenth century. Huerga, *Historia de los alumbrados*, 4: 39–47; Campese Gallego, "Gómez Camacho." On Valer, see also Gil, "Nuevos documentos," Boeglin, "Valer, Camacho y los 'cautivos!'"

27 "Al tiempo que se vido en este Consejo el proceso del dicho Rodrigo de Valer, pareció que el doctor Egidio y el doctor Vargas y otras personas aprobaron y autorizaron las cosas del dicho Valer y los oprobios e infamias que avía dicho contra los ministros del sancto officio y es bien que contra las dichas personas que le dieron esta ocasión se hagan algunas diligencias conforme a derecho y sean penitenciadas segund la calidad de sus personas": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 574, fol. 97r: cited in Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 584.

questioned his judges' legitimacy and demanded external theologians with sufficient expertise to understand the propositions being condemned. While he abjured in the end, his attitude was clear.²⁸ Charles v himself, who in 1549 had promoted Gil's appointment as bishop of Tortosa through the mediation of Domingo de Soto, intervened directly several times to ensure that every possible guarantee was accorded him during his trial.

A first study of Gil's case was made by a committee of theologians: Bartolomé de Carranza, Domingo de Soto, Juan de Muñatones, Master Garci Arias, Master Juan Gil de Nava y Gurrionero, Fray Juan de Robles, Fray Alonso de Castro, and Doctor Oncala.²⁹ It was then entrusted to Domingo de Soto, Gil's former teacher in Alcalá. Soto had just returned from the Council of Trent, where he had taken part in heated debates about the decree *De iustificatione*. There his experience as a theologian had served to oppose those who sought a point of agreement with Protestants by bringing Melanchthon into the Council, as well as those who hoped to free Christian theology from the chains of Scholastic philosophy.³⁰ He had compiled his ideas on the subject in the theological treatise *De natura et gratia*, published in Venice in 1551.³¹

Soto, a Dominican, saw that Gil accepted the same propositions that had grown familiar to him at Trent. He was able to identify precisely the origins and sources of his ideas and to evaluate their heretical nature carefully; he then required his former pupil to explain all their possible implications and to flesh out his retraction.

Gil's abjuration is a masterpiece of theological dissection. It may be that fact, and not merely its author's fame, that caused the Inquisitors to preserve it in a sort of manual of prominent cases and sentences. The text has never been analyzed closely, however, not even during the prolonged polemics that have characterized recent studies of the heterodoxy of those years. These studies have been more interested in classifying it as Erasmianism, Lutheranism, or *alumbradismo*. It is a valuable exercise to dissect Domingo de Soto's expert role and examine his exceptional ability to find European connections and

28 His abjuration statement is preserved in AHN, *Inq.*, lib. 1254, fols. 72–75. Redondo published it in “El doctor Egidio” but does not analyze the censured propositions. For Egidio's trial, see also the detailed paragraph included in Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto*, 415–32.

29 The list appears in Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto*, 422. One member, Garci Arias, would be a future victim of the Inquisition.

30 Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto*, 117ff. and on the latter point 139–48; Faralli, “Una polemica all'epoca del Concilio.”

31 Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto*, 165–73.

referents, and to identify and lay bare the long-standing heretical tendencies that still operated in Spain.

The first proposition linked Gil firmly to the great European debate about the theory of justification by faith. The others provided nuance for his position on a doctrine that drew on certain teachings by Valdés and an exalted spirituality inspired by Saint Paul: his vision of a faith illuminated by love and his reflection on the supreme value of charity, which exalted those who possessed it.

The first proposition that Gil renounced was the notion that “we are saved by faith alone” and that in consequence, “believing in the promises made by Jesus Christ about the remission of our sins, by that assent with which we apprehend those promises we attain pardon for our sins”; and also that “by Jesus Christ alone, and through no merit of our own, we enter again into the grace of the Father.”³² He was forced to acknowledge that other mediations were necessary for pardon: child baptism, “hope,” and “penitence.” This first proposition was directly related to the sixth, which repeated that “only Jesus Christ removes guilt and suffers for our sins” and “nothing is sufficient except the blood of Jesus Christ, for if our works were sufficient he would not have had to come to the world.”³³

The core of Gil’s doctrine was located, however, in the second and fourth propositions. The second maintained that “since faith demonstrates the great goodness of God, love proceeds from it, together with trust and hope in God’s mercy.” Pressed by Soto, Gil admitted that the heresy of this proposition rested on the idea that “faith cannot exist without being followed inevitably by charity.”

On several occasions he had claimed, paraphrasing Paul, that “if I had such faith as to move mountains from one place to another and had not charity, I am nothing.” Charity was thus one of the essential postulates of his theological system. Born of true faith, charity both demonstrated the truth of faith and was itself the necessary and indispensable fruit of faith. Therefore “faith and charity are so necessarily connected that one cannot exist without the other.”³⁴

In his *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*, Juan de Valdés had used similar language to describe the close ties among the three theological virtues. Pedro de Alba, quoting Saint Paul, explained to Eusebio and Antronio that

32 Redondo, “El doctor Egidio,” 594–5.

33 Redondo, “El doctor Egidio,” 594–5.

34 “La fee y caridad son tan necesariamente conexas que no puede estar la una sin la otra”: Redondo, “El doctor Egidio,” 594.

charity is nothing else than love of God.... Saint Paul prefers it to faith and hope. Without it, he says, they would be worth nothing even if a person had all the others And I say in conclusion that if you study the matter carefully, you'll find that the affinity of these virtues is such that one of them is never real without the others. He who has true and living faith clearly has charity, because in order to believe, he knows, and believing and knowing, he loves, and loving, he performs works, and likewise, he hopes in Him whom he knows, believes, and loves.³⁵

But Gil drew more radical conclusions from this doctrine, as we see from the fourth proposition that he abjured:

Likewise I said that faith may be lost through any mortal sin, and I felt strongly that I could affirm this proposition knowing that it went against the determination of the Holy Council, which condemns it. From it derives the second proposition of mine that was censured above, that faith and charity are so necessarily connected that one cannot exist without the other.³⁶

This crucial point had been discussed by Luis de Beteta and Juan del Castillo during the long evening they spent at the house that the Admiral of Castile had ceded to the twelve "apostles." It was fresh in Beteta's memory: the debate had

35 "Charidad no es otra cosa sino amor de Dios Esta la prefiere san Pablo a la fe y a la esperanza; sin ésta dize que no valdría nada puesto caso que tuviese todas las demás Pues concluyendo, digo que si bien miráys en ello, hallaréys que la hermandad destas virtudes es tanta que jamás está la una verdadera sin la otra; porque el que tiene verdadera y biva fe, está claro que tiene charidad; porque para creer conoce; y creyendo y conociendo, ama; y amando, obra; y así mismo espera en aquél a quien conoce, cree y ama": Valdés, *Diálogo*, 70; English trans. *Two Catechisms*, 111. In the same year, 1529, Luther wrote about it in the preface to his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: WA 5: 627.

36 "Yten dixe que la fee se pierde por cualquier pecado mortal e hize vehemente sospecha que afirmaba esta proposición saviéndola contraria determinación del Santo Conçilio que la condena porque della se sigue la segunda proposición que arriva tengo condenada, que la fee y la caridad son tan necesariamente conexas que no puede estar la una sin la otra": Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 594. This is the same proposition preached in Seville by Fray Luis de la Cruz, the Dominican intimate friend of Egidio and Constantino; in 1555 he had circulated in Castille Valdés's *Consideraciones* on the reading of Holy Scripture. See the summary of his trial published in Tellechea Idígoras, "Fray Luis de la Cruz...¿hereje?," 207. His sermon was rebutted by the Sevillian preacher Juan de Ochoa, with whom he had disputed. The same proposition occurs among the 151 errors extrapolated from trial records of the Valladolid tribunal from 1558 and 1559: Tellechea Idígoras, "Perfil teológico del protestantismo castellano," 368, prop. 85.

left him with the impression that Castillo's theological knowledge was deeply deficient for a person of his achievements and fame. Castillo had insisted vigorously that all the mortal sins, not only that of heresy, canceled out the "habits" of faith in the soul. He argued for the notion in an increasingly heated discussion, up to the point where he lowered his voice and changed the subject.³⁷

On this witness's being asked if he had heard from Master Castillo anything about any errors that touched in any way on our holy Catholic faith and Christian religion, he said that he had never heard Master Castillo say anything that the witness could call heresy; but that he did not consider him a theologian or capable of such a high calling as they had given him. And this witness suspected that Master Castillo might err out of hidden pride, thinking himself a man of great achievements without having sufficient preparation, even though he held a degree. For on the aforementioned night when this witness spoke to Master Castillo in Medina de Rioseco, it seemed to him that Castillo was very ignorant of theology for one who was a Master of it In the argument between Master Castillo and this witness Castillo said and swore that through any mortal sin, even if not one of heresy, all the inherent habits of the soul and also the inherent habits of the faith were taken away.³⁸

Beteta's testimony reached the tribunal after the accusations against Castillo had been added to the ongoing trial of his sister. Therefore we do not know in what terms the judges considered Castillo's idea, nor whether it was eventually made into an accusation.

But as Soto had already mentioned to Gil, the question of whether mortal sin effectively implied the loss of one's faith had been discussed in the three controversial drafts of the *De iustificatione* decree.³⁹ The churchmen present at Trent had decided to include an article, number xv, stipulating as orthodox

37 Beteta interpreted this action as a sign of victory: "Master Castillo became confused and fell silent, and made no further objection": Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 117. The date of the interrogation was 11 January 1535.

38 Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 117.

39 See, for instance, *CT*, 5: 390 (first draft) and 425–6 (second draft, appearing as Canon X). The definitive canon, which would be no. 15 approved on 5 November 1546, stated: "any mortal sin takes away grace, but not faith": *CT*, 5: 639, 709. Bartolomé de Carranza exhorted his readers in 1557: "Let no one make you believe that for any mortal sin you can lose your faith: this is one of the many errors that Martin Luther disinterred in Germany after they had been buried for many years": Carranza, *Comentarios sobre el Catechismo Christiano*, 1: 136. But Melchor Cano thought that Carranza himself had been mistaken on this point and in his notion of the connection between faith and charity: Caballero, *Vida del Illmo Sr. D. Fr. Melchor Cano*, esp. 549–54.

doctrine that a mortal sin did not result in a loss of faith but only in a loss of grace. As this consensus was being forged, a certain event had disturbed those attending a discussion in November 1546. Luciano degli Ottoni, abbot of Santa María di Pomposa and a representative of the Benedictines (together with Isidoro Chiari and Crisostomo Calvini),⁴⁰ dissented from this Canon xv and argued that mortal sin did bring about the loss of faith. The Council's secretary, Massarelli, noted the abbot's statement in his diary and criticized it, claiming that it had been supported with clearly Lutheran arguments.⁴¹ The abbot was immediately interrupted by the presiding officer, Cardinal Del Monte, who asked him to explain his position.⁴² Ottoni reasserted his opinion but, *notatus de haeresi*, was forced to retract his words the next day.⁴³

It was not the first time that Ottoni had been accused of heresy in a session of the Council. Even before its official opening, Marcello Cervini had examined a book of his on free will in which Massarelli himself detected several heretical theses, calling the author "ineptissimus."⁴⁴ At the time it was Domingo de Soto, charged with analyzing and reviewing heretical or suspicious works, who raised doubts about Ottoni and asked Massarelli to intervene.⁴⁵ Soto must have had access not only to the treatise on free will but to Ottoni's much more famous commentaries on Chrisostom, published in 1538; years later he would rebut their theses in his commentaries on Paul's Epistle to the Romans.⁴⁶

This episode gave rise to the first treatise by the Benedictine Giorgio Siculo, one of the most mysterious and significant figures of sixteenth-century Italy, who was condemned to death in 1551. Ottoni would have written to him immediately after the debate in the Council and his forced retraction. Siculo's treatise *De iustificatione* arose from these events: it took the form of a reply, written in the San Benito monastery in Polirone on 8 December 1546, to Ottoni's letter of 25 November. In the treatise Siculo started from the same position that the abbot had defended at Trent—the impossibility that sin and faith could coexist—but he hedged his argument to the point of articulating a wholly personal doctrine of justification. Ottoni himself had translated the treatise into Latin,

40 On Luciano degli Ottoni, see esp. s.v. Fragnito, "Degli Ottoni,"; Prosperi, *L'eresia del libro grande*, 79–81.

41 *CT*, 5: 659, 23 November 1546. On this episode, see Jedin, *El Concilio de Trento*, 2: 335–36; Prosperi, *L'eresia del libro grande*, 87ff.

42 *CT* 5: 659.

43 *CT* 5: 659–70, 24 November 1546.

44 Fragnito, "Degli Ottoni."

45 For a reconstruction of the events, see Beltrán de Heredia, *Domínguez de Soto*, 131–3, with Massarelli's letter in 131–132.

46 Beltrán de Heredia, *Domínguez de Soto*, 132.

most likely to present it to the Council as a possible solution.⁴⁷ In his rebuttal of the Council's canons, Siculo claims that the abbot should have stressed the difference between historical faith and living faith. This fundamental distinction, common in the theological language of the time, also appears in the *Beneficio di Cristo*. While historical faith was granted to all by natural grace, living faith involved a divine illumination that encompassed the true and proper state of perfection. Only by enjoying this state of perfection could man achieve the impeccability to which Ottoni referred, yet even that state left open a possible regression into sin, and such a fall would be irreparable and result in permanent loss of God's grace.⁴⁸

In December 1546, a new canon was added to those that clarified the relationship between faith and charity: it declared heretical the doctrine that faith without charity was not true Christian faith.⁴⁹ Jedin thought it was provoked directly by the words of Abbot Luciano degli Ottoni,⁵⁰ but as the Spanish case shows, an accusation of heresy could be brought against many other positions as well.

This same anathematized proposition – that faith and charity were indissoluble – lay at the heart of Juan Gil's doctrine. A man illuminated by faith already carried the signs of justification and perfection. As Valdés explained to Giulia Gonzaga in his *Alfabeto cristiano*, and had hinted in the *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*, what distinguished true Christians was charity, the emblematic virtue for Saint Paul. But Gil went one step further along the path to perfectibility that Valdés had traced: he made charity the absolute core of his doctrine and derived all his convictions from it, including the certainty of grace. Nonetheless, as Giorgio Siculo had already suggested, the consequence of this doctrine could be impeccability: if he who sinned lost his faith, then he who possessed true faith was incapable of sin.

It was significant that in the Spain of the *alumbrados*, even after so many years, Luther's *sola fide* should be reinterpreted as the primacy of charity.⁵¹

47 Prosperi, *L'eresia del libro grande*, 89.

48 Prosperi, *L'eresia del libro grande*, 93.

49 *CT*, 5: 685.

50 Jedin, *El Concilio de Trento*, 2: 337.

51 Among the propositions censured by the anti-*alumbrado* edict of 1525, and one of the most famous, was no. 9: "that in man, the love of God is God; and that they should surrender to this love of God, which orders persons such that they cannot sin either mortally or venially, and that there are no venial faults; and that if something appears trivial, those are faults without blame" ("que el amor de Dios en el hombre es Dios, y que se dexassen a este amor de Dios que ordena a las personas de manera que no pueden pecar mortal ni venialmente y que no hay culpas veniales; y que si alguna cosa pareciere liviana, serán culpas sin culpa"): cited in Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 231. Ortega Costa finds the same phrases in the trials of Beteta and Alcaraz and attributes them to Alcaraz, Isabel de la Cruz, and the

This interpretation destroyed Luther's theses, to the extreme of asserting that man's impeccability is justified by faith. As Gil put it, "I said, speaking in defense of one condemned by the Inquisition, that in this life it is possible, in our religion and by the grace of Jesus Christ, for a man to be wholly freed from the tyranny of sin and from the 'law in his members' [Romans 7:23] that Saint Paul transfigures in his person."⁵² With these words he sought "to explain that a man could be sinless in this life," and the notorious Inquisition case in question must have been that of Rodrigo de Valer, whom he had defended in 1541. He concluded his abjuration by confessing that he had "defended a convict of the Inquisition, saying that, according to the law and grace of Jesus Christ, it is possible to be completely free from the tyranny of sin in this life."

Connecting impeccability to a victim of the Inquisition had an evocative power that transcended the nature of this particular case. Gil's radical view gave new life to the controversy among Spanish *conversos* about those who had "died as martyrs" at the hands of the Tribunal of the Faith. In effect, he was offering an original vision of the world in which all these questions could be posed anew from a single perspective. Saint Paul taught that faith had no value without charity, and that true faith led to a readily recognized state of grace in which man could no longer sin. However, he also insisted that the laws of grace were beyond the understanding of human tribunals – even the most inconstant one of all – charged with judging an individual's faith. Here the evangelical radicalism of "Judge not, that ye be not judged" combined with Pauline doctrine to acquire clear overtones of protest.

At about this time Luis Hernández del Castillo, a student of Gil's who had fled to Paris during his teacher's trial, wrote a short treatise that urged the "little Church in Seville" to resist the "ravening wolves" of the Inquisition. The original booklet, like so many designed to inflame the heterodox community of Seville, has not survived, but its content was preserved by Francisca de Chaves together with a letter of Hernández del Castillo's from Paris, which eventually fell into the Inquisitors' hands.⁵³

mysterious *alumbrado* Alonso de Palomera: Ortega Costa, "Las proposiciones," 31. Many possible interpretations have been advanced, e.g., Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 171ff.; Asensio, "El erasmismo," 77; Selke, "Algunos datos nuevos," 151; Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, 117–27; Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 162–3; Olivari, "La spiritualità spagnola," 192–4.

52 "Dixe con palabras afirmatibas en favor de un condenado en la ynquisición que es posible en esta vida, según la ley y por graçia de Jesu Christo, ser librado un hombre del todo de la tiranía del pecado": Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 596.

53 Letter from Hernández del Castillo in Paris to Francisca Chaves in October 1549, in Schaefer, *Beiträge*, 2: 371; Hernández del Castillo also sent to Chaves the *Diálogo consolatorio*, see Schaefer, *Beiträge*, 2: 301.

In Dr. Egidio's theology, every aspect of Christian life goes back to the mystery of Christ's sacrifice, the ultimate truth in the face of which empty rites and superstitions have nothing to say. Like Valdés, he had taught his followers to renounce the false devotion of "Christians who had a mania for ceremonies" (*cerimoniáticos*): the Way of the Cross, fasting, crucifixes, and images were all objects of idolatrous worship. He also rejected the many "personal" saints chosen only because "some cure the toothache, others cure eye disease"; he censured "the kind of madmen in this world who imagine an impotent God who could not provide for all their needs."⁵⁴ His polemical vigor sometimes recalls Erasmus's frequent and well-known irony,⁵⁵ but his radical spiritualism is not in the least Erasmian, and purported to serve as a guide for the Christian in this world. No element of Church dogma was of use in achieving salvation; there were no norms, laws, or counsels, because only God and the Holy Spirit could lead a man inspired by grace to true understanding of the Scriptures and of everything necessary to a "Christian life and republic":

I said that he who has Jesus Christ does not need the *Sum[m]a Angelica* or the [*Summa*] *Silvestrina* ... and I was determined to pronounce these propositions in a heretical sense: that if a man possesses God, He will teach him all the truths of Scripture and those necessary for a Christian life and republic.⁵⁶

Domingo de Soto required Gil to gloss this proposition with an orthodox doctrinal statement that is extraordinarily revealing. It unveils, *a posteriori*, the real meaning of Egidio's doctrine:

I now confess that an unlettered man in a state of grace may be ignorant of many truths; and it would be reckless and wrong of him to try to grasp them through his own understanding and await a revelation from God. It follows that the Christian republic could not be governed without learned men to inform and instruct the people.⁵⁷

54 On the objection to saint worship, see his *sesta retrataçion* and *setima declaraci6n* in Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 596–8; on fasting, alms, and worship of images, see the *quinta declaraci6n*, 598.

55 Bataillon, *Erasmus y Espa1a*, 526.

56 Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 595.

57 "Antes confieso que puede un hombre yndocto, estando en gracia, ynorar muchas verdades y que por su entendimiento, esperando rrebalaci6n de Dios, las quisiesse averiguar ser1a temerario y herrar1a, por lo qual la rrep1blica christiana no podr1a administrarse sin letrados que ynformen y ense1en al pueblo": Redondo, "El doctor Egidio," 595.

Some time later an Inquisitor would denounce the stubbornness of “foolish women and artisans” who believed in an individual anointing through the presence of the Holy Spirit, which they claimed freed them internally and convinced them of being right. This intense, subjective spirituality distanced the Sevillian heresy even further from Lutheranism strictly defined – from any institutional structure, in fact – while bringing it closer to *alumbrado* and Valdesian networks. In the propositions that Gil renounced, we hear an echo of Alcaraz and his contrast of “spiritual seekers” with “learned men” (*letrados*) who were incapable of sensing truly “spiritual things” – like people who have read that honey is sweet but have never actually tasted it.⁵⁸ We also find traces of Valdés: his advice to Giulia Gonzaga, his conviction that the Holy Spirit was “the proper teacher of the Christian,”⁵⁹ and the belief that divine revelation was, in the end, worth more than any other means of drawing near to God.

The closeness of the two doctrines is confirmed by Antonio de Córdoba, who in his trial compared Juan de Valdés’s *Consideration* on how to read Scripture (which Carranza had brought to Castile) with the doctrine and errors of Dr. Egidio. Antonio de Córdoba, the son of the Marchioness of Priego and a pupil of Juan de Ávila, was a Jesuit who had been one of the earliest and most enthusiastic readers of Valdés’s book; he had shared it with his fellow students at the University of Salamanca, among them the future Patriarch Juan de Ribera. Although he told the Inquisitors in 1559 that he had burned his copy ten years before, he quoted it with suspicious fluency. By then he had detected its profound similarities to the doctrine of Juan Gil, which was later condemned.⁶⁰

Redondo, in the last of his essays devoted to Gil, notes how he was praised by Melanchthon (who, like Alfonso de Valdés, had always called for concord) and places him among the Lutherans who never really separated from the Catholic church. For this opinion he relies, though without much conviction, on the hypothesis of Bataillon and Domingo de Santa Teresa that Juan de Valdés might have influenced Gil’s thought.⁶¹

58 Márquez, *Los alumbrados*, 244.

59 The phrase is from the *Ciento diez ... consideraciones*, translated and circulated by Juan Sánchez in 1558, but it was a widely held opinion. On this issue, see Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, 68ff.

60 Tellechea Idígoras, “Juan de Valdés y Bartolomé de Carranza,” 397.

61 “Gil’s teaching strongly recalls that of Valdés”: Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 525; Domingo de Santa Teresa, *Juan de Valdés*, 321; Redondo, “El doctor Egidio,” 591. Nonetheless most scholars still associate Gil with Lutheran thought, most recently Spach, “Juan Gil and Sixteenth-Century Spanish Protestantism” (though while considering Gil a Protestant he neglects his abjuration); Nieto devotes a chapter to Gil in *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 189–213. In the face of Bataillon’s Erasmian view of Gil, Nieto bases his analysis of him as a

I believe that we should enlarge the scope of Juan de Valdés's influence. By starting from the approval of his catechism and following the fortunes of the Alcalá canons Sancho de Carranza, Juan Gil, Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, and Francisco de Vargas, we can show that Valdés, especially through his *Diálogo*, laid the foundations of so-called Sevillian Lutheranism. A study of the doctrines that Gil abjured proves this dependence on Valdés and further reveals a line of thought that departs from Lutheranism. It resembles that of certain Italians in its search for answers to the problem of justification through faith – a problem that had resonated throughout Europe.

3 Seville and Valdesianism: Constantino Ponce de la Fuente

The other renowned preacher in Seville, Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, was born in the village of San Clemente near Cuenca at about the same time as Juan de Valdés; they both came from *converso* families and studied together at Alcalá. He joined the cathedral chapter in Seville in 1533 as preaching canon and remained there for a quarter-century, occasionally taking on other prestigious posts.⁶² (Gil would assume the same canonry in the fall of 1534 and Francisco de Vargas in 1535.) The author of *Artes aliquot* considered these three the leaders of evangelical preaching in Seville. Ponce, like Gil, reached full doctrinal maturity in that city, publishing a series of well-received works and earning a reputation as one of the greatest preachers in Spain. During his first fifteen years he left only for some extended stays in Portugal at the invitation of Cardinal-Prince Henry.⁶³

Lutheran on: a) the record of Gil's trial and abjuration in *Artes aliquot*, which he calls not only "a serious, historically exact, and well-documented summary" but, since it provides historical context, more useful than propositions that were altered by the Inquisitors; b) his own ruminations on Domingo de Soto's psychology; and c) a study of the propositions that Gil abjured, extracted from Schaefer's German account; Nieto translates them into Spanish in no particular order and with no attention to the complex meaning of the original. See also Boeglin, "El doctor Egidio"; López Muñoz, *La Reforma en la Sevilla*, 72–89.

62 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*; Aspe Ansa, *Constantino Ponce de la Fuente*; Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 217–362; Boeglin, *Réforme et dissidence*; García Pinilla, "Más sobre Costantino Ponce de la Fuente" and "La 'providencia diabólica.'"

63 See Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*, 23, with a citation from the minutes of the cathedral chapter and a reference to Silva Dias, *Correntes do sentimento religioso*. The latter notes an interesting piece of testimony from the trial of Fray Valentim da Luz on Ponce de la Fuente's notable success in Portugal: Silva Dias, *Correntes do sentimento religioso*, 1: 214, 2: 550. There is a 1556 Portuguese edition of works by Ponce de la Fuente, Juan de Ávila, Francisco de Borja, and the editor, Fray Luis de Granada.

His encounter with Europe was belated but intense. In 1548, like the Franciscan Bernardo de Fresneda and the future heresiarch Agustín de Cazalla, he moved to court as preacher to the emperor. Charles v gave him an active role in the Diet of 1550, where he made strenuous efforts to reach an agreement with the Protestants. There he revealed exceptional skills as a mediator, which he would employ in negotiating Francisco de Enzinas's return to Spain.⁶⁴ Back in Seville in 1553, he was plunged into the gloomy atmosphere of Dr. Egidio's trial and the first escapes to Geneva, but in 1555 he was with Carranza once more, accompanying Prince Philip to England where he joined the group of Italians around Cardinal Reginald Pole. We have no copies of the works he published after his travels through Germany and England, and must therefore reconstruct his doctrine through his early writings in Seville, issued between 1543 and 1546: the three *Doctrinas*, *The Sermon on the Mount*, *Beatus vir*, and *Confession of a Sinner* (*Confesión de un pecador*).⁶⁵

Ponce de la Fuente was a preacher above all, and reserved many of his subtle doctrinal arguments for the pulpit. His oratorical gifts were legendary: when Charles v heard of his arrest he exclaimed, "If Constantino is a heretic, he must be a great one."⁶⁶ These facts provide a partial explanation for the later course of events: how difficult the Inquisition found it to define his heresy, and the deep impact of his case on Spanish history.

Ponce de la Fuente escaped the negative judgment of history thanks to the folklore of Seville, which valued his subtle critical insights above the Inquisition's curse at his *auto-da-fé*: after his death in prison, his bones were dug up and ceremonially burned. A popular story related his reply upon being offered a preaching canonry at Toledo (the most prestigious archbishopric in Spain). In these years of Cardinal Silíceo and the purity-of-blood statutes, Ponce rejected the offer with the explanation that his [Jewish] grandparents were resting in peace, and not for anything in the world would he disturb them.

He made a similar quip when the Inquisition began to investigate him during the conflict between the cathedral chapter and Fernando Valdés: "they want to burn me, but they find me very green."⁶⁷ In another anecdote he mocked papal indulgences: a woman had dropped her bull of indulgence into a pot of

64 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*, 24–5.

65 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*, 24.

66 Sandoval, *Historia de la vida*, 1: 33. On this episode, see Aspe Ansa, *Constantino Ponce de la Fuente*, 109–12.

67 "[Q]ue me quieren quemar pero me encuentran muy verde": many of these sayings were copied in *Sales españoles*, 236–7, and many others in his biographical profile in Gonsalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*. On the conflict between the Inquisition and the cathedral chapter of Seville, see Civale, "Con secreto y disimulación."

boiling oil, and afterward a dog ate it. Ponce wondered, “Who benefited from the indulgence, the woman or the dog?” The story, which married contemporary criticism of bulls and indulgences to the colloquial language of jokes and fables, was still being told in Seville years after its author’s death; Jesuit confessors and preachers held it up as an example of the subtle poison that the great heresiarch had injected into Sevillian society.⁶⁸

One of his most famous works, *Beatus vir*, transcribed a cycle of his sermons on the Psalms. As he explains, he wished to document some of the principal questions raised by his most successful addresses; using the same arguments as Gil and Valdés, these stressed the intimate connection between faith and charity. The object of his homilies was “to exhort men not to be satisfied with a dead faith” because “the faith that will save us must be accompanied and inflamed by charity ... our psalm requests this and our explanation insists on it.”⁶⁹

The third exposition of a psalm was devoted to analyzing the relationship of faith and works through the metaphor of a tree. It envisioned a hierarchy of values in which every part contributes to the quality of the fruit, even the leaves – external elements that represent man’s works and could deceive the eye.⁷⁰ Juan de Valdés had used the same image in a more succinct way in 1536 to explain to Giulia Gonzaga that charity was the “fruit” of faith.⁷¹ In his *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*, he had also stated that “living faith ... is the root of works of charity. Just as the branches of a tree grow from the roots, and where there are roots there must be branches in season, so where there is this kind of faith, there must be works of charity if it is to survive.”⁷² Such was the “affinity” of the three theological virtues that: “they are so interrelated and joined together that one springs out of the other. Therefore I am certain that whoever possesses one perfectly will have all three.”⁷³ He went on to expand on one’s duty to strive for perfection and to follow the teachings of the Gospels as if they were commandments.

68 It was still remembered by Jesuits in the eighteenth century: Juan de Santibáñez S.J., *Historia de la Provincia de Andalucía*. The ms. is preserved in BUGr, cajas A-51-A-56.

69 “[E]xhortar los hombres a que no se contenten con tener fe muerta ... [porque] la fe que nos ha de salvar acompañada ha de estar y encendida con caridad ... esta pide nuestro salmo y a esta exhorta su exposición”: Ponce de la Fuente, “Exposición del primer Salmo,” 75.

70 Ponce de la Fuente, *Beatus vir*, 149–183.

71 Valdés, *Alfabeto cristiano*, 43. Alongside the tree metaphor he employed the Lutheran image of the fire “that cannot help but burn.”

72 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 68; English trans. *Two Catechisms*, 110.

73 Valdés, *Diálogo*, 68; English trans. *Two Catechisms*, 109.

The work of De La Fuente's that is closest to Valdés's *Doctrina*, however, is his renowned *Suma de doctrina cristiana*, first published in 1543.⁷⁴ Many direct quotations and convergent themes make the relationship clear. Ponce was attempting to revitalize Valdés's text – which he had first read in Alcalá and often recommended to the canons of Seville – by placing it in a wider and less controversial context.

José Ramón Guerrero, in his book on Ponce de la Fuente's catechisms, provided a detailed analysis of how the *Suma* borrowed and quoted literally from Juan de Valdés.⁷⁵ Bataillon had already done likewise in his commentary on the *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*.⁷⁶ Both sixteenth-century texts retain the structure and argumentative style of the Erasmian dialogue and deal with similar themes. The *Suma* insists that a Christian's life is exclusively spiritual: when precepts and commandments refer to the "spirit," every material precept or limit must be interpreted in spiritual terms. Valdés had already made this point in his 1529 *Diálogo*. Cartagena, Oropesa, and Talavera had introduced this theme, which was later adopted by early *alumbrado* thought. Espoused by Erasmus, whose *Enchiridion* was translated into Spanish by the archdeacon of Alcor, it achieved its finest expression in Valdés' *Diálogo*.

The central figure in the *Suma* is Jesus Christ as the mediator and savior of humanity, whose "beneficence" offers salvation to anyone who seeks it. Therefore, "all men [sin] who do not place all their effort and trust in the death and blood of the Redeemer, and do not believe that this alone suffices them."⁷⁷ The idea is similar to the image of the Church as a mystical body "whose head is Christ our Redeemer": it had been common in the fifteenth century and was successfully revived in texts as different as Calvin's *Institutions*, the anonymous *Beneficio di Cristo*, and Carranza's *Catecismo christiano*. It meant that the

74 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*; also Bataillon, "Introduction," 198–9, 234, 241, 260, 263, 265, 266, 269, 309–13; Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 535. Both Bataillon and Guerrero find that Ponce de la Fuente's doctrine, like that of Valdés, shows a clear Erasmist stamp. I believe that, in spite of more recent studies that show more diverse heterodox strains in Valdés's *Diálogo*, the contributions of Bataillon and Guerrero are still among the most acute analyses of Ponce de la Fuente's *Suma* and the Valdesian elements in his catechisms.

75 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*.

76 Bataillon, "Introduction."

77 "[Pecan] los hombres que no pusieren todo su esfuerzo y confianza en la muerte y sangre del redentor y no pensaren que ésta sola es su satisfacción": Ponce de la Fuente, *Suma*, 57. We find the same topic and almost the same words in Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*, 292; Valdés, *Diálogo*, 27: "Porque mediante este altísimo sacrificio fuésemos reconciliados con él cuando pusiéremos en su nombre toda la confianza y esperanza de nuestra justificación."

members of the Church were “truly sanctified” by the bonds of charity and faith that united them.

It is in the pages that Ponce de la Fuente devotes to the theological virtues, however, that we see his greatest debt to Valdés. Here he returns to the close connection between faith and charity, arguing that charity proceeds from faith but becomes the kernel and “root” of all else: faith “in love and aflame with charity ... is what truly saves all men, and with the easiest of yokes draws them to itself and subjects them to its will.”⁷⁸ The Holy Spirit plays a fundamental role as the igniting principle and guarantor of truth. In a paragraph taken almost literally from Valdés, Ponce de la Fuente claims that the Spirit is the only true support of man’s spiritual life as illuminated by faith.⁷⁹ He expresses the same sentiment in his commentary on the Lord’s Prayer, insisting (as Valdés had done) on the value of “Thy will be done” as the central point of all Christian experience. He also speaks ironically of those who recite the Lord’s Prayer three or four hundred times in an hour while omitting the words “as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Ponce de la Fuente’s *Suma* proved much more successful than Valdés’s catechism of 1529 and was reprinted five times in Seville between 1543 and 1551. Helped by its author’s fame and its own immediate popularity, it soon became the model for a new literary genre, the catechism. Unauthorized imitations were published, and a catechism by Domingo de Valtanás copied many pages from it literally. An essential, transparent, and direct text, it was “more dangerous for what it does not say than for what it does,” according to Menéndez Pelayo.⁸⁰ Its renown was not confined to Seville: Juan de Zumárraga, the first archbishop of Mexico, liked it so well that he reproduced it in full in his *Doctrina cristiana* and its second edition of 1546.⁸¹ He likewise included long passages from it in his *Regla cristiana breve*, perhaps the only work produced under his patronage that he himself helped to write.⁸² He deliberately worked

78 “[E]namorada y encendida con caridad ... la que de verdad salva a los hombres y la que con suavísimo yugo los trae aficionados a ella y sujetos a lo que quier”: Ponce de la Fuente, *Suma*, 29, cited in Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 536, who notes the influence of Valdés.

79 Ponce de la Fuente, *Suma*, 72.

80 Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos*, 63.

81 García Icazbalceta was the first to note that Zumárraga’s *Doctrina christiana*, intended for indigenous Mexicans, was an adaptation of Ponce de la Fuente’s *Suma*: see, García Icazbalceta, *Don Fray Juan de Zumárraga*, 2: 38–46; he was followed by Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 823–27. Adeva adds nothing new in his introduction to Zumárraga, *Regla cristiana breve*.

82 See the analysis by Adeva, Zumárraga, *Regla cristiana breve*, l–liii and lxxvi–lviii; for more detail, see Alejos-Grau, *Juan de Zumárraga*, 70–86.

to popularize Ponce de la Fuente's text, in part by converting the dialogue format to a third-person narrative. Zumárraga, a strict prelate, considered the *Suma* especially apt for his indigenous congregants, whom he hoped to keep away from Old Christian "idolatry":

I thought this catechism the most fitting, at least for these people at this time; and for a few more years they will not yet need any other doctrine. My desire for these people has always been to base everything on the knowledge of our faith, its articles and commandments, that they may know what sins they commit; sermons on other matters can come later.⁸³

A mere six years later, Francis Xavier in the Far East and the first Jesuit missionaries in Brazil also took the *Suma* ("el Constantino") with them.⁸⁴

Many ties bind the thought of Juan de Valdés to the city of Seville, gateway to the New World. His works continued to be read, copied, and circulated there, and the citizens' spiritual affinity with him seemed to guarantee a degree of continuity, though his ideas had developed much earlier and in a different context. We find a revealing example in the case of Juan Pérez de Pineda, one of Juan Gil's outstanding pupils. A teacher of catechism and rector of the *Colegio de la Doctrina* in Seville, he fled to Paris during his master's trial in 1550 and became one of the most highly sought Sevillian heretics. After he moved to Geneva he was still considered dangerous, and in May 1559 Juan González de Munébrega wrote to the Supreme Tribunal that he and others had to be captured: "In the last post we sent you some statements, especially by Julián [Hernández], and if God grants that we capture Juan Pérez and Diego de la Cruz, I assure your worship that great secrets will be revealed. And it would be of no small help to have Zapata verify certain things that are hinted at."⁸⁵

In exile, Pérez de Pineda maintained close contact with the heterodox community in Seville. He sent his former colleagues letters and brief treatises, such as one he had written on the certainty of grace, as well as many heretical books. In 1557 he had Crespín print an edition of Juan de Valdés's commentaries on Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, and made sure that it was sent

83 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 826. For more on Zumárraga's criticisms of the "profane triumphs" of some processions and the Spanish Church's over-reliance on miracles, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 827.

84 MHSI, *Epistolae Xaverii*, 2: 443; see also Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 826.

85 "Con el correo pasado se enbiaron algunos dichos señaladamente de Julian y si Dios fuese servido que se cogiese Juan Perez e Diego de la Cruz Vuestra Merced crea que se descubrirían grandes secretos y no sería mala ayuda la de Çapata para verificar algunas cosas de que ay yndiçios": Seville, 28 April 1559: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942.

to Seville. He had received the work in Paris in 1555 from the Spaniard Juan de Morillo, a familiar of the English Cardinal Reginald Pole, who had attended the Council of Trent and was a friend of Marcantonio Flaminio and Alvisi Priuli.⁸⁶ This was the last group of volumes he sent and the only one for which we know details and exact titles, because it was intercepted and seized by the Inquisition. It was at that point that its true repression in Seville began.

In Valdés's commentaries on Biblical texts in the post-*Diálogo* years, he centered his theology on the wisdom of those who sought perfection (*los perfectos*): it "does not consist of feelings or tastes in spiritual and Christian matters – as I thought and even wrote before – but more precisely of revelation."⁸⁷ Here again, his position coincides with the spiritual evolution of the community in Seville. Pérez de Pineda, as editor, seemed convinced of the fact when he presented to a Spanish readership the doctrine of a man who was "truly Christian," "not Christian only in imagining but an imitator of Christ in practice."⁸⁸ Around 1557, after the decisions taken at Trent and Juan Gil's trial and public abjuration, the atmosphere in Seville grew increasingly oppressive: theological dictates and censures began to affect even the works of Ponce de la Fuente.⁸⁹ More and more voices were clamoring for the immediate arrests of heretics. At just that time, Pérez de Pineda chose Valdés's commentaries on the Epistles for his "little Church," a church of saints that would soon be one of martyrs. One of its sentiments was that "the business of Christianity is not for everyone."⁹⁰ That elitist and esoteric aspect clearly required caution. At the same time, its somber spirit matched the pessimism into which the whole community was plunged: its only certainty and consolation was that "it is very typical of a Christian to be persecuted."⁹¹

The chief Inquisitor, Fernando de Valdés, was keenly aware of all these connections. On 9 September 1558, he wrote in detail to Pope Paul IV about how the wide circle of heretics in Seville had been discovered. Investigations

86 Firpo, "Introduzione" to Valdés, *Alfabeto cristiano*, CXXXV–CXXXVI. On Morillo, see Kinder, "Juan Morillo" and "A Hitherto Unknown Group of Protestants."

87 "[N]o consiste en sentimientos, ni en gustos de cosas espirituales i cristianas, según que yo en otro tiempo he pensado y aun escrito, sino propiamente en revelación": Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, 39; cited in Ginzburg and Prosperi, "Juan de Valdés e la riforma," 194.

88 "[V]erdaderamente cristiano ... no imaginativo cristiano sino práctico imitador de Cristo": Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, xx, xix; cited in Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, 116.

89 See, e.g., the *Parecer* written between August and December 1557 that circulated under the name of Domingo de Soto: García Pinilla, "Más sobre Constantino Ponce de la Fuente."

90 Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, 167.

91 Valdés, *La epístola de san Pablo*, 277.

had begun the year before and had unleashed a series of events: the flight of a dozen Hieronymite monks from the Reformed monastery of San Isidoro; the arrest of Julián Hernández, who had brought to the city a large number of heretical books and letters from Juan Pérez de Pineda; the unmasking of a large circle of heretics centered around “companions and devotees of Dr. Egidio”;⁹² the escapes of Domingo de Rojas, son of the Marquis of Poza, and Carlo de Seso of Valladolid; and the discovery of another cluster of heretics, once more composed of “leading and illustrious persons and learned men.”⁹³

The Inquisitor General noted that the errors had begun long before, with Juan de Oria’s initial heresy in Salamanca and, above all, the circles of *dexados* and *alumbrados* scattered around Guadalajara. Those errors had not been pursued with sufficient zeal, so they had become “the seeds of these Lutheran heresies.” The Inquisitor had to admit that his colleagues at the time, “not well versed in these Lutheran errors,”⁹⁴ had allowed this to happen, and he hinted that certain heretics even enjoyed support in Rome, allowing them to persist in their beliefs and make new converts. This was a clear reference to Juan de Valdés (whose surname he shared), who had been a chamberlain to Pope Clement VII; the Italian heresiarch Carlo de Seso called himself Juan’s disciple, and Valdés’s commentaries on the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans had reached Seville through Pérez de Pineda. The Inquisitor was warning the pope that the heresy extended well beyond Spain’s frontiers. He was remembering Gil’s secret heresy and the serious offenses that had gone unpunished because

some of the guilty ones had traveled to Rome and been welcomed there; by tolerating them, they gave them the chance to persist in their errors and pass them on. And we also understand that when Dr. Egidio was reconciled in [15]53, since the judges did not understand the problems that we are about to narrate in affairs of this type, the damage that we now recognize in Seville was done. The main culprits are the most empasioned admirers and followers of Dr. Egidio, who retained the language of his errors and false doctrines.⁹⁵

92 Fernando de Valdés to Paul IV, in González Novalín, *El Inquisidor general*, 2: 216.

93 González Novalín, *El Inquisidor general*, 2: 217.

94 González Novalín, *El Inquisidor general*, 2: 218.

95 González Novalín, *El Inquisidor general*, 2: 219. Fernando de Valdés places Gil’s abjuration in 1553, but all the other sources agree on the year 1552.

4 The Sevillian Heresy: a Rereading

All the evidence suggests that in 1552, the year of Egidio's abjuration, no other investigations were launched. Moreover, *Artes aliquot* claims that even Inquisitor Corro – the old enemy of Hernando and Andrés de Valdés from Cuenca, and possibly uncle to Antonio del Corro, one of the Hieronymite monks who had fled to Geneva – had been attracted to Gil's cause by the force of his preaching. This fact may explain the remarkable inefficiency of the Seville tribunal and the grave mistakes of which the Inquisitor General accused it. Bataillon confirmed this likely hypothesis, recalling that Corro had reported favorably on the Seville edition of a Treatise on Prayer (*Tratado de la oración*), a translation of Erasmus's *Modus orandi*.⁹⁶ There may be an even more important clue, perhaps involving the same person (if we accept Antonio del Corro rather than Casiodoro de Reina as the author of *Artes aliquot*): supposed dissension in the tribunal over whether Egidio should be condemned, with one member assailing his colleagues and other "ignorant friars." This was reported in a letter by Antonio del Corro in 1567, *Lettre envoyée a la maïesté du Roi d'Espagne*, calling Egidio an emissary come from God "to open the eyes of my understanding and recognize his truth." Antonio had learned of Egidio's doctrine by reading his declaration of abjuration and the record of his trial, given him by an Inquisitor who was presumably his uncle. At that point he saw the light of truth, pierced by "flaming sparks lit in my heart" that told him that "Jesus Christ crucified for the salvation of men was contained therein."⁹⁷ He also spoke of the old Inquisitor's bitter regret as he related the "iniquity," "injustice," and "cruelty" of the tribunal at Egidio's trial, from which he was trying to distance himself as much as possible. Antonio del Corro confessed that on that occasion he had not only heard the truth but encountered for the first time the terrible secrets of the Spanish Inquisition.

Many in Sevillian society had accepted and espoused the type of spirituality that Gil, Ponce de la Fuente, and other preachers were endorsing. No stratum of society was free of its influence, from the cathedral chapter to entire religious communities such as the Hieronymite monastery of San Isidoro and the convent of Santa Paula, noble Andalusian families, the urban elite, city officials,

96 Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 527, 573–577.

97 "[M]'ouvrir les yeux de l'entendement, et cognoistre sa vérité ... estincelles flamboyantes et allumées dans mon cœur ... Iesus Christ crucifié pour le salut des hommes y estoit envelopé": Corran [Corro], *Lettre envoyée a la maïesté du Roi d'Espagne*, A VIII–VIIV: cited from CL ms. KK 1-3-18. I thank Carlos Gilly for helping me to consult the microfilm.

and the artisanal class. The highest ranks were among its strongest partisans, and the Inquisition was very careful not to bring them to trial: among them were the Duchess of Béjar, the Marchioness of Villanueva, and María Enríquez, sister to Perafán de Ribera who was then Marquis of Tarifa and Viceroy of Catalonia. Juan de Cantillana, Cristóbal de Losada's father-in-law, had conveyed to María Enríquez a letter from Juan Pérez de Pineda in 1557, together with books specially chosen for her.⁹⁸ The position of the Viceroy himself was not entirely clear: his son Juan de Ribera, archbishop of Valencia and patriarch of Antioch, remarked on making his will in 1602 that those early years had cast a shadow over his hopes for sainthood.

In about 1549, Egidio and Constantino had convinced Perafán de Ribera to send his son, then studying in Salamanca, to Padua in the company of Agustín Ruiz de Hojeda. This learned preacher from the *Colegio de la Doctrina Cristiana* in Seville was condemned for Lutheranism in 1562.⁹⁹ Juan de Ribera had returned to the city with his "household" and his copy of Juan de Valdés's famous *Considerations*.¹⁰⁰ He was living in his aunt's palace and preparing to leave again when his father changed his mind and entrusted the son's education to Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, who had just returned from England with Carranza. Constantino was to read a lesson from Holy Scripture to him every day.¹⁰¹ The son maintained, however, that God inspired in him such an "abhorrence" of his teacher that he was saved from the contagion of heresy. This claim, like that of Juan de Ávila, is scarcely credible and was most likely invented to support the Counter-Reformation legend that grew around both of these saints.¹⁰² Further, the bishop of Tarazona, Juan González de Munébrega, suspected that Perafán de Ribera had collaborated in the flight of Gaspar Zapata, a member of his household and firm follower

98 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520, exp. 15.

99 The summary or *relación de causa* of Hojeda's trial is in AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2072; he was sentenced to a complete abjuration (*de vehemente*), ten years of confinement, loss of his benefice and canonry, and a fine of 3,000 *ducados*. He had been a reader of Holy Scripture in Seville Cathedral, attached to the Casa de la Doctrina founded by Gil de Fuentes: see Wagner, "Los maestros Gil de Fuentes y Alonso de Escobar."

100 Tellechea Idígoras, "Juan de Valdés y Bartolomé de Carranza" and "Declaración inédita del santo patriarca Ribera."

101 Ribera's testament is summarized in Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos*, 2: 73–4; but see also the biography by Robres Lluch, *San Juan de Ribera*.

102 Robres Lluch, *San Juan de Ribera*. For more on Saint Juan de Ávila, see Sala Balust, "Introducción," 198.

of Egidio – though for the moment it seemed more prudent not to involve the Viceroy directly.

These were not the only *grandees* of Spain to be implicated. Juan Ponce de León, a recognized leader of the heterodox movement in Seville, was the eldest son of Rodrigo Ponce de León, first Duke of Bailén, and the descendant of a powerful family from Arcos. His Inquisition case met with such consternation in Seville that Jesuits and Inquisitors made every effort to obtain a retraction but were unable to protect the family from a shameful public execution.

In 1556, after Juan Gil's death, the canons of Seville supported Constantino Ponce de la Fuente (who was already under suspicion) to fill Gil's canonry against the candidate of Archbishop Fernando de Valdés, president of the Council of Castile and Inquisitor General. This was a risky challenge in which the cathedral chapter even appealed to Rome against its own archbishop, and it resulted in Inquisitorial rage against the Sevillians. The chapter had decided years before to support Ponce de la Fuente (who had been at Philip II's court since 1548) as a preacher, and the canons considered his presence so essential that they delayed urgent building projects in the cathedral to fund his salary. The minutes of the chapter reflect their esteem:

The said Dr. Constantino, whose doctrines are acclaimed throughout the kingdom and elsewhere, and among princes and gentlemen and persons of every estate, and whose doctrine and preaching are of such benefit to all those who hear him, and who is sought by the leading churches of this kingdom; if he does not receive his present salary he could reach an agreement with a different church, which for this holy church would be a great embarrassment; and it would be a grave mistake if the people were deprived of such a man to preach the Gospel and true doctrine. For it is a fact that there is no one else in the kingdom who can do the same, and that he is so eminent in his learning and preaching ... that he deserves everything and must be given everything.¹⁰³

Thus, the battle that was joined around the trials in Seville could be won only with the help of a Trojan horse, someone from outside the complex Sevillian milieu: the bishop of Tarazona, a confidant of Inquisitor General Valdés,

103 Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*, 25.

who arrived with the express mission of overseeing the judges of the Seville tribunal¹⁰⁴ and the recently founded Company of Jesus.¹⁰⁵

The most notorious case, both for its repercussions and for its effect on Spanish society as a whole,¹⁰⁶ was undoubtedly that of the monks of San Isidoro al Campo, a community of Reformed Hieronymites on the outskirts of the city. It was one of the few monasteries that still followed the reforms introduced by Lope de Olmedo in the fifteenth century: these had replaced the existing Augustinian rule by one based on the letters of the founder, Saint Jerome. Olmedo had instituted a more rigid discipline that returned to a stark, essentialist religiosity in which reading and study of the Scriptures were even more central than in the original Order.

We have no documentation of how life had changed since then within the monastery walls. Sigüenza cites various factors to explain the ferocious opposition that arose when the monks were forced back into “traditional” practices in 1567: the extreme poverty of the monastic communities, the fact that the

104 In Inquisitorial correspondence from these years there are many exchanges between the bishop of Tarazona and the Sevillian Inquisitors Carpio and Gasco about how to proceed. Gasco's opinion in particular differed from that Munébraga, whom he accused of having come to Seville “to burn and roast people” and to make him look like the Roman emperor Nero. The bishop wanted to close the cases as soon as possible by imposing exemplary punishments and sending the maximum number of accused to the secular arm, since public *autos-da-fé* would demonstrate the Inquisition's power in the city. Gasco, however, wanted to investigate cases more closely, and wrote, “I still do not think that the root or all the branches of this evil have been uncovered,” adding, “though I trust in God that we have the thread by which everything will be revealed with His help. But I understand that it should be uncovered through great diligence in inquiry and necessary caution in making decisions. And that we should solve more things through the threat of imprisonment and serious measures than through punishment, although I realize that all procedures will be necessary” (“[Y]o no tengo aun la raiz ny todos los ramos deste mal por descubiertos ... aunque confio en Dios que se tiene el hilo por donde todo se a de descubrir con su ayuda. Pero entiendo que se a de descubrir dando grande diligencia en el inquirir y la amonestación necesaria en el determinar. Y que se a de curar mas con la vexacion de las prisiones y modo de proceder grabe que no con el escarmiento, aunque entiendo que todo sera menester”); letter by Andrés Gasco to the Council, 28 February 1559; AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942 n. 58. The first quotation is from Huerga, *Historia de los alumbrados*, 4: 51. *Artes aliquot* also finds Munébraga to be a sinister figure.

105 I reconstructed the climate that existed between 1558 and 1564, with attention to the role of the Jesuits and their sometimes murky links to the Inquisition in Seville, in Pastore, “Esercizi di carità, esercizi di Inquisizione.”

106 The case remains a paradigmatic and often-consulted reference point in theological-judicial circles. See, e.g., the query that Philip II's confessor, the Dominican Diego de Chaves, presented to the king in 1587: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4436, 1, 1.

purity-of-blood statutes had never been applied to Hieronymites of uncertain origin, and of course the scandalous role played by the house in Seville during the repression of heretics there.¹⁰⁷ Two Hieronymite monks, Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera, had fled to Geneva and, as fine Biblical scholars, made a translation of the Bible that is still used by Protestants. Their actions suggest that the order continued its adherence to the initial spirit of reform in at least two aspects: the study of Holy Scripture and the rejection of racial discrimination.

Until the flight of twelve monks betrayed its taint of heresy, the monastery had been an important locus of encounter and exchange. Its prior, Garci Arias – condemned to death in 1560 – had maintained contact with Juan Gil and Ponce de la Fuente, as well as with Juan de Ávila and the group of spiritual seekers that first formed around Bartolomé de Carranza and Fray Luis de Granada in Valladolid. Heterodox writings arriving from Geneva were received at the monastery and distributed from it; some of its monks, like Casiodoro de Reina and Antonio del Corro, enjoyed the respect and esteem of the Seville intelligentsia. *Autos-da-fé* celebrated in those years involved most of the monks who remained in Seville, and others who had made a second, unsuccessful effort to flee; among them were Juan de León, who became a tailor in Mexico City, and his friend Juan Sánchez. The few monks against whom nothing could be proved were placed under the supervision of the Jesuits, who were to oversee their orthodoxy.¹⁰⁸

San Isidoro al Campo was the clearest case of a religious house whose members, almost to a man, had adopted a doctrine eventually condemned as heretical. But it was not unique—there were also the nuns of Santa Paula, the female arm of the Reformed Hieronymites, and those of Santa Isabel. No one can deny, therefore, that for more than twenty years the religious life of Seville centered on the two charismatic preachers Gil and Ponce. According to *Artes aliquot*, they formed the central pillar of the “true Church” of the city, together with the less-known Francisco de Vargas. Whole sectors of civil society and the diocesan clergy had welcomed their doctrines with enthusiasm and made them their own.

The profound implications of this embrace were revealed later. As alarms about Lutheranism began sounding in the city, Juan González de Munébraga, the bishop of Tarazona who coordinated the Inquisition’s activities in Seville, referred to the spread of heresy even among “the low-born.” He argued that those people should be put to death not only because they had no assets to

107 Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 2: 178–9.

108 Pastore, “Esercizi di carità,” 254.

seize but because “it was no shame to them to mount the scaffold or wear the *sambenito*.”¹⁰⁹ They were a well-trained and well-indoctrinated army, whose few leaders set out to convert the multitudes as if they were new apostles illuminated by the Holy Spirit:

Since these crude people have been well taught, the chief learned dogmatizers employ the technique of sending them forth to speak and teach the doctrine; thus they suggest that it comes from heaven and that the Holy Spirit instructs them as it once instructed the apostles – these men who are coarse, unlettered, and mere artisans.¹¹⁰

This passage uses a variety of terms to brand the people among whom the heresy had spread: they were crude, coarse, and of an artisanal class that lacked education in humanism or theology. A second letter of the same vintage employed similar formulas to describe the heretics: aside from the few well-known and “principal” figures were “other people of low repute” filling the city’s jails: “preachers, clerics, sacristans, foolish women, and artisans.”¹¹¹ Clearly there had been an explosion of spiritualism that was directly traceable to the errors Juan Gil had been forced to renounce in 1552. Further, in both Seville and Valladolid there was a general conviction – transcending all ties, norms, customs, and even readings – that every Christian’s spiritual life was ruled by the inner presence of the Holy Spirit. This unexpected belief erased social and cultural barriers and guaranteed that the heresy in Seville would spread in the way that terrified the bishop of Tarazona.

In the resulting repression, 127 persons were forced to appear at the macabre and terrifying *autos-da-fé* held between 1559 and 1562. These filled the city to bursting, attracting spectators from as far as 40 and 50 leagues away. A far greater number of the persecuted performed their penances in secret, protected from the humiliation of public ceremonies and rituals.

It is of little value to review the data from the dry *relaciones de causas*,¹¹² as they offer nothing new about the process. Much more useful is a source,

109 Letter from bishop of Tarazona to the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, 7 March 1559: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, no. 59.

110 “Estando como estan muy enseñados esta gente sohez es artificio de los principales dogmatizadores letrados, que hechan [*sic*] a estos para que ellos platiquen y enseñen esta doctrina para dar a entender que viene del cielo y que la unçion del spiritu sancto les enseña como enseño a los apóstolos, siendo ellos unos hombres rudos y sin letras y offiçiales”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, no. 58.

111 MHSI, *Láinez*, 4: 469; letter from Suárez to Láinez from Seville, 23 August 1559.

112 They are collected in AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2075.

largely neglected until now, that allows us to follow the fortunes of some of the accused beyond the usual arguments about whether the movement in Seville was more Erasmian or Lutheran.¹¹³ These were the *méritos* of the trials: the detailed reports that collected the most relevant phases of the investigations and the accusations by witnesses, who are named.¹¹⁴ These were forwarded from the local to the Supreme tribunal, sometimes after many years; here I am citing reports from 1568.

According to those records, the preaching of Constantino and Egidio gave many hearers the deep conviction that “Jesus Christ had sacrificed for us, and believing in His Passion would lead us to heaven.” The spirituality of the *Beneficio di Cristo*, tinged with mysticism, took root and flourished in Spain, where the polemic about purity-of-blood statutes had already been inflamed by the metaphor of the mystical body of Christ and the notion that Christians shared equally with Christ, through his sacrifice, in his Benefice.

Hernando Ruiz Cabeza de Vaca (father of Agustín, the famous preacher), was convinced that such a belief was orthodox. He defended it not only to the Inquisitors but also to his cellmate Diego de Guillén, who had called it Lutheran. Their argument turned violent, and Guillén, who was a priest, fell and hit his head against a stone, dying soon afterward of his injury. Cabeza de Vaca tried desperately to convince his Inquisitors that the fight with his cellmate had been necessary, since he needed to restore his lost honor after Guillén accused him of Lutheranism.¹¹⁵

113 On the Erasmian position, see Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 522–48, and Guerrero, *Catecismos españoles*. On the Lutheran, see Tellechea Idígoras, “El protestantismo castellano”; Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 161–362. See also Huerga, *Historia de los alumbrados* 4: 56–7, although he concludes that “Erasmianism in Seville had a longer tradition and deeper roots than Lutheranism. So had *alumbradismo*, so similar in many aspects to Erasmianism, [but] *alumbradismo* was nowhere to be found”: Huerga, “Procesos de la Inquisición” and his introduction to Esbarroja, *Purificador de la conciencia*.

114 The first to use them was Huerga, “Procesos de la Inquisición”; he transcribes some of the reports at the end of his article. Since that date (1989) we do not find them cited in the many reconstructions of the heresy in Seville at this period. Nonetheless they form one of the richest sources we have for analyzing certain trials from Seville, and are therefore invaluable for research when combined with correspondence between the Inquisitors. Since 2004 when I first brought attention back to the source they have been used frequently and now partially edited in López Muñoz, *La Sevilla de la Reforma*, tome III, 2: 233ff.

115 The Cabeza de Vaca case was a complicated one that involved extra-Inquisitorial matters, and gave rise to many consultations with the Supreme Tribunal: see a state of the question on the phases and events surrounding his trial in AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4514, 2, 12; leg. 4520, 3.

The *méritos* are invaluable for clarifying the role of Cristóbal de Losada, whom *Artes aliquot* describes – as Menéndez Pelayo would do later – in almost novelistic terms as an innocent youth who embraced the “evangelical faith” to marry the daughter of Juan de Cantillana. This romantic portrait was thoroughly contradicted, however, by the report of his trial that the Seville tribunal sent to the Suprema in 1568. There he appears as a person who exploited a network of wide-ranging contacts. He was reportedly observed “conversing and dealing with Fray Antonio del Corro and Fray Casiodoro de Reina, and with the other friars from San Isidoro who fled to Germany,” and was said to have received letters and advice from them. He remained in close contact with them even after they reached Geneva.

With the help of three men – Juan Ponce de León, Marquis of Bailén; Francisco de Zafra, a former functionary of the Holy Office in Seville; and the bookseller Luis de Abreu – Losada organized a meeting “to decide how these books could enter the city walls, the better to distribute them among those who followed the Lutheran doctrine at that time.” As one of the best-known physicians in the city, he had converted some illustrious patients to his cause, curing them of their spiritual ailments as well. One accusation at his trial specified that “as physician to the Marchioness of Villanueva, and by her desire, he chose some books for her and sent them by means of his father-in-law Juan de Cantillana, together with a letter for her from Licenciante Juan Pérez, who was in Germany.” He was also said to have “translated a catechism by Calvin from Latin to Romance, and to have composed works about Epistles of Saint Paul and Psalms of David.”¹¹⁶

The real point of contact between Seville and Geneva, however, was Gaspar Ortiz, “a blind man who was in the *Colegio de la Doctrina* in Seville.”¹¹⁷ He had been in constant communication with Juan Pérez de Pineda ever since the latter had quietly left the College for Paris and eventually Geneva. Under interrogation, Ortiz admitted that he had remained connected to Pineda, who had left him a slave on his departure, sent him money when he needed it, and put him in charge of some unfinished business matters in the city. Julián Hernández had traveled to Seville twice on Pérez de Pineda’s behalf, bearing letters, carefully chosen books (often translated into Spanish by Pineda and printed at his behest by Jean Crespín), and spiritual advice for the “little Church” there. He had strict orders to deal with Ortiz and three other trusted men: Juan Gil, Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, and Hojeda at the College. But Gaspar Ortiz

116 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520, exp. 15. In fact, the translations were probably made by Pérez de Pineda.

117 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520, exp. 15.

was the true nexus: “When he [Hernández] came from Germany to this city for the first time, he brought letters from Juan Pérez for the said Gaspar Ortiz and other people, and slept one night at his house, and was instructed only to go directly to Dr. Egidio and to Canon Hojeda.”¹¹⁸

Julián Hernández spoke of Gaspar Ortiz’s jealousy of him for being a leader of the spiritual group in Seville. It seems that Ortiz wanted to be the sole recipient and distributor even of letters clearly addressed to others, and of Pineda’s treatise on the certainty of grace (“a tiny book, only a quarter-sheet bound ... which he said explained how a person could tell if he was in a state of grace or not”).

Julián Hernández’s testimony reveals that both Ortiz and Hernán Ruiz Cabeza de Vaca held strongly individual views on religious matters. They had engaged in lively debates: for instance, Ortiz disapproved of Pérez de Pineda’s marriage because “as a cleric, he had done wrong to marry.” Ortiz was also convinced that Egidio’s positions were not heretical, so that his retraction of them had been a grave tactical error: “In speaking with the prisoner about Dr. Egidio, he said that he should not have retracted his propositions; he reproved his rashness and claimed that if he had not been so hasty the Inquisitors would not have condemned him.”¹¹⁹

A few women stand out in the *méritos* of trials from Seville. María and Luisa Manuel, daughters of a well-known “gentleman” and followers of Egidio, had carefully preserved letters from their master; they visited him during his trial and celebrated its end by commissioning a sonnet in his honor.¹²⁰ Francisca de Chaves (recalled as a martyr in *Artes aliquot*) appears in the *méritos* of Ana de Illescas, born into one of the richest families in the city.¹²¹ Both women were originally attracted by the “sermons of Bachiller Luis Hernández, who fled this city and died as a heretic in Germany.” They then became loyal followers of Egidio and Constantino Ponce de la Fuente. Ana used to read from “the brief *Suma de doctrina* of Dr. Constantino” and listened closely as Francisca read sermons by Ponce de la Fuente “that she had written down on papers of her own.”

Religious life in Seville was nourished by an incessant interchange of texts: spiritual letters that passed from hand to hand and copies of sermons, speeches,

118 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520, exp. 15.

119 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4520, exp. 15.

120 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4519, 3, exp. 10 (h).

121 When Ana had been imprisoned for less than a year and a half the local Inquisitors petitioned the Suprema to relieve her of the *sambenito* and life in prison in exchange for a large fine. Although her family had lost a large part of its fortune (three other siblings had been arrested by the Inquisition), it could raise the sum because “they have been, and are, some of the richest people in this city”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4519, 3, exp. 10 (d).

and private readings, like those on the Gospel of John that Constantino wrote at home, which were often copied and distributed. There were also chapbooks, like “the book about the certainty of grace that was being passed around,” which Pérez de Pineda had sent to Gaspar Ortiz “to be bound” (and perhaps printed in secret); compendia, loose sheets, and hand-written volumes like the one that Francisca de Chaves kept, containing notes on sermons, debates, and personal thoughts that would be read in turn by others. At her second hearing, Ana de Yllescas admitted that aside from the “brief” version of Constantino’s *Suma* “she had also had the [full] *Suma de la doctrina* by Constantino, and the declaration of Erasmus, and a book of the Gospels; and later ... she confessed that she had read those books and papers that she spoke of before, and another book handwritten by Francisca de Chaves.”¹²²

Ana was part of a group with connections in the convents of Santa Ysabel (where Francisca de Chaves lived) and Santa Paula (where Juan Gil was the nuns’ spiritual director). Gil had set the nuns, young women, and aristocratic ladies of Seville who used to gather there on the path to perfection. In December 1559 the Inquisitors wrested from the Hieronymite nuns some cautious confessions about those meetings. They had concealed this information during Egidio’s trial but it had continued even after his sentencing, although he was forbidden to preach or instruct his followers. The bishop of Tarazona sent an irritated and sarcastic letter along with those reluctant confessions, revealing how hard it was to penetrate the world that had kept the secrets of the “excellent doctor” for so long:

I am sending certain letters from some nuns of the Santa Paula convent so that you, most reverend Sir, and the other gentlemen can understand how in the past Dr. Egidio spread this false doctrine, and the care that those reverend mothers took to conceal this while he was in prison, and the caution with which they wrote these letters. They were given to Licenciado Carpio while we were mired in difficulties. And now that the latest order is announced we pray God that they not have acquired another papal brief, like the other Dominican nuns.¹²³

122 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4519, 3, exp. 10 (d).

123 “Se envian ciertas cartas de algunas monjas del monasterio de Santa Paula para que Su Señoria reverendisima y esos señores entiendan en tiempo que ha que el doctor Egidio dogmatizava en esta falsa doctrina y la buena conçiencia de aquellas reverendas madres que al tiempo de su prision encubrieron esto y la cautela de que usaron quando escrivieron estas cartas y se dieron al licenciado Carpio que fue quando andavamos enbarra[n]cados y despues de pregonado el auto pasado, plega a dios que no se ayan prevenido de otro breve como las otras dominicas”: AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, 88.

Juan González de Munébrega wished that they had investigated the Santa Paula convent, where there were clear signs that the heresy persisted together with preachings of Egidio's that had not been detected at the time:

Here there is a great source for information on many things, and I suspect that ladies and other persons gathered to hear those sermons, and entered the convent to meet and communicate with María de Bohorques and a second nun who were relaxed at the last *auto-da-fé*.¹²⁴

In September 1559, the Hieronymite friar Diego de Vadillo turned over to the Inquisitors a report entrusted to him by Leonor de Cristóbal, a nun of Santa Paula. Twenty years earlier, her faith had been awakened by Gil's sermons and his rejection of all external signs of devotion; she came to believe "that our works count for nothing ... because our Lord Jesus Christ worked on behalf of us all." Through Gil she had realized that the monastic routine was an empty ritual, leading them all far from the true Christian life and original purity that the orders' founders had preached. She had even declared: "If Saint Jerome and Saint Dominic and the rest of them came back to the world now they would say, 'This is not the order that I created.'" Leonor did not deny that Gil's new doctrine had swept her away, to the point of wishing fervently "that the mothers from the past, who worked so hard to maintain the rules of the order, could be alive today to understand how all that was good for nothing." Later, before the Inquisitor, she not only confirmed the report's contents but tried to define just what "that doctor, so excellent that everyone followed him" had taught her:

Everything he preached seemed to them like such a gentle religion, a life of such grace, that this witness felt that all the rest, like giving oneself up to work and mortification, was excessive. And sometimes, speaking with other nuns, she would say that she wished our ancestresses could be alive now. They had worked so hard to create and preserve these actions and ceremonies of the order that were of so little use for their salvation; if they could hear these sermons and enjoy this doctrine that is so free of hardship, they would not weary themselves so much with serving in the

¹²⁴ "Aquí ay gran pozo y noticia de muchas cosas a lo que sospecho, que es que se ayuntavan señoras y otras personas a oír aquellos sermones y entravan dentro en el convento a tratar y comunicar con las religiosas Maria de Bohorques y otra que fueron relaxadas en el auto pasado": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, 88.

choir and praying and other affairs of the order, since those things did nothing for their salvation.¹²⁵

As the Inquisitors pressed her to confess the names and ranks of others who were not yet under suspicion, Leonor revealed that in 1542 the audience for Egidio's preaching included "the prioress at that time, and the whole convent, and everyone who had come from outside and filled the place." A second nun, Ana de los Ángeles, added that "many people followed him, and she had heard that [the nuns] Bohórquez and Virués, who had been burned, were there, and many other people, both men and women."¹²⁶ Eusebia de San Juan readily confessed that she had been devoted to Egidio and believed his every word; but when the judge urged her to examine her conscience, she claimed to remember only that Egidio had convinced them "to pray as our own will required of us."¹²⁷

All the statements by the Hieronymite nuns contain the idea of the "yoke [that] is easy," a self-justifying faith that implies a profound internal freedom and obviates the need for good works. That radical notion had invaded the life of the convent, which was so rigidly ruled by daily rites, habits, and duties. Its sensibility and arguments were much like the ones that Castillo had expressed in his letters to Petronila, and also like those espoused by Archbishop Pedro de Alba in the *Diálogo* of Juan de Valdés, intended to make the faithful fall in love with Christian doctrine. Such was Leonor's enthusiasm and inspiration that she wished everyone could have lived by such a "gentle" law, including the now-deceased sisters who had felt the weight of all those rituals. If only they could be brought back to life, even for a moment! We find the same sentiments in certain cases from Italy: a feeling of contentment and liberation in Christians who have been rescued by the grace of Jesus Christ and God's infinite mercy.

125 "Todas las cosas que predicaba les paresçia una ley tan suave, una vida tan graçiosa que le paresçia a esta declarante que lo demas de darse a trabajos y afligirse era cosa demasiada e alguna vez hablando con algunas monjas compañeras dezia quien pudiera tener agora vibas a nuestras antepasadas que tanto trabajaron en hazer y guardar estas obras y çirimonias de la horden que tan poco le aprovecharon para su salvaçion para que oyeran estos sermones y gozaran desta doctrina tan sin pesadumbre y no se fatigaran tanto por ellas como es no trabajar tanto en el coro ni rezar ni en otras cosas de la horden, pues que no les hazian al caso para su salvaçion": AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, 78. Beltrán de Heredia, *Domingo de Soto*, 743–4, reproduces some of the letters addressed to nuns of Santa Paula.

126 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, 78, testimony of Ana de los Ángeles.

127 AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 2942, 78.

The last document we will analyze illustrates the attractiveness of the doctrine of the so-called Sevillian heresy and the high expectations it produced. It is an unpublished letter by Gonzalo González, one of the first Jesuits to arrive in the city from Ávila in 1554. The Jesuits were well acquainted with the movement in Seville, to which they had drawn dangerously close before fortuitously drawing back. In 1556 and 1557, as doubts about Constantino Ponce de la Fuente's orthodoxy began to proliferate and the Dominicans increased their attacks on the Jesuits, it was rumored that Ponce had entered the Society of Jesus. Jesuit chronicles tried to describe the embarrassing episode as another attack by that "most persistent heretic" against their orthodox purity, but their protests were not very convincing. On the contrary, we should view the event as proof that certain affinities can account for the Company's successes during those years.¹²⁸

González's letter, preserved in the Jesuit archives in Rome, makes a full analysis of the Sevillian heresy. With its richness of detail, it constitutes one of the most valuable sources on the subject. It begins by describing the different groups and sub-groups and the many "opinions" found within each one, a situation that made it more difficult to define the movement as a whole beyond its common anti-institutional character:

The first notable fact that reveals the dishonesty of all these people is the diversity of opinions among them, without agreement on any one thing. Astonishingly, they say that they are under no obligation to follow any commandment of the Church, because those are commandments made by men and not found in the Gospels; and likewise for everything else that is ordered and established by the holy councils. And they reject and mock the sacrifice of the mass, and what is worse, they deny the truth of the holy sacrament; their leader claims something entirely new that has astounded us all, which I will reveal below. They do not fast, they eat meat on the forbidden days, they call confession a human invention designed to make money, and the same for indulgences and jubilees; they do not consider or fear any censure or excommunication.¹²⁹

128 In Pastore, "Esercizi di carità," I analyzed the complex relations between the Jesuits and the spiritual seekers of Seville before 1558. The matter deserves a more detailed treatment that would bear in mind the strong connections between the Jesuits and the school of Juan de Ávila, and between the latter and the heterodox group in Seville. I began to explore the issue, concentrating on the entrance of Juan de Ávila's school into the Company of Jesus, in Pastore, "Tra conversos, gesuiti e inquisizione," esp. 241–51.

129 "Es la primera que admira y descubre el engaño de toda esta gente ver la diversidad de opiniones que entre ellos ay sin concertarse todos en una cosa por maravilla comunmente

But the whole heretical universe in Seville revolved around a single axis:

That the image of Jesus Christ alone should be worshipped, and that there are no other virtues but his most holy ones (if there is one thing they all agree on it is this, which they understand in their own way), so that if one possesses them there is no need for any other penance or absolution from us. They laugh at hairshirts, scourges, and rosaries, calling them hypocrisy, and at any sign of external conf[es]sion (since they do not know what even the internal kind is). They believe that what they do is pure spirit and truth, while what Catholics do is only ceremonies and survivals of the Old Law.¹³⁰

Juan Gil's thinking about Christ's virtues, and about the uselessness of human works, mortifications, rosaries, and image worship, coincided with this radical spirituality that considered the obligatory Catholic rites to be mere "ceremonies and survivals of the Old Law." The true motivator and support of these Christians' acts was the certainty of grace, also a central tenet for Dr. Egidio (and for his disciple in Geneva Pérez de Pineda, who had written a treatise on the subject). This certainty was a source of strength during the darkest moments of the Inquisition trials and executions:

They declare themselves very certain and sure of grace, trusting in the promises made by Christ; and they feel that admitting any doubt about this would offend Christ's virtues and promises. And if pressed with

dizen que no estan obligados a complir ningun mandamiento de la Yglesia por ser mandamientos de hombres y no expresados en el evangelio y asi de todo lo demas ordenado y establecido por los santos concilios. Y disimulan y mofan del sacrificio de la missa y lo que peor es niegan la verdad del santissimo sacramento, diciendo el mas principal de ellos una cosa muy nueva que a todos nos a admirado y dire abaxo. No usan ayunar, comen carne en los dias prohibidos, llaman al confesarse invention de hombres para ganar de comer y assi de las indulgencias y jubileos no teniendo ni temiendo censuras y excomuniones." The letter is preserved in ARSI, *Hisp.* 99, 442-3. An edition of this exceptional document is now in López Muñoz, *La Reforma en la Sevilla*, 2: 197-200 (with no reference, however, to my first analysis and transcription). See also García Pinilla "La 'providencia diabólica,'" 353-8.

130 "Que solo la ymagen de Jesu Christo se a de adorar, que no ay mas meritos que los suyos sanctissimos (y si en algo vienen a dar todos es en esto a su manera entendido) y que teniendo estos no ay necesidad de ninguna penitencia ni satisfacion nuestra. Riense de cilicios, disciplinas, rosarios, llamandolo yprochresia y a qualquiera muestra de confussion [*sic*, for "confession"] exterior (porque ellos ni aun interior saben que cosa es) pareciendoles que lo que ellos tratan es puro espiritu y verdad y lo de los catholicos cerimonias y cargas de la ley vieja": ARSI, *Hisp.* 99, 442-3.

words of Scripture they reply that it does not mean what it says, like persons who have embraced darkness instead of light; and if [pressed] with reasoning [they reply] that the testimony of their conscience and the peace that they find in it proves to them that the doctrine they profess is evangelical and true. If we told them that they should be consoled by [Christ's] death and suffering they replied that they were already fully consoled, and that they had been longing for this hour. And some of them were so entrenched in their heresies and unable to reject them that in the sentence of one person (who had left religious life after ten years and had professed this doctrine for fifteen) it said that he considered [the heresies] so certain and true that if the very people who had preached and taught them to him now told him the opposite, he would not believe them.¹³¹

The acknowledged leaders of the "little Church" in Seville were Egidio and Constantino. The former had continued to teach, if no longer publicly through preaching then through letters, counsels, and conversations that took place in different homes and religious houses:

The masters of this doctrine in this place that are known so far are Dr. Constantino and Dr. Egidio. Egidio's sentence stated that after he had been made to retract his errors years ago, he said that although they had barred him from preaching he would not cease to benefit the little Church (which is his own) by writing letters and messages, and that is what he did.¹³²

131 "Hazense muy ciertos y seguros en gracia, confiados de las promesas de Christo pareciendoles que admitir qualquiera duda en esto de su parte es hazer injuria a los meritos y promesas de Christo. Y si les apretan con Escripura responden que no es aquel su sentido como gente que an abraçado las tinieblas por luz y si con razones, que el testimonio de su conciencia y la paz que sienten en ella les asegura ser evangelica y verdadera la doctrina que professan. Si les deziamos que se consolassen en su muerte y trabajos respondian que muy consolados estavan y que muy desseada tenian esta hora y estavan algunos tan confirmados en sus heregias e ynabiles para salir dellas que se leyo en la sentencia de una persona (que despues de 10 años de religion se salio y se dio a professar esta doctrina 15 años) que la tenia por tan çierta y verdadera que si los mesmos que se la predicaron y enseñaron tornasen a dezirle lo contrario no los creeria": ARSI, *Hisp.* 99, 442-3.

132 "Los maestros desta doctrina en este lugar que hasta agora se han publicado son el doctor Gostantino [*sic*] y el doctor Egidio. De Egidio dezia la sentencia que avia dicho despues de aver sido recontrado [*sic*] de sus errores los años passados que aunque le aviesen quitado el predicar no dejaria de aprovechar a la Yglesia chica (que es la suya) con cartas comunicaciones escriviendo y ansi lo hazia": ARSI, *Hisp.* 99, 442-3.

The Inquisitors had condemned his doctrine in its entirety, even the parts that contained “some Catholic doctrine,” according to the Jesuit González. The admission is important because it suggests that González could accept part of Egidio’s thinking and because it refers to works of his that have left no trace. Some have doubted their very existence.

The case of Ponce de la Fuente was similar. Though he had already died, his macabre sentence consisted of burning his remains on the pyre and defacing his headstone:

They declared heretical any of his [Egidio’s] treatises or writings even if they contained some Catholic doctrine. And the same with all those of Dr. Constantino. They dug him up and burned his bones, and his grave-stone is turned upside-down with an order that no one may ever be buried on that spot. The sentences of both men ended with a statement that the name and reputation of such a bad man – a heretic, a teacher of an abominable dogma, and other such names – should perish forever.¹³³

The allusion to treatises of Gil’s that were hitherto unknown to us is the only hint that the intellectual output and the doctrinal corpus of the two canons was broader than previously thought. The Jesuit González recounts that a cache of all the works of Luther, Oecolampadius, Zwingli, and Calvin had been discovered (probably at the home of Isabel Martínez de Baena). Hidden among the volumes was a bundle of papers in Constantino’s hand “that revealed fully who he was.” But González scarcely described their compromising contents, except to mention that “a few things were reported, omitting the rest so as not to offend the pious ears of Catholics.”

It appears that Constantino had defended the possibility of marriage for the clergy, considering the married state purer and more perfect than any other; he may also have defined the Catholic Church as “a Papist kingdom” and a “tyrannical estate.” The Jesuit was notably vague in speaking of the volume, which had begun to develop into a legend that reappeared in *Artes aliquot*. His caution contrasts with his forthright tone in citing two other pieces by Ponce de la

133 “Dieron por hereticas qualquier tratado o obras suias aunque contengan alguna doctrina catholica y lo mesmo todas las del doctor Constantino desenterraronle y quemaronle los guesos esta la piedra de la sepultura vuelta de lo arriba abaxo con pena que perpetuamente no se entierre nadie en ella. Acabando la sentencia de cada uno con dezir que perezca el nombre y fama de un tal mal hombre hereje dogmatizador abominable y otros nombres asi”: ARSI, *Hisp.*, 99, 442–3.

Fuente, the *Treatise on the Victory of Jesus Christ* (*Tratado de vitoria Iesu Christi*) and *On the Unhappiness of Rulers* (*De infelicitate regum*).

In the first of these, Constantino apparently wrote of “things unworthy of being written or thought, even by Luther”: among them was that “the sacrament on the altar is a simple offering.” Of all heretical doctrines, this one seems to have scandalized González the most, since early in his letter he alluded to followers of Gil and Constantino who denied “the truth of the holy sacrament.” This symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist had been popular in Alcalá in 1525, when Oecolampadius’s commentaries were widely read. In the second piece, an explicit attack on the Inquisition “that said horrendous things against the Holy Office,” Ponce de la Fuente returned to the polemic that had roiled the city since the days of Rodrigo de Valer.

We have few details about Constantino Ponce de la Fuente’s second residence in Seville. The writings we possess were all produced before his stay at court, at which time he encountered Reform doctrines in an atmosphere of meetings and exchanges that, at least in the realm of imperial politics, remained fairly open. Undoubtedly he became more cautious after Egidio’s trial and would not risk sending a manuscript to the press. The author of *Artes aliquot* refers to a certain work of clearly Lutheran doctrine in which Ponce de la Fuente “openly, as if writing for himself,” disclosed what his true beliefs were. It had been walled up in the home of one of his most devoted followers, Isabel de Baena, where (according to *Artes aliquot*) the heretics of Seville would gather after the flight of the monks from San Isidoro.¹³⁴ When the Inquisitors confronted Ponce with this manuscript, he acknowledged writing it and admitted that he believed what he had said, so that there was no need to call any additional witnesses. The words that *Artes aliquot* puts in his mouth are ““Here you already have an open and full confession of my opinion. So call a halt and do with me whatever you wish.”” The statement transforms him from a Nicodemite Catholic into a martyr of the Protestant Reformation.¹³⁵

No vestige of this supposedly Lutheran manuscript has survived. As Bataillon points out in discussing Ponce de la Fuente’s Erasmianism, it is hard to believe that in the face of such a crushing proof, Constantino died after two years in prison without being tortured. García Pinilla, in his introduction to a theological opinion on Ponce’s doctrine titled *Parecer de Domingo de Soto* (though it was probably penned by a Dominican from Seville), seems to deny that the accusations against Constantino were as well founded as those against the

134 Gonzalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 416–21.

135 Gonzalvius Montanus, *The Arts of the Spanish Inquisition*, 421.

“Lutherans” of Seville.¹³⁶ The true Constantino remains an enigma, distorted and burdened by Counter-Reformation propaganda; his library is equally mysterious because the Inquisitors were unable to identify any example of heretical literature.¹³⁷

Nieto devotes over twenty-five pages to a supposed Gospel “planned” by Ponce de la Fuente, basing himself only on the words of *Artes aliquot*. The letter by the Jesuit González contains our sole reference to its existence, but only by hearsay.¹³⁸ Another source claims that over 30,000 pieces of movable type were found in De la Fuente’s house in Seville.

Every possible accusation has been made against the heretics of Seville: that they were Erasmists, Lutherans, Calvinists, or even devout Catholics. They have even been called enthusiasts of the Reformation, based on a detailed and imaginative analysis of a book that has left no trace and may never have been written. I prefer not to participate in this discussion, nor to weigh the relative value of statements, quotations, references, and silences that are purely hypothetical.

I hope to have demonstrated sufficiently the influence of Valdés and *alumbradismo* on the heretical movement in Seville, based on the success in the city of the *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana* and Pérez de Pineda’s activities in 1557. We can accept as established the varied influences from the Reformation that reached Seville, as well as the solid local knowledge of its different currents and texts. It is crucial to be exact about dates and avoid the common error of simplifying a world that was still fluid and undefined, forcing it into categories that were created later and *ad hoc*. Even within the Roman Catholic sphere, the decree from Trent in 1546 had not yet banished dissent; and within the Reformation sphere, Pérez de Pineda could still publish works by Valdés (an author later condemned for heresy) in Calvin’s Geneva and present Valdés’s commentaries on the Epistles of Paul as the fruit of a reformed orthodoxy.¹³⁹

In his lucid report to his superior, the Jesuit Gonzalo González stressed how hard it was to describe the heretical phenomenon because of the “diversity of opinions” it contained. In light of his observations on the fundamental esoterism of Ponce de la Fuente’s doctrine and on the allusions contained in his

136 García Pinilla, “Más sobre Constantino Ponce de la Fuente.”

137 In this regard, see Wagner, *Constantino Ponce de la Fuente*, who stresses that De la Fuente’s “official” book collection, the one seized by the Inquisition, was entirely orthodox.

138 Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, 309–33. Nieto chose this title because he believes that Ponce de la Fuente’s book must have existed, as a “historical necessity.”

139 Firpo, “Ioanne Valdessio è stato heretico pessimo,” 153ff.

homilies, we should reject facile attempts at classification and concentrate on nuances, gray areas, and cross-contaminations:

As for Constantino, many subtleties were revealed in his manner of preaching to his sect that were understood by its members but not by others. So, for instance, he praised charity, which he claimed could overcome many sins; and they understood that there was therefore no need for confession and nothing else was necessary. And likewise with other things.¹⁴⁰

Very dangerous doctrines lurked behind this insistence on charity. Soto, in his subtle theological writings, had already pointed out the peril of believing that charity was superior to faith. This doctrine had radical implications: it made justification by faith into a revolutionary spirituality that denied any mediation by the institution of the Church, insisted on grace, and (as had happened with Gil) held out the hope of impeccability. Ponce de la Fuente may have believed something very similar, since in his published works he constantly defends the intimate connection between faith and charity.

As González suggested, Constantino's defense of charity in his sermons implied that oral confession was valueless. There may have been more serious implications for other aspects of doctrine that were discussed behind closed doors at Ponce de la Fuente's house: there Constantino commented on the Gospel of John, which had inspired the *alumbrados* of Toledo. A much less prudent figure, the Dominican friar Luis de la Cruz of Valladolid (a friend of both Constantino and Egidio) had delivered a sermon in 1555 from the pulpit of Seville Cathedral on Egidio's thesis that mortal sin results in the loss of faith.¹⁴¹

In this way, certain ambiguous statements, quotations, and allusions could either lead toward a "Lutheran" justification by faith or result in the doctrine of impeccability. The two concepts were opposed in Lutheran thought, but they were two sides of the same coin for Juan Gil and perhaps also for Lerma and Constantino Ponce de la Fuente. In any case they freed the Christian from institutional bonds, or rescued him from servanthood and gave him back the

140 "De Constantino se descubrieron algunas de las muchas sutilezas que tenia en el predicar su secta, las cuales entendian los de ella y no los otros. Y asi que loava la charidad y que con ella se cubre muchedumbre de pecados suos entendian que aquello bastava por confession y no era menester otra y otras cosas desta manera": ARSI, *Hisp.* 99, 442v.

141 Tellechea Idígoras, "Fray Luis de la Cruz ... ¿hereje?," 207.

only thread that, in Pedro de Cazalla's evocative words, ultimately tied man to God.¹⁴²

5 Lutheran Certainties, *Converso* Consolations: Juan de Ávila

To conclude this review of the Spanish heresy from a *converso* point of view, we must briefly consider one more figure: the beloved and controversial Andalusian saint Juan de Ávila.¹⁴³ His tormented history, his relationships, and his thought lead us, however, to a path parallel to the one we have followed so far: the "Dominican way" of rigid, penitential asceticism that, as Bataillon explained, began with Savonarola's success in the Peninsula and influenced Carranza and Fray Luis de Granada.¹⁴⁴

Juan de Ávila arrived in Seville in 1527 from the stimulating milieu of the University of Alcalá, home to the *alumbrados* who had studied Erasmus, Juan de Valdés, Ignatius of Loyola, and the future canons of Seville Cathedral. In the company of Juan Garcés, the first bishop of Guatemala, he intended to sail to the New World. While Juan López de Celaín and Juan del Castillo were organizing their mission for twelve "apostles" in Old Castile, Garcés and Ávila meant to follow in the footsteps of the first Mexican "apostles," the companions of Fray Martín de Valencia. But Ávila's *converso* origins thwarted his plan and eventually, under Archbishop Manrique's protection, he became one of the most popular preachers in Seville. His career was interrupted in 1532–1533 by an accusation of *alumbradismo* and a trial by the Inquisition. Although we

142 This was Proposition 42 of the edict against the *alumbrados*: Ortega Costa, "Las proposiciones." Francisca Hernández attributed it to Pedro de Cazalla. See Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*, 91.

143 The best historical introduction to his life is still Sala Balust, "Introducción;" to which should be added Bataillon, "Jean d'Avila retrouvé." In 1963 Flors published his *Avisos y reglas*, preceded by an important introduction by Sala Balust; his various treatises, included during the 1950s in *Miscelánea Comillas*, now appear in his collected works. Vázquez Janeiro published seven unedited treatises in 2000. Ávila, *Siete Tratados*. Esquerda Bifet, author of a *Diccionario de san Juan de Ávila* and articles in journals directed to the clergy, also published an extensive work that adds nothing to the historical record but insists on the modern relevance of the saint's spiritual thought: Esquerda Bifet, *Introducción a la doctrina*. Since his canonization in 1970, the bibliography about him has grown exponentially, with works by clerical scholars for specialized ecclesiastical presses of uneven and sometimes deplorable quality; these contrast with serious (though not lay) studies such as those by Sala Balust and Martín Hernández. There is an English edition of his main work: John of Ávila, *Audi filia: Listen, O daughter*. See also Coleman, "Moral formation and Social control"; Roldán-Figueroa, *The Ascetic Spirituality*.

144 Bataillon, "De Savonarole à Louis de Grenade."

know of the charges only through a fragment in his canonization documents, he was accused of preaching against corruption in the Church and defending certain forbidden charismatic practices by female devotees.

Juan de Ávila stood for a kind of “illuminism” that advocated ignoring the Lord’s Prayer and the Hail Mary in favor of solitary, silent contemplation of God. He also preached that heaven had been created for the poor and that no rich man could enter it. Above all, however, he attacked the Inquisition. All accounts agreed that he declared those condemned and executed by the Holy Office to be martyrs; in the Seville of Rodrigo de Valer and Juan Gil, this opinion had become a classic *topos* of *converso* spirituality.¹⁴⁵

Ávila’s hagiographers describe how his painful incarceration by the Inquisition in Seville inspired his most profound and intense work, *Audi filia*—but the most important lesson he learned was caution. After that experience both his personal life and his teaching – as we know from his rich correspondence as a spiritual director – made penitence and asceticism a shield against every human sin or temptation. His gloomy pessimism about mankind cast shadows of anguish, doubt, and fear over the joyful certainty of the *alumbrados*, darkening the bright “path to perfection” that led from them to the Lutherans of Seville.

The paths of those two schools of thought had crossed on a number of occasions: first, perhaps, in Alcalá, where Juan de Ávila had studied; certainly in Seville at the *Colegio de la Doctrina Cristiana*; in Ávila’s correspondence with Garci Arias (known as “el maestro Blanco,” because of his completely white skin and head), prior of the Reformed Hieronymite monastery of San Isidoro; and in a shared preaching style based on a return to the essential message of Scripture.

Ávila began writing *Audi filia* just after his first Inquisition trial in 1532–1533, though it was not published until 1556. It was censored mildly by the Dominican Juan de la Peña, who would later defend Bartolomé de Carranza. Peña noted

145 Abad, “El proceso de la Inquisición.” In his autograph defense statement Ávila acknowledged that one who died after renouncing belief in Christ could not be considered a martyr; but he did admit to having persuaded those condemned by the Inquisition that their death “in the faith” could be a form of martyrdom, and would take them straight to heaven. This claim did not annul the accusations against him. Nor did he deny that he had urged those who had escaped with a penitence not to feel hatred for those condemned to death; he admitted to having done so many times “because he knows that some of them do not consider the others to be their brothers.” He had also reproved many for having called “New Christians and *conversos* ‘Moorish and Jewish dogs,’” since this commonest of insults naturally made the infidels even less likely to convert: Sala Balust, “Introducción,” 45.

that it contained “rash” propositions about the close connection between faith and charity; he also found dangerous its defense of a living faith inflamed by grace and mercy. The Dominican found this wording too close to that of Valdés, Gil, and Ponce de la Fuente. He recommended that “people of understanding” excise those passages to obtain a text that conformed to the orthodoxy of the Council of Trent.¹⁴⁶ Melchor Cano, an implacable searcher for *alumbradismo*, was less indulgent: he warned that such stark language, which followed Paul’s text without commentary, explanation, or scholastic interpretation, came dangerously close to the doctrine of grace when, like the “*alumbrados* and Lutherans,” it used expressions that “remove fear and promote certainty.”¹⁴⁷

Juan de Ávila remains a difficult and ambiguous figure, steeped in Pauline spirituality, connected to the *converso* ambience of Andalusia, and sympathetic to Talavera’s teachings. He lived through the first persecutions of the *alumbrados* and the twilight of Erasmianism, and while he shared many ideas with the heretics of mid-century Seville, he managed to separate from them in time. It is astonishing how often he was able to find orthodox or seemingly orthodox paths through clearly heterodox situations. One example was the editorial strategy of the University of Baeza, the only one in 1540s Spain that was administered entirely by *conversos*.

Many classic texts and spiritual works were printed in Baeza in the span of a few years. Eventually they would swell the ranks of books forbidden by the Inquisition, but in the beginning they made a decisive contribution to intimate spirituality and initiated the new wave of *alumbradismo* that peaked in the 1570s.¹⁴⁸ In 1550 and 1551 alone, Baeza saw the publication of a cascade of works: two commentaries in Spanish on the Psalms by Savonarola, the celebrated *Miserere mei* and *Qui regis Israel*,¹⁴⁹ a single volume containing Juan de Ávila’s version of *Contemptus mundi* and a translation of Serafino da Fermo’s *Cento problemi di orazione*; two works by Pseudo-Bonaventure in Romance,

146 Ávila, *Audi filia*, appendix II, “Censura de Juan de la Peña,” 316–7.

147 Cano censured two other controversial works by Ávila. He claims that in *Tratado del amor de Dios* Ávila “assigns everything to Jesus’s merits and nothing to our works.” The famous and popular spiritual letter no. 20 would circulate among Carranza’s followers in Valladolid until it was confiscated from the local “Lutherans” in 1558–1559 and from the *alumbrados* of Extremadura twenty years later: Sala Balust, “Una censura de Melchor Cano.”

148 Bataillon, “De Savonarole à Louis de Grenade” and “Sur la diffusion des oeuvres de Savonarole.” See his *Erasmus y España*, 593–601 for the influence of Savonarola and Serafino da Fermo, which the Baeza press was largely responsible for extending, together with works by Juan de Ávila and Fray Luis de Granada. Asensio, “El erasmismo,” 85ff. On printing and reading in Baeza, see Catedra, *Imprenta y lecturas en Baeza*.

149 Bataillon, “Sur la diffusion,” 100.

Doctrina cordis and *Estímulo de amor*; Francisco de Fuensalida's *Breve suma llamada sosiego y descanso del alma*; and probably an edition of Juan de Ávila's spiritual letters, avidly read by the *alumbrados* of Extremadura.¹⁵⁰

There were books that Cisneros had chosen in his time, and others that had inspired the first spiritual yearnings of Isabel de la Cruz and the accountant Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz. Others taught a path to perfection and impeccability filtered through the experiences of the Italians Battista da Crema and Serafino da Fermo¹⁵¹ and the new roles of confessors and spiritual directors. This situation looked like a return to the past to search for paths different from the ones that had led to the *alumbradismo* of the 1520s; it was like throwing the dice again to achieve a different result. While the intent was the same, it was now recognized that it must occur in a solid institutional context: internal silent prayer must be accompanied by regular confession and communion, as guarantees of consistency and orthodoxy while still defending one's inner freedom.

In Juan de Ávila's Baeza, then, the yearning for perfectibility and impeccability that had inspired the first *alumbrados* surfaced once again, but it now followed a path rigidly laid down by confessors and spiritual directors. The model for this new wave of *alumbrado* spirituality had been the *converso* Juan de Ávila, with his desire for perfection and the dark pessimism about human frailty that appears in his greatest work, *Audi filia*.

The first edition of that text appeared in 1556 and was widely read. It had already circulated in manuscript, with emendations and corrections that its author would later repudiate. He had conceived it as a path to God for his first spiritual daughter, Sancha Carrillo, but it had attracted readers even before reaching the press, augmented by additions and annotations that its author declared to be "full of falsehoods." Nevertheless, it appeared to satisfy the wishes and expectations of its audience. Ávila claimed that the 1556 edition enlarged what in the manuscript version he had expressed briefly and "almost through hints," since it was intended for a "well-informed person who understood a great deal with few words." The result was a book suitable for every reader – especially every female one – that explained "fully and plainly" to every "beginner" how to serve God, come into His presence, and "achieve one's desire through His grace."¹⁵²

150 The printed version of Ávila's letter has not survived but the text appears in AHN, *Inq.*, leg. 4443.

151 In this regard, see the reflections of Massimo Firpo on Lorenzo Davidico's path to perfection and the teachings of his spiritual mentor Battista da Crema, and also those of Elena Bonora on the spirituality of the first Barnabites: Firpo, *Nel labirinto del mondo*, esp. 31–48; Bonora, *I conflitti della Controriforma*.

152 The quotations are from the dedicatory epistle to Luis Portocarrero, Count of Palma, in the first ed. of *Audi filia*: Ávila, *Avisos y reglas*, 83–4.

The aspirations of devout women in Andalusia, and the ambitions of their confessors, rested on the foundation of *Audi filia*. At the same time Ávila's Letter 20, addressed to "an anguished woman," enjoyed enormous success. Insisting on the capacity of Christ's blood to ensure salvation, it exalted the spirits of seekers and Lutherans in Valladolid. It promised *conversos* from Andalusia and Extremadura a path of adversity, suffering, and temptation at whose end they would join God's elect, granting strength and surety to their vocation.¹⁵³

The Inquisitors considered Ávila's letter one of the mainstays of the *alumbrado* faith in the 1570s. A favorite text of secret meetings and small, clandestine religious gatherings or *conventículos*, it encompasses a series of questions typical of *converso* spirituality. One instance is the Pauline notion of "dying daily," in which many scholars have seen the key to a sensibility that, among Spanish *conversos*, extends from the letters of Leonor de Lucena to Rojas's *Celestina* and Saint Teresa of Ávila. Américo Castro saw in it "the unique essence of Spain."¹⁵⁴ Here the shadow of a daily life ruled by fear, suspicion, and inequality, by unexpected betrayals by one's own neighbors, and by discrimination based on an increasing obsession with "purity of blood," is sublimated into a pathway of faith, paved with trials and persecutions. The author's exhortation to "convert the stones of suffering into bread" sounds like a warning to follow the prescribed path as a way to martyrdom and resistance to Inquisitorial power. We should not underestimate the influence of Ávila's words on the devout women who, with their advisers, strove for impeccability; to a greater or lesser extent, they believed in the ability to resist the temptations of the flesh, since these were tests that God required of His elect.

The road followed by Ávila and his *conversos* came perilously close, at many points, to the one we have been outlining in these pages: as they clung to the Pauline notion of the world's wickedness, they were threatened by an ever stronger, more powerful, and more hostile Inquisition. They based their spirituality on Paul's writings and the Psalms, on the strictures imposed by the Holy Office, and on their unshakeable conviction that "the just are martyred, as much now as in Gospel times."¹⁵⁵ This Pauline certainty had suffused the Spain of the Inquisition, and Sigüenza recalled it in the context of the condemned Hieronymites. Those were the protagonists of a very Spanish story, marked by the struggles between men of the flesh and men of the spirit, with

153 Censorship documents from the Inquisition show that a first edition of Ávila's letters was printed in Baeza, certainly before 1578 when the second edition by Pierres Cosin appeared in Madrid: Sala Balust "Introducción," 240–53. Letter 20 had circulated separately, however. On the circulation of Ávila's letters in Valladolid in circles that would later be accused of Lutheranism, see Tellechea Idígoras, *Tiempos recios*, 170.

154 Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas*, 175.

155 Valdés, *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana y el Salterio*, 194; Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 1: 546.

the persecution of the latter. As the famous preacher Pérez de Valdivia – a disciple of Ávila's and a victim of the first Inquisition trials of *alumbrados* in 1575 – proclaimed from the pulpit, martyrdom in Inquisition Spain was so common that no one needed to seek it *in partibus infidelium*.

Juan de Ávila's path traced a line of orthodoxy that could be followed by *converso* seekers from Seville. Only a few decades later the context had changed profoundly for *conversos*, requiring frequent confession and communion and making the confessor the essential link to achieving salvation. At that point a new locus of *alumbradismo* burst into life.¹⁵⁶

6 A Spanish Heresy?

Heresy in Seville was not just Erasmus, or Luther, or the *alumbrado* doctrines from Guadalajara. It grew out of a long process of assimilation and maturation of all these experiences, in a Spain that had adopted and reelaborated the Lutheran concept of justification through faith. Some of the spiritual experiences of Juan del Castillo and the young Juan de Valdés arrived in Seville with the enthusiastic backing of Archbishop Alonso Manrique, who had protected Castillo and defended Valdés's *Diálogo de doctrina cristiana*; another element was the intellectual baggage brought by the canons from Alcalá.

Lutheranism had infiltrated the country by the mid-1520s, and it became more noticeable as its doctrinal outlines grew sharper. Its seed fell on fertile ground and was then reworked and folded into a complex system, as we see through the cases of Juan del Castillo and Juan de Valdés.

Sevillian Lutheranism was thus altered and given a uniquely Hispanic stamp. Luther remained in the background while primacy was granted to charity, a profound spirituality based on Scripture, the doctrine of impeccability, and a soteriological optimism rooted in an ethical, syncretistic faith. It approached the utopian vision of the "Spain of the three religions," in which every person could reach salvation by following his or her own faith.

This heterodox line of thought, running from Juan del Castillo to Juan Gil and Ponce de la Fuente, had gained strength and attracted devotees from all ranks of society. It rested on three pillars: the inner certainty of grace, inscribed in each man illuminated by faith; meditation on Matthew's "easy yoke"; and the general notion of a wholly internalized Christianity stripped of rites and ceremonies.

¹⁵⁶ In Pastore, *Il vangelo e la spada*, 141–98, 405–32, I reconstructed the accusations that the Inquisition brought against Juan de Ávila.

The first point, and perhaps the most important, is illustrated by Castillo's search for the divine presence in man to find "the peace that passeth all understanding." With the same certainty, López de Celáin claims that "true peace, invincible and unconquerable, may be found in this world." The missionary vocation of those two apostles crystallized in Gil's experience in Seville, which would extend to circles of noble ladies, monasteries, "foolish women," and "artisans." The basis for all these positions was "my yoke is easy" (*iugum meum suave*), first cited in Juan de Lucena's *Tratado* as an essential argument against the establishment of the Tribunal of the Faith. That gentle religion offered both salvation and a Christianity freed from obligations, rites, and Ways of the Cross, and it became the center of heterodox thought in Spain from Castillo through Valdés, Ponce de la Fuente, and Egidio. It even suffused the daily lives of the nuns of Santa Paula. Finally, in an ever-widening frame, came the preference for an intimist religion and radical spirituality. As the Jesuit González said of the heretics of Seville, "they deal in pure spirit and truth, while Catholics have ceremonies and the weight of the Old Law." Pro-*converso* polemicists had aimed their darts at that same burden of the Old Testament.

These heterodox ideas, which became revolutionary when projected onto everyday life, took up Lutheran doctrines such as justification or the futility of good works and refashioned them into a system of values, references, and cultural traditions that showed a clearly Hispanic imprint. Juan del Castillo's concern, infused with Islam, was the integration of the ethnic minorities based on a comparative study of their sacred texts and a broad and tolerant list of prophets; in Seville, what counted was resistance to the Inquisition. Gil had challenged the Tribunal directly, and Ponce de la Fuente had written a whole treatise against the Holy Office. Both believed that the unquestioned primacy of charity required struggling against a court that judged matters properly left to God alone. The Inquisition had overthrown the theological virtues and replaced them with a faith that was inherited by blood and the exclusive property of Old Christian "lineages." Here their position coincided with that of Pero López de Soria and the apostolic protonotary Juan de Lucena. It was rooted in the Spain of anti-Inquisition polemic and the debates over the integration of the *conversos* and the purity-of-blood statutes, which many had sought to impose at the risk of splitting the Church and breaking the bonds of charity that united all believers in Christ.

It is impossible to read Juan Gil's abjuration, or some passages of Ponce de la Fuente's *Suma* with its Valdesian echoes, without recalling Alonso de Oropesa's vision of a "Church of saints" in which anyone joined to the mystical body of Christ was already illumined by grace. All Christians were called to create and maintain a perfect Church, a "Church of saints" that annulled any distinction

of race or rank, in which Christ's mercy opened the doors of salvation and perfectibility to all.¹⁵⁷

"Be perfect, as your father in heaven is perfect": Juan de Valdés concluded his catechism with words from the Sermon on the Mount that he believed should guide every true Christian. He had meant to transmit through dialogue the doctrines that were reaching him from Europe, as well as the new ideas of the Reformation. But he filtered them through *alumbradismo*, emphasizing the supreme virtue of charity and the presence of God in man. These were the elements of a path to perfectibility that ultimately went back to the Old Testament and the Jewish heritage of the *conversos*.

This insistence on the primacy of charity was the central theological concern of writers such as Valdés, Castillo, and Gil. Later the focus shifted to anti-Inquisition polemic, waged against an externalized but empty faith judged by its adherence to the ceremonies of Old Christians, under rules formulated by "*letrados*" and members of the Holy Office.

We see continuity between fifteenth- and sixteenth-century thought in the ties that bind the Biblism and experience of Lope de Olmedo's Reformed Hieronymites to the heterodox leanings and splendid Bible translations of Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera. But we must not forget Talavera's description of an internal, essential Christianity derived from the Epistles of Saint Paul. Even in his impassioned exchange with the judaizer of Seville, he reminded his readers of the extraordinary novelty of Paul's message, which bore at its heart a concept of charity that was "the root of the holy law of the Gospels ... which is the true love of God ... and not the servants' fear."¹⁵⁸

Even then Talavera had fixed on the passages that would later inform the thought of Luther, Valdés, and Ponce de la Fuente. In his case, however, the admission that faith was a gift to mankind and charity the summit of Christian experience appears as a criticism of the Inquisitorial system. On condemning heresy, for instance – considered especially grave since "sins against the faith ... are much greater than those against the other virtues" – Talavera added "except for charity," writing in a Spain that was preparing to found the Tribunal of the Faith.¹⁵⁹

At the end of the sixteenth century José de Sigüenza, who was accused of Lutheranism and spiritualism at his Inquisition trial because of his controversial teacher Arias Montano, remarked ambiguously on the founding of the

157 Oropesa, *Luz*, 113–4.

158 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 76 (chap. 11).

159 Talavera, *Católica impugnación*, 180–1 (chap. 1).

Tribunal: “God grant that others may return to life to create another Inquisition against those who have no charity, so as to make the faith both living and pure.”¹⁶⁰ In his history of the Hieronymite order he revived an interest in the fifteenth century that had been lost, devoting many pages to the two great Hieronymites of that time, Oropesa and Talavera. He also reflected on the Church of the perfected, the metaphor of the mystical body, the indissoluble bonds among the faithful, the grace promised to every person, and also (cautiously) his rejection of all discrimination against the *conversos*.

For this Hieronymite chronicler, Oropesa became a symbol of a fifteenth century that was buried under the discriminatory policies of the Inquisition but inspired essential ideas for later spirituality. Talavera appears once more as a martyr of the Holy Office, just as he had been portrayed by Fray Gerónimo de Madrid and the archdeacon of Alcor – a view confirmed by a long and only seemingly suppressed polemic against the Inquisition.

These were the most visible outcroppings of a rich vein of thought that was born in criticism of the Spanish Inquisition, total rejection of anti-*converso* policies, affirmation of a spiritualized Christianity, and the ideal of an “easy yoke” that rejected ecclesiastical tyranny. This marginalized view was shaped by conflicts and tensions that foreshadowed the sinister founding of the new Inquisition Tribunal. It drew on initial strong opposition to the institution, on critical treatises such as Lucena’s, and on the last efforts by the symbolic figure of Talavera. It flowed through Inquisition Spain in underground currents, took shape in anti-institutional stances like those of Juan del Castillo and Juan Gil, mixed with the waters of Reformation ideas, and was adopted by minor figures such as the Toledan priest Pero López de Soria. In the second half of the sixteenth century, this current of thought brought the esoteric doctrines of impeccability taught by the great Biblical scholar Arias Montano; from the Seville of Gil and Ponce de la Fuente it reached Christophe Plantin in Flanders as well as the *Familia charitatis* of Niclaes and Hiël.¹⁶¹ Arias Montano’s pupil José de Sigüenza also drew on it with nostalgia in his *Historia de la orden*.

160 “[P]luguiera al cielo que ansi resuscitaran otros que hizieran otra nueva Inquisición contra los que no tienen caridad, para que asi estuviera la fe tan viva como limpia”: Sigüenza, *Historia de la orden*, 2: 33.

161 On the *familia charitatis*, see Hamilton, *The Family of Love*, and the bibliography in Hamilton, *The Family of Love: Hendrik Niclaes*. The basic work on Arias Montano and his links to the Flemish *familia charitatis* is still Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano*, though it remains controversial. A subtle and acute interpretation of his fervent spiritualism and his doctrine of original sin and impeccability is Domenichini, *Analecta Montaniana*. See also his introduction to Arias Montano, *Dictatum Christianum*, and the harsh criticism of it

We should not, however, diminish the significance of a Spanish heresy that links such disparate events and persons; nor should we confine it to an exclusively Hispanic sphere and seek its protagonists only among those who were crushed by the Counter-Reformation during the reign of Philip II. While it is true that the old *alumbrado* dream of Godlike man, impeccability, and universal salvation was forced to move through hidden channels in Spain, the same dream burst out with unparalleled radicalism in Reformation Europe.

We find the first important evidence for this fact in the biography of Miguel Servet. It is easy to discern his Spanish education behind his personal, radical theological program, which matured during his years in France and Switzerland. His Biblism returned to the purest meaning of the text, leaving aside the hair-splitting interpretations of the Scholastics; he took account of rabbinical glosses and interpretations and sought to reconcile the Old and New Laws in the manner of the anonymous Sevillian judaizer whom Talavera had refuted. Like many other judaizers, Servet had read Pablo de Santa María.¹⁶² He had also taken Cisneros's Polyglot Bible with him to Toulouse, and followed Quintana (whom he served as secretary) to meet the *alumbrados* of Guadalajara and to Charles v's court in Italy in 1529.¹⁶³ His concept of the man-God, born of complex and subtle Emanatist doctrine, drew chiefly on Neoplatonism but contains an undeniable imprint of the more humble *alumbradismo*. The same is true of his almost Gnostic notion of radical divine goodness, which embraced a highly optimistic soteriological vision.¹⁶⁴

Spaniards, with their *tradition marranique*, had drawn Europe toward not only Nicodemist and dissimulatory practices – in all their spiritualist and radical variants¹⁶⁵ – but also a characteristic, overwhelming eclecticism. It seemed that many Spaniards had been possessed by the “demon” who forced Bodin's

in Hamilton, “Il *Dictatum Christianum*.” Arias Montano's centenary inspired many new publications on the man, his Spanish and Flemish relationships, and the *Biblia Regia*: see Lazcano, “Benito Arias Montano: bibliografía”; Portuondo, *The Spanish Disquiet*.

162 In 1627 the “Marrano martyr” Francisco Maldonado de Silva told the Inquisitors of Peru that his Jewish faith had arisen spontaneously after reading Pablo de Santa María; the same had happened to Orobio de Castro. On Maldonado de Silva, see Wachtel, *The Faith of Remembrance*, 4–39; on Orobio de Castro and Pablo de Santa María, see Révah, *Spinoza et le doctor Juan del Prado*, 132; Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 77–8 and 98ff.; Kriegel, “Le marranisme,” 328–9. On the issue, see also García-Arenal, “Reading Against the Grain.”

163 Bainton, *Michel Servet*, 9–12.

164 Bainton, *Michel Servet*; Friedman, “Michael Servetus.”

165 Bataillon, “Juan de Valdés nicodémite?”; Firpo, *Entre alumbrados y «espirituales»*, 104.

friend – or perhaps Bodin himself¹⁶⁶ – to open the Bible “to discover which of all the religions debated on all sides was the true one.”¹⁶⁷ The path of Biblism, Hebrew philology, and textual comparisons was cleared by interminable medieval debates about faith and bitter refutations of converted ex-Talmudists. Spanish heterodox thought was confronted with its Hebrew origins and forced to weigh the doctrine and rightness of every revelation – not in faraway Constantinople but in the Aragon of the *moriscos*, in a country obsessed with assimilating its two ethnic minorities. As the cases of Castillo and Servet show, that thought came close to embracing deist propositions of a kind that would be broadly welcomed in France in the late sixteenth century and in Holland in the seventeenth.¹⁶⁸

To understand fully the impact of the Spanish heresy on Europe, we need only think of the warmth with which Valdés's thought was welcomed in Anabaptist and Socinian circles¹⁶⁹ and the infinite variety of ideas that arose from his teachings. He inspired, for example, thinkers tinged with Averroist skepticism such as Girolamo Busale and Giulio Basalù. The latter passed from believing in “only that which accords with both religions, that is the Hebrew and the Christian” to the conviction that religion was no more than an “invention that causes men to live well,” and had ended his life in Damascus.¹⁷⁰ Valdés's work also affected the anti-Trinitarian beliefs of the Anabaptist communities in the Veneto.¹⁷¹ After 1565, when Adrien Gorin, pastor of Emden, translated his *Cento e dieci divine considerazioni* into Flemish, Valdés was also cast out of the Empyrean of Reformation orthodoxy.¹⁷² In 1569 Bèze classified him, with Miguel Servet and Ignatius of Loyola, among the “*monstra teterrima*” that Spain had foisted upon the sixteenth century. He did so while condemning another *enfant terrible* of Spanish heterodoxy, Antonio del Corro of Seville.

166 Baxter, “Jean Bodin's Daemon”; Rose, *Jean Bodin and the Great God of Nature*. See also Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel*, 54, 56, 113; Cline Horowitz, “La religion de Bodin reconsiderée”; and, for a more general view, Popkin, “L'Inquisition espagnole.”

167 “[P]our trouver laquelle de toutes les religions debatues de tous costez estoit la vraye”: Bodin, *De la Démonomanie* fols. 11–14v and 11v. On that point, see Pastore, “Doubt and Unbelief” and “Pyrrhonism and Unbelief.”

168 One recalls the positions of Bodin, Montaigne, and Pierre Charron and the many contributions of later writers on the topic, but also the meeting of *marranisme* and theism in writers like Uriel da Costa and Juan de Prado, the “teacher” of Spinoza. See Révah, *Spinoza et le doctor Juan de Prado* and *Des marranes à Spinoza*; Muchnik, *Une vie marrane*.

169 See the studies by Ricart, *Juan de Valdés*; Firpo, *Antitrinitari nell'Europa orientale* and *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 101–25, 149–84.

170 Firpo, *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 91–94, quotations at 94 and 139.

171 Firpo, *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 144–48.

172 Bakhuizen van den Brink, *Juan de Valdés*; Firpo, *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 114–18.

This nephew of the Inquisitor Corro had joined the Reformed Hieronymites of the San Isidoro monastery and, seduced by the doctrines of Juan Gil, been forced to flee to Geneva. Once in Reformation Europe between Frankfurt and Théobon, Corro tried to realize the dream shared by many exiles from Seville: a complete translation of the Bible into Spanish. Returning to the traditional Sevillian polemic against the Inquisition, he had published *Artes aliquot* in Heidelberg, probably helped by Casiodoro de Reina.¹⁷³ Together with the latter, his intimate friend since their years in the monastery, he explored the most radical spiritualist doctrines of Schwenckfeld and Joris.

In a letter written in Théobon (where Renée of France had taken refuge) in December 1563, Corro confessed to Casiodoro de Reina his objection to the way ministers of the Reformed Church erected walls between Christians, wasting time on “prolix commentaries” and sterile discussions about transubstantiation and predestination.¹⁷⁴ He solicited his friend’s opinion of Acontius and Velsius, and asked him to send books by Schwenckfeldt and Osiander; these texts might be the only ones capable of solving their thorniest theological problem, the demonstration that Jesus truly “resided ... within man.”

Both Corro and Reina were interested in the mysticism of Osiander (whose doctrines Francisco de Enzinas had already explored).¹⁷⁵ They were particularly interested in the passage “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us” (John 17:21), in the possibility of reconciling Christ’s human and divine natures, and understanding the salvific role of the Son before his incarnation. These subtle theological debates, fragments extracted from a continuous conversation, show the level of maturity reached by *alumbrado* thought and the Sevillian heresy in Reformation Europe, where Servet’s doubts about the Trinity and his Judeo-Christian-Islamic syncretism had taken root.¹⁷⁶ The French pastor Jean Cousin, charged

173 Firpo, *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 114–18.

174 The letter is reproduced in Boehmer, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana*, 2: 31–3.

175 Bataillon, in remarks on the Prologue to the translation of Francisco de Enzinas, focused on this particular convergence in the thought of the Spanish exiles Enzinas, Corro, and Reina: all sought a subjective spiritual dimension in which the presence of Christ in man was the mover of each person’s vocation. The result was to break institutional links with both the Catholic and the Reformed Churches: Bataillon, *El hispanismo*, 34–5. I find the Spanish exiles’ interest in Osiander highly significant, if viewed in the light of this reformer’s clear predilection for Hebrew culture and his philo-Judaic position. On this theme and on the polemics that Osiander generated, see Oberman, *Roots of Antisemitism*, 35–7, 47.

176 In a letter to Corro, Bèze accused him of raising questions that echoed those of Servet (“quaestionem ... Servetanam”): Bèze, *Correspondance*, 10: 35.

with intercepting that dangerous correspondence, wrote that the two Spaniards “share to the fullest the fantasies of Servet and Osiander.”¹⁷⁷

Although Corro’s letter was private, it was disseminated, engendering a lively polemic. Theodor Bèze, the undisputed leader of French Calvinists, wrote a reply and circulated it among the Calvinist communities. He stated indignantly that Corro’s words called to mind the Spanish obstinate determination to “uphold the most crass superstitions,” adding that “the Spaniards’ vain cunningness,” after having afflicted Servet with “the most senseless, empty, Spanish-like ruminations,” now reappeared in Valdés’s futile speculations (“Hispanissimis contemplationis”). Corro proved a worthy disciple of both men with his unhealthy curiosity, his scorn for the “stolid” French and Genevan ministers, and his ill-concealed impatience: he clung to the notion of a man-God, to Servet’s subtleties and judaizing contaminations, and to Valdés’s deeply anti-institutional “Spanish speculations.”¹⁷⁸ In 1576, when English ministers opened a case against Corro (eventually involving the Florentine heretic Francesco Pucci), they proved how hard it was for him to accept the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. As a result, they accused him of Pelagianism and sympathy for the radical spiritualism of Sebastian Franck and David Joris, and especially for Servet’s anti-Trinitarianism.¹⁷⁹

In his wanderings through France, Flanders, Germany, and England, Antonio del Corro drew accusations and polemics that made him increasingly intolerant of the new Reformation orthodoxy and its ministers’ inconsistent questioning. Corro’s dangerous mixture of *alumbradismo*, Irenism, and Latitudinarianism, and his rejection of all institutional strictures, led him to rail against not only the Inquisitors of Seville but also the “new Inquisitors who condemn, anathematize, excommunicate, and accuse as heretics *and* outsiders to the Church all those who reject their belief,” which they defend “as if it were a fifth Gospel.”¹⁸⁰ The life journey of this former Hieronymite friar serves as a symbol of the broader and more complex trajectory that we have sought to illuminate in these pages.

177 “[S]’entent à pleine gorge les reveries de Servet et d’Osiander”: Jean Cousin to François Hotman, 16 June 1567, cited in Boehmer, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana*, 2: 32.

178 On Corro’s stormy relations with the French community in London, see Boehmer, *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana*, 2: 50ff.; Firpo, “La Chiesa italiana di Londra,” 143–51, 156–63.

179 For more on the second English attack on Corro, which also included Pucci, see Firpo, “Francesco Pucci in Inghilterra,” 62–5; Rotondò, *Studi e ricerche*, 259–64.

180 “[N]ouveaux inquisiteurs lesquels condamnent, anathemisent, excommunient et appellent heretiques, retrenchez de l’Eglise tous ceuz, qui ne reçoivent point leur confession”: Corro, *Epistre et amiable remonstrance*, C 4r. For more complete bibliography, see Gilly, “Comme un cinquiemesme Evangile.”

Conversos, Alumbrados, and Diasporas in the Twentieth Century: Talking about Spanish Identity

The story I have sought to tell comes to a close in Europe around the middle of the sixteenth century, with the striking heresies of Miguel Servet and Juan de Valdés, which disconcerted Catholics and Reformed alike with their force and irreducibility. But the problems I have addressed have been the backbone of a centuries-long debate on Spanish identity. This debate has permeated not only academic debates but heated public discussions, between the Spain of Unamuno and the Second Republic, and during the years of the Civil War and the long interlude of Francoism and its exiles, when the history of Spain became, once again, a history from exile.

Three issues have long dominated the study of early modern Spanish religious and cultural history: the status of *conversos*, the relations with the European Reformation, and the phenomenon usually referred to as Erasmianism. Anyone who approaches these issues must reckon with two classics: Marcel Bataillon's *Erasme et l'Espagne* (1937) and Américo Castro's *España en su historia* (1948)¹ The differences between these two works are many, but one in particular matters here: Bataillon develops what I will call a horizontal approach, aiming to integrate the religious history of Spain into that of sixteenth-century Europe, while Castro adopts a vertical perspective, focusing on Spain alone but reaching back to the Middle Ages to understand the early modern period.

Bataillon sought to identify commonalities between the Spanish religious experience and the European Reformation movements, including utopian and mystical tendencies. His goal was to rebut the image of Spain as an atypical, “picturesque” case and to show how its history correlated with that of Europe. In the 1930s this remained a controversial issue, especially in France,² but

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- 1 *Erasme et l'Espagne* was published in 1937. In 1950 it was translated into Spanish by Antonio Alatorre, with considerable revision, additions and corrections. The second edition of the Spanish translation, published in 1966 by the Mexican-Argentine publisher Fondo de Cultura Económica, was considered the reference edition, at least until the 1991 edition. There is no English translation of this seminal work. *España en su historia* by Américo Castro appeared in Buenos Aires in 1948. For its complex publishing and translation history, see n. 18 below.
 - 2 In 1936 Paul Hazard had deplored the exclusion of Spain from any comparative study of the European Reformation and criticized French scholars who had succumbed to the depiction of Spain as “picturesque” by Prosper Mérimée and the Romantic literature: Hazard, “Ce qui

France proved a fertile ground for Bataillon's inquiries. The 1930s were not only the time when the *Annales* launched their project of economic and social history, but also when Henri Bergson, Alain (alias Émile-August Chartier), and Simone Weil were discovering mysticism.³ Bataillon had begun his career as a scholar of Greek and Saint Paul; later he argued that Erasmianism provided a model of interpretation that overcame schisms and divisions. Although alien to any Catholic background or education, Bataillon was fascinated, even moved, by the complex religious and cultural world of Spain, its obscurantist heritage, and the passion and violence at the heart of Miguel Unamuno's essay *En torno al casticismo* (1875), which Bataillon translated and published in France in 1923.⁴ When *Erasme et l'Espagne* appeared in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, the only notice of it from the Republican side was Antonio Machado's militant and admiring commentary.⁵ By contrast, it met with an enthusiastic reception in France.

In a laudatory review, Lucien Febvre noted that Bataillon had shaken Spain out of its isolation and situated it in the heart of European history:

bearing in mind that as to the [European] religious life of that tormented period, all our reconstructions of its thought rested on our (reliable) knowledge of Germany, France, and to a lesser extent England, he [Bataillon] has given us this marvelous gift: Spain in the years from 1470 to 1560, a Spain burning with the consuming ardor of men such as Cisneros, Valdés, and, in the background, Loyola – the Spain of the *alumbrados*, which is also the Spain of the *conversos*.⁶

Despite his admiration for the book's reasoning and conclusions, Febvre sensed that it was pervaded by ill-defined "disquiet about the *conversos*," which

les lettres françaises" and "Sur les échanges intellectuelles." However, in the 1930s, there were still those, like Jean Baruzi, who regarded Spain as exotic and cut off from the emerging rationalism of Western civilization: Baruzi, *Saint Jean de la Croix*.

3 In an open letter to Américo Castro in 1950, Bataillon commented on the historiographical trends of the previous twenty years that had influenced him the most and led him to embrace a very different position from Castro's: Bataillon, "L'Espagne religieuse dans son histoire." When he published the first Spanish translation Erasmus's *Enchiridion* (the *Enquiridión* by the archdeacon of El Alcor), Bataillon put a citation from Alain's *Étude sur Descartes* as the epigraph to this introduction.

4 Unamuno, *L'essence de l'Espagne*.

5 Originally in *Hora de España*; repr. in *Juan de Mairena*, 2: 134–6.

6 The review appeared in 1939 under the significant title "Une conquête de l'Histoire: l'Espagne d'Erasme"; it was later included in *Au coeur religieux du xvie siècle* with the title "L'Erasme de Marcel Bataillon": Febvre, *Au coeur*, 93–111 (quoted passage at 93).

clouded its overall vision and prevented the reader from acquiring a full sense of the Spanish “religious sensibility” – a new category of interpretation that Febvre had proposed in 1939. Due to the complexity of the *converso* tradition, Febvre admitted that the categories he used to describe the religious history of France or the Low Countries might not apply to Spain.⁷

Unlike Bataillon, Américo Castro developed a vertical approach that suited his claim of the uniqueness of the Spanish situation. He portrayed Spain as isolated from the rest of Europe and defined by the presence of three religious cultures and the conflicts that they generated. To understand early modern Spain, Castro insisted, it was imperative to see it as both a continuation of and a departure from its medieval heritage, a time when Muslims, Jews, and Christians coexisted in a *convivencia* (state of living together) marked by both antagonism and forced cooperation.

Having left Spain during the Civil War, Castro wrote in anguish from his condition as an émigré whose journey had taken him first to Argentina and then to the United States. He believed that Spain had deceived itself by developing a modern national identity that was rooted solely in Catholic fundamentalism, erasing its long history of *convivencia* and contributing to the outbreak of the civil war. Influenced as much by Henri Bergson and Wilhelm Dilthey as by his training as a Romance philologist, Castro considered *conversos* and the clashes between diverse ethnic groups as central to Spanish identity. His interpretation was a radical reaction to the “Catholic-inquisitorial fundamentalism” expressed in Menéndez Pelayo’s *Historia de los heterodoxos* (1880–82). Menéndez Pelayo was convinced that the only possible Spanish identity was the Catholic one imposed by the Inquisition, which developed in new and humiliating ways in Franco’s Spain. This identity was a legacy of the “Gothicism” that had dominated Spanish culture for four centuries and struggled to find a uniformly Catholic identity based on fractured roots.⁸

España en su historia thus intervened in a long and heart-wrenching debate over Spain’s relationship to its past, its image abroad, and its weak position in Europe.⁹ The so-called Black Legend, which developed in sixteenth-century Protestant Europe and depicted Spain as the land of arbitrary obscurantism,

7 Febvre, *Au coeur*, 102.

8 Márquez Villanueva, “Américo Castro y la historia,” 128–30. On the “Gothic myth” and its historiographical purchase, see Márquez Villanueva, *El problema morisco*; Hillgarth, “Spanish Historiography.”

9 Manuel Azaña, twice president of Spain under the so-called Second Republic in 1931 and 1936–39, commented ironically that Spaniards’ mistaken and delusional relationship with their own past was one of the most important problems facing the nation. Speaking at a prestigious cultural institution, the Ateneo de Madrid (of which he was president) in November 1930, he stated: “Just as there are hereditary sufferers from syphilis, Spain is a hereditary

ensorship, and the Inquisition, had remained alive all through the nineteenth century. Political pamphlets in the 1930s were obsessed by how the country was seen abroad. Introducing the fourth edition of his *España invertebrada*, José Ortega y Gasset confessed that he had delayed authorizing the work's translation until 1934, when Europe was in the grip of dictatorships, because he had feared that his views might provoke shame among his fellow Spaniards.¹⁰ In the 1950s, the Franco regime returned to the topic of Gothicism, of the unique Catholic identity of Spain, in an even more disturbing form.¹¹

That discussion was closely tied to another that had never died out, regarding the everlasting and inconvenient presence of the Inquisition. In Europe the debate had begun in 1580, but in Spain it surfaced much later. During the eighteenth century, a few enlightened ministers of the Bourbon government had broached the subject. But it was during the short-lived democratic experiment of the Cortes of Cádiz in 1812 and in the work of the Francophile (*afrancesado*) former Inquisitor and historian Juan Antonio Llorente that the possibility of abolishing the Inquisition was raised. Finally, with Spain's ceding of Cuba to the United States and the emergence of the artistic avant-garde known as the Generation of 1898, came the realization that Spain was facing a definitive and incurable decline. The notion that the Inquisition was its ultimate cause followed. For Unamuno, the Inquisition had suffocated, crushed, and deformed every Spanish idea, depriving the country of all cultural vitality and enveloping it in an atmosphere of suspicion and betrayal. In his 1902 essay *En torno al casticismo*, he first described the long-term legacy of the Inquisition – “more than a religious institution, it was the gateway to *casticismo* (i.e., the purity of the Spanish heritage).” Unamuno then elaborated his brilliant, emblematic definition of “the immanent Inquisition,” by which he meant the development of an attitude that had forever undermined Spanish intellectual energy and thus transformed what had begun as a rule laid down by an ecclesiastical tribunal into the mentality of a whole people.¹²

sufferer from history The historical virus that has penetrated our bones does not come from research or criticism or analysis of the facts; rather, the absence of those mental habits makes us susceptible to the infection It inspires the enormous mob of half-crazed, sentimental, arrogant people who have been damaged by false teachings and deceitful nationalism”: Azaña, *Obras completas*, 1: 67–76; Márquez Villanueva, “Américo Castro y la historia,” 130–31.

10 Ortega y Gasset, *España invertebrada*, xxv.

11 García Cárcel, *La leyenda negra*; Kagan, “Prescott's Paradigm.”

12 *Casticismo* implies “pure, authentic Spanishness”: Unamuno, “De mística y humanismo,” 121: “they say that it cut off unhealthy branches, but it killed the tree ... it scraped away the humus ... and left the fields without topsoil” (“podó ramas enfermas, dicen, pero estropeando el árbol [...] barrió el fango ... y dejó sin mantillo el campo”). The last was an explicit reference to fray Luis de León and his lemma “ab ipso ferro.” In 1952, Leo Strauss echoed

This interpretation viewed sixteenth-century Spain as a period when the Inquisition had siphoned off all vitality from all social strata and inflicted terrible pain. At the same time, it helped forge the myth of a wounded and sorrowing (“dolorida”) Spain, which nevertheless found creative ways to counter the oppressive institution of the Inquisition through the madness of Don Quixote and the visions of male and female mystics. It is no coincidence that Unamuno wrote at the moment, the turn of the twentieth century, when a whole generation of intellectuals was discovering sixteenth-century spirituality as the axis of Spanish cultural vitality. To Azorín’s concern for the disdain with which Europe viewed Spain, Unamuno replied: “If a people could not produce both a Descartes and a San Juan de la Cruz, I would be content with the latter.”¹³

Castro took Unamuno’s words to heart in his “tragic” definition of the quintessential Spanish condition of “living in denial of the self” (*vivir desviviéndose*), a concept that he developed after the trauma of the Civil War and his involuntary exile.¹⁴ His thoughts on Spanish religious and cultural history, however, had started precisely from Bataillon’s master work. In a series of pieces composed in 1939 and published in 1940 and 1941, Castro confessed that he had begun to ponder the extraordinary success of Erasmianism in sixteenth-century Spain out of a conviction that not everything could be explained as the result of imports from abroad or as the spontaneous inspiration of an intimist religion created by a large group of converted Jews.

While in Santiago, Chile, in 1949 Castro published a new edition of the essays that he had written after reflecting on Bataillon’s work. There he stated:

Those essays were written in 1939 in an attempt to understand certain peculiar processes in Spanish history. My method consisted of attributing apparently distinct and disconnected events to one single motive, or to one single historical situation. Sixteenth-century Erasmianism – that is, the messianic and utopian dream of a Catholicism freed from ceremonies

Unamuno’s idea in his *Persecution and the art of writing*. On the subject, see Zagorin, *Ways of lying*, 9–11; Márquez Villanueva, *Literatura e Inquisición and Espiritualidad y literatura*; Nieto, *El Renacimiento y la otra España*.

13 Pérez, “Descartes et Saint Jean de la Croix,” 197. The reference was to a well-known Spanish Catholic mystic and saint from the sixteenth century.

14 Unamuno, *Tragic Sense of Life*. Castro stressed on many occasions the close connection between historical writing and “the individual vicissitudes of life” under whose influence history is written: e.g., Castro, “Ilusionismo erasmista,” 135–36 (though there are many other such references in his works). For an explanation of the expression *vivir desviviéndose*, which English translation renders as “living in agony,” see, Castro, *The Structure*, 344–45.

rooted in popular tradition and eager to revive the pure spirituality of Saint Paul – seemed to me insufficiently explained as a simple import from elsewhere, or as a product of the occasional conversion of many Jews who wished to avoid what they called the materialism of certain traditional rites and institutions. I saw in all this, rather, one more facet of the Spanish way of living, which since at least the fourteenth century had manifested itself in events that seemed unrelated, although in fact they had a common origin. In spite of this intuition of a possible system of historical connections, I still could not decide to establish a vital and articulate link to the fact that Christians, Moors, and Jews had lived together for eight hundred years. I even underestimated the Erasmianism of the *conversos*. My reasoning was impeded by a fear of falling into any kind of ingenuous “philo-Orientalism,” or of merely citing anecdotes (which are usually abstract and unconvincing). Therefore, I stubbornly maintained, like all other historians, that because Spain was a Christian country, it could be understood only in a Western European framework, in spite of the “long and troublesome parenthesis,” lasting eight centuries (711–1492), during which it was controlled by a civilization and rulers that were shared by three very different peoples and bodies of knowledge. But after writing these essays I understood the need to return to the beginnings of the Spanish Middle Ages. The result of my work was *España en su historia: Cristianos, moros y judíos* [*The Spaniards: An Introduction to their History*].¹⁵

In other words, at first Castro adopted the same point of departure as Bataillon, but then he realized it was necessary to reach back to the Middle Ages and its distinctive Spanish features. His *España en su historia* appeared in Buenos Aires in 1948.¹⁶ Castro’s radical recasting of the history of Spain

15 Castro, *Aspectos del vivir hispánico*, 9–10.

16 The first English translation (Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*) was published in Princeton in 1954, the second (Castro, *The Spaniards: An Introduction*), which reproduced the second expanded and updated 1954 Spanish version, appeared in 1971. They were both translated by Willard King. A number of Castro’s essays made collected in *Américo Castro and the Meaning of Spanish Civilization* (which included a lecture given by Castro in 1940 at Princeton University, which gives the book its title, and a series of essays whose purpose is to “offer to the English-speaking world a systematic organization of Américo Castro thought and theories”) and Castro, *An Idea of History*. See also Hornik, *Collected studies in honor of Américo Castro*; Surtz, *Americo Castro: The Impact of His Thought*. Castro’s *España en su historia* was translated in English (1954, 1971), Italian (1955), German (1957) and French (1963). The 1955 Italian translation was disparaged in a review by Delio Cantimori, the best-known and most influential Italian historian of early modern Christianity

triggered strong reactions, either of total rejection (from Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, his archrival and fellow exile from Francoist Spain) or of unconditional embrace (from his many students in North America).¹⁷

The debate concerning Spanish Erasmianism that Bataillon had initiated reached Spain only in the 1950s, after his landmark study (first published in French) appeared in Spanish translation in Mexico. Among the first to react to Bataillon's argument was the literary critic Eugenio Asensio. In a long article from 1952, Asensio contended that the reforming movements of sixteenth-century Spain drew their inspiration not from Erasmianism but from the so-called "tree of illuminism" (e.g. of the *alumbrado* movement) whose roots stretched back to the fourteenth century. Asensio objected to Castro's interpretation and emphasized the "dark, very dark mystery of blood – the last stronghold of a Romanticism that is reluctant to understand."¹⁸ For Asensio, it was necessary to link the sixteenth century to the problem generated by *conversos* in the fifteenth century. Following this intuition, he rediscovered a number of forgotten texts and authors that had been suppressed by the Inquisition censorship.

In a new and expanded edition of *Erasmus y España*, published in 1966, Bataillon accepted Asensio's criticisms and suggestions and elaborated on aspects that he had previously ignored, notably the Spain of the fifteenth century and the key figure of Juan de Ávila.¹⁹ Reviewing this work in 1967, Asensio reiterated the importance of studying *conversos* within Spanish history but noted the proliferation of studies on the spirituality of New Christians, especially by North American Hispanists who embraced Castro's views, and criticized them for "an excess of imagination" that filled documentary gaps with "conclusions born only out of desire."²⁰ Asensio had anticipated his criticisms in milder form in a previous publication. It was included in a monographic special issue of the Modern Language Association's journal devoted to the dialogue between North American and European literary critics, in which the editors described

at the time: Cantimori, "Una 'storia' esistenzialista di Spagna." For a general introduction to Castro's work, see Araya, *La evolución del pensamiento histórico*; Márquez Villanueva, *Américo Castro y la historia*.

17 The most extensive critique of Castro's views appears in Sánchez Albornoz, *España, un enigma histórico*, "Ante 'España en su historia,'" and "Las canas se han tornado lanzas." Sánchez Albornoz's works were also translated into English. For a rather critical review, see Hillgarth, "Review of Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz." On Castro's vast echo in the world of North American Hispanism, see Hillgarth, *Spanish Historiography*; Armistead, *Américo Castro in the United States*; García-Arenal, "Américo Castro en Estados Unidos."

18 Asensio, "El erasmismo," 57.

19 See esp. the last page of "Addendum" to the 1966 ed.: Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, 832.

20 Asensio, "Los estudios sobre Erasmo," 313–14. In 1977, he collected his critical interventions on Castro's work in Asensio, *La España imaginada* and "La peculiaridad literaria

Castro as “Spain’s only significant ‘structuralist’ whose psycho-sociological studies in Spanish literature and cultural history have opened up many new perspectives.”²¹

Castro, Bataillon, and Asensio outlined the fundamental issues with which future scholars continued to grapple, but each exerted his intellectual influence in different areas. While scholars in Europe and especially Iberia contended with the legacy of Bataillon and Asensio, Castro attained enormous success in North America, where he trained a great many students, including Albert Sicroff and Stephen Gilman. In 1960, Sicroff published an innovative (albeit less than accurate) monograph on the purity-of-blood statutes, the Spanish laws that beginning in the mid-fifteenth century forbade all descendants of Jews from holding any municipal or ecclesiastical office.²² For his part, Gilman covered aspects of Spanish literature during the Golden Age that Castro had overlooked.²³ As Francisco Márquez Villanueva remarked, Castro inspired innumerable studies because he had built “an edifice that was fortunately unfinished.”²⁴

Torn between his new American home and his native Spain, Márquez Villanueva truly made the legacy of Castro and Asensio his own. From his first book on the *converso* poet Álvarez Gato to his last study debunking the myth that the expulsion of the *moriscos* met no opposition, he highlighted the tolerant undercurrents of Spanish thought in contrast to the dominant historiographical view that the Inquisition had imposed an all-encompassing conformism.²⁵

21 Asensio, “Américo Castro historiador.” The MLA special issue collects essays devoted to György Lukács, Erich Auerbach, Ernst Robert Curtius, and Gaston Bachelard. These were papers discussed at a conference held at Yale University in 1965, which Asensio did not attend. The editors’ comment is on p. 595. Years later, Albert Sicroff objected vehemently to Asensio’s criticism of his teacher Américo Castro, adding that the offprint that Asensio had sent to him was dated 1964. Sicroff, “Américo Castro and His Critics.”

22 Sicroff, *Les controverses des statuts*.

23 Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas*.

24 Márquez Villanueva, “Américo Castro y la historia,” 136. In 1996, Henry Kamen observes that Castro’s disciples often transformed mere suggestions by their teacher into explanatory models that they applied automatically: Kamen, “Limpieza and the Ghost of Américo Castro.”

25 Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones* and *El problema morisco*. The latter book was published in the series “Al-Quibla” edited by Juan Goytisolo, with the significant general title *Ensayo. Historia incómoda*. I attempted a brief sketch of Márquez Villanueva’s historiographical path and the importance of this book, central to Spanish history but also to Márquez Villanueva’s intellectual trajectory, in a preface that I wrote, upon his request, to his re-edition of Hernando de Talavera’s seminal work, *Católica impugnación del herético libelo*. This is the last work that Francisco Márquez Villanueva published before his death. See Pastore, “Francisco Márquez Villanueva y la España que no pudo ser.”

It was Angela Selke, in the 1950s, who opened up a vast new research area on the unexplored world of the *alumbrados*, thanks to her intelligent reading of Inquisition trials.²⁶ José Nieto's controversial book on Juan de Valdés and Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz was followed by Antonio Márquez's work on the *alumbrados* of Toledo and a series of edited transcripts of *alumbrado* trials.²⁷ All these studies, together with Ignacio Tellechea's research on Bartolomé de Carranza, have provided an increasingly clear and precise image of the historical development of spirituality from the 1520s to the 1550s.²⁸

Beginning in the 1980s, a momentous proliferation of scholarship on the Inquisition turned the attention of Spanish historians in other directions. Too often have scholars neglected a close reading of Inquisition records in favor of synthetic approaches that incorporate the very categories adopted by the Inquisition, such as *alumbradismo*, Erasmianism, and Lutheranism. Even so, the debate about the pertinence and usefulness of Erasmianism has not entirely died out. In 1982, José Luis Abellán published a synthesis of Spanish Erasmianism; from then until 2015, numerous works have paid homage to Bataillon's work, with contributions from leading French and Spanish scholars.²⁹

For a long time the category of Erasmianism, in Spanish as well as European historiography, has remained fossilized around the reassuring framework of compromise. Too often it was interpreted as a mask of a Lutheran doctrine behind which the appropriation of Lutheran doctrines hid. And pages and pages have been written about the labels with which to brand the fluctuating Spanish heterodoxy of the first half of the sixteenth century.³⁰

26 Selke, "Algunos aspectos," "Algunos datos," *El santo oficio*, and "Vida y muerte de Juan López de Celain."

27 Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*; Márquez, *Los alumbrados*; Longhurst, "Alumbrados, erasmistas y luteranos"; and Ortega Costa, "Las proposiciones," among others. In many cases (though not all), excellent and useful editions of trial transcripts have later formed the basis of new reconstructions. The best of these are Ortega Costa, *Proceso de la Inquisición*; Carrete Parrondo, *Movimiento alumbrado*.

28 Tellechea, *Bartolomé de Carranza* and *Tiempos recios*.

29 Abellán, *El erasmismo*; Pérez, *España y América*; Revuelta Sañudo, Morón Arroyo, *El erasmismo en España*; *Les cultures ibériques en devenir*. For a clear exposition, see García Cárcel, "Bataillon y las corrientes espirituales" and "De la Reforma protestante." A new edition of *Erasme et l'Espagne* appeared in 1991, which incorporates several additions and corrections made by the author.

30 See, e.g., the views collected in Revuelta Sañudo, Morón Arroyo, *El erasmismo en España* and, in part, Seidel Menchi, "La fortuna di Erasmo in Italia." The term and concept of the "mask" were developed in Nieto, *Juan de Valdés*, then by Gilly, *Juan de Valdés traductor*; Nieto returned to it in *El Renacimiento y la otra España*, making it the central focus of his "cultural socio-spiritual vision" in which, following the same rigid terminology of the Inquisitorial, he distinguishes and catalogs orthodox and heterodox groups. For

There is one important exception. After his book on the Spaniards and the printing of Basel in the sixteenth century, Carlos Gilly published a series of noteworthy contributions that identify the debts that Spanish antitrinitarians and radicals owed to Erasmus.³¹ He stresses the many close ties linking those heterodox thinkers who fled Spain to escape the Inquisition, not to the established Calvinist Church but to the radical and tolerant perspectives of Sébastien Castellion and of his search for broad path to salvation.³² This study deserves to be better known and to be developed in a monograph. Although Peter Bietenholz's book collects many examples, we are still missing a comprehensive study of Erasmus's most radical tendencies and the inspiration he provided in Spain and elsewhere for the radical spirituality that challenged both the Roman and Reformed churches.³³

Scholarship on Iberia has long struggled to weave together the legacy of Erasmus and the history of *conversos*. Selke stands out as a rare exception. As noted, she first pioneered the study of the relations between *alumbradismo* and the Reformation; she then turned her attention to the crypto-Jews of Mallorca (derogatively known as *chuetas*) and later wrote an exquisite article on "the illuminism of the *conversos*."³⁴ In his late writings, e.g. "Juan de Valdés nicodémite," even Bataillon considered the influence of *conversos* in a larger context. In so doing he deliberately reversed the starting point for his most famous thesis. "Nicodemism" was then a favorite topic of a rich Italian scholarship that curiously had remained marginal in Spain.³⁵ It was the term Jean Calvin used to stigmatize the hidden Protestants in Catholic lands, and it could be defined as the practice of religious dissimulation or simulation in contexts of more or less open persecution. Bataillon compared it with *marranism* and suggested that the Spanish experience had influenced the entire European phenomenon of religious dissimulation.³⁶

a different perspective and an important focus on the ideological background of these debates, see Homza, "Erasmus as Hero"; Homza, *Religious Authority*, xviii–xx, 118–119.

31 Gilly, *Spanien und der Basler Buchdruck* and *Erasmus, la reforma radical*.

32 Gilly, *El influjo de Sébastien Castellion*.

33 Bietenholz, *Encounters with a Radical Erasmus*.

34 Selke, *Los chuetas*; Selke, "El iluminismo de los conversos."

35 On nicodemism, see Eire, *Calvin and nicodemism*; Cantimori, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento* and *Nicodemismo*; Rotondò, *Atteggiamenti della vita morale italiana*; Biondi, *La giustificazione della simulazione*; Ginzburg, *Il nicodemismo*; Cavaillé, *Nicodemism and Deconfessionalisation*; Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*.

36 Bataillon, "Juan de Valdés nicodémite?" Bataillon understood marranism as the intellectual trend studied by Révah and Yerushalmi. The debate over the concept of *marranism* has been revived by Wachtel, *The Faith of Remembrance*, and discussed by Kriegel and Revel. See Révah, "Les marranes" and "L'érésie marrane"; Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court*

In so doing, Bataillon refashioned his central thesis, which regarded Spain simultaneously as the beating heart of Europe and as a remote, distant, and almost exotic world. He wrote of the disquiet expressed by a French Cistercian monk who had traveled from one Spanish monastery to the other, finding that those establishments were full of young converts from Judaism and Islam who knew no Latin at all.³⁷ He elaborated on Erasmus's ambiguous relationship with Spain, his visceral dislike of Judaism, and his open contempt for Marranos.³⁸ But in the end, for Bataillon the problem was less the extent to which European trends had penetrated Spain via Erasmus, than the extent to which that complex religious and intellectual theory had reached Europe. Bataillon recalled the letter that another Calvinist minister, Theodor Bèze, wrote to the Spanish exile Antonio del Corro. Bèze condemned Corro's doctrines and stigmatized Spain as a world, disturbing and complex in its hybridity, that had produced 'monstra teterrima' such as Ignatius of Loyola, Miguel Servet, and Juan de Valdés. Needless to say, Antonio del Corro would soon be added to the monstrous gallery that so horrified Reformed orthodoxy. It was this sort of complex irreducibility that frightened Catholic and Reformed orthodoxy: in the disturbing anti-Trinitarian bends taken by some Valdesians; in the doubts that Miguel Servet brought with him from the Spain of the *alumbrados* and *conversos*; and in the very special experience of the "marranique" simulation.³⁹

I find Bataillon's later work extremely evocative. For decades, Delio Cantimori's paradigm had been dominant in the Italian historiography of sixteenth-century religious movements. Cantimori was interested in the Renaissance and Humanistic heritage of the sixteenth-century Italian heretics as well as to their link to the Protestant and Radical Reformation. But his gaze was turned northward, toward the Protestant Reformation, the German-speaking countries, Geneva, and Poland. Spain was not among his interests. Nicodemism, too, was interpreted only through this lens. However, as scholars began to look for possible connections between the Italian and Iberian worlds, unexpected links and comparisons emerged. Such was the case, for example, in Adriano Prosperi's analysis of the heresy of Giorgio Siculo, a central and indecipherable figure in the world of Italian religious dissidence, and in an

to *Italian Ghetto*; Netanyahu, *The Origins*; Kriegel, "Le marranisme"; Revel, "Une condition marrane?"

37 Bataillon, "Un itinéraire cistercien."

38 Bataillon, "Juan de Valdés nicodémite?" Firpo accepted Bataillon's suggestions in his *Tra alumbrados e «spirituali»*, as did Prosperi in *L'eresia del libro grande*.

39 Firpo, *Tra alumbrados e spirituali*, 103–4.

important article by James Amelang, examining the cultural relations between Spain and Italy in the sixteenth century.⁴⁰

It was, however, Massimo Firpo's landmark studies of the intellectual circles gravitating around Juan de Valdés that revealed the fruitfulness of those insights and the many parallels between the Italian and Spanish responses to European Protestantism. In multiple works published over thirty years, not only did Firpo map the networks of the dissidents, antitrinitarians, *conversos*, and high-ranking Catholic clergymen who revolved around Juan de Valdés; he also offered a new model for examining the influence of the Protestant Reformation in Mediterranean Europe.⁴¹ His work can be seen as an update of Bataillon's horizontal approach, except that the charismatic figure of Juan de Valdés replaces the centrality of Erasmus, and *conversos* and *alumbrados* play a fundamental role in the influence of Valdés's teaching and in European religious nonconformism more generally. This horizontal approach, however, has yet to become mainstream.

Castro's vertical approach, which insists on the exceptionalism of the *converso* experience in the long history of Spain, has proven extraordinarily successful, especially among North American Hispanists and literary critics. Castro's disciples, including Gilman, Ron Surtz, and Maria Rosa Menocal, have developed themes that were dear to their teacher in works that have shaped the contours of the discipline.⁴² Between 1954 and 1988, collections of essays, tributes, and translations made Castro's imaginative and baroque prose, as well as his most discussed concepts, accessible to an Anglophone audience. His name is forever associated with his idea of *convivencia*, which regards the Spanish Middle Ages as a period during which Christians, Jews, and Muslims coexisted peacefully. This idea generated much intellectual ferment and was revolutionary at the time because it disrupted the assumption that a monolithic Catholicism defined Spanish identity. Its ideological connotations contributed to its appeal. For many, Castro's *convivencia* presents an alternative to a present in which religious conflicts have resurfaced violently; the Spanish Middle Ages thus became a usable past.⁴³

Castro's legacy also nourished another more specific and fertile line of inquiry, which engendered many contributions in literary studies and remains

40 Prosperi, *Leresia del libro grande*; Amelang, *Exchange between Italy and Spain*. On this point, see also García-Arenal and Pastore, "Introduction".

41 Firpo, *La presa di potere dell'Inquisizione romana* and *Juan de Valdés*.

42 Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas*; Surtz, *Writing Women*; Menocal, *The Ornament of the World*.

43 For a critical survey of the subject, see Tolan, *Using the Middle Ages*; Novikoff, *Between Tolerance and Intolerance*; Soifer, *Beyond Convivencia*.

the often-unacknowledged inspiration for the booming scholarship on maranism. This line of inquiry identified a typically *converso* voice in the extraordinarily rich literature of Golden Age Spain. More specifically, from Gilman's pioneering studies to Zepp's latest contribution, it argued that *conversos'* lacerated and difficult lives led them to withdraw inwardly and that the writings of *converso* intellectuals emphasized a new path to interiority, setting the basis for the birth of an "early modern subjective consciousness."⁴⁴

Scholars have debated and tested the research perspectives opened by Castro's work and the validity and nature of the notion of a *converso* voice in their analysis of classic works of literature, as well as in theological or educational treatises. Some have tried to delineate the sociological traits that defined *converso* identity in a society where genealogy was becoming a central obsession and the concept of nobility was being replaced by that of bloodline, exploring the intellectual world of important *conversos* such as Alonso de Cartagena and Mosén Diego de Valera.⁴⁵ Others have insisted instead on the specificity of *conversos'* religious experience and have offered a range of typologies to classify *conversos'* adherence to or dissent from Christian orthodoxy along a spectrum. These efforts oscillate between essentializing and contextualizing the *converso* identity, but all presume its exceptionalism.⁴⁶

In the mid-1990s, a provocative book by Benzion Netanyahu injected a new polemical tone into this debate. Resuming and developing the arguments used in 1966, Netanyahu argued that all charges of heresy and dissent were an invention of the Spanish Inquisition. Their trials and records did not simply box complex ideas and behaviors into preordained categories; they altogether imagined the existence of these ideas and behaviors. It followed that *conversos* did not exist, and therefore could not have any peculiar voice or social identity.⁴⁷

As I say, it was part of an old polemic, and a version of this argument had actually been discussed forty years earlier. In the 1950s, Israël Révah wrote

44 Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas*; Zepp, *An Early Self*. For a critical assessment, see Bodian, *Américo Castro*.

45 Rosenstock, *New Men*; Kaplan, *Toward the Establishment of a Christian Identity*; Gerli, *Performing Nobility*; Nirenberg, *Mass Conversion*.

46 Very helpful *Inflecting the Converso Voice* and the responses of several scholars in the 1997 *La Corónica* issue. For attempts to classify the religious experience of conversos, see Edwards, "The Conversos: A Theological Approach"; Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit*; Melammed, *A Question of Identity*. For an overview and a comparative perspective with respect to the other Iberian minorities, see Amelang, *Parallel Histories* and the long and very useful annotated bibliography collected in the Spanish edition Amelang, *Historias Paralelas*.

47 Netanyahu, *The Spanish Inquisition* and Netanyahu, *The Marranos of Spain*. (1966).

a series of articles in French to demonstrate the usefulness of inquisitorial records to reconstruct the patterns of the Marrano diaspora across Western Europe and the Atlantic.⁴⁸ Ellis Rivkin and Antonio José Saraiva responded by denying the possibility of using inquisitorial records as a basis for writing about the Jewish past.⁴⁹ It was in this context that Netanyahu, too, in *The Marranos of Spain*, challenged the more traditional approaches of scholars such as Yitzaak Baer, the major representative of the so-called 'Jerusalem School', which dealt extensively with Christian and Inquisitional sources.⁵⁰ Upending the consensus among both Catholic and Jewish historians, he drew from rabbinic *responsa* to reconstruct the history of Jewish converts and claimed that Spanish *conversos* and judaizers were true Christians.

It is easy to discern the ideological underpinnings of Netanyahu's interpretation, which need not be discussed here, except to note that his book cracked open the consensus that until then had forged the image of *conversos*. And in spite of his insistence on the pervasive racism of Spanish society and his tendency to apply a priori categories to fifteenth-century Spain, Netanyahu had the merit of exposing the problematic nature of the primary sources documenting the formative period of the Spanish Inquisition.⁵¹ The ample debate that the book provoked is evidence of the degree to which *conversos* remain a controversial subject.⁵²

In the long run, the vertical paradigm of Spanish exceptionalism has proven more fruitful than Netanyahu's simplifications and has influenced all subsequent investigations of *conversos*. Beginning in the 1990s, Révah's and Yosef Haim Yerushalmi's groundbreaking studies stimulated a new wave of

48 Révah's articles are collected in Révah, *Études portugaises*; see also Révah, "Les marranes" and *Uriel da Costa*; Méchoulan and Nahou, *Mémorial I.S. Révah*.

49 Rivkin, "The Utilization of Non-Jewish Sources." See also the publication of an English translation of Saraiva's book, with extensive revisions, and the addition of footnotes and an appendix that reconstructs the debate between Révah and Saraiva: Saraiva, *The Marrano Factory*. The Portuguese edition was published in 1969.

50 Baer, *A History of the Jews*; Beinart, *Records of the Trials of the Spanish Inquisition* and "The Records of the Inquisition."

51 Netanyahu, *The Marranos of Spain* and *The Origins of the Inquisition*.

52 For the first responses to Netanyahu, see Kagan, "Article of Faith"; Edwards, "Was the Spanish Inquisition Truthful?"; Krow-Lucal, "Marginalizing History." The debate in Spanish began after the book's translation in Castilian in 1999 and it has been collected in *Revista de la Inquisición*. But see also Carrete Parrondo, Dascal, Márquez Villanueva, and Sáenz-Badillos, eds. *Encuentros & Desencuentros*, in particular the piqued reaction of Albert Sicroff, to the delayed glorification of Netanyahu (Sicroff, "Spanish anti-Judaism"). On the historiographical controversy raised by Netanyahu, see, in English, Amelang, *Parallel History*; García-Arenal, "Creating Conversos." For a critical discussion of the hermeneutical reliability of inquisitorial documents, let me refer to Pastore, "False Trials."

scholarship on the Western Sephardic diaspora focusing on the category of marranism.⁵³ No longer inspired by Castro, historians shifted their focus away from Iberia and examined the dispersion of *conversos* across Western Europe and the Atlantic. Yosef Kaplan devoted many important studies to the vibrant community of Amsterdam's "New Jews"—that is, those former Iberian Marranos who forged a new Jewish culture in the diaspora – and even argued that their experience represents “an alternative path to modernity” from the one conventionally traced by studies of Ashkenazi Jews.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, scholars brought to the fore the incredible geographical reach of the Sephardic diaspora and examined its networks, which stretched from the Italian peninsula to the Ottoman Empire, from Amsterdam to Brazil, to Goa and beyond.⁵⁵ While some concentrated on the economic activities of Sephardic merchants across the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and, to a lesser extent, the Pacific and Indian oceans, others turned their attention to the cultural and intellectual sensibility of Marranos. Research on atheist and Spinozian circles in Amsterdam has been particularly rich.⁵⁶ The notion of marranism has thus become the object of heated discussions, beginning with the consideration of Marranos'supposed split identity. This debate began with innovative and richly documented studies of Marranos in the diaspora, France, the Netherlands, and the Americas, the most influential of which were written by French scholars Nathan Wachtel and Maurice Kriegel.⁵⁷ Over time, this line of inquiry fell into the trap of essentialism, turning marranism into an abstract and seemingly self-evident category and papering over the infinite complexity of individual and societal identities, not to mention the intricacies of human lives.⁵⁸

Castro's *vivir desviviéndose* has thus returned under new guises and now feeds a new paradigm of modernity, in which the instability of Marranos' split identities replaces the Cartesian rationality of an older intellectual history at the roots of European modernity.⁵⁹ Yirmiyahu Yovel's controversial book,

53 For Révah, see n. 48 above. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*; Rustow, “Yerushalmi and the Conversos.”

54 Kaplan, *An Alternative Path to Modernity*.

55 Israel, *Diaspora within a Diaspora*; Kagan and Morgan, *Atlantic Diasporas*; Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*; Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*.

56 Révah, *Uriel da Costa*. See also Nadler, *Spinoza*.

57 Wachtel, *The Faith of Remembrance* and “Théologies marranes”; Kriegel, “Du marranisme” and “Le marranisme.” For a critical assessment of the historiographical debate on marranism in France, see Revel, “Une condition marrane?”

58 See, for example, Ehrenfreund, Schreiber, *Les marranismes*; Trigano, *Le marranisme*; Di Cesare, *Marrani*.

59 Others before me have seen a link between the new scholarship on marranism and Castro's older works: García-Arenal, *Creating conversos*; Bodian, “Américo Castro.”

The Other Within, is perhaps the best-known example of this trend. Galloping through the centuries, from medieval to Golden Age Spain to seventeenth-century Holland, Yovel interprets much of Spanish intellectual and cultural history in the light of marranism. In a set of simplifications reminiscent of Netanyahu in form rather than content, he lumps together mystics, *alumbra-dos*, Catholic theologians, and judaizers, placing Juan de Valdés, Fernando de Rojas, and Teresa of Ávila next to one another.⁶⁰ But Yovel is only the paradoxical and polemical point of a larger wave of scholarship that has revolutionized the historiography on the Sephardic diaspora and assigned it a new centrality to the Iberian experience, ultimately promoting reflections on the ties that “New Jews” and Iberian *conversos* continued to maintain and nurture.⁶¹

In the end, the static paradigm of the Jerusalem school, according to which Christians and Jews should be studied as separate and distinct groups, has given way to a more dynamic and interconnected approach to the relations between the two groups, in the Iberian world as well as across the Sephardic diaspora. Particularly important in this respect is David Nirenberg’s insistence on the need not only to temper irenic views of medieval *convivencia* but also to examine the “co-production” of religious identities and stereotypes across Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities.⁶² By demonstrating the extent to which a genealogical mentality penetrated the Catholic majority, Nirenberg also insists on the importance of minorities in understanding the specifics of Iberian history.⁶³ Miriam Bodian’s work on the Amsterdam and Iberian connections, or the comparative and trans-minority perspective of Mercedes García-Arenal, follow along the same line.⁶⁴

This all too brief survey cannot account for the manifold readings and interpretations of Iberian religious, social, and cultural history with which my work engages. Some of the scholarship that I just discussed was published after the first (Italian) and second (Spanish) editions of this book appeared; it represents the end point of a debate on Iberian identity that began in the fifteenth century and continues to this day.⁶⁵ I chose to begin with Castro and Bataillon because, as I have tried to show, I believe they remain a silent presence even when they are no longer explicitly invoked.

60 Yovel, *The Other Within*. See also Yovel, *Spinoza and other heretics*; Nirenberg, “Review.”

61 See Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation* and “The Geography of Conscience”; Kaplan, *Wayward New Christians*.

62 Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence* and “Discourses of Judaizing.”

63 Nirenberg, “Mass Conversion” and *Neighboring Faiths*.

64 Bodian, *Dying in the Law of Moses*; García-Arenal, “Un réconfort pour ceux qui sont dans l’attente” and “Reading against the Grain.”

65 Feros, *Speaking of Spain*.

Today, Castro's exuberant language seems naïve, verbose, and at times even racist. Yet his language, ideas, and style, and not just his best-known keywords – *convivencia* and subjectiveness – have permeated Hispanic Studies the world over, often more than most care to admit. Bataillon's attempt to link the history of Spain to that of Europe via Erasmus and his followers, and the reactions this engendered until the early 1990s, are receding into the distance. A term such as "Erasmianism" was a historiographical category that once resonated immediately and encompassed a wide spectrum of heterodox religious beliefs. Today it is outdated.

Bataillon's footprint is profound in French, Italian, and Spanish scholarship but is scarcely present in North America. The one significant exception is Lu Ann Homza, who extensively discussed Bataillon's heavy and unwieldy legacy, proposing a new interpretive key to the religious and cultural history of sixteenth-century Spain and building bridges between European and American historiographies.⁶⁶ My hope in presenting this book in English is similar. From my marginal position as a scholar of Iberian culture who works in Italian academia, I have developed an acute sensitivity to the barriers that still exist between fields of studies that, in principle, should intersect and dialogue more closely. This includes the historiography of Iberia, the Jewish diaspora, and the Reformation. In the United States, the Reformation is no longer a primary focus for European historians (who are themselves declining in number). Specialists on Catholic Europe are even fewer, and the religious and cultural history of early modern Europe can easily fall prey to old prejudices and confessional divisions. Intentionally or not, bland and ecumenical expressions such as "early modern Catholicism" and "Catholic Reformation" downplay the ruptures and discontinuity between the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century, sideline the role played by the Inquisition, and leave little room for dissident and radical ideas.⁶⁷ Part of my goal in translating this book into English has been to bring a research that was conceived in conversation with a different set of scholarly referents to bear on Anglophone historiography.

To return to the metaphor of the horizontal or vertical paradigms that I used to contrast Bataillon's and Castro's approaches, my reconstruction attempts to hold both paradigms together. I emphasize the peculiarity, even the uniqueness, of the early modern Spanish religious experience, but I attribute it not to the individual experience of forced conversion but rather to the period's broader ecology – the legal changes, theological debates, and social conflicts

66 Homza, *Religious Authority and The Merits of Disruption*.

67 O'Malley, *Trent and all that*; Ditchfield, *Of Dancing Cardinals*; Homza, *The Merits of Disruption*; Firpo, *Rethinking "Catholic Reform."*

engendered by forced conversions over more than two centuries.⁶⁸ Put bluntly, the individuals on whom I focus did not experience new ways of relating to God because they were *conversos* but because they lived in a context that was characterized by the presence of recent converts and the problem of forced conversions.

This was the chief contribution of this book when it was first published. I believe that, today, it can still further the effort to free religious minorities from the straitjacket of inquisitorial categories and map the impact of their history on the history of Spain as a whole. I need only mention Sara Nalle's study of Bartolomé Sánchez, the Messiah of Cardenete, an Old Christian who claimed to be the Messiah and echoed many arguments of judaizing *conversos*. As Nalle demonstrates, ideas, hopes, and expectations transcended confessional and genealogical boundaries – boundaries that thus appear to have been instantiated and rendered effective by the judicial procedures which invoked them.⁶⁹ Although we should not refuse to use documents produced by repressive institutions to shed light on Iberian religious and cultural history, we must refrain from reifying the doctrines and labels that appear in those documents, striving instead to contextualize them. In this way we can break out of the essentialist traps, incommunicability, and dead ends that still haunt the secondary literature.

This is why I devote so much time and effort to unpacking the tricky category of *alumbradismo*, long considered to be the distillation of Spanish religious dissent. To bypass the filters imposed on this phenomenon by inquisitorial records, I believe we need to immerse it in the Iberian context while at the same time connecting it to a wider set of radical European religious movements. In so doing, it is possible to better understand how the passages of the Gospel circulated by Spanish *conversos*, as well as debates on the legitimacy of *limpieza de sangre* and the Inquisition, inspired new forms of spirituality. These were not institutionalized forms of the kind that various Reformed confessions created. Given the repressive apparatus of the Spanish Inquisition, they necessarily lacked theological or legal formality. But they were coherent alternatives to the dominant religion and remained on its margins throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

I am as convinced today as when I first wrote this book that we need to lift Iberia out of its historiographical isolation. We need to understand how Iberian history, beyond its exceptionalism, stands in the broader context of

68 In this respect, I share the premise and arguments of García-Arenal's introduction in García-Arenal, *After Conversion*.

69 Nalle, *Mad for God*.

the European Reformation and the history of dissent, and how the classical history of the latter can be enriched by including Iberian thought. This results in a double benefit: an Iberian history that is less closed and less tied to the paradigm of exceptionalism, and a European intellectual history that is less Eurocentric and more global.⁷⁰

70 Since writing those earlier versions I have explored related areas, most notably the history of doubt and unbelief and of messianism and prophecy. I have also joined the efforts of other scholars to promote an approach to the history of the Iberian world and its minorities that abandons the construct of exceptionalism and adopts a less Eurocentric perspective of European intellectual history by incorporating its colonial dimensions. See García-Arenal and Pastore, *Doubt and Unbelief*; Pastore and García-Arenal, *Visiones imperiales y profecía*. For a discussion of this perspective, see Bodian, *Entangled Discourses*. Among a richer literature, I need only mention Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, which shows the diffusion of a genealogical mentality across Spanish America, and Schwartz, *Blood and Boundaries*, which also highlights the necessity of treating the Iberian Peninsula and its Atlantic colonies together.

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In Toledo in 1529, a converso named Pedro de Cazalla declared that the connection between man and God was but a thread and that it should not be mediated by the Church. Hardly an isolated phenomenon, Cazalla's inner spirituality was a widespread response to the increasing repression of religious dissent enacted by the Inquisition. Forced baptisms of Jews and Muslims had profound effects across Spanish society, leading famous intellectuals as well as ordinary men and women to rethink their sense of belonging to the Christian community and their forms of religiosity. Thus, in this book, early modern Iberia emerges as a laboratory of European-wide transformations.

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