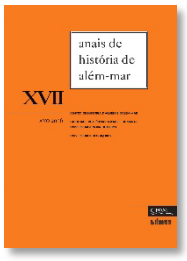

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Constructing and contesting Portuguese difference in Colonial Spanish America, 1500-1650

Brian Hamm*

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Resumo

Este estudo analisa três aspetos, semelhantes porém diferentes, de acusação e contestação – a apostasia, a condição de estrangeiro e a traição – que serviram de base a um vigoroso debate sobre a natureza e o grau da divergência portuguesa por espanhóis e portugueses. Como forma de reação a estes diversos ataques, os portugueses residindo na América espanhola buscavam o estabelecimento da sua naturalidade, lealdade e ortodoxia por meio de várias ações públicas ao serviço da Coroa, da Igreja e da comunidade local. Ao portar-se como um nativo, um fiel vassalo e um devoto católico, cada português era julgado como indivíduo e considerado como tal pelos vizinhos espanhóis, apesar da vasta circulação de preconceitos antiportugueses por todo o império.

Palavras-chave: Portugueses, América espanhola, estrangeiros, cristãos-novos, lealdade.

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Abstract

This article examines three overlapping yet distinct sites of accusation and contestation – apostasy, foreignness, and treason – in which the nature and degree of Portuguese difference was vigorously debated by Spaniards and Portuguese alike. In response to these diverse attacks, the Portuguese in Spanish America sought to establish their nativeness, loyalty, and orthodoxy though repeated public actions in service to the Crown, the Church, and their local community. By behaving as a native, a faithful vassal, and a pious Catholic, individual Portuguese were typically judged as such by their Spanish neighbors, despite the circulation of anti-Portuguese stereotypes throughout the Atlantic world.

Keywords: Portuguese, Spanish America, foreigners, New Christians, loyalty

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Constructing and contesting Portuguese difference in Colonial Spanish America, 1500-1650

Brian Hamm

For over a century, the question of "Jewishness" has been at the heart of scholarly inquiries into the Portuguese in colonial Spanish America. This is hardly surprising, given the abundance of inquisitorial sources that purport to offer a wealth of detail concerning secret "Jewish" practices and traditions. Although some scholars have been content to take these inquisitorial documents more or less at face value, in recent years, several excellent works have raised new questions and proposed alternative ways of thinking about *converso* religiosity and identity beyond the misleading dichotomies of "Jew" and "Christian."[1] Yet, when it comes to the critical question of Spanish-Portuguese relations in the New World, the standard picture has unfortunately remained largely static, marked indelibly by Spanish anti-Semitism and the early modern stereotype linking Portuguese *naturaleza* with Jewish ancestry. Yet, accusing the Portuguese of being secret Jews was far from the only rhetorical strategy that Spaniards used during the early modern period to cultivate enmity against their Iberian neighbors. Depending on time and place, anti-Portuguese discourse could take on a variety of forms, each of which provoked much resistance and opposition not only from the Portuguese, but also from many Spaniards as well.

This essay examines three overlapping yet distinct sites of accusation and contestation – apostasy, foreignness, and treason – in which both the nature and degree of Portuguese difference was vigorously debated by Spaniards and Portuguese alike. The charge of religious apostasy is, of course, the best-known – at least, for the seventeenth century. Yet, for most of the sixteenth century, fears of Portuguese apostasy did not usually involve Judaism, but rather the Protestantism of Spain's northern European

[1] Some leading recent examples include: Nathan Wachtel, *La fe del recuerdo: laberintos marranos* [2001], trans. Sandra Garzonio, Mexico City, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007; Miriam Bodian, *Dying in the Law of Moses: Crypto-Jewish Martyrdom in the Iberian World*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2007; David Graizbord, "Religion and Ethnicity among 'Men of the Nation': Toward a Realistic Interpretation," *Jewish Social Studies* 15 (2008), 32-65; and Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, "Plural Identities: the Portuguese New Christians," *Jewish History* 25 (2011): 129-151.

enemies. The second set of accusations involved the "foreignness" of the Portuguese. Although the Portuguese were always classified juridically as foreigners to the Spanish Indies, early modern Spanish conceptions of "native" (*natural*) and "foreigner" (*extranjero*) were anything but fixed, since in addition to the allegedly "objective" facts of birthplace and lineage, multiple "subjective" variables, such as public behavior and reputation, were critical in making these assessments. Adding to the conceptual confusion, debates about the foreignness of the Portuguese were directly tied to broader disputes about what constituted "*España*" (or "*las Españas*"). The final type of allegation brought against the Portuguese involved collusion with Spain's enemies. The "*complicidades grandes*" in Lima and Cartagena, which involved suspected Portuguese judaizers with ties to Amsterdam, are perhaps the best-known examples of this type.[2] However, similar accusations arose in the sixteenth century as well, when various Spanish officials and writers disparaged the Portuguese, especially pilots and mariners, as untrustworthy and eager to assist the endless numbers of French and English corsairs that roamed the Caribbean.

Despite the enormous differences among these three types of anti-Portuguese rhetoric, the responses to all of them on the part of the Portuguese in Spanish America share much in common. Most fundamentally, in fighting back against these indictments, the Portuguese sought to establish their nativeness, loyalty, and orthodoxy though public behavior and reputation. Portuguese individuals from privileged and humble backgrounds alike defied accusatory stereotypes and invectives through a wide range of public actions that collectively testified to their fidelity and piety, such as maintenance of a *casa poblada*, membership in a *cofradía*, militia service, and patronage of local hospitals and monasteries. By behaving as a native, as a faithful vassal, and as a pious Catholic, Portuguese individuals were usually judged as such by their Spanish neighbors. Even when hostile stereotypes concerning the "Portuguese Nation" circulated on both sides of the Atlantic, individual Portuguese generally proved able to integrate into Spanish colonial society, effectively establishing in the process their religious and political loyalties.

Although these three areas of dispute were distinct, they sometimes coalesced in times of crisis. Once again, the *complicidades grandes* serve as prominent examples of this phenomenon, as many non-naturalized

[2] Ricardo Escobar Quevedo, *Inquisición y judaizantes en América Española (Siglos XVI-XVII)*, Bogotá, Editorial Universidad del Rosario, 2008, chs. 8-11.

Portuguese were accused by the Inquisition of not only following the "Law of Moses," but also of plotting with Jewish compatriots in Holland to finance an attack on vulnerable ports in Spanish America. However, other contexts called for different kinds of arguments. For instance, during most of the sixteenth century, anti-Portuguese rhetoric usually lacked any sort of religious dimension to it; instead, the claims made against the Portuguese were typically political and economic in nature. When religion was mentioned, it often concerned Portuguese *luteranos*, rather than *judaizantes*. Even in the seventeenth century, when stereotypes linking Portuguese *naturaleza* with the "Law of Moses" were commonplace, multiple examples can be found in which arguments deployed against the Portuguese wholly ignored the vexed questions of religious belief and purity of blood, focusing instead on legal categories or pragmatic considerations.

Finally, on all sides of the debates over Portuguese difference, it is hard to overstate the importance of local contexts in shaping the perceptions and responses to the Portuguese residents of the area. Although anti-Portuguese stereotypes abounded during the early modern era, it should not be assumed that these typecasts were particularly accurate reflections of how Spaniards in widely differing locales judged the virtues or vices of individual Portuguese. Time and again, most Spaniards judged specific instances based on a range of circumstantial factors, including the needs of the local community, as well as the personal history of the individual in question. This is not to say that cultural stereotypes had no impact, but rather that the immense diversity of responses and judgments made by the Spanish concerning the Portuguese can only be fully understood through a deeper appreciation of the local dynamics of the specific cities and regions in which these contested negotiations took place.

The Question of Apostasy

Apostasy, particularly to the "Law of Moses," is the best-known of all early modern Spanish accusations leveled against the Portuguese. For generations, scholars have noted how the terms "Portuguese" and "Portuguese Nation" served as synonyms to "Jew" and "Jewish (or Hebrew) Nation." Indeed, these terms were often combined to form new labels, such as "Portuguese of the Hebrew Nation." Difficulties arise, however, when this connection is judged as simply self-evident, precluding any need for further analysis into the complexities of what being "Portuguese" might have meant to different groups at different times. Frequently, historians

mention this synonymic association only in passing, utilizing the same two or three sources, if any references are given at all. Unsurprisingly, confusion abounds from this (mostly) unexamined truism. One basic point of disagreement is when this association between "Portuguese" and "Jew" began. Norman Simms dates the synonymic association to the forced conversions in Portugal in 1496-97.[3] Mordechai Arbell puts the starting point at around 1530, perhaps in connection to the establishment of the Portuguese Inquisition during that decade.[4] Finally, David Gitlitz argues that "the term 'Portuguese' *instantly* became synonymous with 'Judaizer,'" thanks to the Union of the Iberian Crowns in 1580.[5] Unfortunately, none of these conflicting claims are supported by any evidence, leaving the reader without any means of judging between them.

One critical facet to note is that starting in the fifteenth century, many non-Iberians tended to equate all of *Hispania* with Judaism. Erasmus – who had famously professed, "*non placet Hispania*" ("Spain does not please me") – described this displeasing land as being "strange, sinister, and Jew-ridden."[6] Around the same time, Pope Paul IV was said to have held Spaniards in low repute, due to their tainted Jewish blood.[7] One French pamphleteer exclaimed in the 1590s that "those of Castile and Portugal are Jews, those of Galicia and Granada [are] Muslims, and their prince is an atheist."[8] Moving into the seventeenth century, Cardinal Richelieu opined that the Spanish were "*des marranes*, *des faux catholiques*, *des basanés*."[9] What gave foreigners such fodder for these claims was the explosion of a *converso* population in all of Iberia, due to a century of forced conversions (starting in 1391) and expulsions (ending in 1498). Even someone as anti-Jewish as Erasmus came to have doubts about the wisdom of such actions: "Today many wonder whether it would not have been wiser to leave the Jews in

3 Norman Simms, *Masks in the Mirror: Marranism in Jewish Experience*, New York, Peter Lang, 2006, 1.

4 Mordehay Arbell, *The Jewish Nation of the Caribbean: The Spanish-Portuguese Jewish Settlements in the Caribbean and the Guianas*, Jerusalem, Gefen Publishing House, 2002, 226.

5 David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1996, 52, emphasis added.

6 Quoted in Shimon Markish, *Erasmus and the Jews*, trans. Anthony Olcott, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1986, 144.

7 José Álvarez-Junco, *Spanish Identity in the Age of Nations*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011, 215.

8 Quoted in David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 2014, 164. In another pamphlet, Philip II was derided as a "*demi-More*, *demi-Juif*, *demi-Sarrazin*."

9 Quoted in Álvarez-Junco, op. cit., 215.

Spain, as before, rather than to see them today in our midst, their names changed rather than their souls."[10] Although there were various motivations for these sorts of pronouncements, what is clear is that even into the seventeenth century, Portugal was not some sort of uniquely "Jewish" country. All of Iberia was tainted by Jewish blood – and, according to Erasmus, much of Italy was not exempt either.[11] Due to the emergence in the seventeenth century of influential "Portuguese" Jewish communities in places like Amsterdam, Hamburg, and London, it is not surprising that the "Jewish" label would shift from *Hispania* to Portugal. Nonetheless, this change should be seen as a continuation of previous prejudices rooted in the late fifteenth century, not an independent development specifically relating to the Portuguese.

In thinking along these lines, it is striking how infrequently anti-Jewish rhetorical strategies were used in the sixteenth century to attack the Portuguese. One interesting example of this absence is a 1574 letter by Francisco Carreño, an admiral serving on Spain's treasure fleets, who wrote that "in all of the towns along the coast of Tierra Firme and on the islands of Santo Domingo [*sic*], Cuba, and Jamaica, half of the citizens and inhabitants are Portuguese, [...] so that it seems like this land is nothing else but the coast of Portugal." Carreño's proposed solution to this situation was harsh: he argues that the king would be served well "by removing from these Indies and taking the lands of those [Portuguese] who do not have a license from Your Majesty." The author humbly offers his own services in this task, if Philip II would promise him a fifth of all of the confiscated property, which, as the admiral admits, will make him "very rich." In the end, however, Carreño maintains that it is the king himself who will profit the most, as there would be a "great sum of money" going into the royal coffers, which might otherwise be drawn out and shipped to foreign lands.[12] Given the blatant greed and anti-Portuguese prejudice present in this letter, it is perhaps surprising that not a hint is given about the supposed Jewish beliefs or practices of the Portuguese. Carreño's reasons are purely economic and political – *viz.*, the Portuguese drain money away from Castile, and they assist the English and French corsairs in raiding Spanish cities in the New World. One would imagine that if Carreño thought that it would benefit his case, he would utilize religious

[10] Quoted in Markish, op. cit., 93.

[11] *Ibid.*, 73.

[12] ARCHIVO GENERAL DE INDIAS [AGI], Santa Fe 187, f. 170r.

arguments concerning the need to defend the Catholic faith against secret Jews. However, nothing of the sort was put forward by the admiral.

This was not because the Spanish were unaware of the exodus from Portugal of New Christians seeking to escape the Inquisition and, for some, to practice Judaism in greater freedom. As early as 1569, the Duke of Alba claimed in a letter to Philip II that he had "no doubt that many of them [*i.e.*, the Portuguese] would like to go thither [England] to live in the law of Moses."[13] Even more specifically, the Spanish ambassador to England, Diego Guzmán de Silva, reported how those Portuguese who served the French corsair, Peyrot de Monluc, in the late 1560s were "considered by some to be Jews, as they have fled from the Inquisition in Portugal."[14] But even here, the suspicions of Judaism derived from specific actions – *viz.*, leaving Portugal – not simply from their Portuguese nationality. In any case, this belief about the "Jewishness" of these Portuguese did not seem to have been a universally held opinion, as Guzmán de Silva stated that only "some" believed this to be true.

Instead of judging the Portuguese renegades to be Jews, it was much more common for the Spanish to consider the Portuguese pilots employed by the French and the English as heretical Protestants – or, in the parlance of the day, "*luteranos*." One Spanish report in 1588 related a small group of English ships that had committed multiple robberies led by "a Portuguese mulatto pilot [...] named Domingo Díaz. He is a Lutheran, according to what this seaman tells me, and a native of Aveiro."[15] Díaz had served as a pilot of a "packing-boat which the Marquis of Santa Cruz dispatched in 1586 to Santo Domingo," when he was conscripted by Drake.[16] It is unknown whether Díaz was truly a Protestant or if "Lutheran" here simply indicated that the pilot was a willing accomplice of the English, independent of religious persuasion. A more famous *luterano* from Portugal was Simón Fernández, who was described in certain Spanish reports as a "great pilot" and a "Lutheran Portuguese" who had "married in England" some time before.[17] Trained as a pilot in Seville, Fernández became an ally

[13] Martin A.S. Hume (ed.), *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs, Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas*, 4 vols., London, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896, II.187.

[14] *Ibid.*, I.657.

[15] David B. Quinn (ed.), *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590*, 2 vols., London, Hakluyt Society, 1955, II.783; cf. Irene A. Wright (ed.), *Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583-1594*, London, Hakluyt Society, 1951, 233-35.

[16] Quinn, op. cit., II.783.

[17] Wright, op. cit., 15, 240; cf. Quinn, op. cit., II.742.

of the arch-Protestant "spymaster," Francis Walsingham, who had helped the Portuguese pilot avoid charges of piracy in England.[18] Throughout the late 1570s and 1580s, Fernández entered into the service of some of the leading English explorers of the era. He was appointed as a pilot to Humphrey Gilbert in 1578, and later served on both Ralph Lane's 1585 colonizing expedition to Roanoke Island and John White's voyage back to the ill-fated island two years later.[19]

In marked contrast to the early seventeenth century, when Portuguese *converso* allies of the Dutch were hardly ever deemed "Protestant" or "Lutheran," at this point in the sixteenth century, the Portuguese allies of the English were here assumed to have converted to the English religion as well. The battles between Spain and her enemies were understood by all sides as being confessional in nature – specifically, Catholic versus Protestant. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that in official investigations of the robberies committed by French or English corsairs, Spanish investigators would almost always comment explicitly on how these corsairs were "Lutherans."[20] Sometimes this also extended to Spanish or Portuguese prisoners on board. According to one deposition, "The said Corsair [Drake], and all his company, the Portuguese pilot, and negroes were all Lutherans, because this witness saw them perform their Lutheran ceremonies."[21] In the same vein, corsairs like Francis Drake sought to establish a religious solidarity with the pilots he had captured. One captured pilot later testified that Drake had "tempted [him] with many promises of silver and gold, to go with him to England and to become a Lutheran, saying that as soon as he would reach his native country, he would confer great mercies upon him."[22] For both the Spanish and the English, religious antagonism was an integral dimension to these geo-political conflicts, a circumstance that greatly benefited the Portuguese as a whole, who – despite the apostasy of certain individuals – came from an indubitably Catholic nation and shared the same Iberian religious culture as their Castilian neighbors. Portugal had no more succumbed to the temptations of Protestantism than Castile had, and the defections of a tiny number of Portuguese were comparable to the relatively

[18] David B. Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America, 1481-1620*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1974, 249.

[19] Quinn, op. cit., I.79, 199-204; II.515-43.

[20] AGI, Patronato, 267, N.1, R.76b, f. 4v; see also: AGI, Patronato, 245, N.1, R.45, and AGI, Patronato, 255, N.2, G.1, R.6.

[21] Zelia Nuttall (ed.), *New Light on Drake: A Collection of Documents Relating to His Voyage of Circumnavigation, 1577-1580*, London, Hakluyt Society, 1914, 188.

[22] *Ibid.*, 195.

small numbers of Spanish Protestants tried by the various Inquisition tribunals throughout Spain during the sixteenth century.

In response to suspicions and accusations of apostasy to either Protestantism or Judaism, many Portuguese performed works of religious piety and devotion, which increased their reputation as a "*buen cristiano*" in the eyes of the local community. For wealthier Portuguese individuals, patronage of a monastery, convent, or hospital was one important and quite conspicuous means by which to enact their Catholic piety. For example, Jorge Fernández Gramajo was the benefactor of the Franciscan monastery of San Diego in Cartagena, which one traveling Spanish friar noted was "of excellent design and construction, built at his own expense by Captain Gramajo."[23] Fernández's patronage did not stop with the Franciscans; he also contributed generously to the local Augustinian monastery as well. Furthermore, as one of the most distinguished residents of Cartagena, Fernández became friends with some of the highest-ranking clerics of the region, including the bishops of Cartagena and Popayán, whom Fernández could rely upon to bear witness to his devotion to the Catholic faith.[24] Although differing in scale, the same type of religious piety can be witnessed in much poorer Portuguese as well. This can be seen in the example of Andrés González, a pharmacist who routinely donated necessary medicines to local monasteries and convents, as well as tending to the poor and destitute of the city.[25] For rich and poor alike, works of mercy, such as almsgiving and religious patronage, were critical means by which a person's piety was enacted and recognized by others in the community.

Another principal means of demonstrating religious devotion was participation in local Catholic lay brotherhoods (*cofradías*). As it was common to have *cofradías* organized by nation, in cities with a large Portuguese community, there was often a Portuguese *cofradía*, usually dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua, the patron saint of Portugal.[26] However,

[23] Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y descripción de las Indias occidentales* [c. 1620], Washington, Smithsonian Institution, 1948, 292. Julián Ruiz Rivera posits that Fernández established the convent as "a secure front" against the Inquisition; however, he provides no evidence for his claim. Julián B. Ruiz Rivera, "Gobierno, comercio y sociedad en Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVII," in *Cartagena de Indias en el siglo XVII*, eds. Haroldo Calvo Stevenson and Adolfo Meisel Roca, Cartagena, Banco de la República, 2007, 362.

[24] AGI, Santa Fe, 100, N.37a, ff. 1r-1v.

[25] AGI, Escribanía 589B, pieza 23.

[26] Studnicki-Gizbert, op. cit., 56-57; cf. Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, "La Hermandad y Hospital de San Antonio de los Portugueses de Madrid," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 44 (2004), 299-330.

many Portuguese became members in multiple *cofradías*, such as Luis Gómez Barreto who had ties to at least four different *cofradías* in Cartagena, each of which received a bequeathal in his will.[27] Some Portuguese also sought leadership positions within these confraternities. Blas de Paz Pinto was a *mayordomo* of two different *cofradías* in the city, and Luis López was a *mayordomo* for the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament on two different occasions.[28] Membership in religious brotherhoods allowed for many opportunities to build a reputation of religious piety, including participation in religious processions and collective works of patronage. Furthermore, it often afforded the Portuguese numerous Spanish witnesses who could testify as to the genuineness of their devotion to the Catholic faith.

For some Spaniards, however, all the good works and pious acts in the world would not prove convincing as to the genuine Christianity of the Portuguese, especially those known to be New Christians. One memorialist, Fernando de Montesinos, captured this skeptical spirit perfectly in a lengthy account of the 1639 *gran auto de fe* in Lima. Although referring specifically to the Portuguese merchant, Manuel Bautista Pérez, Montesinos's words could have applied equally as well to countless other Portuguese:

> From the outside, he appeared to be a great Christian, observing the feasts of the Holy Sacrament, hearing Mass and the sermons [...] He confessed and took communion frequently, was a member of the congregation, and educated his children with priests as tutors [...] Finally, he performed so many works of a good Christian that he dazzled even those who were very attentive as to whether they had been fooled by such actions. But he could not trick the Holy Office of the Inquisition, which arrested him for being a judaizing Jew [*judío judaizante*] on the 11th of August, 1635.[29]

The claim that these numerous acts of Catholic piety were simply a façade for secret Jewish rituals and beliefs, of course, could never be disproven. What is most interesting, however, is that Montesinos admits that most Spanish observers were "dazzled" and deceived by the works of Catholic piety performed by the *patrão* of the Portuguese merchant community in

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[27] Manuel Tejado Fernández, *Aspectos de la Vida Social en Cartagena de Indias durante el Seiscientos*, Sevilla, Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1954, 342.

[28] Enriqueta Vila Vilar, "Extranjeros en Cartagena (1593-1630)," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* 16 (1979), 164; AGI, Escribanía 589B, pieza 26, f. 22r.

[29] Fernando de Montesinos, *Auto de la fe celebrado en Lima a 23 de enero de 1639*, Madrid, Imprenta del Reyno, 1640, f. 23r.

Lima. Taking away the judgmental bias of the author, this passage ironically affirms the efficacy of these Portuguese strategies of performative piety in convincing their Spanish neighbors that they were faithful members of the Catholic Church. Although the example of Manuel Bautista Pérez is an extreme one, Portuguese from all social classes sought to establish their orthodoxy through similar means: participation in the sacramental life of the Church, works of charity and devotion, and membership in local religious brotherhoods.

The Question of Foreignness

Perhaps the most straightforward way for Spaniards to establish the "otherness" of the Portuguese was through the legal categorization of the Portuguese as "*extranjeros*." Along these lines, the city council of Cartagena complained to the king in 1626 that "ecclesiastical offices and privileges," which belonged by right to the "native sons of the land," were instead being given by the Crown to "the Portuguese and the sons of the Portuguese and [other] foreigners."[30] Given that the matter at hand concerned Catholic ecclesiastical offices and benefits, one could imagine that this would have been an excellent opportunity to use religious rhetoric in denouncing the Portuguese interlopers as secret Jews, subverting the Church from within. However, the city council did not adopt that rhetorical strategy, focusing instead on the Portuguese as foreigners. In contrast to the periodic ambiguity on the precise status of the Aragonese and especially the Basques within the kingdoms of Castile, the Portuguese were consistently classified as foreigners. In this way, they were deemed to be similar to other foreign vassals of the Habsburgs, such as Neapolitans or Flemings. Despite these legal pronouncements, however, most contemporary observers rightly understood that the Portuguese were not simply one more group of foreign vassals among many. The long, intertwined history of Portugal and Castile, combined with the geographical and cultural proximity of the two kingdoms, simply had no analogue in Flanders or Naples. As was true regarding the Basques and Catalans, the question of Portuguese "foreignness" was intimately tied to the perennial issue of what "Spain" meant and how it was to be properly understood. Thus, as the differences between the Castilians and the Portuguese were

[30] AGI, Santa Fe, 63, N.60, f. 1r.

being minimized or expanded, the very notion of "Spain" itself was being simultaneously constructed.

Ideas about "Spain" (*Hispania*; *España*) had ancient geographical and cultural roots. First and foremost, the term served as a geographic designation. For example, sailors returning to all parts of the Iberian Peninsula, including Portugal, would rejoice upon seeing "Spain" once again.[31] Yet, even as a geographic label, "Spain" was rather ambiguous, as can be evidenced from a line in Las Casas's *Brevísima relación*: "As for the vast mainland, which is ten times larger than all Spain, even including Aragon and Portugal," which indicated that it was not uncommon at the time to use "Spain" to refer to only Castile.[32] Indeed, this seemed to be the accustomed usage of the term by the Pope and other Italians, which drew a correction from Philip II in 1585, who insisted upon a much broader construction.[33] This geographical dimension was complemented by a consciousness in elite circles of *Hispania* as a historic-cultural entity, beginning in Roman times and continuing down the centuries.[34] Throughout the Middle Ages, various authors wrote defenses of the inherent virtues of "Spain," known as "*laudes Hispaniae*." For instance, the thirteenth-century canon lawyer, Vincentius Hispanus, declared, "Who, indeed, Spain, can reckon thy glories? Spain, wealthy in horses, celebrated for food, and shining with gold; steadfast and wise, the envy of all, and skilled in the law and standing high on sublime pillars."[35] Such defenses would continue to be taken up in the early modern period by writers such as Francisco de Quevedo and Benito de Peñalosa y Mondragón.[36] For scholars at the courts of Alfonso X of Castile (r. 1252-84) and John II of Aragon (r. 1458-1479), the idea of "*Hispania*"

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[31] J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*, London, Penguin, 1963, 19; James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru, 1532-1560: A Social History* [1968], 2nd ed., Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1994, 146.

[32] Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account* [1552], trans. Herma Briffault, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974, 30.

[33] M.J. Rodríguez-salgado, "Christians, Civilised and Spanish: Multiple Identities in Sixteenth-Century Spain," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 8 (1998), 235.

[34] Cf. Josep R. Llobera, *The God of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*, Oxford, Berg, 1994, 70-80.

[35] Quoted in Helmut Koenigsberger, "Spain," in *National Consciousness, History, & Political Culture in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Orest Ranum, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975, 145.

[36] *Ibid*., 145; Xavier GIL, "One King, One Faith, Many Nations: *Patria* and Nation in Spain, 16th-17th Centuries," in *'Patria' und 'Patrioten' vor dem Patriotismus: Pflichten, Rechte, Glauben und die Rekonfigurierung europäischer Gemeinwesen im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Robert von Friedeburg, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2005, 118.

resonated powerfully.[37] More than one Iberian prince dreamed of the day when all of "Spain" (or alternatively, "the Spains") could be united under his rule. Interestingly, for the Aragonese Martin Carrillo, writing in 1620, it was Philip II, not Ferdinand and Isabella, who had finally realized this long-cherished dream of being the "first king and master of all of Spain," because it was only under the Prudent King that Portugal had been joined with the rest of *España*.[38] Without Portugal, it could not be said that all of "Spain" was united.

Legal constructions of difference set the stage for a wide variety of clashes, but they did not determine them. As the Portuguese were deemed to be foreigners to the Spanish Indies, royal investigations into illegal residence (*composiciones*) were carried out with some regularity, and individual foreigners sometimes sought recourse to the Crown in the form of *cartas de naturaleza*. Furthermore, expulsion orders were periodically given, especially against foreigners residing in port cities throughout the circum-Caribbean. In all of these instances, Castilian and Portuguese protagonists on all sides made use of contemporary understandings of what it meant to be "foreign" or "native," "Castilian" or "Portuguese." These thorny questions, however, were typically answered not so much through erudite abstractions, but through the quotidian testimony regarding a person's behavior and reputation, encompassing such diverse variables as language, comportment, dress, marital status, social and commercial partnerships, and civic participation. Nativeness and foreignness (as well as the other dualities examined in this essay, loyalty/duplicity and orthodoxy/apostasy) were ultimately embodied realities that were realized as they were being performed.[39] Thus, the true native was one who behaved like a native, and in so doing, an individual could transcend even such weighty criteria as foreign birthplace and questionable ancestry.

Even the basic task of determining where someone was originally from proved quite perplexing at times. For example, charges were brought in a 1620 *composición* against Juan Calvo, accusing him of being Portuguese

[37] Elliott, op. cit., 19; Roberto J. González-Casanovas, "Alfonso X's Concept of Hispania: Cultural Politics in the Histories," in *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages*, eds. Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson, and Alan V. Murray, Leeds, University of Leeds, 1995, 155-70.

[38] Quoted in Tamar Herzog, *Frontiers of Possession: Spain and Portugal in Europe and the Americas*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2015, 57.

[39] My arguments in this section owe much to Tamar Herzog, *Defining Nations: Immigrants and Citizens in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003, especially chs. 4-5.

and residing illegally in the Indies. In his confession, Calvo stated that he was not Portuguese, but a "native of the town of Almonte in the kingdoms of Castile, eight leagues from Sanlúcar de Barrameda."[40] It is impossible to know whether Calvo was telling the truth in his testimony. As Almonte is very close to the border with Portugal, it is entirely possible that Calvo's accent or dialect sounded "Portuguese" to some. Alternatively, since it was a very common practice at the time for Portuguese to lie about their origins, perhaps Calvo was actually from Portugal, but managed to pass as Castilian.[41] In any case, Calvo was able to collect multiple witnesses, including a priest and a self-described "*hidalgo*," who confirmed that he was born in Almonte, as he had stated previously.[42] In the end, the investigator judging the case found that the *fiscal* had "not proved his accusation," and declared Calvo to be absolved of all charges.[43]

In considering whether a person should be rightly considered Portuguese or Castilian, the seemingly more "objective" criteria of birthplace and ancestry could be outweighed by "subjective" factors, such as reputation and public behavior. In this way, the Portuguese merchant Jorge Gramajo admitted that he was "an *extranjero* of the Portuguese nation," but nonetheless appealed to the king to recognize his true Castilian *naturaleza*, since he "has established himself in this city [Cartagena] with [his] wife and children" and was "reputed as a *natural* of these kingdoms [the Castilian Indies], which Your Majesty must declare as such."[44] Gramajo was the nephew of Jorge Fernández Gramajo, one of the most famous Portuguese merchants in the entire New World, and his Portuguese background

[40] AGI, Escribanía, 589A, pieza 11, f. 7r.

[41] Cf. Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century* [1992], trans. Carla Rahn Phillips, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, 57-60.

[42] AGI, Escribanía, 589A, pieza 11, ff. 16r-18r.

[43] *Ibid*., f. 23r. Beyond the *composiciones*, one can easily find further evidence of confusion over whether a person was truly Portuguese or not. For example, in a 1619 letter, the inquisitors at Cartagena reported that "a young man, [either] Galician or Portuguese," was arrested and put in the inquisitorial jail for showing "little respect during the procession of the Most Holy Sacrament" and for saying "some obscene words." ARCHIVO HISTÓRICO NACIONAL [AHN], Inquisición, L.1009, f. 30r. As Tamar Herzog has argued, these sorts of classifications were anything but "self-evident," as Castilians tried to define "Spanishness according to Castilian standards," which often led to Galicians and Catalans being accused of being Portuguese and French, respectively. Tamar Herzog, "'A Stranger in a Strange Land': The Conversion of Foreigners into Members in Colonial Latin America," in *Constructing Collective Identities and Shaping Public Spheres: Latin American Paths*, eds. Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 1998, 49.

[44] AGI, Escribanía, 589B, pieza 32, f. 17r.

was impossible to hide. Nonetheless, Gramajo could argue that he was "reputed" to be a native of the Castilian kingdoms of the New World, due to a combination of public behavior and social standing, which he argued outweighed any disadvantage brought about by his Portuguese birthplace and ancestry.[45]

A similar case was that of Juan Gutiérrez Román, an *alférez* in Cartagena who sought a *carta de naturaleza* from the Crown in the mid-1640s. Gutiérrez's autobiographical statements, together with the character testimonies that he obtained from some of the most elite members of local Cartagena society, reveal that Gutiérrez sought to portray himself as *already being* Castilian – due not to birthplace, but to his public image and behavior over many years. Like Gramajo, Gutiérrez simply wanted the king to ratify an already present reality. To this end, the *contador* for the Cartagena Inquisition testified that Gutiérrez, being the "son of a Castilian father" and connected to the "leading persons" of Cartagena, was "commonly reputed among everyone" to be Castilian himself.[46] According to another witness, part of the reason for this reputation as a Castilian had to do with Gutiérrez's "speech and good comportment."[47] Although Gutiérrez's Castilian ancestry was an important factor, it was hardly the only one, complemented as it was by such variables as speech, comportment, and social connections. To this list, another reason was added by Diego de Matute, a Castilian witness who argued that Gutiérrez was "loved and esteemed by all for the regard and goodwill he has always shown to the Castilian people joining them in friendship and association."[48]

[45] These fluid understandings of what constituted nativeness/foreignness did not apply only to the Portuguese. For example, in 1620, Cristóbal Ferrer was accused of being a Genoese foreigner to the Indies, to which he responded with a multi-part defense. First, he claimed that he was a native of Barcelona and therefore, a "native vassal of [Philip IV's] kingdoms, even in the Crown of Castile." Second, Ferrer claimed that he was "reputed" by others to be a Spaniard, arising out of his many years of service as an "infantryman for more than twenty-two years in the city of Milan," a position that Ferrer claimed was only given to "natives of the kingdoms of Spain." Several years earlier, another Genoese in Cartagena, Fabricio Viacava, was described by the local city council as being "a noble man" who was "more of a native than a foreigner," due to the many years that he had previously spent in Granada and Seville. As with those Portuguese examined earlier, these two Genoese were able to utilize the inherent flexibility and fluidity of the early modern concepts of "native" and "foreigner," in order to establish their genuine *naturaleza*. For Ferrer, see: AGI, Escribanía 589B, pieza 34, ff. 13r-13v; for Viacava: AGI, Santa Fe 62, N.98, f. 1r, as well as AGI, Escribanía 589B, pieza 21.

[46] AGI, Contratación, 50A, fol. 28v.

[47] *Ibid*., fol. 32r.

[48] *Ibid*., fol. 25r.

In his testimony, Matute maintained that Gutiérrez's disposition towards Castilians reflected his true Castilian *naturaleza*, despite his Portuguese origins. By stressing this connection, Matute challenged the determinative nature of a person's birthplace, but also subtly reinforced the stereotyped linkage between Portuguese *naturaleza* and anti-Castilian sentiment. If Gutiérrez was found to be lacking the latter, then, according to Matute, it could be safely deduced that Gutiérrez also lacked the former.

By implicitly relating anti-Castilian animus to Portuguese *naturaleza*, Matute was tapping into a quite controversial question. Certainly it was not hard to find Castilian authors who believed that the Portuguese were inherently hostile to Castile and her interests. For example, according to officials of the Casa de Contratación in Seville, "The Portuguese [...] in Cartagena and other parts of the Indies are more numerous than the Castilians, and most are *conversos* [*i.e.*, Jews[49]], people who by religion and nature [*naturaleza*] have so much hatred for Castile."[50] For these officials, since anti-Castilian animus ran in the blood of most Portuguese, there could be no hope of conversion or reconciliation. Foreign observers were also quick to point out the depth of anti-Castilian sentiments not just in Portugal, but in other Iberian provinces as well. One French traveler in the opening years of the seventeenth century commented how

> the Aragonese, the Valencians, the Catalans, the Basques, the Galicians, the Portuguese bait each other, throwing in each others' faces the vices and failings of their provinces; but should a Castilian appear among them, then see how at one they are in launching themselves upon him all together, as bulldogs upon a wolf.[51]

A primary cause of these strained relations was the patently unequal nature of the partnership between Castile and Portugal during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. Indeed, many Castilians proudly touted Castile as the "head" of the Spanish Monarchy, raising the sensitive question of

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[49] Despite the reality that countless numbers of *conversos* were ordinary Catholics, indistinguishable from their Old Christian neighbors, it is clear that the authors of this letter use "*conversos*" here to mean "Jews," given the emphasis on "religion" and "nature" as distinguishing characteristics.

[50] AGI, Contratación, 5171, f. 181v.

[51] Quoted in I.A.A. Thompson, "Castile, Spain, and the Monarchy: The Political Community from *patria natural* to *patria nacional*," in *Spain, Europe, and the Atlantic World: Essays in Honour of John H. Elliott*, eds. Richard L. Kagan and Geoffrey Parker, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 133 n.23.

how the head was to relate to its members.[52] Such a dynamic inevitably bred resentment from the less "privileged" members of the body.[53] Continued Castilian policies of exclusion directed towards the Portuguese in Spanish America only exacerbated the hard feelings.

In light of these factors, it is hardly surprising that those writers desirous of a greater pan-Iberian unity repeatedly emphasized how all the peninsular kingdoms, including Portugal, were equally "Spanish."[54] For example, in 1581, a Castilian Jesuit, Pedro de Rivadeneira, wrote that any war between Castile and Portugal would be a conflict of "Christians against Christians, Catholics against Catholics, and Spaniards against Spaniards."[55] A year prior, the bishop of Coria argued that the Portuguese were so similar to the Castilians that to separate them into different nations could only be done out of malice.[56] The views put forward by these ecclesiastics were affirmed in the strongest terms by the king himself. Writing shortly before he was to assume the throne of Portugal, Philip II argued that the Portuguese were just as Spanish as the Castilians, and since the two "differ so little in language, behavior, and customs," only a "vain and false man" would argue otherwise.[57] These words should not be read as merely a rhetorical ploy on the part of Philip, although there was certainly an element of this. The king's words described a basic reality that Castile had benefited from for decades. Beginning in the early sixteenth century, lacking sufficient numbers of settlers in its distant colonies, Castile had repeatedly turned to the Portuguese to help fill in the gaps, whether in Cuba, Jamaica, or Florida.[58] No other foreign group was relied upon by Castile as much as the Portuguese in populating the dispersed lands that

[52] For examples of the metaphor of Castile as the "head" of the Monarchy, see: J.H. Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans: A Study in the Decline of Spain (1598-1640)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1963, 310; Xavier Torres Sans, *Naciones sin nacionalismo: Cataluña en la monarquía hispánica*, Valencia, Universitat de València, 2008, 189; Erin Rowe, *Saint and Nation: Santiago, Teresa of Avila, and Plural Identities in Early Modern Spain*, University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011, 139.

[53] Resentments could go the other direction as well, as some Castilians felt that the other parts of the Spanish Monarchy were parasites on Castile. Thompson, art. cit., 141-45.

[54] Pedro Cardim, *Portugal unido y separado: Felipe II, la unión de territorios y el debate sobre la condición política del reino de Portugal*, Valladolid, Ediciones Universidad de Valladolid, 2014, 193-207.

[55] Herzog, op. cit., 57.

[56] *Ibid*., 57.

[57] Fernando Díaz-Plaja (ed.), *Historia de España en sus documentos: Siglo XVI*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1988, 494.

[58] Three examples among many others: AGI, Santo Domingo, 1121, L.1, ff. 78v-79v; AGI, Santo Domingo, 1121, L.2, f. 33v; AGI, Indiferente, 426, L.25, ff. 242v-243v.

had come under Castilian rule. Of course, geographical proximity was an important factor, but ultimately, the Portuguese were the obvious choice for the Habsburgs, precisely because of those factors outlined by Philip II – *viz.*, close parallels in language, behavior, and customs. Even as Castilian law continued to uphold the foreignness of the Portuguese, the actions of Castile's rulers tacitly affirmed the fundamental cultural similarities of the two Iberian kingdoms.

Others argued that resentment towards Castile was not so much a Portuguese trait *per se*, but a feature of some subset of the Portuguese population. Of course, Portuguese *conversos* were perennial targets, but they were not the only ones. Class divisions also played a prominent role, as the lower classes in Portugal were the targets of a great deal of scorn and criticism. In contrast to the more magnanimous nobility, Portuguese commoners were accused of harboring ill will against their Castilian neighbors. The Portuguese writer, Diogo do Couto, gave voice to this idea in his *O Soldado Prático*, during an exchange between two Portuguese, a common soldier and a *fidalgo*. The soldier asks about "the ancient strife that has always existed between us and the Castilians," to which the *fidalgo* responds, "This hatred only exists among commoners [*gente baixa*], and with the nobility, it is a very different thing."[59] For his part, the Spanish dramatist, Damián Salustio del Poyo, maintained that the "plebeian ranks" (*la gente plebeya*) in Portugal were "eternal enemies of the Castilian nation."[60] Along the same lines, the Portuguese nobleman, Cristovão de Moura, confessed that the greatest obstacle to Habsburg rule in Portugal was the "natural and ancient hatred that the common people have towards the Castilians."[61] Finally, Philip II also echoed these ideas when he wrote that hostility to Castile was rooted in "popular ignorance" and encouraged by persons "incapable of rational discourse and driven by private interests."[62]

Of course, these notions reflect the elite biases of these authors, and supporters and detractors of the Habsburgs could be found across the socioeconomic spectrum in Portugal. Nevertheless, what is pertinent here is

[59] Diogo do Couto, *O Soldado Prático*, ed. Reis Brasil, Mem Martins, Publicações Europa-América, 1988, 131.

[60] C.R. Boxer, "Spaniards and Portuguese in the Iberian Colonial World: Aspects of an Ambivalent Relationship, 1580-1640," in *Liber Amicorum Salvador de Madariaga*, eds. H. Brugmans and R. Martínez Nadal, Bruges, De Tempel, 1966, 241.

[61] *Ibid.*, 241.

[62] Díaz-Plaja, op. cit., 494.

how closely the elite families of Castile and Portugal were, in fact, connected by intermarriage and shared cultural markers of nobility, such as personal honorifics and participation in military orders.[63] These commonalities allowed for a much easier integration of Portuguese elites into the upper echelons of colonial society. One prominent New World example was Don Vicente de Villalobos, a successful merchant in Antioquia, who was able to marry into one of the most prominent families of the region and eventually became a *regidor* and *alguacil mayor* in Cartagena. A man of high aspirations, Villalobos was lauded by four different city councils throughout New Granada in 1609 for being a "person of valor, understanding, and virtue."[64] These letters of approbation reflect the strength of public reputation and decorous behavior to transcend those impediments that could be incurred by Portuguese *naturaleza*.

However, this is not to say that Villalobos simply tried to disavow his Portuguese background. In fact, he utilized it to his advantage in a most intriguing way. In a 1611 *probanza*, Villalobos asked a series of character witnesses about whether "the nobility of his person" was known and respected not only by Castilians, but also "in particular [by] his fellow countrymen."[65] It appears that Villalobos believed that testimony about his standing among his fellow Portuguese would increase his standing in the eyes of local Castilian elites. Some witnesses did not answer this part of the questionnaire at all, no doubt because they did not know how the Portuguese viewed Villalobos's "nobility." Others, however, went into great detail. One witness, a Portuguese resident in Zaragoza (Antioquia), claimed to know Villalobos's family in Portugal, which included "*alcaldes* and *regidores*," who faithfully served the king with their "horses and arms" in the city of Lagos. All the Portuguese who knew Villalobos, it was said, held "much respect and estimation" for him, because they knew his "birth and quality."[66] For Villalobos explicitly to ask for testimony about local Portuguese opinion suggests that Castilian persons of importance held such opinions in some regard. Indeed, judging from Villalobos's strategy in this *probanza*, the idea of Portuguese individuals with pure and honorable

[63] Mafalda Soares da Cunha, "The Marriage of João de Alarcão and Margarida Soares and the Creation of a Transnational Portuguese-Spanish Nobility," in *Early Modern Dynastic Marriages and Cultural Transfer*, eds. Joan-Lluís Palos and Magdalena S. Sánchez, Burlington, Ashgate, 2016, 139-61.

[64] AGI, Santa Fe, 66, N.72, f. 1r.

[65] AGI, Santa Fe, 99, N.45, f. 93r.

[66] *Ibid*., ff. 115v-116r.

lineage was hardly the kind of oxymoron that it becomes if Spanish perceptions of Portuguese "impurity" or "taintedness" are exaggerated, for example, by a disproportionate emphasis on the stereotype of Portuguese as secret Jews. These negative stereotypes and attitudes must be understood within their larger context, which included many fundamental cultural similarities that blurred the dividing lines between Castilians and Portuguese – or as some writers understood it, between "*españoles castellanos*" and "*españoles portugueses*."[67]

The Question of Disloyalty

A final means by which some Castilians attempted to create distance between themselves and the Portuguese was through accusations of treasonous activities, which became commonplace from the mid-sixteenth century. Such accusations usually were directed towards "wicked" individuals or certain groups (especially Portuguese pilots). In contrast to the later condemnations of the perfidy of the "Portuguese Nation," it was relatively uncommon in the sixteenth century for the Portuguese to be collectively accused of being disloyal, in part due to the presence of Spanish renegades among the corsairs, as well as the continual violence done to Portuguese interests by pirates throughout the Atlantic world. After 1580, the geo-political landscape notably altered with the emergence of the Portuguese pretender, Dom António, whose partnerships with Francis Drake and other English pirates heightened Spanish anxieties regarding the possible duplicity of their Portuguese neighbors. Nevertheless, even in times of genuine crisis, Portuguese residents in Spanish America proved adept at demonstrating their loyalty and were commonly rewarded as such by local officials.

Throughout the sixteenth century, the Spanish were plagued by corsair activity by the French and later from the English. One of the most important early losses was the 1555 capture of Havana by a band of French corsairs led by Jacques de Sores. As Kris Lane notes, this was "no mere pirate sortie, but rather a full-scale military assault."[68] Sores demanded an impossible ransom of 30,000 pesos, combined with several thousand

[67] Cf. Lorenzo de Mendoza, *Suplicación a Su Magestad... en defensa de los portugueses* [1630]. Biblioteca Nacional de España [BNE], R/11868(3).

[68] Kris Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas, 1500-1750*, Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe, 1998, 25; cf. Alejandro de la Fuente, *Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2008, 1-2.

pounds of bread and meat, to which the city leaders responded with an offer of just over 4,000 pesos. The corsair laughingly dismissed this proposal by declaring that "he did not know that there were crazies outside France."[69] Soon a counterattack was planned by Havana's governor, a lawyer with no experience in military matters. Unfortunately for the city, the governor's 300-man force, composed mostly of Indians and Africans, failed spectacularly. Before leaving, the French burned Havana to the ground, devastating the city so thoroughly that, according to one witness, "the Greeks did not leave Troy worse."[70]

Sores was a Huguenot corsair who employed a local Portuguese renegade, Pero Bras, as his pilot. A native of the Azores, Bras had been a resident in Havana for around a year. Captured by the French while traveling with other Portuguese from Nombre de Dios to Santo Domingo, Bras offered to pilot Sores and his men to Havana. The French accepted Bras's offer, and the rest of the Portuguese on board the captured ship were taken prisoner and forced to accompany the French to Havana.[71] With Bras's knowledge and skill as a pilot, the French entered Havana effortlessly and lay siege to the city's fortress. Denounced invariably as a "traitor" who "sold out this land," Bras appeared eager to help the French in whatever way he could.[72] While in Havana, Sores was considering an attack on Santo Domingo, and he asked the *alcaide* of Havana about the best entry point into that city. The *alcaide* protested that Santo Domingo was a heavily armed and well-defended port, which would "not be as easily taken as Havana was." Completely contradicting the *alcaide*, Bras told the French that Santo Domingo was actually quite sparsely defended and could be easily taken by Sores and his men.[73] It is no wonder that one report decried Bras as a man "who was more cruel and of more evil counsels than the captain [Sores] himself."[74] From all accounts, Bras seems to have served the French freely, motivated either by monetary rewards or perhaps by an antipathy to Spain or the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, none of the contemporary accounts attempt to explain Bras's motivations.

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[69] *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de ultramar (Segunda serie)*, Madrid, Est. Tipográfico "Sucesores de Rivadeneyra," 1891, VI.369.

[70] *Ibid.*, VI.436.

[71] *Ibid.*, VI.384-85.

[72] *Ibid.*, VI.422.

[73] *Ibid.*, VI.422-23.

[74] *Ibid.*, VI.373.

In general, Castilian responses to Portuguese renegades during the sixteenth century were based on what the specific individuals did, not on their nationality or descent. In the multiple accounts of the sack of Havana, nowhere was Bras ever condemned for being part of the "Portuguese nation." The pilot's actions in assisting the French capture Havana were always depicted as deriving from his own evil will, not from his "blood" or his "nation." One basic reason for this is that during this period, a number of Spanish renegades also collaborated with the French. Indeed, Bras was not the only traitor to betray Havana; a young man named Juan del Plano also participated in Sores's designs to capture the city. According to one account, Plano claimed to be an "*español*," and "from his speech, so it seems." Yet, there was some uncertainty on this point, as another witness claims that Plano was a "*mozo extranjero*." A third source labels Plano as a "*navarro*," which would explain the ambiguity in identification.[75] Despite their differences in background, both men were equally condemned in the strongest terms: "from [these men], the Frenchman [Sores] came well-informed and advised how the fortress was worthless, without men or any resistance with which to defend itself. [...] Like robbers of a house, these two traitors and spies caused all the harm of this land."[76] None of the eyewitness accounts attempt to draw a broader lesson from this betrayal by castigating the Portuguese or the Navarrese as being a race of traitors or a nation of spies. Instead, the guilt was always seen to rest individually with these two men, not collectively with their respective nations.

This unwillingness to assign blame too broadly can be explained, in part, from the fact that the Portuguese were more often the victims of French or English predations rather than co-conspirators. From the beginning, corsairs paid little attention to whether a merchant ship flew under a Spanish or a Portuguese flag; both were frequent targets. In 1545, Charles V's ambassador to France, Jean de Saint-Mauris, wrote back to Spain informing the Emperor that "the French seize every Portuguese vessel they encounter, and their judges invariably declare them good prizes. The men on board are sent to the galleys and those who are worth it are held to ransom."[77] Throughout most of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese routinely suffered both robbery and imprisonment at the hands of the

[75] *Ibid.*, VI.373, 395, 384.

[76] *Ibid.*, VI.395.

[77] Martin A.S. Hume (ed.), *Calendar of Letters, Dispatches, and State Papers, relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain preserved in the Archives of Simancas, Vienna, Brussels, and Elsewhere*, vol. 8, *Henry VIII, 1545-1546*, London, Mackie and Co., 1904, 81.

French. Unfortunately for those Portuguese captured by Sores, the governor's reckless counter-attack, while failing in its larger aim, did succeed in killing Sores's uncle. Seeking immediate retribution, Sores ordered his men to stab all of his Castilian and Portuguese prisoners to death.[78] Given the ubiquity of Portuguese residents and merchant ships in the Spanish Caribbean throughout the sixteenth century, the vexations perpetrated by French corsairs against Portuguese settlers and traders throughout the Caribbean would not have been lost on the Spanish.

However, some Spaniards did argue that Portuguese pilots were collectively suspect – and frequently culpable – of treasonous alliances with the French and English. Such criticisms were common, especially starting in the 1570s and 1580s. One such complaint was leveled against this conspicuous subgroup of Portuguese by the president of the Council of the Indies, Antonio de Padilla, on the eve of the Union of the Crowns in 1579: "All the pilots who go in these English and French armadas are Portuguese. For this and a hundred thousand other reasons, it would be fitting that Your Majesty should become the King and Sovereign of those countries."[79] Three decades later, officials from the Casa de Contratación expressed similar unhappiness with pilots from Portugal, lamenting that one of the "very great difficulties" that had resulted from so many Portuguese residing in the Spanish Indies was that "in times of war with England or France or Holland, the pilots that bring these nations to [the Indies] were Portuguese."[80] Maritime occupations generally carried little social esteem, and pilots were only marginally more respected than common sailors.[81] As an inherently mobile group, pilots also violated the cultural norms of stability and rootedness that were highly valued in respectable Spanish society.[82] Foreign pilots were thus in a doubly disadvantageous situation, and it is unsurprising that they attracted scorn and suspicion as a group, especially as attacks from French and English corsairs increased over the course of the century.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that Portuguese pilots were universally despised or distrusted by Spanish officials. Pilots from Portugal had long been renowned for their skill in oceanic navigation, and in

[78] *Colección de documentos inéditos*, VI.374, 383. The local military commander only escaped execution, thanks to a ransom of 2,200 pesos.

[79] Nuttall, op. cit., 402.

[80] AGI, Contratación, 5171, f. 181v.

[81] Pérez-Mallaína, op. cit., 35-45.

[82] Cf. Studnicki-Gizbert, op. cit., 45-46, 152.

the face of a continual shortage of qualified pilots and mariners in Castile, it proved impossible for Spanish officials to enforce their restrictions concerning foreigners on Spanish ships.[83] From the beginnings of Spanish imperialism in the New World, the Crown gave licenses to scores of Portuguese pilots, and of course, many more obtained permission through fraudulent means. Despite the restrictive regulations and long-standing fears about the treachery of Portuguese pilots, some Spanish officials remarked favorably on their service to Spain. For example, in 1593, Rodrigo Zamorano, the *piloto mayor* of the Casa de Contratación, offered this positive assessment to the Council of the Indies:

> I am of the opinion when some pilot from Tavira or another part of that kingdom [of Portugal] offers himself [...] because it is Your Majesty's kingdom, and having seen on this [Indies] route many good seamen from there, I do not think it inconvenient to admit such types to the aforesaid examination, having seen the lack of pilots that there are, and with this it can be assured that they will not leave [these kingdoms] to serve in other parts, which at times, because of not being admitted as pilots in Seville [...] they seek other paths where they make themselves useful.[84]

While some officials argued that Portuguese defections to other European powers demonstrated that the Portuguese could not be trusted, Zamorano made the opposite argument. He claimed instead that by employing greater numbers of Portuguese pilots and mariners, the number of defectors would decrease. Zamorano maintained that, instead of being motivated by religious belief or hatred of Castile, Portuguese renegades were compelled to serve foreign monarchs for a much more mundane reason: to seek employment and a means by which to "make themselves useful." Although the trend of Portuguese pilots serving other nations was indisputable, as Zamorano's arguments reveal, the motivations behind these pilots' actions were openly disputed, and therefore, what particular policies towards the Portuguese were needed also proved to be a continually unsettled question.

Anxieties regarding the complicity of Portuguese residents rose noticeably after 1580, when the Portuguese pretender to the throne, Dom

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[83] Portugal also faced shortages, especially on certain routes. See: Amélia Polónia, "Portuguese Seafarers: Informal Agents of Empire-Building," in *Law, Labour, and Empire: Comparative Perspectives on Seafarers, c. 1500-1800*, eds. Maria Fusaro, et al., Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 215-35.

[84] Quoted in Edward Collins, "Portuguese Pilots at the Casa de la Contratación and the Examenes de Pilotos," *The International Journal of Maritime History* 26 (2014), 191.

António, escaped to England, forming certain friendships of mutual utility with various privateers – including, most especially, Francis Drake. From the beginning of the Portuguese succession crisis, the English and French sought to take advantage of the unstable situation for their own benefit, if not necessarily to help Dom António actually become king. Throughout the 1580s, these circumstances all contributed to the circulation of rumors that Dom António was preparing to sail to the New World with the English. For example, one *consulta* from the Council of the Indies in 1582 claimed that Dom António had left from Isla Terceira with 3,500 men, mostly "Portuguese and Frenchmen." Although it was suspected that Madeira and Brazil were the main targets, the Council claimed that "with so many men, [Dom António] could be able to carry out another objective," perhaps an attack on Cartagena. The king was warned that if Dom António's forces did attack Cartagena, it would cause "much harm, since there were not enough defenses in the city to resist [Dom António]."[85] Of course, the Spanish Indies had been threatened by pirates for decades, but what the Spanish feared most after 1580 was not simple pillaging from pirates, but the capture and transformation of a Spanish or Portuguese colonial port into a permanent base of operations for both the English and the Portuguese pretender.

Although Dom António never sailed to the West Indies, such rumors were entirely plausible to observers at the time. Indeed, it was not from lack of trying that Dom António did not join Drake's 1586 expedition, but from the express command of Elizabeth I that he remain in England.[86] Despite the Portuguese pretender's absence, many inhabitants of Santo Domingo and Cartagena believed that Drake's ships were actually led by Dom António. Fleeing from their devastated city, some elite residents of Santo Domingo reported that "from certain indications, we suspect that the commanding officer is Don Antonio of Portugal."[87] Likewise, another letter written only days after the attack states that "some say that Don

[85] AGI, Indiferente, 740, N.99, f. 1r.

[86] According to Harry Kelsey, "On 7 September the pretender to the Portuguese throne, Dom Antonio, arrived in Plymouth. Drake found room for him at his Buckland estate, along with [Sir Philip] Sidney. Dom Antonio also wanted to go on the voyage [to the West Indies], but some correspondence with the queen soon convinced him that this was impractical, and he left for London with Sidney." Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1998, 242. From Ambassador Mendoza's account, Elizabeth I "scoffed greatly" at the idea of Dom António accompanying the fleet to the New World. Hume, op. cit., III.550.

[87] Wright, op. cit., 23.

Antonio is in command of these English."[88] Undoubtedly, the specter of Dom António distressed many Spanish imaginations during this period. As Irene Wright aptly expressed it, "Don Antonio haunted the Spanish Indies in these years – reported to be here, there, and everywhere – as restless and intangible as a ghost."[89]

Within a short time, however, these ghost tales began to fall apart. As the members of the Audiencia of Santo Domingo later testified, "At first it was supposed that the commander of these people was Don Antonio, prior of Crato, but later it was learned that this was not true, that he remains in England at the house of this Captain Francis, by whose hand so much damage has been inflicted."[90] Even though the Portuguese pretender was still in faraway England, some Spaniards testified that they saw "Portuguese" at work everywhere. According to one account, when Drake approached Cartagena, he used his Portuguese "vice-admiral" in an act of trickery to weaken the morale of the city:

> The day [Drake] reached [Cartagena] a ship came close to the shore and pretended that the gammoning of the main mast had broken, and the vessel dropped back, near a point. A Portuguese struck out for shore, swimming. [...] When he got to land, the people received him and dressed him, and he told them that the English had carried him off by force and that at Santo Domingo they had landed 5,000 musketeers and said they would land 1,000 at Cartagena and another thousand and still other thousands, until they razed the city [...] He so frightened the people that not a man faced the enemy nor raised his head. After the city fell, they saw this man with the English, well attired, and he sails with them – the vice-admiral of their fleet, called Don Francisco the Portuguese![91]

This story, while amusing, is nonetheless certainly spurious. The so-called "Don Francisco the Portuguese" was, in fact, a Spaniard, Don Francisco Maldonado. An eyewitness to the carnage at Santo Domingo, Maldonado sailed to Cartagena three days before Drake arrived, in order to warn the city of how the English had so easily sacked Santo Domingo.[92] It seems likely that the continual rumors of a fearsome alliance between the English and Portuguese supporters of Dom António led these Spaniards to see Portuguese where there were none, as well as exacerbating tensions

[88] *Ibid.*, 19.
[89] *Ibid.*, xvii.
[90] *Ibid.*, 36.
[91] *Ibid.*, 173.
[92] *Ibid.*, 30-31.

towards those Portuguese who actually did reside in the region. In the immediate aftermath of Drake's rampages, one leading *vecino* of Havana, Alonso Suárez de Toledo, complained to the king that "all these Portuguese pilots have sold out these Indies, and in these ports there are many in whom little confidence is placed."[93] Nevertheless, even at this point, Suárez refrained from condemning all Portuguese settlers in the Spanish Caribbean, instead singling out Portuguese pilots as a group and declaring that "many" (but not all) of these individuals were deemed untrustworthy.

Portuguese spies planted by the English were yet another source of anxiety for the Spanish. Even when a city seemed safe from enemy ships, the danger of informants gathering valuable intelligence about the state of local defenses remained. Captured members of Drake's fleet seemed to confirm these fears. One prisoner, an Indian named Pedro, claimed to have been with Drake for twelve years and testified in great detail about Drake's spy network. One spy was said to have been housed in Cartagena at the home of a Portuguese pharmacist named González,[94] while two more Portuguese spies, Don Juan and Francisquito, were left at La Margarita. According to Pedro, this Don Juan had sailed to England with Dom António and had quickly become a comrade of Drake's. Yet another of Drake's Portuguese informants, Francisco, had left Cartagena for Nombre de Dios, claiming that he was going on to Panama.[95] It is unknown whether Pedro was simply telling local Spanish officials what they wanted to hear, or whether there was some truth to his testimony. Regardless, what is important is that witness testimonies like Pedro's added more fuel to the rumors circulating around the Atlantic that the local Portuguese were in the pay of Dom António and the English.

Nonetheless, whatever distrust existed at the time did not impede some Portuguese from serving the Spanish Crown faithfully, even in sensitive military positions, for which they received praise and honor from local residents and royal officials. Perhaps most notable was Blas de Herrera, a resident of Cartagena and captain of artillery. During Drake's attack on the city, Herrera was reported to have urged the governor to give him more men, in order to move the artillery pieces into the necessary positions. According to one witness, "[Herrera] begged the governor to give him what he needed for the artillery," but the governor, Pedro Fernández del Busto,

[93] *Ibid*., 173.

[94] Although it is uncertain, this González might have been Andrés González, a *boticario* in Cartagena discussed below.

[95] AGI, Santa Fe, 37, N.72.

"would not provide or do anything." Completely exasperated, the Portuguese captain "swore to God that he did not know what to do or say in the face of so great remissness."[96] The dedication with which Herrera carried out his duties was seconded a few years later by the testimony of the subsequent governor of Cartagena, Pedro de Lodeña. Declaring that Herrera had served his post with "attentiveness and care," the governor even went so far as to suspend Herrera's *composición* on account of the "fidelity" that the Portuguese captain had demonstrated on numerous occasions.[97] While periods of belligerence between Spain and other European powers did provide opportunities for Portuguese betrayal, it also gave many chances for Portuguese from all ranks and classes to demonstrate their fidelity to the king.

Many Portuguese served in local militias as a means of establishing their loyalty and planting deeper roots in the local community. For example, in his 1611 *composición* trial, Manuel Téllez emphasized how his occupation as a *calderero* was "very useful and necessary in this republic," and how he had offered frequent services to the Spanish Crown in defense of the city of Cartagena.[98] To back up his claims, Téllez collected testimonies from some of the leading military and political officials of the city. These men collectively painted a portrait of Téllez as an indispensable and steadfast part of the city's defenses. Underscored on more than one occasion was the fact that Téllez was the only *calderero* in the city. Moreover, these witnesses insisted that Téllez had repeatedly demonstrated his personal character as a "valiant" soldier, an "honorable man," and a "good Christian."[99] These qualities and habits of behavior, enacted over many years, allowed Téllez to deflect charges of being a foreigner in the Indies, as well as to guard against any suspicions of disloyalty to either the Spanish king or the Catholic faith.

To be sure, local militia companies were not the only vehicles by which Portuguese could establish their loyalty and value to their cities and the king. Medicine was another such route, and significant numbers of Portuguese doctors, surgeons, and pharmacists came to the Indies, seeking to profit from their practice. One interesting case from Cartagena is Andrés González, a Portuguese *boticario*, who was declared to be "one of the most

[96] Wright, op. cit., 124.

[97] AGI, Santa Fe, 37, N.107, f. 1v.

[98] AGI, Escribanía, 589B, pieza 35, f. 77r.

[99] *Ibid*., ff. 78r-79v.

useful, necessary, and loyal persons in this land."[100] Despite being, in his own words, an "old, sick, and very disabled man," González had lived in Cartagena for nearly five decades and was renowned for his generosity in donating medicine to the monasteries and hospitals of the city, as well as helping to cure the sick and impoverished.[101] One witness lauded how González came to the assistance of rich and poor alike, for which he was "honored, favored, and esteemed" by his fellow *vecinos*, and that without his medical services, Cartagena would suffer greatly.[102]

Of course, the numbers of Portuguese in military or medical professions provoked uneasiness and discontent in some quarters. It was a common enough notion that Portuguese doctors and physicians were malevolent New Christians who poisoned their Old Christian patients. Indeed, "truly outlandish allegations and conspiracy theories" concerning Portuguese doctors and surgeons circulated not only in Spain and Spanish America, but in Portugal and Portuguese India as well.[103] Uneasiness also developed from having Portuguese soldiers stationed in Spanish American military garrisons, which some observers argued carried dangerous risks. Even Philip II complained in a 1575 *cédula* about the "many problems" that occur due to the reliance on "foreigners, especially Portuguese," to serve as artillerymen on the treasure fleets.[104] Nevertheless, the perpetual needs of both the Crown and local Spanish American towns and cities across the New World opened many doors for the Portuguese, who frequently proved able to demonstrate their own individual loyalties, even in the face of broader suspicion and criticism about the "Portuguese Nation" as a whole.

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Each of these dimensions of Portuguese difference reveal how profoundly contested the questions of apostasy, foreignness, and disloyalty were in colonial Spanish America. Instead of simply taking their cues from

[100] AGI, Escribanía 589B, pieza 23, f. 20v.

[101] *Ibid*., f. 6r.

[102] *Ibid*., f. 20v.

[103] François Soyer, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal: King Manuel I and the End of Religious Tolerance (1496-7)*, Leiden, Brill, 2007, 292-94; Ines G. Županov, *Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India (16th-17th Centuries)*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2005, 225-27. In sixteenth-century Spain, such suspicions also extended to *morisco* physicians as well. Stephen Haliczer, *Inquisition and Society in the Kingdom of Valencia, 1478-1834*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990, 230, 258.

[104] AGI, Indiferente, 1956, L.1, f. 302v; cf. AGI, Indiferente, 1957, L.5, f. 207.

legal categories, popular fears, or perennial stereotypes, both Spaniards and Portuguese sought to define what it meant to be "Portuguese" in Spanish territory, as well as what roles the Portuguese should play in local society. In particular, the rapidly changing circumstances of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led to fluid attitudes and responses on the part of the Spanish toward their Portuguese neighbors. In moments of crisis, one sometimes finds denunciations of the Portuguese as a singular group, but much more common were narrower condemnations, either against specific subgroups of Portuguese or against specific Portuguese renegades. This reluctance to stereotype all Portuguese as Jews or as traitors can even be seen in the actions of the Holy Office. For example, even in the midst of a multi-year crackdown against the Portuguese (1636-42), the Cartagena Inquisition granted two Portuguese the privilege of serving as *familiares*.[105] Additionally, during the 1638 auto that served as the ceremonial climax to this "*complicidad*," two additional Portuguese were given prestigious roles within the procession and ceremony.[106] It is clear that even with fears of a Portuguese "complicity" circulating around the city, the Cartagena Holy Office refused to tar all Portuguese with the same brush.

For their part, most Portuguese were equally determined to assert themselves as faithful vassals of the king and faithful members of the Catholic Church. Some went even further and declared themselves to be genuine "Spaniards." These assertions were not merely rhetorical, but were embodied in countless quotidian actions that served to build a public reputation among their neighbors. Most meaningful in this regard were demonstrations of Catholic piety (e.g., attendance at Mass, charitable giving, cofradía membership) and public actions that established a genuine rootedness in the local community and a commitment to its well-being (e.g., maintenance of a casa poblada, marriage to a local woman, service in the local militia, patronage of hospitals and monasteries). In contrast to the long-standing scholarly emphases on Portuguese endogamy and sep-

[105] These two men were Lorenzo Álvarez Barbosa, a resident of Santa Fe de Bogotá, and Pablo Ferrera, a resident of Cartagena. For the former, see: AHN, Inquisición, 1575, N.793; AHN, Inquisición, 1506, N.7. For the latter: AHN, Inquisición, 1339, N.14.

[106] One was Luis de Rocha, a *regidor* in the city, who helped to carry the large "standard of the faith" in the procession to the cathedral. The other man was Fernando Díaz Pereira, who was of Portuguese descent and related to Luis Gómez Barreto, who was arrested in 1636 on charges of judaizing. As the *arcediano* of the city's cathedral chapter, Díaz Pereira was the celebrant for the Mass that was held as part of the *auto de fe*. Anna María Splendiani, et. al. (eds.), *Cincuenta años de Inquisición en el Tribunal de Cartagena de Indias, 1610-1660*, 4 vols., Bogota, Centro Editorial Javeriano, 1997, III.38.

aratism, these types of local practices help to broaden our understandings of how Portuguese residents in Spanish America – from the wealthiest trans-Atlantic merchant down to the humblest shoemaker – participated in the expansion and maintenance of Spanish imperialism in the New World, even in the face of perennial resistance and prejudice from certain sectors of Spanish society.

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