EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 8: Egodocuments: Revelation of the Self in the Early Modern Period, 2011, University of Texas at Austin, August 21-23

Generational conflict in converso families, 1492-1550

Sara T Nalle, William Paterson University, USA

ABSTRACT: The egodocuments presented to the seminar are Inquisitorial confessions of second-generation "nuevos convertidos" who in one way or another were caught between their parents’ desire to maintain contact with Judaism and their own alleged desire to assimilate as Spanish Catholics.

This presentation is for the following text(s):
- Trial of Francisco Martínez, apothecary, resident of Deza
- Trial of Gaspar de San Clemente

Copyright © 2012 Early Modern Workshop
A Brief Introduction to the Texts.
Sara T. Nalle, William Paterson University

Thinking about ego-documents such as memoirs or autobiographies, one quickly realizes that the documents generated in the course of an Inquisitorial trial in principle are not very different from others in the genre. When a defendant decides to call for a scribe and dictate his confession (or on rare occasions, write his own) he confronts all the same issues self-presentation, self-image, and narration. Even interrogations which result in lengthy self-declarative statements in a sense are ego-documents, in that the same deliberate positioning of self takes place. The difference is one of degree! Although we want to privilege autobiographies because we think that somehow they bring us closer to “what really happened,” we must realize that their authors are no more obliged to represent the truth than are inquisitorial defendants. Yet, we are prepared to assume that the formers’ motive is to “set the record straight” while the latters’ goal is to conceal the truth and confuse their audience. In reality, we must be equally suspicious of both types of ego-documents and apply to them the same methods of analysis.

For two generations now, historians have mined inquisitorial trials to study religious ideas and various forms of social deviance. Along the way, some memorable individuals have emerged from the transcripts. Nonetheless, few of the many authors who have used inquisitorial materials have been interested explicitly in the genre of ego-documents or in the questions that are raised by this seminar. Inquisitorial documents require a high degree of interpretation on the part of the historian, but the analysis applied is for the purpose of arriving at some conclusion about religious belief or some other topic external to what often are quite ambiguous texts. For example, in my own book on the would-be messiah Bartolomé Sánchez, I was more interested in Sánchez’s ideas and the interplay between the peasant and his inquisitors than in how he consciously (or unconsciously) presented himself to the world, even though Sánchez’s extensive confessions provide an excellent opportunity to study the issues addressed by
While a few excerpts from Sánchez’s trial would provide ideal fodder for a seminar on ego-documents, he was neither a Jew or converso, so I have chosen instead to present two examples of confessions from my current study on ethnic identity and the family in Early Modern Spain. One chapter in the book deals with Spanish converso families in the sixteenth century. The two transcripts I have prepared illustrate the problem of intergenerational conflict in the early sixteenth century: how did members of the younger generation, brought up after 1492 in an all-Christian world, deal with parents who continued to practice Judaism? To what degree did they themselves start down the path towards assimilation? That is the subject matter of the confessions. However, their analysis is terribly compromised by the defendants’ need to convince the inquisitors that they were in fact faithful Christians. Perhaps subjecting these texts to analysis as ego-documents will help clarify both the facts presented in the confessions as well as their authors’ intention.

In Gaspar de San Clemente’s confession, he is at pains throughout to present himself as a committed Christian and to distance himself from his siblings and parents. In 1492, several members of his family emigrated to Portugal; afterwards the older generation tried to maintain contact across the border and even intermarry to preserve their property intact. Gaspar became both the emissary and potential husband who would serve to keep the family together, a future which ultimately he rejected.

Francisco Martínez’s pathetic confession revolves around how he betrayed his father in order to save his own life. Martínez’s confession clearly reveals how he tacked back and forth, torn by his father’s pleas for help, his duty as a son, and his need for self-preservation. Here, we can see how he justifies his actions to calm his conscience and earn leniency from the inquisitors.

**Bibliography**

**General considerations relevant to dealing with early modern texts.**


Essays centering on the use of ego-documents, particularly the Italian *libri di famiglia*, in discussing issues of family history.

Letters of remission are certainly ego documents, and present all the same problems of interpretation as do inquisitorial confessions.


Includes an article by Avriel Bar-Levav on Jewish ethical wills as ego documents.


Written at the height of the fascination with texts and post-modernism.


**Spain, and the Inquisition.**


Valuable for the primary sources presented, with a nod toward the concept of Inquisitorial ego documents.


Includes lengthy transcripts of Sánchez’s confessions.

Copyright © 2012 Early Modern Workshop
Trial of Francisco Martínez, apothecary, resident of Deza
Proceso contra Francisco Martínez
1533

Translated by Sara T Nalle, William Paterson University, USA

Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca, Sección Inquisición, legajo 148, exp. 1787
Trial against Francisco Martínez, apothecary, resident of Deza. 1533

Interrogation 18 January 1533

It could be around New Year's that they were saying in Deza that there would be an auto de fe in Cuenca and my father, Bachelor Diego Martínez, whose wife was being held prisoner, asked me to go there. On Saturday, January 4, on the other side of Arcos I ran into the Holy Office's deputy [alguacil], who I asked if they were going to have an auto in Cuenca, and the deputy answered, where was I from and where was I going, and I said that I was Bachelor Diego Martínez's son and I was coming to Cuenca because they had told us that there was going to be an auto. The deputy said that they weren’t having an auto but the scaffolding was done, and it wouldn’t be long before there was one. I said that I wanted to go back to my house since they weren’t going to do it and I had something else to attend to, and the deputy said that if I wanted to go to Cuenca I was welcome to do so, and to go home also, that I should do what I wanted, and so he went on ahead. I stayed with someone called Medrano, resident of Deza, to give him some letters for the lawyers who were working on the Bachelor’s wife’s case, and I went straight home to Deza, and I neither ran into nor saw the deputy.

Once home, in presence of the vicar, Joanes del Altopica, my father asked me how did it go, if I came alright, and I replied that yes, praised be God, but that I had run into the Holy Office’s deputy near Arcos, and that’s why I came back. This happened in my house, and after the vicar and other people had gone, my father the bachelor took me aside and said to me, “God help me! What is this? The deputy is coming here to Arcos; he told you he was coming!” I told him yes, but that I also thought that he was going to
Deza because the Holy Office’s people never say where they’re going to or where they’re coming from.

Then the bachelor said, “God help me! What is this? That woman [i.e., his wife] has been there so long; I have the strongest feeling that, either because of the amount of time she has been there in order to get out, or because of torture, she has said something about me and has hurt me— I need to get out of here, I can’t live in this place. My wife, come good or bad, yes or no, I need to go. Where do you think I should go? By your life, give me some advice!

I told him that since he had to go that it seemed to me that he should go to some friend’s house around there, and that he could spend the night and the next day there. If it looked like he could come back, good, and if not, then leave, and my father said, “I want to go to Berdejo or Torrelapaja to Mosén Jaime’s house.” Then he decided and it seemed better to him to go to Tordesalas to Pero López’s house, but since Pero López is a tithes collector and has many guards who would see him enter and ask him where he was going and coming from, since I had told him that it seemed good to me that he go there, and I was telling him what he ought to do, the bachelor was thrown into confusion over if he would go to Portugal or to France. He decided to go to Portugal by going via his wife’s sisters’ homes, because one lives in Peñaranda, and another in Roa, and by the house of one of his sisters who’s in Castromorcho, and he decided to go to Bión because it was right on the road to the house of one Benito de las Heras, his friend. He said he would spend the night there and the next day, which was Sunday, and at nightfall he would leave.

Now that the bachelor wanted to say goodbye to me, I said to him, “And those children—how are you leaving them?” and the bachelor answered me, “There’s some wheat— I entrust them to you for the love of God, and if their mother comes right they won’t lack for food, and if wrong, then let God do whatever serves him. You have to give me your pony.” I said to him that if I gave him the pony then they would say that I had given him advice and I had given him the pony so he could leave, and they would arrest me. Crying, the bachelor said to me, “Because you are my son, for the love of God, a poor old man like me, where can I go on foot on those roads ahead?” Then I gave him the pony and so he left, and a boy went with him, a son of his called Dickie (Diaguito), and I said to Diego, “Brother, where are you leaving him?” and the boy told me, “I’m leaving him by the Castellan’s meadow” and then I asked him what he [i.e., their father] had said, and the boy said, “he has told me that he will write you around Easter, god willing” and that he told him that if they asked for him that I should said that he was going to Reznos and [the next line is garbled but suggests they said their goodbyes]

On Sunday the deputy arrived in the town of Deza, and in the afternoon the deputy, the vicar, and one Diego de Haro went to my house and came inside, but they did not find
me there, and without knowing that they were at my house I went home and ran into them there. The deputy asked me where my father was, and I told him that he wasn’t in town, that I believed he was in Reznos or in Miñana.\textsuperscript{6} I told him by the oath I had taken that he was in Reznos or in Miñana, and if he wasn’t there, then they would pick up his trail there. The deputy locked me up in a room and went on the road to Miñana, and immediately I spoke to the vicar and said, “Sir, I have taken an oath, and my soul is worth more to me than my father or my mother, and for my conscience’s sake, do me the favor of getting a messenger, and I will pay for him.” He singled out one of his friends to go after the deputy, advising him how my father was on the run and the route he was taking, and so went off one Pedro Herrero. Then, since I wasn’t confident about this, I said again to the vicar that he look for another man, that I would pay for him to go to Miñana or Bion after my father and to tell him that the deputy was after him and to come back, and that if he wouldn’t do it that he should take him prisoner. The messenger went off and then the vicar came back again and I told him to send another messenger in case the first one missed the deputy, to tell the deputy my father’s route because the second messenger wasn’t from Bion.

The fiscal’s accusation charges him with advising his father to escape, which he did. The votos are light—reprimanded, 27 January 1533. Ordered to appear in Deza in his shirt without belt or cap, and pay 16 ducats for masses to be said by the Santo Oficio.

**Endnotes**

\textsuperscript{1}Villages across the border in Aragón, about 10 and 15 miles away, respectively.

\textsuperscript{2}Tordesalas is about 20 miles north of Deza, inside Castile but outside the Inquisition of Cuenca’s jurisdiction.

\textsuperscript{3}Peñaranda de Duero is 100 miles west of Deza on the way to Portugal; Roa is 25 miles beyond that, and Castromocho yet another 60 miles westward.

\textsuperscript{4}Place name as yet unidentified.

\textsuperscript{5}A village about 15 miles to the north of Deza.

\textsuperscript{6}Another nearby village. Here, Francisco gives out the false information that his father told him to say.
Proceso contra Francisco Martínez
Trial of Francisco Martínez, apothecary, resident of Deza
1533

Prepared by Sara T Nalle, William Paterson University, USA

Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca, Sección Inquisición, legajo 148, exp. 1787
Proceso contra Francisco Martínez, boticario, vecino de Deza. 1533

Interrogation 18 January 1533

Dijo que podrá haber que otro día del año nuevo se dijo en Deza que en Cuenca se haría auto [de fe] y que el bachiller Diego Martínez su padre, cuya mujer estaba presa, rogó a este confesante que se llegase acá, y que el sábado, cuatro del dicho mes, este confesante pasado a Arcos topó con el alguacil de este Santo Oficio, al cual preguntó si se hacía auto en Cuenca, y el dicho alguacil le replicó que dende era y a donde iba, y este confesante le dijo que era hijo del bachiller Diego Martínez y venía a Cuenca porque les habían dicho que se hacía auto, y el dicho alguacil dijo que no se haría auto porque los cadahalsos estaban hechos y que no podría tardar de hacerse, y que este confesante dijo que se quería volver a su casa pues no hacían y tenía otro negocio en que entender, y el dicho alguacil replicó y dijo que si quisiese ir a Cuenca que bien podía y si volver, también, que hiciese lo que quisiese, y que así pasó adelante el dicho alguacil, y este confesante se quedó con un Medrano, vecino de Deza, para darle unas cartas para los letrados que entendían en la causa de la mujer del dicho bachiller, y se volvió por el camino derecho hasta Deza, y nunca alcanzó ni vió al dicho alguacil.

runs into his father and warns him

Y llegado en presencia de Joanes del Altopica, vicario, el dicho su padre preguntó a este confesante que cómo se volvía, si venía bueno, y que este confesante le respondió que sí, loores a dios, pero que había topado con el alguacil del Santo Oficio encima de Arcos, el cual le había dicho que no se hacía auto y que él iba a Arcos, y que por eso se volvía, y que esto pasó en casa de este confesante, y después de idos el dicho vicario y otras personas que allí estaban, el dicho bachiller su padre apartó a este confesante, y le dijo,
“¡Válame dios! ¿Qué es esto? –que el alguacil viene acá a Arcos; os dijo que venía” y que este confesante le dijo que sí, pero que también pensaba que iba a Deza porque las personas de este Santo Oficio nunca decían donde iban ni dende venían.

father panics; fears his wife has implicated him
Y que el dicho bachiller dijo, “¡Válame dios! ¿Qué es esto? Tanto tiempo ha que está allá aquella mujer; yo tengo grandísima sospecha que, o por el tiempo que ha estado allá por salir de allí o por tormentos, que ella ha dicho alguna cosa de mí y que me ha dañado -- yo me quiero apartar de aquí, yo no tengo de vivir en este lugar, que mi mujer, venga bien que venga mal, por sí o por no, yo me quiero ir, ¿qué os paresce adónde me iré? ¡dadme consejo por vuestra vida!”

Son gives advice
Y que este confesante le dijo que pues que se tenía de ir que le parecía que se debía de ir a casa de un su amigo por allí, y que allí podía estar aquella noche y otro día, y sí le parecía de volverse, bien, y si no, irse, y que el dicho su padre dijo, “Yo me quiero ir a Berdejo o a Torrelapaja: a casa de Mosén Jaime,” y que después acordó y le pareció mejor de ir a Tordesalas, a casa de Pero López, y que como el dicho Pero López era dezmero y tenía muchas guardas que le verían entrar y le preguntarían que donde iba o venía, como quiera que este confesante le había dicho que le parecía bien que se fuese allí, y él le aconsejaba lo que debiese hacer,

Father decides to go to Portugal
y que el dicho bachiller estaba puesto en perplejidad si se iría a Portugal o a Francia, y acordó de irse a Portugal por irse por las casas de las hermanas de su mujer, que la una vive en Peñaranda y la otra en Roa, y por casa de una hermana suya que tiene en Castromorcho, y tomó por acuerdo de irse a Bion porque era camino derecho a casa de un Benito de las Heras, su amigo, y que allí dijo que estaría aquella noche y otro día, que era domingo, y a la noche se iría.

Son asks about the children and worries about getting arrested
Y que ya que el dicho bachiller se quería despedirse de este confesante, este confesante le dijo “¿Y estos niños, cómo los dejáis?” y que el dicho bachiller le respondió, “Ahí queda trigo -- yo os los encomiendo por amor de dios, que si su madre saliere bien no les faltará de comer, y si mal, haga dios lo que fuere servido. Vos me habéis de dar vuestra haca.” Y que este confesante le dijo que si le daba la haca, que dirían que él le había avisado y le había dado la haca para que se fuese, y le prenderían, y que el dicho bachiller llorando dijo a este confesante “Porque sois mi hijo, por amor del servicio de dios, ¿un pobre viejo como yo, dónde tengo de ir a pie por esos caminos adelante?”

father escapes with a young son
Y que entonces este confesante le dió la haca, y que así se fue, y salió un niño con él, un
hijo suyo que se llama Diaguito, y este confesante dijo al dicho Diego, “¿Hermano, dónde le dejas?” y que el dicho niño le respondió, “Déjalo en el prado del alcaide,” y que este confesante le preguntó que qué él había dicho y que el niño le dijo, “hame dicho que para Pascua de Flores, placiendo a dios, os escribirá, ” y que le había dicho que si preguntaban por él que dijese que había dicho que iba a Reznos,5 y que esto para saron (??) su padre de deste confesante, y este confesante en lo senento (??),

Francisco arrested and questioned
y que otro día domingo llegó el dicho alguacil a la dicha villa de Deza, y a la tarde el dicho alguacil y el vicario y un Diego de Haro fueron a casa de este confesante y entraron dentro y no le hallaron allí a este confesante, y este confesante sin saber que los susodichos estaban en su casa se iba para allá y los topó, y que el dicho alguacil le preguntó que a dónde estaba su padre y que este confesante le dijo que no estaba en la villa, que creía que estaba en Reznos o en Miñana,6 y que entraron en casa deste confesante, y el dicho alguacil le tomó juramento que le dijese la verdad donde estaba el dicho su padre

Francisco betrays his father and aids the Santo Oficio
y que este confesante le dijo que para el juramento que tenía que estaba en Reznos o en Miñana y que si allí no estuviese, que allí hallarían rastro de él, y que el dicho alguacil le dejó preso en una camara y se fue él la via de Miñana, y incontinentemente este confesante habló al vicario y le dijo, “Señor, yo tengo hecho juramento y mi alma es más que mi padre ni mi madre y por descargo de mi conciencia me haga merced que busque un mensajero, que yo lo pagaré” y le señaló un amigo suyo para que fuese tras el alguacil, avisándole como se iba [su padre] huyendo y la via que llevaba, y así fue un Pedro Herrero, y que después no confiándose en esto tornó a decir al dicho vicario que buscase otro hombre, que él lo pagaría para que fuese a Miñana o a Bión tras el dicho su padre y le dijese que el dicho alguacil le andaba a buscar, que se volviese, y que si no lo quisiése hacer que lo tomase preso, y que así fue el dicho mensajero y que tornó otra vez a hablar al dicho vicario y le dijo que enviase otro mensajero por si el primero faltase al dicho alguacil para que avisase al dicho alguacil de la via que el dicho su padre llevaba porque el segundo mensajero no había de Bión.

The fiscal’s accusation charges him with advising his father to escape, which he did. The votos are light– reprimanded, 27 January 1533. Ordered to appear in Deza in his shirt without belt or cap, and pay 16 ducats for masses to be said by the Santo Oficio. 

Archive: Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca, Sección Inquisición, legajo 148, exp. 1787

Endnotes
1Villages across the border in Aragón, about 10 and 15 miles away, respectively.
Tordesalas is about 20 miles north of Deza, inside Castile but outside the Inquisition of Cuenca’s jurisdiction.

Peñaranda de Duero is 100 miles west of Deza on the way to Portugal; Roa is 25 miles beyond that, and Castromocho yet another 60 miles westward.

Place name as yet unidentified.

A village about 15 miles to the north of Deza.

Another nearby village.

Copyright © 2012 Early Modern Workshop
Trial of Gaspar de San Clemente

Proceso contra Gaspar de San Clemente

1541

Translated by Sara T Nalle, William Paterson University, USA

ADC Inq. Leg. 145, exp. 1772 Gaspar de San Clemente

Presented in Sigüenza, January 10,
1540

Gaspar de San Clemente

to me, Domingo de Arteaga,

by

Confession in Sigüenza

Gaspar de San Clemente, prisoner

[age: 38]

Most Reverend and Magnificent Lords

[First page of the confession is a preliminary statement affirming Gaspar's desire to confess and blaming his misdeeds on the devil]

Firstly, I say that often I saw and heard my parents in fear of being prisoners of the Holy Office, and my mother, who is called Isabel de la Peña, quarrelled many times with my father because they had come back from Portugal, where they had converted to Christianity, saying that every day she was going around looking for the boogeyman. I heard this more than twenty-two years ago. My mother also very much wanted to go to Portugal and see a brother she had there, who is called Gabriel de la Peña, and I think it was so she wouldn't be arrested by the Holy Office, because once I heard her say, talking while at home, that she was afraid they were going to arrest them because she had made
"desollas de carne" one Friday after they had returned from Portugal, and she regretted it.

Also, she would say to Francisco de San Clemente and her other sons that they should go see her brother in Portugal, and Francisco and Juan de San Clemente went there, and when they came back, they said that my mother's brother was a bad Jewish man who said and did Jewish things, but not saying or declaring what things.

Many times I saw how Juan de San Clemente dishonored and called my parents heretic Jews, and they were afraid of his blabbing on account of the things he said when they didn't give him what he wanted.

Also, I remember that my mother and father told me and my siblings that we should believe in the Jewish faith, that it was the good and true one, and that we would be saved in it, and they told us that we should say some prayers that did not seem to me to be Christian ones. At the time that they were doing this, my mother, Ysabel de la Peña, was ill, and I and my siblings were somewhat lukewarm, and they told us so much that they scrambled our brains, and we said, yes, we believed in it. This happened two or three times although I think that before this they had told this to my siblings, since they were older and I was young then. My siblings and I who were there at the time were Francisco, Juan, and Jerónimo de San Clemente, and María de San Clemente, wife of Francisco Jerónimo, and this could have taken place about twenty-four years ago, more or less. And I heard each one of my siblings here named say that they so believed.

Item, at the time when my mother was ill, I saw how they stewed up a pot of beef and they covered the whole top with dough, and they give it to her to eat. I saw this and ate from it, and I don't know what stew it was other than it seemed to me that it was different from the one we ate on other occasions. Before this, I saw how my mother wouldn't eat pork fat or fatty meat, only lean, and I saw my mother take the meat in her hands and say, "Get out of here, this meat is really fatty!" and then she would give it to the maids. This was when she was out of bed, because for a long time she was ill, and what I say about the stews, they were adafinas because I heard my parents call them that. By my recollection this would have been about twenty-two years ago.

Item, at my father's house I remember that when I was young I saw how certain people came inside and prayed Jewish prayers like the ones I declared above, and these people were Pedro de Carrión and Francisco López d'Escoto and Pedro de Carrión's wife, and Diego de Aguilera and Francisco d'Esguevillas, and the said Gaspar de San Clemente and Ysabel de la Peña, my parents, and Francisco de Vargas. I don't recall the prayers they said or manner of prayer. [Adds later in the interrogation of Feb. 3 that this happened two or three times in the kitchen, 25 or 26 years ago. Gaspar names many other peopleB his brothers, parents, etc. "Each time this took place my father and the oldest of the people there said certain prayers and I did not understand nor do I know what they were, and they weren't in Latin or Spanish because I know how to read Latin and Spanish, and they
weren't one or the other; instead they were as different as Basque is from Spanish. When they were praying, sometimes they were sitting down and other times they were praying standing up. They would say them towards a wall, and after they had prayed, some of the people some times, other times other ones would take certain steps backwards and forwards toward the wall..." He saw his brothers Juan and Francisco do the same, but not his other siblings, and his father would preach to them the law of Moses, and the people would affirm it.]

Also, I declare that about sixteen years ago, more or less, a man from Portugal sent by my mother's brother, Gabriel de la Peña, came to my father's house, asking him that he send over there one of his sons, and he would give him his estate and he would marry him with one of his wife's neices. My father told me did I want to go, and I went to Our Lady of Guadalupe, and from there I arrived at the city of Elvas, where my uncle lived, and he welcomed me when I arrived.

The next day was Saturday and he asked me if I ate meat. I said that it wasn't the custom in my country, and my uncle's wife said to him, "Aren't you ashamed to be asking that of a youth like him?" They fed me and a man who came with me, and I was there four days.

I left for the city of Evora and Estremoz to take some letters that I carried from Bishop don Fadrique, who was the bishop of Sigüenza, and the man who had come to Sigüenza with the letter [from his uncle] went with me. While talking on the road he asked me if I liked that country and people, and I told him that it seemed wrong to me because there were and there seemed to be really evil men [bellacoBknav], and this man said to me, "Here they aren't such good Christians as over there [meaning Spain] because here they aren't punished and you're going to get married to your uncle's niece." I told him I didn't know. So we got to the city of Evora and I delivered the letters I carried like I said, and I was there on Saint John's Day (June 24) in a monastery on the outskirts of the city, and the next Saturday morning I went into the city and that man with me, and he took me to see the city. Going down a street, he went into a house and I waited for him, and said to him, "Why did you go off, what have you done?" "I came to talk here but since today is Saturday those devils didn't want to answer much less see us." The house was open and watered, and I didn't see anyone in the entryway, and I asked him, "What did you go in for?" "To deliver some letters from a New Christian that they gave me in Elvas," and then we went for a walk. On Monday we left for Elvas and on the road this man told be about wicked lifestyle of the New Christians in Portugal.

After two days we got to Elvas, and my uncle talked to me about if I wanted to marry his wife's niece, and I told him that I would go home and tell my father. Then he replied, "If you come here, I will give you everything I own, and when you come again don't bring with you that youth, who is an Old Christian, just you come by yourself." I answered that he paid attention, and he said to me, "If he does, then I'm not talking because he is a malicious
man, and I am not justifying my life to you." I told him, "What do you have to justify to me if one had to?" and he, "If I should want to go to Castile, I would go," and I said, "Why don't you dare?" and he said because of the Inquisition, which arrested them and took away their property, and I asked who doesn't do it so that he won't be arrested, and he said to this, "Over there there are great persecution." I told him, "I say that although there is persecution, it's better to be there and be Christian and not to say that." To this my uncle replied, "Go with God and leave me, because I must die in the faith I was born in, and I too will be saved like you in yours, since you're a Christian." Then he told me to tell my father that he asked him to send him his answer if I had to marry his niece or not, and while talking then he told me that if I wasn't such a kid that he would tell me a little to say to my father. I said, "What did you want [to say]?" and then he told me that the Messiah they waited for had not yet come and they awaited him every day.

This upset me so much that the next day I left for Medina del Campo where I had to buy merchandise for my father, and since I had come by way of Our Lady of Guadalupe, I got the idea that I would not marry my uncle's niece because I had the desire not to, for which I give thanks to Jesus Christ Our Lord. When I got back to Sigüenza, my father welcomed me, and a day or so later he asked me if I had liked my uncle's wife's niece, and I told him to leave me alone, they could go to Hell, and I wouldn't marry her because they were evil men. With that, my father shut up. At this time, Nuño Vaez, the castle warden of Pelegrina, was staying at my father's house, and I gave him some letters I had for him, and he asked me what I thought, and I told him what was going on and how they were bad people and not for anything in the world would I go there nor marry.

After that, my father asked me again what my uncle had said to me, and I told him what I stated and declared above, and saw how my father rejoiced in the words I told him my uncle had said, and he asked me to go over there to marry.

Also I say that while I was in Portugal in the city of Elvas, I heard my uncle say that he rarely sent for meat from the butcher's shop, and I asked him what did he eat, and he said that he ate chicken, and when he ate beef, sometimes to avoid going to the butcher, he had it slaughtered at home by a New Christian who did it the way the Jews used to slaughter. While talking about other things, I left the conversation and went for a walk through the city and when I got back to the house, I found there a man with whom my uncle was talking, and as I came in the man left, and I asked my uncle, "Who was that?" and my uncle told me that he was a New Christian by name of Moscoso, who sometimes slaughtered the meat that he was going to eat, and I told him, "I've never heard of such a thing in my life!" and the conversation stopped because I didn't want to say anything more to him. This took place two days before I left his house for Castile.
Proceso contra Gaspar de San Clemente
Trial of Gaspar de San Clemente
1541

Prepared by Sara T Nalle, William Paterson University, USA

ADC Inq. Leg. 145, exp. 1772 Gaspar de San Clemente, vecino de Sigüenza. (1540)

presentada en Sigüenza a diez días del mes de enero Gaspar de San Clemente
de mil y quinientos y cuarenta años ante mí Confesión en Sigüenza
Domingo de Arteaga, por el dicho
Gaspar de San Clemente, preso
[age: 38]
+

Muy Reverendos y Magníficos Señores

[first page of the confession is a preliminary statement affirming Gaspar’s desire to
confess and blaming his misdeeds on the devil]

Primeramente digo que muchas veces ví y oí a mis padres tener temor de ser presos por el Santo Oficio y mi madre, que se llama Ysabel de la Peña, reñía muchas veces con el dicho mi padre porque se habían venido de Portugal donde se volvieron cristianos, diciendo que acá andaba cada día catalcoco, y esto oí habrá más de veinteidos años, y así mismo la dicha mi madre tenía gran deseo de se ir a Portugal y ver a un hermano suyo que allá tenía, que se llama Gabriel de la Peña, y creo que era por no ser presa por el Santo Oficio porque una vez le oí decir estando hablando en casa que tenía temor que los habían de prender porque había hecho desollas de carne un viernes luego como vinieron de Portugal, y que tenía pena de ello.

Y así mismo decía a Francisco de San Clemente y a los otros sus hijos que fuesen a ver al dicho su hermano a Portugal, y fueron allá el dicho Francisco de San Clemente y Juan de San Clemente [Gaspar’s brothers] y de que vinieron, dijeron del dicho su hermano de mí
madre como era un mal hombre judío que decía y hacía cosas de judíos, y no diciendo ni declarando qué cosas.

Y ví cómo muchas veces el dicho Juan de San Clemente deshonraba y llamaba de judíos herejes a mis padres y le habían miedo a su lengua de las cosas que decía cuando no le daban lo que quería.

Item digo que me acuerdo que mi madre y padre nos decían a mí y a mis hermanos que creyesemos en la ley de los judíos, que aquella era la buena y verdadera y que nos salvaríamos en ella, y decían que rezasemos oraciones, que no me parecieron de cristianos, y al tiempo que esto hacían era estando mala la dicha mi madre, que se llamaba Ysabel de la Peña, y yo y mis hermanos estuvimos algo tibios y tanto nos dijeron que nos volcaron nuestro seso, y dijimos que sí creíamos en ella, y esto fue dos o tres veces aunque creo que antes de esto a mis hermanos, como eran mayores, lo habían dicho porque yo era pequeño entonces y los hermanos que allí nos hallamos éramos Francisco y Juan y Gerónimo de San Clemente, y María de San Clemente, mujer de Francisco Gerónimo, y esto podrá haber que pasó hasta veinteicuatro años poco más o menos. Y a cada uno de los dichos mis hermanos que en este capítulo tengo nombrados les oí decir que así lo creyían.

Item digo que al tiempo que mi madre estaba mala que ví como guizaban una olla con carnero y la atapaban con masa toda la boca y le daban de comer de ella y lo ví y comí de ella y que no sé qué guisado era más de que me parece que era diferente de el que comíamos otras veces, y antes de esto ví como la dicha mi madre no comía tocino ni carnegorda sino magra y que ví a la dicha mi madre tomar la carne en las manos y decía, “¡Quita allá, qué gorda es esa carne!” y así la daba a las mozas, y esto era estando levantada de la cama, porque mucho tiempo estuvo enferma, y lo que digo de las ollas, eran adafinas porque así lo oí a mis padres, y que esto habrá que pasó según mi memoria veinteidos años poco más o menos.

Item digo que en casa del dicho mi padre se me acuerda que ví siendo pequeño como entraron ciertas personas y rezaron oraciones de judíos como las que de suso tengo declaradas, que eran las personas Pedro de Carrión y Francisco López d’Escoto y su mujer de Pedro de Carrión y Diego de Aguilera y Francisco d’Esguevillas y los dichos Gaspar San Clemente y Ysabel de la Peña sus padres, y Francisco de Vargas, y de las oraciones que rezaban y de la manera del rezar no se me acuerda. [Adds later in the interrogation of Feb. 3 that this happened 25 or 26 years ago 2 or 3 times, in the kitchen. Gaspar names many other people—his brothers, parents, etc. “Cada una de las dichas veces el dicho su padre y las más antiguas de las dichas personas rezaron ciertas cosas que este confesante no entendió ni sabe lo que se eran, y que no eran de latín ni de romance porque este confesante sabe leer el latín y el romance y no era de lo uno ni de lo otro sino tan diferente cuanto es lo vizcaíno de lo castellano, y que cuando así lo rezaron
estaban algunas veces asentados y otras en pie y rezándolo. Lo decían hacia una pared y después que lo habían rezado, algunas de las dichas personas unas veces los unos, otras veces los otros daban ciertos pasos hacia atrás y hacia adelante hacia la dicha pared..."

he saw his brothers Juan and Francisco do the same, but not his other siblings, and his father would preach to them the law of Moses, and the people would affirm it.]

Marriage arranged

Item digo que puede haber hasta dieciseis años poco más o menos que vino a casa de mi padre un hombre de Portugal que lo enviaba Gabriel de la Peña, hermano de mi madre, rogándole que enviase allá un hijo suyo y que le daría su hacienda y lo casaría con una sobrina de su mujer, y el dicho mi padre me dijo a mí si quería ir y yo fue [sic] a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe y desde allí me llegué a la ciudad de Elvas adonde vivía el dicho mi tío y de que llegué me hizo buen recibo.

Fasting and meat

Y otro día era sábado y preguntóme si comía carne. Yo dije que no se usaba en mi tierra y la mujer del dicho mi tío le dijo, “¿No habéis vergüenza a un mozo como ése preguntar eso?” y así me dieron a comer por sí a mí y a un hombre que iba conmigo, y estuve allí cuatro días

New Christians in Portugal

Y me partí para Evora ciudad y a Estremoz a llevar unas cartas que llevaba del obispo don Fadrique obispo que era de Sigüenza, y se fue conmigo el hombre que había venido a Sigüenza con la carta. Y en camino hablando me preguntó que si me contentaba la tierra y gente y yo le dije que me parecía mal porque eran y parecían grandes bellacos, y este hombre me dijo, “Acá no son tan buenos cristianos como allá, porque acá no los castigan y vos casaroseis con su sobrina de vuestro tío,” y yo le dije que no sabía. Y así llegamos a Evora ciudad y dí unas cartas que llevaba como he dicho y estuve allí día de San Juan [June 24] en un monasterio fuera de la ciudad, y otro día de mañana sábado fue [sic] a la dicha ciudad y aquel hombre comigo, y me llevó a mostrar la ciudad, y pasando por una calle entró en una casa y yo le esperé y le dije, “¿A qué salió, qué habéis hecho?” “vine hablar aquí y como es hoy sábado estos diablos no querían responder ni menos aún vernos,” y estaba la casa abierta y regada y no ví gente en el portal y le dije, “¿A qué entrastes?” “-- a dar unas cartas de un cristiano nuevo que me dieron en Elvas” y así luego nos fuimos [sic] a pasear, y el lunes partimos para Elvas y en el camino me decía este hombre el mal vivir que hacían en Portugal los cristianos nuevos, y

Marriage proposal

llegados a Elvas a cabo de dos días me habló el dicho mi tío si me quería casar con la sobrina de su mujer, y yo le dije que iría a mi tierra y lo diría a mi padre, y entonces me respondió, “Si acá os venís yo os daré cuanto tengo, y

Suspicion and anger against Old Christians; fear of the Inquisition
cuando vengáis no traigáis con vos ese mozo, que es cristiano viejo, sino veníos solo” y yo le respondí que hacía al caso y él me dijo, “Si hace, no hablo porque es hombre malicioso, y no os doy cuenta de mi vida” y yo le dije, “¿Qué cuenta me ha de dar si hay que dar cuenta?” [él dijo] que “si yo osase ir a Castilla yo iría,” y dije que, “¿Por qué no osaba?” y dijo que por la Inquisición, que los prendían y les tomaban las haciendas, y yo le dije a quien no hace porque no le prendan, y a esto me dijo, “Grandes persecuciones hay allá,” y yo le dije, “Yo digo que aunque haya persecuciones, que es mejor estar allá y ser cristianos y no decir eso” y

His uncle professes his faith
a esto me respondió, “Anda con dios y déjame, que en la ley que nací tengo de morir, que también me salvaré como vos en la vuestra, que sois cristiano.” Y así me dijo que dijese a mi padre como le rogaba que le enviase luego la respuesta si me había de casar con su sobrina o no, y me dijo así hablando que si no fuera yo tan mozo que me dijera un poco que dijese a mi padre. Yo le dije, “¿Qué quería?” y entonces me dijo que el Mesías que esperaban no era venido y que cada día lo esperaban y

Gaspar shocked and cuts off contact
a esto estuve tan turbado que luego otro día me partí para Medina del Campo donde había de comprar mercadería para mi padre, y como yo había venido por Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, inspiró en mí a que no me desposase con la dicha su sobrina porque yo lo llevaba en voluntad de lo cual doy gracias a Nuestro Señor Jesu Christo. Y así venido a Sigüenza el dicho mi padre me recibió bien, y luego a otro día me preguntó que si me había contentado la sobrina de su mujer de mi tío, y yo le dije que me dejase, que los daba al diablo, que no me casaría con ella, que eran malos hombres. Y entonces calló el dicho mi padre. Y a esta sazón posaba en casa del dicho mi padre Nuño Vaez, alcaide que era de Pelegrina,110 y le dí cartas que traía y me dijo, “¿Qué me parecía?” al cual le dije lo que pasaba y como era mala gente y que por cuanto hay en el mundo no iría allá, ni me casaría.

And discovers that his father is still secretly Jewish.
Y después el dicho mi padre me tornó a interrogar qué me había dicho mi tío, y yo le dije lo que arriba tengo dicho y declarado y conocí que el dicho mi padre se había holgado de las palabras que le dije que decía el dicho mi tío y me rogaba que me fuese a casar allá.

Uncle’s attempts to keep kosher
Yten digo que así mismo le ói decir al dicho mi tío estando en Portugal en la dicha ciudad de Elvas como pocas veces enviaba por carne a la carnecería y yo le pregunté que qué comía y él me dijo que comía pollos y que cuando comía carnero algunas veces lo hacía matar en su casa por no ir a la carnecería, que se lo mataba un cristiano nuevo al modo que los judíos lo solían matar, y estando hablando sobre otras cosas dejamos la plática y me fue [sic] a pasear por la ciudad y de que volví a la dicha casa, hallé en ella a
un hombre con quien estaba hablando el dicho mi tío y como yo entré se fue el dicho
hombre y yo pregunté al dicho mi tío, “¿Qué, quién era aquel?” y el dicho mi tío me
respondió que era un cristiano nuevo que se llama Moscoso, el cual le mataba la carne
que él había de comer algunas veces, y yo le dije, “Nunca tal oí en mi vida” y así cesó la
platica que no conté de le decir más y esto fue dos días antes que me partiese de su casa
para Castilla.

Defends carrying weapons and riding horseback against Inquisitorial prohibition
Yten digo que después de la determinación de la causa de mi padre como es notorio y
Vuestras Reverencias lo saben y es notorio las largas y grandes enemistades que yo he
tenido y al presente tenía en la ciudad de Sigüenza sobre la muerte de Cristobal de San
Clemente mi hermano, traje armas para defensa de mi persona en la dicha ciudad de
Sigüenza y fuera de ella y en otras partes donde andaba entendiendo en mis negocios sin
tener habilitación del Señor Inquisidor General, y esto fue por espacio de mes y medio
porque fue desde 25 de febrero del año de 1527, que la causa del dicho mi padre se
determinó hasta diez de abril siguiente que hube habilitación y también algunas veces
andando caminos anduve en caballo.

In the audience, he adds that “también vió que los dichos su padre y madre les
doctrinaban y enseñaban que se vistiesen camisas limpias los sábados y según algunas
veces les decían a este confesante y a los dichos sus hermanos que se las vistiesen por
honra y guarda de los dichos sábados.”

Archive: Archivo Diocesano de Cuenca, Inquisición, leg. 145, exp. 1772

Endnotes
1Additional information in this last sentence appears to be prompted.
2Adafina was the word used for sabbath stew. David M. Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson
have collected and adapted many examples from Inquisition trials for their cookbook, A
Drizzle of Honey, The Lives and Recipes of Spain’s Secret Jews (New York: St. Martin’s
Press, 1999) but record no reference to bread dough being used to cover the stew pot.
3I.e., shuckling, called “sabadeando” in Spanish.
4A famous shrine at the height of its popularity, located in Extremadura, not far off the
road to Portugal.
5Elvas is the first city one comes to on entering Portugal from Badajoz, Spain. On the
same road, travelling towards Lisbon, next are Estremoz and then Evora.
6For Christians, Saturdays were a meatless fasting day.
7Fadrique de Portugal Noreña, bishop of Sigüenza from 20 June 1519 to 23 February
1530.
8Seems to be a variation of “hacer caso” (pay attention).
9Medina del Campo, near Valladolid, was Castile’s main commercial center and host to an annual fair.
10The Castle of Pelegrina, owned by the Bishop of Sigüenza, was about 5 miles south of the city of Sigüenza.

Copyright © 2012 Early Modern Workshop