Dear REMS Colleagues,

Thank you for this opportunity to share my work with you!

This WIP is a draft of an article that I would like to submit to the Renaissance Quarterly, and I’d like to know whether you think the RQ is an ideal place to submit this to.

I am also particularly interested in hearing your feedback on how clearly I have presented the thread of my argument throughout the paper and where you think it can be tightened.

In addition, one of my advisers is pushing me to make the introduction shorter. However, how to do that and still properly set up the paper has so far eluded me. So I’d be interested in hearing other voices on that matter and any suggestions for what can be cut out.

And of course, I look forward to hearing any other feedback that you might have, both in terms of the content and writing.

Looking forward to our discussion!

Best,

Mayer
Inquisitorial Empiricism and Biographical Mentalities in Counter-Reformation Spain

Hispanist scholarship often emphasizes the primacy of ‘blood purity’ and ‘lineage’ in shaping social identities in the Iberian world. As David Nirenberg has shown, these social constructs became increasingly prominent within Spanish discourse in the aftermath of the mass conversions of Jews to Christianity in 1391 and onward. Faced with a preponderance of shifting identities, Spanish society began labeling formerly Jewish converts and their descendants as ‘New Christians’ to distinguish them from ‘Old Christians.’ In the process, Nirenberg argues, fifteenth-century Iberians developed a broader “genealogical mentality” that classified all people based on their biological origins and allowed one to treat them accordingly. Tensions between Old and New Christians rose gradually over the course of the fifteenth century. By 1449, the city of Toledo instituted the first ‘blood purity statutes’ that legally excluded New Christians and their descendants from holding public office.¹ This genealogical framework similarly undergirded the founding of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478 and its ensuing focus on prosecuting Jewish converts to Christianity.²

Historians of the early modern period have further traced the longevity and evolution of this genealogical mentality. The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century proliferation of blood purity statutes has been well documented.³ We also know that the ranks of hidalgos, or landed nobility,

² Royal proclamations about the need for instituting the Inquisition and the regulations issued by the notorious Juan de Torquemada in 1480s contain explicit references to conversos and Judaizers, see Copilacion de las instrucciones del Oficio de la santa Inquisicion (Granada, 1537). See as well J.P. Dedieu’s statistical analysis in, “Los cuatro tiempos de la Inquisición,” in Bartolome Bennasar ed., Inquisición española: poder político y control social (Barcelona: Crítica, 1981) 15-38.
were greatly expanded during this time, thereby reinforcing the value of pure blood lines.\textsuperscript{4} Scholars have also shown how the construct of blood purity was transformed to discriminate against Muslim converts on the Iberian peninsula, and helped create a trans-Atlantic “racially tinged” bodily discourse of difference that justified African slavery and the segregation of \textit{españoles} and \textit{indios} and evolved in eighteenth-century New Spain into a social hierarchy that is often called the ‘\textit{sistema de castas}’.\textsuperscript{5}

In this paper, I challenge the extent to which this bodily-oriented and biologically-determinative genealogical discourse shaped Iberian society in the early modern period. My goal is not to question the pervasiveness of blood-based discrimination during the early modern period nor to negate the broader socio-cultural import of its underlying genealogical mentality.\textsuperscript{6} Rather, I suggest that this grand narrative conceals competing early modern discourses and mentalities that ultimately served to undermine the primacy of this ‘genealogical’ lens through which Iberians are said to have primarily understood the social makeup of the Iberian world.\textsuperscript{7} By examining changes instituted over the course of the sixteenth century to the opening phase of the Spanish Inquisitorial trial, I will show how, in their attempts to isolate the root causes of Spaniards’ heresy and to identify how best these heretics could be disciplined, Inquisitors developed what we might call a ‘biographical mentality.’\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7} Only recently have scholars begun exploring such angles of research. See, for example, Christina Lee’s \textit{The Anxiety of Sameness in Early Modern Spain} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).
\textsuperscript{10} Throughout this paper the terms ‘biography’ and ‘biographical’ refer to the attempt to explain how and why an individual’s life developed the way it did. This definition draws on scholarship that views biography not merely as the narration of the particulars of a subject’s life, but rather, as an interpretive tool of analysis and a critical method
the genesis of this biographical mentality, this paper engages two fields of research that do not typically intersect with each other: the history of knowledge and the history of the counter-Reformation in Spain.

Scholars working on the history of Iberian science have highlighted how, in the sixteenth century, a variety of new empirical practices emerged out of a Spanish imperial and mercantilist trans-Atlantic discourse. However, in emphasizing changes in scientific modes of knowledge, scholars have largely ignored the Inquisition’s contributions to these epistemological developments. Thus, in the first part of this paper, I show how in the early decades of the sixteenth century Inquisitors began interrogating suspects before the start of the trial in order to elicit their confessions and to ask them questions about themselves and about their alleged crimes. In line with Antonio Barrera-Osorio’s conception of sixteenth-century empiricism, I argue that these interrogations constituted an empirical knowledge practice by privileging suspects’ personal first-hand accounts of their experiences and actions that they presented directly to Inquisitors over previously gathered third-party testimony. We will also see how the Suprema’s attempted to regulate these interrogations and the kind of information gathered by individual Inquisitors and how it sought to ensure that these pre-trial interrogations would yield unmediated first-hand knowledge. This culminated with the Suprema crafting in 1568 a systematic seven-part questionnaire that all Inquisitors were required to employ when questioning suspects at the onset of their trials. Sent across the empire to all Inquisitorial tribunals and subsequently employed in tens of thousands of trials in the ensuing two-and-a-half

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centuries, this questionnaire played a previously unrecognized role in the dissemination of
tempirical practices within Spanish governance and across the empire.

In the second part of the paper, I show how Inquisitors seized on the transformation of
the Inquisitorial suspect into an informant to explore different modalities for sizing up heretics
and a range of possible root causes for heresy over the course of the sixteenth century. Having
first focused primarily on extracting confessions, in the 1510s Inquisitors began using this space
to inquire extensively about a suspect’s genealogy. Then, from around the 1540s onward,
Inquisitors began adding questions that pertained to the suspect’s own individualized life
experiences. This growing biographical curiosity in the context of the prosecuting heresy also
constituted a move away from the primacy of biological determinism epitomized by the
construct of ‘blood purity,’ and an early embrace of the sort of individuation and biographical
determinism that Foucault and others point to as one of the hallmarks of modern subjectivity.\textsuperscript{12}
Through this articulation of a new biographical human subject, ‘genealogy’ became only one
factor among others that Inquisitors’ took into account in their assessments of suspected heretics
and their presumptions about the root causes for heresy.\textsuperscript{13}

I argue that Inquisitors’ growing emphasis on ‘biographical’ questioning stemmed from a
slew of symbolically potent challenges to Spain’s self-image as a pure Catholic Kingdom. From


\textsuperscript{13} Cf. Irene Silverblatt’s depiction of these interrogations as tools for turning people into “statistics” (Silverblatt, \textit{Modern Inquisitions}, 37). I am also departing a body of scholarship that has tended to emphasize the auto-
the 1520s onward, and in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, Inquisitors had been continuously identifying pockets of non-Judaic and non-Muslim heresies, such as *Alumbradismo* and Lutheranism, while the prosecution of Old Christians constantly increased and that of suspected Judaizers declined. Consequently, the old genealogical reasoning that contrasted the heretical tendencies of New Christians caused by their ‘damaged blood’ to the purity of faith of pure-blooded Old Christians failed to comprehensively account for the alarming spread of heresy and religious dissidence across Europe and even within Iberian society. Thus, by gathering information about suspected heretic’s biography and their individualized life experiences, Inquisitors sought to develop a parallel biographical discourse that attributed the cause of heresy to accidental factors. In this way, Inquisitors utilized their empirical skills to help preserve the image of a thoroughly Catholic Spain during the counter-Reformation—thereby contributing to general confessionalization of Early Modern Europe.

By tracing the emergence of biographical reasoning within early modern Iberian epistemologies, this essay provides a corrective to the existing scholarship on early modern Iberian identities. For some time now, scholars have amassed evidence showing inconsistencies between individuals’ purported genealogy or ethnicity and their social and legal identities across the Iberian world. However, the tendency thus far, has been to attribute such discrepancies to the creation of what following Maria Elena Martinez we might generally call “genealogical

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15 There is relatively little scholarship on the process of confessionalization within the Iberian world. However, Allyson M. Poska has convincingly argued that Spain still underwent a process of confessionalization that paralleled the processes unfolding in Northern Europe. See her “Confessionalization and Social Discipline in Early Modern Spain,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 94 (2003): 308-319.
16 A recent retrospective on this burgeoning field of research along with exemplary case studies can be found in O’Hara, Matthew D., and Andrew B. Fisher, eds. *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 2009).
fictions.”¹⁷ Scholars have also used the concept of habitus to explain how a bodily oriented discourse could refract and subsume distinctions that were in fact rooted in socio-cultural practices – such as dress, language, and food ways – or behavioral categories – such as comportment, “honor,” and “calidad” – or geo-cultural categories, such as “Portuguese,” “African,” and “Indio.”¹⁸

In contrast, by tracing the evolution of Inquisitorial procedure, I argue that by the mid-sixteenth century Iberians had developed a growing sense that differentiated socio-cultural experiences could be determinative of people’s character and predilections. I therefore suggest that inconsistencies surrounding social identity in Iberia stemmed from the growing challenges posed by broad historical developments to the primacy of blood purity and other such bodily discourses and their implied biological determinism as an explanatory tool. Thus, when we encounter historical evidence for non-bodily characteristics being used in early modern descriptions of Iberian subjects, we should resist the urge to subsume these within a bodily discourse. Rather, we should see these as instances in which competing non-biological discourses prevailed over the putative primacy of genealogy.

**Methodological Considerations**

Making explicit claims about the significance of changes in Inquisitorial procedure from a broader social and cultural perspective is not without its challenges. The scarcity of sources that directly deal with the rationales behind Spanish Inquisitorial procedure can often make

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¹⁷ Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*.

engaging in anything beyond a surface-level analysis of Inquisitors’ reasoning seem far too speculative and conjectural. Furthermore, most of the sources that do survive tend to be the regulations issued from on high by the Suprema, which raises questions as to how representative they are of the practicing Inquisitors’ approach to their craft. I address these issues by employing a multi-pronged theoretical approach that allows me to meaningfully interpret the available evidence.

My point of departure is that regardless of whether the Inquisition is best conceived of as a court of law, a political institution, a body engaged in social discipline, or a combination thereof, these legal, political, and social endeavors would have all been predicated on the constant production of knowledge. Consequently, I analyze changes in Inquisitorial procedure within an epistemological framework. In adopting this standpoint, I take seriously Inquisitors’ oft-repeated claims to be seeking only to uncover the ‘truth,’ which will allow me to engage questions that historians have all too often ignored, namely: how did the Inquisition determine when they “knew” true knowledge? What constituted “true” knowledge for Inquisitors and did Inquisitors’ preferred ways of knowing change over time?

Second, my goal is not merely to account for the way in which inquisitio was practiced, but to discover the cultural structures and mentalities that informed changes to those practices, and in turn, how these new knowledge practices influenced Iberian culture and society. And in this regard, irrespective of whether all Inquisitors chose to follow them, the regulations, communiques, and manuals issued by the Suprema and the ideas that they conveyed circulated

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20 As Kimberly Lynn points out, while there has been much scholarly interest the last several decades in the history of the Inquisition as an institution and the history of its victims, few studies have focused on Inquisitors themselves; see Lynn, Kimberly, *Between Court and Confessional* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 2.

21 Or what is often called the history of mentalities.
widely across the tribunals, thereby playing a critical role in crystalizing and reshaping
Inquisitorial mentalities. Consequently, throughout this study I treat these documents as
historical sources that are illustrative of changes to those mentalities.

Finally, I supplement this official material with a previously unexamined private
Inquisitorial manual preserved in the Archivo Historico Nacional in Madrid. Written ca. 1562
by Diego Gonzalez, an Inquisitor active in Valladolid from 1568-1574, this small tract contains
Gonzalez’ reflections on proper Inquisitorial procedure, many of which are based on his own
experiences. This manuscript gives us unique insight into how a practicing Inquisitor was
thinking about his craft and allows us to better gauge how other practicing Inquisitors would
have responded to the Suprema insistence that they adopt empirical practices. And as we will,
see, Gonzalez’ manuscript manual captures the growing tensions between a deeply entrenched
genealogical mentality and an emergent biographical approach.

**Inquisitors as Empiricists**

The opening phase of the Spanish Inquisitorial trial is an ideal place to start our inquiry
into how Inquisitorial knowledge practices changed over the course of the sixteenth century,
because it quickly departed from standard Iberian juridical practices. Within late-medieval
Iberian juridical practice, trials typically began with the *acusación*, whereby the prosecutor
formally presented the charges to the defendant and the judges. And it was to these formal
charges that the suspect was expected to respond, either by refuting them or confessing his or her

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22 Physical copies of these instructions were circulated across the tribunals, while Inquisitorial regulations required
that these instructions be read ceremoniously once a year. <INSERT CITATION>.
23 Archivo Historico Nacional – Madrid (henceforth AHN), Inquisición, Libro 1267, fols. 1-7. An inscription on the
top left of the first folio reads “Prim’ quaderno del dr. Portocarrero,” suggesting that it is the ‘missing’ first volume
of Juan Dioniso Portocarrero’s 1624 *recopilacion* of Inquisitorial regulations and related documents; See Miguel
Aviles and José Martinez Millan, “El Archivo del Consejo de la Inquisición: Aportaciones para una Historia de los
Surviving trial records from the earliest period of Spanish Inquisitorial activity suggest that Inquisitors similarly began heresy trials by having the fiscal, or prosecutor, present his accusation based on previously gathered evidence. However, ca. 1500 Inquisitors began introducing a ‘pre-accusatory’ phase to the Inquisitorial trial which was incorporated into the formal trial record. Importantly, during this pre-accusatory phase, even as they were being questioned and prompted to confess to their crimes, suspects were typically kept in the dark about the impending charges. That is, the prosecutors’ formal presentation of the charges was delayed, allowing Inquisitors to hold hearings during which they interrogated the suspect directly.

Spanish legal historians have struggled to account for the introduction of this pre-accusatory phase into the Inquisitorial trial and the tendency to conceal the impending charges while soliciting a confession from the suspect. The legal standing of this practice seems questionable, since contemporary juridical procedure did not require this, nor is there any explicit reference in the Inquisition’s regulations at this time (pre-1500) requiring this step. From a functional standpoint, this exercise also seems redundant; after all, before initiating the trial, Inquisitors were required to have already gathered sufficient proof of the crime so as to justify an indictment. Thus, the question that we will be addressing in the first part of this paper is: what

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24 Maria Paz Alonso Romero notes that criminal courts only began introducing pre-trial interrogations of suspects similar to those developed by the Inquisition in the second half of the seventeenth century. See her El Proceso Penal en Castilla: Siglos XIII-XVIII, (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1982), 209.

25 Henry Charles Lea, History of the Inquisition of Spain Vol. II (New York, MacMillan, 1922), 479; Bruno Aguilera Barchet, “La estructura del procedimiento inquisitorial: el procedimiento de la Inquisición española,” in Historia de la Inquisición en España y América, Bartolomé Escandell Bonet and Joaquín Pérez Villanueva eds., Vol. 2 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1993), 377-382. This is also the impression that one gets from the instrucciones issued in Avila in 1498 (instruccion iii) as reproduced in Copilacion de las instrucciones del Oficio de la sancta Inquisicion (Granada, 1537), fol. 11r.

did the Inquisitors seek to gain by asking suspects to confess to what they, as inquisitors, had already independently substantiated?²⁷

Scholars have long suggested that this pre-accusatory interrogation of suspects stemmed from the “sacramental” dimension of the Inquisitorial court and the Holy Office’s desire to reconcile heretics to the Church. As Enrique Gacto explains, the pre-accusatory phase would have allowed inquisitors to measure suspects’ contrition by inducing them to engage in self-directed confessions prior to their becoming privy of the charges under which they were being brought to trial.²⁸ However, this suggestive interpretation does not compellingly account for this historical change. To begin with, during this period the presumed requirement of self-directed confessions in the sacramental context is questionable. For instance, studies of sacramental confession in the Holy Roman Empire before the Reformation have shown that priests often proactively provided penitents with a written list of sins and suggestions for how to confess.²⁹ And, even if we were to accept that a sacramental mentality would engender Inquisitors’ desire for suspected heretics to engage in self-directed confessions as a means of gauging their contrition, we are not provided with an explanation for why proactive efforts to induce these confessions only developed in earnest in the sixteenth century.

I believe that evaluating this element of Inquisitorial procedure from an epistemological point of view can grant us new insights. This methodological shift is appropriate, since Spanish Inquisitorial procedure drew extensively on existing juridical frameworks that were rooted in the ancient Roman legal form of inquisitio. Briefly put, inquisitio required that authorities be

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proactive in their investigation of crimes and that the state itself function as the suing party rather than merely adjudicate between aggrieved parties. This implicated Inquisitors in the pursuit of truth, because in order to open a trial, Inquisitors needed to have sufficient proof of the crime. And it was this knowledge which in turn obligated them to proactively investigate and punish the perpetrator.\textsuperscript{30} Seen from this light, the introduction of the pre-accusatory phase gains new cogency as a means of obtaining true knowledge about the criminal and his crime. And, as I will argue below, the introduction of the pre-accusatory phase into Inquisitorial procedure stemmed from Inquisitors’ desire to question the suspect directly rather than merely rely on third-party testimony as sufficiently warranting Inquisitorial prosecution.

The emergence of this practice coincides with a larger empirical turn within the Iberian Empire. According to Antonio Barrera-Osorio, this empirical turn emerged when Spanish explorers began sending first-hand accounts about the ‘New World’ to royal officials on the Peninsula. Over the course of the sixteenth century, the Crown increasingly relied on these reports in crafting its colonial project, thereby treating these reported experiences as authoritative sources of knowledge about the natural world.\textsuperscript{34} As such, this sixteenth-century form of empiricism, which Barrera-Osorio sees as a forerunner to the scientific revolution, had some distinct features that differentiated it from modern science. Whereas modern scientific methods would ultimately emphasize the value of observation as a means of obtaining true knowledge of the world, in this earlier phase visual observation was subsumed within the broader category of “personal experience” that was deemed authoritative. The broader significance of this early form of empiricism was not necessarily its ability to yield precise and accurate knowledge, but rather,

\textsuperscript{34} Barrera-Osorio, \textit{Experiencing Nature}, passim.
that it marked a radical departure from Renaissance humanism’s pronounced reliance on classical texts as the ideal source of knowledge pertaining to the natural world.\textsuperscript{35} 

If we approach the Inquisition as a knowledge-producing entity more generally, the introduction of the pre-accusatory phase of the trial, and its evolution over the course of the sixteenth century, fits squarely into this broader embrace of empiricism. That is, in order to prosecute religious crimes, Inquisitors were engaging in the pursuit of knowledge and truth about the individuals they put on trial. By inducing suspects into confessions that would in turn justify the ensuing prosecution, Inquisitors were addressing an incipient rise in skepticism towards third-party testimony. Previously Inquisitors had relied on classical rules of evidence in order to identify suspected heretics. Having gathered such evidence, even if it was purely based on third party testimony, they proceeded to accuse suspects of their alleged crime. In contrast, from ca. 1500 onward, they created a forum through which they could extract first-hand knowledge directly from the suspect about the nature of their sins, before the onset of the trial. From a legal standpoint, this was accomplished by allowing prosecutors to include all relevant information obtained in this manner in their \textit{acusación} and thereby bolster their case from the onset.\textsuperscript{36} 

It is important to note that this empirical turn did not constitute a radical break with the previous practice. Inquisitors continued to rely on third-party testimony to issue initial arrest warrants and ultimately convict suspects who refused to confess. That is, they did not abandon existing forms of knowing; rather new and old means of discovering truth were simultaneously engaged with in a dialectical fashion. Inducing suspects into providing their own accounts of the events allowed Inquisitors to judge the veracity of third-hand accounts. However, that did not

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 1-15, 132. 
\textsuperscript{36} Valdes, Fernando, \textit{Nos don Fernando de Valdes arçobispo de Sevilla, inquisidor apostolico general} (n.p., 1561) no. 18. (hereafter Valdes).
mean that they always deemed the first-hand account to be true.\textsuperscript{37} And in a similar vein, current scholarship on sixteenth century Iberian science does not suggest that Spaniards abandoned classical learning at this time. Rather, the point is that previous modes of knowing now competed with other ascendant sources of authoritative knowledge.\textsuperscript{38}

As members of the growing class of university-trained bureaucrats and 


Inquisitors would have been privy to, and influenced by, the empirical culture that was slowly transforming Spanish governance.\textsuperscript{39} However, while these developments certainly served to reinforce Inquisitors growing embrace of empirical methods over the course of the sixteenth century, to a large extent this procedural development emerged independently. Thus, we need to recognize the distinct contribution made by Inquisitors, who were operating in a jurisprudential framework, to this burgeoning Iberian empiricism.

In part, this procedural development stemmed from broader structural changes in how Inquisitors went about gathering incriminating information at the turn of the fifteenth century. Initially (ca.1480-ca.1500), Inquisitors had gathered such knowledge by using the ‘edicto de gracia,’ or edict of grace, and a pedagogy of fear.\textsuperscript{40} Promising to be lenient with those who fully confessed their heretical past within the allotted time, while threatening to punish severely those who did not come to confess, Inquisitors managed to induce thousands of self-accusations primarily from New Christians and their descendants. As the period of grace came to a close at the turn of the century self-denunciations radically declined. Consequently, Inquisitors began

\textsuperscript{37} See for example, Valdes, no. 43.

\textsuperscript{38} For instance, between 1565-1571, Tomas Lopez Medel’s wrote a treatise on the natural world that aimed to “present the nature of the New World within the classical categorization of the elements and their properties” (\textit{Experiencing Nature}, 91). Similarly, between 1570-1577, Francisco Hernandez completed his renowned translation of Pliny in at the same time that he was writing his own ‘empirical’ natural history of New Spain; see Hernández, Francisco, and Simon Varey ed., \textit{The Mexican Treasury: The Writings of Dr. Francisco Hernández} (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), xvii.

increasingly drawing on testimony taken from those who had previously come to confess and on other third-party denunciations to initiate proceedings against those who did not come forward on their own.\textsuperscript{41}

And, it is around this time that Inquisitors began introducing a pre-accusatory phase, during which they could question suspects directly before formally pressing charges. Inquisitors’ own experiences with the vagaries of prosecuting heresy based on denunciations would have also led them to be skeptical of the reliability of third-party testimony.\textsuperscript{42} The fact that this change was seemingly not dictated from above suggests that practicing Inquisitors working in the field had become dissatisfied with simply relying on external sources when charging suspects with the crime of heresy.\textsuperscript{44}

However, while questioning the suspect directly allowed Inquisitors to gain first-hand knowledge of the crime, this method also had the potential pitfall of circumscribing the scope of inquiry. We can trace Inquisitors’ concerns with perfecting these empirical modes of inquiry by examining the instructions, manuals, and regulations issued by the Suprema during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. A recurring issue that has thus far eluded scholarly attention was the appropriateness of asking suspects \textit{preguntas particulares}, that is, questions relating to specific sins and crimes that suspects were alleged to have committed. In the material that I have examined, two distinct concerns were articulated by Inquisitors criticizing such explicit interrogation methods. As I will show below, one fear was that in prompting suspects to confess to specific sins Inquisitors would limit the potential of expanding the scope of the investigation.

\textsuperscript{42} See for instance, Kamen’s discussion of the tendency for Iberians to denounce to the Inquisition innocent people who were their enemies in order to settle social grievances (Inquisition, 227-231)

\textsuperscript{44} As of yet, scholars have not found records of any regulation requiring this.
A second concern was the risk of inducing suspects into falsely affirming whatever it was that the Inquisitors might mistakenly believe to be true.

Thus, in a carta acordada, or circular, issued to Inquisitorial tribunals across Spain in the 1540s, the Suprema sought to ensure that Inquisitors would gain unmediated access to the entire truth when questioning the suspect directly, by ruling that, “suspects should be not examined in detail but rather generally” and that when inquisitors interrogate the suspects, “they should not begin with the central issues but rather more general [questions.]” 46 The rationale provided for this ruling is that Inquisitors might be simply seeking confirmation of whatever third-hand knowledge that had previously gathered. In insisting that Inquisitors employ ‘general questions,’ the Suprema hoped that suspects would ultimately confess to sins and crimes that were previously unknown to the Inquisitors. 47

Similarly, the regulations issued by the Inquisitor General Fernando Valdes in 1561 insisted that during the pre-accusatory phase Inquisitors were to “question the suspect in a general sense whether they knew the cause for their imprisonment.” 48 Valdes’ regulation further sought to ensure this kind of circumspection by providing Inquisitors with a strict list of questions that they should pose to all suspects during the pre-accusatory phase. 49 In doing so, Valdes writes: “the Inquisitors are forewarned not to ask any other questions than the ones listed,” only allowing Inquisitors to pose follow-up questions in response to the suspects’ confessions. And even then, Inquisitors were to refrain from interrupting the suspects’

46 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 1254, folio 6r: “los reos no se examinen en particular sino en general… que no empiezen con lo principal sino con lo general.” This letter is undated, however it appears between letters sent in 1542 and 1549, so in all likelihood it was issued ca. 1545.
47 Ibid.
48 Valdes, no. 15: “generalmente si sabe la causa de su prisión” (emphasis added).
49 Valdes, nos. 15-16.
confessions, allowing them to “speak freely.”

Valdes’ insistence that Inquisitors stick to the questions listed in the protocol, which were in effect “preguntas generales,” and the emphasis on allowing suspects to confess without being interrupted echo the rationale given in the above cited carta acordada. The goal in questioning suspects was not merely to extract confessions confirming their guilt, but rather, to turn them into informants. It followed, then, that suspects should be allowed to speak (relatively) freely and without too much direction.

Evidently, many Inquisitors were still not abiding by regulations requiring them to use suspects as informants rather than merely pushing them to confirm what the Inquisition already suspected. By 1573, the Suprema was again warning Inquisitors that they needed to avoid “badgering” suspect with specific questions regarding their alleged crimes. These, they asserted, ultimately functioned as leading questions (“sujestion”) and were therefore excessive. Here, however the Suprema was invoking a new rationale for requiring that Inquisitors limit themselves to preguntas generales: if they were to ask directed questions, they risked tainting the very confessions that they sought to obtain. Thus, this circular reflects Inquisitors’ growing sense that they needed to employ safeguards to ensure that the confessions recorded in the trial record were solely the product of the suspect’s self-directed words. And along these lines, in this same circular, the Suprema insisted that the notaries be careful to record the Inquisitors’ questions verbatim as well as the exact words spoken by suspects’ in response, rather than merely paraphrase them.

50 Valdes, no. 15: “los Inquisidores [tengan] mucho aviso de no preguntar fuera de lo indicado, si no fueren cosas que el reo de occasion por su confession, y si fuere confessando dexenle dezir libremente sin ataxarle, no siendo cosas impertinentes las que dixere.”

51 AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 497, fol. 149r-150r: “se le hacen preguntas y repreguntas muy impertinentes a manera de sujestion, que siendo asi parece grave exceso…. Que de aqui en adelante en los exámenes que se hiicieren a los reos el Inquisidor pregunte el preso y el notario…”
Only further analysis of surviving trial records from this period can allow us to ascertain the extent to which individual Inquisitors and notaries complied with these demands. The need to repeatedly discipline Inquisitors and insist that they employ proper modes of questioning suggests that these empirical modalities were not fully embraced by all the officials populating the various Inquisitorial tribunals at this time. Nonetheless, the fact that the Suprema continued to demand the unmediated interrogation of suspects, going so far as introducing procedural safeguards to promote such practices, is evidence of the rising value placed on this form of empiricism by the higher echelons of the Inquisitorial bureaucracy. Furthermore, many Inquisitors would have happily obliged. After all, the Suprema’s warnings and exhortations would have resonated with many of their own experiences.

Such was the case with an Inquisitor who wrote down his reflections on Inquisitorial procedure in the form of a brief manual. To the best of my knowledge, this manual survives in a single copy preserved in the Archivo Historico Nacional in Madrid. While there is no title page preceding this manuscript manual and no explicit mention is made of the author, based on the references made throughout the document I have identified the author as Diego Gonzalez, an Inquisitor in Valladolid between 1558-1576, and its date of composition to ca. 1562. Written around the time that Valdes’ new instruccion was being disseminated, which Gonzalez references explicitly, this manual gives us insight into how a practicing Inquisitor might have

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52 AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 1267, fols. 1-7.
53 On fol. 2v, the author mentions describes his participation in the trials of suspected Lutherans in “esta Villa de Vallid” in 1558. In the process, but without revealing his own name, he lists the other officials who were tasked with processing these suspects among them Diego de Simancas. By comparing this list with a similar one provided by Diego de Simancas describing these same events (quoted in Llorente, “Las relaciones,” fn. 34) we can conclude that our author is Diego Gonzalez, since his name is the only one that appears in Simancas’ list that does not appear in our anonymous manual. For a brief sketch of Gonzalez profesional activities, see Henar Pizarro Llorente, “Las relaciones de patronazgo a través de los inquisidores de Valladolid durante el siglo XVI,” in José Martínez Millán ed., Instituciones y élites de poder en la monarquía hispana durante el siglo XVI (Madrid: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1992), 223-252.
made sense of those regulations. It is also worth noting that throughout the manual Gonzalez’ makes empirical claims to strengthen his authority by drawing on his own previous experiences as an Inquisitor when articulating what he deems to be the best practices for Inquisitors.

A recurring concern for Gonzalez is that Inquisitors ought to refrain from engaging in suggestive lines of questioning when interrogating suspects and that they avoid prematurely sharing any incriminating information with the suspect. Thus, Gonzalez opens up his manual with the following admonition:

Inquisitors should be cautious when dealing with the prisoners such that neither their verbal or facial expressions might allow the suspects to discern anything [regarding the charges] since, in addition to ‘secrecy’ being the most important protection of the Holy Office’s work, the prisoners’ goal is to trick the Inquisitors so that they can remain in their errors and heresy by trying to discover what it is that would satisfy the Inquisitors, so that they can conceal any other relevant information. Here, Gonzalez’ concerns echo the Suprema’s above-referenced circular of 1542. If suspects were to know from the onset of the trial the charges that the Inquisitors sought to bring against them during the accusatory phase, they could easily confess to those things during the pre-accusatory interrogation and conceal the rest of their and their acquaintances’ misdeeds.

In shoring up this point, Gonzalez invokes his own first-hand experiences by referencing a case in which he himself, “observed a prisoner fully confess about his own

54 See for example fol. 3r: “este ano de 62 a benido una instrucion de los SSes del Consejo”; fol. 3v: “la instruccion nueva”; fol. 4v: “Oga no abenido una instruccion nueva.”
55 Fol. 1v: “La primera que los inquisidores deven estar muy recatados con los reos presos de manera q ni por palabra ni semblante de rostro y manos puedan entender cosa alguna por q de mas que el mayor caudal del Offo del Inquisición es el secreto y el disimio de los dhos presos no es otro sino engañar a los inquisidores quedarse en sus errores y heresias y probar a descubrir algo para ver si entienden que los dos inquisidores están contentos con esto para encubrir la ademas sustancia”
misdeeds, corroborating everything that was testified against him, all the while concealing and denying the crimes of others to whom he had no kinship.”56 By way of this anecdote, Gonzalez suggests that keeping suspects in the dark about Inquisitors’ suspicions up and until the accusatory phase will help Inquisitors broaden the scope of their investigation.

Later on in the manual, Gonzalez deals more generally with the ideal mode through which Inquisitors ought to interrogate suspects, writing that, “Inquisitors are forewarned not to ask the prisoners questions in particular detail regarding the crimes for which they have been imprisoned.”57 Gonzalez argues that overly directed questions are problematic because they can induce suspects into rendering false confessions.58 However, rather than merely invoke the recently issued regulations that clearly stipulated what he was advocating for, here again Gonzalez repeatedly draws on his own experiences: “[m]any times, during the audience[s]” he writes, “prisoners ask the Inquisitors what it is that they want to [know] so that they can confess to it.”59 And, Gonzalez asserts, he has seen how this often results in retracted confessions and false testimonies that incriminate those who are truly innocent or exaggerate their crimes.60

Here, then, Gonzalez articulates a second concern with some Inquisitors’ tendency to ask preguntas particulares. Much like the Suprema would admonish Inquisitors a decade later (in the above referenced circular of 1573), Gonzalez asserts that such questions are harmful to the Inquisition’s quest to discover the truth because they are prone to shape suspects’ confession and even induce them into making false statements altogether.

56 Ibid., “Yo vi a un reo decir cumplidamente de sí y satisfacer a lo indizado bastantemente y encubrir a personas con quien no tenía deudo niego.”
57 Fol. 2v: “Que los inqqres deven de estar muy advertidos q no pregunten a los presos cosa ninguna de los delitos por q están presos en particular.”
58 Ibid.: “los reos están esperando que quieren los ynqqres y finalmente dizan lo que parece quieren los inqqres.”
59 Ibid.: “esto se a visto muchas veces estando en el audiencia los presos dizan que bean los inqq lo que quieren q ellos lo diran demás”
60 Ibid.: “se a visto grandes inconvenientes de haver retratado sus confesiones…. se visto que han dicho de algunas personas que no eran culpados o si lo eran no en tanto grado”
If directed questions might influence the content of the confessions, certainly physical torture was prone to do the same. Gonzalez therefore proceeds to criticize Inquisitors who question suspects in the torture chamber about allegations for which no evidence has been gathered. After all, Gonzalez asserts, once suspects are on the rack “they will say whatever they know will relieve this physical burden.”\textsuperscript{61} Referencing Valdes’ \textit{instrucciones}, he further advocates that it is best that the “[suspect] be informed in the [courtroom] why he is being sentenced to torture,” e.g. his denial of the alleged crimes contained in the prosecutor’s \textit{acusación} and in incriminating testimony. “[B]ut on the rack,” Gonzalez concludes, “no reference should be made to these;” rather, he should simply be warned to “say the truth.”\textsuperscript{62}

Gonzalez’ concerns with the reliability of conducting interrogations under torture reflect how deeply this empirical impulse that we have been discussing was ingrained in his mind, even if his resolution seems rather feeble. After all, torture was typically Inquisitors’ last resort for suspects who refused to confess even after they were read the testimony that had been gathered against them.\textsuperscript{63} As such, most Inquisitorial torture victims likely would have remembered enough of what they were accused of before being subjected to torture such that they could simply spit it back to the Inquisitors. Nonetheless, the use of torture was firmly ensconced in contemporary legal proceedings. It was viewed as an effective investigative tool that could reveal truths that the mind refused to acknowledge by putting the body through physical ordeal through which the

\textsuperscript{61} Fol. 3r: “[para] evadir del trabajo en q están si saben que por aquello se relevarán diran cualquier cosa”

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.: “y por esta misma razón y mayor deven de estar muy recatados los jueces que a los reos no pregunten en el tormento tormento cosas ninguna mas de lo que están denunciados por que por se evadir del trabajo en q están si saven que por aquello se relevarán diran qualquier cosa sin respeto de cristianidad ni de bondad alguna. [t]ienese por mejor que puesto reo en el potro se le lea lo testificado y que no se le diga mas. [E]ste año de 62 abenido una instrucción de los SS del consejo por la q[ua]l se manda que en la sala se le haga saber por q le ponen a question del tormento y en el potro no se le diga cosa ninguna ni se le lea nada sino que diga verdad y parece esta buena orden.”

Much of this echoes Valdes, no. 49. However, it is Gonzalez who senses the paradox between seeking to gain unmediated knowledge from the suspect in first audience, and then subjecting them to torture at a later stage of the trial.

\textsuperscript{63} Peters, \textit{Inquisition}, 92.
suspect might admit these truths. As such, Gonzalez could not possibly will away the use of torture in Inquisitorial procedure, even if it flew in the face of his empirical sensibilities. All he could do, was try and justify this practice by imagining a plausible, if somewhat farfetched scenario, in which torture yielded a self-directed and somewhat conscientious choice to speak the ‘truth.’

Thus far, we have seen how over the course of the sixteenth century Spanish Inquisitors developed methods of interrogation that they thought would help them better discover the truth about suspected heretics and the nature of their crimes during the pre-accusatory phase of the trial. And while I have shown how these empirical practices were driven by, and refined through an internal jurisprudential discourse, they formed part of a general sixteenth-century turn toward empirical practices within Spanish bureaucracy. After all, the Supreme Council of the Inquisition was one of the royal councils that formed the Spanish Monarchy and the rising emphasis on empiricism would have permeated the bureaucratic culture of the time. Furthermore, the frequent movement of bureaucrats between the different royal councils meant that empirical techniques and sensibilities were easily transmitted across the Spanish Kingdom’s governing bodies.

Such was the case with Juan de Ovando, who is credited with having “established more systematic information-gathering practices” at the Council of the Indies where he served as a special inspector in 1569 and then as president of this same body between 1571-1573 and spearheaded a project to collect information about Spain’s American colonies. This project, which evolved into what has come to be known as the relaciones geograficas, has been billed as one of the pinnacles in the Spanish Crown’s institutionalization of information-gathering aimed

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at increasing imperial knowledge of the natural world. Ovando is also credited with devising questionnaires that were sent to royal officials across the American colonies in order to gather this information as early as 1569.

Historians of science view the deployment of such systematic questionnaires as an important breakthrough in Spanish empiricism because such tools helped standardize and regulate the type of information that royal informants were to provide.66 As Maria Portuondo notes, the deployment of questionnaires allowed bureaucratic administrators to achieve new levels of “comprehensiveness, commonality, and a shared standard for exposition” in their attempts to gather information about the New World.67

However, prior to his tenure in the Council of Indies, between 1566 and 1571, Ovando had been a member of the Supreme Council of the Inquisition. And, it was during this time that the Suprema was creating its first procedural manual, the Orden que comunmente se guarda en el sancto oficio, printed in 1568.68 Among these was a systematic questionnaire – which we will examine more in detail in the next section of this paper – that Inquisitors were to use when interrogating suspected heretics during the pre-accusatory phase of the trial. And in fact, Ovando appears as a signatory to the Suprema’s circular that accompanied the dissemination of the manual across the tribunals.69 Thus, it emerges that even before he embarked on the project of

66 Barrera-Osorio, Experiencing Nature, 81-100. Cf. Portuondo, Secret Science, 210-256, who notes that there is much scholarly debate as to who should be credited with the implementation of the relaciones geograficas. Nonetheless, while Portuondo primarily credits Juan Lopez de Velazco with implementing the mass collection of the relaciones geograficas, she concedes that Ovando laid the ground for Velazco’s revised project.
67 Portuondo, Secret Science, 211. This is also what distinguishes these questionnaires from the ‘question lists’ that had long been used within a juridical context. While the latter could be customized and reconfigured every time they were implemented, the former was fixed such that the same questions were employed across the board.
68 El Orden Que Comvnmente Se Gvarda En El sancto oficio dela Inquisicion, acerca del processar en las causas que en el se trata conforme a lo que esta proveydo por las instructiones antiguas y nueuas (Madrid, 1568). For this study I have examined a rare first edition housed at Harvard University’s Houghton Library (Call Number: *CC.In24S.568o). While the title page of the first edition contains no author, scholars tend to accept the subsequent attribution of original authorship to Pablo Garcia, one of the Suprema’s secretaries, which appear in a second edition issued in 1591 under the same title.
69 AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 497, fol. 106r-106v. The circular is dated August, 18, 1568.
gathering the *relaciones geográficas*, Ovando had been involved in an Inquisitorial project that employed standardized questionnaires to gather information about suspected heretics.

If we compare the length and scope of the Inquisitorial questionnaires with those subsequently disseminated by the Council of Indies, the latter dwarfed the former in terms of size and scope. The Inquisition’s questionnaire was limited to seven categories of inquiry which included approximately one hundred data points. In contrast, some of the questionnaires disseminated by the Council of Indies consisted of two hundred individual questions, while the printed questionnaire that the council disseminated in 1577 consisted of fifty questions. However, it is also worth noting that to a large extent the successive attempts to gather reports about the Americas through the dissemination of these questionnaires likely failed to widely impress upon colonial officials the need to use such empirical devices to describe the Americas. Judging by the number of responses that the Council of Indies received, it would seem that many, if not most, of the officials tasked with submitting responses to these questionnaires ignored the request completely. Furthermore, this project was relatively short lived with the last questionnaire being sent out in 1588.

In contrast, the Inquisition’s questionnaires were widely adopted by the turn of the sixteenth century and they remained a fixture of Inquisitorial procedure across the Spanish Empire for the duration of the early modern period. Consequently, they would have likely been deployed in tens of thousands of heresy trials. Finally, since these Inquisitors administered their

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70 Portuondo, *Secret Science*, 210-217
71 Approximately 200 *relaciones* have survived. However, we know that Velazco sent 600 questionnaires to be distributed in the vice-royalty of Peru alone (Portuendo, *Secret Science*, 213-14) Thus, it would seem that only a fraction of the thousands of intended recipients across the Americas chose to respond.
72 Only a fraction of the Inquisitorial records have been preserved, and the full extent of Inquisitorial prosecution is subject to extensive debate. However, Gustav Hennigsen and Jaime Contreras have catalogued at least 44,674 heresy trials between the years 1540-1700, see their “Fourty-Four Thousand Cases of the Spanish Inquisition (1540-1700): Analysis of a Historical Data Bank,” in *The Inquisition In Early Modern Europe: Studies On Sources and*
questionnaires to private individuals rather than royal officials, these questionnaires served to expose a significant part of the general Spanish populace to these new modes and tools for empirical investigation.

_From Genealogy to Biography in Counter-Reformation Spain_

We have seen thus far how the formal establishment of a pre-accusatory interrogation of suspects within Inquisitorial procedure allowed Inquisitors to convert suspected heretics into invaluable informants for the purposes of their investigations into heresy. However, over the course of the sixteenth century, the pre-accusatory phase of the trial became a developmental space in which Inquisitors developed new ways of knowing the suspect. The particular inquiries that Inquisitors pursued in these interrogations were shaped by broader conceptions of social reality and were therefore subject to change. Consequently, analyzing these changes allows us to trace significant shifts in Inquisitorial mentalities. In this section, we will explore how and why Inquisitors moved from a predominant genealogical framework to the embrace of a competing biographical model for understanding the roots of heresy.

Initially, Inquisitors seem to have focused their efforts during the pre-accusatory phase on prompting suspects to confess to their alleged crimes. However, by the second decade of the sixteenth century, Inquisitors were using the pre-accusatory phase to question suspects about their family trees. To illustrate this initial transformation of the pre-accusatory phase, I will compare two of the exemplary cases that Bruno Aguilera Barchet presents in his overview of the evolution of sixteenth century Inquisitorial procedure.\(^73\) The first case is that of Juan de Cordova, suspected of Judaizing and tried in Cordova in 1504, and the second case is that of Maria de

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\(^73\) Bruno Aguilera Barchet, “La estructura del procedimiento inquisitorial,” 334-558.

Caçalla, suspected of Lutheranism and *Alumbradismo* and tried in Toledo in 1532. These contrasting prototypes point to the gradual elaboration and affirmation of an explicit genealogical framework for understanding the causes of heresy.

The structure of the interrogation in both Juan and Maria’s cases is nearly identical and comprises three distinct stages. Inquisitors began by (1) asking the suspects to identify themselves; then, (2) they asked suspects to declare the reason for which they believe they have been arrested; and finally, the interrogations concluded when (3) the Inquisitors exhorted them to fully confess their heresy. However, significant differences are readily apparent as well. In Juan de Cordova’s trial transcript, only the suspect’s first and last names, the name of his father, and his place of residence are preserved. In contrast, in Maria de Caçalla’s case, in addition to those identifying markers, the notaries recorded her marital status and age. While these differences may seem minor, they suggest that the Inquisition had begun placing a stronger emphasis on ascertaining personal details about suspected heretics.

This tendency was further expressed in the extensive genealogical query that formed part of Maria de Caçalla’s case and was absent in the case of Juan de Cordoba. When Juan de Cordova was tried in 1504, around the time that the pre-accusatory phase was first introduced, Inquisitors seem to not have bothered inquiring about Juan’s blood origins and their broader genealogies, or if they did, they were not diligent in registering this in the trial record. Thus, having recorded the most basic identifying information about him, Juan’s Inquisitors proceeded to try and induce him into a confession. In contrast, when Maria de Caçalla was interrogated nearly three decades later, her Inquisitors prompted her to identify not only herself but also her parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings—before they proceeded to seek out her

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74 Ibid., 382; 386-389.
confession. And in the process, the notaries recorded a copious amount of details. These ranged from the relatives' places of birth and residence, to their ages and professions and whether they were still alive, to whether Maria had known them personally. Maria also noted along the way (undoubtedly in response to the Inquisitors prompting) that her parents were conversos and indicated which of her relatives had been previously condemned or reconciled by the Inquisition.

The introduction of this kind of genealogical interrogation is hard to date, and its implementation was somewhat ad-hoc.\textsuperscript{75} A survey of the surviving trial records of Judaizers prosecuted in Ciudad Real shows that these became more common by the 1510s.\textsuperscript{76} We also know that by the 1540s, at the latest, it had become part of the official policy, with the Suprema insisting that Inquisitors conduct genealogical inquiries within the pre-accusatory phase of the trial.\textsuperscript{77} It was then incorporated into the new regulations issued by Valdes in 1561, by which time it had become so common that Diego Gonzalez could assert that this was the Inquisition’s “ancient practice.”\textsuperscript{78}

As scholars have pointed out, the data that Inquisitors systematically gathered through this investigative process enabled the Inquisition to act as a clearinghouse for blood purity certificates for the duration of the early modern period.\textsuperscript{79} By introducing a thorough genealogical inquiry into the pre-accusatory phase, Inquisitors made explicit and gave probatory weight to several widespread presumptions, namely that: (1) New Christians had damaged blood; (2) they were therefore predisposed to apostatize; and (3) that their heretical tendencies could be traced inter-generationally to their descendants. The fact that Maria de Caçalla was suspected of

\textsuperscript{75} Lea, History of the Spanish Inquisition, Vol. III, 36-38.
\textsuperscript{76} See the transcripts published in Beinart, Haim. Records of the trials of the Spanish Inquisition in Ciudad Real Vols. 1-3 (Jerusalem: Israel National Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974-1981).
\textsuperscript{77} See the circular issued by the Suprema from Valladolid on October 10, 1542 in AHN, Inquisición, Libro 1254, 5r. A similar missive was issued in 1549 (see ibid., fol. 41).
\textsuperscript{78} Valdes, nos. 14-16; AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 1267, fol. 3r.
Alumbradismo, did not obviate the potential link between her alleged heresy and Jewish or Muslim blood origins. And, by introducing this genealogical inquiry into their standard procedure, Inquisitors were helping entrench a genealogical mentality within the Iberian world. For every condemned heretic who was indeed a descendant of conversos, the interrogation provided information that seemed to instantiate the connection between heresy and tainted blood origins explicit.

And yet, even as this development reflects the widespread predisposition to attribute heresy to genealogical roots, the need to make explicit what had long been popular wisdom underscores the fact that a genealogical framework for accounting for heresy was beginning to lose its explanatory power. The growing need to ask these questions suggests that it could no longer be presumed that those being arrested as suspected heretics were all of converso origins. Rather, this genealogical datum had to be ascertained and documented on an individual basis. With time, the routinization of the genealogia made Inquisitors keenly aware of the growing cases in which such negative correlators were simply not present. Such that in the long run, this investigative practice was bound to have a contradictory effect. By the second decade of the sixteenth century, Old Christians were increasingly prosecuted by the Inquisition, and by the third decade they became the majority of its victims.81 Thus, by registering suspected heretics’ genealogies, Inquisitors had inadvertently opened up a breach in the existing genealogical mentalities which had previously helped account for the persistence of heresy in the Iberian World.

It is not surprising, then, that Inquisitors began increasingly inquiring at the onset of the trial about specific details surrounding suspects’ own lives and individual experiences in the

middle decades of the sixteenth century, thereby exploring the role that other individualized life-experiences might play in promoting heresy in the Iberian world. Scholars have yet to establish the precise chronology of this development. However, current research would suggest that inquiries about suspects’ proficiency in basic Catholic rituals and their religious habits became increasingly common in the 1540s.\textsuperscript{82} We also know that Valdes included these and other personal questions in his regulations issued in 1561. These were then reorganized in a procedural manual issued by the Suprema in 1568.\textsuperscript{83}

In this last manual, which was widely used for the remainder of the Inquisitorial period, the pre-accusatory interrogation covered over 100 data points and was organized around the following themes: 1. Basic Identifying Information; 2. Genealogy; 3. Ethnic Background and Heretical History; 4. Religious Status, Knowledge, and Behaviors; 5. Educational Background; 6. Foreign Travel; 7. General Life Course. In the process, the genealogia was subsumed in what is best understood as a broad and systematic socio-cultural and biographical questionnaire that was administered orally to all suspects with notaries recording their answers in a standardized format.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{82} In his survey of the Inquisitorial tribunal in Toledo prosecution of "scandalous words," "dishonesty," and "blasphemy," JP Dedieu found that prior to 1540, the Inquisitors examined suspects’ fluency in Christian doctrine only in 3\% of cases. However, between 1540-1550 the rate rose nine-fold to 27\%; more than doubling again to 60\% between 1551-1555; and reaching 79\% between 1556-1560. By 1570, after the issuance of Valdes instruccion, suspects were questioned along these lines in more than 95\% of the trials; see JP. Dedieu and Susan Isabel Stein trans., “'Christianization’ in New Castile: Catechism, Communion, Mass, and Confirmation in the Toledo Archbishopric, 1540-1650,” in Cruz, Anne J., and Mary Elizabeth Perry, eds., Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987): 1-24. Similarly, in her survey of the surviving trials from the Cuenca Inquisition, Sara Nalle similarly notes an uptake in such questions “by the late 1540s;” see Nalle, Sara, God in La Mancha (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1992), 119.

\textsuperscript{83} El Orden Que Comvnmente Se Gvarda En El sancto oficio dela Inquisiccion (Madrid, 1568).

\textsuperscript{84} See the appendix for the original. The text of the manual suggests these groupings based on the typographical arrangement and the subsumtion of series of questions under a single prompt such as ‘preguntado,’ or ‘asked,’ and ‘declare.’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>Question or Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Identifying Information</td>
<td>What is their name, where they are from, what is their age and occupation, how long they have been under arrest?(^{85})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogy</td>
<td>They should declare their genealogy in the following manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Parents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resident of… Originally from… Occupation …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality… Alive or Deceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Paternal Grandparents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so… he should declare similar to the previous prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so his wife… idem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Maternal Grandparents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so idem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Uncles on the father’s side</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so, etc. Declaring about all of these if they’re married, and with whom, their children, their ages, their profession, and place of residence, and if they are deceased, and where they died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Uncles on the mother’s side</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so… idem like the preceding cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The suspect’s own siblings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so… idem like those above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Wife and Children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And he should confess that ‘he is married with so and so, resident of… daughter of so and so, with whom he has been married … years and has from her the following children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So and so, aged … married with so and so, and has this many children, and their names, or if they are not yet married.’(^{86})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 5v: “Como se llama, de donde es natural, que edad y oficio tiene, quanto ha que vino preso”

\(^{86}\) Ibid. 5v-6r: “Declare su genealogia en la forma siguiente… Padres… Vezino de… Natural de… Oficio… Calidad… Vivo o Defuncto… Abuelos Paternos… Abuelos Maternos… Tios hermanos de padre… Declarando de todos si son casados, y con quien, y que hijos tiened, su edad, oficio, y vecindad, y si son defunctos y donde… Tios hermanos de madre… Hermanos deste… Muger e hijos… Y que este confiesse es casado con fulana vezina de …
| Ethnic Background and Heretical History | Of what caste and ancestry were the said parents grandparents and other relatives that he has declared? And have they, or one of them, or this confessant, been imprisoned, penanced, reconciled, or condemned by the Holy Office of the Inquisition?  
87 |
| Religious Status, Knowledge, and Habits | Is the prisoner a Christian who is baptized and confirmed? Do they hear mass, confess, and take communion during the times that the Church requires? When was the last time that they confessed? With whom and where? Did they receive the Holy Sacrament?  
‘They crossed themselves, said the Pater Noster and Ave Maria, the Creed, and Salve Regina in Latin or in vernacular, well or badly said, and if they knew it or not, and the rest of Christian doctrine.’  
88 |
| Educational Profile | Do they know how to read and write, and whether they have studied a profession? They should declare where and with whom they studied how to read and write, and the same regarding who they studied a science, if they know one.  
89 |
| Foreign Travel | Have they left these kingdoms of Castile and with which persons?  
90 |
| General Life Course | What has been their life course? ‘That they were born in this or that town etc… where he was raised, where he has lived, with whom he has had business and communications.’  
91 |

The first three groupings of questions roughly correspond to what we already saw in Maria de Caçalla’s case. However, even here we can detect a significant shift. In prompting suspects to construct their family tree, the Inquisitors were asking suspects to systematically provide a biographical snapshot for each person mentioned: e.g. their place of origins, place of residence, profession, social standing, marital status, and whether they were still alive or where they had died. Only then, in a separate set of questions, did the Inquisitors inquire about

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higa de fulano, con la cual aura que se caso … años y della tiene hijos siguientes: Fulano de edad de … casado con fulana y tiene tantos hijos, y sus nombres, o si es por casar”

87 Ibid., 6r: “Preguntado de que casta y generación son los dichos sus padres abuelos y los otros transversales y colaterales que ha declarado y si ellos o alguno dellos, o este confesante ha sido preso, penitenciado, reconciliado, o condenado por el sancto officio de la Inquisicion.”

88 Ibid. 6r-6v: “Preguntado si es Christiano baptizado y confirmado y si oye missa y confiesa y comulga en los tiempos que manda la iglesia quanto ha que se confeso, y con quien, y donde, y si recibió el sanctísimo sacramento. Signose y santiguose, y dixo el Pater noster y Aue Maria, Credo, y Salve Regina, En latin o en romance, bien o mal dicho, y si lo supo o no, y lo demás de la doctrina Christiana”

89 Ibid., 6v: “Preguntado si sabe leer, y escribir, y si ha estudiado alguna facultad…. Declare donde, y con quien aprendio leer y escriuir, y lo mismo de quien oyo la sciencia si supiere alguna.”

90 Ibid.: “Preguntado si ha salido destos reynos de Castilla y con que personas.”

91 Ibid.: “Preguntado por el discurso de su vida: que nacio en tal pueblo etc., donde se ha criado, las partes donde ha residido, con quien ha tratado y comunicado.”
suspects’ ethnic background and the family’s heretical history. As such, regardless of whether the suspect was a descendant of conversos, his or her relatives' places of residence, professions, and family structure were brought into relief. This suggests that the goal of the genealogical inquiry was no longer solely a means of determining whether a suspect had impure blood. Rather, recording suspects’ family trees allowed Inquisitors to situate heretical subjects within a broader social context.

This de-emphasis on the primacy of a genealogical framework for evaluating the suspect is accompanied by a rise in biographical inquiries over the course of the next four groups of questions, which focused on the life experiences of the suspects themselves. That is, Inquisitors were no longer supposed to satisfy themselves with the basic identifying information provided at the onset of the interrogation (name, place of residence, age, and profession). Instead, they were now required to scrutinize more closely the suspect’s biography. A particular focus was placed on evaluating the degree to which suspects were Christianized. Had they been baptized and confirmed? Did they attend mass, confess, and partake of communion? How well did they know how to cross themselves and how familiar were they with Catholic prayers and doctrine? This attempt to construct the suspect’s religious profile was then followed by questions pertaining to their broader cultural profile: what was their level of education and where had they studied? Did they ever leave the Spanish Kingdom and where had they traveled? And finally, the suspect was asked to narrate their life course, whereby the Inquisitors expected them to recount everything from ‘where they were born’ to ‘where they were raised’ and to detail all ‘their places of residence.’

This questionnaire was designed to help Inquisitors inquire about suspects’ specific behaviors that served as cultural markers (e.g. sacramental confession, education, travel), but
also to systematically pay attention to social interactions that these were embedded in: to whom did the suspect confess? With whom had they studied how to read and write and under whom did they train professionally? Who did they travel with when they went abroad, whom did they encounter in those foreign places, and more generally, who were their primary social relations over the course of their lives ‘with whom they had had business and communications?’ As such, Inquisitors’ profiling of suspected heretics shifted from a genealogical model to a broader sociocultural biographical model. In the process, a suspect’s blood relatives became only one group of people, among many, that could influence and shape his or her biography.

While the emergence of this new mode of interrogation is well known to specialists, and has caught the attention of social and cultural historians, few have sought to explore the causes that led to its development.92 One exception is Sara Nalle, who has highlighted the correlation between the expanding list of personal questions from the 1540s onward and the ongoing proceedings of the Council of Trent (1545-1563). According to Nalle, Inquisitors began paying closer attention to a suspect’s broader life story in order to evaluate their level of Christianization when they internalized the pastoralism promoted by Tridentine reform. This in turn allowed Inquisitors to begin implicating themselves in counter-Reformation efforts to catechize the Spanish masses.93

However, I would also note that the Inquisitors’ turn towards biographical inquiry followed the decline in prosecution of conversos suspected of Judaizing, and the rise of prosecution of Old Christians. This sequence of events suggests an equally plausible causal link:

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as the Inquisition became primarily engaged in the prosecution of Old Christians, continuing to emphasize the biological determinism of genealogy in matters of faith was poised to backfire. If followed to its logical conclusion, a genealogical mentality would have suggested that Old Christians, like conversos, had inherited innate tendencies toward heresy. Thus, the introduction of a subset of biographical questions at the onset of heresy trials functioned not only as investigative tool but as a rhetorical device. By introducing biographical reasoning into the Inquisitorial procedure, Inquisitors could attribute the cause of heresy to incidental individualized biographical factors, as opposed to genealogy, thereby differentiating Old Christians who fell into heresy from an otherwise genealogically pure society that was pre-disposed to Catholicism.

Regardless of why Inquisitors began asking suspects biographical questions, they soon came to influence how Inquisitors evaluated the nature of suspected heretics going forward. If previously Inquisitors had tended to judge the nature of suspected heretics based on their blood origins and genealogy, now they were increasingly attuned to potential biographical causes for heresy as well. We can see a reference to this new mentality in Valdes’ 1561 instructions to the fiscal, or prosecutor. While acknowledging the fact that Inquisitors only had jurisdiction over matters of heresy, Valdes urges prosecutors to include in their accusations evidence of any other crimes committed by the suspect. Valdes’ stated reasoning is that this information would help “establish [the suspect’s] bad Christianness or way of living, such that [the judges] could make inferences regarding the matters of faith that are being considered in the trial.”

That is, inquisitors were expected to judge the heretical nature of a person and his or her actions based on

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94 Valdes, no. 18: “siendo testificado el reo de delitos de otra calidad debe el Fiscal acusarle dellos: no para que los Inquisidores le castiguen por ellos sino para agravaciones de los delitos de herejía que le ha acusado, y para que conste de su mala christandad o manera de vivir, y de allí se tome indicio en lo tocante a las cosas de la fe de que se trata.”
a more general evaluation of their good or bad religious behavior and way of living. Here in brief, we have an articulation of a biographical approach to Inquisitorial prosecution: living badly as a Christian could easily devolve into heresy and was therefore correlated with it.

This embrace of biographical thinking did not replace the deeply entrenched genealogical mentality of old. Rather these existed in tension, as illustrated in Diego Gonzalez’ manual, which was written around the same time that Valdes’ instrucción was being disseminated. On the one hand, Gonzalez affirms the importance of subjecting suspected heretics to a genealogical inquiry by arguing that it would help suspects realize that they are burdened by their “damaged blood” and help disabuse themselves of any pretenses of innocence so that they could more easily admit their misdeeds.95 Further, Gonzalez argues that establishing the suspect’s genealogy allows Inquisitors to engage in some inductive reasoning regarding the heretical nature of a suspect when a case is not proven conclusively. Those who “come from damaged blood” ought to be judged negatively, while those who descend from “Old Christians” should be judged favorably. After all, Gonzalez argues, judging the actions of people based on their parents’ goodness and the nature of their blood is “in accordance with human law and divine law and is only respectable.”96

On the other hand, Gonzalez suggests that all Spaniards qua Spaniards were highly vulnerable in matters of faith. Drawing an analogy to God having expelled Adam from paradise and then guarded its entrance with a sword bearing angel, Gonzalez praises Ferdinand and Isabel, the founders of the Inquisition, as having created “a guardian of this Roman and Apostolic

95 AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 1267, fol. 3v: “para que el reo se rinda y piense que pues deciende de sangre dañada que trae la soga arrastrando como se suele decir y q no ay por q los inquisidores se espanten ni el dho reeo se deva de maravillar.”
96 Ibid.: “haciendo algo indicios puedan presumir contra el reo que viene de sangre dañada o si viene de xpanos Viejos ansi mismo presuman bien del que de arta importancia y consideración pues por los Padres ser malos o buenos o de sangre dañada estienden los ojos los Jueces a mas o menos en contra o en favor del reo y es conforme a derecho humano y divino y e"ossa de respetar”
Church, for without it, Spain would be like another Germany in heresy or another France, since the Spaniards are much “too susceptible, excitable, and valiant in their desire to bring about whatever they fancy, and we well know the degree to which they are friends of all novelties.”

In this analogy, the Spanish people are compared to Adam who defied God by indulging his curiosity and eating the forbidden fruit such that he had to be disciplined by expulsion and only the threat of violence could ensure that he would not sin again. Similarly, for Gonzalez, Spaniards were vulnerable and predisposed to heresy by virtue of their characteristically unbounded curiosity.

Gonzalez’ defense of the Spanish Inquisition’s original founding is remarkable because he does not make any mention of the perceived threat posed by conversos and their genealogical propensity toward heresy. In this retelling, the real issue was that any Spaniard – regardless of their blood origins – could easily fall into heresy. The wide embrace of Protestantism in large portions of Europe that did not have large populations of Jewish converts underscored this point. Consequently, Gonzalez could no longer be confident that ‘Catholic’ Spain could be reliably prevented from being swept up in the excitement of the Reformation without the Inquisition’s hanging sword preventing them from doing so. And with the specter in Gonzalez’ mind of a

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97 Ibid., 2r: “creo yo bien que la ynquisicion es esta custodia desta yglesia sta Romana y appca y que a no aber estado de pormedio fuera España otr Alemania en herejías o otra francia pues los españoles son demasiado sujeto y animo y valor para llegar adelante cualquiera cosas que les pareciera ademas que se entiende quántum Amigos son de novedades.”

98 While Gonzalez compares only Spaniards to Adam, this typological conception of ‘Adam as the first heretic’ was further elaborated by the Sicilian Inquisitor Luis de Páramo (1545-1608) in his De origine et progressu Officii Sanctae Inquisitionis, eiusque dignitate et utilitate (Madrid, 1598); see Kimberly Lynn, “Was Adam the First Heretic? Diego de Simancas, Luis de Páramo, and the Origins of Inquisitorial Practice” Archive for Reformation History 97(1): 184-210. As Lynn writes, in Páramo’s view, “Adam left humankind an inheritance of both the capacity for correct choice and the propensity towards sin and heresy” (ibid., 203). Paramo, then, makes explicit the full implications of Gonzalez’ analogy between Adam and contemporary heretics: the propensity to heresy is quintessentially human; it is not particular to any subgroup.
Spain succumbing to the Protestant heresies rapidly spreading across Europe, attributing Iberian heresy exclusively to those with converso origins was no longer tenable.\footnote{Gonzalez’ assertion that the Inquisition protected all Spaniards living in the age of Reformation from a tendency to pursue novelties stands in stark contrast with an anonymous tract against conversos written around the same time which asserts that many of those convicted of Lutheranism in Valladolid in 1558-59 were “conversos” who as a group are “amigos de novedades.” (AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 1267, fol. 14r).}

In presenting this rather pessimistic assessment, Gonzalez invokes the authority of his own experiences as an Inquisitor, which had made him particularly sensitive to the threat of Lutheranism spreading within Catholic Spain. As a member of the tribunal in Valladolid, he had participated in the trials of a circle of Lutherans in 1558, which ultimately led to the arrest and prosecution of the archbishop of Toledo Bartalome de Carranza y Miranda in 1559.\footnote{For a brief synopsis of these events and further bibliographic references, see Homza, Lu Ann, The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub Co., 2006), 194-195.} Writing only a few years after those events, Gonzalez recalled how those incriminated were “illustrious people, caballeros, and clerics” who prior to their arrest had barely hidden their heresy. The trials had “touched all the houses of Castille,” such that many members of the public insisted that it was impossible for them to be heretics.\footnote{AHN, Inquisicion, Libro 1267, 2r-2v: “q con aver este castigo de tan gran infamia no faltaron en estos reinos por nuestros pescados los anos pasados de 1558 hasta el de sesenta gentes ylustres caballeros frailes religiosos labradores que díen fatiga a la iglesia Romana appca con su mala cicana (?) y lo peor q en ello se sintio que con estar presos no faltaba quien defendiese de so socapa que no era posible fuesen herejes. Por aquí se podrá entender que si no hubiera Inqxon que fuera de este rincón las Mandes del Emperador y Nro Rey asistieron tan principalmente al castigo que por esto ganaron no menor renombre de catholicos y grandes príncipes y espero en nro sor les dará su gloria y por sus cartas consta que principalmente escribieron a esta inqxon de Vallid encomendando las cosas de la religion y el castigo ni mas ni menos que si les fuera sus Animas en ello según consta por sus cartas cuyos traslados tengo el mayor celo es el q se tiene a las costas de la religion y por este ado ay guerra entre catholicos y herejes no se perdonan las vidas.”}

However, if all Spaniards regardless of blood origins could devolve into heresy, then new investigative models needed to be employed to identify heretics. Addressing cases in which
“rustic people, minors, or women” made heretical or blasphemous statements, Gonzalez turns to a biographical approach as a means of better discerning the fine line between ‘heresy’ and ‘ignorance.’ Gonzalez suggests as a general principle that such expressions ought to be attributed to their tendency to be ignorant and lax with their words. In other words, a suspect’s age, gender, and socio-economic profile should determine whether Inquisitors consider a nominally heretical action as such. This then, is a counterpart to Valdes’ aforementioned instructions to the fiscal: much as a life of sin and crime made Spaniards more susceptible to heresy, a general state of ignorance – resulting from their age, gender, or class – tended to prevent Spaniards from becoming true heretics.

Conversely, the more educated and cosmopolitan one was, the higher the chances that they were heretics. Male adults who were well educated and properly catechized would be presumed to have heretical beliefs if they blasphemed. Gonzalez also excludes from this presumption of innocence anyone who has been in contact with suspected heretics, or was raised in a place that is suspected of harboring Lutherans and other heretics, or lived in close proximity to lands where Lutherans live openly. Nor should they ever “have left these [Spanish] kingdoms, for only then can the [Inquisitors] conscience be safe in presuming that they are not heretics.”102

By implying that a link existed between biographical factors, such as foreign travel or contact with Lutherans, and heresy, Inquisitors were able to imagine a (somewhat fictional) border between Catholic Spain and Reformed Europe in matters of faith—thereby playing an

102 Ibid., 5r: “hace much al casi que el preso sea rústico o sea menor o muger por que a estos favorecen los Insores en presumir lo que han dio o hecho a sido por ynorancia e facilidad Y quando son Christianos viejos es mucho mas para presumir que no hayan cometido herejía aunq las palabras de cosas q sepan a ellas y ayuda que los susodichos hayan sido criados en lugar q no aya sospecha de herejía ni de luteranismo y también que no aya lugar de lutheranos cerca y ansinesmo que los susodhos no hayan salido de estos reinos q con esto se asegura mas la conciencia antes consideran q no son herejes ni ay por q pensar o ni haver comunicado con persona sospechosa”
important role in projecting the image of a thoroughly confessionalized Spain. And it is in this context that Gonzalez suggests that Spanish Old Christians were less prone to fall into heresy as a result of their ignorance and lack of catechization than as a result of foreign Lutheran influences. And the Suprema’s regulations reflect similar concerns with the deleterious effects of foreign travel. Valdes’ instruccion required that all suspects be questioned about such travels in the course of their first audiencia and similar questions were also included in the procedural manual issued in 1568. Keenly aware that Old Christians were increasingly coming under the scrutiny of the Holy Office, Inquisitors sought to salvage the image of an inherently Catholic Spain by attributing as much as possible the cause of heresy to foreign influences.

On the whole, though, the move toward individualized assessments of suspects and the attribution of instances of Spanish heresy to extra-territorial influences helped cement the notion that all Old Christians were potential heretics. This is reflected in the orders sent to the viceroy of Mexico to establish a new Inquisitorial tribunal in 1570, whereby the Inquisitor General Diego Espinosa dictated that the tribunal “should prosecute Old Christians and their descendants and the other people [that] it is common to prosecute here in Spain.” These ‘other people that it is common to prosecute’ were presumably New Christians and foreign Lutherans; clearly, though,

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103 Mercedes García-Arenal has argued for the existence of homegrown Iberian forms of spiritualism and religious dissidence that were not limited to conversos and paralleled Protestantism and the rise of religious conversions during the confessionalization of Europe; see her “Creating Conversos,” Bulletin for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies 38, 1 (2013), Article 1. For the active role of the Inquisition in shaping popular perceptions of Lutherans and demonizing foreigners as inexorably heterodox, see Thomas Werner, Los Protestantes y la Inquisición en España en Tiempos de Reforma y Contrarreforma (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), especially pp. 345-384.
104 Valdes, no. 15; Orden, 7r.
105 Cite Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily and Werner.
the urgency for establishing a dedicated Inquisitorial tribunal in New Spain was the perceived threat of Old Christian heresy.

The new biographical mentality also took sufficient hold so as to reconfigure subsequent waves of persecution targeting suspected Judaizers. Even as a long standing anti-converso bias rooted in a genealogical mentality persisted, from now on those targeted for prosecution would typically be identified typically by the geo-cultural marker of ‘Portuguese’ rather than their ‘converso’ blood origins. Diego Gonzalez himself, whose Inquisitorial district of Valladolid included the border areas of Galicia, sounded the alarm as early as 1572, warning the Council of the Inquisition that portugueses were fleeing prosecution by the Portuguese Inquisition for having Judaized and then settling in Galicia where they blended with local families.¹⁰⁸ And, starting around the 1580s, the Spanish Inquisition would recurrently target portugueses for prosecution on the Peninsula and across the empire.¹⁰⁹

The significance of this new nomenclature for referring to Judaizers has not been fully appreciated by scholars who have simply asserted that in late sixteenth and seventeenth century parlance ‘portugues’ was synonymous with ‘converso,’ ‘Judaizer,’ and ‘Jew.’¹¹⁰ However, the developments that I have laid out in this paper suggest that a more complex phenomenon was at play. Once the biographical framework for understanding the roots of heresy had taken hold, it was simply no longer enough to invoke heretics’ blood origins as their root cause for their heresy

¹⁰⁸ AHN, Inquisicion, Leg. 1987, fol. 1r., quoted in Contreras, El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición de Galicia, 43.
¹⁰⁹ Dedieu, “Cuatro tiempos.”
nor was this wholly compelling as a defining characteristic. Rather, heresy and a heretical identity now had to be correlated with socio-cultural factors.

Divergences between the histories of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions allowed Inquisitors such as Diego Gonzalez to depict Portugal, on the whole, as a Judaizing hotbed. This image was reinforced by the notorious general pardon granted in 1537 by the Portuguese Inquisition to Portuguese New Christians and the persistence of Inquisitorial prosecution of Judaizers thereafter, at the same time that the Spanish prosecution of Judaizers was winding down.\(^{111}\) Thus, Portuguese origins provided a sufficient biographical correlation with heresy such that there was no longer a need to invoke suspected heretics’ damaged blood origins.\(^{112}\) And the large influx of Portuguese migrants following the annexation of Portugal from 1580 onward would have further allowed Iberians to assert that anyone suspected of Judaizing was a foreigner with Portuguese roots thereby preserving Spain’s self-image of being fundamentally a Catholic nation. Only then did ‘portugues’ and ‘Jew’ become truly synonymous.

My point here is not to dispute the widely acclaimed correlation between Portuguese origins and converso blood.\(^{113}\) Rather, I seek to expose the logic at play in the Inquisitorial imaginary that promoted this new nomenclature. Confronted with the incompatibility of existing genealogical arguments and the persistence of heresy among Old Christians, Inquisitors were

\(^{111}\) Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición de Galicia*, 43. This was the first in a series of pardons secured by Portuguese New Christians over the course of the sixteenth century; see Julio Caro Baroja, *Los judíos en la España moderna y contemporánea* (Ediciones AKAL, 1978), 362-364.

\(^{112}\) Writing about seventeenth century trials against suspected Portuguese Judaizers, David Graizbord notes that when these claimed that they were ‘Old Christians,’ Inquisitors did not “consider [that] datum very significant” and often did not bother to ask them to specifically admit that they were conversos (Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute*, 110-111. Conversely, Sara Nalle has recently shown that from around 1570 onward, when Castillian conversos arrested for non-Judaic heretical crimes claimed to be Old Christians, “Inquisitors accepted their claims at face value;” see Nalle, Sara, “The New and Old Jewish Convers of Siguenza,” in Lynn, Kimberly, and Erin K. Rowe eds., *The Early Modern Hispanic World: Transnational and Interdisciplinary Approaches* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 119.

\(^{113}\) Cf. Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert who writes that Portuguese merchants working in the Spanish Atlantic comprised a large minority of Old Christians; see his *A Nation upon the Ocean Sea: Portugal’s Atlantic Diaspora and the Crisis of the Spanish Empire, 1492-1640* (New York, US: Oxford University Press, 2007), 71.
forced to develop new discourses even when trying to account for Judaizers’ heresy. By seizing on the Portuguese origins of many suspected Judaizers a new foreign menace was created. In this way, the image of Portuguese migrants from a land supposedly rife with Judaizers who were threatening to assimilate into Spanish society served a similar rhetorical function as Spain’s northern European Protestant neighbors, who we already saw were presented by Diego Gonzalez as perpetually poised to corrupt Spanish Old Christians in mid-sixteenth century. And once the Inquisition accepted the resolutions of the council of State protecting foreigners who were Protestants from prosecution in 1612, throughout the seventeenth- and into the eighteenth-century, Spain’s self-image of its Catholic character would be increasingly drawn in contrast with those foreign Portuguese interlopers.114

**Conclusion**

The prevalence and persistence of institutionalized anti-Converso, anti-Morisco, anti-Indian, and anti-African discrimination throughout the early-modern period has often led scholars to emphasize how an Iberian “genealogical mentality,” and its concomitant emphasis on biological determinism, significantly contributed to hierarchizing an expanding Iberian world. By closely analyzing the evolution of the pre-accusatory trial phase within sixteenth century Inquisitorial procedure, I have shown how beginning around the 1540s, Inquisitors began using recently developed empirical practices to elaborate a competing biographical discourse through which Inquisitors assessed heretical suspects. These findings underscore the fragility of embodied social identities in the early modern Iberian world. We have also seen how this biographical reasoning served a rhetorical purpose for Inquisitors seeking to project the image of

a thoroughly confessionalized Spain, whose citizens only fell into heresy due to accidental biographical attributes.

In highlighting the evidence for an empirical turn within Inquisitorial procedure, this paper also introduces the study of Inquisitorial procedure into the history of knowledge. Scholarship on the rise of Spanish empiricism, with its focus on science and the natural world within trans-Atlantic colonial mercantilist imperial projects, has largely ignored the Inquisition’s contributions to these epistemological developments. However, Barrera’s New World adventurers and Imperial Bureaucrats, Inquisitors, and all early-modern Iberians lived within a shared knowledge culture that determined their epistemological field that shaped their ways of knowing. Consequently, their knowledge practices were prone to be affected by all manner of change: whether it was the discovery of the ‘new’ world and its wonders, cultural and social developments such as the splintering of Western Christendom and the confessionalization of Europe, or the recognition that existing Inquisitorial methods had largely failed to fully eradicate heresy in Catholic Spain.

Finally, locating one of the points of origins for early modern biographical thinking in Inquisitorial Spain provides important historical context to this development that we must take into account when evaluating the merits of biography as a tool of analysis. Theoreticians often argue that biography artificially constructs humans, who are all too prone to inconsistencies, into coherent self-constituted subjects. For Bordieu, this “biographical illusion” serves as a straight-jacket, devised to subjugate individuals to the state, which compels people to act in accordance with this coherent narrative and makes them more easily governable.115 Foucault, for his part, has argued that biographical thinking has helped shaped the modern state’s disciplinary

apparatus, by creating a subject that can be monitored and reformed in the hospital, the school, or the prison. However, what this study suggests is that the alternative to biographical subjects might not be the post-modern subjects envisioned by critical theorists, but rather, the genealogically-determined self whose blood was determinative of his or her fate.

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116 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. 
Appendix
ORDEN DE PROCESAR

nombre, pasó ante mi fulano notario.

Si se le hallan dinero, oro, plata, o armas, o papeles, se debe dar noticias a los inquisidores, y hacer lo que ellos ordenaren, y asentar lo ansi en el proceso.

Primera audiencia.

En la ciudad de a, días del mes de de mil y quinientos, &c. estando los señores inquisidores licenciados, fulano y fulano, en su audiencia de la mañana (o tarde) mandaron traer a ella, de las carceles de este santo oficio.

Wheno no esta preso ha de dezir (mandaron en traer a ella, a vn hombre, del qual siendo presente fue recibido juramento en forma de esta de derecho, lo cargo del qual prometio dezir verdad ansi en esta audiencia como en todas las de mas que con el feuieren hasta la determinacion de su causa.

Preguntando como se llama, de donde, es natural que edad y oficio tiene, y quanto ha que vino preso Dixo que se llama fulano, &c. y declaro su genealogia en la forma siguiente.

Padres.

EN EL SANTO OFFICIO.

Tios hermanos de padre.

Fulano.

Fulana, &c. declarando de todos si son casados, y
en quien, y que hijos tienen, y si edad, oficio y vecinad;
y si son defuncos, y donde.

Tios hermanos de madre.

Fulano.

Fulana idem segun que los precedentes.

Hermanos de... 

Fulano.

Fulana idem segun que los de arriba; 

mujer y hijos.

Y que este confiesse es casado con fulana veciana de 
la hija de fulano, con la cual ausente que 
se caso años y della tiene hijos siguientes.

Fulano de edad de años casado con fulana 
y tiene tantos hijos, y sus nobres, si es por casar.

Fulana idem que el precedente.

Preguntado de que causa y generacion son los di-
chos sus padres abuelos, y los otros transversales y 
collaterales que ha declarado, y si ellos o alguno de 
ellos, o este confesante ha sido preso, penitenciado, re-
conciliado, o condenado por el sancto officio de la 
inquision.

Dixo, &c. ha de satisfazer a la pregunta enteramente.

Preguntado si es Christiano bautizado y confirmado, y si 
yoye Misla, y confiesa, y comulga en los tiem-
pos que manda la sancta madre y glesia.

Dixo, &c. ha de satisfazer y declarar quanto ha 

que
ORDEN DE PROCESAR

que se confesó, y con quien, y donde, y si recibió el
santísimo Sacramento.

Signóse y santiguase, y dixo el Pater noster y Ave
Maria, Credo, y Salve Regina, en latin o en romance
bien o mal dicho, y si lo supo o no, y lo demás de la
doctrina Christiana.

Preguntado si sabe leer, y escribir, y si ha estudiado alguna facultad dixo, &c. declare donde y de
quien aprendió leer y escribir, y lo mismo de quién oyó la ciencia si supiere alguna.

Preguntado si ha salido destos reynos de Castilla
y con que personas: dixo, &c.

Preguntado por el discurso de su vida.

Dixo que nació en tal pueblo, &c. declare donde
se ha criado, y las partes donde ha residido, y con
quien ha trabajado y comunicado todo muy por ex-
tenso y muy particularmente.

Preguntado si sabe, presume o sospecha la causa
porque ha sido preso, y trayendo a las carceles de este
santo oficio.

Dixo, &c. Si dixiere que no.

Fue le dicho que en este santo oficio no se aco-
stumbra prender persona alguna sin bastante infor-
mación de aue dicho, fecho, y cometido, o visto de
zir, hazer, y cometer a otras personas alguna cosa que
sea, o parezca ser contra nuestra santa fe catholica,
y ley euangelica que tiene, predica, sigue, y enseña la
santa Madre yglesia catholica Romana, o contra el
recto y libre ejercicio del santo oficio. Y así de-
ue creer que con esta informació, aura sido trayendo.

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