

## Article

# La Vera Cruz: Wills, Confraternities, Catholic Reconquest and Reform in Sixteenth-Century Gibraltar

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**Abstract:** In his *Historia de Gibraltar*, the Gibraltar-born *jurado* Alonso Hernández del Portillo described how “the confraternity of the Santa Vera Cruz has a fine and pleasant church on the Main Street”. Set in the heart of town, it was an impressive building, which caused the missionary Pedro Cubero Sebastián to describe it as “most excellent” in the late seventeenth-century. Within the church existed the confraternity’s pride and joy: el Cristo de la Vera Cruz, a miraculous image of the crucified Christ and a key feature of local devotion. Using unpublished testamentary evidence, this article explores the early years of this local manifestation of Christological devotion, as well as the devotional context out of which it grew. The timeline established by these wills not only allows us to place this church and confraternity, and therefore Gibraltar, within the context of the Catholic Reformation, but to locate these religious developments as part of a prolonged process of Christianisation which began with the city’s reconquest in 1462.

**Keywords:** Gibraltar; Vera Cruz confraternities; Counter-Reformation; Reconquista; suffering Christ; wills



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In his *Historia de la muy noble y más leal ciudad de Gibraltar* (written c.1605–7 with later additions in a different hand), the Gibraltar-born *jurado* Alonso Hernández del Portillo described how “the confraternity of the Santa Vera Cruz has a fine and pleasant church on the Main Street” (Portillo, BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).<sup>1</sup> Set in the heart of town (Figures 1 and 2), it was an impressive building, which caused the missionary Pedro Cubero Sebastián to describe it as “most excellent” when he visited Gibraltar in 1699 (Cubero, BR MS II/1550, f. 243v).<sup>2</sup> By then it had come to house several confraternities; the confraternity of la Vera Cruz, but also those of Saint Joseph and the Guardian Angel (Cubero, BR MS II/1550, ff. 243v–244r). There were five chapels within the church, with a large and excellent altarpiece—*retablo*—in the high altar, and a “rich [altarpiece]” in each of the chapels belonging to the Saint Joseph and Guardian Angel confraternities (*las dos capillas de las dos hermandades dichas tienen dos [retablos] muy ricas*) (ibid., f. 244r). The church’s doorway was of blue stone, and according to an inscription within the chapel of San Juan de Dios, the saint himself had worked at that very door before leaving for Granada (ibid., f. 244r). There were also various jubilees celebrated on different days of the year, while the “many relics” pertaining to this “house [*casa*, church]” were displayed on its feast days (ibid., f. 244r). Last, but by no means least, Cubero singles out a rather special crucifix:

... and a sculpted crucifix, the most perfect and devout which can be considered, and of many miracles [*y una hechura de un crucifijo la mas perfecta y debota que se puede considerar y de muchos Milagros*]. (ibid., f. 244r)

This was almost certainly the Cristo de la Vera Cruz.

By the time that Cubero was writing, the church of la Vera Cruz was clearly an important landmark in Gibraltar. What of the early years of this church and confraternity, however? Testamentary evidence in the Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz goes to some lengths in shedding light on the early years of this local manifestation of Christological devotion, as well as the devotional context out of which it grew. As we shall see, these sixteenth-century wills coincide with a number of important developments in Catholic Christendom, not least the onset of the Catholic Reformation. What can these wills tell

us about the influence of the Catholic Reform on Gibraltar itself, a port city which rested on Spain's maritime border with Muslim North Africa? By the time these wills were drafted, Gibraltar was also still a relatively recent addition to Christendom. What can these documents suggest about the relationship between the processes of reconquest, Christianisation and Catholic Reform on the Rock? The timeline established by these wills not only allows us to place this church and confraternity, and therefore Gibraltar, within the context of the Catholic Reformation, but to locate these religious developments as part of a prolonged process of Christianisation which began with the city's reconquest from Islam in 1462.



**Figure 1.** Plan of Gibraltar by Luis Bravo de Acuña (1627). British Library, London, Cartographic Items Additional MS 15152, f. 23r [© British Library, London].





**Figure 2.** The Church of la Vera Cruz (highlighted) in a detail of Luis Bravo de Acuña’s 1627 plan of Gibraltar. British Library, London, Cartographic Items Additional MS 15152, f. 23r [© British Library, London].

### 1. The Church and Confraternity of la Vera Cruz: A Timeline Locating the Church of la Vera Cruz

There is a consensus that the Church of la Vera Cruz occupied the site of today’s Centre Plaza building on Main Street, more specifically 153 Main Street at the junction with Horse Barrack Lane (Figures 3 and 4) (Galliano 2019, pp. 45, 50; Palao 1977, p. 7). The building can be seen in Luis Bravo de Acuña’s 1627 plan of Gibraltar (Figures 1 and 2), and was, as Portillo noted, “on the Main Street”.<sup>3</sup> The building remained a church after the Anglo-Dutch capture of the Rock in 1704, but by 1753, it had undergone rebuilding works for conversion into a barracks (Galliano 2019, pp. 49–50). It was later the site of the Café Universal (Figures 5–7) (ibid., p. 50). The structure on the site of la Vera Cruz was demolished by the 1980s to make way for the Centre Plaza building.



**Figure 3.** The Centre Plaza building, site of the Church of la Vera Cruz.



**Figure 4.** Main Street and the Centre Plaza building.





**Figure 5.** Early twentieth-century photograph of Main Street. To the left and before the horse carriage is 153 Main Street and the junction with Horse Barrack Lane. The cupola of the Cathedral of Saint Mary the Crowned can be seen in the distance.



**Figure 6.** Detail of Figure 4. The building on the left before the carriage is 153 Main Street, the site of the Church of la Vera Cruz.



**Figure 7.** Early twentieth-century prototype photo-postcard showing the Café Universal (site of la Vera Cruz church).

## 2. The Wills: A Timeline for the Church and Confraternity of la Vera Cruz

We first encounter the confraternity of la Vera Cruz in mid-sixteenth century documents. In his will, dated 17 January 1555, the merchant Juan del Campo Duque willed that on the day of his burial, his body be accompanied by the crosses and confraternities of the Hospital of la Misericordia, San Sebastián and la Vera Cruz (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 95v).<sup>4</sup> He further specified that:

... because I am a brother of the Vera Cruz I will that being at the point of death I be dressed in the tunic which I possess as a brother [of the confraternity] with which I will my body to be buried (ibid., f. 92v).<sup>5</sup>

The confraternity therefore existed by 1555, and from this we can see how its members appeared to own tunics (*túnicas*), uniforms and markers of confraternal membership and identity. It is perhaps worth noting that the confraternity of la Vera Cruz is not mentioned in the earliest surviving will in the archive, that of Gonzalo de Piña (28 October 1523), in which he desired his body to be accompanied by the confraternities of San Sebastián and of the Hospital de la Santa Misericordia (ibid., f. 13r).<sup>6</sup> This of course does not rule out the existence of the confraternity of la Vera Cruz during these earlier decades of the sixteenth century, but Juan del Campo Duque's will allows us to place its presence by the middle of the century.

The years following 1555 appear to have been a time of rapid growth for la Vera Cruz. Twenty years later, its eponymous church was undergoing some kind of work; whether the work was one of construction or some form of alteration, however, is a point to which we must later return. In his will of 9 August 1575, Sancho de Sierra bequeathed four *ducados* to the works (*la obra*) of the church, "la casa de la santa vera cruz" (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 44r).<sup>7</sup> His pious investment into the city's religious infrastructure highlights his own devotions,



as well as the growth of the city's own confraternities and chapels, probably in part due to such bequests:

Likewise I bequeath four ducados for the wax of the Blessed Sacrament of this city in alms from my goods<sup>8</sup>

Likewise I bequeath another four ducados for the works of Nuestra Señora del Rosario of this city to be paid from my goods

I bequeath another four ducados for the works of the chapel of la Limpia Concepción of this city from my goods

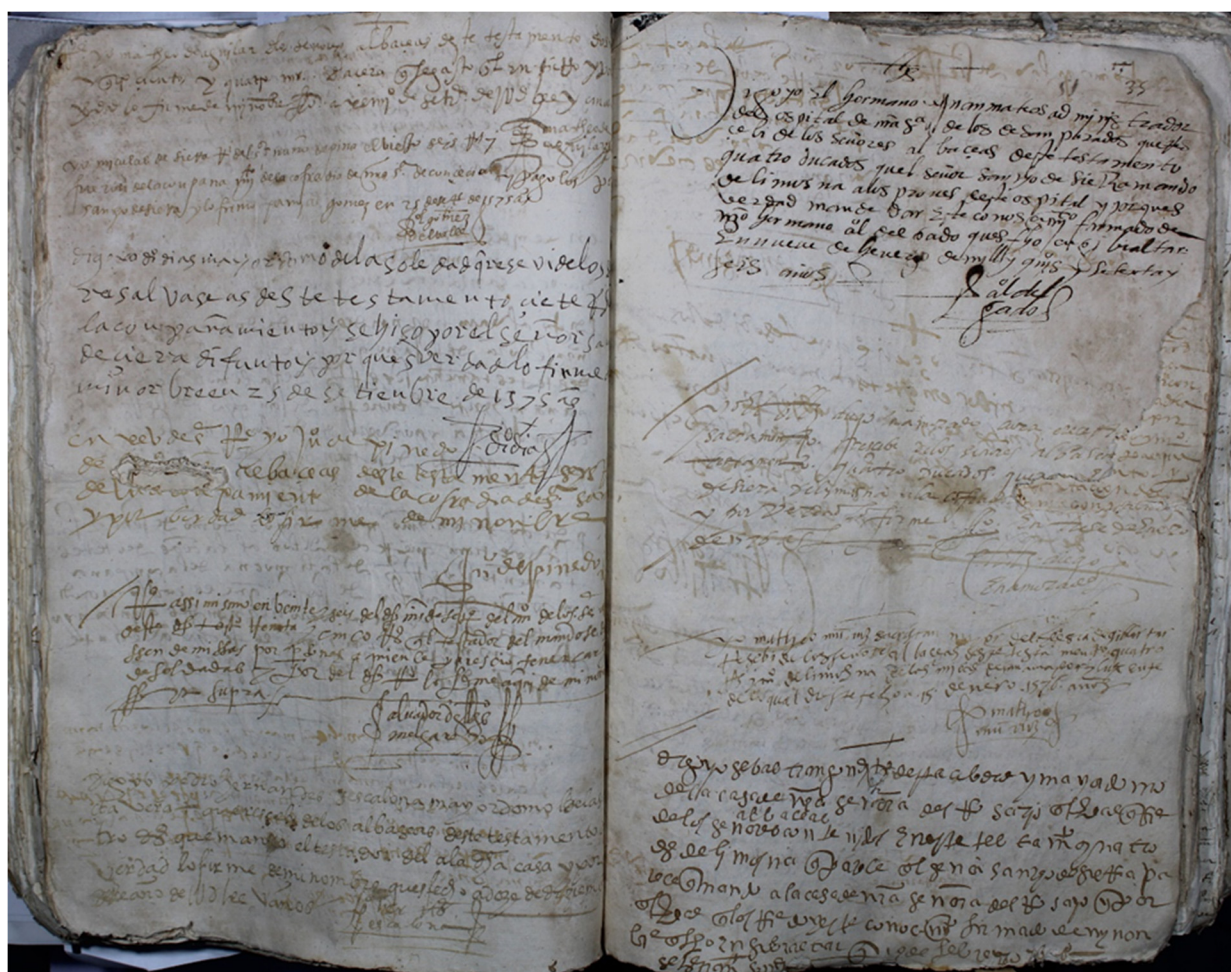
I bequeath another four ducados for the works of the house of the lord Santiago of this city

I bequeath another four ducados from my goods for the works of the house of the Santa Vera Cruz of this city

I bequeath four ducados from my goods to the Hospital of Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados of this city (ibid., f. 44r).<sup>9</sup>

No doubt a serious investment into his own spiritual welfare, Sancho de Sierra's bequests betray a period of transformation in Gibraltar's spiritual landscape, a period of growth for local devotions and confraternities, as the various *obras* suggest. These devotional developments were possibly connected with significant demographic growth on the Rock. In 1502, coinciding with Gibraltar's annexation to the royal domain, its population numbered some 1400 souls (Pleguezuelos Sánchez 2006, p. 32). By 1586, there were 5400 (Silva 2008b, p. 21). Increasing manifestations of local devotion could well have gone hand in hand with a growing local population.

The receipts attached to Sancho de Sierra's will attest to the increasing number of confraternities and religious institutions in Gibraltar (Figure 8). These relate to funds paid for Masses and for the accompaniment of confraternities at his funeral, as well as the fulfilment of his bequests. We have receipts from; Roque Machado, *mayordomo* (steward) of the Confraternity of the Name of Jesus; Pedro Hernández de Escalona, *mayordomo* of la Vera Cruz; Álvaro Hernández, founder (*fundador*) of the *casa de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*; Gerónimo Moro, *mayordomo* of San Sebastián; Hernán Sánchez, *mayordomo* of la Santa Misericordia; Diego Díaz, *mayordomo* of the Soledad confraternity; *hermano* Juan Mateos, administrator (*administrador*) of the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados and Nicolás de Sierra, *mayordomo* of the Concepción confraternity (and of no known relation to Sancho de Sierra) (AHPC PNSR 153, ff. 50r–51v).<sup>10</sup> Sancho de Sierra had requested the accompaniment "of all the confraternities which accompany the dead [*todas las cofradías que acompañan los difuntos*]", with the Vera Cruz, Rosario, Soledad, Name of Jesus, Misericordia, San Sebastián and Santa Ana confraternities all being represented in the receipts (ibid., ff. 41r, 50r–51r). One further receipt from Mateo de Aguilar for "the candlewax which was used in the burial" may represent a further, unnamed confraternity, but no further information is given (ibid., f. 50v). All in all, by 1575, "the confraternities which accompany the dead" numbered seven, with two further receipts from the Blessed Sacrament and Concepción confraternities relating to Sierra's bequests (ibid., ff. 51r–v). These receipts document the existence of no less than nine confraternities, no doubt backed by demographic growth and lay investment in the city's pious infrastructure. Indeed, at least three of these—la Vera Cruz, la Concepción and el Rosario—appear to have been relatively recent foundations by the time Sierra's will was drafted. These, like the *obras*, indicate that Gibraltar was undergoing a period of expansion in its devotional opportunities over the sixteenth century.



**Figure 8.** Some of the receipts attached to Sancho de Sierra's will. AHPC, PNSR 153, ff. 50v–51r. Reproduced with the permission of the Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz [© Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz].

That Sancho de Sierra's bequests to the various religious establishments and their *obras* were fulfilled are confirmed by these receipts. Another receipt dated 12 December 1575 confirms Sancho's donation to the church of la Vera Cruz:

I, Pedro Hernandes de Escalona, mayordomo of la Sancta Vera Cruz, declare that I received four ducados from the executors of this will which the testator bequeathed to the said casa . . . (ibid., f. 50v)

The *obra* was not mentioned, but as we shall see, all of the works mentioned in the will were almost certainly some form of building works as opposed to the confraternities' and churches' own works. And for our purposes, the will provides a key date in the history of la Vera Cruz. By 1575, its *casa*—its church-base—existed and was undergoing construction works. The presence of a *mayordomo* (steward) responsible for the *casa* also points to a hierarchy connected to the church and its confraternity: the *casa* of la Vera Cruz was clearly not just a construction site, but probably a functional—albeit incomplete—church.

Shortly thereafter the church indeed appears to have been either completed or in an apparently completely functional state. On Friday 13 March 1579, Blas Álvarez Portugués, señor de la venta de la Serrana, established a solemn *remembranza*, a Mass to be said annually for his soul and those of his dead relatives, on the day of the Immaculate Conception or on its Octave, in the church of la Vera Cruz (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 27r).<sup>11</sup> It was to be paid in alms of one *ducado*, funded from a tribute paid to him by the apothecary (*boticario*) Cristóbal de Escobar (ibid., f. 27r). These alms were to be paid in perpetuity, suggesting that this was



likewise a perpetual arrangement for an annual Mass and payment (*ibid.*). The *mayordomos* (stewards) and *hermanos mayores* (senior brothers) of the church of la Vera Cruz were to take responsibility for ensuring the funds were collected and paid:

Likewise I will that in the church of la Vera Cruz of this city a solemn *remembranza* be said for my soul and for those of my dead [relatives] on the feast day of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady or on its Octave and for alms for the said *remembranza* I bequeath one *ducado* in alms perpetually from the tribute which the apothecary Cristóbal de Escobar pays me and I grant the power to the *mayordomos* and *hermanos mayores* who are or should be of the said church to collect the said *ducado* of tribute and if it were to be redeemed they shall reimpose it and for all of this I give them the full power [to do so] (*ibid.*, f. 27r).<sup>12</sup>

Apart from this window into the testator's pious concerns, this clause reveals a church which was not only in some state of completion, but up and running. Masses were being celebrated in it, and the presence of *mayordomos* and *hermanos mayores* further points to a functioning confraternal hierarchy and thus structure. Indeed, it also reaffirms the church's purpose as a base for its eponymous confraternity, which also had a role in the building's administration: much as Portillo noted several decades later, the confraternity *had* this church.

The structure's presence is further confirmed by the sale of a property on 16 August 1580. That same year the apothecary Diego de Acepto and his wife, María de Muñoz, had been sold a shop "on the street which comes down from the church of la Vera Cruz, towards the wall of the butchers, adjacent to the houses of Diego de Natera, resident of this city" by Ana Nuñez, the widow of the tailor Pedro Rodríguez (AHDN LUQUE, C.541.D.70, ff. 2r-v).<sup>13</sup> The couple were reselling the property to Doña Estefanía de Suazo (*ibid.*, ff. 2v-6r). The deed attests to what was a probably complete church of la Vera Cruz, for it was cited as a recognisable landmark by which the property in question could be located.

That same year we also encounter another member of the confraternity. In his will of 15 February 1580, Juan Moreno el Mozo requested the accompaniment of all the city's confraternities and declared that he was a brother of la Vera Cruz:

I will that all the confraternities of this city accompany me and I declare that I am a brother of the confraternity of the Santa Vera Cruz and that the accustomed alms be paid to the rest [of the confraternities] (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 132v).<sup>14</sup>

That he specifies that the accustomed alms are to be paid to the rest of the confraternities and does not single out la Vera Cruz for this purpose perhaps suggests that it covered the costs for its involvement in its own members' funerals.

### 3. San Juan de Dios and la Vera Cruz

What remains unclear is whether the *obra* noted in Sancho de Sierra's will of 1575 referred to the church's actual construction or works taking place within or on the building. In other words, does his bequest refer to the actual ground-breaking, or perhaps some form of extension or reconstruction of the church? If the inscription in the San Juan de Dios chapel in the church of la Vera Cruz noted by Cubero in the late seventeenth century was indeed correct, then the church must have been in existence before 1575. As to when San Juan de Dios worked by the church door, Francisco Javier Quintana Álvarez has suggested a date of around 1536 (more recently a date of circa 1538 has also been noted for his time in Gibraltar) (Quintana Álvarez 2013, p. 504; Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, p. 5).<sup>15</sup> He has noted that San Juan de Dios' time in Gibraltar "coincides with a period of important architectural activity in the city", such as the beginning of rebuilding works at the Franciscan friary in 1528–31 (Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, p. 5). "It could be that the presence of master masons and builders in the city was taken advantage of to erect the *ermita* or to order it", he suggests (*ibid.*, p. 5).<sup>16</sup> This is not at all impossible; after all, from Juan del Campo Duque's will, we know that the confraternity of la Vera Cruz

already existed by 1555. It makes sense that there would have been a church of la Vera Cruz by then.

There is nonetheless a need for caution in regard to this inscription. As Quintana has rightly noted, devotion to this saint in Gibraltar increased after his canonisation in 1690: the chapel of San Juan de Dios in la Vera Cruz is a symptom of this “new impulse” and the devotion’s shift to the city centre (Quintana Álvarez 2013, p. 504). While we cannot discard the possibility of the church having been constructed by 1536/1538, it may well be that the *ermita*, with its impressive collection of relics and chapel dedicated to the saint, was trying to cash in on the devotional currents of the day. San Juan de Dios’ presence in Gibraltar is not being disputed, but we need to consider whether he actually worked at the door of this particular church. The now-lost inscription may therefore be a pious exaggeration of fact. It is perhaps more useful in understanding the devotional trends of late-seventeenth century Gibraltar than it is in tracing the early years of this church, whose existence may or may not have coincided with the saint’s time on the Rock.

#### 4. Mid Sixteenth-Century Foundations: La Vera Cruz and Sancho de Sierra’s Other Bequests

Nevertheless, it would appear more likely that the church of la Vera Cruz was one of several churches and confraternities founded in Gibraltar around the mid-sixteenth century. Sancho de Sierra’s bequests refer to some relatively new religious foundations. Most importantly, they are important pieces of evidence allow us to plausibly place the founding and *obra* of the Vera Cruz church within the context of these new establishments.

An overview of the other *obras* and establishments to which he donated—the chapels of Nuestra Señora del Rosario and la Limpia Concepción, the *casa* of Santiago and the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados—shows that these had all been recently founded by the time that Sierra drew up his will in 1575. The last of these was a very recent foundation indeed: Juan de Mateos had founded the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados in 1567, and he was still around to receive Sierra’s donation in 1576 (Santos 1716, p. 48; AHPC PNSR 153, f. 51r).

The church of Santiago may have been a new albeit short-lived foundation. The 1576 receipt recording this bequest is torn; the cleric Ruis Sánchez Trujillo confirmed the receipt of four *ducados*, presumably for “*la obra* of the lord Santiago of this city”—words which follow a significant tear (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 51v). It already existed in some form that year, when on 26 May the sailor (*marinero*) Francisco Hernández and his wife, Isabel de Mesa, sold “a palace covered with tiles . . . incorporated in the houses of the younger sons of Juan de la Parra, which are beside the church of the lord Santiago of this city” (AHDN LUQUE,C.543,D.27, ff. 2r-v).<sup>17</sup> The church appears again in a deed of sale dated 6 March 1581: the tailor Juan de la Parra and his wife, María López, sold a house with an oven or furnace “in *la Calle Alta* beside the corner of the street which leads up to the church of Santiago” to Doña Estefanía de Suazo (AHDN LUQUE,C.541,D.71, ff. 2r-v).<sup>18</sup> By 1599 there is evidence of a ruined building which had once been the church of Santiago (“*un sitio de casa arruynada que antiguamente fue iglesia de Santiago*”); the dedication was then translated to the church of the Hospital de la Misericordia (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 1170–72).<sup>19</sup> This could be our church, and suggests that it may have been in a state of abandonment by then. Indeed, a document of 1644 mentions “houses . . . which were adjacent to those of Baltasar Sanches Truxillo and the mountain and the street which led up to the old church of Santiago” (“*la yglecia biexa de Santiago*”) (Gadeo and Blanes 1983, p. 110). On its front side, one of the houses was adjacent to the *Calle Alta*: “the old church of Santiago” was therefore the same (albeit now abandoned) building mentioned in 1581 (*ibid.*, p. 110). Interestingly, Portillo notes that the older members of the community once called the church of Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza that of Santiago, and then Santa Brígida (Portillo, BNE MS 5579, ff. 108v–109r). Nevertheless, he mentions no other church or chapel of Santiago. It therefore appears that the *casa* of Santiago was a rather ephemeral foundation.



The chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario is possibly a slightly older building; Manolo Galliano has suggested that it was built circa 1530/40 (Galliano 2019, p. 77). The building appears to have existed in 1558, while documents attest to the existence and functionality of both the chapel and confraternity of Nuestra Señora del Rosario from at least 1566 (ibid., p. 77; Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 775). The structure also appears in Anton van den Wyngaerde's sketch of Gibraltar from 1567 (Galliano 2019, pp. 77–79; Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 775). However, Álvaro Hernández, founder of the *casa de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, was still alive to collect six *reales* in alms as payment for the eponymous confraternity's accompaniment of Sierra's funeral (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 50r). The receipt is dated 24 September 1575 (ibid., f. 50r). This suggests that the *casa* of Nuestra Señora del Rosario may not have been such an old foundation after all.

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the informal origins of the chapel predate that of the *casa*. Quintana cites the 1646 testimony of a woman who was allegedly over 104 years old and claimed that she remembered the foundress of the chapel (Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 774). It had apparently been founded by a certain lady called “la Halcona Vieja”, who had established the chapel so that her son Juan Pérez could serve as its chaplain (ibid.). The *capellán* died before his ordination, but the alleged centenarian went on to describe how la Halcona's slaves would bring the materials required for the chapel's construction, with the city's black slaves (*esclavos prietos*) distributing alms to the poor “without the intervention of other persons” during the feast day and procession of Nuestra Señora del Rosario (ibid., p. 774, AHDC Gibraltar, Autos Varios 124, cited and quoted in Ibid., p. 774).<sup>20</sup> While there is a need for caution with this account—not least because it appears to have been cited in a dispute between the confraternities of el Rosario and the Ángel Custodio (Guardian Angel) over precedence—it does suggest that the origins of the Rosario chapel may be found in informal and lay initiatives (Solé 1979, p. 313). Based on this account, Quintana speculatively suggests a foundation date of around 1548 (Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 775).

This testimony muddies the waters as far as the foundation of the chapel is concerned. If the account of the alleged centenarian was indeed correct, it suggests that more than one founder could have been behind the chapel of el Rosario. An informal establishment could well have preceded that founded by Álvaro Hernández, who possibly founded and funded the final, official product.<sup>21</sup> In other words, a legal foundation (or refoundation) succeeded a more informal and popular establishment. Ultimately, and in the absence of further evidence, this cannot be proven. But what we do know is that Hernández signed his receipt as founder of the *casa* in 1575, and on 16 February 1580 signed another as “*mayordomo de la cofradia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*” (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 88r). He clearly played an important role in the administration of both the chapel and its confraternity. On the basis of these documents, I believe that he should be recognised as the legal *fundador* of an establishment whose origins can be traced, like those of the other chapels in Sierra's will, to the middle of the century.

Nevertheless, the chapel does not appear to have been fully completed by the time that Sierra drew up his will in 1575. There is a second receipt for his donation to the chapel: on 19 February 1576, Sebastián Gómez, “*mayordomo* of the *casa de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*” confirmed the receipt of four *ducados* which Sierra had left to the *casa* (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 51r). As with the Vera Cruz receipt, there is no mention of the *obra*, only the *casa* to which the money was left. The works are nonetheless mentioned in the will, and considering that it was probably a relatively recent foundation, Sierra's bequest suggests that the building (or any rebuilding works) may not have been completed by 1575.

The chapel of la Limpia Concepción was located within the friary church of San Francisco, and was probably also in some state of incompleteness.<sup>22</sup> Several decades after Sierra's donation, Portillo noted that there was a confraternity of la Limpia Concepción de Nuestra Señora in San Francisco (Portillo, BNE MS 5579, f. 109r). The cloister and church were rebuilt following a generous grant of land, money and stone from Francisco de Madrid, *escribano* of the local council, in 1531 (ibid., ff. 105v–106r). The church features in a

sketch of Gibraltar by Anton van den Wyngaerde from 1567, but it appears to have been incomplete (Quintana Álvarez 2016, p. 846). Quintana has shown how the Concepción confraternity existed by circa 1562–3 (ibid., p. 857). The eponymous Marian image appears to have been commissioned in 1562 and completed the following year, which also marked the first known recorded donation for Masses to be said in the chapel (ibid., p. 857)<sup>23</sup>. Although the chapel appears to have been functional about a decade prior to Sierra's bequest, the will suggests that it was not entirely complete by then. Indeed, there is a specific mention of the *obra* in the receipt for the donation, which was made in the name of Nicolás de Sierra, "*mayordomo* of the Confraternity of *Nuestra Señora de [la] Concepción*" (Nuestra Señora de la Concepción), but signed by Sebastián Gómez at the former's request because he did not know how to write (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 51v). Dated 19 February 1576, it records the donation of four *ducados* "for the works of the chapel of Our Lady [*para la obra de la capilla de Nuestra Señora*]" (ibid., f. 51v). Works—*la obra*—were still ongoing.

In the same vein, the church of la Vera Cruz would have likely been in some state of incompleteness by 1575, even though we know it was up and running by then (and probably more complete by 1579). I would therefore suggest that the church was probably part of a string of circa mid-sixteenth century foundations, possibly even roughly coinciding with Juan del Campo Duque's will of 1555. Ultimately, when building (or, perhaps, rebuilding) works had begun is not known, but these two wills speak to a church that was still under construction in 1575, and which was able to celebrate Masses four years later.

One final piece of evidence *may*, however, shed some light on the history of the church of la Vera Cruz before 1555. An entry in a late-seventeenth century account book listing the possessions and rents of Don Carlos Venegas de Córdoba, son of Rodrigo Matías Venegas de Córdoba Manrique de Aguayo, Conde de Luque, contains an interesting reference to the church. The entries appear to date to and from 1693, and one includes "the rent [*zenso*] that Francisco Cuaresma pays for some houses on the *Calle Real* [Main Street] beside the *hermita de la Vera Cruz*" (AHDN LUQUE, C.192, D.1, f. 108r [28r]).<sup>24</sup> It continues:

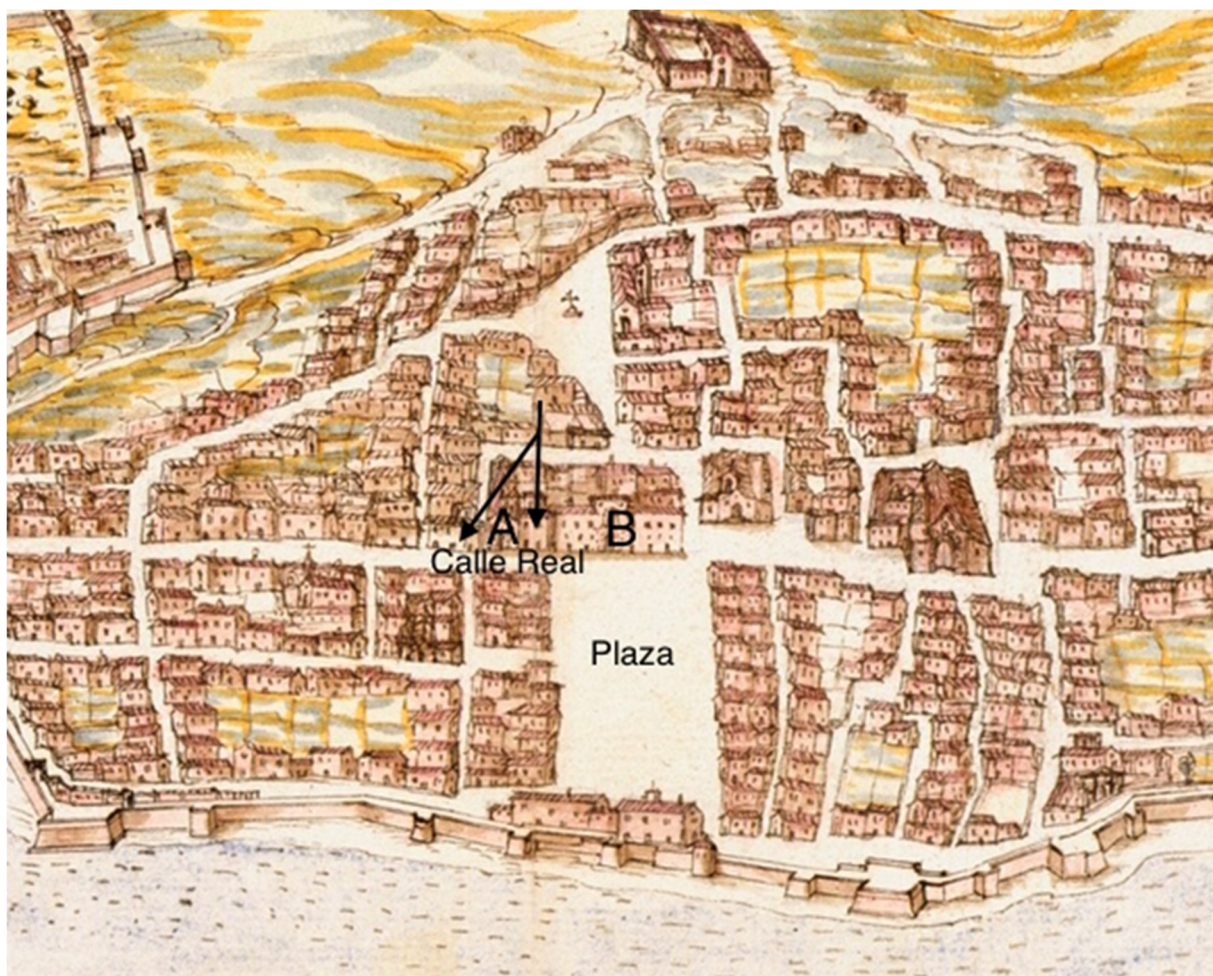
... this rent is of 8 *ducados* of rent per year, and it is paid by Francisco Cuaresma for some houses on the *Calle Real* beside the *hermita de la Misericordia*, I mean *de la Vera Cruz* [*de la misericordia, digo de la vera cruz*], which is recorded by a deed made before Alonso Jiménez *escrivano publico* in Gibraltar on 12 January 1541 (ibid., f. 108r [28r]).<sup>25</sup>

Was there a church of la Vera Cruz in 1541? It has not been possible to locate the document mentioned by the scribe, in the absence of which the exact meaning of his entry remains unclear. Was the scribe citing a 1541 deed which set the rent for houses which were *then* beside the *hermita* (i.e., the church existed in 1541)? Or was he merely using his own voice in the present tense to say that, at the time of writing, Francisco Cuaresma paid rent on houses which were located beside la Vera Cruz, the rent having been set by a deed in 1541?

This is clearly a problematic text, but one could tentatively argue for the latter reading of the document: although the scribe is clearly referring to an original deed, he is lending his own voice to the entry. In the first instance, he makes a mistake before correcting himself: "houses ... beside the *hermita de la Misericordia*, I mean *de la Vera Cruz*". He makes a further mistake when describing this entry in the book's contents page, where he notes "the rent which Francisco Cuaresma pays for his houses on the *Calle Real* beside the *plaza*", the *plaza mayor* being the location of la Misericordia, not la Vera Cruz (ibid., f. 1v; Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).<sup>26</sup>



These may be clues rather than mistakes. Although the houses were beside la Vera Cruz in the 1690s, if the church did not exist in 1541, they would indeed have been beside the *plaza* and la Misericordia (see Figure 9). The 1541 deed may therefore have referred to a house on the Main Street beside the main square (and maybe la Misericordia): these are the details which the scribe could have begun to copy down. He may have passively transcribed the location of the houses from the original document, but had to correct himself because by the 1690s the houses were beside la Vera Cruz, not the *plaza*. In so doing, however, he could have unwittingly revealed the fact that the church of la Vera Cruz did not exist in 1541. Without the original deed none of this is definitive, but this document may suggest that the church was built after 1541. As a circa mid-sixteenth century foundation, it may well have been the original, ground-breaking *obra* to which Sancho de Sierra donated in 1575.



**Figure 9.** Annotated detail from Luis Bravo de Acuña's 1627 plan of Gibraltar. Key: A = la Vera Cruz; B = la Misericordia. The arrows point to structures which are possibly the houses in question. British Library, London, Cartographic Items Additional MS 15152, f. 23r [© British Library, London].

### 5. The Confraternity of la Vera Cruz and San Francisco

Where the confraternity would have been based before the construction of its church is as yet unclear. Quintana has noted that it likely had strong links with the friary of San Francisco in Gibraltar, speculating that it may have been founded there before moving to the church (Quintana Álvarez 2016, pp. 869–70; Quintana Álvarez 2019, p. 2). Indeed, he has argued that it is "more than probable" that the Franciscans were linked to the "origins" of the Vera Cruz confraternity (Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, p. 2). It goes without saying that the strong Franciscan emphasis on Passion devotion went hand in hand with

a confraternity dedicated to the crucified Christ. Could the Vera Cruz have been based in the friary before their *casa* was constructed? We simply do not know. However, there is evidence of people who had links with both institutions. In his will, the cleric Alonso Romero declared that he was a brother of the Soledad and Vera Cruz confraternities (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 227r).<sup>27</sup> The deteriorated and fragmented will appears to date to 10 March 1580 (ibid., f. 254r). In any case, notes pertaining to its fulfilment show how Romero was dead shortly after: we have a receipt for two crusading bullas he took dated to 7 May 1580 (ibid., f. 254v). The funds had been paid by the priest Miguel Perez, described as his executor in a further undated entry (ibid., f. 254v). The undated receipt directly below that of the bullas by Hernán García de Cardenas, “*mayordomo* of the lady Santa Ana”, refers to Romero as *difunto* (deceased) (ibid., ff. 254v).<sup>28</sup> His will and death thus fall within the period which we have been looking at. And more to the point, it shows how his was a piety tied both to la Vera Cruz and the Franciscan friary, for the Soledad confraternity was based in San Francisco (Portillo, BNE MS 5579, f. 109r). Its full title, as recounted by Portillo, was “[la] Soledad y Entierro y Sepulcro de Cristo”: a confraternity devoted to Mary, but also to Christ (ibid., f. 109r). Romero’s will therefore suggests that there could indeed be some connections between both confraternities, or at least members of them, and so between the friary of San Francisco and the church of la Vera Cruz: neither confraternity was necessarily an island.

## 6. La Vera Cruz and Catholic Reform

It would not be entirely wrong to suggest that these wills raise more questions than they answer. They speak of *obras* without specifying what exactly these were, and sometimes provide little detail on the confraternities themselves. However, they are essential in providing a timeline for Gibraltar’s confraternities and churches, particularly la Vera Cruz. By the mid-sixteenth century, the confraternity already existed. The wills confirm that its church—its *casa*—was undergoing works shortly thereafter; it nonetheless appears to have existed and been in a functional state by 1575. By 1579 we know that the church, as a base for its confraternity, was fully open for business.

More importantly, the wills allow us to place both church and confraternity in a very specific context. About a century into Spanish rule, and coinciding with the Council of Trent (1545–63), Habsburg Gibraltar was experiencing a growth in local confraternities and devotions. The construction of the chapels and churches needed to cater for these devotions was a symptom of these developments, as the examples of la Vera Cruz, el Rosario and Limpia Concepción attest. The Blessed Sacrament confraternity was another prominent example. In its thirteenth Session (11 October 1551), the Council of Trent declared that “there is no room left for doubt, that all the faithful of Christ may, according to the custom ever received in the Catholic Church, render in veneration the worship of latria, which is due to the true God, to this most holy sacrament” (Waterworth 1848, p. 79).<sup>29</sup> Considering this emphasis on adoration of the Eucharist, the Gibraltarian confraternity’s devotional activities would no doubt have reflected a particularly Tridentine trend in eucharistic piety.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore, the religious expansion suggested by the wills allows us to place these developments in the context of the wider Catholic Reformation. Confraternities in Andalusia grew significantly over the course of the sixteenth century (Saavedra and López-Guadalupe Muñoz 1998, p. 37). These were places where, as Inmaculada Arias de Saavedra and Miguel Luis López-Guadalupe Muñoz put it, the laity “found . . . one of the few means which were offered to them for associationism and participation in a Church which was undoubtedly too hierarchical and which left little room for the intervention of the laity in its sphere” (ibid., p. 37).<sup>31</sup> The confraternity was also “a privileged vehicle of expression to manifest a form of understanding religion, different to a certain extent to that of the hierarchy and which has been called popular religion” (ibid., p. 37).<sup>32</sup> Both cite this, as well as the confessionalised “religious climate” of sixteenth century society, as reasons for these developments (ibid., p. 37).



The Diocese of Cádiz, of which Gibraltar was part, appears to have experienced precisely this type of growth in its confraternities and religious establishments (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 103r).<sup>33</sup> Arturo Morgado García has explained that there was an increase in church building during this period due to “modest economic prosperity” in the diocese in the sixteenth century (García 2008, pp. 19–20). In his survey of wills from the city of Cádiz from 1531 to 1600, Francisco Espinosa de los Monteros Sánchez also encountered several donations to the *obras* of the city’s religious buildings (Monteros Sánchez 2005, p. 160). The examples he cites begin in 1570, and it is difficult not to see such donations and developments as taking place in the same socio-religious context as those of Gibraltar (ibid., p. 160). It was in 1575 that Sancho de Sierra donated to the *obras* of various churches and chapels on the Rock. The evidence from Cádiz indicates a wider pattern of lay investment in urban religious infrastructure within the context of and possibly fuelled by the spirit of the Catholic Reformation. Gibraltar was not exempt from this process, and its wills arguably set the city, its religious establishments and inhabitants against this background.

Indeed, there are also interesting parallels with regards to confraternities. Among wills from Cádiz, Espinosa de los Monteros found that references to those of la Vera Cruz, la Misericordia, San Lázaro, Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria and Nuestra Señora del Rosario were the most numerous—the latter two only “to a lesser extent” (ibid., p. 156). This, he argues, “should be a faithful reflection of their peak and splendour” at this point (ibid., p. 156).<sup>34</sup> Confraternities were therefore experiencing growth and prosperity at this point, not unlike those in Gibraltar. The earliest dates for these *cofradías* that he has encountered in these wills roughly coincide with the chronology established for those from Gibraltar. Espinosa de los Monteros mentions San Telmo (1582), Nuestra Señora del Rosario (1575), Santa Catalina (1570), la Vera Cruz (1570), Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (1567), San Lázaro (1564), las Ánimas del Purgatorio (1561), Santísimo Sacramento (1561) and la Misericordia (1538) (ibid., pp. 154–8). Most appear to have been around from the second half of the sixteenth century.

We have already seen how several Gibraltarian confraternities and/or their churches and chapels had their origins in the mid-sixteenth century. It is in Sancho de Sierra’s will of 1575 and its 1575–6 receipts that we find nine confraternities which were actively up and running. And although the wills cited so far are those of men, women also invested in local confraternities and religious establishments. In her will of 19 January 1545, Mari Díaz not only willed the accompaniment of “the brothers and hospital of la Misericordia” at her funeral, but bequeathed an annual payment of six *reales* each to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament and the Hospital de la Santa Misericordia (AHPC PNSR 152, ff. 63v, 66v). These were to be paid each year on Saint John’s day (24 June), and two Masses (*remembranzas*) were to be said for her on this day or on its octave: one in the *iglesia mayor* (where the Blessed Sacrament confraternity was based) and the other in the Hospital de la Santa Misericordia (ibid., f. 66v; Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).<sup>35</sup> This is also the earliest reference to the *Santísimo Sacramento* (Blessed Sacrament) confraternity that I have encountered.

In her will of 3 January 1569, María de Toro made a perpetual arrangement to fund the candlewax and ornaments of the Blessed Sacrament confraternity, with the condition that the *cofrades* had two solemn Masses (*dos memorias remembranzas solemnes*) celebrated annually for her soul and that of her aunt on the feast days of the Ascension and Immaculate Conception (or on their octaves):

Likewise I bequeath two *ducados* of rent each year perpetually [and] forever for [literally “to help”] the candlewax and ornaments of the confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament of this city, with the condition that the brothers and *cofrades* of the Blessed Sacrament be obliged to arrange to have two solemn *remembranzas memorias* said each year perpetually [and] forever in the said *iglesia mayor*, and that they be said for my soul and for that of the said María de Toro my aunt, one on the day of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and another on the day

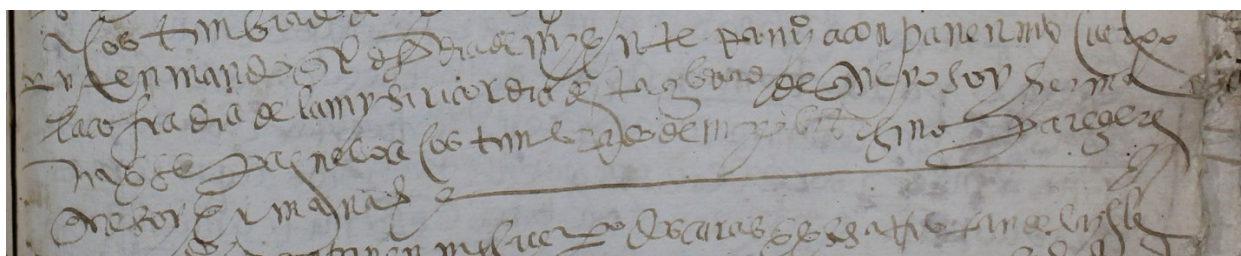
of the [Immaculate] Conception, of their offices or on their octaves . . . (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 151v)<sup>36</sup>

A tear obscures the exact funding arrangements for these Masses, although it appears as though any alms for them were to be paid from the two *ducados*, with the remaining funds to be kept by the confraternity (ibid., ff. 151v–151r). She would have been a woman of some standing, for she had the means to make these bequests; moreover, her husband, Fernando de Bocanegra, owned land in the district of Guadarranque in Gibraltar’s hinterland which was used to fund these arrangements (ibid., ff. 151r, 155v–158v). She was probably also well connected, for her late aunt was the wife of the *regidor* (alderman) Antón Arroyo (ibid., f. 156v). Be that as it may, María de Toro’s will shows that women could and did indeed invest both in eucharistic devotion and in the materiality of confraternal piety (the candlewax and ornaments).

Then there was the curious case of Isabel Muñoz. In her will of April 1561, she declared that:

Likewise I will that on the said day of my burial the confraternity of la Misericordia of this city, of which I am a sister [*hermana*], accompany my body and that the accustomed sum be paid from my goods if it should not appear that I am a sister (ibid., f. 100r) (Figure 10).<sup>37</sup>

She appears to have been somewhat uncertain about her standing vis a vis membership of the confraternity and payment of dues for their accompaniment at her funeral; if she should not appear to be a sister of the *cofradía* at the time of her death, then the accustomed alms were to be paid. It may be that the final line serves as a form of insurance clause in this regard; indeed, she may have been an *hermana* of la Misericordia when the will was made but was unsure what her status would be at the time of her death. But her will points to the fact that women were not only among the investors in Gibraltar’s spiritual infrastructure, but were able to join local confraternities.



**Figure 10.** Detail from Isabel Muñoz’s will (April 1561). AHPC, PNSR 152, f. 100r. Reproduced with the permission of the Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz [photo © Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz (cropped from larger original)].

In light of the evidence from Cádiz, it therefore appears that these foundations on the Rock were not isolated developments, but part of a wider movement in the region which saw the establishment and growth of confraternities and religious establishments. And the evidence from Gibraltar, like that from Cádiz, suggests that there were laypeople who were highly invested—both spiritually and financially—in this process (Monteros Sánchez 2005, pp. 147–60).

A particularly interesting connection can be made with regards to the establishment of Vera Cruz confraternities in the diocese and wider region of Cádiz.<sup>38</sup> That in the city of Cádiz appears to have existed by 1569 (Monteros Sánchez 2005, p. 155).<sup>39</sup> The oldest reference which Espinosa de los Monteros encountered in wills is from 1570 (Monteros Sánchez 2005, p. 155). He notes that it could have been founded a few years earlier, and related to the Franciscans’ arrival in 1566 (ibid., p. 155). Several other towns in the region established Vera Cruz confraternities during this period: for example, those in Jerez de la Frontera and Sanlúcar de Barrameda respectively dated to 1542 and 1544 (Monteros

Sánchez 2005, p. 155; 2009, pp. 8–9). That in Medina Sidonia existed by 1548, that in Puerto Real existed by 1551, and that in Chiclana existed by 1554 (Monteros Sánchez 2005, pp. 155–56; 2009, pp. 9–11). As the earliest reference to the confraternity in Gibraltar thus far is from 1555, we can consider it in the context of these foundations. Taking into account both Juan del Campo Duque's 1555 will and the fact that the confraternity's church may have been built after 1541, the developments in the diocese further suggest that both the *cofradía* and its church were also circa mid-sixteenth century foundations dating to this phase of regional and diocese-wide confraternal and devotional expansion.

Going beyond Cádiz, the Vera Cruz confraternity of Gibraltar can also be seen in the context of broader developments taking place during the Catholic Reformation. Quintana has suggested that the Gibraltarian confraternity was founded in the mid-sixteenth century, proposing Pope Paul III's *vivae vocis oraculo* of 1536 as a *terminus post quem* (Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 2–3). More recently, he has posited that this confraternity may have been a new foundation or the result of the "transformation" of an older one (Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, pp. 2–3). He highlights that in the case of Vera Cruz confraternities in the province of Cádiz (including areas then in the Archdiocese of Seville and the Diocese of Málaga), the *vivae vocis oraculo* "gave rise to the spread and diffusion of confraternities according to the model of the rules of that of Seville" (Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 2–3; Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, pp. 2–3). He notes the "spread" of Vera Cruz confraternities between the years 1542 and 1593 (respectively dates for the *cofradías* of Jerez and Jimena de la Frontera) as the bookends for this process, albeit adding that that the rules of only two such confraternities are known and that there is some disagreement over dates (Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 2–3; Forthcoming, p. 3).

He has further raised the possibility that the Gibraltar confraternity may also be connected to the 1538 rules of the Seville Vera Cruz confraternity (Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, pp. 1–2). Noting interesting precedents in Ronda and Jerez de la Frontera, he asks whether an earlier lay congregation could have been "constituted" as a confraternity after these rules (*ibid.*, p. 2). Taking into account "indirect" references to the confraternity from 1643–4 testimonies from the Rosario-Guardian Angel confraternity dispute which claimed that the Vera Cruz confraternity was older than the ninety-year-old Rosario confraternity, he states: "we can admit with full certainty that the confraternity of la Vera Cruz was founded, or adapted its rules to that of Seville, between 1538 and 1566", the latter being the earliest known date for the Rosario confraternity's existence (*ibid.*, pp. 3–4). He refines this to 1538–1554 if the Rosario confraternity existed by the latter date as suggested by the testimonies (*ibid.*, p. 4).

Through the Cádiz wills, we already have direct evidence that the confraternity in Gibraltar existed by 1555, but this oral papal decree allows us to explore another potential factor in its foundation. Dated to 7 January 1536, it granted indulgences to Vera Cruz confraternities, namely to the "confreres of the Holy Cross, or *Instituti Disciplinatorum*", or "to the confreres of the so-called confraternities of Discipline, or the Holy Cross, or Penitence" (*Confratribus Confraternitatum Disciplinatorum, seu sanctae Crucis, aut Poenitentiae nuncupatorum*) (Wadding 1736, pp. 413, 659).<sup>40</sup> The *vivae vocis oraculo* has been associated with the subsequent proliferation of these confraternities in the sixteenth century (see Susaeta 2000, pp. 459–60; Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 2–3; Forthcoming, pp. 2–3; López-Guadalupe Muñoz 2001, p. 390; Monteros Sánchez 2009, pp. 6, 15). In addition to other factors such as population growth and lay investment in confraternities, this papal 'boost' to the Vera Cruz cause could well have inspired the foundation and growth of the Gibraltarian confraternity.

The Council of Trent may have played a similar role. In his article on Vera Cruz confraternities in the Kingdom of Navarre, Gregorio Silanes Susaeta argued that the motives behind their establishment were "always" in line with concepts from the sixth session of the Council of Trent (13 January 1547) (Susaeta 2000, p. 460)<sup>41</sup>. This session on Justification railed "against the vain confidence of Heretics", who believed that "no one is absolved from sins and justified, but he that believes for certain that he is absolved and justified;



and that absolution and justification are effected by this faith alone" ([Waterworth 1848](#), pp. 36–37). Rejecting the Lutheran heresy of *sola fide* as "anathema" (see *On Justification*, Canon 29), the Council proclaimed that no one could be sure that they had obtained God's grace (*ibid.*, pp. 37, 48). Instead, the Fathers reinforced the importance of good works and penance:

... let no one herein promise himself any thing as certain with an absolute certainty; though all ought to place and repose a most firm hope in God's help. For God, unless men be themselves wanting to His grace, as he has begun the good work, so will he perfect it, working (in them) to will and to accomplish. Nevertheless, let those who think themselves to stand, take heed lest they fall, and, with fear and trembling work out their salvation, in labours, in watchings, in almsdeeds, in prayers and oblations, in fastings and chastity ... obedient to the Apostle, who says; We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh; for if you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live. (*ibid.*, p. 40)

The individual could not know whether they were in a state of grace, so they had to carry out good works and rely on God, who would inspire and support these acts. Individuals were moved to justification by God through the Holy Spirit, but they were also important agents in this process:

... while God touches the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy Ghost, neither is man himself utterly without doing anything while he receives that inspiration, forasmuch as he is also able to reject it; yet is he not able, by his own free will, without the grace of God, to move himself unto justice in His sight. (*ibid.*, p. 33)

Indeed, sinners had to undergo sacramental Confession, which would remit the "eternal punishment" for sin, followed by acts of penance, namely:

... satisfaction by fasts, alms, prayers, and the other pious exercises of a spiritual life ... for the temporal punishment, which, as the sacred writings teach, is not always wholly remitted, as is done in baptism, to those who, ungrateful to the grace of God which they have received, have grieved the Holy Spirit, and have not feared to violate the temple of God. (*ibid.*, p. 41)

The individual therefore had an important role to play in their salvation through works: "Be mindful whence thou art fallen ... Do penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance" (*ibid.*, pp. 41–42).

Such penitential concepts, as Gregorio Silanes Susaeta has highlighted, appear to have been "in agreement" with the reasons for founding these confraternities, and are reflected in the preamble of confraternal constitutions ([Susaeta 2000](#), pp. 460–61). As he puts it, "this is a second milestone in the emergence of confraternities of la Vera Cruz in Navarre: the favourable disposition of the Tridentine Council" ([Susaeta 2000](#), p. 460).<sup>42</sup> As penitential confraternities, Vera Cruz *cofradías* practiced acts of public penance like scourging (see [López-Guadalupe Muñoz 2001](#), pp. 390–92; [Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming](#), pp. 1–2). We do not have further information about the practices of the Vera Cruz confraternity in Gibraltar during its early years, but from Juan del Campo Duque's will of 1555, we know that its members owned and wore confraternal tunics. It would not be amiss to suggest that such tunics were worn for the purpose of public processions and acts of collective public penance, and therefore that the existence of the confraternity can be connected with these wider devotional and penitential trends. Supported by a growing lay population with an appetite for devotional investment, fuelled by the spirit of the Catholic Reformation and possibly inspired by Tridentine decrees, the emergence and growth of the Vera Cruz confraternity of Gibraltar could very possibly be connected with these wider developments. They too coincide with the establishment of Vera Cruz confraternities in the Cádiz diocese and region as a whole. Regardless of the exact date of foundation, it

is the timeline established by the wills which allow us to firmly place the origins of the *cofradía* of the Vera Cruz in Gibraltar within these very specific contexts of wider European religious developments.

## 7. Colonising the Landscape

But these changes should not only be seen in terms of the Counter Reformation. Although these wills and their associated devotional developments went hand in hand with the wider Catholic Reformation, these documents also coincide with the first century of Christian rule on the Rock. Nasrid Gibraltar surrendered to the Duke of Medina Sidonia in August 1462; prior to their surrender its Moorish inhabitants had offered to leave freely with their goods (and compensation for what was left behind) to the Kingdom of Granada (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 49v–50r).<sup>43</sup> Amidst a chaotic dispute over who would accept the surrender with Rodrigo Ponce de León, son of the Count of Arcos, feeling unable to accept their surrender until the arrival of his father and the Duke, the city was taken and the Moors fled to its fortress, which remained under siege (*ibid.*, ff. 50r–53v; see also Hills 1974, pp. 91–95).<sup>44</sup> When the Duke arrived, he agreed to wait for the Count's arrival so that the honour of the victory could be shared (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 54r). However, it had been rumoured that the Duke had subsequently and underhandedly threatened to take the Moors into slavery, and seize their goods (*ibid.*, f. 54v). Whatever happened, they duly surrendered the fortress to the Duke and the Rock was integrated into Christendom (*ibid.*, ff. 54v–55v). Although Portillo does not explicitly note it, it appears as though the Moorish inhabitants left and/or, more probably, were expelled, for what followed the conquest was not just a period of resettlement, but also Christianisation.<sup>45</sup>

The landscape was radically transformed in the succeeding years. What appears to have been the city's main mosque was converted into a church, what was to become the *iglesia mayor* of Saint Mary the Crowned (see Portillo, ff. 103v–104v, 109v; Finlayson and Finlayson 1999, pp. 162–66; Lane et al. 2014, pp. 152–53; Galliano 2015, pp. 1–13).<sup>46</sup> In his *Gesta Hispaniensa*, much of which appears to have been written from 1474, Alfonso de Palencia speaks of “the Church of Saint Mary, which was piously consecrated in the oratory of the Moors after it had been purified of all Mohammedan filth” after the Christian conquest of Gibraltar (Palencia 1999, p. 242).<sup>47</sup> Other mosques met the same fate. After the 1466–7 siege of Gibraltar, Juan de Gúzman, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, granted a mosque to the south of the city to the Order of Saint John to serve as its “house and church [*casa y iglesia*]”, and by 1468 this structure was known as the Church of San Juan (BL Add. MS 28352 (142.)–694, in Álvarez Vázquez 1999, pp. 162–63).<sup>48</sup> Portillo described how several other churches had either been mosques or had an Islamic past. The Church of San Sebastián—certainly the base of the eponymous confraternity—was described as “very old” (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r). He seems to suggest that the building had Islamic origins, for he writes how “it appears to be the work of Christians, although the sacristy does not” (*ibid.*, f. 109r). The Church of Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza in the Villa Vieja district had likewise been a mosque, while the *casa* of the miraculous Nuestra Señora de Europa, at the southernmost point of Gibraltar, also appeared to be “the work of Moors” (*ibid.*, ff. 26v–27r, 108v).<sup>49</sup> This could be seen in the Moorish vaulting within the building (*bóvedas moriscas*) (*ibid.*, f. 27r). Islamic spaces were converted into Catholic sacred spaces as the landscape was Christianised after 1462.

The conversion of mosques was likewise matched by the construction of new churches. Funded by the alms of citizens, a Conventual Franciscan friary was established in Gibraltar in 1471 (Gonzaga 1587, p. 901). Portillo noted that the Hospital de la Misericordia dated “from around the time that this city was won from the Moors” (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).<sup>50</sup> The Church of Santa Ana also existed by 1504, and may therefore have been among the new post-Reconquista foundations (Concepción 1690, p. 545).

This process of Christianisation also involved repopulation, which did not end with the onset of the sixteenth century. Diego Lamelas Oladán has suggested that Gibraltar could have had a population of around 1000 inhabitants by 1473 (Lamelas Oladán 1990, p. 6). But the following year, the city was forcibly depopulated of its Old Christians when the Duke of Medina Sidonia ceded (effectively sold) it to 4350 Jewish conversos from Cordoba and Seville, only for him to evict them two years later in 1476 (Lamelas Oladán 1990, pp. 10–26; Pleguezuelos Sánchez 2006, p. 32). As José Pleguezuelos Sánchez put it, there was a consequent “demographic vacuum” (Pleguezuelos Sánchez 2006, p. 32). The years 1502–3 saw efforts by the Catholic monarchs to repopulate the area after its annexation to the royal domain in 1502; as we have seen, the subsequent decades were ones of demographic growth (Gardoqui and Bethencourt 1966, pp. 343–48).<sup>51</sup> This all came on the back of royal attempts to replace Muslim populations along the coast of the Kingdom of Granada (ibid., p. 344). This was of course a practical move, but it also involved the ongoing colonisation of Gibraltar’s landscape—both demographic and spiritual.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, according to Portillo, it was held by tradition that the same *Reyes Católicos* ordered the *iglesia mayor* to be built as it stood in his day—i.e., on the site of the old mosque (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 103v–104r). The consecrated mosque made way for a more ‘Castilian’ gothic structure, a triumphant symbol of the Rock’s definitive integration into Christian society (Figures 11 and 12).<sup>53</sup>



Figure 11. The high altar of the Cathedral of Saint Mary the Crowned, Gibraltar.





**Figure 12.** Gothic vaulting above the high altar of the Cathedral of Saint Mary the Crowned, Gibraltar.

The religious developments which took place in sixteenth century Gibraltar can be seen as an extension of this spirit of reconquest. In his will of 18 December 1518, Juan de Sanabria declared: “I have begun to build a chapel in the Church of Our Lady Saint Mary the Crowned of this city for my burial” (AHDN LUQUE,C.454,D.6, f. 2r) (Figure 13).<sup>54</sup> Likewise, in his 1523 will, Gonzalo de Piña declared that he willed to be buried in the chapel that he was having built in the same church (Figure 14) (AHPC PNSR 153, ff. 6v–7r).<sup>55</sup> These are very physical manifestations of each testator’s piety, of their respective investments into their own spiritual welfare. But in building these impressive chapels, were they not also sharing in this Christian reconquest of the former mosque? These foundations further sacralised what had once been a site of Muslim sacred space, and claimed these plots not only for the benefactors’ souls, but for the Catholics of Gibraltar.



**Figure 13.** The Sanabria Chapel in the Cathedral of Saint Mary the Crowned.





**Figure 14.** The Piña Chapel, today the Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes in the Cathedral of Saint Mary the Crowned.

Although the cases of Juan Sanabria and Gonzalo de Piña are examples which date to the earlier end of the wills studied, they show how the construction of sacred spaces can and should also be seen as part of this ongoing process to build a Christian society on the Rock. Indeed, to some extent, the same can be said with regards to the foundation of newer churches and confraternities like la Vera Cruz. Possibly also driven by the Catholic Reformation, the founding and funding of these *obras* and *cofradías* can arguably be associated with this process of securing the Rock for Catholicism.

Is this a case of the Counter Reform meets the Reconquista? We do not know, but by the second half of the sixteenth century, and with the foundation of new chapels like la Limpia Concepción, la Vera Cruz and el Rosario, we find more and more spaces being reclaimed for Catholicism. The cityscape was continuously being altered to make way for these new sacred spaces.



There is evidence of both an awareness of this shift, as well as a pervasive memory of what some of these structures replaced. When Portillo wrote his *Historia* in the early seventeenth century, he made some interesting observations about the chapel of Nuestra Señora de Europa:

Now the church is much extended and increased, almost double that which most of the residents of this city knew. Inside it has a fine tower which was indeed Moorish, where the ulemas [*alfaquíes*] would climb to celebrate the Mohammedan ceremonies. Now it does not appear to be so; for it has been renovated in the modern style [*á lo moderno*]. (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 27r–v)<sup>56</sup>

The chapel was an important site for local devotion, but memory of what it once was remained. Its surviving Moorish vaulting, as well as Portillo's recollection of the ulema's tower (a minaret or minbar?) each highlight the fact that this sacred site had once been claimed by infidels. However, the renovation of the tower "in the modern style" eliminated a recognisably Muslim element in the structure. This may have been a stylistic choice as part of wider works, but it represented a further break with the building's Islamic past. One could feasibly ask whether this was the intended outcome of these later works, for reformation *á lo moderno* served to further distance the *casa* from its former association with Mecca.

Even later works came at the expense of older Moorish architecture. While the Moorish cloister at Saint Mary the Crowned was maintained, Portillo describes how recognisably Islamic elements within the church were removed, apparently to make way for a new altar:

This holy church was, as it appears, a Moorish mosque, as can be seen in the stonework which is in the *patio de los Naranjos* and the construction which we saw being demolished in the nave where the altar of the Name of Jesus now is; and it must not have been among the least which the Moors had, as could be seen by what was demolished and what can now be seen in the marbles which are in the said patio or cloister, for being, as they are, so similar to those of the church of Cordoba, both in colour as in length and thickness (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 103v–104r).<sup>57</sup>

This observation was a point of arguably quasi-antiquarian curiosity to Portillo, but it also appears as though impressive and significant elements of the older Islamic structure were destroyed in order to set up the altar of the Name of Jesus. This altar was almost certainly that of the eponymous confraternity which appears in the 1575 receipt attached to Sancho de Sierra's will (AHPC PNSR 153, f. 50r).<sup>58</sup> Considering the fact that Portillo wrote that he was still a child in 1553 and these works were within living memory, they would have probably taken place during the second half of the sixteenth century (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 4r). The 'reconquest' of Muslim elements within the building did not cease with the onset of the Catholic Reformation and the growth of local *cofradías*. The Christianisation of Gibraltar and its former mosques was an ongoing process, and on this particular occasion no doubt spurred on by the devotional impulses of the Catholic reform and the establishment of new chapels, churches and confraternities.

## 8. Christianisation and Catholic Reform on the Frontiers of Christendom

The wills under study here can therefore be set against a prolonged and long-drawn out period of Catholic resettlement and consolidation in Gibraltar, which by the sixteenth century coincided with the impulses of Trent and the wider Catholic Reformation. It is also worth remembering that Gibraltar was, par excellence, a border town on the frontiers of Catholic Christendom. When they granted the city its coat of arms in 1502 (Figure 15), the Catholic Monarchs declared that:

... according to its location [Gibraltar] is the key between these our kingdoms and the seas of east and west and the guard and defence of the Straits of the said

seas through which no vessels or persons can cross from one sea to the other without seeing it or stopping there ... (Paredes 2003, p. 42)<sup>59</sup>

Gibraltar was undoubtedly a strategic port. But it also stood at the crossroads between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and indeed, where Christianity met Islam.



**Figure 15.** The coat of arms granted by the Catholic Monarchs to Gibraltar in 1502 [author's photograph, © Archivo Municipal de San Roque].

In 1567, Anton van den Wyngaerde labelled Nuestra Señora de Europa "the end of Christendom" (*el fin de la cristiandad*) in one of his sketches of Gibraltar; opposite is Africa (Figure 16).<sup>60</sup> Several decades later Portillo too described Gibraltar as a border zone, noting that it was *en frontera de moros* ("on the frontier with Moors") (PortilloBNE MS 5579, f. 74v). He emphasised the dangers that lay across the Strait and beyond:

... because as it is a frontier and it is exposed to the incursions of enemies, who daily raid its districts, and as many residents go to their estates and spend the night there and in the morning find themselves captive and in the lands of the Moors, or killed by them, and how in these years there has been war with some nations of the west, many have not wished to endure so many dangers without reward (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 7r).<sup>61</sup>

Even though the area had been won for Christendom in 1462, North Africa—which is visible from Gibraltar (Figure 17)—remained a threat. But this menace was more than just a bogeyman to the residents of Gibraltar. In 1540, Turkish corsairs sacked the city and took many captives (see *ibid.*, ff. 74v–86r).<sup>62</sup> An account of the event by Pedro Barrantes Maldonado was published in Alcalá de Henares in 1566 (Maldonado 1566). The raid arguably remained engrained in local memory, for Portillo wrote that “no notable military event occurred in this city other than the regular attacks by Turks and Moors”, although another notable Turkish raid was repulsed outside Gibraltar on 8 August 1558 (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 86r–87v).<sup>63</sup> The Muslim threat was very real indeed, and these events can also be considered to be part of the local context in which our wills were drafted.

Indeed, during the 1540 attack the friary of San Francisco was sacked by the raiders (Maldonado 1566, f. E4v). In the friary refectory there is a fresco depicting the martyrs of Morocco (Figure 18) (Galliano 2016, pp. 16–19; Lane et al. 2017, pp. 12–18).<sup>64</sup> Canonised in 1481, these martyrs were Saint Berard of Carbio and his companions, who had been executed in Morocco in 1220 after preaching in the main mosque of Seville (see Ryan 2004, pp. 8–15).<sup>65</sup> The scene of martyrdom is rather vividly depicted: the friar stands with an axe in his head and a scimitar in his back. Blood flows from his fatal wounds, and the word “MARVECOS” (Morocco), likely part of a larger but still obscured inscription, identifies the subject matter. It is believed that this fresco was painted by the mid sixteenth century, and probably following the rebuilding of the friary after Francisco de Madrid’s donation in 1531 (see Lane et al. 2017, pp. 12–18; Galliano 2016, pp. 17–18). In other words, it was roughly contemporaneous with the 1540 raid. Would this image have acquired a new or perhaps more pronounced resonance as a result of the Turkish attack? The weapons used against the friar—his *Arma Christi*, as it were—would no doubt have recalled those used by Muslim raiders. If anything, this fresco would have served as a reminder and a warning as to the dangers which lay beyond the Straits, if only to the inhabitants of the friary itself. It is a very visual example of how the development of religious establishments in Gibraltar can be seen to have gone hand in hand with perceptions of both the Islamic threat and Gibraltar’s status as a frontier zone.



**Figure 16.** Nuestra Señora de Europa: *el fin de la cristiandad*. Detail from 1567 sketch of Gibraltar by Anton van den Wyngaerde. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Cod. Min. 41, f. 65v [© Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna].





**Figure 17.** A view of North Africa from Europa Point, Gibraltar.



**Figure 18.** The Martyrs of Morocco. Fresco painted in the refectory of the Convento de San Francisco (today the Convent, Gibraltar).

## 9. Concluding Remarks: Reconquista and Reformation?

The story of the church and confraternity of la Vera Cruz allows us to place Gibraltar in a very particular context: that of the Catholic Reformation. It is against this background of Catholic renewal that these wills provide evidence to fill in the blanks and place the church and confraternity of la Vera Cruz in the mid-sixteenth century against a background of Catholic renewal and reform. The Gibraltar of the mid to second half of the sixteenth century was one experiencing growth in its confraternities, devotions and religious foundations. But so was the diocese of Cádiz, and the wills from Gibraltar allow us to understand how the Rock was part of this wider movement in the Church. And if these wills are anything to go by, this was a process in which the laity themselves were actively involved.

At the same time, this movement can also be associated with a very localised 'reformation': the construction of a Catholic, Christian society on the ruins of the Islamic community which it had replaced. Phases of Christianisation, arguably informed by an acute awareness of the 'otherness' and very real threat posed by Islam, saw a determined effort to reform the (formerly Muslim) landscape as mosques were converted into churches and rebuilt *à lo moderno*.<sup>66</sup> Arguably, this too informed the religious climate behind foundations like the churches of el Rosario and la Vera Cruz, which possibly represented a continuation of the church-building and sacralisation of urban spaces which had begun in 1462 and continued well into Portillo's day. Reconquest and Reformation perhaps made strange but ideal bedfellows in sixteenth-century Gibraltar.

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## Abbreviations

AHDN	Archivo Historico de la Nobleza
AHDC	Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Cádiz
AHPC	Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz
BL	British Library
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España
BR	Biblioteca Real
PNSR	Protocolo Notarial de San Roque

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> On Portillo and the text, see (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 61–138; Bruña and Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 88–89; Silva 2008a, pp. 25–35).
- <sup>2</sup> On Cubero, his visit to Gibraltar and the text, see (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 228–38; Cravioto 2018, pp. 141–51).
- <sup>3</sup> On the plans of Gibraltar by Luis Bravo de Acuña, see their entry on the British Library online catalogue, accessed 5 July 2022 at <http://explore.bl.uk/BLVU1:LSCOP-ALL:BLL01004983419>. On Bravo and Gibraltar, see (Benady 2014, pp. 28–29).
- <sup>4</sup> '... e mando que el día de mi enterramiento me aconpañen la crus e clerigos de la dicha ygleçia mayor y las cruces e hermandades de el ospital de la mesiricordia y san sebastian y la vera crus desta dicha çudad'. (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 92r). The document is a *traslado* (copy) of the original, made on 2 December 1580 by the *escrivano* Alonso de Vera. See (ibid., f. 95v).
- <sup>5</sup> 'yten mando que por que soy ermano de la vera crus mando que estando en el articulo de mi muerte me vistan la tunica que en mi poder tengo como ermano con la qual mando que me entierren mi cuerpo'. Ibid., f. 92v.
- <sup>6</sup> (AHPC, PNSR 153, f. 7r). This document is a *traslado* (copy) of the original, made on 20 August 1581 by the *escrivano* Alonso de Vera. See ibid., f. 13r.
- <sup>7</sup> (AHPC, PNSR 153, f. 44r). Sancho de Sierra was a member of the Gibraltar city council, being described in council documents as *jurado* in 1530, *regidor* and *jurado* in 1531, and *regidor* in 1555. (Paredes et al. 2006, pp. 278, 283, 304).
- <sup>8</sup> Likely a reference to the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.
- <sup>9</sup> 'yten mando para la çera del santissimo sacramento desta ciudad quatro ducados en limosna de mis bienes yten mando otros quatro ducados para la obra de nuestra señora del rrosario desta ciudad y se pague de mis bienes mando otros quatro ducados para la obra de la capilla de la linpia conçeçpçion desta ciudad de mis bienes mando otros quatro ducados para la obra de la casa del señor santiago desta ciudad

otros quatro ducados mando para la obra de la casa de la santa vera cruz desta ciudad de mis bienes  
mando a el ospital de nuestra señora de los desamparados desta ciudad quatro ducados de mis bienes'. AHPC PNSR 153, f. 44r.

The receipt from Juan Mateos is signed by the *hermano* Alonso Delgado. See (ibid., f. 51r).

The venta de la Serrana is described as being within the limits of Gibraltar's municipal territory ('termino de esta dicha ciudad de gibraltar'). See (AHPC PNSR 152,, f. 21r). The document is a *traslado* (copy) of the original, made on 11 April 1631 by the *escrivano* Francisco de Mendoza. See (ibid., ff. 21r, 29r).

'yten mando que en [la] yglesia de la vera crus [de es]ta ciudad se me diga u[na?] rremenbransa solene por mi anima y de mis difuntos el dia de la linpia consesion de nuestra señora o en su otavario y de limosna por la dicha rremenbransa mando un ducado de limosna perpetuamente del tributo que me paga cristobal de escobal voticario y doi poder a los mayordomos y hermanos mayores que son o fueren de la dicha yglesia para cobrar el dicho ducado de tributo y si se rredimiere lo vuelvan a ynponer y para todo les doy poder cunplido'. (Ibid., f. 27r).

'... dezimos que por quanto este presente año de la fecha la biuda de pedro rrodriguez sastre vezina desta çuadad nos vendio una tienda ques en la calle rreal de la dicha çuadad a la esquina de la calle que desiende de la yglesia de la vera cruz hazia el muro de la carneçeria alindando con casas de diego de natera vezino desta çuadad ... '. (AHDN LUQUE,C.541.D.70, ff. 2r-v. Ana Nuñez is named on f. 3r).

'Mando que me aconpañen las cofadrias [sic] de esta ciudad y declaro que soy ermano de la cofradia de la ssanta vera cruz y a las demas se pague la limosna acostumbra'. (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 132v).

My thanks to Javier for kindly sharing his paper ahead of its forthcoming publication.

'Pudiera ser que la presencia de maestros canteros y alarifes fuera aprovechada para levantar la ermita o para adecentarla'. (Quintana Álvarez Forthcoming, p. 5).

'... un palacio cubierto de teja que nosotros tenemos encorporado en las casas de los menores hijos de juan de la parra questan junto a la ygleçia de senor santiago de esta çuadad'. *Escritura de compraventa otorgada por Francisco Hernández e Isabel de Mesa, su mujer, a favor de Carlos de Villegas [II señor de Benahavis] de un palacio cubierto de teja en la ciudad de Gibraltar (Reino Unido)*, (AHDNLUQUE,C.543,D.27, f. 2r).

'... una casa con su horno ques en esta çuadad en la calle alta junta a la esquina de la calle que sube a la yglesia de santiago ... '. (AHDN LUQUE,C.541,D.71, ff. 2r-v). Further on, *la Calle Alta* is called 'la calle alta de las turbas'. See (ibid., f. 6v).

'1599 marzo 20, Gibraltar. Acuerdo del vicario y regidores de Gibraltar en cumplimiento del provisor de la diócesis, para la traslación de la antigua iglesia de Santiago a la ermita del hospital de la Misericordia, reducido al de los Desamparados', Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Cádiz, Sección Gibraltar, Serie Visitas 2, ed. by Francisco Javier Quintana Álvarez, in (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 1170–72).

(Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 774); '1646 abril 24, Jimena', in AHDC, Sección Gibraltar, Autos Varios 124, cited and quoted in (Quintana Álvarez 2017, p. 774).

My thanks to Glyn Redworth for raising this point.

On San Francisco, the Limpia Concepción chapel and local devotion, see (Quintana Álvarez 2016, pp. 843–75; AHDN LUQUE,C.192,D.1). The original foliation has been crossed out by a more modern hand, and the text refoiled in pencil. I will cite both numbers, the original following the shelfmark followed by the refoiled number in square brackets, as the book's contents page uses the original foliation. On the text, see its entry on *Portal de Archivos Españoles*, accessed 3 March 2021 at <http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/description/3994551?nm>.

On the image, see (Quintana Álvarez 2016, pp. 857–58).

'zenso que paga francisco cuaresma sobre unas casas en la calle real junto a la hermita de la bera +'. (AHDN LUQUE,C.192,D.1, f. 108r [28r]). Although the book itself is undated, the entry for the *cortijo* (farmhouse) of Los Barrios notes that '... presently, this year of 1693, it is generating 300 ducados' [... y de presente esta ganando este año de mill seisçientos y nobenta y treis tresçientos ducados]. The entry below it is later, as it refers to 'this present year of [1]737'. See (ibid., f. 4r [3r]). However, there are further references to 1693 being the present year, with another entry noting that 'the *cortijo del Cañuelo* is leased for the year 1694' (ibid., f. 5r [12r]). The entries therefore appear to date to and from 1693.

'este zenso es de 8 ducados de zenso al año y lo paga francisco quaresma sobre unas casas en la calle real junto a la hermita de la misericordia digo de la bera cruz consta por escriptura otorgada ante Alonso Jiménez escrivano publico en 12 de henero de 1541 años'. (Ibid., f. 108r [28r]).

'el zenso que paga francisco quaresma sobre sus cases en la Calle Real junto a la plaza'. (Ibid., f. 1v) (the contents page was not refoiled). Portillo described how the *ermita* and Hospital of la Misericordia was located on the main square, the *plaza mayor*. La Vera Cruz was on the Main Street, the *Calle Real*. See (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r). There has been some debate as to the exact location of the hospital-hermitage of la Misericordia. Manolo Galliano has suggested that it was represented by the cluster of small buildings on the western end of the square; Quintana has identified it as the larger building on the eastern side of the *plaza*. See (Galliano 2019, pp. 53–55; Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 565, 799–800). Local historian Neville Chipulina has also addressed the issue in an interesting blog article. See (Chipulina 2018). I argue that the large building on the east of the square is more likely to have represented the Misericordia complex.



- 27 '... y declaro que soy hermano de la cofradia de la soledad y de la santa vera cruz'. (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 227r).
- 28 This is a reference to the Church of Santa Ana (see *ibid.*, f. 254v). Further receipts regarding the fulfilment of Romero's will and codicil date to later in 1580. See (*ibid.*, ff. 256r–v).
- 29 On the thirteenth Session, see (Waterworth 1848, pp. 75–91).
- 30 On eucharistic devotion and the Counter Reformation, see also, *inter alia*, (Brian 2014, pp. 185–203; Petersen 2016, pp. 115–29; McGinness 1988, pp. 100–7).
- 31 'Los laicos encontraron en las cofradías uno de las pocos cauces que se les ofrecían para el asociacionismo y la participación en una Iglesia sin duda demasiado jerárquica y que dejaba poco margen para la intervención de los seglares en su seno ...'. (Saavedra and López-Guadalupe Muñoz 1998, p. 37).
- 32 '... al tiempo que un vehículo de expresión privilegiada para manifestar una forma de entender la religion, distinta en cierto modo a la de la jerarquía y que se ha dado en llamar religiosidad popular'. (*Ibid.*, p. 37).
- 33 Portillo notes that Gibraltar was in the Diocese of Cádiz and Algeciras. See (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 103r).
- 34 '... lo cual debe ser un fiel reflejo de su apogeo y esplendor en aquella época ...'. (Monteros Sánchez 2005, p. 156).
- 35 Portillo notes that the Blessed Sacrament confraternity was based in Saint Mary the Crowned. See (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).
- 36 'Yten mando para ayuda a la sera y hornamentos de la cofradia del santo sacramento desta çiudad dos ducados de renta en cada un año perpetuamente para sienpre jamas con cargo que los hermanos y cofrades del santo sacramento sean obligados a hazer dezir y que se digan por mi anima y por el anima de la dicha maria de toro mi tia en la dicha yglesia mayor en cada un año perpetuamente jamas dos memorias rrenenbranças solenes una el dia de la asunçion de nuestro señor jesu xpo y otra el dia de la conçeçion de sus oficios o en sus otavarios ...'. (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 151v). The document is a *traslado* (copy) of the original, made on 27 September 1580 by the *escribano* Rodrigo Muñoz. See (*ibid.*, f. 153v).
- 37 'Yten mando que dicho dia de my enterramiento aconpanen my cuerpo la cofradia de la mysiricordia desta ciudad de que yo soy hermana y se pague lo acostumbrado de mys bienes si no pareçiere que soy ermana'. (AHPC PNSR 152, f. 100r). A tear on f. 102v obscures the day on which the will was made.
- 38 On this point, see also (Quintana Álvarez 2019, pp. 2–3; Forthcoming, pp. 2–3). On confraternities in the province of Cádiz, see (Monteros Sánchez 2009, pp. 3–15).
- 39 Monteros Sánchez (2005, p. 155). On this confraternity, see also (Monteros Sánchez 2009, p. 13 and n. 43 on p. 13).
- 40 '... necnon Confratribus sanctae Crucis, seu Instituti Disciplinatorum magnas concessit Indulgentias ...'. (Wadding 1736, pp. 413, 659). I am here quoting from references to the *vivae vocis oraculo* as they appear in José Maria Ribeiro de Fonseca's second edition of the sixteenth volume of Luke Wadding's *Annales minorum* (1736). On the decree, also see (Susaeta 2000, pp. 459–60; Herrero 1999, pp. 60–61; Idígoras and Gil 2003, p. 141 and n. 38 on p. 141).
- 41 On the sixth session of the Council of Trent, see (Waterworth 1848, pp. 30–53).
- 42 'Este es un segundo jalón en el surgimiento de las cofradías de la Vera Cruz en Navarra: la disposición favorable del concilio tridentino'. (Susaeta 2000, p. 460).
- 43 On this initial offer see (Portillo, BNE MS 5579, ff. 49v–50r). On the surrender of Gibraltar, see (*ibid.*, ff. 49r–55v).
- 44 (*Ibid.*, ff. 50r–53v). For an overview of the events of the 1462 siege, see (Hills 1974, pp. 91–95).
- 45 On the repopulation of Gibraltar, see (Pleguezuelos Sánchez 2006, pp. 31–32).
- 46 Portillo notes that the church appeared to have been 'a Moorish mosque'. For his discussion of the *iglesia mayor*, see (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 103v–104v). He adds that it was called Santa María la Coronada because Gibraltar was conquered from the Moors on the Octave of the Assumption. See (*ibid.*, f. 109v). For archaeological evidence of the mosque see (Finlayson and Finlayson 1999, pp. 162–6; Lane et al. 2014, pp. 152–53). For an overview of the history of the mosque and its conversion into a church, see (Galliano 2015, pp. 1–13).
- 47 '... ecclesia beata Marie, quae in oratorio Maurorum eliminata omni Machumetistarum spurcicia sancte consecratur'. (Palencia 1999, p. 242) (the page number cited includes two pages, both the Spanish translation of the text as well as the Latin original). While I have translated the Latin quote in light of the Spanish translation of the Latin provided by Tate and Lawrance, I have opted for some differences in the English translation of the Latin (for example, 'in the oratory of the Moors' for *in oratorio Maurorum* instead of 'antigua mezquita' [ancient or old mosque]). On the *Gesta*, see the Introduction to Palencia (1998, pp. lvii–lviii).
- 48 The building was granted to Fray Diego Bernal, of the Order of Saint John and *comendador* of Trebejo, Bodonal and Figueroa, in thanksgiving for his participation in the siege, in which Gibraltar was taken in the name of the royal pretender Alfonso 'XII'. British Library (cited as British Museum), London, Add. MS 28352 (142.)–694, ed. by Manuel Álvarez Vázquez in (Álvarez Vázquez 1999, pp. 162–63). On the grant, the siege and Bernal, see (Álvarez Vázquez 1999, pp. 149–61).
- 49 The section in Portillo's *Historia* on Nuestra Señora de Europa was expanded by a later hand, possibly his son Tomás del Portillo. See (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 83–84, 95–96).
- 50 "Es muy antiguo, del tiempo casi que esta ciudad se ganó á los moros". (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).
- 51 Also see the documentary appendix in (Gardoqui and Bethencourt 1966, pp. 365–70).

- On religious reformation and the landscape, albeit in an early modern British and Irish context, see (Walsham 2012).
- On the rebuilding of the church, also see (Galliano 2015, pp. 19–39).
- ‘... yo tengo comensada a haçer una capilla en la ygleçia mayor de nuestra señora sancta maria la coronada desta ciudad para mi enterramiento’. (AHDN LUQUE,C.454,D.6, f. 2r). The clauses of this will are copies made by the council’s *escribano*, Rodrigo de Porres Villavicencio, on 5 November 1698. See (ibid., ff. 2r, 2v–3r). Portillo notes that the chapel was beside the high altar, ‘on the side of the Gospel (*á la banda del evangelio*)’ (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 104v). The Gospel was read on the left side of the altar; as such the Sanabria chapel is that to the left of the high altar. See (Talavera 1496, ff. a5r–v [131r–v]) (I am here citing both the original signature as well as the foliation which has later been added in pencil. On this text, see its entry on USTC, accessed 3 May 2022 at <https://www.ustc.ac.uk/editions/333875>).
- AHPC PNSR 153, ff. 6v–7r. Portillo notes that the Piña chapel was ‘in the cloister or Patio de los Naranjos’ (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 104v).
- ‘Ahora está muy ampliada y engrandecida la iglesia casi al doble de lo que conocimos la mayor parte de los vecinos de esta ciudad. Tiene dentro de la iglesia una buena torre, que si fue morisca donde los alfaquies se subian á hacer las ceremonias mahometicas, ahora no lo parece; antes está renovada á lo moderno’. (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 27r–v). Although it appears as though these words are in Portillo’s hand, the preceding paragraph includes additions in a later hand, most notably regarding the donation of a lamp to the *ermita* in 1625—over a decade after Portillo’s death by January 1610. Quintana has identified this hand as that of Portillo’s son, Tomás del Portillo. See (Quintana Álvarez 2017, pp. 95–96, 198–99). On Portillo’s date of death, see (ibid., pp. 78–79).
- ‘Era esta santa iglesia, á lo que parece mezquita morisca, como lo muestra la fabrica que está en el patio de los naranjos y la obra que vimos derribar en la nave donde está ahora el Altar del Nombre de Jesus; y no debía ser de las menores que los moros tenían, como lo demostraba lo derribado y lo que ahora se ve en los mármoles que están en el dicho patio ó claustro, por ser, como son, tan parecidos á los de la iglesia de Cordova, asi en color, como en longitud y grueso’. (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 103v–104r).
- Portillo notes that the *Nombre de Jesús* confraternity was based in Saint Mary the Crowned. See (Portillo BNE MS 5579, f. 109r).
- ‘... segund su sitio es llave de nuestros reynos e las mares de levante e poniente e guarda e defensa del estrecho de las dichas mares por donde ningunos navíos ni gentes de las unas mares a las otras non pueden pasar sin la ver o hazer escala en ella ...’. (Paredes 2003, p. 42).
- The recto of the sketch is signed by Wyngaerde and dated to 1567. See (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Cod. Min. 41, f. 65v).
- ‘... porque como es frontera, y está expuesta á los incursos de los enemigos, que tan de ordinario les corren sus terminus, y como muchos vecinos van á sus haciendas, y anochecen en ellas y por la mañana se hallan cautivos y en tierra de moros, ó muertos por ellos, y como estos años ha habido guerra con algunas Naciones del Poniente, no han querido muchos aguardar a tantos peligros sin sueldo’. (PortilloBNE MS 5579, f. 7r). On Portillo’s reference to war ‘with some nations of the west’, namely the Anglo-Spanish War which concluded with the signing of the Treaty of London in 1604, see Antonio Torremocha Silva’s note in his edition of Portillo’s text; (Portillo 2008, n. 38 on p. 45).
- The event is discussed in some length by Portillo. See (Portillo BNE MS 5579, ff. 74v–86r).
- ‘No sucedia cosa notable militar en esta ciudad mas de los rebatos ordinarios de turcos y moros’. (PortilloBNE MS 5579, ff. 86r–87v).
- On the refectory and the frescoes, see (Galliano 2016, pp. 16–19; Lane et al. 2017, pp. 12–18).
- On the martyrs of Morocco and their veneration, see (Ryan 2004, pp. 8–15).
- On religious reformation and the landscape, see also (Walsham 2012).

## References

### Abbreviations:

AHDN	Archivo Historico de la Nobleza
AHDC	Archivo Histórico Diocesano de Cádiz
AHPC	Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz
BL	British Library
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España
BR	Biblioteca Real
PNSR	Protocolo Notarial de San Roque

## Primary Sources

### Archives:

Archivo Histórico de la Nobleza, Toledo:

- (AHDN LUQUE,C.192,D.1) Libro de las posesiones y censos de que se componen los dos mayorazgos que Don Carlos Venegas de Cordova mi señor posee en la ciudad de Gibraltar/Libro de cuentas de administración relativas a las posesiones y censos que en Gibraltar (Cádiz), Marbella (Málaga) y Estepona (Málaga), posee Carlos Venegas de Córdoba [hijo de Rodrigo Matías de Córdoba Mandrique de Aguayo, II conde de Luque], AHDN LUQUE,C.192,D.1.
- (AHDN LUQUE,C.454,D.6) Testimonio firmado por Rodrigo de Porres Villavicencio, escribano del cabildo de Gibraltar (Reino Unido), en 1698, de una cláusula del testamento que otorgó Juan de Sanabria, regidor de dicha villa, ante Francisco de Madrid, escribano de ella en 1518, de la fundación de una capellanía en la iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Santa María la Coronada que era patrono [Egas Salvador Venegas de Córdoba Villegas, III] conde de Luque, AHDN LUQUE,C.454,D.6.
- (AHDN LUQUE,C.541.D.70) Escritura de compraventa otorgada por Diego de Acepto y María Muñoz, su muger, a favor de Estefanía de Suazo Mendoza, [(II) señora de Benahavís], de una tienda en la ciudad de Gibraltar (Reino Unido), con cargo de un censo perpetuo en cada un año, data en Gibraltar (Reino Unido) a 16 agosto 1580, AHDN LUQUE,C.541.D.70.
- (AHDN LUQUE,C.541.D.71) Escritura de compraventa otorgada por Juan de la Parra, vecino de Gibraltar (Reino Unido), a favor de Estefanía de Suazo Mendoza, [(II) señora de Benahavís], de una casa con su horno situada en dicha ciudad, con cargo de un censo annual a favor del patronato que fundó Alonso García de Palma, data en Gibraltar (Reino Unido) a 6 marzo de 1581, AHDN LUQUE,C.541,D.71.
- (AHDN LUQUE,C.543,D.27) Escritura de compraventa otorgada por Francisco Hernández e Isabel de Mesa, su mujer, a favor de Carlos de Villegas [II señor de Benahavis] de un palacio cubierto de teja en la ciudad de Gibraltar (Reino Unido), AHDN LUQUE,C.543,D.27.

#### Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz, Cádiz:

- (AHPC PNSR 152) Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz, Protocolo Notarial de San Roque 152.
- (AHPC PNSR 153) Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz, Protocolo Notarial de San Roque 153.

#### Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid:

- (Portillo BNE MS 5579) Alonso Hernández del Portillo, *Historia de la muy noble y más leal ciudad de Gibraltar*, BNE MS 5579.

#### Biblioteca Real, Madrid:

- (Cubero, BR MS II/1550) Cubero Sebastián, Pedro. Year. *Viages por las quatro partes del mundo, hech-os i escritos desde 1671 hasta 1699/por el Doctor Don Pedro Cubero Sebastián Presbítero: Van descripciones generales de África i Europa, particulares de provincias i Ciudades i en especial un epitome histórico de Gibraltar*, BR MS II/1550.

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