Between Christian and Jew
Conversion and Inquisition in the Crown of Aragon, 1250–1391
Paola Tartakoff

In 1341 in Aragon, a Jewish convert to Christianity was sentenced to death, only to be pulled from the burning stake and into a formal religious interrogation. His confession was as astonishing to his inquisitors as his brush with mortality is to us: the condemned man described a Jewish conspiracy to persuade recent converts to denounce their newfound Christian faith. His claims were corroborated by witnesses and became the catalyst for a series of trials that unfolded over the course of the next twenty months. Between Christian and Jew closely analyzes these events, which Paola Tartakoff considers paradigmatic of inquisitorial proceedings against Jews in the period. Prosecutions such as the 1341 trial were understood by papal inquisitors to be in defense of Christianity against perceived Jewish attacks, although Tartakoff shows that Christian fears about Jewish hostility were often exaggerated. Drawing together the accounts of Jews, Jewish converts, and inquisitors, this cultural history offers a broad study of interfaith relations in medieval Iberia.

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