the parts, and the parts between themselves, which is the determination of the best and learned writers: and whereby the Moors are not excluded from beauty; there being in this description no consideration of colours, but an apt connexion and frame of parts and the whole. Others there be, and those most in number, which place it not only in proportion of parts, but also in grace of colour. . . And by this way likewise the Moors escape the curse of deformity, there concurring no stationary colour, and sometimes not any unto beauty.

. . . [B]eauty is determined by opinion, and seems to have no essence that holds one notion unto all. . . Thus flat noses seem comely unto the Moor, an aquiline or hawked one unto the Persian, a large and prominent nose unto the Roman, but none of all these are acceptable in our opinion. . . Thus we that are of contrary complexions accuse the blackness of the Moors as ugly. But the spouse in the Canticles excuseth this conceit, in that description of hers[elf], I am black, but comely. And howsoever Cerberus, and the furies of Hell be described by the poets under this complexion, yet in the beauty of our Saviour blackness is commended, when it is said his locks are bushy and black as a raven. So that to infer this as a curse, or to reason it as a deformity, is no way reasonable. . . .

**THOMAS CALVERT (1605/6–79)**

_The blessed Jew of Marocco: or, A Blackmoor Made White . . . by Rabbi Samuel, a Jew turned Christian . . . to which are annexed a diatriba of the Jews sins_ (York: T. Broad, 1648), 15–21, 31, 33, 42–43.

Thomas Calvert translated into English the testimony of the eleventh-century Fezzan Jew Samuel Marochitanus in _The blessed Jew of Marocco_. First published in Latin in the year 1339, the authenticity of the epistle of Samuel of Morocco has never been confirmed. However, its presentation of a converted Jew and its justification, excerpted here, of Jewish tribulations, may explain why it appeared in more than 20 printings prior to 1500, and 11 more before Calvert’s edition.

Keywords: Jews—Blood Libel—Poisoners—Body Odor—Male Menstruation

Now if any ask what is [the Jews’] misery, and what is the cause, I shall unfold it:

First, there is the judgment of God upon them, they prayed Christ’s blood might be upon them, and upon their children, it is so, it follows and haunts them wherever they go; few states and kingdoms entertain them, and where they are entertained, they are kept under, and made to endure very hard things, the state serving their own ends by them. . . . Now besides this great sin of murdering Christ once, they have other notorious vices that will make any Christian commonwealth first or last vomit them out, unless they
leave their Jewish pranks. . . . They used by craft and by coin to buy and get of the consecrated bread which was left at a Christmas sacrament of the Lord’s supper, and prick it, burn it, and very basely and scornfully abuse it, because they heard Christians call it the body of Christ. . . . Sometimes they were accused for poisoning of wells and springs to make an end of Christians, sometimes for beggaring Christians by excessive usury and extortion; sometimes for clipping of coin, for magic, for cozenage, etc. But their cursing of Christ and Christians, their imprisoning of their dearest friends, and laying some foul false accusations against them, if they smell, that they intend to turn Christians, makes them oftentimes intolerable, some of their rabbis reading such lectures as these, “A Jew may murder or stay a baptized Jew without sin.” So much are they bent to shed the blood of Christians that they say a Jew needs no repentance for murdering a Christian; and they add to that sin to make it sweet and delectable, that he who doth it, it is as if he had offered a corban to the Lord, hereby making the abominable sin an acceptable sacrifice.109 But beyond all of these they have a bloody thirst after the blood of Christians. In France and many kingdoms they have used yearly to steal a Christian boy, and to crucify him, fastening him to a cross, giving him gall and vinegar, and running him in the end through with a spear, to rub their memories afresh into sweet thoughts of their crucifying Christ, the more to harden themselves against Christ, and to show their curst hatred to all Christians. . . . Our diligent Foxe hath given us notice that when England gave Jews harbour, they got our English children, and sometimes crucified them in diverse places, as you may find in Acts and Monuments, and he publishes it withal in his Latin sermon at the baptism of a Jew. There is an excellent relation, if it can be proved to bear its weight with truth, to show the original of child-crucifying among the Jews. . . . [A] certain prophet of theirs when he was at point of death, did prophesy of the Jews thus: “Know ye (sayeth he) this for a most certain truth, that you can never be healed of this shameful punishment wherewith you are so vexed, but only by Christian blood.” This punishment so shameful, they say, is that Jews, men as well as females, are punished cursu menstruo sanguinis, with a very frequent blood-flux. These words (sayeth the converted Jew) the Jews did take with a mistake, for hereupon to heal themselves they every year get the blood of some Christian child, whom they murder; whereas if they had understood aright, this sanguine Christiano, was Christ’s blood that they should get, which in the sacrament we receive, to the healing and saving of sinners, we are presently healed of our father’s curse. . . .

I would not charge the Jews falsely, but I think they are often charged with things that truth gives warrant for. . . . Some will aver it that all Jews yield a stink and filthy savour to them that converse with them, and that they judge this cannot be helped better than by the drinking of the blood of Christians. . . . I leave it to the learned to judge and determine by writers or

109 Corban = An offering.