Jesuits and Conversos as a “Tragic Couple”: Introductory Remarks

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Abstract

This article introduces the phenomenon of Jesuit-converso interactions, mostly in the early modern Iberian world. It summarizes the shifting attitudes of the Society of Jesus vis-à-vis New Christians of Jewish origin as actual or potential Jesuits and maps the multifaceted and variegated interplay between Jesuit priests and converso laymen, understood as a “tragic couple” relationship. This brief survey emphasizes the historiographical contribution of the last generations of Jesuit scholars, and of the five articles included in this special issue of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, to disclose a more overt “historical memory” of the Society of Jesus.

Keywords

Jesuits – conversos – Jews – historiography – Inquisition – purity of blood – Iberian world

In July 2012, I had the privilege of taking part in the international conference “The Tragic Couple,” held at Boston College, which aimed to explore the multiple interactions between Jesuits and Jews throughout history.¹ While the complete accuracy of the terms “tragic” and “couple” might be questioned in this case, I believe that the title expresses the sincere wish of contemporary Jesuit scholars to build friendly bridges and historical convergences with Jews and Judaism, as part of a broader policy of reconciliation initiated by the Catholic

1 James Bernauer and Robert A. Maryks, ed., *“The Tragic Couple”: Encounters between Jews and Jesuits* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

Church since the Second Vatican Council (1962–65).² As a historian who studies New Christians, I also see no objection to adopting these terms to depict the long-term relationship between Jesuits and conversos. Indeed, in contrast to the generally hostile approaches of Jesuits to rabbinic Judaism and professing Jews during the early modern era, Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491–1556) and many of the first Jesuits were positive and welcoming in their perceptions of converted Jews to Christianity, including the Iberian New Christian group.³

That said, these amicable attitudes—initially studied by Eusebio Rey in the 1950s and by James W. Reites in the 1970s—were reversed by the end of the sixteenth century, creating an enduring “tragic couple” situation.⁴ As we shall see in some detail, this shift was never total nor monolithic.⁵ Such a dynamic and complex portrait of the Jesuit-converso relationship is largely the result of a vibrant recent historiography. In addition to Rey’s and Reites’s pioneering contributions, contemporary Jesuit scholars combine historical rigor, intellectual curiosity, and (self-) criticism in an engaged attempt to disclose a more accurate and overt “historical memory” of the Society of Jesus vis-à-vis converted Jews and New Christians, a memory that has been overshadowed by many years of exclusion and prejudice. These scholars include: Robert Maryks, Francisco de Borja Medina, Emanuele Colombo, John Patrick Donnelly, Marc Rastoin, and Thomas M. Cohen.⁶ In the following pages, I will briefly characterize this “tragic couple,” not only from the perspective of conversos as actual or potential Jesuits, as the bulk of scholarship insists, but also in terms of the interactions between non-Jesuit conversos and members of the Society of Jesus. Finally, I will stress the historiographical contribution of the five essays

2 John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933–1965* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Thomas F. Michel, ed., *Friends on the Way: Jesuits Encounter Contemporary Judaism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007). James Bernauer, one of the organizers of the “Tragic Couple” conference and editor of the book of the same name, recently published a learned and poignant exercise in self-criticism and reconciliation (James Bernauer, *Jesuit Kaddish: Jesuits, Jews, and Holocaust Remembrance* [Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020]).

3 See this counter-distinction in Emanuele Colombo, “The Watershed of Conversion: Antonio Possevino, New Christians and Jews,” in *Tragic Couple*, 25–42.

4 Eusebio Rey, “San Ignacio de Loyola y el problema de los ‘cristianos nuevos,’” *Razón y fe* 153 (1956): 173–204; James W. Reites, *St. Ignatius and the People of the Book: An Historical-Theological Study of St. Ignatius of Loyola’s Spiritual Motivation in His Dealings with the Jews and Muslims* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1977).

5 E.g., the Jesuit Antonio Araoz (1515–73), a relative of Ignatius, who was hostile to the admission of conversos into the order, reveals a split within the Society concerning New Christians during Ignatius’s life.

6 Throughout this introduction, I will refer to this historiography. For a succinct bibliography, see particularly notes 7, 10, and 22.

included in this special number of the *Journal of Jesuit Studies* to a better understanding of these historical encounters and mismatches.

Let us recall that Loyola opposed the enforcement of anti-converso exclusionary laws of "purity of blood" within the Society of Jesus, refusing to allow prohibitions *de genere* (of lineage) in the order's Constitutions.⁷ Although he finally agreed to include a question about lineage in the examination of candidates, he stipulated that this should not be a basis for rejection.⁸ Not only was he following Paul (c.5–c.64), who claimed that in a community of Christ believers "there is neither Jew nor Greek" (Galatians 3:28), he was also echoing the Apostle's praise of his Jewish origins (e.g. Romans 9:5, 11:1; Philippians 3:5) in reportedly saying "that he would take it as a special grace from our Lord to come from Jewish lineage," since Jesus Christ was born a Jew—as was the Virgin Mary.⁹

Marcel Bataillon has suggested that the Jesuit order aroused particular enthusiasm and popularity among Iberian New Christians of Jewish origin due to its emphasis on evangelical calling, coupled with active spirituality and ethnic inclusivism.¹⁰ Maryks's *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews* and Rastoin's French overview of 2011, as well as articles by Borja Medina and Cohen, have confirmed and expanded Bataillon's assertions.¹¹ Nowadays, no

7 Albert Sicroff, *Les controverses des statuts de "pureté de sang" en Espagne du XVe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Didier, 1960); João de Figueirôa-Rêgo, "A honra alheia por um fio": Os estatutos de limpeza de sangue nos espaços de expressão ibérica (sécs. XVI–XVIII) (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2011), 90–108.

8 Francisco de Borja Medina, "Ignacio de Loyola y la 'limpieza de sangre,'" in *Loyola y su tiempo*, ed. Juan Plazaola (Bilbao: Mensajero, 1992), 579–615; Thomas M. Cohen, "Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Society of Jesus," in *Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, ed. Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 199–214.

9 The English translation of this well-known excerpt of Pedro de Ribadeneyra's (1526–1611) biography of Ignatius is taken from Robert A. Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews: Jesuits of Jewish Ancestry and Purity-of-Blood Laws in the Early Society of Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 45. Ribadeneyra had *converso* origins, as shown by José Carlos Gómez Menir Fuentes, "La progenie hebrea del padre Pedro de Ribadeneira S.I. (hijo del jurado de Toledo Alvaro Husillo Ortiz de Cisneros)," *Sefarad* 36 (1976): 307–32, so his portrayal of Loyola as a judeophile—which does not appear in any other source—may have been a rhetorical device to defend the status of conversos in the Society.

10 Marcel Bataillon, *Les jésuites dans l'Espagne du XVIe siècle*, ed. Pierre Antoine Fabre (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2009), 235–87. On the character of converso-Jesuit affinities, see Pierre-Antoine Fabre, "La conversion infinie des conversos: Des 'nouveaux-chrétiens' dans la Compagnie de Jésus au XVIIe siècle," *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 54, n. 4 (1999): 875–93.

11 Maryks, *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*; Marc Rastoin, *Du même sang que Notre Seigneur: Juifs et jésuites aux débuts de la Compagnie* (Paris: Bayard, 2011). See among others, Francisco de Borja Medina, "Ignacio de Loyola y los judíos," *Anuario del Instituto Ignacio de Loyola* 4

one will be surprised that Ignatius's early ties to intellectual and spiritual circles in Alcalá, frequented by conversos and imbued with Erasmian and *alumbrado* views, led to his imprisonment by the Inquisition and his interrogation as to whether he recommended observance of the Sabbath.¹² Recently, Kevin Ingram went so far as to ask whether Ignatius's praise of Jewish ancestry was "an indication that he believed himself to be part Jewish? Or was it merely a fraternal gesture to a converso community who had accompanied him on his evangelical mission?"¹³ From the age of fourteen (at the latest), the co-founder of the Society of Jesus spent much of his time with conversos, and "most of the early Jesuit elite were New Christians." Accordingly, "what most conferred upon the [early] Jesuits an air of radicalism, or even subversion, was their New Christian membership."¹⁴

Ignatius was involved in the foundation of the House of Catechumens of Rome in 1543, which became part of the anti-Jewish papal policy of oppression.¹⁵ The original impulse of this institution, however, was to convert Jews and other "infidels" by means of persuasion and education.¹⁶ It is worth mentioning that even if Ignatius was known as a supporter of the establishment of

(1997): 37–63; Thomas M. Cohen, "Jesuits and New Christians: The Contested Legacy of St. Ignatius," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 42, no. 3 (2010): 1–46.

12 Maryks, *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, 48.

13 Kevin Ingram, *Converso Non-Conformism in Early Modern Spain: Bad Blood and Faith from Alonso de Cartagena to Diego Velázquez* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 41. Ingram does not rule out the possibility that Ignatius could have had New Christian Jewish origins but does not provide any direct evidence.

14 Ingram, *Converso Non-Conformism in Early Modern Spain*, 49. Cf. Israel-Salvator Révah, "Les origines juives de quelques jésuites hispano-portugais du xvi^e siècle," in *Études ibériques et latino-américaines: IV congrès des hispanistes français* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 87–96. For a more nuanced view, see Stefania Pastore, "Jesuits, Conversos, and Alumbrados in the Iberian World," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Jesuits*, ed. Ines G. Županov (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 269–92.

15 Kenneth R. Stow, *Catholic Thought and Papal Jewry Policy, 1555–1593* (New York: Ktav, 1977); Marina Caffiero, "La caccia agli ebrei: Inquisizione, Casa dei Catecumeni e battesimi forzati nella Roma moderna," in *Le inquisizioni cristiane e gli ebrei* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2003), 503–37.

16 Cf. the autobiographical narration of the learned Italian Jewish convert and Jesuit missionary in the Middle East, Giovanni Battista Eliano (1530–89), discussed in Adriano Prosperi, *La vocazione: Storie di gesuiti tra Cinquecento e Seicento* (Turin: Einaudi, 2018), 131–38. According to Robert John Cline, Eliano's missionary work and autobiography were both affected by the rise of anti-converso and anti-Jewish voices within the order after the election of Mercurian (Robert John Cline, *A Jewish Jesuit in the Eastern Mediterranean: Early Modern Conversion, Mission, and the Construction of Identity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020], 95–99, 198–200, 206–19.

the Portuguese and Roman Holy Office, he established an enduring tradition of Jesuit non-participation within the inquisitorial machinery (with the notorious exception of Johann Eberhard Nithard [1607–81], the grand inquisitor of Spain from 1666 to 1669), thereby setting the Jesuits apart from other orders. Such involvement, he maintained, would be an obstacle to the full commitment of the Society to mission and evangelization.¹⁷

This policy did not necessarily entail overt hostility. According to John W. O'Malley,

collaboration with various inquisitions was far from a major aspect of their activities [...] but where inquisitions were in place they accepted them as part of their general acceptance of Catholic institutions as they found them, and they felt a responsibility to bring persons suspected of heterodoxy to the attention of the inquisitorial tribunals.¹⁸

During the second half of the sixteenth century, this policy often allowed a *modus vivendi* between both institutions, and was also a means to maneuver between pro-converso and anti-converso factions within the order.¹⁹ Moreover, during the generalate of Everard Mercurian (1573–1580), a sort of compromise with the Inquisition enabled the official policy of detaching Jesuits from the pro-converso followers of Juan de Ávila (1499–1569), within and without the order, who were accused (again) of *alumbradismo*.²⁰

In Portugal, however, Jesuits filled posts adjacent to the Inquisition, such as consultants of the Holy Office, confessors of detainees, and preachers of sermons pronounced at autos-da-fé.²¹ Whereas in Spain, Ignatius consistently

17 José Luis González Novalín, "La Inquisición y la Compañía de Jesús," *Anthologica annua* 37 (1990): 11–55; Stefania Pastore, "Gesuiti, Spagna," in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, ed. Adriano Prosperi et al. (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2010), 2:673–77; Miguel Córdoba Salmerón, "A Failed Politician, a Disputed Jesuit: Cardinal Johann Eberhard Nithard (1607–81)," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 7, no. 4 (2020): 545–69, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00704003> (accessed December 27, 2020).

18 John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: University Harvard Press, 1995), 311–12.

19 According to Pastore, during the second half of the sixteenth century, Jesuit missionaries sent to evangelize the *moriscos* of Granada acted as "pseudo-inquisitors." Analogous alliances occurred in other places, such as Zaragoza and Seville. Pastore, *Il Vangelo e la spada: L'Inquisizione di Castiglia e i suoi critici (1460–1598)* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2003), 267–301, 315, 317–47.

20 Pastore, *Vangelo e la spada*, 405–32 and Rady Roldán-Figueroa, "Ignatius of Loyola and Juan de Ávila on the Ascetic Life of the Laity," in *A Companion to Ignatius of Loyola: Life, Writings, Spirituality, Influence*, ed. Robert A. Maryks (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 159–78.

21 Giuseppe Marcocci, "Inquisição, jesuítas e cristãos-novos em Portugal no século XVI," *Revista da história das ideias* 25 (2004): 247–326; Marcocci, "Gesuiti, Portogallo," in *Dizionario*

rejected Araoz's and other appeals to exclude conversos from the order, in Portugal, Simão Rodrigues (1510–79), Diego Mirón (1516–90), and other Jesuits led a successful anti-New Christian campaign that was accepted by most of the kingdom's elites and church authorities during the reign of Cardinal-King Henry (1512–80).²² As a sort of compromise, already in the 1550s, Ignatius suggested that a Jesuit from Jewish stock should be sent to regions where he would not be discriminated against. This partly explains the departure of converso Jesuits to the Italian peninsula and distant lands in order to enter the Society.²³ That said, the bias that had mostly remained circumscribed to Portugal became the official policy of the order after the generalates of Diego Laínez (1558–65) and Francisco de Borja (1565–72). This change coincided with the election of Mercurian as the first non-Spanish superior general of the order in 1573. The Society elected Mercurian over the Spanish converso candidate and former personal secretary of Ignatius and the Society, Juan Alfonso de Polanco (1517–76). Despite internal debates and criticisms, which continued into the generalate of Claudio Acquaviva (1581–1615), in 1593, conversos (and *moriscos*) and their descendants were excluded from joining the order.²⁴ According to Borja Medina, these measures shattered Ignatius's universalistic project of a "union of souls" within the order.²⁵ Thus, even as Jesuits continued to spread the gospel around the world, they could no longer admit within their ranks devoted Catholic members of the Hebrew "nation" who were attracted by the Jesuit calling.

storico dell'Inquisizione, 2:669–73; José Eduardo Franco and Célia Cristina Tavares, *Jesuítas e Inquisição: Cumplicidades e confrontações* (Rio de Janeiro: EDUERJ, 2007).

- 22 Giuseppe Marcocci, *I custodi dell'ortodossia: Inquisizione e Chiesa nel Portogallo del Cinquecento* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2004), 287–311.
- 23 Josef Wicki, "Die 'cristãos-novos' in der Indischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu von Ignatius bis Acquaviva," *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 92 (1977): 342–61. For Brazil, see José Gonçalves Salvador, *Cristãos-novos, jesuítas e Inquisição: Aspectos de sua atuação nas capitanias do Sul, 1530–1680* (São Paulo: Livraria Pioneira, 1969), 136–46.
- 24 Maryks, *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, 159–213; Colombo, "The Watershed of Conversion: Antonio Possevino, New Christians, and Jews," 25–42; John Patrick Donnelly, "Antonio Possevino and Jesuits of Jewish Ancestry," *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 55 (1986): 3–31; Thomas M. Cohen, "Nation, Lineage and Unity in Antonio Possevino's Memorial to Everard Mercurian (1576)," in *A Companhia de Jesus na Península Ibérica nos sécs. XVI e XVII: Espiritualidade e cultura: Actas do colóquio internacional, maio 2004*, 2 vols. (Porto: Universidade do Porto, 2004), 1:54–61; Claire Bouvier, "Les controverses à propos des Nouveaux-Chrétiens dans la Compagnie de Jésus: La défense des conversos du père Pedro de Ribadeneyra (1526–1611)," *Atlante* 2 (2015): 117–60.
- 25 Francisco de Borja Medina, "Everard Mercurian and Spain: Some Burning Issues," in *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture 1573–1780*, ed. Thomas M. McCoog (Rome; St. Louis: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu and Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004), 945–66.

This was neither the first nor the last time that the Society promulgated the exclusion of groups of Christians.²⁶ During the Third Provincial Congregation held in Lima in December 1582, Jesuits voted to end their previous strategy of accepting *mestizos* as Jesuits (the question of ordaining Amerindian people was never considered). The renowned Jesuit missionary José de Acosta (1540–1600); himself a converso who would vote against converso exclusion, was among the supporters of those anti-*mestizo* measures. He did, however, allow *mestizo* candidates to become secular priests. According to Larissa Brewer-García, "Acosta's testimony supports the theory that the Jesuit exclusion is an attempt to ensure that the Jesuit order would not be stigmatized."²⁷ At the same time, what seems so specific to the converso case is that New Christians of Jewish origin had been among the founding members of the Society and were wholeheartedly supported by Loyola, to the point that many of them attained high ranks during his life and shortly after his death. The best-known example is that of Laínez, the second superior general of the order.²⁸ Maryks has carefully demonstrated that the adoption of anti-converso legislation was driven by a political alliance between Portuguese and Italian Jesuits against the Spanish hegemony in the order, which was associated with the conversos.²⁹ Even if these measures (sometimes legitimized through overt anti-Semitic prejudice) were somewhat relaxed in 1608 as a consequence of the abovementioned complaints, limiting the genealogical investigations to five generations and making them less intrusive, it was not until 1946 that converso exclusion from the Society was officially abrogated. Secrecy and concealment of one's origins were the means through which a converso candidate had a chance to become a Jesuit.

A second aspect of this "tragic couple" situation is related to the interplay between Jesuits and New Christian laymen. While a systematic study of

26 E.g. "between Xavier's arrival in 1542 and the suppression of the Society in India in 1773, only one Indian—Pero Luís Bramane—rose to the priesthood in the Society," and he was "never permitted to take his fourth vow" (Cohen, "Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Society of Jesus," 208).

27 Larissa Brewer-García, "Bodies, Texts, and Translators: Indigenous Breast Milk and the Jesuit Exclusion of Mestizos in Late Sixteenth-Century Peru," *Colonial Latin American Review* 21 (2012): 374–75.

28 Paul Oberholzer, ed., *Diego Laínez (1512–1565) and His Generalate: Jesuit with Jewish Roots, Close Confidant of Ignatius of Loyola, Preeminent Theologian of the Council of Trent* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 2015).

29 Maryks, *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, 117–56, 219–56. For an alternative explanation of this conflict, which minimizes the converso aspect, see José Martínez Millán, "El problema judeoconverso en la Compañía de Jesús," *Chronica nova* 42 (2016): 19–50.

this relationship is lacking, I shall provisionally suggest the following seven characteristics:

First, taking into consideration the prominent role of Jesuits in the Iberian church, culture, and education during the early modern era, I assume that conversos routinely interacted with Jesuits, including New Christian Judaizers. The testimony of Francisco Álvarez before the Inquisition of Galicia seems to me emblematic. Around 1599, according to his confession, he was initiated into the “law of Moses” by an aunt; he then followed his father’s crypto-Jewish practices, although “he was very concerned, because in the Society of Jesus, where he was studying, they said that the law of the Jews was evil and heretical.”³⁰

Second, the Jesuit order was often equated by conversos with learned, self-aware, and militant Catholicism. It is no wonder, then, that the converso Judaizer and martyr, Luis de Carvajal “the Younger” (*el mozo*) (1566–96), burned alive by the Mexican Inquisition in 1596, asked to debate with Jesuits “in order to confound and convert them.”³¹

Third, forms of crypto-Judaism were often constructed counter-culturally upon Jesuit and other forms of high Catholic learning. Returning to the case of Luis de Carvajal “the Younger,” Miriam Bodian has remarked: “Much of Luis’ piety and notions of spiritual discipline derived from sixteenth-century Iberian Catholic sources. His Jesuit schooling in Medina del Campo probably exerted a strong and enduring influence.”³² Moreover, the religious and cultural perceptions of Catholicism and Judaism held by many educated New Christians who fled the Iberian Peninsula and adopted open Judaism in the Sephardic diaspora seem to have been framed through books, institutions, and people connected to the Society of Jesus.³³

30 Translated by David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 222, from Jaime Contreras, *El Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Galicia, 1560–1700: Poder, sociedad y cultura* (Madrid: Akal, 1992), 607–8.

31 Miriam Bodian, *Dying in the Law of Moses: Crypto-Jewish Martyrdom in the Iberian World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 31.

32 Bodian, *Dying in the Law of Moses*, 58. Cf. Claude B. Stuczynski, “Not Hybridity but Counterculture: Portuguese New Christian Judaizers Confronting Christianity and Islam in Bragança,” in *Conversos, marrani e nuove comunità ebraiche in età moderna*, ed. Myriam Silvera (Florence: Giuntina, 2015), 49–70.

33 Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, “Connaissance du judaïsme et préparation spirituelle chez les marranes revenus au judaïsme au cours du XVII^e siècle,” in *Sefardica: Essais sur l’histoire des Juifs, des marranes et des nouveaux-chrétiens d’origine hispano-portugaise* (Paris: Chandeigne, 1998), 239–57.

Fourth, Jesuit and lay converso interactions were informally built upon what I call "negotiated relationships." In cities like Toledo, leading converso families became deeply interrelated with local members of the Society.³⁴ This urban alliance was still felt in the seventeenth century in the pro-converso literary works of the Jesuit antiquarian Jerónimo Román de la Higuera (1538–1611).³⁵ Much the same happened in Córdoba, where New Christians controlled the Jesuit college.³⁶ In late sixteenth-century Bragança, though, the Jesuit-converso relationship was more ambivalent. Whereas Jesuit preachers and teachers offered the large New Christian population a catechetical alternative to the repressive "pedagogy of fear" of the Inquisition, the rector of the local Jesuit college collaborated with the Inquisition of Coimbra.³⁷

Fifth, Jesuit and lay converso interactions implied heterogeneous and shifting approaches. In specific locations such as colonial Goa, in which Jesuits would collaborate with the local Holy Office even more actively than in Portugal, they were not of one mind in supporting the establishment of an Inquisition in 1560 to suppress the dissemination of conversos' "heresy."³⁸ Along these lines, Bruno Feitler has shown that it was only beginning in the 1690s that Jesuits from Olinda, Recife, and Paraíba decided to expand their collaboration with the Holy Office as commissaries of the Inquisition. It seems, then, that this shift emerged gradually and "from simple evolution."³⁹ Notably, during the seventeenth century, many Portuguese Jesuits abandoned anti-converso approaches by leading campaigns against an arbitrary Holy Office.⁴⁰

Sixth, negotiated relationships were not always dependent on mere heuristic approaches: they were also framed by specific historical moments. Thus, in Spain, from the end of the sixteenth century to the fall of King Philip IV's (r.1621–65) favorite, Gaspar de Guzmán (1587–1645), the count-duke of Olivares,

34 Linda Martz, *A Network of Converso Families in Early Modern Toledo: Assimilating a Minority* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

35 Katrina B. Olds, *Forging the Past: Invented Histories in Counter-Reformation Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

36 O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, 190.

37 Claude B. Stuczynski, "Negotiating Relationships: Jesuits and Portuguese Conversos: A Reassessment," in *Tragic Couple*: 49–50.

38 Anna Cannas da Cunha, *A Inquisição no Estado da Índia: Origens (1539–1560)* (Lisbon: Arquivos Nacionais Torre do Tombo, 1995), 125–49.

39 Bruno Feitler, *Inquisition, juifs et nouveaux-chrétiens au Brésil: Le Nordeste XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 96.

40 António Borges Coelho, "Tradição e mudança na política da Companhia de Jesus face à comunidade dos cristãos-novos," *Revista de história* 10 (1990): 87–94.

in 1643, and in Portugal, mainly from the 1610s to the re-establishment of the Holy Office in 1681 (after a seven-year suspension by papal order), it is possible to identify a sort of “elective affinity” between Jesuits and conversos. This was a moment of self-perceived crisis in the Iberian peninsula, which led to top-down and bottom-up initiatives of reform, mostly through the implementation of centralistic policies that featured economic mercantilism.⁴¹

Following the order’s idiosyncratic method of spreading the glory of God in the world, including in the political and economic spheres, some Jesuits recognized the functional role of conversos as state-builders.⁴² Therefore, a few Spanish and Portuguese members of the order were among those who called upon the Iberian monarchs to make structural changes to restore Spain’s and Portugal’s grandeur. These changes included a better integration of the mostly faithful and useful New Christians of Jewish origin and the promotion of the ablest among these “men of commerce” within the ranks of the nobility. This entailed the moderation (if not the suppression) of laws of “purity of blood” in secular society. In the case of Portugal, it also encompassed a reform of the Holy Office.⁴³ No wonder that during this period, leading Spanish Jesuits such as Hernando de Salazar (1577–1646) were criticized for their support of the count-duke of Olivares’s “Machiavellian” and “pro-Jewish” policies, while Portuguese Jesuits became the most vociferous critics of the Holy Office.⁴⁴

41 John H. Elliott, “Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain,” *Past & Present* 74 (1977): 4–61.

42 Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State c. 1540–1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Claude B. Stuczynski, “From ‘Potential’ and ‘Fuzzy’ Jews to ‘Non-Jewish Jews’/ Jewish Non-Jews’: Conversos Living in Iberia and Early Modern Jewry,” in *Connecting Histories: Jews and Their Others in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Francesca Bregoli and David B. Ruderman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 197–213, 293–304.

43 Israel-Salvator Révah, “Les Jésuites portugais contre l’Inquisition: La campagne pour la fondation de la Compagnie Générale du Brésil (1649),” in *Études portugaises*, ed. Charles Amiel (Paris: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro Cultural Português, 1976), 155–83; Francisco de Borja Medina, “Precursores de Vieira: Jesuítas andaluzes y castellanos en favor de los cristianos nuevos,” in *Terceiro centenário da morte do Padre António Vieira: Congresso internacional; Actas*, 3 vols. (Braga: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 1999), 1:491–519; Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, “Jesuitas y cristianos nuevos portugueses en el siglo XVII: El Padre Hernando de Salazar y sus proyectos de repatriación,” *Cadernos de estudos sefarditas* 9 (2009): 35–74; Juan Hernández Franco, *Sangre limpia, sangre española: El debate de los estatutos de limpieza (siglos XV–XVII)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2011), 242–48.

44 Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano, “Oposición política y antijudaísmo en Quevedo: Notas al contexto histórico de La Isla de los Monopantos,” *Voz y letra: Revista de literatura* 11 (2000): 93–110; Julián José Lozano Navarro, *La Compañía de Jesús y el poder en la España de los Austrias* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2005); Yllan de Mattos, *A Inquisição contestada: Críticos e críticas ao Santo Ofício português (1605–1681)* (Rio de Janeiro: MAUAD, 2014).

According to the Jesuit most famously committed to the New Christian cause, António Vieira (1608–97), Portugal's recovery through the economic help of the conversos (and ex-converso Sephardic Jews) would also reinforce its overseas imperial enterprises, including Catholic mission. It is worth mentioning that this idea was previously elaborated by the Portuguese converso merchant Duarte Gomes Solis (1562?–1632), who noted that the initially successful Christianization of Japan stemmed from a collaboration between Jesuit missionaries and New Christian businessmen.⁴⁵

Seventh, although the order never reached a consensus regarding the Iberian Christians of Jewish origin, we cannot dismiss the weight of the legacy of Ignatius's "union of souls." On the one hand, this reflected an alternative, non-hegemonic way of being Iberian and Catholic shared by many individuals and sectors in early modern times.⁴⁶ In this sense, Maryks is right to relate Ignatius's views to a pro-converso tradition studied by, among others, Bruce Rosenstock, Maria Laura Giordano, Stefania Pastore, and Isabella Ianuzzi.⁴⁷ On the other hand, these pro-converso views still remained latent for the members of the order. It is hardly a surprise, then, that the apostolic preacher Juan de Ávila and his circle were so attracted by the first Jesuits, and that the abovementioned moment of Jesuit-converso "elective affinity" was so deeply grounded in Ignatius's inclusive ecclesiology.⁴⁸ Especially among Jesuits imbued with millenarian views, as was the case with Vieira and the Chilean Manuel de Lacunza (1731–1801), such a legacy was revealed through

45 Claude B. Stuczynski, "Portuguese Conversos and the Manueline Imperial Idea: A Preliminary Study," *Anais de história de Além-mar* 14 (2013): 45–61. Cf. Nathan Wachtel, "The 'Marrano' Mercantilist Theory of Duarte Gomes Solis," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 101 (2011): 164–88.

46 Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

47 Maryks, *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, 4–29; Bruce Rosenstock, "New Men": *Conversos, Christian Theology and Society in Fifteenth-Century Castile* (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary, University of London, 2002); Maria Laura Giordano, *Apologetas de la fe: Elites conversas entre Inquisición y patronazgo en España (siglos XV–XVI)* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2004); Stefania Pastore, *Un'eresia spagnola: Spiritualità conversa, alumbadismo e Inquisizione (1449–1559)* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2004); Isabella Ianuzzi, *Convencer para convertir: La "Católica Impugnación" de Fray Hernando de Talavera* (Granada: Nuevo Inicio, 2019).

48 Borja Medina, "Precursores de Vieira"; María Amparo López Arandia, "¿Caminos encontrados?: Juan de Ávila y la Compañía de Jesús," in *El maestro Juan de Ávila (1500?–1569): Un exponente del humanismo reformista*, ed. María Dolores Rincón González and Raúl Manchón Gómez (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española-Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 2014), 567–91.

their far-reaching prophetic visions of history.⁴⁹ Thus, in Vieira's portrait of the last stage of history, he envisioned the conversion of all professing Jews, as well as insincere conversos, to Catholicism, as part of the supreme historical moment proclaimed by Isaiah as "the new heavens and the new earth" (Isaiah 66:22). Vieira interpreted the previous verse of Isaiah, "and I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord," as announcing the abrogation of all the exclusionary laws to priesthood and the admission of Christian descendants of Israel to the ecclesiastical orders.⁵⁰ Thus, whereas in his intensive and engaged life this Jesuit refused to see the pariah condition of lay conversos as merely "tragic," he envisioned a forthcoming era in which the Jesuit-converso "tragic couple" situation would come to a harmonious end within and without the order.

The five articles included in this special issue on Jesuits and conversos explore diverse features of this multifaceted "tragic couple" relationship.

David Martín López's "Conversos and Jesuits in Sixteenth-Century Toledo" makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the intricate alliances between members of the Society of Jesus and the New Christian group. López not only demonstrates common cause against the archbishop of Toledo's Cardinal Silíceo (1486–1557) for his implementation of statutes of purity of blood in 1547, but also shows that converso families of Toledo welcomed the Jesuits to the city from the beginning and were increasingly attracted by the order, as evidenced by eminent clergymen, teachers, and Jesuit missionaries from New Christian backgrounds, such as "the apostle of Poznań," Alonso de Pisa y Palma (1527–98).⁵¹ Moreover, well-known converso Jesuits born in the city or region of Toledo, including Ribadeneyra, Dionisio Vázquez (1527–89), and probably Juan de Mariana (1536–1624), took part in the protests that followed the election of Mercurian as general. For all these reasons, early seventeenth-century Toledo remained a stronghold of

49 Richard H. Popkin, "Comment on Manuel Lacunza (1731–1801)," in *Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture, Volume II: Catholic Millenarianism: From Savonarola to the Abbé Grégoire*, ed. Karl A. Kottman (Dordrecht: Springer, 2001), 101–3.

50 António Vieira, *Defesa perante o Tribunal do Santo Ofício*, ed. Paulo Borges (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2014), 446.

51 Linda Martz, "Pure-Blood Statutes in Sixteenth-Century Toledo: Implementation as opposed to Adoption," *Sefarad* 54 (1994): 83–106; Isabella Ianuzzi, "Mentalidad inquisitorial y jesuitas: El enfrentamiento entre el cardenal Silíceo y la Compañía de Jesús," *Cuadernos de historia moderna* 24 (2000): 11–31.

Jesuit-converso cooperation, despite the exclusionary measures adopted by the order.

On the one hand, José Eduardo Franco and Célia Tavares's article is a reassessment of their previous work on the *longue durée* relationship between the Portuguese Inquisition and Portuguese Jesuits, generally characterized by complicity and cooperation. In his enlightened absolutist propaganda, Portugal's powerful minister, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, marquis of Pombal (1699–1782), depicted the Holy Office as practically a Jesuit invention.⁵² On the other hand, by contrasting the roles played by Jesuits in the tribunals of Portugal and Goa, the authors offer a refreshing view on the exceptional moment of disagreement that took place in the seventeenth century. Whereas the Holy Office of Goa attacked Jesuits for endorsing the principle of religious accommodation among the Malabar population in their missionary activities, members of the order in Portugal (led by Vieira, in cooperation with the converso entrepreneur Manuel da Gama de Pádua [1607–79]) questioned the biased methods employed by the Inquisition vis-à-vis the New Christian population. According to the authors, this went well beyond a shared moment of dynastical, social, and economic crisis: the two conflicts stemmed from the preoccupation of many Jesuits with the proper evangelization of groups of "new" Christians.⁵³ As becomes apparent in Adma Muhana's "António Vieira: A Jesuit Missionary to the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam," this Jesuit explicitly related his missionary experience in Brazil, as well as those of his peers from other parts of Portugal's *padroado*, to the stagnating converso situation. He denounced the decision to risk so many lives to obtain the conversion of "pagans" in distant lands while abandoning the spiritual salvation of the local converso population to the repressive hands of the Inquisition. According to Muhana, Vieira envisioned the application of the abovementioned principle of accommodation to re-Christianize ex-converso Jews who lived in the Sephardic diaspora, as well as insincere conversos. Taking into consideration that Vieira was accused by the Coimbra Inquisition of Judaic leanings, perhaps we can now understand his missionary project as part of the broader and far-reaching phenomenon of the Chinese Rites controversies.⁵⁴ Moreover, in revisiting

52 Franco and Tavares, *Jesuítas e Inquisição*; José Eduardo Franco, *O mitos dos jesuítas em Portugal, no Brasil e no Oriente (séculos XVI a XX), Volume I: Das origens ao Marquês de Pombal* (Lisbon: Gradiva, 2006), 573–85.

53 Cf. Ana Paula Lloyd, "Manuel de Gama de Pádua's Political Networks: Service, Subversion, and the Disruption of the Portuguese Inquisition," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 6 (2016): 251–75.

54 Ines G. Županov and Pierre Antoine Fabre, eds., *The Rites Controversies in the Early Modern World* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

Vieira's encounter with the Amsterdam rabbi and printer of Portuguese-New Christian origin Menasseh ben Israel (1604–57), the author suggests that the latter sought to lure New Christians back to the Jewish fold through a rabbinic adaptation of the Jesuit principle of accommodation.

Juan Hernández Franco and Pablo Ortega-del-Cerro revisit the moment of Jesuit-converso “elective affinity” in Spain under the count-duke of Olivares's political umbrella by analyzing the *Memorial para quitar o limitar Estatutos de limpieza* (1632) of Fernando de Valdés (1584–1642).⁵⁵ On the one hand, they show the degree to which Valdés's criticism against laws of “purity of blood” departs from previous initiatives addressed by non-Jesuit churchmen such as the Franciscan Gaspar de Uceda (c.1520–88) or the Dominican Agustín Salucio (1523–1601) to the Habsburg monarchs from the end of the sixteenth century. On the other hand, Valdés's project appears Jesuit in its combination of pragmatic, utopian, financial, and “reason of state” considerations with Pauline theology. According to its authors, the memorial that Valdés sent to Philip IV, in which he simultaneously proposed limiting and suppressing the statutes of purity of blood, was less a compromise between a pragmatic solution and a utopian dream than the byproduct of an inner dialectical tension.

Such dialectical ways of struggling on behalf of the converso group are echoed in Claude B. Stuczynski's article on Vieira's Judeo-Gentile interactions and Jewish conversion, as reflected in his letters on behalf of the “Hebrew nation” and particularly in his prophetic writings. Although a committed follower of Paul's universalism, Vieira nonetheless departed from negative ideas of Jewishness related to materiality. These ideas were ultimately related to the issue of Jewish resiliency in the writings of the “Apostle to the Gentiles,” through prophetic interpretations of the history of humankind's salvation in which professing Jews and New Christians played a positive, beneficial, and even leading role.⁵⁶

55 Cf. Juan Hernández Franco and Pablo Ortega-del-Cerro, “Renovar la sociedad desde la idealización del veteroconverso: La propuesta de abrogación de los Estatutos de limpieza de sangre de Fernando de Valdés,” *eHumanista /Conversos* 4 (2016): 22–37.

56 Cf. Claude B. Stuczynski, “Converso Paulinism and Residual Jewishness: Conversion from Judaism to Christianity as a Theological-Political Problem,” in *Bastards and Believers: Converts and Conversion between Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Paweł Maciejko and Theodor Dunkelgrün (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 112–33.