The Jews always desire to have the best place in feasts and dinners and to be called rabbis, which means masters. In public places and churches, they covet the best seats. Christ our Lord said of them, through Saint Mark in chapter 12: “Beware of scribes who want to go about in stoles, be greeted in the marketplaces and sit in the front rows in the synagogues.” Furthermore, Luke also states this in chapter 11. It is worth pointing out here the words that the Lord speaks to us through his evangelists, which is that we should be wary of the Jews: “Beware”, He tells us, “because if someone is of vile origin but becomes a prince enjoying an easy life and sees himself rise up and occupy some position of high status, then it will go to his head”. This is the doctrine of Saint Thomas (On the government of princes. Opus 20) in which he offers the following verse of the poet as evidence: Asperius nihil est humilde, cum surgit in altum. Nothing is so odious as a humble man who has risen to power.

I judge (and not wrongly) that such men are normally of the caste that gives itself airs. What is it about smoke, they will ask me, or how can they be assimilated to smoke? Smoke, I say, is generated by fire and it disappears by rising up so that, in its rise, it sullies and blackens everything. Some of them are so full of airs and so presumptuous that their head (when the smoke rises up high) rapidly fills with airs. As their whole being

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1 Here Torrejoncillo refers to both the Jews and the conversos.
2 Mark 12:38–9 and dicebat eis in doctrina sua cavete a scribis qui volunt in stolis ambulare et salutari in foro et in primis cathedris sede in synagogis et primos discubitus in cenis (“And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go about in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts”).
3 Luke 11:43 vae vobis Pharisaes quia diligitis primas cathedras in synagogis et salutatio­nes in foro (“Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets”).
4 St. Thomas Aquinas, Regimen principum et Regimen rusticorum, available in numerous editions. The poet that St. Thomas Aquinas quotes is the Roman poet Claudian (fourth/fifth century AD).
5 In an apparent attempt at a humorous wordplay, Torrejoncillo employs the word for smoke (humo) in this paragraph to mean airs or attitudes of superiority. Unfortunately, this wordplay simply does not translate into English.
is nothing but smoke and is entirely made of hot air, they also live like smoke, spending their whole lives full of airs and ordinarily dying shrouded by this hot air. This is the manner in which Vetronio Turino died because of his presumption as a result of receiving a position of authority. As Ælius describes it, Caesar was angered and ordered him to be hanged and that burning green wood should be placed at his feet so that the smoke could rise to his nostrils until he died. This was done so that his death should be a smoky one, just as his life had been. Moreover, Caesar also ordered that the public crier should proclaim the sentence, saying: *Fumo perit, qui fumos vendidit*: “Let he who sold hot air, die by smoke”. All those conceited Jews who seek the best places, rows and positions in order to sully the poor of this world and suffocate them with their conceit will die in a similar manner. Regarding these men, Christ our Benefactor tells us through His evangelists Saint Mark and Saint Luke to “beware of these people and keep away from them” and I say let them put on airs and be burnt to death. Let those who possess and display such presumptuousness die by burning.

Well, if we may discuss the worries that they cause wherever they are and reside, who will possibly be up to the task of describing and relating them? It was they who caused the incident (as it has been related) of the Holy Crucifix of the city of Beirut, from which gushed out so much blood as a result of the flogging and wounds that they inflicted upon it and which was later divided up amongst many churches. Another case similar to the above is related by Cardinal Baronius. It occurred in Constantinople in the year 446 and caused great concern amongst the Muslims and captive Christians.

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6 The episode related here concerns the punishment inflicted by the Roman Emperor Alexander Severus (AD 222–235) upon a charlatan named Vetronio Turino. This incident is related in the controversial Augustan Histories (*Historia Augusta*), a compendium of biographies of Roman Emperors who reigned between AD 117 and 285 by six different authors and whose authenticity has been the focus of considerable debate amongst modern historians. The author that Torrejoncillo refers to is Ælius Lampridius, one of the six alleged authors. There were many early modern editions of this work, see for instance *Historiae Augustae Scriptores Sex*, ed. Isaac Casaubon (Paris, 1603), 188–9.

7 See chapter nine.

8 Caesar Baronius, *Annales ecclesiastici*, (Rome, 1607), VI, 39. The story related concerns an icon of Christ that allegedly bled copiously after it had been stabbed in the church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople by a Jew who furtively entered into it during the dead of night. The reference Torrejoncillo makes to Muslims and captive Christians is quite erroneous given the date of the event, nearly two centuries prior to the advent of Islam and over a thousand years prior to the fall of Constantinople to the Muslim Ottomans in 1453.