

Article

Inquisition and Purity of Blood in Portugal during the Seventeenth Century

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyse the role played by the Portuguese Holy Office in the process of social discrimination against New Christians, that is, those who were considered to be descendant of Jews converted to Christianity in the late fifteenth century. This article focuses specifically on the different and changing attitudes of the Inquisitors General to the issue of purity of blood during the seventeenth century. In the course of that century, some people considered to be New Christians (with fama or nota) managed to join the Portuguese Holy Office. Nevertheless, this was not due to the fact that Inquisitors General and members of the General Council rejected discrimination using theoretical, religious and moral arguments, but to the impossibility of achieving undoubtful knowledge about the origins of those seeking to join the Inquisition. At the same time, once racial discrimination became institutionalised within the Inquisition during the final third of the sixteenth century, the Inquisitors General became less concerned about the allegations of impure blood made about some of its ministers, so long as it could be demonstrated that they were good Christians and of use to the institution, or else capable of contributing to the specific personal interests of the tribunal's rector. Nevertheless, not all supposed or real conversos succeeded in joining the Holy Office, as evidenced by cases of self-exclusion and the numerous proofs of "purity of blood" that were not approved. To address these questions, we turn to the proofs of "purity of blood" carried out by the Portuguese Inquisition, as well as to correspondence and documents from other institutions of the Portuguese and Spanish monarchies.



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1. Introduction

In 1748, António Ribeiro Sanches, a Portuguese physician of Jewish origin exiled in various European countries, wrote a treatise entitled: *Origem da denominação de Cristão velho e Cristão novo em Portugal, e as causas da continuação destes nomes, como também da cegueira judaica: como método para se extinguir em poucos anos esta diferença entre os mesmos subditos, e cegueira judaica; tudo para aumento da religião catholica, e utilidade do estado* (Origin of the denominations Old Christian and New Christian in Portugal, and the reason for the continued use of these names, and likewise that of the Jewish blindness: as a method for extinguishing in a few years the difference between these very subjects, and the Jewish blindness; all in the cause of increasing the Catholic religion, and the utility of the State). In this document, he endeavoured to prove that the continued existence of Judaism in Portugal was a consequence of three factors: the distinction drawn between Old and New Christians, the discrimination against the latter, and the legal procedure used by the Inquisition. According to Ribeiro Sanches, following the general conversion of the Jews to Christianity in 1497, initially there was no discrimination against the neophytes, and they were appointed to honourable offices in both the government and the Church. Nevertheless, following the establishment of the Portuguese Inquisition, in 1536, a deeper distinction was drawn between New and Old Christians. According to Sanches, the so-called purity of blood statutes, led to this discrimination becoming more deeply embedded

in society. Thus, for Sanches, the Inquisition played a fundamental role in the emergence of the discrimination made between New and Old Christians, as well as in perpetuating the memory of the former's tainted condition. According to Sanches:

“until 1536, no distinction was drawn between Portuguese subjects; and the afore-said ‘nation’ [of New Christians] would have come to an end and merged [with the Old Christians] had the Inquisition not been established” (Sanches 2010, p. 33).

Evidently, Ribeiro Sanches was concerned with two different issues: firstly, that the activity of the Inquisition perpetuated an image of the New Christians as being those who practised Judaism, and secondly, the influence it exerted to exclude New Christians as bearers of tainted blood who should be banned from holding positions in the Church and State. The aim of this article is to explore this second issue, and it poses four key questions: is there a more accurate way to discern the impact of the Inquisition on the creation and development of the social discrimination against the New Christians? Was the Inquisition equally concerned with social discrimination against the New Christians as it was with the persecution of the heretical beliefs held by Judaizers? Did the ministers of the Holy Tribunal uphold consistent attitudes towards the blood and “race” of the members of the Inquisition? And, more broadly, were the ministers of the Inquisition concerned with the purity of blood of the members of the religious orders, the cathedral chapters and the clergy? Addressing these questions is of fundamental importance to undertake a focused analysis of the role played by the Inquisition in engendering and perpetuating discrimination towards New Christians with Jewish ancestry in Portuguese territories. Likewise, addressing these issues is essential to develop an understanding of the diverse routes of social ascent achieved by those whose blood was deemed tainted by Judaic ancestry. Furthermore, this line of enquiry engages in an analysis of the range of outlooks and strategies pursued by members of the Holy Office, in particular, the Inquisitors General, as well as the deputies of the Inquisition's General Council, the inquisitors, along with the deputies and prosecutors of the local tribunals; essentially, this range of inquisitorial agents could contribute distinctive outlooks on the fundamental problem raised by the social reality that marked the lives of Christians with Jewish ancestry.

In this article, I focus specifically on the Inquisitors' General attitudes to the issue of purity of blood during the seventeenth century, which is a key period for studying the evolution of the issue of race in Portugal. As is discussed, up until the 1570s, there was no official requirement that those who served in the Holy Office should have to demonstrate their purity of blood, and it was only in the late sixteenth century that purity of blood enquires were undertaken for all members of the tribunal. The obsession about blood purity peaked subsequently in Portugal during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Therefore, in my view, it is fundamental to understand the ideas, outlooks, and attitudes of the Inquisitors General from the late sixteenth-century consolidation of racial discrimination within the Holy Office up until the apogee of its “puritan” obsession during the final decades of the seventeenth century.

A precise conceptual and terminological framework is essential for the analysis of the issues raised above. Taking into account the historiographical debates on this issue, and despite the critiques they can prompt, in my view, racial discrimination provides a valuable lens through which to study the process of exclusion imposed on the descendants of Jews who had converted to Christianity in the Iberian Peninsula between 1391—when the pogroms took place across Castile—and 1497—during the forced conversion of the Jews in Portugal. From then onwards, a range of mechanisms were introduced to exclude New Christians and their descendants, and their exclusion ceased to be based on religion, but instead on blood ties and lineage. It was precisely these mechanisms that led Juan Ignacio Gutiérrez Nieto, in a thought-provoking article, to define the structure of sixteenth-century Castilian society as being “*castizo-estamental*”, that is, divided into ethnic *castas* or groups, as well as the three estates (Gutiérrez Nieto 1973). Using a different terminology, Max S. Hering Torres has astutely argued that, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Iberian Peninsula, the discourse on purity of blood manifested itself “as an anti-Jewish racism underpinned

by conceptual elements such as contagion, impurity, inheritance and «race» as a defect of lineage” (Hering Torres 2011, p. 42). Francisco Bethencourt also devoted special attention to discrimination against New Christians of the Iberian Peninsula in his magnum opus on the diverse forms of racism in Europe and colonial societies (Bethencourt 2013), as did Jean-Frédéric Schaub and Silvia Sebastiani in their history of racial categories in the West (Schaub and Sebastiani 2021), and Stuart Schwartz in his book about *moriscos*, *conversos*, and *mestizos* in Latin America (Schwartz 2020).

In the early modern Iberian world, the “stain” of Judaism was proved using a set of specific procedures, and, as the period of conversion became ever more distant, these were used to implement broader social concerns and impose more complex forms of social exclusion.¹ By analysing these mechanisms through the specific case study of the Holy Office, it is by no means my intention to deny that the anti-Judaism underpinning the purity of blood statutes was shared by broad strata of society, even though individuals opposing them can be identified, and on occasions these played a significant role (Sicroff 1985). My aim is to attempt to understand how this anti-Judaism, which manifested itself in the purity of blood statutes and other mechanisms, was adapted to the evolution of society in the Iberian world, a society in which it became ever more difficult to prove both the existence and the absence of tainted blood flowing through an individual’s veins.

Discrimination extended across broad swathes of the population as a result of rumours concerning individuals’ *converso* descent, yet numerous New Christians were also admitted to institutions that required them to prove they had pure blood. The latter was possible because the question of what a *converso* really was depended not solely on their genealogy—indeed this had a diminishing importance—but also on the fact that the *converso* was a social construct. Therefore, it was possible for a *converso* to cease to be considered as such, while those with no Jewish ancestry could be subject to racial discrimination as reputation and rumour ended up attaining the status of truth. In 1971, Antonio Domínguez Ortiz explained how people could evade discrimination: “the only way to cease being a *converso* was to make others forget about you” (Domínguez Ortiz 1971, p. 223). That same year, Israël-Salvator Révah, in a study of the controversies stirred up by the purity of blood statutes, argued that, on the one hand, the purity of blood myth was sustained throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries yet, on the other hand, “the specific discriminatory action of the purity of blood statutes came to nothing” due to fraud and falsification (Révah 1971, p. 268). As Jean-Pierre Dedieu has argued, this was the case because in the case of the Spanish Holy Office the structure of the purity of blood proof, permanently established in the 1570s, “rather than the candidate’s origin it increasingly demonstrated their actual social power” (Dedieu 1993, p. 44). According to Dedieu, while the process of undertaking proofs of blood purity became increasingly complex, during the final decades of the sixteenth and the early decades of the seventeenth centuries, access to the Holy Office and the honour that entailed was reserved for the most powerful; indeed, those who had the power would use this official proof to stifle any possible rumour about their purity. Therefore, as Enrique Soria Mesa has demonstrated, even during the sixteenth century, numerous *conversos* managed to join the Spanish Inquisition (Soria Mesa 2016; Soria Mesa 2019).

2. The Portuguese Inquisition and Purity of Blood as a Requirement

According to Francisco Bethencourt, in Portugal the Inquisition exercised even greater influence than in Spain when it came to reinforcing the division between New and Old Christians (Bethencourt 2013, p. 147). The reason for this was the Portuguese tribunal’s constant persecution of Judaizers, which would only decline from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. In contrast to Spain, in Portugal the Inquisition’s principal and unwavering targets were New Christians accused of Judaism. The Inquisition’s constant convictions demonstrate that Jewish beliefs and practices persisted amongst the New Christians well into the middle of the eighteenth century. The public *autos-da-fé* and the printed lists of those convicted by the tribunal extended across the kingdom the conviction that Judaism still persisted in Portugal. Thereby, those who thought every New Christian concealed a

Jew within had their fears confirmed. Furthermore, this policy helped create and perpetuate the image of all New Christians as potential Judaizers, even though in many cases this image did not reflect reality.

In some cases, an inquisitorial conviction led to the exclusion of the convicted person and their offspring from public posts and positions. According to the instructions issued by the Holy Office in 1640, those proved guilty but reconciled to the Church were to be banned from holding public office. In addition, the sons of those who were executed—i.e., handed over to the secular justice—would be banned from holding any honourific offices, such as judge, public notary, court clerk, amongst other public offices.² However, the exclusion of the descendants of those convicted by the Inquisition had in fact begun in the sixteenth century, long before the 1640 *Instructions*. For example, as part of purity of blood investigations conducted by the Inquisition in the 1570s, it was asked if the candidate's parents or grandparents had ever been sentenced by the Holy Office.³

At the same time, the Portuguese Inquisition heightened the distinction between Old and New Christians by using its own proofs of purity of blood. Although it has been said that the *Instructions* issued by the Inquisition in 1552 stipulated that its ministers must not have Moorish, Jewish or heathen descent, matters were more complex. According to these *Instructions*, the inquisitors should be literate, have a good conscience, and be prudent and constant. However, nothing was said about their blood. Likewise, nothing was said about the blood of the other principle inquisitorial ministers such as the prosecutor or notary. The absence of Moorish, Jewish or "heathen" blood was only a requirement in the case of the inferior ranks of the tribunal such as the prison guards. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the post of inquisitor and prosecutor were open to New Christians. On the contrary, in my view, it was tacitly assumed that all the inquisitors had pure blood, although this was not specifically expressed.

To better understand why the 1552 *Instructions* lacked this requirement, it should be noted that in Portugal during the 1550s the purity of blood statutes were still being introduced. According to Fernanda Olival, in the 1540s the Coimbra colleges of St Michael and All Saints ruled that their members had to prove they were not descendants of Jews and Moors. In the 1560s, the same requirement was implemented in the College of St Paul in the University of Coimbra, as well as in a number of religious orders. However, in the mid-sixteenth century, proofs of purity of blood were not required by most of the principal Portuguese institutions, both secular and religious. Nevertheless, the situation began to change in 1570, when the Military Orders and the Inquisition made purity of blood mandatory for those wishing to join. With regard to the former, in 1570, a bull issued by Pius V declared that the descendants of Jews and Moors were not eligible for entry into the Orders of Avis, Christ and Santiago (Olival 2004; Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, pp. 65–68; Paiva 2012, pp. 272–73).

Likewise, during the 1570s, investigations into individuals' purity of blood began to be undertaken by the Holy Office. In 1569, Cardinal Henrique had officially created the General Council of the Holy Office. The council's instructions, which were issued in 1570, ruled that no member of the Inquisition could "have" Moorish, Jewish or heathen "race" (*raza*). As a consequence, in the 1570s, the first investigations into purity of blood were conducted by the Inquisition. From then onwards, all those seeking to serve the Holy Office would have to prove the purity of their blood before being appointed as inquisitors, prosecutors or deputies. As has been discussed by Bruno Feitler, the Inquisition's systematic use of proofs of purity of blood was institutionalised in 1578 (Feitler 2022, p. 52). That year, Cardinal Infante Henrique, Inquisitor General, ruled that information on the genealogical purity of those seeking to join the tribunal had to be compiled in writing; these documents were based on the judicial questioning of witnesses. Around that time, Inquisitor Luís Gonçalves de Ribafria advocated the use of secret reports on anybody who wished to join the Inquisition in order to confirm whether they had any New Christian relations with either Jewish or Moorish ancestry, or else had been born to people from territories where there were Protestants (Giebels 2018, p. 136).

Nevertheless, the rules for checking the purity of those who joined the Inquisition were not strictly adhered to in the early years. Indeed, during the final third of the sixteenth century, not all the members of the tribunal were subjected to a purity of blood test. Only seven purity of blood proofs are conserved for the twenty-two ecclesiastics who were appointed as inquisitors of Lisbon, Évora and Coimbra during the final three decades of the sixteenth century. In the outstanding fifteen cases, it is possible that the proofs were not required as the individuals had joined the tribunal as deputies or prosecutors prior to 1570; or they were not undertaken because the cardinal did not consider them necessary; or they were undertaken orally without any judicial procedure. Alternatively, the documents have been lost. Regarding the General Council, until 1610, the majority of its members had joined the Inquisition without any need to prove their purity of blood through witness statements. Furthermore, up until the 1640s, the council included members who had not undergone any purity of blood investigation. However, from the early seventeenth century onwards, it became more common that those who wished to serve the Inquisition, whether laity or clergy, had to prove they had no Jewish, Moorish or Gentile ancestors. However, during this early phase, information was not gathered with the same rigour as it would be later on, whereby a number of ecclesiastics renowned for having impure blood managed to overcome this impediment and be admitted to the Inquisition, and they even managed to gain access to the tribunal's highest ranks.

As has been demonstrated by Fernanda Olival, over the course of the seventeenth century, the purity of blood proofs undertaken by the Holy Office became increasingly precise and rigorous. Whereby in the eighteenth century, there were numerous cases of members of the laity and clergy who sought to serve the Holy Office, but who were rejected because they were reputed to have Jewish ancestors. The more complicated it was to prove or disprove the truth of the aforesaid reputation, the more influence this infamy exerted to hinder individuals from being appointed to the tribunal.

3. The Inquisitors General and the Purity of Blood Problem

From the late sixteenth century until the 1630s, there was a widespread debate in Castile concerning the negative consequences of the purity of blood statutes (Sicroff 1985; Hernández Franco 2011; Bethencourt 2021). It was in this context that Juan Roco Campofrío wrote a treatise on the purity of blood statutes, which was studied by Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, who also published a part of it in 1955. In this treatise, the inquisitor criticised the detrimental social consequences of the purity of blood investigations, and he proposed they be reformed and that their scope be restricted (Domínguez Ortiz 1955, pp. 233–37).

Campofrío was not the only member of the Spanish Holy Office who took a critical stance to the purity of blood statutes. In 1971, Israël-Salvator Révah argued that between 1580 and 1643 most of the Inquisitors General of Spain would have had critical views of the purity of blood statutes, as well as the idea of dividing society according to racial criteria. Therefore, they would have been in favour of the reform and limitation of the statutes, and would have used their patronage to support authors promoting these measures. For example, the influential *Discurso* by Fray Agustín Salucio, which advocated a reform of the statutes, was supported by: Fernando Niño de Guevara, Inquisitor General between 1599 and 1602; the Archbishop of Toledo, Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas, who served as Inquisitor General between 1608 and 1618; and the bishop of Pamplona, Antonio Zapata, who also served as Inquisitor General between 1627 and 1635 (Révah 1971). Previously, Albert Sicroff had noted that Cardinal Portocarrero, Inquisitor General between 1596 and 1599, had participated in a *junta*—held on an unknown date—that proposed that the genealogical investigations should not extend beyond one hundred years into the past (Sicroff 1985). Some years later, Révah's thesis was taken up again by Henry Kamen in his analysis of the consultation that the Supreme Council submitted to Philip IV in 1626: it was argued that the purity of blood statutes should be reined in with regard to how many family generations would be investigated (Kamen 1986, pp. 347–50). Subsequently, Juan Ignacio Gutiérrez Nieto also argued that in the early seventeenth century the Inquisitors General

were critical of both the purity of blood statutes and the idea of society being divided on the basis of this genealogical purity. In his opinion, the situation changed following the fall of the Count-Duke of Olivares and the appointment of Diego de Arce y Reinoso as Inquisitor General in 1644, but during the previous decade, the Inquisitors Juan Adam de la Parra and Juan Escobar del Corro wrote treatises in favour of the purity of blood statutes (Gutiérrez Nieto 1997; Gutiérrez Nieto 1990, p. 437).

With regard to Portugal, despite the recent insights that have been gained into the issue of purity of blood, in my view, closer scrutiny is required in order to develop an in-depth understanding of how this complex issue was perceived by the ministers of the Holy Office. In my view, it is obvious that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the ministers of the Holy Office, and especially inquisitors and prosecutors, were deeply worried about the problem of the spread of the Jewish heresy. Nevertheless, I think that some of them were less preoccupied by racial issues, such as the need to ensure that religious institutions were free from tainted blood. Three explanations can be proposed for the latter lack of anxiety. On the one hand, many inquisitors probably believed that not all New Christians were Judaizers and that many of them were sincere Catholics. On the other hand, there were practical reasons, both economic and political, for allowing and encouraging the admission of some New Christians into the Inquisition as well as other religious institutions. Furthermore, both the Inquisitors General and the deputies of the General Council, who studied the purity of blood proofs, knew the problems that arose from personal enmities, and how they could give rise to rumours about the lack of purity of candidates seeking to join the tribunal. Finally, the inquisitors were well aware of how reputation came to be constructed, yet they also found themselves immersed in a legal culture in which infamy could be transmitted down the generations to the grandchildren of anyone condemned for heresy.

With regard to the uppermost tier of the Holy Office, my thesis is that once racial discrimination became institutionalised within the Inquisition during the final third of the sixteenth century, the Inquisitors General became less concerned about the allegations of impure blood made about some of its ministers, so long as it could be demonstrated that they were good Christians and of use to the institution, or else capable of contributing to the specific personal interests of the tribunal's rector. In my view, this was above all the case during the final decades of the sixteenth century and the first third of the seventeenth century. This was not due to any theoretical view opposed to the discrimination against people with "Jewish blood", the only exception being Fernão Martins Mascarenhas, Inquisitor General between 1616 and 1628. Instead, the Inquisitors' General lack of concern about rumours that some of the tribunal's ministers were tainted with impure blood was due to the fact they were aware that reputation was a social construct, and rumour arose as a result of tensions and quarrels, factors that recur constantly in documentary sources.

3.1. *The Limits of Tolerance: The Case of Fernão Martins Mascarenhas*

The attitude taken by Fernão Martins Mascarenhas merits a detailed discussion, because, as far as I am aware, he was the only Portuguese Inquisitor General who proposed in writing that the mechanisms used for excluding the descendants of Jews in Portugal should be reined in. Mascarenhas was born into the upper nobility, and members of his family served in the royal household. He had also served as Rector of the University of Coimbra and, later, from 1594 as the Bishop of the Algarve. In 1616, he was appointed Inquisitor General, and oversaw the Holy Office until his death in 1628. As will be discussed, he showed a degree of disregard for racial prejudices, both in his private life and as Inquisitor General.

Fernão Martins Mascarenhas set out his ideas on the segregation of New Christians and the implementation of the purity of blood statutes in a treatise printed in the 1620s and entitled: *Tratado sobre os varios meynos, que se offereceraõ a sua Magestade Catholica para remedio do judaismo neste Reyno de Portugal* (Treatise on the various means that have been offered to His Catholic Majesty to remedy Judaism in this Kingdom of Portugal). Given that the final

page of the treatise explicitly states that its author is “*o bispo inquisidor general* (the Bishop Inquisitor General)” I do not intend to address the question of its authorship.⁴ What is of specific relevance about this short text comprising just 24 folios is that it was intended to influence Crown policy with regard to the New Christians born in Portugal, and that it reveals how the Inquisitor General’s mindset was relatively open in racial terms, albeit not in religious ones. Mascarenhas maintained an unwavering support for the persecution of Judaizers, and in this regard his ideas were neither tolerant nor moderate. During his period of office as Inquisitor General of the Holy Office, he undertook one of the most extensive phases of repression, which included the trial and condemnation of the canons of Coimbra, who were accused of forming the crypto-Jewish brotherhood of St James, as well as the persecution of nuns from a number of convents from the same region of Coimbra, who were considered to be Judaizers (Torres 1978, pp. 57–58; Paiva 2017, pp. 366–75). Furthermore, in contrast to the General Council, Martins Mascarenhas consistently expressed his support for the harsh punishment of deportation for those condemned of Judaism, both as Bishop of the Algarve, and while serving as Inquisitor General (Pulido Serrano 2004; López-Salazar Codes 2011, pp. 71–72). In other words, the Inquisitor General was convinced that many New Christians secretly practised Judaism, and that the Inquisition had to impose harsh repressive measures, and even still harsher ones.

A wholly distinct issue is his perception of the social exclusion of those who were descended from Jews who had converted to Christianity. On the one hand, he opposed the banishment of any distinction between New and Old Christians, since he believed that many *conversos* were clandestine Jews. On the other hand, he argued that it was more important to focus on the faith of those seeking posts and benefices, rather than their ancestry. As a result, before admitting New Christians to public positions or granting them ecclesiastical benefices, he argued that it was necessary to undertake an enquiry into their beliefs, in other words, an “*exame da sua fé*” (examination of their faith) for the purpose of excluding Judaizers, or those about whom there were strong suspicions that they continued to believe in the Law of Moses.⁵ Therefore, everything seems to indicate that, for Mascarenhas, proofs of purity of blood should above all be reports on the rigour of the Catholic faith held by those *conversos* seeking appointment to honourific posts and ecclesiastical benefices. He even went on to state that excluding sincere Christians just because they were descended from Jews was a miscarriage of justice and contrary to the unity of the Church. Therefore, he thought it was wrong to exclude those who “were Jews, or were descended from Jews, and who live in accordance with the same reformation and certainty [of the faith], as they would live if they were Old Christians”.⁶ In general, Mascarenhas invoked the articles on the unity of the Christian republic from the early Christian councils, as well as the bull *Humani generis* issued by Nicolas V, which condemned the division between New and Old Christians. For Mascarenhas, excluding New Christians “solely on the basis that they had been Jews, or for being descended from Jews without any other reason, is a manifest injustice, as well as a disturbance contrary to the union of the Church”.⁷

From a practical point of view, Mascarenhas was in favour of restricting the application of the purity of blood statutes. To achieve this, he proposed that all the *conversos* whose ancestry did not include any Judaizer should be considered as Old Christians, and they could thus be awarded ecclesiastical benefices and posts, with the exception of those pertaining to the Inquisition:

“that his Majesty should as a consequence grant the privilege of Old Christian to those, who having passed the fifth or seventh generation since [their ancestors’] initial conversion, can legally prove that there has never been in their generation a person judged for Judaism and apostasy, and that these individuals should be permitted to take up ordinary posts and benefices without impediment, while barring them from the tribunal of the Inquisition and its posts”.⁸

As can be seen, Mascarenhas did not think that the distinction between New and Old Christians should be effaced, but that it should be solely and exclusively based on religious concerns. Therefore, he supported the punishment of Judaizers, and even that they should be punished with banishment, while also rewarding those who, despite being descended from Jews, firmly upheld their Christian faith. Indeed, the Inquisitor General not only argued this before the king and his ministers, through the aforementioned treatise, he also expressed his views to the Pope. He wrote to Urban VIII on two occasions in 1623 to lend support to the petition submitted by a jurist, Francisco Velasco Gouveia, who sought to be made Archdeacon of Vilanova in the cathedral of Braga. It should be recalled that Clement VIII and Paul V had established that New Christians could not be granted ecclesiastical benefices in Portugal. Furthermore, the chapter of the Cathedral of Braga had agreed in 1612 that no *converso* could take possession of a canonry or position in the aforesaid cathedral (Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, p. 151). The Inquisitor General asked the Pope to grant a dispensation to Velasco Gouveia so that he could be granted the post of Archdeacon of Vilanova on the basis that both his parents were good Christians. In one of his letters, Martins Mascarenhas clearly expressed his idea that punishment should be imposed on those who committed the crime of heresy, while rewards should also be given to those who remained faithful Catholics, despite having *converso* blood:

“given my extensive experience of the affairs of this kingdom and the duty I undertake as Inquisitor General to oppose the heretical depravity that I hold, I am led to seek that the crimes of such men be severely punished, while the public merits of those who are just be recompensed by the Holy Apostolic See”.⁹

Yet Mascarenhas also supported those New Christians whose fidelity to Christianity was beyond any shadow of a doubt, at least for him. For example, in 1618, the Ximenes de Aragão family requested King Philip III to issue them with a document stating their purity of blood (López-Salazar Codes 2016). Mascarenhas supported the claim made by this powerful family, albeit indirectly. He stated that no member of this family had ever been tried by the Holy Office. What is relevant here is that the Inquisitor General ignored the fact that one member of their family had been condemned to abjure *de levi* by the Inquisition of Goa in 1593. It is possible he was unaware of this, yet this signals a lack of care in his revision of the records on the religious behaviour of the Ximenes de Aragão family. Alternatively, it is possible he did not consider such a slight suspicion of Judaism a grave issue. Finally, we cannot overlook the fact that the Inquisitor General was to some degree acquainted with the Ximenes de Aragão family. Shortly after taking up the position of Inquisitor General, Mascarenhas received a treatise from Fernão Ximenes de Aragão, Archdeacon of Santa Cristina in the cathedral of Braga, in which he proposed that all those condemned for Judaism should be expelled or imprisoned for life, whereby they would be completely isolated from other Christians. Subsequently, in 1625, Ximenes de Aragão dedicated to the Inquisitor General his anti-Jewish polemic *Doutrina catholica para instrucção e cõfirmação dos fieis e extincção das seitas supersticiosas e em particular do judaísmo* (Catholic doctrine for the instruction and confirmation of the faithful and the extinction of the superstitious sects and, in particular, Judaism), a text that can be read and interpreted in multiple ways as Claude Stuczynski has recently demonstrated (Stuczynski 2016).

The Inquisitor General also declared that Lourenço da Gama Pereira, an archdeacon of Lisbon Cathedral, had proved his purity of blood to him. At that time, one of the archdeacon's nephews, António da Gama Lobo, was trying to prove the purity of his lineage before the *Mesa da Consciência e Ordens*. Gama Lobo faced a challenging undertaking as he was a descendant of Mateus Esteves, who was the brother of Cristóvão Esteves to whom João III had granted the status of *fidalgos*. However, the latter award left a written register of the fact that Cristóvão Esteves was a *converso*. As Fernanda Olival has discussed, Gama Lobo's strategy sought to demonstrate that Mateus was not Cristóvão Esteves's brother, but rather his stepbrother, whereby Gama Lobo was not descended from Jews who had converted to Christianity (Olival 2002). As can be seen from other proofs of purity of blood, this was a common tactic. Nevertheless, what is interesting in this case, is that the

Inquisitor General also took part in this farce. Mascarenhas issued a statement declaring that Archdeacon Lourenço da Gama Pereira had demonstrated his purity of blood to him, whereby he considered him as suitable for undertaking inquisitorial duties (Silva 1855, p. 40). It is unclear how Gama Pereira's purity of blood was demonstrated given that no documents concerning him have been found in the archives of the Portuguese Inquisition. It is possible that the Inquisitor General questioned witnesses, but as part of an extrajudicial process and without following the standard procedure used for these types of cases.

As has been shown, Fernão Martins Mascarenhas was decidedly open-minded with regard to the integration of New Christians into Portuguese society, so long as they were faithful and sincere Catholics, although his attitude may also be related to their personal interests and relationships. However, he by no means advocated reining in the Inquisition's repression, and he supported especially harsh measures such as the banishment of those sentenced by the Holy Office. I am unaware of any other Portuguese Inquisitor General, at least up until 1773 when the legal distinction between Old and New Christians was abolished, who was such a keen supporter of the social integration of New Christians, so long as the sincerity of their Catholic faith could be demonstrated.

3.2. Purity of Blood and Pragmatism

In his broad and well-documented study *A honra alheia por um fio: os estatutos de limpeza de sangue nos espaços de expressão ibérica, sécs. XVI-XVIII*, João Figueirôa-Rêgo demonstrated that, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, numerous people renowned for having tainted blood managed to join honourific institutions such as the Inquisition and the military orders, while many others did not achieve this for the very reason they had "Jewish blood"; in the majority of cases, what was revealed was the influence of reputation and rumour concerning Jewish descent as opposed to any genuine Hebrew origin.

Over the course of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, periodically rumours arose about the tainted blood of certain members of the Portuguese Inquisition. In my view, it is not surprising that these rumours grew stronger as the Early Modern Age progressed, because more time had passed since the Jews had originally converted. Frequently, such rumours arose due to disputes and tensions either at a local level, or in the context of the competitions held for a range of positions at the University of Coimbra. Were we to consider some of these rumours credible, evidently the Portuguese Holy Office would have included the descendants of *conversos*. However, I think that this image of the Inquisition demands closer scrutiny. As far as I am aware, there was no mass entry of *conversos* into the Portuguese Holy Office during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In my view, this was due to the specific nature of early modern Portugal, where New Christians maintained an identity, whether assumed or imposed, much longer than in Castile. The recurring lists (*fintas*) of those referred to as people of the Hebrew nation, which were drawn up for the purpose of making payments for economic services rendered to the Crown, provided a constant reminder of whose origin was deemed tainted. On the other hand, if New Christians who had managed to "shed" their original identity and blend into Portuguese society attained admission to the tribunal of the Faith, they cannot be considered *conversos*; to do so would be to invoke an essentialism greater than that of the inquisitors themselves.

In my opinion, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the majority of the Inquisitors General maintained a practical attitude towards rumours concerning the tainted blood of certain members of the tribunal. In other words, they accepted and even facilitated admission to the tribunal for individuals with a tarnished reputation because they were useful for the Inquisition, or because it suited their own personal interests. Nevertheless, this is not to say there was no discrimination, as there was. Undoubtedly, consideration must be given to the highly important factor of self-exclusion by those whose origins were deemed suspect and were not able to conceal them. Yet we must also consider that the Inquisitors General, as well as the members of the General Council who analysed the proofs of purity of blood, were well aware that it was practically impossible to establish the

veracity of rumours about the purity of blood of those who aspired to be admitted to the Holy Office. The fact that it was during the eighteenth century when the General Council rejected a greater number of proofs of purity of blood demonstrates it is clear that what was at stake was not only the racial origin of those who sought to join the Holy Office, but also their capacity to be considered pure and capable of occupying respectable positions and honourable positions.

Perhaps the clearest display of the pragmatism shown by a member of the senior tier of the Inquisition was by Inquisitor General Pedro de Castilho, who oversaw the tribunal between 1604 and 1615. As is well known, Castilho took up his post at a highly complex moment when the negotiations between the New Christians and the Crown were drawing to a close, and they led to the general pardon for crimes of Judaism conceded by Clement VIII in 1604. Between 1602 and 1604, Philip III also planned a reform of the Portuguese inquisitorial tribunal, and had it been applied this would have limited the tribunal's autonomy, while also linking its procedure to that of the Spanish Inquisition. Furthermore, there were also plans for the Holy See to undertake a possible intervention into the Portuguese Holy Office by hearing appeals made by those tried by the Portuguese tribunal. Confronted by all these dangers, Castilho initially submitted to the Crown's plans, while also accepting the general pardon for the New Christians, whereby he managed to reconfigure the inquisitorial tribunal, improve its sources of income, and consolidate its legal procedure by a new *Instruction* published in 1613 (López-Salazar Codes 2010).

In this context, it was fundamental to ensure the support of Philip III's *valido*, or favourite, the Duke of Lerma, who would communicate with Castilho and provide direct access to the king. For this purpose, the secretary of State of the Council of Portugal in Madrid, Fernão de Matos, became a key intermediary in the channel of direct communication between the Inquisitor General and the monarch's *valido*. In 1611, Pedro de Castilho appointed Matos secretary of the Portuguese Inquisition in the royal court of Madrid, and he was then granted a salary paid by the tribunal. Matos had performed that office since 1608, although without an official appointment. In 1608, Philip III took over all the affairs related to the Holy Office, and prevented them from being handled by any council, tribunal or *junta* (committee). The Inquisitor General had to provide the Duke of Lerma with all the information regarding the tribunal, and he would send him letters and consultations via the secretary Fernão de Matos. The choice of Matos is completely understandable; he was the secretary to the Council of Portugal, in Madrid, and had established closed links with the Inquisitor General when Castilho was at the royal court between 1603 and 1604.

Nevertheless, a problem arose because Fernão de Matos was appointed secretary of the Inquisition without any prior enquiry into his purity of blood, despite there being rumours that he had Jewish ancestry. Seemingly, the doubts about his purity were due to him being a descendant of Fernando de Lucena, a Castilian who served as agent of Juan de Ulloa, a nobleman from the city of Toro, who gained renown during the War of the Castilian Succession (1474–1479), and whose daughter married the Portuguese Count of Marialva, Francisco Coutinho.¹⁰ Once in Portugal, Lucena remained in the service of the Count of Marialva, and his descendants subsequently forged ties to the House of Bragança, which they served as jurists and secretaries. As Francisco de Lucena arrived in Portugal sometime between the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, it was rumoured that this was due to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. Therefore, those who claimed that Fernão de Matos had pure blood insisted that Fernando de Lucena was already a Christian when he arrived in Portugal. In fact, this was not an isolated case, because, as Figueirôa-Rêgo has underscored, when proofs of purity of blood were undertaken, geographical migration was frequently interpreted as a subterfuge used by people seeking to conceal their tarnished origins (Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, pp. 270–71).

If solely genealogical criteria were used, one could argue that Fernão de Matos had tainted blood. During the purity of blood enquiry that was undertaken years after his admission to the Holy Office, all the witnesses defended the purity of the Matos-Lucena family, and alleged that the Castilian Fernando de Lucena had most probably been born in

the Andalusian villa of Lucena and had been a servant of the Ulloa family in the city of Toro until he began serving the Count of Marialva. The problem was that in a display of erudition, the royal chronicler, Frei Bernardo de Brito, and the royal councillor, Belchior de Teves, claimed that he had not been born in Lucena but instead in Toro, and that he was closely related to the protonotary Fernando de Lucena, who was featured in Jerónimo Zurita's *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, published between 1562 and 1580. The problem arose from the fact that if this Fernando de Lucena really was the grandfather or great-grandfather of Fernão de Matos, the former was a *converso*. Historians had demonstrated that the Lucena brothers—Juan Ramírez de Lucena and Fernando de Lucena—were the sons of Jews from Soria who had converted to Christianity. Furthermore, Juan Ramírez de Lucena's mother was accused of performing Jewish practices by the Inquisition and that Ramírez de Lucena himself wrote a text opposing inquisitorial procedures during the late fifteenth century (Carrete Parrondo 1991; Diago Hernando 1993).

The possible genealogical link between Fernando de Lucena, servant of the Counts of Marialva, and the Jew from Soria was not of major significance for the case because it was never cited by those who questioned the purity of Fernão de Matos's blood. The rumours concerning the secretary's lack of purity were based on the fact that the Lucena family was originally from Castile and had arrived in Portugal in the context of the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. In my view, in many cases, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to be a *converso* did not depend on genealogical facts, but rather on a family's social behaviour. In this case, Matos and his family had not acted as New Christians. Indeed, a witness highlighted that:

“it is confirmed amongst those in that kingdom [Portugal] who are well informed on these matters, that the Jews and New Christians who crossed into Portugal from Castile undertook the professions of merchant and physician, amongst others that these people [Jews and New Christians] normally undertake, and they married and mixed with one another; and that it is well known that neither the aforesaid Hernando de Lucena, nor any of his descendants worked in these professions, nor did they intermarry with New Christians; rather they always engaged in noble professions”.¹¹

For decades, the Lucena family had sought to conceal its distant Jewish origins—assuming they had one—or at least counter the rumours concerning their tainted blood. To a certain extent, they were successful, as it seems they were not included in the lists of the members of the Jewish nation that were drawn up for tax collection purposes during the reign of John III. Nevertheless, the rumour persisted, and seemingly came to the attention of Philip II and the viceroy of Portugal, Archduke Albert in the 1580s. Once appointed to the Holy Office, as secretary to the Portuguese Inquisition in Madrid, Fernão de Matos sought to put an end to any suspicion there might be about his origins. The purity of blood proof that was undertaken at his request in 1614, demonstrates what Jean-Pierre Dedieu terms the “social power” of those who managed to gain admission to the Holy Office despite their having a reputation for possessing tainted blood. The investigations were held in the towns of Leomil and Trancoso, where the Matos-Lucena family were originally from, as well as Lisbon and the court of Madrid. During the investigations, the following gave declarations: Manuel de Castelo Branco, Count of Vila Nova, Henrique de Sousa, Count of Miranda, Belchior de Teves from the royal council, Miguel de Castro, Archbishop of Lisbon, Fernão Martins Mascarenhas, then Bishop of the Algarve, and who had previously served as Rector of the University of Coimbra, Frei Bernardo de Brito, royal chronicler, a number of magistrates from the two high courts of the kingdom (*Casa da Suplicação* and *Relação do Porto*), as well as numerous individuals from diverse backgrounds from a number of towns and cities in the Beira region. The evidence that was gathered was not analysed by the General Council, as was usually the case, but it was studied personally by Pedro de Castilho. Furthermore, instead of restricting himself to approving the evidence, as was customary, Castilho issued a provision stating that Fernão de Matos had pure blood and that this should be registered in the three inquisitions of the kingdom.¹²

In my view, the proof of Fernão de Matos's purity of blood demonstrates two facts, aside from the power he wielded and support he received. Firstly, the Inquisitor General could not manage without Matos, as he played a fundamental role in the network Castilho had created to ensure he had direct access to the monarch via the Duke of Lerma. Secondly, and what is more relevant, Castilho, in both this case and another one addressed below, was aware to what extent purity of blood depended on power games, especially in the local sphere, and not on any genealogical facts. Therefore, if Pedro de Castilho and Fernão Martins Mascarenhas showed a degree of pragmatism when it came to addressing the issue of purity of blood, it was because they knew perfectly well to what extent a person's renown was a social construct that did not always—and increasingly less—depend on genealogical-racial facts.

The pragmatism shown by the Inquisitors General Castilho and Martins Mascarenhas was also demonstrated by the recurring issue of the purity of blood of Diogo de Brito de Carvalho, deputy of the tribunal of Coimbra, and subsequently, of Lisbon. He had been born in Almeida, in the north interior of Portugal, and his family had served the Marquises of Vila Real, who may even have paid for his university studies. In 1589, he entered the College of St Peter in Coimbra, and that same year he began his career as a lecturer at the university. In 1596, following a purity of blood enquiry undertaken the previous year, albeit a somewhat superficial one focused on his mother and maternal grandparents, Diogo de Brito was admitted to the Inquisition as a deputy in Coimbra. Ten years later, the inquisitors of Coimbra informed the Inquisitor General that they had no record that any enquiry whatsoever had been undertaken. Furthermore, they stated that Jerónimo Henriques, Abbott of Almofala, had been commissioned to undertake the investigation, but that the commission had been withdrawn and he was ordered not to proceed.¹³ It is perhaps this fact which explains why the purity of blood enquiry into Diogo de Brito, which was carried out in 1595 despite what the inquisitors said ten years later, appears to be incomplete. In fact, the only witnesses to be examined were from Almeida, where his father and paternal grandparents were from, and their Old Christian blood had never been called into question. In 1595, no investigations were undertaken in Leiria, where his mother was from, or the findings have not been conserved.

Despite the 1595 enquiry into his purity of blood having been focused on the town of Almeida, around that time a tentative rumour began to circulate concerning his mother's tainted ancestry. The rumour does not seem to have had any basis in fact, and all the evidence suggests that it was prompted by her having been the illegitimate daughter of a cleric, who served in the household of the Marquis of Vila Real in Leiria, and a woman from the same city.¹⁴ As was the case on other occasions, the rumours resurfaced when Diogo de Brito undertook the *concurso* or exam, for a doctoral canonry. During these exams, the university was beset by a web of alliances and tensions that gave rise to campaigns to promote as well as discredit candidates for posts. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that these rumours were brought to the attention of the Inquisition at the exact moment in 1605 when candidates for the doctoral canonry of Évora were being examined. Indeed, it was brought to the attention of the tribunal of Coimbra through friar Egídio da Apresentação, who worked alongside Diogo de Brito; they were both deputies of the Inquisition and university lecturers. Given the late date of 1605, the rumour about Diogo de Brito's tainted bloodlines seems barely credible and is instead an example of a university intrigue; he was claimed to be "decried as a New Christian and Morisco".¹⁵ Although he could have been the former, the latter is less likely.

It is not clear to what extent this reputation, communicated by the inquisitors of Coimbra to Inquisitor General Castilho, could have affected Diogo de Brito's inquisitorial career. On the one hand, it is clear that he never rose to the rank of inquisitor. Nevertheless, on the other hand, he never ceased to serve the Inquisition, and remained a deputy in Coimbra and later, from 1625 onwards, in Lisbon. Furthermore, in parallel, he pursued a brilliant career as a magistrate and he was appointed to the posts of *desembargador* (magistrate) of the *Casa da Suplicação*, one of the kingdom's High Courts, and deputy to the

Mesa da Consciência, one of the Portuguese kingdom's most important councils. He also managed to ascend the ecclesiastical hierarchy, obtaining the doctoral canonry of Lisbon in 1609, and finally in 1626 that of Évora, which was the most richly endowed in the kingdom. Finally, Inquisitor General Pedro de Castilho appointed a nephew and his own brother as familiars of the Inquisition in the town of Almeida in 1612 and 1614, respectively.¹⁶

As has been seen, neither Pedro de Castilho nor Fernão Martins Mascarenhas chose to promote Diogo de Brito to the rank of inquisitor, yet they did not dispense with his services. Their choices prove still more relevant if we take into account the fact that in 1619 the General Council ruled that it had been demonstrated that Francisco de Andrade Freire, Brito's nephew and Familiar of the Holy Office, had tainted blood and he was expelled from the tribunal.¹⁷ Indeed, this demonstrates how accommodating the Inquisition could be when it was in its interest to do so, and when the prestige of the institution itself was at stake. Francisco de Andrade Freire had joined the Inquisition in 1612 without any hindrance, nor with any doubt being cast upon the purity of his blood. However, in 1618, the Familiar committed murder and sought to invoke the privilege of inquisitorial exemption to evade the civil court. In that context, the widow of the victim sent a letter to the Inquisitor General denouncing the Familiar's behaviour and in passing she mentioned his tainted ancestry. Following a second round of interrogations of witnesses, the tribunal of the Faith decided to expel him due to the rumours that he had "Jewish blood" through his mother and Moorish blood through his father. What is significant is that neither the General Council nor the Inquisitor General thought it necessary to dispense with his uncles, Deputy Diogo de Brito and Familiar Pedro Vieira de Brito. As a result, Diogo de Brito continued to form part of the Holy Office, voted on inquisitorial sentences, received a salary from the tribunal and appeared in public as a member of the Inquisition during *autos-da-fé*.¹⁸

Besides keeping Diogo de Brito in his post, despite having expelled his nephew for his tainted blood, Fernão Martins Mascarenhas also admitted to the Inquisition people whose purity of blood was doubtful. While the most controversial case during Pedro de Castilho's period as Inquisitor General was that of the members of the Matos-Lucena family, under Fernão Martins Mascarenhas the most disputed example was that of the Veloso de Amaral family. In contrast to what occurred under Castilho, the Inquisitor General's actions were due neither to political questions nor practical ones, but merely to his desire to reward his servants.

Indeed, from the outset, the purity of blood investigations undertaken for the brothers Belchior Veloso and Baltasar Teixeira, both of whom served Martins Mascarenhas, stand out as they did not adhere to the steps usually taken in this type of enquiry. It would seem that the admission of the Veloso brothers to the Holy Office must have been one of the first concerns Martins Mascarenhas undertook as Inquisitor General. It should be recalled that following Pedro de Castilho's death in 1615, Philip III chose Mascarenhas, who was then Bishop of Algarve, to succeed him as head of the Holy Office. On 4 July 1616, the Pope issued the brief appointing him Inquisitor General. Then, in August while still Bishop of the Algarve, he ordered a purity of blood enquiry to be conducted by the Inquisition in Pinhel, which was the brothers' birthplace. This alone was an irregularity, as Martins Mascarenhas had still not yet taken up his position as Inquisitor General. The ceremony for his acceptance of the papal brief that appointed him did not take place until December of that year. Therefore, when Martins Mascarenhas gave orders that the enquiry into his servants' purity of blood should be undertaken, he had still not taken up his new appointment.¹⁹ In addition, he ordered that the information be sent to him, instead of the General Council, which usually received and studied these documents. What is still more surprising is that two members of the General Council signed an accord, dated 16 June 1616, in which they stated that during a meeting of the Council they had seen, in the presence of the Inquisitor General, the proofs of the purity of blood of the brothers, and it was agreed that the evidence satisfied the necessary requirements for serving in the Holy Office. However, this was absolutely impossible because, in June, the Inquisitor General elect had still not been confirmed by the papal brief and was residing in the diocese of

the Algarve. Furthermore, it is not possible to approve in June an investigation that was undertaken in Pinhel in September of that same year.²⁰

The manner in which the enquiry was undertaken in Pinhel is no less surprising. On the first day, some of the witnesses testified that it was said that the brothers had impure blood, but that these rumours had been spread by enemies. It does not seem to be a coincidence that many of the witnesses questioned over the days that followed were relatives of Belchior Veloso and Baltasar Teixeira. Moreover, these witnesses belonged to the suspect side of the family, the Sampaio branch of the family sought to demonstrate their ties to the noble Vila Flor family, *alcaldes mores* (military governors) of the town of Torre de Moncorvo. I have not been able to establish any family ties between the Sampaio de Vila Flor family and Belchior Veloso and Baltasar Teixeira's ancestors.²¹ However, what is stated in *Pedatura Lusitana* by the genealogist Cristóvão Alão de Morais (1632–1693) is that Juliana de Amaral, mother of the Veloso brothers, and, according to the purity of blood enquiry, a descendant of the Lords of Vila Flor, was a *conversa*. Nevertheless, despite the irregularities, or thanks to them, the Inquisition declared the brothers' blood to be pure. Belchior Veloso was appointed Familiar of the Holy Office and Baltasar Teixeira received the post of notary to the Lisbon court. Furthermore, Fernão Martins Mascarenhas adhered to his predecessor's policy, and admitted to the Holy Office some members of the Matos-Lucena family, whose purity of blood remained controversial. In 1617, Manuel de Lucena was appointed deputy of the Lisbon tribunal, and then in 1624 Martins Mascarenhas confirmed Francisco de Lucena as secretary of the Portuguese Inquisition in Madrid.

As has been discussed, the accusation of having tainted blood cast a shadow over a number of ministers of the Inquisition during the early seventeenth century. The rumour that the tribunal was infested by *conversos* reached its peak in the early 1620s. In 1623, an anonymous author submitted a report to Philip IV opposing the policy taken by Mascarenhas as head of the Inquisition.²² The document accused the then Inquisitor General of having left the tribunal's government in the hands of his servant and right-hand man, Belchior Veloso. The Inquisitor General was also accused of having appointed many more ministers than were necessary, who also lacked the stipulated scholarly training, honesty and purity of blood. The new appointees had apparently purchased their positions from Veloso, who had become the principal point of entry into the institution. Furthermore, in exchange for money, Belchior Veloso would ensure that the Inquisitor General would commute punishments imposed upon those condemned by the Holy Office.

In another study, I argued that the treatise against Mascarenhas had been probably written by Simão Torresão Coelho, former deputy to the Inquisition of Coimbra, who had been suspended from his position by the Inquisitor General and was residing in Madrid in the summer of 1623. Whoever the author may be, there can be no doubt that the treatise is a polemical text and, in no case, a faithful reflection of the Portuguese Inquisition during the reign of Philip IV. The text contains numerous errors with regard to the appointments made by Martins Mascarenhas. Furthermore, to prove the existence of some of the family relationships alleged in the document would be a major challenge, and it likewise seems almost impossible to demonstrate the claims that various members of the tribunal had tainted blood and sodomite tendencies.²³

Of all these accusations, I will focus solely on that which concerns the purity of blood of the ministers named by Mascarenhas. If the treatise is to be believed, the following had tainted blood: Sebastião de Matos de Noronha, member of the General Council; Inquisitors Marcos Teixeira and Manuel de Lucena; Deputies Lopo Soares de Castro, Diogo Osório de Castro, António Veloso de Amaral, friar Francisco Carreiro, Amaro Fagundes, António Correia and Luís Correia; the notary, Baltasar Teixeira, as well as a number of familiars. Without wishing to deny the existence of *conversos* in the Holy Office and Mascarenhas's lack of concern with regard to the renown of the ministers who served on the tribunal, this accusation needs to be framed in its specific context and understood as a weapon deployed

against the Inquisitor General's policy, as opposed to being a faithful portrait of those who worked for the Inquisition.

Firstly, it seems unlikely that some of those accused of having tainted blood would have had Jewish ancestors. Sebastião de Matos de Noronha was the nephew of António Matos de Noronha, Bishop of Elvas, who was appointed Inquisitor General by Philip II in 1596. With regard to Marcos Teixeira, he was the nephew of his namesake who joined the Inquisition during the lifetime of the Cardinal Infante Henrique, and he went to be appointed to the General Council.²⁴ Furthermore, both Sebastião de Matos de Noronha and Marcos Teixeira had joined the tribunal of the Faith under Inquisitor General Pedro de Castilho, and not under Fernão Martins Mascarenhas. I have not managed to demonstrate that the brothers Lopo Soares de Castro and Diogo Osório de Castro had *converso* ancestors, although the anonymous treatise labelled them as New Christians on the basis that they were cousins of Belchior Veloso. They did indeed have a distant family tie, but it was through the paternal line of Belchior Veloso, whose blood was considered pure, rather than through that of his mother, who was the one suspected of having tainted blood.²⁵ Furthermore, their connection to the Holy Office predated the appointment of Mascarenhas as Inquisitor General. The evidence for Lopo Soares de Castro's purity of blood was approved in 1614 during the rule of Pedro de Castilho. In addition, both Lopo Soares de Castro and Diogo Osório de Castro brothers were nephews of Bartolomeu da Fonseca, who was appointed Inquisitor of Goa by Cardinal Henrique in 1572, and later appointed to the General Council in 1598 under Inquisitor General António Matos de Noronha.

Secondly, some of the other clerics accused of being *conversos* in the treatise attacking Mascarenhas never formed part of the Holy Office, or at least there is no trace of them. As far as I am aware, there is no evidence that the Cistercian friar Francisco Carreiro, a university lecturer, nor Luís Correia ever served as deputies of the tribunal of Coimbra. Therefore, of all the ministers of the tribunal accused of being *conversos*, it is only those from the Matos-Lucena and Veloso de Amaral families, which I discussed above, who had any such reputation.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that there were not individuals who had tainted blood in the Holy Office. In my view, the 1623 treatise is of no value as evidence for there having been *conversos* in the tribunal, as is also the case for the rumours that periodically arose in the proofs of the purity of blood for some of the ministers and officials who served on it. It is more likely that the Inquisitor General was granting posts in the Holy Office to his personal servants, such as Belchior Veloso, Baltasar Teixeira or Bartolomeu de Monteagudo, who was appointed promoter in Lisbon. In fact, Mascarenhas was not supported by some of the ministers of the Inquisition and, in 1627, the Inquisitor of Coimbra, Gaspar Borges de Azevedo, submitted another memorial to Philip IV in which he accused the ministers of the tribunal of committing abuses when trying those accused of Judaism.²⁶

The appointment of Francisco de Castro as Inquisitor General was accompanied by a general visitation of the inquisitions for the purpose of looking into the accusation of excesses committed against New Christians by the ministers of the tribunals, as well as putting an end to any abuses that might have arisen. Having inspected the three tribunals, the Inquisitor General considered that it had been demonstrated that the majority of his ministers acted justly and equitably, and that the legal procedure used was just and in accordance with the law. Nevertheless, the Inquisitor General decided to dispense with the service of a number of ministers. Although the letter reporting his decision on this issue to the monarch is extremely brief regarding the motives for his actions, it may be suggested that he was motivated either by misdeeds committed by some members of the Inquisition while undertaking their duties, or by doubts about their purity of blood.²⁷

Despite the image of rigour, gravity, and equity that Inquisitor General Francisco de Castro sought to present at the outset of his period of office, the Inquisition continued having to confront the problem raised by the practical impossibility of proving the truth about the origins of those who sought to join the tribunal. The issue became ever more impossible to resolve as the dates of ancestors' conversions grew more distant, whereby

the evidence for a person's *converso* blood came to be based solely on reputation and rumour. Therefore, the tribunal had no other option but to continue maintaining the same accommodating attitude and practice as before. That is not to say that admission to the Inquisition was freely granted to those reputed to have tainted blood, but nor was the tribunal complete devoid of supposed or real *conversos* amongst its members.

In fact, the Inquisition's attitude was not set in stone when it came to the "reputation and rumour" of tainted blood, not even in very similar cases. As has been demonstrated by João Figueirôa-Rêgo, the bonds of solidarity forged at the colleges of St Peter and St Paul at the University of Coimbra shed light on how individuals with *fama* (a reputation for being from a *converso* family) were admitted to the Holy Office during the second half of the seventeenth century. He has demonstrated to what extent a knowledge of connections between alumni of the aforesaid colleges is fundamental for understanding the careers they went on to lead in the Holy Office and university (Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, pp. 379–81). However, I would reiterate that, in my view, the door was not open for everyone. I want now to turn to a significant example that both proves and refutes Figueirôa-Rêgo's thesis because university alliances did not always enable those with suspect bloodlines to enter the Holy Office.

The competitions held for grants to the colleges were moments at which client networks were deployed and all kinds of mechanisms were used to ensure the right candidates received grants, even if this meant discrediting other applicants. This is illustrated by the actions of Dionísio Rebelo de Gondim and Filipe Barreto, who were both from Viana da Foz do Lima, when competing for a grant from the College of St Peter in 1646. Their respective supporters showed doubts about their opponent's purity of blood, although this does not seem to have had any immediate effects. The grant was awarded to Rebelo de Gondim who progressed to become lecturer at the university and magistrate (*desembargador*) of the *Casa da Suplicação*, as well as doctoral canon of the cathedrals of Viseu, Lamego, Guarda and Braga. Therefore, he clearly did not lack support in the university world. Nevertheless, he was unable to shed the reputation that he had *converso* blood, and in 1656, it prevented him from entering the Holy Office, as was his intention. Similarly, the reputation that was circulated in 1646 about the family of Filipe Barreto continued to haunt them, and it resurfaced when his relative Marçal Casado Jácome sought admission to the Inquisition in 1652. Casado Jácome was also an alumnus of the College of St Peter, a retired lecturer with a long university career, doctoral canon of Coimbra and a member of the *Desembargo do Paço*, the highest council and court of justice in Portugal.

In Viana, it was reputed that both Dionísio Rebelo de Gondim and Marçal Casado Jácome had tainted blood. The rumour arose or was rekindled in the same context. Both clerics gained promotion within the magistracy and succeeded in being awarded doctoral canonries. However, one of them went on to be admitted to the Inquisition while the other did not despite the fact that when the investigations into their purity of blood were reviewed at sessions of the General Council of the Holy Office, on both occasions the same deputies attended, some of whom were alumni of the college of St Peter. Therefore, the bonds of solidarity between the alumni helped in one case, but not in the other. In my opinion, the rumour concerning the ancestry of Rebelo de Gondim carried greater weight as the family had unequivocally ascended the social hierarchy, and in addition some of its members had been imprudent enough to become ensnared in criminal affairs. Rebelo de Gondim's father and paternal grandfather were shoemakers, while their maternal grandfather was a tailor, and his maternal grandmother was a shopkeeper in Ponte de Lima. The father of the future doctoral canon went from being a shoemaker to a merchant, which enabled him to attain greater wealth. Thereby, he gained access to the city council positions, at least those of inspector of weights and measures (*almotacé*) and procurator for the council, and, as one witness from Viana declared, these roles were undertaken by the noble men from the town. The family's social ascent reached its height when Manuel Álvares Gondim, Dionísio's brother, was granted a *foro* (certificate of status) as *fidalgo* of the royal household.

It is possible that this promotion prompted antagonism, which would have been compounded by the deeds of the same Manuel Álvares Gondim, who was judged guilty of killing a man, who happened to be a priest's brother. During the enquiry into the crime, Álvares Gondim decided to accuse the priest of having *converso* blood, but the latter retaliated by making the same claim about his accuser.²⁸ In contrast, Marçal Casado Jácome's parents were "very noble and served in the government of this town [of Viana da Foz do Lima]" and his family had not been involved in any murder.²⁹ Therefore, once again, the tribunal demonstrated its capacity to adapt to circumstances when confronted by the practical impossibility of proving the majority of the rumours and reputation that circulated about the tarnished origins of those who wished to be admitted to the Inquisition.

The awareness of the members of the Holy Office that purity of blood was, to a large extent, a social construct explains the decision taken by Inquisitor General Veríssimo de Lencastre (1676–1692) when he came to establish and put a limit on which genealogical works ought to be deemed reliable. As has been studied by João Figueirôa-Rêgo, a *junta* was held in 1685 which included the Inquisitor General amongst others, and it decided which genealogical books could be considered trustworthy. For Figueirôa-Rêgo, this was undertaken not due to any concern that supposed *conversos* may gain admittance to honourable institutions, but because members of the senior nobility feared that shameful genealogical evidence would sully their lineages (Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, pp. 562–74). Nevertheless, these degrading documents, akin to the Spanish *libros verdes*, continued to circulate and the Inquisition sought to prevent this, as is demonstrated by the investigation undertaken in 1710 to discover who was the author of one of these works (Baião 1973, pp. 83–101).

4. The Limits of Inclusion

The foregoing examples seemingly lead to the conclusion that the Inquisitors General and the General Council, at least until the "puritanical turn" that marked the final quarter of the seventeenth century, had no qualms about accepting New Christians, whether real or reputed, into the ranks of the Inquisition. However, it is necessary to revise this view if we take into account that the executive organisms of the Holy Office sought, above all, to safeguard its own interests: they willingly accepted individuals who were *conversos* or reputed to be so, as long as their fidelity to the institution was demonstrated to be beyond doubt. Nevertheless, many others never gained admission to the tribunal, not even with the support of the most senior institutions. The meticulous work of Luís Fernando Lopes on the series of *habilitações incompletas* (incomplete proofs) of the tribunal of the Holy Office has demonstrated that a very high percentage of those who did not gain admission to the Holy Office, were New Christians with Jewish ancestry, or else were reputed to be so (Lopes 2018, p. 58). In my view, the percentage of individuals who did not gain admittance to the Holy Office due to the rumour of having Hebrew blood would be far higher if attention is paid not just to the information found in the series of *habilitações incompletas*, but the evidence provided by the *habilitações do Santo Ofício* as these also list numerous cases of rejected candidates. The extent of this exclusion must have been especially prevalent during the final third of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, which coincided with the peak of the anti-Judaic obsession in Portugal. In fact, the majority of the *habilitaciones incompletas* date from this period, and the only manuscript book in which the Inquisition registered rejected candidates covers the period from 1683 to 1737. Therefore, during the key period of exclusion, the impossibility of being admitted to the Inquisition was more likely to be due to a reputation for tainted blood, rather than any proven Jewish ancestry. Essentially, the rejected appointments reflect the candidates' lack of social power to cancel or hide this possible Jewish origin.

The situation was different during the sixteenth century due to the temporal proximity of the relatives' forced conversion to Christianity. As a result, during the sixteenth century, both exclusions and self-exclusion could, in many cases, have been due to the actual existence of Jewish and *converso* roots and individuals being unable to efface or conceal them. Perhaps the most significant example is that of the New Christian Pinto family,

whose complex relationships with the Inquisition reveal the limits of inclusion, even in the case of those who might have made positive contributions to the tribunal.

Following Portugal's integration into the Hispanic Monarchy, the position of Portuguese ambassador in Rome ceased to exist. From then onwards, there was only one ambassador of the Catholic King to the Holy See. Nevertheless, Philip II ruled that specific Portuguese affairs should be handled by a special agent of the Crown, who would also be appointed by the king. António Pinto was the first person to be appointed to this post in 1583, and he had extensive experience of how affairs were conducted in Rome. He was succeeded by his nephew Francisco Vaz Pinto, between 1588 and 1595 (Pinto 2011; Nelson Novoa 2018). As agents of the Crown of Portugal in Rome at the papal court, António and Francisco Vaz Pinto also had to undertake all negotiations concerning the Holy Office. One of the issues they had to address was the five yearly renewal of the papal brief *de non residendo*, which was granted to the Inquisition so that its ministers could receive the income from their ecclesiastical benefices without fulfilling the obligation to reside there. However, the Holy Office also commissioned these Crown agents to obtain ecclesiastical benefices for the members of the tribunal. Either because their salaries proved insufficient or else because they sought to supplement their inquisitorial earnings with money from ecclesiastical incomes, ministers of the Inquisition always sought to obtain prebends (as canons or dignitaries) in cathedral chapters or collegiate churches or, in their absence, simple benefices. For all those cases when it befell the Pope to grant these, it was essential to have someone in Rome who could make the request. Thereby, the tribunal had no other option but to make recourse to the services of António Pinto and, later, Francisco Vaz Pinto.

The official correspondence between the General Council and the Portuguese agent in Rome does not reveal any tension; indeed, the tribunal praised his dedication. Thus, for example, on one of the occasions that they had to make recourse to his service for the transfer of ecclesiastical benefices between inquisitors, the council wrote to Francisco Vaz Pinto:

“And because this matter cannot be effectively undertaken with the order and diligence that your honour is accustomed to devote to the affairs of the Holy Office, we request your honour to undertake this so that the apostolic letters can be issued with the utmost brevity possible and without any delay...”³⁰

However, despite the refined words, it seems that the Pinto were not obtaining the results sought after by members of the Inquisition. As a result, on a number of occasions, the General Council recommended Archduke Albert to dispense with the services provided by these agents and assign the tribunal's affairs to someone who would undertake them “with greater zeal and diligence for the honour and credit for the Holy Office”.³¹ The question arises as to what extent the complaints made by the Council to the archduke led to Portugal's agent in Rome being changed in 1594. During the summer of that year, the Apostolic Collector informed the Holy See that Philip II had decided to substitute Francisco Vaz Pinto with Gonçalo Mendes de Vasconcelos. The latter arrived in Rome during early 1595 and was a member of the Inquisition, a deputy of the tribunal of Évora. Henceforth, the agents in Rome would be linked to the Holy Office. From 1599, the tribunal granted them a salary and they went from being considered solely agents of the king, to also representing the Inquisition.³² Indeed, in 1608, Francisco Pereira Pinto, agent to the king, also received an official appointment as agent of the Holy Office.³³ It should also be noted that he was related to the aforementioned Pinto, but he belonged to the branch of the family that did not have any ties to New Christians. His successors as agents also belonged to the tribunal of the Faith: Salvador de Sousa, who was chosen for the post by Philip III in January 1614, and Miguel Soares Pereira, agent from 1622, were both deputies of the tribunal of Coimbra.

Having abandoned their position as Portuguese agents in Rome, relations between the Pinto and the Holy Office continued to show signs of tension. Firstly, thanks to their knowledge of the inner workings of the Roman curia, they obtained numerous ecclesias-

tical benefices in cathedral chapters, especially those in Coimbra—where they possessed canonries and the dignity of school master—and Porto—where various members of the family held the position of dean. In 1600, João Pinto, school master in Coimbra and brother of the past agent, Francisco Vaz Pinto, was sent by his cathedral chapter to Rome to address an affair that profoundly harmed the interests of the Holy Office. The chapter, and on its behalf, Pinto requested that the Pope should not set aside more than two positions on the chapter for the those serving the Inquisition, which would mean a serious limitation to the *non residendo* privilege granted to the tribunal.³⁴ Opposition to his proposal was shown by the new agent in Rome, Martim Afonso Mexia, whom the Holy Office had managed to admit to the tribunal just a few months earlier by granting him a salary for undertaking the affairs of the Inquisition at the papal court. The role played by the Pinto in this affair, which seriously prejudiced the inquisitorial tribunal, demonstrates how, having ceased to serve as agents in Rome, they continued to conserve a knowledge of Roman affairs and how to negotiate with the curia. On the other hand, I think that this clearly reveals how they were prepared to defend other interests, contrary to those of the Inquisition, and stand their ground on these, given that admission to the Inquisition was not an option for them due to their tainted origins.

5. Conclusions

As was discussed above, since the 1970s historical research on the issue of purity of blood in Spain underscored how from the late sixteenth century and up until the 1630s many of the Spanish Inquisitors General were opposed to the purity of blood statutes. Their criticism of the statutes was due to social concerns, as they considered that the investigations were being used as a weapon for personal confrontations. Therefore, they did not advocate the suppression of the statutes, but instead a reform of how the purity of blood investigations were undertaken, and that a limit should be imposed on the period of time or number of family generations that should be examined. In conjunction with the period of reforms introduced by the Count-Duke of Olivares, the Portuguese Inquisitor General Fernão Martins Mascarenhas also set down in writing his ideas on the need to limit the purity of blood proofs, although, unlike his Castilian counterparts Quiroga or Pacheco, his arguments were not based on the statutes' pernicious social effects, but rather the more traditional position that all Christians were united through baptism.

In addition, throughout the seventeenth century, the Portuguese Inquisition played a dual role with regard to discriminating against those who had or were reputed to have tainted blood. On the one hand, as a number of historians have discussed, the tribunal reinforced the anti-Jewish obsession in Portuguese society along with the idea that every New Christian concealed a potential Jew. On the other hand, the Inquisitors General and the deputies of the General Council approved and deemed valid proofs of purity of blood, yet these did not suffice to disprove the reputed infamy of the candidate seeking admission to the tribunal. In my view, this occurred not because they were opposed to discrimination against New Christians, but due to the specific political and personal interests of the Inquisitors General and likewise because the upper tiers of the Inquisition knew all too well that the *fama* (reputation) and *rumor* (rumour) about a person's tainted blood were increasingly due to reasons that had nothing to do with any real Jewish origins. Nevertheless, there was a limit to integration, and although many managed to gain admission to the Holy Office, others were unsuccessful. Furthermore, there were cases of self-exclusion, in other words, there were families who never sought to enter the tribunal due to the indelible Jewish or *converso* origins.

Finally, I think it is relevant to highlight the conceptual precision Juan Ignacio Gutiérrez Nieto applied to the Spanish Inquisition, which could also prove useful when thinking about the situation in Portugal. According to Gutiérrez Nieto, throughout the reign of Philip II, discrimination underwent a transformation, whereby the rejection of the *converso* was transformed into a rejection of the *notado*, in other words, those who were reputed for being *manchados* (tainted) (Gutiérrez Nieto 1990). The same transformation occurred

in Portugal: there was still discrimination, but it was adapted to the ever-increasing impossibility of identifying the true genealogical origins of many families. Therefore, anti-Judaic discrimination was transformed into an anti-Semitic form of social segregation. Likewise, there were cases in which institutions had to admit individuals who had some kind of *nota*. As Bruno Feitler has recently stated in *A fé dos juizes*, there came a time when the Inquisitors no longer believed in the truth revealed by their legal procedure (Feitler 2022). In my view, I think that it is possible that by the seventeenth century the inquisitors' absolute confidence in the efficacy of purity of blood proofs as a means of attaining genealogical truth had waned. Nevertheless, the system remained in place until 1773, and this was because, firstly, the Holy Office increasingly depended on the income generated by undertaking purity of blood investigations (Lopes 2016), and secondly, the investigations were used to maintain the Inquisition's grip on social power. Furthermore, the system of discrimination based on blood purity was bound up with political and social concerns that remained in place at least until the final decades of the eighteenth century.

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Notes

- ¹ See Enrique Soria's in depth case study on the limited and late implementation of the majority of the purity of blood statutes introduced in the main Castilian municipalities (Soria Mesa 2013). Nevertheless, as Jerónimo López-Salazar's study on Almagro demonstrated, the existence of a purity of blood statute was not a *sine qua non* condition for discrimination against *conversos* or *notados* (reputed conversos) in municipal life. In 1483, the master of the Order of Calatrava had ruled that the order's municipal posts should be divided between the nobility (25%), *hombres buenos* or rich farmers of high moral standing (50%) and merchants (25%). Over time, the word "merchant" acquired a negative connotation, becoming a synonym of converso, and this system for distributing municipal posts became a reminder of those whose blood was deemed tainted (López-Salazar Pérez 1994).
- ² *Regimento do Santo Ofício da Inquisição dos Reinos de Portugal*. . . Lisbon, Manoel da Sylva, 1640, livro III, título III (Franco and Assunção 2014, pp. 348–49).
- ³ Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (ANTT), Tribunal do Santo Ofício (TSO), Conselho Geral (CG), Habilitações, André, mc. 1, doc. 21.
- ⁴ A wholly different question is what sources Martins Mascarenhas drew on as inspiration as well as the draft texts he based his treatise on. I do not consider this text to be anonymous, as is argued by Claude Stuczynski in his magnificent analysis of this treatise's content and context (Stuczynski 2013, p. 51). The final page of the treatise includes the printed "signature" of the Inquisitor General, Emeritus Bishop of the Algarve. I can find no convincing evidence that demonstrates that the Father Diogo de Areda S.J. could have been the author, although this does not rule out the possibility that he shared the Inquisitor General's ideas, nor that they were in contact with one another prior to the writing of this treatise. In fact, José Pedro Paiva proved that the manuscript version of the treatise, preserved in the Public Library of Évora, dates back to 1599, when D. Fernão Martins Mascarenhas was bishop of the Algarve (Paiva 2011, p. 220).
- ⁵ MASCARENHAS, Dom Fernão Martins: *Tratado sobre os varios meynos, que se offerecerão a sua Magestade Catholica para remedio do judaismo neste Reyno de Portugal*, no place of publication, undated, fol. 4v.
- ⁶ "forão judeos, ou procedem de judeos, & viuem com tanta reformaçam, & certeza, como viueraõ, se forão Christãos velhos". *Ibidem*, fol. 5r.
- ⁷ "só por terem sido judeos, ou por procederem de judeos sem mais outra causa, he manifesta injustiça, & desordem contra a vnião da Igreja". *Ibidem*, fol. 5r.

- 8 “que sua Magestade em consequencia dê privilegio de Christaões velhos àquelles, que passando do quinto, ou septimo grão depois do primeiro convertido provarem legitimamente, que nunca em sua geração houve pessoa compreendida de judaísmo, & apostasia, & que os taes sejam admitidos aos officios, & beneficios ordinários sem impedimento, tirando nos tribunaes, & officios da Inquisição”. *Ibidem*, fol. 24r.
- 9 ANTT, Armário Jesuítico e Cartório dos Jesuitas (AJCJ), liv. 20, mç. 1, n. 21: Letter from D. Fernão Martins Mascarenhas to Urban VIII (22 September 1623).
- 10 During the War of the Castilian Succession, Juan de Ulloa supported Juana of Castile, and he handed the city of Toro over to the Portuguese king, Afonso V. To compensate Ulloa for his actions, his daughter was married to Francisco Coutinho, Count of Marialva, and the couple were granted the town of Castelo Rodrigo in 1476.
- 11 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Fernão, mç. 1, doc. 12 (Declaration made by Paulo Feio de Castelo Branco 27 August 1614).
- 12 Evidence for purity of blood was usually studied and, if appropriate, approved by the General Council, and the Inquisitor General might or might not be present at these sessions. In the case of Fernão de Matos, the Council only approved the aforementioned evidence on 10 April 1617, when Castilho had been dead for two years and Fernão Martins Mascarenhas was serving as Inquisitor General. ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Fernão, mç. 1, doc. 12.
- 13 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Mateus, maço 1, dilig. 1 (loose, unnumbered page).
- 14 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Pedro, mç. 40, doc. 706.
- 15 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Matues, mç. 1, doc. 1 (loose unnumbered page).
- 16 ANTT, TSO, Inquisição de Coimbra (IC), liv. 253, fols. 45v-46 and 80.
- 17 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Francisco, mç. 2, doc. 56.
- 18 ANTT, TSO, Inquisição de Lisboa (IL), liv. 633, fols. 114v-115r: Relación del auto de fe de Lisboa del 14 de marzo de 1627 (Account of the auto de fe held in Lisbon on 14 March 1627). ANTT, TSO, IL, liv. 633: payment of the second quarter of the salary for ministers and officials of the tribunal of Lisbon in the year 1632. In addition, Diogo de Brito is cited as voting on the inquisitorial sentences issued by the tribunal of Lisbon.
- 19 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Baltasar, mç. 1, doc. 19, fols. 3r-3v. It is perhaps for this reason that a blank space for writing the specific day and month was left in the mandate sent to the licentiate Cristóvão Peixoto, vicar of the parish church of Freixedas.
- 20 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Baltasar, mç. 1, doc. 19, fol. 43r.
- 21 According to the witnesses who took part in the purity of blood enquiry, Juliana de Amaral, the mother of Belchior Veloso and Baltasar Teixeira, was the daughter of António Henriques Correia de Sampaio and Isabel do Amaral. António Henriques Correia would be related to the Sampaio family, the lords of Vila Flor, as he would have been the son of Vasco de Sampaio and grandson of Luís Vaz de Sampaio, *alcaide-mor* (military governor) of the Torre de Moncorvo. Neither in *Pedatura Lusitana* by Cristóvão de Moraes, nor in the *Nobiliário* by Felgueiras Gaio is there any reference to a connection between António Henriques Correia de Sampaio and the lords of Vila Flor. None of the genealogical works make reference to Luís Vaz de Sampaio, nor to his son Vasco de Sampaio as father and grandfather of António Henriques Correia de Sampaio. Nor have I been able to demonstrate that this Vasco de Sampaio was, as the witnesses to the purity of blood enquiry stated, first cousin of Manuel de Sampaio, Lord of Vila Flor, chamberlain to John III and son of Fernão Vaz de Sampaio, Lord of Vila Flor (Morais 1943–1948, tome II, vol. 1, pp. 100 and ff; Moraes 1943–1948, tome IV, vol. 2, pp. 273–74; Gaio 1938–1941, tome XXVI, pp. 69–82).
- 22 This highly important document, conserved in manuscript 718 in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, was first discussed by Julio Caro Baroja in 1961–1962 (Caro Baroja 2000–2005). It was subsequently used by Juan Ignacio Pulido Serrano in his study on anti-Judaism during the reign of Philip IV (Pulido Serrano 2002, pp. 86–87). In 2011, I argued that its author could have been Inquisitor Simão Torresão Coelho (López-Salazar Codes 2011, p. 67).
- 23 In this regard, I disagree with the statement made by João Figueirôa-Rêgo that “in as far as it is possible to contrast this [text] with archival sources, everything suggests that this libel is trustworthy and accurate” (Figueirôa-Rêgo 2011, pp. 402–3).
- 24 A wholly different matter is that that there were no *conversos* in their families. Thus, a brother of the maternal grandmother of Sebastião de Matos de Noronha had married a daughter of Cristóvão Esteves Esparragosa, who was renowned for his tainted blood (Morais 1943–1948, tome III, vol. 1, pp. 87–88).
- 25 On his father’s side, Belchior Veloso was the grandson of Brites Dias Cabral. She was the sister of Lopo Dias Cabral, a canon of the cathedral of Guarda and great-grandfather of Lopo Soares de Castro and Diogo Osório de Castro. The Veloso Cabral family were considered as having pure blood.
- 26 Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid (AHN), Consejos, leg. 7130.
- 27 ANTT, TSO, CG, liv. 235, fol. 90r: Letter from Francisco de Castro to Philip IV on 2 October 1632. It was published by António Baião (Baião 1942).
- 28 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Dionísio, mç. 1, doc. 6.
- 29 ANTT, TSO, CG, Habilitações, Marçal, mç. 1, doc. 1 (Declaration from António Barbosa Faria).
- 30 ANTT, TSO, CG, liv. 92, fol. 44r: Letter from the General Council to Francisco Vaz Pinto (2 September 1593).
- 31 ANTT, TSO, CG, liv. 99, fol. 23r: Consultation from the General Council submitted to Archduke Albert (12 March 1594).

- ³² Thus, in 1599, the Inquisitor General António Matos de Noronha granted a salary to Martim Afonso Mexia, agent of the Crown of Portugal in Rome, so that he would also undertake the affairs of the Holy Office. As can be discerned from his correspondence with the Council, he proved to be diligent, which was especially necessary at that time, as there were numerous problems in Rome: some New Christians had fled there requesting the Pope to intervene on their behalf, while others denounced the iniquities of Portuguese inquisitorial procedure and requested a general pardon for crimes relating to Judaism. ANTT, TSO, IL, liv. 128, fol. 70v.
- ³³ ANTT, TSO, CG, liv. 368, fol. 34r.
- ³⁴ ANTT, TSO, CG, liv. 94, fol. 174r: Letter from Martim Afonso Mexia to the General Council (1 August 1600).

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