

Conversos, Accommodation, and the Goan Inquisition: The First Five Decades of the Society of Jesus in India, between Theory and Practice

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Martim Afonso de Sousa (c.1500–04), friend, correspondent, and traveling companion of Francis Xavier¹ on the missionary's inaugural voyage to India in 1541–42, arrived in Goa as the presumptive governor of the *Estado da Índia* with a particular fervour towards eradicating heresy and heathenism. Shortly into his tenure — and seventeen years before the establishment of the Inquisition at Goa — he oversaw the trial of a physician, Jerónimo Dias, a converted Jew (in Portuguese *converso*;² or *cristão-novo*, 'New Christian'), sentencing him under Portuguese law to be burned at the stake for

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1 Francis Xavier, * 7.IV.1506 Javier (Navarre), cofounder of the Society of Jesus, † 3.XII.1552 Shangchuan (China) (*DHCJ* III, 2140).

2 A note here regarding the use of the term *converso* in this study: following the rationale given by Robert Maryks in *Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews*, xvi, "it does not carry any pejorative connotation, it is employed in contemporary historiography, and, additionally, it points out the Iberian origins of the group". Here, the term refers to those who were descendants of Jewish converts in the Iberian peninsula (including converted Jews in lands beyond Europe in the Iberian sphere). Occasionally, following some sources from the period, the term New Christian or *cristão novo* may be used, with the same intended meaning as *converso*. The term encompasses the view at the time in Iberia that those who identified as Christian with any degree of Jewish ancestry should be named so: the *claim* through this term that all were Christian obscured the deeper anxiety of whether a religious conversion to the Christian faith had actually taken place or not. For the Jesuits, until 1593 (outside the scope of this article), *conversos* in principle were admitted to the Society; after this time, they were not permitted to enter; from 1608, applicants had their backgrounds reviewed to the fifth generation; *Ibid*, xv. In the case of both directives, there were exceptions to these rules.

blasphemy in 1543. Dias was only the second former Jew to be executed in India.³

In the Jesuit context, as early as 1545, Francis Xavier discussed the need for an Inquisition in India, stating that his intent was to write to the king, the governor, and the Inquisitor-General Dom Henrique (1512–80) to request that the state “by way of the Inquisition punish those who pursue [the reconversion of] those who convert to our holy law and faith”.⁴ It is not clear whether Xavier actually wrote the letters at the time, but the next year, in May 1546, he wrote to the king of Portugal, Dom João III (r. 1521–57) and again raised the subject of the Inquisition, underlining the large populations in India of Jewish and Muslim people, who, the letter inferred, risked tainting *conversos* that might return to their original faith through contact with them — hence, the logic went, the need for an Inquisition in India to enforce the Christian faith, particularly among *conversos*. He wrote that “in order for there to be good Christians in India, the necessity is that Your Majesty establish the Holy Inquisition, because there are many who live according to the Jewish law and the Moorish sect, without fear of God or shame of the world”.⁵

Fourteen years after Xavier wrote this letter, the first non-European Inquisition was formally established in Goa, in 1560. As is well known, and as Xavier’s letters attest, members of the Society of Jesus were key protagonists in how the situation unfolded in relation to the new Tribunal, both before its establishment and beyond the Inquisition’s activities among *conversos*, as well as among other new

- 3 Cunha, *Inquisição no Estado da Índia*, 127. Cf. Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, 9. The first *converso* was an unnamed man burned at the stake in 1539, as reported, rather confusingly, by Doutor Jerónimo Dias in a letter to the king on 3 Dec 1539, cf. ANTT, *Corpo Cronológico*, I, m. 66, doc. 47, ff. 15–16; transcribed and published in Cunha, 252–55. Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, 273, considers the writer of the letter to be the same Jerónimo Dias who was executed some four years later, yet Cunha notes that there is not enough data to conclude they are the same person but assumes they are different individuals given the opinion rendered against *conversos* in the letter by Dr Dias. This is still rather inconclusive and speculative, given that some *conversos* were not always opposed to implicating other individuals of Jewish ancestry.
- 4 Francis Xavier to Francisco Mansilhas, 7 Apr 1545, *MX*, 1: 380; “que por via de Inquizição castigue aos que percegum aos que se convertem á nossa santa ley e fé”.
- 5 Francis Xavier to D. João III, 16 May 1546, *DHMPPO*, 3: 351; “a segunda nesecydade, que a Yndia tem pera serem bons christãos os que nela vivem, hé que mande Vosa Alteza a samta Ynquizição, porque há muitos que vivem a ley mozaica e a seita mourisca, sem nenhum temor de Deus nem verguonda do mundo”. Cf. Ames, *Renascent Empire?*, 60.

converts, and, indirectly, with respect to the non-Christian population of India, as this article aims to show.

In particular, the study explores the intricate connections that the Society of Jesus had with *conversos*. Such connections were manifold: several *conversos* were first companions of the Society; others subsequently sought to join; still more constituted large segments of the populations where Jesuits worked, including in India. The situation in India between the 1540s and 1580s provides the focus of this study, especially in relation to the Goan Inquisition and the Jesuit method known as 'accommodation', with the aim better to understand the relationship between conversion, heresy, and the state/religion nexus that played out between Europe and India.

Contexts for Apparent Contrasts: Inquisition and Accommodation in India

The frame for the analysis is two-fold: the Goan Inquisition and Jesuit accommodation. In terms of the Inquisition, while initially it developed from the frenzy over *conversos* as suspected secret apostates or crypto-Jews, the tribunal would eventually consider all those in Goa as being subject to the law of Portugal and of the Catholic Church and therefore to be also under the Tribunal's auspices, since technically no non-Christian was allowed to live within the city.⁶ Outside of the *Estado* capital, in Portuguese-held areas, restriction of movement of non-Christians was enforced to supposedly protect Christians from heretical ideas, and there was periodic persecution of 'Judaizers' suspected of practising their old faith and of corrupting others' Christian beliefs. In the wider context of sixteenth-century South Asia, Judaism posed a particularly delicate problem, as places in India like Cochin, Cranganore, and Calicut all had significant Jewish communities living alongside Hindus of varying traditions, Muslims, and Nestorian Christians, each comprised of numerous ethnicities from across the Indian Ocean trading network, speaking different languages and holding diverse perspectives on their respective traditions.

In this complex situation in Asia, but also in the more familiar circumstances of Europe, the Society of Jesus did not take a formal stance on whether an Inquisition should operate in a given territory or not, since technically such questions fell outside the purview of its works, except in cases of explicit papal requests to assist in the tribunals' ac-

6 Cunha, *Inquisição no Estado da Índia*, 77–114.

tivities. Several Jesuits expressed their views, however, and as with many questions across its global operations, they were far from uniform. By 1575, the Italian Visitor Alessandro Valignano SJ⁷ (among others) saw the Jesuit purpose in Asia and the Inquisition as incompatible, while many of the earliest Jesuits in India expressed support for the establishment of an Inquisition without explicitly seeking direct involvement.⁸ As Giuseppe Marcocci has pointed out, “many Portuguese Jesuits in South Asia found the idea of serving the Inquisition absolutely normal”, given that many of them had experienced it firsthand in Europe and often participated in its activity.⁹ Indeed, as we shall see, some Jesuits apparently contributed to the final spark that lit the explosion of the first Inquisition outside Europe.

If Jesuit attitudes and actions in relation to the Goan Inquisition were mixed, a similar picture emerges about the Society’s policy of accommodation: the situation becomes even more complicated when considered in light of the second frame of this article, the ways in which the policy of accommodation was applied — or not — among the *converso* populations in India. The objective of the Jesuit policy of accommodation was to attract the conversion of non-Christians, with the aim that they could reach Christ without compromising their own identity. In its operation as a principle of rhetoric, accommodation involves at its core an adjustment to the audience with which an individual wishes to converse and/or interact. For the Jesuits, it was employed in some mission settings as a tool for conversionary purposes. A particular characteristic of this method is that adjusting oneself to an audience implies a degree of recognition of the particularities of an environment or people through knowledge — especially pertaining to the local context — and in the case of missions involves understanding the origins of their interlocutors’ current beliefs and leading them to the Christian faith, as opposed to any *post facto* imposition of punishment for them. Following the line that connects accommodation to principles espoused in Ignatius of Loyola’s early writings and objectives for the Society,

7 Alessandro Valignano, * 7.II.1539 Chieti (Italy), SJ 29.V.1566 Rome, † 20.I.1606 Macau (DHCJ IV, 3877).

8 Valignano assented to this opinion in his letter to Superior General Mercurian, 30 Dec 1575, *DI*, 10: 376; the original opinion was discussed at the 1575 provincial consultation in Chorão, found in *DI*, 10: 277; Schütte, *Valignano’s Mission Principles*, 113; Marcocci, “Jesuit Missionaries and the Portuguese Inquisition”, 235. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 311–12.

9 Marcocci, “Jesuit Missionaries and the Portuguese Inquisition”, 235.

we can also draw conclusions from his views stated elsewhere in his writings concerning the Jewish people and those of other faiths who became Christians.¹⁰ Most poignant here are Ignatius' own words (borrowed from St Paul), that "in the Society there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, etc., when they are united in the same spirit of divine service".¹¹

In broader Iberian society, in particular, this attitude did not to apply to *conversos*. For the Jesuits who would depart for and work in the *Estado*, the distinct status of *conversos* in Portuguese society, applicable both in the metropole and periphery, presented real obstacles to the development of accommodation practices in relation to them. One of the reasons for this was that the accommodation method was particularly suited to attracting political elites to Christianity, whose conversion might then induce the public at-large, out of respect or deference to the decisions of such elite, to follow suit. In the case of *conversos*, unlike other elites, they were excluded from formal political power, both in Portugal and overseas, including along the Malabar Coast, and despite their unique position of privilege in the cosmopolitan commercial and social milieu of that region's trading centres.

Another obstacle to accommodation among *conversos* pertains to a question of great importance in the Iberian context concerning blood purity in the process of conversion —as Pierre-Antoine Fabre termed, the "infinite conversion of conversos"¹²— where non-Christian ancestry was understood to remain evermore as a piece of one's identity. According to this way of thinking, religions that had for centuries been exposed to Christianity and had resisted its call to conversion, such as Judaism and Islam, blood purity was a distillation of the idea that these peoples, unlike the 'gentiles' of the 'New Worlds' that had never heard of Christ, carried the traits of their historic obstinacy through the generations. Such distinctions 'by blood' were dismissed by Ignatius as irrelevant in the spiritual pursuits of the Society of Jesus. Yet after his death they increasingly held sway in the Society of Jesus and gradually gained currency as a means of defining other converts as well.

10 Ignatius of Loyola, *c. 1491 Azpeitia (Guipúzcoa), founder of the Society of Jesus, † 31.VII.1556 Rome (DHCJ II, 1595).

11 Ignatius of Loyola to Diego Mirón, 5 Apr 1554, *MI Epp*, 569–70; "en la Compañia non est distinctio judaei et graeci etc, quando son unidos en el mesmo spiritu del diuino servicio con los otros"; *Gal.* 3:28.

12 Pierre-Antoine Fabre, "La conversion infinie des *conversos*", 876.

In India, Jesuits employed the method of accommodation in their work of conversion among the 'gentile' populations. However, as Ines Županov has shown, the policy found its first expression in the Indian context, not among the 'gentios' or 'infidels', but among the Christian populations there, that is, the ancient community of St Thomas Christians. She notes that: "it is this experience of closeness, familiarity and common heritage with European Christians, combined with perplexing differences and uncertain analogies [found among the St Christians] that mobilized Jesuit theological and ethnographic inquiries" that in turn became hallmarks of the policy of accommodation.¹³

The same kind of dynamic for the most part did not materialise with respect to Jesuit work among the *conversos* populations in India. Perhaps for this reason, in the historiography concerning the Jesuit policy of accommodation in the Portuguese Indies, scholars have tended to exclude consideration of Jesuit attitudes towards one of the most familiar groups to the Portuguese, namely those who had converted from Judaism to the Christian faith — along with members of the Jewish religion. By contrast with the indigenous cultural, societal, and religious systems in India — of which European missionaries arriving in India had scant knowledge or experience — the exiled and refugee Sephardic Jews living in India prior to Portuguese expansion as well as the more recently-arrived *conversos* were familiar to the India-based Jesuits, as well as to the Dominicans and Franciscans working there. While for these Europeans the Jews and *conversos* potentially could have served as valuable intermediaries from their unique positions of privilege in local trade and politics throughout Goa and the Malabar coast — even potentially assisting Jesuit ethnographic work in aid of their conversionary work among local populations, for example — fear and suspicion arose among Europeans about the migration and presence of *conversos* that coincided with both Portuguese campaigns to establish uniformity across its enclaves in India, and with the increased presence and influence of the Society of Jesus in the region.

Although the formal Jesuit opinion was favourable towards those descended from Jewish converts, the views of many Iberian members of the Society nevertheless ranged from ambivalent to even hostile towards both Jews and *conversos*. The cultural and social frames within which individual Jesuits were formed and operated

13 Županov, "One civility, but multiple religions", 288.

influenced to a large extent the choices they made along this spectrum. With respect to the Hindu and Jewish traditions, furthermore, on occasion Jesuits treated them interchangeably. Yet there were differences, too: in the Christian mission environment of India, criticisms that circulated over how *gentios* might have been or were being compelled into the Christian faith through mass or forced baptisms, and the promotion instead of the method of accommodation among Jesuit missionaries, were not in evidence in discussions about the Jewish population in India or the converts from that faith in the region — neither in the Society of Jesus nor elsewhere in the Christian sphere.

This distinction is reflected in the proceedings of the Goa Inquisition, which became a tool for rooting out crypto-Judaism with much greater force and violence than was used for other traditions: *conversos* comprised over two-thirds of death sentences meted out by the Goan Inquisition in the first sixty years, whilst remnant Hindu praxis among *novamente convertidos* (“newly-converted”) attracted comparatively softer judgment.¹⁴ The inquisitorial approach in Goa of targeting *judaizantes* or ‘Judaizers’ thus mirrored that of Portugal, in line with the anti-*converso* literature that was produced in ever-increasing numbers in Portugal from the 1530s — and coinciding with the establishment of the first tribunal of the Holy Office there in 1536.¹⁵

As we shall see, in many respects, and in contrast to much of their foundational tradition on the question of Jews who had converted to the Christian faith, many Jesuits in India were mirrors of their time with respect to the *converso* population, rather than practitioners of the famed *modo suave* that animated their policy of accommodation in their work with other groups in India.¹⁶

Conversion and *Conversos* at the Dawn of the Society of Jesus

In the European theatre, the scholarship of Robert Maryks deals specifically with the issue concerning *conversos* in the Society and the shift in policy regarding admitting those with Jewish ancestry. Between 1540 and 1593, there existed no legal impediment to vocation in the Society for an individual of Jewish background, although, as

14 Saraiva, *The Marrano Factory*, 347.

15 Stuczynski, “The Imaginary Synagogue”, 176.

16 For the *modo suave*, for example, see Alessandro Valignano to Everard Mercurian, 6 Feb 1574, *DI*, 9: 133; cf. Andrew C. Ross, *A Vision Betrayed. The Jesuits in Japan and China, 1542–1742* (New York, 1994).

Maryks noted, “not every confrere would have supported it”.¹⁷ During the Third General Congregation of 1573, measures were put in place to at least hinder the proliferation of such lineage within, at the very least, the General Curia of the Society and provincial superiors. It was the actions, allegedly, of the Italian assistant and delegate Benedetto Palmio SJ¹⁸ and the Portuguese delegates (headed by the elector Leão Henriques SJ)¹⁹ that torpedoed the presumptive election of Juan Alfonso de Polanco SJ²⁰ to the office of superior general, mainly due, as has been argued, to his *converso* status.²¹ Prior to this so-called ‘intrigue’ of 1573, the first three decades of the Society presented a fairly open admission policy for *conversos* in the face of Spanish reinforcement of *estatutos de limpieza de sangre* (“blood purity laws”) such as that imposed in 1547 by the Archbishop of Toledo Juan Martínez Guijarro o Silíceo (1486–1557).²² Whilst Ignatius and his representatives defended the Society from accusations of ‘judaizing’, it is clear that in the Portuguese sphere within the Society, many were not comfortable with the presence of *conversos* members, even before the ‘intrigue’ of the 1573 general congregation. More generally, strong opinions regarding the place of Jews and those descended from Jews prevailed in Portugal. As Sanjay Subrahmanyam has argued, while the rulers of Castile desired to expel the Jews from Castile, the rulers of Portugal sought to expel the Jews from Judaism.²³

This attitude prevailed in the Portuguese imperial context as well. As Ângela Barreto Xavier has noted, the quest to reclaim the number of souls lost to Protestantism in Europe through new conversions among the non-Christian populations of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, whilst seen as a positive opportunity for Catholicism, also elicited a general apprehension amongst the Old Christians about the integrity of these religious conversions, partially on account of the fact that such new conversions would represent

17 Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, xv.

18 Benedetto Palmio, * 11.VII.1523 Parma (Italy), SJ 1546 Rome, † 14.XI.1598 Ferrara (Italy) (*DHCJ* III, 2962).

19 Leão Henriques, * c.1522 Madeira (Portugal), SJ 30.IV.1546 Coimbra (Portugal), † 8.IV.1589 Lisbon (Portugal) (*DHCJ* II, 1899).

20 Juan Alfonso de Polanco, * 24.XII.1517 Burgos (Spain), SJ 1541 Rome, † 20.XII.1576 Rome (*DHCJ* IV, 3168).

21 Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, xxvi; Wicki, “Die ‘Cristaos-Novos’”, 344.

22 Samson, “The *adelantamiento* of Cazorla”, 819–36.

23 Remarks by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Jews & New Christians in Portuguese Asia 1500–1700” (unpublished paper, delivered 5 June 2013, John W. Kluge Center, Library of Congress). Subrahmanyam, “Jews & New Christians”.

an overwhelming majority amongst some colonial populations, and partly because of similar attitudes in Europe about converts from Judaism, which, after its establishment, informed the Goan Inquisition's activities and priorities.²⁴ As Barreto Xavier points out, "it is clear that by the mid-sixteenth century the aim of the Portuguese authorities was religious unity in Goa [that is, its Christianization], achieved through the same model employed at home, in order to establish the foundations for lasting rule by the crown in those distant lands".²⁵

The role of the Society of Jesus in the establishment of the Goan Inquisition provides some useful insights on this score, with consequences for the history of the Society, for that of the Inquisition, and the relationship between the two. Key to both is the question of the *converso* populations under Portuguese rule and in the overseas territories. In trying to understand how Jesuits operated in this context, Marcocci stresses the importance of analysing "how individual New Christians and Jesuits actually interacted, which was often the result of 'negotiated relationships' made up of affinities, interests and ambiguities, rather than clearly defined choices".²⁶

This can be seen in the person of Ignatius of Loyola, who, as already pointed out, possessed a quite noticeable sympathy towards both *conversos* and to some extent the Jewish tradition (which, he reasoned, produced Jesus himself, the bedrock of his own religious faith). This sensibility preceded the founding of the Society and ultimately carried on through his generalate. The earliest accounts relate to his association with the heterodox *alumbrados*, many of whom had varying degrees of Jewish ancestry and were suspected of being 'Judaizers', possibly helping to explain the attention of the Inquisition towards Ignatius in those years.²⁷

Such associations with *conversos* — as distinct from Jews — form the bulk of what is known about the attitudes of Ignatius: given his birth around the time of the decree ordering the conversion or exile of all Jews in Castile and Aragon, Ignatius may never have inter-

24 Xavier, "*Conversos and Novamente Convertidos*", 286.

25 Xavier, "*Conversos and Novamente Convertidos*", 280.

26 Marcocci, "Jesuit Missionaries and the Portuguese Inquisition", 238.

27 Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 47, suggests that Ignatius drew the attention of the Inquisition and "was incarcerated because the vicar general of Alcalá suspected him of crypto-Judaism, most likely due to his numerous contacts with *alumbrados*/Erasmists who often were of converso background".

acted with any (at least openly) practicing Jews in his earlier years.²⁸ Similarly, in the early years of the Society's operations, it is the *conversos* with whom he surrounded himself that can provide the best evidence of his actual position: these include, Juan Alfonso de Polanco, second Superior General of the Society Diego Laínez SJ,²⁹ Pedro de Ribadeneyra SJ,³⁰ and Jerónimo Nadal SJ.³¹

Beyond this inner circle, Maryks has shown how Ignatius secured patronage from *converso* networks in both Spain and the Spanish Netherlands before and after the foundation of the Society. Ignatius also took great strides to ensure the legal protection of the Society from the anti-*converso* measures of the Spanish Inquisition and from statutes concerning *de limpieza de sangre*.³² Within the Society, together with his *converso* successor Diego Laínez, Ignatius worked to oppose attempts to prohibit *conversos* from joining the Society, writing in 1552 that the archbishop responsible for trying to impose this rule, Juan Martínez Silíceo, "should take care of his own business rather than interfering with the internal issues of the Society".³³ In 1554, the close companion of Ignatius and supposed *converso*, Jerónimo Nadal, defended his admission of *converso* candidates to the Society at Alcalá de Henares by writing: "We take pleasure in admitting those with Jewish ancestry".³⁴

These attitudes and practices stand in particular contrast with the other religious orders that throughout the sixteenth century refused to accept *conversos*.³⁵ The views of Ignatius were preserved in later biographical accounts, especially by his *converso* companions, Po-

28 Rey, "San Ignacio de Loyola y el problema de los cristianos nuevos", 177–78. Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 48.

29 Diego Laínez, * 1512 Almazán (Spain), cofounder of the Society of Jesus, † 19.I.1565 Rome (*DHCJ* II, 1601).

30 Pedro de Ribadeneyra, * 1.XI.1526 Toledo (Spain), SJ 1.IX.1540 Rome, † 22.IX.1611 Madrid (Spain) (*DHCJ* IV, 3345).

31 Jerónimo Nadal, * 1.VIII.1507 Palma de Mallorca (Spain), SJ 29.XII.1545 Rome, † 3.IV.1580 Rome (*DHCJ* III, 2793).

32 Samson, 824–5.

33 Juan Polanco to Francisco de Villanueva, 2 Jan 1552, *Cartas de San Ignacio de Loyola*, 3: 13–21. Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, xxi.

34 Nadal, "P. Natalis ephemerides, Pars secunda. 1553–1562", *Epistolae P. Hieronymi Nadal*, 2: 21: "conquestus et apud me quod non recipere, qui ducunt a iudaeis originem; se id scire de Araozio et Mirone. Respondi ita non esse; sed habere nos delectum in illis recipiendis" (Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, xxii).

35 Dominicans never adopted widespread measures, though individual convents did, such as those in Aragón in 1525; Franciscans did not admit *conversos* up to 4th generation from 1525 onwards; Jeronymites had banned them from 1486 onwards, in line with some civil statutes in Spain; Discalced Carmelites adopted anti-*converso* statutes in 1595; Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 28.

lanco (in his *Chronicon Societatis Iesu*, 1573–75) and Ribadeneyra (*Vida*, 1583): the latter famously wrote that Ignatius had commented to fellow-Jesuits that it would have been a great blessing to “have been born from Jewish lineage”.³⁶ Predictably, at times this attitude reflected negatively on Ignatius and the early Society: Polanco recounted that in 1555 there existed a rumour among the theology faculty at the University of Paris that Ignatius, “the founder of our Institute had been a certain Jew who had instituted this form of religious life in expiation for his shameful crimes”.³⁷ Later, in Córdoba, the Jesuit college educated boys from many of the prominent families, but rarely did any of those seeking clerical vocation join the Society, partly because it was perceived to be the order for Jews.³⁸

The *Constitutions* and its early history, rather than providing clarity, is rather ambiguous on the subject. Pierre-Antoine Fabre notes that the original Spanish version clearly distinguished between *christianos antiguos* and *modernos*, as the 1556 Latin publication described it: “Num a progenitoribus iam olim christianis an a modernis descendat”.³⁹ Fabre further noted that the first version composed in 1550 included the terms “*christianos viejos o nuevos*”, thereby clearly addressing the more familiar nomenclature of the time. The later preference for the slightly different terms *modernos/modernis* in reference to those who had latterly joined the Christian faith may have served to avoid specifically addressing the issue of *christianos nuevos* in the published version of the *Constitutions*, shifting the focus squarely on the question of the extent of candidates’ conviction and solidity in the faith, and avoiding any explicit engagement with Iberian preoccupations with blood purity. Whatever the case, this passage was relevant, given that Jesuits with Jewish backgrounds certainly existed in the early Society.

This unusual openness towards *conversos*, together with the type of accusations levelled against the Society and its founder, while certainly not providing evidence of the founders as somehow having been immune from societal norms and prejudices, do suggest that many Jesuits’ sensibilities were atypical. As John O’Malley put it, “the first generation of Jesuits were by no means innocent of the

36 Ribadeneyra, *Patris Petri de Ribadeneyra*, 2: 375: “huuiera tenido por gran merced de Dios el auer nascido de judios”.

37 Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolae*, 5: 322; Polanco, *Year by Year*, 386.

38 Rey, “Ignacio y el problema”, 191. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 190. ARSI, *Epist. Hisp.* XVIII, f. 314.

39 Fabre, “La Conversion Infinie des *Conversos*”, 877.

prejudices of their day, although in individual instances and in the official policy of the Society they rose above some of them".⁴⁰ Although outside our purview, an important example of this can be seen in an account written by Antonio Possevino SJ,⁴¹ secretary to Everard Mercurian from the latter's election in 1573 until 1576.⁴² Writing about the efforts of Portuguese and Italian electors at the 1573 election to prevent Juan de Polanco from becoming general, under the guise of arguing against the election of a fourth Spaniard as Superior General, Possevino noted the divisive elements of 'nation' playing out within the Society. He wrote that the Society was initially borne out of Ignatian principles of universality and divine providence in opposition to any ethnicity (albeit of a European sort) or bloodline — principles which he thought the Congregation had disregarded. Writing a memorial to Mercurian in his final year as secretary, he detailed exactly how he believed Ignatius intended the Society to view its membership:

[Ignatius] felt that the spirit of God did not make distinctions between people, and that he believed more in Jesus Christ than in worldly caution [...] and this remained stamped on the souls of the Society, and he shaped the Society in such a way that nothing moved him to alter it, knowing that "What God has joined together, let no man separate".⁴³

Moreover, Possevino tied these principles into the very identity of Christians and the Society itself, defined by characteristics which distinguished them from those of pagans and infidels, that is to say "preference for lineage, or for human concerns [...] or for its own honour, such as not allowing oneself to be touched by others or to greet them, as is the custom of some infidels about whom Alessandro Valignano has recently written".⁴⁴ Taking cues from Valignano's letters detailing his observations of rules governing caste interactions in India, Possevino implied that the attitudes of some

40 O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 192.

41 Antonio Possevino, * 12.VII.1533 Mantua (Italy), SJ 29.IX.1559 Rome, † 26.II.1611 Ferrara (Italy) (DHCJ IV, 3201).

42 Everard Mercurian, * 1514 Marcourt (Belgium), SJ 8.IX.1548 Paris (France), † 1.VIII.1580 Rome (DHCJ II, 1611).

43 Cohen, "Nation, Lineage, and Jesuit Unity", 549; cf. ARSI, *Congregationes* 20/B, ff. 206–12. The quotation at the end is a reference to Matthew 19:6, "quos Deus coniungit homo non separet".

44 Cohen, "Nation, Lineage, and Jesuit Unity", 548; *Congregationes* 20/B, fo. 207r.

Jesuits against *conversos* made them no better on this score than the ‘infidels’ they attempted to convert. From the accounts of foreign missions, he argued that this policy of discrimination towards *conversos* would ultimately affect the relations between missionaries and the indigenous peoples with whom they interacted.⁴⁵ Possevino had good reason to be concerned; just as the Society under Mercurian saw the movement towards anti-*converso* politics, it also included a decisive ban in 1579 on admission of both indigenous and *mestiços* (those of mixed European and indigenous descent) into the clergy within India.⁴⁶

Tracing the Lived Experience of *Conversos* in the Society

As has been shown, there was no uniform outlook on the question of *conversos* —neither within the Church nor in the Society of Jesus, with varying views in evidence between Ignatius and his confreres. In the case of the Society, the “Rules for Thinking with the Church” (the final stage of the *Spiritual Exercises*) encouraged this approach, to “recognize the working of the Spirit even in a different way of thinking and in a plurality of opinions” in preference to rigidly set opinions — a point reflected in the controversial Jesuit method of casuistry.⁴⁷ This ‘embedded plurality’ helps explain the changes that arose with respect to the question of Jewish ancestry in the roughly two decades between Ignatius’ death in 1556 and the election of general Everard Mercurian during the Third General Congregation of 1573, which saw a shift towards anti-*converso* politics in the Society. The ways in which these changes played out —beyond Europe and the Iberian peninsula, where they originated —amidst the cosmopolitan and heterogeneous environment of India is the subject of the analysis that follows. In particular it explores: Jesuits active in southern India (including Jesuits who purportedly had Jewish ancestry) and their experience with anti-*converso* measures as well as their own priorities; Jesuits who wrote explicitly against *conversos*, their recommendations, and how their ideas influenced policies and institutions in Goa; finally, how the debate over ancestry and *limpeza de sangue* spilled over into mentalities regarding native Indian populations of Hindu and Muslim religious traditions in relation to the development of cultural accommodation.

45 Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, xxix; Cohen, “Jesuits and New Christians”, 36.

46 Cohen, “Jesuits and New Christians”, 41; Mercês de Melo, *The Recruitment and Formation of the Native Clergy*, 166.

47 Guillén, “Praise”, 102; Mecherry, “*Sentir con la iglesia*”, 131.

Francis Xavier and Gaspar Berze

In 1552, Francis Xavier wrote to Gaspar Berze SJ,⁴⁸ who would replace him as superior of the Indian missions later that year, advising his future successor to “ensure that you never receive persons into the Society who are of young age nor those others who Father Ignacio forbids that should not be received, such as those who are from the Hebrew lineage”.⁴⁹ Xavier’s injunction not only apparently contradicted Ignatius but also his own earlier decision to admit and assign to prominent positions Jesuits with Jewish ancestry — Henrique Henriques SJ⁵⁰ being one, whom Xavier welcomed into the Society in the late 1540s and named as superior of the Fishery Coast missions against the wishes of some others. This incongruous advice remains difficult to decipher. Certainly in the early 1550s letters speak of frustration concerning difficulties of communication, leaving room for potential contradictions between decisions made in the missions and superiors’ wishes back in Europe.⁵¹ Scholars have interpreted Xavier’s letter in light of possible instructions that he may have received from the controversial superior of Portugal and anti-*converso*, Simão Rodrigues SJ (who, despite his well-known attitudes, himself earlier had admitted *conversos* to the Society in Portugal; he was later censured and removed from his post for disobedience to his superiors over excessive practices of self-mortification among other things).⁵² In any case, Xavier’s admissions of Jesuits

48 Gaspar Berze, * 1515 Goes (Netherlands), SJ 20.IV.1546 Coimbra (Portugal), † 18.X.1553 Goa (India) (*DHCJ* I, 427).

49 Francis Xavier to Gaspar Berze, 14 Apr 1552, *MX*, 1: 916–17: “Guardai-vos de nunca receber pessoas para a Companhia, que sejam de pouca idade, nem outros que o P. Ignacio deffende que se não recebem, como são os que vem de linhagem hebraeorum”.

50 Anrrique Anrriques, * 1520 Vila Viçosa (Portugal), SJ 7.X.1545 Coimbra (Portugal), † 6.II.1602 Punnaikayal (India) (*DHCJ* I, 177).

51 See, for example, Niccolò Lancillotto’s letter concerning the transmission of the Constitutions, *DI*, 2: 133. At this time, Polanco took charge of most of the correspondence on Ignatius of Loyola’s behalf, to assist Ignatius with the administration of the growing Society while he was simultaneously working on completing the Constitutions: the regularity of epistolary exchange nevertheless suffered because of workload—Ignatius’ final letter to Xavier was sent after the missionary had already died.

52 Simão Rodrigues, * 1510 Viseu (Portugal), cofounder of the Society of Jesus, † 15.VII.1579 Lisbon (Portugal) (*DHCJ* IV, 3390). Josef Wicki draws his conclusion from Georg Schurhammer, the comprehensive biographer of Francis Xavier, that Simão Rodrigues introduced the ban in an “unauthorised” fashion, cf. Wicki, “Die ‘Cristaos-Novos’”, 348. Robert Maryks too puts Rodrigues at fault, suggesting that this incoherence resulted from uncertainty about the wishes of the superior general, “perhaps because of Rodrigues’ instruction that could have been brought to [Xavier] by one of the many Jesuits who travelled from Portugal to Asia”, cf. Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 74

of *converso* background had all occurred prior to his letter to Berze in 1552, so there is a chance that he changed his mind on the question, or else was following advice from Portugal, which tended to pursue an anti-*converso* stance, despite directives to the contrary from Rome.⁵³

António Gomes

Regardless of Xavier's possible shift in opinion, the Society continued to admit *conversos* for at least the following two decades, both in Portugal and in India. For example, Gomes Vaz SJ⁵⁴ was rector of the college in Malacca, whose paternal and maternal grandparents were of Jewish ancestry and were burned under the Inquisition in his hometown of Serpa.⁵⁵ In the Goa context, one of the most intriguing cases is that of António Gomes, himself of 'dubious' ancestry who served as one of the most vocal critics to admission to the Society of men like him. Gomes is perhaps best known for his role as rector of St Paul's College, having replaced Niccolò Lancillotto SJ⁵⁶ in 1548 and bringing what was seen (at least by his predecessor) as a much-needed reinvigoration of the spiritual life of Goa. However, his tenure was marked by an 'excessive' fervour that pushed a public display of devotion and mortification indicative of many Coimbra novices that arrived in the second wave, and influenced by the religious austerities practised by Jesuits in Portugal, introduced under superior Rodrigues. This earned Gomes a reprimand and ultimately a demotion, then expulsion from the Society. Sent to Diu in northern India, later instructions from his superior and sharpest critic, Francis Xavier, suggested that any attempt on the part of Gomes to leave the Gujarati island would result in more severe penalties. Gomes was later dismissed from the Society, in 1553.⁵⁷

53 Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 74. Given that Xavier died later that year, it is unclear whether he had actually changed his mind or simply been swayed by this supposed transmission.

54 Gomes Vaz, * c.1542 Serpa (Portugal), SJ II.1562 Coimbra (Portugal), † 12.IX.1610 Lisbon (Portugal) (*DHCJ* IV, 3910).

55 Wicki, "Die 'Cristaos-Novos'", 356, 351; Maryks, *Jesuit Order*, 74. It is unclear from both sources whether the victims were the paternal or maternal side, or both.

56 Niccolò Lancillotto, * Urbino (Italy), SJ 1541 Rome, † 7.IV.1558 Quilon (India) (*DHCJ* III, 2276).

57 Francis Xavier to Gaspar Berze, 14 Apr 1552, *MX*, 1: 744; "se Antonio Gomez por todo este ano em que estamos sair de Dio para yr a outra parte, por qualquer caso que seya, abrireis esa sedula e o que n'ela se contem, mandado-lhe o treslado d'ela". Coleridge writes that "this paper shows that Francis had finally determined to cut him off from the Society", cf. *The Life and Letters*, 2: 477. He was ordered to be dismissed from the Society in 1553, but died during a shipwreck in 1554 on his return voyage to Portugal, where he was due to dispute his dismissal.

According to Maryks, Gomes was of Jewish ancestry, yet he objected to Xavier's appointment of Henriques as regional superior of the Fishery Coast (*Costa da Pescaria*), primarily on the grounds of the latter's Jewish ancestry. This apparent contradiction finds some helpful explanations in Robert John Clines' study of Jewish convert and later Jesuit, Giovanni Battista Eliano⁵⁸ — and what Clines calls the process of "self-confessionalisation", where an individual shifts away from previous self-identifiers, at first partially (retaining some for the benefits that they might bring to converting others) and then later in his life in the case of Eliano in the form of outright rejection of his faith by birth, to embrace totally the new prevailing norms brought about through conversion.⁵⁹ This may have been the case for Gomes.

Similarly, in the instance of the only indigenous convert to take up mission in the Society, Pedro Luís SJ,⁶⁰ he felt more compelled to testify to his "liberation" from the "gates of Hell" by converting than to claim any possible benefits that his unique traits gained from his prior religion might have afforded him and others.⁶¹ Returning to António Gomes, his role in the conversions of some indigenous noblemen serves as testament to his commitment to building a lasting legacy in a land with few opportunities for such an undertaking, but his approach portrays a man more concerned with fashioning a Portuguese Christian identity for himself and others — a model that for many like him was the ideal Christian — than an understanding of conversion as a complex transitional process. This kind of preference for honour and reputation befitted the model of the chivalric *fidalgos* of the Iberian Peninsula during the sixteenth century.⁶² As Luke Clossey has remarked, as with Gomes, "many Jesuits of this sort left the order".⁶³

Gomes had been sent to India in an attempt to temper his indiscipline, yet he ultimately fashioned the college of St. Paul's in Goa in the mould of Coimbra, much to Xavier's chagrin. Although this was intended to be a "vaguely punitive or correctional exile", Gomes at least for a time attempted to use this to his advantage, fomenting public displays of zeal within Goa as rector, releasing from prison

58 Giovanni Battista Eliano, * 1530 Rome, SJ 1551 Venice (Italy), † 3.III.1589 Rome (*DHCJ* II, 1233).

59 Clines, "How to Become a Jesuit Crypto-Jew", 4–12.

60 Pedro Luís,* c.1532 Quilon (India), SJ X.1561 Goa (India), † III.1596 Travancore (India) (*DHCJ* III, 2440).

61 Pedro Luís to Superior General Diego Laínez, ca. 17 Nov 1559, *DI*, 4: 393.

62 Mecherry, "Archbishop Aleixo de Menezes", 10.

63 Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 121.

and publicly baptising the local Brahman chief Loku, then celebrating and processing through Goa the now-named Lucas de Sá and his family for one week.⁶⁴ Seemingly beneficial to the Church in India, these acts in fact only further highlighted to his superiors Gomes' unfavourable personality, suggesting a campaign of self-aggrandizement. Gomes had never argued that his own identity gave him a unique insight into conversion, but his actions suggested a transactional form of baptism. As Županov has argued, of utmost importance to Gomes was the prevailing sentiment in the Estado that his high profile convert "became a Portuguese because that was still the undisputed goal of conversion to Christianity".⁶⁵

Gomes' understanding of Christian identity correlated with the prevailing norms of Portuguese identity. The societal pressures acting upon Gomes to reinforce a certain identity which showed greater concern for issues of 'lineage' — that Ignatius had warned against — point to the forces that in some Jesuit mission settings precluded the use of cultural accommodation.

Zealous Jesuits who defended Portuguese Christianity clearly constituted a pronounced presence in Portuguese-ruled territories, while those of a different disposition tended to be sent to work in areas where the Portuguese, in both a secular and ecclesiastical capacity, were less influential.⁶⁶ Gomes was one of the early figures of a developing prototypical identity at Coimbra, albeit not quite as outspoken against *conversos* as his successors. There were limits, then, to the practice of accommodation, but also to the approach promoted by Gomes, for he was ultimately found to be unsuitable to the Society and was eventually dismissed from it.

The *Conversos* of India and the Society of Jesus

For the Society of Jesus in India, a shift occurred during the second decade of missions there, with new arrivals influencing some of the methodologies and main objectives of some Jesuits in Goa and elsewhere in India. More generally, under Portuguese rule, the 1550s in India saw an intensified focus on religious uniformity through many of the same measures used on the Iberian Peninsula.⁶⁷ On the heels of the 1543 trial and execution of the *converso* Jerónimo Dias, for blasphemy, Vicar General Miguel Vaz Coutinho imposed stronger regulations in the religious

64 Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, 116.

65 Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, 137.

66 Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, 127.

67 Xavier, "Conversos and Novamente Convertidos", 280.

sphere: Hindu temples throughout Goa were destroyed, and the public practice of Hindu religious traditions prohibited, while Coutinho himself petitioned the crown for a Goan Inquisition.⁶⁸ By 1560, converts' positions within Indo-Portuguese society saw further volatility, as vice-regal decrees removed from office most *conversos* and *mestiços* in preference for Portuguese Old Christians — a move which in Portugal had already occurred over half a century before.

Despite a royal decree on 6 March 1554 establishing a Tribunal of the Holy Office in Goa, the deaths of the Bishop of Goa Juan Alfonso de Albuquerque in 1553 and of Coutinho's successor Vicar General Sebastião Pinheiro in 1555, as well as the time it took for the announcement to reach India, meant that its formal introduction was stalled until 1560.⁶⁹ Since one of the Tribunal's objectives was to remove vestiges of Jewish belief, practice, and proselytization, this carried significant consequences for the Jewish and *converso* populations of India, along with considerable impacts for all new converts and peoples of non-Christian religions within Portuguese territories. It also shaped the attitudes and works of members of the Society of Jesus there in various ways.

Amidst these developments, two influential Jesuits arrived in Goa, Gonçalo da Silveira SJ⁷⁰ and Melchior Carneiro SJ.⁷¹ While they participated in encouraging the final realisation of the Inquisition in Goa, they were certainly not alone in one of the Tribunal's primary campaigns: to remove 'Judaizers' from Portuguese India. Of general concern, among some members of the Society of Jesus, Church officials and settler (*casado*) and merchant groups, was the presence of New Christians in coastal urban centres. For the Jesuits, the key event that triggered their concern with New Christians in India took place on the feast day of Corpus Christi, 30 April 1557. In the offeritory box of both the Sé church and the Dominican house in lower Cochin ("Cochim de Baixo"), a *chyto* (chitty, or scrap paper) containing various blasphemous writings was deposited, closed with the signature of "the tribes of Israel".⁷²

68 Cunha, *Inquisição no Estado da Índia*, 127.

69 Cunha, *Inquisição no Estado da Índia*, 129–30; Paiva, "The Inquisitional Tribunal in Goa", 574–5.

70 Gonçalo da Silveira, * 23.II.1521 Almeirim (Portugal), SJ 9.VI.1543 Coimbra (Portugal), † 15/16.III.1561 Mozambique (DHCJ IV, 3576).

71 Melchior Carneiro, * c. 1516 Coimbra (Portugal), SJ 25.IV.1543 Coimbra, † 19.VIII.1583 Macau (DHCJ I, 663–4).

72 Melchior Carneiro to Cardinal Infante Henrique, 20 Dec 1557, *DI*, 4: 5–13. Malekandathil, "The Jews of Cochin", 246. Gonçalo da Silveira also references the note, but only recounts the signature, cf. *DI*, 3: 762.

After much commotion and discussion amongst the Franciscans, Dominicans, the vicar of Cochin Pedro Gonçalves, and the two Jesuits Silveira and Carneiro, officials made arrests for apostasy of about twenty *conversos* in the Portuguese-controlled area of Cochin — seemingly the entire local population with Jewish ancestry. A trial was held in the city, presided by the vicar Gonçalves and later the bishop Jorge Temudo,⁷³ and soon thereafter the group was sent to Goa for further interrogation. Since the Tribunal of the Inquisition was yet to be formally established in Goa (despite the decree having been issued from Lisbon already in 1554), the *conversos* were ultimately sent to Lisbon for their final formal trials and autos-da-fé, followed by the execution of all but one of the accused.⁷⁴ This was a defining moment in the history of the Portuguese Inquisition and its activities in relation to its territories in India. The writings of some individuals concerning the arrests and trials of the *conversos* warrant further attention for the light they shed on Jesuit involvement.

Intervention of Dom Gonçalo da Silveira

Dom Gonçalo da Silveira de Bragança was born in 1521 to one of the foremost noble families in Portugal; as a Jesuit, he met an untimely and violent death in 1561, in Mozambique, where he had been appointed provincial the year before.⁷⁵ He had entered the Society on 9 June 1543, at Coimbra, where he remained until sent on mission to India in 1556, as Provincial of the Indian missions until 1559.⁷⁶

- 73 Temudo was later appointed Archbishop of Goa as part of the Ecclesiastical Council in 1567, whose decrees came down strongly on Hindus living in the Goan islands under Portuguese control, and also enacted very strict legislation on the conduct of “old” Christians and converts.
- 74 The excepted individual was Leonor Caldeira, who was excused because of her age; Malekandathil, “The Jews of Cochin”, 246; ANTT, *Inquisição de Lisboa*, Proc. 5265, f. 123. N.B. the first ever Portuguese auto-da-fe was held in Lisbon in 1540.
- 75 Perhaps his most notable exploit came not in India but in East Africa. Sent to Mozambique in 1560 and made superior there, he famously briefly converted the King of Monomotapa before he was killed by order of the king himself on 15 March 1561. While he was not the first Jesuit martyr of the “Indies”, he earned a special place in the literature of the period for his death at the hands of Muslims, particularly regarding the recovery of his remains: Rodrigues, *HCJAP*, 1: 150.
- 76 Valignano, *Historia del principio y progresso*, 302–3. Although Diogo Gonçalves discussed the details of Silveira’s martyrdom in his *Historia do Malavar* (ca. 1615), the primary work was N. Godinho, *Patris Gonzali Sylveriae S. I. sacerdotis in urbe Monomotapa martyrium passi* (Lugduni, 1612). The Jesuit archives contain a number of writings on Silveira, though predominantly focusing on his time (and death) in Mozambique: “Ragguaglio dell’inventione del corpo del P. Consalvo Silveria della Compagnia di Giesù, mandata al P. Franc. Govea della medesima

In India, Dom Gonçalo was known to possess a great passion for preaching the faith and delivering sermons, which prompted companions such as António de Quadros SJ⁷⁷ to comment that God himself would have taken Silveira to confront the Antichrist.⁷⁸ Dom Gonçalo's eighteenth-century biographer, António Franco SJ,⁷⁹ described him as being at times rather arrogant, insensitive, and apathetic. He clashed with fellow-Jesuit Francisco Rodrigues⁸⁰ over the imposed restrictions to sermon lengths, which he viewed as impractical.⁸¹

Dom Gonçalo was outspoken in his negative views about the people of India: during his provincialate in the late-1550s, he commented that the *gentios* (specifically Brahmans) were "malicious people with the intention of disseminating their sect and converting all; true enemies of Christ, bankers from hell, usurers and bearers of evil through diabolical dissimulation".⁸² His suggestion for dealing with them, however, differed from his recommendations concerning *conversos*. He maintained that Brahmans should be removed from public office and their habitations should be separated from the Portuguese, while he believed that the Inquisition should deal with the *conversos*.⁸³ For Silveira, he made a distinction between the *conversos* (who remained subjects of suspicion), and the *gentios* (for whom the separation that he advocated could be transcended through conversion). While he believed that the Jewish ancestry of some members in the Society should have been an impediment to their entry, the Brahman status of Jesuit coadjutor Pedro Luís — mentioned above — Silveira saw no such obstacle to Luís becoming an ordained priest

Compagnia dal Sig.r licentiado Alfonso Barbuda", Rome, ARSI, *Goa* 34 I, ff. 22–31; "Relação da morte do P. Dom Gonçalo da Comp.a [Titulus posterior:] Martyrium B. P. Consalvi Silveriae ex Lusitania missum", ARSI, *Fondo Gesuitico* mss 2 II/121.

77 António de Quadros, * 1529 Santarém (Portugal), SJ 1.IV.1544 Coimbra (Portugal), † 21.XI.1572 Goa (India) (*DHCJ* IV, 3264).

78 Leite, *D. Gonçalo da Silveira*, 19.

79 António Franco, * 2.II.1662 Montalvão (Portugal), SJ 26.VII.1677 Évora (Portugal), † 3.III.1732 Évora (*DHCJ* II, 1518).

80 Francisco Rodrigues, * 1515 Odemira (Portugal), SJ 7.IV.1548 Coimbra (Portugal), † 17.IX.1573 Goa (India) (*DHCJ* IV, 3387).

81 Franco, *Imagem*, 2: 45; Leite, *D. Gonçalo da Silveira*, 126, 133.

82 Gonçalo da Silveira to Cardinal Infante Henrique, Grand Inquisitor, Jan 1557, *DI*, 4: 3: "maliciosissima gente [...] aqueleos de se plantar com sua seita e de adquirir todos a ela, aqueleoso do nome christam, e por huma aqueleoso aqueleoso os banqueiros do inferno, das onzenas e aqueleos". Xavier, "Conversos and Novamente Convertidos", 256.

83 Xavier, "Conversos and Novamente Convertidos", 256.

in the Society. Writing in support of Luís in a letter to Superior General Diego Laínez in 1559, which followed the Jesuit hopeful's request just days before, Silveira gave his opinion that "I believe that he will become a good priest and of good knowledge for here [India]".⁸⁴ Among his reasons for approbation were Luís' prudence and quick handling of orders, but also "seeming to be dark-skinned, according to the climate, although not completely black", and therefore apparently more acceptable for admittance to the priesthood, according to common views that people with lighter skin were more 'civilised' than those with black skin.⁸⁵

Similar to the approach of António Gomes (mentioned above, and who was eventually dismissed from the Society), Silveira had promoted practices inimical to cultural accommodation, with the aim instead to create a new Christian realm in India firmly under Portuguese rule. In Portuguese Goa, for example, technically only Christians were permitted to reside there. For leaders like the Jesuit Silveira, each non-Portuguese group presented different problems, since each one was seen to require different approaches from the authorities. Despite the general understanding at the time that Jews and Brahmans shared roots as far back as Josephus, some European leaders in India advocated different treatment of them, even though many saw both groups equally as potential agents of resistance in Portuguese-ruled Indian territories. Judaism remained a shunned religion by Europeans in the Old World and in India, and *conversos* were perpetually suspected as being crypto-Jews⁸⁶ who should be subject to Inquisitorial jurisdiction. By contrast, Brahmans and *gentios* — tended to be more resistant to Christian instruction, preaching of Scripture, and conversion than were the Jews — were also seen in a more positive light. Their resistance was predicted to last for a shorter timespan (aided by imperial strength) when compared to the centuries-long Jewish 'denial' of Christianity familiar to all Europeans. Consequently, in Portuguese-ruled territories, Hindu groups and their converts to Christianity did not experience quite the same

84 Gonçalo da Silveira to Diego Laínez, 25 Nov 1559, *DI*, 4: 432; "creo saldrá hun bueno sacerdote, y para aquá de buena scientia".

85 Such contemporary views were outlined by Duarte Barbosa in the early sixteenth century in his *O Livro*, which correlated gradations between white and black skin with level of civility, "a hierarchy that started with 'alvo' (the whitest) in the top, and 'preto' (the darkest) in the bottom": Xavier, "Languages of Difference in the Portuguese Empire", 99.

86 Cf. Kamen, *The Rise of Toleration*, 20.

level of suspicion and juridical persecution from their rulers as groups connected to the Jewish faith. While these different attitudes were due to a number of geo-political and historical factors, in the mission field they translated into different treatment of the two groups, including by the Inquisition in Goa.

Jesuit superior Silveira was particularly critical of the religious situation that he observed among the cosmopolitan populations of the Cochin area. The jurisdictional ambiguities that allowed certain freedoms to non-Portuguese and non-Christians in the Cochin area, combined with the emphasis there on trade among all groups regardless of religion, meant that the region around Cochin (especially raja-ruled Mattancherry) and along the Malabar Coast saw numerous waves of immigration of expelled Jews from Castile and Portugal (called *Judeus brancos* or 'white Jews'). Corresponding with royal decrees to banish any Jews from Portuguese lands, these new immigrants, along with communities of indigenous Jews (called *Judeus pretos* or 'black Jews') who held long-established political and commercial links with various local leaders, while prohibited from entering Portuguese-controlled Cochim de Baixo, were permitted to participate in trade.⁸⁷

In the wake of new measures by Portugal's king Dom Joao III against *conversos* in the 1530s, which included the establishment of the Portuguese Inquisition, another wave of immigration occurred, this time of converted Jews and their descendants. Whilst legislation intended to prohibit any contact between local Jews and *conversos* to avoid potential apostasy, the reality was that the city's economy facilitated open engagement between the two groups.⁸⁸ With the renewed vigour of the Counter Reformation and the movement towards establishing an Inquisition in Asia, some religious and political officials sought an end to such spiritually dangerous interaction, regardless of its purpose.

For his part, Silveira expressed very strong opinions on the state of things in Cochin in January 1557, just a few months before the blasphemous writings were found in the Sé church offertory boxes and blamed on local *conversos*. In a letter to then-Grand Inquisitor of Portugal and leading supporter of the Jesuit presence in the Portuguese Indies, Cardinal Dom Infante Henrique (who went on to rule Portugal as king, 1578–80), Silveira described the "pervasive Ju-

87 Malekandathil, "The Jews of Cochin", 243.

88 Tavim, "From Setúbal to the Sublime Porte", 95.

daism” and the Jews and Brahmans as “domestic enemies”, in Cochin in particular. While he went into great detail about the various sins and scandals of each of these groups, specifically “with regards to the Jews and bad Christians, the remedy is plain and simple, that is the Inquisition”.⁸⁹

Several decades later, Jesuit Visitor to the Indies Alessandro Valignano recalled in his *Historia* how Silveira had continuously preached to the community in Cochin, aware of the population of *conversos* and the commerce taking place between them and the Jews of Mattancherry (the part of Cochin under the jurisdiction of the raja). However, Valignano noted that according to Silveira this interaction was not limited to economic activities, and that “they go at night to celebrate in their synagogue their Jewish festivals, which they can then do more at their leisure, for there was not even at that time an Inquisition in India”.⁹⁰ Valignano recounted how these rumours drove Silveira to further zeal and fervour (even “divine fury”) in his preaching, going so far as to persecute the supposed crypto-Jews to the point at which these “irritants and scandalisers” allegedly lost their sanity and consequently responded with blasphemous writings against both Silveira and Christ himself.⁹¹

Jesuit Provincial Silveira’s interventions in Cochin thus coincided with, and possibly contributed to two significant outcomes in the history of Christianity in India: inquisitorial prosecutions of Cochin *converos* back in Portugal and, after delays, the eventual institution of a local tribunal in India. In a highly adulatory letter commissioned by Silveira in 1558, Jesuit confrere António da Costa encapsulated Silveira’s vision for India: “Our Lord by his goodness and mercy gathers those to the Society from his chosen [...] even though there are many infidels, there are so many Portuguese that it looks like another Portugal”.⁹² Against the grain of anxieties about in-

89 Gonçalo da Silveira to Cardinal Infante Henrique, Grand Inquisitor, Jan 1557, *DI*, 4: 2: “Quanto aos judaeus e aqu christãos, o remedio está cham, que hé Inquisiçam”.

90 Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso*, 342: “hião de noyte a celebrar em sua sinagoga suas festas judaicas, o que podião então fazer mays à sua vontade, por não aver aynda aquele tempo na Yndia Inquisição”.

91 Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso*, 342: “De maneyra que, espinhados e escandalizados, não poderão ter sua sanha”.

92 António de Costa, general letter to the Society in Portugal, 26 Dec 1558, *DI*, 4: 198; “Nosso Senhor por sur bondade [e] misericordia os ajunte à Companhia dos seus escolhidos [...] porque nós aqui, aynda que há muitos infieis, são tantos os portugueses que parece este outro Portugal”.

digenous *novamente convertidos, conversos*, and the realities of Jewish populations as well as peoples of other faiths present in India, such a claim to Lusitanian primacy in Jesuit correspondence back home likely placated pro-imperial sentiments and fostered continued support of the missions.

The extent to which there existed an aspiration to extract a distinct Jesuit identity from that of the Portuguese along lines of accommodation played out in the context of sanctity and defence of the faith against blasphemy and controversy. Therefore, while Jesuits operating in volatile areas outside Portuguese presence distanced themselves from the tactics of armed intimidation, some Jesuits such as Silveira championed Portuguese dominance. As Silveira's biographer remarked, "Dom Gonçalo was the true governor of India, in his time".⁹³ In reflecting the Portuguese identity of his birth, Silveira had aided the ambitions of the state which had not only sought to break private trade involving *conversos* that threatened an imperial monopoly but also to fulfil the desired religious uniformity within the *Estado*.

Melchior Carneiro

A further complicating figure in the controversy over the facts and subsequent actions against the Cochin *conversos* by some Portuguese officials, was Silveira's companion in India, Melchior Carneiro. After having entered the Society at Coimbra on 25 April 1543, he was sent to Évora with nine other Jesuits, including Simão Rodrigues,⁹⁴ and in 1551 the group opened the Colégio do Espírito Santo with Carneiro as its first rector.⁹⁵ Nadal appointed him as the companion of Simão Rodrigues when Rodrigues was summoned to Rome to answer for his insubordination. As fellow-Jesuit Antonio Franco noted in the eighteenth century, Carneiro was himself a "companion prone to many of those public mortifications [in Portugal] to which the first of our Fathers were quite inclined", which led to internal division and then censure from Rome as manifestations of disobedience.⁹⁶ Of noble background like Silveira, Carneiro had an intensely storied global career, spanning from Portugal to China in two in-

93 Leite, *D. Gonçalo da Silveira*, 128.

94 *Col. Conimbricens.*, ARSI, *Lus.* 43 I, ff. 1–4; Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso*, 303. Franco, *Imagem da virtude*, i, 262.

95 Alden, *Making of an Enterprise*, 33.

96 Franco, *Imagem*, 1: 264, 262: "era companheiro dos mais naquellas mortificaçoens publicas a que foram tam inclinados os nossos primeiros Padres".

stances of episcopal leadership, a first for the Society of Jesus. He was in Cochin at the time of the controversy over the blasphemous writings blamed on local *conversos* and he played a leading role in the events surrounding it.

In 1555, Carneiro arrived in India. In 1560, on papal request, he was made the titular Archbishop of the ancient city of Nicaea (in modern-day Turkey, and despite never going there), while his confrere Andres Oviedo SJ⁹⁷ was appointed to the see of Hieropolis (also titular and in Turkey): both were assigned to assist the Patriarch of Ethiopia, who at the time was João Nunes Barreto SJ.⁹⁸ Given that it was not possible for the Jesuits to enter East Africa in 1555, Carneiro instead laboured along the Malabar coast for a brief time amongst the communities of St Thomas Christians, seeking to identify the Nestorian 'heresies'. Recalled back to Goa, he spent several years there until 1566, when he was sent to Macau as Apostolic Administrator of China and Japan, where he stayed until his death in August 1583.⁹⁹ Despite not receiving the title of bishop, he carried out the episcopal functions for the diocese, having been finally appointed absentee Patriarch of Ethiopia in 1577.¹⁰⁰

In 1559, Carneiro sent a general report about Jesuit activities in Goa to superior general Lainez. His letter included comments about his fellow Jesuit and Fishery Coast superior Henrique Henriques. Among his many positive observations, he also noted that Henriques "is known as New Christian and for this reason many of the people hold him in low esteem".¹⁰¹ Another Jesuit, who was later

97 Andrés de Oviedo, * 1518 Illescas (Spain), SJ 19.VI.1541 Rome, † 29.VI.1577 Fremona (Ethiopia) (*DHCJ* III, 2936).

98 João Nunes Barreto, * 1517 Porto (Portugal), SJ XII.1544 Coimbra (Portugal), † 22.XII.1562 Goa (India) (*DHCJ* I, 352). Streit, *Bibliotheca Missionum*, 4: 214. Streit states that Carneiro was named Bishop of Nicaea and coadjutor of the Patriarch of Ethiopia in 1557; Wicki, on the other hand, remarks in his annotations of Valignano's *Historia* that this appointment occurred in 1560, cf. *Historia del principio y progreso*, 303. To further confuse things, Carlos Sommervogel mentions that Carneiro "consacré évêque de Nysse en 1555", cf. *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, ii, 757. Given the *Testimonium* of Francisco Fernandes in May 1557, in which Carneiro boasts about his appointment in the line of succession to Patriarch of Ethiopia, it seems most likely that the 1555 or 1557 date is most accurate.

99 Valignano, *Historia del principio y progreso*, 303.

100 Santos Hernández, *Jesuitas y obispados*, 95–6.

101 Melchior Carneiro to Diego Lainez, ca. 20 Nov 1559, *DI*, 4: 420; "es conocido por christiano nuevo i por esta causa algunos del pueblo lo tienen en poco". Wicki's editorial footnote on the same page references the letter written by Gomes to Lancillotto after Henriques was named superior. Here, Wicki argues that this ap-

dismissed from the Society, António de Herédia,¹⁰² wrote that through the appointment of *conversos* such as Henriques to positions of authority in the Society “some people are not edified, before they are scandalised”, naming Henriques as one example.¹⁰³

While details about Carneiro’s views are sketchy in the available documentation, some further insights emerge in relation to the testimony provided about events surrounding the blasphemous writings discovered and blamed on the *conversos* in Cochin in 1557. Francisco Fernandes, the clerk of the church in Cochin where the writings were discovered, described the gathering of the Vicar Pero Gonçalves, Carneiro, and the Franciscan Francisco Lopo, at which they discussed the inquiries carried out concerning the writings “and so also of the New Christians [and] how they lived”.¹⁰⁴ According to the testimony, the captain of Cochin, Diego Alvares Teles, entered the chancel, was offered a seat with the clerics, and after a while began to give his comments on the whole affair. His main contention was that the priests, in carrying out their inquiries about the blasphemies and the New Christians in particular, had done “more than what I said and ordered you [...] I did not tell you otherwise than only for you to take testimonies about the inscriptions, and they tell me here that you asked more than these questions”.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, the captain commanded that the matter be dropped and nothing more be done, but Carneiro disputed the command, saying “meekly” that it was an ecclesiastical affair and that the captain could not interfere.¹⁰⁶ From that point on, the conversation essentially became a contentious discourse over jurisdiction and authority, with each man claiming that their service to God — whether in a clerical or political capacity — was more important.

Fernandes further testified that Captain Teles accused the priests

pointment was the cause of particular disapproval of Henriques among members of the Society, such as Gomes.

102 António de Erédia, * c.1513 Bragança (Portugal), SJ 17.IX.1545 Coimbra (Portugal), *dimissus* 1562 (Wicki, *DI*, 2: 7*).

103 António de Herédia “to a [unnamed] superior”, autumn 1561, *DI*, 5: 201.

104 Fernandes, *Testimonium*, *DI*, 3: 639: “e asy tambem dos crystãos novos como vivyão”.

105 Fernandes, *Testimonium*, *DI*, 3: 639: “fazeis mais do que vos eu dise e mamdey e do que ficastes comigo, eu não vos dise senão que somente tiraseis testemunhas sobre os escrytos e a mim diserão-me que quá que se perguntava por mais”.

106 Fernandes, *Testimonium*, *DI*, 3: 640: “Padre Belchior Carneiro respondeo ao ditto capitão mãosamente: ‘Sennhor, Vosa Mercê não pode mamdar nisto nada porquanto hé cousa eclesiastica’ e como hera coussa da Ymquisição ficava Sua Mercê escomungado”.

of tearing the town of Cochim de Baixo apart through their actions through investigating the private lives of those living there. To this accusation, Carneiro is reported to have responded that “it would be best that those men of poor quality that exist in this land should go away”, defending the decision to weed out the bad Christians.¹⁰⁷ Here, there appears the familiar Jesuit refrain that a few good ones are better than many bad ones, although in this case it was used, not to describe membership of the Society or its conversionary works, but Christian society as a whole.¹⁰⁸ The suggestion that a few ‘bad apples’ risked the whole body of society distorted the preference of Ignatius that it was better to gain stronger but fewer converts than a great number who might risk spiritual ruin of themselves or others, a maxim that Xavier perceived as integral to decisions about the admission and dismissal of members of the Society. This approach certainly suited the Jesuits, who sought to operate *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* qualitatively rather than quantitatively; yet in the context of a city like Cochin the possibility of an entirely Christian community in the Portuguese settlement area of Santa Cruz (Cochim de Baixo) might have prompted an interest of rooting out *judaísmos*. That is perhaps why such intrusion drew controversy and created competing camps within the Society at large.

Captain Teles’ accusation against Carneiro and other ecclesiastical officials of dividing the Portuguese town displays Teles’ concern for the political and social repercussions of church authorities and religious orders’ inquiries made in identifying potential crypto-Jews among the population. The subsequent trial of one of the accused, Maria Nunes, confirmed the claims of the captain, as her testimony noted that already around Easter of 1557 (before the blasphemous writings were ‘discovered’), a group of Cochin *conversos* had attempted to flee to Ormuz to escape Silveira’s efforts to bring the inquisition to India and search out suspected apostates, especially in Cochin.¹⁰⁹

Indeed, such efforts were of concern, not just to the *conversos*, but also to the municipal authorities in Cochin, and the governor of the *Estado da Índia*, Francisco Barreto (fl. 1555–58). Barreto, viewed as one of the more moderate governors of India due to his lessening of

107 Fernandes, *Testimonium*, *DI*, 3: 640: “Melhor serya que os roi[n]s que ouver na terra se vão embora”.

108 Juan Polanco to Niccolò Lancillotto, 22 Nov 1547, *DI*, 1: 211.

109 Cunha, *Inquisição no Estado da Índia*, 132. ANTT, *Inquisição de Lisboa*, processo no. 6369, f. 57v.

legal restrictions against Brahmans, attempted to some extent to restrict the trials of the Cochin *conversos* in Goa, claiming that the Jesuits involved had overstepped their ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The defence lawyer for another accused, Diogo Soares, remarked as much, claiming that Jesuit Provincial Silveira had “made himself an inquisitor, without having the power, authorization or seniority to act as such”.¹¹⁰

Clearly, there was a divergence of views between some Jesuits and the secular authorities in Portuguese territories in India in terms of how best to deal with the *conversos* of the region, adding nuance to existing scholarship about the social and economic features of Portuguese India at the time. For example, Pius Malekandathil notes that a “commercial jealousy” on the part of the private Portuguese traders, somewhat late to the game when compared to the New Christian merchants, motivated the final realisation of an official Inquisition. Malekandathil’s reading of the testimony concludes that Teles had “accused the Inquisitors of trying to empty his city of inhabitants under the pretext of an inquiry against the New Christians”.¹¹¹ Other scholars have suggested similar reasons, pointing to the fear of the growing influence of *conversos* in Cochin and Goa, in opposition to the interest of the Portuguese crown in promoting imperial policies of Christian expansion and consolidation.¹¹² In any case, the sides in contention were not homogenous. As José Alberto Tavim has noted, some individuals gained personally from these excessive steps by the Jesuits, while “the religious for their part profited from these individual quarrels to push ahead their own arguments concerning the heresy of the New Christians”.¹¹³

In the case of those involved in the events of 1557, the prosecution of the *conversos* fell into line with the imperial interests of many Portuguese in the region, satisfying the economic and political desire to wrestle commercial activity in Cochin from *converso* families to the benefit of an emerging Old Christian merchant class, as well as the religious commitment to establish Christian uniformity and allow for a more consolidated judicial power to eradicate deviations from the ‘true faith’ in the future.

110 ANTT, *Inquisição de Lisboa*, processo no. 185, ff. 21–21v; quoted in Paiva, “Inquisitional Tribunal in Goa”, 590.

111 Malekandathil, “The Jews of Cochin”, 246.

112 Paiva, “Inquisitional Tribunal in Goa”, 567; cf. Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa*; Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*; the concept of fear also plays a part in Amiel and Lima, “A narração de Charles Dellon. Estudo”.

113 Tavim, “From Setúbal to the Sublime Porte”, 104.

What had transpired in Cochin 1557, from the perspective of some of the Jesuits in India and other ecclesiastical officials, was an intrusion into the Christian Portuguese space of Santa Cruz (Cochim de Baixo) by Jews through their *converso* associates, thereby 'proving' the continued existence of a threat to civil Christian society already familiar to many Portuguese. As Melchior Carneiro suggested in late 1557, Old Christians were annoyed by the audacity of these *conversos* and the freedom which they supposedly possessed:

the New Christians have given themselves ample occasion without the blasphemous writings, for the freedom that some of them have in conversing [with] the Jews of [raja-ruled] Cochim de Cima and in entering in their synagogue and, according to what is said publicly, in order to help with their factory; and some circumcise their sons, which is very cheeky (*atreuimento*) because commonly the boys go around nude.¹¹⁴

This perceived impudence, to which other Christians attested, legitimated a heightened regulation of space and those within it — with the enthusiastic participation of some Jesuits in this process.

Conclusion

In the years following the 1560 institution of the Goan Inquisition to which the Cochin blasphemy incident directly contributed, the concern about *conversos* waned while trials of *gentio* converts swelled. Between the first trial in 1561 and 1623, *conversos* constituted only 9% of the total 3800 individuals who faced trial by the Goan Inquisition. The bulk of these — 321 — were tried between 1561 and 1590. After 1590, trials of *conversos* drastically fell: 12 between 1591 and 1600; 5 between 1601 and 1610; 4 between 1611 and 1620.¹¹⁵ Most of the other accused were Indian converts or descendants of converted *gentios* who were tried for 'crypto-Hinduism'. Of the total 149 people sentenced to death by the Goan Inquisition in the first sixty years, *conversos* were notably over-represented: of the 9% of all those tried, *conversos* constituted 69% of victims.

From these numbers, a further interesting deduction can be made: both *conversos* in Cochin and *novamente convertidos* in Goa held some prominence in their respective communities, whether through commerce or politics or a combination of these. The harsh restrictions

114 Melchior Carneiro to Cardinal Infante Henrique, 20 Dec 1557, *DI*, 4: 11.

115 Saraiva, *The Marrano Factory*, 346–47.

and blood purity regulations likely sought to re-establish a balance that favoured the Portuguese-born minority in positions of power within the *Estado*. The different contexts in India shaped the fate of their people. The negotiated relationship between Portuguese officials and the raja of Cochin limited the capabilities of the ecclesiastical offices and the secular arm essential to the implementation of their judgments, leaving little room for a Christian polity to rule the whole of Cochin, since the Portuguese did not have jurisdiction over most of Cochin. Portuguese-ruled Goa, on the other hand, had consisted of more demarcated territories since Afonso de Albuquerque's initial victories, supplemented by conquests in the 1540s, and the fall of the Vijayanagara empire in 1565 opened the door for further consolidation of Portuguese power over populations in the Konkan region.

Economic factors played into this context as well. Whilst in Cochin the main threat to Portuguese monopoly was the *converso* population, in Goa it was Brahman control over temple administration and its associated land tax revenue, plus social privileges that threatened the Portuguese elite's visions of consolidating their political and economic power. The specious and even potentially fraudulent claims regarding the 'blasphemous' actions of crypto-Jews in Portuguese-held Cochim de Baixo would seem to reflect the economic contours in the region, combined with uneven political control and religious homogeneity there.

As to the general view of Jesuits towards *conversos*, Josef Wicki, the Jesuit editor of several volumes in the Society's *Documenta Indica* series, argued in the twentieth century that it was not race that caused Simão Rodrigues to seek to exclude from the Society those with Jewish ancestry, but rather their lack of "boa fama" as a collective group in Portugal which caused their exclusion.¹¹⁶ Concern for the reputation of the Society of Jesus in relation to its acceptance of *conversos* was expressed by Jesuits throughout the Iberian peninsula and by some Jesuits operating in India, such as Carneiro and Herédia, as we have seen. Yet Rodrigues' own disobedience in Coimbra, the encouragement of public self-flagellation and disturbance of lay citizens of the city, brings into question his understanding of how best to promote the good repute of the Jesuits.

Already in 1576, Antonio Possevino suggested in his memorial to General Mercurian that there existed a false pretence for the claims of reputation that characterised the Portuguese contingent in opposi-

116 Wicki, "Die 'Cristaos-Novos'", 361.

tion to *conversos*. As Possevino noted, their obstinacy perhaps instead derived from “overweening ambition (because they feel themselves to have been deprived of offices in the Society on which their honour depends).”¹¹⁷ We certainly see this reflected in the views of António Gomes, whose haughtiness was deemed misplaced by Xavier in the context of the Goa, leading to his eventual dismissal.

Given Ignatius of Loyola’s impartiality towards, and at times wilful acceptance of, men with Jewish ancestry, why does the practice become a great concern to many Jesuits especially from the Iberian peninsula, as well as in relation to those with Jewish background sent to India by their own superiors? It is perhaps the presence of a concerted effort of some Jesuits against *conversos* — both within the Society and indeed wider society — that evinces a countervailing cultural effect on members on the ground, even at times in opposition to directives from their superiors, and ultimately bringing about a change of approach for the whole Society, reversing the policy introduced by Ignatius to accept converts and descendants of them.

What occurred in India around the mid- to late 1550s saw one issue — that is, the *converso* question — come into focus where it had not been in the years before. The obsession with crypto-Jews, a veritable Iberian norm, had an impact on the Society in India, several of whose members had drawn on Ignatian concepts to develop mission practices that would become known as accommodation. As this article has shown, the negative attitudes of some members of the Society in India towards *conversos* there — both Jesuit and not — disrupt the view of accommodation as a dominant Jesuit approach in the mission fields of Asia. Instead, the Jesuit mission fields were contested spaces.

Accommodation perhaps might have been able to manifest more decisively in Portuguese-controlled India had the Society’s organising principles that stood above the realm of national identity taken priority. As it stood, Jesuits tended to apply accommodation outside Portuguese jurisdiction. In the case of the Inquisition in Goa, it was the attitudes and actions of some Jesuits that triggered an irreversible and unrelenting assault on *conversos*; when Indian converts of other faiths fell into the inquisitorial net as well, the Jesuit pursuit of ‘helping souls’ was clearly compromised, as was the Society’s earliest claims that it followed the scriptural injunction that made no distinction between Jews, Greeks, or others who had chosen to be united through faith in Christ.

117 Cohen, “Nation, Lineage, and Jesuit Unity”, 555.

Summary

This article explores the complex connections that the Society of Jesus had with *conversos* — as members themselves in the Society, as prospective entrants, and as subjects of the Portuguese Estado da Índia. It investigates these connections with specific reference to the situation in Goa and Cochin during the first five decades of the Society's presence in India, from the 1540s to the 1580s, and in relation to two important aspects of the missions in India: the Goan Inquisition and Jesuit 'accommodation'. By looking at the origins of Jesuit attitudes to the *converso* question — both inside and outside the Society — and at Jesuit discussions of Jews who retained their religion in the diaspora as well as those Christian converts from Judaism in India, the article seeks to discern the wide range of opinions in the Society that provided the key elements and limits of missionary 'accommodation' and Jesuit distinctiveness.

Sumário

Este artigo explora as complexas relações que a Companhia de Jesus teve com os conversos — quer como membros, quer como candidatos à entrada na Companhia, bem como súbditos do Estado Português da Índia. O artigo investiga estas relações com uma referência específica às situações vividas em Goa e Cochim durante as cinco primeiras décadas da presença da Companhia e em articulação com dois aspectos importantes das missões na Índia: a Inquisição de Goa e a 'acomodação' jesuíta. Observando as origens das atitudes jesuítas relativamente à questão dos conversos — tanto dentro como fora da Companhia — e para o debate jesuíta sobre os judeus que mantiveram a sua religião na diáspora, bem como sobre os cristãos convertidos do judaísmo na Índia, este artigo procura discernir a amplitude de opiniões na Companhia que forneceram os elementos chave e limites da 'acomodação' missionária e especificidade jesuíta.

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