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# The Inquisition Tribunal in Goa: Why and for What Purpose?

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## Abstract

This article aims to explain the process which led to the founding of the Inquisition tribunal in Goa, the first Holy Office tribunal to be created outside Europe. Following a review of previous historiographical studies which have analyzed this question, it examines the mechanisms for Christianization/confessionalization deployed by the Iberian monarchs in Asia and America from a global and comparative perspective, based on a rereading and reinterpretation of Inquisition documents and correspondence from various agents who were involved in the process. It presents an explanation that emphasizes the existence of a cluster of causalities which created a dense network of convergent forces that favored the founding of an Inquisition tribunal in Asia in 1560.

## Keywords

Inquisition – Portuguese Empire – diocese of Goa – Jesuits – ecclesiastical jurisdiction – confessionalization

## Introduction

The main facts are well known. In December 1560, the inquisitors Aleixo Dias Falcão and Francisco Marques Botelho arrived in Goa, travelling with same fleet as the first archbishop, Gaspar de Leão. They carried an order from the Inquisitor General Henry, signed on March 2, 1560, to found an Inquisition

tribunal in Goa, a venture that was entrusted to these three men.<sup>1</sup> Another branch of the Holy Office was also being considered for Kochi, although this never materialized.<sup>2</sup> There were no similar plans for Brazil, even though the Inquisition had been active there since the 1540s. Colonization was a slow process in the Portuguese American territories, and it was not proving easy to convert the Indians to Christianity.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Brazil was of no significant economic importance at the time, had not seen a substantial influx of New Christians liable to become involved in Judaism, and showed no disturbing evidence of other faiths such as Islamism, Lutheranism or Calvinism, which could be seen as a potential threat to the Catholicism of the resident Portuguese population. The first suggestion to create a tribunal in Brazil, made by the bishop of Bahia António Barreiros, only appeared in 1599 and although the idea was revived more consistently in the 1620s, even this second attempt was aborted, despite pressure from the Crown.<sup>4</sup>

The Indian Inquisition, as it was called, had jurisdiction over a vast, unevenly distributed territory that was only vaguely defined in its founding document.<sup>5</sup> It covered all Portuguese territory from Sofala, on the East African coast, to Macao and Timor, including various fortresses in Hormuz, India, Ceylon, Malacca and the Moluccas. It was an enormous institution, controlling a greater area than any other Holy Office tribunal in Portugal, Spain and the Italian Peninsula and was the first to be established overseas, predating the

1 The original in Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo (ANTT)—Inquisição de Lisboa, Lv. 840, fl. 5-8, second numbering, published by António Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa de História da sua origem, estabelecimento, evolução e extinção. (Introdução à correspondência dos Inquisidores da Índia 1569-1630)* (Lisbon, 1945), 30-35, and Ana Cannas da Cunha, *A Inquisição no Estado da Índia. Origens (1539-1560)* (Lisbon, 1995), 295-301.

2 Célia Cristina da Silva Tavares, *Jesuítas e Inquisidores em Goa* (Lisbon, 2004), 158.

3 Giuseppe Marcocci, "A fé de um império: a Inquisição no mundo português de Quinhentos," *Revista de História* 164 (2011): 65-100; 80. DOI 10.11606/isn.2316-9141.v01164p65-100.

4 Bruno Guilherme Feitler, "Usos políticos del Santo Oficio português en el Atlántico (Brasil and África Occidental). El periodo filipino," *Hispania Sacra* LIV, 119 (2007): 269-291, 275; Ana Margarida Pereira, *A Inquisição no Brasil: aspectos da sua actuação nas capitanias do Sul (de meados do século XVI aos inícios do século XVIII)* (Coimbra, 2006), 63-76, and José Pedro Paiva, *Baluartes da fé e da disciplina. O enlace entre a Inquisição e os bispos em Portugal (1536-1750)* (Coimbra, 2011), 191-196.

5 Miguel José Rodrigues Lourenço, "Uma Inquisição diferente. Para uma leitura institucional do Santo Ofício de Goa e do seu distrito (séculos XVI e XVII)," *Lusitania Sacra* 31 (2015): 129-164, esp. 143.

tribunals in Lima and Mexico, both ordained by Philip II in 1569, and founded in 1570 and 1571 respectively.<sup>6</sup>

The creation of the Goa Tribunal has been studied by various authors. The first major study, by António Baião, presented key aspects of the creation of the tribunal, drawing on a valuable collection of correspondence exchanged between the Lisbon and Indian inquisitors. His main argument is that the Goa Inquisition emerged from pressures and proposals put forward by certain Jesuits, in particular Francis Xavier and Belchior Carneiro, who feared the growing numbers of New Christians in Kochi and Goa and the freedom they enjoyed, against the background of an imperial policy that displayed a greater interest in expanding and consolidating Christianity in the East, promoted during the regencies of the dowager Queen Catherine (1557-1562) and Prince Henry (1562-1568).<sup>7</sup>

Baião's theories were taken up by Anant Priolkar, who highlighted the harsh repressive measures used by the Holy Office against the Indian populations.<sup>8</sup> Several historians have subsequently returned to the essential arguments put forward by Baião, including Célia Tavares, Patrícia Faria, Miguel Lourenço and José Tavim, the latter responsible for the most detailed and careful reconstruction of the community of Portuguese New Christians resident in Kochi, which was targeted by the Inquisition in its early years.<sup>9</sup>

At the end of the twentieth century, Ana Cunha published the best work to date on the beginnings of the Goa Inquisition. Whilst not denying the possible significance of the warnings issued by the Jesuits, she identified another

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6 In Spanish America, unlike Goa, the foundation of the Holy Office was preceded by a debate in the various councils of the Spanish monarchy, Renée Millar Carvacho, "Lima," in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, ed. Adriano Prospero, Vincenzo Lavenia and John Tedeschi (Pisa, 2010), II: 906-907, and R. Piazza, "Messico" in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, ed. Adriano Prospero, Vincenzo Lavenia and John Tedeschi (Pisa, 2010), vol. II: 1037-1040. A recent study which reprises Francisco Bethencourt's approach clearly emphasizes the importance of studying the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions from a comparative perspective: see Jacqueline Vassallo, Miguel Rodrigues Lourenço and Susana Bastos Mateus, *Inquisiciones. Dimensiones comparadas (siglos XVI-XIX)* (Córdoba, 2017), 9-17.

7 Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 25-26.

8 Anant K. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition: Being a Quatercentenary Commemoration Study of the Inquisition in India* (Bombay, 1961).

9 Tavares, *Jesuitas*, 151; Patrícia Souza de Faria, "De réus a colaboradores: nativos convertidos ao catolicismo diante do Tribunal da Inquisition de Goa," *Revista Brasileira de História das Religiões* III, no. 8 (2010): 165-182, 165-166; Lourenço, "Uma Inquisição," 143; and José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, *Judeus e cristãos-novos de Cochim. História e memória (1500-1662)* (Braga, 2003), 168-169.

set of dynamics in an interpretation which considers that the policies of the Crown were mainly responsible for the path which was adopted. She therefore highlights: a) the growing fears that life in this region of the empire would be dominated by New Christian fugitives from Portugal, since they had become firmly established there and had managed to obtain key positions at the expense of the Old Christians; b) the Crown's fear of alliances between New Christians and the Ottoman Jews, who had set up the commercial networks for the trade in spices and precious stones which ran counter to the interests of the Portuguese Crown and threatened its control over certain regions of Asia; c) the recognition that attempts at religious integration in the East had not been very successful during the 1530s-1550s, making it necessary to adopt new policies to eradicate those who opposed Catholicism which would, in turn, require a more powerful coercive mechanism; and d) the fact that in India the jurisdiction of the authority responsible for overseeing deviations from the faith was not clearly defined, meaning that judicial powers in proceedings involving matters of faith needed to be clarified and authority concentrated within a single institution, as in the kingdom. It should also be noted, in the light of António Baião's work, that matters came to a head following an incident which took place in 1557 in Kochi. Several New Christians accused of Judaism were arrested there, unleashing a wave of panic fuelled by the direct intervention of the Jesuits Gonçalo da Silveira and Belchior Carneiro. This had an immediate effect on Goa and resulted in dozens of defendants from both cities being convicted by the Lisbon Inquisition in 1561.<sup>10</sup> In essence, as clearly summarized by Jorge Macedo, the Holy Office took root as a "political guarantee" accepted by the Crown, which needed to "know what was happening" in Asia, and by "the religious authorities, which needed to determine the sincerity of the religious policy" that had been implemented.<sup>11</sup> The fears caused by the rise of the New Christians involved in Asian trade and the events in Kochi in 1557-1558 are also emphasized by Charles Amiel and Anne Lima.<sup>12</sup>

10 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 39-149.

11 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 13-14.

12 Charles Amiel and Anne Lima, "A narração de Charles Dellon. Estudo" in *A Inquisição de Goa descrita por Charles Dellon (1687)* (S. Paulo, 2014). More recently, a study which is in several ways inaccurate, lacks rigor, fails to provide a basic bibliography and offers no new research, re-examines the idea that both the Goa Inquisition and the other Inquisition tribunals based outside Europe emerged for commercial and institutional reasons with the aim of reducing the influence of New Christians in economic circuits within the Portuguese empire, thus downplaying the actual religious motives, see Toby Green, "Policing the Empires: A Comparative Perspective on the Institutional Trajectory

In a study indispensable to understanding the role played by religion in constructing a Portuguese identity in Goa, Ângela Xavier presents new arguments to clarify the founding of the Goa Inquisition. In her view, the tribunal was more a mechanism designed to support the establishment of a political community in Asia which mirrored the one in the kingdom.<sup>13</sup> This was one of the guidelines that would be used to “invent Goa” or, in other words, to construct a community that had not previously existed. Essentially, it was yet another strategy within a complex process dedicated to the cultural conversion of populations which aimed for a “relatively gradual but almost total transformation of ways of thinking, acting and living and of understanding time and space, the present and the memories of the members of a particular society.”<sup>14</sup> In an earlier article, Xavier demonstrated that the policy of surveillance and repression of religious dissidence used against populations in the Portuguese empire essentially followed the model used in Portugal, introduced at the end of the fifteenth century to deal with the Jews, who were transformed into New Christians through enforced baptisms by order of the king in 1497.<sup>15</sup>

This historiographical background would not be complete without reference to the most incisive and thorough analysis of the activities of the Inquisition in the Portuguese empire during the sixteenth century, when it was already operating on a scale that would nowadays be termed global. Referring to the situation in Goa, Giuseppe Marcocci emphasizes that the founding of the tribunal constituted one more instrument used in the dynamic process which contemporary sources describe as the “spiritual conquest of the East,” i.e. the establishment of a uniform model of Catholicism that would eradicate variety and difference in the worlds to which the Portuguese had gained entry and was essentially “heir to the tradition of the mass conversions of Jews in Portugal.” His major original contribution is to emphasize that the Portuguese in Asia were confronted with an extremely complex cultural and religious world teeming with very different faiths, some of which were previously unknown, and that in

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of the Inquisition in the Portuguese and Spanish Overseas Territories (Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries),” *Hispanic Research Journal* 13 (2012): 7-25.

13 A similar thesis is presented for the establishment of the Mexico Inquisition by Piazza, “Messico,” 1037.

14 Ângela Barreto Xavier, *A invenção de Goa. Poder imperial e conversões culturais nos séculos XVI e XVII* (Lisbon: 2008), esp. 26 and 55.

15 Ângela Barreto Xavier, “*De converso a novamente convertido*. Identidade, política e alteridade no reino e no império,” *Cultura—Revista de História e Teoria das Ideias* 2ª série, 22 (2006): 245-274; and the revised English version, Ângela Barreto Xavier, “*Conversos and Novamente Convertidos: Law, Religion, and Identity in the Portuguese Kingdom and Empire*,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 15 (2011): 255-287.

the 1540s and 1550s a growing intransigence developed towards the eastern religions in response to reports that were arriving in the kingdom, encouraged to a large extent by Jesuits and Franciscans and interpreted in Lisbon by a group of theologians who were influential in determining the options chosen by the Crown. In addition, the creation of a new tribunal was a response designed to resolve judicial inefficiency in the wake of the Kochi episode.<sup>16</sup>

This historiographical review confirms that the aforementioned arguments are important in explaining the creation of the Goa Tribunal. Nevertheless, I would argue that there are other elements that have still not been fully explored, and that not enough emphasis has been placed on the fact that a number of factors, agents and dynamics were responsible for creating the conditions in which the developments unfolded. It is this set of causalities, which created a dense network of converging forces superior to those driving in the opposite direction, that will be examined in this article, focussing on six main areas: 1) the culture and status of the Portuguese Inquisition; 2) the imperial dynamics of the Portuguese presence in Asia; 3) the confessionalization process in Early Modern Europe; 4) the ways in which Christianity was disseminated in the East; 5) the organizational model and actions of the diocesan structures in the Goa region; and 6) the breakdown of jurisdictional boundaries in the religious field.

### Culture and Status of the Portuguese Inquisition

The culture and status of the Portuguese Inquisition is a process that cannot be explained without recalling that, in contrast to the situation in Lima and Mexico where the King played a major role, it was the second Inquisitor General Henry who was responsible for the creation of the new tribunal. Henry was a key figure in the Portuguese Church and politics. He was the brother of King John III, who appointed him to rule the Holy Office in 1539, when he was only twenty-eight-years-old, a position he maintained until 1579. He also acquired

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16 Marcocci, "A Fé," 70-71, 82, and Giuseppe Marcocci, *A consciência de um império. Portugal e o seu mundo, sécs. XV a XVII* (Coimbra, 2012), 373-404, which includes an overview of the debate on religious diversity in India, which was not particularly intense among theologians and inquisitorial authorities in Lisbon. In contrast, the Franciscans and some Jesuits promoted policies of compulsory conversion for local populations, based on the doctrine of John Duns Scotus. In the 1550s and 1560s some Jesuits, such as the Italian Nicolao Lancilotto and the Portuguese António Quadros, contested these policies; see Ângela Barreto Xavier, *A invenção*, 135-137.

the archbishopric of Lisbon and would go on to become cardinal (1545), papal legate (from 1553), regent (1562-1568) and finally king (1578-1580).<sup>17</sup> Without his orders, the Goa tribunal would never have been founded during the period in which he headed the Portuguese Inquisition. However, until the early 1550s, Henry had focused on freeing the Holy Office from supervision by Rome, which had restricted its activities. Supported by the episcopacy and other leading religious institutions, he built up a structure with financial and operational autonomy that covered the entire kingdom and was equipped with its own trusted body of agents, in addition to defining an operational model that took shape in the first Inquisition Regulations (1552).<sup>18</sup>

It was only after 1547, when the outlines of the institutional culture of the Holy Office were better defined, that Henry began planning to extend it to the Portuguese overseas empire.<sup>19</sup> In 1550 he stipulated that everything that took place in the Portuguese territories on the African coast and the Atlantic islands would come under the jurisdiction of the Lisbon inquisitors.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, in the 1550s and 1560s Henry was seeking to centralize surveillance of the empire by the Inquisition in coastal cities such as Lisbon and Goa, the latter the center of the State of India.<sup>21</sup>

It is essential to bear this chronology in mind, since reports of religious problems in Asia had been arriving in the kingdom since at least the 1530s. Although it is true that until the 1540s very little news of heresies practiced in India came to the attention of the Holy Office,<sup>22</sup> some reports were, nevertheless, circulating, and it was easy for someone like Henry (who met regularly with the King) and the deputies of the Holy Office General Council (who had close links with other councils and central tribunals) to be kept up to date with the news coming from Asia. In 1530, a missionary in Kerala identified Christians in the region who were followers of Nestorian errors.<sup>23</sup> Four years later, an official (*feitor*) of Hormuz criticized rewards given to New Christians who “were very Jewish.”<sup>24</sup> In 1539, after the Inquisition had been founded in Portugal, King John III received news that a New Christian had been burnt at the stake in Goa for professing

17 The best biography of Henry is Amélia Polónia, *D. Henrique* (Lisbon, 2005).

18 Giuseppe Marcocci and José Pedro Paiva, *História da Inquisição Portuguesa (1536-1821)* (Lisbon, 2013), 33-43.

19 Marcocci, “A Fé,” 75.

20 Marcocci and Paiva, *História*, 106.

21 Lourenço, “Uma Inquisição,” 138-139.

22 Marcocci, “A Fé,” 74.

23 Marcocci, “A Fé,” 70.

24 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 29.

“worse heresies than those of Luther, Zwingli or Oecolampadius, and there are plenty more like him in this city.” The author of the report expressed his disgust at the many converts who had emigrated to India and acquired positions at the expense of Old Christians.<sup>25</sup> In January 1543, Miguel Vaz, the vicar-general of the diocese of Goa who remained in contact with Henry after returning to the kingdom,<sup>26</sup> informed the king of the large numbers of New Christians in Kochi and the fact that, due to their “undesirable way of life,” he had already asked for the Inquisition to be created in India and was now repeating this request.<sup>27</sup> He added that whatever was done “for the love of God and to honour and serve him” would be designed to help New Christians, “to make them good and guide them to salvation.”<sup>28</sup> Writing from Goa in 1545, the Jesuit Nicolao Lancilotto considered that the existence of large numbers of Moors, Turks and gentiles had turned the city into “a Babylon” in which each man “lives as he pleases.”<sup>29</sup> Also in 1545, Francis Xavier, who had arrived in India in 1542, asked one of his brethren in the kingdom to remind an individual who was not named to write to Henry “to ensure that the Inquisition punishes those who persecute people who convert to our holy law and faith.”<sup>30</sup> This recommendation was not directed against New Christians, although they would feature in the letter that has been cited as key to the creation of the Goa Inquisition.<sup>31</sup> In May 1546, writing to King John III from the Moluccas, Xavier reaffirmed the need for the monarch to establish “a Holy Inquisition, since there are many who live under the law of Moses or follow the Moorish faith, with no fear of God or shame before the world.” He added that they were “spread throughout all the fortresses,” and that the “Holy Inquisition and many preachers” were needed.<sup>32</sup> Three years later, a warning came from Hormuz once again from another Jesuit, the Dutch Kaspar Berzé (*Barzeus*), who believed that this city, located at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, was a “Babylon” where all kinds of bestial and lustful behavior

25 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 252-254.

26 António da Silva Rego, *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado Portugues do Oriente. Índia* (Lisbon, 1950-1952), vol. III: 335-336.

27 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 30; Tavares, *Jesuítas*, 151. Neither of these authors realized that this was the second request made by Miguel Vaz. The date of the first is unknown.

28 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. II: 338-339.

29 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 192.

30 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 162. In Mexico in 1516, the Dominican Bartolomé de las Casas was the first to argue for the introduction of the Inquisition, Piazza, “Messico,” 1037.

31 Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 26; Charles Amiel and Anne Lima, “A narração,” 267-268.

32 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 351.



could be found, since “the Christians are so intermingled with the Moors, Turks, Jews and pagans that it is impossible to distinguish between them.”<sup>33</sup>

In Portugal it was this background of fear that had led to the founding of the Inquisition, an institution designed to combat the problems created by the New Christian minority of Jewish and Muslim origin. However, in those early years the Portuguese Holy Office was not sufficiently well established to contemplate founding a new base separated from Lisbon by months of travel, nor did Cardinal Prince Henry have enough faith in the Jesuits to respond immediately to their exhortations.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, it was not by chance that none of the abovementioned letters were addressed to him, although Francis Xavier realized that the final decision would have to come from the Inquisitor General. Nevertheless, these reports from the East would certainly have created concerns in the minds of those in Portugal who believed that the Inquisition was useful for controlling lapses of faith and preserving the Catholic identity of the country.

In the 1550s these distant echoes from Asia continued to fuel the disturbing image of the religious situation which, due to the strong presence of Muslims and Buddhists, was much more dramatic than in Spanish America. In 1552, in a letter written by the General of the Jesuit College in Goa to his brothers in Portugal, he stated that in Hormuz Kaspar Berzé had identified eight individuals who held “Lutheran and heretical opinions, denying the existence of Purgatory and the Church of Rome and, in some cases, the immortality of the soul.” He had argued with them, convinced them of their “errors” and “led them back to the Church.”<sup>35</sup> In the same year, in Vasai, the Jesuit Belchior Nunes Barreto had encountered Lutherans amongst the mercenaries serving on the armadas as bombardiers, “who have been spreading their heresies, and this is a very dangerous thing in these parts as there is so much loose, dissolute behaviour there.” He asked for travel to India to be banned for “Flemish, English, Germans and French, as we know of many who associate with the Moors and others infected with Lutheranism,” concluding that he had arrested a few and sent them to the bishop to be tried.<sup>36</sup> Also in 1552, according to a report by the Jesuit Manuel Teixeira, the “Moors” had chosen a mountain in the fortress of Thane near Bombay “where they held a great festival, throwing themselves

33 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. IV: 383.

34 Giuseppe Marcocci, “Inquisição, jesuítas e cristãos-novos em Portugal no século XVI,” *Revista de História das Ideias* 25 (2004): 247-326 is essential reading for Henry’s relations with the Society of Jesus.

35 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. V: 243-244.

36 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. V: 261-262.

down from its heights and those who died from the fall were considered holy." A cross was erected at the site to prevent the celebrations but some of the Moors cut it down and burnt it, "although, as we knew who they were, they were burnt at the stake on the orders of the Captain of Vasai."<sup>37</sup>

In the early 1550s as the Inquisition was being set up, Henry was more willing to consider the empire. In addition, he was developing closer relations and greater trust in the Jesuits, who were a good source of information from the East.<sup>38</sup> Another equally important development was the fact that, from the 1540s onwards, the Crown had been showing signs of changing the Christianization policy in the East, as will be explained later. The decision was therefore made in 1554 to found an Inquisition in "Goa and the Indias." On March 2, the Inquisitor General appointed Sebastião Pinheiro, the new vicar-general for the diocese of Goa, an Inquisition commissioner "to combat heresy, depravity and apostasy in the territories and dominions in India." He was granted powers under "sacred canon law and the Foundation Bull of the Holy Inquisition" to investigate and instigate proceedings against residents "in the diocese of Goa and other cities and places in India" accused of heresy and apostasy and those who aided or abetted heretics, and to punish the guilty with sentences which, in the most severe cases, extended to delivering them to the secular authorities to be burnt at the stake. He was also given the authority to instigate proceedings that were pending in other institutions in any of these cases, suggesting that Henry was zealous in protecting the jurisdiction of the Inquisition.<sup>39</sup>

The first order for the founding of the Inquisition in Goa was issued on March 6 and was addressed to the Bishop of Goa Juan Afonso de Albuquerque, Sebastião Pinheiro, the commissioner who had been appointed four days earlier, and the officials Henrique Jacques and Francisco Álvares. It stated that, after consulting various individuals, the Inquisitor General had decided that the Inquisition "should operate" in India, first in Goa and later in Kochi, and issued an edict of grace for four months following publication.<sup>40</sup> It contained various instructions concerning the procedures to be adopted, the most

37 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. v: 280.

38 Giuseppe Marcocci, *I custodi dell'ortodossia: Inquisizione e Chiesa anel Portogallo del Cinquecento* (Rome, 2004), 290-292.

39 ANTT, Conselho Geral do Santo Ofício (CGSO), livro nº 298, fl. 1-4. It has not been noted yet that this measure predated the papal bull issued in 1561, which authorized the Inquisitor General to hear any cases of heresy pending in ecclesiastical courts; see Marcocci, *I custodi*, 98-99 and 164-175, and Paiva, *Baluartes*, 386-393.

40 The original in Inquisição de Lisboa (IL), Livro 1, fl. 1-3v.

important of which were the following: the creation of a specific body of officials (a prosecutor, apostolic notary, bailiff, solicitor and jailer); the provision of books in which denunciations and reconciliations would be recorded; a provision which stated that proceedings could only be instigated for acts committed after the general pardon granted by the pope in 1548; the possibility of confiscating the assets of defendants, except those who were New Christians, since this had been banned by the papal bull that established the Portuguese Holy Office;<sup>41</sup> and the stipulation that sentences which involved delivering the guilty parties to the secular authorities should be copied and sent to Lisbon, together with an opinion from the bishop. The cooperation expected from the latter was significant, not only in terms of the use of resources belonging to the episcopal justice system, namely its prison and bailiff, but also the instance on his involvement in all denunciations, arrests, sentences and appeals.

The procedure was different from usual. Firstly, this was because “wider procedural powers would be delegated to a figure known as the commissioner” after a tribunal had been set up.<sup>42</sup> In addition, there was the precautionary measure which required the close involvement of the bishop in the work of the Inquisition. What was the reason for this? The answer can only be based on conjecture: lack of time to build up a suitable structure; the distance involved, which demanded someone who had the full trust of the head of the Holy Office and would be committed to its work; and fears that the bishop, who had officiated and issued sentences for years, including the maximum penalty for heretics, might oppose the actions of the agents of the Inquisition.

In December 1555, the Jesuit Baltasar Dias wrote from Goa to his fellow priest Diego Mirón to inform him that the “orders for the Holy Inquisition” had arrived in India but had not been implemented since the bearer, Sebastião Pinheiro, had died, and by the time they reached Goa, the bishop was no longer alive. The writer also stated that he feared that if the Inquisition had jurisdiction over the recently converted natives, no one would convert to Christianity. He therefore asked the priest Mirón to try to convince the Inquisitor General to exempt the *cristãos da terra* (local Christians or “Christians of the land,” as the recent Hindu and Muslim converts were called) from its rule, which should

41 The papal bull *Cum ad nil magis*, dated May 1536, is published in Isaías da Rosa Pereira, *Documentos para a História da Inquisição em Portugal* (Porto, 1984), 23-27. This measure was only revoked in July 1568, *Collectorio de diversas Letras Apostolicas, Provisões Reaes, e outros papeis, em que se contém a Instituição, & primeiro progresso do Sancto Officio em Portugal, & varios Privilegios, que os Sumos Pontífices & Reys destes Reynos lhe concederão* (Lisbon, 1596), 118v-119.

42 Lourenço, “Uma Inquisição,” 138.

only be applied to them later, when they had enjoyed “other favours and were better instructed and firmer in the faith.” Finally, in line with other Jesuit missives, it warned of the danger of New Christians arriving from the kingdom who had kept “all the trade in their hands and with these advantages had already begun to govern and rule in the land.”<sup>43</sup>

The initiative having failed, disturbing reports on the problems and tensions that had led to the decision made in 1554 began to mount. In January 1556, the Jesuit Diogo Sobral reported visiting Kochi and seeing Hindu pagodas, Moorish mosques and Jewish synagogues in the city. Saturday was observed as the Sabbath; “the Books of Moses, in Hebrew” could be found in the synagogues, and there was a “tabernacle where the rabbis preached.” He said he had been “saddened” to see “such evidence of the work of the devil and the numbers who served him.”<sup>44</sup> The following year, another Jesuit, Gonçalo da Silveira who corresponded directly with Henry, also wrote to express great concern that the Portuguese were “surrounded by Moors and infidels” and that many Christians “followed them.” He confirmed the presence of Jews and “bad Christians” in India and proposed the Inquisition as a “remedy,” above all to combat the “depravity of Judaism, the enemy within,” since the Jews “were destroying India.” He also recognized that the *cristãos da terra* displayed great “daring and courage” in adhering to their new faith and recommended a general pardon for them.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, Belchior Carneiro stressed the need for the Inquisition in Goa, initially addressing the Inquisitor General and later, in 1559, the General of the Society of Jesus in Rome: “If the Holy Inquisition comes from Rome and the King of Portugal orders governors to refuse white Jews from Turkey and Persia entry to India and forbids bishops from Syria from ruling over the St. Thomas Christians in Malabar, then the vineyard of the Lord can be extended.”<sup>46</sup> During 1557-1558 the Lisbon inquisitors were worried about the first denunciations concerning slaves of Indian origin who were committing heresy and in the following year the Archbishop of Angamaly, Mar Abraham (appointed by the Chaldean Patriarch of Babylon), abjured as a Nestorian heretic in Kochi and was banished from India.<sup>47</sup>

43 Wicki, *Documenta*, vol. III: 407-408, see Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 27, and Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 129-130.

44 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. VI: 95.

45 Wicki, *Documenta*, vol. IV: 1-4, and Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 131.

46 Wicki, *Documenta Indica* (Romae, 1954-1958), vol. IV: 10-12 and 229-230, and Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 144.

47 Marcocci, “A Fé,” 70.

Meanwhile, in April 1557, texts that were offensive to Christianity, signed by the “tribes of Israel,” were found in a Kochi church.<sup>48</sup> The immediate response was to attempt to identify the authors, so that they could be punished. The individuals most closely and actively involved in this process were the aforementioned Gonçalo da Silveira, the Bishop of Nicaea and coadjutor to the Patriarch of Ethiopia, and Belchior Carneiro, together with Pero Gonçalves, the vicar of Kochi, who had been an admirer and supporter of the Jesuits since the 1540s.<sup>49</sup> The vicar and the Jesuits met with some Franciscans and the Dominicans Diego Bermudes and Nicolau do Rosário in the presence of the Captain of the fortress, Diogo Álvares Teles, and, despite the more moderate position of the Dominicans and the strong reservations of the Captain, began hearing witnesses with a view to opening an investigation. This led to a dispute between Belchior Carneiro and Diogo Álvares Teles. Nevertheless, the testimonies went ahead, resulting in arrests and the confiscation of the assets of various New Christians who, in September 1557, were sent to Goa by the vicar of Kochi to be tried by the local ecclesiastical authorities.

In Goa, the priest Gonçalo da Silveira convinced António Rangel de Castelo Branco, the vicar-general and judicial vicar of the diocese, to carry out an inspection, requesting that cases involving offenses against the faith should be denounced. Before the visit began, the Jesuit correctly asserted from the cathedral pulpit that Castelo Branco had the right “not only to investigate these cases of heresy as an inspector, but also as an ordinary inquisitor, under the canon law applicable to prelates in their dioceses.”<sup>50</sup> The visitation took place in November 1557, against the wishes of the governor of India, Francisco Barreto, but welcomed by another Jesuit, Luís Pereira, who wrote at the time to the Society colleges throughout Europe: “In Goa the annual visitation is also being carried out by the judicial vicar and vicar general; may Our Lord cleanse and purify this land, which is contaminated by these people,” adding that many New Christians in Goa had already been arrested.<sup>51</sup>

48 This episode was studied by various authors. The first was Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 25-26; the two most original and in-depth analyses are Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 132-144 and 167-226, and Tavim, *Judeus*, 167-226.

49 Francis Xavier praised him, saying that his house in Kochi “was an inn for the Society of Jesus,” Rego, *Documentação*, vol. IV: 20.

50 These episodes associated with events that took place in Kochi and later in Goa are mentioned in a letter from Gonçalo da Silveira to Miguel de Torres, who was close to D. Henrique, Rego, *Documentação*, vol. VI: 216-231, citation on 221.

51 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. VI: 344.

The Inquisitor General Henry was aware of all this from various sources, and of how the trials of the New Christians in Kochi and Goa were proceeding in the episcopal court, specifically from the letter of December 20, 1557 sent to him by Belchior Carneiro, who had been the first rector of the Society of Jesus college in Evora where D. Henrique was archbishop.<sup>52</sup> The incidents in Kochi and Goa in 1557, together with many other reports from the East concerning the presence of New Christians, Lutherans, Muslims and Nestorians, the heresies and apostasy of large numbers of new converts and the reprisals against “Christians of the land” in their local communities for adopting Christianity all formed part of the background which led to the decision to establish the Inquisition in 1554. Taking advantage of the fact that Gaspar de Leão, the first archbishop appointed to Goa, was about to leave, (a figure with whom Henry was very close, had been his chaplain and had lived with him for many years), and the reconfiguration of the diocese leading to the creation of two new dioceses in Asia in 1558 (Kochi and Malacca), the Inquisitor General renewed the order to found an Inquisition tribunal in Goa.

The contents of his order were almost exactly the same as those of the 1554 document. There were only a few, slight differences: it was addressed to the archbishop and inquisitors rather than the bishop and the commissioner cited in the order from the 1550s; arrests would require the signature of the archbishop and, in the case of important figures, the viceroy; public autos-da-fé “solemnly enacted on a scaffold” were not permitted (sentences had to be displayed inside churches to avoid publicly exposing local populations who had recently converted to Christianity and been convicted of heathenism), which might have discouraged them in their new religion; and the names of witnesses could be hidden from the defendants, as stipulated in a papal brief issued in January 1560.<sup>53</sup>

In the kingdom, the Holy Office had been founded in 1531 but did not become operational until 1536. Similarly, in Goa the decision to create a tribunal was taken in 1554 but not implemented due to unforeseen circumstances. It is important to stress that most of the configurations that explain the appearance of the Tribunal were already in place in 1554, although it only materialized in December 1561. Yet again, in this process Goa appeared to resemble another Portugal, to reprise Catarina Madeira Santos’ suggestion in referring to the policies which, from the 1530s onwards, led to the founding of a State

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52 Wicki, *Documenta*, vol. IV: 10-12.

53 Original in ANTT, IL, Livro 840, fl. 5-8.

of India that almost entirely replicated the existing model in Portugal.<sup>54</sup> The similarities were striking and would have repercussions for the Inquisition. The premises in Goa were situated in the Sabaio Palace, the former residence of governors and viceroys,<sup>55</sup> just as in Lisbon the seat of the Tribunal was the royal Estaus Palace. Moreover, the lighting of the fires to execute those condemned by the Inquisition at the end of the first auto-da-fé in 1563 was another aspect in which Goa resembled Portugal closely.<sup>56</sup>

### Imperial Dynamics of the Portuguese Presence in Asia

The idea of Goa as another Portugal, or another Lisbon, is linked to the second aspect that is relevant in explaining the origins of the Goa Inquisition, namely the imperialist dynamics of the Portuguese presence in India. Until the 1540s, a “policy of pragmatic religious tolerance” prevailed, but afterwards the Crown’s imperial policy involved the combined efforts of the regular clergy and the episcopacy in an attempt to transform the main city in the region and the territories where the Portuguese had the strongest presence into a bastion of Christianity in Asia.<sup>57</sup> It became the time of “militant conversion,”<sup>58</sup> or according to Luiz Thomaz, a cycle of “religious imperialism.”<sup>59</sup> As explained, first by Ângela Xavier and later by Giuseppe Marcocci, the aim was to impose a “monolithic faith, with no margin for doubts or uncertainties, albeit often adopted without proper instruction,” in accordance with the model designed for the kingdom in 1543 by João Soares, the Augustinian friar and future bishop of Coimbra, in the *Libro de la verdad de la fe*.<sup>60</sup> This strategy, destined to “spread the faith and the Christian religion,”<sup>61</sup> was promoted in Portugal by a group

54 Catarina Madeira Santos, *Goa é a chave de toda a Índia. Perfil político da capital do Estado da Índia (1505-1570)* (Lisbon, 1999), 129-190.

55 Santos, *Goa*, 250.

56 Giuseppe Marcocci, “Costruire un outro Portugal. Strategie di conversione a Goa fra Cinque e Seicento,” *Rivista di Storia del Cristianesimo* 7 (2010): 23-34, 31.

57 Délio Mendonça, *Conversions and Citizenry. Goa under Portugal (1510-1610)* (New Dehli, 2002), 250.

58 Mendonça, *Conversions*, 121-160.

59 Luís Filipe F.R. Thomaz, *De Ceuta a Timor* (Lisbon, 1994), 248-253.

60 Ângela Barreto Xavier, “Aparejo y disposición para se reformar y criar otro nuevo mundo. A evangelização dos indianos e a política imperial joanina,” in *D. João III e o império. Actas do Congresso Internacional comemorativo do seu nascimento* (Lisboa, 2004), 783-805, and Marcocci, *A consciência*, 382.

61 Quoted from a 1545 opinion published in Rego, *Documentação*, vol. 11: 197-200.

of court theologians who became powerful in court circles via the *Mesa da Consciência e Ordens* (the royal council of theologians founded in 1532 that pronounced on issues concerning relations with the Church).<sup>62</sup> In the 1550s, the emergence of an imperial literature which had a powerful impact on the court further reinforced this increasingly aggressive, proselytizing culture. Taking the situation in the kingdom regarding Jewish and Muslim minorities as its model, it aimed to instigate integration through faith for the whole population, a policy which took shape in the form of orders on the integration of apostates and renegades, norms to prevent contact between converts and infidels, punishments for prevaricators and the destruction of Hindu temples,<sup>63</sup> all of which secured the cooperation of the episcopacy.<sup>64</sup>

The earliest warnings from India concerning these matters had been sounded in the 1520s by the apostolic commissary Duarte Nunes who, given the situation he encountered, supported the destruction of pagan temples and their replacement by churches.<sup>65</sup> However, the first measures, which also involved interference in socio-economic and local family relationships, would only emerge in the 1540s,<sup>66</sup> supervised by the vicar-general Miguel Vaz, who ordered the destruction of temples and religious items, as well as the expulsion of the Brahmans.<sup>67</sup> This proselytizing drive and the eradication/destruction of other faiths intensified after Francis Xavier was sent to India on the orders of King John III in 1541, followed by a growing contingent of Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans and later Augustinians,<sup>68</sup> also by royal command, who carried out the mass baptisms mainly promoted by the Jesuits and were involved in a series of confrontations with Hindus and Muslims.<sup>69</sup>

The Crown also relied on the cooperation of the bishop Juan de Albuquerque. One eloquent example of this can be found in the letter which he wrote in 1546 to the viceroy João de Castro (1545-1548), reporting that he had received

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62 Although there were no Jesuits among these court theologians, they were in close contact with the Portuguese royal court where the theologians' doctrines were accepted, especially via the links they maintained with Queen Catherine and certain non-Portuguese Jesuits who had studied at the Jesuit College in Coimbra (for example, the Dutch Kaspar Berzé), whom they had met before sailing to India.

63 Marcocci, "A Fé," 78-82.

64 Xavier, "Conversos," 278-279.

65 Xavier, *A invenção*, 94-96.

66 Rowena Robinson, "Some Neglected Aspects of the Conversion of Goa: a Socio-Historical Perspective," *Sociological Bulletin* 42, no. 1-2 (1993): 65-83, 72.

67 Xavier, "Conversos," 277.

68 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 105-112.

69 Marcocci, "Costruire," 24.



a licence from the king ordering him to destroy the pagodas. Given the king's request and the "obligation of my office (...) to strive to eradicate this appalling idolatry," he told the vicar of Vasai and the Jesuits and Franciscans in the area that "wherever you find pagodas (...), destroy them and tear them down; I give you the power and authority to do so" to rid the diocese of "the sect of Mohammed and paganism and all who are against the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>70</sup>

Some viceroys and governors also chose to follow this path, although others expressed reservations, if not opposition.<sup>71</sup> Pedro Mascarenhas (1554-55) attacked the practice of holding Hindu and Muslim ceremonies in public and forced many Indians to convert or leave Goa, even though he had entered into an agreement with Amir Khan, in 1554, that prevented the destruction of temples in Bardez and Salsette. On the other hand, Francisco Barreto (1555-1558) suspended the decrees of his predecessor and permitted Brahmans to work for the state and hold Hindu weddings and other extremely violent ceremonies in which, according to tradition, widows were cremated with their husbands. Under Constantino de Bragança (1558-1561), policies designed to destroy infidels intensified, as well as mass solemn baptisms of natives and favors for the newly converted.<sup>72</sup> Although there are no exact figures, it is accepted that the decisive period for conversions in Goa was the period when Constantino de Bragança ruled, in which 35,919 "souls" were baptized.<sup>73</sup> However, the viceroy was not the only individual responsible for this: in 1557, the Jesuit Francisco Rodrigues arrived in India and became one of the most iconic figures associated with this practice, acquiring great authority in the decades that followed.<sup>74</sup>

This chronology is aligned with the two dates when Henry decided to open a Tribunal in Goa, namely 1554 and 1560, during the rule of Pedro de Mascarenhas and Constantino de Bragança. Thus, it should be considered that the presence of the Inquisition in Goa was seen as another instrument that could be used to reinforce these dynamics.<sup>75</sup> They operated in parallel with measures introduced in Brazil, where the governor Mem de Sá, appointed in

70 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 331-332.

71 Patrícia Souza de Faria, *A conquista das almas do Oriente: Franciscans, catolicismo e poder colonial em Goa (1540-1750)* (Rio de Janeiro, 2013), 79-80.

72 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 81 and 89, and Marcocci, *A consciência*, 392.

73 Santos, *Goa*, 255.

74 Marcocci, "Costruire," 29.

75 Regardless of chronology, the importance of the Inquisition is noted as a major instrument in this policy of repression by Ricardo Ventura, "Conversão e conversibilidade. Discursos da missão e do gentio na documentação do Padroado Português do Oriente" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Lisbon, 2011), 124.

1558, in collaboration with Jesuits such as Manuel da Nóbrega, attacked Indian practices such as anthropophagy and polygamy.<sup>76</sup>

The entire process was inspired by an underlying design which intensified during the period when Cardinal Henry (1562-1568) was regent and the Inquisition already had a foothold in Asia. In 1563, Henry ordered the viceroy Francisco Coutinho to follow the lines of the religious policy to be agreed with the archbishop, the Bishop of Kochi and the Jesuits, focussing in particular on the Jews, St. Thomas Christians and the presence of Ottomans in the State of India, but also extending to a ban on Ottomans taking up permanent residence in any area that came under the jurisdiction of the Crown. In 1566, he demanded that the viceroy Antão de Noronha should wage a full-scale war against the “Moors.”<sup>77</sup> These were, in essence, the policies followed by the archbishop Gaspar de Leão, contributing more towards imposing a Tridentine European form of Catholicism in India than to any attempts to adapt the experience of Christianity to the indigenous way of life, despite some concessions and acceptance of local styles and contexts.<sup>78</sup>

### The Confessionalization Process in Early Modern Europe

A third key strand which explains the creation of the Goa Inquisition concerns the European Catholic world in the 1550s and 1560s, a time when religious policies were consolidated and measures to combat any deviations from religious uniformity intensified, both developments underpinned by the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Council of Trent (1545-1563). It was within this scenario and at a time when the Inquisition had already been established in the kingdom, that the idea of creating a Holy Office in Goa took root.

Although the famous Augsburg maxim *cuius regio, eius religio* (“whose realm, his religion”) was directed in particular to the Germanic Habsburg empire, its spirit touched the rest of Europe and spread to other areas of the world controlled by Europeans, as previously noted with regard to the imperial policies implemented in India. One of the targets of the Council of Trent

76 Maria Augusta Lima da Cruz, *D. Sebastião* (Lisbon, 2006), 65-66.

77 Nuno Vila-Santa, *A Coroa e o Estado da Índia nos reinados de D. Sebastião e D. Henrique: política ou políticas?* *Lusitania Sacra* 29 (2014): 41-68, 50-52.

78 Ângela Barreto Xavier, “Gaspar de Leão e a recepção do Concílio de Trento no Estado da Índia,” in *O Concílio de Trento em Portugal e nas suas conquistas. Olhares novos*, ed. António Camões Gouveia, David Sampaio Barbosa and José Pedro Paiva (Lisbon, 2014), 133-156, 155.

was to “remodel the faithful,”<sup>79</sup> “conquer souls”<sup>80</sup> or, as Paolo Prodi explained, create mechanisms designed to “discipline” the soul, the body and society,<sup>81</sup> all aspects evident in the work of the ecclesiastical and religious organizations present in Portuguese Asia and applied with growing intensity from the 1540s onwards.

It should be emphasized that the members of the Council of Trent were not particularly concerned about the state of Catholicism outside Europe or with confronting these adversities in order to strengthen their position, as friar João Pereira pointed out. He argued that it was not only Lutheranism that was causing problems and that it was necessary to establish an assembly of the Church to “prevent Islam taking control of India,” warning “woe betide Christianity if the Turks invade India.”<sup>82</sup> Even so, the diocese of Goa was the stage for an early attempt to apply the decrees of the Council of Trent on the express orders of Henry, issued to the viceroy Antão de Noronha (1564-1568).<sup>83</sup> In 1568, just four years after the end of the Council, the archbishop of Goa enacted the first synodal constitutions, which clearly stated that the text complied with the Trent decrees and frequently quoted them.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, as previously noted, this process relied on the active involvement of the inquisitors, who were engaged in imposing decrees of Trent, for example, in Vasai in 1573.<sup>85</sup>

### Dissemination of Christianity in the East

The way in which Christianity was disseminated to local populations is another important factor in explaining the creation of an Inquisition tribunal in Goa. Since the 1540s, there had been huge efforts to convert individuals of

79 Jean Delumeau, *Le catholicisme entre Luther et Voltaire* (Paris, 1979), 284-302.

80 Wietse De Boer, *The Conquest of the Soul. Confession, Discipline, and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, 2001).

81 Paolo Prodi, *Disciplina dell'anima, disciplina del corpo e disciplina della società tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994).

82 Xavier, *A invenção*, 85.

83 Vila-Santa, “A Coroa,” 51.

84 José Pedro Paiva, “A recepção e aplicação d Concílio de Trento em Portugal: novos problemas, novas perspectivas,” in *O Concílio de Trento em Portugal e nas suas conquistas. Olhares novos*, ed. António Camões Gouveia, David Sampaio Barbosa and José Pedro Paiva (Lisbon, 2014), 13-40, at 28-31, and *Constituições do arcebispado de Goa* (Goa, 1568), especially the prologue.

85 Marcocci and Paiva, *História*, 113, and *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, Documenta Indica*, vol. 9: doc. 61.

Hindu and Muslim origin living within a framework of very distinctive and varied cultural and religious systems.<sup>86</sup> This usually involved campaigns to attract the public by offering food and clothing, festivals, access to jobs, and tax and legal favors and included hasty baptisms, sometimes using interpreters. The 1541 Statutes of the Brotherhood for the Conversion of the Faith, promoted by the vicar-general Miguel Vaz, stipulated that a grand festival would be held to celebrate the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, when the Brotherhood would offer “rice, curries and other local dishes” to the *cristãos da terra*, so that all could “eat and be comforted and forget the pagan festivals.”<sup>87</sup>

This strategy intensified with the arrival of Francis Xavier and the first Jesuits, supported by the bishop Juan de Albuquerque. In October 1542, writing to Ignatius of Loyola from the south of Goa, Xavier stated that there were locals who had converted eight years ago but, since there were no Portuguese in many areas, the natives were Christian in name only and had no one to hold mass or teach them the creed, the main prayers and the commandments of God and the Church. When he arrived, in addition to hearing confession, visiting the sick and teaching the doctrine, he baptized all the children.<sup>88</sup>

In addition, efforts were made to consolidate the Christian faith amongst local populations through the conversion of princes or important figures in the communities and, at the end of the 1550s and the beginning of the 1560s, particularly after the arrival of the Jesuit Francisco Rodrigues, mass solemn baptisms were held with the support of the viceroy Constantino de Bragança.<sup>89</sup>

This superficial form of conversion led to criticisms. In December 1551, Friar Diego Bermudez, the vicar-general of the Dominicans in Goa, informed his fellow Dominican Bernardo da Cruz that his work was in vain. He claimed that it served “the interests of men more than God” and asked for more preachers who were sincere rather than “ingratiating.”<sup>90</sup>

Some laymen also feared this conversion policy. Manuel Nunes wrote to Queen Catherine in December 1552 to protest against the way in which the Indians were Christianized by offering food and clothing to those who agreed to be baptized and by forcing them to cut their hair and eat beef and thus “offend against their own superstitions and pagan rituals.” This caused many to flee, and consequently the king lost revenue, and the Portuguese lost their labor force. In addition, he stated that the “Dominican and Franciscan friars

86 Xavier, “Gaspar,” 139-140.

87 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 3-12.

88 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 49.

89 Marcocci, *A consciência*, 394.

90 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 79 and 245-248.

have also attacked this in their sermons and rebuked these methods of conversion” mainly adopted by the Jesuits.<sup>91</sup> Even amongst Jesuits, there were pessimists, the first of whom were the Italians Antonio Criminalli and Niccolò Lancilotti.<sup>92</sup> In 1545 Lancilotti had already explained that although there were new converts to Christianity every day in Goa, they were not instructed in the faith, did not know the prayers and articles of belief and were baptized without the use of chrism or any other oil, and consequently “there are those amongst us who do not wish to baptise anyone in this way.” This situation had had an impact on the masses held in churches, which were attended by “Turks, Moors and pagans with no respect.”<sup>93</sup>

Given the situation he discovered on his arrival in Goa in 1560, Archbishop Gaspar de Leão, who advocated a “more gradual and sincere form of conversion” for Hindus and Muslims as well as New Christians of Jewish origin, argued with the Jesuits over mass baptisms, and the latter subsequently taught only the catechism and no longer baptized. Consequently, in 1562, Belchior Nunes Barreto claimed that, due to the archbishop, the business of Christianization had been curbed.<sup>94</sup>

The result of all of this was that in the 1540s, and more intensively in the 1550s, there was an enormous increase in the number of Christians in India who were poorly instructed in the new faith that had been hurriedly presented to them, and this became a potential source of errors and misunderstandings. In addition, the policies that had been adopted were creating doubts, disputes and dissent amongst ecclesiastical agents, which were sometimes intense and public and liable not only to undermine the process of spreading the faith but also the sustainability of the presence of the Portuguese in the region. In overseeing the growing numbers of neophyte *cristãos da terra* and imposing itself as a higher authority responsible for guarding the faith, the Inquisition was therefore also created to address some of these problems, although it may equally have been responsible for dissuading some who feared that in converting to Christianity, they could also be punished by it. In contrast, in order not to alarm the recently converted Indians in Spanish America, the Inquisition was allowed no jurisdiction over them: if they committed acts of heresy, they had to be tried by the episcopal or secular authorities.<sup>95</sup>

91 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. v: 297.

92 Marcocci, *A consciência*, 387-388.

93 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 182.

94 Marcocci, *A consciência*, 395-396.

95 Carvacho, “Lima,” 906, and Piazza, “Messico,” 1038.

### Organizational Model and Work of the Diocesan Structures in Goa

The fifth aspect which needs to be examined is the organizational model and procedures in Goa diocesan structures. India was relatively organized in terms of ecclesiastical authorities and Church jurisdiction, which included the power to administer justice in matters of faith. Since the 1520s, when the region was still part of the diocese of Funchal, a network of vicars had been established with powers that included the exercise of ecclesiastical justice, at least in Chaul, Hormuz, Kochi, Goa and Cannanore.<sup>96</sup>

There is no doubt that the ordinary ecclesiastical justice authorities arrested, tried and sentenced heretics prior to the creation of the Indian Inquisition. The first case that has been identified took place in 1539, when the episcopal court was headed by the Franciscan Juan Afonso de Albuquerque, the bishop of the diocese created in 1533. A similar case can be seen in 1543, when the New Christian Jerónimo Dias was sentenced to death, an occasion on which the bishop took the opportunity to read out the Inquisition Bull of Foundation in the cathedral, thus making the name of the feared tribunal, founded a few years earlier in Portugal, more widely known in Asia.<sup>97</sup> With this and other episodes in mind, the Jesuit Antonio Criminalli wrote to Ignatius of Loyola in 1545 stating that those who were openly heretical had been “severely punished by the bishop, but those who remain hidden do as they please,” suggesting that this vigilance had its limits.<sup>98</sup> Similarly, in Mexico during the 1540s the first archbishop Juan de Zumarrága issued severe sentences in his court for those who offended against Catholicism.<sup>99</sup>

Between 1542-1545, under the rule of the governor Afonso de Sousa, the vicar-general Miguel Vaz, together with the ecclesiastical bailiff and the Goa judge, inspected the house of the New Christian Diogo Soares on suspicion that it contained a synagogue. This was found to be untrue and the governor, bishop and vicar-general apologized to the owner.<sup>100</sup> In 1558, twenty residents of Kochi and Goa were held in the ecclesiastical prison for “matters of faith,”

96 Documents referring to this can be found in Rego, *Documentação*, vol. I.

97 Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 263-264, and Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 126-127. Green, “Policing,” 10, makes two errors in referring to this episode as “the first inquisitorial punishment outside Portugal.” It was not the first, nor was it carried out by the Inquisition.

98 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. III: 169.

99 A. Huerga, “La pre-Inquisición hispano-americana (1516-1568)” in *Historia de la Inquisición en España y América*, ed. Joaquín Pérez Villanueva and Bartolomé Escandell Bonet (Madrid, 1984), 662-700.

100 ANTT, IL, proc. 185, fl. 16v.

and during their trials it was explicitly stated that they were being prosecuted as New Christians accused of “heresy.”<sup>101</sup>

Although there are few reports, it is known that the ecclesiastical justice authorities also prosecuted Lutherans captured in Vasai, as well as targeting Brahmans. In 1558, some Christians in Goa warned Jesuits about a pagan festival that was to be held at night. They went in search of them and found one Brahman. He was arrested and taken to the vicar-general, “who sentenced him to permanent exile, working in the galleys, and his entire estate was confiscated in accordance with the punishment ordered by His Majesty for those who commit such offences.” On another occasion, they encountered a “pagan” who cast “spells (...) and with his invocations and rituals conjured up more than five hundred fantastic elephants.” He was arrested on the orders of the vicar-general, his assets were confiscated, and he was exiled to the galleys and “whipped to set an example to those who engaged in such practises.”<sup>102</sup>

In 1559, one official (*provisor*) serving the Archbishop of Goa went to Kochi to “hear evidence against the heresies of certain evil Christians of the land” in which a New Christian was accused of sodomy, an offence that made him “fit for the bonfires.” He was arrested and taken to Goa where the Jesuit author of the report presumed “he would be burnt at the stake or thrown into the sea.”<sup>103</sup>

As in Portugal, prior to the creation of the Inquisition and during the first decades of its existence, episcopal justice not only prosecuted New Christians accused of Judaism, but also other suspected heretics. The documents which have survived, all dating from the end of the 1550s, provide an opportunity to analyze specific procedures in cases involving matters of faith, since the authorities were not required to observe secret trials. The accused therefore had access to information about dates, places and names of witnesses, which made it easier for them to defend themselves.<sup>104</sup> This practice ended under the Inquisition, when procedural secrecy was introduced in the 1552 Regulations, thus extending the power of the Holy Office to decide the fate of those accused of crimes.

The weak diocesan judicial structures in India and its relatively inefficient procedures,<sup>105</sup> together with the policy of affirming the Inquisition as the sole authority with the power to sentence heresy, favored the establishment of a Tribunal in Goa. The same process had been evident in Portugal, where

101 For example, ANTT, IL, proc. 3836, fl. 3-3v and 7296, fl. 82-82v.

102 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. VI: 469-471.

103 Wicki, *Documenta*, vol. IV: 243-244.

104 See, for example, ANTT, IL, proc. 185, fl. 15-15 and IL, proc. 491, fl. 24v.

105 Marcocci, “A Fé,” 82.

bishops in regions far away from Lisbon and Evora still condemned heretics in their tribunals, particularly until the 1550s, a procedure which the Holy Office blocked after 1561 by granting the Inquisition a practical monopoly over the crime of heresy.<sup>106</sup>

This was the principle adopted by the archbishop Gaspar de Leão, who had been appointed by Henry to found the tribunal and cooperated closely with it.<sup>107</sup> In fact, the 1568 synodal constitutions which he prepared stipulated that cases of heresy should be reported to him or his vicars but that, as there was already an Inquisition in Goa, the vicar-general would not be responsible for judging these cases. If any accusations were received he “would send the witness to the Holy Office if it was in the same area or, if not, would hear the evidence and forward it to the said Tribunal. Moreover, if there was sufficient evidence to justify an arrest, he would imprison the accused.”<sup>108</sup> This was the procedure used in Portugal.<sup>109</sup>

The urgent need to create a Holy Office intensified in 1558, within the context of a geographical reorganization of the dioceses in Asia which was designed to make episcopal power function more efficiently. Two new dioceses were created in Kochi and Malacca, separate from the territory of Goa. This change dispersed the number of ecclesiastical agents who could exercise their authority and potentially increased disputes regarding their jurisdictional powers. It was not by chance that the second order given by Henry to create a tribunal in Goa was issued against the background of these changes, at precisely the time when the new archbishop left for Goa.<sup>110</sup>

### The Breakdown of Jurisdictional Boundaries in the Religious Field

There was a sixth factor to be taken into consideration when the decision was made to create an Inquisition in Goa, namely the ongoing breakup of the jurisdictional boundaries for the surveillance of heresy, in a context in which the

106 This is analyzed in depth in Paiva, *Baluartes*, 46-64.

107 Lourenço, “Uma Inquisição,” 140-142, and Bruno Feitler, “A delegação de poderes inquisitoriais: o exemplo de Goa através da documentação da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro,” *Tempo* 24 (2008): 127-148, 134-135.

108 *Constituições do arcebispado de Goa* (Lisbon, 1568) fl. 1v-2 and 91. This has already been noted by Patrícia Souza de Faria, “Inquisição e poder episcopal no Estado da Índia (séculos XVI-XVII),” in *Inquisição e Justiça Eclesiástica*, ed. Illan de Matos e Pollyana G. Mendonça Muniz (Jundiaí, 2013), 115-136.

109 Paiva, *Baluartes*, 39-43.

110 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 143-144, and Lourenço, “Uma Inquisição,” 163.



relations forged by the various religious authorities involved in safeguarding and spreading the faith were extremely flexible.

Cases of Jesuits arresting suspects and handing them over to the episcopal justice authorities have already been noted above. These situations were increasing in number and could undermine the somewhat unstable relations between the various bodies involved in religious matters, occasionally including the secular justice authorities. In 1560, for example, a Jesuit reported that in Thane, near Bombay, a wealthy Moor who had been “caught” by another Jesuit was imprisoned in the “secular jail, for proclaiming verses from the Koran.” Some Portuguese complained that he had been released, but the individual responsible cited a royal order which stipulated that those who spread the word of the Koran should be arrested and sentenced to work in the galleys.<sup>111</sup>

The arrests of New Christians in Kochi and Goa in 1557 heightened these ambiguities, revealing a failure to respect principles that had already been established in the kingdom. In order to put an end to this situation, in January 1560 twenty defendants were sent to the Inquisition in Lisbon, most of whom were sentenced in an *auto-da-fé* in March 1561.<sup>112</sup> The defendants had been on trial in an episcopal court since the end of 1557, subjected to unusual procedures, sometimes involving Jesuits and Dominicans who had been authorized to exercise extraordinary powers, and it was therefore natural that the Inquisitor General, who would certainly have been informed of this, demanded to hear the trial.<sup>113</sup>

The most striking evidence of the fact that the usual jurisdictional boundaries had broken down during the course of these proceedings can be found in the allegations of the representatives of two of the defendants. In fact, the defense lawyer for Diogo Soares, in an attempt to reveal the abuses that had been committed, claimed that the Jesuit Gonçalo da Silveira, having in Kochi “interrogated New Christians on the basis of personal hatred (...), was striving to create a new Inquisition in this city [Goa].” Together with the vicar-general, he had managed to arrange special authorization from the cathedral chapter “to inspect in accordance with the law and, since he had to wait for the order and

111 Rego, *Documentação*, vol. VII: 49.

112 Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 167-169.

113 In stating that “regarding the forms of investigation and ratification of witnesses, and the concealment of identity and the exact time and place where offences were committed, the system used [in trials in ecclesiastical courts] was inquisitorial,” Cunha, *A Inquisição*, 187-189, does not demonstrate a full understanding of the episcopal justice model and, above all, has not understood that the main problem was that an episcopal court was prosecuting individuals for heresy after the Inquisition had been created.

instructions for the inspection, called on all the people in his sermons to testify to what they knew, warning them that in this Inquisition, as he called it, all would be subject to severe censure and excommunication” and even heard evidence from witnesses who were “notorious enemies and slaves,” assuring them that they need not “be afraid or doubt that their evidence would always remain confidential.” Voicing what must have been a concern for the Inquisition authorities in Portugal, the lawyer claimed that Gonçalo da Silveira “made himself an inquisitor, without having the power, authorization or seniority to act as such and carried out his investigations in an independent tribunal.”<sup>114</sup> Even after this, witnesses were heard in the Society of Jesus college in the presence of the Jesuits Francisco Rodrigues and António de Quadros, and others testified before the vicar-general and the Dominican Nicolau de Sá.<sup>115</sup>

Similarly, the legal representative for Leonor Caldeira, one of the prisoners in Kochi, argued that the evidence that had led to her arrest was invalid. He claimed that the local vicar “had neither the power, nor any special or general commission to inspect and investigate the crime of heresy (...) at the time when he carried out the inspection and inquisition,” since the diocese of Goa was awaiting the appointment of an archbishop, “meaning that neither he nor any other vicar, nor any judicial vicar appointed by the chapter (...) could legally investigate the crime.” He also pointed out that some of the individuals involved in the trial were not qualified and argued that the proceedings had been carried out “without authorisation and in contravention of the law,” since the local vicar had instigated “a special inquisition of New Christians and appointed himself the inquisitor of the crime of heresy and went even further” by using “the reverend father Dom Gonçalo, provincial of the Society of Jesus, and friar Lopo from the Order of St. Francis as his coadjutors and counsellors, neither of whom were even forty years old and, whether they had a commission or not, should not have been involved in any way in investigating the said case of heresy.” He even threatened to appeal to the Holy See if the trial was not suspended by the vicar-general of Goa.<sup>116</sup>

The situation regarding jurisdiction was so confused that in 1558 the residents of Kochi believed that Leonor Caldeira had been imprisoned “by the holy Inquisition.”<sup>117</sup> A number of proceedings called into question the position which the Holy Office had established for itself as a bastion of the faith, as noted by the Goa inquisitor Bartolomeu Fonseca in 1576: “It was greatly lacking

114 ANTT, IL, proc. 185, fl. 21-21v.

115 ANTT, IL, proc. 185, fl. 116v.

116 ANTT, IL, proc. 7296, fl. 10v-12.

117 ANTT, IL, proc. 7296, fl. 8o.

before my time and this still continues: orders are given for investigations without any warrants being issued and inquisitors are created every day."<sup>118</sup> The Goa Inquisition was therefore also founded to address the problem of new pseudo-inquisitors being created in India every day, as observed by someone who had been officially appointed to this position.

### Conclusion

Once the Holy Office was founded in Goa and had been "very well received, thanks be to God,"<sup>119</sup> as the inquisitors informed Henry in December 1562, and despite its embryonic structures and limited human resources, it would develop into a tribunal responsible for the highest number of convictions of all the Portuguese tribunals, operating in the largest geographical area, since it could make arrests in a territory extending from Sofala to Macao. Even though the local Christian population was not large, especially in comparison to Portugal, between 1561 and 1623 it would try approximately 3,800 cases, 44 percent of which involved *cristãos da terra* guilty of "paganism," 18 percent Islamism, 9 percent New Christians accused of Judaism, 10 percent blasphemy, 8 percent bigamy, 7 percent obstructing the work of the Holy Office and 1.5 percent adopting Protestant doctrines, in addition to some cases of sodomy and trading with "infidels."<sup>120</sup> This was the purpose for which it had been created, in response to the various warnings which had been reaching Portugal since the 1540s. The policy of terror inspired by the Goa Inquisition was reflected in the approximately 15,000 trials which took place between 1561 and 1812, involving more than 200 death sentences.<sup>121</sup>

These warnings were not confined to the evidence provided by the Jesuit Francis Xavier or the vicar-general Miguel Vaz on the spread of various forms of heresy and did not simply concern issues of Judaism amongst New Christians, particularly after 1557. The Holy Office was also created to help build another

118 António Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Correspondência dos inquisidores da Índia (1569-1630)* (Lisbon, 1930), 25.

119 Baião, *A Inquisição de Goa. Tentativa*, 38-39.

120 Marcocci, "A Fé," 83-87, and Marcocci and Paiva, *História*, 112. In Lima and Mexico, the pattern is different: heretical propositions, bigamy, blasphemy and witchcraft were the main concerns, Solange Alberro, *Inquisición y sociedad en México 1571-1700* (México, 1996), and Renée Millar Carvacho, *Inquisición y sociedad en el Virreinato Peruano. Estudios sobre el Tribnal de la Inquisición de Lima* (Santiago, 1998).

121 Francisco Bethencourt, *The Inquisition. A Global History, 1478-1834* (Cambridge, 2009), 342.

Portugal in Asia, affirm its sole authority to punish heretics and, in reinforcing the jurisdictional boundaries between the various agents of the Church, establish greater uniformity in religious matters, a key factor in conquering souls in the East. Much of what took place in India was not decided there and depended on the situation of the Inquisition in the kingdom and, in particular, the directives issued by Henry, on how certain groups within the court interpreted the strategy for establishing the empire, on the general political and religious atmosphere in Europe, specifically the dynamics of conversion and approaches to combating dissidence, and on the counter reformation measures decided by the Council of Trent.

Despite its importance, the Goa Inquisition was not, as François Soyer suggested, such an effective institution equipped with efficient global communications that few heretics escaped persecution.<sup>122</sup> On the contrary, the network was small, and although it was qualified to operate on a global scale, in Soyer's view, many escaped its clutches.<sup>123</sup> In 1673, when both the Crown and Church structures had been consolidated in Asia, the Goa inquisitor Francisco Matos, was still writing: "These Eastern Christendoms are spread over a very wide area and many are in the interior, where there are no churches, no parishes and only a few missionaries who administer the sacraments from time to time, either publicly or in secret."<sup>124</sup> Obviously, in this context it was possible to escape the Inquisition, as can be seen from the reports of some individuals who were taken prisoner.<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, although João Paulo Costa, reflecting a more traditional historiography, has argued that the Inquisition played an "insignificant" role in the way in which Christianity was spread through the empire,<sup>126</sup>

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122 François Soyer, "Enforcing Religious Repression in an Age of World Empires: Assessing the Global Reach of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions," *History. The Journal of the Historical Association* 100, no. 341 (2015): 331-353.

123 An excellent portrait of the difficulties which the Goa Inquisition faced (geographical spread, territorial discontinuity, fluid borders, limited human and financial resources, dependence on support from the religious orders and wars in which the Portuguese were involved) can be found in Miguel José Rodrigues Lourenço, "La Mesa de los desafectos. Competencia religiosa y servicio del Santo Oficio en el Estado da Índia (Siglos XVI Y XVII)," in *Inquisiciones. Dimensiones comparadas (siglos XVI-XIX)*, ed. Jacqueline Vassallo, Miguel Rodrigues Lourenço and Susana Bastos Mateus (Córdoba, 2017), 241-269, 246-250.

124 Cited by Faria, "De réus," 174.

125 José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, "A Inquisition no Oriente (século XVI e primeira metade do século XVII) algumas perspectivas," *Mare Liberum* 15 (1998): 17-31, 27.

126 João Paulo Costa (coord.), *História da Expansão e do império português* (Lisbon: 2014), 156-157.

the Holy Office established itself as an institution that was indispensable to implementing the model for the Portuguese presence in Asia, particularly in India, where it assumed the role of one of the “nebula of powers” that ensured the rule of a distant king.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> The expression “nebula of powers” comes from Francisco Bethencourt, “Political Configurations and Local Powers,” in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Cambridge, 2007), 200.