

THE ORIGINS OF THE INQUISITION IN ANDALUSIA

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Everyone has his or her own concept of what the «Spanish Inquisition» was. In his brief study of the death of the inquisitor of Aragon, [Saint] Pedro Arbués, Angel Alcalá expresses, in graphic form, the commonplaces of the popular view of the Holy Office. «When the term 'inquisition' is mentioned, one thinks spontaneously of gloomy dungeons, of hooded torturers, of fanatical Dominicans, of the massive human bonfires of the autos de fe».¹ At the beginning of his recent booklet on the Inquisition, in the series published by Akal, entitled *History of the world for the young* (*Historia del mundo para jóvenes*), Alfredo Alvar Ezquerra observes that «the man in the street usually identifies the Inquisition with the Middle Ages, while the *Spanish Inquisition* is an institution which was born at the end of the fifteenth century (1478), and was abolished at the beginning of the nineteenth». What is more, «the man in the street also usually identifies the Inquisition with diseased cruelty, persecution, and obscurantism», being an «instrument imposed by no-one knows who against the people».² These concepts have their origins, not in the resistance to the Inquisition inside Spain itself, during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, but in the political and religious conflicts of the sixteenth century, throughout Europe. According to the criteria used by Edward Peters, in his perceptive study of the historical phenomenon of the Inquisition, what is nowadays understood by this word is no more than a creation, which he calls «*The Inquisition*», of ecclesiastical history and of art. It seems that this «invention» still has its consequences today.³

In the words of Alfredo Alvar, «We Spaniards have had, for several centuries, the idea that when people in Europe (and, similarly, in the Anglo-Saxon [*sic*] world in general as well, and in the United States of America also) wrote about our country, the result always had pejorative connotations». In the words of this author, by *Black Legend* is understood, since the beginning of this century, «the climate created by the fantastic stories about our native land which have seen the light of day in all countries, the grotesque descriptions which have always been given of the character of the Spaniards, both individually and collectively, the denial, or at least

1. ALCALÁ GALVE, A., *Los orígenes de la Inquisición en Aragón. S. Pedro Arbués, mártir de la autonomía aragonesa*, Zaragoza, 1984, p. 15.

2. ALVAR EZQUERRA, A., *La Inquisición española*, Madrid, 1997, p. 4.

3. PETERS, E. *Inquisition*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1989, pp. 122-154 [ch. 5: «The invention of *The Inquisition*»].

the systematic ignorance of whatever is favourable and beautiful in the various manifestations of its culture and art, and the accusations which have always been launched against Spain».⁴

The quotation comes from the work of the historian Julián Juderías, entitled *The Black Legend* (*La leyenda negra*, 1914), which seems to have inaugurated the use of this phrase in the context of the history of Spain. Nevertheless, the reality of the concept, originated in the schism of the Catholic Church during the sixteenth century, with the result that the evil fame of the Spanish Inquisition, in the eyes of foreigners, had its origin not in the sufferings of the Judeoconversos or of the Moriscos, but in the persecution of the Protestants, both the small number in the Peninsula itself, and the many in the Low Countries. The construction of the image of «The Inquisition», in the almost mythical form described by Peters, owed much to «Reginaldus Gonsalvus Montanus», the presumed Spanish Protestant who, under this pseudonym, published, in Heidelberg in 1567, a work written in Latin, entitled *Discovery and clear declaration of various subtle practices of the Holy Inquisition of Spain*, which influenced the English author John Foxe, above all in his treatise, also written in Latin, entitled *Acts and Monuments of these latter and perilous days...*⁵ In contrast, the quest, on the part of certain European intellectuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (the period in which the concept of «Europe» began to supplant that of «Christendom»), of religious and political tolerance, which might resolve the violent conflicts from which the Continent suffered, resulted in the conversion of the Spanish tribunals of the Holy Office into a symbol of everything that was evil, not only in Spain but in the whole Christian religion. English and French Romanticism created some rather more positive images of Spain, but the Inquisition continued to be painted, even after its permanent abolition, in 1834, as a tyrannical and cruel tribunal. The prejudices which are still current today arise from numerous literary works of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which have been so perceptively summarised by authors such as Angel Alcalá and Alfredo Alvaro, as well as Edward Peters.⁶

These authors have, however, a predecessor in their task, that is to say, Gustave Flaubert. In his *Dictionary of received ideas* (1840-), this writer satirises the commonplaces of bourgeois discourse in his own country and period, stating, «INQUISITION. Its crimes have been greatly exaggerated».⁷ Nevertheless, in recent years, what seemed to this nineteenth-century French writer to be a joke has been converted, among scholars of the Inquisition, into a virtual orthodoxy for many. The latest edition of the well-known study of the Spanish tribunals by Henry Kamen is entitled, *The Spanish Inquisition. An historical revision*, while Helen Rawlings has felt able to write, in the English journal *The Historian*, which is primarily directed towards those who teach history at the pre-university level, an article with the title, «The new history of the Spanish Inquisition».⁸ As a typical example of the

4. ALVAR, A., *La leyenda negra*, Madrid, 1997, pp. 4, 5.

5. PETERS, E., *Inquisition*, pp. 122-134.

6. HALE, J., *The civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*, London, 1994, pp. 3-7; PETERS, E., *Inquisition*, pp. 155-269.

7. FLAUBERT, G., *Dictionary of received ideas*, trans. Robert Baldick, Harmondsworth, 1976, p. 312.

8. KAMEN, H., *The Spanish Inquisition. An historical revision*, London, 1997; RAWLINGS, H., «The new history of the Spanish Inquisition», *The Historian*, 56, 1997, pp. 30-33.

«revisionist» genre, Kamen writes, in the work already referred to, that «A comparison with the cruelty and mutilation common in secular tribunals shows the Inquisition in a relatively favourable light. This in conjunction with the usually good level of prison conditions makes it clear that the tribunal had little interest in cruelty and often attempted to temper justice with mercy».⁹ This point of view has even been reproduced in the *Calendar pad of the Heart of Jesus* [*Taco calendario del Corazón de Jesús*], in which an anonymous commentator writes, following Kamen and other specialists, for example Professor Stephen Haliczer, that «It now emerges, after so much Black Legend, that the Spanish Inquisition 'very rarely' used torture and that the inquisitors were the most benign, if we compare them with their contemporaries as inquisitors in Europe».¹⁰ Thus it is that the consequences of this revisionism can be unforeseen, if not unforeseeable. Professor Kamen recounts the similar case of a response to one of his talks on this theme: «I stressed...that all persecutions, whether ecclesiastical or secular, were bloody, and that for this reason the blame could not be placed exclusively on the Spanish Inquisition». He says that, the next day, an (unnamed) newspaper declared, «Professor Kamen says that the Spanish Inquisition was not the worst». Kamen adds: «I do not know if a historian can really express an opinion as to what is the worst and what is the best».¹¹ At the very least, it is possible to try to arrive at a judgement on the matter.

The «prehistory» of the late medieval foundation of the Inquisition in Spain begins effectively with the violent attacks against the Jewish communities of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon, from Seville to Barcelona, which took place during the summer of 1391.¹² In the wake of these destructive events—loss of property, fires, violence, and even murders—the inhabitants of the Jewish communities (*aljamas*) either fled from the big cities, or converted to become Christians. Those who remained as Jews were subjected, in both kingdoms, to legal, political and social measures, which pressurised them towards the baptismal font.¹³ In addition, there were Christian missions. A Dominican friar, the Valencian Vicente Ferrer (a saint of the Roman Church since the early date of 1453), preached in Castile and Aragon, and in 1413-1414, the anti-pope Benedict XIII (Pope Luna) presided in Tortosa over a theological disputation between Christians and Jews, which resulted in many further conversions.¹⁴ One of the mysteries of the history (and of the historiography) of Castile and Aragon in the fifteenth century is the apparent lack of opposition to the so-called «confesos», or «New Christians», on the part of the «Old»

9. KAMEN, H., *The Spanish Inquisition*, pp. 191-192.

10. *Taco Calendario del Corazón de Jesús*, 1997, Bilbao, 1996, entry for 12 December.

11. KAMEN, H., «Orígenes de la antigua Inquisición en Europa», *Inquisición y conversos. III Curso de Cultura Hispano-Judía y Sefardí* (Toledo, 6-9 septiembre 1993), Toledo, 1994, p. 59. More accurate and fair is the summary produced by María Luna Castro, in the *Diario Córdoba* of 17 november 1997, of the talk which was the origin of this study, in which she states that «it is necessary to relate the history of the origins of the Spanish Holy Office with the ecclesiastical history of all the Catholic countries in fifteenth-century Europe» (p. 12).

12. On the economic and social aspects of the «pogroms» of 1391, see MOLLAT, M. y WOLFF, P., *The popular revolutions of the Late Middle Ages*, English translation by A.L. Lytton-Sells, London, 1973, pp. 211-225; WOLFF, P., «The 1391 pogrom in Spain: social crisis or not?», *Past and Present*, no. 50, 1971, pp. 4-18.

13. The Castilian laws of 1412, the «Laws of Valladolid» of Juan II, are to be found in BAER, F. (o Y.) *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien*, vol. 2, Berlin, 1936, pp. 265-268.

14. PACIOS LOPEZ, A., *La disputa de Tortosa*, 2 vols., Madrid, Barcelona, 1957 [Latin version]; Maccoby, H., *Judaism on trial. Jewish-Christian disputations in the Middle Ages*, London, 1982, pp. 168-186 [English translation of the Hebrew version of Solomon ibn Verga].

Christian majority. During the 1420s and 1430s, the conversos entered many new sectors of Spanish society, such as the Church, royal or municipal government, the guilds, and the confraternities. In appearance at least, no-one entertained doubts concerning the efficacy in these cases of the sacrament of baptism, in renewing completely the life and nature of the catechumen. The 1440s, on the other hand, had a very different character. In 1440, a member of a leading family in the Toledan nobility, Pedro López de Ayala, entered into an alliance with the infante Enrique against the king, his father. Thus began the faction conflicts within the Castilian nobility, which were to dominate the major towns, and threaten their converso populations, for several decades. Already, at this early stage, the role of the conversos in public office was under threat. As a result, on 8 August 1442, Pope Eugenius IV sent to Juan II of Castile the bull *Super gregem dominicam*, in which not only did he reiterate the restrictions on the Jews which had originated in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, but indicated to the king the need to protect the rights of the conversos, because they were just as much Christians as the rest. Apart from giving the impression of an incipient conflict between «New» and «Old» Christians in Castile, the pope suggested a possible explanation for such a struggle, that is to say, the at least potential existence of a return, by some of the «confesos» at least, to the Mosaic Law. Such «judaizers» should be punished by the appropriate inquisitorial tribunals.

The bull of 1442 seems not to have had any immediate results. Although Juan II pardoned his son in 1444, the conflict festered on, both in Toledo and in other parts of the kingdom. The king first removed Prince Enrique's main ally, Pedro López de Ayala, from office, because of his continued rebellion, but was again forced to restore him, as the price of compromise, in 1446.¹⁵ Norman Roth is surely right to suppose that anti-Jewish feeling, primarily expressed against conversos, formed a major part of these conflicts, in Toledo and elsewhere in Castile, which were ostensibly concerned with the balance of power between the king and leading members of the upper nobility. The crucial event, however, was the rebellion, in 1449, led by the municipal authorities of Toledo, under the command of the alcalde mayor (chief magistrate) of the city, Pero Sarmiento, against the government of Juan II, and specifically against the perceived abuses committed by his Condestable (Constable), Don Alvaro de Luna. The scene had been set in the previous year, when there had been yet another rebellious plot among the upper nobility, against the king. The plot failed, and the Almirante (Admiral) of Castile, Don Fadrique Enríquez, fled the kingdom, but, in addition, the king found himself under financial pressure as a result of political demands from some members of the aristocracy for a renewal of the war against Muslim Granada. In 1449, Alvaro de Luna entrusted the collection of the necessary taxation in Toledo to one of the city's conversos, Alonso Cota. Fed, no doubt, by the rumours and animosity of earlier years, the suspicion seems quickly to have arisen that the tax (the figure of a million maravedís was bandied about), had been instigated by the conversos, as a way of getting back at the 'Cristianos Viejos'. Pero Sarmiento, together with his legal adviser, Bachiller Marcos García de Mora, or Mazarambrós, nicknamed 'Marquillos', urged armed resistance to the tax, and asked Prince Enrique to intercede for them with his father.

15. VALDEON BARUQUE, J., «Los orígenes de la Inquisición en Castilla», in *Inquisición y Conversos*, pp. 36-37, 43.

A riot broke out in the church of Santa María, which had previously been a synagogue, and Alonso Cota's house was attacked, though the tax-collector survived to be re-instated by Enrique IV. His unfortunate colleague Juan de Ciudad, who was also a converso, was killed, and his body dragged to the Plaza de Zocodover.

During the short period in which the rebels were in control of the city, in 1449 and 1450, a so-called «Sentencia-Estatuto» (Sentence Statute), which seems to have been composed by Bachiller Marcos de García Mora («Marquillos»), excluded the conversos from any public office. As part of his offensive against his rebel subjects, the king (or rather, his Constable), successfully sought the help of Pope Nicholas V. The bull *Humanae generis inimicus*, dated 24 September 1449, condemned the segregation, or «apartamiento», of the conversos, which had been implemented under the régime of Sarmiento and his legal adviser, «Marquillos». The Pope quoted not only Scripture and other religious arguments, but also what he claimed to be Castilian legislation, of Enrique III and Juan II himself, on the status of the «New Christians». In some famous words, Nicholas affirmed, following Saint Paul [for example, in his epistle to the Galatians, 3:27-29], that «among those newly converted to the [Catholic] faith, above all from the Israelite people, and the Old Christians, no distinction must be made, in the honours, and dignities, and offices, ecclesiastical as well as secular, which they may receive and possess». In his more or less contemporaneous work, *Defensorium Unitatis Christianæ* ['Defence of Christian Unity'], the *converso* bishop Alonso de Cartagena used the same Pauline text to justify the acceptance into Christian society of genuine converts from Judaism.

«Baptized into union with him you have all put on Christ like a garment. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus. So if you belong to Christ, you are the 'issue' of Abraham and heirs by virtue of the promise» [*Revised English Bible*].

By this argument, if Gentile Christians were to be fully incorporated into the Church, then the same must self-evidently apply to Jewish Christians, or conversos, though in the context of Castile in that period, the idea of using an inquisition to test the orthodoxy of the converts was gaining ground. The Toledo rebellion, which was the first such incident in the kingdom to involve outright war against conversos, effectively ended with the arrival of Juan II in the city in May 1449. As Eloy Benito Ruano has indicated, it seems clear that the alcalde Sarmiento, with the help of legal arguments supplied by «Marquillos», sought to justify his treasonable conduct by accusing Toledo's conversos of various iniquities. Although the rebellion itself subsided, and became past history as a result of the death, in 1453, of the Constable Don Alvaro de Luna, who seems to have been the main focus of the wrath of Sarmiento and his cohorts, the issue of the 'conversos' religious orthodoxy and political and social reliability was certainly not about to disappear.¹⁶

16. BENITO RUANO, E., «Del problema judío al problema converso», in *Simposio Toledo Judáico*, vol. 2, Toledo, 1972, pp. 5-28, reprinted in *Los orígenes del problema converso*, Barcelona, 1976; ROTH, N., *Conversos, Inquisition, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, Madison, Wisconsin, 1995, pp. 88-90; ROUND, N., *The greatest man uncrowned. A study of the fall of Don Alvaro de Luna*, London, 1986.

While it is commonly assumed that the «converso question», at least in terms of religion, only came to prominence in Spain in and after 1449, a close examination of papal legislation concerning the Peninsula's Jews and conversos reveals that Nicholas V's bulls concerning Toledo were not in fact his first intervention on the subject. In the first year of his pontificate, on All Souls' day, 2 November 1447, and possibly with the aim of preventing the spread to Spain of the conversionist efforts then being made in Italy by Dominican and Franciscan friars, Nicholas forbade active missionary campaigns directed at the Jews of the Spanish kingdoms. In doing so, he was merely re-affirming the bull *Super gregem dominicam*, which had been issued by his predecessor, Eugenius IV (1431-1447), who had thereby reminded Juan II of Castile of the provisions of the 1215 Fourth Lateran Council on the protection, as well as the restriction, of Jews and their religion. Earlier in 1449, during a period of famine and plague in Seville and its region, Nicholas explicitly authorised the holding of Jewish religious processions alongside the Christian ones. The pope's aim at this time appears to have been to conserve the officially condoned status quo in Christian-Jewish relations, which was increasingly under attack on the ground. Nicholas V issued no further rulings and prescriptions concerning Spain's Jews and conversos, between his reaffirmation of *Humani generis inimicus*, on 20 November 1451, and his death in 1455. His successor, Calixtus III (1455-1458), took no direct initiative in the now heated matter of the Spanish conversos, but his initiation of procedures for the canonization of the Catalan Dominican friar and missionary, Vicente Ferrer, which were concluded by Pius II (1458-1464), certainly appeared to condone the active campaigns for the conversion of Jews which were currently being undertaken in Italy. In the circumstances then prevailing in the Iberian peninsula, on the other hand, the likely target group was the conversos rather than unbaptised Jews. Whereas, in Italy, the friars were developing cheap pawn-banks (*monti di pietà*) in order to drive Jewish moneylenders out of business, in Spain, and particularly in Castile, the main attack was on conversos who had achieved prominence at court, and who were attempting to join the political and seigniorial elite. The special cult of devotion to the 'Name of Jesus', which developed in Italy and spread to Spain in the mid-fifteenth century, was also increasingly focused on the supposedly dubious devotion of ambitious conversos, such as Enrique IV's *contador mayor* (chief accountant), Diego Arias Dávila.¹⁷

It can be argued that the real legal precedent for the foundation of the Spanish Inquisition of Isabel and Fernando is to be found in the 1442 bull of Eugenius IV, which has already been referred to. In this document, as well as giving protection to the goods of both Jews and conversos, the pope stated that, if Spanish conversos returned to the «Law of Moses», they should be punished by means of the existing inquisitorial procedures, which involved the action of diocesan bishops in Castile, and specialised tribunals of inquisitors in the Crown of Aragon. It is significant that,

17. EDWARDS, J., «The Popes, the Inquisition and Jewish converts in Spain, 1440-1515», in *New frontiers in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian scholarship: Como se fue el maestro: for Derek W. Lomax in memoriam*, ed. T.J. Dadson, R.J. Oakley and P.J. Odber de Baubeta, Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter, 1994, pp. 71-74, «Fifteenth-century Franciscan reform and the Spanish conversos: the case of Fray Alonso de Espina», in *Monastic Studies. The continuity of tradition*, Bangor, 1990, pp. 203-210, and «Bishop Juan Arias Dávila of Segovia: 'Judaizer' or reformer?», in *Cultures in contact in medieval Spain. Historical and literary essays presented to L.P. Harvey*, ed. D. Hook and B. Taylor, London, 1990, pp. 71-86 [«The Popes and the Inquisition» and «Bishop Juan Arias Dávila» are reprinted in EDWARDS, J., *Religion and society in Spain c. 1492*, Aldershot, 1996].

in his bull of 20 November 1451, which, as has already been seen, confirmed the full right of sincere conversos to participate in both ecclesiastical and secular structures, Nicholas V also delegated powers to the bishop of Osma and the vicar-general of Salamanca to undertake inquisitorial action against conversos. In the event, the provisions of this bull were never put into effect, but the polemical climate in Castile was increasingly bringing into question the religious belief and practice of the conversos. In 1461, a group of Observant Franciscans, including the author of the notorious anti-heretical, and in particular anti-Jewish polemic entitled *Fortalitium Fidei*, Alonso de Espina, tried to enlist the help of the general of the Jeronymite order, Fray Alonso de Oropesa, in putting pressure on Enrique IV to order an investigation of the religious activities of the conversos. As a result, the archbishop of Toledo, Alonso Carrillo, asked Oropesa to carry out such a pesquisa in Toledo, while the king petitioned Pius II to appoint inquisitors to his dominions, two for New Castile and Andalusia, and two for Old Castile. At this early stage, Enrique was already aiming for a degree of royal control over the proposed institution, asking for nominations to be approved by himself and by two prelates, Lope de Ribas, bishop of Cartagena, and Antonio Giacomo Venier, the papal nuncio and collector of taxes in Castile since the previous year. Instead, the pope, who, while no doubt worried about converso 'judaizing' in Spain, was clearly anxious to retain control over any inquisition which might be established, appointed Venier himself as inquisitor - general for the whole kingdom. Pius informed the Castilian king of his decision by means of a bull dated 1 December 1461, which was followed, on 15 March 1462, by another, directed to Venier, entitled *Dum fidei catholicae*, which appointed the nuncio to the new post and empowered him to name subordinate inquisitors. The new Castilian Inquisition was clearly intended to be an entirely papal institution, on the traditional model, even though it was stipulated that Venier's assistants were to be acceptable to Enrique. Although Pope Pius' tribunal remained largely a dead letter, this was far from being the end of attempts to investigate the religious faith and practice of Castile's conversos.¹⁸ Indeed, later in 1462, the chronicler Alfonso de Palencia reports a violent attack on the conversos of Carmona, which he claims to have been instigated by the alcaide (governor) of the town, Beltrán de Pareja. Palencia, who was no friend to Enrique, suggests that the king took only symbolic action because the alcaide was a relation of his favourite, Beltrán de la Cueva. Thus the intervention of his maestresala, Diego de Osorio, who was at the time corregidor of Córdoba, and came to Carmona with troops raised there and in Seville and Ecija, did little or nothing to secure the future of the town's converso population. In December of the following year, according to another chronicler of Enrique IV, Diego Enríquez del Castillo, Fray Alonso de Espina came to the king in the Madrid, with a group of his fellow Observant Franciscans, in order to persuade him to deal with the «judaizing» conversos, who were even circumcising their sons as though they were still Jews. One of the delegation, Fernando de la Plaza, initially claimed to have access to a hundred foreskins from

18. AZCONA, T. de, *Isabel la Católica. Estudio crítico de su vida y de su reinado*, Madrid, 1964, pp. 379-381; VALDEON BARUQUE, «Los orígenes», pp. 36-37.

these children, but when challenged by Enrique to produce the evidence and the names of the persons involved, the friar proved unable to do so.¹⁹

During the next few years, on the political front, relations between Enrique and his leading nobles deteriorated steadily, until a tribunal of arbitration produced its verdict, in a memorandum dated 16 January 1465. The general political preoccupation with Jews is indicated by the fact that no fewer than twenty-two articles in the *sentencia* were devoted to the subject. Although the conversos are not explicitly mentioned in the document, it is evident from the fact that it contains a request for the introduction of an Inquisition, although this was to be organised on traditional papal lines, that they, rather than Castile's remaining Jews, were regarded as the main enemy, being «malos christianos e sospechosos en la fe» («bad Christians, and suspicious in the faith»). It is very probable that the Jeronymite Alonso de Oropesa was involved in the drafting of this document. The nobles petitioned that, until inquisitorial tribunals were established, diocesans, or their suffragans, should use their traditional powers to root out «heresy» among New Christians.²⁰ Later in that same year, on 5 June, the king was deposed in effigy, by leading nobles and churchmen, in the notorious 'Farsa (Farce) de Avila'.²¹ Although the brief «reign» of Enrique's son Alfonso ended with the boy's death in 1468, the continuing political conflict in Castile continued to claim converso victims. According to Tarsicio de Azcona, «this climate was propitious for new popular revolts to be unleashed against Jews and conversos».²² Azcona believes that the higher authorities were not involved in these community tensions, which sometimes involved «defensive aggression» on the part of conversos. As an example, he adduces the anti-converso riot of 1467 in Toledo. The violence began after the high mass on Sunday 19 July, and the pretext, according to a letter written about a month later by one of the canons, Pedro de Mesa, was a demand by the Cathedral chapter for taxation from the town of Maqueda. A group of conversos, led by Fernando de la Torre, invaded the cathedral shouting, «¡Let them die, let them die, this is not a church, but a congregation of the wicked and vile!» Open conflict broke out on the afternoon of the following Tuesday, on four separate fronts, and lasted for about twenty-four hours. There were several deaths, and houses were burnt, but the conversos were eventually defeated by the Old Christian population, probably under clerical leadership. Prince Alfonso sent two letters to the city, which was supposedly under his lordship at this time, on 27 and 30 July, and also sent representatives with the aim of restoring order. One consequence of this new outbreak of violence was the introduction of a new statute of *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood), which went further than that of 1449, in that it banned conversos not only from secular office in the city but also from clerical benefices. According to the chronicler Alfonso de Palencia, and another anonymous contemporary source, there was by this time a

19. NETANYAHU, B., *The origins of the Inquisition in fifteenth century Spain*, New York, 1995, pp. 740-742; ENRIQUEZ DEL CASTILLO, D., *Crónica del rey D. Enrique IV*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, vol. LXX, Madrid, 1953, p. 130.

20. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 381-382; VALDEON BARUQUE, «Los orígenes», pp. 37-38; *Memorias de don Enrique IV de Castilla*, Madrid, 1915, vol. II, pp. 366-367.

21. Analysis of the event in MacKAY, A., «Ritual and propaganda in fifteenth-century Castile», *Past and Present*, 107, 1985, 3-43, reprinted in *Society, economy and religion in late medieval Castile*, London, 1987.

22. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 382.

deep-seated enmity between the Old and New Christians of the city, and Palencia states that the two factions were also divided politically, with the conversos remaining loyal to Enrique, while the rest of the population supported Alfonso. As will become clear below, in Toledo, as elsewhere, such divisions frequently had local dimensions. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the various contemporary accounts of events in the city in 1467, it is clear that a considerable amount of looting and burning took place, and that numerous conversos were killed or wounded, though by no means all Toledans took part in, or condoned, the violence.²³ Although order was once again restored, at least in appearance, in Toledo, an incident, which was to have serious implications for the future, took place in Old Castile. In 1471, an ecclesiastical tribunal in Segovia, presided over by the converso bishop, Juan Arias Dávila, son of the contador mayor Diego Arias, condemned to death some Jews from Sepúlveda, for supposedly committing the «ritual murder» of a child in the town. Estimates in contemporary accounts of the number who died, either by hanging or burning, vary from eight to seventeen. In any case, the accusation seems to have been part of the Observant Franciscan campaign against Jews, and by extension conversos, which Espina had adopted from, among others, the General of his Order, Giovanni di Capistrano (canonized in 1724) and other zealous preachers. The 'blood libel', that Jews killed Christian children by crucifixion, in order to re-enact the sufferings of Christ, had been known in Castile since the thirteenth century. The *Siete Partidas* (Seven Parts) of Alfonso X state:

«And because we heard it said that in some places the Jews did or do, on the day of Good Friday, commemorate the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in a derisive manner, stealing children and placing them on a cross, or making wax images and crucifixing them, when they cannot obtain children».²⁴

The Sepúlveda trial is the first known case of Spanish Jews actually being accused of committing such a crime, but it was not to be the last.²⁵ As Enrique's reign progressed, however, it was the converso communities of the main Castilian towns who seem to have borne the brunt of the anti-Jewish feeling of members of the «Old Christian» population. The most notorious case of violence took place in Córdoba, in March 1473. Netanyahu is wrong to state that «the auxiliary sources available in this case are extremely curt and deficient», since he appears to have overlooked the fairly full account given by the royal chronicler Diego de Valera, as well as the Cordoban documentary sources which have been published in recent years.²⁶ Nevertheless, there is no doubt that his sole source, Alfonso de Palencia,

23. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 382-383; NETANYAHU, *Origins*, pp. 768-793.

24. CARPENTER, D., *Alfonso X and the Jews: an edition and commentary on Siete Partidas 7.24 De los judios*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1986, p. 29.

25. NETANYAHU, *The origins*, pp. 732-743; EDWARDS, «Bishop Juan Arias Dávila», pp. 73, 78.

26. NETANYAHU, B., *The origins*, p. 798; VALERA, D. de, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, ed. Juan de Mata Carriazo, Madrid, 1941, pp. 240-243; NIETO, M., «La revuelta contra los conversos de Córdoba en 1473», in *Homenaje a Antón de Montoro en el V centenario de su muerte*, Montoro, 1977, pp. 31-49, documentary appendix in pp. 47-49; CABRERA, E., «Violencia urbana y crisis política en Andalucía en el siglo XV», in *Violencia y conflictividad en la sociedad de la España Bajomedieval*, Zaragoza, 1995, pp. 5-25. CABRERA SANCHEZ, M., «El problema converso en Córdoba. El incidente de la Cruz del Rastro», in *La Península Ibérica en la era de los descubrimientos, 1391-1492*. Actas de las III Jornadas Hispano-Portuguesas de Historia Medieval, Seville, 1997, vol. I, pp. 331-339.

provides a vivid narrative of these events, as well as an attempt at explaining them. According to Palencia's account, the Old Christian *Cofradía de la Caridad* (Confraternity of Charity) was processing with a statue of the Virgin through the predominantly converso streets at the southern end of the Calle de la Feria. As the procession was passing the intersection at La Cruz del Rastro, a young girl, aged about eight to ten years, spilt some liquid onto the canopy of the image. A blacksmith, Alonso Rodríguez, immediately shouted out that the liquid was urine, and that it was a deliberate insult to the Virgin by New Christians. He declared that he would take vengeance on the conversos, and was supported by enough of the crowd for attacks to be mounted on some of the neighbouring houses. At this point, a Cordoban escudero (squire), Pedro de Torreblanca, attempted to block the path of the rioters, but he was wounded and trampled on by members of the procession. His supporters responded by attacking the looters, and the fighting spread to the surrounding streets. At this point, the blacksmith and his supporters took refuge in the nearby church of «San Francisco» [San Pedro el Real], but by this time the city's *alcalde mayor*, Don Alonso de Aguilar, had arrived on the scene. Offering negotiations, he inveigled Rodríguez out of the church, but, after an altercation ensued, stabbed the rebel with his lance. The blacksmith was taken home, near to death, by his supporters, while the conversos prepared to defend their property, beginning by hiding away their valuables. A crowd gathered round the blacksmith's house, and heard an announcement that, like Christ, Rodríguez had been resurrected, and was once again demanding vengeance on the conversos.

This macabre attempt at a re-enactment of the Christian story of salvation led to increased looting of the houses of the conversos, which Don Alonso attempted to stop by arriving outside the blacksmith's house with a mounted squadron of his retainers. In the face of his lack of success, a *veinticuatro* (alderman) of Córdoba, Pedro de Aguayo, attempted to organise armed resistance by the conversos. At this stage, Alonso de Aguilar and his men were driven out of the eastern half of the city, the *Ajerquía*. They retired, under a hail of missiles, to their headquarters in the Alcázar, leaving the conversos open to attack not only from urban rioters but from *jornaleros* (day-labourers) and other rural workers, who came into the city in the hope of supplementing their wages with loot. Don Alonso offered the conversos protection in the Alcázar Viejo (Old Castle), and there then followed a two-day stand-off, during which the rioters were armed but did not act. On 16 March, the main attack on the conversos began, after Don Alonso de Aguilar, and his brother Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, the Great Captain, in one of his less auspicious early military exploits, decided to abandon to their fate all those who had not managed to reach sanctuary in the Castillo Viejo. As a result, some conversos were killed or wounded, and houses and shops were looted and burned. According to Palencia's account, the violence spread to various towns which were subject to the control of the *concejo* (city council) of Córdoba —Montoro, Adamuz, Bujalance, La Rambla and Santaella. Many Cordoban conversos fled towards Seville, where further riots took place in the following year, leading some to take refuge in Gibraltar, under the protection of the duke of Medina Sidonia, while others fled to Italy or Flanders. In Córdoba, meanwhile, one immediate consequence of the 1473 riot was a proclamation, with the authority of the *alcalde mayor*, Don Alonso de Aguilar, that from then onwards no converso might hold public office in the city or

its territories. The departure, through death or exile, of victims of the violence is indicated by the re-letting of properties belonging to the Cathedral, in the parish of Santa María adjoining the Calle de la Feria. No doubt a similar process took place in the neighbouring parishes of the Ajerquía.²⁷

The social and economic background to the anti-converso violence of 1473 in Andalusia has been the subject of some debate in recent years. A certain documentary distortion, caused as much by those records which have survived as by the lack of those which have not, has affected, until quite recently, the economic history of Castile in the second half of the fifteenth century. Because the political upheavals of the reigns of Juan II and Enrique IV greatly reduced the power and prestige of the Crown, and in particular its ability to raise, and retain, revenues, it used to be assumed that the economy went into a parallel decline. The truth seems to be, however, that the king's loss of revenue implied no more than the transfer of money and resources from his coffers to those of the nobles, and of others, including many conversos, who were economically active. The climate of the kingdom, including Córdoba and its region, paid scant regard, however, to the ambitions of any king, noble or farmer. Between 1447 and 1473, there is evidence of conspicuously bad harvests in part or the whole of Andalucía, in no fewer than eighteen of the twenty-seven years concerned.²⁸ In addition, the coinage had been heavily debased, particularly during the reign of Enrique IV, with an inevitable effect on the living standards of the poorer members of the community.²⁹ Thus it is not hard to find causes of economic and social discontent in the city and *tierra* (territory) of Córdoba in the early months of 1473, and yet politics played at least as important a part in the build-up to violence against the city's conversos.

The reigns of Juan II and Enrique IV were notorious for complex faction fighting, throughout Castile, among the upper nobility, the main aim of which was that individual aristocratic dynasties should secure as much as possible of the patronage and other economic resources which were, in theory, invested in the Crown. A notable feature of this period was the strengthening of the control exercised over the royal towns by upper noble families. In the case of Córdoba, the battle for power over city and countryside was largely fought out between the two senior branches of the Fernández de Córdoba family, led by Don Alonso de Aguilar and the count of Cabra, respectively. By 1470, the Aguilar faction had emerged victorious and was in effective control of the city, with Don Alonso installed in the Alcázar as *alcalde mayor*. Both the count of Cabra and Córdoba's bishop, Don Pedro de Córdoba y Solier, lived outside the city in the early 1470s, and Enrique IV's attempt, in May 1472, to reverse this situation was unsuccessful. Netanyahu, who appears to be unfamiliar with modern work on the history of Córdoba and derives almost all of his account from Palencia's chronicle, asserts that «the bishop

27. PALENCIA, A. de, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, and trans. A. Paz y Melia, *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, t. 257, pp. 86-87, 130a; NIETO, «La revuelta», pp. 42-49.

28. MacKAY, «Popular movements and pogroms in fifteenth-century Castile», *Past and Present*, 55, 1972, pp. 33-67, especially pp. 56-68, y «Climate and popular unrest in late medieval Castile», in *Climate and history: studies in past climates and their impact on man*, ed. T.M.L. Wigley, M.J. Ingram y G. Farmer, Cambridge, 1981, both articles reprinted in *Society, economy and religion*.

29. MacKAY, «Popular movements», pp. 34, 53-54, and *Money, prices and politics in fifteenth-century Castile*, London, 1981, pp. 42-104.

of course knew that his standing with the nobility had sharply deteriorated, and being ambitious and morally unscrupulous, he looked for followers among the plebeians». For Netanyahu, Bishop Pedro was «a corrupt, greedy and frustrated clergyman, whose peers had lost all respect for him, and who sought to rebuild himself, politically and financially, at the expense of the hated conversos». The Israeli scholar appears not to be aware that the bishop was himself a noble, being the founder of an illegitimate branch of the Fernández de Córdoba, and had been expelled from Córdoba in 1471, because of his support for the count of Cabra, but it is undoubtedly true that the situation of the city's conversos was exploited by those who were involved in the faction conflicts of the period.³⁰ Before considering the role of conversos in these developments, it is necessary to note that the groups known generally as «bandos», which supported the leading noble families of Córdoba, were wider in scope and more amorphous than the «feudal» retinues which existed to the north of the Pyrenees. They included not only blood relatives of the faction leaders, but also those with any kind of military or financial link to them, or even geographical proximity, in terms of residence in particular streets of the city.³¹ In such circumstances, it was as difficult for a converso as for any other Cordoban citizen to avoid some kind of involvement with the bandos. Whether or not that involvement caused conversos to become unpopular, or more unpopular, and even helped to precipitate the violence of 1473, is a matter to be considered when the available archival sources for the riot and its consequences have been exploited more fully. It is not easy to identify individuals who gained conspicuously, in social, economic or political terms, from their baptism. Not only did the neophytes, when taking their baptismal names, supposedly obliterate their religious identities as Jews, but they also took on a new social identity. Thus the only hope of finding greater certainty in identifying converso families, and their true role in Cordoban life, as elsewhere, will be lengthy archival research, both locally and nationally.³²

In 1964, Tarsicio de Azcona described the context of the establishment of the Inquisition in Castile in these terms:

The Spanish Inquisition arose in the context of the difficult fifteenth century, for some the autumn of the Middle Ages, and for us [*sic*] openly new, although, in any case, with a great sea in the background, criss-crossed by clamours for reform, by political and social developments, and by generally innovative heretical shoots.³³

While this concept of the transition from «medieval» to «modern», which appears to derive from Huizinga, is highly questionable, certainly in its application to the reign and policies of Isabel and Fernando, it cannot be denied that the political context of the 1470s played a highly significant part in the establishment of inquisitorial

30. NETANYAHU, *Origins*, p. 799; EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba. The city and its region in the late Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1981, pp. 148-150, 174; CABRERA, «Violencia urbana», pp. 16-18.

31. EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba*, p. 152; QUINTANILLA RASO, M.^a C., «Estructura y función de los bandos nobiliarios en Córdoba a fines de la Edad Media», in *Bandos y querellas dinásticas en España al final de la Edad Media. Actas del Coloquio celebrado en la Biblioteca Española de París, los días 15 y 16 de mayo de 1987, Cuadernos de la Biblioteca Española*, 1, Paris, 1991, pp. 157-183.

32. EDWARDS, «Los conversos de Córdoba en el siglo XV: un proyecto de la historia social», in *Andalucía entre Oriente y Occidente (1236-1492). Actas del V Coloquio Internacional de Historia Medieval de Andalucía*, Córdoba, 1988, pp. 581-584; CABRERA, «Violencia urbana», p. 21.

33. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 367.

tribunals in Castile. The war fought between Castile and Portugal, from the spring of 1475 until a definitive peace was made four years later, has been variously described by historians of differing periods and national perspectives. For William Prescott, it was clearly a foolish conflict, from the Portuguese point of view, at least, and it was attributed by the American author to Prince João of Portugal's «impetuosity and the ambition or avarice of his father», Alfonso V.³⁴ Peter Russell has characterised it as «perhaps the most frivolous of all the wars ever waged by the Portuguese Crown».³⁵ Whether or not this is, from the Portuguese point of view, an entirely fair observation, there is no doubt that Afonso's threat to Castile and its new queen was a real one. As John Elliott observed long ago, «the war was much more than a dispute over the debatable legal claims of two rival princesses [Isabel and Juana «la Beltraneja»] to the crown of Castile. Its outcome was likely to determine the whole future political orientation of Spain».³⁶ Henry Kamen, while observing a rapid return, in 1475, to the «anarchy» of the preceding reigns of Juan II and Enrique IV of Castile, says nothing about Portuguese motives in the war, while Joseph Perez rightly points out that «the Catholic Monarchs needed five years to secure power definitively».³⁷ Azcona goes so far as to suggest that the political and constitutional upheavals in Castile would have led to civil war even if Afonso V had never claimed that kingdom's throne.³⁸

It is undoubtedly true that, in Andalusia, the conflict between *bandos* in and around the major towns was still in progress when Isabel was proclaimed queen in Segovia on 13 December 1474. Also, just two days earlier, on the eve of Enrique's death in Madrid, the Cordoban notary Gonzalo González recorded a second «robo de los conversos» in the city. On this occasion, Don Alonso de Aguilar, who may have had some sense that the reign of the unrespected king was coming to an end, decided to exercise his office as *alcalde mayor* for the Crown, by having six men hanged, three flogged and another three banished.³⁹ In terms of national politics, it is clear that Andalusia was going to be crucial to the outcome of the succession dispute. As early as 27 December, Afonso included the marquis of Cádiz, Rodrigo Ponce de León, in the list of Castilian magnates to whom he sent letters, urging them to obey the terms of Enrique's will, and recognise Juana as heir to the throne, with the Portuguese king, Afonso himself, as her protector during her minority. After Afonso had married Juana, despite their consanguinity and her minority, early in the New Year, he evidently still had hopes of obtaining the support of the marquis of Cádiz. Isabel and her husband, on the other hand, apart from their disputes over their respective powers in the government of Castile, were preoccupied with the fear that further magnates, as well as important towns, might be tempted by the offers of the Portuguese, which were supported by increasing colonial wealth. At the beginning of 1475, the pro-Juana faction did indeed have hopes that Seville and Carmona

34. PRESCOTT, W., *History of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic*, London, no date, p. 121.

35. RUSSELL, P., «Castilian documentary sources for the history of the Portuguese expansion in Guinea in the last years of the reign of Dom Afonso V», in *Portugal, Spain and the African Atlantic, 1343-1490*, Aldershot, 1995, XII, p. 1.

36. ELLIOTT, J.H., *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716*, London, 1963, p. 11.

37. KAMEN, H., *Spain, 1469-1714. A society of conflict*, second edition, London and New York, 1991, p. 2; PEREZ, J., *Isabel y Fernando. Los Reyes Católicos*, Madrid, 1988, p. 111.

38. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 229-230.

39. Archivo Histórico Provincial de Córdoba, Protocolos Notariales, Oficio 14-11 (08), cuad. 12 fol. 55.

might be enlisted in their cause. The extent of this potential support was such that, by May of that year, the chronicler Palencia supposed, and has subsequently been supported by historians from Prescott to Perez, that Afonso committed an error which was fatal to his ambitions in Castilla when, after the celebration of his marriage to Juana, he headed towards Arévalo and not southwards into Andalusia. Although, earlier in the year, the potential support for Juana's cause in Seville, Carmona, Ecija and Córdoba had been considerable, by the time that his agents met the duke of Medina Sidonia in Seville in May, the Andalusian magnate was presenting himself to the public as the keeper of the peace in the region, on behalf of Isabella's Crown. As a result, the possibility of active co-operation between Afonso and Medina Sidonia's main rival, the marquis of Cádiz, had effectively disappeared. If the Portuguese army had gone south, an alliance with the marquis of Villena might well have given Juana and her husband control over the southern half of the Crown of Castile, but the events of 1475, and after, demonstrated that this opportunity had been definitively lost.⁴⁰ As the military and political action, which was crucial to Isabel's retention of her throne, continued in Old Castile, the local authorities in Extremadura and Andalusia undertook raids into Portugal on their own initiative, notably at Nodar on 6 June 1475.⁴¹ Isabel had been aware of the importance of controlling Andalusia from the very beginning of her struggle to secure the Castilian throne. As Ladero has observed, using the phrase of a contemporary chronicler, the Andalusian magnates adopted a policy of «long live the winner», throughout the conflict. Seeking the support of those in the region whom she thought to be reliable, in April 1475, Isabel appointed Gómez Suárez de Figueroa as her special envoy in Seville, with the responsibility of unifying her supporters in the city, and doing all he could to prevent the outbreak of further conflicts between the *bandos*. The change in the attitude of the duke of Medina Sidonia towards Afonso and Juana may be not unconnected with his appointment by the queen, on 24 May of that year, as captain general of Andalusia, with full powers to wage war on Afonso and known rebels, and also as *alcaide de los reales alcázares y atarazanas* (governor of the royal castles and dockyards), with two votes in the *concejo* (city council) of Seville. In the event, the duke, together with the *Adelantado* of Andalusia, Don Pedro Enríquez, kept the peace in the region, ostensibly for Isabel. In Córdoba, the count of Cabra was able to restore his political fortunes by attaching himself to the queen's cause, though there was little conspicuous action by him, or by any other Andalusian magnate, until the battle of Toro demonstrated that she was likely to emerge victorious. As Ladero has observed, it was in 1476, rather than during or as a result of her visit to the region in 1477-8, that Isabel gained the adherence of the bulk of the leading members of Andalusian society. On 30 April 1476, she despatched a series of letters to the marquis of Cádiz, who had sent his representatives to do homage to her on his behalf, at the Cortes of Madrigal. The generosity of the royal grants to the marquis indicates the precarious nature of the royal circumstances rather than any great affection or trust for the head of the Ponce de León dynasty. Don Rodrigo was given

40. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 235-243.

41. PALENCIA, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, pp. 174-200; PRESCOTT, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, pp. 121-124; PEREZ, *Isabel y Fernando*, pp. 102-104.

the royal «fe y palabra» (faith and word) that his house and «estados» (estates) would be preserved by the Crown, he was confirmed as *teniente* of the alcázares (lieutenant-governor of the castles) in Jerez de la Frontera, received permission to resign all his royal offices to his sons and grandsons, was granted considerable *jurros* (assigned revenues) from the royal rents, and was pardoned for his slowness in declaring himself for Isabel's cause.⁴²

As it became clear, during 1476, that Isabel was likely to succeed in securing for herself the throne of Castile, she and her husband began to co-ordinate a strategy for the subduing of the remaining sources of resistance to their rule. It appears that the queen left Madrid on 20 April 1477, and headed towards Extremadura. She first visited the convent of Guadalupe, where funeral rites were celebrated for her brother Enrique, and his burial took place, and then proceeded to Trujillo, where, with some difficulty, she obtained the surrender of the castle by its *alcaide*, who was a supporter of the marquis of Villena. She thus obtained a strongpoint for the final phase of the war against Portugal, even if this was at the price of having to beg the help of her greatest adversary. Military preparations continued through the summer, while in July Isabel went to Cáceres, where she succeeded, if only temporarily, in ending the violent conflict between the two main factions of the town's *regimiento* (council).⁴³ Much to the amazement of some commentators, the queen then began the most daring adventure in her reign so far, which was an attempt, in the absence of Fernando, to secure the full support of the rulers of the major Andalusian cities, and end the conflicts between *bandos* in the region. On 24 July 1477, Isabel arrived in Seville, and immediately set about restoring judicial order. About four thousand *Sevillanos* fled the city, fearing the exposure and punishment of their wrongdoing during the previous decade. By the time her husband arrived to join her, on 13 September, the queen had already secured the reluctant surrender to the Crown by the duke of Medina Sidonia of the alcázar (royal castle), the *atarazanas* (dockyards), and the castle of Triana, as well as an undertaking that he would also restore to legal authority the castles which he held from the Seville city council within its territory. When Fernando arrived, the speed of submission by the regional nobility increased. The main rival of the Guzmán faction, the marquis of Cádiz, travelled secretly from Jerez de la Frontera, a supposedly royal town which he effectively controlled, to meet the king. As a result of this apparent reconciliation, the king and queen visited Jerez, at the end of September, and then continued to the duke of Medina Sidonia's stronghold in San Lúcar de Barrameda, for similar celebrations. During the winter, the last military resistance to royal authority in the area was ended, when the marquis of Cádiz's supporter, the *Mariscal* (Marshal) Fernán Arias, surrendered the *alcaldía* (governorship) of Utrera. Isabel and Fernando stayed in Seville until 29 September of the following year, when they set off for Córdoba, via Carmona and Ecija. By the time they left Andalusia, in December 1478, they had largely restored royal authority in all the major towns, from Seville as far as Baeza and Ubeda (Jaén), removed the leading magnates, including Don Alonso de Aguilar, from the

42. LADERO QUESADA, M.A., *Andalucía en el siglo xv. Estudios de historia política*, Madrid, 1973, pp. 139-143.

43. LUNENFELD, M., *Keepers of the city. The corregidores of Isabella I of Castile (1474-1504)*, Cambridge, 1987, p. 30.

exercise of royal offices, and placed their own men as corregidores in the towns and alcaides of fortresses and castles.⁴⁴ In the words of Ladero,

«In sum, the royal journey of 1477 signified the beginning of a new epoch, the stabilisation of a political régime, and the recognition of certain rules of conduct and equilibrium for all the parties who intervened in it».⁴⁵

Events during the king and queen's visit to Seville were to demonstrate that a new Inquisition was to be part of this «stabilisation» process. As Azcona puts it,

«Above all, the religious, social and political situation of Andalusia matured in a few months the idea of an institution which had spent many years gestating in Castilian politics, and which was to be converted, in the eyes of a few, into one of the most distinctive instruments of the political and religious constitution of Spain».⁴⁶

The new tribunal, which formed part of a more general effort, on the part of the Crown, to reform the Spanish Church, was set up by the bull of Sixtus IV, *Exigit sincere devotionis*, dated 1 November 1478, and resulted from Isabel and Fernando's perception, gained during their stay in Seville, that «judaizing» conversos were a threat to social order, and to their own hard-won authority.⁴⁷

Clearly, then, the beginning of the inquisitors' work in Seville, in 1480, had an immediate political, social and religious context, but what were the origins of this institution, which was adopted both by the Castilian Crown and by the Papacy to «solve» the supposed «converso problem»?

Curiously, although he recognised, in earlier published work, the extra-Peninsular origins of the Inquisition, Benzion Netanyahu makes only the most passing reference, in his recent, monumental study of the *Origins of the [Spanish] Inquisition*, to Pope Gregory IX, who, during the 1230s, set up specialised tribunals to punish and eradicate «heresy», in the first instance in Italy and southern France.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, mainstream historiography has recognised the debt of the «Spanish Inquisition» to its papal, or «Roman» ancestor ever since the days of Henry Charles Lea, who published a three-volume history of the earlier Inquisition, which largely operated outside Iberia, ten years before the appearance of his magisterial study of the Spanish tribunals.⁴⁹ Before Gregory IX's new inquisitorial teams, many of them consisting of Dominican or Franciscan friars, went to work, the responsibility for repressing heresy had lain with diocesan bishops, and this function remained with them thereafter, in any case, such as that of Castilla before 1478, where no

44. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 281-282, 288-289; LADERO, *Andalucía en el siglo XV*, pp. 139-148.

45. LADERO, *Andalucía en el siglo XV*, p. 147.

46. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 289.

47. Text of the bull in SIMONSOHN, S., *The Papacy and the Jews. Documents: 1464-1521*, Toronto, 1990, pp. 1247-1249.

48. NETANYAHU, «Una visión española de la historia judía en España: Sánchez Albornoz», in *Judíos, Sefaraitas, Conversos. La expulsión de 1492 y sus consecuencias*, ed. ALCALA, A., Valladolid, 1995, pp. 89-121, at pp. 114-115; English translation as «Sánchez-Albornoz' view of Jewish history in Spain», in *Toward the Inquisition. Essays on Jewish and converso history in late medieval Spain*, Ithaca and London, 1997, pp. 126-155, at pp. 153-154. NETANYAHU, *Origins*, p. 500. EDWARDS, «Was the Spanish Inquisition truthful?», review essay in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 87, 1997, pp. 350-366, at pp. 362-363.

49. LEA, H.C., *A history of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, 3 vols, New York, 1887, and *A history of the Inquisition in Spain*, 4 vols, New York, 1906-1907.

specialised inquisitors had been appointed. After some wild excesses, including some fairly indiscriminate violence committed by Dominicans in Toulouse in the 1230s, the procedures of what became known as the «Holy Office» were quite speedily standardised, and they changed very little during the late medieval and early modern periods.⁵⁰ In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Papal Inquisition continued to operate in southern France, northern Italy, and the Crown of Aragon, where it had been introduced in Catalonia and Valencia in the 1230s, with the agreement of Jaume I. Inquisitorial tribunals were also introduced to combat Hussites in fifteenth-century Bohemia.⁵¹ Alfredo Alvar correctly states, in his general introduction to the Spanish Inquisition, that England and Castile, unlike most other Catholic states, had no Inquisition, as such, before 1478.⁵² However, although no specialised tribunals were set up in that period, inquisitorial powers were certainly exercised in England, on occasions, by diocesan bishops. In the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, attempts were made by the government of Richard II to proceed against the followers of John Wycliffe, who were commonly known as «Lollards», and were blamed for fomenting and taking part in the rebellion. It was, however, in 1401, after a growing ecclesiastical campaign, involving both the clerical Convocation of Canterbury and the Roman Pope Boniface IX, that the new Lancastrian regime of Henry IV enacted the statute *De Haeretico Comburendo*. Although this was a parliamentary rather than an ecclesiastical law, it was clearly inquisitorial in intent and method. The act stated that no-one was to be allowed to preach without a licence from his diocesan bishop, that no-one should believe or publish anything contrary to the Catholic faith, and that Lollard books were to be handed over to the diocesan. Anyone who disobeyed these provisions might be arrested and imprisoned by his bishop, until he cleared himself of his heretical views. The most notorious provision of this statute was, however, that any convicted heretic who remained obstinate, or else, having first shown penitence, relapsed into his former, Lollard views, should first be judged by an ecclesiastical court, set up by the diocesan, and, if found guilty, be handed over to the «secular arm», in this case the sheriff, to be burnt «in a high place». The new law was quickly put into effect, with the burning of a Norfolk priest, William Sawtry, within a matter of months.⁵³ The best surviving evidence for the practical operation of this «English Inquisition» is to be found in a collection of documents which gives an account of the trials for the Lollard heresy of sixty men and women in the diocese of Norwich, between 1428 and 1431, which were carried out on the orders of Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury and his provincial Convocation. Although they are not notarial records of the trials as such, they give a good indication of the nature of the accusations made, and of the procedure used for dealing with them. Nearly all the trials took

50. HAMILTON, B., *The medieval Inquisition*, London, 1981, pp. 40-59; PETERS, *Inquisition*, pp. 52-74; KAMEN, «Orígenes de la antigua Inquisición en Europa» in *Inquisición y conversos*, pp. 53-59; ROTH, N., *Conversos, Inquisition, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, Madison, 1995, pp. 21, 210.

51. *Le registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier, évêque de Pamiers, 1318-1325*, ed. J. DUVERNOY, 3 vols, Toulouse, 1965; MERLO, G., *Eretici e inquisitori nella società piemontese del trecento*, Turin, 1977; MOLLAT, M. y WOLFF, P., *The popular revolutions of the late Middle Ages*, London, 1973, pp. 267-268.

52. ALVAR, *La Inquisición española*, p. 9.

53. CHRIMES, S.B. and BROWN, A.L., *Select documents of English constitutional history, 1307-1485*, London, 1961, pp. 128, 203-205; RICHARDSON, H.G., «Heresy and the lay power under Richard II», *English Historical Review*, 51, 1936, pp. 1-28; McFARLANE, K.B., *Wycliffe and English Non-conformity*, Harmondsworth, 1972, pp. 134-135.

place on ecclesiastical property, being conducted either by Bishop Alnwick or his vicar-general, with the advisory presence of various other clerics, including the Benedictine prior of Norwich Cathedral and four friars. The investigation of the cases, including the collection of witnesses' depositions, seems to have been entirely in ecclesiastical hands, and the result was generally either the purgation or the reconciliation of the offender to the Church, after due penance, which was generally performed in public, in the accused's parish church. In only one case was a convicted heretic described as «relapsed», and handed over to the secular arm to be burnt. This was clearly an inquisitorial procedure, in accordance not only with *De hæretico comburendo*, but also with the practice of Continental tribunals. Another parallel with the Papal Inquisition was the drawing up of elaborate lists of charges, covering everything from the Mass to church bells, which indicate at least the view held by the authorities of what constituted «Lollardy» in the first half of the fifteenth century. The prevailing punishments were flogging, «solemn penance» and fasting, though in equivalent trials in other parts of England, branding was also employed, and sometimes the compulsory wearing of a garment with a blazing faggot embroidered on it, rather like the later Spanish *sambenito*.⁵⁴ The tribunals which were introduced to Seville and Córdoba, following the issue of the bull of 1 November 1478, thus rested on well established foundations, both within the Peninsula itself and in the rest of Western Europe.

Earlier in that same year, between 8 July and 1 August, a national council of the Spanish Church was held in Seville, at which an extensive programme for its reformation was outlined and agreed.⁵⁵ There is no doubt that this council took place in a climate of increasing fear of «judaizing» conversos, which the king and queen witnessed and partook of in Seville. Ortiz de Zúñiga states that, «the business of greatest consequence to these Catholic Monarchs at this time was the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition». According to his account, the rulers were subjected to a propaganda effort, mainly undertaken by Dominicans. This was supported by the archbishop of the city, Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza, who published a pastoral and catechetical letter of his own, directed particularly at the *Cristianos Nuevos*, and began to act against «false» converts in his capacity as diocesan, either personally or through his «governador» the bishop of Cádiz, the Dominicans, and the royal asistente, Diego de Merlo. Thus «Seville is justly given the glory of having had within it from the beginning the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition, of which this was the draft».⁵⁶ According to tradition, hostility towards conversos in the city, which was being particularly fomented by the Dominican, Alonso de Hojeda, prior of San Pablo, was further increased by an incident which took place on 18 March 1478. A young caballero (knight), who had entered the Judería supposedly to meet his Jewish girlfriend, was said to have surprised a gathering of Jews and New Christians, who were engaged in what was to him a mysterious celebration, in fact for the eve of Passover, which in that year coincided with Holy Week. The matter

54. *Heresy trials in the diocese of Norwich, 1428-1431*, ed. Norman P. Tanner, *Camden Fourth Series*, vol. 20, London, 1977.

55. FITA, F., «Concilios españoles inéditos: provincial de Braga de 1261, y nacional de Sevilla en 1478», *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 22, 1893, pp. 212-257.

56. ORTIZ DE ZUÑIGA, D., *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares de la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Sevilla*, vol. 3, Madrid, 1796, reprinted, Seville, 1988, pp. 102-103; AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 395.

was reported to Hojeda, who immediately confronted his sovereigns with the news, and it was said afterwards that this incident finally persuaded them to petition Pope Sixtus IV for a new Inquisition, which was to begin its work in Seville.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, when the bull was granted, Fernando and Isabel did not act immediately to put it into effect, but allowed the pastoral campaign of Christian teaching, in Andalusia, Extremadura and New Castile, to continue for the time being. The archbishop of Seville's «constitution» outlined, in the chronicler Pulgar's account,

«the form which the Christian must keep, from the day he is born, both in the sacrament of baptism, and in all the sacraments which he must receive, and of the use which he must practise and believe as a faithful Christian in all the days and time of his life, and at the time of his death. And he ordered it to be published through all the churches of the city, and to be put on noticeboards in each parish, as a firm ordinance. And also about what the parish priests and clergy must teach the faithful, and the faithful must keep and show to their children».⁵⁸

The Cardinal's programme, the original version of which unfortunately does not survive, was to be carried out by both secular clergy and religious, on his instructions and those of the monarchs. For Azcona, it was «a perfect indoctrination campaign, such as a modern propaganda office would not organise better».⁵⁹ While some conversos, in Seville and elsewhere, appear still to have been unaware of the seriousness of their predicament, events moved steadily on towards a more radical «solution» to the converso «problem». Sixtus IV's bull of 1 November 1478 had permitted the appointment of two or three priests, who were to be over forty years of age, as inquisitors. Although the delay of two years in implementing the bull may appear to suggest that the religious and social situation, in Seville and in the rest of Andalusia, was not regarded by Fernando and Isabel as being as serious as Alonso de Hojeda told them it was, it is probable that the rulers simply wanted to give sufficient time to see if Cardinal Mendoza's pastoral programme was going to work. On 27 September 1480, however, at Medina del Campo, letters of commission were issued, in terms of the bull, to two Dominicans, Juan de San Martín and Miguel de Mori[e]llo, to act in the archdiocese of Seville, with Dr Juan Ruiz de Medina as their assessor. Both inquisitors had already achieved some distinction in their order. San Martín, the prior of San Pablo in Burgos, had previously been vicar of the reformed, or Observant, houses in the province of Castilla, while Mori[e]llo had in the previous year been appointed as provincial in Aragon, with the evident support of Fernando.⁶⁰ Dr de Medina, a secular cleric who was a member of the Consejo Real, was not named in the relevant royal *cédula*, but is referred to as working with the new inquisitors in a letter which they sent, on 1 January 1481, to all the nobles

57. ROTH, C., *A history of the Marranos*, 4th edition, New York, 1974, p. 40.

58. PULGAR, F. del, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, ed. J. de M. CARRIAZO, 2 vols, Madrid, 1943, c. 96, p. 334.

59. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 395.

60. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 396; royal *cédula*, communicating the nomination of the first inquisitors in Seville, en GRACIA BOIX, R., *Colección de documentos para la historia de la Inquisición de Córdoba*, Córdoba, 1982, pp. 23-26.

of Andalucía, requesting their assistance.⁶¹ As has already been noted, San Martín and Mori[e]llo also worked with Isabel's asistente in Seville, Diego de Merlo, whose career in local government in Andalucía had up to then been somewhat chequered.

Diego was the son of a famous father, Juan de Merlo «El Bravo», who, like so many Castilian courtiers under Juan II, was of Portuguese origin. Juan, whose lands were in the Toro area, had been a guarda mayor of Enrique IV, and alcaide and alcalde, also with the title of corregidor, of the important frontier fortress of Alcalá la Real. He was a faithful servant of the marquis of Villena. His death, on the king's side, in the battle of El Hardón, between Andújar and Arjona, at the end of Juan's reign, was mourned by the Cordoban poet Juan de Mena, in his *Laberinto de Fortuna*.⁶² Whatever his father's misfortunes, Diego was to have a largely glittering career. At the beginning of Enrique's reign, in 1454, he «inherited» his father's offices in Alcalá la Real, and he improved his political prospects by marrying Constanza Carrillo de Toledo. Through the influence of the marquis of Cádiz, he became a judge in Seville and, with this experience in the region, he was soon one of Isabel's main agents in the pacification of Andalusia. He appears to have been, in Navarro Sainz's words, «a person of the lower nobility who enjoyed the complete confidence of the Monarchs», becoming a guarda real, and a member of the Consejo Real (Royal Council).⁶³ During 1476, Isabel appointed him corregidor of Córdoba, where he seems at first to have been accepted by Alonso de Aguilar, who was no doubt anxious to lose any reputation he may have acquired as having been favourable to Juana's cause. The new corregidor's attempt to mediate in the long-running dispute between Don Alonso and the count of Cabra quickly led to a breakdown of relations between him and the alcalde mayor, and Isabel seems to have suffered the embarrassment of having to ask Don Alonso to release her corregidor from imprisonment. Between July and September 1477, he appears to have been replaced in that office by the queen's maestresala, Don Diego Osorio, but, after some months in prison, Merlo was briefly restored, no doubt so that Isabel would not appear to lose face. During his second period in office, he appears to have brokered another truce between the Aguilar and Cabra bandos, which eventually ensured the success of Isabel and Fernando's visit to the city, in 1478.⁶⁴ Apart from his humiliation at the hands of Don Alonso de Aguilar, Diego seems to have failed to intervene in the controversial and tortuous case of the murder of the Comendador

61. LLORCA, B., *Bulario pontificio de la Inquisición española en su período constitucional, 1478-1525*, Rome, 1949, 56-59.

62. ORTIZ DE ZUÑIGA, *Anales*, 3, p. 120; LUNENFELD, *Keepers of the city*, p. 28; NAVARRO SAINZ, «Diego de Merlo, asistente de Sevilla (1478-1482)», *Archivo Hispalense*, 233, 1993, p. 6; COOPER, E., *Castillos señoriales en la Corona de Castilla*, 4 vols, Salamanca, 1991, vol. 2, pp. 980-982; MENA, J. de, *El laberinto de Fortuna*, or *Las trezientas*, ed. J.M. BLECUA, Madrid, 1968, pp. 104-105:

«Allí, Juan de Merlo, te vi con dolor;
menor vi tu fin que non vi tu medio,
mayor vi tu daño que non el remedio
que dió la tu muerte al tu matador;
¡o porfioso, pestífero error!
¡O fados crueles, sobervios, rabiosos,
que siempre robades los más virtuosos,
e perdonades la gente peor!»

63. NAVARRO, «Diego de Merlo», p. 6.

64. EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba*, pp. 29-30, 151-152; LUNENFELD, *Keepers of the city*, pp. 26-27.

Fernán Gómez de Guzmán, in the Calatravan encomienda mayor of Fuente Obejuna, on 22-23 April 1476, and the town's subsequent restoration to the control of the concejo of Córdoba.⁶⁵ Despite the king and queen's evident confidence in him, Merlo's record as corregidor in the city of the Caliphs was hardly unblemished.

On 2 August 1478, Diego was appointed asistente of Seville, the first official of that name in the city for fourteen years. Initially, he was also named *alcalde de la justicia* (chief justice), but he soon delegated this office to a subordinate. He had, in addition, a lieutenant in his main role, who exercised the asistente's full powers in his absence.⁶⁶ During his period in office, which lasted until his death, in August or September 1482, he strengthened his power base in Seville by becoming *alcaide de los alcázares y las atarazanas*, *alcaide* of the castle of Triana, royal *contador mayor*, and, in 1481, even, contrary to Isabel and Fernando's normal practice for his equivalents in other towns, a *veinticuatro* in the city where he served. All these offices, although technically in the gift of the Crown, were effectively bequeathed to his son Juan.⁶⁷ Although Navarro makes no reference to the fact, it is clear that, as soon as he took up his new post, Merlo joined forces with the archbishop of Seville, to confront the supposed problem of «judaizing» conversos. The «pastoral» offensive to secure their Catholic orthodoxy seems to have continued into 1480, but the letter of 1 January 1481 to the region's *señores de vasallos* (lords of vassals), which has already been mentioned, suggests that, by November or December 1480, conversos were already fleeing the city to escape the attentions of the new inquisitors, and a sympathetic «secular arm». Kamen observes that «the appearance of the inquisitors was made possible because Isabella's supporters in the civil wars imposed their authority on the local elite. The opposition, many of them conversos and supporters of rebel nobles, were pushed out».⁶⁸ Stories of converso plots developed, and served the purpose of discrediting all resistance to inquisitors who enjoyed the full support of the Crown and of its agent in the city, the asistente Merlo. One such tale concerns the wealthy converso Diego de Susán, whose daughter was known as «la hermosa fembra» (the beautiful girl), and who was said to have been a focus for the opponents of the new tribunal, and to have arranged a military uprising, with the help of allies in Utrera and Carmona.⁶⁹ A further legend later developed that it was Susán's daughter Susanna who, fearing for her Old Christian lover if violence broke out, betrayed the conspiracy. According to this account, when she saw the inquisitorial repression which followed, including the burning of her own father

65. CABRERA, E. and MOROS, A., *Fuenteovejuna. La violencia antiseñorial en el siglo xv*, Barcelona, 1991.

66. LUNENFELD, *Keepers of the city*, pp. 26-28, 41-42, 234n.

67. NAVARRO SAINZ, «Diego de Merlo», p. 6.

68. KAMEN, *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 46.

69. N. ROTH speaks of «the Inquisitors of Seville, Diego de Merlo and the «doctor of Medina» (fray Juan de Medina, a Jeronymite)» [*Conversos, Inquisition, and the expulsion*, p. 110], but, as has already been noted, Dr Medina was a secular cleric, and an assessor for the Seville inquisitors. It seems that the author's confusion originated in an incorrect reading of the article by F. CANTERA BURGOS, «Fernando del Pulgar y los conversos», *Sefarad*, 4, 1944, pp. 295-348, which states, in the English translation of F. LOPEZ-MORILLAS, «Diego de Merlo and Dr Medina are good men, certainly» [in R. HIGHFIELD, ed., *Spain in the fifteenth century, 1369-1516*, London and Basingstoke, 1972, pp. 296-353, at p. 309]. On the supposed conspiracies of the conversos, see AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 396-397, KAMEN, *The Spanish Inquisition*, pp. 46-47; FITA, «Los conjurados de Sevilla contra la Inquisición», *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 16, 1890, pp. 450-456; CASCALES RAMOS, A., *La Inquisición en Andalucía. Resistencia de los conversos a su implantación*, Sevilla, 1986, pp. 57-69.

along with many other prominent conversos, the beautiful Susanna first retired to a convent and then took to the streets, begging for bread. She was also said to have ordered that her skull should be placed above the door of the family house, as a warning to others. Unfortunately for romantics, as Kamen correctly states, «The whole story about the plot and betrayal was in reality a myth: [Diego de] Susán had died before 1479, the plot is undocumented, and there was no daughter Susanna».⁷⁰ In any case, the new inquisitors, San Martín and Morillo initially established themselves in Hojeda's convent, San Pablo, but during 1481, owing to shortage of space, they moved into Merlo's castle of Triana, a former Muslim fortress guarding the bridge of boats across the Guadalquivir, which had been dedicated to St George by a military order of that name, in the thirteenth century.⁷¹ On 11 February 1482, Pope Sixtus IV issued a brief in which he appointed seven more Dominicans as inquisitors, including the prior of Santa Cruz in Segovia, Fray Tomás de Torquemada, and new tribunals began to spread across the Crown of Castile. The first of these was established in Córdoba. On 4 September 1482, the chapter of the Mezquita-Catedral gave permission to Pedro Martínez de Barrio, Bachiller Alvar García de Capillas, and Bachiller Antón Ruiz de Morales, who had been appointed by the Crown and the pope as inquisitors in the city and diocese, to absent themselves from choir services while carrying out their duties. Antón de Córdoba was instructed to accept the post of notary to the Inquisition, provided that he appointed a deputy to record the acts of the chapter.⁷² By the time the Córdoba tribunal began to function, the actions of the inquisitors had stirred up major controversy, both within Spain itself and at the Roman Curia.

As Ortiz de Zúñiga reported, in the late seventeenth century, «Many were imprisoned, many were punished, and very many escaped; the histories provide incredible figures: no doubt the total, although less than that, was great».⁷³ Ladero agrees that «the inquisitorial action turned out very severe in the early days», and records the estimates of various contemporary chroniclers, that, between 1481 and 1488, seven hundred «judaizantes» were «relajados» to the secular arm, and burnt either in person or in effigy, while approximately 5.000 were «reconciled», with various penances.⁷⁴ Whatever the correctness, or otherwise, of such statistics, it appears that the first auto de fe in Spain, for the processing and reconciliation of penitents, took place in Sevilla on 6 February 1481, soon after the inquisitors began work in Triana castle, extending their tentacles to towns such as Jerez de la Frontera and Puerto de Santa María.⁷⁵ News of the Inquisition's activities evidently spread rapidly to Castile, but one of the first literary reactions is to be found in the

70. KAMEN, *The Spanish Inquisition*, p. 47, cf. ROTH, *Conversos, Inquisition, and the expulsion*, p. 245, and NETANYAHU, *Orígenes*, pp. 1149-1154, who justly criticises the credulity in this matter of P. Fita; a reliable account of those who were burned may be found in BERNALDEZ, A., *Memorias de los Reyes Católicos*, ed. M. GOMEZ-MORENO and J. de M. CARRIAZO, Madrid, 1962, p. 99.

71. FLORES MOSCOSO, A., «Noticias históricas del castillo de Triana», *Archivo Hispalense*, 232, 1993, pp. 33-54.

72. Archivo Catedralicio de Córdoba, Actas Capitulares, tom. 4, fol. 142v; EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba*, p. 184.

73. ORTIZ DE ZUÑIGA, *Anales*, ed. cit., 3, p. 112.

74. LADERO, *España en 1492*, en *Historia de América latina. Hechos-documentos-polémica*, Madrid, 1978, vol. 1, p. 180.

75. JIMENEZ MONTESERIN, M., «El auto de fe de la Inquisición española», en *Inquisición y conversos*, p. 206; AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 397.

converso chronicler Fernando del Pulgar's letter. It was apparently written in the early months of 1481, to his lord and patron, the cardinal archbishop of Sevilla, but was in effect an open letter, which attacks the Inquisition without directly criticising the queen who initiated it. He agreed that there were some unrepentant «judaizers» among the conversos, who deserved to be punished severely, but they were a small minority:

«One form must be kept with the few relaxed [relapsed heretics] and another with the majority: for the few, punishment is entirely proper, and just as it is good for the few, so it is dangerous and also difficult for the many».

Pulgar supports this argument by a reference to Augustine of Hippo, who when writing about the Donatists to the «emperor», in fact a tribune, Marcianus, urged that they should be forgiven «seventy times seven», following Jesus's example [Matthew 18:22]. To illustrate his point, that Christian teaching should be administered gently if mass burnings were to be avoided, the royal chronicler referred particularly to the case of the converso women and young girls in Andalusia.

«I believe, sir [Cardinal Mendoza], that there are some here who sin as wicked men, and others, and they the majority, because they go after these wicked ones; and they would go after the other, good ones, if they had them. But it is because the old Christians there are such bad ones, that the new ones are such good Jews. Without doubt, sir, I believe that of young ladies of ten to twenty years' age, there are in Andalusia ten thousand girls, who since they were born never went out of their houses or heard or knew of any other doctrine, except what they saw their parents doing inside their doors. To burn all these people would be a most cruel thing, and difficult to do, because they would flee in despair to places where no correction would; ministers [the inquisitors], and a great sin».⁷⁶

Pulgar's strongly urged solution to this major pastoral and social problem was to send a team of devout Old Christians and sincere conversos to the region, to teach such people by the example of their own personal faith and practice. In reply, the anonymous «*Defensorium*» of the Inquisition, which was apparently directed to the queen, attacked Pulgar's personal and religious integrity, and then asserted that the faithless conversos had to be punished, however many of them there were. Otherwise,

«there would follow a breakdown of the faith, corruption of the true doctrine, and the death of the virtuous life; in the case of such sins, given that their punishment should be notorious, it is Christ's doctrine to punish, and not to give the gate of pardon either to few or to many, since it is better to enter paradise with one eye, than to suffer in hell with two [Matthew 18:9]».

Far from being «good Jews», as Pulgar stated, the anonymous writer described them as «liars in both laws», and asserted that St Paul's Aramaic word *maranatha*, or «Come, Lord» [1 Corinthians 16:12] in fact meant the same as «marrano».⁷⁷ Giving explicit support to the efforts of Fray Alonso de Espina, the «anónimo» asserted that, as all other remedies for the «problem» had failed, an inquisition was

76. Text of the letter in PULGAR, *Crónica*, pp. XLIX-LVIII.

77. See the commentary of N. ROTH in *Conversos, Inquisition, and expulsion*, pp. 3-14.

the only viable solution. Like Pulgar's effort, the anonymous letter circulated widely, and, fearing that it might reach Cardinal Mendoza from some other quarter, the chronicler sent the document to him himself. He also responded to its author in a further letter, addressed to his «hidden friend», in which he attempted to flush out the identity of his opponent, and asserted as persuasively as he could that he had in no way attacked the inquisitors or the queen, «because I say neither that they sin in their office, nor the Queen in her commission, although it would be possible for Her Highness to have erred if she did this».⁷⁸

This debate about the religious status of the conversos, and about the introduction and work of the Inquisition, which continued through the 1480s and after, was evidently based on the assumption that «judaizing» among the New Christians was a reality. This applied also in the case of the intervention of Pope Sixtus IV, who, on 29 January 1482, warned Isabel and Fernando that there was some irregularity in the operation of the Seville tribunal, not only because it was specifically targeted on «judaizing» conversos, and not against heresy in general, but because abuses by the inquisitors and their officials had been reported to the Curia. On the basis of reports received from pro-converso lobbyists, he accused Morillo and San Martín of illegally and unjustly imprisoning large numbers of people, falsely declaring them to be heretics, despoiling them of their goods, and sending some of them to the stake (*ultime supplicio*). The inquisitors in Seville were to be substituted while abuses were investigated.⁷⁹ In any case, while the Crown and the Papacy, under both Sixtus and his successor, Innocent VIII, manoeuvred for position, during the 1480s Pulgar himself, as Cantera has shown, revised chapters 96 to 120 of his *Crónica* to reflect his changed view that the converso «problem» had spread well beyond Seville and Andalusia. Recently, two authors, Norman Roth and Benzion Netanyahu, have used Pulgar's evidence to support their thesis that virtually all the conversos were, by 1480, genuine Christians, and hence that the Holy Office unjustly persecuted not faithful, though baptised, Jews, but faithful Christians.⁸⁰ Whatever the truth or otherwise of this, and it hardly seems a plausible reading of the passage quoted above, all participants in the events of the last decades of the fifteenth century clearly proceeded from the opposite assumption, not least in Córdoba, where the second tribunal under the new foundation was established.

The impact of the Inquisition was felt in that city in various ways. Thanks to the loss of the great bulk of the tribunal's records, during the French occupation, in 1808 and 1810, it is not possible to provide for Córdoba a systematic survey of its work on the lines of Jean-Pierre Dedieu's effort for Toledo.⁸¹ Nevertheless, enough evidence survives to indicate that, after the inquisitors established themselves in the Alcázar, which was also the residence of the corregidor, the reconciliation of «judaizing» penitents was soon taking place, as well as the burning of the relapsed, generally in the Campo de los Santos Mártires. The first to suffer this death appears to have been the mistress of the Cathedral treasurer, Don Pedro Fernández de

78. CANTERA, «Fernando del Pulgar y los conversos» and the notes by R. HIGHFIELD in the English translation [see note 69]; AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 397-401.

79. SIMONSOHN, *Documents 1464-1521*, and análisis in EDWARDS, «The popes, the Inquisition and Jewish converts», pp. 76-82 [reprinted at EDWARDS, *Religion and society in Spain*].

80. ROTH, *Conversos, Inquisition, and the expulsion*, pp. 113-114; NETANYAHU, *Origins*, pp. 903-904.

81. DEDIEU, J.-P., *L'administration de la foi. L'Inquisition de Tolède (XV-XVIII siècle)*, Madrid, 1989.

Alcaudete, in 1483. In the following year, the treasurer himself was burnt as a «judaizer», while two of the city's jurados (parish councillors), and two escribanos (notaries), lost their offices for the same offence. There were subsequent autos de fe in 1485, 1486 and 1492, in which those who were burnt after the end of the ceremony, apart from those who were made to process and were given lesser sentences, included Cathedral dignitaries, as well as various traders. In the 1492 auto, twenty-four men and seven women were burnt, while, in each of these three ceremonies, effigies of deceased or absent «judaizers» were also burnt. However, it was in Diego Rodríguez Lucero's period of office as inquisitor in Córdoba, especially between 1500 and his eventual deposition, after a «Catholic Congregation» summoned by Fernando in Burgos in 1508, that the main judicial violence was done. Eighty-one people were burnt in 1501, twenty-seven in 1502, and no fewer than 107 on 22 December 1504. Although it is impossible to discover, from the surviving sources, the proportion of Córdoba's converso community, if such it was, which suffered from the Inquisition's ministrations in the two decades or so after 1480, there is no doubt that here, as in other regions, the economic damage was in many cases severe. From 1481, the receiver of confiscated goods for the Holy Office in Andalusia was Licenciado Fernández Lobón, an alcalde de la Casa Real (official of the Royal Household). By 1487, he had been replaced by Diego de Medina, and in 1502, Don Luis de Sotomayor, the Franciscan son of the third count of Belalcázar, was appointed by the Crown to this office. Apart from royal servants and officials, local beneficiaries of this largesse included the Cathedral chapter and Don Alonso de Aguilar.⁸² The archives of the neighbouring tribunal of Jaén suffered a similar fate to those of Córdoba when the Inquisition was first abolished by the French in 1810. The conversos of the city had suffered similar hostility and violence to those of other Andalusian towns, in the reign of Enrique IV, including riots in 1473. When a tribunal of the Inquisition was installed in Jaén, ten years later, its headquarters were very probably in the house of the late Condestable Miguel Lucas de Iranzo, in the Calle Santa Cruz, but were soon transferred to the Dominican convent of Santa Catalina. The first inquisitors of Jaén, who were appointed in 1483, with jurisdiction over the city and diocese, were Juan García de Cañas, who taught law in Calahorra, and Fray Juan de Yarza, the prior of the Dominican convent of San Pedro Mártir, which was in Toledo, and became the headquarters of the Inquisition in that city. An investigation of the conversos in Jaén, parallel to those further west in Andalucía, was begun immediately, and continued in full force until after 1495. In the view of Luis Coronas Tejada, the result of these efforts was that, «in twelve years, the bulk of the judaizers in the kingdom of Jaén had disappeared through extermination or through flight», though, even while acknowledging the caution of Lea, he is much too ready to give credence to Juan Antonio Llorente's figures for 1483-1495, which are no fewer than 583 burnt alive, 380 burnt in effigy, and 5.444 given penances.⁸³

82. GRACIA BOIX, *Documentos*, pp. 31-79, 107-134, and *Autos de fe y causas de la Inquisición de Córdoba*, Córdoba, 1983, pp. 1-7; EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba*, pp. 184-186, «Trial of an inquisitor; the dismissal of Diego Rodríguez Lucero, inquisitor of Córdoba, in 1508», *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 37, 1986, pp. 240-257, and «The judeoconversos in the urban life of Córdoba, 1450-1520», in *Villes et sociétés urbaines au Moyen Age. Hommage à M. le Professeur Jacques Heers*, Paris, 1994, pp. 287-297 [both articles reprinted in *Religion and society in Spain*].

83. CORONAS TEJADA, L., *Conversos and Inquisition in Jaén*, Jerusalem, 1988, pp. 11-12, 19, 23, 26-29, and *La Inquisición en Jaén*, Jaén, 1991, pp. 16-17, 49-56, 76-79

Coronas Tejada should perhaps have paid more regard to Llorente's motivation, as an inquisitor-general who was commissioned by Joseph Bonaparte to write a «historia crítica» (1817-1818) of the conduct of the tribunal of which he was the head. As Peters has observed, «These early works were written from archival sources, but they were certainly not free of a particular kind of polemic».⁸⁴ What seems undeniable, from the sources which are still available for consultation, unlike much of the material from which Llorente worked, is that the oppressive behaviour of the inquisitor Lucero in Córdoba had its effect in Jaén, and was likewise judged by the Congregation of Burgos in 1508.⁸⁵ It may indeed be argued that the Lucero «trial» was the first serious investigation of the conduct of Isabel and Fernando's Inquisition. Violent opposition, from Old as well as New Christians, had, it is true, previously erupted in the Crown of Aragon, as soon as the new, Castilian foundation of the Holy Office was extended to that realm, in 1484, and this even included the assassination of the inquisitor Pedro Arbués. However, such resistance was directed at least as much against Fernando's perceived infringements of the constitutional rights of his Aragonese and Catalan subjects in general, as the threat his actions posed to conversos in particular. None the less, the Aragonese and Catalans, like their Castilian contemporaries, failed to halt the inquisitorial juggernaut.⁸⁶ After the trials of numerous conversos came the expulsion of Spain's remaining Jews, but this measure was preceded by the notorious case of the «Santo Niño de La Guardia» (Holy Child of La Guardia).

In June 1490, some drunks, at an inn in Astorga, apparently returning from a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, claimed to have found a eucharistic host in the luggage of a converso wool-comber, Benito García. The provisor (vicar-general) of the diocese, Dr Villalba, was duly informed, and the suspect was arrested and immediately tortured. These events, and their sequel, are known from the Inquisition trial of another of the accused, the Jew Yuçe Franco, which was published by P. Fidel Fita in 1887, and is the only known survival from the case.⁸⁷ Through his legal procurador, Yuçe defended himself against charges of conspiracy, the crucifixion of a young boy, and hechicería (sorcery), by saying that the demanda (indictment) of the fiscal of the Avila tribunal, Alonso de Guevara, was too vague, lacking specific dates and other particulars, that he had never been part of a conspiracy with other Jews and conversos, he had never crucified a child, and had no knowledge of black magic. In any case, he said, as a Jew he could not, by definition, be accused, let alone convicted, of heresy. The trial continued for much of 1491, and included the torture of the accused, and a confrontation between the witnesses in an attempt to reconcile their contradictory testimony. The story which emerged from these proceedings, was that a group of eleven Jews and conversos, many of them vecinos

84. PETERS, *Inquisition*, pp. 278-287, en p. 281.

85. CORONAS TEJADA, *Conversos*, pp. 50-54, and *La Inquisición*, pp. 64-70.

86. KAMEN, *The Spanish Inquisition*, pp. 48-56; ALCALA, *Orígenes de la Inquisición en Aragón*; EDWARDS, «Jewish testimony to the Spanish Inquisition, 1484-7», *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 143, 1984, pp. 333-350, and «Religion, constitutionalism and the Inquisition in Teruel, 1484-5», in *God and man in medieval Spain. Essays in honour of J.R.L. Highfield*, ed. D.W. Lomax and D. Mackenzie, Warminster, 1989, pp. 129-147 [both articles reprinted in EDWARDS, *Religion and society in Spain*].

87. FITA, «La verdad sobre el martirio del Santo Niño de La Guardia, o sea el proceso y quema (16 noviembre 1491) del judío Juce Franco en Avila», *B.R.A.H.*, 11, 1887, pp. 7-134.

of La Guardia (Toledo), had kidnapped a young boy from that town and crucified him in a nearby cave. They had also stolen a eucharistic host from a church in La Guardia, three years previously. Finally, on 11 November, the Inquisition, having consulted a committee of assessors, decided to hold an auto de fe, which duly took place in Avila, five days later, with the burning of Jews and conversos alike. The first of the strands in this story, the notion that a Christian child, almost always a boy, might be captured by Jews, and subjected to torments similar to those which were suffered by Jesus, was, as has been noted, already known in Spain by the thirteenth century. At the same time, the idea that Jews used the blood of such a child in the manufacture of the unleavened bread of the Passover became entangled with an increasing devotion to the sacrament of the Mass, in which the Church taught that the bread, when consecrated by a canonically ordained priest, became in reality the Body of Jesus Christ. Thus a parallel accusation developed, that Jews would obtain such consecrated bread and, by submitting it to abuse, directly torture Jesus, rather than using a Christian child as a substitute.⁸⁸ The tormenting by Jews of the wax image of such a child is mentioned by Gonzalo de Berceo, in his *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*, while Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas*, as already noted, refer directly to Jews stealing Christian children on Good Friday and crucifying them, using wax images when no child was available.⁸⁹ It is effectively with Fidel Fita's 1887 writings that modern studies of the case of the «Santo Niño» began. His illustrious predecessor as a historian of Spain's Jews, José Amador de los Ríos, asserted, in 1876, that the La Guardia case was not connected with the 1492 edict of expulsion, but Fita disagreed. To him, the further evidence which he unearthed, notably the translation of the trial sentence into Catalan for publication, on Torquemada's orders, showed conclusively that the Inquisition intended to exploit the Avila trial to the full.⁹⁰ Despite Fita's efforts, over a century ago, the link between the «Santo Niño» case and the 1492 expulsion is still not universally accepted today. It has been rejected by both Luis Suárez Fernández and Joseph Perez, though it appears evident to Maurice Kriegel and Stephen Haliczzer, and it is indeed hard to believe either that the crucifixion of the «Holy Child» really happened, or that the story was unconnected with the royal edict of 31 March 1492.⁹¹

The order issued on that date by Fernando and Isabel, that all Jews in their kingdoms who refused to be baptised should leave their territories within six months, continues to elicit conflicting reactions. Stephen Haliczzer rightly observes that «few historical events have given rise to such confident generalisations as the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492», but he is wrong to suggest that «it is generally

88. RUBIN, M., «Desecration of the host: birth of an accusation», in *Christianity and Judaism [Studies in Church History, 29]*, ed. D. WOOD, Oxford, 1992, pp. 169-185.

89. BERCEO, G. DE, *Los milagros de Nuestra Señora*, ed. C. GARCIA TURZA, Logroño, 1984, pp. 75- 77; CARPENTER, D.E., *Alfonso X and the Jews*, p. 29.

90. AMADOR DE LOS RIOS, J., *Historia social, política y religiosa de los judíos de España y Portugal*, Madrid, 1876, vol. 3, pp. 318-319; FITA, «La verdad», pp. 112-114, 132-134.

91. SUAREZ FERNANDEZ, L., *Judíos españoles en la Edad Media*, Madrid, 1980, pp. 266-268; PEREZ, J., *Isabel y Fernando. Los Reyes Católicos*, trans. F. SANTOS FONTENLA, Madrid, 1988, p. 353; KRIEGLER, M., «La prise d'une décision, l'expulsion d'Espagne en 1492», *Revue Historique*, 527, 1978, pp. 49-90 [reprinted in *Chrétiens, musulmans et juifs dans l'Espagne médiévale*, ed. R. Barkai, Paris, 1994, pp. 253-300; HALICZER, S., «The expulsion of the Jews as social process», in *The Jews of Spain and the expulsion of 1492*, ed. M. LAZAR and S. HALICZER, Lancaster, California, 1997, pp. 237- 251, at 243-244.

agreed» that the measure was an inevitable and pre-meditated part of Isabel and Fernando's plan for the governance of Castile and Aragon.⁹² It is true that Fray Tarsicio de Azcona took this view, in 1964, stating that, «the expulsion of the Jews seems like a perfectly logical measure of state. Further, we believe that the Monarchs thought about it for a whole decade as the cleanest [*sic*] and most just thing».⁹³ Haliczzer also adduces, in support of this view, the opinions of Luis Suárez Fernández, as they were expressed in that same year, but this author, in a work published in 1980, offers a far more nuanced treatment of the question, and indeed attacks Haliczzer's thesis, which the latter continued to sustain in 1992, that the expulsion of Jews who refused to convert was ordered by the king and queen to protect their converso supporters in municipal government, particularly in the Crown of Castile. Suárez also opposes Netanyahu's view that the expulsion of the Jews was part of a long-held and devious racist plot on the part of Fernando.⁹⁴ Kamen, on the other hand, rightly exposes the inadequacies of all such «universal» explanations of the 1492 edict. For him, «though the historical event is incontestable, its origins, nature and consequences are all still within the realm of controversy.... The expulsion has seemed so transcendent an event that commentators both then and now have virtually suspended their judgement before it».⁹⁵ In view of this historiographical conflict, it may be best to examine, in turn, the promulgation of the 31 March edict and its antecedents, and its immediate and later consequences. It may then be possible to come to some judgement of the origins and purpose of the measure.

In most general surveys of the period, it is the Castilian version of the «expulsion» edict which is discussed and analysed. This is, for example, the version (in the copy addressed to the municipal authorities of Burgos), which is reproduced by Suárez Fernández in his collection of documents on the subject.⁹⁶ As has often been noted, although the document stated that Jews would have to decide whether to convert to Christianity, or depart, within an interval of four months from the issue of the document, in other words by the last day of July 1492, the actual promulgation of the edict did not take place until 1 May. Various legends surround the reasons for this delay, but it is virtually certain that leading members of the Jewish community made every effort to persuade the Reyes to rescind the document. One of these appears to have been Fernando's Aragonese converso confidant, Miçer Alfonso de la Cavallería.⁹⁷ Until recently, it was thought that little documentary record survived of the expulsion of Jews from the Crown of Aragon, but Rafael Conde has now published numerous sources from the Archivo de la Corona. The

92. HALICZZER, «The expulsion of the Jews», p. 237.

93. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, p. 639.

94. SUAREZ FERNANDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judíos*, Valladolid, 1964, pp. 10-11, and *Judíos españoles*, pp. 257-259; HALICZZER, «The Castilian urban patriciate and the Jewish expulsion of 1480-1492», *American Historical Review*, 78, 1973, pp. 35-58; NETANYAHU, *Don Isaac Abravanel: statesman and philosopher*, 2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1968.

95. KAMEN, «The expulsion: purpose and consequence», in *Spain and the Jews. The Sephardi experience, 1492 and after*, ed. Elie Kedourie, London, 1992, pp. 74-91, at p. 74.

96. SUAREZ FERNANDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión*, pp. 392-393.

97. BEINART, H., «The expulsion from Spain: causes and results», in *Moreshet Sepharad: the Sephardi legacy*, 2 vols, Jerusalem, 1992, vol. 1, pp. 11-41, at pp. 28-31.

Aragonese version of the expulsion provision was issued on the same day as its Castilian equivalent, but in a different manner. It was not, as Kriegel thought, a draft for a «common» Castilian and Aragonese final version, but was addressed generally to Prince Juan and the whole realm, not issued in multiple copies to specific churchmen, religious orders and local authorities, as was the case in Castile.⁹⁸ As to the manner in which the royal provision was published, which was no doubt similar in Castile and Aragon, on 8 January 1493, for example, the corregidor of Zaragoza, two trumpeters, a drummer, and a friar from the Seo, were together paid 16 sueldos for the job.⁹⁹

The traditional narrative of the departure of the Jews, from both kingdoms, during the summer and early autumn of 1492, very properly stresses the sufferings of the numerous forced migrants. In Azcona's words, «The researcher cannot fully absorb the painful scenes of the departure. Families which had lived in a household [solar] and had gathered under a roof in the course of generations, had to abandon it all, carrying with them the key of the house as a symbol of a cradle and of a dwelling».¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Kamen refers to «the tragic exodus of a people who were treated as strangers but had known no other home - both rich and poor, old and young, struggling abroad with the meagre possessions allowed them, cheated and robbed at every stage of their journey».¹⁰¹ Despite his acute lack of sympathy with Judaism as a religion, and with Jews as people, the Cura de los Palacios, Andrés Bernaldez, felt constrained to describe, not without a certain grim satisfaction, the sufferings of those who left the Andalusian ports for North Africa, or Italy and the Ottoman empire, which included attacks at sea and on land.¹⁰²

Many of the problems experienced by the departing Jews in 1492 were, however, less dramatic than drowning and murder, if no less distressing to those who suffered them. Jews who tried to dispose of their property under the terms of the royal edict were bound to face at best exploitation, and at worst ruin. Prices collapsed and, despite royal injunctions and sporadic action by lords and municipalities, many Christians, throughout Spain, resorted to squatting in Jewish houses. An inquiry carried out in 1493, in the lands of the duke of Béjar, who had jurisdiction over various villas and lugares (towns and villages) in the modern provinces of Salamanca and Cáceres, revealed that abuses during the period between April and July 1492, when Jews were passing, as very many did, through these señoríos (lordships) to Portugal, had been extensive. Ducal officials had clearly been aware of what was happening, and interrogated witnesses not only about the fate of former Jewish property, including synagogue ornaments as well as land and agricultural produce, but also about the current possessors of these goods, and whether or not they had a just title to them. It also appeared from this investigation that some Christians had collected Jews' debts for them in Spain, and illegally

98. CONDE Y DELGADO DE MOLINA, R., *La expulsión de los judíos de la Corona de Aragón*, Zaragoza, 1991, pp. 11-12 [text of edict on pp. 41-44]; KRIEGL, «La prise d'une décision», p. 81 n. 131.

99. MOTIS DOLADER, M.A., *La expulsión de los judíos de Zaragoza*, Zaragoza, 1985, p. 89.

100. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 647-648.

101. KAMEN, *Spain, 1469-1714*, 2nd ed., p. 42.

102. BERNALDEZ, *Memorias*, p. 254.

carried Jewish goods across the Portuguese border.¹⁰³ In the meantime, a massive operation was taking place, in both Castile and Aragon, to dispose of Jewish immovable property, involving the Crown, the Inquisition, local authorities, and individuals.¹⁰⁴

Estimates of the number of Jews who left Spain in 1492 have been revised downwards in recent years. Writers who lived through the expulsion, such as the chronicler Bernáldez, and the German traveller Thomas Münzer, thought that approximately 100,000 Jews departed, while the Jewish commentators Abraham Zacuto and Isaac Abravanel estimated, from exile, 150,000 - 200,000 and 300,000 respectively. Among modern scholars, Salo Baron suggested 200,000 departures, Vicens Vives 150,000, and Baer about 200,000, while Suárez Fernández, Jonathan Israel and Ladero have each estimated about 100,000, though Israel, in the second edition of his book, reduced his figure to 50,000. Henry Kamen has steadily lowered his estimates in recent years, from 180,000 in 1983, to the consensus figure of 100,000 in 1985, and then to about 50,000 in 1988, and 40,000 in 1992.¹⁰⁵

The 1492 Castilian and Aragonese edicts were not unprecedented. Two years after the new Inquisition began its operations in Seville, on 1 January 1483, the inquisitors of that city and of Córdoba ordered the expulsion of all Jews from those dioceses, to which those of Cádiz and Jaén, and indeed the whole of Christian Andalusia, were soon added. Those to be expelled were given only a month to leave for other parts of Spain. As Beinart observes, the initiative for the measure, though explicitly coming from the Inquisition, must have originated with the rulers, as the Holy Office had no jurisdiction over unbaptised Jews. The 1483 order, which is specifically mentioned in the 1492 documents, appears to have been intended to facilitate the growing work of the inquisitors among the region's conversos, and was probably not unconnected with the Granada war, in which it seems to have been feared that Andalusian Jews would side with the Muslim enemy, as they had done in 711. It is not known how many Jews actually left Andalusia as a result of the 1483 order. Pulgar estimated the number as 4,000 households, or approximately 20,000 people, while Isaac ibn Faraj made the lower estimate of 5,000 souls. In any case, despite some local opposition, notably in Jerez de la Frontera, a Jewish migration into Extremadura and Castile certainly seems to have taken place.¹⁰⁶

As early as 8 January of that year, the escribano del concejo (town clerk) in Jerez records a «movement of these Jews», but the council protested at the difficulty of liquidating the Jews' assets within just a month, and Jacob Cachopo, who appears to have been the legal representative of the Jerez community, obtained permission from the Crown, on 1 January 1484, for the exiles to return to the town to dispose

103. CARRETE PARRONDO, C., ed., *Fontes Iudaeorum Regni Castellae*, 1, *Provincia de Salamanca*, Salamanca, 1981, pp. 52-54, 67-73; HUERGA CRIADO, P., *En la raya de Portugal. Solidaridad y tensiones en la comunidad judeoconversa*, Salamanca, 1993.

104. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 649-653; KAMEN, «The expulsion», p. 89; BEINART, «The expulsion from Spain», pp. 35-36.

105. LADERO, «Le nombre des Juifs dans la Castile du XV^e siècle», in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, 1973)*, Jerusalem, 1975, vol. 2, p. 47; EDWARDS, *The Jews in Christian Europe, 1400-1700*, London, 1988 and 1991, p. 34; KAMEN, *Spain, 1469-1714*, p. 42, *Inquisition and society in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, London, 1985, p. 16, «The Mediterranean and the expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492», *Past and Present*, 119, 1988, p. 44, and «The expulsion: purpose and consequence», 85.

106. BEINART, «The expulsion from Spain», pp. 19-21.

of their property at reasonable prices.¹⁰⁷ In the meantime, many Andalusian Jews seem to have migrated to Segura de la Sierra, Llerena and Badajoz, in Extremadura. The expulsion seems to have lasted throughout the year, but by 1485 Jews had returned not only to Jerez but also to Moguer and to Córdoba, where the *aljama* contributed to funds for the Granada war in that year.¹⁰⁸ A further «experiment» in the expulsion of Jews took place in the Aragon in May 1486, when Fernando ordered that they should leave the dioceses of Zaragoza and Albarracín, apparently in retaliation for the murder of the inquisitor Pedro Arbués and the stout resistance put up against the Inquisition in Teruel and elsewhere. As in the case of Andalusia, the expulsion was only temporary, and the definitive decision between conversion and departure was postponed to the following decade.¹⁰⁹ The 1492 «expulsion» edict was thus far from being without practical precedent, but its issue was also prompted by advice from the Inquisition itself.

Apparently during or following the conviction and death of those accused of murdering the «Santo Niño de La Guardia», the inquisitor-general, Tomás de Torquemada, addressed a memorandum to the queen, which was entitled, «The things which are happening now which Your Highness should remedy by means of letters». Although it addressed general political issues, Torquemada's memorandum was primarily focused on the Jews, and strongly suggested that existing restrictive laws, on their places of residence, their dress, and their economic activities, had failed, the logical inference being that definitive expulsion was the only solution.¹¹⁰ This may well not be the proper inference to draw, however, from the text of the 1492 provisions themselves. Although the documents refer only to the choice which faced Jews, of baptism or expulsion, and the detail of the planning for expulsion has made many assume that this was the purpose of the measure, the context of the edicts' issue indicates strongly that conversion, rather than expulsion, was their primary aim. As Kamen has rightly commented,

«The Inquisition, of course, in the light of the failure over ten years of a policy of separation and expulsions, had opted for expulsion; but Ferdinand was always in control of the inquisitors, never they of him».¹¹¹

Two additional points need to be made: firstly, that there is no solid evidence that the Crown ever intended to use the Inquisition to exploit the Jews, and, secondly, that by the time the «expulsion» edict came into effect, the economic potency of Spain's remaining Jews was small in comparison with the conversos, against whom the Holy Office was explicitly directed. As Kamen observes, «The Inquisition desired nothing more complicated than the elimination of a choice for the conversos, many of whom felt more at home among their Jewish brethren». Thus the time between 1 May and 31 July 1492 was intended by the Crown to be used by Jews, not to liquidate their assets in Castile and Aragon, but to prepare themselves

107. BAER, F., *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien*, Berlin, 1929-1936, vol. 2, pp. 357-359; SUAREZ FERNANDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión*, pp. 238-240.

108. AZCONA, *Isabel la Católica*, pp. 640-641; EDWARDS, *Christian Córdoba*, p. 182.

109. BAER, *Die Juden*, vol. 1, pp. 569, 913; KRIEGLER, «La prise d'une décision», p. 287; KAMEN, «The expulsion», p. 77.

110. BEINART, «Expulsion from Spain», pp.25-28.

111. KAMEN, «The expulsion», pp. 77-78.

for baptism. There is ample evidence, not least in the writings of Andrés Bernáldez, that a conversion campaign was indeed mounted, with royal support, at this time. Further explicit evidence that conversion, not expulsion, was the primary purpose of the 1492 edicts is to be found in a royal safe-conduct, dated 10 November 1492, which was issued to Castilian and Andalusian Jews who thereafter returned home as baptised Christians. They were to receive back their goods at the price for which they had originally sold them, paying in addition for any «mejoramientos» (improvements) which had subsequently been made by the new owners, as was normal practice in the property law of the period. The November edict indicated that baptism might take place either in Portugal or in a Castilian border town, such as Ciudad Rodrigo or Zamora. Christians who had bought Jewish property earlier in 1492 were to be required, if and when the original owners returned, to appear before the relevant local authorities and negotiate the transfer to the Jews of the goods concerned, subject to the conditions already mentioned. Numerous royal documents, issued between December 1492 and April 1494, indicate that the Crown intended the November provision to be implemented, as newly-baptised Jews are known to have returned to places such as Ledesma, Atienza, Cuéllar, Segovia, Zamora, Logroño, Santolalla and Sepúlveda. Unfortunately, inquisitorial evidence equivalent to that for the Soria-Burgo de Osma tribunal does not survive for Andalusia, but it is clear that the return of Jews, baptised as Christians, particularly from Portugal, was a well-known phenomenon at the time. The Inquisition, as the career of Diego Rodríguez Lucero was soon to demonstrate in Córdoba and Jaén, was to gain much extra business from royal policy in these years.¹¹²

The origins of the Inquisition in Andalusia, like the «expulsion» edict of 1492, have invited, and often received, grandiose and simplistic explanations. For Benzion Netanyahu, this question, like so many others, has an extremely simple answer. In a recently republished article, he asserts that

«The Spanish kings (*sic*) felt the rising tide of antisemitism, and rather than resist it, they decided to ride it. This is, in essence, what was behind the determination to establish—and uphold—the Spanish Inquisition».¹¹³

Typically, the Israeli historian places the origin of Fernando and Isabel's tribunal entirely in a Spanish context. With a few notable exceptions, scholars both within and outside the Iberian Peninsula have generally understood and analysed the beginnings of the Inquisition in Castile, together with its extension into the Crown of Aragon, in the context of the long-standing debate about the identity of Spain,

112. KAMEN, «The expulsion», pp. 80-82 and «The Mediterranean and the expulsion»; MOTIS DALADER, «La conversión de judíos a raíz del edicto de expulsión», in *Encuentros en Sefarad*, Madrid, 1987, pp. 224-225, and *Expulsión de...Zaragoza*, pp. 77-83; CARRETE PARRONDO, ed., *Fontes Iudæorum Regni Castellæ*, 2, *El tribunal de la Inquisición en el obispado de Soria (1486-1502)*, Salamanca, 1985; EDWARDS, «Jews and conversos in the region of Soria and Almazán: departures and returns», in *The Jews of Spain and the expulsion*, pp. 277-287 [reprinted in *Religion and society in Spain*].

113. NETANYAHU, «The primary cause of the Spanish Inquisition», in *The Spanish Inquisition and the inquisitorial mind*, ed. A. ALCALA, reprinted in *Toward the Inquisition*, p. 200.

recently and memorably focused in the dispute between Claudio Sánchez Albornoz and Américo Castro.¹¹⁴

What has generally been lacking, however, is an awareness of the European context of inquisitorial activity in the Spain of the Reyes Católicos. This is odd, given that propagandists, such as Alonso de Espina, explicitly compared the Spanish situation with that of England and France, in particular, in terms of both the use of inquisitorial procedure against heresy and the expulsion of Jews who refused to be baptised. There is little doubt that the political situation in Andalusia was a major influence on the decision of Fernando and Isabel to set up the Inquisition first in Seville, and then in Córdoba. Yet the religious character of the conversos, in Andalusia as in the rest of Spain, who formed the recognised target group of the inquisitors, cannot be understood in the monolithic terms which are generally employed in the debate about the rights and wrongs of the tribunals' work. For one thing, the registers of the Soria-Osma tribunal reveal the expression by the population of religious beliefs which might be found in many other parts of Europe, whether in a Jewish context or not.¹¹⁵

This makes it, to say the least, implausible to suggest that the conversos of Andalusia, and elsewhere in Spain, at the beginning of the reign of Fernando and Isabel, were either almost uniformly Jewish, as Baer, and his followers including Beinart, suggest, or almost uniformly Christian, as Netanyahu and Norman Roth would have it. It is fair and reasonable to debate the reliability, or otherwise, of the evidence which was assembled by the Inquisition, but Christianity and Judaism have always been interlocking faiths, since the very origins of the former.

«Allowance should surely be made for the possibility that individuals really were mixed up about their relationship to two religions which were themselves organically related at the start of Christianity, and have remained closely entwined ever since».¹¹⁶

What is required, if progress is to be made in understanding the «origins» of the «Spanish» Inquisition in Andalusia, is not only a proper comparison with earlier, and contemporary, experience elsewhere in Europe, but an abandonment of belief in abstract monoliths, such as «Judaism» and «Jew», «Christianity» and «Christian», «monarchy» and «king» —or even «Inquisition» and «inquisitor»!

114. RUSSELL, P.E., «The Nessus-shirt of Spanish history», *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 36, 1959, pp. 219-225, reprinted in *Portugal, Spain and the African Atlantic*.

115. EDWARDS, «Religious faith and doubt in late medieval Spain: Soria circa 1450-1500», *Past and Present*, 120, 1988, pp. 3-25 [reprinted in *Religion and society in Spain*].

116. See the review article, of the recent works by N. ROTH and NETANYAHU, by EDWARDS, «Was the Spanish Inquisition truthful?», *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 87, 1997, pp. 351-366 [quotation from p. 366]