



Ana Cannas da Cunha

Director

Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal

With

Dale Luis Menezes

Georgetown University

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Dale Luis Menezes: Hello and welcome to this special web series on the Goa Inquisition. The series introduces you to the most recent research produced by internationally recognized scholars. I am Dale Luis Menezes.

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Our guest will give you a glimpse of the research, as well as the research that has taken place over the last 50 or more years. You will hear directly from the experts about the nature of state and religious violence, as well as the challenges an historian faces in researching a difficult topic such as the history of the Inquisition.

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Our web series aims to educate the public about the various aspects of this historical phenomena. The Web series is supported by the Al-Zulajj Collective in Goa. Additionally, the series is supported by the History of Inquisitions Group, a group of scholars spread across the world.

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We also have the support of the Center for Religious History Studies at the Catholic University of Portugal and of the Chair of Sephardic Studies Alberto Benveniste at the University of Lisbon. We thank all of them for the generous moral support.

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Our guest today is Dr Ana Cannas da Cunha. She is a research fellow at the Center for History of the University of Lisbon and director of the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, also in Lisbon. She holds a PhD in library and information studies which she finished completed from the University College in London in 2004.

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She has taught the University of Lisbon and at the NOVA University, also in Lisbon. Her main fields of research, publication and other activities concern archival studies and history. Dr Ana Cannas da Cunha, thank you for joining us and welcome to the web series.

Religious Violence

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Hello, I'm glad to be here and happy to answer your questions. I will try to do that.

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Dale Luis Menezes: Thank you. So, let's not waste any time and let's get straight to the topic. You are an expert on the history of the New Christians, and you've written about the foundation of the Inquisition. So, without further ado, let me just get straight to the point and just ask you why was the Inquisition founded in 1560 in Goa?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, there were some attempts to establish the Inquisition in the years before, but I think that the main reason was a shift that, during this period, from trying to convert people to the Christian faith by convincing methods, not coercive methods. As the Portuguese Crown was facing diverse cultures and societies far away from Lisbon and the court, that is to say an ecclesiastical or religious court, was used as political tool.

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To try to rule in a uniform way over the Portuguese community. There existed some suspicions regarding the connections between New Christians and Jews in Cochin and Goa, and this was the kind of trigger to justify the establishment of the Tribunal, after the establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal that happened in the previous decades.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, you also talk about the, whether forced or voluntary, emigration of New Christians and Jews, to the to the non-Portuguese territories, but also to Cochin and Goa, and also immigration to the Ottoman Empire. How much was this emigration also linked to the foundation of the Inquisition in Goa?

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Well, it was an issue that I wished to clarify when some years ago already I was studying for a Master's degree about this matter of the Inquisition in Goa. I searched for data on the Jewish or the New Christian immigration from Portugal to the so-called Portuguese Estado da Índia, namely Cochin and Goa, during the years previous to the first attempt of establishing the Tribunal there.

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The information regarding the Portuguese immigration along the 16th century and even after is mainly qualitative. It's about the circulation of New Christians and Jews in and out of Portugal and overseas is provided mainly by several types of correspondence from the Jesuits, from the Portuguese authorities and also we can find some qualitative information in travel books and legislation, as well as in the Inquisitorial files, because people who were accused or denounced spoke about their trajectories along the several areas and several countries.

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It was not possible to obtain precise numbers comparing the Portuguese of Jewish or New Christian origin to the other Portuguese, to the members of the other Portuguese that were settled in India. But even if we discount certain exaggeration by those who whose letters also reflect an anti-Semitic spirit, it seems acceptable that more Portuguese New Christians went out of Portugal when the external and internal pressure for prohibition in Lisbon grew and obviously when the court was seated in Portugal, they fled away and this apparently increasing the New Christian immigration may have worked as an instability factor of ruling by Portuguese Crown of the different possessions in India, and their diverse populations.

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The connections between New Christians and Jews in Portuguese India, supposed in many cases, were real in other cases and were felt by some people as a menace to sincere conversion to Christianity or Catholicism. This conversion was understood by the central power in Lisbon, as a way of controlling the habit, the behavior of people, including from the point of view, in Portugal. Besides, there were already Jewish communities anchored in Portuguese India, synagogues. The reliability [loyalty] of the New Christians toward the interests of the Portuguese Crown what sometimes put in question.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So just to just to clarify, the larger thrust in establishing the Inquisition was to first and foremost, was to make sure that the New Christian population remained Christian, they did not move out of the [Christian] fold. And secondly, it was to make sure that the Jewish population was also controlled in all the Portuguese territories?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes, but I would add that it worked as an example. Or, the idea of those who supported the establishment of the Inquisition in Goa, it was that by the example of the [practice] true Christianity of the New Christians others would follow. It seems paradoxical and it is until a certain point, but the coercive way was to be sure of the faith,

and the true faith, of these people and they were also faithful from the point of view of the...



Ep 3 | The Goa Inquisition: New Perspectives on the State and Religious Violence

Dale Luis Menezes: ...of the Portuguese Crown.

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So, are these fears or concerns reflected in the debates before the foundation of the Inquisition in Goa in 1560?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes. The full scope of this debate on the establishment of the Inquisition is not evident. As information is scarce and, probably, this is also due to the secrecy which surrounded all the matters of the Inquisition and this secrecy is mentioned by the few identified protagonists of debate.

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These debates sometimes oppose religious and secular authorities, but there were also different opinions among the religious authorities and among the secular authorities. A key issue is the link to the debate on how to propagate and preserve the Christian faith. And to reach a true conversion. There were strong arguments on each side, from those who supported a position of persuasion against those who supported a proposition of coercion or even violence.

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Or enticement. Some of these methods they knew resulted in conversions that were insincere and opportunistic and were even questioned within the Catholic Church. Even if in the end, the position was to support the establishment of the Inquisition, during previous years, the debate was [intense]. There is an interesting position of Secretary of King João III, Alcaso Carneiro, who advised him, to be prudent regarding the propositions of expelling the Brahmins of Goa, from Diu, or expelling the Islamic population in Socotra.

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Or, supporting a harsh controlling position. They also discussed the New Christian question and the Judaism question. But they also discussed the opportunity and the effectiveness of the Tribunal in relation to the converted Hindus, the so-called 'gentios' or gentiles. Even Francis Xavier, St. Francis Xavier, who did not question the Inquisition itself considered, 15 years before, that the most important was the need of more preachers.

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The other a key issue linked to this debate was the economical, political, and military

potential effects that the establishment of the Goa Inquisition would provoke. The ambassador, the Portuguese ambassador in Rome at a time, Tavora, feared that the Jews and other people working for the Portuguese Crown in India, immigrated to other places like Basra in Iraq or Cairo due to the Inquisitorial action.

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For him this would benefit Ottoman Turkey and jeopardized the Portuguese interest in India, so it's a mixture of...

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, you mentioned that the Inquisition was used as a political tool. Given all these debates, it was still established, so politics won at the end of the day, would you say that?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes, I dare to say that! In the end, it was. Even if later on, in 17th century and after, when the Judaism and New Christian issue in India was not so strong as was in Portugal, there were hard [strong] debates from time to time, on the effects of the of the inquisitorial action in India.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So that leads me to my next question you. We have established that there is a suspicion, the Royal power, the Crown, the state is suspicious, there is an anxiety about the New Christian population, the Jewish population or any other kind of population. Specifically, in the case of the New Christian population and the Jewish population, do you think that the threat that the Crown or the state perceived was it imagined or was it real, or to what extent, was it real and imagined?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, as I mentioned before, the apparently increasing New Christian immigration may have worked as an instability factor of the ruling by the Portuguese Crown of the different possessions in India and of the diverse populations. The connections were felt by some as a menace.

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It is difficult to have a clear and definitive position on that. I am not sure if they were really a menace, but you see even in the Inquisitorial files, the first trials, just before the Inquisition was established in Goa, you can see that some probably had in his memoir [memory] still Jewish practices, and some were not completely on the side of the interests of the Portuguese Crown. The most important is that, in the end, the power, the Royal power, felt that they

were a menace. I am not sure if all of them were really a true menace.



## Ep 3 | The Goa Inquisition: New Perspectives on the State and Religious Violence

Dale Luis Menezes: Was the problem that the Crown perceived... was it an economic problem or was it a problem of law and order, or politics...

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, I would say...Some aspects that are linked to the others, the economic interests of the Royal authorities or of the Crown could coincide or not with private interests, even the Old Christians or the New Christians, but more than, it seems to me, more than an economic issue, it was a political issue. Sometimes it was a diplomatic issue...and idea that this was the best way to control all the interest there. We could ask if this more than a sign of strength, if this was not a sign of political weakness.

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Dale Luis Menezes: That leads me to a very basic question, perhaps it's too basic for a scholar like you, but I think our viewers need to know who are the 'New Christians'? What is this category? Are New Christians the same as Jews, or are they not, because it seems to be very simple, but I believe it's not that.

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: It is not! And it is an important question. Well, the term 'Christão Novo' or 'New Christian' means those Jews who were converted to the Christian faith. This is the word that in Portugal is more used: Christão Novo. In Portugal, this conversion covered Portuguese Jews and thousands of Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492 after the establishment of the Inquisition in Spain. The most relevant fact it was that this was not a voluntary conversion.

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On the Easter of 1497 thousands of Jews were gathered in Lisbon in a mischievous way, supposing that the King was allowing them to go out. Those who wished to exit from the country and, instead, they were baptize jointly against their real children first, but also the older people. Some of these converted Jews married Old Christians, some pursued truly the Christian faith and others not.

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It is not possible to get precise numbers, but it is possible to reconstitute family and the individual life stories, including using inquisitorial sources as they provide information on the ancestors of the of the accused. For instance, in Lamego, a town in North Central Portugal, there was an important community of New Christians who owned lands and had vineyards as

Old Christians had. This day they were mixed up with the Portuguese society in some cases.



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Dale Luis Menezes: So, if I understood you correctly, what you're saying is that the 'Christãos Novos' comes out of the fall of Grenada after 1492 and the expulsion of Jews from Spain to Portugal. So, there's this conversion that happens against their will, some remain Christian, some don't. But also this population is quite mixed with the Portuguese society and even wider Iberian society as well, so effectively when we say 'New Christians', we are talking about a population that is hard to define, the boundaries are hard to define.

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes, that is true.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, some were integrated [in Portuguese society], others were not. Some made the move away from their old religion, some didn't. This is what creates the fuzzy boundaries. Let's move towards the Indian part of the story, to the South Asian part, and the first place that many of these New Christians and Jews found refuge is Cochin, which was such an important center before, let's say, before the 1530s at least for trade and even for religious power, or state power even.

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How important is a consideration of Cochin when we want to understand the foundation of the Goa Inquisition? Do we need to talk about Cochin, or do we not talk about Cochin? I am asking a very basic question. It's too basic, I am sorry!

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: We need to really speak about Cochin because, I think, there is an important aspect in Cochin, probably a little bit different from other Portuguese possessions in India. Cochin had, Santa Cruz de Cochin, as the Portuguese city or what I could translate to Upper Cochin or Cochim de Cima.

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There existed strong communities of Jews, Jews that were called Malabar or Black Jews and White Jews from different origins and, at the time in the 40s, 50s of the 16th century when this atmosphere of pre-Inquisition was happening [developing], a new synagogue was being built and we know that some of the New Christians who fled from Portugal, were in contact with these communities.

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So in Cochin, it happened in Goa also, Cochin was particular case for suspicion from the point of view of the more orthodox Catholic religious. It [Cochin] was where the first persecutions first began in 1557. Maybe also because in Goa at the time the Governor Francisco Barreto, was prudent regarding the Inquisition. He was not a supporter of the Court. So the first phase of a strong and hard position against New Christians began really in Cochin.

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Dale Luis Menezes: You mentioned the White Jews and Black Jews. What are they? Could you explain to us what's the difference between these two groups?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, the Black Jews or the Malabar Jews were previously settled in India, and recent studies from scholars like Tavim and others, pay attention to the fact that sometimes there are in these black community, of so-called black Jews, there are some Jews of Sephardic origin, but the main difference is that the White Jews were generally connected to the Iberian Peninsula and came later on, had different activities, sometimes more important, and they were separated communities of Jews in Cochin. The so-called white Jews were those more connected with the New Christians. Sometimes they knew each other from links that crossed the Mediterranean Sea and the Ottoman Empire.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, the black Jews were from, say Africa or the Arabian areas?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, I was rereading some studies about that. There is a general idea that they came from the Middle East and they settled many years before the White Jews in the Malabar region. But now its said that probably they did not come only from Middle East, they probably had some mixed origins, but the main feature is that they were there, this community in Malabar, before the waves of immigration of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula or from Portugal and Spain.

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Dale Luis Menezes: Right so, I think we can draw some conclusions from what you said. White Jews were from Iberia, and they were connected with the New Christians, through their trading networks in the Mediterranean and the Ottoman Empire and the Black Jews were the Jewish population that was already there in the Malabar. We can't really say where exactly they came from, perhaps from the Indian Ocean networks like the Cairo Geniza networks, for instance. So that's the main distinction, and the White Jews were the ones who were held in suspicion in places like Cochin.





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Dale Luis Menezes: So, that leads me to the next question. Why were these New Christians and Jews denounced? Why and how were they denounced in Cochin? We know, OK, that there were some 'judaizing' practices and that they were under suspicion, but is there something more that you can tell us about their denouncements?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Well, not exactly the facts, but the basis of the trial began by this: Two or three writings [publications] appeared in two churches in Cochin in more or less March or April of 1557. Those writings were against some of the preachers: namely, one Dom Gonçalo da Silveira, who was a Jesuit. Those writings had some anti-Christians sentences. They [the writings] were found, I will not give you the details, and the immediate suspicion of the authorship fell onto the New Christians. It began first in Cochin like this.

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Different authorities were against the idea of questioning the people and witnesses and slaves, and so on. The captain of Cochin disagreed from that and, but some religious authorities went on, and questioned mainly slaves, afterwards other people, about what were their masters doing in secrecy and this...many of the of the stereotypes that appeared later in the trials of Inquisition, regarding Judaism, that they prayed on Friday night, that they went to attend the masses, but when the Blessed Sacrament was held high people didn't look there, that they did not eat pork inside their house but offered pork when visitors came.

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In Cochin, one of the main issues that was present in this questioning was the fact that some went irregularly to the houses of some Jews, in the other part of the city, in Upper Cochin. So, this was the pretext to start denouncing them.

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Dale Luis Menezes: You mentioned about slaves, and I find that quite interesting. Also, the fact that they asked slaves, and over here in the inquisitorial trials testimony was considered as proof, right? In the case of the New Christians, as you just mentioned how the slaves would denounce them. So, what can we make of the fact that slaves could easily denounce their New Christian masters when it came to their interaction with the Inquisition?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: I've thought about that several times. As other servants, the slaves

were in in proximity to their masters. Theoretically, they had access to aspects of the daily life that were more private and according to the statements of some of the accused, after the slaves were imprisoned in Cochin until they declared what the Court [Tribunal], intended. They were not asked exactly on matters they knew or saw about the masters but on specific things, in a standardized way.

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Not declaring the time, not the exact circumstances of space where the practice might have occurred. There is a double behavior, on the one hand, it appears that there were promises of rewards: money or goods or conditions of marriage and freedom of slaves that were made and the promise that this would be kept secret, and they will not suffer any action from the masters, but it appears also that one or two of the accused tried to intercept slaves from testifying and mistreating them.

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Well, what we must probably stress is that formerly the denounced did not know the identity of the witnesses who denounced them. In Cochin, probably as it was the first action of the Inquisition in a small circuit, probably they could imagine, who were them, but in general they did not know. So, slaves could be a source of information, of true information or not, is difficult to understand.

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Dale Luis Menezes: Were there cases of slaves trying to take revenge? Were there cases of vendetta, of slaves denouncing their masters because they had been mistreated by their masters?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: In one of the records of the trials, I think it was Diogo Soares, the accused say that two of the slaves who wished to testify in favor, their testimony was not recorded. In one or two cases, they stated that the slave was beaten by, I don't know if he robbed or something, and afterwards he went to the authorities to denounce his master. It is something that happens today, perhaps not exactly in the same terms. It is difficult to balance sometimes what was true and what was not.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, the Inquisition tried to find out if the testimony was true and given for no other motive, for no revenge?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: I would say, in this case, in this specific case, just before the official

establishment of the Inquisition, I would imagine that the authorities who wanted the Court [Tribunal] established were not so worried to be sure of the testimonies because this is a time where they wanted really to establish the Court [Tribunal]. So, you don't have in the original files of these cases...you don't have the original testimonies of 1557. You have only what they call the ratification of these testimonies which are copies, of the original ones, so it is difficult to know if there were true witnesses and true testimonies.

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Dale Luis Menezes: So, let's move to the period after the Inquisition was established and, of course, your earlier work was about the establishment of the Inquisition. After your book was published you did some work on some interesting cases where the Viceroy and the religious authorities clashed with each other. From what I understand from your later work is that just as before, there were differences in opinion, it was also differences in opinion afterwards. So, you mention this case between the Viceroy, then Viceroy Dom Antonio de Mello e Castro, with the then Inquisitor at Goa, Paulo Castellino de Freitas from 1663 to 1670. First, could you briefly mention what that conflict was about in the 17th century?

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And secondly, I wanted you to also talk about how important is a consideration of these dissenting opinions when we want to generalize about the Inquisition? So, first, what was the conflict about between the Viceroy and the Inquisitor, and what is the importance of understanding these different opinions in making a broader generalization about the Inquisition?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Okay, well this conflict in the 17th century was related to the Inquisitorial repression of Gentile people, that is Hindus, who in different ways questioned matters such as the conversion to Christianity of children who had lost their fathers. What happened is that in Diu in this specific case, and after that in Goa the Viceroy, Dom Antonio de Mello de Castro, was against the interference of the Inquisition in these matters.

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In Goa, there was a Hindu who worked or was in connection with Portuguese authorities. This Hindu Mangogi Sinay, had three grandchildren whose father had died and the Inquisition interfered, namely Paulo Castellino de Freitas, wanting that the 'Father of Christians'—the 'Pai dos Christãos' to educate them. So they took these children from the family.

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The Viceroy was against this attitude, this action, and the fact that the Inquisition also supported this act. It is a complex conflict, but the question is that it is a really hard [serious]

conflict. The Viceroy did really oppose this and freed the children. Well, it is a long story, but what was interesting is also that it gave rise to a debate about not only the interference of the Inquisition, but also on the role of the 'Father of Christians'.

Religious Violence

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Dale Luis Menezes: Who was Mangogi Sinay? Was he a really important person over here that the Viceroy intervened on his behalf?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes, he had a post in the hierarchy of the administrative structure in Goa and worked for the Portuguese State, keeping his faith. In one of the arguments that the Viceroy used in his letters to the King, he states not only on Mangogi Sinay's three grandchildren but also what happened in Diu.

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He supported the idea that marriages between Hindus, according to Hindu ritual and religion should be respected if they were not exuberant, if they were discreet, and that the Crown should have in India a more moderate position regarding the other religions in order to have more stable position...

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Dale Luis Menezes: ...of the state, presumably, right?

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You presented a very complex case, you have the viceroy on one hand, you have Mangogi Sinay, on the other, you have the children, and you have the Inquisitor. So, again back to the question that I posed earlier, the part two of the question...How important do you think are such kinds of cases for a larger generalization, because one tends to have a particular idea of what the Inquisition was, but how does these kinds of cases change our understanding? Or do they keep our understanding the same?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: I think that this is very important to try to search for dissenting voices, sometimes minority voices at the time, because if we don't try to search this variety of voices, we think that things were just like that and human behavior never is just like that only—once for all! It is not to justify the action of the Inquisition and to say that well there were some good people that wanted to do differently, it's really to see how hard sometimes is to have a different opinion, but that they existed, from minority sometimes they become majority afterward.

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So, it is important to understand the Inquisition itself that we look out, not only inside the Inquisition and different sensibilities along the Inquisition but outside the context and how this can influence the course of the of the history.

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Dale Luis Menezes: And also if we think about the history we're thinking about essentially a period of time right, especially in this case, we know it when it started and when it ended, so we get a starting point and an ending point, and so, I think, it's important that the whole time, and the complexity of what happened because it just not one thing that happened, or 10 things that happened, but many, many things happened. So, our challenge, I guess, as historians, is to try to bring out that complexity of that experience don't you think?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Yes, you pointed out a very important issue, it is the time, the Inquisition in Goa in 1560 is one, the Inquisition in the 17th century is different. And the 18th it is different. The people who are persecuted are not exactly the same [over the centuries], from the point of view of culture and religion, and it is important not to have the idea that the Inquisition is solely about the New Christians and Judaism, that's it. In India, it was not, afterwards, it was not really like that. So, it is really important to have an overall idea and to discover underneath established ideas about the Inquisition or other things, to try to search for different opinions and debates.

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Dale Luis Menezes: Right, and I think on that note, we could end but before we end the interview, I always like to ask our guests what they are currently working. The research, if they would like to give us a glimpse of what's to come. So, are you working on something that could be either directly related to what we spoke, or...?

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Now precisely I am not directly working on the Inquisition, though, and I, as you said, I work at the Overseas Historical Archives—Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino. I cannot search for things related to the Inquisition in those records. But my main interests now relate to archival studies and history, colonial history and even on not too concerned the archives or sources for the study of inquisition I tried to do that related to overseas, so I devote my attention now to colonial history and to the archives of colonial history.

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Dale Luis Menezes: That that sounds fascinating and especially for a topic, like the Inquisition with archives are so less it seems like we would like to have many, many books and articles,

on this to read, especially you know, a student, like me. So, thank you so much! Thank you so much again for agreeing to do this interview, for your time.



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If I may, our story begins from 1492, from the fall of Granada in Spain and how we followed that thread to Lisbon, then, to the Ottoman Empire and Cochin. We spoke about the New Christians, we spoke about who this New Christians are and how difficult it is to define who are the New Christian. We spoke about the Jewish population, we spoke about how the slaves interacted with the Inquisition in Cochin and how difficult it is to understand this interaction because of the nature of how the record was created. You gave us a glimpse of the very interesting conflict in the 17th century between the Viceroy, the Inquisitor, and this figure of Mangogi Sinay which makes our understanding of the Inquisition that much richer than before. So for all that, thank you so much!

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Ana Cannas da Cunha: Thank you for inviting me, really!

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Dale Luis Menezes: Right, and to our viewers, thank you for watching and thank you for your time.



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