

Papal Bulls and Converso Brokers: New Christian Agents at the Service of the Catholic Monarchy in the Roman Curia (1550–1650)*

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Introduction

The Christian minority of the population in sixteenth-century Rome who were of Iberian Jewish origin constituted a notable presence in the city.¹ Part of that minority was also involved in the circuits formed around the issue of apostolic letters and the parallel phenomenon of alienation and commodification of ecclesiastical benefices.

Many converso families, traditionally dedicated to tax farming in the Iberian monarchies, found in the Roman Curia the center of the largest income market in the ecclesiastical world: that of commerce through the issue of benefices. For some other conversos, the Roman provision of benefices represented not only the possibility of accumulating considerable income but also an alternative path to their integration and social advancement. In addition the companies and transnational networks of merchant bankers were essential for the proper functioning of a system in which instruments of credit and circuits of information were essential. All these factors made some conversos from Portugal and Spain excellent candidates for managing these curial affairs, either as brokers hired by individuals or as servants of the Catholic monarchy. This paper focuses on the latter.

Despite the image to the contrary that we could have, during the rule of monarchs such as Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–1598), many individuals whose Jewish

ancestry was well known to the Crown were procured and contracted as royal agents for the Curia. The families of these men, in many cases, eventually joined not only the elites of their kingdoms of origin but also the Spanish, Portuguese, and even Italian nobility—in some cases, in a very short period of time.

We know almost nothing about this network of agencies. A thorough examination of what we do know would surpass the objectives of this paper, but a different perspective, that of the many conversos who acted as agents, may serve as a representative example for analyzing their functions and evolution in the period under study: 1550–1650.

Certainly the new curial dynamics in which these agents appeared began earlier, between the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, in parallel with the full development of a papal “spiritual” taxation (*fiscalità spirituale*) with roots in the fourteenth century. However, it was in the second half of the sixteenth century that these agents became well defined, as we shall see. The system would go into decline a century later, with the loss of the Netherlands and the Italian territories. These years also include the Iberian Union under the Habsburg dynasty (1580–1640), which allows us to see the operation of Portuguese businesses—and Portuguese New Christians—within a system controlled by Spain.

A Complex Curial Market

The development by the Holy See of financial needs similar to those of other early modern states brought with it the papacy’s increased “fiscalization” of the enormous body of ecclesiastical revenues that formed the system of benefices, which most notably affected the Iberian monarchies.²

The benefice—that is, the income linked to all ecclesiastical offices—was the basis for the financial support of the secular clergy (diocesan priests) in the Ancien Régime.³ With its origins in the Middle Ages, until the fourteenth century it seems to have worked without the Holy See interfering in the dynamic of the selection of priests. Afterward, however, the situation moved toward greater control by the papacy, a process that culminated in the sixteenth century.⁴

The invention of the juridical figure of the papal reserve, which made the pope the last holder of all the benefices—*dominus beneficiorum*—became the key to making this possible. Through it the pope reserved for himself the ultimate right over all ecclesiastical benefices, hence the ability to dispose of their succession and provision even when they were legitimately occupied, dispensing the necessary canonical requirements—even, in fact, transferring their ownership. The door was thus opened to the possibility of accommodating those who had the financial

capacity to obtain the bulls. They could circumvent the established route of the normal provision of benefices by means such as resignations (*resignatio in favorem tertii*) or coadjutorships with the right of succession.

We must add to this the large percentage of benefices the papacy was able to reserve in cases of vacancy by death of the owner. For the so-called alternative, only the benefices of free collation that would be vacant in the months of March, June, September, and December were reserved for the ordinary authority (usually the bishop and, to varying degrees according to the diocese, the cathedral chapter or another ecclesiastical body).⁵ The other eight were apostolic months, that is, the choice fell to the pope, and for its effective provision it was necessary to pay for the costs of the respective apostolic letter.

Regardless of how it was accessed, the receiver of a benefice had to meet certain canonical requirements: he had to be of a minimum age, be of legitimate birth, and receive holy orders (and in some cases have academic degrees). In addition the benefice could not be given to those convicted of matters of faith, nor could recipients simultaneously hold two benefices with care of souls. These were all requirements so that dispensation could only be obtained in the Roman Curia. Pluralism, that is the accumulation of benefices, which sometimes took the form of dozens of them in the hands of a single cleric, was in fact common at the time.

In practice Rome had created a genuine transnational market around the issue of apostolic letters (provision of benefices, dispensations of all kinds, and the like). Obviously, this market worked as well as it did because it was of benefit not only to the papal coffers: there were local interests, urban elites, and intermediate groups on the rise in the Iberian Peninsula. The phenomenon of the patrimonialization of ecclesiastical benefices by certain families did not depend solely on the possibilities offered by Rome, but they most certainly facilitated it. There were also networks of brokers, individuals knowledgeable about the inner workings of this market. The curial practice was intertwined, and it is not surprising to find that some of these experts wrote guides for dealing with benefices and dispensations, containing tables of values and taxes, advice about the use of information, and so on.

The Network of Curial Agencies of the Hispanic Monarchy

In the case of the Iberian Peninsula, there was a huge volume of ecclesiastical benefices whose provision could depend on the issuance of an apostolic letter. Some of them were under royal patronage: the presentation for all the bishoprics, every benefice in the Indies, the Canary Islands, the Kingdom of Granada, and a not inconsiderable number in the rest of the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, and the

Netherlands. The transmission of an important part of the ecclesiastical incomes of the Spanish and Portuguese empires depended on a complex negotiation with the curial system.⁶ To this we must add the thousands of dispensations the Curia issued to these realms each year and for different reasons, the taxation of pensions on bishoprics and other benefices, and so on.

The intense traffic of applications required fine connoisseurs of the uses and mechanics of the Apostolic Dataria. They were dispatchers who were stably employed and credited as ordinary diplomatic agents of the Crown, so that they could deal directly, on the king's behalf, with the pope, the datary (*datarius*), and other officials of the Curia.

Someone *práctico en Roma* (the common expression in sources of the period)—in other words the person who could deal with curial affairs diligently and skillfully—was always sought, acting also as an informant at the papal court. Thus, between the ambassador and the different agents, the Spanish monarchy maintained several channels of simultaneous communication, ensuring that it would receive as much information as possible. The correspondence sent to Madrid is quite repetitive, and there are plenty of duplicate copies of letters, which displays the zeal of the agents in avoiding any loss of news.

The Spanish Crown used a system that reflected its supranational nature. This system consisted of several specialized representatives residing in Rome as the functional support for the protection and realization of the Crown's interests in this regard. Among their other functions, they were basically procurators of the ecclesiastical patronage of the Catholic monarch as a sovereign of different territories. It was a composite system for a composite monarchy.

The king appointed a general agent who was, in theory, dependent on the Council of State. His responsibility was the curial business related to Castile, the West Indies, the Inquisition, and the Bull of the Crusade (one of the most important revenues of the Crown, by papal concession, periodically negotiated), as well as any other requirements of the monarchy's governing bodies. As Rafael Olaechea has written:

Rome was the only court where the Spanish monarch sent two delegates; one, the ambassador, minister or plenipotentiary, represented the king before the ruler of the Papal States; the other, the general agent of prayers or petitions, represented the Catholic prince before the visible head of the church. This duality that, at first glance, may seem strange, is not a whim of historians. The pontiff himself understood it in this way and countersigned it. It was in this way that the first [the ambassador] was received by the pope with a specific protocol and ceremony, and

they both dealt with political and religious matters. The second [the general agent] had the doors of the Roman court open to him—especially those of the Dataria and the Chancellery—where all sorts of ecclesiastical matters were handled, from the dispensation of a marriage between first cousins, to the erection of a new diocese, through thousands of pardons, supplications, and provisions related to benefices.⁷

In 1563 Ambassador Luis de Requesens pointed out the need for the services of the Catalan Francisco Robuster as a general agent in the Roman Curia, given the insufficient experience of the staff in the Spanish embassy. He also recommended hiring a second person, since the sheer volume of existing businesses that Robuster dealt with on his own meant a work overload for him.⁸

We know this general agent's role during the late seventeenth through the second half of the eighteenth centuries through Rafael Olaechea's and Maximiliano Barrio Gozalo's studies. They are exceptional contributions to the understanding of a hitherto-neglected early modern period political apparatus.⁹ At this point in time, we know little or nothing about the rest of the network of agencies, despite the abundant documentation preserved.¹⁰

If the affairs of Castile, the Indies, and others of a nonterritorial nature were the responsibility of the general agent, those concerning other kingdoms and states of the Catholic monarchy were dealt with by specific agents: there was an agency for the Crown of Aragon, one for the Kingdom of Naples, one for the Duchy of Milan, one for the Kingdom of Sicily, and another for the Spanish Low Countries and Franche-Comté. Agents often came from the patronage networks of each viceroy or governor, who chose them. Portugal, meanwhile, would be added to this system in the 1580s, maintaining the strong political character of its representatives in the Curia.

In any case the system could accommodate the need for flexibility: the same individual could be responsible for several agencies at the same time. Some agencies could also be temporarily suppressed in favor of the general agency of Spain.

Many conversos fulfilled these duties in the service of the Spanish Habsburgs between 1550 and 1650. Obviously, not all the agents were New Christians, but their number in the period under consideration here was of an extraordinarily significant proportion, given that we are speaking of a social minority. For example, in the agency of Portugal, at least one third of the agents appointed by the Crown had Jewish ancestry. In the case of the Italian agencies, 45 percent of the agents we know of were New Christians. Even more interesting is the fact that conversos were used more frequently in these agencies: 53 percent of nominations as agents

of Sicily, Naples, or Milan were made in favor of New Christians such as Andrés Vela, Ferrante de Torres, Juan Rubio de Herrera, Alonso de la Torre y Berna, and Juan de Córdoba.

The Crown's use of agents who were known to be of Jewish descent was repeated and conscious. It was not a rare phenomenon; rather it is an example of the ambivalence governing the relations between the Iberian monarchies and the New Christian minority during this era. In the search for appropriate representatives in the Roman Curia, efficacy prevailed over genealogy, and many conversos showed that they could provide the most efficient services.¹¹

Problems arose, however, when these agents tried to use their position to force entry (for themselves or their families) into institutions with statutes of purity of blood, most notably, cathedral chapters. Given the strong legitimating power of these bodies of the Iberian local elites, it was a tactic that allowed them to clear the family name—if they could manage to pass through that filter, using whatever means they could. However, the application of the statute could be rigorous if the chapter in question or a decisive part of its members were so inclined. To do so was risky, as it could publicly expose the “stain” that had been conveniently concealed. This was a common element in all the cases of converso agents known to me.

From the reign of the Catholic Monarchs onward, procurators and special agents were used.¹² In the 1520s the first fixed agents appeared on the scene, but it was during the reign of Philip II that this agency system was formally structured. The early years of the embassy of Don Luis de Requesens, who was very critical of the previous performance of various curial agents, are a clear display of the policy of the Catholic monarchy toward achieving a network that was subordinate to the opinion of the embassy.

The Embassy of Requesens: The Case of Andrés Vela and the Weaknesses of the System
 Andrés Vela (ca. 1516–1567) exemplifies the figure of the mid-sixteenth-century curial agent whose influence others would attempt to curb in the 1560s. A converso churchman who immigrated to Rome, he was propelled to a prominent position in the papal court and enriched by the speculation in benefices. He was a shrewd connoisseur of the Dataria's mechanisms. The position of such individuals attracted the Crown, which could count on their services. Their excessive independence and the vested interest they so overtly flaunted were, however, at the root of the problem with them.

Coming from a family of Andalusian Jews converted to Christianity in 1492, Vela went to Rome in his youth, where I have been able to document his presence

from the pontificate of Paul III (1534–1549) onward. In Rome he began dealing in the market of ecclesiastical benefices and soon became a courtier and familiar of the pope. By 1542 he was a knight of Saint Peter, a venal title of knighthood of a papal military order that he must have acquired a little earlier.¹³ Later he obtained the office of prothonotary.

To be a member of the papal family (the close circle of direct servants), a curial officer, and a knight of Saint Peter were clear advantages to those involved in the business of ecclesiastical benefices and the management of apostolic letters. The abundance of prothonotaries, referendaries, notaries of the Apostolic Camera, and *cubicularii* or *camerarii* (that is, stewards) among those who accumulated benefices and were speculators in this market is therefore not surprising. These offices were also venal. Their high price, however, made it necessary to resort to capital from the *societates officiorum*, companies formed by various investors for the purchase of offices that were held by a single individual who held the title.¹⁴

It was in the 1550s that Andrés Vela began to make a name for himself in Rome. An increase in the number of transactions involving ecclesiastical benefices that passed through his hands can be observed in the Vatican archival documentation. This earned him a remarkable level of income, through ecclesiastical pensions and benefices, plus valuable experience in the curial mechanisms. His position in the papal court rose in those years: he had been papal squire under Paul IV (1555–1559), but it would be under Paul's successor, Pius IV (1559–1565), that he reached his greatest influence as the pope's private *camerarius* (chamberlain) and his person of trust.¹⁵

His name is cited in the correspondence of Ambassador Diego Hurtado de Mendoza in 1552, though it is unclear when he began to be counted on as an ordinary agent.¹⁶ His career in the service of the Crown probably began under the reign of Philip II, thanks to the recommendation of the Duke of Sessa, Don Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, with whom he maintained a close relationship of patronage.

The patronage link between the Salazar family, of which Andrés Vela was a member, and this branch of the Fernández de Córdobas, Counts of Cabra and Dukes of Sessa and Baena, had been forged at least one or two generations earlier. For example, Andrés Vela's mother, Leonor de Salazar, had served in the court of the Countess of Cabra, the duke's grandmother.¹⁷ Following the appointment of Don Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba in 1558 as governor of Milan, Vela begins to appear in the documentation as an agent in Rome for the affairs of the duchy. In fact, on August 18, 1559, he was a witness to the presentation of the body of Paul IV, which he reported by letter to Philip II, conveying to him the events and people's reactions.¹⁸

In March 1563 Don Luis Dávila, grand commander of the Order of Alcántara, came to Italy as a special representative of Philip II to the pope for matters relating to the Council of Trent. Simultaneously, Fernández de Córdoba had been appointed to a second term in Milan, during which he made Andrés Vela an agent in the Curia. In September of that same year, Luis de Requesens made his official entry into Rome as the Catholic monarchy's ambassador. The problems for many Spanish curial agents were not long in coming.

Upon his arrival, Requesens received a secret report from the hands of Dávila, who was preparing to return to Spain a few days later. His mission in the court seems not to have been confined to dealing with the council. The grand commander of Alcántara had drafted, along with the outgoing ambassador, Francisco de Vargas, a series of recommendations to strengthen the control and authority of the embassy. One of the proposed measures was to have a number of Spaniards leave Rome, by any means. Among these Spaniards were the curial agents of Milan and Naples.

For Requesens the need for changes in the network of agencies, leading to a system subordinate to the embassy and not parallel to it, was evident. Several of these agents had demonstrated excessive ambition, using their posts without informing the embassy of their actions, when they were not actively working for their own advantage.

And although this has not happened under me, and I will work so that it does not, nonetheless I cannot impose myself on them, for in doing as they wish they do not overstep themselves, and this has been a cut vein for several ministers in the past, which made them lose some of their authority. I believe that it would be convenient to get rid of some of them, especially the agent of Milan, Andrés Vela, one of those [mentioned] in the *memorial* by the Commander of Alcántara, and that the viceroys should transmit all the information to the ambassador and that he have solicitors of his own choosing so that under his orders they can request what is necessary for each kingdom or state. In so doing I assure you things would be better managed.¹⁹

The main obstacle to the imposition of these measures was the closeness of several individuals to the pope. According to the report, it was best to remove them from Rome. Andrés Vela appeared to be unapproachable directly, given his position in the inner circle of the pontiff; his sudden disappearance could lead to tensions with the Holy See. The honor of the Duke of Sessa, his protector, also had to be dealt with tactfully. So, with the consent of the king, they opted for a strategy that would combine a decisive effect and an indirect action.

On October 23, 1563, Requesens wrote to Sessa, warning him about the “negative opinion among everyone” regarding the agent of Milan and the existence of instructions in the embassy that he be made to leave Rome along with the agent of Naples and other Spaniards.²⁰

One night soon after, he ordered the kidnapping of Álvaro Esquivel who, after being held for eight days in the embassy, was sent to Spanish territory in a frigate.²¹ Álvaro Esquivel was one of the elements in the report, but unlike Vela and others, his position was more fragile, as he held no official post in the Curia, nor was he an agent of the Crown. In an encrypted letter dated November 13, 1563, Requesens informed the king of the success of the operation. Though there had been murmuring and apparently some witnesses, Requesens thought that the best path to follow was to deny everything. Resorting to bribery to shut mouths was not believed necessary, as they had accomplished what they wanted: nobody had evidence regarding responsibility for the kidnapping, although everyone, from Andrés Vela to the pope himself, knew now about the embassy’s expeditious ways of going about things.

On December 18 Philip II wrote to Sessa ordering him to dismiss Vela, “who is one of the main members of a group of tricksters among some Spaniards in Rome,” and indicating the new line to follow thereafter in the choice of a curial agent for Spanish Milan:

He [the prospective agent] must possess all the good qualities that you see are required and must not be given more than two hundred ducats as has always been stipulated, ordering expressly that he not deal with matters on his own with the pope, cardinals, nor any other person, but that he be dealt with by the grand commander of Castile, who is my current ambassador, or whoever is in Rome at the time, and let him deal with these matters in order that only he or the people that depend on him decide and that nothing be done that is not known to or ordered by my ambassador because it so suits my service and the authority and reputation of that office, and the matters themselves and their proper issuing and management.²²

On January 4, 1564, Sessa responded to the king by letter regarding the charges against Vela, which were the fruit, according to him, of the passions that any man of his privileged position in the papal court could arouse. It was this position that, in his opinion, would make of him a suitable choice as an agent, a post in which had served diligently. In recent months, and under his express orders, Sessa informed the king, Vela had taken fewer liberties, following the lines desired by the new ambassador, who apparently tried to compromise.

After Esquivel's kidnapping, however, the message had become abundantly clear. Following that event, Andrés Vela had asked Sessa for permission to retire to Córdoba, in the cathedral of which he had obtained a canonry (not without problems on account of the purity of blood statute).²³ It was, as the duke himself explained to the king, the best possible solution for the honor of this agent, who would leave an office without public affront, "which may be allotted as Your Majesty sees fit."²⁴

Other Spanish curial agents handled business as well. The Torres family, also of the same Andalusian Jewish origin as Andrés Vela, exemplifies the adaptation to the new forms. Inquisitorial pressure seems to have led Don Luis de Torres Sr. from his native Malaga to Rome in the first half of the sixteenth century.²⁵ In the same month (October 1563) that the events described above unfolded, his nephew, Don Luis de Torres Jr., wrote to Philip II. In the letter he recalled the good services rendered by both his uncle and himself in the execution of curial matters. With this letter the family expressly reiterated its loyalty and willingness to serve the Crown in the papal court in the future.²⁶ Not only were the Torreses not dismissed but in the 1570s the agency of Naples was confided to Fernando de Torres, Don Luis's brother.²⁷

The case of Andrés Vela illustrates the desire of the Crown to have better control of their multiple agents. These, however, maintained a direct channel of correspondence with the monarch for instructions, lines of credit, and so on. They continually informed Madrid about events, over and above their role as expeditors. Some even made it a point to locate relics, archaeological remains, artwork, or specific artists for the Spanish court.²⁸

Doctor Juan Rubio de Herrera is an example of the variety of parallel functions that were developed by some agents. An Andalusian cleric of Jewish origin, he was known at the court of Madrid for his work as a provider of artwork, relics, and ruins.²⁹ Following the usual strategy, he brought his nephew, Juan de Córdoba, to Rome, where he taught him everything he needed to know to succeed as a curial agent and a dealer in artwork. Moreover, the nephew came to play an important role in this field, thanks to his close friendship with the painter Diego Velázquez.³⁰

The position at the papal court and the experience in negotiating ecclesiastical benefices enjoyed by Juan Rubio de Herrera was, as in other cases, key to the Crown entrusting him with the responsibility of obtaining apostolic letters and other related matters. The logical preference of the Crown for especially efficient and loyal agents was sometimes reflected in their performance of their duties for very long periods (the converso José Pinto Pereira, with twenty-nine years of service as an

agent of Portugal, is a striking example).³¹ It was also evinced in the accumulation of several agencies by one person, like Rubio de Herrera, who simultaneously held three: those of Naples, Sicily, and Milan. A key to his success in business was, in addition to his expertise in the Dataria, his friendship with Ferdinando Brandani (the Italian name of the Portuguese converso Fernando Brandão), the most powerful man in the Dataria, after the *subdatario*, as the prefect in charge of the *compositiones*.³² Until the subdatario's execution for corruption and Brandão's disgrace, this nexus constituted a major source of social capital that Rubio de Herrera not only exploited but also managed to convey to his nephew, who succeeded him in the agency of Naples in 1641.³³ Today a reflection of these ties is the portrait that Velázquez, during his stay in Rome, painted of Brandão.³⁴

The Pintos and the Agency of Portugal

Prior to the advent of the House of Austria in Portugal, there did not seem to have been a stable figure comparable to that of the general agent of Spain for the business of issuing apostolic letters. The most important issuances were the responsibility of either the ambassador in Rome or a procurator expressly hired for the task.

Among the agreements reached in the Cortes of Tomar in 1581 to ensure his acceptance as king of Portugal, Philip II promised to keep Portuguese diplomatic agents in most important embassies, including that of Rome.³⁵ The preserved correspondence between these agents demonstrates that, for at least two reasons, they rapidly became the kind of curial agents who already had dealings with the Catholic monarchy: first, the policy centralizing diplomatic relations of all territories under Spanish sovereignty in the person of the ambassador of Spain, and second, in this connection, a greater integration of the Portuguese community into the *nationes Hispaniae* present in Rome was sought, claiming to give them a single voice and visible head. This would be a source of internal conflict during the six decades of political union.

On the one hand, the Crown knew from experience the damages that resulted from maintaining autonomous agents, who were minor and poorly controlled. It was a problem they had tried to remedy in the 1560s and did not wish to repeat twenty years later. Consequently, the ambassadors' policy was almost always to try to keep Portugal's agent subordinated, limiting his functions to negotiating the issuance of apostolic letters, as an element within the agency system. There was also a call for an outright abolition of the office.³⁶

On the other hand, as Gaetano Sabatini has analyzed, throughout this period the Portuguese community around the national church of Sant'Antonio dei Portoghesi

was the source of constant confrontation with this line of action, not only refusing to recognize the Spanish ambassador as its protector and natural representative but de facto granting this role to the agent of Portugal. The election in 1630 of an ambassador of Portuguese origin, Don Manuel de Moura Corte-Real, the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo, only exacerbated the problem, contrary to what one might think.³⁷

With the Iberian Union, the newly created agency of Portugal was entrusted to the then secretary of the embassy in Rome, Doctor António Pinto. Pinto was a confidant of Lourenço Pires de Távora, Portuguese ambassador to the Holy See, who had called him to Rome.

The client-patron relationship between the Pintos and the Távora family was of long standing. The secretary's grandparents, Doctor Moisés de Valencia (baptized in Portugal as António de Valença) and his wife, Francisca de Valencia, both Jews from Zamora, had entered the service of the powerful Portuguese lineage after leaving Castile in 1492.³⁸

António Pinto immediately saw in the new dynasty an opportunity for his family. In 1580 he appeared in Badajoz, Spain, to receive Philip II on his way to Portugal and to offer his loyalty and services in Rome.³⁹ Pinto would serve as an agent for the next eight years, after which his nephew, Francisco Vaz Pinto, would succeed him. The nephew had previously been called to Rome by his uncle to be trained as a suitable substitute. The Crown accepted his offer in 1588. The Count of Olivares, Spanish ambassador in Rome, made this known in a December 1588 letter to the king:

Doctor António Pinto left here on November 30, and I cannot but testify to Your Majesty that here he has served with much love and rectitude and with great understanding of the business at hand, with great experience in expediting documents, having also helped me and worked hard at the matters that pertained to the responsibilities of my office. . . . The *licenciado* Francisco Baez [Vaz] Pinto (to whom he leaves this office and the other matters according to Your Majesty's will) has been here with him, and even though a few days do not suffice to form a correct judgement of someone, my favorable opinion of him has not diminished even in the few days after his [António's] departure, and the same discipline can be seen in him as that which existed in his uncle.⁴⁰

The Crown's favor to the Pintos, both uncle and nephew, was based on their efficacious work, as well as on their coordination with the Spanish embassy, a key goal from the time of Philip II's reign onward, as we have seen. Francisco Vaz Pinto worked as an agent of Portugal in Rome for eleven years, and his replacement came

in 1599 along with the change of government. The Pinto lineage would, however, be linked to the Portuguese agency through people like Francisco Pereira Pinto, agent from 1610 to 1615,⁴¹ and Doctor José Pinto Pereira, whom the House of Braganza maintained in place for almost three decades.⁴²

The Crown greatly valued expertise in these matters. The possibility of the transmission of this experience from an agent to a candidate in training from within the family partly explains the repeated appearance of brothers, uncles, and nephews in the agency network. Operation of this network was subject to less change when an agent trained someone: experience was accumulated and with it the potential efficiency in the execution of business.

Final Thoughts

The presence of conversos in the network of curial agents is a reflection of the importance they had in Rome and in the business of issuing of apostolic letters. Considering the great proportional weight that the Iberian Peninsula seems to have had in the application for ecclesiastical benefices and dispensations within Catholic Europe, the significance of the Spanish-Portuguese conversos in curial circuits is not strange, nor is their repeated appearance as part of the network of agents deployed by the Catholic monarchy.⁴³ It is useful, however, to emphasize this function in contrast to preconceived ideas.

The factors that made the Curia attractive to conversos likewise explain both the reason the Crown chose many of them as agents and the problem—never fully resolved—associated with them (their conflict of interest). The market that developed around the issue of apostolic letters was an open path to enrichment (through speculation with ecclesiastical benefices) and social mobility, above all by means of the cathedral chapters. The image is repeated with each of the converso agents mentioned.

Andrés Vela amassed thousands of ducats in ecclesiastical benefices, delivering more benefices to his brothers (the priorate of the cathedral of Jaén, a canonry in the cathedral of Córdoba, etc.). In an incredible social leap, a few years later his nephews entered the ranks of the nobility with the habits of knights in Castile, the title of Counts of Vaglio in Naples, and marriages that allowed them to link with prominent noble houses (the Italian Carafas, the Spanish Fernández de Córdobas, and others).⁴⁴

The Torreses shared the prosperous ecclesiastical dignities of archdeacon of Vélez and chancellor and dean of the cathedral of Malaga. Simultaneously, they formed a true episcopal dynasty in Italy. The various branches of their descendants

also would don the habits of knights of military orders, obtain Italian fiefdoms, and acquire noble titles such as the Marquisade of Dragonetti-de Torres.⁴⁵

The presence in the Curia of António Pinto and his nephew Francisco Vaz Pinto assured his brothers and relatives several of the most prominent Portuguese prebends (the archdeaconship of Lisbon, the deanship of Oporto, the chancellorship of Coimbra, several canonries, and so on), the income of which helped Pinto build rich *morgados* (entailed estates) and become part of the local elite in Portugal.

The position of Juan Rubio de Herrera as an agent of Naples, Sicily, and Milan was expressly reflected on his tombstone in the church of Montserrat in Rome. His nephew who commissioned it, the agent Juan de Córdoba, did not hesitate to use that position, the accumulated prebends (a half prebend in the cathedral of Córdoba, a canonry in Cartagena, etc.) and the associated prestige, to qualify his uncle, the son of a New Christian silversmith, as a Cordovan noble (*nobili cordubensi*). He also designed a showy coat of arms for his uncle, a blatant imitation of that of the Fernández de Córdobas, lineage of the “the Great Captain” Don Gonzalo de Córdoba, conqueror of Naples.⁴⁶

The potential of offices such as that of the Crown’s agent presented a temptation too great to ignore, and agents, who were often poorly paid or paid late, took advantage of them.⁴⁷ The Crown itself sometimes compensated its agents by allowing such practices, which were then criticized by several ambassadors. In a context marked by simulation and quid pro quo, many agents ended up establishing ties of interest in the Dataria that were sometimes counterproductive to the Crown. This clash of interests was a weakness of the system and was constantly denounced. The measures taken during Requesens’s embassy in the 1560s were just the first major attempt at reform and takeover planned by the Crown. It would be repeated without clear success throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁸ However, the vital importance of the issuing of apostolic letters for daily life in the Catholic monarchy’s territories (in the dynamics of the social mobility of its elites, the rewards relating to royal patronage, and so on) made the system of curial agencies both a characteristic solution and an irreplaceable apparatus.

Notes

- * Postdoctoral fellow of the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia. (Ref. SFRH/BPD/85917/2012). This article is part of the projects Intergrupos: Grupos Intermédios em Portugal e no Império Português: as familiaturas do Santo Ofício (c. 1570-1773) PTDC/HIS-HIS/118227/2010–

FCT, Portugal; COMPETE/QREN/FEDER–FCOMP-01-0124-FEDER-020722; and Nobles judeoconversos: El origen judío de las élites andaluzas (ss. XV-XVII) – HAR2012-35752. These are the first results of my research on the Iberian network of agents involved in curial businesses. Most of the sources are of Spanish or Portuguese origin. My current, deeper research into the Roman documentation (especially Archivo Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City, and Archivo di Stato di Roma, Rome) is thus far reinforcing the conclusions of this paper. This article is part of the projects Intergrupos. Grupos *Intermédios em Portugal e no Império Português: as familiaturas do Santo Ofício (c. 1570-1773)* PTDC/HIS-HIS/118227/2010-FCT, Portugal; COMPETE/QREN/FEDER-FCOMP-01-0124-FEDER-020722 and *Nobles judeoconversos. El origen judío de las élites andaluzas (ss. XV-XVII)-HAR2012-35752*. Research work carried out within the scope of UID/HIS/00057/2013 (POCI-01-0145-FEDER-007702), FCT/Portugal, COMPETE, FEDER, Portugal2020.

- 1 On the converso minority in Rome, see James W. Nelson Novoa, *Being the Nação in the Eternal City: New Christian Lives in Sixteenth-Century Rome* (Peterborough, Ontario: Baywolf Press, 2014).
- 2 See Paolo Prodi, *Il sovrano pontefice: Un corpo e due anime, la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna* [The Papal Prince. One Body and Two Souls: The Papal Monarchy in Early Modern Europe] (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982). Mario Rosa, *La curia romana nell'età moderna: Istituzioni, cultura, carriere* [The Roman Curia in the early modern age: Institutions, culture, careers] (Rome: Viella, 2013), 31–32, also alludes to this debate on the papal financial policy as a sign of the Pontifical States' modernity, comparing the favorable opinions of scholars such as Delumeau, Reinhard, or Kraus with those holding more skeptical positions, such as Peter Partner. See, for example, Jean Delumeau, *Vie économique et sociale de Rome dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle* [The economic and social life in late sixteenth-century Rome] (Paris: Boccard, 1957–1959). Wolfgang Reinhard, *Papstfinanz und Nepotismus unter Paul V (1605-1621): Studien und Quellen zur Struktur und zu quantitativen Aspekten des päpstlichen Herrschaftssystems* [Papal finance and nepotism under Paul V (1605-1621): Studies and sources on the structure and quantitative aspects of the papal system of government] (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1974); and Peter Partner, "Papal Financial Policy in the Renaissance and the Counter-Reformation," *Past and Present* 88, no. 1 (1980): 17–62.
- 3 On the system of ecclesiastical benefices in early modern Spain, see Maximiliano Barrio Gozalo, *El sistema beneficial de la Iglesia Española en el Antiguo Régimen (1475-1834)* [The system of benefices of the Spanish church in the Ancien Régime (1475-1834)] (Alicante, Spain: Universidad de Alicante, 2011).
- 4 Jorge Díaz Ibáñez, "El pontificado y los reinos peninsulares durante la Edad Media: Balance historiográfico" [The papacy and the peninsular kingdoms in the Middle Ages: Historiographical review], *En la España Medieval* 24 (2001): 465–536; and more recently, Díaz Ibáñez, "La provisión pontificia de beneficios eclesiásticos en el reino de Castilla durante el período avinonés: Estado de

- la investigación” [Papal provision of ecclesiastical benefices in the Kingdom of Castile during the Avignon period: State of the art], *Lusitania Sacra* 22 (2010): 63–84.
- 5 Fernanda Olival and Nuno G. Monteiro, “Mobilidade social nas carreiras eclesiásticas em Portugal (1500-1820)” [Social mobility in the ecclesiastical careers in Portugal (1500-1820)], *Análise Social* 37, no. 165 (2003): 1228.
 - 6 The dynamics of access to and reproduction of Iberian cathedral chapters are an illustrative indicator. In the case of Seville in the seventeenth century, 81 percent of the dignities, canonries, and so on were obtained through bulls. Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, resignations *in favorem* and coadjutorships with the right of succession often made up more than 60 percent of the provisions of benefices of the chapter of Cordova (Spain), often surpassing 80 percent of the total, compared to free ecclesiastical collation. In the chapter of Evora (Portugal), an average of 64 percent of the hundreds of new members between 1547 and 1799 obtained their prebend through a papal bull. See Antonio J. Díaz Rodríguez, “Un mercado benefical: notas sobre mercantilización de beneficios eclesiásticos en Castilla y Portugal” [A benefice market: Notes on commodification of ecclesiastical benefices in Castile and Portugal], in *Comercio y cultura en la Edad Moderna* [Commerce and culture in the modern age], ed. Juan J. Iglesias Rodríguez, Rafael M. Pérez García, and Manuel F. Fernández Chaves (Seville: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 2015), 815–830. On the chapter of Evora, see Ana I. López-Salazar Codes and Antonio J. Díaz Rodríguez, “El cabildo catedralicio de Évora en la Edad Moderna (1547-1801)” [The cathedral chapter of Evora in the modern period (1547-1801)], *Historia y Genealogía* 4 (2014): 50.
 - 7 Rafael Olaechea, *Las relaciones hispano-romanas en la segunda mitad del XVIII: La agencia de preces* [Hispano-Roman relations in the second half of the eighteenth century: The agency of prayers] (Saragossa: Institución Fernando el Católico-CSIC, 1999), 3. All translations are my own.
 - 8 Francisco Robuster, Charles V and Philip II’s chargé d’affaires, was recommended by the embassy as the most “practical” and trustworthy Spaniard for the emission of briefs among the residents in Rome: Letter of Luis de Requesens to the king, 13/11/1563, Estado: leg. 895, Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter cited as AGS), Valladolid, Spain. Born in Reus, he was a canon of Tarragona and an auditor of the Rota. The Crown accepted his nephew Gabriel Robuster in 1570 as his successor. On the presence of this family in Rome, see Ignasi Fernández Terricabras, “De Reus a Roma: la familia Robuster al segle XVI. Algunes reflexions sobre les estratègies familiars” [From Reus to Rome: The Robuster family in the sixteenth century. Some thoughts on family strategies], *Pedralbes* 23 (2003): 551–566.
 - 9 Olaechea, *Las relaciones hispano-romanas*. Maximiliano Barrio Gozalo, “La agencia de preces de Roma entre los Austrias y los Borbones (1678-1730)” [The agency of prayers of Rome between the Habsburgs and the Bourbons (1678-1730)], *Hispania* 73, no. 246 (2014): 15–40. For the nineteenth century, see Fernando González, “La Agencia General de Preces a Roma (1798-1908)”

- [The general agency of prayers to Rome (1798-1908)] (PhD diss., Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1972).
- 10 A recent analysis of the whole Spanish network of agencies for curial businesses appears in Antonio J. Díaz Rodríguez, "The System of Curial Agencies of the Spanish Monarchy in Papal Rome," *Chronica Nova* 42 (2016) (forthcoming).
 - 11 Ambassadors were charged with recommending to the monarch individuals they trusted, who were sometimes among their clientele. A good example is doctor António Pinto, presented by the Portuguese ambassador Lourenço Pires de Távora. In 1559 Távora wrote to the royal secretary, Pedro de Alcáçova Carneiro, recommending to him "a certain António da Fonseca who, as a man of his nation and as a banker I hold to be a good man, and I understand that he serves your grace and he always complies with what is asked of him." (hum Antonyo da Fonsequa que pera homem da sua nação e com ofycyo de banqueyro tenho por bom homem entendo que he servidor de Vossa Merce e que estaa prestes pera o que compryr.) Silva Mendes Leal, José da, ed., *Corpo diplomático português* [Portuguese diplomatic collection] (Lisbon: Academia Real das Ciências, 1884), 8:167. On António de Fonseca, see Susana Bastos Mateus and James Nelson Novoa, "A Sixteenth Century Voyage of Legitimacy: The Paths of Jácome and António da Fonseca from Lamego to Rome and Beyond," *Hispania Judaica* 9 (2013): 169–192. Fonseca collaborated with Pinto as a banker and personal broker. Two of his powers of attorney are in Notai del Tribunale dell’Auditor Camerae: 7.060, 508-511v., Archivio di Stato di Roma, Rome.
 - 12 The activity of Bernardino de Carvajal in the decades between 1480 and his nomination as cardinal in 1493 foreshadowed the functions of the future general agents of Spain. He was responsible for the affairs of Spain and the Indies (the concession of benefices, dispensations, the imposition of pensions on bishoprics, etc.), the negotiations on the Bull of the Crusade, and those involving the Inquisition. On Carvajal, see Álvaro Fernández de Córdoba Miralles, "Alejandro VI y los Reyes Católicos. Relaciones político-eclesiásticas (1492-1503)" [Alexander VI and the Catholic Monarchs: Political and ecclesiastical relations (1492-1503)] (PhD diss., Pontificia Universitas Sanctae Crucis, 2005), 81–83.
 - 13 In the first half of the sixteenth century, the price of the habit of the Order of Saint Peter went from approximately eight hundred to one thousand ducats. Thomas Frenz, *Die Kanzlei der Päpste der Hochrenaissance (1471-1527)* [The chancellery of the popes of the High Renaissance (1471-1527)] (Tübingen: De Gruyter, 1986), 230–231.
 - 14 Alberto García Ulecia, "Las sociedades sobre oficios de la Curia Romana" [Companies for offices of the Roman Curia], *Historia, Instituciones, Documentos* 11 (1984): 197–253. See, in addition, Paolo Prodi, "Operazioni finanziarie presso la corte romana di un uomo di affari milanese nel 1562-1563" [Financial transactions of a Milanese businessman at the Roman court in 1562-1563], *Rivista Storica Italiana* 73, no. 4 (1961): 641–659.

- 15 Between 1551 and 1592 the office of papal squire was sold at between seven hundred and eight hundred (occasionally one thousand) gold ducats. Frenz, *Die Kanzlei*, 233.
- 16 Mss. 981, 321, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.
- 17 Antonio J. Díaz Rodríguez, “La instrumentalización de los cabildos catedrales: Los Salazar como estudio de caso de la minoría judeoconversa” [The instrumentalisation of cathedral chapters: The Salazars as a case study of the converso minority], in *Iglesia, poder y fortuna: Clero y movilidad social en la España moderna* [Church, power, and fortune: Clergy and social mobility in early modern Spain], ed. Enrique Soria Mesa and Antonio J. Díaz Rodríguez (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2012), 128.
- 18 Miles Pattenden, *Pius IV and the Fall of the Caraffa: Nepotism and Papal Authority in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 28–29.
- 19 Estado: leg. 895, AGS.
- 20 *Pío IV y Felipe Segundo: Primeros diez meses de la embajada de don Luis de Requesens (1563-1564)* [Pius IV and Philip II: First ten months of the embassy of Don Luis de Requesens (1563-1564)] (Madrid: Imprenta de Rafael Marco, 1891), 53.
- 21 See an interesting analysis of the Esquivel affair and all its political dimensions in Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, “¿Monarca Católico o Rey de España?: nación y representación de la monarquía de Felipe II en la corte de Roma” [Catholic monarch or king of Spain? Nation and representation of the monarchy of Philip II in the court of Rome], in *Italia non spagnola e Monarchia Spagnola tra ‘500 e ‘600: politica, cultura e letteratura* [Non-Spanish Italy and Spanish monarchy between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Politics, culture and literature], ed. Giuseppe di Stefano, Alessandro Martinengo, and Elena Fasano Guarini (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2009), 3–28.
- 22 *Pío IV y Felipe Segundo*, 140–141.
- 23 Díaz Rodríguez, “La instrumentalización de los cabildos.”
- 24 Estado: leg. 1.214, doc.16, AGS.
- 25 His father had been tried by the Holy Office of Córdoba shortly before. On the Jewish origin of the Torres family, see the papers by María Teresa López Beltrán, “El poder económico en Málaga: la familia Córdoba-Torres (1493-1538)” [Economic power in Malaga: The Córdoba-Torres family (1493-1538)], in *Actas del VI Coloquio Internacional de Historia Medieval de Andalucía* [Proceedings of the VI International Symposium of Medieval History of Andalusia] (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 1991), 463–482; and López Beltrán, “Los Torres de Málaga: Un ilustre linaje de ascendencia judía con proyección internacional” [The Torres of Malaga: An illustrious lineage of Jewish descent with an international projection], in *Creación artística y mecenazgo en el desarrollo cultural del Mediterráneo en la Edad Moderna* [Artistic creation and patronage in the cultural development of the Mediterranean in the modern age], ed. Rosario Camacho, Eduardo Asenjo, and Belén Calderón (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2011), 47–63.
- 26 Estado: leg. 895, AGS.

- 27 Eduardo del Pino González, ed., *Juan de Verzosa: Epístolas* [Juan de Verzosa: Letters] (Salamanca: Editorial CSIC, 2006), 142.
- 28 The relations between Pedro Cosida, Philip III's agent in Rome, and artists such as Jusepe de Ribera, Dirk van Baburen, and David de Haen are well known. See Mar Aznar Recuenco, "Pedro Cosida, agente de Su Majestad Felipe III en la corte romana (1600-1622)" [Pedro Cosida, agent of His Majesty Philip III in the Roman court (1600-1622)], *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar* 109 (2012): 143–176.
- 29 His Jewish ancestry was evoked in 1562 before the Tribunal of the Holy Office of Córdoba by his cousin, Lorenzo Núñez, a notary public. Inquisición: 1492-1, 112, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid. (I thank Professor Enrique Soria for this reference.) His Jewish origin also came to light in his suit against the Chapter of the Cathedral of Cordoba for a prebend. Correspondencia: 2.090, Archivo de la Catedral de Córdoba, Cordoba, Spain.
- 30 David García Cueto, "Sobre las relaciones de Velázquez y don Juan de Córdoba tras el regreso del segundo viaje a Italia" [On the relations between Velázquez and Don Juan de Córdoba after the second trip to Italy], *Archivo Español de Arte* 84, no. 334 (2011): 177–180.
- 31 Diogo Barbosa Machado, *Bibliotheca Lusitana* [Portuguese Library] (Lisbon: Oficina de António Isidoro da Fonseca, 1741–1759), 2: 891–892.
- 32 Despite its name, the *subdatario* acted as the actual head of the Dataria. The *compositio* was the money paid for issuing an apostolic letter, which was the sum of several items, rights, and taxes. The prefect of the *compositiones* was the highest holder of the office charged with establishing the sum to pay and verifying the actual payment before issuing the bull. Francesca Curti, "El retrato desvelado de Ferdinando Brandani. Carrera e intereses artísticos de un banquero amigo de Diego Velázquez y de Juan de Córdoba" [Ferdinando Brandani's portrait unveiled. Career and artistic interests of a banker friend of Diego Velázquez and Juan de Córdoba], *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 29, no. 47 (2011): 185. On the Brandani family and their activity in Rome, see Marina D'Amelia, "Trasmissioni di office e competenze nelle famiglie curiali tra Cinquecento e Seicento" [Transmission of office and expertise in the curial families in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], in *Famiglie: Circolazione di beni, circuiti di affetti in età moderna* [Family: Circulation of goods, circuits of affection in the modern age], ed. Benedetta Borello and Renata Ago (Rome: Viella, 2008), 47–81.
- 33 Marina D'Amelia, "La Dataria sotto inchiesta: Il processo al sotto-datarario Canonici detto Mascambruno nel 1652" [The Dataria under investigation: The process of the vice-datary Canonici called Mascambruno in 1652], in *Les procès politiques (XIVe-XVIIe siècle)* [Political trials (14th-17th centuries)], ed. Yves-Marie Bercé (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2007), 319–350.
- 34 Curti, "El retrato desvelado de Ferdinando Brandani," 178–186.
- 35 Gaetano Sabatini, "Entre o papa e o rei de Espanha: a comunidade lusitana em Roma nos séculos XVI e XVII" [Between the pope and the king of Spain: The Portuguese community in Rome

- in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], in *Portugal na Monarquia Hispânica: Dinâmicas de integração e conflito* [Portugal in the Spanish monarchy: Dynamics of integration and conflict], ed. Pedro Cardim, Leonor Freire Costa, and Mafalda Soares da Cunha (Braga, Portugal: CHAM-UNL/UAç-CIDEHUS-UÉ-GHES-UTL, 2013), 355.
- 36 Sabatini, “Entre o papa e o rei de Espanha.”
- 37 Gaetano Sabatini, “La comunità portoghese a Roma nell’età dell’unione delle corone (1580-1640)” [The Portuguese community in Rome in the age of the union of the crowns (1580-1640)], in *Roma y España: Un crisol de la cultura europea en la Edad Moderna* [Rome and Spain: A melting pot of European culture in the modern age], ed. Carlos J. Hernando Sánchez (Madrid: SEACEX, 2007), 2:859–861.
- 38 I. Drumond Braga, “Judeus e Cristãos-Novos: os que chegam, os que partem e os que regresam” [Jews and New Christians: Those who come, those who leave and those who return], *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* 5 (2005): 12–13. The relationship and family origins appear in Inquisição de Évora: 7.794, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (hereafter cited as ANTT), Lisbon. During the Inquisitorial trials against doctor Pinto’s grandparents, the family’s New Christian origins would once again be brought up in the trial of a niece, accused of Judaizing. The Inquisitorial trial against his grandparents and niece are found in Inquisição de Évora: 7.794 and 8.232 and Inquisição de Lisboa: 2.487, ANTT.
- 39 Secretarías Provinciales: 1.549, 255r., AGS.
- 40 Secretarías Provinciales: 1.549, 653r., AGS.
- 41 Named bishop of Porto in 1640 through Philip IV’s presentation, he could not take possession of his see because of the Portuguese uprising. Enrique Flórez, *España Sagrada* [Holy Spain] (Madrid: Oficina de Antonio Marín, 1766), 21:217–218.
- 42 Machado, *Bibliotheca Lusitana*, 2:891–892.
- 43 The archival sources in the Vatican faithfully reflect this. The collection of documents regarding marriage dispensations for the Hispanic world is an entity unto itself with respect to the rest of the Catholic world. In the *consensus* books of the Apostolic Chamber that registered all the operations with ecclesiastical benefices (resignations, coadjutorships, pensions, etc.), the Iberian dioceses were of great importance. To give but one example, if we examine the total number of registers in one of these books, for the period between December 1582 and December 1584, we see that 74 percent correspond to the territories of the Hispanic monarchy and 64 percent to dioceses from the Iberian Peninsula. Camera Apostolica-Resignationes: 290, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Rome.
- 44 Díaz Rodríguez, “La instrumentalización de los cabildos.” Andrés Vela’s brother bought the lordship of Vaglio or Baglio in Naples. In 1623 his son, Andrés de Salazar, bought the title of Count of Vaglio. Secretarías Provinciales: 187, 75, AGS.
- 45 María Teresa López Beltrán, “Redes familiares y movilidad social en el negocio de la renta: el tándem Fernando de Córdoba-Rodrigo Álvarez de Madrid y los judeoconversos de Málaga”

- [Family networks and social mobility in income business: The tandem Fernando de Córdoba-Rodrigo Álvarez de Madrid and the conversos from Malaga], *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 24 (2012): 72.
- 46 On this tomb, see Antonella Parisi, “‘Per la total perfettione e compimento’: La misión de Velázquez y de su agente Juan de Córdoba en los documentos del Archivo de Estado de Roma” [“Per la total perfettione e compimento”: The mission of Velázquez and his agent Juan de Córdoba in the documents of the State Archive of Rome], in *Velázquez: Esculturas para el Alcázar* [Velázquez: Sculptures for the Alcazar], ed. José María Luzón Nogué (Madrid: Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, 2007), 101–103.
- 47 To cite but one example, the agent António Pinto complained to Philip II in 1586 of his lack of money: “I am forced to say to Your Majesty that I can no longer continue in this service as I would wish without the help of Your Majesty, which I am worthy of because in the six years [in Rome] since I went to Badajoz I spent a reasonable amount of my capital in Your Majesty’s service.” *Secretarías Provinciales*: 1.549, 255, AGS.
- 48 Barrio Gozalo, “La agencia de preces.”

