

Negros, o de cualquiera monstruosa nación: Juan Martínez Silíceo's Racial Histories

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Abstract

Scholars of late medieval and early modern Iberia acknowledge the persistence of *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity) into the era of Habsburg control over Spain and the conquests of the Americas. Yet few writing in English appreciate the ways in which Juan Martínez Silíceo, archbishop of Charles v's Toledo, both preserved the medieval ideal of blood purity and reshaped it to his own political ends when he enacted a *limpieza* statute in the city's cathedral in 1547. Silíceo and the opposing faction of his cathedral chapter left a paper trail of the ensuing controversy. I read Silíceo's letter to Charles – namely, his list of reasons, his opponents' reasons, and his refutations of those reasons – to argue that Silíceo used histories both local and universalist to make claims about Old Christian racial supremacy. I conclude with the University of Alcalá's humanist protest of Silíceo, which includes an allusion to monstrous blackness, marshalled as evidence of the church's universalism.

Keywords

raza (race) – *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity) – *conversos* – *confesos* – blackness – women's education – Charles v – Phillip II

Scholars have worked hard to define the relationship of modern categories like race and nationalism to medieval notions of blood and lineage. Yet many would agree that these medieval ideas gained longevity from their very indefiniteness. The Iberian reuses and recyclings of blood, lineage, and the like are famous, thanks to extensive work on the expulsion of Spain's Jews and Muslims, the Atlantic slave trade, and the conquests of the Americas. This article draws on an underutilized part of the Spanish archive that sharpens our understanding of how blood and lineage endured and transformed in the sixteenth century.

Juan Martínez Silíceo (1486–1557) is not this era's most famous figure, but his life attests to its most famous developments. It was Silíceo who served as archbishop of Toledo during the reign of Emperor Charles V (1500–1588), and Silíceo who asked Bartolomé de las Casas to turn his oral arguments into the famous book, *Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, so that Phillip II (1527–1598) might read it.¹ Silíceo died a wealthy cardinal and a humanist scholar of some renown, but his most enduring legacy was the contentious statute of “blood purity” or “cleanliness” (*limpieza de sangre*) that he first proposed in the summer of 1547.

The controversy caused by this statute, which excluded those descended from the lineage of converted Jews, Moors or heretics from various positions in Toledo's cathedral, is attested by abundant archival evidence, much of which has been recently edited by Fernando Bravo-López.² Among the most important documents are Silíceo's list of his own reasons for the statute, his opponents' list of their reasons for contradicting, and his counterattacks against

1 Rolena Adorno, “The Not-So-Brief Story of the *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*,” in *Bartolomé de las Casas, O.P.: History, Philosophy, and Theology in the Age of European Expansion*, ed. David Thomas Orique, O.P., and Rady Roldán-Figueroa (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2019), 29–57 at 33.

2 The legal language of Old Christian supremacy was contested between the three versions of the statute, but all include, orthography not withstanding, this phrase: “desçiendan de linaje de judíos, ny de moros, ny de hereges...”; Fernando Bravo López, *El Estatuto de limpieza de sangre de la Catedral de Toledo: el conflicto en sus textos, 1547–1556* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2024), 167–169. Translations are mine unless otherwise noted. An earlier version of this paper relied on archival sources, but all are encompassed by Bravo López's edition, as the author explains in this accompanying article: “El Libro de Causas del Arzobispo Silíceo: Problemas de Edición e Interpretación,” in *Los entramados políticos y sociales en la España Moderna: Del orden corporativo-jurisdiccional al Estado liberal*, ed. José María Imízcoc Beunza, Javier Esteban Ochoa de Erie, and Andoni Artola Renedo (Madrid: Fundación Española de Historia Moderna, 2023), 1389–402.

those reasons.³ Across texts like these, Silíceo pulled from histories old and new to justify his statute. His writings show that he understood history itself as a problem of lineage.

Silíceo's racial histories included lofty ideas about philosophy and theology, but they also included personalized attacks on his enemies' families, which can only be understood in light of local politics. Note that Silíceo was nearly sixty when he became archbishop. He entered the role with political baggage that is poorly explained by ideology alone. To take but one example, Silíceo saw support for his statute in the famous anti-*converso* treatise written nearly a century before by Pedro Sarmiento, the rebel leader who briefly wrested Toledo from royal control in 1449.⁴ Modern historians sometimes try to draw an ideological line from Sarmiento to Silíceo.⁵ Yet Sarmiento was just one influence. Silíceo cited Sarmiento, but he wrote more about a little-known 1530 request, made of Empress Isabel (1503–1539), to renew an anti-*converso* statute already in place at the smaller chapel nestled in Toledo's large cathedral, the *Capilla de los Reyes Nuevos*. To draw a straight line from Sarmiento's 1449 to Silíceo's 1547 overemphasizes ideological continuity and deemphasizes contingencies like the renewal of the *Capilla* statute, which occurred while Isabel was representing an absent Charles (he would later try to rescind it). Many such contingencies, like Toledo's preexisting exclusion of *conversos* from municipal offices, shaped the conditions of the statute's creation.⁶ After sum-

3 Scholars once attributed the opposition's list of reasons solely to Juan de Vergara. More likely, the *contradictores* wrote it together. Fernando Bravo López, "Juan de Vergara y los contradictores del estatuto de limpieza de sangre del arzobispo Silíceo: puntualizaciones e hipótesis acerca del escrito de las diez causas," *Studie Iberica et Americana* 4 (2017): 303–15.

4 For a summary of Sarmiento's story, see Gregory B. Kaplan, "The Inception of *Limpieza de Sangre* (Purity of Blood) and Its Impact in Medieval and Golden Age Spain," in *Marginal Voices: Studies in Converso Literature of Medieval and Golden Age Spain*, ed. Amy I. Aronson-Friedman, and Gregory B. Kaplan (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012), 19–41 at 29–30. For an edition of Sarmiento's texts: Tomás González Rolán and Pilar Saquero Suárez, *De la sentencia-estatuto de Pero Sarmiento a la instrucción del realtor: estudio introductorio, edición crítica, y notas de los textos contrarios y favorales a los judeo-conversos a raíz de la rebellion de Toledo de 1449* (Madrid: Aben Ezra Press, 2012).

5 "Silíceo's *raison d'être* for his anti-*converso* legislation is shared with the 1449 Toledan statutes, and, thus, does not need further analysis here ..."; Robert Aleksander Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue of Jews: Jesuits of Jewish Ancestry and Purity-of-Blood Laws in the Early Society of Jesus* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 30. For a similar connection, see Juan Hernández Franco, *Sangre limpia, sangre Española: el debate de los estatutos de limpieza de sangre (siglos XV–XVII)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2011), 19–27. For a mention of Sarmiento and Silíceo that allows for change over time, see María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 44.

6 Hernández Franco, *Sangre limpia*, 103.

marizing Silíceo's biography, I argue that he used racial histories to make his case for Old Christian racial superiority.

Of course, many readers will readily concede that history and race are connected. Perhaps they will think of how a violent history breeds distrust between races, or how the colonizer so frequently gets to write the history of the colonized. It is no shock that Silíceo's Old Christian racial supremacy was also a claim about the past. Yet it remains difficult to cultivate a sensitivity to the parallels between race the idea and history the discipline. As David Nirenberg has pointed out, the logic of race sometimes parallels history, and all the disciplines "with which we study the persistence of humanity in time. For these same reasons, any history of race will at best be provocative and limited; at worst a reproduction of racial logic itself, in the form of a genealogy of ideas."⁷ The risk of writing genealogical histories that mimic racial logics themselves is what makes concerted attention to the contingent minutiae of Silíceo's career so important. In their otherwise right-headed efforts to place the summer of 1547 in a longer history of racial and religious thought, historians have treated the persistence of *limpieza* in Spain as a foregone conclusion. By examining how Silíceo wrote a history of the Jewish race, we may better see the genealogical fantasies underlying an idea like *limpieza* and much of our own historical writing, too.

1 Silíceo's Education and Early Career

Silíceo was born to poor laborers in a village in Extremadura in 1486. In 1507, he went to Paris and obtained the education that enabled his own relatively successful scholarly career. He returned to Spain after nine years abroad, right around the time Charles v became Holy Roman Emperor. By the following summer of 1517, Silíceo was installed at Salamanca's college, a center of *limpieza* ideology.⁸ He was then ordained and went on to hold various jobs across the Castile upon which Charles had left his famously bad first impression.⁹ In 1520, Charles left this Castile to Adrian of Utrecht, prompting the famous

7 David Nirenberg, "Was There Race Before Modernity?," in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, ed. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Zeigler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 232–64 at 262.

8 For these details, see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 72–7 and Albert Sicroff, *Los estatutos de limpieza de sangre: controversias entre los siglos xv y xvi*, tr. Mauro Armiño (Madrid: Taurus, 1985), 126.

9 On the Castilian resentment of Charles, see William D. Phillips Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips, *A Concise History of Spain*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 179–80.

rebellion of the *comuneros* (1520–1521), which successfully held Toledo for some months.¹⁰

The memory of 1521 would loom over Silíceo's efforts. Silíceo mentioned the *comuneros* in the same breadth he described his enemies' relatives as being of Jewish *casta*.¹¹ While some Toledans certainly were descendants of *comuneros*, it's hard to say how many of them were *conversos*.¹² Yet when Silíceo looked back on that turbulent third decade of the sixteenth century, he saw descendants of Jews in many highly unlikely places. Recall that 1521 was also the year of Martin Luther's excommunication. Germany's heretical princes were ascribed Jewish ancestry in Silíceo's list of reasons, as were the *Alumbrados*, a heretical movement whose name literally meant "The Enlightened Ones."¹³ He would cast the emergent Jesuits in similar terms.¹⁴

In 1530, when Silíceo was in his forties, the chaplains of the *Capilla de los Reyes Nuevos* asked for royal approval of their own statue.¹⁵ These chaplains, who were appointed by the king, demanded "that none should be admitted as

- 10 John Eliot, *Imperial Spain: 1469–1719* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 151–9. For a fascinating introduction to the *comuneros* see Miguel Martínez, *Comuneros: El rayo y la semilla (1520–1521)* (Xixón: Hoja de Lata Editorial, 2021), 23–60.
- 11 For Silíceo's discussion of one order's decision to expel those who "came from the caste of Jews" (*venir de casta de judíos*), his use of the Zapata family as an example, and the involvement of *comuneros*; see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza de sangre*, 65 and 218.
- 12 Note that Cazorla, the important territory discussed below, was once controlled by Juan de Padilla, leading *comunero*. Alexander Samson, "The *adelantamiento* of Cazorla, *converso* Culture, and Toledo Cathedral's 1547 *estatuto de limpieza de sangre*," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 84, no. 7 (2007), 819–36 at 830.
- 13 Alastair Hamilton, "The *Alumbrados*: *Dejamiento* and its Practitioners," in *A New Companion to Hispanic Mysticism*, ed. Hillaire Kallendorf (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 10–124 at 103, and Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 204.
- 14 David Martín López, "Jesuits and *Conversos* in Sixteenth Century Toledo," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8, no. 2 (2012): 173–94 and Isabel Ianuzzi, "Mentalidad inquisitorial y jesuitas: el enfrentamiento entre el Cardenal Silíceo y la *Compañía de Jesús*," *Cuadernos de Historias Modernas* 24 (2000): 11–31. For an introduction to Jesuit views on *conversos* and *limpieza* see Juan Hernández Franco and Pablo Ortega-del-Cerro, "A Jesuit Utopian Project on Behalf of the *Conversos*: Fernando de Valdés and the Statutes of Purity of Blood (1632)," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8, no. 2 (2021): 214–32 at 215–8.
- 15 Unlike the larger cathedral in which its nestled, the *capilla* was patronized by the king, who "appointed their chaplains, who enjoyed large salaries," while the Cathedral chaplains, "ever since they lost a lawsuit with the city of Toledo over the taxes of butcher shops, barely received a tenth"; Antonio Domingo Ortiz, "Documentos sobre estatutos de limpieza de las catedrales españoles," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 15 (1966): 33–42. This *Capilla* would remain a contested site for the upcoming generation, as noted here: Laura Canabal Rodríguez, "La capilla de los Reyes Nuevos de la Catedral de Toledo: adiciones y constituciones ortogrados por Felipe II," *Toletana: cuestiones de teología e historia* 17 (2007): 127–54.

a colleague without presenting proof and testimony of *limpieza*; that if they were to be of the generation of Moors or Jews or to have some *raza* of those, they could be dismissed.”¹⁶ In these lines, “cleanliness” or “purity” (*limpieza*) is connected to “race” (*raza*) but they are not synonyms. The English word race, as used in this paper, refers to a set of interlocking ideas including lineage, cleanliness, and *raza* itself. For Silíceo and the *Capilla* statute authors, *raza* was something possessed by those lacking *limpieza*. Race lay within the not-clean part of the blood ratio, rendering only the one in possession of *limpieza* a clean human. Those who failed their *limpieza* exam had some *raza* where only cleanliness should have been. In his fifteenth century work *Corbacho*, the author Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, also known as the Archpriest of Talavera, had spoken of *raza* as good or bad.¹⁷ According to Silíceo’s younger contemporary, Sebastián de Covarrubias (1539–1613), “race in human lineages is meant badly, as in having some race of Moor or Jew.”¹⁸ Silíceo’s own derogatory racial vocabulary would resemble that of this *Capilla* statute and so many others.

In 1534, while Charles captured Tunisia from the Ottomans, Isabel sought a teacher for the young prince. Her search was aided by, among others, Archbishop Juan Tavera of Toledo and the influential Francisco de los Cobos (Charles V’s favorite and effective ruler of Spain). Under their influence, Isabel hired Silíceo. Ángel Santos Vaqueros provides a description of the prince’s education, sent by Silíceo to the king: “At this age of fourteen, when nature begins to regret weakness, God gave the prince much will for hunting, which, with study, occupies most of his time ...”¹⁹ Charles was less inclined to celebrate the hunt. He increasingly entrusted Phillip’s education to Juan de Zúñiga.²⁰

Yet Silíceo remained close to Phillip. When Phillip married Portuguese Princess María Manuela, it was Silíceo who was selected to fetch the bride from Portugal before settling in as bishop of Cartagena in 1541. In 1543, the same year he became regent, Phillip named Silíceo his personal confessor. In a letter of broader political instruction, Charles gave Phillip advice about Silíceo:

16 Rica Amrán, “De Pedro Sarmiento a Martínez Silíceo: la ‘genesis’ de los estatutos de limpieza de sangre,” in *Autor de l’Inquisition: Études sur Saint-Office*, ed. Rica Amrán (Paris: Indigo et Côte-femmes, 2002), 33–56 at 49.

17 Ana M. Gómez-Bravo, “The Origins of *Raza*: Racializing Difference in Early Spanish,” *Interfaces* 7 (2020): 64–114 at 70–71.

18 Nirenberg, “Was There Race,” 250.

19 Ángel Santos Vaquero, *El Cardenal Silíceo y el colegio de doncellas nobles de Toledo* (Toledo: Editorial Ledoria Jesús Muñoz Romero, 2018), 43, n. 15.

20 Manuel Fernández Álvarez, *Felipe II y su tiempo* (Spain: Espasa-Calpe, 1999), 645–54. It’s possible that Silíceo was a compromise candidate in the controversies over Erasmus; see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 77.

As for the Bishop of Cartagena, you know him, and we all know him to be a very good man. Certainly, he has not been, and is not, the one who best suits you for your studies. He's wanted too much to make you happy. God willing this hasn't been in some particular respects. He is your main chaplain. You make confession with him. It would not be good if in things of the conscience he should want so much to make you happy as he has in study. Up until this point, there hasn't been a problem. From now on, there could be, and a very big one. Consider what goes into this, for it's nothing other than the soul.²¹

For Charles, Silíceo may be a valued chaplain for Phillip, but he's not a suitable official confessor. With a telling recognition of his son's dependency on Silíceo, Charles preemptively permits Phillip to let Silíceo see the letter. He's certain the good bishop will agree with whatever Phillip wants, as he does with everything else presented to him.

If, as Charles clearly believed, the prince's choice of Silíceo as confessor was a sign of support for his old teacher, that support would have been useful to Silíceo as bishop of Cartagena. The city remained a site of *limpieza* tension. A few months prior to Silíceo's 1541 arrival, the *confeso* Juan de Santesteva had died under controversial circumstances. Silíceo passed some years engrossed in Cartagena's affairs. In 1543, he was named confessor to Phillip, the same year he became regent of Spain.²² On January 25, 1544, the Cartagena cathedral proposed the reinstitution of their past *limpieza* statute, reopening a debate centered on the memory of Santesteva. Two days later, the Inquisition

21 "... el obispo de Cartagena conoceysle y todos le conocemos por muy buen hombre; cierto que no ha sydo ny es el que más os conyene para vuestro estudio; ha deseado contentaros demasyadamente: plegue a Dyos que no haya sydo por algunos respetos particulares. El es vuestro capellán mayor; vos confesays con él; no serya bien que en lo de la conciencia os desease tanto contentar como a hecho en el estudio. Hasta aquy no ha havydo inconvenyente, de aquy adelante lo podrya haver y muy grande: myrad lo que os va en ello, porque no es más que el alma ..."; Manuel Fernández Álvarez, *Corpus Documental de Carlos v: Edición crítica dirigida, prologada y anotada II (1539–1548)* (Salamanca: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1975), 114–15 and José María March, *Niñez y juventud de Felipe II: documentos inéditos sobre su educación civil, literaria y religiosa y su iniciación al gobierno (1527–1547) Tomo II* (Madrid: Ministerio de asuntos exteriores, 1942), 23–34.

22 Laura Fernández-González, *Phillip II of Spain and the Architecture of Empire* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021), 2.

posthumously condemned Santesteva, exhumed his remains and burned them. That April, Silíceo reinstated Cartagena's statute.²³

Archbishop Tavera of Toledo died in August of 1545, and Silíceo had his job by December. His lucky 1545 was not reflective of Spain's larger fate, however. Maria Manuela died after producing a famously unhealthy heir.²⁴ Charles's taxes exacerbated an economic crisis. In May, Phillip wrote to his father about Spain's poverty, as he and Los Cobos had done for years: "The common people, who have to pay these [taxes], are reduced to such utter misery that many of them walk naked."²⁵

2 Silíceo's Statute: 1546–1548

Silíceo did not arrive in Toledo until Christmas Eve of 1546.²⁶ His transition was shaped by several controversies already at play in the cathedral chapter. Specialists once believed that Los Cobos, Charles's old favorite, was among those who opposed Silíceo's coming to Toledo. More likely, Los Cobos actually canvassed for Silíceo, hoping a grateful new archbishop would grant him one of the few things in Spain he wanted but did not have: the *adelantamiento* of Cazorla.²⁷ Navigating a succession dispute, Los Cobos had pursued this Andalusian hill (once held by the Mendozas, his in-laws) since 1535, at which point he wrested it away from the archdiocese, aided by Charles himself, gaining papal approval that was confirmed by Toledo's cathedral in those months after Tavera's death and before Silíceo's arrival. After Silíceo got to Toledo, the cathedral chapter appealed that decision to give Cazorla to Los Cobos. Undercutting Los Cobos, Silíceo gave Cazorla to Ruy Gómez de Silva, one of Phillip's most intimate servants. Around March, Charles would ask Silíceo to confirm this decision, which so alienated his old favorite. Silíceo returned a

23 For Silíceo in Cartagena, see Juan Hernández Franco, *Cultura y limpieza de sangre en la España moderna: puritate sanguinis* (Murcia: Servicio de Publicaciones, Universidad, 1996), 56–60.

24 Charles VI was disabled in ways we now understand were likely the results of incest.

25 Eliot, *Imperial Spain*, 208.

26 On the period after his appointment and before his arrival, see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 87.

27 Samson, "Adelantamiento of Cazorla," 828–9. While Cazorla's significance is difficult to recover, we might note that it was reconquered by Fernando III in 1231. Miguel Ángel Chamocho Cantudo, *Los fueros de los reinos de Andalucía de Fernando III a los Reyes Católicos* (Madrid: Agencia estatal boletín oficial del estado, 2017), 22.

“refusal to respond,” but cited finances and Los Cobos’s “illegal approaches to members of the council for their support.”²⁸

Tensions over Cazorla persisted, but more relevant controversy stemmed from a decision made in September of 1546, during those months before Silíceo’s arrival. Pope Paul III had given Hernán Ximénez, son of a *converso* accused of apostasy by the Inquisition, a benefice in Toledo’s cathedral. In the early months of 1547, Silíceo protested this appointment with various letters, including one to Pope Paul III. In his message, Silíceo compared the admission of men of unknown race (described with the Latin word *genus*) to the admission of horses of unknown breed into one’s stable. No stable owner would allow it, Silíceo insists, even if the horse were given for free. To admit men without demonstrated good genus would be to hold the church to standards lower than this hypothetical stable, a repugnant outcome that Silíceo tries to depict as the inevitable consequence of not accepting his own statute.²⁹

Jiménez’s case continued to be a contested issue among the cathedral’s men.³⁰ Yet these power struggles couldn’t have been a top priority for Charles in the spring of 1547. In April, he won his famous victory at Mühlberg, and in May, his trusted Los Cobos died. By June, the cathedral men were still debating the Jiménez case. On July 19, they voted to exclude him. Moments after this decision, Silíceo presented his first statute. The second appeared on July 23, and the third appeared on July 29.³¹ What follows is a rough sketch of the ensuing controversy.³²

On July 23, after verbal protests from the opposition, the cathedral’s men passed Silíceo’s second statute draft and decided to send it to Rome for approval, as expected. That same day, a group of city authorities (*jurados*) denounced the statute, while the city council (*ayuntamiento*) expressed support. On July 27, Silíceo and his supporters prepared to send the appropriate correspondances to pope, king and royal councils. Something inflammatory must have occurred, however, for on July 29, the cathedral reapproved a much

28 For these details, see Samson, “*Adelantamiento* of Cazorla,” 828–31.

29 Gómez-Bravo, “The Origins of *Raza*,” 70–71 and Sicroff, *Estatutos*, 131. Sicroff cited Silíceo’s letter to the pope using this manuscript: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Ms. 13038, fol. 134 (henceforth, BNE). For a different manuscript of the letter, see Bravo-López *El estatuto de limpieza*, 91, n. 193.

30 Sicroff, *Estatutos*, 130, n. 22. Sicroff believed this man was not admitted because Silíceo immediately succeeded in convincing Pope Paul III, but this was not the case. Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 91, n. 194.

31 For dating of these statute drafts see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 93, 161.

32 The following relies on Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 103–45; Hernández Franco, *Sangre limpia, sangre Española*, 102–105; Sicroff, *Estatutos*, 126–39.

longer, more controversial statute. They decided to send Diego de Guzmán as messenger. He was to seek royal approval for the statute, then ask permission to proceed to Italy for papal approval.

The channels of information between cathedral and city were wide open. The anti-statute *jurados* immediately wrote to Phillip. On August 3, the *ayuntamiento* wrote to Phillip, too. The *jurados* wrote to him again on August 7. The *ayuntamiento* followed suit on August 10. During these same chaotic days, the cathedral opposition received the anti-statute *requerimiento* of the Archdeacons of Guadalajara and Talavera (also the brothers Mendoza). This may have been the moment when they got the anti-statute letter from University of Alcalá, too.³³ On August 12, Silíceo wrote to Phillip again, referencing the support he enjoyed from the *ayuntamiento*. Diego de Guzmán got to Phillip on August 16 to plead Silíceo's case. On August 24, Phillip declined to immediately support his old teacher's obsessions, kicking the decision to the Royal Council, instead.

On September 2, García Manrique slapped Bernadino Zapata for failing to speak to Silíceo with the proper respect.³⁴ Bernadino's brother, Luis Zapata, entered the cathedral with several men, swords drawn. The family Zapata, widely regarded as the descendants of *conversos*, made up much of the opposition votes. Luis' men attacked García and other canons who were trying to leave the church, forcing them back towards the main altar. Various city officials, including *jurados*, intervened. García and Bernadino were arrested, and Luis was imprisoned in a tower. Once again, various people wrote to Phillip, who on September 13 and 15 mandated that no one in the church should use or discuss the statute. Back and forth the various parties went, struggling over the statute, the meaning of September 2, and whether to obey Phillip. The prince reiterated his position in November.

The record falls relatively quiet until February 1548, at which point Charles v wrote several letters, none of which confirmed the statute. The pro-statute camp at Toledo decided to urge Diego de Guzmán to abandon hope of royal approval and seek papal approval, instead. Not much is known about Guzmán's activities in Rome, but relations between the Hapsburgs and the pope were strained at this time. In May 1548, Phillip asked Toledo's two factions to present their arguments before the Royal Council. Accustomed to ignoring the prince, they waited to hear what the pope had to say. On June 28, Diego de Guzman read the papal approval for the statute to the cathedral. On the last day of June 1548,

33 This type of legal document, literally translated as "requirement," is famous for its role in the colonization of the Americas. Yanay Israeli, "The *Requerimiento* in the Old World: Making Demands and Keeping Records in the Legal Culture of Late Medieval Castile," *Law and History Review* 40, no. 1 (2022), 37–62.

34 Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 117.

nearly a year after the statute was first proposed, the cathedral council finally met to decide who would present their interests to the Royal Council. Most of our extant documents come from the dossier sent to the Royal Council in July 1548.³⁵ Still, Phillip refused to decide. Disregarding his old student, Silíceo was running *limpieza* checks again by August 17. On September 4, Phillip sent the cathedral a reminder to wait for official word.

On October 19, Charles suddenly approved the statute, bringing his son in line. Charles's sudden approval is more difficult to explain than Phillip's youthful inexperience, especially given that emperor and archbishop continued to clash over Cazorla. Hernández Franco shows that Silíceo likely benefitted from the help of Antonio Perrenot de Granvela, an old connection from Paris who had risen to become a great favorite of Charles.³⁶ The statute was still controversial, but it now had papal and royal approval. From drafting through approval, Toledo's *limpieza* struggle was inseparable from local and imperial politics. Some, like the attempts to please Charles, could be easily guessed at. Others, like the clash over Cazorla, are difficult to recover. They are important because they formed the subtext of Silíceo's attacks, which drew their power from these personal attacks and an ideology of Old Christian racial supremacy.

3 History and Race Frame the Statute

Silíceo's racial ideology is not limited to the use of the word *raza*. As seen in the *Capilla's* now-familiar demand that none admitted to their cathedral have the *raza* of Jews or Muslims, the term was just one racial buzzword of a few. In his statute's first draft, Silíceo could also articulate his ideal vision for society with the word lineage, too. He named as desirable colleagues men of clean lineage and clean life immediately before mandating that a large array of different cathedral positions could no longer be filled by those coming from a lineage "of Jews, Muslims, or heretics."³⁷

In the second version of the statute, reworked by a few days' disagreements, the men worthy of joining Toledo's cathedral are described in the positive. In addition to being Old Christian, they must be either noble or highly educated, a development that closely resembles the vote cast by opposition leader Diego de Castilla.³⁸ In the third version, Silíceo keeps the language of nobility and

35 Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 128.

36 Hernández Franco, *Sangre limpia, sangre Española*, 102–105.

37 Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 167.

38 To compare the statute's evolution the vote, see Bravo-López, *El Estatuto de limpieza*, 167–8, and 171. Thank you, Kate Randazzo, for drawing my attention to this.

education, even as he reiterates the significance of the manifest quality of Old Christianness, itself:

and that none of the aforementioned should be descended of the lineage of Jews, Muslims or heretics, and that without this quality of Old Christianness, none of these will be received nor admitted. And if in some case one were received and admitted, and afterwards it became known, through certain and true information, that in him the stated quality of Old Christianness was not present, he would be expelled from our sacred church.³⁹

This sentence concludes by reiterating that these people should not be given salaries or rents. Old Christianness was thus the lack of Jewish, Muslim, or heretical descent, and something one possessed in the positive. It could not be replaced by education or murky categories of nobility. Silíceo often named both Jewish and Muslim ancestors as unacceptable, but his examples were almost exclusively anti-Jewish.⁴⁰

The documents speak of this racial vision, but they speak more of money. The word *benefices* appears at least twenty times in the Castilian texts, alone. This financial focus was common. In fifteenth-century Barcelona, some forty percent of cases at the bishop's court dealt with *benefices*.⁴¹ While such concerns seem baldly materialistic to us, Silíceo gives Charles high-minded explanations for his statute, as when he says that it is "through the consideration of past events that, according to good philosophy, an argument for those events to come can be made."⁴² This remark introduces Silíceo's discussion of Toledo's conquest by the Muslims (I maintain the ideologically-loaded *moros*):

39 "... e que sin la dicha qualidad de cristiano viejo ninguno de todos los susodichos sea recibido ni admitido en ella. E si por caso fuere recebido y admitido, y después se supiere, por cierta y verdadera información, que en el tal no concurre la dicha qualidad de cristiano viejo, luego sea expellido de la dicha nuestra sancta iglesia ..."; Bravo-López, *Estatutos de limpieza de sangre*, 169.

40 The connection Christians drew between Muslims and Jews differed from how the two communities saw themselves and each other. For example, unlike many Jews themselves, "Muslim polemicists attached little or no importance to the exceptionalism of Iberian Jews and did not differentiate between Jewish communities in the Peninsula and in the East"; Mònica Colominas Aparicio, "Muslim Perceptions of Sephardic Exceptionalism in Christian Iberia," *Frankel Institute Annual* (2019): 13–15 at 15.

41 Michelle Armstrong-Partida, "Priestly Marriage: The Tradition of Clerical Concubinage in the Spanish Church," *Viator* 40 no. 2 (2009): 221–53 at 244, n. 75.

42 "... es considerando las cosas pasadas, de las quales, según buena filosofía, se tomo argumento para las que están por venir"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 204.

For, as is read in the histories of Spain, when Toledo was conquered by the *moros* at the time of the general destruction of Spain, this city of Toledo was sold out by its Jewish residents one Palm Sunday, when the Old Christians had gone out in processions to the church of Santa Leocadia, which is outside the walls of this city. These Old Christians were beheaded by the *moros*, solely due to the ambushes and treachery of the said Jews, and the city was lost. Due to its nature, its natural strength and fortitude, it could not have been gained without treachery.⁴³

Silíceo is aware that it is controversial to try and use history to predict the future, as seen by his attempt to preempt that critique with a defensive appeal to philosophy. Like most of Silíceo's evidence, this idea had many antecedents in peninsular thought. Silíceo calls on the concepts of history and philosophy to argue for the corruption of those born from the lineage of Jews, taking for granted the undesirability of Muslim arrival in Spain. He takes Palm Sunday as a temporal site of Christian-Jewish difference. On this holy day, Silíceo's Jews find an outlet for an apparently preexisting desire to betray their neighbors. The Islamic invasion is their fault. Toledo is eternally and essentially strong, so Islamic chaos could not have penetrated its walls without this Jewish chink in its armor. While modern scholars are careful to distinguish between real Jews and *confesos* or *convertos* (Spanish words for "convert" which will be parsed below), Silíceo uses what he understands as real past Jewish actions to explain the fates of those descended from the lineage of Jews, thus collapsing historical distance between the descendants of converts and their ancestors. Such stories gain power when we remember that Silíceo has prepared his listeners to think about Toledo's history in his introduction:

It is a well-known and famous thing that our Sacred Church of Toledo is the most illustrious, the wealthiest, the most powerful and has the most ministers of any of the churches in the kingdoms of Spain, and except for

43 "Porque, según se lee en las historias de España, quando Toledo fue conquistado por los moros, en el tiempo de la general destrucción de España, fue vendida esta çuudad de Toledo por los judios moradores de ella un Domingo de Ramos, yendo los christianos viejos en procession a la iglesia de Sancta Leocadia, que está fuera de los muros de esta çuudad, los quales christianos viejos fueron degollados por los moros, por solas las asechanças y trayçiones de los dichos judíos, y la çuudad perdida, la qual, por su naturaleza, natural fuerza y fortaleza, sin trayçion no pudiera ser ganada"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 204–5.

St. Peter's in Rome, there is no greater church is found in all Christendom than this one.⁴⁴

The first two versions of the statute pause here. The third continues:

For the most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Our Lady, came to this church accompanied by many choirs of angels and garbed the blessed Saint Ildefonsus in a chasuble that today is kept as a great relic in the city of Oviedo along with many other relics that are in that Sacred Church. For this reason, it has, as it does, primacy in all of Spain. Thus, Don Juan Martínez Silíceo, Archbishop of Toledo by divine mercy, primate cardinal of the Spains, high chancellor of Castille, advises us to form and appear in Council.⁴⁵

This miracle story, which relates that the Virgin presented St. Ildefonsus with a chasuble, is one of many old tales deployed by Silíceo. Oviedo, as keeper of this object, bears witness to Toledo's primacy. More important is the self-consciously didactic position from which Silíceo speaks. He is the authority on what is well known and famous. Read in the context of his ire at the papal appointment of Fernando Jiménez, the Virgin's visit seems like a challenge. Silíceo's intended message is clear. The pope may be number one, but Silíceo is a close second. His argument for Toledo's power is his argument for his own.

4 Silíceo after His Statute: 1548–1557

Though the statute would remain controversial, Silíceo turned to other projects after the royal approval of October 1548. In 1550, he wrote a theological tract, defining nobility thusly:

44 "Como sea cosa muy averiguada la sancta iglesia de Toledo ser la más illustre, más rica y más poderosa y de más ministros de todas quantas ay en los reynos de España, y aun después de Sant Pedro en Roma ninguna Iglesia en toda la Cristianidad se halla ser más que ella"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 168.

45 "Ansý por aver venydo a ella la Madre de Dyos, Nuestra Señora, acompañada de ángeles, donde visitó al byenaventurado sancto Illefonso de una casulla, que el dýa de oy se tiene por gran reliquia en la çibdad de Oviedo, como por las muchas reliquias que en ella ay, y por tener, como tiene, la primaçia de toda España. Por ende nos, don Juan Martínez Sylíceo, por la divina miseraçión arçobispo de Toledo, primado de las Españas, chanciller mayor de Castilla, etc., de consejo, acuerdo y pareçer de nuestro Cabildo ..."; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 168.

In view of the fact that we received from our past no coat of arms of worldly nobility, we determined, when we attained the grandeur of the rank of Prelate, to take as our emblems those that our Eternal Father gave to his son, Jesus Christ, of whom all men are sons, which is the name of Jesus, carved into a flint.⁴⁶

When the archbishop depicted Christ's name appearing on a flint or stone, he referenced the most recent surname he had given himself, Silíceo.⁴⁷ When he named his *Colegio de las Doncellas Nobles* (School for Noble Ladies) in 1551, it was this vision of Christ-like nobility to which he referred. He dreamt of a school that would enroll girls between six and ten years of age, all from the broader Toledo area (except for six, from his own family).⁴⁸ All were to be Old Christian offspring of legitimate marriages, but they could be poor: the school would pay for their *limpieza* exams and dowries.⁴⁹ Every year, ten girls of the right season were to be married off in order of age to Old Christian men. Silíceo oversaw his students' marriages and those of his own nieces, as Ángel Santos Vaqueros explains. If a lady did not want to marry, she could remain in the school. If she wanted to join the church, she forfeited her dowry. This school, recently opened to the public in 2016, was one of several women-centric institutions founded by Silíceo.⁵⁰ In a move resonant with contemporary race, Silíceo emphasized the reproductive possibilities of these Old Christian girls and adjusted for the variable of class. Old Christianness was not

46 Allegra García García, "Algunos aspectos en torno a la iconografía del Arzobispo de Toledo Juan Martínez Silíceo," *Espacio, Tiempo, Forma* 1 (2013): 45–64.

47 On Juan Martínez's many names, see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza de sangre*, 73. For the iconography of his *escudo*, see Fabrice Quero, "Les résistances intellectuelles à l'expérience mystique dans le *De Divino nomine Iesus per nomen tetragrammaton significato* (1550) de Juan Martínez Silíceo," in *Résister*, ed. Anita González-Raymond (Valéry: Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2011), 263–6.

48 Silíceo made political moves, including marriages, through nieces and nephews. In this role as uncle, he was similar to many other celibate churchmen of his age. Thank you, Noel Blanco Mourelle, for bringing this to my attention.

49 The historian of Toledo, Francisco de Pisa (1534–1616), respected that Silíceo paid for the school at his own expense. Allegra García García, "El arzobispo de Toledo don Juan Martínez Silíceo (c. 1486–1557) a través de fuentes literarias," in *Homenaje a la profesora Constanza Negrín*, ed. Carlos Rodríguez Morales (La Laguna: Instituto de Estudios Canarios, 2013), 211–32 at 216.

50 Santos Vaquero, *Cardenal y Colegio*, 141. For the school's constitution and the other women's institutions founded by Silíceo, see Laura Canabal Rodríguez, "Educación femenina en la Edad Moderna: constituciones del Colegio de Doncellas Nobles de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, Toledo (siglo XVI)," *Estudios Humanísticos. Historia* 12: 145–54 and 131, respectively.

money. It was reproduced in childbearing. Manuel Pérez García confirms that his thinking amounted to a “redefinition of the noble estate.”⁵¹

Silíceo founded other institutions, including a house for repentant women, but to establish a school, specifically, was to speak a political language. The other institutions wealthy enough to provide dowries for girls had old, prestigious names like “de Haro.”⁵² Also in 1551, the Jesuits founded a college in Alcalá, within Silíceo’s diocese.⁵³ On October 29, after having his nephew inquire against them, Silíceo revoked the Jesuits’ licenses, effectively instating a Jesuit ban. Francisco Villanueva and Miguel Torres presented Silíceo with bulls permitting Jesuits to perform sacerdotal duties. In response, Silíceo screamed that he would “burn them all.”⁵⁴ On November 27, Charles’s Royal Council granted the Jesuits immunity, but this did not deter Silíceo from his anti-Jesuit position. Rome sent Cardinal Giovanni Poggio to mediate.⁵⁵ Without asking the Jesuits, he promised Silíceo they would not admit anyone “that had race.”⁵⁶ By March, he revoked his ban against the Jesuits.

In subsequent years, Silíceo continued to clash with his own cathedral council over costly construction projects. In 1555, his statute was approved by a bull of Pope Paul IV.⁵⁷ He became cardinal in February 1556, and was celebrated in grand fashion.⁵⁸ Sometime that same year, Silíceo sent Pope Paul money.⁵⁹ That August, Phillip, now king, approved the statute, though his own ideology of *limpieza* would remain unclear.⁶⁰ Despite these signs of increased influence, on November 28, Toledo’s council wrote a memorial of grievances against

51 Manuel Pérez García, *Blood, Land and Power: The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Nobility and Lineages in the Early Modern Period* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 41.

52 Canabal Rodríguez, “Educación femenina,” 130.

53 Maryks, *The Jesuit Order as a Synagogue*, xxi.

54 Sicroff, *Estatutos*, 317.

55 For an English summary, see Martín López, “Jesuits and *Conversos*,” 180. Already in 1549, Villanueva could write to Ignatius of Loyola saying that relations with Silíceo were poor. Ianuzzi, “Mentalidad inquisitorial,” 172.

56 For Poggio’s involvement in the lifting of this anti-*converso* and anti-Jesuit ban, see Sicroff, *Estatutos*, 318–9.

57 Samson, “Adelantamiento de Cazorla,” 825.

58 As Samson mentions, the celebration of Silíceo’s cardinalate included a play reenacting his life wherein he was compared to Jesus. See also Ronald Surtz, “Cardinal Juan Martínez Silíceo in an Allegorical *entremé* of 1556,” in *Essays on Hispanic Literature in Honor of Edmund L. King*, ed. Sylvia Molloy and Luis Fernández Cifuentes (London: Tamesis Books Limited, 1983), 225–32.

59 James M. Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Phillip II and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 72.

60 Phillip would both support *limpieza* and “rehabilitate” some *conversos*; Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, 44–5.

Cardinal Silíceo.⁶¹ In February 1557, Phillip sent Ruy Gómez de Silva across Spain to collect various church payments. Silíceo, now seventy-one, owed the crown various monies, including a donation he had promised then postponed. However, Gómez de Silva remained embroiled in the Cazorla machinations and was in no position to force the old cardinal's hand. He was still waiting for the donation when Silíceo died on May 3.⁶²

Silíceo remained controversial in death. Fabrice Quero and Ángel Santos Vaquero have uncovered jokes likely made at Silíceo's expense in the years after his passing.⁶³ Others have suggested that Silíceo is referenced in *Lazarillo de Tormes*.⁶⁴ A fictional Silíceo appeared alongside Phillip and Charles in a play written by Damián Salucio del Poyo in 1615.⁶⁵

Silíceo's direct political influence remains hard to measure; as was often the case for *limpieza* statutes, it's difficult to say how well his rules were enforced.⁶⁶ Yet his statute inspired copycat statutes. It was transcribed for later thinkers, many of whom remembered Silíceo for his ideas about history. Baltasar

61 Hilario Rodríguez de Gracia, "Documentos para la biografía del cardenal Silíceo," *Anales Toledanos XVII* (1984): 85–179 at 123.

62 Boyden, *Courtier and King*, 72–5.

63 In 1560, Silíceo's tombstone was changed, perhaps satirically; see Fabrice Quero, "Le récit biographique moderne comme espace de construction de la mémoire: le cas de Juan Martínez Silíceo (1486–1557)," in *Mémoire, récit, histoire*, ed. Marie Miranda and Marisol Ortolá (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 2008), 230–46 at 235. The next archbishop let the Jesuits live briefly in the Colegio after Silíceo's death, which some took as a jab at his memory; Santos Vaquero, *Cardenal y Colegio*, 56.

64 The new article on this question does not cite the old, resulting in two unrelated cases for the link between Silíceo and this literary work; see Jesús Fernando Cáseda Teresa, "El estatuto de limpieza de sangre de la cathedral de Toledo (1547) en el Lazarillo de Tormes: el arzobispo Silíceo, a su 'pintapanderos' (el maestro Francisco de Comontes), a su obispo auxiliar, el mercedario Pedro de Oriona, y al 'escudero,' el dean Diego de Castilla," *eHumanista* 52 (2022): 341–58. See also Fred Abrams, "To Whom Was the Anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* Dedicated?" *Romances Notes* 8 (1967): 273–7.

65 Luis Caparrós Esperante, *Entre validos y letrados: la obra dramática de Damián Salucio del Poyo* (Salamanca: Universidad de Valladolid, 1987), 168–92; Hélène Tropé, "'El hombre sabio de sí mismo es hijo.' Nobleza de letras versus nobleza de sangre en *El premio de las letras por el rey Felipe Segundo* de Damián Salucio del Poyo (Alcalá, 1615)," *Studia Iberica et Americana: Journal of Iberian and Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies* 5 (2018): 341–54.

66 Toledo had "pure blood statutes in two important institutions, the city council and the cathedral chapter; the latter imposed in 1547 by Archbishop Silíceo, the former by the crown in the 1560s. In theory [...] descendants of Jewish converts should have been excluded from both these corporations, as well as from numerous religious and all military orders. In practice, *conversos* could be found in all of them"; Linda Martz, "Pure Blood Statutes in Sixteenth Century Toledo: Implementation as Opposed to Adoption," *Sefarad* 54, no. 1 (1999): 83–107 at 84.

Porreño (d. 1639) would write a defense of Silíceo's statute at the turn of the seventeenth century.

As François Soyer explains, in 1614, the lawyer Ignacio del Villar Maldonado partially reproduced an infamous anti-Jewish document, *Letter from the Jews of Constantinople*. He traced it to a clergyman of racial purity, who he believed got the letter from Silíceo. Like Silíceo's justifications for his statute, this *Letter* accused *confesos* of plotting to take over the church. This has led some historians to reach the (possible but not quite substantiated) conclusion that Silíceo wrote the *Letter*. Soyer notes that Porreño also ascribed the story to Silíceo, concluding that "it would be an oversight to fail to acknowledge the evident link between the mid-sixteenth-century rumors reported by Silíceo and the forged *cartas*."⁶⁷ This lead is stronger considering Silíceo's forgotten role in the circulation of a similar tale: as Fidel Fita explained, a manuscript created for the playwright Sebastián de Horozco (1510–ca. 1580) holds both a copy of the *Memory of the Sainted Child of la Guardia* and a copy of Silíceo's reasons, the eleventh of which cites the libel. The *Memory*, "written by Damian de Vergas in 1544, is included in these pages with the visible intent of reinforcing support for the statute."⁶⁸

5 Debating the Statute: Histories of French and Spanish Old Christianness

Silíceo's likely use of popular stories like the *Letter* and the *Memory* should be read in conversation with his use of the myth of Mary's chasuble. The eminence of Toledo, represented by that story, shaped debates over *raza* and *limpieza*. All involved agreed that the prestige of the cathedral's men should match the splendor of the city. For example, St. Idelfonsus appears again in the opposition's list of reasons to contradict, when they insist that it's absurd to hire idiotic, lowly men over and above well-educated men, simply because the latter are not Old Christians:

Only three archbishops of Toledo have we read of in the last fifteen hundred years who have been celebrated as saints by the Church: Saint

67 François Soyer, *Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories in the Early Modern Iberian World* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2019), 68–73. For Silíceo's quoting of this story in personal correspondence, see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 86.

68 Fidel Fita, "Breve noticia de Santo Niño de la Guardia, que el arzobispo d. Juan Martínez Silíceo alegó en 1547," *Boletín de la Academia Real de la Historia* 11 (1887): 239–40.

Eugene the Martyr, Saint Idelfonsus the Confessor, and Saint Julian the Distinguished Doctor, whom the writer of the *Sentencias* [Sarmiento] claimed as such. History says he was of Jewish lineage. Now, we would not consider him worthy of a chaplaincy in our choir.⁶⁹

The opposition deems it ridiculous that their church should exclude men of *converso* descent from minor roles when it has already had archbishops of *conversos* descent before. These remarks both reference the quantitative unlikelihood of anyone of this lineage rising in the church and suggest it would be impious to assume that what was good enough for those three saints would not be good enough for a lowly chaplain. They may also be attempts to needle Silíceo by reminding him that his current job was once held by the people he despises. Personal pettiness is a real possibility:

It is not based in reason, either, that the authority somehow now falls to the church of Toledo to look for bad qualities in its ministers – those same ministers that the law required and conserved for many years as canons to have an election not only for the beneficiaries of the church but also for the Archbishop himself, who was usually a person of its congregation, which went on until just a little before our own times.⁷⁰

This little history of canon elections reads as an open attack when read with the struggle against Silíceo's appointment. These men appealed to the institutional power they would have had in the past as part of their effort to resist proposed increase surveillance in the form of Silíceo's claimed right to go looking for bad qualities. Silíceo gave a rambling response to this fourth reason:

After Adam, who was wiser and more illustrious than Solomon? And yet he idolized and turned from God, from whom he had received grace

69 “Solo tres arzobispos de Toledo leemos desde 1.500 años a este parte que ayan sido sanctos çelebrados por la Iglesia: santo Eugenio mártir, santo Ilefonso confessor y sant Julián, doctor insigne, a quien el Maestro de las Sentencias alegar por tal; y de este dize la historia que era de linaje de judíos, por donde agora no le tuvierámos por digno de una capellanía de nuestro coro.”; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 253.

70 “Tampoco paresçe se funda en razón que, aviendo llegado la iglesia de Toledo a la auctoridad que tiene sin buscar más qualidades en los ministros de ella de las que el derecho requiere, e aviéndose así conservado espeçialmente en tiempo que los canónigos tenían election, no solo de los benefiçios de la iglesia, sino de la misma dignidad arzobispal – para la qual ordinariamente elegían personas de su congregación, lo qual duró un poco antes de nuestro tiempos ...”; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 254.

and favors. If we look for examples, we find many in the Holy Scriptures. The militant Church is not founded on letters or nobility, but on faith. St. Peter was a rustic of little or no letters, as is written in the fourth chapter of Acts of the Apostles, and of no nobility that can be known through his lineage.⁷¹

In painting the learned Solomon as idolatrous, Silíceo attacks the very ideal of wisdom that the ancient king's name represented in the Christian tradition. Speaking in the rare voice of a sixteenth-century person who experienced what we now call class mobility, Silíceo claims Peter for the rustics of little or no letters. In so doing, he both takes an anti-intellectual stance and draws a direct line between the Biblical past and the pride he takes in his own birth-place. He cites various quotes from Paul, all of which contradict his opponents.

All this that Saint Paul says is inconsistent with what those who oppose the statute say. Because the main basis for one to be a beneficiary of this holy church is faith, as we said above, and the lack of it is an obstacle to becoming a canon and an impediment to being received into the church. And since the Holy Scripture says a little yeast infects the whole mass, the heresies of the ancestors of these *confesos* leave them defiled. As such, they're not worthy to be in the temple and palace that Our Lady sanctified. Furthermore, it's natural that waters, if they are poisonous and venomous at their source, no matter how much they flow over a large area of land, always carry some part of this poison. Likewise, those who are born of heretical parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents are presumed to have some of this heresy and poison.⁷²

71 "Ítem, después de Adán, ¿quién más sabio y más illustre que Salomón? Y con todo eso idolatró y se apartó de Dios, del qual avia recebido gracia y mercedes. Y si vamos por exemplos, hallaremos muchos en la Sacra Scriptura. No está fundada la Iglesia militante en letras ni nobleça, sino en fee. Rústico fue S. Pedro, y de pocas o ningunas letras, [como está escripto en los Actos de los Apóstoles, en el capítulo 4], y de ninguna nobleça que se sepa su linage ..."; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 272.

72 "Todo esto dicçe san Pablo, lo qual no se compadeçe con lo que los contradictores de el estatuto diçen. Porque el prinçipal fundamento para que uno sea beneficiado en esta sancta iglessia es la fee, como arriba digimos, y la falta de ella es obstáculo e impedimento canónico para no ser recebido en ella. Y pues en ls Sagrada Esçriptura se lee 'modicum fermentum inficit totam massam,' desta manera las herejías de los antepasados destos confesos que agora son los dejan amançillados, y, como tales, no son dignos de estar en el templo y palacio que Nuestra Señora tiene sanctificado. Demás desto, cosa es natural que las aguas, si son en su nascimiento ponzoñosas y venenosas, por más que corran por mucho espaçio de tierra, siempre lleban alguna parte de tal ponçoña. Y desta manera, los

It is now clearer why Silíceo has insisted on the term *confeso* over *converso*. Like history, his reasoning has to do with change over time. To call these people *conversos* would imply that their transformation into real Christians is complete. To Silíceo, it is not. The *confesos* confess Christianity, but their ancestors continue to act on their present. This is why in his list of reasons, Silíceo projected the word into a deeper past, speaking of *confesos antigüdados*.⁷³ Citing the bible, Silíceo says that “a little yeast infects the whole mass,” and apparently, the current *confesos* remain part of the mass of their ancestors. Their birth is poisonous, and those born of heretical great grandparents will still display heresy. The logic of lineage is now all-encompassing. *Confesos* have not inherited faith. Silíceo discusses the nature of *confesos* less as an attempt to uncover disingenuous conversion (he considers the deceits of *confeso* obvious and inevitable) and more as one revealing a material, transhistorical phenomena that cannot be changed by his opponent’s arguments. He insists that the quality of faith is found even among lowly Old Christians, but not among those of *confeso* lineage:

Every year we see, throughout the Inquisitions of Spain, many of them burned and reconciled for being heretics and violators of the faith they received in baptism; for whom it profits little to be noble, illustrious, or learned; for, with all these graces they have from God, they deny Him, not recognizing His Son as the Messiah promised in the law, as we saw this year with that heretic who was burned in Cordoba and many others who have been burned, who said that the Messiah and Redeemer had not yet come.⁷⁴

It is chilling to see the Inquisitorial logic reinforce itself here. The more burnings there are, the more evidence there is for continued relapses into Judaism. Silíceo says that so many of these *confesos* deny the Messiah, theoretically

que naçen de padres, agüelos, y visagüelos herejes presúmesese que desta herejía y ponçoña les cabe parte.” Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 273.

73 This translates roughly to “confessed converts of ancient times.” Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 205.

74 “... pues cada años vemos por todas las inquisitions de España quemarse y reconçiliarse mucho de ellos por herejes y prevaricadores de la fee que en el baptismo reçibieron; a los quales poco aprovecha ser nobles, illustres, o letrados; pues, con todas estas gracias que de Dios tiene, le niegan, no resconociendo a su hijo por el Mexías prometido en la Ley, como este año vimos de aquel hereje que quemaron en Cordova, y de otros muchos que han quemado, los quales decían que el Mexías y Redemptor aún no era venido”; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 274.

leaving open the possibility of a few true *confesos*. Yet this is constricted by his previous insistence on their categorical prosperity over and above old Christians, which saddles them with the ancient stereotype of Jewish wealth. By linking *confesos* to those who waver in their conversion and deny God's son, Silíceo discursively sets back the clock on conversion and reverts *confesos* into Jews, as if there were no time between them and their ancestors. There is no meaningful difference for Silíceo between the Biblical Jews and the *confesos* burned by the Inquisition. This history lesson is Silíceo's most recent so far, including a 1547 burning at Cordoba. In pointing out the Jewish prevarications of *confesos*, Silíceo concludes that baptism has its limits in Jewish blood. Baptism is a grace given by God, but the Jews are ungrateful. Silíceo takes the elitist assumption of his opponents – that old Christians are idiots – and ironically grants it, just to say that old Christians are the only possessors of full faith. Faith is genetic.

Nobility is Silíceo's other major category of bodily inheritance, and it cannot exist alongside Judaism. The ignobility of Jews and *confesos* is also historicizable, as seen in this reason, which fascinatingly suggests the possibility of some pro-comunero sentiment on Silíceo's part: "In the time of King Juan II, of Glorious Memory, the *corregidor* of this city of Toledo was Pedro Sarmiento. The *confesos* of the *casta* of Jews moved and rioted in this city against this *corregidor* and the Old Christians, pretending to be *señores* of this city in order to be able to Judaize ...".⁷⁵ Here, the *confesos* are not of the mere lineage of Jews, but of their very *casta* (literally, "caste"). Within mere decades of this statute's creation, the term *casta* would be applied to famous American racial categories like *mestizo* and *mulatto*. Though the word *raza* is not here, a notion very much akin to race as we know it now discursively unites the current *confesos*, biblical Jews and Sarmiento's troublesome *casta* of Jews. Silíceo praises Sarmiento for trying to remedy a situation in which these people pretended to be *señores* of the city, or its lords, a category which was linked to old ideas of nobility. The *confeso* (who remains a Jew by *casta*) can only play at *señor* status, and he does so in order to Judaize more easily.

These discursively Jewish problems exist outside Toledo. Silíceo is quick to mention that others would agree with his proposed solutions. In his third reason, he references a recent development: "In all the colleges of Spain, which are

75 "Ítem, después, en tiempo del rey don Juan el Segundo, de gloriosa memoria, siendo Corregidor en esta ciudad de Toledo don Pedro Sarmiento, los confesos de casta de judíos commovieron y albortaron toda esta çiudad contra el dicho corregidor y christianos viejos, prettendiendo haçese señores de la dicha çiudad para poder judaizar ..."; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 205.

many, and even in the one at Bologna which was founded by the Archbishop of Toledo Don Gil de Albornoz, only people who are Old Christians are received as colleagues, chaplains and peers ...”⁷⁶ Silíceo’s mention of Bologna is a jab at Diego de Castilla, head of the opposition, whose own Jewish lineage had come to light in his efforts to enter that college in 1530. Interpersonal enmity may explain the apparent mismatch between this statement’s banal reference to Bologna and the vitriolic evidence Silíceo used to support it:

Do not do or imitate their deeds, for they speak but don’t act. They lay on men’s shoulders heavy burdens that they can’t bear, and don’t want to move with a finger. They do all their deeds to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries large and their tassels long. They love the first seats at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, to be treated with reverence in the marketplace and called teachers. They’re hypocrites who close the kingdom of heaven off from men. They don’t enter it and don’t let in those who were going to enter. They devour widows’ houses, even as they make long prayers for them. They cross sea and land to convert one to their law, and once converted, they make that one twice as bad as themselves. They are blind and guides of the blind. They can’t eat a mosquito but swallow a camel. They cleanse what is outside in the chalice or cup, and inside they are full of robbery and filth. They are similar to white tombs that seem beautiful to men from the outside but inside are full of the bones of the dead and all manner of filth. In this way, they appear to men to be righteous, but inside they are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. They are relatives and offspring of vipers. Jesus Christ must have known them well, since He is God, and for that reason couldn’t lie.⁷⁷

76 “Ítem, en todos los collegios de España, que son muchos – y aun en el de Bolonia, que fue hecho por el reverendísimo arçobispo de Toledo don Gil de Albornoz – solas aquellas personas se reciben por collegiales y capellanes familiares que son christianos biejos ...”; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 201.

77 “Pero no hagáis ni imiteis las obras de ellos, porque dicen y no obran, ponen sobre los hombros de los hombres pesadas cargas que no las pueden sufrir, y ellos aún con su dedo no las quieren mover. Haçen todas sus obras por ser vistos de los hombres. Ensalçan sus filaterias y engrandecen sus fimbrias. Aman los primeros assentamientos en los convites y las primeras sillas en las synagogas, y ser reverenciados en la plaça y llamados maestros. Son hypócritas, los quales çierran el Reyno de los çielos delante de los hombres y no entran en él, ni dexan entrar a los que van para entrar. Comen las cosas de las viudas haçiéndoles luengas oraçiones, rodean el mar y la tierra por convertir uno a su ley, y, convertido, haçen que sea dos veçes peor que ellos. Son ciegos y guías de ciegos. Un mosquito no pueden comer y tragan un camello. Limpian lo que está fuera en el cálize o copa, y de dentro están llenos de rapiña y de suciedad. Son semejantes a los sepulchros blancos, que

Silíceo both paraphrases and comments on Matthew 23. The anti-Pharisee critiques of these lines have long been hard to separate from general anti-Judaism. The *confesos*, like the Jew-coded Pharisees, are similar to whitewashed tombs that appear beautiful to men from the outside but inside are full of the bones of the dead, of all manner of filth. Silíceo believes this history needs revisiting, a re-revealing. Like those alleged *confeso* bones in Cartagena, it must be dug up. It is a history of past and present Jewish action. There is a closing of temporal space between the biblical narrative and Silíceo's description of admittance to college in Bologna. When Silíceo paraphrases the scriptures in this way, it's not clear if he imagines himself to be citing them or simply describing Jews in the world as he sees them. He emphasizes that Christ couldn't lie, rendering the possibility of real conversion uninteresting, choosing instead to establish a direct line between the Jewish problems known to Christ and his own, thus collapsing the boundary between *confeso* and Jew. Jews (who are now discursively also their biological descendants) shirk work. They care only for appearances.

For Silíceo, history is one long attempt to eliminate so-called Jewish temptations. In their ninth reason for opposing, which cites the bad reputation Spain has for *limpieza* disputes on the broader European stage, the opponents appeal to a different sense of Spanish history. If Silíceo shows a Spain eternally imperiled by Jews, these men appeal to something like the Spanish nation, which is threatened by the innovations of *limpieza* statutes:

In other nations where they hear of the divisions caused by these statues, they'll think of Spain as full of heretics and apostates, even though Spain is currently the purest and most Catholic province in the world. Certainly, this opinion and infamy will never stop while these statutes and divisions continue. They've ceased in the other realms of Christendom, even those who in past times had no fewer infidels than Spain (infidels who've been gradually converted little by little, just like in Spain). Yet because these innovations have not been made with the newly converted and with their descendants, as has been and is being done in Spain, the natives of those realms, so close to us, are generally considered Old Christians. To prove that a person is an Old Christian, it is sufficient to prove that his father

de fuera parecen preciosos al hombre, y de dentro están llenos de huesos de muertos y de toda suciedad. Y desta manera se muestran a los hombres ser vistos ser justos, y de dentro son llenos de hipochresía y de maldad. Son parientes y hijos de vívoras. Bien los debía de conoçer Jesuchristo, pues siendo Dios, y por esta razón no pudo mentir"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 208–209.

was French. By contrast, we see that Spaniards, however noble and pure they may be, are called *marranos* wherever they go outside this realm.⁷⁸

Apparently, France is full of easily identifiable Old Christians. The anxiety about Spain's international reputation as *marranos*, that old word for forcibly converted Jews, is acutely felt. It inspires Silíceo's opponents to think historically:

Look at the histories of France, which was the most noble and Catholic realm in all of Christendom. One finds that at the same time that in Spain the first conversion of the Jews was happening, as mandated by King Sisebut, the same was being done in France by King Dagobert. Innumerable Jews converted then. Some were from Spain, which had been united by King Sisebut. Others were ancient residents of the [French] realm.⁷⁹

The opponents continue with the expulsions and conversions of Phillip II, Phillip IV, and Louis X:

And with all that, never in those times or these times was a nation so defamed as ours [...] in our own Spain it is certain that never after the first conversion of King Sisebut have there been other conversions from three hundred or four hundred years ago, as seen in the ancient laws

78 "... en otras nações donde se oye este división que estos estatutos hazen, luego de ella conçiben que España está llena de herejes y apóstases, siendo, commo es al presente, la provincia más limpia y católica del mundo. Y es çierto que esta opinión e infamia jamás çesará mientras estos estatutos y divisions duraren, commo ha cesado en otros reynos de la Christiandad, en los quales, commoquier que aya avido en tiempos pasados no menos número de infieles que en España, los quales poco a poco se han ido convirtiendo commo en España, pero por no averse fecho estas novedades con los nuevamente convertidos y con sus descendientes – commo se ha hecho y haze en España –, los naturales de los dichos reynos, açerca de nosotros, son tenidos generalmente por cristianos viejos. De manera que, para probar a cada uno que es christiano viejo, basta probar que su padre era francés. Y, por el contrario, vemos que españoles, por nobles y limpios que sean, doquiera que vayan fuera del reyno los llaman marranos"; López-Bravo, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 258.

79 "Véanse las historias de França, que ha sido el más noble y católico reyno de la Christiandad, y hallarse ha que, al mesmo tiempo que en España se hizo la primera conversión de judíos, que mandó hazer el rey Sisebuto, se hizó tambien la mesma diligencia en França por el rey Dagoberto, donde se convirtieron infinito número de judíos, parte de los que de España avían huido del rey Sisebuto, y parte antiguos moradores de aquel reyno." López-Bravo, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 258.

of these realms, which speak of the newly converted. But statutes were never introduced.⁸⁰

The cleansing conversions of must be well-remembered, because they prove that there are simply no Jews in Spain, a homeland of which the speakers felt protective. In foreign nations without statutes, such issues of descent have already been forgotten. The opponents hope this could happen in Spain, too. It's already occurred among the descendants of Muslims, or *moros*.

The same is true for the converts of the *moros*, who are innumerable in the villages; laborers, who through pacts with the Christian Kings stayed in their houses and lands (*haciendas*) and then were converted. Among their descendants, there is no memory of not having been with the Christians. As it is with low people, they don't tell any accounts.⁸¹

Here, the categories of worker, ruralness (*hacienda*), and reconquered Moors combine to create a sense of the masses. Apparently, poor people don't tell histories (the opposition's elitism was not a figment of Silíceo's imagination). The opponents argue that *limpieza* distinctions have ceased to exist in communal memory, suggesting that the fighting itself keeps them alive:

There is not a single infidel left in Spain. Their memory and that of their descent could soon run out. Be careful with these statutes that conserve it and make it so there will always be some notorious memory of them, making it so that no antiquity would be sufficient, not even five hundred years, to make an Old Christian, so no passing of time would suffice to wear away and clean this infamy, as it has been in other realms, where there is much more occasion than in our own.⁸²

80 "Y con todo esto, ni en aquellos tiempos ni en estos, nunca aquella nación fue infamada como la nuestra [...] nuestra mesma España, donde es cierto que, demás de la dicha primera conversión de en tiempo del rey Sisebuto, ha auido otras conversiones de trezientos y quatroçientos años, como paresçe por leyes antiguas de estos reynos que hablan de nuevamente convertidos. Y por no averse aún introduzido estos estatutos ..."; López-Bravo, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 259.

81 "Y lo mesmo es de los convertidos de moros, que quedaron infinitos por esas aldeas, labradores que por pacto con los reyes christianos se quedaro en sus casas y haciendas, y después se convertían, de cuya desçendençia ya no ay memoria, por no averse tenido con ellos, como con jente baxa, quenta ninguna"; López-Bravo, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 259.

82 "Agora que ya no quedava infiel ninguno en España y que brevemente podría acabarse la memoria de ellos y de su desçendençia, provéese con gran cuidado por estos estatutos que se conserve siempre y entretenga aquella memoria, como cosa muy neçessaria, de

As seen in the dating and the term antiquity, historical time is the framework through which the lineage must be understood. For the contradictors, Spain's history, with its converting kings and amnesic Moorish peasants, has successfully homogenized itself. It is no fantasy to hear a real fear of violence in their plea to be careful with these statutes.

The opposition has put Silíceo in a difficult position. He cannot disagree with concerns over Spain's greatness. In his response to their objections, Silíceo agrees, remarkably, that there is a problem with Spain's international reputation. He identifies as the cause the real continued presence of the descendants of heretics in Spain, not the statutes themselves:

This perpetual infamy is found in all nations in which there are heretics or descendants of them, although there are no statutes in other nations similar to ours in Spain. It is clear that our nation is not to be considered infamous because it has some statutes and laws that other nations do not have. In Castile there is a law that a husband may behead his wife if he proves she is an adulteress, and therefore it must be said that this kingdom of Castile is infamous for having a similar law and statute, which is not found in other foreign nations.⁸³

This last comparison should dispel any doubt that Silíceo relished violence, or at least the idea of it. Women are not mentioned elsewhere in the statute's documents.

To say that similar statutes engender infamy in the nation where they are kept is to say that the statutes are infamous or unjust in where they come from, [but] the Pope and the Emperor, our lords, have confirmed similar statutes, and to affirm that what they do is unjust, that what they do results in infamy for the things of the realm. To openly affirm this is

manera que ninguna antigüedad sea bastante, aunque sea de quinientos años, para hazer a uno christiano viejo; y, y por consiguiente, ningún discurso de tiempo baste para raer y limpiar esta infamia de nuestra nación, como se ha raído y quitado de las otras donde ha auido la mesma ocasión que en la nuestra"; *El estatuto de limpieza*, 259.

- 83 "Y esta perpetua infamia se halla en todas las naçiones en los quales ay herejes o desçendientes de ellos, aunque no aya estatutos en las otroas naçiones semejantes a nuestros de España. Clara cosa es que no se ha de tener nuestra naçión por infame porque tenga algunos estatutos y leyes que las otras naçiones no tengan. En Castilla ay ley que el marido pueda degollar a su muger si probare que es adúltera, y no por eso se ha de deçir que este reyno de Castilla sea infame por aver en él semejante ley y statuto, qual no se halla en otras naçiones estrañas"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 287.

to move against and conspire against your superiors, and with little difficulty, we can taste this as heresy, or that it has the flavor of that.⁸⁴

Silíceo thus accuses his opponents of heresy for daring to see anything negative in statutes that have been approved by the authorities and compares them to the heretics of Germany who go against the Pope. He then defends the statute from the charge of perpetuating infamy among other nations:

We say it's nothing new for Spaniards to be taken for *marranos* in other nations. Long before statutes like this one, they used this word to refer to both Old Christians and *confesos*, which they will not do from now on, once they learn that there are two lineages of men in Spain: Old Christians, who never stumbled in faith nor had any ancestors who did, and *confesos*, descendants of heretics and men who are enemies of our faith. When they learn that a statute like this one exists in Spain, they won't think that all are *confesos*, as they currently do.⁸⁵

In Spain, there are two types of men, born into fixed lineages that don't change over time. By pursuing apartheid, Silíceo suggests, Spain will prove the purity of real Spaniards, silencing French whispers of *marrano*. To the claim that a man in France can prove his Old Christian status simply by proving his Frenchness, Silíceo says the following.

It's true that in France many infidels converted, as can be seen from history. They were mostly gentiles, not Jews. Since they converted voluntarily, they remained in the faith, and from then until now have not fallen from it. For this reason, it wasn't necessary to make a statute like ours.

84 "Y decir semejantes estatutos engendrar infamia en la nación donde se guardan es decir ser estatutos infames y ser injusto así el papa como el emperador, nuestros señores, que semejantes estatutos confirman y aprueban. Y es abiertamente haçer conspiraçión contra sus mayores, y aun con poca dificultad podriamos probar que, o es herejía, o tiene sabor della decir esto"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 288.

85 "... decimos que no es cosa nueva ser tenidos los españoles por marranos açerca de las otras naçiones mucho antes que semejantes estatutos uiese. Y así llamaron al christiano viejo marrano como al confeso, lo qual no harán de aquí adelante, quando supieren que ay en España dos linages de hombres, unos christianos viejos, que ni ellos ni sus antepasados estropeçaron en la fee, y otros confesos, descendientes de herejes y de hombre enemigos de nuestra fee. Y así, quando supieren que semejane estatuto ay en España, creerán que no todos son confesos, como al presente lo creen"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 288.

Until just a little while ago, the Inquisition existed in France, but because they're all Old Christians, there was little need for it.⁸⁶

France is very Old Christian, because most of its converts were descended from gentiles, not Jews. This attested history of a gentile to Christian trajectory is the ideal, a fantasy of very Old Christianness. By comparing the two places, Silíceo suggests that Old Christianness is something France and Spain could share (if only Spain could shake off her Jewish past) for it springs from ancient gentile conversion. These gentiles, the ancestors of those who never stumbled in the faith, were found on both sides of the Pyrenees, albeit in unequal quantities. Silíceo imagines a history that can prove that ancient Spaniards and ancient Frenchmen both have pure lineages. These lineages are stable across historical time and geographic space. These lineages are distinctly French and Spanish yet unified by an Old Christianness that comes from gentile ancestry. This freely given gentile faith is handed down the generations. In this way, Old Christianness is something like America's whiteness, insofar as whiteness can both encompass regions and subdivide into smaller ethnicities.

Silíceo is frustrated by those who suggest that the gentile conversions of the deep French and Spanish pasts could compare to newer Jewish conversion. Importantly, he concedes that the good converts could theoretically include Moors or Jews from long ago, writing that "in Spain, those that converted in ancient times out of their own will to become Christians, including Moors and Jews, all their descendants will be called Old Christians, because there is no memory of their ancestor's apostasy, and they have never parted from the faith they received."⁸⁷ Yet this tidy past wherein Moors, Jews and Spain-based gentiles alike happily embraced Christianity is long gone. It's irrelevant to those whose recent lineages are written in the Inquisition books Silíceo mentions in this same passage.

Nearly all today called *confesos* descend from Jews converted against their will not long ago. Most have apostatized and are heretics. For this

86 "A esto decimos que así es verdad que en Françia muchos infieles convirtieron, como puede constar por historias, principalmente gentiles más que judíos. Y como los tales se convirtieron de voluntad, así permanecieron en la fee que desde entonces hasta agora no cayeron de ella. Y por eso no fue necessario haçer tal estatuto como el que hemos hecho. Y de muy poco tiempo acá ay Inquisición en Françia, porque, como todos eran christianos biejos, poca necesidad avia de ella"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 288–9.

87 "Y así, en España, los que se convirtieron antiguamente de su voluntad a ser christianos, así de moros como de judíos, deçimos que todos los descendientes de ellos se pueden llamar christianos viejos, porqye no ay memoria de aver apostatado sus antecesores, ni apartádose de la fee que recibieron"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 289.

reason, the Catholic Kings of glorious memory with the authority of the Pope our Lord, put in place the Holy Inquisition, where almost all have been reconciled as heretics, and many of them burned.⁸⁸

Silíceo then gives numbers to show that virtually all *confesos* are heretics, and continues:

Because every day we see in these kingdoms of Spain so many of them being reconciled and burned, it's a just thing to put this statute as a restriction, so that at least in this holy church there is no one who brings the smell of *confeso* nor brings the origin of heretical parents or grandparents.⁸⁹

The threat of real violence was obviously present, and the alleged *confesos* listening to Silíceo would have had few options left once he declared heresies heritable. France was quite lucky to have less Jews and more gentiles in its past gene pool. For Silíceo, the odor of these heretics is not about the body. It is a metaphor for his own subjective experience of sniffing out *raza*, of coming to find, identify, uncover, and discard anything that smells of Jews, Moors, and heretics. To him, the world stinks of this odor, and his enemies are like smokers unoffended by the smell of cigarettes only because they themselves are reeking.

6 Universal Histories of Adam, Judaism and Blackness

Recall that not all dissent to Silíceo's history lessons came from within the cathedral's factions. Consider the letter from Alcalá sent to the opposing dean.⁹⁰ Like Silíceo, these writers started with a history. They chose the earliest one imaginable: Adam.

88 "Pero, como los que agora son confesos desçienden de judíos, desçienden casi todos de judíos convertidos contra su voluntad, y, como tales, apostataron y fueron herejes, a cuya causa, los Reyes Cathólicos, de gloriosa memoria, con autoridad del papa nuestro señor, puesieron la Sancta Inquisición, por donde han sido reconciliads casi todos como herejes, y muy muchos de ellos quemados"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 289.

89 "Y porque cada día vemos en estos reynos de España reconçiliarse y quemarse muchos, fue cosa muy justa ponerles este freno del estatuto, a lo menos para que en esta sancta iglesia no se halle persona que tragya olor de confeso o trayga origen de padres or agüelos que ayan sido herejes"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 289.

90 There was a longer history of political competition between Toledo and Alcalá. Silíceo himself may well have already debated the ideas of Erasmus with men from the

All born since the beginning of the world, and all born until its end, of whatever generation or whatever heritage they may be; we all come from one Adam and are redeemed by Christ, the true Son of God. The good Christian is proximate to all types of people. Divine Providence, knowing that the differences that exist between men had to be so, gave us the natural, theological and moral rules that, if used well, permit us to deserve the enjoyment of eternal life.⁹¹

God made distinctions between people for some necessary reason during Adam's time or even previously. The good Christian accepts these as part of God's plan and gets close to all kinds of people.

At various times God took pity on the gentiles by placing believers among them, as with Ruth and her husband's uncle, and Tamar and Judas, her father-in-law, for through him she was spared from losing nobility. Tamar had two sons. One inherited nobility, the other was a reputed *villano*. And so this descended from noble to noble until it was planted in the most blessed Mother of God, from whose flesh, by the work of the Holy Spirit, came the true Messiah. Through his belief all were ennobled, through his faith all his believers are saved, and by his true name, Christ, all of us who follow him take the name of Christians, whether they be gentiles, Jews, blacks, or whatever monstrous nation.⁹²

Even this full-throated defense of universalism does not deny nobility. Rather, it places nobility with Christianity itself. The authors appeal to a Christian

University of Alcalá during the 1527 *junta de Valladolid*; see Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza de sangre*, 83; Rafael R. de Espona, "El cardenal Silíceo, Príncipe Español de la Contra-Reforma," *Annales de la Fundación Francisco Elías de Tejada* 11 (2005): 41–61 at 45.

91 "Todos los nacidos desde el principio del mundo y los que nacerán hasta el fin de él, de qualquiera generación y herencia que sean, procedemos de un Adán y somos redimidos por un Christo, Hijo de Dios verdadero. Y así, el buen Christiano tiene por próximo a todo género de gentes. Y conociendo la divina Providencia las diferencias que entre los hombres había de haver, nos dio reglas naturales, theologales y morales para que, usando bien de ellas, mereciésemos gozar de la vida eterna"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 189.

92 "Algunas vezes se apiadó Dios de la gentilidad ingiriéndola en los creyentes, así como en Ruth, con el tío de su marido; a Tamar con Judas, su suegro, porque del tuvo no estuviere desheredado de esta nobleza. Tamar huvos dos hijos, de los quales uno heredó la nobleza y otro fue reputado por villano. Y así fue descendiendo de noble en noble hasta que se plantó en la benditísima Madre de Dios, de cuya carne, por obra del Espíritu Santo, salió el verdadero Mesías, por cuya creencia todos se habían ennoblecido, en cuya fee se salvan todos sus creyentes, y por sun ombre verdadero, Christo, tomamos todos los que le seguimos el nombre de christianos, ahora sean gentiles, ahora sean judíos, ahora sean negros o de qualquiera monstruosa nación"; Bravo-López, *El estatuto de limpieza*, 191.

sense of history – the sense that the present is a Messianic age – to argue for all believers as the inheritors of Christ's noble legacy. The examples of those eligible for conversion gets more radical as the list goes on. The terms Gentile and Jew echo Galatians 3:28, but the term blacks slips almost imperceptibly into those unknown monstrous nations. This flash of hypothetical blackness reflected concerns that would have been well-known to the elites of Toledo, albeit not of acute importance in their own city. Debra Blumenthal noted that “by the end of the fifteen century, black Africans made up as much as forty percent of the slave population of Valencia.”⁹³ According to María Elena Martínez, Spanish ideology only occasionally construed reproduction with Spaniards as redemptive for *Indios*, and it almost never “allowed blacks the possibility of full ‘redemption.’”⁹⁴ Larissa Brewer-García explains how Covarrubias connected the color black to “what he presumes to be the lowly position of black people themselves in Iberian societies” and associated white with *castidad*, *limpieza*, and *alegría*.⁹⁵ Of course, not all living under Iberian political dominion ascribed to such assessments. Chloe Ireton has uncovered stories of “black men and women successfully claiming pure Old Christian lineages rooted in African origins that permitted them to access privileges typically reserved for Catholic Castilians.”⁹⁶

For the men of Alcalá's university and Toledo's cathedral, the most important sites of the reworking of the meanings of blackness were far from home, in this period. Monstrosity was an older phenomena. Nations and groups called *genus* had been associated with monstrosity since before Pliny the Elder (d. 79).⁹⁷ For the humanists of Alcalá, the extreme example of monstrosity attests Christianity's ability to transform even the basest peoples. This passage, labeled “monster” and dated to 1547, is found in the manuscript containing Silíceo's documents, belonging to the playwright Sebastián de Horozco.⁹⁸

93 Debra Blumenthal, *Enemies and Familiars: Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth Century Valencia* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2009), 4.

94 Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, 154–5.

95 Larissa Brewer-García, *Beyond Babel: Translations of Blackness in Colonial Peru and New Granada* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 23.

96 Chloe Ireton, “‘They are Blacks of the Caste of Black Christians’: Old Christian Black Blood in the Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century Iberian Atlantic,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 97, no. 4 (2017): 579–612 at 585.

97 To take a straightforward example, Pliny spoke of “Ethiopians more than twelve feet in height”; Pliny, *Natural History VII*, tr. H. Rackman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 31–2.

98 For this manuscript's proximity to Silíceo's own time and its link to Horozco, see Fita, “Breve noticia,” 239–40.

The wife of a *gestero*, already six or seven months pregnant, birthed a dead creature that had two heads and one body and two arms and four legs and in the middle of each was a pair of legs, one of which had the nature of man. A thing of wonder. Many people in the city saw it, and I saw it. I put it here so it might be remembered *ad perptuam*. The archbishop of Toledo Don Juan Martinez Silíceo took it to the ladies that were, at the time, in Alcalá de Henares, so that they might see it.⁹⁹

True or not, this story of popular interest in a monstrous child shows that monstrosity, an ancient category, circulated as a discourse in Silíceo's contemporary Toledo. The comparison between blacks and monsters would have been a meaningful one.

The next generation of anti-*limpieza* thinkers would also use blackness to show their commitment to Christian universalism. Agustín Salucio provided a reformist voice in his 1599 work on the *limpieza* statutes. He had his own copy of Silíceo's work.¹⁰⁰ Like Silíceo and his opponents, Salucio responds to a list of reasons:

There is no power on Earth to exclude that which Christ our Lord has made right. This is likewise true of the priesthood, the bishopric, preaching and the administration of the Sacraments, for all those honors were instructed by Christ our Lord for all the nations of the world. No one has the power to exclude any nation from them. If the Ethiopians, Indians, Chinese, Japanese became Christian, sufficiently cultivated, with good understanding and doctrine, and able and capable to move past the novice stage of their Christianity, then it would become right to have priests and bishops of their nation.¹⁰¹

99 I maintain orthography but expand abbreviations. "Monstruo: Es de saber que en esta cibdad de Toledo junto con la puerta que dizen de per primera martes veinte dias del mes de diziembre año del nasamiento de nuestro señor ilustrisimo Cristo de mil y quinientos y quarenta y siete años una muger de un gestero parjo una criatura muerta ya prende de seis o siete meses que tenia dos cabezas en un cuerpo y dos brazos y quatro piernas y en medio de cada par de piernas una natura de hombre. Cosa de admiracion. Y asi lo vio gran parte de la gente de la cibdad e yo lo vi. Por ende los puse aquy ad perpetua sea memoria. He volo el arçobispo de Toledo Don Juan Martinez Siliceo a las infantas que a la sazón estaban en alcala de henanres para que lo viesen"; BNE, Ms.9175, fol. 4v.

100 See generally Madrid, BNE, Ms.6055.

101 For the edited Spanish, see Agustín Salucio, *Discurso Sobre los Estatutos de Sangre*, ed. Antonio Pérez Gómez (Valencia: Artes Graficas Soler, 1975), 9.

Neither the universalism nor the colonial condescension can surprise those familiar with European history. More interesting is the example Salucio goes on to provide:

As an example, we present the case of what would happen if a new military order were to be established, and it asked for Castilians, such that Aragonese were excluded. If the king were persuaded that there was no honor in the Aragonese as there are in the Castilians, that there was no reason to fear them, who could doubt that he would want to exclude them? From his view, better to have more honorable vassals.¹⁰²

The imagined Christian aspirations of Ethiopians, Indians, Chinese and Japanese are insufficient as human examples through which the pain of exclusion can be seen. Yet their plight is directly comparable to Castilian-Aragonese hostility. Salucio reaches first for black Ethiopians, as the letter from Alcalá reached for black people (*negros*), but his mental map unfurls also towards the Orient.

Comparisons between blackness and Jewish descent may have been used elsewhere in the early modern Mediterranean, which scholars understand as highly interconnected. Consider the case of the *bildis*, a Moroccan neo-Muslim community that was marked as the descendants of Jewish converts into the modern era. In 1641, an anti-neo-Muslim manifesto was published in Fez, some decades after the group had been expelled from the city market. Neo-Muslim scholar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mayyāra compiled a response.¹⁰³ Like Silíceo's opponents, his text consisted of legal evidence. Like the men of Alcalá, he opened with Adam and the importance of universal acceptance:

What the illustrious scholars have previously mentioned is true, nothing else is permissible in the Muslim community, and no one denies it except he who shows his ignorance and the weakness of his intellect. Islam relies on what went before, and the Muslims are as brothers, and all of you are from Adam, and Adam is from clay. "Indeed, the most noble among you is the most pious." (Quran 49:13)¹⁰⁴

102 Salucio, *Discurso Sobre los Estatutos de Sangre*, 9.

103 Paul Fenton, "From Forced Conversion to Marranism: Crypto-Jews in Morocco and their Fate," *European Judaism* 52, no. 2 (2019): 31–42 at 35.

104 Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Mayyāra, *Naṣīḥat al-muḡhtarrīn wa-kifāyat al-muḡṭṭarrīn fī al-tafrīq bayna al-Muslimīn bi-mā lam yanzilhu rabb al-‘ālamīn wa-lā jā’a bi-hi al-rasūl al-amīn wa-lā thubita ‘an al-khulafā’ al-muḡḍiyyīn*, ed. Mīna al-Maghārī and Ḥafīza al-Dāzī (Rabat: Dar Abī Raqrāq, 2007), 72.

Here, the Quran links nobility (*sharaf*) to piety, a move that represents the Islamic tradition's own universalizing aspect. Mayyāra returns to this point several times, but the qualifiers needed to explain this universalism are telling. In one of seventeen supporting legal treatises, the idea of Islam's triumph over difference appears as it was reported by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855) in his famous hadith collection: "Oh people, indeed your Lord is one, and indeed your fathers are one, such that the Arab is not favored over the non-Arab, nor the non-Arab over the Arab, and not the red over the black or the black over the red except in piety."¹⁰⁵ Mayyāra's imagined black bodies were not monstrous as those at Alcalá, but his choice of this passage is curious given the total lack of dark-skinned characters in his story. He used this image to defend those of alleged Jewish descent no less than three times. Apparently, we can find thinkers who used figures of universal history (like Adam) to create racial discourses broad enough to encompass categories as apparently disparate as blackness and Judaism, in both the Muslim and Christian early modern worlds.

7 Conclusion

In 1449, during the Castilian Civil War, Pedro Sarmiento wrote a treatise excluding *conversos* from Toledo's city government. In 1547, Juan Martínez Silíceo wrote a statute meant to exclude *conversos*, now *confesos*, from the Toledo cathedral, one section of which was already technically forbidden to them, as it housed the *Capilla de los Reyes Nuevos*. His polemics would be read by critics and sympathizers and even defended by Porreño.

It is no shock that Silíceo attempted to keep Old Christianness for himself, even as he levelled a surprisingly strident critique of aristocracy. His writings surprise with the issues they raise. They contain evidence for the reception of *limpieza* at the Habsburg court, the role of cultural competition with France and Italy in Spain's reuses of *limpieza*, the connotation of *converso* versus *confeso*, anxieties over Protestantism, and others. Most importantly, they help us better appreciate how an old hatred could be put to ever new uses, even in old Toledo, which few would place at the center of the racial violences Spain was perpetuating by the middle of the sixteenth century.

¹⁰⁵ Mayyāra, *Naṣiḥat al-muḡtarrīn*, 87.