

EMID – THE EARLY MODERN INQUISITION DATABASE

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Resumen: La base de datos *Early Modern Inquisition Database* contiene actualmente información de más de 100.000 procesos de las inquisiciones españolas y portuguesas. Está en línea y va a ser abierto al público general cuando esté acabado. Los procesos están registrados con información detallada de las sentencias y algo menos de los delitos. Se están creando enlaces entre procesos de cómplices y los antecedentes en caso de varios procesos contra el mismo reo, y los procesos están siendo codificados para ser analizados con un GIS.

Palabras clave: Inquisición española, bases de datos

Abstract: The Early Modern Inquisition Database (EMID) contains information on more than 100.000 trials from the Portuguese and Spanish Inquisitions. It resides on a server and can be accessed from anywhere in the world. It will in the future be opened up to all interested parties to access over the internet. The trials are being coded by offence and sentence, geocoded and linked by antecedents and complicities.

Keywords: Spanish Inquisition, database

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INTRODUCTION

The Early Modern Inquisition Database¹ (EMID) contains information on more than 100.000 trials from the Portuguese and Spanish Inquisitions in a database system built on *fichoz* as developed by Jean-Pierre Dedieu². It resides on a server and can be accessed from anywhere in the world with an updated version of FileMaker Pro and username and password. It will in the future be opened up to all interested parties to access over the internet.

A BRIEF HISTORY

EMID as it exists today was created in 2013. There were earlier databases, such as one created by Jean-Pierre Dedieu for Toledo, and another one created by myself for much of the rest of Spain and the Spanish empire based on index cards generously provided by Gustav Henningsen³. These two databases were merged in 2011 in a new database using the same database system that currently underlies EMID. In 2013 I was approached by Mauricio Drelichman who needed a database for a project to study long-run effects of the Spanish Inquisition in collaboration with Hans Joachim Voth. We established a partnership and were able to attract funding to register much more data on every trial. As we laid out the plans to do so, we decided which data to include, which data to register summarily, procedures for training and supervising research assistants (RAs) in the archive, and we created manuals and routines for the work. It quickly became apparent that it would be easier and faster to register everything from the ground up from the archival sources than to use the data from Henningsen and Contreras as a framework for an extended registration.

This is why we consider 2013 as the year for the creation of EMID: this year we discarded the old data from Henningsen and Contreras' project, and we went to the archives with a team of researchers and RAs (a total of 5 people at the most were working simultaneously) to register everything from scratch. Five years later we believe we will have registered all *relaciones de causas* and all *procesos* in the AHN by the end of the year, and most of the sources in the ARV, AUV, and AHPZ, as well as in the British Library and the University Library in Halle by the end of 2019. What remains after this is to register the sources in the ADC in Cuenca, the MHC in Canarias and the various American archives. From Portugal we have registered all trials in the ANTT in Lisbon, and aim to register the remaining trials in Evora and Coimbra by 2020.

THE DATABASE STRUCTURE

EMID is trial-centric. The basic instance registered is the formal trial of faith against a person. A trial with multiple defendants is registered as a new instance for each identifiable individual. When a person is known to have been tried various times a record is made for each

1 KNUTSEN, Gunnar W., DRELICHMAN, Mauricio, DEDIEU, Jean-Pierre, and HENNINGSEN, Gustav, *Early Modern Inquisition Database*.

2 See <http://www.fichoz.org>

3 These formed the basis for the statistics circulated, published, reworked and republished several times by Gustav Henningsen and Jaime Contreras, from 1977 to 1993. The final and presumably authoritative published version is HENNINGSEN, Gustav, "The Database of the Spanish Inquisition," in *Vorträge Zur Justizforschung, Geschichte Und Theorie*, Band 2, Frankfurt am Main, 1993.

trial. Documents that are simply denunciations, testimony or other pieces of information on alleged offences committed by someone are not registered unless we are certain that they formed part of or led to a formal trial of faith, since as little as an estimated five per cent of all denunciations led to formal trials⁴. Each registered trial is linked by one-to-many relationships to multiple offences and sentencing components, allowing us to capture the plurality of charges in many trials, and the fine-grained complexities of inquisitorial sentencing. The sentences contain spiritual (e.g. reconciliation or fasting), pecuniary (e.g. fines and confiscations) and physical (e.g. burning and whipping) components. Registering these in detail give a much better picture of inquisitorial practice than the broad categories used by Henningsen and Contreras. To give just one example, someone penanced might well suffer harsher physical punishment than someone reconciled –even though the latter in canon law was a far more severe sentence.

Registering the punishments in detail is relatively easy since both the *procesos* and *relaciones de causas* normally give this information in a clear and concise form⁵. Registering the offences in similar detail has so far not been done for reasons of economy and practicality. While the components of the final sentence are written down in a single place and normally spelled out with no ambiguity, the charges brought against the accused frequently changed during the course of a trial and are described in different ways in various places in the original trial files. The *relaciones* are easier in this respect but they share with the *procesos* another problem, which is that of interpretation of the charges. Distinguishing between (to take just one example) blasphemy, heretical blasphemy, irreverent words, and so forth is difficult. Indeed, it was so hard that the inquisitors left it to theologians, the *calificadores* of the Holy Office. Putting this burden on RAs today would require us to invest heavily in training and later to commit significant resources to ensuring uniformity of criteria between those registering the trials. Therefore, the decision was made to register offences by using the same categories as Henningsen and Contreras, but to note separately the trials for sodomy and bestiality within the large group of (V)arious offences. EMID also allows us to register incidences during a trial, such as the use of torture, confession, intervention by the Suprema, and so on. However, this has not been done in a systematic way so far, except for Toledo. Again, this has been a question of resources.

Information on the defendant at the time of trial has also been entered: name, age, gender, *raza* and nationality⁶, civil status and profession. This has been recorded for every trial instead of using a separate module with an entry for every person, because it allows us to register changes in civil and professional status, as well as establishing several data points on age for all those tried more than once.

4 Figures for this are hard to come by, but those published by Dedieu and Paiva indicate that one in twenty denunciations resulted in a formal trial. DEDIEU, Jean-Pierre, *L'administration de la foi: L'inquisition de Tolède (XVIe-XVIIIe Siècle)*, Madrid, 1989; PAIVA, José Pedro, *Bruxaria e superstição num país sem "caça às bruxas" 1600-1774*, 2nd ed., Lisboa, 2002.

5 Early *relaciones de causas* are, of course, less informative and do not contain such particulars.

6 These are, of course, difficult concepts, both in early modern usage and in our attempts to translate them into modern categories. Yet, it would be hard to justify throwing away this information simply because it is difficult to work with or has categories that offend our sensibilities. We have tried to normalize the categories (e.g. Italians instead of Milanese, Roman, etc.) and create larger groups around the registered information (e.g. converts from Islam).

The sources of the data are also registered, allowing us to follow the leads up from the trial, through the document containing information on the trial, and up to the archival piece containing that document. It is also possible to approach it from the other direction, navigating from the archival unit to the documents it contains and to the trials mentioned in those documents.

Finally, EMID allows us to code relationships between trials and between individuals: complicities, and antecedents in trials, and family relationships between defendants. In both cases this can be done across Portuguese and Spanish tribunals, which is quite important since a notable number of Portuguese defendants in the Spanish Inquisition turn out to have suffered previous trials in the Portuguese Inquisition. Thus, EMID allows us to go from a vision of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions based on individual trials, to one based on chains of trials. This will allow us to understand the dynamics of prosecution and persecutions much better, giving us a different global perspective on the prosecutorial activities of the Holy Office than what we have had available so far.

PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH DATA

As of today, the Portuguese and Spanish data reside in two different but similarly structured modules. They will be merged in the near future, but it has been convenient to keep them separate for now for two reasons. First, because we have had different teams working on the Portuguese and Spanish data, and secondly because we have kept the registered data in the original language. Thus, while the interface is in English the registered data for punishment, offences, professions, and civil status are recorded in Spanish and Portuguese. Some decision must be made whether to keep the two languages side-by-side in the same system, to translate everything into English or to add a translation layer so that one can search across the system for certain nationalities, professions, punishments, and so on. Integration will be completed before publication of the full database.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Data has been registered by a number of researchers and institutions, yet the majority of the data in EMID has been entered by a group of research assistants (RAs) working in Spanish archives since 2013. Other data comes from previous work by Jean-Pierre Dedieu and Gunnar W. Knutsen, and from archive catalogues. This data has been formatted, coded and adapted to the structure of EMID before being checked and expanded by RAs who have worked with the original sources in the archive. This has been necessary both to check the quality of the data and to get all the information that should be in EMID, frequently left out from archive catalogues and other registrations that work with more summary data.

The RAs work with a simplified registration interface which has been designed to allow them to register sources and cases as they work in the archive without needing to cross-reference trials or access the whole database. The file they work on is a registration file, so that the data does not get entered directly into EMID, but is subject to vetting and quality control before importation. When more than one RA is active we have used a file residing on

the main server for our registration, allowing several persons to add records simultaneously and work on the same file without conflicts. This is, of course, only possible with a working internet connection, which has proven troublesome in certain archives.

The data registered is regularly examined and if no serious errors are found, it is imported into EMID. Yet, even when correctly registered, the data needs to be cleaned up, which is typically done in batches after importation.

POST-REGISTRATION CLEAN-UP

Registering the data is not enough: obvious spelling errors must be removed, and the various misspellings of structured fields must be corrected. For example, the field for civil status does in principle only acknowledge three statuses: *soltero/soltera*, *casado/casada*, or *viudo/viuda*. However, occasionally some errors have been introduced and need to be corrected. Similarly, the age should be registered as a single numerical figure, e.g. “30”, but sometimes has been registered as a range: “mas q 30”, or “30-40”. In these cases, the youngest age is registered, and the additional information regarding the age is put in the notes field, where it should have been put during registration. The gender field has two values, M/F, yet even here the occasional error has crept in. Occasionally one sees that a convicted bigamist has been registered as unmarried! More errors can be found in the more complex sentencing fields, and these also need to be cleaned up so that there is consistent spelling and phrasing throughout the database. There are, statically speaking, not a great many errors of this sort, yet over tens of thousands of cases even a small percentage can become a significant total number.

Another form of clean-up is the removal of duplicates. As mentioned earlier, the RAs work with a simplified interface in the archive, and simply register all the trials they come across in the documents they work on. The work of searching for duplicates is then done after registration. The reason for this is two-fold. First, it is more efficient to look for duplicates in large batches after registration than to check every case in the archive. Second, it is useful to have a record of the various sources to each trial, since they can contain complimentary information or archival items can become inaccessible for longer or shorter periods due to restoration work, deterioration of sources or archival loss.

Duplicate records of trials come in many forms. Especially numerous are the duplicate copies of *relaciones de causas*, which are the source to the largest number of trials from the Spanish Inquisition. These were sent in two, sometimes three, copies to the *Suprema* and the inquisitor general. Thousands of trials are known from original trial manuscripts (*procesos*) as well, and hundreds more are known from various reports of sequestered property, inspections of *sambenitos* in parish churches, and so forth. In addition, hundreds, if not thousands, of cases were reported in more than one *relación de causas*. Effectively, the local tribunals over-reported their activity levels to the *Suprema*. How deliberate and systematic this was is a subject that awaits further study, yet it is clear that there was little risk of the inquisitor general or councillors of the *Suprema* recalling that they had heard a particular case one year earlier after having had the records of hundreds of other cases read aloud to them the previous year.

In concrete and practical terms, the removal of duplicates means that we delete all recorded instances of the trial except one and point all the records of sources mentioning this trial to that instance. Thus, instead of having two trials with one source each, we have one trial with two sources. While doing this we check that we do not lose any information by copying information from the records to be deleted to the one that we will keep when they have extra information, such as birthplace or profession. Not all *relaciones* contain the same information on the same case – nor, indeed, do always otherwise word for word similar *relaciones* always contain the same trials. One is sometimes lacking a case, frequently the last one. The *procesos* are, naturally enough, more information rich than the *relaciones*. Checking and correcting all this means that removing duplicates can be laborious work, since it is important not to mistake several trials against the same person or trials against several persons with the same name for duplicates of a single trial. This is closely connected to two other activities that we will deal with among others in the next section on coding trials: coding multiple trials against a defendant and coding complicities and family ties.

CODING

After the data has been registered and cleaned comes the time for coding. This phrase has caused some confusion when I have presented EMID previously. What we mean by this is that we create links between trials and locations (geocoding) and links between individual trials. In the future it will also include creating links between the individual defendants outside of the links between their respective trials (e.g. coding family relationships, professional relationships etc.).

A significant number of persons were tried more than once, including many if not most of those finally relaxed: these had previously been reconciled and were sentenced to be burned upon their conviction as relapsed heretics. It is also quite frequent to see someone tried for not having completed their sentence from a previous trial, such as by breaking their banishment and returning home. These earlier trials are normally mentioned in the later *proceso* or the *relación de causas*, and the RAs make notes of this when registering the trials. We then later go through EMID searching for these earlier trials, establishing links when we find them, make a note if we do not, and occasionally, registering the earlier trial on the basis of the later trial if there is sufficient information. The record so far is a total of seven convictions racked by up a sorceress from Valencia in the seventeenth century! Joana Ana Pérez was convicted by the tribunal of Valencia in 1613, 1639, 1644, 1647, 1655 and 1659. She is not the only one to have suffered a series of convictions. For example, Joana Ana Mata, also from Valencia, and likewise convicted for sorcery, was convicted by the Holy Office in Valencia in 1615, 1638 and 1640. As part of the sentence in the latter trial, she was banished to Zaragoza, where she was convicted of sorcery in 1644. She died in the Inquisition's jail while the decision was made whether to flog and banish her, or simply to let her go with a reprimand and warning⁷. Not all her trials where

⁷ I mentioned her when writing my book on trials for superstition in Valencia and Barcelona, but since EMID had not yet been created I was unable to trace her after her final trial in Valencia. Her inquisitorial trials in Valencia made clear that she had been convicted in at least two different secular courts in Valencia and banished to Sardinia. Gunnar W. Knutsen, *Servants of Satan and Masters of Demons: The Spanish Inquisition's Trials of Superstition, Valencia and Barcelona, 1478-1700* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009).

for superstition: in 1640 she was convicted of breaking the banishment she had been sentenced to in 1638. These two examples of long delinquent careers (at least according to the Spanish Inquisition) are extraordinary, but they are not unique. As we go along coding these links we see that EMID contains records of thousands of individuals who have been tried more than once, including in both the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions.

Another type of connection between individual trials is that of complicities between defendants who had been accused of breaking the law together. These trials are then linked as we go along coding the registered trials. This is relatively straightforward since complicities are spelled out in the *procesos*. In the *relaciones* it is not always so clear cut due to their brevity. Early *relaciones de causas* frequently omit this information; as they get longer it is sometimes implied rather than spelled out, before the later *relaciones* become almost complete in the information they contain. What I mean by implied complicities may not be obvious and deserves an explanation. Essentially it refers to family relationships that are mentioned in the *relaciones* without specifying that they are also complicities. The *relaciones de causas* were judicial documents of a type quite common in early modern Europe: the summary information of all judicially relevant information from a trial to allow a court to reach or justify a judicial decision⁸. Family relationships were therefore brought up in two sets of circumstances: First, a woman's civil status was always reported since it had judicial consequences if she was married or not, and secondly, kinship was always reported when it involved others who had been tried by the Holy Office for offences that were believed to be committed within the family: the practice of Judaism and Islam, and the holding of Protestants beliefs. Thus, these family relationships are included in the *relaciones de causas* because they were considered to be judicially relevant, implying to the readers in the *Suprema* a complicity between the defendant and those family members who had also been tried by the Holy Office. Therefore, we code the links between these trials as *implied* complicities, erring on the side of caution by separating them from those complicities that are explicitly mentioned in our sources. In addition to this coding, these family ties will later be coded on a personal level, not between trials, but between defendants. The difference is subtly, but technically important in a database.

This coding of complicities and multiple trials has significant impact on our vision of the Holy Office. For one thing, we go from a view of the Inquisition's activities dominated by individual trials to one that includes thousands of chains and clusters of connected trials. We will be able to answer not only questions such as how many women were tried and for what activities (which, unbelievably, we still lack proper statistics for in Spain despite several books dedicated to women and the Inquisition⁹), but also how frequently women were prosecuted on their own

8 The elaboration of these could be the responsibility of one judge who then presented the case before his peers for a vote, as in the French *parlements*, or it could be the task of a separate group of lawyers who could not afford a to buy a full judgeship, as was frequently the case in Spain. See for example, SCHOLZ, Johannes-Michael, "Relatores et magistrados. De la naissance du juge moderne au XIXe Siècle espagnol," in *Les figures de l'administrateur: Institutions, réseaux, pouvoirs en Espagne, en France et au Portugal, 16e-19e siècle*, Paris, 1997; SHENNAN, J. H., *The Parlement of Paris* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1968). In the Spanish Inquisition the task of producing the *relaciones de causas* fell on the fiscal.

9 See, for example GILES, Mary E., ed., *Women in the Inquisition: Spain and the New World*, Baltimore, 1998; VOLLENDORF, Lisa, *The Lives of Women: A New History of Inquisitional Spain*, 2005; ZAMORA CALVO, María Jesús, ed., *Mulieres inquisitionis: La mujer frente a la Inquisición en España*, Lugo, 2017.

without the simultaneous or previous trial of male relatives. Similar questions can be raised in the case of trials against minors, and I will attempt to answer these questions in forthcoming papers.

Previous research indicates that somewhere around 5 to 7 per cent of all denunciations resulted in formal trials of faith¹⁰. From this the number of denunciations made to the Holy Office has been calculated by multiplying the total estimated number of trials by twenty. However, if the denunciation resulted in not one trial, but a series of trials, the estimated number of denunciations has to be lowered significantly. The coding of the connections between trials thus opens new possibilities both for a better understanding of the scope of the Inquisition's activities, and new fields of research.

Geocoding the trials again means creating links, not between trials and persons or between various trials, but between trials, defendants and physical locations. For each trial we geocode three locations if we have information on them: the defendant's birthplace and place of residency, and the place where the offence was committed if that is stated as different. If no place of offence is recorded in the source, we impute and code as imputed that the place of the offence was the same as the place of residency if that is within the tribunal's district. Again, the difference in information density between trial manuscripts and *relaciones de causas* is important: the first normally spell out where the defendant was born, lived and was alleged to have broken the law. The latter only do so at a late stage, with earlier *relaciones* simply noting the place of residency systematically, mentioning birthplace and place of the deed only if they differed from the place of residency. This geocoding can be used to generate maps on the basis of selected trials, for example to see where Italians were tried or study the shifting borders between tribunals, revisiting the classic subject of Dedieu and Contreras' classic 1993 article¹¹.

PUBLICATION

One recurrent problem in creating EMID has been funding. Normally considered research infrastructure rather than research, historical databases have few sources of funding. Some small grants have come directly to EMID, while the majority of the money used to build the database have come research projects that use it for their own purposes. This means that funding has always been relatively short-term, making it hard to plan for the long term, and that to some extent the data registered has been dictated by the needs of whatever project that at any moment was footing the bill. This makes it difficult to give a precise time frame for the final completion and publication of EMID. We currently hope to be able to finish it to such a degree that we can open it to the public by the end of 2020.

10 PAIVA, *Bruxaria e superstição num país sem "caça às bruxas"*, 208; DEDIEU, *L'administration de la foi*, 282. Jeremy Black likewise suggests that many denunciations were never followed up by the Roman Inquisition, though the figures he suggest are both much higher and less certain than those of Dedieu and Paiva. BLACK, Christopher F., *The Italian Inquisition*, New Haven, 2009, 72, 134.

11 CONTRERAS, Jaime and DEDIEU, Jean Pierre, "Estructuras geograficas del Santo Oficio en España", *Historia de la Inquisición en España y America*, vol. 2, Madrid, 1993, 3-47.