

Table of Contents

- 1 *Claude B. Stuczynski and Yosi Yisraeli*
What is Converso Paulinisms? Towards a New Conceptualization of Paul and the Converso Crisis
- 13 *Yosi Yisraeli*
“Fides ex auditu, as your Rabbis often say”: A New Perspective on Paul in the Fifteenth Century
- 39 *Erika Tritle*
Spirit, Letter, and Flesh: Alonso de Cartagena and Marcos García de Mora Contest the Apostle’s Legacy
- 63 *Rosa Vidal Doval*
Saint Paul, the Apostolic Age, and the Status of Conversos in Alonso de Espina’s *Fortalitium fidei* (1464) and Hernando de Talavera’s *Católica impugnación*
- 81 *Isabella Iannuzzi*
Beyond Paulinism: Fray Hernando de Talavera and a New Path Towards Conversion
- 113 *Maria Laura Giordano*
The Failed Dream of Unitas Christiana: John of Ávila’s Commentary on Galatians
- 155 *Claude B. Stuczynski*
Henri Mauroy’s Judeo-Christian Apology of the Conversos: Meaning and Context
- 177 *Nadia Zeldes*
An Annotated Translation from Latin and Greek of the Frontispiece and Prologues of Henri Mauroy’s Apology
- 207 *Samuel Temkin*
Enrique Nunes, aka *Righetto*, and His Family
- 249 List of Contributors

What is Converso Paulinisms? Towards a New Conceptualization of Paul and the Converso Crisis

Claude B. Stuczynski and Yosi Yisraeli

This volume of *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* presents the first collection of studies dedicated to the impact of the Iberian converso crisis on the interpretation of Paul's life and teachings. We believe this to have been a significant historical phenomenon—one which we may call *Converso Paulinisms*. By way of introduction, we briefly present the main developments from which this concept derives its rationale and the productive end we hope it can serve. We begin with the lessons we learned from recent developments in Pauline studies and the readings of Paul by Church authorities, theologians, and contemporary thinkers. Then, we move on to consider their implications in Late Medieval and Early Modern setting of the converso phenomenon.

1. The Turn in Pauline Studies: The Varieties of Paul and the Jewish Question

The transformation that the study of Saul of Tarsus/St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, underwent in the last fifty years hardly requires introduction.¹ A new scholarly approach that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century

1 For historical surveys of these scholarly developments, see Magnus Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul: A Student's Guide to Recent Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009); William Baird, *History of New Testament Research, Volume 3: From C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013); Murray J. Smith, "Paul in the Twenty-First Century," in *All Things to All Cultures: Paul among Jews, Greeks, and Romans*, ed. Mark Harding and Alanna Nobbs (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 1–34; John J. Collins, *The Invention of Judaism: Torah and Jewish Identity from Deuteronomy to Paul* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 159–81; Matthew Thiessen, "Conjuring Paul and Judaism Forty Years after *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*," *Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting* 5 (2018): 6–20; Margaret M. Mitchell, "Paul and Judaism Now: Quo vadimus?" *Journal of the Jesus Movement in its Jewish Setting* 5 (2018): 55–78; Matthew V. Novenson, "Anti-Judaism and Philo-Judaism in Pauline Studies: Then and Now," in *Protestant Bible Scholarship: Antisemitism, Philosemitism and Anti-Judaism*, ed. Arjen F. Bakker et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 106–24; Michael F. Bird, "An Introduction to the Paul within Judaism Debate," in *Paul within Judaism: Perspectives on Paul and Jewish Identity*, ed. Michael Bird et al. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023), 1–28.

claimed to recontextualize Paul within his Jewish environment. Engaging Paul's letters in conversation with the rabbis unleashed an array of new interpretations that radically overturned previous conventions about the Apostle to the Gentiles and the Early Church²—most notably, his proto-Marcionite (and anti-Jewish) image, and his pairing with Gentile-Christianity as opposed to the Jewish-Christianity of Peter.³ Thus, from an uncompromising censor of the Hebrew Bible, Paul was recast as its sensitive interpreter who diligently read the Gospels into the Scripture of the Jews. From a brazen anti-Jewish hater, he was transformed into the proud son of Israel—not only in spirit, but also in flesh. And instead of

- 2 The bibliography is vast and growing. Among the contributions are Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles, and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976); Nils Alstrup Dahl, *Studies in Paul Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002); Stanley Kent Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981); E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987); John G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008); Nicholas Thomas Wright, *Pauline Perspectives: Essays on Paul, 1978–2013* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013). These new perspectives on Paul also occurred among Jewish Studies' scholars. In this respect, see Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Paula Fredriksen, "What Does It Mean to See Paul 'within Judaism'?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 141 (2022): 359–80. Paula Fredriksen employed an interdisciplinary approach in her *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). This scholarship is to be found in the comprehensive guidebooks: James D. G. Dunn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Bruce W. Longenecker, ed., *The New Cambridge Companion to St. Paul* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Matthew V. Novenson and R. Barry Matlock, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Pauline Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).
- 3 Paul's proto-Marcionite image was promoted most significantly by Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930). See his *Das Alte Testament in den Paulinischen Briefen und in den Paulinischen Gemeinden* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1928); idem, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God*, trans. John E. Steely and Lyle D. Bierma (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007). On the dichotomy between Petrine and Pauline Christianity, see Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Works, His Epistles and Teachings*, 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1873–1875); Matt Jackson-McCabe, *Jewish Christianity: The Making of the Christianity-Judaism Divide* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020). According to some scholars, a more "Jewish" Paul also challenges the traditional boundaries between Christianity and Judaism. See Kimberley Stratton and Andrea Lieber, eds., *Crossing Boundaries in Early Judaism and Christianity: Ambiguities, Complexities, and Half-Forgotten Adversaries; Essays in Honor of Alan F. Segal* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

an extreme antinomian, he was discovered to be a Jew motivated by deep concern about who and how one should observe the Law. Of course, all of these claims and many others are fiercely debated by experts, yet they are not the subject of this volume. For our purpose the historical image of Paul matters less than the interpretive varieties of his later readers and believers. In that respect, the turn in the Pauline studies can teach medievalists and early modernists two important and interrelated lessons which earlier historians could not have fully grasped.

The first concerns the astounding scope of possible interpretations and conflicting meanings that ardent and informed readers could find in the Pauline corpus. Significantly, the new study of Paul opened our eyes to potential medieval and early modern readings that previous historians might have missed because they could not imagine them possible. No less important, these developments vividly illustrate that the Pauline corpus could simultaneously support radically diverse images and ideals of Paul: from a keen anti-Jewish supersessionist to a proud Jewish follower of Christ. Importantly, we do not mean to endorse an “essential relativism.” In fact, as will be noted, we do believe that the new scholarship on Paul offers a more accurate portrait of the apostle, confirming to some extent the more Jewishly benign and inclusive readings that were heralded by (some) Late Medieval and Early Modern Iberian conversos and their supporters.⁴ However, this specific assessment is incidental to our main methodological point.

The second crucial lesson stems from the historical context and political circumstances that gave birth to these “new perspectives on Paul.” While the prodigious achievements in this field were powered by sophisticated philological and historical methods, few would deny that they were driven, or at least underpinned, by a tectonic hermeneutical shift that was no less moral, religious, and political than scientific. Primarily, these novel views stemmed from an urgent call to reshape Christian-Jewish relations following the traumatic events of World War II and the horrors of the Holocaust.⁵ This compelling desire to model a Church that was not inherently and virulently anti-Jewish drove many Christian scholars and theologians to reevaluate their most fundamental traditions, searching for a Christianity that was not governed by supersessionist ideals.⁶ The writings of Paul, which defined the Christian approach towards its

4 Or, if to put from the other way around, we could also say that these Late Medieval and Early Modern Iberian readings anticipated many of the future scholarly achievements of our times.

5 In the case of the Catholic Church, this paradigmatic shift was made possible through the Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965. See John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933–1965* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Karma Ben-Johanan, *Jacob’s Younger Brother: Christian-Jewish Relations after Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2022).

6 Examples of recent theological reinterpretation of Paul’s letters, are Brant Pitre,

Jewish origins, were first among these ancient sources.⁷ However, these were not the only ethical motivations for new readings in the Pauline corpus that sprang up in the aftermath of World War II. Along with historians and (professionalized) theologians, contemporary philosophers and radical thinkers also honed in on Paul in order to promote their own political ideas. For them, however, Paul was the revolutionary inventor of universalism and, at times, a messianic anarchist—an antithesis to what they perceived as the political and ethnic particularism of the Jews.⁸ Somewhat ironically, these “radical” readings adopted older perceptions of the apostle as a committed supersessionist and/or antinomian thinker, albeit reframed in new garbs and channeled toward other aims.⁹ So, just as in the past, opposing perspectives on Paul (and the Jews) are still endorsed in the name of political ideas, even if in more implicit, indirect, and compartmentalized ways.

None of this is meant to impune the scholarly advances made in the field of Pauline studies, but simply to call our attention to the critical fact that there is an intrinsic synergy between Christian understanding of Judaism and readings of Paul. Accordingly, any comprehensive revision of our assessment of Judaism and its kinship with Christianity and any challenge to these categories or concepts demands intense reinterpretation of the Pauline corpus.¹⁰ With these two lessons in mind, let us return to premodern Iberia.

Michael P. Barber, and John A. Kincaid, *Paul, A New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019); Gabriele Boccaccini, *Paul's Three Paths to Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020).

- 7 Other significant paths of historical and theological reevaluations are the numerous reassessments of Jesus’s Jewishness in Christian and Jewish cultures (e.g., Barbara Meyer, *Jesus the Jew in Christian Memory: Theological and Philosophical Explorations* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020]), and regarding the overwhelmingly Jewish character of the first communities of Christ believers (e.g., Paula Fredriksen, *When Christians Were Jews: The First Generation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018)).
- 8 Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003); idem, *The Fragile Absolute: Or, Why Is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London: Verso Books, 2009); Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005). See also Edgar Morin, *Le monde moderne et la question juive* (Paris: Seuil, 2005).
- 9 Douglas Harink *Paul, Philosophy, and the Theopolitical Vision: Critical Engagements with Agamben, Badiou, Zizek, and Others* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007).
- 10 A telling example of this is Adi Ophir’s and Ishay Rosen-Zvi’s book: *Goy: Israel’s Multiple Others and the Birth of the Gentile* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), in which they propose that the abstract concept of the Gentile as opposed to the Jew first appeared in Paul’s Letters.

*2. Can Christianity Tolerate “Jewish Qualities”?**The Necessity of Converso Paulinisms*

The study of the converso phenomenon has undergone a revolution of its own since the middle of the twentieth century. Parting ways from essentialist perceptions of “Judaism” and “Christianity” as fixed and inherently antithetical entities, historians of this field began to bring to light the dynamic and creative efforts through which Jews, converts, “New Christians,” and “Old Christians” were refurbishing and negotiating their religious identities.¹¹ As understood today, this process entailed Christian reflection on its Jewish origins on a scale and with intensity not seen since the early days of the Church. Indeed, the “genealogical” crisis that followed the Iberian mass conversions of Jews took many social, political, legal, and religious forms.¹² But practically all of them were mapped, in one way or another, to the basic questions of Jewishness and Christianity—that is, what are the “Jewish qualities” that Christian society can or cannot tolerate among its members, and what kind of transformation, i.e., conversion, makes Jews (and their descendants) into Christians. While many historians of the nineteenth century and even later believed that the answers were rigidly derived from the nature of Christianity and Judaism, we now know that for a long period the correlation between these two entities posed open questions. Accordingly, for more than two hundred years Iberian scholars deeply pondered on the historical, theological, and moral affinities or disparities between Judaism and Christianity to articulate and debate the Jewishness of the conversos (i.e., the converts and their so-called New Christian descendants) and their place in the body of Christ. Unavoidably, many of these inquiries had to go through Paul, who was not only the certified arbiter on issues of Jewishness (whatever his position was alleged to be), but also a personal model of Jewish conversion to Christianity. The converso crisis, therefore, dramatically changed the stakes involved in understanding Paul, propelling a significant effort to read him in new ways.

The basic idea that throughout the converso phenomenon Pauline traditions came to play a special role in shaping some of the idiosyncratic religious identities and ideals of Early Modern Iberia is, of course, not new. In fact, it has quite a history of its own. Already in the 1930s the French hispanist, Marcel Bataillon, suggested that in sixteenth century Spain, Christians of Jewish origin were particularly sympathetic towards Erasmus of Rotterdam on account of his Pauline-

11 E.g., David L. Graizbord, *Souls in Dispute: Converso Identities in Iberia and the Jewish Diaspora, 1580–1700* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

12 David Nirenberg, “Mass Conversion and Genealogical Mentalities: Jews and Christians in Fifteenth-Century Spain,” *Past and Present*, 174 (2002): 3–41, reprinted in the collection of his studies, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

like teachings. Building on Paul's concept of the "new man" (Eph 4:22–24), Erasmus promoted an ideal of Christian inner spirituality that was indifferent to ethnic traits. This model became especially attractive to conversos who sought their place as full-fledged Christians in an environment that was increasingly obsessed with matters of Jewish lineage.¹³ While other scholars such as Eugenio Asensio argued in response that the Erasmian appeal should be understood in broader cultural context, a basic recognition in the apologetic rationale behind a converso-Pauline connection began to gain ground.¹⁴

In the 1960s Francisco Márquez Villanueva identified similar Pauline leanings among late fifteenth century conversos, such as the poet Juan Álvarez Gato (ca.1440–1509) and friar Hernando de Talavera (ca.1430–1507).¹⁵ At about the same time, Albert A. Sicroff showed that Paul's "neither Jew nor Greek" (Gal 3:28) and other inclusive ideas of Christian community were invoked by converso apologists as a leitmotif against the laws of "purity of blood" from the very beginnings of the anti-converso exclusion of 1449s Toledo.¹⁶ Later on, Benzion Netanyahu enhanced this repertoire of Pauline verses, concepts and ideas that were used by conversos and their Old Christian supporters prior to the inception of the Spanish Inquisition in 1478.¹⁷ Netanyahu did not explicitly associate his findings with any kind of Paulinism, but several years later Stefania

- 13 Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmus et l'Espagne: Recherches sur l'histoire spirituelle du XVIe siècle*, ed. Daniel Devoto and Charles Amiel, 3 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1991). Accordingly, this also explain why so many conversos were attracted by the Pauline messages of the Society of Jesus. See Marcel Bataillon, *Les Jésuites dans l'Espagne du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2009); 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: Brill, 2010).
- 14 Eugenio Asensio argued that these Erasmian affinities should be understood in their broader cultural, religious, and chronological contexts; see Eugenio Asensio, "El erasmismo y las corrientes espirituales afines (conversos, franciscanos, italianizantes)," *Revista de Filología Española* 36 (1952): 31–99.
- 15 Francisco Márquez Villanueva, *Investigaciones sobre Juan Álvarez Gato: Contribución al conocimiento de la literatura castellana del siglo XV* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1960); Hernando de Talavera, *Católica impugnación del herético libelo, maldito y descomulgado que en el año pasado de 1480 fue divulgado en la ciudad de Sevilla; Con dos escritos de Francisco Marquez Villanueva. Presentación de Stefania Pastore. Edición de Francisco Martín Hernández* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2012).
- 16 Albert A. Sicroff, *Les controverses des statuts de «pureté de sang» en Espagne du XVIe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Didier, 1960).
- 17 Benzion Netanyahu, *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain* (New York: Random House, 1995). On the theological dimension of these debates, see Bernhard Holl, *Die Conversos: Christliche Gegner und Verteidiger der iberischen Neuchristen in den Jahren vor 1492* (Baden-Baden: Ergon, 2022).

Pastore and Maria Laura Giordano identified strings of continuity between the Pauline appeal in these earlier stages of the mid-fifteenth century and the later periods studied by Bataillon and Márquez Villanueva, suggesting they were a part of the same intellectual trend.¹⁸

Simultaneously, Bruce Rosenstock showed that Alonso de Cartagena (1384–1456) and Juan de Torquemada (1388–1468) developed, on the basis of Romans 11, a pro-converso theology that placed the Jewish people at the center of Christian salvation.¹⁹ Yosi Yisraeli subsequently suggested that Alonso de Cartagena's father, Pablo de Santa María (ca. 1352–1435), already recognized Judeocentric messages in Romans, albeit through the rabbinic exegetical conventions he mastered as a former rabbi.²⁰ Claude B. Stuczynski, for his part, expanded the scope of the inquiry to Portugal and the Iberian colonial domains of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while identifying conflicting strategies within converso (and anti-converso) Pauline argumentation.²¹ Moreover, Stuczynski mapped these

18 Stefania Pastore, *Il Vangelo e la spada: L'Inquisizione di Castiglia e i suoi critici (1460–1598)* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2003); idem, *Un'eresia spagnola: Spiritualità conversa, alumbadismo e Inquisizione (1449–1559)* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2004); Maria Laura Giordano, *Apologetas de la fe: Élités conversas entre Inquisición y patronazgo en España (siglos XV y XVI)* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2004).

19 Bruce Rosenstock, *New Men: "Conversos," Christian Theology, and Society in Fifteenth-Century Castile* (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary, University of London, 2002). Cf. Jeremy N. H. Lawrance, "Alfonso de Cartagena y los conversos," in *Actas del primer congreso anglo-hispano, II: Literatura*, ed. Alan Deyermond and Ralph Penny (Madrid: Castalia, 1993), 103–20. Claude B. Stuczynski, "From Polemics and Apologetics to Theology and Politics: Alonso de Cartagena and the Conversos within the 'Mystical Body'," in *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honour of Ora Limor*, ed. Israel J. Yuval and Ram Ben-Shalom (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 253–75; Juan de Torquemada, *Tractate against the Midianites and Ishmaelites*, ed. Thomas M. Izbicki and Jorge Ledo (Leiden: Brill, 2023); Tomás González Rolán and Antonio López Fonseca, *Sobre la igualdad de los judeoconversos: Estudio, edición crítica y traducción del 'Defensorium unitatis christianae' de Alfonso de Cartagena* (Madrid: Guillermo Escolar Editor, 2024).

20 Yosi Yisraeli, "Constructing and Undermining Converso Jewishness: Profiat Duran and Pablo de Santa María," in *Religious Conversion: Historical Experiences and Meaning*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Miri Rubin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 185–215; idem, "Between Jewish and Christian Scholarship in the Fifteenth Century: The Consolidation of a 'Converso Doctrine' in the Theological Writings of Pablo de Santa María" (PhD diss., Tel Aviv University, 2015), 275–301. Another important contribution concerning the imagination of a "rabbinic Paul" in the medieval Iberian context was recently presented in Ram Ben-Shalom, "Paul in the Eyes of Profayat Duran: Constructing a Jewish Paul," *AJS Review* 44 (2020): 246–68.

21 In this respect, see the case of the Portuguese Jesuit Father António Vieira (1608–1697), who channeled Pauline pro-converso views with mercantilist considerations

strategies to the unresolved tensions in the Pauline corpus. He stressed that far from a simplistic universalism, the Apostle's integrative ecclesiology inherently embodied the distinction between Jews and Gentiles and the roles they played in human salvation. As Ishai Rosen-Zvi and Adi Ophir recently put it: "If there is any consistent effort in his [Paul's] letters, it is to erect 'the dividing wall' and not just to 'break (it) down,' as per Ephesians. Before the two [Jews and Gentiles] can become one in Jesus [Ephesians] (2:15,) they must first appear as two; they must be radically and systematically differentiated."²² In other words, Paul's Judeo-Gentile community was constructed upon the amplification of Jewish and Gentile memories and soteriological differences. Following the mass conversions, readers in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iberia expanded Paul's assumptions, concluding that the Pauline model supported hierarchies and differences within the new community of believers—thus turning Jewishness from a precondition that had to be evoked at the threshold of conversion into a quality that persisted baptism as a kind of residue or remnant that New Christians of Jewish origin brought with them to the predominantly Gentile Church of Old Christians.²³ It was this basic insight into the writings of Paul that allowed and propelled a rich variety of interpretations, both hostile and friendly to the conversos, and vitalized Pauline discourses in the Iberian world until an unequivocal integrative interpretation was finally embraced—either by the intervention of Enlightened Absolutism or through the slow and difficult process of converso assimilation with its ensuing social amnesia.²⁴

All of these (and other) studies attest to the persistent need to reclaim Paul as part of the efforts to understand and solve the Iberian protracted converso problem.²⁵ At the same time, they show that these engagements were far from

and millenarian expectations; Claude B. Stuczynski, "The Jesuit António Vieira on Paul's Judeo-Gentile Universalism and Jewish Resiliency," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8 (2021): 250–75.

22 Ophir and Rosen-Zvi, *Goy*, 147–48.

23 Claude B. Stuczynski, "Converso Paulinism and Residual Jewishness: Conversion from Judaism to Christianity as a Theologico-political Problem," in *Bastards and Believers: Jewish Converts and Conversion from the Bible to the Present*, ed. Theodor Dunkelgrün and Paweł Maciejko (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 112–33.

24 E.g., the law of May 25, 1773, by Portugal's minister of king José I, the Marquis of Pombal, that abrogated the social and juridical differences between New Christians and Old Christians. See Claude B. Stuczynski, "From 'Potential' and 'Fuzzy' Jews to 'Non-Jewish Jews'/'Jewish Non-Jews': Conversos Living in Iberia and Early Modern Jewry," in *Connecting Histories: Jews and Their Other in the Early Modern Europe*, ed. Francesca Bregoli and David B. Ruderman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 197–214.

25 For two more recent and important contributions, see Axel Kaplan-Szyld, "¿Adversus

harmonious or coherent. Some aimed to uncover “Jewish” historical layers in the Pauline text long forgotten by medieval readers; others stressed (from different perspectives) the supersessionist elements in the Pauline letters; while some focused on Paul’s message of spiritual union in the Church. And yet, these conflicting converso and pro-converso views of Paul shared a common aim: to reflect on the integration of the converso group as full-fledged Christians. Hence, by suggesting *Converso Paulinisms* as an historical framework we do not intend to mark a single ideological trajectory but, rather, to delineate an interpretive field—hence, the plural “s.” We believe that when taken together, these various readings form a significant branch in the history of Pauline interpretations, united by a common concern. In their earlier phases these Iberian interpretations predated the Protestant reflection on Paul; in their later stages they corresponded with it; and in modern scholarship, they have been mostly eclipsed by it.²⁶ *Converso Paulinisms* may allow us to historically integrate contradictory ideologies, and thus not only better understand their development, but also their interactions with a host of other social, political and intellectual scenes in Iberia and beyond. The essays presented in this volume illustrate the different kinds of Paulinisms that were accommodated by the converso crisis. Yet, they by no means cover all the necessary ground. In fact, we think of this volume as an invitation for future studies to broaden the breadth of the investigation.

The opening article of this volume, by Yosi Yisraeli, deals with the earliest stage of the converso phenomenon, through the theological works of the convert-bishop from Burgos, Pablo de Santa María (d. 1435). While Pablo’s pro-converso readings in Paul have been acknowledged before, Yisraeli suggests that Pablo’s unique preoccupation with the Apostle ran much deeper, insofar as he detected in the Pauline corpus a long set of analogies, concurrences, and similarities with rabbinic notions and patterns. In so doing, Pablo not only advocated the use of rabbinic sources for the reinterpretation of Paul but also portrayed a new image of the Apostle whose “Jewishness” was steeped in rabbinic elements. As Yisraeli points out, while this explosive portrait of Paul differed significantly from future forms of Converso Paulinisms, it had a strong appeal among Jewish converts of the late Middle Ages.

iudaeos o proconverso? Teología proconversa en la ‘Cuarta parte de la Introducción del símbolo de la fe’ (1583),” *Hispania Sacra* 72, no. 146 (2020): 377–89; Constanza Cavallero, “El converso que defendió la Inquisición: Antiluteranismo, apocalíptico y paulinismo en los espejos de príncipes de Luis de Maluenda (1537–1545),” *Sefarad* 83 (2023): 117–68.

26 Matthew V. Novenson, “Anti-Judaism and Philo-Judaism in Pauline Studies, Then and Now,” 106–24. Cf. Claude B. Stuczynski, “What Does ‘Judeo-Christianity’ Mean in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iberia?” *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* 20 (2019): 11–34.

Erika Tritle takes us one generation forward, to the time when the anti-converso sentiment burst through with all its might during the Toledo rebellion of 1449. Analyzing the position of leading figures in the anti-converso and pro-converso parties (i.e., Marcos García de Mora and bishop Alonso de Cartagena, respectively), she shows how each applied Pauline images and texts to make their case about the “nature of the Castilian church” and particularly how they struggled over the implications of Paul’s binary between flesh and spirit. Did the flesh mark the Jewish lineage of the converts or did it symbolize Christians who could not grasp the Scripture’s inner meaning, like the anti-converso rebels?

Moving on to the second half of the fifteenth century, Rosa Vidal Doval examines the works of Alonso de Espina’s *Fortalitium fidei* (1464) and Hernando de Talavera’s *Católica impugnación* (1480). As Vidal Doval points out, while in modern scholarship these authors often represent opposite approaches toward the converso problem, they nevertheless show much consistency in their hermeneutical choices and historical imagination. They both draw on the Apostolic Age to understand and explain the religious crisis of fifteenth century Spain, and they both conclude from the Pauline Epistles that converso heterodoxy is to be understood in terms of judaizing heresy. In other words, they illustrate that by the late fifteenth century the imagination of the converso problem in Pauline terms has become the norm.

Staying with Hernando de Talavera, Isabella Iannuzzi offers a different take on his *Católica impugnación*.²⁷ Reading it against the background of the Iberian homogenization enterprise, Iannuzzi recognizes a more ambitious socio-religious vision in Talavera’s Pauline approach to the question of conversos. Talavera, she claims, sought to mobilize the inclusive and universal ideals of Pauline conversion and evangelization, into a broader reform of Iberian politics and religiosity—namely, the unification of believers under the messianic governance of Isabella and Ferdinand.²⁸

The next article, by Maria Laura Giordano, offers a new assessment of Juan de Ávila’s (1499–1569) commentary to the Epistle to the Galatians. Drawing on a set of hermeneutical keys and semantic clues that she finds in related works, Giordano closely analyzes several passages from Avila’s often enigmatic text, revealing their encoded and allusive messages concerning the “embryonic converso Church” and its unjustified persecution. Through his focused reading

27 See her new edition: Hernando de Talavera, *Católica Impugnación del herético libelo, maldito y descomulgado. Edición de Ángel Gómez Moreno y prólogo de Isabella Iannuzzi* (Granada: Nuevo Inicio, 2019), and her extensive commentary of Talavera’s tract in Isabella Iannuzzi, *Convencer para convertir: La Católica Impugnación de fray Fernando de Talavera* (Granada: Nuevo Inicio, 2019).

28 Cf. Adriano Prosperi, *Il seme dell’intolleranza: Ebrei, eretici, selvaggi; Granada 1492* (Rome: Laterza, 2011).

in Paul, Giordano postdates and contextualizes the commentary to the Galatians within the tumultuous events of the late 1550s, not only showing why there was a real need for self-censorship on Avila's part, but also why did he chose to elevate dissimulation into a (positive) theological category.

Finally, Claude B. Stuczynski's analysis of Henri Mauroy's "Apology in Two Parts on Behalf of Those Who Descend from the Patriarchs"-(Paris, 1553), the annotated translation of the frontispiece, and two prologues of the book by Nadia Zeldes sheds light on a neglected monumental apology written on behalf of the conversos by a French humanist of the Sorbonne. On the one hand, the case of Friar Mauroy, demonstrates that echoes of Converso Paulinisms could be found outside the Iberian Peninsula.²⁹ On the other, Converso Paulinisms is not limited to focus on Paul. In the case of Mauroy's "Apology," Paul's life and epistles were a point of departure to dismantle a justification of the exclusion of conversos from ecclesiastical offices in Paul's name by the cardinal and archbishop of Toledo Juan Martínez Silíceo (1486–1557) and his followers, who inter alia invoked Titus 1:10 ("For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group"). At the same time, a Jewish portrait of Paul helped Mauroy to demonstrate that Christianity emerged organically and progressively from Judaism, without ever losing these ties, and that the inclusion of a larger group of Gentile-Christians to constitute an all-embracing universal church was made possible through the contribution of Christians of Jewish origin. Since this synergy included Hebrew wisdom, Mauroy celebrated the fundamental contribution of rabbis and other Jewish interpreters of the *hebraica veritas*, because they were needed to properly understand God's words and the Christian truth. In other words, Mauroy's proto-concept of Jewish Christianity (in contrast to that of Ferdinand Christian Baur) aimed to harmonize the Churches of Peter and Paul. For him, the Apostle to the Gentiles was also a proud Jewish member of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil 3:4–8), who demonstrated through his life and teachings that a Judeo-Gentile Paul was an example to be followed by Christians at any time and everywhere.

Claude B. Stuczynski, Department of General History, Faculty of Humanities,
Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan
claude.stuczynski@biu.ac.il

Yosi Yisraeli, The Koschitzky Department of Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry, Faculty of
Jewish Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan
yosi.ysraeli@biu.ac.il

29 Another case of this sort was studied by Nadia Zeldes, "Arguments for a Judeo-Christian Identity in the Writings of Antonio de Ferrarisi: Pro-Converso Polemics in Southern Italy," *Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas* 20 (2019): 55–79.