The historiography of the Portuguese Inquisition is experiencing a moment of great expansion, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of most of the works written about the subject. The body of scientific studies has been steadily increasing since the 1980s and the different research lines have been gradually filling in a significant part of the gaps relating to what was still unknown about the Inquisition early on in that decade. There are several reasons for this and it is not my intention to list them all here. First of all, the peak of quantitative history resulted in attempts to measure the rhythms of inquisitorial repression in an accurate way. Later, the interest shown in the problems caused by intolerance gave a fresh impetus to the study of certain defendants, especially those who were New Christians. The most recent debates about the Catholic Reformation and the process of social disciplining have given rise to new analytic perspectives on the activity of the Holy Office and on the relationships it established with other ecclesiastical institutions. Finally, reflections on the State during the Early Modern Age have also resulted in attempts to assess the relationships between the Tribunal of the Holy Office, the Crown and other secular and ecclesiastical institutions. Furthermore, from a material point of view, we should not forget the policy of research promotion that has been implemented over the last few years by several public institutions, both in Portugal (FCT-Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia) and in Brazil (CNPq-Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico; Capes-Coordenação de aperfeiçoamento de pessoal de nível superior, etc.), which has made numerous PhD theses and research works possible. More recently, the complete digitalization of the archive of the Tribunal of Lisbon has even allowed historians who live outside Portugal to rely on cheaper – but not always easier – access to sources.

It is in this context that, in Portugal, several master’s degree theses and doctoral dissertations about the Inquisition have been presented over the last few years at the universities of Porto, under the guidance of Elvira Mea, and Coimbra, under the guidance of José Pedro Paiva. In Brazil, a group of highly qualified professors, such as, initially,