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Jewish Studies in Portugal

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Resumo:

Este artigo pretende informar e refletir sobre os estudos judaicos em Portugal, no período contemporâneo. O seu principal objetivo não consiste numa enumeração de autores e trabalhos associados a este campo de estudo (numa mera perspetiva historiográfica acrítica) mas, sobretudo, numa reflexão das mais importantes etapas porque passaram esses mesmos estudos judaicos. Finalmente apresentamos hipóteses sobre o seu limitado desenvolvimento, quando comparado com os contextos científicos de outros países, que resulta da inexistência de uma verdadeira institucionalização enquanto campo autónomo de estudo.

Palavras-chave: Portugal, historiografia, estudos judaicos, judeus, marranos, conversos

Abstract:

This article aims to inform and reflect on Jewish Studies in Portugal, in Modern Times. Its main purpose is not to make an enumeration of authors and works that can be associated with this field of study (a mere uncritical historiographical view) but above all a reflection on the most important steps taken in Jewish Studies in Portugal. Finally we present hypotheses concerning its poor development, when compared to the scientific contexts of other countries, which has resulted in the inexistence of their true institutionalization as an autonomous field of study.

Key words: Portugal, historiography, Jewish Studies, Jews, New Christians, *marranos*, *conversos*

This paper aims to analyze on Jewish Studies in Portugal in Modern Times, from the 19th century onwards, beginning with the leading figure of Portuguese historiography, Alexandre Herculano (1810-1877). As an adherent and an activist of Liberalism, he left a deep mark on the lines of investigation on Judaism in Portugal. This anticlerical man supported historical criticism of the Church's ideological interpretation of History, and wrote the landmark *Da Origem e Estabelecimento da Inquisição em Portugal: Tentativa Histórica* (*From the origin and establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal: historical attempt*), in three volumes, originally published in 1854-1859; in its second edition, dated from 1859, the work got its definitive title *História da Origem e Estabelecimento da Inquisição em Portugal* (*Origin and establishment of the Inquisition in Portugal*). This version would become the basis for subsequent editions, including its English translations. As stressed by Giuseppe Marcocci and José Pedro Paiva, Alexandre Herculano did not set out to write a general history of the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition, created in 1536, but rather of the troubled period of its foundation, in the reign of king João III. This came in the wake of his studies on the foundation of the kingdom, aimed at gaining an understanding of the regime which was crumbling apart in the

liberal revolution of 1820¹. In any event, this landmark work by Alexandre Herculano, for reasons both of literary aesthetics and of the wealth of documentation supporting his study, would profoundly impact the field of Jewish Studies in Portugal. First, in its dimension of a “visit to origins” and, later on, of an intended vision of the historical phenomenon as a whole, that is, of conceiving an historical interpretation with an essentially diachronic dimension; and secondly, in a concept of the history of Jews in Portugal taken as an intrinsic part of his plans to study the Tribunal of the Inquisition, embracing an essentialist view of Jews as victims. The first dimension is related to the disclosure of a lost History, with the originality of bringing to light documents that were left unused until then, relating to facts that were ignored. This implies, a result, a teleological dimension, since the fundamental goal is the “salvation” of a memory, an important part of History overshadowed by the regime’s ideology or lack of interest in the historical phenomenon. It is this second factor that makes the perspective of Jewish Studies in Portugal more singular, even when compared to the neighbouring Spanish historiography, where in spite of the strength of studies on local New Christians and the Inquisition tribunals, the overwhelming documentation of the Jewish communes (*aljamas*) allowed for a greater development of the interest on the Spanish Jews’ medieval past. On the contrary, less abundant medieval documentation and the extraordinarily voluminous output of the Portuguese Inquisitions sealed the fate of Jewish Studies in Portugal, making them focus mainly on the New Christians in their dimension of potential Jews, in an appraisal of inquisitorial accusations that, however critical, was considered credible².

The singularity of this interest in Jews (or those considered as such) in Portugal, in contrast with other historiographies dealing with different kinds of materials, e.g. those coming from the Jewish communities themselves – and the studies on the Portuguese community of Amsterdam are a good example of this – is evident when we consider that the debate considered paradigmatic, even on the scientific level, dealt precisely with the Jewish identity of New Christians in Portugal, and featured as its main figures the Portuguese historian António José Saraiva (1917-1993) and his French counterpart Israel Salvador Révah (1917-1973). The controversy, continued by the followers, opponents and repeaters of their theses – an example is *The Marrano Factory. The Portuguese Inquisition and Its New Christians, 1536-1765*, an amply revised and extended translation of the former’s work, by Herman Prins Salomon and I.S.D. Sassoon³ – took place in 1971, very close to the fundamental event which was the *Revolução dos Cravos* (The Carnation Revolution, on April 25th, 1974). Synthetically, Saraiva argued in his *Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos (Inquisition and New Christians)* that the Holy Office was an instrument of the traditional classes – above all nobility and clergy – to fight the social and economic ascent of the New Christians, seen as the most dynamic group within the emerging bourgeoisie. Contrary to his views, and with the support of a thorough documental collection, Révah not only believed in a perpetuation of Judaism, but tried also to demonstrate that the inquisitorial intransigence actually resulted in its resistance⁴. It is curious that in our own time, taking into account especially the Spanish reality, Elliot Horowitz “resurrected” this theme of the active resistance by Jews and New Christians persecuted by the Catholic society

¹ Giuseppe Marcocci and José Pedro Paiva, *História da Inquisição Portuguesa, 1536-1821*, Lisboa, Esfera dos Livros, 2013, pp. 454-455.

² On the issue of true vs. plausible in Inquisition processes, see Herman Prins Salomon, “Les procès de l’Inquisition Portugaise comme documents littéraires ou du bon usage du Fonds Inquisitorial de la Torre do Tombo”, in *Estudos Portugueses: Homenagem a António José Saraiva*, ed. Maria de Lurdes Belchior et. al., Lisboa, Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa-Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1990, pp. 151-164.

³ Leiden, Brill, 2001.

⁴ António José Saraiva, *Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos*; Lisboa, Estampa, 1994 (original 1969 edition). The 1994 edition contains the data of the 1971 polemic.

around them, in his work *Reckless Rites: Purim and the Legacy of Jewish Violence*, published in 2006⁵.

But let us return to the studies on Jews in Portugal, after Alexandre Herculano. Abroad, almost at the same time as Herculano's work was published, other authors produced studies which considered the Portuguese case, such as *Geschichte der Juden*, by Henrich Graetz (1836-1876)⁶ and *História social, política y religiosa de los Judíos de España y Portugal* (*Social, Political and Religious History from the Jews in Portugal and Spain*) (1875-1876), by José Amador de los Ríos⁷. Specifically about Portugal, Meyer Kayserling produced his *Geschichte der Juden in Portugal*, in 1867⁸. Kayserling, who was a rabbi in Switzerland, was probably encouraged in his historical research by the "father" of German Positivism, Leopold van Ranke, and he published many works on the history and the literature of Jews in the Iberian Peninsula⁹. It was not by accident, as Anita Novinsky notes, that Kayserling corresponded with Herculano, on whose work he based some of his chapters¹⁰. In reality, Kayserling had a fundamental goal in mind, with his exemplary empiricism. As he writes in the preface to his book on Portugal's Jews: "may it [the book] permit the many examples of a rare loyalty to the faith, here described, to stimulate today's generation which – thanks to Providence – lives in happier conditions than those offered to our poor Portuguese brethren"¹¹. But the work of Meyer Kayserling would become a part of Portuguese Jewish Studies only with its translation to Portuguese, in 1971, by Gabriele Borchardt Corrêa da Silva and Anita Novinsky (author of the introduction), in Brazil, published by Livraria Pioneira, in São Paulo, famous for editing books on this thematic area.

It was no coincidence that the translation was made in Brazil, which at the time already had communities solidly implanted in the social fabric, resulting from the immigration of Jews whose native tongue was, in many cases, the same as Kayserling's¹². Also in Brazil a tangible interest was felt in the "discovery" of Portuguese Marranos in the 20th century. In that country, the existence of large Jewish communities made possible not only a reasonable output of bibliography focusing on the study of the *Conversos* who lived there in the colonial period, but also investment by members of the community – some of whom at the academic level – in the production and evolution of Jewish Studies in that country. In Portugal, and in the opposite direction, the small number of Jewish residents, when compared to those in Brazil, would also decisively impact the fate of Jewish Studies. With the relevant exception of Moisés Bensabat Amzalak, whom we will talk about later, Jewish Studies in Portugal seem to ignore the existence of a Jewish community and, being the work of non-Jews, will always retain a character of interest in something exogenous.

This is the case, in effect, with the specific development of Jewish studies in Portugal. Between 1895 and 1928, Joaquim Mendes dos Remédios (1867-1932) published the two volumes of his work *Os Judeus em Portugal* (*The Jews in Portugal*), covering the Middle Ages,

⁵ Princeton, Princeton University Press.

⁶ Berlim, Arani, 11 vols.

⁷ Madrid, Imprenta de T. Fortunat, 3 vols.

⁸ Berlim, Istar Leiner

⁹ About the author see Anita Novinsky, "Introduction" to the Portuguese translation of Kayserling's book, called *História dos Judeus em Portugal*, São Paulo, Pioneira, 1971.

¹⁰ "Kayserling, Meyer", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo Português*, ed. Lúcia Liba Mucznik et al., Lisboa, Presença, 2009, p. 303.

¹¹ M. Kayserling, *História dos Judeus ...*, p. XXII.

¹² See José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, « De Gaspar da Gama aos 'zumbis da liberdade'. Contribuição para o estudo do discurso identitário dos judeus do Brasil (século XXI) », in *O reino, as ilhas e o mar oceano. Estudos de homenagem a Artur Teodoro de Matos*, coord. Avelino de Freitas de Meneses and João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, Lisboa, CHAM, vol. 1, 2007, pp. 203-232.

through the History of New Christians and the Inquisition, and also, from 1906 to 1908¹³, a diplomatic edition of Samuel Usque's *Consolação às Tribulações de Israel (Consolation to the Israel Tribulations)*¹⁴. Unlike the case of certain hasty, "à la mode" trends, Mendes dos Remédios, upon visiting Amsterdam, also realized that the local community was in fact composed of Portuguese people of Jewish faith, and as such it would inevitably have been the object of studies on Portuguese Jews. For that reason he would publish, in 1911, his book *Os Judeus Portugueses de Amsterdão (The Portuguese Jews from Amsterdam)*¹⁵. The work of Mendes dos Remédios reveals precisely this exogenous character thanks to the qualifications of the people he portrays as Jews, adding to their characterization a moral outline consistent with his epoch's ideas on racial types. Some chapters of his work include items such as "Psychology of the Jews" or "Jewish types".

In the 1920's, Portuguese historiography again cultivates an interest in Jews as victims of the Inquisition, i.e., on their history as conditioned by that Tribunal, maybe because those interested in these studies were adepts of Positive Science, for whom documents and their disclosure were the basis for all scientific work in History. The main figure of this current in Portugal was António Baião (1878-1961), archivist and director of Torre do Tombo who, beside some innovative studies on the workings of the Inquisition Tribunals, such as the one in Goa, also published, from 1919 to 1938, the *Episódios Dramáticos da Inquisição Portuguesa (Dramatic Episodes of the Portuguese Inquisition)*¹⁶. Near that time, in 1921, João Lúcio de Azevedo (1855-1933) would write his famous *História dos Cristãos-Novos Portugueses (History of the Portuguese New Christians)*¹⁷ which, due to its propensity for Economic History, looks like a prelude to the book by António José Saraiva. Actually, Azevedo's work is based on a massive gathering of documents, some of which are published in the Appendices, and tries to show us the history of these New Christians in Portugal, from their "creation" in the time of King Manuel to the extinction of the Inquisition, without omitting the Diaspora. By choosing to focus on New Christians instead of Jews, however, he again follows Herculano on the importance, for the History of Portugal, of the Converso sector and its identitarian resistance. On the other hand, by trying to prove that the Inquisition was the institution which attempted to expel from the Nation's body the exogenous group of the Jews and, therefore, by underlining their continued exclusion, is he not also trying to project his idea of the Jews as "the others", studied by someone who attempts to understand a socio-religious group he doesn't belong to? Let us not forget, with the help of Lúcia Parnes, that João Lúcio de Azevedo was a reader of the nationalist and racist theories of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who saw Jews as pariahs and strangers to the nation¹⁸.

Historians of the Inquisition, largely conditioned by the specific historiography on the evolution of the religious Tribunal, forget that Jewish Studies in Portugal strongly reflect a phenomenon that is intrinsic to the Jewish universe itself, i.e., the "discovery" of the Marranos from the North of Portugal. It is the discovery of these "living vestiges" that would stimulate renowned personalities such as Cecil Roth (1899-1970) to write some of their works. Committed scholars would attempt to change the course of studies on Jews in Portugal, starting from the statement and interpretation of an identitarian perpetuation among people in the North of the country, especially in Belmonte. First comes Samuel Schwarz (1880-1953), the Polish engineer who in 1925 published the groundbreaking book *Os cristãos-novos em Portugal no século XX (The New Christians in Portugal in the 20th century)*¹⁹, where he

¹³ Coimbra, França Amado Editor

¹⁴ Coimbra, França Amado Editor, 3 vols.

¹⁵ Coimbra, França Amado.

¹⁶ Porto, Renascença Portuguesa, 3 vols.

¹⁷ Lisboa, Livraria Clássica.

¹⁸ "Azevedo, João Lúcio", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, pp. 67-68.

¹⁹ Lisboa, Edição da Associação dos Arqueólogos Portugueses.

transmitted to the world what those people had conveyed to him, about beliefs and practices kept hidden by the pressure of segregation and a fear that went back to Inquisition times, often volatilized in a desire to keep things secret. Samuel observes that the practices of these “New Christians” step away from normative Judaism, but this is not difficult to explain: the need to keep the cult secret led to the abandon of certain very visible practices, e.g. circumcision, and to the modification of the religious calendar. Nevertheless, in his book those people never call themselves Marranos, but Jews – and so they are called by their neighbours. In that same year the industrious Abade de Baçal, or Francisco Manuel Alves (1856-1947), also knowingly refers to them as Jews in his work *Memórias Arqueológico-Históricas do Distrito de Bragança. Os judeus do distrito de Bragança*²⁰ (*Historical-Archaeological Memories from the Braganza District. The Jews from the Braganza District*). The ethnologist José Leite de Vasconcelos (1858-1941), in his *Etnografia Portuguesa (Portuguese Ethnography)*, begun in 1928, drawing on his own and Schwarz’s knowledge, also includes these “contemporaries” in his study of “Jews” [in Portugal], published in Part II – Ethnic Groups – of his work on the Portuguese People²¹. Elaborating on this very special context for the interest on Jews in Portugal we have Artur Carlos de Barros Basto, known by his Jewish name Ben-Rosh (1887-1961), who in 1925 founded the Jewish community of Porto. With his *Obra do Resgate (Work of Ransom)* of those he calls Marranos²² he drew attention, sometimes in a romantic sort of way, to institutions and personalities with an interest in those Jews, once lost and now found again. The former include the Anglo-Jewish Association and the Alliance Israélite Universelle. Among the latter, we have his famous disciple (and a “Marrano” himself) Amílcar Paulo (Levi Ben-Har, 1929-1983), who gave his posthumous 1985 book (he died two years before) the name *Os Judeus Secretos em Portugal (The Secret Jews in Portugal)*, in order to encompass the whole experience of Jews in Portugal up to the 20th century²³. As for his fellow countrymen, he explicitly calls them “crypto-Jews”, which reveals the way his knowledge of the survival of Jewish practices (or of their metamorphoses) is a decisive retrospective factor in his historical analysis²⁴.

It was at the international level, however, that seduction by the phenomenon of Marranism had its most extensive consequences, with an almost immediate effect. Fascinated with the work of Ben-Rosh, the famous British historian Cecil Roth wrote a book about him, whose title was destined to accompany its subject for all eternity: *L'Apôtre des Marranes*, in 1930²⁵. And it was under the influence of this movement that he wrote down his perspective of the web of the Conversos’ socio-religious survival in his famous *A History of the Marranos*, which logically ends, in an apotheosis, with the “contemporary discovery”²⁶. Also, the Brazilian historian Anita Novinsky considered this discovery to be a proof of the vitality of a crypto-religiosity²⁷, adding greater foundation to her research on the Converso community of Bahia in times past²⁸. In reality, in Brazil, interest in Portugal’s Marranos acquired some relevance, since it appealed to the sense of resistance of the country’s very large Jewish communities, even

²⁰ Bragança, Tipografia Geraldo da Assunção.

²¹ J.L. de Vasconcelos, *Etnografia Portuguesa. Tentativa de sistematização pelo Dr. J. Leite de Vasconcelos*. Composed from the author’s source materials – enlarged with additional information – by M. Viegas Guerreiro. Introduction, notes and conclusion by Orlando Ribeiro, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, vol. IV, 1982, pp. 162-235.

²² About Ben-Rosh see, above all, Elvira de Azevedo Mea and Inácio Steinhardt, *Ben-Rosh. Biografia do capitão Barros Basto*, Lisboa, Afrontamento, 1997.

²³ Porto, Editorial Labirinto.

²⁴ About Amílcar Paulo see Elvira de Azevedo Mea, “Paulo, Amílcar”, in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, p. 404.

²⁵ Paris, L’Univers Israélite.

²⁶ Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1932.

²⁷ Anita Novinsky and Amílcar Paulo, “The last marranos”, in *Commentary*, nº 5, 1967, pp. 76-81.

²⁸ Anita Novinsky, *Cristãos-Novos na Bahia: A Inquisição*, São Paulo, Editorial Perspectiva, 1972.

when they were of Ashkenazi descent²⁹. And it was abroad that the best developments on Marrano identity and religiousness took place: as an example we have Nathan Wachtel's transdimensional studies on the "Marrano condition"³⁰; and the alluring perspective of analysis opened up by Daniel M. Swetschinski – an expert in the history of Amsterdam's Jews – for whom Marranism is the continuation of a popular Jewish tradition which, even when Judaism was a legitimate religion in the Iberian Peninsula, had always remained different from the Judaism of the educated rabbinic elite. As a religion of home, family and community, therefore more permeable to the surrounding Christian universe, it enjoyed for those very reasons better chances of survival³¹.

In Portugal, it probably wasn't the erosion of the Ransom's work, with the consolidation of Salazar's regime and the damage to its mentor's image, which led to a lack of interest in this or other perspectives. What we see, in many studies, is a divorce between a phenomenological reflection, which could be brought about by the "rediscovery" of Marranos in the 20th century, and the march of historic discourse, totally alien to that reality, as can be seen in the emblematic work of António José Saraiva. But among contemporary Jewish authors the same phenomenon occurs. For example, the prolix Moisés Bensabat Amzalak never wrote about the Marranos of Portugal, although he personally appreciated the Work of Ransom and even obtained a subsidy for the newspaper *Ha-Lapid*. One could think that this reflects the lasting reluctance by the Jewish community of Lisbon towards those Northern people, the fear that their insertion into normative Judaism would have consequences in Salazar's Catholic Portugal, and above all an unspoken hostility towards the Apostle of the Marranos³². However, the explanation for this divorce should be found in a quite common reality: the incipient state of anthropological studies in Portugal, and the divorce of those who inserted themselves in the erudite culture, such as History teachers in University, from the so-called popular culture. This gap, which widened during Salazar's regime – despite the existence of renowned ethnologists who devoted themselves to collecting popular heritage (such as Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira), and even the output of Jews from the North of the country (such as Casimiro de Morais Machado)³³ – dampened the potential of that possibly fruitful reflection. We would have to wait until the 1990's to see, at an internal level, Maria Antonieta Garcia take a sociological interest in the (now) Jewish community of Belmonte³⁴, although that didn't lead other people involved with Portugal's Jewish Studies to consider the importance of the data she presented for their itineraries in History and other areas of the Social Sciences.

Jewish Studies in Portugal thus accompanied the elitism of so-called academic studies in general, even in periods when the focus shifted to the expression of the roots of popular culture, for example after the Carnation Revolution. But there is yet another element to consider in this context, which we have mentioned above: the demographic rarefaction of the Portuguese Jewish community, never large in numbers. As has been said, one of the most

²⁹ See José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, "O interesse pelos marranos de Portugal: um ângulo do espelho identitário judaico-brasileiro", in *Anais do IV Encontro Nacional do Arquivo Histórico Judaico Brasileiro*, ed. Nachman Falbel, São Paulo, Arquivo Histórico Judaico Brasileiro, 2005, pp. 27-46.

³⁰ See especially his *La Foi du souvenir. Labyrinthes marranes*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2001.

³¹ See "Marranos", in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, Nova Iorque, Macmillan Publishing Company, vol. 9, 1987, pp. 210-218.

³² On this subject see E. Mea and I. Steinhardt, *Ben-Rosh...*; and also Edgar Samuel, "Jewish missionary activity in Portugal between the Wars", in *Jewish Historical Society Studies. Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, vol. 41, 2007, pp. 173-181.

³³ See his study "Subsídios para a História de Mogadouro. Os marranos de Vilarinho dos Galegos. Tentativa Etnográfica", in *Douro Litoral*, no.s 1-2 in the fifth series, 1952, pp. 1-33.

³⁴ See, above all, his works *Os judeus de Belmonte – Os Caminhos da Memória*, Lisboa, Instituto de Sociologia e Etnologia das Religiões, 1993; and *Judaísmo no Feminino. Tradição Popular e Ortodoxia em Belmonte*, Lisboa, Instituto de Sociologia e Etnologia das Religiões, 1999.

prolix characters in this community, a man who kept his intellectual (though not social) distances from the Marrano question, was the famed Moisés Bensabat Amzalak (1892- 1978), a professor at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Económicas e Financeiras, vice-rector and later rector of Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, from 1956 to 1962, president of the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa since 1962, while also president of the Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa, from 1927 until his death. He was the author of over 300 works, many of which related to Jewish Studies, focusing on Portuguese Jews in particular. We owe him the publication of many Jewish authors' texts, as well as studies on such famous characters as Isaac de Pinto, Joseph de la Vega, David Nieto, Isaac Oróbio de Castro, Espinosa and the celebrated Duarte Gomes Solis³⁵. Also, he was the main influence in conceiving the first and only issue of the famous *Revista de Estudos Hebraicos* (*Review of Hebrew Studies*). Published in 1928, that is, only three years after the publication of Samuel Schwarz's work, it is a display of "high culture" contributions, bringing together famous personalities who, in their own distinct ways, devoted themselves to the study of Jews in Portugal. Only one of the invited contributors lived outside Portugal: Nahum Slousch (1872-1966) was a famous author of Russian origin, previously interested in Portugal's Marranos and above all in the Jews of North Africa – which may account for Amzalak's interest in him, due to his family's Moroccan root – who wrote his article "Poésies de Don Jehuda Abrabanel" between Lisbon and Jerusalem, where he had migrated to in 1919. This means that Amzalak paid close attention to the development of Jewish Studies in Europe and to figures of the Jewish world which possessed great cultural dynamism. This was one of those rare moments when a foreign author was invited to contribute to a work on Jewish Studies in Portugal. But all the others are Portuguese and there is a balance, certainly accidental, in their religious allegiances: four are Christians, the other four Jews. Among the former are people who had already committed themselves individually, although not exclusively, to this area. They are the ethnologist José Leite de Vasconcelos, who contributed "Para a bibliografia do Hebreu em Portugal" ("For The bibliography of the Hebrew in Portugal"); the more prolix Joaquim de Carvalho (1892-1958), a professor at Universidade de Coimbra³⁶, who had already published on Espinosa and Oróbio de Castro, presents two articles – "Dois Inéditos de Abraham Zacuto" ("Two ineditis from Abraham Zacuto") and "Uma epístola de Isaac Abarbanel" ("An epistle from Isaac Abravanel"); and the doctor Augusto da Silva Carvalho (1861-1957), known for his studies on the History of Medicine, on Portuguese Jewish doctors and also on Garcia de Orta and his family – curiously publishes a "Notícia sobre a Gramática Hebraica de Francisco de Távora" ("News about the Hebrew Grammar from Francisco de Távora"). As has been said, although not committed intellectually to the recent findings on the Marranos, Amzalak invited to collaborate in this issue Artur Carlos de Barros Basto, who wrote on "Os judeus no Velho Porto" (The Jews in Old Porto). In addition to Slousch, among the Jews were also Adolfo Benarús (1863-1950), creator of the Escola Israelita in 1922, a student in the Curso Superior de Letras and a teacher³⁷, who wrote "Da influência de alguns pensadores hebreus sobre as ideias religiosas e filosóficas da Idade Média" ("From the influence of some Hebrew thinkers on the religious and philosophical ideas of the Middle Age"). Moisés Bensabat Amzalak, the true patron of the publication, was also the most productive, with three articles: one on Isaac Sasportas, another on Selomoh de Oliveira, and a third on the Israelite cemetery on the island of Faial³⁸. Despite its unparalleled scientific quality, the *Revista* had no continuation. Like the books of Samuel Schwarz, it was published

³⁵ About Amzalak see Esther Muchnik, "Amzalak, Moisés Bensabat", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, pp. 46-48.

³⁶ About this author see Orlando Ribeiro, *Joaquim de Carvalho, personalidade e pensamento*, Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras, 1980.

³⁷ See "Benarus, Adolfo Salomão Bensabat", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, p. 91.

³⁸ *Revista de Estudos Hebraicos de Portugal*, dir. Moisés Bensabat Amzalak, vol. I, Lisboa, 1921.

still in the Republican period. And the year 1921 was particularly rich in social upheaval. Later on, the military convulsions would lead to the end of the Republic and the onset of the Estado Novo³⁹. So a new context began to take shape, not very favourable to these initiatives in Minority Studies. In addition, the international situation which originated the Second World War, and the War itself especially, made the energies of Portuguese intellectuals, Jews included, turn in other directions. And it was in fact just before this not so favourable context that there appeared some figures in the Jewish community with an interest in Jewish Studies, such as José Benoliel, from Tangier, (1858-1937, moved to Morocco in 1921), prolific writer and translator of Biblical texts, who taught French and Hebrew at the University of Lisbon⁴⁰; and Joaquim Bensaúde (1835-1922), an expert in Portuguese Nautical and Cartographical History, who very effectively emphasised the role of Jews in the history of Portuguese discoveries.⁴¹ But in addition to the less favourable context described above, other factors led to a growing estrangement of the community from Jewish Studies: the assimilation of old Sephardic families, marrying into the Christian milieu; the departure of many of the Ashkenazim, victims of anti-Semitism and Nazism, to lands of greater freedom such as Israel and the United States, and in the 1960's the emigration of many young people, mostly to Israel, due to the burden of the Colonial War. This would alter the community's age distribution – as Esther Mucznik points out – and the possibility of many people being interested in Social Studies (most of its members are doctors, engineers, liberal professionals, etc.)⁴².

This means that the few studies written on Jews and Judaism in this period were the work of non-Jews and, among these, of people who came from the area of Theological and Biblical Studies or that of Semitic Languages. Among the authors with this background stands out Manuel Augusto Rodrigues, who in 1963 was invited by the Faculty of Arts from the University of Coimbra to be extraordinary professor, eventually reaching the position of Director of the Archive of this university. The author of over one hundred studies, he produced Jewish Studies in the proper sense, for example works on the Hebraic Studies in Coimbra University or studies on the poetic works of Leão Hebreu⁴³. Along the same path we find António Augusto Tavares, a professor of Pre-Classical Civilizations and Hebrew at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences from the *Universidade Nova* from Lisboa, who published some studies on the influence of Hebrew on the Portuguese language and on documentation written in Hebrew and kept in Portuguese archives⁴⁴. With diverse trajectories, but all of them determined by Inquisition studies, we should highlight three names in the Portuguese historiographical panorama: Isaías da Rosa Pereira, António Borges Coelho and Elvira Cunha de

³⁹ On this issue see for example, for a synthesis, A.H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal*, Lisboa, Palas Editores, vol. 2, 1976, pp. 264-288.

⁴⁰ Moisés Bensabat Amzalak, "Benoliel, Joseph (José)", in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth, Jerusalem, Keter Publishing, vol. 4, 1971, p. 544; Esther Mucznik, "Benoliel, José", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, pp. 92-93

⁴¹ Fátima Sequeira Dias, "Bensaúde, Joaquim", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, pp. 99-101.

⁴² See Esther Mucznik, "Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa", in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, pp. 168-171; idem, "Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa: presença e memória", *História* 15 (1999), pp. 32-41; idem, "A Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa e o apoio aos refugiados", *Revista de Estudos Judaicos* 5 (2001), pp. 70-78.

⁴³ Manuel Augusto Rodrigues, *Les Études Hébraïques à l'Université de Coimbra (XVIe siècle)*, annex, Paris, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1984 ; idem, *A obra poética de Leão Hebreu: texto hebraico com versão e notas explicativas*, Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras, 1982.

⁴⁴ Among others, see "Palavras e expressões portuguesas de origem hebraica", *Estudos Orientais II – O Legado Cultural de Judeus e Mouros* – Lisboa, Instituto Oriental, 1991, pp. 217-244; idem, "Manuscritos hebraicos na Torre do Tombo", *Didaskalia* 11/2 (1982), pp. 379-392; idem and Dov Cohen, "Novos manuscritos hebraicos", *Didaskalia*, 25 /1-2 (1995), pp. 189-194.

Azevedo Mea. The first two taught at the Faculty of Arts, in Lisboa, while the third taught at Faculty of Arts from the Porto University. The canon Isaías da Rosa Pereira (1919-1998), who studied at the Universities of Louvain and Salamanca, focused essentially on publishing documentation, with some introductory notes, in a positivistic approach to the exposition of facts: at any rate, his editions are a very useful resource for researchers⁴⁵, much more so than certain interpretative operations which are grounded on defective research and interpretation of sources. António Borges de Coelho, beside his studies on the Inquisition, among which stands out *A Inquisição de Évora: dos primórdios a 1668 (The Inquisition of Évora: from its origins to 1668)*⁴⁶, published a series of short studies brought together in the collection *Questionar a História (To Question History)*⁴⁷, where Jews are always present, as well as New Christians (for example the merchant Duarte Gomes Solis). In his formulations we can sense an interpretation with Marxist roots, which became more flexible as his career progressed, and where documental analysis is very rigorous.

The trajectory of Elvira Mea is substantially different: living in Porto, she was heavily influenced by the patriarchal character of the “Marrano” Amílcar Paulo, who wrote an introduction to her first publication – *O Sefardismo na Cultura Portuguesa (The Sefardism in the Portuguese Culture)* – in 1974, the year of the Revolution⁴⁸. Amílcar Paulo would eventually collaborate with her in the article “Adiciones a la Inscriccion Hebraica de Gouveia (Portugal)” (“Additions to an Hebrew inscription from Gouveia (Portugal)”), published in the *Sefarad* review, in 1980⁴⁹. However, her interest in the Marranos led her to focus especially on the old New Christians and the Coimbra Inquisition, the Tribunal which covered the Northern part of the country, where the Marranos lived. That is why she chose, as the subject of her doctoral dissertation in History, the Coimbra Inquisition, later publishing the dissertation in book form⁵⁰. Perhaps the most interesting aspect in relation to New Christians is her resolve to prove that these were not mere “victims”, having instead developed concerted strategies to render unfeasible some of the Tribunal’s policies⁵¹. Together with Inácio Steinhardt she is the author of a biography of Barros Basto – as if she were returning to the roots of her historiographical interests⁵². Let us also emphasise the contribution by Joaquim Antero Romero de Magalhães, professor at the University of Coimbra, who in 1981 wrote a masterful article on New Christians in the Algarve: “E assim se abriu o Judaísmo no Algarve” (“And this way the Judaism in Algarve was uncluttered”)⁵³. And also the work of Humberto Baquero Moreno, a professor at the University of Porto, an expert in Medieval Studies, who published some gems in the context of Jewish Studies, e.g. the article “Novos elementos relativos a

⁴⁵ See for example *Os Róis dos Confessados como fonte histórica*, Lisboa, Academia Portuguesa de História, 1986; *A Inquisição em Portugal – Séculos XVI-XVII – Período Filipino*, Lisboa, Vega, 1993; and *Livro de Receita e Despesa dos Presos Ricos da Inquisição de Lisboa: 1594-1596*, Lisboa, Livraria Olisipo, 1994.

⁴⁶ Lisboa, Caminho, 2 vols., 1987.

⁴⁷ Vols. 2, 4 and 5 contain the richest essays in this area. They were published by Editora Caminho, in 1994, 1998 and 2001 respectively.

⁴⁸ Published in Porto by Livraria Paisagem.

⁴⁹ 40 -2, pp. 309-314.

⁵⁰ *A Inquisição de Coimbra no século XVI: a instituição, os homens e a sociedade*, Porto, Fundação Engenheiro António de Almeida, 1997.

⁵¹ See for example “Le Saint Office de Coimbra: un Tribunal de Judaïsants au XVIe siècle. L’Inquisition comme source de diaspora », *Revue des Études Juives* 166/1-2 (2007), pp. 273-279; and “Inquisição e minoria judaica, séculos XVI-XVII”, in *Minorias étnico-religiosas na Península Ibérica. Períodos medieval e moderno*, ed. Maria Filomena Lopes de Barros and José Hinojosa Montalvo, Lisboa, Colibri, 2008, pp. 381-39.

⁵² E. de Azevedo Mea and I. Steinhardt, *Ben-Rosh ...*

⁵³ *Revista da Universidade de Coimbra* 29 (1981), pp. 1-74.

Mestre Paulo, pregador do século XV, contra os judeus bracarenses” (“New elements on Master Paulo, preacher from the 15th century, against the Jews of Braga”)⁵⁴.

Based also on her generic interest in Medieval Studies, Maria José Pimenta Ferro Tavares ended up focusing her objectives on the Jewish minority in Portugal during the Middle Ages⁵⁵, although she later tried to extend her studies not only in the diachronic sense, covering the fate of New Christians in the 16th century and revisiting the question of how the Inquisition was established⁵⁶, but also in the spatial sense, producing many studies on certain communities in the kingdom, including those of *Conversos*⁵⁷, and extending her analysis to the Diaspora communities⁵⁸. Later on she authored syntheses on this vast theme, among which a volume published in Spanish⁵⁹. Hers is a name we cannot ignore in Jewish Studies in Portugal, in a more recent period (her career as an author dates mainly from the April Revolution onwards, her first study having been published in 1970), and she is still very active. In her work we detect as influences the pragmatism of Professor Virgínia Rau (1907-1973) – a custodial figure in the Economic and Social History of Portugal in Medieval and Modern Times – and also the premises of the *Annales* group concerning “total History”⁶⁰.

As we can see above, Jewish Studies in Portugal were for the most part the result of individual initiatives. They never came to constitute, for the reasons presented above, an institutionalized scientific area, in contrast with what happened in other countries such as Germany, France, Spain, the United Kingdom or the United States, or even Brazil. Sanjay Subrahmanyam characterized very effectively the evolution of Portuguese historiography in the decades following the 25th April Revolution. The 1970’s saw a gradual transformation of Portuguese cultural institutions, opening up to some international currents which enjoyed greater visibility, as well as the appearance of a growing number of foreign historians, who utilized Portuguese sources along with others. This made possible a different perspective, opposed to the heroic and nationalist studies rooted in the ideology of the Estado Novo. This evolution continued in the 1980’s, a period of interchange with other historiographical traditions – French, Anglo-Saxon, North-American – while at the same time some Portuguese historians felt the need to access documentation contained in articles outside Portugal – sometimes in other continents – to complete their studies even on the History of Portugal. However, as Sanjay Subrahmanyam correctly notes, this opening up hid tensions which soon came to light, especially in the context of the celebration of the Portuguese Discoveries, in the 1990’s. The author considers that these events reinforced the historiographical nationalism of Portugal’s traditionalist historians. However, we think another aspect deserves attention: not only at the level of the History of the Discoveries, but also at that of the general History of Portugal, the occasion brought to the surface, even in groups of

⁵⁴ Braga, annex of *Bracara Augusta*, 1978. See also *Reflexos na cidade do Porto da entrada dos conversos em Portugal em finais do século XV*, Porto, annex of the *Revista de História*, 1978; and *Marginalidade e Conflitos em Portugal nos séculos XIV e XV. Estudos de História*; Lisboa, Presença, 1985.

⁵⁵ See *Os judeus em Portugal no século XIV*, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos Históricos, 1970; *Os judeus em Portugal no século XV*, Lisboa, Universidade Nova de Lisboa and Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 2 vols., 1982, 1984.

⁵⁶ See *Judaísmo e Inquisição. Estudos*, Lisboa, Presença, 1987.

⁵⁷ See for example “Para o estudo dos judeus em Trás-os-Montes no século XVI. A 1ª geração de cristãos-novos”, *Cultura: História e Filosofia* 4 (1985), pp. 371-417.

⁵⁸ See for example “Judeus, cristãos-novos e o Oriente”, in *Estudos Orientais III – O Ocidente no Oriente através dos Descobrimentos Portugueses*, Lisboa, Instituto Oriental-Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1992, pp. 49-63.

⁵⁹ See *Los judíos en Portugal*, Madrid, MAPFRE, 1992.

⁶⁰ See Marc Bloch, *Introdução à História*, Lisboa, Publicações Europa-América, 1976; Fernand Braudel, *História e Ciências Sociais*, Lisboa, Presença, 1976; *Fazer História*, ed. Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora, Lisboa, Livraria Bertrand, 2 vols. 1977-1981.

authors considered loyal to “nouvelle histoire”, who in theory embraced those principles of overture to the paradigms of other historiographies and source materials, a chauvinist, self-centered and messianic-nationalist set of ideas. Even some approaches which would necessarily have to be open to other theoretical and historiographical fields began to drift away, in a sort of defensive reaction, from the debates of multifaceted, multicultural historiography⁶¹, defending their premises with arguments that mirror patriotic ideologies (not even refraining from cultural terrorism) and also revealing their fear of losing power (cultural, but above all social and political) in the face of innovation. The importance of resorting to other sources and understanding other contexts was supplanted by the elaboration of questions which reflect the authors’ theoretical exhibitionism rather than the adequate comprehension of the wealth of documental material that is brought to light every day. In some cases, an underlying rejection of the Other’s history, i.e., of everything that cannot be situated in relation to European issues, affects even the History of minorities who lived in the territory of the Peninsula. The overvaluation of Political History and the History of the elites and institutions, attempting to cover the whole of society with an hegemonic theoretical apparatus, to consecrate the imposition of the norm and not the resistance by what is different (only its adaptation), is the clearest indication of this renewal of Eurocentrism, and in the Portuguese case of the “Portuguesism” of many among the country’s historians, even when they study other societies and continents. In the case of Jewish Studies in Portugal, the attempt at dominance by historians of the Inquisition (that is, of an institution) over the area of Jewish Studies is very evident, as if this area lacked its own epistemological field, and its interest depended exclusively on the Inquisition. On the other hand, however, these hegemonic attempts also demonstrate, as we have already mentioned, the weakness of Jewish Studies as an epistemological body, and their very characteristic atomisation, past and present, since the demagogic, media-based ostentation of the supposed institutionalisation of an area of knowledge does not make it worthy and institutionalised.

The “specialization in generality” which characterized the evolution of a large part of Portuguese historiography gradually evolved into something that was ethically objectionable, as it allowed some people without a personal bibliography or sufficient scientific knowledge to reach positions of cultural visibility for which they do not qualify at all. In some cases there was actually an “attack” by unscrupulous people on “à la mode” areas of knowledge, making the most of a certain institutional void that existed. The case of Jewish Studies and the study of other minorities is very evident, and it would be pointless to dwell here on something that has no entitlement to scientific dignity. The existence of “placebos” who talk about everything and anything, posing as directors of a research which they never practised with any decency, aimed not at forming and stimulating interest in an area of study but only at projecting a network of friends, giving positions to people without doctorates who would need training in the field, administering training courses to others, who do not really bring together those who work in this area but instead try to seduce them so that they won’t be disturbed in their ignorance, and who ostensibly follow a policy of dramatization of their research as though they were the fundamental models in their area, is not wholesome and invalidates their own unnecessarily media-based propaganda. Above all, they exhibit opportunism and a thirst for the spotlight which are the opposite of the healthy, industrious and intelligent production of scientific knowledge. But they suggest a sociological interpretation that brings to mind the famous title by Vitorino Magalhães Godinho: *A estrutura da Antiga Sociedade Portuguesa* (*The structure of the ancient Portuguese society*)⁶². After all, contrary to what the famous Portuguese historian

⁶¹ See Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Preface”, in José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, *Judeus e cristãos-novos de Cochim. História e Memória, 1500-1663*, Braga, Edições APPACDM Distrital de Braga, 2003, pp. 13-14.

⁶² Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *A Estrutura da Antiga Sociedade Portuguesa*, Lisboa, Arcádia, 1977.

of the *Annales* School intended to prove, that structure is alive, almost unchanged, being one of the reasons for the visible and unfortunate economical and socio-political immobility of Portugal, a country which couldn't sufficiently modernize its structures to adapt to a post-colonial Europe. It is as if an outer appearance of modernity were always transforming and reshaping itself, being able to impose a false democratic quality – a non-rational kind of democracy, as opposed to those countries who enjoy structured and truly implanted regimes. The visible gamut of behaviours which translate into shortsighted elitism, abuse of power (some even attempt to “excommunicate” critics), corporativism, subservience and mercenary services is still present in many sectors of Portuguese society, including the one that euphemistically calls itself “the academic universe”, in all its diversity, and is opposed not only to the interchange of knowledge but also to the introduction of Portugal into the true democratic universe of scientific knowledge.

It should be noted that very recent scientific events held in Portugal reveal a trend towards an opening up that had never occurred, on this scale, in this area of study. In 2012 took place, in the University of Évora, the 2nd Meeting of the *Society Sefarad*, created in Jerusalem in the year 2009 - an international society of researchers who devote themselves, using a multidisciplinary approach, to the so-called “Sefardic Studies”. Dedicated to the theme “The Encounter of the Jews of Sefarad with Islam and Muslims”, it received more than 20 participants, from several countries⁶³. In the same year, another two meetings with Portuguese and foreign researchers took place in the same university, with the support of the *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia de Portugal*, the *Centro Interdisciplinar de História, Culturas e Sociedades da Universidade de Évora* (CIDEUS), the *Centro de História de Além-Mar da Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa* (CHAM) and the *Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Judaicos* (APEJ), dedicated to the study of Jewish and Muslim minorities in the Iberian Peninsula, considered in a comparative approach at the level of their “moments of interception”. These two meetings, under the theme “Na Ibéria e na Diáspora: História de Judeus e Mouros (séculos XV-XVII)/ In the Iberian and the Diaspora: History of Muslims and Jews (15th-17th centuries)”⁶⁴, were devoted respectively to History and to Language and Culture⁶⁵. The results of these three meetings are currently in the process of being published: the first on the Society's webpage in the *Journal of Sefardic Studies*; and the second and third meetings in the form of a multilingual book, to be released by an international publisher.

We would also like to emphasise the role played by one of the entities which supported the last two events: the *Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Judaicos* (Portuguese Association of Jewish Studies), founded in 1996, which in spite of some irregularity in its activities – dependent on the availability of its directors and the opportunities for financial revenue – has organized in the course of its existence several international conferences with published proceedings⁶⁶. This association also organizes individual conferences, with some scientific and temporal irregularity, but always bringing in important audiences, including personalities of the cultural and political world. It is a pity that the Association's review – *Revista de Estudos Judaicos* (*Review of Jewish Studies*) – is not published at regular intervals, and does not adopt a publishing structure that would pull it away from an ideological orientation towards similar international publishing structures, which would lend it

⁶³ See [http://www.sefarad-studies.org/image/users/136725/ftp/my_files/The Encounter of the Jews of Sefarad with Islam and Muslims-6.pdf?id=10146802](http://www.sefarad-studies.org/image/users/136725/ftp/my_files/The%20Encounter%20of%20the%20Jews%20of%20Sefarad%20with%20Islam%20and%20Muslims-6.pdf?id=10146802)

⁶⁴ Both organized within the scope of the Project PTDC/HIS-HEC/104546/2008, “Muslims and Jews in Portugal and the Diaspora: Identities and Memories (16th-17th centuries)”, co-financed by the Foundation for Science and Technology, and by FEDER, through “Eixo I” of the “Programa Operacional Fatores de Competitividade” (POFC) of QREN (COMPETE).

⁶⁵ See the program in http://www.cham.fcsh.unl.pt/CID_home.html

⁶⁶ See Esther Mucznik, “Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Judaicos”, in *Dicionário do Judaísmo ...*, p. 62.

indispensable scientific quality and impartiality. The year 2009 also saw the publication of the *Dicionário do Judaísmo Português* (*Dictionary of Portuguese Judaism*), abundantly cited already, containing entries of great thematic diversity, written by national and foreign experts who have specialized in Jewish Studies in Portugal.

In this area of study, occupied by so many Portuguese “scholars” who insist on ignoring, to their own gain, proper epistemological frontiers, as well as a healthy international dialogue, heuristic and operative, let us hope one does not forget the words of Vitorino Magalhães Godinho about “culture without cultural efficiency”... words from the 19th century....⁶⁷. But in order to achieve that one must, with seriousness and a love of science, take a look at what other institutions truly devoted to minority studies are doing in this field – and one needn’t go any farther than our neighbouring country.

⁶⁷ V. Magalhães Godinho, *A Estrutura ...*, Index.