



Guest Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue, "Jewish (In) Visibility in Iberia: A View from the Margins"

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I. Return to the Iberian Peninsula?

The “absence” of Jews has been a leading trait of Iberia’s imagery and public life since the decrees of expulsion from Spain (1492) and Portugal (1496). However, over the past two centuries, the attention to and visibility of the Iberian Jewish past as well as the presence of Jews have undergone countless revivals and reversals in the Peninsula. These have been conditioned by the interests and developments at stake in the Iberian countries; by the initiatives and trajectories of individual Jews in some cases, by small waves of Jewish migrants or even larger Jewish conglomerates in others; by changing international circumstances. Consequently, the dimensions and complexities of the debate about the Jewish past and, even more so, the reinitiation of Jewish life in Iberia have responded to multiple factors, including the rise of liberal nation-building projects in these countries. Important figures among the liberal elites turned to the Jewish Iberian past as a strategy to fight off the hegemony and restrictions of Catholic doctrine¹ (Friedman 2020; Meyuhav Ginio 2008;

¹ In 1847, Adolfo de Castro published his *Historia de los judíos en España desde los tiempos de su establecimiento hasta principios del presente siglo* (Castro 1847). One year later, Amador de los Ríos brought to light his influential *Estudios históricos, políticos y literarios sobre los judíos de España* (Amador de los Ríos 1848), followed almost 30 years later by *Historia de los judíos de España y Portugal* (Amador de los Ríos 1875). In Portugal, Joaquim Mendes dos Remédios in *Os judeus em Portugal* (Remédios 1895) accused the Catholic Church of having been and still being anti-Semitic and thus contributing to the atmosphere of dangerous and widespread anti-Semitism of the late nineteenth century. In the 1871 *As Causas da decadência dos povos peninsulares*, Antero de Quental characterizes Muslims and Jews as the “Glory of Portugal” (Quental 1871: 12), having contributed to past historical achievements, especially in the Age of Discovery.

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Shinan, 2013, 2016). No less significant were the territorial expansion and colonialism of Spain and Portugal that allowed some Jews in Gibraltar and North Africa to become *protégés*, commercial intermediaries and interpreters whenever these types of services and connections served the colonial powers. Spain retained its instrumental connections with the Sephardic communities in North Africa after Morocco's independence in 1956 (Ojeda-Mata 2018).²

Other factors included the impact of the Balkan Wars in 1912–1913 and the disintegration of the Ottoman, Austro–Hungarian, and Czarist Empires following WWI. They all unleashed various waves of Jewish migration that moved from East to West. Small contingents of these major flows reached Spain and Portugal, adding new migrants and refugees to the Jewish presence that had begun to take shape in Iberia in the second half of the nineteenth century.³ The rise of republicanism in the Peninsula, which culminated in the establishment of the First Portuguese Republic (1910–1926) and the Spanish Second Republic (1931–1936), inaugurated a tenuous hope for ethnic tolerance and religious freedom (González García 2004; Franco 2002; Martins 2010). However, the rampant antisemitism in Eastern Europe followed by the rise of Nazi Germany in Central Europe, together with the establishment of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* in 1933 and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, brought an unexpected reversal of the hope that Iberia could become a safe haven for the ever-increasing number of persecuted European Jews.⁴

Notwithstanding the later institutionalization of the Iberian dictatorships, those of António de Oliveira Salazar (1933–1968) and of General Francisco Franco (1939–1975), Portugal and Spain's "neutrality" during WWII transformed the Iberian states into major transit countries for those trying to escape from Nazi-occupied Europe (Avni 1997). Given that few could stay in Franco's Spain, which had been devastated by the Civil War, the majority headed for Portugal as their next destination, given that Lisbon remained the last open harbor that had ships departing for the Americas during the hardest years of WWII. At this time, traditional Christian anti-Judaism and modern antisemitism were still well established in Portugal, despite the Salazar regime's official attitude towards the arrival of Jews in the country during the Holocaust.⁵ Yet in Spain, the use and abuse of antisemitism by Catholic,

² At the turn of the nineteenth century, the strong presence of Sephardic and Arab Jews in Ceuta and Melilla contrasted with that of rich Ashkenazi families in the Basque Country. Historical records point out that by 1897 there were around 400 Jews living in Spain, while the Jewish presence in Melilla was much more significant due to the crisis at the Sultanate, with the number of Jews in the city reaching 3000. In 1900, Dr. Ángel Pulido, the major Spanish Philosephardic intellectual, made public that there were 2000 Jews in Spain. By then, there were only three important centers with a Jewish presence: Ceuta and Melilla, which already had Jewish community life records, and Seville. In the early twentieth century, the tiny Jewish presence in Madrid and Barcelona was mixed in composition. See Garzón (2019).

³ A case in point is the Turkish Sephardim of San Antonio Market in Barcelona, who settled between 1920 and 1930, with the earliest arrival dating back to the end of the nineteenth century (Ojeda-Mata 2015). Lisbona Martín calculates that the total Jewish population of Barcelona in 1925 was at least 1000 individuals. (Lisbona Martín 1993, 34).

⁴ The year 1933 brought around 3500 Jews fleeing from Central Europe to Catalonia and the Balearic Islands. Many left with the outbreak of the Civil War, even though many others would come with the International Brigades (of which 10–15% were Jews), both cases reflecting a temporary presence.

⁵ Iberian historiography has mostly focused on the restrictive immigration policies implemented in Spain and Portugal and their impact on Jews during the Holocaust (1943–1945). However, in the last decades, it has undergone an epistemological turn in its approach to the Holocaust, from the analytical

ultra-nationalist, and fascist sectors had a virulence and intensity that was absent in Portugal (Avelãs Nunes 2020).⁶

The Francoist regime's antisemitism bent, evident mainly in continental Spain (Avni 1982), led to outlawing of communities and synagogues, arresting of Jews for their republicanism or association with Freemasonry, limiting their access to work (a punishment also applied to other religious minorities), and pressuring them to convert.⁷ These policies did not prevent a more moderate attitude towards Sephardic Jews in North Africa.⁸ It should be borne in mind that the Spanish sovereign territories of Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco, and the International Zone of Tangier, which Spain occupied until the end of WWII, alleging security reasons, allowed some 30,000 Jews to continue with their communal life and creed, even though economic penalties were not uncommon (Garzón 2008).⁹ With the fall of Italian and German fascism towards the end of Second World War, the Francoist regime's relationship with the Jews in continental Spain gradually changed and the amount of antisemitism literature reduced. During 1946–1947, timid attempts to restore Jewish life appeared as the Jews of Madrid and Barcelona were allowed to celebrate their religious services in private apartments. But even though private synagogues were opened in 1949 (Garzón and Macías Kapón 2001) and Madrid, with around a 1000 people mostly from Germany, Poland, France, and Hungary, had a synagogue and a graveyard (albeit with no permanent rabbi), the organization of the religious life of the Jewish communities in Spain remained rudimentary throughout the 1950s (Rozenberg 2010).

While the regime tolerated the celebration of major festivities such as Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur at the synagogue, the synagogues' functioning depended on the goodwill of the Francoist authorities. This was the case for Barcelona's synagogue on Roma Avenue, which dated from 1949, and for the Community Center on Porvenir Street, inaugurated in 1954, which catered for two synagogues, one following the Sephardic rite and the other the Ashkenazi rite. The heterogeneous Jewish population of Barcelona was composed of Turks,

Footnote 5 (continued)

level of state policies to an analysis of various actors and agencies active in Spanish and Portuguese civil society and their responses to the European genocide, giving major importance to the politics of memory, which until then had been neglected. See Gómez López-Quñonez and Zepp (2009), Brenneis and Herrmann (2020) and Senkman and Milgram (2020).

⁶ The antisemitism images and rhetoric featured in the Portuguese press of those years reveal moderate antisemitism in Portugal. For the heterogeneous and contradictory aspects of a regime committed to the political control of society and the construction of social harmony in accordance with corporatism, see Cláudia Ninhos (2020).

⁷ The image of the Jew underwent a drastic transformation in certain intellectual circles in Spain before and during the Civil War, becoming demonized as the enemy guilty of the alleged destruction of Catholic *Hispanidad*. This radicalization appeared in the reactionary *Acción Española*, fascist *Falange Española*, among pro-Franco ideologues such as José María Pemán or reactionary modernists such as E. Giménez Caballero, who abandoned an early Philosephardism to become an enthusiastic anti-Semite, later referred to as the Spanish Goebbels. See Schammah Gesser (2007) and Martín Gijón (2020).

⁸ An apparently "benevolent" empathy of some Spanish soldiers from the Blue Division who were shocked by the inhumane situation of the Jews in the territories of the Soviet Union under Nazi occupation has received wide attention in Spanish historiography.

⁹ Sephardic Jews were spread across the cities of Tangier, Tetouan, Larache, Alcázarquivir, Arcila, Ceuta, and Melilla, as well as other smaller towns.

Poles, Greeks, Germans, French, Bulgarians, Swiss, and Portuguese, amounting to 2500 individuals (Rozenberg 2010).

At the international level, Spain, which had been excluded from the United Nations at the end of World War II, turned to the newborn State of Israel, a UN member since 1949, as a possible bridge to reach the post-WWII institutions of the Western world—but to no avail (Aliberti 2018). Meanwhile, the independence of Morocco and the end of the Tangier International Zone in 1956 led to the arrival of a critical mass of Sephardic Jews, mainly but not only to Madrid. That year, migratory flows also arrived from Egypt as a result of the emergence of Arab nationalisms and the impact of events in the Middle East (Rein 2006). This was to radically change the profile of the Jewish community in Spain, as Sephardic Jews, mostly from Spanish North Africa, became the majority (Benbunán 1997).

Following these developments, in the early 1960s, Yair Behar Passy, the representative of the World Sephardi Federation in Spain, proposed various initiatives to strengthen the links between Spain and the Sephardic culture, although such initiatives for the time being had no impact on the real Jewish communities then living in Spain. Be that as it might, a novel visibility of Sephardic culture in the Spanish public sphere took shape. Major exhibitions and conferences, such as the First Symposium of Sephardic Studies and the decision to create a Sephardic Museum in Toledo, signaled a new approach towards the Judeo-Christian dialog in Spain, a dialog widely conditioned by the Second Vatican Council's worldview. However, the Jewish communities in Spain were not legalized until 1965, and only in 1968, after the 1967 Religious Freedom Law, was the *Beth Yaacov* synagogue in Madrid established, followed by the creation of Jewish communities in Málaga, Alicante, Valencia, Palma de Mallorca, Tenerife, Las Palmas, Torremolinos, and Marbella. It was only in the 1970s that the institutionalization of Jewish community life could be felt. By that point, Madrid already had a working synagogue, a school, a cemetery, and a social recreation farm. The religious services, the observance and provision of Kosher food, and the *Ezra* voluntary organizations followed the Hispano-Moroccan community schemes of North Morocco, reflecting the place of origin of most of the Madrilenian community members. These schemes, however, explain the subsequent difficulties in "absorbing" later migrant waves composed mostly of secular and politically left-wing Latin American Jews. These waves included many political exiles who were escaping from the military dictatorships in the Southern Cone, such as those who arrived from Argentina after the 1976 military coup. Despite viewing Spain as an "alternative homeland," they refused to participate in the more traditionalist and observant Hispano-Moroccan communal networks. At the same time, the 1973 Yom Kippur War brought yet another contingent of Hispano-Moroccan Jews who had stayed in North Africa to Madrid, which now hosted nearly 7000 Jews (Garzón and Macías Kapón 2001). With the passage of time, both Madrid and Barcelona experienced a number of splits and reorganizations of their congregations that increasingly responded to the greater diversification taking place within the Jewish communities themselves (Martínez Ariño 2011).

The Constitution of 1978 and the Organic Law of Religious Freedom of 1980, which provided a new legal framework for religious minorities, led to the establishment of the Federation of Israelite Communities of Spain in 1982, in accordance with the Law of Religious Freedom 7/1980 of July 5 and the Royal Decree of

January 9, 1981.¹⁰ The Spanish state's recognition of Judaism as a religious confession with important roots in 1984 paved the way for the later Cooperation Agreement signed in 1992. In that respect, the changes taking place in Spain not only responded to the transformations that Spanish society as a whole was experiencing (transition to democracy, modernization, and a clear orientation towards Europe, changing attitudes within the ruling elites and the Spanish Catholic Church), but also were due to the accomplished role played by a new cadre of community leaders proceeding from the Spanish Protectorate, who increasingly gained a say in the institutionalization of Jewish life in democratic Spain.¹¹

In a parallel fashion, the preparations for the celebrations of the Fifth Centenary of 1492 in the late 1980s gave rise to several cultural and political initiatives that officially reconnected Spain with the Jewish world. At the diplomatic and symbolic level, the "recovery of the memory of *Sepharad*" resulted in a plethora of events and activities that included the first official visit of the Prince of Asturias, Felipe of Bourbon, to Sephardic communities in the Diaspora and the homage paid to the Sephardic community in Buenos Aires in 1991, and the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord presented to these collectives. The impact of the celebrations on the Jewish communities living in Spain was in turn sponsored and visualized in the Spanish media, which provided detailed coverage of King Juan Carlos's visit and landmark speech at the *Beth Yaacov* synagogue in Madrid in 1992. This gesture went hand in hand with the State Cooperation Agreement signed with the Federation of the Israelite Communities of Spain that defined the conditions under which the Jewish communities of Spain officially established their relationship with the Spanish state, in terms of the role and position of the ministers of worship, registration of community premises, exemption from certain taxes, and the like. With Spain joining the project sponsored by the Council of Europe that celebrated the "European Day of Jewish Culture" in 1999, establishing the official day of the "Remembrance of the Holocaust and the Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity" in 2004, promoting the preservation of Ladino and the culture of the Sephardic Jews, and conferring the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem in 2007, an ongoing bond of acknowledgment has been reinforced (Flesler et al. 2013). This bond has been further strengthened by the creation of the Centro Sefarad-Israel in Madrid in 2006 as well as by ever-increasing academic meetings, courses, and cultural activities in the public sphere and Spanish media. Hence, it does not go too far to assert that, in the first decades of the new millennium, the Jewish communities in Spain not only are characterized by processes of growth, diversification, and visibility due to the impact of globalization and contemporary international migration—the numbers of young Israelis who have been coming to Spain either to study, spend their holidays, or make a living are a case in point—but are also becoming the object of increasing interest, study, and debate (Camargo Crespo 2000; Martínez Ariño 2011, 2016, 2020; Weisz 2019).

¹⁰ In 2004, the Federation changed its name to the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain, FCJE.

¹¹ Rozenberg (2010) estimated 10,000 persons living in Spain in the years following Franco's death, with only 40% of them having Spanish nationality.

In comparison with Spain, which received various waves of Jewish migrants, especially between the 1950s and 1970s, and openly welcomed the institutionalization of Jewish communities under the Federation of Israelite Communities of Spain, in Portugal, which for the most part was an emigration country throughout the nineteenth century and until the 1990s, there was only a highly fragmentary and minuscule Jewish presence. The situation had been deepened by a lack of incentives by the Portuguese ruling elites to attract Jewish immigrants in general, and descendants of Iberian Jews in particular.¹² Portugal had produced no “buzz” such as that orchestrated by the 1924 Royal Decree promulgated during Primo de Ribera’s dictatorship, which extended Spanish nationality to former Spanish *protégés* or their descendants and resonated loudly among the Sephardic communities in the Balkans. There would be no Portuguese gesture that paralleled Franco’s 1948 Decree. Although the Decree essentially was a piece of political propaganda, it granted Sephardic Jews in danger in Greece and Egypt the status of residents living abroad. By recognizing them as Spanish *protégés* and even awarding Spanish nationality to some, the measure benefited 267 people in Egypt and 507 in Greece (Rozenberg 2010). The same could be said of the recognition provided in 1982 by the Spanish Socialist government, whereby descendants of Sephardic Jews were to have the same rights as Latin Americans, enjoying a reduced time limit that enabled them to apply for Spanish nationality. Such measures stimulating the return of the Sephardim did not exist in Portugal, except for the attribution of titles of Portuguese nationality to some Jews of the Ottoman Empire in 1913, during the Balkan Wars (Franco 2004).

At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the first modern synagogue in Lisbon, *Shaaré Tikva*, dating from 1904, was inaugurated more than a decade before there was an active synagogue in Madrid, even when the Portuguese house of worship was originally built as a private initiative and had no external façade that allowed its identification as a Jewish temple. In that respect, the active life of the Jewish community in Lisbon in the early 1900s had to wait until the rise of the first Portuguese Republic in 1911 before it was awarded legal status. The official birth of the *Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa* in 1912 brought with it the creation of a bulletin (1912–1919), the founding of the Association of Hebrew Studies *Ubá-Le-Sion*, and the Zionist Federation of Portugal in 1920, followed by a library, a hostel, a dining room for the needy, and a school. In 1925, a youth organization, *Hehaver*, which was to play a major role helping Jewish refugees in WWII, was launched. However, despite the emerging network of institutions and the arrival of Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe, the Jews in Lisbon remained a small community of around 800–1000 people (Mucznik 1999). Parallel to the development of the Jewish community of Lisbon and a small Jewish presence in the Azores and in Faro in southern Portugal, the return to Judaism by numerous Crypto-Jews in the north and northeastern regions of Portugal (e.g., Porto, Braganza, Covilha, and Belmonte) in the 1920s and 1930s led to a new “Jewish” visibility in the Lusitanian state (Stuczynski 2005). The Crypto-Jewish phenomenon in Portugal, seen as a menace by the Portuguese

¹² Unlike its Spanish counterpart, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Portugal was not the epicenter of a fervent philosephardism. The Portuguese cultural milieu did not produce a figure matching the public campaigns of Ángel Pulido, known, albeit somewhat sarcastically, as the “Apostle of the Sephardic Jews” in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Catholic Church, and equally feared by the more established Jewish community of Lisbon and the Portuguese authorities, remained a source of polarization and dispute among Jews both in Portugal and in the Diaspora.

Despite Portugal's role as a transit country for Jewish exiles from Nazi Europe during the 1930s and 1940s, the opening of its borders during WWII did not modify the policy of the *Estado Novo*, which refused to grant permanent residence to Jews even though Portuguese nationality had been granted to some, namely in the Balkans, to rescue them from Nazi persecution (Mucznik 2018). Only a minority of them found a new home in Portugal under the dictatorship (e.g., Ilse Losa); rather than a safe harbor, Lisbon was but a gate to freedom (Pimentel 2006; Milgram 2011; Pimentel and Ninhos 2013; Kaplan 2020).

During the dictatorship and even in the revolutionary period, Portugal was not attractive as a destination for migration in general and particularly not for Jewish migration. Whereas the laicism of the First Portuguese Republic had favored the rediscovery of Jewish communities and a rapprochement with the Jewish past, the establishment of Oliveira Salazar's dictatorship in 1933, which promoted a process of "re-Christianization," silenced any memory of cultural diversity, past or present. Although the New State's Constitution maintained the separation between State and Church as anchored in the republican Constitution (Constituição da República Portuguesa 1933, § 8 No. 3), Catholicism was acknowledged as the traditional religion in Portugal (Constituição da República Portuguesa § 42 No. 3). Up until the end of the 1950s, the structure of Portuguese society changed only little. During the 1960s, Portugal experienced substantial economic and social changes. A wave of emigration heading for Europe was accompanied by the progressive opening of the economy through membership of the European Free Trade Association. At home, the expansion of the urban middle class went hand in hand with harsh criticism of the *Estado Novo*, which was to die in the wake of what some scholars defined as "the last imperialist colonial war waged by a Western European nation" (Monteiro and Costa Pinto 2011). The wars of liberation initiated in the African colonies of Angola, Mozambique, Guinéa-Bissau, and Cape Verde took a great economic and sociopolitical toll on Portugal, diverting attention from foreign relations to preventing decolonization. It was not until 1974 that the conditions were given for initiating contacts with Israel, as the Carnation Revolution of April 25 put an end to 48 years of dictatorship and to 13 years of colonial war. However, the effects of having to integrate hundreds of thousands of returning Portuguese from the former African provinces (collectively known as *retornados*) and the political and economic turmoil resulting from the military coup and successive governments were to cripple the Portuguese economy for decades to come. Accordingly, the establishment of diplomatic ties between Portugal and Israel in May 1977 was scarcely noted in the Jewish world, and Portugal remained unattractive for (Jewish) migration. In the early 1980s, however, the prospect of Portuguese accession to the European Community and of having consolidated the democratic tradition fostered the "synchronization and homogenization" of Portuguese national cultures and institutions with those of Europe (Monteiro and Costa Pinto 2011).

This wider context is pertinent to understand when and why Portuguese state institutions and official discourses initiated a process of "recovering" Portugal's

lost Jewish identity in the 1990s. This process has given rise to an increase in the production and dissemination of knowledge about and the appreciation of the Portuguese Jewish heritage (Schammah Gesser and Pinheiro 2019). It is against this backdrop that the fragmentation, shrinking, and late revival of the Jewish presence and visibility in the new millennium needs to be discussed (Mucznik 1999, 2018). Whether the New Law of Nationality for Descendants of Sephardic Jews, an amendment that was approved by a large majority in the Portuguese parliament in 2015, makes the growth and restitution of Jewish life, presence, community building, and activities possible in Portugal today is still too early to say.

II. A View from the Margins

Contemporary Iberia undoubtedly offers an exceptional and idiosyncratic constellation, especially in comparison with Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. As opposed to Italy, Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, and Russia, which had a very significant Jewish presence prior to the Shoah, Spain and Portugal's lack of a Jewish presence for almost five centuries makes the renewal of Jewish life and the restoration of their Jewish past most remarkable. While taking this *longue durée* of Iberian responses to the Peninsula's Jewish past as its background, and the actual return of Jews to the Iberian countries as departing points, the present volume considers the "entangled" contemporary history of Spain and Portugal (Kocka and Haupt 2009; Sardica 2013, 2019) as a framework to offer new and underresearched case studies from a variety of perspectives. The scholarly literature studying the renewed presence of Jews in the Peninsula has mostly focused on continental Spain (Lisbona Martín 1993; Berthelot 1995, 2001; Macías Kapon et al. 2000; Garzón and Macías Kapon 2001; Garzón 2007; Rosenberg 2010; Ojeda-Mata 2018; Aliberti 2018; Flesler and Pérez Melgosa 2020), while twentieth century Portugal and the Spanish Protectorate have received less scholarly attention (Martins 2006; Garzón 2008; Martín Corrales and Ojeda Mata 2013).

Jewish (In)Visibility in Iberia: A View from the Margins represents an effort to address this imbalance (Appadurai 1986). Furthermore, the volume provides complementary angles that highlight the inherent contradictions and ambivalences that the concept of *Sepharad* entails—in terms of the gap between discourses about symbolic/absent/generic Sephardic Jews and Sephardic identity on the one hand, and the real communities of Jews in the *whole* of the Iberian Peninsula on the other. In this respect, we assume that the interest in what has been conventionally defined as *Sepharad*¹³ in Spain and Portugal has responded to different geopolitical, socioeconomic, cultural, diplomatic, transnational, and even epistemological cycles taking place in Iberia.

¹³ The notion of *Sepharad* addresses a single, though internally differentiated and multifocal cultural and religious Jewish Iberian legacy, pertaining to Spain and Portugal—despite these regions' geopolitical, dynastic, and sociocultural differences—from ancestral times up to the Decrees of Expulsion from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497. This Sephardic legacy manifested itself through three temporal dimensions that affected the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish communities at the time of the expulsion: a shared Iberian past, a threatened present, and an irreversible diasporic future (Orfali 2018). These foundational experiences became part of the Iberian Jews' being in the world as they underwent uprooting,

These cycles have been influenced crucially by Iberian politicians, scholars, intellectuals, and artists, who have played a major role in the production of *Sepharad* as an object of study and debate and, ultimately, of appropriation (Riviere Gómez 2000; Rohr 2011; Flesler et al. 2013; Menny 2015; Flesler and Pérez Melgosa 2020). It therefore should be no surprise that the Iberian states have mobilized the “return of *Sepharad*” according to their own geopolitical, economic, diplomatic, and cultural agendas. New Nationality Laws passed in Spain and Portugal in 2015 as “Laws of Return,” offering citizenship to the descendants of expelled Sephardic Jews, are certainly a case in point.

The notion of *Sepharad* forms a common thread that runs, albeit in different modalities, throughout the six articles on Portugal and the Spanish Protectorate included in this volume. The first two studies hone in on less known aspects of the Sephardic communities under Spanish colonialist rule. Maite Ojeda-Mata's historical reconstruction and Angy Cohen's ethnographic analysis offer a nuanced reading of Jewish life under the Spanish Protectorate and the modernization process it unleashed. At the same time, both articles provide a genealogical insight that helps us to understand the origins and rehabilitation of the Jewish communities in Madrid, Barcelona, and other cities from 1948–1949 onwards (Garzón and Macías Kapón 1991).

More notably, Ojeda-Mata's focus on the Zionist organization circles in different cities within the Protectorate until 1956; in independent Morocco afterwards; and in the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in the north of the Sherifian state, highlights the links between different sectors of the Sephardic communities and their community leaders with Zionism and the State of Israel. Far from presenting a homogeneous response towards Zionism, Ojeda-Mata delves into the considerations taken by the Sephardic Jews vis-à-vis the options available: leaving for Israel, establishing new Jewish communities in Spain, or choosing other destinations such as the USA, Canada, or Latin America. Her analysis of the Spanish state at different points in history—during the Second Republic, the Civil War, and Francoism vis-à-vis the Protectorate—brings to the fore the variety of interests the Spanish state had in instrumentalizing Sephardic Jews, from contacting the Jews in Palestine to encourage them to protect the Christian sanctuaries in the Holy Land should an Arab–Israeli conflict break out, to strengthening cultural ties and religious contacts in Israel, given the lack of interest in advancing diplomatic relations with the Jewish state once Spain had been accepted as a member of the United Nations. Certainly, her study reveals the fluid relations entertained among a vast numbers of players both within and outside the Jewish communities in the North African Protectorate, whether local Zionist activists, Sephardic community leaders, agents of Israel's

Footnote 13 (continued)

forced conversion, expulsion, secret return, internal exile, or resettlement in foreign lands. Notwithstanding the different paths taken by the Sephardic Diasporas, *Sepharad* as a dense network of traditions (e.g., life experiences, memories, texts, liturgy, music, and other material and immaterial traces) has remained an enduring diptych linking Spain and Portugal. In a parallel fashion, the relations between Iberia and its Sephardic Diasporas have undergone innumerable twists, reversals, and revivals as Spain and Portugal experienced their own processes of nation-state building in the modern and contemporary periods.

Mossad, representatives of the Israeli cargo shipping company Zim, or the Jewish Youth Movements who faced the impact of the creation of the State of Israel vis-à-vis the Jewish communities living in Muslim countries.

Complementary to Ojeda-Mata's historical approach, Angy Cohen delineates an anthropological framework to study autobiographical narratives of Sephardic Jews in Spanish North Africa. Her work examines the peculiar processes Sephardic Jews underwent as colonial subjects and how this status conditioned, in an intended or unintended fashion, their identity affiliations and allegiances as members of and participants in different institutional frameworks at the same time: the Spanish colonial agencies, the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, the Jewish Agency, the Jewish community, and the Moroccan authorities. These overlapping contexts and their institutions inevitably created tension, contradictory roles, and ambivalent forms of belonging for Moroccan Jews. By focusing on the participants' memories about their identification with Spain and the adoption of Spanish habits and customs during the Protectorate period, the author traces the ambiguous "re-Hispanization" of Sephardic Jews during the colonial period and the ways this "re-Hispanization" transformed Jewish life and redefined the limits between the different ethnoreligious groups—Jews, Muslims, and Christians—in the Spanish Protectorate. Cohen approaches the performativity of their Sephardic identity and religiosity or lack of it (e.g., traveling on Shabbat, eating Kosher, and mixed marriages) in terms of flexibility and tolerance: a kind of ad hoc yet smart answer through which Sephardic Jews in the Protectorate adapted to the experience of living in the different, even liminal worlds that the geopolitical and socioreligious realities of the Spanish Protectorate brought together.

But whereas the Sephardic Jews in the Spanish Protectorate, as Cohen argues, could arguably be considered the most Spanish of all Sephardim, being "at the gates" of Spain and already having come into direct contact with Spaniards by the nineteenth century, on the western margins of the Iberian Peninsula, the Jews who remained or returned to Portugal after the Expulsion (1496) and Inquisition (1536–1821) adopted and maintained different strategies to resist complete assimilation, forced conversion, and antisemitism. Today, the Portuguese's complex relation to their Jewish heritage is marked by the country's past antisemitism, the result of centuries of Inquisitorial persecution, and almost half a century of national Catholicism enforced by the Salazar dictatorship. The remaining articles that complete this special volume discuss Portugal's efforts to overcome this burden while also focusing on the fragmentary and diverse character of the Jewish communities, their past offshoots, and the new possibilities open to them in the present, a diversity that is even more surprising given the reduced dimension of these communities.

Paulo Mendes Pinto points out the significant change that defines "the recent recovery of Jewish identity in Portugal," examining the generation of scientific knowledge and a widespread appreciation of Jewish heritage by state institutions and official discourses from the 1990s up to the present. The author defines the recovery of the Sephardic past as a "*lieu de mémoire* of Portuguese cultural identity" and examines the initiatives of institutions as well as the contents and reasons behind this rediscovery in a country with a tiny Jewish population which, until the 1990s, was mostly of Ashkenazi origin.

In contrast to Mendes' panoramic outlook, which takes Portugal as its frame of reference, Avraham Milgram's study focuses on the brief encounter that took place in Lisbon in the first half of the twentieth century between highly differentiated groups of Jews—the old Sephardic community dating from the mid and late nineteenth century, Crypto-Jews who began to return to Judaism, and Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Milgram further traces the impact of Nazi persecution and the outbreak of WWII that brought thousands of new Jewish refugees to Portugal as they tried to emigrate to countries overseas. The last newcomers, fleeing from a chaotic world, added an additional albeit temporary facet to Jewish existence in Portugal. The article discusses how the emergence of this complex Jewish reality transformed the tiny Portuguese Jewish community overnight, especially in Lisbon, bringing to the fore intricate questions related to religiosity versus assimilation, Jewish nationalism versus collective Jewish identity crises, and communal solidarity versus alienation and estrangement as each of these communities pugnaciously positioned itself vis-à-vis the others. By focusing on the unique characteristics of Jewish life in Portugal in the first half of the twentieth century, and on the diversity that each group represented in social, cultural, economic, and political terms, Milgram's study reveals the failure of Jewish community building at the time, a topic that has received scant attention in the historiography of the Iberian Jews.

From a collaborative ethnographic perspective (Lassiter 2005), Marina Pignatelli in turn critically discusses the broad notion of Jewish identity and its representations in present-day Portugal. While mapping the existing Jewish communities, their power interrelationships and the categorizations used to label who is identified as a Jew, Pignatelli examines the "making" of cultural Jewish heritage, its paradoxes, and the agents and agendas involved. Although in theory Jewish identity can be conceived as multidimensional, the author shows how the present systematization process of Jewish memory and traditions in Portugal neglects contemporary *native* Jewish tangible and intangible cultural traces. Pignatelli suggests a *glocal* frame to address the impact of the homogenizing tendencies of globalization and of the particular local reactions to such trends on the perception of Portugal's Jewish past and the plural ways in which Jewish identity and its cultural manifestations are enacted in contemporary Portugal. Taking this *native* heritage as a starting point, the article stresses why the Portuguese matrix of Jewish culture remains part of the *Sepharad* imaginary while, at the same time, it is subjected to the constraints of time and space.

Finally, Yizhak Kerem analyzes the factors and motivations that spur the desire for Portuguese citizenship of various groups of applicants, many of them in Israel, in response to the Spanish and Portuguese amendments to their respective laws of nationality. Approved in 2015, these new Nationality Laws allow descendants of Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1496 to become citizens of one of the Iberian states if they are able to present proof of belonging to a Sephardic community of Portuguese or Spanish origin. Based on ethnographic research and interviews, Kerem's article focuses on the mechanisms at stake behind the Portuguese passport. The author unveils the new role being played by the small communities of Lisbon and Porto, the abrupt development of the migration

industry, and the network of interests that transforms the Portuguese citizenship into a “golden fountainhead” for Sephardic Jewry.

In this respect, it is evident that the Laws, as “acts of interpellations” (Althusser 1971) on behalf of the states, have enabled a web of intermediary state agencies; community institutions and semipublic organizations that, together with a network of lawyers, translators, and genealogists, mediate between the power of the states and the applicants. Functioning as crucial bottlenecks, these institutions, agents, and procedures naturalize and standardize different definitions of Sephardic-ness to meet the state’s requirements, while this standardization needs to be internalized by the different groups addressed. Notwithstanding the individuals’ or groups’ own understandings of themselves as to who is a Sephardi, those who do not meet the legal criteria have not been able to obtain Iberian citizenship. As Kerem’s article shows, this form of misrecognition, which functions differently in Portugal than in Spain, has produced contrasting results.

In so doing, the Laws have opened Pandora’s box, because the attribution of nationality to Sephardic Jews, which initially can be seen as a symbolic act, raises complex questions about language, identity, and collective memory, about social mobility, migration, entrepreneurship, and investment, and last but not least, about diplomacy and realpolitik (Schammah Gesser 2019). The multiple agendas that the Laws have triggered make visible the contested interests of the Iberian states in retaining the authority to define “Sephardic” collective identity; their modes of “interpellation” and the reception of the Laws in the Jewish communities worldwide and in Israeli society in particular. While the affirmation of Sephardic identities experienced in the last three decades in Israeli society has become an appealing means of distinction within a complex grammar of cultural, ethnic, and religious belonging that subverts imagined cultural monoliths such as Ashkenazim and Mizrahim (Rafael Vivante 2020), the new Nationality Laws, particularly that of Portugal, provide yet another arena to increase differentiation and conspicuous mobility, symbolic capital, and economic opportunities in the ever-challenging Israeli context.

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