

# PORTUGAL AND THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM SPAIN

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'Therefore we, with the counsel and opinion of certain prelates and grandees and knights of our kingdoms, and of other persons of knowledge and understanding in our Council, after much deliberation about [the matter], agree to order all the Jewish men and women of our kingdoms to leave, and never return, or come back to them, or to any one of them'<sup>1</sup>.

These words, taken from a pragmatic issued by the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, in the recently-conquered city of Granada, on 31 March 1492, have traditionally been held to indicate that it was the desire of the rulers to remove all Jews from their kingdoms. Indeed, there can be no doubt that a major movement of population resulted from the edict, which seems not to have been promulgated until the end of April, thus effectively reducing by a quarter the interval of four months which was originally allowed for Castilian and Aragonese Jews to arrange their affairs and leave. The terms of the edict stated that, after 31 July of that year, no unbaptised Jew was to be allowed to return to his or her property in those kingdoms, and any Christians who helped them to do so would lose their goods as well. Jews were allowed to dispose of their real estate before leaving, but they were not permitted to take out war materials, which included animals such as horses and mules, or cash and bullion.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Por ende nos, con consejo e parecer de algunos perlados e grandes e cavalleros de nuestros reynos e de otras personas de çiençia e conçiencia de nuestro Consejo, abiendo abido sobre ello mucha deliberaçion, acordamos de mandar salir todos los dichos judios e judias de nuestros reynos e que jamas tornen ni buelban a ellos ni a algunos dellos'. [LUIS SUÁREZ FERNANDEZ, *Documentos acerca de la expulsión de los judios*, Valladolid, p. 393; translated by JOHN EDWARDS, in *The Jews in Western Europe, 1400-1600*, Manchester University Press, in press].

On the of it, the purpose of the royal edict seems clear enough. The Jews, unless they were baptised, would have to be removed from Christian society in Castile and Aragon because:

'We [the Catholic Monarchs] are informend by the inquisitors and by many religious people, ecclesiastical and secular, a great danger to Christians has clearly emerged, this having followed, and it is still continuing, from the activity, conversation [and] communication which [these Christians] have maintained with Jews. [These Jews] demonstrate that they always work, by whatever ways and means they can, to subvert and remove faithful Christians from our Holy Catholic Faith, to separate them from it, and attract and perver [them] to their wicked belief and opinion, instructing them in the ceremonies and observances of their Law'<sup>2</sup>.

Nonetheless, at that time and since, the basic presupposition of the documents and of commentators upon them has been that the primary aim of the 1492 edict was not in fact expulsion but conversion. It is of course true that nothing of this kind is said explicitly in the edict itself, but observers at the time had no doubt in their own minds about what Ferdinand and Isabella intended.

The contemporary chronicler Andrés Bernáldez, an Andalusian priest who, according to his writings, was no great friend of the Jews, states that considerable efforts were made, after issue of the edict, to convert them to what was intended to be the sole religious faith of the Spanish kingdoms.

'And once this edict and order was known in all the synagogues of the excommunicate, it showed its force; and many sermons were preached to their *aljamas*<sup>3</sup> and communities, in all the synagogues, and the squares, and in the churches and in the fields, by the learned men of Spain; and the Holy Gospel and the doctrine of Holy Mother Church was preached to them, and it was proved from their own scriptures how the Messiah whom they were expecting was our Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ, who came at the acceptable time, and whom their ancestors maliciously ignored, just as all the others, who came after them, never wanted to listen to the truth'<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Segun somos ynformados de los ynquisidores e de muchas otras personas religiosas, ecclesiasticas e seglares, consta e parece el gran daño que a los christianos se a seguido e sigue de la participaçion, conbersaçion, comunicaçion que an tenido e tienen con los judios, los quales se prueban que procuran siempre por quantas bias e maneras pueden de subvertir e subtraer de nuestra santa fee catolica a los fieles christianos, e los apartar della e atraer e perbertir a su dañada crencija e opinion, ynstruyendolos en las çeremonias e obserbançias de su ley'. [SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ. *Documentos*, p. 392].

<sup>3</sup> A synonym of *comunidad*, though, unlike the latter term, it was normally only applied to Jewish and Muslim communities.

<sup>4</sup> 'E sabido este edicto e mandado en todas las sinogas descomulgadas, manifestó sus fuerças; e a todas las aljamas e comunidades dellas fueron fechas muchas pedricaciones en todas las sinagogas e en las plaças e en las iglesias e por los campos. por los sabios varones de

According to a nearly contemporary Jewish writer, Elijah Capsali, this campaign not only really happened, but also had considerable success. 'In those awful days [i.e. the four months after the signing of the edict of 31 March]', he wrote, 'thousands and even tens of thousands of Jews converted'. He goes on to add, 'and this even included some who were leaving or had left the country, as they saw what a terrible fate awaited them in their travels'<sup>5</sup>.

In this comment, by a Jew from Crete, whose family was involved in receiving Spanish Jews into the Ottoman empire, after 1492<sup>6</sup>, much of the following discussion may be summed up. For the Jews of Castile and Aragon, the events of 1492 involved not only the choice between conversion to Christianity and expulsion, but also the possibility of subsequent return. It is probably in this light that the comments of one of Isabella's modern biographers, Tarsicio de Azcona, should be regarded. In contrast to contemporary Jewish and Christian writers, he regarded the 1492 conversion effort as a failure. While seeing it as 'a widespread campaign of religious conquest' which seemed to indicate Ferdinand and Isabella's intention to 'induce conversion, so that the decree might achieve its aim, but without entailing major consequences for the kingdom'<sup>7</sup>, Tarsicio nonetheless cast doubts on the effectiveness of evangelistic campaigns such as that undertaken, in that year, by Luis de Sepúlveda in Torrijos and Maqueda (Toledo)<sup>8</sup>, stating that, 'if Ferdinand and Isabella believed that, by raising this possibility and organising conversion, they were going to soften the impact of the decree, they were mistaken. The Jews preferred exile'<sup>9</sup>. More recent scholars have returned to the view of commentators at the time, and regarded conversion as

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España; e les fue pedricado el santo Evangelio e la dotrina de la santa madre Iglesia, e les fué pedricado e provado por sus mesmas escripturas, cómo el Mexías que aguardavan era nuestro Edentor e Salvador Jesucristo, que vino en el tiempo convenible, el cual sus antepasados con malicia inoraron, e todos los otros que después dellos vinieron nunca quisieron dar el oído a la verdad'. [ANDRÉS BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, ed, Manuel Gómez-Moreno and Juan de M. Carriazo, Madrid, 1962, p. 252].

<sup>5</sup> ELIJAH CAPSALI, *The minor order of Elijah [Seder Eliyahu Zuta]* in, *The expulsion 1492 chronicles. An anthology of medieval chronicles relating to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal*, ed. David Raphael, North Hollywood, CA, 1992, p. 17. [From the transcription and edition by Arych Shmuelewitz, vol. 1, Jerusalem, 1975].

<sup>6</sup> RAPHAEL, *The expulsion 1492 chronicles*, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> 'Esta disposición fue acompañada de una amplia campaña de captación religiosa. Parece que los reyes querían provocar la conversión, de modo que el decreto cumpliera su finalidad, pero sin que arrastrase consecuencias importantes para el reino'. [Tarsicio de Azcona, *Isabel la Católica. Estudio crítico de su vida y su reinado*, Madrid, 1964, p. 643].

<sup>8</sup> SUAREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 454-456.

<sup>9</sup> 'Mas si Fernando e Isabel creyeron que adelantando esta posibilidad y canalizando la conversión iban a suavizar las consecuencias del decreto, se equivocaron. Los judíos prefirieron el destierro'. [Azcona, *Isabel*, p. 643].

having indeed been the monarchs' primary motive<sup>10</sup>. Nonetheless, there was undoubtedly a major migration from Castile and Aragon of Jews who refused to be baptised. The question of their numbers and destination is thus crucial.

Some Jews did indeed take up the royal edict's offer of continued residence in return for conversion. This was certainly so in the kingdom of Aragon. The town of Teruel, for instance, had put up stout resistance, during 1484 and the early months of 1485, to the introduction of the new foundation of the Inquisition, on constitutional grounds, as well as in defence of its 'New Christians'. Although the Crown and its inquisitors had won that battle and begun operations, it seems that the town's remaining Jews, about a hundred of them, who legally should not have been in that diocese since 1486, because of an earlier expulsion order, were baptised *en masse* in the town square, on the day of the proclamation of the edict of expulsion<sup>11</sup>. Already, by 15 May 1492, the number of converts was apparently sufficient for Ferdinand, in his capacity as king of Aragon, to instruct the Inquisitor-general, Tomás de Torquemada, to collect reports from his subordinate inquisitors in both Castile and Aragon concerning earlier 'lapses' in the Catholic faith by Jews who had decided to convert to Christianity after the edict of 'expulsion' was issued. Leniency in such cases was strongly urged upon them<sup>12</sup>.

Nevertheless, the decision of large numbers of Jews, in the early summer of 1492, was undoubtedly to leave, and descriptions of their resulting troubles are well-known, and continue to be repeated in later centuries of European history. Comments by Jewish writers are fully matched from Christian pens, and the whole of the Mediterranean was to know the reality, as well as the consequences, of the Sephardic diaspora. Thus Elijah Capsali, who was not from Spain but from Crete, recounts in graphic terms the sufferings of the exiles, particularly in Muslim-ruled North Africa, including the self-slaughter of those who would not convert to Christianity in the Christian

<sup>10</sup> For example, Henry Kamen: 'There can be no doubt whatever that conversion rather than expulsion was the primary object of the Catholic Monarchs'. [In 'The Mediterranean and the expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492', *Pas and Present*, 119, 1988, p.37].

<sup>11</sup> ANTONIO FLORIANO CUMBREÑO, 'El tribunal del Santo Oficio en Aragón: establecimiento de la Inquisición en Teruel', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 86, 1925, pp. 544-605 and 87, 1925, pp. 173-260; JOHN EDWARDS, 'Jewish testimony to the Spanish Inquisition: Teruel, 1484-7', *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 143, 1984, pp. 333-350 and 'Religion, constitutionalism and the Inquisition in Teruel, 1484-5', in *God and man in medieval Spain, essays in honour of J.R.L. Highfield*, ed. DEREK W. LOMAX and DAVID MCKENZIE, Warminster, 1989, pp. 129-147, and *The Jews in Christian Europe*, p. 32 and note on p. 39; Fritz [Yitzhak] Baer, *Die Juden im Christlichen Spanien*, Berlin, 1929-36, repr. Farnborough, 1970, vol. 1, p. 569; Kamen, 'The Mediterranean and the expulsion', pp. 52-53 and note.

<sup>12</sup> RAFAEL CONDE and DELGADO DE MOLINA, *La expulsión de los judíos de la Corona de Aragón. Documentos para su estudio*, Zaragoza, 1991, p. 79, translated in Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe*, in press.

outposts in North Africa, especially Arzila. 'And many are the stories', he wrote, of how those who had been banished from Spain acted, as they sanctified God's name diligently<sup>13</sup>. Bernáldez, on the other hand, described, partly through personal observation of those who passed through his home region of Andalusia, the sufferings undergone by the departing Jews even before they left Spain.

'Christians took their many estates, very many rich houses and landed properties for a few coins, and [the Jews] went about begging to sell them, but they could not find anyone to buy them. They exchanged a house for an ass, and a vineyard for a small piece of cloth or linen, because they could not take out either gold or silver'<sup>14</sup>.

He then went on to describe the sufferings of the exiles abroad in terms not dissimilar to those used by Capsali<sup>15</sup>. When it comes to exact numbers, however, the difficulties increase. Christian writers who were living at the time of the expulsion, such as Bernáldez and the German traveller Thomas Münzer, estimated that 100,000 Jews had left the country in 1492, while Jewish writers, such as Abraham Zacuto and Isaac Abravanel suggested 150-200,000 and 300,000 respectively. Among twentieth-century scholars, Yitzhak Baer and Salo Baron suggested that 200,000 departed, while Jaime Vicens Vives estimated 150,000, and Luis Suárez Fernández, Jonathan Israel and Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada think in terms of 100,000. Henry Kamen has variously estimated 180,000, in a work published in 1983, 100,000 in 1985, 50,000 in 1988, and 70,000 in 1988<sup>16</sup>. It will not be possible to come to any conclusion in the matter of numbers without referring to Jews who, as has already been indicated in the quotation from Azcona above, returned to Spain within a fairly short interval. In the meantime, though, it is important to note the destinations of those who did indeed depart during the summer months of 1492.

Jewish and Christian sources, such as Capsali and Bernáldez, describe the refugees as having fled in all directions from the domains of the Catholic

<sup>13</sup> CAPSALI, *The minor order of Elijah*, p. 33. There are distinct echoes in this account of the experiences of Jews in the Rhineland in 1096 and 1147, who preferred to kill themselves and their closest relatives, rather than be baptised under the violent pressure of participants in the First and Second Crusades to the Holy Land. [*The Jews and the crusaders. The Jewish chronicles of the First and Second Crusades*, ed. and trans. Shlomo Eidelberg, Madison, 1977].

<sup>14</sup> BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, p. 254, translated in Edwards, *The Jews in Western Europe*, in press.

<sup>15</sup> BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, pp. 257-264.

<sup>16</sup> MIGUEL ÁNGEL LADERO QUESADA, 'Le nombre des juifs dans la Castille du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, 1973)*, Jerusalem, 1975, vol. 2, p. 47; Edwards, *The Jews in Christian Europe*, p. 34; Kamen, *Spain, 1469-1714. A society in conflict*, London, 1983, revised edition 1991, p. 42, *Inquisition and society in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, London, 1985, p. 16 and 'The Mediterranean and the expulsion', p. 44.

Monarchs. Jews from Castille and Aragon migrated, during that period, to the still-independent kingdom of Navarre in the north and to south-western France, to Italy, including Naples and Rome, and to various Muslim territories in North Africa, such as Fez, Tunis and Tlemcen, as well as the Ottoman empire<sup>17</sup>. However, all commentators, at the time and since, agree that Portugal was one of the main destinations of those who departed from the Spanish kingdoms, and in particular from Castille. According to Bernáldez, when the Spanish edict came into force, at the end of July 1492, and with the agreement of king John II of Portugal, more than three thousand Jews left through Benavente (Zamora) and entered the neighbouring kingdom via Bragança, about thirty thousand went from Zamora to Miranda, and twenty-five thousand via Ciudad Rodrigo to Vilar Formosa<sup>18</sup>. For Azcona, the attractions of Portugal, for those who felt constrained to leave Castile, were obvious. The neighbouring kingdom was close-by, with a land frontier, and, unlike more distant destinations, it afforded an opportunity to observe financial and other business operations which, notoriously, were often not resolved during the interval allowed by the royal edict<sup>19</sup>.

The passage to Portugal was, however, not made easy for the emigrants on the Spanish side. It was inevitable that Jews who decided to leave would find it difficult, if not impossible, to dispose of their Spanish property within the term of the edict. An inquest which was carried out by agents of the duke of Béjar, in 1493, reveal that, in the lands under his jurisdiction, in the modern provinces of Salamanca and Cáceres, local people had illegally relieved departing Jews of such items as land and agricultural property, as well as synagogue ornaments. The ducal officials also sought evidence concerning debts owed by Christians to Jews, in order to identify those who had taken advantage of the expulsion in order to evade their obligations. Information was to be obtained about Christians who had looted Jewish property, including synagogues, and the ducal questionnaire, given to officials for this investigation, also suggests that some Christians were collecting debts on behalf of departing Jews, and had even carried goods across the frontier for Jews who were moving to Portugal<sup>20</sup>. In the border village of San Felices de los Gallegos, Christians were denounced for smuggling Jewish goods into the neighbouring kingdom, but the main border town in this area, which, as Bernáldez indicated, much used by Jews leaving the northern part of the

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<sup>17</sup> BENAJAMÍN R. GAMPEL, *The last Jews on Iberian soil. Navarrese Jewry, 1479/1498*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, 1989, pp. 89-119; CAPSALI, *The minor order of Elijah*, pp. 17-31; 42-45; BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>18</sup> BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, p. 256.

<sup>19</sup> AZCONA, *Isabel*, p. 649.

<sup>20</sup> CARLOS CARRETE PARRONDO, ed., *Fontes Iudaeorum Regni Castellae [FIRC], 1. Provincia de Salamanca*, Salamanca, 1981, pp. 52-54.

kingdom, was Ciudad Rodrigo. There, as soon as they heard of the royal edict, the customs officers raised the duty on those crossing the frontier to Portugal from one *real* to four-and-a-half, and, in October 1492, two royal investigators reported on the unjust duties which had been collected from departing Jews at this post, during the period allowed by the edict.<sup>21</sup>

The unresolved business left behind by the Jews, particularly from Castile, who moved in such difficult circumstances to Portugal, will be considered in due course, but what conditions were they to meet in the neighbouring kingdom? Even if, as Azcona states, his statistics are to be treated with the utmost scepticism, the comments of Bernáldez on this subject are nonetheless worthy of consideration, for what they do not say is as much as what they do.<sup>22</sup> According to his account, Spanish Jews who entered Portugal during this period were allowed to stay for six months, in return for a royal tax of one gold *cruzado*, and departed after that to various destinations, such as Fez, in modern Morocco<sup>23</sup>. The significance of this statement lies not in the question of whether or not it is necessarily accurate in its entirety, but rather in that it discounts the nature and reality of the Portuguese situation at the time, including the state of the Portuguese Jewish community and its relations with the Crown and the Christian majority. Given his commitment to the study of the military orders throughout the Iberian peninsula<sup>24</sup>, as well as his feeling for England, which, in 1386, signed the treaty of Windsor with the country which is now its 'oldest ally', Portugal, Derek Lomax would surely not have approved of such myopia.

Whether or not they were to be well received, Spanish Jews who crossed the frontier to Portugal in 1492 knew that would find well-established Jewish communities on the other side. At that time, it appears that there were more than thirty towns and villages in Portugal which had Jewish communities within them. Indeed, 1492 was not to be the first year in which Spanish Jews crossed this particular in large numbers. In the first year in which Spanish Jews crossed this particular in large numbers. In the years after 1391 there had been a previous wave of Jewish immigrants to the neighbouring kingdom, and, whether or not as a result of that migration, the remaining, if fragmentary, taxation records suggest that there may have been about

<sup>21</sup> CARRETE PARRONDO, ed., *FIRC*, I pp. 67-73; FELICIANO SIERRA MALMIERCA, *Judíos, moriscos e Inquisición en Ciudad Rodrigo*, Salamanca, 1990, pp. 41-45; MARÍA FUENCISLA GARCÍA CASAR, *FIRC*, 6 *El pasado judío de Ciudad Rodrigo*, Salamanca, 1992, pp. 39-40.

<sup>22</sup> AZCONA, *Isabel*, p. 649 n. 53: 'en todo lo referente a cifras es necesario abandonarlo absolutamente'.

<sup>23</sup> BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, p. 259.

<sup>24</sup> As illustrated by his bibliography, in *Medievalismo. Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales*, year 2, vol. 2, Madrid 1992, pp. 242-246. DEREK LOMAX also edited, with ROBERT OAKLEY, sections of Diogo Lopes chronicles, as *The English in Portugal, 1376-87*, Warminster, 1988, 2nd ed. 1989.

30,000 Jews in Portugal in the second half of the fifteenth century, corresponding to about three per cent of the total population of the country. Portuguese Jews, like their neighbours across the borders, had become integrated to a considerable extent into the community, regardless of their religious affiliation. Jews were involved in a wide range of occupations, including tax-farming and administration, the medical profession, various crafts, and the ownership, including, on occasions, the working, of land which was cultivated with vines and olive-trees, though less commonly with cereals<sup>25</sup>.

It is not generally appreciated, in Spanish or non-Spanish discussion and analysis of events surrounding the 1492 expulsion, that the Jewish emigrants of that year found themselves, when they arrived in Portugal, in social and economic conditions which were already. The main cause of the problem was a series of outbreaks of the bubonic plague, or 'Black Death', which had affected one or more of the country's main centres of population in every year since 1477, and would continue to do so in subsequent years. During the 1480s, feeling had built up, both against Jews and against those who had converted to Christianity. In 1481, for example, the city council of Oporto expelled those Jews from neighbouring Arrifana and Zurara, who had brought their dead relatives to be buried in its cemetery. When Evora was affected by the epidemic in 1487, the authorities, working apparently on the venerable medieval theory that Jews were a cause of disease, rather than its victims like everyone else, ordered the gates of the Jewish quarter to be blocked up and forbade its inhabitants to come into other parts of the town. Not surprisingly, Jewish communities throughout the country, being royal chattels, like their co-religionists elsewhere in Europe, appealed to the king for protection, but worse was to come. In July and August 1490, there were riots in Lisbon, which were acknowledged in royal documents to have been directed against the Jews. As so often, the consequences were felt as much by the victims as by the aggressors. Although the Crown and the municipal authorities ensured that new squads were formed to protect the Jewry, the effect was further to segregate the two religious communities, with inevitable adverse consequences for the Jews economic and social interests. Thus the discontent felt by the Christian population against the established urban authorities had its impact on the Jews, and provided an awkward set of circumstances for those who migrated across the frontier from Castile and León in the summer of 1492<sup>26</sup>.

Thus it was not good news for most people in Portugal when large numbers of Spanish Jews began to arrive in their midst. The region of Beira, through which many of the refugees came, was suffering yet another bout of

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<sup>25</sup> MARÍA JOSÉ PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os Judeus em Portugal no seculo XV*, Lisbon, 1982, pp. 22-80, 107-112, 273-285, 303-305; EDWARDS, *The Jews in Christian Europa*, p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os judeus*, pp. 425-427.

the plague when they arrived<sup>27</sup>. According to the contemporary royal chronicler Rui de Pina, the Jews who refused to convert under the terms of the Spanish edict tried to bribe their way into the neighbouring kingdom, not only that 'he should welcome them at once into his kingdoms', but that 'he should also grant others of them passage from his sea-ports'<sup>28</sup>. Thus it appeared right at the start that only a certain proportion of the Spanish Jewish families intended to remain permanently in Portugal. Even so, Pina's view was that the king made a great error in letting them in at all. Criticising John II's decision, and ascribing his counsellors majority agreement to a simple desire to please, he added that 'it is less of an error, and less reprehensible, that things should be done without advice than against advice'<sup>29</sup>.

Pina's remarks certainly seem to reflect the general attitude of the Portuguese population at the time. As soon as the king's decision to grant rights of residence to six hundred Spanish Jewish households became publicly known, local councils, already preoccupied with the plague and with social disturbance, much of the latter being focused on the existing Jewish communities, began to complain of the consequences. In Evora, which was one of the main points of arrival, Jews spilled out of their quarter, as a result of the influx, and moved into the 'Christian' parts of the town, where lodgings were available and offered to them. The king's response to the local council's protest was to say that most of the incomers were in passage and not permanent settlers. John II rejected pleas to prevent further immigration, except in the case of Jews arriving from places in Castile which were suffering from the plague. Whether or not the threat of disease was being used by the Portuguese as an excuse to halt the immigration, it is striking that the surviving records from Castile, and subsequent Jewish commentators elsewhere in the Mediterranean, make no reference to the plague as a factor. That this may be case of ideological preoccupations overcoming practical reality is suggested by the edict which the Crown issued for Lisbon in that year, ordering the local authorities to check that olive oil had not come from plague-infested areas, before allowing its sale<sup>30</sup>. Perhaps the best indication of the Portuguese Crown's attitude to Castilian Jewish immigrants at this time is to be found in a royal document issued on 9 December 1492, long after the interval allowed for emigration in Ferdinand and Isabella's edict had expired.

<sup>27</sup> PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os judeus*, p. 425.

<sup>28</sup> 'Se socorreram a El Rey Dom Joham, pera que con esperaça de muito dinheiro que lhe prometeram, en seus Regnos os acolhesse logo, e delles pera outros nos seus portos do mar tambem lhes desse passagem' [Rui de Pina, *Crónica de El-Rei Dom João II*, ed. Alberto Martins de Carvalho, Coimbra, 1950, p. 179, translated somewhat inaccurately in Raphael, *1492 expulsion chronicles*, p. 148].

<sup>29</sup> 'Porque menos erro he, e menos reprehensam merece o que as cousas faz sem conselho, que contra conselho'. [Pina, *Crónica*, p. 180].

<sup>30</sup> PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os judeus*, p. 428.

In this document, John II told the authorities in Evora that he had heard that they were refusing entry to all Jews coming from Castile. The king told them to abandon this policy, and 'concerning the aforesaid Jews who have not come from places where people have died and are not themselves dyng of the plague, you should let them enter and dwell in that city'<sup>31</sup>.

From this and Portuguese documents, it is clear that the process of emigration from Castile to Portugal was far more lengthy than seems to have been envisaged by the Spanish authorities or has commonly been understood by subsequent commentators. The Portuguese sources indicate that many of the refugees entered the kingdom secretly, often without valuables or money to pay the fee of 6,000 *cruzados* which was demanded from each family by John II's government<sup>32</sup>. Apart from the nature of the Jews' reception in Portugal, it was to be of great relevance that, on 19 October 1492, John II extended the privileges offered to those who converted to Christianity. As Pimenta Ferro Tavares rightly observes, 'It is probable that the measure taken by the Portuguese sovereign had been approved by the Catholic Monarchs, who were trying to secure once again a newly-baptised minority, which would not be put in danger of apostasy by contact with Jews'<sup>33</sup>. To examine the truth of this statement, it is necessary to return, at this stage, to events in Ferdinand and Isabella's domains.

When the parish priest of Los Palacios (Seville), Andrés Bernáldez, outlined his own activity in baptising about a hundred returning Jews including some rabbis, he seemed to be referring to those who had come back from Muslim North Africa<sup>34</sup>. Nonetheless, it is clear that 'the return' was in fact a much greater and more widespread phenomenon, which attracted the attention of the Spanish rulers, as well as their Portuguese neighbour. Indeed, by November 1492, the government of Ferdinand and Isabella found it necessary to issue a further edict, which effectively gave a safeconduct to Jews from Castile and Aragon, who had emigrated as a result of their earlier measure, to return, provided that they were baptised as Christians. Responding to a petition from those who wished to return, that they should be allowed by the rulers to do so:

'And thus, because it was their will to live and die in the same places in which they lived and dwelt when they were Jews, we should command that

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<sup>31</sup> 'Vos mandamos que... acerca dos ditos judeus nom viimdo elles dos lugares donde morrem nem morremdo amtre elles,, leixes entrar e estar em esa çidade...' [PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os judeus*, p. 468].

<sup>32</sup> EDWARDS, *The Jews*, p. 36.,

<sup>33</sup> 'É provável que a medida tomada pelo soberano português tenha sido aprovada pelos Reis Católicos que procuram, de novo, reaver uma minoria recém-baptizada para a qual já não se põe o perigo de, por contactos com judeus, apostatar'. [PIMENTA FERRO TAVARES, *Os judeus*, p. 428].

<sup>34</sup> BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias*, p. 260.

that the houses and goods and property which they sold and abandoned should be restored and returned to them by the people who hold them now, for the quantities of *maravedís* for which they sold them, paying for improvements which may have been made in them, or as our pleasure might be<sup>35</sup>.

Those to be included within the terms of this measure were apparently assumed to be returning from Portugal, and not from elsewhere. Thus it provided for returning Jews who had been baptised either in Portugal itself, or in Spanish border towns, such as Ciudad Rodrigo. In any case the newly-converted Jews were to return through their original town of departure, Badajoz, Ciudad Rodrigo or Zamora, and should have with them a valid baptismal certificate, either from Portugal, or from the relevant Spanish authorities.

At the border, it has been hard to find specific evidence of the return of Jews from Portugal and of its immediate effect on these communities. In Ciudad Rodrigo, one inhabitant of the town was allowed to return even before issue of the November edict. In Barcelona on 26 October 1493, Rodrigo Arias Maldonado was granted permission by the Crown to return and regain his former property in the town, because he had been baptised<sup>36</sup>. However, there is no doubt at all that the effects of the 'expulsion' edict and of the offer of return to those willing to be baptised had its effects all over Castile, and even in Aragon. In December 1492, Francisco del Aguila, a citizen of Atienza (Guadalajara), received permission to regain legal possession of his former property, because in 'Ciudad Real he turned Christian and made his wife and children turn Christian, and also many others, who were in total fifty persons'<sup>37</sup>. This document offers a revealing insight into the kind of 'conversion' methods which were in operation at the time.

One area of Castile which has left a considerable amount of Inquisition evidence concerning both religious life among 'Old' and 'New' Christians, and the phenomenon of return. The register of the Soria-Osma tribunal, in north-eastern Castile, near the borders with Aragon and Navarre, is unusual among Inquisition sources in that it contains statements, taken in the years between 1486 and 1502, which predate any subsequent trial<sup>38</sup>. Similar

<sup>35</sup> 'Y asi mismo porque su voluntad era de beber e morar en los mismos logares donde bebian e moravan al tiempo que eran judíos mandasemos que las casas e bienes y raizes que ellos vendieron e dexaronles fuesen bueltas e tornadas por las personas que agora las tenian por las quantias de mrs que ellos las vendieron pagando los mejoramientos que en ellas oviesen fecho o como la nuestra merçed fuese'. [SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, p. 487, trans. EDWARDS, *The Jews in Western Europe*, in press].

<sup>36</sup> SIERRO MALMIERCA, *Judíos, moriscos e Inquisición*, p. 46.

<sup>37</sup> 'Pues en Çibdad Rodrigo se tornó christiano e fiso tornar christianos a su muger e a sus fijos e a otros muchos, que fueron por todos çinquenta personas'. [MARÍA FUENCISLA GARCÍA CASAR, *El pasado judío*, p. 42].

<sup>38</sup> CARRETE PARRONDO, ed., *FIRC, 2, El tribunal de la Inquisición en el obispado de Soria (1486-1502)*, Salamanca, 1985. This source is discussed in José María Monsalvo Antón, 'Herejía

material for the district of Almazán is provided by the archive of the Cuenca tribunal<sup>39</sup>. In addition, royal documents, issued between December 1492 and April 1494, indicate that the Crown intended to assist newly baptised Jews to regain their property and wealth in the kingdom, as individuals and their families gradually returned to Ledesma, Atienza, Cuéllar, Segovia, Zamora, Logroño, Santolalla and Sepúlveda<sup>40</sup>. It is clearly not possible to attach any precise statistics to the return of baptised Jews to this or any other area, but statements to the Inquisition, as well as individual cases dealt with by the royal administration, indicate that a significant movement of population back to Spain took place in the year of the expulsion edict and those which followed. Indeed, it appears that this return was commonly used, in the diocese of Soria at least, to date personal and community events.

For example in 1502, ten years after the expulsion, a loquacious informer of the local Inquisition, Juan de Salzedo, referred to 'the time when the Jews [*sic*] returned from Portugal'. In more than one statement, he indicates that this process of return had continued from 1492 into the following year<sup>41</sup>. Likewise, in 1505, Alonso de Alves, from Almazán, described the year 1494 as one in which 'the Jews came back as Christians'<sup>42</sup>. One Francisca, also from Almazán, employed a similar phrase in that same year, as did the *alguacil mayor* [chief constable] of the town, Bernaldino de Mendoza<sup>43</sup>. Individual cases, though, are even more interesting, when it comes to trying to understand why Jews preferred to return to Spain as Christians, rather than remain abroad, in Portugal or elsewhere, as adherents of the faith of their birth. Such evidence makes it clear that both economic and religious motives were involved in the making of such decisions, but while individual Jews and their families might vary in their attitude to Christianity, economic motives seem to have applied in virtually every case.

Even before the issue of the general edict of 10 November, which has already been referred to<sup>44</sup>, the Castilian Crown had begun to address the

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conversa y contestación religiosa a fines de la Edad Media: las denuncias a la Inquisición en el obispado de Osma', *Studia Historica*, 2, 1984, pp. 109-138, and Edwards, 'Religious faith and doubt in late medieval Spain', *Past and Present*, 120, 1988, pp. 3-25, together with 'Debate: religious faith, doubt and atheism', comment by C. John Sommerville and reply by JOHN EDWARDS, *Past and Present*, 128, 1990, pp. 152-161.

<sup>39</sup> CARRETE PARRONDO and CAROLINA FRAILE CONDE, eds, *FIRC*, 4, *Los judeoconvertos de Almazán, 1501-1505. Origen familiar de los Lainez*, Salamanca, 1987.

<sup>40</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 487-489, 494-496, 504-505, 508-510, 512-513, 517-518, 520-523, 525-528, 531-533.

<sup>41</sup> 'Al tiempo que se tornaron los judios de Portugal', *FIRC*, 2, p. 71, and 'que bolvieron los judios de Portugal', *FIRC*, 2, p. 142. In the view of Carrete Parrondo, most of Soria's departing Jews went first to Portugal. [*FIRC*, 2, p. 154n.].

<sup>42</sup> 'Que se tornaron christianos los judios. [*FIRC*, 4, p. 29].

<sup>43</sup> *FIRC*, 4, pp. 45, 77.

<sup>44</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, 487-489.

question of returning converts in individual cases. Already, on 7 September of that year, two converted Jews from Coruña del Conde (Burgos), whose baptismal names were Pedro and Nuño Núñez de Santa Fe, were given royal protection to regain their property in Castile, after their return from Portugal. According to their account, given to royal officials, this family's experience during the months following the issue of the original expulsion edict seem to have been typical of those described in more general accounts. The brothers said in their petition to the Crown that 'they could not leave as quickly as their wives, who went to the kingdom of Portugal, taking many of their goods with them, and leaving them to wander about in various places, with the fear they had that they might be arrested'<sup>45</sup>. During this period of fear and uncertainty, the brothers and their wives had made various unfortunate financial deals with individuals, who were no doubt attempting, like so many others, to exploit the situation of the departing Jews, and who, since the brothers' baptism, were apparently denying that the transactions concerned had ever taken place. More will be heard of Pedro Núñez in due course, but at this stage it is simply worth noting that, in a series of measures issued under the great seal, the Castilian Crown continued, during the succeeding years up to end of the century, to give its protection to returning converts and attempt to ensure that their economic lives in Spain would be restored.

The motive for such royal measures was clearly conversion. Thus, on 1 December 1492, Don Yuça Hadid, a Jew formerly resident in Ledesma (Salamanca), was released from his punishment for having illegally taken hard currency to Portugal during the previous months, on condition that he was baptised<sup>46</sup>. In the period between December 1492 and April 1494, similar provisions for economic protection after baptism were made for Francisco del Aguila of Atienza (Guadalajara), who has already been mentioned<sup>47</sup>, Fernán Gómez de la Cueva of Cuéllar (Segovia), Diego Sánchez, of Gumiel del Mercado (Burgos), Juan Gutierrez of Plasencia (Cáceres), Ponce de Cabrera, and others, from Cuéllar, Yuda Corcos from Zamora, Francisco de Madrid of Ávila, Juan Suárez and Fernán Núñez of Fuentidueña (Segovia), Alfonso Núñez de Guadalajara, and Pedro Línex of Sepúlveda<sup>48</sup>. In addition, more general provisions were made. On 24 October 1493, for instance,

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<sup>45</sup> "Lo qual dís que non pudieron faser tan presto que sus mugeres non se le fueseen al reyno de Portugal levandoles muchos de sus bienes de dexandolos derramdos por muchos logares con el temor que levavan de no ser detenidos". [SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 468-479].

<sup>46</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 494-495.

<sup>47</sup> See too note 37.

<sup>48</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 508-509 [6 March 1493], pp. 509-510 [22 March 1493], pp. 512-513 [31 March 1492], pp. 517-518 [25 June 1493], pp. 520-522 [3 July 1493], pp. 525-526 [13 July 1493], pp. 527-528 [19 October 1493], pp. 531-532 [30 April 1494], pp. 532-533 [also 39 April 1494].

the authorities in the dioceses of Cuenca, Osma and Sigüenza were ordered to treat returning converts properly, while in July of that year, the safeconduct for baptised Jews had been repeated, this time mentioning those who returned from Navarre, as well as Portugal<sup>49</sup>.

Given the nature of the previous activities of Jews in Ferdinand and Isabella's kingdoms, and the nature of the departur of so many of them, it was inevitable that the issue of conversion would become involved with economics. As Benjamin Gampel observes, in the case of those who crossed to Navarre in the summer of 1492, it was effectively impossible for the refugees to settle all their business, public or private, before leaving<sup>50</sup>. That business interests, as well as religious belief and practice, weighed in the making of decisions by individual Jews and their families is made very clear in the records of the Inquisition in the diocese of Soria and Burgo de Osma, which have already been referred to<sup>51</sup>. The affairs of Diego Sánchez of Gumiel del Mercado, for instance, appear in both royal and economic documents, and are a typical case of the problems which could arise when Jews converted and came to claim their inheritance. In March 1493, the Castilian royal council replied to his petition concerning the dowry of his daughter, who had married a Jew called Moses Hen, from Coruña del Conde, by a normal Jewish contract. After that, though, Diego and his daughter converted to Christianity, while Moses died in Portugal, still a Jew and without an heir. However, Moses' brother, who had accompanied him to Portugal, seized all his property and was then baptised himself. He took the baptismal name of Fernando and returned to Coruña to claim his inheritance. The Crown appointed a local lawyer to investigate the case and sort it out and, although, as is typical in such cases, the result is not known, it is clear that this kind of dispute was common among those who took up the royal offer of safeconduct in return for conversion to the Catholic faith<sup>52</sup>.

A well-documented example of the economic complications which often faced the returnees, and of their inevitable involvement with questions of religion, is the case of Pedro and Nuño Núñez de Santa Fe, which has already been referred to<sup>53</sup>. Although Nuño thereafter fades out of the picture, Inquisition sources add to the information concerning Pedro Núñez, formerly Yuçe de Valladolid, and known as 'el Ronquillo' ['the snorer'], which isto be found in royal document. It appears that he was baptised in July or

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<sup>49</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 528-529 [24 October 1493] and pp. 526-527 [30 July 1493].

<sup>50</sup> GAMPEL, *Last Jews*, pp. 115-119; this work does not seriously treat the question of Jews who returned from Navarre to Castile and Aragon as converts.

<sup>51</sup> See note 38.

<sup>52</sup> SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos*, pp. 509-510.

<sup>53</sup> See note 45.

August of 1492, and returned home to Coruña in 1494 with his wife, who by this time had been baptised as well. According to the testimony of one witness, given in Aranda de Duero on 17 January 1502, it was in 1496 that Pedro sent another convert, Juan Esteban, a cloak-maker [*mantero*] to fetch their children from Portugal<sup>54</sup>. Other documents in the Sorian Inquisition's register give a rare glimpse into the religious perceptions (as well as the economic worries) of the new Pedro Núñez, because it appears that he was not inclined to slip quietly back into the 'Christian' society of which the Catholic Monarchs had dreamt. According to some accounts, given in witnesses' statements to the inquisitors, Pedro and his wife, now Constanza, still tried to keep Jewish dietary laws at home. In 1501, Pedro was sentenced to 'perpetual imprisonment' (which, in the Inquisition's practice often meant a comparatively short term) for having supposedly stated, concerning the Jewish Law and the Christian one, 'I do not believe that of Christ or that of Moses'<sup>55</sup>. Pedro was also said to have boxed his grandson's ears, in about 1500, for putting his hands together in the Christian manner to say grace before a meal. 'Which God do you mean? It's no use praying now!'<sup>56</sup>. A local doctor claimed that Pedro came to him in church, during the recitation of the Passion gospel on Good Friday in the previous year:

'I'm amazed at these people keeping on about this 'passion', because here, when a brother or relation is killed, especially if they kill him for justice, they don't want it to be mentioned, but these people do nothing but talk about it'<sup>57</sup>.

Pedro seems to have had a strong sense of what he regarded as justice and equity. Although, like many others at the time, he questioned the Inquisition's receiver of confiscated goods about the wealth of the tribunal and how it had been obtained, nonetheless told the official in question, Bachelor Pedror Álvarez de Añaya, that he accepted the inquisitors' right to convict him<sup>58</sup>. He genuinely seems to have had difficulty, on grounds of common sense as much as theology, with Christina teaching on the saving role of Jesus. 'Let them burn me tomorrow', he apparently said to one Riba Martínez,

<sup>54</sup> 'Francisco de Avila, christiano nuevo, vecino de Sant Estevan, preso..., dixo que puede aver fasta ocho años... que un Juan de Sant Estevan, mantero, vecino de Sant Estevan [Santes-teban de Gormaz, Soria], christiano nuevo, después de tornado christiano e venido de Portugal con su muger, Pero Núñez de Santa Fe e su muger enbieron a... Juan de Estevan, desde Coruña a Portugal, para que truxiese de allá a su fijo o fijos de... Pero Nuñez, el qual fué a Portugal'. [*FIRC*, 2, p. 144].

<sup>55</sup> 'Descredo por la de Christo y por la de Moysén'. [*FIRC*, 2, p. 69].

<sup>56</sup> '¿Qué Adonay? ¿Que agora no aprovecha resar! [*FIRC*, 2, p. 89].

<sup>57</sup> Coruña, Good Friday, 1499: 'Maravillome desta gente en mentar de contino esta Pa-sión, porque quando acá matan a un hermano o pariente, en espeçial sy le matan por justiçia, non quieren que se lo menten, y esta gente nunca hasen syno mentalla'. [*FIRC*, 2, p. 90].

<sup>58</sup> *FIRC*, 2, p. 81.

in Coruña in 1499 or thereabouts, 'but I'll not stop saying that it seems an excessive thing to me that when God is in the heavens, he should go down to hell, and yet not achieve any more than he did'<sup>59</sup>. Despite his apparent scepticism about all religion, which will be discussed below, Pedro seems nonetheless to have harked back, for whatever reason, to his old religion. According to the evidence of one Andrés Gil, a citizen of Coruña, some time during the year 1496, or thereabouts, Pedro 'put to this witness a comparison, telling him that, when he used to go to the fair and took good merchandise there, everyone used to praise it. He had made a mistake [in converting], because when he was a Jew everybody called him 'Don Yuça', and now they call him 'Pedro the trickster'<sup>60</sup>. After some of his cabbages had been stolen, he said that 'the Jewish law was better than the Christian one, because although they [the Catholic Church] issued letters of excommunication for some things, [under Jewish law] nothing was hidde'<sup>61</sup>. This was, at the very least, testimony to the efficacy of the former Jewish community discipline in Spain, and may indicate one former Jew's personal situation. It does not, however, necessarily provide evidence for some of the generalisations which are still commonly made about the mental and religious state of Spanish Jews who converted to Catholicism.

The unusually extensive and articulate testimony of Pedro Núñez is helpful here, even if it is far from prescriptive. Several witnesses, for instance, told the Soria Inquisition about a conversation which supposedly took place in 1499, between Pedro and a Dominican friar called Lic. Francisco de Aranda. While the two men were talking, the friar apparently expressed his amazement that so many Spanish Jews had been baptised, and then 'did not keep any Law', even though they had previously observed the Jewish Torah. Later on in the conversation, Pedro observed that, 'if it was not for the debts that he was owed, he would not have turned Christian or come back from Portugal'<sup>62</sup>. This and other such statements have led many scholars, in both past and present, to put forward the concept of some kind of *converso* mentality', particular to those Spanish Jews who converted to Christianity in

<sup>59</sup> 'Quémenme mañana, que no lo dexaré de desir, que cosa demasiada me paresçe estando Dios en los cielos que abaxe a los ynfierros y no pudo más'. [FIRC, 2, p. 90].

<sup>60</sup> 'Puso a este testigo una comparación diziéndole que quando iba a la feria e traía buena mercadería que todo el mundo ge la alabava e qué! non la avia fecho buena, que quando hera judío todo el mundo le llamava don Yuça, e agora le llaman Pero Enbudo'. [FIRC, 2, p. 92].

<sup>61</sup> 'Hablando sobre unas berças que le avian hurtado, que era mejor la ley de los judíos que la de los christianos, porque aunque por algunas cosas sacavan cartas de descomunió, no se encubría nada'. [FIRC, 2, p. 93].

<sup>62</sup> '[The friar] se maravillava dellos, para qué se avian tornado christianos que no mantenían ninguna ley, e que de antes mantenían su ley, e que agora ni manteían ley de christianos ni de judfos... que sy no fuera por las debdas que le devían que no se tornara christiano ni vinera de Portugal'. [FIRC, 2, p. 107].

this period and to their descendants. For Angus Mackay, given his very proper concern with the social and economic environment, as well as the cultural and religious world, in which these people lived, a better expression would be 'the *converso* predicament'<sup>63</sup>. But is this the best way in which to look at the problem?

There is no doubt that conversion from one strong, coherent and well-organised religion to another has always been liable to produce personal and even social disturbance, and the case of converts from Judaism to Christianity is no exception<sup>64</sup>. It is also true that the forced questioning of an individual's faith in one religion, in which he or she was brought up, is always liable to end in scepticism concerning all religions. This certainly seems to have happened to many people in the Netherlands, for example, during the religious and political conflicts of the mid-to late sixteenth century<sup>65</sup>, and Mackay draws similar conclusions concerning the situation of Spanish *Judeo-conversos*, from the letters of the *converso* royal chronicler, Fernando de Pulgar, and an early sixteenth-century novel by an Andalusian Catholic priest called Francisco Delicado<sup>66</sup>. For this scholar, these texts indeed indicate precisely the kind of 'a-religious' [rather than 'irreligious'] frame of mind of which Parker spoke, in the later case of the Netherlands. Thus the 'converted' Jews of Andalusia were at best 'ignorant and confused' while still at home, as Pulgar stated, and at worst, like the Jews and converts, especially the females, who arrived in Rome as a result of the work of the Inquisition and of the Spanish expulsion edict, 'they are certainly not Christians, and it is equally clear that they are not crypto-Jews'<sup>67</sup>.

Now this statement may be much debated. Slowly but surely, it is beginning to be understood that 'For the religious person, doubt has always been an intrinsic part of faith, yet its exact nature, and in particular its intellectual quality, is slippery and hard to define'<sup>68</sup>. More recently, the question of religious faith and doubt has been attended to in a stimulating study by Gavin

<sup>63</sup> ANGUS MACKAY, 'The Hispanic-*converso* predicament', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, 35, 1985, pp. 159-179, reproduced in *Society, economy and religion in late medieval Castile*, London, 1987.

<sup>64</sup> EDWARDS, 'Religious belief and social conformity: the 'converso' problem in late medieval Córdoba', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, 31, 1981, pp. 115-128.

<sup>65</sup> GEOFFREY PARKER, *The Dutch revolt*, Harmondsworth, 1985, p. 155.

<sup>66</sup> F. CANTERA BURGOS, 'Fernando de Pulgar y los conversos', *Sefarad*, 4, 1944, pp. 295-348; FRANCISCO DELICADO, *La lozana andaluza*, ed. Bruno M. Damiani, Madrid, 1969.

<sup>67</sup> MACKAY, 'The Hispano-*converso* predicament', pp. 175, 177. For a fuller account of this material which develops the same arguments, see, 'A lost generation: Francisco Delicado, Fernando del Pulgar and the *conversos* of Andalusia', in *Circa 1492. Proceeding of the Jerusalem Colloquium: Litteræ Judæorum in Terra Hispanica*, ed. Isaac Benabu, Jerusalem, 1992, pp. 224-235.

<sup>68</sup> EDWARDS, 'Religious faith and doubt', p. 3. See also the subsequent debate in *Past and Present*, 128, pp. 152-161.

Langmuir<sup>69</sup>. In it, he argues, quite rightly, that the nature of orthodox belief always varies through time, and hence doubt must change its form too. However, his discussion seems a touch 'intellectual', perhaps too much influenced by the monumental work of William James<sup>70</sup>, in that it talks only in terms of personal thought and experience as against the official doctrine of religious bodies, such as churches and rabbinate, and does not pay enough attention to the experience of religion through family and community. Even after all the scientific and historical developments which have taken place in the twentieth century, many thinking, and even religious, people still seem to find it difficult to accept what sociologists and social historians have been saying for decades, in other words that religion is expressed in human and communal terms.

At the general and intellectual level, the debate will undoubtedly go on. As far as the immediate question of why so many of the Spanish Jews who left for Portugal and other places in 1492 returned subsequently is concerned, it may well be that bruised religious feelings, rather than any lack of faith, are involved. There is certainly no lack of theological sophistication in the material which was collected by the Sorian tribunal in this period, even if much strong and even foul speech was recorded as well. Given the conditions then reigning in Portugal, it is perhaps not surprising that so many Jews from Castile decided to return and attempt to remake their lives, even at the cost of what Pedro Núñez called 'a drop of water'<sup>71</sup>. Some statements made by and about the Jews who returned under the terms on offer reveal deep divisions of opinion as well as religious reflection. In about 1496-7, Pedro Antón, from Terradillo, expressed the view that it would have been better for the Jews to 'turn Christian' and not leave. However, regret and nostalgia for the old religion and its loss seems to have been more typical. A moving expression of the predicament of those who stayed initially is to be found in a conversation which took place between Juan de León, a weaver from Santisteban de Gormaz, and another convert, Francisco de Ayala, who had gone to Portugal and then returned. Juan said that, whichever decision Jews made in 1492, to go overland to Portugal or sail across the Mediterranean from ports such as Cartagena, was bound to lead to disaster - yet to stay put was just as bad.

'So don't be sad because you left. If only it had pleased God that I had been you and you had been me; because you're stupid to be sad about leaving

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<sup>69</sup> GAVIN I. LANGMUIR, 'Doubt in Christendom', in *Toward a definition of Antisemitism*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1990, pp. 100-133.

<sup>70</sup> WILLIAM JAMES, *The varieties of religious experience*, Cambridge, Mass., 1985; NICHOLAS LASH, *Easter in ordinary. Reflections on human experience and the knowledge of God*, London, 1988; EDWARDS, 'Debate: religious faith, doubt and atheism', pp. 155-161.

<sup>71</sup> *Un poco de agua*. [FIRC, 2, p. 69].

and because you [who left] drank death in one draught, while we, who remain here among this wicked people, we receive from them death every day<sup>72</sup>.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that many of those who returned from Portugal in and after 1492 were not certain of their religious identity. Neither option, an increasingly hostile Portuguese government and population or what was effectively a forced baptism into a doubted or even hated faith, could have held many attractions for these individual Jews and their families, whether from Soria or elsewhere. The story of those who did come back is, however, an important part of Spain's life in the sixteenth century and beyond.

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<sup>72</sup> 'Pues no estés triste por esta yda vuestra, y plugiese al Dió que yo fuese vos y vos fuédeses yo, que sois neçio en estar triste por la partyda, que vosotros tragáys la muerte en un trago e nosotros quedamos acá entre esta mala gente, que cada día reçevimos la muerte con ellos'. [*FIRC*, 2, p. 153].