

KIVUNIM Goes to Portugal

March 11 – 14, 2018

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Tudo se ilumina para a quele que busca a luz. BEN-ROSH

הלפיד

...alumia-vos aponta-vos o caminho, BEN-ROSH

(HA-LAPID)

Órgão da Comunidade Israelita do Porto

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PORTO

Cecil Roth e as suas obras sobre os Maranos

Muitos e variados escritores estrangeiros tem produzido livros sobre os maranos portugueses, uns fixando alguns detalhes sobre a vida dos cripto-judeus lusitanos, bordando varias considerações sobre a sua psicologia, e dando indicações sobre a melhor forma de os conduzir ao judaísmo oficial; outros limitam-se a fixar o resultado da sua observação, coada atravez a sua sensibilidade pessoal, em narrações um tanto fantasistas, romanticas ou poeticas.

Varias rotabilidades judaicas vieram a Portugal estudar o problema dos maranos e me deram o prazer e honra da sua visita.

Todas fizeram a sua critica ao meu trabalho na Obra do Resgate, e apresentaram a sua formula para resolução do problema. Essa critica, umas vezes apresentada por uma forma extremamente gentil e delicada, outras vezes de forma tal, que, apesar do emprego de frases de bom tom usadas em sociedade, não podiam deixar de manifestar certa censura ao meu modo de actuar. Todas estas pessoas conhecendo meios judaicos muito diferentes do meio marano julgavam que era possivel aplicar aqui os meios uteis para essas velhas Comunidades israelitas, mas que de nenhum efeito são no problema marano.

Um Rabbi distinto, Dr. Sola Pool, Rabbi-mor das congregações luso-espanicas da Norte America, por ocasião da sua visita ao

Porto, onde falou com varios maranos proferiu a seguinte opinião: — «a questão dos maranos não é uma questão de dinim, preceitos, mas uma questão de psicologia».

Boa sentença baseada numa boa observação. E assim é. Todo o marano que se sente judeu por atavismo, mas que ignora o judaísmo oficial, quer que lhe falem á sua alma, que o convençam da grandeza espiritual da sua crença ancestral e que lhe forneçam elementos de deleza da sua fé perante o cristianismo que o assedia.

Em vez disso o que fazem alguns salvadores de maranos? Pretendem resolver o problema com individuos que sabem de Shehitah (Degoladura de Animais), coisa essencial numa velha Comunidade onde problemas importantes dessa ordem são tratados, mas que numa comunidade marana esses problemas não tem applicação, porque tendo esses judeus de raça vivo durante séculos afastados do formalismo judeu oficial não sentem esses problemas complicados. A formula ritual é indispensável para crear unidade religiosa, tambem para a fixação material da espiritualidade da sua fé. Falar a almas sedentas de pão de espírito apenas do modo como se deve comer dá o triste resultado de haver familias cripto-judaicas, cujo idealismo israelita foi apunhalado pela desilusão causada pelo ensinodum shohet judeu, que se intitulava Rabbi.

Sunday, March 11: We have breakfast at 8 followed by checkout and loading the bus for our journey across the Portuguese/Spanish border to Belmonte in the central part of the country where we will visit a historic anomaly: Jews who converted to Christianity to save their lives and then proceeded, against all odds, to maintain their Jewish identity and religious practise in secret for 500 years! We will visit the beautiful new Synagogue, stay in a kosher hotel and for centuries. We have all seen the remarkable film by Frederic

Brenner entitled “The Last Marranos.” But seeing the film is only a small portion of the story. When Frederick came to Belmonte in 1991 he had no idea what he would find. To even imagine that people could retain an identity in secret for 500 years was inconceivable. When he filmed and photographed their Passover preparations and rituals he began to understand the remarkable power of what had happened here. People can only be oppressed and repressed physically. The human spirit is not crushable.

The citation from the entrance wall of the Belmonte Synagogue that I quoted to begin our journey to the Iberian Peninsula now bears repeating (and repeating!):

It reads in Portuguese and in Hebrew, here beautifully and sensitively rendered into English by Rabbi Dov Lerea, former Director of KIVUNIM (2010-2013):

The thread of continuity was never severed from this place

Here, in the Village of Belmonte

**Here, in this very house and the houses adjacent,
the heart of the Jewish quarter,**

Full, robust Jewish lives have thrived since antiquity.

In the wake of royal edicts and decrees, the Jews of this village, like other Jews throughout Spain and Portugal, were forced to denounce their faith – while safeguarding their Jewishness in the safety of their homes.

Nevertheless, here, the flame was never extinguished...

Here, in the homes of the village, the Jews kept the sacred commandments of Judaism, and throughout these five hundred years, transmitted our tradition orally from generation to generation.

They did this clandestinely, keeping Shabbat in their hearts, while appearing in public worship with their neighbors on Sundays.

They were coerced into leading double-lives...

They were careful not to falter in-between the stumbling blocks of Jewish and Christian customs, lest they fall into the hands of the Inquisition and its underground.

They recited the blessings over hallah and wine, mumbling to themselves silently, in the dark, during Christian prayers, while guarding their Jewishness in the interiority of their souls.

Here the Jewish soul did not walk into oblivion...

Here the Jewish soul remains eternally.

For from the midst of the past, shall the future arise, and from the dark mist of medieval days shall the future emerge into the light of this Synagogue and spiritual center.

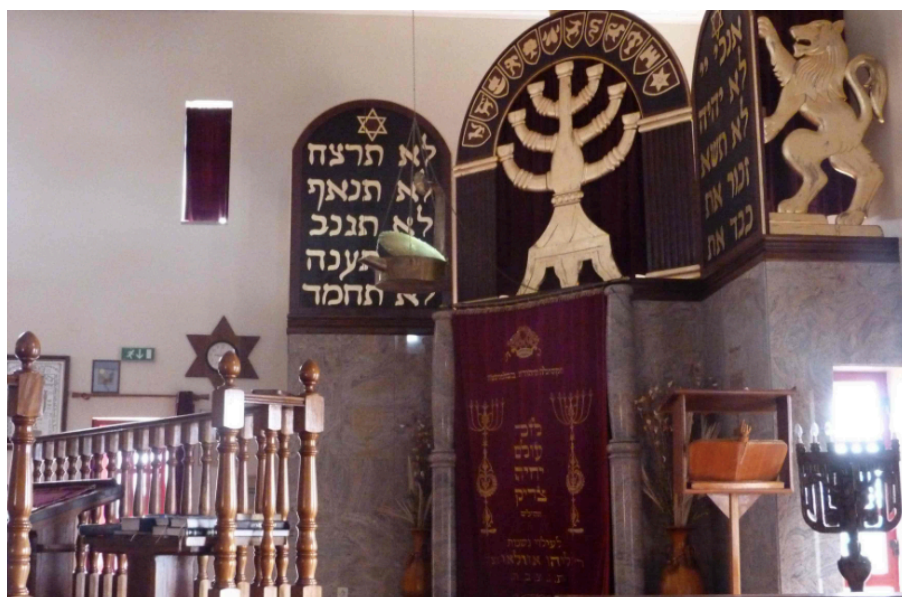
These powerful words convey the enormous surprise, powerful and elegant in its majesty, that sits right below the surface these weeks in Spain and Portugal. It's not only what we see and who we meet, it's the presence of a 500 year old secret that will surround us wherever we turn. What possess-ed these people to remain loyal in the face

of such overwhelming opposition. How did they manage to transmit belief and practice over hundreds of years without Rabbis or teachers or schools or synagogues? How is that possible?

Portugal is a country where Jewish life has been invisible for 500 years. We will witness the remarkable transformation of the secret to the revealed, the hidden to the open and the power of making the unknown...known. Of course there have always been hints. In New York City, the oldest congregation is that of Shearith Israel Synagogue (“the remnant of Israel”) known to most as “The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue.” Yet if Jews know anything about Jewish history, they immediately think of Spanish Jewry, of the Inquisition and ultimately of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. About Portugal you hear almost nothing. This trip will open a new chapter!

Most Jewish families in North America trace their roots to Eastern Europe, commonly called “Russia” although many came from places that had languages, cultures and religions that were not Russian. But we have fewer Jews from Spanish (Sephardic) background. They are the minority. **Historically this is probably a highly inaccurate assessment.** In the middle ages Spanish Jewry may very well have approached half of the total of Jews in the whole world. I recently discovered a family tree of my mother’s paternal grandfather, Solomon Rosenfield, a Rumanian Jew. The tree begins with a Rabbi Benjamin Ashkenazi in the 1500’s. Ashkenazi of course means “German” and he lived in a small German town.

But this classic “German” Jew, even holding the name Ashkenazi actually was born in Portugal. There are many more stories like this than we realize.



So first, a little history: The first archeological evidence of the presence of Jews in Portugal dates back to the fifth century, in a tombstone unearthed in Mertola, with a menorah on it. From the beginning of the monarchy up to

the XV century there were tolerant kingdoms in which the Jewish communities prospered as well as others in which conditions were less tolerant, where numerous restrictive measures were taken, such as the prohibition of access to public positions, the use of distinguishing items of clothing or obligatory curfews.

Jews probably established themselves in Tras-os-Montes after 1187, because of the benefits offered to them by the *foral* (a document establishing legal rights and administrative procedures) of King D. Sancho I. During the more tolerant reigns Jewish communities spread throughout Portugal. A highlight occurred during the late 15th century reign of King D. Joao II, who put at his service Jewish doctors, mathematicians and cosmographers who played a fundamental role in the Portuguese Discoveries (you do remember studying the “explorers” and the huge role played by the Portuguese?)

In 1492 the Decree of Expulsion was issued in Spain. It prompted a massive emigration to Portugal , estimated to be above a hundred thousand people. There followed a rapid expansion of local commercial activities such as tanning, shoe making, iron mongering and later the silk industry. At this time there is evidence of the existence of a synagogue within the walls of the castle of Braganca, capital of the district. This indicates the importance that the local Jewish community had during this period (Jacob, 1997).

But in December 1496 the Portuguese King also signed a decree of expulsion. However this resolution was modified in May 1497 by means of a forced conversion in which about twenty thousand Jews from all of the country, who were preparing themselves to depart in exile, were baptized against their will.

This attempt at a political solution through “integration” did not have the desired effect. Tensions and hostilities between **conversos** (forcibly converted Jews) and old-Christians became more and more accentuated, **and the phenomenon of crypto-Judaism emerged**. In May 1536 a papal bull was issued, which established the Inquisition in Portugal in order to seek out these false converts and eliminate the threat they were perceived to represent to the Church. In 1582-83, the Inquisition arrived in the Province of Tras-os-Montes reaching a peak of activity in 1599. Accusations and imprisonments followed and the list of names of individuals charged with Judaism grew day by day. (The original documents of the Portuguese Inquisition are in the Rare Book Room of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in NYC.) An example of these grim times is found in the village of Carcao, where among 150 families, 130 people were arrested for reverting to Judaism, many of whom perished in the fires of the Inquisition (burned at the stake).

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the inquisitorial process was intensified and as a consequence, there was a significant exodus to other countries, particularly from the manufacturing and mercantile elite, which then were flourishing in this region. At the end of the fifteenth century, there were approximately 134 Jewish communities throughout Portugal with a population estimated at 100 thousand, which was 10% of the total population of the country. The exact number of those who emigrated is not known, however it is believed that by 1631 the Jewish population was reduced to 10,000.

Initially, in the mid-sixteenth century, many of them set themselves up in Amsterdam, London, Hamburg, and some French and Italian cities. After that, some of them went to the new Portuguese colonies in Africa, India and Brazil and then from the cities of

Northern Europe to the New World, Curacao, Paramaribo, and the U.S. The major Diaspora of crypto-Jews actually begins in the fifteenth century and continued up until the eighteenth century, at which point the Pombaline discrimination law came into effect and the official persecution of the Inquisition ended. It is not until the 19th century that the Jewish communities' re-emergence really began. In 1927 the Jewish community was founded in Braganca, and in June 1928, the Synagogue "Shaaré Pideon", was inaugurated 431 years after the previous one.

During the Salazar Dictatorship period, from the year 1934 on, the community of Braganca gradually disintegrated. The descendants of this extinct community have remained dispersed through the district area, still claiming Jewish identity although most of them have been assimilated into the local culture and even in some cases into the dominant religion.

Across Portugal we will see examples of so-called "Manueline" style or Portuguese late Gothic, which is the sumptuous, composite Portuguese style of architectural ornamentation of the first decades of the 16th century, incorporating maritime elements and representations of the discoveries brought from the voyages of Vasco da Gama and Pedro Alvares Cabral. This decorative style is characterized by virtuoso complex ornamentation in portals, windows, columns and arcades. Several elements appear regularly in these intricately carved stoneworks:

- elements used on ships: the armillary sphere (a navigational instrument and the personal emblem of Manuel I and also symbol of the cosmos), spheres, anchors, anchor chains, ropes and cables.
- elements from the sea, such as shells, pearls and strings of seaweed.
- botanical motifs such as laurel branches, oak leaves, acorns, poppy capsules, cornucobs, thistles.
- symbols of Christianity such as the cross of the Order of Christ (former Templar knights), the military order that played a prominent role and helped finance the first voyages of discovery. The cross of this order decorated the sails of the Portuguese ships.
- elements from newly discovered lands (such as the tracery in the *Claustro Real* in the Monastery of Batalha, suggesting Islamic filigree work, influenced by buildings in India- Vasco da Gama lived and died in Cochin, India- where there was a large Jewish community)
- columns carved like twisted strands of rope
- semicircular arches (instead of Gothic pointed arches) of doors and windows, sometimes consisting of three or more convex curves
- multiple pillars
- eight-sided capitals
- lack of symmetry
- conical pinnacles
- bevelled crenellations
- ornate portals with niches or canopies.

This style of ornamentation marks the transition from Late Gothic to Renaissance. The construction of churches and monasteries in Manueline was largely financed by proceeds

of the lucrative spice trade with Africa and India and has become a symbol of national pride in Portugal.

In approaching an understanding of the draw of Jews to remain in the Iberian Peninsula both literally and culturally is the enormous wealth being created by the colonization of the New World. While Jews from Eastern Europe quickly left their origins behind, Jews of the Iberian peninsula still call themselves Spaniards (Sepharadi) and in NY, London and Amsterdam the most distinguished Synagogue is still "The Spanish/Portuguese" one. The architecture reveals the opulence of the times.

4:00 PM Arrival in Belmonte and check-in to our Hotel Sinai. At 6:00 PM we will gather in the lobby for a meeting and then head up the hill to the beautiful Synagogue of Belmonte with some members of the community (relatives all of those you saw in the film). As you know, throughout most of the Middle Ages, Jews on the Iberian Peninsula enjoyed freedom, wealth and power. Yet the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions in the late 15th century changed all this. Those Jews who weren't expelled were forced to convert to Catholicism, or were killed.



Here in the small village of Belmonte, the Jewish community decided to risk persecution and even death and continued to practice their religion... in secret. For centuries, these so-called *Marranos* (a preferred term is Anusim, those forced to do so, i.e., be converted) led a clandestine existence. Living among Christians, the Crypto-Jews in this mountainous Central Portugal town (close to the Spanish border) protected themselves by giving the appearance of following the Christian religion. Prayers and traditions were practiced at home under maximum secrecy behind closed doors and windows. The Anusim also abandoned circumcision, since any circumcised man would be highly suspicious. Writing in Hebrew was given up, as were most traditional Jewish rituals. Crypto-Jews even took up Christian names and went to church to mislead their neighbors.

Today, relations between Christians and Anusim are good. But that deep-seated fear of the outside world is still present and is reflected in the secret traditions handed down from generation to generation, which has given the Crypto-Jews their strength and their secret character. This clandestine existence even impacted the Marranos' diets as they prepared *Alheira*, the heavily seasoned sausages that are still very popular throughout

many parts of Portugal. By adapting their kosher cooking, the Marranos gave the impression that they ate pork. In fact, though, the recipe involved rabbit and chicken, says resident Antonia: "Everything is mixed and in the end, it looks like if it was pig meat, that's how we make Alheira."

The secret belief of Belmonte's Jews was not uncovered until the early 20th century. The Polish-Jewish mining engineer Samuel Schwartz discovered the Marranos in 1917 and subsequently published a book about his experiences. Frederic Brenner's film was taken over 27 years ago when the Jews of Belmonte were still relatively secret. It took decades for the community in Belmonte's Jewish quarter, with its maze of ancient alleyways and buildings, to openly live out their belief. The synagogue, built by wealthy Jewish donors from Morocco and North America, wasn't opened until 1996.

Belmonte's Jewish community was the only Iberian Jewish community to survive the Inquisition. Their rich Sephardic tradition of Crypto-Judaism is considered unique in Europe. Today, the Jews of Belmonte claim to profess Orthodox Judaism. But research into Crypto-Jewish life remains extremely difficult for outsiders. Faced with a wall of silence and distrust, even Jews are subject to close scrutiny before they are introduced into the privacy of local families.

It's estimated that 100 Marranos still live in Belmonte. But only a few are willing to speak -- and with the numbers dwindling rapidly, this is not likely to change in the future. Of course the times of inquisition are over, but the fear remains. Many horrible things happened to the Jews over the past few centuries. In Belmonte, there was always mistrust. The fear of persecution remained deep. But with the end of the Salazar dictatorship in the mid-1970s, the Marranos slowly opened up, yet even though the Crypto-Jews are progressively reintegrating into the wider Jewish religion, some are today still following secret rituals. In the past, the Crypto-Jews survived within the Catholic world and today, this secret Jewish religion still exists within Judaism. But either way, it's a hidden religion. Belmonte's Jews still celebrate the Pesah Holiday secretly, as well as prayers and other ceremonies.

7:00 PM We will have a strictly kosher dinner in our hotel. Eating a meal like this in this remote village is both unique and historic.

Monday March 12, 2018

8:30 AM Breakfast

9:30 AM We will make our way to the Jewish Museum of Belmonte, one of the most amazing and special Museums we will visit all year. Here we will be introduced to the story of **Portuguese Army Captain Arthur Carlos Bartos Basto** who in the 1930s was accused and convicted by Antonio de Oliveira Salazar's dictatorship and stripped of his military rank and status. Salazar's dictatorship promoted Catholic conservatism and nationalism and Barro Basto ran right into them making powerful enemies for his efforts to establish a Jewish community made up of descendants of **Anusim** – Jews who had

been forced to renounce their faith to escape religious persecution during the 16th-century Portuguese Inquisition and after.

As he convinced growing numbers that their past was Jewish, many sought conversion, including of course circumcision. Barros Basto was accused of sexually abusing the men he circumcised, and in 1937 was dishonorably discharged from the army, where he had served with distinction. Even today, years after his death in 1961, the Jewish community together with other progressive forces in Portugal seek to redress this grievance by a full re-instatement of Barros Basto to his highest achieved rank with all honors.

The Museum contains some remarkable documents from this amazing man's life and quest. BEN-ROSH is a biography of Barros Basto, this republican of crypto-Jewish ancestry, who distinguished himself and was highly decorated in the service of his country during World War I. After his return from the war, he established a Jewish community in Oporto in 1923. After the discovery of crypto-Jewish descendants in the Tras-os-Montes (Cape Verde) and Beiras regions, Barros Basto initiated a proselytizing movement with the aim of bringing back to Judaism the whole remnant flock of those who, while they lost some of the essential content of Judaism, remained Jewish in spirit, despite the inexorable repression of the Inquisition.

Artur Carlos de Barros Basto

Abraham Israel Ben-Rosh

אברהם ישראל בן-רוש



Barros Basto

Born 18 December 1887
[Amarante, Portugal](#)

Died March 8, 1961 (aged 73)
[Porto, Portugal](#)

It was the "Obra do Resgate", a movement of redemption, that excited Jewish communities all over the world and triggered a strong chain of support, headed by the Portuguese Marranos Committee, created by the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London. The "Estado Novo", the Salazar dictatorship and the anti-Semitism that was rampant in Europe during the '30s, fruitlessly attempted to denigrate the movement. All their efforts to do so were in the range of nuisance value resulting in delays and hindrances, but they could not destroy it; not even when, in the name of the army's honor (and in a lawsuit without honor), they succeeded in the subduing of the soldier, the man, but not the "apostle of the marranos."

His dreams and his deeds were indestructible, as attested by the "Mekor Haim" (Source of Life) Synagogue, courageously inaugurated in 1938 in Oporto that we will see tomorrow. Barros Basto was separated from active army service, defamed, accused of being a Communist, yet he carried on with his lifelong mission and took an active part in the rescue of his brethren in faith who fled from the Nazis. He made the Oporto community a shelter for the refugees, some of whom have been redeemed, have started a new life, and are still there to testify.

The author of his biography, Dr. Elvira de Azevedo Mea was born in Oporto, graduated in the Arts Faculty of the city's university and attained her doctorate in Modern and Contemporary History. She presently holds the position of associate professor in the same university. Her historical research work has been mainly on the subjects of Judaism, New-Christians and the Inquisition, in their social, cultural and psychological contexts. Dr. Mea has authored more than 30 papers that have been published in Portugal and abroad.

Here in this Museum we will see a remarkable newsletter, called Halapid, the Torch. In the United States today there are very few Jewish publications with Hebrew names, and of them none that publish solely with that Hebrew name and in Hebrew letters. Here was a man with an enormous mission who created a newsletter to teach Ansim about their past and started with Hebrew as the first thing they would see. This would be a radical approach even today, long after the days of the 1930's when Hebrew was just beginning its rebirth. Encountering a personality like that of Barros Basto is an experience, and a challenging one at that. Where did the passion come from? What does it mean when a community arises from the dead after hundreds of years? We are here in Portugal for a very short time. But believe me when I say to you that Portugal will be within you for a very long time.

Our host Jozi Domingos Levy is one of those beneficiaries of Barros Basto. He has arranged for us to see a wonderful documentary on the life of **Aristides de Sousa Mendes** who represents the character of the Portuguese people in the face of Nazi persecution of Jews of other countries. It is another unknown and untaught story that KIVUNIM strongly seeks to bring to life.

1:00 PM Picnic Lunch

2:00 PM En route to Trancoso with some interesting surprises provided by Jozi. Then we will make our way to the nearby town of Trancoso. Here in the 15th century there was a large Jewish community that contributed much to the development of commerce. This period has left its mark in the architecture of the houses with two doors (a wide one for the shop entrance and a narrow one leading to the living quarters) and in the Casa do Gato Negro, or House of the Black Cat, (in the Largo Luís de Albuquerque), one of the town's most emblematic buildings identified as being the former Synagogue and home of the Rabbi. In Trancoso Jozi Levy Domingos, will have much to show and teach us.

More than five centuries after Portugal's Jews were compelled to convert to Catholicism, Jozi brought a Torah back to Trancoso to inaugurate the village's new Jewish cultural and religious center. The facility, that we will visit (and that KIVUNIM inaugurated several years ago on a Shabbat we spent here, is named the Isaac Cardoso Center for Jewish Interpretation, named after a 17th-century Trancoso-born physician and philosopher who came from a family of B'nai Anusim (Marranos). Cardoso later moved to Spain with his family and then fled to Venice to escape the Inquisition, where he and his brother Miguel publicly embraced Judaism.



Cardoso went on to publish a number of important works on philosophy, medicine and theology, including a daring treatise in 1679 titled *The Excellence of the Hebrews*, which defended Judaism and the Jewish people from various medieval stereotypes such as ritual murder accusations and the blood libel.

The initiative for the center came from Trancoso's mayor, Julio Sarmiento, who invested more than \$1.5 million in erecting the modern structure, which includes an exhibition about the Jewish history of Portugal and the renewal of Jewish life in the region in recent years. At Sarmiento's insistence, the building also contains a new synagogue, *Beit Mayim Hayim*, "the House of Living Waters," and near the entrance to the synagogue is a memorial wall filled with the names of B'nai Anusim who were tried and punished by the Inquisition for secretly practicing Judaism, including some who were publicly burned at the stake in the 18th century, nearly

three centuries after their ancestors had been dragged to the baptismal font. Located in the Guarda district in Portugal's northeastern interior, the charming village of Trancoso was home to a flourishing Jewish community prior to the expulsion and forced conversion of Portugal's Jews in 1497.

Jozi Levy Domingos, has spent decades lovingly recording and preserving the town's Jewish past and has discovered well over one hundred stone etchings and other physical traces of that bygone era in Trancoso's old Jewish quarter, some of which are poignant and emotive. On typical Jewish homes, for example, the windows were laid out in a decidedly asymmetrical fashion, at varying heights and lengths, creating a sense of architectural imperfection and inadequacy. Domingos explains that this was done intentionally because the Jews wanted to emphasize that only the Temple which once stood in Jerusalem embodied perfection.

Many of the medieval homes have crosses engraved adjacent to the entrance as an ostensible statement of Christian piety. Fearful of running afoul of the watchful eyes of the inquisition, Trancoso's B'nai Anusim also engaged in this practice, albeit with a twist. Domingos points out that at the bottom of the etching, they added what appear to be three prongs, as if holding up the cross. But to Jewish eyes, it is clear what their real intention was as for the three spokes to clearly form an inverted "*Shin*," the Hebrew letter that is often used to denote one of the Divine names and mark a mezuzah. This was how Trancoso's hidden Jews sought to cling to their heritage, subtly indicating that they had not forgotten, nor abandoned, the faith of their forefathers.

Jose has been urging me to encourage KIVUNIM alumni to come to this region in the summertime and develop a Jewish camp for children of Anusim. It is the only

way they can learn of their roots! The government has provided him with campgrounds and I have begun conversations with the Sarvas leadership...all we will need are some KIVU volunteers...are you up for it??

We'll have dinner here in Trancoso and spend the night in the local, recently opened, Turismo Hotel.



Tuesday March 13, 2018

This morning we head northwest to Oporto, Portugal's second largest city. Oporto sits on the hills on the northern bank of the Douro River. It is considered one of Portugal's chief economic centers. The internationally famed Porto wine (what we call PORT), got its name from the city because it was originally shipped from its ports. In spite of Porto being Portugal's second largest city, it still possesses the charms and quaintness of a traditional small town. The shopping street Santa Catarina, the San Bento train station with its famous Portuguese tiles (azulejos), the Bulhão Market, the Stock Exchange Palace and the St Francis Church and of course the most known avenue of Porto, the Aliados Avenue with the City Hall. The historical centre is considered a World Heritage site by UNESCO. After a short panoramic tour of Porto, we will start walking down the Judiaria (Jewry) of Porto discovering the secret past of the Jewish community of this city that will be completed after a visit to the Synagogue of Porto (with our meeting with one of the leaders of the Jewish Community).

This is the Synagogue that Bartos Basto built in the anticipation of 100's of Anusim returning to Judaism in his lifetime. To have successfully raised the funds to build this building with no evidence of a community of interest to speak of is an indication of the power of this man's personality! Quite amazing.

We'll check-in to our hotel and then make our way to the Ribeira, the Waterfront, the most characteristic neighborhood of Porto where the old houses with their colorful façades still remind us of the poor fishermen and sailors that once lived there. By the way, here at the Taylor's wine cellar (www.taylor.pt) they make a Kosher Port Wine, the only one made in the World! We will also visit the Library Lello and Irmao, considered by many as one of the best bookstores in the world. Some of the "Harry Potter" movie scenes were shot here!

We will have dinner out along the waterfront.

Wednesday March 14

7:00 AM Breakfast and loading the bus
8:00 AM Departure for Coimbra and then Lisbon



10:00 AM Our first stop will be in the city of the students: **Coimbra**. With one of oldest universities in Europe, Coimbra has stood out as a centre of knowledge and Portuguese culture for the past seven centuries. A visit to the old University founded in 1290 (still functioning of course) will give you a general perspective of the teaching system in Portugal as well as an insightful approach to the influence that the Jewish population had in the Portuguese

educational system.

The University of Coimbra founded as Studium Generale in Lisbon in 1290 by King Dinis I and relocated several times to Coimbra, and finally to the premises of the Coimbra Royal Palace in 1537. Since then, the city life has revolved around the state-run university, and for many decades, several colleges (*colégios*) were created to provide an alternative to the official form of teaching and established by the religious orders in the city, which were later gradually discontinued through the times with the secularization of teaching in Portugal.



Built in the 18th century, the Joanina Library (*Biblioteca Joanina*), a Baroque library, is the most notable landmark of the ancient university. The Baroque University Tower (*Torre da Universidade*), from the school of the German architect Ludovice and built between 1728 and 1733, is the city's "ex-libris," a Latin phrase, meaning literally, "from the books" and often used to

indicate ownership of a book, as in "from the books of..." or *from the library of...*

In 1772, the Prime Minister of King Jose I, undertook a deep reform of the University, where the study of the sciences assumed vast importance. The collections of scientific instruments and material acquired since then are nowadays gathered in the Science Museum of the University of Coimbra, and constitute one of the most important historical science collections in Europe.



After our visit to the University, we will head to Lisbon, the capital and largest city in Portugal, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and the mouth of the Tagus river. It is the city of the palaces covered by the azulejos (the characteristic painted tiles) and of the winding alleys crossed by trams. Today we will see the Lisbon colonized by many civilizations along the centuries: Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Moors and finally the Portuguese after 1147. We see St. George Castle, including its surrounding quarter and Alfama,

Lisbon's oldest quarter. Conquered from the Moors in 1147 by Dom Afonso Henriques, the first King of Portugal, the **Castle of Sao Jorge** stands proudly at the top of one of the city's seven hills. With a magnificent view over the city, it was the site chosen as the home of the Portuguese court during the first two centuries of the kingdom's existence.

The **Alfama** quarter grew south-eastwards from the Castle, spreading down the hillside to the river and is the first new section to be built by the Christians at the end of the 12th century. With its many narrow streets, it is reminiscent of the labyrinthine residential quarters built by the Moors. It is well worth walking around this quarter, where large numbers of Jews settled in the 15th century, many of them fleeing from Spain, after their expulsion by Ferdinand and Isabella. In this area, you will still find even today the Rua da Judiaria and close by, at No. 8 Beco das Barrelas, the site which tradition holds to be that of the ancient synagogue.

Close to Alfama is the **Judiaria** (Jewish Quarter) of Lisbon with its narrow streets and small houses where the Jewish population used to live. In the central area of the city we will also find the sad conclusion of Jewish presence in Commerce Square, where thousands of Jews were baptized against their own will in the late 15th century.

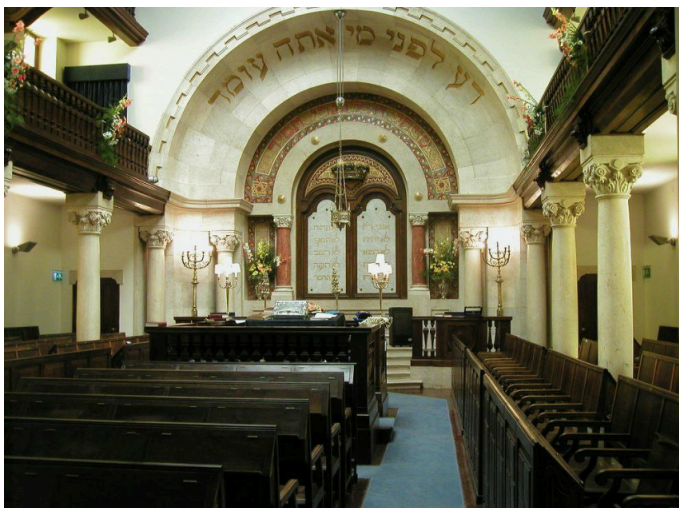
We have arranged a special visit later in the afternoon to the Lisbon Synagogue. At the end of the 20th century, several groups of Jews from Gibraltar formed a community and constructed the Shaare Tikva (Gates of Hope) Synagogue. This building, the work of the Portuguese architect Ventura Terra, is located at No. 59 Rua Alexandre Herculano, in the center of the city. We will hear its history from the Congregation's President.

A short distance away is the **Baixa**, traditionally the financial and commercial center of the city, whose parallel streets run into the vast Praça do Comércio, the former Terreiro do Paço, where Dom Manuel I (who reigned from 1495 to 1521) built the royal palace. In this square, flanked by the river on one of its sides, is a beautiful statue of Dom José I on

horseback. This part of the city was partially destroyed by a damaging earthquake on November 1, 1755. From its ruins was to rise up the area known as the Baixa Pombalina, so called because its reconstruction was carried out under the auspices of the Prime Minister of Dom José I, Marquês de Pombal. By ordering these new streets of sober monumentality to be laid out at right angles to one another in the form of a grid, he changed the face of Lisbon.

When the Jews were expelled from Portugal in 1496, there were two important Jewish quarters in this area: the Judiaria Grande (Large Jewish quarter) close to the present-day church of Sao Nicolau, in the street of the same name, and the Judiaria Pequena (Small Jewish quarter) created during the reign of Dom Dinis (1279-1325), in the place where the Bank of Portugal stands today, in a street parallel to the Praça do Comércio.

To the east, on Rua da Alfandega, is the Igreja da Conceição Velha, a church which some historians consider to have been built on an old synagogue and is itself remarkable for its richly carved Manueline doorway. A little further ahead is the Casa dos Bicos, one of the most interesting architectural curiosities remaining from the time of the Explorers, with its original facade of diamond-shaped stones. There are yet other urban and monumental areas in the city that are linked to the history of the Jews in Portugal: **the Praça Dom Pedro better known as Rossio, where the Court of the Inquisition** was held in the Palácio dos Estaus, at the site where the National Theatre Dona Maria national theatre now stands.



Close to the river, in Belém, the point of departure of the great fleets of ships which made the golden age of exploration possible, is the Tower of Belem, (classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site), built to defend the river, between 1515 and 1521, and is one of the most gracious and elegant examples of the Manueline style of architecture. The Mosteiro dos Jerónimos (also classified as a World Heritage Site) is another masterpiece from the Manueline period. Amongst the rich collection of statues carved

into the southern portal is one depicting Moses.

Several museums of great interest also add to the attractions of this area: the Museu dos Coches (Coach Museum) has a unique collection of 16th to 20th century coaches and horse-drawn carriages with an emphasis on those from the Baroque period; the Naval Museum (Museu de Marinha) with a number of exhibits that are connected with the Portuguese Explorations, some of which owe their existence to the work of Jewish scientists (such as the astrolabes that were perfected at that time by a Jew); the Archaeological museum (Museu Nacional de Arqueologia); and also the Belém Cultural

Centre, an example of modern architecture, with its remarkable program of exhibitions and concerts. **Of course we will not have time for everything mentioned above...this visit to Portugal, as all of KIVUNIM's trips this year is meant to light a fire within you to travel and increasingly take in the greatness that the world holds out to us. Don't get frustrated, this is only the beginning.**

Finally please note that Lisbon is the city of the Fado, (*Portuguese* for destiny or fate) a musical genre that can be traced to the 1820s in Portugal, but probably has much earlier origins. In popular belief, Fado is a form of music characterized by mournful tunes and lyrics, often about the sea or the life of the poor. However, in reality Fado is simply a form of song which can be about anything, but must follow a certain structure. The music is usually linked to the Portuguese word *saudade* which symbolizes the feeling of loss (a permanent, irreparable loss and its consequent life-long hurt). Fado is dramatic, a fabulous art form and conveys a deep sense of the culture and brooding spirit that is found here in Portugal. [Try this link to get a flavor!](#)



You will time for dinner out and then we head for Lisbon's Oriente Station for our 9:34 PM departure for Madrid's Chamartin Station where we will arrive at 8:40 AM and transfer directly to the airport.

Thursday, March 15 : Arrival in Madrid; transfer to Barajas International Airport Terminal 4S for Iberia Airlines flight # 3340 departing at 12:50 PM and

arrived at Marrakech, Morocco's Menara Airport at 1:50 PM.

