



## King Manuel I and the expulsion of the Castilian *Conversos* and Muslims from Portugal in 1497: new perspectives

*François Soyer*

University of Southampton

On 5 December 1496, King Manuel I of Portugal (1495-1521) ordered all the Jews and Muslims residing in his realm to leave before the end of the following October. Despite the decree of expulsion, the Portuguese Jews, as is now well known, were practically all forced to convert to Christianity. The historical significance of this event cannot be underestimated. At one stroke, Portugal became the *first* Christian kingdom since the Visigothic period (AD 507-711) to forcibly convert its Jewish population *en masse* and, at the same time, also became the *first* Christian kingdom to ever expel its Muslim population *en bloc*.<sup>1</sup>

The persecution of the Portuguese Jews in 1497 remains a fascinating if somewhat grim episode in Portugal's history.<sup>2</sup> Its repercussions extended far beyond the Iberian Peninsula. A list of persecutions of German Jews, drawn up by an anonymous Ashkenazi Jew in the first half of the sixteenth century, contains the following reference to the Portuguese persecution:

At the beginning of the year 5258 [1497] rumours came of a decree of forced conversion in the lands of Portugal. All, young and old, were forced to convert from Judaism, and to mingle [among the non-Jews]. May God, blessed be He, keep us from harm, Amen.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the treatment of Jews in the Iberian Peninsula during the Visigothic period see SAITTA BIAGIO, *L'antisemitismo nella Spagna visigotica* (Rome, 1995) and R. GONZÁLEZ-SALINERO, *Las conversiones forzadas de los judíos en el reino visigodo* (Rome, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> For an extensive study of the events of 1496-7 see F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal. King Manuel I and the End of Religious Tolerance, 1496-7* (Leiden, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> A translation of the anonymous list of persecutions is available as an appendix in



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The infamous “*conversão geral*” that befell Portuguese Jews in 1497 is perhaps the most evocative illustration of the vulnerability and ambiguous position of Jews living in Christian societies during the medieval and early modern periods. Entirely dependent upon the King for protection – literally ‘his Jews’ – their property and persons were considered by Manuel to be his to dispose of as he wished.

In comparison with the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the Portuguese persecutions of 1496-7 have generated very little academic debate. In his seminal study entitled *História da origem e estabelecimento da inquisição em Portugal*, Alexandre Herculano, for instance, briefly examined these events. It was clear for Herculano that King Manuel, paying no heed to the misgivings of many of his councillors, had yielded to imperious Spanish demands to expel the Jews and Muslims because of his own selfish desire to further his ambition to unite the Iberian Peninsula as a result of his marriage to the Spanish *Infanta* Doña Isabel:

*A princesa D. Isabel era filha mais velha dos Reis Católicos e sua herdeira presuntiva, no caso de faltar o príncipe D. João, único fiador da sucessão masculina ao trono de Castela. Casando com ela, o rei de Portugal via em perspectiva, ao menos como possível, a reunião das duas coroas da Península numa só cabeça.*<sup>4</sup>

This straightforward view of the events of 1496-7, in which King Manuel ended religious tolerance in Portugal in order to secure his marriage to the eldest daughter of Queen Isabel of Castile (1474-1504) and King Fernando of Aragón (1479-1516) – who adopted the title, granted to them by the Pope, of *Reyes Católicos* from 1496 onwards – has become the uncontested master narrative concerning the end of religious tolerance in Portugal. It has

*A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague, c. 1615*, ed. A. David and tr. L. J. Weinberger and D. Ordan (Tuscaloosa, 1993), 79-85 [text quoted from page 83].

<sup>4</sup> A. HERCULANO, *História da origem e estabelecimento da inquisição em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1975), Vol. 1, 114.

been accepted by historians without challenge from the nineteenth century to this very day. In spite of this apparent consensus, a new examination of this subject is essential.

This paper will not focus on the forced conversion of the Portuguese Jews but rather on the fate of the Muslim minority and Castilian *conversos* who also resided in Portugal in 1496. That fateful year actually witnessed *three* expulsions in Portugal: almost a month prior to the expulsion edict against the Jews and Muslim in December 1496, an expulsion edict was indeed directed against the Castilian *conversos* in November of that same year. There are many subjects that I would like to discuss here in this paper but, due to the restrictions imposed by time, I have decided to talk about two different aspects of the events of 1496-7 that I believe have been more or less completely ignored by historians and which urgently need to be considered:

- Firstly, I will examine the problem of the Castilian *conversos* who arrived in Portugal during the reign of Manuel's predecessor João II (1481-1495), fleeing from the Inquisition in Spain. I will argue that much of the historiography concerning the role of the *Infanta* Isabel in the persecutions of 1496-7 has in fact been misunderstood due to a striking confusion between the Castilian *conversos* and Jews.
- Secondly, I shall posit that the expulsion of the Muslim minority, which has been completely overlooked by the traditional historiography in Portugal, must be analysed separately. All the available evidence points to the fact that the Muslims minority was expelled for reasons that were very different from those that led King Manuel to decree the "expulsion" of the Jews.

### **Manuel I and the Castilian *conversos*:**

Castilian *conversos*, the descendants of Jewish converts to Christianity, first started to arrive in Portugal in significant numbers fol-

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lowing the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition during the 1480s. The acute social tensions that resulted from their arrival in Portugal – particularly in Porto and Lisbon – prompted João II to issue two decrees in 1488 and 1493 that forbade their immigration into the kingdom and which expelled those already there.<sup>5</sup> According to the Portuguese chronicler Rui de Pina, the King created a special Inquisition that initiated a severe crackdown on the suspected judaizers, although we know next to nothing about this short-lived Inquisition.<sup>6</sup> A German traveller visiting Lisbon, Jerome Münzer, records in his diary that the *conversos* had been ordered to leave Portugal by December 1494 and that, at the time he was visiting Lisbon, he witnessed some of them boarding a ship in order to go to the Kingdom of Naples.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the silence of the Portuguese narrative and documentary sources, an undated Castilian document makes it clear that large numbers of Castilian *conversos* still remained in Portugal after the accession of Manuel I in October 1495. This fascinating document takes the form of a proposal – or *memorial* – sent by a certain “chaplain Pineda” to Isabel and Fernando:

Because of the Inquisition, some persons have fled these kingdoms [of Castile and Aragón] and settled in Portugal. These persons have received support for their cause in Rome and claim to have received absolution from the Holy Father. They desire to return to these realms and claim that they would do so if Your Highnesses [Isabel and Fernando] were to be disposed

<sup>5</sup> See the articles of H. B. MORENO, “Movimentos Sociais Antijudios em Portugal no século XV” and “Reflexos na cidade do Porto da entrada dos conversos em Portugal nos fins do século XV”, *Marginalidade e Conflictos Sociais em Portugal nos séculos XIV e XV* (Lisbon, 1985), 79-88 and 133-160.

<sup>6</sup> F. SOYER, “Was there an Inquisition in Portugal before 1536?”, *LACOBVS. Revista de Estudios Jacobeos y Medievales*, 177-202.

<sup>7</sup> “*Rex autem Portugalie, morem gerens Regi Hispanie, precepit, ut ante festum nativitatis Domini omnes Marrani regnum exeant. Qui conduxerunt navem Regine, pulcherrimam navem, et iam per medium decembris Neapolim ibunt.*” H. Münzer, ‘Itinerarium Hispanicum’, ed. L. Pfandl, *Revue Hispanique*, 48 (1920), 83.

to allow them to return in spite of the sentences [of heresy pronounced against them by the Inquisition], so that the reverent inquisitors would receive them and give them reasonable penances. If Your Highnesses were to grant them a safe-conduct to return to these realms and reside in them, then in return they would give Your Highnesses 7,000 ducats. Furthermore, those who return shall be the 150 [*converso*] households that have remained in Portugal because those who did not have a papal absolution were expelled from [Portugal] by order of the King of Portugal, who is now deceased.<sup>8</sup>

The Spanish historians António de la Torre and Luis Suárez Fernández believed the date of this document to be April 1487. This date, however, seems to be quite incorrect. To start with, the reference to the King of Portugal “who is now deceased” would appear to put the date firmly as either 1496 or 1497. Indeed, the reference can only be to the recent death of King João II on 25 October 1495 and it cannot possibly refer to the demise of Afonso V (1438-1481). King Afonso V had died on 28 August 1481, when the Castilian Inquisition had begun to operate in Andalucía for only a few months and before the flight of *conversos* to Portugal had become an issue. Even more conclusive is the closing reference to the fact that all *conversos* without a papal absolution had been expelled “by order of the King of Portugal”: a clear reference to the previous expulsion edicts of João II in 1488 and 1493. Nevertheless, this document seemingly confirms beyond any doubt that there

<sup>8</sup> “Por razón de la inquisición salieron algunas personas destes reynos al reyno de Portugal, los quales segnyeron en Roma sus cabsas e dizen que ovieron absolución del Sancto Padre. Desean venir a estos reynos a su naturaleza, y dizen que, sy Sus Altezas son dello servydos, movydos a misericordia, e aunque tengan las dichas sentençias, los quieran admitir, para que los padres de la inquisición los reciban e les den penitençias saludables; e con esto, dandoles Sus Altezas seguro para que libremente puedan venir e entrar e tratar e estar de bybyenda en estos sus reynos, que ellos serbyran a Sus Altezas con syete mill ducados e çiento e çinquenta casas, que han quedado en Portugal porque tenian esta dicha absolución del Santo Padre, que los que non la tenian todos fueron echados del dicho reyno por mandado del rey de Portugal, que agora murio.” A. DE LA TORRE and L. SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reino de los Reyes Catholicos* (Valladolid, 1963), 333-4, doc. 378.

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remained a sizeable group of Castilian *conversos* still residing in Portugal in 1496, indeed at least 150 households (*casas*).

The measures implemented by João II had presumably successfully managed to expel a large number, possibly even most, of the Castilian *conversos* but the King had allowed this substantial minority to remain because of a papal absolution they had received from Rome. Additionally, the effectiveness of the measures taken by João II to prevent the arrival of further fugitive *conversos* into Portugal is open to question. A document preserved in Seville, for example, informs us that on 13 November 1493 a *conversa* named Juana Diaz, who had fled from the tribunal of the Holy Office in Seville to seek refuge in the town of Faro in the Algarve, took steps to have her daughter Isabel brought from Andalucía to the safety of Portugal. It is interesting to note that Juana Diaz undertook to bring her daughter to Faro in spite of the royal edict promulgated by João II in July of that very same year, which expressly forbade the entry of more *conversos* into Portugal.<sup>9</sup>

Practically nothing is known about these exiled Castilian *conversos* during the first years of Manuel's reign. The royal biographer Damião de Góis, like all other Portuguese narrative sources, does not mention Castilian *conversos* at all. A rare indirect mention of Castilian *conversos* in Portugal does appear in a pardon granted by Manuel I to a certain Simão Álvares of Monforte in May 1496. This man had escaped from the prison, where he had been imprisoned for the particularly grave crime of forging the King's signature on a document. The document states that Simão Álvares received his royal pardon in recognition of the unspecified assistance which he had provided in the apprehension, in Évora, of Jacob, his wife Jamila and their daughter Cimfa by the Crown's officials Fernão Lopes de Carvalho and Rui Dias – respectively *juiz* and *alcaide pequeno* of Évora – in February 1496. According to the pardon, these

<sup>9</sup> J. Gil, *Los conversos y la Inquisición Sevillana* (Seville, 2000), Vol. 1, 105.



Jews had become Christians in Castile “but became Jews once more [in Portugal]”.<sup>10</sup> Taking this document into account, it would appear sensible to contend that, even though the presence of those *conversos* holding a papal absolution continued to be officially tolerated by the Portuguese Crown, the illegal arrival of other *conversos* was not.

This situation was nonetheless not destined to last. The minutes of the municipal council (*actas da vereação*) of the town of Loulé in the Algarve record that Manuel decided to proceed against the Castilian *conversos* as early as November 1496. According to the transcript of these very interesting minutes, a royal edict was issued on 14 November by which Manuel I ordered all the Castilian *conversos* residing in Portugal to leave before the end of August 1497. Those *conversos* found to be still residing in Portugal after August would have all their property confiscated and would be punished as the King saw fit. This document is of paramount importance. To date, no other version of this particular expulsion edict against the Castilian *conversos* has been discovered and the narrative sources (whether Portuguese or Spanish) entirely fail to mention it. Historians both inside and outside of Portugal have been oblivious of its existence decree and have consequently totally ignored this expulsion and its important ramifications.<sup>11</sup>

There can indeed be little doubt that the expulsion of the Castilian *conversos* from Portugal was the result of Spanish pressure. Portugal remained outside the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisi-

<sup>10</sup> “...que em Castela sendo judeus se tornaram cristãos e neste reino se tornaram judeus outra vez.” *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo* (A.N.T.T.), *Chancelaria de Manuel I*, bk. 43, fol. 77.

<sup>11</sup> The expulsion edict against the Castilian *conversos* was issued in the town of Santarém on 14 November 1496 and was apparently received in Loulé on 12 January 1497. “...fazemos saber que considerando nos como nestes regnos a estada dos conversos que sentenciados sam pellos comisarios do Santo Padre nom he serviço de Nosso Senbor e isso mesmo nom he bem de nossos regnos e asy per outros justas caussas que nos mouem mandamos que ata fim do mes d’Agosto do ano que vem de mill IIIIc LRVII se saiam todos os dictos sentenciados de nossos regnos e senborios (...)”. L. MIGUEL DUARTE, ‘Actas de Vereação de Loulé, Século XV’, *Revista al-ulya* n° 10 (Loulé, 2004), 227-9.





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tion and hence continued to represent a safe haven for *converso* fugitives even though, as we have seen above, the scarce documentary evidence indicates that the Portuguese authorities did arrest some *conversos* who illegally moved to the kingdom. Clearly, Isabel and Fernando could not continue to tolerate this situation.

The presence of the Castilian *conversos* in Portugal emerged once more when discussions between Manuel and the Catholic Monarchs over his marriage to the *Infanta* Isabel began in earnest in 1496. No evidence exists concerning the precise nature of the instructions that the Portuguese King gave his representative but a marriage contract was finally drawn up on 30 November 1496 at Burgos in Castile. We are fortunate in that two identical versions of the original marriage contract have been preserved in the vaults of the *Torre do Tombo* in Lisbon and the *Archivo General* in Simancas.<sup>12</sup> Contrary to the claims made by a number of historians, none of the twelve clauses of the marriage contract actually mention the expulsion of either the Jews or the “heretics” (i.e. *conversos*) as a precondition of the marriage.<sup>13</sup> It seems that Fernando and Isabel, as they were later to claim – and as we will see further below – received a separate promise from Manuel to expel the *conversos* and Jews. This promise was either an oral one made by his plenipotentiaries at Burgos or was made in a separate document that has either not yet been found by historians or which has perhaps not withstood the test of time. The surviving narrative evidence provides little helpful information. The Spanish chroniclers Bernáldez and Santa Cruz, for instance, do not connect the marriage negotiations and the deci-

<sup>12</sup> For the document conserved in Lisbon see A.N.T.T., *Gaveta* 17, *maço* 5, doc. 15. For the document preserved in Spain see A. DE LA TORRE and L. SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reino de los Reyes Católicos*, 3, 1–8, doc. 467.

<sup>13</sup> For the frequently repeated erroneous statement that the marriage contract of 30 November 1496 contained a clause promising the expulsion of all Jews from Portugal see, for instance, A. LOSA, “Le statut légal des maures et des juifs portugais pendant les XIIe–XVe siècles”, *Medievalia. Textos e Estudos*, 5-6 (1994), 307; F. PORTUGAL, ‘O problema judaico no reinado de D. Manuel’, offprint of *Armas e Troféus*, 3, (1975), 7.





sion to expel the Jews from Portugal, which they barely mention at all.<sup>14</sup> The information provided by the Portuguese chroniclers Damião de Góis and Jerónimo Osório is also extremely disappointing. Damião de Góis, who was also the keeper of the Royal Archives in Lisbon between 1548 and 1571, states that Fernando and Isabel sent “missives” (*cartas*) to Manuel in which they requested that the King of Portugal expel the Jews. Damião de Góis does not, however, provide any indication of *when* the Portuguese monarch received these letters. In Damião de Góis’s chronicle, the decision to expel the Jews is discussed in chapter 18 whilst the marriage negotiations are treated separately (and subsequently) in chapter 19 and no explicit connection is made between these two events.<sup>15</sup>

Mutual mistrust between the Castilian and Portuguese courts was such, however, that the expulsion edict of 14 November 1496 did not mark the end of the “*converso* problem”. The issue of the presence of Spanish *conversos* in Portugal was one of major significance for the rulers of Castile and Aragón. The Aragonese chronicler Zurita alleges that Isabel and Fernando simply did not believe that Manuel actually intended to honour his promises and implement the expulsion of the *conversos*. They suspected some dissemblance on his part:

It was feared and believed that the King of Portugal did not wish to expel those people from his realm because, instead of expelling them, he kept extending the period of time they were allowed to remain [in Portugal], so that they might remain in Portugal and [they feared that Manuel] was attempting to secure bulls from the Holy See [of Rome] in his favour.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> ANDRÉS BERNÁLDEZ, *Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, ed. M. GÓMEZ-MORENO and JUAN DE M. CARRIAZO (Madrid, 1962), chapter 206, 503; ALONSO DE SANTA CRUZ, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, ed. J. de Mata Carriazo (Seville, 1951), Vol. 2, chapter 18, 85.

<sup>15</sup> “*Depois que hos Reis de Castella lançaram os Iudeus fora de seus Regnos, e senhorios, quomo atras fíco dito, elrei dom Emanuel requerido per cartas dos mesmos Reis determinou fazer o mesmo...*”, DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), Vol. 1, chapter 18, 38; JERÓNIMO OSÓRIO, *De Rebus Emmanuelis Regis* (Lisbon, 1571), 18.

<sup>16</sup> “*Tambien se sospechava, y aun creya, q̃ el Rey de Portugal no auia gana de echar aquella gēte de su Reyno: porque en lugar de lançarlos, les alargaua el plazo, que les auia dado, para que se estuuiessen en*





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A new diplomatic crisis concerning the presence of Castilian *conversos* in Portugal erupted during the spring of 1497. The documentary sources are largely silent but a careful examination of the subsequent events and the surviving chronicles can shed light on what transpired. At some unknown date in early 1497, the *Infanta* Isabel wrote a personal letter to her future husband informing him of her vehement refusal to enter Portugal, and thus to marry him, until he would fulfil his promise to expel all the “heretics” (*hereges*) from his kingdom. All arrangements for the wedding were suspended. The *Infanta’s* intransigent position aroused Manuel’s fury and he wrote to his future father and mother-in-law to inform them of his displeasure.<sup>17</sup>

Did the Catholic Monarchs deliberately manipulate their daughter? Isabel and Fernando might well have intentionally goaded their daughter to send her letter and the Portuguese monarch certainly feared that his putative in-laws were exploiting the issue of the *conversos* as a bargaining lever with which to extort further concessions from him. Damião de Góis conveys Portuguese suspicions concerning Princess Isabel’s demands which surprising candour:

The *Infanta*, induced it was suspected by her parents, wrote a letter to the King informing him that she would delay her coming to Portugal until all the Jews (sic) had been expelled.<sup>18</sup>

Zurita also communicates the same Portuguese fears:

The King of Portugal started to have certain suspicions concerning the reasons put forward to explain why the Princess delayed her departure [for Portugal]. He feared that her parents the King and Queen harboured other

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*Portugal, y procura de ayer bulas de la Sede Apostolica en su favor...”, J. ZURITA, Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Catolico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 125.*

<sup>17</sup> DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), chapter 25, 50.

<sup>18</sup> “...no qual meo tempo induzida ha Rainha Princesa, quomo se teue per suspeita, pellos Reis seus pais, screueo hũa carta a elRei pedindolhe que dilatasse sua vida atte ter de todo lançado de seus Regnos hos judeus...” DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), chapter 25, 50.



designs. Although they assured him that the Princess would be sent [to Portugal] when he had expelled the heretics from his realms, he did not carry out [the expulsion], for he was very worried that later on they would make further delays, and new demands.<sup>19</sup>

Nonetheless, the Aragonese chronicler claims that these fears were groundless and presents less sinister explanation for the *Infanta's* reluctance to enter Portugal:

She attributed the disaster that was the death of her first husband [Prince] Afonso to the fact that in Portugal [João II] had shown such favour to the heretics and apostates who had fled from Castile. This caused her to have many scruples and she was so frightened of offending God that she claimed she would rather die [than go to Portugal].<sup>20</sup>

The *Infanta* Isabel had indeed been married to prince Afonso, son and heir of João II, until his accidental death in 1491.

Whether or not the Princess was the tool of her parents' diplomacy, as the Portuguese suspected, or whether her disinclination to remarry was in fact caused by her own religious scruples is a question for which we will probably never hold a satisfactory answer. What more might Isabel and Fernando have wanted from Manuel and the Portuguese? Neither Zurita nor Damião de Góis are particularly specific about the Portuguese suspicions but there can be no

<sup>19</sup> “*Como el Rey de Portugal entendiò, que se ponía tanta dilacion por parte de la Princesa, en efectuar su matrimonio, concibió algunas sospechas, no le pareciendo, que la razon que la Princesa daua, fuese la que le mouia a sobreseer en su ida: y temia que los Reyes sus padres tuuiessen otros fines: y aunque se asseguraua por su parte, que desterrando los Hereges de sus Reynos, a la hora embiaran a su muger a Portugal, no se determinaua en cumplirlo: y recelaua, que despues no huuiesse otros achaques, y nueuas demandas.*” J. ZURITA, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Catholico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 124v.

<sup>20</sup> “... y el desastre acaecido en la persona del Principe don Alõso su primer esposo, lo attribuya, al ayer se tanto favorecido en aquel reynos los hereges, y apostatas, que se auia huydo de Castilla: y formaua grã escrípulo dello: y crecia le tanto el temor de ofender a Dios en esto, que afirmaua, que antes recibiria la muerte.” J. Zurita, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Catholico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 124v.



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doubt that what Manuel was most fearful of was a Spanish attempt to put pressure on him to join the Holy League against France. It is difficult to establish exactly when Manuel was first approached by representatives of Isabel and Fernando with an invitation to join the Holy League as our two main sources provide contradictory statements. The Portuguese Damião de Góis states that Manuel was invited to join the Holy League whilst he was staying in Estremoz, in early 1497.<sup>21</sup> In contrast to this, the Spaniard Zurita places the request firmly in 1496 and as having been made at the same time as the marriage negotiations were taking place.<sup>22</sup> On balance, it appears far more plausible that the invitation was made in 1497 rather than in 1496. If Isabel and Fernando had thought that the Portuguese monarch was in no position to refuse to join the Holy League, they were to be sorely disappointed as Manuel stood his ground firmly:

(...) concerning these alliances, the King politely declined [to join], promising, however, that if the King of France invaded the kingdom of Castile he would come to its aid despite the peace and friendship he had with the monarch of France.<sup>23</sup>

The discontent that Manuel's refusal provoked at the Spanish court is reflected by Zurita, who indignantly records that the Portuguese King had preferred to uphold his "friendship" with the French King "even though he had entered into the possession of that realm [of Portugal] by the favour, and with the help, of the King [of Aragón] and the Queen [of Castile]."<sup>24</sup> Manuel's refusal to

<sup>21</sup> DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), chapter 19, 40.

<sup>22</sup> J. ZURITA, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Cathólico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 88v.

<sup>23</sup> "... das quaes alianças se elrei excusou, prometendo com tudo q̃ se elrei da França lhes viesse fazer guerra dẽtro dos regnos de Castella, que em tal caso ho ajudaria, sem embargo da paz, & amizade que entam com ho dicto rei de França tinha..." Damião de Góis, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), Vol. 1, chapter 19, 40.

<sup>24</sup> "... aunque avia entrado en la posesión de aquel Reyno con el favour, y amparo del Rey, y de la



intervene in wars between different European powers was to become a feature policy of his reign. Throughout his reign, Manuel observed a position of strict neutrality in European affairs. Manuel knew only too well that he had nothing to gain – and much to lose – by actively participating in European wars. A war with France would only have diverted precious material and financial resources away from his projects to expand Portuguese rule in North Africa and open a sea route to India. The King of Portugal had no territorial claims to defend against France either in Italy or indeed any other part of Europe beyond the Pyrenees. Furthermore, apart from occasional acts of piracy committed by French ships, relations between the Crowns of France and Portugal were generally amicable.<sup>25</sup>

The outraged reply that Manuel sent to the Spanish court, immediately after receiving the princess' demands, is unfortunately no longer extant. We are nonetheless able to gain an insight into its content from a surviving letter that Isabel and Fernando wrote to their ambassador in Portugal, Álvaro de Silva, on 21 June 1497, in which they gave him clear instructions relating to what he was to say on their behalf to the Portuguese King to appease his anger:

As [King Manuel] already knows, at the time when the marriage negotiations were taking place [in Burgos], the Princess imposed the precondition that he was to expel all the heretics from his realms and lordships before she entered them. [The Princess] asked us [to make this condition] when the engagement was agreed and did not even want to agree to [the engagement] until [the heretics] had left [Portugal]. Nonetheless, we all told her then that she did not need to worry as the heretics would be expelled before her entry into Portugal. Two or three days after this, when [King Manuel] himself could not yet have known of the engagement, or the precondition set by the

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*Reyna.*" J. ZURITA, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Catolico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 88v.

<sup>25</sup> The Portuguese policy of adopting strict neutrality in European wars that Manuel I resolutely clung to was later also adopted by his son João III. DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), Vol. 3, chapter 23, 100; I. MENDES DRUMOND BRAGA, *Um espaço, duas monarquias* (Lisbon, 2001), 143-173.



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Princess, there came the news that he had ordered the heretics to leave his realms. [This took place] in such a way that it seemed to be a miracle from God.<sup>26</sup>

The importance of this letter cannot be overestimated. It has generally been assumed in various articles and books that the “heretics” (*hereges*) to which the *Infanta* Isabel was referring were in fact the Jews (*judeus/judíos*) whom Manuel ordered to leave to Portugal on 5 December 1496, and that she might even have included the Muslim minority in Portugal as well under that designation.<sup>27</sup>

Such an assertion is nevertheless quite incorrect. The letter that Queen Isabel of Castile sent to Alvaro de Silva goes a long way towards identifying who the “heretics” were and makes it apparent that she cannot be referring to either Jews or Muslims. In the letter, Isabel and Fernando clearly state that news of the expulsion of the “heretics” reached them at Burgos, where they were then staying,

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<sup>26</sup> “Y que ya sabe que, al tiempo que se tratava este casamiento, la princessa pidió por condiçion que el rey huviesse de echar todos los hereges de sus reynos y señorios antes que ella entrasse en ellos, y esto mismo pidió al tiempo que se fizo el desposorio; y no lo queria hazer basta que fuessen salidos, sino que todos deximos que no lo detoniessse por aquello, que, antes que ella fuesse a Portugal, serian echados los dichos hereges; y con esta condiçion fizo ella el desposorio. Y acabecio que dos o tres dias despues de hesso, a tiempo que no podia el abun saber el desposorio ni la condiçion que en el se havia pedido, vino nueua como el havia mandado que saliesen de sus reynos todos los dichos hereges; de manera que a todos nos parecio cosa que venia de Dios.” A. DE LA TORRE and L. SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reino de los Reyes Catholicos* (Valladolid, 1963), Vol. 3, 12-5, doc. 470.

<sup>27</sup> Professor Maria José Ferro Tavares, for instance, makes this claim in the following work: M. J. P. FERRO TAVARES, “A expulsão dos judeus de Portugal: conjuntura peninsular”, *Oceanos*, 29 (1997), 13: “Podemos concluir pela correspondência citada que os judeus e mouros foram integrados nas mesmas exigências de expulsão dos conversos castelhanos, fugidos à Inquisição espanhola ou que o termo hereges englobava este e todo os infiéis.” Her opinion is also expressed in her English article “Expulsion or integration? The Portuguese Jewish Problem”, *Crisis and Creativity in the Sephardic World 1391-1648*, ed. B. R. Gampel (New York, 1997), 99: “Who were these heretics? At first glance we might conclude that they were Castilian conversos who had found refuge in Portugal. However, the majority of these had already left for Naples, and those who remained in the kingdom were considered good Christians. The princess’s refusal to cross the border into Portugal before the last Jews had left the country clearly indicated that they were included in the designation of heretics.”



only “two or three days” after the conclusion of the marriage contract on 30 November 1496. They thus received the news of the expulsion edict on circa 2 or 3 December 1496. It is thus impossible that they would be referring to the news of the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Portugal, which was only made public on 5 December. There can be little doubt that Isabel and Fernando were referring in their letter to the order of expulsion directed against the Castilian *conversos* in Portugal, whose existence is recorded in the transcript of the official minutes of the town council of Silves (which have already been discussed further above). This expulsion edict directed against the Castilian *conversos* had been issued by Manuel I two weeks earlier at Santarém on 14 November 1496 and it is entirely plausible that, given the distances involved and the harsh weather of the winter season, news of the anti-*converso* expulsion edict only reached Burgos on 2 or 3 December.

The confusion relating to the exact identity of the “heretics” is not simply the fault of modern historians but in reality dates back to the very first *Portuguese* accounts of these events. In this respect, there is indeed a major divergence between Spanish and Portuguese sources. The Aragonese chronicler Zurita consistently refers to “heretics” in his work but, in the sixteenth century, the Portuguese authors Damião de Góis and the Bishop of Portalegre Amador Arrais, for instance, both wrote that the *Infanta* had called for the expulsion of the “Jews” (*judeus*).<sup>28</sup> In this period, the Castilians and Aragonese consistently employed the term “heretic” to describe *conversos* and never applied it to the Jews. It was an extremely common popular insult in Castile and Aragón to describe a *converso* as a Jew but the reverse never took place. No one in either Castile or Aragón would ever have referred to a Jew as a *converso*! It is indeed clear that

<sup>28</sup> “La princesa lo differia pidiendo que auia el Rey don Manuel de echar primero de su reyno, todos los que se auian recogido a el, por miedo de la inquisition: cõtra quien se auia procedido en ausencia, y estanã condenados, como conuencidos de hereges.” J. ZURITA, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando el Catholico. De las Empresas, y Ligas de Italia* (Zaragoza, 1610), fol. 124v.

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Damião de Góis and Amador Arrais both made a glaring confusion between the Jews and the Castilian *conversos*. The Portuguese authors might have been reflecting the tendency, widespread amongst the Portuguese population in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to negatively characterise all the descendants of converts from Judaism, or “New Christians”, as “Jews”. The impact of this muddle on our perception of the events of 1496-7 has extended to modern scholarship ever since.<sup>29</sup>

The intervention of Princess Isabel over the expulsion of the *conversos* led to renewed negotiations in 1497 relating to the terms of the marriage contract. These discussions apparently continued throughout the month of July and into early August. Now, however, pressure began to mount on the Spanish court for a speedy conclusion of the marriage. On 29 July, the Spanish ambassador Alfonso da Silva urgently wrote to his masters, warning them that certain councillors of the Portuguese King, distrustful of Castilian aims, were sowing seeds of doubt in his mind and advising him against the marriage.<sup>30</sup> A new agreement was finally drawn up on 11 August 1497 with João Manuel, the High Chamberlain of Portugal, signing the document in his capacity as King Manuel’s plenipotentiary. Manuel pledged to expel all the Castilian *conversos* residing within Portugal by the end of September 1497. In a separate document, included within the new marriage contract, the *Infanta* herself left no doubt concerning who the “heretics” were. She swore to stand by the terms of the new agreement so long as Manuel effec-

<sup>29</sup> DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), chapter 25, 50 (quoted above); FREI AMADOR ARRAIS, *Diálogos*, ed. M. Lopes de Almeida (Porto, 1974), 112-3.

<sup>30</sup> “*Los que stan en gana de turbar este negocio o de derramalle dizzen al rey para ponelle miedo que como debe tirar seguro si vuestras altezas no se quieren contentar de querer las vistas otro dia despues de haverse el velado, y a el asientasele aquello porque con sus rezelos parecele que se cumple con todas partes en fazerse assi.*” L. SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Política Internacional de Isabel la católica. Estudio y Documentos* (Valladolid, 1972), Vol. 5, 198-9, doc. 34.



tively expelled “all those condemned [for heresy] over here [in Castile], who are presently in his realms and lordships.”<sup>31</sup>

### Manuel I and the expulsion of the Muslim minority

Having examined the fate of the Castilian *conversos*, I would now like to turn to that other forgotten minority in medieval Portugal: the Muslims.<sup>32</sup> The expulsion of the Muslim minority from Portugal has always been overshadowed by the brutal forced conversion of the Jews. Contemporary Portuguese chroniclers barely refer to it and Jewish sources never mention the fact that the expulsion edict also affected Muslims. Modern studies rarely, if ever, mention it. This striking silence is to a large extent probably due to the total absence of any Muslim sources that might shed light on this event and offer us a Muslim perspective. The lack of information relating to the expulsion of the Portuguese Muslims is all the more remarkable as the event itself is so surprising. Manuel’s decision to expel his Muslim subjects is difficult to understand and was a totally unprecedented act. Throughout the Iberian Peninsula, the presence of Muslim communities continued to be tolerated by the Christian authorities until 1502 in Castile, 1516 in Navarre and 1525-6 in the territories of the Crown of Aragón.

One of the first and most important questions concerning the expulsion of the Muslims might seem an incongruous one but is certainly crucial: did it actually take place? In 1904, António de

<sup>31</sup> “...*todos los que fueron condenados aqua por hereges que stan en los dichos sus reynos e señorios...*”. A.N.T.T., *Gaveta 17, maço 1*, doc. 9; *Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, ed. A. DA SILVA REGO, *Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos* (Lisbon, 1967), Vol. 6, 486-8, doc. 4080; A. DE LA TORRE and L. SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Documentos referentes a las relaciones con Portugal durante el reino de los Reyes Catholicos* (Valladolid, 1963), Vol. 3, 15-8, doc. 471 [The authors wrongly give date in the document’s title as 11 July 1497].

<sup>32</sup> On the Muslim minority in medieval Portugal see the seminal and masterful study by MARIA FILOMENA LOPES DE BARROS, *Tempos e espaços de mouros: a minoria muçulmana no reino português, séculos XII a XV* (Lisbon, 2007).





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Sousa Silva Costa Lobo, the only historian to have actually examined the expulsion of the Muslims in any detail, argued that the expulsion did not in fact occur. According to Costa Lobo, Manuel simply abolished organised Islamic worship in Portugal and merely satisfied himself with the confiscation of the communal property of the Muslim communities (mosques, prisons and cemeteries), finally allowing Muslims to remain in his kingdom. Costa Lobo believed that the expulsion edict was used as an excuse to extort money from the Muslim minority. His stark conclusion was the following one:

*Nenbuma redução attendível foi causada na população islamita pela ordenação que se gloriava de expurgar o país de todos os infiéis. (...) Essa ordenação, em relação aos mouros, não fez nada mais que extinguir o culto do Koran.*<sup>33</sup>

In spite of these assertions, there is in fact considerable documentary evidence to prove that the Muslim minority did leave Portugal in the late winter and spring of 1497.<sup>34</sup>

Of the many enigmas surrounding the expulsion of the Portuguese Muslims, the most persistent and difficult ones to answer remain the ones asked in a short article on the subject that was authored by the British historian L. P. Harvey and published in 1995: Why the Muslims? Why Portugal? Why 1497?<sup>35</sup>

Manuel did not reveal the reasoning behind his decision in any surviving document and contemporary source do not provides any solution to these seemingly simple questions. The prevalent expla-

<sup>33</sup> A. DE SOUSA SILVA COSTA LOBO, *História da sociedade em Portugal no século XV* (Lisbon, 1904), 42-6 (quote page 46).

<sup>34</sup> For further information concerning the departure of Muslims from Portugal in 1497 see F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal*, 243-253 and 260-8 and "El Rey Manuel Y la Expulsión de los Moros de Portugal (1496-7)", *Iacobus: Revista de Estudios Jacobeos y Medievales*, 21-22 (2006), 363-400.

<sup>35</sup> L. P. HARVEY, "When Portugal expelled its remaining Muslims (1497)", *Portuguese Studies*, 2 (1995), 1-14.



nation, indeed the only one put forward by historians both in and out of Portugal, is that the Portuguese Muslims like the Jews of that realm, were the victims of Spanish pressure on Manuel I. Isabel and Fernando are thus supposed to have demanded that Manuel expel the Muslims of his realm as well as the Jews before they would consent to granting him their daughter. This idea has important ramifications for historians as it presupposes that Isabel and Fernando harboured a plan to rid the Iberian Peninsula of Muslims (or at least of public Islamic worship). Professor Harvey, in particular, has cited the expulsion of the Portuguese Muslims as evidence to support his claim that “it was curiously in Portugal and not in any of the Spanish realms that Spain was first able to insist on the implementation of a policy of monolithic Catholic Christian unity, with, as a corollary, the elimination of all other faiths.”<sup>36</sup>

Many modern historians have indeed perceived Isabel and Fernando as having formulated and enforced a coherent policy of religious uniformity designed to strengthen their political power. In a few extreme cases, there has even been a confusion of facts which has led some historians to erroneously state that the Catholic Monarchs expelled the Muslim minority in their kingdoms at the same time as the Jews in 1492, which was certainly not the case.<sup>37</sup> The notion that Isabel and Fernando pursued a Machiavellian and coherent policy of religious homogenisation from the very beginning of their reign makes little sense and is not supported by any narrative or documentary evidence. To begin with, if the Catholic Monarchs did indeed formulate a “*política de exclusión*” from the start

<sup>36</sup> L. P. HARVEY, *Muslims in Spain 1500 to 1614* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 15.

<sup>37</sup> For instance in A. LOSA, «Le statut légal des maures et des juifs portugais pendant les XIIe-XVe siècles», *Medievalia. Textos e Estudos*, 5-6 (1994), 307: «Fernando et Isabel, en 1492 avaient expulsé d'Espagne les juifs et les maures qui restaient après la conquête de Grenada. Or parmi les clauses du contrat de mariage de la princesse, était exigé, de la part du monarque portugais, l'expulsion de tous les maures et juifs vivant dans son Royaume.»

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of their reign then it is difficult to understand why they did not also force the rulers of Navarre to expel their Muslim subjects when they forced them to expel the Jews of Navarre in 1498. Navarre in 1498 was in an even more delicate position than Portugal in 1497. Successive treaties – notably those of Valencia in 1488, Pamplona in 1493 and Madrid in 1495 – had to all intents and purposes reduced Navarre to the status of a Spanish protectorate. The rulers of Navarre were not in a position to turn down such a demand. Their position *vis-à-vis* the Catholic Monarchs was so weak that the famous French diplomat Philippe de Commines commented in his famous memoirs that Isabel and Fernando “did what they wanted with Navarre”.<sup>38</sup> If Isabel and Fernando were indeed planning to rid their realms of Muslims and did pressure Manuel into expelling his own Muslim subjects in 1497, why then did they not also follow exactly the same policy with Navarre? When Navarre expelled its Jewish population in 1498, because of pressure from Isabel and Fernando, it did not also drive out its Muslim inhabitants. Even after Castilian troops invaded Navarre in 1512, the local Muslim communities continued to reside in that kingdom until 1516, when Navarre was formally attached to the Crown of Castile and adopted all of its laws and edicts, including the Castilian expulsion edict of 1502.<sup>39</sup> It is also worth mentioning that the expulsion of the Portuguese Muslims, just like that of the Jews, does not feature in any clause of the marriage contract between Manuel and Isabel that was drawn up at Burgos on 30 November 1496. Moreover, it appears even more improbable that, as has been suggested, the Muslims were included among the “heretics” that *Infanta* Isabel wanted Manuel to expel before she would agree to marry him and enter Portugal.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> J. DEL BURGO, *Historia general de Navarra desde los orígenes hasta nuestros días* (Madrid, 1992), Vol. 2, 231-257; PHILIPPE DE COMMINES, *Mémoires*, ed. J. Blanchard (Paris, 2001), 667.

<sup>39</sup> L. P. HARVEY, *Islamic Spain 1250 to 1500* (Chicago, 1990), 149-150.

<sup>40</sup> M. J. P. FERRO TAVARES, “A expulsão dos judeus de Portugal: conjuntura peninsular”, *Oceanos*, 29 (1997), 13.

The attitude of Isabel and Fernando towards their own Muslim subjects up to the time of the Portuguese expulsion betrayed no premonitory signs of their future policies. Even though the Jews were expelled from Castile and Aragón in 1492, it was a full decade before the Muslims of Castile were likewise forced to either leave to convert to Christianity. When false rumours circulated in Castile and Aragón in 1493 that they intended to expel the Muslims as well as the Jews, Isabel and Fernando reacted vigorously and sent a letter all the magistrates and justices of their realms in which they categorically and publicly denied this news. All those who were found to be circulating such false reports were to be arrested by their officials. The decision to force the Muslim population living in Castilian territory to convert in 1502 has its roots firmly in the revolt of the Granadan Muslims in 1499-1500.<sup>41</sup> The decision to expel the Jews on 31 March 1492 had been prompted by the fear that their presence encouraged the judaizing of *conversos* but, until 1500, there was no similar problem with the Muslim minority in Castile. At the surrender of Granada, in January 1492, the Christian victors had guaranteed that the religious freedom of the conquered Muslim population would be respected and this agreement had been acknowledged by the first Archbishop of post-conquest Granada, Hernando de Talavera. It was not until the zealous and intolerant Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros – who occupied the influential position of confessor to Queen Isabel of Castile and became Archbishop of Toledo in 1495 – intervened directly in Granada that the situation deteriorated. Cisneros forced many Granadan Muslims of Christian origin, the *renegados*, to accept baptism and his brutal

<sup>41</sup> M. A. LADERO QUESADA, "Isabel and the Moors", *Isabel La Católica, Queen of Castile: Critical Essays*, ed. D. Boruchoff (New York, 2003), 177-187; M. MEYERSON, *The Muslims of Valencia in the Age of Fernando and Isabel: between Coexistence and Crusade* (Berkeley, 1991), 51-60 and "Religious change, regionalism, and royal power in the Spain of Fernando and Isabel", *Iberia and the Mediterranean world of the Middle Ages: studies in honor of Robert I. Burns, S. J. Vol. 1., Proceedings from Kalamazoo*, ed. L. J. Simon (Leiden, 1995), 96-112.



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methods resulted in a series of bloody Muslim rebellions between 1499 and 1501. It was these uprisings that forced Queen Isabel to change her policy relating to her Muslim subjects. In the eyes of the Queen of Castile, the rebellion meant that the Muslim inhabitants of Granada had broken the terms of the surrender agreement of 1492 and thousands of them were forced to convert, thus creating an entirely new problem. It was feared that contact between the reluctant converts (now *moriscos*) and the Muslim communities in the rest of Castile outside Granada would prevent their proper Christianisation and, accordingly, the remaining Muslim population of Castile was also forced into baptism in 1502.<sup>42</sup> Thus it is simply impossible to claim that, prior to the events of 1499, there is any evidence that Isabel and Fernando entertained a Machiavellian plan to rid their realms – and the whole Iberian Peninsula – of Muslims.

If Spanish pressure cannot be deemed to have been responsible for Manuel's decision to expel the Muslims, then what was? The eighteenth-century Dominican historian Pedro Monteiro alleges in his history of the Portuguese Inquisition that the idea of expelling the Muslims was in fact suggested to the Portuguese king by his Dominican confessor Friar Jorge Vogado.<sup>43</sup> Little is known of Jorge Vogado, though he was in fact head of the Dominican Order in its province of Portugal and Monteiro only states that he was a distinguished theologian. In his account of the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims, Monteiro closely follows Damião de Góis but this significant information is clearly derived from a different source or chronicle. The identity of this source is unfortunately not revealed by Monteiro and it is possible that Monteiro may have had access to narratives or documents in archives – including the Dominican

<sup>42</sup> On the actions of Cisneros in Granada: L. P. HARVEY, *Islamic Spain 1250 to 1500* (Chicago, 1990), 324-339 and *Muslims in Spain 1500 to 1614* (Chicago, 2005), 24-44.

<sup>43</sup> "... de conselho de seu confessor o Padre Mestre Fr. Jorge Vogado, Inquisidor do Reyno, religioso Dominicano, lançou for a esta gente por Dezembro do anno de 1496..." P. MONTEIRO, *História da Santa Inquisição do reino de Portugal, e suas conquistas* (Lisbon, 1750), Vol. 2, 6 and 427.



archives in Portugal – that are no longer accessible to modern scholars.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, this claim has to be treated with a great degree of scepticism since, in an earlier work, Monteiro erroneously implies that Jorge Vogado was behind the expulsion of both the Muslims *and* the Jews.<sup>45</sup>

The expulsion of the Muslim minority makes far more sense when examined in the light of the declared aims of the Portuguese monarch in the first years of his reign. The reign of Manuel is chiefly remembered today because of the first sea voyage by Vasco da Gama, which opened up a sea route to India in 1497-9 and thus paved the way for the establishment of the Portuguese empire in southern Asia. Nonetheless, from the very start of his reign, Manuel I also focused his attention on revitalizing the crusade against the Muslims in Morocco. The King of Portugal soon found himself involved in complex diplomatic contacts with the Papal *Curia* in Rome and his plans brought to the fore Portuguese concerns about competing Castilian claims in North Africa. A detailed analysis of this aspect of the reign suggests another, far more plausible, hypothesis to account for the expulsion of the Muslims.

The kingdoms of Portugal and Castile both claimed the right to extend the *reconquista* against Islam across the straits of Gibraltar and onto North African soil. Following the Portuguese conquest of the Moroccan stronghold of Ceuta in 1415, the Luso-Castilian rivalry only grew fiercer and both sides turned to the Papal *Curia* to establish the legitimacy of their territorial claims by obtaining supporting papal bulls. Civil strife and the wars with the Muslim rulers of Granada had kept the Castilians from intervening militarily in North Africa for most of the fifteenth century. The pacification of Castile under Queen Isabel and the fall of the last Islamic bastion in

<sup>44</sup> Pedro Monteiro might, for instance, have had access to documents destroyed in the great earthquake of 1755.

<sup>45</sup> P. MONTEIRO, *Claustro Dominicano* (Lisbon, 1729), 83-4.



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the Iberian Peninsula in January 1492 seemed, however, to finally clear the path for Castilian expansion in the Maghreb. Most recently, in February 1495, Pope Alexander VI had granted Isabel and Fernando the bull *Ineffabilis et Summi* (February 1495), which gave the Castilians and Aragonese sovereignty over any territories they conquered in “Africa”. The terms of the bull were suitably vague and presented a cause for grave concern at the Portuguese court.<sup>46</sup>

From the very beginning of his reign, Manuel worked hard to restore the Portuguese position. Damião de Góis states that Manuel informed his subjects at the special parliament (*cortes*) which gathered at the town of Montemor-o-novo in 1495 that the renewal of Portuguese territorial expansion in Morocco was to be one of the principal objectives of his reign. One of his main objectives was to secure Papal sanction for his ambitions in North Africa and Manuel correspondingly started an intense diplomatic offensive at the Papal Curia.<sup>47</sup> In Rome, his ambassador Pero Correia and the Portuguese Cardinal Jorge de Alpedrinha were negotiating with Pope Alexander VI for the concession of a papal bull that would confirm Portugal’s territorial claims and safeguard them and any further Portuguese gains from encroachment by a rival Christian power. In September 1496, Pope Alexander VI granted Manuel the crusading bulls *Redemptor noster* and *Cogimus jubente*. These two bulls clearly demonstrate that the King was planning a crusade to North Africa, even though the bulls did not protect any future Portuguese conquest from rival claims by other Christian princes.<sup>48</sup>

The negotiations for the grant of a new papal bull were eventually successful and, on 1 June 1497, Pope Alexander VI granted the

<sup>46</sup> On the rival Portuguese and Castilian claims in North Africa see F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal*. 273-5.

<sup>47</sup> DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel*, Vol. 1, 35-6.

<sup>48</sup> CH.-M. DE WITTE, “Les bulles pontificales et l’expansion Portugaise au XVe siècle”, *Revue d’Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 53 (1958), 39-42 and 450-1. See F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal*. 164-6 and 274-8.





Portuguese sovereign the bull *Ineffabilis et Summi*. This bull was an almost identical copy of the one granted only two years previously, with exactly the same name, to Isabel and Fernando. The Pope decreed that the Portuguese monarch and all his descendants could possess in perpetuity any lands conquered from the infidels. The only major disparity between this version of *Ineffabilis et Summi* and the one granted to Isabel and Fernando was that it explicitly cautioned other Christian princes not to molest, impede or wage war against Manuel I and his descendants. The Portuguese sovereign was likewise instructed by the Pope not to impinge upon the territories of other Christian rulers. The version of *Ineffabilis et Summi* granted to King Manuel mentioned the fact that, by means of his ambassadors, the king of Portugal had conveyed to the pope his “intention to fight the infidels in the manner of his forbearers”.<sup>49</sup> As the modern historian Charles Martial de Witte has pointed out, the lands to which *Ineffabilis et Summi* referred were clearly those of North Africa rather than any other future territorial conquests that might result from the naval expedition to India which was also been concurrently planned by Manuel.<sup>50</sup> The Pope was, of course, anxious not to affront the rulers of Castile and Aragón and thus chose to remain deliberately vague in the terms and expressions used in the bull. This vagueness was not a new development in the diplomacy of the Papal *Curia* and had been already employed by Pope Alexander in 1493-4 to preserve the balance of power and peace between both Iberian realms.<sup>51</sup> From Manuel’s point of view,

<sup>49</sup> “...et ad sedem ipsam successu temporis conuerti sane pro parte tua nobis nuper per Venerabilem fratrem nostrum Georgium Episcopum Albanensem sanctae Romae ecclesie Cardinalem Vlixbonensem nuncupatur expositum sint quod tu qui more tuorum progenitorum intendis Infidelium expugnationi vacare desideras...» J. MARTINS DA SILVA MARQUES, *Descobrimientos portugueses. Documentos para sua história* (Lisbon, 1944), Vol. 3, 479-480, doc. 315.

<sup>50</sup> CH-M. DE WITTE, ‘Les bulles pontificales et l’expansion Portugaise au XVe siècle’, *Revue d’Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 53 (1958), 452-3.

<sup>51</sup> H. VANDER LINDEN, ‘Alexander VI, and the demarcation of the maritime and colonial domains of Spain and Portugal, 1493-1494’, *The American Historical Review*, 22 (1916), 1-20.



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however, the grant of *Ineffabilis et Summi* served an extremely useful purpose. It nullified any advantage that the Castilians and Aragonese might have hoped to hold over Portugal in any future negotiations relating to territories in North Africa with their own version of *Ineffabilis et Summi*.

Taking into account these facts, it is easier to attempt to understand the reasoning that probably informed Manuel's decision to expel the Muslim minority from Portugal. This expulsion only makes sense if it was envisaged by Manuel to be an act of political propaganda, designed to make an impression on the Papacy as well as other Christian rulers. It was the action of a king whose desire to portray himself as a champion of Christendom was stimulated both by his obsession with the struggle against Islam and his anxiety regarding competing Spanish claims in North Africa. King Manuel consciously played on his image as an ardent and enthusiastic crusader in the letters he sent to Rome. Such propaganda would continue to play a central role throughout the rest of Manuel's reign. Indeed, Manuel would finance the printing in 1505 of a short propaganda pamphlet in Latin entitled *Epistola ad summum romanum pontificem*. The pamphlet was ostensibly a letter (*epistola*) written to the Pope but was in fact designed to be widely circulated throughout Christendom. The pamphlet set out to highlight the King's credentials as a great crusader at the expense of the other Christian kings of Europe who were criticised for their inactivity. Even though he did not mention the expulsion of the Muslim minority in 1497, the King strongly emphasised the importance of fighting the common enemy of Christendom more by deeds than by words. In a grandiloquent tone, the Portuguese sovereign informed the Pope of the impending destruction of Mecca by the Portuguese armies in India. The Portuguese monarch even claimed the credit for the forced conversion of the Muslim minority in neighbouring Castile in 1502, stating that he had personally suggested the idea to his (by then) in-laws Isabel and Fernando. Indeed, Manuel congrat-

ulated himself that “[the forced conversion in Castile] was carried out and accomplished, as was promised, with the praise of God and to our great pleasure and benefit”.<sup>52</sup>

The lengthy periods of time that were necessary for negotiations between Portugal and the Papal *Curia* means that it is obvious that Manuel I had determined to obtain crusading bulls such as *Redemptor Noster* and *Ineffabilis et Summi* in the first months of his reign, when he sent his ambassador Pero Correia to Rome. Once it was clear that the expulsion of the Jews was an unavoidable compromise in order to secure a new dynastic alliance with Castile, it seems likely that the King then also seized the opportunity to enhance his image as a Christian king by expelling the Muslim minority as well. The relatively small size of the Muslim population in Portugal, and its consequently limited importance to the Portuguese economy, made the expulsion of this minority far less of an economic sacrifice than the expulsion of the Jews.<sup>53</sup> Another aspect of the problem that must not be ignored is the way in which the expulsion of the Muslim minority coincided with King Manuel’s personal vision of Christian kingship. Professor Thomaz has pointed out that his unlikely succession to the throne of Portugal prompted King Manuel to firmly believe that he had been appointed by God to wage war against His enemies on Earth: the follow-

<sup>52</sup> “... saiba vossa sanctidade que quando se contrattou casamento entre nós, e ha Rainha nossa muita amada molber nisto principalmente insistimos, e houemos por mais bemaumentado dote, pedirmos abo dito Rei nosso pai que nam somente totalas mezquitas dos Mouros sogeitas abo Regno de Castella has mandasse todas destruir, mas que ainda hos seus filbos pequenos, e de pequena idade fossem tirados de seus pais, e se baptizassem, e que hos tornassem Christãos. Ha qual cousa, assi quomo foi prometida, assi com louuor de Deos se acabou, e cõprio, no que recebemos grãde prazer, e benefício.” DAMIÃO DE GÓIS, *Crónica do Felicíssimo Rei D. Manuel* (Coimbra, 1949), Vol. 1, chapter 93, 224-7; DAMIÃO DE GÓIS gives an accurate Portuguese translation of the original Latin work: Manuel I of Portugal, *Epistola ad summum romanum pontificem* (Lisbon, 1505). This passage refers to the second marriage of Manuel to the *Infanta* Maria of Castile in 1500.

<sup>53</sup> On the size and economic importance of the Muslim minority in medieval Portugal in comparison to the Jewish minority see F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal*. 41-6 and 72-7.

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ers of Islam. This conviction was clearly not at the root of his persecution of the Jews, but we should certainly not overlook the significant role it may have ultimately played in his decision to expel the Muslims.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

To conclude, I hope that this paper will have demonstrated that many aspects of the events that surround the end of religious tolerance in Portugal in 1496-7 are still open to debate. King Manuel's expulsion of the Castilian *conversos* in November 1496, long ignored by modern historians, must now be listed alongside that of the Jews and Muslims and it should be carefully distinguished from these slightly later expulsions. The part generally ascribed to the *Infanta* Isabel in the unhappy events of 1497 must also be rewritten. The Spanish *Infanta's* reluctance to enter Portugal in 1497, whether or not it was engineered by her parents, had nothing to do with the fate of the Jews in Portugal. Rather, it was directly related to the problem of the continued presence of Castilian *conversos* in Portugal and Castilian mistrust of the measures King Manuel took to expel these Castilian *conversos*.

At the same time, the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims cannot simply be ascribed to the same causes. In my opinion, at least, the Muslim minority was not expelled because of Spanish pressure. The most likely hypothesis is that Portuguese Muslims were rather the victims of Manuel's obsession with the crusade against Islam in North Africa and his wish to gain the papacy's support. The absence of evidence of any marked anti-Muslim sentiment in Portugal during the fifteenth century also makes it difficult to argue that Manuel may have been pandering to anti-Muslim sen-

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<sup>54</sup> L. F. F. R. THOMAZ, 'L'idée impériale Manueline', *La découverte, le Portugal et l'Europe*, ed. J. Aubin (Paris, 1990), 89-90.

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timent in the Portuguese population.<sup>55</sup> In fact all the available evidence points to the conclusion that when Manuel decided to expel the Muslims in December 1496 he was not prompted to do so by his Spanish neighbours but rather by his own ambitions of territorial expansion in North Africa. It would be simplistic to claim that this hypothesis is anything more than a theory but, in the absence of any contrary evidence, it remains the only credible explanation of the expulsion of the Muslims from Portugal.

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<sup>55</sup> See F. SOYER, *The Persecution of the Jews and Muslims of Portugal*. 253-9.



