

Lux



HISTORICAL
CONSULTING

Lux is a Portuguese historical consulting firm specialized in genealogy, corporate history, heritage management and tourism.

We rescue the past hidden into the archives and bring it to the present, telling the stories of people, families and places. We help companies to strengthen their identity and brand through the preservation and communication of their heritage and collective memory. We promote cultural and touristic events, focusing historical contents in a original and playful way.

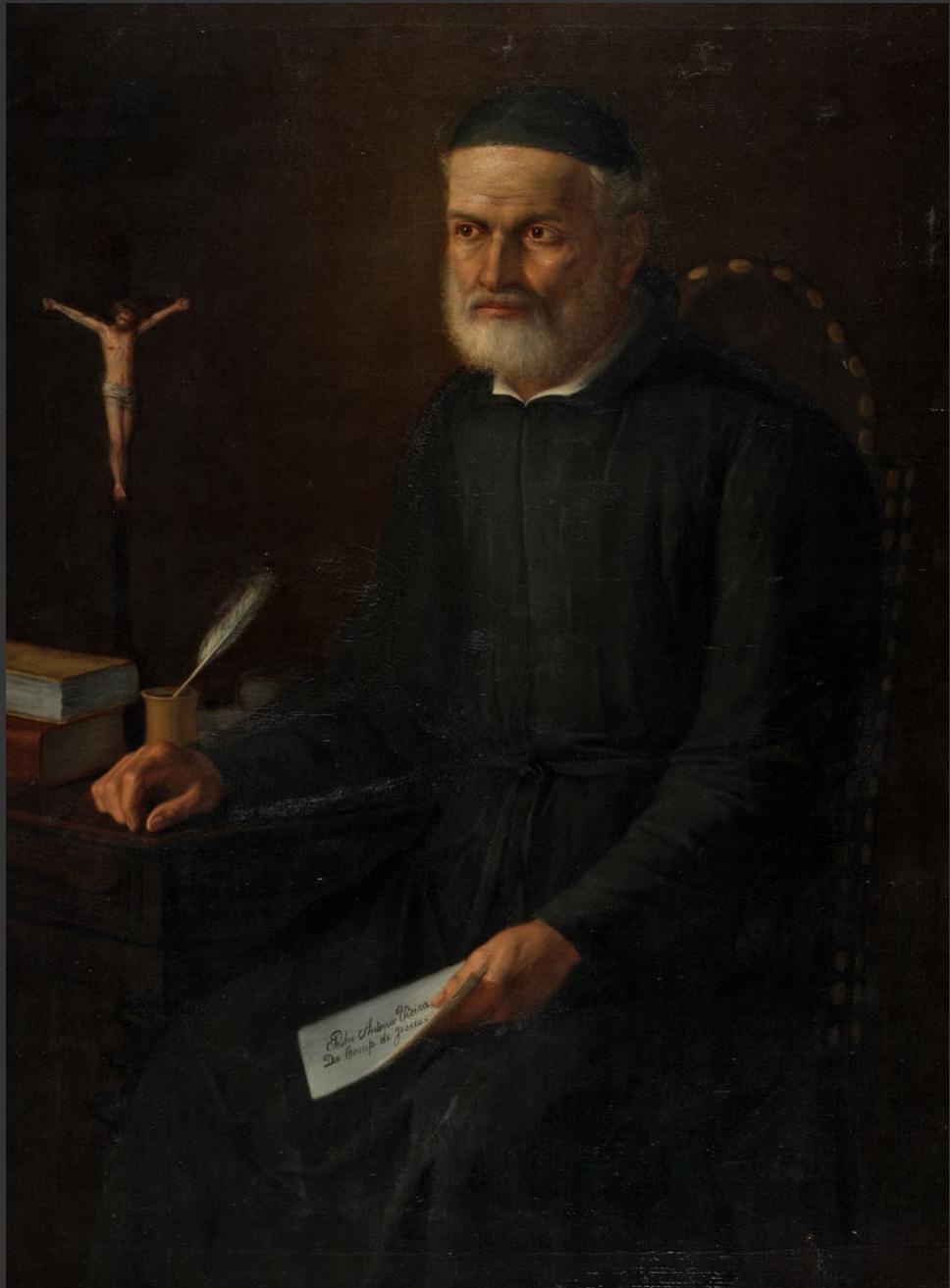
We believe that History produces value. The values of cooperation, sharing of synergies, ethics and authenticity inspire our work. Rigour, responsibility, honesty, proactiveness, innovation, joy and passion are our key-words. We build a relationship of trust with the client, founded on mutual respect, transparency, dialogue and flexibility. Our goal is to get the best response to the challenges of the client.

Lux Historical Consulting has a research team with a wide experience on Sephardic studies and offers a highly specialized service of

Jewish Genealogy

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*“for the love they have
for Portugal”*

“In all European kingdoms and provinces, there are a large number of Portuguese merchants [New Christians and Jews] who have great fortunes and deal with the most of the worldwide trade and wealth. All of them are willing to be allowed to return to the Portuguese kingdom for the love they have for Portugal, as their homeland, and for Your Majesty, as their king.”

António Vieira, S. J.,
«Proposta Feita a El-Rei D. João IV»,
(Proposal made to King John IV), 1643

The Jewish people settled in the Iberian Peninsula long before the foundation of Portugal. During the Middle Ages, they lived in specific urban areas (Jewish quarters), some of them with their own ovens, wine presses, hospitals, leprosarium, prisons, cemeteries, inns, synagogues and schools.

Outwardly, the Jews were subject to the general laws of the Portuguese kingdom. However, inside their communities, they were governed by the Jewish law and they formed an autonomous religious, social and judicial body.

They were forced to use a six-pointed red star in their clothes, slightly above the stomach, to differentiate themselves from the rest of the people.



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1474	2	2	2	2	2	1508	4	5	36	36	36
1475	3	3	3	3	3	1509	1	6	37	37	37
1476	4	4	4	4	4	1510	2	7	38	38	38
1477	1	5	5	5	5	1511	3	8	39	39	39
1478	2	6	6	6	6	1512	4	9	40	40	40
1479	3	7	7	7	7	1513	1	10	41	41	41
1480	4	8	8	8	8	1514	2	11	42	42	42
1481	1	9	9	9	9	1515	3	12	43	43	43
1482	2	10	10	10	2	1516	4	13	44	44	44
1483	3	11	11	11	3	1517	1	14	45	45	45
1484	4	12	12	12	4	1518	2	15	46	46	46
1485	1	13	13	13	5	1519	3	16	47	47	47
1486	2	14	14	14	6	1520	4	17	48	48	48
1487	3	15	15	15	7	1521	1	18	49	49	49
1488	4	16	16	16	8	1522	2	19	50	50	50
1489	1	17	17	17	1	1523	3	20	51	51	51
1490	2	18	18	18	2	1524	4	21	52	52	52
1491	3	19	19	19	3	1525	1	22	53	53	53
1492	4	20	20	20	4	1526	2	23	54	54	54
1493	1	21	21	21	5	1527	3	24	55	55	55
1494	2	22	22	22	6	1528	4	25	56	56	56
1495	3	23	23	23	7	1529	1	26	57	57	57
1496	4	24	24	24	8	1530	2	27	58	58	58
1497	1	25	25	25	1	1531	3	28	59	59	59
1498	2	26	26	26	2	1532	4	29	1	60	60
1499	3	27	27	27	3	1533	1	30	2	61	61
1500	4	28	28	28	4	1534	2	31	3	62	62
1501	1	29	29	29	5	1535	3	1	4	63	63
1502	2	30	30	30	6	1536	4	2	5	64	64
1503	3	31	31	31	7	1537	1	3	6	65	65
1504	4	1	32	32	9	1538	2	4	7	66	66
1505	1	2	33	33	1	1539	3	5	8	67	67
1506	2	3	34	34	2	1540	4	6	9	68	68
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In Lisbon, there was a Jewish school of copyists where were produced some beautiful illuminated manuscripts. The first book printed in Portugal was made in a Jewish workshop: a Hebrew Pentateuc, printed by Samuel Gacon in Faro, 1487.

Some Portuguese Medieval Jews standed out in several fields, as commerce, medicine, literature or science. They also gave a precious contribution for the Portuguese discoveries. It is well known how essential was Abraham Zacuto's *Almanach Perpetuum* for the Portuguese navigation during the overseas expansion.

Unlike what happened in other European countries, some Portuguese Jews achieved titles of nobility and became distinguished courtesans. It was the case of Don Isaac Abravanel, counselor of King Afonso V and a close friend of the Duke of Braganza.

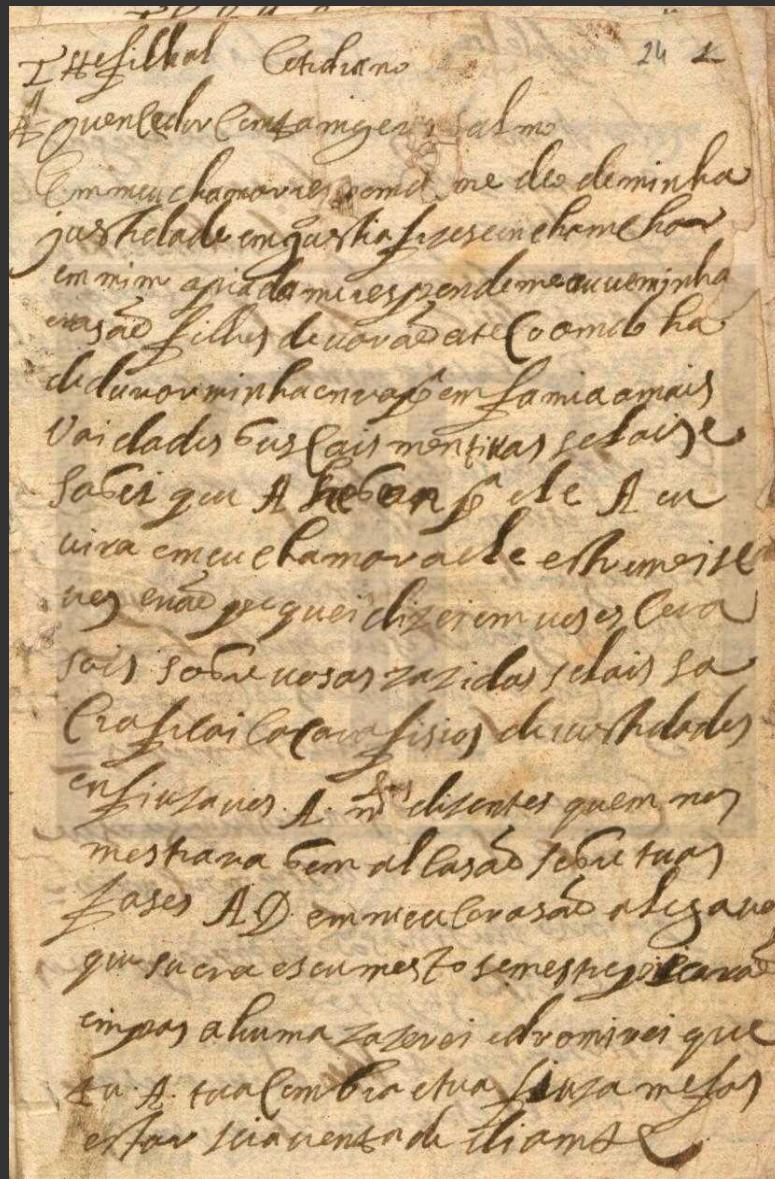
In 1492, it was promulgated the Edict of Expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Most of them moved to Portugal and settled there by paying high taxes or even clandestinely.

Portugal became the only Iberian kingdom where Judaism was allowed. But only during the following 4 years. In December of 1496, King Manuel signed a decree of expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from Portugal.

Then, King Manuel decreed that all Jews had to convert to Christianity or leave Portugal until October of 1497. Despite having ensured that they could freely leave the country with their properties, the king put several obstacles to their departure.

During the following months, Jewish children were baptised and removed from their parents to be raised by Christian families. At last, all the Jews who remained in Portugal were forced to become Christians.





The Jews who were baptized became known as New Christians, or *conversos*, or even *gente da nação* (people of Nation).

They were initially encouraged to be assimilated into the Christian society. However, the boundaries did not disappear.

Some of them maintained their group solidarity and endogamy, still living in the same area of the old Jewish quarters, and remained a religious duplicity: adhering outwardly to Christianity, while secretly practicing Judaism.

On the other hand, at the eyes of the Old Christian society, New Christians continued to be suspect, even when their adherence to Christianity was sincere. This social stain limited their full integration.

The Portuguese Inquisition was established in 1536, and its major target was the New Christians. The court was under the authority of the king and the Church, and its very particular methods ("Inquisition styles") induced the defendant to accuse whoever was supposed to be his complainant, and condemned him to misery through the seizure of his properties.

The torture, by the *polé* (pulley) or the *potro* (rack), was commonly employed to force the defendant to confess. At the end of the trial, the sentence was read during the *auto da fe*. The punishments varied from spiritual penalties, penitential garment, public whipping, prison, exile, service as oarsmen in royal galleys to, at last, the relaxation to the secular arm for burning at the stake.





For escaping religious persecution, or searching for new business opportunities, or even looking for the possibility of returning to Judaism, many New Christians left Portugal and contributed to the creation of flourishing Sephardic communities in Venice, Livorno, Hamburg, Amsterdam and London, among others.

In 1675, the Amsterdam Sephardic community inaugurated one of the most important synagogues of Early Modern Europe – the Portuguese synagogue of Amsterdam, also known as the *Esnoga*.

These Sephardic communities combined the Jewish religion with its Iberian heritage, keeping Portuguese and Spanish as cultural and administrative languages, and, in some cases, also preserving the noble titles obtained in the Iberian kingdoms.

Iberian Jews and New Christians spread throughout all over the world, building wide social and commercial networks supported in family links and cultural and religious affinities.

Among their destinations, there were:

- ◆ Ottoman empire;
- ◆ Brazil;
- ◆ Peru;
- ◆ Mexico;
- ◆ Suriname;
- ◆ Curaçao;
- ◆ North America;
- ◆ Barbados;
- ◆ Jamaica;
- ◆ Saint-Domingue;
- ◆ Martinique;
- ◆ Saint Eustatius;
- ◆ Senegal





In the 19th century, as consequence of the official extinction of the Portuguese Inquisition in 1821, some Sephardic Jews prudently returned to Portugal, coming mainly from Northern Africa. Some of them settled in Faro and Lisbon. The Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa (Jewish Community of Lisbon) was established, and inaugurated its synagogue in 1904. However, it was only officially recognized in 1912.

During the II World War, Lisbon became a crossing point for thousands of Jewish refugees. Then, a man stood out: Aristides de Sousa Mendes, who, as Portuguese consul-general in Bordeaux, defied superior orders and issued visas to an unknown number of Jewish refugees, saving thousands of lives. In 1966, he was honored posthumously with the title of “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem.



If you are descendent of Portuguese Jews and you would like to be granted with the Portuguese nationality, Lux Historical Consulting and its research team specialized in Sephardic diaspora could help you to obtain the evidences requested by the Portuguese Jewish communities responsible for issuing the certificate of belonging to a Portuguese origin Sephardic community.

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