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Two Judeo-Spanish ‘Marrano’ hymns in the liturgy of the Jews of Cochin

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ABSTRACT The liturgy of the Jews of Cochin, Kerala, is extant in several manuscripts, the oldest dating back to the end of the seventeenth century. Among the Hebrew pieces, we find two compositions in Old Spanish written in Hebrew characters, *Alto dio de Abraham* and *Todos kiriyados*. Here we provide for the first time an edition of these texts (from MS. Roth 33 of the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds and MS. Or. 2242 of the Cambridge University Library). A philological analysis reveals that these two texts – a supplication paraphrasing Psalm 121 and a translation of a medieval Hebrew *pizmon*, *Kol bēru’e* – are orally transmitted versions of prayers belonging to the liturgy of the Hispano-Portuguese New Christians. A comparison with their European counterparts and the study of the linguistic peculiarities of these Indian versions show influences from Portuguese and Malayalam. In the context of the history of Jewish and Marrano migrations to the Malabar Coast, these texts represent an important vestige of a Judeo-Iberian heritage within Indian Jewish culture.

THE CITY OF Cochin, on the Malabar Coast in Southern India, aside from its Dravidian languages-speaking Hindu and Muslim population and its various Christian minorities, has been a place of Jewish settlement since at least the early medieval period. Though these Jews, who speak the local language, Malayalam, are usually reputed to be of mostly indigenous origin, their synagogue liturgy stems from the Sephardi (Spanish) rite. The pronunciation of Hebrew that is common among them,¹ their liturgical music,² as well as the very form of prayers used in Cochin is cognate to those

A previous version of this text has been read by Dr Isaac S.D. Sassoon and Prof. François Ploton-Nicollet. I thank them for their insightful comments, as well as Dr Nicholas LoVecchio for his instrumental help in translating this article.

1. Jarmo Forsström, ‘The Pronunciation Tradition of Biblical Hebrew among the Jews of Cochin: A Preliminary Survey’, *Studia Orientalia* 82 (1997), pp. 111–28: Among phonetic features that match the general Sephardi pronunciation, two peculiarities are more specifically shared with the reading tradition of the Western Sephardi Jews: *tāw raphe* pronounced [ð], *bēt raphe* pronounced [b].

2. Johanna L. Spector, ‘Shingli Tunes of the Cochin Jews’, *Asian Music* 3:2 (1972), pp. 23–8: ‘The

used by the various Jewish communities of Iberian background in Europe, North Africa and Asia. However, on that common basis, a later local tradition developed of adding circumstantial poetry for special holidays, life-cycle celebrations and various other occasions to perform liturgical services.

That local paraliturgy is known thanks to several manuscript miscellanies and, partly, in some printed editions published in Europe and India from the seventeenth century on.³ These manuscript or printed compilations are not always consistent in the choice and order of liturgical pieces, but the overall nature of their content is generally uniform. Besides a large number of texts from the Medieval Spanish school (Judah Halevi, Solomon ibn Gabirol, Abraham and Moses ibn Ezra, etc.) and its Ottoman offspring (Israel Najara), shared with the liturgies of most other Middle Eastern Jewish communities, and a number of texts of Yemenite origin,⁴ the core of the Cochin paraliturgy was composed, following the stylistic and metric rules of Sephardi *piyut*, by local poets, anonymous or not, such as Eliyahu ben Moše Adeni (d. 1631), Nehemiah b. Abraham Mota, David Castiel, Joseph Zakkai, Ezechiel Rahabi and others.

These liturgical compilations form a significant part of the few dozen manuscripts left by the Jews of Cochin. Most of the Indian Jewish manuscript material now held in public repositories transited through the collections of the British scholars David Sassoon (1880–1942)⁵ and Cecil Roth (1899–1970).⁶

Cochin cantillation shows several facets: The overall impression is European Sefardic, descendent from Spanish tradition' (p. 26); 'religious music of the Cochin Jews is Sefardic with traces of Yemenite and Babylonian (Kurdish) styles' (p. 27); see also Israel J. Ross, 'Cross-Cultural Dynamics in Musical Traditions: The Music of the Jews of Cochin', *Musica Judaica* 2:1 (1977–78), pp. 51–72. The similarity between the Cochin tradition and the Western Sephardi liturgy can be observed in the recordings made in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s by J. Spector and I. Ross which are kept in the ethnomusicology section at the National Library of Israel.

3. See Edwin Seroussi, 'The Singing of the Sephardi Piyut in Cochin (India)' (in Hebrew), in E. Hazan and B. Bar-Tikva (eds), *Piyut in Tradition II* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2000), pp. 231–48. Seroussi also provides a list of the print editions of the Cochin *piyutim*.

4. Meir Bar Ilan, 'Books from Cochin' *Pe'amim* 52 (1992), pp. 74–100 (in Hebrew), described some of the Yemenite influences in the rite of Cochin. Beyond the borrowed texts, the Jews of Cochin retained some melodies introduced by Yemenite *paytanim* and even the Yemenite pronunciation of Hebrew, of which a variant is still used, alternating with the normally used Sephardi pronunciation, for a few parts of the liturgy.

5. David S. Sassoon, *Ohel Dawid. Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the Sassoon Library* (2 vols; London: Oxford University Press, 1932). The liturgical manuscripts from Cochin (only partially inventoried by Seroussi) are described on pp. 257–70 of the catalogue; they are numbered as follows: nos 53, 104, 105, 114, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 128, 129, 140, 153, 250, 446, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 449, 465, 574.

6. Surprisingly ignored by scholars (including Seroussi, 'The Singing of the Sephardi Piyut',

It was among manuscripts of these two important former collections that I had the fortune of discovering a linguistic and philological curiosity that had hitherto gone unnoticed by scholars of both Indian Judaism and Judeo-Spanish: two liturgical poems written in Spanish using the Hebrew alphabet, interspersed among the Hebrew pieces within the Judeo-Malabar manuscript hymnary.

1. אלטו דיו דאברהם – *Alto Dio de Abraham – Great God of Abraham* is a long supplication in five stanzas of eight short irregular verses (from seven to ten syllables) with enclosed rhymes. The theme and the style of this text recall that of Sephardi penitential *selihot*, but it cannot be identified with any actual *seliha* of the Jewish liturgy. It is extant in at least three manuscripts:

- MS. Or. 2242 of the Cambridge University Library, former MS. Sassoon 455, liturgical collection of 150ff., with a colophon dated 12 February 1694. The poem אלטו דיו דאברהם appears at f. 16 and is the 42nd poem of the section שירות.⁷
- MS. Roth 33 of the Brotherton Library (University of Leeds), a very similar liturgical collection copied in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, probably at the same time and by the same hand as MS. Sassoon 455, as will be shown below. The poem appears at ff. 17b–18a, numbered 47th in the section שירות.
- MS. Sassoon 465, written in a cursive hand, dated nineteenth century by David Sassoon in the catalogue of his library.⁸ The poem אלטו דיו דאברהם is the 62nd of the first section, entitled פזמונים.

who referred only to the print editions and the Sassoon manuscripts), the Cochin manuscripts collected by Roth and now kept at Leeds are the following: MS. 34, liturgy for *Simhat Tora*, rite of Cochin, 17th–18th century; MS. 35, various poems and prayers, signed Elijah, Moses, Israel, etc., Cochin handwriting, 18th century; MS. 36, service and hymns for the wedding ceremony, rite of Cochin, 18th century; MS. 37, hymns and poems, rite of Cochin, including hymns for the *Simhat Tora* service, 18th century; MS. 40, hymns, rite of Cochin, modern copy; MS. 112, miscellany with various poems including some from Cochin (Cecil Roth, 'Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Roth Collection', in Saul Lieberman [ed.], *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume* [New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950], pp. 503–35). Roth's interest in the Jews of Cochin and his idea to visit India to 'hunt' for Jewish manuscripts reportedly came as a result of his acquaintance with David Sassoon and his domestic staff, in London, who was recruited among Cochin immigrants (according to the testimony of Isaac S. D. Sassoon, 19 November 2016).

7. Sassoon, *Ohel Dawid*, vol. 1, pp. 262–5, where this and the following poem are mistakenly identified as 'in Portuguese'.

8. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 266b–269. This manuscript, kept in a private repository, can no longer be accessed.

2. טודוש כיריאדוש – *All creatures*, a literal prose translation into Spanish of the medieval hymn *מטה ומעלה כול ברואי* *Kol bēru'e*,⁹ sometimes attributed to Salomon ibn Gabirol, which was included, in its original Hebrew version, in the daily prayers of the Sephardi rite among the *baqašot* of the morning service. The Spanish version of *Kol bēru'e* appears in four Cochin manuscripts:

- MS. Cambridge MS. Or. 2242 = Sassoon 455, at f. 92, with the incipit *טודוש כיריאדוש די אריבה*, subtitled as follows: *לחן כל ברואי בלעז* ('on the melody of *kol bēru'e*, in Ladino').
- MS. Roth 33, f. 72b, 16th poem in the section *בקשות*, also subtitled "לחן כל ברואי בלעז".
- MS. Sassoon 465: 22nd poem of the second section, beginning with the words *טודוש כיריאדוש די אריבה*.
- MS. 1391 (former no. 273) of Mossad ha-Rav Kook Library (Jerusalem), dated in the catalogue as nineteenth century; the poem *טודוש כיריאדוש* appears at f. 71.

These manuscript versions, spanning at least two centuries, clearly show that these texts are not an occasional *hapax* in the Cochin rite, but an integral component of the liturgical tradition, until fairly recently, of that community.

Edition of the two poems

This edition of the texts was based on MS. Roth 33 of the Brotherton Library in Leeds and MS. Or. 2242 of the Cambridge University Library (former MS. Sassoon 455). The text edited and transcribed strictly follows that of MS. Roth 33, and indicates in the critical apparatus the variants found in the Cambridge manuscript.

MS. Roth 33 is a volume of 135 folios, sized 160 × 105 mm, with 19 to 21 lines per page, on paper, in poor condition and partially torn at the margins. The manuscript contains: 181 pieces in the section *שירות* – chants (ff. 1–68), 21 *בקשות* – supplications (ff. 69–81) and 17 *תשבחות* – hymns of praise (ff. 82–94), followed by selections of the *Simḥat Torah* service (ff. 95–110), of the

9. Israel Davidson, *Thesaurus of Mediaeval Hebrew Poetry* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924–33), p. 282.

circumcision ceremony (ff. 111–21) and wedding ceremony (ff. 122–46), and some additional poems added on unbound folios. It is written in a semi-cursive Sephardi rabbinical hand, with vowels, catchwords, running titles and foliation of the same hand in Hebrew numerals with ink, and modern pencil foliation in Arab numerals.

Roth dates the manuscript between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century; this date range can be narrowed further. A caption at f. 117b, *יצ"ו מוצאתי בקונטרס ... מורי ... לוי בלילא יצ"ו* indicates that the following poem was found by the copyist in the collection of his master Levi Belila. The abbreviation *יצ"ו* ('may the Lord protect and redeem him') indicates that he was still living when the manuscript was copied. Yet we know, through the dedication, dated 3 March 1688, of a *Seder azharot* printed in Amsterdam for the Jews of Cochin, that one rabbi Levi Belilia (החכם רבי לוי בליליא),¹⁰ who was alive then, patronized that edition and even supplied the manuscripts used by the printer to compose that book.¹¹ Considering the relatively short life expectancy in seventeenth-century Cochin,¹² it is reasonable to posit that our manuscript was copied within a few decades before or after 1688, probably in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. It is therefore roughly contemporaneous with the very similar manuscript Sassoon 455, dated 1694, as noted above.

Since the manuscript was copied in continuous lines, here the verse division is restored. Apart from this one intervention, the original text is reproduced identically to the manuscript. The transliteration into Latin

10. Is our Levi Belilia the same as the 'haham Belilia' whom Paiva, in his account (Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva, *Noticias dos Judeos de Cochim*, Amsterdam, 5447, p. 3), indicates having visited on 22 November 1686, and of whom he says, 'he H. do K. e segundo dizem homem scientifico' ('he is the *hakham* of the *qehila* and is said to be a learned man')? In the list of distinguished Jews he met, he mentions only three Belilias, none with the (first) name *Levi*: 'Haham Rabbi Haim Belilia', at the top of the list; a homonymous 'Haim Belilia hazan sopher'; one David Belilia, from Jerusalem, of unknown profession. Yet Paiva did know Levi B., because he was the one who sent Paiva the *Azharot* in 1688, whose printing was subsequently entrusted to the bookseller Uri Ha-Levi. It should be noted that, to the best of my knowledge, there is no survey of epitaphs from Jewish cemeteries in Kerala, a task that would be of great value to prosopographical studies on this community.

11. See Marvin J. Heller, *The Seventeenth Century Hebrew Book: An Abridged Thesaurus* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 1133, for a description of that Cochin *Seder azh-arot* (Amsterdam: Uri ben Aaron Ha-Levi, 1688). These *Azharot* ('admonitions') are not the well-known homonymous poem by Salomon ibn Gabirol, which has been integrated into the Sephardi service for *Sabu'ot*, but special poems composed by Eliyahu Adeni in Cochin for the *Šemini 'ašeret* service.

12. On average 40 years for adult men in Cochin in the sixteenth century, according to O. Gamiel, 'Textual Crossroads and Transregional Encounters: Jewish Networks in Kerala, 900s–1600s', *Social Orbit* 4:1 (2018), p. 46.

characters presented on the left respects the graphic particularities of the original text, while attempting to produce a readable text. The words are divided based on Spanish usage following the presumed meaning. ך, which never takes *dageš*, is always transcribed *b*, and ן ן. ן, which in the original never carries a *šibolef*, is transcribed as either *ś* or *š*, depending on the presumed phonology, and each time to distinguish it from ם, transcribed *s*. ן, which appears to note both /q/ and /z/, is transcribed as either *g* or *g*. ן is transcribed *k* to differentiate it from ן transcribed *q*. ן may be *p* or *f* depending on the context, these sounds being undifferentiated in the original script, except in the two occurrences of ן surmounted by a *raphe*. As in the rest of the manuscript, the Tetragram, pronounced *adonai* as confirmed by the rhymes, is noted ם (transcribed as *yy*).

MS. Or. 2242 of the Cambridge University Library, described in Sassoon's catalogue under the number 455, appears to have been written by the same hand as MS. Roth 33. The paper, the handwriting, the general layout and the order of liturgical texts are all very similar to those of the former manuscript. Due to its excessive wear, part of folios 92 and 93 is lost; moreover, the paper was so perished that it has been entirely lined both sides with gauze to prevent it falling to pieces. This lining sometimes renders reading unsure; hence the preference given to MS. Roth 33 in the present edition. The texts provided by the Cambridge manuscript differ from MS. Roth 33 by a few orthographical variants, noted below in the critical apparatus. It occasionally inserts ן *yod* or ן *aleph* of no phonetic value, and sometimes interchanges ן *šin* for its equivalent ם *samekh*. In three occurrences, it differentiates /q/ and /z/ by adding a *raphe* sign to letter ן *gimel*. The only significant difference of that manuscript is the addition, at v. 19 of the first poem, of one word, ן *agenoś*, apparently omitted in MS. Roth 33.

1. *Alto Dio de Abraham*

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Alto dio de Abraham | אַלטו דיו דאָברָהם |
| | dio foerti de Israel | דיו פּוֹאַרְטִי דִי יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| | tu qe oisites a Iśma'el | טוֹקִי אֹאִישׁ־יִשְׁמַעֵאל |
| | oia la mi orasion | אֹוִי לָהּ מִי אֹוֹרְסִיוֹן |
| 5 | mandamuś la salvasion | מַנְדַּאמוֹשׁ לָהּ סַאֲלֻסִּיוֹן |
| | yy dio de fonsadoś | יִי דִיו דִי פּוֹנְסַאדוֹשׁ |
| | por dizer con mais razon | פּוֹר דִּזִּיר קוֹן מַאִיס רַאזוֹן |
| | el qantar de loś digrador[s]. | אֵיל קַאנְטַאָר דִּילוֹשׁ דִּיגְרַאדוֹר: |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| | Tu qe en la noble altura | טוקי אין לה נובלי אלטורה |
| 10 | te apuzantaste śnior oia a iste peqador qe te leiama di bašura tu qe a toda qiriatura abres qaminos i foentis | טי אפוזאנטאשטי שניגור אוני אאישטי פקאדור קטיליאמה די באשורה טוקי אטודה קיריאטורה אבריס קאמינוס אי פואינטיס |
| 15 | alše mis oguś a loś montiś dondi verna mi aiura. | אלשימיס אוגוש אלוש מונטיש דונדי וירנה מי אייורה: |
| | Śnior livramuś de gerra poes qe śomus de tu śenoś de adurar de iogus | שנייר ליברמוש דיגירה פואיש קישמוס די טושינוש די אדוראר די יוגוש |
| 20 | qoza qe el onberi tantu iera qonfesu qe en mi i insiara geran peqadu qi en mi ai mi aiuda di qon γγ fazien loś siełoś i tiera. | קוזה קי איל אונברי טנטו ירה קונפסו קי אין מי אי אינסירה גראן פיקאדו קי אין מי אאי מי איודה דיקון יי פאזיין לוש סילוש אי טירה: |
| 25 | Ben se qe somusu inorme i qe peqe qontera ti alnemrati γγ de mi bašta qi su figu di ombri śnior por ti santu nombri | בין שי קישו מושו אינרמי אימי פיקי קונטרה טי אלנמראטי יי די מי באשטה קישופיגו די אומברי שניור פורטי טנטו נונברי |
| 30 | tu mi libraś de turmentu non dan a toś pieś reśfuementu tu goardador no še adurmira. | טומי ליברש די טורמינטו נון דאן אטוש פייש רישפואימינטו טו גוארדאדור נושי אדורמירה: |
| | Porfizitu Daniel la vinida del maśiaħ | פור פיי זיטו דניאל לה וינידה דיל משיח |
| 35 | senior mandalu en noeśtroś dias poes qe nos temus de fiel no meres a este revel tu poeblu qe no lo merese qe no doereme ni še adurmise | שניור מאנדלו אין נואישטרוש דיאס פואיש קי נוסטי מוש די פיל נומירש אאישטי רויל טו פואיבלו קי נו לו מיריסי קי נוו דואירימינשי אדורמיסי |
| 40 | goardador de Ísrael. | גוארדאדור די ישראל: |

מונטיש | C אונגוש | C אלשימיש 15 || C קיריאטורה 13 || C די 12 || C מאיש 7 || C מנדאמוש 5 || C די 1
C || C אייודה 23 || C אונברי טאנטו 20 || C יוגוש אגיגוש 19 || C ליברמוס | C שניור 17 || C אייודה 16 || C
C || C רייל 37 || C מאנדאלו 35 || C אדורמירה 32 || C שניור 28 || C פיגו 28 || C אלנמראטי 27 || C קונטרה

Although it undeniably evokes motifs from traditional Jewish prayer, and in particular from *selihot*,¹³ there is no direct equivalent of this long Spanish supplication in the Hebrew liturgy. However, this Cochin text is not a *hapax*: it appears to be a longer version of a text attested, in Latin letters, in Iberian sources: a prayer that seems to have occupied a central place in

the clandestine liturgy devised by Spanish and Portuguese Crypto-Jews.¹⁴ In versions that are shorter but largely overlapping with the Cochin text, this prayer is widely attested in the inquisitorial documentation from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, among the prayers that those accused of Judaism admitted to knowing and reciting. Liebman published two versions discovered in Inquisition trials in Mexico, one in Portuguese, drawn from the depositions of Diego Díaz Nieto in 1596, and the other in Spanish, drawn from the trial of Catalina Henríquez in 1643, a Sevillian woman of Portuguese descent, who was 80 years old at the time of her deposition, whereupon she confessed to having been ‘indoctrinated into Judaism’ by her Portuguese husband.¹⁵ A very similar version to the 1596 one is found in a Coimbra Inquisition trial in the late sixteenth century, reported by the Portuguese defendant Bernardo Lopes, from Trancoso, who stated that he learned it from his father, a New Christian.¹⁶ Manuel da Costa Fontes mentions a Lisbon version from 1674 and a Coimbra version from 1584.¹⁷ In the twentieth century, Amílcar Paulo even recorded a modern version in the oral tradition of the Crypto-Jews of Felgueiras, in northern Portugal,¹⁸ and David Canelo recorded yet another from the better-known Belmonte Crypto-Jews.¹⁹ The latter version, reproduced here alongside the Liebman transcriptions, differs significantly from the others, if only due to the many

14. The clandestine rituals of the *conversos*, cut off from the normative practice of rabbinic Judaism, included a special liturgy, in Spanish and Portuguese, mostly inspired by the Old Testament and passed on orally; for comprehensive studies on this subject, see A. Salah, ‘The Liturgy of Portuguese Conversos’, in J.P. Decter and A.P. Oliván (eds), *The Hebrew Bible in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 201–22; the classic study by C. Roth, ‘The Religion of the Marranos’, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 22 (1931–32), pp. 1–22.

15. Seymour B. Liebman, *Jews in New Spain* (Coral Gables FL: University of Miami Press, 1970), pp. 155–6. The same texts were partially cited by Moshe Lazar, ‘Scorched Parchments and Tortured Memories: The ‘Jewishness’ of the Anusim (Crypto-Jews)’, in M.E. Perry and A.J. Cruz, *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 176–206, p. 189.

16. ‘Alto deus de abraão, rei forte de israel, tu que ouviste ismael, ouve a minha oração, tu que nas altas alturas te aposentaste ... ouve-me a mim pecador que estou nestas baixuras; Tu que a toda a criatura, abres caminhos e pontes. ... alcei meus olhos aos montes donde virá minha ajuda; ... deitemo-nos agora e cada hora em poder de adonai que ... muitas são as piedades para nos haver de apiedar,’ Torre do Tombo archives, trial no. 8198 of the Coimbra Inquisition, cited by Maria José Ferro Tavares, ‘Os judeus da Beira Interior: a comuna de Trancoso e a entrada da Inquisição’, *Sefarad* 68:2 (2008), p. 407.

17. Manuel da Costa Fontes, ‘Orações criptojudias na tradição oral portuguesa’, *Hispania* 74:3 (1991), pp. 511–18; revised article republished as ‘Duas novas orações criptojudias de Rebordelo’, *Gávea-Brown: A Bilingual Journal of Portuguese-American Letters and Studies* 19–20 (1999), pp. 26–53.

18. Amílcar Paulo, *Os Judeus Secretos em Portugal* (Oporto: Editorial Labirinto, 1985), p. 105.

19. David A. Canelo, *Os Últimos Criptojudus em Portugal* (Belmonte: Centro de Cultura Pedro Álvares Cabral, 1987), pp. 136–7.

corrupted passages and the omission of the incipit and several other lines, but it still strikingly corresponds to the Cochin version.

| Portuguese version from the trial of Diego Díaz Nieto in 1596 | Spanish version from the trial of Catalina Henriquez in 1643 | Modern Crypto-Jewish version from Belmonte, recorded by Canelo |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Alto Dio de Abraham, Rey forte de Israel, tu que ouuiste a Ismael, ouue a minha oração; tu que en las grandes alturas te aposentas Señor, ouue a esta pecadora que te chama das bas juras; pois tu que a todas criaturas abres caminos e fontes alzo meus ellos aos montes donde dira minha ajuda minha ajuda de con Adonay a que fez ho ceu e ha terra libranos de tanta guerra pues que somes os teuos seyes de adorar ed Dioses allheuos coisa en que tanto ho me encerra eu confesso que en mi se encerra gran pecado que en mi ay minha ajuda do con Adonai El que fez o ceu y a terra.</p> | <p>Oh, Alto Dios de Abraham, Dios fuerte, Dios de Israel, tu que oíste a Daniel, oye mi oración; tu que en las grandes alturas te pusiste, mi Señor, oye aquesta pecadora que te llama de las basuras; tú que a toda criatura abres caminos y fuentes; alce mis ojos a los montes, donde vendrá mi ayuda. Yo bien sé que en mi se encierra gran pecado que en mi hay. Mi ayuda de Adonay, que hizo cielos y tierra; Santo(s) Dios, fuerte Dios, misericordioso Dios immortal, Habed misericordia de mi, Señor.</p> | <p>Senhor que estais nessas santas, divinas alturas, a ensinar estas criaturas, a ouvir este grande pecador, chamado das baixuras. Senhor, avé criaturas, abre caminhos e fontes, Lancei meus olhos aus céus e aos montes, lá verei do Senhor minha ajuda. Com a ajuda de Adonai, sobre o céu e a terra, Senhor livrai-me da guerra. Adonadas alheias é coisa em que muito erro, em querer caminhos se encerram. Minhas malícias não me enganam, não sejam acuidadas, para diante do verdadeiro Altíssimo Senhor me dê tudo por perdoado. Amén, Senhor, ao céu vá, ao céu chegue!</p> |

Several passages from the Cochin text with no equivalent in these three states of the text can be found in other versions. Lines 17–18 ‘*Śinior livramoś de gerra / pues qe ōmus de tu ōenos*’, 26 ‘*i qe peqe qontera ti*’, and 28, ‘*bašta qi su figu di ombri*’, are recombined in a passage from a 1583 Coimbra version: ‘*Tira me de tanta guerra / poys que somos do teu ver / povo que arrevelle e adormece / abaste que sou filho de homem e de molher / que pequei diante de Ti / ha piedade de mym e de todo o filho d’Israel*’.²⁰ The final reference to Daniel’s prophecy and the coming of the Messiah (lines 33–35) is found in later versions. At the end of the 1674 Lisbon version cited by Costa Fontes,

20. Elvira Mea, ‘Orações judaicas na Inquisição Portuguesa: século XVI’, in Y. Kaplan (ed.), *Jews and Conversos: Studies in Society and the Inquisition* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies / Magnes Press, 1985), pp. 160–61 n. 24.

these very similar lines are found: ‘Dâ-me ajuda e favores / que prometeste a Daniel / esta vinda do Messias / seja, Senhor, em nossos dias.’

All of these versions incorporate more or less modified fragments of the Spanish translation of Psalm 121 (which, in addition, was often known and recited by Crypto-Jews²¹): it is in the Cochin version that these borrowings, even preceded by an announcement of the quotation from the ‘Song of Ascents’, are the most extensive and systematic. In fact, the first four verses of the psalm are integrated in the form of the last two lines of each stanza of the supplication: after the announcement in line 8, lines 15–16 correspond to verse 1, lines 23–24 to verse 2, lines 31–32 cite verse 3 with the hemistiches reversed, and lines 39–40 verse 4.²² The regularity of this composition and its preservation in the Cochin version, which is the only one to reveal its structure intact, suggest that, of all the preserved versions of this prayer, this one is not only the longest, but also one of the closest to a possible archetype. A few emendations could be made to closer approximate the archetype: the rhyme seems to indicate that lines 7–8 have been inverted; line 32, the rhyme with line 25 and the extra length of the verse suggest that the original may have had *adurme* rather than *adurmira*.

With this Spanish supplication, the Malabar Jewish liturgy therefore provides a twofold philological interest: (1) a textual state of this important Marrano prayer which is certainly much more original and complete than the various oral versions spoken by the defendants in earlier inquisitorial depositions and the later oral tradition of Portuguese Crypto-Jews; (2) a unique, unparalleled case – even within the (para-)liturgies of Western Sephardi (former New Christian) communities – of incorporation into an organized Jewish community’s liturgical corpus of a text attested in the Peninsular Crypto-Jewish liturgical tradition such as it is known through the Inquisition trials.

21. Charles Amiel, ‘Les cent voix de Quintanar. Le modèle castillan du marranisme’, *Revue de l’histoire des religions* 218:4 (2001), pp. 555–6. Amiel found this text in Spanish Inquisition trials.

22. For the sake of comparison, we provide here the first four verses of Psalm 121 as translated in the Spanish version of Ferrara: 1. *Alçare mis ojos a los montes: de donde verna mi ayuda.* 2. *Mi ayuda de con A. faziên cielos y tierra.* 3. *No dara a resvalo tu pie: no se adormecera tu guardador.* 4. *He no se adormecera y no dormira guardan Ysrael (Libro de oracyones de todo el año, [Ferrara], 5312 [1552], ff. 72b–73a; cf. the next note).*

2. *Todos kiriados*

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Todoś kiriadoś de arriba i bašu aitestigoaran denosieran todoś elios komo unu 4 yy unu su nombre unu.</p> | <p>טודוש כיריאָדוּשׁ דִּי אַרְיָבָה אִי בָאָשׁוּ אַיִטִּיקְסִיגִוְאַרְן דִּינִוִּסְיִרְן טודוש אֱלִיּוֹשׁ כּוֹמוֹ אֹנֹנֹ יְיִ אֹנֹנֹ סוֹ נֹמְבְּרִי אֹנֹנֹ:</p> |
| <p>Tirinta i doś sendieroś de tu kamino i todo intantien su segretu rekontaran tu gerandeza i elioś qunseren qe lo todo tuio 8 i tu el dio el rei el aunado.</p> | <p>טירינְטָה אִי דּוֹשׁ סְנְדִיאֲרוֹשׁ דִּי טוֹ כְּמִינוֹ אִי טוֹדוֹ אִינְטִנְטִיִּין סוֹ סִיגְרִיטוֹ רִיבֹנְטֶאֶרְאַן טוֹ גֶרְנְדִיזָה אִי אֱלִיּוֹשׁ קֹנְסִירְן קִילוֹ טוֹדוֹ טוִיוֹ אִי טוֹ אֵיל דִּיוֹ אֵיל רִיאִי אֵיל אֶאֹנְדוֹ:</p> |
| <p>qorosones en su pensar^c mundu perguntadu aliaron todo afoieras de ti demudado kon qonta qon pezu lo todo kuntadu 12 todoś elioś foeron dadoś de pastor unu.</p> | <p>קורוסֹנֶס אֵין סוֹ פִּינְסֶאָרָה מֹנְדוֹ פִּיגִוְאַדוֹ אַלִּיָּרוֹן טוֹדוֹ אֶפֶזִּירְס דִּי טִי דִּימֹנְדֶאדוֹ כּוֹן קֹנְטָה קֹן פִּיזוֹ לוֹ טוֹדוֹ כּוֹנְטֶאדוֹ טודוש אֱלִיּוֹשׁ פּוֹאֲירוֹן דֶּאדוֹשׁ דִּי פֶּסְטוֹר אֹנֹנֹ:</p> |
| <p>De persipio fasta fin ai a ti sinal norte i punieti i aurien ai sul sielo i mundu atestigu fiel 16 di aqi unu.</p> | <p>דִּי פִּרְסִיפִיוֹ פֶּסְטָה פִּין אַאי אִטי סִינָאל נֹרְטִי אִי פּוֹנְטִי אִי אֶאֹרְיִין אַאי סוֹל סִילוֹ אִי מֹנְדוֹ אֶטִּיקְסִיגוֹ פִּיֶּל דִּי אַקִּי אֹנֹנֹ:</p> |
| <p>Lo todo de ti foi fadaro afadar tu istaras i elioś si reperderan de perder por tando kiriado dara ti onra 20 de pirsipio fasta kabu di ser tu padre unu.</p> | <p>לוֹ טוֹדוֹ דִּי טִי פּוִי פֶּדְרוֹ אֶפֶדָּאר טוֹ אִיקְסֶאֶרְס אִי אֱלִיּוֹשׁ סִרִּיפִירְדִּירְן דִּי פִּירְדִּיר פּוֹר טְנָדוֹ כִּירִיאָדוֹ דֶּאֶרָה טִי אֹנְרָה דִּי פִּרְסִיפִיוֹ פֶּסְטָה כֶּאבּוֹ דִּי סִירְטוֹ פֶּדְרִי אֹנֹנֹ</p> |

C. כאבו 20 || C סִדִּיפִירְדִּירְן 18 || C דִּי 16 || C כּוֹנְטֶאדוֹ 11 || C קֹנְסִירְן 7 || C בָּאָשׁוּ 1

This text warrants less commentary than the previous one: translated from a well-known Hebrew text, *Kol bēru'e*, it is closely related to the version found in the Spanish translation of the Jewish prayers printed in Ferrara in 1552 and widely reprinted and circulated for two centuries in the Western Sephardi communities. The refrain is identical, and the verses differ only slightly. For comparison, the version printed in 1552²³ is reproduced below, with the deviations or omitted passages in the Cochin version italicized:

Todos criados de arriba y abaxo,
Atestiguan, denuncian, todos ellos como uno.
A. uno y su nombre uno.

Treynta y dos *carreras* tu *sendero*,
Y todo entendien su secreto *recontan* a tu grandeza,
Y ellos conosceran que el todo tuyo

בקשות

ישעשענו ענינים וישמחה : גדלנו ליה ארץ גדרות ומעב אלו
יחדיו :
למן כל כחאי : עליו

מודוש כי רי אלוש די אהבך או באשו איניסטיעו
ארן די טוסייבן מודוש אלנוש כולו אננו
די אננו סונכותרי אננו : טוירינגטק אידוש סגדה איקש
די טו כליטנו אי טודו אינטנגיין סוסיגריטנו ריכוכטראץ
טו גרנדיזק אי אלנוש קונטקירן קילנו טודו טונו איטוואל
דיו אינל ריא אינל אאנדו : קורוסונס אין סופינגטארק
טונדו פירגו אדו אלירן טודו אפויירק דימדי
טודאלו כון קונטק קון פירזו לו טודו כונטמאדו טודוש
אלנוש פואירן דאלוש די פסטור אננו : די פירסיפיו ז
פסטק פין אחי אטי סיפאל נורמי או פונטיטי או אאוהין
אאיסול סייל או טונדו איניסטיעו פויל די אקי אננו :
לו טודו די טו פווי פדכו אפדאר טו איסטארק אי ז
אינוש סיה פירדירן די פירדיר פור טנדו כיה אלו
דארק מי אונרם די פירסיפיו פסטק באכו די סירטו
פדו אננו

לך אורב אדון עולם ככל יעני ואם לילם ראובן
פוע אאר טולם כוואערך יקוא נעלם : ז
וחוללק זכול נפשי וגם בדוק עלי ראשי וכו נקבע
עמור

FIGURE 1 Todos kiriyados, MS. Roth 33 (Brotherton Library, Leeds), f. 72b.

Y tu el Dio el rey el *unico*.

Coraçones en su pensar mundo *edificado*
Fallan todo *seer* afueras de ti demudado,
Por cuenta, *por* peso *el* todo contado:
Todas ellas fueron dadas de pastor uno.

De principio y fasta fin *es* a ti señal
Septentrion y *Ocidente*, y Oriente y *Meridion*;
Y cielo y mundo a ti testigo fiel
De a qui uno y *de a qui* uno.

El todo de ti fue *apartado* *apartando* ;
Tu estaras y ellos se *deperderan* *deperdiẽdo*;
Por tanto *todo* *formado* dara a ti honrra
Qual *el* de principio y fasta *fin* *salvo* padre uno.

The divergences from the Ferrara text are minimal and consist essentially of synonymic substitutions or omissions, which point to oral transmission between the printed text and its echo in the Malabar liturgy.²⁴ As with the other prayer, the vector of introduction may have been the Crypto-Jewish liturgy: we know that the Spanish version from Ferrara was known to the New Christians in Iberia. It is found, for example, in the depositions of an Inquisition trial in Mallorca in 1678.²⁵ The choice of this prayer and its retention in the Cochin liturgy are not trivial: as Herman P. Salomon rightly noted in explaining the predilection that Portuguese Jews had for this text, ‘its popularity among Sephardim, and specifically among the ex-Marranos, is easy to understand. Surely there exists no other single Hebrew poem which expresses so succinctly and so dramatically the unalterable unity of God.’²⁶

Linguistic analysis of the texts

The graphic system applied to Spanish is peculiar, and frequently deviates from the traditional systems used for Spanish written in Hebrew characters.

24. Which thus precludes any direct written transmission; furthermore, while it is true that the Amsterdam community sent printed books to the Jews of Cochin, the lists that have been preserved mention only works in Hebrew (J.B. Segal, *A History of the Jews of Cochin* [London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1993], p. 43).

25. Lazar, ‘Scorched Parchments’, p. 192, with the identical incipit ‘Todos criados de arriba [y] abaxo’.

26. Salomon, ‘Was There a Traditional Spanish Translation’, p. 79.

Here, [k] is often represented by כ *kaf* instead of ק *qof* according to common usage. The vocalization systematically uses vowel points (*niqqud*) rather than *matres lectionis*, and these are often omitted, but not in any consistent way. Thus, in a single text, Spanish *señor* is spelt differently each time it occurs: שׂינײר, שׂינײר, שׂינײר, שׂינײר. The *raphe* is used irregularly and sometimes without any reason at all (one occurrence of ר̄). The word divisions often do not follow understandable semantic principles, especially in the first text, and may suggest that the copyist did not fully grasp the syntax and the meaning of the text.

As for the language, both texts are written in the variety of Spanish (Ladino) unique to the calque translations of Hebrew of which the Ferrara translations are the prototype. Even *Alto Dio de Abraham*, without strictly being a translation from the Hebrew, contains stylemes unique to this somehow artificial language: *dio de fonsados* to render עֲבָדוֹת יי 'God of the armies', archaic present participles such as *fazien* for עוֹשֶׂה 'doing'.²⁷ The texts do not incorporate any loanword from Hebrew, except one pseudo-Hebraism: in *Alto Dio*, line 34, מַשִּׁיחַ *mašīah* 'Messiah' is written with Hebrew orthography, but the rhyme with *dias* on the following line suggests that it was meant to be pronounced as Spanish *mesías*, at least in an earlier stage of the text.

Both texts contain morphological and phonetic features that differ from the literary Spanish of the end of the seventeenth century and point to earlier, pre-standardized stages of the language. The forms *figu* 'son' (Modern Spanish *hijo*) and *bašu* 'low' (Modern Spanish *bajo* with [-x-]) did not undergo the consonantic shift that occurred in Spanish during the seventeenth century. Morphology exhibits non-standard features such as metathesized *verna* 'will come (P₃)' (Modern Spanish *vendra*) or P₄ reflexive pronoun *mos*, in the examples *mandamuś* 'send us' (Cambridge MS. *mandamoś*) and *livramuś* 'free us' (Modern Spanish *nos*). Their presence in our texts demonstrates that the texts eluded any later revision or attempt to align them with the evolution of the language by eliminating their obsolescent features. All these features also exist in Ottoman Judeo-Spanish, where they were retained much longer than in the peninsula, and we cannot exclude the hypothesis of a later influence from speakers of these dialects.

27. On this 'calqued Judeo-Spanish' of the sixteenth-century Jewish translations, it is still worthwhile to consult the description in Haïm V. Sephiha, *Le Ladino (judéo-espagnol calque): structure et évolution d'une langue liturgique* (Paris: Association Vidas Largas, 1979).

Some cases of interference with Portuguese can be detected: *mais* ‘more’ (Portuguese *mais* / Spanish *mas*), *dizer* ‘to say’ (Portuguese *dizer* / Spanish *decir*), *alнемrati* ‘remember (imp. P2)’ (Portuguese *alembra-te* / Spanish *membra*); nearly systematic closing of post-tonic final /e/ in /i/: *foentis*, *montis* for Spanish *fuentes*, *montes*, of pre-tonic /e/ in /i/ (*digrador* for Spanish *degradados*, *istaras* for Spanish *estaras*) and of post-tonic final /o/ in /u/ (*passim*, for example *poebllu* for Spanish *pueblo*), and sometimes even in pre-tonic position: *apuzantaste* for *apostante*, *turmentu* for *tormento*. These suggest that the texts, at some point in their tradition, were transmitted orally by people who were more familiar with Portuguese than with the Spanish of the texts.

Then there are features that can be explained neither by archaism nor by Portuguese influence:

- epenthesis in proximity to /r/: *geran* for *gran*, *onberi* for *hombre* (but elsewhere, *ombri*), *qontera* for *contra*, *doereme* for *duerme*, *kiriadoś* for *criados*, *tirinta* for *treinta*, *gerandeza* for *grandeza*, and so on. This phenomenon can surely be explained by the influence of Malayalam, as the same type of adaptation can be found in words previously borrowed in Malayalam: compare, for instance, the borrowings from Portuguese during the same era as our texts, കുരിശ് *kuriśū* ‘cross’ < Portuguese *cruz*, പാതരി *pāthiri* ‘priest’ < Portuguese *padre*.²⁸
- metathesis, sometimes several instances per word: *porfizitu* for *profetizó*, *intantien* for *entienden* (with consonantal assimilation). Once again, the phenomenon can be traced back to Malayalam; compare രാത്രി *rānthal* ‘lantern’ < Portuguese *lanterna*.
- simplification of consonant clusters /ns/ and /nt/: *denosieran* for *denuncieran*, *punieti* for *poniente*, *persipio* for *principio* (with metathesis), here also attributable to the influence of Malayalam, which does not have /ns/ or /nt/ clusters in medial position.²⁹ It is the same phonetic adaptation needed to explain the form *tando* < Spanish *tanto*.

The absence of a graphic distinction between *p* and *f* (except in two occurrences of פ) might also be due to the influence of Malayalam, whose

28. These and the following examples are drawn from K.M. George, *Western Influence on Malayalam Language and Literature* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1972), esp. pp. 26, 247 et seq.

29. Ronald E. Asher and T.C. Kumari, *Malayalam (Descriptive Grammars)* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 426.

phonological system has no phoneme /f/, consistently adapted into /p/ or /p^h/ in early borrowings.³⁰ All of these features enable us to hypothesize that, before it was written down, the tradition of our texts was based on Malayalam speakers.

Finally, there are various corruptions: *digrador* for *degradados*, *fadaro* possibly for *fadado*, *aiura* for *ayuda* (in the latter case, this form, which is absent from the Cambridge MS, may have just been a copyist's error due to the similarity between ט and כ, or an attempt to enrich the rhyme with *qiriatura* at line 13), which might attest to the erosion of texts that were recited, repeated and transmitted by people who neither spoke nor understood the language in which they were composed.³¹

These linguistic features, deviations from the print versions in the case of *Todos kiriados*, confirm the view that these two texts were transmitted orally, by speakers of Portuguese and/or Malayalam, up until their transcription at the end of the seventeenth century, likely by a copyist skilled in Hebrew, surely also conversant in Malayalam, yet obviously not accustomed to writing Spanish in Hebrew characters.

How can we explain the presence of these texts in the liturgy of the Jews of Cochin? A certain historiographic tradition³² minimizes, overlooks, even strongly denies the existence of direct Iberian influence in the Judaism of the Malabar Coast. This tradition relies particularly on the renowned 1688 account of the Cochin Jews by Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva, the *Notisias dos Judeos de Cochim*, which makes no mention of any Spanish or Portuguese origin among the few families it lists, and on the local tradition of a community

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 406, 422.

31. This was still possible among the Jews of Cochin into the twentieth century: Seroussi, 'The Singing of the Sephardi Piyyut', p. 238, reports having heard them, in Nevatim, Israel, reciting without understanding anything of the Turkish refrain of an Ottoman *piyyut* incorporated into one of their modern print rituals (החונה וברית מילה), ספר שירות למועדים, שבתות, החונה וברית מילה), Nevatim, 1963, pp. 186–7).

32. Represented by O. Gamliel (e.g. 'Back from Shingly: Revisiting the Premodern History of Jews in Kerala', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 55:1 [2018], pp. 53–76), as well as by Nathan Katz and Ellen S. Goldberg, 'The Sephardi Diaspora in Cochin, India', *Jewish Political Studies Review* 5:3–4 (1993), pp. 97–140, whose misleading title is explained by the fact that it uses the word *Sephardi* to refer to Jews from Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Yemen. For an overview of the general bibliography on the Jews of Cochin and of recent scholarly developments in all fields of historical and social sciences, see especially Barbara C. Johnson, 'New Research, Discoveries and Paradigms: A Report on the Current Study of Kerala Jews', in N. Katz, R. Chakravarti, B.M. Sinha and S. Weil (eds), *Indo-Judaic Studies in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 129–46.

whose ‘white Jewish’ families, known as *Paradesi*, usually do not pass for having substantially preserved any memory of Iberian origins.³³

But there evidently was an Iberian contribution to Kerala Judaism, not only demographic but also cultural. In fact, this contribution was twofold. First of all, there was certainly no lack of Spanish and Portuguese people among the official community of ‘white’ Jews who openly practised the religion of Moses there in the sixteenth century: from the very start of that century, we know there was a Sul family from Setúbal, as well as Real and Narbona families, not to mention the many families who came from the Ottoman Empire who must have spoken Spanish or may have even been born on the Iberian Peninsula.³⁴ In addition, from the time of the Portuguese conquest of Cochin in 1503, these professed Jews were joined by (semi-) clandestine Judaizers, the Portuguese New Christians. Their presence is well documented, as early as 1529, when several families of *conversos* were already present, including the Rodrigues, Olivares, Nunes, Costa, Vaz and Rodrigues ‘Boquinhas’ families.³⁵ These people, who sometimes passed through Goa, chose to settle permanently in the lower city of Cochin – a Portuguese zone and therefore Catholic – separated from the upper Indian city where the official Jews lived. Yet the boundary between the two groups, although geographically separated, was porous and a number of New Christians tried to blend in with the group of professed Jews. An Inquisition trial reveals that a New Christian woman named Leonor Caldeira, a Jewish merchant of Spanish origin baptized in Lisbon in 1497 and who had settled in the lower town of Cochin in 1535 after transiting through Goa, recognized a white Jew from the upper town as a former tailor from Castelo de Vide!³⁶ As Tavim rightly wrote: ‘Parece

33. Since at least the sixteenth century the Jews of Cochin have been divided into three castes of identical rite but differentiated by skin colour, including a dominant group of ‘white Jews’, also known as *Paradesi* (in Malayalam, ‘foreigners’): David G. Mandelbaum, ‘The Jewish Way of Life in Cochin’, *Jewish Social Studies* 1:4 (1939), pp. 423–60 (for a more modern approach to the history of racial distinctions among the Jews of Cochin, see Jonathan Schorsch, *Jews and Blacks in the Early Modern World* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004], pp. 204ff.). On the origin narratives collected since the seventeenth century by European travellers from the Jews of Cochin, see Walter J. Fischel, ‘The Exploration of the Jewish Antiquities of Cochin on the Malabar Coast’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87:3 (1967), pp. 230–48.

34. José-Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, *Judeus e cristãos-novos de Cochim: História e memória* (Braga: APPACDM, 2003), pp. 172–3.

35. Lúcio de Sousa, ‘Judaico-*Converso* Merchants in the Private Trade between Macao and Manila in the Early Modern Period’, *Revista de Historia Económica/Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 38:3 (2020), pp. 519–52, p. 523.

36. Tavim, *Judeus*, pp. 173, 260.

que houve uma maior aproximação entre cristãos-novos e judeus *brancos* porque partilhavam um fundo civilisacional comum (inclusivamente ao nível das práticas religiosas) [It seems that there was greater proximity between New Christians and white Jews because they shared a common civilizational background (including at the level of religious practices)].³⁷ We also know that there existed at least one professed Cochin Jew, ‘Isaac o Pequeno’, himself Portuguese, who ‘taught’ the Jewish religion to his fellow Portuguese New Christians.³⁸ In the Portuguese city, Leonor Caldeira herself ‘represented the memory of the Sephardic traditions, knowledge that guaranteed her a central place in the community, instructing Judaeo-converso families on Jewish rituals’,³⁹ and the inquisitorial trials even recorded samples of Spanish elegies sung at funeral ceremonies held in her home.⁴⁰

The establishment of an Inquisition tribunal in Cochin in 1557 and then, in 1560, of the better-known one in Goa,⁴¹ which had jurisdiction over all the Portuguese Indies (and was abolished only in 1812), did not, as one might have thought,⁴² lead to the departure of all the Portuguese New Christians from Cochin;⁴³ nor did it prevent the arrival of new Iberian immigrants with Judaizing tendencies. For the city of Cochin alone, the *Reportorio* by the Inquisitor João Delgado Figueira lists 23 New Christians accused of the crime of Judaism between 1562 and 1623.⁴⁴ Now, even if one might doubt the veracity of the accusations of Judaism against the Portuguese New Christians here as elsewhere,⁴⁵ it is proven that many of these individuals

37. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

39. Sousa, ‘Judaeo-Converso Merchants’, p. 523.

40. J.-A. Tavim, “‘Las palomas a volar, mi amor bueno’: Cultura sefardí en un puerto índio del siglo XVI: Cochin’, *Ladinar* 7–8 (2014), pp. 67–80, p. 75.

41. Primarily due to Charles Dellon’s famous 1687 *Relation de l’Inquisition de Goa* (critical edition by C. Amiel and A. Lima [Paris: Éditions Chandeign, 1997]).

42. Sousa, ‘Judaeo-Converso Merchants’, p. 525, states, for example, that ‘the Sephardic community of Cochin was never able to recover, being closely watched by the Inquisition of Goa’.

43. It seems that only about twenty of them actually left, in 1557, to be tried in Lisbon: P. Malekandathil, ‘The Jews of Cochin and the Portuguese: 1498–1663’, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 62 (2001), pp. 239–55, p. 246.

44. J.-A. Tavim, ‘Um inquisidor inquirido: João Delgado Figueira e o seu *Reportorio*, no contexto da “documentação sobre a Inquisição de Goa”’, *Leituras: Revista da Biblioteca Nacional* 1 (1997), pp. 183–93.

45. Refer to the fundamental study by A.J. Saraiva, *The Marrano Factory: The Portuguese Inquisition and Its New Christians, 1536–1765* (trans., rev. and augmented by H.P. Salomon and I.S.D. Sassoon [original title: *Inquisição e Cristãos-Novos*]; Leiden: Brill, 2001), and the many works by H.P. Salomon, whose conclusions call into question the sincerity of the depositions of Jewish suspects in the Inquisition trials.

took an active part in the Jewish ceremonies. Not only did the Cochin New Christians have their own Spanish liturgy, especially for funerals,⁴⁶ but they also celebrated the normative rites: an Inquisition trial of 1558 reported that the professed Jews of Cochin met – rather than in a synagogue in the upper city – in the house of the New Christian Diogo Vaz to celebrate the Sabbath service in Hebrew and Portuguese/Spanish.⁴⁷ Similar contact also happened in the opposite direction,⁴⁸ and it was certainly even due to the New Christians that some desecration rituals of Christian symbols were introduced into the practices of the professed Jews – rituals which in theory were completely unknown to normative Judaism but were still occasionally practised by the Jews of Cochin into the twentieth century.⁴⁹ In contrast, among the professed Jews, the Iberian component would predominate: in 1583, the Dutch navigator Jan Huygen van Linschoten reported that the Cochin Jews ‘speak a good and very perfect Spanish’, and in 1606 Admiral Paul van Caerden wrote of them ‘that they had beautiful women ... who spoke good Spanish’.⁵⁰ To retain their language until the early seventeenth century among a majority of Malayalam-speaking local Jews, and even to be noticed by observers traveling through, Iberian Jews must have been a substantial demographic presence.

Why was the memory of such connections between Jews and Portuguese lost, along with the memory of the New Christian influence and ultimately that of the *Hispanidad* of the Jews of Cochin? Tavim concludes by asserting that the Portuguese past was perfectly obscured from the collective memory of the white *Paradesi* Jews of Cochin, as if ‘withdrawn from the archival records’.⁵¹ He explains it as a consequence of the hated image associated

46. Tavim, *Judeus*, pp. 250–54. Inquisition trials have preserved some samples, including elegies which exhibit some similarities with those of the Spanish Jews of Morocco and further east (Northern Africa, the Middle East, etc.).

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 255.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 246–9; see also Malekandathil, ‘The Jews of Cochin’, p. 245; for a precise description of these rituals and their survival in modern practices in Cochin, see J.-A. Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, ‘Purim in Cochin at the Middle of the Sixteenth Century According to Lisbon’s Inquisition Trials’, *Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies* 11 (2010), pp. 7–24.

50. J.B. Segal, ‘White and Black Jews at Cochin, the Story of a Controversy’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1983), pp. 228–52, p. 234. Mandelslo, in 1639, also described two Jewish communities in Goa, one Indian and one Spanish-speaking (Adam Olearius, *The Travels of John Albert de Mandelslo from Persia into the East-Indies*, vol. 2 [London: Printed for John Starkey and Thomas Basset, 1669], p. 86).

51. Tavim, *Judeus*, pp. 439, 423–4.

with the Portuguese, considered in collective memory as destroyers and persecutors. It seems reasonable to posit, in my view, that the establishment of the Inquisition in Cochin and then in Goa in 1560 hastened or at least contributed to this process of wilful forgetting: the Inquisition, as is well known, did not target Jews who had always been Jews, but those who had been baptized and returned (or converted) to Judaism. In this regard, any Iberian origin could have made a Jew suspicious in the eyes of Inquisitors, and so discreetly blending in with the majority of native Jews or those from other regions would have been opportune. Such precaution might also explain Paiva's silence on the Portuguese families in Cochin:⁵² even though the city had been under Dutch rule since 1663, the Inquisition was never far away and there was still reason to worry. Who better than a Portuguese Jew from Amsterdam could have understood such danger? Quick to adapt to the circumstances, the collective memory of the group would ultimately make the troublesome, even dangerous, memory⁵³ of an ancestral *Hispanidad* disappear, and only the liturgy, out of sight of the Inquisitors, could crystallize the memory of the Marrano past of the Jews of Cochin.

These two Spanish texts from Kerala – far from being some random curiosity, or even more so an inexplicable textual happenstance – are the concrete evidence, in the liturgical practice, of a past that has been partially obscured from collective memory. They are tangible proof that something remained of the Portuguese experience and of the Iberian Crypto-Jewish contribution to Judaism in India. In the history and traditions of the numerous Sephardi communities that emerged from the return to Judaism of former Spanish and Portuguese conversos, they constitute the only known example of the survival of texts from the Crypto-Jewish poetic tradition in the synagogue liturgy.

52. Surprisingly, the memory of the Portuguese Jewish settlement in Cochin had not been lost abroad. In 1844 a French Jew noted that many Portuguese Jews had 'formed settlements ... in the East Indies, in the country of Cochin' (Alphonse Cerfberr de Médelsheim, *Ce que sont les juifs de France* [Paris: Mansut, 1844], p. 20).

53. It has already been noted that the origin narratives of the Jews of Cochin, like surely those of many other groups, adapted readily to circumstances: 'At different times, the Cochin Jews narrated alternate origin legends. For example, a couple of centuries back when Europe was in search of lost tribes, they claimed to be a lost tribe. Some of their Malayalam-language folk songs indicate a Persian origin, and at times Yemen was proclaimed their ancestral home. Today's version claims a dual ancestry from Jerusalem and Cranganore.' Nathan Katz, 'The Judaisms of Kaifeng and Cochin: Parallel and Divergent Styles of Religious Acculturation', *Numen: International Review for the History of Religions* 42:2 (1995), p. 137.

Finally, if Cochin and Malabar have been considered ‘as the easternmost outpost of a Eurasian Hebrew cosmopolis connected with the Jewish Diaspora in Asia and Europe through the Hebrew script and Jewish texts’,⁵⁴ the same could be said of Spanish as a Jewish liturgical language, with Cochin being the easternmost point in a network of communities where, from Bayonne to Italy to the Levant, the old language of *Sepharad* – after it ceased to be spoken – survived as an auxiliary language for the sacred ceremony.⁵⁵ In this regard, these texts represent, for Judeo-Spanish philology, not only an extreme geographical margin, but above all one more element in the picture we have of the original cultural and liturgical manifestations of the Judaism of the ‘Portuguese Nation’.

54. O. Gamliel, ‘Textual Crossroads’, p. 42. For Hebrew, this assertion is questionable, since the Chinese Jews of Kaifeng – even more so than the Cochin Jews – had preserved a Hebrew tradition and cultural exchanges with the Jews of Persia and Central Asia until at least the seventeenth century (see Paul Wexler, ‘Jewish Languages in Kaifeng, Henan Province, China (1163–1933)’, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 135:2 [1985], pp. 330–47).

55. On similar cases of survival in other Jewish communities that no longer speak Spanish, see Peter Nahon, ‘L’espagnol, naissance d’une langue morte: quelques considérations sur l’hispanité des *Séphardim* d’Aquitaine’, *Bulletin hispanique* 120:2 (2018), pp. 643–62, esp. p. 660 n. 53.