

## **1- An Entrepreneurial Diaspora without a Religious Ethics?**

In his “The Jews and Modern Capitalism” ( *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben*, Leipzig 1911), Werner Sombart proposed explaining the origins of capitalism as a consequence of the successful influence of Judaism on the Western world, thereby contradicting the thesis of Max Weber for whom capitalism was an epiphenomenon of Protestant Puritanism.<sup>1</sup> On one hand, Sombart saw the Jewish religion as a system of values whose legalistic praxis would tend on its own to develop an accumulative attitude towards earthly things. On the other hand, he identified the Early Modern Age with the beginning of Jewish preponderance in the world economy.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, the religious character of these international merchants was

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<sup>1</sup>Werner E. Mosse, “Judaism, Jews and Capitalism: Weber, Sombart and Beyond”, *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, XXIV (1979), pp. 3-15; Freddy Rafael, *Judaïsme et capitalisme; essai sur la controverse entre Max Weber et Werner Sombart*, Paris 1982; Giacomo Todeschini, “Una polemica dimenticata; Sombart e “Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben” nella discussione storiografica, 1911-1920”, *Società e Storia*, XXXV (1987), pp. 139-160.

<sup>2</sup> In my opinion, Anthony Reid sweetened Sombarts’ “primordialist” positions, when he wrote that: “Sombart made the case that capitalism flourished where Jews were given the greatest economic freedom, and he attributed Jewish economic success **to the more positive attitudes** toward wealth expressed in the Torah than in New Testament” (See the seminal article: Anthony Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities , Nationalism, and the State”, in: Daniel Chirot & Anthony Reid (eds.), *Essential Outsiders, Chinese and Jews in Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*, Seattle & London 1997, p. 35). I agree with Derek Jonathan Penslar when he proposed to separate Sombart’s “circumstantial” and “valid” argument (i.e. **Jews** were involved in capitalism) from the “qualitative” and “false” argument (i.e. **Judaism** promotes by itself capitalism).(Cf. Derek Jonathan Penslar, “The Origins of Jewish Political Economy”, *Jewish Social*

supposedly transformed into the capitalist system, which Sombart basically understood as that economic perception which focussed on the accumulation of wealth as an end in itself.<sup>3</sup>

In this process of expansion of the "Judaic" idea of economics, the Marranos supposedly played a preponderant role. It is sufficient to note the item "Marrano" in the index of Sombart's book to realize to what extent these Jews --converted en masse to Christianity in the Iberian Peninsula towards the end of the Middle Ages and their descendants, called New Christians, -- appeared to be those principally responsible for the spread of the capitalist system throughout the world, as they maintained commercial, family, and religious ties with the Jewish communities of the Iberian or Sefardic Diaspora in sophisticated entrepreneurial networks.<sup>4</sup> Proof of the nexus existing between Judaism and capitalism through the Marrano network was, for Sombart, the appeal that Manasseh ben Israel, rabbi of the Portuguese community of Amsterdam, a New Christian by origin,<sup>5</sup> directed to Oliver Cromwell to persuade him to admit the Jews expelled from there in 1290:

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*Studies*, III (1996-97), p. 54 n. 21). See also: Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, "On Werner Sombart's 'The Jew and Modern Capitalism', an analysis of its ideological premises", *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, XXI (1976), pp. 87-107; Robert S. Wistrich, "Reflexions on Werner Sombart, the Jews and Capitalism", in: Menahem Ben Sasson (ed.), *Religion and Economy, Connections and Interactions*, Jerusalem 1995, pp. 77-88. (Hebrew).

<sup>3</sup> In his *Das Bourgeois*, Leipzig 1913, Sombart will discern between the "entrepreneurship" creative capitalism characteristic of the German peoples and the cinetic "trade" inherent to the Italians, the Scots, and above all, the Jews. (See: Natalie Zemon Davis, "Religion and Capitalism Once Again? Jewish Merchant Culture in the Seventeenth Century", *Representations* LIX (1997), p. \*).

<sup>4</sup> See the English edition of the book (translated by M. Epstein): New York 1969.

<sup>5</sup> Herman Prins Salomon, "The Portuguese Background of Menasseh Ben Israel's Parents as Revealed

*“It is a thing confirmed that merchandizing is, as it were, the proper possession of the Nation of the Jews. I attribute this in the first place to the particular Providence and mercy of God towards His people: for having banished them from their own Country, yet not from his Protection, he hath given them, as it were, a naturall instinct by which they might not onely gain what was necessary for their need, but they should also thrive in Riches and possessions...”<sup>6</sup>*

Now, today's historiography categorically rejects Sombart's thesis. According to Anthony Reid, it was because his later sympathy for Nazism and Anti-Semitism.<sup>7</sup> In fact, this rejection was also due to the fact that the author displayed reductionist and prejudicial views both in regard to capitalism as well as Judaism. According to Jacob Katz the positive attitude to wealth existing in Judaism, paradoxically, could not develop freely to capitalism due to the economic limitations fixed by the Mosaic Law itself.<sup>8</sup> In his study on economic attitudes of the “Musar” literature and memoirs among the Ashkenazi Jews during the XVII-XVIII centuries, Mordechai Levin arrived to the conclusion that wealth was not considered as an indication of Divine Grace, but rather an instrument of action, when the study of the Mosaic Law and the application of its precepts were beyond any utilitarian consideration.<sup>9</sup> Therefore,

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Through the Inquisitorial Archives at Lisbon”, *Studia Rosenthaliana*, XVII (1983), pp. 105-146.

<sup>6</sup> Lucien Wolf, *Menasseh Ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell*, London 1901, p. 81.

<sup>7</sup> Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities, Nationalism, and the State”, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Jacob Katz, “Reflexions on the Relationship between Religion and Economy”, in: Menahem Ben Sasson (ed.), *Religion and Economy, Connections and Interactions*, Jerusalem 1995, pp. 33-46. (Hebrew).

<sup>9</sup> Mordechai Levin, « Economic Attitudes and Behavior in Jewish Tradition an Examination of Sombart's Thesis in the Light of *Musar* Literature and Memoirs”, , *Zion*, XLIII (1979), pp. 235-263. (Hebrew).

if for Ellis Rivkin these kind of arguments prove the inconsistency of Sombart's thesis.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, a good part of the logical framework on which Sombart's posture towards the Marranos was based, was found to be historically fallacious, particularly the nexus between Religion and Capitalism. As the studies carried out by Jonathan Israel have clearly demonstrated, it is true that the Marranos' economic activity and that of the Sephardic Jews was very important between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>11</sup> They seem to have erected sophisticated trading networks that traversed South Asia, Western Africa, Europe, and America, networks often entailing intense financial activity. Using the facilities afforded by Iberian colonial expansion, the religious flexibility of the Marranos, and the dispersion of the Sephardic Jews, they were prominent in trading over long distances. For example, sugar, spices, bullion, diamonds, tobacco, chocolate, textiles, Brazil wood, paper, metals, coral beads and slaves circulated through these networks.<sup>12</sup> In the case of the Spain of the Count-Duke of Olivares, the Marranos of Portuguese origin were likewise outstanding for their financial role of the first order of magnitude.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, we are not dealing here with the economic manifestation of a specific religious vision, as Sombart argued. For Jonathan Israel,

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<sup>10</sup> Ellis Rivkin, "Judaism's Historical Response to Economic, Social and Political Systems", in: Walter Block & Irving Hexman (eds.), *Religion, Economics and Social Thought*, Vancouver 1986, pp. 375-387.

<sup>11</sup> E.g.: Edgar R. Samuel, "The Trade of the 'New Christians' of Portugal in the Seventeenth Century", in: R.D. Barnett & W.M. Schwab (eds.), *The Sephardi Heritage*, vol. II, Grendon 1989, pp.100-111; Jonathan I. Israel, "The Sephardi Contribution to Economic Life and Colonization in Europe and the New World (16th-18th Centuries)", in: Haim Beinart (ed.), *Moreshet Sepharad: The Sephardi Legacy*, 2 vols., Jerusalem 1992, vol. II, pp. 365-398.

<sup>12</sup> For two different examples of the dynamics of these networks, see: Idem, "The Changing Role of the Dutch Sephardim in International Trade, 1595-1715", *Dutch Jewish History*, Jerusalem 1984, pp. 31-52; James C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580-1640*, Baltimore & London 1993.

<sup>13</sup> Idem, *Portuguese Bankers at the Court of Spain, 1625-1650*, New Brunswick 1983.

what led to the creation of these Diaspora economic networks stretching over long distances was the consequence of a coming together of contingent historical circumstances which were favorable to this development. It is in this circumstantial sense that we are to understand what Israel called the foundation of "*a new type of Jewish economy*".<sup>14</sup>

The circumstantial connection linking religion and economics is confirmed when we are aware of the differences existing between traditional Jewish identity and the plurality of identities that the Marranos brought along with them. Although for traditional Jews, religious identity was dominant, for the Marranos, only some of them can be designated as crypto-Jews. The Marranos did not conduct themselves as "Orthodox Jews" as Sombart held.<sup>15</sup> Conversion en masse to Christianity had led them to take on a heterogeneous religious inner self. Hence, it was the common ethnicity that we may find underlying the group identity of the Marranos, who were also called "Men of the Nation" (Homens da Nação), which was reinforced by the Inquisition's persecutions and by other means of social segregation. It is for this reason that, in his capacity as a member of the "Nação" a Marrano businessman of sincere Catholic faith might have formed an integral part of the Sefardic trading networks.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, Judaism and crypto-Judaism can be seen as quintessential parts of Marrano ethnicity. However, it cannot be said that they were a *sine qua non* condition for their group belonging.

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<sup>14</sup> Israel, "The Sephardi Contribution to Economic Life and Colonization in Europe and the New World (16th-18th Centuries)", p. 365.

<sup>15</sup> See a good critic to Sombarts' aprioristic assumptions in: Yosef Kaplan, "The Religious World of an International Merchant Jew in the Age of Mercantilism. The Embarrassment of Riches of Abraham Israel Pereyra", in: Menahem Ben Sasson (ed.), *Religion and Economy, Connections and Interactions*, Jerusalem 1995, pp. 237-238. (Hebrew)

<sup>16</sup> Miriam Bodian, "'Men of the Nation', the Shaping of 'Converso' Identity in Early Modern Europe", *Past*

Moreover, in a splendid study that Yosef Kaplan dedicated to the economic attitudes of one of the most outstanding exponents of the Sefardic Diaspora, the businessman of Marrano origin, Tomé Rodríguez Pereyra/Abraham Israel Pereyra, Kaplan found that a dissonance existed between his intense, copious international business activities, and his economic attitude that was markedly hostile to profit and gain. Kaplan showed that Pereyra's economic ideology derived from direct reading of Catholic authors, such as Fray Luis de Granada, who struggled against any manifestation of human presumption. In his capacity as an ex-New Christian, Pereyra, like many other Sefardim who shared the same origin as he did, would have formed an economic mind-set with a Catholic substratum, since the Jewish religion of his own community, Amsterdam, tended to restrict itself to the sphere of ritual. Likewise, the argument that Manasseh Ben Israel expounded to Cromwell and his Puritan readers, was not, as Sombart maintained, the articulation of a specifically "Jewish" economic discourse. Quite the contrary. For Kaplan, his argument was likely to have been a device which consisted of adapting his personal discourse to the "capitalist ethic" of his readers in order to make the rhetoric of his argument more effective.<sup>17</sup>

All these arguments led modern historians to revert the "qualitative" argument of Sombart. Not only Jewish religion was not the responsible for the success of the Marrano entrepreneurial network. In a great extent, it was the absence of any monolithic religious ethics in the field of economy (and religious identity) that explains the high degree of

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*and Present*, CXLIII (1994), pp. 48-76.

<sup>17</sup> Kaplan, "The Religious World of an International Merchant Jew in the Age of Mercantilism. The

adaptability of this minority group in the capitalistic system.<sup>18</sup> Only Katz accepted the existence of a Jewish economic mentality formed, among others by the Jewish religion. **Pero para Katz será justamente la modernidad (esto es: la emancipación política del judío y su desapego de la religion tradicional) aquella que pudo llevar completamente al acto esa mentalidad económica específica que en buena manera se encontraba en potencia.**<sup>19</sup>

## **2- Religion and Economics among the Judaizing Marranos in Iberia: the case of Bragança**

All these arguments which vitiate Sombart's thesis, would have been enough for me, if I had not found in the trial records of the Portuguese Inquisition in the prosecutions of Marranos living in the city of Bragança during the sixteenth century, causal connections appearing very clearly between Judaizing and enrichment. Israel Salvator Révah has rightly called Bragança "metropolis of crypto-Judaism."<sup>20</sup> And it was after the Inquisition of Coimbra began to dismantle the New Christian community there (the seventies of the sixteenth century) that Bragança was transformed into the main "producer" of those accused of Judaism and tried by

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Embarrassment of Riches of Abraham Israel Pereyra”, pp. 233-251.

<sup>18</sup> Penslar, “The Origins of Jewish Political Economy”, pp. 26-60.

<sup>19</sup> Katz, “Reflexions on the Relationship between Religion and Economy”, pp. 45-46.

<sup>20</sup> Israel Salvator Révah, “Aux origins de la rupture spinozienne: nouvel examen des origines du déroulement et des consequences de l’affaire Spinoza-Prado-Ribera”, *Annuaire du Collège de France*, LXXI (1971), p. 584.

this Inquisitorial tribunal.<sup>21</sup> As in many other cases, the economic profile of the Bragança New Christians was typified by its urban character. Very few of them were employed in agriculture. Thus, if we trust the evidence of the Inquisition records, among the local Marranos, being a farmer was equivalent to being an Old Christian with its pertinent religious implications. Thus, when the Marrano shoemaker António de Leão invoked the Holy Spirit in order to free his father from the Inquisitorial prison, his cousin accused him of being a crude rustic ("charro"), since epithets for God of this kind were specific to the "laborers" (lavradores) and not to New Christians who called upon "the God of the Heavens" (Deus dos Céus) alone. And in fact, the majority of its members devoted themselves to activities linked to leather (tanners and shoemakers), to silk or to trade. In general, the New Christian of Bragança, be he a shoemaker, a weaver, or a merchant, rich or poor, focussed a good part of his economic activity on the regional markets of the Portuguese Northwest or of Castile. Few of them devoted themselves to large-scale commerce or to leasing and few took direct part in the international Sefardic networks. The Sousa family was one of those exceptions, maintaining trading stations in Lisbon and Castile. Nevertheless, from the moment that the latter began to emigrate toward Castile or the south of France starting from the eighties of the sixteenth century, we find a clear process of enrichment and occupational metamorphosis of its members. The ex-shoemakers of Bragança became textile merchants in Castile, while their children continued the social rise marked by the emigration of their parents. Then, trading networks were woven which were made up of families from Bragança and united

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<sup>21</sup> Luiz de Bivar Guerra (ed.), *Inventário dos Processos da Inquisição de Coimbra*, 2 vols., Paris 1972; José Veiga Torres, "Uma longa guerra social. Novas perspectivas para o estudo da Inquisição portuguesa. A Inquisição de Coimbra", *Revista de história das ideias*, vol. VIII (1986), pp. 59-70; Elvira Cunha de

Iberian Marranos and ex-Marrano Jews of Northern Europe, as in the case of the Luis family which settled in Bayonne.<sup>22</sup> We know about families of international merchants and financiers, originating in Bragança, such as the Nunes da Costa/Curiel family, the Lopes Suasso, or the Cortizos.<sup>23</sup> Their dizzying economic rise is known as well. But a glance at the family trees of the Marranos of Bragança established in Madrid, drawn up by Markus Schreiber, confirms that we are considering a rather widespread process.<sup>24</sup>

Now let us go back to the sixteenth century. In accord with what we can read in many of the trial records of the Inquisition, it seems to have been a widespread belief among the New Christians of Bragança that God of the Heavens (that is: the one God of the Jews rather than the trinity of the Christians) granted "mercies," "goods," and "riches" to those who walked in His way, just as he healed the sick, freed the prisoners, and ensured a good outcome to difficult births. According to an appraisal that we are now undertaking, the Jewish fasts (of Monday and Thursday, of the "Dia Grande" --Yom Kippur-- and the Fast(s) of Esther) seem to have been the most effective means for obtaining from the Deity help in everyday material activities. And the merchant Adrião Nunes saw things as follows: "These fasts please God, and they are also good for attaining anything that one wants."<sup>25</sup> For that reason, we often find testimonies about New Christians who, on the eve of a deal or business transaction, undertook a Jewish fast: "So that God would guide them and give them a good right hand in

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Azevedo Mea, *A Inquisição de Coimbra no século XVI. A Instituição, os Homens e a Sociedade*, Porto 1997.

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<sup>23</sup> Daniel M. Swetschinski, *The Lopes Suasso Family, Bankers to William III*, Amsterdam 1988; Edgar R. Samuel, "The Curiel Family in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Portugal", *Jewish Historical Studies*, XXXI (1990), pp. 111-136

<sup>24</sup> Markus Schreiber, *Marranen in Madrid 1600-1670*, Stuttgart 1994.

their business dealings."<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, giving charity to the poor, fulfilling the Sabbath rest, reciting prayers considered Jewish, or respecting the ritual dietary laws, also showed themselves to be no less effective means for obtaining similar results. Moreover, in most cases the material reward given by God appeared as an outcome of fulfilment of the Law of Moses in its entirety. This demonstrates to us that it was the Law, fulfilled totally or partially, that we find as the motor of divine equations. The New Christians Brites Manuel and Maria Cardosa made a summary: "that the said law was rich, and whoever believed in it would never be poor."<sup>27</sup> If the individual's wealth corresponded to his fulfilment of the Mosaic Law, it could be quickly determined which of the New Christians was fulfilling the Mosaic precepts. For that reason, in many cases where the equation, Judaism = wealth, prevailed, those Marranos who were poor were interrogated by other New Christians of the city who urged them to fulfil the Mosaic rules in order to get out of their state of indigence. On some occasions, those doing the urging said that they had experienced on their own flesh the economic virtues of the Mosaic Law. The innkeeper Bastião Afonso advised Álvaro Rodrigues to fulfil such precepts "in order to attain material goods, salvation of the soul, and Glory," since he himself, before being faithful to the Mosaic law, was so poor that he had to ask the butcher to give him meat on credit. But now: "God had so increased his possessions that he no longer envied his neighbors."<sup>28</sup>

On the other hand, poverty was a precise sign of abandonment of the Marranos' religious

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specificity. This notion used to come up particularly in cases of exogamous marriages, in which carrying out the Law of Moses sometimes became a dangerous and impractical task. For example, the shoemaker Baltazar da Costa explained to the shoemaker Gaspar Rodrigues Garcia: "If he were not married to an Old Christian, he would be richer than he was, since he would fulfil the Mosaic Law and God would grant him many favours."<sup>29</sup>

The same thing happened on the collective level. The relative wealth of the New Christians compared to the Old Christians was perceived as a consequence of the community's attachment to the Mosaic faith. It was for that reason that Leonor Alvares believed: "all those of the Nation in Vinhais became Christians and for that reason, they were poor and God did not grant them mercies."<sup>30</sup> When, in 1599, Manuel Fernandes introduced himself clandestinely into Bragança, bringing letters and money for needy family members sent by their relatives established in France, some New Christians are said to have cried out admiringly: "that those relatives were good, and since they lived by the good law, God helped them, and they said further that it would be good if everyone went to the place where those [relatives] lived, since in their country they were not allowed to fulfil that law as they wished."<sup>31</sup> It was for that reason that we should not be surprised if the zenith of the equation, Judaizing = wealth, should be located precisely in Biblical times, as Felipe Serrã said: "those of their forefathers who kept [the Law of Moses], God made them very rich and gave them

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manna from the heavens."<sup>32</sup>

It is possible that this connection between religion and economics resulted from a merchant mentality that characterized these “Men of the Nation”, identified by the surround society and by themselves as: “Merchant Men” (“Homens de Negócios”).<sup>33</sup> In this vein, it would be useful to show an analogy existing with other merchant mentalities such as the Italian renaissance Christian businessman Gregorio Dati, who chose to begin his “Purchases Book” in the following manner: “*In the Name of God, the Virgin Mary and all the Saints-may they grant me health in soul and body and prosperity in business*”.<sup>34</sup> But we cannot dismiss the theological and specific message that the quoted fragments suggest presents an immanent God who provides earthly rewards to the Children of Israel who fulfill their covenant and punishes those who abandon it. This Biblical vision that seems to emerge from the Pentateuch, but not from the Book of Job nor the rabbinic sources, presents the incoherence of the Inquisition's persecutions.<sup>35</sup> In other words, how do we explain the existence of a God who rewards His faithful with riches while Judaism is persecuted and outlawed? In order to respond to this situation, I would like to return to what Manasseh Ben Israel said to Oliver Cromwell, that the acquisition of wealth is a proof that Divine Providence had not abandoned the people of Israel. In this way, not only did Judaizing --

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<sup>34</sup> Gene Brucker (ed.), *Two Memoirs of Renaissance Florence: The Diaries of Buonaccorso Pitti and Gregorio Dati*, New York 1967, p. 108.

<sup>35</sup> On the Marrano (auto)identification with Bible's Israel, see: Eleazar Guthwirth,, “Gender, History and the Judeo-Christian Polemic *Contra Iudaeos*”, in: Ora Limor & Guy G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics Between Christians and Jews*, Tübingen 1996, pp. 257-378.

which was so perilous in practice-- show itself to be profitable, but it converted itself into the only tangible proof of the continuation of the Divine Election of the Children of Israel in Iberian exile.

It was not by chance that in 1587, Father Luis da Cruz of the college of the Society of Jesus of Bragança chose the Pauline theme for a sermon by saying: "the Law of Moses was like a tree full of fruit and while it bore fruit it was firm, and the Law of Moses was likewise, as long as Jesus Christ had not died."<sup>36</sup> Father da Cruz knew that a good part of the Marranos of Bragança were found among the large crowd. Surely he wanted to show his audience that at a time when the Inquisition was triumphing over a Judaism "that did not bear fruit," it was obvious that the Divine Election was now found among the Christians. It is for that reason, in view of these apparently so empirical arguments, that the merchant Lopo Nunes could reply: "One day, this truth will become clear that is already clear [to us], that the New Christians find themselves raised up over the Old Christians due to the many mercies that God sent to them and by multiplying the estates that he was giving them, and that formerly when the Jews kept this law well, [God] gave them everything without their having to work."<sup>37</sup> Or consider what he said about another merchant of Bragança: "Praised be God Who has distributed so many goods among the people of the Nation despite the tribulations of the Inquisition".<sup>38</sup>

**Es posible que esta asimilación entre judaísmo y riqueza tenga sus raíces en una**

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mentalidad no oficial, acaso popular.<sup>39</sup> Sin embargo su utilización como respuesta a los embates de la sociedad circundante nos hace pensar que estaríamos frente a ese tipo de respuestas narrativas que Amos Funkenstein catalogaba como “counter-history”.<sup>40</sup>

### *3- Towards a contextual approach to Sombart's thesis*

To conclude my exposition, I would like to indicate that this kind of mental association appears in many other trials of the Iberian Inquisition throughout its history.<sup>41</sup> It is fitting to ask ourselves how it is possible that while Judaizing and wealth are shown in direct relationship among Judaizers of Iberia, they appear in contraposition in the Jewish communities of the ex-Marranos, as Kaplan held? A possible answer to this dilemma would be to say that the Inquisitorial sources are false and that they represent the voice of the Inquisition rather than the voice of those on trial.<sup>42</sup> Without being able to explain here the reasons why, I believe, on the contrary, that we are considering possible true statements due to the “polyphonic” character of many of these expressions.<sup>43</sup> Hence, I would like to quickly put forth an alternative explanation to the existence of this dissonance of economic mentality.

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<sup>40</sup> Amos Funkenstein,

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<sup>42</sup> Herman Prins Salomon, “The Portuguese Inquisition and its Victims in the Light of Recent Polemics”, *Journal of the American Portuguese Cultural Society*, vol. V (1971), pp. 19-28.

<sup>43</sup> On the identification of “polyphonic” statements in the Inquisition trials as a methodological tool, see: Carlo Ginzburg, “The Inquisitor as an Anthropologist: an Analogy and its Implications”, in: *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method*, Baltimore 1989, pp. 156-164.

If, for the Judaizing Marranos, the conception of wealth was a mean of struggle against the stormy winds coming from the surrounding Christianity, for the former Marranos of the Sefardic Diaspora, who were more exposed to apologetics than to interreligious polemics, they had to construct a Judaism in accord with rabbinic teachings but also with the rules of decorum of the sensitivities of those surrounding them.<sup>44</sup>

**Es más, una comparación somera que hagamos entre lo encontrado por nosotros entre los Judaizantes de Bragança del siglo XVI y el diario de la comerciante Ashkenazi Glückel of Hameln de finales del siglo XVII en donde la riqueza tiene un papel esencial (por ello fue identificado por Sombart como otro ejemplo del nexo existente entre judaísmo y capitalismo),<sup>45</sup> muestra a claras que también en estos casos las diferencias parecen superar los puntos en común. Como Natalie Zemon Davies lo señalaba con precisión, en el caso de Glückel habría sido la noción de “honor” la que acompañaba a la riqueza como buen comerciante de la época, mientras que en nuestro caso estudiado era la Ley de Moisés la que siempre acompañaba la idea del enriquecimiento.<sup>46</sup>**

**Todas estas consideraciones nos llevan a formular dos conclusiones a tomar en cuenta, una con respecto a la postura de Sombart y otra con respecto a la Diaspora Marrano-Sefardi:**

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46 Zemon Davis, “Religion and Capitalism Once Again? Jewish Merchant Culture in the Seventeenth Century”, p. 68.

1) This dissonance existing in the core of the same ethnic and/or religious group is a good example to admit that the direct relationship existing between religion and economics seems to have overwhelmingly meta-economic functions, and does not seem to be the product of religious essences of an accumulative nature. For that reason, as Clifford Geertz and others saw in cases quite different from ours, “ethics of Capitalism” seems to exist also in many and different historical and religious contexts.<sup>47</sup>

2) It is true that prominent role of a minority in entrepreneurial networks in the past must be analyzed through the spectrum of the impact of religion in the economic activities.<sup>48</sup> In our case, the gap existing between religion and capitalism within the same Diaspora network it was the consequence of the uniqueness of the Marrano/Sefardi ethnicity.<sup>49</sup> But I think that this case exceptional as may be, may serve as an invitation to us not to set aside the situational specifics of each community beyond their cohesive and common elements of the whole entrepreneurial Diasporas.

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<sup>47</sup> See also : Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt (ed.), *The Protestant Ethics and Modernization: A Comparative View*, New York 1968

<sup>48</sup> See the interesting remarks of Anthony Reid (Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities , Nationalism, and the State”, pp. 34-37).

<sup>49</sup>