

I know that the origin of the Jews who live in our countries, in the old days and even today, was Andalusian. And a large majority lived in Portugal. They showed attachment to the Catholic faith but kept hidden their Judaic origins. They more readily slipped unnoticed among the Christians than among the Andalusians. They read scientific books in *aljamiado* [Castilian Romance written in Arabic script], indeed they spoke no other language. Besides, they reached high ranking position thanks to their scientific knowledge. When one of them accessed such position of power, he took advantage to punish people harshly, especially in the Andalusian region. To the point that when a Christian or Andalusian person was harshly punished, they asked about their origin and found that he was a Jew in hiding, or perhaps that he was of Jewish descent, either from both parents or either on his mother or his father's side. Indeed out of lust for power and greed they mixed with the Christians by marriage.... All Jews had such covert self-importance that it was impossible to imagine until I met some in those countries, over there, the country of the Franks and Flanders. Up there, they are well known... because they can carry arms and dress like ordinary Flemish people. In Bordeaux, in the kingdom of France, I met scholars... who have gone too far in the praise of their faith....

Al-Hajari (décédé en 1641), Nasir Addine ala alkawmi, étudié par Mohammed Razouk, 1987, p. 119-124.