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“The teaching of appreciation”: the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana and the inclusion of Jews in Spain’s public sphere during the Franco Dictatorship

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ABSTRACT

Established in 1961 in Madrid, the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana strove to promote a dialogue between Catholic and Jewish Spaniards. The article accounts for the Amistad’s origins and its development, explaining the critical impact of the Second Vatican Council, which allowed for the eventual formal recognition of Madrid’s Jewish community by the Franco regime. The support received by a sector of the Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy permitted the association to embark on a campaign to purge school textbooks from anti-Jewish content, and to condemn blood-libel traditions that were still very much alive in Spanish popular culture. The article argues that the experiences and activities of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana should be included within the larger historiographical trend that highlights the role played by civil society in helping pave the way for the Spanish transition to democracy.

KEYWORDS

Amistad Judeo-Cristiana;
Max Mazin; Spanish Jewish
community; antisemitism;
Franco regime

Recent historiography has demonstrated the great impact that civil society movements had on the democratization processes experienced by Spanish society during the last two decades of Francisco Franco’s regime (1939–1975), calling into question those traditional explanations that emphasized the importance of policies from above, i.e. based on pacts agreed almost exclusively by politicians. Such explanations tended too easily to blur the important active role often played by different agents of civil society within the process of democratization. The new interpretations, on the contrary, have come to emphasize the need to incorporate explanations “from below,” highlighting the relevance of different civic initiatives and collective actions, without ignoring the actions of official institutions and political leaders (Alonso and Muro 2011; García and José 2008; Radcliff 2011).

By now, we have an increasingly rich and complex vision of this critical period of contemporary Spanish history, which includes a growing number of actors who contributed, in one way or another, to the rapid transformation of a dictatorial regime into a democratic state. These actors include the labor movement (Moliner and Ysàs 1998), neighborhood associations (Radcliff 2011), student groups (Sandoica, Elena, and Baldó Lacomba 2007), as well as the teachers’ movement (Groves 2013, 2017). Perhaps less well

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known is the role played by representatives of the different religious denominations that sought to obtain official recognition from a regime based on the ideology of national Catholicism.

This article focuses on the *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana* (Jewish-Christian Friendship), an association created in the early 1960s by the leaders of the small Jewish community of Madrid and some Spanish Catholics who advocated for a religious rapprochement towards the Jews. With the support of a sector of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the *Amistad* sought to combat the deep-rooted anti-Jewish prejudices existing in Spanish society and to promote interreligious dialogue. Special attention is given to the *Amistad*'s successful efforts to revise a considerable number of Spanish school textbooks and, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, to expunge antisemitic wording from them.

In this regard, the article emphasizes the initiative's NGO nature and its origins within civil society, which complements other perspectives that concentrate more on the association's international impact. Previous studies referred to its favourable reception in the US the hostility it stirred in the Arab world, where the association was seen as an agent of Israeli interests (Lisbona)—, or to the antisemitic reactions it provoked in Spain itself (Álvarez Chillida). The *Amistad*'s trajectory deserves to be incorporated into the historiographic account of this general effort to build a more tolerant, pluralist, and democratic public space, serving also as a precedent of great value for the subsequent development of active associationism within and beyond the Spanish Jewish community during the period of the transition to democracy.

Eichmann's kidnapping and its repercussions

In May 1960, Israeli Mossad agents abducted in Buenos Aires the Nazi hierarch Adolf Eichmann, one of the main organizers of the Jewish extermination during World War II (Bascomb 2009). Eichmann's kidnapping and the subsequent trial and execution in Israel caused a wave of antisemitism worldwide, sponsored by extreme right-wing groups. Antisemitic manifestations in Spain resulted, among other things, in the defacement of numerous walls with swastika graffiti in the streets of the country's main cities.¹ According to the testimony of Max Mazin, a Jew of Polish origin who had just assumed the presidency of the Madrid Jewish community, this was the context in which he decided, in 1961, to establish the *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, an initiative that sought to temper this hostility through dialogue between the two religious communities.²

The Jewish community of Madrid had only recently reassembled in the late 1940s. A small community, which officially numbered only 45 members in the mid-1930s, had to shut down during the Spanish Civil War. Although not formally recognized as a religious community, the Francoist regime granted permission in 1949 for Jews in Madrid to hold religious and communal meetings in a private apartment owned by one of the wealthy members of the community. In 1958, the small Jewish community received authorization to purchase an apartment on Pizarro Street, in the centre of the Spanish capital. By the early 1950s, the community was predominantly composed of European Jews, with a mixture of Sephardi and Ashkenazi origins, many of whom had arrived in Spain in the 1930s as political refugees. However, the late 1950s saw the influx of a significant number of Moroccan Jews from the Spanish Protectorate following the independence of Morocco in 1956.³

Since the early years of the Franco regime and until the late 1950s, the leadership of the Madrid Jewish community tried to keep a low profile, in the hope of not attracting too much public attention toward the few Jews living in Spain. The new president of the community, Max Mazin, opted instead for a strategy aimed at giving public visibility to the Jewish community. Within a few years, he achieved the formal recognition of the community from the government and received permission to build a synagogue and community center in Madrid.⁴ Born in 1923 in the small shtetl of Horodzeij, Mazin was a Holocaust survivor who first traveled to Madrid in the early 1950s for business purposes and that led him to settle there.⁵ Early on during his presidency, in an interview given to the press in September 1962, he manifested his desire to normalize the Jewish presence in the country, the size of which had been calculated at the time to be around 4,000 Jews, 1,500 of whom resided in Madrid.⁶ Mazin's project tried, in short, to provide solid and stable foundations to a small but growing community, many of its members, according to an estimate provided by Mazin himself in the community's bulletin, had only been residing in Madrid between three and four years.⁷

The idea of creating an association that would promote interreligious dialogue in Spain arose during a dinner at the home of a local Jewish family in which besides Mazin was also present Father Antonio Peral Torres, a priest and professor of Semitic languages at the University of Madrid with whom Mazin had a good relationship. Peral Torres had collaborated with the Arias Montano Institute of Hebraic Studies, affiliated with the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) since its creation after the Spanish Civil War.⁸ Both agreed on the desirability of involving non-Jewish Spaniards in efforts to counteract the antisemitic campaign that was spreading in Spain as well as in other places.⁹ Mazin then proposed the creation of an association to promote interreligious dialogue that would include Catholic priests, following the organizational model established in other Western countries in the postwar era after the momentous Seelisberg Conference of 1947.¹⁰

As a result of that first conversation, the two decided to contact Francisco Cantera Burgos, a reputed Hebraist of a markedly Catholic character who directed the aforementioned Institute of Hebraic Studies. Peral Torres' role was crucial in involving in the project the representatives in Madrid of the order of the Sisters of Sion, a Catholic congregation created in nineteenth-century France with the aim of helping to convert Jew. Following the end of World War II, it shifted its purpose to that of facilitating religious dialogue with Judaism. Mazin, on his part, mobilized certain sectors of the Jewish community of Madrid.¹¹ Finally, they arranged a meeting with José María García Lahiguera, then auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Madrid-Alcalá. The latter welcomed the proposal and suggested as interlocutor Father Vicente Serrano, censor of the diocese and president of the Spanish section of Pax Christi. This was a Catholic movement created set up in France in 1945 originally as a prayer group seeking reconciliation and social peace after the war. It was formally recognized by Pope Pious XII in 1952 and established centers in many European countries. Its founder, the French bishop Pierre-Marie Théas, had served time in a prison camp during the war for opposing the anti-Jewish policies of the Vichy regime.¹²

To Mazin's surprise, who feared that things would not amount to more than good words, the civil authorities of the Franco regime granted the permits requested to establish a new association of this kind. In October 1961, the association's foundation ceremony took place in the assembly hall of what was then the CSIC

headquarters, at Duque de Medinaceli Street. Among the nearly 200 guests who attended the event was, curiously enough, Blas Piñar, director general of the Instituto de Cultura Hispánica and who would become infamously known during the transition to democracy as the founder of the extreme right-wing party Fuerza Nueva.

The new association had an organizational structure headed by two vice-presidencies, one Jewish and the other Catholic, occupied respectively by Mazin and Father Vicente Serrano. The board of directors included, in addition to the two vice-presidents, the following people: the above-mentioned Hebraist Cantera Burgos and Blas Piñar; the general secretary of the association; the Catholic journalist José María Pérez Lozano, founder of the publishing house Propaganda Popular Católica; Mother Esperanza, superior of the Residencia de Nuestra Señora de Sion; and José Camón Aznar, dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Madrid. Among local Jewish leaders, it included Samuel Toledano and Alberto Benasuly, both were born in Tangier.¹³

One of the first public acts of the association took place on 29 November 1962, again at the headquarters of the CSIC. It was a colloquium directed by the two vice-presidents and by Francisco Cantera Burgos, under the title "Judíos y cristianos ante un problema actual" (Jews and Christians facing a current problem), and was also attended by Salomon Gaon, the chief rabbi of the Sephardic community of Great Britain, who was visiting the Spanish capital. He declared at the meeting that only unity and cooperation between the different religious confessions, built on the basis of common spiritual values, could help to combat the dangers of materialism and the increasingly pressing religious indifference.¹⁴ This ecumenical shared concern about the rise of urban civilization and the growing withdrawal from hierarchical, institutional religion in Western societies was to become a driving force for the association's activities.

The association's bylaws stated that, in pursuit of its aims, the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana would seek to establish "a common front to counteract the permanent offensive of present-day materialism, with its denial of the values and ideals that both Jews and Christians have been upholding over the course of centuries."¹⁵ These aims focused on fostering spiritual rapprochement between Jews and Christians, facilitating mutual knowledge about their respective traditions and ways of life, working to dismantle negative preconceptions and prejudices, and striving to achieve fraternal appreciation between members of both religions. To this end, the association proposed the organization of colloquia and conferences, the use of all possible means of communication and dissemination, encouraging the creation of joint study groups, as well as promoting relations with Catholic organizations and establishing contacts with associations of a similar nature abroad.

Mazin, as many Madrid Jews, saw in the active participation of members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in this undertaking a symbolic gesture of great value. It was interpreted as a first step toward the official recognition of a community that, in fact, up to that moment, lived in a situation of informal tolerance, without the existence of officially acknowledged rights as a religious minority or of any legal or political guarantee that this tolerance would be maintained over time. In this context, the determination of the Vatican to review the relations between the Catholic Church and the Jewish world, as well as the convening of the Second Vatican Council, the first session of which had taken place precisely in October 1962, was a clear signal that the development of the activities

of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana in Spain met with a very favorable climate (O'Collins 2013; O'Malley 2008).

Overall, John XXIII's decision in 1959 to convene a new Council came as a surprise to the Spanish bishops, highlighting the extent of disconnection between the Spanish Catholic hierarchy and contemporary Catholic theology. The role of the Spanish bishops in the four sessions held between 1962 and 1965 was minor, revealing their discomfort with discussions on religious liberty and ecumenism. Nearly a third of the Spanish bishops strongly opposed the terms proposed by the papacy on these matters, particularly rejecting the notion that public authorities lacked competence in religious affairs. Nonetheless, eventually, all the Spanish bishops accepted the Council's documents without reservation. In this regard, it can be argued that the Council's sought-after *aggiornamento* would gradually find its place in Spain, driven more by external factors than internal demands.¹⁶

Mazin understood nonetheless the great historical opportunity that these circumstances presented at the time to facilitate a certain normalization of Jewish life in the country, making interreligious dialogue the flagship activity of his presidency at the head of the Madrid Jewish community. The early death in June 1963 of John XXIII, the great promoter of the Second Vatican Council and surely the pontiff most committed to the ecumenical ideal, did not alter that road map, although it was felt with great regret by the Jews of Madrid. In fact, the Jewish community of Madrid celebrated a religious service in honor of John XXIII the day after his death; as pointed out by the press, this was the first time that a Jewish community anywhere celebrated in its synagogue an act of that type in memory of a pontiff.¹⁷ At the end of the religious service, Mazin read an emotional eulogy in which he recalled how, on one occasion, John XXIII had addressed a Jewish delegation with the words "I am your brother Joseph." Mazin firmly stated that the Jewish people mourned "the disappearance of a great friend."¹⁸ The proactive involvement of John XXIII in reaching out to the Jews likely stood in stark contrast in the mind of many of Madrid's Jews to the passive stance of Pope Pius XII during the Holocaust. Pius XII had seemed more concerned with avoiding antagonizing the Axis powers and not alienating the millions of Catholics who supported the fascist and Nazi regimes, rather than stepping forward to defend the victims, even when these were Catholic. His silence was particularly noticeable in the Italian context as racial laws were enforced, and Jews were rounded up and sent to Auschwitz.¹⁹

The baton of John XXIII was taken up by Paul VI, who decided to continue the work begun by his predecessor. He presided over the remaining sessions of the Second Vatican Council, broadening the path of ecumenical relations and interreligious dialogue. In this sense, the high point would come with the approval in October 1965 of the *Nostra Aetate* declaration, a document drafted not without difficulty by the German Cardinal Augustin Bea. The document dealt with the attitude that the Catholic Church should maintain toward non-Christian religions and laid the foundations for a profound revision of relations with Judaism, stressing the common root that united both religions and refuting the traditional charge of deicide that weighed on the Jews.²⁰

Once the first version of the declaration was approved in November 1964, and aware of the importance of the document, Mazin addressed the Spanish Jews. In an article titled "El Concilio y nosotros" (The Council and Us) published in *Hakesher*, the almost artisanal-produced newsletter that the community had recently started publishing, he urged his

fellow religionists to recognize the transformative potential of the Vatican Council for Jewish-Christian relations. While he was well aware that this was an internal Catholic matter and that there were good reasons for skepticism, since according to his own words, for centuries the Jews had been the victims of negative portrayals sponsored by the Church, Mazin defended the need to support Cardinal Bea. In Mazin's view, Bea had shown great firmness in keeping alive the legacy of John XXIII. Bea, who would later befriend Mazin, had resisted the hostility of some conservative sectors in the Church that opposed the wording of the declaration. Mazin affirmed, in this regard, not without adding a certain degree of drama, that the *Nostra Aetate* declaration had already become "the most transcendental fact in the relations of the Catholic Church with the Jews in the last two thousand years."²¹

Toward recognition of the Jewish community

The decisions the Catholic Church adopted at the Second Vatican Council, as well as the growing collaboration between several members of the Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy and prominent personalities of Madrid Jewry within the framework of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, generated a certain pressure within the Francoist state to reshape its relations and attitudes towards the Jewish citizens and residents in Spain.²² This was happening within a context of growing economic liberalization in which the regime was taking steps towards a timid and cautious political openness. One of the expressions of this new policy was the approval in 1964 of the Law of Associations that allowed the free association of citizens as long as the political principles of the system were not questioned (Palomares 2010; Radcliff 2010). These circumstances contributed to increasing the confidence of Jewish community leaders in the possibility of achieving formal recognition of the small Spanish Jewish communities.²³

The occasion to request such recognition arose on 20 January 1965, when General Franco granted an official audience in the Palace of El Pardo to the presidents of the Jewish communities of Madrid and Barcelona, Max Mazin and Alberto Levy. During the meeting, Mazin let Franco know how he had received with great joy the Caudillo's words in a New Year's speech in which, driven by the new spirit coming from Rome, he had expressed his intention to create in Spain the appropriate conditions to guarantee religious freedom. Franco, on his part, after recalling his past encounters with several Jews in Ceuta and Melilla, showed interest in the life of the Spanish Jews, as well as the situation of Moroccan Jews.

The Caudillo talked about his time as an officer in the military campaigns in Morocco, drawing special attention to the difficult conditions in which the Jews of Chauen lived when the Spaniards entered the city. Franco recalled the request made by local Jews to General Dámaso Berenguer to be allowed to wear shoes, something that the local Muslim population had traditionally forbidden them to do.²⁴ The meeting concluded with Franco's commitment to evaluating Mazin's request to officially enter the Jewish communities in the Registry of Associations under the Ministry of the Interior.²⁵ Jewish media in the Americas, Europe and beyond informed about the meeting, highlighting the obligation that Franco assumed, as a Catholic, to recognize the resolutions of the Ecumenical Council that eradicated the traditional charge of deicide leveled against the Jewish people, something that encouraged the Spanish government and the Catholic

hierarchy to continue taking steps in the same direction.²⁶ The Ladino-language Israeli newspaper *La Verdad* emphasized that, up to that point, Spanish Jews had not been allowed to start synagogues, a situation that forced them to meet in places that could not be marked on the outside as places of worship.²⁷ Only a few months after the meeting with Franco, in March 1965, Mazin announced that the government had approved the bylaws that the Jewish community of Madrid had submitted for its consideration, assuming now the official name of Comunidad Hebrea de Madrid.²⁸ According to the community leader, this put an end to the situation of informal tolerance that had prevailed until then, granting for the first time in five centuries an official recognition of a Jewish presence in Spain. Mazin also assured that he hoped to be able to announce in a short time a similar recognition for the Jewish community of Barcelona.²⁹

In this context of a growing normalization of Jewish community life, the Amistad, presided over by Mazin and Serrano, would continue to broaden the range of its activities of interreligious rapprochement. In April 1966, an event was held in the convent of Santo Tomás de Ávila to mark the fifth anniversary of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. The site was charged with powerful symbolism since it was the place where the Inquisitor Tomás de Torquemada had lived and was buried.³⁰

However, the activity that had the greatest public impact among those organized by the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana was undoubtedly the joint religious service of Jews and Catholics – a paraliturgy – that was held on 28 February 1967 in the parish of Santa Rita, in the Madrid neighborhood of Argüelles. The event attracted a mixed audience of about two thousand people who were invited to pray together several psalms and to recite a rewording of the Lord's Prayer based on references from the Old Testament. The newspaper *ABC* reported on the exceptional nature of the occasion, which, as they were assured from Rome, was unprecedented.³¹ The article informed that mixed religious acts between Jews and Catholics or Protestants had been organized in halls or open spaces in other European countries, but that this was the first time that a Catholic temple hosted an event that included a joint prayer, even if it was not strictly liturgical. The Jesuit José María de Llanos, who had been present at the service and was well known for his social work in the Spanish capital, wrote a note for the newspaper *Ya* in which he described, visibly moved, an overflowing church where, in his vision, a miracle had taken place that finally opened up the possibility of a fraternal reconciliation between the two peoples.³² The *New York Times*, on its part, showed its interest in the situation of the Madrid Jewish community and highlighted in its report the parallels between the Jewish-Catholic paraliturgy with a series of shared religious services held between Catholics and Protestants in Madrid in recent years, imbued with the ecumenical spirit emanating from the Vatican Council.³³

However, the true pivotal moment for Spanish Jews to attain formal recognition from the Francoist state arose with the increasing willingness to openly discuss the matter of religious liberty. This discussion held the potential to provide enhanced legal protection for Spain's religious minorities. On 14 December 1966, the Spanish people had approved in a referendum the Organic Law of the State, which introduced a series of institutional changes within the Franco dictatorship, including an initial recognition of religious freedom.

Shortly afterward, Mazin discussed the issue in a lecture delivered in the building on Pizarro Street that was used at the time by the Jews of the capital as a synagogue

and community center.³⁴ Mazin emphasized that the legal reform represented an event of historical dimensions for the Jewish population of the country and that it would not have been possible without the figure of John XXIII. He emphasized that, in the new context opened up by the initiative of the late pontiff, the establishment of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana had made it possible to channel inter-religious dialogue, this being the first time in Spain that Jews and Catholics acted within the framework of the same association. Now, thanks to the modification of the *Fuero de los Españoles*, the state undertook to guarantee, under its tutelage, the religious freedom of all Spaniards. Mazin warned, however, that the new law of religious freedom still had to receive its final approval in the Cortes – the Spanish parliament – and although it had the approval of the Episcopal Conference and the growing support for the principles of the Vatican Council by Spanish Catholics, there were still strong sectors opposing it.³⁵

Indeed, the idea of religious freedom was not wholeheartedly embraced by the Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy. Only a few days after Mazin's address to the Jews of Madrid, the widely distributed and falangist-led newspaper *Pueblo* reproduced some statements on the question of religious freedom made on a television program by the auxiliary bishop of Madrid, José Guerra Campos, showing a lukewarm adherence to and reservations about the principle of religious freedom outlined in the Vatican Council, in whose sessions he had participated.³⁶ According to the bishop, the state should not stop favoring one religion, if it considered that this was advantageous for the social and spiritual development of the country, as long as it did not undermine the juridical equality of all citizens. Guerra, therefore, distinguished between positive and negative religious propaganda, a distinction that somehow found its way into the final version of the law of religious freedom approved by the Cortes on 28 June 1967, which limited the ability of non-Catholic minorities to proselytize. This restriction disappointed Mazin, who insisted in an interview granted to the same newspaper in January 1968 that even though this measure had no practical consequences for the country's Jewish community, as the Jews were in general not bent on proselytizing, it nonetheless went radically against the principle of equality that the legal reform was supposed to establish.³⁷ The interviewer, journalist Alejo García, affirmed that he had found a less exultant Mazin than he had known in earlier years, at the time of the conciliar approval of the declaration on religious freedom.

Despite the disappointment shown by the Jewish community leaders regarding the final wording of the law of religious freedom, all the necessary conditions were already present for the legal recognition of the Jewish communities in Spain, a fact that was not going to be delayed much longer. Mazin's negotiations with the authorities eventually led to the legal recognition of the Jewish community of Madrid in December 1968, simultaneously with the inauguration of a new synagogue in the capital. This project had been in the making for some years. The Jewish community in Madrid had been experiencing a noticeable growth due to the continuous immigration of Moroccan Jews, and the premises on Pizarro Street, which were being used for community services, could no longer accommodate an expanding community. Consequently, in 1963 they had decided to buy a plot of land on Balmes Street, in the Chamberí district. The community lacked legal personality, so they had to create a corporation – Bet Knesset ("synagogue" in Hebrew) SA – to acquire the property.³⁸

A tedious process began then to get the necessary authorizations, which finally came to fruition at the end of 1967 when Mazin obtained the construction license for the first building to be erected in Spain with all the visible signs of a synagogue since the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492.³⁹ The money to cover the costs of the purchase of the land and the construction was obtained thanks to donations from local and international Jewish organizations and individuals, whereby the largest contributions were those of the Swiss banker Edmond Safra, whose father was honored with the name of the synagogue, Beth Yaacov (Lisbona 2017, 54). The synagogue's inauguration ceremony was held on December 16, with the participation of London Rabbi Salomon Gaon, Rabbi Davis Kahan of Buenos Aires, and Rabbi Harold Gordon of New York.⁴⁰

“Discovering” the Jews

The new Madrid synagogue triggered a growing interest among the Spanish public in the Jewish minority residing in the country, giving greater visibility to a public debate on the Vatican Council and the activities of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. As Federico Revilla from *La Vanguardia Española* pointed out, for many Christians an authentic “discovery of the Jewish people” was taking place, and they became aware of the spiritual closeness between both religions and of the great amount of Jewish resonances in the Christian faith itself.⁴¹ The Vatican Council had shown that the ignominious and persistent accusation of deicide against the Jews was nothing but an “excrescence” imposed on the Gospel message, something that disfigured what should be the authentic Christian position. Another article published in May 1968 titled “Jews and Christians, talking” informed about some of the activities of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, as well as about several publications on Jewish and Sephardic topics by the CSIC.⁴²

This new sensibility and will to approach Spanish Jews only increased after the inauguration of the Madrid synagogue. Thus, *Pueblo* journalist Antonio Aradillas, in an article called “Una sinagoga española” (A Spanish synagogue) was convinced that the new synagogue would contribute to mutual understanding between Jews and Christians in the Spanish capital, and eventually put an end to the usual displays of disrespect that on too many occasions had obscured relations between the two peoples.⁴³ ABC published an extensive photographic article entitled “Synagogues of Spain,” which pointed out the centrality of the synagogue as a community center and place of study, highlighting that its inauguration represented the culmination of the recent rapprochement between Jews and Christians in the country.⁴⁴ The article reported that there were five active synagogues in Spain – the newly inaugurated one in Madrid, two in Barcelona, and two in Ceuta and Melilla – and included a photograph of the young rabbi of the Madrid community, Benito Garzón.

The growing visibility of Jewish places of worship generated a renewed interest in the remnants of the extensive medieval Jewish presence in the Iberian Peninsula, most notably the ancient Synagogue of El Tránsito in Toledo, a Mudejar structure built in the 14th century by Samuel ha-Leví Abulafia, treasurer of King Pedro I of Castile.⁴⁵ Already in the mid-1960s, the State had ceded the Toledo synagogue for its conversion into a museum dedicated to preserving the Sephardic legacy. Franco himself had conveyed to Mazin during their meeting early in 1965 his satisfaction for having contributed to that

decision.⁴⁶ The Spanish media highlighted the Sephardic museum's importance to gain better knowledge of Spanish culture as it offered the possibility of acquiring greater familiarity with the traces left by the long presence of Jews in the country and could become also a vehicle to deepen the Spanish people's awareness of the history of the Jewish people, a portion of which had partaken of the Hispanic genius and mentality in the Middle Ages. Professor Federico Pérez Castro from the University of Madrid and secretary of the Museum's Board of Trustees informed in *La Vanguardia Española* of the great interest that the project had aroused among the Sephardic community worldwide.⁴⁷ The bulletin of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana called attention to the many Jewish visitors that the museum received from different countries of Europe and the Americas. It explained that, apart from the historical testimony of the Jewish presence in the Peninsula, the objective of the museum was to strengthen the bonds between Spain and the Sephardic communities worldwide.⁴⁸ A few years later, in November 1971, the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana would choose the Toledo synagogue for the celebration of its tenth anniversary. Among those present during the celebration was Cornelius Rijk, director of the Vatican Office for Jewish-Christian Relations, who had traveled expressly from Rome for the occasion.⁴⁹

The success of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana served as a model for the establishment of a similar initiative to advocate rapprochement between the country's Catholic majority and the still incipient Spanish Islamic community. Although the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana was predisposed from the outset to support such an initiative, its relationship with Amistad Islámico-Cristiana (Islamic-Christian Friendship) was not free of tensions, mostly due to the conflict in the Middle East. Even before the formal establishment of the new association, a note in the bulletin of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana noted that this type of association should proceed with caution when openly facing political issues.⁵⁰ The article cited as an example the recent cancellation in Madrid of a conference in which a Spanish professor was to speak about a trip to Israel, which had to be suspended due to pressure from Arab diplomats and the presence of Muslim demonstrators on the premises where the meeting was to be held.⁵¹ Despite these initial reservations, the two presidents of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, Vicente Serrano and Max Mazin, dedicated an open letter of congratulations to the new association after its formal constitution in 1968.⁵²

The letter, addressed to the president of the new entity, the Jesuit Salvador Gómez Nogales, expressed the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana's pleasure at the creation of an association similar to their own and their desire to collaborate in favor of greater understanding between the three Abrahamic religions. Gómez Nogales, on his part, reciprocated the good wishes expressed by the presidents of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, thanking them for their help in removing negative allusions to Islam and the Arab peoples from various textbooks.⁵³

Purging school textbooks

The revision of school textbooks was a priority for the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. One of the first issues of the association's bulletin included an extensive article by Sister Esperanza, of the Congregation of Our Lady of Sion, in which she analyzed the responsibility of Catholic textbooks in perpetuating negative preconceptions about Jews.⁵⁴ Most of them, according to the nun, favored a narrative of the Passion

intended to arouse compassion and emotion in schoolchildren, rather than convey any theological significance. Thus, the books tended to attribute a collective responsibility to all Jews for the death of Christ, imprinting a very negative image in the minds of children between the ages of four and ten, with the consequent impact this had on their psychological development.

The nun illustrated through a collection of quotations from these school texts how widespread were the stereotypes surrounding Jews as “a deicidal race,” on which supposedly fell an almost physical, irremediable curse, and on the basis of which “a true education of repugnance, contempt and hatred of the Jew” was sustained. Among the examples collected by Sister Esperanza, she included the text that four-year-old children were taught in a Spanish school:

- Who killed Jesus?
- The Jews.
- And what are you going to do? Shout it out loud.
- Kill them.⁵⁵

Inspired by the approaches of the Vatican Council, another article in the same issue asked how Catholic catechesis could be renewed in order to banish the negative myths and stereotypes about the “Jewish brethren” too often wielded by catechists and other Catholic instructors as dogmatic truths.⁵⁶ To achieve this, the author proposed to give greater relevance to the study of the Old Testament as part of Christian history itself, as well as to emphasize the influence of the Old Testament in the Catholic liturgy, derived from Jewish liturgy. It also pointed out the obligation to respect historical truth, to engage with the Judaism contemporary to Jesus, and refute the explanation of the Diaspora as a punishment for the attributed deicide, when in fact the dispersion of the Jews had already begun prior to the birth of Jesus.

In April 1966, Cardinal Bea addressed the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana to propose that Spain’s religion textbooks be revised to accommodate the doctrinal changes implemented by the Church during the Second Vatican Council and following the principles of *Nostra Aetate*. This would be a first step, said the German clergyman, to gradually assimilate the new doctrine and overcome a load of prejudices and “misconceptions” that had accumulated over centuries.⁵⁷ The Amistad Judeo-Cristiana accepted the challenge and established a committee to evaluate the way in which the Jews were represented in a wide sample of Spanish school textbooks. The results of the work of this committee, directed by Professor Celestino Rodríguez Mendigorria, were presented in two reports. The first one, in June 1967, was dedicated to primary education textbooks; the second one, dated October 1968, to secondary education textbooks.

The first report set out the goal of “banishing prejudice from the tender minds of children,” stating that “most of these deformities of thought are due to the lack of rigor in teaching, which leads to making a negative mark on the soul of men.”⁵⁸ The report pointed out that in Spain anti-Jewish feelings had been fueled for generations by passing down “terrifying stories” about ritual crimes and Jewish usury, as well as by the habitual use of derogatory language characterizing Jews as “deicidal people,” “rot within the nation” or “unpleasant people.” In the face of these deep-rooted attitudes, the new spirit promoted by the Vatican Council favored the correction of many of these errors almost

automatically, without the need for external intervention. Therefore, it affirmed that in the great majority of the books analyzed there was no need for changes.

The commission reviewed 159 books for primary education, using as a reference the lists published by the Spanish National Book Institute. The evaluators found totally or partially unacceptable wording in 29 of them. The general secretary of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, José Francisco Riaza Saco, thus concluded that the result of the evaluation carried out by the commission was encouraging, since it confirmed that most of the schoolbooks had already been positively adapted to the guidelines set by the Vatican Council. Riaza pointed out that, among the books reviewed, there were generally no expressions of animosity against the Jews, nor was there a tendency to point the finger at the Jewish people as a whole for the death of Jesus.⁵⁹

The second report, signed by Riaza in October 1968, dealt with secondary education.⁶⁰ It revealed even more positive conclusions. The report included some of the positive reactions from authors and publishers who had been contacted to suggest changes in content and wording that were not in keeping with the conciliar spirit. These responses were welcomed by the commissioners as a "clear demonstration that the mindset of today's Spaniards does not harbor any negative attitudes or preconceptions."

Furthermore, the report highlighted the support from the Ministry of Education and Science, which had positively welcomed the first report on the state of primary education. In its conclusions, it stated that in the great majority of the cases, the changes suggested by the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana to the authors and publishers had been introduced without hesitation, and expressed satisfaction with the fact that most of the texts published in recent years included content that was in line with the new teaching plans and the conciliar directives. Thus, it was possible to confirm "the positive situation of Spain regarding the relations between Jews and Christians and, in general, regarding the relation with men of faiths other than the one that predominates in Spain."⁶¹

The "teaching of appreciation"

In 1971, the year it commemorated its tenth anniversary, the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana decided to dedicate its efforts to the "teaching of appreciation." Its bulletin explained that in its first years of life, the group had been dedicated to combating the "teaching of contempt," echoing an expression coined by the Jewish-French historian Jules Isaac, who, after losing his family in the Holocaust, had led, together with the Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, European efforts to facilitate a rapprochement between Jews and Christians.⁶² The association now wished to initiate a new phase based on a constructive spirit, and appealed to the country's educators, who should teach children to see "in every man not only a possible friend but a brother, a child of God, even if he has another skin color or another nationality or another religion."

With this purpose in mind, the Amistad invited a group of students and educators to the association's tenth-anniversary celebration in Toledo. If, according to Mazin, during its first decade of existence they struggled to banish prejudices, now it was a matter of involving educators in the efforts to build greater understanding between Catholics and Jews in Spain.⁶³ The last article of the bulletin's issue called attention to the crucial role of educators, given their privileged position to "change the mindset of younger generations more efficiently."⁶⁴ The author of the note, who wrote under the pseudonym "Vercar,"

stated that harbouring hatred towards any distinct group within the human family was, in fact, indicative of a lack of religious faith, and argued that there was indeed a need to shift from condemning the teaching of contempt to actively promoting a “teaching of appreciation.” “However, while he perceived the gradual rapprochement between Christians and Jews as a sign of providential intervention, he also appeared to maintain a certain impartiality or equidistance when assessing the historical causes that had nurtured enmity between the two religious communities. He stated that it was “a disastrous mistake to keep promoting separation by attributing the weight of all the responsibility, the entire burden of guilt, to only one of the parties, Judaism or Christianity.” It prescribed, on the contrary, a new approach emphasizing the shared biblical sources of religious affection that could bring forward a new age of mutual understanding.: “We believe that the time has come to forget, which is the transcendent expression of forgiveness; we must forget old quarrels, the hatred unleashed and the suspicion fostered over centuries.” Despite the fact that the author’s call to forget could be interpreted as advocating a form of social amnesia – a prerequisite for ushering in a new era of harmony – this should not overshadow the reality that the Catholic members of Amistad Judeo-Cristiana consistently expressed remorse over the years for Christian anti-Judaism, and regularly denounced the manifestations of traditional Catholic intolerance towards the Jews.

In spite of the promising prospects of the early 1970s, a 1975 document by Vicente Serrano seemed to question the accuracy of the reports previously submitted by the association, or, at least, to suggest that there had been a certain setback in the educational field as regards the treatment of the Jews. Serrano referred to a new report prepared at the request of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. The aim was to evaluate the influence exerted on Catholic education – both in catechesis and in schools – by the guidelines and suggestions issued in December 1974 by the Vatican for the effective application of the *Nostra Aetate* declaration on Catholic relations with non-Christian confessions.⁶⁵

According to Serrano, due to the haste with which the Vatican office had requested the information, a less exhaustive review had been carried out than the one completed in the years 1967–1968. On this occasion, the sampling included a total of 44 books, including catechetical and primary school textbooks. The evaluators seemed to find a series of general patterns: Judaism appeared as historically superseded, without any relevance in present times, as it had been replaced by the Church with the message of Salvation. This approach led by its very nature to an “almost absolute disregard of Judaism.” Most of the texts reviewed included “serious errors” about the history and culture of the Jews. It concluded categorically that “In general, the guiding principles of Vatican II are conspicuously absent in all the texts consulted.”⁶⁶

Another issue that was closely related to the pedagogical purposes of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana was to morally condemn the anti-Jewish blood libels that had become part of popular folklore in Spain. Two notorious cases were those of the Santo Niño de la Guardia, in the province of Toledo, and of Santo Dominguito del Val in Zaragoza. The devotion to these two saints was an important identity component in their localities.⁶⁷

In 1966, the bulletin of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana published a summary of the lecture given by the priest and journalist José María Javierre dealing with the alleged Jewish ritual crimes.⁶⁸ He stated that the Church desired to acknowledge the errors committed in the

past, and referred to the charge of committing ritual crimes as one of the most serious challenges to be confronted by Catholics, as they would have to change deeply-entrenched views. The path proposed by the Vatican Council could "illuminate certain hidden resentments that perhaps we have concealed within our souls." Beyond the question of historical accuracy, Javierre sought to explore the mental and emotional sources of these accusations. He then pointed out that the Romans had already used similar accusations against Christians themselves during the expansion of Christianity. Anti-Jewish accusations had proliferated in the Christian world in the context of the Crusades, multiplying rapidly throughout Europe in suspiciously similar forms, "as if they had been engraved from the same cliché."⁶⁹

Although the Vatican had faltered on certain occasions, Javierre maintained that the majority of popes had expressed their repulsion towards the accusations, denouncing them as mere pretexts to attack and persecute the Jews. The falsity of these accusations was aggravated by the economic benefit that the propagators of the slander obtained from plundering the goods of persecuted Jews. The priest was therefore in favor of a critical review of those cases for which there still was historical documentation available, giving historians the last word on the matter. Javierre suggested that the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana undertake a historical investigation of the cases of the Santo Niño de La Guardia and Santo Dominguito del Val. He also recommended Francisco Cantera Burgos, Hebraist at the University of Madrid, to guide the investigations of the Toledo case, and offered his own expertise to deal with the Zaragoza case.

The following year the two presidents of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana rose to the challenge, aligning the pedagogical objectives pursued by the association with a historical revision of the alleged Jewish ritual crimes. Mazin declared that Spain had already set an example by expunging from its textbooks insulting wording towards the Jews. Serrano announced the intention of the association to initiate a critical historical study of the famous cases of the Niño de la Guardia and Dominguito del Val.⁷⁰ Between November of that year and the summer of 1968, the secretary general of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, Riaza Saco, published a series of articles to expose the falsity of these blood libels. He denounced it as a "painful" fact that those who claimed to be followers of the Gospel had let themselves be carried away by hatred "to the point of making up a whole series of horrible legends to slander the Jewish people and generate reactions of fear, contempt, and death in those around them."⁷¹ He expressed his hope, however, that the cult to these saints would be abolished once the Church revised the saints' lists of the two dioceses, since both cases were "an unfortunate stumbling block in the perfect fraternity that should be the Jewish-Christian relations".

In a later installment, Riaza alluded with surprise to the negative reaction that had been unleashed in certain media at the possibility of revisiting the ritual crime in Toledo. His position, however, was clear, convinced as he was that the accusation was part of a plan hatched in the final years of the Middle Ages to pave the way for the expulsion of the Jews: "We should feel ashamed today of the expulsion forced upon them in 1492 and this requires from us, if we are truly authentic Christians, to repair the damage, to the best of our ability, restoring the good name that fanatics or evildoers tried to take away from them."⁷²

In April 1970, the Spanish press reported that the presidents of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana had officially requested the Episcopal Commission on Ecumenical Affairs to

abolish the cult of the Child of La Guardia and Dominguito del Val.⁷³ In their petition, Mazin and Serrano argued that the accusations of ritual crimes were typical of times ruled by hatred and superstition. They justified their petition by alluding to the path opened by ecclesiastical authorities in other countries, recalling the cases of Trento in Italy, Benzhausen in Germany, and York in England.

The petition, however, provoked some uneasiness at the local level. The correspondent of *La Vanguardia Española* in Toledo, Luis Moreno Nieto, who had closely followed the activities of the association in that city and had been seen with favorable eyes the establishment of the Sephardic Museum, noted that the measure had generated a great deal of perplexity.⁷⁴ After describing the deep roots that the cult of the saint had in the province, and despite being convinced that the petition of Mazin and Serrano was driven by the noble desire to promote a rapprochement between Jews and Catholics, Moreno questioned their way of proceeding. He argued that the revisionist zeal would have found a better reception if they had begun by demonstrating with solid evidence the historical falsehood of the supposed martyrdom, instead of raising the petition before the conclusions of the investigation were known. In his opinion, raising this issue in the way Mazin and Serrano had done was not “the best way to strengthen the bonds of friendship with Spanish Jews,” as it would rather reopen wounds that were on their way to healing.⁷⁵ It certainly appeared that Amistad had an easier and less contentious task in removing portrayals of Jews as deicides, along with other anti-Jewish theological elements from textbooks, than in attempting to suppress prevalent religious cults and social practices that continued to rely on significant antisemitic imagery.

Despite Moreno’s skepticism, the same newspaper reported that the archbishopric of Zaragoza had given orders to initiate an investigation into the historical veracity of the supposed martyrdom of Dominguito del Val in the Aragonese capital, which once again showed the capacity of influence of the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana.⁷⁶ In spite of the resistance it encountered, the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana remained faithful to its purpose of contributing to end the cult of the child martyrs. At the meeting commemorating the tenth anniversary of the association, held in Toledo in November 1971, Mazin insisted that even greater efforts should be made to achieve this goal.⁷⁷

Conclusions

In January 2020, the president of the Community of Madrid announced that secondary school students would broaden their studies related to Jewish heritage. To this end, the contents of the subjects of Geography and History and Art, as well as Ethics and Religion, were modified so that students would be steeped in the Jewish origins of Christianity, the Jewish presence in the Iberian Peninsula, and Jewish history up to the present day, including the Holocaust.⁷⁸ This change was achieved with the critical encouragement of an organized Jewish community whose existence was not legally recognized only a few decades before.

This new educational initiative is the culmination of a process that started already in the 1960s, during the Franco regime accompanied the transition to democracy, and continues to mature to this day. In his 2003 book, *The Myth of Civil Society: Social Capital and Democratic Consolidation in Spain and Brazil*, Omar Encarnación could still

argue that the example of Spain showed that civil society was of little relevance to the processes of democratization.⁷⁹ Recent historiography on the transition to democracy, has challenged and refuted this argument.

This article offered an additional lens through which to examine the period preceding the Spanish transition to democracy and added one more protagonist to the already known agents and actors of democratization and creation of a pluralistic society: the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. Its history illustrates the potent influence of an idea initially conceived by private individuals who believed in the imperative of delving deeper into social and religious understanding. Although many of those involved in this initiative held notable social positions – whether a wealthy businessman like Max Mazin, academics with established positions at the university like Francisco Cantera and Antonio Peral, or clergy such as Vicente Serrano – they were motivated by their own determination to champion a cause that had the potential to subject them to public criticism and animosity. Beyond achieving strategic aims like securing legal recognition for the Jewish community or fostering a more favourable international perception of Francoist Spain as a nation that upheld religious freedom, the desire to promote mutual acknowledgment is evidenced by the undeniable success the association achieved in rekindling public interest in Jewish history and culture. The institutional endorsement granted by ecclesiastical authorities facilitated an endeavour rooted in civil society, rather than this success being driven from a top-down approach.

There were undoubtedly challenges and setbacks in achieving the goals set forth by Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. These difficulties were particularly apparent in attempts to curtail religious and social practices that still garnered significant popular support, as seen in the case of the cult of the Santo Niño de la Guardia in Toledo. The path leading to the legal recognition of religious freedom also left part of the Jewish leadership in Madrid somewhat dissatisfied. Nevertheless, it is hard to refute the pivotal role that Amistad Judeo-Cristiana played in ultimately securing the formal recognition of the Jewish community in Madrid. This set an important precedent for the subsequent emergence of robust Jewish associations in the 1970s and 1980s. In this context, the backdrop of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s carried a crucial weight in Spain, accelerating an *aggiornamento* facilitated by the rapid societal transformations experienced in the decade, possibly contrary to the desires of a significant portion of the national Catholic hierarchy.

Spain has gone a long way in leaving behind the ideas of national Catholicism, upheld by the Franco dictatorship, and has embarked on the path toward a multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Still, the journey towards this goal has to continue and the educational system has a key role to play in this process. School textbooks are both a mirror to the current situation as well as one of the tools in bringing about a tolerant society, respectful of differences, and that recognizes all sorts of “others” including Jewish-Spaniards, as an integral part of their society, past, present, and future. The Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, encouraged by the changes promoted by the Vatican, contributed decisively to opening a process of gradual normalization of Jewish life in Spain, an important legacy for the subsequent development of the Jewish communities during the new democratic phase in Spain.

Notes

1. For more on how the Spanish press reported on the Eichmann trial, see “Controlled Spanish Press Raps Eichmann Trial, Hide Hitler Horrors,” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency [JTA]*, 6 July 1961.
2. Max Mazin in an interview with a family member, 11 August 2005, Archivo Max Mazin [the Max Mazin family Archive, Madrid (MMA hereafter)]; on the formation of the action group, see “Catholic, Jewish Leaders in Spain Form Group for Mutual Understanding,” *JTA*, 30 November 1961.
3. On the history of Madrid’s Jewish community, see among others Ayton Shenker (1993) and Lisbona (1993)
4. Years later, Mazin insisted that these had been his goals since he became the president of Madrid’s Jewish community (Mazin in an interview with journalist César Vidal, MMA).
5. Raanan Rein and Adrián Krupnik, *Max Mazin: empresario y dirigente judío en tiempos de dictadura y democracia* (in preparation).
6. “4.000 hebreos residen en España,” *España*, 28 September 1962.
7. Max Mazin, “Nuestra Comunidad,” *Hakesher* [El Vínculo], December 1962.
8. Max Mazin in an interview, MMA. On Antonio Peral Torres, see Díaz Esteban (2001).
9. For a discussion of antisemitism in Spain of those years, see Álvarez Chillida (2002).
10. For the critical role played by the Seelisberg Conference – which was attended by representatives of the Catholic Church and various Protestant denominations – in the Christian-Jewish postwar rapprochement and the fight against antisemitism, see Rutishauser (2007).
11. The Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion was founded in 1847 by Theodore Ratisbonne, a convert from an assimilated Jewish family. On its history and involvement in interreligious dialogue after World War II, see Rota (2005) and Deutsch (2016).
12. On Pax Christi, see Kline and Shore (2016).
13. “4.000 hebreos residen en España,” *España*, 28 September 1962.
14. *Vanguardia Española*, 30 de noviembre de 1962, p. 8. On the 1960s wave of secularization, see Cox (2013).
15. “Estatutos de la Asociación judeo-cristiana,” MMA.
16. On the attitudes of the Spanish bishops and the tendencies of the Spanish Church regarding the Second Vatican Council, see Laboa (2005).
17. “El pueblo judío llora hoy la desaparición de un gran amigo,” *La Vanguardia española*, 5 June 1963, p. 11.
18. *Ibid.* Mazin would later recall that the organization of this event earned him the reproach of certain Jewish sectors in various parts of the world: interview with Max Mazin by César Vidal, MMA.
19. On Pius XII and the Holocaust, see Kertzer (2022)
20. Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate*, declaration on the relation of the Church to Non-Christian religions, 28 October 1965. On the relationship between this document and the transformations taking place in the Catholic Church vis-à-vis other religions, as well as on the resistance it met when it was first presented, see Rutishauser (2005).
21. Max Mazin, “El Concilio y nosotros,” *Hakesher* 2, November-December 1964, pp. 11–12. The newsletter, published in Spanish, had a limited circulation among the members of the small Jewish community.
22. For an overview on the Catholic church in Spain and the II Vatican Council, see Díaz Burillo (2019)
23. “Spain’s 5,000 Jews Seek Recognition,” *New York Times*, 4 June 1964.
24. In the 1920s, as a young colonial officer serving in Morocco, Franco expressed the belief that Spain could utilize Moroccan Jews to further Spanish objectives in the Protectorate, arguing that they were more adaptable to civilization than the Muslim population. The Franco regime, ally of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, was not exempted of antisemitism, but it often made a distinction between Ashkenazi Jewry and the Sephardic population which had assimilated Spanish characteristics. See Rohr (2011)

25. This account of the meeting is based on a typed note, preserved by Max Mazin, containing a partial transcription of the conversation held during the audience. The note indicated that it lasted some 15 to 20 minutes, MMA.
26. "Historic Meeting in Madrid," *Jewish Chronicle*, 29 January 1965; "El General Franco promete reconocer a las comunidades Judías de España," *El Tiempo*, Tel Aviv, 9 February 1965.
27. "Espanya ande el general Franko," *La Verdad*, Tel Aviv, 23 January 1965.
28. The choice of the term "Hebrew Community" instead of "Israelite" responded to the desire of Franco's government to avoid possible misunderstandings with the Arab countries, making it clear that the recognition of the Jewish community did not imply the establishment of diplomatic relations with the State of Israel. On Franco's policy of alignment with the Arab countries, see Pardo Sanz (2001).
29. "Spanish Government Grants Legal Status to Madrid Jewish Community," *JTA*, Daily News Bulletin, Vol. XXXII, n. 57, 24 March 1965, p. 3.
30. "Día de la Amistad Judío-Cristiana en el convento de Santo Tomás de Ávila," *ABC*, 22 April 1966; "Inquisitor's Home has Jewish Guest," *New York Times*, 24 April 1966
31. "Un acontecimiento excepcional en el espíritu del Concilio," *ABC*, 1 March 1967, p. 15.
32. José María de Llanos, "La paraliturgia judeo-cristiana," *Ya*, 2 March 1967. On Llanos, see González-Balado (1991)
33. Tad Szulc, "Madrid Jews Join Catholics in Prayer," *The New York Times*, 1 March 1967.
34. "Los judíos y la libertad religiosa, conferencia pronunciada por D. Max Mazin en la sinagoga de Madrid el 25 de febrero de 1967," MMA.
35. On the Religious Freedom Act of 1967 and the controversy surrounding it, see Blanco (1998), and Moreno Seco (2001).
36. "En materia religiosa, el hombre ha de actuar por convicción interior," *Pueblo*, 1 March 1967. Guerra was one of the *procuradores* in Cortes who in November 1976 voted against the Political Reform Law, whose approval effectively repealed the principles of the Francoist regime.
37. The interview was republished in the bulletin of Spain's Jewish communities, *Hakesher*, No. 29, January 1978, pp. 23–24. See also, "Change in Religious Rights Bill Upsets Spanish Non-Catholics," *New York Times*, 4 March 1967; "Spain's Liberty Law Disappoints," *Jewish Chronicle*, 9 June 1967.
38. Max Mazin in an interview with César Vidal, MMA.
39. The Jews of Barcelona had built a community building on Porvenir Street in Barcelona in 1954, which also functioned as a synagogue for religious services, but had no legal permission as such or any external signs of its function, keeping the appearance of a residential building. See Lisboa (1993, 167–174).
40. A letter of thanks from Rabbi Gordon for the invitation is preserved in Max Mazin's archive. The meeting was also attended by other prominent personalities of the Jewish world. See also a thank-you letter from J. I. Linton, from the Department of International Affairs of the World Jewish Congress, thanking Mazin for the opportunity to be present at the event. John Slawson, of the American Jewish Committee, congratulated Mazin for his achievements, MMA.
41. Federico Revilla, "Descubrimiento de los judíos," *La Vanguardia Española*, 21 May 1966, p. 58.
42. Lope Matero, "Judíos y cristianos, al habla," *La Vanguardia Española*, 31 May 1968, p. 11.
43. Antonio Aradillas, "Una sinagoga española," *Pueblo*, 17 December 1968.
44. Juan Balansó, "Las sinagogas en España," *ABC*, 13 July 1969, pp. 126–129.
45. On this growing social visibility of medieval places of Jewish worship, see Flesler and Pérez Melgosa (2020).
46. "Historic Meeting in Madrid," *Jewish Chronicle*, 29 January 1965.
47. Luis Moreno Nieto, "Toledo: El próximo año será inaugurado el Museo Sefardí," *La Vanguardia Española*, 20 October 1966.
48. "Reunión del Patronato del Museo Sefardí," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 23, November-December 1968, p. 12.
49. "En Toledo, X aniversario," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 38, January-February 1972.

50. "Amistad y enemistad," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 6, 1965, p. 5.
51. For the diplomatic protests of Arab countries against the Amistad Judeo-Cristiana and its activities, see Lisbona (1993, 252–253).
52. "Carta a la Amistad Islámico-Cristiana," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 21, June–August 1968, p. 9.
53. "Amistad Judeo-Cristiana también contra los prejuicios antiislámicos," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 22, September–October 1968, p. 6.
54. Sor Esperanza, "La condenación y la crucifixión en los libros escolares," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 6, 1965, pp. 3–5.
55. On the prevalence of antisemitic elements in textbooks in the early years of Franco's regime, see Ben-Dror (2014).
56. Elsa Pariente, "Renovación de las catequesis cristianas," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 6, 1965, pp. 6–7.
57. The letter was sent by the association to the newspaper *ABC* for publication and was only partially transcribed: "Carta del cardenal Bea a la asociación 'Amistad Judeo-Cristiana' de Madrid," *ABC*, 5 April 1966, p. 12.
58. Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, "Informe sobre revisión de libros de texto de enseñanza primaria," Archive of the Centro de Estudios Judeo-Cristiano.
59. *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 13, February–March 1967, p. 12.
60. Amistad Judeo-Cristiana, "Segundo informe sobre revisión de libros de texto," Archive of the Centro de Estudios Judeo-Cristiano.
61. Ibid.
62. "La enseñanza del aprecio," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 35, April–May 1971, p. 1.
63. Max Mazín, "Apuntes sobre un viaje de la enseñanza del aprecio," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 35, April–May 1971, p. 3.
64. "En el camino de la comprensión," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 35, April–May 1971, p. 7.
65. Vicente Serrano, "El judaísmo en la enseñanza católica," MMA.
66. Ibid.
67. On these two cases of alleged ritual crime, see Perceval (1993); Duque (2018); Soyler (2021).
68. "¿Es cierto que los judíos asesinaron niños cristianos?," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 10, May–June 1966, pp. 1–3, 10.
69. Ibid.
70. "Asamblea de la Amistad Judeo-Cristiana," *ABC*, 29 November 1967, p. 72.
71. José Francisco Rianza Saco, "El caso del Niño de la Guardia," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 17, November–December 1967, pp. 1–3.
72. José Francisco Rianza Saco, "El Niño de la Guardia, Menéndez Pelayo y Walsh," *Amistad Judeo-Cristiana*, No. 18, January–February 1968, pp. 1–2, 6.
73. "Amistad Judeo-Cristiana solicita la abolición del culto a dos santos," *La Vanguardia Española*, 14 April 1970, p. 9.
74. Luis Moreno Nieto, "Pros y contras de la revisión del culto al Santo Niño de la Guardia," *La Vanguardia Española*, 21 April 1970, p. 10.
75. Ibid.
76. "El arzobispo de Zaragoza ordena el estudio de la historicidad del martirio de Santo Dominguito del Val," *La Vanguardia Española*, 21 April 1970, p. 10.
77. "Amistad Judeo-Cristiana. X aniversario," Archive of the Centro de Estudios Judeo-Cristiano, Madrid.
78. "Díaz Ayuso anuncia que los alumnos ampliarán sus estudios sobre la historia del pueblo judío," <https://www.comunidad.madrid/noticias/2020/01/23/diaz-ayuso-anuncia-alumnos-ampliaran-estudios-historia-pueblo-judio>; "Díaz Ayuso apuesta por dar historia del pueblo judío en secundaria," *El País*, 23 January 2020.
79. Omar Encarnación, *The Myth of Civil Society: Social Capital and Democratic Consolidation in Spain and Brazil*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

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