



Dr. Bea Schroettner

Previously Foreign Student Assistantship (2001-2)

Email: beantje_at_aol.com

Portuguese and Spanish Attitudes towards Refugees during the Second World War
(Working Title)

The objective of the Ph.D. thesis is to analyze and compare Spanish and Portuguese views, attitudes and policies toward Jews immediately before, during and after WWII. The study is intended to present a comparative analysis of the political and social realities in the two Iberian States which shaped the respective policies toward Jewish refugees and which, on a more abstract level, also influenced the idea or the image of "the Jew" in both countries. The focus will have to be laid on an analysis of the importance that historical concepts - such as the aftermath of the Inquisition, the rather philo-Semitic strands in, for instance, Spain before and during WWI and the personal experiences of leading statesmen, such as Franco's contacts with Jews during his military service in North Africa - exerted on the policies of the countries in question. Also, the influence of Catholicism, the course of internal political and social developments and last but definitely not least the influence of Allies or political affiliation with certain countries during WWII will have to be taken into consideration. The main focus of the thesis will rest on the developments in Portugal, which have so far been neglected by scholars, especially when it come to Jewish topics in the post-Inquisition area. The Portuguese findings will then be compared to their Spanish counterparts, which have received somewhat more attention but are not fully researched yet.