

## Moacyr Scliar's *Immigration and Identity: A Bibliometric Analysis of Research Trends (2000-2024)*<sup>\*</sup>

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### Abstract

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Despite Moacyr Scliar's extensive literary production, there remains a gap in understanding the academic trends addressing his work, particularly concerning themes of immigration and identity. To explore this gap, this article aims to map the scientific production on Scliar through a bibliometric analysis of articles published between 2000 and 2024. The research was based on sources indexed in Google Scholar, resulting in a corpus of 38 selected articles. The findings revealed publication patterns, key authors, and prominent journals, highlighting an increase in publications after the author's passing in 2011. As a main contribution, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the academic reception of Scliar's work, offering insights for future research on his influence in Brazilian literature and discussions about identity and immigration.

**Keywords:** Moacyr Scliar, Immigration, Identity, Bibliometric Analysis, Brazilian Literature.

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### 1. Introduction

Moacyr Jaime Scliar (March 23, 1937 – February 27, 2011) was a Brazilian physician and one of the most prolific writers in Latin America, whose literary works bridged the fields of public health and fiction. A member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters since 2003, Scliar's narrative talent, combined with his ability to explore the complexities of identity, culture, and migration, established him as a critical voice in contemporary Brazilian literature. His works have been translated into more than 20 languages, expanding his influence far beyond Brazil's borders (Scliar, 2006).

Scliar's Russian-Jewish heritage, inherited from parents who emigrated from Bessarabia to Brazil in 1904, shaped his literary worldview. Raised in Porto Alegre's Bom Fim neighborhood, a hub of Jewish immigrant life, he drew upon the challenges and resilience of this community to craft his stories. Bom Fim, an enclave marked by a blend of Jewish traditions and Brazilian modernization, served as the backdrop for narratives like *O Exército de um Homem Só* (1973), which intertwine the utopian aspirations of immigrants with the harsh realities of displacement (Pereira, 2007).

The historical context of Jewish migration to Brazil is integral to Scliar's oeuvre. As Pereira (2007) emphasizes, the influx of Jewish immigrants into southern Brazil during the early 20th century, spurred by pogroms and economic hardships in Eastern Europe, created communities rich in cultural and social dynamics. These immigrants, as Scliar poignantly depicts, carried utopian dreams of prosperity and safety while confronting the complexities of assimilation and survival. Scliar's exploration of these themes reflects broader narratives of immigration, particularly the interplay between ideological aspirations and the socioeconomic constraints of their new homeland (Pereira, 2007; Waldman, 2023).

Jeffrey Lesser's insights into the construction of identity among immigrants in Brazil illuminate the significance of Scliar's work. Lesser (1999) explains how the immigrant experience in Brazil involved a dual

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process of adaptation and identity preservation, manifesting in cultural hybridity. Scliar captures this tension through his characters, who grapple with retaining their Jewish heritage while integrating into Brazilian society. This duality of identity is exemplified in *The Strange Nation of Rafael Mendes* (1983), where themes of dislocation, memory, and resilience take center stage.

By embedding Jewish cultural elements into the broader Brazilian narrative, Scliar redefined the immigrant experience as a lens to examine the evolving national identity. His works both reflect the historical experiences of other immigrant groups in Brazil and serve as a commentary on cultural hybridity in modern societies. Waldman (2023) highlights how migration, labor, and cultural exchange shaped urban spaces like Porto Alegre, making Scliar's contributions a crucial part of this broader narrative.

This study applies a bibliometric approach to analyze the academic discourse surrounding Scliar's work from 2000 to 2024. Bibliometric analysis, as highlighted by Donthu et al. (2021), provides a quantitative method to map the impact and evolution of scholarly research, offering insights into key trends, influential authors, and thematic developments within a given field. By examining scholarly trends, key themes, and the evolution of academic interest, the study seeks to map the impact and reception of his work in national and international literary discussions. Using indicators such as author networks, journals, and citation analysis, we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of how Scliar's exploration of identity and migration continues to influence contemporary scholarship.

## 2. Methodology

This study employs a bibliometric approach to analyze the scholarly discourse surrounding Moacyr Scliar's literary contributions, particularly focusing on themes of immigration and identity. Bibliometric analysis, as described by Donthu et al. (2021), provides a quantitative framework for mapping the evolution of research within a given field, offering insights into publication trends, influential authors, and thematic developments. The present study follows a descriptive bibliometric design, aiming to assess the trajectory of academic interest in Scliar's work from 2000 to 2024, using key bibliometric indicators such as author occurrence, journal impact, keyword trends, and citation counts.

To construct the bibliographic dataset, an initial search was conducted in Scopus and Web of Science, two widely recognized academic databases known for their comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature. These databases are considered among the most reliable sources for social sciences research due to their extensive indexing of high-impact journals and structured citation tracking (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). However, due to the limited number of relevant studies found, Google Scholar was selected as the primary data source, given its broader indexing capabilities, which include journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters that may not be covered by traditional databases (Halevi, Moed & Bar-Ilan, 2017). The search strategy employed the following query: "Moacyr Scliar" AND ("identity" OR "diaspora" OR "immigration" OR "identidad" OR "diáspora" OR "inmigración") NOT ("thesis" OR "dissertation" OR "monograph" OR "TCC" OR "undergraduate" OR "master's thesis" OR "doctoral dissertation" OR "book" OR "libro" OR "livro" OR "tesis" OR "disertación" OR "monografía"), with the search limited to the period between 2000 and 2024 to capture recent developments in the academic study of Scliar's work.

The initial search resulted in the retrieval of 705 documents. To ensure the relevance and quality of the dataset, a rigorous manual screening process was conducted, applying predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Only peer-reviewed journal articles were considered for inclusion, with all theses, dissertations, monographs, books, and book chapters being excluded to maintain the focus on scholarly journal output. Conference proceedings and grey literature were also removed to ensure consistency and reliability in the analysis. This manual refinement process resulted in a final dataset composed of journal articles directly related to the study's objectives.

The bibliometric analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel, following the methodological guidelines suggested by Gutiérrez-Salcedo et al. (2017) for processing and analyzing bibliometric data. The refined dataset was systematically analyzed based on several key indicators, including author occurrence to identify the most prolific researchers contributing to the study of Scliar's work, and institutional affiliations to determine which academic institutions have shown sustained interest in the topic, however the inconsistency of this metric led to the decision of keeping outside this study. In addition, the most influential journals publishing on Scliar's themes were identified, offering insights into the preferred publication venues for this research area. A keyword analysis was conducted to detect recurring themes and emerging topics within the field, while citation analysis provided a measure of the impact of scholarly contributions over time.

Despite the structured approach applied in this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the reliance on Google Scholar as the primary data source introduces potential biases, as the platform indexes a broad range of documents, including non-peer-reviewed content, which may affect the overall quality of the dataset

(Martín-Martín et al., 2018). Additionally, the manual screening of articles introduces an element of subjectivity, which, despite efforts to maintain consistency, may influence the selection of articles. Another limitation relates to the use of Microsoft Excel for data processing and visualization. While Excel is an effective tool for basic bibliometric analysis, it lacks the advanced network analysis and visualization capabilities offered by specialized bibliometric software such as VOSviewer or Bibliometrix, potentially limiting the depth of the analysis (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). This choice was made because the absence of elements such as DOI affected the performance of bibliometric software. Given the small dataset size, Excel proved to be a more suitable tool for conducting the analysis.

In conclusion, this study adopts a systematic bibliometric approach to evaluate the academic discourse surrounding Moacyr Scliar's work on immigration and identity, providing valuable insights into scholarly trends and contributions. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of how Scliar's literary contributions have been received and explored in academic research over the past two decades.

### 3. Results and discussions

This study aimed to map the academic production related to Moacyr Scliar's literary contributions, focusing on themes of immigration and identity through a bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric methods have been widely recognized as a valuable tool for assessing scholarly output and identifying research trends within a given field (Donthu et al., 2021; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). The analysis was conducted on 38 selected scientific articles, filtered from an initial dataset of 705 documents retrieved from Google Scholar. Google Scholar, despite its limitations regarding metadata consistency and potential duplications, remains a widely used and accessible academic search engine, offering extensive coverage of scholarly publications across disciplines (Halevi et al., 2017). The selection process was carried out following predefined criteria to ensure relevance and alignment with the study's objectives, which focused on identifying how Scliar's work has been discussed within the context of immigration and cultural identity.

The findings of this analysis offer significant insights into the evolution of publication trends, the most influential authors, and the primary thematic areas within the selected corpus. The temporal distribution of publications highlights fluctuations in scholarly interest over the years, reflecting broader shifts in academic engagement with Latin American Jewish literature and migration studies. Previous bibliometric studies have shown similar publication patterns in the humanities, where scholarly attention often coincides with historical anniversaries, cultural movements, and contemporary socio-political discussions (Moretti, 2013). Furthermore, the study identifies key themes that recurrently appear in the literature, such as Jewish diaspora, cultural hybridity, and national identity, underlining the multidimensional nature of Scliar's work and its relevance in contemporary literary discourse (Lesser, 1999; Waldman, 2023).

By employing bibliometric indicators such as citation analysis, publication frequency, and keyword occurrences, the study contributes to a better understanding of the scholarly landscape surrounding Scliar's work and its evolving reception within academic circles. The findings also highlight gaps in the literature that could inspire future research directions, emphasizing the importance of continued exploration of Scliar's narratives within broader frameworks of global migration and identity studies (Small, 1999). While the analysis was constrained by the limited availability of structured metadata, the insights derived from the selected articles offer a foundational understanding of the key academic conversations surrounding Scliar's contributions.

#### 3.1. Publication trends over the Years

The analysis of publication trends over the years highlights fluctuations in scholarly interest in Moacyr Scliar's work. As shown in the figure below, the number of publications exhibited periodic increases and declines, with notable peaks in 2001, 2013, and 2021. A significant rise in publications between 2011 and 2018 can be linked to Scliar's passing in 2011, which likely reignited academic discussions surrounding his literary contributions, particularly in the context of immigration and identity. The peak in 2021 is especially noteworthy, as two publications originated from the same journal, *Revista de Literatura Brasileira*, indicating a focused academic effort within this publication outlet. This pattern aligns with findings from previous bibliometric studies, which suggest that key events such as anniversaries and cultural movements often influence academic interest (Moretti, 2013; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). The continued presence of publications in recent years underscores the enduring relevance of Scliar's work within Brazilian literature and migration studies.

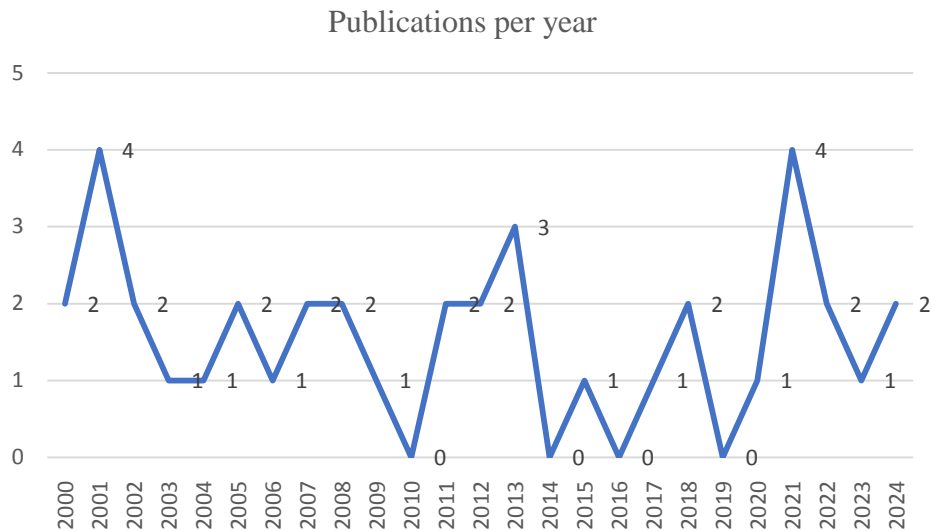


Fig. 1. Publications per Year Related to MoacyrScliar's Literary Contributions. Created by the author.

A closer examination of the publication trends reveals the dynamic nature of academic interest in MoacyrScliar's work, influenced by both internal literary developments and external cultural factors. The periodic fluctuations in publication output suggest that researchers revisit Scliar's contributions in response to broader discourses in migration, identity, and Jewish-Brazilian literature. Furthermore, the presence of multiple contributions from specific journals in key years points to the role of specialized academic outlets in fostering focused discussions on his literary themes. Additionally, it is important to highlight that this analysis represents just a cutout from one of the many themes explored by Scliar throughout his prolific career. Over his lifetime, he authored more than 70 books across diverse genres, including children's and young adult literature, novels, as well as medical and academic essays (Scliar, 1985). Works such as *A Condição Judaica: Das Tábuas da Lei à Mesa da Cozinha* (Scliar, 1985) reflect his deep engagement with questions of identity and displacement, further reinforcing his relevance in contemporary scholarship. This ongoing engagement underscores the significance of Scliar's narratives and suggests opportunities for further interdisciplinary exploration.

### 3.2. Citation Analysis

Citations serve as a valuable indicator of the academic impact and relevance of scholarly works. Among the analyzed documents, citation counts varied significantly. According to Google Scholar, the most cited work, authored by de Andrade Tosta (2005) and published in *Hispania*, accumulated 25 citations, underscoring its prominence in academic discussions surrounding Brazilian and Jewish literature. Another notable contribution is Waldman's (2002) study, *Entre braços e pernas: prostitutas estrangeiras na literatura brasileira do século XX*, which received 10 citations, reflecting continued interest in the socio-cultural aspects of Scliar's work. Rozenchan's (2006) article, which explores Jewish literary themes in the work of Cíntia Moscovich, gathered 5 citations, further contributing to the discourse on Jewish identity in Brazilian literature.

Other publications, such as those by Lilenbaum (2007) and Brumer (2009), each with 4 citations, highlight the ongoing interest in Scliar's exploration of Jewish identity and humor. Meanwhile, studies by Miletich (2018), López-Calvo (2000), and Vieira (2008) reflect moderate engagement with citation counts of 3 and 2, respectively. It is important to note that the majority of the selected articles exhibited lower citation counts, with several works receiving only a single citation. This trend suggests that research on Scliar's literary contributions remains specialized within niche academic communities, with potential gaps in broader scholarly recognition.

Year	Citations	Author	Title
2005	25	de Andrade Tosta, A. L.	Between heaven and hell: Perceptions of Brazil and the United States in 'Brazuca' literature
2002	10	Waldman, B.	Entre braços e pernas: prostitutas estrangeiras na literatura brasileira do século XX
2006	5	Rozenchan, N.	Cíntia Moscovich's Brazilian view on Jewish literary themes

2007	4	Lilenbaum, P. C.	Testemunho: uma breve reflexão sobre ética e estética na literatura judaica
2009	4	Brumer, A	O humor judaico em questão.
2018	3	Miletich, M.	Dragomans gaining footing: Translators as usurpers in two stories by Rodolfo Walsh and Moacyr Scliar
2000	2	López-Calvo, I.	La negociación de las diferencias sociales en Marcos Aguinis: descolonización de la identidad cultural judía ante la adversidad
2008	2	Vieira, N. H.	Visões de identidade de escritores judeus: O Eu e o Outro
2001	1	Cury, M. Z. F.	Imagens flutuantes, identidades negociadas
2002	1	Süssekind, F., & Barros, M.	Deterritorialization and poetic form: Brazilian contemporary poetry and urban experience
2008	1	Heller, B.	Judeus na ficção de Moacyr Scliar: um exemplo de hibridismo
2012	1	Júnior, F. O. S.	Judaísmo, medicina e literatura: ética médica judaica em A majestade do Xingu, de Moacyr Scliar
2013	1	Brisolara, V. S.	QUANTO MAIS VOCÊ OLHA, MENOS VOCÊ VÊ: MAX E OS FELINOS DE MOACYR SCLiar E A VIDA DE PI DE YANN MARTEL.
2021	1	Fauri, A.	Centauros muito além do jardim

Fig. 2. Summary of scholarly publications on Jewish literature and cultural identity by year, citations, author, and title. Created by the author.

Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that citation counts may be influenced by the indexing limitations of Google Scholar, potentially excluding references from non-indexed sources or alternative citation databases. Nevertheless, the selected studies provide a representative overview of the academic interest in Scliar's work across different themes and time periods.

### 3.3. Journal Distribution

The analysis of journal distribution within the dataset reveals a broad spectrum of academic interest in Moacyr Scliar's literary contributions across both national and international platforms. Arquivo Maaravi: Revista Digital de Estudos Judaicos da UFMG stands out as the most prolific journal, featuring six publications spanning from 2007 to 2021, underscoring its role as a key outlet for scholarship on Jewish literature in Brazil. Additionally, Revista de Literatura Brasileira and Chasqui contribute multiple articles, highlighting sustained academic engagement with Scliar's work across different time periods. Notably, the presence of interdisciplinary journals such as Cadernos De Língua E Literatura Hebraica and Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas demonstrates the thematic richness of Scliar's narratives, which transcend literary studies to intersect with cultural, linguistic, and migration-related discussions. Furthermore, journals like Journal of Modern Jewish Studies and Jewish Quarterly signify the international appeal of Scliar's exploration of Jewish identity and diaspora. This diverse journal distribution reflects the global and interdisciplinary reach of Scliar's literary legacy.

Works	Year	Journal
6	(1) 2007, (2) 2012, (1) 2013, (1) 2018, (1) 2021	Arquivo Maaravi: Revista Digital de Estudos Judaicos da UFMG
3	(1) 2001, (1) 2007, (1) 2013	Chasqui
3	(1) 2001, (2) 2021	Revista de Literatura Brasileira
2	(1) 2015, (1) 2022	Cadernos De Língua E Literatura Hebraica
2	2024	Journal of Modern Jewish Studies
2	(1) 2009, (1) 2011	WebMosaica: Revista do Instituto Cultural Judaico Marc Chagall

1	2002	Arachne@Rutgers: Journal of Iberian and Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies
1	2021	Cahiers d'études romanes
1	2022	Editora Científica Digital
1	2018	Hikma
1	2005	Hispania
1	2008	ITINERÁRIOS – Revista de Literatura
1	2003	Jewish Quarterly
1	2006	Journal for the Study of Religion
1	2013	Línguas & Letras
1	(1) 2011, (1) 2005	Literature and Arts of the Americas
1	2002	Remates de Males
1	2001	Revista da Universidade de Aveiro
1	2023	Revista de Estudos do Discurso
1	2000	Revista Iberoamericana
1	2020	Revista Léngua & Meia
1	2017	Revista V! RUS
1	2000	Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies
1	2004	The Review of Contemporary Fiction
1	2008	Topoi (Rio J.)

**Fig. 3.** Journal distribution of publications on MoacyrScliar's literary contributions. Created by the author.

The visualization above highlights the distribution of academic publications across various journals that have engaged with MoacyrScliar's literary contributions. It underscores the predominance of specific journals, such as *Arquivo Maaravi: Revista Digital de Estudos Judaicos da UFMG*, which features the highest number of publications, followed by *Revista de Literatura Brasileira* and *Chasqui*. This distribution reflects both national and international scholarly interest in Scliar's work, spanning diverse thematic perspectives and academic disciplines. Although no specific thematic dossier dedicated to Scliar's work within the scope of this study was identified, it is common for journals to organize special issues or thematic dossiers to commemorate significant literary figures, such as Scliar, and revisit their contributions from new academic perspectives. It is possible that some publications indirectly related to the themes of this study were not captured within the dataset.

### 3.4. Key authors' contributions

The analysis of the dataset reveals a concentration of scholarly contributions from a select group of authors who have repeatedly engaged with Moacyr Scliar's literary work. Notably, N. H. Vieira emerges as a significant contributor with two publications spanning over a decade (2008, 2021). Vieira, a professor of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and Judaic Studies at Brown University, holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Portuguese and Brazilian Literature. His work delves into themes of identity and self-perception in Jewish literature, reflecting the enduring relevance of Scliar's exploration of cultural and individual identity in the Brazilian context. Vieira's research interests align closely with Scliar's literary themes, focusing on the intersections of ethnicity, diaspora, and alterity, making his contributions invaluable to the field of Brazilian Jewish studies (Vieira, n.d.).

Similarly, S. Kirschbaum has contributed multiple articles (2022, 2024) that focus on the geographic and cultural dimensions of Jewish migration as depicted in Scliar's work. Kirschbaum's research offers valuable insights into the intersection of literature and spatial identity, emphasizing Scliar's portrayal of Jewish diaspora experiences in Brazil. Although the two works analyzed here are translations, Kirschbaum, who holds a PhD in Hebrew Language, Literature, and Jewish Culture, is actively engaged in various scholarly activities related to Scliar's work, exploring its diverse facets beyond the themes of identity and migration (Kirschbaum, n.d.).

Another recurring author, A. Brumer, has made significant contributions with studies published in 2009 and 2011, examining Scliar's unique approach to humor and storytelling in Jewish literature. Brumer holds a Ph.D.

in Sociology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and has an extensive academic background in Jewish studies, focusing on cultural identity and social dynamics within Jewish communities. Her analyses underscore Scliar's literary versatility and his ability to intertwine humor with deeper socio-cultural commentary, providing critical perspectives on the interplay between narrative structure and identity construction in Jewish literature (Brumer, n.d.).

Author	Year	Article Titles
Vieira, N. H.	2008, 2021	Visões de identidade de escritores judeus: O Eu e o Outro, Unholy Emotions: Judaic Spirituality and Homosexual Identity in Brazil
Kirschbaum, S.	2022, 2024	Geografias da imigração: o Rio de Janeiro de Samuel Rawet e a Porto Alegre de Moacyr Scliar, Geographies of immigration: Samuel Rawet's Rio De Janeiro and Moacyr Scliar's Porto Alegre
Brumer, A.	2009, 2011	O humor judaico em questão, Moacyr Scliar e o conto insólito

**Fig. 4.** Key authors and their contributions to the study of Moacyr Scliar's Work. Created by the author.

These key contributors highlight the multifaceted nature of Scliar's literary legacy, with their works reflecting a sustained academic interest across diverse thematic lenses, including migration, identity, humor, and cultural adaptation. Their repeated engagement with Scliar's texts demonstrates the author's profound influence in both national and international literary spheres.

Despite the prominence of these authors, the relatively limited number of repeated contributors suggests that academic interest in Scliar's work, while significant, remains somewhat specialized within particular scholarly circles. This reinforces the need for continued research to further explore the depth and complexity of his contributions to Brazilian and Jewish literature.

#### 4. Conclusion

The analysis of scholarly works related to the themes of immigration and identity in Moacyr Scliar's literature highlights a significant trend: most of the academic contributions are found in monographs, theses, dissertations, and books. This is a clear indication of the depth of engagement with these topics in Brazilian academic discourse. Given Brazil's rich cultural and racial miscegenation, it is unsurprising that the themes of identity and immigration hold a central place in both the country's academic and cultural dialogues. Brazil's diverse society, shaped by the continuous integration of various ethnic and cultural groups, has made the dynamics of integration a compelling subject of study, particularly when it comes to the Jewish community's role in the nation's historical and cultural formation.

Scliar's works serve as an essential resource for exploring the intersection of literature, identity, and immigration. His narratives offer a window into the lived experiences of Jewish immigrants in Brazil, enriching our understanding of the country's complex social fabric. However, the research conducted thus far predominantly remains within the realm of literary studies, with few attempts to connect these literary analyses to broader historical, sociological, or anthropological frameworks. This presents a significant gap in the academic discourse and points to exciting avenues for future research.

Future studies could extend beyond literature by engaging with the fields of history and social sciences. A comparative analysis between Scliar's fictionalized accounts of Jewish immigration and historical records could yield profound insights into the real-world experiences of immigrants in Brazil. Additionally, exploring Scliar's works through a phenomenological lens would deepen our understanding of how the author's personal experiences with immigration and identity are reflected in his fiction. This approach could offer a more intimate perspective on Scliar's work, connecting his literary output to the real-life dynamics of the Jewish community in Brazil.

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