

Confessions of a Marrano

By Guillermo Lazo

“Are you a Gentile or are you Jewish?” In elementary school I was asked this question in the hallway by Ed Lerner. He was a small, blonde boy and I shared a desk with him. When Ed asked me this question, everyone from our class gathered around to hear my answer.

I wasn’t raised as a Jew, but I didn’t consider myself a Gentile, so I didn’t say anything. Again, he pressed me: “Are you a Gentile?” There was a long pause.

“No!” I answered and that seemed to satisfy him and everyone else. Our friends had by now filed out to the playground.

And so it was in our neighborhood and I was living in a nether world. I was a part of the community, I was “one of the boys” but I lived in-between the Jewish and larger world which comprised our community. We lived in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood though we did not practice any religion, save a nominal Protestantism. My mother taught us “God makes everything work out for the best.” This is a teaching that comes from Rabbi Akiva. Centuries after the Inquisition that is pretty much all that remained of our Judaism: my mother’s statement in the face of adversity.

There was a kind of unspoken knowledge that our family had come from somewhere before Mexico. My father was raised by his mother’s family: The Delgados. His grandfather was Benjamin Delgado. Dad would tell us that he thought we were ‘Moros’ who had emigrated to Mexico. It was pretty much left at that. I think it’s odd that he still says grace after meals, as his mother taught him. “*Gracias Señor para todo me dio que no lo merezco...*”

Discovering Marrano ancestry is like going up into an attic and sifting through an old family trunk and finding out that you were adopted. It is something that changes how you see yourself, your self-image. Your identity. There is a joke college students ask each other, “Who am I?” Then they laugh. I did my share of laughing but my senior thesis in college was on Malamud and Saul Bellow.

In that metaphorical trunk, I learned that the names of both my parents’ families were common Marrano names: Delgado and Ayala. My maternal grandmother’s maiden name was Nieto, a name linked to an illustrious rabbi. Even my own surname Lazo, I often thought was a corruption or shortening of Lazarus or Lazar. My grandfather on my

mother’s side, Cecilio Gutierrez claimed to be Apache from Sonora, Mexico, but even his surname has been linked to Anousim.

I talked with a few rabbis about my interest in Judaism, and it was as though I had to pay through the *gehunkus*. However, after a time, a rabbi I had written to answered me. His reply was that if I believed I was descended from Marrano Jews, then I should immediately immerse myself in study of Torah, and that is where I would find my answers. So, that is when I felt the pull from inside of me to embrace Torah and let the chips fall where they may.

To my surprise, my father and brothers and sisters accepted my decision. I have an older sister who recently confided to me that some of our “people” were Jews. Is that a pattern among Latinos

who find Jewish ancestry? It is not spoken of. It is avoided but then when the hints and the stories, and the evidence mounts up, then it is accepted; sometimes grudgingly, but eventually accepted.



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I was referred to a rabbi in Denver. I called him and we talked for a few minutes then he asked me to hold. When he came back on the phone, he agreed to meet with me. What I didn't know was this: At the precise moment I called, he was in consultation with a young woman, named Cindy. He took down my name and said to Cindy, "I've got this guy on the line who wants to convert to Judaism. Why do they always call me?" Cindy asked him to repeat the name. He said, "Guillermo Lazo." Cindy said, "Well you have to see him because I went to high school with him in Chicago and he has Sephardic background." This was a random occurrence 1,000 miles away and over twenty years later! Coincidence?

In my family, we didn't consider ourselves Jews but I often heard my family referred to as Mexican or "Spanish" Jews. And it wasn't usually said in a nice way. One evening, a friend and I were walking around the neighborhood and we were near the temple. Suddenly, some young toughs cornered us in an alley. "Are you a Jew?" He demanded. I didn't know him. They were older than us. Bigger, stronger. "No," I said. Then he smiled and stuck out his hand for me to shake it, and he said, "Good, neither am I." I thought it was strange that he would offer me his hand to shake, but I didn't have to think about it too long, because he sucker-punched me and knocked me out. They were out to beat up Jews and I got caught. In my high school graduation photo, there is a trace of the black eye.

I was fortunate to be exposed to Judaism at an early age, so there was and still is a very strong feeling of homecoming. Also, there is a strange pattern that is very personal to me. Throughout my life, people have approached me and invited me to attend synagogue, whether for b'nai mitzvah or for services. I remember when I was 12 years old and I went to my friend Mark's bar mitzvah. There was a discussion at the Temple on whether I had to wear *tallit* or just a *yarmulke*. Finally the rabbi decided I didn't have to wear a *tallit*, but I should wear a *yarmulke*. Afterwards, I walked back home. Mrs. Fischer, from across the street, walked back the same route with her two children. She was very friendly and said she thought it was nice that I "went to Shul".

I later moved to Colorado. On a sales call in a Denver book store a long time ago, the owner and I got involved in conversation, and after awhile he gave me a copy of *Tikkun* magazine. He didn't say that it was a Jewish magazine, but later, as I read it, I couldn't understand why he gave me such a magazine. I was Mexican, a Chicano, why was he giving me that magazine? Although I had been raised around Jews, I'd made a break and pretty much was nothing. I thought I'd never be accepted as a Jew and so after my childhood involvement, I was distanced.

During that time I sat in a café with a good friend, who'd originally come out to Colorado from New York. He began telling me of the 'crypto' Jews of New Mexico. He talked for a while about the gravestones and other evidence that had been found. I didn't think much of it at the time. But he ended it with, "Just think, the Latinos are the only people who want to be Jews." Then he laughed.

It's ironic that all of those hints and suggestions fell on deaf ears. My genealogical search on my family names led to dead ends. I couldn't go any farther into the past than 1746 in Guanajuato, Mexico. So either we were Indians (which we are) or what? We must be Gypsies I concluded. We must be

Mexican Gypsies who intermarried with Indians. So that is how I left it.

I had posted to a number of Internet bulletin boards asking for any information on my surname. Nothing really came back, until a few years later; I received an email in a funky kind of Spanish. As I read it I thought to myself, "This guy's Spanish is jacked." As it turned out, it was from a researcher who was writing to me in Ladino. He had evidence that there were people with the surnames Lazo/Laso who were exiled from Spain and Portugal during the Inquisition for Judaizing. Also there were Delgado and Ayala families who suffered the same fate. Those are the names from my father's side. Then more information came about the name on my mother's side: the Nieto family. That is the reason for the photo of David Nieto, which accompanies this article. So you see, all my life I have been on this path, and I was deaf and blind to it. However, after I saw some evidence as to the history of my people, it dawned on me that I was a Jew. Why else couldn't I believe in the divinity of Jesus? Why could I never believe in the divinity of a man? Why don't I believe in

I received an email in a funky kind of Spanish. As I read it I thought to myself, "This guy's Spanish is jacked." As it turned out, it was from a researcher

original sin? I thought that these ideas must be from my Aztec past. Now I know where they come from. I came to investigate my spirituality once and for all. There was something nagging me. Christians, Muslims and Buddhists were approaching me. First I dove into Buddhism. I studied Buddhist writings and tried to become content in my life and work. Buddha taught that all life is suffering. I didn't believe

that. My life has had suffering, but it was not all suffering. There was also great joy. Then I found a parallel between the teachings of Buddhism and the teachings of Jesus, the parables. It is there, in the parables that I was pointed back to Judaism, for reference is made to the law i.e. the Torah. It was an intense period for me. I attended a Quaker church for a couple of years and when we moved, I couldn't find a Quaker congregation, but I found a Mennonite congregation. It was there during a Sunday school session, when the teacher who was trained at the seminary could not adequately explain why the Hebrews always spoke of Israel, while they were in captivity in Egypt. He addressed the question but I was not satisfied with his answer. He didn't have *yiddishkeit*. It was something that seemed so obvious to me. This happened about the same time that I'd found a link to my Jewish ancestry. When the pastor spoke glowingly of the crusades, and the "people who killed Jesus" I knew my days as a Christian were numbered. I also felt silly singing songs like, *Make Me as White as the Snow*.

The first Delgados began appearing in Mexico around 1746. Ten years earlier, in Spain, an Antonio Delgado was imprisoned for practicing Judaism, and his mother-in-law was burned at the stake. That was the reason I'd been unable to get beyond 1746. The preceding ten years must have been years of flight and secrecy, escaping the Inquisition even as they traveled to the Americas. The Office of the Inquisition followed them to Mexico City. The Delgado and Lazo family (historically linked) fled to Guanajuato. The Nieto family fled first to Monterrey, Nuevo Leon (the "New" Lion of Judah), then West Texas and finally New Mexico.

Conversion

In my twenties, a tennis partner back in Chicago asked me to convert to Judaism. I told him that I didn't think I would be

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Gloria Trujillo

The time has come and this is my final message as president. I have enjoyed my tenure as your president and although I won't be holding an elected office, I will be assisting the new officers during the transition. I have several personal projects that have been on hold and I look forward to getting back to them.

Please don't wait until the last minute to send in your conference registration. Conference planning is going well, thanks to Michael Atlas-Acuña, local conference chair; Stan Hordes, program committee and all who have contributed much time and effort. Please see the program on page 10 for details. We are extremely happy with our presenters this year and I know you will be surprised with the diversity, knowledge and research they are bringing to the conference. We will be pleased to be helping Temple Emanuel observe its centennial when we join them for dinner and entertainment Monday night.

You will find the proposed new bylaws in the newsletter. The membership at the conference will vote on their approval at the business meeting on Tuesday afternoon. Everyone who renews or joins at the conference will have the opportunity to vote on the bylaws and officers. The nominations committee, made up of Dolly Sloan, Stan Hordes and Art Benveniste has put together a slate of officers with their bios, which you will also find on this page. Criteria for selection of recommended candidates are the following:

- Member in good standing
- Commitment to the society, its mission, goals and objectives
- Record of prior service to the Society
- Required experience, skills and time to carry out the functions of the position.

I have truly enjoyed my association with the Society and have seen many events and changes take place since the first meeting in Taos, New Mexico, ten years ago. The most notable and positive change is our association with the Sephardic House of New York and its website and Webmaster, Scott Alfassa Marks. I would like to thank Rabbi Stampfer for his patience and wisdom, Stan Hordes, Art Benveniste, Dolly Sloan, Randy Baca and Flavio Montoya for all of their unending support of the Society and most importantly, their friendship.

Best to all

Gloria



GLORIA'S LEGACY

By Stanley Hordes

After four years, Gloria Trujillo is stepping down as President of the Society. A charter member of the SCJS, Gloria has participated tirelessly in all facets of the group since its first meeting in Taos in 1991. During her two terms as President, she organized the Annual Conferences in Denver, El Paso, Los Angeles, Albuquerque and Pueblo, and has steered the Society through a time of growth and difficult challenges. In response to suggestions from the membership, Gloria took responsibility for formalizing the procedure by which the program for the Annual Conference was organized, resulting in a much more open process, and a more professional program for the 2001 Conference. More importantly, she insured that the Society's bylaws were reformed to better reflect a greater level of participation on the part of the membership.

Gloria Trujillo leaves the presidency of the organization in far better shape than she entered it. The Society owes a great debt of thanks to Gloria for her tireless efforts.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE SELECTIONS FOR SCJS BOARD

PRESIDENT: Arthur Benveniste
VP- PROGRAMS: Stanley Hordes
VP- COMMUNICATIONS: Dolores Sloan
VP- MEMBERSHIP: Randy Baca
TREASURER: Rabbi Joshua Stampfer
SECRETARY: Flavio Montoya
MEMBER AT LARGE: Orfa Salines,

See page 7 for biographies of the nominees

More nominations will be taken from the floor at the Pueblo Conference. The election will take place at the business meeting on Tuesday. See pages 8 – 10 for the Proposed By-laws which will also be presented for members approval.

IN SYMPATHY

We were saddened to learn that our founder, Rabbi Joshua Stampfer recently lost his son in an accident.

We send our deep sympathies to Rabbi and Mrs. Stampfer in this tragic moment.

A fund in his memory has been established for the Solomon Schechter Camp. To donate make checks payable to Congregation Neveh Shalom, 2900 SW Peaceful Ln. Portland, OR 97201-1162

MARRANO from page 2

accepted. He replied, "We'll take you." At that time there wasn't much diversity among Jews. However, I was raised among Ashkenazi Jews and discovered my own Sephardic/Marrano roots rather late in life. There were hints but no conclusive proof e.g. Why weren't we Catholic if we were Mexican? Why were we more "international"? Why did we travel more? Why did we consider our family "cleaner" than others? Why were better off economically than other Mexican families, our parents engaged in business? Why was there such a premium put on education? Why did my sister and I marry Jews? Even after I divorced why was I still drawn to Judaism? Why were there many unanswered questions about my Jewish ancestry? It's a very deep and personal discovery. It's core feelings kind of stuff. When a Marrano starts reaching, he is letting his guard down. Fortunately, in my case, many people reached back.

If I share part of my journey with you, then you will know that my first wife was a non-practicing Jew. My sister married a Jew, and she converted and raised her children as Jews. How proud I was when I carried the Torah around at her daughter's *bat mitzvah*. I always kind of longingly looked towards the Jewish faith but felt I would never be accepted. When that orthodox rabbi told me that if I considered myself descended from Marrano Jews, then I should immediately immerse myself in the study of Torah, that simple statement has changed my life and opened a whole new world to me.

I decided to go to the *mikvah* and embrace the Torah. I did that in Baltimore, MD on July 12, under the tutelage of Rabbi Howard Gorin of Tikvat Israel. I like to say in the last century. Some people say that Marranos don't need to formally go through a conversion process and receive a certificate of *Ger*. But, at the *beit din*, one of the rabbis asked me how I felt about some people who would never consider me Jewish. That is beyond my control, so it doesn't affect me. I spoke to a friend of mine from high school days, and he said that he doesn't believe people have to even go to a *mikvah*, any body of water will do. As my friend Henry in Miami says, being a Jew without going to the *mikvah* is like fishing without a license.

Who have always been my oldest and dearest friends? Who have stood by me through out the twists and turns of my life? Why have I re-connected with friends after so many years and been accepted?

A few years ago, I worked with Arabs for a time, prior to my conversion. One day, Yusef came up to me and said, "Cousin, would you like some coffee?" I asked him, "Why do you call me 'cousin'?" He said, "Don't worry, your secret is safe with me."

I asked him, "What secret?" "Why, that you are a Jew, of course."

"What?"

"Well, you see, I am from Morocco, and many people in my country have your last name, and they are all Jews. Jews and Arabs are cousins because Ibrahim is our grandfather."

He said, "Sure, don't worry. Your secret is safe with me. I won't tell anyone."

Here are excerpts from documentation on my family names:

Delgado: Ruan (Rouen ??) France, Province, Normandy had a large Jewish community which was decimated by the 1394 expulsion of the Jews from France. "Una nueva comunidad menor fué establecida en Ruan después de 1659. Después de la expulsión "final" no había judíos en la ciudad, hasta la llegada de algunos marranos al cierre del siglo XVI. Unos 40 judíos se asentaron en Ruan alrededor de 1605, y en 1609 se habían dispersado. Pocos años más tarde se produjo la llegada de una nueva ola de marranos.

En la nueva comunidad la familia de **Gonzalo Pinto Delgado** (padre del poeta João Pinto Delgado) desempeño un papel prominente. A demás de comerciantes incluía un buen numero de médicos. A pesar de que practicaban supuestamente las observancias cristianas, poseían su propio cementerio...y eran acusados de judaizantes."

New Orleans, USA: "Entre de los judíos mas prominentes de New Orleans a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX fiuraron el fiscal Lemann de Louisiana; **Isaac Delgado**, cuyo nombre fué dado al Museo de Nueva Orleans. Este último -evidentemente sefardi por su nombre - resultó ser alcalde de Nueva Orleans durante cuatro periodos."

Venice: " Particularmente en los siglos XVI yXVII, los estudiosos y rabinos de gran nombre que vivieron en Venecia fueron Modena, Luzzato, el historiador Rodrigo Mendes Da Silva, el erudito Samuel Aboab y muchos más; otros notables....Zacuto Sara Coppio Sulam, poetisa, y el filósofo David Nieto que dejó Venecia para dirigirse a Londres y convertirse en el dirigente espiritual de la comunidad sefardi en formación." (Painting of **David Nieto** on page 783 " **David Nieto** o **Netto**, nació en Venecia en 1654, famoso médico y rabino, tuvo a su cargo la synagoga sefardi de Londres."

Londres: " Si nos atenemos a sus lideres espirituales....de estudiosos extranjeros...la lideraron....David Nieto (1701-1728.) La congregación fué reforzada continuamente por nuevos refugiados marranos de España y Portugal." While at the research library I looked up "Judíos de Toledo" inventory of archive documents, edited by Pilar Leon

Tello, Madrid 1979; We find 3 Ayala names listed, with 27 documents from the archives dealing with recorded transactions (#) of Documents: The index notes the following: Ayala, Ines, (19 docs.) Ayala Mencia, (1) Ayala Teresa, priora. (7). So we know that Ayalas lived in Toledo prior to the expulsion.

Notes by Ben Nachman

Guillermo Lazo lives in Colorado. For more information on his sources email him at: guilazzo@csn.net

THE AUTO DE FE OF 1680

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The horrors of the Inquisition against the conversos continued unabated for many centuries. Periods of relaxation were often followed by renewed violence and execution of many anusim. Such a period occurred under Charles II, (1659-1700), the last of the Hapsburgs, and was in complete contrast with the previous reign of his father, Philip IV, whose minister, the Count-Duke Olivares favored the establishment of the conversos from Portugal, then under Spanish domination until 1640, in Madrid and the Spanish Empire. The autos de fe under Charles II became elaborate and well synchronized ceremonies, where anusim were burned at the stake for the amusement of the court and the population. The cruelty of such behavior was so reprehensible that the Queen, Marie Louise of Orleans, a French princess, who was Charles II first wife had nothing but disdained for her adopted country. One of the largest autos de fe took place on June 30, 1680 in the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, in the presence of the king and his court, and included 104 conversos. A painting of this auto de fe can be seen at the Prado museum in Madrid. The description of the ceremony that led to the assassination of the Sephardic conversos was published in London a few years after the event.

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"A scaffold, fifty feet in length, was erected in the Square, which was raised to the same height with the balcony made for the king to sit in. At the end, and along the whole breadth of the scaffold, at the right of the king's balcony, an amphitheater was raised, to which they ascend by twenty-five or thirty steps; and this was appointed for the Council of the Inquisition, and the other Councils of Spain. Above these steps and under a canopy, the Grand Inquisitor's rostrum was placed so that he was raised much higher than the king's balcony. At the left of the scaffold and balcony, a second amphitheater was erected of the same extent with the former, for the criminals to stand in.

.... the ceremony opened with a procession ... in the following order. The march was preceded by a hundred coal merchants, all armed with pikes and muskets; these people furnishing the wood with which the criminals are burnt. They were followed by Dominicans, before whom a white cross was carried. Then came the Duke of Medina Celi\*, carrying the standard of the Inquisition. Afterwards was brought forwards a green cross covered with black crepe; which was followed by several grandees and other persons of quality, who were familiars of the Inquisition. The march was closed by fifty guards belonging to the Inquisition ... and commanded by the Marquis of Povar, hereditary Protector of the Inquisition. The procession ... proceeded afterwards to the Square, where the standard and the green cross were placed on the scaffold, where none but the Dominicans stayed, the rest being retired ... An hour after, the king and queen of Spain, the queen-mother, and all the ladies of quality, appeared on the balconies.

At eight o'clock ... came thirty men, carrying images made in pasteboard, as big as life. Some of these represented those who were dead in prison, whose bones were also brought in trunks, with flames painted round them: and the rest of the figures represented those who having escaped the hands of the Inquisition were outlawed. These figures were placed at one end of the amphitheater.

After these came twelve men and women, with ropes about their necks and torches in their hands, with pasteboard caps three feet high, on which their crimes were written ...

These were followed by fifty others having torches also in their hands and clothed with a yellow Sanbenito or great coat without sleeves, with a large St. Andrew's cross, of a red color, before and behind. These were criminals who, (this being the first time of their prisonment) had repented of their crimes; these are usually condemned either to some years' imprisonment or to wear the Sanbenito, which is looked upon to be the greatest disgrace that can happen to a family. Each of the criminals were led by two familiars of the Inquisition. Next came twenty more criminals, of both sexes, who had relapsed thrice into their former errors and were condemned to the flames. Those who had given some tokens of repentance were to be strangled before they were burnt; but for the rest, for having persisted obstinately in their errors, were to be burnt alive. These wore linen Sanbenitos, having devils and flames painted on them, and caps after the same manner. Five or six among them who were more obstinate than the rest were gagged to prevent their uttering any blasphemous tenets. Such as were condemned to die were surrounded, besides the two familiars, with four or five monks...

The Officers of all the Councils, and several other persons of distinction.... all of them on horseback, with great solemnity arrived afterwards ... the Great Inquisitor... came last of all, in a purple habit, accompanied by the President of the Council of Castille...

About twelve o'clock they began to read the sentence of the condemned ... who thereupon were put into ... cages one by one in order for all men to know them. The whole ceremony lasted till nine at night: and when they had finished the celebration of the mass the king withdrew and the criminals who had been condemned to be burnt were delivered over to the secular arm, and being mounted upon asses were carried through the gate called Foncaral, and at midnight near this place were all executed."

*From an anonymous translation of Joseph del Olmo's description in his "Relación Histórica del Auto General de Fe que se celebró en Madrid este año de 1680," Madrid 1680, published as "An Authentic Narrative of the origin, establishment and progress of the Inquisition" London 1748, p.35.*

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*\* Ed note: Today the Instituto Arias Montano, an institute of Sephardic studies and publisher of Sefarad, a journal of Sephardic Studies, is located on Calle Duque de Medinaceli, in Madrid.*

## CRYPTO CONNECTIONS: THE BATTLE OF LEPANTO, THE DUKE OF NAXOS AND DON QUIXOTE

By Arthur Benveniste

On October 7, 1571, two great armadas, one Christian and one Moslem, met at the mouth of the Gulf of Patras, off Lepanto, Greece. The battle is significant for several reasons: It was the last naval battle in history in which both navies used galleys propelled by slaves chained to oars and it marked the end of Turkish ascendancy in the Mediterranean and opened the door to Christian dominance of that sea. One of the sailors of the Christian fleet was severely wounded. The wounded seaman lost the use of his left hand and had to give up a career at sea. He took up writing. His name was Miguel de Cervantes, and with his right hand he produced *Don Quixote*.

But, what was the cause of this battle and, of greater interest to readers of *Halapid*, what was the crypto-Jewish connection?

The war, like all wars, had many causes, but one of the more significant ones was the fact that France owed 150,000 ducats to the Duke of Naxos.

Turkish Sultan Selim II had conquered the Island of Naxos and appointed his close friend, Joseph Nasi, as Duke. Nasi had been born in Portugal to a family that had been forcibly converted to Catholicism. Joseph was baptized in the church and raised under the Christian name João Miguez. His aunt was the well known Doña Gracia Nasi. When Joseph followed his aunt to Constantinople, he married his cousin, Brianda, Doña Gracia's daughter. His famous aunt was now his mother-in-law. Earlier, he had become a principal in the House of Mendes, the family firm, and a major trading and banking company of the age. Mendes ships often assisted crypto Jews in fleeing Iberia, the firm's agents arranged for bills of credit to allow Jews to flee with their possessions.

### NASI LENDS MONEY TO THE FRENCH KING

As a financier, João/Joseph often dealt with the royal houses of Europe, and a loan to the king of France was made while he was still openly a Catholic. For their own safety, the family had to emigrate from Iberia and eventually they settled

in the Ottoman Empire. Here they returned to Judaism and to their Jewish names.

Joseph, as he was now known, became a close friend of Prince Selim, the son of Suleiman the Magnificent. When Selim ascended the throne, he rewarded his Jewish friend with the Dukedom.

When King Charles IX of France learned of this, he disavowed his debt to the new Duke, insisting that the loan was taken from the Christian, João, and that nothing was owed to the Jew, Joseph.

Joseph, however, owed money to the new sultan and could not pay it unless the French loan was collected. In 1569 Sultan Selim II gave the Mendes/Nasi banking family permission to seize merchandise from French-flagged ships in the port of Alexandria. The French protested to Constantinople, and Sultan Selim notified King Charles that the merchandise would be

For their own safety, the family had to emigrate from Iberia and eventually they settled in the Ottoman Empire. Here they returned to

returned when the loan was paid. The dispute continued and intensified. Two years later, French vessels joined an allied fleet (about 200 galleys), consisting mainly of Spanish and Venetian ships, with other vessels sent by the pope and some Italian states. They defeated the Moslem fleet of Turkish and North African galleys.

In 1588, many Spanish veterans of Lepanto were aboard vessels of the Armada that Frances Drake destroyed off the coast of Britain. The Battle of the Armada ended Spanish control of the Atlantic and opened the way for English colonization of the New World.

## CASA SHALOM PLANS SEDERS IN MAJORCA

*Casa Shalom*, the Institute for Marrano-Anusim Studies, is a center for the study and collection of material on individual and collective secret Jews from all over the world. These include, Meshed, Ireland, Sao Tome, New Mexico, South America, Cuba and other Caribbean islands, Spain, Portugal and the Balearic Islands.

The institute is making seder for the conversos in Majorca this year. The event is open to participants who are members of *Casa Shalom*, registration closes by mid-March.

The institute is asking for support for its activities. See their membership page for further details:

<http://www.gezernet.co.il/marrano/index.htm>

## CATHOLIC VIEW OF THE INQUISITION

The following was found on the New Advent website of the Catholic Church (<http://www.newadvent.org/>). It was in the section on Queen Isabel I and her role in forming the Inquisition.

*"To preserve the purity of the Faith and religious unity, against the intrigues of the Jews, who were employing the influence of their wealth and their usurious dealings to pervert Christians, the Catholic sovereigns solicited of Pope Sixtus IV the establishment of the Inquisition."*

### BYLAWS

Read the proposed new bylaws on pages 8 to 11, then join us in Pueblo, August 19-21 where we will ask for our input before voting on the bylaws and electing new officers.

SCJS member proposes Genetic Study

## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GENETIC MAKE-UP IN A NEW MEXICO POPULATION WITH EXISTING GENETIC DATA OF JEWISH POPULATION.

by Flavio Montoya

The subject of the Crypto-Jewish community of the southwest, primarily that of New Mexico, has been prominent recently in a large amount of literature. Research by some scholars indicates that there may be an affinity between some members of the New Mexico population and the expelled Jews of Spain in 1492.

Much research and genetic study has been done in comparing various Jewish populations and communities. In some studies the comparison has been with Jewish and non-Jewish populations.

The purpose of this project is to generate interest within the academic community among those scholars who have done research, to help in establishing scientific data on this subject. Time is of the essence in this project due to the increasing intermarriage of the New Mexico population with more recent immigration by other groups. The project calls for a blind sample of subjects with established New Mexico genealogical lineage for comparison with members of established Sephardic communities.

## Society for Crypto Judaic Studies

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### EDITORIAL POLICY OF HALAPID

*Halapid* contributors come from all over the world. The editors respect different national writing styles and, where possible, have left each item in the author's style. We edit for grammar, spelling and typographical error.

Many contributions are memoirs or retelling of family stories and legends. They may or may not be historically accurate, although they are indeed valid, sacred memories that have been passed along through time. We do not attempt to change individual perceptions as long as they are reported as such, but we do change obvious misstatements or historical error.

We reserve the right to edit any material. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of SCJS or *Halapid*. Articles from *Halapid* may not be reprinted without permission.

## NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE SELECTIONS FOR SCJS BOARD

### *Arthur Benveniste*

A member since 1993, Art has edited *Halapid* since 1996. He grew up in a Ladino-speaking family in the Los Angeles community of Jews from Rhodes. He was co-chair of the 1999 conference in Los Angeles. Art is an officer with the Sephardic Film Festival of Los Angeles.

### *Stanley Hordes*

Co-founder with Rabbi Joshua Stampfer of the Society, Stan is former state historian of New Mexico. His archival research was instrumental in the theory that the first Spanish settlers of New Mexico were crypto Jews. He is chair of the 2001 Conference Committee, and has been an officer of SCJS since its founding.

### *Randy Baca*

A member since 1999, Randy (aka Veneranda Ana Chavez Y Chavez de Baca) chaired the recent Bylaws Committee. Her article, *Buscando Mi Propria Verdad*, appeared on page one of the Spring Issue of *Halapid*. Randy has served in leadership positions in governmental and civic organizations, and has founded successful public relations and communications companies in New Mexico and Arizona.

### *Dolores Sloan*

Dolly has been a member since 1998 when she attended the El Paso Conference. Co-chair of the 1999 Los Angeles Conference, she serves as an editor of *Halapid*. Dolly has been a presenter at the Society's Los Angeles and 2000 Albuquerque Conferences. She is writing a historical nonfiction book on Sephardic Jews in Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

### *Flavio Montoya*

Flavio was born in Albuquerque, NM. He discovered his crypto-Judaic roots through his grandfather and has been actively involved in Crypto-Judaic studies for the past four years. His is presently developing a project on DNA study of crypto-Jews of New Mexico. He now lives in southern Calif. Has been active with the committee that wrote the bylaws.

### *Rabbi Joshua Stampfer*

Rabbi Stampfer is a recognized authority on crypto-Jews. He lives in Portland, Oregon, where he was Rabbi of the Neves Shalom synagogue. He is one of the founders of the SCJS and served as our first president. He has been treasurer for six years.

### *Orfa Salinas*

Orfa Salinas lives in Las Vegas, NM, where she worked for several years for the U.S. Postal Service. She holds a B.S. in Math and Biology, and served in the U.S. Army as microbiologist conducting research in food microbiology. She is in the process of exploring her family's Jewish roots in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, and other parts of Northeast Mexico.

# THE SOCIETY FOR CRYPTO-JUDIAIC STUDIES

## PROPOSED BYLAWS

*The Bylaws committee, made up of Flavio Montoya, Randy Baca, Stanley Hordes, Dolores Sloan, Gloria Trujillo and Arthur Benveniste, met in Flagstaff, Arizona. The proposed bylaws resulting from the meeting are printed here. Please read them. These bylaws will be submitted for amendment and approval at the SCJS conference in Pueblo on Tuesday, August 21.*

### ARTICLE I: Name

The name of the organization is The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies (hereinafter known as the Society), a non-profit corporation.

### ARTICLE II: Purpose and Objectives

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Society serves the following purposes: the fostering of research and networking of information and ideas into the historical and contemporary development of Crypto-Jews of Iberian origin. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in this immensely fascinating and perplexing area.

The Society may support and sponsor research, and dissemination of same, which falls within the subject area set forth in the Society's Mission Statement. The Society may collaborate with public, non-profit, for-profit organizations, agencies, religious institutions, and individuals to further projects within the subject area set forth in the Society's Mission Statement. This activity may include, but not be limited to, holding of conferences, the production, publication, release, distribution and sales of printed and audio/visual material(s) including journals, newsletters, books, articles essays, surveys, studies, abstracts, films, audio and videocassettes, CDs, CD ROMs and other media that exist now or that may become technologically available in future.

The principal office for the transaction of legal activities of the Society is within the State of Texas, as required by the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and is the same office shown in the Society's Articles of Incorporation as the "Registered Office." The Address for the "Registered Office" and the "Principal Office" shall be the same, but may, along with the Registered Agent, be changed from time to time by action of the Board of Directors, so long as such action conforms with the Articles of Incorporation in effect at the time of said change.

The Society is empowered to receive, purchase, manage, sell and/or transfer real or personal property, maintain and hold same whether received by gift, bequest, purchase, divestiture or investment, such capital or property, held either absolutely or in trust, for the furtherance of any of its stated purposes.

### ARTICLE III: Membership

Membership in the Society shall be open to all interested persons. The Society shall have such categories of membership as the Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as "Board") may, from time to time, deem appropriate. The Board shall establish membership dues for each membership category. The categories are: Individual, Family, Sustaining, Donor, and Honorary. The membership roster of the Society shall remain strictly confidential.

### ARTICLE IV: Dues

The Board shall review, consider and recommend any changes in dues periodically. Dues shall be due and payable on the First day of January each calendar year, with membership extending through the year from January 1 to December 31. Membership dues shall include a subscription to the Society's quarterly publication, HaLapid. If changes in the dues structure are recommended by the Board, such changes shall be presented and voted on by the membership at the Annual Business Meeting. A majority of voting members in attendance at the Annual Meeting shall rule.

### ARTICLE V: Board of Directors

Members of the Board shall include the following: President, Vice President(s), Secretary, Treasurer, Member(s)-at-Large, and Immediate Past President.



# PROPOSED SCJS BYLAWS

Each Officer/Director must be a member in good standing of the Society, and shall have freely accepted the responsibility to further the purposes of the Society, and shall conduct the Society's business in a manner consistent with the generally accepted fiduciary responsibility for non-profit organizations, and shall not personally profit from any business transacted by the Society. Members of the Board shall recuse themselves from any action where a conflict of interest or the appearance of same exists.

The Board will be responsible for the long-range planning and direction of the Society, as well as the general conduct of the Society's finances, contractual agreements and grant applications, acceptance and/or award.

The President of the Society, by virtue of his/her office, shall be Chair of the Board. The Board may amend, enact, or repeal standing rules for the conduct of all appropriate business of the Society not specifically provided for in its bylaws.

The Board shall meet, at minimum, two times annually. The Board may transact business and may vote by US or private mail, electronic mail and/or telephone. Multi-party telephone or other electronic conferencing is authorized. The Board shall meet within one week prior to the convening of the Annual Meeting of the Membership. A Board meeting may be convened at the request of the President or any three individual Board Members. A majority of the filled Board positions must participate in order to constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise provided for, a simple majority vote is required for the adoption and/or approval of any agenda item brought before the Board. Appropriate written minutes shall be maintained of all Board action(s).

## ARTICLE VI: Officers

The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, such number of Vice Presidents as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board to the smooth conduct of the Society's operation, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President and one or more Member at Large. Each officer shall be elected (with the exception of the Immediate Past President) to serve a two-year term. At the expiration of their term of office, the officers may be re-nominated and re-elected to the same or any other office, provided the individual(s) has agreed to serve, if elected. In the event an officer or Board Member resigns, or is deemed, by a two-thirds majority of the remaining Board Members, to be found in dereliction of duty, or incapacitated, or in any way unable or unwilling to fulfill the remainder of his/her term of office, the Board shall appoint a member in good standing, either from the Board or the general membership of the Society, to fill the remaining term of the office in question.

**President:** The President shall preside at all meetings of the membership and Board. The President shall appoint committees annually to ensure that the work of the Society shall be performed in a timely manner. The President or his/her designee shall represent the Society at all times. Along with the Treasurer and/or Secretary, the President will sign leases, contracts, checks and all other legal instruments approved by the Board of Directors, and shall act as an ex-officio member of all committees, with the exception of the Nominating Committee. The President shall appoint all committees, whether temporary or permanent. Unless incapacitated or having delegated this responsibility and/or authority, only the President shall speak officially for the Society to media or other organizations and entities.

**Vice President(s):** In the absence of the President, or in the event of his/her inability to act in that capacity, whether temporarily or permanently, a Vice President, in rank order as follows, shall assume and perform the duties of President, subject to the same privileges and restrictions as the duly elected President. The Vice Presidents shall perform such other duties as, from time to time, may be assigned to them by the President.

1. **Vice President/Programs:** Shall be responsible for arranging and coordinating programs including speakers and events for the Annual Conference and Meeting. The Vice President/Programs shall be responsible for arranging and coordinating seminars, workshops, performances and cultural/social events and, subject to approval of the Board, charge admission or participation fees and/or receive donations to accomplish same, submitting all such funds received, along with appropriate documentation, to the Treasurer in a timely manner. He/she shall work in coordination with the Local Chair appointed for each Annual Conference/Meeting.

2. **Vice President/Membership:** Shall be custodian of all completed membership forms and shall provide a list of current and new members in a timely fashion to the Vice President/Communications. The Vice President/Membership shall be responsible for maintaining the membership roster, as well as the Society's mailing list. As appropriate and working in concert with the Public Relations Committee, the Vice President/Membership shall make information available regarding joining the Society and undertake such actions as may appropriately expand membership in all membership categories.

3. **Vice President/Communications:** shall be the editor, responsible for the timely production and dissemination, of the quarterly publication of the Society, HaLapid, and other Society publications as may be produced from time to time. S/he is to ensure that HaLapid is generated on a regular, periodic basis, and shall solicit, receive, collect and edit material for publication in a manner consistent with generally accepted editorial procedures and ethics. The Vice President/Communications may, from time to time, be asked to publish items and notices deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board and/or the President.

# PROPOSED SCJS BYLAWS

**Secretary:** The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining accurate minutes of all meetings and other activities of the Society, the Board, and maintain custody of all records for those proceedings and any associated reports, including any documents and records of the Society's business. S/he shall maintain the minutes and records of the organization in appropriate books and in a manner consistent with generally accepted practices for non-profit organizations. S/he shall transfer custody of all such records and documents to the succeeding Secretary in a timely manner. S/he shall further act as Corresponding Secretary for the President and/or the Board, ensuring that all correspondence representing the Society is accurate and of a quality consistent with the Society's image and standing. The Secretary shall further ensure that any required documents shall be produced and submitted so as to maintain the Society's good standing as a Non-Profit Corporation under the applicable laws of the State of Texas.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be the custodian for all funds of the Society and may sign checks or other appropriate legal instruments, along with the President, and/or other duly authorized officer(s), for all approved and appropriate disbursements. S/he shall further prepare quarterly financial reports for distribution to the Board and shall make appropriate reports to the Board at each Board meeting. Further, the Treasurer shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a full and accurate financial statement for the Annual Meeting and see that same is provided in a timely fashion to the Vice President/Communications for inclusion in the issue of HaLapid prior to the Annual Conference/Meeting. The Treasurer shall produce and submit, or cause to be produced and submitted, any required financial documents so as to ensure the maintenance of the Society's good standing as a Non-Profit Corporation under the applicable laws of the State of Texas.

**Member-at-Large:** One Board Member shall be elected each term to represent the interests of the general membership at all Board meetings. S/he may be called upon to chair special committees and perform other duties at the request of the President.

An Officer or Committee Chair, with the majority consent of the Board of Directors, may arrange for appropriate professional assistance, if required, to exercise the duties and responsibilities with which s/he is charged, on either a pro bono or for payment basis. All contracts for such services and disbursements of funds for same are governed by the practices and procedures outlined in Article V.

## ARTICLE VII: Meetings

There shall be one business meeting annually of the general membership at such time and place designated by the Board. Once determined by majority vote of the membership at the previous Annual Conference and Business Meeting, the designated site and date may be changed only by a majority vote of the Board of Directors with sufficient cause for such change. All members shall be notified of such changes by US mail in a timely fashion. Members not in good standing (delinquent in dues) and non-members of the Society may attend the Society's Conference and Business Meeting(s) but retain no right to vote on any issue. In the event of a conflict, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

## ARTICLE VIII: Nominations and Elections

At least four months prior to each Annual Conference/Meeting, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee which shall be formed to identify appropriate candidates and propose a slate of officers for election by the general membership. Said Nominating Committee shall be chaired by the Vice President/Membership and shall include a minimum of three (3) Society members in good standing. The Committee shall solicit nominations from the general membership and shall ensure that any person submitted for consideration for election shall be willing and able to perform the duties of the office for which s/he is proposed, if elected. Any member in good standing may propose him/herself for consideration.

Nomination(s) from the floor shall be called for during the Annual Meeting, providing that any person making a nomination from the floor shall have determined that the member proposed is in good standing and is willing and able to perform the duties of the office for which s/he is so nominated, if elected. All nominations from the floor must have a second. Voting shall be by secret ballot, with each member in good standing casting one vote for each office. Cumulative and/or proxy voting is not permitted. Election shall be achieved by a majority vote of those members in good standing in attendance at the Annual Meeting. In the event of a tie, the tie shall be decided by the drawing of lots. The President shall appoint a committee to count all ballots and no person who is subject to election shall serve as a member of the ballot counting committee. In the event of a conflict, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

## ARTICLE IX: Committees

The President may create ad hoc committees and appoint their chairs, as deemed necessary and appropriate for the effective operation of the Society. The President shall appoint the Chairs and each Chair shall report to the President, with the term of each committee and its Chair being for a time certain, appropriate to the accomplishment of the purpose at hand. All Committee Chairs shall report directly to the President. The President shall serve as an ex-officio member of each committee.

# PROPOSED SCJS BYLAWS

General duties and responsibilities: All Committee Chairs shall request, direct and manage the assets required to perform the assigned tasks and duties. Appropriate minutes and financial records shall be kept by each Committee Chair or his/her designee. Committee Chairs will present a written report(s) to the Board of Directors at the conclusion of their work or as requested by the President and/or the Board. Members in good standing may request to serve as chairperson or member of a committee, or may offer assistance or expertise on an ad-hoc basis..

Each committee chair may solicit members of his/her committee from the general membership of the Society. If deemed necessary and appropriate and with the consent of the President, non-members of the Society may serve on a Committee.

## ARTICLE X: Bylaws and Standing Rules

The enactment of these Bylaws and any repeal or amendment of same thereafter shall be confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote cast by members in good standing in attendance at the subsequent Annual Conference/Meeting. Proposals to amend the Bylaws will be submitted to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Conference/Meeting, either through the Society's publication and/or sent to the active membership list via US mail. Any member in good standing may submit a proposed change or amendment to the Bylaws, in writing, to the Board of Directors no later than February 1. The proposal for said change should include a short explanation of the proposed change(s) and should be submitted in writing via US mail. The general membership will be notified of the proposed change(s) and/or amendment by the Society's publication, and the proposal shall be voted on at the next Annual Conference/Meeting. The Board, by majority vote, may propose Bylaw amendments, deletions or changes for vote by the general membership at the Annual Meeting, provided the membership is notified of the proposed changes least three (3) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting at which the matter at hand will be submitted to a vote.

Adopted by the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies at the Annual Conference/Meeting, August 21, 2001.

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Secretary

## A LETTER FROM BRAZIL

By Sinaida Leão

*The following was sent to Art Benveniste's website, and is reprinted with the writer's permission. We have tried to maintain her style, while making only a few corrections to her English.*

I was really very grateful to know that you are interested in learning more about the story of crypto Judaism in my family.

First, I would like to apologize for my English as probably I will commit many mistakes (English is not an official language in Brazil, but I studied it during several years). The story of my family and mainly my story is very curious -- it seems a romance but it is real. I hope sincerely that when you read this you could feel my feelings and the importance of that research to me.

My parents never talked to me in a special manner about Judaism. I learned it from films, documentaries, and from the school. However, since I was a child, those words "Jew" and "Judaism" have had a special meaning to me that I couldn't explain. I felt something in my heart that I couldn't understand, a feeling that attracted me more and more to Judaism. In fact, there was a suspicion that my family had a Jewish heritage, but no one paid much attention to that -- only me. When a child, I asked my parents for a Magen David, and started to use it as my religious symbol, although my family was Catholic. I asked my parents and some of their Jewish friends to bring me to a synagogue, where I genuinely hoped to find the answers to all my questions about my family heritage, but they never brought me. As I often talked to my parents (I am very persistent) about that, I remember that once my mother laughed and said to my father "That girl will marry a Jew, wait and you will see."

When I was fifteen years old I was introduced to the son of a very close friend of my father. We were very shy and very similar in thoughts and in tastes, which made us *simpático* instantaneously one for another. In that first meeting, he said to me: "I am a Jew. What's your religion?" After some minutes of surprise, I answered that I didn't believe what I was hearing. And I told him all of my story, showing him the Magen David. I was using. Although he said that he considered himself a Jew, he explained that officially he wasn't. Like me, during all of his life (he was 19 years old at that time) he felt himself attracted to Judaism, as his heritage was certainly Jewish and dreamed to "return" to Judaism. One side of his family is *de Toledo* -- they were expelled from Spain, and went to Portugal; after that they went to Pisa, Italy and finally to Brasil. The other side is named Leone from Calabria, Italy. As I told you, at first Judaism was for me a feeling that I couldn't explain. So I started to study Hebrew and Judaism by myself and with him for five years, and to research my mother family origin, suspected to be of crypto-Jews. Next, I will tell you some information that I discover:

My mother grandparents were from Mogadouro (village of To and Algozinhos, very near Spain), Portugal. I only knew my grandmother because my grandfather died when my mother was a baby. My grandmother died when I was very young, three years old. So I decided to ask my relatives and mainly my mother about their story.

My grandparents said they were cousins, but in fact we

don't find any relation between their families. They didn't have brothers or sisters. My great grandmother's name was Vicenta Peres and she was born in Famoselle, Spain (again along the border between the two countries), and my great grandfather's name was Nicolau Antonio Rodrigues, born in Algozinhos. When my grandmother (Maria Emilia, born April 7, 1891) was seven years old, they died, and although she said there were many relatives in the village, she was raised by the priest of the village, who taught her how to pray, as she didn't know. She said that in fact she was like a maid to the priest, and looked after the house for him. My grandfather's name was Antonio Joaquim Marcos (born March 5, 1888) and his parents' names were Seraphim do Espirito Santo Marcos and Isabel Maria Martins (both from Mogadouro, To).

My grandparents came to Brazil in 1911 and they were peddlers, who were aided by another Jews, owners of big shops. As my grandparents are dead, I started to ask other relatives. My grandmother had a cousin (in fact she was only a very close friend) and I asked her daughter what was the origin of our family in Portugal (detail: I didn't pronounce the word "Jew"). She said her brother, who liked to research those matters always said we were descended from Jews, but that their mother prohibited him to mention that. So I decided to ask to her mother about our Jewish heritage and I was very surprised at her response. She denied strongly, almost shouting, that we were not Jews, and started to describe with fear the life of the Jews in Portugal.

I also tried to ask my aunts and uncles to remember some words or sentences said by my grandparents, as they used to say many proverbs.

After studying Judaism and Hebrew for five years, and to be sure of a conscious desire (the unconscious I already had) to become

formally Jewish, Flavio (the young man who became my husband) and I passed through a serious process of conversion (we could ask for a process of "return", but it is difficult to prove it and we didn't want to wait: our Jewish feeling was stronger than everything) with two rabbis. One of them now lives in Walnut Creek, California, R. Roberto D. Graetz. We made a *shiddushin* two years before our marriage, and finally we married in 1993. Today we have a nice daughter, called Hannah, two years old, and she is the main reason of that research. I think that you can understand what I mean, can't you? We belong to several Jewish associations and synagogues, and we hope we are successful in transmitting Jewish traditions to our daughter.

I remember that once my mother laughed and said to my father "That girl will marry a Jew, wait and you will see."

## THE CARVAJALS

### THEATER REVIEW

#### IN THE NAME OF GOD

By Rogelio Quesada Cervantes

Sabina Berman's play, "In the Name of God" directed by Austin Coppola was presented at the Skirball Cultural Center on Sunday June 17th. Our Havorah and friends attended the afternoon performance. The playbill presents the following description: "The long and dreaded arm of the Spanish Inquisition crosses the ocean into New Spain following the Carvajal family. Though baptized, some members of the family still practice Judaism." The action takes place in Nuevo Leon, Mexico. The play was ...marvelous.

The cast of six men and three women dressed in completely black outfits dramatized the fear of the Inquisition, which extorted confessions by using tools of medieval torture. Each cast member played more than one role portraying both the Carvajal family and the dreaded Catholic Inquisitors.

On June 14, 1579 the King of Spain granted Luis de Carvajal the Kingdom of Nuevo Leon in New Spain (Mexico) appointing him governor for life. Carvajal selected 100 families to settle in Nuevo Leon. (He convinced the king to wave the customary *limpieza de sangre* certification for his colonists.) All of these settlers are Jews converted to Catholicism (conversos); but they practice Judaism in secret (crypto-Jews). The women settlers go so far as to hide small bibles under their skirts, the books being so small that they can be read only with magnifying glasses. Isabel Carvajal has vowed to lead her brother Luis back to the Law of Moses. She tries to convince him to return to the Judaism that has been all but eradicated by both the Spanish Inquisition of 1492 and the Portuguese Inquisition of 1497.

Caught by the Holy Inquisition, young Luis is whipped as the Inquisitor shouts demands at him: "Tell me your secret name! Your accomplices! Your creed." The dreaded sound of whipping is heard. The Inquisitor continues, "Tell me your secret name!" The whipping goes on. As is well known the majority of the Carvajal family was burned at the stake in Mexico city for practicing Judaism in secret.

Once caught by the Holy Inquisition the accused had no right to confront his accuser, to an attorney or to see the charges against him. Months could pass before the accused was charged. In sum, the Catholic Church saw no problem in burning Jewish converts and taking all their property.

The truth is those New Christians who had gone to Mexico to practice their ancestral faith in private, as crypto-Jews, once again found only the Catholic Inquisition knocking upon their doors. The Bancroft Library in Berkeley holds a remarkable collection of Mexican Inquisition records which covers the period from 1593 to 1817. Further information on the Mexican Inquisition can be found at the Bancroft Library website: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/BANC/banccoll/inquisition.html>

### A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Some Comments on "The Poetry of Leonor de Carvajal and the Crypto-Jewish Tradition in New Spain,"

HaLapid, Vol. V111, Spring 2001, issue 2, pp. 8-9.

The most comprehensive and authoritative biography of Luis de Carvajal, *el mozo*, that I have come across in my study of the Crypto-Jewish phenomenon is that authored by Martin A. Cohen, titled *The Martyr*<sup>1</sup>. While Cohen's views on Iberian Crypto-Judaism and that of the western hemisphere seem to me to vacillate between more and less sympathetic to its authenticity, I have yet to find an opinion that places the quality of scholarship in question.

The author of *The Martyr* relates *el mozo's* inability to endure the torture and his revelation to his inquisitors of the crypto-Judaic practices of his siblings and presumably others, his suicide attempt to avoid resumption of torture and the permanent question of whether he converted or not before being garroted at the stake.<sup>2</sup>

The comparison between Leonor de Carvajal who "could no longer resist the torture..." and Luis de Carvajal who "...was burned alive as a true martyr" is foreign to Sephardi Judaism which never evaluated their martyrs on how hard they bit the bullet, but rather their attachment to Judaism and the cruelty and tragedy of their deaths.

Inquisitorial records cite several men, as well as women, as "rabbis" for their knowledge of Judaism. While the education of Jewish girls probably remained the exclusive purview of Jewish women, that of Jewish boys passed to Jewish men after toddlerhood. Since Crypto-Judaism obviously could not maintain the communal facilities of young male instruction, it would seem to me maternal instruction in the privacy of the home had to take its place, which it ably did.

Interpreting Leonor de Carvajal's poetry "in all of your homes..." as a warning against lighting Sabbath candles seems bizarre. One of the few relics of rabbinic Judaism remaining to Crypto-Jews was lighting Sabbath candles. Candles are not specifically mentioned in the translated text of the poem. A more likely interpretation would be the prohibition to kindle fire on the Sabbath.

<sup>1</sup> *The Martyr: the Story of a Secret Jew and the Mexican Inquisition of the 16th Century*, Jewish Publication Society of America, Phila. 1973.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 244-259

Arye Hazary

#### The General Archives of Mexico (Archivo General de la Nación de Mexico).

To find information about people who were brought before the Inquisition for being Jews, Judaizers or Jewish New Christians, see the website of the General Archives of Mexico: <http://www.agn.gob.mx/>

**Tentative Program for  
Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies  
Eleventh Annual Conference  
Pueblo, Colorado, August 19-21, 2001**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 19**

**Dinner and Keynote speaker**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 20**

**Morning Session -- History:**

8:00 - 8:45 am:

Dr. Stanley M. Hordes, University of New Mexico -  
"Between Toleration and Persecution: The Relationship of  
the Inquisition and Crypto-Jews on the Northern Frontier of  
New Spain, 1589-1663"

8:45 - 9:30 am:

Ana Schaposchnik, University of Wisconsin - "The Hidden  
Identities of Crypto-Jews in the Ibero-American World,  
1600s"

9:30 - 10:00 am:

Dr. Richard Ayoun, University of Lisbon, Portugal - "Crypto-  
Jews of Nantes [France] in the Sixteenth Century" (paper  
delivered in absentia)

10:00 - 10:15 - Break

10:15 - 11:00:

Dr. Robert Ferry, University of Colorado, "Prison, Re-  
sistance, Defeat; The Inquisition, Women, and the Crypto-  
Jewish Community in Seventeenth-Century Mexico"

11:00 - 11:45:

Dr. Elizabeth C. Hirschman, Rutgers University -  
"Melungeons: The Last Lost Tribe in America"

11:45 - 12:30:

Rabbi Leo Abrami, "The Anusim of Portugal"

**12:30 - 2:00 pm Lunch**

**Afternoon Session -- Transitions:**

2:00 - 2:45 pm:

Rabbi David Kunin, San Diego - "Rabbinical Responsa to  
Attempts of Conversos to Return to Judaism, 1390s to the  
Present"

2:45 - 3:30:

Dr. Michael Perko, Loyola University, Chicago - "That Well-  
Cultivated Olive Tree: Toward a Theological and Cultural  
lens for Viewing Crypto-Judaism."

3:30 - 3:45 Break

3:45 - 4:30 pm:

Richard Santos, San Antonio, Texas - "Tejanos, Manitos, and  
the Sefard"

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 21:**

**Contemporary Issues:**

8:00 - 8:45 am:

A. Omeropez de Cadena, Washington, DC - "Our Secret Her-  
itage: Crypto-Jews of South Texas"

8:45 - 9:30 am:

Dr. Arturo de Jesus de Rodriguez Marcovici, Culiacan, Sina-  
loa, Mexico "Enigmatic Convergence"

9:30 - 9:45 Break

9:45 - 11:00 am:

Dr. Seth Kunin, University of Aberdeen, Scotland -- "Ethics  
of Research and Responses to the Crypto-Jewish Communi-  
ty"

11:00 am - 11:45 am:

Arlene Glchinsky, University of Denver "Documentary and  
Published Holdings of Denver University's Crypto-Jewish  
Resource Center"

**11:45 am - 1:30 pm Lunch**

**Afternoon Session**

1:30 - 2:15 pm:

Kathleen Alcalá, novelist, Seattle -- "A Thread in the Tapes-  
try: The Narros of Saltillo, Mexico in History and Literature"

2:15 - 3:30 pm:

Business Meeting and election of officers

**RABBI LERER**

Rabbi Lerer was scheduled to be our keynote speaker at the  
Pueblo Conference. However he was injured in a fall and had  
to cancel his appearance. We wish him well and hope for a  
speedy recovery

**JUDY FRANKEL'S SEPHARDIC SONGBOOK**

SCJS supporter, Judy Frankel, internationally acclaimed con-  
cert artist/lecturer, has just announced that her songbook, *Se-  
phardic Songs in Judeo-Spanish*, has been published by Tara  
Publications. The book contains fifty traditional and original  
Sephardic songs from her repertoire. All selections appear  
with melody line, chords, transliterations, and translations,  
and annotations. A compact disc featuring seventeen songs is  
also included with the songbook priced at \$29.95

# The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies

Registration Form for the SCJS 2001 Conference  
19-21 August 2001

***Holiday Inn - Pueblo***  
***Room Rate \$79.00 for Single/Double Room***

- Location 4001 North Elizabeth, Pueblo CO 81008 (I-25 exit 101)
- Telephone (719) 543-8050 For Reservations
- Fax (719) 545-2271

Official Conference Travel Agency:

**Pedroza Travel Center**

369 N. Farfax Ave #7

Los Angeles, CA 90036

800/237 7597 (from L.A. County 323/651 1931) Fax: 323/651 1982

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- Conference Registration
    - Members \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 115.00
    - Non-Members \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 140.00
    - Renew/New Membership \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 25.00
    - Vendor Sales Table \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ 85.00
  - Total Conference Fees \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - Make Check for Conference fees payable to:  
The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies

Mail Check & Registration Form to:

Gloria Trujillo

2000 Avenida Cesar Chavez

Monterey Park CA 91754

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Room rates guaranteed through August 1, 2001 (or until room block is sold out). Be sure to mention *The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies* in order to receive the preferred rate. If possible, please use the preferred rate rather than another discount plan such as the Auto Club or AARP, and please let the hotel know you are attending the conference. The Holiday Inn requires a minimum two-night stay and "Kids Eat Free" is not included with the preferred rate.

***We look forward to seeing you at the conference!***