

HALAPID

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CONFERENCE 2000: A JOURNEY FULL CIRCLE IN NEW MEXICO

BY MAX VALERIO

This year, the annual conference of the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies convened in Albuquerque New Mexico. The hot, dry air felt saturated in desert colors, and white clouds stretched in the blue sky without limit. People came from many parts of the country to attend, and had many reasons for being there. All participants possessed a compelling interest in Sephardic Jewish history and culture; a few were scholars, others were searching for crucial information in their investigation of Jewish ancestry.

The first evening began with a kosher dinner and a concert of Sephardic music by Judy Frankel. Rachel Amado Bortnic, a conference participant who is Sephardic and an expert on Ladino (as well as being a native speaker) said later that Judy's interpretation of Sephardic songs is significant not only for its haunting and lyrical musical presence, but also because of her careful attention to Ladino pronunciation. Judy gets it right. Also, she learns her songs directly from Sephardim, helping to preserve what otherwise might be lost from a fading oral tradition, and remarkably, sets to music poems of current Sephardic poets, helping to create a new legacy of Sephardic musical literature.

The conference was crammed with information. Fresh ideas surfaced and older, more established facts were revealed in new perspectives.

Dr. Stanley Hordes and Dr. Seth Kunin gave presentations filled with important details of their collaborative research. Dr. Hordes, a founder of SCJS, clarified evidentiary issues in Crypto-Judaic research, including surname studies, ritual practices and the importance of context. He also gave a detailed report on his latest research tracking the origins of nine sample Spanish colonial New Mexico families. Through Inquisition records, he is connecting many of these founding families with crypto-Jews fleeing the Inquisition fires and trials in Mexico City. As he establishes connections, Dr. Hordes is fleshing out their stories with new historical details. Dr. Hordes is using this group as a strong sample of New Mexico Spanish colonial families. Since so many families in this region were interconnected and intermarried, their history may be strongly representational. It has been difficult to definitively trace Jewish roots since there was so much movement of persons, 1

and they were often covering up or lying about their background in order to survive. However, given these historical circumstances, he is making significant headway and has traced many to their towns of origin. Surprisingly (or possibly not, given the circumstances after the expulsion from Spain), many of these families, although identifying as Hispanic culturally, could be traced to Italy, Greece, Belgium and even Ireland! Some had connections to the Canary Islands as well. Dr. Hordes has also found that they were endogamous, marrying among themselves, much like conversos and Sephardim the world over. He has established a connection between Juan de Oñate and the Halevi family, as well as tracing the secretary to Diego de Vargas, Alonso Rael de Aquilar, to the Spanish town of Lorca -- where it is recorded that his father "turned to become a Christian."

Since Crypto-Jews were often living in relative isolation from traditional Judaism, they had to be inventive and create new forms with what they had available, recreating what they knew and remembered of Jewish rituals forbidden to them.

Working with Sephardic material culture specialists and Dr. Seth Kunin, Dr. Hordes' book will be published by 2003.

Anthropologist Kunin next gave us new intellectual tools to comprehend the living process of identity and

culture -- a post modern perspective. Culture, he told us, is not static, it is not a realm of ideal and unchanging "pure forms." Using an anthropological term, "bricolage," advanced by French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, Dr. Kunin said that culture is created from the materials and circumstances of the environment in which a people is situated. It is dynamic, forged by context and chance, a living process constantly being created by its participants through their experience of the world around them. With these concepts informing his research, Dr. Kunin is examining the various ways in which people have created crypto-Jewish practices. These might include the subversion of traditional Catholic practices, for example, using a crucifix as a Mezuzah, or lighting Sabbath candles while saying the rosary. Another method would be to borrow elements from the immediate cultural or natural environment, and make them Jewish through use in what was understood to be Jewish ritual; like substituting flour tortillas for unleavened bread. Since crypto-Jews were often living in relative isolation from traditional Judaism, they had to be inventive and create new forms with what they had available, recreating what they knew and remembered of

As culture is created by this constant inventiveness, it is important to understand that each individual will have a unique and fluid relationship to their own Jewish identity. This is true whether or not it has always been known, or is only recently being uncovered. Dr. Kunin emphasized that in interviewing an individual and attempting to determine Jewish ancestry or identity, the idea of "authenticity" should be reexamined. It is more important for the cultural anthropologist to investigate and attempt to understand the particular point of view and perspective of each person interviewed, instead of trying to impose a certification of "proof."

Kristine Bordenave, MD, was unable to attend the conference, and asked Dr. Hordes to give an update on their research on the auto-immune disease Pemphigus Vulgaris, a fatal disease that affects the soft connective tissues of the body. Researchers have found that the disease primarily affects Jews of Mediterranean descent. Dr. Hordes, with permission of patients, asked questions about their backgrounds and learned that some knew of a crypto-Jewish background, several were unaware of, but had suspicions of such a background, and some had no such knowledge.

popular Catholic culture has always been more tolerant of religious syncretism than the official Catholic culture of the Vatican.

A founding member, now Director of the Hispanic Crypto-Judaic Research Center at the University of Denver, Dr. Seth Ward spoke on the book, *Heretics or Daughters of Israel, The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castille* by Renee Levine Melammed. His talk was thought provoking and wide ranging. He pointed out we know "very little" about Jewish women in history, but in converso/anusim history the situation is markedly different. Renee Melammed, believes that much of crypto-Judaism was passed on through the women, as men were in the public sphere. Interestingly, Stanley Hordes has discovered in interviews that crypto-Jewish practices can be passed either through the male or the female. In any case, without question women played a visible and indispensable role in passing on crypto-Jewish practices and identity. The book details the process of Inquisition trials, and is particularly good in its detailed depiction of the trial of Lopez - Villareal women. At Inquisition trials, torture wasn't always carried out, but it was a constant threat. Torture was random, and could be used on anyone -- young, old, poor or rich. The random nature of the torture kept it an ever constant source of terror. Also,

Mona Hernandez offered a ground breaking presentation of the venerated statue of the Virgin Mary, La Conquistadora, now in St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe, and her religious confraternity, Our Lady of the Rosary, as they relate to secret Jewish practice. The inventive way in which La Conquistadora became a symbol of Queen Esther, or Saint Esther (Esterika) is somewhat astonishing, as is a prayer recited by the Spanish colonists to ward off both Indian attacks and the hostilities of what they called “the gentile pagans.” Hernandez is directly descended from the families involved in the establishment of the religious confraternity, one of whom was tried by the Inquisition for Judaizing, Francisco Gomez Robledo.

See page 4

President's Corner

by Gloria Trujillo

The 2000 conference is over and after a two-week vacation in New Mexico, we got to work on the newsletter. First of all, I would like to thank everyone who attended the conference, and hope that all came away with a better understanding. This year, we attempted to present new points of view and information on the Crypto-Jews. We heard many positive comments and we also hope that everyone had an enjoyable time at the conference.

For those of you familiar with Max Valerio's insightful contributions to several Internet list serves, we are happy to announce that he has written an outstanding article for our newsletter on our presenters and conference. This was Max's first conference and he was able to spend a few days in New Mexico after the conference before heading home. Thank you Max!

The reading of Mario Martinez' *The Converso* at Miguel Spiegel's El Rincon Libros was a real treat on Saturday evening. Our thanks go to the Podium Players headed by Victor and Jo Roybal Izay whose readers did an outstanding job, Mario Martinez, Victor and Jo Izay, Gerard Martinez, James Chavez, Kimberly Penn, Madeline Aron, and Maria Martinez.

Ana Pacheco interviews SCJS members

We hope many of those who live in New Mexico were able to hear the interviews done by Ana Pacheco, which aired on Sunday, the day the conference started, and the following Sunday. Ana interview Art Benveniste and me on the conference and the Society. SCJS members Mona Hernandez and Floyd Montoya spoke about their New Mexico families and their Jewish heritage.

After Sunday evening's dinner, I decided to do something different, and asked Dolly Sloan to go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves and tell us where they were from. Judy Frankel's concert was one of the highlights of the concert, and we all enjoyed the evening immensely. Judy told us that she had several benefit concerts planned during the week for the Jewish victims of the recent Los Alamos fire and Rabbi Lynn's new synagogue in Albuquerque.

We would also like to especially thank Dolly Sloan for helping with publicity and getting us an article on the conference in the Albuquerque *Journal*. Miguel Spiegel and Saul Saldana also helped with getting a story on the crypto-Jews and the conference into the premiere issue of *Imagen*. Jose Armas, the publisher of *Imagen* stopped by to drop off some copies, and Dr. Hordes and I briefly chatted with him.

Hispano Cultural center to open

Carlos Vasquez, representing the national Hispano Cultural Center, spoke about the October opening of the new center, which will offer a variety of cultural resources including a Sephardic component. During a break, we had the opportunity to show *Crypto Jews of the Southwest* by Eve Harris several years ago, which was shot on location in southern Arizona and New Mexico. Ms. Harris documented the lives of contemporary American Hispanics living with the ambiguity of an often-secret Jewish heritage.

Lorenzo Dominguez was unable to attend the conference, and sent us his regards. We hope to bring you more about Lorenzo and his award winning radio program in the future. I didn't want to repeat anything that Max has already written about the conference, but I want to briefly mention some individuals who were at the conference. Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb gave our

group a warm welcome. Dr. Tomas Atencio stopped by on Tuesday afternoon and Richard Santos asked him to comment on some of the points he had brought up in his presentation. Also attending was Antonio Medina, President of the New Mexico Acequia Association and community leader from the Mora Valley.

Cary Herz is indeed, in Richard Santos' words, "a poet with a camera." We thank her for her conference photos. Diana Bryer's art displays along with Cynthia Zimmerman's of Felipe's Old Town were fantastic. And, Miguel Spiegel's book sales table was equally impressive.

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Seth Kunin gives a post-modern view of identity and culture

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.

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the constant threat of Inquisition fires. He and his mother would be tried by the Inquisition for judaizing, but acquitted. Other family members would not be so lucky, and would burn at the stake. Interestingly, Sloan reported that some descendants of Sant  ngel have returned to Judaism.

The final speaker was Richard Santos who recently completed and published his book *Hidden Heritage* about the Sephardim's role in the colonization of the Spanish American frontier. Santos is a tejano from South Texas, a proud descendant of conversos and crypto-Jews, as he said of his ancestors, "I am fiercely proud of those who fled or were burned at the stake -- or kept their religion secret." The outspoken historian advocates the teaching of an "authentic history" of the Hispanic population of New Mexico and Texas. Listening to him speak, I realized how true it was that so much of Hispanic history has been homogenized or misrepresented. As a descendant of the manitos from Northern New Mexico (Spanish Colonial founding families), I don't recall pi  atas, the Day of the Dead or other Mexican cultural artifacts or events in my childhood. Santos' talk was informative and inspirational, as his knowledge of Spanish Colonial culture and history is extensive. I look forward to reading his detailed, exciting and colorful book.

The conference was full to bursting, with every presenter a rich offering of insight and information. Other speakers included Dr. David Kazzaz, MD on his book, *Mother of the Pound*, which narrates the courageous story of his wife's exodus from Iraq, after martial law had been declared in 1950 and the Jews were under attack by neo-nazi forces. Dr. Kazzaz sees the book as an important addition to the story of Jewish women's history. He is also a founding member of the Hispano Crypto-Jewish Resource Center at the University of Denver, as well as Project Pride. He has a dream to build centers to help crypto-Jews throughout Latin America and the rest of the world.

Certainly, the Hispanic population of New Mexico is awakening to its hidden Sephardic heritage. Before the conference, I was happy to attend a dramatic reading of a new teleplay by Mario Mart  nez, *Converso*, presented at Albuquerque bookstore, El Rincon. The store is dedicated to "Hispano, Latin American and Jewish Cultures." Both the highly visual and ambitious historical play, and the very existence of this wonderful bookstore, attest to a growing interest in and possible rebirth of Sephardic culture.

Ana Pacheco, Founding Editor and Publisher of *La Herencia*, a magazine for and about Hispanic culture in New Mexico, also testified to a growing awareness of the Sephardic ancestry of New Mexicans. Although she identifies as a Catholic, she acknowledged with pride her own Jewish ancestors. Ever since *La Herencia* began to feature a column written by Albuquerque writer Emma Moya called "Sephardim," the calls and letters have been pouring in from Hispanic New Mexicans who suspect or know that they have Sephardic heritage; most have been positive.

On other notes of cultural resurgence and historical preservation, several speakers made announcements or called for renewed Sephardic cultural participation. Representatives of The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society testified to a

growing involvement with issues of Sephardim and Anusim. Ladino expert Rachel Bortnic called for the "rescue of Sephardic culture" through study, awareness and participation. She distinguished Mizrahi culture from Sephardic, in order to clarify key cultural issues and differences. She also called on Ashkenazi Jews to be aware that Sephardic culture exists and is distinct -- in other words, not all Jews ate bagels or spoke Yiddish. Another speaker, Carlos Vasquez, announced the opening of the National Hispanic Cultural Center. He spoke with great feeling about the influence of Sephardic intellectuals in Spain, their key role in the establishment of Spanish grammar, and read part of the Edict of Expulsion, as well as the stirring response from Isaac Abravanel. He also spoke of "blood memory," memories that one cannot possibly have personally, but that come suddenly in dreams or intuition. He advised everyone to listen for these voices, as they could open a path to knowledge of the past. The Hispanic Cultural Center will open October 21, 2000 in Albuquerque and will have spaces for the performing arts, visual arts and other cultural activities. It will also have a genealogy research center and a publications unit.

Finally, an inspiring talk by Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb underscored this incipient blossoming of Sephardic culture in New Mexico. Rabbi Gottlieb had a grandmother from Spain, and wrote a play, *Esther, the Secret Jew*, while studying in Israel. The early impact of Sephardic culture on her

"I am fiercely proud of those who fled or were burned at the stake -- or kept their religion secret."

Richard Santos

consciousness prepared her for unexpected developments later in life, with first, a Hispanic friend who revealed a hidden and nearly lost Sephardic heritage, to heading what is now a congregation in Albuquerque with many returning anusim. The temple service incorporates Sephardic melodies and Ladino ritual, and is careful to

avoid the objectification and exoticizing of anusim. Rabbi Gottlieb reminded everyone of that amazing period in Spain, the golden age of *convivencia*, when diverse cultures flourished and fed each other with rich artistic intelligence and blazing philosophical erudition. She called for another period like this to begin, a time of opening to individual creative voices without suppression, to each culture's specific and universal pulse. This SCJS conference was one small, positive step towards this expansive goal.

THE SYNAGOGUE OF ÓBIDOS

From Beit Yaakov, a web page dedicated to the Jewish Heritage of the Portuguese Jews and Bnai Anusim.
(<http://grichen.hypermart.net/stats/index.htm>)

One of my major concerns is the situation of the old synagogue of the village of Óbidos.

Óbidos is a medieval village 80 kms north of Lisbon. It is classified as national heritage. We do not know exactly when the first Jewish community settled in Óbidos but there is a reference in 1333 to the Synagogue that allows us to believe that there was already an organized Jewish community. The building of the old synagogue still exists and needs to be restored. Actually the building is for sale. If anyone is interested in helping with the restoration of this building please contact me at: grichen.jhsp@teleweb.pt. Or send contributions to, Mario van Grichen, Rua. Dr.Gama Barros, 75 1. esq., 1700 Lisboa, Portugal



Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb addresses conference

PIONEER JEWS IN UPDATED EDITION

Harriet Rochlin's *Pioneer Jews: A New Life in the Far West* was published by Houghton Mifflin Company in hardcover in 1984. The book has since gone through eight printings in soft cover, and is featured in the bestselling backlist section of the Mariner Books catalog. In July it was released in an updated edition with a new cover, preface, 250 photographs, and a revised profile of the controversial Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp. The study covers Jewish pioneering in the Far West, from the Rockies to the Pacific, from 1590 to 1912. The San Francisco *Chronicle* has called the work "Social history at its best," and the New York *Times* "... packed with information and anecdotes likely to surprise most readers." For further information about Rochlin's works, please log on to her web site at: www.rochlin-roots-west.com.

See the Home page of the SCJS"
<http://sephardconnect.com/halapid/halapid.htm>

MI SEFERINO GOES INTERNATIONAL

The radio program *Mi Seferino* will be syndicated internationally beginning in September 2000. The 30 minute monthly program about the conversos or crypto Jews of New Mexico will be broadcast from WRMI in Miami via short wave radio transmission into Latin America and South America. In addition the program will also be broadcast from Italy on the IRRS Network via short wave radio transmission into Europe and the Middle East. "This is a tremendous accomplishment, the program just continues to reach more people and create an amazing interest from broadcasters. I never thought that the program would reach such heights," says Lorenzo Dominguez host and executive producer. He will be signing a one year agreement with WRMI for the syndication.

A LETTER FROM GUATEMALA

The following letter was emailed to Arthur Benveniste:

Guatemala in the colonial period was the capital of the Reyno de Goathemala "Kingdom of Goathemala" (Chiapas, Tabasco, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica). Ruled by Spain, Guatemala never had trials of the Santo Oficio for cases of Judaism, but in Costa Rica the first Spanish settlers were Jewish conversos or New Christians living undercover from the Spaniards. I was curious because in my family we had ancestors around 1650 and earlier with the last name Benavides (early in the colonial period). Thank you for any information.

Elsquez Alburez

Chiquimula, Guatemala

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LISBON 1646: DIOGO HENRIQUES AND THE INQUISITION

The Portuguese Inquisition was as efficient as the Spanish one, especially since many anusim (conversos) had fled to Brazil, Portugal's largest colony, when the country was united with Spain from 1580 to 1640. Furthermore, many of these anusim returned openly to their old faith when the Dutch captured the northeastern part of Brazil and held it from 1630 to 1654. During the last ten years, the Dutch were fighting continuously against the Portuguese, and some anusim were captured by them. Many were brought back to Lisbon for their trial including Diogo Henriques who is the subject of the following Inquisition report.

"On the 19th day of December, 1646, in Lisbon, in the first Audience Hall of the Offices of the Holy Inquisition, his Worship Inquisitor Melchior Dias Pretto, holding the morning Audience, summoned to appear before him Diogo Henriques,... who... had asked for an audience, in order to name other persons with whom he remembers he had communications, when in error...

"He said that having reached the country of Brazil, five years ago or thereabouts, he became acquainted in Pernambuco with Manoel Nuñez,... who lived for some time in Madrid, and deponent has heard that he fled thence to France fearing the justice of the Holy Office, and then proceeded to Pernambuco, where he followed the profession of surgeon; he was married to Catherina da Costa, who, deponent has heard, was burnt in effigy in Madrid. And the said Manoel Nuñez appeared to be about 45 years of age and spoke Portuguese, and confessant saw him attending the Synagogues and publicly professing belief in the Law of Moses,... in which Law Catherine da Costa, wife of the aforesaid, also lived publicly.

Further declares that at the same time he was acquainted with Abraham Israel, whose name as a Catholic he does not know, native of Portalegre, cousin of Luis Mendes, and confessant has heard the said Abraham Israel say that he left this kingdom and went to Holland, for fear of the justice of the Holy Office; and he said that he was married to a niece of his, who was also a Jewess by belief, and lived in Amsterdam. Further says that at the same time he was acquainted in Pernambuco with David Zuzarte, whose name as a Catholic he does not know, native of Thomar, married in Amsterdam,... and he also publicly professed the Law of Moses,... attending the synagogues in company with confessant. And all the said persons were in Arrecife at the time confessant was brought to the Fortress of the River of San Francisco...

"Asked his name, age, race, native town and place of residence: Says, he is named Diogo Henriques, is of the race of New Christians, native of Medina de Rio Secco in Castile; is 26 years of age or thereabouts; that his father was named Pedro Henriques, and his mother Anna Vas; and that on his father's side he had four uncles, though he has never heard any but Antonio Henriques ... who left this kingdom for Italy.

"And that the said Antonio Henriques was married to Fillipa de Mesquita, sister to confessant's mother, who had one daughter only, also named Fillipa de Mesquita, married to Francisco Alvares ... and he now remembers that his said fa-

ther had sister named Isabel Henriques, who lives in the town of Padua, widow,... and she has two sons, one a Doctor of Medicine... And that on his Mother's side he has one uncle only, Francisco Vas who was married to Beatriz Rodrigues, deceased, by whom he had two daughters, who have remained unmarried...

"And this deponent has three brothers, namely, Antonio, Joao and Fernando, all unmarried and younger than deponent; and two sisters, namely, Violante Henriques, married to Isaac Baru and Catherina Henriques married to Jacob Vas... And that this deponent... was baptized in the Church of Santa Maria Maior of Medina de Rio Secco,... and he did not at any time go to Church, as Catholic Christians do, nor perform any action or work as such, because from his earliest years he was instructed in the ceremonies and beliefs of the Law of Moses,... and his said parents warned him that the Law of Moses forbade any knowledge of the Law of the Gospel. And he only knows how to read, write and count as much as is needed for his business and commerce...

"Asked whether he has understood the reason why he was summoned before the Inquisition and detained, says, that he was brought here as a Jew, and that he was detained be-

Asked whether he, the prisoner, has understood the reason why he was summoned before the Inquisition and detained, says, that he was brought here as a Jew, and that he was detained because the fact of his having been baptized was known...

cause the fact of his having been baptized was known...

"That the offender Diogo Henriques was a heretic and apostate from our holy Catholic faith, and that he has incurred the sentence of major excommunication and confiscation of all his goods to the Royal

Fisc and Treasury, and all other penalties as by law established in similar cases... And in penalty, and penance for his faults they command that he shall appear in the Auto da Fe in customary manner; and hear his sentence, and shall formally abjure his heretical errors; and they assign to him a prison, and he shall wear a penitential habit perpetually;...

"The above sentence was read to the offender Diogo Henriques in the public Auto da Fe celebrated on the Terreiro do Pago of this city of Lisbon, on Sunday, 15th day of December, of 1647..."

For the complete report see *The Spanish Inquisition*, by Cecil Roth, New York 1964, p.277.

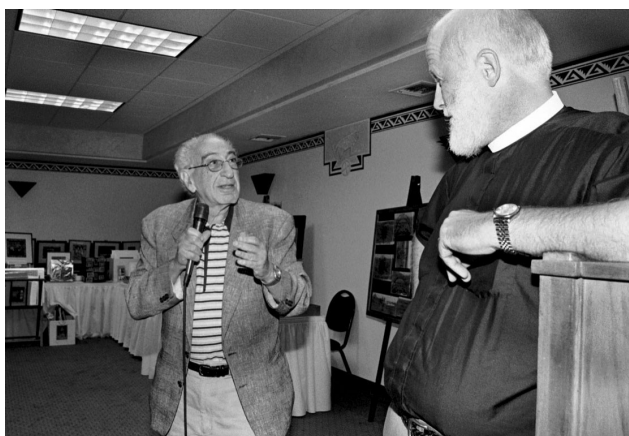
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MORE CONFERENCE PHOTOS

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Max Valerio, Art Benveniste, Rachel Bortnic



David Kazzaz and Father Perko

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LA SUSANA: THE STORY...

by Scott Marks

In response to where the La Susana story took place (It was in Sevilla), here is the story courtesy of Dr. C. Roth:

A young Spaniard man who was trying to court a Jewish girl went to meet the Jewess and secretly came upon a group of Jews and conversos (forcibly baptized converts who still practiced Judaism secretly) in a celebration.

That night was Passover, and those assembled had come together to celebrate it. The problem was further worsened because that week was also the Holy Week for the Catholic church. The young Christian quickly told authorities, and news spread like wild fire through the city of the "blaspheme" that had been done by the Jews. It did not take long before, at the urging of the heads of the Spanish church, the Pope issued instruction giving authority for an Inquisition.

Those persons who had assembled that fateful Passover night would wait two full years before the tribunal of the Inquisition marched into the city in solemn procession with intent on rooting out the "heretics" using torture or any means necessary.

When these same persons found out they were soon to be tried as heretics, they banded together to revolt, one named Diego de Susan stating: "How can they come against us? We are the principle persons of the city?" These men (all Jews) led by Diego gathered arms, and planned a conspiracy to fight back. However, Diego had a daughter who was nicknamed "La Susanna." She was such a beautiful girl she became known through out the city as La Hermosa Hembra ("The beautiful woman").

She was having an affair with a young Christian, and in a moment of sentimental weakness, the Jewish girl told her lover of what her father and the men planned to do. Nothing could have been better for the inquisitional authorities. In a matter of days they arrested and condemned to death all of the conspirators; and on February 6, 1481 at least 12 of them were burned alive.

La Susanna was left destitute by her father's death, and was later placed in a convent. She quickly escaped and went on to live a life as a prostitute. On her death bed with her last breath she asked that her skull be placed above the door of her home where she lived her disorderly life as a warning. This was done, and the street she lived on went on to be called Calle de la Muerte, Street of Death*.

Here it remained for centuries, and stories of people hearing her "cry out" for remorse were perpetuated. The home was destroyed just recently in the last century, but the story of *La Hermosa Hembra* is still spoken of in the Barrio de Santa Cruz (Jewish quarter) of Sevilla today.

*Calle de la Muerte still exists and can be walked by visitors. Ed.

Scott Marks, elpasha@bellsouth.net, is the webmaster for Sephardic House in New York. This article was posted on the anusim@onelist.com.

A LETTER FROM BRAZIL

From Bob Feron

I've been traveling for the past three weeks and was fortunate enough to visit many of our Bnai Anusim friends in the northeast of Brazil. I was also able to introduce Regina Igel to key members of the community in Recife. I'm pleased to report that everything is going very well there.

Many isolated communities and families of dispersed and hidden Jews have retained some traditional Jewish practices, often including a variety of circumcision as well as certain aspects of kashrut.

As someone who has personally discussed these matters at some length with literally dozens of individuals of crypto-Jewish background in Brazil and the U.S., however, I can testify that the variety of continuity and discontinuity found among such communities and individuals is truly remarkable. Variety is the rule.

I know of at least three orthodox Rabbis who have shown a willingness to work with individuals of crypto-Jewish background in the context of a "Baal Tshuvah" rather than a regular "Giur." Others are willing to combine the two in a hybrid "Giur Tshuvah." They do so with the approval of the Sephardic Chief Rabbi in Israel, so everything is completely "kosher" from an orthodox perspective.

I also know of Masorti (Conservative movement) Rabbis who have overseen "Giur" or "Baal Tshuvah" procedures for individuals of crypto-Jewish background. Contrary to what one might expect, the Masorti Rabbis are actually more reluctant to employ the Tshuvah procedure than are the Orthodox, although a few have been willing to do so.

In every case, however, whether the Rabbi is Orthodox or Masorti, the individual circumstances must be investigated and considered carefully. There is no such thing as a blanket procedure applicable to everyone, although the basic requirements are always the same.

Based on my own personal conversations with many Bnai Anusim over several years, one of the primary considerations they typically cite when explaining their own preference for either Tshuvah or Giur (and some have indeed preferred a Giur) is their desire to obtain full acceptance by the local Jewish community where they live.

Sometimes they want their children to attend the local Hebrew day school. Sometimes they want a specific local Rabbi to preside over their own wedding or that of one of their children. Sometimes one of their own children is approaching the age for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Such practical considerations are often paramount in their minds, at least as they have explained their own thinking to me.

I personally know quite a few Bnai Anusim who have undergone Baal Tshuvah and others who have undergone traditional Giur procedures. The study, preparation and circumcision requirements are absolutely identical. It is only the final procedures (beit din and mikvah) that differ.

Anyone wishing to be referred to a suitable Orthodox or Masorti Rabbi is free to contact me privately.

Bob Feron is a translator for the Portuguese Embassy in Washington, D.C. Email: BobFeron@att.net

A CRYPTO JEW PROPOSES TO HIS LOVE

A young man recently asked subscribers to the Anusim online list for help in selecting an appropriate location in Mexico where he can propose to his girl friend. He is a returning Jew. His bride-to-be thinks that she too has Jewish ancestors. He wants to pop the question in a location that has significance to anusim. Any suggestions? Letters will be published in the next issue of Halapid.

INTERNET LISTS

Email lists have become very popular lately. Members of a list post messages that are then distributed, by email, to all other members. It has become a handy way to exchange information, ask and answer questions and conduct discussions. Lists have been created to cover almost every interest.

Members of SCJS with internet access may want to join one of the following lists.

Crypto-Jew@egroups.com

Hosted by our own Isabelle Sandoval. Many members of SCJS have posted items.

anusim@egroups.com

Another list concerned with crypto Judaism

Ladinokomunita@egroups.com

Concerned with the preservation of Sephardic language and culture, this list is conducted in Ladino and is hosted by SCJS member Rachel Bortnic.

sefarad@shamash.org

Sephardic Electronic Archives hosted by Yitzchak Kerem, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece. This list publishes material of Sephardic interest, sent out usually monthly.

Apellidos-Sefarditas@egroups.com

A list devoted to Sephardic genealogy, conducted in Spanish.

Kulanu-L@ube.ubalt.edu a list serve for Kulanu it contains much information about conversion to Judaism.

WEBSITES

Halapid, Home page of the SCJS

<http://sephardiconnect.com/halapid/halapid.htm>

Erensia Sefardi

<http://members.aol.com/erenia/ereniasefardi.index.html>

Beit Hakfar, Inacio Steinhardt's Home Page

<http://www.geocities.com/Eureka/1514/>

Doña Gracia Mendes, Her Life and Times

<http://www.kahalbraira.org/mendes/GraciaMendes.html>

Hedbreos Net España

<http://hebreos.spain.webjump.com/hebreos.html>

Kulanu <http://www.ubalt.edu/kulanu/index2f.html>

Bloom Southwest Jewish Archives, University of Arizona

<http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu/images/swja/swjalist.html>

Jewish News of Greater Phoenix <http://www.jewishaz.com/>

Benveniste's Home Page <http://home.earthlink.net/~benven/>

Sephardic Connection <http://sephardiconnect.com/>

Ladinokomunita

<http://www.egroups.com/community/Ladinokomunita>

Trudi Alexy's Home Page, The Mezuzah in the Madonna's Foot:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~talexy/>

Schulamith Halevy:

<http://www-csgso.cs.uiuc.edu/~nachum/sch/>

VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THE SCJS CONFERENCE

Recordings of the presentations at the 2000 Conference of the Society for Crypto Judaic Studies will soon be available.

Ordering information:

The entire conference: Audio \$50 Video \$75

Individual presentations:

Audio: One \$8; two \$7 each; three or more \$6 each.

Video: One \$20; two \$17 each; three or more \$15 each

1. Ana Pacheco- Persecution, Perseverance, Preservation.
2. Seth Kunin & Stanley Hordes- Evidentiary Issues in Researching the History and Anthropology of Crypto-Judaism in New Mexico
3. Stanly Hordes reviewing the research of Kristine Bordenave, MD- Recent Medical and Genetic Research in New Mexico
4. Seth Ward- Heretics or Daughters of Israel, The Crypto-Jewish Women of Castile.
5. Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb - A Multicultural Congregation
6. Michael Perko- The Cross of Contexts: Theology, Culture and Geography in the Crypto-Jewish Experience.
7. Seth Kunin- Juggling Identities: Crypto-Judaism and the Post Modern Self
8. Mona Hernandez- La Conquistadora: La Shechinah
9. Dolores J. Sloan- Luís de Santángel: A Converso Bridge to the New World
10. Richard Santos- Jews of Northern Mexico and South Texas
11. Stanley Hordes- The Sephardic Legacy Project: Update on Research in Spanish and Mexican Archives

Send orders to the SCJS, 333 Washington Blvd. #336, Marina Del Rey, Ca 90292

Make checks payable to the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies
Please send me:

() Tapes numbered _____ video () audio ()

() Entire series video () audio ()

I am enclosing \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Note: Tapes will be shipped after October 15th.

NMJHS PLANS MEETING ON JEWISH IDENTITY IN NEW MEXICO



David Scholder

The New Mexico Jewish Historical Society announces the Alvin H. Solomon Conference In Jewish History. Al Solomon was an active member of the Society and was most recently hailed for his role in organizing the first New Mexico Jewish Film Festival in November 1998. Al died unexpectedly in 1999. His family and close friends have created an endowment for the Annual conference now held in his memory. The provocative topic for this year's event on November 17, 18, and 19 will be "Negotiating Jewish Identity in New Mexico: Open Lives, Hidden Lives". The conference will be held at the Santa Fe Hilton Hotel.

According to A. David Scholder, president of the Society, the conference will speak to crucial issues of identity, self definition, and spiritual community.

"What is it like to find out you are not who you thought you were?" adds Melanie LaBorwit, conference chair. "What is it like to hide your Jewish identity through the subtle and not so subtle process of assimilation? For some, the discovery of Jewish roots confirms long held suspicions of identity. For others, it becomes a burden or an obstacle to fitting into society. This year's conference will explore these conflicts in both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities in the Southwest."

The newest data from the academic research and first hand stories from people in the New Mexico Jewish community will be offered. For a detailed brochure, call 877-NMJESH (665-3974) or email: scholder@earthlink.net; website: www.nmjewishhistory.org/index.htm

The Autrey Museum of Western Heritage is organizing a major exhibit for 2002 which will be called The Jewish West. Scholder, as president of the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society, serves on the advisory committee which is putting together a strategic plan for this exhibit. For those interested in the story of the Jews of the West, this conference will be of particular importance. Check *Halapid* for future developments on this.



Seth Ward and Cynthia Zimmerman



Stan Hordes

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THE HEBREW EXILE - A POEM FROM 1843

Submitted by Barbara Taverna (btaverna@aol.com)

The following poem appeared in *The Occidental*, a magazine of Judaica that was printed in the mid-nineteenth century in the US. The poem is by an unknown author, commemorates the Expulsion from Spain. It appeared in English. A good friend was kind enough to take the time to translate it into the beautiful Spanish language, as it should be. The translator noted it is a very free translation, and he did his best to keep the soul of the original. Hebrew was changed to Jew and Spain to Sefarad.

THE OCCIDENTAL

The following lines came to us without a name from Richmond. They are evidently the work of an unpractised writer; yet as a whole they possess considerable merit, and betoken much promise of excellence if the author perseveres with care in the path he (or she) has entered. Hence we give them a place in our periodical, although as a rule we would prefer printing nothing that has not the author's name attached.

Richmond, April 21, 1843.

Oft has he wandered--now again
Must go--he has no home in Spain.
The vine and olive-yards he's learned to love,
Soft Andalusia's valleys with their gentle streams,
The heavens, which spread so calm his head above,
The earth, that with its richest products teems,
Must be deserted. He must go again,
The wretched Hebrew has no home in Spain.
His gold, his merchandise, his fields, his all,
Be left behind. To what land can he turn?
To this--he goes to torture, that--to slavish thrall,
To toil out life in pain, or at the stake to burn,
What matters it--he must not here remain,
The Hebrew has no longer home in Spain.
How quivers his stern lip--and grief too try for tears
Fevers his breast--his hopes of happiness gone!
Snatched from him thus the fruits of toilsome years,
Driven from the land where peace began to dawn;
Hush, now he weeps--oh! how could he refrain,
He knows he has no more a home in Spain.
And why must he depart!--why leave the land
Where his sires lie entombed? whose the decree
Which exiles him--whose the unsparing hand
Which gives him as alternative of death, to flee?--
They're Ferdinand's heralds who aloud proclaim
The Jew no longer has a home in Spain.
And now he hath departed. See the look of woe
He casts from yonder hill-top--drops one tear,
One tear o'er bygone years, and turns to go,
For ever leaves the land which was to him so dear.
Hebrew farewell! thou wilt not see again,
But long wilt recollect, thy home in Spain.

(Suggested by Prescott's spirited description of Ferdinand and Isabella's expulsion of the Jews from Spain.)

For more information:

<http://members.tripod.com/~anak/anusim.htm>

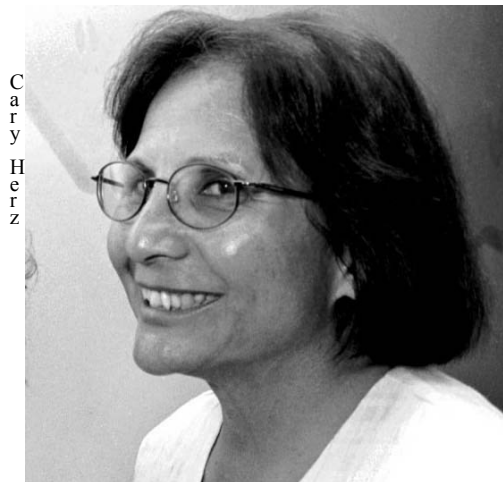
SOLLOZA EL JUDIO

Solloza el Judio, ya no hay ni esperanza.
Persecucion tenaz lo arroja de su lar.
Y en la unica tierra do dulce lecho
hallo, de alli se le rechaza.
Y errante tiene que ser una vez mas.
Ahora igual que antes, lo ha sido con frecuencia,
debe partir de nuevo, Sefarad ya no es su hogar.
Alli donde aprendiera a amar con tanta fuerza,
parrales y olivares, los valles andaluces,
sus graciles arroyos, y cielos de esplendor.
Sus tierras generosas en prodigas cosechas.
Ha de dejarlo todo, de nuevo hay que huir.
Judio destrozado: Sefarad ya no es hogar.
Atras se queda todo: los bienes y los campos.
A donde poder ir?
Por aca ? Hacia la tortura
Por alla ? Trabajo esclavo.
A luchar por la vida en vano?
O morir aca en la hoguera?
Solo existe lo imposible del quedar.
Sin hogar en Sefarad esta el Judio ya:
Le tiembla un poco el labio,
pide lagrimas su duelo.
y se le quema el pecho
pues ya no hay esperanzas de la felicidad.
Arrancan de sus brazos la labor de tantos anyos.
Se le arroja de la tierra
donde alborea la paz.
Silencio : ahora solloza, no puede contenerse
al sentir que nada queda de su hogar en Sefarad.
Y porque partir ya debe?
Su terrunyo, porque ha de abandonar?
Si alli yacen sus acestros.
De quien es el decreto ? Quien lo exilia?
De quien es la cruel mano que huida o muerte da?
Fernando y sus heraldos a gritos lo proclaman:
Ya no tiene el Judio su hogar en Sefarad.
Ha partido : desde postrer colina
otea lo que deja y loa anyos que se van.
Y una lagrima despidе la tierra que tanto amo:
Judio, adios ,Judio.
Ya no has de volver a verlo pero recordaras,
si, por siempre tu hogar en Sefarad.

THE HEBREW WAILS

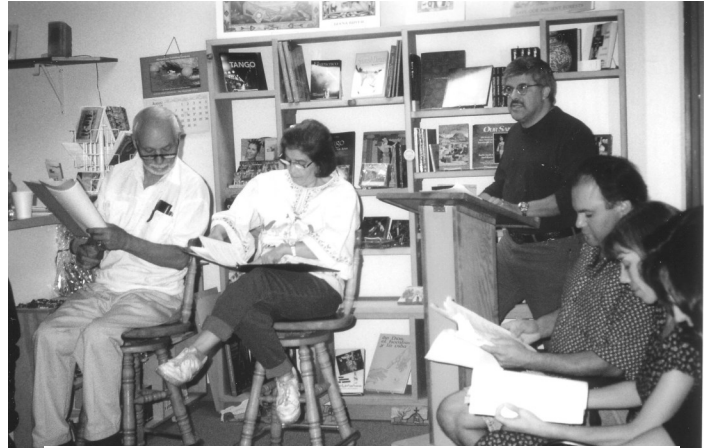
The Hebrew wails. All hope is fled--
Fierce persecution drives him from his home;
The only land where he could rest his head
Rejects him, and he once more is to roam.

SCENES FROM THE ALBUQUERQUE CONFERENCE 2000



Cary Herz

President Gloria Trujillo coordinated conference



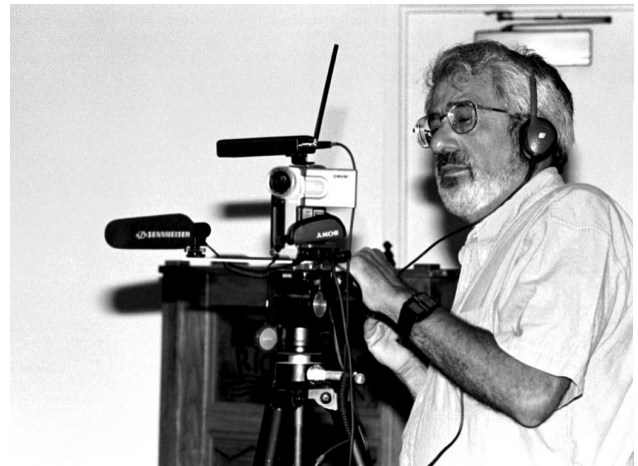
D Sloan

Mario Martinez leads Victor and Jo Izay, James Chavez and Maria Martinez in reading of *El Converso*



Cary Herz

Ana Pacheco displays Crypto-Jewish issue of *La Herencia del Norte*



Cary Herz

Art Benveniste videotapes the conference



Cary Herz

Tomas Atencio comments on Richard Santos' presentation



Cary Herz

Mona Hernandez reports on *La Conquistadora*