

**The Society for' Crypto-Judaic Studies
8th Annual Conference, El Paso, Texas
August 2 - 4, 1998
by Gloria Trujillo**

We hope you will join us for our 8th annual conference in El Paso, Texas. The purpose of our conferences is to bring together scholars, historians, writers, artists, anthropologists, sociologists, and others who are interested to speak about their research relating to the historical and contemporary development of the Crypto-Jews of Iberian origins.

The site of this year's conference is The Camino Real located in downtown El Paso. Please use their toll free number, 800 769-4300, to make your room reservations. The Camino Real has a complimentary shuttle from the airport to the hotel for registered guests. If you are driving, secured underground parking is available for \$3 a day.

A tentative list of our presenters is as follows: Rabbi Seth Kunin, Rabbi Stephen Leon, Dr. Judith Cohen, Professor Richard Santos, Dr. Abe Lavender, Carlos Melendrez, Judith Kneger, Daniel Goldberg (producer of "Un Beso a Esta Tierra"), Professor Horacio Calles, Dr. Stanley Hordes, Charles Meyers and Arthur Benveniste.

The conference begins Sunday evening at 7:30 p.m. with registration and a reception. Following our reception, we will begin the conference with opening remarks, and Daniel Goldberg will tell us about the film project he is currently developing. Our concert features Dr. Judith Cohen this year, who will perform Sephardic music from around the world.

We will start Monday morning with a continental breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and the first presenter will begin at 8:00 a.m. After lunch at the hotel we will continue until approximately 5:00 p.m. There will be book sales tables at the back of the meeting room. Moses Hillel Booksellers of El Paso will have its own book table.

On Monday evening at 6:15 p.m., we will go to B'nai Zion for a kosher dinner and entertainment. B'nai Zion is located at 805 Cherry Hill Lane, and we will provide transportation. Our host, Rabbi Stephen Leon, will hold services from 6:45p.m. to 7:15p.m. The Hillel Booksellers will set up at the synagogue. You may browse if you do not wish to attend services. Rabbi Leon is speaking before dinner, and he is looking forward to meeting our group. Completing the evening will be a short performance of Israeli dancing by

THE TRIAL OF DIEGO LOPEZ

Introduction and Translation by
STANLEY M. HORDES, Ph.D.

During the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is estimated that several thousand crypto-Jews, or secret Jews, emigrated from Spain and Portugal to the Indies. Sometimes referred to as conversos, marranos, or New Christians, these people were descended from those Jews who were forced either to convert to Catholicism or face exile from Spain in 1492, by decree of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.

Many of these cryptoBjews found their way to the Viceroyalty of New Spain, with the heaviest period of immigration occurring in the 1620s. A strong motive for emigrating was the improvement of their material condition; moreover, New Spain served as a potential haven for crypto-Jews who wished to practice their secret religious rites

Contrary to popular belief, torture was used sparingly and selectively to gain confessions

in an atmosphere of relative security. In contrast to the Iberian Peninsula, where the Holy Office of the Inquisition posed a constant threat to New Christians, the Mexican Inquisition was not particularly concerned with the persecution of judaizantes. Except for two notable periods of activity against cryptoBjews, one in the 1580s and '90s and the other in the 1640s, the Holy Office focused its attention upon less spectacular breaches of Catholic orthodoxy, such as witchcraft, bigamy, blasphemy, and the solicitation of women by priests. Thus, once the troubled crypto-Jews left their Iberian homeland for New Spain, they would be able to begin new lives, relatively free from the persecutions of the past and filled with the expectation of a comfortable material existence.

Those conversos who arrived in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries joined crypto-Jewish communities that had flourished in Mexico City and other towns since the early 1520s. Mexican crypto-Jews tended, more often than not, to pursue mercantile trades. Some, stationed for the most part in Mexico City or Veracruz, engaged in trade across the Atlantic, importing goods from Spain, as well as slaves from Angola, while exporting silver, dyestuffs, and other Mexican products. Others worked out of Acapulco and concerned themselves with Philippine trade.

PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES IN CRYPTO-JUDAIC STUDIES

Dr. Seth D. Kunin

The Crypto-Judaic community in New Mexico is complex in respect of individual and communal identity and history. The community as a whole, if one can speak of it as such, has developed in a cultural and historic context very different from other segments of the Jewish community. The primary distinction is found in respect to its strong association with the Catholic Church. By necessity, most Crypto-Jews in New Mexico participated to a lesser or greater extent in the life of the Church. This association has led to the culture of the Crypto-Jews to be shaped to some extent by Catholic ideas, ritual and culture. The necessity to compartmentalize ones internal, hidden Jewish identity and ones external Christian identity has also shaped the culture of the Crypto-Jew. Since the conquest of New Mexico by the United States, other Christian churches have also affected the identity of the Crypto-Jews. Influences have included the use of Biblical names and the reading of Biblical texts. While these customs may have been already present within the community, the Protestant sects enabled these practices to be openly performed.

Like all other Jewish communities, the Crypto-Judaic community is also integrated into other larger cultural communities, e.g., Western American culture. This cultural integration adds a further level of complexity. Each period of development, whether in the context of Spanish, Mexican, or American culture, influences the development and conceptual language of Crypto-Judaic culture. This influence is perhaps strongest today because of the pervasive nature of American culture, and the degree of assimilation into that culture. Complexity is also found to an even greater extent in respect to the individual.

Each family has its own history regarding the movement from Spain to the New World. Some trace their roots to the early colonization, others to later periods of migration. Geographic settlement is also a significant feature. Settlement in urban centers, e.g., Santa Fe, or more remote areas of New Mexico, whether recently or historically, also has a significant impact on practice and identity. Current religious affiliation is a further factor in complicating Crypto-Judaic identity. Within the community of people identifying themselves as Crypto-Jews we find a wide range of affiliation. Some individuals have identified strongly with the main stream Jewish community, often converting to be accepted into synagogues and communities. These synagogues range from Reform to Chabad. Other individuals, while identifying with Judaism have, often due to a feeling that they are authentically Jewish and see no reason to convert, not identified with any particular main stream community.

Some Crypto-Jews recognize their Jewish origins but choose to continue identifying with various Christian groups, including Catholicism, various Protestant groups, and modern Messianic sects. Others are members of the LDS. Each of these religious affiliations raises questions about the nature of Crypto-Judaic identity. In many cases, as discussed below, genealogical descent appears to be the significant factor. Other individuals, while recognizing a Jewish ancestor, do not consider themselves to be Crypto-Jews. In respect of

practice and identity there is a wide range of variation within the community and even families. The community can be broken down into four ideal types based on practice, identity, and beliefs. It should be noted that most people will range between these types rather than fitting exactly into any one. The first type is composed of people who have all three components. They consider themselves to be Jewish. In some cases they have known this all their lives, with the Jewish identity never being a secret within the family. In other cases they have been told of their Jewish identity at some time during their childhood, the beginning of puberty is the common time. The significant factor is that Jewish identity is perceived as being mutually exclusive; they are Jews rather than Christians. The element of practice or ritual is also significant, as practice has always been seen as the identifying characteristic of Jews. Within this category there is a high degree of practice identified as being Jewish. Within each family the elements of practice will differ, what will remain constant is the identification of these practices as Jewish. In respect to belief we find a clear

Jewish identity is perceived as being mutually exclusive, they are Jews rather than Christians

rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, an acceptance of one God, and a strong focus on the 10 Commandments. Other beliefs will be idiosyncratic.

The second category is composed of individuals with a Jewish identity but more ambiguous expressions of the other elements. Individuals within this category will often have grown up without knowing they were Jewish. At some point, sometimes at puberty and sometimes only in adulthood, they will have been informed that they were Jewish. When they examine their past, they may find that their families had certain practices which can in retrospect be identified as Jewish. Yet these practices were often done without explanation or identification as being Jewish. We find similar ambiguity in respect of belief. This category may also include those people who, although never told that they were of Jewish origin, have discovered this through genealogical research. The third category is composed of individuals who have recognized Jewish practices within their families, yet do not have any tradition of Jewish identity, or current Jewish identity. Many of the individuals within this category consider themselves to be Christian or Hispanic, which may be incompatible with Judaism in their eyes. Within the families and traditions of these individuals, however, may be identified either internally or externally practices which may be identified with the Crypto-Judaic community. An example of this may be the use of Ladino.

The final category is composed of individuals who have no documented or tradition of Jewish origins. They often state that although there is no tradition of Judaism within their families, nor any apparent Jewish practices, they feel themselves to be Jewish. In some, though not all, cases their self identification is associated with membership in some Messianic organization.

Bricolage

One significant conceptual model which is essential to understanding the development of Crypto-Judaic culture, and indeed any culture, is that of bricolage. This concept, first introduced by Levi-Strauss, suggests that all culture is created from materials at hand. The bricoleur uses what is available in

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Gloria Trujillo

We are looking forward to seeing all of you who have registered for the 1998 conference in El Paso next month. For those of you who haven't attended a conference in a couple of years, we are hoping that you are not thinking that it's the same old thing again. And, we would also like to thank our loyal members who have been with us since the beginning and who have attended almost every conference.

The purpose of the conferences is to present the latest research that is being done in the many different areas relating to the Crypto-Jews, or Anusim. The Conference is also a great opportunity for everyone to talk to friends, whom they haven't seen in a year, and to meet new people. Our host, Rabbi Stephen Leon at B'nai Zion will speak to us about his involvement in El Paso with the Anusim, and the Jewish community. I spoke to Rabbi Leon and he is expecting a large turnout at B'nai Zion on Monday evening.

Our newsletter, Halapid has steadily undergone some improvements through the past several years under the able guidance of our Editor, Arthur Benveniste, and former Editor, Bob Hattem. Art has also devoted much of his spare time and energy getting us set up upon the Internet.

I don't mention our Vice President, Dr. Stanley Hordes, too often, but he has been a steadfast participant, and has been a great help with almost every aspect of the organization that he, and Rabbi Joshua Stampfer envisioned many years ago, and put together in 1991. Stan was in Spain earlier this summer and he will update us on the pertinent information that he uncovered while he was there. Speaking of our former SCJS President, Rabbi Stampfer will be attending this year's conference and we are looking forward to seeing him again.

Jordan Elgrably, of Irvi-Nasawi has told us that the planned October Symposium has been postponed indefinitely, and he sends his apologies. We will let you know as soon as Jordan has a tentative date for us. Don't miss the Sephardic Festival at the Skirball Center in Los Angeles on July 19. Arthur and some other SCJS members are volunteering to help out at the Festival.

Art, and Bob have sent out reminders for those of you who haven't sent in your membership renewal for this year. We just recently received

information from Kathleen LeMieux, Conference Coordinator of, ASantangel 98: The Life and Times of Luis De Santangel" being held near Chicago on August 23-26.

We've also sent our members some information on the 18th Annual San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, which is being held July 1-August 3. The locations of the Film Festival are San Francisco, Berkeley, and Menlo Park, California. In Southern California, Arthur is the co-chair for a 2nd Annual Sephardic Film Festival that will be held in Los Angeles later this year, and he has included an update in the newsletter on the event for us.

If you are sponsoring an event, or know of one in your community, please send the information to Arthur, and he will try and include it in the next newsletter. We believe that it's important to let our members know what's happening in our Jewish local community, and across the country.

Bob, and Arthur have also sent out membership renewals, and want me to remind those of you who have been putting off sending in your dues, to mail them in as soon as possible.

El Paso Conference

(cont from page 1)

Jodi Toren and her group.

The following day will begin with a continental breakfast served at 7:30 A.M. We will begin the conference promptly at 8:00 a.m. This year we will be having a light lunch at 11:30 a.m. and the conference will end with our business meeting at approximately 2:30 p.m.

ZORRO A CRYPTO JEW???

A movie review in the July 24-30 issue of the Jewish Journal of Los Angeles is titled: **The Swordsman as Landsman**. And begins with the words:

Was the legendary Zorro Jewish? Was he a swashbuckler in Spanish California by day and a reader of the Zohar by night?

Just ask John Gertz, president of Berkeley's Zorro Productions which co-produced "The Mask of Zorro."

His family has escaped to the far reaches of the Spanish empire in California. He is interested in matters of justice. He has a hidden identity. He is clearly Marrano.

PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES IN CRYPTO-JUDAIC STUDIES

both the natural and contextual environment to build elements that fit into his own cultural pattern or structure. Thus, it is not the particular cultural elements, e.g., rituals or actions, that are significant, or indicative of culture, but the way in which these elements are associated with each other, and their relationship or opposition to elements from neighbouring cultures.

There are several important implications of this concept to the Crypto-Judaic community. First, it cannot be expected that the Crypto-Judaic community will practice rituals which are identical to those practiced by Jews in other cultural contexts. Rituals, especially when not accompanied by written legal texts, as any cultural element, change over time. Culture change is a continuous process, and even a concept or an attempt not to change is a form of transformation. Thus, some of the rituals which are found today among the Crypto-Jews, while owing their origin to practices in Spain, will be constructed and include elements of the cultural context of Spain, Mexico, and the United States. It should therefore not be surprising to find elements of Catholic ritual incorporated into some Crypto-Judaic rituals. What is significant is how these elements are fit into the Crypto-Judaic cultural structure.

Second, we may also find rituals or practices which have no direct relationship to Jewish practices of pre-expulsion Spain. These rituals may have been constructed of elements available and fit into the cultural identity of the Crypto-Jew. In annualising these practices it is essential to determine the range of practice, that is, are they restricted to the Crypto-Judaic community and the interpretation or understanding of the practice. In some cases these practices may be associated with either the expulsion itself or the culture of secrecy which has been a defining characteristic of the Crypto-Judaic community.

Third, in several cases it has been determined that particular elements of some Crypto-Judaic practice cannot owe its origin to pre-expulsion Spain. An example of this may be the "dreidel," this case is discussed below. Although there are many possible explanations for the introduction of these practices, they are clearly explicable within the bricolage model. The model would suggest that when the Crypto-Judaic community came into contact with other aspects of the Jewish community, especially the Ashkenazim who settled in the South West after the conquest by the USA, it would select elements of Jewish culture which fit into its own structure. Jewish cultural elements would be particularly appropriate because of their clear association with Jewish identity. Inclusion of these elements into Crypto-Judaic culture would strengthen Crypto-Judaic Jewish identity. Some scholars have focussed on Crypto-Judaic rituals as remnants of Jewish culture rather than part of a living and developing culture. This, however, ignores the fact that culture is not composed of artifacts or remnants. Culture is composed of living and interrelating elements, each part of a wider structural pattern. Thus, when examining Crypto-Judaic culture each of the elements, whether ritual or conceptual, must be fit into a structural context which is the basis and foundation of Crypto-Judaic identity.

The final section of this paper focuses on five areas which are used both within the Crypto-Judaic community and without as means of identification and validation. These examples are chosen specifically because they raise interested

issues or problems related to those areas discussed above. It must be noted that there are many other examples which could have been discussed which do not raise these problems. The examples discussed are: genealogy, the dreidel, symbolism and kashrut (especially regarding slaughter of animals).

Genealogy is an essential aspect of Crypto-Judaic identity. To some extent, one defining feature of Crypto-Judaic identity is identifiable Jewish ancestors. This is true both for those Crypto-Jews who are aware of their Jewish ancestry, that is, the Jewish identity has been openly acknowledged within the family, and for those who discover their Crypto-Judaic identity through genealogical research. In some cases, individuals who had no inkling of Jewish identity and had no knowledge of Jewish practices within the family feel transformed and different upon discovering their Jewish genealogical roots. The significance of genealogy is also strengthened by external forces. Genealogy as historical evidence is used to defend against those who would deny Crypto-Judaic presence in New Mexico. This feature is found both among the community and scholars who attempt to describe it. Genealogy is also strengthened in respect to the wider Jewish community. It is used to validate the identity of Crypto-Jews as authentic. Genealogy thus becomes a key building block in constructing Crypto-Judaic identity. Genealogy, however, is a cultural construct. It becomes significant in cultures which value continuity with the past. This is true both for the Hispanic and Jewish communities. Both place value on clear lines of genealogical descent. Within the Jewish community genealogy is the defining feature in Jewish identity, that is, a Jewish person is defined as having a Jewish mother. In respect to the Crypto-Judaic community this definition and emphasis is both a value and a problem. As stated, an emphasis is placed on having a Jewish ancestor, however, this often does not fit in with the normative Jewish pattern.

The use of genealogy is also problematic in another respect: Do to the time frame, and the number of Jews who were forced to convert between 1390 and 1490 it is likely that most people of Spanish descent can find a Jewish ancestor in their genealogy. However, it cannot be said that all people with Jewish blood are Crypto-Jews. Genealogy, therefore, cannot be a sufficient defining characteristic. It may be necessary, but other factors must be present as well. This does not mean, however, that these factors need to have been historically present. Individuals today who discover Jewish roots can become part of the modern Crypto-Judaic community. This does not suggest any necessary Crypto-Judaic background in their families. It is possible but not necessary. Not all Jews who converted were either forced or retained their Jewish identity. There is one area in which genealogy moves beyond a cultural construct, that of genetic illnesses. Scholars have identified several genetic diseases which appear to be limited to the Sephardic community both outside of and within the Crypto-Judaic community. These genetic factors create a clear link between these two communities. But genetic factors do contain cultural information. How this biological information is used is again within the realm of cultural construction. There are interesting examples of individuals discovering and developing Crypto-Judaic identity on the basis of these genetic diseases.

Genealogy as historical evidence is used to defend against those who would deny Crypto-Judaic presence in New Mexico

The dreidel is an interesting example because of its pervasiveness in the popular literature about the Crypto-Judaic community. Many informants and observers have pointed out the use of a four-sided top used within the Crypto-Judaic community during the late autumn or early winter, coinciding with Christmas. It is associated in some cases with the celebration of a form of Chanukah. It is often assumed that the dreidel was brought from Spain by early Jewish immigrants. This, however, is highly unlikely because all evidence suggests that the dreidel was first used several centuries later in Eastern Europe, and was not present in Spain in 1492.

This historical discrepancy has led several scholars to discount the dreidel as a feature of Crypto-Judaic history and identity. There are, however, several possibilities which must be examined before determining the status of the "dreidel". It is possible that the dreidel was introduced to the Crypto-Judaic community at some later date. Two possibilities suggest themselves: either by the incoming Ashkinazic community in the mid to late nineteenth century, or from the Jewish communities established in the twentieth century. Evidence from informants suggests that it was present very early in the twentieth century. If it was taken from the Ashkinazic community at either of these dates, this fits well with the model of Bricolage. The bricoleur when continuing the process of cultural construction, based on a Jewish identity, would naturally borrow from the community openly identified as Jewish. Thus, the presence of the dreidel, far from weakening the identification of Crypto-Judaic culture, may be understood as part of the natural process of cultural development and transmission. This explanation, however, must be examined in the wider context of Hispanic culture in the Southwest. It must be determined whether the top is used within the broader Hispanic community. If this is the case, then the presence of the top cannot be used as an indicator of Crypto-Judaic culture. This being said, however, the use of the "dreidel" today within the Crypto-Judaic community must be seen as one factor in identity. Individuals use it because they associate it with their Jewish identity.

Many students of Crypto-Judaic culture, whether from within or without the community, have focused on the use of symbols as a means of identifying Crypto-Jews. These studies have particularly focused on symbols found in cemeteries. They have pointed out a wide range of symbols which are considered to be secret or open statements of Jewish identity. While in some cases these identifications are undoubtedly true, for example, use of Hebrew in a name, in other cases there are several problematic issues. It is often assumed that the symbols used have a limited repertoire of meanings, and are restricted to one particular cultural framework. Symbol theory, however, suggests that the use of symbols is much more complex. Symbols have no necessary meaning or referent. Their meanings are culturally determined and occasionally highly individual. They are also often used by many different cultures with different meanings and explanations. They may also be found, especially on grave stones, used as decorating motifs without any particular symbolic associations. Thus, when examining the use of a particular motif on grave stone, several questions must be asked. Is the motif undeniably a statement of Jewish identity? Is the motif used only by Jews or is it found in other contexts as well? Is the motif carved by stone cutters using a standard pattern book? Finally, why was this particular motif chosen

by the family? With these questions in mind the motifs found in cemeteries may be categorized into several groups. First, this category includes those motifs which have a clear and undeniable Jewish association. This category must be limited to those with a Hebrew name and the use of Jewish identification by an outside source, for example, the army.

Second, the use of symbols specifically and uniquely associated with the Jewish community. This category may include the Menorah and occasionally the Jewish or six pointed star. Care, however, must be taken in respect of the star because it was often used as a decorative motif by other elements within Spanish society. It is also a relatively simple way to make a star. Its use is perhaps more conclusive when found on a professionally carved stone. It must be noted that the star came into popular use as a symbol on graves in the twentieth century (particularly among the Ashkinazic community). Its use in the Crypto-Judaic community can be explained by the process of Bricolage discussed above.

Third, the group includes the use of symbols which suggest Jewish symbols, for example, a flower shaped like a star. This category, which also includes candles, books, shrouds etc., can only be considered as evidence when accompanied by interviews with the family and a clear identification by them of their reasons for using the particular motif. This use of interviews is also preferable in respect of the second category as well.

Thus, symbols or motifs on grave stones can in most cases be suggestive of Crypto-Judaic identity. They can, however, for individuals and families be ways of expressing or concretizing identity. Any symbol can become significant for a group or individual, and can become a focus for the expression of feelings, ideas, memories, or identity. The practice of slaughtering animals by slitting their throats and draining the blood is commonly described by Crypto-Jews as a significant part of their practice and expression of their Jewish identity. It is sometimes, though not always, associated with separation of milk and meat. The method of slaughter, however, does not appear to be restricted to the Crypto-Judaic community. There is some ethnographic indication that it is the common method used in New Mexico. Thus, the method itself is not sufficient to indicate Crypto-Judaic identity or a practice associated with the Crypto-Judaic community. An additional element which does seem to be unique to the Crypto-Judaic community is the disposal of the blood either by allowing it to be absorbed into the ground, or by throwing it away. This is clearly associated with the prohibition in Jewish law against eating the blood. In examining the practice of individuals this element will usually indicate whether the method of slaughter is used for Crypto-Judaic reasons or part of the common New Mexican inheritance. An example of this is one informant who reported that his family followed the pattern of slaughtering but when asked if they ate the blood he said, "we did, but we didn't like it." This type of response suggests that the slaughtering practice was not performed for Jewish reasons, but due to the informant's present understanding of Judaism he was re-understanding his past. This process of re-understanding is a normal part of cultural development and transformation. In this paper we have briefly examined some of the elements of Crypto-Judaic identity. We have

focussed on aspects of identity construction. This emphasis should not be taken as a denial of the validity of the community. Rather, it demonstrates that the Crypto-Judaic community, as is any living culture, is in the process of development and transformation. Similarly, individuals in any culture go through a continuous process of identity construction and reconstruction based on their cultural context and individual understanding and feelings. Due to this continuous process of cultural development and transformation which is ultimately one of Bricolage the culture of the Crypto-Jew is built from materials from many different cultures and times. It contains elements brought from Spain, others taken from Spanish Catholic culture, and others from the Ashkenazic Jewish community. It is likely that this process will continue with elements of American and modern Sephardic culture being added into the Crypto-Judaic repertoire. Far from challenging the validity of Crypto-Judaic culture these additions reveal that it is a living and transforming culture distinct from the neighbouring Hispanic culture. This, however, does not allow us to ignore the problems and challenges. If the Crypto-Judaic community is to be properly understood both internally and externally the problems raised here and elsewhere must be addressed. It is important for people to share their knowledge and traditions and to allow them to be analysed by scholars. This is also important for the understanding of Judaism as a whole as one of the significant features of Crypto-Judaic culture is the persistence of Jewish identity whether associated with identifiably Jewish practices or beliefs. This issue is of importance in respect to developments in Jewish culture in the United States and to those communities of Eastern Europe.

Dr Seth D. Kunin,
University of Nottingham

A LETTER AND POEM FROM ARIEL ZAPATA

The poem that I'm sending you, I wrote it back in 1996, when

I decided to fully recognize and retrieve my Sephardim ancestry. By the way, could the Society of Crypto-Jews Studies find out about these last names?: **Bohorquez Ballestas** (my mother side) and **Olivella** (my father's mother last name). The Bohorquez in my family were almost totally "open" in recognizing that they were Jews. In the case of the Olivellas, the only trace is that they married other Sefarditas (two cases in particular: the **Aaron-Olivellas** and the **Bendek-Olivellas**). All these last names are located in the Caribbean coast of Colombia, where as well as in their regions of that country, in many of its towns people burn candles (during the whole night up until dawn) the night of December the 7th, preceding the Roman Catholic celebration of the Immaculate Conception, December the 8th. Catholics do not relate at all the candle burning with any Roman Catholic tradition. The obvious conclusion and explanation is that it is a case of remembering Hannukah. Another evidence: This is not celebrated at all in Cartagena. Why? Probably because Cartagena is the city where the Inquisition was. There is a long way to go regarding research of the anusim in Latin America. Don't you think so?

Here's the poem, first in English:

Mikail

In the transparency of your face
I find all those lost
in the Diaspora,
assassinated in the name of each lie
which terminates every hope,
ending every nascent love
murdering the faith
in which Father does exist...
The same lie that aborts
every possible life.
It hurts me and I blame myself
when I see your eyes
holding all that...
that which dies every day
because of that lie.
You, surviving in the wait
of Father;
you, who learned from Job;
you, who did not sell yourself
for a plate of lentils.
You, with your hands opened
and loving brothers and not brothers
for the sake of Father.
You, who knows that Father and you
are one with your people.
You, who never denied Him,
despite endless tortures and massacres
perpetrated by the lie...
this same lie that preaches the truth,
but denies it because it is made
out of stone, and therefore it's a lie.
I see you with pain and shame,

because your ancestors did not
 deny, but mine did...
 hiding from faith
 and defeated by fear to hopelessness.
 But memories survived
 among the profound deeps
 of that memory that sailed
 with Noah,
 traveled with Abraham,
 transmuted with Moses
 and was crowned with David,
 after fleeing from them,
 denying them.
 I look at your eyes
 and I remember.
 I weep embracing you,
 I laugh because your
 hanukkah candles still burning
 singing Psalms
 celebrating Father, the One.
 And they transmute
 in Love and Light
 that sad, jealous and desperate lie,
 which without knowing,
 is dying with your overflowing love,
 believing that in your
 millions of lives, Mikail,
 it has sacrificed you.
 You knew, like Job,
 that Father always
 kept you with Him.

Mikail

(Spanish original version)

En la transparencia de tu rostro
 encuentro todos aquellos
 perdidos en la Diaspora y
 asesinados en nombre de la mentira

que fulmina toda esperanza,
 que masakra los amores
 siempre naciotes,
 que ejecuta la fe en que
 Padre existe,
 que aborta toda vida posible.
 Me duele y me culpo
 al ver tus ojos
 sosteniendo todo aquello
 que dia a dia asesina la mentira.
 Tu, sobreviviendo en espera
 de Padre,
 tu que aprendiste de Job.
 Tu, con tus manos abiertas
 y amando a hermanos y no hermanos,
 por amor a Padre.
 Tu, por saber que Padre y tu
 son uno contigo y tu pueblo.
 Tu, que nunca lo negaste
 a pesar de las torturas y masacres
 de la mentira...
 esa misma que pregonaba la verdad
 pero la niega
 porque es de piedra y es mentira.
 Te veo con dolor y verguenza
 porque tus mayores no negaron
 y los mios si,
 escondidos de la fe
 y vencidos por el miedo de la
 desesperanza.
 Pero sobrevivio el recuerdo
 en los profundos abismos
 de la memoria que zarpo con Noe,
 transhumo con Abraham,
 transmuta con Moises
 y se corono con David,
 tras haber huido negandolos.
 Miro a tus ojos y recuerdo.
 Lloro ante tu abrazo,
 rio porque tus velas de Hanuka

siguen encendidas
 entonando los salmos
 que celebran a Padre, unico.
 Y transmutan en Luz y Amor
 la mentira triste, celosa y desesperada
 que sin saberlo muere cada dia
 con tu amor desbordado,
 que en tus millones de vidas, Mikail,
 han creido haberte sacrificado.
 Supiste como Job,
 que Padre te acogio.

Ariel

JOIN US AT THE
 CAMINO REAL HOTEL
 IN EL PASO
 AUG 2 - 4, 1998

CHECK OUT THESE WEB PAGES

Society For Crypto Judaic Studies: <http://sephardiconnect.com/halapid/halapid.htm>
Sephardic Genealogy and Historical Society: <http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/1321/index.html>
Sephardic Jews from Spain: <http://www.bsz.org/aspanishjews.htm>
Sephardic and Sephardim Genealogy: <http://www.orthohelp.com/geneal/sefardim.htm>
Inacio Steinhardt's Home Page: <http://www.geocities.com/Eureka/1514/>
Kulanu: <http://www.ubalt.edu/www/kulanu/>
Bnai Sepharad: <http://www.geocities.com/SouthBeach/8341/>
Benveniste's Home Page: <http://home.earthlink.net/~benven/>
The Anusim List Page: <http://members.tripod.com/~anak/anusim.htm>
Portugal Em Linha: <http://www.portugal-linha.pt/lusods/english/articles> (scroll to the page by Rufina)
Erencia Sefardi: <http://members.aol.com/erensia/erensiasefardi.index.html>

Society for Crypto Judaic Studies

Articles from Ha Lapid may not be reprinted without permission

**PRESIDENT and
 SECRETARY/TREASURER**
 Gloria Trujillo
 2000 Avenida Cesar Chavez
 Monterey Park, CA 91754
gtruj@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT
 Dr. Stanley Hordes
 1375 Santa Rosa Dr.
 Santa Fe, NM 87501
smhordes@aol.com

FOUNDING PRESIDENT
 Rabbi Jolshua Stampfer
 2900 SW Peaceful Ln
 Portland, OR 97201
i3js@odin.cc.pdx.edu

EDITOR, HA LAPID
 Arthur Benveniste
 333 Washington Blvd. #336
 Marind del Rey, CA 90292
benven@earthlink.net
<http://home.earthlink.net/~benven>

FOUNDING EDITOR
 Maurice "Bob" Hattem
 4821 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #
 7
 Culver City, CA 90230
bhat@mediaone.net

DIEGO LOPEZ

Continued from page 1

Some sought to take advantage of the profitable cacao trade with Maracaibo and Caracas, while certain others maintained commercial ties with Peru. Many crypto-Jewish merchants dealt with sources and markets within New Spain, including the remote area of the far northern frontier.

Mexican crypto-Jews were able to practice their faith secretly in an atmosphere of relative toleration, except for two periods when the Holy Office of the Inquisition embarked on vigorous campaigns against the conversos. The first of these, which lasted from 1589 to 1601, was initiated in response to the activities of one Luis de Carvajal, a Portuguese New Christian, and nephew of the Governor of Nuevo Leon. The younger Carvajal (el mozo, as he was called) had begun to proselytize within the converso community of Mexico, urging the people to embrace their old faith. The Inquisition came down hard on Carvajal, his family and associates. Several dozen were arrested and tried by the Holy Office. Most were "reconciled" to the Church, suffering penalties of partial confiscation of their estates and loss of status. A handful were burned at the stake, including Carvajal himself.

The following excerpt from the 1595 trial of Diego Lopez for the crime of judaizante provides a glimpse into the formal procedure carried out by the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Typically, the defendants would be called before an audience with the inquisitors and be asked to give their occupation, genealogy, and a brief biographical sketch. During the course of this and succeeding audiences, they would be urged to confess their crimes and provide the names of others engaged in observing the "Dead Law of Moses."

Contrary to popular belief, torture was used sparingly and selectively to gain confessions. Several months after their initial audience with the inquisitors, defendants were presented with a formal accusation, itemizing point by point the crimes with which they had been charged. After consultation with a court-appointed defense attorney, they responded to these charges. They were then presented with transcripts of the testimony of anonymous witnesses and were offered the opportunity to respond. After a prolonged period, the inquisitors met, agreed upon the verdict, and pronounced sentence.

Throughout this lengthy procedure, often lasting five to seven years, the Inquisition staff was careful to record every stage of the process. The resulting documentation provides historians with valuable archival material, analogous to today's transcripts by court reporters, with which to analyze the social, economic, and cultural history of the peoples of New Spain.

THE TRIAL

Excerpts from the Trial of Diego Lopez, charged by the Holy Office of the Inquisition of Mexico with the crime of observing the Law of Moses.

(Hispanic Documents Collection, Document No. 6,
Folios 23 R & V.)

First Audience

In the City of Mexico, Friday, the third day of March 1595, presiding in the afternoon audience, Inquisitor Lic. Don Alonso de Peralta, it was ordered for a man to be brought from the secret jail of this Holy Office. Once he was present he swore in the proper legal manner to tell the truth, in this audience as well as in all future audiences that may occur until

the closing of the case, and to keep confidential all that he might see and understand regarding his case.

He was asked his name, place of birth, age, occupation, and the circumstances surrounding his imprisonment. He said that his name is, Diego Lopez, born in San Vicente Davera, in Portugal, twenty-one years of age, and his occupation is peddling goods through the streets; and last Saturday he was taken prisoner and placed in one of the secret jails of this Holy Office; and he declares his genealogy to be as follows:

PARENTS

Genealogy CSimon Mndez, whose place of birth he does not know, other than the fact that he is a vecino [resident] of the said Villa of San Vicente Davera, and that he is a tanner; and Leonor Lopez, his wife, born and a vecina of the said Villa of San Vicente Davera, whose occupation is sewing and embroidering; and it is his understanding that they are alive.

PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS

CDiego Mndez, whose place of birth he does not know, nor has he ever known, other than the fact that he has heard that he had been a shoemaker, now deceased; with regard to his grandmother, he does not know her name, nor where she was born, only that she is deceased.

MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS

Calvaro Lopez, vecino and native of the said San Vincente Davera, and according to what he had heard from his mother, he was a tailor, and Beatriz Alvarez, his wife, native of the said Villa; deceased.

AUNTS AND UNCLES ON FATHER'S SIDE

Antonio Mndez, who is either a youth or a bachelor; he does not know his occupation, nor his age, nor his place of residence, nor if he had any children; he understands from his father that his uncle is deceased; he does not know if his father had any other brothers or sisters.

AUNTS AND UNCLES ON MOTHER'S SIDE

CSimon Lopez, merchant who lives in Sevilla, married to Clara Rodriguez; he does not know his age, only that he is a merchant, and he understands that he has three or four children, that one daughter, ten years old, is named Beatriz; with regard to the others, he does not know their names, but understands that they are all alive.

CLeonardo NdZez, married in the said Villa of San Vicente; he does not know the name of his wife, nor his age, nor where he is at present; later he said that he remembered that he lives in Montilla, that he has four children, two of whom are named Alvaro Lopez, and the other Beatriz; he does not know their ages, and understands that they are all alive.

Folio 27 R:

He said that he had reexamined his memory and remembered that when he arrived in this City of Mexico of Mexico of [New?] Spain, he lived in the house of the said Manuel DRaz three or four months, as he had stated. During this time he witnessed the said Manuel DRaz and his wife, Ysabel Rodriguez, put out clean bed linen on Saturday afternoons and Friday nights. Later he said that some Friday nights they would put on clean shirts. They would observe

the Sabbath, since he observed that Ysabel RodrRguez would not perform any work on Saturdays, saying that she was indisposed and was not able to work. He also observed that on some Saturdays she would wear her nicer clothes; when she did not do so, she would stay in bed, saying, as he had already explained, that she was indisposed.

And the said Manuel DRaz went to his store on Saturdays, as on other days, and did not change his clothes, because this witness always saw him carry extra clothes; and on the said Saturdays he put on a clean shirt and neckcloth, in contrast to the rest of the week.

And when he would eat fowl, he would order a slave (whose name he could not remember) to cut off its head.

And when they had the opportunity, Manuel DRaz and Ysabel RodrRguez would with their own hands slit the jugular vein and drain the blood from the meat that they planned to eat; other times they ordered their slave to do so, telling him that the meat stayed fresher longer butchered in this manner.

He was asked if he had any other observations regarding the said Manuel DRaz and Ysabel RodrRguez, his wife.

He responded that he had not seen them doing anything else, because he had spent little time in their house.

He was asked what he suspected with regard to the said Manuel DRaz and Ysabel RodrRguez .

* Diego López ultimately was found guilty by the inquisitors, appeared in the Auto da Fe of 1596, reconciled to the Catholic Church, and was sentenced to three years in prison.

Translated from Document No. 6 of the Hispanic Collection

THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE ,
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Supported by a grant from:
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

2nd ANNUAL LOS ANGELES SEPHARDIC FILM FESTIVAL -

October 28 to November 8, 1998. Opening with a reception at the Director's Gulid and closing with a seminar in film making.

Santangel '98:

The Life and Times of Luis De Santangel

Dominican University near Chicago on August 23-26, 1998

CRYPTO- JEWS: THE IÑIGUEZ DE VIEDMA CASE.

By José C. Iñiguez.

ANTECEDENTS.

For those Jews choosing La Nueva España to Old Spain's intolerance, as for their descendants, life- and this is an understatement-was not easy. The self imposed isolation with which many of them avoided the long arms, the big ears and the wide eyes of the inquisition --*las paredes oyen*-- was usually accompanied by the geographical isolation of most of the new settlements. This state of affairs was of course exacerbated by the intermittent state of unrest -- political, economical, religious -- with its concomitant cauda of insecurity, intolerance and persecution that has characterized those lands since the early 1500's.

It is thus not hard to imagine the effect that being far from one another; the absence of communal places of worship; the lacking of formal religious instruction for their offspring and a life of continuously dodging hardships and obstacles would have in the manifestations of their Judaism. For some it was reduced to a thin but resistant thread constituted, among other elements, by remnants of the language of their elders, their patronymics, certain elements of diet: no pork, no milk with meat; circumcision, all kept alive by the certainty that the day would come for them and they to flourish again. A vivid example of this is provided by the Jews of Venta Prieta, Hidalgo, Mexico, whose ancestors, in the words of author Alison Gardy¹ "accomplished the impossible -- they remained Jews throughout the inquisition, even though they had no synagogue and no rabbi to instruct them during the long centuries of hiding". For some others however, the Jewish distinctiveness of the elements above referred was forgotten. Many of them became simple peculiarities in the behavior of the elders. Some were maintained out of respect for them; others, through mechanical repetition were transformed into "family customs" In any case they became substrata to the behavior, customs, rites and celebrations of other faiths. These Jews were so successful in guarding their secret that at the end most of them were not able to remember that there was a secret, much less what the secret was about. However, *no hay mal que dure cien años*. The increased attention that the matter has received lately has produced an increased sense of awareness. Some are looking back to what they thought were oddities and have found meaning in them, others are talking to their elders in search for information, still others are turning to genealogical searches. As can be easily understood, the ways to unearth the secret, to dig under the dust of time and forgetfulness are many. They are also personal, as is the joy of walking through them and the exhilaration of getting there, if, of course, there is a there.

THE MEANING OF TRUTH AS PRELUDE.

In a philosophical sense, knowing the truth about something means having captured its essence; means nothing about it is alien anymore; the whole of it, its beginning, its becoming, its present, its past, its future and its ending is no longer out of bounds. In a sense it has been encircled by you, incorporated into you, and in this happening you have become one with that something The fact of knowing the truth i.e. the alpha, the omega, and all in between of everything there has been, everything there is and everything there will be encompass thus within it, i.e. subsumes in it, the qualities of omniscience, of omnipresence, of absoluteness. Thus understood, the truth is an attribute of G-D.

On this same matter Raynaud de la Ferriere tells us that [2]
"En la Santa Qabbalah, a la verdad se le denomina con la palabra hebrea EMETH, compuesta de la primera y de la última letra del alfabeto hebreo Aleph y Tau, reunidas entre si por la letra media mem. . . En verdad para transformar dos en uno, hay que llenar el vacío entre los dos, con un tercero que toque a uno y otro... El compás, cuyas dos piernas se unen en la cúspide es un magnífico símbolo... por que una punta representa el Aleph y la otra el Tau, religados en la mitad por la cabeza del compas que aqui simboliza el mem. Entonces el círculo que trazará el instrumento, es un símbolo perfecto del universo creado: Es el mundo manifestado La palabra EMETH es de esa manera, un emblema perfecto del G:A:D:U:."

Let me now try to translate into English, Raynaud's disgression above transcribed... In the Qabbalah, truth is represented by the Hebrew word EMETH, constituted by the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet, aleph and tau, joined together by the middle letter *mem*. Truthfully, in order to transform two into one, the void between them must be occupied by a third one that touches one and the other. The compass, whose two legs are joined at the top is a magnificent symbol.... because one of its legs represents the aleph, the other one the tau, and the head of the compass, joining the legs together, symbolizes the *mem*

In being the circle traced by such a compass a perfect symbol of the created universe, it then follows that the word EMETH is thus a perfect emblem of G-D*

A CRYPTOGRAM AND ITS DECIPHERING.

Internet surfing is an important part of the information collection effort. It was in one of those occasions that a reference to the name Benavides came under an Iñiguez search. The web address to such a reference was <http://www.net64.es/heraldicaldatos/Benavide.HTM>. Beside the coat of arms for the Benavides name, the above referred web page advanced the following information on the origin of such a name. It read "*El origen del apellido Benavides partió de Don Rodrigo Iñiguez de Viedma, señor de los Molineros y de la casa de Ares, cerca de Alcalá del Río, alcaide de los Alcázares de Jaén donde llevó a cabo grandes hazañas contra los moros y fué hijo de Iñigo Iñiguez de Biedma, caballero gallego que acudió a la conquista de Andalucía y de allí la procedencia de Galicia del linaje.*"

The above transcribed quote states that founder of the Benavides lineage was Don Rodrigo Iñiguez de Viedma, Lord of the Molineros and of the House of Ares, near Alcalá del Río, Alcaide of the Alcázares of Jaén, where he successfully participated in the fights against the moors. He was the son of Don Iñigo Iñiguez de Biedma, a caballero from Galicia that took part in the reconquista of Andalucía.

This information was news to me. Up to that moment I had no idea of a possible connection between the Iñiguez and the Benavides names. This, on the context of my search, looked promising enough for me to look deeper into the matter. And that I did. The search however, beyond bits and pieces here and there, proved fruitless. No reason or explanation for such a tie was found. The connection at that point seemed arbitrary and since no more sources of information were available to me at that time, I took the decision to call the inquiry quits, at least for the time being. It was precisely the day when I was filing away the information gathered on the Iñiguez-Benavides connection that, in looking at the printout of the web page above referred, it all made sense. Once written in a piece of paper it looked beautiful. Those Iñiguez were indeed cryptographers. Trough letter transposition they had left a message that, as far as I know, has remained undeciphered through centuries and with it the true nature of the connection between the apparently unrelated names Iñiguez and Benavides. Regarding about Crypto-Jews; Let us see: If the letters of the "de Viedma" name are rearranged accordingly we will get... guess what? "eme David", so Don Rodrigo Iñiguez de Viedma becomes Don Rodrigo Iñiguez *eme* David. Now, while *eme* is the Spanish word for the letter "m"; *mem* is the Hebrew word for the same letter "m". *eme* and *mem* are thus one and the same. If with this as base we write Don Rodrigo Iñiguez *mem* David we will be getting at the bottom of the matter. All we need to do to get there is to realize that the *mem* here, as in the EMETH word before discussed, is definitely establishing a particular relationship between the Iñiguez and Benavides names. It is uniting them, fusing them, making one out of the two in such a way that the message we get is that Iñiguez is David and vice versa. This of course must be interpreted as Iñiguez being one with David, i.e. one of the seed of David, one of the people of David, one of the chosen people, one of the Hebrew people. If He was David, his descendants were then Ben David, or Benavides, and that's it.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn to my servant David: 'your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations' ". Psalm 89/3,4.

EPILOGUE.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!. Psalm 133/1.

NOTES.

*In order to emphasize its role in getting to the conclusion herein advanced, the word *mem* has been here italicized.

**You may have noticed that in the quote transcribed from the web page above referred, while Don Rodrigo is "Iñiguez de Viedma", Don Iñigo is "Iñiguez de Biedma". It should be interesting to note on this regard that even at the present time in certain regions of northern Spain such as the Basque country, the prevalent spelling is Dabi and not David. It is also interesting to note that the "b" is associated to the name of Don Iñigo, from Galicia, northern Spain, while the "v" is to the name of Don Rodrigo from Andalucía, southern Spain. The change appears thus tied to what I suppose was in those times the prevalent spelling of the name David in the region of origin of each of those caballeros. Finally, that Don Rodrigo and not Don Iñigo is to be taken as the founder of the lineage under consideration stems from the fact that such a lineage is Benavides and not Benabides.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Alison Gardy, "Emerging from the Shadows A Visit to an Old Jewish Community.", NACLA Report on the Americas, Vol. XXVII, No.2, Sept/Oct 1993, p.10-13.
2. Serge Raynaud de la Ferrière, "El Libro Negro de la Franemasonería.", Editorial Diana, Mexico, D.F., 1ª. Edición, 1973, p.111.

MOVIE REVIEW

THE GOVERNESS

Written and Directed by Sandra Goldbacher

Starring Minnie Driver

A Sephardic girl in mid-19th Century Brittan seeks work in order to support herself and her family. Because of antisemitism, she must masquerade as a Christian. She takes the name Mary Blackchurch and finds employment as a governess with a wealthy and eccentric family in the north.

Minnie Driver (No, that is not a small golf club) powerfully portrays the Jewess, Rosina da Silva. She tutors the daughter of the Cavendish family and eventually she is working with Mr. Cavendish on his photographic experiments. In time an illicit love affair develops.

Sandra Goldbacher's script and direction beautifully show the dilemma of the Jewish girl secretly following her Jewish rites while outwardly pretending to be Christian. The film is accented with a sound track of traditional Sephardic romansas.

The Los Angeles Sephardic Film Festival committee was treated to a private studio preview of The Governess. We hope to include it in next year's festival.

A WEEK OF MAJOR SEPHARDIC EVENTS: JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE, 40 YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS: SEPHARDIC ARTS FESTIVAL

New Works of Contemporary Sephardic and Mizrahi Artists

During the week of July 12th to July 19th, Los Angeles was the locale of several important events highlighting Sephardic history and culture.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Los Angeles hosted **Hollywood Chai**, the 18th Annual Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Century City. Over 600 people, from all over North America attended. In past years the seminars focused overwhelmingly on the Jews of Eastern Europe. This year an attempt was made to present more about Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews: Harriet Rochlin (a member of SCJS) presented *From Pariah to Partner: Pioneer Jews of the West*; Professor Sanford J. Shaw of UCLA spoke on the *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*; Debbie Adhami gave a paper on the *Center for Iranian Jewish Oral History*; Victor Oziar and Abraham Chamou gave a presentation on the *Jews of Iraq*; Arthur Benveniste (editor of Halapid) spoke on the *Crypto Jews of the Southwest* and Victor Perera (also a member of SCJS) spoke On Being Sephardic and read from his book *The Cross and The Pear Tree: A Sephardic Journey*. Both Rochlin's and Perera's papers made reference to Crypto Jews.

Ivri-NASAWI was also active during the same week. On Tuesday July 14th a reception opened the week long exhibit: **40 Years In The Wilderness, New Works of Contemporary Sephardic and Mizrahi Artists** at the Skirball Museum. Featured were the mixed media of Micaela Amato (also a SCJS member), sculptures of Claudie Toussier Oliver and paintings of Avi Binur, Desy Saran-Gerard, Lidia Shaddow, Ettie Sharabi-Lerner, Nessim Sibony and Ginnette Mizrahi.

On Thursday, July 16, the Art Exhibit continued and included an evening of readings and music. Victor Perera again read from his autobiographical works including a new memoir. Kathleen Alcalá, who is of Mexican American Crypto Jewish ancestry read from her new novel, *The Flower in the Skull* and Cuban born, Ruth Behar, a prize-winning poet, who is also

known for her groundbreaking work in humanistic anthropology, read some of her new poems. Each reader was introduced by Spanish Guitarist Dan Zeff. The readings ended with Ziff accompanying as the audience sang Abraham Avinu.

Later, the attendees were treated to a concert by vocalist, Bonita Jaros with John Bilezikjian's Andalusia Ensemble. Operatic Bonita Jaros sang Sephardic songs most of which could be traced back to Jewish Spain. John Bilezikjian is world renowned for his virtuosity on the oud, an ancient Persian instrument widely played around the Mediterranean.

Sunday July 19th saw the Sephardic Arts Festival at the Skirball. Several thousand people saw the art exhibit, tasted Sephardic specialties baked by Joe Benon, strolled and shopped in a Sephardic Bazaar and listened to more Sephardic music. The music began with Mezzo-soprano Isabelle Ganz, again accompanied by John Bilezikjian. Miss Ganz is the founder of the Alhambra group which specialized in the music of the Sephardic Jews. Isabelle Ganz, Bonita Jaros and John Bilezikjian have all performed at conferences of the SCJS. Later that afternoon Stephani Valadez and her group performed more Ladino songs. And the day ended with the music of the eight-piece Middle Eastern ensemble Za=atar who performed music of Israel and the Yemenite Jews. Many people, inspired by the music, danced in the aisles.

It was a spectacular week.

GENEALOGY

Art Benveniste

The internet is evolving into a major resource for genealogical research. Postings are made regularly to the Anusim list (<http://members.tripod.com/~anak/anusim.htm>) asking for information on family names. Through our SCJS website (<http://sephardconnect.com/halapid/halapid.htm>) several people have contacted me directly, asking if I could identify certain names as being of CryptoJewish background. I am no expert so I thought it would be a good idea to post the inquiries in Halapid. Perhaps some of our readers would be able to help.

If anyone has information on the following names, please contact me and I will forward the information to the interested parties.

Aben Trigo who changed the surname to names such as **Trigueros, Trigueiro, Trigo and Trigano Lopez Cardozo or Lopes Cardoso**

VICTOR PERERA

As we were going to press, Halapid was informed that Victor Perera had suffered a stroke. He is in a hospital in Berkeley, California.

The latest word is that he is in intensive care in stable condition. ed.

Del Valle or: Del Valle/Del Valhe/Delvaille, Salom del Valle, Do Valle/Do Vale, Del Valle Saldana, Arias del Valle, Do Valo, and of course in Dutch "**Van Daelen**" **Solis** who possibly was established in Amsterdam and who may have travelled back to Spain.

Torres Albarran