

THE 36th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
THE SOCIETY FOR CRYPTO-JUDAIC STUDIES
VIA ZOOM
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2026



SEPHARDIC AND CRYPTO-JEWS IN THE EARLY SOUTH

ALL SESSIONS VIA ZOOM; please register to receive the link. Eastern Daylight Time given for all sessions, as well as Central, Mountain and Pacific time—all Daylight Time, and time for presenters outside the US. October 25, 2026, is still Daylight Time in most of the U.S. and Canada, but Europe and Israel return to Standard Time earlier that morning. *Please check time in your location carefully.*
Special Thanks: Conference Committee: Corinne Brown, Blanca Carrasco-- SCJS Past President, and Seth Ward.
Zoom Access Manager: **Isaac Nunez**

Session 1 11:00 AM-12:45 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(4 PM Spain, 10AM Central, 9 Mountain Daylight and Mexico City Standard Time, 8 Pacific Daylight Time)

WELCOME (11:00-11:10 Eastern)

Corinne Joy Brown, SCJS VP, Conference Co-Chair

Seth Ward, Program Chair

Isaac Amon, M.C.

OPENING SESSION (11:10 AM-12:50 PM Eastern)

Chair: **Nancy Katz**

Diego Martínez Serrano: Baths and Synagogues: Material Evidence of Crypto-Jewish Life in Colonial Mexico City

Mark A. Schneegurt: Pamphlets and Periodicals Published by A. C. Barros Basto for the Crypto-Jewish Communities of Northern Portugal

César David Ciriano Vela and Magda Moreno Ciriano: The Philosephardic Movement and the Reconnection of the Sephardic and Hispanic Worlds: 1869–2026

David Gonzalez Guajardo: The Invisible Return: Modern Anusim, Microaggressions, and the Barriers to American Jewish Integration

Session 2: 1:00 PM-2:45 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(7 PM Israel, 12 Noon Central, 11 AM Mountain, 10 AM Pacific)

**THE BEN-ZVI RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP:
GLOBAL FIELD INVESTIGATIONS INTO CRYPTO-JEWISH COMMUNITIES**

Chair: **David A. Kunin**

Malka Shabtay: The Ben-Zvi Research Fellowship: Supporting Emerging Scholarship on Crypto-Jewish Communities

Rabbi David A. Kunin: From Kisar to Ambon: Converso Traditions and Emerging Jewish Identity in Indonesia's Maluku Islands

Gianfranco Ferlisi, Traces of Judaism in Post Expulsion Sicily

Gabriel Gualán Maldonado: Hidden Heritage in Southern Ecuador: The Crypto-Jewish Legacy of Loja

Juliana de Albuquerque: Shifting perceptions of Jewish identity within groups of the Brazilian population with ties to the Jewish people

Session 3: 2:45-3:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(1:45 PM Central, 12:45 PM Mountain, 11:45 AM Pacific)

Lunch / Coffee Break / Open-mic Zoom conversations in breakout rooms.

Open Mic Coordinators: TBD

Come and go as your schedule allows; meet and greet your fellow conference-goers. Eat lunch while on zoom. Join a conversation, move between breakout rooms, or have your own conversations. Continue chatting about a presentation; open up a new topic. **Suggested discussion topics:** Crypto-Judaism: Charting our Paths / Critical Conversations in Real Time / Among Ourselves; Furthering Understanding / Emerging Crypto-Jewish Communities / Open Discussions on Past Problems—Present Goals.

Session 4: 3:30 PM-4:45 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(8:30 PM France, 2:30 PM Central, 1:30 PM Mountain, 12:30 PM Pacific)

CRYPTO JEWS (AND THEIR DESCENDANTS) IN THE ATLANTIC AND EARLY SOUTH

Chair: **Debbie Wohl Isard**

Hélène Jawhara Piñer: The Chocolate Diaspora: Sephardic Jews and the Journey of Cacao

Leah Stein: Reading Between the Lines, Speaking into the Silences: Doctor John de Sequeyra and Being Jewish in Eighteenth-Century Virginia

Isaac Amon: From Crypto-Jew to Jewish Pioneer: Dr. Samuel Nunes and the Founding of Jewish Savannah

Session 5: 5:00-6:15 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(4 PM Central, 3 PM Mountain, 2 PM Pacific)

THE STANLEY M. HORDES DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR LECTURE

Opening Words: **Seth Ward**

Introduction and Contextualization: **Rabbi Merrill Shapiro**

Roger Martínez-Dávila, Univ. of Colorado, Colorado Springs: Crypto-Judaism: The Southern Atlantic Jewish Experience

Session 6: 6:45-8:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(8:45 pm Brasilia Time, 6:45 PM Central, 5:45 PM Mountain, 4:45 PM Pacific)

KEEPING JUDAISM ALIVE IN CONCEALMENT

Chair: **Daria Berman**

Ricardo Villarreal De Silva: A Rooster's Double Meaning: Symbolism, Persistence, and Converso Concealment (more on an artifact published in *HaLapid*)

Dr. Cicero Adson de Souza Ferraz and Iam Marcos dos Santos: Crypto-Jewish Presence in the Pajeú and Seridó Hinterlands: A Comparative Analysis of Incidence, Family Signatures, and Genetic Heritage with Emphasis on Floresta do Navio, Betânia, Itacuruba, Carnaubeira da Penha, Carqueja, and Airi

Manashe Khaimov: Chala Jews: The Untold Story of the Jews of Bukhara Who Converted Publicly and Kept Judaism Alive at Home

Joseph S. Berríos: Hidden in Plain Sight: Jíbaro Identity as Crypto-Jewish Concealment Strategy in Puerto Rico

Session 7: 8:45-10:15 PM Eastern Daylight Time

(7:45 PM Central, 6:45 PM Mountain, 5:45 PM Pacific)

Brief business meeting conducted by **Elisheva Irma Diaz** President of the Society. All are welcome.

THE STRATTON-PETIT SOSIN ADDRESS TO ADVANCE SCHOLARSHIP IN THE CRYPTO-JUDAIC ARTS

Introduction: **Corinne Brown**

Marcia Fine: Crypto-Jews as Inspiration in Historical Fiction: Understanding How the Trauma of Duality Shaped Jewish Life

Moderator: **Corinne Brown**

The Last Word: M.C., **Isaac Amon.**

SEE YOU IN NEW ORLEANS!

The 2027 Conference of our Society is being planned for New Orleans. The tentative theme for the 2027 conference is “Exploring Crypto Jewish Roles in Colonial America”—broadly defined. We will especially welcome research and personal narratives from the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, as well as experiences throughout the colonial Americas, and of course all research proposals, personal narratives, issues and practical workshops.