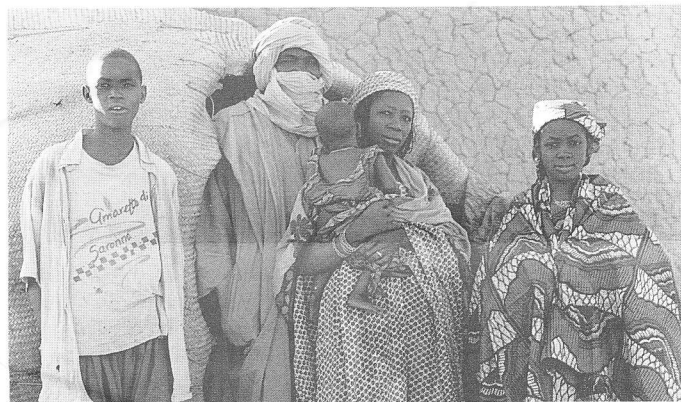


## The Renewal of Jewish Identity in Timbuktu

By Karen Primack  
Kulanu Syndication Service

When my husband and I lived in the West African country of Niger in 1990-92, we traveled often in neighboring Mali. We got to some pretty remote places there -- Segou, Djenné, Mopti, villages around Bandiagara -- but never to the legendary Timbuktu. We were told it was a dangerous and arduous journey, and "nothing" was there.

But now there's something of interest to visit in Timbuktu -- a community of 1000 "Jews" who have recently revealed their identity.



*Jewish family in Tangasane, Mali. (Photo by Joshua Klein)*

Egyptian Jews may have settled in the northern part of Mali as early as biblical times, and it is known that in the late seventh century, when the Arabs invaded North Africa, one of the chiefs of the Berber warriors resisting that invasion was a heroic princess of Jewish origin known as Kahina (Dumya). In the eighth century, the Rhadamites (those multi-lingual Jewish traders who traversed the known world by land and sea, including crossing the Sahara) settled in Timbuktu and its environs.

And, as we know, in the 14th century many Moors and Jews, fleeing persecution in Spain, migrated south to the Timbuktu area, at that time part of the Songhai empire. Among them was the Kehath (Ka'ti) family, descended from Ismael Jan Kot Al-yahudi of Scheida, Morocco. Sons of this prominent family founded three villages that still exist near Timbuktu -- Kirshamba, Haybomo, and Kongougara.

In 1492, Askia Muhammed came to power in the previously tolerant region of Timbuktu and decreed that Jews must convert to Islam or leave; Judaism became illegal in Mali, as it did in Catholic Spain that same year. As the historian Leo Africanus wrote in 1526: "The king (Askia) is a declared enemy of the Jews. He will not allow any to live in the city. If he hears it said that a Berber merchant frequents them or does business with them, he confiscates his goods." The Kehath family converted with the rest of the non-Muslim population. (cont., p. 11)

## Elizabethan Marranos Unmasked

By Charles Meyers  
Kulanu Syndication Service

*(The author is a law librarian in Florida.)*

In 1588, Mrs. Mary May sued Dr. Hector Nunes, a Portuguese physician and merchant, in the Court of Queen's Bench for debt. It seems that Mrs. May's late husband, Richard, had received insufficient profit for his cloth investment aboard the ill-fated voyage of the "Red Lion of London" to Lisbon in December of 1586. The case was not decided until June 14, 1599, in the Court of Chancery, with Mrs. May prevailing. The case presents some intriguing information concerning Portuguese "Marrano" religious practices in Elizabethan England.

When Richard May and other London merchants joined together to ship English goods aboard the "Red Lion of London," a vessel owned by a London commercial syndicate, they were aware that Dr. Nunes had a safe conduct pass and a commercial license from the Marques Santa Cruz, a powerful member of the Spanish government. Dr. Nunes was able to obtain the license despite the Spanish ban against the importation of English goods into Lisbon. The vessel arrived safely in Lisbon but the cargo and vessel were seized by Portuguese authorities, apparently due to English ownership of the cargo. Or was it because the Nunes family were Jews?

Mary May's suit depended upon the testimony of William Wilson, a former Christian servant of Bernal Lewes, a brother-in-law of Nunes. Wilson told the court that it "was well known in Lisbon that Lewes, his sisters and kin in London lived in Jewish ceremonies." It is quite clear that his statement led to the following Interrogatory: "Was the arrest of Lewes due to Judaisme or some other heresies held by Lewes and (Peter) Freire (cont., p. 7)

## Doctors Needed in Uganda

Kulanu is seeking physicians and other health care professionals to visit the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda to assess medical needs of the community and for possible treatment of epilepsy, eye diseases, skin diseases, nutritional problems, and other medical problems. It will be a rewarding humanitarian and religious experience!

Kulanu cannot furnish financial assistance, but can help with logistics and contacts. For information contact Aron Primack, MD, at 301-565-3094 or [primack@aol.com](mailto:primack@aol.com).

## REPORT FROM AVICHAIL

# Filming, Teaching and Praying in India

By Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail

There is increasing interest in the Ten Tribes, and the interest is expressed more and more in films. Especially of interest are the Bnei Menashe of Mizoram and Manipur in northeast India. The subject appears in documentaries, news, and interviews, here in Israel and in other countries.

A company by the name of Associated Producers Inc. of Canada, headed by Simcha Jacobovici, received initial financial backing to produce a documentary on the subject. This company produced many excellent movies, winning an Emmy among its many awards. Among its important productions are movies about the Ethiopians and about the descendants of the Marranos of Spain.

After studying my book *The Tribes of Israel*, and after an initial meeting some years ago, I was invited to Canada for a week during Chanukah to participate in planning a film on the Bnei Menashe. I was to advise on the theme of the movie and also participate in the film. The company agreed to pay my full travel expenses, plus \$3000 for the building of a synagogue in Manipur and two fax machines for the Bnei Menashe in Mizoram and Manipur.

In February, about a month before my departure, I sent Gamliel Gangte and his wife to be Amishav representatives in northeast India and to manage "Amishav House". We rented this three-story House from Kaimang Vaiphei and renovated it to include a synagogue, library, classrooms, dormitory and offices. Mr. Vaiphei came on *aliyah* about three months ago with a group of 24, including Gideon Rey, the spiritual leader in Mizoram, and Shimon Gin, leader in Manipur. It was therefore very important to send Mr. Gangte to take over the leadership of the Bnei Menashe, since he was also a former leader of the group in Manipur.

Combining my activities with the filming of Jewish life of the Bnei Menashe was very successful, and being there on Purim only added to the success of the filming.

Our first stop was Manipur. We arrived from Calcutta on March 20 and were received joyfully at the airport in Imphal by a crowd, many of whom were from outside Imphal. We were driven to the Kuki Inn and were greeted by a crowd of hundreds, including women and children who traveled by bus from afar in order to be with us. There were speeches, singing, dancing and special performances, and exciting meetings with parents and relatives of Menashe who live in Israel.

Manipur is not a safe place, and things are deteriorating. More than eight Menashe have been killed by the Naga people. The city of Imphal and the roads around it are filled with police and army, but we celebrated a joyous Purim with hundreds of Bnei Menashe who participated in the prayers and the reading of the Megilla, and especially in the Purim feast and the dancing, which took place in the large Kuki Inn. The Canadians almost forgot their work and participated in the joy and dancing with a feeling of love and brotherhood toward their lost brethren.

For me, the days spent in Imphal were filled with lectures and lessons. Many hours were spent every day, and especially on Shabbat, trying to quench the thirst of the people for Judaism. Some lectures lasted three hours, and the people didn't want them to stop. We talked about building a *mikveh* in the new settlement of Or Zion near the city of Churachandpur. Mr. Thangzom, manager of tourism in the state of Manipur, whose daughter Ruth is now studying in a yeshiva in Jerusalem, donated a plot of his land to be used for a new building for Bnei Menashe, possibly for a new seminary.

On March 23 we flew to Silchar in Assam in order to reach Mizoram. Here we also had a joyous reception at the airport, with placards and singing, and we started on a seven-

hour car ride to Aizawl, the capital. We stopped on the way in the towns of Vairenta, Kolosiv and Sipir to pray, film, and exchange greetings. We reached Aizawl at night and found relatives of Israeli Menashe waiting for us at the hotel.

In Mizoram, in addition to prayers, lectures, and lessons, we also had an important meeting with the prime minister of the state of Mizoram, Lal-Thanhawla, who promised a plot of land to be used for the building of a synagogue in Vairenta. We also spoke about the possibility of sending foreign teachers who could stay for long periods of time in the community.

We also had an interesting meeting with leading persons of the Christian community, who wanted to talk about the Bnei Menashe for the purpose of clarifying their own past history. Daniel Menash, a young Israeli soldier who received special leave in order to visit his family, represented the Israeli Bnei Menashe honorably; he was also my interpreter in the lectures and lessons.

After a very intensive and fulfilling week, I returned to Israel, while the filmmakers went on to Uzbekistan.

(Editor's note: Tax-deductible contributions to Kulanu can be earmarked to support Rabbi Avichail's work.)

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# Shabbat in Rusape, Zimbabwe

By Mark Ellyne

**Kulanu Syndication Service**

*(The author travels frequently from Washington to Zimbabwe for the International Monetary Fund.)*

I set off from my Harare hotel early in the morning to seek out a "lost tribe" of Israel. I knew I had at least two hours of traveling to my destination. After getting lost in torrential rain, I arrived at the outskirts of Rusape and stumbled across the small building with the Star of David on it. I was welcomed by a man wearing a kippa and a Star of David around his neck. He escorted me into the sanctuary, where a seat was waiting for me.

A congregation of some 125 people, dressed in their best clothes, were listening attentively to a speaker who was reading a passage from the Bible and discussing its meaning. They were talking alternately in Shona, the local language, and English. After a time, the analysis of the biblical passage ended and the rabbi on the pulpit welcomed me and recessed the congregation for a short break. They had begun their morning prayers at 9 a.m. and it was now 11 o'clock.

Rabbi Ambros Makuwaza greeted me warmly; he had been expecting me and was worried because I was so late. We talked briefly and he told me that the next part of the service would be the Torah reading, followed by the communal lunch and an afternoon service.

I settled down for the next service, which started off with the most incredible singing I have ever heard. During the course of the late morning, the choir of about 30 young people sang many songs in Shona, English and Hebrew -- Hinei Ma Tov was extraordinary. The singing in multiple harmonies, with everyone rhythmically marching and swaying, was hypnotic. One song lasted about 15 minutes while the choir marched around the chapel. For a while I felt more like I was in a Baptist church than a synagogue.

At a certain point, all the men took out their tallitot, said the blessing, and put them on. To follow the service, I was handed a thin, worn-out prayer book that covered Shabbat, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Passover. I was able to follow the service, which was primarily in English, but as far as I could tell, this was a unique Shabbat service, unlike any I had experienced in Conservative or Reform synagogues. It contained alternate leader passages and congregation responses and a few traditional Jewish prayers such as the Mourners' Kaddish.

After some time, Rabbi Makuwaza rose to give his sermon. Despite his 72 years, he was a powerful speaker. His voice rose and fell rhythmically with resonance. He spoke in Shona, but one of the elders translated everything publicly into English -- probably for my benefit.

He began by reminding the congregation that they were all Jews, not Christians. He explained to them that the Bible said that

Jews had traveled "beyond the rivers of Ethiopia," and the congregants were part of those people. He explained that the totems of their forefathers connected them to the various tribes of Israel (he was a Levite). He stressed that no one can deny them their right to be Jewish; his father raised him as a Jew and he will continue in that tradition. He reminded his congregation that God commanded the Jews not to eat pork and other specific animals to be protected from certain ailments so they would remain strong. For that reason, His people followed those traditional dietary laws.

Holding a shofar in his hand, he emphasized that they all must fight for their Jewish identity in Africa and in the world. Long ago, God had punished the Jews because they had turned away from Him; however, He will return to His chosen people as they follow His commandments. He explained that God speaks to His people through their leaders, particularly the rabbi and elders, just as He spoke to them in biblical days through Moses, Joshua and other prophets. The congregation was entranced as the rabbi spoke, and one could hear grunts of approval or whispers of "Amen" throughout his sermon.

At last, Rabbi Makuwaza asked that anyone wanting to become a Jew should come forward and sit in the few chairs placed in the center of the congregation. A man and a woman with her baby came forward and took seats. A short ceremony was read as they were inducted into the congregation, and the singing again began. It was a spiritual experience.

Lastly, I was called on to say a few words to the congregation. I thanked them for having me in their service and explained that I was representing a group called Kulanu that was interested in locating and supporting scattered Jewish communities throughout the world. I told them that their community was no longer unknown and had been in the newspapers in the United States. I explained that I belonged to a congregation called "Machar" in Washington that believed that people are Jews based on their practices and the culture they follow, and not on their color or the language they speak. I said that Jews all over the world have suffered throughout history and therefore must help each other and that I hoped we could help them. I then presented them with several gifts from Kulanu and a T-shirt from Machar. The congregation was very appreciative. When I finished talking, the rabbi told me to walk down the aisle because everyone would want to shake my hand.

During the lunch break that followed, I had more time to talk with individuals and understand what this unusual group was about. Many of the believers were second or third generation Jews, and there were another half dozen attached congregations throughout Zimbabwe, with about 5000 total followers. For them, Judaism is a religious faith, not a culture or race. They not only trace their own heritage back to the tribes of Israel, but believe that all the Bantu people of Africa came from Israel and migrated south around 70 C.E. (Originally, the Bushman had occupied southern Africa and the Bantus later descended from the north.) They follow the traditions and dictates of the "Old Testament". They believe in "the religion of Jesus (a Jew) and not the religion about Jesus," although Jesus is regarded as a rabbi by them. They put less emphasis on the rabbinic or post-biblical social, cultural and ceremonial Jewish traditions that have developed over the ages. Although many questions remain about this group, I guess I would consider them Jews by choice.

Following that Shabbat, I had several other exchanges with some of the Rusape Jews before I left Zimbabwe. They have several important projects under way, including the construction of a new synagogue in Harare. Life is difficult for these poor African Jews, so I was not surprised when they asked me if the American Jewish community might assist them. Such assistance could range from correspondence and advice on holiday traditions to financial support for their projects. Thus, I leave the reader with their parting request.

*(Editor's note: For further information or to arrange a visit, write*





# Second Leadership Conference Planned for Anusim

By Schulamith C. Halevy

Following my encounters with hundreds of *anusim* (Crypto-Jews), I am ready now to organize a second leadership conference for *anusim*, to take place in Jerusalem next year. I hope to have 20-30 participants. Much has moved forward since the first meeting, and potential leaders are far more abundant.

In the upcoming conference I plan to have the members meet several persons from various places (Brazil, Mexico, Spain, US, etc.) at various stages of their return to the community to share their experiences.

I organized the first "Leadership Conference for Descendants of Anusim" in August 1994 in Jerusalem, with the support of the Jewish Agency, the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, Congregation Shearith Israel and the World Sefardi Federation via its Midrash Sefardi Institute in Jerusalem and its director Rabbi Sam Kassir. The group was here for a week, and received lectures from Israel's finest scholars on various aspects of Jewish culture, with an emphasis on Sefardi heritage.

The choice of Jerusalem as the conference site proved to be excellent. The people attending were deeply moved to be back in their ancestral cradle, and the history and special spirit of the place had an overwhelming impact on everyone. And the pool of scholars who are in position to teach the group is unparalleled anywhere in the world.

As I write these lines, groups of *anusim* are forming around the world. Many of these groups have been consulting with me, and with members of the group I organized in Chicago.

The Chicago model is very interesting. A group I organized last August succeeded by December in writing and staging the performance of a biographical play in memory of Luis de Carvajal el Mozo, supported by the Instituto Cervantes and performed at the renowned Newberry Library in Chicago. Two paintings on the subject were also unveiled on that occasion by the brothers Alejandro and Oscar Romero, Chicago Latino artists who acknowledged their connection to Judaism for the first time at this event. They also arranged to have December 8th declared Luis de Carvajal day in Chicago to commemorate and encourage tolerance among peoples. Following the work of these dedicated and inspired people, Chicago will never be the same!

The Chicago group has both public and private aspects, led separately by two different members. This way, people who are ready to move the issue forward are free to forge ahead while people who are still tentatively shaping their identity and investigating their roots can do that in privacy and with the support of someone sensitive to these needs. Leaders need to know how to assist people who are afraid to be public, how to advise people whose families are not in agreement on the subject of their Jewish identity, how to help people find confirmation if that did not come explicitly from family members, how to choose supportive members of the mainstream community, and how to train supportive people in the community.

I already have a location arranged in the Old City of Jerusalem, and accommodations for the men. Meals are mostly covered and I expect I can have a guide volunteer to show the group around Jerusalem. I hope the speakers will agree to appear at no cost again, but hope also that I can at least reimburse them for their expenses this time. I will need financial support in the amount of \$13,600 for travel grants for attendees, sleeping accommodations for 10 women and for travel inside Israel. I plan a trip to Safed and Tiberias, both rich with Sefardi heritage.

Although I promised those attending the first leadership conference that they would enjoy privacy, they expressed interest toward the close of the meeting to meet the press and gave an interview to the *Jerusalem Post*. An article appeared in the Magazine section and had a very positive impact. In the upcoming meeting I expect there will be considerably more coverage, since the shrouds of secrecy are becoming less necessary, especially among the emerging leadership.

I envisioned and carried out the first leadership conference for *anusim*, and feel glad the idea is catching on. I will be happy to share my experience with anyone else embarking on such a project. Contact me at schalevy@cs.huji.ac.il or PO Box 14582, Jerusalem 91145 Israel, tel/fax 972-2-627-3440. (Editor's note: Kulanu will be a supporter of Halevy's second leadership conference for *anusim*. Tax-deductible contributions to Kulanu may be earmarked for this project.)

## Crypto-Jewish Opera Opens in San Diego

By Karen Primack

On March 1, the San Diego Opera presented the world premiere of "The Conquistador", an opera about Don Luis de Carvajal, a Spanish admiral and governor in New Spain (colonial Mexico) from a Converso family during the Inquisition.

The composer is Myron Fink and the librettist Donald Moreland. Fink, who taught composition at Hunter College for a number of years, began the project after reading about the Mexican Inquisition in a library book. They spent about eight years completing the work. The style of the music is described as "narrative opera," in which the orchestra is used as punctuation and accompaniment and the story is given the emphasis. *Los Angeles Times* critic Mark Swed described an "outstanding cast," (there are 14 principal roles and a cast of more than 100) and a work that "keep(s) an audience riveted." Critic Rodney Milnes of the Times Newspapers Limited called the score "expertly crafted, ingeniously orchestrated," but Scott Duncan of the *Orange County Register* found the music "too safe and timid."

In the true 16th century story, Don Luis, who is not at first aware that his family was Jewish, sees his family tortured by the Mexican Inquisition and burned alive. Once a ruthless conquistador, he falls from grace and dies in prison after reclaiming his ancient faith.

The opening-night audience included descendants of Don Luis. As writer Scott Duncan put it: "Now living in Arizona, Catalina Carvajal and other family members heard of San Diego's opera, bought their tickets and showed up to watch their family's saga unfold. This doesn't happen with 'La Boheme.'"

The opera runs for three and one-half hours. Journalist Mark Benoit describes the \$1.2 million production as "a powerful history lesson."

A photo exhibit at the San Diego Museum of Man was held in conjunction with the opera. It featured the work of Cary Herz, a photo correspondent for *The New York Times*, who for nine years photographed tombstones with hidden Jewish symbolism in the American Southwest. The exhibit also featured replicas of trial documents of Carvajal family members tortured and burned at the stake during the Mexican Inquisition.



## SISTER SYNAGOGUES

An historic event is taking place that will link the vast country of Brazil with tiny Sharon, Pennsylvania. Brazil-born Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn, the spiritual leader at Temple Beth Israel in Sharon, is helping Crypto-Jews in his homeland to establish their own synagogue. (Crypto-Jews, or Marranos, are the descendants of those Iberian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity in the 14th-16th centuries and who, although maintaining an outward Christian identity, secretly kept alive Jewish traditions.)

The unaffiliated "Sinagoga Brasileira Kulanu Israel" in Sao Paulo will reach out to welcome back the Marranos who have not been able to openly practice Judaism as welcome participants since the time of the Inquisition.

In a gesture of solidarity and support, Temple Beth Israel has formally voted to adopt this new synagogue as its sister synagogue. This will entail a penpal program for religious school students, exchanges of ideas, rabbinical advice via the Internet, synchronized celebration of religious ceremonies, and mainly letting this fledgling Brazilian synagogue know that it is not alone.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time this kind of sister synagogue relationship is taking place between a mainstream synagogue and a Crypto-Jewish community.

Kulanu would like to encourage Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, and independent synagogues and havurot to enter into a similar relationship with Sinagoga Brasileira Kulanu Israel in the name of solidarity.

For more information contact: Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn at Temple Beth Israel, 840 Highland Rd., Sharon, PA 161416, tel. (412) 346 4754 Fax (412) 981 4424 or e-mail: JacquesC@pgh.net. Or contact Helio Cordeiro in Sao Paulo by e-mail at CORDEIRO@STBNET.COM.BR/HPF/CORDEIRO.

## Striving for Sexual Equality in Uganda -- And Winning!

*By Matthew Meyer*

Some wonderful news has come our way concerning the educational progress of Abayudaya girls. The Abayudaya director of educational studies, Uriah Katula, wrote me in mid-March, "I'm happy to report to you that 1997 academic year girls have improved very greatly."

Esther Kaliesubula, a recipient of Kulanu scholarships, has passed secondary level examinations and is one step (two years) from university. She is the first Abayudaya woman in the community's 78-year history to reach this step. She deserves our heartiest congratulations. She also deserves our help. As an orphan she cannot afford the personal things (mattress, sheets, books, medical care) needed for boarding school.



*Esther Kaliesubula. (Photo by Arlene Gardsbane)*

Rachel Namudosi, whose beautiful singing voice is now admired internationally, was the first Abayudaya girl ever to receive a "calling letter", which accepted her into an elite boarding high school without a need to apply. Uriah sent me a copy of the admission letter and fund structure. The cost (per term, I think) is \$60 for day students, \$125 for boarding. The school is in Pallisa District, so it apparently will not be possible for Rachel to be a day student. There are additional costs of obtaining the uniform, etc.

**We must ask our readers to continue their generous support of Kulanu's Margolis-Shair Abayudaya Orphans Education Fund.** This Fund was established in the summer of 1995, in memory of Lorna Margolis and Clara Shair, and has successfully maintained about 100 Abayudaya youth in primary and secondary school for every term since then. The number has risen to 127 for the current term.

**It is clear that this Fund has been so successful in getting so many in the community quality education, that the costs of the community's educational needs escalate!** More and more students are finishing primary school and need funding for secondary school, which costs six times as much!

I ask readers not to view the Abayudaya as some community in tremendous need of our assistance. Yes, these people are very poor by our standards. But **the Abayudaya are a phenomenal group of Jews who offer US a lot of insight about OUR OWN Judaism.** While we can do things to assist them, the real long term challenge is to play a little around the edges and watch as the village builds itself. Our generosity must facilitate the long-term welfare of the community. Helping the Esthers and the Rachels with their educational costs -- which their families cannot begin to afford on their own -- does just that.

On a separate matter, I want to raise about \$1000 to bring 40 *mezuzot* to the community. Each \$25 donation will purchase one *mezuzah* for a family that has dreamed to have one their whole life. **I have gone to countless homes where the residents kiss a chalk drawing on a doorway when they walk in. They desire better. They deserve better.**

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Our Indian Friends

*By Jack Zeller*

Kulanu has received continuous and generous support from the small but vibrant Indian Jewish community in the United States. Two of the leaders of the community, Samuel Daniel and Elijah Jhirad, have helped us on many occasions to ensure that Bnei Menashe en route from Mizoram to Israel receive hospitality at the hostel in Bombay.

The unique and wonderful Jewish liturgical melodies of the Indian Jewish community can be heard at Congregation Bina in New York. Call Elijah Jhirad (718-297-3978) for information. You will find Mr. Jhirad a remarkable repository of modern Jewish Indian history, especially in relation to Israel during the early years of the state.

It has been recently announced that ORT India is raising funds by selling an 18-minute documentary on David Sassoon, one of the great, generous and wealthy leaders of the Jewish community in India. For more information, contact jhirad@giasbmm01.vsnll.net.in.

And a reminder: An audio tape of Yom Kippur and Selichot Melodies of the Bene Israel of India has been developed, taken from the oral tradition, meticulously passed down from one generation to another. With the increasing dispersal of the Bene Israel worldwide, this preservation is a worthy project, but it is also a beautiful treat -- a variety of melodies, tempos, and instruments. The Primack family ordered one and liked it so much, they ordered five more for gifts! To order send a check for \$12 (which includes postage in the US), payable to Romiel Daniel, to him at 95-19 64th Road, Suite 19-D, Rego Park, NY 11374.

# "The Sephardic Experience"

By Irwin M. Berg

New York's Congregation Shearith Israel (better known as the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue) recently hosted a weekend of activities entitled "The Sephardic Experience". These activities commemorated the 500th anniversary of the forcible conversion of the Jews of Portugal in 1497. Shabbat services in the synagogue were followed by a luncheon at which the guest speaker was Dr. David Gitlitz, professor at the University of Rhode Island and author of *Secrecy and Deceit: The Lives of the Crypto-Jews*.

The physical appearance of the synagogue and the service follow the Amsterdam *minhag* (custom). Portuguese Jews began to settle in Holland during the middle of the 16th century to escape the Inquisition in Portugal. The *bimah* (reader's platform) is in the back of the synagogue, and many prayers and songs which are common to both the Sephardic and Ashkenazic traditions have at least one different verse. Rabbi Mark Angel informed us that minutes of the meetings of the *parnasim* (trustees) were written in Portuguese from the founding of the synagogue in the 1660s until the 1730s.

The meal consisted of food of the Sephardic communities of Turkey and Greece and not that of Amsterdam which long ago lost its culinary distinctiveness. After the meal, *zmioroth* (Sabbath songs) were sung, some with familiar words but tunes unfamiliar to us Ashkenazim.

Gitlitz's lecture was entitled "How Jewish Are the Crypto-Jews of Portugal?" The Jews who remained in Portugal had to contend with the Inquisition for a period of 300 years, beginning in the 1530s. Punishments for backsliding, or Judaizing, included death by burning. As a consequence, all books in Hebrew disappeared, and Hebrew became a forgotten language. Portuguese Jews were familiar with their religion primarily through the Latin Old Testament, which they could read without incurring suspicion. Customs and prayers were handed down from mother to daughter. Children were not told that they were Jewish -- or allowed to witness family observances -- until they were old enough to keep a secret.

In the course of time, Jewish identity died out in Portugal except in two towns, Braganca and Belmonte, where Jewish beliefs and practices adopted many of the accouterments of Catholicism. The baby Moses was venerated; Queen Esther became a saint; salvation for each individual was stressed in the prayers rather than God's merciful judgment upon His people Israel.

Holidays which could be observed without drawing the attention of neighbors were preferred. Yom Kippur was strictly observed since fasting was not noticeable. Rosh Hashanah was forgotten -- perhaps because a shofar could not be blown. Matzah for Passover was baked in cellars, and Shabbat candles were hidden. Circumcision was not practiced. Purim was observed, but not Chanukah, a post-biblical holiday.

The Portuguese Jews were totally isolated from -- indeed, they were unknown to -- the outside world until 1917. In that year, a Polish-Jewish mining engineer was in Belmonte seeking to buy supplies when he happened upon them. He overcame their disbelief that he was Jewish when he recited the *Shema* prayer; in it they recognized "Adonai" (Lord), the only Hebrew word remembered by the Belmonte Jews, and a word which was frequently invoked in their secret prayers.

Gitlitz did not discuss the *halachic* status of the Crypto-Jews of Portugal. Sometime during the early 1990s, the State of Israel arranged for a Moroccan rabbi to live in Belmonte. A ruling was obtained from a high rabbinic authority that the Crypto-Jews of Belmonte were Jews -- they needed only to be circumcised and undergo a symbolic immersion in a *mikveh*. The ruling did not apply to other Crypto-Jews living elsewhere

Half of the Jews of Belmonte (about 90 persons) have joined the Orthodox congregation led by the Moroccan rabbi; it is too difficult for the other half to leave their old traditions, taught to them by a 500-year unbroken line of mothers, for a "new" religion being taught by a Moroccan rabbi.

In 1994, my wife Elaine and I visited Belmonte. We met a 60-year-old man who told us that he had entered a synagogue for the first time in his life in Paris during a visit with his son in the 1970s. The *gabbai* of the synagogue asked him if he and his son were Jewish. Five centuries of secrecy and caution prevented him from acknowledging that he was Jewish then. Much had changed by 1994. In the market, selling linen, a young man wearing a *kippah* and *tstisith* told us that he was a member of the new Orthodox congregation.

The Inquisition has finally been defeated, at least for some.

## Internet Notes

Kulanu needs Internet mavens to help develop a new web site and list serve. Please contact Jack Zeller at [jazeller@aol.com](mailto:jazeller@aol.com).

The China Judaic Studies Web page has been updated. See <http://www.oakton.edu/~friend/chinajews.html>

The Latin American Jewish Studies Assoc. has inaugurated an electronic mailing list devoted to research into the history, current situation, demographic features, and literary and cultural production of the Jewish populations of the various Latin American countries. To join send an e-mail message to: [listproc@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu](mailto:listproc@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu). The message should only contain: "subscribe lajsa-list <your first name> <your family name>"

The Conversion to Judaism Home Page, founded by Kulanu vice president for outreach Larry Epstein, <<http://members.tripod.com/~epst>> now has direct e-mail links to more than 60 rabbis, whom people interested in learning about Judaism can ask questions and receive guidance about joining the Jewish people.

The Abayudaya Web page, founded and maintained by Kulanu vice president for African affairs Matt Meyer, has been updated. You can now buy kippot with the click of a button, and read about the visits of two rabbis and numerous other distinguished visitors to the community of Ugandan Jews. You can learn more about the community's past and find other sources to learn their history. <http://www.intac.com/PubService/uganda>

JEWL offers a comprehensive list of links to more than 60 Jewish websites in 18 countries in Europe. Access at <http://www.ort.org/ecjc>

The New Jewish Music network is located at <http://www.jewish-music.com>

Subscribe to Kulanu's lively list serve by contacting [Kulanu-L@ube.ubalt.edu](mailto:Kulanu-L@ube.ubalt.edu).

You can have Kulanu archives sent to you by forwarding e-mail to: [fileserv@ube.ubalt.edu](mailto:fileserv@ube.ubalt.edu). In the body of the e-mail "send kulanu-L.1997-02 (or whatever year and month you desire). You should first receive an acknowledgement

# Publishing News

Kulanu announces the establishment of a syndication service that will e-mail to nearly 100 Jewish publications previously unpublished articles about lost and dispersed Jewish communities around the world. This newsletter will also carry these articles (you will note some designated articles in this issue). Please clip and send to the Kulanu office any "Kulanu Syndication Service" articles you see in other publications, including source and date, so we can gauge our success in reaching a wider readership. Authors interested in writing articles for the Kulanu Syndication Service and/or this newsletter should contact Karen Primack c/o the Kulanu office or at [primack@aol.com](mailto:primack@aol.com) before sending any work. Publications wishing to receive the syndicated articles should also contact Karen.

The B'nai B'rith International Jewish Monthly for April features a six-page article about the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda by Lucy Steinitz. The article is accompanied by no fewer than seven pictures, four in color. Lucy also donated her \$500 fee to Kulanu!

Karen Primack's story about the Abayudaya became the cover story in the *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press* on April 4. Page one sported a 5"x10" photo of Abayudaya schoolchildren!

Judith Fein's article on Rabbi Cukierkorn's latest tour of the Jewish highlights of Brazil appears on page one of the *Miami Herald's* Travel section on April 6.

The January issue of *Ha Lapid*, the publication of the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies, features an article by Rabbi Albert Plotkin entitled "The Challenge of the Return of the Marranos".

Noting that one out of every 35 Jews in America is a Jew by choice, *Embracing the Covenant -- Converts to Judaism Talk About Why & How*, edited by Rabbi Allan Berkowitz and Patti Moskovitz, examines personal experiences of 20 converts.

Journalist Ruth Silverman recommends two books on Spanish Jewry. Claudia Roden's *The Book of Jewish Food -- An Odyssey from Samarkand to New York* (Knopf, 1996) not only offers 400 Ashkenazi and 400 Sephardi recipes; according to Silverman it is also "a most comprehensive history of both groups, through the foods they ate and prepared. The section on Sephardim is wonderful! Roden is a noted food writer, Cairo born and reared, educated in Paris and London (where she lives). The book is more than 600 pages, and truly fascinating." The book won the 1997 James Beard Award for Cookbook of the Year.

Her second recommendation is *Sephardic American Voices -- Two Hundred Years of a Literary Legacy*, edited by Diane Matza (Brandeis U. Press). Offering poetry, prose, a play with music, and short stories by about 30 Sephardi writers, Silverman calls the work "one of the loveliest books I've bought in a long while."

Al Passy has just finished the third edition of *The Ladino Folk Dictionary* and will be ready for the first printing in less than 60 days. The book will retail for \$29 in the U.S. All book vendors, educational and religious organizations are eligible for the normal discount. If you desire an issue, it is advisable to place an order early as he will print only 1000 books. Contact

*Spain and the Jews -- The Sephardi Experience 1492 and After*, edited by Elie Kedourie (Thames & Hudson) available at a discount at Daedalus Books (800-395-2665). This is a compilation of essays by 10 international scholars marking the quincentenary of the Sephardi exodus.

The spring 1997 issue of *Points East* contains an excellent summary of all the writings about Jews outside of Kaifeng that have been found in the literature by Donald Leslie, as well as a commemoration of Wang Yisha, the past curator of the Kaifeng Museum.

Indiana University Press announces the publication of *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries*, edited by Harvey E. Goldberg. It is an anthology of writings by historians, anthropologists and linguists from Israel, Europe and the US. To order phone 800-842-6796.

## Elizabethan Marranos Unmasked (Cont.)

(cont. from p. 1)

to the religion of Spain or from a private quarrel between Lewes and Freire and some people in Lisbon?"

Wilson replied that he did "not know if Lewes and Freire were accused thereof." William Wilson was not able to categorically state that Lewes and Freire were accused of being practicing Jews. On the other hand, he stated that their "great quarrels with the Portuguese in Lisbon...were increased by the arrival of their goods."

William Wilson displayed his personal knowledge of the Nunes family by discussing the impact of Anthony Veiga and John Fernyandas, converts to Catholicism. Both men had been temporary residents in London. They had visited the home of Lewes. Veiga and Fernyandas claimed that they had personal knowledge that Lewes and his sisters were Jews. They returned to Lisbon and accused Lewes of "Jewish practices of Judaism." The accusations occurred despite Wilson's insistence that Freire and Lewes had given Veiga "large sums of money not to tell the Inquisition."

Wilson also had personal knowledge that "Gratia Freire, Peter's sister and the wife of Alvaro Grammaxe, resident of Villa Nova, Portugal, was jailed for Jewish ceremonies. Her husband paid great sums for her release from her being sent to the Holy House" (Holy House of the Inquisition).

The following Interrogatories can be directly attributed to William Wilson and his brother, Thomas, a servant of Ferdinando Alvarez, a Nunes kinsman by marriage: "Did Lewes, Lyma and Ferdinando Alvarez (all Nunes kin) and their wives and children live in one house in London? Did some of them live in London as Jews using divers ceremonies of meates, newe moones, feasts of sweet and unleavened bread for several days together every year? When did these feasts of sweet and unleavened bread occur? Did they make their Sabbath day Saturday?"

Thomas Wilson, William's brother, stated that both families did "commonly towards Easter light a great candle and set it in a basin with 4 white loaves about the candle in the midst of a great room in Ferdinando's house." Furthermore, he stated that they would "come into the same room barefoot and stay there a long time looking for Christ."

(cont. p. 12)



## KULANU BRIEFS

### 1996 Financial Report

Treasurer Robert Lande reports that for the calendar year 1996 Kulanu attracted \$21,781 in income from donors and \$1000 from a publisher's advance for an upcoming book based on Kulanu newsletters.

Expenditures included \$10,174 for projects in Uganda (Abayudaya school tuition, purchase and shipping of books and ritual objects, school repair, et al., much of it earmarked by the donors), \$7493 for Bnei Menashe projects (construction of a seminary in India, et al.), and \$3100 for books and ritual items for communities in Peru, Ghana, China, Brazil, and Ethiopia.

Expenditures for education about lost and dispersed communities totaled about \$3300 (newsletter printing and mailing, copies of slides for speakers), and filing fees, bank charges, and office expenses totaled less than \$250.

### A New Address!

Speaking of finances, **all payments of any kind** (contributions, purchases, etc.) should now be sent to Kulanu c/o Bea and Joe Hantman, 3520 Tarkington Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20906.

### Famine Relief

Kulanu notes with pride the generous response of subscribers to the Kulanu list serve and of Temple Beth Israel of Sharon, Pennsylvania, in quickly raising \$3000 for famine relief for the Abayudaya in eastern Uganda. Among the contributors were a mother and her four children who dropped by Rabbi Cukierkorn's office and "spread on my desk all the money they had in their tzedakah boxes, \$120." Our thanks to the Frank Family!

Rabbis and other subscribers were also engaged in offering prayers for Stacy Keziah, a two-year-old Abayudaya child who is seriously ill with convulsions.

Our quarterly newsletter is not timed to respond to sudden emergencies, but our internet contingent came through with flying colors! To become part of the Kulanu list serve, simply contact Kulanu-L@ube.ubalt.edu and indicate "subscribe".

Kulanu activist Matt Meyer spoke by phone with Joab Keki, chairman of the Abayudaya community, in late April. He was told it had started to rain in Mbale a few weeks before. Meyer reports: "They said an end to the food crisis is in sight. See the Abayudaya Web Page: <http://www.intac.com/PubService/uganda>.

### An Abayudaya Recording

A truly exciting commercial CD and audio cassette of Abayudaya music is due to come out later this year. It features familiar Jewish liturgy set to African melodies and rhythms, as well as songs unfamiliar to most of us, sung in Luganda, Swahili, Hebrew and English. To help us along with the project (all proceeds go to the Abayudaya) Kulanu is accepting contributions of at least \$18, which will entitle the contributor to a copy of the CD or audio cassette (please specify). Please send contributions, payable to Kulanu, to the new finance address mentioned above.

### Travel to Brazil in August!

On August 9, Brazil-born Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn will lead a two-week trip to Brazil on the trail of the Crypto-Jews there. (Current estimates of the number of descendants of secret Jews in Portugal and Brazil are as high as 34 million!)

The tour will include meeting with these Marranos who are returning to Judaism, visiting an active Marrano synagogue, and seeing a remote castle built by a Catholic priest who has declared that he and most of his congregation are descended from secret Jews.

Other Jewish highlights include the oldest torah on the continent, a cemetery for Jewish prostitutes, and the grave of the legendary "saint" Rabbi Moyal.

The tour, which costs \$3480, includes Rio de Janeiro, Natal, Caico, Recife, Manaus and Salvador. If you will teach on this trip (talk to Rabbi Cukierkorn) or will be doing career-related study, you might want to talk to your tax adviser about possible deductions that might apply to you.

Cukierkorn led this historic trip for the first time last year, and it generated enormous worldwide interest. This year's trip promises to deepen and broaden the experience even further as more secret Jews continue to emerge after 500 years in hiding. For information contact Cukierkorn at Temple Bnai Israel, 840 Highland Road, Sharon, PA 16146, tel 412-346-4754, e-mail JacquesC@pgh.net.

### A Leadership Retreat in Brazil?

There are about 15 million people in Brazil who have potential Jewish roots, and Brazilian-born Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn feels it's time to do more to help those who wish to return to Judaism. Our friend in Sao Paulo, Helio Cordeiro, has a database of Marranos in Brazil who would like to learn more about Judaism and eventually return to the Jewish fold. Cukierkorn is working right now to create a leadership retreat -- a gathering of a large number of Marranos in one site for intense study and leadership training.

The seminar would be a hands-on, dynamic, experiential effort to teach these leaders and potential leaders about Judaism and to teach them how to teach and develop their own communities. These individuals would then return to their communities, armed with knowledge and educational materials, and train their local people for conversion. Afterwards, a *beth din* would visit each community and officiate at several conversions. This model could serve in the future for other communities Kulanu works with. If you would like to help in developing the idea, writing a grant and finding funding, contact Rabbi Cukierkorn at Temple Beth Israel, 840 Highland Rd., Sharon, PA 16146 (tel. 412-346-3722 or email JacquesC@pgh.net). Tax-deductible donations to Kulanu can be earmarked for for this project.

### Kulanu in South Florida

Yasher koach to Yaakov Gladstone, who founded a lively 32-member chapter of Kulanu in the Miami area. Participants recently heard a talk by Prof. Abe Lavender of Florida International University, attended an art exhibit by Yossi Vila, descendant of a Crypto-Jewish family, and collected \$375 for Kulanu. Many members are "snow birds" from Montreal and Toronto who spend winters in South Florida, and one such couple, Chayim and Estelle Strauss, enrolled their 12-year-old grandson Joshua as a Kulanu supporter in honor of his being accepted as a student by Herzliya Hebrew High School in Montreal. Welcome to new members Laz and Ellen Schneider, Rabbi Nathan Cryan, Rabbi Menachem Armon, Sid Schaffer, Rosie Reha, and Tom Carter. For information about this chapter, contact Yaakov at 305-532-2923 (in summer 212-922-3642).

## KULANU BRIEFS

### A New York Chapter

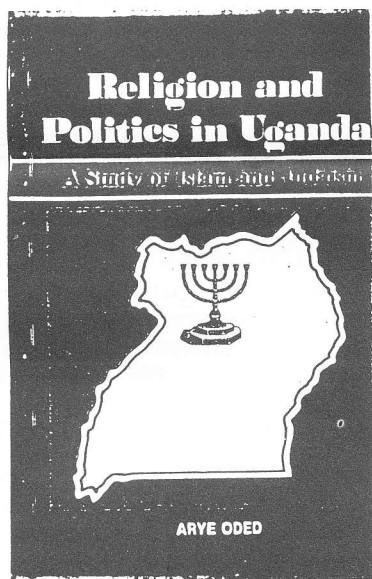
The inaugural meeting of the greater New York chapter of Kulanu was held in March, with about 15 attending. Guest speaker was Irwin Berg, reporting on his visit and contacts with the Abayudaya. For information on the chapter contact Barbara and Julie Shair at 914-362-0547 or Shairswire@aol.com.

### Active in Tucson

*Yasher koach* to Israel Rubin for organizing an active Kulanu chapter in Tucson, and to the following Arizonans for their contributions: Alma Vactor, Yvette & Ivan Gur-Arie, Beverly Ross, Phyllis & Norman Salmon, Rhoda Babis, Renee Hershkowitz, Margaret Nugent, Chana & Irwin Steinberg, Laura Stone, Stephen Gomez & Amy Feldman, Barbara Rosenblum, Sonia & Zach Fradkin, Launa & Paul Weingrad, Alfred & Sylvia Friedman.

### Book on Uganda Available

Sales have been brisk, but we still have some copies left of Dr. Arye Oded's book *Religion and Politics in Uganda -- A Study of Islam and Judaism*. Send a check for \$12 to the Kulanu office. It's must reading for the well-informed history buff, by a distinguished diplomat who is currently a lecturer in the Department of African Studies at The Hebrew University.



### Mound Lectures

Gloria Mound, executive director of the Institute for Marrano (Anusim) Studies in Israel, has lectured recently in the US (NY, Florida, and Georgia), as well as England and Holland. A recent four-week return trip to the Balearics turned out to be one of her most fruitful, with contacts with more Marranos and discovery of a great deal of important historical material. In addition, she has announced that the local government has, at her instigation, purchased the estate within which the historic secret Formentera Synagogue stands, and will restore it as a cultural center. Mound is available for lectures before congregations and other groups. She can be reached at Casa Shalom, Institute for Marrano (Anusim) Studies, PO 66 Gan Yavneh, Israel 70800.

### Cukierkorn Will Lecture

Rabbi Jacques Cukierkorn, one of Kulanu's rabbinic advisors, is available to lecture before organizational groups and congregations. His topics include general Kulanu programs, Brazilian Marranos (he studied them in his native Brazil for his seminary thesis), and the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda (he led the Kulanu mission to Uganda in 1995). His charge will be expenses plus an honorarium, which he will donate to Kulanu. Contact Rabbi Cukierkorn at 412-346-3722 or JacquesC@pgh.net.

### Did You Know...

In the past 30 years more Jews have converted to Christianity than in the previous 2000 years? (Source: *Craig Miller of the Jewish Community Relations Council's Task Force on Missionaries and Cults*) Each year evangelical groups spend over \$150 million on efforts to convert Jews? (Source: *Jews for Judaism*)

### Medical Evidence on the Balemba

It's not often that Kulanu looks to medical journals for information, but a recent (Nov. 1996) issue of the *American Journal of Human Genetics* contains an article about the Lemba, a southern African Bantu tribe with possible Jewish roots. According to an article by Spurdle and Jenkins, at least 50 percent of Lemba "Y" chromosomes are Semitic in origin, and approximately 40 percent are Negroid. These results are "consistent with Lemba oral tradition" about Jewish ancestry.

### A Sad Note

We note with sadness the passing of Wang Yisha, the distinguished past curator of the Kaifeng Jewish museum in China. Kulanu had subsidized some of his research.

### Todah Rabah!

Kulanu expresses gratitude to the Molly S. Fraiberg Judaica Collection at the S. E. Wimberly Library, part of the Florida Atlantic Univ. Libraries, for its donation of *siddurim* and *machzorim* to the House of Israel congregation in Sefwi Wiaso, Ghana.

Also to Rachel Segal of Dix Hills, NY, who sent seven boxes of books, tapes and Judaica to the Jews of Timbuktu.

### Special Kids

Martha Cromartie's third grade class at Case Avenue School in Sharon, Pennsylvania, has been collecting funds for charity by operating a "school store" at which pupils sell each other candy, used toys, etc. This year's proceeds of about \$100 will go to assist the Abayudaya community near Mbale, Uganda. The community subsists through agriculture and a few small businesses; their villages have no electricity or running water as yet, and few families can afford to send their children to school. Way to go, kids!

And the Student Council at Akiva Academy in Youngstown, Ohio, raised \$32 in its Pennies for Passover drive to send an Abayudaya youth to school. This mitzvah will be greatly appreciated.

### Volunteer Help Wanted

Kulanu is looking for a few good souls. We need help with **publicity** -- writing a letter for mass mailing and logistical (cont., p. 10)

## KULANU BRIEFS

(cont. from p. 9)

support. Also, we always need experienced **grant application writers!** And **Internet** help -- someone to help create a new Kulanu web site and listserve. Also, could someone advise us about obtaining a **Visa or MasterCard account** so that supporters can charge contributions and purchases? Please contact Jack Zeller at 301-681-5679 or [jazeller@aol.com](mailto:jazeller@aol.com).

### Tokayer, Katz Lead Tours

Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, former rabbi in Japan, will lead his 16th Jewish-interest to the Orient July 3-17. Entitled "Pepper, Silk & Ivory," the tour includes Kyoto, Kobe, Rokyō, Hong King, Shanghai, Xian and Beijing.

Prof. Nathan Katz of Florida International Univ., co-author of *The Last Jews of Cochin*, will lead a special culture and religion tour to southern India Dec. 14-Jan. 4 to focus on Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Judaism. Madras, Madurai, Cochin and Mysore will be included, and an optional stopover in Sri Lanka is available.

In addition, Tokayer and Katz will be joined by Romiel Daniel to lead 1997-98 Jewish-interest tours of India in November, February and April, stopping in New Delhi, Agra, Cochin, Ahmedabad, and Bombay.

For info contact Lotus Tours, 2 Mott St., New York, NY 10013, tel 212-267-5414, fax 212-608-6007.

### Meet Judith Cohen

Judith Cohen is someone most Kulanu supporters would love to meet. With a PhD in ethnomusicology, specializing in Ladino songs in Canadian Sephardic communities, and an MA in medieval studies, specializing in women's music in Jewish, Muslim and Christian medieval Spain, she is both an academic and a performer. She recently completed fieldwork in Portugal (including spending Pesach with a Belmonte family) recording some regional traditions. She performs Spanish, Catalan, French Canadian, Portuguese, Yiddish and other traditions and is associated with York University in Toronto.

One way to get to know Judith is through her several recordings. Contact her for a price list at 751 Euclid Ave., Toronto, Canada M6G 2V3 or [jcohen@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:jcohen@chass.utoronto.ca).

### A Salonica Museum

The Sephardic community of Salonica has announced plans to open a museum to highlight the 450 years of Spanish and Portuguese Jewish life in the city. If you would like to lend or donate any artifacts, pictures, or documents, please contact Andreas Sefiha, 24 Tsimiski, 56 624 Thessaloniki, Greece.

### Publicity Needed

Many people who hear of us are interested in our work. But no one can join us if they haven't heard of us. Does your synagogue or Jewish organization have a newsletter that would run a short article on Kulanu? Show the editor a copy of this newsletter or write up a few paragraphs yourself. If you do this, interested people will be able to contact us. Thank you very much -- we really need your help.

### We Want Your Feedback

This newsletter contains 16 pages instead of our usual 12. We want to provide information on communities not covered elsewhere, but we don't want to over-burden our readers! What do you think? Are you less likely to read a 16-page newsletter than a 12-page one? Do you appreciate the extra coverage?

### Next Meeting

The date and place of the next Kulanu meeting will be announced in the next newsletter.

### Kulanu Slide Show Available



Have you ever considered becoming a Kulanu speaker? We have a slide show that might make this task easier. We have collected slides of the groups that we have been working with, from India (the Shinlung/Menasha), Uganda (the Abayudaya), Ghana, Peru, Mexico, Israel, Brazil and Portugal. If you would be interested in the slides, along with accompanying explanations, for one or more of these groups, call Bob Lande at 301-585-5229. (If you would instead like to arrange for a Kulanu speaker for your synagogue or organization, please call Jonina Duker, afternoons or evenings, at 301-530-2361.)

### Certificates Available

Certificates are available from Kulanu to honor special occasions (birthdays, anniversaries, bar/bat mitzvahs) or in memory of a friend or relative.

These certificates measure 8"x11", are in color, feature a stylized representation of Jerusalem's cityscape, and are *extremely* attractive. They were designed by Jeri Lande.

To order a certificate, please send a minimum \$18 donation to the office, indicating your name, recipient's name and address, and whether it is "in honor of" an occasion or "in memory of" someone.

	<b>Kulanu</b> <i>Helping Lost Jewish Communities</i>
Gratefully acknowledges a generous gift from	
Name	
in memory of	
Whoever	
	
<small>Kulanu is a charitable organization dedicated to finding people with potential Jewish ancestry throughout the world and helping them return to Judaism.</small>	

### L'Hitraot!

Lucy Steinitz, who has visited, written about and lectured on the Abayudaya on behalf of Kulanu, has left her 15-year job as executive director of Jewish Family Services of Central Maryland to move with husband Berndt and their two children to Windhoek, Namibia, in June. Lucy will volunteer at a residential treatment center for delinquent youth and Berndt will be working on the computer system for the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, while the children will attend the International School. During their 13-month adventure, the family will be on the lookout for Namibia's lost Jewish communities! They will be reachable at [Steinitz@IBM.net](mailto:Steinitz@IBM.net).



# Renewal of Jewish Identity in Timbuktu (Cont.)

(cont. from p. 1)

The Cohens, descended from the Moroccan Islamicized Jewish trader El-Hadj Abd-al-Salam al Kuhin, arrived in the Timbuktu area in the 18th century, and the Abana family came in the first half of the 19th century. Rabbi Mordoché Aby Serour in the late 19th century. According to Prof. Michel Abitbol, at the Center for the Research of Moroccan Jewry in Israel, in the late 19th century Rabbi Mordoché Aby Serour traveled to Timbuktu several times as a not-too-successful trader in ostrich feathers and ivory.

Back to the present: Ismael Diadie Haidara, a historian from Timbuktu, has found old Hebrew texts among the city's historical records. He has also researched his own past and discovered that he is descended from the Moroccan Jewish traders of the Abana family. As he interviewed elders in the villages of his relatives, he has discovered that knowledge of the family's Jewish identity has been preserved, in secret, out of fear of persecution.

Current crypto-Jewish clues to the identity of these Timbuktu Jews are that the families have continually given newborns Jewish names; some members sign their names with a Star of David; some Hebrew songs are still sung; and they only marry among themselves, a custom forbidden by Islamic law.

Ethnic consciousness was revived by an incident in 1963. Near the village of Tinderma, a group of fishermen wanted to build a village on the grounds of the former Al Yahudi cemetery. The Jews rose up in strong opposition -- and with a new awareness of their identity.

In 1993 Haidara, aware of continuing religious intolerance in the area, established Zakhor (the Timbuktu Association for Friendship with the Jewish World) as an informal, unpublished association. They were careful to advocate only the re-establishment of Jewish identity, not conversion to Judaism. At a meeting in July 1995 the group came out of the closet, admitting their heritage. The organization was formally registered in 1996.

Zakhor issued a Manifesto in May of 1996, addressed to the presidents of Mali and Israel, diplomatic missions in Mali, and Jewish communities throughout the world, all of whom it called upon for "understanding and support." Carried in its entirety in *Le Republicain*, a newspaper published in Bamako, the capital city of Mali, the Manifesto proclaims, "It is incumbent upon us...to remember and affirm our Israelite origins, which our fathers and forefathers kept secretly."

The Manifesto, in simple logic, avers, "We are Jews because our ancestors were Jews, whose genes are found in all our families. Our Judaism is based on ethnicity." It lists as their three obligations teaching their children about their heritage, learning and using the Hebrew language as a second language ("rejecting Arabic... would impoverish us culturally"), and safeguarding their sociocultural patrimony by collecting and publishing oral and written sources of their history.

The international press considered the existence of Jews in Mali "news". The Agence France Presse, in March 1996, reported on a community of Jewish origin living in the Timbuktu area who had in the past "converted to Islam because of the hostility of local rulers to their own faith." At the same time *Le Republicain*, in a lengthy article, noted, "Since being recognized as Jewish in Timbuktu today does not lead to harassment, intolerance or persecution, these 'forgotten Jews' are much more aware of their ancestry." The article, by I. Maiga, also stated that the community's "intention is not to return to Israel, but to assert their identity" and quoted a member of the community as saying, "It is God who made Timbuktu our land of refuge, and we are Muslims."

In June 1996 Radio France Internationale reported, "Historians and researchers have been surprised by the existence of a Jewish community of about 1000 people in the Timbuktu region of Mali. These families decided to come out into the open and set up the Timbuktu association of friendship with the Jewish world." The report quoted Haidara responding to the question of whether these individuals are indeed Jews:

simple. However, where there is de-Judaization there is also a process of loss of identity. Because of the Islamization that took place in 1492 with the accession to power of Mohammed Askia..., who among other things ordered the destruction of the synagogue at Tamanhit, ...in the period from 1492 to 1503 the Jews of this region stopped practicing their religion and went into a long process of loss of identity."

A BBC world broadcast in June also reported on the community, and an historic article on Jews in Mali was published in January 1997 in *Jeune Afrique*.

Some of Zakhor's accomplishments during its short life include providing for 15 children "in dire circumstances," paying school fees for 100 children, and equipping a health center, including training and funding two nurses.

Immediate plans include ethnographic and historic research on the Jews of Timbuktu. Other plans, for which Western assistance is needed, include the training of Hebrew language teachers, rehabilitating Jewish cemeteries in Tindirma, Kirshamba, Goundam and Timbuktu, and initiating development projects (health, education and agricultural production).

Richard Gold, who works for the US Agency for International Development in Bamako, has been following the progress of Zakhor and bringing the Malian Jewish community to the attention of Americans, in part through the Internet. The list-serve of Kulanu has carried Gold's messages (Kulanu-L@ube.ubalt.edu) and stimulated considerable interest.

Gold feels Zakhor has been good for the community, providing much needed mutual support:

"Since the release of the Manifesto, the organization wrote a letter to the Governor of the Timbuktu region protesting anti-Semitic statements made by a radio station operating from the Governor's office building. I believe the Jews are becoming increasingly conscious of their uniqueness."

As to whether the community is interested in conversion, Gold surmises, "I haven't heard any real desire to convert. Given their absence of even the most basic knowledge of Judaism, I couldn't see anyone being ready to convert for many years."

On the other hand, it is clear that their public announcement of their pride in their Judaic heritage is a significant change from the past, and one that may in the long term result in conversion for some.

Gold notes that in Morocco there are tens of thousands of Muslims with Jewish roots, but they are not organized. "What is special about the Jews of Timbuktu is that they are taking pride in their Jewish heritage," he says.

Are they Jewish? Recognizing the complexity of this question, Gold replies, "I only know that the interest of anyone in rediscovering their Jewish roots should be encouraged."

Upon reading about Zakhor in the Malian press, Samantha Klein, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mali, did some investigating and found Haidara's family and two leading members of Zakhor, an economist and a teacher. She recalls being "disappointed to learn there were no practicing Jews, only the Islamicized descendants of Jews, who had nonetheless maintained their identity over the centuries."

Samantha and her brother Josh, a photographer visiting from New York, were determined to visit two of the villages where Jews lived. They took a rented motorized canoe along the Niger River, from which they saw "villages and sand dunes tumbling into the river, and the temporary encampments of nomads built under the shadow of palm trees and tower-like termite mounds."

At Tangasane they were welcomed into the house of an elder, "where much fuss was made of preparing beds and slaughtering a lamb. We made an attempt at eating, and caused much upset by our lack of appetite for the never-ending platters of organs and meat, followed by bowls of raw milk and butter." After the meal, about 30 people crowded into the small room, "bearded, long robed patriarchs."

(cont. p. 14)

# We Must Ask: WHY?

By Edward Eitches

(The author is president of the Washington Association for Ethiopian Jews.)

Israel is denying 3,000 observant Ethiopian Jews their right to make *aliyah*. It is time we start asking WHY?

It can't be because they are not Jewish enough. It's true that some of their ancestors converted to Christianity, often under severe pressure. But this community in Addis Ababa has fully returned to Judaism. They pray three times a day in a synagogue they built for themselves. The women go to the *mikveh* they built. They keep Shabbat and Yom Tovim - and celebrate Israel Independence Day.

They are so strictly kosher that until an Israeli ritual slaughterer visited recently, most had not touched meat in years. Children in the community attend a yeshiva in the Beta Israel compound in the Addis Ababa slum where their families live. Hundreds of adults spend their evenings studying Hebrew and Judaism.

The Israeli Knesset's Aliyah and Klita Committee has repeatedly called for their immigration, terming it "a matter of the highest national priority." At the time of Operation Solomon, Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu and former Chief Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef called upon Prime Minister Shamir to bring this community to Israel. Over three years ago, a committee appointed by the current Chief Rabbis declared them to be a Jewish community.

Ethiopian religious leaders (*kessim*), including Chief Kes Hadane, recently visited the community in Addis Ababa and declared that it is thoroughly Jewish in every way. A prominent Israeli rabbi and representative of the Chief Rabbis who visited the community in September wrote that the community "could serve as a model for Diaspora Jewry." The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (the Conservative movement) unanimously passed a resolution stating that this is a Jewish community composed of Jewish individuals.

The fact that some of their ancestors may have left the faith in no way invalidates the authenticity of their descendants' return. Jewish tradition repeatedly asserts, in word and deed, that when people of recent Jewish heritage wish to return, they should be welcomed with open arms!

Is there a question about the motives of the Beta Israel in Addis Ababa? Some people call them opportunists, wishing only to lead better lives in Israel. According to Jewish tradition, that attitude, if present, would be irrelevant. But in truth, it is rarely if ever found among the Beta Israel. Many members of the community actually lived far better lives in the hills of Gondar than in the slums of Addis Ababa while waiting for six years to make *aliyah*. In Addis Ababa, they live in the most miserable, degrading condition, in hovels not fit for human beings, surviving on a pittance and a work program supplied by the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (Israel has not spent one penny on their care). Year after year, they have remained in Addis Ababa in order to be observant Jews, and keep alive the hope of rejoining their families in Israel.

Some ask: Will they continue to live as fully observant Jews in Israel? Only a crystal ball can tell the future; the temptations of secularism in Israel are obvious, and acceptable to many Israelis. Nonetheless, virtually every one of these Jews who has succeeded in reaching Israel has joyfully gone to the *mikveh* for a "ceremony of return" (not conversion, as they are already considered Jews). Reports from their absorption site in Israel attest to their continued religious observance, and their children continue to attend religious schools. Has a guarantee of perpetual Orthodox observance become the litmus test for admission to Israel?

Some ask: Are they heavily intermarried? Will they bring

same as that of other Ethiopian Jews, far below the intermarriage rate of American or European Jews! If a community's ability to reject intermarriage is to be the litmus test for *aliyah*, practically no one -- except for Ethiopian Jews -- will qualify.

So why are these three thousand good Jews, devotees of Israel, still in Addis Ababa five years after Operation Solomon, still struggling to break through a stone wall erected against no other Jewish community?

The obvious answer stares us all in the face. We reject it. We do not want to believe the Israel of Operation Solomon and Operation Moses is racist. We do not want to believe Israel rejects poor and uneducated Jews. We believe good citizens and true lovers of Israel welcome all Jews with the open arms of our history, past and present.

If you would like to help, please contact me at [hcf78a@prodigy.com](mailto:hcf78a@prodigy.com).

(Editor's note: The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ) runs a school in Addis attended by 1100 children and provides regular meals to about 1700 children. Readers can help their work by requesting an illustrated order form of Jewish embroideries made by Jews in Addis waiting to go to Israel. A pillow cover in a design selected by the donor, with 40,000 hand-done stitches, will be sent to contributors of at least \$72. Contact NACOEJ at 165 E. 56th St., New York, NY 10022, tel. 212-752-6340, fax 212-980-5294.)

## Elizabethan Marranos Unmasked (Cont.)

(cont. from p. 7)

It is my contention that William was responsible for the structure of the Interrogatories during the lengthy trial in Chancery. Furthermore, I feel that financial remuneration was the reason for William's enthusiastic testimony during the trial. William had no outstanding grudges against Bernal Lewes, his former employer and brother-in-law of Dr. Hector Nunes. He was more assertive and frank than his brother Thomas, whom I feel was more of a placid individual. William spoke for both of them.

None of the testimony presented by the Wilson brothers in Chancery can be corroborated. Thomas told the court that his Passover testimony was derived from the observations of blackamoors (black slaves) in the Alvarez and Lyma household. In fact, the majority of the surviving religious testimony presented by the Wilson brothers came from the household slaves. I do not have to emphasize that the "transmission" of verbal information to others loses much of its validity in the process. Here more so. Illiterate slaves and Christian servants were the sole transmitters of this vital religious data. How do we judge their observations and words?

The small and secretive Marrano community in Elizabethan London, bereft of emotional, educational, and religious support from Jewish congregants nearby, apparently endeavored to follow the customs and dictates of their ancestral religion. Thomas Wilson's testimony tells us, first, that they celebrated the Sabbath by not working and by wearing their best clothes.

(cont. p. 12)

## LETTERS TO KULANU

### Peru

We are a community that practices Judaism. We have the name "Bnei Avraham" (formerly Bnei Moshe). Bnei Avraham, like any Jewish community, practices Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, Rosh Hashana, Sukkot, Pesach, Shavuot, Chanukah, Purim, and other typical Jewish holidays, and of course we don't forget the fasting days like Yom Kippur, Tisha B'Ab, Esther's fast, Yom Gedaliah, etc. In Shabbat and other festivities all men try to get a minyan; also Mondays and Thursdays. Bnei Avraham follows the rules of *shulchan aruch* and Torah.

We especially want to thank Mr. Robert Lande in the name of our community for his spiritual help and the beautiful Shabbat we shared, and also for all the presents that he brought representing Kulanu and Rabbi Myron Zuber.

It's a big pleasure to us to know that we count friends like you, who, even knowing that we only practice Judaism (and have not yet been converted), you consider us your own brothers and sisters. All this gives us strength to go ahead to serve God through His *mitzvoth* and also keep our path and hope to be converted, one day to emigrate to Eretz Israel.

Please, keep giving strength to our community. Don't forget us, because we never will forget you.

*Julio Raza, president  
Rosmary Lujan, secretary  
Trujillo, Peru*

### Zimbabwe

It was a great pleasure to meet Mark J. Ellyne on the Sabbath of 15 February 1997 at Rusape, Zimbabwe. I am so thankful to the gifts you sent us which include among other things the T-shirt, cassette and copies of songs. May the Almighty God bless you for the good work you are doing.

As mentioned by Mark J. Ellyne that your objective is to try and help fellow Jews wherever possible, I wish if you could assist us by acquiring some donors who would donate either cash or in kind towards the construction of the synagogues at Rusape and Harare. The present structure at Rusape is so old and small, which is another factor which make some of our fellow Jews to look down upon us.

Once again, I thank you for all the effort you have made by sending a delegate to meet us at Rusape. Shalom

*Rabbi Ambros Makuwaza*

### Russia

I was amazed to read about the Abayudaya people in Uganda, Bnei Menashe in India and many other people who enrich the multifaceted look of our people. I believe what you are doing is extremely important to the Jewish people, as there are many people in the world who consider themselves Jewish or want to be Jewish, or even are actually Jewish, and most of them need help and not rejection, which they so often encounter. I would like to become a Kulanu Activist.

*Anna Politskaia  
Moscow, Russia*

### Brazil

After talking to members of the B'nai Anussim of Goiania and Natal, we decided to organize the First Brazilian Sefardi B'nai Anussim Meeting. It will take place in Recife at the First Israeli Synagogue of the Americas from the 23rd to the 25th of Iyar [from the 30th of May to the 1st of June 1997]. During this meeting we shall organize all the details for the upcoming visit of Rabbi Joseph Sebag (the Secretary to the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel) to Brazil. If things work out, we hope that Rabbi will be here in June. During this meeting, we shall

remember the 500 years of the banishment of the Jews of Portugal and the 500 years of their secret lives.

*Judge Geraldo Apoliano 'Dias  
Vice-President of the Association of Religious Sephardi  
B'nai Anussim of Recife, Brazil*

### India

Shalom. We received the books from you with thanks. Once again I thank you for bringing Judaism among us through this kind of book. I invite you among us so that you can clearly understand the original position of our people. We also need an honest rabbi who can come and stay with us to teach us Torah, Hebrew, etc.

*Sadok Yacobi  
Bene Yacob Telugu Jewish Community  
Guntur Dt., A. P. India*

### Uganda

My name is Moses Wetege. I learn from Namakwekwe Primary School. I am aged 14 years, and of course I get my school fees from Kulanu. Before that I was sitting at home doing nothing. So I am very happy to get to school. Thank you very much.

*Moses Wetege  
Mbale, Uganda*

Long live the Kulanu organization! I'm very grateful for what you have done for us. We have appreciated the funds you are giving towards our education. I couldn't imagine my brother and myself to be in the classes we are now in. I'm pleased to tell you that I'm now in Standard Six, which could not have happened if not for the funds.

So far most of the learners have pen pals. This has helped to fight the problem of isolation in the Abayudaya community, and all these were through the effort of Kulanu members. Some other members need penpals.

*Tarphon Kamya  
Mbale, Uganda*

*(Editor's note: If you would like a penpal, write to Tarphon at PO Box 225, Mbale, Uganda, and he will find you one.)*

## Elizabethan Marranos (Cont.)

*(cont. from p. 12)*

Second, they attempted to have a proper Sabbath meal complete with "loaves of bread," two for each family in the household. Third, the Alvarez and Lyra families attempted to prepare the household for the Passover holiday. Fourth, there is some understanding that they made an effort to celebrate Yom Kippur by walking without shoes. Finally, there is a possibility that they attempted to maintain Jewish dietary laws, since an Interrogatory suggests that they used "divers ceremonies of meates."

If true, the fragmented and inconclusive religious testimony presented by the Wilson brothers in Chancery confirms the families' devotion to Judaism. Beyond this, it would be inappropriate to make any additional assertions until other information is uncovered.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would love to tell you that my research process was totally organized and structured. It was not. I have been



## Jewish Identity in Timbuktu (Cont.)

(cont. from p. 11)

All orthodox Muslims, the elders wanted to know about Jews in other places (their only information about Jews comes from the Koran) and want those far-off Jews to know about them. They also want their children to learn about their history. They also expressed a desire to better their lot. The Americans toured the village the next morning and were struck by the appearance of the malnourished children, as well as by the impressive rice fields with hand-dug canals.

The leaky canoe then took the travelers to the village of Kirshamba and another warm welcome at the house of Ismael Haidara's grandparents, where "we upset their sensibilities by imploring them not to slaughter a lamb for us." Another meeting of elders ensued, where priorities of health, education (so they can learn their history and the Hebrew language) and materials for rice cultivation were listed.

One of the elders expressed a wish for more American Jewish visitors: "It has been a long time that we have been here without knowing that we had brothers elsewhere, and to meet (Samantha and Josh) is quite an occasion."

After their return, the adventure of Samantha and Josh was reported in *Le Republicain*. "The purpose of the visit was to make contact with Malians of Jewish heritage," the article stated.

One of the Internet readers about Zakhor is a young Malian living in Europe. In a recent e-mail message to Richard Gold, he said he had just learned about the Jews of Mali and "I rejoice greatly because I have always esteemed the Israeli people." He believes that if the Jews want to remain in Mali as Malian Jews, and not emigrate to Israel, the Malian people will support them:

"I am sure that the Malian people will understand and accept their appeal, because for every human being nothing is as important as rediscovering one's identity. Mali is a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country where communities of different ethnicities live side by side. And these communities have always shown that nothing will disturb the social order in which they live and in which respect, tolerance and recognition of the rights of others are always applied. It is this that has always been the greatness of Mali."

Let's hope so.

(Ismael Haidara, who divides his time between Timbuktu and Granada, Spain, can be contacted at B. P. 66, Tombouctou, Mali, West Africa, tel. (223) 92-11-78 or e-mail [murci@dragonet.es](mailto:murci@dragonet.es).)

(The author wishes to thank Richard Gold, George Lichtblau, and Judy Neri for their assistance in translating documents and articles.)

## A Look at the Jews of Greece

*Greek Jewry in the Twentieth Century 1913-1983* by Rabbi Joshua Eli Plaut, Associated Univ. Presses, Inc., 1996

Reviewed by Irwin M. Berg

In 1908, Greece had a Jewish population of approximately 110,000, of which 90,000 resided in Salonika. Salonika was the religious and intellectual center of the Sephardic world. It was called by its Jewish residents "the mother city in Israel". A short 36 years later, only 10,000 Jews remained in all of Greece and of these only 1,950 in Salonika. The tragedies that befell our people in Greece and its devastating effect on the survivors is the subject of this volume.

In 1957, I was stationed aboard the U.S. Destroyer Warrington while it was attached to the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. In April of that year, the Warrington visited Salonika, and during that visit I attended a Jewish wedding. I did not know at that time that 89 percent of the Jewish population of Greece and 95 percent of the Jewish population of Salonika had been murdered by the Germans and their Fascist allies. But I could see that the synagogue was less than half full and that there was an absence of the excitement that attends a marriage. Rabbi Plaut's book provides the reasons.

The history of Jews in Greece extends perhaps as far back as biblical times, certainly as far as Roman times. Beginning in 1453, these Jewish communities came under the control of the Ottoman Turks as they extended their empire from Anatolia to the Balkans.

In 1492, over 100,000 Spanish Jews sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire and developed a Judeo-Italian dialect called Corfuote. To a large extent, they absorbed the native Jewish population of Greece (known as the Romaniots) into their culture and customs, and particularly into Ladino -- the language of the Jews of Spain. However, in central and southern Greece, the Romaniots did not totally disappear.

In 1823, Greece began to establish its independence from the Ottoman Turks. The absorption of Ottoman Jews into Greece was accompanied by an emergence of anti-Jewish violence and massacres.

A Sunday closing law passed in 1922 presented many Jews with the choice of economic ruin or opening on Saturday. Those Jews who could not accept working on the Jewish Sabbath emigrated to Palestine or France, but the majority opened on Saturday.

Beginning in 1930, political, social and economic pressures caused many Greek Jews to relinquish their religious traditions, but pushed many others to emigrate. On the eve of World War II, 56,000 Jews lived in Salonika (down from 90,000 in 1908) and 79,000 resided in all of Greece (down from 110,000 in 1908).

But the worst was yet to come. In a one-year period, the Germans virtually emptied Greece of Jews, transporting them to Auschwitz. By October 1944, when Salonika was recaptured by Greek and allied forces, 89 percent of the Greek-Jewish population had been exterminated along with 95 percent of the Jews of Salonika. A great Sephardic civilization, flourishing for over 400 years, had been destroyed; only native, Greek-speaking Jews, descendants of the Romaniot Jews, survived the roundups by melting into the local population.

Intermarriage today is estimated at 50 percent, but many people involved in mixed marriages in Greece remain active in the Jewish community.

Rabbi Plaut's prognosis for the future of the Greek Jews of the provinces is that they can survive only by moving abroad. Whether they can survive by moving to Athens or Salonika -- indeed whether the Jewish communities of Athens and Salonika can survive -- is unclear. In the 1990s, the author points out, 6,000 Bulgarian Jews, almost the entire Jewish population of Bulgaria, emigrated to Israel. In 1990 and 1991, the entire Jewish community of Albania emigrated to Israel in a secret exodus. Is the fate that awaits the Jews of Greece emigration or assimilation?

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- \$1000** will allow Kulanu to raise funds by advertising in national publications
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- \$5000** will underwrite the production of an audio cassette/compact disk featuring Abayudaya music of Jewish liturgy set to Ugandan melodies and rhythms
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- \$10,000** will pay for two Abayudaya students to study in Israel for two years
- \$18,000** is needed to send a rabbi to live with the Abayudaya in Uganda, Incas in Peru, or Menashe in India for six months to teach them in preparation for formal conversion to Judaism

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# ELIZABETHAN MARRANOS UNMASKED (CONT.)

(cont. from p. 13)

dealing with fragmented and incomplete Elizabethan law cases concerning Dr. Hector Nunes and his kinsmen for the last 25 years.

I came upon the Mary May suit merely by chance in the course of searching bundles of Chancery documents for distinctive time periods that could possibly apply to Dr. Nunes and his kinsmen. Originally, while pursuing a doctorate on Tudor-Stuart England at Kent State University in Ohio, I came upon the publications of the late Lucien Wolf, foreign editor of the *London Daily Graphic*. Wolf had spent many years researching the Inquisition papers in Spain and published the paper "Jews in Elizabethan England" in 1928 through the Jewish Historical Society of England. In 1969, I attempted to pursue Wolf's citations on the entire Elizabethan London Marrano community in the English History section of the main public library in Cleveland. In the course of pursuing this research objective, I discovered one prominent member of the community, Dr. Hector Nunes. My interest was thoroughly piqued.

The "shootings/accident" at Kent State University in May of 1970 caused me to lose my teaching fellowship. Rather than continue my studies without any financial aid, I traveled to Europe with a backpack. I toured Portugal, Spain, France, and England. In England, I went to the Public Record Office in London looking for a "needle in a haystack." I had specific time periods in mind together with Nunes' name and those of his kinsmen. But the court case records of Admiralty, Chancery, and Requests did not have proper indices to search and still do not to this day. It was all hit and miss. I literally went through case records one by one from 1970 to 1993.

Once in a long while, I had specific citations to work with, but even that meant searching through individual numbered bundles. Even when I came upon data pertaining to Dr. Nunes, it had no beginning, middle, or

conclusion. This meant that somehow I had to "flesh out" the subject matter by utilizing other primary sources such as the Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, or the Calendars of State Papers, Domestic, Foreign, Spanish, or Addenda. These sources have distinct printed indices which I utilized heavily. However, much of the time I had to rely upon my own creativity and secondary sources for background materials on the subjects and topics mentioned in the primary case citation data.



My paper is only the first step in the process. Lucien Wolf published his definitive paper nearly 70 years ago. Although he documented members of the community and their actions, he did not report any actual religious practices of the Marrano community nor of any individual members. Without Mary May's suit in Chancery, we would be still relying upon his original research. It is time for other scholars to continue and enhance the research that I began over 25 years ago and still continue to this very day.

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Deadline for next issue: July 15, 1997



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Edited by Karen Primack

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