

“We Speak and Write This Language Against Our Will”: Jews, Hispanics, and the Dilemma of Ladino-Speaking Sephardim in Early-Twentieth-Century New York

Translated and Annotated by Aviva Ben-Ur ¹

Introduction

In American Jewish historiography, the epoch of 1880 to 1924 is known as the period of Eastern European migration. Yet this classification is in some ways inadequate because it overlooks the significant influx of Sephardic Jews from the former Ottoman Empire (Turkey and the Balkans), a migration that brought 40,000 Ladino-speaking immigrants to New York City by the early 1920s.² These Eastern Sephardic Jews traced their origins to the Iberian Peninsula and had transmitted a Spanish legacy readily apparent in their Judeo-Spanish language, in their *romansas* (romantic ballads evocative of medieval Spain), in much of their cuisine, and in their often traumatic historical memories of the Inquisition and Expulsion. The immigrant experiences of these Sephardic newcomers differ remarkably from the experiences of Eastern European Ashkenazim, and they render the narrative of American Jewish history broader and much more complex than ever before imagined.

One of the most captivating dimensions of the Eastern Sephardic immigrant experience is the “Hispanic/Sephardic connection.” Although Ladino, based on early modern Castilian with admixtures of Hebrew, Turkish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Arabic, and Greek, and traditionally written in Hebrew letters, is significantly different from modern Spanish, Eastern Sephardic immigrants can and did communicate with their Spanish-speaking neighbors. Spanish-origin or Spanish-speaking people in America, known collectively today as Hispanic Americans, interacted with Levantine Sephardim in social, economic, political, and intellectual spheres.

Linguistic and cultural similarities led to a significant incidence of intermarriage between the two groups, particularly in East Harlem,

where a burgeoning Sephardic community coexisted with Puerto Ricans, the largest Latin American community in New York City (61,000 migrants arrived between 1898 and 1940).³ Many Sephardim also formed ties with Hispanic communities through economic channels, by studying modern Spanish in order to establish lucrative import-export business with Central and South America.

Since the early teens, representatives of the Spanish American community, particularly those affiliated with New York's *La Prensa* (published from 1913 to 1918), were actively engaged in efforts to repatriate Ottoman Sephardim in America to Spain. In the intellectual sphere, Dardanelles-born Maír José Benardete (b. 1895), long-time professor of Spanish and Sephardic studies at Brooklyn College, and Hispanist Federico de Onís, who founded Columbia University's Hispanic Institute (Casa Hispánica) in 1920, are well known for effecting a reconciliation between Hispanics and Sephardim in America. Benardete, whose dissertation, *Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews*, was first published by the Hispanic Institute in 1953, became director of the institute's Sephardic Studies Section (Sección de Estudios Sefardíes) in the late 1920s. Under Benardete's direction, the Sephardic Section sponsored lectures on Sephardic civilization, generated articles for the institute's *Revista Hispánica Moderna*, published a Ladino/Spanish commemorative volume on the medieval Spanish-Jewish poet, Yehuda Halevi, and even staged dramatic performances in Judeo-Spanish.



Moise Gadol, the editor of
La America
(American Jewish Archives)

And yet, historical legacies threatened to tear asunder the alliances forged by these two branches of the Spanish Diaspora. Many Sephardim were tormented by their traumatic memories of Iberia, particularly the Inquisition and the Expulsion of 1492. These memories led them to distance themselves from their Hispanic heritage and to seek identification with the Jewish people as a whole and with Jewish nationalistic movements. In the teens, for example, Moise Gadol (1874–1941), editor of the first American Ladino tabloid, *La America*, vehemently rejected overtures by the Spanish American press and the Spanish

ambassador in Washington to repatriate Sephardim to Spain. Gadol's response to these campaigns was that Sephardim had still not forgotten the bitterness of the "cruel and barbaric" Inquisition and that the only land of resettlement for all Jews was Palestine. Gadol even claimed that Sephardim spoke Ladino against their will and only because their ancestors had failed to revive the ancient Hebrew language. Rejecting all national ties with Spain, Gadol asserted that the only remedy for Sephardim was to "work for the honor and dignity of our nation under the new national Jewish ideal, Zionism."⁴ During the teens, a lively debate developed between Sephardim and Spanish Americans on whether or not the anti-Semitism of the Spanish people was merely a phenomenon of the past.

Sephardic interactions with non-Jewish Hispanics in America can be attributed to both "push" and "pull" factors. On the one hand, due to their unfamiliar physiognomy, language, culture, and religious rites, coupled with their ignorance of Yiddish and Eastern European culture, Eastern Sephardim were simply not recognized as Jews by their Ashkenazic brethren. This phenomenon, which I have termed "co-ethnic recognition failure,"⁵ cannot be attributed to social snobbery but rather to a genuine ignorance that "Spanish"-speaking, Mediterranean-featured individuals could indeed be Jewish. On the other hand, many of the cultural and historical traits that set Eastern Sephardim apart from Ashkenazic immigrants simultaneously drew them toward non-Jewish Hispanics, particularly in New York, which is to be the focus of this essay.

New York City, the largest Judeo-Spanish center in America, was also the birthplace of the American Ladino press, the most important primary source on the history of Levantine Sephardim in the United States. The American Ladino press, which encompasses at least nineteen publications published from 1910 to 1948,⁶ is the richest, most comprehensive record of the experience of Ladino-speaking immigrants in this country. With the exceptions of the works of Joseph Papo and Marc D. Angel,⁷ American Ladino periodicals remain largely unexplored and untreated in scholarly accounts. This essay will feature two excerpts from the Ladino press that shed light on the interactions between Hispanics and Sephardim in early-twentieth-century New York. These excerpts illuminate the forces that alternately drew Hispanics and Sephardim together and tore them asunder.

The first document is entitled "Postemas de Mujer" and was written

by Bula Satula, which is a pseudonym of Moise B. Soulam. It appeared in the Ladino paper *La Vara* on November 30, 1928.

One of the most vibrant and socially revealing portrayals of the immigrant Sephardic community is an advice column written by the Salonikan immigrant, Moise Soulam (1890–1967). Soulam is probably the closest Sephardic parallel to Abraham Cahan, a founding editor of the New York Yiddish newspaper, the *Forward*, who also became renowned for his advice columns. Like Cahan, Soulam also wrote an advice column but one that differed from the “letters to the editor” style Cahan embraced. While Cahan “doctored” or even invented many of the letters he published, Soulam tampered with his very authorial identity.⁸ Writing under the female pseudonym of “Tía Satula” (“Aunt Satula”) or “Bula Satula,” Soulam variably entitled his columns “Palabras de Mujer” (“Words of a Woman”) and “Postemas de Mujer” (“Pet Peeves of a Woman”). These columns appeared sometimes intermittently in the newspapers *La America*, *El Progreso* and *La Vara* from 1913 until 1934. Written in a popular Ladino idiom and peppered with humor, ironic proverbs, and slang, this column’s stated purpose was “to proffer good morals to the people, and to counsel women to take the right path in this blessed city.” The column dealt with issues such as gambling, bargaining in public marketplaces, rowdy social gatherings, and ostentatious dress and makeup. Its main intention was to advocate the acculturation of Sephardic women into American society and to criticize Sephardic vices through social satire.

“Postemas de Mujer” is especially significant to modern Jewish history because it features one of the numerous Ladino words that have infiltrated the modern Hebrew language, albeit with some alteration in meaning. In modern Hebrew slang, a “postema” alternately refers to a “pain in the neck,” an “airhead,” a “bitch,” or an “idiot” and, as an adjective, denotes “feckless.”⁹ In the Ladino language, “postema” refers to a pustule, which until the discovery of antibiotics was incurable. Figuratively, a “postema” in Ladino is something extremely worrisome or bothersome. As Moise Soulam employed the term, a “postema” denoted any of the irritating phenomena the columnist encountered in his daily life within the Sephardic community and sought to decry.

The installment I have chosen is one testimony to the intense relations between Ladino-speaking Sephardim and Puerto Ricans in East Harlem (Spanish Harlem), where both groups had formed sub-

stantial subethnic communities by the 1930s (Hispanic East Harlem being known as "El Barrio" and Sephardic Harlem being known as a "Little Jerusalem"). Because Soulam's columns blend fiction with reality, they are thus filled with paradoxes. The principal paradox surrounds the author himself, a young man in his early twenties writing under the guise of a matronly woman. This initial departure from reality casts some doubt on the authenticity of the events and individuals described by "Aunt Satula" and "Bula Satula." However, much of the information transmitted by Soulam through his invented character finds echoes in the nonfictional sections of the Ladino press and is also corroborated by outside sources.

For example, the Sisterhood of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue interviewed a Dr. H. Goldstein of the Jewish Center on December 18, 1926, and reported that Goldstein "stated that Porto [sic] Ricans (non-Jews) in large numbers had moved to the district of his center [Harlem] and had driven out the Sephardim because of the fear of intermarriage, many moving to the Bronx — one group forming a Synagogue in the Grand Concourse."¹⁰ Anxiety about intermarriage with Puerto Ricans and other non-Jewish Mediterranean peoples is reflected in other installments of "Postemas de Mujer." Puerto Ricans were also linked, often as pimps and "madams," to a growing problem of prostitution in the Sephardic community of Harlem. This installment subtly suggests such a link when the Puerto Rican man Soulam describes mistakenly identifies as prostitutes the two Sephardic women he encounters. This installment also speaks to the concern of many Sephardic leaders about the sexual victimization of Ladino-speaking females, both girls and married women.¹¹

The second document is entitled "La Espania i los Sefaradím," which appeared in the Ladino newspaper *La America* on June 25, 1915. Its author was probably Moise Gadol.

Efforts to repatriate Ladino-speaking Jews to Spain intensified after Angel Pulido's "discovery" of the Ladino-speaking Sephardim during his voyage on the Danube in the late 1800s.¹² Besides the obvious romantic motivations of returning the "*españoles sin patria*" ("Spaniards without a homeland") to their ancestral land, Spain also harbored economic and political motives, particularly through its desire to establish an economic and political stronghold in the Ottoman Empire.

The second document demonstrates how Sephardim influenced

Spaniards in New York and how the interactions between Spaniards and Sephardim forced the latter to confront their latent feelings for Spain. The opinion of Moise Gadol reflects that of many of the leading Sephardic leaders of New York, who reacted negatively to Spanish overtures calling for the repatriation of Ladino-speaking Jews to Spain. Joseph Gedalecia, president of the Federation of Oriental Jews, declared in 1915 his dismay that Spain could ever imagine it might have succeeded in convincing Sephardim to return to their ancestral land, "to the land which had burned, massacred and hunted down their ancestors." "The Jews of the Orient," Gedalecia explained, "though they have no feeling of resentment or animosity against Spain, have not forgotten the sufferings of their ancestors."¹³ With similar misgivings, Alberto Pessah, in a letter to the *American Hebrew*, pointed out that "the Jews are at liberty there [in Spain] [only] if they are not recognized as such." Noting that the Decree of Expulsion had not yet been repealed, Pessah wondered if the editor of the *American Hebrew* might "verify this and, if found true, try to intervene with the Spanish Embassy in this country with a view to having the decree revoked."¹⁴ In the second document here, Moise Gadol confirmed that Sephardic businessmen living in Spain were indeed fearful of being identified as Jewish. Gadol, an ardent Zionist, insisted that the land of Israel, not Spain, was the true homeland not only of Sephardim but of Jews throughout the Diaspora. And yet, the relationship between Sephardim and Hispanics was not settled, despite Gadol's proclamations, and continued to color the debates appearing in the American Ladino press and the very lives of Sephardic and Hispanic newcomers in New York City.

Document #1: "Pet Peeves of a Woman," by Bula Satula (Pseudonym of Moise B. Soulam), *La Vara*, November 30, 1928

Dear *Vara* of my soul,

Wherever it may be, I am always hit in the face by a pet peeve, some vexation and angst, due to the misbehavior of certain of our women who still do not know whether they are in New York, in the city of the veritable Tower of Babel, where many languages are spoken, or whether they are living in the old Turkey, where our women used to speak not only shouting through the streets, but also moving their hands and feet.

Here it is the same, with some of our women, who, without even

knowing who is sitting by their side, in the car, elevated train and subway, go around speaking to each other in Spanish, and shouting as if they were litigating.

If I write this to you, *Vara* of my heart, it is because on Monday, two Sephardic women living in the section of Harlem, were on the elevated, returning from downtown to their homes, speaking not only shouting, but also gesticulating with their hands.

What was remarkable about the conversations that the women in question were having on the elevated, was that one of them was speaking about matters between husband and wife. The woman speaking should have spoken to her friend either very softly or when they were alone in their homes.

Besides this, they began to mock in Spanish a fat man who was sitting in front of them, and began to say things about him, both truths and untruths, ugly words that would make you want to block your ears.

Everything was going fine until the two women left the station at 116th Street, but as they walked down the stairs, they found themselves behind a Puerto Rican good-for-nothing, to whom they did not pay attention at first.

The women were walking on 116th Street, returning to their homes, and the Puerto Rican also continued to walk behind them.

The two ladies turned onto Park Avenue, when the Puerto Rican suddenly came to their side. After greeting them in Spanish, he invited the two to come to his house....

You can well imagine that the two Sephardic women did not answer him, and the Puerto Rican continued to follow them. But, seeing that he was not getting any response either to his greeting or to his inauspicious invitation, he ventured to speak a few dirty words to the two Sephardic women, who answered him brazenly:

- What do you think we are? Get out of here before we call a policeman.

Upon hearing this, the Puerto Rican told them:

- Excuse me, ladies, as I was sitting next to you on the elevated, I heard that you were speaking in Spanish some words that you will readily recall, and I thought that you two were...

Thus saying, the Puerto Rican started walking rapidly, or, better said, started running, before the two women could call a police agent. ...

Don't ask me, dear *Vara*, how I came to know this, since my Grandmother used to say, "do not pay money to learn a secret."¹⁵ This

applies even more in this case, since women cannot keep secrets. These two ladies told the story to their female neighbors, their female neighbors told their nieces, their nieces told their girlfriends, their girlfriends told their husbands, and before you could say "and the cat came and ate the kid, and the dog came and bit the cat,"¹⁶ I also got a bite of this gossip. What I mean to say is that I came to know the matter and told it to you so that this may serve as a lesson for those women of ours who, when they find themselves on the streets or in cars, on the elevated and in subways, that they be careful not to speak shouting, since, as I told you before, New York resembles the Tower of Babel. Here there are peoples and individuals who speak various languages, and without knowing or thinking about it, we can be heard, understood, and accused by strangers, and the best thing of all is to behave yourself while talking, with which I remain your,

Bula Satula

Document #2: "Spain and the Sephardim," *La America*, June 25, 1915

This week, in all of the Jewish and American newspapers of New York, important articles appeared regarding the question of Spain and the Jews. The Spanish government has launched an official campaign, calling Jews to return to Spain, promising them mountains of gold.

Mr. Oscar Straus¹⁷ and Mr. Levy Friedman of New York were invited by the Spanish ambassador of Washington to develop a campaign in favor of a return of the Jews to Spain. These Jewish diplomats at first believed that an immigration of Jews to Spain, and especially of Spanish-speaking Sephardim of the Balkan countries of Salonika and Turkey, would be favorable to our own Jews. They were and possibly still are convinced that the Spain of today is no longer the old Spain of Torquemada and the auto-da-fé.

The Jewish newspapers of our brothers the Ashkenazim of New York categorically oppose such an emigration. They say that our brothers, although in dire straits due to the wars and political situation of those countries, should not commit an unpardonable crime of returning to a country from which they were expelled 400 years ago after the cruel and barbaric Inquisition. Some of these Jewish newspapers say that the Spain of today is no less than the Spain of 400 years ago. Their informants say that the anti-Jewish laws of old times have still not been abandoned until the present day.

On this occasion, we take it upon ourselves as our duty to clarify

that a few months ago, our editorial offices received various letters from Madrid and Barcelona from a few of our Sephardim who emigrated from America there [to Spain] for business. They begged us to send them our newspaper well wrapped so that it would not be seen that this is a Jewish newspaper, being that they find it better not to declare themselves as Jews, seeing the antagonism of the Spanish Catholic people for the Jewish element. It was very strange for us to receive such letters, after having read various times about the campaign of the Spanish government begging our Jews to return to Spain. The publications of the Yiddish newspapers make us see the truth of these letters.¹⁸

Two years ago we published the fact that our editor was begged by the Spanish Catholic newspapers, "Las Novedades" ["The News"] and "La Prensa" ["The Press"] of New York to undertake a campaign in favor of making our Spanish Jews return to their native country, Spain, to which we responded: that we cannot undertake such a campaign knowing the sad history of the Inquisition and that we would not be so ignorant as to return to a country that left us with such sad memories. It was clarified to them that we labor for the honor and dignity of our nation under the new Jewish national ideal (Zionism) to make our people return to our ancient fatherland, "Palestine," and never to another country in any part of the world, being that our conviction is that only in this way will the Jewish question be resolved. These editors saw that they did not find in us a Samuel Levy of Salonika¹⁹ or a Doctor Yahuda²⁰ of Jerusalem. They returned to their talk, begging us to allow them to embrace us because we speak their language, which remained our inheritance. To this we responded that we speak and write this language against our will, being that our ancestors did not take pains to resurrect our own ancient Hebrew language, but that our generation is developing the greatest activity to resurrect our maternal Hebrew language, which will no doubt be realized.

In this way, we made ourselves understood that we will never return to Spain, and to Mr. Straus and Mr. Friedman we respond that we do not concur with their idea, but rather adhere to the idea [expressed in] all of our Jewish newspapers [i.e., Zionism]. And if these gentlemen intend to do us good regarding matters of language, we say to them that our Jews, speaking only Spanish, if they find difficulty in immigrating to America because of the language, are already finding a remedy by immigrating to where the Spanish language is spoken, including Cuba, Texas, and other United States where Spanish is

spoken, as well as to Panama, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, etc. in South America.

Aviva Ben-Ur is an American Jewish historian specializing in Ladino and Sephardic studies. She received her Ph.D. from Brandeis University's Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department in 1998 and is currently the Hazel D. Cole Fellow in Jewish Studies at the University of Washington.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Dr. Isaac Jerusalem of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, for his assistance with the Ladino translations. This essay represents part of an early draft of my project, "The Hispanic/Sephardic Connection: Jews, Latinos, and the Legacy of Spain in Early Twentieth Century America," for which I have been recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. I thank the NEH for its generous support.

2. Estimates of Jewish immigration from the Middle East vary widely. See Aviva Ben-Ur, "Where Diasporas Met: Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews in the City of New York: A Study in Intra-Ethnic Relations, 1880–1950" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1998), appendix 10. The American Sephardic population was estimated in 1926 at 50,000 to 60,000. See Louis M. Hacker, "The Communal Life of the Sephardic Jews of New York City," *Jewish Social Service Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (December 1926): 34. Hacker calls 40,000 a "conservative" estimate.

3. Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, "Puerto Ricans," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), 858–67. A similar pattern has emerged in Canada, where, according to a study from the 1980s, French-speaking Mizrahi Jews have married fellow non-Jewish Francophones more often than Ashkenazim. See Rebecca Posner, "Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Quebecois: Jewish Politics in Multicultural Canada," in *The Narrow Bridge: Jewish Views on Multiculturalism*, ed. Marla Brettschneider (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 79, 85.

4. Moise Gadol, *La America*, June 25, 1915, 5.

5. See Ben-Ur, "Where Diasporas Met," 55 ff.

6. See Aviva Ben-Ur, "The Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) Press in the United States, 1910–1948," in *Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literature*, ed. Werner Sollors (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 64–77.

7. See especially Joseph M. Papo, *Sephardim in Twentieth Century America: In Search of Unity* (San Jose: Pelé Yoetz Books and Judah L. Magnes Museum, 1987), and Marc Dwight Angel, *La America: The Sephardic Experience in the United States* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982).

8. On Cahan's alteration of Bintl Brief letters see Abraham Cahan's autobiography, *Bleter fun Mayn Leben* (1928), 471–86; I. Chaiken, *Yidische Bleter in Amerika* (1946), 191, as quoted in Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 533–37; George Wolfe, "The 'Bintl Brief' of 'the Jewish Daily Forward' as an Immigrant Institution and a Research Source" (master's thesis, Graduate School for Jewish Social Work, 1933); and Jeremy Dauber, "Worthy Editor: Theorizing the Advice

Column by Looking at the Jewish Daily Forward's Bintl Briv" (bachelor's thesis, Harvard University, Department of Social Studies, 1995). I thank Jeremy Dauber and Daniel Soyer for these citations.

9. See Hayim Baltzan's Latin-scripted *Webster's New World Hebrew Dictionary* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1992), 345, where the word *poostermah* is defined as a slang noun meaning "a pain in the neck." See also Shimsohn Inbal's *Hebrew/American/English/Hebrew User-Friendly Dictionary* (Jerusalem: S. Zack, 1992), 388, where the word is defined as "airhead; bitch; idiot; feckless."

10. Alice David Menken, "Report on Conference Members from Board of Directors of Sisterhood." According to this notice, present at the meeting were Miss Sarah Lyons, Mrs. N. Taylor Phillips, Miss N. Levy, and Mrs. M[ortimer] Menken (Alice David Menken). Sisterhood Archives, Congregation Shearith Israel, New York.

11. Moise Gadol, editor of *La America*, began to write about Sephardic prostitution as early as 1913. See his "Los Suzios Aktos Entre Nuestros Turkinos de Nev York," *La America*, August 22, 1913, 3. See also Jacques Hattem, "El Kavzo de White Slavery kon un Turkinio," *La America*, February 13, 1914, and report of Alice Davis Menken to Martha B. Bruere, December 7, 1926, Sisterhood Archives, Congregation Shearith Israel. See the discussion of Sephardic prostitution in Ben-Ur, "Where Diasporas Met," 204–12.

12. Angel Pulido, *Españoles sin Patria y la Raza Sefardí* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1993). This book was first published in Madrid in 1905.

13. Joseph Gedalecia, "Spain and the Jews," letter to the *American Hebrew*, July 1, 1915, 7.

14. A. Pessah, "Spain and the Jews," *American Hebrew*, November 25, 1921, 40; translated to the Ladino in *La Luz*, December 11, 1921, 4.

15. The implication is that in a very short time the secret will be common knowledge and, therefore, it is not worthwhile to pay money for a secret.

16. From "Had Gadya," a traditional song in the Passover Haggadah.

17. Oscar Solomon Straus (1850–1926) was a diplomat, author, public servant, and jurist. He served as minister (1887–89 and 1898–1900) and ambassador (1909–10) to Turkey and was the first Jew to hold a cabinet post, serving as Theodore Roosevelt's secretary of commerce and labor from 1906 to 1909. Straus was opposed to political Zionism but supported territorialist ideas for the settlement of persecuted Jews. See Naomi W. Cohen and Hanns G. Reissner, "Straus," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 430–31.

18. The Yiddish press generally reacted negatively toward the issue of Sephardic repatriation to Spain. Gadol's fluency in German enabled him to read and speak Yiddish with some degree of fluency. The early issues of his newspaper include a number of articles in Yiddish, indicating that he was a reader of the Yiddish press.

19. Sam Saadi Levy (1870–1959) was a Salonikan-born journalist. At an early age, Levy moved to Paris but returned to Salonika in 1898, where he collaborated in the newspapers *La Epoca* (Ladino), founded in 1875, and *Journal de Salonique* (French), founded in 1895. He also wrote and edited the satirical *El Kirbatch* ("The Whip"), the model for the short-lived American Ladino tabloid of 1917, *El Kirbatch Amerikanano*. In 1905, fleeing censorship, Levy settled in Zemlin, Austria, where he founded the French newspaper, *Le Rayon*, and the Ladino newspaper, *El Luzero*, both intended for circulation in Turkey. During the Young Turk revolution of 1908 he returned to Salonika where he resumed editorship of *La Epoca* and *Journal de Salonique*. He even-

tually settled in Paris, where he launched *Cahiers Sefardis*, a magazine featuring historical, social, and economic studies on Near Eastern Jewish communities. Levy's relationship to Spain is unknown to me at this time. See Joseph Neipris, "Levy, Sam Saadi," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 164.

20. Abraham Shalom Yahuda (1877–1951) was a Jerusalem-born orientalist of Baghdadi descent. He studied Semitics at Heidelberg and Strasbourg and from 1904 to 1914 lectured at the Berlin Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums. From 1914 to 1922 he served as professor at the University of Madrid. During World War I, while in Madrid, he attempted to convince King Alfonso XIII to intercede with the emperors of Germany and Austria on behalf of the Jews of the land of Israel, a move later criticized by Chaim Weizmann in his autobiography, *Trial and Error* (New York, 1949). In response, Yahuda published *Dr. Weizmann's Errors on Trial* (1952). Yahuda became a professor at the New School for Social Research in New York in 1942 and died in New Haven, Connecticut. See Martin Meir Plessner, "Yahuda, Abraham Shalom," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 703.