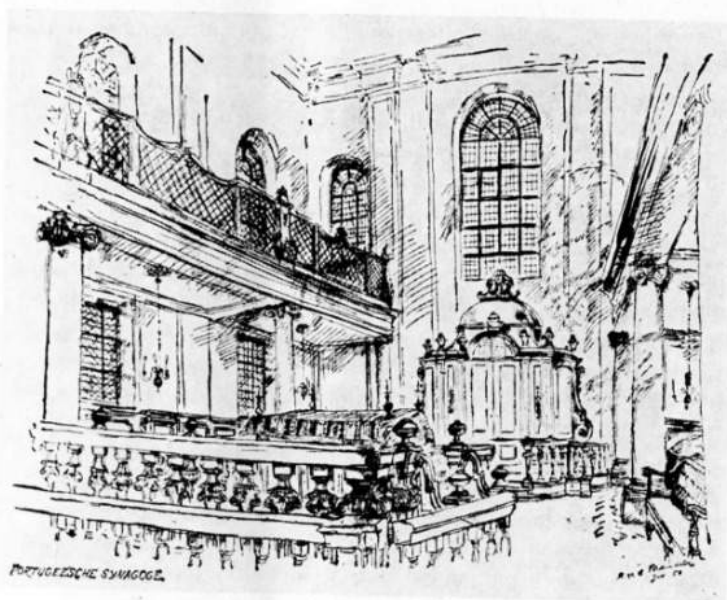


SEPHARDIC HERITAGE



The Esnoga, Amsterdam (1673).

The Strange Odyssey of "Bendigamos"

by H. P. SALOMON

In contradistinction to the rich heritage of Spanish and Spanish-Jewish folklore which adds so much to the culture of the Oriental Sephardim, only one Spanish-language hymn is known today in some Western Sephardi congregations. It may be heard every year in the *Sukkah* of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue "Shearith Israel" in New York after the completion of the Grace in Hebrew. It is called *Bendigamos* after its opening word and is chanted to the typically Western Sephardi tune of *Az Yashir Moshé*, the song of the Red Sea Crossing. For many members of Ashkenazi background it represents the first and only contact with the Hispanic culture of the Sephardim. Some visitors to the congregational *Sukkah* may imagine that 20th century New Yorkers are chanting the same Spanish words as did their 17th century spiritual ancestors in Amsterdam and New Amsterdam, perhaps continuing a tradition harking back to the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry. In this study I shall investigate the hymn's history and place of origin as well as demonstrate the accidental nature of its transmission to and preservation in the New York congregation.

The enlightening article by Professor Cecil Roth on "The Rôle of Spanish in the Marrano Diaspora"¹ gives the following basic information:

"A Spanish table-hymn, *Bendigamos al altísimo*, vaguely survived until recently in the South of France . . . and does still, though through sheer romanticism, in New York . . . It was formerly current in Bordeaux, Bayonne, Amsterdam and the West Indies, but never, apparently, in London. For text cf. (M. Kayserling, "Notes sur la littérature des Juifs hispano-portugais") *Revue des Etudes Juives*, (1891) XXII, 124: it is included in the Table-Hymns for the use of the congregation Shearith Israel of New York, ed. D. de Sola Pool (Jerusalem, 1932)."

During an extended sojourn in Amsterdam (1954-1958) I heard the *Bendigamos* sung in the congregational *Cabana* (*Sukkah*) just as in New York, whence had come printed copies, but an elderly lady informed me that the *Bendigamos* which she had heard in her youth was simpler and shorter. The *Haham* of the Amsterdam congregation, the Very Rev. Solomon Rodrigues Pereira, provided me with some additional facts. The *Bendigamos* has never been

¹Professor Herman P. Salomon teaches French Literature of the Seventeenth Century at the State University of New York at Albany.

BENDIGAMOS

1.
 Bendigamos al Altísimo,
 Al Señor que nos crió,
 Dígnosle agradecimiento
 Por los bienes que nos dió.
*Alabado sea su Santo Nombre,
 Porque siempre nos apiadó.
 Loyal al Señor que es bueno,
 Que para siempre su merced.*

2.
 Bendigamos al Altísimo,
 Por su Ley primeramente,
 Que liga a nuestra raza
 Con el cielo continuamente.
*Alabado sea su Santo Nombre,
 Porque siempre nos apiadó.
 Loyal al Señor que es bueno,
 Que para siempre su merced.*

3.
 Bendigamos al Altísimo,
 Por el pan segundamente,
 Y también por los manjares
 Que comimos juntamente.
*Pues cominos y bebimos alegremente,
 Su merced nunca nos faltó.
 Loyal al Señor que es bueno,
 Que para siempre su merced.*

4.
 Bendita sea la casa esta,
 El hogar de su presencía,
 Donde guardamos su fiesta
 Con alegría y permanencia.
*Alabado sea su Santo Nombre,
 Porque siempre nos apiadó.
 Loyal al Señor que es bueno,
 Que para siempre su merced.*

הודו ליי כי טוב כי לעולם הסדר

printed in Amsterdam. It was first introduced there by his great-uncle, *Haham* Aron Mendes Chumaceiro, upon the latter's return to Amsterdam in 1868 from a twelve-year term as *Haham* of Congregation "Mikveh Israel" in Curaçao, Dutch West Indies.²

The shorter version of the *Bendigamos* brought to Amsterdam in 1868 is no doubt the same as the one that was published by M. Kayserling in the *Revue des Etudes Juives* of 1891 (see Appendix). How did the expanded New York version come to be? An early printing of the four-page *Bendigamos*-leaflet (see illustration) distributed to visitors of the *Sukkah* in New York's "Shearith Israel" bears the mention that the English "translation" facing the Spanish text was made by the Rev. Joseph Corcos who was *Hazan* of "Shearith Israel" from 1919 to 1922.³ From 1896 to 1898 Corcos had been *Hazan* in Curaçao. A native of Mogador (Morocco), Corcos had acquired fluent English during two terms as *Hazan* in Kingston, Jamaica (B.W.I.) and modern Spanish during extensive travel through South America.⁴ He apparently brought the *Bendigamos* from Curaçao to Jamaica and New York, embellished the Spanish text and adapted it into English. We can surmise that the *Bendigamos* was unknown in Jamaica before 1900, in New York before 1919.⁵

BENDIGAMOS

(Translated by the Rev. Joseph Corcos)

1.
 O let us bless the Lord most high,
 The God whom we adore,
 Give thanks unto His Holy Name,
 And praise Him evermore.
*O praise and glorify His Name,
 Our Rock, our Shield, our Guide,
 Whose love and mercy e'er the same
 Shall with us e'er abide.*

2.
 O bless the Lord, whose gracious hand
 Hath saved from all disgrace
 And led in glorious mission here
 His chosen people's race.
*O praise and glorify His Name,
 Our Rock, our Shield, our Guide,
 Whose love and mercy e'er the same
 Shall with us e'er abide.*

3.
 O praise the Lord who giveth us
 Each day our daily bread,
 To Him let praises e'er ascend,
 By whose kind hand we're fed.
*O praise and glorify His Name,
 Our Rock, our Shield, our Guide,
 Whose love and mercy e'er the same
 Shall with us e'er abide.*

4.
 O blessed be this holy fane
 Where songs ascend on high,
 Where feasts and blessings ne'er will fail
 With His blest presence nigh.
*O praise and glorify His Name,
 Our Rock, our Shield, our Guide,
 Whose love and mercy e'er the same
 Shall with us e'er abide.*

הודו ליי כי טוב כי לעולם הסדר

Corcos added a new stanza concerning the *Torah*: *Que liga a nuestra raza con el cielo continuamente*. Corcos may have blundered by using the word *raza* which has always been avoided by Spanish-speaking Jews.⁶ From the beginning of the 16th century the word has taken on the pejorative connotation of "vile Jewish blood."⁷ No doubt desirous of showing that a Jew's first concern is not with bread, Corcos unwittingly provides the basis for an even graver misunderstanding.⁸

The older Spanish text cannot have originated in Curaçao for the same reason that it could not have originated in New York or Amsterdam. The predominant language of the Jews of Curaçao was Portuguese. Only after 1820 did Castilian begin to replace Portuguese among them and only after 1865 Castilian definitely supplanted it.⁹ A song like *Bendigamos* would not have gained popularity with Curaçaoan Sephardim of the 17th or 18th centuries.

This line of reasoning leaves only one possible region of origin for *Bendigamos*, excluding the hypothesis of its having come from the Spanish-speaking Oriental communities, where it is unknown.¹⁰ The Sephardi congregations of Bordeaux, Bayonne and several small towns near Bayonne are the only ex-Marrano communities which were exclusively Spanish-speaking in the 17th century.¹¹ Indeed, the Portuguese language was apparently not in use there, either in the synagogue or in the home.¹² It is conceivable that these congregations restricted themselves to the label "Portuguese" out of political expediency and that nearly all the founders were born in Spain.¹³ The "missing link" between Curaçao and France is



Music of *Bendigamos* (A. L. Cardozo, Music of the Sephardim, N. Y., 1960, 69)



Haham A. M. Chumaceiro

provided by a footnote in Kayserling's article of 1891. The latter, who lived in Hungary, had recourse to a certain J.-C. Molina of Paris for linguistic information about the Jews of Bordeaux:

Le texte espagnol (de *Bendigamos*), nous écrit M. Molina, nous a été fourni par M. Elie Lévi Maduro, administrateur du temple de la rue Buffault, à Paris . . ."

The distinguished Levi Maduro family migrated from Amsterdam to Curaçao during the 17th century and flourished on the island, producing rabbis, *hazanim* and more recently businessmen and bankers.¹⁴ The member of this clan who was a *parnas* in the "Portuguese" synagogue of Paris must have passed on the text of *Bendigamos* to his brothers or cousins on the Dutch island at the very time when the Jews of Curaçao had become Spanish-speaking. Conversely, because of his Curaçao background, Elie Levi Maduro of Paris seems to have been one of the very few French Jews capable of transcribing the Spanish text in 1891.¹⁵

The last part of Kayserling's footnote tells us that *Bendigamos*

" . . . fut traduit en vers français, il y a environ un demi-siècle, par M. Lévi Alvarès, et il figure dans l'annuaire israélite bordelais de M. Mardochée Molina, ministre-officiant."

From 1874 to 1880 there appeared every year in Bordeaux a Jewish almanac published by *Le Chevalier* Mardochée Molina, *Hazan* of the congregation. Each issue contains a French adaptation of *Bendigamos*.¹⁶ The J.-C. Molina of Paris who also transmitted this text to Kayserling may have been the son of the Bordeaux *Hazan*. Kayserling's assertion as to the author of the French adaptation (but not the approximate date) is confirmed by the *Catalogue des livres imprimés de la Bibliothèque Nationale*. The very same French *Bendigamos* (see illustration) is to be found in ten successive editions of Levi Alvarès' *Hymnes Sacrées à l'usage des Israélites français* published in Paris beginning in 1825.¹⁷

David Lévi Alvarès of Bordeaux lived from 1794 to 1870. He was the author of some 320 French textbooks and educational pamphlets the titles of which cover 13 double-columned pages of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* catalogue. They comprise long and short treatises on geography; cosmography; Universal, Roman and French history; dictation; physics; arithmetic and any other subject one could think of. He seems to have produced all the books prescribed for study in the newly created elementary school system of the post-Napoleonic era. In 1825, when the first edition of his hymns appeared, he organized in Paris enormously popular

HYMNE D'ACTION DE GRACES

Après le repas,

Imitées de l'Ébreu et de l'Espagnol.

AIR de *Bendigamos*.

Béni soit la Toute-Puissance
Qui sur nous verse, chaque jour,
Les trésors de sa bienfaisance
Et les trésors de son amour!
Oubliant de notre âme impure
Les travers et l'iniquité,
Il ne punit sa créature
Qu'en l'accablant de sa bonté.

Gloire au Roi de la nature,
Gloire à son ÉTERNITÉ!

Béni soit le Dieu secourable
Qui pourvoit à tous nos besoins;
Il appelle à sa sainte Table
Ses enfants heureux de ses soins
Celui qui blasphème ou murmure
Contre sa divine équité,
Doit sa vie et sa nourriture
À son immense charité.

Gloire au Roi de la nature,
Gloire à son ÉTERNITÉ!

Bénissez-nous, Dieu de lumière;
Éloignez de nous les malheurs,
Et sur notre famille entière
Répandez vos saintes faveurs.
Que la vertu, que la droiture
Inspire notre volonté,
Et que notre voix tendre et pure
Longtemps s'écrie avec gaité:

Gloire au roi de la nature,
Gloire à son ÉTERNITÉ!

Hymnes Sacrées

à l'usage des Israélites français,

Composées

Sur les Aires Hébraïques-Portugaises les plus
connues,

PAR D. L. . . .

Nations, chantez le Seigneur,
Peuples, chantez tous ses louanges.
(PSAUME 117.)



Auc. du Cimétière St. André de Bordeaux
1825.

HYMNES SACRÉS

à l'usage

DES ISRAÉLITES FRANÇAIS.

Composés

sur les Aires Hébraïques les plus connues.

PAR D. L. . . .



1^{re} édition. 20 centimes.

PARIS,

AT BUREAU DES ARCHIVES, Rue Pavée, 1. MARSEILLE,

M. J. CASTRO, rue Héboulle, n. 1.

BORDEAUX: MARDUCHÉE MOLINA, 22, R. d'Alsace. NANTES:

LEVI MADURO, 32, R. d'Alsace. D. M. CASTRO, au St-Gregoire

1825

weekly courses in baby-care for expectant mothers. In 1833 Lévi Alvarès founded what must have been Europe's first School of Education, giving weekly pedagogical sessions for a host of young, female elementary-school teachers at the Hôtel de Ville (City Hall of Paris).¹⁸ Lévi Alvarès' works and endeavors are now all but forgotten except perhaps for the French adaptation of *Bendigamos* which is not identified with his name.

Lévi Alvarès' French *Bendigamos* has a curiously deistic, perhaps even Spinozistic outlook. It presents a kind of secular theology, involving the idea that God rules through nature and inspires virtue; that all human beings receive the same bounty and must sing out their gratitude. This neatly sums up the "Judaism" adhered to by the Sephardim of Bordeaux through the centuries.¹⁹

The reference in Lévi Alvarès' booklet of 1825 to the Spanish *Bendigamos* is proof that it was current in Bordeaux at least until that date. The rubric: *Imitée de l'Hébreu et de l'Espagnol* which precedes the French adaptation corresponds to the text reproduced by Kayserling with its integrated Hebrew refrain, actually rhyming with the Spanish. It must have been written at a time when Spanish was still widely spoken. We can assume, I think, the place of composition to have been Bordeaux. The Spanish text would have been preserved if the hymn had been written in Bayonne because of the far more conservative attitude towards such relics in that community.²⁰ The fact that even in Bayonne only the French version of *Bendigamos* is known indicates that it was brought to that city at a late period when the Spanish one had already been forgotten in Bordeaux.

Thus we see that both the Spanish original and the French adaptation of *Bendigamos* were first published in the hymn's country of origin, although the latter 66 years before the former. By the mid-20th century the Spanish hymn might have disappeared had it not satisfied the need of a Sephardi identity-card in a North-American congregation with a largely Ashkenazi membership. There it seems assured of survival in its revised form after having gone into five printings.

In conclusion I should like to close the circuit that has taken us backwards in time and space from New York to Amsterdam, Curaçao, Paris, Bayonne and Bordeaux. The following eloquent lines were addressed to me in 1966 by a member of the Bordeaux congregation, upon his return home from a visit to "Shearith Israel" in New York:

"Bordeaux, le 30 mai 1966

"Cher Ami,

"*Bendigamos al Altísimo* . . . hymne antique qui rappelle aux juifs 'portugais' leur lointaine origine ibérique. Cependant, pour moi, aux premiers accents de cette action de grâce, ce n'est pas la vision de l'Espagne des siècles passés qui surgit dans mon esprit, mais bien le jeune et superbe New York 1966, qui semble s'élançer vers le ciel, pour confondre les visiteurs dans une contemplation méditative . . .

"Si vous étiez Français . . . et si comme vous vous le seriez promis, vous alliez visiter une synagogue dite 'portugaise,' sans trop croire que vous auriez le plaisir d'y voir exercer un rite tant soit peu ressemblant à celui que vos parents vous ont inculqué, vous diriez *dayénou*. Et si aux premiers chants qui viendraient frapper votre tympan, vous sentiez un léger frisson le long de votre épine dorsale, dû à l'émotion de découvrir cette ressemblance que vous n'osiez espérer, vous diriez *dayénou* . . . Mais si l'on vous emmenait chez le *Hazan* Monsieur Cardozo qui en signe de bienvenue se mettrait au piano pour jouer le "Bénéissons la Toute-Puissance" de votre enfance et que l'on vous remit en souvenir de votre passage le *Bendigamos* en version originale disparue de votre famille depuis plusieurs générations . . . vous ne diriez plus *dayénou*, mais, empruntant la langue de vos ancêtres: ES DEMASIADO."

Appendix

*Original version of BENDIGAMOS, first published in 1891.*²¹



Bendigamos a el Altísimo
Al Señor que nos criò
Démosle agradecimiento
Por los bienes que nos diò.
Alabado sea su santo nombre
Porque siempre nos apiadó
Loor! Adonai que bueno,
Que para siempre su merced.
Bendigamos a el Altísimo
Por el pan primeramente
Y después por los condumios²²
Que comimos juntamente.
Pues comimos y bebimos alegremente
Su merced nunca nos faltò
Odou l'Adonai ki tob
Ki légnolam hasdò.
Bendita sea la casa esta,
Que nunca manca²³ en ella fiesta
Tarde mañana (y) nuestra siesta²⁴
A nos, y a todos hijos de Israel.²⁵

◀ Portuguese Synagogue of Bordeaux (France)

¹ *Hispanic Studies in Honour of I. Gonzalez Llubera*, Oxford, 1959.

² By 1868 most Amsterdam Sephardim were so ignorant of the peninsular languages that they would not have known whether the *Bendigamos* was in Spanish or in Portuguese. Chumaceiro was the first Amsterdam *Haham* to preach in Dutch. He left Curaçao because of an ideological upheaval from which that community never recovered. Cf. I. S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of the Jews of Curaçao*, N. Y., 1957, 484-8.

³ Cf. D. and T. de Sola Pool, *An Old Faith in the New World*, N. Y., 1955, 184-5. It should be noted that the English text is never sung.

⁴ This information was kindly given me by his daughter, Mrs. John Hezekiah Levy.

⁵ Cf. *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, art. Kingston: "In 1941 there was still chanted in the Sukkah the *Bendigamos*, a Portuguese (*sic*) hymn . . ." Corcos later brought his *Bendigamos* to the "Shearith Israel" Congregation of Montreal, Canada, where he was *Hazan* from 1922 to 1925.

⁶ I am so informed by Professor M. J. Benardete.

⁷ Cf. Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana*; Corominas, *Diccionario Etimológico de la lengua Castellana*. Cf., however, the title of Senator A. Pulido's pro-Jewish book: *Españoles sin patria y la raza sefardí* (Madrid, 1905). Cf. also the constant use of "raza" with derogatory adjectives in J. Amador de los Rios, *Los Judíos de España*, Madrid, 1848.

⁸ Professor Américo Castro suggests that the Jews, not the Christians, introduced the concept of "race" into pre-expulsion Spain. Cf. his *Realidad Histórica de España*, Mexico, 1954, 500-505: ". . . la limpieza de sangre fué replica de una sociedad animada de furia antijudáica, al hermetismo racial del hebreo . . ." (505). It is therefore of the utmost importance to establish the recent date at which the word *raza* was added to the hymn under consideration.

⁹ Cf. I. S. Emmanuel, *op. cit.*, 112-3.

¹⁰ Typical ex-Marrano elements are the tune (the same wherever the hymn is sung) and the use of the literal (Ferrara) translation of Psalm 118, 1 (" . . . que para siempre su merced") and Psalm 55, 18 (*Tarde, mañana y siestas*). Both phrases frequently recur in the liturgy.

¹¹ Cf. A. Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews*, N. Y., 1968, 140-2, 203-5.

¹² Cf. A. Lévi, *Les vestiges de l'Espagnol et du Portugais chez les Israélites de Bayonne*, Bayonne, 1936; C. Cirot, "Recherches sur les Juifs Espagnols et Portugais à Bordeaux," *Bulletin hispanique*, 1906, 172-189; 1922, 203-224; H. Léon, "Les Juifs espagnols de Saint-Esprit: Chansons et Prières," *Bulletin hispanique*, 1907, 277-285; M. Kayserling, *Revue des Etudes Juives*, XXII, 119-124.

¹³ The original *Lettres patentes* of 1552 signed by Henry II and several times renewed by his successors welcomed Marranos to France under the name of "Portuguese Merchants." There was continual war between France and Spain which once actually led to an order for expulsion of Jews from the Bayonne area as potential enemy agents (cf. Hertzberg, *op. cit.*, 17). Most of the 17th-century ex-Marrano founders of Jewish communities in France bore Portuguese names as did many victims of the Spanish Inquisition during that century. I would suggest that the majority were "second-generation" Spaniards of Portuguese origin who had abandoned Portuguese. It should be noted that all the devotional literature written for and by the ex-Marranos of South-western France at the end of the 17th century was in Spanish.

¹⁴ Cf. I. S. Emmanuel, *op. cit.*, 209-212.

¹⁵ By 1887 no Jew in Bordeaux or Bayonne knew Spanish through parental transmission. The secretary of the Bordeaux congregation, employed there since 1865, remembered (in 1906) having heard *Bendigamos* during his childhood, sung first in Spanish, then in French. Cf. Cirot, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ These almanacs are to be found in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. They give interesting information on the old synagogue of Bordeaux which burned to the ground on June 7th, 1873, and was replaced by the existing structure (see illustration) on September 5th, 1882.

¹⁷ A "Word to the Reader" in the first edition contains the ingenuous remark: "Les Israélites sont d'un naturel chantant, surtout ceux qu'on appelle *Portugais*; mais la plupart ne comprennent pas ce qu'ils chantent . . ." The preface is much abridged in following editions and omits the reference to "Portugais."

¹⁸ Cf. *Grand dictionnaire universel Larousse du XIXe siècle*.

¹⁹ Talmudical study has always been considered superfluous in Bordeaux. Cf. the caustic observations by *Haham* Azulay in the 18th century (Hertzberg, *op. cit.*, 159-161).

²⁰ The Spanish version of a dirge for the 9th of Ab is still used in Bayonne whereas it has long ago disappeared from Bordeaux (Cf. *American Sephardi*, II, 1-2, 1968, 49-59). Bayonne is the only ex-Marrano congregation to still maintain the recitation in Spanish of the three *haftaroth* preceding the 9th of Ab. A Spanish hymn, *A vos benignes Señores*, was actually composed for the Bayonne synagogue during the 19th century and is still current. Bordeaux was the first of the ex-Marrano communities to abandon its Hispanic linguistic heritage. French replaced Spanish in the minute books by the second decade of the 18th century and Spanish died out shortly thereafter (Cf. Hertzberg, *op. cit.*, 140).

²¹ I have followed Léon (*op. cit.*, 282) in correcting the following obvious mistakes in transcription by Kayserling: Altissimo; creo; Demos le; alabada; ha piado; Por comimos; Bendito. I suspect that the third line of the second stanza should read, as in the Ferrara prayerbook: *Load a A. que bueno*.

²² *Conduimios*, "an ancient word of rustic origin" (cf. Covarrubias, *op. cit.*), applies specifically to "food that is eaten with bread." Cf. also Corominas, *op. cit.*

²³ This gallicism demonstrates that France, rather than Curaçao, is the place of origin. *Mancar* is also found in the Judeo-Spanish of the Balkans, but there it is a more recent Italianism.

²⁴ I have ventured to correct Kayserling's lesson: "es nuestra siesta," which does not make sense. Perhaps the original reading was: *y en las siestas*.

²⁵ The clumsiness of the last stanza makes me wonder if it was not composed at a later date than the four preceding ones. The hymn would end more naturally with the Hebrew quotation.

Lemi Ebkeh

by ALLAN CORRE

For whom shall I weep?
A solemn vigil keep?
And beat upon my breast,
And to my complaint
Give vent?
Shall it be for the House
Of God or for the Holy Ark
Where ravens dark
And foxes wild
Are sent?
Shall it be for the wise
Who on the Law knew to advise?
But the Talmud now—
On its study there's none
Intent.
Sucklings, children, women all are dead,
No more they raise the head.
The mighty foe came by,
Slaughtered, pillaged and raped
And went.

NOTE: This is very free translation of the Lament Lemi Ebkeh sung in Sephardic Synagogues on the eve of the Fast of Ab commemorating the destruction of the Temple. The Hebrew poet can say that he "calls the porcupine his brother," and be understood, since that animal was supposed to live in deserted places (and also happens to rhyme with the verb "to mourn" in Hebrew) but this will not do in English. Yet an attempt is made to preserve the spirit and limping meter of the poem. It is symbolic of the Jew's longing for Jerusalem in all the years in which he was separated from her.

DR. ALLAN CORRE is Chairman of the Department of Hebrew Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

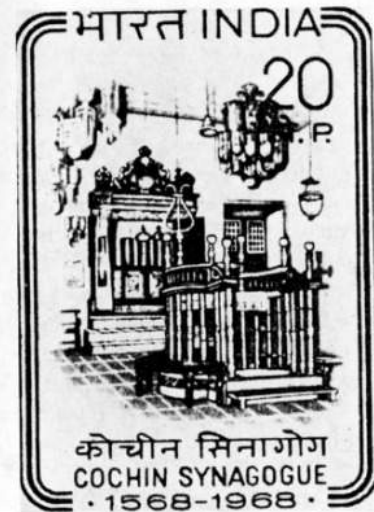
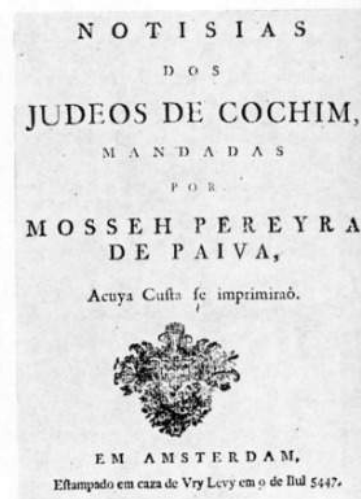
Sephardic Philately

*A Jewish Stamp Voyage from
India to Surinam: 1568-1968*

by ABRAHAM L. CARDOZO

The year 1968 marked the 400th anniversary of the Synagogue in Cochin, India. It also marked the 300th anniversary of the construction of the first Synagogue in the "Jewish Savannah" in the Dutch colony of Surinam, South America. This synagogue was replaced by a monumental structure inaugurated in 1685, which was later abandoned and is now but a ruin. Funds have been found to restore not merely the beautiful synagogue, but also the cemetery and the rest of the amazing Sephardi settlement. The work has begun in 1968.

There are several common denominators between these events. Both the Government of India and the Government of Surinam have issued special stamps (India one stamp, Surinam a set of three) to commemorate the occasion and to pay homage to their respective Jewish populations. Thus, for the first time in philatelic history, we see Synagogues on stamps; coincidentally, two coun-



The Rev. Abraham Lopes Cardozo, in the ministry of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in New York since 1946, previously served as spiritual leader of both the Sephardic and Ashkenazic congregations in Surinam.