

Invisible Sephardim

by Richard Kostelanetz (August 2015)

Rereading Ilan Stavans' [this table of contents](#). As far as I can tell, though this book includes Jewish Latinos with Ashkenazi names (Goldman, Dorfman), Sephardic writers still don't exist in Stavans' literary universe, Lord knows why not.

Some sense of the Sephardic experience in the Americas appears in a charming book that Stavans ignores (not even to mention), similarities in their titles notwithstanding Victor Perera's *The Cross and the Pear* (1995). Given that Stavans is the sort of writer who wants to tell readers all he knows, my hunch is that he may not know about Sephardic Americans and that, having gone from Mexico City to Amherst, he may not know anyone who would tell him what he does not know. On page 3, Stavans confesses, "My research into the Jewish-Hispanic tradition [is] still in a state of growth," which is another way of revealing that perhaps this attempt at a taste-making anthology has appeared too soon.

Individual entries on Richard Kostelanetz's work in several fields appear in various editions of *Readers Guide to Twentieth-Century Writers*, *Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia of Literature*, *Contemporary Poets*, *Contemporary Novelists*, *Postmodern Fiction*, *Webster's Dictionary of American Writers*, *The HarperCollins Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*, *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, *Directory of American Scholars*, *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in the World*, *Who's Who in American Art*, *NNDB.com*, *Wikipedia.com*, and *Britannica.com*, among other distinguished directories. Otherwise, he survives in New York, where he was born, unemployed and thus overworked. His many books are [here](#).

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