

The Double Life of Doctor Lopez – Spies,
Shakespeare and the plot to murder Elizabeth I by Dominic Green.
Century 2003.

For those who like their history books to read like detective stories The Double Life of Doctor Lopez by Dominic Green will be a delight.

Set in the swirling world of the Elizabethan court and rich in the characters and factions that moved around the Queen, jostling for position and constantly intriguing against each other, the central protagonist is a *converso* Jew, Roderigo Lopez.

Green starts his story – and an extraordinary story it is – with the particularly grisly execution of Lopez at Tyburn in 1594, following his conviction of plotting to poison Elizabeth I on behalf of Spain. He then tells a tale of cross and double cross and high level intrigue as those closest to the Queen and those who were opposed to her struggled for advantage.

Dominic Green is to be congratulated on bringing an era rich in individual and incident to life as well as detailing the way in which the figure of Dr Lopez has survived throughout subsequent history as the likely model on whom Shakespeare based the character of Shylock in the Merchant of Venice.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh