

# THE ABARBANEL PRESS HOUSE ©

## Introducing the Abarbanel Press House Newsletter



*"Be not astonished at new ideas; for it is well known to you that a thing does not therefore cease to be true because it is not accepted by many."*

Baruch Spinoza

The focus of the Abarbanel Press House Newsletter is to provide you with food for thought about the Iberian Jewish cultural legacy. A key goal of this newsletter is to serve as a gateway of information about Iberian Judaism to all those who wish to learn more about this small but significant community within the Jewish People. We wish to provide you with critical information from a historical and academic point of view, while giving way to artistic expressions in literature and the visual arts. We wish to expound on the issues that this community faced in the past, and often times, still faces today. It is our deepest wish that you enjoy reading from this publication! Bom Proveito!

## Why Abarbanel?



The Abarbanel family is one of the oldest and most distinguished Spanish families, which allegedly traces its origins back to King David. Members of this family have a long history of fighting for the preservation of the Iberian Jewish community. Its oldest representative, Don Isaac Abravanel, was the treasurer of the Catholic Monarchs at the time of the expulsion of the Jews of Spain in 1492. Abravanel tried reasoning, to no avail, with the Spanish Crown in order to avoid the great expulsion of the Jews. Today, the descendants of the Abarbanel family can still be found in the Iberian Peninsula, Holland, England, and Turkey. The founder of the Abarbanel Foundation, Rabbi Abraham Deleon Cohen, traces his matrilineal ancestry back to the Abarbanel's who settled in his native Ladino-speaking community in Istanbul, Turkey.

*Quien Camina por el Sol Sabe  
la Sabor de la Sombra.*

Whoever walks in the sun knows the  
pleas.

*"...and the captives of Jerusalem, who are  
in Sepharad, will possess the cities of the  
Negev."*

Obadiah 1:20



## Cultura Judeo Espanola

### The Candle Lighting Ladino Recitation

#### La Orasion De La Mujer (Ladino)

Kon estas kandelas  
Arrogamos al Dio  
El Dio de nuestros padres  
Avraham, Isak i Yaakov  
Ke moz de vida saludoza  
A todos miz keridoz  
I al mundo entero

*Kon estas kandelas  
Arrogamos al Dio  
El Dio de muestras madres  
Sarah, Rivka, Lea i Rachel  
Ke moz de vida saludoza  
A todos miz keridoz  
I al mundo entero*

#### The Woman's Prayer (English)

With these candles  
We pray to God  
The God of our fathers  
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob  
To grant us good life and health  
To all my dear ones  
And the whole world

With these candles  
We pray to God  
The God of our mothers  
Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel  
To grant us good life and health  
To all my dear ones and the whole world

#### Grace After Meals Prayer (Birkat Hamazon in Ladino)

Ya komimos, y bevimos, i al Dio santo Baruh Hu u-Baruh Shemo bendishimos; ke mos dio i mos dara pan para komer, i panyos para vistir i anyos para bivir. El Padre el grande ke manda al chiko asegun tenemos de menester para muestras kazas i para nuestros ijos. El Dio mos oiga i mos aresponda i mos apiade por su nombre el grande, somos almikas sin pekado. Hodu L'A' ki tov ki leolam hasdo. Hodu L'A' ki tov ki leolam hasdo. Siempre mijor, nunca peor, nunca mos manke la bendicion del Kriador. Amen.



#### Judaica Art:

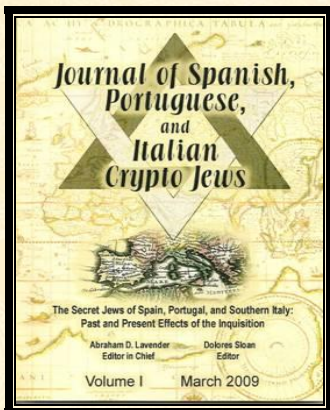
#### What Always Survives



Article by Suzan Kalil  
Curator of Exor Galleries

The painting, *What Always Survives*, pays homage to the suffering and continuous religious concealment of the Crypto-Jews of the XV Century. The simple, yet haunting composition of the painting presents a dramatic psychological atmosphere. Representing an era of turbulent times, the dark background is comprised of deep shades of sepia, red and smoked black hues melting into one another. The dominant figure, a Tallit (prayer shawl), is situated atop a crimson wooden box. Partially rolled and tucked into itself, the weight of the Tallit grips the top surface of the box as its body casually drapes alongside the front edge of the box just barely revealing a keyhole. A metaphor for the strength that was needed to balance religious conviction in spite of having to, at times, conceal identity, this Tallit emanates pride in being outside of the historical box of concealment. The obstructed keyhole suggests that perhaps the key to survival during times of imposed cultural hegemony is to live around or beyond or in spite of the constructs that are imposed upon us. In the bottom right of the painting, is the artist's signature bearing the same hue as the lock. Perhaps the key to cultural survival also lies in retelling the narrative of a people's journey with honor. Painstakingly working from an inner calling bestowed upon himself, artist Jonatas Chimen is part of this legacy of self-expression.

## Book Suggestion of the Month:



### *Journal of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian Crypto Jews*

An annual journal devoted to academic, peer-reviewed, and papers on the topic of Crypto Judaism is now available! It is being published by Florida International University in partnership with the Society for Crypto Jewish Studies. The editor-in-chief is Abraham Lavender, PhD, from FIU, former president of SCJS; the editor is Dolores Sloan, former editor of *HaLapid*, and the business manager is Arthur Benveniste. To order yours, e-mail: [lavender@fiu.edu](mailto:lavender@fiu.edu)



## The Jews of Bahia- Brazil

Reclaiming their Heritage – 400 years later

The presence of Portuguese New Christians (forcibly converted Jews) began with the discovery, conquest, and colonization of Brazil. When the tribunal of the Inquisition was established in Portugal (1536; operating until 1821), and after the first *auto-de-fé* (1540), the immigration of New Christians to the Brazilian colony grew, and many of them arrived in Bahia with the first governors. As of 1591, the Tribunal do Santo Ofício made several visits to Brazil, powers were delegated to some bishops, and clergymen would indict people for Jewish practices directly in Lisbon.

Today, despite the persecution that lasted over four centuries long, the Iberian Jewish community of Bahia is flourishing again. Families have come together and founded "*Kehilat Morasha Israel*", where they now celebrate their common heritage, and serve as a living testimony to the world that it is possible to overcome fierce persecution, and the luring invitation to lose themselves into assimilation. For more information about this emerging community, visit: [www.morashasisrael.com.br](http://www.morashasisrael.com.br)

(Source for historical background: [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/.../ejud\\_0002\\_0003\\_0\\_01878.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/.../ejud_0002_0003_0_01878.html))

**“The past, present and future are timelessly linked  
in the spinning circle of life.  
Our past was the seed that became the present.  
We can make it bloom in the future  
if we nurture it with love, respect, and  
understanding of the shared culture and heritage that we call life.**

By Steven Gorban

# Kozina Muestra

## Brazilian Crypto-Jewish Yellow Stew

A recipe from the Judaizer Dona Branca Dias (*A Drizzle of Honey*, by D. Gitlitz)



Heat some olive oil in a large stew pot over medium heat. Fry the garlic, bay leaves, and crushed birdseye peppers for about 3 minutes. Add the onions and fry until translucent, about 5 more minutes. Remove to a plate. Add more oil if need be, then cook the meat in a single layer until lightly browned on all sides, about 6 minutes. Do it in several batches if you have to. Stir the onion mixture back in. Add enough water to just barely cover the meat. Bring to a boil, then lower to a simmer, cover, and cook for 1 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally. Stir in 1 sliced mango, bulghur, saffron, allspice, salt, black pepper, and chipotle. Continue simmering, covered, for another 45-60 minutes, until the meat is tender. If it looks too watery, remove the lid during the last 15 minutes of cooking, and throw in some corn starch or other thickener if you like. I felt no need to do any of this, but you may wish to. Remove the bay leaves, and stir in the second sliced mango. As with most stews and curries, this actually tastes better the second day, after the flavors have had all night to meld together in the fridge. It has a bit of a kick to it, but not much. It is intensely flavorful. I can easily imagine 16th century Jewish women cooking this before sunset on Friday night, and leaving the pot covered, nestled by the banked fire, flavors building until they were ready to eat it on Saturday, when they could not cook because of Shabbat. (Source for text and picture: <http://www.groupprecipes.com/3416/crypto-jewish-brazilian-yellow-stew.html>. Adapted from *A Drizzle of Honey: The Life and Recipes of Spain's Secret Jews* by David M. Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson)

ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה כי לעולם חסדו  
 "With a strong hand and outstretched arm..."

In Affiliation with:



**צדקה**

**Contribute:**

We hope you enjoyed this free publication.

You can also participate in helping Iberian Judaism flourish!

Donate to the Abarbanel Foundation and extend a helping hand to communities of Iberian Jews from all over the world!

Contributions from within the U.S. are tax-deductible.



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