

## ‘The good woman makes the empty kitchen full’: The Culinary and Cultural Power of Sephardic Women

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Invoking the woman’s proper role and place, a Judeo-Spanish refrain asserts that *‘la mujer buena la casa vazia la aze yena’*: the good woman makes the empty kitchen full. Although the repertoire of Ladino sayings is full of references to women and appropriate female behaviour, there is perhaps no other refrain that so succinctly captures the Sephardic cultural perspective of the importance of her culinary role to a woman’s individual and communal identity. While this proverb may seem to reflect the limiting notions of a patriarchally-defined tradition, confining female influence exclusively within the domestic culinary space, it also underscores the significance of Sephardic women in the preservation of Sephardic culinary heritage. In particular, after the Sephardic Jews’ expulsion from Spain and the community’s subsequent settlement in the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic women played a crucial role as the culinary interpreters of the Sephardim’s new Ottoman surroundings even as they preserved the gastronomic connection to the lost Spanish homeland. Thus, by understanding the importance of Sephardic women’s culinary roles, their tremendous influence — indeed, the power they exerted from their kitchens — on Sephardic cultural identity becomes apparent.

The question of female power in the Jewish tradition is neither new nor resolved. In a religious tradition mainly defined by and for men, on all of its textual, social, and economic levels, Jewish women’s agency has often been neglected or non-existent. Judith Baskin, in her work on women in Midrashic texts, situates the cause of this in the rabbinic textual tradition that has shaped Jewish communal behaviour: ‘the rabbinic sages deliberately constructed women as ancillary beings, shaped on the rib of the primordial man to fulfil [sic] essential social and sexual functions in an androcentric society’ (Baskin 2015, p. 2). In this statement, Baskin identifies several key points that critically affect our understanding in the study of Jewish women: first, that the Jewish perception of women’s bodies, role, and power is inherently affected by the male perspective of the rabbis who shaped it; secondly, that Jewish society throughout history has traditionally been oriented by and for men; and finally, that as secondary beings, Jewish women lack fundamental agency over themselves and the Jewish tradition. Indeed, Baskin’s assertion also surfaces the primary obstacle in the study of Jewish women: their lack of historic legibility. Whereas the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of Jewish men — and their influential perceptions of women — can be gleaned from Jewish textual tradition and ritual practice, those of women are not nearly so comprehensible. Therefore, our

understanding of historic female experience is limited. This problem of female legibility even functions on the level of the body; as Shaye J. D. Cohen demonstrates, in his work *Why Aren’t Jewish Women Circumcised? Gender and Covenant in Judaism*, by asking ‘if circumcision is an essential marker of Jewishness, what are women? Can women be Jews?’ (Cohen 2005, p. xii). By controversially querying the most basic bodily expression of the Jewish community’s divine covenant, Cohen shows that this difficulty in finding tangible traces of female influence on the Jewish tradition results in the conscious and subconscious centering of male narrative and influence. Jewish women, like women of other cultural groups throughout time, have been marginalized not only by their own tradition but the lack of historical data that evidences their experience. As a result, the study of Jewish women’s impact on communal cultural identity has suffered.

Indeed, while much work has been produced in the Jewish Studies field to comprehend the historical experience of Jewish women, this has been a challenging effort, particularly when it comes to the study of medieval and early modern Jewish women. On the one hand, as previously mentioned, the study of medieval Jewish women suffers from a basic lack of documentation. For all the textual evidence of male interpretation and influence on the Jewish tradition, there exists very little analogous material for women, as medieval Jewish women did not possess the same avenues for textual expression and preservation as did their male peers. Further, in the case of the bare traces of Jewish women that do exist, as Silvia Planas Marcé demonstrates in her analysis of the notarial registers of medieval Spanish municipalities, ‘in all instances the personal details of a woman are subjoined to a male, usually her husband, whether he be alive or dead’ (Planas Marcé 2010, p. 101). More than a mere lack of documentation, the data that does exist relating medieval and early modern Jewish female experience confines women in relation to a male. Yet traces of Jewish female autonomy during this period do exist, as authors like Baskin and Avraham Grossman show. Baskin writes that ‘Jewish women played an increasingly vital and often autonomous part in their family’s economic lives, both as merchants and brokers’ (Baskin 2010, p. 79). For both Baskin and Grossman, this agency is evidenced through women’s economic actions; indeed, Grossman situates

the primary conclusion of [his] work i[n] that the profound economic change that occurred in Jewish society in the Middle Ages, and its transformation

into a bourgeois or petit-bourgeois society, exerted a stronger positive influence upon the status of the Jewish woman than any other factor (Grossman 2012, p. 2).

In the case of both Baskin and Grossman, the appraisal of medieval Jewish women as having agency only occurs once: to borrow the phrase of Asunción Blasco Martínez, Jewish women 'seep beyond the boundaries of the domestic world' (Blasco Martínez 2010, p. 100). Though Blasco Martínez no doubt intended to make a statement about the inherent obliqueness of women's impact outside the domestic sphere, it can also be interpreted as an assertion of the powerful, uncontainable nature of female influence that radiates outward from the home.

This economically-based assessment of Jewish women's power, while much clearer to trace, neglects a central part of the medieval and early modern Sephardic Jewish woman's experience: her role in the domestic sphere, particularly in the kitchen. To measure a woman's power by the standards of her involvement in the economic realm is to render an incomplete portrait of Sephardic female influence. Especially given the male-oriented and male-dominated economic sphere of the medieval world, the historiographical definitions of female power are necessarily defined in male terms. The study of women in medieval Spain in particular has suffered from this lack of focus on the culinary sphere. This may be a result of the perspectives of authors like Baskin regarding the ways Islamic mores shaped Sephardic culture, since Sephardic

social life was strongly influenced by Islamic norms...while Jewish women of prosperous families were not literally isolated in women's quarters as were Muslim women of comparable social status, community norms dictated that women's place was in the home (Baskin 1998, p. 103).<sup>1</sup>

For Baskin, it seems there is a strong connection between these culturally-influenced social norms and the limitation of the domestic sphere on Sephardic women's power. However, while measuring the medieval Jewish woman's agency through her economic influence may serve to reflect an accurate and surprising picture of female power, Baskin's and Grossman's reliance on this analytical lens filters the medieval Jewish female experience through the singular experience of medieval Ashkenazi women, making monolithic the lives of Sephardic women. In fact, some more recent scholarship, such as Cia Sutter's work on Jewish women and sacred power,<sup>2</sup> has shown that the data we have about medieval Jewish life in Spain 'suggests that rabbinic ruling may not have been actively employed, and what became written text was not necessarily the reality of embodied text' (Sutter 2010, p. 4). Authors, such as Asunción Blasco Martínez, have also done tremendous work to demonstrate that the prioritization of the domestic space in medieval Sephardic culture does not necessarily indicate a lack of influence.<sup>3</sup> It seems that the study of

Jewish women as a whole has suffered from the prioritization of the ashkenormative expectation of women's roles and its influence on the 'certain social order that dictates the subdivision of space between genders' (Hadar 2007, p. 144). Therefore, I would suggest that by shifting the analytical focus from the economic realm, which has served to limit the understanding of non-Ashkenazi Jewish women and their agency, to the female-oriented culinary sphere, we not only offer new, non-male-oriented terms through which to quantify female power, but also enrich the scholarly appraisal of non-Ashkenazi Jewish women throughout history. Jewish women's power and lives are not and have not been monolithic across denominations; therefore, their study should seek to portray the variety of Jewish female experiences and loci of power, too.

It is notable, too, that this marginalization of female experience is not merely endemic to the Jewish studies of Sephardic women but also within the food studies discipline. Arlene Voski Avakian and Barbara Haber, in their introduction to *Feminist Food Studies*, explain that although 'like women's studies, the emerging field of food studies is interdisciplinary and includes attention to the daily lives of ordinary people within its purview' (Avakian and Haber 2005, p. 2), the vast body of work in the field neglects to pay attention to the daily lives of those women who often possessed the hands that shaped global cuisine in their quotidian action. In fact, 'despite the fact of women's centrality to food practices, until the last decade, few in this plethora of new works on food focused on women, and only a minority of those had a feminist analysis' (Avakian and Haber 2005, p. 2). In this statement, Avakian and Haber highlight a surprising lacuna in the food studies field, one that particularly affects this study of Sephardic women: the dearth of scholarship that focuses its analysis of culinary identity on the actions and influence of women. By ignoring the important work of the female agents of culinary culture, we miss out on the understanding of the small-scale changes that aggregate to form regional and global food cultures. Indeed, we can apply Baskin's assertion that 'historical transformations in many eras affected men and women quite differently and that when women were excluded from "sanctioned" male cultural activities or religious observances, they often created their own artifacts and rituals' (Baskin 1998, p. 15) not only to the Jewish gender studies field but also to the food studies discipline. In fact, the centering of the culinary experience of Jewish women actually offers more avenues through which to evaluate historical female agency, since, as Baskin suggests, 'the arenas in which a [Jewish] wife could rebel against her husband's authority or insult his dignity were exceedingly limited [...so] it is not surprising that most of these stories involve either food preparation or sexual behaviour' (Baskin 2015, p. 110). Thus, by using food as the analytical entry point, we render a more accurate portrait of Jewish women throughout history while constructively appraising her power on

female terms. Ultimately, this serves to expand notions of power not only in the historical survey of Jewish women but also in the food studies discipline as well.

Turning to the period in question, the expulsion of the Sephardic community from Spain in 1492 represented a crucial moment in the development of Sephardic cultural identity. As has been well-documented,<sup>4</sup> in Spain, the Sephardic Jews enjoyed a well-developed cultural identity in relation to their concurrent non-Jewish communities. Although they were highly integrated in both the Muslim and Christian societies in medieval Spain, the ‘Jews of Sepharad, as they called Spain, created an impressive civilization in their own right’ (López Baralt 1992, p. 20), as Luce López Baralt indicates in her survey of Spanish literature. Aside from generating what López Baralt terms a ‘Hispano Hebraic Renaissance’ (López Baralt 1992, p. 22) through their efflorescent cultural production of art and literature, the Sephardic community self-governed through its judicial courts, and became successful merchants in cross-Mediterranean commerce. However, starting in 1391, with a pogrom in Sevilla that violently swept through the Jewish communities of the south of Spain, conditions for the Jewish community in Spain began to deteriorate. The expulsion served as a traumatic finale to this worsening condition and a complicated beginning to communal re-settlement in unfamiliar locales. For many Sephardic Jews, particularly of the Eastern Sephardic diaspora, this path led to the Ottoman Empire. Jonathan Ray explains that the path of the Sephardim to the Ottoman Empire was a challenging one, as

even during the larger and more decisive expulsion of 1492, the majority of Jewish exiles did not go directly to the Ottoman Empire, but reached it through a long and circuitous route marked by a series of successive migrations from Iberia, North Africa, and Southern Italy (Ray 2009, p. 46).

This period of transition proved immensely challenging to Sephardic communal identity: even within the same family, there might be members who converted to Christianity and stayed in Spain and others who left for lands like the Ottoman Empire. This disjointed diasporic move greatly impaired the Sephardic community of the male-led cultural, social, and economic institutions that had assured their cultural continuity on the Iberian Peninsula. In this vacuum of public, male-oriented communal structures, ‘with no Jewish community available to provide teachers, rabbis, schools, or texts, the only institution that remained more or less intact and viable was the family...the home transformed into the one and only center’ not only ‘of crypto-Jewish life’ (Levine Melammed 2002, p. 139), but of those in the Sephardic community who had remained Jewish too. In that way, with the weakening of these institutions, the domestic sphere became crucial to the continuation of Sephardic cultural identity in this moment of huge communal

transition. Jewish women, already adapted to life without these institutions, in large part due to their prohibition of women, were not robbed of the religious center of their communal identity in the same way as their male counterparts. Indeed, the main responsibilities of a Jewish woman were domestically based: in the preparation and separation of the *challah*, the ritual cleansing of the self after the menstrual cycle and other times of ‘impurity’ through *niddah*, and the lighting of the candles for Shabbat, *hadlakat neirot*. Thus, as the ritual and daily keepers of the culinary and domestic spheres, Sephardic women, became the primary providers of communal structure during this moment of change.

This important culinary role continued even upon the successful establishment of Sephardic communities in Ottoman lands. In fact, as Avigdor Levy explains, Sephardic settlement in the Ottoman Empire was relatively quick, as ‘by the second and third decades of the sixteenth century, Sephardic communities had become established in many Ottoman towns, which in the late fifteenth century had little or no Jewish population at all’ (Levy 1992, pp. 5-6). Yet this quick establishment of the Sephardic community was not a result of fitting into the existing Jewish communal structure in Ottoman lands; in fact, ‘Romaniot, Ashkenazi, and Karaite Jews already resided in Istanbul (Balat) and maintained their separate community structure and identity from the Sephardim’ (Zarinebaf 2012, p. 81).<sup>5</sup> In fact, a primary way that the Sephardic community maintained their communal identity and distance from other concurrent Jewish communities was through the recreation of Spanish dishes. Several authors, such as Susan Starr Sered, have shown that women’s culinary role is an important mechanism for the interpretation of religious and spiritual identity and its transmission to subsequent generations. Although Sered writes about the experience of more contemporary Middle Eastern Jewish women, her explanation that ‘the basic building blocks of their religious world include shopping, sorting, cooking, serving, and cleaning — tasks that are simultaneously and inseparably essential to both physical survival and spiritual fulfilment [sic]’ (Sered 2001, p. 89) can be as easily applied to medieval Sephardic women. The culinary work of Sephardic women was crucial in that it ensured the physical, spiritual, and cultural survival of the Sephardic community upon its establishment in the Ottoman Empire. In the early days of Sephardic settlement in the Ottoman Empire, the Sephardim lacked the robust communal structures on which they had relied; thus, the domestically-based rituals of Sephardic women gained a new and critical influence as the locus of identity formation in these early days of Sephardic settlement in the Ottoman Empire.

Ironically, most of the dishes Sephardic women recreated in their new Ottoman homes were the very dishes that had been used to single out Jews during the expulsion and Inquisition. Dishes like *almodrote*, a casserole of eggplant and cheese; *adafina*, the Sephardic Sabbath stew;

and cakes, or *biskochos*, made with ground nuts and bound together with eggs, were all foods found in the Inquisitorial proceedings against New Christians suspected of Judaizing.<sup>6</sup> In their new Ottoman context, the preparation of these foods acted as the powerful and proud expression of the Sephardim's Spanish roots. This gastronomic expression of difference was important to the Sephardim since, as Aryeh Shmuelevitz points out, they 'felt superior to the other [indigenous] Jewish communities because, in comparison with them, it considered itself much advanced culturally' (Shmuelevitz 1984, p. 13). At the same time, these dishes evoked the lost Spanish homeland of the Sephardim as 'with the exile, personal memory of the way things were done [became] an important resource. Shared experiences and memories create[d] a bond [...] between two exiles' (Davidson 2011, p. 29). One of the most immediate ways this bond could be reconstructed was through the preparation of Sephardic dishes. Notably, the memories that helped in the recreation of these dishes were female since

remembering, like other human activities, is influenced by gender dictates, and a difference is found between the memories of men versus women. Feminine memory tends more toward personal memory than masculine collective memory...It is a subversive memory and offers another type of valor (Alexander 2015, p. 70).

This statement is especially meaningful because, in the recreation of the Spanish dishes they knew how to prepare, Sephardic women in the diaspora prioritized their own memory, which would deeply influence, and even feminize, how subsequent generations would perceive their own culinary repertoire. On a basic level, this meant that the culinary expression of Sephardic identity would be essentially based upon a female perspective. Moreover, these foods enabled Sephardic mothers to initiate their children, either newly born in the Ottoman Empire or not old enough to remember Jewish communal life in Spain, to taste of their own cultural identity, using the very same ingredients for which they had been persecuted in Spain. Even more than merely recreating dishes for their children, a key role for Sephardic mothers and mother-figures was the actual orientation of subsequent female generations to this culinary legacy. As Sephardic women, 'matrons and young girls, sitting in the shade... whisper[ed] to each other while kneading the dough to make delicious *fideos*' (Molho 1998, p. 256), they also gave their daughters the culinary tools to carry on this heritage and its significance to Sephardic cultural identity, even as the actual physical connection to Spain subsided over time. Indeed, Daisy Alalouf Newell recounts the important transmission of recipes and cooking techniques from mother to daughter before the daughter's marriage<sup>7</sup> as a main value of the Ottoman Sephardic community. In orienting the newer generations to the flavor of Sephardic cultural identity in its new Ottoman context, Sephardic women exerted great

influence to ensure its survival. Thus, until courts, synagogues, and other male-oriented Jewish institutions were eventually established in the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic women and their culinary work ensured an essential level of continued Jewish experience in the early days of Sephardic settlement. In that way, Sephardic women were imbued with a level of power that had not been granted to them by the male-oriented institutions that governed the Sephardic community in Spain.

Just as Sephardic Jewish women played a key role in the preservation of the Iberian roots of Spanish Jewish cultural identity, so, too, did their culinary role enable the smooth integration of the Sephardic community into its new Ottoman context. The Ottoman lands already offered fertile ground for Sephardic settlement, given the legendarily warm welcome of Sultan Bayezid II to the Sephardic Jews. After the establishment of Sephardic communities all over the Ottoman Empire, as Fariba Zarinebaf explains, in the cosmopolitan context of Ottoman urban centres,

outside the ruling class and slaves, the lives of average Muslim and non-Muslim men [were] and women were quite parallel. We can now comfortably speak about an Ottoman urban milieu that existed in Istanbul where Muslim and non-Muslim residents felt at ease living together and had a sense of belonging to the larger urban environment (neighborhood, guild, market place) beyond their confessional identities (Zarinebaf 2012, p. 81).

This 'ease of living' did not only apply to Sephardic Jewish men in the Ottoman Empire, but to women as well, as Ruth Lamdan highlights: 'in Istanbul, Salonica, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Safed,' Sephardic Jewish women 'traded both indoors and in the public markets, mainly in silk, wool and linen fabrics, jewelry [sic], needlework, spices, olive oil, wine, vegetables, and various other items' (Lamdan 2007, p. 51). It is easily imaginable that in their market interactions with non-Jewish Ottoman residents, Sephardic women picked up recipes, ingredients, and cooking techniques that their Ottoman neighbours were using, such as the

soups (*ash*) [that] were as fundamental to Turkic cuisine as they were to Mongol cuisine. Sweets included syrups, jams, and candied nuts. From Perso-Islamic cuisine, Turko-Islamic cuisine adopted stews thickened with chickpeas, spiced meat stews, pastries, including a precursor of baklava, and sweetened fruit drinks (sherbets) (Laudan 2015, p. 147).

The abundant street foods, including filo pastries,<sup>8</sup> also clearly influenced Sephardic women, as the innovation of the *boreka* demonstrates. In that way, Sephardic women became the first-hand culinary interpreters of the Ottoman context, in which certain ingredients that were

characteristic of the Spanish context of their cuisine were no longer necessarily available to them, resulting in such innovations as, *tishpishti* (a syrup-soaked semolina cake), *pishkado abilado* (fish cooked in a tomato sauce), and *bamiya* (okra in a tomato-based sauce). Each of these Ottoman Sephardic culinary innovations was the result of the combination of Sephardic taste with Ottoman techniques and ingredients. For example, *pishkado abilado* combined the Sephardic technique of frying fish in olive oil with a tomato sauce.<sup>9</sup> In fact, this ease of integration may have had a great deal to do with the pre-existing affinity between Sephardic and Ottoman culinary traditions, as Aylin Öney Tan explains:

although they spoke a foreign language, the Jews of Spain were not alien to the food culture and the food language of the Ottoman lands. One important reason behind this relatively smooth accommodation could be that the Sephardic culture of Spain and contemporary Ottoman food culture already had an affinity with one another’ (Öney Tan 2009, p. 341).

This affinity includes the use of eggplant, swiss chard, and chickpeas, which were seen as particularly ‘Jewish’ ingredients in medieval Spain<sup>10</sup>, which Öney Tan herself highlights in the Ottoman palace shopping lists: ‘Topkapı Palace registers for 1489-90, [which] listed 75 *kile nohud* (chickpeas), 4603 *kiyye pazi* (chard), and 720 *bazincan* (eggplants)’ (Öney Tan 2010, p. 341). Yet what Öney Tan does not mention is that, like with the synthesis of Turkish words into the Ladino vernacular of the Sephardim, it was Sephardic women in their preparation of Turkish-inflected dishes who helped to form the new culinary vernacular of the Ottoman Sephardi. Indeed, it is no surprise that in famous food-related songs of the Sephardic musical repertoire, women are most commonly mentioned as the main characters of the culinary and musical narrative.<sup>11</sup> In that way, Sephardic women exerted crucial influence not only as keepers of Spanish Jewish culinary heritage but also as the agents of Sephardic cultural identity in its new Ottoman gastronomic expression. While much of the historical experience of Sephardic women is illegible in the public sphere, it is in the kitchen that we can fully read the importance of their historical influence.

While medieval and early modern Sephardic women have long been viewed by their male counterparts and interpreted by modern scholars as lacking agency, by observing their role in the female-oriented culinary realm, a completely different portrait of female power emerges. In the early modern Sephardic diaspora and subsequent settlement in the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic women acted both as the culinary preservers of Spanish Jewish cultural and ritual identity and its interpreters in its new Ottoman context, facilitating the culinary integration of the Sephardic community that became symbolic of their cultural synthesis on the whole.

Though subtle and often invisible to the eye of historical analysis, the culinary work of Sephardic women — captured in their recipes, ingredients, cooking techniques, and even their songs and spoken refrains — act as the text through which we can perceive their tremendous influence. By consciously reading these ephemeral female footprints on Sephardic cultural identity, we can fully appreciate and re-interpret the power of women so often written out of the pages of history.

#### About the author

Sara Gardner is the current Associate Director of Young Adult Programs at Hebrew College. Before working at Hebrew College, Sara conducted research on the culinary heritage and cultural identity of the Sephardic Jews as a Fulbright 2016-2017 grantee. A 2016 graduate of Tufts University with a BA in international Literary & Visual Studies and Spanish, Sara regularly publishes about her research on her blog, *Boka Dulce* ([www.bokadulce.com](http://www.bokadulce.com)). She has also shared her expertise on Sephardic and Jewish food culture through her writing for *The Nosh*, an online Jewish food publication; her teaching for *The Gefilteria* and the Reform Jewish Community of Madrid; and her show, ‘Comiendo la Diáspora,’ on *RadioSefarad*. Her scholarly work has been published in the *Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery*.

#### Notes

1. Baskin seems to hold the medieval Muslim standard of the treatment of women as lesser than that of contemporary Christian societies, yet as Daniel Dawson explains, ‘it should be noted that the law in practice [in Islamic Spain from the 700s until 1492] was more favourable towards women than it was on the books and women of different religious and social groups experienced different treatments under the law system. In reality, Muslim women in Al-Andalus were able to assert themselves in multiple areas, including marriage and family law, inheritance and property rights, as well as education, religious spaces and employment. Islamic law in Al-Andalus, therefore, was essentially no better or worse for women than contemporary law codes, and it simply operated differently in its granting and withholding of rights and privileges’ (Dawson 2015). For more on the legal treatment of Muslim and non-Muslim women in pre-1492 Spain see: Dawson, Daniel. ‘Women under the Law in Islamic Spain, 700s–1492’. *Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History* 5, no.2 (Nov. 2015).
2. See: ‘Women and Sacred Power’, in *The Miriam Tradition*, ed. by Cia Sautter, Teaching Embodied Torah (University of Illinois Press, 2010), pp. 1–22.
3. See: Asunci—n Blasco Mart’nez, ‘Queen for a Day: The Exclusion of Jewish Women from Public Life in the

- Middle Ages', in *Late Medieval Jewish Identities: Iberia and Beond* (New York and Basingstoke, Eng.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 91–105.
4. See: Dodds, Jerrilynn Denise, Maria Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (Yale University Press, 2008).
  5. Elli Kohen explains that this communal distinction was occasionally even more nuanced, down to divisions among the Sephardim based on their locations of origin in Spain: 'the Iberian immigrants immediately formed a congregation of their own according to their respective towns or districts of origin in the Iberian Peninsula. In Salonica, they began with a congregation called Gerush Sefarad (the Expulsion from Spain). It was followed by the congregations of Castellan, Mallorcan, Catalan as well as Portuguese and Sicilian groups, each quite autonomous and cultivating its own ritual' (Kohen 2007, p. 24).
  6. See: Carlos Carrete Parondo, *Fontes Iudaeorum Regni Castellae II: El Triunal de La Inquisición En El Obispado de Soria, Fontes Iudaeorum Regni Castellae, 2, 1st edn* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1985).
  7. Alalouf Newell explains that 'la madre sefaradi ambezava a as ijas las consejas, los consejos, las kantigas, komidas i kuras para ser novia komplida. Eya tambien era la ke transmética todas las reglas por mantener las varias fiestas relijozas [the Sephardic mother taught her daughters the advice, the refrains, the songs, foods, and cures to be an accomplished bride. She was also 'the one who transmitted all the rules to observe the various religious holidays]' (Alalouf Newell 2003; my translation).
  8. See: Mehrdad Kia, *Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (ABC-CLIO, 2011).
  9. See: Gil Marks, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010).
  10. See: David M. Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson, *A Drizzle of Honey: The Life and Recipes of Spain's Secret Jews* (Macmillan, 2000).
  11. The classic Judeo-Spanish song 'Siete modos de gizar la berendgena' offers some interesting insights into the culinary and cultural synthesis of the Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire. Of the various ways listed to prepare eggplant, it includes one verse that suggests a preparation of an eggplant dolmá, a Turkish technique and term for stuffing vegetables, and another that mentions a preparation with pepper, a definite influence of the Ottoman New World pepper trade. See: Mar'a Salgado: *Siete Modos de Guisar las Berenjenas*, Nubenegra (2007).
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