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space, and intermarriage is readily apparent in the names and titles carved on the stones of both sub-ethnic groups. Meanwhile, slave rebellions, Maroon attacks, the general collapse of Suriname's economy, soil depletion, absentee land ownership, and a ravaging fire all contributed to the demise of the old rainforest settlement beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century. The subsequent population shift from Jodensavanne to Paramaribo gave rise to the largest Jewish community in the Americas at the time.

This project's points of departure are three Sephardi cemeteries (those in Jodensavanne, Cassipora Creek, and Paramaribo), whose monuments date from 1666 to 1904; one Ashkenazi cemetery (the Old Ashkenazi Cemetery of Paramaribo), whose monuments date from the 1680s to the late nineteenth century; and the remains of the seventeenth-century synagogue in Jodensavanne. *Remnant Stones* presents the results of eight years of on-site fieldwork in Suriname and research in archives in the United States and the Netherlands, carried out by the authors since 1995.

The present volume presents transcriptions and English translations of nearly 1,700 epitaphs, carved in Portuguese, Hebrew, Spanish, Dutch, Aramaic, and French. The gravestones are indexed according to names, causes of death, occupations and distinctive titles, place names, poetic verses, languages, and sepulchral art. A User's Guide provides information about individual cemeteries, gravestone numbering systems, names, and measurements; a list of abbreviations and acronyms; an outline of the Jewish calendar; and a glossary of terminology. A fold-out scaled plan of each of the cemeteries shows stone orientation, locations, and adjacencies. The forthcoming second volume traces the history of Surinamese Jewry and presents a social and architectural analysis of its community, cemeteries, and synagogue. The *Remnant Stones* project presents the first documentation of Suriname's oldest surviving Jewish burial grounds to those who are otherwise unable to access these remote historical monuments.

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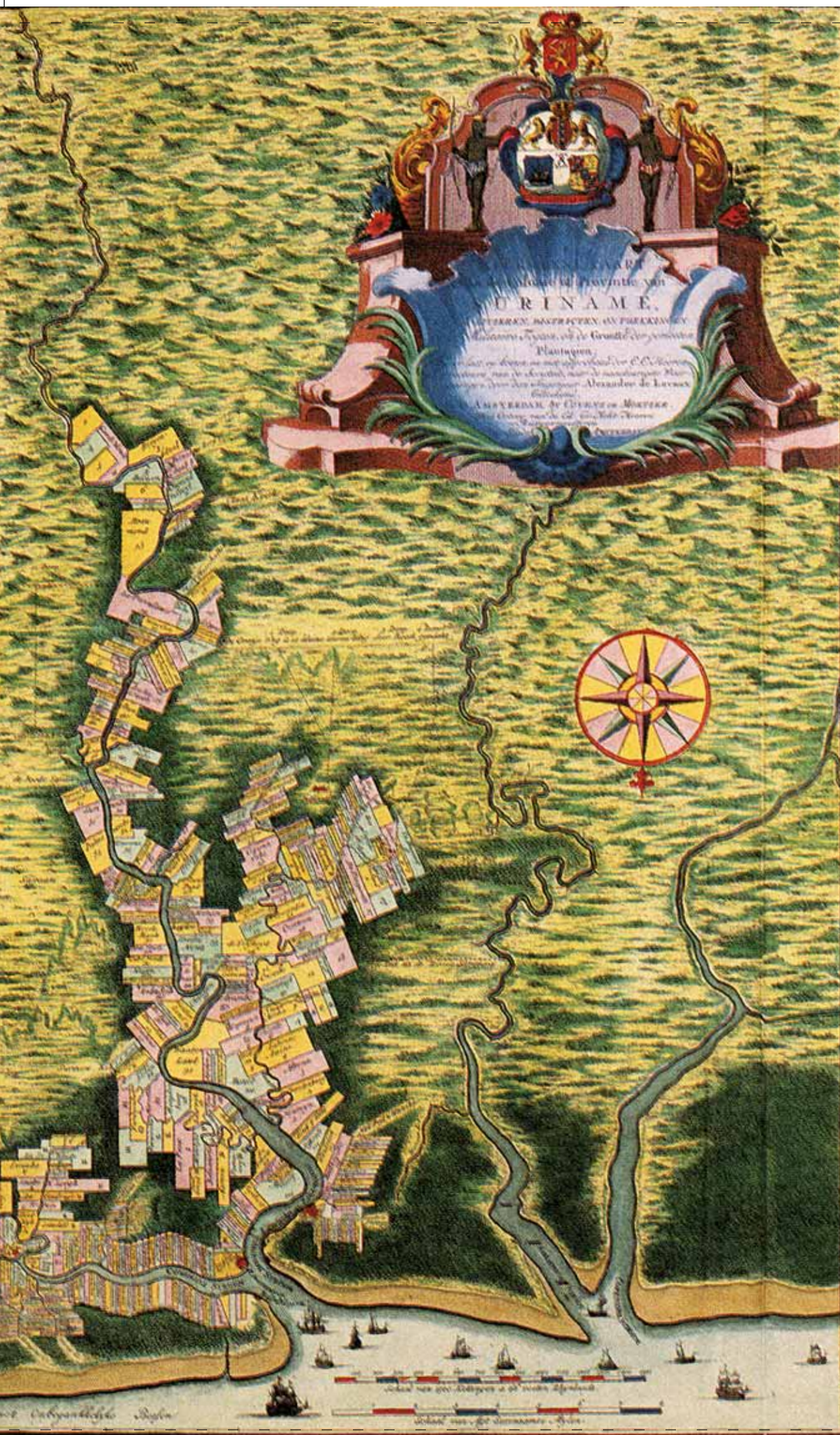
FRONT AND BACK COVER
A. de Lavaux, *Algemeene kaart van de colonie of provincie van Suriname* (General map of the colony or province of Suriname), indicating both Suriname's plantations and the communities formed by runaway slaves. (Amsterdam, after 1758). Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University



THE JEWISH CEMETERIES OF SURINAME: EPITAPHS
REMNANT STONES

AVIVA BEN-UR and RACHEL FRANKEL

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In the 1660s, Jews of Iberian ancestry, many of them fleeing Inquisitorial persecution, established an agrarian settlement in the midst of the Surinamese rainforest. The heart of this community—Jodensavanne, or Jews' Savannah—became an autonomous village with its own Jewish institutions. It boasted a majestic synagogue consecrated in 1685, elegant houses, schools, a firehouse, and a court of justice. Situated along the Suriname River, some thirty kilometers from the capital city of Paramaribo, Jodensavanne was by the mid-eighteenth century surrounded by dozens of Jewish plantations sprawling north- and southward and dominating the stretch of the river. These Sephardi-owned plots, mostly devoted to the cultivation and processing of sugar, collectively formed the largest Jewish agricultural community in the world at the time and the only Jewish settlement in the Americas granted virtual self-rule. Under tolerant Dutch authorities, Sephardim received rights, exemptions, and immunities both as an ethnic minority and as burghers. It was the most liberal treatment Jews had ever received in the Christian world.

The creation of this independent ethno-religious enclave led to social patterns quite alien to the Old World. Most plantation labor was carried out by enslaved sub-Saharan Africans, whose unions with Sephardim, predicated on rape or consensual relations, soon produced a small but influential mulatto Jewish community. Their demands for equal rights challenged the community's very definition of Jewishness. Moreover, one hundred years before the first Jews of France were granted equal rights, Suriname's Jewish community was already autonomous and free to emancipate its own enslaved members, many of whom had been formally converted during bondage. Through the course of the centuries, this inter-communal mingling flowered into an enduring Afro-Jewish syncretism, readily evident in the country's Jewish cemeteries and community consciousness.

Sephardi settlement paved the way for the influx of hundreds of Ashkenazi Jews, who began to migrate in the late seventeenth century from western and central Europe. Generally banned from Jodensavanne, these newcomers chose to settle in Paramaribo, where they established their own cemeteries and historic synagogue, deeply influenced by their European Jewish predecessors. Evidence of cultural borrowing, shared

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