Judeo-Spanish and the Making of a Community

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Edited by

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2015

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-7805-7
ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-7805-0

To the leaders, members, supporters,
and advisors of ucLADINO for believing
in our vision and helping us to build
muestra komunitika.

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PREFACE

Judeo-Spanish and the Making of a Community brings together twelve scholars in Sephardic studies from across the globe. The collaboration of these authors is the result of three years of dialogue from the 2012-2014 UCLADINO Judeo-Spanish Symposia. UCLADINO is a student-run organization at the University of California, Los Angeles. The goal of this group is to educate others about—and in—the Judeo-Spanish language(s). UCLADINO engages students, scholars, and members of Sephardic communities in an exploration of the multiple facets of Judeo-Spanish through the examination of Sephardic culture and history. The symposia have allowed for a great deal of collaboration and have fostered a series of discussions across multiple disciplines. Leaders, scholars, and activists share research that has allowed for the advancement of knowledge of Judeo-Spanish languages and Sephardic culture.

This collection is unique from other publications that catalogue a variety of Sephardic research in that most of the articles treat the Judeo-Spanish languages as their primary focus. Due to a number of factors discussed throughout this volume, UNESCO considers Judeo-Spanish an endangered language. As with all endangered languages, there is a tremendous need to document communities of speakers of the language while such endeavors are still possible. Several of the authors in this volume examine historical periods that may only be understood thanks to primary sources in the Judeo-Spanish language. Other contributors rely on ethnographic observation and sociolinguistic interviews in order to construct an understanding of the current state of the language.

Given the multidisciplinary scope of Judeo-Spanish studies, this volume will be of interest to a wide audience. Within the academic realm, universities with Jewish Studies Departments or Centers will be able to utilize this text as a resource to better understand Sephardic communities worldwide. The question of which cities and nations should be included under the categorization of the term *Sephardic* is complex. The volume refers to those communities with a Judeo-Spanish linguistic heritage as Sephardic; due to this, *Judeo-Spanish and the Making of a Community* does not address Mizrahi populations, since it is outside the scope of this study. This collection will add to the research on the Sephardim, which by comparison is far less readily available than works published on their

Eastern European brethren, the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim. Also, given that this volume contains articles on Judeo-Spanish communities in Turkey as well as Morocco, Near Eastern Studies Departments or Centers will be able to utilize this work to better understand the situation of the Sephardim in predominantly Muslim countries.

Within Romance Language Departments, in particular Spanish and Portuguese Departments, this volume will prove relevant. While most of the Sephardim have lived outside of Spain and Portugal for more than 500 years, their language has its roots in Medieval Spanish and for many, their identity is still embedded to a degree in Iberian traditions and culture. The governments of Spain and Portugal have recently (2015) revised their policies for granting the Sephardim Spanish and Portuguese citizenship in an effort to right the wrongs from centuries past. While both nations continue to finalize the procedures for naturalization, they have clarified that proficiency in Judeo-Spanish will serve in part as proof of Sephardic origin. The implications of this policy, rooted in history and language, will foster additional interest inside and outside of academia for all those who are interested in learning about the Judeo-Spanish language and the journey of the Sephardim.

As the editor of this volume, I would like to thank the authors for contributing their research, partaking in the editing process, and engaging in the resulting discussions. I speak for each contributor when I say that we hope that this volume encourages further dialogue and exploration in Sephardic studies and inspires others to learn Judeo-Spanish in order to facilitate their research in the future.

INTRODUCTION

This volume serves to explore particular aspects of the relationship between the Judeo-Spanish language and Sephardic culture from the fifteenth century until the present day. In employing the term 'Sephardic,' the articles refer to those Jews who trace their lineage to the Iberian Peninsula. For many Sephardim, their language, primarily of Ibero-Romance origin, continued to develop while they primarily inhabited Turkey, the Balkans, and North Africa. In those lands of migration, over time, they adopted elements from the languages of the areas in which they settled; the language that developed from that contact is known today as Judeo-Spanish or Ladino, among other names. The notion of Judeo-Spanish as one language or as a number of varieties of language shared by the Sephardim is discussed on several occasions throughout this collection.

The makeup of the Judeo-Spanish language can be better understood by following the path of the Sephardim throughout the centuries. In the same way, observing the characteristics of the language exposes how it has been shaped by the linguistic influences from the nations in which the Sephardim have resided. The volume's articles explore not only how language shapes identity and culture, but also how historical events reveal the linguistic landscape across Sephardic communities. While nearly all articles focus on the Judeo-Spanish language, this volume is divided into three sections that represent the researchers' main areas of research: linguistic, historical, and cultural.

Part one explores varieties of Judeo-Spanish throughout the Sephardic world. The first article by Bryan Kirschen examines how Judeo-Spanish is both a Jewish language as well as a Romance language. This piece explores models that account for the development of Jewish vernaculars and calques, and surveys how ideological stance factors into the understanding of Judeo-Spanish as a hyphenated language. This section continues with Rey Romero's article, which analyzes the concepts of dialect concentration and dissipation. Using online forums, textual sources, and personal interviews, Romero assesses how speakers of an endangered language are able to re-construct it in the twenty-first century. His research reveals the current state of Judeo-Spanish worldwide and how speakers and learners modify the language according to agency, appropriation, and audience.

The articles that follow focus on specific Sephardic communities in the United States, Turkey, and Morocco. Within the United States, while New York City and Los Angeles represent two of the largest Sephardic communities today, Molly FitzMorris suggests that it is in Seattle that one may find one of the most unified Sephardic communities in the nation, a community that is made up primarily of Rhodeslis and Turks, or their descendants. FitzMorris discusses *Los Ladineros*, a self-selected group of Judeo-Spanish speakers within the Sephardic Jewish community of Seattle. Her research describes structural changes in the language as well as the language attitudes of this group's members.

The next piece features the work of Karen Sarhon. Sarhon's utilization of the Ladino Database Project, which consists of interviews with speakers of Judeo-Spanish from Istanbul and Izmir, allows her to review the state of the language in Turkey today. This database allows for the analysis of linguistic features unique to the two communities under consideration. The final article in this section explores Haketia, the Judeo-Spanish of Morocco. Alicia Sisso Raz introduces readers to this variety of language, another vernacular of the Sephardim. Her research considers linguistic peculiarities of Haketia and how they diverge from those of other varieties classified as Judeo-Spanish.

Part two reviews how languages that entered the communities inhabited by the Sephardim were often determined by the historical events and the leading institutions of the period. Several articles in this volume address the role of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* and the impact that this organization had on Sephardic communities. Its *mission civilisatrice* fostered new linguistic policies and ideologies among the Sephardim that would replace Judeo-Spanish with other languages, particularly French. Ceren Abi explores the role of Ottoman Turkish and French within Sephardic communities of the Ottoman Empire prior to the formation of the Turkish Republic. She reviews the function of Judeo-Spanish within the Empire and pays particular attention to its collapse as demonstrated by the *Vatandaş Türkçe Konuş*! (Citizen Speak Turkish!) campaign. The next article by Ana Ćirić Pavlović examines the language policies established by the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in three major centers of Sephardic life within the Ottoman Empire. By examining reports published in the *Bulletin d'Alliance Israélite Universelle,* Ćirić Pavlović reviews which languages were offered to students throughout Salonika (Thessaloniki), Smyrna (Izmir), and Adrianople (Edirne) from 1882-1912. Her research accounts for the changes in the courses offered within each city due to shifts in power and politics during this period.

The final contribution in this section reviews the life journey of Doña

Gracia Mendes from Portugal to Turkey. Rifka Cook divides her article into two parts; the first provides autobiographical information on Doña Gracia, while the second explores a *responsa*, a term used to refer to an exchange of letters in which one party consults another on a matter of Jewish law. Cook provides evidence that the selected centuries-old text reveals insight into Doña Gracia's life. Furthermore, she refers to the aljamiado texts of the responsa in order to better understand the spoken and written language of the time.

The third and final part of this volume examines the use of language in helping to construct identity and culture. Turning once again to the Haketia language found in Morocco, Vanessa Paloma Elbaz reports on her ethnographic research in order to reveal relations of power within the dwindling Sephardic communities of Northern Morocco. She posits that, although men are regularly seen as figures of authority in public spheres—the synagogue, the Jewish Community 'Junta,' and the Rabbinical Courts—the power of women in the private sphere is actually the most important power in the community. While women are responsible for keeping a kosher household, preparing for Shabbat as well as other holidays, and assuring family purity, they are also the ones who pass down familial, cultural, and religious oral traditions in the Haketia language.

The next two articles explore periodicals published in a U.S. metropolis with a large Sephardic presence, that of New York City. A number of scholars have written on the Judeo-Spanish-language press, given that its influence reached from Turkey and the Balkans to the United States and accounted for over 300 periodicals prior to World War II. The two pieces consider newspapers printed in New York City and how the Sephardim and their language were perceived in those publications. Holly Vernon examines the Judeo-Spanish newspaper *La Amerika,* published in New York during the early twentieth century, so as to understand attitudes of the Sephardim toward their language, as well as the attitudes of the Ashkenazim. Her extensive review of this periodical reveals the challenges that the Sephardim faced upon immigrating to the United States and sheds light on the resources that *La Amerika* provided its readers in order to facilitate citizenship and assimilation into the mainstream culture.

While assessing the Judeo-Spanish press reveals a great deal about Sephardic life, less is known about how the Sephardim were perceived by the surrounding non-Jewish and Hispanic populations in New York City. In her analysis of English- and Spanish-language newspapers from 1885-1930, Bethany Beyer describes how a handful of major newspapers introduced their readers to the Sephardim, often using a plethora of terms and constantly marking the group as different, different from most Jews in

the United States and different from most speakers of Spanish in the nation.

The final article is unique in that it contributes not only to the body of literature on Judeo-Spanish studies, but also because it is in Judeo-Spanish. Liliana Tchukran de Benveniste explores the variety of musical styles sung in Judeo-Spanish, from medieval to contemporary. Her research as an investigator, performer, and speaker of the language allows readers to not only gain insight into the diversity of Sephardic musical expression but also to appreciate the composition of the language itself.

As the authors attempt to demonstrate throughout this volume, communities of Sephardim are located worldwide. It is our hope that this volume will introduce readers to the various facets of Judeo-Spanish through its exploration of the language, culture, and history of the Sephardim. At the same time, this collection can serve as a means to encourage students, scholars, and community members to contribute to this multidisciplinary field and the ongoing conversations within it. Contributors to this volume consist primarily of junior scholars and community activists from around the world. Conversation between these two groups is fundamental in order to understand how the history of the Sephardim has allowed for the development, maintenance, endangerment, and even revitalization of the Judeo-Spanish language. May future collaboration enable more people to engage in this work in order to represent a greater number of Sephardic communities and ways of life.

PART ONE:

LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE

JUDEO-SPANISH AS A JEWISH LANGUAGE: LINGUISTIC REALITIES AND IDEOLOGIES

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1. Introduction

In this article, I explore Judeo-Spanish as both a Jewish language and a Romance language. I explain its historical and linguistic roots dating back to the Iberian Peninsula and its development in the Sephardic diaspora. I begin by discussing models of Jewish language typology, beginning with Wexler's (1981) pioneering theoretical framework, continuing with that of Fishman (1985), and culminating in recent research by Benor (2010). I continue by highlighting differences within Judeo-Spanish dialectology, primarily between the two major varieties, Djudezmo and Haketia (Bunis 1992b). I use Djudezmo to refer to the spoken language of the descendants of the Iberian Jews who migrated to Turkey and the Balkans, and Haketia to refer to the spoken language of those Iberian Jewish descendants who settled in North Africa, primarily in northern cities of Morocco. Following this discussion, I analyze the syntactic calqued variety of the language known as Ladino (Sephiha 1985). Finally, I explore the ideological stance of Sephardic Jews as applied to Judeo-Spanish. While a clear linguistic analysis between Jewish languages and their non-Jewish cognates helps one to understand the hybrid nature of Jewish language typology, reporting upon extra-linguistic features is imperative for such investigation. I compare research from Callaway (2008), Kushner-Bishop (2004), Harris (1994), Bunis (1992b), and Rodrigue (1990) in order to assess extra-linguistic considerations that shape the Judeo-Spanish speakers' ideologies of their mother tongue. Together, we may better understand the *Jewish* and *Romance* elements of this language.

2. What is a Jewish Language?

In this section, I examine the myriad of Judeo-Spanish repertoires within the current framework of Comparative Jewish Linguistics (also referred to

as Jewish Inter- or Intra-linguistics). Judeo-Spanish is one of a number of Jewish languages used contemporarily throughout the world and pertains to a much larger list if one takes into account those Jewish languages no longer in use. Sephardim who speak Judeo-Spanish are often exposed to the language in their formative years; the language represents a unique grammar within their language faculty. Chomsky notes that the language faculty can be thought of as a *language acquisition device*, "an innate component of the human mind that yields a particular language through interaction with presented experience, a device that converts experience into a system of knowledge attained."[1] Considering such principles of language helps us to understand the linguistic structure of Judeo-Spanish and how its grammar fits into the larger theory of Universal Grammar. This initial state of the language faculty determines what is possible—grammatical—within a language and what is not. As we explore the nature of the Judeo-Spanish language, we will determine how innate properties of grammar interact with the societies in which the Sephardim have resided.

After examining complementary as well as competing definitions on what Jewish languages are, I evaluate their typology, creation, and further considerations within the field. I describe unique features of Judeo-Spanish and include the reasons for linguistic as well as ideological parameters to establish its norms. In order to answer a series of questions such as how Jewish languages emerge, how they are related, and who their users are, linguists of Comparative Jewish Linguistics have offered a variety of paradigms to respond to these as well as other inquiries. Throughout this article, I examine the issues that arise in such claims. Jewish languages are often compared to the languages spoken by their co-territorial non-Jewish neighbors. Wexler conjectures that "the base component of every Jewish language is derived from a coterritorial non-Jewish cognate, yet never completely overlaps with it," often keeping them from obtaining an independent status as a language.[2] Such a language is one that Ornan posits is spoken typically among Jews themselves, while expanding on the definition in that the language used from within the Jewish community is different from that outside of it.[3] Stillman notes that Jewish languages, while often pertaining to unrelated linguistic families, are linked to one another in their "use of the Hebrew

[1] Noam Chomsky, *Knowledge of language: Its nature, origin, and use.* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1986), 16.
[2] Paul Wexler, "Jewish interlinguistics: Facts and conceptual framework," in *Language* (1981), 117.
[3] Uzzi Ornan, "Hebrew is not a Jewish Language," in *Sociology of Jewish Languages*, ed. Joshua Fishman (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 22-26.

script for writing them (although this is not an absolute *sine qua non)* and the inclusion, and indeed ready assimilation, of an element of Hebrew and Aramaic vocabulary."[4] The distinct forms of writing and speaking among the Jews from their non-Jewish neighbors have been a common trend throughout history. Differences among Jewish repertoires range from those that incorporate a small number of Hebrew and Aramaic words into their lexicon to those that grammatically differ from their non-Jewish cognates.[5] The substratal or adstratal degree of inclusion of Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon, as well as the sociolinguistic phenomena with which they interact, is a vital component to understanding Jewish varieties of language.

In regard to treating the Jewish repertoire as a language, researchers of Jewish languages and Jewish Comparative Linguistics have built upon one another's work and have proposed additional frameworks that encompass a number of lesser-studied Jewish languages. The most comprehensive definition is that of Fishman, who defines a language as Jewish,

> that is phonogically, morpho-syntactically, lexico-semantically or orthographically different from that of non-Jewish sociocultural networks and that has some demonstrably unique function in the role-repertoire of a Jewish sociocultural network, which function is not normatively present in the role-repertoire of non-Jews and/ or is not normatively discharged via varieties identical with those utilized by non-Jews.[6]

In his description, Fishman encompasses the fundamental linguistic features of language while highlighting the significance of the sociological aspects of the users behind the language. Thus, it is not only the linguistic construct of the Jewish language that must be focused on, but also a complementary understanding of psychological and sociological factors intertwined within the community of speakers.

Researchers continue to revise existing terminology in an effort to expand the database of Jewish languages and how they precisely fit into such frameworks. New hypotheses may be tested by examining research from both well-documented and understudied Jewish languages. Jewish

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[4] Norman Stillman, *The language and culture of the Jews of Sefrou, Morocco: An Ethnolinguistic Study*, no. 11 (University of Manchester, 1998), 3.

[5] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Towards a New Understanding of Jewish Language in the Twenty-First Century" in *Religion Compass* 2, no. 6 (2008).

[6] Joshua Fishman, "The sociology of Jewish languages from a general sociolinguistic point of view," in *Readings in the sociology of Jewish languages* (1985), 4.

Comparative Linguistics, which Wexler originally refers to as Jewish Interlinguistics, has a unique research agenda that has evolved into a field of its own.[7] Research in this field compares those languages with similar typological features, which are "derived from a coterritorial non-Jewish language, and each is open to similar types of enrichment—sometimes even similar resources."[8] Wexler adds that speakers of Jewish languages are those who have a common ethno-religious identity and are linked to a series of language shifts dating back to Old Hebrew.

In recent decades, several issues have lingered over typological frameworks within the field. One of these concerns deals with the assumption that a Jewish language must be spoken by Jews for it to be identified as Jewish. This preconceived notion has led scholars to conclude that Modern Hebrew cannot be classified as a Jewish language.[9] This claim deduces that Modern Hebrew is not a Jewish language from a sociolinguistic perspective, given that Jews and non-Jews alike also speak it natively. Since Modern Hebrew has achieved official nation-state recognition by Israel and is spoken by millions of Muslims and Christians in the land, the claim suggests that it is not possible for the language to be a Jewish one. This is a topic that continues to result in debate among scholars. Judeo-Spanish, of course, also served non-Jews as the language of international trade, while gaining a great deal of attention throughout the Balkans.[10]

While there is inevitably a 'Jewish' component to the conceived notion of a Jewish language, documenting precisely where these features lie remains at the forefront of the field. Similarly, although Jews typically used a variant of the Hebrew alphabet as the preferred orthography of their language, this cannot be a defining factor in determining what a Jewish language is. Judeo-Spanish, for example, was written for centuries in the Rashi and Solitreo alphabets, along with certain printed sources in Meruba-block characters. However, the reforms implemented by Ataturk in 1928 made it that all those residing in Turkey switch to the Latin alphabet, which included a switch from the Arabic alphabet used in Ottoman Turkish to a Latinized alphabet used for Modern Turkish. Judeo-

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[7] Paul Wexler, "Jewish interlinguistics: Facts and conceptual framework," in *Language* (1981).
[8] Ibid., 137.
[9] Uzzi Ornan, "Hebrew is not a Jewish Language," in *Sociology of Jewish Languages*, ed. Joshua Fishman (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985).
[10] Tracy Harris, "The sociolinguistic situation of Judeo-Spanish in the 20th century in the United States and Israel," in *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana, 4* (2) (2006), 120.

Spanish speakers similarly gave up their established norms of writing.[11] In defining a Jewish language by its orthography, one would have to claim that Judeo-Spanish would subsequently lose the 'Judeo' character in its shift to the Latin alphabet; of course this is not the case. Works written in Jewish characters in languages like Judeo-Persian or Judeo-Arabic are often classified as Jewish literature, even if themes of the text are not related to Judaism.[12] Nevertheless, the orthography of these texts is only decipherable to a (mostly) Jewish audience. The conundrum, therefore, lies in the purpose for implementing a Jewish font for written sources by the Jews.

The most widely spoken contemporary Jewish language is still an emerging one, that of Jewish-English.[13] Gold and Benor have carried out extensive research on Jewish English.[14] Jewish-English, as the language is termed, does not have a history of documentation in Hebrew characters; however, it still pertains to the vast number of Jewish (or Judeo-) languages in existence today. These issues, along with others, have provided scholars with new ways of analyzing individual Jewish languages and approaching comparative studies between them.

I have described Jewish speech varieties as languages. However, as linguists often find themselves discussing, the distinction between a language and a dialect is a controversial, political, and ideological matter. Max Weinreich is known for his statement that a "language is a dialect with an army and navy," which serves to demonstrate the paradox as to how languages have become independently recognized from one another throughout history due to underlying politics at hand.[15] Gold insists on using the terms 'lect' and 'variety' to describe what are typically referred to as Jewish languages.[16] He asserts that using these terms allows the field to move forward and not put forth (often subjective) judgments on which

[11] Olga Borovaia, "The serialized novel as rewriting: The case of Ladino belles lettres," in *Jewish Social Studies* 10, no. 1 (2003).
[12] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Do American Jews Speak a Jewish Language"?: A Model of Jewish Linguistic Distinctiveness," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99, no. 2 (2009).
[13] See note 6.
[14] David Gold, "Jewish intralinguistics as a field of study," in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, no. 30 (1981); Sarah Bunin Benor, "Do American Jews Speak a Jewish Language"?: A Model of Jewish Linguistic Distinctiveness," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99, no. 2 (2009).
[15] Bernard Spolsky, *The Languages of the Jews: A Sociolinguistic History* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 141.
[16] David Gold, "Jewish intralinguistics as a field of study," in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, no. 30 (1981).

speech varieties should be classified as dialects or languages, for which a comprehensive paradigm has not been created. He does, however, accept the hierarchal terminology of 'language,' which could be used to refer to Judeo-Spanish or Yiddish and the respective lects that pertain to each of them. Such an issue, prevalent across the world, is a linguistic and ideological one in both categorization and nomenclature. American English, British English, and Australian English are all classified as English; Egyptian Arabic and Moroccan Arabic are both considered Arabic; yet Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian, due to politics within the former Yugoslavia, are considered separate languages by their speakers. Linguistically, however, there is no distinct point at which a language becomes independent from another, or simply a dialect of it, regardless of how many contrasting features they reveal. Identifying at what point Yiddish becomes a different language from German, Judeo-Spanish from Spanish, or Judeo-Arabic from Arabic, remains unanswered. This leads Gold to assert that a lect is "a Jewish lect to the extent that it furnishes its Jewish users with the means of expressing all that a person as a Jew needs to express by language."[17] With this notion, one may explore how Jews go about using their language and the degree of Jewishness it suggests, given variation from the non-Jewish variety.

Benor's work agrees with that of Gold, while considering Jewish languages as lects, etholects, and in describing a new theoretical construct, the Jewish Linguistic Repertoire. Benor emphasizes the importance in classifying what are typically referred to as Jewish languages as Jewish regiolects or Jewish lects.[18] This revised terminology accounts for variation within a community, as opposed to ignoring varieties that fall anywhere outside of a fabricated standard of a Jewish 'language' or 'dialect.' The Jewish Linguistic Repertoire (JLR) focuses on the selective use of distinctive features that Jews use as resources in their speech or writing. Benor notes that such a concept takes the set system of a language and "renders the controversy about language vs. dialect irrelevant, and allows for the use of more or less distinct language by any Jew or non-Jew."[19] These features, on the one hand, can include infrequent lexical incorporation from Hebrew, Aramaic or other languages and, on the other, represent the utmost unintelligible language in comparison to the non-Jewish cognate language. This shift in categorization focuses on the community and appreciates the elements that Jews use to interact within as

[17] Ibid., 33.
[18] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Towards a New Understanding of Jewish Language in the Twenty-First Century" in *Religion Compass* 2, no. 6 (2008).
[19] Ibid., 1068.

well as outside of their speech communities. The revised construct shifts the question from "Does Jewish community X speak a Jewish language? to: How and to what extent does excerpt of speech or writing X make use of a distinctively Jewish linguistic repertoire?"[20] This adjustment to the fundamental and underlying question behind Comparative Jewish Linguistics allows scholars to connect past and present speech communities and assess their development diachronically.

While the JLR offers a distinct approach to the study of Jewish speech varieties, particularly for that of Jewish-English, there are certain issues for which we must account. Of the documented Jewish languages, Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish are the most carefully researched. They also represent an anomaly compared to other Jewish languages and a hiccup to the JLR. Both Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish are what Benor refers to as post-co-territorial languages.[21] This type of language is brought about when generations of speakers use their language outside their original territory in new regions of different languages, or when a speech community continues to use their language even when their co-regionalists shift to another one. Post-co-territorial languages constitute an exception and not the norm in Jewish history. This is understood in that Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish, both pertaining to this category, developed profoundly outside the lands of their base-language, while most other Jewish vernaculars remain in close geographic proximity to them. Thus, the JLR construct applies somewhat differently to these post-co-territorial vernaculars, which I address through the lens of Judeo-Spanish spoken vernaculars.

The latest advance of Jewish language classification is an updated account of the Jewish Linguistic Repertoire to that of the Ethnolinguistic Repertoire, in order to account not only for Jewish language varieties, but others as well.[22] Similarly, this approach relies on a set of linguistic resources that speakers have at their disposal in order to index a given part of their (ethnic) identity. In this construct, variability and distinction are established by "any elements of language used in other groups (whether or not the speakers are aware of them), including system level morpho-syntactic, phonological, and prosodic features, as well as sporadic lexical and discourse features."[23] This description of the revised theoretical

[20] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Do American Jews Speak a Jewish Language"?: A Model of Jewish Linguistic Distinctiveness," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99, no. 2 (2009), 235.
[21] See note 5.
[22] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Ethnolinguistic repertoire: Shifting the analytic focus in language and ethnicity," in *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 14, no. 2 (2010).
[23] Ibid., 160.

construct complements as well as extends Fishman's definition of a Jewish language.[24]

Wexler accounts for four types of situations that allow for the creation of a Jewish language:[25]

A. Languages that are different from their non-Jewish cognates because of linguistic developments of the associated Jewish community. Some of these languages are connected through a chain of language shift going back to Old Hebrew and implement a substratum of Hebrew and Aramaic. [Example: Yiddish].

B. Languages that are different than their non-Jewish cognates because of linguistic developments of the cognate language. The variety of the Jews, therefore, becomes Jewish by default. Some of these varieties are considered 'fossilized' or 'archaic' in that they do not develop in the same way that the non-Jewish cognate does. [Example: Judeo-Spanish 'Djudezmo'].

C. Languages that are unspoken, yet are representative of culture and religion. Written varieties of this sort are typically calqued versions of liturgical texts where the Hebrew/ Aramaic component is translated word-for-word into the colloquial language of the Jewish community. This variety may exist alongside the spoken vernacular, however, varying greatly in linguistic construct. [Example: Ladino, the written translation variety of Judeo-Spanish].

D. Languages that vary minimally from the non-Jewish cognate yet incorporate an occasional set of Hebrew/ Aramaic elements in their speech. Such newly emerging or obsolescent languages tend to be preceded by the prefix 'Jewish,' rather than 'Judeo.' [Example: Jewish-English].[26]

The factors that lead to the development of a Jewish language include segregation, religion, migration, and/ or a desire for a separate linguistic profile.[27] Types A and B represent this concept in that the former (A) relies on changes established from within the Jewish community while the non-Jewish co-regionalists bring about such change in the latter (B). The spoken vernaculars of Judeo-Spanish that developed outside of the Iberian

[24] See note 6.
[25] See note 2.
[26] Paul Wexler, "Ascertaining the position of Judeo-Spanish within Ibero-Romance [1977], " *Jewish and Non-Jewish Creators of "Jewish" Languages* (Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006a).
[27] Paul Wexler, "Jewish linguistics: 1981-1991-2001 [1993]," in *Jewish and Non-Jewish Creators of "Jewish" Languages* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006b).

Peninsula did not experience the same linguistic innovations that occurred from within it, as Jewish communities were virtually isolated from linguistic developments in the Peninsula.[28]

The enrichment of Hebrew and Aramaic elements, which arise from religious practice and the nexus with their speech communities' established traditions, is common to all Jewish languages. The history of Jewish settlement and linguistic shift has been a topic of inquiry dating back to the Jewish exile into Babylon in 597 BCE.[29] The history of migration among the Jews has put them in close quarters with speakers of cognate and non-cognate language varieties, adding adstratal or superstratal elements to their Jewish repertoires. As Jews often desire to have a distinct linguistic profile from their co-regionalists, this contributes to unique innovations within and across Jewish languages.

At the core of Jewish languages is lexical incorporation from Hebrew and/ or Aramaic. Wexler notes three roles for which these languages serve: "they are potentially the oldest component in a Jewish language, they are the only component common to all Jewish languages, and they are capable of systematically assuming two forms for each borrowed element."[30] Hebrew, the original language of the Jewish people would serve as a substratal element for the initial diasporic languages that the Jews adopted: Aramaic, Iranian, and Greek. For those Jewish languages not in direct contact with either Hebrew or its successor as of the sixth century, Aramaic (or Judeo-Aramaic at that), these two languages are considered to contribute secondary substratal or adstratal elements. The integration of Hebrew and Aramaic, commonly referred to as *The Holy Language* or *Lashon haKodesh* (LK), is what Rabin states as the "substructure that enabled the Jews in their wanderings to change spoken languages, and in some cases even written languages, without changing their culture."[31] Although Hebrew was not utilized as a primary means of communication or socialization for over two millennia, the language had remained an integral component of the Jewish religion.[32] For this reason, Hebrew

[28] The case of Haketia, the Moroccan Judeo-Spanish vernacular, however, remained in closer contact to the developments within Spain due to geographic proximity.

[29] Bernard Spolsky, *The Languages of the Jews: A Sociolinguistic History* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 35.

[30] Paul Wexler, "Jewish interlinguistics: Facts and conceptual framework," in *Language* (1981), 119.

[31] Chaim Rabin, "What Constitutes a Jewish Language?" in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, *30,* ed. Joshua Fishman (1981), 24.

[32] Bernard Spolsky, "Jewish multilingualism in the first century: An essay in

remained in the spheres of Jewish life and, thus, throughout their (Jewish) languages to varying degrees. Elements of Hebrew and Aramaic are often fully integrated into their respective Jewish languages.[33] These elements undergo linguistic (phonological, morphological, etc.) changes in their new constructs. This assertion makes the fusion of features within Jewish languages clear, as opposed to believing that lexical items are merely borrowed resources and not fully integrated into the Jewish language. Elements of Hebrew and Aramaic incorporated into Judeo-Spanish, for example, have shown a variety of semantic processes. Certain lexical items retain the same meaning in both languages; some may (partially) differ, while other Jewish languages may semantically extend the definition of a particular word or phrase. These lexical refinements, of course, occur alongside all other linguistic juxtapositions.

3. Djudezmo and Haketia: The Judeo-Spanish Spoken Vernaculars

Speakers of Judeo-Spanish refer to their language by a number of names, among those: Djudezmo, Djudyo, Djidyo, Haketia, Spaniolit, Muestro Espanyol, Ladino, Judeo-Spanish, or simply Spanish or (E)spanyol. Each term has an ideological stance associated with it; however, for the purposes of this article, I use *Djudezmo* to refer to the spoken language of the descendants of the Iberian Jews who migrated to the Ottoman Empire, and *Haketia* to refer to the spoken language of those Iberian Jews who settled in North Africa, primarily in northern cities of Morocco. *Judeo-Spanish*, a term created by scholars within the last century, encapsulates all forms of diasporic Ibero-Romance Jewish speech. Often, Djudezmo is referred to as Eastern Judeo-Spanish and Haketia as Western Judeo-Spanish. Djudezmo may be further divided into two varieties: Southeastern, encompassing Turkey, Greece, and Eastern Bulgaria, and Northwestern, representing the former Yugoslavia, Rumania, Western Bulgaria, and Austria.[34] Many speakers and language-orientated institutions

historical sociolinguistics," in *Readings in the sociology of Jewish languages* (1985).

[33] David Bunis, "A Comparative Linguistic Analysis of Judezmo and Yiddish," in *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 30* (1981).

[34] David Bunis, "The Language of the Sephardic Jews: A Historical Sketch," in *Moreshet Sefarad , II*, ed. H. Beinart (1992b).

refer to the language of the Sephardim as *Ladino*,[35] however, this term will be used to describe a particular written variety of Judeo-Spanish (see section 4). Throughout the centuries of the post-Iberian Diaspora, Sephardim have referred to their language by all of these names, as documented in Judeo-Spanish periodicals and other textual and oral sources.

The history of the Judeo-Spanish language and its dialectology may be divided into three periods, as suggested by Bürki, Schmid, and Schwegler.[36] They suggest grouping the linguistic development of the Sephardim into *Sefarad I, II* and *III*, where *Sefarad* represents not only the changes in the language, but also the relocation of the Sephardim in their diasporas. I categorize these *Sefarads* according to this paradigm in the following figure.

PERIOD	APPROXIMATE DURATION
Sefarad I	Medieval Judeo-Hispanic culture in the Iberian Peninsula
Sefarad II	Life in Sephardic communities formed outside of the Iberian Peninsula after the expulsions at the end of the fifteenth century
Sefarad III	Establishments in the United States, Latin America, Western Europe, and Israel

Figure 1.1 Sefarads, adapted from Bürki, Schmid and Schwegler (2006:9)

Sefarad I theoretically spans over a millennium in which the Jews resided in the Iberian Peninsula, yet particularly refers to the way the Jews used their language in the years leading up to la Reconquista. *Sefarad II* represents roughly four centuries in the Jews' diaspora into the Ottoman Empire and North Africa. Lastly, *Sefarad III* represents the shortest temporality beginning in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Bürki, Schmid, and Schwegler associate this diaspora with the migration patterns of the Sephardim after the rise of nation-states within the Ottoman Empire and the tragic events of World War II, where many Sephardic cities, like Ashkenazic, were annihilated.

Focusing on Djudezmo, Bunis similarly establishes a paradigm for the development of the Judeo-Spanish language according to three periods:

[35] While I use Ladino to refer to the written calqued variety, I keep the term when quoting a speaker who may use *Ladino* to refer to the spoken variety, as is quite common outside of academic circles.

[36] Yvette Bürki, Beatrice Schmid, and Armin Schwegler, "Una lengua en la diáspora: el judeoespañol de Oriente," in *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana (RILI), IV* (2006).

Old, Middle and Modern, similar to those *Sefarads* suggested above.[37] However, his analysis represents the linguistic paradigms associated within the respective geographical setting of the Sephardim and not the actual migration itself. The Old Period, similar to *Sefarad I*, spans from the beginning of Jewish settlement until 1492, the year in which the Jews were expelled from Spain.[38] Scholars continue to debate whether or not a Judeo-Spanish variety existed during this period; this is due to the lack of primary sources alluding to the language of the Jews prior to their expulsion. Minervini expresses this challenge in noting, "la lingüística histórica tiene el límite intrínseco de estar basada sobre fuentes escritas, que inevitablemente borran—o al menos ocultan—rasgos importantes de la lengua hablada, sobre todo aquella de los estratos sociales más bajos."[39] Bunis explains the linguistic particularities of the Jewish variety of language while within the Peninsula, using the few medieval texts that have survived, most from the fifteenth century. However, similar to Minervini, he notes, "since writing, and especially creative and formal writing, always differs somewhat from speech, these written documents can only give us an imperfect idea of how the average medieval Sephardi spoke."[40] Both Bunis and Minervini offer lists of lexicon to exemplify the influence of Hebrew and Aramaic in (non-calque based) writings, while noting minimal substrata from Judeo-Arabic and Judeo-Greek. Examples tend to be limited in the literature of those describing these substrata, often noting *meldar* 'to read' and *Ayifto* 'Egypt' from Judeo-Greek and *alhad* 'Sunday' and *alkunya* 'surname' from Judeo-Arabic.

Wexler acknowledges that Judeo-Spanish during *Sefarad I,* as well as in the immediate years following the expulsion, predominantly mirrors Castilian, while undoubtedly having elements of other Romance languages present. For this reason, he notes, "it may be more correct to describe the speech of 15th century Iberian Jews as (Judeo-?) Aragonese, (Judeo-?) Valencian etc., rather than as simply 'Judeo-Spanish.'"[41] Given that the term *Judeo-Spanish* often encapsulates all forms of Ibero-Romance language, there are still many questions to be asked about unique varieties

[37] See note 34.
[38] This could also span until 1497, the year in which the Jews of Portugal were forced to convert or exiled.
[39] Laura Minervini, "El desarrollo histórico del judeoespañol," in *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* (2006), 15.
[40] David Bunis, "The Language of the Sephardic Jews: A Historical Sketch," in *Moreshet Sefarad , II*, ed. H. Beinart (1992b), 42.
[41] Paul Wexler, "Jewish interlinguistics: Facts and conceptual framework," in *Language* (1981), 114

of Jewish speech prior to the expulsions of the Sephardim. Nevertheless, although Judeo-Spanish is heavily based on Castilian Spanish, other peninsular languages have influenced its formation as well.

Aside from occasional lexical variation among Sephardim, Minervini notes that in examining their syntax, phonology, and morphology, it is not possible to ascertain substantial differences between the Jews and Christians during this period.[42] Similarly, Sephiha attests that prior to the expulsion, the Jews of Spain spoke varieties of Spanish similar to those of their Christian and Muslim neighbors.[43] Therefore, differences between the Spanish of the Jews and that of their co-regionalists does not preclude a distinct Judeo-Spanish, as evidenced in later periods. These views are prominent among scholars who take the stance that the variety of language within the Peninsula was not uniquely Jewish in nature.

The strongest argument for a distinct Jewish repertoire during *Sefarad I* comes from an analysis across the Judeo-Spanish varieties of Djudezmo and Haketia. This argument notes that, while these varieties developed after *Sefarad I,* the similarities between them indicate a common linguistic source for both groups of speakers. Schwarzwald asserts that the similarities between Djudezmo and Haketia are not coincidental.[44] She notes the retention of prepalatal fricatives in both vernaculars as evidence of a common linguistic origin. This, however, would not indicate a unique Jewish component in speech during *Sefarad I* given that co-regional non-Jewish speakers also used these phones. Instead, their retention can be attributed to their isolation from the Peninsula during the evolution of Castilian. A more convincing argument for common roots from *Sefarad I* is the innovative lexical forms pertaining to both Djudezmo and Haketia, primarily of Hebrew origin. These include: *balabay(a)* 'householder, boss', *axenarse* 'to beautify oneself', *dezmazalado* 'unlucky'. Shared lexicon from other language stock include: *trokamyento* 'change', *prometa* 'promise', *araskina* 'itch', and *prestura* 'speed.'[45] While these forms provide evidence for a Judeo-Spanish repertoire within the Peninsula, the evidence does not necessarily account for a separate variety altogether.

The question whether Judeo-Spanish existed in the Peninsula prior to the expulsion compares to how the variety of language spoken by

[42] See note 39.
[43] Haim Vidal Sephiha, "'Christianisms' in Judeo-Spanish Calque and Vernacular," in *Readings in the Sociology of Jewish Langauges*, ed. Joshua Fishman (1985).
[44] Ora Schwarzwald, "Language Choice and Language Varieties Before and After the Expulsion," in *From Iberia to Diaspora: Studies in Sephardic History and Culture*, ed. Yedida Stillman, and Norman Stillman Zucker (1999).
[45] Ibid., 406.

Sephardim outside the Peninsula is a Jewish variety. The Ethnolinguistic Repertoire is one approach that may account for this issue.[46] In comparing Jewish vernaculars, Benor notes, "while speakers of Yiddish and Ladino spoke completely different language from their Slavic and Balkan neighbors, speakers of Judeo- Greek, Judeo- Arabic, Judeo- Persian, and dozens more languages spoke the local language with varying degrees of distinctiveness."[47] Although Benor does not apply the repertoire approach directly to Judeo-Spanish nor its distinct periodization, her theory reminds us of what is at the core of Jewish language typology. Her statement reviews Djudezmo in *Sefarad II*, which was undoubtedly out of contact with the language developments occurring within the Peninsula during the initial centuries following the expulsion. However, Benor notes that speakers of Greek and Arabic spoke Jewish varieties of the language in their respective territories, and aptly places these Jewish varieties within the model of the Ethnolinguistic Repertoire. Therefore, the language spoken by the Sephardim in the Peninsula before the turn of the century following their expulsions should, and could, appropriately fit into this model as well. This type of language would be classified under Wexler's type D typology, which alludes to nascent languages, or those that are exceedingly similar to that of the co-territorial non-Jews, despite substratal influences from Hebrew, Aramaic, or possibly another language.[48]

At this point, we must distinguish between the linguistic developments of Eastern (Djudezmo) and Western (Haketia) Judeo-Spanish during *Sefarad II*. As Djudezmo and Haketia are both post-expulsion developments, their linguistic origins can be traced to *Sefarad I*, and explored in the years following this period. The development of Djudezmo is represented during *Sefarad II,* encompassing the years 1493 until 1810. Bunis categorizes this period in two distinct periods: Early Middle (1493- 1728) and Late Middle (1729-1810).[49]

Minervini attributes the development of Judeo-Spanish outside of the Peninsula to koineization.[50] Referring to the situation concerning Judeo-Spanish, she describes this term as the formation of a variety of language "que es consecuencia de las nuevas condiciones históricas, sociales y

[46] Sarah Bunin Benor, "Ethnolinguistic repertoire: Shifting the analytic focus in language and ethnicity," in *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 14, no. 2 (2010).
[47] Ibid., 13. In this case, Benor uses 'Ladino' in terms of the spoken vernacular, and not the calqued variety.
[48] See note 2.
[49] See note 40.
[50] Laura Minervini, "El desarrollo histórico del judeoespañol," in *Revista Internacional de Lingüística Iberoamericana* (2006).

culturales determinadas."[51] For example, Wexler notes the common belief that features from Portuguese found in Judeo-Spanish are attributed to koineization during *Sefarad II*.[52] However, he hypothesizes that these components may have been integrated into Judeo-Spanish during the years between 1492-1497 in which many Sephardim migrated to Portugal before leaving there as well. Nevertheless, daily contact among Sephardic communities, which may have exhibited slight differences in their Jewish repertoires depending if they were from Aragón, Castilla, León, Cataluña or other regions, would level their language as they began to incorporate adstratal and superstratal components into their language. The Jews of various regions from within the Peninsula settled into post-expulsion areas with one another, often establishing synagogues based on their former cities, although not all were represented. Quintana-Rodríguez notes that the initial process of koineization occurred within Sephardic communities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[53] She posits that two koines developed independently; one in Istanbul and the other in Salonika. These two major centers of Sephardic life influenced other Judeo-Spanish speaking communities with which they were in contact.

Following the years of the expulsion from Spain, Penny explores the linguistic development of Castilian within the Peninsula as well as Judeo-Spanish outside of it.[54] Significant changes took place in both varieties, which makes comparison of such features a more promising undertaking during the period of *Sefarad II*. Judeo-Spanish retained certain phonological features that Romance varieties shared prior to the expulsion. Castilian replaced the voiceless prepalatal fricative [ʃ], its voiced counterpart [ʒ], and the voiced prepalatal affricate [dʒ][55] with the voiceless velar fricative [x]. Djudezmo, however, retained these pre-expulsion *Sefarad I* phones. Similarly, Haketia retained [ʃ] and [ʒ], while [dʒ] converged with [ʒ] in words of Ibero-Romance origin.[56] Kushner-Bishop

[51] Ibid., 18.
[52] See note 26.
[53] Aldina Quintana-Rodríguez. *Geografía lingüística del judeoespañol. Estudio sincrónico y diacrónico* Vol. Sephardic 3. (Berne: Peter Lang, 2006).
[54] Ralph Penny, *History of the Spanish Language,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) and *Variation and change in Spanish,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[55] Thought to be an allophone of /ʒ/ in Old Spanish, occurring in initial position as well as after a nasal.
[56] An example of Haketia [ʃ] is *disho*. Examples of Haketia [ʒ] include: *hiĵo* (son)*, ĵudió* (Jew), *reliĝión* (religion) and *ĝeneral* (general). In contemporary orthographic norms the grapheme *ĝ* (as opposed to *ĵ*) is used before an [e] or an [i].