

English Abstracts

Ilan Eldar

The Grammatical Literature of Medieval Ashkenazi Jewry

The Ashkenaz school of grammar took shape and solidified in the main centers of early Ashkenazi Jewry in Western Europe: northern France, Germany and England. This school first flourished in the generations that followed Rashi (d. 1105), and reached the peak of its development in the second half of the thirteenth century; the decades on either side of 1300 marked its end.

Unlike its Spanish counterpart, the Ashkenaz school of grammar has aroused scant interest among students of Hebrew linguistic literature, evidently on account of the prevailing view that linguistic studies were neglected by Ashkenazi Torah scholars of the day, preoccupied as they were with Halakhic activity and Talmudic exegesis. The linguistic attainments of the scholars of Ashkenaz, written for a relatively small audience well-versed in rabbinic literature but scientifically somewhat naïve, never matched the scientific quality of the Jewish scholars in Moslem Spain.

Aside from a few (though not insignificant) displays of originality, no fundamental and substantive advances were made by Ashkenazi grammarians that were not due to Spanish influence, nor did they effect any radical change in the patterns of grammatical thinking about the Hebrew language.

Nevertheless, one cannot gainsay the value of the Ashkenazi grammatical works or the importance of their contribution to the study of Hebrew language in their day and in their localities; though almost totally lacking in theoretical expression of grammatical principles and methodological assumptions, a few of these works contain a full and comprehensive picture of the rules of Hebrew as embodied in the Biblical text with its vocalization and accentuation.

Only eight treatises of the grammatical writings of the Ashkenaz school have been preserved in manuscripts and have survived in their entirety. The content of each treatise is described here briefly, presenting a more or less clear idea of the Ashkenazi activity in the field of Hebrew grammar.

Moshe Bar-Asher

Some Usages of the Hebrew Component in Modern Judeo-Arabic

This paper explores the use of Hebrew words and expressions in modern Judeo-Arabic, especially in Maghrebite dialects (and to a limited extent in the East as well). The phenomenon encompasses

known elements from classical Hebrew that have acquired new meanings diverging from their usage in Hebrew texts, as well as entirely new words and idioms. In some cases, the grammatical form of the word has undergone transformation.

The examples cited include: (1) בֵּית שְׂרָפָה (signifying "a Moslem cemetery"); (2) בִּרְהָ (an appellation for "Moslem" derived by calque [loan translation] from the Arabic kə'ba which has the same meaning as בִּרְהָ; it also suggests the Ka'aba in Mecca); (3) מֵאַרִּיךְ טַרְחָא אַתְנָה ("After a long and tiresome speech, the listeners need a rest"); (4) מִנִּין ("ten"); and (5) (ל)פִּסְטִיל – ("An appellation for Muhammad, the prophet of Islam"). These words and expressions appear in Hebrew sources; however, in the Judeo-Arabic of the Maghreb (and the East) they have acquired new meanings as illustrated above.

Original expressions created in various North African locales, becoming part of everyday spoken Judeo-Arabic dialects, are also cited in this paper. They include: (1) בַּעַל הַזֶּהָב יֶאֱהָב וּבַעַל הַכֶּסֶף יוֹכֵסֶף ("The wealthy are popular, everyone desires their company"); (2) – לֹא תִרְצַח – וְרִצַּח ("Although there is an unconditional prohibition against murder, society occasionally condones murder", [or more precisely – "An absolute prohibition without exceptions does not exist"]); (3) סוֹכָה בַּחוּבָכָה ("The appropriate time has passed, the act is now irrelevant"); (4) מִגֻּנוֹב ("a thief"); and (5) דִּלְתִּין ("forty" – the plural of the letter דָּלֶת = "four").

Examples of Hebrew grammatical innovations that developed in different North African communities are presented as well: מִגְבָּעָה ("hat" – the singular form of מִגְבָּעוֹת), and תִּקְנָאוֹת (the plural of תִּקְנָה). The dual forms טַעֲנָה/טַעֲנָה coexisting in the spoken Arabic and oral Hebrew tradition of the Jews of Tafilalt (Morocco) shed light on the history of the Hebrew language as reflected in ancient Mishnaic manuscripts and in other diaspora traditions.

Some of the Hebrew elements cited above have a widespread distribution among the various Judeo-Arabic speaking communities

(e.g., לפסול as an appellation for Muhammad), while others have restricted usage (e.g., בית שרפה for "Moslem cemetery"). Both types illustrate the inherent linguistic richness of these dialects. The examination of these and other Hebrew elements in modern Judeo-Arabic dialects enhances dialectical studies, and at the same time makes a significant contribution to historical studies of the Hebrew language.

Robert D. Hoberman

Modern Aramaic and the Method of Comparative Reconstruction

The modern Aramaic dialects native to northern Iraq and adjacent parts of Iran and Turkey (Northeastern Neo-Aramaic) are descended from the undocumented Aramaic that must have been spoken there in ancient times. When the method of comparative reconstruction is applied to modern Aramaic dialects, it affords a glimpse at a variety of Aramaic which existed between the time of earlier, documented Aramaic languages and the appearance of the modern dialects. This method is applied here to several topics in phonology and the morphology of the pronouns and pronominal suffixes.

Hebrew Elements in the Spoken Arabic of Djerba

In this paper I collect the Hebrew elements in the Arabic dialect spoken by the Djerba community. The main question that arises is to what degree are these Hebrew elements unique and independent of the Arabic.

From a phonological point of view, I compare the spoken Hebrew of Djerba with the traditions found in the reading of the Bible and the Mishna. This comparison revealed several differences: the plosive glottal /ʔ/, the fricative bilabial /b/, the vowel /i/, and short /a/. From the phonological analysis I conclude that the influence of spoken Arabic was absolute since these words are perceived as part of their Arabic language.

As far as morphology is concerned, the Hebrew elements have a medium status. On the one hand, the influence of Arabic on Hebrew is obvious in the definite article, the possessive pronouns, the verbal system, the broken plural and the diminutive. On the other hand, the Hebrew elements keep their uniqueness and individuality in the case of the plural form “-iyot” (gmariyot) and free formation of words (šifah, ’uriḥim). In the above we discussed ancient Hebrew forms that are used in Djerba such as “ṭḥayat emmitim”, “keemmar”.

The syntax of the Hebrew element in the Djerba dialect agrees with that of Arabic. This can be seen in Hebrew-Arabic phrases such as “ye’dwi belafellu” and in the Arabic syntax in the secret language “dōbber lu”.

We can conclude from the semantic discussion that the Hebrew words in the Djerba dialect behave as in any living language in that meanings change, vary or become specific: 'amaleq – tall man. Not only do we find slight changes in meaning, but also completely new expressions. Examples of this are maḥṣeq, mōdleq.

The Hebrew used as a secret language had a special status. The Jews took advantage of the Hebrew language to converse among themselves, preventing non-Jews from understanding them. Examples are "lu lanu", "lu tidōbbōr".

Benjamin Hary

The Tradition of Later Egyptian Judeo-Arabic Orthography

This article examines the orthography in Later Egyptian Judeo-Arabic (15th–19th centuries). In this period the tradition of the *šarḥ*, a translation of a sacred text into Judeo-Arabic began to develop. Furthermore, historical, halakhic, liturgical and other texts were written aimed at the general public and not only at the elite. Toward the end of this period and in the next, Modern Judeo-Arabic (20th century) folk literature began to flourish. The data in this paper are based on three texts: "The Purim Scroll of the Cairene Jewish Community", a liturgo-historical text from 16th century Cairo depicting the "miracle" that happened to the Jews there and how they were saved

from Ahmad Pasha; "Townsmen and Fellah", a Geniza text from the 17th century that describes the disputes between urban people and villagers; and "Darxe No'am", a book of rabbinical responsa from 17th century Cairo which contains verbatim testimonies of witnesses in court.

The above mentioned tradition is characterized by three main elements: the influence of Hebrew and Aramaic spelling, the phonetic influence and the continued influence of the Classical spelling from the period of Classical Judeo-Arabic (10th-15th centuries). Another issue is the notion of *schreiberschule*, where each scribe took pride in his own spelling conventions and traditions achieving an excellent degree of standardization in each manuscript. Comparison is made to the orthography of the Maghrebi *šarḥ* described by M. Bar-Asher and to the spelling of the Arabic glosses in the Italian version of the Biblical dictionary "Miqre Dardaqi" (Naples, 1488), described by O. Tirosh-Becker.

The above described orthographical tradition is not entirely based upon the model of Classical Arabic orthography as is the case with "Classical Judeo-Arabic Spelling"; nor is it entirely based on phonetic approximation principles as is the case with "Early Vulgar Judeo-Arabic Spelling" (both of these traditions described by Blau and Hopkins). To a certain degree this spelling of Later-Arabic is a combination of both.

Traces of Yiddish in the Hebrew Writings of S. Y. Agnon

The author explores the use of Yiddish sentences and isolated expressions in the writings of Agnon. This phenomenon is derived primarily from the fact that Yiddish is the language spoken by most of his characters, despite the indubitable Hebrew garb of his creations. Agnon not only presents us with the Hebrew parallel of the spoken language, but at times also incorporates the Yiddish component in its plain meaning in order to infuse his descriptions with authenticity and realistic credibility, and he generally provides a parallel Hebrew translation. Agnon's use of the lexical basis of Yiddish is apparent already in the letters written by the young Agnon to his revered friend Y. H. Brenner, as well as in the letters written by the mature author to Dov Sadan.

The references to and descriptions of Yiddish speech appear throughout various periods of Agnon's writings in works such as: "Tehilla", "Shira", and "The Yerakhmielim". The interspersing of Yiddish words and sentences occurs primarily in his novel "Temol Shilshom". The debates concerning the status of Yiddish in Eretz Israel during the period of the Second Aliya are also related in this novel. In Agnon's story "Shnei Talmidei Hakhamim Shehayu be'Irenu", the Yiddish folk-saying, presented without a Hebrew translation, serves as a significant motif that influences the unfolding of the story's plot. An entirely independent issue concerns the Yiddish poems that Agnon at times embedded in stories from all periods of his work, both with and without accompanying Hebrew translation.

Ktzia Katz

Spoken Hebrew and Oral Tradition – the Spoken Hebrew of the Djerba Community

In the description of the history of modern Hebrew one has to place considerable importance on the language of non-native speakers who belong to the older generation of the various communities. Through speakers who have preserved the language traditions of their communities when reading the Biblical and post-Biblical texts, we can study at first-hand how the liturgical use of Hebrew has been adopted and adapted for use in daily life.

This paper describes the Hebrew spoken by one of the members of the Djerba community, and compares it to his reading tradition, to his vernacular, and to modern spoken Hebrew.

Arye Kendi

Hebrew Words in Hungarian Slang

The article presents a (not necessarily definitive nor complete) list of some 180 words compiled from several dictionaries of the Hungarian "thieves' slang", that appear to be of Hebrew origin.

The meaning of many Hungarian derivatives relates to that of their Hebrew original only by way of association of ideas. Most of the words appeared initially in German/Yiddish form, but adjusted later to the Hungarian pattern.

The first known list of Hungarian "underworld" words dates back to 1782; three of its 74 words derive from Hebrew. A 1911 dictionary containing some 3000 words includes close to 30% Hebrew derivatives; two later collections, from 1917 and 1924, show a decline in the presence of Hebrew: 160–170 words out of some 1200 and about 150 out of more than 1400 respectively.

The words in the 1911 listing show to a great extent the influence of Rotwaelsch, the slang of the German underworld. Many words also probably reflect the language of new settlers in the Hungarian territories of the Austro-Hungarian empire who had recently migrated from German/Yiddish speaking areas.

The separation of Hungary from these areas after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy explains the diminishing trend of Hebrew in the slang. During the past six-seven decades most of the words have been lost and no new ones have been added. The remaining words are part of the general slang.

A vocabulary of the Hungarian underworld published in 1990 included among its 1300 odd listings some 80 words of Hebrew origin. These are designated by "90" in the world-list.

Yehuda Ratzaby

Additions to the Dictionary of the Hebrew Language Used by Yemenite Jews

This article contains additions to the "Dictionary of the Hebrew Language Used by Yemenite Jews", which I published in 1978. Since the publication of the book, I have collected more material, which I present here.

Joseph Chetrit

A Socio-Pragmatic Study of the Hebrew Component in the Judeo-Arabic Poetry of North Africa: Textual Aspects

The goal of this study is to present a comprehensive socio-pragmatic and linguistic analysis of the Hebrew component in the Judeo-Arabic poetry of North Africa. The study follows a more theoretical study to be published elsewhere dealing with the socio-pragmatic characteristics of the text as text, with the general and various uses of the Hebrew component in Judeo-Arabic texts and with a short survey of the growth

and the genres of Judeo-Arabic in North Africa during the last five centuries. The present study is more applied and deals with the concrete uses of Hebrew morphemes, lexical units, phrases and sentences which are present in several genres of poetical texts and almost totally avoided in other genres and texts.

In this regard, the essential questions that are raised here are how does one determine what socio-pragmatic features condition in the Judeo-Arabic poetical texts the use or the non-use of the Hebrew elements, and what kinds of uses are made in the several texts and genres of texts. After having presented a general stratification of Hebrew uses in Judeo-Arabic texts, which includes intertextual, integrated and camouflaging uses, and the stratification of the Arabic language used by Jews in North Africa to produce poetical texts based on the one hand on higher or literary registers and on the other on lower or colloquial ones, three principles are presented, principles that explain the general use of the Hebrew component in our texts:

- 1) The poems written in literary or semi-literary Moslem or Jewish Arabic use very few Hebrew elements because of the lexical unification principle that guided scholars and Rabbinical writers until the beginning of the 19th century.
- 2) The genres written in Jewish colloquial registers use a very rich Hebrew component, but only if their thematic foci deal with traditional Jewish cultural matters. In this case both intertextual and integrated uses appear in the poems depending on the educational background of the writer.
- 3) The camouflaging uses of Hebrew elements appear only in satiric and humoristic poems.

These uses are illustrated by many poetical texts appearing principally in manuscripts from the various communities of North African Jewry including perfect bilingual poems of the "Matrug" (= embroidered) genre and poems where Hebrew and Arabic are greatly mixed in the utterances.

To make our discussion more concrete, a systematic semantic-lexical and morphosyntactic analysis of the integrated Hebrew elements in the various Judeo-Arabic structures is proposed. This analysis concerns noun phrase structures with or without determiners as well as verb phrase structures, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases. Finally, camouflaging uses are analysed in several humoristic or satiric poems and the Hebrew (only integrated) component of the women's oral songs is presented in some detail.

Ofra Tirosch-Becker

Preliminary Studies in Rabbinic Quotations Embedded in the Pentateuch Commentaries of the Karaite Scholar Yeshu'a Ben-Yehuda

It is common knowledge that the Karaites rejected the Rabbinic Halacha. Nevertheless, despite their controversy with the Rabbanites, they did not refrain from using Rabbinic Hebrew in their language. Furthermore, there are Karaite scholars who cited Rabbinic sources in the course of their arguments in order to refute their opponents. The existence and variety of such citations clearly demonstrate the acquaintance of these Karaite authors with Rabbinic literature.

It is hoped that the study of Rabbinic quotations embedded in Karaite treatises will shed light on Rabbinic Hebrew from an unusual direction, i.e., from their rivals' point of view. Following the extraction

of the Rabbinic quotations from Karaite manuscripts three major questions should be discussed in detail: 1) Do these citations exhibit the linguistic features found in the most reliable Rabbinic manuscripts, features which are considered to be representative of original Rabbinic Hebrew? 2) Can we establish what tradition (or traditions) is reflected in these citations? 3) Are there any unique traits in this material?

The fact that the Karaite authors came from different places and periods compels us to devote a separate study to each Karaite author, taking into account the influence of these factors on the authors' language and on their tradition of Rabbinic Hebrew. The synthesis of the separate studies into a unified picture will be carried out at a later stage.

In this paper I discuss linguistic phenomena from a selection of Rabbinic citations embedded in the Pentateuch commentaries of the 11th century prominent Karaite scholar from Jerusalem – Yeshu'a ben Yehuda. Specifically, I have concentrated on quotations transcribed into Arabic script (sometimes with Hebrew vocalization signs) embedded in Arabic texts. A few citations from a Hebrew text were also considered.

The study of these selected citations clearly reveals that its language contains numerous features common to the best known manuscripts and oral traditions of Rabbinic Hebrew. Among these we find the 2ms pronominal suffix ךָ^- ; the feminine participle שֶׁל יוֹצֵא ; proclitic to the following word; the word רַבִּי with a *hiriq*; the proper name אֲלִיעֶזֶר without a vocalization mark under the aleph; the form עַד אֵן and other phenomena. Hence the tradition of the above citations can be considered reliable.

The language of these citations also exhibits a few features considered to be characteristic of the Babylonian tradition, i.e., the forms הַקְרָאָה , הוֹאָה and דַּחֲאוּ . In addition, examples of the alternation between *pataḥ* and *segol*, which is characteristic of the Babylonian vocalization system, can also be found, although in general the reading tradition reflected in these quotations is Tiberian. Nevertheless, the

existence of features that are considered to be of the Palestinian tradition (e.g. *אליעזר, בית תר, שמא*) leads us to withhold judgment concerning the tradition reflected in these citations. Are we faced with a Palestinian tradition that contains traces of a Babylonian substrate, or a Babylonian tradition which had absorbed some Palestinian features? The co-existence of features from both traditions in Yeshu'a ben Yehuda's writings is clarified, to a certain extent, by his background: this distinguished Karaite scholar lived in Jerusalem, but his ancestors and mentors came from Babylon.

Other topics studied in this paper are the unique form *לא ראה א כראה* ב, and the increased use of *פועל* (< *פָּעַל*).