English Abstracts

Yitzhak Avishur

The Aramaic Elements in the Arabic Dialects of the Iraqi Jews

Studies on the Hebrew elements in Jewish languages include some Aramaic elements as well, based on the assumption that Hebrew and Aramaic elements are integrated in the same way. While this may be true for most of the Jewish languages, it seems to me that for the areas of Mesopotamia-Syria-Palestine, one has to study the Aramaic elements separately from the Hebrew ones.

In these areas Aramaic was quite dominant for about 1500 years as a spoken as well as a written language, beginning in the 6th–7th cent. B.C.E. and up to the 9th–10th cent. C.E.

With the Arab conquest in the mid–7th cent. C.E., Arabic gradually superseded Aramaic as the lingua franca in these areas. However, it remained a spoken language till the 10th cent. and in some isolated places till the present time.

The rather gradual disappearance of Aramic left its mark on Arabic dialects of the area and vice versa: the surviving Aramaic dialects are greatly influenced by Arabic. Therefore, this mutual influence necessitates special studies. One may expect to find a substantial Aramaic substratum in local Arabic dialects. The study of Aramaic in the Jewish Arabic dialects of Iraq should be based on four components: (1) Aramaic elements (AE) that had entered literary Arabic and are found in a certain local dialect as well; (2) AE that had entered the Arabic dialects of Jews and non-Jews; (3) AE that are found in Judeo-Arabic as well as other Jewish languages; (4) AE which are unique to one dialect.

This distinction will show us the uniqueness of the AE in the local Arabic dialects when compared with other Jewish languages. The uniqueness of the AE in the local Judeo-Arabic is based on the following reasons:

(1) The Jews of Babylonia spoke Aramaic from the 6th cent. B.C.E. till the Geonic period. Moreover, some Babylonian Jews, namely, the Jews of Kurdistan, spoke Aramaic up until the present and were in continuous touch with the rest of the Babylonian Jews. Babylonian Jews created great literature in Aramaic, e.g., the Book of Daniel, the Aramaic Targums of the Bible, the Babylonian Talmud, and Geonic literature.

(2) This literature was used while they spoke Aramaic and continued using it even after Aramaic ceased being their spoken language. Thus, it is natural that an Aramaic substratum should be found in the Judeo-Arabic of Iraq, derived from the written and spoken Aramaic.

The study shows some similarities of the AE in Iraqi and Syrian Jewish dialects while some are unique to the Iraqi ones, and they seem to be a residue of the spoken Aramaic words that are closely associated with the local customs of the Babylonian Jews. Therefore, they would appear to reflect local folklore and traditions.

Shlomo Elkayam

The *Piyyuṭ* *"Al Hadiqduq"* by Rabbi David Elkayam

The written documentation of the grammar among Jews from
Morocco has not yet beem fully described. The publication of the poem
Al Hadiqduq ("About Grammar"), which was written by Rabbi David
Elkayam, a famous figure in Morocco during the 19th–20th centuries,
provides us with additional grammatical material.

The grammar rules which are included in this *piyyuṭ* belong to the part
of the document that deals with reading, i.e., rules which aim at teaching
the proper way of reading letters, vowels, and main stress in the Bible.

These grammatical rules include
– the division of consonants according to their origin;
– the different vowels classified according to *Avot Vetoladot*;
– the different shewas (letters with mute vowels);
– the rules concerning the use of daghesh in letters;
– the classification of the 22 letters of the alphabet according to their
abilities to receive the daghesh;
– the nature of the syllable and its main stress;
– a detailed explanation of the main stress in the Bible.

This *piyyuṭ* has no exceptional value in itself, but provides important
evidence about the degree of interest in the Hebrew language at the
writer's time.

On occasion these efforts to learn Hebrew grammar proved to be
typically academic and had nothing to do with the grammatical habits
existing in the writer's surrounding environment, especially when he
used L. Ben-Zehev's method, taken from his essay "Talmud Lashon
Ivrit". He learned from Ben-Zehev the organization of written material,
the grammatical definitions, and even borrowed some of his examples.

Joshua Blau

"At Our Place in the *Maghreb*"

Maimonides invariably uses the expression "at our place in the *Maghreb*" in the sense of 'at our place in Spain', Spain being included in the *Maghreb*. In general, Maimonides refers by '*our custom*', etc., to Spain.

Moshe Bar-Asher

Studies in the Transmissions of the *Sharh* *"Leshon Limmudim"* of Rabbi Raphael Berdugo

This article seeks to trace the history of the different transmissions of the *Sharh "Leshon Limmudim"* to the Pentateuch. We possess 16 manuscripts of this *Sharh*, reflecting 23 different transmissions. Even though this composition is only some 200 years old, the manuscripts differ from one another to varying degrees.

On the whole, the manuscripts transmit one version of the tradition; however, there are differences among them. Many of the differences are in orthography (e.g., חלת for חללת *həllat* "I opened"; צבאח/סבאח, which are both pronounced the same way: *ṣbaḥ* "morning"); some of these orthographic differences reflect phonetic variations (e.g., גטא *ǧṭa* as opposed to כטא *ẓṭa* "cover"; both realizations exist in Maghrebine

Arabic). There are also differences in morphology (לעלם l-'əlm as against תעלים t-tə'lim, both of which mean "study", "knowledge", as well as in vocabulary (but not in meaning; e.g., "tree": ערסא 'əṛṣa and סזרא šəžra). Most of the variations between the manuscripts are of the types mentioned above.

Only on occasion does one find textual differences, some of which are minor (e.g., the translation of שדה by לכלא l-xla "desert" as opposed to פדאן fəddan "field"), while others are more extensive, as when one group of manuscripts possesses a version that is absent from another group.

It appears that the copyists of *Leshon Limmudim* were responsible for most of the differences in the text. In copying the composition, the scribes were influenced by the old oral traditions of the *Sharh* that they knew and by their own usual writing conventions. *Leshon Limmudim* was not, in their eyes, a sacred book that could not be altered. It is possible that a few of the differences originate in expansions or shortenings of the original version of *Leshon Limmudim*. These changes were probably introduced into the text by the author himself or by one of his students.

Ephraim Hazan

Rhyming and Pronunciation
in the Poetry of Rabbi David Hassine

David Ben Hassine (1727–1792) is the most celebrated poet of Moroccan Jewry. His *piyyuṭim* were already popular during his lifetime

not only among Moroccan Jews, but also among Sefaradim all over the world. His poetry merits special attention. This article intends to examine the pronunciation and language tradition of the Moroccan Jews as reflected in Hassine's rhymes: e/i; o/u; b/b̲; p/f; s/š/ṣ. All these are part of the pronunciation of Moroccan Jewry. This rhyming also reflects traditional languages, such as the morphemes "כומר" "חומר", or the influence of his vernacular language, e.g., "תקופה", "כייף".

Yosef Tobi

Pre-Sa'adianic Arabic Translation
of the Pentateuch

Most scholars share the view that Sa'adia was the first to write a Judeo-Arabic translation of the Pentateuch, even though he was preceded by Christian translators. Sa'adia's translaion is distinguished by the fact that it is not syntactically tied to the Biblical text. Sa'adia is rightly considered the founder of the unique linguistic method of the Judeo-Arabic medieval literature known as "Middle Arabic". This alludes to the fact that, although it is not the same as high Arabic (as reflected in Arabic poetry and classic Arabic literature), it is completely different from the vulgar, spoken Arabic. Also it is generally accepted that only at a relatively late date, the 14th century, written Judeo-Arabic literature underwent the transition from Middle Arabic to the vulgar dialect.

Recently this view has been questioned after various pre–14th century texts – commercial letters and halakhic writings – were deciphered in the Cairo Genizah, which were written in Middle Arabic rather in the vulgar dialect.

This view is even more questionable now since the present writer found in the Genizah collection remains of two different medieval Judeo-Arabic translations of the Pentateuch which date to the 12th century at the latest. These translations are characterized by their word by word rendition and their vulgar orthography, which is in complete contradiction to Sa'adia's translation technique.

The present article includes a comprehensive and detailed linguistic and textual analysis of one of the translations as well as the text itself. The main conclusion of the writer is that Judeo-Arabic Biblical translations possibly existed at the advent of Islam in the 7th century, and in any event before the time of Sa'adia, whose translation aimed at uprooting the "defects" of those translations: literal rendition and vulgar orthography.

Tsuguya Sasaki

The Hebrew-Aramaic Component in Yiddish: Morphology and Semantics

As a consequence of fusion and internal developments, the Hebrew-Aramaic component in Yiddish ("merged Hebrew") shows features which are not found in the Hebrew-Aramaic determinant ("whole Hebrew"). The present study attempts to make a tentative classification

of these features, which distinguish the Hebrew-Aramaic component from the Hebrew-Aramaic determinant in the fields of morphology and semantics in view of the fact that, to the best of our knowledge, there is no comprehensive classification of this sort.

The chapter on morphology includes (1a) changes in inflection involving only the Hebrew-Aramaic component, (1b) changes in inflection involving the other components as well, (2) changes in derivation (involving only the Hebrew-Aramaic component), and (3) changes in compounding (involving only the Hebrew-Aramaic component); verb formation is treated separately. In the section on semantics, changes are classified first into three major types, i.e., narrowing of meaning, widening of meaning, and shift of meaning, and, subsequently, are subclassified into minor ones.

Ofra Tirosh–Becker

A Linguistic Study of Mishnaic Quotations Embedded in Yeshu'a ben Yehuda's Commentary on Leviticus

This paper seeks to characterize the language that is reflected in Rabbinic quotations embedded in Yeshu'a ben Yehuda's Judaeo-Arabic commentary on the Pentateuch.

Yeshu'a ben Yehuda, a prominent Karaite scholar, who was one of the sages of the Jerusalem Karaite center in the 11th century, was well acquainted with Rabbinic literature and often adduced it in his works.

In the present study I focus on the portion of Yeshuʻa ben Yehuda's long commentary on Leviticus found in MS Firkovitch II, Heb.–Arab. (Ser. I) 1376. This manuscript was written in Hebrew characters and many of the Rabbinic citations scattered therein were punctuated using the Tiberian punctuation systerm (although some of the quotations were only partly punctuated). Some citations were accompanied by accent signs (*Ṭěamim*).

The first part of the discussion aims to show that linguistic phenomena found in the aforementioned citations are in accord with known features of Rabbinic Hebrew as it is reflected in the most reliable Rabbinic manuscripts and in oral reading traditions. For example, הֵין (denoting approval; and not הֵן); טְנִי (and not טְנָא); אגיסו (and not גיסו); יהא and סָגַן (and not סְגַן); הֵיכן (and not איכן); מלמעלה (and not מלמעלן) יהוא/יהו as 3rd person singular and plural imperfect forms of הֵיה; the form מקרות הגבר (and not מקרוא); phrases constructed of an indefinite noun accompanied by a definite adjective, such as שַׁעַר הגדול; the 2nd person singular possessive pronoun ךָ and the particle שֶׁל attached to the following word.

Of the abundant linguistic material found in the Mishnaic quotations embedded in this Karaite composition, I have chosen to present a detailed analysis of six special plural forms, all of which are new in Tannaitic Hebrew. The form נְבָסִין, i.e., the plural of נֶבֶס, which is found in this manuscript, is the only known evidence outside the Yemenite tradition for the existence of a plural pattern קְטָלִים for נֶבֶס. In this manuscript we also find the plural form פְּשֵׁיפְּשִׁין alongside the singular form פִּישְׁפֵּשׁ. This plural form is attested in reliable manuscripts of the Mishnah, while the singular form might be of a later date. The forms רְבִיעִין and יַבָּבוֹת are additional examples of the reliable transmission in this Karaite manuscript. Especially interesting is the word רְבִיעִין in Mishnah Tamid 3:5 (and Middot 3:5), which bears a unique meaning. This word has been amended in some sources, but was kept intact in the Karaite manuscript. Another noteworthy plural form is מְפָתְחוֹת (sing. מַפְתֵּחַ) instead of the common form מַפְתְּחוֹת (or

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מַפְתְּחוֹת). This form was previously known only from MS Paris 328–329 of the Mishnah. Therefore, its occurrence in the Karaite manuscript supports the possibility that in some traditions (or tradition) of Rabbinic Hebrew the singular and plural forms of this word might have followed different patterns (cf. מַזְלֵג – מִזְלָגוֹת). The plural form of פּוֹתַחַת, i.e., פּוֹתְחִיוֹת which occurs here, is known from the best Rabbinic manuscripts (in Codex Kaufmann A 50: פּוֹתָחִיוֹת). This form differs from the regular plural pattern of noun קוֹטֶלֶת, which is קוֹטָלוֹת. Extended plural suffixes such as -יוֹת, which appears in פּוֹתְחִיוֹת, are also known elsewhere in Rabbinic Hebrew.

Finally, two dual forms are also discussed in detail. The first is the dual form of the word עוֹד, which is עֶדְוַיִם (with a *seghol* in this manuscript, as in MS Parma De Rossi 138). The second is the dual pattern found in the term בֵּית הַמְּטְבָּחַיִם. Both duals are new forms in Tannaitic Hebrew.

Vladimir Orel

The Five Biblical Scrolls
in a Jewish Translation into Belorussian

This paper reviews a new book by Prof. M. Altbauer, *The Five Biblical Scrolls in a Sixteenth-Century Jewish Translation into Belorussian (Vilnius Codex 262).*

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