

THE ROLE OF THE MERCHANTS IN THE LINGUISTIC HISTORY OF THE SEPHARDIC JEWS

Laura MINERVINI

ABSTRACT • A thorough appreciation of the role of the merchants in Sephardic linguistic history is still a desideratum, from which the whole field of Jewish studies would benefit. The first step in this line of research should be the edition of a corpus of merchants' letters, that could act as an important source for the study of Judeo-Spanish. The language history of Judeo-Spanish – as most language histories of the Western hemisphere – is based primarily on printed texts and thus tells the story of the printed language. More precisely, it tells the story of the literary and formal texts from high registers printed in a few cities (Salonika in the 16th century, Istanbul and Izmir in the 18th century), so most of the Judeo-Spanish speaking world has not been covered by up-to-date research. Handwritten documents such as merchants' letters can fill the “blank spaces” left by traditional language histories and constitute the basis of a language history from below in its own right.

KEYWORDS • Judeo-Spanish; Sephardim; Sephardic merchants; Sociolinguistics.

1. The role played by merchants in the economic, social, and cultural history of the Jews of Spanish or Portuguese descent has been duly recognized by scholars, but their contribution to Sephardic linguistic history must be further examined. The topic may be approached from two viewpoints: a purely linguistic one relies on the availability of a fair amount of documents written by merchants (letters, notebooks, quitclaims, etc.), while a broad sociolinguistic one is based on various types of historical sources on Jewish trade activities (e.g., travelers' accounts, statutes and regulations, records of conflicts within and outside the Jewish community, etc.).

2. A rich *corpus* of reliable texts – i.e. texts edited according to philological principles – is needed in order to compare their language and style to contemporary texts (printed and handwritten, literary and practical). Such a comparison would display similarities and unprecedented differences (particularly in terms of the lexicon) at various levels.

In spite of the paucity of published Sephardic merchants' letters until now, we can try to issue some general remarks on their contents. Letters often dealt with private affairs but also contained references to business, usually sent to a member of the family clan. As a matter of fact, the Sephardic Jewry throughout the Mediterranean was connected in a network of professional and family ties, and long-distance relations were fostered by letters and notes that freely mixed personal and professional matters.

Sephardic merchants' letters tend to present a strong formal structure (Quintana 2007, 300-301): they normally begin with an opening ritual greeting in which the sender relates his health and well wishes to the addressee. In vernacular letters, this part is often in Hebrew or contains He-

brew words and phrases, depending on the writer's competence; abbreviations and Biblical quotations are frequently used.

This is the beginning of a letter written by Yişhaq ben Abraham Bruneto, living in Cairo in second half of the 16th century:

L(i-šu'atkha) q(ivviti) YY. Señor padre, corona de mi cabeza, sabrés como estamos de salud, t(odah) l(a-El), ainsí oigamos de vosotros, amen (Quintana 2007, 298–299) [I have waited for your salvation, Lord. My lord and father, crown of my head, you know that we are healthy, thank God, and the same may we hear of you, amen]¹

Greetings may be sharply abridged, although they are seldom lacking. Here is the beginning of a letter written by Yosef del Corral to his brother (in Navarre or Northern Castile during the second half of the 15th century):

Ahi ašer ke-našši, y(išmarekha) h(a-Šem), sabed que vos enbío 2 pares çapatos (Minervini 1992 I, 336–337)² [My brother that I have in my soul, may the Lord protect you, you know that I send you two pairs of shoes.]

Thus, “a rich repertoire of colorful and polite phrases” was at the disposal of the letter writers. These expressions of piety, affection, and gratitude may seem insignificant, but they deserve attention since “the phrases constantly used in a society are indicative of what it regards as ‘natural,’ as universally valid, as accepted standards” (Goitein 1988, 2).

After the ritual greeting, Yişhaq Bruneto introduces the main issue pertaining to economic transactions – the sales and purchases of different goods:

Y como venda el S(efer) T(orah), os mandaré los 3 ducados de la compra y de la ganancia, asegún lo que se vendiere a el tempo, si querés asperar, y si querés agora los 3 ducados, os lo mandaré luego, afilu que no aya vendido el S(efer) T(orah) (Quintana 2007, 299–300) [And as soon as I sell the Book of Torah, I will send you three silver coins of the purchase and the gain, according to what is sold at that time, if you want to wait, and if you want the three silver coins now, I will send them to you immediately, although I have not yet sold the Book of Torah.]

In a short letter sent by a merchant whose first name was Menaḥem to the English consul in Aleppo, possibly from Izmir at the beginning of the 17th century:

día de jueves, a oras de medio día, vino la nave ingleza con ropa de ferrarezes: dizen que ay cantidad de ropa y moneda por p[a]go d'él, maz el que avía se vendió a razón de 24, y lo que ay en magazenes les dieron 25, s[i] querén dar más puede ser que den por 25 ve-heši (Minervini 2011, 334)³ [On Thursday at noon the English ship arrived, with cloth from Ferrara: they say that there is plenty of cloth and money to pay for it, but what was sold was at the rate of 24 and what was in warehouses they gave 25, if they want to give more possibly they give it for 25 and a half.]

And in a letter sent from Egypt by an anonymous merchant to his commercial partners in Leghorn (Livorno) in 1734:

y si podran azer el negocio de dicho aspur con los razos y mandarmelo con dicha nave, les quedaré muy ovligado por cavza que el razo, en no vendiendose en Ramasan, cale dexarlo en magazén asta el otro Ramasan (CUL, TS 16.349).⁴ [And if you can trade the above mentioned safflower together with

¹ The letter is written in Hebrew script, as all the others quoted below; I slightly modified Quintana's transliteration. The first sentence is a quotation from Gen. 49: 18.

² The letter was previously published by Cantera Burgos (1971).

³ The letter was previously published by Lewis (1981).

⁴ This letter was transcribed by Aldina Quintana, to whom I am very grateful for her generosity.

the satin cloth, and send it to me with the same ship, I will be very thankful, since the silk which is not sold in Ramadan has to be kept in warehouses until next Ramadan.]

Afterwards, some information about mutual relatives is requested or provided. Once more, in Yişhaq Bruneto's letter:

Y escrevime largamente de todo, y cómo está Perla q[ue me dizen] que ya se fue a *Mişrayim* con su marido, y cómo está *Şemuel* y [...] *Rivqah* con su marido y *Raḥel* (Quintana 2007, 300) [And write me largely about everything, and how is Perla, whom I was told went to Cairo with her husband, and how is *Şemu'el* [...] and *Rivqah* with her husband and *Raḥel*.]

Finally, another letter from Yosef del Corral demonstrates the closing greetings and wishes. Again, in vernacular letters, this part is replete with Hebrew words and phrases:

A mi señor don *Şemuel*, que se lo enco[mi]enda mi señor padre, y(*işmerehu*) *h(a-Şem)*, e todos nos otros, a don Moşeh, mi señor ermano, e a mis ermanas nos saludad, e a mi sobrinos, y(*işmerem*) *ş(uram) v(iḥayyehem)*. *Şalom lekha ki-reşonka ve-ki-reşon aḥikha* (Minervini 1992 I, 356) [Best regards to my lord don *Şemu'el*, to whom my father – may God preserve him – and all of us address our salutations, and to don Moşeh, my lord and brother, and to my sisters and my nephews, may their rock (i.e. God) preserve them and give them life. Peace to you according to your will and to the will of your brother.]

In Yişhaq Bruneto's letter:

Mikhael os beza las manos [...] munch]as encomiendas de mi parte y de parte de *Ester* [...] doña Dulsa, *m(i-naşim) b(a-ohel) t(evorakh)*, y que el Dio nos ajunte [...] *ve-şalo(m)* (Quintana 2007, 300) [Mikhael kisses your hands [...] many regards from me and Ester [...] lady Dulsa, blessed shall she be above women in the tent, and may God gather us [...], and goodbye.]⁵

And, more concisely, in the anonymous 1734 letter:

Que el *Ş(em) yit(barekh)* de todo guarde y los prospiere, *a(men) k(en) y(ehi) r(aşon)*, *ve-şalo(m)* (CUL, TS 16.349) [May the Lord, bless Him, protect you from everything and let you thrive, amen, so be God's will, and goodbye.]

This formal structure is found in most Sephardic letters from the 15th to the 19th century. Indeed, this form developed from the traditional epistolary structure, which was originally more complex – in Latin rhetoric, *salutatio, exordium, narratio, petitio, conclusio*. The art of writing letters was part of the curriculum in Jewish schools, and manuals and models circulated among teachers and scribes (Quintana 2010a, 321-322).

From the scanty examples quoted above, the linguistic features of these merchants' letters are still evident from a lexical viewpoint. The presence of loanwords is easily noticeable:

- *aspur* (or *ospur*) < Turkish *aspur* “safflower, bastard saffron”
- *ramasan* < Arabic *ramaḍān* “ninth month of the Muslim year”
- *magazén* < Italian *magazzino* “warehouse.”⁶

Many more could be detected by examining the full text of each letter. In fact, the abundance of loanwords may be considered a peculiarity of merchants' language

⁵ The Hebrew sentence is a quotation from Jud. 5:24.

⁶ The forms *magazeno, magazenu, magasen*, etc. may be found in ancient Italian texts, along with the more common *magazzino* (cf. TLIO). They are all loanwords from Arabic *maḥzan* (or, possibly, from the plural form *maḥāzin*), that is also the origin of Spanish *almacén*. The Italianized form *magacén / magazén* occurs in a few 16th and 17th century Spanish texts (cf. Corominas & Pascual 1980 I, 180; CORDE).

non regolata direttamente dal gusto, né dalla moda, né dal generico prestigio socio-culturale delle lingue in causa, ma piuttosto assoggettata alla necessità – ancor prima che all’opportunità – di chiamare le cose con il loro nome in realtà alloglotte (Cella 2010, 57) [directly ruled neither by taste, nor by fashion, nor by the general socio-cultural prestige of the languages at stake; rather, affected by the necessity – even more than by the advisability – of calling things by their own name in foreign realities.]

Relevant phonetic, morphological, and syntactic features can also be identified in these texts; for example, the personal object-pronoun *os* “you” in Yişhaq Bruneto’s letter or the 3rd person plural undiphthongized form *queren* in the Izmir letter. The former is seldom used in later Judeo-Spanish texts while the latter is extremely common. It is worth repeating that only a detailed comparative analysis of different kinds of texts could ascertain how innovative merchants were in their use of written vernacular. Such an analysis could also help recognize various diachronic, diatopic, and diastratic layers. The category of the “Sephardic merchants” is a broad one: it includes businessmen engaged in international trade and peddlers as well as people residing in big cities, small villages, and mid-sized towns throughout a multi-secular history.

3. This point brings us to a more nuanced sociolinguistic approach emphasizing the role of the merchants as a social group, first in the diffusion and normativization of the Sephardic vernacular, and later in confrontation with Western European languages. As is well known, Judeo-Spanish (or Ladino) is a Castilian-based supraregional variety developed from the 16th century onwards in the Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire and Morocco. In its early period, Judeo-Spanish incorporated phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and lexical elements from other Iberian languages and dialects (Portuguese, Aragonese, Catalan, Leonese, etc.). It later received elements from the other languages with which it was in contact (Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian). These elements are responsible for most of its internal lexical differences.

It has to be stressed that Judeo-Spanish, even in its formative stages, was far less fragmented and dialectalized than would be expected: the convergence of Castilian was apparently immediate,⁷ the process of koineization took place in the first generations after the settlement, the fluctuation between accepted and rejected features was relatively limited. We posit that a process of mutual accommodation occurred among speakers, deleting the most salient features of their own dialects and preserving the less marked forms (Penny 1992, 2000, 174-193; Quintana 2006, 295-318, 2017; Varvaro and Minervini 2007-2008).⁸ The elaboration of the new Judeo-Spanish variety was parallel to the linguistic assimilation of Jews of different linguistic backgrounds that was part of the Sephardization of the Ottoman Jewry that took place in many areas in the empire (Hacker 1987; Rozen 1994, 2002, 87-98; Ben-Naeh 2008, 420-431).⁹

The rise of Judeo-Spanish, by both its speed and effectiveness, defies our common assumptions about the process of “new dialect formation.” The first generations of Sephardic exiles, native speakers of different Iberian dialects, were scattered over an enormous area where different languages were spoken and written. There was nothing comparable to the modern mass media system.

⁷ No printed texts in any other Iberian language were found in the Ottoman Empire, while in Italy and in Northern Europe, Portuguese printed texts addressed a Jewish or *converso* audience.

⁸ The formative process of Judeo-Spanish is thus interpreted within the framework of the “dialects in contact” research set up by Trudgill (1986).

⁹ The social and cultural process of Sephardization has not always implied the linguistic assimilation of non-Sephardic Jews; this occurred mainly in the Balkans, Greece, and Anatolia.

Moreover, Judeo-Spanish was not supported by any cultural or political institution; in their limited autonomy, Jewish institutions like law courts used Hebrew. No vernacular grammar was written for centuries and no academy or school ever worked in order to set a vernacular standard. Still, we do not find the proliferation of norms that we would expect in the early written texts. Lodge (1993, 95) offers some insight on this:

The defining characteristic of non-standardized languages is not the absence of norms but their proliferation in response to the local needs of the loosely networked social groups which make up the speech community. It is reasonable to suppose the existence of local norms, supralocal (regional) norms and eventually supraregional norms. Standardization involves the progressive elimination of alternative norms through the selection of one norm which is superimposed on the rest.

We have reason to believe that merchants were among the social forces in the Sephardic speech community that contributed to the elaboration and diffusion of supralocal norms.¹⁰ They were clearly part of a network that needed “a set of shared linguistic norms” for its own sake whose writing activity involved “the imposition of uniformity upon a class of objects [an] the suppression of variation” (Lodge 1993, 23).

An interesting first-hand testimony is provided by Emmanuel (the son of Isaac) Abuaf, a merchant examined in 1600 by the Tribunal of the Inquisition in Pisa. When asked how old he was, his profession, and how long he had been living in Pisa, he answered:

Interrogatus quanti anni habbia et che professione è la sua e quanto tempo è che si trova in Pisa, respondit: Io ho 28 anni, sono hebreo e faccio mercantia qui in Pisa di comprare e vendere particolarmente robbe di Levante come ciambellotti e cose simili e sono circa sett'anni ch'io sono in Pisa. Interrogatus quanto tempo è che venne di Spagna o di Portogallo, respondit: Io non sono venuto di Spagna né di Portogallo né mai ci sono stato né negoziato in detti paesi. Interrogatus se lui habbia la lingua spagnuola e dove l'ha imparata, respondit: Io so la lingua castiliana, se bene parlo italiano et l'ho imparata domesticamente in casa di mio padre perché tutti gl'Hebrei levantini la parlano universalmente come cosa certa. Interrogatus che non è verissimile che s'impari la lingua d'una provincia estranea senza esservi stato massime esattamente che, praticando con altri, si potria bene imparare qualche parola ma non esattamente tutta la lingua e scriverla, respondit: Io ho giurato dire la verità e la dirò, vostra signoria si potrà informare che, non solamente in tutto il Levante, ma in Venetia et in Ancona e Ferrara e qui in Pisa, i nostri fanciulli hebrei li precettori, che di sei anni gl'incominciano a insegnare la Scrittura, gliela leggono in lingua spagnuola interpretandola e tutti li traffichi e commertii in Levante si tengono in spagnuolo con caratteri hebraici, ma io tengo li miei libri in lingua italiana con carattere italiano e così non vi è difficoltà che gl'Hebrei sappino la lingua spagnola ancorché siano nati fuori di Spagna (Ioly Zorattini 1997, 76-77) [When asked how old he was and what was his profession and for how long he has been in Pisa, he answered: I am 28 years old, I am a Jew and I am a merchant here in Pisa, buying and selling stuff from the Levant like camlets and similar things, and I have been in Pisa for about seven years. When asked how long ago he came from Spain or Portugal, he answered: I did not come from Spain or Portugal, I have never been there and I never traded in those countries. When asked if he were a Spanish speaker and where he learned the Spanish language, he answered: I know the Castilian language although I can speak a good Italian, and I learnt it [Castilian] familiarly in my father's home because all the Levantine Jews speak it widely without a doubt. When asked if it were unlikely that it would be possible to learn to speak and write the language of a foreign land without ever being there, as one could learn some words from talking with other people

¹⁰ The importance of the written variety (*scripta*) used by traders and public officers in long-distance communication is stressed by Folena (1992, 241-242).

but not exactly the whole language, he answered: I swore to tell the truth and I will tell it. Your Lordship may be informed that not only all over the Levant but in Venice, in Ancona, in Ferrara, and here in Pisa, the tutors who teach our Jewish children (from six years old) the Holy Scriptures read to them in Spanish and interpret the text. All dealings and trades in the Levant are done in Spanish in Hebrew script, but I have my books in Italian in Latin script, so it is not baffling that Jews could know Spanish even if they were born outside Spain.]

Emmanuel Abuaf was charged with apostasy by the Inquisition – from the Jewish perspective he belonged to the class of the *anusim* (Jews forcibly converted to Christianity that could return to Judaism) but from the Christian perspective he was a *converso* (or a New Christian) who was not allowed to return to the religion of his ancestors. The linguistic issue is thus of crucial importance: to the Tribunal, Abuaf's proficiency in Spanish proved that he had spent his youth in Spain – where Jews were banned since 1492. Abuaf, on the other hand, argued that it proved nothing, since (Judeo-)Spanish was the common language of the Mediterranean Jewish world and it was possible to learn it everywhere. He was also specific about its domains of usage, namely school – as a support to the study of the Holy Texts – and commerce. Another defendant in Pisa in 1600, Mair Lombroso (Pisa 1600), addressed an important domain omitted by Abuaf, that of the sermons:

in Salonic tutti gl'Hebrei e la maggior parte de Turchi parlano spagnuolo et qui et in Venetia et in tutto il Levante li nostri rabini non fanno le prediche in altra lingua che in lingua spagnuola (Ioly Zorattini 1991, 347) [In Salonika, all the Jews and most of the Turks speak Spanish, and here [in Pisa] and in Venice and all over the Levant, our rabbis do not preach in any other language but Spanish.]

Emanuel Abuaf's testimony underscores the mention of the Hebrew script as the common way of writing (Judeo-)Spanish among the Levantine Jews. Modern scholars call *aljamiado* any Romance text written in the Arabic or Hebrew alphabet. Indeed the Iberian Jews and Muslims largely used this system for vernacular texts. The aforementioned 1734 letter written in Egypt explicitly states:

las respuestas de mis cartas me las mandarán de esta letra de *raši*, no de otro (CUL, TS 16.349) [You will send the answers to my letters in this *rashi* script, not in any other.]¹¹

The request was probably inspired by a desire for secrecy – an obvious requirement in the world of traders and businessmen. However, it is conceivable that a Sephardic Jew dwelling in the Levant in the early 18th century was simply more at ease reading and writing his own vernacular in Hebrew script than in the Latin alphabet. The situation was different in Italy or the Netherlands where Jews were involved in a variety of social activities entailing the use of Latin script on a daily basis. Emanuel Abuaf maintained that Italian was his favorite business language and that his notebooks were written “con carattere italiano” [in Italian script]. This was not – or at least not only – a *captatio benevolentiae* for an Italian court but reflected the linguistic reality of a group of multilingual Sephardic Jews.

This multilingualism is further proved by an examination of the mail sent from 1704 to 1746 by the merchants Moses Ergas and Isaac Silvera in Leghorn to their commercial partners all over

¹¹ *Rashi* refers to a Sephardic semi-cursive handwriting and typeface based on the name of Rabbi Shelomoh Yīṣḥāqī (1040-1105). To distinguish his commentaries on the Talmud and Bible from the texts themselves, early Hebrew typographers employed different typefaces – square for the texts, semi-cursive for his commentaries.

the Mediterranean. 9,568 of 13,760 letters were written in Italian and 4,101 in Portuguese, often peppered with Spanish words and expressions. Only one letter, addressed to a Persian Jew, was written in Hebrew. However, Hebrew words are scattered throughout the texts, especially reference to Jewish festivals and legal contracts (Trivellato 2009, 178). The high percentage of Italian mail (70%) is particularly significant considering that Ergas' and Silvera's native language was Portuguese, as was the case for many Western Sephardic Jews. They were referred to as "Ponentines" who lived in the thriving communities of Leghorn, Venice, Amsterdam, Hamburg, and London, and were properly described as "reluctant cosmopolitans" (Swetschinski 2000).

The fact that Ergas and Silvera were based in Leghorn clearly helps explain the massive use of Italian in their correspondence. Additionally, in the aftermath of the medieval diffusion of Italian dialects among sailors and traders in the early modern period, Italian gained the status of a vehicular language in the Ottoman Empire and Barbary States. There, it was often used by political and administrative authorities when dealing with Europeans. An extremely simplified form of Italian known as *lingua franca* – "the language of the Franks" (i.e., the Westerners) – apparently circulated among European slaves in Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and other coastal cities (Minervini 2006, 2010; Baglioni 2010, 19-27, 259-269; Bruni 2013, 135-214; Banfi 2014, 106-146, 213-252).

Sephardic Jews, who often "acted as middlemen across political frontiers" (Trivellato 2018, 148), could not ignore such a crucial element of the Mediterranean linguistic reality. On the contrary, they were deeply involved in the diffusion of written Italian in the Levant and the Maghreb where they often acted as middlemen and chancery scribes (Baglioni 2011). It is not by chance that the verso of the above letter from Izmir contained an inscription in rudimentary Italian written in Latin letters:

Al m(ol)to ill(ustrissi)mo sig(nor)e colle(ndissi)mo sig(nor)e consolo per la nation ingleza in Allepo (Minervini 2011, 334) [To the very distinguished Sir, honorable Sir, the consul of the English nation in Aleppo.]

The Mediterranean expansion of the Ergas & Silvera commercial firm was not an exceptional case. The polyglot composite of Sephardic merchants was a major force in the spread of Judeo-Spanish and the definition of its norms. As a consequence of the activity of such talented Ponentine merchants, a new character emerged in the 17th century Ottoman Jewish society. The *Franco* was a Western (usually Italian) Jew trading in the Levant, often a long-time resident but not a subject of the Port. As citizens of a European state, the Francos were exempted from paying head taxes and granted lower customs duties; they were also guaranteed privileges and concessions concerning commercial and civil disputes, rights to religious worship, protection from local powers, etc. (Rozen 1992; Trivellato 2009, 112-131, 2018, 150-151).

The impact of these merchants on Sephardic society was impressive and help exemplify the wider phenomenon of "Port Jews" – individuals dwelling in lively trading centers with a leading role in the transformation of traditional Jewish communities (Sorkin 1999, 2002; Lehman 2005; Ruderman 2010, 34-41). In the 18th and 19th centuries, the wealth and social prestige of the Francos' (and later, their engagement in Jewish education) spurred the flow of Western lexical items into Judeo-Spanish (Aslanov 2006, 172-183). Moreover, the Francos greatly concurred with restructuring the linguistic repertoire of the Sephardic Levantine communities – where Italian, French, English, and German would be considered High Languages along with Hebrew. Such restructuring was induced by a deep change in the value system associated to each language and in the long run amounted to the decline of Judeo-Spanish in terms of both status and social functions (Quintana 2010b, 48-51). Finally, the Francos actively took part in the "war of schools" in the Ottoman Jewish community in the late 19th century, which kindled, above all, the issues of language instruction and the disruption of the traditional educational system (Rodrigue 2002, 874-889; Minervini 2018, 98-100).

4. A thorough appreciation of the role of the merchants in Sephardic linguistic history through further research is still a *desideratum* from which the whole field of Jewish studies would benefit. The first step in this line of research, as previously stated, should be the edition of a corpus of merchants' letters, that could act as an important source for the study of Judeo-Spanish.

The language history of Judeo-Spanish – as most language histories of the Western hemisphere – is based primarily on printed texts and thus tells the story of the printed language. More precisely, it tells the story of the literary and formal texts from high registers printed in a few cities (Salonika in the 16th century, Istanbul and Izmir in the 18th century), so most of the Judeo-Spanish speaking world has not been covered by up-to-date research. Handwritten documents such as merchants' letters can fill the “blank spaces” left by traditional language histories and constitute the basis of a language history from below in its own right (Elsass 2014, 156).

REFERENCES

- Aslanov, Cyril. 2006. *Le français au Levant, jadis et naguère. À la recherche d'une langue perdue*. Paris: Champion 2006.
- Baglioni, Daniele. 2010. *L'italiano delle cancellerie tunisine (1590-1703). Edizione e commento linguistico delle «Carte Cremona»*. Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.
- Baglioni, Daniele. 2011. Lettere dall'impero ottomano alla corte di Toscana (1577-1640). Un contributo alla conoscenza dell'italiano scritto nel Levante della prima età moderna. *Lingua e Stile* 46. 3-70.
- Banfi, Emanuele. 2014. *Lingue d'Italia fuori d'Italia. Europa, Mediterraneo e Levante dal Medioevo all'età moderna*. Bologna: il Mulino.
- Ben-Naeh, Yaron. 2008. *Jews in the Realm of the Sultans. Ottoman Jewish Society in the Seventeenth Century*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Bruni, Francesco. 2013. *L'italiano fuori d'Italia*. Firenze: Franco Cesati.
- Cantera Burgos, Francisco. 1971. Cuatro cartas de Laguardia en judeo-español. *Sefarad* 31. 313-317.
- Cella, Roberta. 2010. Prestiti nei testi mercantili toscani redatti di là dalle Alpi. Saggio di glossario fino al 1350. *La lingua italiana. Storia, strutture, testi* 6. 57-99.
- CORDE = Real Academia Española, *Corpus Diacrónico del Español*, <http://corpus.rae.es/cordenet.html> (accessed 09 May 2015).
- Corominas, Joan & José A. Pascual. 1980. *Diccionario crítico etimológico castellano e hispánico*, 6 vols. Madrid: Gredos.
- Elsass, Stephan. 2014. The Use of Private Letters and Diaries in Sociolinguistic Investigation. In Juan M. Hernández-Campoy & J. Camilo Conde Silvestre, *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 156-169.
- Folena, Gianfranco. 1990. *Culture e lingue nel Veneto medievale*. Padova: Programma.
- Goitein, Shlomo David. 1988. *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*. Vol. 5. *The Individual: Portrait of a Mediterranean Personality of the High Middle Ages as Reflected in the Cairo Geniza*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press.
- Hacker, Joseph. 1987. The Intellectual Activity of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. In Isidore Twersky & Bernard Septimus (eds.), *Jewish Thought in the Seventeenth Century*, 95-135. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.
- Ioly Zorattini, Pier Cesare (ed.). 1991. *Processi del S. Uffizio di Venezia contro Ebrei e Giudaizzanti (1608-1632)*, vol. IX. Firenze: Olschki.
- Ioly Zorattini, Pier Cesare (ed.). 1997. *Processi del S. Uffizio di Venezia contro Ebrei e Giudaizzanti. Appendici*, vol. XIII. Firenze: Olschki.
- Lehmann, Matthias B. 2005. A Livornese Port Jew and the Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire. *Jewish Social Studies* 11. 51-76.
- Lewis, Bernard. 1981. A Letter from Little Menahem. In Shlomo Morag et al. (eds.), *Studies in Judaism and Islam Presented to Sh.D. Goitein*, 181-184. Jerusalem: Magnes Press.

- Lodge, R. Anthony. 1993. *French: From Dialect to Standard*, London - New York, Routledge.
- Minervini, Laura. 1992. *Testi giudeospagnoli medievali (Castiglia e Aragona)*, 2 vols. Naples: Liguori.
- Minervini, Laura. 2006. L'italiano nell'impero ottomano. In Emanuele Banfi & Gabriele Iannàccaro (eds.), *Lo spazio linguistico italiano e le lingue «esotiche». Rapporti e reciproci influssi*, 49-66. Roma: Bulzoni.
- Minervini, Laura. 2010. Lingua franca (italiano come). In Raffaele Simone (ed.), *Enciclopedia dell'italiano*, vol. I, 802-804. Roma: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana G. Treccani. [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lingua-franca-italiano-come_\(Enciclopedia-dell'Italiano\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/lingua-franca-italiano-come_(Enciclopedia-dell'Italiano)/) (accessed 09 May 2015).
- Minervini, Laura. 2011. Tres cartas en judeoespañol. In Elena Romero & Aitor García Moreno (eds.), *Estudios sefardíes dedicados a la memoria de Jacob M. Hassán (z"l)*, 331-350. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Minervini, Laura. 2018. Appunti per lo studio della diffusione dell'italiano nelle comunità ebraiche del Mediterraneo orientale. In Francesca Malagnini (ed.), *Migrazioni della lingua. Nuovi studi sull'italiano fuori d'Italia*. Firenze: Cesati, 93-105.
- Penny, Ralph. 1992. Dialect Contact and Social Networks in Judeo-Spanish. *Romance Philology* 46. 125-140.
- Penny, Ralph. 2000. *Variation and Change in Spanish*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2006. *Geografía lingüística del judeoespañol. Estudio sincrónico y diacrónico*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2007. Responsa Testimonies and Letters Written in the 16th Century Spanish Spoken by Sephardim. *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* 5. 293-301.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2010a. The Merger of Hispanic Medieval Heritage with the Jewish Tradition in Judeo-Spanish Texts (1): Private Letters. *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* 7. 317-333.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2010b. El judeoespañol, una lengua pluricéntrica al margen del español. In Paloma Díaz-Mas & María Sánchez Pérez, *Los sefardíes ante los retos del mundo contemporáneo. Identidad y mentalidades*, 33-54. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2017. La pre-koiné judeoespañola durante las dos primeras generaciones de los expulsados (emigrantes). In Elena Romero, Cristóbal José Álvarez & Elizabeht Fernández (eds.), *Actas del XVIII Congreso de Estudios Sefardíes*. Madrid: CSIC, 223-244
- Ray, Jonathan. 2008. New Approaches to the Jewish Diaspora: The Sephardim as a Sub-Ethnic Group. *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* 15. 10-31.
- Ray, Jonathan. 2013. *After the Expulsion. 1492 and the Making of Sephardic Jewry*. New York – London: New York University Press.
- Rodrigue, Aron. 2002. The Ottoman Diaspora: The Rise and Fall of Ladino Literary Culture. In David Biale (ed.), *Cultures of the Jews. A New History*. New York: Schocken Books, 863-885.
- Rozen Minna. 1992. Strangers in a Strange Land. The Extraterritorial Status of Jews of Italy and the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries. In Avigdor Levy (ed.), *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry*, 123-166. Bloomington (IN): Indiana University Press.
- Rozen, Minna. 1994. Individual and Community in the Jewish Society of the Ottoman Empire: Salonica in the Sixteenth Century. In Avigdor Levy (ed.), *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 215-273. Princeton – Washington: The Darwin Press – The Institute of Turkish Studies.
- Rozen, Minna. 2002. *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul. The Formative Years, 1453-1566*. Leiden – Boston: Brill.
- Ruderman, David. 2010. *Early Modern Jewry. A New Cultural History*. Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Sorkin, David. 1999. The Port Jews: Notes Toward a Social Type. *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50. 87-97.
- Sorkin, David. 2002. Port Jews and the Three Regions of Emancipation. In David Cesarani (ed.), *Port Jews. Jews Communities in Cosmopolitan Trading Centres, 1550-1950*, 31-46. London – Portland (OR): Frank Cass.
- Swetschinski, Daniel M. 2000. *Reluctant Cosmopolitans. The Portuguese Jews of Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam*. Oxford – Portland (OR): The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization.
- TLIO = Istituto dell'Opera del Vocabolario Italiano, *Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini*, <http://tlioweb.ovi.cnr.it> (accessed 09 May 2015).

- Trivellato, Francesca. 2009. *The Familiarity of Strangers. The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press.
- Trivellato, Francesca. 2018. Jews and the Early Modern Economy. In Jonathan Karp & Adam Sutcliffe (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. VII, *The Early Modern World, 1550-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 139-167.
- Trudgill, Peter. 1986. *Dialects in Contact*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Varvaro, Alberto & Laura Minervini. 2007-2008. Orígenes del judeoespañol. *Revista de Historia de la Lengua Española* 2-3. 147-172, 149-195.

LAURA MINERVINI • is Full Professor in Romance Philology and Linguistics at Università di Napoli Federico II.

E-MAIL • laura.minervini@unina.it