
Section II: **Rabbinical Literature in Ladino**

David M. Bunis

Judezmo Passages in the Ottoman Rabbinic Responsa of Samuel de Medina: Testing the Verbatim Transmission Hypothesis

1 Introductory Remarks

The rabbinic responsa or *šē'elot u-tšuvot* ('questions and answers') literature consists of questions addressed to rabbis on diverse aspects of Jewish law and Judaism in its broadest sense, and the rabbis' deliberations and responses regarding those questions.¹ The responsa literature began to arise some 1,700 years ago. Emerging first as isolated questions, which remained in manuscript form or were incorporated into printed volumes consisting mostly of material in other rabbinic genres, the responsa genre eventually established itself in its own right, with entire volumes written by individual rabbinic authorities and printed in Jewish communities throughout the world. The responsa of rabbis in the medieval Iberian or Sephardic¹ communities started to appear in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Following the expulsions (from Castile and Aragon in 1492, from Portugal in 1497), responsa collections by their spiritual descendants in the Ottoman Empire first began to be authored by Iberian-born rabbis who found refuge in the empire following the expulsions, and thereafter by rabbis mostly born in the empire. They were published from the sixteenth century on in the major cities of the empire,

1 As I was reminded recently by my dear friend Hazan Isaac Azose of Seattle, English-speaking Sephardim tend to prefer the forms 'Sepharadi(c)' and 'Sepharadi(m)' over 'Sephardi(c)' and 'Sephardi(m)' as being closer to the forms used by Judezmo speakers in Judezmo and Hebrew. However, since the latter forms have become conventional in English as reflected in the major dictionaries, those forms will be used in the present article.

Note: An abridged form of this article was presented at the International Workshop on Ladino and Yiddish Rabbinic Writings, organized by Katja Šmid, Chava Turniansky, Avraham Novershtern and myself at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 9–10 March 2016. The research upon which the present version is based was undertaken with the support of Israel Science Foundation grants 807/03 and 830/96, for which I express my gratitude. In writing the article I was greatly assisted by the librarians of the Rare Book Collection of the National Library of Israel, to whom I am thankful. I also benefited greatly from the HebrewBooks.Org Internet site (Ryzman Edition), the online edition of the Bar-Ilan Responsa Project, the books and manuscripts of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Schneerson Collection at the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, Moscow, all of them accessed through the Bloomfield Humanities Library of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. My sincere thanks to these institutions and their librarians are hereby extended.

such as Istanbul, Salonika, Izmir, Sofia and Jerusalem, or in cities in Italy such as Venice and Livorno, in Amsterdam, in other parts of Western Europe, and later, in Ashkenazic communities in Central and Eastern Europe. Some collections were published during the scholars' lifetimes; others, only posthumously.

The matrix or dominant language of the responsa literature of all Jewish communities is usually Hebrew. In reflection of documents and oral testimony transmitted to the judges of the rabbinic courts, words and passages of various lengths phrased in varieties of the Jewish and non-Jewish vernacular(s) used in an individual responsa author's local Jewish community and in neighboring non-Jewish communities are often inserted within the Hebrew matrix text, generally transcribed in Hebrew letters. As in the responsa collections produced in other Jewish communities, it is usually the question portion (*šē'ela*/שאלה) of the responsa collections produced by the Sephardic rabbis of the Ottoman Empire that incorporate the vernacular material; sometimes vernacular material is also to be found in the rabbinic response (*tēšuva*/תשובה). The vernacular material in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa is usually in that community's traditional group or ethnic language, Judezmo (also known as Ladino or Judeo-Spanish, and in the Hebrew portions of the Sephardic responsa, generally called *lēšon La 'az* לשון לעז; for further discussion see section 3 below). Some such material is in languages of the local non-Jewish neighboring populations used or understood by Jewish community members, such as varieties of Turkish, Greek, and South Slavic languages, or in Jewish varieties of those languages, such as Jewish Greek (e.g., Medina, *Even ha-'ezer*,² nos. 20, 50), and Jewish Arabic (e.g., Ya'aqov Kastro [1525–1610], 1783, no. 32). Unlike the testimony in Judezmo, which was generally left untranslated into Hebrew in the responsa, apparently on the assumption that the rabbis of the Ottoman Empire as a group understood the language of the passages without need for Hebrew mediation, passages in other languages were often accompanied by a Hebrew translation. Vernacular passages, or extracts from them, appearing in the questions were sometimes cited in the reply (*tēšuva*) portions as well.

Also as in the responsa collections of other communities, it is generally claimed in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa volumes that the incorporated vernacular material is reproduced 'letter for letter, word for word' (H.³ *ot bē-ot, teva bē-teva* or *ot bē-ot, milla bē-milla*) from the original vernacular or mixed Hebrew and vernacular written documents submitted to the rabbinic court, or from the court transcriptions of vernacular testimony presented orally before the rabbinic court judges.

² In citations of Hebrew, a vowel preceded by a blank space or a hyphen may be understood to be preceded by an *alef* (i.e., 'alef).

³ Note the following abbreviations of language names used in the article: A. = Arabic, G. = Greek, H. = Hebrew, J. = Judezmo, L. = Latin, P. = Persian, S. = Spanish, T. = Turkish.

If this claim were proven to be valid it would make of the corpus of vernacular language material in the responsa an important, reliable source for the historical, regional, social level, and stylistic study of the languages represented, even—since much of the material is attributed in the responsa to specific individuals—at the level of the idiolect.

In the present article it will be argued, however, that upon close inspection, one finds discrepancies between the exact wording of certain vernacular material as it appears in the question portions of the responsa collections, as opposed to the occasional citation of parts of that material in the rabbinic replies following the question portions, in the lists of question synopses often added at the beginning or end of the collections, in some or all of that material appearing in subsequent editions of the collections, as well as in discussions of the same questions in responsa collections by other, contemporaneous rabbis, in various places in *their* assorted editions. Such discrepancies raise the question of how the Ottoman Sephardic rabbis and their court scribes actually related to the issue of ‘verbatim’ (*ot bē-ot, teva bē-teva* or *ot bē-ot, milla bē-milla*) text reproduction, or exactitude in the transcription and citation of vernacular material introduced in the first edition of a particular responsa collection, in subsequent editions of that collection—and in consequence, of the extent to which such material may actually be relied upon as an exact ‘letter for letter, word for word’ reproduction of the original written or spoken text—and thus, as a reliable source for linguistic analysis at the level of the idiolect.

In the following paragraphs, after a brief overview of the responsa literature produced by the Ottoman Sephardic rabbis, the major types of vernacular materials encountered in that literature will be reviewed, and representative examples, primarily from the responsa of R[abbi]. Šēmu’el (or Samuel) de Medina (or Maharašdam/מהרשד"ם, Salonika, 1505–1589; henceforth, Medina) will be examined to demonstrate textual inconsistencies within the earliest individual responsa editions, and in those editions in comparison with later editions.⁴ In the first part of the textual analysis, features encountered in entire supporting documents written in *lēšon La’az* and submitted for the perusal of Medina will be examined; in the second section, diverse features dispersed through the entire corpus of ostensible transcriptions of oral witness testimony and/or supporting written documents in Judezmo in Medina’s responsa will be examined. After demonstrating that there is significant linguistic divergence in the purportedly same passages appearing in different editions of the same responsa, the paper will end with a caveat against the

⁴ The biographical and bibliographical literatures on Šēmu’el de Medina and his Ottoman rabbinic contemporaries are extensive; because of the essentially linguistic nature of the present article no attempt will be made to provide references here. For a recent treatment see Morell (2024).

uncritical reliance upon responsa editions as completely reliable and incontrovertible sources of ‘verbatim’ reproduction of the written and oral vernacular material presented to the Ottoman Sephardic rabbinic courts.

2 Responsa Literature of the Sephardic Rabbis in the Ottoman Empire: A Brief Overview

Upon their arrival in the Ottoman Empire following the expulsions of the Jews from Iberia the Sephardic rabbis in exile established religious law courts and ruled on diverse questions of religion and communal life, often based on precedents established by the rabbis of Iberia. Rabbinical jurisdiction in religious and internal communal social issues continued in the Jewish communities of the empire and its successor states into our own times. As was noted, from the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries, the results of much of the *halakhic* (or Jewish legal) deliberations of the major Ottoman rabbis on such issues were published, locally and in more distant Jewish communities. Some volumes still remain in manuscript. Among the earliest published collections were those by individuals who had been born in Iberia, functioned there as rabbis, and were forced to leave the peninsula with the expulsions. Once re-established in the Ottoman Empire some of them regained positions as rabbis or judges in regions under Ottoman rule, among them, Moše Alaškar (b. Zamora?, 1466, d. Jerusalem, 1542) and Ya‘aqov Be Rav (b. Maqueda, 1474, d. Safed, 1546). Some of their legal decisions are preserved in posthumously published responsa collections (e.g., Alaškar 1554; Be Rav 1663).

Other early responsa collections were the work of individuals who, with the expulsions, had been brought to the Ottoman Empire while still children or arrived there as young men, eventually becoming rabbis and judges there; among these were Yosef Taytašaq (b. Castile 1465, died Istanbul 1540s; some of his responsa appear in Karo 1791 and Taytašaq 1559); David Abi Ibn Zimra (or ‘Radbaz’, b. Spain, 1479, d. Safed, 1573; responsa: 1652 and later versions), Lewi Ibn Ḥabib (or ‘[Maha]ralbah’, b. Zamora, c. 1480, d. Jerusalem, 1545; responsa 1565) and Yosef Karo (b. Toledo, 1488, d. Safed, 1575; responsa 1598, 1791). The early collections, by individuals born in Iberia, were followed by hundreds of compilations produced by subsequent generations of rabbis born in the empire.⁵

⁵ For extensive bibliographies of responsa collections by Ottoman-born rabbis see especially Glick (2006); for biographies see the relevant entries in Stillman (2024).

The rabbis belonging to this Jewish subculture group who produced the last responsa volumes *in situ* included Salonika-born David Pipano (1851–1925), chief rabbi of Bulgaria, who published *Hošen ha-efod* (1891–1915), *Ḥagor ha-efod* (1925), and *Avne ha-efod* (incorporating *Nose ha-efod*) (1912–1927) in Salonika and Sofia; the first Sephardic Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, Ben Ṣiyyon Me'ir Ḥay 'Uzzi'el (1880–1953) of Jerusalem, whose third and last responsa volume, *Mišpēte 'Uzzi'el* was published in Tel Aviv in 1940; Ya'aqov Arguete of Istanbul, who died in 1944 and whose *Yerek Ya'aqov* appeared in Istanbul in 1940; Yosef Mordēkay Ha-Lewi [1875–1947], whose *Šē'erit Yosef* was published posthumously in Jerusalem in 1947; Ḥananya Gavri'el Yēhošua' (1875–1954) of Jerusalem, who published *Minḥat he-ḥag* in two volumes (Jerusalem, 1942–1948); and Salonika-born Ḥizqiyya Ben Šabbētay Yēhošua' (1862–1955), who was a rabbi in Israel and published his two-volume *Divre Ḥizqiyyahu* in Jerusalem in 1935–1952. Of these, only the works of David Pipano still incorporate whole passages in Judezmo; the others contain no more than a few scattered words in Judezmo (La'az), or none, pointing to the decline in the use of the language in the Sephardic rabbinic courts, and in general, from the 1930s and 1940s.

3 Judezmo in the Ottoman Responsa Literature

A distinctive and unifying feature shared by most of the responsa collections produced by the Sephardic rabbis of the Ottoman Empire and its successor states is the inclusion of text in what the authors called *La'az*/לעז or *Lo'ez*/לועז—both being language names derived from the biblical Hebrew root ל.ז.ר./ל.ז.ר., originally referring to a 'foreign, non-Hebrew language' (cf. Psalms 114:1 *me-'am lo'ez* 'from a people of strange/foreign/non-Hebrew language', meaning the Ancient Egyptians) but which in the Mishnaic period came specifically to denote 'Greek' and 'Latin.' Paralleling the semantic development of the Latin-origin language names *Latīnus* and *Romanice* in the popular medieval Romance languages (e.g., S[panish]. *lat-/ladino, romance*), the rabbis of medieval Iberia and their post-expulsion heirs used Hebrew (*lēšon*) *la'az* and *lo'ez* primarily in the sense of 'Ibero-Romance (language)' or 'Jewish Ibero-Romance (especially Jewish Castilian and its derivatives)', and later, the fusion of elements of Ibero-Romance, Turkish and Balkan, and other origins which came to constitute the everyday language of the Ottoman Sephardim, especially as opposed to (H.) *lēšon ha-qodeš* / (J.) *lashón akódeš* // לשון הקודש 'language of holiness,' i.e., Hebrew.

For example, in volume 1, responsum no. 82 of his responsa collection *Torat ḥayyim*, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* (Salonika, 1713), Ḥayyim Šabbēṭay (c. 1557–1647) of Salonika informed readers that certain litigants in the court over which he presided had given evidence in Judezmo by preceding the testimony in this responsum with the Hebrew words “*ṭa’anu bēfanenu kol e[ḥad] me-hem bi-lšon la’az*” ‘each of them argued their case before us [rabbinical judges] in the [everyday Jewish] language originating in Ibero-Romance [and other languages].’⁶ Of the ‘kitchen utensil made of a thin plate or sheet of metal, zinc or tin, on which bread, pies, pastry are placed for baking in the oven or over a flame’ known in Turkish as *sac*, Moše Mordēkay Yosef ben Rafa’el Mēyuhās, in his responsa collection *Sefer birkot mayim* (Salonika 1789, f. 68b) wrote: “*Oto ha-kēli haya niqra sach bi-lšon la’az*” ‘the same utensil is called *sach* in the La’az language.’ On the other hand, concerning a Jew who had given a warning in Hebrew (rather than Judezmo) to someone regarding a commercial transaction, Šabbēṭay stated: “*Wē-hitra bo bi-lšon ha-qodeš ‘Ani matre kaḳ’*” ‘And he warned him in the Holy Language [saying] “I warn thus”’ (Šabbēṭay 1713, no. 87, 134a). The term *lēšon La’az* is still used in one of the last of the Sephardic responsa collections published in Turkey, Arguete 1940, no. 33 (70b), where living rooms which had been used for Jewish prayer sessions are described as “*ha-ḥadarim ha-niq[ra’im] bi-l[šon] la’az (sala)*” ‘the rooms that are called in the La’az language *sala*’ (cf. J[udezmo], S. *sala*).⁷

The rabbis’ juxtaposing of the two Hebrew terms, *la’az* and *lēšon ha-qodeš*, which denoted the two principal Jewish languages of much of the Ottoman Empire, had a parallel in the opposition marked by Judezmo speakers in their everyday vernacular by the terms *lađino* ‘(Jewish) Ibero-Romance’ versus *lashón (akóqesh)* ‘(Holy) Tongue, Hebrew’.⁸ For example, Ma’ir [Benveniste’s] Salonika 1568 Judezmo translation of portions of Yosef Karo’s halakhic classic, *Šulḥan ‘aruk* (Venice, 1565),

6 In citations from the responsa, passages in Hebrew and Aramaic will be presented in the body of the text in standard Romanization and English translation and in the footnotes in the original spelling.

7 "החדרים הנק' בל' לעז (סאלה)"

8 In the present article, Judezmo passages in the responsa will be Romanized from the original Hebrew-letter text, accompanied by an English translation in square brackets. The Romanized transcription of Judezmo from the original Hebrew-letter sources essentially follows the system advocated by La Akademia Nasionala del Ladino en Israel (on which see Bunis 2021), with the following exceptions: the [j] glide is represented by y rather than i; *d* denotes occlusive [d], while *ḏ* denotes fricative [ð], and *g* denotes occlusive [g] as opposed to *ḡ* representing fricative [ɣ] (in the dialects making these distinctions); irregular stress (meaning non-penult stress in words ending in a vowel or -n, -s/-z and non-final stress in words ending in other consonants) is indicated by an acute accent over the stressed vowel. The sequence (*l*)y denotes possible articulation as [ɬ], [ɭ] or [j], and (*h*) denotes possible articulation as the voiceless glottal fricative [h] or phonological zero.

is presented on its title page as *Livro (l)yamado en lashón (h)akódes̄h Shulhán (h)a-panim i en ladino Meza de el alma* ‘Book called in the Holy Tongue *Šulḥan ha-panim* and in the Jewish Ibero-Romance vernacular *Meza de el alma* [Book of the soul]’. From the time of the earliest relocation of the Jews of Iberia to the Ottoman Empire at the end of the fifteenth century, and into the beginning of the modern era of Ottoman Sephardic Judaism at the end of the eighteenth century, their traditional, pre-modern La‘az/Lo‘ez—known in the language itself as *ladino*, *djudezmo/djidyó*, (*djudeo*-)*espanyol* and other names (Bunis 2008)—was composed mostly of elements originating in medieval Jewish Ibero-Romance (with its Jewish Ibero-Arabic and other local substrata), Hebrew-Aramaic, and Turkish and Balkansprachbund⁹ languages.¹⁰

In their writings the sixteenth-century Ottoman rabbis did not necessarily distinguish between the La‘az/Lo‘ez of Jews and non-Jews, i.e., Judezmo and Spanish. For R. Yosef Ben Lev (b. Monastir [Macedonia], 1505; d. Constantinople, 1580), for example, the essential difference between the Lo‘ez of the Spanish or Sephardic Jews and the Spanish Christians was that the former wrote their language in the Hebrew alphabet (*ha-yēhudim* [. . .] *kotēvim lēšon lo‘ez sēfaradi bē-otiyot* ‘ivriyyot’ ‘the Jews [. . .] write the Spanish/Sephardic Lo‘ez language in Hebrew letters’), while the latter wrote their language (referred to as *lašon šel ha-sēfaradim ha-goyim* ‘the language of the non-Jewish Spaniards’) in the Latin alphabet.¹¹ However, some rabbis did distinguish between what they saw as their own language, written in the Hebrew alphabet, and what they considered to be Christian forms of Ibero-Romance, written in the Roman alphabet, calling the latter ‘Christian writing and language’: e.g., Šelomo Ben Binyamin Ha-Lewi (d. 1697), in his responsa on *Hošen ha-mišpat* (1808), no. 67, referred to certain items evidently entered in Latin-letter Portuguese in the records of the Portuguese Jewish community in Izmir (descended from Jews who had outwardly converted to Christianity in Portugal) as “*hefše sēhora wē-nēdunya še-bē-se[fer]*” *haskamot šelahem mudpas bi-ktav wē-lašon nošri, si[man]’ kal[f]*, *mi-šēnat 5430*”¹² ‘commercial and dowry items in their record book which is printed in Christian writing and language, section 20, from 5430 [=1670].’

9 The principal Balkansprachbund languages are generally considered to be Albanian, Aromanian, Bulgarian, Greek and other Hellenic varieties, Bosnian, Serbian, Macedonian, Balkan Romani, and the diverse varieties of Romanian (Friedman 2005; Joseph 2010).

10 Unlike the varieties of modern Judezmo reflected in post-eighteenth-century non-rabbinic sources, the Judezmo passages in the responsa literature generally do not include elements of modern Italian and French origin.

11 Ben Lev (1573, vol. 3, no. 8).

12 "חפצי סחורה ונדוניא שבס' הסכמות שלהם המודפס בכתב ולשון נוצרי סי' ד משנת ה'ל"ז

Occasionally, in Hebrew, the Judezmo-speaking rabbis referred to their own everyday Judezmo simply as *lēšonenu*/לְשׁוֹנֵנוּ ‘our language’.¹³ They did not limit the meaning of the term to elements of Hispanic origin incorporated into their language; the reference included elements of all origins. Thus, regarding a reference by an Ashkenazic rabbi to what appeared to be a kind of cabbage, discussed in no. 127 (from Izmir, 1661) of the section *Yore de‘a* of his responsa, Ḥayyim Benveniste (1788) of Constantinople and Izmir wrote: “*ha-kēruv še-katav še-qorin ‘kroyt’ ulay hu ha-kēruv še-niqret bi-lšonenu kulkás še-mašuy bahem ha-kēnima mē’od*”¹⁴ ‘the cabbage that he wrote about that they call *kroyt* [Y(iddish). ‘cabbage’] perhaps it is the cabbage that is called in our language *kulkás* [cf. T(urkish). *kulkas* ‘taro, the plant and root of *Colocasia esculenta*’ < A(rabic). *qulqās*] in which a lot of aphids are found’.

4 Halakhic Strictures Concerning Exactitude in the Reproduction in Rabbinic Responsa of Documents and Testimony Presented to the Rabbinic Court

Although some of the vernacular documents appearing in the responsa collections of the Ottoman rabbis were obviously written in varieties of the mixed, scribal Hebrew-Aramaic-Judezmo “legalese” employed at the time in materials submitted to the rabbinic court, many other vernacular documents, and much of the litigant argumentation and witness testimony adduced in the responsa, are presented by the responsa authors as being the precise written reproduction of the original documents or the exact spoken testimony of specific individuals reporting in their own words what they wanted to declare, or what they had seen and heard, or what they had been told directly by first-hand witnesses, Jewish or non-Jewish, with respect to legal cases on which the rabbis had to pass judgment. And in fact, an examination of such texts against a backdrop of what is known about the features of everyday Judezmo speech leads the reader to conclude that passages of direct speech in Judezmo encountered in the Ottoman rabbinic responsa contain features which more closely resemble the natural language of everyday speakers¹⁵—or at

¹³ On the use of the parallel Judezmo term, *muestra lingua* ‘our language’, see Bunis (2008:10–11).

¹⁴ “הכרוב שכתב שקורין קרוי” ט אולי הוא הכרוב שנקראת בלשוננו קולקאש שמצוי בהם הכנימה מאד”

¹⁵ On some of the markers of everyday speech as portrayed in Judezmo literary texts see Bunis and Adar-Bunis (2011).

least of speakers who received a traditional religious education of the kind available to Ottoman Sephardim in past generations and who were considered worthy and reliable enough by the rabbis to have their testimony accepted in the rabbinic courts—than much of the material contained in most other forms of writing in Judezmo cultivated before the late nineteenth century, such as rabbinical literary prose or poetry.¹⁶

Eliav Shochetman, a major authority in the field of Jewish law, described the responsibilities of the *sofer ha-dayyanim* / סופר הדיינים, or ‘rabbinical judges’ scribe,’ and of the rabbinic court employing him, as follows:

The scribe must be very careful in the transcription (H. רישום) of the arguments of the litigants, and he must be careful not to change anything at all of the arguments of the litigants and of the supporting evidence, and must make sure that none of their words touching on the trial be omitted; the rabbinic court bears the burden of ensuring that the court scribe perform his job properly according to halakhah [my translation].¹⁷

Shochetman’s depiction of the court scribe, known among the rabbis of Spain and their Ottoman heirs as *sofer bet din* (סופר בית דין / ב"ד) ‘scribe of the rabbinic court’,¹⁸ or simply *sofer* (סופר) ‘scribe’,¹⁹ derives from the writings of rabbis of the Middle Ages such as the Sephardim Moše Ben Maimon (or Maimonides, 1135–1204),²⁰

¹⁶ For general treatment of such writings see for example Molho (1960); Romero (1992); Lehmann (2005); and Borovaya (2017). The passages may be said to be closer in their spoken verosimilitude than many of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century literary portrayals of speech as found in Hebrew-letter Judezmo novels penned by imitators of highly stylized French and other European novels, as opposed to some of the more natural writings of the time which attempt to represent the everyday speech of popular Judezmo speakers (see numerous examples in Bunis 1993b).

¹⁷ "הסופר חייב להיות זהיר מאוד ברישום טענותיהם של בעלי הדין, ועליו להיזהר שלא לשנות מאומה מטענות בעלי הדין ומחומר הראיות, ולדאוג לכך שלא יושמט דבר מדבריהם הנוגע למשפט; על בית הדין מוטל להשגיח שסופר בית הדין ימלא את תפקידו כהלכה" (Shochetman 1988:347–348).

¹⁸ For example, the term is found in the responsa of the highly influential Ašer Ben Yēhi‘el, of Ashkenazic descent (1517, rule 7, no. 4); as well as in those of Ottoman rabbis of Sephardic descent such as Ya‘aqov Be Rav (1663, no. 4), Yosef Karo (1598, *Even ha-‘ezer*, no. 130), Moše Mitrani (1629, part 1, no. 100; part 2, no. 9), Yosef Ben Lev (1561–65, no. 74), Šemu‘el de Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, nos. 262, 289), Moše Alšek (1605, no. 13), Moše Galante (1608, no. 83), David Pipano (1912, no. 15).

¹⁹ In Ottoman responsa texts the term *eskrivano* (cf. S. *escribano* ‘court clerk, notary’) is also used to denote a scribe, clerk or notary, although not necessarily one employed by the rabbinic court; e.g., “[. . .] el *eskrivano* *eskrivia al pye de kontrato* [. . .]” “[. . .] the clerk wrote at the foot of the contract [. . .]” (Medina 1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 380; see also Ḥayyim Šabbēṭay [or Maharḥaš, Salonika, before 1555–1647] 1713b, no. 59).

²⁰ E.g., Maimonides, *Mišne tora*, *Hilkoṭ malwe wē-lowē*, chapter 24, law 1.

Yiṣḥaq Bar-Šešet (or Ribaš, 1326–1408),²¹ and Yosef Karo (or Maran, 1488–1575), the last of whom authored the halakhic classic *Bet Yosef* and its abridgment, *Šulḥan ‘aruk*. Karo wrote that after hearing the arguments of the litigants ‘the rabbinic court should order the scribe to write them down’ (“ציון [בית הדין] לסופר לכתבם”).²² It has become accepted, according to Jewish law, that litigant argumentation should be delivered orally and be transcribed by a court scribe, whose transcriptions should be approved by the litigants. According to rabbinic agreement, the scribe transcribing the oral testimony of witnesses could sign his name under it.²³ The court scribe’s transcriptions were meant primarily to help the judges remember the details of the case before them in order to adjudicate, and also provide a basis for subsequent appeals by the litigants. Only in rare instances were individuals involved in a law suit able to revise their litigation or testimony.²⁴

The stringency of Jewish law with regard to the transcription by scribes of litigant argumentation and witness testimony has led to the suggestion by modern scholars of Yiddish that the vernacular legal arguments and witness depositions found in Ashkenazic rabbinical responsa collections were “recorded verbatim” and thus constituted “unique evidence for spoken Yiddish”;²⁵ presumably, the same stringency would apply in the copying and reprinting of the various written documents submitted to the rabbinic courts in support of legal arguments. To my knowledge, the claim of absolutely verbatim transcription of the Yiddish witness

21 Bar-Šešet (1546–47, no. 298).

22 Karo (1559, *Bet Yosef*, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, section 13) and Karo (1565, *Šulḥan ‘aruk*, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, *Hilkot dayyanim* [Laws concerning judges], section 13, 3).

23 Cf. Šelomo Ben Avraham Adret (or Rašba; Barcelona, 1235–1310) 1539, part 1, no. 729, and part 3, no. 438; Karo (1559, *Bet Yosef*, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, section 28) and Karo (1565, *Shulḥan ‘aruk*, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, *Hilkot ‘edut* [Laws of testimony], section 28).

24 The information in this section is based primarily on Shochetman (1988:346–353); see also Grossman (1992); Haas (1996); and Ettinger (2003). I am grateful to Rabbi Reuven Lauffer for his relevant remarks on the transcription of witness testimony as practiced in rabbinic courts today: “There is an obligation for a Beit Din to have the equivalent of a stenographer at each hearing. His job is to transcribe exactly what is said and not to add or detract anything. As far as I am aware this is something that has been in place for many generations. The reason for such a thing is quite clear as it ensures that no one can claim afterwards that something was, or was not, said. In the past there were people who were famed for their ability to write things quickly and accurately”, <https://www.asktherabbi.org/question/testimony/> [Accessed 12.12.2021].

25 E.g., Marvin Irving Herzog, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/West-Germanic-languages/Yiddish> [accessed 27.01.2025] wrote that “Unique evidence for spoken Yiddish is incorporated into an extensive body of rabbinical Responsa (published rabbinical opinions on matters of religious law) beginning in the 15th century. Testimony before the rabbinic court, which was recorded verbatim, provides unusual insight into the colloquial language.” See also the article by Taube in this volume.

testimony in the Ashkenazic responsa has not been contested and the materials were not closely scrutinized for internal discrepancy.

In Ottoman Jewish historical research in general, as well as in Judezmo language research in particular, the verbatim nature of the vernacular passages appearing in the responsa is often presented as a given. For example, Gutwirth (1997:17) referred to “some lines of verbatim testimony in Judeo-Spanish aljamia deciphered by Teicher.” Goldish (2008:l) wrote that “One especially exciting moment in the [Ottoman Sephardic] responsa is the occasional citation of verbatim testimony given before the rabbinic court, which very self-consciously maintained its integrity. In fact, such testimony is often quoted in the language in which it was given.” Although Elon (1994:1508, as discussed by Benaïm 2012:15) argued that “neither the copyists nor the respondents thought it important to preserve the exact language of the question, as their main concern was with the respondent’s legal discussion and decision,” Benaïm (2012:15) maintained to the contrary that “the preservation of the original testimonies was vitally important, in particular the wording of wills and contracts, the words used in marriage situations and witness testimonies to agunot cases.” Shochetman (1988:347–348) certainly appears to concur with Benaïm in principal. The verbatim claim seems generally to have been accepted at face value, and linguistic analysis, including assertions regarding historical changes in the language and the nature of its regional dialectology, have been based, among others, upon the Judezmo passages in the responsa.

5 The Ottoman Rabbis on the Exactness of Reproduction of the Original Versions of the Written and Spoken Vernacular Materials Incorporated into Their Responsa

Over a period of more than four centuries the more prominent Sephardic rabbis of the Ottoman Empire received and responded to halakhic inquiries from Sephardim and other Jews, many of them more minor rabbis, scattered throughout the extensive empire and beyond it. Copies of contracts and other written documents introduced into the responsa were accompanied by notes asserting that they had been reproduced from the original documents ‘letter for letter’ (H. *ot bē-ot* / אות באות),²⁶ or ‘letter for letter, word for word’ (H. *ot bē-ot milla bē-milla* / אות באות

26 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* nos. 15, 148).

מילה במילה,²⁷ or *ot bē-ot teva bē-teva* / אותות תיבה בתיבה.²⁸ Other allusions to the purportedly exact verbatim nature of the texts reproduced in the responsa include phrases informing the reader that the litigant or witness wrote ‘in the following words, in the La‘az language, letter by letter, word by word’ (H. *ka-dēvarim ha-elle bi-lšon la‘az ot bē-ot milla bē-milla* / מלה במלה [ת]’מלה באות [ת]’מלה בלשון לעז),²⁹ or ‘these are his words in the La‘az language’ (H. *elle dēvaraw bi-lšon la‘az* / אלה דבריו [ת]’אלה דבריו בלשון לעז),³⁰ or the document reproduced was ‘a bill of exchange [. . .] that is written in this language’ (*kētav šel ḥalifin* [. . .] *še-kētuva ze”ha-la[šon]* / [ת]’כתב של חליפין [ת]’כתב של חליפין),³¹ or was ‘(written) in manuscript, in the following manner’ (H. *bi-ktav yad bē-ze ha-ofen* / בכתב יד בזה האופן).³² Texts purportedly reproducing communal or commercial agreements were preceded by statements such as ‘this is the language of the agreement’ (*wē-ze lēšon ha-haskama* / וז[ה]’ל[שון] ההסכמה),³³ ‘and they made an agreement and this is its language in La‘az’ (*wē-‘asu haskama wē-ze”l[ēšonah] bē-la‘az* / ונעשו הסכמה וז[ה]’ל[שונה] בלע”ז),³⁴ Last wills and testaments were preceded by statements such as “and this is the wording of the will,”³⁵ and so on. In one responsum, passages ostensibly reproducing oral testimony (on which see below) were followed by the text of a written document, preceded by the words “*Aḥar kaḳ ra’inu kētav eḥad še-šālēḥu mi-Fama Gusta* [. . .] *ze lēšono*” ‘Afterwards we saw a written document that they sent from Fama Gusta [Cyprus] [. . .] this is its language’.³⁶ The end of such ‘exact citations’ was generally indicated by the phrase ‘up until here (is its/his language)’ (H. *‘ad kan [lēšono]* / עד כאן [לשונה]),³⁷ abbreviated³⁸ ע”כ or ע”כ”ע

27 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 383).

28 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 15).

29 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 382): “ראובן תושב סופיאה כתב לשמעון שבאישקופיא: “Rē’uven, a resident of Sofia, wrote to Šim’on in Skopje the following words in the La‘az language letter for letter word for word’.

30 Medina (1594, *Yore de‘a* no. 68): “Rē’uven wrote to him himself in this bill and these are his words in the La‘az language’.

31 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 65).

32 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 175).

33 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de‘a* no. 118).

34 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de‘a* no. 155).

35 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 313): “And this is the wording of his will [written] on Wednesday 8 Elul of the year 5301 [=Julian 31 August 1541].”

36 Medina (1586?–87, vol. 1 no. 261), corresponding to Medina (1594, *Even ha-‘ezer* no. 166): “אחר כך: “ראינו כתב אחד ששלחו מפאמה גושטה. . . זה לשונו”

37 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de‘a* no. 68).

38 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 262).

As has been alluded to in the preceding citations, the Judezmo and other vernacular passages incorporated into the manuscript and published versions of these responsa were often accompanied by the names and places of origin and residence of the authors of written documents submitted to the rabbinic courts, of the litigants and witnesses who testified orally before the rabbis presiding over the courts, and of the court judges. Written documents, ostensible transcriptions of oral depositions made in the rabbinic courts, and any explanatory notes accompanying them often included mention of the places and sometimes even the exact dates they were composed or rendered in the courts, as well as the names of other witnesses present in the court during the oral depositions. For example, in a question sent to Šemu'el de Medina concerning the sale of property the transcription of testimony by ten Jewish men in Sofia, whose full names were specified and whose words were written down by the rabbinic clerks in their own city, was followed by the statement "We the clerks of the rabbinical judges of the Holy Congregation of Sēfarad [Iberia, according to the Jewish conception, or the post-expulsion communities in which the exiles and their descendants established themselves] here in Sofia [. . .] [present] all of the testimony that follows from the mouths of each and every one of the witnesses letter for letter, word for word" (H. *ot bē-ot, teva bē-teva*). It was then declared by the scribe of the rabbinic court in Salonika in which the case was tried: "This we copied letter for letter (H. *ot bē-ot*) as it was written in the written document which he [the litigant] gave us from the judges of Congregation Sēfarad [in Sofia]." The deposition concluded with the date: "And this was in the month of Tammuz of the year 5337 (or June-July 1577)."³⁹ Such testimony ostensibly affords us details on the varieties of Judezmo spoken in Sofia in the mid-sixteenth century.

In another question to Medina we learn of a case involving "the Holy Congregation of Rhodes [. . .], since their custom was to make wine outside the city [. . .]."⁴⁰ The members of this congregation, who forwarded their legal query to Medina for judgment, had agreed upon certain principles concerning wine making, as intro-

39 Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 15):

"אנחנו >ו' פרנסי דיני ק"ק ספרד אשר פה סופיא כד אתו סהדיא אלין ואסהידו בתור[ת] עדות מכה החרם כל העדייות הנמשכות מפי כל אחד ואחד מהמעידים אות באות תיבה בתיבה. . . זאת העתקנו אות באות כאשר כתב בכתוב שנתן לנו מדיני ק"ק ספרד. . . וזה היה בחדש תמוז שנת השל"ו"

Where Hebrew dates are cited, an approximate corresponding Julian, until 1582, and thereafter Gregorian date will be offered in square brackets (such dates may be completely correct in all instances; see <https://www.rosettacalendar.com/>; <http://www.hebcal.com/converter/?gd=16&gm=11&gy=1536&hd=22&hm=Cheshvan&hy=5299&h2g=Compute+Gregorian+Date>) [Accessed 27.01.2025]. When only a Hebrew month is cited without specifying a particular day, the calculation will arbitrarily be based on the 15th of the month. My thanks to Javier Castaño for important insights concerning this issue.

40 Medina (1594, *Yore de'a* no. 53): "א" בהיות היה מנהגם: "מעשה שהיה כך היה כי קהל קדוש רודיש. . . [י"א] בהיות היה מנהגם: לעשות היין חוץ לעיר [וכו'] . . .".

duced in the query they submitted to Medina with the words: “and this is the language appearing in the agreement: *En el anyo de 5297 [. . .] anaalé⁴¹ don Yosef Levi [. . .] komensó de hazer lagares en-la tyera [. . .]*” [In the year 5297 (=1537) (. . .) the sublime don Yosef Lewi (. . .) began to make wine presses in the earth (. . .)].⁴² With respect to the date on which the question was raised, “it was on Wednesday, the 22nd of Hešwan of the year 5299 [=16 October 1538] [. . .]”⁴³ Thus, in this case we are ostensibly dealing with a text in Judezmo as used by Sephardim on the Island of Rhodes in 1537–38. If, in the instance of such texts, we could be confident that court testimony and documentation were reproduced in the responsa with exactitude, we should be able to connect between specific linguistic forms used in the texts and the varieties of Judezmo used in particular Ottoman Sephardic communities, or at least in the idiolects of particular individuals residing in those communities, during specific years—thus enabling us to obtain important insights into the historical and geographic development of Judezmo in the Ottoman Empire.

In a responsum attributed to Moše Ben Yosef Mitrani (or [Ha-]Mabbīt,” b. Salonika, 1500 or 1505; d. Jerusalem, 1585), incorporated into the responsa of Yosef Karo (no. 80), Mitrani refers to the document included in the responsum as “*lašon [. . .] še-he’ētaqti mi-lēšon la’az*” ‘language/text [. . .] that I copied from the La’az language’ (see section 7.2.2.1 below for this citation in context); according to the rules governing the incorporation of documents and testimony in the responsa, Mitrani’s intention would undoubtedly have been to ‘copy’ the document verbatim.

The linguist’s confidence in the verbatim nature of these passages would tend to be bolstered by further formulations added to some of the passages by the authors of the responsa collections or by the court scribes, regarding the word-for-word reproduction in the responsa of the oral testimony or written declarations which had been introduced in the rabbinic courts. For example, many of the transcriptions of oral testimony in the responsa are accompanied by assurances by the rabbinical authors or scribes that they replicate oral statements made exactly “in this language” (H. *bē-lašon ze* / בלשון זה,⁴⁴ *bē-ze ha-lašon* / בזה הלשון,⁴⁵ “this is its/his language” (H.

41 Throughout the present article elements of Hebrew and Aramaic origin appearing within the context of Judezmo are treated as Merged Hebrew elements in Judezmo, i.e., part of the Judezmo lexicon. Such elements are transcribed here as realized among Judezmo speakers in the historically major population centers of the language (e.g., Salonika, Istanbul); thus, הנעלה = *anaalé* rather than Romanized Classic Hebrew, *ha-na’ale*, as used in the Romanizations of the Whole or actual Hebrew passages cited here.

42 Medina (1594, *Yore de’a* no. 53): “וזהו תורף לשונו[ת]’ הבאים בהסכמה איל אנו די הרצ”ו כו’ הנעלה דון: יוסף לוי [. . .] קומינסו די האזיר לאגאריש אינלה טיירה . . .”

43 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de’a* no. 53): “היה זה יום ד’ כ”ב לחשון שנת הרצ”ט ליצירה וקים”

44 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 97).

45 E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 263).

wě-ze lěšono / וזה לשונו),⁴⁶ “these testimonies [. . .] were received before the rabbinic court favorably, and this is their language” (H. *ha-‘eduyot ha-elle* [. . .] *nitqabbēlu bi-fne be[t]”di[n] yafe. Wě-ze lě[šonam]* / [ה]”ל[שונם] וז[ה] יפה. ב”ד יפה. וז[ה] [ה]”ל[שונם]),⁴⁷ and so on. Witnesses sometimes signed their testimony: e.g., “*I por aver pasado esto delante nozorotros [!] firmamos akí, Moše Ándjel, David Mor Ḥayyim*” ‘And having passed/reviewed [the transcription of this testimony] before us, we sign here, Moše Ándjel, David Mor Ḥayyim’.⁴⁸ So, too, did members of the rabbinic court; e.g., following the Judezmo testimony of several witnesses testifying to the fact that a certain physician in Salonika had a son, there appeared the statement “These are the testimonies of the aforementioned men and [in concession of] their being true we signed our names today, the 22nd of Nisan” [H. *elle hem ‘eduyot ha-anašim ha-niz[karim] wě-li-hyot ha-emet ken ḥatamnu šēmotenu ha-yom yom 22 lě-nisan*].⁴⁹

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, *verbatim* is explained as “With reference to a copy of a text or passage in a book, a report of a speech, a transcription of spoken testimony, quotation of spoken remarks, etc.: using exactly the same words as in the original; in the exact words.” Whereas linguists and historians who made use of the Judezmo passages in the Ottoman responsa have tended to refer to them as ‘verbatim’ transcriptions of the original documents or testimony received by the judges of the Ottoman rabbinic courts (K. Levy 1929:356–363; Molho 1960:359–376), the Ottoman responsa literature itself asserts that the judges’ approach to the reproduction of such material was meant to go a step further, bringing it closer to the concept expressed by the Latin term *verbatim et literatim*, i.e., (again citing the OED) “word for word and letter for letter; used to emphasize the absolute exactness of a copy, transcription, etc.”

The exact written or oral statements attributed to a litigant were generally set off by fixed introductory and concluding phrases in Hebrew, while the litigant’s actual statements were in Judezmo. For example, in Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 94) we read: [H.] “*Rě’uven tava’ et Šim’on wě-ṭa’an ‘alaw bě-lašon ze*”⁵⁰ [J.] ‘*Yo demando ke [. . .] Diġo ke me keḏa a-dever [. . .] komo e mil i tak*⁵¹ *as[pros], ke-me-los de.*’ [H.] ‘*Ad kan tēvi’at Rě’uven*”⁵² [H.] Rě’uven sued Šim’on and complained against him in this language [J.] “I demand that [. . .] I say that he still owes

46 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de’a* nos. 68, 118); Medina (1594, *Even ha-‘ezer* no. 166).

47 E.g., Medina (1594, *Yore de’a* nos. 68, 118); Medina (1594, *Even ha-‘ezer* no. 166).

48 Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 5).

49 Medina (1586?–87, vol. 1 no. 261), corresponding to Medina (1594, *Even ha-‘ezer* no. 166): אלה הם: עדויות האנשים הנז’ ולהיות האמת כן חתמנו שמותנו היום יום כ”ב לניסן”

50 “ראובן תבע את שמעון וטען עליו בלשון זה”

51 *E mil i tak* = 5,500, cf. H. *he/5* = ה (thousand) + *taq/500* = (100 + 400) תק.

52 “ע”ד”כ”אן] תביעת ראובן”

me [. . .] around 5,500 piastres, let him give me them". [H.] Until here is the claim of Rē'uven'. In the same responsum Šim'on's use of language was then presented analogously: [H.] "*Hešiv Šim'on bē-lašon ze*⁵³ [J.] *ke Reuvén tenía una kantiḡaḡ de dinero* [. . .] [H.] '*A[d] ka[n] tēšuvat Šim'on*'⁵⁴ [H.] Šim'on replied in this language [J.] that Rē'uven had an amount of money [. . .] [H.] Until here is the reply of Šim'on'.

Oral depositions of witnesses were sometimes presented as quotations by means of verbs indicating speech acts such as *dezir* 'say' and *ser meid* 'testify' (cf. H. *me'id* '[M.SG] testifies').⁵⁵ For example, in Medina 1586?–87, no. 56 (corresponding to Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 8) we find: [J.] "*I disho ribí Yosef aniz[kar]' a-las ke a(l)yí estavan 'Sedme eḡim komo lo tomó por kidušín.*' *Esto fue meid betoraḡ eḡuḡ Moshé Basa* [H.] '*A[d]"ka[n]* [. . .] *Bē-ota ša'a ba*'⁵⁶ Moše Franko [J.] *i disho* [. . .] [H.] '*A(d) ka(n) haya qabbalat 'edut ze bē-fanay ani he-ḡatum lē-maṡa yom he 'erev ḡag ha-šavu'ot* [. . .] *Šēmu'el de Medina*' 'And the aforesaid ribí Yosef told those who were present: "Be witnesses for me that she took it [i.e., the object I offered her, by accepting which she expressed her agreement] for betrothal". [H.] Until here [are his words] [. . .] At the same time came Moše Franko [J.] and said [. . .] [H.] Until here was the receipt of this testimony before me, the undersigned, on Thursday, the eve of the Shavu'oth holiday [. . .] Šēmu'el de Medina.'⁵⁷

In rare instances, Judezmo passages in the responsa actually include the names of the court scribes who received the written documents surrendered to the judges or transcribed the oral depositions made in the courts. For example, to one such document was appended the statement: "I, the scribe, and the witnesses, shall sign our names here, and all this is binding and firm in the name of the congregation: Yuda Valansí, Šēmu'el Alvo, Yosef Zakūt."⁵⁸ Another responsum bore a more specific signature: "The undersigned, the scribe the honored rabbi Šēmu'el Maḡir and two others, from one of which he brought the results of the rabbinic court of Serrai."⁵⁹ To one question appearing in the second edition of his responsa Medina added a preface noting that he was reconsidering the question after another rabbi had opposed his earlier ruling: "Since this question came before Rabbi Šēmu'el Ḥaḡam Ha-Lewi of blessed memory and he ruled the opposite of my words I again

53 "השיב שמעון בלשון זה"

54 "ע[ד]"[כ[א]] תשובת שמעון"

55 On Judezmo analytic or periphrastic verbs constructed of a Hispanic-origin auxiliary and a Hebrew-origin complement see Bunis (2009).

56 "באותה שעה בא"

57 "ע"כ היה קבלת עדות זה בפני אני החתום למטה יום ה' ערב חג שבועות"

58 Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṡ* no. 262): "אני הסופר ולעדים החתומים נחתום שמותינו כאן והכל שריר: וקים בשם הקהל יודה ולאנסי שמואל אלבו יוסף זכות"

59 Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṡ* no. 263): "חתומים למטה הסופ' כה"ר שמואל מכיר ושנים אחרים: אשר הביא מאחד מהם קיום ב"ד של שייריש"

wrote an answer to his words, one to one, and here is what he wrote: 'Rě'uven sued Šim'on and complained against him in the following language [. . .]'.⁶⁰ A passage of testimony in Judezmo followed; thus, in this instance Medina noted having "reproduced" the text himself.

Considering the rabbinical and scribal iterations and reiterations of the avowed verbatim et literatim reproduction in the responsa volumes of the Judezmo written and oral depositions adduced by the testifiers, it is clear that exact letter-for-letter replication was the avowed intention of the members of the rabbinic court and all involved in the preparation of the responsa texts.

6 Scholarly Interest in the Judezmo Passages in the Ottoman Responsa Literature and Reliance Upon Them As Verbatim Reproductions of Rabbinic Court Witness Testimony

Familiar with the highly exacting demands for precision in the reproduction in the responsa of original documents and testimony presented to the rabbinic courts as stipulated in Jewish law and reiterated by the Ottoman Sephardic responsa authors, the pioneering historians, philologists and linguists who laid the foundations of Judezmo and Ottoman Sephardic studies at the turn of the twentieth century recognized early on the potential value of the Judezmo passages in the Ottoman rabbinical responsa. The earliest philologically-oriented works already cite data from the Ottoman responsa: for example, the rabbi and historian Abraham Danon of Edirne, who died in 1925, gleaned passages from responsa collections illustrating the use of the Turkish language, and of Judezmo lexemes originating in Turkish (Danon 1903–04, 1913) and Greek (Danon 1922) among the Jews of the Empire in the sixteenth century. In 1929 the Romance philologist Kurt Levy published some linguistic analysis of Judezmo passages in Ottoman responsa collections. In his annotated 1960 anthology of Judezmo literature, the rabbi and Sephardic culture historian Michael Molho of Salonika included passages in Judezmo from several responsa collections by rabbis from Salonika. In 1984, under the direction of the present writer, Jacqueline Benatar completed a Master's thesis in which she analyzed Judezmo

⁶⁰ Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 95).

"להיות כי באה שאלה זו לפני החכם כמהר"ר שמואל חכם הלוי ז"ל ופסק הפך דברי חזרתי וכתבתי תשובה על דבריו א' לאחד והא לך מה שכתב: ראובן תבע את שמעון וטען עליו בלשון זה. . .".

The original question had been published in Medina (1586?–87, vol. 1 no. 99).

passages in the responsa of Šmuel de Medina and Yişhaq Adrebi (or Adarbi, Salonika, 1510?–1584?). In 1996 Annette Benaim, too, wrote a Master's thesis analyzing Judezmo texts in the responsa of Medina; and in 2006 she expanded her study of the Judezmo passages in the responsa of Medina into a doctoral dissertation, an expanded version of which she published in 2012; it contains 84 Judezmo passages from the sixteenth-century responsa collections of 11 Ottoman rabbis.

Since 1993 the present author has been citing Judezmo material from the responsa in his research, and since 1996, with the assistance of grants from the Israel Science Foundation and the Federman Foundation (Hebrew University of Jerusalem),⁶¹ he has been working intensively with Judezmo and Turkish passages in the responsa of Ottoman rabbis from the sixteenth through twentieth centuries.⁶² In recent years, Aldina Quintana (1996, 2001, 2007), Alberto Várvaro and Laura Minervini (2007, 2008), Omer Shafran (2014) and others have also published selected responsa passages and analysis.⁶³

7 Form and Functions of Lo'ez/La'az Elements in the Responsa of Šmu'el De Medina

Šmu'el Ben Moše de Medina was a major rabbi and judge in sixteenth-century Salonika. His complete responsa number 956 questions and answers; from the 1594–97 edition they are arranged in four parts, according to the order of the *Arba'a turim* of Ya'aqov Ben Ašer (b. Cologne 1270, d. Toledo, c. 1340). The first edition of his responsa was published in Salonika in two volumes as *Pisqe ha-ga'on [..] Šmu'el de Medina* in 1586?–1587,⁶⁴ and it was followed by emended, expanded versions published in Salonika in 1594–97: *Še'elot u-tšuvot [..] me-he-ḥakam [..]*

⁶¹ Israel Science Foundation Grant no. 830/96 (1996–1999): Turkish component in Modern Judezmo; Federman Foundation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2002): Judezmo in Sephardic Rabbinical Sources; Israel Science Foundation Grant no. 807/03 (2003–2007): Linguistic encounters between speakers of Judezmo (Ladino) and speakers of Turkish in the Ottoman Empire: A linguistic and anthropological analysis of the Ottoman component in 16–18th century Judezmo.

⁶² E.g., Bunis (1993a: 20–29, 2003, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2006–2007, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2018–19).

⁶³ The bibliography of historiographic works making use of the Ottoman Sephardic responsa is too extensive to note here; an example of a monograph based entirely on that source is Goodblatt (1952). More recently Ottoman rabbinic responsa have been used for sociological studies, e.g., Rubešová (2008).

⁶⁴ Here and throughout this article the publication dates cited for the responsa collections reflect those given in the Bibliography of the Hebrew Book site of the Israel National Library.

R. Šemu'el de Medina, vol. 1, on *Oraḥ ḥayyim* and *Yore de'a*, 1594; vol. 2, on *Even ha-ezer*, 1594; vol. 3, on *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ*, 1595–1597. A collection of Medina's responsa was published again in Salonika, under the same title, in 1797–98 (vol. 1, on *Oraḥ ḥayyim* and *Yore de'a*, 1797; vol. 2, on *Even ha-ezer*, 1797; vol. 3, on *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ*, 1798); and a complete edition in Lemberg 1862, under the title *Šē'elot u-tšuvot* [...] *me-ha-Rašdam* (vol. 1, on *Oraḥ ḥayyim* and *Yore de'a*; vol. 2, on *Even ha-ezer*; vol. 3, on *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ*). As we shall see, the diverse editions diverged from one another in various ways.

In his responsa Medina deliberated on a wide variety of personal and communal, civil and religious issues. He based his judgments on the rulings of Jewish legal predecessors, as well as on his own original thinking. The broad range of materials in Judezmo and other languages used in the Ottoman Empire incorporated into the Ottoman Sephardic rabbinic responsa in general is well exemplified in Medina's responsa. In the following paragraphs the ways in which non-Hebrew, and especially Judezmo, material was incorporated into some of the various versions and diverse sections of Medina's responsa volumes will be elucidated and compared, particularly in an attempt to ascertain the extent to which the ostensibly identical Judezmo material that appears in more than one place in his writings may be said to be precisely identical in all of the places.

7.1 References to Elements of Material Culture, Technical Terms, Proper Nouns and Other Vernacular Terms Lacking a Precise Equivalent in the Hebrew Known to Medina

One use of La'az elements in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa was the insertion within the Hebrew matrix text of various responsa of single, isolated vernacular words or terms for which the rabbinical authors evidently knew no satisfactory Hebrew correspondent, or which, due to the critical nature of the concepts that the terms denoted in the legal argument advanced, the authors deemed it preferable to use the original terms which had been used in a supporting written document rendered to the court or in oral testimony related to the court by witnesses, rather than an attempted Hebrew analogue. Often such terms belonged to the terminology relating to diverse professional fields relevant to the case at hand. An instance of this kind is illustrated in responsa no. 45 in Medina's volume on *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* published in Salonika in 1595–97 (37a–38a). Nouns and verbs of Hispanic origin (here in bold in the original text, and in italics in my English translation) are interwoven in the following segment describing the processing of a woolen garment from a question addressed to Medina concerning a dispute over the responsibility

for a damaged garment. Of these terms, the mixed Hebrew-La'az verb forms *lě-per-char* 'to rack' and *lě-tundir* 'to shear' also appear in the summary of the question printed on 8a of the volume):

Before asking my question I will preface it with a few words about the manufacture of clothing, as follows: After the cloth is woven they give it to the *batanero* [cf. S. *batanero* 'fuller'] and it is beaten in the fulling pan in order to degrease it and give it further body, and afterwards they give it to the *perchero* [cf. OS. *perchero* 'racker and carder of wool'] to perform the work they call *betaldar* [cf. S. *be(l)taldar* 'airing'] and afterwards they give it to *tundir* [cf. S. *tundir* 'to shear'] it, and after that work is done they examine the cloth to see if it is pure and clean of oil, and if it is not pure enough as required they give it to another man to clean and purify it of oil and this work is called *desterar* [cf. S. *desterrar* 'to remove oil'] and they put sodium carbonate and water on it and after it is clean and pure of oil the *perchero* [racker] takes it to *perchar* [rack] it again and then the *tundidor* [cf. S. *tundidor* 'shearer'] takes it for drying on the verandah as is the custom and the simple fact is that the *tundidor* does not soak the garment in water at all but rather the *perchero* does, and he dries it in the sun, as was mentioned, and the same is true of the *karizías*⁶⁵. This was the preface. The question: Rē'uven gave two *karizías* to Šim'on to *perchar* [rack and card] and to Lewi to *tundir* [shear] and an instance happened that they were not clean and pure of oil and he gave them to Yēhuda to clean them. . . .⁶⁶

קודם שאבא לשאל שאלתי אקדי[ם]
הקדמ[ה] בענין מלאכת הבגדי[ם]
וזאת היא אחר שהבגד ארוג נותנים לו
לבטאנירו והוא מבואר ואחר כך נותנים
אותו לפירג'ירו לעשות בו מלאכה שקורין
ביטאלדאר ואחר כך נותנים לטונדיר אותו
ואחר שזאת המלאכ[ה] עשויה רואים
הבגד אם הוא טהור ונקי משמן או לא ואם
אינו טהור כראוי נותנים אותו לאיש אחר
לנקותו ולטהרו מהשמן וזאת המלאכה
נקראת דישטיראר ונותנים בו נתר ומים
ואחר שהוא טהור ונקי מהשמן לוקח אותו
הפירג'ירו לפירגאר אותו פעם אחרת ואחר
כך לוקח אותו הטונדיר לנגב לשמש
באכסדרא כאשר הוא המנהג וגם כן פשוט
הוא שהטונדיר אינו שורה הבגד במים
כלל אלא הפירג'ירו והוא מנגב אותו לשמש
כנוכר וכן הקאריזיאש זאת היה ההקדמה.
השאלה. ראובן נתן שני קריזיאש לשמעון
לפירגאר וללוי לטונדיר וקרה מקרה שלא
היו טהורים ונקיים משמן ונתן אותם
ליהודה לנקותם. . .

65 On the carisia cloth typical of the Jews of Sicily see Simonsohn (1997:10718); Simonsohn (2011:633). In his responsum no. 81 on *Orah hayyim* (1594) Medina noted the difference between *karizías* and J. *panyo* (cf. S. *pañó*) 'cloth' and *panyos de cuenta* (S. *paños de cuenta* 'cloth of a certain quality measured by the number of threads used in its manufacture'): "... קאריזיאש היה נראה כפי זה: דלאו בגד סתם [וצה] "לומר" פאניוש בלע"ז אלא שם מיוחד להם קאריזיאש ומ"מ פאניוש די קואינטה בכלל פאניוש סתם הם. . ."

'*karizías* would seem, according to this [discussion in the responsum] not to be an ordinary garment, called *panyos* in La'az, but rather a specific name for [a certain kind of] them, *karizías*, and thus *panyos de cuenta* are included among the ordinary garments.'

66 Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 45, 37a–38a); in the Lemberg 1862 edition the text appears on 19a–18b. The names Rē'uven, Šim'on, Lewi and Yēhuda—four of the twelve tribes of Israel mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 49)—are frequently used in the responsa to denote hypothetical individuals (cf. English Tom, Dick and Harry).

Some basic observations regarding the form and use of such terms in the Ottoman rabbinic responsa are worth making. The Judezmo elements introduced within the Hebrew responsum in question exemplify terms belonging to the technical field of cloth production, a specialty of the Jews in Spain.⁶⁷ Following their expulsion, cloth production was a major industry engaged in by members of the Sephardic communities throughout the Ottoman Empire,⁶⁸ and those of Salonika in particular, as well as Jews in parts of Western Europe such as Sicily. It was the Jews who were entrusted with the manufacture of the uniforms of the Ottoman military.⁶⁹ In this responsum the Hispanic-origin Judezmo terms refer to the processors of the wool used to make the cloth—the *batanero* ‘fuller,’ *perchero* ‘racker and carder of wool,’ *tundidor* ‘shearer’; and to the actions involved in the processing—*betaldar*⁷⁰ ‘airing,’ *tundir* ‘shearing,’ *desterar* ‘removing oil,’ *perchar* ‘racking and carding’ – offering but a small taste of the rich cloth-production terminology which must have existed among the Salonika Jews in the 16th century.

The cited elements also illustrate some of the means by which vernacular elements were incorporated within the Hebrew responsa matrix, and the ways in which local, post-expulsion borrowings were incorporated into Judezmo. In the case of isolated terms such as those in the present responsum, the Hebrew morphosyntax at times formally influenced the manner of their incorporation. For example, in the above passage two Judezmo verbal infinitives are inserted in the fusion construction: Hebrew bound quasi-infinitive marking preclitic *-l/le-* ‘to’ (cf. H. *lē-dabber* ‘to-speak’) + Judezmo infinitive form (with the morphemes *-ar*, *-ir*): *lē-perchar oto* / אִר אוֹתוֹ ‘to-rack it,’ *lē-tundir oto* / לְטוֹנִידִיר אוֹתוֹ ‘to-shear it.’ That is, the infinitives retain their etymological Judezmo infinitive structures but accept a tautological Hebrew infinitive marker.

67 Cf. Gerber (1992:170).

68 Shmuelevitz (1984:139).

69 Mazower (2005:52); Göktürk (2017:91).

70 The verb *betaldar* and its variant, *beltaldar* (*un paño*), seem to be rare in Spanish. *Beltaldar* occurs with respect to the processing of wool in *Vocabulario de Comercio Medieval* (AMC, *Actas Capitulares*, 1462 Legado Gual Camarena, Universidad de Murcia (Fundación Juan March), s. *betaldar*, <https://www.um.es/lexico-comercio-medieval/> [Accessed 27.01.2025]; in the anonymous *Real cédula de los señores Reyes Católicos* from 1501, ed. Luis Morales García-Goyena, Granada: Tipografía de López Guevara, 1906–1907, II, 104: “la mayor perfección de los paños esta en los cardar en la percha e en el betaldar e despuntar dellos e que sy esto no hiziesen o viesen haser sus dueños de los dichos paños ligeramente los oficiales que los oviesen de cardar en la percha e betaldar, gelos podrian destruir todos” (REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA: Banco de datos (CORDE) [Accessed 27.01.2025]. *Corpus diacrónico del español*. <<http://www.rae.es>> [Accessed 27.01.2025]); and in Diego de Atienza, *Reportorio de la nueva Recopilacion delas leyes del Reyno*, Alcalá de Henares, 1581:279.

On the other hand, as also illustrated in the passage, the Hebrew morphological framework was in certain instances almost systematically overridden by Judezmo morphology. One such instance is that of the plural form of Judezmo substantives of non-Hebrew or Aramaic origin inserted in the Hebrew text, whether of Hispanic, Turkish, Greek, South Slavic or other origins. Almost universally, such plural forms exhibit the Judezmo (in this case, Hispanic-origin) plural marker *-es*,⁷¹ rather than a Hebrew-origin plural marker (e.g., m. *-im*/ים-, f. *-ot*/ות-); e.g., as illustrated in the preceding passage, sg. *karizía*/קאריזיא > pl. *karizía+s*/קאריזיאש 'carisia (type of expensive knitted fabric usually manufactured in Italy).' The use of such vernacular-language plurals in the Hebrew-language responsa should not simply be presumed; Israeli Hebrew, for example, tends to pluralize borrowings from foreign languages with Hebrew plural morphemes – e.g., sg. *dólar* 'dollar' > *dolár-im* (rather than **dólar*s, with the English plural marker). Potentially, analogous plural forms of nouns of non-Hebrew or Aramaic origin could have been created by the authors of the Ottoman Sephardic responsa for use within the Hebrew matrix text; in fact, a few occasionally do appear—e.g., f.pl. *ḥodjarod*/רוֹת(א) הוֹג < f.sg. *ḥodjara*/רוֹת(א) הוֹג 'chamber; alcove, niche' (cf. T. *hü-/hucerat*, pl. of *hücre* < A. *ḥuġra*);⁷² but these are extremely rare and it is almost always the Hispanic-origin plural morphemes which are used.

It is worthy of note that not only the plural forms of Hispanic-origin nouns occurring in the responsa, such as those appearing in Medina's text above, appear overwhelmingly with the Judezmo plural marker *-es*; so too do those of Turkish, Balkansprachbund-language, and (Jewish) Arabic origin: e.g., elements appearing in the responsa of Medina such as pl. *mulkye+s*⁷³/מולקייש < *mulkye* 'property' (cf. T. *mülk* ← A. *mulk*) and *tabak+es*⁷⁴/טאבאקיש < *tabak* 'tanner' (cf. T. *tabak[çı]*), rather than with plural morphemes of Hebrew or Turkish origin (cf. T. pl. *mülkler*, *tabak[çıl]lar*).⁷⁵ Such plurals suggest that, at the time of their recording in the responsa, these elements were already perceived and used by Judezmo speakers

71 Pluralizing *-s* is added to nouns with a final vowel, and *-es* to those ending in a consonant. On plural formation in Judezmo see Bunis (1985).

72 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 192): 'היו לו חוקה שני הוגרות, הוגרת ראובן מצד אחד וב' "He had the purchasing prerogative on two chambers, the chamber of Rē'uven on the one hand and two chambers of Šim'on on the other hand'.

73 Medina (1594, *Yore de'a* no. 175): 'המעות שנכנסו במקנת החצר הנ"ל הוקדשו על מנת לקנות מהם "The money that entered from the sale of the said courtyard was dedicated to the purchase of properties'.

74 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ*, no. 358): 'נתן אל לבו לשאת ולתת עם תוגרמים טאבאקיש' "He was determined to trade with Turkish tanners'.

75 On elements of Turkish origin in pre-modern Judezmo see Bunis (2013a); on elements of Slavic origin, Bunis (2017); on elements of (Jewish) Arabic origin, Bunis (2018). On the interaction of Ju-

as an integral part of Judezmo, rather than as sporadic citations of foreign lexemes or as momentary ‘switches’ to Turkish, Greek, South Slavic, and so on (cf. analogous plurals in Modern Judezmo such as *fildjanes*/פִּילְדְּגָנִים [< sg. *fildján*] ‘small cups for Turkish/Balkan coffee’ appearing with the Hispanic-origin plural marker in the nineteenth-century Hebrew-language responsa of Ḥayyim Palacci of Izmir,⁷⁶ analogous with Bosnian sg. *fildžan* and Greek sg. *flitzáni* ‘small cup for Turkish/Balkan coffee,’ pl. *fildžani* and *flitzánia*, respectively, with Slavic- and Greek-origin nominative plural *-i* and *-ia*, vs. T. sg. *filcan*, pl. *-lar*).

Further supporting evidence of the fact that the Judezmization of such elements had occurred by the time of their appearance in the responsa is to be found in fusion formations constructed of bases of Turkish or Balkan-language origin and derivational morphemes of Hispanic rather than Turkish-Balkan origin. For example, in accordance with the phonologically-determined rules of Judezmo hypocoristics,⁷⁷ polysyllabic nouns with a final *-l*, regardless of their etymological origins, take the Hispanic-origin hypocoristic suffix *-iko* (cf. S. *-ico*), as illustrated in the borrowing *chenbel+iko*/גִּנְבִּילִיקוֹ ‘little head scarf,’⁷⁸ from Turkish *çember* (< Persian *čenber*) + Judezmo *-iko*, incorporated into Medina’s responsa, rather than analogous forms with a hypocoristic morpheme of Turkish origin such as *-cık/-çık*. The hypocoristic forms of Judezmo nouns with a final velar phoneme instead take *-ito* (cf. S. *-ito*), as illustrated in the hypocoristic form *chardak+ito*/גַּאֲרַדְאִיקִיטוֹ and later metathesized variant *chadrak+ito*/גִּאֲדְרַאִיקִיטוֹ ‘little gazebo’ (cf. T. *çardak* < P. *čār* + A. *tāq* + J. *-ito*) appearing in responsa 43, 105 and 281 of Medina’s *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* (1595–97).⁷⁹

Additional Judezmo single-word terms and short, isolated phrases encountered in the Ottoman responsa literature include anthroponyms and toponyms (often discussed in responsa concerning forms and spellings acceptable in halakhic documents such as marriage and divorce contracts);⁸⁰ the names of foods the kashruth or holiday use of which was called into question (e.g., the suitability of

dezmo speakers with speakers of Jewish Arabic as reflected in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa see Bunis (2018–2019) and Bunis (2023).

76 Palacci (1873 no.15): "אם יש לאסור שלא ישתו בכלים הנז' שקורין פִּילְדְּגָנִים" 'if it should be prohibited to drink from the vessels which they call *fildjanes*.'

77 On Judezmo hypocoristics see Bunis (2003).

78 Medina (1594, *Even ha-ezer* no. 34), from 1567 "ריקה יצאתה עם גִּנְבִּילִיקוֹ אחד על ראשה" 'Rika went out with a little kerchief on her head'.

79 Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 281). The metathesis of *-rd-* to *-dr-* will be discussed in section 7.3.2.1 below.

80 E.g., proper nouns appearing in the responsa of Medina such as (a) names of Jews, such as f. *Paloma*/פַּאֲלוֹמָה vs. *Palomba*/פַּאֲלוֹמְבָה (Medina 1594, *Even ha-ezer* no. 12), *Rozika* (Medina 1594, *Even ha-ezer* no. 13), *Estre(l)yika* (Medina 1594, *Even ha-ezer* no. 19), including discussion of whether female names with initial *Dj-* such as *Djamila* and *Djoya* require a diacritic over the initial Hebrew

yufkás/יּוּפְקָאשׁ 'baked goods made from thin pastry dough' (cf. T. *yufka*) for Passover use);⁸¹ and the names of articles of clothing and ornaments, in connection with religious requirements (e.g., the possible need for ritual fringes [*šišiyot*] on the *feredjé*/פְּרִי"ג [cf. T. *ferace* < A. *farāja*] 'Ottoman robe-like dustcoat'),⁸² or the garments worn by a deceased Jew whose corpse was found in a public place and whose identity needed to be determined (e.g., Dani'el who, according to a responsum from 1626, was found dead wearing *tumanes*/טומאניש *mi-beged Saloniki* 'puffed breeches of Salonikan cloth' [cf. T. *tuman*]),⁸³ or gifts bequeathed to an heir (e.g., *saya* 'kind of mantle, overcoat, tunic, skirt, etc.' [cf. S. *saya*] and other garments, bequeathed by Ya'aqov de Ávila to his daughter in his will dictated on 8 Elul [5]301 [= 31 August 1541]).⁸⁴

7.2 Written Documents Submitted to the Rabbinic Court in the Vernacular

7.2.1 Document Types

The responsa volumes are generally subdivided into the four sections of the Jewish legal classic *Arba'a turim* by Ya'aqov Ben Ašer (b. Cologne 1270, d. Toledo, c. 1340): *Oraḥ ḥayyim*, *Yore de'a*, *Even ha-'ezer*, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ*, each section devoted to a different basic field of Jewish law. A major subcategory of *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* is the topic of wills and testaments; in the Ottoman rabbinic responsa dealing with this subject,

letter *gimel* (Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 205): ראייתי לסופר בזמני כותב גט וכשיקרא שם כמו גאמילה: (Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 205) "או גויא או באות ג נוקד נקודה למעלה להבין קריאת הג' ועתה שבא לידי ענין זה נתתי אל לבי לדרוש ולתור בדבר" 'I saw a scribe in my time writing a divorce contract and when he read a name such as Djamilā or Djoya or some other beginning with Dj- he added a dot above the letter to specify reading with dj and now that [a question] concerning this matter has reached me I have decided to investigate the matter'; (b) names of non-Jews, e.g., *Aḥ-/Ahmat* <אה-אחמאט> (Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer*, no. 57, both alternants appearing in the same question); (c) toponyms such as *Monestiryo* (Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer*, no. 57), *Plevna* (Medina 1594, *Even ha-'ezer*, no. 72), *Belogrado* (Medina, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ*, no. 227).

⁸¹ E.g., Medina (1594, *Oraḥ ḥayyim*, no. 26).

⁸² Karo (1565 *Šulḥan 'aruk*, *Oraḥ ḥayyim*, *Hilkoṭ šišit*, *Dine kanfoṭ ha-ṭalit*, sec. 12) pl. פִּירִיגִישׁ; Medina (1594, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 53) פְּרִי"ג

⁸³ E.g., Šabbēṭay [d. 1647] (1651b, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 52): [טומאניש מבגד] . . . היה מלובש עס] . . . טומאניש מבגד: (1651b, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 52) "דניאל . . . היה מלובש עס] . . . טומאניש מבגד: (1651b, *Even ha-'ezer* no. 52) שאלוניקי"

'Dani'el [. . .] was wearing baggy trousers of Salonikan cloth'.

⁸⁴ E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 313): "שאלה: ה"ר יעקב די אבילה נ"ע בהיותו מושבב על: (Medina 1595–97, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 313) ערש דוי צוה על נכסיו וזה נוסח צוואתו ביום ד' ח' לאולול משנ' הש"א דיזי קי לי אה די דאר אשו הי"גה ז' אלפים ות"ק אשפירוש קון אונה שאייא די גראנה רואדה אי און רופן די גראנה מוראדה אי אונה שאייא די גאמילוטין] . . ."

Judezmo wills and testaments are sometimes incorporated.⁸⁵ For example, Medina's section on *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* (1595–97), responsum 313 (reproduced in Benaim 2012:275–278) discusses a will providing for the bequeather's wife and brothers.⁸⁶

In addition to purportedly exact reproductions of wills and testaments, the responsa also incorporate various other types of written documents, composed in several varieties of Judezmo used by the Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire. For example, Medina's responsa include inventories of luxurious gift items forming a part of dowries;⁸⁷ commercial contracts and agreements between merchants or householders;⁸⁸ fragments from communal and organizational regulations, ordinances and agreements;⁸⁹ and the like. Some such questions incorporate parts of documents containing examples of direct speech in Judezmo, as well as in Hebrew translation. For example, Medina, in *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* (1595–97) no. 69, reports the reply to a complaint by someone who argued that his brother-in-law had not sent him the correct amount of value in cheese in compensation for brushes for cleaning cloth fibers for which he had originally paid him: "*Ermano, ke me demandas p[er] aspro[s]' ke vos enbíe de karda[s]'[?]* Por vida de mis fijos r[eš] aspe[ros]' me dyeron i r[eš] aspe[ros]' vos enbíe de kezo" 'Brother, why do you ask me to send you 80 *aspros*' worth of carding combs? By my sons' lives, they gave me 200 [and not 280] *aspros* and I sent you 200 *áspros* worth of cheese.'⁹⁰

If we rely on the words of the responsa authors, such documents were submitted to the rabbinic courts in their original forms as written by their authors, and thus they ostensibly provide us with examples of relatively natural, not necessarily literary non-fictional writing. Authorities such as Šemu'el de Medina sometimes interpreted the legal implications of the occasionally ambiguous language of the documents, at times written in the 'language of plain people' (*lēšon bēne adam* / לִשְׁוֹן

⁸⁵ For discussion of written testimony and testimony recorded in legal documents within the context of Jewish law see Sinai (2010:341–374).

⁸⁶ For another example see Medina (1594, *Yore de'a* no. 168), presented in Benaim (2012:207–209).

⁸⁷ Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 313).

⁸⁸ Among the numerous documents in the responsa of Medina connected with commercial and financial concerns and incorporating Judezmo texts are those found in questions dealing with possible obligations of heirs following a death (*Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 5); controversies over the right to purchase, sell, or reside in a property (*Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* nos. 15, 227, 262, 263), or build a porch or trellis between properties (*Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 281); questions revolving around the payment of bills of exchange, debts, and the validity of supporting documents (*Yore de'a* no. 68, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* nos. 33, 52, 65, 170, 175, 380); the dissolution of a partnership (*Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 95); and other business matters (e.g., *Yore de'a* no. 88, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* nos. 97, 148).

⁸⁹ E.g., Medina (1594, *Orah hayyim* no. 118), concerning the purchase of wool by Jews in Salonika.

⁹⁰ The coin often referred to in Ottoman rabbinic sources as *aspro* (cf. G. *áspros* 'white') was equivalent to the Ottoman *akçe* or 'white (i.e., silver) coin.'

בני אדם⁹¹ as each writer saw fit, rather than in Hebrew and according to the norms of strict Jewish law, as the authorities would have preferred.

7.2.2 Written Vernacular Documents Submitted to the Rabbinic Courts: Testing the Verbatim Transmission Hypothesis

Despite the claims made by the court scribes and responsa authors that the vernacular passages in rabbinical responsa collections constitute verbatim reproductions of the written documents submitted to the rabbinic courts and of scribal transcriptions of oral testimony rendered before the adjudicating judges, we cannot employ such passages as a basis for linguistic analysis, or at least an analysis of the idiolects attributed to particular persons in specific places at precise times, without attempting to test that claim. We obviously cannot test the memories of litigants and witnesses from past centuries, and in most instances the original court transcriptions and documentation appear no longer to be extant.⁹² Thus, in many instances, we cannot compare the texts published in the responsa collections with their earliest written reflections, in an attempt to determine the truth value of the verbatim transmission hypothesis, according to which the rabbinic court scribes and other copyists (often, students of the judges),⁹³ the responsa collection authors, and the editors, typesetters, printers, and other individuals involved in the production of the responsa volumes would have felt bound by Jewish religious law to reproduce in every linguistic detail (“letter for letter, word for word”), in the original and in subsequent editions, the exact language employed in the written documents and oral testimony with which the rabbinical judges were originally furnished.⁹⁴

On closely considering this body of literature, several avenues for testing do present themselves. Because of the explanatory nature of the question portion (*šē’ela*) of the responsa, passages of Judezmo written documents and witness testimony examined by the rabbinical judges generally appeared in a responsum in the question portion; but sometimes extracts were also cited in the rabbi’s reply

⁹¹ Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* no. 328).

⁹² The problem of whether the published versions of the responsa, and the oral testimony and documents ostensibly reproduced in them, actually reflect extant original responsa manuscripts was briefly raised by Glick (2006:xlvi). However, this crucial issue has never been examined in detail; in the instance of numerous responsa volumes the original manuscripts are unavailable or exist only in partial form.

⁹³ Glick (2006:xlvi).

⁹⁴ For discussion within the context of Jewish law see Shochetman (1988:345–353, Chapter 14: “Riššum protocol”). A few relevant notes also appear in Glick (2006, vol. 1, ix–xxvii).

(*těšuva*). Furthermore, in an attempt to facilitate the use of responsa volumes by the reader, they often included indices (*maftehot*) or synopses in which abridged versions of the vernacular passages were sometimes included. Thus, an internal consistency test can sometimes be made by comparing the vernacular material in the question, reply, and index sections of a responsa volume to determine whether the vernacular material in the various sections of a responsa edition are at least internally consistent, as would be expected of legal works whose authors and their assistants purported to incorporate within them verbatim reproductions of oral and written texts. Furthermore, although most Ottoman rabbinical responsa collections enjoyed only a single edition, the collections of a few major Ottoman rabbinical authorities underwent more than one edition. A comparative examination of the vernacular material in two or more editions of the same responsa collection should enable us to ascertain whether the vernacular passages across the various editions are identical. The presence or absence of such internal consistency within a single edition and across several editions should give us an inkling of what the attitude of the individuals responsible for the production of the editions was with regard to exactitude in the reproduction of documentation and testimony, even if some consideration must be made for human error, as when *verdad* 'true' was misspelled as וידאד/*vedaḏ* in the 1594–97 edition of Medina's responsa and was corrected to וירדאד/*verdaḏ* in the 1797–98 edition, and when authors, sometimes by their own admission, were unable to proofread their compositions.⁹⁵

In addition, some of the legal cases arising in the responsa literature were dealt with by more than one rabbinical authority, ostensibly relying upon the same original witness testimony and/or supporting documents which were presumably made available to all of the examiners, or on published versions. This too should enable us to compare written reflections of what are supposed to have been identical written or oral sources—although in such instances it might be argued that the various rabbis perhaps did not see the exact same documents examined by their colleagues considering the same case and, perhaps due to errors by those who prepared the copies sent to the various rabbis, they might have based their deliber-

95 A curious example of the latter instance is recorded by Šemu'el Ben Ḥayyim Vital (Damascus and Egypt, 1598–c. 1678). At the end of his responsum 96 from 1676, which included several passages of testimony in Judezmo and Judeo-Arabic, Vital noted that, concerning the case of an '*aguna* 'straw widow,' after he and the other adjudicating rabbis had decided to declare the woman's husband deceased 'he gave the responsum to a scribe to copy and then he fell ill and the papers were lost and he did not have sufficient time to reconstruct them and nonetheless all of us agreed to free the woman' (ואחר שכתבתי בה והסכמתי להחיר העגונה הזאת עם הסכמת חברי רבני זאת העיר נתתי התשובה) "בד סופר אחד להעתיקה יען כי נהייתי וחליתי על המטה ונאבדו הנירות לגמרי ולא היה לי פנאי לחזור לסדרם ועכ"ז (כבר כולנו הסכמנו להחיר).

ations on divergent sources from the outset, or the secondary adjudicating rabbis were not present at the same witness depositions.

As a preliminary attempt to try to understand the attitude of the producers of Ottoman Sephardic responsa collections toward verbatim transmission within the collections of written and orally related legal passages, the present author performed an internal comparison between Judezmo passages included in three editions of the responsa of a single author, Šemu'el Ben Moše de Medina of Salonika, published in Salonika in 1586?–87, 1594–97, and 1797–98. (A fourth edition of Medina's responsa, published in Lvov 1862, seemingly based on the 1797–98 edition but containing numerous typographical errors in the Judezmo passages—undoubtedly due to the unfamiliarity of the Ashkenazic typesetters with the language of the Ottoman Sephardim, which they did not speak—was generally not taken into consideration in the comparison here.) The Judezmo passages in the question and reply sections of the body of the three editions, as well as in their indices, were compared. They were also compared with parallel passages dealing with the same cases in the legalistic works of two other Ottoman rabbis, Ḥayyim Benveniste (1734), who died in Constantinople in 1673, and Mes'ud Ḥay Ben Aharon Raqaḥ (b. 1690 Izmir; d. Tripoli 1768) (Raqaḥ 1964).

As will be demonstrated, the textual comparison led to the conclusion that the vernacular legal documents and witness testimony incorporated into the body of the first edition of Šemu'el de Medina's responsa collection were not always reproduced verbatim in subsequent editions of the collection. Within the first edition itself there are also linguistic discrepancies between the language of Judezmo passages in the question portion of the responsum and portions of text “quoted” in the rabbi's reply,⁹⁶ as well as between the language in the body of the text and in the index.

As will be elaborated in the following sections, there are linguistic divergences in the variants of written documents and oral testimony ostensibly reproduced verbatim in different parts of the first edition of Medina's responsa, and in that edition and in the later editions of it, at the levels of orthography, phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, and other levels of structure.

Given the claim of verbatim reproduction maintained by the authors and technical producers of Medina's responsa collection, the divergences between the Judezmo material in the body of the first edition and in its very index, as well as between the Judezmo passages in the first edition and in that produced by the author's son, Moše de Medina, less than ten years later, are thought-provoking and, for the Judezmo historical linguist, a cause of concern.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 382).

⁹⁷ For comparative remarks on the two sixteenth-century editions without respect to their Judezmo passages see Spiegel (2000).

The divergences within the first edition, and across the three Salonika editions, would appear to be connected with (a) a measure of free variation between certain linguistic features characterizing varieties of Judezmo as used in one and the same period, in the same or different communities; and (b) the occurrence of structural shifts in Judezmo, especially in written Judezmo, taking place in the language over the course of its diachronic development, in particular regions or universally in the language, leading to the textual replacement of certain older forms by others. As we shall see, the individuals responsible for the production of the responsa editions tended, consciously or unconsciously, to replace what for them were obsolete or extralocal forms which had appeared in earlier editions of the responsa with the equivalents used in their own period and locale. The literary nature of some of the replacements must be noted, since the modifications occasionally caused the forms to differ from the spoken language of the later period in the direction of something approaching a Judezmo literary standard developing throughout the Ottoman regions, sometimes in direct opposition to the corresponding spoken forms actually used in Salonika; e.g., word-initial <(')> פ > *fe* (from Latin *f*-), denoting *f*-, alternating – at least orthographically – in the sixteenth century with <ה> *he*, perhaps denoting the voiceless glottal fricative *h*, or perhaps actually representing phonological zero (e.g., ג'ו' פ' *fijo* // ה'ג'ו' *hijo* or perhaps *ijo* 'son') → <א> *alef*, clearly denoting phonological zero, e.g., א'ג'ו' *ijo*). By the eighteenth century the orthographic shift <ה-פ> // *f/-h* → א/zero was widely accepted in the literary language of the rabbis, but it actually stood in opposition to the actual preservation of *f*- in spoken Salonika Judezmo (e.g., *fijo*) into the modern era (see section 7.3.2.1 below).

A factor which may have contributed to the ostensibly cavalier fashion in which the rabbis and scribes appear to have treated the halakhic issue of exactitude in copying texts, resulting in textual divergences within the different sections of a given responsa edition and across its various editions, was the haste in which they admittedly had to work with the court materials, because of their many other pressing obligations and because of the urgency for adjudication in cases in certain domains. For example, with respect to a case concerning an alleged marriage proposal and betrothal, Medina admitted that he received the testimony on his own, in the absence of the other two rabbis who generally formed with him the rabbinic court triumvirate, writing it down "letter by letter," because of the urgency of the legal matter brought to him on the eve of a Jewish holiday.⁹⁸ The linguistic modi-

⁹⁸ Medina (1587, no. 56) and Medina (1595–97, *Even ha-ezer*, no. 8):

'היה קבלת עדות זה בפני אני החתום למטה יום ה' ערב חג שבועות ולהיות הדבר נחוץ וערב מועד והנוגש [ים]
אצים לא עמדתי עם ב' אחרים רק אני לבדי קבלתי העדות אות באות כנו' ולהיות אם הבחור [ה] ואחיו [ה] נפשו
מרה להם על הענין בקשו ממני אכתוב להם להורות אם יש שום חשש באלו הקדושים ולהפסיק דעתם כתבתי
שורותם אלו בקוצר גדול"

fications which the rabbis and/or scribes will be shown to have introduced while working on the first edition, as well as those introduced by the individuals responsible for the later editions, perhaps seemed trivial to those individuals, as they possibly would have seemed to the average Judezmo speakers reading the vernacular material in the responsa collections, since, upon comparison of the divergent texts, it may be said that the changes generally did not alter the overall arguments of the witnesses but simply consisted mostly of replacements of one linguistic variant with another, all of the variants familiar to the responsa authors and producers as either of a historical, regional or stylistic nature, or free variants used during the same time, in the same locale. Perhaps this caused those involved in the production of the responsa volumes not to perceive the differences in the versions of the texts, to the extent that they noticed them at all, as transgressions against the halakhic verbatim text reproduction principle. But to linguists analyzing Judezmo, many of the fine discrepancies encountered within the first edition of Medina's responsa and across the later editions in fact tie in to the critical bundles of isoglosses distinguishing regional, social, stylistic and historical varieties of the language of the kind analyzed diachronically and synchronically by Quintana (2006), and by the many investigators of variation in Judezmo who preceded her.

7.2.2.1 An Example of Textual Divergence Within the Responsa Editions of Šēmu'el De Medina of Salonika and in Comparison with a Parallel Phrase in the Halakhic Works of Ḥayyim Benveniste of Constantinople and Izmir and Mes'ud Raqaḥ of Izmir and Tripoli

One typical example of linguistic diversity in the La'az passages appearing in different editions of the same responsa collection is undated responsum no. 4 (8b), included in the second part of Medina's original responsa collection, which appeared in Salonika in 1587, and was republished there as no. 328 (237a) in the 1595–97 *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* edition. In this responsum the author discussed the last will and testament set down in 'the kingdom of Portugal' (*bē-malkūt Portuḡal*, on 24a of the latter edition) by a former *converso*, referred to in the responsum by the fictitious name Rē'uven, who had a wife, Sarah, and a brother in Flanders, the latter referred to there by the fictitious name Šim'on. Medina noted that in the country in which Rē'uven resided the law stated that from the half of the legacy due to a man's children he could give a third to whomever he wanted, but from the half due to his wife he could give no part to anyone else.⁹⁹

The testament reproduced by Medina illustrates one function of La'az texts in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa as noted above: the incorporation within a

⁹⁹ For background details on the case see Benaim (2012:278–279).

responsum of documents of legal significance in their original language. In this case the will attested was in a variety of La'az (rather than the rabbinically more normative Hebrew in which the rabbis preferred that wills be written) different from that with which Medina was familiar locally; it perhaps resembled for Medina the language used by non-Jewish Iberians and crypto-Jews who returned to Judaism outside Iberia, written in the Latin alphabet characteristically used by Christians and crypto-Jews having no knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet or afraid to write or keep Hebrew-letter documents in their homes because of the Inquisitorial ban. The following is the text cited by Medina, as introduced by him in Hebrew. As is true of the non-Hebrew material included in the entire Ottoman responsa literature, in Medina's responsa volume the text was cited in Hebrew letters, as reproduced below, but it is likely that the original document had been written by the former converso in the Latin alphabet; a hypothetical reconstruction of that text is offered here as well (Medina's introductory statement in italics is in Hebrew):

U-R'uvven ha-niz[kar]' 'asa šawwa'a bi-lšon la'az wē-ze"l[šono]: [Latin letter reconstruction of the La'az text based on Hebrew-letter text and Spanish orthographic norms of the period:] Declaro que en toda mi hazienda tiene mi [h]ermano la metad [or: mitad] y yo otro tanto en-la que él tiene por sí, y aún que-la mía sea más, él la ayudó a-ganar, y mi intención [or: intención] fue sienpre esta. Sola mente le pido por merced que, muriendo él sin hijos, haga [h]eredera a-mi hija, casando ella a-su voluntad.¹⁰⁰

וראובן הנז[כר]' עשה צוואה בלשון לעז וז[ה]"ל[שוננו]
דיקלארו קי אין טודה מי האזינדה טייני מי אירמאנו
לה מיטאד אי יו אוטרו טאנטו אינלה קי איל טייני
פור שי אי אאון קילה מראה שיאה מאש איל לה
אידוד אנאנאר אי מי אינטינסיון פואי שיינפרי אישטה
שולה מינטי לי פידו פור מירסיד קי מוריינדו איל שין
הי"גוש האנה אירידירה אמי הי"גה קאזאנדו אלייא
אסו וילונטאד.

[H.] *And the aforesaid R'uvven made a will in the La'az language and this is its language:* [La'az] I declare that in all my wealth my brother has a half and I twice the amount as what he himself has, and although mine might be more, he helped earn it, and my intention was always this. Only I ask him as a favor that, if he dies [i.e., is about to die] childless, he make his heir my daughter, if she marries according to his will.

Frequently, passages from the documents and other vernacular written material cited in the question portion of the responsa were then referred to again in the author's response to the question. For example, in his response concerning the will cited above, Medina (1587:8b) noted that, instead of using the ambiguous wording

¹⁰⁰ In modern Judezmo phonemic transcription this would be: *Deklaro ke en toḏa mi ḥazyenda tyene mi ermano la metad i yo otro tanto en-la ke el tyene por sí, i aún ke-la mía sea mas, el la ayudó a-ganar; i mi entensyón fue syenpre esta. Sola mente le pido por merced ke, muryendo el sin hijos, ḥaḡa ereḏera a-mi hija, kazando eya a-su veluntad.*

of the declarative phrase appearing in the question portion (here reproduced verbatim from the question in Medina's response): *tyene mi [h]ermano [la metad y yo otro t[a]nto en-la que él tyene por sí]*, the writer 'could have said' (H. *haya yakol lomar*): *tyene él un tanto y yo, dos tantos* 'he has one portion, and I, twice the portions'. To Medina's way of thinking, the latter wording might have obviated the litigation brought to the rabbinic court by the testament writer's heirs.

In the indices (*maftehot*) appearing on 229a at the end of the 1587 volume there is a synopsis of the will. (Henceforth, the Hebrew-letter La'az passages cited here will be Romanized according to a slightly divergent form of the orthography accepted by La Akademia Nasionala del Ladino en Israel, on which see the articles in Schwarzwald 2021, and the footnote on Romanization appearing in section 3 above.) The indices incorporate only a brief portion of the La'az passage; this time the original first-person direct-speech declarative formulation, "Deklaro ke en toḡa mi ḥazyenda tyene mi ermano la metad i yo otro tanto" is not reproduced verbatim but is reduced, with a syntactic change made in the resulting indirect-speech rephrasing of it (presumably authored by the court scribe or some other editor) using a third-person subordinate clause, now introduced by Hebrew *wē-amar* 'and he said': "*wē-amar ke en toḡa su ḥazienda tenga su ermano la metad*" 'and he said that in all his property his brother should have a half', and concluding with the Hebrew phrase "*yeš li-š'ol i[m] zaḡa ba-mamon aḥiw o lo*" 'one must question whether his brother won the money or not'.

| | |
|--|---|
| [H.] <i>Rē'uven bē-malkuṭ Portugal šiwwa bi-lšon la'az</i> | ראובן במלכות פורטוגאל צוה בלשון לעז ואמר קי אין |
| <i>wē-amar [La'az] ke en toḡa su ḥazyenda tenga su</i> | טודה שו האזיינדה טינגה שו אירמאנו לה מיטאד יש |
| <i>ermano la metad. [H.] <i>Yeš li-š'ol im zaḡa ba-mamon</i></i> | לשאול אם זכה בממון אחיו או לא. |
| <i>aḥiw o lo.</i> | |

'Re'uven in the kingdom of Portugal made a will in the La'az language and said that in all his property his brother should have a half and one must question whether his brother won the money or not'.

In the version of the passage incorporated into the body of Medina's *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* published in Salonika in 1595–97, presented there as no. 328 (237a), we find divergence from the 1587 version only in that the 1587 text used the abbreviation *ha-niz[kar]*"/[כר] and full spellings of the words, while the 1595–97 version showed occasional omission of the *matres lectionis* *alef* and *he* denoting the vowel *a*—that is, rather than the original text being reproduced 'letter-by-letter,' spelling changes were introduced:

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>U-R'uven ha-nizkar 'asa šawwa'a . . . ḥ[a]</i> | וראובן הנזכר עשה צואה . . . הזינדה . . . |
| <i>zyenda . . . t[a]nto . . . est[a] . . . eređer[a]</i> | טנטו . . . אישט[ה] . . . אירידיר[ה] . . . קאז[א]נדו אלייה |
| <i>kaz[a]ndo e(l)ya a-su velunt[a]d.¹⁰¹</i> | אשו . . . וילונטד. |

This divergence, perhaps the result of the printer's attempt to economize, might seem insignificant—except to a scholar interested in Judezmo spelling, or halakhic issues, who might be perturbed by the inexactitude of the reproduction of the original text.

Of greater significance for anyone interested in the history of Judezmo and variation in the language in the sixteenth century are several noteworthy divergences between the Judezmo passage appearing in the body of the 1595–97 edition of *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* and that appearing on 24a (no. 12) in the indices (*mafteḥot*) of the same volume. In the indices the La'az document appearing in the body of the text is ostensibly reproduced, but in fact it contains several substantive textual changes of linguistic significance (indicated below in bold):

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>[. . .] ha-nizkar [. . .] Deklaro ki/ke [. . .] ḥ[a]</i> | [. . .] הנזכר [. . .] דיקלארו כי [. . .] הזינדה [. . .] לה |
| <i>zyenda [. . .] la metaḍ [. . .] i mi kavaná fue</i> | מיטאט [. . .] אי מי כוונה פ'ואי שיינפרי אשי [. . .] |
| <i>syenpre así. [. . .] ki/ke si el muryere sin fijos, sea mi fija su ereḡera.</i> | כי שי איל מורירי שין פ"גוש שיאה מי פ"גה שו אירידירה. |
| [H.] <i>the aforesaid</i> [. . .] [La'az] I declare that [. . .] wealth [. . .] half [. . .] and my intention was always thus [. . .] that if he should die without sons/children, may my daughter be his heir. | |

As may be seen by comparing the text appearing in the question part of the responsum with the variant text offered in the indices of the same volume (24a), there are several textual differences. First of all, there are two spelling changes: the Hispanic-origin conjunction *ke* was spelled קי/*qy* in the body of the text (henceforth, text), as usual in Judezmo, but in the table of contents it is כּי/*ky*, denoting either the Hebrew-origin conjunction *ki*, or perhaps an alternative way of spelling *ke*, under Hebrew influence, with *k* denoted by *kaf* instead of more usual *qof*. Also, the word-final interdental fricative [ð] or [θ] in *metaḍ* 'half' was denoted by *dalet* in the body of the text (מיטאד), but by *tav* (which can denote [ð] and [θ] but also occlusive [t]) in the table of contents (מיטאט). Furthermore, there is a phonological replacement: *ḥ* or zero-denoting *he* in *hijos* 'sons/children' and *hija* 'daughter' in the body of the text is replaced by *f*-denoting *fe* in *fijos* 'sons/children' and *fija* 'daughter' in the table of contents; *f*- would come to be a significant isogloss distinguishing the Salon-

¹⁰¹ In this and several of the following textual variants shown, only the words or phrases diverging from the earlier variants will be provided.

ika and Northwest Judezmo dialects from the phonological zero of the Southeast (e.g., Istanbul, Izmir) dialects.¹⁰²

There are also two lexical replacements: Hispanic-origin *entensyón* ‘intention’ is supplanted by more or less synonymous Hebrew-origin *kavaná*/כוונה (although the latter is often used in Judezmo in the more specific sense of ‘religious intention’), and Hispanic-origin demonstrative *este* ‘this’ is supplanted by adverbial *así* (the latter form commonly used in the Spanish of conversos and those Judezmo speakers whose language tended to accept contemporaneous literary Spanish as their normative model, while popular Judezmo speakers generally preferred the variants *ansí* or *ansina*, as continues in the modern language). There are also syntactic changes: while the original text appearing in the question shows the adverbial and subordinate phrases *muryendo el sin hijos, haga ereder[a]’ a-mi hija* ‘if he dies without sons/children, he should make my daughter heir,’ with a gerund in the protasis and a present subjunctive using transitive *hazer* ‘make’ in the apodosis, in the table of contents these are replaced by *si el muryere sin fijos, sea mi fija su eredera* ‘if he should die without sons/children, may my daughter be his heir’, having a future subjunctive in the protasis and a present subjunctive using the copula verb *ser* in the apodosis. The last vernacular phrase appearing in the body of the question, an if-clause, *kaz[a]ndo e(l)ya a-su velunt[a]d*, is omitted in the table of contents. With respect to the diachronic development, regional geography, and stylistics (including component structure) of Judezmo, all of these replacements are significant; again, they evidence a lack of absolutely verbatim et literatim reproduction of the text.

As was mentioned, Medina’s responsa were republished in Salonika in 1797–98. The spelling of the passage being discussed here as presented in the question portion of the *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* volume printed in 1798 (177b) shows a few divergences from the 1595–97 edition: in addition to those defective spellings which were used in the question portion of the latter it also shows defective *erm[a]-no*/אירמנו; and more modern positioning of the diacritic after the letter *gimel* in *hijos*/היג'וש rather than before it (הי"גוש). The version appearing in the indices of the 1798 edition (17a) also shows minor spelling divergences from the 1595–97 edition: abbreviated *U-R'*/ור' instead of *U-R'aven*/וראוּבן, *ha-niz[kar]'*/הנז' instead of *erm[a]no*/אירמנו, *de klaro*/די קלארו, and *kavaná*/כונה with a single rather than double waw. Otherwise there are no textual changes.

As noted, versions of the introductory phrase appearing in Medina’s responsa are also introduced in the halakhic works of two later Ottoman rabbis, Ḥayyim Ben-

¹⁰² For synchronic and diachronic discussion of the dialect regions of Judezmo see Quintana (2006).

veniste and Mes'ud Raqaḥ. In both instances Medina is cited as the source (presumably the reference is to 1595–97 responsa 328). Benveniste's first volume on *Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ* appeared in Izmir, 1660 but it did not include this responsum; it first appeared in the second volume, *Kēneset ha-gēdola, haggahot ṭur ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ*, vol. 2, no. 255, published posthumously in Izmir, 1734. In it the following phrase appears:

| | |
|--|--|
| En toḡa mi fazyenda tyene mi ermano la meat[a]d | אין טודה מי פאזינדה טייני מי אירמאנו לה מיאטת' |
| In all my wealth my brother has a half | |

This variant diverges from those in Medina's sixteenth-century editions and the 1798 edition in its denotation of 'wealth' by *fazyenda*, with word-initial *f*/פ rather than *h[a]zyenda*, with word-initial *h*/ה, and 'half' as *meat[a]d*, with *-ea-* in the first syllable and final *-d* denoted by *taw* with a diacritic (ת), rather than *-e-* or *-i-* and *-d/-*ד.

The version of the phrase appearing in Mes'ud Raqaḥ's *Ma'ase Raqaḥ* (or *roqeaḥ*),¹⁰³ in the posthumously published volume 4, section *Hilḳot zēkiyya u-mat-tana* no. 10, law 3 (1964:344, presumably based on a copy of a manuscript from around the mid-eighteenth century). Diverging from the sixteenth-century and 1798 editions of Medina, as well as from the version appearing in Benveniste's work, the text in Raqaḥ's work contains modern, universal literary Judezmo *azyenda*/אזינדה instead of *hazyenda* or *fazyenda*, and like the Medina editions but unlike Benveniste's citation, denotes 'half' as *me-/mitad*:

| | |
|---|---|
| [Deklaro ke] en toḡa mi azyenda tyene mi ermano la mitad | דיקלארו קי] אין טודה מי אזינדה טייני מי אירמאני [!] לה מיטאד |
| [I declare that] in all of my wealth my brother has a half | |

Comparing the versions of this passage as they appear in the 1587 edition of Medina (in the body of the text versus the indices), the 1595–97 edition of Medina (body versus indices), the 1798 version of Medina, and the introductory phrase appearing in Benveniste (1734, from c. 1660) and Raqaḥ (1964, from the mid-eighteenth century) the linguistically not insignificant divergences may be summarized as follows:

¹⁰³ Cf. Ex. 30:25 *ma'ase roqeaḥ* / מעשה רקח 'after the art of the perfumer'.

With support from a ruling by R. David Ben Ḥayyim Ha-kohen (or רד"ך/*Radak*, b. Corfu, after 1465; d. Edirne, 1530), Kohen 1537, no. 30 (or 26, 195a–202a, esp. 199a, regarding a will written *bi-lšon ha-lo'azim*), Medina decided that the will at hand, despite its language, had to be related to as halakhically valid. Medina implied that the reason for the variety of language, specific formulation, and alphabet used by its writer was that 'he grew up among the [non-Jewish] Lo'ez speakers [*lo'azim*, a term sometimes used to denote non-Jewish Lo'ez/La'az or 'Romance speakers'—including speakers of Italian and Castilian as a group] and what he bequeathed in writing he bequeathed in the La'az language; and the custom of the [non-Jewish] Lo'ez speakers is that any will a man writes he writes in language of concession (*lēšon hanahā*) [. . .] and [in the case of such a will] we have to accede to the language of plain people [as opposed to that of Jewish scholars]'.¹⁰⁴

The preceding discussion of the La'az passages in documents ostensibly reproduced or cited in the responsa of Medina, Benveniste and Raqaḥ well illustrate the problematic nature of the versions of written documents incorporated into the Ottoman responsa. The reflection of the passages in the generally important but linguistically somewhat deficient collection of Judezmo passages in the sixteenth-century Ottoman responsa published by Benaim (2012) shows up some of the problems in the insufficiently careful reproduction of such passages in some research publications. In the case of the passages just analyzed, Benaim relies solely upon the 1595–97 (or second) edition of Medina's responsa (2012:278–279). Her insertion of *h* in the Romanization of Medina's text in words such as *hermano* and *hereder(a)*, in which they lack graphemic counterparts but instead begin with 'silent' *alef* in the Hebrew-letter text (e.g., *ermano*/אֵרמאנו, *ereder[a]*/אֵרֵידֵיר), and use of the same *h* to represent *he*/ה in words in which it does appear in the text (e.g., *hija*/הֵיגה) blur this significant distinction for the reader; thankfully Benaim provides reproductions of the Hebrew-letter sources. Furthermore, in the responsum under consideration here Benaim fails to identify the textual variants *entisyón* and *meatad* as Judezmo variants (cf. Nehama 1977:179, 353), transcribing the first as 'inte(n) çion' and saying for the second "read: mitad" (note that neither *in-entensyón* nor *mitaḏ* appear in Nehama's dictionary of modern Salonikan Judezmo, but both *entisyón* and *meatad* do). Such deficiencies tend to be characteristic of Hispanists and

104 אני אומר שבאלו השאלות שקדמו ראוי לדון אותם כפי מנהג המקום אשר שם אירע הענין שהרי גדולה מזו כתב הטור בשם הראב"ד ז"ל שלמדין ממנהג הגוים לישראל כ"ש שראוי לעשות כן בדברים שאירעו בין הגוים בהיותם נהגים אלו האנוסים ע"פ מנהגם ומצאתי דברים בתשובה אחת לרב הגדול כמה"ר דוד כהן זצ"ל מתקן לחיכי מאד וז"ל ובר מן דין אמינא כיון שש"מ זה נתגדל בין הלועזים ומה שצוה וכתב בלעז ובלשון לעז ומנהג הלועזים הוא שבכל צוואה שאדם כותב אותו בלשון הנחה ולשון הנחה הוא היותר מעולה בש"מ פשיטא שיש לנו לומר דאני מניח לפ' ליתן קאמר שיש לנו ללכת אחרי לשון בני אדם כו' יעויין במקומו וכן אני אומר בנדון שלפנינו שיש לדון צוואה זו ע"פ מנהגם גם בכל הדברים כנ"ל"

Romanists researching Judezmo without relating to it as a distinct language variety and without considering the rich research sources providing detailed information on the language.

7.3 Rabbinic Court Witness Testimony and Other Oral Depositions Committed to Writing

In addition to the incorporation of passages in Jewish vernaculars originally submitted to the rabbinic courts in written form, the responsa further include entire passages in Judezmo ostensibly reflecting the testimony of witnesses and the arguments of litigants which had been presented orally before the adjudicating rabbis and were then preserved in the form of written transcriptions, many of them ultimately published, in Hebrew letters, in the responsa collections.¹⁰⁵ The responsa contain numerous examples of both direct speech, representing testimony that had been reported directly to the rabbinic court judges (e.g., Medina, *Even ha-ezer*, no. 166),¹⁰⁶ and indirect speech, reconstructing for the judges language which the witnesses had heard used by others, the judges often mentioning in their responsa the names of the various court witnesses whose remarks were documented therein (e.g., Medina, *Even ha-ezer*, no. 8).¹⁰⁷ The reported testimony, mostly in Judezmo but also in languages such as Turkish, Greek, South Slavic, and Arabic, or Jewish varieties of certain of those languages, often formed the principal basis upon which the rabbinical adjudication rested. The Ottoman responsa include some first-hand witness testimony presented in Hebrew rather than a vernacular (e.g., Medina, *Even ha-ezer*, nos. 34, 35, 42, 54; *Hošen mišpaṭ*, no. 45, 47, 53), begging the question whether such depositions were actually made in Hebrew, or were translations by the rabbinic court scribes or judges.

Most of the witness testimony represented first-hand or second-hand depositions by Jews; some were reconstructions of testimony by non-Jews reported to the rabbinical courts by Jews. The instances of testimony by non-Jews, presumably reported to Jews in their own languages (e.g., by Turks to Jews in Medina, *Yore de'a*, no. 183; *Even ha-ezer*, no. 51; *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, no. 352), usually take the form of attempted reconstructions by Jewish court testifiers who had interacted with the non-Jewish witnesses to scenes of relevance to the rabbinical courts, often at a considerable distance from the courts in which their testimony was presented and

¹⁰⁵ For numerous examples in Judezmo from the sixteenth century see Benaim (2012).

¹⁰⁶ See Benaim (2012:216–222).

¹⁰⁷ See Benaim (2012:209–211).

sometimes following a certain time lag. Before the seventeenth century such testimony was generally reported on by the rabbinical authors in Hebrew reconstructions; but from the seventeenth century on some attempted Jewish reconstructions of testimony in Turkish or other languages which had been used in interactions between non-Jews and Judezmo speakers were incorporated into the responsa in the original languages, in Hebrew-letter transcription. In some such instances—especially when the attempted testimony reconstruction was in a local language other than Turkish—the court scribes, or the responsa authors themselves, translated these non-Judezmo passages into Hebrew for the benefit of their rabbinical colleagues who might not be fluent in the non-Jewish languages, or perhaps because they did not rely on their own ability to transcribe such material accurately in the original language, even in the Hebrew alphabet.¹⁰⁸

Responsa concerned with certain specific topics tend to be particularly rich in Judezmo and other non-Hebrew reconstructions of oral depositions made before the rabbinic court judges. One type deals with the *'aguna* or 'straw widow' of a man who had left his home, went missing for some time, never returned and was eventually presumed dead. For the widows of such individuals witnesses were sought who could testify to the husband's death, thereby freeing the widow from this halakhically catastrophic status (since she could not remarry until her husband's death was proven).¹⁰⁹ Other responsa types often incorporating Judezmo witness testimony concern disputes regarding inheritances and property rights;¹¹⁰ attempts to reconstruct the exact phrasing of vernacular proposals of marriage which purportedly had been addressed by male members of the community to the objects of their affection in the presence of Jewish male witnesses, and the replies received by the women, in order to determine whether an act of betrothal had taken place according to Jewish law;¹¹¹ and the wording of a variety of oaths and promises recited by members of the community under diverse circumstances, e.g., a vow made in anger not to speak with a certain individual or enter his house.¹¹² The vernacular material was supplied to the rabbinical judges directly by the testigants while present in the rabbinic courts, or in written transcriptions of such testimony which had been taken down in other rabbinic courts and forwarded to the adjudicating rabbis, in order to assist the judges in ruling on a wide variety of questions and conflicts arising among members of the Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire, most of them of Iberian origin, but some belonging to other Jewish sub-

¹⁰⁸ The reconstructions of the passages in Turkish will be dealt with in a separate article.

¹⁰⁹ E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 382); see Benaïm (2012:288–290).

¹¹⁰ E.g., Medina (1595–97, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ* no. 15); see Benaïm (2012:227–238).

¹¹¹ E.g., Medina (1594, *Even ha-ezer*, no. 12 and no. 34), see Benaïm (2012:211–213, 213–214).

¹¹² Medina (1594, *Yore de'a*, no. 157), see Benaïm (2012:205–207).

groups such as Romaniote or Jewish Greek-speaking Byzantine Jews, Ashkenazim speaking Yiddish or German, Jews from various parts of Italy and other European regions, the Middle East and elsewhere.

7.3.1 Ostensible Uniqueness of the Representations of Judezmo Speech in the Ottoman Responsa Literature

As was noted, if the oral depositions of rabbinic court witnesses were in fact transcribed and reproduced verbatim in the Ottoman Sephardic responsa collections, this material would constitute a unique corpus representing exact reflections of real speech acts by specific people, often cited by name, at the precise times and in the particular places mentioned in the responsa collections in connection with the depositions, from the sixteenth through early twentieth centuries. The following sections will attempt to examine the status of these passages as exact verbatim transmissions of witness testimony.

7.3.2 Witness Testimony Ostensibly Transcribed from Oral Deposition in the Responsa of Šěmu’el De Medina: Testing the Verbatim Transmission Hypothesis

In the present section I shall illustrate some of the types of linguistic divergence distinguishing the transcriptions of Judezmo witness testimony as cited in the body of the text (question as opposed to reply portions) and in the indices or synopses of the first three editions of Šěmu’el de Medina’s responsa collection published in Salonika. (The highly flawed Lemberg 1862 edition will not be considered here.) In this section Medina’s responsa will be examined as a whole corpus (sometimes including written documents evidently submitted to the rabbinic courts), rather than focusing on specific responsa. Note the following abbreviations used in this section:

| | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| Medina I | = first edition (1586?–87) |
| Medina II | = second edition (1594–97) |
| Medina III | = third edition (1797–98) |
| EH | = <i>Even ha-‘ezer</i> |
| ḤM | = <i>Ḥošēn ha-mišpaṭ</i> |
| OḤ | = <i>Orah ḥayyim</i> |
| YD | = <i>Yore de’a</i> |

7.3.2.1 Orthography and Phonology

The diverse versions of what should have been identical passages show divergence in the orthographic representation of certain Judezmo phonemes, in some instances related to historical shifts, as well as historical changes in Judezmo spelling conventions. The orthographic divergences include:

(a) defective (or zero) vs. plene representation of vowels (e.g., Medina I: דימאנדר/*demand[a]*/ → II, III דימאנדר/*demandar* ‘to ask’ [ḤM 52]);

(b) presence versus absence of the lenition-marking diacritic (e.g., use with *bet* to denote /v/: Medina II שאבי/*save* → III שאב'י ‘3SG.PRES.IND ‘knows’ [ḤM 15]; *waw* versus *bet* with or without diacritic to denote /v/ [demonstrating that simple *bet* often represented fricative /v/, as opposed to occlusive /b/, presumably corresponding to their opposition in the modern language], e.g., Medina I וינו/*vino* ‘(3sg.pret. indic) he came’ → III וינו/*vino* [ḤM 5]; Medina II אישקריי/*eskrive* → III אישקריי ‘writes’ [ḤM 52]; Medina I שירביר/*servir* → II, III שירויר ‘to serve’ [ḤM 148]); increasingly consistent use of the diacritic with *šin* to denote /sh/ as opposed to unmarked *sin* representing /s/, e.g., Medina I דישומי/*dishome* → II די"שומי → III דיש'ומי ‘he told [PRET.IND] me’ [ḤM 148]); instances of *gemal* with or without diacritic versus *šin* to denote /sh/, e.g., Medina I דיגי/*dishe* → II, III דישי ‘PRET.IND I said’ [ḤM 148]). There is divergence in the use of the diacritic with *gemal* to denote /j/: e.g., Medina I קונשיגו/*konsejo* → II, III קונשיגו ‘advice’ [ḤM 339], although the last form runs counter to the tendency in the modern language).

(c) alternation of *fe* <פ>, *fe* with diacritic <פ'> and *he* <ה> corresponding to Old Judezmo *f* (cf. S. *f* < L. *f*), in the sixteenth-century editions, and their replacement by *fe* with diacritic <פ'> or phonological zero-denoting *alef* <א>, characteristic of the modern literary language, in the eighteenth-century edition, e.g., Medina II פאזיר/*fazer* → III פ'אזיר/*fazer* (ḤM 5); Medina I פאזיר/*fazer* → II פאזיר/*fazer* // הזיר/(h)[a]zer → III אזיר/*azer* ‘to do’ (ḤM 52); Medina II ה"גה/(h)ija → III א"זיה/*ija* ‘daughter’ [ḤM 313]).¹¹³

(d) substitution of *gemal* + diacritic <ג'>, characteristic of pre-modern Judezmo, by the more modern grapheme *zayin* + diacritic <ז'>, e.g., Medina II ה"גה/(h)ija → III א"זיה/*ija* ‘daughter’ [ḤM 313]). Throughout most of the history of Judezmo linguistics the actual phonological value in pre-modern Judezmo texts reflected in the word-medial intervocalic grapheme *gemal* + diacritic <ג'/"ג'> when correspond-

¹¹³ The actual phonological value reflected in the grapheme *he* <ה> corresponding to Latin (usually) word-initial *f*, is unclear: it might have been [h] or perhaps in the sixteenth century it was already zero. The questionable value of the letter is denoted in the transcriptions by 'h, denoting [h] or zero.

ing to Old Spanish <g> before a front vowel and <j> before a non-front vowel was widely believed to have been affricate [dʒ] (e.g., *adjuntar* <אג'ונטאר> 'add') or more usual fricative [ʒ] (e.g., *mujer* <מוג'יר> 'woman, wife'), in accordance with Modern Judezmo. In recent years this supposition has been questioned by some Hispanists, who have argued that the grapheme had universally denoted fricative [ʒ] in that position; but I believe there is no sound reason to doubt the validity of the earlier supposition.

(e) vacillation in the representation of Judezmo *s* corresponding to Castilian <ç/-z> vs. <s/-ss/-s>. In some of the texts in Medina's sixteenth-century editions bearing the earliest dates one continues to find the orthographic parallel to the Castilian <ç/-z> = Judezmo ס / (more rare) צ vs. Castilian <s/-ss/-s> = Judezmo ש opposition characteristic of pre-expulsion Judezmo texts. The preservation of the Old Judezmo graphemic opposition in the earlier sixteenth-century Judezmo passages in Medina's responsa would seem to indicate the expertise of some early sixteenth-century Judezmo writers in the pre-expulsion Hebrew-letter writing tradition, which they seem to have accepted as their orthographic model, rather than an actual reflection of a phonological distinction preserved in everyday Early Middle Judezmo speech. But rather early on in the sixteenth century one also finds *samek/sin* <ש/ס> vacillation (and loss of the use of צ/ץ in Judezmo orthography except in the transcription of words of Hebrew-Aramaic and occasionally Ottoman origin) in the textual representation of the Judezmo phonemes—or in fact single phoneme, /s/, which came to correspond to the two distinct contemporaneous Castilian phonemes, /θ/ (from earlier /ts/, orthographically denoted by <ç/-z>) and /s/ (s/-ss/-s): e.g., Medina I סינקואינטה/ç/sinkuenta [cf. S. *cincuenta*] → II, III שִׁינקואינט/sinkuent[a] '50' (HM 175); Medina I, II נוס/nos → III נוס 'us' (HM 380)). Even in the earliest edition of Medina's response there is evidence of the Judezmo /s/ = Castilian /s/ and /θ/ correspondence: e.g., Medina I אובליגאסיון/ovligasyón [cf. S. *obligación*] → II אובליגאסיון, III אובליגאסיון/ovligasyón 'obligation' (HM 380); I פִּנְסֵי/pensé/pensí [cf. S. *pensé*] → II, III פִּנְשִׁי I [PRET.IND] thought' (HM 148). The older editions of Medina's responsa show a few instances of the use of *sin* <ש> corresponding to Old Spanish word-medial <-s> to denote /z/, and sometimes this is retained even in the eighteenth-century edition: e.g., Medina II, III קאזה/kaza 'house' (HM 262); but there are also examples of the replacement of this *sin* by what would become the universal representative of /z/ in Judezmo, *zayin* <ז>: e.g., Medina II שִׁיזֵנָה/sezena → III שִׁיזֵנָה '(f.sg) sixth' (HM 52), Medina II מִיזְמו/me-/mizmo → III מִיזְמו '(m.sg.) same' (HM 52).

(f) sixteenth-century single *yod* <י> used to denote the *y* glide and the palatal element in *ny/ñ*, reminiscent of the practice in Old Spanish (cf. orthographic <i>, <ni>, as in the variants <dania/daño> 'harm,' later replaced by normative <daño>), is some-

times replaced by double *yod* <יי>, as was to become universal in later Judezmo; e.g., Medina II פאניו/*panyo* ‘cloth’ → III פאנייו/*panyo* ‘cloth’ (EH 166).

(g) there are variant orthographic reflections of word-initial *vuV-*: e.g., Medina I *vuéstera*/וואישטירה, II alternating *vuéster*[a]’/וואישטיר, *vuestra*/וואישטרה, and *vostra*/וואישטרה (2PL.F.SG) ‘your’ (HM 52, 263; in the index of Medina II), III the preceding forms, as well as variant *guesstra*/גואישטרה (2PL.F.SG) ‘your’ (HM 263).

(h) vacillation in Medina’s sixteenth-century responsa editions in the representation of word-final *-θ/-δ* as *taw/dalet* <ת-/ד> (reminiscent of the word-final <th>/<d> alternation to denote these sounds in Old Spanish) tends to be replaced in the eighteenth-century edition by final *dalet*: e.g., Medina I וירדאת/*verdaθ/-δ* → II וירדאת and וירדאד alternation → III וירדאד ‘true’ (HM 52; 148).

The spellings used for elements of Hebrew-Aramaic origin incorporated into the Judezmo passages also show some variation: e.g., the masculine plural present participle of the verb *lē-ha’id*/להעיד ‘testify’ used with the Hispanic-origin auxiliary verb *ser* ‘be’ to create a Judezmo analytic verb meaning ‘testify’ takes the more frequent Mishnaic form *מעידן/meidín*, with final *nun*, in Medina I; the form ‘מעיד/’*meidí*’ (with an abbreviated plural marker specifying either *nun* nor *mem*) in Medina II; and the less common Mishnaic form *מעידים/meidim* (employing the Biblical masculine plural morpheme) in Medina III. There is also vacillation in the spelling of proper names in documents: e.g., plene טאריקה in Medina I vs. defective טריקה in Medina II in the spelling of the surname *Tarika* (HM 263); defective יעקב/*Yaakov* in Medina I versus plene יעקוב in Medina II in the masculine proper name; the variants בלאנסי/ולאנסי/*Valansí* in Medina I, בלאנסי/*Valasí* in Medina II, בלאנסי/*Valansí* in Medina III in the spelling of this surname (HM 262); אנדרינופול/*Andrinópolis* in Medina I, אנדרינופולי/*Andrinópolis* in Medina II, in the Italianized spellings of the Greek-origin form (*Adrianoúpolis*) of this toponym (present-day *Edirne*, Judezmo *Edirné*).

The Judezmo passages also reveal divergences in word boundaries, especially those merging or separating as discrete Judezmo lexemes what are today ordinarily written as distinct words. This is especially true of prepositions and a following definite article, demonstrative adjective or relative pronoun: e.g., Medina I קונישטה/*konestá*, Medina II, II קון אישטה / *kon esta* ‘with (F.) this’ (HM 148); Medina I לוקי/*loke*, Medina II, III לו קי / *lo ke* ‘that which’ (HM 148); but also of individual lexemes, e.g., Medina I דימאן דאדור/*demán daḏor* (perhaps under the influence of the lexeme *daḏor* ‘giver’), Medina II, III דימאנדאדור/*demandador* (as in the modern language) ‘questioner’ (HM 52). The element *de* ‘of’ is seemingly represented as being of Hispanic origin in idiomatic די (שלמה) / *el aní de Shelomó* ‘poor Šelomo’ in

Medina I, but as Aramaic *dě-* (perhaps because it follows and precedes Hebraisms) in variant *איל עני דשלמה* / *el aní de-Shelomó* in Medina II, III (HM 382).

The use of abbreviations, too, often differs from one edition to another. The earliest edition often preferred full words, while in the eighteenth-century edition—perhaps for reasons of economy, especially in the instance of elements of Hebrew origin—these are replaced by abbreviations, or the abbreviations used in the various editions diverge: e.g., Medina I *טרים* / *tres*, Medina II, III *ג'* / *[gema]* ‘three’ (HM 382); Medina I *ח"ו* / *ha[s]"ve[shalom]*, Medina II, III *ח"ש* (representing the same expression) ‘Heaven forbid!’ (HM 148). Sometimes this tendency was reversed; e.g., Medina I *קינט' / kint[ales]*, Medina II *קינטאליש* (with final -s represented by *sin* as typical of this era), Medina III *קינטאליס* (instead using *samēk*, which would generally replace *sin* for /s/ from this time on) ‘[plural form of a unit of mass]’ (HM 148).

Numerous textual divergences separating the editions would seem to reflect not only orthographic shifts over time but also actual phonological differences in the forms represented:

Vocalism. There are several variants in the sixteenth-century editions showing an epenthetic vowel, usually *e*, sometimes *o*, between an occlusive and a historically subsequent *r*, e.g., Medina II *קואירדה* / *kuerda*, III *קואידירה* / *kuedera* [presumably from *kuedra*] ‘cord’ (HM 5; cf. S. *cuerda*); Medina I *וואישטירה* (cf. L. *vostra*, S. *vuestra*), II alternating *vuéster[a]"* / *וואישטיר*, *vuestra* / *וואיטרה*, and *vostra* / *וויטרה* ‘(2PL.F.SG) your’ (HM 52, 263; in the index of Medina II), with III showing the preceding forms, as well as variant *גואישטרה* / *güestra* ‘(2PL.F.SG) your’ (HM 263); Medina I *אשפירוש* / *ásperos* (cf. Byzantine G. *áspros* < L. *asprum* ‘white/silver coin’), Medina II, *אשפרוש* / *aspros* (YD 128). The epenthetic vowel appearing in this environment in the sixteenth century editions becomes rare in later Judezmo texts, essentially disappearing in texts from the nineteenth century on. It is interesting to note some parallel forms in Morisco texts in the Arabic alphabet, e.g., *vuestero* (Galmés Fuentes 1975:213), analogous *nuestero* ‘(1PL.M.SG) our’ (Hegyi 1981:176),¹¹⁴ as well as in the eighteenth-century Judezmo liturgical poetry of the Sabbataians (see Feldman 2007).

Consonantism. Although the Judezmo analogue of Old Spanish <ll>, which had denoted palatalized [ʎ], was generally *לי* / *lamed + yod (+ yod)* in Medina’s earlier responsa editions, possibly representing spoken variant [ʎ/lj], or already in fact denoting the *y* glide [j], the eighteenth-century edition shows some rare instances of corresponding *יי* / *yod + yod*, clearly representing the *y* glide, which was universal

¹¹⁴ For other parallels between the varieties of Ibero-Romance used by Jews and Muslims see Bunis (2015).

by this time; e.g., II לייאמה/(perhaps) *lyamá* → III ייאמה/*yamá* ‘(2PL) call!’ (HM 5). The eighteenth-century edition also exemplifies the shift in point of articulation of *n* to *m* (represented orthographically by a shift from *nun* to *mem* in the passages) before the *w* glide; this shift was already documented in the sixteenth century but only rarely, and it became more widespread with the beginning of Modern Judezmo in the late eighteenth century: Medina II נואיבאש/*nuevas*, III מואיבאש/*muevas* ‘(F.PL) new’ (HM 15).¹¹⁵ The different editions also show the direction of realization of what was to develop in Turkish as the single phoneme /h/, reflecting Arabic *h*/*h*, *h*/*h* and *x*/*h*: it is transcribed in Medina I as *he*/*he* (perhaps corresponding in contemporaneous Judezmo to [h] or possibly zero) in *הוג'יט*/*hudjet* ‘title deed’ (T. *hüccet* < A. *hujjat*; HM 15) and *ג'והיר*/*djuher* ‘jewel’ (HM 148; T. *cevher*, *cevahir* < A. *jawhar*, pl. *jawāhir* < P. *gewher*), but in Medina III as *alef*/*alef*, representing phonological zero, in *אוג'יט*/*udjet* (or perhaps it is *het*/*het* (representing [x]) in *הוג'יט*/*hudjet*), and *ג'ויר*/*djuer*, both zero and [x]—but not [h]—being possible reflections of Turkish /h/ in modern Judezmo, depending on the individual word and the regional dialect in which it occurs. That orthographic *he*/*he* very likely corresponded in speech to phonological zero already in the sixteenth century is hinted at in the transcription in Medina I (as in the later editions) of the Turkish (from Arabic) masculine given name מיאמיט/*Meemet* (HM 382; T. *Mehmet* < A. *Maḥmad*).

Some of the various types of metathesis – especially those occurring adjacent to the phoneme /r/, which are so characteristic of Modern Judezmo—are already to be seen in the earliest edition(s), but the order of the phonemes may be reversed in later editions, or vice-versa. Metathesis of the order of /r/ + vowel include Medina I פירמירו/*pirmero* (but II, III פרימירו/*primero*) ‘(M.SG) first’ (HM 52; cf. S. *primero*); Medina I פרופיה/*propya*, II פורפיה/*porpya* (III פרופיאה/*propia*) ‘(F.SG) same’ (HM 339; cf. S. *propia*). Other metathesized sequences begin to appear, or appear more

¹¹⁵ The shift *nw* > *mw* is already exemplified in a Judezmo text from the sixteenth century: אין מואיטרוש דיאש / *en nuestros días* ‘in our days’ (*Fuente klara* 1584:13b, for a recent edition see Romeu 2007), and in passages in the responsa from the seventeenth century: e.g., מואיטרוש / *nuestros partidos* ‘our parties’ in Estrosa [d. 1653] 1754, HM, no. 49, from Saray 1645; פארטידיש / *nuestros partidos* ‘our parties’ in Estrosa [d. 1653] 1754, HM, no. 49, from Saray 1645; מואיטרה חברה / *muestra havrá* ‘our society,’ מואיטרה נאבי / *muestra nave* ‘our ship’ in Vital [d. 1678] no. 57 (149b, from Salonika; recorded July 1665), no. 96 (279a, from Egypt, 1676); מואיטרה / *muestra ley* ‘our law/religion’ (Garmezán [d. 1675], 133b, no. 98, from 1665); מואיטרו ב'יינו / *muestro vezino* ‘our neighbor’ (Ha-Lewi [d. 1697], 31a, Even ha-‘ezer, r. 26, from 1684). However, of these responsa, only those of Estrosa were published before the eighteenth-century edition of Medina’s responsa, in Salonika 1754. Since these editions do not show the authors’ original manuscript pages we cannot know exactly what they or their court scribes heard and wrote down, although from the orthography it seems likely that the transcriptions reflect the original court records.

frequently, in the eighteenth-century edition, and they become characteristic of modern Judezmo, especially in the Southeast dialect region: e.g., Medina I, II טירשירה/*tersera*, III טרישירה/*tresera* ‘(F.SG) third’ (HM 52; cf. S. *tercera*); Medina II קורדובאניש/*kordovanes*, III קרודובאניש/*krodovanes* ‘kind of garments originating in Córdoba’ (HM 380; cf. S. *cordovanes*).

The eighteenth-century edition also shows several instances of the especially characteristic Judezmo *-rd-* > *-dr-* (i.e., *-ř-* > *-đ-*) metathesis in forms having *-rd-* in the sixteenth-century editions; e.g., Medina II קואדירנו/*kuaderno*, Medina III קואדירנו/*kuadreno* ‘notebook’ (cf. S. *cuaderno*) and Medina II שי אוירדאדיריאן/*se averdaderían*, III שי אוירדאדיריאן/*se aveđrađarían* ‘(3PL) would be validated’ (HM 393; cf. S. *averdadar/-decer*); Medina II ג'ארדאקי/*chardake* (perhaps in alternation with ג'ארדאקי/*chadrake* [the type is unclear]), Medina III variant ג'ארדאקי/*chadrake* ‘gazebo’ (EH 34), Medina I diminutive ג'ארדאקיטו/*chardakito*, II also variant ג'ארדאקיטו/*chadrakito* (as opposed to 10 instances of *chardakito*), III five instances of ג'ארדאקיטו/*chadrakito* as opposed to six of *chardakito* (HM 281). The insertion of possibly epenthetic *e* in *-rd-* > *-der-* is seen in Medina II קואירדה/*kuerda* → III קואיירדה/*kueđera* ‘cord’ (HM 5; cf. S. *cuerda*). Medina I shows evidence of historical word-final *-d* loss in וירדה/*verdá*, while Medina III restores it in וירדד/*verdad* ‘true’ (HM 175; cf. normative S. *verdad*).¹¹⁶

All of the above examples illustrate the fact that forms appearing in later editions of the responsa do not necessarily preserve the same form, “letter for letter,” but rather may show later historical forms, in accordance with changes in the spoken language. In such instances, relying solely on later editions would lead to false conclusions about the period(s) from which various sound and spelling changes had begun to occur.

¹¹⁶ As in the instance of the *nuV* > *muV* (or *nw* > *mw*) shift discussed above, apparent examples of the *-ř-* > *-đ-* metathesis appear in Judezmo lexeme forms attributed to responsa from the late sixteenth century on. However, as was also true of the *nw* > *mw* shift, most of those responsa did not appear in published form until the eighteenth century: cf. *tađrí fasta ađora* ‘I delayed until now’ (Ha-Kohen [1535–1602], vol. 4, no. 44), reporting on a witness who testified in the court in Salonika in 1597, but the volume was not published there until 1730, by which time the metathesis is well documented in Judezmo texts, e.g., *detadřar* ‘to slow down’ (Asa 1729:2:12b), *veđrađ* (Hulí 1730:[iv]b) (cf. S. *detadar*, *verdad*). The metathesis also appears in forms attributed to speakers before the eighteenth century in other responsa volumes which were not published until the eighteenth century, such as *kueđra* ‘cord’ in Ben Ḥason 1720, responsum no. 47 concerning *Mišpaṭim* from Vidin first reported on in 1610 (cf. S. *cuerda*); *tađre* ‘late; afternoon’ (Salṭon 1713, no. 26, from Izmit 1635); *veđraθ* <וירדאת> (Përahya [d. 1678] 1723, no. 265, from Salonika 1658) (cf. S. *verdad*); surname *Pađro* (Ha-Lewi 1808, *Even ha-ezer* no. 26, from 1684) (cf. S. *Pardo*). Only an examination of the original court transcriptions would enable us to determine whether the forms used in the courts had *-ř-* or *-đ-*.

7.3.2.2 Morphology

The Judezmo passages in the various editions of Medina's responsa diverge in elements of morphology, including in features which may be used to distinguish different historical stages of the language.

Examples of structural divergence across the editions are to be found in changes occurring in the finite forms of verbs occurring in the passages. For instance, in Medina I and II, the 1sg present indicative form of *pensar* 'think' shows the vowel breaking corresponding to Castilian, פִּינְסוֹ/*pyenso* 'I think', while Medina III shows the form corresponding to Modern Judezmo, without vowel breaking, פִּנְסוֹ/*penso* (EH 166). The pre-modern 2sg preterite indicative marker *-istes* appearing in Medina II וִינִישְׁטִישׁ/*venistes* 'you came' is replaced in Medina III by the modern form *-ites* וִינִישְׁטִישׁ/*venites* (HM 5; cf. normative S. *veniste*). The historical development of the 2PL preterite, in several of its tenses and modal forms, is also exemplified in the diverse editions of Medina's responsa. The oldest Judezmo marker of the 2PL imperfect subjunctive, *-ŷsedes* – with the ending *-edes* ultimately corresponding to OSp. *-edes* (reflecting Latin *-etis*), which was replaced in later normative Spanish by *-éis* – appears in all three editions of Medina's responsa as טוּבִיִּישְׁדֵּשׁ/*tuvyésedes* 'that you had' (*tener* 'have'). But in other 2PL forms there is considerable variation across the editions: Medina I shows the more reduced form וִישְׁשֵׁי V-/Vseys (corresponding to OSp. *-ŷseis*) in פִּנְסֵשֵׁשׁ/*pensaseys* 'that you thought' (*pensar* 'think'), which is then transformed into the vocally reduced form וִישְׁשֵׁ V-/Vses (or *-Vses*), פִּנְסֵשֵׁשׁ/*pensases*, in Medina II, and finally into the modern form וִישְׁשֵׁ V-/Vses (with characteristic Judezmo palatalization of *s* to *sh* following *ŷy*) in Medina III in פִּנְסֵשֵׁשׁ/*pensásesh* 'that you thought'; cf. also Medina I 2PL present indicative טֵנֵיִשׁ/*tenéys* > II טֵנֵיִשׁ/*tenés(h)* > III טֵנֵיִשׁ/*tenésh* 'you have'; present indicative I דֵּיִישׁ/*deziys* (perhaps a spelling convention actually realized phonologically as *dezís*) > II, III דֵּיִישׁ/*dezís(h)* (all of these forms appeared as variants in HM 148). In the same passage Medina I, II (as well as in its index) and III have *-sh*, denoted by שׁ- / *šin*+diacritic, in 2PL future indicative דִּירֵשׁ/*dirésh* 'you will tell,' but in the index of Medina I דִּירֵשׁ appears, without a diacritic, which could denote *dirésh* or *dirés*.

There is also divergence across the editions of Medina's responsa in the bases of certain irregular verbs. For example, in HM 52 the imperfect subjunctive (in this case, *-(y)ese*) base in Medina I is קִי- /*kij-*, corresponding to its Modern Judezmo correlate, in the 3sg form קִינֵיִשׁ/*kijese* 'might want', while in Medina II and III it is קִי- /*kiz-*, קִינֵיִשׁ/*kizyese*, a variant base which essentially became obsolete in Judezmo after the sixteenth century (cf. OS *quigesse/quisiesse*, MS *quisiese*). On the other hand, in YD 168, the stem of *saver* 'know' in the 2PL future indicative is regular *saver-*, e.g., 2PL שֶׁאֲבִירִיִּשׁ/*saverésh*, in Medina I and II, while in III it is the irregular form that is more usual in the modern language, *savr-*, i.e., שֶׁאֲבִירִיִּשׁ/*savrésh* 'you will know' (cf. normative S. *sabréis*). These variants imply that all of the forms

appearing in the sixteenth-century editions were co-occurring in Ottoman Judezmo in that century, but since the forms vary within the responsa of the diverse editions and in their indices we cannot know which of those forms were actually used by the specific testigants testifying in the particular cases documented; on the other hand, we can probably assume that the variants first appearing in the eighteenth-century edition were not used during the sixteenth century.¹¹⁷

There is also divergence between the various Medina editions in the form and use of pronominal verbs and object, reflexive and possessive pronouns. For example, in H̄M 263 the 2PL object and reflexive pronoun appears as אוש/os in the passage incorporated into the responsum in the imperative form of *estarse* ‘be’ in Medina I and II: אוישטאוש/*estáos*, agreeing with the form that became normative in Castilian; but it is ווש/vos (אישטאוש/*estávós* ‘be!’) in the index to II, as well as in the text incorporated into Medina III (אישטאב'וש/*estávós*), as became normative in modern Judezmo. In YD 88 the 1PL possessive adjective base is נואישטר-/*nuestr-*, e.g., (F.SG) נואישטרה/*nuestra* ‘our’ in Medina I and II, as in fact in one variant of modern literary Judezmo (alternating with more usual/popular *muestr[a]*); but it is (F.SG) נואיש(ה)/*nues(a)* in III, a form hardly found in modern literary Judezmo (although *mues[a]* does occur). The 2PL possessive adjective is (M.SG) וואישטרו/*vuestro*, (F.SG) וואישטרה/*vuestra* and variant וואישטרה/*vuestera* in the responsum itself in Medina I and II, (M.SG) וואישו/*vueso* and (F.SG) וואישטרה/*vuestra* in the index to II, and (M.SG) וואישטרו/*vuestro*, and variant (F.SG) נואישטרה/*güestra* (known from the early period [e.g., *גואישטרה/güestra* in Ha-Lewi [d. 1697] 1808, OH. 5] into the modern era [e.g., Nehama 1977:234]) in the text in III (H̄M 263). In EH 166 ל/le appears in Medina I as the pronoun denoting the 3SG human object of the verb *kastigar* ‘punish,’ as in normative Castilian and as actually used in some parts of Spain (*leísmo*): *rogóme ke le kastigase* ‘he asked me to chastise him’; in III this is replaced by לו/lo: *rogóme ke lo kastigase*, as in Modern Judezmo.

Additionally, there are divergences in the derivative morphemes appearing in some lexemes, e.g., the substantivizing suffix מינט-/*mento* appearing in פאגאמינטו/*pagamento* ‘payment’ in Medina II (as in Portuguese) instead appears as מיינטו-/*myento* in פאגאמיינטו/*pagamyento* (as in Castilian and modern Judezmo) in Medina II (H̄M 65).

These morphological examples further illustrate that the copying of the Judezmo passages from one Medina edition to another does not always constitute ‘letter for letter, word for word’ verbatim reproduction.

7.3.2.3 Syntax

As was already alluded to above, the Judezmo passages in Medina’s responsa editions offer some instances of syntactic divergence. For example, in H̄M 52 the existential

¹¹⁷ For further discussion of divergence in verb forms in the responsa of Medina see Shafran (2014).

verb *aver* (cf. S. *haber*) appears in the singular present subjunctive form *אייא/aya* (cf. S. *haya*) in Medina I: *otro ones fuera este no parese ke aya* ‘there does not seem to have been an act of force outside of this one’; in Medina II the verb appears instead in the present indicative, *א/ay*: *no parese ke ay*; in Medina III the verb is replaced by the ‘be’ verb *ser*: *no parese ke es* ‘does not seem to be’. In the same responsum the plural noun phrase *קונשינסיאש / וואישטיראש / vuésteras konsensyas* ‘your consciences’ in Medina I is replaced by singular *קונשינסירא / וואישטירא / vuestra konsensya* ‘your conscience.’ There is also a plural to singular shift in EH 8: Medina I and II have plural (*boltó las espaldas*) ‘(she turned) her back,’ while III has singular *la espalda*. Also, in the same responsa text in both Medina I and II the first witness to testify is cited as having said that the object pronoun used to denote the object taken by the alleged betrothed woman was singular: in Medina I, *Seḏme eḏim komo lo tomó* ‘Be my witnesses how she took it,’ in Medina II, with a change from the relative adverb *komo* to *ke*: *Seḏme eḏim ke lo tomó* ‘Be my witnesses that she took it’; but in the index appearing in Medina II there is the assertion that both witnesses testified (*šēnehem me’idim*) using the plural object pronoun, *Seḏme eḏim komo los tomó* ‘Be my witnesses that she took them.’ It should be noted that Adrebi’s *Divre rivot*, no. 3, examines the same case and offers similar, but not identical, testimony: while all editions of Medina have *entonses* for ‘then’ and singular *la espalda* for ‘her back,’ Adrebi has *estonses* and plural *las espaldas*. In the matter of *entonses* versus *estonses*, we may assume that both forms were being used in sixteenth-century Salonika, but because of the textual discrepancy between the testimony incorporated into the responsa of these two major rabbis, we cannot be sure specifically which of the two forms the witness cited used.

Furthermore, there are divergences in apparent codeswitching: e.g., in HM 52 in Medina I and II there is an intersentential Judezmo-Hebrew switch, exhibiting the Hebrew bound preposition *-ב/bě-* ‘with’, perhaps precipitated by the use in the sentence of the Hebrew adverbial phrase (*lo prevaré*) *bě-eḏim kēšerim* ‘(I shall prove it) with halakhically suitable witnesses’; in Medina III there is no language switch, since the adverbial phrase makes use of Hispanic-origin Judezmo *kon* ‘with’ followed by what may be considered here the merged Hebrew borrowings *עדים / edim kesherim* ([. . .] *kon eḏim kesherim*).

7.3.2.4 Lexicon

The consecutive versions of the Judezmo passages in Medina’s responsa editions offer numerous examples of lexical shift, mostly consisting of different forms of the same word; lexical replacement is rare, e.g., *mucho* (*mi amigo*) ‘very much my friend’ in Medina I is replaced by *muy* (*mi amigo*) in Medina II, III (EH 166). Generally speaking, Medina I and II incorporate archaic forms, or forms evidently used by members of the Salonika community’s socioeconomic elite, which in the early

years employed some forms corresponding to those in use among the analogous socioeconomic sector of Christian Spain and which were ultimately rejected in the evolving Ottoman Judezmo, whereas Medina III replaces them with the forms used in the more popular Judezmo of the majority of speakers, which became accepted in later general Ottoman Judezmo or at least the dialect of Salonika. The following table illustrates some of these lexemes (the original Hebrew-letter spelling is indicated only where significant; forms corresponding to modern Salonika Judezmo are annotated with a reference to Nehama 1977):

Divergences between the 1586?–87, 1594–97, 1797–98 editions of Medina’s responsa.

| Part of speech | Medina I 1586?–87 | Medina II 1594–97 | Medina III 1797–98 | Meaning | Responsum |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| SUBSTANTIVE | | | | | |
| | אינטנסיין/en-/intensyón | אינטנסיין/en-/intensyón | אינטסיין/entisyón ¹¹⁸ | ‘intention’ | HM 52 |
| | | djudyó | ג'דיי/djidyó ¹¹⁹ | ‘Jew’ | YD 155 |
| | kuenta [cf. S. cuenta] | kuenta | konta [cf. Pt., Gal. conta] | ‘account’ | HM 393 |
| | | kamyo | kambyo ¹²⁰ | ‘bill of exchange’ | HM33 |
| ADJECTIVE | | | | | |
| | mucho | mucho | mucho ¹²¹ | ‘much’ | HM 148 |
| ADVERB | | | | | |
| | mucho (mi amigo) | muy (mi amigo) | muy (mi amigo) | ‘very’ | EH 166 |
| | non | non | no ¹²² | ‘no, not’ | HM 263 |
| | así | ansí | ansí ¹²³ | ‘thus’ | HM 52 |
| | depués | después | después ¹²⁴ | ‘after’ | HM 52, HM 393 |
| | | delante | delantre ¹²⁵ | ‘before’ | HM 5, HM 15 |

¹¹⁸ Cf. Nehama (1977:179).

¹¹⁹ Cf. Nehama (1977:236).

¹²⁰ Cf. Nehama (1977:264, *kambyo*; 265, *kamyo*).

¹²¹ Cf. Nehama (1977:373, *munčo*; 371–72, *mučo*).

¹²² Cf. Nehama (1977:384, *no*); although, probably under the influence of Italian and French, *non* is in fact used by some modern Judezmo writers.

¹²³ In the sense of ‘thus’ Nehama (1977:39) notes only *ansí*; *así* is only used to introduce various expressions of request or desire (Nehama 1977:61).

¹²⁴ Nehama (1977:131) notes *después*, but not *depwés*.

¹²⁵ Nehama (1977:118) notes *delantre*, but not *delante*.

7.3.2.5 Formulation

Some of the responsa note divergences between testigants in the formulation of statements attributed to third parties central to the cases at hand. For example, Medina's responsa vol. 1 (1586?–87), no. 56 (corresponding to Medina II [1594], *Even ha-ezer* no. 8), concerns the issue of whether a halakhically binding act of betrothal had taken place or not. The first witness cited in the responsa is said to have asserted that, in reply to an offer of coins to the proposed bride by the boy who allegedly proposed the marriage, the acceptance of the coins by the girl supposedly signifying her acquiescence to his proposal, she said “*Poneldos en suelo i los tom[a] ré* [. . .] *i boltó las espaldas para irse*” ‘Put *them* on the ground and I’ll take *them* [. . .] and she turned her back to them to leave.’ However, according to the words of the second witness, דישו לה מוסה פון אונג אינ איל שואילו אי לו פוזו אי לו טומו לה מוסה / “*Disho la mosa ‘Pon uno en-el suelo’ i lo puzo i lo tomó la mosa* [. . .] *i e(l)ya ke se iva* [. . .]” ‘The maiden said “Put *one* on the ground” and he put it and the maiden took it [. . .] and she, while she was leaving [. . .]’, the last verb in the imperfect indicative tense. In the index to the second edition the author or editor of the volume documents the interaction recalled by the second witness as די"ג לה / “*Disho la mosa ‘Pon uno en el suelo’ i-lo puzo i lo-tomó i se fue*” ‘The maiden said “Put *one* on the ground” and he put it and the maiden took it [. . .] and she left,’ the last verb in the preterit indicative tense. That is, in the index the text of the second witness diverges from that specified in the body of the responsum itself in that there are spelling changes (דישו → די"ג // *disho*, אינל → אינל // *en(·)el*, אי לו → אילו // *i(·)lo*), and the second phrase, describing the girl’s action, is reduced and altered simply to “*lo tomó i se fue*” ‘she took it and left’. Thus, in this supposed replication of the witness’s testimony in the index we again see a failure to reproduce the original text *verbatim et literatim*.

8 Concluding Remarks

An avowed principle of Jewish law, emphatically endorsed by the authors and other parties responsible for the responsa literature produced by the Sephardic rabbis of the Ottoman Empire, is the ‘letter for letter, word for word’ or *verbatim et literatim* transcription and transmission in the responsa collections of vernacular and other witness testimony and supporting written documents, as originally adduced in the rabbinic courts. However, through a comparative examination of Judezmo passages in three editions of the responsa of Rabbi Šemu’el de Medina of sixteenth-century Salonika, and references to citations of a phrase from one such passage in the halakhic works attributed to two other Ottoman Sephardic rabbis,

it has been demonstrated that in Medina's works there are in fact linguistic divergences between ostensibly the same passages appearing in different sections of a single edition (e.g., in the question part of the responsum, in citations from that text in the reply section of the responsum, and in the index of the volume purportedly citing a portion of the passage), as well as across the three different editions (1586?–87, 1594–97, 1797–98), and also in the ostensible reproductions of the same passages in the responsa of the other rabbis. For the native Judezmo speakers responsible for the production of the editions—their authors, editors and printers—the divergences which have been disclosed here would perhaps have seemed halakhically insignificant, consisting mostly of examples of what the linguist would call 'free variation' in the forms of lexemes used in a given period, or of historical, literary or stylistic variants of those lexemes, all of them probably perceived by native speakers as being essentially non-distinctive divergences from the textually original forms, or rather 'the same thing,' especially since the divergences would have been inconsequential in the judges' adjudication. Thus, the substitution of one linguistic variant for another very likely would not have been perceived by the producers of the responsa volumes as a serious transgression against the 'verbatim transmission' tenet.

However, for linguists seeking to use the Judezmo passages in the responsa as a basis for an understanding of the development of Judezmo in its historical, regional, literary and stylistic variation, some of the linguistic features distinguishing the passages in the three editions from one another are among the very criteria which have been used to determine the isoglosses setting off one geographic dialect region or social or literary or historical register from another. Examples of divergences in the features marking the transition from one historical period of the language to another which have been noted by comparing the responsa editions analyzed above include:

- (a) ORTHOGRAPHICALLY, the systematic use of *matres lectionis* to represent vowels, and of the diacritic mark consistently following the consonants *bet*, *gimal*, *zayin* and *fe* to represent the phonemes *v* (וינו → ב'ינו/*vino* '[3SG.PRET.INDIC] came') vs. *b*, *ch* (ח) (מוגאגו → מוג'אג'ו/*muchacho* 'boy') or *dj* (דִּי) (ג'ודייו → ג'ודייו/*djudyó*) or *j* (ז) (ה'יג'יה' → פ'ה'יג'יה'/*hija* → א'יג'יה'/*ija*) vs. *g*, and *f* (פאלטא → פ'אלטא/*falta* 'error') vs. *p*, respectively; the abandonment of *gemal*+diacritic in favor of *šin* with or without a diacritic as the indicator of *sh* (ש) (e.g., די"ג → די"ש/*disho* '[3SG.PRET.INDIC] said'), of *waw* as an indicator of *v* (in lexemes of non-Hebrew-Aramaic origin) yielding to *bet*+diacritic (see *vino* above), of *šin* as the indicator of voiceless *s* corresponding to Old Spanish <s-, -ss-, -s> as opposed to *samek* (and *šadi*) corresponding to Old Spanish <ç>, ultimately replaced in the late eighteenth century by universal *samek* (אינטנסיין/*intensyón* → אינטיסיין/*entisyón*), and of *tav* as a variant indicator of word-final -*d* (phonetically, -*δ* or

- θ), ultimately yielding to universal *dalet* with or without diacritic (ד/ידראת → 'ב'ירדאד/*verdad* 'truth'); the rise of double *yod* (or variant *lamed+yod+yod*) as a reflection of putative Old Judezmo λ (cf. S. <ll>) as well as the glide *j* (Old S. consonantal <i, y>) (י/י → יי/[ל]י/yo 'I') and to denote the palatal quality of ת (קוניאדה → קונייאדה/*kunyada* 'sister-in-law'); and the establishment of norms governing word boundaries;
- (b) PHONOLOGICALLY, the metathesis of *-rd-* or *-rð-* → *-dr-* (e.g., ג'ארדאקטו/*chardakito* → ג'ארדאקטו/*chadrakito* 'little gazebo'); the bilabialization of *nw* → *mw* (e.g., נואיבאש/*nuevas* → מואיבאש/*muevas* '(F.PL) new');
- (c) MORPHO-SYNTACTICALLY, the triumph of verb bases without vowel-breaking, corresponding to verbs with vowel-breaking in Castilian (פיינשו/*pyenso* → פיינשו/*penso* 'I think'); the loss of the first *-s-* in 2SG.PRET.INDIC *-istes* → *-ites* (e.g., וינישטש/*venistes* → וינישטש/*venites* 'you came'), and the palatalization of 2PL *-Vís* → *-Vsh* (e.g., טיניש/*tenéys* → טיניש/*tenés(h)* → טיניש/*tenésh* 'you have'); the loss of *os* and universal acceptance of *vos* as the 2PL object and reflexive pronoun, the loss of *le* and universal acceptance of *lo* as the 1M.SG direct object pronoun with a human referent, and the loss of forms such as *nuéstero* and *vuestero* in favor of *n-/muestro* and *vuestro* as the 1PL and 2PL possessive adjective;
- (d) REGIONALLY (and to an extent, historically), dialect isoglosses such as word-initial Latin-origin *f-* vs. zero (פ'אזיר/*f/hazer* → פ'אזיר/*fazer* vs. פ'אזיר/*azer* 'to do'), Istanbul *muncho* vs. Salonika *mucho* 'much', Istanbul *djudyó* vs. Salonika *djidyó* 'Jew';
- (e) SOCIO-STYLISTICALLY, shifts such as the preference for a lexeme of Hebrew or Portuguese origin as opposed to Castilian or vice-versa, e.g., Hebrew-origin כונה/*kavaná* replacing Hispanic-origin *intensyón* 'intention'; perhaps Portuguese-origin *konta* replacing Castilian-origin *kuenta* 'account'; and the suppletion of elite and/or archaic (in terms of Judezmo) forms such as *depués* (→ *después*) 'after,' *intensyón* (→ *entisyón*) 'intention,' *así* (→ *ansi*) 'thus,' *delante* (→ *delantre*) 'before,' *donde* (→ *onde*) 'where.'

The considerable freedom which the producers of the responsa editions—perhaps in particular the editors and/or printers of the later editions—apparently allowed themselves in replacing some linguistic variants with others must force us to call into question the 'verbatim transmission' hypothesis in general, and in particular with respect to the reliability of responsa data for linguistic analysis, especially as concerns the idiolectal use of features by the particular individuals named in the responsa, the places cited, and the dates given. While hardly proposing that linguists completely reject the responsa literature as being a completely untrustworthy source of data for the analysis of historical, regional, literary and stylistic variation in Judezmo—or in any other Jewish language—it is suggested here that

linguists be advised to proceed with caution when using data from that source as the sole basis for linguistic argumentation. Assuming that the linguistic divergences in the Judezmo materials met in the responsa of Šěmu'el de Medina are typical of the Ottoman responsa literature as a whole, we should probably *not* assume that Judezmo and perhaps other Jewish-language passages appearing in the responsa—especially responsa published posthumously, as most have been—are necessarily exact verbatim—or *verbatim et literatim*—reproductions of the original oral or written materials examined by the rabbis, but rather may differ from the original texts in various ways.

As a general rule, in order to get as close as possible to the original oral or written version of a given text it would seem best always to use the earliest extant version of it, particularly the original author's or court scribe's manuscript version—in order, for example, to avoid attributing to an early period a historical shift which in fact occurred later. To linguists this would perhaps seem obvious; unfortunately, it was not so to those responsible for the otherwise invaluable Bar-Ilan Responsa Project, who chose to use as the basis of their digitization of Medina's responsa the fourth edition of his responsa, published in Lemberg in 1862 and reprinted through photo offset several times thereafter. Those editions contain numerous typographical errors in the Judezmo passages, undoubtedly introduced by their non-Judezmo-speaking typesetters; the errors were left uncorrected in the Responsa Project materials—making their otherwise extremely useful Internet site totally unreliable for our purposes. When we use the earliest existing text of a passage of Judezmo oral testimony appearing in the responsa, we can probably assume that it exhibits features which were actually known in Judezmo at the time and perhaps in the place of its publication—although even in such instances it is possible that authors or typesetters or proofreaders originating in other dialect regions introduced changes, unwittingly or consciously, bringing features of the text closer to their native dialects or what might have been perceived as more 'standard' or 'non-popular' forms, and thus we cannot be sure that the language of the passage is identical with that actually spoken by the witness to whom it was attributed. It is also likely that the divergences from the earliest editions appearing in later editions of a responsa collection—e.g., in Medina III, from the eighteenth century—reflect forms more widespread during the time of their printing than the variants in the earlier editions, perhaps with the conscious intent of making the passages more comprehensible to contemporary readers without changing their basic meaning. In short, the responsa literature is potentially of great value to the student of Judezmo and other Jewish languages, offering glimpses of their spoken and written varieties as used in diverse places and at different periods. But they must be used with caution.

References

- Adret, Šelomo Ben Avraham Adret [or Rashba; Barcelona, 1235–1310]. 1539. *Těšuvot šě'elot*. Bologna (in Hebrew).
- Alaškar, Moše Ben Yišhaq. 1554. *Šě'elot u-tšuvot*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Alšek, Moše [d. after 1593]. 1605. *Sefer šě'elot u-tšuvot*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Arguete, Ya'aqov Ben Avraham. 1940. *Sefer yerek Ya'aqov*. 2 vols. Istanbul: Šelomo Alkaher (in Hebrew).
- Asa, Avraham Ben Yišhaq. 1729. *Letras de ribí Akivá*. Constantinople.
- Bar-Šešet, Yišhaq [or Ribaš; 1326–1408]. 1546–47. *Těšuvot Ribaš*. Constantinople (in Hebrew).
- Bašan, Eliezer and Leah Bornstein. 1973. *Mivhar munaḥim lo'azim bē-sifrut ha-šě'elot u-tšuvot šel ha-těqufa ha-'otomanit / Selection of Foreign Terms in the Responsa of the Ottoman Period* (Internal publication of BIU).
- Benaim, Annette. 1996. *Six Responsa of Rabbi Samuel de Medina: a Legal and Linguistic Analysis*. MA thesis, University of London.
- Benaim, Annette. 1997. "The treatment of women in a legal context as reflected in the Judeo-Spanish testimonies of the *Responsa* of Rabbi Samuel de Medina." In *'Quien hubiese tal ventura: Medieval Hispanic Studies in Honour of Alan Deyermond*, ed. Andrew M. Beresford. London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 199–206.
- Benaim, Annette. 1998. "A Case of Guardianship: Two Halakhic Perspectives." *Le'ela: A Journal of Judaism Today* 46: 15–19.
- Benaim, Annette. 1999. "Le dixo tomadlo por Quiduxím". La validez de este fenómeno según se refleja en alguna de las *responsa* sefardíes del siglo XVI." In *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the 20th Century*. Vol. 2, eds. Judit Targarona Borrás and Ángel Sáenz-Badillos. Leiden et alia: Brill, 457–463.
- Benaim, Annette. 2006. *Judeo-Spanish Testimonies in Sixteenth-Century Responsa*. Doctoral dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University.
- Benaim, Annette. 2008. "Hebrew Lexical Borrowing in Judeo-Spanish As Represented in Some of the Sephardic Responsa of the 16th Century." In *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Conference on Judeo-Spanish Studies*, 26–28 June 2006, eds. Hilary Pomeroy, Christopher J. Pountain and Elena Romero. London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary University of London, 35–48.
- Benaim, Annette. 2012. *Sixteenth-Century Judeo-Spanish Testimonies*. Leiden–Boston: Brill.
- Benatar, Jacqueline. 1984. *Le judéo-espagnol à travers les responsa du 16^e siècle à Salonique*. MA thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Benatar, Jacqueline. 1993. "Le judéo-espagnol de Salonique à travers les "responsa" de S. de Medina et I. Adarbi." *Yod* 33–34: 95–98.
- Ben (or Ibn) Ḥabib, Lewi [or Maharalbah; c. 1480–c. 1545]. 1565. *Sefer šě'elot u-tšuvot Maharalbah*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Ben Ḥason, Šelomo Ben Aharon [early 17th c.]. 1720. *Sefer bet Šelomo*. Salonika.
- Ben (or Ibn) Lev, Yosef Ben [c. 1505–c. 1580]. 1557?–98. *Šě'elot u-tšuvot*. 4 vols. [vol. 1, Salonika, 1557?; vol. 2, Constantinople, 1561–65; vol. 3, Constantinople, 1573; vol. 4., Constantinople, 1598] (in Hebrew).
- Benveniste, Ḥayyim Ben Yisra'el [or Benvenist/Benbanast(e), b. Constantinople, 1603, d. Izmir 1673]. 1734. *Kėneset ha-gėdola, ḥošen ha-mišpaṭ*. Vol. 2. Izmir.
- Benveniste, Ḥayyim Ben Yisra'el. 1788. *Sefer ba'e ḥayye mi-šu"t ḥeleq even ha-'ezer niqra 'eš ha-da'at*. Salonika.
- [Benveniste], Ma'ir (trans.). Karo, Yosef Ben Efrayim. 1568. *Livro (l)yamađo en lashón ('h)akóđesh Shulhán ('h)apanim i en lađino Meza de el alma*. Salonika.

- Ben Yēhi'el, Ašer [or Roš; b. western Germany, 1250 or 1259, d. Toledo, 1327]. 1517. *Šē'elot tēšuvot lē-ha-Roš z"l*. Constantinople (in Hebrew).
- Be Rav, Ya'aqov Ben Moše [1474–1546]. 1663. *Sefer šē'elot u-tšuvot* [. . .] *Ya'aqov Be Rav*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Borovaya, Olga. 2017. *The Beginnings of Ladino Literature: Moses Almosnino and His Readers*. Bloomington–Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Bornstein, Leah. 1979. *Maftēhot to the Maharaschdam–Index to the Responsa of Rabbi Shmuel de Medina*. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press (in Hebrew).
- Bunis, David M. 1985. "Plural Formation in Modern East Judezmo." In *Jerusalem Studies in Judeo-Romance Languages*, eds. Joseph Sermoneta and Isaac Benabu. Jerusalem: Magnes, 41–67.
- Bunis, David M. 1993a. *A Lexicon of the Hebrew and Aramaic Elements in Modern Judezmo*. Jerusalem: Magnes.
- Bunis, David M. 1993b. *Voices from Jewish Salonika*. Jerusalem–Thessaloniki: Misgav Yerushalayim and Ets Haim.
- Bunis, David M. 2003. "Ottoman Judezmo Diminutives and Other Hypocoristics." In *Linguistique des langues juives et linguistique générale*, eds. Frank Alvarez-Pereyre and Jean Baumgarten. Paris: CNRS, 193–246.
- Bunis, David M. 2004. "Distinctive Characteristics of Jewish Ibero-Romance, Circa 1492." *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* 4, 105–137.
- Bunis, David M. 2005a. "Writing as a Symbol of Religio-National Identity: On the Historical Development of Judezmo Spelling." *Pe'amim* 101–102, 111–171 (in Hebrew).
- Bunis, David M. 2005b. "A Theory of Hebrew-Based Fusion Lexemes in Jewish Languages as Illustrated by Animate Nouns in Judezmo and Yiddish." *Mediterranean Language Review* 16: 1–115.
- Bunis, David M. 2006–2007. "Judezmo Inanimate Fusion Nouns with Non-Romance Affixes." *Yod* 11–12: 359–410.
- Bunis, David M. 2007. "Judezmo and Haketia Inanimate Nouns with Hebrew-Origin Bases and Romance-Origin Affixes." *Sha'are Lashon: Studies in Hebrew, Aramaic and Jewish Languages Presented to Moshe Bar-Asher*, eds. Aaron Maman, Steven Ellis E. Fassberg and Yochanan Breuer. Vol. 3. Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, *40–63.
- Bunis, David M. 2008. "The Names of Jewish Languages: A Taxonomy." In *Il mio cuore è a Oriente. Studi di linguistica storica, filologia e cultura ebraica dedicati a Maria Luisa Mayer Modena*, eds. Francesco Aspesi, Vermondo Brugnattelli, Anna Linda Callow and Claudia Rosenzweig. Milan: Cisalpino, 415–433.
- Bunis, David M. 2009. "Judezmo Analytic Verbs with a Hebrew-Origin Participle: Evidence of Ottoman Influence." In *Languages and Literatures of Sephardic and Oriental Jewry*, ed. David M. Bunis. Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim and Bialik Institute, 94–166.
- Bunis, David M. 2011. "Native Designations of Judezmo as a 'Jewish Language'." In *Studies in Language, Literature and History Presented to Joseph Chetrit*, eds. Yosef Tobi and Dennis Kurzon. Haifa–Jerusalem: Haifa University and Carmel, *41–81.
- Bunis, David M. 2013a. "From Early Middle to Late Middle Judezmo: The Ottoman Component as a Demarcating Factor." *El Prezente. Studies in Sephardic Culture* 7 and *Menorah* 3: 115–163.
- Bunis, David M. 2013b. "Turkish Influence on Hebrew in the Ottoman Empire." In *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan. Leiden: Brill, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-hebrew-language-and-linguistics/turkish-influence-on-hebrew-in-the-ottoman-empire-EHLL_SIM_000521> [Accessed 27.01.2025]. First appeared online: 2013; first print edition: 9789004176423, 20130809.

- Bunis, David M. 2015. "Jewish and Arab Medieval Ibero-Romance: Toward a Comparative Study." In *the Iberian Peninsula and Beyond*, eds. José Alberto R. S. Tavim, Maria Filomena Lopes de Barro and Lúcia Liba Mucznik. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 64–148.
- Bunis, David M. 2016. "Judezmo (Ladino)." In *Handbook of Jewish Languages*, eds. Lily Kahn and Aaron D. Rubin. Leiden: Brill, 365–450.
- Bunis, David M. 2017. "Lexical Elements of Slavic Origin in Judezmo on South Slavic Territory, 16–19th Centuries: Uriel Weinreich and the History of Contact Linguistics." *Journal of Jewish Languages* 5: 217–252.
- Bunis, David M. 2018. "Echoes of Judezmo in Syria." In *Caminos de leche y miel: Jubilee Volume in Honor of Michael Studemund-Halévy, Language and Literature*, eds. David M. Bunis, Ivana Vučina Simović and Corinna Deppner. Vol. 2. Barcelona: Tirocinio, 64–115.
- Bunis, David M. 2018–2019. "The Language and Personal Names of Judezmo Speakers in Ereš Israel during the Time of Nathan of Gaza: Clues from Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Rabbis." *El Prezente. Studies in Sephardic Culture* 12–13: 31–72.
- Bunis, David M. 2019. "Judezmo (Ladino/Judeo-Spanish): A Historical and Sociolinguistic Portrait." In *Languages in Jewish Communities, Past and Present*, eds. Benjamin Hary and Sarah Bunin Benor. Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter, 185–238.
- Bunis, David M. 2021. "La lingua de los sefaradim en romanizasion." In *Las Ortografías del Ladino*, ed. Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald. Jerusalem: La Akademia Nasionala del Ladino en Israel, *21–37, 35–45.
- Bunis, David M. 2023. "The Judezmo Language in Late Ottoman and Mandate Eretz Israel." In *The Sephardic Old Yishuv in Eretz Israel*, eds. Yaron Ben-Naeh and Michal Held-Delaroza. Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 201–218 (in Hebrew).
- Bunis, David M. and Mattat Adar-Bunis. 2011. "Spoken Judezmo in Written Judezmo: Dialogues in *Sefer Me'am Lo'ez* on Leviticus and Numbers (Istanbul 1753–64) by Rabbi Yişhaq Magriso." *Pe'amim* 125–127: 412–505 (in Hebrew).
- Danon, Abraham. 1903–04. "Essai sur les vocables turcs dans le judéo-espagnol." *Keleti Szemle* 4 (1903): 215–229; 5 (1904): 111–126.
- Danon, Abraham. 1913. "Le turc dans le judéo-espagnol." *Revue Hispanique* 29: 5–12.
- Danon, Abraham. 1922. "Les elements grecs dans le judéo-espagnol." *Revue des Études Juives* 75: 211–216.
- Elon, Menachem. 1973. *Ha-mišpaṭ ha-ivri*. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Magnes (in Hebrew). (English translation: *Jewish Law*. 4 vols. Philadelphia–Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1994).
- Estrosa, Dani'el [1582?–1653, Salonika]. 1754. *Sefer magen gibborim*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Ettinger, Shimon. 5763 [=2003]. "The Role of Witnesses in Jewish Law." *Dine Yisrael* 22: 7–37.
- Feldman, Hadar. 2007. *Writings of the Dönme Sect: Identification of Their Author and His Theological Doctrine*. MA thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Finkel, Avraham Y. 1996. *The Responsa Anthology*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson.
- Friedman, Victor A. 2005. "Balkans as a Linguistic Area." In *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Keith Brown. Oxford: Elsevier, 657–672.
- Galante, Moše [d. after 1612?]. 1608. *Sefer šē'elot u-tšuvot*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Galmés de Fuentes, Álvaro, ed. 1975. Anonymous, *Libro de las batallas* [ad 1600]. Madrid: Gredos.
- Garmezán, Šemu'el [Salonika, b. 1605(?)]. 1945. *Sefer mišpēṭe šedeq*. Brought to the press by Yosef Ben ha-rav Eliyyahu Šama'. Jerusalem: [Rafa'el Ḥayyim Ha-Kohen] (in Hebrew).
- Gerber, Jane S. 1992. *Jews of Spain: A History of the Sephardic Experience*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

- Glick, Shmuel. 2006. *Kuntress Ha-Teshuvot He-hadash: A Bibliographic Thesaurus of Responsa Literature Published from ca. 1470–2000*. Vol.1. Jerusalem–Ramat-Gan: The Schocken Institute and Bar-Ilan University Press.
- Göktürk, Gülen. 2017. “Jewish Presence in Ottoman Salonika throughout the Centuries.” *Journal of Ufuk University Institute of Social Sciences* 6: 11, 85–96.
- Golb, Norman. 1973. “A Judaeo-Arabic Court Document of Syracuse, A. D. 1020.” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 32: 105–123.
- Goldish, Matt. 2008. *Jewish Questions: Responsa on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Goodblatt, Morris S. 1952. *Jewish Life in Turkey in the 16th Century as Reflected in the Legal Writings of Samuel De Medina*. New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Grossman, Avraham. 1992. “Legislation and Responsa Literature.” In *The Sephardi Legacy*, ed. Haim Beinart. Vol. 1. Jerusalem: Magnes, 220–239.
- Gutwirth, Elazar. 1997. “Sephardi Culture of the ‘Cairo Genizah People’ (Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries).” *Michael* 14: 9–34.
- Haas, Peter J. 1996. *Responsa: Literary History of a Rabbinic Genre*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- Ha-Lewi, Šelomo Ben Binyamin [d. 1697]. 1808. *Sefer lev Šelomo*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Ha-Lewi, Yosef Mordēkay [1875–1947]. 1947. *Sefer šē'erit Yosef*. Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Ha-Kohen, Šelomo Ben Avraham [or Moharšaq, Salonika, b. 1535, d. 1602]. 1730. *Sefer heleq rēvi' mi-šē'elot u-tšuvot*. Vol. 4. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Hegyi, Ottmar, ed. 1981. Anonymous, *Relatos moriscos* [ad 1600]. Madrid: Gredos.
- Herzog, Marvin Irving. “Yiddish.” In *Encyclopedia Britannica* online, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/West-Germanic-languages/Yiddish> (Accessed 27.01.2025).
- Hulī, Ya'aqov Ben Maķir. 1730. *Sefer me-'am lo'ez: bērešit*. Constantinople.
- Joseph, Brian D. 2010. “Language Contact in the Balkans.” In *The Handbook of Language Contact*, ed. Raymond Hickey. Malden–Oxford: Wiley and Blackwell, 618–633.
- Karo, Yosef Ben Efrayim [b. Toledo, 1488, d. Safed, 1575]. 1550–59. *Sefer bet Yosef*, 4 vols. [vol. 1, *Orah hayyim*, Venice 1550; vol. 2, *Yore de'a*, Venice 1551; vol. 3, *Even ha-'ezer*, Sabbioneta 1553; vol. 4, *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*, Sabbioneta 1559] (in Hebrew).
- Karo, Yosef Ben Efrayim. 1565. *Sefer šulḥan 'aruk*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Karo, Yosef Ben Efrayim. 1598. *Šē'elot u-tšuvot Bet Yosef* [. . .] *even ha-'ezer*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Karo, Yosef Ben Efrayim. 1791. *Šē'elot u-tšuvot avqat rokel*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Kastro, Ya'aqov. 1783. *Sefer ahole Ya'aqov*. Livorno (in Hebrew).
- Kohen, David [or Radak, of Corfu]. 1537. *Tēšuvot šē'elot ha-Radak*. Constantinople (in Hebrew).
- Lehmann, Matthias B. 2005. *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture*. Bloomington–Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Levy, Kurt. 1929. “Historisch-geographische Untersuchungen zum Judenspanischen: Texte, Vokabular, grammatische Bemerkungen.” *Volkstum und Kultur der Romanen* 2: 342–381.
- Maimonides [Moše Ben Maimon or Rambam, 1138–1204]. Mss. from 12th century and printed editions from c1474. *Mišne tora. Sefer mišpaṭim. Hilḳot malwe wē-lowē* (in Hebrew).
- Mazower, Mark. 2005. *Salonica: City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews: 1430–1950*. London: Harper Perennial.
- Medina, Šēmu'el De [or Maharašdam]. 1586?–87. *Pisqe ha-ga'on* [. . .] *Šēmu'el de Medina*. 2 vols. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Medina, Šēmu'el De. 1594. *Šē'elot u-tšuvot* [. . .] *me-ha-ḥaḳam* [. . .] *Šēmu'el de Medina*, part 1: *Orah hayyim* [. . .] *yore de'a*; part 2: *Even ha-'ezer*. Salonika (in Hebrew).

- Medina, Šemu'el De. 1595–97. *Še'elot u-tšuvot* [. . .] *me-ha-ḥaḳam* [. . .] *Šemu'el de Medina*, part 3: *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Medina, Šemu'el De. 1797. *Še'elot u-tšuvot, nidpas šēliši*, part 1: *Orah ḥayyim* [. . .] *yore de'a*; part 2: *Even ha-ēzer*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Medina, Šemu'el De. 1798. *Še'elot u-tšuvot, nidpas šēliši*, part 3: *Hošen ha-mišpaṭ*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Medina, Šemu'el De. 1862. *Še'elot u-tšuvot Maharašdam*. Lemberg (in Hebrew).
- Mitrani, Moše Ben Yosef [or Mabbīṭ, 1500–1580]. 1629. *Sefer še'elot u-tšuvot*. Venice (in Hebrew).
- Molho, Michael. 1960. *Literatura sefardita de Oriente*. Madrid–Barcelona: CSIC.
- Nehama, Joseph. 1977. *Dictionnaire du judéo-espagnol*. Madrid: CSIC.
- Nissan, Ephraim, 1998. *Fictitious Toponyms in the Responsa: Bashan's Ruleset Revisited*. Jerusalem: Aluma Dept. of Mathematics, Bar-Ilan University.
- Palacci, Ḥayyim. 1873. *Sefer ḥayyim ba-yad* (responsa on *Yore de'a*). Izmir.
- Pērahya, Ḥasday [or Ḥisday] Ben Šemu'el Ha-Kohen. 1723. *Torat ḥesed*. Salonika.
- Pipano, David. 1891–1915. *Hošen ha-efod*. Salonika–Sofia (in Hebrew).
- Pipano, David [1851–1925]. 1912–1927. *Nose ha-efod*, in his *Avne ha-efod*. 2 vols. Sofia (in Hebrew).
- Pipano, David. 1925. *Ḥagor ha-efod*. Sofia (in Hebrew).
- Quintana, Aldina. 1996. “La lengua espanyola de los sefardis en las ‘Sheelot u-teshuvot’ del siglo 16.” *Aki Yerushalayim* 53: 21–26.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2001. “Concomitancias lingüísticas entre el ladino (judeo-español) y el aragonés.” *Archivo de Filología Aragonesa* 57–58: 163–192.
- Quintana Rodríguez, Aldina. 2006. *Geografía lingüística del judeoespañol: Estudio sincrónico y diacrónico*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2007. “Responsa Testimonies and Letters Written in 16th Century Spanish Spoken by Sephardim.” *Hispania Judaica Bulletin* 5: 283–301.
- Raqah, Mes'ud Ben Aharon [b. Izmir 1690, d. Tripoli 1768]. 1964. *Sefer ma'ase raqah*. Vol. 4. Ed. Šemu'el 'Aqiva Yofe-Shlesinger. Jerusalem–New York: Lipa Friedman.
- Romero, Elena. 1992. *La creación literaria en lengua sefardí*. Madrid: Mapfre.
- Romeu, Pilar, ed. 2007. *Fuente clara (Salónica, 1595): Un converso sefardí a la defensa del judaísmo y a la búsqueda de su propia fe*. Barcelona: Tirocinio.
- Rubešová, Markéta P. 2008. “Living in a Multicultural Neighbourhood: Ottoman Society Reflected in Rabbinic Responsa of the 16th and 17th Centuries.” In *Frontiers and Identities: Cities in Regions and Nations*, eds. Lud'a Klusáková and Laure Teulières. Pisa: Plus-Pisa University Press, –152.
- Šabbētay, Ḥayyim [or Maharḥaš, Salonika, before 1555–1647]. 1651a. *Še'elot u-tšuvot* [. . .] *even ha-ēzer*. Part 1. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Šabbētay, Ḥayyim. 1651b. *Še'elot u-tšuvot* [. . .] *even ha-ēzer*. Part 2. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Šabbētay, Ḥayyim. 1713. *Torat ḥayyim, ḥošen mišpaṭ*. Part 1. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Šabbētay, Ḥayyim. 1722a. *Torat ḥayyim, ḥošen mišpaṭ*. Part 2. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Šabbētay, Ḥayyim. 1722b. *Torat ḥayyim, ḥošen mišpaṭ*. Part 3. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- Salṭon, Moše Ben Ya'aqov [Constantinople, 1615–1685]. 1713. *Sefer bēne Moše*. Constantinople.
- Schwarzwald, Ora (Rodrigue). 2021. *Las Ortografías del Ladino*. Jerusalem: La Academia Nacional del Ladino de Israel.
- Shafran, Omer. 2014. “Topics in the Language of Shemuel de Medina's 16th-Century Rabbinical Responsa: Hoshen Mishpat, Responsum 5.” *Massorot* 16–17: 239–278 (in Hebrew).
- Shmuelevitz, Aryeh. 1984. *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Late Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centuries: Administrative, Economic, Legal, and Social Relations as Reflected in the Responsa*. Leiden: Brill Archive.
- Shochetman, Eliav. 1988. *Seder ha-din*. Jerusalem: Ha-mišpaṭ ha-ivri (in Hebrew).

- Simonsohn, Shlomo. 1997. *The Jews in Sicily*. Vol. 8. Leiden: Brill.
- Simonsohn, Shlomo. 2011. *Between Scylla and Charybdis: The Jews in Sicily*. Leiden: Brill.
- Sinai, Yuval. 2010. *The Judge and the Judicial Process in Jewish Law*. Jerusalem: Institute for Jewish Law and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Spiegel, Y. S. 1999. "On the Two Editions of the Responsa of Rabbi Šemu'el de Medina." In *Aṭara lē-Ḥayyim*, eds. Israel Ta-Shma, Daniel Boyarin, Menachem Hirshman, Shamma Yehuda Friedman and Menachem Schmelzer. Jerusalem: Magnes, 501–533 (in Hebrew).
- Stillman, Norman A., ed. 2024. *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, <https://referenceworks.brill.com/display/db/ejio> [Accessed 27.01.2025]. First published online: 2010.
- Taytašaq, Yēhuda. 1559. *Šē'erit Yēhuda*. Salonika (in Hebrew).
- ‘Uzzi’el, Ben Siyyon Me’ir Hay Ben Yosef Rēfa’el [1880–1953]. 1935, 1938, 1940. *Sefer mišpēṭe ‘Uzzi’el*. 3 vols. Tel Aviv (in Hebrew).
- Várvaro, Alberto and Laura Minervini. 2007. "Orígenes del judeoespañol: Textos." *Revista de Historia de la Lengua Española* 2: 147–173.
- Várvaro, Alberto and Laura Minervini. 2008. "Orígenes del judeoespañol: Comentario lingüístico." *Revista de Historia de la Lengua Española* 3: 2–47.
- Vital, Šemu’el. [17th c.]. 1966. *Sefer šē’elot u-tšuvot Bē’er mayim ḥayyim*, eds. Aharon Vider and Efrayim Fishel Herskovits. Jerusalem: n.p. (in Hebrew).
- Weiss, Gershon. 1977–78. "A Testimony from the Cairo Genizah Documents. Son-in-Law Mother-in Law Relations." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 68: 99–103.
- Yēhošua’, Ḥananya Gavri’el [1875–1954]. 1942–1948. *Sefer minḥat he-ḥag*. 2 vols. Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Yēhošua’, Ḥizqiyya Ben Šabbētay [1862–1955]. 1935–1952. *Divre Ḥizqiyyahu*. 2 vols. Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Zimmels, Hirsch J. 1958. *Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Zimmels, Hirsch J. 1971. "The Contributions of the Sephardim to the Responsa Literature till the Beginning of the 16th Century." In *The Sephardi Heritage*, ed. Richard D. Barnett. London: Valentine and Mitchell, 367–402.
- Zimra, David Ben Šelomo Ibn Abi. 1652–1818. *Šē’elot u-tšuvot šel ha-rav David ibn Abi Zimra* [nos. 1–300]. Livorno. (Later versions were published in Venice, 1799 (nos. 1–318), Fürth, 1781 (nos. 400–649), Livorno, 1818 (nos. 2051–2341); a complete edition was published in Sudzilkow, 1836).