

Eliezer Papo

Sephardic Rabbinical Elite's Involvement in Business and Its Effects on Their *Weltanschauung* and Theology: Three Case Studies

1 *La guerta de oro*—An Insider's View of Sephardic Merchantocentrism

A popular Sephardic proverb proclaims “*Haham i merkader, alegria de la mujer*” ([A husband] erudite and merchant, is what makes a wife happy).¹ Being erudite in Jewish Law as well as a self-maintaining merchant was indeed a Sephardic cultural ideal. Obviously, not everyone could accomplish both its components, although some major Sephardic rabbis were also successful businessmen. However, most men were not trained rabbis, and many were “mere” artisans. Truth be told, there were not too many other options, forming a completely urban population, Ottoman Sephardim depended for their living almost exclusively on trade and craftsmanship.

According to David Moše Atijas, the first known Sephardic *maskil*,² trade was indeed the most highly-valued asset among the Sephardim: “[. . .] *algun libro ke trate sobre la merkaderia, ke es la koza la mas akerensiada para nosotros Djidios* [. . .]” (‘some book that would discuss trade, which is the thing for which our [Levantine] Jews have the greatest affection’).³ Consequently, he asserts, all Sephardic men aspire to become merchants: “[. . .] *i por esto todos keremos ser merkaderes*” (‘and because of that we all want to be merchants’).⁴

Atijas’s *La guerta de oro: Tratenimiento gustozo, saviozo i provechozo* (The Garden of Gold: A Delicious, Wise and Profitable Treatise), published in 1778 in Livorno, is the first secular work written in Ottoman Judeo-Spanish (see Figure 1 below).⁵ It constitutes a type of guide for a young Levantine businessman wishing

1 Attested in many different Judeo-Spanish *refraneros*, see for example Saporta y Beja (1957:163) or Bunis (1993 § 1527, vi).

2 For more information about the man and the treatise, see Lehmann (2005a:51–76).

3 Atijas (1778:3a). For the whole passage see Bunis (2013a:144, see also 143, 147); and Berenguer Amador (2016:36).

4 Atijas (1778:4b).

5 Ángel Berenguer Amador presented in 2016 his PhD thesis, under the title “Edición y caracterización lingüística del libro sefardí ‘La güerta de oro’ de David M. Atías (Liorna, 1778),” to the Complutense University of Madrid. The thesis subjects the treatise to a thorough linguistic study, and

to establish himself in the North, that is Christian Europe, or, at least, in need of traveling there for the sake of business. Although the book is addressed to young Levantine merchants, its author is very critical of what he sees as an excessive focus on mercantilism among the Sephardim.⁶

I si meti el kavo del *pasuk* de “Vaethanan” en *Devarim* es para dar a entender kuantu sea la premura del *She[m] Yit[barah]* para ke su puevlo Yisrael seya tenido de las *umot* por hente⁷ savya i entendida, ke les kijo dar hueros i djuizios muy savios i muy santos.

Ama por nuestos pekados, o sea por nuestras maldades, somos tenidos de las *umot* por hente la mas azna i la mas negra ke ayga sobre la tieria, diziendo ke non savemos otra sensia ke negosyar i enganyar al mundo. Kon todo ke *afilu* entre de eyos se ayan tambien de la hente asna i enganyadera, ma responden ke se topan tambien muchos savios: ken de estrologiya, ken de matematika, ken de aldjebra, ken de geometria, ken de filosofia i muchos otros de kozas virtuozas i dotrinamientos ke sirven para avrir i esklareser los meoyos de-la hente, tanto loke toka a las kozas de este mundo komo de las kozas del otro, loke entre nosotros non ay ninguno ke eskriba ni ke mos asaviente en este kamino dolorozo ke se aze en este mundo, ni menos ay ken se ensele ni tome enshempio de las *umot*, ke kuantu mas van, mas i mas se van rafinando i aformosiguando en las sensias i artes de los antigos; loke entre nosotros, kuantu mas vamos, mas i mas atras es lo-ke estamos,

If I’ve placed [at the title page of the book] the ending of the biblical verse from the weekly reading “*Wa-ethannan*” from Deuteronomy [Deut 4:6], this was in order to make [everyone] understand how important it was for Go[d] Bless[ed be He] that His people Israel should be taken by the Gentiles for wise and intelligent people, He wanted to give them very wise and holy statutes and judgments. However, due to our sins, or due to our evils, we are considered by the nations [Gentiles] for the most donkey-like [stupid] and the worst people that exists on the earth. They say that we have no other proficiency besides trade and cheating the world. It is true that even amongst them there are also donkeys and swindlers, but they respond that there are also many scientists amongst them: some in astrology, some in mathematics, some in algebra, some in geometry, some in philosophy and many others in other virtuous matters and fields that serve to open and enlighten the minds of the people, in things related to this world or to the other one. But amongst us there is nobody who writes about these things, or who educates people how to walk this grievous path that we are walking in this world. There is also no one envious of the [advancement of the] nations, willing to take their example. The more they go, the more refined and pleasing they become in the sciences and the arts of the ancients. We, however, the more we go,

includes also a reedition of the integral text of the work. Linguistic features of Atijas’ work, with an emphasis on elements of Hebrew origin, were discussed in Bunis (1993:33–39); its orthographic features were noted in Bunis (2005:134, 136, 142); elements of Turkish origin in Bunis (2013b:141–142, 146–147); South Slavic borrowings in Bunis (2017); satirical aspects in Bunis (1997:323–324, 332); the incorporation of Judezmo proverbs in Bunis (2015:26–27, 31–32, 43,50, 52–53).

⁶ Atijas (1778:4a).

⁷ Under influence of contemporary Castilian, Atijas sometimes replaces initial Judeo-Spanish *ʾ* with *π*. For an elaboration of the phenomena see Berenguer Amador (1999, vol. 2:464–468).

sin kerer ir mas adelante de akeya algo
 kuantto de sensia ke mos desharon en eskrito
 los gran savios ke tuvimos en los pasados
dorot,⁸ komo un aRaMBaM i tantos otros
 nombrados *afilu* entre los livros savios de-
 las *umot*.

the more we fall behind, without the will to
 advance from that bit of science that our great
 sages of past generations, like Maimonides and
 many others, mentioned even in the books of the
 nations, have left us in writings.

At the beginning of the passage, Atijas quotes the biblical verse “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people” (Deut 4:6), noting that this verse adorns the title page of his work.

Atijas’s intended readership was steeped in traditional Ottoman-Sephardic culture, in which many biblical verses (especially those commonly quoted in sermons and moral works) were known by heart by most of the public. Accordingly, a reference to a single verse (as Atijas quotes on his title page) or to the name of a Pentateuch portion that contains certain verses (as in the passage quoted above) would put people in mind of the entire biblical passage, which in this case (Deut 4:5–8), in King James’ English translation, reads as follows:

Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

Jewish religious rationalists of all periods, and Atijas among them, have seen in these verses proof that Torah is not some kind of antirational superstition, but rather a logical and rational system that reflects perfect Divine wisdom. According to Atijas, it was important for God that the people with whom His name is associated be seen as “wise and intelligent.” However, life in the Diaspora blunted the Jewish sense for science, or even for mere ethics. Atijas’s choice of the Judeo-Spanish words “*hente mas azna*” (most donkey-like people) to describe the way in which the European-Christian intellectual elite sees the Jews implies an obsession with materialism. Due to their shared trilateral root HMR, the Hebrew words *hamor*

⁸ For the diverse forms, meanings and references to use in modern Judeo-Spanish of the elements of Hebrew and Aramaic origin incorporated in the Judeo-Spanish passages see Bunis (1993).

(donkey) and *homer* (matter) are seen as related (cf. Gen 22:5). Consequently, in traditional Jewish texts a donkey is not only a symbol of stubbornness or stupidity, but also a metaphor for materialism, worldliness or exaggerated sensuality and engagement in sexual intercourse. Atijas's choice of words is not accidental. He is essentially making five different claims:

1. God wanted Israel to be appreciated by the nations for the sake of their sophisticated laws.
2. Instead of fulfilling the Divine will of engaging with wisdom, Jews are obsessed with material gains, thereby bringing on themselves the scorn of the nations, instead of the divinely-intended appreciation.
3. As if the narrowing of the nation's great potential to trade alone were not enough, Gentiles claim that Jews conduct their business in a treacherous way that causes an even bigger desecration of the Divine Name.
4. While there are also some materialist and treacherous Gentiles, they can at least take pride in many individuals who dedicate their lives to the pursuit of wisdom.
5. There are no such people amongst the Jews, all of whom are obsessed with business.
6. Consequently, with the passage of time, the Gentiles are becoming more refined and the Jews more vulgar.

Although Atijas is careful to attribute this critical description of the Sephardic Jews to the Gentiles, it is obvious that he himself considers it to be not far from true. While his claim that there are no Jews who pursue wisdom is surely exaggerated, there is little doubt that even the Sephardic rabbinical elite did not see business as a vice or vanity to be avoided, but as a necessity of the human condition. Without necessarily accepting the critical approach of Atijas's ethno-confessional caricature, it would be safe to say that the traditional Ottoman Sephardic community was a trade-oriented and business-minded one. Consequently, in the theological and legal writings of Sephardic rabbis, and especially in those written in Judeo-Spanish for the "needs of the hour" of their immediate community, even the transcendental world is seen and understood through the experience of small businessman.

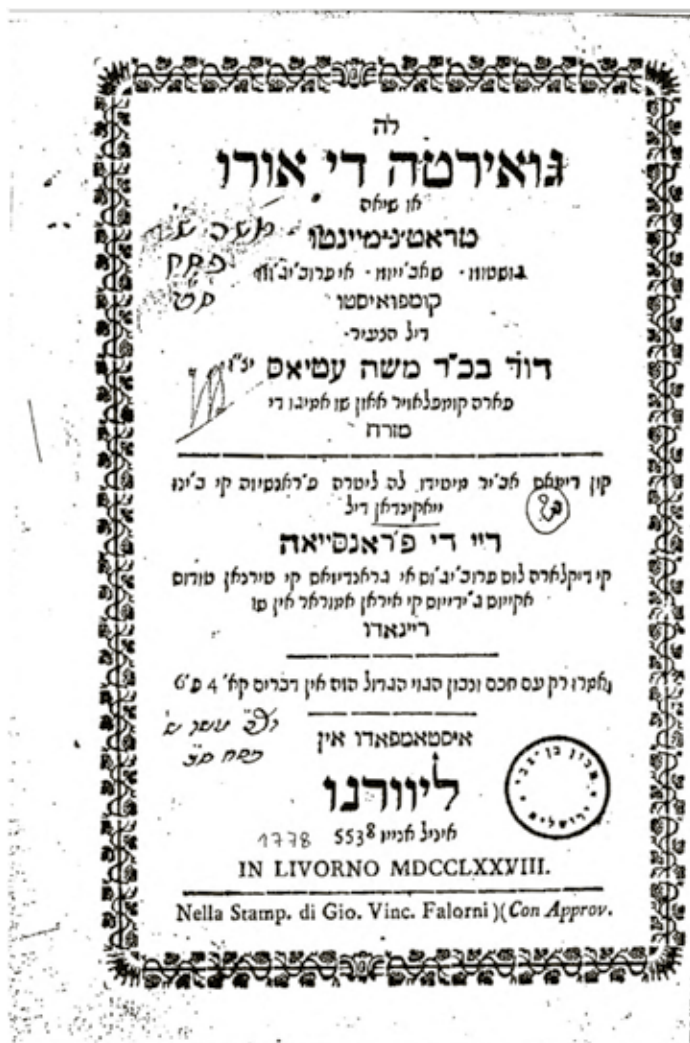


Figure 1: Moše Atijas, *La guerta de oro* (Livorno, 1778), title page. Courtesy of Eliezer Papo.

2 **Ḥam Ribī Avram Moše Finci's *Leket a-Zoar* and the Sephardic Business Mind**

Some of the best examples of this “business theology” are to be found in Ḥam⁹ Ribī Avram Ben Moše Finci's¹⁰ *Leket a-Zoar*,¹¹ an anthology of selected texts from the Zohar, translated into Judeo-Spanish,¹² printed first in Belgrade in 5619 (1858/9) (see Figure 2 below) and subsequently in Salonika (5627–1866/7) (see Figure 3 below) and Izmir (5637–1876/7) (see Figure 4 below),¹³ by a scion of one of the most venerated Bosnian¹⁴ rabbinical dynasties: the Fincis.¹⁵

9 The traditional title of a Sephardic rabbi in Bosnia is *Ḥaham Ribī*, but through haplology the first syllable of the first word is usually elided, thus leaving only *Ḥam Ribī*. Hebrew words in Ladino texts in this article are transliterated in accordance with their pronunciation by Ladino-speaking Sephardim.

10 Throughout the article personal names of Bosnian Sephardim are transliterated in accordance with Serbo-Croatian orthographic tradition and conventions, for example: Avram (not Abraham or Avraham), Josef (not Joseph or Yosef) and Juda (not Judah or Yehudah), Moše (not Moshe). The same applies to Bosnian Sephardic family names: Atijas (not Attias or Attiyas), Finci (not Finzy, or Fintzy). In the English translations of Ladino excerpts from Zohar, as well as in the analysis, familiar Hebrew names of Biblical personalities follow English convention: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, etc.

11 In his lexicon of elements of Hebrew and Aramaic origin in Judeo-Spanish Bunis (1993) incorporated dozens of Hebrew borrowings used by Finci in the Belgrade and Salonika editions of *Leket a-Zoar*; Lehmann (2005a:57) was the first to do research about the thematic contents of Finci's work. I also recently examined Finci's work in the context of Ottoman traditions of learning shared by Bosnian Sephardim and Muslims (Papo 2020); as well as in the context of its author's view of interfaith relations in Ottoman Bosnia (Papo 2021).

12 Finci's work is written in Ottoman rabbinical Judeo-Spanish, with some dialectal peculiarities typical of colloquial Judeo-Spanish. In an introductory article to Samuel Romano's dictionary of spoken Bosnian Judeo-Spanish, David Bunis summarized the history of research of this dialect and the literature written in it (Romano 1995). For further discussion, see, for example: Baruch (1930); Quintana (1997, 2006); Bunis (2001); Nezirović (1988, 2002); Papo (1995, 2006/7, 2007, 2008, 2013a).

13 The first printed edition of a Ladino translation of selected excerpts from the Zohar was in fact published in 5600 (1839/40) in Salonika, by Eliyau Chahon, under the title *Sefer mezake et a-rabim: Livro Ladino i son palavras de Zoar a-Kadosh*. However, Finci's *Leket a-Zoar* appears to have been received better by the Sephardic reading public, as can be deduced from the two subsequent editions.

14 For the study of the history of the Jews of Sarajevo from the community's founding until the Austro-Hungarian conquest, see the pioneering work by Moritz Levy ([1911]1996). See also Eventov (1971); Maestro (1991); and Pinto (1987).

15 On another famous Bosnian rabbinic dynasty, the Pardos, see Papo (2006).



Figure 2: *Leket a-Zoar* (Belgrade, 5619 [1858/9]), title page. Courtesy of Eliezer Papo.

Ḥam Ribī Avram was a grandson of the famous Ḥam Ribī Josef Finci of Travník,¹⁶ brother of the famous Ḥam Ribī Josef Finci, chief rabbi of Belgrade and the author

¹⁶ As mentioned by the author himself in his reflection on excerpt 201. The entire passage, with a Hebrew translation, is reproduced in Bunis (2013a:160–162):

Yo me akodro kuando era kriatura, mala-mata el anyo de [5]573, rosh hodesh Tamuz, se fue mi sinyor papu, Ḥa[ham] Josef Finci a[lav] a[shalom] le-ir a-kodesh Yerushalayim, ti[bane] ve[tikonen] bi[mera] befyamenu].

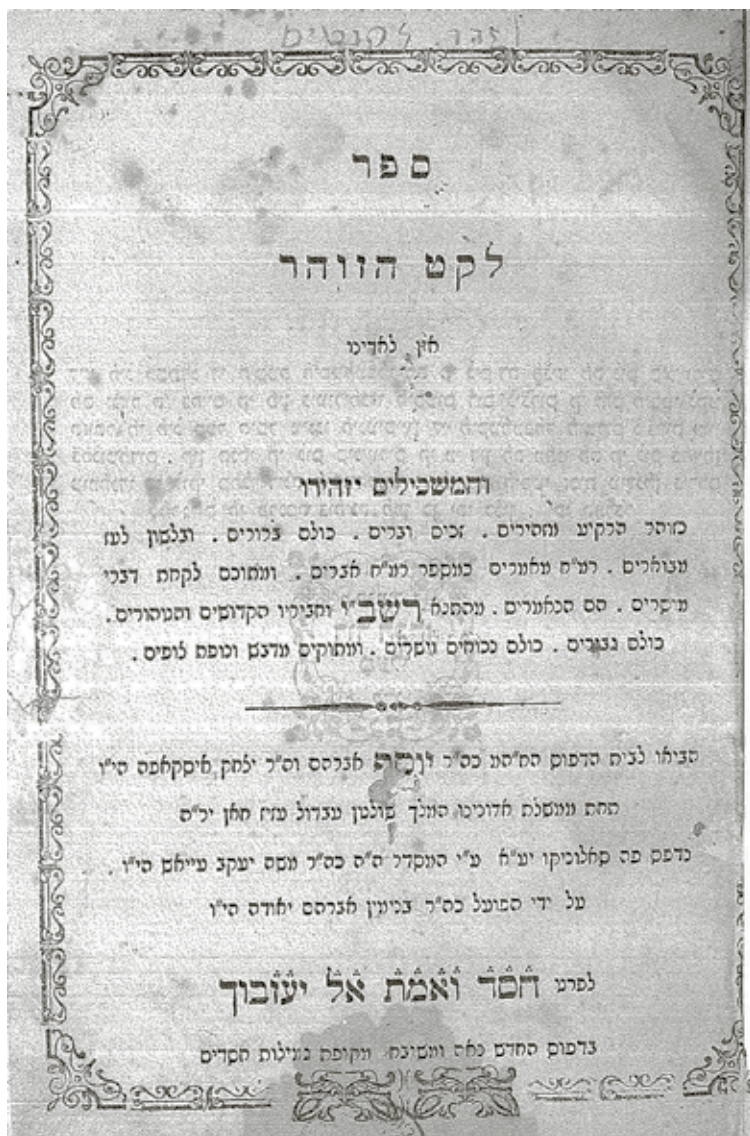


Figure 3: *Leket a-Zoar* (Salonika 5627 [1866/7]), title page. Courtesy of Eliezer Papo.

I remember when I was a kid, more or less in the year [5]573 [1813], by the beginning of the month of Tamuz, my grandfather, Ha[ham] Josef Finci, pea[ce be upon] hi[m], went to the Ho[ly] Ci[ty] of Jerusalem, [may it be] bu[ilt] and re-established spee[dily] and [in our own days].



Figure 4: *Leket a-Zoar* (Izmir 5637 [1876/7]), title page. Courtesy of Eliezer Papo.

of an alphabetical compilation of rabbinical knowledge entitled *Wa-ylaqqet Yosef* (Josef Collected [from classical rabbinic sources]) (cf. Gen 47:14);¹⁷ he was also the uncle of the famous Ḥam Ribī Jeuda Leon Ben Josef Finci, the author of *Tiqqun Ḥaṣot*.¹⁸

According to the title page of the book, it is supposed to contain 248 excerpts from the Zohar, recalling the number of organs in the male body as calculated by the sages of Talmud:

248 excerpts, according to the number of the organs
of the body, to learn from them words of musar
(morality), said by Ribī Šim'on Bar Yoḥay and his
friends, the holy and pure ones, all of them mighty
men, and all their words pleasant and upright,
sweeter than honey and nectar [Prov 8:9] [...].

רמ"ח מאמרים במספר רמ"ח איברים, ומתוכם
לקחת דברי מוסרים, הם הנאמרים מהתנא רשב"י
ותבריו, הקדושים והטהורים, כולם גבורים, כולם
נבוכים וישרים, וְתַתְּקִים מדבש ונופת צופים

However, not only is the numbering of the excerpts throughout the first edition inaccurate; their total number is also defective. The anthology contains only 246 excerpts; two must have been omitted during the printing process.

Just over half the excerpts (125) are not elaborated, commented upon or explained. The remainder (121) are accompanied by Ḥam Ribī Avram's own reflections and a summary of the moral of the story. The second, Salonikan, edition adds its own mistakes in the numbering of the paragraphs. Until paragraph 145 it is quite accurate, but the next paragraph is numbered 149, thus creating a gap of three between the numbering and the actual sequence of paragraphs. However, two subsequent paragraphs after paragraph 183 are both numbered 184, thus reducing the gap between the numbering and the reality of the anthology to two. As a result, this edition ends at paragraph 248 (as intended by the author), although it still contains only 246 paragraphs. This edition also includes some localized misnumberings that are subsequently corrected. Thus, paragraphs 156 and 157 are both numerated as 156, but the subsequent paragraph is numer-

¹⁷ As mentioned by Ḥam Ribī Hajim Matatja Benaroja, in his mentioned approbation of the anthology and by the author himself, in his reflection on excerpt number 15:

"[. . .] *a mi sinyor ermano, ahi verosh, baal Vaylaket Yosef, z[eher] ts[adik] ve[kadosh] li[vraha]*."

'[. . .] my master and brother, my brother and head, the author of the book *Wa-ylaqqet Yosef*, [may the] me[mory of the] ri[g]hteous man] and [the saint] be a b[lessing].'

¹⁸ Lebl (1990:37, 38). When his father, Josef, became the chief rabbi of Belgrade, Ḥam Ribī Jeuda spent some time with his father in Belgrade, but later he was called back to Sarajevo. In the year 1868, when Bosnian *Ḥaham-bashi* (Chief Rabbi) Avram Levi left for the Land of Israel, no Bosnian rabbi was ready to accept the position of chief rabbi of the community. Consequently, a *bet-din* (rabbinical court) of three judges served as a collective "chief rabbi" until the year 1884. Ḥam Ribī Jeuda Leon was one of the three judges who sat in this court, the other two being: Ḥam Ribī Bencijon Pinto and Ḥam Ribī Eliezer Ben Santo (Shemtov) Papo. According to his descendant, Isak Kabiljo, quoted by Lebl, Ḥam Ribī Jeuda Finci also served as a member of the City Council of Sarajevo, and was known by Sarajevo's non-Jewish inhabitants as Hodža Finci.

ated as 158. The same is true of paragraphs 223 and 224, which are both numerated as 224, but the subsequent paragraph is numerated as 225. The third, Smyrna, edition mirrors the second edition rather than the first. Its paragraphs are misnumbered in the same way as in the Salonikan edition, and not according to the Belgrade edition. For a rare picture of an early twentieth century Bosnian Jew studying Zohar, see Figure 5 below.



Figure 5: R. Isak Katan, son of Rebi David, studying Zohar at his home, Sarajevo 1913. Courtesy of Dori and Yosi Pinto, R. Isak's descendants.

2.1 God as a (Small) Businessman

Some of Finci's discourses are masterpieces of the traditional Judeo-Spanish oral genre of *darush*.¹⁹ As noted earlier, many of them reflect the business-oriented community that Finci is part of and which he addresses. Thus, for example, in the *darush* that follows excerpt 160 (mistakenly numerated 162 in the Belgrade edition), Finci compares God Almighty to a (small) businessman. The way the Master of the

¹⁹ On the word see Bunis (1993:164 § 1005).

Universe manages His world is examined, explained, and understood through a comparison of “God’s business” to that of an Ottoman coffeehouse keeper. Divine motives are understood through the common sense of all shopkeepers:

Se nota de este *maamar* kuantu *madrega* alkansa el ke se levanta en la noche por meldar. Kuantas *berahot* lo bendize. I es una koza natural. Ke mire la persona i ke tome preva de akeyos ke uzan a ir a la *kavane*, a beber un *kave*, o sea dos – i le da al *kavedji* 10 *p[ajr[as]*. Kuantu ganansia tiene akel *kavedji* en akeas 10 *p[ajr[as]*. I kuantu servimiento le aze! Le da *chibuk*, o *nargile*, i le trae brazika, i si le da la gana i le demanda una agua freska, kore el dezventurado asta la fuente, por azerle voluntad del personal. Kuando se va de la *kavane* le dize *beraha*: “*ke tenga safa yeldin*,” “*hosh yeldin*.” I todo es porke fue en su *kavane*, ke podia ir a otra *kavane*.

From this excerpt it can be noted how great a level acquires a person who gets up during the night in order to learn. How many blessings [God] bestows on him. And it is only natural. May everyone look and see a proof from those who go to a coffeehouse, to drink one coffee, or maybe two, paying to the shop-owner 10 cents. And how many services he gives him. He gives him a pipe, or a hookah, and brings him the glowing coal, and if he wants some fresh water and asks for it, the poor guy runs to the fountain, just to fulfill the client’s wishes. When he [the customer] is leaving the café, he [the owner] blesses him: “may you be welcome,” “you are welcome.” And all of this because he was in his café, as he could have gone to another café instead.

Like the shops familiar to Finci’s intended readers, God’s “shop” faces heavy competition. As a result, God is very appreciative of those who choose His business over that of His competitors. Not surprisingly, He also makes a special effort to ensure that His customers are satisfied. Thus, attending the synagogue or the House of learning becomes equivalent to keeping the Divine business alive during hard times. People who help God’s business can rest assured that He will likewise help theirs, since He is aware that they could always do business with the competition—or, to use Finci’s own metaphor: “go to another coffeehouse”:

Ansi el *She[m]* *Yitba[rah]* kale ke mos bendiga i mos de bueno, porke vamos a Su *kavane*, la *kavane* de vidas i verdadera. Ke podia ser ke se alevantara el onbre i ke fuera a otra *kavane*, por beber *kave*. Ma siendo desha la *kavane*, i se asento a beber *kave* de la ley, en el *midrash*, seguro es ke el *She[m]* *Yitba[rah]* lo bendizira, *leavdil*, komo el *kavedji* ke le dize: “Va en buen ora.” Ansi kale i El ke mos bendiga, porke el non korta la paga de ninguno. I kon esto, akel ke se levanta por meldar, seguro es ke sera bendicho del *She[m]* *Yitba[rah]*, i terna todo bueno, *bee[zrat]* *a[Shem]*, Amen!

In the same way Go[d], Bless[ed be He] has to bless us, because we are coming to His coffeehouse, to the Coffeehouse of Life, the Real Coffeehouse. Because it could have been that a man got up and went to another café, to have a coffee. But, being the fact that he gave up on [such a] Coffeehouse, and he sat down to drink a Torah-coffee, in the House of Learning, it is sure that Go[d], Bless[ed be He] will bless him, just like, though let there be no real comparison, the owner of the café, when he tells him: “May you leave in a good hour.” In this same way He has to bless us, because he never misses repaying anyone his due. This being so, the one who gets up in order to learn, it is sure that he will be blessed by Go[d], Bless[ed be He], and have all the good, with G[od’s] he[lp], Amen!

2.2 Satan and His Unscrupulous Competition

Just as Finci uses an Ottoman institution popular amongst the local population, the coffeehouse, as a metaphor for the Divine Business (“*porke vamos a Su kavane*”—“because we go to His coffeehouse,” “*kavane de vidas i verdadera*” Coffeehouses of Life, the Real Coffeehouse), in the *darush* that follows excerpt 67 Finci uses the Ottoman institution for foreigners dwelling in the city, the *han* (inn) as a metaphor for the business of the Divine competition—Satan:

De aki ke mire el ombre i ke entienda kuantos es la grandeza de la *tsedaka* i su fuersa, sigun ya esta savido i aklarado en muchos lugares. I es verdad ke todos keremos dar, ma el *Satan* es ke non mos desha, kon su intento. Porke todo loke lazdra el *Satan* es por inchir akel mal orno tan grande, i siendo ke la fuersa de la *tsedaka* lo eskapa, kon esto mete todo su tino i mal destino, a non deshar dar *peruta*. I le trae mil modos de consejos, para ke se aripe[n]ta de dar la *tsedaka*. I todo es porke kere yevar un *mushteri* mas a su *han*, ke es un *han* muy grande i fuerte, i muy eskuro. Por esto, mi ermano, mi kerido, despiertemos de nuestro *enbeleko* i tomemos este *peshat* del *pasuk* por *kamea*, i azer *tsedaka* sigun puede. Porke la karga de los pekados es muy pezza, i se kere muncha lenya kemar, para ke se kemen los pekados. I esto ke disho ariva es koza muy provechoza para avansar tanta lenya. El *She[m]* *Yitba[rah]* ke mos de i meta en nuestro korason para ke demos, *Amen!*

From here [it should be understood that] a man ought to look and understand how great is the merit of charity and its strength, as it is known and explained in many places. And the truth is, we all want to give it, but it is Satan who doesn't let us, with his intentions. Because all that Satan is working so hard to achieve is to fill that huge evil oven, and the power of charity enables him to evade it, he puts all his mind and all his bad inclination into not letting him give a single dime. And he approaches one with a thousand kinds of counsels, just so that one would repent on the idea of giving charity. And it's all because he wants to bring yet another customer to his inn, which is a big and fortified inn, a very dark one too. And so, my dear brother, let's wake up from our trance, and let's take this simple meaning of the verse as an amulet, and give as much charity as one can. Because the burden of sin is very heavy, and in order for the sins to be burned, there is a need for a lot of wood. And the thing that he [the Zohar] said above is a fruitful thing in order to collect that wood. May Go[d], Ble[ssed be He], give us, and may he put into our hearts [the will] to give, Amen!

Thus, just as God tries to win over people's hearts for His business (the Coffeehouse), so Satan seeks to ensure that they will all come to his business (the inn). This is why he makes such an effort to prevent people from investing (via charity) in sin-burning stocks that might annul their debits and qualify them for entering the celestial Divine Coffeehouse (Paradise). Unlike God, who gives more than the client deserves in order to keep him happy, Satan does not play fairly. Rather, he is an unscrupulous competitor, seeking not only to advance his own business but also to talk the clients out of their options so that he can monopolize the market.

2.3 *Dar a los proves—emprestar al Dio*

As the Sephardic proverb illustrates, “To give to the poor is to lend to God,” Sephardic theological narrative (shaped mostly by hybrid rabbis-businessmen for the needs of a business-minded community) is highly dependent on the concepts and vocabulary of the world of business. Indeed, Finci’s insights can sometimes not easily be understood by a person without any business background. The *darush* which follows excerpt 25 is a good illustration of this phenomenon:

De aki ke preve el ombre i ke guste si el *She[m] Yitba[rah]* lo meresio a ke este en titulo de resivir *musafir* en su kaza, *uvifrat* si ya es mandado de la sivdad, ke se lo mando el si[nyor] *rav* o el si[nyor] *gabay*, ke lo resiva kon gusto, i ke se guste komo si tenia algun *musafir gevir* en su kaza, i ke pense: “Si un *gevir* de Viena o de Londra me mandava un *musafir*, i me traia karta de rekomendatsion diziendo: ‘todo el *kavod* ke le azes a este, komo si me lo izieras a mi’, kuantos se ezmerava por darle todo modo de visio i koza buena ke ay en el mundo, por mor de la karta ke le trusho akel *gevir*.” Ya save ke akel *gevir* non se keda de basho, aun ke puede ser fin ke era avizo ke ya lo resivio i le izo *kavod* komo enkomeno. Tanto puede ser ke se puede murir o el, o el, i keda todo el gaste ido sin tener provecho, torna el non manka de azerle su palavra.

Aki, ke el *She[m] Yitba[rah]* mando akel *ani*, a ke lo mantenga, i es *amanet* del *She[m] Yitba[rah]*, ke trae karta de rekomendatsion del *She[m] Yitba[rah]*. En kuantos lugares lo rekomendo! Seguro es ke terna su pago bueno kuando le va *haber* ke ya lo resivio, porke non tenemos miedo ke se piedra la karta, ni miedo de murir *ha[s] ve[shalom]*.

From here one should take proof [and learn how to] enjoy it if Go[d], Ble[ssed be He] gave him a privilege and the title of hosting a guest in his house, and especially if he was sent to him by the city [Jewish Community], i.e., by Mr. Rabbi or by Mr. Sexton. He should receive him with pleasure, and he should enjoy it as if he had a rich merchant as a guest in his house, and he should think: “If a rich merchant from Vienna or London would send me a guest, and [if that guest] would bring me a letter of recommendation which would say: ‘all the honor that you do to this person, [I’ll count it] as if you have done it for me.’ How careful he would be to give him all kind of delightful and great things that exist in the world, for the sake of the letter that the rich merchant sent him.” How can he know that this rich merchant will not go bankrupt before he receives a report how [this man] accepted [the recommended guest] and gave him honor the way the rich merchant commanded? It could also happen that one of them [the rich merchant or the man who did his command] dies, in which case all the expenses would be lost without any profit. And yet this doesn’t prevent anyone from executing the commands [of such a rich merchant].

And in this case, where Go[d], Ble[ssed be He], sends that poor man, so that one can sustain him, and it is a favor asked by Go[d], Ble[ssed be He], as he brings a letter of recommendation from Go[d], Ble[ssed be He]. In how many places [in the Bible] He recommended him! Surely, [the one who fulfills the Divine commandment] will collect abundant profits when God receives information how that man received the poor man, because [in this case] there is no danger that the letter [informing God] can be lost, or that one would die, G[od] f[orbid!] [before collecting the profit, as even in such a case he will still collect it in the World to Come].

Ay ke esta en *hashash* ke non pagara,
seguro es ke el grufu ya esta pronto
antes ke vaya la *politsa*, el ya la acheta,
i non se kuvra ni por %, komo es la
uzansa. I kon esto deve el entendidor ke
entiende komo es el mundo, de resivir
akel prezente ke le enbio el *She[m]*
Yitba[rah], kon mucho gusto, i el *She[m]*
Yitba[rah] le pagara todo bueno, *Amen*,
ken yei ratson!

There are people who are afraid that they will not
collect their profits, but it is sure that the profit was
extracted even before the policy [a deed of mercy]
was even made, and He [God] already validated the
policy, without even charging [certain] percentages
for that service, as is customary. Because of this,
a connoisseur, who understands how the world
functions, has to accept the present [the poor man
sent to his care] that Go[d], Ble[ssed be He], has sent
him, with great pleasure, and Go[d], Ble[ssed be He],
will pay him back with all good, Amen and may this be
His will!

According to Finci, “a connoisseur who understands how the world functions” treats God as a credible businessman, knowing that if he tends to the needs of the beneficiary of the Divine letter of recommendation (i.e., poor people commended into one’s care by divine commandment), he will be able to collect all the benefits from such a service in both worlds. The Torah’s promise of abundance to those who help the poor is much more secure than a mere business policy. Firstly because, unlike with mortal businessmen, there is no bankruptcy in Divine business. Secondly, because in the case of a “physical” policy, the beneficiary himself can die, in which case his inheritors might benefit from the policy, but he himself will not. However, if one has a metaphysical policy, he can also benefit from it in the World to Come. Consequently, poor people are not a nuisance, but rather a Divine present offering the chance to secure one’s well-being in both worlds.

2.4 Public Relations or How to Sell Oneself for a Better Price

In his moral on an excerpt from the Zohar brought in paragraph 241 (misnumbered in the Belgrade edition as 243), Finci elaborates on the vices of snobbism. His choice of words is again highly telling. Snobbism, according to him, is an attempt “to *sell* ourselves better than we are”:

Ma esto mos viene de non meter tino en loke meldamos. Ken non save esto ke los *malahim* non komen, i onde Avram komieron? *Afilu* las mujeres ya lo saven esto, i tambien en boka de las kriaturas esta reglado: “En la sivdad ke estas, komo veras—ansi aras.” Ma todo viene ke mos keremos vender por muy delgado – i por esto pasa las palavras de los si[nyores] *hahamim*, el *She[m] Yitba[rah]* ke mos kongrasye de Su grasia para non salir del kamino verdadero, Amen!

But all of this happens only because we don’t pay attention to what we are reading. Who doesn’t know the fact that angels do not eat, but that at Abraham’s table they did it. Even women know that, and even in the mouths of children there is a customary expression: “In the city where you are, what you see is what you should do.” But it’s all caused by the fact that we want to sell ourselves as very refined—and because of that one finds himself transgressing the words of the sages, may Go[d], Ble[ssed be He], give us grace so that we don’t leave the right path.

In a world dominated by business, commerce serves as the ultimate metaphor. Public relations are the way one “sells” oneself to others, and snobbism is “selling ourselves as very refined.” This actually constitutes a type of cheating, i.e., selling something for a price higher than its real market value.

3 Assurance Against Divine Unpredictability and Providing Higher Dividends of One’s Merits for One’s Own Partners

One of the most striking examples of the extent to which the business mind influenced Sephardic theology and the understanding of the transcendental and metaphysical is to be found in the famous *Šitre ha-Hitqaššērut* (Deeds of Commitments) of the members of *Ḥevrat Ahavat Šalom* (Confraternity Love of Peace), a mystical society that evolved within the renowned Sephardic Kabbalistic Yeshivat Bet El in Jerusalem (see Figure 6 below).

Much has already been written about this particular academy (Giller 2008), the confraternity (see for example Ḥeibi 1987:49–50; Ha-Kohen 1998), and even the special Deed of Commitment signed on five different occasions by its members,²⁰ including its origins in Isaac Luria’s circle (Scholem 1940). However, in order to highlight the specific Sephardic understanding of the metaphysical capital, as this is reflected in these Deeds of Commitment, a short contextualization of these “corporation acts” is called for.

Yeshivat Bet El was founded in 1737 by ha-Rav he-Ḥasid (“the Pious Rabbi,” the official title of the head of the Yeshiva) Gēdalya Ḥayon (a native of Constantinople), for the study of *kabbalah* in the Holy City. Ḥayon organized life at the yeshiva around its

²⁰ For a thorough analysis of the phenomenon see Benayahu (1995a); for an analysis of the same phenomenon in Safed and Egypt, see Benayahu (1995b).

prayer services, hoping that a liturgical-mystical communion with God would bring the scholars closer to an understanding of the secret teachings of *Kabbalah*. When he died in 1751, the mantle of leadership passed to ha-Rav he-Ḥasid Ya'aqov Yisra'el Ben Yom Tov Algazi, who later (1755) also became the Riṣon lē-Ṣiyyon (the Sephardic Chief Rabbi of the Land of Israel). Following Algazi's death in 1757, ha-Rav he-Ḥasid Šalom Mizraḥi Šar'abi took over the leadership of the institution (Fine 2003:6).

Around 1750, twelve Kabbalists from Bet El founded the confraternity *Ahavat Šalom*, signing the first Deed of Commitment, no longer existent, that hung on the door of Bet El's Hekal (Holy Ark). On four different occasions (1752,²¹ 1754, 1758 and 1759) updated versions of the Deed were signed or new cosignatories were admitted, but the spirit of all the versions is more or less the same: "[. . .] all twelve of us shall be as one glorious soul [. . .] that if God forbid one of us encounters misfortune, we will all assist him [. . .]," and such like.

For the purposes of this article, two passages are of particular interest—one from the Second Deed of Commitment (1752 [in Benayahu, 1757]) and the other from the Third Deed (1754). These passages offer insight into the way Sephardic *ḥahamim* understood metaphysical capital, the ways it is handled in heaven and the ways that humans can influence that management for their benefit or that of their friends.

The first of the two passages essentially insures the members of the Confraternity against Divine unpredictability:

And as a part of this obligation, we the undersigned have also committed ourselves to a completely firm bond of love between us, accepting from now that, after long days and years, [once] in the World to Come, each of us will strive, while [already] in the World to Come, to save, to rectify and to lift the soul of anyone from our Confraternity, in any way he can, including all kinds of efforts that brothers might have to undergo to help their friends. In other words, in the World to Come each will save his friend; even if, God forbid, they decide in Heaven that one of us the undersigned should take [over] the share of one of the other friends, in accordance with the Talmudic concept: "If he merits it, by becoming righteous, he takes [. . .] etc."

ובכלל הדבר נתחייבנו אנחנו הח[תומים]
מ[טה] לקשר אהבתנו בתכלית הקשר
אמיץ, ומקבלים עלינו מעכשיו שלאורך ימים
ושנים בעו[לם] הב[א], יטרח כל אחד ממנו,
הן בעודנו בעו[לם] הב[א], להציל ולתקן
ולהעלות את נפש אחד מחברתנו בכל מה
שיכול, ובכל מיני הטרחה שיכול לעשות כל
אח ורעהו, כלומר הצל יציל כל אחד בעו[לם]
הב[א] וכל אחד הצל יציל את חברו, באופן
גם אם ח[ס] ו[שלוש] יסכימו מן השמים
שאחד ממנו הח[תומים] מ[טה] יקח את
הטוב מחבר אחר, ע[ל] ד[עת] "זכה – נוטל
חלקו" כו'.

21 One of the Deeds cites Tammuz 1757 as the date of signing, and notes Ḥam Ribī Ya'aqov Algazi (who passed away on 10 Tammuz 1756) as one of the "contractors." This led Benayahu (1995a) to dedicate an entire chapter of his long article to an attempt to explain the rabbi's posthumous appearance. However, the possibility that the date was erroneously copied, particularly since it was presented as a Gematric syntagm, as raised by Ša'ul Ḥanna Ha-Kohen Kook, strikes me as a far more plausible solution to the contradiction (Kook 1944). In another article, Kook (1947) notes that Abraham Danon was the first to date the Deed to 1762 or 1767.

From now on, for the sake of the benefit that each of us has received from all other members, namely that each and every one of them will take part in any sorrow that, hopefully, will not come upon any other member; we all have obligated ourselves with complete and definitive obligation, in every form and mode, effective by human or heavenly laws, to transfer back the mentioned share that was taken by a [heavenly] decree from one of the friends who didn't profit from it, [the way the Torah says] "and every man's hallowed things shall be his" [Num 5:10], in accordance with the way that our Master ha-Ari [R. Yish'aq Luria], may his memory live in the World to Come, explained [the words of the daily prayer] "and amongst these grant our portion." In that exact way, we have all agreed as stated.

מעכשיו, בשביל טובת הנאה שקיבלנו כל אחד מחבירו להשתתף בצרתו שלא תבוא, נתחייבנו בחיוב ג[מור] ושלם] בכל לשון ואופן המועיל בדיני אדם ובדיני שמים, למחול לו הטוב ההוא, לאותו החבר שנגזר עליו לקחת את טובו ושלא נהנה ממנו, ואיש את קדשיו - לו יהיה, ע[ל] ד[עת] שפי[רש] מן האר"י ז[כרוננו] ל[חיי] ה[עולם] ה[בא] ב"ושים חלקנו עמהם". על הדרך ההוא נתחייבנו באופן האמור.

The fear of the sages was inspired by the Talmudic concept that God can transfer one person's share in the World to Come to his friend, as elaborated in tractate *Ḥagiga* 15a (translation according to the *William Davison Talmud*):

The Gemara relates: Aḥer asked R. Meir a question, after he had gone astray. He said to him: What is the meaning of that which is written: "God has made even the one as well as the other" (Eccl 7:14)? R. Meir said to him: Everything that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, He created a similar creation corresponding to it. He created mountains, He created hills; He created seas, He created rivers.

Aḥer said to him: R. Akiva, your teacher, did not say so, but explained the verse as follows: Everything has its opposite: He created the righteous, He created the wicked; He created the Garden of Eden, He created Gehenna. Each and every person has two portions, one in the Garden of Eden and one in Gehenna. If he merits it, by becoming righteous, he takes his portion and the portion of his wicked colleague in the Garden of Eden; if he is found culpable by becoming wicked, he takes his portion and the portion of his colleague in Gehenna.

Rav Mesharshiyya said: What is the verse from which it is derived? With regard to the righteous, it is stated: "Therefore in their land they shall possess double" (Isa 61:7); whereas with regard to the wicked, it is stated: "And destroy them with double destruction" (Jer 17:18); therefore, each receives a double portion.

In 1752, eighteen leading Sephardic and Mizraḥi scholars of the generation, amongst them two future Sephardic Chief Rabbis of the Land of Israel (Ḥam Ribī Ya'aqov Yisra'el Ben Yom Ṭov Algazi, who served in the position in 1755–1756, and his son Ḥam Ribī Yom Ṭov Ben Yisra'el Ya'aqov Algazi, who served in 1773–1802) and the most prolific rabbinical author of the eighteenth century, Ḥam Ribī Ḥayyim Yosef David Azulay (known by his acronym "the ḤYDA") tried to find a safe way around the terrifying Divine entitlement to transfer one person's share in the World to Come to a more virtuous fellow. Bearing in mind the individual merits of each of the members

of the group, it is hard to imagine any of them being trumped by anyone outside the group; most of the potential candidates to outrank them were already in the group. Accordingly, once the members of the group promised that each of them would transfer back their fellow's share, if it were granted to him by a Divine decree, then everyone's lot was firmly assured.

While some will find this arrangement strange, it makes perfect sense in the world of Sephardic metaphysics, in which a share in the World to Come is considered almost as personal property—one's own metaphysical capital. God is seen as a fair player with special entitlements. It is true that He can transfer someone's share in the World to Come to another person, but even this Divine prerogative is not seen as an arbitrary act of an autocrat. Rather, God is seen as just, and as such He will transfer someone's metaphysical capital only if that person was better than the original holder of the merits. However, if all the potential competitors agree in advance that in such a case they will return the share to its original owner, God would be obliged "by human or heavenly laws" to approve such a transaction. God can transfer someone's accumulated merits to a better other by way of a bonus, but if this better person returns them to their original owner, God has to approve. Fair play is fair play, and bonuses are transferable.

The other passage relevant for the attempt to understand how Sephardic *hahamim* understand metaphysics appears in the Third Deed of Commitment (1754). While its opening sounds almost Communist and its middle is as capitalist and individualist as could be, its peculiar ending is a real jewel of the Sephardic approach:

In addition, we all have gathered as a single person and established this total partnership in all of the Torah, the commandments and the good deeds that any of us will do separately, in any imaginable way, may they be counted as we all did them as one person.

However, it is not our intention, God forbid, to deprive anyone of his own merits by making them common merits of all of us. Rather, our intention is based on the concepts that "every single Israelite's merits are beneficial to the rest of the people" and that "an individual who performs a single *mitzvah* produces [also] merit beneficial for the entire people of Israel."

Consequently, our intention is to achieve by this partnership that each and every one of us should be entitled to more dividends [coming from the deeds of any member of the partnership] than the rest of the people of Israel. This has all been resolved amongst us as an absolute and definitive obligation and absolute and definitive appropriation with definitive agreement.

עוד נתוועדנו יחד ונשתתפנו שותפות גמור, כולנו כאחד, בכל התורה והמצוות ומע[שים] ט[ובים] שיעשה כל אחד ממנו בפני עצמו, בכל אופן שיהיה, שיחשב כאילו עשינו כולנו כאחד. ואין כוונתנו בשותפות הזה ח[ס] ו[שלום] לגרוע ולזכות כל אחד לחבירו מזכויותיו ממש, כי אם כוונתנו ע[ל] ד[עת] ש"כל ישראל זוכים זה לזה", ו"יחיד עושה המצוה מזכה לכל ישראל".

אלא דע[ל] י[די] השותפות הנז[כר] נזכה כולנו כאחד יותר בפרטות משאר כל ישראל. והכל נגמר מידינו בח[וב] ג[מור] ושל[ום] ובק[ים] ג[מור] ושל[ום]. ובהסכמה גמורה.

And the gravity and the firmness of this agreement is the same as that of all the agreements made since the days of Moses, Our Teacher, peace be upon him.

And in order to witness the truthfulness of all of this we have signed our names, on the *Roš Hodeš* [Head] of the month of Adar of the year 5514 [1754]. And it is all clear, comprehensible and firm.

וחומר וחוזק הסכמה זאת כחומר
וחוזק כל ההסכמות הנעשות מימות
מש[ה] ר[בנו] ע[ליו] ה[שלוש].
ולהיות אמת חתמנו שמותינו, פ[ה]
ע[יר] הק[דוש], ביום ראש חדש אדר,
משנתנו הבק"ר או"ה. והכל שריר
ובריר וקיים.

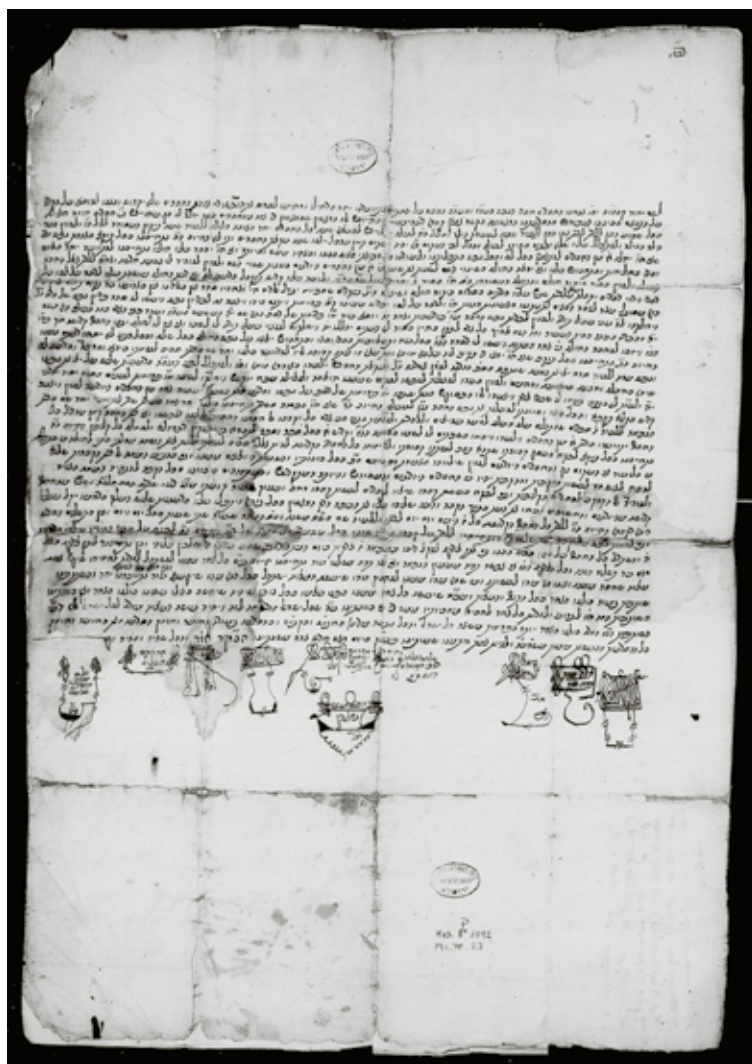


Figure 6: The Third Deed of Commitment (Jerusalem, 1754).

Figure 6: (continued)

שטר התקשרות של אגודת מקובלים בירושלים, 1754, סימול 1512 / 085 אוסף תעודות הסטוריות.
 Historical documents Collection, The National Library of Israel. This file was cataloged and
 made available thanks to the Samis Foundation, Seattle, Washington.
 אוסף תעודות הסטוריות, הספרייה הלאומית. תיק זה נרשם והוגש בתמיכת קרן סאמיס, סיאטל, ושינגטון.

By creating their peculiar partnership called the Love of Peace, these Sephardic *ḥahamim* did not seek to merge their individual metaphysical capitals in a single corporation, becoming holders of equal percentages of shares of the joint capital. True to their small businessman mentality, it was important to them that each individual member of the Confraternity continue to be the primary beneficiary of his own work and efforts. However, they also believed that there is such a thing as public (in the sense of the entire people of Israel) dividends from every single share (righteous deed) of each Jew. Regarding the distribution of these public dividends only, they believed that members of the partnership established by the original creator of shares with his life-long carefully-chosen partners (with the same arrangement when it comes to distribution of their own merits) should be entitled to higher percentages than ordinary Jews.

4 Conclusion

The Ottoman Sephardic collective was completely urban. Traditionally, women were housekeepers, while men provided maintenance for the family. Most of the men were small businessmen. Some were merchants, while others were artisans. The communities also supported a handful of religious professionals who provided religious services for the rest, serving as *dayyanim* (judges), *mēlammēde tinoqot* (teachers) or *ḥazzanim* (cantors). However, even these paid professionals often maintained their own businesses as well. Other religious services, such as those provided by the *šohet* (ritual slaughterer) or *sofer* (calligraphic writer of Torah scrolls, *Mēzuzot*, and phylacteries) were small commercial businesses not sponsored by the community. Since essentially everyone was entitled and expected to work, *yeshivot* of the Ashkenazi type were unheard of in the Sephardic world: no one was a life-long *yeshivah* student. All males received a traditional Torah education in their childhood, and invested varying amounts of time to Jewish learning in their later lives. People with special talents, usually but not necessarily from established rabbinic families, were singled out for future religious services. They would spend a

decade or more in learning, and later serve as judges, arbiters, and/or teachers for the remainder of their lives. As already stated, many of them would also run a small business on the side, or at least enter into a partnership with brothers, cousins or other relatives. Accordingly, they formed an integral and essential part of their business-oriented community, and their metaphors and associations stemmed from their experiences in these settings. On the one hand, their language lacked many rural and agriculture-related terms, as is apparent from their Judeo-Spanish translations and mistranslations of Hebrew terms in these fields. On the other, it was overabundant with information on urban life, politics and economy, religion and culture. To the best of my knowledge, no other ethno-confessional group has ever numbered so many businessmen amongst its theologians, and no theologians from any ethno-confessional group have ever had a more business-minded audience. Consequently, in the given framework, Sephardic *ḥahamim* developed a remarkable narrative based on the metaphor of doing business with God, in both worlds. In this theology, each righteous deed was basically a share. People were encouraged to collect such shares and to share their dividends with the community (especially amongst the rabbinic elite itself). Just like material shares, these metaphysical shares were seen as a fitting subject for diverse negotiations and transactions, before and even after one's death. At the same time, sins were not necessarily seen as an intrinsic flaw, but rather as a "bad business" that leads to a loss of shares. In most cases, they could be repaired by leveraging share-producing righteous deeds. Quite an optimistic outlook, one could say; religious but yet mundane, pragmatic yet spiritual.

References

- Atijas, David Behar Moše. 1778. *La guerta de oro*. Livorno.
- Baruch, Kalmi. 1930. "El judeo-español de Bosnia." *Revista de Filología Española* 17: 113–154.
- Benayahu, Meir. 1995a. "Šiṭre ha-Hitqaššērut bi-Šfat u-v-Miṣrayim." *Asufot* 9: 129–160 (in Hebrew).
- Benayahu, Meir. 1995b. "Šiṭre ha-Hitqaššērut še-li-Mqubbale Yērušalayim." *Asufot* 9: 9–126 (in Hebrew).
- Berenguer Amador, Ángel. 1999. "Aspectos lingüísticos del libro de David M. Atías *La güerta de oro* (Liorna, 1778)." In *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the 20th Century* [. . .], eds. Judit Targarona Borrás and Ángel Sáenz-Badillos. Vol. 2. Leiden: Brill, 464–468.
- Berenguer Amador, Ángel. 2016. *Edición y caracterización lingüística del libro sefardí "La güerta de oro" de David M. Atías (Liorna, 1778)*. Doctoral dissertation, Complutense University of Madrid.
- Bunis, David M. 1993. *A Lexicon of the Hebrew and Aramaic Elements in Modern Judezmo*. Jerusalem: Magnes.
- Bunis, David M. 1997. "The Use of Hebrew and Aramaic Elements in the Creation of Satire by Speakers of Judezmo." *Massorot* 9–10–11: 319–333 (in Hebrew).

- Bunis, David M. 2001. "On the Incorporation of Slavisms in the Grammatical System of Yugoslavian Judezmo." *Jews and Slavs* 9: 325–337.
- Bunis, David M. 2002. "Rabbi Yehuda Alkalay and his Linguistic Concerns." In *Zion and Zionism Among Sephardic and Eastern Jews*, eds. Zev Harvey, Galit Hasan-Rokem, Haim Saadon and Amnon Shiloah. Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim, 155–212 (in Hebrew).
- Bunis, David M. 2005. "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. 2013a. "The Judezmo Press as a Forum for Modern Linguistic Discourse." In *La presse judéo-espagnole, support et vecteur de la modernité*, eds. Rosa Sánchez and Marie-Christine Bornes-Varol. Istanbul: Libra, 143–179.
- Bunis, David M. 2013b. "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. 2015. "On Judezmo Terms for the Proverb and Saying: A Look from Within." In *Damta LeTamar: Studies in Honor of Tamar Alexander* Vol. 3. Eds. Eliezer Papo, Hillel Weiss, Yaakov Bentolila and Yuval Harari. *El Prezente. Studies in Sephardic Culture* 8–9 and *Mikan* 15: 11–54.
- 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.
- Eventov, Yakir. 1971. *Tolēdot Yēhude Yugoslavia*. Vol. 1. Ed. Cvi Rotem. Tel Aviv: Hitahdūt 'Ole Yugoslavia, 173–210 (in Hebrew).
- Fine, Lawrence. 2003. *Physician of the Soul, Healer of the Cosmos: Isaac Luria and His Kabbalistic Fellowship*. Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture 6. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Giller, Pinchas. 2008. *Shalom Shar'abi and the Kabbalists of Beit El*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ha-Kohen, Nahman. 1998. *Minhage Bet El*. Jerusalem.
- Heibi, Aaron. 1987. *Giant of the Spirit*. Jerusalem: Yafet.
- Kook, Ša'ul Hana. 1944. "Lē-tolēdot ḥavurat ha-mēqubbalim bi-Yrušalayim." *Luah Yērušalayim* 4: 134–137 (in Hebrew).
- Kook, Ša'ul Hana. 1947. "'Al agudat mēqubbale Yērušalayim." *Qiryat Sefer* 24: 84–85 (in Hebrew).
- Lebl, Ženi. 1990. *Jevrejske knjige štampane u Beogradu 1837–1905*. Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine.
- Lehmann, Matthias B. 2005a. *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture*. Bloomington–Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Lehmann, Matthias B. 2005b. "A Livornese 'Port Jew' and the Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire." *Jewish Social Studies* 11(2): 51–76.
- Levy, Moritz. [1911] 1996. *Die Sephardim in Bosnien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Juden auf der Balkanhalbinsel*. 3 vols. [Sarajevo] Klagenfurt: Wieser.
- Maestro, Jakov. 1991. "Qēhillat Sarayevo ben šēte millḥamot ha-'olam." In *Tolēdot Yēhude Yugoslavia*. Vol. 2. *Yēhude Bosnia-Hercegovina ba-'et ha-ḥadaša*, ed. Zvi Loker. Jerusalem–Tel Aviv–Haifa: Hitahdūt 'Ole Yugoslavia, 249–300.
- Nezirović, Muhamed. 1988. "Algunos rasgos fonéticos del español anteclásico en el habla judeo-española de Bosnia." In *Actas del I Congreso Internacional de Historia de la Lengua Española*, eds. Manuel Ariza Viguera, Antonio Salvador Plans and Antonio Viudas Camarasa. Cáceres: Arco Libros, 1537–1545.
- Nezirović, Muhamed. 2002. "Judenspanisch." *Wieser Enzyklopädie des europäischen Ostens–Lexicon der Sprachen des europäischen Ostens*. Klagenfurt: Wieser, 101–116.
- Papo, Eliezer. 2006. "Pedigree, Erudition and Piety; Involvement and Mobility: The Life Story of Ribi Dawid ben Ya'aqov Pardo–A Case Study in the Making of a Traditional Sephardic Hacham." *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Hebreo* 55: 171–189.

- Papo, Eliezer. 2006/7. "Les influences slaves sur le judéo-espagnol de Bosnie dans la littérature du 'Cercle séfaraïde.'" *Yod: Revue des études modernes et contemporaines hébraïques et juives* 11–12: 315–337.
- Papo, Eliezer. 2007. "Serbo-Croatian Influences on Bosnian Spoken Judeo-Spanish." *European Journal for Jewish Studies* 1(2): 343–364.
- Papo, Eliezer. 2008. "Ethnic Language in an Age of Nationalism: Bosnian Judeo-Spanish in Modern Times." *Pe'amim* 113: 11–51 (in Hebrew).
- Papo, Eliezer. 2013. "German Influences on Bosnian Spoken Judeo-Spanish during the First Half of the 20th Century, the Way These Are Reflected in the Literature Produced by the Sarajevo-Based Sephardic Circle." In *Sefarad an der Donau, Lengua y literatura de los Sefardíes en tierras del Habsburgo*, eds. Michael Studemund-Halévy, Christian Liebl and Ivana Vučina Simović. Barcelona: Tirocinio, 295–312.
- Papo, Eliezer. 2020. "Reading Zohar as Mussar Literature: Ḥam Ribī Avram Finci's Ladino Translation of Selected Texts from the Zohar as a Window into Traditional Sephardic Learning Gatherings and Their Relation to Local Islamic Tradition of Ders." *Colloquia Humanistica* 9: 181–222.
- Papo, Eliezer. 2021. "Ottoman Bosnia as a Case Study of the Sephardic Tradition of Reading Zohar as Musar." *Kabbalah—Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Texts* 48: 167–196.
- Papo, Isak. 1995. "Turcizmi u jevrejsko-španjolskom Sefarada Bosne i Hercegovine." In *Sefarad 92—Zbornik radova*, eds. Muhamed Nezirović, Boris Nilević and Muhsin Rizvić. Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, Jevrejska zajednica Bosne i Hercegovine, 241–254.
- Pinto, Avram. 1987. *Jevreji Sarajeva i BiH*. Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Quintana, Aldina. 1997. "Diatopische Variation des Judenspanischen in den Balkanländern und in der Türkei." *Judenspanisch* 2 [= *Neue Romania* 19]: 47–65.
- Quintana, Aldina. 2006. *Geografía lingüística del judeoespañol: Estudio sincrónico y diacrónico*. Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang.
- Romano, Samuel. [1933] 1995. *Dictionnaire judéo-espagnol parlé – français – allemand, avec une introduction sur la phonétique et sur la formation des mots dans le judéo-espagnol*. Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim (with an introduction by David M. Bunis and notes on the author by Zvi Loker). (Original doctoral dissertation, Zagreb University, 1933).
- Saporta y Beja, Enrique. 1957. *Refranero sefardí*. Madrid–Barcelona: CSIC.
- Scholem, Gershom. 1940. "A Document by the Disciples of Isaac Luria." *Zion* 5: 133–160 (in Hebrew).