# The Pronunciation of Hebrew in the Western Sephardic Settlements (XVIth-XXth Centuries). First Part: Early Modern Venice and Ferrara (1)

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To the blessed memory of
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## § 1. The Aims of the Research

In and around 1552, Isac Cavallero published in Venice three or more bilingual prayer-books (in Hebrew with Spanish translation). Simultaneously an anonymous scholar gave to light a translation of the *seliḥot*, penitential prayers, printed in Latin characters in the city of Lagoons. [1]

Around the same time in Ferrara Yomtob Atias and Abraham Usque published a complete translation of the Bible, several liturgical works in vernacular, and two editions of a Spanish Psalter. [2] It is possible that other prayer-books (or reprints of the first ones) were published. If so they were lost without leaving any trace. The Spanish *siddurim* printed in both cities were clearly meant for synagogue use. Continuous annotations enabled the former Marranos, still unfamiliar with Hebrew, to follow step by step

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[1]    See *infra*, § 2.1.

[2]    See *infra*, § 2.2.

a service conducted in that language. For this purpose, both Cavallero in Venice and Atias and Usque in Ferrara, transliterated some passages of the Hebrew ritual into Latin letters. By perusing these transcriptions, it was possible to study the features of Hebrew pronunciation in the XVIth century Sephardic settlements in Northern Italy.

A comparative study of the vulgarizations printed in Venice and in Ferrara led me to the conclusion that, not only the Spanish translations, but also the transliterations of Hebrew prayers were the original works of separate and independent authors who acted without knowledge of the work of the others. As a matter of fact, these authors pronounced Hebrew in an identical manner but sometimes represented the same sounds by different graphemes.

Additional research was carried out in order to ascertain when and where in Italy the pronunciation of the consonant *ayin* shifted towards the nasal sound represented by the graphemes *ng, ngh, gn, n*. It was possible to state that, in the Italian and Ashkenazi communities, this change took place during the course of one and a half centuries, roughly between the end of the XVIth and the beginning of the XVIIIth century. The Sephardim adopted this pronunciation later than the *Italiani*. We shall expose the results of this particular investigation in the second part of this work.

§ 2. THE AVAILABLE SOURCES

The present research is based on the analyses of:

– Hebrew names, words and texts transliterated into Latin letters by Jewish scholars in Spanish and Portuguese vulgarizations of the Bible, *siddurim*, *maḥazorim* and *haggadot*.

– Spanish words and texts transcribed into Hebrew characters mainly by Jewish translators and compilers of *siddurim* and *haggadot*.

– Transcriptions of Jewish names and Hebrew words in deeds drawn up by the Chancellors of the Portuguese Nation of Ferrara, in contracts, letters, last wills and other documents written by Sephardic merchants in Ferrara, Venice and Ancona in the XVIth century.

– Jewish names and Hebrew words transcribed into Latin characters by Christian notaries and other public officers in several Italian cities as

well as similar transcriptions registered by Inquisition's notaries and officers in Italy and in Portugal.

– Statements and annotations explicitly made by grammarians, scholars and rabbis.

– Transcriptions of Hebrew words in the XVIIth century Registers of Deliberations (ספרי הסכמות *Livros das hordems* of Pisa, Leghorn, Reggio Emilia, Venice and of the Western Portuguese Nations).

In the following pages we provide a concise description of these sources.

## § 2.1. The Venetian Vulgarizations

Towards the middle of the XVIth century Venice was the capital of Jewish printing, [3] not only for the quantity of its production, but especially for the hitherto unequalled typographical perfection reached by several printing houses. [4]

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[3]   I borrow this expression from C. Roth, *EJ* 13, cols. 1096-1114, s.v. «Printing, Hebrew.»

[4]   On the history of Hebrew bookmaking in Venice, see D. Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Repr. London 1963 [Philadelphia 1909]); J. Bloch, «Venetian Printers of Hebrew Books» *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 46 (1942), pp. 71-92; M. Benayahu, *Copyright, Authorization and Imprimatour for Hebrew Books Printed in Venecia* (Hebrew) (Tel-Aviv 1971); G. Tamani, «L'attività tipografica a Venezia fra il 1516 e il 1627» *Henoch* 2 (1980), pp. 63-76; P.F. Grendler, «The destruction of Hebrew Books in Venice, 1568» *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 44 (1978), pp. 103-130; B. Ravid, «The Prohibition against Jewish Printing and Publishing in Venice and the difficulties of Leone Modena» in I. Twersky, ed., *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature* (Cambridge, Mass. and London 1979), pp. 135-153; N. Pavoncello, *Le tipografie ebraiche minori a Venezia* (Roma 1990); P.C. Ioly Zorattini, «Il S. Uffizio di Venezia e il controllo della stampa ebraica nella seconda metà del '500» in *La Censura Libraria nell'Europa del Secolo XVI. Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Cividale del Friuli … 1995* (Udine 1997), pp. 127-145; R. Bonfil, «The History of Spanish and Portuguese Jews in Italy» in H. Beinart, ed., *Moreshet Sepharad. The Sephardi Legacy* (Jerusalem 1992), 217-339, pp. 220-221; G. Tamani, «Le Edizioni Ebraiche Veneziane dei secoli XVI-XVIII» in S. Pelusi, ed., *La civiltà del libro e la stampa a Venezia: testi sacri ebraici, cristiani, islamici dal Quattrocento al Settecento* (Padova 2000), pp. 29-36; A. di Leone Leoni, «La presenza Sefardita a Venezia, intorno alla metà del Cinquecento, I Libri e gli Uomini» RMI 67 (2001), pp. 35-110, pp. 37-51.

Before dealing with the XVIth century vulgarizations of the Hebrew ritual, it is perhaps advisable to recall that the Spanish prayer-books were anteceded by several editions of Hebrew *siddurim* printed in Venice according to the Sephardic rite. In 1524, Cornelio Adelkind[5] edited the volume תמונות, תחנות ותפילות ספרד (*Images, Supplications and Prayers of Sepharad*)[6] for Daniel Bomberg who had it printed yet again in 1544. A new edition of this *siddur* was prepared in 1546 by A. Benveniste for M. A. Giustiniani with the title סדר תפילות מכל השנה (*Siddur for the whole Year*).[7] Zuan de Gara[8] reprinted it in 1581 «with Bomberg types»[9] (just to quote a few of the many editions).

In or around 1552 Isac Cavallero published in Venice, at least, three bilingual prayer-books with a literal Spanish translation printed side by side with the original text in Hebrew.[10] Unfortunately for a long time these *siddurim* did not receive proper attention from scholars. Some authors found it easier to quote only the Spanish part of their titles without mentioning the Hebrew wording. Owing to these inaccuracies other scholars were induced to believe that the Venetian *siddurim* included only the Spanish translation (without the Hebrew text).

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[5]   On Cornelio Adelkind, see A.M. HABERMANN, *The Printer Cornelio Adelkind, his Son Daniel and the List of Books Printed by Them* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1980).

[6]   The complete title is תמונות תחנות תפילות ספרד ערוכות בשלחן ולאכול מזומן ופיוט ופזמון בתוכו מפורד בסופו תחפש ותמצא מסומן. נדפס על ידי קורניליייו אדילקינד בבית דניאל בומבירגי יצ״ו בשנת ר״פד.

[7]   A copy of this *siddur* is preserved at the British Library (Sh.m. 1972.b.25). It was merely a reprint of the *siddur* published by Bomberg a few years before. From a legal point of view this was made possible by a *parte* issued by the Venetian Senate in 1517, according to which the validity of all the privileges and copy-rights was limited to a ten years period. See R. FULIN, *Documenti per servire alla storia della Tipografia Veneziana..., ristampato dall' Archivio Veneto* XXIII (Venezia 1882), pp. 84-212, 111-112 and 130-131; BLOCH, «Venetian Printers» p. 105.

[8]   On Zuan [John] di Gara, see AMRAM, *The Makers of Hebrew Books*, pp. 214, 351-363; BLOCH, «Venetian Printers» pp. 19-23; HABERMAN, *The Printer Cornelio Adelkind;* Y. YUDLOW, *Zuan di Gara Printer in Venice, a List of Books Printed at His Press* (Hebrew) (Lod 1982); G. BUSI, *sub voce* «Di Gara» in M. MENATO et al., *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani, Il Cinquecento* (Milano 1997); M.A. PIATTELLI, «More about the Printer Zuan (Giovanni) di Gara» (Hebrew), *Kirjat Sepher* 63, n° 2 (1990-91), 675-678.

[9]   A copy of this *siddur* is kept at the British Library (Sh.m: 1972.b.23).

[10]   LEONI, «La presenza Sefardita».

The first of these books, the *Orden de Oraciones,* [11] was printed between 1550 and 1552, a short time after the expulsion of the Marranos from Venice and its dominions. As a consequence of political circumstances both the translator and the publisher of this book kept a low profile. Neither the name of Alvise Bragadini nor his printer's mark appear on the title page. [12] For some reasons the *siddur* was published without a *prologuo* (introduction), without a *tabla* (index), without a colophon and without any expression of thanks for the completion of the work. Even the date of the edition was withheld. No explanation was provided on the style of the translation that followed word for word the form and order of the Hebrew text [13], even if the elegance of the modern Spanish language was lost in the process. [14]

Other accidental circumstances withheld precious information from scholars. The Bodleian Library in Oxford owns a copy of the *Ordenança de Oraciones* published by Cavallero in 1552. This volume was however incomplete as the (first) title-page was lost. [15] The exact title of this edi-

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[11] I. Cavallero, סדור תפילות כמנהג הספרדים הועתק מלשון עברי ללשון ספרד על ידי הרופא קאבאלירו בויניציה שם טוב יצחק ב"ר המובהק רבי. *Orden de oraciones / segundo el uso ebrèo en lengua / ebraica y vulguar español: / traduzido por el dotor Isac fijo / de Don Sem tob Cavallero: / EN VENECIA [versus 1552].*

[12] See Tamani, «Le edizioni ebraiche veneziane dei secoli XVI-XVIII»; Leoni, «La presenza Sefardita.»

[13] M. Morreale, «El Sidur Ladinado de 1552» *Romance Philology* 17 no. 2 (1963), 332-338, p. 334; H. P. Salomon, «The Last Trial in Portuguese» in E. Toaff, ed., *Studi sull'Ebraismo Italiano in memoria di Cecil Roth* (Roma 1974), 159-185, pp. 162-163; Id., *Deux Études Portugaises – Two Portuguese Studies* (Braga 1991), pp. 54-55; H. V. Sephiha, *Le Ladino, judeo-español calque: Deutéronome, versions de Constantinople (1547) et de Ferrare (1553)* (Paris 1973); I. M. Hassán, «Dos introducciones de la Biblia de Ferrara» in Id. (ed.), *Introducción a la Biblia de Ferrara, Actas del Simposio Internacional… Sevilla 1991* (Madrid 1994), 13-66, pp. 22-32; H. den Boer, «La Biblia de Ferrara y otras traducciones» in Hassán, *Introducción a la Biblia,* pp. 279-296.

[14] Cfr.: *Biblia / En lengua Española traduzida palabra / por palabra dela verdad Hebrayca / por muy excelentes letrados, vi- / sta y examinada por el officio / dela Jnquisicion. Con privilegio del Ilustrissimo Señor / Duque de Ferrara,* Ferrara 1553*,* f. *2r/ [II]a, [Prólogo] Al letor.* See Hassán, «Dos Introducciones» p. 41; E. Romero, *La Creación Literaria en Lengua Sefardí* (Madrid 1992), pp.17-18; Salomon, *Deux Études,* pp. 51-52.

[15] On the two different title pages of the *Ordenança de Oraciones,* see H. P. Salomon, «Was there a Traditional Spanish Translation of Sephardi Prayers before 1552?» *The*

tion, its date and the name of the printer remained unknown. It was the great merit of Cowley [16] to understand that this *siddur* was printed in or around 1550, and not towards the end of the XVIth century as formerly believed. [17] The incorrect dating of these prayer-books led many scholars to underestimate the importance of the Sephardic Settlement in Venice in the fifteen-fifties. [18]

After the Second World War the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York acquired a complete copy of the *Ordenança de Oraciones* formerly belonging to E. N. Adler. [19] Margherita Morreale, who consulted it, described the style of the Spanish translation, but scarcely paid any attention to the Hebrew text. She even neglected the Hebrew title of the book and ignored the information therein supplied. [20] Her inaccuracies led some scholars to the wrong conclusion that Spanish was the main language used by former Marranos for their prayers in Venice and in Ferrara the XVIth century.

In 1552 Alvise Bragadini published also a Spanish vulgarization of the *seliḥot* (penitential prayers) without the Hebrew text. [21] The name of the printer was provided only in «Raši» characters. [22] As the name of the translator does not appear in the title page, he thus remains unknown.

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*American Sephardi* 6 (1973), pp. 79-90. On the copy preserved at the Bodleian Library see the discussion in LEONI, «La presenza Sefardita,» pp. 38-40.

[16]   A. E. COWLEY, *A Concise Catalogue of the Hebrew Printed Books in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford 1929), p. 554. The Author did not state how he reached this conclusion. Cfr. M. STEINSCHNEIDER, *Catalogus librorum hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana,* 2 vols. (repr. Hildesheim-New York 1977 [Berlin 1852-60]), col. 360, no. 2404, col. 1100.

[17]   Cfr. J.C. WOLF, *Bibliotheca Hebraea,* Amburgi Felginer, 4 vols. (repr. Bologna 1967 [1715-33])*,* II, pp. 618-19, n. 1279b; vol. III p. 1459; M. STEINSCHNEIDER, *Catalogus … Bodleiana,* col. 360, no. 2404, col. 1100; M. KAYSERLING, *Biblioteca Española Portugueza Judaica. Dictionnaire Bibliographique des Auteurs Juifs, de leurs ouvrages espagnoles et portugaises* (Strasburg 1890), pp. 37-38 and 59-60.

[18]   SALOMON, «Was there a translation» p. 80.

[19]   This volume is shelf-marked «La Cav. 1552» and bears the number 71.686.

[20]   Morreale did not realize that the book was printed by Alvise Bragadin.

[21]   [Anonymous Translator] *Celiloth / Segun la orden del vso / español hebraico. / De los quarenta dias antes del / dias de Quipur. / El qual uá seguido de luengo sin / tornar atras.* / נדפס בבית האדון מיסיר אלויזי בראגאדין EN VINECIA / MDLII.

[22]   Strangely enough Morreale did not pay attention to the short Hebrew wording. She only stated that this text «was without vowels» and failed to identify the publisher.

By carrying out a comparative study of the vulgarizations of the *bakašah* [23] כל ברואי מעלה ומטה made by Isac Cavallero (in Venice) and by Yomtob Atias (in Ferrara), Salomon could state that these translations were produced independently by two separate authors who acted without knowing about each other's work. [24]

By comparing the text of the Venetian *Celihot* [25] with the analogous *Orden de Silhoth* [26] published almost contemporaneously by Yomtob Atias in Ferrara, I came to the conclusion that these editions were also produced separately by different scholars.

In his bilingual prayer-books Cavallero gave a rigorous translation of the Hebrew text. In order to convey to the reader the exact meaning of every single Hebrew word he tried to maintain the structure of the sacred language even in the form of the verbs. This author arranged the Spanish translation opposite the Hebrew text in perfect symmetry, page by page, line by line, and word by word so that every Spanish word was facing its Hebrew counterpart. The reader could thus find an immediate explanation of every word of the original text. These *siddurim* provide a valuable instrument for the study of the Hebrew language and the Sephardic Liturgy.

In Cavallero's *Orden de oraciones* the blessings for the reading of the Torah and the ברכת הגומל (to be said after having escaped a danger) are not translated into Spanish. Instead of the vulgarization, the Spanish side of the *siddur* bears a transliteration of the Hebrew text into Latin characters. [27] Former Marranos, not familiar with their fathers' language, were thus enabled to take an active part in the service.

The *siddurim* printed by Cavallero were meant for use in the synagogue. Continuous annotations, both in Hebrew and in Spanish, lead

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[23]  Poetical supplication.

[24]  SALOMON, «Was There a Translation.»

[25]  For the complete title see note 21.

[26]  Y. ATIAS, *Orden de Silhoth el qual / comiença en la luna nueva de / Elul que responde a Agosto y / dura fasta Kipur, q[ue] son quarenta / noches de contricion: y comen- / çarã a leuãtarse de madrugada / a dezirlo el otro dia despues de / Reshodes del dicho mes: por= / que en el primero de Elul subio / Moseh al monte la vltima vez / y estuuo quarẽta dias en cõ- / tinua contemplacion: / y descendio dia / de Kipur con / la ley,* Ferrara 1552. The title page is reproduced in LEONI, «La presenza Sefardita» fig. 6a.

[27]  See doc. 1 in Appendix.

the worshipper throughout the book and explain which sections of the prayers are to be recited by the *ḥazzan* and which and when responses are to be given by the congregation.

These annotations are generally given in the Judeo-Spanish vernacular, both in Hebrew characters (on the Hebrew side of the text) and in Latin letters (alongside the Spanish vulgarization). [28] They provide a precious instrument to appraise the phonetic value of Hebrew consonants in the XVIth century.

In the *Orden de Oraciones*, the annotations on the Hebrew side of the book are generally printed in small cursive «Raši» types. These texts are not immediately intelligible to readers unfamiliar with this particular writing. It is probably for this reason that some of the Hispanists who studied the style of these translations failed to note a fascinating feature: there are in these texts some characteristic archaisms probably derived from pre-expulsion liturgical literature. In effect these annotations include Hebraisms and expressions typical of the Judeo-Spanish jargon that found their origin back in ancient Sephardic traditions.

An analogous phenomenon can be noted in the Ferrara vulgarizations, in the Venetian *Haggadah con su Ladino* [29] and in other works produced by Sephardic scholars. A few examples are provided here: *Afilu* [אפלו = even], *teva / thevah* [תבה = podium where the Torah is read], [30] *tesuvà* [תשובה = repentance], [31] *hehal* [היכל = ark (*lit.* palace)], [32] *meldar* [מילדר = to read, to study], [33] *llevdo, llevado*

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[28]   See, for instance, fig. 3 and docs. 5 and 6 in Appendix.

[29]   [Anonymous ed.], *Haggadah con su Ladino* סדר הגדה של פסח קון שו לדינו עם כמה (Venice 1619), צורות על כל האותות והמופתים אשר נעשו לאבותינו במצרים ועל הים ובמדבר unnumb. p. with the instructions for the ceremony of the ביעור חמץ (removal of leavened food). On this edition, see Y. Yudlow, *The Haggadah Thesaurus: Bibliography of printed Haggadoth from the Beginning of Hebrew Printing until 1960* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1993), p. 7, # 47-49.

[30]   Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 163.

[31]   Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 226 and *passim*.

[32]   Cavallero, *Orden Or.,* pp. 146, 163.

[33]   Cavallero, *Orden Or.,* p. 146; *Ordenança*, p. 151; *Haggadah con su Ladino*.

[לייבדו = leavened], [34] *cenceña* [סינסנייא = unleavened bread], [35] *beth ahayym* [בית החיים = the house of life (euphemism for cemetery)], [36] *asur* [אסור = forbidden]. [37]

### § 2.2. The Ferrara Vulgarizations

In or around 1550 don Samuel ben Askarah Sarfati [38] moved his press from Rome to Ferrara [39] where he printed the *Maʿayane ha-Yešuʿa* (*Sources*

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[34]   Y. ATIAS, *LIBRO / DE ORACYONES / de todo el año traduzido del / Hebrayco de verbo a ver / bo de antiguos exem / plares, por quanto / los ympressos / fasta a qui / estan errados, con muchas / cosas acrescentadas de / nuevo segun por la / siguiente tabla se / muestra / 5312 [=1552] De la Criacion / a 14 de Sivan* [= ATIAS, *Libro Or.*], f. 134v; *Haggadah con su Ladino,* see doc. 7 in Appendix. The form *Leudo* was also used. Cfr. Ishac ATIAS, *Thesoro dos Preceptos, donde se encierran las joyas de los seycentos y treze preceptos que encomendo el Señor a su Pueblo Israel con su Declaracion, Razon y Dinim* (Venetia 1627), f. 201r.

[35]   *Haggadah con su Ladino,* see doc. 7 in Appendix. Cfr. ATIAS, *Orden Or.*, f.134v; ATIAS, *Thesoro dos Preceptos,* f. 88r.

[36]   Abraham USQUE, ORDEN DE ORACIONES DE / Mes arreo .S. [= saber] sin boltar de / vna a otra parte. / Y LA ORDEN DE / HANUCAH / Purim, y Pascuas de Pesah / Sebuoth, y Sucoth, con / mucha diligentia en- / mendada. / Estampado por yndustria y despesa / de Abraham Usque. / En Ferrara 12. de Setembro 1555, f. 182v.

[37]   [Anonymous Translator], *Ordem de Orasois que se dizem en todo ho anno asaber: cutidiano, Sabat, Pascuas, Ros Sana Quipur e da qui [sic!] seque o Seliquo [sic!] que se diz quorenta dias antes de Quipur todas as madrugadas e no ultimo dia, que he Quipur descendé Mose do monte com a Lei* [Form. belonging to G.B. Rossi who called it *Ordo precum iudaicarum lingua lusitana versus ab anonimo Judaeo*], Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi, Piacenza (Ms. Landi 11, f. 4r).

[38]   Son of Ysac Sarfati, one of the «twenty old bankers» of Rome, Samuel was merchant, financier, communal leader and printer. Cfr. H. VOGELSTEIN – P. RIEGER, *Geschichte der Juden in Rom* (Berlin 1895), vol. II, pp. 61, 117; K. R. STOW, *Taxation, Community and State, The Jews and the Fiscal Foundations of the Early Modern Papal States* (Stuttgart 1982); S. SIMONSOHN, *The Apostolic See and the Jews. Documents 1546-1555* (Toronto 1990), doc. 3027, p. 2796. On Sarfati's printing press see A. PESARO, *Memorie Storiche sulla Comunità Israelitica Ferrarese* (Ferrara 1878), p. 23; AMRAM, *The Makers of Hebrew Books,* pp. 249-250.

[39]   On the Hebrew press in Ferrara, see G. BUSI, «La tipografia ebraica in Emilia Romagna. Elenco delle Edizioni: Ferrara» in S. M. BONDONI and G. BUSI, *Cultura Ebraica in Emilia Romagna* (Rimini 1987), pp. 637-638.

*of salvation*) by Yṣḥac Abravanel. Samuel Sarfati was closely related to the Abravanels. [40] This link was strengthened when Yacob, the son of Don Samuel and Benvenida Abravanel, married Benvenida Sarfati, the daughter of Don Samuel Sarfati. [41]

In 1552, shortly before handling his printing press over to Yomtob Atias, Samuel Sarfati produced a Hebrew *maḥazor* for the penitential days. [42] In 1552 Atias published a Spanish vulgarization of the Jewish prayer-book for the whole year: the *Libro de Oracyones de todo el año*. [43] In the course of a few months this volume was followed by two other liturgical works in the vernacular: the *Sedur de Oraciones de mes* [44] (comprising the daily and saturday service and the prayers for *Roš Ḥodeš*, *Ḥanuka*, *Purim* and Fast days) and the *Orden de Silhoth* (penitential prayers). [45] Between 1553 and 1555 Abraham Usque published a Spanish *maḥazor* for the high holydays, a Psalter [46] (in two editions) [47] and the famous *Orden de Oraciones de mes arréo*. [48]

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[40]   A. de Leone Leoni, «Nuove Notizie sugli Abravanel,» *Zakhor* 1 (1997), pp. 154-206: 154-155.

[41]   ASFe, notary C. Sacrati, pc. 1, April 4, 1549: Yacob Abravanel states that Yacob, the son of Samuel Sarfati was his brother in law. As Yacob was married to Allegra, the daugter of Abram Sarfati (*ibid.*, March 4, 1552), it may hence be inferred that Benvenida, the wife of Yacob Abravanel, was Yacob Sarfati's sister and Samuel Sarfati's daughter. See the inventory of Yacob Abravanel's estate in Leoni, «Nuove Notizie sugli Abravanel,» 202-206.

[42]   A. Piattelli, «An Unknown Publication from Ferrara» (Hebrew), *Alei Sefer* (1994-97), pp. 147-152.

[43]   Atias, *Libro Or.*

[44]   Y. Atias, *Sedur de Oraciones de mes con mucha diligencia visto e emendado, ympresso por industria y despesa de Yon Tob Atias hijo de Levi Atias, en el mes de Sivan de 5312* [May-June 1552].

[45]   For the whole title see note 26.

[46]   A. Usque, *PSALTERIUM / De David en Hebrayco / dicho Thehylim, trasla= / dado cõ toda fielidad / verbo de verbo del / Hebrayco: y Repartido / como se / deve / leer / Per cada dia del / mes segun uso / de los An= / tiguos. Estampado en Ferrara a. 15 / de Noviembre 1553.*

[47]   The title of the second edition is *PSALTERIO / de Dauid trasladado en / español cõ toda fielidad verbo de verbo / de su verdade- /ra origen: y / Repartido / como se / deue / leer / Per cada dia del / mes segun vso / de los An / tiguos. / Estampado en Ferrara a 15 / de Henero 1554.*

Unlike the bilingual *siddurim* published in Venice by Isac Cavallero, the Spanish prayer-books printed in Ferrara by Yomtob Atias and Abraham Usque consisted only of the Spanish vulgarization with just a few occasional passages in Hebrew characters. For instance, in Atias' *Sedur de Oraciones de mes,* the Hebrew text of the blessings for the reading of the Torah is provided alongside the Spanish translation «en hebrayco y español». [49] Some words in Hebrew characters occur also in Usque's *maḥazor* [50] and in his *Orden de mes.* [51]

Cecil Roth was perhaps the first modern scholar who paid extensive attention to the vulgarizations printed in Ferrara. [52] Convinced as he was that all Conversos of Jewish origin had remained faithful to their fathers' religion, Roth assumed that these translations were based on a (supposedly) widespread traditional vulgarization used in Spain by several generations of Marranos. [53] Following Roth's tracks, other scholars assumed that the translations of the Jewish ritual printed in Ferrara and in Venice were mainly meant for the benefit of those Marranos who did not know Hebrew and prayed in the privacy of their homes (rather than in synagogues).

According to some authors, Spanish had become a sort of sacred language that replaced Hebrew even in the religious ceremonies of the new Sephardic settlements. It was not so. It was the merit of Herman P. Salomon to state clearly that these vulgarizations were intended mainly for public use in the Sephardic synagogues of Italy and of the Levant. [54]

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[48]   Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes,* ff. 172r-172v, where the Hebrew text and the Spanish translation are respectively in Hebrew characters and in Latin letters.

[49]   Usque, *Maḥazor*, f. 3v and *passim.*

[50]   Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes, Addendum* with the «Osaanot».

[51]   Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes, Addendum* with the «Osaanot».

[52]   C. Roth, «The Marrano Press at Ferrara, 1552-1555» *Modern Language Review* 37 (1943), pp. 307-317. This Author accepted substantially the general opinion according to which the vulgarizations printed in Ferrara came to the light earlier than the ones printed in Venice. He was however the first scholar to point out that the Spanish translation of the *Celihot* was produced in Venice in 1552, in the same year as the *Libro de Oracyones* published by Yom Tob Atias in Ferrara.

[53]   Roth, «The Marrano Press» p. 308.

[54]   H. P. Salomon, «Hispanic Liturgy Among Western Sephardim» *The American Sephardi* 2 (1969), 49-59, pp. 51-52.

In the Ferrara vulgarizations there are continuous references to the course of the synagogal service. In Yomtob Atias' *Libro de Oracyones* (Ferrara 1552) the title (or the first words) of many prayers are given in Hebrew, transcribed into Latin letters [55] and we can easily imagine that, in the synagogue of the Portuguese Nation of Ferrara, the *ḥazzan* stressed his voice at the beginning of each section for the benefit of those former Marranos who still encountered some difficulties in following a service conducted in their fathers' language.

In his *siddurim* Yomtob Atias did not translate the initial passage of the *šemaʿ* but transcribed it into Latin letters, thus enabling all the worshippers to recite without difficulty the first words of this prayer in Hebrew. [56] He also transcribed the main congregational response to the *Kaddiš*. These short transliterations were inserted also into Atias' *Sedur de mes* and into his *Orden de Silhoth.* [57]

Abraham Usque was well aware of this problem. In 1553, he transliterated, in his *maḥazor,* the first lines of the *Šemaʿ* and several other Hebrew words in Latin letters. [58] Usque devoted a special chapter of this book to the repetition of the ʿ*Amidot* where he explained the somewhat complicated order of these prayers and provided a transliteration of some of the main congregational responses to the *Kaddiš.* [59]

A few years later, in 1555, Abraham Usque inserted at the end of his *Orden de oraciones de mes* the blessings for the Talit, the Tephilin, the Torah reading and the *Kaddiš* fully transcribed into Latin letters. [60] It is from these and other similar transliterations that we can try to understand how the Sephardim in Venice and Ferrara read Hebrew at that time.

Beyond any doubt, the *Biblia en Lengua Española* [61] represents the most important achievement of the Sephardic press in Ferra-

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[55]  See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[56]  ATIAS, *Libro de Or.,* f. 19r; ID., *Sedur de Or. de mes,* f. 53r. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[57]  ATIAS, *Libro de Or.,* f. 19; ID., *Orden de Silhoth,* f. 11v.

[58]  USQUE, *Maḥazor*, ff. 4r, 47r, 135v, 255v.

[59]  USQUE, *Maḥazor*, f. 255v. See fig. 9 and doc. 3 in Appendix.

[60]  See fig. 6 and doc. 4 in Appendix.

[61]  *Biblia en lengua Española* (for the complete title, see above, note 14). This precious work is now available in the magnificent *Edición facsimilar* ed. by I. M. HASSÁN (Madrid 1992), published together with the volume *Introducción a la Biblia.*

ra. [62] Several authors already described the merits of this precious volume [63] and I shall not deal with them at this time.

No Hebrew passages are transliterated into Latin characters in the *Biblia*, nor there any liturgial reason for doing so. This volume is however a helpful source of information on the Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew as it bears scores of personal and geographical names transliterated into Latin letters.

Alongside his vulgarizations of the Jewish ritual, Abraham Usque published also the famous *Consolação as Tribulações de Israel* of Samuel Usque [64] and two other Hispanic books which were not of immediate Jewish interest, [65] Alfonso de la Torre's *Visyon delectable de la philosophia* [66] and Bernardim Ribeiro's *Menina e Moça.* [67] Furthermore, Abraham Usque produced at least twenty-nine books in Hebrew. These included liturgical, philosophical, exegetical and apologetic as well as

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[62]   Y. H. YERUSHALMI, «A Jewish Classic in the Portuguese Language» introduction to *Consolação as Tribulações de Israel. Composto por Samuel Usque, Empresso en Ferrara en casa de Abraham aben Vsque 5313 da criaçam, am d. 7 de Setembro* [1553] (repr. Lisboa 1989), 15-123, pp. 87-89; SALOMON, *Deux études*, pp. 50-57; HASSÁN «Dos introducciones»; R. SEGRE, «Contribución documental a la historia de la imprenta Usque y de su edición de la Biblía» in HASSÁN (ed.), *Introducción a la Biblia,* pp. 205-226. This article must be consulted with caution as the authoress did not realize that Yom Tob Atias and Jerónimo de Vargas were two different persons: father and son. See also Aron di Leone LEONI, «New Information on Yomtob Atias *alias* Alvaro de Vargas» *Sefarad* 57 (1997), pp. 271-276.

[63]   G. F. DE BURE, Le Jeune, *Bibliographie instructive ou traité de la connaissance des livres rares et singuliers, Volume de Théologie* (Paris 1763), pp. 98ff.; D. CLEMENT, *Bibliothèque Curieuse historique et critique ou Catalogue raisonné des livres difficiles à trouver* III (Göttingen, J.W. Schmid, 1752), pp. 446-448; J. B. DE ROSSI, *De Typographia Hebraeo-Ferrariensi commentarius historicus quo ferrarienses judaeorum editiones Hebraicae Hispanicae Lusitanae recensentur et illustrantur* (Parma 1780), pp. 68-102.

[64]   USQUE, *Consolação.*

[65]   See YERUSHALMI, «A Jewish Classic,» p. 94; G. TAMANI, «La tipografia marrana di Ferrara (1552-1555)» in M. PERANI, ed., *L'interculturalità dell'Ebraismo* (Ravenna 2004), pp. 287-299.

[66]   A. DE LA TORRE, *Uysyon delectable de la philosophia y artes liberales. A do por muy sotyl artificio se declaran altos secretos. Y per fin las XXIIIJ Coplas de don George Manrique, Estampado en Ferrara, Março 1554.*

[67]   B. RIBEIRO, *História de Menina e Moça* (Ferrara 1554), now available in the *Reprodução facsimilada com Estudo Introdutório por* J. V. DE PINA MARTINS (Lisboa 2002).

literary and geographical works. [68] The first Hebrew book ascribed to
Usque, [69] the *Hoshanot le-Succot (*Hymns for the Feast of Tabernacles)
with a commentary by Simon ben Zemah Duran [70] came out on August
19, 1553, a few days before the Spanish *maḥazor, Orden de Roshasanah
y Kipur.* [71]

As a marginal remark, I would like to point out that I have not used
the old and perhaps obsolete expression «Marrano Press of Ferrara» in
this article. In effect the editors and the printers of the Ferrara vulgar-
ization were former Marranos who had openly embraced their fathers'
religion. Most of the «Men of the Nation» living in Ferrara had returned
to the official practice of Judaism. They had established an independent
synagogue and enjoyed wide jurisdictional and administrative privi-
leges. [72]

### § 2.3. A XVIIth Century Portuguese Translation of the Siddur: The «Ordem de Orasois de Todo ho Anno»

Of particular interest is a handwritten *Ordem de Orasois* formerly
belonging to the hebraist G.B. de Rossi and now kept at the Municipal
Library of Piacenza. The volume is incomplete as the title page is missing.
The name of the translator as well as the date and place where this rare
work was compiled remain unknown. De Rossi called it *Ordo Precum
Iudaicarum lusitanice versus ab anonimo Judaeo* [73] and ascribed it to the

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[68]   For a complete list of the Hebrew works printed by Abraham Usque, see Busi, «La
tipografia ebraica in Emilia Romagna.» Also G. Tamani, «Copisti e collezionisti di libri
ebraici nel Ducato Estense» in E. Fregni and M. Perani, *Vita e cultura ebraica* (1993), pp.
149-162.

[69]   This might also be the last book published by Samuel Sarfati, before he delivered
the Hebrew fonts to Usque. Piattelli «An Unknown Publication» has recently discovered
a Hebrew *maḥazor* printed by Sarfati in 1552.

[70]   The title p. of this book is framed by the design of a gate with two columns. The
same engraving was used for the title p. of Usque's Spanish *maḥazor*.

[71]   See Yerushalmi, «A Jewish Classic,» p. 93.

[72]   See A. di Leone Leoni, «Gli Ebrei Sefarditi a Ferrara, Nuove ricerche e inter-
pretazioni» RMI 52 (1987), 407-446, pp. 419-422; Id., *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e
Portoghese negli Stati Estensi* (Rimini 1992), pp. 194-197 and 213-218.

[73]   *Ordem de Orasois*, f. 272r.

XVIIth century. [74] I took up its Portuguese title from a note written by the anonymous compiler. [75]

The *siddur* contains the translation of the daily and Saturday service and the essential part of the service for *Roš Ḥodeš*, *Ḥanuka*, *Purim*, and the Holydays. These prayers are followed by an *Addendum* [76] with the *seliḥot*. The manuscript is in Portuguese with no text in Hebrew characters. Several Hebrew words as well as the first two verses of the *šemaʿ* are transliterated into Latin characters. [77] A few words, taken up from the Judeo-Spanish jargon, occur in the texts, e.g., *asur* [אסור = forbidden], [78] *sedaqua* [צדקה = righteous deed, charity], [79] *misdrah* [מזרח = Orient]. [80]

### § 2.4. Government Decrees, Notarial Deeds, Inquisitorial Registers

In the course of the last few decades I carried out a systematic (even though incomplete) research in the archives of several Italian cities in order to find new evidence on the history of Sephardic settlements in Ferrara, Modena, Reggio Emilia (in the states of the House of Este), Ancona (under Papal rule), Pesaro (in the Duchy of Urbino) and Venice. The documents gathered so far offer a wealth of precious information on the legal status, communal organization, financial, commercial, industrial and cultural activities, as well as on the socio-economical structure of these communities.

Government decrees and judicial records provide names or lists of names of Spanish and Portuguese Jews compiled by chancellors and public officers who obviously did not know Hebrew and transcribed the sound of foreign words by ear.

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[74] Cfr. G. Tamani, «Manoscritti e incunaboli ebraici nella Biblioteca Comunale di Piacenza» *Archivio Storico per le Province Parmensi* (1969), 131-141, p. 137, n. 5.

[75] *Ordem de Orasois*, ff. 227v-228r.

[76] *Ordem de Orasois*, ff. 232r-271v.

[77] *Ordem de Orasois,* ff. 227v-228r.

[78] *Ordem de Orasois*, f. 4r.

[79] *Ordem de Orasois*, ff. 179r, 236r and *passim*.

[80] *Ordem de Orasois,* f. 132v.

In Ancona the Levantine merchants used to draw up the terms of their commercial transactions in Hebrew and had them written by the chancellors of their community or by rabbis. The Portuguese merchants, still unfamiliar with Hebrew, made frequent recourse to city notaries. Both the Levantine and the Portuguese communities had their deliberations recorded by city notaries when they had to appoint delegates who would represent them in front of the Papal government in Rome. [81] These deeds contain scores of Jewish names transliterated into Latin letters.

In Ferrara, where the Sephardim felt safer and more free, the notarial archives preserve an incredible wealth of information on the history of several families, on their previous life as Marranos in Antwerp, in London and in Lyon and on the ties with their relatives and companions living in Portugal or in North European cities. Other deeds provide wide evidence about their commercial activities and their links with Portuguese, Italian and Ashkenazi merchants in Ferrara and in other cities. The last wills of several prominent people throw new light on the structure of their families, on their religious and emotional links with the *schola* (synagogue) of their Nation and its charitable institutions, and with the Spanish synagogues in Saphed and in Jerusalem that many of them regarded as the spiritual centre of the Sephardic Diaspora. These papers frequently contain the transcription of Hebrew words and several expressions of the Ladino jargon. Many deeds include an official Italian translation of other documents previously drawn up in Portuguese or in Hebrew by the Chancellors of the Portuguese Nation or directly by the concerned parties. Of special interest are the transcriptions of rabbinical sentences concerning marriages, doweries, divorces and inheritances. Some commercial transactions deal with the printing of Hebrew books.

The immense notarial archives of Venice have been only partially explored, so far. However it was possible to gather enough evidence on a hitherto unknown Portuguese community established in the *Ghetto Nuovo* in the middle of the XVIth century. [82] As in other cities, the Venetian deeds

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[81]  A. di Leone Leoni «La Nazione Portoghese ad Ancona e Pesaro» in P. C. Ioly Zorattini, *L'identità dissimulata* (Firenze 2000) pp. 27-98. See the documentary Appendix therein.

[82]  A. di Leone Leoni, «Alcuni Esempi di quotidiana Imprenditorialità tra Ferrara, Ancona e Venezia nel XVI Secolo» *Zakhor* 4 (2000), 57-114, pp. 97-103; Leoni, «La presenza Sefardita,» pp. 69-77.

provide scores of Jewish names and the transcription of several Hebrew words.

Other lists of names are found in the records of the Inquisition. A fundamental contribution was provided by the papers of the Venetian *Santo Uffizio* relating to Jews and Judaizers, integrally published by Ioly Zorattini. [83] This author published also the texts of several proceedings of the Portuguese Inquisition. [84]

I have traced and studied the depositions delivered in Portugal by several people who had belonged to, or had visited Sephardic communities in Italy. In many cases these witnesses described the Jewish ceremonies and sometimes recited passages of prayers, using Hebrew terms and words that the notaries of the Inquisition transcribed on the spot, by ear, into Latin letters.

### § 2.5. The Registers of the Deliberations of the Western Sephardic «Nations»

In 1542 Duke Hercules II granted the «University» [85] of the Spanish and Portuguese Merchants of Ferrara the privilege of dealing with any dispute which might arise between members of their Nations and to settle them by compromise (בוררות). [86]

Thirteen years later the same Duke awarded the Spanish and Portuguese Nation [87] authority to elect *Massari* and *Deputati* (פרנסים וממנים, guardians and appointed officers) with power to enact ordinances, to deal with any dispute among the members of their Nation, to give judgement without appeal, to impose and collect taxes, to fine and excommunicate the

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[83]  P. C. Ioly Zorattini (ed.), *Processi del S. Uffizio di Venezia contro Ebrei e Giudaizzanti (1548-1734),* 14 vol. (Firenze 1980-1999).

[84]  See, for instance, the famous *Processo de Anrrique Nunez* (ANTT, Inquis. Lisboa, no. 2931) in Ioly Zorattini, *Processi 1570-1572* (Firenze 1984), pp. 219-286.

[85]  *University = Association, Corporation, Community.* Cfr. G. Rezasco, *Dizionario del linguaggio storico e amministrativo* (Firenze 1881), *s. v.*

[86]  A. di Leone Leoni, «Documents inédits sur la "Nation Portugaise" de Ferrare» *REJ* 152 (1993), 137-176, pp. 147-148 and doc. 3 therein, pp. 162-164.

[87]  This was the name of the Sephardic community of Ferrara in 1555. It was later called «The Portuguese Nation.»

transgressors and to enforce punishments. However the jurisdictional autonomy of the Nation was not extended to criminal cases.

One of the first ordinances enacted by the Spanish and Portuguese community of Ferrara established the penalty of *niddui* (a form of excommunication) for those who infringed the jurisdictional autonomy of the Nation by appealing to non-Jewish courts. A plenary assembly unanimously agreed upon this provision[88] which became a binding *Ascamah* (agreement, approved deliberation), as the Sephardim used to call their ordinances. Unfortunately the first Register of the Deliberations of the Spanish and Portuguese Nation of Ferrara was lost (or however is not available to scholars). We know about this *Ascamah* from a Responsum by R. Yeḥiel Trabot. [89]

The Chancellors and Rabbis of the Portuguese Nation of Ferrara acted as public notaries and drew up deeds and statements, mainly in Portuguese but also in Hebrew, at the request of members of their community. Copies of some of these documents are preserved in the city archives, attached to Christian notaries' deeds. These papers are important also from the linguistic point of view as they contain expressions lifted from Judeo-Spanish and many Jewish names and Hebrew words transcribed into Latin characters.

In the second half of the XVIth century, Portuguese former Marranos were alllowed to settle in Pisa and in Leghorn (in Tuscany), in Savigliano (in Piedmont), in Nice (in Savoy), and in several minor Italian cities where they established new Jewish centres. They obtained from the Dukes of Savoy and from the Grand-Dukes of Tuscany the identical privileges that Hercules II had granted to the Spanish and Portuguese Nation of Ferrara in 1555. [90]

The new communities enjoyed wide administrative and jurisdictional autonomy. Their communal organization was governed by statutes and ordinances *(Escamot)* drafted by the *Mahamad* (governing board) and

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[88]    JTSA Library, Ms. Rab. 1355, *responsa Mattanot ba-Adam*, ff. 68a-69a (resp. 106); f. 99a (resp. 101), published in French translation by Leoni, «Document inédits» pp. 174-175.

[89]    See R. Bonfil, *The Rabbinate in Renaissance Italy* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1979), p. 153.

[90]    The texts of all these privileges are gathered in the *Libro di Corame Rosso* kept at the Archivio di Stato di Modena, Cancelleria Ducale, Ebrei, b. 14A, publ. *in extenso* in Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese*, pp. 212-248.

democratically approved by the plenary assembly *of* the *yeḥidim.* [91] These regulations became a binding code for all the Sephardim and encompassed the whole range of Jewish life. The *Escamot* stated the principles according to which the «Men of the Nation» had to behave inside the community, in the privacy of their homes and in their relations with Gentiles. The *Mahamad* had full authority to impose taxes for the upkeep of the Nation and to inflict punishments to transgressors and rebels. [92]

In Ferrara the Portuguese Jews were proud of their religious, administrative and jurisdictional autonomy and regarded it as the most important of their privileges. The main, or at least the most conspicuous, duty of the *Mahamad* was to settle the disputes among the «Men of the Nation.» Three *parnassim* were always available (standing, עומדים) for this purpose at the *Residence* of the Nation, in the building of their synagogue. Thus, the *Mahamad* was metaphorically called «The Standing Residence». [93]

The Spanish and Portuguese Nation of Reggio Emilia was perhaps the only Sephardic community in Italy who called its governing board *Vaad* [ועד, committee, council]. [94]

The Statutes of the «Levantine» [95] *Nation* of Pisa, [96] those of the Hebrew Nation of Leghorn [97] as well as the *Livro das Hordems* of the Portuguese Nation of Reggio Emilia and Modena [98] have been published

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[91]    *Yeḥidim* (*lit.* individuals), members of the Community holding no official position at the moment.

[92]    See the decree issued by Grand Duke Ferdinando de Medici on June 10, 1593, § 23, published in Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese*, pp. 237-238. See also the third chapter of the decree issued by Duke Francesco I d'Este on September 10, 1652 (*Ibid.* p. 242). On the decree issued by the Duke of Ferrara on December 23, 1555, see Leoni, «Documents inédits» pp. 162-164.

[93]    Leoni, «Documents inédits,» pp. 147-150; Id., «Per Una Storia della Nazione Tedesca di Ferrara,» *RMI* 62 (1996), 137-166, p 154.

[94]    *O Livro das Hordems da Nação Portuguesa de Reggio Emilia*, published in Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese,* ff. 253-407: 2r-4v and *passim.*

[95]    On the name of the «Nazione Levantina» see R. Toaff, *La Nazione Ebrea a Livorno e a Pisa* (Firenze 1990), pp. 57-64.

[96]    See D. Carpi, «I Capitoli della Comunità di Pisa del 1636 (e le aggiunte degli anni 1639, 1641, e 1643)» *Michael* 9 (1985), pp. 27- 50; Toaff, *La Nazione Ebrea*, pp. 493-554.

[97]    Toaff, *La Nazione Ebrea,* pp. 555-638.

[98]    Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese,* pp. 253-406.

and can be easily compared with the *escamot* of Amsterdam, [99] London, [100] Recife (in Brazil), [101] Bordeaux, [102] and other centres in South-Western France. [103]

The tremendous importance of this documentary corpus cannot be overestimated. Strangely enough the scholars, who studied the minute books compiled in Italy, were mainly Hispanists interested in the peculiarities of the vernacular(s) spoken by the Portuguese Nations. [104] A comprehensive study on the rendering of Hebrew words and names in this literary production is still among the desiderata.

These registers were compiled partly by the chancellors and officers of the different Nations and partly by the *Parnas Presidente* in charge, [105] during his mandate. As these officers were not necessarily scholars or literates they generally had no academic interest in the rules of grammar. They drew up these minutes, and wrote the Hebrew terms therein occurring, transcribing the Hebrew (as well as the Portuguese) words by ear, according to their sound, as they heard it during the service in the synagogue or in current conversation, thus providing direct unamended evidence of the actual pronunciation.

Of great interest are also the Statutes of Charitable Confraternities (חברות) such as, for instance, the [*E*]*scamot* of the «Santa Companhia de dotar Orfans e Donzelas» of Amsterdam [106] and those of the similar institutions of Venice and Leghorn [107].

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[99]   The forty two *Escamod* of the 1639 «merger agreement» of the three Sephardic Communities of Amsterdam were published by W. C. PIETERSEE, *Daniel Levi de Barrios als Geschiedschrijver van de Portugees-Israelitische Gemeente te Amsterdam in zijn Triumpho del Governo Popular* (Amsterdam 1968), pp. 156-167.

[100]   M. BODIAN, «The Escamot of the Spanish-Portuguese Jewish Community of London, 1664» *Michael* 9 (1985), pp. 9-26.

[101]   The *Ascamot* of Recife (1648) were published by A. WITZNITZER, *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* LXXIV (Rio de Janeiro 1954), pp. 58-73.

[102]   See S. SCHWARZFUCHS, Le Registre des Deliberations de la Nation Juive *Portugaise de Bordeaux (1711-1787)* (Paris 1981), pp. 63-611.

[103]   See G. NAHON, *Les «Nations» Juives Portugaises du Sud-Ouest de la France (1684-1791). Documents* (Paris 1981).

[104]   G. Tavani, «Appunti sul giudeo-portoghese di Livorno» Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli. Sezione Romanza (1959), pp. 61-99.

[105]   See TOAFF, *La Nazione Ebrea*, pp. 9-12; LEONI, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese*, pp. 249-251.

### § 2.6. Grammar Books and Dictionaries

The importance of these instruments is obvious and does not need a special discussion. Of particular interest is a grammar book published in Spain in 1526 by the converso Alfonso de Zamora. This author claimed that he had access to the archives of the Jewish communities, seized at the time of the expulsion but still extant. [108] Thus he stated, in rather explicit terms, that his grammar reflected the linguistic traditions –and the pronunciation– of the Spanish Jewry. The scientific value of this work was stated by S. D. Luzzatto. [109]

A grammar book compiled at the beginning of the XVIIth century by the Catholic Humanist Blancuccio is particularly interesting as it proves that the /gn/ pronunciation of *ayin* was already taking place among Italian Jews. [110] The author was a trustworthy witness of this phenomenon. As we shall see, the perusal of grammatical works is essential in documenting the progressive shift towards a nasal-guttural pronunciation of the *ayin* by the Italian Jews between the XVIIth and the XIXth Centuries.

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[106] I. S. Révah, «Le Premier Règlement imprimé de la "Santa Companhia de dotar Orfans e Donzelas Pobres"» *Boletim Internacional de Bibliografia Luso-Brasileira* 4 (1963), 650-691, p. 666. We owe to this scholar a list of the Hebrew words, Hebraisms and expressions typical of the Judeo-Spanish jargon occurring in this precious document.

[107] See, for instance, *Capitulaciones del modo que se deve governar la Hebra de casar huerfanas y donzellas, Instituidas en esta Ciudad de Liorne. Reformadas en el año 5442 per los Señores H. Jacob Jesurun Lopez, Gabriel de Medina... Y de nuevo reformadas, y acresentadas este año 5466.* In Livorno 1706. We reproduce the title page in fig. 16.

[108] A. de Zamora, סדר דקדוק לשון הקדש ... *Introductiones Artis Grammatice Hebraice nunc recenter edite, impresse in Academia complutensi in Edibus Michaelis de Eguía* (undated reprint [1526]) (*Introduction*, unnumb. p.): «ex hebraeorum archivis adytis – haec bona coepta sunt in Hispania.»

[109] S. D. Luzzatto, *Prolegomeni ad una grammatica ragionata della lingua ebraica del Professore S. D. Luzzatto* (Padova 1836), pp. 42-43.

[110] B. Blancuccio, *Institutiones in linguam sanctam Hebraicam,* Romae MDCVIII. On this Author, see Luzzatto, *Prolegomeni.*

## § 3. THE RENDERING OF HEBREW CONSONANTS AND VOWELS BY THE SEPHARDIC SCHOLARS IN THE XVITH CENTURY

Of paramount interest is Yomtob Atias' translation of the book of Lamentations, [111] which is read during the Yom Kippur service. As it is known, this book consists of five poetic compositions: the first four are alphabetic acrostics where every verse (or cluster of verses) begins with letters of the Hebrew alphabet in progressive sequence, from *alef* to *taw*. The repeated succession of verses in alphabetical order was meant to stress the manifold sufferings of the Jewish people. [112] It was also a way of expressing the hope that the tribulations and misfortunes of the sons of Israel were completely fulfilled [113] and had now come to an end. Yomtob Atias was well aware of the importance of this message. [114] In order to convey it unaltered through the process of the vulgarization, he resorted to an expedient: he used the names of the Hebrew letters in Latin characters as headlines for each (cluster of) verse(s) in alphabetical order. Thus the names –and the pronunciation– of the Hebrew consonants are provided, one by one. [115]

The same device was used in the *Biblia Española,* in the translation of Psalm 119, [116] where each stanza is preceded by the name of the initial letter of the Hebrew text transcribed into Latin characters. The names of several Hebrew consonants provided in the *Biblia* are slightly different from the ones given by Yomtob Atias in his *Libro de Oracyones.* This adds new evidence to the fact that the translation of the *Biblia* was undertaken by a team of scholars [117] rather than by a single unknown author. [118]

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[111] ATIAS, *Libro de Oracyones,* ff. 209-217v.

[112] See J. H. TIGAY in *EJ* 10, cols. 1368-1375.

[113] Deut. 28; cfr. USQUE, *Consolação,* «Dialogo Terceiro,» § 30. f. 204r.

[114] See A. di Leone LEONI and S. HERZFELD, «The Orden de oraciones de mes arréo (Ferrara 1555) and a Bakasa composed by Abraham Usque,» *Sefarad* 62 (2002), pp. 99-124.

[115] See fig. 4.

[116] *Biblia*, pp. 304v-306v (see fig. 7).

[117] A. USQUE, *Psalterium de Dauid: Prológo al lector.* Abraham Usque pointed out that he was a member of the team who translated the Bible alongside with eminent scholars. He also stated that all the previous Latin translations were consulted. Cfr. A. di Leone LEONI, «A hitherto unknown edition of the Spanish Psalter by Abraham Usque (Ferrara 1554)» *Sefarad* 61 (2001), 127-136, pp. 131-132.

In his Psalter (Ferrara 1553), Abraham Usque used the Hebrew consonants in alphabetical order as headlines for the stanzas of Psalm 119. However, for this purpose, he employed Hebrew fonts and did not transcribe the name of Hebrew letters into Latin characters.

In 1622 Abram Netto published an enlarged edition of Isac Cavallero's bilingual *Orden de Oraciones*. The new volume [119] presented a fascinating novelty. Netto inserted at the end of the *siddur* an appendix with a list of the Hebrew letters and vowels, giving their names in Latin characters. Furthermore he provided a short *Declaration delos Puntos* (Explanation of vowel-signs) where he explained how every diacritic symbol [120] was to be pronounced. [121]

Until now the *Declaration delos Puntos* was ascribed to Isac Cavallero [122] along with his *Orden de oraciones.* [123] However, I did not find any such explanation in the vulgarizations printed in Venice in the middle of the XVIth century. Thus, in my opinion, the attribution of this «work» to Isac Cavallero is completely groundless. Moreover, in the appendix of the prayerbook sponsored by Abraham Netto, the names and the sounds of several consonants are not consistent with the pronunciation rules (tacitly) adopted by Cavallero seventy years before. The *Declaration delos Puntos* was therefore the work of an independent author: either the same Abram Netto or a scholar employed by him for this purpose.

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[118] R. SEGRE, «La Tipografia ebraica a Ferrara e la stampa della Bibbia, 1551-1559» *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* 35 (1992), pp. 305-332. According to this author the Biblia's translator was unknown («di autore ignoto»). See the remarks by L. PERINI, «La Stampa a Ferrara nel Cinquecento» in A. CHIAPPINI and A. PROSPERI, eds., *Storia di Ferrara*, *Il Rinascimento* (Ferrara 2000), 370-393, pp. 381 and 391.

[119] Abram NETTO, סדור תפלות כמנהג הספרדים בלשון עברי ולשון ספרד. נדפס בויניציאה שנת ש"פב. *ORDEN DE / Oraciones / Segundo el uso / Ebreo, en lengua / Ebraica y en / Español:/ In Venetia, 1622/ Appreso gli Illus[tri] / S[ignori] Piet[ro] e Lor[enzo] Bragadin.* The title p. of this volume is reproduced in LEONI, «La presenza Sefardita,» fig. 12 in Appendix.

[120] On the creation and development of this diacritic system see S. MORAG, *The Vocalization Systems of Arabic, Hebrew and Aramaic: Their Phonetic and Phonemic Principles* ('S-Gravenhage 1962).

[121] See fig. 15.

[122] See, for instance, KAYSERLING, *Biblioteca Española,* pp. 37-38, 59-60.

[123] As we have pointed out, the title of the *Ordenança de Oraciones* was not available to scholars until the middle of the XXth Century.

The names of the Hebrew consonants, given by several scholars in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century are shown in the Table to be published in the second part of this work. The changing names of some letters show the progressive variations occurred in their sound in the span of four centuries.

The pronunciation of each consonant is discussed in the following pages. Unless otherwise stated, these notes are related to the pronunciation of Hebrew by the Sephardim in Venice and in Ferrara in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century. In particular cases I paid attention to further developments in the rendering of specific Hebrew consonants.

Additional research was carried out in order to ascertain how the Italian communities of different origins pronounced the consonant *ayin* between the XVI<sup>th</sup> and the XX<sup>th</sup> century. The results will be presented in a following article to be published in a further issue of this journal.

## § 3.1. Alef

In the sixteenth century the phonetic value of this letter was zero. In most cases it was left without transcription, especially when it occurs at the beginning of a word, e.g. *Aharon* [אהרון, *p.n.*], [124] *Abraham* [אברהם, *p.n.*], [125] *Abinu* [אבינו, our Father], [126] *Atah* [אתה, you, Thou], [127] *veimru* [ואמרו, and will say], [128] *anse emunah* [אנשי אמונה, men of faith]. [129]

However, *alef* was sometimes transliterated as <h>, e.g. *harba* [ארבע, four]. [130] It is worth noting that the same grapheme was used in this case to transliterate both *ayin* and *alef*. In the transcriptions of Spanish texts into Hebrew characters, *alef* was used as *mater lectio-*

[124] *Celihoth*, f. 35v.

[125] *Celihoth*, f. 35v.

[126] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 38v.

[127] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 52v, 53r. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[128] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 181v.

[129] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 32v.

[130] *Biblia Española de Ferrara,* [hereafter: *Biblia*] f. 9v: *Kiriat harba.*

*nis,* to indicate the vowel /a/ [131] as, for instance, אקאבארא [*acabara,* he will complete], [132] אלצארא [*alçara,* he will lift up], [133] סאקארן [*sacaran,* they will extract], [134] טומאראן [*tomaran,* they will take]. [135]


*§ 3.2. Bet*

Hard (dotted) *bet* was regularly rendered as a plosive *b.* Both in Venice and in Ferrara soft (undotted) *bet* had frequently a sound identical to hard *bet* as, for instance, in *kebod* [כבוד, the honour], [136] *Abinu* [אבינו, our Father], [137] *uba* [ובא, and He comes], [138] *Abimelech* [אבימלך, *p.n.*], [139] *habdalah* [הבדלה, separation]. [140] The *Biblia de Ferrara* provides many more examples: *Hadebarim* [הדברים, Deuteronomy], *Nebiim* [נביאים, Prophets], *Hobadiah* [עבדיה, *p.n.*], [141] *Reuben* [ראובן, *p.n.*], [142] *Ribkah* [רבקה, *p.n.*], [143] *Zebulun* [זבלון, *p.n.*], [144] *Ketubim* [כתובים, Hagiographa]. [145] In other, less frequent, instances the soft (undotted) *bet* was rendered as <v>, e.g *vaya-*

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[131] On the use of *alef* and its most frequent association with /a/ in ancient transliterations of Hebrew texts, see L. MINERVINI, «The Development of a norm in the Aljamiado Graphic System in Medieval Spain» in Y. K. and N. A. STILLMAN, eds., *From Iberia to Diaspora, Studies in Sephardic History and Culture* (Leiden 1999), 416-431, p. 420.

[132] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 176. See doc. 6 in Appendix.

[133] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.,* p. 146.

[134] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.,* p. 194.

[135] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.,* p. 253.

[136] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* p. 21r; ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes,* p. 53v and *passim;* USQUE, *Maḥazor,* f. 47r.

[137] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* p. 38v. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[138] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, p. 40v. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[139] USQUE, *Psalterium,* f. 45v.

[140] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes,* f. 200v.

[141] *Biblia,* ff. *IIIr, 265r.

[142] *Biblia,* f. 25v.

[143] *Biblia, f.* 9v and ff.

[144] *Biblia,* ff. 7v, 60v.

[145] *Biblia, Tabla.*

*havor* [ויעבור, (He) passed], [146] *arvit* [ערבית, evening prayer], [147] *kevod*
[כבוד, honour], [148] *thevah* [תבה, podium]. [149] In some cases Yomtob Atias
transcribed the hard (dotted) *bet* as <bb>, e.g., *rabba* [רבא, (*Aram.*) great], [150]
*gibbor* [גבור, mighty], [151] *Ribbon* [רבון, Master], [152] *mibbeth* [מבית, from the
house]. [153]

In the following centuries the almost general lack of distinction be-
tween soft and hard *bet* remained a typical feature of the Sephardic pro-
nunciation in Italy and in the Western Portuguese Nations, e.g., *tebà, tebah*
[תבה, podium], [154] *nedabà* [נדבה, donation, offer], [155] *hebrà*, [156] *haberim*, [157]
*haberut* [158] [חברות , חברה,חברים, confraternity, members of the confrater-
nity, membership], *tesuba* [תשובה, return, penitence], [159] *yesiba* [ישיבה, (in

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[146] *Celihoth, passim*; ATIAS, *Orden de Silhoth*, ff. 14v-17r; USQUE, *Maḥazor,* f.
163r and ff.

[147] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, f. 208 and *passim*; IDEM, *Ordenança, Tabla* and *passim,*
ATIAS, *Orden de Silhoth,* 14v and *passim.*

[148] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 19v and *passim*; Usque, *Maḥazor,* f. 135v. See doc.
3 in Appendix.

[149] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 171v.

[150] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 19r.

[151] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 23v and *passim.*

[152] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 48v and *passim.*

[153] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* ff. 184v, 234v.

[154] *Escamod e Estatutos do K.K. de Liorne, 1665, 1655-1677,* publ. TOAFF, *La Nazione
Ebrea*, pp. 555-593: 559, 580 and *passim*; *Orden y Regulamento del Talmud Torah del
K.K. de Nefusoth Jeudah* [at Saint-Esprit], no. 7 and 8, publ. NAHON, *Les Nations*, p. 243.

[155] *Livro das Hordem*, Reggio Emilia, ff. 11, 24 and *passim;* LEONI, *La Nazione
Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese,* pp. 279, 306. *Escamod de Liorne* (1655-77), in TOAFF,
*La Nazione Ebrea,* p. 573.

[156] *Livro das Hordems,* Reggio Emilia*,* ff. 11-12, 24, 25, LEONI, *La Nazione Ebraica
Spagnola e Portoghese,* pp. 279-281, 307, 31; *Escamot de Liorne* (1655- 94)*,* TOAFF, *La
Nazione Ebrea,* pp. 569-638, 576, 580, 590 and *passim; Registre des Deliberations de
Bordeaux, Asc.* no. 1 (May 11, 1710) and *passim* until *Ascamot* 532, 533, 534 (April 7 and
May 5, 1785), publ. SCHWARZFUCHS, *Le Registre,* pp. 556-558.

[157] *Livro das Hordems,* Reggio Emilia*,* f.12; LEONI, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e
Portoghese,* p. 281.

[158] *Capitulaciones … Hebra de Casar Huerfanas, Liorne,* pp. 23, 33.

[159] *Livro das Hordems,* Reggio Emilia*,* f. 35, LEONI, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e
Portoghese,* p. 331; ACE,Ve, *Libro delle Parti,* p. 3 and *passim.*

this case) session], [160] *ab bet din, ros yesiba* [אב בית דין, ראש ישיבה, head of the (rabbinical) tribunal, director of (the) high talmudic school], [161] *libnot* [לבנות, to build]; [162] *sof dabar* [סוף דבר, in conclusion], [163] *abélim* [אבלים, mourners], [164] *hamabdeel* (English transcription) [המבדיל, who separates], [165] *uba* [ובא, and He comes], [166] *ngabde* [עבדי, servants of, *c.s.*], [167] *shober* [שובר, breaks]. [168] However in rare instances we find also *tevà,* [169] *hevrà,* [170] *nedavà.* [171]

## § 3.3. Gimel

This consonant was realized as a hard /g/ (as in the English word *gift*) and generally transcribed by a simple g as in *Gilhad* [גלעד,

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[160] *Livro das Hordems,* Reggio Emilia, f. 35, LEONI, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese,* p. 331; *Orden y Regulamento del Talmud Torah del K.K. de Nefusoth Jeudah,* no. 6, publ. NAHON, *Les Nations,* p. 242.

[161] Y. YEHUDA LEON, *Alabanças de Santidad / Traducion de los Psalmos de David por la misma phrasis y palabras del Hebrayco, en Amsterdam año 5431* [1670-71], unnumb. p. with the *Approbação do Haham Ishac Aboab.*

[162] Yoseph, Iacob and Abraam PROOPS תורה נביאים וכתובים בשני עמודים, *Biblia in dos colunas Hebrayco y Español … en la primera coluna el original Hebraico, con todas las perfecciones en las letras puntos y taamim con las annotaciones de or Tora, poniendo cada coza en su lugar… en la segunda coluna la traduccion en lengua Española; y buscamos las palabras mas proprias en aquella lengua, para exprimir el sentido del texto; נדפס באמשטרדם en casa e a costa de Yoseph, Iacob y Abraam de Salomon Proops estampadores y mercadores de Libros, Hebraicos y Españoles en Amsterdam* [5522/1762], unnumb. p. of the introduction.

[163] PROOPS, *Biblia, ibid.*

[164] [A. Baruch CREHANGE] עץ החיים . *L'arbre de la vie. Prières pour les malades, les mourants et les morts* (Paris 1911), p. 83.

[165] M. GASTER, ed., *The Book of Prayer and Order of Service According to the Custom of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews with an English translation … and the traditional tunes,* vol. I (Repr. 1965 [Oxford 1903]), p. 246.

[166] GASTER, *Book of Prayer*, p. 320.

[167] GASTER, *Book of Prayer*, p. 254.

[168] GASTER, *Book of Prayer*, p. 259.

[169] *Escamot de Liorne, 1655-1677*, see TOAFF, *La Nazione Ebrea*, p. 571.

[170] TOAFF, *La Nazione Ebrea*, p. 573.

[171] TOAFF, *La Nazione Ebrea*, p. 598; NAHON, *Les Nations,* p. 156.

*g.n.*], [172] *Gilgal* [גלגל, *g.n.*], [173] *Megiddo* [מגדו, *g.n.*], [174] *megila* [מגלה, scroll]. [175] We also find the forms *g^{ui}, g^{ue}* and even *gh^i, gh^e* or gh^a. The former graphemes were probably originated by their affinity and similarity to the Spanish forms *q^{ue}, q^{ui}*, e.g.: *Maguen* [מגן, defender], [176] *Guilgal* [גלגל, *g.n.*], [177] *seguemalanu* [שגמלנו, who has delivered us], [178] *Guedelha* [גדליה, *p.n.*]. [179]

The forms *gh^i, gh^e* were loans from Italian, probably due to the presence of local workers in the printing press, e.g. *meghilah* [מגלה, roll], [180] *ghimel* [גימל, consonant], [181] *Ben Ghebirol* [בן גבירול, *p.n.*], [182] *Maghen* [מגן, defender], [183] *Meghido* [מגדו, *g.n.*] *Ghilhad* [גלעד, *g.n.*], [184] *Ghilboah* [גלבע, *g.n.*], [185] *Ghemara* [גמרא, tradition], [186] *haghadah* [הגדה, narration], [187] *Gad* [188] or *Ghad* [189] [גד, *p.n.*]. This is probably another symptom of the fact that several persons of different cultural extraction worked at the translation of the *Biblia.*

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[172] *Biblia,* ff.14v-15r and *passim.*

[173] ATIAS, *Orden de Silhoth*, f. 36r.

[174] *Biblia*, ff. 105r, 107r.

[175] *Biblia,* f. *IIIa.

[176] USQUE, *Maḥazor*, f. 105v.

[177] *Celihoth*, f. 37r.

[178] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 181v.

[179] ANTT, Inquis. Lisboa, *Processo* 2931, f. 81r, March 8, 1581, publ. IOLY ZORATTINI, *Processi 1570-1572,* p. 273.

[180] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, *Tabla*, f. iiij.

[181] *Biblia* f. 304v.

[182] ATIAS, *Orden de Silhoth*, f. 52r.

[183] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 28r.

[184] *Biblia,* ff. 78v, 105v, 109r, 109v.

[185] *Biblia,* ff. 138r, 151r.

[186] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 22r; USQUE, *Orden de mes*, *Tabla,* f. *ijr.

[187] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 129r.

[188] *Biblia*, ff. 14r, 17r, 23r, 60v, 105r.

[189] *Biblia*, f. 109r.

## § 3.4. Dalet

This letter was homogeneously transliterated as *d* and does not call for any special remark. In word final position it was sometimes pronounced /t/, e.g.: Davit. [190] «Re Davit» [King David] was the name of a ship owned by Adam Arens, a Jewish merchant of Venice, in the first decade of the XVIIth century. [191] The form *Davit* was widespread also among the Italian Jews. [192]

## § 3.5. He

Both in Ferrara and in Venice this consonant was either transcribed by *h* or left without notation, for instance, *cahal* [congregation], [193] *teva* [194] / *thevah* [195] [תבה, podium where the Torah is read].

The problem of establishing the exact value of this letter and of other laringeal consonants is complicated by the fact that both the Venetian and the Ferrarese scholars used the symbol <h> to represent not only consonants with a similar phonetic value, such as *alef, he* and *ayin*, but even the *ḥet* and the soft *kaf* with their completely different palatal sound, e.g. *Ahabat holam* [אהבת עולם, (with) everlasting love] [196] *Pesah* [פסח,

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[190] ASAn, not. B. Pavesi, reg. 963 (November 16, 1546); ASAn, not. G. B. Agli, reg. 224 (March 3, 1552); ASAn, not. A. Manfredi, reg. 735 (January 23 and November 30, 1553); *ibid.*, reg. 754, ff. 264r-267r (July 1554); *ibid.,* reg. 234 (June 19, 1555); ASAn, not. P.G. Senili, reg. 1153 (April 4, 1555); ASFe, not. A. Coccapani, pc. 5 (December 31, 1552); *ibid.,* pc. 9 (May 27, 1558); ASPs, not. Francesco Fattori (January 5, 1557); ASFe, not. M. Taurino, *Testamenti* (June 21, 1563); ASVe, not. G.B. Monti, reg. 8252 (November 24, 1564); *ibid.,* reg. 8257 (May 12, 1569); *ibid.,* reg. 8261 (October 15, 1571); CHJP, HM 3147 (Venice 1580) f. 2.

[191] See B. ARBEL, *Trading Nations, Jews and Venetians in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden 1995), p. 177.

[192] S. SIMONSOHN, *The Apostolic See, Documents 1522-1538* (Toronto 1989), docs. 1443, 1464 and 1527.

[193] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p 108.

[194] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 160.

[195] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 171v.

[196] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 59v.

Passover], [197] *Yeriho* [ירחו, *g.n.*], [198] *Melahim* [מלכים, kings], [199] *berahot* [ברכות, blessings]. [200]

## § 3.6. Consonantal waw

Consonantal *waw* [201] was regularly pronounced /*v*/. It calls for no special remark. In the transcription of Spanish texts into Hebrew characters, *waw* was used to represent the sound of the letter v, *e.g.* וראנו [*verano,* summer], [202] אינוירנו [*inverno,* winter], [203] וינו [*vino,* wine], [204] וירדורא [*verdura,* vegetables]. [205]

## § 3.7. Zayin

This consonant deserves no particular comment. It was pronounced /z/ and graphically represented as *z* and less frequently as *s*. For instance: *hazan* [חזן, cantor], [206] *oznecha* [אזנך, Your ear], [207] *ezo* [איזו, which?]. [208]

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[197] Atias, *Libro Or.*, *Tabla (Index).*

[198] *Celihoth*, 37v.

[199] *Biblia Española, Tabla.*

[200] Cavallero, *Ordenança, Tabla*, *passim.*

[201] For a definition of the *consonantal* (or *semivocalic*) and *vocalic* values of this letter, see Morag, *Vocalization Systems,* p. 21.

[202] Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 132 and *passim.*

[203] Cavallero, *Orden Or.*

[204] Cavallero, *Orden Or.,* p. 253.

[205] *Haggadah con su ladino,* unnumb. p. with the vulgarization of «*Mah Ništanah*» [«in what is (this night) different?»]. See doc. 7 in Appendix.

[206] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 181v; Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 108, 140 and *passim.* See doc. 4 and 6 in Appendix.

[207] Atias, *Libro Or.*,f. 42r.

[208] Atias, *Libro Or.*, f. 154r.

*§ 3.8. Ḥet*

This consonant was pronounced as a voiceless pharyngeal fricative. Its sound was graphically represented as *h,* e.g., *hazan* [חזן, cantor], [209] *Pinhas / Pinhaz* [פינחס, *p.n.*], [210] *Nahum* [נחום, *p.n.*], [211] *Rahel* [רחל, *p.n.*]. [212]

In notarial documents registered in various Italian cities, *ḥet* was frequently transliterated as *ch,* e.g., *Charavon* [חרבון, f.*n.*], [213] *Chaim / Chaijm* [חיים, life, used as *p.n.*], [214] *Abenmenachem* [אבן מנחם, *f.n.*], [215] *Giachia* [יחיה, *f.n.*], [216] *Simecha* or *Simacha* [שמחה, Joy (Gioia in Italian), used as p.n.]. [217]

In the XVIIth century *Livro das Hordems* (*Sefer Ascamot*) of the Portuguese Nation of Reggio Emilia, *ḥet* was occasionally trascribed as <g> as, for instance, *gesban* [month of the Jewish calendar]; [218] *gebra* [חברה, company, confraternity]. [219] This form occurred also in the XVIIIth century Register of Deliberations of the Portuguese Nation of Bordeaux where the *ḥet* was transcribed also by <j>, e.g., *ḥebra,* [220] *jebra* or even *jebera;* [221] *bedajaim*

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[209] Usque, *Orden de mes*, f 181v; Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 108, 140 and *passim.* See doc. 4 and 6 in Appendix.

[210] *Celihoth*, f. 37r; Atias, *Orden de Silhoth*, f. 36r.

[211] *Biblia, Tabla.*

[212] *Biblia, Tabla* and *passim.*

[213] ASAn, not. Antonio Manfredi Reg. 724, ff. 378r-379r, October 27, 1552.

[214] ASAn, not. G. B. Agli, Reg. 221, ff. 368v-369r, September 15, 1552.

[215] ASAn, not. B. Pavesi reg. 964, ff. 679v-680r, December 28, 1547.

[216] ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, *Registrum Decretorum* 25, p. 205, October 6, 1560, Safeconduct in favour of Gedalia ibn Yaḥia. See Leoni, «Documents inédits» p. 165.

[217] ASFe, not. G.B. Saracco, pc. 29S, January 13,1540 ; ASVe, not. G. B. Monti, reg. 8252, ff. 18r-18v, August 17, 1565.

[218] *Livro das Hordems,* pp. 19, 24; see Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese*, pp. 295, 307.

[219] *Livro das Hordems,* f. 24v; Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese*, p. 307.

[220] *Registre des Deliberations de Bordeaux*, *Asc. 25*, May 12 1722, publ. Schwarzfuchs, *Le Registre* p. 103.

[221] *Registre des Deliberations de Bordeaux*, *Asc. 25*, May 12 1722, publ. Schwarzfuchs, *Le Registre* p. 104.

[בית החיים, cemetery]. [222] These transcriptions were probably due to persons of Spanish mother tongue.

### § 3.9. Ṭet

This consonant was uniformly pronounced /t/ identically with the *taw*. In the transcription of Spanish texts into Hebrew characters, the letter *ṭet* was used to graphically represent the sound of /t/, e.g. [אינטרי טאנטו, in the meantime]. [223]

### § 3.10.1 Consonantal Yod.

Both in the Venetian and in the Ferrarese vulgarizations, consonantal *yod* [224] was transcribed by *i*, *y* or *j* as, for instance, *Israel / Ysrael*, [225] *yad* [יָד, hand], [226] *jigmaleha* [יגמלך, He will deliver you]. [227] We shall deal with the *vocalic value* of the yod below, in the paragraph devoted to the /i/ sounding vowels.

### § 3.10.2. The Use of Yod as Mater Lectionis in the Transcriptions of Spanish Texts

In the transcriptions of Spanish and Ladino texts into Hebrew letters, Yod was employed as *mater lectionis* after an /e/ sounding vowel but it was also used as graphic support for /i/ as for instance ויז [*vez,* time], [228]

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[222] *Registre des Deliberations de Bordeaux*, *Asc.* 26, September 29, 1722: *Asc.* 45, March 30, 1729; *Asc.* 50, April, 4 1730; *Asc.* 152, January 28, 1748; *Asc.* 159, June 8 1748, publ. SCHWARZFUCHS, *Le Registre* pp. 102, 120, 122, 200, 207.

[223] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança*, p. 80.

[224] For a definition of the *consonantal* (or *semivocalic*) and *vocalic* values of this letter, see MORAG, *Vocalization Systems,* p. 21.

[225] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, pp. 214, 217 and *passim*; ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, pp. 21r, 49v and *passim.*

[226] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, p. 36v.

[227] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 147.

[228] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.,* p. 160, 194; *Haggadah con su Ladino*.

אינטרי [*entre,* between], [229] מיניסטיר [*menester,* need], [230] דיראן [*diran,* they will say], [231] נינגונה [*ninguna,* (f.) none]. [232]

Simple or double Yod combined with *nun,* <נ'יי> ,<נ'י>, formed the clusters of Hebrew letters representing the Spanish *ñ,* e.g. אנייו [*año,* year], [233] אוניאס [*uñas,* nails]. [234]

A lamed in combination with double *yod* was generally used to graph-ically represent the Spanish <ll>, e.g. לייגארן [*llegaran,* they will arrive], [235] אליי [*alli,* there], [236] לייבדו [*llevdo,* leavened]. [237]

*§ 3.10.3. Yod as Mater Lectionis in the Transcriptions of Italian Texts by Italian and Italo-Sephardic Scholars.*

In the transliterations of Italian texts into Hebrew characters, the letter *yod* was used as *mater lectionis* to denote an /e/ or /i/ sounding vowel. In the *Tephillot Latini,* an Italian vulgarization of the prayerbook in Hebrew characters, [238] we find פַטוֹרֵי דִי צֵילִי אֵי טֵירַה [*Fattore di celi* [239] *e terra,* Maker of skies and land], [240] אסינדו קוֹסטְרֵיטוֹ אֵי פְרֵיגַטוֹ [*essendo costretto e pregato,* as I was compelled and requested]. [241]

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[229] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 108 and *passim; Haggadah con su Ladino,* docs. 6 and 7 in Appendix.

[230] Cavallero, *Orden Or.* unnumb. p. with the Ladino translation of הא לחמא עניא («This is the bread of affliction»).

[231] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 76 and *passim.* See doc. 5 in Appendix.

[232] *Haggadah con su Ladino.*

[233] *Haggadah con su Ladino,* vulgarization of «Mah Ništanah.» See ab. note 205.

[234] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 254.

[235] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 301.

[236] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 277.

[237] *Haggadah con su Ladino.*

[238] [R. Talmi] *Tephillot Latini* (Bologna 1538).

[239] The Italian word «cieli» is transcribed according to its sound regardless of its exact spelling.

[240] *Tephillot Latini,* p.2.

[241] *Tephillot Latini.*

The sound of the Italian tryptich <gli>was transcribed as <ליי> or <לי> e.g. פליולי [*figlioli,* sons], [242] טאליאר [*tagliar,* to cut). [243]

Double *yod* was used to graphically represent the sound of Italian soft /g$^i$/, /g$^e$/, e.g. יינטילי דוני [*gentili donne,* ladies]. [244] The Italian phoneme /gn/ was represented by means of a cluster of letters composed by a *nun* and one *yod* or –more frequently– two *yods* <ניי> as in ביסונייה [*bisogna,* it is necessary], [245] סינייורי [*signori,* gentlemen]. [246]

## § 3.11. Kaf

Soft (undottet) *kaf* had a voiceless fricative sound identical with that of *ḥet,* graphically represented as *h* or *ch,* e.g. *hehal, hechal,* [247] *echal* [248] [היכל, ark], *Malachi* [מלאכי, *p.n.*]. [249]

Hard *kaf* with a *daggeš* was pronounced as a voiced velar stop /k/ and variously represented as *c, cc, k, q,* e.g.: *Kerubim* [כרובים, Cherubs], [250] *haskivenu* [השכיבנו, make us lie down], [251] *haccol* [הכל, all, the whole thing]. [252]

Final *kaf* vocalized by *ševa* or *kameṣ* was pronounced with a marked fricative sound. In Ferrara it was represented by *ch* as, for instance *erech apaim* [ארך אפים, indulgent], [253] *camocha* [כמוך, like You], [254] *banaych* [בניך, your children]. [255]

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[242] M. MODENA MAYER (ed.), «Masseket Ḥamor,» stanza V, line 24.

[243] «Masseket Ḥamor,» *stanza* XI, line 6. Cfr. R. BONFIL, «One of the Italian Sermons by R. M. Dato» (Hebrew), Italia 1 (1976), pp. 1-32.

[244] *Tephillot Latini*, f. 2r.

[245] «Masseket Ḥamor,» p. 334, *stanza* X, line 1.

[246] «Masseket Ḥamor,» p. 337, *stanza* XII, line 13.

[247] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 163, 164, 206 and *passim*; ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, p. 206.

[248] USQUE, *Consolação*, f. 218r.

[249] Biblia, ff. 276-277.

[250] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* unnumb. p. of gathering *"**"*.

[251] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 61v.

[252] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 39v and *passim.*

[253] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 39r and *passim.*

[254] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 36r.

In Venice, Isac Cavallero transcribed soft (undotted) *kaf* as <h> and final *kaf* as <c>, e.g. *barehù* [ברכו], *baruc* [ברוך]. [256]

Samuel Usque represented final *kaf* as <ck>, e.g. *Abimeleck* [אבימלך, *p.n.*]. [257] Of particular interest is the form *nakdisah* [נקדישָׁךְ, we shall sanctify You], [258] occurring in the *Kedušah* [קדושה, santification]. In the Sephardic ritual the possessive suffix (for the second person masculine singular) is attached directly to the verb as against the form נקַדֵשׁ את שְׁמֶךָ [we shall sanctify Your Name] found in the Aškenazic *siddurim*. [259]

In or around 1526 Alfonso de Zamora called the soft *kaf* «chaf» and «caf». [260] In 1622 Abraam Netto gave the final *kaf* a special name «hcaf,» but in most cases he transcribed it as *ch* as for instance, *Baruch* [ברוך, Blessed], [261] but also *Baruc*. [262]

## § 3.12. Lamed

This consonant does not require any discussion.

## § 3.13. Mem

The pronunciation of *mem* calls for no special comment as it was regularly rendered as *m*. However, at the end of the word *mem* was often pronounced as /n/, e.g. in the proper nouns *Abrahin*, [263] *Abrain* [264] and

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[255] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 109v.

[256] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.,* pp. 146-147. See doc. 1 in Appendix.

[257] USQUE, *Consolação*, ff. 39v-40r.

[258] ATIAS, Libro *Or.,* p. 24r. See Doc. 2 in Appendix.

[259] E. Y. KUTSCHER, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, ed. R. Kutscher (Jerusalem-Leyden 1982), pp. 34-35.

[260] ZAMORA, *Introduciones Artis Grammatice*, p. marked «אב» with a prospect of the *Alphabetum Hebraeum.* See figure 1.

[261] NETTO, *Orden Or*., pp. 306-307, 535.

[262] NETTO, *Orden Or.,* p. 306.

[263] ASM, Cancelleria Ducale, *Volumen Decretorum* 25, pp. 121-22, February 1, 1493: Duke Alfonso's safeconduct in favour of the first Spanish Jews who settled in Ferrara.

[264] ASVe, Notarile Testamenti, B. 348, not. G. A. Catti, April 22, 1589.

*Abrahan,* [265] *Effrain,* [266] *Yon Tob,* [267] *Menahen,* [268] *Menachin,* [269] *Cain,*
*Cayn and Hain* [חיים], [270] *Yeoyachin,* [271] but also *queducin* [קדושים, mar-
riage celebration]. [272]

Final *mem* was often merged with the preceeding vowel and ren-
dered by a velar nasal sound, as it appears from such Lusitanian forms
as Abrahão, [273] Abrahaõ. [274] The final diptych of this word was undoubt-
ely pronounced with a marked nasal accent by the Portuguese Jews of
Ferrara.

## § 3.14. Nun

*Nun* was graphically represented as \<n\>. However, especially in final
position, it was sometimes pronounced *m,* e.g., *Choem, Coem, Cohem,* [275]

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[265] ASVe, Notarile Atti, not. G.B. Monti, reg. 8261, June 28, 1571 («Abrahan
Caref»).

[266] ASVe, Notarile Testamenti, B. 348, not. G. A. Catti, April 22, 1589.

[267] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, title p.; ASFe, not. C, Sacrati, pc. 1 June 7 1544.

[268] ASVe, Notarile Atti, not. G.B. Monti, reg. 8261, June 28, 1571 («Abrahan Caref,
Menahen Cohen, Ser Jsahac quondam Cain»).

[269] *The Code-Book of Hayyim Saruq,* publ. Arbel, *Trading Nations,* 210-215, p.
214.

[270] ASMo, Archivi Giudiziarii, Consiglio di Segnatura, reg. 42, no. 457, *s.d.* [January
1569]; reg. 43, no. 3174, *s.d.* [July 1569]; ASVe, not. G.B. Monti, b. 8262, January 2,
1572 and *passim*; ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa*, Processo 2931, f. 81r, publ. Ioly Zorattini,
*Processi 1570-1572*, 219-286, p. 273.

[271] *Biblia, Catalogo de los Reyes,* f. *viiia, f. 182r.

[272] ASFe, not. G.B. Conti, pc. 16, December 2, 1578.

[273] ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa*, Processo 5817, f. 17r; *Ibid.*, Processo 12493, f. 6; ANTT,
Conselho Central do S.to Officio, doc. no. 2542, *passim.*

[274] Usque, *Consolação*, f. 232r, 232v, 236r and *passim.* On Usque's habit to write the
accent on the final \<o\> as, for instance, in *razaõ (razão)*, see J. V. de Pina Martins, «Estudo
Introdutório,» in Usque, *Consolação* (repr. Lisboa 1989), 125-409, pp. 388-389.

[275] ASAn, not. G. B. Agli, reg. 221, March 3, 22, 1552; *ibid.*, reg. 191, January 23,
February 6, 1553; November 23, 1553; *ibid.*, reg. 190, June 23 1556 (Cfr. Leoni, *La
Nazione Portoghese ad Ancona e a Pesaro* pp. 89, 96-97); ASAn, not. A. Manfredi,
reg. 754, March 6, 1554; ASMo, Archivi Giudiziarii, Consiglio di Segnatura, reg. 30,
no. 788, *s.d.* [February 1566]; *Ibid.,* reg. 46, N. 248, *s.d.* [January 1570]; ASAn, not. G.
Alberici, reg. 232, October 25, 1553; ASVe, reg. 6517, May 2, 1571; not. G.B. Monti,

*Caim,* [276] *Ziom* [ציון, *g.n.*], [277] *Harom* [אהרן, *p.n.*], [278] *Jocanam* [יוחנן, *p.n.*], [279] *Cassam* [חסן, *p.n.*], [280] *Natam* [נתן, *p.n.*]. [281]

In Ladino the alternation between /m/ and /n/ occurred also in other word positions as it is shown by such transcriptions as אינפיסאר [*empezar,* to start], [282] איסקומדאראן [*escondaran,* they will hide]. [283]

In the transliteration of Spanish words, final *nun* was frequently left untranscribed, e.g., ליאמרא [*llamaran,* they will call], [284] דירא [*diran,* they will say]. [285] This happened occasionally in the transcription of Hebrew names, also when *nun* does not occur at the end of the word, e.g., *Beyamin* [בנימן, *p.n.*]. [286]

## § 3.15. Samekh

This consonant does not require particular attention. It was uniformly pronounced /s/ and variously transcribed as *s*, *ç* or *c^e*, *c^i*. For instance:

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reg. 8262, May 14, 1572; ASFe, not. A. Coccapani, p. 9, December 12 1555; *ibid.* not. de Vecchi pc. 1, December 30, 1564, March 17, 1578; ASFe, not. G. Conti, May 2, 1574; ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa,* Processo 2931*,* ff. 81r-82r, March 8, 1581; *ibid.*, Processo 5817, f. 17v, 20r, March 6, 1581; Ioly Zorattini, *Processi 1570-1572*, pp. 273, 274; ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Ebrei, 2, witness testimony by David Alvarez, publ. Leoni, «Documents inédits» p. 171.

[276] Usque, *Consolação*, f. 224r.

[277] Usque, *Consolação*, ff. 251v, 254r, 257r, 258v, 281r and *passim*.

[278] Usque, *Consolação*, f. 250r.

[279] *The Code-Book of Hayyim Saruq,* publ. Arbel, *Trading Nations,* 210-215, p. 212.

[280] ASPs, not. A. Allegrucci, October 24, 1548; not. G. Garattoni, May 5 and May 13 1549, March 3 1550; ASAn, not. G.B. Agli, reg. 221, September 15, 1552; ASFe, not. A. Coccapani, pc. 5, December 12 1552.

[281] ASFe, not. A. Coccapani, pc. 5, September 19, 1552.

[282] *Haggadah con su Ladino.* See doc. 7 in Appendix. In later edition the form «*escombraran*» is found.

[283] *Haggadah con su Ladino.*

[284] Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 146.

[285] Cavallero, *Orden Or.*, p. 160.

[286] Usque, *Consolação*, f. 68r and ff.

*Yocef* [יוסף, *p.n.*], [287] *Sepher,* [288] *Cefer* [289] and *Çefer* [290] [ספר, book, scroll of the Law], *Muçaf* [מוסף, supplement]. [291]

### § 3.16.1 ʿAyin

In Italy, in the first half of the XXth century, *ʿayin* was realized as a voiced velar nasal phoneme commonly transcribed as *gn*. Its sound was similar to the Spanish *ñ* in the word *España* and to *gn* in the Italian word *sognare* or in French *agneau.* Typical was the rendering of *Šemaʿ* as *Scemang* or *Scemagn*. According to popular belief, this particular sound was introduced by the Iberian exiles that arrived in Italy after the expulsion from Spain (1492) and the general forced conversion in Portugal (1497). We could ascertain that it was not so. In the second part of this work we shall deal with the progressive shift in the pronunciation of *ʿayin* a process which took place in the course of a few centuries.

### § 3.16.2. The Pronunciation of ʿAyin in the Early Modern Sephardic Settlements of Venice and Ferrara

The perusal of a wide range of transliterations of Hebrew words and (mainly liturgical) texts led me to the conclusion that, in the XVIth century Sephardic communities of Venice and Ferrara, the phonetic value of *ʿayin* was zero or tending to zero.

In the vulgarizations of Hebrew prayers printed in Ferrara and in Venice this consonant was most frequently transcribed as <h>. For

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[287] *Celihoth*, f. 37r; ASFe, not. Fiornovelli, pc. 2 Undated [1565] letter of Abraam Benveniste to «Chia» [חייא] Barochas signed (among others) by «Yocef Cohen» member of a Venetian Bet Din**.**

[288] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, *Tabla.*

[289] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 146.

[290] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança*, p. 147, 150.

[291] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança*, *tabla* and *passim.*

instance, in *Semah* [שמע hear!], [292] *harbith* [ערבית, evening prayer], [293] *leholam vahed* [לעולם ועד, forever and ever], [294] *nehilah* [נעילה, closing (*liturg.*)], [295] *Kenahan* [כנען, *g.n.*]. [296] However, in many cases, *ʿayin* was not transcribed at all, e.g., *vaed* [ועד, forever], [297] *arvit / arbith* [ערבית, evening prayer], [298] *Azaria* [עזריה, *p.n.*], [299] *Iacob*, [300] *hosaana* [הושענה, Osanna], [301] *Ghilboa* [גלבע, *g.n.*], [302] *Amida*, [303] *Omer* [304] [(ספירת ה) עמר], [305] *Kiriath harba* [קרית ארבע, *g.n.*], [306] *hol amoed* [חל המועד, days between the first and the last days of a holiday]. [307]

In the records of Portuguese Inquisition we find: *Tesabeav* [308] and *tisabeab* [309] [the ninth day of av], *cerabetebe* [עשרה בטבת, the tenth day of tevet], [310] *samã* [hear!]. [311]

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[292] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança,* p. 89, 188 and *passim*; ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes, Tabla (Unnumb. p.),* f. 53v.

[293] ATIAS, *Libro. Or.*, *Tabla*, f *IJ and *passim*.

[294] ATIAS, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, pp.19r, 49v, 53v and *passim*; USQUE, *Maḥzor*, ff. 4r, 48r, 255v, 260r and *passim*.

[295] USQUE, *Maḥazor,* ff. 248r and *passim*.

[296] *Biblia*, f. 17r and *passim*.

[297] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 146.

[298] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança, Tabla* and *passim*; ATIAS, *Sedur de mes*, *Tabla* and *passim*.

[299] *Celihoth* f. 38r; Atias, *Orden de Silhoth* 36v.

[300] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança*, p. 156.

[301] USQUE, *Orden de mes*, *addendum* for Succoth, f. 8v and passim.

[302] *Biblia,* ff. 138 r, 151r.

[303] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança,, Tabla*, pp. 99, 122 and *passim*; ANTT, *Inq. Lisboa, Processo* 9.016 (December 2 (?), 1585).

[304] CAVALLERO, *Ordenança, Index.*

[305] *Sephirat ha-ʿOmer*, the counting of the days comprised in the seven weeks between the first day of Passover and Savuʿot.

[306] *Biblia* f. 9v.

[307] ANTT, *Conselho Central do Santo Officio*, doc. no. 2542*,* f. 7r.

[308] ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa, Processo 12.815*, pp. 1r-3v; copy *Ibid.*, *Registro da Inquis. Lisboa* no. 704, pp. 63-65: deposition of João Bautista who previously lived in Ferrara, publ. LEONI, «La presenza Sefardita» 89-91, p. 90.

[309] ANTT, *Conselho Central do Santo Officio*, doc. no. 2542, f. 7r.

[310] ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa, Processo* 12.815, *locum cit.*

[311] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

The fact that in many cases the ʿ*ayin* was left without notation cannot be assumed as an absolute proof that its ancient sound was completely lost and abandoned by all Sephardic scholars in early modern Northern Italy. According to H. P. Salomon, already in the fifties of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century there were examples of *ayin* represented as <hg>. [312] I did find one only similar case in the works prublished in Ferrara. In his *Libro de Oracyones*, Yom Tob Atias gave in 1552 the name of this consonant as *hgain*. [313] This perhaps implies at least a reminiscence of an ancient pronunciation. However, rather inconsistently, this author did not use this grapheme in his *siddurim* and he normally transcribed the ʿ*ayin* as *h* or even ignored it. As far as I know the grapheme <hg> does not appear in other vulgarizations of the Sephardic liturgy printed in Italy during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century.

## § 3.17. Pe

The pronunciation of this consonant calls for no particular attention. Hard *pe* was regularly transcribed as *p* and soft *pe* as *f* or *ph*, e.g., *sepher,* [314] *Parhoh / Parho* [פַּרְעֹה, Pharaoh]. [315]

## § 3.18. Ṣade

This letter was uniformly pronounced as a voiceless velate affricate and variously transcribed by several graphemes such as *z,* s, *ç*<sup>a,o,u,</sup> *or c*<sup>i,e</sup> as, for instance, *zemach* [צמח, scion], [316] *razon* [317] and *rason* [318] [רצון, will-

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[312] H. P. Salomon, «Hebrew Pronunciation among Western Sephardim» *The American Sephardi* 1 (1967), 20-25, p. 23. The Author did not provide examples.

[313] Atias, *Libro de Or.,* ff. 213r-213v. See fig. 4.

[314] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 89v.

[315] *Biblia*, f. 5v and ff; Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 46r.

[316] Atias, *Libro Or.*, f. 26r.

[317] Atias, *Libro Or.,* f. 31r. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[318] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 182r. See fig. 6.

ingness], *Zion,* [319] *Cion,* [320] *Cyon* [321] and *Sion,* [322] *zebaoth,* [323] *cebaoth,* [324] *çevaot,* [325] and *çevaoth* [צבאות, hosts]. [326]

It is worth noting that in the XVIth century transcription of Italian words, Jewish scholars used to transcribe the Italian triptychs *cc$^i$, cc$^e$* as <צי>, e.g., אצייו [*acciaio,* steel], [327] ברציו [*braccio,* arm], [328] אצינארי [*accennare,* to make reference]. [329] However, in some case a simple *tsade* was used, as for instance, אצו [*acciò,* for the purpose]. [330]

*§ 3.19. Qof*

Both in Ferrara and in Venice this consonant was pronounced *k* (as a hard *kaf)* and variously represented as *k, or q$^{ue}$, q$^{ui}$* or even *ch,* for instance, *Habakuk* [חבקוק, *p.n.*], [331] *bekirbi* [בקרבי, inside me], [332] *pasukim* [333] and *pasuchim* [334] [פסוקים, verses]. The last form was obviously due to some Italian influence. The members of the Portuguese Nation of Ferrara usually transcribed the sound of *qof* as *qu$^{a,e,i,o}$*, for instance, *quetuba* [כתבה,

[319] Atias, *Orden de Silhoth*, p. 34v; Idem, *Libro Or.,* f. 40v. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[320] Cavallero, *Ordenança,* p. 323 ; Usque, *Orden de mes,Tabla.*

[321] Usque, *Orden de mes* (Repr. Venice 1619), *Tabla.*

[322] Cavallero, *Ordenança,* p. 153.

[323] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, p. 31v and *passim*; Atias, *Orden de Silhoth*, p. 30v; *Biblia,* p. 215v.

[324] Usque, *Maḥazor,* ff. 135v, 240r.

[325] Cavallero, *Ordenança*, p. 154.

[326] Cavallero, *Ordenança,* p. 128, 155, 156 and *passim.*

[327] David de Pomis, צמח דוד. *Dittionario Novo Hebraico, molto copioso, Dechiarato in tre lingue con bellissime annotationi e con l'indice latino e volgare de tutti li suoi significati… Venetijs, apud Ioannem de Gara 1587, s. v.*

[328] Pomis, *Dittionario.*

[329] Pomis, *Dittionario.*

[330] Yacob ben Naphtali Ha-Kohen, *Tephillot Volgar* [Italian version of the Prayerbook in Hebrew characters] (Mantova 1561), f. 182r.

[331] *Biblia,* pp. 269r-270r.

[332] Atias, *Libro or.,* p. 186v.

[333] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes*, f. 172v; *Biblia*, f. 183r, 206r, 234r, and *passim.*

[334] *Ibid.,* f. 15v, 45v, 60r, 80v.

marriage contract], *queducin* [קדושים, marriage celebration], *Usque* [אוסקי, *p.n.*], [335] *sedaqua* [צדקה, charity]. [336]

Italian notaries transcribed the sound of the *qof* as *c* or *ch,* for instance, *chetubbà,* [337] *cheducin.* [338]

### § 3.20. Reš

This consonant does not require any particular attention. It was uniformly rendered as *r*. According to the Converso Alfonso de Zamora, acquainted with Jewish traditions, Spanish Jews pronounced the *reš* in word initial position with a marked, doubled sound. [339]

We are not in a position to confirm –or to exclude– that this characteristic was still present in the early modern Sephardic settlements of Venice and Ferrara. However in his *Compendium Grammatices Linguæ Hebreæ* (Amsterdam 1676) Spinoza stated that this consonant was «lene in medio, asperum in initio dictionis». [340]

It is worth mentioning that when *reš* occurs immediately after a dorso dental fricative consonant, such as *šin, ṣade* or *zayin,* a dental plosive is inserted in the transcription, between the two phonetic elements, e.g. *Isdrael,* [341] *Esdra,* [342] *Azdriel* [עזריאל, p.n.], *misdrah* [מזרח,

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[335] See, for instance, the colophon to Hasdai CRESCAS, *Or ha-Šem,* publ. 1555 by Abraham Usque. Cfr. LEONI. «La presenza Sefardita» plate 9.

[336] Ms. *Ordem de Orasois*, f. 236r.

[337] ASFe not. G. Conti, pc. 14, July 19, 1575.

[338] *Ibid.*, August 17,1574.

[339] ZAMORA, *Introductiones Artis Grammatice, Liber I, Cap. Secundum,* unnumb. p. «Est notandum quod in principio dictionis sonat sicut duplex "rr" ut ראש *rros,* ראשית *rresith.»*

[340] B. SPINOZA, *Compendium Grammatices Linguæ Hebræœ* (Amsterdam 1676) [repr. C. GEBHARDT (Herst.), *Spinoza Opera* (Heidelberg 1972)], p. 288.

[341] ASVe, not. G.B. Monti, Reg. 8252, November 11, 1566; March 20, 1967: *Jsdrael Abensusen,* ASVe, Notarile Testamenti not. D. de Adami, b. 71, f. 77r, November 18, 1616.

[342] ASFe, not. M. Taurini, pc. 7, September 10 and 29, 1546; ASPs Notary Almerico Emilioni**,** August 10, 1552; ASFe, Notary G. Conti, pc. 9, January 5 1560; *Ibid.,* notary Andrea Coccapani, pc. 9, March 24, 1557, January 5 1558; ASVe, notary G.B. Monti July 16, 1566; ASMo, Archivi Giudiziarii, Consiglio di Segnatura, reg. 19, no. 385 *s.d.* [1563];

East]. [343] We find similar forms also in the XVIIIth century Amsterdam *siddurim,* for instance, *selos estré* [שלש עשרה, thirteen]. [344]

This phenomenon, described by Irene Garbell in her study on the pronunciation of Hebrew in Medieval Spain, [345] was widespread also among Italian Jews. As a matter of fact, we find *«Esdra»* even in the works of such scholars as Leon da Modena, [346] Samuel Fiorentino [347] and ŠaDaL. [348]

*§ 3.21. Šin*

In XVIth century Sephardic *siddurim* and *maḥazorim* printed in Ferrara and Venice, both *šin* and *śin* were uniformly transcribed as <s> without any distinction between the two forms, e. g., *Semah* [שמע, Hear], [349] *sephatay* [שפתי, my lips], [350] *bakasah* [בקשה, poetical suppli-

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*Ibid.*, reg. 30, no. 3449 *s.d.* [August-September 1566]; *Ibid.*, reg. 32 no. 21 *s.d.* [January 1567] *Ibid.*, reg. 33, no. 3883, *s.d.* [September-October 1567]; *Ibid.*, reg. 34, no. 3699, *s.d.* [August-September 1567]; *Ibid.*, reg. 38, no. 2116, *s.d.* (May-June 1567); reg. 40, no. 3873, *s.d.* [August-September 1569]; ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, *Notai Camerali*, not. Bonsignore, reg. 61a, f. 134v, August 28, 1577; ASFe, not. G.Conti, pc. 15S, September 5, 1577; *Idem*, pc. 16S, January 27 and 29, 1578, CHJP, HM 3147, f. 2; ANTT, *Inq. Lisboa, Processo* 5.817, f. 16v (1581); ASMO, Cancelleria Ducale, Ebrei, 2, Processi 1580-90, file 12: undated [January-February 1586] letter of cardinal Savelli to the Ferrara inquisitor, p. 5; *Ibid.*, deposition of David Alvarez, published in LEONI, «Documents inédits» p. 171.

[343] Ms. *Orden de Oraçõis,* f. 132v.

[344] A. H. QUERIDO, *Orden de las Tres Pascuas* (Amsterdam 5487), p.18.

[345] I. GARBELL, «The Pronunciation of Hebrew in Medieval Spain» in *Homenaje a Millás-Valicrosa.* Vol. I (Barcelona 1954), 647-669, p. 684.

[346] L. MODENA, *Istoria de Riti Ebraici, Vita e speranza degl'Ebrei di questi tempi. Leone da Modena Rabbi Hebreo da Venetia, gia stampata a Parigi e ora corretta e riformata con licenza de Superiori. In Venezia 1638, appresso Gio. Colleoni.*

[347] S. FIORENTINO, סדר תפלה, *Orazioni quotidiane per uso degli Ebrei Spagnoli e Portoghesi… le tre orazioni giornaliere, quella del sabato, e del capo di mese tradotte dall'idioma ebraico coll'aggiunta di alcune note e di qualche poetica versione da Salomone Fiorentino appresso Antonio Schmid, Vienna MDCCCXXII, p. IV.*

[348] LUZZATTO, *Prolegomeni*, pp. 33, 169 and *passim.*

[349] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, p. 21r.

[350] *Ibid.,* f. 52r.

cation], [351] *gerusim* [גרושים, expelled], [352] *parasah* [פרשה, pericope], [353] *sovah* [שָׂבָע, abundance]. [354]

The same feature is found also in the documents of the following centuries, e.g., *sebuim* [שבויים, prisoners], [355] *samas* [שמש, beadle]. [356]


### § 3.22. Taw

In the XVIth century both hard and soft *taw* were graphically represented as *t* or *th* and were uniformly pronounced /t/ identically with the emphatic *ṭet*. Isac Cavallero in Venice and Abraham Usque in Ferrara used indifferently the two graphemes, e.g., *Torah* [357] *or Thorah; Torato* or *Thoratho* [His Law]; [358] *Torat emeth* [תורת אמת, Law of truth]; [359] *noten* or *nothen* [נותן, gives], [360] *et* [את, *nota accusativi*]. [361]

In his Spanish *siddurim,* Yomtob Atias made an (almost) systematic distinction between hard and soft *taw,* and transcribed the former as *t* and the latter as *th,* as for instance, *Vezoth hatorah* [וזאת התורה, and this is the Law], [362] *sabath* [שבת], [363] *arbith* [ערבית, evening prayer], [364] *byotho* [בהיותו, while he was], [365] *bethoch* [בתוך, inside], [366] *bath Zion* [בת ציון, daughter of Zion]. [367]

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[351] *Ibid.,* unnumb. pp. of gatherings marked «**» and «***.»

[352] *Ibid.,* f. 184v, 234v.

[353] *Biblia,* ff. *ixa-*xb, 3r and *passim.*

[354] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 181v. See doc. 4 in Appendix.

[355] ACE, Ve, *Libro delle Parti,* p. 1.

[356] *Livro das Hordems, Reggio Emilia,* ff. 17r, 27r, 31r and *passim.* See Leoni, *La Nazione Ebraica Spagnola e Portoghese,* pp. 291, 313, 325, and *passim.*

[357] Cavallero, *Ordenança, Tabla.*

[358] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes,* ff. 181r-181v. See doc. 4 in Appendix.

[359] Cavallero, *Orden de Or.,* p. 147.

[360] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 181r.

[361] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 181r.

[362] Atias *Libro Or.* f. 40r. See doc. 2 in Appendix.

[363] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes, Tabla* and *passim.*

[364] Atias, *Sedur de Or. de mes, Tabla* and *passim.*

[365] Atias, *Libro Or.* f. 58r.

[366] Atias, *Libro Or.,* f. 55r.

As we have seen, Abraham Usque transcribed both hard and soft *taw* indifferently as *t* or *th*. However, in his *Orden de Oraciones de mes* (1555), he provided a transliteration of the *Kaddiš* where the soft *taw* was sistematically represented as *th*. [368] It is difficult to understand why Usque suddenly adopted new rules, inconsistent with those followed in the preceeding pages. Probably the distinction between hard and soft *taw* in this section of his book was due to the presence of an Aškenazi proof-reader in the Ferrara printing press. We also wonder whether Usque lifted this transliteration from another *siddur*, perhaps no longer extant and unavailable to us.

In rare instances *taw* at the end of a word was left untrascribed. In his *Orden de Oraciones de mes,* Abraham Usque rendered טלית as *Tale*. [369] The same transcription is found in the 1519 Venetian edition of this *siddur* [370] and in many later Amsterdam editions, as well as in the *Orden de Oraciones* published in Venice by Abraam Netto in 1622. [371] We find «*Tale*» even in an inquisitorial document written in Rome in 1586. [372]

In 1622 Abraam Netto transcribed the soft *taw* in final position as <d>. In a table published at the end of his *Orden de oraciones,* [373] he gave the names of Hebrew letters as follows: *Alef, bed,... daled,... ched, ted...* He also *declared* the name of the vowel *pataḥ* as *padach*. Netto was not consistent with his own explanation. In the last pages of

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[367] ATIAS, *Libro Or.* f. 178v.

[368] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 181v. See doc. 4 in Appendix.

[369] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 181v.

[370] In 1619 Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadin reprinted A. Usque's *Orden de Oraciones* under the title *ORDEN DE / ORACIONES DE MES / ARREO .S. [= saber] SIN BOLTAR / de vna a otra parte. / Y LA ORDEN DE / Hanucah / Purim, y Pascuas de Pesah, Se- / buoth, y Sucoth, con / mucha dili- / gentia / emendada. / Y les añadimos enel las Osanod / IN VENETIA MCCXIX / Estampado por orden delli Illustriss. Sig. / Pietro e Lorenzo Bragadini. / Con licenza de los Superiores.*

[371] USQUE, *Orden de Oraciones de mes,* p. 251 (see fig. 14); NETTO, *Orden de Or.*, p. 535.

[372] ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale, Ebrei, *Processi*, 2, file 22, undated [January-February 1586] letter of Cardinal Savelli [head of the Roman S. Uffizio] to the Ferrara inquisitor. See LEONI, «Documents inédits» pp. 168-169.

[373] NETTO, *Orden Or.*, last, unnumb. p.

his prayerbook he provided several blessings transliterated into Latin letters and he transcribed both hard and soft *taw* indifferently as *t* or *th*, regardless of the presence or absence of a *dageš*. This was probably due to the fact that he lifted these transcriptions either out of Abraham Usque's *Orden de Oraciones de mes,* [374] or from the 1619 Venetian reprint of this extremely popular *siddur*.

Starting from the beginning of the XVIIth century, the pronunciation of soft gradually shifted from /t/ to /d/. In 1612 the famous Venetian rabbi Leone da Modena transcribed the soft *taw* as <d> as, for instance, *midngasser* [מתעשר, he makes himself rich]. [375] In 1751 Simon Calimani, a Venetian rabbi, stated that «Italian Jews read *taw* without *dagesh* as *d*. Aškenazi Jews pronounce it *th* as the Greek letter *theta θ*. Sephardi Jews do not make any distinction because of the *dageš* and always pronounce *taw* as a simple *t*». [376] However, this was not always true as, already in the XVIIth century, several Sephardi scholars transcribed the soft *taw* as <d>, e.g., *taanid* [תענית, fast], [377] *masod* [מצות, unleavened breads]. [378]

In the transliterations of Spanish texts into Hebrew characters /t/ was graphically represented by means of a *ṭet*. *Taw* was not used for this purpose.

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[374] Usque, *Orden de oraciones de mes*, f. 181r; Netto, *Orden Or.* p. 535. See docs. 4 and 8 in Appendix.

[375] L. da Modena, פתחון. גלות יהודה והוא פשר דבר מכל מלה זרה או צריכה. *Novo Dittionario Hebraico et Italiano, cioè dichiaratione di tutte le voci Hebraiche più difficili delle Scritture Hebree nella volgar lingua italiana … Opera di Leon Modena Hebreo da Venetia* (2nd ed., Padova 1640 [1st ed.: *Venetia, appresso Giacomo Sarzina, MDCXII*]), unnumb. p. of gathering marked «A2.»

[376] S. Calimani, *Grammatica Ebrea spiegata in Lingua Italiana, composta da Simon Calimani Rabbino Veneto, Con un breve trattato della Poesia antica e moderna di essa lingua ebrea. In Venetia nella Stamperia Bragadina à MDCCLI. Con licenza de Superiori e Privilegio* (Venice 1751), p. 3: «La ת secondo gl'Ebrei d'Italia [è pronunziata] come D, e secondo gl'Ebrei Germani come θ greco, TH. Gl'Ebrei oriundi dalle Spagne non notano in tal lettura alcuna differenza per detto puntino e la pronunziano sempre come T semplice.»

[377] MS *Ordem de Oraçois*, f. 218v.

[378] *Ibid*. f. 170v.

## § 3.23. The Pronunciation of Vowels and Half-Vowels by the Sephardim in XVIth Century Venice and Ferrara

### § 3.23.1. The /a/ Sounding Vowels

*Kameṣ* and *Kameṣ ḥatef* were generally pronounced /a/, identically with the *pataḥ* (as in the English word *far* or in the Spanish *casa*), e.g., *Gadol* [גָּדוֹל, great], [379] *behalma* [בְּעָלְמָא, (*Aram.*) in the world], [380] *cadam* [קֶדָם, (*Aram.*) ancient, original]. [381] *Kameṣ* was read /o/ (as in the English word *bone*) only when it occurs in a *closed* unstressed syllable, i.e., when it is followed by a consonant without vowel or with a silent *šewa*, e.g., *bekori* [בְּקָרְאִי, when I was calling], [382] *oznecha* [אָזְנֶךָ, Your ear], [383] *korbanoth* [קָרְבָּנוֹת, sacrifices], [384] *vesoltané* [וְשָׁלְטָנֵהּ, and the domination]. [385] As it is well known, the lack of phonetic difference between these two vowels was considered a typical feature of Sephardic pronunciation already in the Middle Ages. [386]

In Ferrara there were a few exceptions and deviations. Abraham Usque regularly transcribed the *kameṣ* as *a*. However in his *Orden de Oraciones de mes,* in the transliteration of the *Kaddiš*, we find *sovah* [שָׂבָע, abundance]. [387] In the index (*Tabla*) of his *Libro de Oracyones,* Yomtob Atias repeatedly transcribed הַפְטָרָה as *aphtora*. Both in the *Biblia de Ferrara* and in Abraham Usque's *siddurim,* the word הַפְטָרָה and its plural הַפְטָרוֹת were transcribed as *Haphtara* and *Haphtaroth.* [388] However, the form *aphtora* reappeared in later editions of the *Biblia Española* and of the Hebrew liturgy. For

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[379] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 44r.

[380] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 181v.

[381] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes,* f. 182r.

[382] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 30v.

[383] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 42r.

[384] ATIAS, *Libro Or.,* f. 51r.

[385] PROOPS, *Biblia in dos colunas, prefation*, unnumb p.

[386] A. IBN EZRA, *Sefer Ṣaḥut* ספר צחות בדקדוק שחבר החכם הגדול רבי אברהם ב' ר' מאיר הספרדי ... נדפס בבית דניאל בומבירג בשנת ש"ו לפ"ק פה ויניציה [1546], p. 137ff.; GARBELL, «The Pronunciation» pp. 686-688.

[387] USQUE, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 181v. See doc. 4 in Appendix.

[388] *Biblia de Ferrara*, ff. *IXa-Xb (added gathering with the *Tabla delas Haphtaroth de todo el año*; USQUE, *Orden de oraciones de mes*, *Tabla.*

instance, in the 1630 Amsterdam edition of the *Biblia* we find an «Orden delas Aphtoras». [389] This form has survived in Bayonne where the discendants of the first Portuguese émigrés still pronounce this word as *Aphtora.* [390]

### § 3.23.2. The /e/ Sounding Vowels

In the XVIth century Venetian and Ferrarese transcriptions of Hebrew texts no distinction was apparently made between «long» and «short» vowels. In any case, even if the authors did appreciate this difference, the typesetters were not equipped with fonts suitable to express the shades of phonetic values. As a matter of fact they had some difficulties even to cope with the accents of the Iberian languages.

No graphical distinction was made in the transcription of /e/ sounding vowels (*segol*, *ṣere*, *šewa*, *segol ḥatef*) were all transcribed as <e> [391] and pronounced as in the English word *set*. *Šewa* was always pronounced when it occurs at the beginnig of a word, when it accompanies a letter with a *dageš*, as for instance, *rezeh* [רְצֵה, be pleased], [392] *Sechinah* [שְׁכִינָה, the Divine Immanence], [393] *gerusim* [גְּרוּשִׁים, expelled], [394] *hameborac* [הַמְבֹרָךְ, the Blessed]. [395] *Šewa* was pronounced also in other instances which we do not list here. In fact it is almost impossible to ascertain whether the authors of the Venetian and Ferrarese vulgarizations followed precise principles in distinguishing between a mobile (pronounced) *šewa* from a quiescent one. In any case, on the basis of the available documentation, we cannot state whether these authors were consistent in following

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[389] *Biblia en lengua española traduzida palabra por palabra de la verdad Hebrayca por muy excellentes letrados, vista y examinada por el officio de la Inquisición, con privilegio del yllustrissimo Señor Duque de Ferrara* (Amsterdam 1630), f. ***2r.

[390] This information was confirmed by Mr. Georges Dalmeyda, whom I thank for his courtesy.

[391] In 1526 Alfonso de Zamora gave the phonetic value of these vowels as «e.» In 1622 Abraham Netto stated: «cere, segol, seva faran todos tres 'è'». See figures 1 and 15.

[392] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 26v.

[393] *Ibid.,* f. 228r.

[394] *Ibid.,* f. 234v.

[395] CAVALLERO, *Orden Or.*, p. 146. See doc. 1 in Appendix.

rigid grammatical rules. We provide a few other examples of vocal *šewa: Halelu* [הַלְלוּ, praise!], [396] *vesameru* [וְשָׁמְרוּ, they shall celebrate], [397] *asere* [אַשְׁרֵי, happy], [398] but also *asre.* [399]

According to grammarians, *šewa* is quiescent (silent), among other cases, when it follows a syllable with a long accented vowel. As we have pointed out, the difference between long and short vocalic sounds was not generally observed among Sephardim in Early Modern Italy. As a consequence, a clear distinction between quiescent and mobile (vocal) *šewa*, based on this principle, was not possible. Thus, Sephardic authors transcribed and read the *šewa* also in several instances when the Aškenazim regard it as silent.

According to Irene Garbell, in Medieval Spain, *šewa, ṣere* and even *segol* were sometimes pronounced as /a/, especially in the case of personal names as, for instance, *Samuel, Samaya, Salomon, Mair.* [400] Similar transcriptions can be found in XVIth century vulgarizations and in notarial deeds, e.g., *Mayr,* [401] *Salamon,* [402] *Salamão / Salamaõ,* [403] *Samuel.* [404] In the *Biblia de Ferrara* we find *Beersabah* [בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע, *g.n.*], [405] but also *Semuel,* [406] *Selomoh* [407].

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[396] ATIAS, *Libro Or.*, f. 74r.

[397] *Ibid.,* f. 65v.

[398] *Ibid.,* f. 51v.

[399] *Ibid.,* ff. 80r,199r.

[400] GARBELL, «The pronunciation» pp. 689-692.

[401] ASAn, not. Antonio Manfredi, reg. 724, ff. 378r-379r, June 27, 1552; ASFe, not. G. Conti, pc. 13, Dec, 21 1573: copy of an Official statement of the mahamad of the Portuguese Nation of Ferrara; ASFe, not. P. Fiornovelli, pc. 3, November 21 1569, June 7, 1570, August 29, 1571; ASVe, not. G.B. Monti, b. 8257 May 12, 1569; *Ibid.,* June 30, 1569; October 12, 1569: ANTT, *Inquis. Lisboa, Processo 2931,* f. 67v, cfr. IOLY ZORATTINI, *Processi 1570-1572,* p. 263.

[402] ASMo, not. G. Barbanti, pc. 1444, October 20 1516; ASFe, not. Lavezzoli, May 5, 1539; not. B. Saracco, pc. 29S, January 13 1540; not. A, Coccapani, pc. 2, January 17 1547; ASAn, not. G.B. Agli, reg. 223, October 10, 1548; *Ibid.*, reg. 221, December 15, 1552; ASAn, not. A. Manfredi reg. 754, January 18, 1554; ASMo, Ebrei, b. 1, *Processi*, N. 74, 1573, p. 17; ASMo, Cancelleria Ducale*, Leggi e Decreti, Registrum Decretorum* 27, f. 321, November 20, 1592. ASMo, Archivi Giudiziarii, Consiglio di Segnatura, reg. 47, N. 1143, *s.d.* [February-March 1570]; *Ibid.* no. 2607 s.d. [June 1570].

[403] USQUE, *Consolação*, ff 43v, 68r, 75v, 136v and *passim*.

### § 3.23.3. The /i/ Sounding Vowels

Ḥireq was regularly pronounced /i/ (as in the English word *big* and in the Spanish *vino*) and does not call for any discussion. As we have stated, [408] the consonantic *yod* was read /i/ and graphically represented as *i*, *y* or *j*. Vocalic *yod* was identically transcribed and pronounced /i/.

*Yod* quiesces and remains silent when it occurs after an /e/ or /i/ sounding vowel, which is not *homogeneous* with it. For instance, *Bethel* [בֵּית־אֵל, g.n.], [409] *en* [אֵין, (there is) not], [410] *yosbe* [יושְׁבֵי, (c. s.) the dwellers of]. [411]

In rare instances, however, *yod* occurring after a *ṣere* at the end of a word was transcribed as *y*, e.g., *Elohenu velohey* [אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי, our God and God of (our fathers)]. [412] This was probably due to an occasional Aškenazi influence.

At the end of plural words, before the consonant *waw*, *yod* is used as *mater lectionis* to denote the possesive suffix for the third person masculine, and has no phonetic value, e.g., *Panau* [פָּנָיו, His countenance], [413] *bimromau* [בִּמְרוֹמָיו, in His altitudes], [414] *berahamau* [בְּר־חמיו, [415] in His mercy]. [416] It is worth noting that, in this case, the Sephardim pronounced the final *waw* as /u/ (as in the English word *bull*) while the Aškenazim read it as /v/. In the XVIth century these features were common to both Sephardic and *Italiani* Jews.

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[404] ASFe, not. A. Boldrini, pc. 2, September 23, 1549: Samuel Pagi; *Ibid.*, not. G. Conti, pc. 4S, October 23, 1549: *Samuele Usque Hebreo Lusitano; Ibid.*, not. Andrea Coccapani, pc. 4, 1550 May 6: *Samuelis Abbravanelli.*

[405] *Ibid.,* f. 12r.

[406] *Biblia, Tabla*, f. *Va.

[407] *Biblia, Tabla.* and *passim; Atias, Orden de Silhot*, f. 14v.

[408] See above, § 3.10.

[409] *Biblia,* f. 5v.

[410] Atias, *Libro de Or.,* f. 36r.

[411] Atias, *Libro de Or.*, f. 51v.

[412] Atias, *Libro de Or.,* f. 270r.

[413] Usque, *Maḥazor,* f. 259v.

[414] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 182r.

[415] This word is used in the plural as it represents a continuous repeated action.

[416] Usque, *Orden de Or. de mes*, f. 182r.

Yod occurring after vowels sounding /a/, /o/, /u/ was transcribed as *i* or *y*, e.g., *Sephatay* [שְׂפָתַי, my lips], [417] *henay* [עֵינַי, my eyes], [418] *oyebay* [אוֹיְבַי, my enemies], [419] *sinuy* [שִׁנּוּי, change]. [420] In the transcriptions of Spanish texts *yod* was used as *mater lectionis* to point out the presence of an /e/ sounding vowel, e.g., *el que* [אֵיל קוֹי, the one who]. [421]

### § 3.22.4. The /u/ and /o/ Sounding Vowels

These vowels call for no special comment.

### §. 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

We carried out an extensive graphematic analysis of the transliterations of Hebrew texts published by Sephardic Scholars in Venice and in Ferrara towards the middle of XVIth century, as well as of later documents. We can state that both the XVIth century Spanish translations of Jewish liturgy and the transliterations of Hebrew prayers were the original works of separate scholars who acted independently from each other. These authors pronounced Hebrew in the same way but, due to the lack of graphic norms, they represented the same sounds in different ways. The same was true also for the vernacular works of the Sephardi émigrés who carefully respected the sounds of the Iberic languages but often represented them by different graphemes.

It was possible to ascertain the features of the Sephardi pronunciation of Hebrew in early modern Northern Italy, as follows:

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[417] ATIAS, *Libro de Or.,* f. 52r.

[418] ATIAS, *Libro de Or.,* f. 62v.

[419] ATIAS, *Libro de Or.,* f. 200r.

[420] *Orden de oraciones de mes arreo sin boltar de vna à otra parte, y la orden de Hanvcah, Purim, y Pascuas de Pesah, Sebuoth, y Sucoth; con mucha diligentia emendada y las Bakassot al principio en ladino… Impresso a despesza de la Santa Hebra de Talmud Torah, del Kahal Kados Bet Yaahkob en Amstradama: Anno* 5378 [1617/18], unumb. p. with the transliteration of the hymn *Adon 'Olam.*

[421] CAVALLERO, *Orden de Or.*, p. 146.

a) The almost general lack of distinction between hard and soft *bet*. In most cases the latter was pronounced as a plosive /b/ in the same way as hard *bet*.

b) During the XVIth century the phonetic value of the *'ayin* was zero or close to zero. This consonant was transcribed as *h* or even ignored.

c) There was almost no distinction between *šin* and *śin*. Both were transcribed as *s* or *ç* and pronounced /s/.

d) Both soft and hard *taw* were pronounced as *t*. As we shall see better in the second part of this article, in the course of the XVIIth century the pronunciation of soft *taw* started to shift towards /d/. This was due to the influence of Italian rabbis and scholars

e) No distinction was made between *kameṣ* and *pataḥ*. Both vowels were read as an open *a*. This feature was also common to the *Italiani* Jews.

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The Documentary Appendix and the Figures will be published in the next issue of *Sefarad*.

[*Continuará*]

**Archival and Bibliographical Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| ACE, Ve | Archivio Comunita Ebraica di Venezia |
| ANTT | Archivos Nacionais da Torre do Tombo, Lisboa |
| ASAn | Archivio di Stato, Ancona |
| ASFe | Archivio di Stato, Ferrara |
| ASMo | Archivio di Stato, Modena |
| ASPs | Archivio di Stato, Pesaro |
| ASVe | Archivio di Stato, Venice |
| CAHJP | Central Archives for the History of Jewish People, Jerusalem |
| LJTS | Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York |

| | |
|---|---|
| *EJ* | *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 16 vols. and Supplements (Jerusalem 1972- ) |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Italia* | *Italia, Studi e Ricerche sulla Storia, la cultura e la Letteratura degli Ebrei d'Italia* (Jerusalem) |
| *RÉJ* | *Revue des Études Juives* (Paris) |
| *RMI* | *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* (Rome) |

**Other Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| asc. | *Ascamah* (deliberation) |
| b. | *Busta* (file) |
| *c.s.* | Contruct state |
| *f.* | Feminine |
| *F.n.* | Family name |
| *g.n.* | Geographical name |
| *Liturg.* | Liturgical |
| *n.* | Name |
| *Matr.* | *Matricola* (registration number) |
| not. | Notary, notarial |
| pc. | *Pacco* (piece, bundle, box, boîte, file) |
| *p.n.* | Personal name |
| reg. | Register |
| *s.d.* | *Sine data* |