

Genizot as a Source for Moroccan Jewish History

Oren Kosansky

Lewis & Clark College

Major turns in the historiography of Jewish Morocco have been closely associated with the emergence of new documentary sources that had, for any number of reasons, previously escaped the gaze of those interested in recording this particular past. This situation is not the result of a uniform and natural accumulation of documents simply waiting to be found. As new collections—and, as importantly, new types of collections—continue to come on the historiographic scene, any finds represent shifts in the training, interests and commitments of historians who determine what constitutes a worthy historical document in the first place.¹

The turn to new sources for the study of Moroccan Jewish history in the second half of the twentieth century, for example, was associated with a reconsideration of colonial scholarship, in which the inadequate consideration of Arabic language sources severely limited an appreciation of the intricate relationships between Muslim and Jewish communities. As scholars turned their attention to social and cultural history, to take another example, creative use was made of other “new” sources, including *responsa* and other legal literatures, which registered rabbinic rulings that documented numerous facets of Jewish legal, commercial, familial, and communal life. The historical turn in anthropology, for its part, has played a role in the reconsideration of conventional sources from the extended colonial period, and in directing attention to documentary forms beyond state archives and other official domains. When the communities in which historically attuned ethnographers work are deeply textual, as is the case in Jewish Morocco, the conditions are primed for interventions that remove textual artifacts from their previous cultural locations in order to create “historical” collections that can be made available for scholars. What this approach calls for, before assessing the contents and potential historical value of individual documents, is an accounting of the processes by which collections were initially assembled and then reorganized, redirected, managed and made accessible.²

1. For a recent accounting of how this process plays out in Moroccan historiography, more generally, see Michel Le Gall, and Kenneth Perkins, *The Maghreb in Question: Essays in History and Historiography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

2. On the turn to Arabic sources, see Germain Ayache, “La Recherche au Maroc sur l’histoire du judaïsme marocain,” *Identité et Dialogue: Juifs du Maroc* (Paris: La pensée sauvage, 1980). On the use of *responsa* literature in historical anthropology, see Shlomo Deshen, *The Mellah Society: Jewish Community Life in Sherifian Morocco* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

It is in this light that we can begin to consider one kind of documentary collection—the *genizah* (pl. *genizot*)—which is increasingly attracting the attention of researchers interested in the history and heritage of Jewish Morocco. The prospects and challenges associated with transforming Moroccan *genizah* repositories into accessible historical collections are illustrated in the case of The Rabat Genizah Project, which has operated as a partnership between The Museum of Moroccan Judaism (Casablanca) and Lewis & Clark College (Portland, Oregon) since 2011.³ *Genizot*, as they exist in Moroccan and other Jewish communities, are repositories of documents collected for the purpose of proper disposal. The potential historical value of such repositories seems self-evident largely in light of the spectacular Cairo *genizah*, whose immense size, scope, and antiquity have motivated extensive and ongoing research for over a century. While it is unlikely that any Moroccan *genizah* of such significance will be discovered, the Cairo case provides both inspiration for recognizing the historical value of North African *genizot* and a cautionary tale regarding the colonial, and now post-colonial, contexts of European expropriation and scholarly appropriation. As *genizah* collections come to be considered sources for Moroccan Jewish history, we are obliged to develop protocols for making materials available for scholarly consultation while prioritizing the authority of those communities from which the collections derive and considering the broader heritage publics, to which the collections pertain.⁴

The composition of *genizah* collections is determined broadly by a ritual process in which sacred texts deemed to be no longer useful or usable are collected and sequestered through burial in a cemetery grave or mausoleum designated for such purposes. Among the declared reasons for this practice, as articulated in Jewish Morocco as elsewhere, is to treat such texts with respect and protect them from desecration. While the category of sacred text might seem to limit the range of documents contained in *genizah* collections, they may be extremely wide in scope. Biblical, Rabbinic, and liturgical texts are sure to be well represented in *genizah* collections, but so too are myriad other genres that directly draw language from, and indirectly refer to, a sacred textual core. By virtue of their form and content, wedding contracts, synagogue announcements, invitations to life-cycle events, community

3. Major funding for The Rabat Genizah Project has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities (USA) through the Office of Digital Humanities. The late Simon Lévy, founding director of the Museum of Moroccan Judaism, was instrumental in the inception of this project. Zhor Rehihil, the museum's curator, has provided support and guidance at all stages of the project's development. Full information about the project can be found at <http://library.lclark.edu/rabatgenizahproject/>.

4. For a historical account of the Cairo *genizah* and its significance for numerous fields of research, see: Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza* (New York: Next Book, 2011).

registers, and religious school textbooks are often destined, at the end of their useful life span, for the genizah.

More broadly, it is difficult to determine any strict textual boundary that would exclude a document from entering a genizah. In some pre-modern cases, the sacredness of the Hebrew language itself likely conditioned the inclusion of all documents written in that language and others, like Judeo-Arabic, which used the same orthography. The proliferation of textual production associated with the emergence of print capitalism and secular vernaculars penetrated genizot as well. Far from being judiciously weeded out from inclusion in this ritual process, even the most mundane and atheistic of texts can be found in modern Moroccan genizot. Such inclusion seems to be less a reflection of the generalized sacredness of textuality itself and more the result of collection tactics that must contend with the massive paper waste that accumulates in modern homes, offices, schools, and other institutions where sacred and secular paper intermingle in desk drawers, file cabinets, storage boxes, and the like.

The scope of sacred and secular texts that compose any given genizah will, therefore, reflect the particular conditions of assemblage, which are only loosely determined by Jewish custom. As a matter of Jewish law, the genizah process is partly inspired by the rabbinic injunction to treat torah scrolls as living bodies and to ritualize their disposal accordingly. In this vein, genizah collections were, and continue to be, interred in cemeteries following funerary rites that invoke the practices and liturgies of human burial. In the past, annual Jewish festivals were occasions for the collection of genizah materials within local communities. Holidays that focus on the revelation of the torah (Shavuot) and its manifestation in scroll form (Simhat Torah) were occasions when community members were invited to bring their derelict sacred materials to synagogues for genizah collection. The frequency and extent of genizah collection appear to have been variable, dependent on community priorities, resources and demographic shifts.

The community process that created the collection curated by The Rabat Genizah Project should not, therefore, be considered typical. Nevertheless, that process does represent patterns that are likely to operate in other instances as well. Near the beginning of the twenty-first century, a committee of men within the Jewish community of Rabat undertook the collection of materials for genizah burial. After numerous waves of migration in the second part of the twentieth century and continued departures into the early years of the twenty-first, the community numbered in the dozens and maintained only one regularly functioning synagogue. With expectations that the trend would continue, the importance of collecting for the genizah was thrown in relief for

those who initiated the process. Previously occupied synagogues, schools, homes, and apartments held the textual residue of those who had left or were planning to do so. Over the course of several weeks, written material was collected from those spaces and held in community storage while awaiting arrangements for burial in the local cemetery.

I was at the time a resident of Rabat and a participant in the city's public Jewish life. Expressing my interest in the genizah materials, I was granted permission to consult the repository as it was being collected in order to retrieve materials in which I had research interests. The subset of materials I culled from that repository constitutes the Rabat genizah collection now available for historical research. While such chance intervention at this phase of the ritual process may not often be repeated, I confronted several issues that have more general application as genizah repositories are potentially transformed into research collections. One set of issues concerns the authority over such collections, both in their original state and in their later archival situation. A second refers to the content of such collections, both with respect to their historical value and the conditions of their public accessibility. A third pertains to the various publics, including academic and broader heritage audiences, interested in and represented by genizah collections.

The issue of authority exists at intersecting levels of religious interpretation, community jurisdiction, and national legislation. Insofar as the genizah is situated in the ritual processes of Judaism, rabbinic authority may be considered in decisions about if and how to reclaim genizah materials for preservation and research. For example, rabbinic opinion may play a role in establishing the legal (e.g. *halakhic*) implications of intervening with genizot in their various stages, especially with respect to materials that have already been interred. The situation is complicated by the fact that cemetery genizot, in the form of closed pavilions or subterranean rooms, can receive materials over extended periods before being finally sealed. Are there different rabbinic considerations, we might ask, when dealing with sealed genizot as opposed to open ones? Beyond rabbinic authority, officially sanctioned community bodies take responsibility for organizing the local collection of genizah materials and management of the cemeteries in which genizot are located. At what point might the materials in the genizah come under the ownership or authority of local communities under whose auspices genizah collection and internment are usually carried out? Decisions about whether to place genizah materials into research collections, where such collections should be located, and how they should be managed have also attracted the interest of national Jewish agencies, authorized by the Moroccan state, that may cooperate with local communities. Beyond the Jewish social framework itself, the recently

reformed framework within which the Moroccan state library and archives operate provides another institutional context in which management of research collections derived from genizot might be considered over the long term.

Without known precedent for navigating these issues, an initial challenge with respect to the Rabat collection was to develop a strategy for stewardship of the materials within the umbrella of the Moroccan Jewish community. The Museum of Moroccan Judaism presented the most obvious choice. As a project of the Moroccan Foundation of Jewish Cultural Heritage, the museum was and remains the most prominent institution dedicated to the preservation of Moroccan Jewish materials. As a practical matter, the museum had the staff, space, and commitment to accept the collection and mediate decisions about its future.

The next step in transforming the genizah materials into a research collection involved creating an inventory of the contents. The collection contains approximately two thousand discrete items, of which over five hundred are published volumes with publication dates ranging from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. As expected, the majority of books are of a religious nature, spanning a wide range of biblical, rabbinic, hagiographic, Hassidic, and liturgical genres. This subset includes approximately four hundred works written and published in Morocco, providing an important resource for research into the contours of religious knowledge and publishing in Morocco. The collection further maps the networks of textual exchange within which Rabat was situated. Works published in Fez, Casablanca, and Rabat exist alongside others from Constantine, Tunis, Paris, Vilna, Warsaw, Jerusalem, and New York. Indeed, the historical value of these publications, taken as a collection, may primarily be in helping to better understand the national, regional, and global webs of religious production and exchange in which modern Jewish Morocco was forged.

Also included in the collection are hundreds of other printed items, including broadsheets, pamphlets, rabbinic iconography, newspapers, magazines, community bulletins, school material, invitations and greeting cards. These items pertain predominantly to Judaic life, providing an important resource for research into liturgical composition, ritual practice (e.g. holidays, life-cycle events, pilgrimages), community institutions (e.g. synagogues, brotherhoods, schools, courts), and other religious domains (e.g. kashrut, magic, inheritance). Another significant feature of this collection is its broad linguistic profile, including over two hundred and fifty items in Judeo-Arabic in genres both religious (e.g. commentaries on ritual practice) and secular (e.g. joke books). Examined over time, the collection might be explored for

changing patterns in the relative use of Judeo-Arabic, Hebrew, and French as dominant languages of textual production across various contexts. Beyond these core languages, the collection contains printed materials in English, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and other languages.

A final category of texts includes a smaller number of manuscript materials, including Jewish court documents, personal correspondence, student and teacher notebooks, community registers, sermon notes, synagogue announcements, and poetic compositions. As with the other materials, these documents do not pertain uniquely to the Rabat community. Such documents hail from other cities and communities within Morocco, with their final deposition in the Rabat genizah conditioned by patterns of internal migration and communication during the course of the twentieth century as the Rabat Jewish population grew in size and prominence. More broadly, global Jewish communications can be traced through documents that travelled to and from Europe, Israel, and North America.

Taken as a whole, the Rabat genizah collection provides a snapshot of the kinds of texts that circulated in Jewish Morocco into the twentieth century. Indeed, while any subset of documents might inform research on specific historical topics, the greatest value of this collection and others like it may be the composite picture they provide about the collective library of Moroccan Jewish communities in particular times and places. We are, of course, unable to determine precisely how the texts were distributed, used, and interpreted among specific readerships in specific institutional contexts. But used in conjunction with other forms of evidence, knowledge of what texts were being produced and circulated will surely contribute to developing more robust portraits of Moroccan Jewish history.

This prospect raises questions of how access to the materials should be managed, considering the audience to be addressed as well as the ends to be prioritized. The hybrid nature of genizah collections presents distinct challenges for making decisions about accessibility. The set of published materials might be reasonably treated as a bibliographic collection and so follow established conventions of library management and access. Yet, books can include extensive handwritten additions that make any given item an archival manuscript, potentially subject to another set of ethical and legal considerations. Other genizah documents—such as community registers, medical records, and personal correspondence—seem to fall squarely in the category of archival material, with decisions about ownership, management, and access to be determined by community representatives following relevant Moroccan laws. Beyond considering individual items, questions of ownership and stewardship of the collections as a whole need to be considered. What

respective roles, for example, will be played by those local communities from which genizah collections are derived and those institutions in which they may be preserved? How are the interests of various cultural heritage stakeholders to be incorporated into decisions about preservation, presentation, and access?

In this twenty-first century, issues of accessibility must also be considered in light of the opportunities afforded by digital tools and web based platforms. From its inception, The Rabat Genizah Project has operated as a vehicle for managing the physical collection and creating a digital surrogate with online presence. Beyond contributing another level of preservation, digitizing the materials can promote access for academic researchers and heritage publics alike, both in Morocco and beyond. In order to create the most accessible and productive resources for historical research, the digital archiving of genizah collections should make use of the full range of finding, management, and analytical tools that are being developed under the rubric of digital humanities.⁵

The online publication of materials must be considered in terms of the various rights and interests of those who created the individual items, those who are represented by the materials, those who assume stewardship of the collection as a whole, and intended audiences. Legal considerations of copyright and archival confidentiality, for example, potentially constrain how digitally reproduced books and community records are published on line. Determination of the various and nested communities represented by the specific collections has implications for considering the advantages of digital publication and the kinds of consultation to be sought. The Rabat genizah collection, for example, represents the local community in which it was collected, the various Moroccan Jewish communities from which materials originated, the national Moroccan Jewish community, the broader Moroccan nation of which those communities are a part, and the Moroccan Jewish population dispersed across the globe. The flexible infrastructure of digital publication can be used to support and invite interest in Moroccan Jewish history by facilitating access to materials across language audiences (Arabic, Hebrew, French, and English) and their associated global contexts.

These have been the guiding principles of The Rabat Genizah Project, which aims to preserve the collection and manage its digital publication. As the historical value of other Moroccan genizah collections is explored, similar opportunities and issues are likely to be faced. Emerging projects

5. Further reflections on the creation of digital archives and research tools in relationship to genizah collections can be found on the project website. See, especially the NEH Grant application statement (<http://library.lclark.edu/rabatgenizahproject/neh-narrative>) and White Paper (<http://library.lclark.edu/rabatgenizahproject/whitepaper>).

will be situated at the intersection of multiple communities and institutions, with various stakeholders prioritizing objectives, offering expertise, and contributing resources. Transparent coordination among these stakeholders, whose rights and interests should determine how projects unfold, has been a main goal of The Rabat Genizah Project and should be a benchmark of success in similar endeavors. The prospects for realizing the historical and heritage value of genizot in Morocco will depend not only on the location of available collections, which surely exist in urban centers and rural regions alike. Equally important will be the extent to which financial support can be found within and outside Morocco. Moving quickly is critical. Given the potentially fragile state of genizah collections *in situ* and the threat posed by a competing international market for North African Judaica, the window of opportunity for placing genizah materials in accessible institutional collections might well be limited.

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ملخص: الجنيزا كمصدر للتاريخ اليهودي المغربي

ارتبطت المنعطفات الكبرى في التاريخ ليهود المغرب بشكل وثيق بظهور مصادر جديدة أغفلتها أنظار المهتمين بكتابة هذا الماضي بشكل خاص. وفي هذا السياق يمكننا أن نأخذ بعين الاعتبار وثائق الجنيزا التي جذبت إليها عددا لا يستهان به من الباحثين المهتمين بتاريخ يهود المغرب وتراثهم. وانطلاقا من نموذج جنيزا الرباط كمثال، تتناول هذه المقالة كثيرا من الاعتبارات المتعلقة باكتشاف مجموعات الجنيزا وقيمتها العلمية بعض إخضاعها للتمحيص التاريخي. ويتعلق الشق الأول بالسلطة المسؤولة عن هذه المجموعات، سواء في حالتها الأصلية أو في وضعها الأرشيفي اللاحق. ويشير الشق الثاني إلى محتويات هذه المجموعات، سواء فيما يتعلق بقيمتها التاريخية أو شروط إمكانية الوصول إليها. ويتعلق الشق الثالث بمختلف الفئات المهمة، بما في ذلك جمهور الأكاديميين المهتمين بالتراث والممثلين بمجموعات الجنيزا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الثقافة النصية، المصادر التاريخية، العبرية-العربية، التراث الثقافي، الحفاظ على الأرشيف، العلوم الإنسانية الرقمية، شناعة توفان.

Résumé: la Geniza comme source pour l'histoire juive marocaine

Les tournants majeurs de l'historiographie juive du Maroc ont été associés à l'émergence de nouvelles sources documentaires. Cet article aborde plusieurs considérations liées à la découverte, à la gestion et aux valeurs des collections de genizah alors qu'elles sont soumises à un examen historiographique. Une série de questions concerne l'autorité sur ces collections, à la fois dans leur état d'origine et dans leur situation archivistique ultérieure. Une seconde se réfère à leur contenu, à la fois en ce qui concerne leur valeur historique et les conditions de leur accessibilité. Un troisième touche le public concerné par ce type de document y compris les universitaires et les spécialistes du patrimoine dans son sens le plus large.

Mots clés: culture textuelle, sources historiques, judéo-arabe, patrimoine culturel, conservation archivistique, humanités numériques, Shana Tova.

Abstract: Genizot as a Source for Moroccan Jewish History

Major turns in the historiography of Jewish Morocco have been associated with the emergence of new documentary sources. This article addresses several considerations related to the discovery, management, and value of genizah collections as they come under historiographic scrutiny. One set of issues concerns the authority over such collections, both in their original state and in their later archival situation. A second refers to their content, both with respect to their historical value and the conditions of their accessibility. A third pertains to the various publics, including academic and broader heritage audiences, interested in and represented by genizah collections.

Key words: textual cultural, historical sources, judeo-arabic, cultural heritage, archival preservation, digital humanities, Shana Tova.

Resumen: Genizot como fuente para la historia judía marroquí

Las principales vueltas en la historiografía de Marruecos judío se han asociado con la aparición de nuevas fuentes documentales. Este artículo aborda varias consideraciones relacionadas con el descubrimiento, manejo y valor de las colecciones de genizah cuando están bajo escrutinio historiográfico. Un conjunto de cuestiones se refiere a la autoridad sobre tales colecciones, tanto en su estado original como en su posterior situación archivística. Un segundo se refiere a su contenido, tanto con respecto a su valor histórico como a las condiciones de su accesibilidad. Un tercero pertenece a los diversos públicos, incluidos los públicos académicos y de patrimonio más amplio, interesados y representados por las colecciones de genizah.

Palabras clave: textual cultural, fuentes históricas, judeo-arabic, herencia cultural, preservación archivística, humanidades digitales, Shana Tova.

Les langues juives et l'histoire des Juifs au Maroc

Abdelkrim Boufarra

Université Mohammed I^{er}, Oujda

L'étude de l'histoire des Juifs du Maroc, et du judaïsme marocain par la suite, peut se révéler d'une grande importance lorsqu'elle prend en compte les sources hébraïques et juives qui ont relaté, noté, inscrit et décrit les événements survenus au Maroc depuis plus de cinq siècles; quoique écrites en hébreu ou dans une autre langue juive. Ce critère linguistique est à prendre en considération lors de l'exploration et de l'exploitation de ces sources.

Une importance doublement appréciée: au niveau du contenu, mais aussi et surtout, au niveau de la forme de cette documentation marocaine, judéo-marocaine et juive. Judéo-arabe et hébraïque, et, dans une dimension moindre, judéo-berbère;¹ voire judéo-espagnole ou ladino ou même *Hakétia*, un mélange de castillan, de l'arabe et de l'hébreu.

Il s'agit de sources écrites par des Juifs marocains en hébreu et/ou en judéo-arabe plus précisément. La question de la langue est soulevée, dans ce contexte, afin d'attirer l'attention sur l'existence d'une documentation riche et féconde, mais non accessible à la majorité des historiens marocains contemporains, handicapés par la langue (ou les langues) de cette historiographie juive.

Cette méconnaissance explique, en grande partie, l'état des lieux actuels dans lequel les sources juives et hébraïques sont presque totalement rejetées (étant méconnues donc inexistantes) dans l'étude de l'histoire du Maroc, dominée par une approche coloniale et post coloniale; vu que les documents mis en valeur émanent des archives françaises, appuyées par des sources arabes.

Ce constat, peu réjouissant, ne devrait pas occulter les travaux publiés par des chercheurs marocains hébraïsants qui tentent de faire connaître les sources juives écrites en hébreu et en judéo-arabe. Parmi les grandes figures de ce courant marocain, le Professeur Ahmed Chahlane est de loin la référence dans ce domaine.² Il est à l'origine de la naissance d'une école marocaine

1. Seule une version de la *Hagadah de Pessah* existe en judéo-berbère.

2. Citons parmi ses travaux: Ahmed Chahlane, *al-Yahūd al-Maghāriba min Manbat al-'Uṣūl 'ilā Riyāḥi al-Furqa* (al-Ribāt: Dār Abī Raqrāq, 2009); idem, *Majma' al-Baḥrayn. Mina al-Fīnīqiyya ilā al-'Arabiya* (al-Ribāt: Dār Abī Raqrāq, 2009); idem, *Ibn Roshd wa al-Fikr al-'Ibrī al-Wasīl*, 2 volumes (Murrakuch: al-Matba'a al-Wataniyya, 1999); idem, *Yahūd al-Andalus wa al-Maghrib*, 2 volumes (al-Dār al-Baydā': Matba'at al-Najāh, 2000); idem, *al-Thurāt al-'Ibrī al-Yahūdi fi al-Gharb al-Islāmī* (al-Ribāt: Dār Abī Raqrāq, 2006). Les travaux de Chahlane s'articulent sur la nécessité d'étudier le patrimoine marocain juif dans sa dimension marocaine, c'est-à-dire nationale. Un patrimoine marocain écrit par des Marocains pour des Marocains.

spécialisée dans l'édition critique et la traduction de ce grand patrimoine juif marocain qui traverse les siècles et transcende les époques.³

La présente étude vise à donner un aperçu des sources hébraïques et juives que l'on peut explorer et exploiter dans toute étude visant à traiter tel ou tel événement historique qu'avait connu le Maroc avant, pendant et après le Protectorat français par exemple.

Ces sources hébraïques et juives pourraient servir de "contre-exemple" dans l'étude et dans l'histoire parallèle, c'est-à-dire lors de la confrontation et de l'analyse critique des différentes sources qui relatent l'histoire du Maroc.

L'intérêt pour ces sources peut nous aider à mieux comprendre les études faites par des voyageurs, des historiens, des missionnaires et des hommes de lettres de confession juive, mais qui ne sont pas des Marocains.

Ces sources hébraïques et juives sont le reflet d'une situation que vivaient des Marocains juifs dans un Maroc en proie à des guerres de conflits ou d'intérêts, des guerres civiles, des épidémies et des troubles intercommunautaires et interconfessionnelles.

Le choix délibéré porté sur la langue hébraïque traduit un sentiment d'estime pour la langue de la Thora et la liberté de croyance dans la société marocaine. Non seulement un Marocain peut demeurer juif sur le plan de la confession, mais peut écrire en hébreu ou en judéo-arabe. La langue joue ici le rôle de relai identitaire sur le plan culturel.

La notion de langue juive dans ces sources revêt une importance toute particulière sur le plan aussi bien linguistique que sociolinguistique que

3. Cette école s'appelle: l'Association Marocaine pour les Études Orientales (AMEO) dont le siège se situe à Rabat. Parmi les membres de cette association qui comprend exclusivement des enseignants hébraïsants dans presque toutes les universités marocaines (Rabat, Oujda, Casablanca, Tétouan, Marrakech, Agadir, Fès, Mohammedia, etc.) les chercheurs: Himméd Abderrahim (Université Ibn Zohr, Agadir), Boufarra Abdelkrim (Université Mohamed Premier, Oujda), Koutoubia Souad (Université Cadi Iyad, Marrakech), Zbiri Nezha (Université Ibn Zohr, Agadir), Lamrini Moulay Elmamoun (Faculté de la langue arabe, Marrakech), Gfaiti Saïd (Université Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fès), Aabiza Driss (Université Mohammed V, Rabat), Chahbar Abdelaziz (Université Abdelmalek Saadi, Tétouan), Almountassir Saïdia (Université Hassan II, Mohammedia). L'AMEO a publié une liste de livres édités par Ahmed Chahlane: Ahmed Chahlane, *Qira'a ft Mudawwanat al-Sharq al-Qadim* (al-Ribât: Dâr Abî Raqrâq, 2012); idem, *Turathu al-Sharqi al-Qadim* (Al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2009); idem, *Mudawwanatu al-Nuṣuṣ al-Qadima* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2008); idem, *Thamaratu Darsi Sharqi* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2008); idem, *Kitābāt Sharqiyya ft al-Akhlaqi wa Tassawwuf wa al-Adyān* (Al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2007); idem, *Hadaratu al Sharqi al-Qadim Bayna 'Ilm al-Athar wa Ḥafriyyati al-Tārīkh* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2006); idem, *Al-Lughatu Wa al-Ḥaḍāratu al-Sharqiyya* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2005); idem, *Ādābu al-Sharqi al-Qadim Watalāquḥ al-Ḥaḍārāt* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya 2005); idem, *al-Dirasat al-Sharqiyya. Wāqī'un wa 'Āfāq* (al-Ribât: Manshūrât kulliyat al-'ādāb wa al-'ulūm al'insāniyya, 2004).

nous ne serions en mesure de traiter en détails ici;⁴ étant donné la nécessité d'aborder les questions des interférences,⁵ l'étude (philologique et linguistique) comparée⁶ ou la nature de cette langue avec ses différentes variétés;⁷ dont le judéo-arabe constitue un élément primordial.⁸ Le judéo-arabe est encore utilisé jusqu'à nos jours, par 542.250 individus de la population en Israël.⁹ Cette langue judéo-arabe, est encore actuelle tout comme le ladino, la Hakétia ou le judéo-berbère, et reflète (éventuellement beaucoup plus que d'autres langues juives), dès le départ, une situation d'interférence, de mélange, de diglossie, voire de bilinguisme ou de plurilinguisme aussi bien sur le plan de l'écrit que celui du parlé, sans oublier la graphie et l'écriture.

L'interférence est observable dans ce judéo-arabe sur le plan morpho-syntaxique, par exemple, quand des notions grammaticales ou sémantiques et des structures de l'hébreu ancien ou moderne se trouvent entremêlées à un style arabe moyennement correct, dans la plupart des cas. Le mélange, quant à lui, se situe généralement au niveau lexical notamment lorsque le terme en hébreu évoque une réalité spécifiquement juive, et que ne saurait traduire la langue arabe utilisée par ces Juifs marocains. La diglossie, qui part de la possibilité de choix entre plusieurs variétés et niveaux dans deux langues se trouvant sur un même territoire, est un phénomène très présent dans les textes judéo-arabes. L'appellation de cette langue confirme cette double variété linguistique: hébraïque et arabe. Il est à noter que cette diglossie, est dans notre cas précis, orale et écrite. Elle intègre, aussi, les variétés hautes et basses dans cette situation sociolinguistique. Le bilinguisme est facilement observable dans ce judéo-arabe par la coprésence de deux niveaux dans l'utilisation de l'arabe et de l'hébreu, selon les cas et les situations. La maîtrise de l'une et/ou de l'autre langue dépend du degré de compétence des auteurs et de la finalité de leurs publications. Le plurilinguisme serait ce bilinguisme à un niveau plus complexe. Le juif marocain se trouvait dans des situations de contact variées. Il ne cherchait pas seulement à communiquer par voie orale, mais voulait s'exprimer par écrit (parmi les définitions du juif: étant celui qui doit savoir lire et écrire). Cette variété de langues et dans les langues est une donnée

4. Abdelkrim Boufarra, *Sociolinguistique de l'hébreu moderne* (Oujda: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres, 2012), 70.

5. Joseph Tedghi, éd., *Les interférences de l'hébreu dans les langues juives* (Paris: Publications Inalco, 1995), 5.

6. Aharon Maman, *Comparative Semitic Philology in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

7. Moshé Bar-Asher, "La recherche sur les parlers judéo-arabes modernes du Maghreb; état de la question," *HEL* 18, 1 (1996): 167-177; Joshua A. Blau, *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judeo-Arabic* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).

8. M. Paul Lewis, G.F. Simons and CD Fennig, *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (Dallas: Texas SIL International, 2015).

9. "Le judéo-arabe: une langue macro linguistique en Israël." Last modified 24 October, 2015, <http://www.ethnologue.com/language.jrb>. Code Iso 639-3 jrb.