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# Modern Judeo-Provençal as Known from Its Sole Textual Testimony: *Harcanot et Barcanot* (Critical Edition and Linguistic Analysis)

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## Abstract

This study offers a linguistic description of the idiom of the Jews of the Comtat Venaissin (“Judeo-Provençal”) at the end of the 18th century, based on a critical edition of the only relevant document illustrating this language, a theatrical play in verse entitled *Harcanot et Barcanot*. The introduction provides a philological inventory of all known sources of “Judeo-Provençal.” The critical and variorum edition of the text, accompanied by linear glosses in English, is followed by a commentary comprising a glossary and analysis of all relevant linguistic features. It reveals, *inter alia*, that this language possessed words pertaining to the linguistic repertoire of French Jews since the Middle Ages; as for the phonetic features of the Jewish dialect of Provençal, their etiology is to be found in the history of the communities. The study concludes with a reassessment of the nature of linguistic variation in the dialect of the Jews of Provence.

## Keywords

Judeo-Romance – Judeo-Provençal – diglossia – Provençal philology – Jews in France – Jewish literature – Hebraisms

## 1 Introduction: Judeo-Provençal Sources<sup>1</sup>

The dialectal languages of the Jews of Provence are little known despite the existence of so-called “Judeo-Provençal” texts quite diverse in nature, spanning nearly four centuries, and which have been previously documented in several inventories.<sup>2</sup> This relative unfamiliarity can be explained by the philological complexity of most of these texts, which often do not represent spontaneous oral states of language. Indeed, so-called Judeo-Provençal texts can be divided into three groups: (1) texts written by Jews in varieties of Provençal that were, in general, barely distinguishable from the common language; (2) texts written by Christians imitating the Jewish lect, for satirical purposes; (3) texts written by Jews in a variety deliberately purporting to represent their lect.

### 1.1 *Texts Written by Jews in Provençal*

There are three main types of texts written by Jews in Provençal. The oldest documents are glosses, in Hebrew characters, in manuscripts of Hebrew works composed during the High and Late Middle Ages, with the oldest ones dating to the 12th century. These Provençal glosses have not been treated as satisfactorily as the so-called Judeo-French *oil* glosses, and the vast majority of them remain unpublished.<sup>3</sup> Then there are a few literary works, such as the well-known *Roman d'Esther*, by Crescas de Caylar, which was first published by Neubauer and Meyer (1892:194–227), and later by Silberstein (1973);<sup>4</sup> finally, there are liturgical or paraliturgical texts: Provençal translations of the daily ritual (such as the famous Roth32 manuscript from the University of Leeds library, notably studied by Lazar 1970) or poems for special occasions and holidays, written entirely or partially in Provençal, and called *obros* by philologists. Some of these texts, written in the 17th century by the Carpentras rabbi Mardochee Astruc, were published by Sabatier (1874), then Alcantara (1891), based on the print editions distributed in various liturgical collections issued

1 My special thanks go to Dr. Nicholas LoVecchio for his translation of this present article and for his remarks on its content.

2 The earliest attempt at an inventory of Judeo-Provençal texts was undertaken by Pierre Pansier in *L'argot hébraïco-comtadin*, which has never been published and is held in manuscript form at the Avignon municipal library (ms. 5739c). Pansier's inventory was largely adopted by Szajkowski (1948; cited hereafter in its French translation, 2010). The late Adam Strich provided a far more complete inventory of these texts in his encyclopedic treatment (Strich & Jochnowitz 2015:517–551), whose minor oversights will be pointed out below.

3 See Strich (2015:518) and Mensching (2015:237–264).

4 On this text, see also Thiolier-Méjean (2002:33–46). A fragment of a similar contemporary text in Provençal, also about the story of Esther, was described and edited by Baricci (2004).

in Avignon and Amsterdam throughout the 18th century.<sup>5</sup> The most comprehensive edition is Lazar's.<sup>6</sup> Some of these poems remain unpublished to this day, if not completely unknown to philologists.<sup>7</sup> Astruc was also the author of a paraliturgical play about Queen Esther, partially imitating Racine's *Esther*, which was supplemented with several scenes and published by Jacob de Lunel in 1774. The title of the 1774 edition is *La Reine Esther: Tragediou en vers et en cinq actes, à la languou vulgari*;<sup>8</sup> Sabatier had it reprinted unchanged and Pansier (1932:361–404) produced an arbitrarily altered edition. The language of this text, as well as that of the *obros*, is the common Rhodanian Provençal dialect spoken in Carpentras and its area,<sup>9</sup> though heavily Gallicized.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.2 *Texts Written by Christians Attempting to Imitate the Jewish Lect*

Among the “pseudo-Judeo-Provençal” texts are a few plays in print or manuscript form, whose titles hint at their content: *Les Juifs dupés* (1696–1698),<sup>11</sup> *Le testament de Fourfouille, Juif de Carpentras* (early 18th century),<sup>12</sup> *Les procureurs dupés* (1774), *Leis embarras doou marca de Carpentras* (1789),<sup>13</sup> and several others, identified by Strich, which feature one or more Jewish characters. To these can be added the poem *Lou pès enleva* (1803), a kind of polyphonic

5 These were inventoried by Roth (1972:81–87).

6 Lazar (1963:290–345). Blondheim (1926b:388) anticipated publishing an edition of these “Provençal poems,” although he apparently never did so.

7 This is the case, for example, with an elegy in alternating Hebrew and Provençal lines, beginning with the line אַתְּחִיל בְּנֵהי וְנִרְהִי בְּנֵהי וְנִרְהִי, which I discovered in a manuscript of Hebrew prayers copied in Avignon in 1682, held at the Alliance Israélite Universelle library in Paris (Élie Nahmias collection, ms. H0006, ff. 141–142). This text was not known to Strich, nor, as far as I am aware, has been referenced in any printed work.

8 Strich and others have stated that there is only one extant copy of this play, held in the Carpentras municipal library; however, four other copies held in public French collections are reported in Eygun (2003:117).

9 On the linguistic boundaries and subgroups within the languages of Southern France, see Ronjat 1930–1941. Rhodanian Provençal is the name usually given to the group of central dialects of Provençal spoken around the banks of the Rhône, especially in the area of Avignon and the Vaucluse department, which covers the former Comtat Venaissin area.

10 The only particular linguistic feature of this text lies in a few lines composed in the *sabir* or *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean seaports.

11 Several manuscripts cataloged by Eygun (2003:88–90), and an edition, again filled with errors, by Pansier (1932:331–360).

12 Several manuscripts, partially cataloged by Eygun (2003:157–159) and Strich (2015:528). Both Eygun and Strich overlooked the manuscript version held at the Bibliothèque Méjanes in Aix, with the title *Fourfouye, comédie burlesque*, contained in the collection entitled *Recueil de pièces intéressantes la Provence* (ms. 1924, text 2).

13 This text was probably inspired by the Provençal satire *Embarras de la fieire de Beaucaire*, composed in burlesque verse by Jean Michel (Nîmes, 1603–1689) in the 17th century.

satire containing a fragment of reported speech attributed to a Jew; in addition to the two manuscript versions held in Carpentras (mss. 976 and 988), another version was printed over half a century after its composition.<sup>14</sup> In addition to these secular pieces, there are also “*Noëls*,” popular Christmas carols, often in Provençal, which were widely composed in the 18th century, and some of which mentioned the conversion of Jews;<sup>15</sup> the so-called *Séguret Pastorale*, a Christmas pageant probably written toward the end of the 17th century recounting the Catholic conversion of a Comtadine Jew, and which, according to Szajkowski, continued to be performed until the beginning of the 20th century;<sup>16</sup> and lastly, the famous *Sermon des juifs*, a mock synagogue sermon that was recited once a year at Carnival to the Christian masses of Carpentras by a Catholic priest dressed up as a rabbi. Many manuscript versions of these exist, referenced by Strich,<sup>17</sup> as well as some non-critical editions, including Viguier’s (1989:235–259) based on the Avignon manuscript 2715, which remains the best and is accompanied by a French translation. Viguier hypothesized that this was an authentic Jewish sermon, hastily recorded by a Christian who supposedly turned it into a Carnival attraction. This hypothesis is not implausible; however, the specialized vocabulary, appearing in this text in the form of some two dozen lexical items, presents rather little interest, especially because the manuscript tradition, dependent as it was on Catholic copyists who were as inaccurate as they were ignorant of the Jewish lect, rendered it in a manifestly altered form.

Strich’s article, whose bibliography of all these texts is remarkably well documented, includes references to almost all pertinent scholarly and lay publications. This bibliography is extensive, although much work remains to be done

14 Anrès (1857:57–100). It was on the basis of a misreading and naive misinterpretation of one word in this text that Szajkowski invented the pseudo-glottonym *shuadit*, a ghost word that, since its uncritical adoption by Weinreich, has come to designate, in numerous publications, the language of the Jews of Provence, against all historical reason. There never was such word as *shuadit* before Szajkowski invented it: the word he actually misread in the manuscripts was spelled *chuadi*, and could be a Provençal borrowed form of Fr. *choisi*. One of the virtues of Strich’s 2015 article is that it was the first to expose the absurdity of this denomination.

15 Szajkowski (2010:68–72) cataloged and analyzed these.

16 Szajkowski claimed to be in possession of the text of this pageant, although in 2016 I was unable to locate it in his papers, which are held in the archives of the YIVO Institute in New York.

17 Who nevertheless overlooks the three versions held in Aix-en-Provence (Bibliothèque Méjanès, ms. 1924) bound with the piece mentioned fn. 12, one of which includes a small glossary entitled “Explication des mots.” The same collection contains a curious “Sermon des juifs sur la mort de Louis XVIII,” written in French mixed with Provençal, which has never been described, nor does it seem to contain any specifically Jewish linguistic features.

on these texts, many of which have never been published in a philologically adequate way.<sup>18</sup> Most of these texts only remotely concern the spoken language used by the Jews of the Comtat. Concerning the texts of group 1, written by Jews, only the most obvious conclusion will be drawn here: namely, that the Jews of Provence, at various times in their history, were clearly capable of writing (and therefore, more generally, of expressing themselves) in a variety of Provençal devoid of distinguishing Jewish features. As for the texts in group 2, it will be noted only that the Christians of the Comtat were in sufficient contact with Jews to be able to produce satirical texts more or less faithfully reproducing the stereotypical features of their language, and that the Christian audience to whom these texts were recited or performed could, due to their familiarity with the Jewish lect being mimicked, experience the *vis comica* of such parodies.

### 1.3 *Texts Written by Provençal Jews in their Own Lect*

Finally, the only texts truly useful for our understanding of the specialized language of the Comtadine Jews are those written by Jews who used, or rather deliberately illustrated,<sup>19</sup> their own lect. In fact, this group can only appropriately be spoken of in the singular since, apart—maybe—from the aforementioned *Sermon des juifs*, the only extant text is the play *Harcanot et Barcanot, ou la Méfila de Carpentras au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* [Harcanot and Barcanot, or the Jewry of Carpentras in the 18th century]. This text, for which a critical edition is needed, is therefore the sole basis for describing Jewish linguistic variation in Provençal.

## 2 *Harcanot et Barcanot: The Only Modern Judeo-Provençal Text*

The play *Harcanot et Barcanot, ou la Méfila de Carpentras au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* is a burlesque comedy composed mainly in alexandrine verse, with some short lines probably intended to be sung. It comprises two acts, followed in all

18 In October 2016, Adam Strich, then a graduate student at Harvard, and I agreed to jointly compile an exhaustive literature review and scholarly desiderata in the field of Judeo-Provençal, and determined to collaborate on a bilingual collection of all these Judeo-Provençal texts, broadly defined, according to the strictest philological standards. In April 2017, Adam informed me that he was terminating his scholarly work for personal reasons and he urged me to proceed alone. I subsequently learned of his untimely death in January 2019. I hope to be able to carry this work to completion in the coming years.

19 What the philologist Georges Straka called “variétés stylisées” (stylized varieties), and which roughly correspond to Benedetto Croce’s “letteratura dialettale riflessa” (reflected dialectal literature; see Croce 1954:355–364).

likelihood by a third act, which has been lost. The plot of the two surviving acts, which takes place shortly before the French Revolution, is as follows. A burglary has taken place in the Jewish community of Carpentras; the populace is in an uproar, debating how to protect themselves from future raids by the Catholic thieves. Then two particularly farcical Jews, Harcanot and Barcanot, decide to stand guard around the Jewish quarter. To do so, they will need guns: the entire second act is devoted to their visit to the bishop of Carpentras (this bishopric was abolished only in 1801) in order to acquire them. Following an incident caused by the servants of the bishop's palace, the prelate warmly welcomes them. Despite the poor communication between the French-speaking bishop and the two patois-speaking Jews, the latter manage to get their message across and the kind bishop gladly provides them with the guns requested.

Besides the few lines in French in the course of the dialogue with the bishop, the language of the play's Jewish characters, which forms the largest part of the text, attempts to be a representation of the spoken language of the Jews of Carpentras: overall, a Judaicized variant of the local Rhodanian Provençal dialect.

This play is known via two textual sources, both of which attribute it to the lawyer Israël Bédarride. According to research conducted by Viguier (1997:7–11 and 2000:239–251), Bédarride was born in Pézenas in 1797 to Comtadine Jewish parents; he practiced law at the Paris bar in 1820, then in Montpellier from 1824 until his death in 1869. The obituary for Bédarride published in the *Archives Israélites*<sup>20</sup> does not mention the existence of this work, but what is known about the man—namely his interest in Jewish history<sup>21</sup> and his love of literature<sup>22</sup>—makes the attribution of *Harcanot et Barcanot* to him quite plausible. The writer Armand Lunel offers a brief analysis of this play, which he says inspired his opéra bouffe *Esther de Carpentras* (1926). He writes:

This regrettably unfinished farce presents, although some twenty years after emancipation, such a funny and faithful portrait, in the *bœuf gros-sel* genre, of life in these communities under the Ancien Régime that, in the early 20th century, manuscript copies of it were still to be found among almost all the old Jewish families from the Comtat. The author, Israël Bédarrides, wrote this burlesque comedy, when he was a student,

20 Félix (1869:717–723).

21 He was indeed the author of a major work of Jewish scholarship, published in Paris in 1859 under the title *Les Juifs en France, en Italie et en Espagne. Recherches sur leur état depuis leur dispersion jusqu'à nos jours sous le rapport de la législation, de la littérature et du commerce*.

22 "At an early age, Bédarride left Pézenas, his native land, to pursue classical studies, which he never gave up and which often filled his leisure time," wrote Félix (1869:719).

based on his parents' and grandparents' still burning memories. He never denied his authorship, even when, after becoming president of the bar at the Imperial Court of Montpellier, he wrote his remarkable *Histoire des Juifs en France, en Italie et en Espagne*, which still today is worth consulting.

Lunel 195:55

The textual tradition of this play is fairly clear: starting from the original, written in the author's youth (around 1825), and now lost, various manuscript copies circulated among the Jews of southern France (the Midi) in the 19th century. None of these secondhand copies, mentioned notably by Armand Lunel,<sup>23</sup> have survived, but two manuscripts from this group were used to generate the two current textual sources:

1. Manuscript 1005-VII at the Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine in Carpentras, copied, according to the catalog, by the local scholar Casimir-François-Henri Barjavel (1803–1868), probably in the 1850s or 1860s, from a manuscript belonging to one Lunel, presumably from Carpentras, as indicated by the note in the same hand as the text, which can be read at the end of the manuscript.

This play was written, from what Mr. Lunel believes, by Mr. Bédarrides, a lawyer in Montpellier. It was written in the rural language or rather the local argot, used in Carpentras until the earliest years of the 19th century. Mr. Bédarrides never lived in Carpentras, but he is said to have learned the mores and language of his coreligionaries by one Dame Vidal-Naquet from Carpentras,<sup>24</sup> who was married in Montpellier. This play which has never been published was provided to me by Mr. Nathan Lunel. I have copied it from a manuscript belonging to him. He could not tell me if it was ever performed.

The Barjavel manuscript takes the form of a thin notebook of unlined paper, written in a rather careless cursive script that is sometimes difficult to read. It

23 Other than in the passage already cited, he added: "This play was published late in the *Annuaire israélite* of 1897 [*sic*] in Toulouse; but copies have always circulated among the old Jewish families from the Comtat, who could enjoy this humorous reminiscence of their ancestors" (Lunel 1975:162). The Calvet Museum in Cavaillon holds a documentary collection from Armand Lunel; I was unable to locate a manuscript of this play in it, however. Eygun (2003:84–86), in his inventory of Occitan theater, is also aware only of the two textual sources described here.

24 According to Szajkowski (2010:85), this "Dame Vidal-Naquet" was allegedly Esther Vidal-Naquet, née Digne, born in Carpentras around 1795 and the granddaughter of one Abraham Digne, who was known to have advocated for creating a theater out of an abandoned church during the Revolution.

contains glosses in French, in the same hand, indicating, between the lines or in the margin, the meaning of most of the words pertaining to the specialized language of the Jews.

2. The edition published in 1895 by Raoul Hirschler, a Marseille-born *ḥazan* (precentor) of the Portuguese rite then stationed in Toulouse, in the “Partie littéraire” (‘literary part’) of his short-lived publication, the *Annuaire israélite du Midi de la France pour l’année religieuse 5657*. Hirschler stated that he was publishing the play “with the permission of the author’s son”; it was probably from the latter that he received the manuscript from which the text was published. Hirschler may therefore have reproduced the text from a manuscript kept in the author’s family—perhaps even the original. While subsequent to the Carpentras manuscript, this printed edition thus proceeds from a textual tradition that may well be more direct. Hirschler suggests that this play was only a “fragment” and that there might be a continuation of it, of which I have found no other mention. Hirschler’s edition was not widely distributed beyond the Jewish families of the south of France. It is from this one that Armand Lunel seems to have been introduced to the play. Hirschler’s text contains no glosses or notes, but the words that the editor considered as belonging to the Jewish lexicon are systematically italicized. The text is quite satisfactory in terms of sense; it is written in a Gallicizing orthography whose main flaw is to sometimes employ inaccurate word breaks.

The Carpentras Manuscript 1005 served as the basis for an edition prepared by Pansier (1925:113–145) and published in the *Revue des études juives*. Pansier, who was unfamiliar with the version published by Hirschler, produced, on the sole basis of the Barjavel manuscript—whose handwriting is particularly hard to read—an edited text that is unsatisfactory in several respects. First of all, there are numerous errors in the interpretation of the manuscript, especially concerning the distinctive linguistic features that Pansier did not grasp. For example, where the manuscript and the Hirschler edition present the word *levus* n. m. sg. ‘garment,’ borrowed from Hebrew לבוש *lebhuš* with the same sense and that is the expected form, Pansier supplied “*leons*.” The Hebrew borrowing *ganaou* ‘thief,’ found in many instances in the text, was read once (line 109) as “*hanaou*” and entered into the glossary under this form. Many other mistakes like these could be listed. In addition, Pansier arbitrarily “corrected” many passages he did not understand, or rewrote lines to achieve the proper syllable count, but sometimes without indicating his changes. Finally, he aligned the entire text with the Mistralian orthographic standard of Provençal, thereby further obscuring a text that had already been made impracticable. Pansier then proposes a rather imaginative glossary, whose forms are almost



all erroneous and result from misreadings, while at times the glosses are correct, since they were copied directly from those present in the manuscript. The many flaws in Pansier's edition might have been inconsequential had it not been circulated; but, unfortunately for the textual tradition, it was mainly via this edition that the play became known to scholars, and notably to Szajkowski: the scholarly *Revue des études juives* circulated more widely than Hirschler's modest yearbook, and Pansier, who had authored many works of local scholarship, is still considered, fundamentally, to be reliable. Pansier himself incorporated the largely defective material from this glossary into a "Vocabulaire hébraïco-provençal" included in his *Histoire de la langue provençale à Avignon* (Pansier 1924–1927:vol.3,181–185), thus introducing a dating error: the lexemes are systematically dated to 1795, the year Pansier—who had not identified the author of the work—places its approximate composition. Some of these words, by means of this source, have even found their way into von Wartburg's *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (FEW).<sup>25</sup>

These textual problems, along with the uniqueness of this text in the history of the specialized Comtadine Jewish language, warrant the publication of a critical edition here, based on the two relatively reliable sources described above. Raoul Hirschler's edition (RH, in the critical apparatus here), whose tradition was transmitted only by speakers of the lect, is less prone to include corrections caused by a misunderstanding of the distinctive linguistic features than is the case with Barjavel's manuscript<sup>26</sup>—especially if, as is likely, Hirschler prepared

25 Unfortunately, scholars of Judeo-Provençal continue to use Pansier's error-ridden edition. Recently, Jochnowitz (2018:129–144) painstakingly attempted to account for forms arising out of Pansier's misreadings. For example, concerning the spurious word *gueneruf*, Pansier's misreading of *guénévuf* (proper reading in the manuscript and Hirschler, and etymologically expected), Jochnowitz states, "The letter *r* in the word is a mystery, perhaps reflecting the elongation of *vav* into *resh*, a regional sound change, or perhaps it is simply an illustration of how the Rector [i.e., the bishop who repeats the word] misheard the word" (p. 140). Consultation of the other states of the text would have prevented such speculation. It should also be noted, as a matter of curiosity, that Pansier's glossary was even used by a speaker of the current Provençal Jewish lect who, via this source, [re]introduced into his own speech, alongside his own oral lexical repertoire, words learned from this glossary, thinking in good faith that they were once used by his ancestors, whereas many of them are none other than ghost words based on Pansier's misreadings. Details about it can be found in our comprehensive survey of the language of the contemporary descendants of Comtadine Jews (Nahon forthcoming).

26 For instance, at line 112 Hirschler gives *Quintei kavof!* 'what an honor!' vs. *quinto causo* 'what a thing!' in the Barjavel manuscript. There are, however, a small number of such reconstructions in Hirschler's text. Thus, for lines 72–73, the reading, satisfactory in the manuscript, was clearly rewritten by Hirschler, who, by then unfamiliar with the

his text directly from an authorial manuscript. Unless otherwise indicated, this is the text followed for this edition. I have corrected it where it contained obviously inaccurate word breaks or clearly erroneous readings, for which the Barjavel manuscript (MS, in the critical apparatus) provides preferable variants. The spelling differs slightly between the two sources: on the whole, I follow Hirschler's spelling, which, since it is Gallicizing, is probably closer to what the French-speaking author would have used in 1825, well before the emergence of movements that promoted standard orthographies for Provençal such as the Félibrige organisation, founded in 1854, whose normative precepts, adopted by most dialectal writers, could well have influenced Barjavel. In the handful of cases where Hirschler omitted lines present in Barjavel's text (notably the first three lines), I have adapted the spelling, in these passages restored from the manuscript, according to the Gallicizing usage employed elsewhere by Hirschler. I have retained the use of capital letters, which are common at the beginning of words—apparently for emphasis—in Hirschler's edition, as well as his italicizations, which seem to emphasize more or less all words perceived (by him or the source he follows?) as distinctively Jewish. The punctuation of the text, inconsistent between the two sources, has been tweaked. In order to avoid unnecessarily overloading the critical apparatus, I have not indicated the spelling variants for linguistically insignificant features that vary within the same source (for example, post-tonic final *-a/-o*; *y/i*; *ch/tch*; *gnie/gne*; *au/aou*, etc.). Cruxes and corrupted passages are marked off by obeli (†).

Due to the linguistic, and especially lexical, uniqueness of the play, specific treatment seems warranted: the significant linguistic features—syntactic, morphological, and graphophonetic—will be highlighted and commented on individually following the text. Mere editorial reflections on the establishment of the text and questionable readings are dealt with in footnotes throughout the text.

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distinctive Hebrew-origin feature *hanassin* n. pl. 'men,' corrected it with the French *assassin*, then had to rewrite the next line accordingly to avoid, somewhat awkwardly, a nonsensical sequence. See below, in the critical apparatus, for this correction as well as ones to lines 68, 84, 152, 210, 240.

**SECTION 3:**  
**CRITICAL EDITION**  
**AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

*Harcanot et Barcanot*  
*ou la Méfila de Carpentras*  
*au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*

*Harcanot and Barcanot*  
*Or the Jewry of Carpentras*  
*in the 18th Century*

∴

*Acte premier*

## Scène I / TOURLERETTE ET JACO DE VARACHÉ

TOURLERETTE

1           Quinta *Maka*  
 Dédin la *Méfila* !  
 Sé paou pu yé téné !  
           Quinta *Maka*  
 5           Dédin la *Méfila* !  
 Sé paou pu yé resta !  
           Négré Gouyin  
 Touti de *ganavin* !  
 10          Happoun tout cé qué trovoun  
           Négré Gouyin  
 Touti de *ganavin* !  
 Lou *maou kaou* su sei prin !

JACO DE VARACHÉ

Tchamaï une pessia comme aquello d'ayer.

TOURLERETTE

15          Ha, sé n'én parlara dédin tout lou *héyer*.  
 A *rebbe* Israël yan *happa* sa capito,  
 Si bézicle, si *haou*, sa vesto et sa lévitto,  
 Et sa fume *Riouka* faguéssé tché dé bru  
 Yé *happavoun* dé maï si bas et son fichu.

JACO DE VARACHÉ

20          Ha, qué disés aqui ! Sént-ans té presté vido !  
 M'an bén *happa* à yéou une dinde roustido !  
 A maï tchaque mousséou yé sara dé *famin*  
 Et yéou n'auräi pu tché per la gneu dé *purin*.

1–3 *versus om.* RH | Quinto maka / dedin la Mefila / se paou pa pu yé tene MS || 10 trovoun MS ||  
 13 su soun prin || 16 si capito RH sa capito MS || 17 béricle MS || 20 cent ans te preste en vido ||  
 21 ma ben hapa MS ||

*Act One*

*Scene I* / TOURLERETTE AND JACO DE VARACHÉ

TOURLERETTE

1           What a disaster  
           In the Jewry!  
           We can't hold on anymore!  
           What a disaster  
 5           In the Jewry!  
           We can't stay here anymore!  
           Vile goyim,  
           All thieves!  
 10          They steal everything they find.  
           Vile goyim,  
           All thieves!  
           May fever strike them down!

JACO DE VARACHÉ

Never has there been a pillage like the one yesterday.

TOURLERETTE

15          Oh! Everyone will be talking about it all throughout town.  
           From Rabbi Israel they took his prayer book,  
           His glasses, his pants, his jacket and his frock coat,  
           And if his wife Rebecca hadn't made noise  
           They would've taken her stockings and headscarf too.

JACO DE VARACHÉ

20          Oh, what do you say here! May you live a hundred years!  
           From me they took a roast turkey!  
           And every last morsel will go in their stew,  
           And I won't have anything left for the night of Purim.

## Scène II / YÉDIDIA, LAFLOUR ET LI PRÉCÉDÉNTS

YÉDIDIA

- 25 *Rabofai!* y bén témps qué tout eisso féniqué  
 Mé veiran *mahari* ou faou qué yé périgué  
 Lou *Ganaou* qu'eï bengou troubla tout lou *kahal*  
 Vénie daou *bef déras*, soun touti *medur-bal* ;  
 Maï li vechessi touté et Harcanot qué darsso  
 Avan qué sièche gneu veiran de belli farsso.<sup>27</sup>

Scène III / HARCANOT, HANA, BARCANOT, RECHENO, RAHÉOU  
 DE BRINGOULE, LI PRÉCÉDÉNTS, LOU POPLÉ.*Ensemblé.*

- 30 Es une ourrou  
 Qu'en *kahal* én plén tchour  
 Sé *hapé* de la sorte.  
 Es une ourrou  
 Qu'en *kahal* én plén tchour  
 35 Tchogoun dé pareils tours.  
 A Carpentras  
 Naoutré *trahalén* pas,  
 Naoutré sian touti d'hommé.  
 A Carpentras,  
 40 Naoutré *trahalén* pas :  
 40b Ni pas pur l'an di ca<sup>28</sup>  
*Happoun* dé tchour :  
 Yé faou tchouga un tour,  
 Dé gneu monta la garde.

24 Laflour et li précédent / Laflour | finigue MS || 25 mahari RH ma harif MS || 27 vené doun bef déras MS | medurbal MS || 28 vech issi MS véchessi RH || 29 darsou MS || 30 farsou MS || 40b ni pas pur l'an di ca (versum om. RH) ||

27 The manuscript omits the character Yédidia and attributes this line to Laflour (see critical apparatus). The line, furthermore, seems slightly corrupted, especially with regard to the words *mahari* and *medurbal*, which do not present a satisfactory meaning. The verb *darsso*, although not italicized by Hirschler, appears to be a conjugated form of a verb \**darssa* 'to give a sermon, to preach' (see Glossary).

28 Problematic line, present in the manuscript in this form and omitted by Hirschler. Pansier arbitrarily changes this to "Si pou pus lambica" 'We can stall no longer,' a baseless correction. The conjectural interpretation proposed in the translation, in brackets, is from Viguier (1997:247).

*Scene II* / YÉDIDIA, LAFLOUR AND PREVIOUS CHARACTERS

YÉDIDIA

25 Gentlemen! It is high time for all this to end  
 I will be seen † [?] † or I'll have to perish  
 The thief who came to disturb the whole community  
 Came from the house of study. They are all † [?]  
 Although I saw them all, and Harcanot who's preaching, †  
 Before night falls, we'll see plenty of farces.

*Scene III* / HARCANOT, HANA, BARCANOT, RECHENO, RAHÉOU  
 DE BRINGOULE, PREVIOUS CHARACTERS, THE PEOPLE.

*Together.*

30 It's a horror  
 That in the Jewry in broad daylight  
 People rob like this.  
 It's a horror  
 That in the Jewry in broad daylight  
 35 Such tricks are played.  
 In Carpentras  
 We are not afraid  
 We are all men.  
 In Carpentras  
 40 We are not afraid:  
 40b [We are not afraid of anyone]  
 They rob by day:  
 We must play a trick,  
 Stand guard by night.

- 45 *Happoun* dé tchour :  
 Yé faou tchouga un tour.  
 Qué n'en disés tu, Laffour ?  
 LAFLOUR  
 Nègré *typés*,  
 As tché dé *kéliès*
- 50 Et vos té fairé crégné !  
 Nègré *typés*,  
 As tché dé *kéliès* :  
 Per un n'en fourri dés.  
 HARCANOT  
 Yédidia
- 55 Dédin la *méfila*  
 Sé faren respeta.  
*Toutis ensemblé.*  
 Pessita<sup>29</sup> faou qu'agneu chacun monté la garde,  
 Car dé trop vivamen tout eisso nous régarde.  
 RECHENO  
*Barbinan !* Qué moun fi *Choanan*<sup>30</sup> s'en anessé,  
 60 Ha ! *trahalariou* bén qu'é l'air mé l'empourtéssé.  
 HANA  
 Mouna la garde! Moun Diéou, ah! garda lou dé maou !  
 Mon mari *Salamoun* sor pas dé mon oustaou!  
 RAHÉOU DÉ BRINGOULE  
 Ah ! certe seri ben un reel *typessuf*  
 Dé tchancha sis enfants per quaouqué *Guénévuf*.  
 65 Din moun *bayé* vendrin mé *happa* ma caméyo  
 Que lissarion tchamaï sourti mon fi *Aléyo !*

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50 faïé RH faire MS || 53 fourié dex MS || 54 Yededia MS || 58 car de trop pres MS || 60 *Joanan* s'en anessé RH *Choanan* sin anessé MS || 61 Diou lou garde de maou MS || 63 un rico tipessus MS || 66 Aleyo MS *Alíyo* RH ||

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29 Questionable word: it is not glossed by Barjavel nor italicized by Hirschler. It is most likely from Aramaic פֵּשִׁיטָא *pešita* adv. 'clearly, obviously' (a word from Talmudic rhetoric).

30 This first name, borrowed from Heb. יוֹחָנָן *Yohanan*, is written *Choanan* in the manuscript, and *Joanan* in Hirschler's edition, where the form is surely a scholarly reconstruction based on its etymology.



45           They rob by day:  
           We must play a trick.  
           What do you say, LafLOUR?  
                   LAFLOUR  
           Wretched fool,  
           You don't have a gun  
 50           And you want to be feared!  
           Wretched fool,  
           You don't have a gun:  
           For one we'd need ten.  
                   HARCANOT  
           Yédidia,  
 55           In the Jewry,  
           We'll be respected.  
                   *All together.*  
           Surely everyone must stand guard tonight,  
           Because all this matters too much to us all.  
                   RECHENO  
           God forbid my son Johanan should go,  
 60           Oh! I'd be terrified he'd be torn away from me.  
                   HANA  
           Stand guard! My God, oh! Protect him from harm!  
           My husband Salomon will not leave my house!  
                   RAHÉOU DÉ BRINGOULE  
           Oh! Certainly it would be pure idiocy  
           To trade your kids for some theft.  
 65           They can come to my house and steal my shirt  
           But I will never let my son Élie leave.

BARCANOT

*Raramin*<sup>31</sup> an agu une belle *ourma*  
 En disen aou *Boré*, « *lo afani issa* »<sup>32</sup>;  
 Sé dédin lou *kahal* éria touti soulétte,  
 70 Vous virarien isso insi qu'une oumelette!  
 Per bonheur sian ici et naoutri *hanassin*  
 Dé tout eisso d'ici voulen veire la fin.

HARCANOT

As résoun, Barcanot, soun touti dé pagnote:  
 Plante mé leis aqui, vaou tchancha de culotte,  
 75 Partiren touti dous per veiré lou *Haoumoun* ;  
 Yé faren nettamen noste proupousitioun.

Scène IV / LEÏS PRÉCÉDÉNTS, EXCEPTA HARCANOT ET BARCANOT

HANA

*Brahoun* tché lou *Haoumoun* quu saou qu'*afeyaran*<sup>33</sup> ?  
 Sian touti *afurin*!

RECHENO

Qué disés, *Barbinan* ?  
 Faou tchamaï aou *fatan* durbi la gorge négre :  
 Canten lou grand *Halel*, siechen touti allegre !

67 *Barrhamin* RH *Raramin* MS || 68 lei afan i *issa* RH lo afani issa MS || 71 naoutri hanassin MS nostis assassin RH || 72 voulen veire MS véiran ben léou RH || 75 et touti dos, anen che lou hooumoun MS || 78 *fatun* RH *fatan* (le diable) MS ||

31 The manuscript reading, *Raramin*, is far preferable to Hirschler's, *Barrhamin*, which would be an expressive expletive of obscure etymology, or even a scarcely identifiable variant of *barbinam*. It represents a form of the Hebrew plural of the word חַכְמָה *hakhmah*. It echoes, in the same line, *ourma*, which is borrowed from the Hebrew word of the same family חִכְמָה *hokhma* n. f. 'wisdom' (*h'ourmah*). The use of this word without an article at the start of the sentence comes from postbiblical Hebrew syntax: in Jewish sapiential literature, Heb. חַכְמִים *hakhmamim* n. m. pl. 'sages, rabbis' is commonly the first word of a paragraph ("the rabbis say that" etc.), as is the case here.

32 Citation from the Jewish ritual: Heb. לֹא עָשִׂי אִשָּׁה *lo 'asani 'isha* 'you did not make me a woman,' the closing words of a blessing recited by men in the morning service, whose full text reads: "Blessed are you, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who did not make me a woman." The Hebrew word אִשָּׁה *'isha* 'woman' has also survived in the present-day variety of French spoken by Comtadine Jews, in the form *issa*.

33 Barjavel glosses this as "ce qu'on fera" 'what one will do.'

BARCANOT

The rabbis had great wisdom  
 In saying to the Creator: “You did not make me a woman”!  
 If you ladies were all alone in the community,  
 70 They’d flip you like an omelette!  
 Fortunately we are here and we men,  
 Of all this here we want to see the end.

HARCANOT

You’re right, Barcanot, these ladies are all poltroons:  
 So leave them here, I’m going to change my breeches,  
 75 We will both go to see the bishop;  
 And will clearly make our proposal to him.

*Scene IV / PREVIOUS CHARACTERS, EXCEPT HARCANOT AND  
 BARCANOT*

HANA

They’re going to the bishop: who knows what they’ll do?  
 We’re all doomed!

RECHENO

What are you saying, God forbid?  
 One must never open the dark mouth of the devil:  
 Let’s chant the great Halel, let’s all be cheerful!

RAHÈOU

80 Ha leisse mé ana enferma moun *Behor* ;  
Senté qué tout lou tchour yéou anariéu d'oue cor.<sup>34</sup>

Scène v / HARCANOT, BARCANOT, LAFLOUR

LAFLOUR

Maï quu pourra tchamaï metré en ben une affairé,  
Quu pourra *Barbinan* ! tanben visqué mon payré,  
Din lou cor di *gouyin* cava la *nessama*.

HARCANOT

85 Ah! moun fi, sabé ben dé qué vos *dabéra* :  
D'aco qu'*afeyé* poou; tanben visqué ma féyo !  
Ren qué de yé pensa perdé la *tabahéyo*.<sup>35</sup>

LAFLOUR

Ah! coume sian vengut! pu tché dé *chéüduf*!  
Lou bon Diéou nous punis, qu'aven din nosté *Guf*  
90 Dé vougué di *gouyin* touchou suivré la trace.  
Leissen li faire, et pieï resten tchacun à noste place.  
Mettren de *kéliès*. Et non, negré *béhen*  
*Lo tahafé* tchamaï coume *mahaféen*.<sup>36</sup>

HARCANOT

Touti lis *harémof* noun faran tché dé *Rahé*.  
95 Dedin la *méfila* vouten pu tché de *pahé*.  
Anen tché lou *haoumoun* quéré de *kéliès*  
Foura que nous entende, ou ben sera *rhérés*.

FIN DU PREMIER ACTE

81 iou anariou dou cor || 84 cava la *mensanna* RH | lava la *nessama* MS || 86 daco gafeyo MS || 88 chehéduf (foi) MS || 89 vous puni qu'avés din vosté guf MS || 90 li trasso MS || 95 harimo (frayeur) || 97 reres MS ||

34 Provençal *anar dou cors* 'to go to the bathroom' (Mistral 1879–1886:1, 23b).

35 Word attested nowhere else in Provençal, but probably related to Judeo-French *tabahie* 'rectum, final portion of the large intestine' (Rashi – 11th century: FEW 21, 318a), with antihiatic [j]. See commentary below.

36 Hebrew biblical citation: לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כַּמַּעֲשֵׂהם *lo ta'ase ke-ma'asehem* (Exodus 23:24) 'thou shalt not do after their works.' The Provençal segment *tchamaï coume* is interpolated and *coume* 'as, like' translates the Hebrew particle כִּי *ke-* of the verse.

RAHÈOU

80 Oh! let me go lock up my eldest son;  
I feel like all day long I could be going to the bathroom.

*Scene V* / HARCANOT, BARCANOT, LAFLOUR

LAFLOUR

But who could ever seal the deal,  
Who could, God forbid! on my father's life,  
Plumb the depths of the goyim's soul?

HARCANOT

85 Oh! my son, I know well what you're talking about:  
About what's scary; on my daughter's life,  
Just thinking about it, I want to empty my bowels.

LAFLOUR

90 Oh! How far we've come! No more Judaism!  
The good Lord is punishing us: what do we have, in our pride  
To always want to follow in the goyim's tracks!  
Let them do it, and then let's each stay in our place.  
We'll take up rifles? And no: wretched fool,  
Never act following their acts.

HARCANOT

95 None of these threats will do us harm.  
In the Jewry we want no more terror.  
We're going to the bishop to seek guns:  
He better hear us out, otherwise he'll be deaf.

END OF THE FIRST ACT

*Acte second*

*Scène I* / HARCANOT, BARCANOT DANS L'ESCALIER DE L'ÉVÊQUE.

BARCANOT

*Eine* un paou Harcanot quintéis appartaments!  
Té yé mirayaris.

HARCANOT

La febré din ti dents!

100 Qué sis chez quu qué si,<sup>37</sup> Barcanot, dé qué crésés,  
Lou *Haoumoun* es *malé mahof* taou qué lou vésés.

BARCANOT

Y ségur, et tchamaï nous a rén *alveya*,  
Faou diré lou véraï. *Bar!* Coume aco y loucha!  
*Eine* aquel escalier coume tout acco bréyo.

HARCANOT

105 Ha! lou *Haoumoun* n'a mai dedin sis escoubeyo  
Qué tu et tis enfants dédin vosté vayan.

BARCANOT

N'en disés une belle, et qué siéou un *behen*,  
Qué sabé pas dé qu'és un *Haoumoun*. Après *Meler*  
Y lou proumi. Crésis qu'éro un *ganaou de derer!*

110 Lou *Haoumoun* es aoutan qué lou tchuché dé pas.

HARCANOT

Per aquelo, moun fi, disés ren dé *radas*;  
Quintei *Kavof* portan, dedin nosti fameyo  
Quand caouqué tchour ou moun fils ou ta feyo  
Pourran diré à si fi dédin l'ouccasioun

115 Nosté grand une fé *brahé* tché lou *Haoumoun*.

BARCANOT

Es *émef!* Harcanot, cé qué disés m'*ahéno*  
Quand yé pensé pourtant caoucaren mé faï péno.  
Cu saou sé lou *Haoumoun afeyara Kavof?*

98 Einou MS || 100 que sis chez cu qué si MS que si éché quu que si RH || 106 vayan MS *vouyen* RH || 112 Quinto causo MS || 118 *afeyara cavos* (faire honneur) MS ||

37 *Si*: pres. subj. P3 of TO BE < Old Occitan *sia*. According to Ronjat (1930–1941:3, § 635), the type was “replaced except in a few set expressions.”

*Second Act*

*Scene 1 / HARCANOT, BARCANOT IN THE BISHOP'S STAIRWELL.*

BARCANOT

Just look, Harcanot, what appartments!  
You could see yourself in it like in a mirror.

HARCANOT

Fever in your teeth!

100 Whoever's place you are—Barcanot, what do you think?—  
The bishop is filthy rich, as you can see.

BARCANOT

Yes indeed, and he's never lent us anything,  
To tell the truth. My God! How he lives!  
Look at this staircase, how it all shines.

HARCANOT

105 Oh! The bishop has more in his garbage  
Than you and your children have in all your belongings.

BARCANOT

You're right on that one, and that I am a fool,  
Not knowing what a bishop is. After the king  
He's number one. You thought he was a highway robber?  
110 The bishop is on par with a magistrate.

HARCANOT

By that, my son, you say nothing new;  
Yet what honor in our families,  
When someday my son or your daughter  
Can tell their sons sometime:  
115 "Our grandfather once went to the bishop's."

BARCANOT

It's true! Harcanot, what you say delights me;  
Yet when I think about it, something worries me.  
Who knows if the bishop will respect us?

HARCANOT

Perqué noun qué y anen *alveya* de *mahof*?  
 120 Y veraï y anen ben demanda une graço,  
 Maï quand séren aqui et que veyren sa faço  
 Crésé ou mé troumpariou qué pourren yé parla.

BARCANOT

Y bén cé qué disio dédin ma *téphila*;  
 Prégavé lou bon Diéou dé pas nous leissa en peino,  
 125 Aviéou un maou dé cor qué levavo l'aleno.  
 Din ma poche aï pourta dos *mevuvof*.

HARCANOT

*Batoou!*

BARCANOT

Aï dos veno d'ayé dédin un papi foou<sup>38</sup> ;  
 Senso aco lou matin sorté pas dé moun *bayé*.  
 Ma fume dis qu'aco faï dé ben per lou *ayé*.<sup>39</sup>  
 130 En y entran Harcanot, tché dé *Quifé-Harros*,  
*Eïno* sé vés pertout dé grand *talú* dé bos.

HARCANOT

Alors qu'*afeyaren* ? D'une manière ounesto  
 Fourri sé présenta.

BARCANOT

Diras qu'as maou dé testo,  
 Et quand seren yentra ver éou dé *holaim*,  
 135 Per estré pas tant sot, *afeyaren Modin*.

119–120 Perqué noun? qué y anen *alveya* de *moof* / Es *verai*, y anen || 125 Avisou RH Avieou MS ||  
 126 *meruvof* (amulettes) || 127 foou MS || 128 Senso *ayé* MS || 131 *vesé* pertout MS || 134 vers eou  
 de *holayen* MS ||

38 *Papiè foui/fouel* 'blotting paper' ("papier joseph, papier brouillard" in Mistral 1879–1886:2,  
 475). The French compound *papier fou* is attested as a Provençalism in Gabrielli (1836:222),  
 which provides the same gloss as Mistral, for whom it was surely the unidentified source.

39 Trace of a common Mediterranean superstition that garlic has apotropaic properties; this  
 belief is perhaps reinforced by the homonymy of the Provençal name for this plant, *ayé*,  
 with Hebraism *aye* 'eye,' borrowed from Heb. אַיַן 'ayin with the same meaning.



HARCANOT

120 Because we're not going to lend him money?  
 It's true that we are going to ask him a favor,  
 But when we're there and see his face  
 I believe, if I'm not mistaken, that we'll get to speak with him

BARCANOT

125 That's just what I was saying in my prayer;  
 I was praying the good Lord would not let us suffer,  
 I felt so sick to my stomach I couldn't breathe.  
 In my pocket I brought two mezuzahs.

HARCANOT

Excellent!

BARCANOT

130 I have two cloves of garlic in blotting paper;  
 Without it, I don't leave the house in the morning.  
 My wife says it helps against the evil eye.  
 When going in, Harcanot, no hat!  
 Look, you can see big wooden crucifixes everywhere.

HARCANOT

So what do we do? In an honest way  
 We must introduce ourselves.

BARCANOT

135 Say you have a headache,  
 And once we're in, near him, like sick people,  
 To not seem so foolish, we will bow to him.

HARCANOT

Ralamen Barcanot as dédin ti *chadayin*  
Lou *Féhé* dou *holan*.

BARCANOT

Ei de *min hassamaïn*  
Qu'aco m'es avengu.

HARCANOT

Per ounté entraren ?  
Ah! per aquo, volé mouri d'un aoussiden  
140 Su tant de *pessarïn* se iéou trouvé la bono ...  
Durben un paou ici.

BARCANOT

*Eino* sé y'a persouno ;  
Qué qué as *afeya* ? Ei lou *Bahakifé*.  
Embaoumi: à l'oudour crésiéou un salouné.

*Un domestique entre au moment où Harcanot allait parler.*

BARCANOT, *continuant*.

Vers nous aoutré un hommé eici s'és avança ;  
145 Béléou y lou *Haoumoun*. Véguén dé qu'*afeya*,  
Faou yé parla touchou como sé éro éou.

HARCANOT

As resoun, yé dirai : Moussu ou Mounsignour ?  
*Eino* qué béou *lévus* ! nous entén pas, n'en piésqué ?  
Aqeli *harelin*, *eino* un paou de qué risqué  
150 De y estre *médaber*.

LE DOMESTIQUE

Serait-ce à Monseigneur  
Que vous voulez parler? (*à part*) Ils sont transis de peur.  
Il est là.

HARCANOT

Quin *taïf*, ta *rrouma afeyavo*,  
Lou crésis Mounseignour.

137 Lou ferel doou holan (le bon sens du monde) MS Lou *féhé* dou *holam* RH || 142 Ce que vas hafeya, es lou Beahaquifé MS || 144 Scène 2. Harcanot, Barcanot et les domestiques de l'évêque. Harcanot allait parler quand Barcanot le retient, voyant un domestique de l'évêque. [*versus 144:*] Mai moun fi, que dabéres MS || 145 degen que quofeya? MS || 147 As resoun. Ye dirai: Mounseignour ou Moussu? MS || 148 n'en piésque MS || 149 de que eis que MS || 152 Quint'*aiïf* ta *rrouma* RH Quin *taïf* (quelle erreur) ta *rourma* MS ||

HARCANOT

Really, Barcanot, you have in your hands  
The intelligence of the world.

BARCANOT

It was a gift from the heavens  
That it came to me.

HARCANOT

Where do we enter?  
Oh! This makes me want to die from apoplexy,  
140 If out of all these doors I find the right one ...  
Let's open a bit here.

BARCANOT

See if anyone's in there;  
What did you do? This is the bathroom.  
It smelled like perfume! from the scent I thought it was a little  
salon.

*A servant enters just as Harcanot is about to speak.*

BARCANOT, *continuing.*

A man has stepped toward us here;  
145 Maybe it's the bishop. Let's see what he does;  
We must always speak to him as if it is him.

HARCANOT

You're right, but do I say: Monsieur or Monseigneur?  
Look at that beautiful suit! He can't hear us, what can I do?  
With these Christians, see a bit what I risk  
150 In speaking to him.

THE SERVANT

Is it to the Monseigneur  
That you wish to speak? (*aside*) They are paralyzed with fear.  
He is here.

HARCANOT

What a mistake your intelligence made!  
You took him for Monseigneur.

BARCANOT

Hé ! Maï mé lou semblavo,  
Aro yé faou parla s'és qué soun *messaref*.

HARCANOT

155 Moussu lou *Haoumoun*, yei ?

LE DOMESTIQUE

Dé qué voloun aquéli?  
Sé voloun counfessa?

HARCANOT

Ha ! lou *maou caou* per elli.  
Quelli nègre Gouyin soun touti din soun *daf*.

BARCANOT

Ha! *dabérés kelal, afeyarin péraf*.

HARCANOT

*Ani trahalé* pas.

BARCANOT

Lâisse mé parla, yéou.

HARCANOT

160 Té mandariou aou *cef*; moussu lou *Haoumoun* y ei ?

LE DOMESTIQUE

Aquel homé que voou ? Dé qué diablé demande ?  
Soun crési dé *chusioou*, faou saoupré cu li mande.

BARCANOT

*Trahalé*, m'a sembla qué parlavo *chaid*.

HARCANOT

165 Vaï sis un *ahayé*.—Moussu lou *Messaref*?

UN SECOND DOMESTIQUE

Que veulent ces messieurs ? Mais je vois que ces êtres  
Sont Juifs : faisons-les donc sauter par les fenêtres.

HARCANOT

Acco sari pas cho ; sari un assassin.

154 Aro li yé MS || 157 aqueli negri gouin MS || 158 afeyherin de raf MS || 159 haïn trahalé pas MS || 161 *primum hemistichum om.* MS || 165 Vaï sis un *ahayé* RH Vai sies un ahïy MS || 166 *primum hemistichum om.* MS | quel est cet être? MS || 167 Des Juifs?... Faisons-les sauter par la fenêtre MS || 168 Aco seri pas un cho MS ||

BARCANOT

Oh! But that's how it seemed to me,  
Now we must speak to him if it's his servant.

HARCANOT

155 Is Monsieur the Bishop here?

THE SERVANT

What do these people want?  
Do they want to confess?

HARCANOT

Oh! Fever upon them.  
These vile goyim are so caught up in their religion.

BARCANOT

Oh! you're speaking generally, we will do so in particulars.

HARCANOT

I'm not afraid.

BARCANOT

Let me speak for myself.

HARCANOT

160 I'll send you to the devil; is Monsieur the Bishop here?

THE SERVANT

What does this man want? What the devil is he asking for?  
They're Jews, I think; I need to find out who's sent them.

BARCANOT

I'm scared; it seemed to me like he was talking to himself.

HARCANOT

165 Go, you are † [?] †.—Monsieur Servant?

A SECOND SERVANT

What do these gentlemen want? But I see that these beings  
Are Jews: let's have them jump out the windows.

HARCANOT

That would not be a game: that would be murder.

BARCANOT

Remercien moussu ... *tamben l'aféyarin*  
 170 Tout maou d'eli faou pas ... *Sema Israël! Yoto*,<sup>40</sup>  
 Prégue Diou qué sourten sen quitta la culotto!

HARCANOT

Anen dounc, Barcanot, té crésiéou un *Guibor* ;  
 Sian *bef amaléquin*, as *pahé* d'un *siccor*.

BARCANOT

Parle yé, Harcanot, car yéou aï maou dé cor.

UN TROISIÈME DOMESTIQUE

175 Allons, mes braves gens, vous sentez le fagot ;  
 Approchez par ici, vous ne ferez qu'un saut.

BARCANOT

*Dabère* toun *védui*, eisso es ma dernière ouro  
 Agué *rârhamana* de Barcanot qué plouro.

HARCANOT

Oou secous sian *hafur* an lou *cef* din lou *guf*  
 180 Aven tché fa de maou en res ! ... Quin *typessuf* !  
 Oou secous lou *haoumoun* ! Moussu, *hargoun* moun frayre.

Scène III / L'ÉVÊQUE, BARCANOT, HARCANOT

LOU HAOU MOUN

Quel est ce bruit ? Qu'entends-je ?

BARCANOT

Ha ! Moun bon païré !

Encare un paou, hélas ! avia pu tché dé fi.

LOU HAOU MOUN

Calmez-vous. Qu'avez-vous ? Parlez, mes bons amis.

BARCANOT (*évanoui*)

185 N'en podé pu ! Siéou mor.

HARCANOT

Moussu lou Haoumoun, vite

Un paou dé vin.

170 *Schema Israël* RH | *Sema Israël* MS || 172 anen dounc *om*. MS || 174 Harcanot parle tu? ay maou de cor MS || 178 *Ague raramana* (pitié) MS ||

40 Mistral (1879–1886:2, 142) records *Ioto* 'Jewish female name, diminutive of Lia'; the character referred to by this stereotypical name is invoked here in her absence.

BARCANOT

170 Let's thank Monsieur ... also, let's do it,  
We mustn't have troubles from them. *Shema Yisrael!* My wife!  
Pray to God we get out without dishonor.

HARCANOT

Come on, Barcanot, I thought you were brave;  
We're like two Amalekites, and you're afraid of a drunk.

BARCANOT

Talk to him, Harcanot, because I feel sick.

A THIRD DOMESTIQUE

175 Come, my good people, you smell like heresy;  
Come this way, you'll just make a jump.

BARCANOT

Say your confession, this is my final hour.  
Have mercy on Barcanot who's weeping.

HARCANOT

180 Help! We're doomed, they're possessed by the devil!  
We've done nothing wrong! ... What folly!  
Help, Bishop!... Monsieur, they're killing my brother.

*Scene III / THE BISHOP, BARCANOT, HARCANOT*

THE BISHOP

What is this noise? What do I hear?

BARCANOT

Oh! My good father!  
Just a bit longer, alas! and you would've had no more sons.

THE BISHOP

Calm down. What's wrong? Speak, my good friends.

BARCANOT (*fainting*)

185 I can't take it anymore! I'm dying.

HARCANOT

Monsieur Bishop, hurry  
A bit of wine.

LOU HAOUMOUN

Voici de l'eau bénite.

HARCANOT

Négré, té van sauva.<sup>41</sup>

BARCANOT (*revenant à lui*)

*Barbinan !... aï pu ren.*

Crésé qué lou grand air, Moussu, mé fara ben.

LOU HAOUMOUN

Allons, ne craignez rien.—Qu'avez-vous à me dire ?

BARCANOT

190 Vité, *dabéré yé*.

HARCANOT

Moussu ...

BARCANOT

Maï pas anssin :

Faou coumença d'abord per yé faire *Modin*.

HARCANOT

Et ben *aféyen yé*.

LOU HAOUMOUN

Expliquez-moi sans crainte

Ce que vous désirez : j'entendrai votre plainte.

BARCANOT

195 Noun plaguéssen dé ren, moussu lou *Haoumoun*, sian  
Doou matin chusqu'ouou soir aou *Barda de Kakan*.<sup>42</sup>

La veyo di *chantoou* aqui tout *Kahal* passe,

Aqui *dabéroun* tout dé qué y a din la place :

S'an *sahata* un bioou, sé s'ès fa un *bérif*,

S'un taou a pas manqua ni *minrha*, ni *arvif*;

200 En un mot sé dis tout, et per féni l'affaire

Vous *daberarai* dounc ... Mon fi, visqué toun païre

*Dabére yé* lou tu.

190 Aco y pa ansin MS || 195 barda de Cacan MS ||

41 Literally, 'they are going to save you'; in the translation, we follow a gloss in the Barjavel manuscript (Fr. *baptiser*).

42 This toponym designates a place where the Jews gathered in Carpentras. See below, Glossary of proper nouns.



THE BISHOP

Here is some holy water.

HARCANOT

Wretch, they're going to baptize you.

BARCANOT (*recovering*)

God forbid! I have nothing left.

I think the fresh air, Monsieur, will do me good.

THE BISHOP

Come on, don't be afraid.—What did you have to tell me?

BARCANOT

190 Hurry, tell him.

HARCANOT

Monsieur ...

BARCANOT

But not like that:

First we have to start by bowing to him.

HARCANOT

Well then, let's bow to him.

THE BISHOP

Explain to me without fear

What you want: I will hear your complaint.

BARCANOT

195 We're not complaining about anything, Monsieur Bishop, we are  
From morning to night at the *Barda de Kakan*.

On the eve of a holiday, the whole community goes there,

And everyone talks about what is going on in the place:

If a cow has been slaughtered, if there's been a circumcision,

If someone's missed the afternoon or evening service;

200 In a word, we say everything, and to finish up

I will tell you then ... My son, on the life of your father

Tell him yourself.

HARCANOT

Tout nègré, ero *batoou*;  
Yé disis maï qué ben, *Barbinan* vené foou.  
Parle de *Guénévuf*.

LOU HAUMOUN

Parlez, je vous écoute.  
205 Jusqu'ici, je ne sais.

BARCANOT

*Bar* acco mé dérouté.  
Per la bone *thora* foou diré la résoun:  
Vous *daberarai* dounc, bon moussu lou *Haoumoun*,  
Qué din la *Méfila* ...

HARCANOT

*Typés*, as maï toun *rodes* ?  
Vos qu'un *Haoumoun* saché parla *Lassan Hakodès* ?

BARCANOT

210 As ben résoun, mon Diou, maï lou foou pas espré :  
Quand parlé coume aco crésé parla français.

HARCANOT

Ha ! gare té d'aqui : bon moussu lou *Haoumoun*  
*Halayin* de *gouyin* tchamaï noun *ganaoutavoun*,  
Maï li *Gouyin* dé yeuï dédin la *méfila*  
215 *Haccol halaïla*, *brahoun* per *ganaouta*.

LOU HAUMOUN

Je n'entends pas un mot de ce que vous me dites  
Parlez plus doucement; et si vous le redites,  
Tâchez de me parler en français ou patois.

HARCANOT

220 Je le *dabérerai* une seconde fois  
C'est pour le *Guénévuf* qu'on a fait chez Elie ...

---

208 as maï toun rohodes (tu as encore ta morale) MS || 209 *lasson-Hakodès* RH l'assan hakodes (le langage hébraïque, l'argot) MS || 210 maï vai lou foou pas espré RH maï lou faou pas espres MS || 211 frances MS || 213 Haleÿn di gouyn MS || 214 Les gouyn de jour (les étrangers d'aujourd'hui) MS ||

HARCANOT

Really, wretch, that was great;  
 You were telling him more than well—my God, I'm going crazy —  
 Talk about the *guénévuf* [theft].

THE BISHOP

205 Speak, I'm listening to you.  
 Up to now, I don't understand.

BARCANOT

My God, that throws me off.  
 By our good Law, we must get to the point:  
 I will tell you then, my good Monsieur Bishop,  
 That in the Jewry ...

HARCANOT

Fool, you're still on your whim?  
 You think a bishop knows how to speak Hebrew?

BARCANOT

210 You're right, my God, but I don't mean to:  
 When I speak like that, I think I'm speaking French.

HARCANOT

Oh! get out of here: good Monsieur Bishop,  
 †Before the † goyim never used to rob us,  
 But nowadays the goyim in the Jewry  
 215 Come each night to rob us.

THE BISHOP

I don't understand a word of what you're telling me  
 Speak more slowly; and if you repeat it,  
 Try to speak to me in French or patois.

HARCANOT

220 I will say it a second time  
 It's about the *guénévuf* [theft] that happened at Élie's ...

LOU HAOUMOUN

Le *Guénevuf*! grand Dieu! Qu'est-ce que ça signifie?

BARCANOT

Lou crésé, lou soou pas dé ques un *Guénevuf*:  
Un qué *ganaoute* un uf, poou *ganaouta* un buf;  
Es *émef*, maï moussu, per *ganaou* volé diré,  
225 Coume se Harcanot *happave* tou *maou d'éou*  
Qué lou crésesse siéou.

HARCANOT

Lou *maoucaou* su toun léou  
Qué *dabérés* aqui ...

LOU HAOUMOUN

Je commence à comprendre.  
Le *Guénévuf*, c'est ...

BARCANOT

Oui.

LOU HAOUMOUN

Quand on veut prendre  
Ce qui n'est pas à vous ... un voleur, en un mot.

HARCANOT

230 Vésés qué m'a coumpré, vai, lou *Goy* n'es ren sot.

LOU HAOUMOUN

Eh bien! à ce sujet, que vous faut-il?

BARCANOT

Nous aoutré

Ah! noun *trahalen* pas, gni'a dis un et dis aoutré;  
Enfin voudrian pousqué garda nostis oustaou  
Afin qu'à l'aveni faguessoun tché de maou.

LOU HAOUMOUN

235 Quoi ...

HARCANOT

Soou pas qués aco; yé crésiéou maï dé *fehé*.  
Moussu dé *Kéliès* ... Lo soou pas, vai té quere.

BARCANOT

*Dabéré* yé en français.

221 Lou Guenevuf! Qu'est-ce que MS || 224 per ganauta MS || 225 taméou d'éou MS || 227 Sé dabérés aqui MS || 228 Lou Guenevuf MS || 229 Ce qui n'est pas à soi MS || 232 Amai trahalen pas, nia MS || 233 Anfin voudrian garda MS || 234 Anfin MS || 235 feré MS ||

THE BISHOP

The *guénevuf*! good God! What does that mean?

BARCANOT

Can you believe it, he doesn't know what a *guénevuf* is:  
 Someone who *ganaoute* [steals] an egg, can *ganaouter* a cow;  
 It's true, but, Monsieur, by *ganaou* I mean,  
 225 As if Harcanot took † [?] †  
 That he believed to be his own.

HARCANOT

Fever on your lung!  
 What you're saying here ...

THE BISHOP

I'm starting to understand.  
 The *guénévuf* is ...

BARCANOT

Yes.

THE BISHOP

When you want to take  
 What's not yours ... a thief, in a word.

HARCANOT

230 You see he understood me. Come on, the goy is not stupid.

THE BISHOP

Well! on this subject, what do you need?

BARCANOT

We

Oh! we're not afraid ... there are ... some and then others ...  
 I mean ... we'd like to be able to guard our homes  
 So that in the future we won't be harmed.

THE BISHOP

235 What ...

HARCANOT

He doesn't know what it is; I thought him more savvy.  
 Monsieur, some *kéliès* [rifles]... He doesn't understand, well!

BARCANOT

Tell him in French.

HARCANOT

Per li *feffer d'ascole*

Aï tchamaï dou français sachu une paraoule

BARCANOT

Sabés *davar*, ami, leisse mé yé parla;

240 Coumo que sables pas qu'es un tarroun traouca ?

LOU HAUMOUN

Voyons, rassurez-vous ; parlez, mes bons amis.

HARCANOT

Ha ! parlaren d'acco ... —Acco *hargari* un *is*.

BARCANOT

Es un affairé long ... *Bar* tchamaï m'arrivesseQué Yoto entre mi man un *Kéliès* véguesse.

LOU HAUMOUN

245 Mes amis, je ne puis, sans savoir ...

HARCANOT

Paouré *goï*!Belléou n'est pas *maquir*.

BARCANOT

Yé parlarian tout yoï

Qué tchamaï parvendrian à yé faire comprendre.

*(voyant un fusil)*

Maï n'en vésé ici un, et téné lou voou prendré.

Ha ! moussu lou Haoumoun, es d'aco de *bekan*250 Que nous n'én foudri *bef* en vous li démandant.LOU HAUMOUN *(riant)*

Ah ! ce n'est que cela ? Vous pouviez bien le dire.

Vous voulez des fusils ? S'ils peuvent vous suffire,

Très volontiers: je vais vous les faire donner.

Prenez-les : vous pouvez chez vous les emporter.

255 C'est fort bien. Dès ce soir allez monter la garde,

Que chacun de vous ait fusil ou hallebarde ;

Et si quelque voleur vient encor vous troubler,

Faites-lui feu dessus; vous pouvez le tuer.

*(Il les reconduit jusqu'à la porte.)*

239 Sabes *davar*, ani ye voou parla MS || 240 Coumes é sables RH Coumo que sables MS || 241 *primum hemistichum omisit* MS || 242 parlarai MS || 244 Que yote (que ma femme) entre mi man MS Qué Yoto entre maï man RH || 246 n'es pas MS || 250 faudri ben MS || 251 Parbleu, c'est bien cela MS || 252 C'est des fusils, s'ils peuvent vous suffire MS || 253 Bien volontiers MS || 257 encore RH || 258 Faites-leur feu dessus, vous pouvez les tuer RH || 259 argarion MS ||

HARCANOT

By the books of the synagogue,  
I never knew a single word of French.

BARCANOT

240 You know nothing, friend, let me speak to him;  
What do you mean, you don't know what a hollowed stick is?

THE BISHOP

Come on, don't worry; speak, my good friends.

HARCANOT

Oh! We'll talk about it ...—It would kill a man.

BARCANOT

It's a long thing ... My God, hopefully never  
will Liotte<sup>43</sup> see a *kéliès* [rifle] in my hands.

THE BISHOP

245 My friends, I cannot, without knowing ...

HARCANOT

Poor goy!

Maybe he doesn't understand.

BARCANOT

We could talk to him all day long  
And we'd never get him to understand.  
(*seeing a rifle*)

But I see one here, and, here, I'm going to take it.  
Oh! Monsieur Bishop, it's one of these things here,  
250 That we need two of, by asking you for them.

THE BISHOP (*laughing*)

Oh! it's just that? You could've just said it.  
You want rifles? If that's all you need,  
Very gladly: I'll have them given to you.  
Take them: you can bring them home.

255 Very well. Starting tonight go stand guard,  
Whether each of you has rifle or halberd;  
And if any thief comes to disturb you again,  
Fire upon him; you can kill him.

(*He leads them back to the door.*)

43 According to a gloss in the manuscript, the name of Barcanot's wife (see also line 170).

## HARCANOT

260 *Barbinan!* noun moussu, *hargarian* pas une mouso ;  
 Maï manqué pas dé cor, maï aï la visto courto.  
 Vaï plan ! ... Lou nègré a vis qu'erian d'*amallequin* :  
 Nous a reçus coumo dé *melarrhin* !

## FIN DU SECOND ACTE.

## 4 Linguistic Commentary

The language depicted in the lines of the Jewish characters in this text corresponds to a sort of Rhodanian Provençal, diverging significantly from the common language of non-Jewish speakers through a variety of linguistic features, including distinctive lexical, (grapho)phonetic, and syntactic characteristics. It will be useful to examine them in an attempt to determine what these features, as applied in a literary text, may tell us about the linguistic practices of Provençal Jews at the end of the Ancien Régime.

4.1 *Lexicon*

Among the specific lexical features, it seems necessary to distinguish between the many Hebraisms resulting from code switching between Hebrew and Provençal vocabulary in characters representing Jewish speakers competent in both languages, and the differential features inherent in the diasystem of the Jewish Provençal lect; each of these two aspects of linguistic variation, due to their different nature, requires special treatment.

## 4.1.1 The Hebrew Element

The Hebrew lexical element, so prominent in the text, can be analyzed as a combination of a few loanwords and a great deal of code switching between the spoken Provençal language and Hebrew. It is generally recognized that, among the Jewish population of the Comtat Venaissin up to the first decades of the 19th century, knowledge of Hebrew—the language of school and worship—was widespread enough to allow most speakers to freely incorporate Hebrew lexemes into Provençal speech.<sup>44</sup> At this stage of the linguistic history of Provençal Jews, many Hebraisms are thus the pragmatic result of free

44 The secularization of society that followed the French Revolution caused the Jews of Provence to abandon their traditional Hebrew education; on Hebrew literacy in Provence before and after the Revolution, see Nahon 2017a, and especially Nahon forthcoming.





of Heb. ת *th* \* [θ] (among others) to [f] (*ef* for תֶּף *eth*; in the play, *mevuvof* for Heb. מזוזות *mezuzoth*); the adaptation of certain cases of [o] and [u] (*be'houl* for בכל *bekhol*; in the play, *gouyen* for Heb. גוים *goyim*), etc.<sup>46</sup>

At the morphological level, the Hebrew nouns are still subject to inflection according to Hebrew morphology: for example, *ganaou* sg. 'thief' / *ganavin* pl. 'thieves,' corresponding to Heb. גנב *ganabh* sg. 'thief' and גנבים *ganabhim* pl. 'thieves.' This is even the case for words with irregular plurals: thus, alongside *is* 'man' (line 242), which corresponds to Heb. איש *iš* 'man,' is found the plural *hanassin* (line 71), which reflects Heb. אנשים *anašim* 'men,' the only classical plural of איש *iš*.

As far as can be judged in the absence of an original translation provided with the play, the Hebrew words do not change their meaning when used in Provençal. I will just mention one example where a neologism of Hebrew origin might be used in discourse with a meaning that is not strictly Hebrew: *bef* adj. card. num. 'two' (lines 173, 250), which corresponds to Heb. בית *beth* 'name of the letter ב *beth*, second letter of the alphabet, used in writing to indicate the number 2.' This usage may reflect the fact that the name of the grapheme ב was used, instead of the regular Hebrew forms of the numeric adjective, when Hebrew texts containing this numeral were spoken aloud: in this case, the occurrence of *bef* in this lect would be no more semantically innovative than the other Hebraisms.

Cases of interference extend beyond the level of the lexeme itself: the Hebraisms sometimes concern entire segments of utterances that retain syntactic features of Hebrew. This is the case, at line 101, with the adjective phrase *malé mahof* 'very rich, loaded,' where the adjective *malé* (Heb. מלא *male* 'adj. 'full') functions phraseologically as in Hebrew, without a preposition, with its complement *mahof* (Heb. מעות *ma'oth* n. pl. 'coins, money'). Likewise, at line 137, "Ei de *min hassamain* qu'aco mes avengu" 'it is from the heavens that this came to me,' the Hebrew prepositional phrase מן השמיים *min ha-šamayim* 'from the heavens' remains intact (despite the apparent redundancy of the two prepositions "de *min*").

For some Hebrew passages, it is hard to say whether these utterances stem from code switching with an equivalent linguistic system or from citation (from the Bible or the ritual); but, considering that the Hebrew language existed, within the linguistic capacity of its speakers, only through the use of sacred or liturgical texts, it amounts to essentially the same thing. The first utterance, at line 68, includes a textual citation from the ritual: "En disen aou

46 All these details pertaining to the phonetics of Hebraisms in Provençal are exhaustively studied in Nahon forthcoming.

*Boré, lo afani issa*” ‘Saying to the Creator: “You did not make me a woman,”’ i.e. Heb. לא עשני אשה *lo ‘ásani iša* ‘you did not make me a woman,’ the closing words of a blessing recited by men in the morning service, the full text of which reads: “Blessed are you, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who did not make me a woman.” A bit later, it is a biblical citation that is interwoven into the Provençal discourse: “*lo tahafé tchamaï coume mahaféen*” (line 93) ‘you shall never act following their actions,’ where we recognize the biblical injunction לא תעשה כמעשהם *lo ta‘áse ke-ma‘ásehem* (Exodus 23:24) ‘thou shalt not do after their works.’ The Provençal segment *tchamaï coume* is interposed and *coume* ‘as, like’ translates the Hebrew particle כִּי *ke-* ‘as, according to’ of the original Hebrew verse. Here we have a prototypical example of code switching where Hebrew linguistic material, while drawn from textual sources, emerges orally on an almost equal footing with Provençal.

In the area of verbal syntax, some inflected Hebrew forms are used in Provençal discourse with a periphrastic formation also of Hebrew origin: just as the continuous present tense of common verbs is, in Hebrew, expressed by a periphrasis made up of the (non-expressed) auxiliary TO BE and the present participle of the inflected verb, here we also find Hebrew present participles borrowed and integrated into the Provençal system using the same calqued periphrasis. For example, at line 246: “Belléou n’est pas *maquir*” ‘maybe he doesn’t understand,’ with *maquir* for Hebrew מכיר *makir* present part. sg. ‘knowing, understanding’ from הכיר *hakir* ‘to recognize,’ constructed with an inflected form of Prov. *estre* ‘to be.’ Likewise, in another mode, we have at lines 149–150: “*eino un paou de qué risqué de y estre médaber*” ‘look a bit at the risk I take in speaking to him,’ with the present participle *médaber*: Heb. מדבר *medaber* present part. m. sg. ‘speaking’ from the verb דבר *dabar* ‘to speak.’

Only several basic Hebrew verbs are genuinely incorporated as Provençal lexemes, such as *afeya*, *ahéna*, *alveya*, *braha*, *darssa*, *eina*, *ganaouta*, *harga*, *sahata*, which appear in the text as inflected forms according to Provençal verbal morphology. These are examples of highly integrated and stabilized borrowings, which as such warrant proper glossary treatment, as provided in the following section. As for the other Hebraisms, primarily nouns, which do not belong to the Provençal diasystem and would not be included in a Provençal text glossary, below are listed the occurrences in alphabetical order, followed by the Hebrew form of the word. Besides the gloss of the Hebrew etymon, no additional definition is given for a word’s meaning in Judeo-Provençal use, since nothing, except the immediate context of the text, would make it possible to determine the extent to which the meaning of a Hebraism in the Judeo-Provençal text might diverge from the meaning of its Hebrew etymon.

- afurin* (line 78): Heb. אסורים 'asurim pl. of אסור 'prisoner.'
- amallequin* (line 261): plural of Heb. עמלק 'amaleq proper n. 'Amalek (particularly bellicose biblical character); here formed by antonomasia.
- ani* (line 159): Heb. אני *ani* pers. pron. 1P 'I.'
- arvif* (line 199): Heb. ערבית 'arbhith n. f. 'evening prayer.'
- ayé* (line 129): Heb. עין 'ayin n. m. '[evil] eye.'
- bahakifé* (line 142): Heb. בית הכסא *beth hakise* loc. n. m. 'bathroom.'
- Bar* (lines 103, 205, 243): clipped form of *Barbinan* (line 59), or borrowing from Aramaic בר *bar* 'far; God forbid!'
- barbinan* (lines 59, 187, 203, 259): Aramaic בר מינן *bar minan* loc. 'far from us; God forbid!'
- bayé* (lines 65, 129): Heb. בית *bayith* n. m. 'house.'
- bef* (lines 173, 250): Heb. בית *beth* 'second letter of the alphabet; as written, number 2.'
- bef déras* (line 27): Heb. בית דרש *beth deraš* loc. n. m. 'place of study.'
- behor* (line 80): Heb. בכור *bekhor* n. m. 'firstborn son.'
- bekan* (line 249): Heb. בבאן *bekan* adv. 'here.'
- bérif* (line 198): Heb. ברית *berith* n. f. 'circumcision.'
- Boré* (line 168): Heb. בורא *bore* n. m. 'Creator.'
- cef* (lines 160, 179): Heb. שד *šed* n. m. 'devil.'
- chadayin* (lines 136): Heb. ידיים *yadayim* n. f. dual '(two) hands.'
- chaïd* (line 164): Heb. יחיד *yaħid* qual. adj. 'only.'
- chantoou* (line 196): Heb. יום טוב *yom tobh* loc. n. m. 'good day; festive day.'
- daf* (line 158): Heb. דת *dath* n. m. 'religion, faith.'
- davar* (line 239): Heb. דבר *dabhar* n. m. 'thing (used as negation, like French rien).'
- émef* (lines 116, 224): Heb. אמת *emeth* qual. adj. 'true.'
- famin* (line 22): Heb. חמין *ħamin* n. m. 'hot meal.'
- fatan* (line 78): Heb. שטן *šaṭan* n. m. 'enemy; Satan.'
- jeffer* (line 237): Heb. ספר *sepher* n. m. 'book.'
- féhé* (lines 137, 236): Heb. שכל *šekhel* n. m. 'brain, intelligence.'
- ganaou* (lines 26, 110, 224): Heb. גנב *ganabh* n. m. 'thief' (pl. *ganavin*). As locution: *ganaou de derer* (line 110): loc. n. composed of *ganaou* and Heb. דרך *derekh* 'path.'
- ganavin* (lines 9, 12): Heb. גנבים *ganabhim* pl. 'thieves,' plural of *ganaou*.
- gouyin* (lines 7, 11, 84, 90, 157, 213, 214): Heb. גוים *goyim*, pl. of גוי *goy* 'nation.'
- Goy* (line 230): Heb. גוי *goi* n. m. 'nation; (postbiblical) non-Jew' (plural: *gouyin*).
- guibor* (line 172): Heb. גבור *gibor* adj. 'strong, mighty.'
- guf* 1. (line 89): Heb. גאות *geuth* n. f. 'pride; greatness.'

- guf* 2. (line 179): Heb. גוף *guf* n. m. 'body.'
- haccol halaïla* (line 215): Heb. הכל הלילה *ha-kol ha-layla* loc. 'each night.'
- hafur* (line 179): Heb. אסור *asur* qual. adj. 'imprisoned, captive' (pl. *asurin*).
- Halel* (line 79): Heb. הלל *halel* n. m. 'praise; liturgical series of Psalms 113 to 118.'
- hanassin* (line 71): Heb. אנשים *anašim* pl. of איש *iš* 'men.'
- haoumoun* (lines 75, 77, 96, 105, 118, etc.): Heb. הגמון *hegmon* n. m. 'bishop.'
- harelin* (line 149): Heb. ערלים *arelim* n. m. pl. 'uncircumcised men.'
- harémoſ* (line 94): Heb. חרמות *haremoth* pl. of חרם *herem* 'anathema.'
- héyer* (line 15): Heb. עיר *ir* n. f. 'town, city.'
- holaïm* (line 134): Heb. חולים *holaim* n. m. pl. 'illnesses.'
- holan* (line 137): Heb. עולם *olam* n. m. 'world; people.'
- is* (line 242): Heb. איש *iš* n. m. 'man.'
- kahal* (lines 26, 31, 34, 69, 196): Heb. קהל *qahal* n. m. 'community.'
- kavof* (lines 112, 118): Heb. כבוד *kabhodh* n. m. 'honor.'
- kelal* (line 158): Heb. כלל *kelal* n. m. 'general rule.'
- kéliès* (lines 49, 52, 92, 96, 237, 244): Heb. כלי אש *keli eš* loc. n. m. '(lit.) fire tool; rifle, gun.'
- Lassan Hakodès* (line 209): Heb. לשון הקודש *lašon ha-qodeš* loc. n. 'language of sacredness.'
- lévus* (line 148): Heb. לבוש *lebhuš* n. m. 'garment.'
- mahof* (lines 101, 119): Heb. מעות *ma'oth* n. f. pl. 'coins, money' (as locution, at line 101).
- maka* (lines 1, 4): Heb. מכה *maka* n. f. 'blow, strike; wound.'
- malé mahof* (line 119): Heb. מלא מעות *male ma'oth* loc. adj. 'full of money; hence 'very rich.'
- maquir* (line 246): Heb. מכיר *makir* present part. 'knowing, understanding.'
- médaber* (line 150): Heb. מדבר *medaber* present part. m. sg. 'speaking' from the verb דבר *dabar* 'to speak.'
- méfila* (lines 2, 5, 55, 95, 208, 214): Heb. מסילה *mesila* n. f. 'lane, alley.'
- melarrhin* (line 262): Heb. מלכים *melakhim* n. m. pl. 'kings.'
- messaref* (lines 154, 165): Heb. משרת *mešareth* n. m. 'servant; officer.'
- mevuvof* (line 126): pl. of Heb. מזוזה *mezuzza* n. f. 'ritual parchment affixed on the lintel.'
- min hassamain* (line 137): Heb. מן השמיים *min ha-šamayim* prep. phrase 'from the heavens [skies].'
- minrha* (line 199): Heb. מנחה *minḥa* n. f. 'afternoon prayer.'
- Modin* (line 135): see Glossary, s.v. *afeya*.
- nessama* (line 84): Heb. נשמה *nešama* n. f. 'soul.'
- ourma* (line 67): Heb. חכמה *ḥokhma* n. f. 'wisdom.'

- pahé* (lines 95, 173): Heb. פחד *paḥad* n. m. 'fear.'
- peraf* (line 158): Heb. פרט *peraf* n. m. 'specific case, detail.'
- pessarim* (line 140): Heb. פתחים *pethaḥim* n. m. pl. 'doors, openings.'
- pessia* (line 14): Heb. פשיעה *pešī'a* n. f. 'offense, crime.'
- pessita* (line 57): Aramaic פשיטא *pešita* adv. 'clearly, obviously.'
- purim* (line 23): Heb. פורים *purim* p. n. 'Purim (holiday).'
- Quifé-Harros* (line 130): Heb. ביסוי הראש *kisuy ha-roš* loc. n. 'headgear.'
- rabofai* (line 24): postbiblical Heb. רבתי *rabothay* 'sirs, gentlemen.'
- radas* (line 110): Heb. חדש *hadaš* qual. adj. 'new.'
- raramin* (line 67): Heb. חכמים *hakhamim* pl. 'sages, rabbis.'
- rârhamana* (line 178): Aramaic רחמנא definite n. m. 'the merciful.'
- rebbe* (line 16): Heb. רבי *rebi* 'my master; (title given to a rabbi)' (see below, Glossary of proper nouns).
- rhérés* (line 97): Heb. חרש *hereš* adj and n. 'deaf.'
- rrourma* (line 152): Heb. חכמה *hokhma* n. f. 'wisdom' (as *ourma*, line 67).
- Sema Israël* (line 170): Heb. שמע ישראל *šema 'yisra'el* 'Hear, O Israel.'
- siccor* (line 173): Heb. שכור *šikor* qual. adj. 'drunk.'
- talū* (line 131): Heb. תלוי *taluy* 'hanged; Jesus; (by metonymy) crucifix.'
- taiïf* (line 152): Heb. טעות *ta'uth* n. f. 'error, mistake.'
- téphila* (line 123): Heb. תפילה *tephila* n. f. 'prayer.'
- thora* (line 206): Heb. תורה *tora* n. f. 'Jewish law, Torah,' as locution: *per la bone thora*.
- typés* (line 48): Heb. טיפש *tipeš* adj. and n. 'fool, idiot.'
- typessuf* (line 63): Heb. טיפשות *tipešut* n. f. 'stupidity.'
- védui* (line 177): Heb. וידוי *vidui* n. m. 'confession.'

To these cases of lexical interference between Hebrew and Provençal, three "Hebroid" lexemes need to be added, which represent words that appear to be Hebrew but are not attested in any corresponding form in that language, although they do conform to its morphological rules. One, *béhem*, is a back-formation, while the two others, *chéüduf* and *guénévuf*, are formed by suffixation in ות -*uth*.

*béhen* (line 92): Heb. בהמה \**behem* 'animal, beast,' n. m., masculine back-formation on Heb. בהמה *behema* n. f. 'animal, beast.' Apart from this Judeo-Provençal attestation, a masculine 'Hebroid' back-formation appears to exist only in certain German argots (Rotwelsch), where the forms *behem* or *behejm* [be'ɛ:m] qual. adj. 'foolish, dumb, stupid' are sporadically attested,

obviously borrowed from German Jewish lects but apparently not found in them (Klepsch 2004:343).

*chéüduf* (line 88): Heb. יהודות\* *yehuduth* ‘Judaism,’ word formed by adding the substantivizing suffix ות -*uth*, on Heb. יהודי *yehudi* ‘Jew’ (Hebrew itself only has the form יהדות *yahaduth*).

*guénévuf* (lines 64, 204, 220): Heb. גנבות\* *genebhuth* n. ‘theft, burglary,’ noun unattested in Hebrew, formed on Heb. גנב *ganabh* v. tr. ‘steal,’ by suffixation in ות -*uth*.

The existence of analogous “Hebroid” forms with the suffix ות -*uth* has also been described in Judeo-Italian (Aprile 2012:34), where this morphological process affects words other than those found here. The presence of these three “Hebroid” words—words unattested in Hebrew but formed using the morphologic resources of the Hebrew language within Provençal discourse—is yet another indication of the intermingling of the Hebrew and Provençal codes in the linguistic consciousness of speakers, and thus of the overall instability of this element of variation. But the unique lexical features of this text do not end with such examples of code switching.

#### 4.1.2 Glossary

The glossary below lists the “remarkable” lexical units—that is, leaving aside the “contingent” Hebraisms presented above, all those which, within the Provençal element of the text, represent a distinctive pragmatic, etymological, or interpretative feature, compared to general Provençal. More generally, it compiles all such words that are scarcely, if at all, described in Romance lexicography, and all linguistic material the translation is not enough to interpret.

Among these words, the series of verbs *afeya*, *alveya*, *braha*, *darssa*, *eina*, *ganaouta*, *hargá*, and *sahata* stand out for the uniformity of their formation: they are all -á (type 1) verbs created by conversion of a verbal root of a Hebrew preterite (or a noun, in the case of *ahéna* and *eina*), and which acquire regular Provençal morphology in the language of the text. The rest of the lexicon compiled here is etymologically heterogeneous, with a significant portion of indigenous Provençal words whose salient feature lies in the fact that they are used with a frequency that makes them “typical” markers of the lect in a caricatural text.

*afeya* v. tr. ‘to do, to make’ (lines 118, 135, 142, 152, 158, 192).—Verb formed from Heb. עָשָׂה *‘ásah* v. tr. ‘to do, to make, to accomplish, to perform; to work, to prepare,’ with antihhiatic [j], which is used as a semantic substitute for

Provençal *faïre*. It is twice attested in locutions in the text: line 118 *afeya Kavof* ‘to respect,’ with *Kavof* borrowed from Heb. כבוד *kabhodh* n. m. ‘honor,’ and line 135 *afeya Modin* ‘to bow,’ with *Modin*, a delocutive segment corresponding to Heb. מודים *modim* present part. m. pl. ‘thanking,’ the incipit of a prayer repeated daily in the service, where this word, used with the meaning ‘we give thanks,’ is accompanied by a bow, hence the meaning of the locution, taken from the pragmatic context of utterance. A similar locution exists in Venetian Judeo-Italian: *far modim* ‘to bow one’s head’ (Aprile 2012:161) and in the slang of German Jewish livestock merchants: *maudim machem* ‘to have epilepsy’ (Klepsch 2004:1087). The French form *afeyer* [afɛˈje] exists in the present-day lect of the Comtadine Jews, but only with semantic development: ‘(tr.) to do business with (someone); to swindle; (intr.) to close a deal.’<sup>47</sup> The same borrowing is attested in Judeo-Piedmontese from Turin: *asè, nosè* ‘to do, to make’ (Aprile 2012:258).

*ahéna* v. tr. ‘to please (someone), to delight (someone)’ (line 116).—Among the series of Hebrew-origin *-a* verbs, *ahéna*, with *eina*, is the only one that does not derive from a verb stem: it is a parasynthetic form on Heb. חן, *hen* n. m. ‘grace, charm, appeal,’ which in biblical Hebrew is found in particular in the locution למצוא חן בעיני *limšo’ hen be-‘ene* ‘to find grace in the eyes (of someone).’ The borrowing from Heb. *hen* is attested in all the Judeo-Italian varieties (Aprile 2012:209, 224). In the variety of French spoken by the Jews of Gascony is found the transitive verb *rhiner* [xiˈne] ‘to appreciate (someone), to like (someone),’ which is formed on the same etymon or borrowed from a variant of this Judeo-Provençal word (Nahon 2018a:275–276).

*alveya* v. tr. ‘to lend, to borrow’ (lines 102, 120).—Verb formed on Heb. הלווה *hilwa* v. tr. ‘to lend,’ with antihaptic [j] (as in *afeya*); [a-] comes from a Hebrew inflected form of the verb *hilwa* (which may present vocalic variation depending on tense and mode). As a verb, this Hebraism does not appear to exist in any other Romance or Germanic Jewish lect.

*ascole* n. f. ‘Jewish place of worship, synagogue’ (line 237). Here, only in the interjectional phrasal locution: “Per li *feffer d’ascole*” ‘by the books of the synagogue!’—Semantic development of Prov. *escolo* ‘school’; the ‘synagogue’ sense is widely attested, notably in Provençal dictionary of Acharid (1785:305a), who notes, s.v. *escolo*, that “the Jews of the Comtat Venaissin

47 References to the present-day French language of the descendants of Comtadine Jews are based on the results of the fieldwork carried out between 2015 and 2019 among some fifteen informants as part of my PhD dissertation. The material gathered during these surveys is in the process of being published. On the contemporary language of the descendants of Comtadine Jews, see also Nahon (2020:87–113).



so name their synagogue.” The FEW records both forms in the general language as diatopically unmarked free variants: Prov. *escolo*, *ascolo* ‘school’ (11, 300a, SCHOLA), likely following Mistral. The [a-] variant *ascolo*, mentioned by Mistral (1879–1886:1, 995b, s.v. *escolo*) without any particular marking, is not present anywhere in Provence according to the *Linguistic Atlas of France* ALF (map 441), which does attest [e-] throughout Provence, notably in the Comtat (geolinguistic point 853 = Courthézon). The presence of the two equivalent forms in Jewish sources makes it possible to hypothesize the existence of free variation here. The Gallicized form [es'kolə] *escole* ‘synagogue’ and its synonym *école* still exist in the modern-day lect of the Comtadine Jews.

**braha** v. intr. ‘to go, to head (somewhere)’ (lines 77, 115, 215).—Verb formed on Heb. ברח *barah* ‘flee,’ with syncope of the first syllable, absent in the Judeo-Italian cognates of this word: Piedmont *barhhè* and Mantua *barchàr* ‘to flee’ (Aprile 2012:160). This verb has survived in the form *braer* [bɾa'e] (with muting of intervocalic [x]) in the contemporary French of Provençal Jews, who used it to form the derivatives *embraer* v. intr., *s'embraer* v. pronom., and *embrahage* n. m.

**capito** n. f. ‘prayer book (?)’ (line 16).—A gloss on the Barjavel manuscript indicates “bréviaire” (‘breviary’). Semantic development by metonymy, not found in the lexicography, from Prov. *capito* n. m. ‘chapter, section of a work.’<sup>48</sup> The shift to the feminine was modeled on other nouns with final posttonic -o, following a common pattern in Provençal (Ronjat 1930–1941:3, 13).

**darssa** v. intr. ‘to give a sermon, to preach’ (line 28).—A gloss in the manuscript indicates “pérorer” (to perorate). Verb formed on Heb. דרש *daraš* v. tr. ‘to interpret; (especially) to teach, to deliver a sermon.’ This verb has a well-attested Judeo-Spanish cognate, *darsar* ‘to preach, to give a synagogue sermon’ (Nehama & Cantera 1977:115) and also exists in Judeo-Italian (Florence and Rome) in the form *darsciare* with the same sense (Aprile 2012:127). Used here with an iterative stylistic effect, after the use, in the previous line, of *bef déras* loc. n. m. ‘place of study, place of preaching’ (Heb. בית דרש *beth deraš* ‘place of sermons’), nominal locution with the noun corresponding to the same verb.

**eina** v. tr. ‘to look at, to watch’ (lines 98, 104, 131).—Verb formed from Heb. עין *ayin* n. f. ‘eye,’ still attested orally in the French of Comtadine Jews in the form [ai'ne]. The same verb is found in Judeo-Piedmontese in the form *ainè* ‘to look at, to watch’ (Bachi 1929:32); other Judeo-Italian forms are attested

48 Mistral (1879–1886:1, 459a); missing in FEW 2, 265a, CAPĪTULUM.

in Piedmont, Venice, Verona, Leghorn, Florence, and Rome (Aprile 2012:158–159). Provençal *igna* ‘to look at, to watch’ (thieves’ argot in Marseille in 1881: Vernet 2007:88, 90) might be a generalized form of the same verb.

*ganaouta* v. tr. ‘to sneakily seize what belongs to others, to snatch away, to steal’ (lines 213, 215, 22).—Verb formed on Heb. גנב *ganabh* v. tr. ‘to steal,’ with epenthetic [-t-] necessitated by the evolution of final ב *bh* to semi-vowel [ɥ] (as in the noun *ganaou* ‘thief,’ still attested orally in the French of Comtadine Jews in the form [ga'nau]). A verb of similar formation exists in Judeo-German and Rotwelsch in the forms *ganneven*, *ganfen*, etc., ‘to steal’ (Klepsch 2004:602) and in Judeo-Italian throughout Italy; for example, Piedmont *ganaviè* ‘to steal’ (Aprile 2012:249–250).

*happa* v. tr. ‘to take, to seize (something)’ (lines 21, 42, 45, 65, 225, where the sense is explicitly distinguished from *ganaouta* ‘to rob, to steal’).—Likely borrowed from Judeo-German or Yiddish *chappen* v. tr. ‘to take, to seize, to get, to obtain’ (Klepsch 2004:436), a common verb from Alsace to Russia whose etymology is disputed.<sup>49</sup> The Gallicized form *h'apper* (with initial [x]) was still in use in the French of Comtadine Jews at the end of the 19th century but no longer seems to be in use today. The verb *happa* was borrowed in the Gascon lect of Jews in southwest France: it is attested there, in the Gascon form *hhappa* ‘to take by trickery,’ in Bayonne in 1845 in stereotypical comedic dialogues (Nahon 2018a:60), and it exists today in the French of the same community in the form *rhaper* [xa'pe] ‘to steal.’ In Judeo-Italian, only the form *haplar* ‘to take by deception’ is attested, with epenthetic -l- (Aprile 2012:38).

*harga* v. tr. ‘to kill (someone), to assassinate’ (lines 181, 242, 259).—Verb formed on Heb. הרג *harag* v. tr. ‘to kill, to put to death,’ also attested in Judeo-Provençal in the form *arguer* ‘to kill; to deceive’ in the *Sermon des juifs* (Viguiier 1989:259). Here, *h-* seems to represent the phonetic segment [x-], an isolated outcome of Heb. ה *h*, which has been muted everywhere else in the lexis. The word is still used in French in the present-day lect of Provençal Jews in the form *rarguer* [ʁaʁ'ge], with several derivatives, and was borrowed in the French lect of the Jews of Gascony (*rharguer* [xaʁ'ge] ‘to swindle, to deceive’). The same borrowing is attested in Judeo-German and in Rotwelsch in the form *hargenen* [h-] ‘to kill, to assassinate’ (Klepsch 2004:683).

49 Rather than a Romance loan originating in Latin *CAPERERE*, or a borrowing from postbiblical Heb. חָפַץ *haphan* v. tr. ‘to take in the palm of one’s hand,’ as some have argued, it is probably a verb formed in Eastern Yiddish via borrowing from Polish *chapać* ‘to grab’ (Beider 2015:452).

*maou caou / maou kaou* loc. n. m. ‘high fever, febrile delirium’ (lines 13, 156, 226).—This compound lexeme is consistently italicized by Hirschler, perhaps, it seems, because it is particularly common in Jewish speech—especially in imprecations, as is the case with the three occurrences in the play. At line 226, its rhymed use in the curse “Lou *maoucaou* su toun léou!” [‘May high fever [come] on your lung!’] seems proverbial. This locution is recorded in Provençal by Achard (1785:437b, s.v. *mau caud*), but no curse-like use is attested. The spelling with *k*- reflects the perception by Hirschler (or by his copyist) that the word is a distinctive feature with Jewish connotations.

*nègré, nègré* qual. adj. and n. PEJ. ‘dark, bad, vile (person)’ (lines 7, 48, 78, etc.); used *passim* in a general disparaging sense, especially to intensify an insult (*nègré béhen*, line 92; *nègré typès*, line 48; *nègré Gouyin*, line 7), but not exclusively: *lou nègré a vis* (line 261).—The proliferation of this word in Provençal Jewish texts has elicited some dubious commentaries, notably from Pansier (1925:144), who assumes that the word can be traced to Heb. נכרי *nokhri* qual. adj. ‘foreign,’ which Viguier (1989:259) likewise maintains; Strich (2015:534) meanwhile argues that it is a borrowing from Judeo-Spanish—all improbable conjectures that are also unnecessary, since negative uses of *negre* are well attested in general Provençal: *negre* qual. adj. ‘dark, somber, obscure, pallid; awful, obnoxious, cruel, inhuman,’ according to Mistral (1879–1886:2, 402a), who provides, among others, *ah! negre fraire* ‘oh! heartless brother’ and *negre de Dieu* ‘(type of expletive): Only the high frequency of this word in the play represents a caricature of Jewish speech, and possibly its interjectional use (lines 187, 202), although these uses seem more a matter of stylistic effect (of burlesque imitation of “colorful” or “picturesque” speech) than of a distinctive linguistic feature strictly speaking.

*quin(to)* exclamatory adj. ‘what!’ (lines 1, 4, 98, 112, 152, 180).—This exclamatory, used throughout—especially before Hebraisms—abounds perhaps due to a similar stylizing effect. In Achard’s Comtadine dictionary (1785:533), the word is marked as a “terme montagnard” (mountain dialect term); while Mistral (1879–1886:2, 677a) does cite some apparently neutral examples, in particular from the Avignon writer Saboly, its use may have retained some connotation of picturesque linguistic quaintness.

*sahata* v. tr. RELIG. ‘to slaughter ritually (an animal for meat, here a cow)’ (line 198).—Verb formed on Heb. שחט *šahat* ‘to slaughter (according to the Jewish ritual).’ This word spread to Rhodanian Provençal, with the adaptation of [x] into [g], in the form *sagata* ‘to cut the throat’ (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 833a, and FEW, 20, 27b, ŠAḤAṬ, where no form with *-h-* is attested), and still exists in the modern-day lect of Provençal Jews in the form *sagater*.

*tabahéyo* n. f. ‘rectum (?)’ (line 87) in the verbal locution *perde la tabahéyo* ‘(fig.) to be terrified.’—Hapax probably derived from Judeo-French *tabahie* ‘rectum, final portion of the large intestine’ (Rashi – 11th century: FEW 21, 318a), with antihatic yod (the word must have passed through an intermediate stage \**tabahío*, then \**tabahíyo*; the shift from *í* to *e* can be compared to that in *caméyo* ‘shirt,’ line 65; see below). The meaning would be consistent with the rest of the text, which unabashedly employs (notably at line 81) a Rabelaisian comic touch. Judeo-French *tabahie* טבחייה is one of the rare words among Rashi’s Judeo-French glosses that are not of Romance origin, as evidenced by the presence of the letter ת *h*. Levy (1960:556–557) ascribes an Arabic origin to the word, and explains that it was “so familiar in Rashi’s milieu that the Champenois rabbi did not consider it to be of Arabic origin.” Notwithstanding Levy’s position, this word could more plausibly be traced to postbiblical Hebrew טבחייה *ṭaba’at* ‘anus, rectal orifice.’ While the reading of the Carpentras manuscript is indisputably *tabaheyo*, Pansier arbitrarily corrected the word, which he did not understand, to *tabatiéyo* ‘snuffbox,’ an improper change imposed by the rhyme (*féyo* in the preceding line) which prevented a reading of \**tabatiéro*, although this form is impossible in Provençal for this word (no *-iéyo* < \*-ERIA in Ronjat 1930–1941:3, § 114). This attestation represents a unique remnant of a distinctive medieval Judeo-French feature, without equivalents in other oral Jewish lects, and which survived only in that of the Jews of Provence.

*trahala* v. intr. ‘to be afraid’ (lines 37, 40, 60, 159, 165, 232).—Verb of uncertain origin, very frequent in the text. This word is attested in Judeo-Provençal in the *Sermon des juifs* in the form *trehala* (Viguiier 1989:258). It is found in Mistral (1879–1886:2, 1021c), who notes: “*trahala* (lat. *tribulare*) v. n. et a. t. de juiverie. Souffrir, tomber; tourmenter” (old Jewish term. To suffer, to fall; to torment). The word is included in the FEW in three places:

FEW 21, 412b: Bayonne *trahalá* v. “souffrir, tourmenter; tomber, s’effondrer (t. de patois juif)” [‘to suffer, to torment; to fall, to collapse (term from Jewish patois)’. The localization to Bayonne comes from an unknown source (I have never found any other attestation of this word in the Gascony area).

FEW 22/1, 40b: Avignon *trahala* v. “trembler, craindre” (argot hébraïco-provençal) [‘to tremble, to fear’ (Judeo-Provençal argot)]. The source indicated for this attestation is none other than Pansier’s glossary, although with a localisation error, since Pansier’s attestation, drawn from *Harcanot et Barcanot*, is from a variety of Carpentras and not Avignon.

FEW 4, 377, HALARE [‘to breathe’]: Avignon *trehalá* “trépasser” [‘to pass away’]. Again from Pansier, here providing an attestation from the *Sermon des juifs*. Wartburg, with the same localization error as in the preceding, fails to indicate that the word belongs to a Jewish lect (whereas Pansier clearly states this) and proposes a dubious etymological relationship if ever there was one.

The etymology of this word is obscure. The etymon put forth by Mistral is unconvincing: none of the derivatives coming from TRĪBŪLARE (FEW 13/2, 251b) presents vocalic evolution in *a* or evolution from *B* to *h*. Nor do \*TRĪPALIARE (FEW 13/2, 287b) and \*TRĒMŪLARE (FEW 13/2, 241a) present satisfactory forms in Gallo-Romance, except, maybe, s.v. \*TRĪPALIARE, Francoprovençal *traati/traatě* ‘to work,’ but the shift from *t* to *l* and the semantic evolution remain unexplained. Viguier suggested that this word could have derived, via borrowing, from Heb. תרעלה *tar‘ela* ‘dizziness, wobbling,’ but that is far from certain. In the absence of a satisfying etymon, it may be possible to consider this word to be an “expressive” formation.<sup>50</sup> In general, the language of the play appears to be a deliberate caricature; this is achieved through the exaggeration of particularly expressive elements—for example, the numerous occurrences of words that “impress” the reader. *Trahala* may thus rank alongside *quin*, *nègre*, or *maou caou*.

#### 4.1.3 Glossary of Proper Nouns

*Aléyo* (line 66).—A form of the biblical name Elijah (the French equivalent *Élie* appears at line 220 of the play), from the regular Provençal form, which is *Elio* (Mistral 1879–1886:1, 856b), by the same type of phonetic evolution also observed in other lexemes (see below): epenthesis of an antihhiatic yod, opening of [i] into [e] before it, then dissimilation, in the previous syllable, from [e] to [a].

*Barcanot*.—Invented literary anthroponym, like *Harcanot*. The two first names or nicknames, which are almost identical, correspond to each other just as the farcical characters they designate in the play. These two names bear no resemblance to any known form in common Comtadine Jewish onomastics,<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> According to the terminology coined by Grammont (1901:97–158).

<sup>51</sup> The question of Provençal Jewish anthroponymy in the modern era has already been studied, in particular aspects, by several scholars, including Seror (1992), and, with a special focus on surnames and nicknames, Bitton (1996) and Kerner (1988). Beider (2019) catalogs all occurrences of Provençal Jewish family names but does not address first names. In this area, the most complete records of Jewish personal names in the Comtat are available online: in addition to the very handy online prosopographic tool provided

are not related to any identifiable lexical item, and cannot be broken down morphologically, except perhaps for the final syllable, which would be the French diminutive suffix *-ot* [-o], common in some proper names. *Barcanot* and *Harcanot* are imaginary names, made up by the author.

*Barda de Kakan* (line 195).—Compound lexeme formed from Prov. *bardat* n. m. ‘paving stone, pavement made up of *bards* (large square paving stones used for terraces),’ attested in Comtadine Provençal (Achard 1785:76) and absent from the FEW (where it should be under 19, 23a, BARDA’A), and from *kakan/Cacan*, a personal nickname,<sup>52</sup> but possibly borrowed from Heb. כַּחַם *ḥakham* n. m. ‘sage; rabbi,’ or from Provençal: the word *cacan* ‘rich, prosperous man’ is attested in Achard (1785:135b) in the general Provençal of the Comtat, where the Hebraism might have spread to wider use.

*Choanan* (line 59).—Male first name borrowed from Heb. יוֹחָנָן *Yoḥanan*, corresponding to French *Jean* (and English *John*), with expected muting of intervocalic ח *ḥet*, and evolution—also regular in Comtadine Jewish speech—of initial yod to [tʃ] (with an intermediate stage [dʒ]; see below).

*Hana* (line 61).—Very common female first name of Hebrew origin, corresponding to French *Anne*, borrowed from Heb. חַנָּה *Ḥana*. As its etymon, here it is probably oxytonic (hence the retention of final *-a*).

*Harcanot*.—Corresponding form to *Barcanot* (see above).

*Jaco de Varaché* (lines 1, 14, 20).—In this detoponymic anthroponym, *Jaco* is a popular form of the male first name *Jacob* (and not a variant of *Jacques*); the similar *Yaco* is attested in a Gascon Jewish text in Bayonne in 1837 (Nahon 2018a:47). *Varaché* is a form, with evolution from [dʒ] to [tʃ] (see below), of the Provençal toponym *Varage* (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 1085), probably corresponding to French *Varages* (a town in the department of Var).<sup>53</sup> In the Carpentras library (ms. 2119), there is a portrait dated 1838 depicting *Un juif de Carpentras, appelé Isaac Cavaillon dit Varage négociant de chevaux* [A Jew from Carpentras, named Isaac Cavaillon aka Varage, horse trader];<sup>54</sup> note

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by the research group Nouvelle Gallia Judaica ([http://ngj.vjf.cnrs.fr/BdeD/jccohen/avert\\_cohen.htm](http://ngj.vjf.cnrs.fr/BdeD/jccohen/avert_cohen.htm)), several private genealogy websites (especially *Descendants de Juifs du Papes et leurs alliés*) contain a wealth of data on the first and last names of Comtadine Jews in various eras.

52 To cite Lunel (1993:87): “Let’s delve into the sad confines of our Jewry, reduced to this long and tortuous alley, where here and there dead ends led to courtyards, the largest and only paved one like a Moorish courtyard, *lou barda de Cacan* (the Cacan terrace), after the nickname of its wealthy owner, Mossé de Monteux.”

53 Rostaing (1973 [1950]:297–298) provides other related Occitan forms.

54 This work is reproduced in Delmas (2011:8).

that this name was not found as an actual anthroponym in the records or sources available on the names of Comtadine Jews.

*Lafleur* (lines 24, 47, 48).—This anthroponym, which means ‘the flower’ in Provençal, seems to be an occasional nickname of a type described by Meiss as being frequent among the Jews of the Comtat:

From what I, too, have heard, almost all the old families have had nicknames, since time immemorial, for reasons that are often completely insignificant; but in the “Mefilah” (the Jewry), life’s tiniest details took on colossal proportions! And so it was necessary to be able to differentiate between the many Mossés, Isaquets, Tsofers, Aarouns, Crémieus, Lisbonnes and Vidals! To such a man’s patronymic name might have been added the nickname “Poulet” [Chicken], which he would have religiously transmitted to his descendants because he was terrified of “Keli-Etz” or guns; one B. L. was crazy about the “Mazza Douces” [sweet matzoth] and was given the nickname “Coudolle” [sweet matzah]; others would be nicknamed “Mange-Poisson” [Fish-Eater], merlan [whiting fish], “Muggiou” [mullet fish], “Pagéou” [sea bream], Biaou [beef/cow], abricot [apricot], etc. for purely gastronomic reasons.

Meiss 1909:467–468

In passing, it is noteworthy how much the overall spirit conveyed by the play corresponds to these few remarks by an astute observer from the century following.

*Rahéou de Bringoule* (lines 30, 63).—Form borrowed from Heb. רַחֵל *Rahel*, biblical first name corresponding to French *Rachel* and Provençal *Rachèl* (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 684b). The evolution of postvocalic [l] to [w] is regular in Provençal. The apparently detoponymic patronym *de Bringoule*, formed on a common model among the Comtadine Jews (*de Carcassonne*, *de Lunel*, *de Beaucaire*, *de Monteux*, etc.), does not seem to exist in the historical onomastic documentation; *Bringoule* might be a form of *Brignoles* (a town in the department of Var)—incidentally, located not far from Varages—possibly with a vaguely farcical connotation due to the influence of Provençal *brinda* ‘to drink’ and *goule* ‘throat, gullet.’

*Rebbi Israël* (line 16).—The biblical first name *Israël*, in its usual form—in Hebrew as well as Provençal and French—is preceded here by the title *rebbi* ‘rabbi,’ borrowed from a variant of Heb. רַבִּי *rabi*. The presence of *-e-* originates in an early vocalization of the Hebrew etymon, רֵבִי *rebi*, attested in

- 13th-century French Hebrew sources and of which some vestiges can be found in Judeo-German and Yiddish dialects (Beider 2015:328).
- Recheno* (lines 59, 77).—Form of Prov. *Regino* ‘Régine (first name)’ with evolution of [dʒ] to [tʃ] (see below). The first name *Régine* appears quite often in the civil status register of Comtadine Jews around 1800.
- Riouka* (line 17).—Female first name of Hebrew origin, corresponding to French *Rébecca*, borrowed from Heb. רבקה *Ribhqa*.
- Salamoun* (line 62).—Usual Provençal form (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 836a) of the French first name *Salomon*. The lists of Jewish names in Carpentras between the 14th and 16th centuries reproduced by Loeb (1886:194 *et sqq.*) already exhibit the sole form *Salamon*, with *-a*.
- Tourlerette* (lines 1, 15).—Female nickname formed by onomatopoeia on a root attested in Provençal (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 1010b: *tourlourou* n. m. ‘raucous, boisterous, unruly’;<sup>55</sup> possibly crossed with *tourtoureto* ‘turtledove; (term of endearment)’ or similar forms).
- Yédidia* (lines 24, 54).—In this form, it appears to represent the Hebrew male first name ידדיה *Yedidiah* ‘Beloved of God.’ However, this form seems doubtful. On the one hand, the name is very rare in Jewish onomastics of the Comtat; on the other hand, it does not correspond to the form expected based on the phonetic norms of Hebrew in Provence, by which the initial yod should have evolved into [dʒ] or [tʃ], as in *Choanan* above. In both occurrences of this name, the text is problematic and so this form seems to be, rather than an original reading, a reconstruction by Hirschler (1896) to give meaning to a crux.
- Yoto* (lines 170, 244).—The manuscript glosses this name as “ma femme” (my wife); it seems to be an endearing diminutive of the first name of Barcanot’s wife, who is absent from the play. The name is recognized elsewhere: Mistral (1879–1886:2, 142) records *Ioto* ‘Jewish female name, diminutive of Lia.’ The word’s form can be explained by the evolution [lj] > [ʎ] > [j], which was late since initial [j] was not affected by the earlier and widespread evolution to [dʒ]. The intermediate French form *Liotte* is also widely attested in individual genealogies of Comtadine Jews in the 18th century.

## 4.2 (Grapho)Phonetic Features

### 4.2.1 Neutralization of the Opposition between /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ and Fusion into /tʃ/

The Rhodanian Provençal phoneme /dʒ/ is consistently represented by <ch> or <tch>. This trait applies to all occurrences of the phoneme, in all positions, in words of any origin, and even in proper nouns: for example, *Rechèno*

55 On this lexical item, see also Chauveau (2017:4–22).



corresponds to Provençal *Regino* 'Régine'; *Choanan* (line 59) to Heb. יוֹחָנָן *Yohanan*. Everywhere, Old Provençal *ges* 'not' (ALF 89; FEW 4, 116b, GĚNUS) results in *tché*. For this word, the FEW gives a form with devoiced initial consonant only in the Hérault, in Languedoc: *tšes* (*tš* indicating an intermediate phonetic segment between [tʃ] and [ts]). It is possible that this intermediate sound marked *tš* corresponds to the phonetic segment represented in the play, and thus is present in this lect. An attestation would confirm this: the word *chantoou* 'religious holiday' (*Harcanot*, line 196)—borrowed from Heb. יוֹם טוֹב *yom tobbh*, in which the initial consonant cluster written <ch> results, as in Romance words, from the evolution of a former [j] through an intermediate stage to [dʒ]—is attested in another lexicographic source in the form *Tsantou* (Meiss, 1909, 467 and 1923, 33). In the lines of the Jewish characters, the trait is widespread; in the lines of the Christian characters, it occurs only once. One of the Christian servants uses the word *chusioou* 'Jew,' the phonetically "Jewish" form of Provençal *jusiou*: the imitation of the Jewish phonetic trait in the ethnonym, pronounced the way those it designates would, must have imparted a mocking connotative nuance to the word.

In modern Occitan varieties, this fusion has been reported only in the lects of Montpellier and neighboring districts in Languedoc, which supports the FEW's attestation for *tšes*: "*ch* and *j* merge into [č],<sup>56</sup> generally followed by a more or less distinct [y], in Montpellier, La Boissière, Les Matelles, Aniane, Clermont-l'Hérault, Paulhan, Montagnac, Frontignan, Pézenas, Bessan and Agde," probably as early as the 18th century (Ronjat 1930–1941:1, 93). At first glance, it would be tempting to attribute this trait to the author of *Harcanot et Barcanot*, who was born in Pézenas and lived in Montpellier—exactly the area where this trait is prevalent. But the fusion of these phonemes had already appeared in other sources imitating the speech of the Comtadine Jews, in particular in the *Sermon des juifs* (17th–18th centuries). In her edition, Viguier (1989:242) set out to find, unsuccessfully, an explanation for this trait, which she describes as the "only overall marker" of the Jewish lect. Moreover, the phonetics of borrowings in the speech of present-day descendants of Comtadine Jews shows that Hebraisms are subjected to the same phonetic treatment. In their use of Hebraisms, initial yod, which evolved early on to [dʒ], as in Romance words, resulted, after an intermediate stage [tʃ], in [ʃ] in contemporary French. For example, there is *chai* ['ʃaj] n. m. 'wine' borrowed from Heb. יַיִן *yayin* (compare Venetian Judeo-Italian *giàin*: Aprile 2012:186) or *chacard* [ʃa'kaʁ] adj. 'expensive' borrowed from Heb. יָקָר *yaqar*. Yet contemporary speakers there and their ancestors of the last two centuries presumably did not spend long periods of time in the Languedoc. All the evidence shows that the trait extended to all

56 That is, in IPA, [tʃ].

possible occurrences of the phoneme in the Jewish lect of Carpentras, and not only the inherited Provençal lexicon.

So how could this phonetic trait have emerged and spread throughout the lect of Carpentras Jews, to such an extent that it became a characteristic feature? To be sure, some families of the Comtat Venaissin could have traced their genealogy back to a Languedoc origin: the anthroponymy of a number of families named after toponyms in that area on the west side of the Rhône, such as *Lunel*, *Millau(d)*, or *Carcassonne* is sufficient evidence of this. But the migration of these families from the provinces of Languedoc goes back, at the latest, to the expulsion of the Jews from the kingdom of France in 1394,<sup>57</sup> and it is highly doubtful that a dialectal phonetic trait could have endured for four centuries in Carpentras while the rest of the linguistic material of the variety, in terms of syntax, morphology, and lexicon, became aligned with the local language—all the more so since this phonetic phenomenon, in the lects of the Montpellier region, certainly dates to after 1394. On the other hand, it is quite possible, and even probable, that this trait spread to the Comtadine Jewish lect in the 17th and 18th centuries, a period during which, despite various prohibitions, many Jews from the Comtat traveled to the Montpellier region to do business, sometimes settling there temporarily for the same ends, until local edicts forced them to retreat to the Papal States. A richly documented study by Roubin (1897–1898), which focused on the presence of Comtadine Jews in the Languedoc, showed that this region, and more specifically the area around “Montpellier, decidedly the place of choice for the Comtadines,” was the main commercial destination for the Jews of the Comtat, who went there to “traffic in” silk, fabrics of all kinds, secondhand clothing, and livestock. Roubin concludes his historical study in these terms:

Ultimately, despite the persecutions, a natural consequence of their condition as *aubains* (foreigners) considered outside the scope of common law with respect to the Languedocians, the life of the Comtadines was rather easy in the province. The Languedoc was for them a land of predilection. Driven out of this province on several occasions, most recently in 1615, they had withdrawn to the Comtat, where they felt protected by the Vice-Legate. Furthermore, the general expulsion of 1615 was never permanent. Their sojourns and commerce continued long after this date. Their visits were so frequent that, a century later, the Conseil d’État was forced to crack down on them. Curiously, the year in which they were

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57 According to the data compiled by Beider (2019) the earliest Lunels, Carcassonnes, and Beaucaires already appear in the Jewish censuses of Carpentras in 1277.

again officially expelled from the Languedoc (1716), far from marking the end of their business ventures there, brought them renewed vigor. From that point on, they proliferated in the province, settled down, and slowly absorbed into the Languedoc population, so much so that the Constituent Assembly, in decreeing (1790) the definitive emancipation of the Avignon Jews, only enshrined in law, as far as Languedoc was concerned, an integration that had long been effected between Jews and inhabitants of the country.

Roubin 1898:100

It therefore seems quite likely that Comtadine Jews, often traveling between the Comtat and Languedoc—at least periodically for the annual *foires*, but at times settling there for several years, or even one or two generations—adapted their speech to this phonetic trait, which is the most striking distinctive feature of the dialect of this area (Ronjat 1930–1941:4, 93). The movement of these speakers between the Languedoc and the cities of the Comtat would have enabled this initially individual trait to stabilize and become generalized in the lect of the Jews of the Comtat Venaissin: in such a sociolinguistic context of isolation and segregation of a closed-off community, this trait would have found the ideal conditions to become widespread and stratified as a marker of belonging to the group of Jewish speakers. Closer scrutiny of the text reveals the presence of another apparently stratified diatopic feature from Languedoc in the Jewish lect: for example, line 28, *véchessi* imperf. subj. P1 of *veire* ‘to see,’ corresponding, with the development of the phonetic feature described, to Languedoc *vegessi* (Ronjat 1930–1941:3, 323), whereas the Rhodanian Provençal lects have [-g-]. However, we also find the P3 form *véguesse* (line 244) in another character: perhaps here it is a free variant, or represents influence of the language of the author’s native region.<sup>58</sup>

#### 4.2.2 *-i* < Provençal *-ié*

The evolution of Provençal *-ié* to *-i* is generalized in the language of the play. This was observed by Strich (2015:533–534) who considered it to be a verbal morphological trait seen only in P2 and P3 of the imperfect indicative and present conditional, when in fact it represents phonetic evolution, which can consequently be observed in both nominal and verbal forms. For example:

<sup>58</sup> In any case, the presence of these features disproves the argument of Strich (2015:525), about the play *Harcanot et Barcanot*, in which he observes “the complete absence of any influence from the Lengadocian dialect of Montpellier and its environs.”

- line 127, *papi* for *papié* n. m. ‘paper’ (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 475b), alongside *crésis* (line 109) for Prov. *crésiés* imperf. ind. P2 *crèire* ‘to believe’;<sup>59</sup>
- *embaumi* (line 142) for *embaumié* imperf. ind. P3 of \**embaumí* ‘to scent with perfume’ (to add to FEW 1, 226a, BALSAMUM, which only gives npr. *embauma*);
- *fourri* (lines 54, 133) for *foudrié* pres. conditional P3 (impersonal) ‘it would be necessary’;
- *si* (line 100) for Old Provençal *sia* (archaic form of pres. subj. P3 *estre* expressed in Provençal “by extremely varied forms” according to Ronjat 1930–1941:3, 282: here we have to postulate a form \**sié*); *mirayaris* (line 99) for *miraiariés* pres. cond. P2 of *miraia* ‘to look at oneself in the mirror’ (Mistral 1879–1886:2, 343c).

As for verbal morphology, this trait is described by Ronjat (1930–1941:3, 173) as affecting P2, P3, and P6 of the imperfect indicative (and hence the conditional, which is aligned with this paradigm), in the language of Nyons, Valréas, Orange, and Courthézon (Vaucluse); the latter town almost borders on Carpentras (10 miles away) and is contiguous with Monteux and Bédarrides, where many Carpentras Jewish families originally came from. In contrast, the spread of this phonetic development to all occurrences of *-ié* in the general language seems to be specific, in Provence, to the language of the Jews. This can be illustrated with the example *papi/papié*: the ALF (map 967) only gives, in the Vaucluse, the form [pap'je] (survey points 853 = Courthézon, 864, and 874), possibly borrowed from French; no form in *-i* is found in Provence: *papi*, a form Mistral identified as idiosyncratic to Dauphiné, barely extends beyond the Francoprovençal zone, where it is common. The presence of this form in the Jewish lect of Carpentras can be explained by the adoption of a diatopic trait, initially restricted to verbal morphology, and later spreading as a phonetic trait to all occurrences of the phoneme. The borrowing by Jewish speakers of a limited number of conjugated forms in *-i* from neighboring varieties introduced a phonetic variable [-i]/[-je] between Jewish and Christian speech, and this variable, limited at first, became a sound change in its own right, as defined by the Neogrammarians: “a phonetically motivated shift of an entire sound class, affecting all words in which that sound occurs at the same time” (Labov 1994:440). The interpretation of this phonetic trait as a marker of “linguistic Jewishness” thus caused, as with the preceding trait, its spread to all members of the speech community, but more importantly its spread as a phonetic trait affecting all instances of the sound in question.

59 General Rhodanian Provençal, according to Ronjat 1930–1941:3, 172.

## 4.2.3 -éyo &lt; -íyo (&lt; -ío)

Many words in the play present word-final -éyo, where an earlier stage -íyo can be postulated, itself deriving, in some cases, from a still earlier form -ío. The evolution of Provençal -íyo to -éyo is observed in the words *féyo* ‘girl,’ line 86 (compare Prov. *fiho* in Mistral 1879–1886:1, 1133a); *bréyo* ‘shines (cf. Prov. P3 pres. ind. *brilhá*);’ line 104; *escoubéyo* ‘trash, filth,’ line 105 (*escoubiho*, *escoubilho* in Mistral 1879–1886:1, 997a); *faméyo* ‘family,’ line 112 (*famiho*, *familho*, in Mistral 1879–1886:1, 1094c). In the words *tabahéyo* (line 87) and *Aléyo* ‘Elijah’ (line 66), which are both borrowed from Northern French with final -ia, we have to assume an initial stage -ío followed by epenthesis of an antihyatic yod. Finally, the form *caméyo* ‘shirt’ implies prior isolated muting of intervocalic [z]: ALP map 1211 records [ka’mizɔ] throughout the Comtat; nowhere is found a paroxytonic form without [-z-], even in the other Occitan lects (ALF 264).

The tendency to fuse [i] and [e] before [j] (a widespread phonetic realization in all Provence lects, and still sometimes written *lh* due to orthographic conservatism) is prevalent in many varieties (Ronjat 1930–1941:1, § 54, 79 and 80); Philipon (1917–1918), in his systematic study of the “destinies of the phoneme e + i,” as Ronjat wrote, “concludes that there are dialectal divergences, and this conclusion is certainly well founded, but the fact remains that a single speaker quite often has -e- in some words and -i- in others.” In the Comtat, the linguistic cartography shows that [ej] and [ɛj] are, in general, more common than [ij]: for example, ALP 1171 (‘handle,’ FEW 6/1, 215b, MANĚČŮLA) shows heterogeneous distribution of [ma’nejɔ], [ma’nijɔ], [ma’niɔ], and other forms in Provence, but all survey points in the Vaucluse present [ej] or [ɛj], and not [ij] (except in Séguret, at the far north of the department). But this phonetic development affects words in the play that are never otherwise affected by it in the non-Jewish dialects: for *féyo*, ALF (570 ‘girl’) gives 100% of [i] throughout Provence and Languedoc, with [’fiɔ] in the Comtat (points 853, 864, and 874). The defining aspect of the feature in the language of Carpentras Jews, once again, would be its generalized, even universal diffusion in all occurrences of the sounds concerned.

The distinctiveness of this trait in the Comtadine Jewish lect is confirmed by an occurrence where it affects a Hebrew-Aramaic word, in an ethnographic recording that happens to represent the only documented audio of this variety. Indeed, the National Library of Israel holds (under catalog number Y-01551) a soundtrack recorded on July 31, 1972, by an unidentified musicologist, presumably in Marseille, in which can be heard Éliane Amado Lévy-Valensi singing in Provençal, two times, a version—apparently vernacular and not based on the printed versions—of the famous “Chant du Chevreau” or חַד גַּדְיָא *had gadya*

(One Goat Kid), a song that was part of the Passover paraliturgy in Provence and elsewhere and whose vernacular Romance origins were studied by Gaston Paris (1872). This song, probably originating in the local folklore, survived in the oral repertoire of the Comtadine Jews until the 20th century owing to its introduction into the home liturgy at Passover; moreover, in many families, it seems to have been the last liturgical component preserved, in spite of the religious “disintegration” of the Comtadine Jews that Lunel and others have described.<sup>60</sup> Éliane Amado Lévy-Valensi, a psychoanalyst and philosopher, was born in 1919 in Marseille to a family from Thessaloniki, but she was undoubtedly introduced to the Comtadine traditions by her husband, Max Amado, himself born in Aix and the son of Germaine Bédarride, born in Aix but originally from Carpentras.<sup>61</sup> In the recording of this song, neither of the two phonetic features previously described in *Harcanot* is found: in particular, the opposition between /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ is maintained, notably in [mã'dʒa] ‘eaten (past part.),’ where [dʒ] might have been restored due to the influence of French. This is hardly surprising: a priori, the recording of a ritualized text performed by a non-speaker, who learned it from another non-speaker, would be unlikely to provide dialectologically accurate data. On the other hand, the song contains a verbal segment in Aramaic, where the phonetic sequence [-ia] of the etymon is treated almost in the same way as in *caméyo*, *Aléyo*, or *tabahéyo*. The Aramaic refrain אֵי גַדְיָא הָד *had gadya* ‘one goat kid’ is pronounced, in all its numerous occurrences (more than twenty), [xazgade’ja]. This pronunciation is confirmed in a written source: in the version of the song published by the Crémieu brothers in their sheet music collection of the liturgical chants of the Comtat, this segment is transcribed *rrhad gadeïa* (Crémieu & Crémieu 1885:198).

We are thus faced, once again, with a phonetic feature that is clearly generalized across a comprehensive body of occurrences in the lect of the Jews.

### 4.3 *Syntax*

The syntax of the text in the play *Harcanot et Barcanot* does not diverge significantly from general usage, except, perhaps, for the profusion of archaizing set expressions. For example, at line 100, “Qué sis chez quu qué si” ‘whoever’s place you are,’ an apparently set expression surely used in a sense other than

60 On the liturgical and religious dissolution of Comtadine Judaism, see Nahon (2017a) and (2018b).

61 Information kindly provided in September 2014 by his son, Mr. Michaël Amado, who reported that his father—probably one of the last southern French Jews to do so—sang this text each year at the end of the home liturgy on the evening of Passover.

its literal meaning, thanks to which archaic subjunctive forms are preserved. Likewise, at lines 83, “tanben visqué mon payré”; 86, “tanben visqué ma féyo”; and 201, “visqué toun païre”: the interpolated subjunctive expressing wish *visqué* [‘viske] seems to reflect a set usage (recalling the various kinds of *per la vita* oaths and expletives common in Judeo-Italian, according to Aprile 2012:98–99, 222). Also possibly archaic, at line 18, is *faguéssé*: the subjunctive (imperfect) without conjunction as a subordinate proposition (“generally in an elevated style” according to Ronjat 1930–1941:3, 611). However, it is only natural that a text written around 1820 and intended to depict Jewish life in Carpentras in the 18th century, as its subtitle indicates, would make use of archaisms: ultimately, all differential features of the text could be considered, to a certain extent, archaisms if we take into account the fact that the use of this Jewish variety of Provençal was already, at the time the play was written, in decline.

The fact that the non-Jewish characters in the play speak French itself goes a long way to illustrating the sociolinguistic context surrounding the work, as does the subtle but perceptible influence of French in the Provençal of the Jewish characters. Thus, at line 223, “Un qué *ganaoute* un uf, pooo *ganaouta* un buf”: *uf* ‘egg’ and *buf* ‘ox, cow’ are regional French forms for *œuf* and *bœuf* (with [y] for [œ] representing a feature still common to southern France in the early 19th century), presented in the Provençal discourse through a clumsy imitation of the well-known French proverb *Qui vole un œuf vole un bœuf* (literally, ‘who steals an egg steals a cow’). At line 246, “Belléou n’est pas *maquir*,” *n’est pas* is French (‘is not’), but without the subject pronoun (another former feature of southern French); unless *est* represents a Gallicized written form of Provençal *es*. Finally, in one set of lines, the Jewish character Harcanot tries to speak entirely in French: “Je le *dabérerai* une seconde fois / C’est pour le *Guénévuf* qu’on a fait chez Elie” (lines 219–220). This sentence, the first documentation of the specialized French variety of the Comtadine Jews, from a character who later says, at line 238, “Aï tchamaï dou français sachu une paraoule” (‘I never knew a single word of French’), succeeds in characterizing the facetious plurilingualism of the text as an important literary artifice and as the very matter on which lies the text’s literarity.

#### 4.4 Interpretation

All of the linguistic interpretations of the play so far, starting with Pansier, have largely overlooked the fact that it is a literary text—that is, a complex form of utterance, far from being unambiguous, far from “reflecting” a spontaneous oral practice the way an audio recording would, and in which different states of language are intertwined, to some extent by design. The author—himself a passive speaker of the lect but also a French speaker and as familiar with

literary language as a law graduate can be—makes the particularly antiquated Jews of the Carpentras ghetto, from his grandparents' generation, speak in the play in such a way as to make his readers laugh or smile: both the author and his readers are descendants of Comtadines and share a common set of references and memories, as well as postvernacular practices. The specialized language is summoned here to reproduce, before Jewish audience members or readers, the situation of linguistic fellowship that existed between speakers, but this time for literary purposes. There is little doubt that this text would have had, among the Jews of the south of France who read it and copied it, the success it deserved. Its inclusion in Hirschler's yearbook in 1896 demonstrates, at any rate, that at that time there were still enough Jewish speakers of Provençal capable of appreciating such a text for Hirschler to have published it, driven more by commercial interest than by philological concern for preservation. We may assume that this text could still "speak" to the generation that Armand Lunel (1892–1977) described in the figure of his grandfather Albert Lunel (Carpentras, 1837–1926), a learned and eager collector of local traditions, who took pride in having known and corresponded with Mistral, and whose illiterate aunts "spoke only Provençal infused here and there with Hebraisms"—the stylized variety portrayed in *Harcanot et Barcanot*—while he expressed himself mainly in French (Lunel 1993:72–73, 85–88). This was the generation, born in the mid-19th century and the last to have fluently spoken Judeo-Provençal with the monolingual speakers of the previous generation, for whom Hirschler published the chief surviving memorial to this linguistic variety.

What is more, the use of the distinctive linguistic features shows that *it is indeed language itself which is the subject of the play*. In the first act, in which only Jewish characters appear, at first glance the text might seem overloaded with specialized vocabulary, yet it is actually not, if we look more closely. The linguistic situation it portrays must differ rather little from that of the current-day descendants of the Comtadine Jews, for whom the specialized vocabulary constitutes, within their French lect, a freely adaptable repertoire: the characters are quite capable of choosing whether or not to use the differential lexicon. In Act 1, Scene 3, we can observe the alternation, from one reply to the next, of Provençal *oustaou* 'house' and its Hebrew-origin synonym *bayé* (borrowed from Heb. בית *bayith* 'house') three lines later, without any apparent variation in meaning, use, or connotation: the Provençal words are interchangeable with those of the specialized language.

In contrast, in the second act, where the two eponymous characters Harcanot and Barcanot meet with the bishop of Carpentras, the whole comedy of the play, for the audience at that time, comes from the fact that—unlike what would be expected from real people, and unlike the "normal" Jewish



characters in Act 1—the two outlandish Jews are incapable of speaking anything other than with the differential vocabulary. The misunderstanding, the humor of the confrontation with the bishop arises out of this breakdown in communication. They should be able to speak the “patois,” as the bishop asks them to (line 218)—that is, a Provençal unmixed with Hebraisms—but they cannot: although they are aware that they are using a “special language” that the bishop cannot understand (line 209), they are unable to do without it (even when they try to speak French, lines 219–220). The author’s art consists in having conceived this purely fictitious literary scene where the characters are trapped, even imprisoned, in their linguistic difference: the epitome of absurdity for Jewish readers or members of the audience, who would have been used to adapting their language use according to the context. This may even help explain why only the first two acts—ultimately the most interesting—have been preserved: the rest of the plot didn’t really matter, as long as those earlier scenes were kept, where the comic virtuosity of verbal play is at its peak.

It is worth noting the analogy between this text and the fragments of comic dialogues from Bayonne, published in 1845 but whose action takes place in 1790, and which are among the only surviving traces of the special dialect of the Jews of Gascony.<sup>62</sup> Both are theatrical texts whose action takes place some fifty years before the composition of the text, still in the final years of the 18th century, and which stylize the Jewish ‘patois’ by slightly exaggerating its features. Only *slightly*, because the depiction—not overblown—of these linguistic traits is enough to activate the comic force. In both cases, the subject of the texts, their literary motivation, is—rather than a plot or a tale—the representation of a language and the play on its archaic features. Ultimately, it should come as no surprise that the finest documents on the distinctive language of Jews were produced by and for Jews themselves: it is only natural that speakers, former speakers, or semi-speakers of these lects would be more receptive than others to the value of its portrayal, and of seeing it portrayed. It would not be hard to find other examples of theatrical stylizations of specialized lects of Jewish communities, written by descendants of speakers.<sup>63</sup>

62 These texts, presented in Nahon (2017b), were comprehensively published and analyzed in Nahon (2018a:56–69).

63 For example, the specialized language of the Jews of Florence was thus “saved” in a communal play, *La Gnora Luna. Scene di vita ebraica fiorentina* (Benè Kedem [pseudonym], Florence, 1932), although it had already reached a more advanced state of senescence than Judeo-Provençal in Bédarride’s time. In the preface, the authors describe their approach, which is an almost caricatural example of the spirit at work behind this type of text: “In this our *Gnora Luna* we have dared to try to reconstruct the old Florentine Jewish dialect. Born too late, we have never, to tell the truth, been able to hear this dialect

#### 4.5 *Reassessment of Jewish Linguistic Variation in Provence*

Bédarride's text, taken for what it is—that is, a literary text playing, for aesthetic and comedic purposes, on a complex linguistic situation—enables us to describe Jewish linguistic variation in Provençal as a continuum of linguistic markers of Jewishness that are more or less adaptable depending on the circumstances. It seems clear that, in normal practice (unlike the caricatured speech of the characters Harcanot and Barcanot), the differential features were susceptible to being variously used or attenuated by speakers. The situation was presumably analogous to the one described by Marcel Cohen (1912:453) in the Algiers Jewish dialect of Arabic, where there was a fairly clear distinction between (1) a rather limited core of differential lexis specific to Jews, comprising words pertaining primarily to the areas of culture, emotion, and religion, hardly if at all adaptable by speakers (as with the special phonetic features unique to the group), and (2) a vast lexical repertoire that could be substituted for the general lexicon, adaptable depending on the circumstances and mainly consisting of Hebraisms, and used, when necessary, for cryptolalic purposes; these words, he wrote, “remain foreign in the language.”

But while the choice of Jewish lexis seems to have been adaptable by speakers according to circumstances—chief among them being the religious affiliation of the speaker (we saw how the comedy in *Harcanot et Barcanot* plays precisely on the inability of the eponymous characters to master the pragmatic rules of resorting to this lexicon, when they are speaking with a Catholic)—the phonetic traits, on the other hand, do not appear to be adaptable, that is to say, traits from which the speakers cannot deviate according to the circumstances. This kind of diastatic variable, which might be regarded as unique and distinctive to Jews, is not. Phonetic traits comparable to the one observed here are sporadically documented among other groups. To remain within the Occitan domain, Ronjat (1930–1941:2, 77) mentions a phonetic change affecting the consonants in the Provençal language of an area located between Toulon and Fréjus among “peasants and fishermen, but not artisans and the bourgeois.”

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from the mouths of those who spoke it regularly, because it is by now (shall we say unfortunately?) dead for a while. But we were assisted with the help of a qualified person, who himself was also born too late, although a little before us, but who, having had the opportunity, in his official capacity, to come into contact with people belonging to the lower social strata of the Florentine Jewish population, in which some remnants of the old dialect still remained, has collected and methodically studied these remnants, and in addition has researched the old evidence of the dialect in the written documents that have been passed down to us. Thanks to the invaluable help of such an authority, we were able to manage this attempt; and its favorable reception assures us that the attempt must not have missed the mark” (p. 3).

Pierre Nauton, in his monograph on the Occitan dialect of Saugues (Haute-Loire), also described a similar situation:

Through their pronunciation, the patois speakers of the village are divided into two clearly distinct categories. On the one side, the peasants, laborers, and artisans pronounce all the words like the peasants of neighboring villages—and where, incidentally, most of them were originally from—and on the other side, the bourgeois, merchants, and small rentiers, present several differences in their speech, of which the main ones are as follows: [a list of phonetic variants follows: for example, “the language of the town generalizes *ts*, *dz* in some cases where the peasant language retains forms in *te*,<sup>64</sup> *dj*”].

Nauton 1948:34–35

This division remains stable because the language that has evolved phonetically—that of the bourgeois and merchants, who are numerically in the minority—is “ridiculed,” explains Nauton, by the peasant majority. This is one of the likely reasons why the phonetic innovations of the Jewish lect in Provence remained confined to a social group voluntarily separated from the Christian majority: when one “pronunciation” is stigmatized by the majority such that it becomes, in the eyes of the latter, a marker used to linguistically identify the group that uses it, and when that group—as would presumably be the case of a Jewish community in hostile Christian surroundings—is cohesive enough for the trait to spread widely and become almost a sign of belonging, all the conditions are met for such a variation to be maintained over time and to resist the assimilative forces of the linguistic environment.

There is no doubt that the phonetic features of the Jewish lect were identified as a “sign of belonging” by speakers of the general variety, especially since in earlier Romance-speaking societies, almost everyone, from one village to another, from one neighborhood to another, from one environment to another, spoke differently: linguistic variation, whether diatopic or diastratic—and to a much greater degree than is conceivable today—was part of everyone’s natural environment. In the Comtat, the Jewish “accent,” viewed from the outside, was clearly perceived as a marker. Without specifying its nature, various observers alluded to it. René Moulinas (1981:194) noted that Pamard, in his *Topographie physique et médicale d’Avignon*, spoke of the Jews in 1801 as follows: “Thus we all know them, as much by their appearance, their language, their accent, as by their small number”; while in Carpentras, the Provençal storyteller Joseph

64 For IPA [tʃ].

Eysséric (1860–1932) mentioned the “accent of the Jewry.” But as far back as 1653, the “Judaic accent” and “Judaic gibberish [*barragouin*]” of the Avignon Jews were already a source of ridicule for the Bas-Dauphinois poets David Rigaud and Jean-Thomas Vincent.<sup>65</sup> The phonetic markers constituting this “accent” were well-known and were mirrored back to the speakers. Proof of this is the nickname *chassé* n. m. ‘(nickname given to the Jews in Avignon),’ recorded by Mistral (1879–1886:1, 537b), a deanthroponymic derived from the male first name *Jassé*, the local form of *Joseph* particularly common among the Jews of the Comtat under the Ancien Régime (Seror 1992:539), but articulated with shift from [dʒ] to [tʃ], which we have seen was the most distinctive phonetic feature of the Jewish lect.<sup>66</sup> This nickname thus plays, in its phonetic form, on the anthroponymic and phonetic characteristics of the Jews, evidence that both were perceived equally clearly by the Christian population. If the phonetic markers of the group were immediately perceptible when a Jew spoke, as opposed to the differential lexical repertoire that Jewish speakers could choose to use just among themselves, even some part of this lexicon must have been somehow familiar to Christians, at least to the authors and readers of satirical texts mocking Jewish speech; and there must have been many of them, if only those who, every year, heard the *Sermon des juifs* recited at Carnival. Some distinctive Jewish features were even, it seems, exaggerated by some observers, such as Mistral, who noted, “The Jews of the Comtat said *aquire* for *aqui*” (1879–1886:1, 119a, s.v. *aqui*), and, “The Jews of the Comtat said *eiciro*” (1879–1886:1, 841a, s.v. *eicito*), here describing a dubious feature that has not been confirmed by any source that I am aware of.

65 In the collection of poems by the draper-merchant and versifier David Rigaud (1653), there are, over several dozen pages, some highly colorful verse invectives between the author and his rival Jean-Thomas Vincent, who accuse each other of belonging to the Avignon Jewish community. Remarks on language as a marker of identity are quite numerous: for example, one says to the other: “On t’a veu dans leur Synagogue, / Commencer en vers le Prologue / qu’ils y font le jour du Sabbath, Avec un accent judaïque / Tu parles en langue Hebraïque / Quand quelque marchand te rabbat” [We saw you in their synagogue, / Beginning the prologue in verse / that they say there on the Sabbath, With a Judaic accent / You speak in the Hebraic tongue / When some merchant cheats you] (p. 153); and “Thabita d’un ton Hebraïque / Et d’un barragouin Judaïque, / Se plaignait de trop peu de prix” [Thabita (Rigaud’s wife) in a Hebraic tone / And in Judaic gibberish, / Was complaining about the price] (p. 172). The works of Rigaud and Thomas, known only to a handful of bibliographers, are of great literary and linguistic interest. The many passages about Jews, with whom these merchant poets were obviously very familiar, would make for a fascinating study.

66 Mistral’s localization of this word in Avignon confirms that the phonetic trait was also present there, and was therefore not specific to the language of Carpentras, which was the only one documented by the sources previously studied.

It is therefore also because these features were interpreted and stratified as markers of the Jewish group *from outside the group* that they became generalized within the group, and that the individuals identifying as members of the group aligned their speech with a group norm defined as such by both speakers and non-speakers. The construction of this linguistic differentiation illustrates the principle formulated by Labov (2001:24):

Those who adopt a particular group as a reference group and wish to acquire the social attributes of that group, adopt the form of speaking characteristic of that group. The opposition between the two forms of speaking continues as long as the social opposition endures, and terminates in one way or another when the social distinction is no longer relevant.

Now it was precisely at the moment when, after several centuries of relative continuity, this social distinction was on the verge of being reconfigured, as a result of the French Revolution, the incorporation of the Comtat into France, and the change in status of southern French Jews, that Bédarride could provide for this “characteristic way of speaking” the remarkable testimony that is *Harcanot et Barcanot*. Thanks to this text, and crucially backed up by the application of sound philological principles, we can now have a fairly accurate idea of the linguistic landscape of the Jewish communities of the former Comtat.

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