

SERBO-CROATIAN INFLUENCES ON SPOKEN BOSNIAN JUDEO-SPANISH

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Abstract

The sweeping and far-reaching political, economical and demographical changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of 19th, beginning of the 20th century affected profoundly the linguistic situation of the country's Jewish, overwhelmingly Sephardic, minority. Having lost the unity with their brethren on Balkans, the Bosnian Jews had to rely more and more on their relations with other Bosnian ethno-religious communities. It is from this deepened contact with their Serbian, Muslim and Croatian neighbors on one side and from the constant need for new linguistic solutions, brought about by the ever changing reality, that Serbo-Croatian influences (once so superficial) started entering all the spheres of Bosnian Judeo-Spanish, its lexicon, morphology, phonology, syntax, and even grammar. The author analyzes those influences as they are, consciously or unconsciously, reflected in the literature produced by the members of the *Sephardic Circle*—the Sarajevo-based group of young and idealistic Sephardic intellectuals who tried to fight and prevent the oblivion of Judeo-Spanish language and culture.

1. *Introduction*

In the XIX century, the Balkan Peninsula was affected by changes both profound and broad. The Serbs, the Montenegrins, the Bulgarians, and the Greeks achieved their independence, creating nation-states and bringing about the renaissance of their languages and cultures. At the same time, those ex-Ottoman peoples, like Sephardic Jews, who did not manage to acquire sovereignty over some piece of the ex-Ottoman territory, were reduced to insignificant minorities in the new national states throughout the Balkans.

In the multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina, the gradual end of Ottoman rule did not mean creation of an independent state. In order to establish and secure order in the country torn apart by the civil war between the Muslim rulers and the Serbian-Orthodox (or Croat-Catholic) subjects, the superpowers of the time gave the Austro-Hungarian Empire the mandate to rule the country in the

name of the Sultan. Austrian plans, however, were slightly different from the beginning, but it was only in 1906 that they could act on them openly. The Habsburgs had used the turmoil of the revolution in Istanbul to proclaim the annexation of the country, a move which led, eight years later, to WW I. In any case, with the Berlin Congress (1878) the status of Bosnia and Herzegovina changed, from being the most northern province of the Ottoman Empire it became the most southern province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Bosnians were “transferred” from one civilization to another, without even leaving their homes.

In order to pave the way for the future annexation, immediately with their entrance into Bosnia, the Austrians started with the industrialization of the country and the Occidentalization of the landscape. The introduction of Austro-Hungarian architecture, the massive migration of the Muslim population to Turkey and the parallel immigration of the Austrian occupational apparatus redesigned the social milieus. The local population itself underwent overwhelming transformations (change of clothes, of the entertainment culture and even of the linguistic habits). Bosnian Jews,¹ being exclusively an urban population, managed to adapt very quickly to the new order. Obviously, they had learned to prefer the enlightened absolutism of the Habsburgs to the destabilized and decentralized Ottoman rule in Bosnia, whose last decades were marked by the total despotism of the local Muslim elite. Just like the rest of the country, the Jewish Community started acquiring a Western profile. New cultural and humanitarian societies (like *El Progreso*, *Nueva flor*, *La Benevolencia* [1892], *Humanidad* [1894], *La Lira* [1901] and *Glorija* [1903]) were created;² the first Judeo-Spanish newspaper (*La Alborada* [1900]) was started, and so on.

¹ For the history of the Bosnian Jews prior to the Austrian occupation, see Moritz Levy, *Die Sephardim in Bosnien, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Juden auf der Balkanhalbinsel* (Nachdruck der Ausgabe von 1911) (Klagenfurt: Wieser Verlag, 1996). The book was also translated into Serbo-Croatian: *Sefardi u Bosni* (Sarajevo: bosanska biblioteka, 1996). For the history of Bosnian Jews between the two world wars, see: Avram Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i BiH* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987).

² On different Jewish societies in Sarajevo, see Avram Pinto, “Jevrejska društva u Sarajevu,” *Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu* (Sarajevo: Odbor za proslavu 400-godišnjice dolaska Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu, 1966), 173–188.

1b. *Linguistic Situation of Bosnian Jews at the
Beginning of 20th Century*

Having lost the unity with their Sephardic brethren on the Balkans, the Bosnian Jews had to rely more and more on their relations with other ethno-religious communities of Bosnia. It is from this deepened contact with their neighbors and from the constant need for new linguistic solutions (brought about by the ever changing reality) that Serbo-Croatian (=SC) influences (once so superficial) entered all the spheres of the language of Bosnian Sephardim: its lexicon, morphology, phonology, syntax, and even grammar. In the next stage SC evolved gradually from an external to an internal influence as, becoming the language of the new generations, it ceased to be only the language of the neighbors. The acquisition of SC by Jewish children was due to the establishment of the obligatory state-run elementary education. This meant not only the end of the 400 years of Jewish educational autonomy in Bosnia (from now on, the traditional Jewish education was confined to the religion classes in public schools or to the synagogue) but also the end of the exclusivity of Judeo-Spanish in the Bosnian Jewish microcosm, as the teaching language at the public schools was SC, i.e. the language of the country. The first generation of Jews educated in public schools was monolingual before they were sent to school, but were fairly bilingual after graduation. Many of them kept peculiar Jewish problems with SC (such as obstacles with noun declinations or with accent) throughout their lives, which stigmatized them as non-native speakers. More importantly, for many people of this generation, SC became the sole language of their reading (and even writing) culture, while Judeo-Spanish (=JS) was reduced to the language of intimacy spoken only at home or in the Jewish milieus. When this generation became parents, they chose to speak SC with their children in order to prepare their children for the public school, and to avoid accent problems.

Thus, in the interwar period, during the Kingdom of Serbs Croats and Slovenians which later became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, a new generation of Bosnian Jews emerged who felt more at home in SC than in JS. However, having monolingual grandparents (with special accent on grandmothers) all of them still understood it perfectly well—but many had a fairly limited vocabulary. The passage

from the story *Aparežos* ('Preparations'), written by Ribi Avram Romano "Buki"³ published in *Jevrejski život* in 1924 illustrates the phenomenon very well:⁴

Berta: Diz,⁵ ki muestru *tata*⁶ es bueno. Kuando *god*⁷ li alesensjan las *prilikas*,⁸ el ja ti da. Dainda si tu apanjavas a el ansina, kuandu sta *raspoložen*,⁹ ki mi de para una boa di seda kun franznas, ki si jevan agora in la *zabava*.¹⁰ Di kvandu ki estu es la *želja*¹¹ mija.

Rivka: Deša agora. Avagar, avagar todju ja virna. Sino luke es ki ti ija dizir? A! Ti keru ver agora komo ti vas amostrar en el pasatiempu. Mira kun Silvio¹² kuantu manko di star. Prikura di pasar el tiempo, kuantu mas pudes kun otros. El si va murir di *mukas*.¹³ Si li va a rebolver el selu, i stonses mas muču ti va kerer.

Berta: *Uf*,¹⁴ *mama*, *baš*¹⁵ sos tu *čudnovata*.¹⁶ Tu mus keris a mozotras *sporedijar*¹⁷ istesu komo i Tolstoj. Jo agora sto meldandu un livru suju. Vjeras luke dizi: "Todas las mučačas son unas *stupi-*

³ For Romano's biobibliography, see Muhamed Nezirović: *Jevrejsko-španjolska književnost* (Sarajevo: Institut za književnost, 1992), 573–585.

⁴ Num. 40, p. 4.

⁵ SC: *mama* (n. f.)—'mother.' The principles of absorption of SC nouns in JS are elaborated in the paragraph 6. a.

⁶ SC: *tata* (n. m.)—'father.'

⁷ SC: *god*. According to *Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* (Etymological dictionary of Croatian or Serbian language) by Peter Skok (Zagreb: JAZU, 1971), the meaning of the word is 'holiday, year, birthday or the measure of the yearly growth of a tree.' When added to interrogatives such as *ko* 'who,' *šta* 'what,' *koji* 'which,' *čiji* 'whose,' *kako* 'how,' *gdje* 'where,' and *kad* 'when' it receives the meaning of the English suffix *ever*, like in the words *whoever*, *whatever*, *whichever*, *however*, *wherever* or *whenever*. These forms inspired the following JS hybrid calques: *kuan-dugod* ('whenever'), *kengod* ('whoever'), *lukegod* ('whatever') or *ondigod* ('wherever').

⁸ From SC: *prilika* (n. f.)—'occasion' + [s], JS morpheme for creation of plural for nouns ending with a consonant.

⁹ SC: *raspoložen* (adj.)—'full of joy.' The principles of absorption of SC adjectives in JS are elaborated in the paragraph 6b.

¹⁰ SC: *zabava* (n. f.)—'party.'

¹¹ SC: *želja* (n. f.)—'desire.'

¹² There is even a "onomastic" gap between the two generations. While the parents, Šimon and Rivka, have Hebrew names—the children bear European names: Berta and Silvio.

¹³ From SC: *muka* (n. f.)—'suffering' + [s], JS morpheme for creation of plural for nouns ending with a consonant.

¹⁴ SC: *uf*—interjection that implies disagreement.

¹⁵ SC: *baš*—'real' or 'really' (internal SC linguistic shift from the original Ottoman Turkish meaning of the word *baş* which in the original language means 'head').

¹⁶ SC: *čudnovat/a* (adj.)—'amazing.'

¹⁷ From SC *usporediti* (v.)—'compare.' The principles of absorption of SC verbs in JS are elaborated in the paragraph 6. c.

cas.¹⁸ Kvandu la mučaća si *dočereja*¹⁹ i sali a la kaj, es ki ja si *zapnijo*²⁰ la *stupica*. Kvandu algun mansevu enpesa a *hofirjarli*,²¹ es ki ja li migijo il kezu di adjentru di la *stupica*. Kvandu spoza il mansevu, estonsis ja entro in la *stupica* i kvandu si *vjenčēja*,²² istonsis ja si sero.”

Rivka: Estu sta buenu. Importa vuoztras soš las ratoneras, i lus mansevus son lus ratunis. Dizmi tu a mi, stuvu kazadu esti Tolstoj?

Berta: Estu jo no se. Sino solu ti se dizir, ki lus livrus sujus a mi muču mi *zanimejan*,²³ i sjempre jo *rado*²⁴ lus maldo. I agora *čim*²⁵ skapu di alevantar esta meza, vo azer las kamas, i ilugo vo tumar esti livru, ki stanoče mi kali skaparlu. Ja ti maldava gritandu, ki sjentas i tu mama, ma tu ilugu ti durmis.

Rivka: No keru jo sintir pur il kezu i las ratoneras.

Berta: Vejis mama komo sos? Tu di todo ti *rugejas*.²⁶ Si tu savijas, ki grandi filosof, ki es esti Tolstoj! El mundu enteru lo *hvalēja*.²⁷

Rivka: E, ja kali ki seja grandi filosof, abasta ki li kvadro tantu.

Berta: Es dibaldis luke jo a ti avlu, kvandu tu nunka no puedis *shvatijar*²⁸ luke keru ser Tolstoj!

Romano is making an exaggerated portrait of a mother/daughter conversation in a Bosnian Jewish home at the time. The linguistic framework is that of Judeo-Spanish—but the daughter is unable to speak JS without strong SC lexical interference. It is obvious that she is more used to speak SC—and therefore the SC words come first to her mind. However, her sentence is syntactically and grammatically, without a doubt, still a JS sentence. The Slavic influences are almost only lexical and are automatically and irreproachably Judeo-Spanolized and absorbed into the grammatical system of JS. In spite of its character as a caricature, the passage is very realistic. It represents the differences between the generations very well. Out of 27 SC words, only 1 is used by the mother, while 26 were used by the daughter (one of them: *stupica*—‘mousetrap’ 4 times). The

¹⁸ From SC: *stupica* (n. f.)—‘mousetrap’ + [s], JS morpheme for creation of plural for nouns ending with a consonant.

¹⁹ From SC: *dočjerati se*, vulgar form: *dočerati se* (v.)—‘dress up.’

²⁰ From SC: *zapeti* (v.)—‘stretch.’

²¹ From SC: *hofirati* (v.)—‘court’ (loan from German *hofieren*—‘court’).

²² From SC *vjenčati se* (v.)—‘marry.’

²³ From SC: *zanimati* (v.)—‘interest.’

²⁴ SC: *rado* (adv.)—‘willingly, gladly.’ The principles of absorption of SC adverbs in JS are elaborated in the paragraph 6d.

²⁵ SC: *čim* (adv.)—‘just as soon as.’

²⁶ SC: *rugati se* (v.)—‘mock, jest.’

²⁷ SC: *hvaliti* (v.)—‘praise, laud.’

²⁸ SC: *shvatiti* (v.)—‘understand.’

mother's only Slavism: *murir di mukas* ('to die of sufferings') shows in a context of a calque translation of a SC expression: *umrijeti od muke*. These loans were typical for the traditional Bosnian JS. Many SC expressions were completely or partially translated to JS and became part of its lexical fond. The "problem" with the new generation was that they did not fall back on SC for useful expressions which did not exist in JS, but, rather for dozens of simple everyday words such as *mama* ('mother'), ('father'), *raspoložen* ('full of joy'), *želja* ('desire') etc.²⁹ The passage mentioned above shows us very clearly that the daughter is versed in all rules of JS and understands it perfectly well. Personally, however, she feels more at home in SC. It is her primary language and it dictates her thoughts and lexicon. With the mother the situation is quite the opposite. She understands her daughter's SC loans, but she does not have a need for them. Naturally she replaces her daughter's SC *stupica* ('mousetrap') for JS *ratonera*.

1c. *The Bosnian Sephardic Answer to the Linguistic Challenge of the Time*

Romano was a member of the *Sephardic Circle*, the Sarajevo-based group of intellectuals who tried to fight and prevent the oblivion of Judeo-Spanish language and culture primarily by perpetuating it through literary means. In the interwar period, Sarajevo was a well-known stronghold of the *Sephardic Movement*, whose main aim was to offer a Sephardic alternative to the Ashkenazo-centric Zionism.³⁰ The activities of the *Sephardic Circle* are tightly related to the ideology of this movement.³¹ As a part of their attempt to create modern western literature in JS, or, at least, to perpetuate the Sephardic language and values via literature, the leading Bosnian Sephardic intellectuals (such as Ribi Avram Romano, Dr. Samuel Romano,³²

²⁹ The word *zabava* ('party') can be explained away by the fact that it was the official name of the event, and in such a situation it would be very normal for a bilingual person to "quote" in the original language.

³⁰ For more information on the subject, see Cvi Loker, "Sarajevski spor i sefardski pokret u Jugoslaviji," *Žbornik Jevrejskog istorijskog muzeja*, vol. 7 (Beograd: Jevrejski Istorijski Muzej, 1997), 72–79.

³¹ For the ideology of the movement, see the manifestos written by its members: A. Ješua Kajon, "Sefardi do danas," *Biblioteka Esperanza* (Zagreb: Esperanza, 1927), 19–32 and Samuel Kamhi, "Sefardi i sefardski pokret," *Biblioteka Esperanza* (Zagreb: Esperanza, 1927), 3–18.

³² For the short biography of Dr. Samuel Romano, see Zvi Loker's annotation

Laura Papo “Bohoreta,”³³ Benjamin Pinto,³⁴ Moni Finci,³⁵ Jošua Izrael³⁶ and others) wrote dozens of plays, novels, and short stories in JS. Some of these intellectuals (e.g. Avram Romano and Benjamin Pinto) were dialectal writers par *excellence*. Others (like, Laura Papo “Bohoreta”)³⁷ tried to recreate a modern super-dialectical literary JS which could easily be understood by all the Sephardim of the ex-Ottoman lands. In both cases, however, their writings disclose (sometimes through macaroni dialogues—and sometimes through unintended calque-translations from SC) an amazing level of Slavic influence on all the strata of local JS,³⁸ starting with the lexicon and the syntax, and on to morphology and phonology. This paper analyzes the phonological, morphological, morpho-syntactical, syntactical and lexical influences of SC on Bosnian JS,³⁹ as they are (consciously or unconsciously) reflected in the literature of the *Sephardic Circle*.

in the introduction to Romano’s “Dictionnaire judéo-espagnol parlé – français – allemand, avec une introduction sur la phonétique et sur la formation des mots dans le judéo-espagnol” (Ph.D. diss., University of Zagreb, 1933), issued by Misgav Yerushalayim, Jerusalem, 1995.

³³ For more information about her biobibliography, see Eliezer Papo, “Hayeha umifala ha-sifrut shel Laura Papo Bohoreta, ha-mahazait ha-sefaradit-yehudit harishona” (The life and the opus of Laura Papo Bohoreta, the First Sephardic Feminine Dramatist), *El Prezente 1 & Mikan 8* (2007): 61–89.

³⁴ For Pinto’s biobibliography, see Nezirović, *Jevrejsko-španjolska književnost*, 600–605.

³⁵ For Finci’s short biobibliography, see Nezirović, *Jevrejsko-španjolska književnost*, 615, 616.

³⁶ For Israel’s biobibliography, see Nezirović, *Jevrejsko-španjolska književnost*, 557–560.

³⁷ For more information on Bohoreta’s linguistic policy, see: Eliezer Papo, “Dibur belashon ahat bakehila diglosit, ha-omnam?—Leshonotehem shel Yehude Bosnia ve-Hertsegovina ulshona shel Laura Papo Bohoreta” (Is Unilingual Speech a Possibility in a Diaglossic Community: The Languages of the Bosnian Jews and the Language of Laura Papo Bohoreta), *Peanim* (in print) [Hebr.].

³⁸ Comp. David Bunis, “On the Incorporation of Slavisms in the Grammatical System of Yugoslavian Judezmo,” *Jews and Slavs* 9 [=Festschrift Professor Jacob Allerhand], ed. W. Moskovich (Jerusalem and Vienna: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001), 325–337.

³⁹ For general characteristics of Bosnian Judeo-Spanish, see Kalmi Baruh’s Ph.D. diss. “Der Lautstand des Judenspanischen in Bosnien” (University of Vienna, 1923) or his article “El judeo-español de Bosnia” in *Revista de la Filología Española* XVII (1930): 113–154; as well as Anton Kovačec, “Les séphardim en Yougoslavie et leur langue (d’après quelques publications yougoslaves),” *Studia romanica et anglica zagrebiensia*, XXV–XXVI (1968): 161–177 and Muhamed Nezirović, “Judenspanisch,” *Wieser Enzyklopädie des Europäischen Ostens—Lexicon der Sprachen des Europäischen Ostens* (Klagenfurt: Wieser Verlag, 2002), 101–116. For more on the phonetics and phonology of Bosnian Judeo-Spanish, see Alica Knezović, “Fonetika i fonologija židovsko-španjolskog govora u Sarajevu” (M.A. thesis, University of Zagreb, 1986).

2. *Phonological Influences*

It would appear that the phonological influences on Bosnian spoken JS should be limited to the tendency to palatalize the plosive-velar consonants [k] and [g] after the palatal accented vowel [i]. This tendency is typical for the diminutive suffixes *iko/ika/ikos/ikas*—usually pronounced in Bosnian spoken JS as *ikjo/ikja/ikjos/ikjas*, as exemplified in the following words: *ermanikjos*,⁴⁰ *kulčanidikjo*,⁴¹ *palikjo*,⁴² *perikjo*,⁴³ *sorvikjo*,⁴⁴ *tasikja*,⁴⁵ *vizinikjas*.⁴⁶ Not every [k] and [g] that follow the palatal accented [i] are palatalized—but the phenomenon is all encompassing and can be observed in all the strata of JS lexicon, regardless of the origin of the word or its nature. It applies to Ottoman loanwords (for example *tefterikjo*)⁴⁷ as well as to the SC ones (as in the words *zelenikjas*⁴⁸ or *javanikjus*);⁴⁹ to nouns (like in the examples given above); to adjectives (like *rikjo*,⁵⁰ *pretikja*,⁵¹ *haraganikja*,⁵² *čikjo*,⁵³ or *ombligju*,⁵⁴ *pingja*⁵⁵) or to verbs (*bendigja*⁵⁶—the subjunctive form, third person sing., of the verb *bendizir*; *didju*—the first person of present indicative (sing.) of the verb *dezir* and its subjunctive form for the third person of singular *didjan*).⁵⁷ It is also very usual in the affectionate

⁴⁰ Laura Papo Bohoreta (later in the footnotes: LPB), *Pasensia vale mučo*, ms. p. 9 [. . .] *esto ja siento de kuando kunava jo a los ermanikjos*.

⁴¹ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 48: [. . .] y a la kitara le vamos meter un *kulčanidikjo* [. . .]

⁴² LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 41: Bendičo *palikjo* de un tiempo!

⁴³ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 25: Komo el *perikjo* va tornar.

⁴⁴ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 25: Beve un *sorvikjo*, todas beven.

⁴⁵ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 40: Toma, agora, todas una *tasikja* de leče.

⁴⁶ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 25: Las *vizinikjas* le inčeron los mejojos!

⁴⁷ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 29: El perdido stava eskrieviendo no se luke en el *tefterikjo*!

⁴⁸ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 26: Ariva faziremos konduču, mos faziremos *zelenikjas*, veras komer, veras batir el diente!

⁴⁹ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 50: Son buenos lus *javanikjus*.

⁵⁰ LPB, *Pasensia*, ms. p. 8: *Rikjo* no so, ja saveš, ama kuando me kantan las fižikjas, no mi trukava por el mas gevir de la sivdat.

⁵¹ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 39a: I tu, *pretikja*! Ketal te kamina a ti el fečo?

⁵² LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 30: A tus anjos hue yo, muj rizona y *haraganikja*, y la verdat ke te diga: abolada, abolada.

⁵³ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 19: *Čikjo* gusto hue kuando la resivio tu Ašer—el ministro prezidenti.

⁵⁴ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 36: Dizen ke eja esta tan alta ke tu no li puedis vinir ni al *ombligju*!

⁵⁵ LPB, *Esterka*, ms. II akto, p. 22: Si va ver la *pingja* i algo de apetitozo—naldo jo!

⁵⁶ LPB, *Pasensia*, ms. p. 12: *Bendigja* al Kriador ke no les da mala vida.

⁵⁷ “Josefiko,” “Tija Strulača jeva mal kun il jarnu,” *Jevrejski glas* 52 (1932): 5.

forms / pet forms (regardless of their language of origin): *Merkadikja*,⁵⁸ *Mošikjo*, *Rafikjo*, *Nisimikjo*,⁵⁹ *Petrikjo*, *Ĵovikjo*.⁶⁰

3. Morphological Influences

The examined corpus shows one SC morphological influence on spoken Bosnian JS: the neutralization of the gender in personal pronouns for the first and second person of plural.

Unlike the traditional JS which differentiates between the masculine personal pronouns for the first and the second person of plural (*mozotros* and *voztros*) and the feminine personal pronouns (*mozotras* and *voztoras*), in SC there is no gender in the personal pronouns for the first two persons of the plural. In the writings of Laura Papo “Bohoreta,” this differentiation is constantly neutralized. For example, in the play *Avia de ser* (in scenes with three characters involved: the mother and her two daughters), Sara (one of the daughters) tells the mother: “Ajdi, mana, kantimos—i *mozotros* vamos akompañar”⁶¹ or: “No se spante por *mozotros*, mana!” while the other daughter, Rahela, adds: “*Mozotros* no bivimos en tiera de Moros!”⁶² In another play, Esterka, the main character after which the play is named explains to her niece: “Ves, Linda, kuando entro esta senjora, del paso ke izo, del ožada ke ečo, jo supe en su momento ke no va merkar nada! *Mozotros* huemos en una klasa [. . .].” In the same play, Rikica (Esterka’s assistant) states: “A las senjoras amas ja les pasa, ja se ulvidan, se sakuden enriva de *mozotros* las lavoraderas y las čikas.” This neutralization of gender distinction is typical of all Bohoreta’s plays. In *Tiempos pasados*, the main female character, Žusta, says: “Salga mi enemigo komo salimos *mozotros* las mužeris!”⁶³ In the play *Hemandat/Suegra ni de baro buena*, two female characters, Dona and Palombi, are quarrelling about the role the heart should play in the world of a modern woman. Dona asks Palombi: “I onde vos

Salgu jo ahuera i lis *didju*, ki mi *didjan*, ki keru i jo saver luke es esta ribultina, la ora urada?

⁵⁸ LPB, *Hemandad*, ms. p. 49: Tristi di *Merkadikja*!

⁵⁹ LPB, *Hemandad*, ms. p. 39b: Si estava *Mošikjo*, *Rafikjo*, *Nisimikjo*, si avia ken ke vos mire komo lavoraš [. . .]

⁶⁰ LPB, *Hemandad*, ms. p. 49: Aaa, *Petrikjo* i *Ĵovikjo*!

⁶¹ LPB *Avia de ser*, II ver. ms. p. 9.

⁶² Ibid., *ibid.*

⁶³ LPB *Tiempos pasados* ms. p. 9.

se topa a *vozotros* el korason?”—and Palombi retorts: “Asu lugar komo y a *vozotros las* idealistas. Solo ke *mozotros* no lo ečamos tanto e este korason tyran! Ke salte, ke sufra, ke jore—*mozotros* adelante, bivimos y no mos dešamos amargar de ell.”⁶⁴

The phenomenon might be related to the SC influence on this particular writer—as other authors of the *Sephardic Circle* are aware of the traditional JS gender distinction in the personal pronouns for the first and the second person of plural. In the already quoted passage from Romano, we find Berta telling her mother: “Tu mus keris a *mozotras* sporedijar [. . .]” to which her mother responds: “Importa *vuoztras* soš las ratoneras [. . .].”

4. Morpho-Syntactical Influences

As far as morpho-syntactical SC influences on spoken Bosnian JS are concerned, the examined corpus attests to one such influence: the use of indirect pronominal objects as affectionate form. In Bosnian spoken SC, the indirect pronominal objects (*meni/mi, tebi/ti, njemu/mu, nama, vama, njima*), in addition to their usual roles, can also be used as a way of demonstrating affection towards the interlocutor. The local JS has adopted this semantic shift and its indirect pronominal objects (*me, te, le, mos, vos, les*) are used also as a way of demonstrating affection. This is one of the most interesting influences of Bosnian spoken SC on Bosnian spoken JS. Here are some examples followed by their SC parallels and English translation:

JS Alas skundidas, el rubi ke ambizava a los kunjadikos, me ečava muestras i čap čup, čap čup *te* embezo yo a melder [. . .]⁶⁵

SC [. . .] i malo po malo, malo po malo naučim *ti* ja da čitam [. . .]

In this example, just like in following ones, the indirect pronominal object *te* or *ti* should not be translated according to its usual meaning—but, rather, as a word of endearment: “little by little, little by little, *my dear*, and I’ve learned how to read.”

JS Mozotros *te* tanjimos esta plata sin azer guzma unas 50 vezes!⁶⁶

SC Mi smo ti svirale tu ploču, bez pretjerivanja, nekih 50 puta.

⁶⁴ LPB, *Hernandad*, ms. p. 35, 36.

⁶⁵ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, I akto, p. 4.

⁶⁶ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, I akto, p. 10.

- E We have played that record, *my dear*, without exaggeration some 50 times.
- JS Esto *te* es el arte anónimo [. . .]⁶⁷
 SC To *ti* je anonimna umjetnost [. . .]
 E This, *my dear*, is anonymous art [. . .]
- JS Esto es komo el soldado deskonesido ke kaje a la guera!⁶⁸
 SC To *ti* je kao neznani junak koji pogine u ratu!
 E It is, *my dear*, similar to the unknown hero who dies in the war!
- JS Jo *te* so estesa!⁶⁹
 SC Ja sam *ti* ista!
 E *My dear*, I am the same as that.
- JS Esta *te* es guerfana.⁷⁰
 SC Ta *ti* je siročē.
 E That one, *my dear*, is an orphan.

The pronominal object *ame/mi* can have the same role:

- JS Alkavo no *me* gostates del amanet de konjada Riketa!⁷¹
 SC Na kraju *mi* ne proba maksuziju jetrve Rikete!
 E In the end, *my dear*, you have not tried the speciality of my sister-in-law Riketa!

5. Syntactical Influences

The syntactical influences of SC on Bosnian spoken JS are mostly related to calques—word by word translations of SC expressions. There are dozens of examples in the corpus. I have chosen only few: For example, the JS expression *por inat* translates SC *za inat*—‘capriciously,’ as can be seen from the example “Todo esta komo ečado en bašo *por inat!*” (‘It all looks as if thrown down *capriciously!*’).⁷² The JS expression *ser majmun de alguno* translates SC *biti nečiji majmun*—‘to be someone’s monkey,’ as can be seen from the example: “Majmun vuestro so?” (‘Am I your monkey?’).⁷³ In spoken SC, the

⁶⁷ LPB, *Esterka*, sm., II akto, p. 3.

⁶⁸ LPB, *Esterka*, sm., II akto, p. 3.

⁶⁹ LPB, *Esterka*, sm., III akto, p. 17.

⁷⁰ LPB, *Shuegra*, sm., I akto, p. 20.

⁷¹ LPB, *Shuegra*, sm., I akto, p. 20.

⁷² LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 69 [70].

⁷³ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 69 [70].

adjectives *lijepo* ('nice') or *dobro* ('good') can be used as adverbs, like in the examples *lijepo se naljutiti* ('to go mad in a nice way') or *lijepo se sporazumjeti*. Bosnian spoken JS has adopted this structure, as can be attested from the following examples:

- JS Ala mansevez ja mos supimos i mozotros *hanino araviar*, ke enčapetar, ke gritos.⁷⁴
- SC U mladosti smo se i mi znale *lijepo naljutiti*, koje svađe, koja galama.
- JS En una viene una dama, se *dešo hanino* servir, la patrona se da a la pena kon ea, ora, ora i media—i se va, oj no me puedo dečizar ja vinire otro dia [. . .]⁷⁵
- SC Istom, dođe jedna gospođa, *dade se lijepo* poslužiti, gazdarica se potrudi oko nje [. . .]
- JS Jo ja me *di hanino* a entender kon ea!⁷⁶
- SC Ja sam se *uspjela lijepo* sporazumjeti s njom.
- JS Sež anjos pasateš la ora enđunto, ja vos *koneseš hanino* las manjikjas.⁷⁷
- SC Šest godina se zabavljate, *dobro si poznajete* narav.

In Bosnian spoken SC, the verb *skakati* 'to jump' is sometimes used in the meaning of 'to make efforts.' From there comes a special derogatory remark *sve da skačeš* ('even if you were to jump') aimed at emphasizing disbelief that someone will attain something even if he makes an effort. This expression was also calqued to Bosnian spoken JS:

- JS Gritar no te kero, ja sos mansevo para la hupa, mežor es no dar en el ožo de la Juderia, si medras nam de kufer—no te dan novia *si saltas* barminam!⁷⁸
- SC [. . .] neće ti dati mladu *sve da skačeš*, gluho bilo!

The SC expression *ništa se ne dopadati* ('not to have any grace') was calqued to JS as *no estar nada agradando* (as in the example: "Esta tose minuda *no me esta nada agradando*"⁷⁹ / "Ovaj sitni kašalj *ništa mi se ne dopada*."), while the expression *držati se principa* ('to abide by principles') was calqued as *detenerse de principes* (as in the example "Delantre

⁷⁴ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, I akto, p. 7.

⁷⁵ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, II akto, p. 10.

⁷⁶ LPB, *Hemandat*, ms. p. 21.

⁷⁷ LPB, *Shuegra*, ms. p. 93.

⁷⁸ LPB, *Ožos mios*, ms. p. 7.

⁷⁹ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, I akto, p. 15.

del Dio, de la gente por esteso devemos dar ripuesta, por esta alma sin pekado, i de estos *principes mos kale detener* i de nada otro”⁸⁰ / “[. . .] tih nam se *principa valja držati* i ničeg drugog”). It should be pointed out here that the word *principes* in the last example is not plural of the JS *principe* (‘prince’), but rather of SC germanism: *princip* (‘principle’).

6. *Lexical Influences*

6a. *Nouns*

One of the general rules for the lexical influences of SC on Bosnian spoken JS is that nouns ending in the vowel [a] are recognized as feminine, and consequently, the definitive or indefinite article for feminine is added to them, according to their place in the sentence, as in the following example: “Koriendo, le kaje *la beba*, Dona *la* alevanta—*la čika* kaje kansada enbašo, ve *la beba* onde Dona i se le empesa aserkar avagar, avagar”⁸¹ or “Jo ki sinti estu, ja mi fizi *una bivulica*.”⁸² As we can see from this last example, the phonological tendencies peculiar to Bosnian spoken JS, such as “closing” the non-accented vowel [o] into [u] also apply to SC loan words. JS *bivulica* comes from SC *bivolica* (‘female buffalo’). The same is true for the tendency of “closing” the non-accented vowel [e] into [i] apply “Ah, *nivolja*, mi fižitju, *nivolja* [. . .].”⁸³ JS *nivolja* is actually SC *nevolja*—‘trouble.’ Usually, nouns ending in [a] are defined as feminine in SC itself. Sometimes, probably because of the obvious masculine nature—like, for example, in the case of the word *tata* (father)—in spite of the [a] ending, the word is recognized as masculine. Probably for the same reason, this recognition is retained in JS as well: *Mi tata! Mi tata kerido*.⁸⁴ The nouns ending in consonants are usually recognized as masculine. Sometimes they are left the way they are pronounced in SC, but in many cases the morpheme [o] used in JS as marker for masculine gender is added to masculine nouns ending in consonants,

⁸⁰ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, I akto, p. 21.

⁸¹ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 16.

⁸² “Josefiko,” “Tija Strulača jeva mal kun il jarmu,” *Jevrejski glas* 52 (1932): 5.

⁸³ “Josefiko,” “Turnandu di la Kisela,” *Jevrejski glas* 42 (1932): 6.

⁸⁴ LPB, *Shuegra*, ms. p. 2.

as can be seen in the next example: “A estos anjos estan los mansevikos komo los *bivolos!*”⁸⁵ *Bivol* is ‘buffalo’ in SC, to which the “masculinization” morpheme [o] has been added, together with the morpheme [s] for plural and the definitive article for plural masculine: *los*. In some words like *čabru*, which comes from SC *čabar* (‘pail, tub’), not only the masculine gender morpheme [o] is added, but also syncope (neutralization of the vowel [a]). The same rules applied in the rest of JS lexicon are applied to the Slavisms included in it. Thus, for example, the diminutive form of masculine nouns is created by adding the suffix *iko/ikjo*, as can be seen from the following examples: “Agora les vo fazer un fenti, si esto no ajuda les vo ečar *čabriko* de agua jelada—veras saltar!”⁸⁶ or “Si ti eče este *čabriko* de agua freska, luego te se va fujir, amor y algo otro.”⁸⁷ In the ethnonim *javanikjus* (like in the example: “Son buenus lus *javanikjus.*”),⁸⁸ used by Bosnian Sephardim to refer to their Serbian-Orthodox neighbors,⁸⁹ besides the masculine gender morpheme [o], the diminutive suffix [ikju] and the plural morpheme [s], we can observe the assimilation of the vowel [o] in the first syllable into [a] (Jovan-Javan), probably due to the influence of the second vowel [a] accompanied by the consonant [n].

JS does not have any declinations, whereas SC has seven. Most of the SC lexical loans to JS were adopted in their nominative form. Sometimes, however, for still unknown reasons, JS speakers prefer the genitive form, as for example in the word *kola* (‘folk dance’). Given the fact that in JS the gender of a noun is indicated by its last morpheme, and given the fact that the genitive form of *kolo-kola* ends in the vowel [a], the SC neutrum *kolo* has become feminine *kola* in JS: “Empesan kon las tamburas a tanjer Tija Merkada balja por esteso en medio de la “kola”, se va y torna despues de poko kon un grande tifzin de zelena, ea la pone enriva la kavesa y balia en medio de la *kola.*”⁹⁰ Sometimes loan words can be incorporated into JS in their diminutive forms, like in the following example: “*Mamica, mamica* mia, me ija murir de eskarinjo.”⁹¹

⁸⁵ LPB, *Pasensia vale mučo* p. 12.

⁸⁶ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 37.

⁸⁷ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 39^a.

⁸⁸ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 50.

⁸⁹ The term developed from a very common Serbian masculine name: Jovan.

⁹⁰ LPB, *Hermandat*, ms. p. 50.

⁹¹ LPB, *Esterka*, sm, II akto, p. 24.

6b. *Adjectives*

When incorporating SC adjectives which end in consonants into JS, Bosnian Jews tend to absorb them together with their original gender. Being that in SC masculine adjectives can end with the vowel [i] (termination typical for JS adjectives without gender, like *grande* or *verde*), in the process of absorption the [i] ending is usually replaced with the typical masculine JS gender morpheme [o], as in the example: “Puedi ser ni il maridu rogjenu no mirišjo esti regalú ansina amurozu di alma i di kurason.”⁹² Rogjenu is JS adaptation of SC *rođeni* ‘own.’ JS adjective *čudu*, (like in the example “[. . .] mi stuvu muj *čudu*”)⁹³ developed from SC *čudno* (‘curious’) did not need addition of the gender morpheme a, as in the language of origin it ends with o. Here though, due to the change of accentuation, the consonant [n] became soft and was neutralized. JS adjectives never end with [dno/dnu], while JS participle (many times used as adjective) always end with [do], as in *avlado*, *kerido*, *fuido*.

6c. *Verbs*

In Romano’s above-quoted passage of caricature, there are nine verbs which originate in SC: *sporedijar*, *dočerear*, *zapnijar*, *hofrijar*, *vjenčear*, *zanimear*, *rugear*, *hvalear*, *shvatijar* (from SC *usporediti*, *dočerati*, *zapnuti*, *hofirati*, *vjenčati*, *zanimati*, *rugati*, *hvaliti*, *shvatiti*). All of them are absorbed into the grammatical system of JS by attributing them to the verbal group I (*AR*). In all the cases, the same rules were applied: the SC infinitive morpheme *iti/ati/uti* is replaced by JS infinitive morpheme *EAR*. Due to the peculiar phonological characteristics of Bosnian JS, in this dialect the morpheme is usually pronounced as *IAR/IYAR*, as can be seen from the examples in the passage itself. Out of the nine verbs, three are shown in the text in the infinitive, and in all three of them the JS infinitive morpheme *EAR* is pronounced as *IYAR*: *sporedijar*, *hofrijarli*, *shvatijar*. The addition of the JS morpheme attributes the verbs in case to the verbal group I. From now on, they are conjugated through all the tenses and persons as all the verbs belonging to this group. Thus, besides the three already mentioned verbs which are contained in the text

⁹² MMP, “Tija Strulača en la Makarska,” *Jevrejski glas* 50 (1937): 8.

⁹³ “Josefiko,” “Turnandu di la Kisela,” *Jevrejski glas* 42 (1932): 6.

in the infinitive form, the quoted passage contains one verb in the second person present sing. (*rugejas*); three verbs in the third person present singular (*dočereja*, *vjenčēja* and *hwaleja*); one verb in the third person present plural (*zanimejan*) and one verb in third person of past simple tense, sing. (*zapnijo*). The elaboration on phonological and morphological mutations which occurred in some of the examples surpasses the modest scope of the present article.

6d. *Adverbs*

When incorporating SC adverbs which end in consonants into JS, Bosnian Jews tend to add to them the gender morpheme [o], which in Bosnian JS often becomes [u], as in the following example: “Ma *zaludu*; no li ajuda la boka di alvar in blahu,”⁹⁴ or “ja apruvi sjen kozas, *zaludu*, mi kirida, todū *zaludu*,”⁹⁵ *zaludu* being the JS adaptation of SC *uzalud*—‘in vain.’

7. *Conclusion*

The writings of the members of the *Sephardic Circle* evince large-scale interference of SC on spoken Bosnian JS in all three interwar period generations (grandfathers, sons and grandsons) on all the linguistic levels: i.e. phonological, morphological, morpho-syntactical, syntactical and lexical. The phonological influences are approximately the same in all three age groups. Morphological influences can only be attested in the writings of one author (LPB) and do not seem to represent a development in the Bosnian JS dialect in general. The morpho-syntactical influences discussed above seem to be more typical (characteristic) of the speech of older women than of the other two age groups. The syntactical influences appear to be typical of all age groups, but the lexical influences were much more typical of the grandsons than of fathers or grandfathers. In any case, the very fact that all these influences were incorporated into the grammatical system of Judeo-Spanish, without destroying it or replacing it, shows the great vitality and flexibility of JS. These two characteristics were enough to allow it to survive as an ethnic language. Had it not been

⁹⁴ M. M. P., “Tija Strulača en la Makarska,” *Jevrejski glas* 50 (1937): 8.

⁹⁵ “Josefiko,” “Turnandu di la Kisela,” *Jevrejski glas* 42 (1932): 6.

for the Croatian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina during WW II, when most of JS speakers were annihilated by the Croat and Muslim Ustashi movement, taking with them their language, it would continue to exist today, so the genocide was also a linguisticide.

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Figure 1

Esperanza, 1927

I row: Ješua Kajon, Jakica Atijas, Avram Pinto, Izidor Levi, Šua Salom. II row: Avram Gaon, A. Kamhi, Mazalta Poljokan, Iso Levi, Ruta Levi, Samuel Sarafić. III row: Markus Finci, Elijas Eškenazi, S. Altarac, Avram Gaon, Eliezer Levi, Mosko Kaveson, Levi, Joži Kabiljo, Drago Papo & one unknown person.

*(From the private collection of Eliezer Papo
Unknown photographer)*



Figure 2
Laura Papo—"Bohoreta" (1891–1942)
(*Courtesy of the Jewish Community Sarajevo
Unknown photographer*)

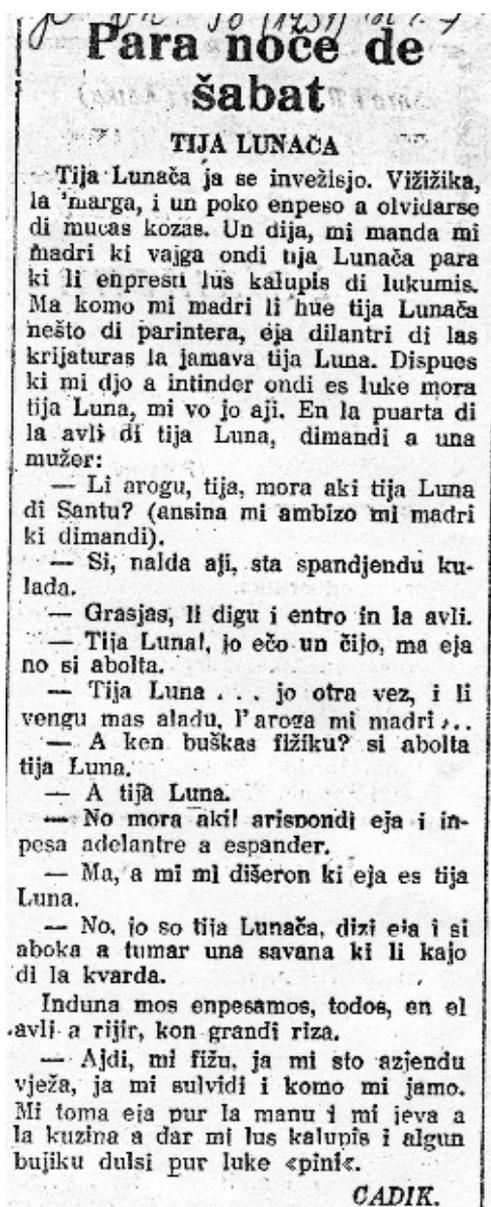


Figure 4

A short story in JS from Jevrejski glas
50 (11/XII/1931): 7

(Made by Eliezer Papo)

