The Jewish languages and their typology: Issues and models
The paper aims at drawing an explicit picture of the Jewish languages when they are considered from the point of view of their typology, and at reflecting on the issues at stake when heading towards such a typology. These objectives call for an inquiry into the major paths that have been taken for the linguistic analysis of these languages, and for a survey of the formal and informal proposals of a comparative and/or typological character that have been formulated when studying the same group of languages.

Frank Alvarez-Pereyre is a linguist and an anthropologist. The typological exploration of the Jewish languages and the interdisciplinary investigation of Jewish liturgy constitute his most current research topics, together with the study of Jewish legal systems and interpretative methodologies. He is the author, co-author or co-editor of La transmission orale de la Mishnah (1990), Jewish Oral Traditions. An Interdisciplinary Approach (1994), Linguistique des langues juives et linguistique générale (2003), Le droit interne hébraïque (2004), L'idolâtrie, ou la question de la part (2011). Also interested in the epistemology of interdisciplinary research, he is the author of L'exigence interdisciplinaire (2003), and editor of Categories et catégorisation. Une perspective interdisciplinaire (2008). Frank Alvarez-Pereyre is now an emeritus research fellow at the French National Center for Scientific Research. He teaches at the Museum national d’histoire naturelle and at the Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University.

Mind the Gap! The schism between perceptions of the Yiddish language and Yiddish cultural realities
There is a vast Yiddish literature which remains mostly untranslated and unknown. This paper ponders whether embedded narratives about the Yiddish language are a contributing factor to cultural
neglect. Yiddish 'insiders' perceive Yiddish culture quite differently from 'outsiders'. Several case-studies will be explored from an insider's perspective.

Helen Beer is the BenZion Margulies Lecturer in Yiddish at UCL. A native Yiddish speaker, she teaches and lectures extensively in Britain and Europe. She is also Director of Ot Azoy, an intensive Yiddish summer course held annually in London. Her main research interests are modern Yiddish literature, Yiddish folklore, Yiddish literature in interwar Poland, and Holocaust writing in Yiddish.

MARILENA COLASUONNO

Modern Judeo-Italian in the light of Italian dialectology and Jewish inter-linguistics

Modern Judeo-Italian was spoken up until the 19th-20th centuries, due to the disintegration of the ghettos and the Shoah. Modern Judeo-Italian is made up of a variety of dialects that corresponds to the geographical layout of the Italian dialects. Modern Judeo-Italian is conventionally divided into Judeo-Roman, Judeo-Venetian, Judeo-Piedmontese, Judeo-Emilian-Romagnan – including Judeo-Mantuan – and Judeo-Tuscan – including Judeo-Florentine and Judeo-Livornese. This presentation deals mainly with Judeo-Roman, Judeo-Mantuan, Judeo-Venetian, and Judeo-Livornese. Firstly, Judeo-Roman and Judeo-Mantuan preserved morphological and lexical traits that were more archaic than the corresponding co-territorial dialect, different from Judeo-Venetian. Judeo-Livornese or Bagitto was in a relationship of diglossia (a situation in which two languages, or two varieties of the same language, are used under different conditions within a community, often by the same speakers), without bilingualism with Spanish and Portuguese, which were used by the Jewish higher class. Secondly, features that all Modern Judeo-Italian dialects share are examined – for instance, the Spanish loanword ‘negro’, and the semantic shift of the Hebrew loanword davar into ‘silence’. Thirdly, hallmarks belonging to all Jewish languages that occur in Modern Judeo-Italian are touched upon. In conclusion, the investigation of Modern Judeo-Italian is crucial for both Italian dialectology and Jewish inter-linguistics.

Maria Maddalena Colasuonno received her PhD in Ancient Near Eastern Studies in 2015, at the University of Naples ‘L'Orientale’, with the dissertation Linguistic Variation in Ancient Hebrew (1000 BCE – 200 CE). During her PhD, she studied at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and Leiden University. Furthermore, she taught Hebrew Language at the University of Salento (Lecce, Italy). She published two papers in international peer-reviewed journals: “Notes on the Sociolinguistic Terminology in Contemporary Hebrew: Morpho-syntactic and Lexical Devices for the Creation of the Sociolinguistic Technolect of Contemporary Hebrew” (Hebrew Studies, 2014); and “Some Considerations on the Problem of Diglossia in Biblical Hebrew” (AION, forthcoming). She contributed to the EHL with the entry “Sociolinguistics” (2013). At the moment she is preparing the new Italian translation with notes of The Copper Scroll (Paideia). From October 2016 she will be at the Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg as a postdoctoral fellow.
The Aramaic of the Zohar: The status quaestionis

Under the influence of Gershom Scholem’s academic authority, it has been commonly accepted as axiomatic that the Zohar – Judaism’s most important kabbalistic work – was composed in an artificial type of Aramaic in late-13th-century Castile by Moshe de Leon. In order to give the Zohar authoritative status, de Leon not only attributed it to the 2nd-century Palestinian sage Rashbi, but he also ‘established’ its authenticity by employing various literary Aramaic dialects of antiquity, which resulted in the distinctive Zoharic language. In this paper I shall discuss the recent developments in the linguistic research of medieval Aramaic sources and their implications for the linguistic profile and dialectal classification of Zoharic Aramaic. Rather than being an ‘artificial’ idiom, as argued by Scholem, it seems that the Aramaic of the Zohar fits into an unbroken literary tradition which still existed far into the Middle Ages. I shall conclude the paper by presenting the findings of my own pilot study of Zoharic Aramaic.

Alinda Damsma is Senior Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic at Leo Baeck College, London. She received her Bachelor and Master of Divinity from the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam (2003) and her PhD from the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, University College London (2008). Her past publications focused on Aramaic, the Targums, and Jewish mysticism, and she is currently working on two monographs: a grammar of the Zohar and a study on the perception of witchcraft in the King James Version and the impact of this Bible translation on the early modern witch-hunts. She is the assistant editor of the Journal of Jewish Studies.
The translation of the Tanakh into Crimean Karaim on the basis of a few manuscripts

There are many manuscripts containing translations of the Bible into Crimean Karaim, but all are fragmentary. The most complete one is manuscript BSMS 288 (among the holdings of Cambridge University Library), which comprises the whole Bible except Chronicles. This manuscript, in four bound volumes, was taken as the basis of our critical edition. The critical edition includes volumes i and iv, i.e. approximately half of the total (the Pentateuch, the Five Megillot, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah). Another important manuscript is Gaster 170 of The Rylands University Library in Manchester, which contains large portions of the Pentateuch, and manuscript B 283 (housed at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St Petersburg), which includes Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah. BSMS 288 can be dated to the 18th century, but the language of translation is much older with archaisms going back two centuries earlier. The translation exhibits word order copied from Hebrew, so that sometimes it is hard to understand the sense without the original text. This critical edition will be the first critical publication of a large Crimean Karaim language document.

Henryk Jankowski, MA in Turkish and Hungarian at Budapest University (1981), PhD at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland (1986), is Professor in the Department of Asian Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University. His research concentrates on Turkic languages including Crimean Tatar, Crimean Karaim, Noghay, Kazakh, and Turkish. Among his publications are articles on various linguistic aspects of these languages as well as some more general problems of Turkic studies, such as reconstruction of Middle Kipchak, and even Altaic languages, e.g. “Altaic Languages and Historical Contact” (2013). He is the author of A Historical-Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Russian Habitation Names of the Crimea (2006) and co-author of A Crimean Karaim-English Dictionary (2015). At present, he is heading a collaborative project entitled “Critical edition of the Karaim Bible with an English translation,” financed by the Polish National Centre for the Development of Humanities.

SZONJA KOMORÓCZY

Between mother-tongue and argot: Yiddish in Hungarian in the early 20th century

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Hungarian Jews went through gradual linguistic assimilation: from Yiddish through Judeo-German and German, eventually to Hungarian. The paper will look at the later phases of this linguistic assimilation, starting from comedies and travesties, the cabaret, but will focus on elements of Yiddish that remained in use for further generations, in spoken language and in literature – often intermingled with Yiddish elements in argot.

Szonja Ráhel Komoróczy is a Yiddishist and Jewish historian, and a research fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies of the Institute for Minority Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She wrote her doctorate at Oxford on the history of Yiddish culture in Hungary, and since then has published and edited books on this topic including Yiddish Printing in Hungary: An Annotated Bibliography (2011).
JOSHUA KLAGSBRUN LEBENSWERD

The Yiddish-Modern Hebrew interplay in the language of Swedish Jews

Starting in the post-WWII era, Modern (Israeli) Hebrew - a language that had barely existed half a century earlier - began to make inroads into the ethnolinguistic repertoire of Swedish Jews. During this historical process, a Modern Hebrew-based register - along with a set of associated values, such as modern, formal, correct, Zionistic etc. - came to replace most of the functions - e.g. in Jewish education (schools etc.) and formal writing (e.g. prayer books, calendars, community magazines etc.) - that traditionally had been assigned to a Yiddish and Ashkenazi Hebrew-based register. In contrast to the Modern Hebrew-based register, the formerly used register came to be perceived as folksy, informal, ‘old country’, traditional, etc.; and later on, even nostalgic. As a result of this sociolinguistic process, these different registers became linked with different speech contexts and social identities, which effectively created socially meaningful variation. Playing on enregistered social meanings of linguistic resources (words, sounds, pronunciations, phrases etc.) associated with these registers, Swedish Jews have the ability to stylize their language to index various aspects of Jewish identity. The present study uses notions of enregisterment and indexicality to capture the play on identities across variants. It builds on data from interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, analysis of historical documents, and survey data.

P. Joshua Klagsbrun Lebenswerd is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Research on Bilingualism at Stockholm University. His research interests include linguistic anthropology, language ideology, language and identity, and Jewish linguistic practices. His research deals with language use among Swedish Jews, focusing on historical and contemporary linguistic practices, and how these relate to language ideologies.

MEIRA POLLIACK
Codeswitching in Medieval Judaeo-Arabic texts and their writing systems

Multilingualism/bilingualism and its relationship to the phenomenon known as ‘codeswitching’ have featured since the 1970s in the work of sociolinguists. Recently, these concepts have drawn interest as tools for the study of Jewish languages (Judeo-Arabic among them). My paper will begin with a survey of the different approaches with respect to codeswitching and its application to Judeo-Arabic, from the diachronic perspective (as a continuously spoken and written Jewish language from medieval to modern times) and synchronic perspectives (in relation to other Jewish languages such as Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) and Yiddish. I will also explore the term ‘religiolect’ in this respect. In Part One, I will discuss examples of codeswitching in single script written Judeo-Arabic sources from the Cairo Genizah, and in Part Two I will discuss codeswitching in mixed script (Hebrew and Arabic) Judeo-Arabic sources in this collection. I will try to highlight the conditions for codeswitching and its functions, especially when both scripts occur in the same given text and page (written by the same hand). The textual presentation will lead to wider questions concerning other aspects of Judaeo-Arabic usage in Bible manuscripts and in combination with other Jewish canonical texts.

Meira Polliack (Ph.D Cambridge University, 1993) is Professor of Bible at Tel-Aviv University and currently serves as acting head of the Biblical Studies Department at TAU. She was Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Visiting Professor of Judaic Studies at Yale University (2009-2010) and member of the research group on Encountering Scripture in Overlapping Cultures: Early Jewish, Christian and Muslim Strategies of Reading and Their Contemporary Implications at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2010). She is co-editor of the Brill Book Series Karaite Texts and Studies and Biblia Arabica. Since 2012 she has served as a Project Instigator of the international-led research project “Biblia Arabica: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims”. Her books include: The Karaite Tradition of Arabic Bible Translation (1997), Karaite Judaism: A Guide to its History and Literary Sources (2003), Yefet ben ’Eli’s Commentary on Hosea, (co-author, annotated edition, Hebrew translation and introduction, 2009), The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims (co-edited, 2013). She has published on the Bible as literature, medieval Jewish Bible translation and exegesis in the Islamic milieu, Judaeo-Arabic literature, Karaism, and the Cairo Genizah.

HILARY POMEROY

A cultural and social history of Ladino

‘Ladino’, as the language of Sephardi Jews is known today, was once widely spoken throughout the Sephardi diaspora established in the former Ottoman Empire and also in Morocco where it is known as Haketia. It was even used by non-Jews to communicate with Jewish tradesmen and served as a lingua franca among the various Jewish communities around the Mediterranean basin. Sadly, that language once widely spoken by thousands of Sephardim has almost died out today. The processes of modernisation and Westernisation experienced in Levantine countries in the nineteenth century together with the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, the establishment of new nation states, negative attitudes towards the language, and the extermination of thousands of Sephardi Jews during the Holocaust have all contributed to what must surely be its near demise.
In the course of this lecture I will discuss the history of this language, its cultural significance, and the current state of this ‘old dressing gown’ of a language.

Hilary Pomeroy read French at Leeds University and after graduating taught French for several years. She obtained her PhD, a study of medieval Spanish ballads kept alive by the Sephardi communities of Morocco, in the Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary, University of London. Her doctorate was published in 2005. She has chaired the British Conference on Judeo-Spanish Studies, now an international scholarly resource, since 1995 and has created and taught a course on the culture and history of the Sephardi Jews in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies, University College London. In addition to her studies of Hispanic and Sephardi ballads, her published articles include studies of the Muslim influence on Sephardi material and visual culture and of the Spanish and Sephardi culinary cultures. She was guest editor of two issues of the journal European Judaism devoted to Ladino studies (43.2, 44.1).

RACHID RIDOUANE

Jewish-Berber: a linguistic sketch
Berber (Amazigh) is an Afro-Asiatic family of closely related varieties spoken by an estimated 20–30 million in North Africa. It is mainly spoken in Morocco, Algeria, and by the Touareg population. It is also a native language of some populations living in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt. Berber used to be the mother tongue of Jewish communities settled in North Africa in ancient time, though it is still unclear how this variety arose and how different it is from the variety spoken by non-Jewish Berbers. It used to be spoken by thousands of Jews, mainly in Morocco, within the Tashlhiyt Berber geographical area. Today, Jewish-Berber is almost extinct, spoken by only some old people in Israel, France, and Morocco. Among the Jewish linguistic varieties, Jewish-Berber is probably one of the least studied. Primarily oral, with almost no written tradition, it has not received much interest from scholars until very recently. In this presentation I will provide some key linguistic characteristics of Jewish-Berber including lexical, syntactic, morphological, and, more specifically, phonological and phonetic features. These patterns will be illustrated by examination of two sources of data: a Berber version of the Haggadah and production data from a speaker of Jewish-Berber.

Rachid Ridouane (born in 1971 in Agadir, Morocco) is a linguist, research fellow at the French National Center for Scientific Research. He teaches phonology at the Sorbonne Nouvelle University in Paris. His interests are mainly the phonetics and phonology of Tashlhiyt, a Berber language spoken in Morocco. Working within the Laboratory Phonology framework, he dedicated a number of publications to syllable theory (focusing on syllables without vowels), consonant gemination, and laryngeal articulations. Also interested in feature theory, he is co-editor of Where Do Phonological Features Come From? (2011) and Features in Phonetics and Phonology (2015). His most current research topics include the prosodic structure of Tashlhiyt and the phonetic system of Mehri, a Modern South Arabian language spoken in Oman.
History in the Ashkenazic vernacular: The Yiddish Yosippon

Sefer Yosippon, a medieval Hebrew compilation of Josephus's works (and the works of some other historians), enjoyed great popularity among early modern Jews. This paper will investigate the Yiddish translations of Yosippon, published in Zurich, Prague, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam, and it will ask how they allow us to think about the Yiddish language and Jewish history as fields that were shared and contested among Jews and Christians in early modern Ashkenaz.

Andrea Schatz is a Reader in Jewish Studies at King’s College London. Her current research focuses on "imagined geographies" in Jewish historical writing, while she also pursues her long-standing interest in the Hebrew and Yiddish languages as they shaped Ashkenazic interpretations of nation and diaspora. Recently, she was a co-investigator in the AHRC-funded research project "The Reception of Josephus in Jewish Culture from the Eighteenth Century to the Present" (Oxford). With Lily Kahn, UCL, she organised the conference "Language, Nation and Modernity: Hebrew in Europe, 1800-2000" (2014).

Multilingual practise and identity in Judaeo-Arabic

This talk will investigate the relationship between languages and scripts attested in the sources of the Cairo Genizah and how they relate to religious and communal identity of Egyptian Jews. Based on documentary Judaeo-Arabic writing samples of writers from the Cairo Genizah, such as the gaon Daniel b. Azaryah, the court scribe Halfon b. Manasse, and prominent traders of the 11th century, I will explore how the language forms they used reflect religious and communal belonging. This will involve a general discussion of religiously based sociolects, investigations of the ability and choice of individual scribes to use Judaeo-Arabic and Hebrew in their writings by analysing code-switching between the languages Arabic and Hebrew as well as script-switching between Hebrew and Arabic alphabets, and an examination of how the level of interference of Hebrew in Judaeo-Arabic texts relates to different text genres. Attention will also be paid to differences and commonalities of the
codeswitching phenomena encountered in Judaeo-Arabic as opposed to other Jewish languages, such as Yiddish. The linguistic phenomena investigated will be linked to social factors, such as professional and religious identity, and minority community politics.

Esther-Miriam Wagner (PhD 2008 University of Cambridge) is a Senior Research Fellow at the Woolf Institute and an Affiliated lecturer and Associated researcher at the University of Cambridge. Her research interests include Genizah Studies, Arabic linguistics and language history, Yiddish, sociolinguistics, and Muslim-Jewish relations. She is the author of Linguistic Variety of Judaeo-Arabic Letters from the Cairo Genizah (Brill 2011), and the editor of the themed volumes Scribes as Agents of Language Change (2013) and 'Merchants of Innovation. The Languages of Traders' (2017). Her latest publications are concerned with codeswitching of Hebrew in Judaeo-Arabic and Yiddish, with subordination in late medieval Judaeo-Arabic, and with scribal practise in Judaeo-Arabic documents from the Cairo Genizah.