

ПО СЛЕДИТЕ НА СЛОВОТО



снимка: Симеон Стефанов

оформление: Симеон Стефанов

DE+INFINITIVO AS BALKAN CONTACT INFLUENCE IN JUDEO-SPANISH

Iskra Dobрева

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (Bulgaria)

iskradobрева2000@yahoo.com

Abstract: This paper reveals the initial signs of loss of the infinitive in Judeo-Spanish, resulting from Balkan contact. They are numerous and range from infinitive's replacement by *que+subjunctive* in same-subject purpose clauses to the preference for gerunds in immediative and accompaniative constructions, among others. Judeo-Spanish also tends to insert ungrammatical or expletive preposition *de* before infinitives (Spanish *deísmo*). Thus Judeo-Spanish approximates to Italian and to Balkan languages, distancing itself from Spanish and other Ibero-Romance languages. Beside Romance inheritance, the contentless *de* preceding Judeo-Spanish infinitives is also due to a Balkan influence, replicating earlier stages of infinitive loss, e.g. infinitive headed by *da* as detected in Old Bulgarian texts.

Keywords: Balkan infinitive, Judeo-Spanish, Balkan contact, Language Change, *deísmo*

Резюме: В доклада се разглеждат наченките на загуба на инфинитива в сефарадския език на Балканите, като резултат от контактното взаимодействие с балканските езици. Сефарадският инфинитив се замества със спрегнати глаголни форми *que+subjunctivo* в хомосубектни подчинени изречения за цел или с нефинитни форми *gerundio* в имедиативни и акомпаниативни конструкции. Сефарадският инфинитив също често се предшества от предлози като *de* (*deísmo*) и *por* без семантична натовареност, особено в балканославянска среда, което наподобява появата на частицата *da* пред старобългарския инфинитив. Проследява се отдалечаването на сефарадския от иберороманските езици и неговото доближаване до италиански и балканските езици въз основа на конкретния случай на предложния инфинитив *de+infinitivo*.

Ключови думи: Балкански инфинитив, сефарадски език, контакт, езиково изменение, предложен инфинитив

1. Introduction.

Balkan infinitive loss or, rather, its replacement by other non-finites (converbs, action nominals, participia) or finite forms headed by *va*, *da*, *să*, *tě* in the main Balkan languages (Greek, Balkan Slavic, Balkan Romance and Albanian) is far from fully discussed and continues to spur linguistic interest. Neo-Balkan languages, especially Judeo-Spanish, provide a series of valuable and relevant linguistic facts shedding light on the Balkan dispreference for the infinitive and its gradual and almost complete loss.

Judeo-Spanish (hereinafter 'JS') developed over a relatively short time in the Balkan linguistic area: slightly more than four centuries between 1492 and the first half of the 20th century. Therefore, by the end of the mentioned period, JS texts (drama and novels from 1900s written by Sephardic authors in various towns of Bulgaria and other Balkan countries, for a detailed description, see primary sources) contain numerous instances of Balkan contact-induced change. They may be regarded as initial Balkanisms and therefore, present precious

linguistic data revealing the most salient and prominent loci of adoption of Balkan areal features: one of them being the trend towards the loss of the infinitive. This paper presents this areal feature in JS.

2. Formation of the JS koine in extra-Iberian conditions

When JS joined the Balkan linguistic area, contact with local Balkan languages occurred at more within, than outside Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire. Within Jewish communities JS interacted mainly with Romaniote (Judeo-Greek) and Franco (Judeo-Italian), although in the Ottoman Empire Ashkenazi and Hungarian Jews were also present, as were Jews speaking Bulgarian from the 15th and 16th centuries. Early Ottoman Jewry was characterized by a high level of linguistic diversity and heterogeneity, and JS easily established itself as a lingua franca of the Ottoman Jewry and filled the linguistic gap formed among Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, JS also came into contact with local languages outside the Jewish communities. Over the 17th and 18th centuries Sephardic Population settled in Ottoman towns joining Romaniotes (Byzantine Jews) and Francos (who had arrived a few centuries earlier from Venice and other Italian towns and had settled in Byzantine ports, but also the inland Balkans, in the medieval kingdoms neighboring the Byzantine territory to the north). The Sephardic population joined local Jewry forming a stable trade network, of a constant and intense communication all over the Ottoman Empire and beyond. Therefore, JS formed under strong Greek and Italian influences, as contact with Greek and Italian took place both within and outside Jewish communities.

3. Changes in the JS infinitive, adoption of Balkan pattern based on Romance inheritance

One of the most outstanding cases of adoption of Balkan features in JS is the trend towards a lack of preference for the infinitive, in line with the predominant Balkan areal pattern, as by the end of the 15th century the loss of the infinitive was at an advanced stage in the main Balkan languages. This loss triggered a ripple effect over the whole non-finite system of the Balkan languages, notwithstanding the finite verbal forms. Instead of four the non-finite members found in elder Balkan languages, the drop of infinitive in newer Balkan languages led to the formation of a three-member non-finite system. Each Balkan language ‘compensated’ for the infinitive loss on its own way. Besides using the finite forms mentioned above (headed by *va*, *ða*, *sǎ*, *tě* in Greek, Balkan Slavic, Balkan Romance, Albanian), which in several cases replaced the infinitive, Balkan languages developed and increased the use of their respective converbs, action nominals and participia. Similar changes may be observed in JS, but at an initial stage. Moreover, within its Balkan development, JS was ‘balkanized’ within the limits

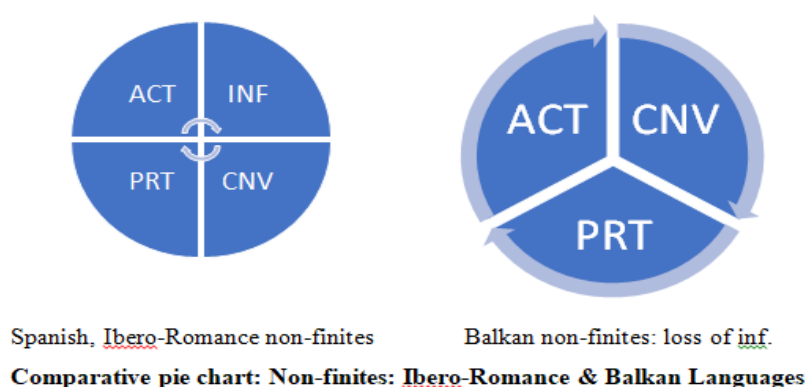
of its (Ibero-)Romance inheritance. Therefore, the change produced in JS as part of its alignment to the Balkan areal lack of preference for the infinitive took several routes of development, which will be regarded in the next item, one of them being the insertion of a void prepositions *de*, *por* or the complementizer *que/ke* in front of the infinitive, beside its replacement by converbs, as well as by finite subjunctive forms in same subject purpose clauses, and obligation ‘have to do’ independent sentences, among others.

Ylikoski (2003:228) defines the four main types of non-finite verb forms (infinitives, converbs, participia, action nominals), their syntactic functions and “new word-classes”, as shown in the following table¹:

NON-FINITE FORM	INF	CNV	PART	ACTNs
Syntactic function	argument (subject, object, obl. adv.)	free adverbial (=adjunct)	attribute (+ adjectival predicate)	those of nouns
Direction of lexicalization	nouns, adverbs	adverbs, adpositions, conjunctions	adjectives (→nouns)	nouns

Table 1. The four main types of non-finite verbal forms (infinitives, converbs, participia, action nominals), their syntactic functions and the “new word-classes” they generate, Ylikoski (2003:228)

Below we present the contrast between Spanish (Ibero-Romance) and Balkan non-finites.



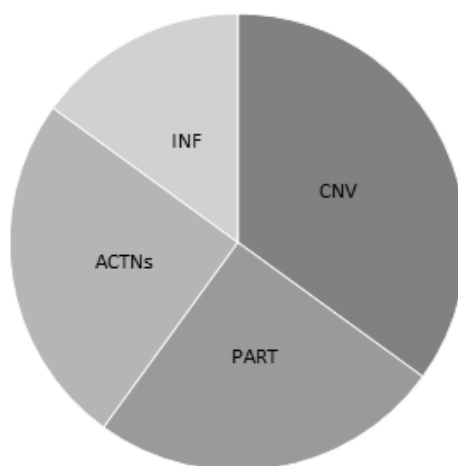
Non-finites have no strict borders between each other, they may be regarded as a microsystem within the language and constantly take over each other’s functions over the

¹ The abbreviations INF, CNV, PART, ACTNs stand for infinitives, converbs, participia and action nominals, respectively.

course of historical development, contact with other languages, and other ways of language change.

4. JS non-finites accommodation to the Balkan Pattern

When JS joined the Balkan linguistic area, its non-finite system was mainly affected by the decreased use of the infinitive and its replacement by converbs (*en* + gerunds or standalone gerunds).



**Chart 2: Restructuring of JS non-finite system in Balkan environment:
Infinitive is reduced on account of converbs and other non-finites**

Moreover, the JS infinitive was also replaced by *que*+subjunctive forms in specific types of embedded clauses (see below). However, based on corpora research and calculations, Schmid (2016) has found out that, compared to Spanish, the frequency of infinitives in JS is maintained or even increased. Schmid (2016: 441) analysed JS texts from between 1880 and 1930 comprising the corpus Mem-Tet, where the relative frequency of the infinitive in JS is 36 pro mille, while for Modern Spanish, in the corpus CREA, it is 25 pro mille.

The JS infinitive was replaced by finite or non-finite forms in a few very specific cases, as described below, but it took over new functions, so the overall frequency and number of infinitive forms increased. Further corpus studies are needed, in order to obtain more precise figures and do the respective comparisons.

Prior to enumerating the main changes affecting the JS infinitive, it should be stressed that JS failed to lose its infinitive, the changes below are but initial steps towards the loss (which was at an advanced stage in the Balkan area when JS joined). Therefore, JS only began to lose its infinitive; it was mainly replaced by finite *que*+subjunctive forms and gerunds. This very initial loss of the JS infinitive proceeded along the following scenarios, which all developed simultaneously over the duration of JS development in the Balkan linguistic area:

4.1. Replacement of JS infinitive by finite forms (*que*+Subjunctive)

(1) JS Vengo para ke te yame/SP Vengo para llamarte. 'I am coming to call you.'

This change originated and is predominantly detected in embedded same-subject purpose clauses (headed by *para que* 'in order to'), as well as same subject 'without-' clauses or negative possession headed by *sin que* 'without'. In Spanish, these two types of embedded clauses are characterized by a finite subjunctive form headed by *para que* and *sin que* if the subjects of the main and embedded clause differ, and *para* or *sin* + infinitive if the subjects of the main and embedded clause coincide. Thus same-subject in Spanish requires infinitive in purpose and absence (negative possession) clauses, while different subjects require the use of the finite *que*+subjunctive form. However, JS tended to ignore the above requirement and began to use the finite *que*+subjunctive forms irrespective of whether the subjects of the embedded purpose or absence clause were the same or different. The analysed JS texts from 1900-1910s demonstrate this change, as follows:

(2) ...tieni el derecho para enpatronarse ouna kopia de esta Beografia, sin ke tenga apagar dingouna paga. (Arie p.5)

'They have the right to obtain a copy of this biography without having to pay anything'.

(3) ...i esto es lo ke azian sin ke pensavan para aprovetcharen en el mizmo dija... (Arie p. 313)

'...this is what they did without thinking of taking advantage the same day'

(4) ...i la kudiava sin ke tenija el menester de ajudarse de dinguno (Arie p. 250)

'...and he looked after her without the need of help from anyone.'

This change is rather stable in Modern Ladino and the structure continues active today:

(5) No mos alevantimos de la meza sin ke gostamos akeyos pepinos en trushi. (taken from a forum Ladino Komunita of native JS speakers from around the world, 2010s).

'We did not leave the table without enjoying those canned cucumbers'.

Another case where JS infinitive was replaced by finite *que*+subjunctive forms are the independent sentences expressing obligation. JS obligatives are formed by a modal verb followed by *ke*+subjunctive form, e.g. *Kale/Prime ke aga* 'I should/have to/must do it', in contrast to the Spanish structure of modal verb+infinitive: 'tengo que, debo hacer'). The same is found in deliberative or dubitative sentences in the form of indirect or direct questions and auto-questions of the type: *Koalo ke aga?* 'What should I do?' and *A ken ke me adrese para konsolar me* 'Who should I ask for confort?' Gabinskiy (1992:110, 157-166) also notes that the most frequent cases of JS deliberatives are the first person singular, and gives the following

examples, obtained from primary data collected from JS native speakers living in Skopje and Bitola by Cruz (1935) and Luria (1930):

(6) Kualu ke ti fage?, Il hamor ondi ki lu desi? Komu ke trage pan? (Gabinskiy 1992: 158)

‘What should I do for you?’ ‘Where should I leave the donkey?’ ‘How should I bring you the bread?’

4.2. Replacement of JS infinitive by participles in Balkan environment.

(7) Kale etcho ‘It should be done’, in contrast to Spanish infinitive: ‘Hay que hacerlo.’

This use of the participle in impersonal obligative sentences is referred to as a secondary infinitive in Balkan languages by Gabinskiy (1992). This is a rather rare case in JS, but quite relevant as the infinitive is replaced by another non-finite form, i.e. the past participle, and it demonstrates the restructuring of the JS non-finite system and its alignment to the Balkan three-member pattern. More data should be collected in order to trace the interaction of Romance genealogy with areal patterns of obligations.

4.3. Replacement of the JS infinitive by converbs (*en+gerund* or standalone *gerunds*)

(8) JS *En passando sintieron musika* // ES *Al pasar oyeron música*.

‘While passing by they heard music.’

JS clearly lacks preference for the use of the infinitive in accompaniment clauses, i.e. simultaneous actions accompanying the main action and showing the way or the manner the main action is performed. Beside other infinitive structures, *al+infinitive* is the most common way in Spanish to express immediate anteriority to the main action, e.g. ‘On opening the door, they saw the open drawer.’ Therefore, in the functions of immediate anteriority (immediative) and accompanying simultaneity (accompaniative), the use of the gerund prevailed over the infinitive in JS, regarded as Greek and Italian contact influence in JS, see Dobрева (2019) and Dobрева (to appear).

4.4. Insertion of the preposition *de* or conjunction *que* or both before the JS infinitive as complementizer.

This insertion of prepositions *de* or *por/para* (or both), as well as followed by the complementizer *que/ke*, i.e. *de ke/porke/para ke* before the infinitive is another change affecting JS in the Balkan environment. In Spanish, the insertion of *de* or *de que* before infinitive, finite verbal forms or nouns is a common phenomenon, known as *deísmo* and *dequeísmo*. The use of *de* before the infinitive does not alter the meaning, i.e. *de* is contentless but has a rather syntactic charge. Unlike other Romance languages, like French and Italian

where *de/di* is a complementizer, in Spanish it is an expletive preposition; it tends to be avoided in standard Spanish, but is often encountered in informal and rural Spanish or in Latin America. Deísmo and dequeísmo are also typical and quite frequent in JS. Gabinskiy (1992: 110) attributes the increased JS deísmo to French influence, however, it is also an Italian and a Balkan contact feature. Balkan ‘finite infinitives’ are headed by *va*, *ða*, *sǎ*, *tě*. Therefore, the reactivation and frequentization of *de*+infinitive may be regarded as an instance of Balkan contact-induced change in JS. Thus, a simple phrase like ‘I am asking you to leave’ would equal Spanish *Te pido/ruego salir* and JS *Te rogo de salir*. The insertion of *de* before the infinitive *salir* ‘to leave’ is also possible, but redundant in Spanish, adding no grammatical charge and a vast Hispanic literature discusses deísmo. In JS, it was detected in several instances in oral speech produced by JS native speakers in the Balkan Slavic environment (Sarajevo):

(9) *al vieju le peso de le yevar todú estú al mansevu.* (taken from Quintana (2009:246), referring to Baruch (1930:141))

‘It was too heavy for the old man to carry (him) all this to the young man.’

The above example shows advanced stage of Balkan influence to JS, as, apart from the insertion of the contentless *de* before the infinitive, it also presents object reduplication: *le, al mansevu*.

(10) *em buenu de te lo pagar.* (taken from Quintana (2009:246), referring to Baruch (1930:141))

‘May I be able to repay you this in better days’

Likewise, Gabinskiy (1992:110) provides similar examples taken from Crews (1935) and Luria (1930), i.e. JS in Balkan Slavic environment:

(11) *Es kolay de imažinarsé* ‘It is easy to imagine.’

(12) *Permeteme de dezir* ‘Allow me to say’.

Apart from showing the existence of deísmo in JS, it may also be interpreted as French or Italian influence, as Sephardic communities in Italian and French towns maintained stable relations with Ottoman Sephardic population. JS deísmo infinitive did not attract much linguistic interest, as it is regarded as a typical Romance and pan-Hispanic phenomenon. However, here it is regarded also as a Balkan areal feature. More precisely, *de*+infinitive in JS may be regarded as an Ibero-Romance inheritance which was strengthened and reactivated by Balkan influence and contact. It demonstrates how JS adapted to the Balkan areal pattern of infinitive headed by conjunction or preposition which was gradually grammaticalized and lost its function as such and became a subjunctive marker in the main Balkan languages. As

mentioned above, this process was detected in JS only at its initial stage of development, therefore, the infinitive is simply headed by the expletive preposition *de*. The expletive *de* tends to be inserted especially after the obligation *dever* ‘must’ and demand *rogar* ‘ask, pray’ verbs, as in the following examples:

(13) ... i denpoes kedaron de akodro ke devia *de* ser la boda dopo de 3 meses. (Arie p. 151)

‘...and then they agreed that the wedding should be in three months.’

(14) ... toda la suma ke el devia *de* resivir (Arie p. 272)

‘... the whole amount he had to receive.’

Besides being a Romance inheritance, JS *de*+infinitive replicates the diachronic change of replacement of the infinitive by finite forms in the Balkan languages. Old Bulgarian texts feature several infinitives preceded by the conjunction ‘*da*’. With certain main verbs expressing doubt, uncertainty, hope, believe, etc. *di*+infinitive in Italian indicates the same or different subjects of the main and embedded actions and *de* is a complementizer.

(15) IT Marco mi ha confessato di essere in serie difficolta economiche.

‘Marco has confessed to me to being in economic difficulties.’

With main verbs of control, such as ‘ask’, ‘wish’, ‘allow’, the one exercising control and the one subject to control are different persons, i.e. the subjects are different:

(16) IT Ti permetto di fumare, ma devi uscire sul balcone. ‘I allow you to smoke, but you have to go to the balcony’.

(17) Ti auguro di fare una splendida vacanza. ‘I wish you to have a nice holiday’.

In French also the verbs of control require *de* before the infinitive, for instance: ex. *demander, défendre, etc. (a quelqu-un) de faire quelque chose/decider de faire quelque chose*, in contrast to Spanish infinitive alone: *prohibir a alguien hacer algo* ‘to forbid someone to do something’ and *decidir hacer algo* ‘decide to do something’.

The contrast between Spanish and Italian has been considered by Bini/Guil (2002:93) and Fogliani (2016:9), among others, but in this respect JS is closer to Italian, rather than to Spanish, as examples from JS fiction texts show:

(18) yo provi de levantarme, ma fue en vano (Guliver, p. 2)

‘I tried to get up, but it was in vain’.

(19) se determinaron de embezarme sus lingua. (Guliver, p. 3)

‘They decided to teach me their language’.

(20) me dezia de tenerme sovre mis guardes (Guliver, p. 6)

‘He told me to be cautious.’

(21) No te ivas estremeser de sentir las palavras de tu ijo? (Rinio, p. 38)

‘Wouldn’t you be shocked by hearing the words of your son?’

5. Conclusions

The insertion of *de* before the Judeo-Spanish infinitive is regarded as a French and Italian influence (Gabinskiy 1992:110) and, indeed, it is one. However, it also matches the Balkan areal pattern. In addition, it is extremely frequent in JS in Balkan Slavic environment, as the above examples showed.

It is a typical Ibero-Romance and Romance phenomenon (Spanish *deísmo*, *dequeísmo*). It is Balkan contact influence, too, in JS related to the alignment to the overall Balkan areal pattern of infinitive replacement by finite forms (*que*+subjunctive) or other non-finites.

JS texts from the 1900s present the stage of initial replacement of the infinitive by finite (*que*+subjunctive) forms, whereby the infinitive is preserved, but is headed by expletive *de*. Other expletive prepositions are also used before the JS infinitive, such as *por*, *para* alone or accompanied by *que* (*porque*) when the meaning of purpose is present. Therefore, *de*, *por*, *que* and their combinations are often found in a position before the JS infinitive acting as complementizers. This is in line with Koneski (1996:177) and Asenova (2002:169) observations that the infinitive came to be preceded by the conjunction *da* when it was in purpose function or accompanying verbs of desire, demand, intention, permission and control as attested in medieval Balkan Slavic texts. While several examples of *por*, *para*, *que* prior to the JS infinitive exist, here only the following case is presented:

(22) mi detchizi por eskrivir ouna beografia (Arie, p. 4)

‘I decided to write a biography’.

De is found before the JS infinitive when the main verb has the meaning of intention, control, demand, while *por/porque* tend to precede purpose infinitives. These cases replicate exactly the Balkan development of a gradual drop of the infinitive and its replacement by finite verbal forms or other non-finites. This process began by the insertion of the conjunction *da* before the infinitive of purpose and wish and control, as attested in earlier Bulgarian texts, (Koneski 1996, Asenova 2002 cited above).

The insertion of the expletive prepositions *de* and *por* prior to JS infinitives may be regarded as a very initial stage of infinitive loss. As JS developed for a relatively short period in the Balkans (for some four or five centuries), this and other Balkan contact changes remained at an initial stage of their development.

References

- Asenova 2002*: Asenova, P. *Balkan Linguistics*. Faber, Veliko Tarnovo, 2002. [Асенова 2002: Асенова, П. Балканско езикознание. Фабер, Велико Търново, 2002.]
- Bini, Guil 2002*: Bini, M. Guil, P. Italiano y español: algunos puntos de contraste, in Carabela, 2002, 69-94.
- Baruch 1930*: Baruch, K. El judeo-español de Bosnia, *Revista de Filología Española* 17:2, 113-151.
- Crews 1935*: Crews, C. *Recherches sur le Judéo-Espagnol dans les pays balkaniques*. Paris, Droz, 1935
- Dobрева, 2019*: Dobрева, I. Reactivation of (en +) gerundio as Judeo-Greek feature in Judeo-Spanish, in Ralli, A., Barka, P., Joseph, Br., Bompolas, St. (eds.) *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Modern Greek Dialects and Linguistic Theory (MGDLT8)* Gjirokaster, 4-6.10. 2018, Vol. 8, No. 1 (2019), 11-24. <http://resmictel.lis.upatras.gr/index.php/mgdlit/issue/view/364>
- Dobрева to appear*: Dobрева, I. Restructuring of Judeo-Spanish verbal system as a result of the adoption of the Balkan areal pattern of infinitive dispreference, in *Proceedings of the 2nd Conference on Linguistic Contact in the Balkans and in Mala Asia*, November 8-10, 2019, organized by the Institute of Modern Greek, Manolis Triandaphilis Foundation and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.
- Fogliani 2016*: Fogliani, F. Análisis de errores en la expresión escrita de aprendientes italo-fonos de ele y presentación de tareas interactivas, *Revista de estudios filológicos*, Num. 31, 2016, 1-35.
- Gabinskiy 1992*: Gabinskiy, M. Judeo-Spanish, in Russian: Сефардский язык. Штиинца, Кишинев, 1992.
- Koneski 1996*: Koneski, B. History of Macedonian, in Macedonian: *История на македонскиот јазик*. Prosvetno delo, Skopje, 1996.
- Luria 1930*: Luria, M. A study of the Monastir dialect of Judeo-Spanish based on oral material collected in Monastir, Yugo-Slavia. New York, Instituto de las Españas en los Estados Unidos. Reprinted from *The Revue Hispanique* 79, 1930, 323-583.
- Quintana 2009*: Quintana, A. Aportación lingüística de los romances aragonés y portugués a la coine judeoespañola, in *Languages and Literatures of Sephardic and Oriental Jews*, Misgav Yerushalayim and the Bialik Institute, Jerusalem, 221-255.
- Schmid 2016*: Schmid, B. De nuevo sobre el infinitivo en judeoespañol, in Ledgeway, Adam/Cennamo, Michaela/Mensching, Guido (eds.) *Actes du XXVIIe Congrès International de linguistique et de philologie romanes* (Nancy, 2013) Section 4: Syntaxe, Nancy, 2016, 439-450.
- Ylikoski 2003*: Ylikoski, Y. Defining non-finites: Action Nominals, Infinitives, Converbs, in *SKY Journal of Linguistics* 16, 2003, 185-237.
- Primary sources:
- Gulliver 1911*: Ben Ghiat, Alexandre “Los dos vyajes de Gulliver”, 1911. Preface and Transcription by Olga Borovaya 2007 (available online: http://web.stanford.edu/dept/jewishstudies/programs/sephardi/borovaya_texts_files/gulliver/Los_Dos_Vyajes_de_Gulliver.pdf)
- Arie 1910*: Abraam Arie II, Tchelebi-Moshe. *La Beografia de la Familia Arie*, vol. I. 1910, unpublished, archive unit 553, fund 1568k, description 1, Bulgarian Central State Archive.
- Rinio 1906*: Galante, Abraam. *Rinio o el amor salvaje*, 1906. Perez, A. (ed.) *El instituto Maale Adumim para la Dokumentasion del Ladino i su Kultura*, 2009. (available online folkmasa.org/av/Riniolad.pdf).