

כתב

איטורק שואינצרה מין לואר די מארני די שפאויש די ציזרוש  
 לאש מאטם יו מי וואישטרה חייב, פויה ש אצרוש שניורה  
 קאמו מונג אישטמאטוש מאראוואל אדאש קומע די שפאויש די  
 פארטוישטיים טון נוש אביש אינציאלנו אונע קארטע ט און  
 פאלק פאצינעו דינה מענה ק נוש די שאפטיים קון איל  
 די צאמאלן פיר קאומה די וואישטרה פארטוישטאדע ק  
 יו ט אובנימי האליאדו קון קיאין אישקייורוש נוש אונפיאלה  
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 מי מונג ק קון איל פרומירו הי וינלב קי נוש אישקייוראיים  
 די וואישטרה יחל נשעס מונשט פאלטיים די גלי פאר  
 מי די פארטי די מע מונג אלמאנדאדו מונג איל מלעל  
 צי ונסק צוויאן ים אי אלה אונמארה מלל די וואישטרה  
 מונג פוניא אסרז מלצ מ מונשט פאלטיים די גלי  
 אירמאנה קאלאר

איטורק עק נש

אילדין ווש ציזה לאש מלוננס  
 קומל וואישטרו קינע טא ציייה יונצע



Oxford School of  
**Rare Jewish Languages**

**IMPACT REPORT 2023-24**



# Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages

## Impact Report 2023–24

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This report was compiled, designed and edited by the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages (OSRJL) Coordinator, Madeleine Trivasse. A section of the report was authored by Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and Madeleine Trivasse together, whilst others were written by Madeleine Trivasse, OSRJL students and teachers.

The data presented in this report reflect anonymised and/or non-personal information from and regarding student applications received by the OSRJL for the 2023–24 academic year, as well as previous academic years; OSRJL class and lecture attendance records; responses to termly student and teacher surveys disseminated to all participating OSRJL students and teachers for their non-mandatory completion; as well as written communications between the OSRJL Coordinator, Madeleine Trivasse, and OSRJL students and teachers regarding feedback on the OSRJL programme. All processes of data collection pertaining to the 2023–24 academic year were conducted during said year, while other collection processes took place during previous years to which the data corresponds.

Images portraying and written materials produced by OSRJL students, teachers and/or supporters are published herein with the consent of said individuals. Names of individuals featured in this report have been eliminated upon request to preserve individuals' anonymity. Where relevant, citations and copyright notices are provided.

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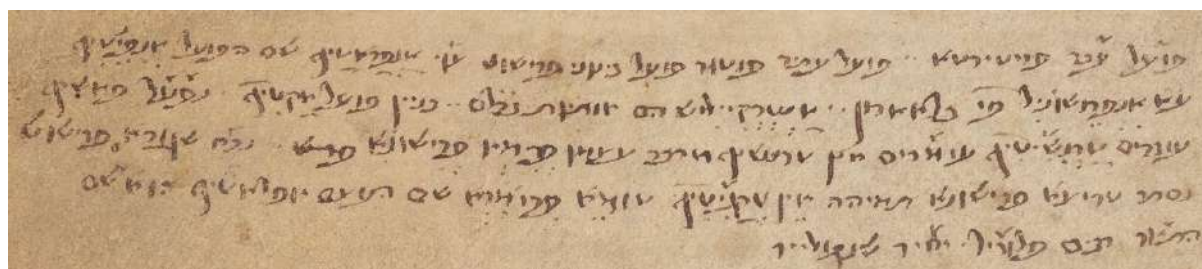
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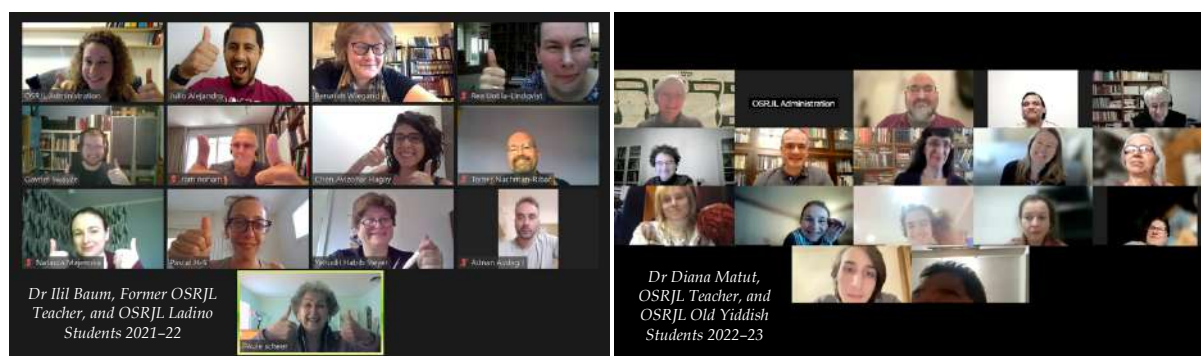
## Behind the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages

Jewish languages are essential and incorporeal parts of Jewish history, creativity, culture and identity. Most of them are currently in danger of extinction, while others are already dead, known only from early writing. Various research programmes stress the immense role of vernacular languages in Jewish life and culture as well as point to their fragility, yet universities offer very few learning opportunities for most of these rare Jewish languages.



List of grammatical terms translated from Hebrew into Old French, MS Opp. 152, fol. 1r. (© Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford)

Since its inception, the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages (OSRJL) has aimed to preserve, spark interest in, enable access to and reflect on the nature and role of Jewish languages as rich linguistic facets of Jewish life and history. As the first school of its kind globally, the OSRJL continues to go from strength to strength. Created in August 2021 by the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies (OCHJS) in collaboration with the Institut des Langues Rares (ILARA) at Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE), Paris, the OSRJL offers free, online teaching of rare Jewish languages and their cultural-historical contexts—along with a public lecture series, academic blog, Visiting Fellows programme, Jewish music classes and language Cafés—accessible at no cost to accepted students and members of the general public around the globe.



The enormous interest in and engagement with the OSRJL and its offerings during its initial 3-year 'pilot phase' (2021-24), as detailed below, testify to the lasting legacies of Jewish languages—as well as to the OSRJL's integral role in their continuation into the future. Thanks to new and enduring sources of funding, we greatly look forward to further honing and developing the OSRJL over the next 3 years and beyond.

*Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger FBA & Madeleine Trivasse*



## Overview of the Programme’s Pilot Phase (2021–24)

The OSRJL’s pilot phase ran across 3 academic years – 2021–22, 2022–23 and 2023–24. During that time, the programme received a total of 1,973 applications for its language classes from individuals living in 76 countries, including: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



Even after capping each language class at a maximum of 30 student places to ensure that an effective learning environment was established and preserved, the OSRJL was able to offer an astonishing 1,140 student places and to provide students with 1,280 hours of language teaching over its first 3 years. While 12 Jewish languages were taught in the programme’s inaugural year, it expanded its offerings to 15 languages in its second year and 18 languages in its third. Though the OSRJL initially focused on providing teaching at an introductory university level (‘Beginners’ classes), the programme quickly broadened its scope to encompass multiple levels of certain languages based on demand and the prior language skills of applicants. Classes taught over the course of the pilot phase and their teachers included:

Language	Level	Teacher
<b>Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic</b>	Beginners Intermediate Intermediate/Advanced Advanced	Dr Assaf Bar Moshe <i>Freie Universität Berlin</i>
<b>Classical Judeo-Arabic</b>	Beginners Intermediate/Advanced	Friederike Schmidt <i>Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München</i>
<b>Haketia</b>	Beginners	Dr Carlos Yebra López <i>University College London</i>
<b>Judeo-French</b>	Beginners Advanced Beginners	Dr Sandra Hajek <i>Georg-August-Universität Göttingen</i>
<b>Judeo-Greek</b>	Beginners	Dr Julia G. Krivoruchko <i>University of Cambridge</i>
<b>Judeo-Hamadani</b>	Beginners	Professor Dr Saloumeh Gholami <i>Goethe-Universität Frankfurt</i>
<b>Judeo-Italian</b>	Beginners	Dr Marilena Colasuonno <i>University of Naples</i>
<b>Judeo-Moroccan</b>	Beginners	Haviva Fenton
<b>Judeo-Neo-Aramaic</b>	Beginners	Dr Dorota Molin <i>University of Oxford, University of Cambridge</i>
<b>Judeo-Persian</b>	Beginners	Maximilian Kinzler
	Advanced	Dr Ofir Haim <i>The Hebrew University of Jerusalem</i>
<b>Judeo-Provençal</b>	Beginners Advanced Beginners	Dr Peter Nahon <i>Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique</i>
<b>Judeo-Tat</b>	Beginners	Professor Gilles Authier & Dr Murad Suleymanov <i>EPHE, Paris</i>
<b>Judeo-Turkish</b>	Beginners Advanced	Professor Laurent Mignon <i>University of Oxford</i>
<b>Karaim</b>	Beginners	Professor Henryk Jankowski <i>Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań</i>
<b>Kivruli</b>	Beginners	Dr Hélène Gérardin <i>Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, EPHE, Paris</i>
<b>Ladino</b>	Beginners	Dr Ilil Baum <i>The Hebrew University of Jerusalem</i> & Dr Carlos Yebra López <i>University College London</i>
	Intermediate	Dr Carlos Yebra López <i>University College London</i>
<b>Old Yiddish</b>	Beginners	Dr Diana Matut
<b>Yiddish</b>	Beginners Advanced Beginners Lower Intermediate Intermediate Intermediate/Advanced Advanced Literature	Dr Beruriah Wiegand <i>OCHJS, University of Oxford</i>

The abovementioned figures relate only to the OSRJL's language classes—numerous individuals participated in the programme's many other activities and publications. Countless hours were spent on such endeavours. Additional activities over the pilot phase included 4 student-led language Cafés, 9 Jewish music classes and 15 specialist lectures. Publications over the same period included 4 textbooks pending publication (see 'Publications', page 18) as part of the OSRJL subseries in UCL Press's *Textbooks of World and Minority Languages* series; 1 volume, *Jewish Languages and Book Culture*, co-edited by OSRJL Director Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and Dr César Merchán-Hamann; 23 academic blog posts on *The Jewish Languages Bookshelf*; and 442 exercises across different languages on the OSRJL Tutorials platform. Additionally, 5 Visiting Fellows came to Oxford over the course of the pilot phase and researched a wide range of themes related to rare Jewish languages, gave public lectures, wrote articles for *The Bookshelf* and worked on their own publications. Lastly, the OSRJL and its teachers sponsored and participated in the activities of other partner projects and organisations, such as the Jewish Language Project's 'Jewish Women's Voices' exhibit and 'Judeo-Baghdadi Arabic Cursive' class, Limmud's 2022 teaching of Judeo-Italian and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's 'Judeo-Persian Literature in Translation' class.



Suffice it to say, the OSRJL's pilot phase was a resounding success. The remarkable global response to our programme's multifaceted offerings spurred us on to grow the programme at pace and take it to new heights year after year. In view of the OSRJL's abundant flourishing, the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies is keen to solidify it as a permanent programme.

*Madeleine Trivasse*

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## The End of the Pilot Phase

In 2023–24, the final year of the OSRJL's pilot phase, we yet again expanded our language offerings to include classes on 3 rare Jewish languages new to the programme (Haketia, Judeo-Hamadani and Kivruli), thereby teaching a total of 18 vernacular languages spoken and/or written by Jews from the Middle Ages until today. We also incorporated multiple sections and levels of several languages to accommodate demand and need. We were grateful that all our teachers—leading academics at universities and skilled teachers in Europe and around the world, the majority of whom joined the OSRJL in its inaugural year—carried on teaching in the programme, as we also welcomed 2 new instructors.

All OSRJL language classes continued to be offered free of charge to accepted students, who were selected through a process that was particularly competitive this year due to an enormous influx of applications, as detailed below. The applications of students studying at any university globally, particularly those studying Jewish languages and related fields, were prioritised as per the programme's founding criteria, even as the programme welcomed and accepted a large proportion of



applications from members of the broader academic and non-academic publics. Subject to fulfilling attendance requirements, all accepted students were eligible for certificates of participation at the end of the academic year.

Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger FBA (OCHJS President; Director, Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies, Oxford; Professor of Hebrew Manuscript Studies, EPHE, Paris Science et Lettres [PSL]; and Fellow, Corpus Christi College, Oxford) continued to direct the programme. Madeleine Trivasse (OCHJS Academic Registrar and Publications Officer) remained the OSRJL Coordinator, though she went on unexpectedly early maternity leave at the end of October 2023 to bring baby Cyrus into the world. Thereafter, while she continued to oversee all aspects of the programme's funding, operations and development, she did so in a more limited capacity than usual for most of the year. As the OSRJL Administrator, Celeste Pan kept the programme running in Madeleine's absence and worked tirelessly in carrying out its day-to-day administration with her typical efficiency and kindness. She finished her time in the role at the end of August 2024 and helped induct her successor, new OSRJL Administrator Esther Edwards, who also served as Interim OCHJS Academic Registrar (maternity cover) from November 2023–October 2024 and assisted Professor Olszowy-Schlanger with fundraising efforts for the OSRJL programme during that time. Priscilla Lange (OCHJS Academic Administrator) supported the OSRJL through organising its public lectures, in conjunction with other series of the OCHJS, as well as its Jewish music classes. Kerry Maciak (OCHJS Bursar) and Jun Tong (OCHJS Accounts Assistant) undertook all financial aspects of the programme's administration. And Michael Allaway (Software Engineer, University of Oxford) continued improving and supporting the OSRJL Tutorials platform.



*Esther Edwards, Interim OCHJS Academic Registrar & new OSRJL Administrator beginning Autumn*



*2023–24 OSRJL Administrative Staff (L-R):*

*Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, OCHJS President*

*Madeleine Trivasse, OSRJL Coordinator, OCHJS Academic Registrar & Publications Officer*

*Celeste Pan, OSRJL Administrator*



*Priscilla Lange, OCHJS Academic Administrator*

*Kerry Maciak, OCHJS Bursar*

*Jun Tong, OCHJS Accounts Assistant*



The OSRJL's Advisory Committee, whose expert membership has remained constant since the programme's inception, yet again offered invaluable insight and support. Its members included: Dr Sarah Bunin Benor (Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion); Dr Yehudit Henshke (University of Haifa); Professor Lily Kahn (University College London); Professor Geoffrey Khan (University of Cambridge); Professor Laurent Mignon (University of Oxford); Professor Ofra Tirosh-Becker (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem); and Professor Dr Ronny Vollandt (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München).

The 2023–24 academic year drew to a close the OSRJL's pilot phase, funded by 2 generous foundations which wish to remain anonymous. Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and the OSRJL team furthered their fundraising campaign aimed at extending the programme beyond its pilot phase and were delighted to raise the capital for the programme's fourth year. Their continued fundraising efforts now focus on securing an endowment for the OSRJL to ensure a stable future for this extraordinary programme.

*Madeleine Trivasse*

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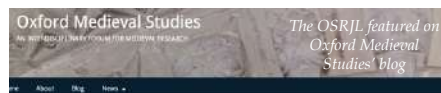


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## 2023–24 in Review

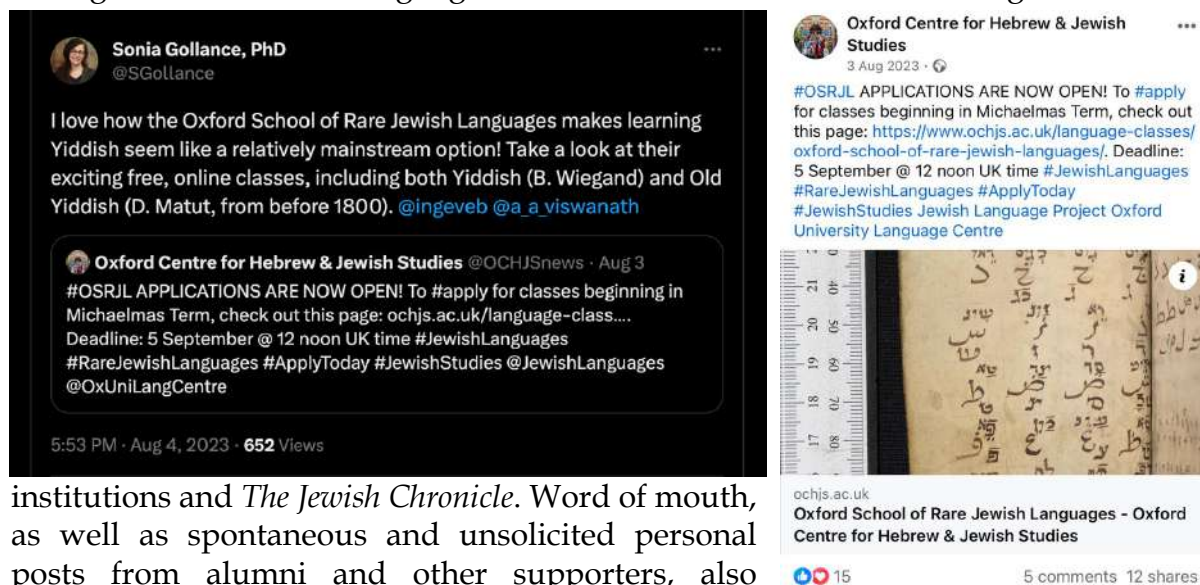
It goes without saying that the horrific attacks on 7 October 2023 and the ensuing war in Israel and Gaza threw the beginning of the academic year into upheaval for us all. Some of the OSRJL's accepted students from Israel had to withdraw from classes very early on, and some of our teachers and students living in Israel required greater flexibility in Michaelmas Term 2023 particularly, given the unfolding crisis. We endeavoured to support them, as well as all those affiliated with the programme who were affected by the situation in one way or another, as much as we could. Additionally, others of our students and staff continued to be impacted by the ongoing war in Ukraine, and we likewise sought to be flexible according to their needs. To ensure that as many individuals as possible had opportunities to benefit from the programme, we quickly offered to other applicants any places that were given up, and we kept in close contact with all those students and teachers whose circumstances were in flux in the autumn especially. We were grateful that all our teachers were able to continue teaching with us throughout the year and that all our classes were able to proceed amid the upheaval.

Despite these global crises, the third and final year of the OSRJL's pilot phase was marked by ever-increasing interest from prospective students and the general public, coupled with continued expansion of the programme's class offerings. Our application documents, created through Microsoft Forms, were put to good use once again as we received more applications for classes beginning in Michaelmas Term 2023 alone than we had for classes across all three terms of 2022–23: the 671



**Rare Jewish Languages at Oxford**  
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 # Around Oxford News | # Impact, Jewish, Languages  
 Jewish languages are essential and integral parts of Jewish history, creativity, culture and identity. Most of them are currently in danger of extinction while others are already dead, known only from early writing.

applications submitted for Michaelmas Term 2023 amounted to 157 more than we received for the entire 2022–23 year. This considerable rise in numbers occurred in spite of the fact that our advertising methods remained the same: we posted class offerings through the [OCHJS website](#), social media accounts and email list, as well as through the Oxford Language Centre, various academic mailing lists across



institutions and *The Jewish Chronicle*. Word of mouth, as well as spontaneous and unsolicited personal posts from alumni and other supporters, also bolstered our global reach significantly.

As mentioned above, the 15 languages taught in 2022–23 were joined by an additional 3 this year – Haketia, Judeo-Hamadani and Kivruli. We reworked a few of our class offerings to last for 1, 2 or 3 terms and accommodate different levels—for instance, Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic classes were divided into Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced levels; Judeo-Turkish was offered at only the Advanced level; and 2 sections of Beginners Yiddish were provided alongside Lower Intermediate, Intermediate and Advanced Literature classes. Overall, the advertised array of 18 languages taught through the programme during the 2023–24 academic year and their teachers included:

- Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic** Dr Assaf Bar Moshe, Freie Universität Berlin
- Classical Judeo-Arabic** Friederike Schmidt, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
- Haketia** Dr Carlos Yebra López, University College London
- Judeo-French** Dr Sandra Hajek, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
- Judeo-Greek** Dr Julia G. Krivoruchko, University of Cambridge
- Judeo-Hamadani** Professor Dr Saloumeh Gholami, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt
- Judeo-Italian** Dr Marilena Colasuonno, University of Naples
- Judeo-Moroccan** Haivva Fenton
- Judeo-Neo-Aramaic** Dr Dorota Molin, University of Oxford, University of Cambridge
- Judeo-Persian** Dr Ofir Haim, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, & Maximilian Kinzler
- Judeo-Provençal** Dr Peter Nahon, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
- Judeo-Tat** Professor Gilles Authier & Dr Murad Suleymanov, EPHE, Paris
- Judeo-Turkish** Professor Laurent Mignon, University of Oxford
- Karaim** Professor Henryk Jankowski, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań



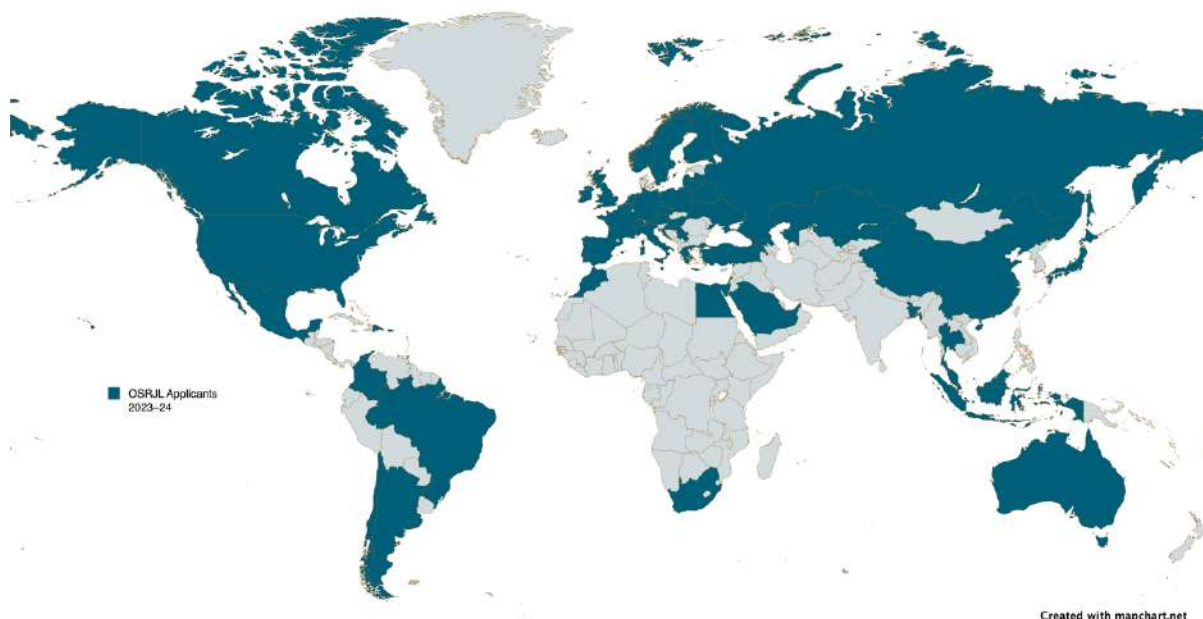
**KivruLi** *Dr H el ene G erardin, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, EPHE, Paris*

**Ladino** *Dr Carlos Yebra L opez, University College London*

**Old Yiddish** *Dr Diana Matut*

**Yiddish** *Dr Beruriah Wiegand, OCHJS, University of Oxford*

As noted above, this year’s application numbers were remarkable from the outset – we received 810 total applications from prospective students (many of whom applied for multiple language classes), up from 514 the previous year. Individuals from the following 56 countries applied: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, T urkiye, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



As has always been the case, our applicants were a mix of current students studying a wide range of fields at academic institutions across the globe and members of the broader general public both within and outside academia. In total, 453 individuals were accepted to and took up student places in OSRJL language classes in 2023–24 (with a number of these applicants being accepted to multiple classes) – up from 349 accepted students in 2022–23. Of the accepted students this academic year, 213 were current students in degree programmes elsewhere; 240 were members of the general academic and non-academic publics; 331 were entirely new to the OSRJL; and 122 were alumni who had studied with us during previous years and chose to reapply for more classes in 2023–24.

All classes were limited to a maximum of 30 student places and allowed a waitlist of up to 10 applicants, some of whom were offered places when they became

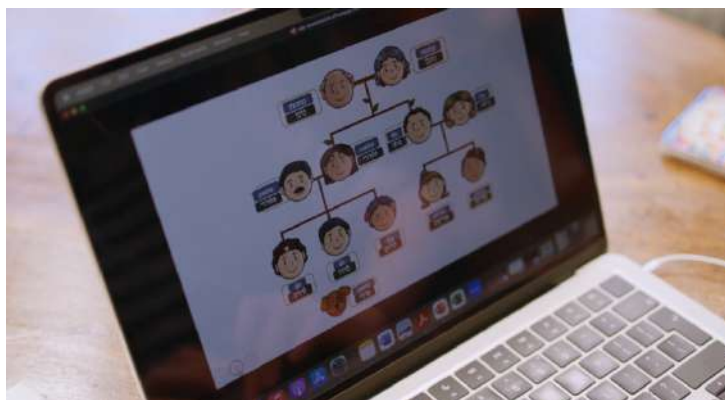
available. Our second edition of the OSRJL Student Handbook, produced by OSRJL Administrator Celeste Pan, proved a welcome introduction and guide to the programme for new and returning students alike.

During all three 8-week Oxford terms, each language class was held weekly online for 1 hour via Zoom, and many of them were accompanied by a growing body of exercises on our OSRJL Tutorials platform, detailed below. As has been our model since the programme's inception,



classes were offered for 1, 2 or 3 terms depending on the language but with the majority of languages taught across all 3 terms. Classes offered for multiple terms were contiguous ones in which the material built on itself term after term. Classes offered for 1 term included: Advanced Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic, Advanced Beginners Judeo-French, Beginners Judeo-Greek, Beginners Judeo-Hamadani, Advanced Beginners Judeo-Provençal, Advanced Judeo-Turkish, Beginners Karaim and Beginners Kivruli. Those offered for 2 terms included: Intermediate Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic, Beginners Haketia, Beginners and Intermediate/Advanced Classical Judeo-Arabic and Beginners Judeo-Tat. Those offered for 3 terms included: Beginners Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic; Beginners Judeo-Italian; Beginners Judeo-Moroccan; Beginners and Advanced Judeo-Persian; both sections of Beginners as well as the section of Intermediate Ladino; Beginners Old Yiddish; and both sections of Beginners Yiddish, plus Lower Intermediate and Intermediate Yiddish, as well as Advanced Yiddish Literature. In total, the OSRJL offered 504 hours of language teaching over the course of the year (up from 456 hours in the 2022–23 academic year).

In their classes, teachers covered a variety of topics (grammatical and syntactical features, vocabulary, conversational phrases, etc.) and used a range of methods



(conversational practice, reading of manuscripts, lectures on historical and cultural contexts, discussion of linguistics and phonetics, etc.) depending on relevance for the language being taught. While more and more of the resources for use outside and during classes were disseminated to students by teachers via our

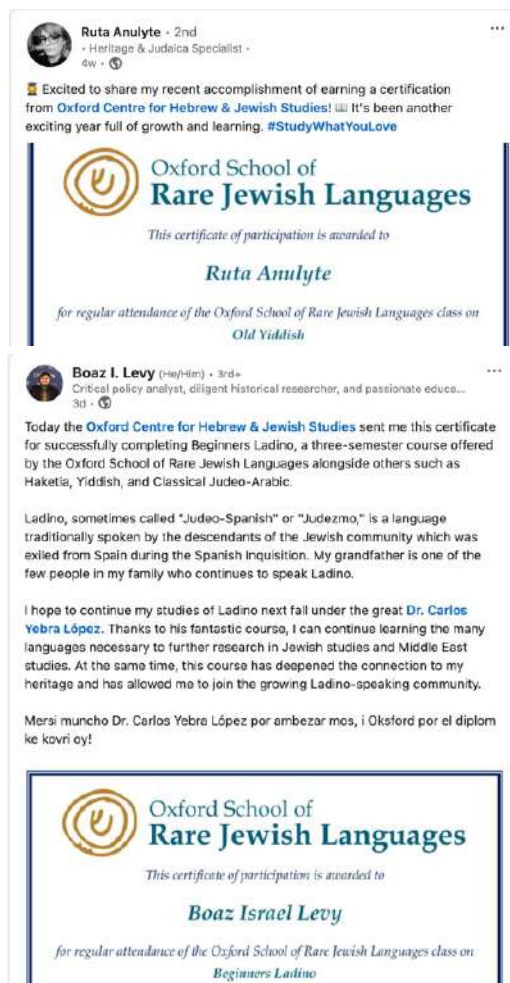
OSRJL Tutorials platform in an effort to consolidate teaching materials and work toward streamlining our ways of working, some materials continued to be emailed or sent via WhatsApp groups.



Electronic certificates of participation were issued to eligible language students upon their completion of classes. Our qualifying attendance policy of missing no more than the equivalent of 2 sessions per term for each class taken remained in place for the issuing of such certificates. OSRJL Administrator Celeste Pan diligently kept weekly attendance records for all classes throughout the year and issued certificates under the supervision of OSRJL Coordinator Madeleine Trivasse and Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger. As has been the case since the OSRJL began, some students arranged to receive official recognition of their studies with us through their home universities using their certificates of participation, though OSRJL classes continue not to be marked or offered for credit through the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies directly.

While language classes persisted as the core of the OSRJL programme, additional endeavours, such as those described below, were pursued throughout the 2023–24 year and garnered much engagement and attention.

**OSRJL Cafés:** Though the OSRJL as a whole entered its third year in 2023–24, our Café series ran for its second year. Following on from 2 successful exploratory events in 2022–23 organised in response to students’ requests for opportunities outside weekly classes to connect with other students studying different languages through the OSRJL, each of this year’s Cafés focused on a specific theme—‘Heritage’ in Michaelmas Term 2023 and ‘The Hebrew Alphabet’ in Trinity Term 2024. During the Cafés, 2-3 preselected students studying different languages with us gave 20-minute presentations on particular aspects of Jewish languages. The events were emceed by student convenors, who introduced the speakers and topics as well as moderated Q&A sessions after each presentation. Both Cafés culminated with an interactive activity to allow all attendees greater scope for engaging with one another. In Michaelmas Term 2023, student Iglia Nikolova-Stoupak convened the Heritage-themed Café, which 66 people registered to attend and which included talks on ‘Baghdadi Jews and the British Raj’, given by student Amanda Mingail Shubert; “‘əl-Lišana Gana Hiwala,” To Give Life to Language’, by student Samuel Miller; and ‘Between Life and Death: “Chi nasce, muor/Kina Shemor” by Rabbi Leon Modena and “Yerusha” by Haim Gouri’, by student Agata Kroh. In Trinity Term 2024, Agata Kroh convened the Hebrew Alphabet-themed Café, which 33 people registered to attend and which featured talks on ‘The Forgotten World of Soviet Yiddish Book Design’, by student Noah Bromberg, and ‘Writing German, Writing Yiddish: Uses of the Hebrew Alphabet in 15th-Century Germany’, by student Brianna Burdetsky.





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## Michaelmas Term OSRJL Café

Convened by Igljika Nikolova-Stoupak (OSRJL Student)

30 November 2023, 5pm UK Time, Online via Zoom



### 'Baghdadi Jews and the British Raj'

This talk introduces a new research project on Baghdadi Jewish history and culture under the British Raj (1859-1947). The Baghdadi Jews of India were Arab Jews – not only Iraqis but Syrians, Yemenis, Afghans, Persians, and others – who migrated to India beginning at the turn of the nineteenth century for colonial trade opportunities and refuge from political instability in their home countries. As a descendent of the Calcutta Baghdadi Jewish community, I use material and visual culture from my family archive to interpret the ways that my ancestors negotiated their complex and hybrid identities as Indians, Arabs, Jews, and British colonial subjects.

Amanda Mingail Shubert (OSRJL Student) is Teaching Faculty in English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she specializes in Victorian literary and visual culture. She received her PhD in English from the University of Chicago in 2019. Her first book, 'Seeing Things: Virtual Aesthetics in Victorian Culture', is under contract with Cornell University Press.

### "əl-Lišana Gana Hiwala," To Give Life to Language'

Speakers of endangered and moribund languages often have complex relationships with them. This talk will explore language preservation and cultural activism through the eyes of a heritage speaker of Lishan Didan (Jewish Neo-Aramaic from Persian Azerbaijan/Urmia). It will walk through examples of past and current documentation efforts, including oral histories, music, and automatic transcription software. In discussing these efforts, the talk aims to answer the question: what value is there in fighting to keep a language alive?

Samuel Miller (OSRJL Student) is an Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing Researcher, with a BS in Computer Science from the University of Maryland, College Park. He is also a Documentation Assistant for the Jewish Language project, where he helps document and preserve his mother's language, Lishan Didan. He is currently applying to PhD programs, hoping to study how novel Artificial Intelligence techniques can be used to bolster the vitality of endangered languages.



### 'Between Life and Death:

"Chi nasce, muor/Kina Shemor" by Rabbi Leon Modena and "Yerusha" by Haim Gouri'

A gem of the Judeo-Italian tradition, 'Kina Shemor' is a poem written by the Venetian rabbi, Leon of Modena, at the end of the 16th century. 'Yerusha' by Haim Gouri, on the other hand, was published in 1960. Both of these texts reflect remarkably the richness of the Jewish literary creation, at times its ironic playfulness, and ultimately its universal value. In this talk, I would like to illustrate the idea that what lies at the core of the Jewish heritage is the multiplicity of readings, the joy and depth found in a rich array of interpretations, and how Modena's piece may serve as a metaphor for this process.

Agata Kroh (OSRJL Student) earned her M.A. in English from Adam Mickiewicz University and M.St. in Jewish Studies from Oxford. She also studied in Cambridge and in Israel. For over a decade, she taught Jewish Culture, Modern and Biblical Hebrew in Poland and in France. Her research interests include linguistics, translation, Romance languages, the Hebrew language and Modern Hebrew literature, and Jewish – non-Jewish relations.



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## Trinity Term OSRJL Café

*Convened by Agata Kroh (OSRJL Student)*

Monday 10 June 2024, 6:30pm UK Time, Online via Zoom



### 'The Forgotten World of Soviet Yiddish Book Design'

Pick up any Yiddish book published in the USSR from 1959 to 1991, and you will find it adorned with striking and inventive lettering art. But today, these book covers—and the circle of talented Soviet Jewish letterers who designed them—remain largely unknown. In this presentation, we will take a new look at some of these books, the artists behind them, and the tangled history of Yiddish and the alef-beys in the Soviet Union.

Noah Bromberg (OSRJL Student) is an undergraduate student in classical archaeology, and an intern at the Yiddish Book Center. Their research focuses on Yiddish printing history as well as the languages of the Bronze Age Mediterranean.

### 'Writing German, Writing Yiddish: Uses of the Hebrew Alphabet in 15th-Century Germany'

Old Yiddish was more closely related to German than the Yiddish we know today. In written manuscripts, one of the few features which distinguish it from contemporary German is its use of the Hebrew alphabet. However, toward the end of the Middle Ages, examples began to appear of Christians using Hebrew script to read and write German. In this presentation, I discuss two 15th-century examples of this "German in Jewish script," what they tell us about the relationship between German and Yiddish, and how they served as a precursor to Christian missionary efforts toward Jews over the next three centuries.



Brianna Burdetsky (OSRJL Student) earned her M.A. in Medieval and Renaissance Studies from Columbia University, where her thesis research focused on Arthurian literature in Middle High German and Old Yiddish. She works at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA.

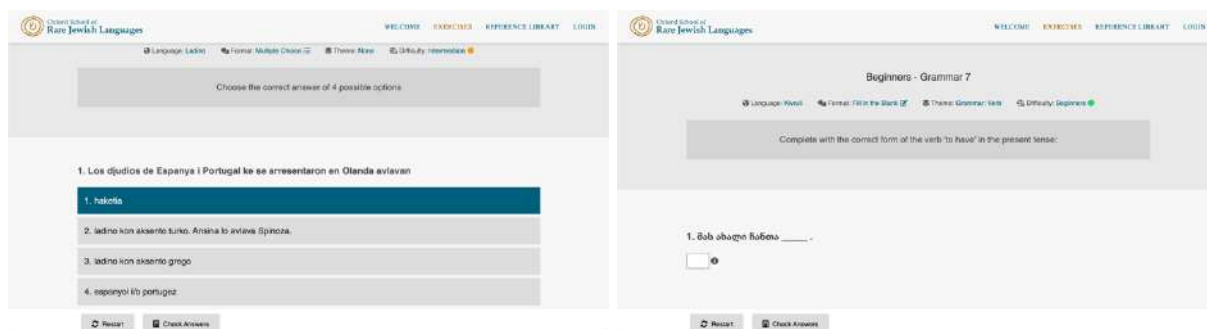


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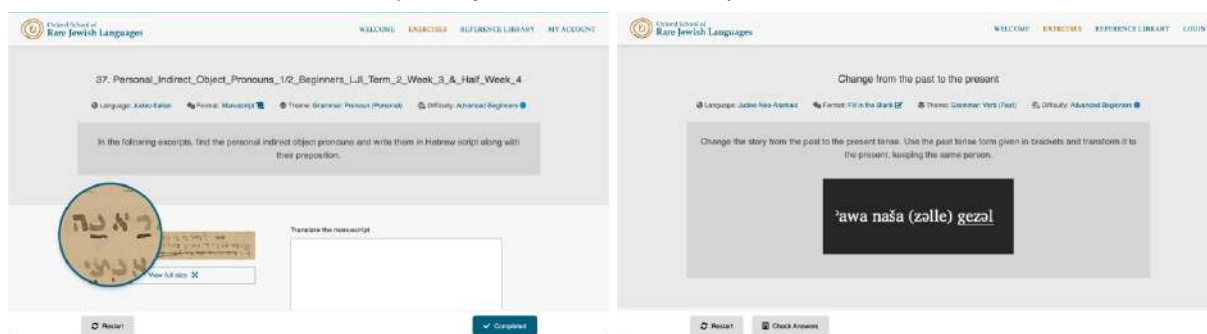


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**OSRJL Tutorials Website:** Teachers added more exercises and materials to our [Tutorials](#) platform this year as we encouraged greater use of the platform in our streamlining efforts. The Tutorials site, uniquely designed for the OSRJL, hosts self-correcting exercises as well as other educational resources (text, image, audio and video files) for students to complete and use outside class sessions to support their language learning. We will continue to invest in and upgrade this important tool now that the OSRJL has passed out of its pilot phase and moves toward becoming a permanent programme of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies.



Screenshots of several exercise formats on OSRJL Tutorials (l-r, top-bottom): multiple choice (Ladino), fill-in-the-blank (Kioruli), manuscript analysis (Judeo-Italian) and fill-in-the-blank (Judeo-Neo-Aramaic)



**OSRJL Lectures:** As part of the OCHJS's public-lecture offerings, OCHJS Academic Administrator Priscilla Lange continued to organise for the OSRJL a series of talks, given in a hybrid format, focused on topics related to rare Jewish languages to provide both OSRJL students and the general public glimpses into the broader historical, cultural, literary and linguistic contexts of such languages. The first of these lectures, that of Professor Nathan Cohen on 'Changes in the Yiddish Book Market in Eastern Europe between the mid-19th Century and WWII', was recorded and made available on the [OCHJS's Vimeo account](#), where previous OSRJL Lectures as well as other events of the OCHJS are also available for viewing.

### Michaelmas Term 2023

#### 'Changes in the Yiddish Book Market in Eastern Europe between the mid-19th Century and WWII'

Professor Nathan Cohen,  
Bar-Ilan University



Slide from Professor Nathan Cohen's OSRJL Lecture in Michaelmas Term 2023



### Hilary Term 2024

'Jewish Mysticism in 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century Ashkenazi Society: Translating the Zohar in Old Yiddish' *Professor Jean Baumgarten, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris*

### Trinity Term 2024

'Judeo-Italian in Hebrew Mathematical Treatises from Renaissance Italy' *Dr Ilana Wartenberg, Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University*

The screenshot shows the website interface for the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'WELCOME', 'EXERCISES', 'REFERENCE LIBRARY', and 'MY ACCOUNT'. Below this, there are two audio player widgets. Each widget is titled 'Week 2 - Jewish Singing in the Middle Ages - non-Hebrew' and includes a language selection dropdown set to 'Jewish Music'. The first player shows a progress bar at 0:13 / 6:29, and the second player shows a progress bar at 0:00 / 4:08. To the right of the second player, there is a text box that reads 'Jewish music resources on our OSRJL Tutorials platform'.

**Jewish Music Classes:** Dr Diana Matut's popular Jewish music class series, focusing on specific facets of Jewish music and related to the theme of Jewish languages, entered its third year as part of the OSRJL in 2023–24. This year, her classes revolved around Yiddish music specifically: 'Yiddish Music as a Global Phenomenon, 1800–1933' (Michaelmas Term 2023, 29 students), 'Yiddish Music for the Stage' (Hilary Term 2024, 33 students) and 'From Resistance to New Voices: Yiddish Music from Wartime to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' (Trinity Term 2024, 26 students). Music classes were offered once each week for 1 hour per session during the 8 weeks of each Oxford term, just as the OSRJL's language classes were. Certificates of participation were issued for these classes by OCHJS Academic Administrator Priscilla Lange, who organised the classes.

**The Jewish Languages Bookshelf, An Academic Blog:** This year, our academic blog, [The Jewish Languages Bookshelf \(The Bookshelf\)](#), welcomed articles on particular pieces of material and book culture including the following:



Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Levy 19, f. 529r. From 'A Latin-Alphabet Inscription in a Hebrew Pentateuch' Celeste Pan

'A Latin-Alphabet Inscription in a Hebrew Pentateuch' *Celeste Pan, University of Oxford*

'Crime and Detective Stories in Yiddish' *Professor Nathan Cohen, Bar-Ilan University*

'On a 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophical and Scientific Glossary in Hebrew and Judeo-Italian' *Dr Ilana Wartenberg, Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University*

**‘Translating, Editing and Printing Tikkunim in Old Yiddish’** Professor Jean Baumgarten, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris

**‘Jewish Languages as a Bridge: The Case of Avram Davidson’** Professor Laurent Mignon, University of Oxford

**‘The Oran Mahzor as a Source for the Study of Multiple Histories’** Professor Jonathan Glasser, The College of William & Mary, & Dr Amina Boukail, University of Jijel



A. A. Davidson, 'Caphtor & Other Places', Orthodox Jewish Life, vol. IX, no. 6 (July-August 1952), p. 24. From 'Jewish Languages as a Bridge: The Case of Avram Davidson' Professor Laurent Mignon

**OSRJL Visiting Fellowships:** The OCHJS hosted another 2

OSRJL Visiting Fellows this year – Professor Jean Baumgarten (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) in Hilary Term 2024, working on 'An Anthology of Old Yiddish Literature (16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)', and Dr Ilana Wartenberg (Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University) in Trinity Term 2024, researching 'A Hitherto-Unpublished Hebrew and Judeo-Italian Astronomical Glossary from the Italian Renaissance (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Opp. 696)'. Previously, Professor Baumgarten and Dr Wartenberg were Visiting Fellows at the OCHJS as part of the Oxford Seminar in Advanced Jewish Studies on *Books in Judeo Languages: Popular Reading and Scholarship*, led by Professor Baumgarten in Michaelmas Term 2022. This year as OSRJL Visiting Fellows, both of them contributed articles to *The Bookshelf* blog based on their time in Oxford, as well as gave OSRJL Lectures.



**Publications:** Our collaboration with UCL Press on the publication of an OSRJL subseries – one specifically dealing with rare Jewish languages – in the publisher’s *Textbooks of World and Minority Languages* series, edited by Professor Lily Kahn and Dr Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi, continued this year. The preparation for publication of 4 textbooks – those on Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic (Dr Assaf Bar Moshe), Ladino (Dr Carlos Yebra López), Judeo-Neo-Aramaic (Dr Dorota Molin) and Judeo-Italian (Dr Marilena Colasuonno) – progressed throughout the year, with those on Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic and Ladino being advanced in the publication process. Further potential volumes in the subseries continue to be under discussion with other teachers. Greater details about the subseries will be made available on our website in due course. Furthermore, Professor Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and Dr César Merchán-Hamann (Director of the OCHJS’s Leopold Muller Memorial Library and Victor Blank Curator of Hebraica & Judaica, Bodleian Library) released their edited volume, *Jewish Languages and Book Culture*, published by the Bodleian Library in September 2024.



Madeleine Trivasse



## Monitoring, Evaluation & Reflection

Not content for our programme to stagnate, we were able to act on learning from last academic year to improve the OSRJL programme in 2023–24 through the many ways detailed herein. Though possibilities for the programme’s growth seem almost endless,



we are pleased with what we were able to accomplish this year, especially given our reduced staff capacity and, sadly, the difficult nature of the year for many of our students, teachers and staff directly and indirectly affected by the wars in Israel and Gaza as well as Ukraine. In 2024–25, we aim to keep pursuing several of the points for development discussed in our 2022–23 Impact Report—such as upgrades to our Tutorials platform and adding a third Café to our events calendar—in addition to tackling the new challenges involved in establishing the OSRJL as a permanent programme at the heart of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies’ public outreach activities.

Over the course of 2023–24, we released surveys to all our students and teachers following each term, as well as a separate survey to those students who, for one reason or another, had to drop classes before completing them. These regular monitoring and evaluation practices, which have been in place since the OSRJL’s inauguration, yet again proved invaluable by allowing us to make helpful adjustments throughout the year and plan for the longer term when thinking about future years of the programme. Our administrative team analysed the results of all surveys, shared anonymised, relevant information with teachers to make constructive changes quickly and coupled the feedback with advice from our Advisory Committee when planning and preparing for the 2024–25 academic year.

In addition to the feedback gathered via surveys, we collected freeform reflections and pieces from our students and teachers regarding various aspects of their involvement with our programme. Samples of such comments follow below.

*Madeleine Trivasse*

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Participating in the classes of the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages has been a profoundly enriching experience for me. As a Ladino teacher and translator myself, my journey into these lesser-known Jewish languages has significantly broadened my understanding of this linguistic and cultural phenomenon.

Studying these languages has deepened my expertise in Ladino and allowed me to contextualize its development within a broader framework of Jewish linguistic heritage. Each language—whether Judeo-Italian, Juhuri (Judeo-Tat), Kivruli or others—reveals unique insights into the historical and cultural tapestry of Jewish communities worldwide. This newfound knowledge has not only enhanced my professional capabilities but also enriched my personal life.

Moreover, the classes have provided me with the opportunity to engage with a diverse cohort of learners from around the globe. Together, we have formed a community of enthusiasts dedicated to exploring and preserving these rare Jewish languages. This collaborative environment has offered a space for sharing insights, exchanging ideas and building connections with like-minded individuals passionate about Jewish linguistic heritage.

*Matan Stein, OSRJL Student*

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I initially signed up to learn Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic because I was considering doing research on Iraqi Jews. The classes surpassed my expectations in the best ways. Assaf Bar-Moshe is a gifted language teacher, and the students were a very helpful mix of native speakers and language nerds. Learning the language has opened windows for me to understand the structure of other Arabic dialects as well as reinforce my knowledge of Hebrew. Occasionally, I feel Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic creeping into my spoken and thinking Arabic, which is fantastic. I'm sure the class doesn't need any more recommendation because there seems to be a waiting list.

*Maryam Nabeelah Ismail, OSRJL Student*

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My background is in cultural history, but not that of Maghrebi Jews from which my family originates. I have always wanted to learn more about where my family is from. Through the OSRJL and Haviva Fenton's class, I was so grateful to have a chance to gain both a foundation in Judeo-Moroccan and further insight into the day-to-day life of Jews in Morocco. Haviva's first-hand experience growing up in Marrakech provided what was almost a microhistory of mid-century Moroccan Jewish experience. Coupled with the unique backgrounds of each of my classmates, the class made for some inspiring Monday mornings. I look forward to a better understanding of my family's experience because of these lessons!

*Jean-Philippe SanGiovanni, OSRJL Student*

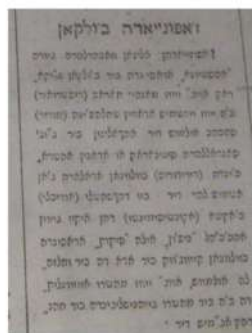
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Among the texts read as part of the Advanced Judeo-Turkish class this past year were articles from the newspaper *Üstad* ('The Master'), published in İzmir from 1889–91. The main aim of this periodical was to increase familiarity with the language of the Ottoman-Turkish press among the Sephardim of Ottoman Turkey. Representing



the great wealth of Turkish sounds with the Hebrew alphabet was a challenge, but not more than doing so with Arabic letters. The publishers of *Üstad* were daringly creative and developed a quasi-phonetic alphabet that one can argue is the lovechild of the Ottoman-Turkish and Judeo-Spanish alphabets.

Seeking to teach their readers arguably unfamiliar Ottoman-Turkish vocabulary, *Üstad's* publishers provided readers with bracketed translations of such terms. Hence *seyahat* ('travel, journey') would be followed by *viaje*, or *dehşetli* ('terrible, horrible') by *orrivle*. Very rarely was a Ladino word used directly in a Turkish sentence, but there are exceptions, such as in the case of the word *shena* – an Italian loanword referring to the stage in a theatre – probably because theatre terminology in Turkish was still developing and the Turkish equivalent term, *sahne*, had not yet settled.



Learning about Japan in Ottoman and Judeo-Turkish: Children and Volcanoes, Slide 1

**ז'אפוניאדה ב'ולקאן**  
 ז'אפוניאדה ב'ולקאן האנהלהרה ג'ורה  
 "אספטיזא" דאסנידה ב'ולקאן ג'יקארק  
 אוג" ייוו חאנהי חאראב ב'ה ייוו ייהטמש  
 דאמין טהלהפינה סהבה אולמושדיר.  
 האקאליניג ב'יר ג'יג'י סאנהלהרה ס'יג'יארק  
 או דאחין האטרספינה ב'וולונאן דאלארה  
 ג'אן חטמישלארדיר. ב'ו דהקשהטלי ב'אקעדהן  
 ג'יקיי ג'יוון אהב'צהל "ג'יפיון" אילא "ס'יקוק"  
 ארסנידה ב'וולונאן ק'יווג'וק ב'יר דאדא ב'יר  
 ז'הולה אולמוש, אוג" ייוו מהטרו  
 אוזוולוקדה ב'ה ב'יר מהטרו ג'ייהטשליג'ינה  
 ב'יר חנהדק אג'ימשידי.



Source: *Sabah*, 25 July 1900



F. A. (Fatma Ünsiye) *Musavver Japon Çocukları* Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1328 (1912)

Learning about Japan in Ottoman and Judeo-Turkish: Children and Volcanoes, Slide 2

Sometimes, I cannot help but think that, when it comes to the relationship between Ottoman-Turkish and Jewish languages, Ladino is the gift that keeps on giving. In his fascinating study of the Arabic elements in the Yiddish of the Old Yishuv titled *Arabic Elements in Palestinian Yiddish: The Old Ashkenazic Jewish Community in Palestine, its History and its Language* (Jerusalem, 1966), Mordecai Kossover

briefly evokes the role Ladino played in the transfer of Turkish words into Palestinian Yiddish. Examples of such words were those related to bath-culture, including *peştamal* – the traditional hammam towel – or, no less important, to cuisine, including *paça* – a rather delightful dish made from calves' or lambs' feet.

Just as the texts we study are spaces of encounter where Turkish flirts with Ladino, Ladino woos Yiddish and Yiddish courts Turkish, so the virtual classroom of the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages brings together people from very different backgrounds united in their desire to learn more about Turkish in the Hebrew alphabet.

Professor Laurent Mignon, OSRJL Judeo-Turkish Teacher

I am an economist who likes to work on historical texts with economic content in order to study the economies in or about which they were written. In particular, I am interested in the economy of North African Jewry as reflected in Geniza documents. I am especially interested in the letters of North African Jewish traders in India. The Classical Judeo-Arabic class taught by Friederike Schmidt through the OSRJL has been very useful to me in pursuing my research. The teacher is a fount of

knowledge about not only the language itself but also the cultural and linguistic environment in which the language was spoken and texts in it were written. Furthermore, my fellow students have been a valuable resource. I am grateful to the OSRJL for organizing these classes.

*Melekh (PV) Viswanath, OSRJL Student*

The OSRJL's Intermediate Ladino class presented an exceptional opportunity to delve into the intricacies of Ladino language, including reading and writing in Ladino using Rashi, Solitreo and even Cyrillic scripts. Furthermore, the class facilitated comprehensive discussions on Sephardic history and culture across various regions, providing invaluable insights into the communities that use Ladino and the initiatives dedicated to preserving this linguistically and culturally rich language. As a descendant of Sephardic Jews, I was honoured to participate in this structured course, expertly led by Carlos Yebra López. Although I am a lawyer by profession, my colleagues and I are planning a translation project of Solitreo letters to contribute to the documentation of Sephardic history. Moreover, I am committed to passing down to my family the knowledge I have acquired to ensure the continued use of Ladino by future generations.

*Pedro Solomon, OSRJL Student*

Teaching Judeo-Hamadani with the OSRJL has been a remarkable and enriching experience. The students, hailing from diverse disciplines, brought unique perspectives to the class. Some were intrigued by the language's grammatical aspects, while others aimed to use Judeo-Hamadani as a modern communication tool. This diversity enriched our discussions and deepened the learning experience for everyone involved.



In addition to grammar and dialogue sessions, we studied and analysed a Judeo-Hamadani song recently recreated by singer and anthropologist Galeet Dardashti. The song, about a Jewish family in Hamadan desperate to exempt their son from the Iranian military draft, was transcribed, translated and linguistically analysed by the students. Our curriculum also included texts from Abrahamian's 1936 fieldwork, along with dialogues that I myself created.

One major challenge of teaching the class was the severe under-documentation and near-extinct status of Judeo-Hamadani. The primary resources available were my recordings from fieldwork in Iran. Although two speakers I met in Iran remembered the language, they did not use it in daily life, complicating the compilation of a



comprehensive lexicon. These challenges highlighted the urgency of preserving the language of the Jewish community in Hamadan.

Despite these difficulties, the students' enthusiasm remained high. Their passion for the language and culture was evident in every session. They frequently requested a textbook, underscoring the need for more comprehensive resources. Their interest inspired me to work toward publishing such a book on Judeo-Hamadani, a project that promises to be both challenging and rewarding. Soon I will be submitting my manuscript proposal as part of the OSRJL's subseries of UCL Press's *Textbooks of World and Minority Languages* series.

Teaching this class has been profoundly motivating and has highlighted the urgent need for more resources on endangered or extinct Jewish languages. It has inspired me to contribute further to the preservation and dissemination of this valuable cultural heritage.

*Professor Dr Saloumeh Gholami, OSRJL Judeo-Hamadani Teacher*

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As a linguist and as a Jew, I have always been interested in rare languages on the one hand and Jewish languages on the other. The OSRJL wonderfully brings two of my passions together. This year, I was lucky to be able to study three languages at once—Judeo-Moroccan, Haketia and Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic. All were taught by experts in their field to a group of very enthusiastic and motivated students, making each course an unforgettable experience. Studying three(!) languages simultaneously gave me new perspectives on Jewish languages, enabling me to see the similarities in how each of them creatively incorporated elements from other languages or gave new life to old Hebrew words. Each class gave a lot of food for thought and ideas for further research, so my quest for knowledge is definitely not over yet! Many thanks to the OSRJL, the instructors and my fellow students for this wonderful opportunity.

*Jenia Gut, OSRJL Student*

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I chose to apply for the OSRJL's Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic class, as I am interested in saving vanishing and rare languages and dialects. The class gave me an opportunity to contribute to the promotion of this magnificent language by studying and researching it. I was very pleased to be a part of the programme.

*Samir Beldjoudi, OSRJL Student*

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Our first Haketia cohort was very unique, and the classroom experience served as a catalyst to everyone's academic and activist endeavours. Several of my students' knowledge of Arabic and their fieldwork experiences in Morocco inspired me to travel to Tetouan and Tangiers in 2024 and to film new material in Haketia for them through my own nonprofit archive, Ladino 21. I was also able to meet and keep in contact with

a speaker in Paris whose first language is Haketia. Currently, I am writing a chapter on the digital revitalisation of Haketia as part of *Cultural Rhizomes of the Global Hispanophone*, coedited by Mahan Ellison and Lennie Amores.

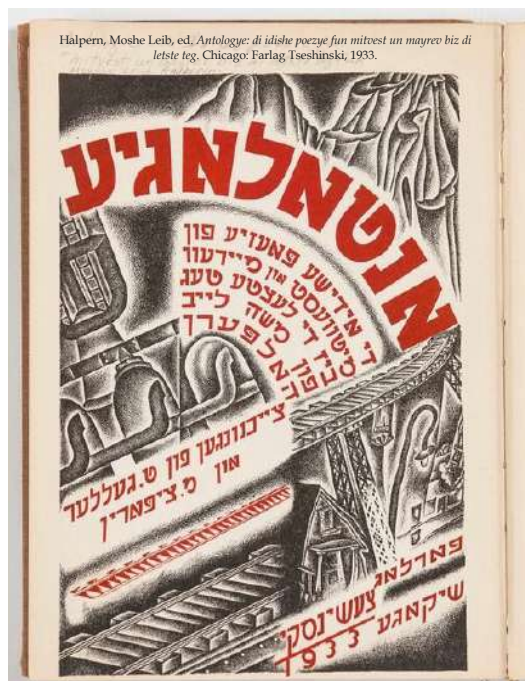
*Dr Carlos Yebra López, OSRJL Ladino & Haketia Teacher*

## Looking Forward

As we establish the OSRJL as a permanent fixture and look forward to developing it in the long term, we have set some specific goals for the 2024–25 academic year—goals we believe will help ground the programme and enable it to grow ever stronger.

Rather than adding even more languages to our roster in 2024–25, we are focusing on those already on offer and creating more opportunities to learn those languages at additional advanced levels. Accordingly, we have already split Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic classes into Beginners, Intermediate and Conversational levels, as well as added Intermediate classes in Judeo-Italian, Karaim and Kivruli, along with an Intermediate/Advanced class in Judeo-Tat and an Advanced class in Judeo-Greek.

Also for the upcoming year, we decided to cap the number of classes that individuals may apply for to a maximum of 4 classes. As well as helping administrative staff, this course of action aims to assist applicants in discerning what they are most interested in and give a greater number of them opportunities to study



through the OSRJL. In the same spirit, we are also instituting a formal donation request when accepted students drop a class without completing it. We hope advance notice that such donation requests will be made will encourage accepted students either to persevere with their studies and complete their classes or to decline, at the outset, places offered to them if they suspect they will be unable to attend classes consistently for their duration. We will then be able to offer declined places to those on waiting lists.

We look forward to honing other existing aspects of the OSRJL programme, including: implementing new improvements on our Tutorials platform based on a compiled list of ideas drawn from both teacher and student feedback; hosting further language Cafés around themes such as ‘Literature’ and incorporating more interactive portions to engage all participants; holding 3 new Jewish music classes on selected themes; welcoming more Visiting Fellows, including Dr Ilana Wartenberg (Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Institute, Tel Aviv University) in Trinity Term 2025, this time studying ‘Judeo-Latin in the Hebrew Transmission of the Theorica Planetarum as



Manifest in Ms. Reggio 42 from the Bodleian Library’; posting new and exciting articles on *The Bookshelf*; and seeing through to publication our first batch of textbooks through UCL Press, as well as facilitating the crafting and submitting of more proposals for the subseries.

While many of the abovementioned goals revolve around existing aspects of the OSRJL programme, we are preparing to incorporate an innovative initiative of the Jewish Language Project under our umbrella and administration—namely, ‘[Heirloom](#)’, a project that ‘seeks to reclaim and revitalize endangered Jewish languages so they can remain in Jewish families for generations to come’ through mentorship schemes. For more information about the project, which the OSRJL helped co-found this past academic year, please consult the [website](#) of the Jewish Language Project, as well as check back on that of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies in due course.



Last but certainly not least, we are concentrating our fundraising efforts on securing an endowment for the OSRJL so that we may keep building and growing the programme for many years to come.

*Madeleine Trivasse*

## Thank You

On behalf of all those involved in the running of the OSRJL, thank you for your interest in and support of our programme during its third year. Particularly, we would like to thank our generous funders, enthusiastic students and committed teachers for making the programme such a success. We look forward to engaging with you further during the upcoming academic year and beyond.

In the meantime, if you wish to learn more about or apply for our classes, then please visit [our page on the OCHJS's website](#) or email our new Administrator, Esther Edwards, or Coordinator, Madeleine Trivasse, at [osrjl@ochjs.ac.uk](mailto:osrjl@ochjs.ac.uk).

Currently, especially now that the programme's pilot phase has come to a close, we are seeking donations to ensure that all our OSRJL activities can remain free of charge to students and participants in years to come. If you wish to join with us in preserving, sparking interest in, enabling access to and reflecting on the nature and role of Jewish languages, then contact our Coordinator, Madeleine Trivasse, directly at [osrjl@ochjs.ac.uk](mailto:osrjl@ochjs.ac.uk) regarding how to make a donation to support the work of the OSRJL.

In gratitude,

*The OSRJL & OCHJS Team*



Oxford School of  
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