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BENEATH THE RHETORIC LIES ETHNOLOGY¹

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Relationship to the JAREL² project

There are several aspects to ethnolinguistic research involved in the compilation of JAREL, a bilingual Judeo-Arabic /French dictionary. A description of the linguistic systems shows that Judeo-Arabic is a «contact language,» at a linguistic crossroads where six languages meet.³ Analysis of the lexicon reveals the creative features of the language, which is related to the ethnology of the linguistic community and is primarily the product of language interference⁴. These creative features are often rhetorical devices.

The inventory of these monolingual or multilingual rhetorical devices in discourse illustrate recurrences of functions in the formal structure of the languages which helped shape the dialect, or in their semantic structures. These devices rely on linguistic appropriation and give the dialect its specificity.

This article presents several examples of the use of these rhetorical devices which illustrate the process described in the title; namely, that ethnology emerges from beneath the rhetoric. Before turning to these examples, however, it is worth examining briefly how these figures of speech are defined.

1.2. Preliminaries to a typology of rhetorical devices

Without entering into the debate over the classification of rhetorical devices, it should be pointed out that the definitions (at times too superficial, often too sophisticated) in one manual can contradict definitions in another, or even fail

¹ The following survey presents one of the studies I was able to carry out this year in Israel as visiting scholar at the CRFJ and the University of Jerusalem. Note that the bibliography and corpus only appear in the French version of this bulletin.

² The acronym JAREL designates ethnolinguistic research on the Jews of North Africa, the group of researchers, investigators and informants who contributed to it as well as the Documents de Travail which publish on-going reports concerning this project designed to produce a bilingual Judeo-Arabic/ French dictionary.

³ Georgette Bensimon-Choukroun (henceforth GBCH): 1992a, p. 101-120; 1993a, p.35-64; 1993b, p.57-82; 1994, p.41-54; 1996, p.25-75; 1997a, p.63-78.

⁴ GBCH, 1992b, p13-17; 1994a, p7-17; 1994b, p79-98; 1995, p301-337; 1997b, p137-149.

to coincide with a single manual (Fontanier, 1830)⁵. In any case, these devices are the outcome of complex processes associating the conscious and the unconscious, the individual and the collective, historical references and comparison by analogy (Hagège, 1982, 1985, 1993, 1998). In final analysis, the simplifying rigor of a typology cannot do them justice.

Claude Hagège posits explicitly that figures of speech reflect a complexity that is inherent to discourse processes, because these processes are human. This is put forward in his theory of «socio-operative or «anthropological» linguistics (see also his *Cours, Séminaire, Collège de France*, 1998). Denise François-Geiger (1990) uses the term «anthropolinguistics» (p.266) in the conclusion of her work on «search for meaning» to emphasize the vast range of rhetorical devices. Thus rhetorical devices are a means of expressing the complexity of feelings, and this itself mirrors human complexity.⁶

1.3. Role of *antonomasia* in typologies

Antonomasia (a word dating back to the 14th century, composed of the Greco-Latin etymons *anti* (in the place of) and *onoma* (name) is a «poor relative,» compared to the two, three or even four main categories of tropes (metaphor, metonym, synecdoche and irony) because it is considered to be a subclass. It is a stylistic device «similar to metonym» (Cressot, 1974), a «special case of the synecdoche» (Fontanier, 1830), the synecdoche itself being a type of metonym (Du Marsais, 1730), which according to another point of view, connects

⁵ The manual by Pierre Fontanier (1830) is not the worst. He states (p.77) that there are «three main types of tropes in a single word (metonym, synecdoche, metaphor)» and then immediately destroys his argument by saying that «we will see that each of these devices can be found in what we call mixed tropes». Roland Barthes (1966) also favored a trilogy but not the same one (p.10) « Provisionally, three main types of discourse can be defined: metonymy (story), metaphor (lyric poetry, sapient discourse) enthymeme (intellectual discourse).»

⁶ One example is a situation where the meaning swings from one referent to another, eliciting events, actions, thoughts and representations. The valence of the French word «calvaire» in the expression «ce fut un calvaire» as a way of describing a difficult test is far removed from the original meaning of «calvaire.» The word was first borrowed from Hebrew /gulgolet/ (skull), catachresis designating a place (top of a hill) because of its shape, the signifier «supplice» (torture) is transformed by metonym of the place to the act that occurred there, then through metaphorical generalization to mean «suffering.» The word for «mandarine» (tangerine) derives from two borrowed words: one from Sanskrit > mandarin and from roman > mandar (Portuguese, Spanish) as well as the metaphor naranja mandarina to differentiate an orange from the «fruit of mandarins» (color of tangerine peel or valued for or similar to...). The Spanish qualifying phrase is then truncated by aphaeresis of the first phoneme and the final vowel is Frenchified. «Hasard» from the Arabic, via Spanish first of all designates one of the sides of a die, /ə-z zhar / then via metonym, a set of dice, then through a first metaphor, any game of chance and then via a second metaphor to mean any action over which we have no control, etc. Thus one rhetorical device can conceal others...

Jakobson's «two poles» (1956)⁷ or Rastier's «two isotopes» (1972)⁸. Metonym and metaphor are said to belong «[...] to the same dimension, which could both be classified under the broader term of *metaphoricity*» (Deguy, 1969).

Definitions of antonomasia can in fact be divided into two groups. The first group of definitions considers antonomasia to be «something mythical», «incarnating a virtue in a stylistic device» (Barthes, 1970), «a concretization» or a «personification» or «a condensation of a specific feature.» The second group of definitions considers antonomasia to be «substitution of a common noun for a proper noun or a proper noun for a common noun.» (Littré, 1872, Cressot, 1974), or «a stylistic device by which a noun is replaced by another or by a phrase» (Bénac, 1949). The *Le Robert* dictionary (1982) defines it as a «stylistic device consisting of replacing a noun by a phrase with a property of the object or the being it designates,» etc⁹. The lesson to be learned from these definitions is that the first group focuses on transfer of meaning, whereas the second group reflects transfer of grammatical class (neither transfer being exclusive), and that antonomasia can apply to a person or a thing. The examples that follow illustrate the use of this figure of speech.

1.4. Antonomasia in multilingual settings

In cases of code switching (Gumperz, 1989) where speakers alternate between two languages, one of which is becoming extinct, instances of the dying language can be found in the form of picturesque usage which complement the style or heighten the meaning of discourse. This is the remarkable case of the use of Judeo-Arabic among native North African speakers who are currently bilingual or multilingual. The striking thing is that expressions in Judeo-Arabic are preserved outside of the original geographic circumscription of the language and that they abound in rhetorical figures¹⁰. The corpus presented

⁷ R. Jakobson, «Metaphor and metonym, two poles of figures of speech», in «Two aspects of language and two types of aphasia,» p.40 and sq. and «In ordinary verbal behavior, the two processes are constantly in use [...]». In «The metaphorical and metonymic poles.» p.63. As G. Genette has shown, in his critical overview, *Figures III* (1972), metaphor as a figure of speech has been generalized (Esnault, 1925; Aish, 1938; Konrad, 1939; Stutterheimm, 1941; Migliorini, 1957; Brooke-Rose, 1958; Black, 1962; Rifaterre, 1969), before shifting emphasis to the metonym (Ullmann, 1960; R. Barthes, 1970; Basilio, 1990). Roman Jakobson stresses that he pointed out its specificity in 1927, in his «remarks on metonymic expressions in the art of language.» (Jakobson, 1956,p.63).

⁸ Rastier (1972) basis his discourse analysis on the concept of isotopy by differentiating horizontal or sememic isotopes and vertical or metaphorical isotopes.»

⁹ See the list of definitions and comments in the Dictionary by Bernard Dupriez (1984).

¹⁰ This article is a more in depth and extended version of the following papers: «Figures de rhétorique en discours plurilingue,» Journée d'Etudes JAREL, 31 mars 1995, LACITO, Paris. Paper presented at the Alliance Française, Jerusalem, January 16, 1997. Paper presented July 25, 1997 at the XVI International Conference of

here deals with antonomasia in conversation. These are taken from a larger corpus collected over a period of the last ten years from French speaking natives of Fès (Morocco); their attestation and meaning have been verified over the last few months. They are dealt with here after transfer of grammatical class. I will be looking at transfer of meaning as a function of associative and connotative mechanisms, (Martinet, 1967; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1977, 1987; Masson 1987) and the kind of anamnesis which inspired them. This should shed light on the significance of this type of verbal behavior, over and beyond the desire to create a common bond characteristic of any time of exchange. All figures of speech are discursive creations, are the end products of connotation, and require the discourse partners to possess a minimum of shared knowledge without which communication would fail. In my opinion, two features give antonomasia its special quality and a semiological (as well as typological) relevance among stylistic devices. First, antonomasia appears to be a more restricted class of entities (an inventory could be drawn up for a given time in the life of the language). Secondly, this class of items testifies to the survival mechanisms of the dying dialect.

2. CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE APPEARANCE AND USE OF ANTONOMASIA

A number of conditions govern the appearance and use of antonomasia in the corpus presented here. These have been classified as a function of their origins as proper nouns or common nouns or phrases.

2.1. *Case of proper names which become nouns acting as qualifiers*

The French first name Denise symbolizes the process of French acculturation in the expression /kän.t̥ Dona o rzæ.t̥ Døniz/ (P1) /. «She was a Dona and she became Denise.» Here, each first name is invested with the features of a different civilization. Five centuries separate their use by this linguistic community. The first name «Dona» has survived from generation to generation (in particular in Fès) since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. The second name, «Denise,» marks the arrival of the French. The sentence employs humor and self-derision to characterize one of the sources of conflict between young and old in the community¹¹. Note that the connotative mechanisms by which

Linguists, Paris CIL, July 19-25, 1997.

¹¹ This example contains the expression /habel-habalim/ from the Hebrew «vanity of vanities.» However the semantic connection between the assessment of «vanity» /habel/ and the schizophrenic posture of the beneficiaries calls for another, lexical, connection. In this dialect, the word which designates the insane, or insanity is /hbil/, /hbäl/, the paronym of /habel/. I will say no more about the relationship between linguistic creations and the unconscious... As regards the first example which reflects the quarrel between the old and new generations, it should be noted that the dialect has other terms to stigmatize this phenomenon, such as /xərz.t̥ m.əl wad o nəsf.o rəzle.ha/. «She left the Qued and her feet have dried.» (in other words she no longer has any memories of her

Dona and Denise become instances of antonomasia depend on a metonymic correlation which links the first name Dona to the older world and the first name Denise to the new. The Dona-Denise opposition actually defines the antonomasia since neither of the names is either antiquated or modern in absolute terms. This particular usage is also a case of fossilization. Another feature is at work in the utterance (P2) /haja Bonina ʔarʃav Penina/. It differs from Dona-Denise because there is no mockery. Rather, Sentence (P2) primarily has an informative function. The lady in question indicates that she now lives in Israel and has taken on an Israeli first name. It is commonplace for people to change their names to Hebrew sounding ones when settling in Israel. Thus the two first names symbolize two periods in her life, but do not form antonomasia of the type found in P1. In fact these two first names also represent qualities, namely, «good» and «precious» (Bonina is the Arabic diminutive of the corresponding Spanish word and Penina means «pearl» in Hebrew). Thus the pair does indeed form a well-known type of linguistic antonomasia which assigns qualities to individuals, such as names of flowers or precious stones. There are numerous examples in the dialect /worda/ «rose», /jakot/ «diamond», /zohra/ «pearl».¹² These same names are used in series as compliments (P3): /lwiza, djamanta o jaʔota/.

Several other first names are carriers of other symbols, via a metonym. For instance a very large yawn is termed a /zart.na Ister/ (P4) «our neighbor Esther; » has curvaceous hips, known as a /mnano/ (P5) from the name of the person who excelled in that area; the ʃha a happy simpleton is either Ašer or šmøjäl (P6) the latter giving rise in addition to a fossilized expression in a noun phrase /møt-šmøjäl / which literally means «dead-šmøjäl»(P6) to indicate that one is giving a phony excuse to avoid an obligation in order to fool people (here a metaphor is superimposed); /hmido-əl-buwas/ is someone you can't get rid of, (P7) etc. in the same way that heavy rains are said to be 'deluvian' /əl mäßbøl de Nuwah/ Noah's flood (P8).

Other proper names from the Bible or the Talmud are used as nicknames or laudatory or pejorative qualifiers.

The names of evil individuals tend to be associated with curses. When referring to Amalek, a Biblical figure, /ʕamaleʔ/ in Judeo-Arabic symbolizes two qualities. The first is connected to the description of Amalek in the Bible as the most abhorrent of all individuals, standing for the worst enemy (without or within) (P9, P10). The other meaning related to Amalek in Judeo Arabic has the connotation (P11) that the person is big, or enormous, like an Amalek (there are other attestations of this variant haketija in Judeo-Spanish in the north of Morocco: /grande kemo un ʕamaleʔ/. The meaning of the word is thus split, in that the signified divides and is doubly condensed. Each meaning is thus representative of part of Amalek's features. Balak, King of Moab who

origins.)

¹² The reverse is also a well-known procedure, where flowers are named for people: begonia, dahlia, fuchsia, gardenia, magnolia, etc.

called on the prophet Balaam to curse Israel in order to weaken it, is the nickname for a «strapping inoffensive young man», a /balaʔ/ (P12). The term /ʔapekoros/ from the Greek Epicurus, the philosopher who championed hedonism, characterizes the «vulgar» (P13) and only more rarely the «libertarian» (P14). The term /tetos/ from the Emperor Titus, has become a fairly mild insult used frequently with a connotation of derision (P15). The expression /parʕo/ from the word Pharaoh, the key figure in the story of the Hebrews' exodus from Egypt, has become a noun used to characterize someone who is tyrannical and stubborn who will not listen to reason. (See /bo el Parʕo/ as a challenge below). The term is often used in homeologic reduplication with /ʕorʕ/ ror/ «ferocious». (P16). The insult /mənkor/ could also be derived from Pharaoh (?) based on /mənkorəʕ/ מְנַקְרֵעַ, the grandson of Cheops and in reference to Pharaoh's legendary cruelty to the Jews. His name may have undergone a truncation by apocope of the final syllable. /Haman/ the name of the advisor of Ahasuerus, designates absolute evil (P17). It is rivaled by /zabel/ (P19) /zabel-tetosa/ in apparent reference to Isabelle the Catholic (Ferdinand of Aragon escapes verbal vindication it seems!). The use of /Bilʕam/, prophet of good tidings despite himself, is used to stigmatize the unbeliever (which is his attribute (P20)) and to indicate that there are degrees of merit (P21). The pair /dabid-o-goljat/ (David and Goliath) is used to express the contrasting contradiction between large and small in action and size. (P22).

Figures representing Good are generally accompanied by praise:

/šelomo-a-melex/ «King Solomon» for his intelligence (P23); /jəsf-a-sadeʔ/ «Saint Joseph» is heralded for his beauty (P24). The determinants «King» and «Saint» are not hypertrophied in the antonomasia of their name¹³. These terms are found in Biblical and Talmudic writings but have become part of the dialect through the oral tradition. They remain in the dialect less as proper names connected to the events in history that made them famous, than as features connected more or less closely tied to the original figure. /ʔapekoros/ does not elicit Epicurus and /tetos/ does not trigger Titus to my 70 year old women informants (today Canadian, French or Israeli). Even if they know who Titus was, the signified /tetos/ is completely divorced for them from the historical referent Titus. On the contrary /haman/ has a well defined place in collective memory for having planned the destruction of the Jewish people and the signified has not altered in meaning. In addition, the sequence /ʔitler et Haman ji.maħ šem.om/ in a reduplicative structure intensifies the homeological (or synonymous value). Literal metaphors are also brought to the fore, such as in example (P25) where the /kurjasim/ represent the three final examinations

¹³ Similarly, although many former schoolchildren still remember adjectives from Homer and have not forgotten the hero Ulysses (of a thousand ruses) and his epithet «the ingenious hero,» they have however forgotten his odyssey and only remember (like Du Bellay) his «wonderful voyage.» Another example, is the word «Oedipus» which after Freud is used more frequently with reference to the complex since collective memory has forgotten the hero and his story and has preserved the meaning in psychoanalysis. The beautiful Helen is now a delicious dessert

for a degree. These examples all suggest that if we Babelize, it is the fault of antonomasia. However if we can standardize and exchange our cultural references it is also thanks to antonomasia.¹⁴

A few names of animals are reserved for expressions of feelings of admiration, repulsion or humor:

For example, a free-spirited or not overly home-bound girl or woman is a /ʔito-t-soʔ/ (P26). The origin of the segment /ʔito/ could be a Berber first name because it appears in several holiday rhymes, but without this connotation. It may denote ‘the cat’ /əl ʔəta/ with suspicious vocalic variations or may in fact refer to the plural /ʔtot/ «cats.» The third segment is doubtless /suk/ or ‘outside’ which are two attested acceptations in the dialect. The central segment would be the functional elliptic /de/, rendered unvoiced by the environment of the two unvoiced consonants; the DEF determiner is also dropped. This can give rise literally to ‘ito of the street’ «street cat»; this latter hypothesis could be confirmed by the French equivalent of ‘alley cat’. (The figure of speech in this case goes through a metaphor before establishing itself as antonomasia). The lion is mentioned not for its strength but doubtless for its metaphorical stature as ‘king’ since /sbəʕ/ or /sbəʕa/ (P27) also designates great scholar (s). The attribute was first used exclusively for Bible and Talmud scholars but the term was extended to cover all extensive knowledge. The use of /kəlb/ «the dog» has the same (metaphorical) connotation of abjection as in other languages but here the intensity is apparently greater when it is used in code switching. A somewhat similar case can be found with the antonomasia of donkey, the /hmar/ (P28) in the comic oxymoron associating the hypocoristic «cheri» (darling) along with the name of the animal. This supreme insult is hence tempered. The goat appears in a humorous expression which stigmatizes both stubbornness and stupidity (P29). In this case metaphor and metonym are combined to yield the antonomasia.

2.2. Common nouns also follow this pattern – the Signifier associates with other Signifieds

Certain terms of endearment follow convoluted routes to their sources

For example, the hyperbolic /kapara/ and /zdaʔa/, are commonplace terms used by a mother to a child or when speaking about a child but can also be used in more intimate settings. Hard to translate, they appear alone or associated to other terms from other domains and are frequently found in series. A paraphrase would be «my love» or ‘I adore you’ and other ways of expressing extreme affection whose intensity cannot be captured in translation

¹⁴ International examples of common nouns which derive from proper names are legion: units of measurement (ampere, curie, hertz, joule, newton, ohm, volt, watt), names of foods (béchamel, chantilly, parmentier, pralines, savarin, sandwich, tatin), architecture (mansard, mausoleum), clothing (lavallière, raglan, ottoman), games (belote) and others (boycott, calepin, maccabee, micheline, montgolfière, morse, pulmann, vespasienne), etc.

since the feeling reflects one meaning of the word... «expiation». The term /kapara/ comes from the Hebrew «sacrificial offering» and /zdaʔa/, from the Hebrew /tsedaka/ means ‘justice’ and by extension ‘charity’. Many terms of endearment are derived in a similar fashion from one component of meaning: /malʔax/ (P32) is not used in its full meaning of ‘messenger’ but rather as the equivalent of ‘my angel’ and more frequently ‘vision, delight’ (my delight). /tāz/ «royal crown » (P30, 31) is the result of truncation by apocope of the term /tāz d.əl ʔbila/ «crown of the tribe (family), an affectionate term for ‘son’. A common noun can give rise to another common noun by stretching the signified through a meta analysis of its signifier. This is the case for /zøfre/ (P33) which comes from the French ‘the workers’ (les ouvriers) changed to /əz zufre/ with the Arabic definite article attached to the plural of the French determiner. Since the basis for the signifier have been lost, the referent ends up being the signified ‘hooligan’, ‘bandit’. Presumably the cause is a metonym. The exterior symbols (dress, strangeness) could lead to confusion between the appearance and the person to give rise to such extreme antonomasia. A similar semantic effect occurs when the end product is in Judeo Arabic and not its initial Aramaic: /dalil/ which means ‘poor,’ changes referent and takes on the signified of «low » (P34). Here again, social status is correlated to the hierarchy contrasting ‘high’ to ‘low’ (‘my high society’ is an affectionate and proud way one female informer called and talked about her son). A synecdoche effect shifts the «lowness» trait from external appearance to an inner quality (other words in the dialect exist to designate the poor -- the /ʕnijim/ and the /mosraxim/ -- both of which come from Hebrew with the morphology of the Hebrew plural in /-im/.

Some examples of cases of the use of antonomasia based on common nouns or participles that are transformed into proper names

The proper name of the Cohen family is the basis for a Hebrew noun which means «devoted to the temple service», from the term /Aharon-ha-kohen/ (Aaron the priest) which generalized into the /køhin/ (the priest), the descendents of the first /kohen/ were the /kohanim/.¹⁵ Our speakers know the history of Moses (who freed the Hebrews from slavery) and his brother Aaron (who was the first high priest); however the connection between these two signified /kohen/ ‘high priest’ and «Cohen» (family name), which is a metonym, is not at all instantaneous in all speakers¹⁶ although it is still part of the language and traditional ceremonies the most well-known of which is the /fək-əl-køhin/ the redemption of the Cohen, which consists of a simulation. The father symbolically buys back his first born son from the Cohen, to whom he is supposed to belong. Without giving rise (to my knowledge) to a last name, /Masijah/ the participial form of the Hebrew ‘anointed’ is even used as a

¹⁵ Reynaud, the name given to the fox in the story has supplanted the name of the animal to designate a fox.

¹⁶ This is also true in European languages where the term ‘abbey’ is widespread. Yet only etymologists remember that the signified «father» from the Aramaic /abb/ gave rise to the word abbot.

proper name in Judeo-Arabic, with the end meaning of liberator. Other proper names derived from similar situations, without however having such a prestigious origin, have better chances of surviving since first and last names are traditionally transmitted in this community. The first name /Məxləf/ also comes from a transfer of grammatical class. A participial form on the model of ‘replaced-replacing’ it was first attributed to a newborn infant whose birth replaces that of a child who died. In the second step, because it is traditional to transmit adult first names (living or dead depending on family customs,) a child will later be called /Məxləf/ without being a ‘replacement’. Motivated first names are thus common but linguistic awareness in the community is not evenly distributed. The origin of the signified /Məxləf/ is almost totally unknown whereas /Məsʕəd/ and /Məsʕəda/ (in the feminine) are known to mean ‘good luck.’ The feminine first name /Mzalto/ assigned from /mazal tov/ (or from the name of a relative) is less well known although the syntem it derives from is extremely common. Similarly, /Səntob/ is only poorly recognized as the Hebrew /ʃem-tov/; Saul /ʃawul/ means desired, etc. The words /sejor/ and /sejora/ (P36) from Spanish are fossilized as a form of address to the father in law and the mother in law, alongside the Semitic /hmo/, /hma/. The connotation of deference in the terms /sejor/ and /sejora/ probably refer to the status of the master of the house which is conferred upon the father of the husband when, as was the custom, they all lived under the same roof. Here, antonomasia went through metaphor. /Side/ from the Arabic /sid/ ‘master’ is a similar example of the transition from a common noun to an individual designation but this case of fossilization with its first person possessive determiner /-e/ is used for another reason. It is a substitute first name for a proper noun when, for certain reasons, the person is not called by the given name. In the instance here, the mother gave the name of her father to his child and because she venerated his memory, she called her own son /side/ «my master». The wife and children of this son did the same. This second name, which is metaphorical, was then transmitted in the family. Other family terms of address are thus phrases that have become nouns (see below).

In other levels of language, the signifier /sidər/, from the Hebrew /seder/ whose generic meaning is both ‘arrangement’ and ‘ordering’ and has both a verb form and nouns derived from it (someone who is rational is /msədər/ from the Hebrew /mesudar/), is used to designate the ritual meal and the Passover liturgy (the Christian Last Supper). This is the use in which it has become fossilized as well as the object it designates for our speakers (P37). In contrast, the term /hagada/ which first of all designates specifically the story of the exodus from Egypt (which is traditionally told on the first night of the Jewish Passover), has an additional meaning: it can express an ironic or condescending judgment concerning any story which is felt to be too long (P38). If not in the Passover situation, the extended meaning of /hagada/ is differentiated from the Passover /hagada/ (in its restricted meaning). In addition it can be used in its literal meaning which contributing to metaphor formation in the term /bla ʕada w.la hagada/ (P39) to mean ‘tasteless’. Also connected with the Passover holiday is the term /ʔapekomen/ (borrowed from the Hebrew via the Greek whose referent evokes a happy and perhaps orgiastic

end of a meal) designates the piece of unleavened bread which ends the Passover meal. For the knowledgeable, it is meant to symbolize both the sacrificing of the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread (bread made in haste before the exodus from Egypt, also called the 'bread of affliction' referring to slavery). /ʔapekomen/ is thus far removed from meaning the dessert suggesting 'pleasing to the palate' since paradoxically it expresses the fact that the customary dessert is forbidden. Nevertheless this term, whose use was so specific and referred to a particular ritual is found in ordinary speech with the commonplace meaning of «end of the meal» and can also refer to the dessert, the original meaning by antonym and even a substitute for dessert. In fact it changes symbolism through ignorance. The names of vegetables can also be used to designate an individual through the features of the vegetable. A squash stands for someone bald, because a squash is round and smooth and the term is fossilized in expressions such as the aphorism (P40) where it is advised not to make trouble for nothing. The use of these rhetorical figures reaches its height when the symbolism of the referent, the signified or the signifier all condense into a speech act that merges the verbal and nonverbal. When the word becomes flesh (St. John) or on the contrary when flesh becomes word....

¹⁷This occurs in certain rituals which associated with the eating of certain foods, the choice of the food and the apotropaic formula associated with eating. The symbolism of the signified is concretized by eating a food which changes referent if necessary. For example it is traditional to eat 'bitter' herbs to recall /əl mrar/ from the Hebrew /maror/ the bitterness of the time of slavery at the start of the Passover meal by eating leaves of /xasa/ (Aramaic word) «lettuce» dipped in salt, which normally does not refer to bitterness¹⁸. That night, lettuce is a bitter herb in all Seders. At other times, the symbolism of the spoken signifier is associated with the food eaten. It is also traditional at /rassna/ (deformation in Judeo-Arabic of the Hebrew /roʃ ha ʃana/ literally «head of the year» which designates the New Year) to celebrate the creation of the world with the coming of Autumn. The festival consists among other things of a ritual meal during which food is eaten while saying prayers and blessings by using the signifiers of the foods symbolically. Some of these sayings were part of the multilinguistic discourse of our informants. One example is /i.tslək.o/, a response which recalls that complaining is useless and that only you are responsible. The relationship between this can be found in the play on the symbolism of the signifier of the root √slq: one of the traditional foods eaten while uttering a ritual blessing is /seleq/, the Hebrew for Swiss chard. The blessing consists of expressing the idea of 'cut off' using the verb with the same Hebrew root /je.staleq.u/ «will be cut off». The occurrence in the example cited here is a truncated reformulation of the saying which ritually accompanies the eating of the vegetable: «[...] Let your real enemies, your

¹⁷ Or «eat the book» as Haddad describes (1984).

¹⁸ As Claude Lévi Strauss (1947) points out regarding the natural species chosen by Primitives because they are «good to think about and not only good to eat.» This phenomenon apparently exists in many civilizations and in particular not in those classified as primitive. See Marcel Pagnol (1957) who has his father-figure say: «Do I stop you from eating your god every Sunday.»

lack of belief and your evil inclinations, disappear.» (Caro, 1948). Along with the pomegranate, is stated «You shall be full of /mitsvot/ «good deeds» like the pomegranate is full of seeds,» etc. Aside from certain vegetables which are used for their signifiant, others are named and eaten as symbols either of an era (/matsa/) ‘affliction’. The /matsa/, the Passover bread is made without leaven. Leaven symbolizes strength and being deprived of leaven symbolizes the weakness of a people who could not shake off the yoke of oppression without divine intervention. The prohibition of leaven commemorates the conquest of freedom (with a feeling of humility) or hard labor ((/haroset/ ‘bricks’, etc. In the end, the symbolic association of language with eating is a «perfective» form of antonomasia which performs the most exemplary mnemonic act.

/həløla/, which has become part of French in the form of «la hiloula» derived from the Judeo-Arabic, is used in the community as a signifier derived from Aramaic in the sense of «praise the Lord». In Hebrew, /halel/ (in the same lexical field) in Judeo-Arabic designates psalms which glorify God. The term /həløla/ in j-a designates any annual festive pilgrimage on the birthday of a saint, and since the commemorative evening is traditionally marked by the lighting of candles by all the participants the term also refers to the holiday of lights by restricting the signified to a single feature (P41)., as is also said in French with another reference, the fireworks on the 14th of July «Why are all the lights on? Is it the 14th of July?» In addition, companies give brand names to their products or products by other companies.¹⁹ For instance /sombbrero/ (P42) designates «hat» and no longer the original Spanish hat company. /pompeja/ (P43) designates ‘perfume’ rather than a brand of perfume. /maripoza/ (P44) the ‘gas stove’ regardless of the manufacturer, etc. In other cases there is toponymic creation which is also a synecdoche (part for the whole) as for the name of a neighborhood in Fès /tərna/ (P45) from the Spanish «tavern».

However, a rhetorical device can also be triggered from an event and become a word, and then experience shifts and reincarnations of meaning. A sad historical event at the beginning of this century has given rise to a neologism in Judeo-Arabic

/tritəl/ (GBCH, 1995) to designate the rapes, ransacking, massacres, and burning of the entire Jewish neighborhood of Fès for three days (in the month of April 1912. In the wake of the insurrectionary atmosphere connected to the signing of the protectorate of Morocco, Sherifian troops, the ‘tabors’ viciously attacked the mellah of Fes.). This word, now almost 100 years old, has become polysemic, in part due to antonomasia. Aside from naming the specific event in history (the memory of which is fading, forgotten in history books and now extremely watered down (Julien, 1978)²⁰ and only rarely orally transmitted) it

¹⁹ In French the brand name Frigidaire has replaced the word for refrigerator despite resistance from the latter which has in fact hardly any choice in the matter.

²⁰ Note the watered down version by Charles-Andre Julien (1978, p.87)> «The Sherifian infantry battalion, the «tabors» rose up on April 17, massacred their officers

is used with other extensions of meaning. First of all it has generalized to cover other tragic events, and secondly has taken on the attenuated meaning of «tumult, disorder, indescribable uproar» (P46, P47). This usage has extended far beyond the sole speakers of Fès to the Jewish linguistic community of North Africa. The same is true for the term /zəlja/ which designates the expulsion from Spain in particular and more generally any hurried fleeing. Both terms are found in the reduplication of the synthemetic coordinated structure: /tritəl-o-zəlja/ to describe – by extension – recent events which do not only involve the linguistic community described here.

2.3.Cases of noun or verb phrases giving rise to synthemetic noun neologisms

The term /pesemexa/ is used to stigmatize credulous behavior or notorious incompetence, by juxtaposition of the metaphor for a badly done job, a metonym associating the finished object to the work itself, and antonomasia which designates the author of a specific work (P48, P49). The term /pesemexa/ is the almost unmodified end product (although unrecognizable except to the initiated) of the Hebrew /pesel-mixa/ «statue of Micah» in reference to the story in the Mishna which makes fun of the misshapened statue and the vanity of the sculptor (Micah, a character in the book of Judges 17-18, had a private shrine and a silver statue). This fossilized Hebrew noun phrase in its Judeo-Arabic synthem has two axiological and close values: one (P48) corresponds to the signifier «heavy set» and the other (P49) has the meaning of «unkempt». Both values share features of meaning with the original term but neither refers to the signifier «statue» or the proper name «Micah». The informants themselves are not speakers of Hebrew or have lost all linguistic awareness of its components. A similar synthemetic composition /sebatexa/ comes from the Hebrew /šabat-exa/ «Saturday lamentations» (the Saturday in the year when the liturgy includes the reading of the Lamentations of Jeremiah). The word designates something in bad taste, not nice to look at or not good to eat. The examples deal with dress or cooking. The traditional Saturday dish /sxena/ when it does not turn out well is said to be a /sxena de səbatexa/ (P50). To understand this example, we need to know that the Saturday meal is generally commented upon and that it is a time of vexations or praise for the hostess. One of the jokes consists of saying, when satisfied with how a dish has turned out, that the husband should increase his wife's dowry. When the dish is not up to standard, it is said that the dowry should not be increased. Here again, there is no awareness of designating a book of poetry (Lamentations). There is also no awareness that the first component is a signifier which is very common in the dialect: /səbt/ «Saturday» and people

and ransacked the mellah, and burned the main street down. A note on page 88 specifies: «the losses in the mellah were 51 dead and 40 wounded.» The duration of the tritəl, three days, is eliminated. Only the massacre of the officers is mentioned and not the Jewish population and above all no mention is made of the other forms of extortion. Note as well the restrictive translation of the term «ransacking» used by Louis Brunot and Elie Malka (1932) as the title for the tritəl: « the ransacking of April 1912.» For more complete details on events at that time see GBCH (1994,p.331 and 335-336).

realize even less that the expression is in fact based on the culinary ritual that one does not eat meat during the period of Lamentations. The traditional Saturday dish is hence less rich and less tasty than usual! Another example from the culinary domain is the use of /palebe/, a kind of double macaroon cookie. It illustrates another instance of a completely obliterated linguistic awareness. It is a deformation of the Spanish «light bread» or «raised bread» Louis Brunot argues for the former. Regardless, this term, a compound word originally, has been desynthemized and is considered to be a monematic unit. Here word and thing will in all likelihood be perpetuated. A similar case is /tæjɛr-s-səfra/ (P51) which only a champion Talmudist could identify. This is an Aramaic noun phrase which means ‘change in bile.» This expression is used as a synthem for «breakfast» in the dialect. The use of /hkäm-zdøm/ which illustrates the superimposition of the metaphor (impiety) and metonym (by designating the inhabitants of a city by the name of the city) is used to denounce an unacceptable judgment or an authoritarian attitude (P52). A Judeo-Arabic neologism, the word is composed of an Arabic word /hkäm/ «judgment» and the name of the Biblical city of Sodom. It is purposely used to severely condemn a terrible injustice, a stance, by metaphorical connection to the story of Sodom which was destroyed because of its impiety. However speakers are not always aware of naming this city. Similar it is difficult not to identify the Judeo-Arabic noun /tsəʕbäb/, the Hebrew phrase /tiʕa-ve-av/ which designates the date of the destruction of the temple, literally the 9th of Av, but the expression is used frequently in the metaphorical sense of something horrible. Other forms of address come from phrases which have fossilized into noun synthems. The form /Wazəb/ is the imperative of the second person singular of the Arabic verb «answer» (P53). It is a variant in a way to call (or heckle) the husband, but never the wife. Its use apparently indicates very clearly how the expression fossilized as a verbal challenge, while merging with the meaning of «answer». There is however no instance of use of /ʔa Wazəb wazəb/. /mæilbäs/ «without difficulty» and /xarz-t-treʔ/ (P54) «leaving the road» are other cases where an individual is named when not called by his patronymic. In both cases the synthemetic form conceals a phrase whose formulation works as an apotropaic. The individual is protected by not saying his name, just as one would avoid committing profanation, alongside other terms such as /ʕinija/ «my eyes» /ʔalbe/;etc. The liver is considered to be the seat of emotion with the connotation of concern (for children and kin);

«/əl kəbda/» never gives a moment’s peace (the ‘innards’ of Mme de Sevigné). The example of /rabeno/ (P55) is different because it functions on the literal and figurative levels. Literally, from the Hebrew «our rabbi» the phrase works as a proper name designating a master, rabbi or not, and not necessarily the master of the speaker who is using it.

But linguistic awareness has not been lost and the word is used with an ironic or simply a humoristic connotation. Along the same lines, in the area of teaching, the word /ʔemabanim/ (literally) ‘mother of children’ (P56) designates schools, motivated by the fact that the initiative for first school of this type was a woman. This gave rise to a synthemetic neologism «mother of children» to name the first school, in Fès and then other schools in other towns

even when founded by men, were called in the same way. The item /vajaʕabor/ (57) is another case of designation of a tall man. However it is the Hebrew phrase ‘and he passed by’. It may be the case that there is paronymic confusion with another Hebrew word /gibor / «(big».).²¹

Other instances of synthematic neologism are based on quotations from the beginning of books. The borrowing of the item involves formal truncation and sometimes a shift in meaning. The procedure is highly recurrent. For instance /berifit/ the well known beginning of Genesis, is used to express impatience to have to listen to a story again from the start. /lexlexa/ (from the Hebrew, «go», or «go away») is the way for the initiated to describe the process of leaving the family to be independent. This refers to the divine command to Abraham at the start of the chapter describing his departure from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan. But the item is used more often to mean «get out of here» (P58). /boelparʕo/ symbolizes the attitude of someone who deals with adversity with courage and tenacity, in reference to the episode when Moses is told by God to convince Pharaoh to free the Hebrews: /bo el Parʕo/ «Go to Pharaoh». The expression is also used to indicate a challenge (P59). The phrase /bajiso-bajhano/ from the Hebrew /va ji.sʕ.u va ja.han.u/ (P60) «and they left and they camped» expresses the re-occurrence of a situation and is used to make fun of people who can’t sit still. A Judeo-Arabic neologism it is made up of two anaphoric terms that describe the wanderings of the Hebrews in the desert. There are many examples of this type. Another instance is /gadilu/ which comes from the comments of a spectator at a football match who, when he saw the player touch the ball, screamed angrily: «What’s the referee waiting for?» /ta ji.ʕmæl gadilu ?/ to mean «he grabbed the ball.» (P61). The allusion is found in the context of prayer in the synagogue on the days of the week when the Torah is read. When the Torah is taken out of the cabinet (the ark), and before it is brought to the lectern where it is read, the leader places his hand on it and recites a blessing which begins by /gadelu laʕem [...] / «Exalted God...». By only using the first words of the sentence, the speaker described the situation and expressed his impatience that the referee did not penalize the player even though he touched the ball.

Sometimes this process is heightened by a formal mechanism of reduplication, a case of «morphosymbolism» as described by Hagége (1982, 1993). In order to emphasize a characteristic feature the multilingual speaker will vary the

²¹ The lack of linguistic awareness of the origin of these expressions has led to a number of paronymic accidents. The example below testifies to this (dialogue recorded 2/23/97):

- A: And now he has calmed down, he has his feet on the ground he told me he didn’t want to be Rēbo, he wanted to be a cook (in the Army)
 B: Mmm? Excuse me I didn’t understand. What’s the relationship with (...Rimbaud?)
 A: What? Rombo, the character on TV!
 B: Oh of course Rombo
 A: Oh yes, it’s all over, he doesn’t show off any more [...]
 This is how the poet was dethroned!

expressive mode by formulating the feature through «binomes» – components belonging to both languages.²².

3. CONCLUSION

The mechanisms of association and connotation which give rise to antonomasia also involve other rhetorical devices such as varieties of metaphor and metonym.

The thematic features as reflected in this corpus (which in no way can be representative given its size) suggests that antonomasia mirrors large portions of collective memory and some of the psychological and sociolinguistic features of the community of speakers. Above all however, **emotion emerges from beneath the rhetoric**. The recollections that motivate these «injections» of a practically extinct language into the speech of people whose parents or grandparents spoke the dialect is very eloquent. These choices of anamnesis express a collective psychology (in particular to characterize beauty, intelligence and knowledge, intensity of feelings, adoration and abhorrence, the humor of self derision humor, the commemoration of events –both happy and sad_ the hierarchy of social relationships (in particular within the family but also as regards relationships outside the community) and special ritualistic and culinary traditions.

Finally, antonomasia may be the best rhetorical device through which a language can leave traces of its existence when it has vanished. Beyond the specifically socio-ethno-anthropolinguistic features and the need for expressiveness that motivates it, the use of this figure of speech apparently corresponds to a quest for greater bonding, involving the affirmation of multiculturalism and enhancing the expression of cultural invariants.

The interpretations assigned at times to a given referent in this article call for comment. For example the connotation associated with the French use of ‘sodomy’, ‘sodomite’ is not the same as what is expressed in Judeo-Arabic. «Sodomy» refers to the body and stresses the reprobation of transgression of a sexual taboo whereas /zdøm/ refers to the soul and stresses reprobation of moral conduct. Further, there is no reason to assume that this dialect will either survive or internationalize beyond the bounds of its linguistic community (although a few items have been integrated in Yiddish speaking or Judeo-Spanish speaking families such as /mæskøta/ (another kind of cake like a Savoie cake), /sxena/ or /dafina/ the traditional Saturday dish, /mæʔøda/ a kind of omelet. The term /xəmsa/ which is Arabic in form and Semitic in origin (in Hebrew /xamef/) appears in prayers to ward off the evil eye, and is becoming better known thanks to a film and in its translation of Judeo-Arabic into French as ‘five for you my brother.’ But most of the terms derived from Hebrew,

²² See my bibliography on this subject and in particular the next issue of *La Linguistique*, with some 300 examples of this device.

shared by all the Jewish dialects can be transmitted through any of these languages which having a tendency to be fossilized in their Hebrew form (due to the revival of Hebrew) such as the word /kafer/ or /kofer/. We have seen that these examples refer in most cases to practices and languages that have survived beyond the dialect.

Thus there is no reason to assume that these forms of antonomasia will have an impact on the international linguistic community. This however does not infirm the hypothesis since the examples serve to illustrate the phenomenon. In fact, currently extinct languages have left their mark at least partly through this figure of speech (for instance in the lexicon of topology which recalls the names of peoples speaking these lost dialects such as Chartres, from the Gaulish Carnutes, or the Ligurian names Alpes, Manosque and the Iberian Luchon, etc.).

This could lead to a definition of antonomasis which incorporates the ones cited earlier. It should be added that although this figure of speech requires shared knowledge among speakers (as much as for metaphor and metonym), it is more condensed in its symbolic form and shorter in its formulation and hence is more likely to produce the desired linguistic bonding effect. This succeeds when the sign produced in this way has chances of internationalizing and becoming part of the set of words rooted most deeply in languages.

In his distinction between scientific and literary languages Charles Bailly (1951, p.244) said that « by giving a new meaning to existing words, it creates [...] language acts.» This is indeed what occurs in the dialect and its linguistic innovations. In the search to identify the resources for this linguistic creativity, and methods to discover its meaning, it may just be possible to break through the frayed warp of the ethnological fabric of a dying linguistic community.

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