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The legal status and socio-economic integration of the Jews in the Ottoman state

Our survey relates to the legal status of the Jews and to their socio-economic integration. It focuses on the realtively well-documented Jewish urban population mainly in Anatolia and the Balkans in two main eras: the first stretches from the late fifteenth century, when a large group of Iberian Jews settled in the rapidly growing Ottoman territories, until the early nineteenth century.[1] The second period starts with the Ottoman reforms (*Tanzimat,* 1839 onward) and ends with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923.

Jews in Ottoman law

The legal integration of the Jewish minority in the Ottoman world empire took place within the framework of majority-minority relations in a patrimonial state, characterized by a rigid stratification. Being a Muslim state, the Ottoman Empire's legal framework which regulated the presence of religious minorities within its borders was based on the *şari'a* (religious law), on the *kanun* (sultanic law), and on customary law which reflected precedents and practices relating to *dhimmis* in earlier Muslim states and in the empire itself. The fair treatment of the *dhimmis* was but one aspect of the sultan's obligation to rule justly. This framework enabled the existence of Jewish communities under specified known conditions, set their legal status, and to a great extent shaped their collective and individual lifestyle in an atmosphere of co-existence with Ottoman society at large and an ambience of safety and stability. It remained in force until the constitutions enacted during the nineteenth century, known as *Tanzimat.* Islamic law tolerated the existence of minorities who belonged to "people of the book" (*ahl al-kitab*) as protected persons, *dhimmis* (*ahl ad-dhimma*) vertically divided according to their religion. This status meant that in return for accepting the superiority of Islam and obeying the holy law, the *dhimmis* were under the protection of the state. This entailed recognition of their right to life and to hold property, substantial re-

1 For references to primary and secondary sources, see, Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Jews in the Realm of the Sultans. Ottoman Jewish Society in the Seventeenth Century. Tübingen 2008.

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ligious liberty, and freedom of occupation and movement. In addition to religious toleration, the Ottoman state granted the *dhimmis* a degree of autonomy in organizational and judicial affairs, but it is not certain just how clearly defined it was. So long as law and order were maintained and collective taxes were paid smoothly and effortlessly, the state abstained from intervening in communal affairs, unless such intervention was requested by a member of the community.

The major external attributes of their inferior status were payment of a poll tax (*cizye*) and subjection to bylaws that demonstrated their inferiority and distinguished them from Muslims. The *kadi* and the *muhtesib* were charged with enforcing those regulations. The inferior status of *dhimmis* was also evident in the *shari'a* courts: thus, for example a *dhimmi* could not testify against a Muslim. The language of the court records when relating to *dhimmis* was derogatory and marked their otherness and inferiority in various manners.

While the inferior status of the *dhimmis* and conditions under which they had to live were set by law, daily life was much more dynamic, for better and for worse. The *şari'a* laws in regard to *dhimmis* conduct were not consistently enforced, even being applied differently in various regions of the empire in accord with specific political and economic circumstances. Very few were almost always strictly enforced, e. g. the severe prohibition to build new places of worship and limitations on renovating existing ones.

Let us check to what extent the major restrictions were applied.

(a) *Cizye*

Payment of the poll tax signified the submissive status of the *dhimmis* and was a fundamental element in the contract of patronage between them and the Muslim rulers. Basically, it was a per capita tax imposed on every free, healthy adult male, who each had to pay in person according to his property rank: rich, of modest means, or poor. The policy regarding the sum and the manner it was to be paid changed from time to time, but the custom was a collective levy of a negotiable number of taxpayers. As part of fiscal reforms in the 1690's, the stipulations of the *şari'a* were once again strictly enforced: the *cizye* was to be paid by each individual on the basis of his actual property, and the poll tax (cizye) sums were updated. This tax was annulled only in 1856.

(b) Segregation laws

More than sporadic opposition to physical co-mingling with *dhimmis* (in *hamam*s), it was the proximity of their dwellings and places of worship to mosques that aroused problems from time to time. The explicit reason for the distancing was that their very presence bothers the faithful and that their behavior disturbs Muslims' prayers. A famous case in this context, which took place during the 1580s, relates to the main synagogue in Jerusalem, which was eventually closed down.[2] The numerous mosques in Old Istanbul undoubtedly engendered constant pressure to remove Jews and Christians from the area; this was partly achieved after the 1660 fire.

Another problematic locus was the bathhouse, where believers and non-believers mingled without any possibility of distinguishing between them. Once and again Muslims demanded to find a means to differentiate and separate them. One example is an edict issued by the governor of Damascus ordering that Wednesday mornings be set aside for bathing by *dhimmi* women in Jerusalem.[3] In some cities there were bathhouses in which the presence of *dhimmis* was forbidden, and those were preferred by pious Muslims.[4]

(c) Restrictions intended to humiliate and stigmatize *dhimmis*

The construction of new churches and synagogues was strictly forbidden, and offenders were threatened with death. Even renovation of existing ones was permit-

2 Cohen, Amnon: Jewish Life under Islam. Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century. Cambridge 1984. pp. 81–84. See, for example, Altınay, Ahmet Refik: Istanbul Hayatı, 4 vols. 2nd ed. Istanbul 1988. vol. 3. doc. 20 from AH 1104 (1692) and doc. 42 from AH 1112 (1700).

3 Cohen, Amnon: The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem. Leiden/Boston/Köln 2001. p. 67.

4 In sixteenth-century Jerusalem, different towels denoted non-Muslims. See Cohen, Amnon and Elisheva Simon-Pikali (eds.): Jews in the Moslem Religious Court. Society, Economy and Communal Organization in the XVIth Century. Documents from Ottoman Jerusalem. Jerusalem 1993. pp. 144–48, doc. 137, 141, 143. In response to a question referred to the *kadi'asker* of Rumeli in AH 1091 (1680), he forbade Jews to bathe in a certain bathhouse in Sofia, noting that segregation was "a dogma of the faith." Boškov, Vančo (ed.): Ottoman Documents on Balkan Jews. Sofia 1990. Doc. 21. In AH 1136 (1723), it was publicly announced in the streets of Cairo that *dhimmis* were forbidden to enter bathhouses unless they wore a bell around their neck. Winter, Michael: Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt. Studies in the Writings of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī. New Brunswick/London 1982. p. 213; Winter, Michael: The Relations of Egyptian Jews with the Authorities and with the Non-Jewish Society. In: The Jews in Ottoman Egypt (1517–1914). Edited by Jacob M. Landau. Jerusalem 1988. pp. 371–420. [in Hebrew].

ted only after an examination of the structure, and on condition that its dimensions would not exceed the former ones. This prohibition at times served as an excuse for false accusations against *dhimmis*.[5] Limits were also set to the height of Jews' houses, and in some regions, it was forbidden to build them of stone or oven-baked bricks.[6] Muslim sensitivity was also evident in spatial prominence, e. g. grand Jewish burial monuments aroused the ire of devout Istanbuli Muslims.

Ownership of slaves was also a status symbol, and as such was denied to *dhimmis*, but since the 1560's, Jews in the larger cities were permitted to own non-Muslim slaves, in return for payment of an annual tax and *cizye* for male slaves. Once a slave converted to Islam, he or she would be taken out of the possession of their Jewish owner and sold to a Muslim at the market price. Nevertheless, we read about Jews owning Muslim slaves and servants. European travelers noted the central role of Jewish men and women in Istanbul's slave markets. According to their reports, Jews used to buy male and female slaves from their captors and provide them with proper training in their homes, i. e. they taught them the Turkish language, how to play musical insturments, singing, dancing, and other necessary skills for the most expensive ones.[7]

Restrictions on dress, the most common and most visible class marker, seem to have been the most relevant ones in everyday life. Since the early seventeenth century, dark blue or purple was the dominant mandatory color for the outer garments and shoes of Jews in Ottoman cities. From time to time, limitations were placed on the donning of luxury fabrics and expensive furs. Restrictions also regarded the shape and size of headgear, and the length of robes and width of their sleeves – thus preventing *dhimmis* from having these status symbols. Interestingly, some Jewish communities enacted ordinances that forbade men and women from donning luxurious clothes and wearing excessive jewels in public. There is no evidence that the prohibitions against riding horseback and bearing

5 See, e. g., an edict of 1584 ordering an investigation into the construction of many synagogues in Safed. Heyd, Uriel: Ottoman Documents from Palestine 1552–1615. A Study of the Firman according to the Mühimme Defteri. Oxford 1960. pp. 169–171, doc. 112, 113. For Jerusalem, see Cohen, Jews, pp. 70–88. On allegations against Jews and Christians in the Crimea, see Ben-Naeh, Yaron [et al.] (eds.): Debar Sepatayim. An Ottoman Hebrew Chronicle from the Crimea (1683–1730). Written by the Krymchak Rabbi David Lekhno. Boston 2021. pp. 126–132.

6 Altınay, Istanbul, vol. 1, pp. 58–59, document 1 from AH 966 (1586); Altınay, Istanbul, vol. 3, doc. 92 from AH 1131 (1719) and 112 from AH 1137 (1726). For evidence of the construction of a tall building by Jews in Salonica and public reaction, see Angel, Baruch: Responsa. Salonica 1617. §51, 66c. [in Hebrew].

7 Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Blond, Tall, with Honey-Colored Eyes. Jewish Ownership of Slaves in the Ottoman Empire. In: Jewish History 20 (2006). pp. 315–332.

arms were enforced. It seems that Jews did not comply with these injunctions, at least outside the city limits.

Strict enforcement of the *şari'a* restrictions was either the result of initiative from above or below (local Muslim clerics or the public). The first may have stemmed from the piety of the ruler and people in his close circle, but no less from domestic political reasons – an effort to mobilize the support of the religious establishment and the public. A period marked by weakness of the ruler or the state was generally a congenial background for a stricter policy vis-à-vis *dhimmis*, and as the sense of crisis increased, so did religious tolerance diminish. The attitude towards the *dhimmis* reflected to a great extent the balance of power between the sultan and the *'ulema*; and at times the relations of the Ottoman state with European states. It seems that enforcement of the *şari'a* restrictions was not uppermost in the minds of most Ottoman rulers, and that even their representatives – governors and *kadi*s – did not invest much effort in it. False accusations about infringing the law were usually a pretext to extort money from Jewish subjects, rather than an expression of religious piety.[8]

Below we will review attitudes toward Jews, which also affected their acculturation and their access to economic opportunities.

The attitude of the Muslim elites

The sultans and their Jewish subjects

The policy of the sultans vis-à-vis the minorities was conditioned by the *şari'a*, the *kanun*, and precedents. As defenders of the "holy law" and tradition, it was incumbent upon the sultans not only to ensure law and order in the state, but also that justice would be meted out. Maintaining the limits of the social order was one of the important obligations of the ruler towards his subjects, the first ring in the Ottoman "circle of justice." Individuals and communities knew that they were entitled to appeal to the sultan and were well aware that the ruler was obligated to protect the just interests of his subjects. The central government was obligated, first and foremost, to defend the *şari'a* and the true believers, since it was these that provided legitimacy for its rule. This, however, forced it from time to time to deal with conflicting claims. In his study of Jerusalem, Oded Peri has shown that the central government, having recourse to various interpretations of the

8 Marcus, Abraham: The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity. Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century. New York 1989. pp. 42–43.

şari'a, would speak in one tongue to Islamic local zealots and in another to the Christians, who based their claims on precedents and on European protection. At times, contradictory edicts were issued. In the end, the immediate interests of the ruler determined who would hold the upper hand.[9]

The rational policy in this Sunni empire, the religious and ethnic heterogeneity, and the presence of many *dhimmis*, taken together with increasing protection of Christian minorities by European nations in later years gave rise to a tolerant attitude towards *dhimmis*, from which the Jews also benefited. Even though Ottoman Turks were famous for their eagerness to convert non-believers, only very rarely – in exceptional situations – was anyone subject to forced conversion. Formally at least, the convert became an equal with Muslims, but many sources point to suspicion and contempt exhibited by lay Muslims towards converts. One folk saying maintained that a bad Christian would never make a good Muslim.[10]

This generally ideal picture is marred by rare events. Interestingly, Jewish popular literature contains some stories about the intention of this or that sultan to do away with all Jews in Istanbul, or even throughout his empire, for example as a punishment for the Sabbatean movement. Even if this was never true, the fact that such stories were created, disseminated, and preserved in the collective memory indicates that people believed that this could happen, and hints to a crack in their sense of security. Jewish complaints of hard times and despair become frequent during the days of Ahmed III, but the reason for this is as yet unknown.

The official policy toward the Jews in practice

Perusal of diverse Ottoman documents indicates that in the seventeenth century, the term *dhimmi* had lost is originally more inclusive connotation and, like *kefere* or *kafir*, was used only to denote Christians (Fig 1).[11] All non-Muslims were denoted by the term *gayr-i müslim* (lit. whoever is not a Muslim). In official documents such as edicts, writs of appointment, and *şari'a* court records, Jews are generally referred to as a distinct category, a fact that points to clear differentiation between religious denominations but not necessarily to a different legal status. Thus, for ex-

9 Peri, Oded: Ottoman Rule, Islam, and Christian Cult in Seventeenth Century Jerusalem. In: Essays on Ottoman Civilization. Proceedings of the XII[th] Congress of the Comité International D'Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes. Edited by Abdul-Rahim Abu-Husayn. Prague 1998 (Archiv Orientální/ Supplementa, 8). pp. 299–304.

10 Abbott, George F.: Under the Turk in Constantinople. A Record of Sir John Finch's Embassy 1674–1681. London 1920. p. 65. Le Bruyn, Corneille: Voyage au Levant. 2 vols. Rouen 1725. pp. 260, 472.

11 *Kefere* replaced *nasrani*. *Rum* was employed for Greeks since the eighteenth century.

ample, edicts ordering the collection of taxes throughout the empire list the following groups, and in this order: Christians (*rum ve-ermeni* i. e., Greeks and Armenian Christians), Jews (*yahudiler*, *yahuda*, *yahud taifesi*, *taife-i yahudiyan*), Roma (*Kiptian*), and others. This ranking apparently reflects the status or importance the state ascribed to the various denominations.

When a non-Muslim had to appear before an official body or was mentioned in a formal document, he was described by his name and that of his father, his religious denomination, the city or quarter of his residence, and often also by his congregation and occupation. At times nicknames or physical descriptions were

Fig. 1: Map of the Ottoman Empire in 1683. © Yaron Ben-Naeh

added.[12] When a Jew applied in writing to any official body, he would add "the Jew" to his name, in this way: "Musa yahudi" (Moses the Jew).

An effort was also made to differentiate semantically and orthographically between *dhimmis* and Muslims, i. e. in terminology and writing style. In cases in which names were common to both Jews and Muslims, the scribes preparing official documents purposely wrote them in a distorted manner. In addition, they would delete honorary titles (except for rabbi – *hakham*) and on the whole tended to use slighting language when referring to *dhimmis* of both sexes. When recording "so and so, son of so and so," they would replace the customary *ben* or *ibn* by *veled.* Jewish and Christian women would never have the title lady (*hatun*) affixed to their names, as was the case with Muslim women. When referring to a *dhimmi* who had passed away, one would write *halık* instead of *almarhum* (the deceased), and the *dhimmi* would never have "May he find repose in the Garden of Eden" or "May the Lord have mercy upon him" inscribed after his name. When noting that a *dhimmi* died, the word used for died, or dropped dead – *öldü* had a negative connotation, and his body was often called a carcass – *laşe.*[13] The Jew does not truly belong to a city, but only resides there (*mutemekin*, and in arabic: *al-mustawtin*), as if on a temporary basis. *Dhimmi* religious faiths and ceremonies were treated with disdain and disparaging terminology; when the conversion of a Jew to Islam was recorded in a *şari'a* court it served as a good occasion to describe Judaism as a vain superstition.

Fiscal transformation that had been applied since the late sixteenth century affected Jewish life. The gradual expansion of the lease tax (*iltizam*) framework, streamlining the collection of the traditional tithe tax (*osr*) imposed on cultivated government land (*miri*), enabled an increase of the fiscal burden on the tax lessees (*mutesellim*). In exchange for a cash payment of the annual tax estimated in advance to the treasury, the tax lessee was granted a quota (*mukata'a*) which included a concession to impose the tithe tax on government land cultivators (*miri*) for one year and its collection. The fiscal transformation led to the weakening of supervision over agricultural production, reducing the state's income from agricultural production, its main source. At the same time, local governors and notables increased their power. These fiscal transformations impacted mainly Jewish communities in the Ottoman provinces, which became subject to the arbitrary deci-

12 For example, see Yerasimos, Stephane: La Communaute Juive d'Istanbul a la fin du XVIe siècle. In: Turcica 27 (1995). pp. 114–115.

13 Researchers dealing with *şari'a* court records have noted this semantic differentiation. This is also the case in the Istanbul *sicil* records which I consulted in the İstanbul Müftülüğü Şer'iyye Sicilleri Arşivi (İMŞA).

sions of the local ruler.[14] All residents of distant cities, but particularly *dhimmis*, were more susceptible to assault and extortion.[15] Governors and *kadi*s had to expend large sums of money to gain an appointment, which in any case was limited to a year or two, and did everything in their power to accumulate as much money as possible during their term in office. The repeated requests made by the Jerusalem community to influential Jews in Istanbul to intervene on their behalf with the imperial court and defend them from extortion exemplify the unstable condition of *dhimmis* in the provinces, their dependence on leading Jewish personalities in the Ottoman capital.[16] Jewish communities had to adopt the following strategies to cope with their difficulties: (a) Bribing leading local officials, and maneuvring between them. (b) Submitting petitions to the sultan or the grand vizier.[17] The central government's handling of such cases was meticulous and considered fair and unprejudiced, but was also lengthy and of doubtful efficacyl. (c) In special and urgent cases, sending a written request or a special envoy to the Jewish community in the capital, requesting the help of influential Jews in the imperial court. (d) Lastly, seeking favorable legal opinions or precedents. In the mid-seventeenth century, a Muslim resident of Cairo prevented Jews from passing through a Muslim neighborhood on their way to the cemetery, but the *kadi* ordered him to desist after the Jews had shown him *fetva*s of the four chief muftis as well as edicts and the written opinions of many religious personages, all maintaining that Jews had the right of passage there day and night.[18]

14 Even in the capital city there were attempts at extortion and illegal collection of taxes. This can be inferred, for example, from an edict addressed to the *vezir* Yusuf Pasha and the *kadi* of Istanbul in AH 1077/1078 (1666/1667) after the Jewish community had complained to the sultan of extortion attempts by the *subaşı* and *'ases başı*, İMŞA, Istanbul-Bab *sicil*, vol. 4, p. 195.

15 Most of the evidence is from the southern Balkan territories where there were many Jewish communities, but the same probably holds true for other distant provinces.

16 On Court Jews and their motives, see Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Ottoman Jewish Courtiers. An Oriental Type of the Court Jew. In: Jewish Culture and History 19,1 (2018). pp. 56–70.

17 See, for example, a petition from the small Jewish community of Silibria, 1646/1647, complaining about the pressure being exerted by their neighbors: Mühimme Defterleri, AH=hijri year 1056 (1646/1647), doc. 485 (according to the catalogue). For the procedure of presenting petitions, see *in extenso* Darling, Linda T.: Revenue-Raising and Legitimacy. Tax Collection and Finance Administration in the Ottoman Empire, 1560–1660. Leiden/New York/Köln 1996. pp. 248–260.

18 El-Nahal, Galal H.: The Judicial Administration of Ottoman Egypt in the Seventeenth Century. Minneapolis/Chicago 1979 (Studies in Middle Eastern History 4). p. 57.

Jews and the *'ulema* – the religious elite

Istanbul was practically the capital of Sunni Islam. It housed some of the most important and prestigious *madrasas* that trained hundreds, perhaps thousands, of students of all levels every year. It was there that junior and senior clerics awaited appointments, and to which they returned seeking promotions. Their presence in Istanbul influenced the attitude of the rulers towards non-Muslim minorities living in the capital and to some extent the rest of the *dhimmi* subjects.

The exercise of authority by Jews or Christians in high office greatly annoyed clerics and commoners, arousing resentment and acts of violence against these officials.[19] Some clerics wished to avoid physical proximity: In the late sixteenth century, Shmuel de Medina related that a Muslim cleric (*hoja*) was prepared to do business with Jews and rent them property, but would not deign to live amongst them under any condition.[20] Leading members of the *'ulema* did not refrain from employing Jews to run their businesses; one such case is that of Moshe Yerushalmi who was in the service of the Sheykh-ul-Islam during the 1620s.[21] There is also evidence that Jews intervened with the imperial court for the appointment of a certain *kadi*, expecting to receive benefits in the future.[22] On certain – apparently very rare – occasions there were close relations and mutual respect between rabbis and Muslim clerics, as in the case of Rabbi David Ibn Shushan, who moved from Salonica to Istanbul in 1601. The chronicler recounts that he was very erudite in the "religious books of the Ishmaelites", so much "so that Ishmaelite sages and their judges used to come to learn from him [matters] in their religious books [...] and the greatest Ishmaelite sages [in Istanbul] would treat him with much honor because of his great learning".[23] The kabbalist R. Hayyim Vital had some relations with clerics in late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century Palestine, and Shabbetai Zevi is known to have had close ties with Vani Efendi and with Muslim

19 Such feelings are reflected, for example, in two poems written by sheikhs in Egypt during the second half of the seventeenth century. Michael Winter has documented Abd el-Wahab al-Sha'arani's, (an Egyptian cleric and mystic d. 1565) hostile attitude towards *dhimmis*; Winter, Society, pp. 283–91.

20 Medina, Responsa, Hoshen Mishpat, Salonica 1595, §281, fol. 200c [in Hebrew].

21 De Groot, Alexander Hendrik: The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic. A History of the Earliest Diplomatic Relations 1610–1630. Leiden 1978. pp. 108, 134, 197, 299 n. 10, 304 n. 59.

22 Rozen, Minna: Actions of Influential Jews in the Sultan's Court of Seventeenth-Century Istanbul on Behalf of Jerusalem Jewry. In: Michael 6 (1981). pp. 425–29, letters 225, 227, 229.

23 Konforte, David: Kore ha-Dorot. Venice 1746. fol. 39a, and in the introduction of Ya'akov le-veit ha-Levi to Delmedigo, Yosef Shmuel: Sefer Ilem. Amsterdam 1629 [in Hebrew]. The fact that this was noted indicates that these were rare occurrences.

dervishes. As a rule, conducting religious disputations was rare, as Muslims were sensitive to any offence to Islam.

Jews came into close contact with Muslim clerics in the *şari'a* courts. *Kadis* did not refrain from deciding in favor of a *dhimmi.* Moreover, we have noted earlier that Hebrew sources testify to cases in which the *kadi* protected the Jewish residents of a city or acquitted a Jew against a more powerful Muslim opponent. That said, it seems that Jews differentiated between the courts in Istanbul, in which one could generally expect a just trial, and provincial courts, where the *kadi* was more independent and could be manipulated.[24] Interestingly, Jews turned to this institution, despite the rabbinic ruling against doing so. The fact that Jews obeyed state law and turned to the *kadi* and his court to settle personal and communal disputes indicates that Jews believed they would be given a fair trial. It is also proof that they knew how to contend with the limitations imposed by their legal status, using various means that included legal manipulations, false testimony, paying Muslims to bear false witness, bribery, and other methods that point to intimate acquaintance with the law and with the dynamics of the legal system, seasoned with self-confidence.

Waves of religious fanaticism point to a connection between a time of political economic crisis and greater piety, and were expressed in stricter enforcement of the *şari'a* restrictions on *dhimmis.* The first began during the 1580s and continued until the beginning of the next century. Among its causes we may list the economic and political crisis, and the arrival of the Moriscos, the Muslims expelled from Spain during the last decade of the sixteenth century, who held a bitter grudge against Christians. The second wave of religious fanaticism erupted during the 1630s, when Sultan Murad IV adopted a policy of strict observance of Islamic law, probably under the influence of *kadizadeliler*, who called for a return to "pure" Islam, which included a stricter attitude towards the *dhimmis* and relegating them to their proper place in society. A sultanic edict was issued in AH 1040 (1631) ordering enforcement of the restrictions that the *şari'a* imposed on non-Muslims: They were forbidden to ride horses, walk on the same sidewalk as a Muslim, wear a *kalpak* (tall fur hat), don furs and clothes made of expensive cloth, as well as the *fereje* worn by Muslim women, and more.

The third period of religious fanaticism occurred during the final third of the seventeenth century, and can be put down to several causes: (a) The sermons of Vani Efendi, the influential preacher of Sultan Mehmed IV, who desired a "Muslim

24 Alfandari, Eliyahu: Seder Eliyahu Rabbah ve-Zuta. Constantinople 1719. §3, fol. 24a [in Hebrew].

space" within the walls of Old Istanbul.[25] (b) The frequent military failures following the defeat at the gates of Vienna in 1683 were seen as divine punishment for the promiscuous behavior of Muslims and their leniency towards *dhimmis*. Since a return to religious and moral values was believed to be a means of improving the difficult political and economic situation, the sultans renewed the prohibition on the consumption and sale of wine, games of chance, and more. By imperial order, strict observance of the commandments of Islam was to be the rule of the day. (c) The gradually increasing importance of the *şari'a* as the source of the law, accompanied by greater influence of the *'ulema*, a process which necessarily entailed stricter supervision of the regulations that governed *dhimmi* existence. These processes reached their peak in the final decade of the century, especially during the reign of Sultan Mustafa II and Sheykh-ul-Islam Feyzulla Efendi. During these years, orders were given time and again to enforce the regulations concerning dress. We know of an edict issued by the *kaymakam* of Istanbul, Halil Ahmed Paşa, in 1693/1694, and that in 1699, Grand Vizier Mustafa Daltaban Paşa renewed the regulations requiring *dhimmis* to wear clothing made of dark coarse fabrics, to hang a bell around their necks, and not to walk in wooden clogs. His successor, Rami Paşa, was more lenient towards Jews, but the fact that Grand Vizier Jelayli Ahmed Paşa sold individual *dhimmis* the right to dress as they pleased indicates that the severe restrictions were still enforced.[26] The picture that emerges from edicts issued during the last decade of the seventeenth century is one in which it is difficult to differentiate between the religious denominations, because distinctive clothing had been abandoned. For that reason, the sultan ordered that the restrictions be publicly declared and brought to the attention of the populace. Violators were to be punished, and no excuses accepted.[27] During these very years, the Ottoman state implemented taxation reforms, which included a revision in the collection of the *cizye* in accordance with the *şari'a.* It may well be that religious, and not only economic, motives lay at the basis of that change.

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25 See Zilfi, Madeline C.: The Kadizadelis. Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul. In: Journal of Near Eastern Studies 45,4 (1986). pp. 263–265; Baer, Marc David: The Great Fire of 1660 and the Islamization of Christian and Jewish Space in Istanbul. In: International Journal of Middle East Studies 36 (2004). pp. 159–181.

26 Cantemir, Dimitrie: The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire. 2 vols. London 1756. p. 441; von Hammer, Joseph: Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches. vol. 7. Wien 1863. p. 54.

27 Complaints about violation of the regulations concerning dress and the difficulty of discerning between *dhimmis* and Muslims are recorded, for example, in Abu-El-Haj, Rifa'at Ali: Power and Social Order. In: The Ottoman City and its Parts. Urban Structure and Social Order. Edited by Irene A. Bierman [et al.]. New York 1991. p. 95, n. 14. Most interesting is the early use of the term *milleteyn.*

Another wave seems to have taken place in the 1760s and 1770s, evidently connected with the costly war with Russia.

Jews and *askeris* – the army and high officials

Military units of varying sizes were garrisoned in all Ottoman cities. Since Istanbul was the home base for the infantry and the fleet, during periods in which war was not being waged it was home to tens of thousands of soldiers. They tended to get drunk and act violently against *dhimmis*, especially prior to the sailing of the fleet, in the spring, and before the army set out on a military campaign. The seventeenth century Frenchman Jean de Thevenot reported that sailors became a serious public nuisance three days before their sailing. He noted that during these days it was customary for sailors to rob Jews and Christians at knifepoint.[28]

Popular uprisings in the capital were another source of danger. Soldiers took advantage of such occasions to set fire to homes in Jewish quarters so as to loot them during the efforts to extinguish the flames. In other cases, soldiers falsely accused Jews, saying that the fires began in their homes; in this way, they intended to extort money from Jews or even bring about their execution. One of the best-known uprisings was directed against the Jewess known as Kira, whose wealth and great influence in the court of Mehmed III aroused much antagonism. She was cruelly murdered, and her property looted and confiscated. Several wealthy and leading Jews in the capital were given the choice of converting to Islam or death, and for several weeks, the community exposed to looting and physical violence.[29] Abuse by soldiers at times took the form of the rape of young Jewish girls and boys.[30] There were also a few instances in which soldiers demanded that Jews

28 De Thevenot, Jean: The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant. Newly translated from the French by Archibald Lovell. London 1687. p. 73.

29 Mordtmann, Johannes H.: Die jüdischen Kira im Serai der Sultane. Berlin 1929 (Mitteilungen des Seminars für orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin: Westasiatische Studien 32/2 1929); Uzunçarşili, İsmail H.: Osmanli Tarihi, III, pts. 1–2. Ankara 1951–1954. pp. 125–126. Sanderson writes that Jews who left their homes were beaten and stripped of their clothes, Sanderson, John: The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584–1602. Edited by William Foster. London 1931 (Works issued by the Hakluyt Society 2, 67). pp. 85–86, 201, 203.

30 Among the writings of the Armenian Eremya Çelebi is a piece that relates the rape of a group of Jewish girls by 'shepherds' in one of the sultan's estates in a suburb of Istanbul. The author points out that the Jews were powerless when faced by the sultan's slaves: Kömürjian, Eremia: Eremya Çelebi Kömürjian's Armeno-Turkish Poem 'The Jewish Bride'. Edited by Avedis K. Sanjian and Andreas Tietze. Wiesbaden 1981. p. 30. In another case six or seven Janissaries caught a Jewish boy, raped and killed him: Shilton, Moshe: Benei Moshe. Constantinople 1713. §32, 60c–d. [in Hebrew].

be removed far away from them.[31] At times, there were even violent clashes between soldiers and *dhimmis*, like in Salonica in 1622.[32] The author of a chronicle of the blood libel in Istanbul in 1633 noted that it was the initiative of two soldiers and stressed the hatred of Jews by the Janissaries and Sipahis. The soldiers' Christian provenance, re-education by devout Muslims, and affiliation with orders of dervishes explains the ongoing animosity towards Jews.

The attitude of the masses of Muslim subjects to the Jews

The sense of superiority adopted by the Ottomans vis-à-vis other nations was common to all levels of society. That negative and patronizing attitude towards the Christian world would begin to change towards the end of the seventeenth century, after a series of military defeats, especially during the reign of Ahmed III. Usually, contempt or disregard remained at the sentimental level. Islamic holidays, the return of the *haj* convoy, and military successes or defeats inflamed the masses, enhancing anti-*dhimmi* feelings.

Muslim masses expressed their contempt and even hatred towards the *dhimmis* particularly through insulting epithets, such as *Çifut*, for a Jew, which appears frequently in the writings of Evliya Çelebi.[33] In fact, one of the gates in the walls of Istanbul near an area that was densely populated by Jews is called Çifut Kapısı. Dutch traveler Cornelis de Bruyn, when writing about the animosity shown by Turks towards non-Muslims, particularly Europeans, notes the prevailing epithets they used: *jiaur* (heretic), *köpek* (dog), and *dinsiz* (unbeliever).[34] *Yahudi* was one of the strongest and most offensive terms that could be used against a Muslim. When

31 De Tournefort reported that the Janissaries were the effective rulers of the city of Trabzon and that no Jew was permitted to live there: de Tournefort, Joseph Pitton: A Voyage into the Levant. vol. 2. London 1718. p. 156.

32 In a dispatch sent by the Venetian ambassador in the summer of 1622, he reported that the Sipahis demanded a huge sum of money from Salonica's Jews, who received permission from the *kadi* to defend themselves. Together with the Greeks, they opposed the Sipahis and even killed a few of them: Vacalopoulos, Apostolos E.: History of Macedonia 1354–1833. Thessaloniki 1973 (Hidryma Meletōn Chersonēsou tou Haimou). pp. 207–208. See also about Istanbul and Izmir: Knolles, Richard and Paul Rycaut: The Turkish History. vol. 1. 6th ed. London 1687. pp. 975b–976a.

33 It is also found in the Armenian chronicle about Shabbetai Zevi; Galanté, Abraham: Histoire des Juifs de Turquie. vol. 8. Istanbul 1986. pp. 196, 264–265.

34 le Bruyn, Corneille: Voyage au Levant, I, Rouen 1725. p. 268.

Sheykh-ul-Islam ‘Ali Efendi was asked: “What shall be done to Zeyd, the father who has cursed his son, Emir, ‘Oh you heretic, the son of a Jew’,” he replied: flogging.”[35]

In the provinces, things were more precarious. European travelers noted, neither sadly nor innocently, that Muslims showed greater animosity towards Jews than to Christians, and that the condition of Jews in the provinces was the worst of all the religious denominations. This testimony should not be taken at face value; it may well be that in the Asian provinces the condition of the Christians was more severe than that of the Jews.[36]

Nevertheless, things only rarely deteriorated from a derogatory manner of speech to actual violence. Jews bore expressions of contempt and animosity with a degree of indifference and apathy that surprised European observers, who commented on the asymmetry between the good services that Jews provided their masters, and the contemptuous way they were treated, noting the loyalty that Jews display towards the Ottomans. But Jews had no choice: they had too much to lose, and raising a hand against a Muslim or a statement that may seem as defaming Islam in public could lead to the death of the offender.

When Evliya Çelebi described the participation of the guild of Jewish tavern keepers in a procession of guilds in Istanbul, he wrote that three officers accompanied them to protect them from the angry mob that threw stones, shouted insults, and tried to steal their clothes and their fine dishes.[37]

While most cases of harassing Jews were clashes involving individuals, usually from the fringes, from time to time there were ethnic confrontations, like the ones after the Sabbatean affair ended; or the one in Salonica when Muslim residents protested against the expansion of the Jewish cemetery in 1709.[38]

Relations between Muslims and Jews were not a one-way street. There was a variegated pattern of relationships that combined personal feelings with economic interests when the two sides met, clashed, or came together for some purpose. Physical proximity also led to the establishment of social relationships, even friendship, between Jews and Muslims in their residential neighborhoods, spend-

35 Efendi, ‘Ali: Şeyhülislam Fetvalari. Edited by Ibrahim Ural. Istanbul 1995. p. 125, no. 828. See also: Winter, Relations of Egyptian Jews, p. 412. For a later period, see Lane, Edward W.: An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians (1833–1835). 2 vols. 5th ed. London 1871. pp. 304–305.

36 Rycaut, Paul: The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches. Anno Christi 1678. London 1679. p. 24.

37 Efendi, Evliya: Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa in the Seventeenth Century. vol. 2. London 1834. p. 249.

38 Ginio, Eyal: Expansion of the Jewish Cemetery in Salonica (1709). An Example of an Inter-Religious Struggle over Public Space in an Ottoman City. In: Pe’amim. Studies in Oriental Jewry 98–99 (2004). pp. 319–332. [in Hebrew].

ing time in places of recreation, co-working in commercial centers, and appearing in courts. Hebrew sources mention many cases of friendly relations between men: encounters and conversations when they met while practicing their occupations (in the markets and ports), in guild life, and in places where they spent their leisure time – coffeehouses, taverns, and public baths. At times this also happened during mixed parties in private homes, far from public attention.[39]

Jews and Ottoman Christian subjects

A substantial Christian population, sometimes strong and greatly influential, resided in the major cities of the Ottoman Empire. The animosity of Greeks and Armenians towards Jews stemmed from both religious and commercial reasons, as there was competition in certain commercial areas, and therefore their animosity was probably greater than that exhibited by Muslims who were sure of their higher status.[40] The rising importance of Greek merchants in the Ottoman Empire since the last third of the seventeenth century and the fact that Greeks filled important posts in the capital added to the mutual hostility, which only escalated in the next century. In the Balkans, the Jews were seen as supporters of the Ottoman conqueror, so that another stratum was added to the tension between the two ethno-religious groups, especially after Greek nationalism arose during the eighteenth century, and culminated in a murderous manner during the Greek revolt. While we have no detailed evidence how this tension was expressed in daily life, it was obvious at the time, for European travelers everywhere in the Levant repeatedly mention the hatred and contempt of urban and rural Christians for Jews.

Especially severe was tension between Jews and Armenians, particularly in the commercial centers, where they competed. The fact that the Hebrew sources refer to the latter as Amalekites,[41] a biblical appellation bearing an extremely harsh connotation, lends weight to this impression. A regulation made by the guild of the button producers in late eighteenth century Istanbul demonstrates

39 Most interesting is a complaint lodged in court against Muslims, Jews, and Christians who got together to drink alcoholic beverages and to enjoy music and dancing.

40 For an example of tension caused by professional competition, see Efendi, Evlya: Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa. Trans. J. von Hammer. London 1846. pp. 240–241.

41 Shmuelevitz, Aryeh: Relations between Jews and Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian Case. In: Ottoman History and Society. Jewish Sources. Edited by Aryeh Shmuelevitz. Istanbul 1999. pp. 83–87.

the fierce economic competition between those groups.[42] Hostility between Christians and Jews was not absolute nor all-encompassing, but it was present on both individual and communal levels. The Hebrew sources report denunciations and false charges by Christians against Jewish communities; the motive at times was to draw the attention of the authorities to the demographic increase of Jews and their wealth in order place a heavier tax burden upon them.[43] Inter-communal tension also took the form of competition for priority and prestige during official events.

Apparently, Jerusalem was the most significant site of Jewish-Christian tension, since the very presence of each denomination in the Holy City, their political and social standing, and the extent of property it held within it had obvious theological implications. The religious outlook of Catholic and Protestant travelers to Jerusalem colored their descriptions of the Jews. They took pains to note how few they were, pointed to their humiliation, oppression, and being the most hated and poorest ethnic community in the country. At the same time, they also depicted the Jews as the greatest enemies of Christians in the Holy Land. Many of these travelers angrily claimed that Jews obstructed local Christians and pilgrims, interfered with their religious processions, and schemed – together with the Turks – to destroy Christian religious sites.

Blood libels against Jews in the Ottoman Empire have been documented since the sixteenth century. They were usually initiated by Janissaries and Christians from the lower classes,[44] but the central government took a firm stand against the blood libels. As early as the sixteenth century, stringent orders were sent to the provinces commanding that such cases be referred to the imperial *divan*, where they would be judged fairly without local influence.[45] The number of blood libels increased considerably after 1840.

Alongside evidence of tense relations between Christians and Jews, we know that normally Christians bought meat that was ritually slaughtered but declared

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42 Barnai, Jacob and Haim Gerber: Jewish Guilds in Istanbul in the Late 18th Century. In: Michael 7 (1981). pp. 206–226. [in Hebrew].

43 For an example from Larissa (Greece), see Modeano, Yitzhak Shmuel: Ne'eman Shmuel. Salonica 1723. §93, fol. 117d. [in Hebrew].

44 See Cohen, Amnon: Ritual Murder Accusations against Jews during the Days of Suleiman the Magnificent. In: International Journal of Turkish Studies 10 (1986). pp. 73–78; Hacker, Joseph R.: Blood Libels against Jews in the Ottoman Empire. In: The Elder will Serve the Younger. Myths and Symbols in Dialogue between Judaism and Christianity. A Tribute to Israel Jacob Yuval. Edited by Ram Ben-Shalom, Ora Limor and Oded Ir-Shai. Jerusalem 2021. pp. 413–429. [in Hebrew]. Includes updated references to the research literature and sources.

45 Heyd, Uriel: Ritual Murder Accusations in 15th and 16th Century Turkey. Jerusalem 1961. pp. 141–143.

not kosher. Leaders of the various denominations cooperated in support of their co-religionists in the Holy Land during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, or in local affairs such as dealing with a rapacious local ruler or a natural disaster. There are also indications of friendly relationships: A question posed to a rabbinic authority at the beginning of the seventeenth century mentions local Christians drinking wine together with Jews in the courtyard of an Istanbuli synagogue.[46]

Jews' legal and political status and their relations with other city dwellers with whom they interacted daily impacted their socio-economic integration, which will now be discussed.

Jewish socio-economic integration: occupations and social strata

Patterns of Jewish economic behavior were shaped by a few factors: the legal constraints set by the state; the local structure of economic opportunities; and Jews' access to them. The latter was dependent on both skills and the ethno-demographic structure in which various Jewish groups operated affected by the tripartite relationship: Ottomans, Jews, and Christians.[47] As members of a minority group, they naturally inclined to remain closest to those of their own ethnic group in occupations, residential areas, and leisure activities. To this should be added the tendency – common to the entire Ottoman population – for a son to continue his father or father-in-law's occupation, a practice encouraged primarily by craft guilds who in this way intended to maintain stability and prevent competition. This was also true regarding inter-generational transfer of knowledge-intensive professions requiring personal training such as doctors, rabbis, and ritual slaughterers.

Due to lack of detailed studies based on Ottoman archival documentation, we can only make general statements about the role of Jews in the economy. Below we have delineated preliminary outlines of Jewish socio-economic integration in the Ottoman economy.

46 Bassan, Yehiel: Responsa. Istanbul/Constantinople 1737. §104, fol. 71d [in Hebrew].

47 Landau, Jacob M.: Relations between Jews and Non-Jews in the Late Ottoman Empire. Some Characteristics. In: The Jews of the Ottoman Empire. Edited by Avigdor Levi. Princeton 1994. pp. 539–545.

Shaping the Jewish socio-economic profile before 1839

Jews were traditionally city dwellers. As such, they had a preference for urban occupations: mainly crafts, commerce, and services. Thus they were an integral element of Ottoman urban economic life.[48] The economic activity of Jews, like their Christian neighbors, was marked by much diversity and intense involvement in economic life. This is clearly reflected in a late sixteenth century source, a census in which 740 taxpaying Jews in Istanbul were listed as engaging in no less than 119 occupations, and it may well be that had the list been more complete the number would be even higher.[49]

Neglecting the governmental sector, specializing in leasing and collecting taxes and customs

During the last quarter of the fifteenth century and throughout the next, Jews were prominently involved in tax farming; their number among the leading holders of such leases exceeded by far their proportion in the urban population. At first, these were Romaniote Jews who leased the collection of various taxes and duties from state authorities, frequently in partnership with Greeks and Armenians and on fewer occasions with Muslims.[50] As time went on, ambitious immigrants from the Iberian Peninsula entered this lucrative field. Up until the mid-seventeenth century, Jews still leased taxes and duties in the customs houses of the empire's important commercial centers.[51]

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48 Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Urban Encounters. The Muslim-Jewish Case in the Ottoman Empire. In: Researching Ottoman History. Studies in Honor of Prof. Amnon Cohen. Edited by Eyal Ginio and Elie Podeh. Leiden 2013. pp. 177–197.

49 Yerasimos, Communauté juive, pp. 127–128.

50 Inalcik, Halil: Jews in the Ottoman Economy and Finance, 1450–1500. In: The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times. Essays in Honor of Bernard Lewis. Edited by Clifford E. Bosworth [et al.]. Princeton 1989. pp. 513–550. (detailed tables appended).

51 For research and documents on Jews as lessees of taxes, see Inalcik, Jews; Epstein, Mark Alan: The Ottoman Jewish Communities and their Role in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. Freiburg 1980. pp. 107–144; Gerber, Haim: Economic and Social Life of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th Centuries. Jerusalem 1982. pp. 49–60 (a general survey with appended Hebrew and Ottoman documents); Gerber, Haim: Jewish Tax Farmers in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th Centuries. In: International Journal of Turkish Studies 10 (1986). pp. 143–154; Çizakça, Murat: A Comparative Evolution of Business Partnerships. The Islamic World and Europe, with Specific Reference to the Ottoman Archives. Leiden 1996. pp. 153–159.; Goffman, Daniel: Izmir and the Levantine World. 1550–1650. Seattle 1990. p. 88 (Table 9); Emecen, Feridun Mustafa: Unutulmus bir Cemaat. Manisa Yahudileri. Istanbul 1997. p. 120.

Tax farmers tried to maintain their leases for as long as possible and often employed their immediate family or relatives as sub-lessees or assistant collectors.[52] The most profitable leases were for the port taxes collected in Istanbul, Izmir and its environs, Salonica, Bursa, Alexandria, and the Danube ports; the silk-weighing tax (*mizan-i harir*) in Aleppo, Bursa, and Izmir; and duties levied on wine and ʻarak. It is uncertain to what extent Jews were involved in collecting the poll tax, *ʻavariz*, and other imposts in towns and villages, though there is some evidence of this. Thanks to the leasing of tax collection, *dhimmis* could attain the highest administrative offices that were open to non-Muslims, and this was also one of the only ways in which a *dhimmi* could amass wealth. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, wealthy Jews leased the *gabella* – the communal tax on thr consumption of kosher meat – as a profitable occupation.

Data from the core of the empire, as well as from the Arab provinces (e. g. Cairo, Aleppo) shows that around the mid-seventeenth century, Jews were pushed out of the realm of tax farming and customs collecting by Muslims of the ruling classes. There were a few reasons for this including the changing Ottoman fiscal policy and weakening of the rigid class differentiation in Muslim society, which led to a decrease in the profitability of this occupation. Together with the greater risk it entailed on account of the deteriorating security, and the uncertainty as to the possibility of recouping the immense investment involved, resulted in the impoverishment of Jewish financiers that made them no longer eligible for tax farming. In addition, there was increased religious extremism that disapproved of *dhimmis* serving in offices having a semblance of authority and mastery over Muslims. All this notwithstanding, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there were still quite a few Jews among the important lessees of the taxes and duties in the capital.

Jews were over-represented in the private business sector for various reasons, one of which was that they were prohibited from entering the privileged *askeri* class and the governmental sector until the *Tanzimat* (1839).

Large-scale trade: wholesale trade, international trade

The *Sephardim* mostly lived in commercial centers such as port cities around the Mediterranean basin, and at the crossroads of trade routes such as the *Via Egnatia* crossing the Balkans, enjoying greater opportunities and better communication.

52 Evliya Çelebi reported that about forty Jews were employed in the service of the supervisor of the Istanbul customs house; Efendi, Narrative, part 1, vol. 2, p. 171.

They were already equipped with mercantile skills,a knack for conducting commerce, linguistic skills such as fluency in local and European languages, wise entrepreneurial tools including commercial know-how, and together with family and business networks these enabled these merchants to thrive. They adopted innovative commercial methods including the provision of credit and guarantors, intensive use of semi-banknotes (*polisa*) to transfer large sums of money, maritime insurance (*seguro*), and factorage (*fatorea*).[53] Under the factorage system, widespread family networks connected commercial centers in the Ottoman Empire and Italy. This meant the merchant had a trusted agent in another city where he sold goods that were sent to him and bought other merchandise which he sent back to his master or partner. Obviously, a relationship based on trust and confidence between family members and co-religionists was essential for trade of this sort, nevertheless, we find partnerships with non-Jews.[54] These merchants entered maritime as well as overland commerce with Christian Europe, which Muslim merchants, who had a very limited tradition of maritime commerce, avoided.[55]

Since the late sixteenth century, treaties and agreements signed with European states included provisions relating to the empire's Europeans who took up temporary or permanent residence there. The phenomenon prevailed from the turn of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries in view of the empire's military failures when these agreements became an instrument for the penetration of European

53 Gerber, Haim: Enterprise and International Commerce in the Economic Activity of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th–17th Centuries. In: Zion 43 (1978). pp. 51–58; Shmuelevitz, Aryeh: The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Late Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centuries. Administrative, Economic, Legal, and Social Relations as Reflected in the Responsa. Leiden 1984. pp. 141–153. Barter trade is also mentioned. For maritime insurance, see Wimmer (Goldner), Yehudit: Jewish Merchants in Ragusa as Intermediaries between East and West in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. In: The Days of the Crescent. Chapters in the History of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire. Edited by Minna Rozen. Tel Aviv 1996 (Publications of the Diaspora Research Institute 111). pp. 109–120. [in Hebrew].

54 Bregoli, Francesca: A Father's Consolation. Intracultural Ties and Religion in a Trans-Mediterranean Jewish Commercial Network. In: Jews and the Mediterranean. Edited by Matthias B. Lehmann and Jessica M. Marglin. Bloomington 2020. pp. 129–148.

55 Ravid, Benjamin: An Introduction to the Economic History of the Iberian Diaspora in the Mediterranean. In: Judaism 41, 3 (1992). pp. 268–285; Ray, Jonathan: Iberian Jewry between West and East. Jewish Settlement in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean. In: Mediterranean Studies 18 (2009). pp. 44–65. See also Israel, Jonathan I.: European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism. 1550–1750. Oxford 1985; Israel, Jonathan I.: Diaspora Within a Diaspora. Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the World Maritime Empires (1540–1740). Leiden/Boston/Köln 2002. The axiom that Muslims refrained from engaging in commerce is no longer accepted. Muslims were among the ranks of the greater merchants. Gilbar, Gad G.: Trade and Enterprise. The Muslim Tujjar in the Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran. 1860–1914. London 2022.

colonialism into the Ottoman Empire. This resulted in the proliferation of foreigners with a privileged status, who now competed with local merchants, especially Jews, who were dominant in the trade with western Europe. Another consequence was that Ottoman Jews were now divided according to whose subjects they were: Ottoman subjects (the old Sephardi core); and a minority of foreign subjects, mainly Francos (Jews of Portuguese descent, who migrated from Livorno and other Italian cities) as well as certified foreign-protected Ottomans (*beratli*). Some of the latter were Ottoman Jewish merchants who came to Italy as part of their activities and returned with foreign protection as real or fictitious workers of local European consuls and ambassadors. Their linguistic skills also enabled a growing number of Jews to offer their services as translators (*dragomans*) and guides to European merchants, diplomats, pilgrims and tourists. The *beratlis* enjoyed some privileges that gave them serious advantages over Ottoman subjects. First, they were exempt from the poll tax and subject to lower tariffs (2%–5% of the value of the goods). Second, they had protection against confiscations by state functionaries. Third, they were subject to the consular courts, rather to that of the *kadi.* Finally, they were also exempt from compliance to some of Ottoman bylaws, such as those of the guilds. Whereas the legal and physical protection against arbitrary confiscation allowed foreigners to accumulate capital mainly in foreign trade, Jewish Ottoman subjects suffered a heavier tax burden and a degree of uncertainty.

The Francos played an intermediary role in Mediterranean trade. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jewish traders from Tuscany, mainly from Livorno, who enjoyed French patronage, played a crucial role in the French trade conducted between Salonica and the Mediterranean ports, especially the port of Marseille, which became a free port in 1669. Although potential competitors to Christian French traders, they served as perfect middlemen between the Ottoman producers and the French importers. These Francos were considered skilled traders who had gained their mercantile experience through Tuscan ports and were considered trustees for both sides, despite the wars between the Empire and the Christian countries. As French subjects, they could represent the French consul's interests, and at the same time benefit from their strong connections with their local Jewish Ottoman counterparts. The latter enjoyed easy access to the Macedonian raw wool market, essential to the developing textile industry in France: They had priority in buying the woollen fleece at a discounted price because they had to supply woollen fabrics to the uniforms of the Janissary regiment. The good relations that they maintained with Ottoman officials enabled Ottoman Jews to purchase a significant part of the fleece at a price lower than the market price. On the other hand, the partnerships between French-protected Jewish merchants and French Christian merchants, who depended on Franco liquid capital for credit, helped the Ottoman local Jews to circumvent the regulations prohibiting them

from trading directly with France.[56] The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars (1789–1815) caused an upheaval in the French trade in the Levant, harmed Jewish middlemen and benefited their Greek rivals. The latter had been collectively protected by Russia since 1774, and had controlled the trade routes in the northern Balkans and the Black Sea since the late eighteenth century.[57]

Financial and commercial services to Ottoman elites

During the seventeenth century up until the 1820's, Jews filled the position of *sarraf*s for the highest officials in the Ottoman administration, both in Istanbul and Edirne, and in the provincial capitals. European travelers claimed that every high official in the capital and the provinces needed a Jew to manage his economic affairs. We know about seventeenth century Jewish *sarrafs* in Cairo, Hayim Farhi in Damascus and Acre, and Yehezkel Gabbay and David Sassoon in early nineteenth century Baghdad. Their services included the provision of cash or credit to the governor or statesman, money lending, money changing, coinage minting, and handling financial affairs. Jewish *sarrafs*, suppliers (*bazargans* see below) and court physicians in Istanbul consisted of a small group of Court Jews, which is out of the scope of this article.[58]

Another lucrative occupation for a person that had credit and could raise large sums on demand was trading in salaries and grants. Since soldiers were often in need of credit, Jews bought large quantities of payment orders in cash and at a discount (higher than the interest rate), and in due time presented them to the treasury for full payment.

56 The share of the Francos was estimated at about 10 % of all foreign trade in Salonica during the heyday of the eighteenth century. Rozen, Minna: Contest and Rivalry in Commerce of the Mediterranean Maritime in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century. The Jews of Salonica and the European Presence. In: In the Mediterranean Routes. The Jewish-Spanish Diaspora from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries. Edited by Minna Rozen. Tel Aviv 1993. pp. 65–113. [in Hebrew]; Filippini, Jean Pierre: Le Rôle des Négociants et des Banquiers Juifs de Livourne dans le Grand Commerce International en Méditerranée au XVIII Siècle. In: The Mediterranean and the Jews. Edited by Ariel Toaff and Shimon Schwarzfuchs. Ramat Gan 1989. pp. 123–150.

57 Lampe, John R. and Marvin R. Jackson: Balkan Economic History 1550–1950. From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations. Bloomington 1982. pp. 39–44; Shaw, Stanford J.: The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. Basingstoke 1991. p. 141.

58 See Ben-Naeh, Courtiers, pp. 56–70. On Jewish court physicians see Galanté, Histoire, vol. 5, pp. 156–160.

Lending at interest was not a standard Jewish occupation in Ottoman cities, and Haim Gerber refuted that claim long ago.[59] Muslim society created a mechanism for lending and borrowing money from endowments (*vakif*s) and from private people who wished to secure themselves a secure fixed profit for their cash money – women, especially widows, orphans, and religious scholars. Jewish businessmen were seeking cheap credit rather than lending money.

Suppliers of luxury goods and services to governors, the army command, officeholders in the imperial court, the sultan, and his family members

Wealthy Jews served as suppliers (*bazargan*) to high officials and their household, which included their family, entourage, slaves and servants, supplyng them with foodstuffs and other goods, as well as horses, weapons, clothing, and the like. Among the goods were luxury items such as jewels and precious stones, embroidered textiles, furs, scents, and spices. These purchases required huge sums of cash money and were risky, in accordance with the ups and downs in the careers of those officeholders.[60]

Noteworthy is also the trade in antiques which prospered especially in the nineteenth century, when demand for Eastern and Ottoman antiques grew immensely. Yet, since the seventeenth century, European travelers had already mentioned that Jews were very helpful in the acquisition of coins, medallions, manuscripts and various other local artifacts.

Internal trade: commerce between cities and villages

Jews took part in all aspects of urban commerce, whether in the markets, caravansaraies, ports, or in the streets, as wholesalers or retailers, in their stores or market and street stalls, and as itinerant peddlers. Some were mediating between the cities and the villages, despite the risk of being robbed and killed by robbers and

59 Gerber, Haim: Jews and Money-Lending in the Ottoman Empire. In: Jewish Quarterly Review 72 (1981). pp. 100–118.

60 For information about Jews as Ocak Bâzergâni, see Ecker, Yehoshu'a (Shuki): Ha-bazergan shel ocak ha-yeniçerim–biografyah shel tafkid. M. A. Tel Aviv 2002. [in Hebrew]. Jewish women who served as cosmeticians, midwives, and healers in harems became intermediaries between harem women and the outside world, and at times also dealt in luxury items.

by villagers. These itinerant peddlers left their home in the city and made the rounds of the countryside on weekdays, sometimes for weeks on end, selling villagers household utensils, fabrics, and other articles, and purchasing from them raw materials such as wool, silk, cotton, hides, wax, sulphur, and salt, as well as live animals, coins, scrap metal, and fresh food (including fruit, vegetables, honey and eggs) which they then sold in the city. Domestic trade also included seasonal fairs. There, Jewish merchants bought and sold raw materials and finished products, and also contracted business relationships and partnerships. Among the best-known fairs in the Balkans were those of Osijek, Estruga, Alasona, Muskulor, and Dulya.[61]

Domestic production and the guilds

Jews were absent from agricultural production,[62] but well-integrated into the urban trade and production through the guilds. A diversity of occupations and active participation of Jews in the Ottoman economy through membership in guilds, joint work and neighboring shops are important characteristics of the Ottoman Jewry socio-economic profile and are among the features that distinguish it from most Jewish communities in eastern and western Europe.

Craftsmen, merchants, and suppliers of services were all working within the guild system. In each city, there were dozens or more guilds (*esnaf*). The guilds were self-governing professional organizations under the supervision of the state. They held and managed a monopoly on the means of production, on setting styles and prices, and supervised the quality and the quantity of the merchandise in the markets.[63]

Our knowledge of Jewish guilds is sporadic, especially regarding the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The appearance of Jewish guilds since the second half of the sixteenth century, when Ottoman guilds grew and flourished, indicates completed integration into Ottoman society. The rabbinic literature relates to a guild of

61 Shmuelevitz, Jews, pp. 135–141; Faroqhi, Suraiya: The Early History of the Balkan Fairs. In: Südost-Forschungen 37 (1978). pp. 50–68.; Faroqhi, Suraiya: Crisis and Change. In: Südost-Forschungen 37 (1978). pp. 489–490.

62 Meron, Orly C.: Jewish Entrepreneurship in Salonica, 1912–1940. An Ethnic Economy in Transition. Brighton 2013. p. 30.

63 On Ottoman guilds, their leadership and activities, see, for example, Faroqhi, Suraiya: Guildsmen and Handicraft Producers. In: The Cambridge History of Turkey. vol. 3. The Later Ottoman Period, 1603–1839. Edited by Suraiya Faroqhi. Cambridge 2006. pp. 336–355; Yi, Eunjeong: Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul. Fluidity and Leverage. Leiden/Boston 2004.

wool weavers in Salonica in 1570. Evliya Çelebi's description of the guilds' procession in the Ottoman capital in 1638 contains details on Jewish guilds and subguilds. Noteworthy are those who deal with food, with luxury items such as pearls and expensive fabrics; those who process precious metals; and several groups (*kol*) that syndicated hundreds of entertainers – dancers, jugglers and musicians.[64] Later sources mention another related group – puppeteers (operating the Turkish *karagöz* shows).

Jewish involvement in guild life was so deep that it affected communal organization, especially that of the benevolent societies, as well as the professional organization of the slaughterers, the cantors, and the circumcizers in the larger communities. While at all periods there were both separate and – primarily – mixed guilds, the tendency towards dividing along religious lines began during the seventeenth century and gained impetus starting in the mid-eighteenth century. This process may be explained by growing religious tensions, the infiltration of Janissaries into the artisans' guilds, and the deteriorating economic situation. In the second half of the eighteenth century, we hear more and more about exclusively Jewish guilds, whose members have a relatively low income. Unsurprisingly, harsh competition and enmity prevailed between Jewish and Christian rival guilds.[65] The Jewish guilds in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries acquired political strength, as is evident in the violent controversies in Izmir. The Jewish boatmen's guild in Istanbul operated benevolent societies to assist poor guild members and other needy people in the community.[66]

Ottoman Jews were prominent in textile production and the textile trade. While the native Romaniote Jews continued the old-time handicrafts, including the production and dying of silk, the Iberian Jewish immigrants brought with them the advanced technologies of the western textile industry. Their knowledge made Salonica the most important production center of woollen cloth in the empire.[67] However, since the late sixteenth century, Jewish textile manufacturers, like others textile laborers, were unable to effectively compete with their European rivals. The latter, equipped with the latest technologies and more favorable trade

64 Efendi, Narrative, part 1, vol. 2, pp. 104–285. Information for other cites is rather sparse, but for Jerusalem see Cohen, Guilds.

65 Yi, Guild, p. 91–96.

66 Ben-Naeh, Yaron: The Benevolent Societies of the Jewish boatmen Guild in Istanbul in the 18th and 19th Centuries. In: The Scepter Shall Not Depart From Judah. Leadership, Rabbinate and Community in Jewish History. Studies Presented to Prof. Simon Schwarzfuchs. Edited by Joseph R. Hacker and Yaron Harel. Jerusalem 2011. pp. 101–140. [in Hebrew].

67 Braude, Benjamin: The Cloth Industry of Salonica in the Mediterranean Economy. In: Pe'amim. Studies in Oriental Jewry 15 (1983). pp. 82–95. [in Hebrew].

conditions, had gained control over the production of raw materials, which forced up input prices. Europe then flooded the empire with high-quality and cheaper woolen textiles. The Jewish manufacturers who had committed themselves to supplying uniforms for the Ottoman Janissaries were forced to absorb heavy losses. As early as the first decade of the seventeenth century, some of Salonica's textile manufacturers had relocated to Manisa in western Anatolia, which became a center for that industry due to favorable special tax exemptions.[68]

Yet, the prominent low presence of Jewish workers in textiles on the edge of the *Tanzimat* era (e.g., table 1, below) resulted from the continued weakening of the local Jewish craft guilds which had begun in the eighteenth century. In Salonica, it reached its lowest ebb in 1826, due to the disbandment of the Janissary corps who were the target costumers of these woollens,[69] as well as a long-standing failure to compete with British and continental manufacturers both in quality and price.

The expansion of cheap manufactured imports from Europe hit the traditional Ottoman producers, including Jewish Ottoman subjects, hard, also in other production areas.[70] Increasing illegal agricultural exports, produced in the countryside by Muslim great estate owners, emptied the urban craft sector of raw materials in favor of exporting them to the developing European industry. The high purchasing power of foreigners, which was also affected by the low value of the local currency in relation to the value of foreign currency, worsened the competition over the limited qualitative raw materials (cotton, tobacco, wool and leather). It also ensured the maximum profit for the owners of the great estates and increased the production costs of the local crafts while reducing its quality.[71] From the mid-eighteenth century, the increase in purchasing power in the hands of the senior Ottoman officials (as well as foreign merchants) created a growing demand for imported luxury goods: textiles, Russian furs, glassware from central and western Europe, and

68 Goffman, Izmir, pp. 90–91; Goffman, Daniel: The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe. Cambridge 2002 (New approaches to European history 24). On Istanbul merchants in the eighteenth century, see Eldem, Edhem: French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century. Leiden/Boston/Köln 1999.

69 Meron, Orly C.: Jewish Commerce in Salonica. 1881–1912. In: Encyclopaedia of the Jewish Diaspora, vol. 3. Edited by Avrum Ehrlich. Santa Barbara 2008. pp. 860–864.

70 Quataert, Donald: Ottoman Manufacturing in the Nineteenth Century. In: Manufacturing in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. 1500–1950. Edited by Donald Quataert. Donald Albany 1994. p. 98.

71 Lampe and Jackson, History, pp. 33–37; Svoronos, Nicholas: Administrative, Social and Economic Developments. 1430–1821. In: Macedonia – 4000 Years of Greek History and Civilization. Athens 1991 (English edition supervised by H. L. Turner). pp. 354–38; Stoianovich, Traian: Balkan Worlds. The First and Last Europe. Armonk/London 1994. pp. 97–98, 204–205.

colonial products such as sugar, coffee and tea.[72] The capital accumulated by these elite people as well as privileged traders, partially invested in illegal cottage-industry ventures using the putting-out system. This initiative attempted to adjust the production to the new demand that the guilds failed to meet, and harmed the guilds' ability to compete. The strengthening of the economic power of the owners of the estates also led to the strengthening of their power in the management of the cities where they preferred to live, and to the weakening of the power of the guild officials to protect their products that were strictly controlled. As a result, new technologies of production were not introduced to optimize production and the competitive ability of the local craft products decreased compared with the imported industrial products.[73]

Ludwig A. Frankl, who visited Istanbul in 1856, mentioned various Jewish occupations such as merchants, money changers, peddlers, mediators and agents, porters, boatmen (*kaikjis*), match manufacturers, and pipe producers; and also gave specific numbers for other professions:

Table 1: Jewish occupational structure, Istanbul 1856.

Branch	Sub-branch	No.	No. in branch	Percentage of branch out of total employed
Food and spirits	Groceries	100	1,100	13.16
	Pasta and pastry makers	550		
	Kosher foodstuffs cooks	150		
	Sweets producers	100		
	Wine and spirits producers	200		
Building trade	Masons	100	100	1.2
Metals	Blacksmiths and producers of nails	400		
	Tinsmiths	1,000		
	Gunmakers	100		
	Weight producers	300	1,800	21.54
Jewelry	Gold and silver wares	150		
	Precious stone sanders	1		
	Inlayers of precious stones	200	351	4.20
Glass	Owners of glass furnaces	2		

72 Stoianovich, Traian: The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant, In: The Journal of Economic History 20 (1960). pp. 234–313.; Stoianovich, Worlds, pp. 97–98, 195.

73 Sugar, Peter F.: Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule. 1354–1804. Seattle 1977. pp. 224–232.

Table 1: *(Continued)*

Branch	Sub-branch	No.	No. in branch	Percentage of branch out of total employed
	Glaziers	150		
	Mirror makers	150	352	3.61
Leather manufacturing	Shoemakers	100		
	Saddlers/cobblers	100	200	2.39
Textiles	Cotton weavers	2		
	Silk weavers	180	182	2.18
Clothing	Garment producers	500		
	Embroiderers in gold and silver thread	50	550	6.58
Tobacco	Tobacco cutters	50	50	0.60
Printing	Bookbinders	1,000		
	Scribes	20	1,020	12.21
Maritime and fishing	Fishermen	900	900	10.77
Medical services	Popular healers	500		
	Surgeons/certified doctors	40		
	Apothecaries/druggists	50	590	7.06
Free professions	Architects	1	1	0.01
Entertainment	Musicians	500		
	Acrobats	10	510	6.10
Private services	Barbers	700	700	8.38
Total		**8,356**	**8,356**	**100**

Source: Adapted from Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Istanbul's Jewish Community through the Eyes of a European Jew: Ludwig A. Frankl in his "Nach Jerusalem". In: Istanbul-Kushta-Constantinople: Narratives of Identity in the Ottoman Capital (1830–1900). vol. 2. Edited by Christoph Herzog and Richard Wittmann. Abingdon 2019. pp. 199–209.

Frankl's description highlights some domains and crafts with a noticeable Jewish presence.

Food and beverages

Jews were prominent in the production of kosher food and beverages, which were sold by them in shops, market stalls, or in the streets. It may be assumed that in such cases, too, behind the seller who was a member of a certain guild stood a woman who prepared the dishes in her home. In an eighteenth century source, Jews are mentioned as members of a guild of street peddlers of sweet beverages (*sherbet*) while others were members of the tobacco sellers' guild.[74]

Wine and spirits

Forbidden for Muslims, spirits (mostly wine and arak) were produced, imported and sold in taverns by Jews and Christians. According to Evliya Çelebi, in Istanbul alone hundreds of Jewish families made a living from this occupation in the 1630's.[75] The existence of a guild of Jewish tavern keepers indicates for a high integration in hospitality services connected with spirits.

Metals, glass, and building

About one-fifth of the abovementioned were working with metals, ranging from renewing and repairing pots to producing guns. Their part in the last industry has been documented since the early sixteenth century. Interestingly, nails were still manufactured manually, a typical trait of pre-industrial society. Apparently based on knowledge transferred through their co-religionists in Venice,[76] Jews were well-integrated in glass manufacturing, from raw glass to mirrors.

Jewelry: processing precious metals and stones

Jews were involved in the processing of precious metals, an occupation that was almost completely monopolized by *dhimmis.* Evliya Çelebi reports, for example,

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74 Kal'a, Ahmet: Istanbul Ahkam Defterleri. Istanbul Esnaf Tarihi. vol. 2 (1764–1793). Istanbul 1998. pp. 118–119, 303.

75 The English translation mentions 100 taverns owned by Jews, while in other editions, the numbers given are greater.

76 Light, Ivan and Léo-Paul Dana: Entrepreneurs and Capitalism since Luther. Rediscovering the Moral Economy. Lanham 2020. pp. 37–50.

that in Istanbul a guild of 200 Jews collected the dust from shops of goldsmiths and silversmiths in order to burn and refine it. Others produced gold and silver thread (*tel*) which was used in luxurious textiles. Some supplied raw materials for the sultanic mint and worked there and in provincial mints. According to Evliya, almost one-third of its thousand workers were *dhimmis*.[77] Hundreds of Jews were involved in the import, processing, polishing and setting of pearls and precious stones.[78]

Printers, bookbinders, and booksellers

Jews were the first to print in Hebrew and in other languages in the Ottoman Empire. Printing houses were established by the exiles from the Iberian Peninsula in Istanbul and Salonica. Since the late sixteenth century, many of the printers had been Jewish immigrants from Italy or refugees from eastern Europe. One of the most famous printers and entrepreneurs was Ya'akov Ashkenazi, who was also instrumental in establishing the first Ottoman printing house during the reign of Ahmed III.[79]

Leather products

As tannery was considered too despicable a craft for Muslims,[80] it became a *dhimi* occupation. Greeks monopolized skin and hide processing thanks to easy access to both raw materials and cheap Greek rural skilled labor to produce the material for footwear, saddles, housewares and the like.[81] Jews were integrated in leather man-

77 Efendi, Narrative, part 1, vol. 2, p. 165. Additional testimony is found in official documents and reports by European travelers.

78 Efendi, Narrative, p. 191. According to this same source, the guild of metal smelters numbered about 100 Jews (Efendi, Narrative, p. 165), while the guild of producers of an acid used to refine silver also had 100 members, most of them Jews (Efendi, Narrative, pp. 191–92). He also reported that the guild of pearl merchants numbered 100 extremely wealthy Jews who owned 40 shops (ibid., 189). For goldsmiths and silversmiths in Jerusalem, see Cohen, Life, pp. 168–170; Cohen [et al.], Jews, pp. 209–218.

79 Ben-Naeh, Yaron: Hebrew Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire. In: Jewish Journalism and Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Edited by Gad Nassi. Istanbul 2000. pp. 35–82. For the first Ottoman press, see Sabev, Orlin: Waiting for Muteferrika. Glimpses of Ottoman Print Culture. Boston 2018.

80 Lewis, Bernard: The Jews of Islam. Princeton 1984. p. 28.

81 See Svoronos, Developments, pp. 354–386.

ufacturing as shoemakers, cobblers as well as saddlers and bookbinders for the end consumer in the domestic market.[82]

Textiles and clothing

The relatively low presence of silk weavers and the negligible Jewish presence in the growing cotton weaving industry resulted design from the stagnation in the professional technological knowledge that Jews possessed. No wonder they remained with the traditional market, and their fourtunes fell when their main customer, the Janissaries, ceased to exist in 1826. Modernity brought changes in fashion and the consumption of clothing, and that made many other professional workers useless. In the mid-nineteenth century, the percentage of Jewish employees in clothing was three times higher than in textiles (table 1), and it indicates the future inclination of the Jewish minority's entrepreneurs to increase their presence in this labor-intensive industry, at relatively low costs of production (table 2).

Frankl did not relate to gender in the workforce even in branches, which were generally linked to female labor. The inferior status of women was expressed by the restrictions imposed on women similar to religious minorities. As Muslim women were subjected to constant supervision of Muslim males, they were very restricted in working out of their household. Consequently, women, similarly to slaves, day laborers, and itinerant peddlers, worked independently outside the framework of the guilds. From the Hebrew sources and the records (*sijilat*) of the *şari'a* courts in Istanbul, Bursa, and Jerusalem, we know that women were actively involved in commerce as independent merchants, or as partners and guarantors with their own funds for their husbands' business activities. Peddling was especially prevalent among women, children, and newcomers to a city, because they were not hampered by the restrictions on guild members, and their mobility enabled them to evade municipal supervision. Since they did not pay taxes or rent, they could sell at prices below those of guild members.

Professional services

Medical practitioners belonged to several categories. There were physicians (called *tabib* or *hekim*, only a few were university educated doctors), surgeons (*jerrah*),

82 Meron, Orly C.: The Jewish Economy of Salonica (1881–1912). In: Jewish Journal of Sociology 47 (2005). pp. 22–47.

and ophthalmologists. Most of the practitioners were in fact folk healers, both men and women, and the borderline between medicine, magic, and sorcery was fairly blurred until the modern era. Jewish women also served as midwives and providers of diverse gynecological treatments to women of all religious denominations.[83]

Communal services

This category included mostly religious functionaries such as rabbis, slaughterers, schoolteachers, cantors, beadles, and circumcisers. Most of them received their salary from the Jewish congregation or community which they served. We may add to this category rabbinic scholars who received stipends for studying in rabbinic academies (Heb. *yeshivot*). Affluent members or designated endowments paid these stipends, which were usually graded according to the recipients' seniority, age, and rabbinic status.

To conclude, the situation in the capital in mid-nineteenth century certainly represents other Jewish communities. The Jewish occupational structure was still characterised as mainly traditional, targeting local consumers, with hardly any sign of modern crafts.

Jewish occupations in the post-*Tanzimat* urban multi-ethnic society

On the eve of modern times, the Jewish population was described as impoverished and lacking in modern education or skills.[84] According to a 1884 report by an Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU) informant in Salonica, the province's Jewish labor force consisted of 4.000 tradesmen, 4.000 shopkeepers, 2.000 porters, 600 boatmen, 250 brokers, 250 butchers, 250 tinsmiths, 150 fishermen, 150 donkey drivers (for

83 Like a woman mentioned in an eighteenth-century Hebrew source: Malki, Ezra: Ein Mishpat. Constantinople 1770, section *Even Ha'ezer*, §2, 44c [in Hebrew]. For women as folk healers, see Ben-Naeh, Yaron: A Tried and Tested Spell. Magic Beliefs and Acts among Ottoman Jews. In: Pe'amim 85 (2000). pp. 99–100. [in Hebrew]; Buskila, Tali: The Beginning of Life in Ottoman Jewish Society. Fertility, Childbirth. PhD. Jerusalem 2021. [in Hebrew].

84 For Dr. Moise Allatini's report on Salonica's Jews in the mid-nineteenth century, see Barnai, Jacob: Sources. In: History of the Jews in the Islamic Countries, III. Edited by Joseph Tobi. Jerusalem 1986. p. 108. [in Hebrew]. See also Lewis, Jews, p. 171.

transportation), 100 domestic servants, 60 coal dealers, 60 turners, 50 chair manufacturers, and 500 people playing various other trades.[85]

The following multi-dimensional transformations created new conditions and lifestyles which affected the Jewish integration in Ottoman urban social and economic life:

Legal and official attitude toward non-Muslims

The legal reforms, *Tanzimat*, of the nineteenth century reflected a change in the Ottoman state's regards towards non-Muslim religious denominations. The sultan's declarations (in 1839 and 1856) of equality before the law of all the empire's subjects, regardless of religion, and the subsequent series of new laws that encouraged foreign investment in Ottoman territories, allowed foreigners and non-Muslim citizens to gain access to new entrepreneurial opportunities. Noteworthy was the cancellation of the old prohibition against foreign ownership of real estate (in 1856, and again in 1867). The state was now eager to encourage foreign investment in infrastructure.[86]

European semi-colonialism in Ottoman markets

With the abolition of Ottoman trade monopolies and the establishment of free trade zones (in 1838), the control of imports was effectively transferred from the state and local guilds to European hands.[87] This only worsened the process in which the growing volume of imports exceeded the exports, thus harming local manufacturing, and the country's balance of payments. The Ottoman state became a global debtor, and eventually went bankrupt (in 1875 and 1881).[88] The newly established Ottoman Public Debt Administration which represented the empire's for-

85 Dumont, Paul: The Social Structure of the Jewish Community of Salonica at the End of the Nineteenth Century. In: Southeastern Europe 5 (2) (1979). pp. 33–72, here p. 37.

86 For a description of the legal transformations and their impact on creating new environments for the economic integration of the non-Muslims, see Meron, Entrepreneurship, pp. 17–19.

87 For a survey of semi-colonialism in Ottoman Macedonia see Meron, Orly C.: Jewish Entrepreneurship in Salonica during the Last Decades of the Ottoman Regime in Macedonia (1881–1912). In: Frontier of Ottoman Studies. State, Province, and the West, vol. 1. Edited by Colin Imber. London 2005. pp. 265–286; Meron, Entrepreneurship, pp. 18–22.

88 Wallerstein, Immanuel [et al.]: The Incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the World-Economy. An Overview. Berlin 1982. p. 92.

eign and local creditors, now had immense power over the economy, which meant a de facto "semi-colonial" situation.[89] Foreign investments were encouraged, and brought about substantial changes in production, trade, and consumerism.[90] Non-Muslims, who were free from conscription, now enjoyed a privileged status and competitive advantage over Muslims.[91] Jewish merchants who acquired a *protégé* status, had already accumulated sufficient capital during their early activity in international trade, and now exploited the opportunities created by the incorporation of Ottoman markets into the world economy.

3. The educational revolution within Jewish communities from the 1860s on had a special impact. Modern schools, especially those established by the French-Jewish Alliance Israélite Universelle, promoted the acquisition of modern skills, and Westernization. Jewish entrepreneurs broadened their intermediary economic activity in agricultural products (tobacco, opium, and silk cocoons) in regional and metropolitan markets. Jews were also active in the importing and distributing of consumer goods and luxury goods for the expanding local middle classes. The social, economic, and cultural changes within the Jewish communities, encouraged by the Ladino press, created demand for more commercial clerks and laborers.

4. The fact that Ottoman Jews had no national aspirations made them best fitted to fill the role of a "middleman minority".[92] Yet, the nationalistic policy under the Committee for Unity and Progress (CUP) in 1908, narrowed the possible steps of the minorities, especially Greeks and Armenians, and thus slowed down some of the processes.

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89 Wallerstein [et al.], Incorporation; Pamuk, Şevket: The Ottoman Empire in the "Great Depression" of 1873–1896. In: The Journal of Economic History XLIV,1 (1984). pp. 107–118.

90 Anastassiadou, Meropi: Salonique, 1830–1912. Une ville ottomane à l'âge des réformes. Leiden/New York/Köln 1997. pp. 97–103.

91 Issawi, Charls: The Transformation of the Economic Position of the Millets in the Nineteenth Century. In: Christian and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society. vol. I. Edited by Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis. New York/London 1982. pp. 262–285, 273–276.

92 For Salonica, see Meron, Commerce, pp. 860–864.

Economic life in Edirne: a case study

The Jewish community of Edirne, estimated in 1913 at about 23.000 souls, was the third largest Jewish community in Turkey (after Istanbul and Izmir), and home to about a quarter of the total Jewish population in the country.[93] This allows us to focus on it as a typical Jewish economy in the last decades of the empire. Our data emanates from a report by the newly Brussels-based *Union des Assocations Israélites* (1913) which raised funds for Balkan Jewry.

Table 2: Jewish occupations by branch, Edirne 1913. Source: Adapted from the American Jewish Year Book 1913. pp. 203–204.[94]

Branch	No.	Percentage
Finance	82	2.7
Large-scale trade	130	4.3
Trade in commodities	1,170	38.5
Trade in agricultural products	110	3.7
Clothing	195	7.4
Footwear	40	1.3
Food and beverages	380	12.6
Metals	110	3.7
Wood	20	0.7
Paper and printing	10	0.3
Construction	250	8.3

93 Daniels, Jacob: Solidarity and Survival in an Ottoman Borderland. The Jews of Edirne, 1912–1918. In: Turkish Jews and their Diasporas. Entanglements and Separations. Edited by Kerem Öktem and İpek Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu. Palgrave 2022. pp. 35–57; Levy, Avigdor: The Siege of Edirne (1912–1913) as Seen by a Jewish Eyewitness. Social, Political, and Cultural Perspectives. In: Jews, Turks, Ottomans. A Shared History, Fifteenth through the Twentieth Century. Edited by Avigdor Levy. Syracuse 2002. pp. 152–193.

94 The categories in the table include the detailed occupations: Finance=bankers, money changers (*sarrafs*), brokers; Large-scale trade=suppliers to the military (contractors and subcontractors) and wholesalers; Trade in commodities=distributors of manufactured goods, petty traders, dealers in second-hand men's clothing, peddlers, clerks and tailgaters in trading houses (500); Trade in agricultural products; Clothing=cloth merchants, tailors, hat merchants, laundrette owners and their employees; Footwear=cobblers; Food and beverages=sellers of grocery products in wholesale and retail, shopkeepers, workers in cheese factories, confectioners and butchers, saloonists and distillers; Metals=tinsmiths, blacksmiths, manufacturers and installers of wheels; Wood=cabinetmakers; Paper and printing: molders; Construction=builders and their workers; Transportation services=porters; Personal services=barbers; Medical services=pharmacists, doctors and dentists; Religious/communal= idlers and rabbis; Miscellaneous=100 manual workers and 200 dependents.

Table 2: *(Continued)*

Branch	No.	Percentage
Transportation services	200	6.7
Personal services	20	0.7
Medical services	20	0.7
Religious/communal services	70	2.3
Miscellaneous	200	6.7
Total	3,007	100.0

The presence of Jews in the government bureaucratic sector remained negligible even after the opening of governmental service (administration, judiciary, military, and police) to non-Muslims. One of the reasons was that they knew they would find themselves in an inferior and vulnerable position, having difficulties to get a promotion.[95] The presence of 30 "idlers" (*batlanim*) and 40 rabbis shows that the Jewish community offered some alternative to the clerical public sector.

The presence of Jews in the liberal professions was minimal. The low proportion of doctors (ten physicians and dentists) and pharmacists (ten apothecaries) in this community (about 2%) was due to the lack of appropriate academic educational opportunities in the Ottoman Empire.[96] Those who did become pharmacists, dentists and physicians, lawyers, and engineers gradually took part in communal leadership.[97]

Jews were prominent in finance as bankers (12), money changers (30), and brokers (40). To these we may add the fact that following the Ottoman reforms, some Jews expanded their financial operations and purchased real estate as an investment. Thus, for example, members of the Danon family from Tire (near Izmir) purchased an estate (*ciftlik*) as an investment and leased it to Muslim villagers. Similarly, in Aydin, Jewish merchants entrusted agricultural holdings that they owned, including vineyards and fig orchards, to Greek and Turkish farmers.[98] Like-

95 Findley, Carter V.: The Acid Test of Ottomanism. The Acceptance of Non-Muslims in the Late Ottoman Bureaucracy. In: Christian and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Functioning of a Plural Society. vol. I. Edited by Benjamin Braude and Bernand Lewis. New York/London 1982. pp. 339–368.
96 Meron, Orly C.: Sub-ethnicity and Elites. Jewish Italian Professionals and Entrepreneurs in Salonica (1881–1912). In: Zakhor. Rivista di Storia degli Ebrei d'Italia VIII (2005). pp. 177–220.
97 Meron, Entrepreneurship, pp. 16–31, 51–68.
98 Dumont, Paul: Jewish Communities in Turkey during the Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century in the Light of the Archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle. In: Braude, Lewis, Christian. vol. I. pp. 209–242.

wise, the Salonican banker Jacob Modiano bought 15 agricultural estates (*ciftliks*) in the Macedonian hinterland, primarily as a speculative investment.[99]

Jewish mercantile operations were diversified. At the large-scale, upper end were Jewish contractors (ten) and sub-contractors (100). They supplied the armies who were fighting in the Balkan wars with goods (e. g. grains), or catered to Turkish officers. The poorer end included small-scale to micro-scale traders – shopkeepers and peddlers. This category included 120 petty tradesmen, 200 peddlers and 50 colporteurs. Accordingly, "the poorer, plied their trade with the soldiers and peasants, peddled in the villages, stood in the markets, or sold knickknacks in the streets".[100]

The most prevalent field among Edirne's Jewish merchants, at all levels, was the trade in commodities: from agricultural products (50 dealers in grains and 60 vegetable dealers), to luxury products (30 dealers in glass and crockery) and to imported industrial products (120 dealers in manufactured articles of all kinds; 120 dealers in hardware). Indeed, a western European delegation that visited Balkan Jewish communities in 1913 concluded that: "The Jews in general are merchants and tradesmen; The poorer among them follow the street trades, deal in second-hand clothing, or own little shops or stands".[101]

However, the fascinating new group is precisely the 500 clerks and salesmen employed in the modern department stores. The formation of the commercial clerical class and the craftsman class were a direct result of the Alliance schools (the first was founded in Edirne in 1867). These provided their students with trade-related skills alongside professional mentoring and professional apprenticeship workshops. Modern education helped create a new petty bourgeoisie, which included craftsmen, merchants and officials.

The group of skilled artisans included 20 carpenters, 120 tailors, and 20 tinsmiths as well as a few mechanics.[102] In the metal branch it is possible to notice the innovations related to the means of urban transport. Manufacturers and installers of wheels hint at the laying of modern transportation infrastructure. Ten professional molders are connected to the printing sector. Jewish carpenters, trained in the apprenticeship workshops of the AIU, prepared cabinets and other furniture, cheaper substitutes for imported ones. It seems that Jewish artisans preferred producing finished products for the general market.

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99 Meron, Entrepreneurship, p. 30.

100 Friedman, H. G.: The Balkan Wars and the Jews: In: The American Jewish Yearbook 15 (1913). pp. 108–206, 203.

101 Friedman, The Balkan Wars and the Jews, pp. 108–206, 203.

102 Friedman, The Balkan Wars and the Jews, pp. 108–206, 203.

Among the modern services there is a considerable group of about 200 Jews who worked in transportation services. Noteworthy are new occupations which are related to new patterns of leisure, especially among the Jewish bourgeoises, e. g. selling spirits in retail, saloonists (*sic!*) and other hospitality services. The Jewish proletariat in the city was relatively small and included construction workers, artisanal workers, and porters. Despite the entry of Jewish women into the labor market and despite the processes of professionalization of Jewish men through the professional apprenticeship workshops and vocational schools of the AIU, it seems that in the cities of Turkey, the degree of proletarianization of the Jews is less than that observed elsewhere in the Balkans (e. g. Salonica).

An epilogue: into the twentieth century

In 1913, Istanbul was home to about 65.000 Jews (out of a total population of 1.200.000).[103] The diversification of Jewish occupations seemed to have grown during the last two Ottoman decades. The different distribution (compared to Edirne) is understandable if we remember it was the largest administrative and commercial center in the Ottoman Empire, offering more opportunities than any other city. According to a sample compiled by Minna Rozen based on the marriage registers of the Jews of Istanbul during the years 1902–1922, the various occupational categories included trade in various scales: brokers, agents (representatives of commercial companies), peddlers, greengrocers, livestock traders, bagel (*simit*) vendors, owners of taverns, cloth sellers, and dealers in second-hand goods. Next to them were about 300 other large-scale merchants (imports, exports, and wholesalers). The next sector was financial services: money changers, bankers, and bank clerks, as well as goldsmiths. In another category were included fishermen (about 100); craftsmen (over 200): tailors, umbrella makers, box makers, upholsterers, cobblers, glaziers, and tinsmiths. Employees numbered over 1.500, and among them were teachers and doctors (less than 50); administrative staff, and soldiers.[104] The massive presence of Jews in the public sector and in the army during the Young Turk regime is impressive. Noteworthy as well is the large number of salaried salesclerks, probably graduates of the Alliance schools, who were employed in the many modern shops and department stores.

103 Friedman, The Balkan Wars and the Jews, pp. 199, 201.

104 Rozen, Minna: The Meat Trade and the Social Struggles in Jewish Istanbul, 1700–1918. In: Pe'amim 105–106 (2016). pp. 83–126. [in Hebrew]

The data from Edirne and Istanbul relates only to male workers, but we know that since the late nineteenth century, greater numbers of Jewish girls and women had been working outside their home. The industrialization process of the Jewish female workforce resulted from the professional training provided by the *Alliance* schools for girls.[105] Until then, unskilled Jewish women in various localities who lacked professional training were engaged in collecting vineyard produce or sorting tobacco leaves. The London-based Rabbi Elkan Adler, touring the Izmir region in 1905, describes Jewish schoolgirls in Manisa, learning the craft of carpet weaving, which was previously a monopoly of Turkish women. Local Jewish women were eager to send their daughters to the few schools that struggled to meet the demand for professional training. In Bursa, Jewish women after 1900 were integrated into the silk industry thanks to an initiative of an AIU teacher. AIU workshops also trained young Jewish girls for the mass production of clothing items, as well as for *haute couture* sewing and the crafts of embroidery, lace and hatmaking.[106] Once sewing machines became popular, female workers preferred to work independently in garment production, rather than the arduous work at the textile workshops controlled by males.[107]

Interestingly, it is only in Salonica, with its large sector of laborers, amounting to thousands, many of them in the tobacco industry and in the harbor, that workers' organizations and even a developed class consciousness and socialist movement became established and flourished.[108] Not in Istanbul, nor in Izmir or Edirne, where none of these existed. What we do find are the traditional benevolent societies, both communal and those pertaining to guilds, whose main goal was mutual help.[109] The reason for the difference between Salonica and other cities was probably the absence of an organized workforce in the latter, with their lower level of industrialization until a very late date.

105 Rodrigue, Aron: Education, Society and History. "Alliance Israaélite Universelle" and Mediterranean Jewry, 1860–1929. Jerusalem 1991. p. 95. [in Hebrew].

106 Rodrigue, Education, Society and History, pp. 95–96.

107 For Salonica, see Meron, Economy; Meron, Entrepreneurship, pp. 88–94.

108 Rozen, Minna: The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond. The Jews in Turkey and the Balkans, 1808–1945. Tel Aviv 2005. pp. 154–155.; see also: Shai Srougo, Professional Characteristics of the Jewish Guild in the Muslim World: Thessaloniki Dockers at the End of the Ottoman Era. In: Mediterranean Historical Review 26, 2 (2011). pp. 115–133.

109 See, for example, Ben-Naeh, Societies, pp. 101–140. [in Hebrew].

Conclusion

Since the sixteenth century onward, Jews have been well-integrated in the economic life of Ottoman cities, and as a rule continued filling a similar role until the nineteenth century with their traditional occupations as artisans (especially in the textile industry, and processing gold and silver), as traders (from international trade with Italian cities to grocers and peddlers) and as service providers (financial services, healers, musicians and dancers), where they had advantages over their neighbors. General changes, such as the infiltration of Janissaries into the labor force in the seventeenth century, and the separation of the guilds according to religious denomination during the eighteenth century, affected Jews as they did all the others. During the same period, the centuries-long competition with the Greeks and especially the Armenians got worse. While local Jewish middlemen and translators worked with British merchants, Livornese Jews (Francos), who, since the late seventeenth century had settled in Izmir, Aleppo, and Salonica, had closer relations with the French traders in the Levant.

A few processes that took place in the second half of the nineteenth century brought significant changes in the Jews' socio-economic integration up to an optimal peak.

For one, the *Tanzimat* reforms and the legal changes that ensued, and the subsequent incorporation of the Ottoman economy into the global one (which became favorable to foreign investments and local entrepreneurs), affected almost every aspect in the lives of Ottoman Jews both directly and indirectly.

Furthermore, Jewish demography changed. Not only did the number of Jews grow, but they were also immigrating to western Anatolia and concentrating in the larger urban centers with all the opportunities that these could now offer. Moreover, the size *inter alia* impacted the relations between the mercantile sector and the industrial sector. The larger the Jewish population, the larger the size of the industrial workforce, including unskilled workers.

Cultural changes in general – in fashion, in leisure activities, and other consumption patterns – demanded new commodities, modern stores and institutions, and created new professions. Another serious cultural change that concerns Jews is modern education. The French AIU schools that operated in the Ottoman Empire since the 1860s on (for boys, and since the 1870s for girls as well) and other modern educational institutions reshaped the world of thousands of graduates, males and females, and trained them so that they could staff the newly created occupational opportunities – from mechanics to commercial clerks.

Consequently, these transformations led to a significant extension of the occupational structure and the sectoral composition of Ottoman Jewry, even in some of

the Arab provinces. Especially noteworthy in that respect is the immense expansion of the private sector.

On the verge of transition to a republican state, prior to the forced exchange of populations with Greece and Bulgaria, the Jewish economy in western Anatolia, resembled other Ladino-speaking Jewish communities in the Balkans such as Salonica.[110] Similar conditions of operation that include a common political framework and a similar ethnic composition of the population for hundreds of years created Jewish economies with similar characteristics.

The significant changes in the patterns of Jewish occupations seem to have been slowed down or even reversed to a narrower and more concentrated economy after the nationalistic CUP came to power, and more so in the early republican era.

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110 Meron, Economy, pp. 22–47; Meron, Entrepreneurship, p. 29.

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