

## THE BASIC DEVELOPMENT OF JEWISH PRINTING IN THE OTTOMAN PERIOD.\*

## OSMANLI DÖNEMİNDE MUSEVİ MATBAACILIĞININ TEMEL GELİŞİMİ

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*Makale Bilgisi/Article Info: Geliş/Received: 24/04/2023 Düzeltme/Revised: 17/05/2023 Kabul/Accepted: 10/06/2023*

### *Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article*

**Atıf / Cite as:** Yıldırım, İ. (2023). The Basic Development Of Jewish Printing In the Ottoman Period. *Bellek Uluslararası Tarih ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5(1), 61-79. <https://doi.org/10.52735/bellek.1287227>

### ÖZ

Osmanlı döneminde ilk Musevi matbaacılık faaliyetleri, İspanya'dan sürgün nedeniyle ayrılmak zorunda kalan Sefarad Yahudilerinin girişimleriyle başlamıştır. Sefarad Yahudileri ve Polonya ve çevresinden göç etmek zorunda kalan Aşkenaz Yahudileri, Selanik, Edirne, İzmir ve İstanbul'da matbaacılık faaliyetlerini sürdürerek kendi dinlerine ve kültürlerine ait eserleri oluşturmak istemişlerdir. Osmanlı dönemi içerisinde Musevilere ait ilk matbaa 1493 yılında kurulduysa da eserlerin yoğun bir şekilde basılması 19. ve 20. yüzyıllarda gerçekleşmiştir. İlk Musevi gazetecilik faaliyetleri de 1842 itibarıyla İzmir'de gündeme gelmiştir. Bu faaliyetler daha sonra İstanbul'da devam etmiş ve bu iki şehirde yoğunluk kazanmıştır. Bu noktada çalışma, Osmanlı döneminde var olan Musevi matbaacılık faaliyetlerini siyasi ve toplumsal süreçler dahilinde ele almayı amaç edinmiştir. 1493 ve 1922 yılları arasındaki dönemi kapsayan çalışmada Musevilerin matbaacılık faaliyetlerine doküman incelemesi yöntemiyle yer verilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, Osmanlı döneminde matbaacılık faaliyetleri dönem dönem kesintiye uğrasa da zaman içerisinde başarılı bir gelişim göstermiştir. Osmanlı hükümetinin de özellikle bölgedeki Müslümanların matbaa kullanmadığı dönemde, gayrimüslim bir millet olarak Musevilerin matbaa faaliyetleri yürütmesine izin vermesi sosyal ve ticari açıdan önem taşımaktadır. Musevilerin bastıkları eserlerde uzun bir dönem dini temanın ön planda olması; İspanya'dan sürgün edilmeleri, göç ettikleri yerlerde azınlık olmaları ve bunun beraberinde getirdiği yok olma endişesi nedeniyle dini kimliklerini koruma çabası olarak açıklanabilir. İlerleyen süreçte bastıkları eserlerde edebiyat ve bilim konularına yönelmeleri hem zamanla üzerlerindeki tehdit algısının azalması hem de İspanya'dan aldıkları köklü kültürü değerlendirme ve uygulama çabası olarak ifade edilebilir.

\* Bu araştırma sürecinde; TR Dizin 2020 kuralları kapsamında “Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesinde” yer alan tüm kurallara uyulmuş ve yönergenin ikinci bölümünde yer alan “Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine Aykırı Eylemlerden” hiçbirini gerçekleştirilmemiştir. Ayrıca bu araştırma “Etik Kurul İzni” gerektirmeyen bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde Yeditepe Üniversitesi Gazetecilik Ana Bilim Dalı Öğretim Üyesi Prof. Dr. Suat Gezgin'in fikir ve önerilerinden faydalanılmıştır.

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**Anahtar kelimeler:** Osmanlı Musevi matbaacılığı, Osmanlı Musevi basını, Osmanlı Musevileri, Türk Musevileri, Osmanlı dönemi basını

### EXTENDED SUMMARY

The first Jewish printing activities in the Ottoman period started with the initiatives of the Sephardic Jews who had to leave Spain due to their exile. Sephardic Jews and Ashkenazi Jews, who were forced to immigrate from Poland and the surrounding areas, wanted to create works of their own religion and culture by continuing their printing activities in Thessaloniki, Edirne, Izmir, and Istanbul. The Jews were the first nation to conduct printing activities in the Ottoman Empire, and the Greeks and Armenians started printing activities later on. In this regard, the Nahmias brothers assumed the leading role in printing in the Ottoman lands in 1493. After the Nahmias brothers, the Soncino family continued the printing tradition; and Jewish printing houses were established intermittently.

Even though the first Jewish printing house was established in 1493 during the Ottoman period, intensive publication of works only occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries. This delay is explained by the isolation of the Jewish community after the false Messiah Sabbatai Zevi movement.

The first journalistic activities came to the fore in Izmir in 1842. After that, they spread to Istanbul and intensified in both cities. Democratic processes were very effective in the birth and development of Jewish journalism in the Ottoman period. It is stated that the Gülhane Edict of 1839 (Edict of Reorganization), which stipulated not to discriminate between all subjects of religion and sect, played a prominent role in the opening of the first newspapers. Especially after the expansion of minority rights with the Reform Edict of 1856 and the enactment of the first Constitutional Law in 1876, it is seen that the establishment of Jewish newspapers gained momentum. However, it should be noted that after the Reform Edict, the beginning of the control of press organizations with the Press Regulations issued in 1857 and the start of the period of autocracy with the Martial Law Decree as of September 20, 1877 negatively affected the aforementioned developments. Along with these, it is observed that the number of Jewish newspapers increased with the developments in the democracy process in the Ottoman lands after the proclamation of the 2nd Constitutional Monarchy in 1908. These political developments and the Young Turk movements provided a comfortable environment for the Jews.

The research problem in this article is the extent of the printing activities of the Jews in the Ottoman period and the social and political events that occurred in conjunction with them. In this sense, the aim of the study is to include the printing activities of the Jews who lived in the Ottoman Empire within the political and social processes and thus, the study is important in terms of understanding these activities with the religious, cultural and social dynamics of the period.

In the article covering the period between 1493 and 1922, the printing activities of the Jews were examined using the document analysis method. In this method, written materials related to the research problem studied are used to analyze the targeted phenomena. In addition to written materials, visual materials may also be included in the research. Based on this method, this article analyzed Jewish printing activities in the Ottoman era within the political and social events of the period. Since the first printing activities started in 1493 and the Ottoman Sultanate was abolished in 1922, the study was limited to the period mentioned.

As a result, in spite of intermittent pauses in printing activities during the Ottoman period, it still experienced a successful growth over time. The Ottoman government's permission for the Jews, as a non-Muslim nation, to conduct printing activities was a socially and commercially important move, especially when Muslims in the region were not using the printing press. Frankly, the relationship between the government and the Ottoman Jews was reinforced by the praises attributed to the sultans in the published books. The constant presence of religious themes in Jewish works can be attributed to the attempt to preserve their religious identities due to their exile from Spain, being a minority in the places they migrated to, and the fear of annihilation. The fact that they turned to literature and science in the works they published in the following process can be expressed as both the decrease in their sense of threat over time and an effort to assess and utilize the deep-rooted culture they received from Spain.

Ottoman Jewish journalistic activities were welcomed in Istanbul, Izmir, Edirne and Aydın, yet newspapers were predominantly published in Istanbul and Izmir. With the spread of the schools belonging to the Alliance organization and the announcement of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, an increase was seen in the newspapers printing in French; and the people who were educated in the aforementioned schools took on an

enlightened role and contributed to the political and social development through the press. The fact that more than sixty newspapers, regardless of their longevity, were published by Ottoman Jews, should be considered an important success in the Ottoman press, despite the enactment of the printing laws, the use of censorship, and some political problems. Through the utilization of the Turkish-Jewish identity in the forefront and creating content that was moderate and unifying, it allowed for great success.

**Keywords:** Ottoman Jewish Printing, Ottoman Jewish Press, Ottoman Jews, Turkish Jews, Period Ottoman Press

## INTRODUCTION

The first Jewish printing activities in the Ottoman period started with the initiatives of the Sephardic Jews who had to leave Spain due to exile. Sephardic Jews and Ashkenazi Jews, who were forced to immigrate from Poland and the surrounding areas, wanted to create works of their own religion and culture by continuing their printing activities in Thessaloniki, Edirne, Izmir and Istanbul. The Jews were the first nation to conduct printing activities in the Ottoman Empire, and the Greeks and Armenians started printing activities later on. In this regard, the Nahmias brothers assumed the leading role in printing in the Ottoman lands in 1493. After the Nahmias brothers, the Soncino family continued the printing tradition; and Jewish printing houses were established intermittently.

Although the first printing house belonging to Jews was established in 1493 during the Ottoman period, intensive publication of works only occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries. This delay is explained by the isolation of the Jewish community after the false Messiah Sabbatai Zevi movement.

Due to the prominent Sephardic Jews in printing activities, even though the dominance of the Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) language is seen in this area, Jews who were educated and provided education in the schools opened in the Ottoman lands by Alliance (Universal Jewish Union), which was established in Paris in 1860, started to prefer French language in the works they published by being included in the field of press.

Within the above-mentioned political and social events, this article examines the extent of Jewish printing activities in the Ottoman period and the sociopolitical events that occurred in conjunction with them. In this sense, the aim of the study is to include the printing activities of the Jews who lived in the Ottoman Empire within the political and social processes and thus, the study is important in terms of understanding these activities with the religious, cultural and social dynamics of the period.

In the article, document analysis method will be used; in this method, written materials related to the research problem studied are used to analyze the targeted phenomena. In addition to written materials, visual materials may also be included in the research. Much of the information we know about the past today has come from the use of this method by historians and other researchers in the social sciences.<sup>1</sup> Based on this method, in the article, Jewish printing activities in the Ottoman period will be conveyed within the political and social events of the period. Since the first printing activities started in 1493 and the Ottoman Sultanate was abolished in 1922, the study will be limited to the period mentioned.

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<sup>1</sup> Ali Yıldırım and Hasan Şimşek, Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri, 11.Edition, Seçkin Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2018, p.189.

## 1. Jewish Printing in the Ottoman Period

The first work in the Ottoman period was *Arba'ah Turim* (Four Rows), a religious work published by the Nahmias brothers; after *Arba'ah Turim*, religious works continued to be published. Spanish and Italian families played a leading role in the early printing activities in Ottoman lands. However, families who immigrated from Poland and the surrounding countries in the following periods also became involved in printing activities and achieved significant success.

### 1.1. Early Jewish Printing Activities

Printing activities in the Ottoman Empire started with the Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492, and the Jews who came from here were mostly settled in Istanbul, Izmir, Edirne and Thessaloniki. At this point, David and Shmuel Nahmias brothers, who settled in Istanbul, established their printing houses and started printing activities, and at the first stage they published a book called *Arba'ah Turim*. The book in question is a religious work and contains information about Jewish law. It is stated on the book that it was printed in 1493.<sup>2</sup> *Arba'ah Turim* was written by Jacob ben Asher in Spain at the beginning of the 14th century and was published in Istanbul at the Nahmias brothers' printing house on the mentioned date, about two hundred years later.<sup>3</sup> While it was being prepared for printing in the printing house, the editor of the book was Eliyahu ben Benjamin ha-Levi, who settled in Istanbul before the Spanish exile, in other words, a Romaniote Jew. Levi was among the most learned Jews in Istanbul, and his teachers were the famous former chief rabbis of Istanbul, Moshe Kapsali and Eliyahu Mizrachi.<sup>4</sup> Moshe Kapsali served as the Byzantine Chief Rabbi before the conquest of Istanbul by Mehmed II. After the conquest, Mehmed II accepted him as the chief rabbi of the Jewish community and always implemented an open-door policy for non-Muslims coming to Istanbul.<sup>5</sup> This policy, which had been maintained since Mehmed II, enabled Istanbul to meet the printing press thanks to the Jews during the reign of his son, Bayezid II.

Bayezid II, who ruled the Ottoman reign between 1481 and 1512 and was indicated to have relatively less liberal views than his father Mehmed II according to Offenbergs statement, did not welcome it initially when he heard that a text on the Jewish religion was published; after nearly twelve years of mediation, he took the situation warmly.<sup>6</sup> In Jewish printing houses, 19 works were published during the reign of Bayezid II, and 33 during the reign of his son Yavuz Selim. On the printed works, the statement "*Printed under the auspices of Bayezid II.*" was written.<sup>7</sup> In this sense, it is seen that the printing activities of the Jews were not interfered with during the Ottoman period in the following processes. The fact that the printing press was not immediately accepted among the Muslim subjects in the Ottoman lands after the invention of the printing press in 1444 in Europe is explained by religious reasons. The arrival of the printing

<sup>2</sup> Yasin Meral, İbrahim Müteferrika Öncesi İstanbul'da Yahudi Matbuatı, Divan Kitap, 1.Edition, 2016, p.27-29.

<sup>3</sup> Nadia Vidro, "Calendar Tables in Manuscript and Printed Arba'ah Turim: Tur Oraḥ Ḥayyim, Chapter 428", Journal of Jewish Studies, V.69, N.1, 2018, p.58-85.

<sup>4</sup> Adri K. Offenbergs, "The Printing History of the Constantinople Hebrew Incunable Of 1493: A Mediterranean Voyage of Discovery", The British Library Journal, V.22, N.2, 1996, p.221.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmet Hikmet Eroğlu, "16. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde Efsanevi Bir Yahudi: Yasef Nasi", Bütün Yönleriyle Yahudilik: Dinler Tarihi Araştırmaları -VIII (International Symposium), 18-19th February 2012, p.722.

<sup>6</sup> Offenbergs, p.231.

<sup>7</sup> Ş. Korkmaz, "Matbaacılık Tarihi", MatbaaTürk (www.matbaaturk.org), 2004, p.4-5; Narrator: Mustafa Kınık, "İbrahim Müteferrika ve Yayımladığı İlk Kitaplar", Kalemşi Geleneksel Türk Sanatları Dergisi, V.2, N.4, 2014, p.27.

press was delayed in order not to spoil the work of the Qur'an calligraphers.<sup>8</sup> However, since there was no such situation for non-Muslims living in the region, preventive measures were not taken by the Ottoman government against the activities of non-Muslims.

After *Arba'ah Turim*, the first work published in Jewish printing houses of Istanbul was the Torah, which was published in 1505. The fact that the first published books were of a religious nature is explained by the purpose of meeting the needs of the exiled Jews. So much so that in the first works, it was seen that the information in the Torah was included and interpreted, as well as the information that people could practice in their daily lives in the form of sermons and parables.<sup>9</sup>

It was observed that printing activities were conducted by Jews who had been forced to leave Spain and settled in Thessaloniki. The printing of the work named *Eyn Ya'kov* in Thessaloniki can be given as an example. The author of the book, Ya'kov ben Shlomo ibn Haviv, praised the printing press owner Yehuda Gedaliah at the beginning of the book. It is stated that before Gedaliah was settled in Thessaloniki, he was also involved in printing activities in Lisbon, Portugal. Likewise, there is information that the Nahmias brothers started their first activities in Spain. The proof of this is that the works printed in the Nahmias brothers' printing house had exactly the same ornaments and letter manipulations as those printed in the Alantasi and Zalmati printing houses in Spain.<sup>10</sup> It was stated by those who examined the *Arba'ah Turim* work that the Nahmias brothers were never novices in the printing business and they did their work properly from start to finish. In addition, the Nahmias family was among the most distinguished Jewish families in Spain. With the deportation edict, it is mentioned that they collected their printing houses and departed from Spain and settled first in Naples and then in the Ottoman lands.<sup>11</sup> The printing activities of the Nahmias brothers and their printing of works were highly appreciated by both Romaniote and Sephardic Jewish scholars and aroused enthusiasm.<sup>12</sup> Frankly, it is possible to say that the Nahmias brothers and Gedaliah were successful printers in Spain and Portugal. The fact that they had to emigrate enabled them to bring their works together with Romaniote Jews as well as Sephardic Jews. Moreover, the fact that the Nahmias brothers came from a distinguished family and published works on the Jewish religion can be considered as one of the reasons why they were heard and appreciated among the Jewish communities.

After the Nahmias brothers and their sons continued their printing activities until 1522, the Italian-origin Soncino family dominated the printing house between 1530 and 1547, and during this period multilingual Torahs were printed in Aramaic, Arabic and Persian. Accordingly, the Torahs were printed in Hebrew letters, the original text in Hebrew was in the middle of the page, the Aramaic translations on the right, the Persian on the left, the Arabic translations on the top, and the commentary of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki - the "Rashi commentary" in short terms in the literature - was located at the bottom.<sup>13</sup> Another translated version of the Torah was also published in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Spanish.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Mahmut Gündüz, "Matbaanın Tarihçesi ve İlk Kur'an-ı Kerim Basmaları", Vakıflar Dergisi, S.12, 1978, p.339.

<sup>9</sup> Meral, p.33-35.

<sup>10</sup> Meral, p.30-31.

<sup>11</sup> Offenber, p.224.

<sup>12</sup> Abraham Yaari, Hebrew Printing at Constantinople: Its History and Bibliography (İbranice: ha-Defus ha-İvri be-Kuşta), The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 1967, p.17-21; Narrator: Minna Rozen, A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul: The Formative Years, 1453-1566, Brill, 2002, p.261.

<sup>13</sup> Meral, p.36-38.

<sup>14</sup> Aron Freimann, "Die Soncinate Drucke in Salonichi und Constantinopel (1526-1547)", Zeitschrift für hebraische Bibliographie, V.9, 1905, p.21-25; Narrator: Nil Pektaş, "The Beginnings of Printing in the Ottoman

Considering the languages used, it was aimed to appeal to a large Jewish audience, especially the Sephardic Jews of the Mediterranean region.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, it is important to note that innovations such as italic writing, capitalization and page design were introduced by the Soncino family in the field of printing in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>16</sup>

After the Soncino family, Moshe Parnas, Shmuel ben Hayim Helitz and his brothers simultaneously conducted active printing activities until the 1560s. After this date, it was seen that the Ya'bits brothers became the leading actors among Yosef ben Shmuel Hakan ha-Levi Hâkim and Avraham ben Shmuel ha-Kohen Sancho. Yousef Ya'bits started the Talmud printing project as a result of the growing concern among the Jews that the Talmuds would perish, after the Papacy banned the publication of the Talmuds, the Jewish civil code, in 1553 and subsequently ordered them to be burned.<sup>17</sup> Ya'bits brothers, who focused on the Talmud publication especially between 1583 and 1593 and published more than forty works in total, first started their activities in Thessaloniki and then continued in Istanbul.<sup>18</sup> Even though they were not able to print the entire Talmud, their efforts were greatly appreciated. It should be noted that with the death of the elder brother Shlomo Ya'bits in 1593, the Ya'bits brothers' printing house was closed; and Yousef Ya'bits did not print any works after this date. In addition, among the printing houses operating in Istanbul at the same time as the Ya'bits brothers, there was also the joint printing house of Eliezer ben Yitzchak and Rabbi David ben Eliyahu Kasti. However, this printing house was only able to operate between 1575 and 1576 due to reasons such as financial difficulties.<sup>19</sup> Before coming to Istanbul, Eliezer had been a printer in Lublin for sixteen years, and following his departure from Istanbul, he continued to perform this business in Safed. In addition to financial difficulties, among the reasons why it could not hold on this job in Istanbul was the fact that the Ya'bits brothers assumed the leading role in the region and therefore there was no need for another new printing house. So much so that Eliezer and his sons were considered skilled craftsmen who brought fonts and ornamental material from Lublin. However, he had difficulty in purchasing paper due to lack of financial resources. This was the reason why he started a partnership with Kasti, a member of Romaniote community.<sup>20</sup>

Between the years 1593 and 1598, the activities of the Reyna Nasi's printing house came to the fore. Reyna Nasi lost her husband, Yosef Nasi, who was the duke of Naxos Island in the Ottoman lands, in 1579; and after this loss, she aimed to be instrumental in the printing of books by establishing a printing house with some of her wealth in 1593, since there was no Jewish printing house in Istanbul.<sup>21</sup> Although the Jewish printing house in Istanbul exhibited a slow pace of development with interruptions, it was among the leading centers of Jewish printing

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Capital: Book Production and Circulation in Early Modern Istanbul", *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları*, V.16, N.2, 2015, p.15.

<sup>15</sup> Yaari, pp.102-103; Narrator: Stephen Lubell, "The Use of Hebrew in the Antwerp Polyglot Bible", Unpublished Master's Thesis, Londra University, 2008, p.65.

<sup>16</sup> Nadide Güher Erer, "A Short History of Copyright in the West, in the Ottoman Empire and in Turkey", *Türk Kütüphaneciliği*, V.28, N.4, 2014, p.642.

<sup>17</sup> Meral, p.39-42.

<sup>18</sup> Esther Benbassa and Aron Bodrigue, *Sephardi Jewry: A History of the Judeo-Spanish Community: 14th-20th Centuries*, University of California Press, 2000, p.107; Narrator: Marvin J. Heller, *Further Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book*, Brill, 2013, p.89.

<sup>19</sup> Meral, p.42-43.

<sup>20</sup> Yaari, p.30, Narrator: Marvin J. Heller, "Early Hebrew Printing from Lublin to Safed: The Journeys of Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi", *Jewish Culture and History*, V.4, N.1, 2001, p.87.

<sup>21</sup> Meral, p.45-46.

worldwide, with an increasing activity until the 17th century, alongside the Venice and Amsterdam printing houses.<sup>22</sup>

Fifteen works were published in the Reyna Nasi's printing house in the aforementioned period of approximately five years. Some of the published works were *Yafek Ratzon*, written by Yitshak Ya'bits from the Ya'bits family, and *Gal shel Egozim*, which included sermons by Menahem ben Moshe Egozi.<sup>23</sup> Before the Nasi family migrated to the Ottoman Empire, they had to live with their Christian identity by continuing their Jewishness secretly due to the pogroms in Europe, and when they immigrated to the Ottoman Empire, they had the chance to act again with their Jewish identity.<sup>24</sup> In this sense, it is extremely important for those people who have the chance to re-establish a lifestyle in accordance with the religion they follow, to publish books belonging to their own language and culture.

After the death of Reyna Nasi and the closure of the printing house in 1598, there was no Jewish printing house operating in Istanbul for nearly forty years. However, with the establishment of the printing house by Andalusian origin Shlomo ben David Franco in 1639, the printing movements were revived and Franco preferred to print Rashi's Torah commentary in the first place. Franco's printing house, which continued its activities until 1711, had an eight-year interruption between 1656 and 1664.<sup>25</sup> Despite the interruptions, it is stated that among the non-Muslim communities in Istanbul, the Jews undertook and ran the most successful early printing business. As seen in the example of Reyna Nasi, the special patronage and philanthropy of the Jewish people and both maintenance close relations of the Jewish community with each other and dominance the book market in Istanbul played an important role in the success of the Jewish printing house in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time as the Franco's printing house, Avraham ben Yedidiya Gabay had a printing house in both Izmir and Istanbul. Gabay's printing house was the first printing house established in İzmir. Sabbatai Zevi, who claimed to be the Messiah during the period when the Gabay and Franco printing houses were active, showed his influence on the works printed in the printing houses. For example, the books by Nathan of Gaza, who played the role of Sevi's ambassador, were printed in the Franco's printing house, which included prayers day and night. Moreover, printing activities were interrupted from time to time in Izmir and Istanbul in this process, and it is thought that the reasons for these interruptions were the fights between the followers and opponents of Sabbatai Zevi. It should be said that in addition to the printing house in the Ottoman Empire, the printing houses in Europe were also affected by the Sabbatai Zevi movement. Poland and the surrounding countries, which were exposed to pogroms, had a strong support for Sabbatai Zevi, as they needed a Messiah during this difficult process; and the rabbis made great efforts to eliminate this strong support.<sup>27</sup> As a result, printing works were adversely affected by the Sabbatai Zevi movement, it is stated that no works were published between 1683 and 1710 in Istanbul and between 1655 and 1695 in Thessaloniki.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Kemal Beydilli, "Matbaa", Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (DİA), Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul, 2003, V.28, p.105-106.

<sup>23</sup> Meral, p.46.

<sup>24</sup> Eroğlu, p.723.

<sup>25</sup> Meral, p.47-49.

<sup>26</sup> Pektaş, p.16.

<sup>27</sup> Meral, p.49-51.

<sup>28</sup> Beydilli, p.105-106.

## 1.2. 18th and 19th Century Jewish Printing Activities and General Situation

Yona ben Ya'kov Ashkenazi and his family, who had to migrate from Poland to the Ottoman Empire due to pogroms, were among those who actively conducted printing activities in Istanbul between 1710 and 1778. The said printing house became the largest and most influential of its time in Istanbul, Rumelia and the Middle East. Yona Ashkenazi had improved the quality of his printing activities year after year by having had new type-founding, prepared aesthetic prints and improved his ornaments.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the necessary letters of the Müteferrika's printing house, which was established in 1727 and was the first Turkish Muslim printing house in the Ottoman lands, were also made in Yona Ashkenazi's type foundry.<sup>30</sup> At this point, the Ashkenazi's printing house has a historically important place in Turkish Muslim printing.

Between the years 1710 and 1778, 188 out of 210 Hebrew books which had been published in Istanbul was printed by the Yona Ashkenazi's printing house. The printing house, which brought works to life by printing in Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) language, also printed the Torah with Ladino translation. In the fifty years after the Ashkenazi's printing house ended its operations, fifty works were published in Ladino, whereas in the previous 230 years, this number did not exceed six.<sup>31</sup> In this sense, Yona Ashkenazi played a pioneering role in the publication of works in Ladino in the Ottoman Empire. Between 1493 and 1940, a total of 758 works were published in Hebrew, and 260 of these works and 30 periodicals were published in Istanbul in Ladino, mostly after 1730.<sup>32</sup>

During the Ottoman period, the Jews both included the name of the sultan of the period in the works they published and praised him, and stated that it was printed in Istanbul with the names *Kushta*, *Kusdina*, *Kushtantina*. The expressions "*It was printed here in the metropolitan Istanbul, under the reign of Sultan Bayezid, the great king of the Muslim kingdom. May his life be long, God help him, may his reign last forever! Amine!*" in *Arba'ah Turim* and "*It was printed in Istanbul under the reign of the mighty king Sultan Ahmed, our lord. May his glory be great!*" in *Sefer ha-Yashar* published by Yona ben Ya'kov Ashkenazi can be given as examples of praise for the sultans of the period. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the printing houses operating in Istanbul during the Ottoman period were located in the Suriçi (Fatih-Eminönü) region and around Kuruçeşme, and the expressions "*Kushta*" and "*Kushtantina*" were mostly used to refer to Suriçi.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, it is known that Istanbul's leading role in Jewish printing was preserved until the 19th century, but Thessaloniki began to come to the fore in later dates.<sup>34</sup>

The printing of the Torah with Ladino translation in the Ashkenazi's printing house, as well as the printing of *Me'am Lo'ez* and other Ladino works, which was a comprehensive interpretation of the Torah, marked the beginning of the large-scale Ladino language printing activity in Ottoman lands, especially in Istanbul. By the end of the 1800s, printing in the Ladino language constituted the majority of the printing works in Hebrew letters in Istanbul and the activities of printing centers in other Western Ottoman cities such as Izmir and Thessaloniki.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Meral, p.52-57.

<sup>30</sup> M. Sevilla-Sharon, *Türkiye Yahudileri: Tarihsel Bakış*, Kudüs, 1982, p.90; Narrator: Beydilli, p.105-106.

<sup>31</sup> Matthias Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture*, Indiana University Press, 2005, p.38-51; Narrator: Rachel Simon, "The Contribution of Hebrew Printing Houses and Printers in Istanbul to Ladino Culture and Scholarship", *Judaica Librarianship*, V.16, N.17, 2011, p.128.

<sup>32</sup> Simon, p.134.

<sup>33</sup> Yaari, p.59, p.174; Narrator: Meral, p.110-113.

<sup>34</sup> Beydilli, p.105-106.

<sup>35</sup> Simon, p.128.



Sephardic Jews pioneered the cultural and economic development in Thessaloniki with their deep-rooted history they inherited from the cultural crossroads of Spain. So much so that other Jewish communities such as non-Sephardic Ashkenazi and Romaniote had to learn Ladino in order to be effective in social and economic life.<sup>36</sup> In this sense, it should be said that the Ladino language was an important unifier among Jewish communities.

Although the first Ladino publications had religious content such as the Torah, commentary and prayer books, by the 19th century it had become more diverse, covering literature, history, biography, science, Ottoman provincial laws and regulations. It is seen that Jewish periodicals appeared in Istanbul in the middle of the 19th century; and it is stated that more than half of the publications that appeared at that time were published in Ladino. At the end of the same century, a new genre emerged among Ladino publications. The genre in question included both original Ladino novels and novels that had mostly been translated from French. Several editions of Jewish community rules were also noted to have been published in Ladino, followed by some provincial and municipal ordinances. Thus, it is stated that Ladino was especially important in social and cultural terms as of the second half of the 1800s.<sup>37</sup>

It should be emphasized that Ladino novels and periodicals were interdependent during the Ottoman period, novelists were able to sell their articles over the newspaper and readers followed the next part of the serialized novel through the newspaper. Additionally, this situation made the conditions of publication difficult and made the authors and editors raced against time. Since the revision and correction work was done in a hurry, it was observed that chapter numbers were omitted from time to time, names were written without being registered, and mistakes were made in printing and typesetting.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, although it is stated that numerous works published in Istanbul included copyright statements that the work could not be reproduced without permission, there is also information that printing houses did not print works without permission, since there was no competition environment and they were generally the only printing house in their region.<sup>39</sup>

## 2. Journalistic Activities in the Frame of Jewish Printing in the Ottoman Period

Even though the first Jewish printing house was established in the Ottoman lands in 1493, the project to publish the first Jewish newspaper took 1842. However, it should be kept in mind that the first newspaper in Ottoman lands was *Vakayi-i Mısriye*, published in Egypt in 1828, and then the first official newspaper of the Ottoman Empire, *Takvim-i Vakayi*, was published in Istanbul in 1831.<sup>40</sup>

Democratic processes were very effective in the birth and development of Jewish journalism in the Ottoman period. It is stated that the Gülhane Edict of 1839 (Edict of Reorganization), which stipulated not to discriminate between all subjects of religion and sect, played a prominent role in the opening of the first newspapers. Especially after the expansion of minority rights with the Reform Edict of 1856 and the enactment of the first Constitutional

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<sup>36</sup> Naim Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudileri Tarihi I*, Gözlem Basın Yayın, 1995, p.61; Narrator: Melih Çoban, "Ottoman Jews in Salonica: A Community at the Heart of Ottoman Enlightenment", *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, V.11, 2007, p.72-73.

<sup>37</sup> Simon, p.131-134.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Alpert, "The Ladino Novel", *European Judaism*, V.43, N.2, 2010, p.53-54.

<sup>39</sup> Meral, p.91.

<sup>40</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, *İlk Gazete İlk Polemik, Vakayi-i Mısriye'nin öyküsü ve Takvim-i Vekayi ile Tartışması*, Ankara, 1989; Narrator: Hıfzı Topuz, *II.Mahmut'tan Holdinglere Türk Basın Tarihi*, 8.Edition, Remzi Kitabevi, 2018, p.13.

Law in 1876, it is seen that the establishment of Jewish newspapers gained momentum. However, it should be noted that after the Reform Edict, the beginning of the control of press organizations with the Press Regulations issued in 1857 and the start of the period of autocracy with the Martial Law Decree as of September 20, 1877 negatively affected the aforementioned developments.<sup>41</sup> In this process, schools opened in Ottoman lands by Alliance (Universal Jewish Union), which was established in Paris in 1860, also stood out in press activities. In the education given by the Alliance organization, which provided the opening of Jewish schools in Istanbul, Bursa, Thessaloniki, Aydın and Çanakkale, French was taught in addition to Turkish and also French culture was imposed.<sup>42</sup> Those who taught in the mentioned schools made newspaper initiatives and preferred to use French as well as Ladino in the news they included in the press outlets they established. Along with these, it is observed that the number of Jewish newspapers increased with the developments in the democracy process in the Ottoman lands after the proclamation of the 2nd Constitutional Monarchy in 1908. These political developments and the Young Turk movements provided a comfortable environment for the Jews.

The first journalistic activities conducted by Jews during the Ottoman period started in Izmir. Among the most important reasons for the start of these activities in İzmir was that the city had a cosmopolitan social structure and as a result, the development of the press in a foreign language in the region. Following the initiative of two newspapers in the city, journalistic activities began to continue in Istanbul.<sup>43</sup> (See Table 1 for a full list of newspapers.)

**Table 1:** Ottoman-era Jewish newspapers.<sup>44</sup>

PRESS IN IZMIR	PRESS IN ISTANBUL	PRESS IN EDİRNE	PRESS IN AYDIN
La Buena Esperansa, 1842	Or İsrail, 1853	Karmi, 1881	La Revue d'Orient, 1908-1909
Sha'arey Mizrah, 1845	El Manadero, 1854	Yosef Da'at El Progreso, 1888	
Revue d'Orient, 1871	El Jurnal İsrailit, 1860 (Coha i Cohaiko humor supplement)	Karmi Shelli, 1890	
Esperansa, 1871	Trezoro, 1864	La Boz de la Verdad, 1904	
Zeman, 1872	Sefat ha'Emet El Luzero, 1867	L'Echo d'Andrinople, 1921-1922	
Eride-i Erceke, 1876	El Nasional, 1871 (Became El Telegraf in 1872, El Telegrafo in 1878)		
La Verdad, 1885	El Tiempo, 1872		
Üstad, 1889	El Progreso, 1871		
El Progreso, 1890	Şarkıyye, 1866		
Le Nouvelliste, 1891	Ceride-i Tercüme, 1876		

<sup>41</sup> Naim A. Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basını Tarihi*, Gözlem Yayınları, 2015, p.26-45.

<sup>42</sup> Eva Groepler, *İslam ve Osmanlı Dünyasında Yahudiler*, Translator: Süheyla Kaya, Belge Yayınları, 1999, p.43-44.

<sup>43</sup> Hammet Arslan, "Tarihsel Süreçte İzmir Yahudi Cemaatinin Sosyo-Kültürel ve Ekonomik Durumu", *Milel ve Nihal Dergisi*, V.11, N.1, pp.132-133.

<sup>44</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basını Tarihi*, p.27-85.

El Meserret, 1897	El Sol, 1878		
El Komersiyal, 1906	El Amigo de la Famiya, 1881		
La Boz del Puevlo, 1908	El Radio de Luz, 1885		
El Pregonero, 1908	El Enstruktur, 1888		
El Meserret's Humor Supplements, 1909 (El Kismet Poeta or El Mazalozo, El Kismet de Martes and El Soyтары)	La Edision de Martes de El Telegrafo, 1888		
Cilveli, 1909	La Edision de Cuguevez de El Telegrafo, 1894		
El Sorsilyo and Bayram, 1910	Ceride-i Lisan, 1899		
El Guion - Le Trait d'Union, 1910	La Boz, 1908		
La Boz de İzmir, 1911	L'Aurore, 1908		
Ufuk, 1911	Mir'at, 1908		
El Lavorador, 1913	El Bourlon, 1908		
Les Annales, 1914	El Cudio - Ha Yehudi, 1908		
Şalom, 1919	Le Jeune Turc, 1909		
Haverenu, 1921	Hamevasser, 1909		
El Mundo, 1922	El Cugueton, 1909		
	La Patria, 1908-1909		
	El Relampago, 1909		
	El Çuflete, 1909		
	El Grasiozo, 1910		
	El Korreo, 1910		
	La Nation, 1919		

## 2.1. The First Jewish Newspapers in the Ottoman Period

The first Jewish newspaper, *La Buena Esperansa* (The Good Hope) was planned to be published in İzmir in 1842 by Rafael Uziel, but according to the findings, it is indicated that the newspaper project did not materialize. It is mentioned that the newspaper could not conduct its activities due to both the high expenses and the reaction of the rabbis in İzmir to the newspaper on the grounds that it harmed the religious integrity of the Jewish community.<sup>45</sup> It is stated that *La Buena Esperansa* was a newspaper project with a secular purpose, and some rabbis inclined towards rabbinic literature as a rebellion against this newspaper.<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, the aim of the newspaper was described as “to raise the Jewish character by encouraging Israelis to cultivate liberal arts and sciences”. It was also planned that the newspaper would be published weekly and include commercial news.<sup>47</sup>

A second newspaper project, *Sha'arey Mizrah - Puertas del Oriente* (The Gates of the East), was published in Izmir in 1845, at the initiative of the merchant Rafael Uziel, the founder of *La Buena Esperansa*. The opening four pages of *Sha'arey Mizrah*, which was a 8-page

<sup>45</sup> Güleriyüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.28.

<sup>46</sup> Matthias B. Lehmann, *Ladino Rabbinic Literature and Ottoman Sephardic Culture*, Indiana University Press, 2005, p.46.

<sup>47</sup> Olga Borovaya, “La Buena Esperansa (Izmir), 1842”, *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World (EJIW)*, [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/la-buena-esperansa-izmir-1842-SIM\\_000147](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/la-buena-esperansa-izmir-1842-SIM_000147). (Access date: 23.01.2023).

publication and used Ladino, had news from the palace, local news, quotations from newspapers and religious texts, and the last four pages had economic news and advertisements, as well as share prices intended for traders. Frankly, Uziel's merchant identity was effective in the fact that the second four pages of the newspaper are based on the economy. Uziel had also published articles on religion and morality in every issue of the newspaper. It is also worth mentioning that the newspaper was not printed in a Jewish printing house, but was instead prepared for publication in the Griffith's printing house. According to the reference given by Güleriyüz, the Griffith's printing house was preferred either to avoid the opposition of the local rabbis or because there was no Jewish printing house in the city. *Sha'arey Mizrah* had to close at the end of 1846 due to adverse economic circumstances. It is noteworthy that no other newspaper was published in İzmir in the next 25 years.<sup>48</sup>

It is seen that the first Jewish newspaper in Istanbul was published in 1853 with the name *Or Israel* (La Luz de Israel - The Light of Israel). *Or Israel* was published in Ladino, just like *Sha'arey Mizrah*, which was among the first newspapers in Izmir. The newspaper, running for two and half years, was published by the printer Leon Hayim de Kastro to meet the rising desire to know more about the Crimean War and to fulfill the people's need for information; and Kastro, who was the editor of the newspaper as well, included news and interviews about the war.<sup>49</sup>

The first newspaper in Edirne was opened by Baruch ben Isak Mitrani in 1881 under the name *Karmi* (My Vineyard). The newspaper was published in Hebrew in order not to break the ties with the Jewish communities in Western Europe, but there were also summary translations of the articles in Ladino. The newspaper circulated for two years and was also issued in Pressburg (Bratislava) apart from Edirne.<sup>50</sup> Mitrani was a supporter of the Haskalah movement, which means Jewish Enlightenment, and aimed to spread modern European culture among Jews. However, it must be mentioned that Mitrani was a versatile Jew, so much so that he both supported this enlightenment and took a balanced Ottoman Jew stance that advocated for Jews to stay Jewish nationalists and loyal Ottoman citizens at the same time.<sup>51</sup> Mitrani also published a monthly magazine called *Karmi Shelli* in the period 1890-1891 and in 1906. The newspaper, which served in Hebrew and Ladino languages, was published in Vienna<sup>52</sup> and Belgrade as well as in Edirne; and in the following process it was named *Ha-Shalom*. It is stated that Mitrani's aim of establishing *Karmi Shelli* was to defend the rebirth of Ottoman Palestine and the idea of Jewish colonization.<sup>53</sup> In this regard, it should be said that Mitrani acted with similar aims while founding *Karmi* and *Karmi Shelli*.

In both Istanbul and Izmir, newspapers were abundant and included *El Tiempo* (Time), *El Meserret* (Joy) and *El Telegrafo*, which had a long life. Frankly, the fact that these newspapers preferred a moderate way was effective in their longevity. In these newspapers, which reinforced the Turkish-Jewish identity by avoiding a Zionist point of view, a wide range

<sup>48</sup> Güleriyüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.28-31.

<sup>49</sup> D. Gershon Lewental, "La Luz de Israel (Istanbul)", Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World (EJIW), [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/la-luz-de-israel-istanbul-SIM\\_0013250](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/la-luz-de-israel-istanbul-SIM_0013250). (Access date: 23.01.2023).

<sup>50</sup> Güleriyüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.58-59.

<sup>51</sup> Tamir Karkason, "Between Two Poles: Barukh Mitrani between Moderate Haskalah and Jewish Nationalism", *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture* 18, 2021, p.1-11.

<sup>52</sup> Güleriyüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.59.

<sup>53</sup> Lewental, "Karmi Shelli (Edirne)", Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World (EJIW), [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/\\*-SIM\\_0012690](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/*-SIM_0012690). (Access date: 23.01.2023).

of literary, scientific and cultural contents were shared, as well as social and political issues. Even though Ladino language was preferred in the newspapers published in this process, the newspapers *Sarkıyye*, *El Tiempo*, *Ceride-i Tercüme*, *Ustad*, *El Meserret* and *Ceride-i Lisan*, which printed in Turkish with the Ottoman Turkish alphabet or in Turkish with Hebrew letters, defending the development of the Turkish language, also participated in Jewish press life. For example, the *Ceride-i Lisan* newspaper, established in Istanbul in 1899 by the printer Avram Leon, was intended to familiarize the Jewish community with Turkish language.<sup>54</sup> Alexander Benghiat, who took responsibility for the newspaper *El Meserret*, which was published in Turkish on one side and in Ladino on the other, expressed his hope that the first issue of the newspaper would create a cohesive atmosphere among the Ottoman authorities and the Jewish community.<sup>55</sup>

*El Tiempo*, the longest-lived newspaper in the Ottoman period, was founded in Istanbul in 1872. The newspaper's first editorial manager was Merkado Fresko; and in 1875, David Fresko took over the newspaper and was at the helm for 55 years. As the owner of the newspaper, Fresko started to conduct all the duties himself in 1894, and throughout his tenure, he did his best to bring Turkish Jews to an advanced and enlightened level and to spread the Turkish language among them.<sup>56</sup> In this sense, *El Tiempo* newspaper took a very enlightened, liberal and anti-Zionist stance. It is known that the newspaper struggled with Zionism and Zionists and also criticized the budget expenditures of the Chief Rabbinate. According to Fresko, Zionism was described as a kind of adventure and causes division among Jews.<sup>57</sup> He evaluated Zionism, which aimed to establish a country belonging to the Jews, as an ideology that disrupted the social balance in the Ottoman lands, and thus used *El Tiempo* as a platform for social criticism. On this particular, it needs to be said that the poems included in the newspaper also had anti-Zionist views. The poems in question written by Merkado Fresko and Yitzak B. Shabtay can be given as examples.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.41-58.

<sup>55</sup> Julia Phillips Cohen and Olga Borovaya, "El Meseret", Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World (EJIW), [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/el-meseret-SIM\\_0007100](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/el-meseret-SIM_0007100). (Access date: 23.01.2023).

<sup>56</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.41-43.

<sup>57</sup> Eldar Hasanoğlu, "Osmanlı Yahudilerinde Milliyetçilik: 1914'e Kadar Siyonizm", *İSTEM Dergisi*, N.26, 2016, p.59-71.

<sup>58</sup> Yizhak Cytrin and Nitza Dori. "Anti-Zionist Tendencies and Social Messages in the Hebrew Poetry Published in El Tiempo: the Newspaper of the Ottoman Empire's Ladino- Speaking Community in the Early Twentieth Century." *The Journal of Modern Hellenism*, N.33, 2017, p.1-28.

Picture 1: El Tiempo Newspaper.<sup>59</sup>



*El Tiempo* newspaper, which started its activities in the Ottoman period and continued them in the Republican period, has an important place in the field of Turkish Jewish press due to its 58-year longevity.<sup>60</sup>

## 2.2. Jewish Journalistic Activities After the 1908 Constitution

After the autocracy regime that lasted for approximately 30 years, a new era emerged when the Committee of Union and Progress re-declared the Ottoman Constitution on 23-24 July 1908. Thus, the period of Abdülhamid II ended and the Second Constitutional Era began. On July 24, 1908, the celebrations of the Proclamation of Liberty began, and the day in question is celebrated as Press Day every year, even today, after the end of censorship and autocracy. However, in addition to these developments, the Law on Printing and Printing Houses was enacted on 29 July 1909 in order to re-regulate the press right after the freedom environment had completed one year. With the regime change in 1908, publications of the humorous genre

<sup>59</sup> This picture from the newspaper *El Tiempo*, dated 30th August 1906, was obtained by personal communication with Alberto Modiano, archive coordinator of the The Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews, on 10th August 2021.

<sup>60</sup> Topuz, p.387.

increased, and Zionist-oriented newspapers emerged.<sup>61</sup> The leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress supported the establishment of cultural associations with Zionist tendencies, and this situation was also reflected in the press.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, it should be noted that Ottoman Jews, who received good education in Alliance schools and learned French and various professions, acquired an active role in the political and social sense by reaching the upper echelons of the society after the 1908 Constitutional Monarchy.<sup>63</sup>

Among the newspapers that started to be published in this period, the newspaper *El Cugueton* (Laughing) was among the long-lived newspapers. The weekly humor newspaper, which had been on sale for many years with original or French adapted story booklets, was published by Elia Karmona, who left the David Fresko's printing house as a typographer and founded her own printing house. The publication of the newspaper was suspended for a while after Karmona criticized the Chief Rabbi of the time and the Chief Rabbi submitted a complaint against Karmona to the respective authorities.<sup>64</sup> Frankly, Karmona's critical attitude can be given as an example of the liberal atmosphere brought about by the regime change in 1908. Moreover, it is stated that *El Cugueton* stood out among humorous publications with the covers it presented by visualizing the political and social events of the period in a humorous style, despite having had printing errors and having been inelaborate.<sup>65</sup> In this period when the humor genre developed, the newspapers *El Bourlon*, *El Çuflete* and *El Gracioso* participated in the press life, as well as *El Cugueton*; and these newspapers performed their humor by criticizing the community issues in a sarcastic way.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to the humor genre, it is seen that the Zionist press developed in this period with newspapers such as *L'Aurore*, *El Cudio Ha Yehudi*, *Hamevasser*, *La Nation* and *Le Jeune Turc*.<sup>67</sup> Jewish nationalism and similar issues were discussed in the aforementioned newspapers. For example, the newspaper *Hamevasser* featured letters, reports and articles on Jewish communities in Ottoman lands and elsewhere. Among the issues that drew attention were Jewish immigration to Ottoman lands, Jewish education, elections within Jewish institutions, and conflicts within the Jewish community in Jerusalem, Thessaloniki, and Istanbul. Additionally, by presenting a wide range of news about the Ottoman Empire, this newspaper included analyzes of current events in favor of Ottoman politicians. The articles in the newspaper both reflected the idea of Ottoman nationalism and a strict line of Jewish nationalism.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, *L'Aurore* newspaper was in favor of the idea of Ottomanism and also advocated Zionism.<sup>69</sup> It is stated that this newspaper was issued the day after the 1908

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<sup>61</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.63-64.

<sup>62</sup> Hasanoğlu, p.66.

<sup>63</sup> Bernard Lewis, *İslam Dünyasında Yahudiler*, Akılçelen Kitaplar, Ankara, 2018, p.272.

<sup>64</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.73-75.

<sup>65</sup> Aitor García Moreno, "El Humor Gráfico En La Prensa Sefardí: El Caso De Las Portadas De El *Ĵuguetón* De Constantinopla." *Sefarad*, V.70, N.1, 2010, p.195-240.

<sup>66</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.73-76.

<sup>67</sup> Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.76-83.

<sup>68</sup> Jakob M. Landau, "Comments on the Jewish Press in Istanbul: The Hebrew Weekly *HaMevasser*", *Etudes Balkaniques*, 2, 1990, p.78-80.

<sup>69</sup> Lewental, "L'Aurore (Istanbul)", *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World (EJIW)*, [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/lauore-istanbul-SIM\\_0013500](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/lauore-istanbul-SIM_0013500). (Access date: 23.01.2023).

Constitution, thanks to the freedom provided by the Committee of Union and Progress; and it was published in Cairo after Istanbul.<sup>70</sup>

*La Nation* newspaper was included in the press life in Istanbul on October 24, 1919 as the official organ of the Eastern Zionist Federation. The Zionist-oriented newspaper was published in French, and the editor-in-chief of the newspaper was Jak (Jacques) Loria, one of the former teachers of Alliance Schools,<sup>71</sup> who had a good command of French and had a thousand-page French book called *Les Mystères de Péra* (Beyoğlu's Secrets).<sup>72</sup> Another French-language newspaper, *Le Jeune Turc*, was in circulation from 1909 to 1915 and it advocated for Jewish rights, even though it wasn't explicitly related to the Turkish Jewish paper. The newspaper was thought to be a Zionist sympathizer due to its consistent presentation and advocacy of news related to the Jewish community; however, Koloğlu stated that the newspaper was not an organ of Zionism. In the following process, when the idea of Zionism was not welcomed by the Ottoman Jews, editor-in-chief of the newspaper, Vladimir Jabotinsky, presented a new trend combining the idea of Zionism and Ottomanism; and also, this newspaper was followed by diplomats both inside and outside the country for its high-level journalism.<sup>73</sup> In this regard, it is seen that the moderate stance of the period among the Jews was a mixture of the ideas of Zionism and Ottomanism.

## CONCLUSION

In spite of intermittent pauses in printing activities during the Ottoman period, it still experienced a successful growth over time. Even though all Jewish printing houses opened in Ottoman lands had a joint contribution in this development, after the Nahmias brothers, the Soncino family, which conducted printing activities between 1530 and 1547 and brought innovations in various fields from writing style to page design, and Ya'kov Ashkenazi, who had new type-founding in the 18th century, prepared aesthetic prints and helped Müteferrika's printing house technically, were good developers. In this sense, it is essential to mention that the Jews were quite successful in the early stages of the printing business. The Ottoman government's permission for the Jews, as a non-Muslim nation, to conduct printing activities was a socially and commercially important move, especially when Muslims in the region were not taking advantage of the printing press. Frankly, the relationship between the government and the Ottoman Jews was reinforced and solidified by the praises attributed to the sultans in the published books.

The constant presence of religious themes in Jewish works can be attributed to the attempt to preserve their religious identities due to their exile from Spain, being a minority in the places they migrated to, and the fear of annihilation. The fact that they turned to literature and science in the works they published in the following process can be expressed as both the decrease in their sense of threat over time and an effort to assess and utilize the deep-rooted culture they received from Spain. At this point, it was observed that the Judeo-Spanish, also known as Ladino, was being used as a highly effective and functional tool in terms of both

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<sup>70</sup> Juliette Rosenthal, "From Constantinople to Cairo: A Zionist Newspaper Across National Boundaries", History Honors Thesis, Skidmore College, 2019, p.11.

<sup>71</sup> Evrim Görmüş, "Alliance Israelite Universelle: Osmanlı Yahudilerinin Dönüşümünde Bir İtici Güç" Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, N.40, 2020, p.263.

<sup>72</sup> Johann Strauss, "Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Türkçeden Başka Dillerde Edebiyatlar", Antik Çağ'dan XXI. Yüzyıla Büyük İstanbul Tarihi, Translator: Ahmet Aydoğan and Ömer Ulusoy, V.7, 2015, p.277.

<sup>73</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, "Celal Nuri'nin Jeune Turc Gazetesi ve Siyonist Bağı", Tarih ve Toplum, N.108, 1992, p.46; Narrator: Gülerüz, *Türk Yahudi Basım Tarihi*, p.82-83.



conveying the vast knowledge of the past and bringing all the other Jewish communities together.

Ottoman Jewish journalistic activities were welcomed in Istanbul, Izmir, Edirne and Aydın, yet newspapers were predominantly published in Istanbul and Izmir. With the spread of the schools belonging to the Alliance organization and the announcement of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, an increase was seen in the newspapers printing in French; and the people who were educated in the aforementioned schools took on an enlightened role and contributed to the political and social development through the press. The fact that more than sixty newspapers, regardless of their longevity, were published by Ottoman Jews, as seen in Table 1, should be considered an important success in the Ottoman press, despite the enactment of the printing laws, the use of censorship, and some political problems. Through the utilization of the Turkish-Jewish identity in the forefront and creating content that was moderate and unifying, it allowed for great success. Publications that embrace the ideas of Zionism and Ottomanism together, and as well as those aiming to spread Turkish, can be given as examples of this moderation and unification.

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