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A Jewish Colonization Attempt in Türkiye: The Case of the Bandırma Tekfur Farm

Türkiye'de Bir Yahudi Kolonizasyon Denemesi: Bandırma Tekfur Çiftliği Örneği

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Abstract Following the French Revolution, rising nationalism also influenced Jewish communities and strengthened the Zionist movement led by Theodor Herzl, which encouraged Jewish settlements in Palestine. In this context, the Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA), founded in 1891, established agricultural colonies to support Jewish immigrants. As part of this initiative, the Tekfur Farm in Bandırma was purchased in 1913 and settled by Jewish immigrants from Romania and Russia. The JCA financed the purchase with 164,450 francs and registered the property under the name of Franz Philippson, a Belgian citizen acting on its behalf. The farm aimed to create a productive agricultural community using modern techniques while preserving religious values. During World War I, Ottoman 5th Army units occupied the farm, and its production was sent to the Çanakkale Front. Expropriation attempts in 1916 and 1936 failed, unfavorable geography, low productivity, and wartime instability undermined the settlement. Ultimately, the farm was nationalized in 1942 and transferred to the Merinos Breeding Farm. Using Turkish and Israeli archival sources, this study analyzes the farm's establishment, settlement process, agricultural activities, and nationalization to explain the failure of the Jewish settlement in Bandırma.

Öz Fransız İhtilali sonrasında yayılan milliyetçilik akımı Yahudi toplumunu da etkileyerek Theodor Herzl öncülüğünde Filistin'e yerleşme amacı taşıyan Siyonizm düşüncesini güçlendirmiştir. Bu süreçte kurulan hayır kurumlarından biri olan ve 1891'de faaliyete başlayan Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA), Yahudi göçmenlere yardım etmek amacıyla çeşitli ülkelerde koloniler oluşturmuştur. JCA'nın çabalarıyla Bandırma'daki Tekfur Çiftliği 1913'te satın alınmış ve Romanya ile Rusya'dan gelen Yahudi göçmenler buraya yerleştirilmiştir. Satın alma için 164.450 frank katkı sağlayan JCA, tapuyu yönetiminde bulunan Belçikalı Franz Philippson adına tescil ettirmiştir. Çiftlikte modern tarım tekniklerine hâkim, üretken ve dini değerlere bağlı bir toplum oluşturulması hedeflenmiştir. I. Dünya Savaşı sırasında çiftlik, 5. Orduya bağlı birliklerce işgal edilmiş ve ürünler Çanakkale Cephesi'ne sevk edilmiştir. 1916 ve 1936'daki istimlak girişimleri sonuçsuz kalmış, coğrafi koşullar, tarımsal verimsizlik ve savaş dönemindeki siyasi istikrarsızlık çiftlik yaşamını olumsuz etkilemiştir. II. Dünya Savaşı koşullarıyla 1942'de çiftlik kamulaştırılarak Merinos Yetiştirme Çiftliği'ne devredilmiştir. Çalışmada, 1913-1942 yılları arasında Bandırma'da faaliyet gösteren Tekfur Çiftliği'nin satın alınma süreci, yerleşen aileler, elde edilen ürünler, Çiftliğin istimlakine yönelik girişimler, JCA ile çiftlik sakinleri arasındaki ilişkiler ve 1942 yılında gerçekleşen istimlak süreci, Türkiye ve İsrail'deki arşiv kaynakları kullanılarak ortaya koyulmaya çalışılmış, Bandırma'da Yahudi Kolonisi kurulmasına yönelik girişimin neden başarısız olduğu izah edilmiştir.

Keywords Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA) · Leib Goldenberg · Falic Herschkovitch · Bandırma Tekfur Farm · Zeilik Kant

Anahtar Kelimeler Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA) · Leib Goldenberg · Falic Herschkovitch · Bandırma Tekfur Çiftliği · Zeilik Kant

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Introduction

Zionism, based on the word Zion, means the return of the Jewish people to their historical homeland and refers to the political movement aiming to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionism, which emerged among Eastern European Jews at the end of the 19th century and then spread among all Jews, soon turned into a political, socialist and cultural movement.

The ideas of equality and nationalism that had emerged in Europe after the French Revolution also affected Jews living in different states, causing them to struggle for political, administrative and cultural rights. This situation led to an increase in the reaction against Jews for both religious and ethnic reasons, and to the emergence of an anti-Zionist movement. In Eastern Europe and especially in Tsarist Russia, state oppression against the Jews increased and social conflicts on the axis of Christianity-Judaism increased. The oppression and conflicts led to the emergence of the Hovevei (Hibbat) Zion (Lovers of Zion) organization, the strengthening of the idea of immigration and settlement in Palestine among the Jews living in Russia, and the birth of the first great immigration (aliyah) movement to Palestine[1].

In *Der Judenstaat*, written by Theodor Herzl and published in 1896, the idea of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine was discussed. The book was a driving force in the revival of the idea of returning to the "*holy land*" from the diaspora, especially in Europe, and in the Zionist movement's orientation towards a political goal. With the efforts of Theodor Herzl, the basic principles of the Zionist movement were determined with the first World Zionist Congress convened in Basel on August 29, 1897. The World Zionist Organization (WZO), thanks to its institutional structure and the congresses it organized, was effective in keeping the Zionist movement alive and spreading it among the Jews. It played a leading role in organizing immigration to Palestine and providing political and economic aid to the immigrants.[2]

In order to ensure systematic immigration and settlement in Palestine and to help those who immigrated, a number of other organizations emerged parallel to the Zionist organization. One of these organizations was the Alliance Israël, founded in Paris in 1860. Advocating that technical, scientific and linguistic studies should focus on the immigrating Jews in order to save the Eastern Jews from misery and ignorance, whose welfare levels were low, the Society opened schools providing theoretical education and aimed to raise the economic, social and cultural levels of the Jews in a strict disciplinary and hierarchical order. In order to save poor Jews from poverty, it established an agricultural apprenticeship system and started to provide training in agriculture. From 1880 onwards, agricultural schools were established in Western Anatolia to help Jews develop in the field of agriculture. However, the schools opened by the Society were not beneficial enough for the poor Jews who had to work for a living, and apprenticeship schools were prioritized to provide training in professions such as tinkering and shoe repair.[3]

The Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA) was founded in Paris in 1891 by Baron Maurice de Hirsch to help Jews in distress. The JCA was originally a joint stock company with headquarters in London and a capital of 2.000,000 pounds, divided into 20,000 shares of 100 pounds each. Maurice de Hirsch purchased 19.993 shares and the remaining 7 shares were purchased by many prominent British and French Jews such as Baron Edmond de Rothschild, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Sir Benjamin S. Cohen, Sir Ernest Joseph Cassel, Monsieur S. H. Goldschmidt, president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, Salomon Reinach and F. D. Mocatta. In 1893, the management of Maurice de Hirsch's shares was transferred to the Alliance Israélite Universelle,

[1] M. Lütfullah Kahraman, "Siyonizm", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA)*, V. 37, İstanbul, 2012, p. 329.

[2] M. Lütfullah Kahraman, "Siyonizm", *DİA*, p. 329.

[3] H. Siren Bora, "Alliance Israélite Universelle'in Osmanlı Yahudi Cemaatini, Tarım Sektöründe Kalkındırma Çalışmaları ve İzmir Yakınlarında Kurulan Bir Çiftlik Okul: Or Yehuda", *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1993, p. 389.

the Anglo-Jewish Association and the Jewish communities in Brussels, Berlin and Frankfurt. According to the regulations of the JCA, only Jews who were members of the association were included in the board of directors. The number of members of the executive committee, which was initially 6, was later increased to 11. At first, the board of directors of the association consisted only of Jews from England, France, Belgium and Germany, but later, Jews from Israel and the USA were also included in the board of directors.[4] The first president of the JCA was Maurice de Hirsch. After his death in 1896, Salomon Goldsmid (1896), Narcisse Leven (1896-1919), Franz Philippson (1919-1929), Lionel Leonard Cohen (1929-1934), Sir Osmond d'Avigdor Goldsmid (1934-1940), Leonard Montefiore (1940-1947) and Sir Henry Joseph d'Avigdor Goldsmid took office.

The company, whose regulations does not state that it is a charitable organization, was intended to spend according to its revenues and to protect its capital by returning the money it lent in the long term. The aim of the JCA was to help Jews, especially those victimized by the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, who were in economic difficulties or forced to emigrate to other countries, to migrate and settle, and to support them to stand on their own feet economically. For this purpose, the JCA established agricultural colonies, opened vocational schools, and established credit funds to provide cheap loans to poor Jews. The first activity of the JCA was to ensure that thousands of Russian Jews, who were in a difficult situation and forced to emigrate, settled in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the USA, Palestine, Türkiye and Cyprus and became productive in agriculture.[5] Beyond the idea of providing humanitarian aid to poor Jews in distress, aid to Jewish immigrants was motivated by the perception of immigrants as a means of enabling the resettlement of Jews in the land of Palestine and as a vehicle for a Jewish renaissance.[6]

Russia was one of the countries where hatred and hostility against the Jews was most prevalent. The efforts of Alexander III, who ascended the Russian throne in 1881, to create a single Russian-Orthodox nation left Jews with the choice of either Russification or emigration to other countries. The law of 1882, "Provisional Regulation on Jews", accelerated this process by further restricting the lives of the Jews.[7] With the 1903 regulation, Jews were banned from acquiring immovable property in Russia, while immigrants coming from Russia to Palestine were protected by the Russian consulate. Russia's attempt to protect its subjects coming to Palestine while committing atrocities against Jews in its own territory was based on the idea of accelerating Jewish immigration in its country.[8] Over time, colonies were established in Odessa, Cherson and Crimea for Jews who would emigrate to Palestine. About 6,000 Jewish families were settled in villages and given 102,000 Desyatin (1 Desyatin = 1.1 hectares) of land to cultivate.[9] In 1882, around 3,000-4,000 Jews from the Russian Empire arrived and settled in Palestine. Unlike their predecessors, the Jews who arrived were not old men and women who came to study, pray and die, but young men and women who came to work, build and live.[10] Between 1882-1903, 20.000-30.000 people, mainly from Russia, Romania and Galicia, between 1904-1914, 35.000-40.000 people, mostly from Russia, between 1919-1923, 35.000 Jews from Russia, Poland and Romania had to emigrate.[11]

[4] Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm A History of The Jewis Colonization Association*, Routledge & Kegan Paul Plc, London, 1985, p. xii.

[5] Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm*..., p. 5. For Baron Maurice de Hirsch's attempts to establish a Jewish state in Anatolia by purchasing lands belonging to the treasury in the financially troubled Ottoman Empire within the framework of his aid activities for Jewish immigrants from Russia, see. Vahdettin Engin, *Pazarlık İkinci Abdülhamid ile Siyonist Lider Dr. Theodore Herzl Arasında Geçen "Filistin'de Yahudi Vatanı" Görüşmelerinin Gizli Kalmış Belgeleri*, Yeditepe Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, p. 64-65.

[6] Mim Kemal Öke, *Siyonizm ve Filistin Sorunu (1880-1914)*, Üçdal Neşriyat, İstanbul, 1982, p. 40.

[7] Nurdan İpek Şeber, "II. Abdülhamid Dönemine Rusya ve Romanya'dan Gelen Yahudi Muhacirler", *Tarih Dergisi,* No. 53, (2011/1), İstanbul, 2013, p. 42.

[8] Şir Muhammed Dualı, *Çarlık Rusyasında Yahudiler (Sosyo-Politik, Tarihi ve İnanç Boyutlarıyla)*, Divan Kitap, Ankara, 2016, p. 139.

[9] Joseph Roth, *Yahudiler Yollarda, Galiçya'dan Viyana'ya, Paris'e, New York'a*, transl. Ahmet Arpad, Kırmızı Kedi Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2018, p. 99.

[10] Bernard Lewis, *Semitizm ve Anti-Semitizm Çatışma ve Önyargıya Dair*, transl. Hür Güldü, Everest Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004, p. 181.

[11] M. Lütfullah Kahraman, "Siyonizm", *DİA,* p. 329.

The strengthening of the Zionist movement and the intense wave of immigration to Palestine caused attention to be focused on the Ottoman Empire, which held the Palestinian territories under its sovereignty. The Ottoman Empire had to take measures both to deal with the thousands of Jewish immigrants piling up on its borders and to prevent the future demands for national identity and political rights that might arise with the settlement of a large Jewish population in Palestine. The Ottoman consulates in Russia attempted to control the immigration movement by issuing passports only to Jews who agreed to convert to Ottoman nationality and pledged to settle in a region other than Palestine. However, despite the settlement ban, Jews took all the risks and tried to realize the project of creating agricultural colonies in Palestine.[12]

The negotiations with Sultan Abdülhamit II, led by Theodor Herzl, to allow Jewish settlement in the Palestine region and the proposals made to him did not yield any results. Although the Sultan allowed Jews fleeing persecution to settle in Ottoman lands other than Palestine, he strongly tried to prevent attempts to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. He banned the sale of land to Jews, and Jews traveling to the region for pilgrimage were closely monitored.[13] Despite this, the increase in the Jewish population in Jerusalem could not be prevented, and the Jewish population increased from 6,000 in 1861 to 50,000 in 1907.[14]

In 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress government, which began with the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, lifted restrictions on Jewish visits to Palestine and the sale of land to Jews for a while, but after the March Thirty-one Incident in 1909, controls and restrictions on Jews came back into force.[15]

After the Ottoman Empire restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine, Baron Edmond Rothschild took action to settle the immigrants in the neighboring regions of Palestine. In 1894, he purchased land in Syria for the settlement of 200 Jews. By the end of the reign of Abdulhamid II, 33 settlement centers were established for immigrant Jews.[16] 30 families were settled in Sazılar, 50 in Kara and 50 in Mamure, and an administrative unit for the colonies was established in Eskişehir. In 1900, an agricultural school was opened in Bornova, Izmir and Çakıroğlu farm was purchased near Akhisar.[17] Accordingly, farms were established in Anatolia, named Or-Yehuda in Akhisar, Mesilla Hadaşa in Istanbul-Sultanbeyli, Tekfur in Bandirma, Beylikahır and Sazılar in Sivrihisar, Fethiköy in Istanbul-Silivri and Mamure in Eskişehir, where immigrants from Russia were settled and where they were taught agriculture and farming.

The JCA established a central office in St. Petersburg with the approval of the Russian government to deal with the affairs of Jewish immigrants, especially those from Russia, and opened an office in Istanbul in 1910. Some of the Jewish immigrants settled in Anatolia and Cyprus by the JCA did not like where they were and wanted to migrate to other places. The JCA, which did not put pressure on the immigrants to stay where they were settled, conducted surveys for new settlements in Çukurova and Mesopotamia in 1909 and 1910, but both regions were deemed unsuitable due to irrigation problems.[18]

The aim of the JCA was to establish permanent colonies by raising self-sufficient farmers who were not interested in commerce and industry, who earned a living by cultivating the land, who knew modern techniques in agriculture based on the French school, to ensure that the Jewish population lived together while preserving their religious and national values, and to make the immigrants living in the colonies, who

[12] Nurdan İpek Şeber, "II. Abdülhamid Dönemine Rusya ve Romanya'dan Gelen Yahudi Muhacirler", p. 47.

[13] Vahdettin Engin, *Pazarlık İkinci Abdülhamid ile...,* p. 100-106.

[14] Gülnihal Bozkurt, "Osmanlı-Yahudi İlişkilerine Genel Bir Bakış", *Belleten*, Vol. 57, No. 219, 1993, p. 559.

[15] M. Lütfullah Kahraman, "Siyonizm", *DİA,* p. 330.

[16] Ali Arslan, *Avrupa'dan Türkiye'ye İkinci Yahudi Göçü*, Truva Yayınları, İstanbul, 2006, p. 150.

[17] Avram Galanti, *Türkler ve Yahudiler, Tarihi, Siyasi Tetkik*, Tan Matbaası, İstanbul, 1947, p. 111.

[18] Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm...,* p. 107.

were planned to be settled in Palestine in the future, productive. In order to prevent the farm residents from selling their property, engaging in other businesses or migrating to other places, the JCA took control of the property of the farms. The title deeds of the farms, with the exception of Fethiköy in Silivri, were in the name of Franz Philippson, a Belgian subject. The JCA was not in favor of farmers raising large amounts of livestock for other than their own needs and did not want farmers to engage in commerce by selling their livestock. They were also not allowed to establish factories and stores.[19] Despite all efforts, the expectations of the JCA were not fully realized, some of the Jews settled in the farms could not adapt to agricultural activities, while others adapted to social life in different cities under the Ottoman identity.[20]

The agricultural colonies were all under the jurisdiction of the JCA, headquartered in Paris, and strictly supervised by appointed agricultural inspectors. All agricultural colonies were conceived of as small agricultural cooperative enterprises, with the land in the farms divided according to the number of families, so that each family could cultivate its share of the land. The type of crops to be grown, transportation, sale, purchase of seeds, saplings and machinery, and etc. were all decided by the JCA administration.[21]

1. Purchase of Bandırma Tekfur Farm

In 1912, Zeilik Kant came to Türkiye with four friends and with the encouragement of the JCA, Zeilik Kant purchased the Tekfur Farm[22], 5 km from Balıkesir-Bandırma, for 13,000 Ottoman liras[23], which was owned by Tevfik Bey[24], the grandson of Tepedelenli Ali Pasha. Zeilik Kant paid 5.549 liras, Leib Goldenberg paid 5.800 liras and Falic Herschkovitch paid 2.146 liras during the purchase transaction that took place on April 13, 1923. The total amount paid was 13.495 liras.[25] For the purchase of the farm, the JCA lent 7.150 liras to the families living on the farm through the Bank of Salonika, and it was agreed that the money would be repaid with 4% annual interest.[26]

[19] Yehuda Levin, "Labor and Land at The Start of Jewish Settlement in Argentina", *Jewish History*, V. 21, No. 3-4, 2007, p. 343; Taylan Esin, "19. Yüzyılın Sonunda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kurulan Musevi İskan Birliği (JCA) Çiftlikleri", *Toplumsal Tarih*, Vol. 249, September 2014, p. 24. In order to ensure the safety and security of the Jews who would settle in Palestine, priority was given to the settlement of Jews who were engaged in agriculture, and in 1870, the German Jewish Agricultural School of Jaffa was opened by the Alliance Israelite in the colony of Mikve Israel. The following quote attributed to Israel Zangwill, an Anglo-Jewish novelist, summarizes the connection between Zionism and agriculture: "*Palestine is a country without a people; the Jews are a people without a country. The revival of the land will lead to the birth of the people*". See Özge Togral, "The Educational Phenomenon of the Alliance Israelite in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of the Jaffa German Jewish Agricultural School", *Mediterranean Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 12, 2022, p. 202; Bernard Lewis, *Semitism and Anti-Semitism...*, p. 192.

[20] Sarah Michelle Zaides, *Tevye's Ottoman Daughter: The Making of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews in the Shatterzones of Empire, 1882-1923*, University of Washington, Unpublished Phd Tehsis, Washington, 2017, p. 150.

[21] H. Siren Bora, "Alliance Israélite Universelle'in Osmanlı Yahudi Cemaatini, Tarım Sektöründe Kalkındırma Çalışmaları ve İzmir Yakınlarında Kurulan Bir Çiftlik Okul: Or Yehuda", p. 391.

[22] The 1845 dividend book of Gökmen Village/Tekfur Farm shows that there were no non-Muslims in the village. It is seen that the Tekfur Farm was owned by Rıfat Pasha, the Chief of Ahkam-ı Adliye, and that Rıfat Pasha owned 250 acres of cultivated fields, 200 sheep, 10 horses, 11 buffaloes, 5 black cattle, 8 mares and his annual income was 18.020 kuruş. See Muzaffer Tepekaya, "Temettuat Defterlerine Göre Gökmen Köyü/Tekfur Çiftliği'nin Sosyo-Ekonomik Durumu", *Uluslararası Bandırma ve Çevresi Sempozyumu Tam Metin Bildiriler Kitabı I Tarih, Arkeoloji, Göç Hareketleri, Önemli Şahsiyetler, Kültür ve Folklor, Edebiyat ve Eğitim*, ed. Zekai Mete, Ahmet Aydın, Gülnil Aydın, Emre Gürbüz, Bandırma, 2018, p. 122-123.

[23] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları*, Kastaş Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2003, p. 23.

[24] Hüseyin Kamil Bey, the owner of the farm, was born in Istanbul in 1865 to İsmail Rahmi Bey, the grandson of Tepedelenli Ali Pasha, who served as Governor of Ioannina and was executed in 1822 for rebelling against the state. Since his father was a member of the Council of State, he received a regular education in Istanbul and graduated from Aksaray Mahmudiye Rüştiyesi and Mülki İdadi Schools. He worked as a clerk in the Tanzimat Department for a short time. He did not take another position until his death and lived a comfortable life by selling his farms in Thessaly and Bandirma. He wrote poetry, novels and stories, but very few of his works were published. He died on December 15, 1921 in Istanbul and was buried in Merkez Efendi Cemetery. See Ümran Ağca, *Tepedelenlizâde Hüseyin Kamil -Hayatı, Edebi Kişiliği, Eserleri*, Erciyes Üniversitesi, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Kayseri, 2001, p. 20-23. In his memoirs, Albert Kant referred to the former owner of the farm as "Tevfik Bey" and stated that a painting of his great-great-uncle Tepedelenli Ali Pasha hung in the farm. See Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 23.

[25] *The Central Archives For The History of The Jewish People (CAHJP), The Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) Turkey Collection, JCA/TR39, 1919-1935.*

[26] *CAHJP, JCA/TR13, 1914-1916.* The "Law on the Acquisition of Real Estate by Foreigners" issued on 7 Safer 1284 (June 10, 1867) permitted foreigners to purchase real estate within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, except for the Hejaz region. Shortly thereafter, protocols were signed with Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, the United States of America, Greece, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands, Iran, Portugal, Russia, and Sweden. Under these protocols, foreigners were permitted to acquire property in the Ottoman Empire, provided they complied

The title deed of the farm, which today includes Bandırma to the north, the airport to the northeast, Keçili pasture to the east, Külefli Village to the south, Doğanpınar Village to the west, and Edincik district to the northwest, was issued in the name of Franz Philippson, a Belgian citizen who was also a member of the JCA's administration and served as its president between 1919 and 1929, due to the financial support provided by the JCA. After the purchase, a general power of attorney was granted to Leib Goldenberg to run the farm.[27]

The farm was considered to be named *"d'Atikva*", which means hope in Hebrew, but the old name of Tekfur Farm was continued to be used. A school, a small synagogue, a meeting hall, and other necessary units were established in the farm to create a modern settlement.[28]

After the purchase of the farm, Jewish families came to Istanbul by ferry in the summer of 1913 and settled in Bandırma after staying in Istanbul for a while. It was decided that the farm would be divided between the Kant, Goldenberg, Landmann and Herschkovitch families and run by them.

Information on the families who owned the Tekfur Farm is limited.

Kant Family: Zeilik Itskov Kant was the steward of the estate called Nikolayefka, located 25 km from the city of Kiliya on the Danube. By his first wife Rebecca, he had a daughter Esther and a son Albert (he married Laura on November 8, 1929), and by his second wife Tsiliya, he had Isiya, Hayim and a daughter Anna. Zeilik Kant was married for the third time to Dora Schmouchecovic. One of the brothers Oyzer (with his four daughters and two sons) settled in Tekfur Farm, while his other brother Kolman settled in Argentina and used the surname "*Kantt*".[29] Their maid, Mrs. Dünya of Russian origin, also stayed at the farm with the Kant family.

The Kant family owned 6.000 decares of the farm.

The Goldenberg Family: Leib Goldenberg, Hayim Leyzer, Leyba, sons Avrumber and Zioma, daughters Motya and Etia, settled on the farm.[30] On June 12, 1914, Leon Goldenberg, together with his wife, applied for Ottoman citizenship[31], but his request was not accepted.

*Herschkovitch Family***:** Falic Hertzovitch settled on the Farm with his wife, a daughter and two sons.[32] The Herschkovitch family owned 3.000 decares of the Farm.

Landmann Family: Shmil (Schmerl) Landman settled on the farm with his wife and one son.[33] He owned 3.000 decares of the farm.

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with the laws in force in the Ottoman Empire and did not avail themselves of the privileges granted to their countries under the capitulations. foreigners began to acquire property. This right granted to citizens of countries that signed protocols with the Ottoman Empire was also extended to legal entities by the "Law on the Disposal of Real Estate by Non-Citizens," issued on February 26, 1913 (the Rumi calendar: 16 February 1328). The Treaty of Lausanne, signed on July 24, 1923, also guaranteed foreigners the right to acquire, sell, and inherit movable and immovable property, provided they comply with existing laws. See Muzaffer İlhan Erdost, "Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Yabancılara Taşınmaz Satışı Yasallaşma Süreçleri ve Sonuçları", *Memleket Siyaset Yönetim*, No. 1, 2006 p. 64; Nedjip H. Chiha, "Osmanlı Devletinde Gayrimenkul Mülkiyeti Bakımından Yabancıların Hukuki Durumu", çev. Halil Cin, *Ankara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi,* Vol. XXIV, No. 1-4, 1967, p. 272.

[27] *CAHJP, JCA/TR12, 1913.* Franz Philippson (1851-1929): Born in Magdeburg in 1851, he was the son of Ludwig Philippson. After completing his education in Brussels, he founded a bank in 1871 and engaged in credit and commercial ventures in many countries outside Belgium. In 1884, he was elected president of the Jewish community in Brussels and served as president of the Consistoire Central Israélite de Belgique from 1918 onwards. In 1901, he was elected vice-president of the JCA and became its president in 1919. He died in Paris in 1929. Other Jewish settlements registered in the name of Franz Philippson included Or-Yehuda in Akhisar, Mesilla Hadasha in Istanbul-Sultanbeyli, and Mamure Farms in Eskişehir. See *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, 9 July 1929, p. 3.

[28] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 26.

[29] *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Dışişleri Bakanlığı Türk Diplomatik Arşivi (TDA)*, 508/44334-211585-2; Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 5.

[30] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 64, 69.

[31] *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi* (*BOA*), *Dâhiliye Nezareti İdare-i Umûmiye Evrakı, (DH.İ.UM.),* 29.2/2.

[32] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 64, 69.

[33] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 43.

Zeilik Hant's wife Tsilya, Hayim Leyzer of the Golderberg family, and Oyzer Kanıt's young daughter Sara, died of the Spanish flu and were buried in a small Jewish cemetery on the seashore in Bandirma.

2. Confiscation of Tekfur Farm by the 5th Army

The Ottoman Empire participated in World War I on the side of the Central Powers. The 5th Army, which was tasked with protecting the militarily and strategically important Dardanelles Strait, established farms run by the army in some places or seized existing farms in order to provide the foodstuffs it needed. Agriculture and animal husbandry activities were carried out on the farms with old soldiers and local people, and the products obtained were sent to the Dardanelles Front. Tekfur Farm was one of the places confiscated by the military troops for production purposes. The use of the farm by the army troops started in July 1914 and continued until June 1919.

Albert Kant provides the following information about the settlement of the military units at the Farm;

> "*In November 1914, a month before Türkiye entered the war, the local authorities declared mobilization and confiscated our horse-drawn carts, heavy vehicles pulled by oxen or cattle, to transport various supplies and materials to the Dardanelles. My father, like his partner L. Goldenberg, bought scrawny oxen in the spring and fattened them in the meadows, with the aim of selling them in Istanbul in the fall at a good price. The military authorities came to the farm and confiscated these herds, which had been fed for two months at great expense. After the damage we suffered, some battalions and regiments came to the farm and settled in the area. They took grass from us for their horses and, as with the oxen they confiscated, they did not give us anything from the state treasury; unfortunately, we received nothing in return for the goods we gave. Our vegetable garden and fruit trees were plundered in a short period of time. All of this was done because they saw us as enemies. We had* no *choice but to pray to God to protect us from worse coups*".[34]

Soldiers and officers, who lived in the same houses as the farm's inhabitants, fought to increase agricultural production. To increase production, the army brought a German Hanomac tractor to the farm and a German named Hanz, a former pilot, to drive it.[35]

After Leyba Goldenberg, one of the farm partners, *reported* to Mehmet Ali, who was in charge of organizing the agricultural work on the farm, that Zeilik Kant was a Russian sympathizer and that he was telling everywhere that the Russians would enter the country with their victorious armies, the Kant family faced the danger of deportation. With the help of the German commander Limon Von Sanders who came to Bandirma, they were saved from deportation at the last moment.[36]

Some of the farm's livestock, crops and agricultural tools were confiscated by military units. A commission, sometimes chaired by the district governor of Bandirma and sometimes by the commander of the troops, determined the value of the confiscated property and issued receipts to the owners for later payment by the state.

During and after the occupation by the military authorities, the farm owners tried to seek compensation for the damages they suffered and to seek their rights. Leon Goldenberg, who made a speech at a meeting

[34] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 27.

[35] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 31.

[36] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 36, 37. In a letter dated November 7, 1914, the reason for the arrest of a Jew from the Russian subjects at Tekfur Farm and his release one day later is asked. See *BOA, Dâhiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti* (*DH.KMS),* 28/47. Limon von Sanders went on a tour on January 29, 1915 to inspect the coastal defenses between Çanakkale and İzmir, and after visiting Edremit and Ayvalık via Bandırma-Balıkesir, he returned to Bandırma via Balıkesir. "*...Since the storm left no shelter in the harbor, all the ships left Bandirma, so he arrived in Istanbul many days later than he thought*". See Liman von Sanders, *Türkiye'de Beş Yıl*, transl. M. Şevki Yazman, Burçak Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 1968, p. 70.

Table 1

Warrants/receipts issued for the payment of the confiscated products to the farm owners and given to the farm owners

Date and Number	Type	Weight/quantity	Unit price (cents/ money)	Total Fee Payable (Kuruş)	Signatories on the Mazbat
August 4, 1914/43	Meat	8,300 (77 Cattle)	6 cents	49.800	Bandırma District Governor and Commission Members
August 8, 1914/67	Meat	5,720 (44 cattle)	5.20 cents	31.460	Bandırma District Governor and Commission Members
	Hay	212	6 cents	1.275	"
August 9, 1914	Hay	250			127th Regiment Commander Arif
August 11, 1914	Black Cattle	160	–	–	"
August 19, 1914/171	Hay	348	6 cents	2.304	
September 3, 1914/3	Weed	11.294	14 Para	3.952,30	
	Hay	24	6 cents	144	
	Oats	514	32 Para	411	
	Tohéki (?)	21,5	30 cents	67,20	
October 9, 1914	Hay	500	-	-	"
July 24, 1915/9	Hay			915	Bandırma District Governor Mehmet and Commission Members
July 25, 1915/85	Horse carriage	2		2.200	"
July 31, 1914/19	Meat	2,015 (20 cattle)	6 cents	12.090	"
February 4, 1916	Ox	10 pairs			Military Officer
December 1, 1916	4 horses				Bandırma Tradesmen President Ahmet Tahir
April 24, 1917	1 Axe 7 plows 8 yoke Win 1 2 zinc drums				Tekfur Farm Secretary Hilmi
July 18, 1917	1 plow, 2 heifer				Military Officer at Tekfur Farm
March 3, 1918	Barley	4 kilos			Commander of Bandirma

Source: The Central Archives For The History of The Jewish People, The Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) Turkey Collection, 1923-1937 JCA/TR 43, p. 35-51.

held in Paris in 1927 on the situation of the Jewish colonies in Türkiye, stated that the Turkish authorities seized the farm as soon as World War I broke out, that he, as an agricultural expert, showed the soldiers how to cultivate grains, that the Turks allocated 8,000 decares of the farm as pasture, that hay was obtained from 1,800 decares, that wheat was planted on 7,000 decares, oats on 1,800 decares, and barley on 1,500 decares, and that 10.300 decares of land suitable for the climate were not plowed by the Turkish authorities

in 1919 and therefore the yield from the soil decreased, they plowed and cultivated 800 decares of land with their own means, the rest of the land was left fallow, 50 decares of the farm could be planted with vegetables because irrigation facilities were available, but vegetables could not be planted because the soldiers damaged the water pipes, there was great damage to the farm buildings, the soldiers killed 400 cows, 220 cattle, 80 oxen, 300 calves, 150.000 kilos of grass, 100.000 kilos of hay, the prices were underestimated in the warrants issued for the payment of the confiscated goods, 241.530 liras of loss occurred due to the occupation and there was a great decrease in the income of the farm.[37]

3. Resettlement of Muhajirs to Tekfur Farm

During World War I, an intense migration movement started from the lost lands to the interior of Anatolia. Some of the refugees coming to Bandırma from the Balkans were tried to be settled in Tekfur Farm. In order to settle more refugees, the expropriation of the farm came to the agenda. In 1916, the expropriation was carried out with the decision of the Council of Ministers, "*Since the owners of the farms in question were not present here and there was no objection in this regard, the transaction* was *finalized without the need for referral to the court*"[38]. The expropriation price of 1.333,800 kurus was deposited in the Bandırma Property Chest on October 19, 1916.[39] During the process of expropriation of the farm, six members of the Kant family, who were residents of the farm, were arrested and sent to Bursa[40].

On October 30, 1918, with the signing of the Armistice of Mondros, the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from World War I changed the political balance. Farm owners tried to get support first from the British and then from the Greeks in order to stop the expropriation and compensate for the damages they suffered.[41] In a letter dated May 17, 1919, upon the objection of the owners of the farm, which was expropriated for the settlement of the Muhajirs migrating to Anatolia and in which some Muhajirs were settled, it was stated that it should be returned to its owners "*according to the situation*".[42] The farm was returned to its owners in June 1919. Albert Kant stated that they did not receive any help from the JCA in the process of removing the expropriation and that they removed the expropriation with their own means.[43]

After the restitution process, the farm owners submitted a petition to public institutions demanding compensation for the damage and payment of rent for the five years the farm was operated by the military. In addition, it was stated that the Fethibey Farm in Silivri, which was similarly occupied and operated by military authorities, was not taxed and the 80.000 liras of tax accrued to the farm was requested to be offset against the rent to be paid. In the reply, it was stated that the tithe of Fethibey Farm was collected by the property chest, while the tithe of Tekfur Farm belonged to the Public Debt Administration and therefore it was not possible to meet the request, and that no commission decision or amount was specified regarding the rent to be paid.[44]

A commission was established in 1923 to determine the amount of rent to be paid. By the order of the district governor of Bandırma, a commission was established under the supervision of the Edincik District

[37] *CAHJP*, JCA/TR43, 1923-1937.

[38] Taylan Esin, "19. Yüzyılın Sonunda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kurulan Musevi İskan Birliği (JCA) Çiftlikleri", p. 26. Albert Kant stated that the farm was "*expropriated for the Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria after November 1918*". See Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 43.

[39] *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi (BCA)*, 272.74/64.8.18.

[40] *BOA, Dâhiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umûmiye Müdüriyeti (DH.EUM),* 5.Şb. 40/15.

[41] *BOA, Bâb-ı Âli Evrak Odası (BEO),* 4629/347141.

[42] *BOA, BEO,* 4574/343002.

[43] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 74.

[44] *BOA, Dâhiliye Hukuk Müşavirliği (DH.HMŞ),* 8/1-3.

Directorate, and it was decided to pay 3,000 liras per year, upon which the Ministry of Finance notified the Directorate of Vevenue.[45]

4. Banditry Incidents

The conditions created by World War I led to the deterioration of order and public order in the country and the proliferation of bandit gangs. Tekfur Farm and its inhabitants were occasionally subjected to attacks by these bandits. The Bacak Hasan Gang demanded a ransom of 10.000 liras for Albert Kant and Leon Goldenberg, whom they kidnapped. The hostages were held at a farm near Gönen until the money was paid. Albert Kant, who asked for money from his father in a letter at the insistence of the bandits, stated the amount to be paid as 10.000 rubles instead of 10.000 liras, and managed to be freed for a lower amount than the bandits demanded. After the incident, the Kant family had to live in Bandırma city center for a while.[46]

On July 2, 1920, the Bandırma district where the farm was located, was occupied by the Greeks, and public order and order were disrupted. In 1921, a Circassian gang of 35 people kidnapped Albert Kant and seized 300 sheep, demanding a ransom of 20.000 liras to be paid within five days. He was released with 8.000 liras paid by his father and the intervention of Circassian Ethem Bey.[47] The residents of the farm applied to the Greek authorities and demanded the capture of the bandit and the return of the ransom.[48] However, no result was obtained from the applications to the Greek authorities and things continued to go badly. Greek authorities were also indifferent to the theft of 120 sheep from the farm.[49]

In a letter dated August 30, 1920, it was stated that 35.800 kurus, which was the cost of 9 buffaloes owned by the Goldenberg family and confiscated by the military authorities, was deposited by the 14th Corps in the property chest on April 12, 1920, but during the Anzavur Uprising, Anzavur's deputy Hacı Musa received the money "*on behalf of Kuva-yı Muhammediye (Forces of Muhammed)*" and gave a receipt. The farm owners asked for help from the Greek authorities and requested that the Ottoman State be pressured to return the money to them.[50]

The farm faced many difficulties during the occupation of Bandırma by the Greeks. From time to time, the Greek army tried to procure the products they needed from the farm without paying for them. Sometimes they gave receipts to the residents of the farm to be collected at the center in Izmir. In order to protect the farm from the attacks of Greek soldiers, a British flag was hung on the gate of the farm, as the owner of the farm was a Belgian citizen and under British protection.[51]

On September 17, 1922, at the end of the occupation, the Turkish army entered the city under the command of Şükrü Nail Pasha, and the residents of the farm helped the Turkish army and mobilized their means to care for and transport the wounded. Albert Kant, while giving information about the end of the

[45] *CAHJP,* JCA/TR50, 1919-1935.

[46] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 41; *CAHJP, JCA/TR25* 1919.

[47] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 114-121.

[48] *CAHJP, JCA/TR27*, 1921.

[49] *CAHJP, JCA/TR26*, 1920.

[50] *BOA, DH.HMŞ,* 8/1-4. "*On the night of April 13-14, 1336* [April 13-14, 1920], *Nuri from Keçidereli, who was left in Bandirma by Anzavur for security, went to Tekfur Farm and raped and threatened the members of the Jewish Lebink Family, an Italian subject who owned the said farm, and took two hundred and fifty liras from them, Since the women and children residing in the aforementioned farm ran away from the farm after half-eleven and came to Bandirma and directly applied to the British representative, upon the business and attempts made, he was taken to the delegation coming for him from Istanbul and was removed from Bandirma by being sent to Kirmasti*". See Mücteba İlgürel, *Milli Mücadele'de Balıkesir Kongreleri*, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p. 237.

[51] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 76-77. During the withdrawal of the Greek armies from Anatolia, Jews also suffered their share of the destruction, and Greek soldiers retreating from cities such as Izmir, Manisa, Bursa and Edirne destroyed Jewish homes and businesses, and many Jews lost their lives. See Rıfat N. Bali, *Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni (1923-1945)*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2020, p. 33-34.

Greek occupation in his memoirs, said that he settled his family in the station buildings under the control of the French because it was safe, that he started to stay at the farm at night to protect the farm from bandits and fleeing Greek soldiers, that the last Greek troops and the Greek-Armenian people were taken on board the ships under the auspices of the Greek warship Averoff in the port, that some bullets fired from the battleship Averoff fell on the farm land when the Turkish army entered the city, and that Turkish soldiers arrived at the farm on the morning of September 17, 1922, After a while, the Corps Commander Şükrü Naili Pasha came to the farm, left for Erdek in the evening, and went to see his family in Bandırma with the permission paper he received from him, He stated that the city was set on fire and the fire was still going on in some places, that the Haydarçavuş Mosque was destroyed by the artillery of the Greek army, that he saw bodies of Armenians and Greeks on the streets, and that the warehouses in the city center were destroyed by the Greek army.[52]

Due to the hardships suffered during the war, the farm's population declined rapidly to half a dozen people. Albert Kant stated in his memoirs that after World War I, his uncle Oyzer returned to Burshtein and Schmerl Landmann to Bessarabia, and that apart from the Kant family, Leib Goldenberg's sons Leyba, Avrumber and Zioma and his daughter Motya and M. Herschkovitch's wife and three children remained on the farm.[53] By 1926, the three families remaining on the farm were both paying their taxes to the state and trying to settle their debts to the JCA.[54] Albert Kant gave the following information about the financial situation of the farm residents; "*In 1926-1927, our economic situation improved, we were able to buy a combine harvester and a steam locomobile so that we could beat our grain crops more easily and quickly. After a while, we bought a Case tractor made in the U.S. It had a large frame and accessories. The wheels were big, heavy and all made of iron. They did not have the rubber tires made today*".[55]

5. The Relationship between JCA and Farm Residents

The JCA always tried to take care of the Tekfur Farm, supporting them to buy the tools and machinery they needed and to overcome their financial difficulties. In 1913, the JCA made a cash advance of 7.150 liras for the purchase of the farm, and on February 6, 1920, 3.750 liras, of which 1.500 liras were used by the Kant family, 15.000 liras by the Goldenberg family, and 750 liras by the Herschkovitch family. In 1924, M.M. Fainetein received 11.36 liras for his travel expenses, M. Leitchik received 32 liras for his travel to the farm, in 1925 he received 65.07 liras for power of attorney and travel expenses, and in 1915 he received 286 liras from the Tekfur farm in return for 4% annual interest on the money given in 1913.[56]

By 1938, it was understood that the farm residents owed the JCA a total of 2.400 liras, 750 liras for 1935, 800 liras for 1936 and 850 liras for 1937, of which 2.100 liras had been paid and the remaining 300 liras were promised to be paid after the threshing.[57] On April 6, 1938, Leib Goldenberg and Zeilik Kant sent a document to Leon Faraggi, the representative of the JCA, stating that they would pay the remaining 328 liras of the 1937 debt on June 15, 1938 by selling their horses, and that they would pay the remaining 900 liras of the 1938 debt within three months after the harvest in July, and that they would give a notarized commitment to the JCA for this, and that they would contact Landmann and Herzovitch to ensure their participation in

[52] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 76, 121, 130-135.

[53] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 64, 69.

[54] Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm...*, p.164-165.

[55] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 141.

[56] *CAHJP*, *JCA/TR43*, 1923-1937 p. 13-16; *CAHJP*, JCA/TR26, 1920.

[57] *CAHJP, JCA/TR32* 1936-1943.

this commitment.[58]

In order to prevent farm residents from selling their land and to ensure financial control, the title deeds of the purchased land were registered in the name of the JCA, in the name of the people the JCA identified. When things were not going well, farm residents applied to the JCA to sell their land. In 1921, the sale of the farm was put on the agenda. The JCA decided that if the farm was to be sold, it would first be necessary to collect the loans given to the inhabitants of the farm, which amounted to 209.075 francs with interest, and then the remaining money would be given to the inhabitants of the farm.[59] However, after a while, the JCA gave up on the sale and gave an advance of 3.750 liras to the farm's inhabitants in order to support the farm's production. In the early 1930s, Albert Kant and Leib Goldenberg traveled to Paris to present their demands to the JCA. The JCA executives, who did not look favorably on the sale and thought that the value of the farm would increase in the future, stated that the advance given to the farmers for the sale must first be repaid with interest and rejected the request by giving a small advance.[60]

The farm was supervised from time to time by Jozef Niego[61] assigned by the JCA, who provided advice on both financial matters and agricultural activities, and made efforts to resolve disputes between the farm owners themselves.

In a letter dated December 13, 1933, sent by Schmerl Landmann to S. Tcerniak, the JCA's representative in Istanbul, he stated that he had accepted the repayment of the loans made by A. Kant and L. Goldenberg's debt repayment agreement with the JCA, that he was a Romanian citizen and therefore could not stay in Türkiye for more than two months, that the last time he was in Türkiye was in 1929, that he could not take care of his land sufficiently due to his short stay, that after 1929 his land was managed by Falic Hertzovitch but that he did not send him money, that he did not answer his letters, that he now had a work permit in Türkiye, and that the JCA should give him an advance of 2.000 liras in advance for him to settle in Türkiye with his family, that he did not receive a share of the 3.750 liras advance given by the JCA to those at the Tekfur Farm in 1920, and therefore his debt to the JCA should be reduced.[62]

Schmerl Landmann must not have received a response to his demands because he sent a new petition on December 10, 1934, stating that he came to Bandirma in 1913 to buy land, that he bought 3.000 decares of land in the name of his brother-in-law Weimberg and himself, that in 1914 his brother-in-law sold his share to Falic Herschkovitch for 441 liras stating that the sale was made in Romania, that F. Herschkovitch paid only half of the money he was supposed to pay, and requested the JCA to intervene in the case and pay the money to which he was entitled and to Weimberg's widow.[63]

Falic Hertzovitch also had problems with the Kant family. In his memoirs, Albert Kant wrote that he had bought 300 sheep cheaply from an Armenian on the days the Turkish army entered the city, and that Falic

[58] *CAHJP, JCA/TR32* 1936-1943.

[59] *CAHJP, JCA/TR27*, 1921.

[60] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 142, 143, 149.

[61] Jozef Niego was born in Edirne in 1863. He lost his father Ezra and mother Perla at an early age and his uncle Raphael Behmuiras took care of his education. He started his primary education in Edirne and moved to Istanbul with his family in 1876. He completed his high school education in Istanbul. In 1878, he continued his education at the Ecole Normale Israélite Orientale in Paris. He graduated from the Ecole Nationale d'Agriculture School in Montpellier, France. In 1885, he was appointed to the Mikveh Agricultural School in Palestine. In 1897, he was assigned as a consultant to the JCA's activities in Palestine. In 1904, he returned to Istanbul and took part in the establishment of various settlements for Jewish refugees throughout the Ottoman Empire, supervising farms. In 1911, he founded the Benei-Berith Grand Lodge in Istanbul. In 1913, he took part in the establishment of Bene-Berith High School, the first Jewish high school in Istanbul, and served as its principal for three years. In 1923, he was appointed by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) as chairman of a fund that offered loans to small and medium-sized Jewish businesses. In 1933, he published Cinquante Années De Travail Dans Les Oeuvres Juives -Allocutions Et Conferences (50 Years of Work in Jewish Institutions - Lectures and Conferences). He died in 1945. See (Online) Digital ID: https://web.archive.org/web/20080626094417/http://www.behmoiras.net/Yahoo/www.behmoiras.com/bioniego.html February 01, 2024.

[62] *CAHJP*, JCA/TR39, 1919-1935.

[63] *CAHJP*, JCA/TR39, 1919-1935.

Hertzovitch had complained to the Turkish authorities that he had plundered the property of the Greeks, He stated that they later received a receipt from the Armenian who made the sale, but that he could not file a lawsuit because he could not afford a lawyer and that his sheep were confiscated, and that Falic Hertzovitch moved to the house of his groom İsmail Aga in the Turkish village because of the discord between them, and that after a while he settled in Bandırma and started manufacturing soap.[64]

In the 1930s, there were also problems between the Kant and Goldenberg families, and due to the discord between the families, their property on the farm was divided in two by two mediators, one a rabbi and the other a manufacturer, and the union representative Mr. Tcherniyak. Albert Kant gave the following information about the division;

> "*The land belonging to the Kant and Goldenberg families was divided and demarcated. One part of the land was more fertile. Those with fertile land would have only a long building and no drinking water. Those with the less fertile land would get most of the residential buildings and outbuildings. The family with fertile land would be given one year after the lottery to build houses and animal shelters. In addition, the party that would own the buildings in the lottery would* pay *the other a sum of 1,500 liras*".[65]

6. Expropriation of the Farm

Although Albert Kant states in his memoirs that "*after Atatürk died* [in 1938]*, rumors began to spread that the government would expropriate the farm. The minister of agriculture wanted to establish a model farm*"[66], the first attempt to expropriate the farm seems to have started in 1936.

In order to increase the production of Merino fleece, which is a very important product for the textile and fabric industry, and to ensure the breeding of Merino breed sheep , with the "*Law on the Breeding of Merino Sheep and the Production of Improved Cotton Seeds*" numbered 2582 enacted on July 5, 1934, Gemlik, Inegöl, Inegöl, Iznik, Karacabey, Mudanya, Mustafa Kemalpaşa, Orhaneli, Orhangazi, Yenişehir in Bursa; Balya, Bandırma, Dursunbey, Erdek, Gönen, Sındırgı, Susurluk, Manyas in Balıkesir; and Biga, Bozcaada, Eceabad, Ezine, Gelibolu, İmroz, Lapseki, Ayvacık, Yenice, Bayramiç in Çanakkale. For the effective realization of merino breeding activities, the "*Merino Breeding Inspectorate*" was established in 1935, headquartered in Bursa.[67] The Karacabey Horse Farm was temporarily used to raise breeding rams for the conversion of domestic sheep in Western Anatolia to the Merino breed. When the Karacabey Horse Farm proved to be insufficient, a search was started for an independent farm where breeding sheep could be raised, and as a result of the examinations made in 1934, it was decided that the Tekfur Farm in Bandırma was suitable for this purpose due to the climate and geographical conditions. In 1936, the nationalization of the farm came to the agenda.

The land commission and the Bandırma District Administrative Board were assigned to determine the expropriation value of the Tekfur Farm, and the board appraised it at 83.000 liras. On September 2, 1937, in a letter sent to the Presidency of the State Council through the District Governorship of Bandırma, the lawyer Leon Faraggi, representing the heirs of Franz Philippson, a Belgian citizen who owned the Tekfur Farm in Bandırma, wrote that the value determined by the administrative committee did not reflect the truth, because during the inheritance procedures following the death of Franz Philippson in 1929, the treasury had

[64] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 137.

[65] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 149.

[66] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 156, 159.

[67] Mehmet Gökhan Polatoğlu, "Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nde Hayvancılığın Sanayiye Tatbikine Bir Örnek: Merinos Yetiştiriciliği", *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, No. 100, Fall 2019, p. 593.

valued the farm at 41.530[68*], that it was unfair to value the farm at 83.000 liras, the decree dated December 7, 1936 prepared by the district administration committee was notified to the residents of the farm on December 10, 1936, and as a result of the objection made on October 2, 1936, in accordance with the decision numbered 937/215 and dated January 18, 1938 taken by the State Council, it was stated that "*the decision of the land commission and the Bandırma accident administrative board on the valuation of the farm known as Tekfur Çiftlik (Tekfur Farm) within the Bandırma accident was reversed by the Council of State, as shown in the decree dated and numbered above*", but that taxes continued to be collected from the farm and animals were seized, and it was requested that this be stopped as soon as possible.[69]

During the expropriation process, the Turkish government decided to deport the residents of the farm. In the decision of the Executive Board of Deputies dated December 24, 1938, it was stated that "... *Goldenberg* (Leib Goldenberg)*, Zeliç* (Zeilik Kant) *and Felik Ersuviç* (Falic Hertzovitch)*, Romanian subjects and Jews of the Jewish race, who had been living in the Tekfur Farm they had purchased in the Bandırma district for 26 years and who should be treated as Jews from Romania, Hungary and Germany, were allowed to stay in Türkiye for five more months to liquidate their businesses*".[70] In the letter sent to the Romanian consulate on the subject, it was stated that the aim was to prevent Jewish immigration to Turkey from countries that followed racist principles and that "*the difficulties against the residence of the three Romanian Jews in Turkey were not due to the treatment of Jews, but to the application of the principle of retaliation to Romanian subjects*"[71] . As a continuation of this policy, Turkey issued a law on January 30, 1941 prohibiting the issuance of residence permits and even tourist visas to Jews fleeing their country, while those with valid visas and tickets were allowed to transit.Türkiye.[72]

The inhabitants of the farm were not deported, but attempts to expropriate the farm continued during World War II. This attitude seems to be related to the Turkish state's view of Jews and the changing perception of Jews in public opinion. In the early years of the Republic, Jews, who gave up their rights under the Treaty of Lausanne, were the weakest minority, constituting one percent of the population. During the War of Independence, Jews, who were subjected to attacks by the Greek armies and suffered heavy losses, sometimes faced allegations such as collaborating with Greeks and Armenians during the War of Independence, seizing their economic inheritance, seizing the property of Muslims during the war, becoming excessively rich while the Turkish people were living in poverty, not using Turkish effectively and not integrating with Turkish society. In the early years of the Republic, Jews, who were on the side of nationalism rather than against it and supported the revolutions, tried to become a part of Turkish society with the "Citizen Speak Turkish" campaigns.[73]

In parallel with the rise of Nazism in Germany from the 1930s onwards, anti-Semitic propaganda also increased. Although the wave of Fascism, which spread along with antisemitism, had its effect in Turkey as in almost every country, the Republican administration never looked favorably on racism. Turkey has always been a door of hope for Jews fleeing Germany. In 1934, the Thrace Incidents, which broke out in response to the misunderstanding by the Jewish community of the Compulsory Resettlement Law enacted for the

[68*] Considering that 1 pound sterling was 1.032 kurus in 1930, the value of the farm in Turkish lira was 428.589 liras, and considering that 1 pound sterling was 637 kurus in 1934, the value of the farm was 264.546 liras. See Feridun Ergin, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda ve Atatürk Döneminde Fiyatlar ve Gelirler", *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, Vol. 3, No. 7, 1986, p.78.

[69] *CAHJP*, *JCA/TR43*, 1923-1937, p. 216-217, 226.

[70] *BCA*, 30.18.1.2./85.106.13; *CAHJP*, *JCA/TR32* 1936-1943.

[71] *TDA*, 568/38938-158712-18; *TDA*, 568/38938-158712-17.

[72] Esther Benbassa, *Aron Rodrigue, History of the Jews of Turkey and the Balkans (14th-20th. Centuries),* transl. Ayşe Atasoy, ed. Rıfat N. Bali, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, p. 371.

[73] Avner Levi, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Yahudiler, Hukuki ve Siyasi Durumları*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1996, p. 30-34.

Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia region, shook the Jewish community's loyalty to the state and the regime, but did not lead to a fundamental rupture.[74]

It is not a coincidence that the expropriation of Tekfur Farm dates back to World War II. At the beginning of the war, Türkiye resisted pressure from Germany to deport the Jews living in its territory and allowed Jews fleeing Nazi persecution to enter its territory. However, the German invasion of the Balkans, the occupation of Greece and the invasion of Türkiye in 1941, and the realization that Britain and France would not be able to provide Türkiye with sufficient support in the event of a possible invasion led to changes in the policies of Türkiye. Due to the increasing German threat, Türkiye restricted the enrollment of Jews in military schools and prevented them from taking active duty by dividing them into different units.[75] It is possible to see the traces of this attitude in the Wealth Tax enacted in 1942.

Although Turkey did not enter World War II, it felt all the negative effects of the war. On the one hand, the conscription of nearly one million young men led to a decline in agricultural production, while on the other hand, the stockpiling of basic consumer goods in preparation for a possible war caused prices to rise and led to black markets. The rapid rise in the prices of export products and the shortage of imported goods enabled merchants and commission agents to make high profits. The increase in the prosperity of the merchant class, which consisted mainly of Greek, Armenian, and Jewish minorities, caused a reaction from society. To tax the excessive wealth created by war conditions, withdraw money from the market to reduce demand and inflation, cover the expenses of the mobilized army, and create resources to close the budget deficit, the Wealth Tax was introduced on November 11, 1942, as a one-time measure[76].

The application of different tax rates based on citizens' ethnic and religious identities, the closure of avenues for appealing taxes, granting only one month to pay taxes, sending those who fail to pay taxes to labor camps, and the seizure of property and wealth of many people due to tax debts and the fact that 80% of taxpayers were non-Muslims have caused widespread reactions. The injustices committed in the determination and implementation of the tax, which was introduced in the shadow of anti-Semitism in Germany and the successes of the German army in World War II, led to rumors that the tax was introduced to punish non-Muslims. The tax became a tool for a policy aimed at breaking the power of Christian, Jewish, and Dönmeh (Sabbatean crypto-Jews) businessmen and industrialists and creating a Muslim Turkish bourgeoisie.[77] In a speech delivered at an independent CHP group meeting, Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu stated "*This law is also a revolutionary law. We are facing an opportunity that will grant us economic independence. By eliminating non-Turkish elements that dominate our market, we will place the Turkish market in the hands of Turkish merchants and Turks*."[78] These words caused concern among non-Mulsims.

Faik Ökte said "*The Wealth Tax bears the stamp of chauvinistic nationalism and racism. It is certain that this intoxicating, morphine-like wind blew during the collection of the tax. When we encountered the realities of tax collection, we pulled ourselves together. But by then it was too late*"[79] . The Wealth Tax, which he criticized, was met with opposition by European countries, negatively affecting Turkey's rapprochement with

[74] Mücahit Düzgün, "Cumhuriyetin İlanından İsrail'in Kuruluşuna Kadar Türkiye'deki Yahudiler", *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 3, No. 10, 2000, p. 75.

[75] Stanford J. Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Yahudiler*, Kapı Yayınları, İstanbul, 2008, p. 411, 414.

[76] Faik Ökte, *Varlık Vergisi Faciası*, Nebioğlu Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1951, p. 35, 37; Mehmet Korkud Aydın, "Dönemin Basınına Göre Varlık Vergisi Uygulaması", *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 28, No. 1, January 2018, p. 293.

[77] Marc David Baer, *The Dönme Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries and Secular Turks*, Stanford University Press, California, 2010, p. 230.

[78] Serap Tabak, "Varlık Vergisi ve Afyon'daki Uygulaması", *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, December 2002, p. 65.

[79] Faik Ökte, *Varlık Vergisi Faciası*, Nebioğlu Yayınevi, İstanbul 1951, p. 211.

Western countries and its accession to NATO, and Turkey was accused of being anti-Semitic[80].

Tekfur Farm has also been affected by the anti-foreigner sentiment sweeping across the country. In his memoirs, Albert Kant claims that Burhan (Yener) Bey, who was a lawyer in Bandırma and had political influence, was influential in the expropriation of the farm. He states that Mr. Burhan acted as a lawyer in a lawsuit filed against Leyba Goldenberg for a debt owed by a Jew from Istanbul, that Leyba Goldenberg was subjected to foreclosure at the end of the lawsuit, that there was tension between Goldenberg and the lawyer during the lawsuit process, and that Mr. Burhan, who wanted to punish Goldenberg for his *"insolent and stupid actions*", suggested Tekfur Farm to the Minister of Agriculture who was looking for a place to establish a model farm.[81]

Leon Goldenberg and Albert Kant stated that in the fall of 1942, the gendarmerie commander summoned them to Bandirma and told them that he did not wish to have foreigners in his district and asked them to vacate their property immediately; a few weeks later, the governor of Balikesir summoned them and asked them if it was possible to sell the farm to the government to raise Merino sheep, They stated that they told the governor that they should ask the property owners for an answer, and that the governor replied that this was just an opinion, that there was no finalized situation, and that they had corresponded with the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding the issue and received a letter stating that there was no reason for them to evacuate the property.[82]

The unpleasant incident that Leyba Goldenberg, one of the owners of the farm, experienced in Edincik on August 19, 1942 is important in terms of showing the attitude towards the farm and its inhabitants. When Leyba Goldenberg went to the Edincik district near Bandırma to find laborers, he encountered a worker who had previously worked on the farm and had not been paid, and a fight broke out between Leyba and the worker who demanded his wages. Leyba was arrested by the gendarmerie forces that arrived at the scene and taken to the police station, where he was severely beaten by gendarmerie officer Hasan Çelik and Sergeant Osman and detained all night. He was then taken to Bandırma Prison, his family's attempt to release him on bail was rejected and Leyba was imprisoned for several weeks.[83]

Fifteen days after the incident, Leyba Goldenberg was brought to the Bandırma Government House in handcuffs, Balıkesir MP Yahya Sezai and Ali Fahri Bey, a merchant, saw Goldenberg on his way to the district governor's office in handcuffs, and the district governor of Bandırma used force and threats, It was alleged that they had Leyba Goldenberg sign a petition to reduce the value of the farm, supposedly because of its high tax debt, and that Gendarmerie Commander Hasan Kuyu and Prosecutor Cemal threatened witnesses not to report them to other authorities.[84]

Leyba Goldenberg, a French citizen, sent a letter to the French consulate in Istanbul, stating that he was pressured by the local authorities, who had the intention of expropriation, to declare that the value of the farm, which had been appraised at 74.000 liras by the appraisal commission in the 1930s (it was appraised

[80] İbrahim İnci, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Türkiye'de Varlık Vergisi Uygulaması", *CBÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2012, p. 287; Mehmet Cural, Recep Yücedoğru, "Türkiye'de Varlık Vergisi: Nedenleri, Uygulanması ve Etkileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", *Mali Sosyoloji: Maliye Disiplininde Alternatif Bir Bakış Açısı*, ed. Serpil Ağcakaya, Ekin Basın Yayın Dağıtım, Bursa, 2021, p. 87. Esther Benbassa, *Aron Rodrigue, Turkey and Balkan Jews...*, p. 375-377; Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye'nin Devlet Yaşamında Yahudiler*, Afa Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 1992, p. 252-253. In 1943, with the disappearance of the German threat, Turkey, trying to increase its relations with Western states, began to prevent the oppression of Jews and to take harsh measures against extreme right-wing groups. The Wealth Tax was abolished, Professor Avram Galanti was elected as an MP from Niğde, and Jewish immigrants trying to go to Palestine by sea were facilitated. See Mücahit Düzgün, "Cumhuriyetin İlanından İsrail'in Kuruluşuna Kadar Türkiye'deki Yahudiler", p. 80.

[81] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 156, 160.

[82] *TDA*, 508/44334-211585-23.

[83] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 160-161; *TDA*, 508/44334.211585.23.

[84] *TDA*, 508/44334-211585-23; *TDA*, 508/44334-211585-5.

at 83.000 liras in 1936), had decreased, and that she was invited to leave the farm immediately, whereas the current value of the farm was 300.000 liras, that he was taken to court on the allegation that he beat the Gendarmerie Commander Hasan Kuyu and Sergeant Hasan Çelik and tore off two of their buttons because he did not sign the document, that the Justice of the Peace Mübeccel ruled for acquittal, that the Bandırma prosecutor issued a decision dated 21.8.1942 dated 21.8.1942 and numbered 18 and referred him to the Bandırma Criminal Court, the Bandırma district governor invited İsmail Hakkı, the lawyer he had appointed for his defense, to his office and asked him to withdraw from the case, but İsmail Hakkı refused, and while he was in prison, the district governor brought him to his presence in handcuffs and threatened him with beatings and demanded that the value of his farm be reduced to 40.000 liras, that he was sentenced to 1 month imprisonment and a fine of 45 liras by the court on September 15, 1942, that the district governor, who did not allow him to use his right of appeal, demanded that he immediately liquidate the farm and leave Bandırma, and that the expropriation be stopped, that he be given time to evacuate, and that an administrative investigation be initiated against those who pressured him.[85]

Shortly after the unilateral actions of the gendarmerie and judicial authorities, the residents received a notification from the Ministry of Agriculture that the farm would be expropriated.

The commission formed to determine the value of the farm appraised the farm at 42.000 liras and the money was deposited in the Ziraat Bank on behalf of the farm owners[86] . The district governor of Bandırma came to the farm and not only notified them of the expropriation decision but also gave them two months to vacate the farm and liquidate their property. This was not enough, and the farm residents asked the district governor for 30 more days. Leyba Goldenberg, who met with the governor of Balıkesir, was also notified of the same decision.

The decision taken by the commission formed to determine the value of the farm was announced to the public through newspapers. On December 1, 1942, the following information about the expropriation of Tekfur Farm was given in the advertisement published in Son Posta Newspaper;

> "*Sample of the Report of the Commission on Appraisal from the Municipality of Bandirma*
>
> *In accordance with the decision of the provincial administrative board dated 6/8/1942 and numbered 1655. In accordance with the decision of the provincial administrative board dated 6/8/1942 and numbered 1655, we, whose names and signatures are below, were selected for the appraisal of the Tekfur Farm located 3-8 kilometers away from the city of Bandırma, which was requested to be expropriated, and we went to the afore-mentioned farm on 4/9/1942 and made on-site inspections and examinations by our committee, the boundary of this farm is bounded by the Bandırma-Gönen highway from the south and the Kuru Creek and Gazcı Rıza Karaoğlu land adjacent to this highway; and to the east by Eğridere and Manyas road, and according to the title deed, it consists of 29 parts, starting with no. 1 and ending with no. 29 in September 1934. The land and outbuildings of the Tekfur Farm, which is registered in the names of Franç Filopson* (Franz Philippson) and *his children Jul Jorjrana (*Jules Philippson) *and Moris (*Maurice) *Rişar Manoel and Madame Kabriel (*Gabrielle), the *land and outbuildings of the Tekfur Farm, the building and the vegetable garden, which are jointly owned by the above-mentioned, have been valued as follows.*
>
> *Namely;*
>
> *1-.3.000 lira: vegetable garden with buildings and stables and haystacks and ponds,*
>
> *2-3.972 liras 75 kurus: 8.297 decares of stony, rocky, sloping and uncultivable land at 75 kurus per decare,*
>
> *3-10.500 liras: 7.000 decares of poor soil, which is currently pasture, at 1,5 liras per decare,*

[85] *TDA*, 525/38415-153774-5.

[86] Albert Kant states the value of the farm as 52,000 liras. See Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 164; *TDA*, 508/44334-211585-23.

4-9.000 liras: 3.000 decares of land with partially poor cultivation at 3 liras per decare,

5-16.000 liras: 4 liras for each decare of 4.000 decares of land with good soil and capable of agriculture, in total, all the land and outbuildings of the Tekfur Farm are valued at 42.472,75 (forty-two thousand four hundred and seventy-two liras 75 seventy-five) kurus and that this value is suitable for the current purchase and sale, and this valuation report has been prepared and signed and approved by all of us.

Land Registry Officer A. Ertem, M. Zeybek from the Municipality, H. Sezgin from the Municipality, T. Atmaca from the Municipality, M. Evyapan from the Municipality, M. Özcan, H. Uyar, A. Bereket".[87]

Tekfur Farm was expropriated "*on 26.2.1943 by the Executive Board of Deputies in accordance with the amended second article of the Decree of Expropriation for the benefit of the public in order to be used as a Merino Breeding Farm*".[88] Balıkesir governorship deposited the expropriation fee of 42,472.75 liras to Ziraat Bank.

Figure 1

Land Status of the Merinos Farm Established after the Expropriation Decision and the Location of the Buildings

Source: İktisat ve Ticaret Ansiklopedisi, Vol. II, İstanbul, 1947, p. 237.

In the note sent from the Belgian embassy after the expropriation decision, it was stated that Albert Kant and Leyba Goldenberg, who managed the farm, should return to the farm and continue their duties, and that they went to Bandırma on August 16, 1943, accompanied by Belgian consular clerk Poswich. Poswich applied to the district governor of Bandırma and the governor of Balıkesir, stating that neither the property owners nor their representatives had been notified about the expropriation and asked for the expropriation

[87] *Son Posta*, 1 December 1942. In a book published in 1947, it was stated that 7.200 acres of land belonging to the Farm was suitable for agriculture and in good condition, 3.400 acres was second class land, 2.800 acres consisted of meadows that could not be used, and the remaining 5.075 acres could be used as pasture. See *İktisat ve Ticaret Ansiklopedisi,* Vol. II, İstanbul, 1947, p. 237.

[88] *BCA*, 30.18.1.2./101.13.17. On October 24, 1946, Gökmen Farm, which had 33,838 decares of land, was expropriated for 74,879.85 liras and included in the Merino Breeding Farm. See *BCA*, 30.18.1.2./112.68.9; *Bandırma Gazetesi*, 4 October 1947.

to be stopped. The district governor of Bandırma rejected the request and stated that he had invited the director of the Merinos Institute and Leyba Goldenberg to the farm about 6 months ago, and that he himself had gone to the farm with an officer from the land registry and finance, but Leyba Goldenberg did not show up. Poswich stated that no such invitation was made to Leyba Goldenberg, that the expropriation decision was taken by the governorship of Balıkesir and that no notification was made to the owners, and that the owners learned about the situation only through the announcement made by the Bandırma Municipality on November 2, 1942, and that the evacuation order was sent the same day. He also stated that the Bandırma municipality based its expropriation decision on the Decree of Expropriation dated 21 Cemazielevvel 1296 (May 13, 1879), but that the decree was repealed by Law No. 3710 dated July 7, 1939. According to all laws, old or new, an expropriation decision can only be made with the consideration of "*public interest*", and here, expropriation decisions can be made on issues related to municipal services, whereas an expropriation decision cannot be made for the purpose of establishing a farm, the farm is outside the borders of Bandırma municipality, and the municipality cannot make an expropriation decision.[89]

The Turkish authorities responded to the allegations by stating that the decision to expropriate the Tekfur Farm was not taken by the municipality, but by the Ministry of Interior upon the proposal of the Ministry of Agriculture, and that this was in accordance with Article 1 of the Provisional Law dated 4 Cemaziyelahir 1332 (30 April 1915), which was enacted as an equivalent to the decree dated 1296 AH (1879), stating that land and farms can be expropriated for public interest and Article 2 stating that "*The provincial council decides what is in the public interest, the Ottoman Council of Ministers decides on the expropriation of large farms and lands upon the request of the Ministry of Interior. In the expropriation of large farms and lands, the Council of Ministers decides upon the request of the Ministry of Interior; if the land concerns two or more provinces, then the Council of State decides*", and that all transactions and notifications were carried out in accordance with the procedure.[90]

After the expropriation, the Kant and Goldenberg families were forced to liquidate their movable property at a low price as soon as possible. Albert Kant vacated the farm and went to Istanbul, and later Leyba Goldenberg and Albert Kant traveled to Ankara in 1943 to object to the appraised value of the farm. They met with lawyer Sıtkı Yırcalı, who was originally from Balıkesir, to seek their rights, but the parties could not come to an agreement as Sıtkı Yırcalı demanded 5.000 liras in advance for filing a lawsuit and 20.000 liras if the lawsuit was won.[91]

Albert Kant and Leyba Goldenberg, who stayed at the Ankara Palas Hotel for a while, conveyed their problems to Falih Rıfkı Atay through the hotel manager Hikmet Bora and with the help of Mr. Falih Rıfkı, they met with the Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu. During the meeting, they basically stated that expropriation was not possible within the framework of the law and that the government should pay the real value of the farm if it needed to. Şükrü Saraçoğlu promised that he would convey the matter to the Minister of Agriculture, but they did not get any result.[92]

The residents of the farm, who did not receive the attention they expected from Ankara, filed a lawsuit in Bandırma in order to increase the value of the farm, but the lawsuit, which lasted more than twenty years, did not yield any results.[93]

[89] *TDA*, 508/44334-21585-1.

[90] *TDA*, 508.44334-211585-24.

[91] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 172.

[92] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 177.

[93] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 163-75.

During this process, it was observed that the JCA remained indifferent to the issue and did not help the farm residents with the expropriation.[94] The JCA decided to withdraw its investments in Türkiye due to the high costs of litigation, political reasons and anti-Jewish sentiment in Türkiye. In 1920-1922, only Fethiköy, Or Yehuda, Messila-Hadacha and Tekfur Farms of the JCA were able to continue their operations, and by the 1930s, the liquidation of the JCA's properties in Türkiye was largely completed.[95] In 1899, an agricultural colony was established on the 28,000 acre Alexander Çakıroğlu farm in Akhisar, and the Or Yehuda Agricultural School opened there. In 1915, the farm buildings and 500 acres of land were confiscated by the state, and the state-owned Seydiköy Agricultural School was transferred here. In 1925, the farm was sold to a farmer named Ahmet Kayalı.[96]

Seeking to crown military successes with economic achievements and make them permanent, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha prioritized the determination of economic policies to be followed for the country's development at the Economic Congress held in Izmir. To develop agriculture and livestock farming suitable for the geographical conditions of Anatolia, he sent students abroad, invited foreign experts to the country, established seed and animal breeding stations, and opened model farms to set an example for the public[97].

One of the steps taken to increase agriculture and livestock farming was to distribute state-owned land free of charge to farmers who did not own land. With the legal regulation made in 1925, 1,077,526 acres of land were distributed to villagers in the early years of the Republic[98].

In order to reverse the decline in population growth and agricultural production caused by prolonged wars, the government has launched many enterprises to feed the existing population, reduce imports, and achieve the surplus production necessary for debt repayment and national development.[99]

In the early years of the Republic, livestock farming was supported through state-owned stud farms and cattle farms operating on large tracts of land. Model farms were established in Ankara, Silifke, Yalova, Tarsus, and Dörtyol with the aim of introducing new agricultural methods to farmers, promoting the development of livestock farming alongside crop production, and increasing production diversity and product quality. With the transfer of many farms, most of which belonged to Atatürk, to the treasury in 1937, the State Agricultural Enterprises Institution was established by Law No. 3308 dated January 1, 1938, to manage the farms. In the same year, Agricultural Combines, which cultivated fields and grew barley and wheat, were established in addition to livestock farming. In 1950, Atatürk's farms and the Agricultural Combines were merged by law and placed under the General Directorate of State Production Farms.[100]

One of the steps taken by the government to lead the public in agriculture and animal husbandry, teach new techniques to the public, and encourage efficient and effective production processes has been to promote the production of Merino sheep. At the end of the expropriation process, Tekfur Farm came under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and was transformed into a Merino Breeding Farm on June 1, 1943. While some of the breeding Merino sheep raised at Karacabey Horse Farm were transferred to the newly opened sheep breeding branch within Karacabey Horse Farm, some of them were transferred to the Merino

[94] Albert Kant, *Bir Yahudinin Anıları...*, p. 178.

[95] Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm...*, p. 165.

[96] Naim Güleryüz, *Tarih Boyunca Trakya ve Anadolu'da Yahudi Yerleşim Yerleri*, Vol. II, Trakya ve Anadolu, Gözlem Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2018, p. 87-88.

[97] Yüksel Kaştan, "Atatürk Dönemi Tarım Alanında Devletçilik Uygulamaları ve Antalya", *Uluslararası Sosyal ve Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, Vol. 7, No. 14, December 2020, p. 179.

[98] Mehmet Kayıran, *Cumhuriyet'in İlk Yıllarında Türk Tarımı*, Hacettepe University, Institute of Atatürk Principles and Revolution, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Ankara, 1988, p. 81.

[99] Yüksel Kaştan, "Atatürk Dönemi Tarım Alanında Devletçilik Uygulamaları ve Antalya", p. 179.

[100] Suna Doğaner, "Türkiye'de Tarım İşletmeleri ve Faaliyetleri", *Coğrafya Dergisi*, No. 3, 1992, p. 160.

Breeding Farm[101]. The Merino Breeding Farm did not only deal with sheep breeding, but also pioneered breeding, maintenance, breeding and productivity improvement activities in five branches opened for crop farming, poultry, cattle breeding and horse breeding.[102]

In 1949, the Western Anatolian Horse Breeding Institution was opened at Karacabey Horse Farm and transferred to Merino Breeding Farm in 1952. In 1972, the Veterinary Zootechnical Research Institute was established. On May 1, 1987, it was renamed as Sheep Breeding Research Institute and on March 1, 1998 as Marmara Livestock Research Institute. 205.680 square meters of the farm land was allocated to the Ministry of National Defense for the construction of an airport[103] and a part of it was allocated to Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University.

Conclusion

The nationalism movement, which spread throughout the world, especially in European countries after the French Revolution, led to the collapse of many empires and the establishment of nation states. Jews living in different countries were also influenced by the idea of nationalism and struggled with the existing governments to protect their political and cultural rights. The nationalist movement spreading in Europe led to an increase in the Christian-Jewish conflict, and thousands of Jews were forced to leave their countries as a result of the anti-Semitism that began in many countries.

Zionism, which initially emerged with the aim of defending the rights of Jews, helping those in difficult situations, and providing political and economic support to those who had to emigrate, turned into a political movement with the initiatives of Theodor Herzl at the end of the 1890s. The idea that Jews should settle in the land of Palestine and establish a sovereign state there gained acceptance among Jews in a short time. In this process, the issue of immigration for Jews went beyond just settling in a safer place; it merged with the ideal of settling in Palestine, which was seen as part of a historical mission.

Many Jewish aid organizations have emerged to improve the social and economic situation of Jews and to overcome the difficulties encountered during migration. The Jewish Colonization Agency (JCA), which was established in 1891 for this purpose, approached the immigration issue a little differently, not only providing material aid to immigrants, but also trying to create colonies for them to become producers and to stand on their own feet. The colonies were intended to learn advanced agricultural techniques, to set an example for the farmers who would settle in Palestine in the future, to preserve Jewish traditions and customs, and to have enough land to host the Jewish population in case of possible waves of immigration.

Ownership of the farms was under the control of the JCA and each family was allocated the amount of land they could cultivate. The JCA had the sole say in deciding on the type of production, purchasing agricultural equipment and marketing in the farms, which were strictly controlled by the JCA. Farm residents were not allowed to engage in trade and animal husbandry, nor were they allowed to build shops and factories.

One of the farms that JCA helped to purchase was Tekfur Farm. In 1913, Zeilik Kant and his friends came to Bandırma and purchased Tekfur Farm, which belonged to Tevfik Bey, the grandson of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, for 13,000 Ottoman lira. During the purchase, JCA provided a loan of 7,150 lira at an annual interest rate of 4% through the Bank of Thessaloniki to the families living on the farm. JCA stipulated that the title deed be transferred to Franz Philippson, the vice president of JCA, to ensure the repayment of the loan, the operation of the farm in accordance with its purpose, and to prevent the sale of the farm and the relocation of the farm

[101] *İktisat ve Ticaret Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. II, p. 237.

[102] "Balıkesir", *Yurt Ansiklopedisi, Türkiye, İl İl, Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını*, Vol. 2, Anadolu Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 1982, p. 1157.

[103] *BCA*, 30.18.1.2./142.20.19.

owners. After the sale, a general power of attorney was granted to Leib Goldenberg to manage the farm's operations. JCA has always sought to maintain an interest in the farm, sending agricultural experts, notably Jozef Niego, to teach the farm owners modern farming methods based on the French school and to guide them in their agricultural activities. It has also provided support to help the farm owners purchase the tools and machinery they needed and overcome financial difficulties.

The farmland was divided among the families in proportion to the amount they had paid for it, with each family receiving either 6,000 or 3,000 decares, and each family engaged in agricultural activities in their own name. In 1930, a new agreement was reached between the Kant and Goldenberg families regarding the use of water resources and buildings. Water resources, storage facilities, and agricultural equipment, primarily tractors, were used jointly. The farm was conceived as an agricultural cooperative, with each family earning income proportional to the products they produced. JCA did not receive any profit or rent from agricultural activities, but only attempted to collect the loan it had provided in 1913 from the farm owners. Although the farm owners occasionally made payments to JCA, they were unable to turn a profit and often had to request assistance or advances from JCA.

During World War I, Tekfur Farm was occupied by military troops in line with the needs of the Turkish army, and the agricultural and animal products obtained were shipped to the Çanakkale Front. Some of the products and tools in the farm were confiscated by the military troops, and the losses of the farm residents were tried to be compensated with payment receipts issued below their value. However, these were not enough.

We do not have sufficient information about the agricultural, livestock, and commercial activities of the farm owners, nor about their profits and losses. The only data we have is from the period when the farm was operated by military authorities during World War I. During this period, 8,000 decares of the farm were set aside as pasture, 1,800 decares were used for hay, 7,000 decares were planted with wheat, 1,800 decares with oats, and 1,500 decares with barley. Thanks to irrigation facilities, vegetables were grown on 50 decares of the farm. It is understood that military authorities confiscated 400 cows, 220 cattle, 80 oxen, and 300 calves. In 1942, when the farm was expropriated, it was observed that 8,297 decares of land were rocky, stony, and hilly, 7.000 decares were used as pastures, and 7.000 decares were suitable for agriculture.

It is observed that the farm owners, whose number did not exceed 40, employed permanent and temporary workers from neighboring villages to continue their agricultural activities covering a very large area, and hired local shepherds for the care of the animals. It is noted that they occasionally faced conflicts with the local population due to security issues and non-payment of wages. Indeed, in 1942, a dispute between farm owner Leyba Goldenberg and a worker who had previously worked on the farm in Edincik and had not been paid led to his arrest.

The state attempted to expropriate the farm both in 1916 and 1936. The first expropriation attempt did not materialize due to the change in political conditions with the signing of the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918 and the British, French and Greek occupation of the country. The second attempt in 1936 also did not materialize due to the political conditions before World War II.

While the farm residents struggled to cultivate the land, cope with geographical conditions, and obtain productive crops, they also faced difficulties adapting to Turkey and Turkish society. Numbering between 25 and 40, the farm residents lived isolated lives, never integrating with the local population. The diverse ethnic makeup of the city of Bandırma, where the farm is located, coupled with the political instability that arose during and after the First World War and the subsequent National Struggle, had a negative impact on the farm residents. Both Turkish authorities and Greek authorities during the occupation period did not

hesitate to seize the farm's products and failed to protect the farm from bandit attacks. Circassians attacked the farm, stealing sheep and kidnapping the farm owners for ransom.

The farm's location 5 km away from the city, language and religious differences, and JCA's activities aimed at encouraging families settling on the farm to live in accordance with Jewish culture and prevent assimilation, Bandırma, the lack of a strong Jewish community with public buildings such as a synagogue and a school, educational problems, insufficient adaptation to the region's climate and geographical conditions, and a lack of knowledge about agricultural activities and marketing of products suitable for the region have hindered the development of the farm. Following the Balfour Declaration in 1917, the increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine led to a decline in Jewish interest in the farm, as well as a reduction in expectations regarding the cultivation of the vast land due to the possibility of future Jewish immigration.

Failing to achieve the desired population and agricultural production achievements, the Farm was occasionally considered for sale, but the JCA did not agree. Although there was an improvement in the financial situation of the Farm in 1926-1927, this did not last long, and in 1942, due to the harsh conditions and political pressures brought about by World War II, the Farm was nationalized by the Turkish government. The residents of the Farm tried to stop the expropriation process, which took place at a fraction of its value, but neither the bureaucrats in Ankara nor the judicial authorities they applied to were able to get any results.

The farm land was later transformed into a Merino Breeding Farm. The memory of the farm, part of whose land was given to the military airport and part to Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, continues to live on in the few old buildings left behind and in the memory of the people of Bandırma.

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[104] Further information about the archival documents used in this study is provided in the footnotes

[105] Further information about the periodicals used in this study is provided in the footnotes.

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Appendix | Ek

Ek 1

Tepedelenli Hüseyin Kamil Pasha

(Ahmet Müfid, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa (1744-1822), Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsan, İstanbul, 1324, p. 216.)

Ek 2

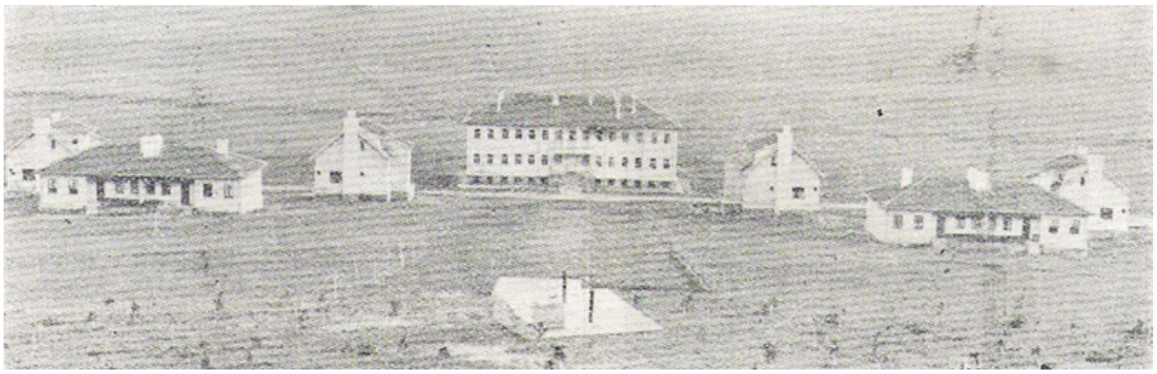
Albert Kant

(Albert Kant, Bir Yahudinin Anıları, Kastaş Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2003, p. 266.)

Ek 3

View of Bandırma Merino Farm Headquarters and Lodgings from Tekirtepe

(İktisat ve Ticaret Ansiklopedisi), Vol. II, İstanbul, 1947, p. 237.



Ek 4

East View of the Stables, Warehouses and Farmhouse in the Farm when Tekfur Farm was Expropriated

(Bandırma Merinos Farm Archive)

Ek 5

Employee Houses Built Before the Expropriation

(Bandırma Merinos Farm Archive)