

**JEWS OF IZMIR:
Transformation of Businessman Identity***
**İzmir Yahudileri:
İşadamı Kimliğinin Dönüşümü**

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Özet

Bu makalenin amacı, Osmanlı imparatorluğundan günümüze İzmir Yahudi cemaatinin ekonomik kimliğini bir alan araştırması ışığında tartışmaktır. Çeşitli sekörlerden 10 işadamıyla derinlemesine mülakat tekniğiyle yapılan görüşmelerde, cemaat üyesi işadamlarının dönüşümü ele alınmıştır. Deneklerin profili, şirket geçmişleri, bir yaşam biçimi olarak Yahudilik, “tüccar Yahudi”, “cimri Yahudi” sıfatlarına bakış, para nedir, nasıl kazanılır, iş adamı gözüyle iş, deneklerin gözünden geçmişte ve günümüzde İzmir, işadamı için risk alma, işadamı kimliği, tartışmaları yapılmıştır. Sonuçta İzmirli Yahudi işadamlarının İzmir ithalat-ihracat ve ticaret alanında kan kaybettiği görüşünde birleştikleri gözlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İzmir, Yahudi cemaati, İşadamı, Kimlik, Dönüşüm.

Abstract

The object of this paper is to discuss the economic identity of the Jewish community of Izmir in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey from the early 17th century until today, in the light of modernization theory. While taking a background of 400 years into consideration, the reflections of such a background for today have been tested through a field study, and opportunity has been provided to discuss and think over the same.

Keywords: İzmir, Jewish community, Businessman, Identity, Transformation.

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Introduction

Identity is an issue of belonging as to what we have in common with some other people and what distinguishes you from others. In its most essential meaning, identity provides a person with a sense of individual status and the individuality with an unchangeable self. But it is also related to the social relations of an individual and to his complex ties with others, and such relations are increasingly becoming more complex and confusing in the modern world (Weeks, 1998: 85). To discuss the Jewish identity in the Ottoman society and the Republic of Turkey first draws the attention to a religion-based identity discrimination. The non-muslim identity within the Muslim majority, unlike that of the Christian Greeks and Armenians, is filled in with being of the Jewish religion. Other than the religious distinction within the Ottoman society, the most distinctive characteristic of the Jewish minority was identified with "Merchant" identity in terms of economic activities, and the value attribution of "Merchant Jew" developed in the form of positive or negative, but mostly negative values. Such attributions cannot be thought to have formed independent of the structure of the economic and social environment in which they exist. When we look at the Ottoman societal structure and nation-state structure from the outside/opposite, we see that the members of Izmir Jewish community, the subject to our topic have been mostly engaged in trading earning. It is important to see the underlying economic, political, religious and ideological reasons as to why it is so, and to determine its position in the complex network of relations. Identifying the bases of construction and continuation of an identity is effective in determining the social relations between the bearers and attributors of that identity.

Economic Panorama of the Jews of Izmir from the 17th Century until Today

Following the very first Jewish settlement near Izmir (Sardes) dating back to the 4th century, small communities are known to exist in Izmir. But in order to be able to speak of a true society, we need to go back to the early 1600s. Although different populations are given in the observations of travellers, a society of seven thousand was settled in Izmir in 1631 (Weiker, 1992: 6).

As in the whole of the Ottoman territories, the economy was also based upon agriculture in İzmir. By the end of the 16th century İzmir had already become a market and trading centre. On the other hand, the lack of authority and social disturbances like banditry in and around İzmir did not create a pleasant area of attraction. In the early 17th century, an economic infrastructure had been formed in İzmir, which could attract the Jewish population (Goffman, 1992).

According to Goffman, the agricultural production in and around İzmir was very important in terms of meeting the foodstuff needs of Istanbul. On the other hand, the western merchants who had discovered the easiness of transporting cotton, wool and tobacco of the Western Anatolia from İzmir because the basis for the economic pre-eminence of İzmir. The crisis of weavers as experienced in Salonica accelerated the Jewish migration to İzmir. During that period, the Jewish occupations were observed to have been vergi multezimliği (tax contracting), intermediation, translation, usury, brokery. The Jews played a very important role in carrying out the businesses of Dutch, French and British Levantine companies (Goffman, 1990).

In the early 17th century, İzmir went far beyond being a local port and changed into an international warehouse. In this respect, the Jews who could speak foreign languages undertook a significant mission in integrating İzmir into the trading network of the West. The economic fluctuations as experienced in the 18th century did not spoil the cosmopolitan structure that İzmir had attained in the previous century. The Jews did not lose their professional identity within the trading network which was a competitor to that of Istanbul, but on the contrary, became stronger in such fields as leather trading, jewelry, weaving with the experience that they had gained through such occupations as translation and commissioning.

Starting from the late 18th century, the process of modernization extending until today strengthened the position of the non-muslims in economic terms, but in terms of citizenship, one cannot even mention equity before the laws. In the 18th century, the Jews left their position in the international trading in favour of the Christian non-muslims because the European merchants preferred Christians rather than the Jews (Lewis, 1984).

According to R. Kasaba, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Ottoman economy and markets were basically connected to the European markets via the highway network branching from the harbour towns towards the inland and entered the domination of the latter. This should be considered to be an integral part of the modernization process as from the first half of the 19th century (Kasaba, 1998). Inevitably affected by the economic and political downfall of the Ottoman Empire, the Jewish community of Izmir was making its westernization attempts on one hand, and on the other started its vocational training efforts as a remedy for poverty.

The institution named Alliance Israélite Universelle established in 1860 functioned as the very first educational and vocational training institution of the Ottoman Jewish community in the westernized meaning (Rodrigue, 1990). In 1874, the principal of the Izmir Alliance school declared the object of the establishment of the school as to be recover any business fields that they had lost to the Greeks and Armenians by putting an end to poverty through education and vocational training. Benbassa states that in 1895, the occupations of the fathers of the students of the Izmir Alliance school concentrated in “unqualified occupations” and in 1899, the Jewish tradesmen of Izmir did not display too much of a difference as for trained-undertrained ones, and stresses the social and economic reasons for this (Benbassa& Rodrigue, 1987). The French language taught in such schools became the propelling force of a process to lead the Judeo-Español, the mother tongue of the Jewish society, to get lost in time. On the other hand, they continued to be a community holding the privilege of “knowing a language” which was the key for trading with the West. Besides the commercial relations with the Modern West, adopting the western type life style caused the differentiation of the society.

The poverty of the community at the end of the 19th century can be explained by their loss of competitive was circumstances upon their commercial superiority, passing to the Greeks and Armenians. It is pointed out that in 1873, 1000 Jewish families out of 3500 in Izmir were poor, there was a rich class engaged in trading, beggary increasingly became widespread (Bora, 1995). This situation will allow a transformation to be experienced in the professional profile of the Jews in the early 20th century. Such a transformation is a situation which

describes well the economic conditions of İzmir. The loss of occupation continued during the World War I, and there were even such people who became British, Italian, French nationals in order to make use of any privileges that the Ottomans had recognized for foreigners (Bora, 1995: 121–122)

When one looks into the monopolization structure in the commercial life in the period of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, one observes that the monopoly in imports and exports of textiles is in the hands of the Armenians, that of intermediary trading in those of the Greeks and that of stationery and hardware in those of the Jews. Such a situation played a role in the Jews' making up the commercial bourgeoisie. Paralleling the liberalization of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the pressure of the state diminished upon the entrepreneur, and the taxes were reduced. Adoption of the National Economic Policy (Toprak, 1982; Zürcher, 1996) gave way to the nationalist thought and the fields in the hands of the non-muslims and foreigners to be a model target prepared to create a domestic class of bourgeoisie. From this point of view, the "non-Turkish" İzmir is an important stage for the practice of the National Economy. The members of the İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Committee for Union and Progress) included the Jews into their plot of disengaging the Greeks and Armenians from the field of trading and utilized the "make-Turkish" policy for the purpose of creating a local bourgeoisie. This policy which caused the Greeks and Armenians to migrate led the takeover of the businesses left behind by the Muslims, but the lack of information and experience showed up itself here (Zürcher, 1996). Although businesses assigned to Jews, one cannot speak of an entire economic improvement for the Jewish society.

The conflagration in İzmir in 1922 burned the modern district of İzmir down to ashes, and in the meanwhile the properties and business places of the Jews also had their share in this. The war upset the social conditions altogether, and the condition of the Jews tried to be improved by means of donations and contributions (B'nai B'rith - American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee = Joint). In the meanwhile, migrations were experienced (Levi, 1996).

In the "First Economic Congress of İzmir" held in 1923 after the war (Okcun, 1981), the basic conclusion was that the local industries should be protected, but the foreign investments would not be objected,

provided that the foreigners be not given any privileges. The state would be responsible for huge investments, and this allowed the foundations of the national industry created by the state. According to Keyder, the Ottoman state structure was not removed after the World War I, but was only replaced by the new Turkish state with a few different staffs. Upon the expatriation of the Christian population after the Liberation War, the elite of the state did not have to think whether they could collaborate with a strong class of bourgeoisie (Keyder, 1998). A new bourgeoisie was created owing to state policies in the process of national modernization. The Turkish government affected by the crisis of 1929 sought for a remedy for the crisis through statist ideology, and the Kemalist policy put the capitalist build up process under the control of the state in its entirety.

The "Capital Tax" code passed in November 1942 aimed the application of new taxation arrangements in order to regulate the economic condition and was put into practice by levying upon the non-muslims in the big cities a burden of ten-fold of that upon the Muslims with no fixed ratios or installments and no recognition of any objections (Akar, 1992). The Jews' being subjected to such highly negative conditions as the seizure of their assets due to non-payment of their taxes, the compulsion to work and exile is underlied by the antisemitic practice againsts the "merchant-rich Jew". This law while contributing to the strengthening of domestic bourgeoisie also caused bourgeoisie to be weak in its nature in the sense that from the political point of view it became wholly dependent on the state for its development.

Starting from 1950s when liberalism rose, a "state of honeymoon", as Levy suggests, started to be experienced between the members of the Jewish society and the state authorities (Levi, 1996). But this honeymoon was not without any problems. In that period, import-subrogative policies of Turkey in accordance with the American policies and the prevailing economic conditions of the world had provided the the policy packages needed by the state, thus allowing to actualize the promises of national development quite successfully. But economic development seen as the requirement of modernization is did not lead to the improvement of individual autonomy or legal rights. This period of relative relief can be defined as a period of revival in the commercial and industrial sectors for the Jews.

During the period of national development, the process of Turkey's re-integration with the international capital and a period of import-subrogative industrialization started, which the products were manufactured in the domestic market accomplished through imported technology. Fed by ideological elements during the 1960s, this structure displayed small concentrations in Izmir and Adana regions while a great majority of the new industry was established in m Istanbul region. This situation can be taken as the beginning of the reduction in the commercial and industrial sectors as experienced in Izmir in the late 1990s.

The economic crisis at the end of the 1970s was re-structured through the economic policies of Ozalism in the 1980s. The joint ventures with foreign companies for imports and products under license of the import-subrogative period in the process of creation of the export-oriented free market economy transformed into export-oriented family companies (Zürcher, 1996). The Free Trading Zone established in Izmir ensure that the foreign investors be incited and that the factory-erecting companies re-export their own products. In this period, changes started on the basis of the countries to which exports were made, the oriental markets such as the former Soviet countries and Turcic republics with textile and foodstuff, and the EU countries slightly lost their importance.

Reaching the end of the 1990s, the post-1980 major socio-economic trends have not been changed. The theme of "globalization" has gained prominence in the Turkish economic and social life.

Four hundred years of the Ottomans history and the history Republic of Turkey may be defined as the history of the economic trasformation of the Jewish community of Izmir, and in this sense, as that of the Turkish modernization. According to Habermas, the modernity is defined as an "unfinished project" (Habermas, 1987), and he empasises that while the modern societies achieve the economic progress and technological development, they have pushed freedom and democracy to the background. The Turkish economic and social structure well confirms the Habermasian represenation through the westernization in the 19th century, modernization in the Republic period, "era-leaping" in the 1980s and globalization today.

Whenever we speak of modernity, we point out to the instiutional transformations whose origins are located in the West. Two different organzational grouping have a special importance within the

development of the modernity: nation-state and systematic capitalist production. The reason for their interconnected spread is the power that they generate. None of the more traditional societies could ever achieve to display such a power (Giddens, 1998).

Samples from Field Study:

The study has been performed via 2–3 hours interviews with 10 businessmen in Izmir through in-depth interviewing technique. The findings obtained shall be conveyed in narrative language but not as statistical data. The adoption of such a way will ensure not to be pressed by the language of numbers. Ten interviewed businessmen (hereinafter “Sample”) are male between 49–71 years of age, married, have children and all were born in Izmir. Their current occupations vary widely from textile industry (1), hardware wholesaling (1), import and export agricultural products (3), banking (1), shipping (1), import of construction foods (1) to agricultural and industrial plastics production and importing (1) and construction and tourism (1). The samplers have been directed open-ended questions, and they have been ensured to emphasize the diversity in their views over the phenomenon. We can now continue to assess the findings:

1) Educational Status: The samples are graduates of private high schools instructing the students in English and French. Those who attended higher education studied business administration, economics and engineering in the universities of Turkey, Switzerland and France. One of the samples has a master and two have Ph.D. degrees. Such a level of education ensures them to know not less than two foreign languages. The level of knowing Judeo-Español (speaking and comprehension), their mother tongue, increases as the age increases. But their children do not know this language. They have indicated that Judeo-Español is increasingly getting lost due to such reasons as the failure to speak it at home, the death of the elderly people and orientation towards English, and that their children cannot ever be aware of that language.

2) Company Backgrounds: Almost all of them were established in the form of family businesses; we can mention of taking over father’s business (one sampler has told that his father established the company in 1923), becoming partners with brothers. There are some

changes into incorporated companies during the 1960s and 1970s. Six samplers enterprise in other fields (partnerships, membership of board of directors, imports, exports). None of the children of all the samplers have directed towards their father's professions. They evaluate their choices in Istanbul or abroad. The samplers think that they approve their children's professional choices in this matter, but their businesses will come to an end after them and İzmir has recessed in the business world. Instead of orienting towards their father's profession, sons and daughters, grandchildren and sons-in-law choose the popular professions of the modern world. Today's middle-aged businessmen generation implemented the mission of rising the commercial businesses taken over from fathers up to a company basis and integrating the same into the international trading and industry, but their views as to the fact that the future generations do not have such a goal reflects the Turkey's economic profile in a sense.

3) Jewishness as a Life Style: Their replies to the question "Is Jewishness a life style?" are as follows: We have been prisoners of customs and traditions since we came from Spain. Continuation of traditions creates a lingual and societal tie. This is certainly so for a religious person. If he experiences any difficulty throughout the history, he immediately changes his country. Religion is effective in life. Clergymen have told, "whatever country you may go, do obey the laws of that country." Being Jewish is too difficult. The rules are all a whole and cannot be isolated. When keeping pace with the age, one easily goes out of religion. Religion is very important; it is a life style. Otherwise birth of Israel would not be possible after all those centuries. Religion unites men. In the Passover, they say, "here this year and in Israel next year". Religion reminds man of his origins. It is very important for them to be able to live in their ancestors' land.

4) A Look into the "Merchant-Jew" Attribution: How do you evaluate the attribution of 'merchant Jew' to describe Jews for centuries? Is every Jew a merchant? We can summarize the replies which accept or reject our questions:

Those who have connected it to the Jew's involvement in trading as a minority in the Ottoman society. Self-proving, directing oneself towards trading as a result of being suppressed and suffering, expressing

that such a result stems from the advantage in trading of knowing a foreign language. Being oriented towards trading because of the restriction to invest in soil or properties. Availability of cash only in trading. Due to the fact that the Jews have been hindered to be recruited in military or civil service, orientation towards either arts or trading is the only way of exit. This way of exit can only be found in trading in Turkey. Trading is a business which has come from earliest days and passed from father to son. It is now changing, and the Jews are shifting to industries.

All such expressions draw the social and economic profile of Turkey. Being Jewish requires to exist in an area which has been restricted by the Muslim majority; this field, as stated by Behmoaras, is confirmed at every section of the society including the elite and maintains its legitimacy (Behmoaras, 1993).

5) A Look into the Concept of “Stingy Jew”: As has just been referred above, the Jew, who is defined as “merchant”, is added the attribution “stingy and economical”. When I asked about the reasons why, the replies came as follows:

Prodigality is a sin in terms of religion. This is instructed to the son by the father. The one who has lived in poverty will never spend his money easily. This is the anxiety of an insecure future; this is not stinginess but being cautious. The capital tax was unjust. Such incidents generate an anxiety of future. Fear of life generates economy of money. A merchant-businessman hardly earns his money and hardly spends it. When one lives in fear, he spends his money hardly. This term has been concocted under the Arabian influence. We are called stingy just because of jealousy. A Jew cannot ever be stingy, he really loves luxury and ostentation and spends much.

All such points stated represent the public status of a Jew. The concerns of the Jews such as “worrying about the future; unknown future” which have been directing the lives of the Jews for centuries occupy an important place in the Judeo-Español idioms and proverbs (Perahya et al., 1994).

6) What is Money? What is Earning Money? Money is a means. It is just for the perpetuation of life and for small happinesses. Money is everything Even health is provided by the use of money. Money is power in the capitalist world. Money is a must, but not something to be

worshipped. Money is business; one cannot trade without money. For a Jew, money is a payback.

The expressions of the samplers overlap During's definition of money. According to During, in capitalism, it is money rather than language which regulates the exchangeability as a determinative relation between objects in the world. Money is a built-up time and security as well. Built-up pleasure can also be added to this (During; 1995: 119).

7) Business through the Eye of a Businessman: The replies to the question "Could you, as a businessman, define business?" seem to fit the values as attributed to business by the modern world. Business is a source covering the economic aspect. It is a hobby, a sport. Business is my life; if I quit it, I will surely die. I come to work as a sick man, but leave in good health. Business is therapy; it is happiness. It extends life. When one works with a liking, then the work place is a second home. Business never gets out of my mind, I always think about it. It is the transfer of training and education to earning money. It gains importance through age and experience. It is diligence, hundred percent devotion. The place where one earns money for bread is necessary for the continuation of life.

All the samplers have stated that they pursue any and all innovations about their business, that they are aware of any new production and management techniques through publications, fairs, etc. and that they try to apply the same in their businesses.

The replies to the business-satisfaction are extremely high. But it has also been emphasized that both the economic structure of İzmir and the negativity of the market conditions lessen the business-satisfaction.

8) İzmir in the Past and Today through the Eye of a Businessman: In this section, the samplers have replied both in a positive and a negative way the question "How do you evaluate İzmir as a city of industry and commerce in the past and today?" Those who suggested that İzmir's economic condition is increasingly getting positively (2 persons) have revealed an optimistic point of view saying that İzmir is standing in exports and imports, and getting better and better from the past onwards today. But those who stated that the economic course of İzmir is shifting in a negative direction have made the

evaluation of the past and today with their highly detailed knowledge of social history in terms of the integral structure, economy and politics:

a) In economic terms: Izmir is dying in economic terms. Istanbul is the centre of industry and commerce. Investments are all made there. In the past (the Ottoman period), Izmir was a golden city, the largest port. Now it is discussed whether or not it is the third biggest city. We have been overwhelmed by Bursa and Adana in industry and commerce. Tradesman is shifting to industry, but moving toward Istanbul. Economic revival is just surfacial; there is no radical improvement. There is no qualified personnel in Izmir; everybody runs to Istanbul since the salaries are really high. Stock and trade exchanges are there as well as holdings, international connections. "If Istanbul collapses, then Izmir can build it easily, but if Izmir collapses..." In economic terms, Izmir has just become a step child.

b) In terms of policies: Izmir was extraordinarily important in the Otoman period. The Free Party hindered the rise of Izmir. Investments were directed to Istanbul due to political concerns. Upon shifting to the multi-party system, Izmir became the capital of democracy and made a progress. The government is now neglecting the city. The Smyrnaian identity has just started to establish, but through intangible projects but not through global suggestions. It seems to be sacrificed in terms of politics. Izmir is dying.

c) In terms of city structure: The city of commerce and arts of hundred years ago has come to an end. All the historical texture collapsed; the mayors have devastated Izmir. Any foreigners who know the background of Izmir are shocked. The city is just like a large site of construction, but this is not directed to production and investment. The businessmen of Izmir must take Izmir under protection, but first of all Ankara must not forget Izmir.

As can be seen, almost all the statements agree upon Izmir's loss of its past economic and social significance. References are very intensive as to the fact that Istanbul is the capital of industry and commerce. They agree that after the 1950s, Izmir was the stage of a relative revival, but the economic activity after 1980 will not be enough to bring back the former structure of Izmir. Such views can be taken as heralds of how dark the future of Izmir shall be.

Another question was “How would you evaluate the economic condition of the Jews of İzmir as a Jewish businessman?” The replies well confirm the foregoing: The Jews are diligent; they can overcome any kinds of work. Engaged in trading in the beginning, the Jews lost this superiority of theirs to the Greeks and Armenians. They directed to artisanship and craftsmanship. There were tin maker, tap repairer and tailor Jews in İzmir. We know poverty very well. We attended school and grew up under very difficult conditions, but there are not any poor Jews in İzmir today. When the state of Israel was founded, those who did not have anything to lose went there. They used to wait for a boat at Pasaport. Now the economic conditions are far better. Fathers were either merchants or brokers. The business was carried on by the father and then by the sons. Now the sons do not carry on the father’s occupation. In the early times, İzmir was called “non-muslim İzmir”. The Levantines were involved in trading. A Jew takes himself as a Turk. Their businesses all remained to the Turks. The Jewish businessman started the investment too late. The economic ease runs parallel with the political ease in Turkey. The Jews of İzmir are at a lower economic level than those of İstanbul. The Jews of İzmir are somewhat different in every aspect, but cannot be taken exclusive and independent of those of İstanbul.

The businessmen were asked the question “Is being in İzmir or being in İstanbul, France, USA, Israel more important in your business life? And why?”, and the reply “İzmir” was received with no exception. Among the reasons can be counted the place where I was born and have grow up; family ties; friendships; I am from İzmir; being of İzmir is a privilege. Even though they have emphasized that the economic importance of İzmir is lost, İstanbul is the capital of the business world, and it is required to be there for business, it is very important that all of them possess a spirit of İzmir. The choice of working in İstanbul or abroad rather than saying in İzmir is, unlike their fathers, very high in the young generation. From this standpoint, despite all of its negativity for the middle-aged generation today, İzmir is a factor of attraction for living and getting involved in trading and industry. It can be said that the same İzmir is a distracting factor for the young generation.

9) The Most Important Thing in His Business and Risk Taking According to the Businessman

As seen above, contrary to the stereotype, the most important issue in a business which means life to a businessman is not money. All the samplers have first of all stated that honesty, promise-keeping (my word is my deed), good human relations, hard working and reliability are the most important factors. When one possesses such characteristics, then success and money follow. This is a common statement among the samplers. A businessman, especially if he is Jewish, must surely possess such characteristics. Otherwise he will vanish from the business world. This well clarifies the situation.

The question "Would you take risk in your business?" has been replied in two extremes. Those who say "I do not take risk, I avoid any risky business" on one hand, and on the other those who say "business means risk; commerce would not do without risk, there is no industrialist who does not take risks, risk means success, I always take predictable risks, I see the steps I take" are grouped. This situation well describes how the risk is considered within business. According to Giddens, reliance and risk have a special significance in the criteria of the modern world. Upon the development of the modern social organizations, a kind of a balance has come to exist between the reliance-risk and security-hazard relations. Unlike the pre-modern societies, the dynamic strength between such balances is important. Despite of the high security systems as provided by the modern world, there are new risks coming into being as well; Sources or services are not under legal control any more (for instance, petroleum crisis in 1973; military coup in 1980; economic decisions of April 1994, etc.). All the commercial businesses and investors other than some local organizations of industry works in such an environment requiring them to estimate what the others should do to optimize their economic earnings. Where the risk is known as risk, there is no way to produce reliance for any hazardous actions. In the traditional environment, this takes place as religion and divine fate (fortuna) (Giddens, 1998). This situation as pointed out by Giddens overlaps the businessmen's statements.

10) Jewish Businessman Identity

The replies to the question “How would you describe yourself as a Jewish businessman of İzmir?” have revealed how they conceive and convey this identity. Descriptions can be distinguished as follows:

a) In terms of business: Hardworking, modest, full of willingness of success, honest, eager to do his business well, self-possessed, careful, with high business satisfaction.

b) In terms of family ties: Placing great importance on his family, with very strong family ties, enjoying the comfort of having prepared a future for his children, the last person of the business/company due to the fact that the sons will not continue the business, not conveyed Judeo-Español to the new generations (conscious of the reasons).

c) In terms of religious and societal ties: Not observing the religious rules, performing some of the religious rituals, considering the religion as an ethical rule, non-religious Jew; with very strong societal ties, with poor societal ties, working for the society, not always attending the works for the society due to his business, having worked for the society in the past, not willing to work now.

d) In terms of İzmir and social relations: born in İzmir, a lover of İzmir, having the identity of a Smyrnaian, feeling worried about the condition of İzmir today, feeling responsible for the economic future of İzmir.

Self-descriptions are clear enough not to require any further explanation. All of ten businessmen interviewed emphasized their business life while describing his own identity.

Conclusion

The Jewish community of the Turkish society who has been, involved in “modernization” efforts for a hundred years, has taken its place both in an easy manner and, experienced the difficulties in a more intensive manner in regard to their results of this process. As may already be known, the singular individual cannot become free within the modernization policies, but conversely is made to be increasingly more dependent upon all such organizational mechanisms. When evaluated in regard to the identity of a businessman of İzmir, modernization is seen to point out to the inevitability of the dependency of the members of the community. If, in the final analysis, we define the transformation as

“blood loss”, then we can conclude that Izmir is losing blood, the Jewish businessman of Izmir is now losing its initiative in imports, exports and trading which he has carried forward from the past. The businessmen who have stated their latent concerns about the fact that there will be no Jewish community in Izmir after some 50 years entails the fact that the young generation will not stay in Izmir to the fact that Izmir has lost its importance in industry and commerce in favour of Istanbul. Such a transformation is very important from the standpoint of both the future of Izmir and the members of the community, and thereby the businessmen.

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