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Jewish Immigration to the American Continent

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Abstract

This study investigates the migration of the Jews from the Ottoman Empire from the 1860s onward and from modern Turkey to the American continent. It provides a picture of the process of Jewish migration to and Jewish integration in the destination countries in the continent. Country-by-country analyses of the integration processes and the profile of immigrants disclose parallels and differences of the integration of Jewish people in different countries in the American continent. The article finds that Jewish immigrants established communities around religious, educational, and philanthropic organizations that facilitated the preservation of their distinct culture and their integration in the host nations.

Keywords: *International Migration, Jewish Migration, Ottoman Empire, Turkey, American Continent, North America, South America*

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Yahudilerin Amerika'ya Göçleri

Şule Toktaş[*], Fatih Resul Kılınç[**]

Öz

Bu çalışma, Yahudilerin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan ve Türkiye'den Amerika kıtasına göçünü inceleyerek yerleşilen ülkelerdeki göç ve uyum süreçlerinin genel bir değerlendirmesini yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Genel olarak Yahudi göçmenlerin profilleri ve sergilediği uyum, Güney ve Kuzey Amerika'da yer alan birçok varış ülkesinin kendi karakteristik özelliklerine göre farklılık arz etmektedir. Dil benzerliği, ekonomik esneklik, vize ve göçmen kabul yasaları gibi bazı yönlerden birbirleriyle benzerlik gösteren göç süreçleri, ulus devlet normları, toplumların göçmen kabul etme tolerans sınırları ve göç kotaları gibi çeşitli diğer faktörler ışığında farklılık arz etmektedir. Bu makale, Yahudi göçünde önemli bir damar olan Amerika kıtasına göçünü, entegrasyon süreci ve göçmen profillerinin ülke bazında analizi yolu ile aydınlatmaktadır. Ayrıca, Yahudi göçmenlerin yerleştikleri ülkelerde kurdukları dini, eğitim ve yardım kuruluşları aracılığıyla kültürlerini nasıl koruduklarına değinilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Uluslararası Göç, Yahudilerin Göçü, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Türkiye, Amerika Kıtası, Kuzey Amerika, Güney Amerika*

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JEWISH MIGRATION(S) AND THE OTTOMAN/TURKISH SETTINGS

The Ottoman Empire and Turkey have been a safe destination for Jews for centuries. Jews from Spain and Portugal sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire in the late 15th century and afterwards (Galanti, 1995). After this initial flow of Jewish immigration, the Ottoman Empire continued to be a shelter for Jewish refugees and immigrants from all parts of Europe including central, southern and eastern Europe, and Russia, becoming a transit site on their journeys to Palestine/Israel, European countries such as France, and to various countries in South and North America (Shaw, 1991). Pogroms and anti-Semitism in Europe were the main factors behind these immigrations to the Empire (Eisenstadt, 1992). Likewise, Turkey received Jewish immigrants from Russia especially during and after the First World War. Among the White Russians that Turkey hosted, some of whom were later naturalized, there were many Russian Jews. During the Second World War, Turkey continued to receive Jewish refugees who used Turkey as a transit site for their final destinations. In their migrations, mainly to Palestine but also to other destinations, European Jews often chose to use the ports of Istanbul and Izmir for transit (Nahum, 2000). Thus, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey have been one of the safe regions on the globe for Jews to settle, to live, and to maintain and prosper their ethnic, cultural and religious heritage (Besalel, 1999).

At the same time, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey had been immigrant-sending countries, as many of their native Jewish population emigrated abroad (İçduygu, Toktaş, and Soner 2008). The main destination places for these departing Jews were Palestine and, after its foundation, the state of Israel. Israel attracted the world Jewry most; yet, there were other countries and regions of destination for the Ottoman and Turkish Jews (Toktaş, 2006).[1] Amongst these regions, North and South America particularly appealed to many Jewish immigrants from different parts of the globe, as they offered abundant economic opportunities. This trend

1 Ottoman Jews refers to Ottoman citizen Jews, and Turkish Jews refers to the Jewish population of modern Turkey after its foundation in 1923.

continued in modern Turkey. The Jews of Turkey, diminished in numbers throughout the 20th century, migrated to Palestine (then to Israel), to Europe (i.e. Bulgaria, France, Greece), to Cyprus and even further away to South and North America (Güleryüz, 1993).

This study investigates the migration of the Jews from the Ottoman Empire from the 1860s onward and from modern Turkey to the American continent and provides a picture of the process of Jewish migration to and Jewish integration in the destination countries in the continent.[2] Country-by-country analyses of the integration processes and the profile of immigrants disclose parallels and differences of the integration of Jewish people in different countries in the continent. The article finds that Jewish immigrants established communities around religious, educational, and philanthropic organizations that facilitated the preservation of their distinct culture and their integration in the host nations. The article covers the Jewish emigration to the American continent from the 1880s onwards. Therefore, until the foundation of Republic of Turkey in 1923, the territorial area covered in the article refers to territorial space controlled by the Ottoman Empire by the 1880s unless otherwise stated. Bulgaria, Macedonia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania in Europe; Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Palestine, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar in the Middle East; Libya, Algeria, Egypt, and Sudan in North Africa, countries that are separated from the Ottoman Empire after the 1880s, are referred as the Ottoman Empire until their separation and independence dates in the article. Countries that are separated from the Ottoman Empire by the 1880s are called by their today's names in the article. In this sense, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, Greece, Moldovia, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia and Slovakia in Europe; Morocco and Tunisia in Africa are called by their names as countries of departure of the Jews who immigrated to the American continent. Turkey in the article refers to the territorial space on which the Republic of Turkey stands from 1923 until now.

2 The research was funded by Kadir Has University Scientific Research Programme (Project No: 2017-BAP-11).

The purpose of this study is twofold. Studies on Jewish immigration to the American continent are abundant, yet these studies predominantly focus on either one country case or on a group of countries cases. The primary purpose of the current study is to capture a holistic picture of immigration and integration of Jewish communities from the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey to the American continent from the 1860s until now, thereby contributing to Jewish immigration studies. The secondary purpose of this study is to provide a general framework for future studies on Jewish migration and integration in the continent. The scope of the study makes it impossible to conduct field research and very detailed analysis of the integration process of each Jewish community in the continent. However, it is hoped that this study can function as a departure point for those who want to study the specific migration and integration processes of each Jewish migrant group in different countries in the continent. The mapping of Jewish emigration to and integration in the continent is achieved through an extensive literature review of secondary sources. The numbers presented in the article are crossed checked with different sources to ensure that they represent the values closest to real numbers.

Push and Pull Factors of Jewish Emigration from Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey

Push factors for the Jewish emigration can be classified into political and economic categories both in the Ottoman and the modern Turkish contexts (Kedourie, 1988). While political push factors emerged mainly as a result of the changing political environment within the collapsing Ottoman Empire and politics related to the framework of nation-state building in modern Turkey (Aktar, 2000), the economic push factors emanated from limited economic opportunities in the war-ravaged Ottoman Empire and the unfriendly economic environment created for the minorities in Turkey (İçduygu et al., 2008). The regional instabilities that engulfed the Middle East, the Balkans, and western Anatolia in the 19th and 20th centuries especially affected the Jewish communities who were resident in the conflict-ridden parts of the Ottoman Empire (Lewis, 1996). The debilitating economic and social conditions for these Jews resulted in a large migration

from the Empire to Palestine, Europe and the American continent. There were various push factors for the Ottoman Jews to leave the country. Some of these include the Balkan Wars, which particularly affected the Jews in the Balkan region; the 1908 Young Turk Revolution; military conscription becoming universal and thus encompassing the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire in 1909; pervasive poverty in the Ottoman Empire; and natural disasters such as the Hasköy Fire, which consumed a large number of Jewish residents in Hasköy, a by-then Jewish neighborhood in Istanbul.

The most significant pull factor was however the dream of a wealthier life in the American continent. Originally from Salonika, and the founder of the longest running Ladino Newspaper in the United States, Moise Soulem composed a poem in the 1910s that reads "come to 'blessed America' and work hard 'night and day' in order to bring over loved ones who remained behind" (Naar, 2015:174). This line demonstrates vividly the importance of the economic incentives for the Jewish emigration to the United States. Indeed, one of the main motivations of the émigrés from the Ottoman Empire to the American continent, especially to the United States, was the wages of unskilled workers, which were ten times higher than in Ottoman Empire (Bali, 2006). Various private companies operating in the Ottoman Empire at the time were marketing the American dream. Additionally, when the émigrés returned to their city of origin in the Empire, they told stories of how they were able to gain small fortunes in a short time on the American continent. Pulled and pushed by these factors, many Jews legally or illegally left the Ottoman Empire in pursuit of a better life.

During the time of modern Turkey, three cases serve as the best examples, although many incidents, regulations, laws and policies may be identified as political push factors for emigration of Jewish citizens in modern Turkey: the "Citizens, Speak Turkish!" campaign in the late 1920s; the Thrace Incidents in 1934; and the Capital Tax Law of 1942 (Bali, 2001). Language was one of the most important tools utilized by the founding cadres and the intellectuals of the Turkish Republic to create the Turkish nation and sense of Turkishness (Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 2004). The importance of the language in forming the Turkish identity was such that being Turkish is associated with speaking the Turkish language (Bali, 2000).

Started as a student initiative at Istanbul University, "Citizens, Speak Turkish!" campaign supporters wanted no other language but Turkish to be spoken in public spaces in order to promote the Turkish language. The message of the campaign was disseminated on boards and banners placed in the public spaces of the cities. The main target of the campaign was the non-Muslim minorities and non-Turkish Muslims, the majority of whom at the time were speaking their own languages (Çolak, 2004). Jews were not an exception as the most common language used among the Jews was Ladino, French (especially among the educated Jews) and Yiddish (especially among Russian Jews) (Landau, 1996). The campaign was supported by the Ministry of Interior Affairs and the Ministry of Education because it was in conformity with the official language policy of the state, especially in cities such as Edirne, Kırklareli, Bursa, Izmir, and Istanbul, where large numbers of non-Muslim citizens lived, and demonstrations supporting the campaign were allowed by the Home Office (Akdoğan, 2012). As a result of the campaign, the Jews found themselves in an unpleasant situation that put them at the periphery of the Turkish society, defined on the basis of linguistic unity. Thus, this issue was one of the push factors for the Jewish emigration from Turkey (Toktaş, 2008).

Another push factor for the Jews to emigrate from Turkey were the Thrace Incidents (Bali, 1996). This was a direct result of a wave of ultra-nationalism coming from Europe in the 1930s (Levi, 1996:10). In addition, the incident was an attempt to uproot Jewish community from the Thrace region because Turkey considered the region as a strategic point in case of an Italian aggression in the 1930s (Aktar, 1996). Starting as a boycott against Jewish-owned businesses in the Thrace region of Turkey, the Thrace Incident of 1934 quickly turned into violent attacks against Jews (Haker, 2002). The incident, which was the result of a series of actions, was the most apparent systematic attack against the Jews, aiming to extirpate them from the Thrace region of Turkey (Eligür, 2016). During and prior to the incident, the Jews of the region received threatening letters that warned them to leave their homes or to face death. Their properties and businesses were looted, and they were forced to sell their properties at prices far below their actual value. The incident resulted in a Jewish migration from the re-

gion to larger cities of Edirne, Istanbul and Izmir. This migration lowered the Jewish population in the towns where the incident took place. Some of these Jews did not return to their homes and some of them emigrated from Turkey.

There were economic factors for Jewish emigration as well. The Capital Tax introduced in 1942 created unease among the non-Muslim minorities of Turkey (Bali, 1997). The Capital Tax targeted primarily non-Muslim communities the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jews. The tax aimed to Turkify the economy by imposing disproportionate tax on non-Muslim minorities (Aktar, 2004). The Embassy of Greece protected the Greeks, as most of the ethnic Greeks were nationals of Greece. Likewise, most of the Armenians were protected by foreign embassies because of their foreign citizenship (Jewish Distribution Committee, 2017). The Jewish community, many of whose members held Turkish nationality, suffered the consequences of the Capital Tax the most. Around 1,200 Jewish business people encountered serious tax bills and most valuable real assets were sold by a member of the Jewish community to pay their toll (Aktar, 2012). Many Jewish citizens were unable to pay the tax and were obliged to sell their businesses and factories in order to pay the tax. With the tax, elimination of the Jewish community from the market, to great extent, was achieved (Aktar, 1999: 20). Those who could not do so were placed into labor camps.

The Capital Tax was revoked in 1944; yet, the disproportionate and excessive amount of tax that the non-Muslim minorities had to pay discouraged the Jews from living in Turkey. As a result, Turkey continued to lose its Jewish population, and within two years between 1948-1949, almost 30,000 Jewish people immigrated to Israel (Aktar, 2012). Even in subsequent decades after the foundation of Israel, members of Jewish community in Turkey continued to emigrate. In 1943, approximately 50,000 Jews resided in Istanbul; 12,500 in Izmir; 2,900 in Edirne; 2,500 in Bursa; 1,000 in Ankara; with a countrywide total of 68,400 (Jewish Distribution Committee, 2017). By 1955 45,995 Jewish citizens were recorded in Turkey and by 1965, the number fell to 38,267 (Aktar, 2012). By 2013 less than 17,000 remained in Turkey. Considering the decrease in the number of

Jews living in other provinces such as Adana, Muğla, and Manisa, it is fair to say that every province with a Jewish population in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey has experienced Jewish emigration.

Countries of Departure of Jewish Immigrants who immigrated to the American Continent since the 1860s	
European and Eastern European Jews (Mainly Ashkenazic)	Sephardic Jews
Austria	Algeria
Bulgaria	Egypt
Croatia	Israel
Germany	Iraq
France	Jordan
Greece	Lebanon
Hungary	Libya
Poland	Morocco
Romania	Palestine
Russia	Syria
Ukraine	Turkey
	Tunisia

THE FORMATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

The Jews migrated in the 18th and 19th centuries not only from the Ottoman Empire but also from the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires. It is estimated that 1,200,000 Jewish people from the Ottoman Empire immigrated to the American continent between 1864 and 1914 (Karpat, 1985). Also, the number of Ottoman émigrés in Latin American countries, the majority of whom were Sephardic Jews, exceeded 150,000 at the beginning of 1908

(Genç & Bozkurt, 2010). There was a considerable number of Jewish émigrés to North America from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. In 1926 there were about 40,000 Sephardic Jews in New York alone, many of whom were from the Ottoman Empire (Bali, 2011). Considering the 20,000 Sephardic Jews in other cities in the United States, the total number there was around 60,000 (Bureau of Jewish Social Services, 1926). With the mass immigration in the wake of the First World War, New York became the third-largest city for Ottoman-born Jews after Istanbul and Salonica (Naar, 2015).

In overseas migration, the ports of Istanbul and Izmir were gates to the new world. Depending on the proximity to the departing cities, the Jews who resided in provinces located in the Aegean region such as Aydın, Manisa, and Muğla used the port in Izmir and those who resided in cities around Istanbul such as Edirne, Kırklareli and Çorlu province in the Thrace region came to the ports in Istanbul. From the port cities of Izmir and Istanbul, Jewish people who wanted to arrive at the continent of America first went to European port cities such as Marseille and Genoa, and then from there to South and North America (Bali, 2006). Jews emigrated sometimes with their entire families and sometimes alone (Bali, 2003). Those who immigrated alone were predominantly young Jewish males who were running from military conscription. In some instances, Jewish males were sending their families to Latin America and were themselves staying in Turkey (Özcan, 2006). In other cases, married males immigrated to the American continent, leaving their families behind. However, compared to other immigrant groups, Jewish immigrants were more balanced in terms of gender with 56.6% of them being male (Jasso & Rosenzweig, 1990). In comparison to Ashkenazic immigrants, Sephardic Jews received less from an organized international support system and their immigration was facilitated largely through family and group connections (Brodsky, 2011).

The socio-economic status of the Jews impacted their choice of destination. Less affluent Jews preferred to go to either Palestine or to the Spanish speaking countries of Latin America as the Ladino language has a linguistic affinity with Spanish. This linguistic affinity with Spanish enabled them to experience less integrational difficulties in Latin American countries. Wealthier and more educated Jews, more likely able to speak

French, aimed to settle in Western European countries such as France (Zetler, 2014). An equally important factor that determined the country choices of the Jewish people was their religious sect. The majority of Ashkenazic Jews came to the Ottoman Empire especially after the 1880s from Eastern European countries. In the same period, almost 500,000 Ashkenazic Jews also immigrated to countries such as Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom (Şeber, 2011). Therefore, the majority of Ashkenazic Jews in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey immigrated to the United States of America and Canada in the continent where their relatives had previously settled, while the majority of Sephardic Jews migrated to Latin American countries. Yet, a range of disparate visa regimes in the Continent was another important factor. For example, Jewish immigration to the Latin American countries from Turkey and the Ottoman Empire was induced by the loose immigration rules of Latin American counties compared the United States and Canada as Latin American countries did not require visas from the Ottoman and Turkish Jews and issued residency and work permits without condition (Genç & Bozkurt, 2010) whereas obtaining such residency privileges was much harder in the United States and Canada.

When the Jewish immigrants from the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey moved to the Americas, there were already nascent Jewish communities across the continent. These communities were built around institutions that served the cultural and material needs of the community. Resilience of these communities was sustained by strictly maintaining tradition, liturgy and language (İçduygu, 1996a). In this sense, some of them turned their houses into synagogues and some launched Ladino newspapers, such as *La America* in New York in 1910 (Bejarano, 2012). These establishments functioned as socializing places for immigrants while playing the role of integration agency for newcomers. For example, one of the main aims of the newspapers was to inform the Jewish immigrants from the Ottoman Empire regarding residency and work permits, as the Sephardic Jews were unable to speak English.

Most Sephardic immigrants from the Ottoman Empire were uneducated and unskilled (Angel, 1973); yet many were also educated, especially

those who had graduated from the Alliance Israelite Universelle schools in Izmir and Istanbul (Pool, 1913). Western education and language skills provided by the Alliance not only facilitated upward social mobility within the Jewish community, but also an outward social movement outside of the Ottoman Empire to Western European countries, the American continent, and the African continent (Levy, 1994:118). The first batch of immigrants from the Ottoman Empire to the American continent usually took up jobs in bakeries, restaurants, and laundries and were engaged in peddling, selling fruits, post-cards, flowers, and polishing shoes (Pool, 1913). Some others found jobs at theaters as ushers and guards (Bali, 2006). Only the wealthiest Jews were able to open their own shops, usually selling imported oriental stuffs such as carpets and rugs (Bali, 2011:89). However, there were exceptions, too, with some becoming industrialists.

Destination countries played a significant role in the integration process. Based on the countries they settled in, Jews either faced assimilation or were able to keep their distinct cultural life. Jews in Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru could not quite fit the self-image of these countries whose national identity was formed by a homogenous population profile (Bejarano, 2005). In contrast, in countries such as Argentina, Uruguay, Cuba, and Brazil, which experienced mass immigration that fluctuated socio-ethnic profiles, tolerance towards minorities was the norm (Liwerant, 2013). Therefore, it can be argued that whereas Jews in Argentina, Uruguay, Cuba, Brazil, and Canada experienced a rather easy integration process given these countries' multi-racial societal structures and relatively easier integration schemas, their counterparts in Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru experienced limited integration, which reinforced the differences between the Jewish communities and the rest of the host society (Liwerant, 2013). Communities that were founded around the Amazon River faced total disintegration, whereas communities that settled in big cities such as Sao Paolo, Buenos Aires, and Cordoba were able to resist assimilation due to their ties with similar ethnic groups in the destination country and the mother community. For example, in light of the migrations from Morocco to Caracas, Venezuela, the Jewish community in Caracas kept its distinct cultural features (Blank, 1993).

Those who immigrated to the American continent in recent decades

settled predominantly in either the United States or Canada because of the deterioration of economic and social opportunities in Latin American and the Caribbean countries. This trend was furthered by the fall in numbers of young Jews learning to speak Ladino over time and increasingly learning other languages like English instead (American Jewish Committee, 2007). Indeed, the Jewish communities in Latin America and the Caribbean had been shrinking due to various factors including forced migration, voluntary household relocation and the search for better economic opportunities. In almost every country in Latin America, the number of Jews has dropped. Since the 1970s, the Jewish population in Uruguay has flopped from 50,000 to 22,000; in Venezuela, from 30,000 to 15,000; and in Chile, from 30,000 to 21,000 (Liwerant, 2013). The countries that host the biggest Jewish diasporas in Latin America have experienced the same trend. In Brazil, the number of Jews has decreased from 140,000 to 96,000 and in Argentina from 390,000 to 180,000 (Liwerant, 2013). In contrast, the number of Jews in the same period in the United States and Canada has increased. More recently, and parallel to trends in Turkey, many young Jews have left Turkey for educational reasons (Molinas, 2018). Those who left Turkey for educational reasons have predominantly immigrated either to the United States or Canada in the American continent (Lowen, 2017). This suggests that, compared to the émigrés in the late Ottoman era and the early decades of the Republic, Jewish émigrés from Turkey in the second half of the 20th century are more educated and skilled.

Countries of Arrival of Jewish Immigrants in the American Continent since the 1880s			
North America	Central America	South America	The Caribbean
Canada	Belize	Argentina	Bahamas
The United States of America	Costa Rica	Bolivia	Cuba
Mexico	El Salvador	Brazil	Dominican Republic
	Guatemala	Chile	Haiti
	Honduras	Colombia	Jamaica
	Nicaragua	Ecuador	Puerto Rico
	Panama	Guyana	
		Paraguay	
		Peru	
		Suriname	
		Uruguay	
		Venezuela	

Jewish immigrants in South and Central America

Any attempt to provide a snapshot of the Jewish integration process across the whole continent would be incomplete, as the integration processes differ. Thus, a general account of the integration of Jewish immigrants in the 20th century can be formed from sources that survey not only Jewish émigrés from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey but from other countries to the continent. When the new-comers immigrated to the continent, they did not find a stable and unified Jewish diaspora in the countries they emigrated to; rather, they found fragmented Jewish communities divided into sub-groups. Sephardic Jews from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, the Balkan countries, and Italy; Mizrahi Jews from the Middle East; and Jews from North Africa developed their own communities. Different integration and naturalization processes of these groups are observed in the

countries of South and Central Americas (İçduygu, 1996b). The difference of integration and naturalization processes of Jewish communities in different countries in Latin America lies within each country's idiosyncratic socio-political structure. Therefore, this part of the article is dedicated to a country-by-country analysis of naturalization and integration processes to foreground how Jewish communities and their destination countries in Latin America interact with one another in the process of naturalization and integration. With as much available data as possible, the Jewish communities of every country in Latin America have been scrutinized.

The Sephardim in Cuba have been characterized by the homogeneity of their population with a large part of them arriving from Istanbul, Edirne and Kırklareli and they were able to assimilate into Cuban society comparatively easily. One of the reasons for this quick assimilation was the phenomenon of intermarriages. For example, a Cuban citizen whose father migrated from Turkey states that though his father was a very devout Jew, he married a non-Jewish Dominican woman (Franklin, 2016). Marriages such as this one allowed the Jewish community to integrate to a greater degree and in a shorter time into the Cuban society. Social enclaves of their mother communities were created upon their arrival, where they reconstructed the way of life in their old home and maintained a clear social distinction from the environment, especially for girls and women. Bejarano states this fact with the following words "Family life was exactly as in Turkey, there was no difference whatsoever; religious life was the same so was social life" (2005).

Although Jews from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey came to Cuba as uneducated and unskilled workers to work in the sugar cane fields, they quickly ascended the social ladder, becoming middle class by the 1950s. After the sugar cane fields grew unable to yield as much profit, the Jewish community began opening their own shops. The transformation of the Cuban economy impacted the Jewish community's job preferences and forced them from being unskilled laborers into businesspeople. Their success, in part, was due to their unified community structure where the Sephardim and Ashkenazi community cooperated in almost every part of life. Later comers to the island therefore found a unified community which had estab-

lished an economic foundation that benefited them. There was an exodus of Jews from Cuba after the successfully implemented Cuban Revolution. The Jewish population of 15,000 in the 1950s dropped to a staggering 2,400 Jew in 1965. Along with the Cuban bourgeoisie, the middle-class Jewish community immigrated mainly to the United States as the previously favourable economic conditions were wiped out by the Revolution's economic policies.

The Jewish population in Brazil, estimated to be 120,000, lives in cities such as Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018). The Jews came to Brazil because they were either unable to get visas for the United States or Argentina or were tricked by vendors who left them in Brazil rather than their promised destination of the United States (Elkin, 2014). In Brazil, the Jewish diaspora was never able to create a unified community, as the inward Jewish migration to the country came from various directions. This, however, had a positive impact on their integration (Lesser, 1997). Compared to other closed Jewish communities in Latin America, Jews in Brazil were able to join politics and assumed high positions in the bureaucracy. Jews were elected to both federal and state legislatures, as well as municipal councils. With its booming economy, Brazil in the early 20th century provided a fertile ground for the economic integration of Jews into the country. An upward economic mobility within the Jewish community was observed. At the initial stages of integration, the old comers helped the economic integration of the new comers by teaching peddling techniques such as how often to pass by a street to maximize their sell and the local language. This solidarity amongst the Jews came to fruition, and Jews in Brazil today own the largest publishing and jewellery companies in the country (Lesser, 1997).

In Argentina, which at the time hosted most Sephardic Jews from the Ottoman Empire, synagogues, Jewish colleges, social clubs and cemeteries were set up (Kara, 2007). The Jewish population in Argentina is mainly Ashkenazic, with only 15% being Sephardim. Currently, there are about 200,000 Jews in the country (World Jewish Congress, 2018). The Jews who arrived in Argentina from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey were mainly Sephardic Jews coming from Istanbul, Izmir and the Aegean Is-

lands. The majority of Sephardic Jews who immigrated to Argentina from the Ottoman Empire were earning their living in commerce and lodging sectors, the textile industry, and restaurant chains where kosher food was offered (Kara, 2007). Over time, they participated in different sectors like fur, textile, chemical, electronics, finance and banking, and automotive industries. Still, one third of the community lives below the poverty line as a result of the economic crisis which hit Argentina in 1998. Therefore, there is a steep decline in the number of Jewish people in Argentina due to emigration. Similar to other Jewish communities on the continent, the Jews in Argentina maintain their cultural values through institutions including schools, cemeteries, and synagogues and social and sports clubs. There are almost 70 schools throughout Argentina, which 60% of Jewish children attend at least once in their lives.

Chile was the destination country for Sephardic Jews, especially from Tunisia and Macedonia at the end of the 19th century. Especially after the 1881-1882 pogroms in Russia, Chile was branded as a "safe haven" for Jews, which attracted Ashkenazic Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia. Therefore, the first wave of Jewish immigration to the country started at the end of the 19th century. The first immigrants worked in unskilled jobs, but over time economic and social integration was achieved. Jews in Chile were able to establish the *Banco Israelita* in 1944 that became the largest creditor institution in the country, indicating that the integration of Jews into the financial milieu was fast. Unlike other Latin American countries, the integration of the Jewish community into the political life of Chile was speedy. Marcos Chamudes, Natalio Berman, and Angel Faivovich ascended high ranks in communist and socialist parties in the 1930s. The total number of Jews in Chile today is around 20,000 (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018). The Jewish community in the country consists of middle and upper-middle class members that are located in the capital city of Santiago.

Estimated Jewish Population in Central America and The Carribbean*

*The numbers of populations are taken from virtualjewishlibrary.org

Uruguay, on the other hand, served mainly as a transit country for Jews on their way to Brazil and Argentina. There are established Jewish communities in the country albeit separate Sephardim and Ashkenazi communities. Of the early Jewish settlers in Uruguay, 88% were Ashkenazi and 18% were Sephardim coming from countries like Algeria and Egypt and the Ottoman Empire (Porzecanski, 2009). The early settlers worked as small shop-owners, tailors and artisans (Arocena, 2009:120). Uruguay's secular political structure based on democratic politics and social modernization enabled Jewish communities to integrate in the society more easily.

In Paraguay, the first Jewish people came from Italy, France and Switzerland, but they were so few that they merged with the local society. In the first decade of the 20th century, Sephardic Jews, especially from Palestine and other territories of the Ottoman Empire arrived in Paraguay, establishing the first synagogue in 1917 in the country. Like Uruguay, Paraguay had been seen as a transit country, especially for Jewish people travelling to Argentina. Hence, the number of Jewish people there compared to other large nations in Latin America remained small. Today, a number of 900 Jewish people are thought to reside in Paraguay. The Jewish identity in Paraguay is preserved through religious and education institutions. Escuela Integral Estado de Israel, the only Jewish education institution that teaches

Hebrew and Jewish studies in Paraguay, is attended by 70% of all Jewish children in the country. In Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, there are three synagogues for Ashkenazi, Sephardim and Chabad communities.

Sephardic Jews from the Ottoman Empire came to Bolivia in very small numbers. It is estimated that only 25-30 Jews in total settled in Bolivia in 1917 (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018). According to a census in 1950, 926 Jewish people from Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Egypt and Libya were recorded in Bolivia. Bolivia was an unattractive country for settlement for Jews as it offered little commerce and industry opportunities with a small, non-institutionalized Jewish community (Osterweil, 1997). Though Bolivia's Jewish population hit 7,000 in the 1930s, almost 2000 Jews left the country by the end of 1940s. Throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, members of the Bolivian Jewish community fled the country with increasing numbers as the country went through various military coups. Bolivia is home to almost 500 Jewish people today; however, this population continues to shrink for political and economic reasons. Younger Jews emigrated to the United States and Europe, seeking a better educational and economic futures, while older Jews emigrated to escape the stifling political atmosphere under these military rules.

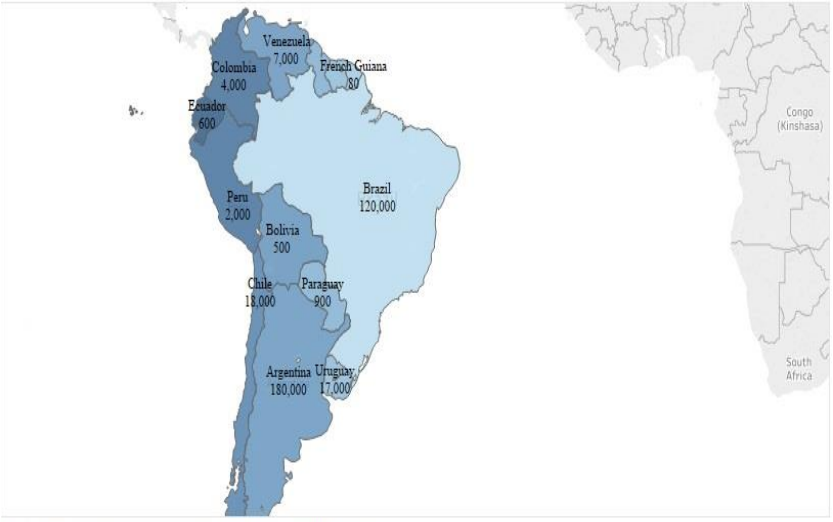
In Venezuela, Jewish integration into society was achieved mainly through education (Blank, 1993). The secular education system within the Jewish community allowed pluralism to flourish, which in turn accelerated the integration of Sephardic Jews in the country. In addition, religious organizations played an important role in the integration of new-comers to the country. For example, the first Jewish organization, Asociacion Israelita de Venezuela, founded in the 1920s, served almost 800 families.

There is a small Jewish community in Peru, numbering around 2,000. Jews coming from the Ottoman Empire on the eve of and during the First World War settled across Peru, but due to its urbanization, Lima has been the main city of inhabitance. Some members of the Jewish community have ascended to high bureaucratic positions such as Efrain Goldenberg Schreiber, who was Finance Minister and later Prime Minister of Peru in the 1990s. Ecuador has only 600 Jews today (Jewish Virtual Library,

2018). Both Peru and Ecuador continue to lose their Jewish communities.

Hosting nine synagogues, Colombia has an equal number of Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews, totalling 2,500 as of today, who predominantly live in Bogota (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018). The country's Jewish population is upper middle class and has been subject to various attacks, including kidnapping. Therefore, many have headed towards the US, and especially to Miami. There are also small Jewish communities in the Central American countries of Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Surinam, and French Guyana. In these countries too, Jewish people are organized around schools and synagogues. Like in other regions in the American continent, the integration of Jewish communities was affected by both internal and external factors, and there has been a continuous migration towards the north.

Estimated Jewish Population in South America*



*The numbers of populations are taken from virtuallibrary.org

The Sephardic Jews in Latin America arrived from the territories of the Ottoman Empire; North African states such as Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya; and the Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. The overwhelming majority of these Sephardim immigrants settled in large Latin American countries such as Brazil and Argentina. Economi-

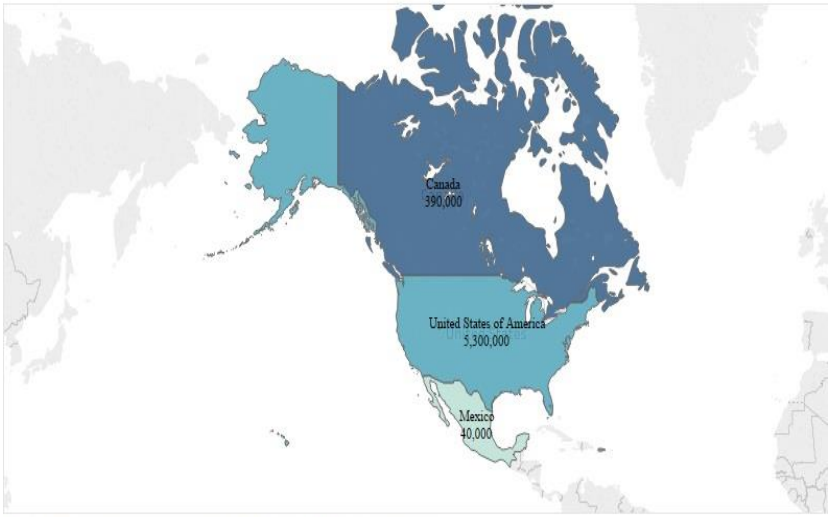
cally deprived at the time of their arrival, they were later able to integrate into their destination countries. The integration of Jewish people differed based on the country they had settled in. In Venezuela and Nicaragua, the Jews had a harder integration process due to the national identities of these countries, which had a strong Catholic influence. In Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, the democratic and secular environment facilitated a smoother integration. Almost all Jewish communities in Latin America are concentrated in capital cities, underlining the urban outlook of Jewish communities. In recent years, there is a decline in numbers of Jewish people across Latin America as, economic and political instabilities triggered an outward mobility, mostly toward the north, especially to the US.

Jewish immigrants in North America

Identity formation in Mexico, where national unity is created by a common national identity and culture based on Catholicism, has provided very little space for the Jews who did not fit the imagined national identity, though there are almost 40,000 Jews in the country. Therefore, the Jewish diaspora in Mexico gathered around institutions designed to fulfil the community's material, cultural, and religious needs. In this sense, synagogues, schools, cemeteries, kosher stores, and libraries were the driving institutions in Mexico to consolidate the Jewish identity and have become the major sources of Jewish identity in Mexico. Considering the fact that 90% of the Jewish community in Mexico belongs to one of same 30 synagogues and that almost 80 to 90% of Jewish children attend the Jewish schools, the significance of these self-organized Jewish institutions in keeping the Jewish identity is understandable (Jewish Virtual Library, 2018). The inward-facing structure of the Jewish community has some disadvantages, however. Many Jewish communities are regarded as having a dual loyalty. Some tried to overcome these allegiance issues by sending their kids to American schools in Mexico, and by partnering with Mexicans in entrepreneurship endeavors. Some concrete steps have been taken by the Jewish community to ease the tension of dual allegiance, with the most famous example being the construction of a watch tower, funded by Arabic-speaking Jews and Marunis from Aleppo, Damascus, and Lebanon, on which a sign that reads

"gift from the Ottoman people to Mexico" is imprinted. This construction is, in some ways, aimed to make the integration of Jews into Mexican society smoother (Odman, 2007).

Estimated Jewish Population in North America*



*The numbers of populations are taken from jewishvirtuallibrary.org

Canada is deemed to be one of the most successful countries in the integrating of immigrants in society, which is formed on the basis of multiculturalism. The immigration policy of Canada puts emphasis on embracing the Canadian identity while allowing immigrants to keep their own culture. The country's cultural policy based on multiculturalism was a pull factor for the Jewish community. Historically, Canada attracted Jews from many regions of Europe and North Africa, albeit in fluctuating numbers due to the country's immigration quotas and policies. Though a small number of Jewish people immigrated to the country, especially to Montreal, Quebec in the 17th and 18th centuries, the main immigration wave came in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. According the national census in 1871, the number of Jewish people in Canada was recorded as 1,115 people. Canada accepted as few as 5,000 Jews from 1933 to 1948. However, in the subsequent decades, and with a change to immigration policy that favoured Second World War immigrants, almost 20,000 Holocaust survivors arrived in Toronto and Montreal in the 1950s from Eastern European countries such

as Romania, Russia, Poland, and Lithuania. This wave of immigration had a lasting impact on the Jewish community in the country. Yiddish became the third most spoken language in Quebec in the 1950s, reflecting the rapid inward Jewish migration to Canada after the Second World War (Bauer, 2011). However, the dominance of Ashkenazic Jews in Canada was lessened with the arrival of Sephardic Jews especially from Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. It is estimated that almost 20,000 Sephardic Jews immigrated to Canada from these Francophone countries. Sephardic Jews who settled mainly in Montreal had an easier integration process compared to Eastern European Jews because of their language skills. Though the majority of early comers worked as peddlers, they later established their own small businesses. A considerable majority of Jewish people found jobs in the textile industry (*Canadian Jewish Community,* 2015). Today, the total number of Jews in Canada is estimated to be around 391,665 (*Basic Demographics of the Canadian Jewish Community*, 2015). As the Jewish migration continues, the cities they settle in also differ. While Montreal was the largest Jewish city in the country in the 19th and 20th centuries, Toronto now hosts half the Jewish community.

The United States of America is home to almost 4.2 million people who define themselves as Jews (Lipka, 2013). This number increases to about 5.3 million when adding those who are culturally or ethnically Jewish, albeit non-practicing (Lipka, 2013). With these numbers, the US is, after Israel, the country with the second largest Jewish population. Although Sephardim immigration to the United States dates back to the 15th century from Spain and Portugal, Jews in the Ottoman Empire immigrated to the United States beginning from the end of the 19th century. It is estimated that 30,000 Sephardic Jews from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey immigrated to the United States between 1890 and 1924 (Bali, 2006). Before 1899, an estimation of the immigrant populations would be inaccurate as the Bureau of Immigration started to register immigrants based on the country of birth or residence as well as religious orientation in 1899. Previously, only the country of origin was the yardstick to enumerate the immigrants. Even then, the Bureau of Immigration applied the term 'Hebrew' to quantify all Jewish immigrants in 1910. The categorization, however, was based on being able to speak Yiddish; therefore, Sephardim and Mizrahi had not

been included in immigration statistics. Thus, a more accurate estimation regarding the number of Sephardim and Mizrahi immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Middle East would be 50-60,000 between 1880 and 1924 (Ben-Ur, 2009).

Those who came to the United States in this period had to pass the tough bureaucratic mechanism of the United States on Ellis Island. The Sephardic Jews were sent back to their countries if they did not have sufficient money and a personal guarantor. Disease and illiteracy were also amongst the most common causes for deportation. Those Sephardim who were admitted to the United States faced more hardship than Ashkenazic. The immigration officers believed that those who came from Southern and Eastern European countries were inferior to those who come from Northern and Western Europe. The migration numbers fell dramatically in 1924, the year the United States introduced a legislation called the Johnson-Reed Act, which allowed entry to the country for only 2% of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States, reducing the number of the annual intake to 350,000 (Ben-Ur, 2009). In 1925, only 137 Jews from Turkey entered the United States (Angel, 1973:87). Although there were attempts to scatter the Sephardim Jewish community to different cities such as Columbus, Seattle, and Toledo, these attempts failed, and almost 90% of Sephardic Jews settled in New York. Even today, the city hosts the largest Jewish community. Poor English language and employability skills impeded the integration of the Jews from Ottoman Empire and Turkey in the United States. Their integration is further exacerbated by the Ashkenazic Jews coming from Europe; the physical appearance and Spanish-sounding names of the Ottoman Jews led the Ashkenazic Jews, who were the mainstream Jews in the United States, to believe that Sephardic Jews were not legitimate Jews (Ben-Ur, 2009). In addition, the Sephardim coming from the Ottoman Empire were discriminated against by the existing Sephardim community, who shunned them, calling them Oriental or Levantine Jews.

Greek-speaking, Arabic-speaking, and Spanish-speaking Jews have established their distinct communities in the United States with organizations designed for educational, social, and philanthropic purposes. However, there were umbrella organizations founded by the Sephardim

and Ashkenazic immigrants from Turkey, Spain, and Morocco such as the Society of Union and Peace and the Levantine Jewish Society. The country and city of origin for the Sephardic Jews played a role in establishing their own communities in the early years of immigration, as different communities identified themselves with their hometown or natal city. Yet, there were a variety of labels to refer Jews from Eastern Europe and the Middle East. *Oriental*, *Levantine Jews*, *Levantine Sephardim*, *Turkinos*, *Arabian Jews* were used to distinguish Sephardim and Mizrahim from the Yiddish speaking Ashkenazi community. The terms *Asiatic Jews* and *African Jews* were also used. Those who came from Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia were called Asiatic Jews, and those from Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia were called African Jews. However, the cultural distinctiveness of Sephardim and Mizrahim paled in time following their acculturation to American society and through intermarriages. The exclusively male café culture that they brought from the Ottoman Empire was an especially significant socializing institution for the Sephardim community in the United States. The names of cafés signalled the origin of their denizens. *Café Constantinople*, *Café Oriental*, *Café Smyrna* are among some of these café names.

The majority of the Sephardic Jews upon their arrival worked as candy peddlers, bootblacks, cloakroom attendants, waiters, and the like. (Angel, 1973). An early study also finds that Sephardic Jews were working "in a great variety of factories, working in different centers at the various garment trades, in woollen mills, in the steel mills of Pittsburgh and Gary, in establishments producing phonographs, electrical apparatus, and cigarettes" (Pool, 1913:213). In the initial immigration years, as the Judeo-Spanish newspaper *La America* reports, the majority of Sephardic Jews were living in poverty in the 1910s. However, they soon became shop keepers: those who were bootblacks opened shoe-repair shops and those who sold candies opened candy concessions. Their advancement into the middle class was also evidenced by the number of significant Jewish figures in the American economy. By the 1920s, there were many professionals in the community like teachers, professors, doctors, and engineers. The increase of practitioners in these professions from Sephardim communities

in a short period of time testifies to upward economic and social mobility. The reception system of the US made it convenient for the Jews to migrate to the US, especially after WWII. Today, the Sephardim community in the United States is well integrated into the society and has become middle-class.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Within the medium of migration studies, Jewish immigration to the American continent is a specific form of migration which deserves scholarly attention not only for the large numbers of movement involved, but also for understanding the sending and receiving societies' dynamics that illustrate challenges for the Jewish communities and their emigration and immigration processes. Migration to the American continent is a specific form of migration, and in the case of Jewish people, it pinpoints to a distinct destination area when flow, duration, and diaspora formation processes are considered (Kastoryano, 2000). Migration to the American continent occurred amongst the Ottoman and Turkish Jews in the 19th and 20th centuries. There were other source regions in Jewish migration to the American continent (Johnson, 2000). Jews of different sects and countries of departure from Europe, Russia, and the Middle East also migrated to South and North America. This article has discussed the economic and political dynamics of Jewish emigration from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey to the New World while investigating the trends, frequencies, and push and pull factors for these Jewish communities. The profile of Jewish immigrants in different destination countries was presented. By looking at the push and pull factors of Jewish emigration, the profiles of Jewish immigrants and their integration in the host societies, this study aimed to map a wide range of information regarding Jewish emigration to the New World from the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey.

On this specific movement of a particular group of immigrants, certain points seem to have arisen. First, dating back to the 15th century, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey illustrated a safe geography for world Jewry and hence served as a solid destination (Yetkin, 1996). During harsh wartime conditions, pogroms, the Holocaust and various other political cha-

os that threatened Jews in their home countries, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey were safe places to seek refuge, to settle, or to transit from (Shaw, 1992). Numbers vary, and cases are plentiful. For example, the cases of eastern European Jews' arrival in the 19th century, the Russian Jews' settlement during World War I, French and German Jews' settlement during the Second World War, and thousands more to use Ottoman State/Turkey as transit site on their voyage to other destinations, primarily to Palestine and Israel (Shaw, 2001).

Second, the Ottoman Empire and Turkey was also a source for Jewish emigration. Due to many economic and political factors, many Jews left this safe geography in the hope for a better future. In particular, the development of citizenship in the place of imperial subjecthood, like the universal and compulsory military conscription in 1909, and the policies of nation-state formation pressured Jews to emigrate. Third, Jewish migration from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey was west bound. That is, with exception of the flood of immigrants to Palestine and Israel after its foundation in 1948 and determination to be a solid destination point for all world Jewry, the outward movement of the Jews in the hinterland of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey was, by and large, destined for the Americas. The movement towards Europe from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey to countries like France or Greece has not been constant due to the war environment of the two world wars (Liberles, 1984). Thus, Jews continued their movement further west and reached the American continent.

Fourth, South America received Jewish immigrants mainly because of linguistic affinity between Ladino and Spanish. Although South America has had Jewish settlers since its colonization, the continent has attracted many Jews especially, Sephardic Jews. The Ashkenazi also migrated to South America with greater numbers in the wake of World War II. Jewish immigrants of all backgrounds formed their communities in various countries of South America and their integration into the host societies depended on the socio-political and economic conditions and reception policies of the country that they had settled in. In-group relations like those between and across Ashkenazic, Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews also influenced the community structures they established.

Fifth, the movement to South America did not end in the country of arrival. Some Jews migrated within South American countries, and what's more, continued their migration to North. The US received many migrants from South America, and among those were Jews who had previously migrated from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. That is, although Jews migrated to various countries in the southern continent of the New World, those Jews carried on with their immigration movements and moved on to the US. To exemplify, a Jewish family who moved to Cuba, later on migrated to Miami after a time spent in Havana. Last but not least, North America, particularly the US served as the major destination point within the New World. The US, being a country founded by immigration with enhanced and structured migration policies, has attracted Jews from the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey. The migration trends changed over time, but the US remains a major destination point for contemporary Jewish movements out of Turkey.

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