

Minna ROZEN
Université de Tel-Aviv

CONTEST AND RIVALRY IN MEDITERRANEAN
MARITIME COMMERCE IN THE FIRST HALF OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY:
THE JEWS OF SALONIKA AND THE EUROPEAN PRESENCE

Introduction

In the sixteenth century, the Jews in the Ottoman Empire, expelled and refugees from the Iberian Peninsula, created one of the principal centers of the Diaspora: Salonika¹. They constituted not only a large community of

1. Salonika was known as Thesaloniki in Greece; Selanik was the Ottoman designation; the Jews called it Saloniki. — According to the Ottoman census, at the end of the first third of the sixteenth century, the population of Salonika was 24,315, of which 13,225 were Jews. See Ö.L. Barkan, "Research on the Ottoman Fiscal Survey", in M.A. Cook, ed., *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London, 1970), p. 170, Table 3. In 1613 there were 16,644 Jews in Salonika, of which 2,863 were heads of families (the coefficient is 5 members per family). See B. Lewis, *Notes and Documents from the Turkish Archives* (Jerusalem, 1952), pp. 25-27. Table 2. In comparison, the second major center of Jews in the Empire was in Istanbul, whose Jewish inhabitants numbered ca 18,000 in the sixteenth century. See A. Rozanes, *A History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1930), p. 119. Ottoman documents dated from the end of the seventeenth century cite similar findings. See H. Gerber, *Economic and Social Life of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1983), pp. 117-119. Other Jewish communities in the Empire were much smaller (see Ö.L. Barkan, *ibid.*). For Jerusalem and Safed in the sixteenth century, see A. Cohen and B. Lewis, *Population and Revenue in the Towns of Palestine in the Sixteenth Century* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 81-94, 155-161. According to Cohen and Lewis, Jerusalem in 1553-4 numbered 324 heads of households, 13 unmarried men, and 1 invalid, a total of 1,634. In 1555-6, Safed numbered 719 heads of households and 63 unmarried men, a total of 3,658. One should bear in mind that the numbers based on the Ottoman census are smaller than the actual total. For a discussion of this point, see M. Rozen, *The Jewish Community of Jerusalem in the Seventeenth Century* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1984), pp. 11-17, and A. Cohen, *The Jewish Community of Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 37-38 [in English, *Jewish Life under Islam* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 28-34].

The populations of the larger communities outside the Empire did not approach those of Salonika and Istanbul. In 1552 Venice had 902 Jews out of a total population of 158,067; in 1593 there were 1,034 Jews out of a total population of 139,459. See C. Roth, *A History of the Jews in Venice* (New York, Schocken, 1975), pp. 106-107. In 1591 Rome had 3,553 Jews out of a total population of 116,696. See A. Toaff, *The Ghetto of Rome in the Sixteenth Century, Ethnic Conflicts and Socioeconomic Problems* (Hebrew) (Ramat Gan, 1984), p. 37. On the

Jews in a single area but were also the demographic and economic backbone of the city of Salonika².

For a variety of geographic, economic, and historical reasons, in the first half of the sixteenth century this group of immigrants converted the city of Salonika into a wool-manufacturing center that supplied fabric for the Empire and for export as well. This chapter has been extensively researched and only its most salient features will be mentioned here. The influx of refugees from the Iberian Peninsula occurred as the Ottoman Empire enjoyed a period of territorial and military expansion, and population growth. It was also an era marked by intensive economic activity, an improved standard of living for the inhabitants of the Empire, and a parallel rise in the demand for textiles. The Jewish refugees from the Iberian Peninsula were skilled in the processing and weaving of wool, and Salonika was located near a superior source of raw material — the Macedonian lamb. In addition, Salonika was an important intersection and the soft-water springs necessary for the scouring of wool were located in its environs³. The development of the city into a textile-manufacturing center during a period of increased demand for the product, naturally transformed Salonika into a textile-marketing center as well. From the city, cloth was distributed throughout the Empire and without. Foreign trade was conducted primarily through the ports of Italy and was based on the

Jewish population of Venice in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries see also: B. Ravid, *Economics and Toleration in Seventeenth Century Venice, The Background and Context of the Discorso of Simone Luzzato* (Jerusalem, 1978), pp. 75-77.

2. In the eighteenth century, the population in Salonika was between 60,000 and 70,000, among them 25,000-30,000 Jews, 16,000-20,000 Greeks, and the remainder Turks. See N. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1956), pp. 7, 8 and 11. At the end of the eighteenth century, Félix de Beaujour assessed the number of Jews at 12,000, but noted that his was a rough estimate. However, the monies paid by Jews for the poll-tax at the time indicate that his estimate was lower by a third. See F. de Beaujour, *A View of the Commerce of Greece, formed after an annual average, from 1787-1797*, trans. T.H. Horne (London, 1800), pp. 29-31. For information on the status of Jews in the economy of the city throughout the period, see future references.

3. On the wool industry, see S. Avişur, "The Woolen Textile Industry in Saloniki", *Sefunot* (Hebrew), Vol. 12 [*The Book of Greek Jewry* Vol. 2] (Jerusalem 1971-1978), pp. 145-168; A. Shoḥat, "The King's Clothing in Saloniki", *ibid.*, pp. 169-188; B. Braude, "International Competition and Domestic Cloth in the Ottoman Empire, 1500-1650: A Study in Underdevelopment", *Review of the Fernand Braudel Center*, Vol. 2, no. 3 (1979), pp. 437-451; *idem*, "The Textile Industry of Salonica in the Context of Eastern Mediterranean Economy", *Pe'amim* (Hebrew), 15 (1983), pp. 82-95; H. Sahillioğlu, "Yeniçeri Çuhası ve II Bayezid'in son Yıllarında Yeniçeri Çuha Muhasebesi", *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2-3 (1973-74), pp. 415-467; and S. Faroqhi, "Textile Production in Rumeli and the Arab Provinces: Geographical Distribution and Internal Trade (1560-1650)", *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 1 (1980), pp. 61-83.

export of "Salonika cloth" and the import of woolen fabric, silk, and brocade from Italy to Salonika; from Salonika, these fabrics were distributed elsewhere. In the sixteenth century, the textile trade was the city's major commercial enterprise and it was concentrated in the hands of Jewish merchants from Salonika or Jewish and non-Jewish merchants from Italy⁴. National frontiers, legal niceties, and even wars did not grind this commerce to a halt⁵. The merchants' ability to move freely between the Moslem and Christian worlds is evident in the words of a sixteenth-century rabbi of Salonika, R. Samuel (Shemuel) di Medina (RaSHdaM):

In this great Empire of everlasting glory, which opens its portals to all Mankind...this Empire is unwall'd, its gates are open day and night, and anyone may freely enter and exit...All who desire to purchase or trade therein are welcome⁶.

These favorable conditions encouraged the Jews of the Iberian Peninsula in the Ottoman Empire and in Italy to form a community specializing in

4. This conclusion is based on the frequent references to the textile trade between Venetian and Salonikan Jews, cited in sixteenth-century responsa literature. Quantitatively, this material far exceeds references to Jews trading in other areas on the Mediterranean at that time. For example, on the apparel (textile) trade in general, see Yiṣḥak Aḏrabi's *Responsa, Dibrey Rivot* (Hebrew) (Venice, 1582), Nos. 93, 282, 307, 319, 381, 383, and 389. On the textile trade between Salonika and Venice, see Nos. 87, 382, and 405; Shemuel di Medina's (Rashdam) *Responsa* (in Hebrew) (Lemberg, 1862). On textile trade in general, see *Yoreh De'ah*, Nos. 97, 99, and 117; *Hoshen Mishpat*, Nos. 11, 45, 53, 64, 88, 89, 95, 101, 114, 115, 118, 130, 139, 145, 146, 153, 166, 190, 193, 205, 206, 210, 217, 247, 267, 334, 365, 368, 394, 433, and 491. On woolen apparel from Italy in Salonika, see *Hoshen Mishpat*, Nos. 36, 56, 101, 121, 165, 394, 416, and 422.

Quantitatively, references to textile trade exceed those on any other item in the work of this rabbi, who is universally recognized as one of the principal Salonikan rabbinical scholars of the sixteenth century. On the textile trade between Salonika and Venice, see also M. Rozen, "The Fattoria-A Chapter in the History of Mediterranean Commerce in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", in *Mi-Qedem u-mi-Yam, Studies in the Jewry of Islamic Countries* (Hebrew) (Haifa, 1981), p. 105. One can reasonably assume that the contribution of Salonikan Jews to this trade was considerable if not crucial, although the available data do not determine this absolutely. Nevertheless, it was the primary enterprise of Jewish merchants. Similarly, we do not have sufficient data to ascertain the extent to which Moslems were engaged in this trade.

5. On wartime commerce between the Christian and Moslem spheres, see M. Rozen, "The Fattoria", pp. 123-124, and E. Bashan, "The Freedom of Trade and the Imposition of Taxes and Customs Duties on Foreign Jewish Traders in the Ottoman Empire", *East and Maghreb, Texts and Studies in the History and Culture of the Jews in the Orient* (Hebrew), 1 (1974), p. 111. On the temporary cessation of trade during the war between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic, see Rashdam, *Yoreh De'ah*, No. 218 and *Hoshen Mishpat*, Nos. 70 and 84. On the advantage of the Jews in Moslem-Christian trade, see S. Luzzatto, *Discorso circa il stato gl'Hebrei et in particolare dimoranti nell'inclita città di Venetia* (Venice, 1638), Ch. 4. However, while reading this work, the reader should bear in mind the author's apologetic intentions. See also B. Ravid, *Economics*, pp. 66-70.

6. Rashdam, *Hoshen Mishpat*, No. 407.

maritime commerce on the Mediterranean, and Salonika was one of its capitals in the sixteenth century⁷.

It was an epoch in which the Ottoman Empire rose in stature and power. The Ottomans were one of two large political blocs on the Mediterranean, rivals of the Habsburg Empire for world dominance. To that end, the Ottomans concluded treaties with France (1569)⁸, England (1580)⁹, and the Netherlands (1612)¹⁰, conferring privileges known in the West as the Capitulations (from the Latin *capitulare*, to draw up in heads or chapters). In Ottoman history, these privileges were known as the *Imtiyāzāt*, or commercial privileges. Initially these rights, accorded from a position of strength, were the gesture of a powerful ruler towards allies deemed worthy of his esteem. However, at the end of the seventeenth century, the Empire suffered military and territorial losses, and the Capitulations, no longer granted as tokens of magnanimity, were conceded under the duress of victorious powers or out of the need to preserve the good will of traditional allies.

For the Western powers, the Capitulations provided the means to penetrate into the heart of the Ottoman Empire¹¹. Initially the Imperial concession of commercial privileges to the European powers enabled the latter to flood the markets of the Empire with superior, less expensive textiles that competed vigorously with the domestic-made "Salonika cloth". Salonikan industry met the challenge until the beginning of the seventeenth

7. On the commercial ties between the Jewish communities on the Mediterranean, see M. Rozen, "The Fattoria", pp. 104-110; H. Gerber, "Enterprise and International Commerce in the Economic Activity of the Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th-17th Centuries", *Zion* (Hebrew), XLIII (1978), pp. 48-59; and E. Bashan, "The Freedom", pp. 105-113.

8. In the historiography of European diplomacy, it is generally agreed that France was granted the first Capitulations in 1535. This opinion is based on the briefing received by the royal emissary, a document preserved in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The briefing was reprinted in H. Charrière, *Négociations de la France dans le Levant*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1848), p. 255. See also, G. Pellissié du Rausas, *Le régime des capitulations dans l'Empire Ottoman*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1902), pp. 5-6; J.A.R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question, An Historical Study in European Diplomacy* (London, 1940), pp. 92-94; and P. Masson, *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle* (Paris, 1911), pp. xii-xiii. H. Inalcik, in his article on the Capitulations, indicated that no such contract was signed by the Ottoman Empire and France. The French continued to trade in the Empire on the basis of rights granted by Selim I to the French and the Catalonians, after the conquest of Egypt in 1517. The first Capitulations were granted to the French in 1569. See *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., s.v. "Imtiyāzāt". Hereafter cited as *E.I.*

9. A. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London, 1964), pp. 8-9.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

11. See H. Inalcik, *E.I.*, s.v. "Imtiyāzāt".

century, but subsequently faced a steep decline in the demand for, and quality of, the Salonikan wool fabric¹².

This turn of events obliged the Salonikan wool manufacturer to diversify his specialties; consequently, he switched from the manufacture of finer broadcloth garments to the weaving of coarser items, such as carpets, blankets, and cloaks, which were in demand in France and Italy¹³. Yet wool manufacturing in Salonika did not disappear altogether, owing to a purely external cause. In the first half of the sixteenth century, as part of a *corvée*, the Jews of Salonika were required to provide wool fabric to clothe the Janissaries stationed in the city. Since this *corvée* remained in effect, the manufacture of woolen fabric continued even as the general market for it declined, a situation that prevailed until the destruction of the Jannissary corps (1826)¹⁴.

12. S. Avişur, pp. 165-166; B. Braude, "International Competition"; *idem*, "The Textile Industry", pp. 90-92.

13. See references in N. Svoronos, pp. 254-256.

14. The precise data when this *corvée* was imposed on the Jews of Salonika is unknown. The claim of Jewish historians, according to which the *corvée* was imposed by Suleyman the Magnificent at the request of the Jews in 1537, when he visited Salonika, as a substitute for the poll-tax, or even by Selim II, is unfounded. See A. Rozanes, *A History of the Jews*, vol. 3 (Sophia, 1938), pp. 171-172, 393-398. E.S. Emmanuel, *Histoire de l'industrie de tissus des Israélites de Salonique* (Paris, 1935), pp. 41-45; and A. Shoḥat, p. 171. All of the above relied on later sources, such as Aharon Sason's *Responsa, Torat Emet* (Hebrew) (Venice, 1626), No. 149; Ḥayim Shabtay's *Responsa, Torat Ḥayim* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1713), No. 65; Asher Kobo's *Responsa, Sha'ar Asher* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1877), vol. 1, *Yoreh De'ah*, No. 13; or Ya'aqob Menasheh's *Responsa, Be'er ha-Mayim* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1836), *Yoreh De'ah*, No. 40. None of them mentioned the date of imposition of the *corvée*. The description given by Ḥ. Shabtay, according to which the *corvée* was imposed at the request of Salonikan Jews as a substitute for the poll-tax and other duties, was written to cater to certain interests prevalent at the time, and his rendition should be read with skepticism. The source closest in time to the events is Moshe Almosnino's *Extremos y Grandezas de Constantinopla*, MS. Mailand, Bibl. Ambrosiana, No. III, 32, p. 205. His work describes how, following the burning of the *Musellimlik* (Writ of Freedom), which had codified the taxation system of Salonikan Jews, in 1545, the Jews were required to supply 7,800 heads of cattle to the government, and to provide cloth for the Janissary corps. This event is the first reference to the issue of textiles. However, it is not mentioned as a substitute for the poll-tax but is cited as part of a general tax structure and collective arrangement with the community. Almosnino wrote of these events after the codification of the second *Musellimlik* in 1568. See Moshe Almosnino, *Meameş Koah* (Venice, 1588), pp. 6a-7b. The material in A. Shoḥat's "Taxation and its Administration", *Sefunot* 11 [*The Book of Greek Jewry*, vol. 1] (Jerusalem, 1971-1977), pp. 301-308, needs further research. — N. Svoronos's contention (*op. cit.*, p. 187) that Bayezid II imposed the *corvée* is true, although the documentation provided is misleading. The only clear reference to the initial involvement of Salonikan Jews in the supply of cloth in the period of Bayezid II is found in the Ottoman accounting records kept for that purpose towards the end of Bayezid II's reign, in 1510-1511 (published by H. Sahillioğlu, pp. 425-426). These records show that the Ottomans tapped various monetary sources for the supply of the cloth, and the principal source was the poll-tax levied from the *eyâlet* (district) of Salonika. This development may have led the Jews

The aforementioned *corvée*, or “cloth tax”, as it was known in Hebrew, was collectively imposed on all the Jews of the city, but the Jewish community leaders apportioned it among the *yehidim* who could afford to pay it, and who were the tax-paying members of the congregations in town. The decline in wool manufacturing had resulted in a substantial loss of income for the middle class of the community, i.e., the craftsmen who processed the fabric and the small-time merchants. Some of the major contractors of the industry abandoned the enterprise, having by then amassed a considerable fortune in need of an outlet. As a result, these wealthy entrepreneurs shouldered the burden of the “cloth tax” which had previously been shared by a much larger public. They reacted by emigrating in droves from the city, and some even converted to Islam. Thus, those who remained in the city were for the most part large contractors whose profits were guaranteed by the mandated provision of fabric for the Janissary corps¹⁵.

Thus, the seventeenth century is marked by a decline in the importance of Salonika as a center for the manufacture and commercial distribution of woolen and other textiles, and the economic status of the Jewish community in the city declined commensurately.

Western Powers in Salonikan Commerce: First Steps

During the sixteenth century and for most of the seventeenth, the bulk of Salonikan trade with the Christian world was in the hands of Jewish and Italian merchants, who maintained the time-honored traditions of commerce in this part of southern Europe. Surprisingly, the nations of Western Europe had displayed no commercial interest in Salonika. After all, the city

of Salonika, at a later date, to suggest that they supplied the king's cloth as a substitute for the poll-tax.

On the supply of the “king's cloth” in the eighteenth century, see S. Avişur, pp. 165-168; A. Shoḥat, “The King's Clothing”, pp. 180-188; and N. Svoronos, pp. 187-188. This episode also deserves further clarification.

15. A general but imprecise picture of the tax structure is in A. Shoḥat's “The King's Clothing”, pp. 174-188. On the emigration of wealthy individuals from the city in the seventeenth century, see H. Shabtay, vol. 1, No. 65, for additional sources see E. Bashan, “The Attitude of the Sages of Salonika in the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries in the Confrontation over Oligarchical Rule”, *East and Maghreb, Research in the History of the Jews in the Orient and North Africa*, vol. 2 (Hebrew) (Ramat Gan, 1980), p. 50, n.60. On the conversion of wealthy Salonikan Jews to Islam at the close of the seventeenth century, see M. Benayahu, “The Shabbatean Movement in Greece”, *Sefunot* (Hebrew) 14 [The Book of Greek Jewry, vol. 4] (Jerusalem, 1971-1977), pp. 92-94; A. Shoḥat, “The King's Clothing”, p. 186; Y. Barnai, “On the History of the Sabbatian Movement and its Place in the Life of the Ottoman Empire”, *Pe'amim* 3 (1979), pp. 60-61.

had an excellent harbor, an ideal channel for marketing the agricultural produce of Macedonia. Why did the European powers fail to exploit the commercial possibilities of the city, as they had, for example, in Aleppo (known as Ḥalab in Arabic and as Alep in Turkish), Iskenderun (Alexandretta) or in Izmir? Two reasons may account for this neglect. First, until the end of the sixteenth century, most of the Macedonian wool was channeled into the domestic textile industry and could not, therefore, be exported as a raw material¹⁶. Second, it seems that the Ottoman authorities guarded the coasts of Salonika and its environs far more vigilantly than they did other areas on the Aegean Sea in order to prevent the export of agricultural produce¹⁷. As it was extremely difficult to keep the many islands and coasts along the Aegean under constant surveillance, the guards apparently decided to concentrate their efforts on an easier target, the port of Salonika.

Since the use of raw Macedonian wool for domestic industry had declined, a large supply of the product remained untapped. The ideal market laid in western Europe, in France, England, and Italy, whose industries clamored for more wool fabric¹⁸. These new developments quickly caught the attention of Italian and French merchants. Aside from their interest in the export of raw wool, they also had their eye on the potential profits to be made from the export of other agricultural products, such as grain, cotton, tobacco, hides, wax, etc. Although numerous restrictions made the export (via Salonika) of a highly prized item such as grain a somewhat complicated affair, the French and English were surely aware of the fact that Greek, Italian, and Jewish merchants were exporting the product in various ways through the smaller ports around the city¹⁹, and the French and English took such factors into account.

France was the first nation in Western Europe to focus its interest on the Salonikan market. In 1673, France obtained new Capitulations; the taxes

16. See above. For more information on the attempts of Salonikan Jews to prevent the sale of raw wool to western Europe in 1569, see H. Sahillioğlu, p. 420, n.20.

17. R. Paris, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille de 1660 à 1789, Le Levant* (Paris, 1957), p. 478; F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (London, 1972), vol. 2, p. 584. This work concentrates on grains but is relevant to wool as well: B. McGowen, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe, Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land 1600-1800* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 31, 40 and pertinent notes; and P. Masson, p. 435.

18. According to B. Braude, one of the reasons accounting for the decline of the Salonikan textile industry was the purchase of raw wool by the Western powers in the Balkans, which raised the price of raw wool. See B. Braude, "International Competition", pp. 445-446. On the other hand, there is no doubt that as the domestic industry declined, the supply of raw wool for export grew.

19. B. McGowen, p. 31; P. Masson, p. 436, n.

imposed on French merchants trading in the Empire were lowered to 3%, placing France on an equal footing with England and Holland. In addition, these Capitulations reconfirmed other privileges granted previously to the French, such as the right to protect all subjects of Christian lands (*dār'ül-harb* in Turkish or *Dār al-Ḥarb* in Arabic) who lacked diplomatic representation in the Empire²⁰. These Capitulations greatly boosted French trade in the Levant, and preliminary steps were taken to open a consulate and establish a French trading colony (*échelle*) in Salonika. The initiative was Joseph Fabre's the consular farmer general (*fermier général des consulats*) and director of the Franco-Mediterranean Company (*directeur de la Compagnie de la Méditerranée*)²¹.

In the wake of Fabre's initiative, in 1680 the French acquired additional rights when the sultan issued an edict (*fermān*), ordering the *Mollā* of Salonika not to levy more than a 3% tax from French merchants. Four years later, another *fermān* determined that vessels flying the English and Dutch flags (England and Holland had no consuls in Salonika) must seek the protection of the French consuls and pay the requisite duties²². In effect, these edicts were an outgrowth of the Capitulations granted in 1673.

Nevertheless, the French were hamstrung, in several ways. The Marseilles Chamber of Commerce, which dominated French trade in the Levant, disapproved of Fabre's decision to establish a consulate and doubted if any benefits would be gained therefrom. Consequently, the consulate was not really established until 1685²³. Another ten years elapsed until the first French merchant settled in the area²⁴. A French presence in Salonika was slow to develop even though the export of Macedonian wool and grain via Salonika was an obviously lucrative enterprise for the French²⁵. Although the difficulty in adjusting to the customs of Levantine trade played a role in slowing down the French²⁶, a more serious obstacle to trade in the Empire was the Ottoman war against Venice, Russia, and the Holy Roman Empire. The Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 seriously obstructed the Ottoman Empire's maritime and transcontinental trade routes in the final decades of

20. On the circumstances related to the establishment of a French consulate in Salonika, see N. Svoronos, pp. 141-142; P. Masson, p. 288; and R. Paris, pp. 477-480.

21. N. Svoronos, pp. 141-2; R. Paris, pp. 478-480.

22. N. Svoronos, p. 38.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-2; R. Paris, p. 479.

24. N. Svoronos, p. 142.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

26. For example, see the letter of the consul, Jean François Arnaud, to the secretary for maritime affairs, M. de Pontchartrain, 12 August 1699, in the Archives Nationales de France, Affaires Étrangères, B¹ 990.

the seventeenth century²⁷. The first French merchants did not begin settling in earnest in Salonika before 1703²⁸. Between 1700 and 1719, thirty-one French subjects settled in the city. Yet even this period of flourishing French trade in the city suffered intervals of paralysis. Between 1709 and 1712, a plague ravaged the city and many of its residents fled to neighboring villages. Those merchants who weathered the storm later enjoyed a peak of trading activity. Whereas in 1700 the value of French-exported goods from Salonika was 338,000 *livres*²⁹, in 1714 it rose to 634,000 *livres*³⁰.

Such numbers could not fail to impress the English. Until 1714, English merchants trading in Salonika sought French protection. The Levant Company's policy regarding the establishment of an English consulate in the area was similar to that of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce: indeed, the English learned from the experience of the French in the Levant. In 1690 Hussey, the deputy governor of the Levant Company, speaking on its behalf, likened the consulates in the area to leeches sucking the life blood out of the body, i.e., out of the merchants. He noted that much could be learned from the sorry experience of the French consulates — that it was difficult to find individuals worthy of serving in remote areas such as the Levant, and the net result of it all was harmful to trade³¹. But the economic wisdom of engaging in trade with Salonika, as manifested by French activity in the city, caused the Levant Company to reassess its position, and in 1715 Richard Kemble was appointed the first English consul in Salonika. He settled in the city permanently in 1718³². In due time, other delegations arrived: Holland, the Two Sicilies³³, and others³⁴.

The French Consulate and the Jews of Salonika

The vested interests of Western Christian nations in the city opened new vistas for the Jewish merchants, who capitalized on these economic and political changes. A clear picture of this development emerges upon investigating the web of relations that developed between the consuls, merchants,

27. N. Svoronos, p. 122.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

29. P. Masson, p. 435.

30. *Ibid.*

31. A. Wood, pp. 122, 128.

32. N. Svoronos, p. 166.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 175, 179-180.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178, 180-185.

and seamen of Christian Europe on the one hand, and the Jewish merchants of Salonika on the other, relations based on the struggle for dominance in international trade in Salonika and the satisfaction of mutual concerns³⁵.

The first to confront the realities and problems of trade in Salonika were the French. Their main interest was the purchase of sheared Macedonian wool, and in 1699 they attempted to buy the fleeces for export to France. They soon learned, to their dismay, that this would be no easy task. The Jews of Salonika had priority in everything connected with the purchase of sheared wool because they had to provide cloth for the Janissary corps. A fifth of the sheared Macedonian wool crop was sold by the growers to the authorities at a very low price, much cheaper than its real market value, and it was at this reduced price that the wool was relayed to the Jewish manufacturers. According to Jean François Arnaud³⁶, the French consul, the Jews of Salonika exploited this right in order to control the supply of sheared wool. They bought as much wool as possible, at the lowest prices, and there by monopolized the raw-wool market. Afterwards, the wool was sold to the French at high prices. According to the consul, the Jews had the backing of the Ottomans, and all his entreaties and arguments — the Ottomans were losing a lot of money by allowing the Jews to buy sheared wool so cheaply, since in any case the wool was not used to weave broadcloth — were to no avail. He even spoke about the problem to the French ambassador in Istanbul, but he, too, could not find a way around the Jewish right-of-way in buying wool. Having gotten nowhere through traditional diplomatic routes, the consul wrote the Secretary for Maritime Affairs (*Secrétaire d'État de la marine*), the Comte de Pontchartrain.

After having given the matter much thought, I was obliged to offer several gifts, a total sum of 500 *écus*³⁷, in order to settle the issue peacefully. It is a considerable sum, compared to the benefits we are apt to gain, but what can we do? Such vexations will inevitably arise with any successive government [of the Ottoman Empire]³⁸.

35. The documents used in this writer's research were not unknown. They were compiled by the Archives Nationales de France, Affaires Étrangères, hereafter cited as A.N., A.E. Svoronos consulted these documents for a chapter on the Jews and Salonikan commerce in the eighteenth century (op. cit., pp. 187-193). A number of documents culled from the Archives of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce (hereafter cited as ACCM) were published by S. Schwartzfuchs, "The Salonica 'Scale' — the Struggle Between the French and Jewish Merchants", *Sefunot* 15 (Hebrew) [*The Book of Greek Jewry*, vol. 5] (1971-1978), pp. 77-102; J. Weyl, "Les Juifs aux échelles du Levant et en Barbarie", *REJ*, vol. 13 (1896), pp. 285-292. Yet none of the above attempted to probe the significance of the commercial activity of Salonikan Jews in the historical context of their community or against the background of other factors related to the port of Salonika.

36. Served as consul from 1695 to 31 October 1699. See N. Svoronos, p. 145.

37. A silver coin; the French designation of the *gurüş* bearing the stamp of the lion.

38. See n. 26.

Since the French could not annul the most-favored status of the Salonikan Jews in their purchase of wool, they were forced to bargain year after year and to bribe the local officials so as to secure the right to buy part of the wool. In 1721 they paid the *aga* of the Janissaries in Salonika³⁹ one gold *altun*⁴⁰ each for every *balla* (bale) of wool⁴¹. Why did the Ottomans ignore the entreaties and persuasive arguments of the French, who urged them to change their policy regarding the Jewish monopoly? A likely explanation is that the sums paid to the *aga* of the Janissaries and to other functionaries in the Ottoman Empire assured them a comfortable source of income. A clear-cut policy on the question would squash the opportunity to funnel extra income into the pockets of the local officials; thus, the latter were none too eager to settle the matter. Quite possibly, there were those in the upper echelons of the Ottoman government who benefited from the bribery as well, hence the French were also unsuccessful in their attempts in Istanbul. Not only was the amount of wool purchased by the French, in this roundabout manner, inadequate, but they paid more for it than did the Jewish contractors. In their efforts to purchase other agricultural products, the French fared no better. The local Jews, utilizing their contacts in the government, managed to acquire goods even if they were contraband, and they dominated trade in leather, cotton, tobacco, and wheat by serving as the middlemen between the local market and foreign merchants⁴².

The collusion between Salonikan Jews and Ottoman authorities, a partnership based on mutual economic interests and goals, is reflected in the feud between Jacob (*Ya'aqob*) Capon⁴³ and the Jews of Livorno in Salonika⁴⁴. Jacob Capon was the *şarrāf başı*, i.e., the manager of the treasury and chief moneychanger of the pasha, the governor of Salonika. In 1732 Capon quarreled with two Jews from Livorno who traded in Salonika under the protection of the French consulate. Three of the most prominent Jewish merchants in the city, ostensibly sharing Capon's interests, came to his aid. The three were Nathan (*Natan*) Baruch⁴⁵, Samuel

39. The commander of the *orta* of the Janissary corps in Salonika, in charge of maintaining law and order in the city and its environs. His rank was that of *Çorbaci*. See N. Svoronos, p. 16. On the question of rank, see H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (Oxford, 1969), vol. 1, p. 319.

40. A gold coin that served as a fictional basis for monetary computation in the Ottoman Empire. See also, N. Svoronos, p. 189.

41. Italian. Usually, the bale was rolled up.

42. A.N., A.E., B' 994 (1736); N. Svoronos, p. 164.

43. The family apparently hailed from the city of Capoa, Italy.

44. See below.

45. An extended family in Salonika. See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of the Jews of Salonica* (Hebrew) (2 vol., Jerusalem, 1968), index.

Namias (*Shemu'el Nahmiyas*)⁴⁶, and Jacob (*Ya'aqob*) Levi. The three were the chief middlemen⁴⁷ for the Livorno Jews and for several French merchants as well, and they diligently began to undermine the business affairs of Jacob Capon's two rivals. Among other things, the latter had been excommunicated by the rabbis of the local community. Capon's rivals found themselves in dire straits. A French vessel loaded with goods in their name was anchored in the harbor; the goods had to be unloaded and the ship reloaded with cargo destined for Livorno. But they couldn't reach the ship owing to the excommunication. The French consul, turning to the *Mollā* of Salonika, charged that such acts constituted a violation of the Capitulations. The *Mollā* arrested Jacob Capon and two of his three cohorts, but they were all released after a few hours. Rumor had it that 500 *gurūs*⁴⁸ or more exchanged hands at the time. The *Mollā* apologized and said that the pressure of so many Salonikan citizens demanding the release of the arrested had proved insurmountable. He promised to pursue the matter at some point in the future, but of course he never found the spare time⁴⁹. Since Capon's cohorts continued to act as mediators in French business affairs, the *chancellor* of the consulate assumed that they would not give up until the Livorno Jews surrendered⁵⁰.

In order to weaken the Jewish cartel, at least in the wool market, in 1732 the French decided to organize so as to meet the challenge, and at a meeting held on 20 May 1732, the French merchants in Salonika resolved that henceforth they would no longer bid against each other when buying wool, but would instead purchase it *en bloc* and at a uniform price, each buyer receiving an equal amount of wool⁵¹. The resolution was also signed

46. A son of a wealthy and eminent family of the first half of the sixteenth century. See, for example, Rashdam, *Hoshen Mishpat*, No. 402, on the controversy between the communities of Lisbon and Evora regarding the affiliation of a member of the Namias family. On other members of this prominent family, see *Hoshen Mishpat*, Nos. 148, 161, 244, and 347; *Eben ha'Ezer*, No. 17; and Y. Adrabi, Nos. 82 and 106. On the sages of the community born of this family, see I.R. Molcho, "The Covenants of the Jewish Community of Salonica in Ladino", *Sefunot* 2 (1958), pp. 32-60.

Shemuel Bakhar Yiṣṣhak Ibn Nahmiyas died in the month of Kislev, 5511 [1751]. A poem inscribed on his tombstone exalted his lineage, wealth, and generous support of the poor and of Jewish scholars. See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, pp. 612, 615.

47. *Censals*.

48. The silver coin most widely used in the Ottoman Empire at the time. On the value of coins in this period, see N. Svoronos, pp. 82-83.

49. Letter, Chancellor Broche to the Comte de Maurepas, secretary for maritime affairs, 15 February 1732, A.N., A.E., B¹ 944.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.* See also A.N., A.E., B¹ 944, sections from the minute-book of the consular chancellery, record of the meeting between the assembly of the *nation* and the consul, Joseph Bayle, 20 May 1732.

by the Livorno Jews who traded under the aegis of the French⁵². The French hoped that such measures would lower the price of wool. The results were not spectacular. After five months, the French reported to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs that in 1732 they had managed to send only 2,000 bales of wool to Marseilles, whereas before, the annual quantity had been about 4,000 bales. Two factors accounted for this: (a) a plague had ravaged the sheep, and (b) a Jewish firm (*maison*) trading under Dutch protection had managed to purchase huge amounts of wool by relying on the services of their Ottoman and local Jewish contacts. That year the French paid the inflated price of 21 *aspers*⁵³ for an *ōqa*⁵⁴ of wool, an unprecedented rate, they claimed, despite scrupulous adherence to the resolution they themselves had signed⁵⁵. It was perhaps this incident that prompted the French merchants to waive the resolution. In any case, it had obviously been nullified, since in 1736 the secretary for maritime affairs recommended anew that the consul instruct merchants to purchase wool, cotton, hides, tobacco, and grain from the Jews *en bloc* and at a uniform rate so as to lower prices⁵⁶. Yet all these maneuvers and schemes could not solve the problem, and the Jews of Salonika continued to dominate the raw-wool market⁵⁷.

An additional obstacle standing in the way of the French in Salonika was their lack of credit. The Jews of Salonika controlled most of the credit sources in the city and determined the rate of interest. This credit squeeze working against the French is noteworthy. Indeed, it makes one wonder about the business acumen of French traders in the city. Whereas the Jews and Italians had long been sending bills of exchange⁵⁸ throughout the

52. A.N., A.E., B¹ 944. See sections from the minute-books of the consular chancellery, 23 May 1732, on the oath taken by the Jews from Livorno to implement the resolution.

53. A small silver coin, valued at one-eightieth of the *gurūs* stamped with the lion's emblem. See J. Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant ou Instruction générale pour ce qui regarde le commerce des marchandises de France et les pays étrangers* (Paris, 1777), vol. 1, p. 752.

54. A unit of weight equivalent to 3 lbs. 2 oz. of Marseilles. See J. Savary, p. 747.

55. A.N., A.E., B¹ 944. Letter, Chancelier Broche to the Comte de Maurepas, 25 October 1732.

56. See n.42.

57. On the status of Jews in wool commerce and the struggles of the French in that trade until the end of the eighteenth century, see S. Avişur, p. 167; I.S. Emmanuël, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique* (Paris, 1936), p. 58; N. Svoronos, pp. 187-190; F. de Beaujour, *A View of the Commerce of Greece*, pp. 100-102 (see n.2).

58. In Italian, the *polizza di cambio*; in French, *lettre de change*. A written note whose purpose was the prevention of actual monetary transfers from one place to another. On the use and nature of the bill of exchange, see M. Rozen, "The Fattoria", pp. 111-115; *idem*, "Les marchands juifs livournais à Tunis et le commerce avec Marseille à la fin du XVII^e siècle", *Michael IX* (1985), p. 92; and R. de Roover, *L'évolution de la lettre de change* (Paris, 1953).

Mediterranean⁵⁹, it was only in the middle of the eighteenth century that the French in Salonika began to send them to Istanbul, Izmir, Venice, and certain German cities. Only then did they shake their dependence on the credit they were forced to obtain from their competitors⁶⁰.

The Jews of Livorno Trading under the Protection of the French Consulate in Salonika

Relations between the French consulate and the Jews of Salonika took a different turn once the consulate placed the first Italian Jewish merchants under their wing. The willingness of France to protect Italian Jews who settled in the Ottoman Empire, granting them the same rights as French subjects, attracted Jewish merchants to the Levant, especially those from Livorno in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; others arrived from Venice, the Papal States, and other Italian states⁶¹. Whereas the local Jews were the subjects of the sultan and, as such, were considered *dhimmi*s, or second-class citizens as defined by Islamic law, the Jews under French protection were exempted from the poll-tax (*ḥarāj*) and were free of other restrictions imposed on *dhimmi*s by Islamic law⁶². In short order, near every French consulate there sprang a colony of Sephardic and Portuguese Jews from Italy⁶³. The French called these Jews “*les Juifs protégés de France*”, or “*les*

59. See M. Rozen, “The Fattoria”, *ibid.*; W. Brulez, *Marchands flamands à Venise, 1568-1605* (Brussels, 1965), vol. 1, pp. 23-25, 53, 68, 374-5, 395, and many more, all from the Archivio di Stato di Venezia.

60. N. Svoronos, pp. 120-121.

61. See n.63.

62. On the concept of *dhimma* in Islam, see the article of Cl. Cohen, *E.I.*; C.E. Bosworth, “The Concept of Dhimma in Early Islam”, in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire, The Central Lands*, eds. B. Braude and B. Lewis (New York and London, 1982), vol. 1, pp. 37-51.

63. In most of the French consulates in the Levant, these communities appeared more noticeably after Marseilles was declared a duty-free port (see n.72) and after the capitulation treaty of 1673, which reconfirmed France’s right to protect subjects of Christian lands who lacked diplomatic representation in the Empire. On these Capitulations, see “François Emmanuel Guignard, 1735-1821, comte de Saint-Priest, Ambassadeur de France en Constantinople”, in C. Schefer, *Mémoire sur l’ambassade de Turquie et sur le commerce des Français dans le Levant* (Paris, 1866; Amsterdam, 1974), p. 473. On the appearance of Francos in the Levant, e.g., in Aleppo, see A.N., A.E., B’ 77, Alep 1708-1715, which notes that the Francos had been French protégés for about forty years, i.e., as of 1671-1673 (the consul could not furnish an exact date). In the volumes of consular correspondence from Aleppo, a Jew from Livorno is first mentioned in a letter from the consul, François Jullien, 22 August 1691. See the Archives de la Chambre de Commerce de Marseille, hereafter cited as ACCM, J 899, Alep. Lettres de François Jullien (1685-1692). The Francos are first mentioned in 1693 in the *inventaire* of the Archives of the Chancellery in Aleppo. (ACCM, J 1013, in the case of *Benjamin Lubergon v. Isaac Lopes*, 29 February 1693). On the appearance of Francos in Izmir and North Africa, see M. Rozen, “Les marchands”, p. 90, n.7.

Juifs livournais”⁶⁴, and more rarely, “*les Juifs italiens et espagnols*” or “*les Portugais*”⁶⁵. In Jewish communities where they took up residence, these Jews were known as “Francos”⁶⁶, i.e., those who hail from the region of “Frankia”⁶⁷, the Hebrew designation for Christian, as distinguished from Muslim, lands.

Why did the French decide to protect these Jews? First, French patronage was the vestige of a privilege the French had exercised in the past, the right to protect all subjects of Christian states (*dār’ülharb*) who lacked diplomatic representation in the Empire, and it was thus a matter of prestige. But a more important factor was the *modus operandi* of the French consulates. The consulates operated in a highly undisciplined manner and relied on the taxes levied from those trading under their protection. The consuls never had enough money to maintain what they considered an “appropriate” lifestyle fit for a consul⁶⁸. To achieve that standard, they borrowed money, sank into debt, and constantly sought new sources of potential revenue⁶⁹. The merchants who enjoyed French consular protec-

64. On the use of the term in Salonika, see A.N., A.E., B' 944, Broche to the Secretary for Maritime Affairs, 15 February 1732; on the testimony of Livorno Jews, 23 May 1732, *ibid*. More data on Salonika is available in A.N., Marine B', F 77v, 112v, 115v.

65. In Aleppo, *les Juifs italiens et espagnols*. See A.N., A.E., B' 77, Letter, 12 December 1701. All three designations, “*les Juifs italiens ou espagnols ou portugais*” are mentioned in a letter, 10 July 1699, A.N., A.E., B' 76 Alep.

66. On Francos in Salonika, see Abraham Meyuḥas's *Responsa, Benay Abraham* (Hebrew) (Istanbul, 1773), p. 91 a; Benbenishty Gatinyu's *Responsa, Mašref la-Kesef* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1867), No. 36; Shimshon Morpurgo's *Responsa, Shemesh Sedaka* (Hebrew) (Venice, 1743), vol. 1, *Yoreh De'ah*, No. 61; Yosef 'Imanu'el Ergas's *Responsa, Dibrey Yosef* (Hebrew) (Livorno, 1742), No. 25; Nissim Gabay's *Responsa, Peat ha-Negeb*, (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1837), *Hoshen Mishpat*, No. 32; Yosef Molkho, *Shulḥan Gaboh, Oraḥ Hayim* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1756), p. 8b; Yiṣḥak Molkho, *Orḥot Yosher* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1831), p. 149a; Yosef Modiliyano's *Responsa, Rosh Mashbir* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1821), *Yoreh De'ah*, No. 17. — One should note that the term “Franc” as a designation for this group was used in Aleppo and appears in French documents (although more rarely). See A.N., A.E., B' 76, letter of Chambon, the French consul, to the Comte de Pontchartrain, 20 June 1698, “*Les Juifs francs qui s'établissent en Alep sous la protection des François*”.

67. See, for example, M. Rozen, “The Incident of the Converted Boy — A Chapter in the History of the Jews in Seventeenth-Century Jerusalem”, *Cathedra*, 14 (1980) (Hebrew), pp. 77-78, esp. p. 78, n. 19; Manuscript Budapest, Kaufmann Collection, No. 164, *Responsa* (Hebrew), pp. 646-647, enquiry sent to R. Shelomo Laniado on “The sons of the Francos who are from the towns of Frankia who came to live here in Şoba [Aleppo]”.

68. On Salonika, see A.N., A.E., B' 990, letter, Jean François Arnaud to the Comte de Pontchartrain, 12 August 1699; in addition, see the letter of Boismond to Pontchartrain, 10 November 1716, A.N., A.E., B' 991, which contains a complaint about the difficulty of financing consular affairs in a respectable manner. In Aleppo, see the letter of Lemaire to Pontchartrain, 28 December 1710, A.N., A.E., B' 77, vol. 2, which stresses the connection between taxation of Jews and the status of the consul.

69. On the lifestyle of French consuls in the Levant, their income, expenses, and relations with the *nation*, see P. Masson, pp. 445-454; and R. Paris, pp. 201-203.

tion also provided French vessels with cargo for shipment between Italy and the Levant. In brief, the consuls clearly wanted to expand the commerce under their aegis. However, this desire was not always understood by the French merchants. As for the Jews, they were none too eager to pay these duties and tried to circumvent them in legal and extralegal fashion. They were often accused of resorting to fraud to avoid the payment of taxes, and of fostering unfair competition with the French merchants⁷⁰. These Jews were forbidden to trade directly with France, as that was the monopoly of the French merchants. Despite this injunction, Jews attempted to trade directly with France anyway⁷¹, a lucrative enterprise once Marseilles was declared a free port in 1669⁷². French merchants and consuls alike often complained about this state of affairs, but the latter continued to extend their protection, and the former transacted deals and formed partnerships with Jews in defiance of French law, in order to allow Jews to trade with Marseilles⁷³. This broad outline of the relations governing Jewish merchants under French protection and the French consulates and *nations*^{73b}, obtained not only for Salonika but for other colonies of Francos in the Ottoman Empire, e.g., Izmir, Istanbul, Aleppo, Alexandria, Cairo and some ports of North Africa.

Most of the Francos settled near the French consulates in the Levant around 1673. But in Salonika, the Francos arrived much later. The first known reference to Livorno Jews under consular protection is made in 1707⁷⁴; the Jews mentioned are Moshe Ḥayim de Leon and his son, Moshe Ḥananiya de Leon (Vitta y Moise Gratia-dio Leone)⁷⁵. Although they are

70. See, for example, ACCM J 1584, "De Par le Roy", 18 March 1693.

71. See M. Rozen, "Les marchands", pp. 92-129; and ACCM J 1584, "Ordonnance du Roi", 4 February 1727, sects. 3-7.

72. On this issue and on Colbert's reforms, which led to the growth of French trade in the Levant, see P. Masson, pp. 160-177.

73. See M. Rozen, "Les marchands", and future references.

73^b. Nation was the French term designating a united community of French nationals living abroad. The *nation* could include people of diverse pursuits, such as merchants, priests and others.

74. When Chancellor Broche intervened on behalf of the Leone family in their dispute with Jacob Capon and the local Jews, Broche stressed that the Leone family had traded under French protection for twenty-five years. See A.N., A.E., B' 944, Letter of 5 February 1732.

75. Vitta and Moise Gratia-dio Leone are listed among the Francos who signed a contract with the local Salonikan Jews regarding the Francos' cooperation in the payment of community taxes. See A. Meyuhās, p. 91a. In that contract, Vitta (Ḥayim) Leone (de Leon) agreed to pay not only his own taxes but those of his brother Yehuda, of his son-in-law Yehuda Almilda, of his son Moshe, and all dependents of the above. The text of the contract is cited by B. Gatinyu in the section of *Hoshen Mishpat*, No. 39. Moshe Ḥayim de Leon, described as a *gebir* (lord, or wealthy man), is mentioned in 1718 in Salonika. See Shelomo Amarillio's *Responsa, Kerem Shelomo* (Hebrew) (Salonika, 1719), *Hoshen Mishpat*, No. 25. Ḥayim Yehuda

mentioned again 1709⁷⁶, there is a hiatus until 1715⁷⁷, after which their names are consistently cited along with those of other Jews.

Why didn't the Jews from Christian lands arrive to trade under French protection before 1707, and how should one explain the hiatus from 1709 to 1715? One can safely assume that the Jews avoided Salonika during that period for the same reasons that the French and English did. A rampant epidemic in the city until 1712 forced many merchants to flee and deterred the settlement of others. Moreover, the continued war between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire, Russia, and Venice was an added disincentive. With the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), and once it was clear that Salonikan commerce afforded the French a comfortable income⁷⁸, others joined the bandwagon.

The first settlers from Livorno who came to trade in the Levant were of two types: (a) those who had not prospered in Livorno and who wanted to try their luck in the Levant, and (b) the sons or poor relatives of merchant families from Livorno⁷⁹. From the very outset, these settlers had strong commercial ties, and at times a family alliance, with prosperous Livorno firms that could provide substantial backing when needed. Thus, for example, in 1716 the firm of Villareal in Livorno sent two members of the family, Jacob (*Ya'aqob*) and Raphaël (*Refa'el*) Gabay Villareal, to set up a branch in Salonika. As early as 1686, in order to trade freely with France, the parent company had exerted pressures to secure a residence permit enabling another member of the family to live permanently in Marseilles⁸¹.

Leone (sic) died in 1759. The following epitaph, in rhyme, was inscribed on his tombstone: "He has departed for a world more peaceful and tranquil, / Here lies a man who feared God and shunned evil, / A lord and master [*gebir*] most honored and charitable / R. Ḥayim Yehuda Leone, of blessed memory". See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 698. Moise Gratia-dio Leone also died in 1759. I.S. Emmanuel refers to him as Ḥananiya Leone, "the august and wealthy lord [*gebir*]". See *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 102. In 1759, there was an epidemic in Salonika and the two apparently succumbed.

76. A memorandum sent to the French ambassador in Istanbul, 4 September 1725. See A.N., A.E., B' 992.

77. See reference 76 and letter of the consul, Boismond, to the secretary of maritime affairs, 10 November 1716, in A.N., A.E., B' 991.

78. See references 29-30.

79. The French in Salonika testified that the Francos who had settled in Salonika arrived penniless. See Boismond's memorandum of 29 December 1721, which reveals what Boismond knew about the protection extended to foreigners in Salonika, in A.N., A.E., B' 991; See also Budapest MS (reference 67). On poverty among Francos in Salonika, see reference 73 pertaining to the contract concluded between Francos and the local Jews; see also the discussion of the attempts of Robino, Calvo, and Fernandez Chicco to obtain French protection.

80. Letter, Boismond to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 10 November 1716, in A.N., A.E., B' 991.

81. A.N., Marine B' 56, F163.

Thus, the family built up a commercial network of its own in the Mediterranean. Evidence of the parent company's continual support of its Salonikan subsidiary emerges from the urgent message sent by the House of Villareal in Livorno to the Secretary of Maritime Affairs, the Comte de Pontchartrain. The message contained a request that he lower the taxes on cargo loaded onto French ships in Salonika. Should the secretary refuse, the merchandise bound for Salonika would be shipped on English vessels, since cargo on English vessels was taxed at half the price demanded by the French⁸².

Five years after the House of Villareal began to trade in Salonika, French merchants discovered how vulnerable they were to the combined forces of a local Jewish community well connected with the Ottoman authorities and possessing capital ripe for joint investment with other Jews who enjoyed the privileges of European subjects. By 1721 there were three firms of Livorno Jews trading in Salonika under French protection: Vitta and Moise Gratia-dio Leone, Jacob and Raphaël Villareal, and Daniel Mendoza⁸³. The Jews would buy goods that were officially a government monopoly, from the local Ottoman authorities, paying cheap prices; in turn, the Jews sold the goods to the French via the Francos, who served as the intermediaries in the transaction. The Francos thus became the middlemen in the deals struck between the local government and the local Jews on one hand, and the French on the other. Meanwhile, the local Jews determined the price of the goods. Local Jews, again using the Francos as middlemen, would "rent" the names of French merchants and seamen and then export merchandise directly to Marseilles, a flagrant contravention of the law which prohibited all foreigners from engaging in direct or indirect trade with Marseilles⁸⁴. According to the French, the Jews "rented" French names unabashedly. They were wont to turn on their own to the chancellery of the consulate and would register their business holdings

82. Letter, Boismond to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 10 November 1716, A.N., A.E., B¹ 991.

83. Jacob Gabay Viliareal (sic) died in 1736. The date cited by I.S. Emmanuel, 1727, is an error. On his tombstone, part of the epitaph read: "The tomb of the august lord [gebir] and lover of truth, who sought the goodwill of his Father in Heaven, always generous, the revered and wise R. Ya'aqob Gabay Viliareal (sic), may he rest in Paradise, citizen of Livorno". See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 574. In 1736, Jacob Villareal's last will and testament was registered in the chancellery of the French consulate. See the *inventaire* of the chancellery, A.N., A.E., B¹ 997. — Daniel Mendoza no longer appears in the documentation. Apparently he did not prosper and sought better fortune elsewhere.

84. See M. Rozen, "Les marchands", pp. 97, 115-116. On the breach of law by Jews, see the letter of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 21 February 1720, ACCM J 1586.

under the names of Francos, so as to avoid paying taxes to the Ottomans. Yet why would the *chancellor* have agreed to the subterfuge? The explanation is simple. Neither the chancellery nor the parties renting their names emerged empty-handed from the affair. Envious Frenchmen would point out that the Livorno Jews who had settled in Salonika without a penny to their name, had grown so rich in five years that they began to purchase vessels and employ French seamen, sending the vessels off to Marseilles under the names of French seamen, and listing them as the *capitaines* and *patrons* of the vessels — even though everyone knew the vessels belonged to the Jews, who did not even bother to cover their tracks. Raphaël Villareal bought a ship, employed a French captain, and had no qualms about naming his ship the *Archange-Raphaël*⁸⁵. In 1721 the French consul, Boismond, complained that the Jews of Livorno enjoyed the rights of French subjects without having done a thing to earn them, without incurring any obligations in return, and without displaying the slightest loyalty or allegiance to the French crown. At the slightest whim, he continued, these Jews were free to reject French patronage. The delegates of the French *nation* in Salonika lamented the fact that “Salonika is the only place where such distressing events occur”⁸⁶. In fact, this state of affairs existed in all the *échelles* of the Levant where Francos were extended French protection; in all of them, the French charged that Francos competed with French trade⁸⁷; at the same time, there were always a few Frenchmen who volunteered to collaborate with Francos in contravention of French law⁸⁸.

85. Memorandum, Boismond, 29 December 1721, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 991.

86. *Ibid.*

87. See, for example, the letter of the consul in Aleppo, Louis Chambon, 22 June 1692, ACCM J 900; A.N., Marine B⁷ 64, F 592,595; A.N., A.E., B¹ 76, F 327r; “Mémoire pour servir d’instructions au sieur Marquis de Bonnac, lieutenant pour le Roy au gouvernement du pays de Foix, allant à Constantinople en qualité d’Ambassadeur (à Paris, 30.5.1716), instructions complémentaires”, hereafter cited as “Mémoire d’instructions”, in P. Duparc, ed., *Recueil des instructions données aux Ambassadeurs et Ministres de France depuis les traités de Westphalie jusqu’à la Révolution Française*, series XXIX (Turkey) (Paris, 1969), pp. 240, 254, hereafter cited as *Recueil des instructions*.

88. There is abundant material attesting to the close cooperation between the French and the Jews in the Levant and North Africa and their joint contravention of French and Ottoman law. Numerous discussions on the subject were held in Paris and Marseilles, e.g., A.N., Marine B⁷ 68, fol. 75v; 431v; A.N., A.E., B¹ 313, vol. 1, fols. 77-79; 114; A.N., Marine B⁷ 59, fols. 61, 39, 80, 140, 230, 251v; B⁷ 64, fols. 49, 600, and 626v; ACCM J 1584; 1587; and 1589. See also Bonnac, “Mémoire d’Instructions”, in P. Duparc, *Recueil des instructions*, p. 240. On the attempts of Livorno Jews in the Levant to penetrate trade with Marseilles, see “Mémoire pour servir d’instruction au sieur Marquis de Villeneuve, Conseiller d’État, allant à Constantinople en qualité d’Ambassadeur de sa majesté, Versailles 11.8.1728, instructions complémentaires”, in Duparc, *Recueil des instructions*, pp. 299, 313; and “Mémoire pour servir d’instruction au

French anxiety over the alliance of Livorno and Salonikan Jews and their infiltration of French trade, is manifest in the feud between the *nation* of French merchants in Salonika and the consul, Le Blanc de Favedic⁸⁹. In 1725 the merchants of Salonika sent a letter to Paris and wrote that the Jews were systematically violating French law. They voiced particular concern over the Jews' connection with the local merchants and their creeping infiltration of trade with Marseilles. The French further charged that greed had led Le Blanc de Favedic to favor the Jews over the French. In reply, the consul wrote to Paris and denied the charges. He wrote that in order to placate the delegates of the *nation*, he no longer visited the Jewish firms under his protection, visits that he and his predecessors used to make periodically without arousing anyone's antagonism. In his view, the accusation that Jews were violating the law was shameless, since the French violated it as well whenever it proved expedient to do so. From his communication, it appears that some Frenchmen tended to cooperate with the Jews and even undertook joint ventures with them. But the faction opposed to such collaboration won the day by intimidating the other merchants, who were afraid to express an opinion at the meeting of the *nation*. Le Blanc de Favedic considered such conduct unethical and insufferable, since "liberty is the soul of commerce"⁹⁰.

In order to mollify his detractors, Le Blanc de Favedic undertook certain measures against the Jews. The interlocking interests of the local merchants and protégés of the consulate was an amalgam that damaged French commerce in the following way: the Jews of Livorno violated the laws governing the distribution of grain. According to the law, all grain acquired by the French, as well as by Jews who traded under French consular protection, was to be divided equally among all the merchants. As it turned out, the Jews of Livorno purchased the grain from the local Jews without letting the delegates of the *nation* in on the bargain. The *nation* took the

sieur Comte des Alleurs allant à Constantinople en qualité d'Ambassadeur du Roy, Versailles 12.2.1747", in Duparc, *Recueil des instructions*, p. 380.

89. Served as consul from 1 November 1724 to 1727. See N. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique*, p. 145. He was sent back to France because of his heated disputes with the *nation*.

90. Letter, Le Blanc de Favedic to the Comte d'Andrazel, the French ambassador in Istanbul, 20 November 1725; synopsis of d'Andrazel's letters to Le Blanc de Favedic, from Belgrade, 6 June 1725, and from Pera (a suburb of Istanbul), 7 June 1725, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 992. For more information on Jewish penetration of trade with Marseilles, see the letters of the Secretary for Maritime Affairs, the Comte de Maurepas, to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 19 June 1726 and 11 September 1726, in ACCM J 1589; See also the letter of Pierre Cardin Le Bret, the *intendant* of Provence, also in charge of commercial affairs, to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 22 September 1726, in ACCM J 1586.

Francos to court and Le Blanc de Favedic declared the Francos guilty⁹¹. Nevertheless, the French felt that he had paid mere lipservice to their cause, and they continued to accuse him. This time he was charged with failing to prevent foreign vessels docking in Salonika from turning to the Francos, who encroached on the livelihood of the French. Le Blanc de Favedic decided to clarify the status of Livorno Jews in other *échelles* of the Levant, and he asked the French ambassador in Istanbul, the Comte d'Andrazel, to ascertain if foreigners in other *échelles* of the Levant were prohibited from doing business with Jews under consular protection, and if they were limited to dealing with the French alone⁹². The ambassador's response was unequivocal.

It has been confirmed that in all the *échelles*, foreigners have always been free to employ the services of the *protégés*. They cannot be coerced into dealing solely with the *nation*. We have no recourse but to leave things as they are⁹³.

The quarrels in the *échelle* of Salonika became so acrimonious that on 6 November 1725 a special emissary of the French Ministry of Maritime Affairs arrived to investigate the charges against Le Blanc de Favedic and to try and effect a compromise between the parties. The emissary, M. d'Ez, full of good will, drew up a lengthy and tedious document whose contents indicated that an agreement had not been reached and that perhaps M. d'Ez had not really gotten to the bottom of the affair. On the one hand, he recognized that most of the grievances of the members of the *nation* sprang from their envy of Livorno Jews who had prospered so quickly. On the other hand, he asserted that the consul had not proved his innocence⁹⁴. The consul then claimed that d'Ez had been partial in his judgment of the merchants and favored them⁹⁵. D'Ez's most interesting conclusion was reserved for one of the Villareal brothers, probably Jacob. Villareal represented the business affairs of Livorno Jews, and in d'Ez's view, he did so in brutal and arrogant fashion.

91. The *inventaire* of the chancellery of the consulate records four meetings of the *nation* devoted to this particular grievance in 1725; the edict of the consul is also recorded. The *inventaire* records the topics discussed, the legal proceedings, etc., in capsule form. Thus, the details of the affair cannot be gleaned from the *inventaire* (see A.N., A.E., B¹ 977). Allusions to the affair appear in d'Ez's report to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs (see n.94).

92. See n. 90; also Favedic to d'Andrazel, 20 July 1725, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 922.

93. See n. 90. The response was appended to the letter of the ambassador in Pera.

94. D'Ez's report was written on 19 March 1726 and is fifty-four pages long. See A.N., A.E., B¹ 933.

95. D'Ez's report; see also Favedic to Maurepas, 29 January 1726 and 6 February 1726, in A.N. A.E., B¹ 993.

The man sets little value on his equals or his superiors, and even less on the French merchants, whom he treats as his inferiors in every respect⁹⁶.

Even if we ignore the causes and essence of the feud, d'Ez's depiction of Villareal says a great deal about the self-confidence exhibited by Francos in Salonika, a security anchored in the economic power they had gained in only a few years.

The dispute with Le Blanc de Favedic was a factor that prompted the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to issue a new edict on 4 February 1727, which reiterated the prohibitions and restrictions to be observed by protégés of the French consulate, and which defined the limitations imposed on French consuls, merchants, and seamen in the Levant and North Africa, in their dealings with local Jews and other protégés. The prologue to the edict stated that the decree had been issued because of the conduct of the consuls⁹⁷.

In the year following the issuance of the edict, the Francos and the *nation* still struggled with the affair, but afterwards no further grievances were voiced over the infiltration of French trade and the renting of names. Perhaps the Francos had accepted the verdict. On the other hand, the fact that the infiltration of French trade continued to preoccupy so intensely all the parties involved in France and the Levant, is proof that the phenomenon persisted⁹⁸, possibly in Salonika itself. Thus, silence may have reigned because the French merchants simply gave up the fight. In any case, although numerous disputes continued to pit the Francos and the *nation* against each other, the reasons for them had changed. Two principal causes of friction affected relations between the Francos and the French consulate in Salonika between 1730 and 1750: (a) the refusal of Francos to pay certain duties imposed by the consulate, and (b) the rights of Francos to participate in consular ceremonies and to attend the consul's formal visits with prominent guests from Christian lands or with the country's élite.

96. The remarks are in the report sent to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs (see n.94).

97. "Ordonnance du Roi, Portant règlement sur ce qui doit être observé dans les Échelles de Levant & de Barbarie, de la part des Juifs et autres étrangers qui y jouissent de la protection de France", in ACCM J 1584. The edict appears in J. Weyl's "Les Juifs aux échelles du Levant et en Barbarie", pp. 289-292; See also Z. Szajkowski, "Franco-Judaica: An Analytical bibliography of books, pamphlets, briefs and other printed documents pertaining to the Jews in France (1500-1788)", *PAAJR* (1962), p. 38, §412.

98. See n.88; See also Maurepas to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 12 March 1727, in ACCM J 1586, dealing with these disputes; see Maurepas's letter of 21 October 1727, dealing with a French vessel carrying three barrels of indigo from Marseilles for the Leone firm in Salonika, in ACCM J 1589.

The chief duties that Jews under consular protection were obliged to pay were as follows:

1. *Droits d'entrée*. Customs duties upon entry. These duties were placed on goods that arrived for the Francos in Salonika, on any incoming vessel. The duties were placed at about 2% of the value of the goods. They were estimated once every three months by the assembly of French merchants, the consul, and *députés de la nation*. Incoming vessels carrying goods for the French, and empty vessels, were tax-exempt.

2. *Droits de sortie*. Exit duties. These were of two kinds: (a) *avarie de l'échelle*, a tax levied from the French as well, ranging from 0.003% to 2% of the value of the goods. If the vessel carried no cargo, a global tax was paid according to vessel type. (b) *Le droit de consulat de sortie*, a consular exit tax. This tax was levied from all ships sailing from Salonika to Italy or to other areas that were beyond the jurisdiction of the Marseilles chamber of Commerce. The tax was placed at 2% of the value of the goods sent on the account of all non-French merchants under French consular protection.

3. *Cottimo*. This global tax was levied from all vessels, whether or not they carried goods for the French or their protégés⁹⁹.

The Francos could not see the logic in paying the *droits de sortie* on goods shipped from Salonika on English, Dutch, or other non-French vessels, to non-French merchants in Livorno or any other district outside France. They claimed that the *avarie* and the *droit de consulat de sortie* cut into their profits and tempted their partners in Livorno to engage merchants connected with patrons who did not levy such taxes. In 1722 the House of Villareal refused to pay the tariff¹⁰⁰, and seven years later the House of David Morpurgo & Benjamin (*Binyamin*) Seppilly followed suit. When Morpurgo and Seppilly saw that the *nation* remained inflexible, they both renounced French protection and switched to the Dutch consul, who also represented the interests of the Holy Roman Empire in Salonika¹⁰¹. In 1732 additional merchants from Livorno, granted French protection, established two firms in Salonika: Jacob Henriquez Miranda & Company and Fernandez Diaz & David Sacchy¹⁰². The two firms, especially the former,

99. On these duties, see N. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique*, pp. 67-75.

100. *Inventaire* of the chancellery (see n.91), in A.N., A.E., B¹ 977.

101. On the refusal of Morpurgo & Seppilly to pay the exit duties, see the *inventaire* of the chancellery in A.N., A.E., B¹ 977. When Morpurgo wanted to reinstate himself as a French protégé, a lengthy correspondence ensued between Salonika and Paris. The letters show that Morpurgo & Seppilly had left French protection in that year. On 16 July 1729, Maurepas urged the consul, Baile, to do everything in his power to lure Morpurgo back to French protection. See Pierre Thomas to Maurepas, 30 June 1737, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 944.

102. The writ of protection for these two firms was approved at a meeting of the *nation* on 18 September 1732; protection was also extended to their partners. The guarantor for the firm

waged intensive propaganda against the payment of duties immediately upon receiving French protection. The consul remonstrated that the Jewish protégés in Aleppo had asked to be exempt from the very same tax, and the Secretary for Maritime Affairs had turned them down. The Francos hinted unsubtly that in Aleppo the Jews had recourse to only one consulate, whereas in Salonika the Jews could pick and choose, and what was to prevent their partners in Livorno from engaging Jews who enjoyed the protection of other consulates¹⁰³?

The lawsuits regarding the consular right to exact the customs dragged on. Two years after the *nation* took them to Court, the Francos filed a counter-motion, and in 1740 they were still mired in the suit when the well-respected firm of Leone joined the fray. The case was prolonged because, for the duration of the hearings, the Jews had to pay the duties; meanwhile, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs would not undertake additional measures that would cause the Jews to reject French protection, an impasse that suited the ministry perfectly. The Francos, well aware of the reasons for the delay, claimed that for the French merchants in Salonika, the king's protection was a matter of national honor and glory. But they (the Francos) were merely merchants living in Salonika in order to make money, and were not particularly attached to the area. Indeed, they had

of Jacob Henriquez Miranda was a local Jew, Mordekay Abouaf. The guarantor for the firm of Fernandez Diaz & Sacchy was a middleman (*Censal*) and a local Jew, Abraham Henriquez Miranda. Abraham Henriquez Miranda's guarantorship for the firm of Diaz & Sacchy, rather than for the firm of Jacob Henriquez Miranda, was a function of the family ties between Abraham and Jacob Miranda. Relatives were ordinarily not accepted as guarantors. Although in Abraham Miranda's letter of guarantorship, he is described as a *Censal* of the city (Salonika), Jacob Miranda is not mentioned in the agreement between the Francos and the local Jews, signed in 1744. Abraham Miranda is cited, and he paid the duties for all the members of the family. For information on the assembly of the *nation* and the decision to extend French protection to Jacob Miranda, Fernandez Diaz, and David Sacchy, see A.N., A.E., B' 997. On the agreement between the local Jews and the Francos, see A. Meyuḥas, p. 91a; and B. Gatinyu, No. 36.

Abraham Enriques (sic) Miranda died in 1760 (see I. S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 703). He subsidized the distribution of several published works [see Yiṣṣhak ha-Kohen, *Batey Kehuna*, vol. 2 (Salonika, 1744)], and in the introduction to this book, he was hailed as the "august and honorable lord, Abraham Enriques Miranda". David Fernandez Diaz and David Sacchy (in Hebrew, Shaky) were also included in the aforementioned agreement. Their firm paid taxes not only for the members of their household but for Shemuel Robino; his brother and their families; for David Vilitro and his family; "and for all the other poor Francos who reside among us in this city". David Fernandez Diaz died in 1769. The epitaph on his tombstone read: "A virtuous and God-fearing man, the eminent lord...David Fernandez" (see I. S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 278).

103. See the letter of Bayle to Maurepas, 26 October 1732, and Bayle's letter of 4 June 1733, in which he confirms the decision of the secretary of maritime affairs, obliging the Jewish protégés to pay these duties, in A.N., A.E., B' 944.

every intention of returning to Livorno as soon as they had the funds, in order to set up a business there. The same was true of French protection; their motive for seeking it was not the love of France or its king, rather their partners and relatives in Livorno had instructed them to seek it for purely pragmatic reasons. But if the protection gave them more trouble than it was worth, they would not hesitate to renounce it¹⁰⁴.

In November 1740, the Secretary for Maritime Affairs pronounced his judgment: the Jews must continue to pay the duties in the future¹⁰⁵. By all rights, that verdict should have laid the issue to rest. But things turned out differently. When the Italian vessel, the *Constanza Glorioza*, arrived in Salonika in March 1743, Fernandez Diaz & Sacchy loaded it with cargo bound for Venetian merchants; the main item on board was 1,200 bales of tobacco. But Diaz and Sacchy refused to pay the exit duties and found a way around them. They “sold” the goods to the captain of the Venetian ship in a bogus deal which, in effect, removed the Jews from the picture¹⁰⁷. The *droit de consulat de sortie* was finally rescinded in 1749 after most of the Jews trading under the French flag opted for the protection of the English consul, who represented the interests of the Austrians, i.e., of the Holy Roman Empire, in Salonika. The French, afraid that they would lose their last remaining protégés, abolished the tax¹⁰⁸.

A leitmotif in the behavior of the Jews throughout the protracted negotiations over the *droits de sortie* was their deliberate separatism. The Jews continually stressed the profit-related, utilitarian aspects of their connection to the consulate, as distinct from the loyalty and respect the French felt for their mother country. A thoroughly different attitude was

104. See the letter of Bayle to Maurepas, 31 October 1734, in A.N., A.E., B' 994; See the letters of Pierre Cardin Lebrét, the *intendant* of Provence, to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 7 September 1734 and 4 October 1734, in ACCM J 1586. For the sequel to the episode in 1740 and for the Protocols of the court case and relevant correspondence in 1734, see A.N., A.E., B' 996.

105. From the letter of Thomas, 10 March 1741, in which he confirmed that he had received a letter from Maurepas, which contained the latter's decision regarding the payment of the *droit de consulat*, in A.N., A.E., B' 996.

106. See the letter of Berard, the *premier député de la nation*, to Maurepas, 9 July 1743, which discusses the mooring of the vessel, in A.N., A.E., E' 996.

107. Letter, Maurepas to Bérard, 31 October 1743, instructing Bérard to levy the duties from the Jews on the tobacco. Even though the Jews had sold the goods to a Venetian captain, the status of the goods was to remain unchanged. See ACCM J 1586. On the Jew's insistence that no trickery was intended, see the letter of Jonville to Maurepas, secretary for maritime affairs, 16 May 1744, in A.N., A.E., B' 996. From Jonville's last letter on the issue, written 9 May 1745 (A.N., A.E., B' 996), it appears that after all the procrastination, the firm promised to pay the duties and “to be more careful in the future”.

108. Letter, Jonville to Maurepas, 17 March 1749, in A.N., A.E., B' 997.

displayed by the Francos when they insisted on the right to attend the ceremonies and formal receptions of the consulate. For the Francos, participation at these functions had a purely social significance: did they “belong” or was their presence merely tolerated by the French *nation* in Salonika? For the French, Jewish participation had practical repercussions as well, since distancing Jewish protégés might induce them to seek protection elsewhere.

Until 1738, the Jews under French protection did not attend the consul’s formal visits with Ottoman heads of state or with prominent guests from France. But that year the Marquis d’Antin visited Salonika. To honor the Marquis, Pierre Thomas, the consul at the time, arrived on deck with a cortège of all the Frenchmen in Salonika. Several hours later, the *chancelier* of the consulate appeared with all his Jewish protégés. A few days later, the consul visited the *Mollā* of Salonika, having added the Jews to his entourage. From that moment, although no official proclamation existed to the effect, the Francos attended all consular ceremonies and functions, to the dismay of the French merchants. In 1743 the *nation* reprimanded *député* Bérard¹⁰⁹ for his unauthorized invitation of Jews at such affairs. Bérard replied that Pierre Thomas had already set a precedent for it¹¹⁰. This incident, like the previous one, shows that the French consul, who stood to benefit from extending his protection, did his utmost to maintain close relations with the Jews. But the merchants saw things differently. As for the contradiction between the Francos’ desire to “belong” and the patently separatist rationale underlying their refusal to pay exit duties, it can be explained when viewed from another angle. The Francos were not Franco-philés primarily interested in winning the acceptance of the French *nation* per se. They did, however, demand appropriate social recognition of their economic power. Curiously, they did not seek such acknowledgement strictly from Jews, but turned to non-Jewish society as well, a significant departure in the behavior of Jews in the Ottoman Empire, where historically each religious community, including the Jews, had withdrawn and closed ranks.

The pragmatic motive underlying the consulate’s rapport with the Francos is evident not only in the aforementioned disputes. Expedience also

109. Letter, Bérard to Maurepas, 2 July 1743, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

110. *Ibid.* See the letters of Maurepas to the *Échevins et députés de commerce de Marseille*, 30 September 1743 and 31 October 1743 (ACCM J 1586), in which he empowers the French consul in Aleppo to act as he wishes in the matter of ceremonies (a *laissez faire* policy first instituted in Salonika), i.e., if the consul in Aleppo preferred not to have the Jewish protégés accompany him, that was his privilege.

determined the consulate's policy regarding the acceptance of new protégés, and its relations with other consulates in all questions pertaining to the protection of Italian Jews. Most of the cases involving new protégés are well documented in the consular correspondence, and a clear picture of the motives and calculations at play emerges. In the years immediately following the establishment of the consulate, all kinds of individuals were granted protection simply because they were of Tuscan or Venetian origin. Forty or fifty years later, considerations of expedience and profit predominated.

David Morpurgo¹¹¹ was a Jew born in Romans, a town in the county of Gradisca in Friuli, which was governed by the Holy Roman Empire¹¹². He entered a partnership with a Jew from Ancona, Benjamin Seppilly. Since most of their trade was conducted in Ancona, Morpurgo also became a subject of the Papal State, whose domain encompassed the town of Ancona¹¹³. Morpurgo, a descendant of an illustrious Italian family, settled in Salonika and was extended French protection around 1710. In 1729, following a quarrel with the consul, M. Baile, over the *droits de consulat*, Morpurgo transferred his holdings to the Dutch consul, who represented the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire. In transferring to Holland, Morpurgo had apparently exploited the fact of his birth in Friuli. The Secretary for Maritime Affairs instructed Baile to do his utmost to win back Morpurgo, but in the absence of an agreement on the *droits de consulat*, Morpurgo wouldn't hear of it¹¹⁴. Meanwhile, Morpurgo's company flourished and

111. David ben Salvador Morpurgo was the brother of R. Shimshon Morpurgo, the author of *Shemesh Sedaka* (see reference 66). According to I.S. Emmanuel, he arrived in Salonika in 1710 and had studied medicine in Padua, Italy. He was a known philanthropist and subsidized the publication of numerous books. He died in 1758. The rhymed epitaph on his tombstone read: "Lament and mourn, for God has reclaimed his noble prince, / Most august and wise, charitable and revered, was he, / David Morpurgo, among God-fearing men may his name forever recounted be". See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, pp. 695-697; and E. Morpurgo, *La Famiglia Morpurgo* (Padua, 1909), pp. 32, 34, 37, 38, and 70. David Morpurgo was also among those mentioned in the 1744 agreement with the Salonikan community (see n.75).

112. Located in northern Italy.

113. Whenever it proved convenient for him, Morpurgo would claim the citizenship of the Papal State. See the letter of Thomas to Maurepas, 30 June 1737, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 994, cf., Jonville to Maurepas, 29 January 1748, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

114. See the letter of Pierre Thomas, reference 113; cf. reference 101. It is possible that Morpurgo had other motives for leaving. His brother-in-law Isaac de Velasco had failed to fulfill certain obligations and Morpurgo, his guarantor, had to pay 1000 *ğurüş* while Velasco was under arrest in the consulate. When Velasco was released, he, too, abandoned French protection and switched to that of Holland. However, as all the details of the episode are not known, it is difficult to judge the affair. See the *inventaire* of the chancellery, which records Morpurgo's guarantorship, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997. Velasco and Morpurgo eventually returned to French protection.

the French consulate was extremely unhappy that his taxes were going to the Dutch. Moreover, it seems that Morpurgo competed dangerously with the French in purchasing wool from the Jews of Salonika. Whereas the French and their Jewish protégés were still bound by the resolution that forbade them to raise the price of wool, Morpurgo was free to do as he pleased¹¹⁵. In 1735, when another war was waged between the Austro-Russians and the Ottoman Empire, Morpurgo felt unsafe as a protégé of the Dutch consulate, which represented the interests of the Holy Roman Empire. Thus, in 1737 the consuls of England, Holland, and France courted Morpurgo and begged for his favors. The Dutch consul, who was the dual representative of the Holy Roman Empire and of Holland, offered to protect Morpurgo in his capacity as the representative of Holland. Pierre Thomas extolled Morpurgo's virtues before the Ministry of Maritime Affairs: (1) his return would prove immensely profitable for the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce; (2) Morpurgo was a merchant with vast holdings, i.e., the consul stood to benefit as well; (3) he was honest and well liked by the French merchants; and (4) everyone agreed that Morpurgo's return to French protection would benefit the *nation*¹¹⁶. Along with other excuses, Thomas rationalized Morpurgo's previous defection by pointing to his Austrian birth, which had obliged him to seek Dutch patronage¹¹⁷. Hence, on 26 July 1737 the French merchants in Salonika decided to grant Morpurgo and his associate, Benjamin Seppilly, consular protection¹¹⁸. They were so eager for his return that they allowed Morpurgo's brother-in-law, a physician named Isaac (*Yishak*) de Velasco, to sign as guarantor, even though a blood relationship usually invalidated a guarantorship¹¹⁹.

The path of other Jewish merchants was not nearly as smooth. A Jewish doctor from Livorno, Emmanuël (*'Imanu'el*) Calvo, and his nephew Raphaël traded on a smaller scale: they were granted French protection in

115. Letter, Broche to Maurepas, 25 October 1732, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 944. The "Jewish firm" under Dutch protection cited therein is doubtless that of Morpurgo; cf. letter of Thomas (see n.101).

116. Thomas to Maurepas, see reference 113.

117. *Ibid.*

118. See the entries in the registries of the consular chancellery, protocol on the assembly of the *nation*, 26 July 1737, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 994.

119. *Ibid.* Isaac de Valesco also signed the agreement between the Francos and the local community in 1744 (see reference 75). He married the daughter of Isaac de Mayo, the interpreter at the French consulate. He immigrated to the Holy Land and settled in Jerusalem, where he and Yosef Samnon were appointed *parnasim* (leaders) of the community in 1756. See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 661; and Y. Barnai, "The Leadership of the Jewish Community in Jerusalem in the Mid-Eighteenth Century", in *Shalem* (Hebrew) (vol. 1, Jerusalem, 1974), p. 278.

practice but not formally. When they tried to gain formal acceptance in 1745, the consul, Jonville, was unenthusiastic. They were not wealthy and they had no guarantors. Although they offered to serve as each other's guarantors, an arrangement that had raised no objections in Morpurgo's case, Jonville demurred¹²⁰. The Calvos, it was true, were honest and paid their taxes on time, but Jonville latched on to the excuse that they kept "dubious company"¹²¹ to deny them protection. However, since the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) immobilized French and English trade in the Mediterranean, and in view of the Francos' blatant preference for enlisting the services of the consular representative of the Two Sicilies (Naples) in order to continue their trade¹²², the French were hard-pressed to put off the Calvos much longer, and the two brothers were accepted in 1746¹²³.

The French were equally unenthusiastic when the Robino brothers of Livorno requested French protection. They had married local Salonikan women, and the brothers were not affluent¹²⁴. The French never bothered to reply. Another request, that of David Fernandez (also known as David Fernandez Chicco), was favored with a reply. Fernandez sought French protection, lost his money, and moved to the neighboring city of Cerés. Having failed there as well, he returned to Salonika. The French were not eager to take him back¹²⁵, but the possibility that Fernandez would turn to the Neapolitans decided the issue, and he was accepted. Yet that concession proved short-lived, because as soon as Fernandez stood to benefit from an association with the Neapolitans, he tried to renounce French protection again¹²⁶.

120. Emmanuel Calvo was born in Salonika. He left with his father for Livorno, studied medicine in Padua, and received his doctorate on 23 October 1724, after which he returned with his family to Salonika. He died in 1780. The epitaph on his tombstone vaunts his readiness to help poor patients. He was also a poet. For more on Calvo, see I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, p. 755. On the attempt of Calvos to obtain French protection, see the letter of Joinville to Maurepas, 27 July 1745, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996, and 5 November 1746, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

121. Letter of Jonville, 27 July 1745 (see above).

122. Jonville's report to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs regarding the commercial state of affairs in 1745, 15 January 1746, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 977; see also the letter of Jonville, 29 April 1746, *ibid.*

123. Letter of Jonville, 29 April 1746 (see n. 122).

124. These were the same "poor" parties whose taxes were paid by Fernandez Diaz & Sacchy, as agreed by contract (see n. 75 and 102).

125. Letter, Jonville to Maurepas, 30 June 1745, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

126. Letter, Jonville to Maurepas (see n. 125); see also Jonville's economic report, 15 January 1746; Jonville to the secretary of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 29 April 1746; and his letter of 28 September 1746, all in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

The most interesting episode was that of Asser (Asher) Abrabanel¹²⁷. In his case, the extension of French patronage was a foretaste of things to come. Asser Abrabanel was the descendant of an illustrious Sephardic family whose branches extended all the way from Italy into the Ottoman Empire¹²⁸. He was a local Jew, immensely wealthy, a *parnas*, or leader, of the Salonikan Jewish community¹²⁹, and in charge of the “king’s cloth”¹³⁰, i.e., the provision of cloth for the Janissary corps. In addition, he was a mediator for the English consulate in Salonika and was a business partner of Isaac de Mayo¹³¹, the interpreter for the French consulate in the city. Isaac de Mayo enjoyed French protection because he possessed a *berat*, an interpreter’s certificate, which automatically granted him consular protection¹³². But Abrabanel, an Ottoman subject, was a *dhimmī* and as such, his status was inferior to that of the Moslem subjects of the sultan. He strived to obtain privileges similar to those of de Mayo, which would safeguard his business affairs from the covetous Ottomans and grant him the prestige commensurate with his actual wealth. He had initially dealt with the consulate in his capacity as *parnas* of the community. In 1741 he served as the guarantor for the debt incurred by the Jewish community, a loan of 7,800 *gurūs* of Seville extended by the *nation*¹³³. Clearly the French had full confidence in Abrabanel’s ability to reimburse so large a sum. In 1743, with the help of his contacts in Istanbul, Abrabanel obtained the papers that enabled the French consulate in Salonika to grant him its

127. Died in 1764. The words “august lord [*gebir*] of a noble family...Don Asher Abravanel” were engraved on his tombstone. For more on Abrabanel, see I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, pp. 722-723.

128. On the Abrabanel family in Salonika, see M. Benayahu’s “The House of Abravanel in Salonika”, *Sefunot*, (Hebrew) 12 [*The Book of Greek Jewry*, vol. 2] (1971-1978), pp. 7-68. On Asser Abrabanel, see p. 27.

129. It was said of him that upon his father’s death, he inherited “houses filled with luxury...immense wealth and property”. See I.S. Emmanuel, *ibid*.

130. Letter, Bérard, *premier député* of the *nation* and the consular replacement, to the Comte de Castellane, the French Ambassador in the Sublime Port, 13 May 1743, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

131. *Ibid*. See also Jonville to Maurepas, 30 June 1745, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996. de Mayo’s daughter was married to the physician Isaac de Velasco. In 1742, de Mayo planned to go to the Holy Land. The “officials in Istanbul” even wrote to the *parnasim* of Jerusalem, advising them to treat him with the greatest respect due to a man of his stature, and advised them to extend de Mayo credit when needed.

Isaac de Mayo was one of the contributors to the yeshivah of Neveh Shalom-Berit Abraham in Jerusalem. See I.S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones...*, vol. 2, pp. 673-4; Y. Barnai, *The Jews in Eretz-Israel in the Eighteenth Century* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 191, 235.

132. Jonville to Maurepas, 30 June 1745, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

133. *Ibid*; See also the letter of Chancellier Chabert to Maurepas, 9 August 1741, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

protection. The *premier député*, Bérard¹³⁴, wondered if Abrabanel's newly extended French protection created a conflict of interest with his numerous affiliations. Abrabanel assured Bérard that he had resigned from his post as mediator for the English and would soon resign from the posts of *parnas* and appointee for the "king's cloth". The French accepted him¹³⁵. His acceptance raised far more complex issues than had Robino and Calvo, but Abrabanel's contacts with the governments and the local commercial network, and his immense wealth, ironed out the wrinkles and paved the way for his acceptance, which ultimately proved most lucrative for the French.

Competition Over Jewish Protégés

Evidence of the economic importance attached by consular officials in Salonika to the protection of Jews from Italy, and later of local Jews, emerges not only from the aforementioned episodes but from the open competition over individual protégés, to which we have already alluded¹³⁶.

For a time, the Dutch attracted the Francos, and during the War of the Austrian Succession, the Francos gravitated toward the Neapolitans. The war severely curtailed the activity of the French and English in Salonika, paving the way for the entry of other nations. In 1740 the kingdom of Naples, or the Two Sicilies, obtained Capitulations¹³⁷, and M. Boissin, a French merchant from Nîmes, undertook to represent the interests of Naples in Salonika¹³⁸. Boissin forthwith exempted the Jews who shipped their goods on Genoese vessels bearing the Neapolitan flag from paying the *droits de sortie*. His stratagem encouraged most of the Francos under French protection to ship their goods on Genoese vessels, apparently in Boissin's name, so as to avoid paying the duties. The French, formerly the chief purveyors of protection for Jews from Christian lands, were furious but helpless when they realized that their days were numbered. They seldom sailed into the region because of the war. Although the French sorely needed the revenue from the Jews, the duties imposed were so exorbitant that the Jews abandoned French protection. In brief, the French were in a quandary¹³⁹. But the English consul in Salonika solved the dilemma.

134. Bérard to the Comte de Castellane, 13 May 1743, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

135. *Ibid.* See also Jonville to Maurepas, 30 June 1745, *ibid.*

136. See n.101.

137. See N. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique*, pp. 174-5.

138. Jonville to Maurepas, 30 June 1745, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

139. *Ibid.* See also Jonville's letter of 27 July 1745 in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996; and 5 November 1746, 29 April 1746, 9 December 1746, and 26 April 1747, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

The English colony in Salonika, established in 1715, had remained small and did not number more than five merchants, aside from the consul. In Salonika, these merchants sold English wool, linen, muslin, tin, lead, steel, and watches. For the most part, they purchased cotton, tobacco, and carpets. Their relative share in Salonikan trade was smaller than that of the French¹⁴⁰. The English were also far less liberal than the French in their attitude toward Jewish protégés. The Levant Company was, in principle, wary of accepting Jewish members, and for many years, in all the colonies in which the English had set up a consulate, they restricted the number of Jews placed under their protection. The only Jews granted protection were the interpreters at the consulate, and they, too, were carefully screened¹⁴¹. The members of the Levant Company dreaded the emergence of a “Jewish-Mediterranean connection” of the kind personified by the Villareal family. Thus, the English did not welcome Jews into their midst: at best, the Jews served only as the middlemen in the exchange between English and local Salonikan merchants. However, the chief stopover on the English trade route to the Levant was Livorno. The more English enthusiasm for trade in the Levant waned and shifted to India, the more the English tended to increase their cooperation with the Jews of Livorno in the Levant. In fact, they could not avoid doing business with Jews in Livorno. But it was only in 1753 that the London company began to accept Jews. At the same time, the dread of a “Jewish connection” continued to haunt them. That fear was evident in one of the clauses of the company charter, which prohibited Jewish members of the Levant Company in London from using Jewish agents in the Levant¹⁴². In fact, however, these precautions were waived, and in 1753 most of the English consulates in the Levant granted Jews protection. The majority of these Jews were former French protégés.

Even when they were not extended the protection of the English, the Jews under French consular protection in the first half of the eighteenth century would regularly threaten the French that they would adopt English protection if their wishes were thwarted. That threat was made even in Aleppo, where the English had bluntly declared that they had no intention

140. A. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, pp. 164-5.

141. See, for example, the letter of the directors of the Levant Company in London to George Brandon, the English consul in Aleppo, 24 March 1704, Public Record Office of Great Britain, hereafter cited as PRO, s.p. 105/343, p. 155. See also the volume of correspondence for the years 1703-1706. Most of the letters were written by George Brandon to various individuals in England and the Levant, concerning the arrest of their Jewish “Drogerman” (a corruption of the Italian *dragoman*, which is a corruption of the Arab *tarjumān*, interpreter), PRO, s.p. 110, Aleppo Papers, vol. 23.

142. A. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company*, p. 156.

of protecting the Francos¹⁴³. The same was true of Salonika. From the day the English established a consulate there, the Jews under French protection threatened to leave whenever they faced French intransigence¹⁴⁴. In view of the fact that until the middle of the eighteenth century, the Jews stayed put, one is entitled to doubt if the threat was real or if it was more of a paper tiger. One should recall that the English colony was tiny, and perhaps because of its small size, the consul may have been more amenable to fulfilling the wishes of additional merchants, even if they were Jews. At least one piece of evidence indicates that the English attached considerable importance to their relations with the Francos in Salonika, even if they were not granted English protection. Whereas all other data on the invitation of Jews to join the English consulate are actually Jewish claims to that effect, which attenuates their credibility, the following episode provides incidental evidence on the total state of relations with the Jews. At the end of 1739. Horswell, a new English consul, arrived in Salonika. Among the European *nations* in Salonika and probably elsewhere as well, rules of etiquette and diplomatic protocol applied. One such convention was that on New Year's Eve the various consuls would dispatch an interpreter to extend their good wishes to their colleagues. Horswell flouted the convention and stated that he had not come to Salonika to engage in ceremonial gestures but in trade and, as far as he was concerned, the French were welcome to dispense with the New Year salutations as well. The incident might have been treated as an insignificant sign of crudity had Mr. Horswell not sent his interpreter to convey his good wishes to the Jews of Salonika on the eve of the Jewish New Year. The French seethed with rage. They were later to learn that Horswell considered his overture to the Jews an economic necessity, rather than as a superfluous formality¹⁴⁵.

The triangular relationship — the Jews, the French, and the English — became more complex because of French and English rivalry over the employment of their commercial fleets in the Mediterranean. Well before the Francos became English protégés, the Francos and the local Jews worked together with English seamen sailing on the Aegean. All French protégés were required to load their cargo on French vessels, a financial

143. See, for example, the letter of Lemaire, the consul, to Pontchartrain, the secretary of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 22 July 1711, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 77, cc. 1708-1715.

144. See Le Blanc de Favédic to Maurepas, 20 November 1725 and 20 July 1725, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 992; see also the broad hints in the Francos' response to the demand of the *députés* regarding the payment of the *droit de sortie*, 26 November 1734, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996; and Pierre Thomas to Maurepas, 30 June 1737, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 994.

145. Thomas to Maurepas, 13 February 1740, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 996.

quidproquo for the extension of French consular protection. However, those who loaded their cargo onto French vessels paid consular and shipment duties at 8% of the value of the goods, whereas those loading their cargo onto English vessels paid only 4% of the value of the goods. The net result was that although the Jews were protected by the French, they preferred to ship their goods on English vessels sailing between the Aegean sea, Livorno, and Venice. The Villareal brothers cited earlier advised the parent company in Livorno not to engage the services of French vessels so as to reduce the amount of duties¹⁴⁶. Although the French consul in Livorno protested vigorously against the steep sums demanded of those loading their cargo on French vessels, the English tariff remained cheaper. Consequently, not only the Jews but the French, too, began to use English vessels whenever they could¹⁴⁷.

A turnabout in relations among the French, the English, and the Francos in Salonika occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century. The turnabout was not only a function of a change of heart in the Levant Company but resulted from pan-European events which, on the surface, seemed unconnected with Salonika and its Jews. In 1737, the last of the dukes of Medici who had ruled over Tuscany, Gian Gastone dei Medici, died. The Grand Duchy was given to the French duke, François de Lorraine, who became Francesco III di Lorena. He married Maria Theresa of Austria, heiress to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire. During the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) François de Lorraine was appointed emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and assumed the throne as Franz I in 1745. The ducal title was given to their son, Leopold, who ruled Tuscany until 1790. Hence, as of 1745, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was part of the Holy Roman Empire and under the domain of the Habsburgs¹⁴⁸. On 25 May 1747, the Capitulations granted to the Holy Roman Empire were renewed and extended to Tuscany as well¹⁴⁹. The English consul in Salonika, Mr. Paradis, or Señor Paradiso as the Jews called him, was quick to seize the financial opportunities afforded by representing the interests of the Holy Roman Empire in Salonika. Admittedly, he was reluctant to extend his protection to Italian or other Jews, but purchased the *lettres*

146. See reference 82.

147. On 7 January 1727, the injunction against the French, prohibiting them from using foreign vessels for shipping goods in their name, was revoked. See the royal decree on the issue in ACCM J 1584.

148. On the transfers of power, see G. Guarnieri, *Livorno e la marina mercantile Toscana sotto i Lorenzi (1737-1860)* (Pisa, 1969), pp. 19-23, 149-155.

149. See N. Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique*, p. 192; G. Péllissié du Rausas, *Le régime des capitulations dans l'Empire Ottoman*, pp. 92-97; and H. Inalcik, *E.I.*, s.v. "İmtiyâzât".

patentes, which confirmed that he was a legitimate representative of the Holy Roman Empire's affairs in Salonika. As such, he claimed "ownership" of the Livorno Jews and of the attendant profits of such ownership¹⁵⁰. The French consul, Jonville, was at a loss. Two Frenchmen had left the consulate in order to obtain Tuscan citizenship, because they preferred the protection of the English consul. One defector, the aforementioned Boissin of Nîmes, who represented the interests of Naples in Salonika, was a dubious sort to begin with¹⁵¹. However, Ange Bezud was a former *député* of the *nation* and was one of the most respected merchants in the *nation*¹⁵². To complicate matters, Jonville also had to contend with the Jews who threatened to leave the consulate. According to Jonville, the duties paid by these Jews covered most of the consulate's expenses, and it was unclear how the consulate would subsist without that revenue¹⁵³. As Jonville describes it, the English consul invited five representatives of the major firms owned by Francos to his home and advised them that they would do well to join his consulate. He offered to cancel the duty on goods shipped on foreign, i.e., non-English and non-Austrian, vessels, but he also threatened to cause them serious financial damage if they refused his protection¹⁵⁴. A lengthy correspondance began between the Jewish merchants and their parent companies in Livorno, and among and betwixt the ambassadors of France, England, the Holy Roman Empire, located in Istanbul, and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs in Paris¹⁵⁵. According to

150. Letter, Jonville to Maurepas, 31 December 1747, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

151. Jonville to Maurepas, 8 June 1747, *ibid.*

152. Jonville to Maurepas, 31 December 1747, *ibid.*

153. *Ibid.*

154. *Ibid.*

155. See the summary of the protocols on the assembly of the *nation*, regarding the invitation of Jews to join the English consulate, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997. See the response (in Italian) of the Jewish merchants, 22 December 1747, *ibid.*; See the letter of David Morpurgo, 24 December 1747, deposited in the chancellery of the consulate, *ibid.*; Jonville's report on commercial affairs in Salonika for 1738-1747, 1 January 1748, *ibid.*; See the table and graph; See Jonville to Maurepas, 29 January 1748, 2 February 1748, and 15 February 1748, *ibid.*; See his letter to Comte Lorenzi, the French delegate in Firenze, *ibid.*; Jonville to the secretary for maritime affairs, 19 June 1748, *ibid.*; Memorandum, Jonville, 19 June 1748, regarding the demands on Jews by the English consul in Salonika, *ibid.*; See his letter to Lorenzi, 29 February 1748, *ibid.*; Jonville to the secretary for maritime affairs, 19 June 1748, reports that the Livorno merchants received instructions from Tuscany advising them to leave his protection and adopt that of England, *ibid.*; Letter of Maurepas, 29 June 1748, *ibid.*; Letter of David Fernandez Diaz to the secretary of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 7 September 1749 (in Italian), *ibid.*; Jonville to the secretary of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 17 March 1749, *ibid.*; Letter, David Morpurgo to the secretary of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, 18 September 1748 (in Italian); Morpurgo to Jonville, 28 August 1748 (in Italian), *ibid.*; and David Fernandez Diaz to Jonville, 12 September 1748, *ibid.*

Jonville, the Jews were unhappy with the change. They feared the instability of the new consulate and worried that a consul-merchant with interests opposed to theirs would eventually be in charge¹⁵⁶. Despite such misgivings, apparently the pressures from Firenze and the double opportunity of achieving an independent status and reducing their taxes finally convinced the Francos to yield. All of them, aside from Morpurgo and Fernandez Diaz, opted for the protection of the English¹⁵⁷.

The Status of the Francos in West European Trade

The consuls' attitude towards the Jews in Salonika in general and the Francos in particular, as reflected in their assessments of these Jews and as revealed in their struggle to exercise the right to levy taxes from them, creates the impression that Jewish trade was considerable, a decisive factor in Salonikan commerce. One is also tempted to believe that the Francos and the local Jews virtually dominated French trade as well. The impression is reinforced upon studying the accounts of European travelers and the memoirs of consuls who served in the Levant. They all claim that the Jews dominated trade, a consensus that obtained well into the first half of the eighteenth century¹⁵⁸. But was it true?

In most of the studies published to date on the economic life of Jews in the Ottoman Empire, statistical data have rarely been used. The conclusions reached are based on the general assessments of tourists, consular officials, and merchants; on material in responsa literature, which is copious but does not give a clear picture of the extent of Jewish involvement in the various areas of endeavor described therein; and the investigation of the Ottoman archives and the legal archives of the *shari'a* courts in the Empire — of capital importance, but which does not offer a yardstick of Jewish commercial activity relative to the overall activity in a given field of endeavor¹⁵⁹. However, the correspondence of the French consulate for

156. Jonville to Maurepas, 29 January 1748, in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

157. See the correspondence enumerated in reference 155. See also Jonville to Maurepas, 17 March 1749, *ibid*.

158. See, for example, P. de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant fait par ordre du Roi (1700)* (Amsterdam, 1718), vol. 1, p. 197; P. North, *Lives of the Norths* (London, 1826), vol. 3, p. 534; M.W. Montagu, *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (London 1837²), vol. 2, pp. 13-14 (on the Jews of Edirne); M. de Pouqueville, *Travels in the Morea, Albania and other parts of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1813), p. 51 (on the Jews of Patras); J. Montague, *A Voyage Performed by the Late Earl of Sandwich, Round the Mediterranean in 1738 and 1739* (London, 1799), p. 206.

159. See, for example, E. Bashan, "The Freedom", pp. 105-113 (assessments based on responsa literature and travelers' memoirs during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries); E. Bashan, "Evidence of European Travelers as a Source to the Economic History of

the years 1738-1747 contains facts and figures that enable the researcher to use alternative methods to check the veracity of the assumptions made regarding Salonikan Jewry of that period. When Jonville, the French consul, discovered that he was about to lose "his Jews" to the English, he quickly expedited detailed accounts and reports to Paris concerning the revenue obtained from Jews, which filled the coffers of both the *nation* and the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce. Since the taxes were levied at a specific percentage of the value of the goods traded by Jews, the reader ought to be able to determine how large a "slice" the Jews had not only in French commerce, but for certain years, in west European trade as a whole. The word "ought" is used advisedly, since the data provided by Jonville are incomplete in several respects. In his report, Jonville listed the amount of duties paid annually the Jews in the form of *droit de consulat de sortie* for a period of ten years, on goods shipped from Salonika via foreign vessels. The duty was placed at 2% of the total value of the goods. Thus, normally, one should be able to deduce the value of all the goods shipped by Jews on foreign vessels. Jonville also drew separate lists enumerating the amount of taxes paid by Jews in the *avarie*, *cottimo*, and *droit de consulat*, on goods shipped via French vessels from Salonika during that decade. From that total, one should subtract the *cottimo*, since it was not levied according to the value of the goods, and the *avarie*, whose percentage fluctuated. In our view, the *droit de consulat* cited in this list refers only to exported goods, i.e., Jonville meant the *droit de consulat de sortie*. To wit, the subheading of

Mediterranean Jewry in the Ottoman Period" in *The Sephardi and Oriental Jewish Heritage Studies*, ed. I. Ben 'Ami (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 34-66; E. Bashan, "The Economic Activities of the Jews of Izmir in the 17th-18th Centuries According to the British Levant Company Archives", in *The Jews in Economics* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1985), pp. 149-167; Y. Barnai, "Jewish Guilds in 16th-19th Century Turkey" in *The Jews in Economics*, pp. 133-147; H. Gerber, "Enterprise and International Commerce"; *idem*, "The Jews in the Economic Life of the Anatolian City of Bursa in the Seventeenth Century, Notes and Documents, *Sefunot, Studies and Sources on the History of the Jewish Communities in the East*, new series, vol. 1 (16), 1980, (in Hebrew), pp. 235-273; *idem*, *Economic and Social Life of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 49-80; and M. Winter, "The Jews of Egypt in the Ottoman Period according to Turkish and Arabic Sources", *Pe'amim*, 16 (1983) pp. 5-21 (assessments based on Moslem archival sources). — A rich source of material on the status of Jews of Jerusalem in the economic life of the city during the sixteenth century is A. Cohen's *The Jewish Community of Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 140-219 [*Jewish Life under Islam*, pp. 153-235]. However, Cohen does not attempt to compare his economic data on the Jews with economic data on the general population. On the status of the Jews of Istanbul in the tax farming in the city and its environs at the end of the fifteenth century, see M. A. Epstein, *The Ottoman Jewish Communities and their Role in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Freiburg, 1981), pp. 101-144, and especially p. 121.

the column in his table reads in full “*droits de consulats percues sur les marchandises quils ont embarquées sur nos Battimens*”, in other words, he refers to merchandise loaded at the port of Salonika. Those duties, too, were placed at 2% of the value of the goods. On the basis of these data, one can compute the total sum of goods exported by Jews in Salonika, but we cannot compute the amount imported. In addition, we can adduce the volume of Jewish export from the city and compare it to French and overall export. Yet that picture of economic activity is limited. Its drawbacks are as follows: First, as noted earlier, it provides only one dimension of the commercial picture, that of outgoing trade from Salonika, whereas the incoming trade, at least from France, was sometimes two or three times greater than the export. Had we been able to compare these factors with data on importation by Jews of Italy to Salonika, the picture as described below would be significantly altered. Second, the numbers at our disposal are inconclusive. The Jews who exported goods on foreign vessels associated with a consulate in the city rented the names of foreign sailors and merchants so as to avoid paying the *droit de sortie* and frequently evaded it altogether. Even those who did use French vessels rented the names of Frenchmen to avoid paying the *droit de consulat*. Finally, although data are available on the value of goods exported from Salonika by other west European nations for the years 1744-1747, here we face a problem of another sort: that portion of the export which Jews no longer sent via the French consulate and which was sent via other consulates, appears under the latter column, but we cannot estimate the quantity with the means at our disposal. As of 1744, French commerce declined precipitously because of the War of the Austrian Succession, whereas the share of Jews in the overall commerce rose sharply¹⁶⁰. The decline in Jewish commerce for the years 1745-1747, shown in Table 1, is not a reflection of a real decline but a function of the Jews' transfer to the consulate of the Two Sicilies. Notwithstanding all these inaccuracies, if we tabulate and illustrate the data, the following picture emerges:

160. Trade in the port of Livorno was not adversely affected by the course of the war because the Grand Duchy had issued an edict of neutrality for the port of Livorno as early as 28 December 1739, so as to protect its interests in the event of war. See G. Guarnieri, *Livorno e la marina mercantile Toscana*, pp. 23, 156-158.

TABLE I
Export Trade and Consular Duties
in Salonika, 1738-1747

Year	Duties paid by Jews, <i>droit de consulat</i> on French vessels, in <i>gürüş</i> ^a	Duties paid by Jews, <i>droit de sortie</i> on foreign vessels, in <i>gürüş</i> ^b	Total, French trade in Salonika (export) ^c in <i>gürüş</i>	Total, foreign trade in Salonika (export)		Total, value of Jewish-owned goods exported from Salonika		
				French data ^d	Correction (Venetian) ^e	in <i>gürüş</i>	%, French export	%, overall export (Venetian)
1738	1942.109	278.59	271,325		111,055		40%	
1739	2209.24	156.71	247,122		118,300		48%	
1740	2096.14	f 44.42	211,952		105,547		50%	
1741	1468.65		274,611		74,172		27%	
1742	2068.6		265,072		104,170		39%	
1743	2018.62	398.91	686,810		120,876		18%	
1744	696.84	1415.4	160,702	327,958	105,612	491,937	66%	21%
1745	75.42	1408.21	49,615	465,436	74,181	698,154	149%	11%
1746		2219.74	104,805	611,455	110,987	917,182	105%	12%
1747		997.74	246,886	678,343	49,887	1,017,514	20%	5%

^a According to Jonville's report in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

^b According to Jonville's report in A.N., A.E., B¹ 997.

^c See N. Svoronos, p. 288.

^d *Ibid.*

^e According the information of Venetian consuls, the French underestimated foreign trade; Svoronos estimates the correction at ca. 50%. See N. Svoronos, pp. 297-8, n. 1.

^f The sum of 44.42 was paid for the period of three years.

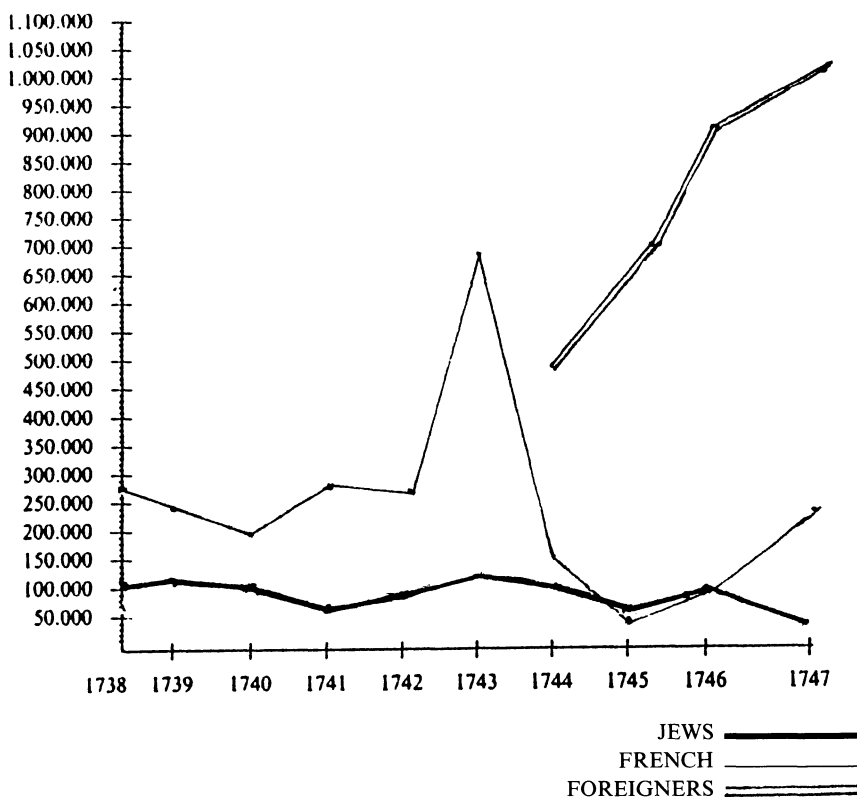


Figure 1. Export trade, Salonika, 1738-1747

The following can be inferred from the above data: In the decade under analysis, 1738-1747, the Francos had a large share in the "pie" of exports from Salonika, roughly an annual average of 37% of French export, but only 10% of overall export. These figures partially clarify one small detail in the tableau of Jewish economic activity in Salonika. It sheds no light on wider questions, e.g., as compared to the years before and after the decade under analysis, was the economic activity of Salonikan Jews, or of the Francos alone, on the rise or in descent? However, that ray of light is useful in other ways: (a) it proves that one cannot rely on the assessments of the French consuls, and certainly not on those of mere tourists, in ascertaining the status of Jews in the commerce of the city. The impressions of the latter are based on the status of Jews in French commerce but not in overall trade, and they are often colored by the dependence of French consuls on the duties paid by Jews, and (b) in the French enumeration of export activity, the position of the Francos is shown as being highly erratic,

owing to the influence of external events. Yet the roster of general export is distorted, as noted earlier, by the indirect penetration of Jews into that field of endeavor (see Figure 1 p. 348). Therefore, the Jewish share in overall export is actually more stable than it appears in the graph, a stability which indicates the real input of Jews in the city's trade with western Europe. One should also recall that Salonika was a vibrant center of Jewry, a fact which facilitated the economic activity of Francos in the area. If in so vibrant a city their share in foreign trade stabilized at around 12%, it appears that in other areas that were not as conducive to Jewish commerce, their share in overall trade may have been even smaller.

Summary and Conclusions

The sixteenth century was an epoch of splendor and glory for the Ottoman Empire. For the Jews of Salonika, it was an age of burgeoning economic and cultural activity. It was as if all the creative forces of these Jews, who had been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula and had survived and overcome their expulsion, finally erupted. The fruits of their cultural activity have been the focus of much of the research conducted on the history of sixteenth-century Salonikan Jewry. But the intellectual ferment that characterized the first century following the expulsion from Spain waned during the seventeenth century. Consequently, the amount of Hebrew sources for the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is small when compared to the plethora of sources covering the sixteenth century. As a result, Jewish historiography yields little in the way of research on the community of Salonika in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Salonika was perceived as a decaying community, and historians extrapolated the descent in social and economic activity from their knowledge of the community's intellectual decline¹⁶¹.

The recourse to the memoirs of travelers and consular officials in the historiography of the period has led others to conclude the contrary. A reading of these memoirs creates the impression that the Jews of Salonika were dangerous competitors or, even worse, an unassailable cartel, especially in foreign trade, a perception that persists into the eighteenth century¹⁶².

161. See, for example, A. Rozanes, vol. 5 of *A History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (Sophia, 1934-5), pp. 217-220; M. Benayahu, "The Shabbatean Movement in Greece", *Sefunot*, 14 (1971-1977); E. Bashan, "The Attitude of the Sages of Salonika in the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries", pp. 49-51 (see reference 15).

162. See the assessments of N. Svoronos in his chapter on the Jews in *Le commerce de Salonique*, pp. 187-193; See also the assessment of P. Masson, *Histoire du commerce français*

The data afforded by a systematic investigation of the reports and correspondence of the consuls in Salonika and the *nation* (which, *inter alia*, discuss the status of Salonikan Jews in Mediterranean and west European commerce in the first half of the eighteenth century) should alter several time-honored fallacies regarding these Jews and their activity in Salonika. To obtain a more precise picture, not only consular but other, e.g., Ottoman, sources should be consulted and juxtaposed with the traditional historiographic sources (itineraries, consular memoirs, and *responsa literata*).

First, the view prevalent in the Hebrew sources, according to which Salonika in the eighteenth century constituted a decaying community, should be modified and updated. The fact that the Jews constituted a large demographic concentration in Salonika lent them a considerable measure of economic power and some political leverage as well. When new forces, i.e., the nations of western Europe, cast their anchor in the port of Salonika, the local Salonikan Jews exploited their contacts with the authorities and utilized their acquired wealth to steer the course of these events in their favor, and they were expert at doing so.

Second, the reverse stereotype of the Jewish cartel, as it appears in the writings of consuls, even in the eighteenth century, is not accurate, at least as regards the foreign trade in the period under discussion. The Jews played an important role in Salonikan trade, at the stage of mediation between the local market and the foreign merchants, but they certainly did not control the foreign trade. A more accurate evaluation of their status would be that these Jews excelled in the art of strategic maneuver, turning the prevailing conditions to their best advantage.

Third, the establishment in Salonika of consulates from the Christian world heralds a new era not only in the commerce of the city but in the internal life of the Jewish community. Although we have not discussed the repercussions of that development on Jewish society in Salonika, some thoughts on the subject are appropriate. A new class of Italian Jews arose in the city, Jews who in one way or another secured the protection of European consulates. The interaction of this class of Jews, the *Francos*,

dans le Levant au XVIII^e siècle (Paris, 1896), pp. 134-136; R. Paris, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille du 1660 à 1789, Le Levant* (Paris, 1957), pp. 256-260. An excellent example of the discrepancy between unfounded assessments and statistical evaluations is in Félix de Beaujour's *A View of the Commerce* (see reference 2). On the one hand, he estimates the export of raw wool to Italy, comparing it to the export to France; the latter exceeds the former tenfold (see p. 102). This obtains for other goods as well. On the other hand, he describes how the Jews engage in deception and wage unfair competition with French trade, endangering its very existence (see p. 378).

with the local Jewish community was limited, at least in the period discussed¹⁶³. Nor did the Francos identify with the superpowers granting them protection, and even less with the Ottoman Empire. Their affinities lay with the community of Spanish-Portuguese Jews who left Portugal in the wave of immigration that occurred in the seventeenth century, and who settled in Livorno, Pisa, Amsterdam, London, and elsewhere. Baron Félix de Beaujour, the French consul in Salonika from 1787 to 1797, tried to convince some of these merchants to leave the Ottoman Empire and settle in France, in the hope of transferring their fortunes to his mother country. They declined his most generous offer. In reaction to their negative response, Beaujour inserted the following remark in his book. Although the *aparté* should be read in the light of his disappointment with the Jews, who had just declined his offer, it contains more than a grain of truth:

There are dispersed through my consulate several Jews, at Salonicki and Larisa, all of whom are under the protection of the French, and who enjoy immense fortunes. I have often invited them to realize them and convey them into France, promising them that they would find everything agreeable. They constantly answered me, that France was certainly the foreign country to which they gave the greatest preference, but that they could not abandon the *sepulchres of their fathers* [Beaujour's emphasis]. The Jew, however, has the ways of a citizen of the world, and is less attached to this country than the Greek, who considers Greece as *his own country* [Beaujour's emphasis]¹⁶⁴.

In the above excerpt, Beaujour initially refers to Francos of “immense fortunes” but then generalizes about the “attachment” of all Jews to Salonika. Admittedly, his somewhat exaggerated view is a mixture of personal experience with the Francos and conventional prejudice about Jews as a people, *sui generis*. Yet one cannot dismiss Beaujour's perception of the Francos entirely. An outsider observing the Francos' separatism in the first half of the eighteenth century might well have received a similar impression of them.

The Francos were a class of cosmopolitan merchants whose parents had led part of their lives as Christians, and the Francos introduced a certain measure of secularism into Salonika, which could not but affect the Jews in the city. The influence of these Francos on the community of Salonika was, of course, a function of their wealth and economic power. But equal factors were the rise of the European presence in the Ottoman Empire and the desire of the élite of the local community to affiliate itself with the

163. Allusions to the tensions and disputes between Francos in Salonika and the local Salonikan Jews are in reference 66.

164. Félix de Beaujour, *A View of the Commerce*, p. 386.

Francos. This they did by purchasing the *berat*: Asser Abrabanel was the first to do so. These developments eventually frittered away at the wall of isolation in which the Francos chose to immure themselves in the beginning of their sojourn in Salonika. In the future, these events would ultimately link the Francos with the local community. But all these events and cross-currents are the subject of a separate chapter on the history of Salonikan Jewry.

RÉSUMÉ

This is a monograph, based on archival sources (Archives de la Chambre de Commerce de Marseille, Archives Nationales de France, the Public Record Office of Great Britain) and on Hebrew documents, mainly Responsa literature from the eighteenth century, which successively deals with the first steps of west European nations in the Salonika trade; the French consulate and the Jews of Salonika; the Jews of Livorno ("Francos") under the auspices of the French consulate in Salonika; the competition over the Jewish protégés; the status of Francos in west European trade. The main innovations of this research are: (1) The use made of the above sources to describe and analyze the relations between Salonika Jews and especially the Francos, and the French and British consulates; (2) The use of the French statistical material to evaluate the role of the Ottoman Jews in European Trade. This has never been done before in the historiography of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The Study reexamines and modifies two common but contradictory views that have dominated Jewish and non-Jewish historiography. (a) Jewish historiography using Hebrew sources draws a picture of severe economic deterioration affecting the Salonika community during the eighteenth century. This picture needs correction. Our research shows that though the cloth industry of Salonika had declined significantly, and the community as a whole suffered from great financial pressures, the demographic weight of Salonika Jewry enabled the community to wield economic and political power. When new forces appeared in the port of Salonika — namely the European nations, the native Jews were able successfully to make use of their connections with the Ottoman authorities and their remaining financial resources, in order to face the changes that had taken place in the city. (b) The second stereotype found in European historiography, based upon consular correspondance which was written without recourse to any statistical material, depicts the Jewish merchant as dominating the trade of Salonika, and especially that with Italy. This picture, too, is invalidated by the statistical material.

The Jewish merchant in eighteenth — century Salonika played an important role in the trade with western Europe, but he certainly did not dominate it. It would be much more accurate to say that he managed to adapt himself to the circumstances of the changing times.