Contacts between Jews in Smyrna and the Levant Company of London in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries*

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The Sephardi Jewish community in Smyrna was founded in the second half of the sixteenth century.¹ The first settlers were Jews from Tire and Manissa in Anatolia, but the majority came from Salonika in the wake of an economic slump. Smyrna was gaining prominence as a business centre for traders from Europe, especially England, a fact which encouraged the influx of Jews to the city and offered scope to their initiative. During the seventeenth century their numbers increased because of emigration from Anatolia, the Balkans, Leghorn, Bordeaux and Amsterdam, including Marranos from Portugal.²

The estimates given by European travellers for the number of Jews testifies to an increase during the seventeenth century. A French dealer in jewellery, named Tavernir, who visited the Middle East six times between 1631 and 1670, writes that the Jewish population numbered 6000–7000 out of a total of 90,000, or about 8 per cent. Some years later, in 1676, a figure of 12,000–15,000 is given, out of a total of 55,000. Their percentage as part of the total population thus increased to about 20 per cent.³

Their number later diminished as the result of an earthquake and a fire in July 1688, from which Jews, as well as other ethnic groups, suffered. La Motraye, a French traveller who visited it in 1699, counted 1500 Jews out of a total of 24,000 or about 6 per cent of the whole population. A similar estimate is given by Tournefort, who visited Smyrna three years later. He speaks about 1800 Jews out of 27,000, or roughly 6.5 per cent of the total.

During the eighteenth century the community managed to regain its strength, and more Jews arrived. Their number was then estimated again at between 6000 and 12,000, or 5 to 12 per cent of the total population.⁴ In the 1780s more than 100,000 people lived in Smyrna: Moslems, Greeks, Armenians and Europeans, but the percentage of the Jews is apparently lower than before. A. Hayes, Consul of Great Britain in Smyrna (1762–94), reported that there are 140,000 residents, including 30,000 Greeks, 45,000 Armenians and 7500 Jews.⁵ Despite their small number in comparison to the Moslem majority, the Jews played an important role in the economic life of the Ottoman Empire in general, and in Smyrna especially.

Both Jewish and external sources mention the economic activities of the Jews in Smyrna and their part in local and international trade, from the middle

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of the seventeenth century. In the diaries of English, French and other travellers to the East, the significant role played by the Jews in trade is evident, both as independent merchants and as intermediaries for Europeans arriving there. According to some reports, the Jews did well and became rich, while others write of their dominance in trade.  

In this paper we shall examine the economic activities of the Jews in Smyrna, and particularly their connections with the Levant Company, as reflected in the Company archives. These files include reports of British ambassadors and consuls in Turkey, instructions by the Company’s central office in London to consuls, minutes of factors’ meetings in Smyrna, records of income and expenditure, and various payments of consuls’ fees and so on.

Some historical background will be of help in understanding the detailed analysis. European merchants, especially Italians, were active in Smyrna by the beginning of the sixteenth century.\(^7\) In the second half of the century international trade grew, as is clear from a decree sent in 1574 from Istanbul to Smyrna prohibiting the export of wax to ‘the lands of the infidels’, because of the lack of this commodity in the capital. Incidentally, the decree was issued after a Jew by the name of Isaac had complained of the lack of wax.\(^8\)

In the seventeenth century Smyrna became an important focal point of European trade with the East. Various factors gave rise to such a situation, not least the port which facilitated the anchorage of large ships. Silk was brought from Persia—as were other raw materials from different places in the East—for export to Europe. Venetian, Genoese, Ragusian, Dutch and French merchants were active here, to be followed by the English. Although they were newcomers, the English managed to gain preeminence over other European competitors, mainly owing to the excellent quality of the English weaves exported there. Evidence can be found for this not only from the English traders themselves, but also from their French competitors.\(^9\) Other strong contenders were the Dutch, mostly after the Venetians and Genoese had suffered a decline.\(^10\) In addition to various types of weaves, the English exported lead, tin, copper, steel, gunpowder, swords, phosphorus, clocks, watches and so on. They bought there silk, cotton, goatshair, mohair and grogram yarn, carpets, valonia (for tanning hides), raisins, dried figs and coffee (from Egypt).\(^11\)

Trade between England and Smyrna, as with other commercial centres in the Ottoman Empire, was carried out by the Levant Company, which began its activities as a result of the capitulation agreement between Murad III (1574–95) and Queen Elizabeth in 1580. According to this, similar rights were given to English merchants as to other Europeans who had preceded them.\(^12\) The task of the first ambassador William Harborne who was appointed in 1582—as it was for other British ambassadors until the beginning of the nineteenth century—was essentially to encourage trade between the two kingdoms. The Company received a charter from the queen in 1581 (again in
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1593, 1600, 1603, 1605, 1643 and 1661), investing it with the right of control and monopoly of trade with the territories belonging to the Ottoman Empire, except for Persia. In 1675 the Sultan Mahmud IV (1648–87) granted it the concession to trade in Persia and around the Black Sea. The rights and obligations of the Company’s members were also delineated. Consuls were appointed in major trade centres in order to represent their interests, and vice-consuls in less important places. Among these were two Jews: Sabbetai and Israel Taragano in Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, 1753–1816. The first consul in Smyrna was appointed in 1611 and the last in 1794. The latter retained his position until the disbanding of the Company in 1825.13

Until 1753 no Jews were accepted as members of the Company. A move endorsing their reception in 1744 was rejected. The explanation for this refusal lies in the industriousness and consequent predominance of the Jews within the Oriental trade. The English, who were aided by the Jews and who were familiar with them, feared that any connivance between the Jews of London and their brethren in the East would result in their taking control of trade.

In 1753 the restriction allowing only ‘free traders from London’ to be eligible for the Company was abrogated. From now on, all British subjects, including Jews, could become members, on the understanding that they would honour their duty to British law. There was, however, a reservation prohibiting Jewish members from employing Jews as factors or agents in the East. Yet doubt still existed regarding the ‘Jewish connections’, as can be seen from an application by Henry Jacob, a Jewish British subject, to become a member of the British factory in the East in July 1818. It ‘was refused on the score of being a Jew’.14

Some scattered references to Jewish ties with British trade are to be found in the Jewish responsa literature. For example, R. Haim Benveniste (who lived in Tira and Smyrna, and who died in 1673) writes to Smyrna in 1661 about ‘two partners who participated as brokers at an English trade house’.15 A similar situation was described by R. Aharon Lapapa (who was born in 1604, and who became in later years a Dayyan in Smyrna, and who died 1667): but no specific mention is made of the fact that the events took place in Smyrna.16 Further references to Jews working with the English as brokers are found in responsa written by sages who lived in Istanbul.17 Those sources generally debate the perpetual rights of the broker (called in Hebrew Hazaka) in the face of attempts to infringe them. According to evidence from the year 1709, a Jew served the British consul in Smyrna in an unspecified capacity, perhaps as a dragoman. R. Aharon Haim Alfantari writes: ‘Isaac ben Adot, whose name is renowned among the gentle traders as Bendigo, was taken into employ by the captains of the ship belonging to the English consul, as he was familiar with foreign languages’.18 As will be shown later, the consuls were forbidden to employ Jewish dragomans, but there were exceptions.

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English sources are more copious. Mordehai Zvi, the father of Shabbetai Zvi, was a broker, and served an Englishman in Smyrna, according to Paul Rycaut, consul there between 1667 and 1677. John Finch, who acted as British ambassador in Istanbul between 1674 and 1681, writes of a Jew who had commercial connections with an Englishman in Smyrna, who dealt in cloth and jewellery. An English nobleman travelling in the Mediterranean in 1738–9 wrote that despite the fact that the majority of the populace were Turks, the trade in Smyrna is in the hands of Franks, Armenians, Greeks and Jews, a considerable number of whom lived there. In 1785 an Englishman wrote of two brokers, an Armenian and a Jew, who were employed by a captain in the port of Smyrna. The Jew was authorized to deal with some goods. He also mentioned Jewish and Armenian money changers in the Bezestan, as well as brokers and independent traders.

The biographer of P. North, one of the governors of the Company in the eighteenth century, writes that a merchant is as incapable of freeing himself from the Jew, as he is unable to shed his skin. The Jew would guide the merchant in all his ways, and cannot exist without him. They act as brokers at an international level.

A. C. Wood, who wrote a book on the history of the Levant Company, states that the Jews controlled the majority of the trade in the East and farmed taxes, especially customs duty. They were bankers from whom the European traders borrowed money, and the English exercised their trade by means of Jews. When a new Englishman arrived at the port he was presented before a Jew upon whom he could rely, and was connected to him in all his economic activities. This seems to apply in general to the involvement of Jews in international trade.

Now we come to the documents located in the Levant Company’s archives, which supply a wealth of details about the role of the Jews in European trade. Particularly useful are the documents between the years 1649 and 1825, which provide evidence for the commercial relations of the Jews in Smyrna with the English.

First, some general information: owing to the contacts between the English and the Jews, the English traders were familiar with Jewish laws and customs. A letter written on 23 June 1671 from the head office of the Company to consul Rycaut, remarks: ‘Touching a complaint you make, of an Order of the Jewish Synagogue, That no Jew should bear Testimony against another before the Turkish Justice: Wee are apprehensive that the consequence thereof may be of great Detriment, in respect of Debts standing out to the English, Unles a peculiar care be taken: In which you are to do the best you can by way of Prevention.’

Jews are described by the end of the seventeenth century as competing with European traders. The governors of the Company wrote the following on 11 May 1694, to the Dutch Levant Company: ‘Wee have understood from our agents at Smirna that the Portugese Jewes have of latter years resorted
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thither in great numbers, dryng a very considerable Trade, not onely to & from Italy but other parts of Europe to the very great prejudice of the Frank Nations.25 (See Appendix IV for the entire text.)

Interestingly, there is clear evidence that account was taken of Jewish holidays. William Sherrard, the British consul in Smyrna (1703-16) wrote on 2 April 1713 in the name of twenty-two English factors to the commander of the British fleet in the Middle East, thanking him for delaying his ships sailing for an additional twenty days. They would, he said, renew their economic activities only following the Passover holiday of the Jews 'without whom the people of the country will not do business'.26 (See Appendix I.)

Jews were also active as independent importers and exporters. The first document referring to this is from 1 January 1649. In this case, Englishmen were to be found representing the interests of Jews. Isaac and Joseph Jesurun, merchants living in Istanbul, came to the cancelleria of the British Embassy in the capital, and gave power of attorney to Daniel and Joseph Edoard, so that they could receive and send goods to Venice and Leghorn, and represent them before the Courts. An agreement between a captain of a ship and three Jewish traders—by the names Moseh Sulam, Abram Villanoses and Chaim d'Avila, who sent wool and alum to Leghorn—was confirmed and recorded in the same cancelleria on 13 October 1649.27

More information is available from the records of consulate fees paid by Jews to the British consuls for merchandise sent and brought on English ships. Between the years 1715 and 1726 the names of more than a hundred Jewish firms appear, including partnerships of two brothers or of families, buying and selling to the English.

Close commercial connections were maintained with Leghorn and Amsterdam. Detailed records are to be found concerning Jews involved in export and import between Smyrna and Leghorn between the years 1721 and 1726. The same firms are mentioned frequently as importers and exporters to Leghorn, Amsterdam and other places. A few figures: in a record of consulate fees on goods imported from Leghorn to Smyrna in July 1723, nineteen Jewish firms appear. In a similar list, 18 March 1724, out of twenty-two firms sixteen were Jewish.28 In a list of exports to Amsterdam about a year later (5 May 1725) thirty-five Jewish firms appear, who sent cotton yarn, mohair yarn, goats' wool, carpets, opium, fruits, figs and so on. In September of the same year, out of nineteen exporters to Amsterdam, fourteen were Jews. We found fewer records on exports to Crete and Messina: Hananel Sforno and Isaac Sarfati exported wax to Canea (Crete) on 27 June 1722. Nine Jewish merchants are mentioned exporting goods from Smyrna to Messina on 3 April 1723. One of them does so two years later as well.29

It should be mentioned that commercial connections between Jews in Leghorn, Amsterdam and Smyrna are mentioned in Rabbinical sources as well.30
A variety of goods were bought and sold by Jews. From Leghorn they brought tin, Florentine weaves, silks, corals, Dutch pepper and so on. From the English they bought hardware, but mainly different types of weaves. They also sold the English raw materials for their textile industry, such as silk, mohair yarn and grogram yarn. Silk was a product in much demand in Europe, and Jews, like Armenians, had warehouses where the silk was stored until it was sold. When complaints arrived from London after the beginning of the eighteenth century as to the quality of the silk called ‘sherbasse’, it was decided on 12 December 1726 that an obligatory check was to be made on the silk stored. The English appointed four experts, and among twelve traders whose store was checked on 16 February 1727 there appears a Jewish name: Elias Tocatle. The Jews seem to have been organized in a guild and had control over bringing grogram yarn to Smyrna and selling it to the English. This seems clear from the complaints delivered by the English concerning the excessive profit margin demanded by the Jews: 10 dollars (or 10 per cent) per bale. In response to a meeting of the factors on 4 March 1706, which dealt with various trade obstacles, including this one, the governors in London suggested to the factors in Smyrna that they meet the Jews and discuss how to change this situation. They were to negotiate with the ‘Deputation of the Jewish Nation’. If they are unable to reach a solution they should boycott these Jews. After several meetings it was concluded that they could not pay more than 1½ per cent. The Jews insisted on 6 per cent. The British consul invited the chief Armenian and Greek traders to join the resolution concerning maximum profit or brokerage to be paid to the Jews. They, together with twenty-three factors, signed an obligation on 30 December 1706 not to buy grogram yarn except under their conditions. This is the earliest information on a Jewish guild or corporation in Smyrna. From Rabbinical sources we know of Jewish guilds of craftsmen only from the beginning of the nineteenth century or from the end of the eighteenth.

This is not the only complaint against Jews. On 11 March 1671 a complaint was filed concerning the fact that Jews owed money to the English, and explaining that this was causing a lack of trust towards Jews. (See Appendix II.) Various other accusations and complaints are filed in minutes and letters from between the years 1661 and 1771, accusing Jews of being disreputable or harming British trade. Preconceived notions and negative generalizations are evident, reflecting almost certainly an element of jealousy for their abilities and achievements.

Jews and Armenians were also accused of smuggling, a matter harmful to British interests. In a circular from the Company’s governors to the consuls and treasurers, in the wake of a decision taken on 15 February 1698, it is stated that the smuggling of cloth and other goods by Jews and Armenians has come to notice. This is repeated on 31 October 1716 (See Appendix III) and 2 July 1717. The accusation included the export of weaves from
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England—as well as other goods from Italy—and their marketing in Smyrna without the mediation of the Levant Company in order to save consul's fees. Such deeds, however, were carried out in conjunction with English merchants, who broke their promise to the Company by engaging in private business with Armenians and Jews. Information concerning this behaviour arrived at the consulates, and at the office of the Company in London. Repeated warnings and decisions to levy fines were apparently of no avail since the rewards for both sides were great.

In addition, a document of 6 August 1742 deals with the fact that merchants in Smyrna sent fruit, cotton and other goods via Leghorn to Jews in England. A letter from the governors in London records that there was a prohibition on the export of fruit from Turkey, excepting fruit intended for the royal kitchen. It was not stated whether Jews were the senders, but it could conceivably be so. It was feared that harm would be caused to the interests of the Ottoman authorities, as well as to the credibility of British agreements. Already in 1590 a decree was issued containing a list of goods prohibited for export from Turkey. In the course of time a number of changes took place, and restrictions were imposed on the export of vital food products because of their scarcity in Turkey, especially during periods of war and famine. Export was conditional upon obtaining a licence from the authorities, and was subject to negotiation between the ambassadors and the Sultans. The measure also served Turkish economic interests. In the Capitulation agreement of 1675 arranged by ambassador Finch with Sultan Mahmud IV (1648–87), it was permitted to export dates and raisins to the kitchen of the king of England, but only in years of plenty and in amounts restricted to two ships a year, and after payment of 3 per cent customs duty. In the following years there were similar agreements, as special gestures to royalty.

Jews and Armenians were forced to pay fees to the English far in excess of those paid to the French. This fact appears in a document of 17 September 1674. The disparity may be explained by the competition between France and Great Britain. The French enjoyed a position of privilege with the Ottomans, and also gave protection to Portuguese Marranos who came to the Middle East as well as other Jews. Consular fees were a source of income, and it was worthwhile for the French to offer a discount in order to attract customers. (In 1695 the protection granted to the Jews by the French was annulled.)

In a letter written by the governors to William Raye, consul in Smyrna (1677–1703), on 14 August 1689, it was stated that Jews and Armenians paid 2 per cent consular fees to the English, 1 per cent higher than that paid by Europeans such as the Dutch. Indeed, in the wake of a complaint by Venetian traders living in Aleppo, it appears, in a letter written on 1 August 1746 to the consul in Smyrna, that the French demanded consular fees in one direction only—either import or export—whereas the English demanded it on
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both, as did other countries.\textsuperscript{47} Also in connection with the competition between the English and the French, a letter of 15 April 1752 stated that the Jews sent a sample of French cloth to Spain, in order for it to be produced there and then exported to the Ottoman Empire. The matter was recorded in critical vein, because it would compete with English weave.\textsuperscript{48}

The fact that Jews were on the one hand a competitive element, and on the other a vital link in international trade, resulted in conflicting approaches to the protection granted them by the representatives of European nations in the Levant. The following evidence is typical: on 11 May 1694 the governors of the Company requested the governors of the Dutch Levant Company in Amsterdam to order their consul in Smyrna to abrogate his protection of the Jews. The reason offered was the damage caused by the Portuguese Jews to European trade. it was stated in the letter that the French had granted protection to the Jews, and that after French merchants had complained of the damage caused as a result, this protection was annulled. The British consul had as yet not offered his protection, and an instruction was issued not to do so in future.\textsuperscript{49} (See Appendix IV.) The Dutch, however, did not accede to the request, and as a result the governors wrote to the ambassador in Istanbul, and to the consuls in Aleppo and Smyrna, on 26 October 1694, that since the Dutch had refused the request, the British should act similarly. If a Jew wished to receive the consul’s protection, his request was to be granted, but only after consultation with the factors, and once consideration had been given to the benefits that would accrue.\textsuperscript{50} (See Appendix V.) About a year later, on 14 August 1695, the matter was again brought up. In a letter from the governors to the consul in Smyrna, a negative attitude was expressed towards giving the Jews protection. The writers expressed the hope that all European countries would agree to this policy, as the Jews were damaging trade. But in any event, the conclusion reached was nevertheless to grant protection, but only under certain conditions, to those who were beneficial to the British interests.

The Ottoman authorities were not satisfied with the fact that Jews in great numbers enjoyed the protection of European diplomats, and as a result they did not pay the poll tax imposed on D’himmis (‘protected persons’, or resident aliens).

In an order by the Grand Senior—sent on 18 January 1696 to the Kadi, Gümruk Emini (chief customs officer) and ciyzedar (poll tax collector)—it is mentioned that Portuguese Jews enjoyed the protection of the French and later of the Dutch, a fact that was harmful for the income of the government. From now on, they should pay customs and taxes like other Re’ayas. The consuls were requested not to interfere in such affairs.\textsuperscript{51} This subject appears again in the early years of the eighteenth century in connection with the sale of Berats—certificates of patent, or protection, bought by able local Christians and Jews from ambassadors, which entitled them to the status granted by the Ottomans to diplomats, their families and their servants, according to the Capitulation agreements. The aim of the buyers was to avoid payment of poll
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tax and the discriminating laws of the ‘Omar Covenant’.52 Since the sale of Berats was a source of income to the ambassadors, many were sold, and some recipients were given the veiled title of ‘honorary drugoman’. In January 1736, for instance, Moseh Levi, Ephraim Arditi, Juda Manpoli and Isaac Semmah held this title. Thirty-four years later the following is recorded in the cancelleria’s minute book: ‘31 March 1770, The same Day the Ambassador renewed the Patent of Solomon Levi of Smyrna, honorary Drugoman and Baratlee’.53 Those persons were granted the honorary titles despite the instructions limiting this.

The governors of the Company instructed the consul of Smyrna on 18 July 1706 not to sell Berats except to people who were really in the service of the British. Others who benefited from protection would harm the trade in cloth. A year later, on 29 May 1707, there were disputes between the ambassador and the consul in Smyrna on the question of whether to return the Berats to those who had them before, on the grounds that they were proving harmful to English trade. The sale of Berats was therefore a double-edged sword: on the one hand a source of income, on the other a negative factor, competing with the mercantile activity of the English in the Orient.54

A. Galante writes in his book on the history of Jews in Smyrna that Jews were employed as dragomans by French, Dutch, Ragusan and Venetian traders in the sixteenth century, and later by the English. Regarding the latter, matters are far from clear. According to sources from the beginning of the eighteenth century, the English opposed the employing of Jewish dragomans. This can be seen in an instruction from the governors of 27 March 1704 to terminate the employment of a Jew by the name of Cohen, who was employed as second dragoman by the British consul in Aleppo, as well as by the Dutch. The reason of his dismissal was that his employment contravened instructions.55 There seems to be no earlier such order, but ten years later—on 13 April 1714—an instruction to the ambassador states that it was obligatory to refrain from employing Jews as dragomans in Istanbul, Smyrna and Aleppo.

There were certainly exceptions, and the instructions were not meticulously carried out. In 1675, for example, an Englishman by the name of George Wheeler is writing on a Jewish dragoman employed by the English in Istanbul.56 Moses and Abraham Arditi are mentioned in January 1703 as ‘sons of a dragoman’. It may well be that their father was Ephraim Arditi, a follower of Shabbetai Zvi. He is mentioned by Lord Chandos, the British ambassador in Istanbul, in his report of 16 June 1687. In 1730, a patent was again granted by the British ambassador to Isaac Angeli, a Jewish dragoman.57 Information also from the beginning of the nineteenth century has been found concerning a Jew by the name of Leon Gabbay, second dragoman of the British consul in Smyrna. A German called Ludwig Bartholdy, visiting Turkey in 1803–4, met him. Gabbay is mentioned once more in the Levant Company archives as one demanding restitution of a debt from the British consul in Smyrna. Clearly the
number of Jewish dragomans employed by the British was limited.

The dragomans were generally Greek or Armenian, but there were many local Italians. The most famous of these were the Pesani family, who served in this capacity for about 200 years. It appears that the refusal of the English to employ Jews as dragomans stems from doubts as to their reliability, and from the possibility of their acting as double agents on behalf of the Turks. The holder of such a position fulfilled missions of delicate nature, demanding secrecy. The Jews were more loyal to the Ottomans than the local Christians, so they were not trusted by the British. In order not to be dependent on foreign dragomans, the English began in the nineteenth century to train dragomans of their own nationality.\(^{58}\)

From Jewish sources we know of Jews in the service of the customs in Smyrna. Some of them inherited positions held by their fathers previously.\(^{59}\) According to the existing structure, the chief customs officer in Istanbul would be entitled to appoint two dues collectors in Smyrna, one of them being in charge of merchandise imported from Europe.\(^{60}\)

In a bill read on 21 February 1744, giving reasons against accepting Jews as members of the Levant Company, there is a detailed description of the involvement of Jews in the economic life of the Ottoman Empire. It includes the following sentence: 'The Jews are generally the agents of the great men in Turkey, and are employed in all customs houses'. This information applies to Smyrna as well. In the files of the Levant Company there is evidence for Jews functioning in that position from the year 1675. A list of presents given to officials by the consul before Passover 1675, mentions 'the chief Jew of the custom', who receives a quantity of cloth.\(^{61}\) A Jewish customs officer is mentioned by the British ambassador Lord Chandos in his letter to the consul in Smyrna of 8 December 1681.\(^{62}\)

A Jew by the name of Soncino, who was employed in the customs house, is mentioned in a list of presents to officials on 27 August 1723, and again on 5 June 1724 and 22 March 1725. Gifts were thus given yearly. There is, however, another detail which merits attention: on both occasions it is recorded that in addition to the cloth, he received £20 as payment for information concerning French imports ('customhouse Jew for giving amount of the French import at the port'). Similar evidence from a later period appears in a report by A. Hayes, consul in Smyrna, to Lord Conway, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 2 January 1766. He writes that Jews who are employed in the customs house of Smyrna gave information on the imports and exports of the harbour.\(^{63}\)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a delay in the granting of annual gifts to the Jewish customs officers. They were displeased, and their demand, presented in a form of memorandum, came up at a meeting of the English factors in Smyrna on 7 June 1809. The matter was postponed to a meeting convened on 9 January 1810, when it was unanimously decided to
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accede to their demand.\textsuperscript{44} It may be assumed that in a period that saw a fall in the extent of British trade in Smyrna, and upheaval and war between Britain and France (1793–1815), there was a tendency to restrict the presentation of the gifts so generously granted to officials in the past.\textsuperscript{65}

Wood, in his book on the Levant Company, writes that Jews lent money to English merchants. Ulker, author of a book on the rise of Smyrna between 1688 and 1740, repeats the assertion, but does not substantiate it with reference to sources. Documents now available do not endorse this assumption (which is, however, verified regarding the Jews in Istanbul).\textsuperscript{66} On the other hand, there is clear evidence that Jews were borrowers.

A Jew by the name of Joseph borrowed 1000 dollars from John Foley, an English merchant residing in Smyrna. He promised to ‘pledge 700 okes of grogram yarn and 70 miskals of gold in chains’. Joseph paid 900 dollars and asked for the pledge. Meanwhile Foley left the country, leaving the pledge with his partners, C. Laxton and C. W. Weld. When he desired to pay the rest of his debt, they refused to restore the pledge. This story is recorded in a translation of the Grand Senior’s command, as sent to the Mola of Smyrna in July 1679. The man in charge there was ordered to investigate the case and ‘permit not any to do anything contrary to the noble law’.

Again, a Jew by the name of Sonsino who was in need of a loan, was mentioned by the British ambassador on 10 November 1686, who quotes the words of the consul in Smyrna. There is opposition to lending him money, because of the Jew’s ‘lack of honesty’.

Among those who lent money for profit, there was a chaplain, ‘Minister of the English Nation in Smyrna’. B. Mould lent, between January and December 1720, different amounts to six persons totalling 2000 dollars. The list of loans begins on 16 December 1720, with Jacob Ariaz borrowing, at the interest of 12 per cent, 150 dollars. The others paid only 10 per cent. This money belonged to a deceased British trader whose will stipulated that the money be delivered into the hands of the Minister, ‘to be put out in Interest for the Benefit of the Minister and Poor of Smyrna, to be divided yearly, or half yearly in equal Portions’.\textsuperscript{67}

To summarize: the archives of the Levant Company reveal the important role of Spanish and Portuguese Jews in international trade between Smyrna and Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The zenith of Jewish involvement was apparently in the first half of the eighteenth century, when trade with Leghorn assured them a position of prominence. The only area in which the records show the Jews to have been in full control was that of selling grogram yarn to the English, and probably to others. Jews also had to survive competition from other minorities, mainly Armenians and Greeks. The Jewish merchants or brokers were organized in a guild or corporation recorded in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Negotiations on profit margins
were held with their representatives. Repeated accusations that Jews were counterproductive to the mercantile interests of Europeans in the Orient bear witness to their special status. The English set themselves two contradictory aims: to exclude them from their employment, as the Jews constituted a competitive threat to trade, and, on the other hand, to include them when there was no alternative. The competition among Europeans for protection proved a blessing for the Jews as for other minorities. Protection granted them by the Dutch resulted in a similar act by the English. Reservations held by the English toward the Jews, and their misgivings as to their commercial abilities and connections, found expression in prohibiting the employment of Jews as dragomans. One area where Jews enjoyed prominence was within the customs administration. This enabled them to convey information on the commercial activities of European countries competing against the English.

The evidence of these archives contradicts the assumption that Jews everywhere—including the Ottoman Empire—were engaged principally in money-lending, and that they were in the habit of demanding high interest.68

NOTES


2 Barnai, Pe'amim (see n. 1). The following references ought to be added: Molho, Otzar Yehudey Sepharad II (1959) 38; on Jews from Portugal who came to Smyrna recently, in a document dated 11 May 1694: SP 105–114, p. 639; and 18 January 1696: SP 105–334, p. 50b. The earliest reference to a Jew coming from Leghorn to Smyrna is 1672: Haim Benveniste, Bnei Hayye (Salonica 5548–5551). Hoshen Mishpat II, 92. In dealing with the commercial connections of Marseilles with the Levant, a rich Jewish family from Bordeaux was mentioned in 1759 as being active in Smyrna. In the same source, Jews from Leghorn living in Smyrna are alluded to: R. Paris, Histoire du commerce de Marseille ed. G. Rambert, t. 5, 1660–1789 (Paris 1957) 256.

3 Even if we do not take these figures too literally, they give us some relative information about the number of Jews in comparison with other ethnic groups: B. J. B. Taivnir, in Collections of Travels through Turkey into Persia and East Indies I (London 1684–8) 33. He lived between the years 1605 and 1689. It is not clear in what year he gave the estimate. N. Ulker, in The Rise of Izmir, 1688–1740, University of Michigan, Ph.D. 1974 (c. 1975) 41, suggests that he wrote this figure in 1664. In 1676: G. Wheler, Voyage de Dalmatie, de Grèce et du Levant (1675), (Amsterdam 1689) 138. There are lower estimates from the 1680s:
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7000 Jews, 60,000 Moslems, 15,000 Greeks, 8000 Armenians, and 1000 Europeans. Accordingly, Jews number less than 10 per cent. H. Myrike, Reformierten predigers bey der holländischen Gesellschaft in Konstantinopel; Reise von Konstantinopel nach Jerusalem (Augsburg 1789) 8.

4 A. de La Motraye, Travels through Europe, Asia and into Part of Africa, translated from the French I (London 1723) 152. 12,000–14,000 Moslems, 8000 Greeks, 400 Armenians, 200 Europeans. J. P. de Tournefort, A Voyage into the Levant III (London 1741) 333. The Jews had 8 synagogues. On the earthquake: Ulker (see n. 3) 42–8. E. Bashan, 'Earthquakes and Fires in Smyrna in the 17th–19th centuries, and a Document accrediting Jews of Conflagration;' in Miqqedem Umigym; Studies in the Jewry of Islamic Countries, II, University of Haifa, 1986, 13–27. 5000–6000 Jews between 1736 and 1740: R. Pococke, A Description of the East and some Other Countries II (London 1743–5) 37. A Dutch traveller gives the following figures: 10,000–12,000 Jews out of 100,000 residents: Van H. Kinsbergen, Beschreibung vom Archipelagus, aus holländischen überseyt, anmerkungen K. Sprengel Rostock (Leipzig 1792) 107. A similar estimate is given by a Bohemian priest who visited Turkey on his way to Jerusalem in the 1720s: in addition to 80,000 Turks, 12,000 Greeks and Armenians, almost that number of Jews live in Smyrna. They have 7 synagogues: P. A. M. Myller, Peregrinus in Jerusalem (Wien and Nürnberg 1735) 460. 12,000 (7 synagogues), according to a German: C. W. Lüedeke, Beschreibung des Türkischen Reiches I (Leipzig 1780) 72 (the author d. 1768).

5 Report dated 15 May 1789 on population increases. Peasants from central Anatolia abandoned their villages because of high taxes on lands; 80,000 Christians from Morea moved to Smyrna because of war in 1715 between Venice and Turkey: Neueste Reisebeschreibung durch die vornthämtigen Provinzen der Ottomanschen Pforte (Berlin and Leipzig 1772) 22; F. V. J. Arundell, Discoveries in Asia Minor II (London 1834) 413–14; D. Georgiades, Smyrne et l’Asie Mineure au point de vue économique et commercial, préface de M. A. Mangin (Paris 1885) 94–107. Ulker (see n. 3) 41–2, 48–50, 66.

6 On the economic activities of the Jews in Smyrna in the 17th century: Cornelia Magni, Varie lettere scritte in Italia, le quali principalmente include no l’esame della Metropoli di Costantinopoli (Parma 1679) 42–3, quoted by: A. Bakalopoulos, A Greek Nation, 1453–1669, translated by I. and P. Moles (New Brunswick 1976) 414, n. 150. The Secretary of Nointel, French ambassador in Istanbul, after 1670, wrote that trade moved from Istanbul to Smyrna, and that the Jews, who had been a small and poor community, became rich as a result of their contacts with the new European merchants. The Jews controlled all trade between the Turks and the Europeans: Petis de la Croix, Mémoires du sieur de la Croix, y devant secrétaire de l’ambassade de Constantinope II (Paris 1684) 315, 815. A French priest, several years later, mentions the Jewish brokers employed by the Europeans. The position was inherited, and the punishment for transgressing this right is banishment from the Synagogue: M. Febure, Teatro della Turchia (Milano 1681) 354; Galante (see n. 1) 138–9, 142. The English are aware of this matter among the Jews: A. C. Wood, A History of the Levant Company (Oxford 1935) 214. According to a source from the beginning of the 18th century, all trade passes through the hands of the Jews. No business is carried out without consulting or involving them: Tournefort III (see n. 4) 336; Galante (see n. 1) 137–9. The Jews controlled the trade there in the 18th century: Paris (see n. 2) 254, 341. Recent research on Smyrna mentions the important role of the Jews, but not their dominance: Ulker (see n. 3) 49. As reported at the beginning of the 19th century, the brokers were mainly Jews: J. C. Hobhouse, A Journey through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey...during the Years 1809 and 1810 (London 1813) 622.


8 Galante, Documents officiels concernant les Juifs de Turquie (Stamboul 1931) 204–5; Barnai, Pe'amim (see n. 1) 48–9.

9 Galante (see n. 1) 136; T. Stoyanovich, 'The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant', Journal of Economic History XX (1960) 271; Nehama, Ginzh Saloniki I (1961) 20; L. Roberts (Merchant), The Merchants' Mappe of Commerce (London 1638) 118–19; P. Rycaut, The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches (London 1679) 33–4; An Englishman who visited the Orient in 1675: G. Wheeler, A Journey into Greece in Company of Dr Spon of Lyons (London 1682) 245; A Dutchman who visited the Middle East in the 1720s described the Dutch and English trade in Smyrna: J. A. Van Egmont, Travels through Part of Europe, Asia Minor, I, translated from the Low Dutch (London 1759) 88–9; Pococke II (see n. 4) 37; Neueste Reisebeschreibung (see n. 5) 131; An Englishman who visited the Middle East in
Eliezer Bashan


10 The struggle of Venice against British trade in the Levant: Robert II (see n. 9) 73; the British success against them: Cawston (see n. 9) 75-6; H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, Islamic Society and the West I (Oxford 1950) 174; Cernovodeanu (see n. 9) 455; the French competition: A. L. Horniker, 'Anglo-French Rivalry in the Levant from 1583 to 1612', Journal of Modern History XVIII (1946) 289-305.


11 Export of English weaves to the Levant: Ulker (see n. 3) 123-38, 169, n. 189; the peak of these exports was in 1672-7: SP 105-145, p. 305-10; details on types of weaves: Cernovodeanu (see n. 9) 450-1; in 1717: SP 105-116; an account of the number of woolen cloths of all sorts exported by the Levant Company from England to Turkey in 46 years from Christmas 1671 to Christmas 1717, London 1718 (?). Remarks on the case published by the Levant Company, London 1718: BM 357, b6 (46); in 1730: Cawston (see n. 9) 84; Short Reasons on Behalf of the Levant Company 1744; BM 357, c12 (38); 1788: BM 38, 348, p. 106.

Other goods exported from England: E. Ross (ed.) Discours des Turkes by Sr. Thomas Sherley (London 1636) 9; an English traveller who came to the Levant in 1611 (1578-1644): G. Sandys, Travels, Containing an History of the Original and Present State of the Turkish Empire I (6th ed. London 1670) 67; F. J. Fisher, London’s Exports in the Early 17th Century, in Economic History Review III (1950) 151-61; B. Carré de Chambron, The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East, 1672 to 1674, translated by Fawcett (Hakluyt Soc. III) 88, n. 3; according to a visitor in 1730: C. Thomson, Travels of the Late Charles Thomson, Observation on France, Italy, Turkey in Europe II (London 1744) 172-3; in 1788: BM, Addit. 38223; Export of Watches: BM 38, 348, p. 103. Imports to England: a detailed list of goods imported in the years 1699-1705: SP 105-145; in 1674: SP 105-153, p. 315; 1733: SP 105-169, p. 2; Roberts (see n. 9) 118-19; Abbot (see n. 10) 170, 179-80, 209, 223, 349; Ulker (see n. 1) 76-120; in 1788: BM 38, 348, p. 101b; a visitor in 1818: J. Fuller, Narrative of a Tour through some Parts of the Turkish Empire (London 1829) 43.

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was the first Englishman who in 1553 succeeded in obtaining a privilege from Sultan Suleiman for free trade in the territories belonging to the Ottoman Empire. Text of the privilege, see: J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East; A Documentary Record 1553–1914 I (Princeton 1956) 5–6; The background for the agreement was the common interest against Spå → E. Pears, 'The Spanish Armada and the Ottoman Porte', English Historical Review VIII (1893) 439–66; B. Lewis, The Ottoman Archives, a Source for European History (supplement to Research Bibliography) (Washington 1956) 23–5; republished in Collected Studies (London 1976); C. Roth, JQR, NS34 (1943–4) 81.


14 In a bill read 21 February 1744 called 'Reasons against the Bill now depending in Parliament Intituled A Bill for Inlarging and Regulating the Trade to the Levant Seas' under the headline: 'Jews improper People to be admitted into the Turkey Trade', there are several reasons, covering three pages, why Jews are 'improper people'. One passage reads: 'not under any prejudice to them as unfair Traders, but from particular circumstances with regard to those of their own nation already established in all the scales of Turkey as subjects of the Sultan...there are two strong reasons: one is, that they must endanger the ruin of all our privileges, and of course of our establishments in Turkey. The other, that if the trade can be supported, it must all fall in their hands to the total exclusion of all the rest of his Majesty's subjects...The Turks have been accustomed to the King's Christian subjects only, and to look upon them as those in favour of whom the benefit of the capitulations is granted. The English Jews will appear as a new nation to them, and as they must see them resorting in the Synagogues of their subjects, which in all the towns, are in separate quarters from where the foreigners dwell, they will in time begin to look upon them as one people with them, and make difficulties of allowing their goods to pass for the same custom as those of other Englishmen were wont to do, or allow those goods to pass free from place to place in Turkey with a custom house receipt, from whence such disputes may arise as may endanger the capitulations.' BM 357c 12 (39). J. Hanway, An Historical Account of the British Trade Over the Caspian Sea II (London 1753) 63–4; Wood (see n. 6) 155–6, 215; C. Roth, A History of the Jews in England (Oxford 1964) 206. 15 July 1818: SP 105–136, pp. 546, a+b.

15 Ba'ei Hayye, Hoshen Mishpat I, 128; R. Shmuel Shalem from Salonika, who had business in Smyrna, had connections with the English consul: Meleh Shalem (Salonika 5529) 41; M. Benayahu, Sefunot XV (1981) 22.

16 Bnei Aharon (Smyrna 5434) 74.

17 R. Jehoshua Benveniste, Dayyan in Istanbul from 1612 until his death in 1662, wrote that 'Reuben, who was a broker of an Englishman, offered partnership to Shimon in brokage with the English': Sha'ar Jehoshua (Hosiatin 5664) 28. R. Moshe Benveniste (1606–77) mentions a Jew who was trading with an Englishman in wool. No location is indicated: Pnei Moshe (Istanbul 5427–5479) II, 16.
18 Yad Aharon (Smyrna 5495) II.
19 P. Rycaut, The History of the Turks, Beginning with the Year 1679 II (London 1687–1700) 174. Febure (see n. 6) 371.
20 Abbot (see n. 10) 292–3.
21 J. Montague, A Voyage Performed by the Late Earl of Sandwich, Round the Mediterranean, in the Years 1738 and 1739 (London 1799) 309.
22 Griffiths (see n. 9) 40, 84–5.
23 P. North, Lives of the Norths III (London 1826) 534; Wood (see n. 6) 214–15; M. Rosen, Pe'amim IX (1831) 114. The wife of a British ambassador who expressed her impressions of Turkey in the years 1716–18 mentions the important role of Jewish brokers and their connections with the British; but her assumption that the whole trade of Turkey is in their hands is exaggerated: The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (London 1837) 125; ibid. II, 13; Wood (see n. 6) 215, Marcus, Sinai XLVIII (1959) 377.
24 Wood (see n. 6) 214; Lutzki, Zion VI (1941) 49. Every Foreign trader has a Jewish broker: A bill read 21 February 1744 (see n. 14). F. Werry, the British consul in Smyrna (1794–1825) wrote on 13 January 1818 that all the factors do their business by their brokers: SP 105–136, p. 29.
26 SP 105–335 p. 125a + b; Ulker (see n. 3) 230; In a letter of 25 March 1744, one promises to pay a debt (not to a Jew) ‘as soon as the present Holydays of the Jews are over’: SP 105–185 p. 200b. cf. Haim Paliagi, Lev Haim II (Smyrna 5650) 105, p. 59.
29 Exported to Amsterdam 5 May 1725: David Aboulafia, Alfantari and Sid, Arditti, Solomo Azecry, Solomo Bar David, Jacob Barche and Co., Isaac Barche, Moseh Nunes Belmonte and Co., Moseh Bonomo, Haim Caldon and Co., Solomo Calomite, Calvo di Castro and Co., Cordoso, Samuel and Abram Danon, Fernandes Diaz, Abram Falcon, Moseh Falcon, Samuel Falcon, Abram Fernandes, Abram Gomeleon, Eliah Levy and Co., Levy and Perpignian, Eliah Moseh and Co., Mordey Musdrahy (Mizrahi?), Solomon Mutale, Jacob Nune and Samuel Danon, Jacob Pardo, Haim Sarfati, Caleb Saul, Moseh and Useph Saul, Samuel Sereno, Sforno, Jacob Sid and Calomite, Moseh and Salvador Sonsino. September 1725: Eliah Levy and Jacob Sereno, Jaco Arditti, Moseh Falcon, Isaue and Dan Cordose, Mordecai Saul, Sforno, Juda Murcia, Moseh Saul and Isaiah Calomite, Menahim Perpignan, Eliah Levy and Co., Solomo Mutale, Haim Sarfati (six of them exported in May as well). On trade between Smyrna and Amsterdam: Ulker (see n. 3) 221–4. Exported to Messina, 3 April 1723: Alfantari and Sid, D'Alva Baravia, Moseh Bonomo, Isaac Calomite, Sevi Coen, David Perpignian, Isaac Sarfati, Sonsino, Sforno. The last one on 24 September 1725 again. Sonsino received goods from Messina 2 August 1725: SP 105–207. The biggest firm was apparently Elias Levy and Co. (1724–5); other big firms were Solomo Mutale (1722–5); Moseh and Joseph Saul (1721–5); Sonsino (1721–5); Sforno
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(1721–6); Haim Sarfati (1722–5).

30 In 1668: Haim Benveniste, Ba'el Hayye, Ḥoshen Mishpat (see n. 2) 151, 158; two years later: ibid. 24, 44, 95; Aharon Hakohen Peraḥia, Parah Māte Aharon (Amsterdam 5463) 64; in 1715: Shlomo Emerilio, Kerem Shlomo (Salonika 5479) Ḥoshen Mishpat, 49; Abraham Haim Rodríguez, Orḥah Lazadik (Lehbgorn 5540) Ḥoshen Mishpat, 5. (The author lived in Lehbgorn and died 1735.) Joseph Ergaz, Divrei Joseph (Lehbgorn 5502) 47; a trader in Lehbgorn was represented in Smyrna by an agent: Moshe Israel, Maset Moshe II (Istanbul 5493–5505) 46. 

31 SP 105–113.

32 SP 105–335, pp. 224–6. Ulker (see n. 3) 94–6. The governors ordered the opening of every parcel of silk arriving from Persia, on 13 August 1708: SP 105–115. According to a source from the 18th century, silk from Bursa was bought by Jews in Smyrna in partnership with traders of Istanbul: W. Eton, A Survey of Turkish Empire (London 1799) 488.


34 SP 105–113, pp. 301–2.


36 SP 105–155, p. 460.

37 The governors ordered the consul in Smyrna to gather the factors in order to discuss how to avoid this matter, following a previous order of 2 December 1713 on the same problem: SP 105–335, p. 168; SP 105–155.

38 SP 105–116; Ulker (see n. 3) 280.


40 A fine of 1 per cent ad valorem, 26 October 1702: SP 105–115; 10 per cent, 30 August 1770: SP 105–332; 20 March 1716: SP 105–180, pp. 1–2. 1718: 20 per cent on wool, 10 per cent on gold and silver: A Case of Several Members of Levant Company Complaining of the Restraint of their Trade, (London 1718); Ulker (see n. 3) 127.

41 SP 105–117.

42 Skilliter (see n. 13) 56; Inalcik (see n. 9) 215, 217; Braudel (see n. 7) 351; P. Mantran Foreign Merchants and the Minorities in Istanbul during theSixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, in: B. Braude and B. Lewis (eds.) Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire I (N.Y. and London) 133.

43 A similar agreement in 1697: Ulker (see n. 3) 191, 123; in a report 31 October 1699, it is mentioned that 2 tons of rice may be exported to the kitchen of the king of England: SP 105–115. A similar permission is mentioned 6 August 1742: SP 105–332, p. 175; 7 June 1743: SP 105–332, p. 178.


46 The text of the letter is: 'Seing the Dutch do not demand any consulage of our Nation upon money betwixt your Place and Constant- inople, We are satisfied that two per cent taken upon the Smyrna Factor is returned. It being our Intention to treat them and other Frank Nations w[i]th the same civility they practise towards us, but as to Armenians, Jews and other people of
the Country, it is our Rate that they pay two per cent, although we have from tymne to tymne (as we still do) let it to you to mitigate, when you see occasion.' (SP 105–332, p. 13.)

47 SP 105–118, p. 22.

48 SP 105–118, p. 222.

49 SP 105–114, p. 639; the right of the British to grant protection to strangers is part of the capitulation agreement, 34: SP 105–152, p. 152 (22 July 1663). Definition of the protection is detailed in a bill read 21 February 1744: ‘The protection given to stranger Jews, by the Christian ambassadors in Turkey... are not considered as the subjects of any one of the states by whom they are protected. They are not received into the community in any of the nations they are under, or have place at their national assemblies. They pay them consulage, and are exempted from being treated as subjects of the country.

The Turks allow the protection of their own subjects by foreign ambassadors, with the commission of an honorary druggman in the same manner.' BM 357c. 12 38, 39.


51 Part of the letter written by the Governor of the Levant Company to Consul Raye in Smyrna, 14 August 1695, reads: ‘Wee find it somewhat averse to yr giving Protections to yr Jew’s & wee ourselves shouuld be likewise pleased that all Frank Nations w[oul]d concur to refuse them, but since our single standing out w[oul]d only debarr us from receiving any part of the benefit of their Consulage but cannot prevent the prejudice they doe to Trade, wee now againe pray to his Lor[dish]p to Protect such of them as desire it, upon such termeas as may be most for our advantage.’ SP 105–115; 18 January 1696: SP 105–334, pp. 50b–51. Ulker (see n. 3) 231–2.

52 The Berats: SP 97–52, pp. 116–17, 132; Ulker (see n. 3) 181, 197, 245, n. 63. In Turkish it is called Nisan-i Serif. Berats granted to Jews in Smyrna between the years 1682 and 1735 in the archives of the Levant Company include: 4 October 1682: BM Stowe 219, p. 43; January 1703 to the sons of the Dragomans Moseh and Abraham Arditi: SP 105–334, p. 57. Ulker (see n. 3) 245–6, n. 65. 25 May 1724 to Jehuda Manopoli and his son: SP 105–207.

53 In a report of 17 August 1767 it is stated that the price of a Berat was 2600 Piastres, and for a renewal 600 dollars. This is paid personally to the ambassador according to the capitulation agreements, SP 97–43, p. 173. In a report of 25 April 1795, the ambassador’s income of Berats was £2000–£3000: Cunningham, Middle Eastern Affairs II (1961) 85. ‘Honourary Druggmen’: January 1736: SP 105–334, p. 62. 1770: SP 105–184, p. 240.

54 SP 105–115; the negative attitude of the Company towards selling Berats, as expressed in a letter of 18 July 1706, was apparently a result of the objection of the Ottoman authorities. The Head vezir is against renewal of Berats unless they are British subjects (10 May 1703). But the British insisted on this right, based on the capitulation agreements: SP 105–115.

55 Galante (see n. 1) 136; SP 105–115; Ulker (see n. 3) 49.

56 SP 105–116; G. Wheeler (see n. 3) 201; as recorded in a letter of 6 June 1682 to the consul in Smyrna, a recommendation by a German to employ a Jew as a druggman, (apparently) for the British Consul at Smyrna, was rejected by the British ambassador: BM Stowe, 219, p. 38.

57 On the sons of Arditii, see: n. 52; G. Scholem, Shabbetai Zvi (Tel-Aviv 1957) 349 (Hebrew). 16 June 1687: BM Stowe, 220, p. 87.

58 On October 1730: SP 105–182, p. 27.


60 A record of the year 1789: SP 105–337, p. 93.

61 21 February 1744: BM 357c. 12 (39) p. 5; Ulker (see n. 3) 230; 1675: SP 105–334, p. 59b.

62 BM Stowe 219, p. 18; 19 April 1714: SP 105–335, p. 137.


64 SP 105–338, pp. 21–2, 26–7.

65 An order was issued 4 May 1710 to stop the annual payment of 200 Piastres paid previously to ‘Custome house Jews’ in Aleppo: SP 105–115.

66 Wood (see n. 6) 214–15; Ulker (see n. 3) 230.


68 On this subject see H. Gerber, ‘Jews and Money Lending in the Ottoman Empire’, JQR, NS 71 (1981) 100–18.
Jews of Smyrna and the Levant Company

APPENDICES

Appendix I

To Robert Arris Esq. Commander in Chief of the British Squadron with the Lev[an]t seas.

Sir,

We were honour'd yesterday with your favour directing the departure of the Merchants ships, and their attending you the 13th Instant.

We are Exceedingly oblig'd for that kind resentment you are pleased to make of our due respects, and at the same time, we return our most humble thanks for it, and your other marks of wishing well to this factory, particularly that Instance of Granting Twenty Days for the ship's stay beyond the time limited, We crave leave to say before you the state of our Trade, and how prejudiciall to Great Brittain, and the Levant Company this departure may happen, in Case we are able to Transact our affairs as expect we are persuaded shall do soon after the present Jews festivall is Ended, without whom the people of the country will not do Bussiness.

Smy[rna] 2 April 1713

Sir

Your most Obedient and Devoted humble servants

George Humberston
Charles Smyth jun[ior]
John Mitford
Francis Frys
Robert Stevenson
Charles Pollull
John Wedale
Arthur Bamardiston
Henry Morse
Will[iam] Whitfield
William Brooke
Copia vera quod attestor
Rich Gaben Canc[ellier]

John Peters
John Salwey
Henry March
Tho[mas] Allen
John Chadwicke
Robert Constantine
George Hanger
John March
Tho[mas] Vaughan
Rich[ard] Kemble
John Baker.

W. Sherard Consul

Appendix II

To Consul Ricaut

Sir...

The slow and bad payment of those Debts owing by the Jewes, and the trouble thereby brought upon the Nation (whereof there have bin so manifold Complaints) should deter the factory from trusting those whom they have found so unfaithfull: Then w[hi]ch we know not what better remedy can be applid; whereof a due care may be had for the future. And for past Debts now standing out, you ought to interest yo[ur]self, and endeavour a recovery thereof, by yo[ur] Power and Countenance; but yet at the charge of those perticularly concern'd, for we would not have such a president [p. 302] created, as would ingage the Company to such kind of Expences on the account of perticular persons.

March 11th 1671

[p. 300]

[p. 301] Debts of Jewes

[p. 303] Signed as the former of this date
Eliezer Bashan

On p. 299 the following names are mentioned at an end of a letter written 11 March 1671:

And: Riccard Gov[error]  John Langley Dep[uty]
Jon: Dawes  Jn.º Prestwood
Jo: Morden  Jn.º Harvey
Rich: Young  Pet: Houllon
Jn: Morice  Hen: Hunter
Dan: Morse  Hen: Griffith

Appendix III

SP 105-335, p. 168

John Cooke, Esq  London the 31st October 1716
Consul at Smyrna

The great discouragement that our Trade has for some time past, and at present lies under from the Clandestine Trade that is carried on by Armenians, Jews, and others, either from hence, or from Italy to Turky, has oblig'd us to make the enclosed order, in hopes to prevent the same for the future, and therefore we do require you to put the same in Execution; And further we enjoyn you to assemble the factory at your seals, and very earnestly recommend to Them the Consideracon of the present state of our Trade, and according to our Order of the 2d December 1713: We expect that if they can find out any other way to restate the aforesaid Trade, that they come to such Resolutions as are necessary, which you are to transmit to us for our approval and Information, and as ours as well as their own Interest, engages them to act vigorously on this occasion, We cannot doubt, but that they will lay aside all private Views, and heartily Concur to put a stop as far as possible, to a Trade so pernicious and Destructive to the publick. We remain.

Your Loving friends

Jnº Shilliggs  Gerard Conyers Dep[uty] Gov[error]
Charles Shilliggs  Charles Cooke Treasrer
William Kingston  Isaac Boddington Husb.
David Bosanquet  Barnington Eaton
Tho[mas] Boddington  George Boddington jun[ior]

Appendix IV

SP 105-114, p. 639  London, 11 May 1694

Amsterdam to the R[ight] Wor[shipful] Directors of the Levant Trade & Navigacon in the Mediterranean
R[ight] Wor[shipful]

Wee have understood from o[u]r Agents at Sm[yrna] that the Portughese Jewes have of latter years resorted thether in great numbers, dryvng a very considerable Trade, not onely to & from Italy but other parts of Europe to the very great prejudice of the Frank Nations, incouraged them to by the protecon given them by the French Consul; But upon complaints made to him by his own Merch[an]ts of the great disadvantage accruing thereby to their Trade, hee withdrew his protecon, werupon yo[u]r Consul gave them his Protection, though to the dislike of yo[u]r Factory, who (as wee an advise) have represented this matter to your Wor[ship]ps as greatly prejudiciall to their Trade (as said Consul & Factory have likewise done to us) so if you shall think
Jews of Smyrna and the Levant Company

meet to give orders to yo[u]r Consul to withdraw his protection from the said Jews, as o[u]r Consul hath never hetherto, so wee shall give ord[e]rs that in the future hee shall not entertaine them. Wee hope to finde yo[u]r Concurrence herein, esteeming it as a matter that may tend to the mutuall good & advantage of o[u]r Trade, otherwise wee must take such measures as wee judge may promote o[u]r own Interest. Yo[u]r Answ[e]r by the first conveniency will oblige us to Remain & Signed Gabriel Roberts Dep[u]ty John Harvey Treas[ure]r W[illi]a[mm] Fawkener Hus[band] John Morice Tho[mas] Uvidale Jn0 Tufnaile Barington Eaton Gerard Conyors Jas[per] Clotterbook Mark Winn Tho[mas] Hartop Alexa[nder] Jacob Daniel Morse.

Appendix V

SP 105–332, p. 26–7

To Consul Raye London 26.th October 1694

The protections given to the Portughese Jews, we are sensible is an apparent Injury and prejudice to the trade of all the frank Nations, and have represented the same accordingly to the Directors of the Dutch Levant Company at Amsterdam, desiring them to give Orders to their Consuls to withdraw such their protections, but finding by their answer to us that they are not willing to doe it, We think ourselves obliged to doe the same, that as we cannot prevent the prejudice done to our Trade by our standing out, whilst the Dutch doe continue it, so we may at least partake of the benefitt that may come in by their Consulage. If therefore any of that sort of People shall desire your Protection, we would have you to grant it them, upon such Termes as you, with the advice of the factory, shall judge may [p. 27] most conduce to our advantage. [no signature] [in: Register of Orders from the General Court of the Levant Company]