Article

Repositioning Ethnicity and Transnationalism: Community Resilience Strategies among the Non-Migratory Segment of Turkish Jewry

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Abstract: The methods that communities exploit to cope with national hegemonies that dispossess and exclude them have attracted the interest of migration scholars who emphasize the development of transnational strategies as community-building vehicles. Some scholars focus on migrant communities, whereas other studies analyze the "stayers"—those who remain in the countries of origin—in their analyses of the impacts of transnational trends on these groups. Yet how such transnational dynamics influence the "stayers" among ethnonational communities whose members rapidly "repatriate" *en masse* to their perceived nation-state, such as the migration of Middle Eastern Jews to Israel in the era of regional decolonization and nationalization, remain understudied. This article focuses on the community of "stayers" among Turkish Jews, whose leaders sought methods to cope with the effects of rising nationalism on their community structure and the intensity of an emigration crisis that engulfed them due to the vacuum they faced after losing 40 percent of their members in 1948–1949 to Israel. We analyze *Şalom*, the most important newspaper that Turkish Jewry continued to publish well after 1948. To escape marginalization and to re-establish their base in Turkey, one of *Şalom's* main strategies, we find, is conveying to its readership in Turkey the advantage of connecting and twinning the two national centers that had become the focal points of most of the community by 1950—the Turkish Republic and the State of Israel.

Keywords: Ladino (Judeo-Spanish); Kemalism; Israel; foreign affairs; Middle East

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1. Introduction

Scholars often treat ethnic communities as domestic "minorities" or subgroups distinguished from the broader "majority" (national) societies of the countries in which they reside by religion, race, language, and cultural traits. Relatedly, domestic discrimination, (lack of) minorities' access to political and social capital, and maintenance of their cultural traits in the broader hegemonic setting serve as important prisms for social analyses. While manifestations of marginality help to demarcate communities from the outside—by their definition at the hands of others—internal processes of community self-definition also play a significant role. In response to marginalization by hegemonic groups, a collective sense of belonging may strengthen distinct cultural, religious, and ethnic characteristics [1–3].

In geographical terms, the attachment to often marginalized geo-locales (pre-national tribal areas or neighborhoods) abet both processes of definition—the external and the internal. In the contemporary migration and diaspora literature, ethnic communities are prominently defined in terms of members' collective attachments to their "place of origin", such as those represented by nostalgia for cities of origin and neighborhoods and even streets and households in their pre-migration homelands [4,5]. Nonetheless,

moving beyond the perception of migration as a unidirectional, bipolar movement from a homogenous, "sending" country to a hegemonic, "host" country, various spatial metaphors have helped to emphasize the role of social action dynamics and multifocal definitions of ethnic space in contemporary migration literature ([4], p. 28).

The term "transnationalism" has been perhaps the most prevailing in capturing the social, cultural, economic, and political ties that link migrants in their "places of origin" with their new surroundings at various levels. This concept has marked a paradigm shift in migration studies. It has been highly productive in challenging the idea that nation-states are self-contained units and emphasizes the importance of understanding the broader social, economic, and political contexts in which migration from one country to another occurs [6]. Scholars often distinguish between "grassroots transnationalism"—or "transnationalism from below"—and "state-led transnationalism" that connects government and political elites across borders [7]. Grassroots transnationalism is a salient prism for understanding how ethnic communities respond to displacement, xenophobia, and immigrant marginalization by national host societies by developing cross-border links and diverse ethnonational points of reference for their self-empowerment [8].

Relatedly, since the 1990s, scholars of transnationalism have demonstrated how assimilation and transnationalism are not mutually exclusive but rather are interwoven and compatible processes. In other words, migrants simultaneously maintain strong ties to their country of origin while engaging in the social, cultural, and economic life of their new country [9]. In this vein, the concept of "long-distance nationalism" among ethnic diasporas encapsulates the logic that nationalism could, in fact, emerge more strongly among dispersed ethnic groups far from their homelands [10,11].

Migration and diaspora literature pinpoint the existence of various additional forms of transnationalism as strategies for cross-border community building and resilience, among them the influence of those who stay ([3], pp. 6–7). Adding to that scholarly discussion, Peggy Levitt developed the concept of "social remittances", that is, "the ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that flow from receiving- to sending-country communities", thereby facilitating the transformation of immigrant social, economic and cultural lives not only in the destination but also in the places of origin [12]. For those who stay behind, transnational ties can provide financial, social, and cultural support, but they may, contrarily, generate feelings of abandonment and social and cultural disorientation in light of the change that emigration brings to the local social fabric [13].

The nuanced and complex ways in which transnationalism impacts "stayers", however, constitute an insightful perspective from which to examine the effects of migration on historic ethnonational diaspora communities. Through their spiritual attachment to various sites in the *holy land*, Jews have long represented the prototype of ethnic diasporas along with their Armenian and Greek counterparts [14]. Following the formation of their new reciprocal nation-states, these groups often perceived their migration as repatriation to a country where they would become part of the dominant national "majority" [15,16]. Yet many Jewish immigrants in Israel continued to constitute a demographic, political, and cultural minority, or even a separate ethnicity, based on their attachment to the countries and regions from whence they arrived [17]. For such groups, whose attachments to "place of origin" and "host country" is highly hybridized, national migration may trigger no less than an existential crisis, a crisis stemming from their misfit with homogenizing national frameworks.

This crisis may be perpetuated by a burgeoning sense of "contraction", a term introduced by André Levy in his study of Moroccan Jews in the wake of their ethnic emigration during the 1950s and 1960s. In the context of Casablanca's dwindling Jewish population, the contraction was experienced as an active creation of imaginary spatial divisions and spheres. This strategy allowed for a more manageable interaction with the majority Muslim population and helped maintain a sense of community in the face of demographic decline. These mechanisms for dealing with change, like "contraction", may indeed be

applicable to other communities in crisis and, as such, warrant further investigation and understanding [18].

Thus, the research into the prototypical ethnic diaspora communities—Jewish, Armenian, or Greek—may have additional and specifically significant implications for understanding the influence of transnational methods of community reorganization on those who stay in their place amidst national migration. This article examines the specific transitional dynamics that affected Turkey's Jewish community, 40 percent of its approximately 77,000 members of which migrated to Israel in 1948–1949. Focusing on those segments of Turkish Jewry that remained in Turkey after the mass migration of half of its members to Israel, we demonstrate how surging nationalism creates informal, transnational strategies for re-establishing community life.

2. Contextualizing the Jewish-Turkish Rupture

In their seminal work, 'The Age of Migration', De Haas, Castles, and Miller define 'ethnic minorities' mentioning Jews as one of several groups whose ethnoreligious identity predates current forms of ethnicity-formation among present-day migrants and that was shaped in non-migratory contexts across the decades ([2], pp. 76). Jews, however, who have been strongly influenced by the momentous modern migration waves of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, emigrated from the Ottoman Empire gradually and slowly, largely to the United States [19] and Latin America, [20] in a manner typical of the global migration trends in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Amid rising political tensions between Muslims and Jews in the aftermath of European colonialism, the almost one million Jews across Asia and Africa—most in Muslim-majority countries—began to emigrate on scales previously unseen in their modern histories, with the State of Israel as their primary destination. Thus, in 1948–1951—a time that, in Jewish and Israeli histories, came to be known as the "Great Aliyah", or the Great Repatriations—some 260,000 Jews in Arab countries (see Table 1), 34,000 in Turkey, and 25,000 in Iran emigrated to the newly established, self-defined Jewish state [21,22].

Table 1. Percentage of Immigrants from Arab Countries and Turkey to Israel in 1948–1951, out of the total immigration during1948–1986. A recapitulation by the authors of data from Dominitz ([23], p. 5). The data on Turkey was retrieved from Czerniak ([24], p. 15) and Toktas [25]. The percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Country or Countries of Origin	Number and Percentage of Migrants, 1948–1951 (% of Total, 1948–1986)
Syria and Lebanon	2913 / 12,405 = 23.5%
Iraq	123,371 / 129,546 = 95.2%
Yemen and Aden	48,315 / 50,594 = 95.9%
Morocco	28,263 / 265,566 = 10.6%
Algeria	3810 / 23,775 = 16.0%
Tunisia	13,293 / 52,129 = 25.5%
Libya	30,972 / 35,796 = 86.5%
Egypt and Sudan	8,760 / 30,084 = 29.1%
Total from Arab Countries	259,697 / 559,895 = 46.4%
Turkey	35,123 / 61,273 (1948–1989) = 57.3%
Total from all the world	686,739 / 1,778,000 = 38.6%

Migration to Israel occurred in various phases and was significantly influenced by the unique conditions within each country (see Table 1). For example, during 1948–1951, migration from Iraq was notably intense, with 123,371 immigrants. This represents a significant portion of the total 129,546 Iraqi immigrants who would move to Israel between

1948 and 1986. Conversely, from Morocco, 28,263 Jews immigrated to Israel from 1948–1951. This number, however, increased dramatically to 70,438 during 1955–1957 and even more significantly to 100,354 during 1961–1964 ([23], p. 5). While migration patterns mirrored not only the establishment of Israel and its attraction as a Jewish homeland but also the specific push factors in each country, including, for example, political upheavals and economic challenges, the period from 1948–1951 was the most intense, marking a previously unseen wave of Jewish migration to Israel that changed several communities across the Jewish world.

Relatedly, in 1948–1949, the Jewish outflux from Turkey changed in terms of pace, type, and direction. The departure of some 40 percent of the Jewish community in a mere two-year period precipitated an unprecedented demographic crisis among the community leaders. Like other Jewish emigrations from Arab countries and southeastern Europe in that era, the story of the Jewish emigration from Turkey to Israel after 1948 is one of "total emigration", not of a given sector, but rather, in most cases, of significant numbres of an entire ethnic community, including its women and children [26,27]. Likewise, between 1948 and 1956, Israel was the most significant destination for migrants from the Turkish Republic, as throughout the 1940s and 1950s, more people emigrated from Turkey to Israel than to the United States [28]. Turkish Jewish immigrants accounted for about five percent of the total Jewish immigrants to Israel in 1948–1952, and about 10 percent of that from Asian and African countries ([23], p. 5).

Developing against the backdrop of Turkish nationalism, the departure of Jews from Turkey unleashed charges of "dual loyalty" not only against those who left but also against those who stayed [29,30]. The consequences of national migration for this ethnic group thus add another layer of complexity to the analysis of community crisis and resilience in the context of migration: marginalization in the nationalizing surroundings in their places of origin. "The assumption of a 'natural' link between Turkish Jews in Israel", to quote Doygu Atlas, "meant that blame for the perceived wrongdoings of Israel would be visited upon Turkish Jews by virtue of their presumed association with Israel in the years to come" ([31], p. 115).

In the mid-1950s, the emigration of Turkish Jewry was also affected by the Cypriot War of Independence against the British, waged with Greek support and against Turkish interests. The war was characterized by a further deterioration in relations between Turkey's minority, non-Muslim communities, and its majority. Indeed, the torching in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 6–7 September 1955, of the house where the founding father of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938), was born, sparked anti-Greek violence in Istanbul and Izmir that was already inflamed by the Cyprus dispute and that eventually spilled over into Jewish-owned businesses. In what is known in the historiography as "*6–7 Eylül Olayları*" or the "Istanbul Pogrom", angry crowds in these two cities attacked anything representing the cultural, religious, and economic presence of minorities ([32], p. 371).

As Table 2 shows, some 40 percent of the Jews in Turkey emigrated in 1948–1949 to Israel in one great surge, and an additional 5 percent of its members joined them over the following two years. Though the pace of emigration slowed further during 1952–1955, the proportion of Turkish-Jewish diaspora members who remained in Turkey proper continued to decline. The data allude to the relationship between migration and political instability: in both of the years 1956–1957, tracking the Cyprus crisis, more than twice as many Jews emigrated to Israel than during the entire 1952–1955 period. Thus, the population of Jewish "stayers" in Turkey continued to shrink considerably, with each wave adding to their sense of the loss of community life. During the period from 1945 to 1957, therefore, Turkish Jewry effectively partitioned itself into two, almost equally sized segments that comprised the stayers in Turkey and the emigrants to Israel. This transformation, a momentous manifestation of the almost two-decade-long marginalization process experienced by the community, was a significant blow to its relative resilience and stability.

Table 2. Emigrants and stayers among the Jewish community in Turkey, 1945–1957. The table is gleaned from a combined analysis of the findings reported by Czerniak, regarding the years 1948–1955 ([24], p. 15), and Atlas, regarding the years 1956–1957 ([31], p. 129). The table disregards any natural increase among the Jews of Turkey during those years and is presented only to describe the proportions of Jews who remained in Turkey vs. those who emigrated to Israel.

Year	Emigrants from Turkey to Israel	Jews in Turkey (Approx.), Based on Subtracting the Number of Emigrants in Each Period from the Original Number of Jews in Turkey in 1945	Proportion of Remaining Jewish Population in Turkey Compared to 1945 Levels
1945		76,965	100
1948–1949	30,657	46,308	60.2
1950	2328	43,980	57.2
1951	1228	42,752	55.5
1952–1955	805	41,947	54.5
1956	1710	40,237	52.3
1957	1911	38,326	49.8

The division of the Turkish-Jewish diaspora into two main communities with the emigration *en masse* of half of its members merits a better understanding of the local "minority-majority" dynamics and how they came to affect Jews from the 1920s through the 1940s. Historically, most Jews who lived in the major cities of the Ottoman Empire, the provinces of modern-day Turkey and southern Europe, were Sephardim—descendants of Jews expelled from Iberia in 1492. From the sixteenth century onward, the Ottoman authorities enabled Jews to preserve their heritage, including the vernacular of their old Iberian homeland, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) ([33], pp. 1–35).

Ladino, a Castilian Spanish language fused with Hebrew and Aramaic components in the familiar manner of all the Jewish languages, became the ethnic language of the Ottoman Jews. Over time, the language also absorbed elements from the surrounding Eastern Mediterranean languages, mainly Turkish, Arabic, and Greek. While Ladino publications predominantly used Hebrew scripts during the Ottoman period, they transitioned to Latin scripts in Turkey after the Turkish Republic implemented a modified version of the Latin alphabet in 1928 [34].

During the Ottoman reforms of the "long nineteenth century" (1789–1923), the Ottoman State implemented "the *millet* system", a protocol for the treatment of non-Muslim subjects living under Muslim rule. The system conferred additional degrees of autonomy on the "*millets*", or non-Muslim religious communities, granting them equal rights in their communal settings. This attitude negatively influenced Ottoman Muslims, who lost the political and economic privileges they had over their non-Muslim countrymen [35,36]. Between 1894 and 1924, the frustration and xenophobia caused by the openness towards non-Muslims culminated in two momentous events—mainly during the Armenian genocide of 1915–1918 and following the population exchange with Greece in 1922–1923—when the Ottoman state undertook calculated efforts to destroy its Christian communities [37].

Against the backdrop of the demise of Turkey's Christian communities, the Jews, who had previously represented only 5 percent of all non-Muslims in Turkey, abruptly constituted 30 percent, 82,000 among 269,000, respectively, slightly outnumbering the Armenians and falling short of the number of Greeks ([32], pp. 368–369). Filling the vacuum created by the leaving Christians, Jews became more prominent in the local economy and actively sought to brand themselves as more loyal to the Republic than the Greeks and Armenians ([38], pp. 116–118).

However, after the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, its leaders associated Turkish nationalism with the formation of a homogenous Muslim Turkophone majority ([39], pp. 13–15+102–123). The narrative about the loyalty of the Jews thus came under threat, as the Kemalist establishment's belief that they maintained other ethnonational

identities led to its ambivalence toward their successful integration into the national society ([38], pp. 119–121). The increasingly hostile atmosphere of the new Turkish Republic thrust the Turkish-Jewish diaspora into a communal identity crisis in the 1920s that lasted into the 1940s. For instance, the Republic demanded that all of its citizens have knowledge of Turkish, [40] in a way that threatened their century-old Ottoman Ladino culture ([39], pp. 57–62).

Moreover, in June–July 1934, events that broke out in the province of Thrace led to the escape from the Thrace region of between a third and a half of the 13,000 Jews who lived there. Debates exist within the historiography concerning whether the attacks on Jews were incited by the local leadership of the ruling Republican People's Party, ignited spontaneously by a mob, or if the establishment was in any way involved ([39], pp. 140–148).

The most prominent manifestation of the fledgling Republic's nationalism was the "capital tax" (*Varlık Vergisi*) imposed to finance the defense of the Republic during WWII. In September 1942, the government began to gather information for a tax to divide the population of Turkey into several groups, mainly Muslims and non-Muslims. Applied in a discriminatory fashion from the start, the average per capita tax is estimated to have been 5 percent of one's annual income for Muslims vs. 156 (!) percent for Greeks, 179 (!) percent for Jews, and 232 (!) percent for Armenians. In its defense, the government claimed that the high tax rates were justified by the tendency of the targeted groups to evade military service in Turkey ([33], p. 182).

Unsurprisingly, while the capital tax caused the economic collapse of much of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie in Turkey and severely affected working-class circles, it accelerated the creation of a new "Turkish"—that is, Muslim—bourgeoisie ([38], pp. 240–242). Moreover, anyone unable to pay the tax was sent to labor camps in Aşkale in eastern Anatolia, where 21 non-Muslims died between 1943 and 1944 from hard labor, poor living conditions, and hunger. Although the Kemalist establishment did not formally justify discrimination fueled by anti-Jewish ideologies similar to those that were being cultivated in Europe at the time, ([39], pp. 148–155) the capital tax and the labor camps fomented a major crisis of trust among Turkish Jews vis-à-vis the state and largely paved the way for their emigration from their country a few years later ([38], p. 251). Rifat Bali specifically emphasized how the crisis prompted many Turkish Jews to affiliate with Zionism, which they saw as a viable substitute for Turkish nationalism ([30], p. 3).

Basing themselves on research into ethnic minorities within the confines of nation-states, various scholars, like Bali [29,30,38], emphasize the conflict between "Middle Eastern" nationalism, representing the country of origin, and Israeli nationalism, representative of the destination country. Thus, in the post-1948 era, when Jewish communities that had existed for centuries as minority collectives under Muslim rule were forced to choose between the different components of their self-determination—the Jewish element or that of their countries of origin—and then observe allegiance accordingly, the vast majority naturally chose the former over the latter [41]. In this context, Bali defined the "silent" characteristic of Jews who stayed in the Turkish Republic to allude to the undesired "low-profile policy" that they adopted to avoid drawing attention to their foreignness in the Republic ([30], pp. 2, 13).

Criticizing the Zionist metanarrative of Jewish homecoming, or unidirectional repatriation, and Jews' "natural" attachment to Israel, many scholars have emphasized opposing tendencies toward integration in the MENA countries of origin and, specifically, the development of Arab national identities among MENA Jews. While this may have been the case among groups of national elites in some Arab countries, the reactions of the Turkish-Jewish elite to rising Turkish nationalism were markedly different [42,43]. As an aside, it's worth mentioning the intriguing parallels between Iran and Turkey concerning their Jewish communities' relationship with Israel. Both these nations, being among the first Muslim-majority countries to recognize Israel, enabled the formation of transnational ties between their Jewish communities and Israel. Despite the majority deciding not to emigrate, a significant interest was discernible within the Iranian Jewish community regarding Israel's

social, political, and economic developments. This curiosity instilled nuanced layers into their comprehension of Israel and their place within the broader Jewish diaspora in the MENA region, an aspect that our research seeks to brings to light in the Turkish case [44,45].

3. The Specificities of Turkish-Jewish Nationalism

In 1947, Turkey voted against UN General Assembly Resolution 181—the Palestine partition resolution—on 29 November due to its concern about the prospects of Soviet control of a new Jewish state and its reluctance to express any hostility toward the Arab states, especially those with which it shared a border. Yet it remained neutral in the 1948 Arab–Israeli war. Unlike most countries of origin of the Jewish immigrants to Israel at the time, Turkey already officially recognized Israel in March 1949, the first Muslim majority state to do so formally, and its decision was welcomed by the Turkish press and public opinion. Israel established a consulate in Istanbul on 16 October 1949, in a ceremony witnessed by nearly 20,000 Turkish Jews ([46], pp. 13–15). The fact that such a large part of the remaining Turkish Jews, including many leaders, chose to attend the event attests to their tremendous enthusiasm about their country's rapprochement with Israel.

The dynamics surrounding the embrace of nationalism that typified the Jewish communities in Arab or other Majority-Muslim countries that lacked diplomatic relations with Israel were essentially different from that which developed in the Middle Eastern Jewish community of Turkey. Instead of emphasizing how Turkish Jews chose between allegiance to the Muslim state and loyalty to the Jewish state, the Turkish case shows how an ethnic community that was slowly transforming into a national minority in its place of origin sought, contrarily, to benefit from the up-front integration of loyalty to both ends of the dyad—Israel and Turkey.

The Turkish case is also relatively distinctive in the broader Israeli context. Jewish migrants from Europe had been reaching Israel since the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, and given the complex circumstances of their departure, the vast majority of them found it difficult to develop a transnational relationship with their country of origin [47]. Among emigrants from the Islamic countries, who accounted for a majority of immigrants to Israel in 1948–1951 and throughout the 1950s, the Turkish community was the first to experience the establishment of bilateral relations between the country of origin and Israel. Thus, Turkish immigrants in Israel could practically maintain various transnational ties with their country of origin from the early 1950s onward, coinciding with the rise of post-WWII regional nationalism. It was thus only a matter of time until this specific political situation was leveraged by community leaders in Turkey in their coping mechanism with rising nationalism and ethnic marginalization.

The transnationalism that Jews from Turkey had embraced during the Great *Aliyah* of 1948–1949 became sharper when the community participated in the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Serving as mediators between the countries in diplomacy, the economy, and sports echoes a strategy of integration characteristic of many migrant communities ([2], pp. 82–83). As we have shown elsewhere, during the 1950s, these dynamics also characterized the community of Turkish Jews in Israel, who were struggling to find their new place as an ethnic community in the Jewish state by dwelling on their ties with Turkey and its Jewish community [48]. In this article, we develop this discussion by delving into the local Turkish context and the dynamics that characterized those who stayed.

4. The *Şalom* Newspaper: Perpetuating "Ethnicity" in the Age of "Nationalism"

Studies of the migration experience of Turkish migrants to the nation-states of industrialized Central Europe tend to report feelings of marginalization and confinement to the social, economic, and geographical peripheries of the destination country. Such reports amplify the urgent need for the establishment of transnational organizations that can enable the community to share an experience of solidarity and attend to its members' needs [49]. Ethnic communities take shape through the evolution of ethnic networks that eventually

merge to create an ethnic collective with cultural and organizational norms. These norms are often reinforced by collective narratives that are disseminated and circulated within the community's networks. A central tool for the creation of strongly-bounded community networks is the ethnic press [50,51]. Large-scale migration forces not only the migrants' community but also the origin community, which has lost a large proportion of its members, to rethink its organizational norms and bolster its internal strength as best it can.

By studying the newspaper *Şalom* (Shalom), established on 29 October 1947 and edited by community leaders and cultural agents associated with the Jewish community (see Figure 1), we can analyze Turkish Jewry's actions and self-narratives at the time of such a crisis. *Şalom*, which consolidated itself and grew during the mass departure years, reflects in its pages the contours of the community at that time and how it coped with the mass emigration and related crises of marginalization. For many years, its distribution was in the thousands of copies and reached almost every household in the community, and it continues to be published to this day [52,53]. Therefore, it not only reflects community events but also serves as a cultural instrument for the formation of community networks, a unifying discourse of solidarity, and a shared collective narrative that includes connecting with a place that is identified with the community [54].

Şalom שלום
A lo tuerto tuerto, a lo dereço dereço
ŞALOM
Sahibi ve yazı işlerini fiilen idare eden :
AVRAM LEYON
İdarehane : Galata, Şair Elya Paşa Caddesi, Bereket Han, 24/5
TELEFON : 49581
İdareye gönderilen yazılar neşredilsin veya edilmesin, iade edilmez
YIL 5 - Sayı 237 8 Mayıs 1952 —13 Iyar 5712 Telefon : 49581—Perşembe Günleri Çıkar Haftalık Siyasî İçtimaî Edebî TÜRKÇE-MUSEVİCE GAZETE — Sayısı her yerde 10 Kr.

Figure 1. The Headline of *Şalom*, 8 May 1952, 1 (Courtesy of Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Library, Jerusalem).

In 1948–1949, the Jews' willingness to leave Turkey *en masse* took the Turkish authorities by surprise [55]. One may surmise that among the Jews themselves, too, amid the chaos—the switching of homelands, the significant emigration to Israel, and the ensuing community crisis in Turkey—the full implications of the situation were not immediately grasped. Therefore, evidence of the crisis in the pages of *Şalom* appears mainly from 1951 onward, corresponding with the gradual internalization by the Turkish-Jewish community of the emigration crisis. Relatedly, the materials in our possession indicate that in 1948–1949, although mass emigration was in full swing, there are no indications of any official community organizational efforts to address the crisis brought on by the mass exodus of the community's members.

Between 1947 and 1984, *Şalom* continued to appear in Ladino, even when this ethnic language came under attack by the Kemalist establishment due to its aspiration to homogenize Turkish society ([40], pp. 255–261). This de facto rendered the Ladino used by *Şalom* an undesirable "reminder" of the existence of a separatist communitarian ethnicity that was maintained by means of language, religion, and culture within a parochial melting-pot national discourse that sought to obliterate the Jewish communitarian identity and subordinate it totally to the majority culture. By virtue of its very existence and much like the migrants' press that evolved in Israel and elsewhere, *Şalom* attested to a dynamic of ethnocultural resistance to the cultural framework dictated by the nation-state.

Notwithstanding its use of Ladino, *Şalom*, established by Avram Leyon (1912–1985) of Istanbul, a community leader, exhibited a strong orientation towards the Turkish language. This reflected the significant shift the community had been undergoing since the 1920s. It presented its title in Turkish transliteration; it used Turkish names for months, and during its initial years of publication, it almost always ran at least one article in Turkish on its front page. Unlike Ladino newspapers that appeared elsewhere, including those of the Turkish diaspora in Israel, *Şalom* used Turkish lettering as an integral part of the Ladino

language. Its adherence to the ethnic identity that found expression in Ladino appears to have originated precisely in the strength of its assimilation into Turkish culture.

Leyon, who had gone to work for the popular Turkish daily newspaper *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) at age sixteen, founded *Şalom* together with his colleague Yitzhak Yaech (1922–1970), who in 1948 became the editor of a rival paper *Or Yehuda.* The crisis in the community leadership pursuant to the wave of emigration was also mirrored in community leadership networks supported by the writers for *Şalom*, and in 1949, Yaech emigrated to Israel. Once there, he established a leading émigré newspaper titled *La Verdad,* which he initially defined as "the only politically independent newspaper" but later began to brand as "the only *Turkano* journal in Israel" (Turkish migrants to Israel nicknamed themselves *Turkinos* or *Turkanos*) ([56], pp. 114–116).

For Leyon and those like him, the emigration of community leaders such as Yaech, who moved their lives and center of activity to another location in the Turkish diaspora—the newly founded State of Israel—was yet another problem with which to cope. Until he became ill in 1983, Leyon continued to edit *Şalom* with the help of his wife, Sophie, whose specific contribution to the newspaper has not been illuminated in the research to date. At that time, the editorial board of the paper was replaced with a team of volunteer community activists born in the 1940s through the 1960s. Due to the significant weakening of Jewish community institutions, ([57], pp. 27–50+145–164+201–268) the large majority of Jews who wished to identify with the formal Jewish community subscribed to *Şalom*. Even after the community weakened and shrank to 26,000 members in the early 1990s, *Şalom* had 4000 subscribers, and it was clear that the newspaper benefited from wide, hand-to-hand circulation, thus reaching a larger proportion of the community than is reflected in the number of subscriptions ([52], pp. 52–53).

In the era of pride in national culture and the growing dominance of the Turkish language, the appearance of *Şalom* in the Jewish ethnic language, Ladino, underpinned the creation of a rooted connection to the historical community, one that preceded the era of nationalism. By studying editions of the paper from the period reviewed, one finds reporting on the Jewish year cycle (festivals and observances), community events, synagogues in Istanbul, and worship services for special occasions. The profusion of bar-mitzvah and wedding notices not only linked private family celebrations with the community's collective festivities, but they also, of course, provided the newspaper a source of revenue (Seremonias de Bar Mitsva, *Şalom*, December 27, 1951, 3; B.S.T. [Besimantov]: Matrimonio, *Şalom*, 3 January 1952). For instance, one can find an announcement in *Şalom* about an "entirely kosher dance dinner party" for the holiday of Hanukkah, while "upon taking part in this party, you will participate at the same time in the holy deed of maintaining and clothing of numerous poor school kids" (La Fyesta ke sera dada por la Mişne Tora, *Şalom*, 20 November 1947); and "wishes of good fortune, joy and good health to its male and female readers (*lektores i lektrisas*)" for the holiday of Shavuot (*Şalom*, 10 June 1948). By implication, *Şalom* served not only as a source of reporting on community events but also as a medium for the formation of a local community network at a time when most of the community had scattered.

One must admit that the relocation of many poor Turkish Jews to Israel alleviated stress on the mutual-aid system of the stayers' community [25]. However, the needy Jews who remained still required a local relief mechanism, and *Şalom* participated in the community's internal mutual-aid system. Jacob Barha, who worked for the *Şalom* editorial board in the early 1960s, stated, "At the beginning of every school year, he [the editor, Leyon] announced a donation campaign of books and writing implements for poor families. The contributions flowed to the editorial board and quickly filled [its premises]" ([52], p. 56).

In addition to covering the Jewish community in Istanbul, *Şalom* also reported on other communities in Turkey. In September 1948, for instance, it reported that the Jewish community of Heybeliada—one of the Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara, near Istanbul, and a popular resort for upper-middle class Turkish Jews—had informed the newspapers' readers "that the Sacred holidays of Rosh Hashana and [Yom] Kippur shall be celebrated

at the Salon of the Greek school (*Ilk Okul*) of the island" (Avizo por las fyestas santas, *Şalom*, 16 September 1948). The Jewish community in Izmir, the second largest community in Turkey, was also covered extensively in the newspaper, which surveyed the visit of the Izmir community's representative to the newspaper's headquarters (Una vijita bien agradavle, *Şalom*, 21 April 1949) and reported on the reorganization of the community (Bensinyor, Y. La komunidad de Izmir Verso su reorganizasion, *Şalom*, 7 September 1950). *Şalom* thus established itself as a platform for a variety of Turkish-Jewish communities.

5. Transnationalism and Community-Contraction

For Turkish Jewry after 1948, the Land of Israel was the center of Jewish life—not only as a historical homeland where a Jewish community was taking shape but also as a center in the here and now, from which members could derive unifying narratives and inspiration for self-empowerment; therefore, even though *Şalom* targeted the community that existed in Turkey, many of its points of reference related to the new center that Turkish Jewry had acquired: Israel, home to the émigré segment of the community, which also established relations with Turkey.

The rump community of stayers, like those who had migrated, wanted to show, first and foremost to themselves and their readership, the importance of their role in strengthening bilateral relations, particularly after diplomatic relations were formed with Israel in the early 1950s. In this context, their attempts to contribute to Israel originated not with an intention to move there or even donate funds but rather, contrarily, in the wish to buttress their status and strength after they had internalized the magnitude of the emigration and its implications for their internal cohesion.

In the diplomatic and cultural contexts, the editors of *Şalom* shared with their Turkish-Jewish readers their sense of pride at the sight of the Turkish flag on the occasion of Israel's fourth Independence Day (1952). Under a picture of the Turkish colors intertwined with those of Israel and the caption "Welcome" in Turkish (*Hoş Geldiniz*) in an exceptionally bold font, the editors wrote: "In the arch of triumph erected for the Turkish Jews, the glorious Turkish flag waves next to that of Israel, as evidence to the inscription of '*HOŞ GELDINIZ*'". They added that "ATATÜRK, the founder of the Republic, is revered and esteemed throughout all of Israel" (see Figure 2).

The community viewed events that symbolized the strength of the relations between Israel and Turkey as touchstones that reinforced its resilience and ethnic solidarity in the age of nationalism. Wishing to re-establish its solidity in Turkey, the community of stayers began to describe Israel as a source of political power. Concurrently, however, it demonstrated its strong bond with the Turkish Republic in a manner that doubled its political authority and communitarian strength:

> The time has ended for the Jews to bow their heads under the burden of their enemies, of their persecutors. Today Israel fiercely raises its head, and a resounding voice comes out of its heart: "I am free." I have my homeland and if one day someone, no matter who, will come to attack us everyone from small to big, men, women we will tell them: YOU SHALL NOT PASS (La fiesta de la Inpendensia selbrada en Israel, *Şalom*, 8 May 1952).

These remarks—which appeared in *Şalom* only a few years after the Holocaust and could have been misunderstood as expressing enthusiasm for the Zionist project and the ingathering of the Jewish exiles in Israel—must be interpreted here in a different context: the stayers did not emphasize their wish to emigrate to Israel, but to leverage its power remotely.

In its efforts to remain relevant to its readership, the community of stayers, *Şalom*, consistently communicated the benefits of maintaining the connection with and interweaving the two national centers of Turkish Jewry by 1950. *Şalom* thus made a point of reporting only favorable aspects of the relations between Turkey and Israel, avoiding reference to any ambivalence. In contrast, the Turkish-language press, almost always edited by Mus-

lims, did not flinch from articulating a negative attitude toward Jews or Israel and from expressing antagonism toward the formal relations with Israel ([46], pp. 12–38).

La fiesta de la Independensia selebrada en Israel

Enel Arko de Triomfo alsado por los Judios Turkos, la glorioza bandiera Turka bolava al lado de akea de Israel, metiendo en evidensia la enskripsion de "HOŞ GELDINIZ„

ATATÜRK es Venerado i Estimado por todo Israel

Los drapelos Turko-Israeliano lado kon lado flotando enel Arko de Triomfo dresado por los Judios emigrados de Turkia, en honor de los jurnalistas Turkos envitados por el governo de Israel a asistir a la selebrasion del aniversario de la fondasion del Estado de Israel

Figure 2. La fiesta de la Inpendensia selbrada en Israel," *Şalom*, 8 May 1952, 1 (Courtesy of Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Library, Jerusalem).

While Bali and others stressed the "silent" characteristic of the Jews of the Turkish Republic—or the *kayades*, in Ladino—we claim that in the early and mid-1950s, the Jews of Turkey utilized transnationalism as a form of expression. They were able to express a "natural" affinity for Israel without harming their "Turkishness" or being accused of disloyalty, since this affinity, in fact, coincided with Turkey's national geopolitical interests. Since 1945, the United States has strengthened its ties with Turkey in the frame of the "Truman Doctrine", a foreign policy whose stated objective was to counter Soviet geopolitical expansion during the Cold War ([58], pp. 210–211+237–238). In parallel, the United States, one of the key supporters of the establishment of the State of Israel, forged strong ties with Israel and consolidated the pro-Western orientation of the Ben-Gurion administration, which gradually distanced itself from the Soviet Union [59]. Under the promise of the strategic alliance forged between the United States, Turkey, and Israel, the transnational affinity of the remaining Turkish Jews to the new Jewish state was, therefore, a relatively early exception to the low-profile policy that was enabled by the unique conditions of the Western pole in the Cold War period.

Under these circumstances, accusations of dual loyalty in view of the wave of emigration to Israel were never mentioned in *Şalom*, though they may have existed. The editors'

overriding message to their stayer-readers: the continued presence of Jews in Turkey after the emigration to Israel of many of their brethren will not degrade the stayers' status. The community leaders wished to reassure those in their community, as best they could, with positive reinforcement to bolster their morale in those troubled times and to persuade them that their remaining in Turkey was, in fact, advantageous to them.

Furthermore, the community even began to regard its presence in Turkey as a golden opportunity to play an active role in Turkey's foreign-relations system and, thus, to demonstrate the importance of establishing itself as a strong Jewish community in the aftermath of the great emigration. To demonstrate the strength of Turkey's support for Israel, the writers at *Şalom,* in an overview of the Turkish-language press, cited discussions indicating that Turkey preferred the Israeli stance over the Arab one, as in the following quotation from the newspaper *Dunya*: "It turns out that the friendly relations Turkey entertains with Israel provoke a grand discontent in these countries" (Una nota Araba protestando kontra los buenos reportos TURKO-YISRAELIANOS, *Şalom*, 8 May 1952). An observation that might have been perceived as critical through pro-Arab lenses was translated in *Şalom* into a positive sign for the Jewish community in Turkey.

The "stayer" community wished to demonstrate the benefits of strengthening relations between Israel and Turkey in broader diplomatic contexts. The commonality of interests between Israel and Turkey vis-à-vis their shared enemies stood at the forefront of the community discourse. The crisis between Turkey and Greece over the Cyprus question in 1955 was the first in a series of confrontations that the two countries would weather in the ensuing decades. In this crisis, the Greeks and the Greek Cypriots availed themselves of military aid from Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–1970), the President of Egypt (1956–1970) and Israel's sworn enemy, against the background of Nasser's antagonistic stance toward Turkey [60]. At the time of the 1964 crisis, *Şalom* advised its readers that Dr. Fazil Küçük (1906–1984), head of the Turkish community in Cyprus and the first president of Cyprus (1960–1973), had said the following in an interview with Israel Radio:

> The whole world knows that the colonel Nasser believes himself to be a superior political personality. The proposition of Military support that he has made to Makarios [Makarios III (1913–1977), the first president of Cyprus (1960–1974, 1974–1977)], [and the Greeks in Cyprus] did not leave any impression on us [the Turks in Cyprus], knowing that Nasser's potency represents nothing compared to the invincible force of Turkey (Deklarasion del Doktor Küçük, eças al korspondiente de la radio israeliana, *Şalom*, 26 August 1964).

The leaders of the remaining Jewish community in Turkey considered it important to show that Turkey's connection with Israel had internal implications for the community itself. Much like familiar community narratives in Western countries, foremost the United States, [61] it was alluded to that if Turkey and Israel had similar geopolitical interests, then the continued existence of the Jewish community on Turkish soil served both countries' national interests similarly to the Turkish-Jewish community that had taken root on Israeli soil.

The editors of *Şalom* also wanted to show the community of Turkish-Jewish readers that Israel valorized the Ottoman national memory that Turkey continued to represent and preserve. This was attested to by the case of a monument for two Turkish pilots who had served in the Ottoman Army in WWI and whose craft had gone down near the shores of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Kinneret). The monument was erected in the late Ottoman era at that location in northern Israel. *Şalom* related to this case as "a well-known tragedy" on the assumption that at least some of its readers knew what it was about (Una seremonia en Israel en honor de los heroes aviatores Turkos ke avian sido viktimas, *Şalom*, 5 June 1952).

Another monument to the two pilots was found in Istanbul. After a memorial ceremony "for the heroes of Turkish aviation" was held there on 15 May 1951, the Jewish-Turkish newspaper stressed that "numerous people who had lived during that period"—probably Turkish Jews—"addressed the Israeli legation and demanded to be ranked [*ranseyados*] on their state and next to a similar monument" located in northern Israel. As *Şalom* mentioned,

the monument in Israel had been "abandoned during the entire [British] Mandate Period". Pursuant to this appeal, the monument was refurbished by the State of the Jews at the initiative of the Israeli Embassy in Turkey, and thus, "On behalf of the initiative of the government of Israel, this place, abandoned during the entire mandate period was cleaned of the thorns that covered it" (*Şalom*, ibid). *Şalom* carried this report to emphasize how the stayer community had established a relationship with Israel's official legation and, in so doing, helped uphold Turkish interests of "soft power" vis-à-vis Israel in the interior of that country—a point of pride for the leaders of the Jews who had stayed.

A similar course of events unfolded in the arena of sports, where the Turkish-Jewish community emphasized its importance as a mediator to empower its resilience in the post-emigration era. In the mid-twentieth century, football, a game that combines leisure, commerce, and politics, became an integral driver of the formation of transnational communities around the globe, as the ball effectively bound migrants to their country of origin after they settled in the host country [62]. In its efforts to amplify the community's status amid post-migration melting-pot nationalism, *Şalom* used one of Turkey's strengths at this time—its growing achievements in football, cresting at the 1954 World Cup—to speak about the importance of the Turkish-Jewish community as a mediator of the sports dimension of Israel–Turkish relations.

On 1 May 1952, *Şalom* ran a front-page article about the hosting of "the Israeli football team 'Macabi' in Ankara" over a photo of "the Israeli footballers in front of the tomb of the immortal Atatürk" (La ekipa de foot-ball yisraeliana "Maccabi" en ANKARA, *Şalom*, 1 May 1952). *Şalom* reported that the first match, held between Maccabi Tel Aviv and Hacettepe Spor Kulübü from Ankara, was attended by high-ranking officials such as the Israeli Envoy to Turkey, Eliyahu Sasson (1902–1978) and the Mayor of Ankara, Atıf Benderlioğlu (1910–1992). "The first kick of the match", the paper even reported, "was delivered by the Israeli ambassador (*ambasador*)" (*Şalom*, ibid.; Sasson was not an ambassador but an envoy).

Again, we see how members of the community wish to create community resilience via narratives depicting the relationship between Turkey and Israel as sound, if not affectionate. It is thus not out of the question that the Turkish-Jewish community was somehow involved in arranging these sports encounters and others, thus demonstrating again the role of the web of relations among Israel, Turkey, the migrant community from Turkey in Israel, and the community of migrants who remained in Turkey itself (Los atletas Turkos, *Şalom*, 17 April 1952).

6. Conclusions

The foregoing analysis of the available editions of *Şalom* from 1948 to 1957 sheds new light on a unifying, transnational discourse of strategic narrative significance. These times were characterized by the rump Jewish community in Turkey coping with the crisis of rising nationalism and the resultant marginalization and emigration of roughly half of its numbers. Amid the launching of a melting-pot national project that posed a dire challenge to the community's heritage and its ethnic-communitarian structures, the leaders of the stayer community wished to emphasize and publicize the advantage of the linking and intermingling of the two national centers, Turkey and Israel, as a way of painting their new reality and fragile status in rosier colors than expected.

Even as some in Turkey might denounce this phenomenon, some principal leaders of the Turkish Jewry—encouraged by the alliance that their country formed with Israel, to which their brethren had emigrated—wished to strengthen the transnational connection of their activity. After all, in so doing, they positioned themselves as an important piece in the mosaic of Turkey–Israel relations to bolster community resilience. Adopting this approach, Turkish Jewry benefited by adhering to "dual loyalty", embedded in a transnational Zionist discourse that did not contrast with the continuity of Jewish community life outside of Israel and exhibiting a phenomenon that is rarely attributed to Jews of the Middle East

but that is commonly attributed to "Western" Jewish communities, foremost the United States [63,64].

This article furthers our understanding of the implications of the migration of ethnonational minorities for the creation of transnational communities from an unusual perspective—investigating how ethnonational emigration affects the part of the minority community that did not emigrate and that struggled to reaffirm its position in the country of origin by forming concrete ties with its conceived ancestral homeland, and maintaining these connections through communal narratives. While ethnic communities are sometimes perceived in national scholarships as self-defined mirror-images of national frameworks, we see how, from a transnational point of view, communities can acquire form by associating with multiple national narratives that, together, foster resilience—at least at the level of the discourse that occurs within its networks.

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