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**Associational Strategies
in Ottoman Jewish Society
in the Nineteenth
and Twentieth Centuries**

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THE RISE OF an associational life within the Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire did not begin in the second half of the nineteenth century with their hesitant entry into modernity, that is, Westernization and relative secularization. It was, however, at that time that associations of a new kind came to life. They did not replace the groupings rooted in traditional Jewish or Ottoman Jewish life, such as charitable and educational associations, or others, linked to the local context, such as the professional corporations.¹ These traditional associations continued to play their part, even while the new associations claimed some of their functions, helping thereby to enrich the different means of socialization and political participation available.

The type of political participation studied here will be, first and foremost, that of Jewish opinion groups, acting through associations, circles, clubs, committees and even trade guilds. These, in general, emerged, progressively, under the inspiration of Western counterparts such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle (henceforth abbreviated as Alliance),² the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden (henceforth Hilfsverein),³ the Zionist movement, and the B'nai B'rith⁴ (local pronunciation: Béné Bérit). It is understandable, therefore, that imported ideologies, even though adapted to local conditions, were essential in positioning different tendencies within the empire's Jewish communities.

The establishment, in 1835, of the office of chief rabbi (*haham başı*),⁵ in principle for the whole of Ottoman Jewry, and, even more, the promulgation, in 1865, of an organic statute for the Jewish com-

munity (*Hahamhane Nizamnamesi* or *Nizamati*),⁶ which officially recognized different authorities within the community—religious, lay, and mixed—were important milestones in the progressive politicization of the different tendencies within the community, especially among the laity who sought power. In addition, the country's general political course was about to arouse among some Western Jewish philanthropists and opinion groups a new interest in Ottoman Jewry. From this perspective, the *Tanzimat* era and the Young Turk Revolution represented important stages in the entry, in different ways, of Western Jewish interest groups on the Ottoman scene. Finally, it was near the authority structures of the community and in relation to them that the different opinion groups were to be found, even if, locally, their initial purpose was not always defined in these terms.

Associational life figured quite early in the plans for action of these opinion groups, whether they were autochthonous or imported. Sometimes a real gap existed between how the opinion groups used the associations and how their use was perceived by the public. The success encountered by associational activity was also related to this gap. It is evident, however, that all the parties involved in associational structures used them to advance their own interests.

The Association between Tradition and Modernity

The term "traditional society" generally implies a society where the religious element pervades all societal activities, including those which, in our modern societies, are considered as having no relevance to it.⁷ In fact, in such a society all aspects of life are governed by religious precepts.⁸ In traditional Jewish society, associations could not earn the right to be established unless they represented the society's values: study of the Torah, charity, and the pursuit of philanthropic activities.⁹ These associations also constituted structures of socialization for the few who took part in them. The idea of an associational life intended for the masses developed with modernization and the relative secularization it implied.

The community life of the Jews who had come to the Ottoman Empire from Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth century and later, included associational structures that corresponded to the demands of traditional Jewish life and that continued to develop with time.¹⁰ During the modernization era, these traditional associations coexisted with secular associations. They even grew in numbers in response to

the calamities that struck the Ottoman Jewish communities, particularly their increasing impoverishment.¹¹ With the progress of modernization, however, the traditional associations, in particular those that were devoted to charitable works, underwent a progressive secularization due to the diminution of the religious values prevailing at the time of their foundation. Moreover, in the nineteenth century they became more open to the masses. They also took an increasingly more active role in the politics of the Jewish community. Thus the traditional associations, from several perspectives, began to resemble the modern ones.¹²

The new associations that appeared in the major Jewish centers of the empire in the second half of the nineteenth century developed, to be sure, within the community, but most of them no longer depended directly on its official structures. The principal objectives of the emerging associations were no longer linked directly to the religious requirements of traditional Jewish life. This new situation had the potential of causing conflict; but it could also inspire a new dynamism in the communities.¹³ Indeed, many of the new associations became the principal vectors of Jewish modernity, with various measures of success.

The modernization of the Ottoman Jews was initiated during the *Tanzimat* period with the intervention of Western Jews. It gained the immediate support of local Jewish elites, connected to the merchant bourgeoisie and to financial circles. These were mostly foreign nationals, notably Italian, known locally as *Francos*.¹⁴ This could be described as modernization from above, largely due to the elites' voluntarism. This dynamic, started by a group of notables who were more progressive than the community's traditional leadership, was supported also by *maskilim*, followers of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish movement of Enlightenment. The latter were anxious to reform the Jewish community, open it to the West, and collaborate with European Jewry. But the "regeneration" of the local Jews and their modernization required a new schooling and an education of a Western kind. Thus these two groups cleared the way for the Alliance and its educational endeavors. In various Ottoman towns local committees were created to support the Alliance's work. In 1863, the Salonica Alliance Committee and the Regional Committee of the Alliance in Istanbul were founded, and others followed soon.¹⁵ The Alliance committees were the secular, modern equivalents of traditional societies like those of *Talmud Torah*, "institutions of piety, knowledge and close solidarity,"¹⁶ which until then had maintained a monopoly over traditional Jewish teaching and

education. The Alliance committees were the most important early associations of the new type. By virtue of their allegiances they formed a bridge between the Jewish West and the local communities, still mostly traditional.

The foundation of Alliance schools was followed by the emergence of an entire network of alumni associations whose formation was intended to supplement the school's activities. These associations, which were of a corporatist kind, brought together in the first place the alumni of the schools, joined by other categories of members (including community notables) likely to support the Alliance's undertaking. The Alliance used them both in order to cultivate future supporters and as instruments in the propagation of its ideology. These associations first appeared in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In Izmir, the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance was founded in 1896¹⁷; that of Salonica in 1897¹⁸; and the association of Edirne in 1901 (the last was known under the name *Fraternité Scolaire* or *Cercle de la Fraternité*).¹⁹ In Istanbul, it was not until 1910 that two rival associations were formed, the one "Alliancist," the *Amicale*, and the other Zionist, *Agudat Crémieux*.²⁰ At a somewhat later stage were formed associations of graduates of the Alliance girls' schools (*Associations des Anciennes Elèves*), such as that of Salonica, in 1909.²¹

These associations, compared to the traditional ones, were, to be sure, open to greater numbers, but they did not yet provide structures for the masses. They initiated a new form of corporatist associational life, linked not to a trade guild but to a basically foreign educational institution. They were to contribute, along with the Alliance's other institutions, to transforming the Alliance, at the local level, into opinion groups of considerable influence and to provide it with grass roots support.

Concerning membership, in 1897, one year after its foundation, the association of Alliance alumni in Izmir had 183 members²²; in Salonica, between 1910–1911, the figures were slightly over 350.²³ In fact, however, these associations did not reach a majority of the graduates of the Alliance's schools.

In addition, these associations were now required to provide a suitable replacement for the traditional leisure structures to which these youths had been accustomed. Consequently, they tried to foster mutual aid activities among their members. This was a new version of traditional corporatist charity, with the addition of various cultural activities. They also offered a sort of continued association to former

students centered on such values as solidarity and friendship. They thus assumed some of the functions of professional corporations and of traditional charitable organizations by helping craftsmen who completed their training or apprenticeship in Alliance institutions. For these purposes, some associations created institutions resembling professional trade unions and mutual aid funds, which were quite similar to European mutual funds.²⁴ The Izmir association thus created a Workers' Society (*Société Ouvrière*), which was to provide work for craftsmen trained in the Alliance's vocational institutions and to contribute to the improvement of their "financial and moral condition" by means of repayable loans.²⁵ The Salonica association took measures to reorganize the old society of Jewish craftsmen, *Ermandad*, which had stopped functioning.²⁶ In 1909, the *Ermandad* of Edirne was reorganized as *Le Syndicat des Ouvriers*.²⁷ Both craftsmen and workers were thus covered, a fact which widened the Alliance's impact as it could now penetrate groups already organized by trade guilds. Such undertakings were a consequence of an important principle of the Alliance's ideology: turning Jews into "productive" citizens. Through a variety of programs, which included lectures, evening courses, theatrical performances, recreational activities, sports events, and establishing new libraries and orchestras, these associations continued not only to offer post-school education to their members, but also to acculturate them in the molds of Western and secular leisure. They also helped poor students by trying to find them work when they left school; they also participated in philanthropic activities beyond the strict definition of the association's objectives. These associations based their legitimacy on their relation to the Alliance's educational activities. The Salonica association, for example, in its statutes for the years 1905–6, explicitly stated its mission to propagate in support of the Alliance.²⁸

During this period there existed associations that did not directly depend upon the Alliance, but which were, nevertheless, in large part made up of members who had attended Alliance schools. As an example, one can cite, for Edirne, *Le Cercle Israélite* (founded in 1890), attended by the well-to-do, and *Le Cercle de la Bienfaisance* (1903). Both merged into one in 1914.²⁹ Salonica had a westernized and secular associational life relatively early. *Le Cercle des Intimes* was founded in 1873, the same year as the first Alliance school was established in that city. The *Cercle*, restructured in 1907, took on the name *Club des Intimes*.³⁰ Its activities were both philanthropic and cultural. In 1890, still in Salonica, *Le Grand Cercle* was founded. Its purpose

was to protect the interests of Jewish merchants. In 1909, incorporating other associations, it became Le Grand Cercle Commercial.³¹ In 1907, the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Ecole franco-allemande (a private Jewish school), was added to that of the Alliance.³² Istanbul also had its clubs and literary societies.³³

Furthermore, toward the turn of the century there began to appear in the major Jewish centers societies for the propagation of the Turkish language among Jews. Behind this initiative was, apparently, the Acting Chief Rabbi Mosheh Levi (Halevi) who had the approval of the Ottoman authorities. The intention, it seems, was to please the palace.³⁴ It was nevertheless evident that the modernization of the Jewish community also required integration into Ottoman society. Acquiring the Turkish language could open new opportunities for the local Jews.

Finally, one should point out the contribution of circles of *mas-kilim*. In 1879, in Edirne, an association was founded in order to spread the Haskalah's ideas, *Hevrat Dorshei ha-Haskalah* (literally: Society of the Seekers of the Haskalah), or *Sosiedad do los Progresistas*.³⁵ This association published a bulletin (*Boletino de la Sosiedad Dorshei ha-Haskalah*), subscribed to Hebrew publications, maintained a reading room, and financed a scholarly periodical in Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew. The last was devoted to Jewish history and in particular to that of the Turkish Jews.³⁶ Istanbul also had an association linked to the Haskalah, *Dorshei Leshon Tziyon* (literally: The Seekers of the Language of Zion). It was founded in 1890 by Jews from Eastern Europe.³⁷ In the same year a similar association was created in Izmir; it also advocated the teaching of Hebrew language and literature, following the principles of the Haskalah. It called itself *Dorshei Leshon Ever* (literally: The Seekers of the Hebrew Language).³⁸ At the current state of our research, it is difficult to assess exactly the part played by these associations in modernizing Ottoman Jewish communities. At the very least, their existence suggests the impact of European Jewry's new intellectual currents.

Another association, *Kadimah* ("Forward" or "Eastward" to Palestine), founded in Salonica toward 1899, did not fit into any previous category. It was related to the Haskalah movement, but was distinguished by its nationalist aspirations.³⁹ Its founders were *talmidei hakhamim*, traditional scholars, who, after their schooling in the religious *yeshivot*, went on to learn French and secular subjects. Their objectives were to cultivate and propagate the Hebrew language, to

educate the masses through Hebrew, and to enlighten and strengthen religious faith by promoting Jewish studies.⁴⁰ The *talmidei hakhamim* who comprised the membership of this association included teachers at traditional Jewish schools, journalists, merchants, and other well-educated people.⁴¹ The association offered a range of activities, including book lending, lectures, discussions, as well as evening courses in Hebrew grammar, Jewish history, and general Hebrew studies.⁴² The association established a library containing works in Hebrew and other languages.⁴³ *Kadimah* was not favorably regarded by the chief rabbi of Salonica because its members did not seem to conform to religious traditions more than necessary. However, by virtue of its membership, as well as by its objectives and activities, it was located half-way between tradition and modernity. It was, in fact, considered a clandestine Zionist association.⁴⁴ After the Young Turk Revolution and the beginning of the Zionist renewal in Salonica, *Kadimah* resumed its activities under the name *Bibliothèque Israélite*. It eventually joined the *Fédération Sioniste de Grèce* following the latter's foundation in 1918.⁴⁵

The Young Turk Revolution and the Constitutional Period that followed the Hamidian absolutism, encouraged intense social change in the country as a whole and the development of associational life. The first Ottoman constitution (1876) did not guarantee the freedom of association.⁴⁶ That of 1908, with the modifications of August 1909, guaranteed associative rights to Ottoman subjects, despite some restrictions. (The latter included a ban on "separatist" associations whose objectives might jeopardize the territorial integrity of the empire, and "political associations borrowing their object and title from a race or a nationality."⁴⁷)

The empire's Jewish communities were no exception and their awakening was indeed spectacular. Thus, associations which had atrophied were now reorganized and new ones created. Conditions in the country as a whole, combined with the particular circumstances of the community, were to infuse Jewish associational life with a new dynamism.

The foundation of Zionist associations dates from this period. It began with the establishment of a branch of the World Zionist Organization in Istanbul, in 1908, under the cover of a banking institution, the Anglo Levantine Banking Company. Indeed, there had been earlier Jewish nationalist associations in the empire before the Young Turk Revolution, like *Kadimah*. However, given Abdülhamid II's policy on Palestine and the climate of suspicion that prevailed during his

reign, these associations had had to remain mostly clandestine.⁴⁸ Consequently, it was only after 1908 that Zionist associational life developed in the empire, in Istanbul in particular. However, due to the restrictions mentioned above these groups had to adopt different covers.

The brand of Ottomanism advocated by the Committee of Union and Progress had found supporters in the Jewish community. During the first years after the revolution, a number of associations for the propagation of the Turkish language sprouted in Istanbul as well as in other major Jewish centers.⁴⁹ The Zionists, following the example of other opinion groups, which supported Ottomanism for tactical reasons, also created associations for the teaching of Turkish, but, at the same time, also undertook to teach Hebrew.⁵⁰

In fact, until the First World War, Zionist activities focused in particular on the revival of the Hebrew language and culture, at least in appearance. The Maccabi athletic clubs also played a major part in the propagation of Zionism. Until the Balfour Declaration, the Zionist movement and its associations supported, on the local level, the principle of Ottoman territorial integrity. Within the community, the Zionists' main impact was to mobilize Jewish public opinion against the chief rabbinate and the Alliance. Because of conditions in the country and in the community, they moved through several stages, from covert nationalism to proclaimed Zionism, especially after the First World War.

Whatever their political aspirations at the time of their foundation, the Zionist associations occupied the middle ground between tradition and modernity. The favorite setting for Zionist action was most often the synagogue, the traditional meeting place of the community, at least when circumstances permitted. To this, it should be added that they generally tended to conclude alliances with religious circles. But their nationalist, Zionist ideology, despite some local adaptations, was truly part of the movement of Jewish modernity. The synagogue, however, was important, for apart from transmitting traditional Jewish religion and culture, it could encourage the emergence of a community leadership and internal authority.⁵¹ The Zionists chose this strategy for all these reasons, as they wanted to adapt their action to the groups they wanted to reach. The Zionists secularized, as it were, this major traditional locale as they preached in the synagogue the love of Zion. Tradition and nationalism (one aspect of Jewish modernity) converged there. The Alliance's ideology had proven weak in the context of Ottoman Jewry, where it could not truly replace

tradition, especially among some segments of the population. Zionism, on the contrary, could bridge that gap.

The establishment of B'nai B'rith lodges in the major Jewish centers of the empire, in particular the foundation of the lodge of Istanbul (the 678th), in February 1911, and of The Great Lodge of District No. XI of the Orient, the mother lodge,⁵² in May 1911, initiated a new form of associational life, unknown until then, involving significant philanthropic activity. While B'nai B'rith is considered as the oldest secular Jewish organization in America,⁵³ in the Ottoman Empire, it was about to make its quick entry on the community scene primarily as an opinion group.⁵⁴

Thus, in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, Ottoman Jewry displayed a wide range of associational activities, revealing the diversity of tendencies rooted in the community. Confrontations and crises within the community, as well as general circumstances in the country as a whole, eventually politicized some of the associations. Those who were strongly attached to traditional values could remain, however, more or less outside of this politicization.

Political Socialization and Participation

Organizations located on the periphery of community institutions, and semipolitical groupings, served in a way as a prelude to community leadership.⁵⁵ They made possible a political socialization preceding the move to the center. It is from this perspective that one can examine the role of the Alliance committees and that of its alumni establishments. The Alliance program for a future Jewish society and the restructuring it required did not please those in authority, especially in Istanbul, the seat of the chief rabbinate.

To be sure, the tensions between progressives and conservatives had been in existence before the intervention of Western Jewry in the nineteenth century. They came to the surface and became more accentuated, however, as new elements appeared on the scene. Generally speaking, in the context of their time and place, those who opposed the men in authority were called "progressives." Once in power, however, the same would soon be labelled "conservatives" by other groups. This also applied to the "Alliancists." Formerly "progressive," they were called "conservatives" by the Zionists, after their rise to power in 1908.

Up until 1908, the organizations affiliated with the Alliance performed the function of political socialization. In contrast with the paralysis of community institutions, they emerged as a power group on the periphery.⁵⁶ But it was only after the Young Turk Revolution and the coming to power of Haim Nahum (in principle an Alliance man) as chief rabbi that, with the help of its different local branches and the press which supported it, the Alliance could move toward the center.⁵⁷ The "Alliancist" notables who had received their political education within peripheral "power" structures, now reached the central authority, namely the secular structures⁵⁸ of the chief rabbinate, as their candidate won the position of chief rabbi in 1908 and 1909.⁵⁹ From then on, they played a direct role in community politics, as an oligarchy. It goes without saying that not all the "Alliancists" came to power; but their group was represented in great numbers. These, however, were primarily the notables. The rank and file were left behind, and these would gradually enroll for the most part in Zionist ranks.

For the Zionists, the establishment of associations was from the start an instrument of political action. Their objective was, on the one hand, to reach the Ottoman authorities in order to make progress on the question of Palestine, and, on the other hand, to strike roots in the community. The representative of the World Zionist Organization in Istanbul, Victor Jacobson, was a supporter of the "practical" current of Zionism, in contradistinction to the Zionist leadership who favored at that time "political" Zionism. For practical Zionism, *Gegenwartsarbeit* (action in the present) in the diaspora took precedence over exclusively political maneuvers. Among other things, it advocated gaining control of community institutions in order to mobilize Jews in different countries around a national plan and to combat assimilation. Zionist entry into the power structures of the community would require, in fact, a complete revision of the main political principles followed thus far by these Jewish authorities, both inside the community and outside, vis-à-vis the government.

To accomplish the turnaround of the Jewish population in favor of Zionism, a similar change in the attitude of their representative authorities had to be realized. This would create a balance of power favorable to the nationalists vis-à-vis the oligarchy, the chief rabbi, and those elements close to the Alliance. The realization of such a plan would enable them to reorganize the community in such a way that it could become an important interlocutor with the authorities. The Zionists wanted indeed to seize control of the community.⁶⁰ To

achieve that they transformed themselves into a party in opposition to the chief rabbi. In response, those in power also had to organize themselves as a party in order to combat the opposition and its allies. Many of the associations emerging from the contending groups became political instruments. The Alliance had already used its alumni associations as a means for propagating its cause. Now, in the confrontation with the Zionists, the politicization of these associations grew more intense due to the high stakes both outside and inside the community.

The Zionists drew a clear distinction between, on the one hand, the notables and the chief rabbi believed to be on the side of the Alliance and advocating assimilation; and on the other, the poor masses, misled by their leaders, excluded from community management and confined to tradition. The solution which they offered advocated nationalism and the democratization of community institutions at the same time. This somewhat simplistic presentation of community realities was at the heart of the populist campaign mounted by the Zionists, especially in the period leading to the resignation of Haim Nahum in 1920 (he had been a preferred target for Zionist attacks). In one sense, the Zionist associations became instruments of political action for an "imported" Zionist leadership; but they also enabled some local Jews who had been left out of community structures to obtain political experience themselves before they too could wield power. The function of the Zionist associations should not, however, be reduced to these two aspects. To most Jews, they provided a new nationalist framework of leisure and self expression. This encouraged the emergence of a national consciousness among part of the Jewish population, first in Istanbul and later in other major centers. Those attracted to the Zionist associations were primarily from economically underprivileged groups, on the fringes of modernity, or youths without real possibilities of social advancement or integration into Ottoman society. Besides raising a "national consciousness" which, in the Ottoman period, should not be confused with separatist intentions or with concrete plans of immigration to Palestine, the Zionist associations also helped these groups acquire a conjunctural "political consciousness."⁶¹ Depending on the activities they offered and their recruitment strategies, these associations were able to appeal to a variety of other groups.

The middle class also provided a significant segment of the membership of these associations. This was the case of Salonica, where the masses in contradistinction to the middle class were generally drawn

to the Fédération Socialiste Ouvrière.⁶² This same middle class, which had no access to the central community authority, had also provided the founders and active members of the traditional associations.⁶³ Some intellectuals, journalists, and teachers also joined the Zionist associational structures. Thus the Zionist associations accommodated those who had been excluded from active participation in the community and offered them opportunities for political socialization. Many among those who had been left out had supported progressive notables on their rise to power, as well as their reform program. Yet neither the community institutions nor the Alliance, which was related to them, could train them and give them responsibilities. The middle class had expected to participate in power, given their increased importance, especially as an economic force likely to be called upon to support the community's financial burdens. The Zionist movement, as an opposition party, and its different organizations, in particular its associations, offered these groups new structures, both more supple and open.

In Istanbul, the absence of a melting pot like the Fédération Socialiste Ouvrière of Salonica also enabled the Zionist associations to tap the discontent and social demands of the masses. Zionism was a political movement and, as such, it sought to regroup the discontented from all quarters and to fuse them into one supporting force.

In a similar manner, immediately after the Young Turk Revolution, the progressive notables affiliated with the Alliance had tried to use popular discontent against the incumbent Acting Chief Rabbi, Mosheh Levi, and transform it into a force supportive of their own candidate, Haim Nahum, and to strengthen their position. Thus, beside the demonstrations expressing support for the new regime, organized by the Jewish associations, the meetings devoted to the redefinition of community's administration grew more numerous in Istanbul.⁶⁴ Eventually, even places of worship were used to this end.⁶⁵

Public opinion was thus taken into consideration, even though it played no direct role, neither in the choice of the candidates to the supreme position of Ottoman Jewry, nor in the election of its lay leadership. In October 1908, the Rodfei Emet (literally: the seekers of truth) association, founded by the progressives, appears to have gathered in the populous district of Hasköy some 15,000 supporters for the new Acting Chief Rabbi, Haim Nahum, who was then campaigning in the different suburbs of the city for his election to the position of chief rabbi.⁶⁶ On their part, the conservatives, who had

already lost some control of community affairs in 1908, when Nahum became acting chief rabbi, fearing that they might be completely excluded if he were elected chief rabbi, had sought to manipulate the Jewish butchers' guild against the newcomers.⁶⁷ This guild used to collect the tax on kosher meat (*gabela*), which was an important source of income for the chief rabbinate. It was, therefore, an important economic factor within the community. Indeed this guild's strikes paralyzed community life. Launched during the election period and periodically later on, the guild managed to undermine the position of the new spiritual leader and the oligarchy. On their part, the clubs and associations won over by the progressives and the acting chief rabbi mobilized to break the power of the guild.

The confrontation between associations representing opinion groups linked to the Alliance and the Zionists went back to the Amicale affair in 1910. Isaac Fernandez, the president of the Alliance's Regional Committee in Turkey, and Chief Rabbi Nahum (who was also the Committee's honorary president) took the initiative to found an association of Alliance school alumni (Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance).⁶⁸ In March 1910, serious controversies rocked the assembly, which discussed the statutes of the proposed association that had been prepared by an ad hoc committee.⁶⁹ It soon turned out that the assembly was divided into two factions. The first, superior in numbers and better organized, used the Zionist newspaper *Hamevasser's* correspondent to express its view. The minority faction was described by what was to become its official organ (*Bulletin de l'Amicale*) as comprising individuals acting on an independent basis.⁷⁰ In fact, it was an "Alliancist" group on which those who had planned the foundation of the new association were counting.

One article in the proposed statutes caused a serious conflict leading to a split. The pro-Zionist faction wanted the association "to initiate, whenever warranted by circumstances, a movement of solidarity among the Jewish population in support of those fellow Jews, from whatever country, who might suffer because they are Jews."⁷¹ In fact, such a principle had been incorporated in paragraph 2 of article 1 of the Alliance's own statutes,⁷² as well as in those of the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance of Salonica (article 5).⁷³ The Zionists had planned to beat the "Alliancists" with their own arms and on their own turf. In reality, however, although the Zionists used the Alliance phraseology they did not share its objectives. They hoped that the confusion that might ensue would win over the uncommitted to the

Zionist cause. In fact, by insisting that this article be included in the statutes, the Zionist faction proclaimed the political import it wanted the proposed association to assume. The "Alliancist" minority, however, maintained that the goals the Zionists wished to assign the association were incompatible with those of an alumni organization.⁷⁴

The chief rabbi and the "Alliancists" had originally planned to form an organization that would curb the expanding Zionist associations and clubs in the city. But they had not correctly assessed the impact of Zionism on students graduating from the Alliance schools. In fact, some of their own members were in the process of moving over to the opposition. The battle over this issue was meant to prevent an Alliance association from becoming a Zionist political organ. At the end, the "Alliancist" minority left the assembly. The Zionists renamed the association *Agudat Crémieux* (Crémieux Association), after the illustrious former president of the Alliance, Adolphe Crémieux. They thus appropriated for themselves the prestige of the Alliance while maintaining the ambiguity regarding the organization's character.

The "Alliancist" faction was supported by only nineteen of the sixty members of the assembly.⁷⁵ They too, with the approval of the Central Committee of the Alliance in Paris, founded an association named the *Amicale* organized on the model of the alumni associations already existing in Ottoman provincial towns.⁷⁶ *Amicale* reformulated the contentious article, in a restrictive sense, so as to underline its philanthropic character.⁷⁷ In addition, Article 4 of its statutes specified that the association had no political objectives.⁷⁸

At about the same time, a similar incident had taken place in Salonica. The *Nouveau Club* was born as a result of a split in the *Club des Intimes* (known until 1907 as *Cercle des Intimes*).⁷⁹ The *Club des Intimes* had been specifically devoted to philanthropic and cultural activities. After the Young Turk Revolution, it had briefly flirted with Zionism, welcoming Zionist spokesmen, such as Vladimir Jabotinsky (in 1908) and Victor Jacobson (in 1909). Later, however, it moved toward a "proclaimed and outspoken" Ottomanism, with a clear "Alliancist" tendency. This change led to the creation of the *Nouveau Club* by members of the *Club des Intimes* who disagreed with the new line. The *Nouveau Club* became distinguished by its nationalist and pro-Hebrew positions. Each of the two clubs had its own newspaper. Each took an active part in the community politics of Salonica as they unfolded.⁸⁰

The political activities of these two clubs extended even beyond the limits of Salonica. In 1910, as tension was mounting in Istanbul between Chief Rabbi Nahum and the Alliance on the one hand, and the Zionists on the other, the *Club des Intimes* circulated a petition,⁸¹ which expressed fervent patriotism for the empire and called upon Ottoman Jewry to support its chief rabbi. Signed by the club's committee and its four hundred members, this document warned of the danger to the empire's Jewish population if they were to elect a Zionist chief rabbi. This was a major attempt to mobilize the "Alliancist" forces. Jacobson therefore described the members of this club as "enemies" of the Zionists.⁸² Alliance sympathizers participated in numerous associations not directly linked to that society. The Zionists, however, following the Young Turk Revolution, made a conscious attempt to infiltrate organizations close to the community authorities in preparation for taking them over. Thus, the opinion groups used the associations either to retain power, or to conquer it.

Another case illustrating the degree of politicization of associational life was that of the Maccabi athletic and sports clubs in the years before the First World War. The impact of these clubs on the youth of the populous suburbs of Istanbul was considerable. Following the example of most of the Zionist associations, the Maccabi clubs articulated a constant anti-Alliancist line. The chief rabbi, in order to demonstrate his discontent with this situation, refused the invitation of the *Balat Maccabi* club to attend its celebration in October 1910.⁸³ This incident, however insignificant in appearance, sparked an explosion. In a speech delivered during the celebration, the club's vice-president attacked the Alliance in vehement terms.⁸⁴ In retaliation, the chief rabbi gave up his title as honorary member of the club.⁸⁵ The Zionists considered this act a declaration of war on the "national movement."⁸⁶

The Zionist clubs and associations described the work of the Alliance as assimilationist and antinationalist. On the other hand, the Alliance pretended to be above all this and to ignore the Zionists. Few "Alliancists" were unaware, however, of the conflicts between the Alliance and the Zionists in Bulgaria in the early years of the twentieth century. These conflicts resulted in the closure of most of the Alliance schools in Bulgaria, except two, by 1913.⁸⁷ But the Alliance strategy had some impact. The presence of "Alliancists" in community authorities was a guarantee, although a temporary one, for the continued survival of its schools, in spite of the increasing erosion of their repu-

tation. The Alliance associations and related institutions infiltrated by its followers, enabled the Alliance to maintain this presence. Concerning the part played by the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance of Salonica, Joseph Nehama, a school director, explained as follows: "We have collaborated with other groups in community elections, and our collaboration resulted in a community council widely open to modern ideas and tendencies."⁸⁸

On a smaller scale, Istanbul's Amicale tried to act in the same way, without however being able to hold its own against the Zionist associations. Amicale's capabilities to mobilize support proved quite weak.⁸⁹ In general, the political impact of the Alliance associations varied from one Jewish center to another, depending on local circumstances and the degree of Zionist activity.

The Zionists also used associational life to make alliances with other opinion groups. The Zionists seem to have benefitted from the mistrust, and even opposition, which religious people harbored toward Westernized groups and notables, Western-style education, and ultimately the Alliance and its educational network.⁹⁰ Although the Orthodox had lost their dominant position in the community to the "Alliancists," they still continued to play a role in the religious and religious-lay structures of the chief rabbinate. The Zionists hoped that by cementing an alliance with the Orthodox, they would be able to attract their votes and those of their conservative supporters within these structures, strengthening thereby the attachment of the masses, who were close to the Orthodox.

The main force in mobilizing the rabbis was David Marcus, the rabbi of the Ashkenazi community, who was associated with the Zionists and also represented the Hilfsverein. This development was described by the Zionist press as an awakening of the Orthodox religious movement.⁹¹ With Zionist support, the Histadrut ha-Rabbanim (Rabbis' Union), was founded in April 1911.⁹² Thus taking advantage of the dispute between conservatives and progressives, the Zionists, through Rabbi Marcus, were able to win over the Hilfsverein and the Ashkenazi community which was under-represented in the general community leadership and among whom the Zionists were able to recruit a substantial number of followers. The foundation of the rabbis' union was part of the power struggle conducted by the Zionists in order to take over the community's institutions. The importance

of the rabbis' union was not particularly decisive in itself, but it aided the Zionists in their work.

Associations and clubs founded by the Zionists as of 1910, such as Ha-Ivriyah (The Hebrew), whose center was in Berlin, and Benei Yisrael (local pronunciation Béné Yisrael; "Sons of Israel"), or others infiltrated by them, like the Société Juive de Chant Renanah, became by the First World War not only centers for disseminating Zionist ideology, but also important political training grounds. It is difficult, however, to assess the rates of participation in these Zionist associations.

In 1914, with the foundation of the Histadrut Tziyonit Otomanit (The Ottoman Zionist Organization), the Zionists came out in the open.⁹³ But this move was short-lived. The minister of the interior, after becoming acquainted with their statutes, decided to dissolve the organization.⁹⁴ Open Zionist associational life appeared in fact only after the First World War. Consequently, Istanbul's B'nai B'rith lodge was progressively transformed into a Zionist center, especially after the war. Since its foundation, Victor Jacobson, as well as other Zionist activists, professionals and nonprofessionals, had been among its members. But notables affiliated with the Alliance were also part of it. In fact, the B'nai B'rith in Istanbul was said to have brought together "the intellectual elite and financial aristocracy,"⁹⁵ that is, groups that usually were inclined to join associations related to the Alliance. But there is no doubt that the Zionists, especially in the period leading to Chief Rabbi Nahum's resignation, exercised the greater influence on the lodge's political line. It was no accident, therefore, that in 1911 the Alliance Secretary, Jacques Bigart, approached the chief rabbi in order to convince him to oppose the development of this organization in Turkey.⁹⁶

Zionist associations seem to have been used as models even by their opponents who, like the Zionists, used them as political instruments. In 1919, Chief Rabbi Nahum and his supporters founded an association called Béné Israel (Benei Yisrael), adopting the very name of the Zionist association mentioned above, which had become defunct in the meanwhile. The purpose of the new association was to "counteract all the organizations recently founded and which, as part of their program, called for Mr. Nahoum's departure and his replacement by another religious leader."⁹⁷ The awakening of Jewish national sentiment was part of this new association's objectives. Postwar conditions allowed the ruling group to demonstrate such daring and gave

it the opportunity to recoup the Zionist experience for its own benefit. The new association, which consisted of "Alliancist" notables and members of Amicale, was in Rabbi Nahum's own terms a "defense party."⁹⁸ Its program, apparently similar to that of any other nationalist association, could attract the Zionist following and, in time, reverse the balance of power in favor of the ruling oligarchy and its leader.⁹⁹ It could also, for the same reason, win the favor of the British who had occupied Istanbul along with the other Allied Powers. The British had denigrated the chief rabbi and his friends and, since the announcement of the Balfour Declaration, were flirting with the Zionists.

In fact, the ruling group adopted the same tactics used by the Zionists who themselves had no qualms borrowing the Alliance's discourse when it suited their interests. Now the ruling oligarchy did the same with the principles advocated by the Zionists before the war. Patronage was still a way of life and associations were used for that purpose. In the end, however, the new association and its suburban branches did not seem to have been very effective: they were unable either to strengthen the ruling group or to weaken the Zionist associations, which continued to multiply. In fact, in 1920, there was some talk of absorbing this association and its branches into the Zionist associations.¹⁰⁰ With the resignation of Chief Rabbi Nahum, the cause for the defense of which they had been founded had vanished and they no longer had any justification to exist.

Indeed, in the years following the Mudros Armistice (October 1918) and the occupation of Istanbul by the Allied Powers (March 1920–August 1923), the Zionists reaped the fruits of their intense activities in the pre-war era. In 1919, the Zionist associations, which had then multiplied, were brought together in the *Fédération Sioniste d'Orient* (abbreviated FSO). Zionist associational life thus transformed Zionism into a real second community power, but still oppositional. It had helped to win over the otherwise silent masses and to make of them a lever that the Zionists could use on several occasions. It created an electorate (short-lived, to be sure), which supported the Zionists in the 1920 community elections in the populous suburbs of Istanbul and elsewhere.¹⁰¹

The association as a means for shaping public opinion can be considered as a new element of associational life in the major Jewish centers. The Alliance opened the way; the progressives followed, and the Zionists took their turn as they transformed the associations into

true political instruments. From the time they first emerged as an alternative to the community's traditional structures and to the groups which controlled them, associations functioned as arenas for socialization and political participation. These two major functions of modern associational life could be jointly carried out by the same set of associations, as was the case with the Zionist ones.

During the years 1908–20, when most of the institutional power was in the hands of the "Alliancist" group, associational dynamics focused either on the struggle against the oligarchy in power, or on counterattacks organized by those in control against those who threatened the status quo. This was an open confrontation between opinion groups conducted through the associations. Even though they infiltrated the institutions of the chief rabbinate and intermittently controlled executive power, the Zionists nevertheless were primarily on the side of those excluded from power and therefore could more easily unite.

With the FSO's foundation (4,000 members in 1920, according to official Zionist figures¹⁰²), Zionist associational life began to become institutionalized. Zionism lost some of its political impact as it stopped being primarily an opposition party and became one actor, among others, in community life. The new Acting Chief Rabbi, Haim Ben-Jarano, responding to the new circumstances, was more conciliatory toward Zionism than his predecessor. In addition, the quasihegemony of the Zionists in the community authorities, at least until 1922,¹⁰³ made political action less urgent than before 1920. Neutrality was also in season for Amicale and B'nai B'rith.

Furthermore, the new international context—the changing position of the World Zionist Organization (now based in London) on the subject of Zionism in Turkey, now that Palestine was no longer a part of the empire—and the development of a more independent local Zionism caused a relative depoliticization of Zionist associational life. It now became an opinion-shaping vehicle no longer for political participation in the community, but for Zionism as such.

The FSO tried to take hold of the different associations in Istanbul and created others in the provinces, controlling them closely,¹⁰⁴ in order not to lose ground to nationalist and Zionist tendencies, which did not recognize its authority and had their own associational networks (such as Maccabi and Hit'ahdut, short for: Hit'ahdut ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir u-Tze'irei Tziyon).¹⁰⁵ Associations multiplied, merged, and disappeared.¹⁰⁶ At least half a dozen associations were active in each

suburban district of the capital with large Jewish populations. There were branches of organizations such as Shivat Tziyon (Return to Zion), Benei Tziyon (Sons of Zion), Benot Tziyon (Daughters of Zion), Mac-cabi, and others.¹⁰⁷ Ashkenazi immigrants, fleeing pogroms in their countries of origin and becoming more numerous in Istanbul, created their own associations. These activities lasted until the birth of the Turkish Republic.

By this time, the Zionist associations had lost some of their previous importance, and their general meetings were not well attended.¹⁰⁸ They offered, however, an impressive range of cultural activities, such as concerts and lectures on national themes, films with biblical motifs, etc. They erected true structures for the expression of a Jewish national culture and recreational activities. In addition, they organized various collections of funds for the World Zionist Organization and its branches for the purpose of building a Jewish national home in Palestine. When observing all this bevy of activities one wonders how the local people could sort their way through these different functions. The festivities, the balls and garden parties organized to collect funds did not differ much from the more traditional activities of charitable associations, such as B'nai B'rith or Amicale.¹⁰⁹ As the associations needed the well-to-do, they also offered activities that were familiar to them.¹¹⁰ The masses were not neglected either; their participation was always considered important. Through the renovated synagogues and popular recreational activities, the Zionist associations maintained their contacts with the masses.

Zionist associations now played the part of a philanthropic intermediary between the Zionist Organization and the local Jewish population. This was a modern form of philanthropy as well as an expression of Jewish solidarity in the service of Zionism, and not for the community poor. In fact, from this perspective, it might be argued that the Zionist associations were still somewhere between tradition and modernity. Were all these associations' activities well attended? If one may judge from the rapid mergings and disappearance of some of them, it is likely that they did not draw large crowds except, perhaps, for the recreational activities they offered. Moreover, a survey of the ads printed in the local Zionist paper, *La Nation*, leads one to believe that some of the associations did not have well-defined programs to distinguish them from each other. Nevertheless, if one considers the large number of organizations, even if their activities were only moderately attended they still must have reached a rather large public.

Nevertheless, in becoming transformed from organizations offering an alternative to "establishment" institutions, the Zionist associations lost one of their primary *raison d'être*. The era of ruptures, from the Young Turk Revolution to the Allied Occupation, had created favorable conditions for the rise of associational life and especially Zionist activity. (This was also the case of Salonica following its occupation by the Greeks in 1912.) But it was the intracommunity conflicts, born of the confrontations between different opinion groups, and in a more general way the politicization of community life that had given its thrust and vigor to nearly all forms of associational life.

Notes

List of Abbreviations

- AAIU: Archives de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle (Paris)
 AI: *Archives Israélites* (Paris)
 AU: *L'Aurore* (Istanbul)
 BA: *Bulletin de l'Amicale* (Istanbul)
 BGLD: *Bulletin de la Grande Loge de District XI—B'nai B'rith* (Istanbul)
 BSa: *Bulletin annuel de l'Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Salonique)
 BSaI: *Bulletin annuel de l'Association des Anciennes Elèves de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Salonique)
 BSm: *Bulletin annuel de l'Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Smyrne/Izmir)
 CZA: Central Zionist Archives (Jerusalem)
 EJud: *El Judio* (Istanbul)
 ET: *El Tiempo* (Istanbul)
 HM: *Hamevasser [Ha-Mevasser]* (Istanbul)
 JC: *Jewish Chronicle* (London)
 MO: *Le Moniteur Oriental* (Istanbul)
 NA: *La Nation* (Istanbul)

1. Professional guilds were known in Turkish by different names: *esnaf*, *taife*, *ehl-i hîrfet*, *ehl-i sanat*. About this, see: Robert Mantran, "Le milieu urbain et social à Istanbul. Les activités économiques: les gens des corporations," in id., *L'Empire ottoman du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), [III], pp. 119–59.

2. An organization founded in Paris in 1860 for the emancipation of Jews in countries where this had not yet been attained and for their protection in case of persecution. Later the Alliance decided also to work toward the "moral and material regeneration" of these Jews, especially through education. Thus between 1862 and 1914 it established in Middle Eastern and North African countries a large network of elementary schools and vocational and agricultural training institutions. These institutions, established with the participation of the local communities, followed French educational models com-

plemented by additional instruction in Jewish subjects and local languages. The Alliance established its largest educational network in the Ottoman Empire, while in eastern Europe it failed to strike roots. The Alliance made a particularly important contribution to the diffusion of the French language and culture.

3. A German organization established in 1901 for the improvement of the social and political conditions of East European and Oriental Jews. It created in the Ottoman Empire a small educational network which competed with that of the Alliance. In the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan countries it became an instrument for the advancement of the German language and culture.

4. A Jewish organization structured on the model of masonic orders in lodges and chapters. Founded in the United States in 1843, it was established in Istanbul in 1911.

5. Moïse Franco, *Essai sur l'histoire des Israélites de l'Empire ottoman* (reimp., Paris: Centre d'Etudes Don Isaac Abravanel—U.I.S.F., 1980), p. 151; Abraham Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul* (Istanbul: Hüsnütabiat, 1941), vol. 1, pp. 108–9.

6. For the original text, see: *La konstitusion para la nasyon israelita de Turkia* [Constitution of the Jewish Nation of Turkey], n.p.: Estamparia del Jurnal Israelit, 5625/1865.

7. Jacob Katz, "Traditional Society and Modern Society," in Shlomo Deshen and Walter P. Zenner (eds.), *Jewish Societies in the Middle East* (Washington: University Press of America, 1982), pp. 38–39. For Sephardic society there does not exist an equivalent for the theoretical work undertaken by Jacob Katz on traditional Ashkenazi society. The works of competent amateurs, such as Abraham Galanté, Joseph Nehama and others, who will be cited here now and again, appear nevertheless to justify certain comparisons with the type of society described by Katz.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

9. Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis. Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages*. 3rd ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1977), p. 158.

10. For a list of these associations, see: Joseph Nehama, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique* [reproduction] (Salonique: Fédération séphardite mondiale, 1959), vol. 5, pp. 44–53; Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul*, vol. 1, pp. 203–5; *idem*, *Histoire des Juifs d'Anatolie* (Istanbul: M. Babok, 1937), vol. 1, pp. 86–100.

11. Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul*, vol. 1, pp. 206–21; Avraham Amarillo, "Hevrot Tzedakah va-Hesed" [Charitable and Goodwill Associations], *Sefunot*, vol. 15 (1971–1981), pp. 105–33.

12. Ya'acov Barnai and Haim Gerber, "Gildot Yehudiyot be Kushta be-Shilhei ha-Me'ah ha-18" [Jewish Guilds in Istanbul at the End of the Eighteenth Century], *Michael*, vol. 7 (1981), pp. 209–10.

13. Katz (*Tradition*, pp. 166–67) develops a similar analysis in his description of traditional associational life. Considering the little information we have on traditional associations in the Ottoman Empire, it is not easy to assess their relations with the official authorities of the community. Our analysis leads us to identify manifestations of relative independence in the associations of the new kind.

14. On the Francos, see the contribution in this book by Aron Rodrigue, and also: *Idem*, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860–1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 37–40 and *passim*.

15. Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews*, pp. 47–48 and *ff.*

16. On Talmud Torah societies in Salonica, see: Nehama, *Histoire*, vol. 5, pp. 45–54; Avraham Amarillo, "Hevrat Talmud Torah ha-Gadol be-Saloniki" [The Great Talmud Torah Society of Salonica], *Sefunot*, vol. 13 (1971–1978), pp. 274–309. On the schools of these societies, the equals of East European *hadarim*, called *meldarim* in Judeo-Spanish and also *talmudei torah*, see: Aron Rodrigue, "The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Attempt to Reform Jewish Religious and Rabbinical Instruction in Turkey," in Simon Schwarzfuchs (ed.), *L'Alliance dans les communautés du bassin méditerranéen à la fin du 19^{ème} siècle et son influence sur la situation sociale et culturelle* (Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim, 1987), pp. LIII–LXX.

17. The association's statutes were adopted 5 February, 1896; BSm, no. 3 (1899), Assemblée Générale du 28 Décembre 1898, p. 30.

18. BSA, no. [10] (1905–1906), p. 31.

19. The statutes of this association could not be found. It was, nevertheless, described as consisting almost entirely of Alliance alumni. See: AAIU, France XVI, F. 27, Annual Report, M. Mitrani to Paris, received 26 September, 1909; 6 July, 1921. (This last report gives a history of associational life related to the Alliance at Edirne.)

20. On l'Amicale and Agudat Crémieux, see: BA, September 1910, part 1, pp. 5–43; Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews*, pp. 127–29; Esther Benbassa, *Haim Nahum Efendi, dernier Grand rabbin de l'Empire ottoman (1908–1920): son rôle politique et diplomatique* (Thèse de Doctorat d'Etat, Paris: Université de Paris III [Sorbonne Nouvelle], 1987), pp. 272–81; *idem*, *Un grand rabin sépharade en politique 1892–1923* (Paris: Presses du CNRS, 1990).

21. BSA, no. [1] (1909–1910), p. 14.

22. BSm, no. 1 (1897), Assemblée générale du 3 mars 1897, p. 5.

23. BSA, no. [14] (1910), p. 21; Yosef Uziel, "Tenu'ot Hevratyot [Associational Movements]," in *Saloniki, Ir va-Em be-Yisrael* [Salonica, A Jewish Center] (Jerusalem/Tel-Aviv: Research Center on Salonica Jewry, Union of Jews from Greece et al., 1967), p. 128.

24. Esther Benbassa and Aron Rodrigue, "L'artisanat juif en Turquie à la fin du XIX^e siècle," *Turcica*, vol. 17 (1985), pp. 124–25.

25. BSm, no. [3] (1899), pp. 15–16; AAIU, France XIX. F. 30, D. Nabon to Paris, 31 January, 1910.

26. BSA, no. [13] (1909), p. 20.

27. AAIU, France XVI. F. 27, Annual Report, M. Mitrani to Paris, received 26 September, 1909.

28. BSA, no. [10] (1905–1906), p. 31 (article 2 of the statutes).

29. It was then known as Cercle Israélite et Bienfaisance. In 1919 it was renamed Cercle d'Andrinople. AAIU, *loc. cit.*; *idem*, Turquie XII. E., M. Mitrani to Paris, 3 April, 1914; *idem*, 9 January, 1919.

30. Uziel, "Tenu'ot," pp. 127–28.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 129.
33. Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul*, vol. 1, pp. 222–24. Also see: AAIU, Turquie I. H. 1, *passim*. (In this file there is considerable information on the various associations, including those of Istanbul, and their relations with the Alliance.)
34. AAIU, Turquie XXX. E., H. Nahum to Paris, 27 February, 1910; *idem*, 30 May, 1900.
35. Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle in Turkey, 1860–1914* (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985), p. 234.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 234–35.
37. Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul*, vol. 1, p. 223; Hayyim J. Cohen, *Ha-Pe'ilut ha-Tziyonit be-Artzot ha-Mizrah ha-Tikhon* [Zionist Activity in the Countries of the Middle East], n.p.; *Ha-Histadrut ha-Tziyonit ha-Olamit*, n.d., pp. 38–39.
38. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 38.
39. On Kadimah, see: AAIU, Grèce I. G. 3, J. Nehama to Paris, received 13 January, 1903; David Benveniste, *Yehudei Saloniki ba-Dorot ha-Aharonim* [The Jews of Salonica in the Last Generations] (Jerusalem: Kiriat Sefer, 1973), p. 141.
40. AAIU, *loc. cit.*
41. Benveniste, *Yehudei Saloniki*, *loc. cit.*
42. AAIU, *loc. cit.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. Uziel, "Tenu'ot," p. 127; AAIU, *loc. cit.*
45. Uziel, *loc. cit.*
46. Robert Bianchi, *Interest Groups and Political Development in Turkey* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 109.
47. For these restrictions, see articles 3 and 4 of the Law on Associations (29 Receb, 1327H/3 Ağustos, 1325M/16 August, 1909): A. Biliotti et Ahmed Sedad, *Législation ottomane depuis le rétablissement de la Constitution* (Paris: Jouve, 1912), vol. 1, pp. 295–96. Also refer to Bianchi, *Interest Groups*, pp. 109–10; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (reprinted, London: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 217; Hüseyin Hatemi, "Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet Dönemlerinde Derneklerin Gelişimi" [The Evolution of Associations during the Tanzimat and Constitutional Periods], in *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* [Encyclopedia of Turkey from the Tanzimat to the Republic] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, n.d.), vol. 1, pp. 201–2; Zafer Toprak, "1909 Cemiyetler Kanunu" [The Law of Associations of 1909], in *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e*, vol. 1, pp. 205–7.
48. Cohen, "Ha-Pe'ilut" p. 39.
49. ET, 17 June, 1910; AU, 17 June, 1910; JC, 3 June, 1910; AAIU, Grèce I. G. 3, J. Nehama to Paris, 28 June, 1911.
50. EJud, 10 Tammuz, 5670/17 July, 1910; HM, 26 Tevet, 5671/26 January, 1911.
51. W. P. Zenner and S. Deshen, "The Historical Ethnology of Middle

Eastern Jewry," in Shlomo Deshen and Walter P. Zenner (eds.), *Jewish Societies*, p. 13.

52. AU, 3 March, 1911; HM, 9 Adar, 5671/9 March, 1911; BGLD, February 1911–February 1913, part 2, chap. 6, pp. 105–7; part 1, chap. 1, pp. 9–12.

53. Deborah Dash Moore, *B'nai B'rith and the Challenge of Ethnic Leadership* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1981), p. XI.

54. Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 295–302 and *passim*.

55. This has been inspired, with some qualifications required by our study, by Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 22, 83, cited by Bianchi, *Interest Groups*, p. 9. J. Katz also views in this way one of the functions of traditional associations, namely, training the young in community affairs on a small scale before their coming to power. See: *Tradition*, p. 167. In our case we mean the rise to power of an opinion group, and not only of individuals taken separately.

56. Rodrigue, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 305–6.

57. *Ibid.*; Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 103–10 and *passim*.

58. The *Hahamhane Nizamnamesi* stipulated that in the *meclis-i umumi* (general council) there would be sixty lay members in addition to twenty religious members, chosen by the lay members from the corps of rabbis. It was also provided that at the time of electing a chief rabbi, forty lay delegates from provincial Jewish communities were to join the council. In principle the lay members from the capital were to be elected by the Jews of Istanbul and its suburbs. They also made up the *meclis-i cismani* (lay council) which was the executive authority. The members of the latter council were chosen from among the sixty lay members of the general council.

59. In 1908, Haim Nahum was elected *kaymakam*, acting chief rabbi, and in 1909 *haham başı* or chief rabbi. See: Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 73–124.

60. Benbassa, *ibid.*, pp. 355–417.

61. Following the resignation of the chief rabbi, the Zionists opted for a truce in the intra-community confrontations. It was then that the population's lack of interest in community elections was once again confirmed. In 1921, of 25,000 potential voters, only 25 voted for the constituent assembly (a new term derived from the postwar Zionist vocabulary to designate the *meclis-i umumi*). See: NA, 14 January, 1921. The partial elections for the same assembly, called in 1922 to replace those members who had resigned, elicited only 11 votes and were declared void. See: NA, 26 May, 1922. On the following ballot there were only 26 votes. NA, 2 June, 1922. The Zionists themselves recognized at that time that it was urgently necessary to educate the population politically.

62. Paul Dumont estimates the number of their followers at several thousand. Not all of those were Jews, but the latter were by far the most numerous. Cf. "La Fédération socialiste ouvrière de Salonique à l'époque des guerres balkaniques," *East European Quarterly*, vol. 14 (4) (Winter, 1980), p. 383.

63. Katz, *Tradition*, p. 166.
64. On this subject see: Esther Benbassa, "La 'nation' juive au lendemain de la révolution 'jeune turque' (1908) à travers *El Tiempo*, journal judéo-espagnol d'Istanbul," to appear in the proceedings of the conference "Istanbul dans la presse. La presse à Istanbul," Istanbul, 23–24 May, 1985.
65. ET, 9 September, 1908.
66. *Ibid.*, 21 October, 1908; AAIU, Turquie XXX. E., H. Nahum to Paris, 24 December, 1908; AI, (4), 28 January, 1909.
67. ET, 31 August, 1908; 9 September, 1909; 11 September, 1908; 5 November, 1908; 11 November, 1908; AI, loc. cit.
68. ET, 22 April, 1910; BA, September 1910, pp. 5–6.
69. BA, op. cit., p. 11.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*
72. For the text of these statutes, see: André Chouraqui, *Cent ans d'histoire: l'Alliance Israélite Universelle et la renaissance juive contemporaine (1860–1960)* (Paris: P.U.F., 1965), p. 412. This paragraph called for "prêter un appui efficace à ceux qui souffrent pour leur qualité d'israélites." See also Rodrigue, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 314–15.
73. BSa, no. [12] (1908), p. 57; no. [13] (1909), p. 67.
74. BA, op. cit., p. 12.
75. *Ibid.*
76. HM, 15 Iyar, 5670/24 May, 1910; Rodrigue, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 315.
77. Article 2, paragraph 5; BA, September 1910, p. 99.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
79. On these two clubs, see: AAIU, Grèce I. G. 3, J. Nehama to Paris, 28 June, 1911; Uziel, "Tenu'ot," pp. 128–29; Benveniste, *Yehudei Saloniki*, p. 147.
80. AAIU, loc. cit.
81. Flyer of the Club des Intimes, dated 16 November, 1910, in: AAIU, Turquie I. G. 1, H. Nahum to Paris, received 4 December, 1910; AU, 29 November, 1910; MO, 19 January, 1911.
82. CZA, Z2/11, V. Jacobson to D. Wolffsohn, 14 December, 1911.
83. ET, 28 October, 1910; AU, 4 November, 1910.
84. *Ibid.*
85. AU, 8 November, 1910; CZA, Z2/9, V. Jacobson to D. Wolffsohn, 4 November, 1910; ET, 4 November, 1910.
86. CZA, loc. cit.
87. On the experience of the Alliance in Bulgaria, see: AAIU, Bulgarie I. G. 14, H. Cohen to Paris, 8 August, 1898; idem, Central Committee of Zionists in Bulgaria to Central Committee in Paris, 2 August, 1903; idem, I. G. 7, G. Arié to Paris, 14 May, 1911; Rodrigue, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 334.
88. BSa, no. [14] (1910), p. 50.
89. Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 318–20, 361–467 and passim.
90. For example, in 1909 religious circles organized a campaign in Palestine, as well as in Istanbul, asking for the intervention of European allies to

prevent the election of Haim Nahum to the position of chief rabbi. The Zionists and the Hilfsverein also joined them. See: Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 95–103.

91. HM, Passover 5671/13–20 April, 1911. Also see: ET, 17 April, 1911.
92. For this Union, see: Benbassa, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 285, 382–86, 400.
93. ET, 27 March, 1914; JC, 3 April, 1914.
94. ET, 16 April, 1914; JC, 24 April, 1914.
95. NA, 16 June, 1922.
96. AAIU, Registre Secrétariat, J. Bigart to H. Nahum, 14 February, 1911.
97. AAIU, Turquie I. G. 1, A. Benveniste to Paris, 13 April, 1919.
98. *Ibid.*, Turquie XXX. E., H. Nahum to Paris, 27 April, 1919.
99. A similar analysis of the role of this association was offered by the Zionists in 1920, several months after the resignation of the chief rabbi: "Its obvious purpose [that of Béné Israel] was to strengthen the position of the supporters of the former chief rabbi and the suburban branches. In spite of their Zionist mask [they] were in reality only entrenched camps established in opposition to the various associations of *Shivat Tziyon* [the Zionists]." (NA, 23 July, 1920).
100. NA, loc. cit.
101. *Ibid.*, 12 March, 1920; 2 April, 1920; ET, 16 March, 1920; 30 March, 1920; AAIU, Turquie II. C. 8, A. Benveniste to Paris, 30 March, 1920. These elections were first held in March 1920, but were never concluded. The Ottoman authorities, claiming that foreigners participated in them, requested that they be declared void. The elections were held again in September 1920; NA, 10 September, 1920.
102. These figures must be considered with caution. At the time the Zionists had an interest in inflating them in order to convince the Zionist Organization in London of their own importance regarding local public opinion. See: NA, 23 July, 1920.
103. The apparent flexibility demonstrated by the new acting chief rabbi encouraged the emergence of a relative truce. Several declarations made by the rabbi attest to this attitude, in particular one supporting the Zionist associations (NA, 14 January, 1921), or his signing an appeal calling for subscription to Keren Hayesod (a Zionist fund) launched by the Zionists (NA, 14 April, 1922). For a detailed account of the relations between the Zionists and the acting chief rabbi until 1922, a year marked by renewed community tensions, see: NA, 28 July, 1922.
104. For relations between the FSO and the associations, see: NA, 27 May, 1921; 3 June, 1921; 10 June, 1921 (Reports of the Third Congress of the FSO). For a list of associations affiliated with the FSO, see: NA, 16 December, 1921. For the tightening of control, consult: NA, 23 September, 1921; 30 September, 1921; 24 March, 1922 (concerning the meeting of committees of affiliated associations); 11 November, 1921.
105. NA, 3 June, 1921; 14 April, 1922; 24 March, 1922.
106. This dynamic emerges from reading *La Nation*. See, for example:

21 May, 1920; 17 December, 1920; 18 March, 1921; 29 October, 1921; 3 November, 1921.

107. NA, 21 May, 1920.

108. NA, 28 April, 1921; 2 December, 1921; 26 May, 1922; 16 June, 1922.

109. NA, 3 September, 1920; 4 March, 1921; 10 August, 1921.

110. *Ibid.*, 23 July, 1920. The efforts to attract the well-to-do were considered at the Second FSO Congress as a strategic error, in view of the paucity of funds collected. "One should have thought of the middle class, of the lower class," declared the Zionists.