

# *Pe'amim*

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Ottoman Jewish wills further our understanding of family life. Wills reflect feelings, relations between family members and the larger household as well as values, which were in accordance with those of the Muslim urban society. This article by Yaron Ben-Naeh adds to our knowledge on Ottoman Jewish society and especially on the pre-modern family which has been much idealized.

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The article by Dov Cohen discusses one of the 19th century's most fascinating Judeo-Spanish egodocuments: the memoir of Salonikan poet and publisher Sa'adi Halevi-Eskenazi, an influential cultural and literary icon, renowned in Sephardic communities throughout Turkey and the Balkans. The article examines an expanded version of the memoir, which has yet to be studied by scholars. In his article, the author addresses issues such as Halevi-Eskenazi's motivations for writing the memoir, the chain of events leading to its publication in Ladino newspapers, its significance as a historical source, the search for existing copies of the memoir, and more. Two selected chapters from the memoir are presented as an appendix to the article.

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Shenhav Bartov's paper presents the character of Avraham Ben Yosef Reuven, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Hebrew poet, who was active mainly in Salonika and Istanbul. This paper also deals with nature of his poetry and presents several of his poems for the first time.

Dr. Shenhav Bartov is an independent researcher whose studies deal with Jewish secular poetry in the Ottoman Empire

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This study by Melech Westreich and Ayelet Segal discusses the economic rights of the *yevamah* in Salonika, from the time of the expulsion from Spain, in 1492, to the Holocaust. In the first part, the authors focus on the legal rights of the *yevamah*, a widow legally locked in a levirate relationship with her brother-in-law: she could only marry another man after her brother-in-law performed the rite of *chalizah*. The authors analyze the wide spectrum of legal attitudes adopted by the most prestigious sages in the Ottoman Empire, with regard to a case that occurred in Salonika in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the economic consequences of these attitudes. The second part of the paper focuses on the *ketubah* clause, developed in Salonika, which allowed the *yevamah* to collect the monetary components of the *ketubah* independently of the *chalizah* rite. The paper introduces a version of the new clause intended to ease the economic situation of the *yevamah* and identifies the time when the clause was introduced. The authors describe the background of the emergence of the clause, which was influenced by the many legal opinions

discussed in the first part of the study, and by the many levirate relationships resulting from the emigration from the Iberian Peninsula and from the numerous plagues in Salonika. The authors also point out the textual roots of the clause in the Sephardic legal tradition. The paper concludes by tracing the legal crystallization of the clause, as well as its essence, reception, and dissemination in time and space.

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Israeli political identities' discourse has produced a fascinating literary and cultural output. Irit Ronen's paper argues that Lea Aini, in her monumental novel *Rose of Lebanon* (2009), is shaping a literary reform of the identity discourse by suggesting a complicated and contradictory Israeli identity. This transformation mixes between ethnical, gender, national and status categories and creates a unique hybrid in contemporary Israeli literature. Aini claims a place for her literary creation and challenges the identities' discourse by poetic tactics which include theft, invasion and lie. These tactics allows a new perception of identity in Israeli reality that offers poetic salvation by the utilization of transgressive means.

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The first part of the article by Shalom Sadik describes three different opinions that Rabbi Ibn Ezra shows in his different commentaries: 1. The law of the Torah is identical to natural law and all God's commandments have a rational reason. 2. We cannot understand the reason for God's commandments. 3. God's commandments can go against natural and moral law. The article goes on to conclude that Rabbi Ibn Ezra holds a dialectical position, a conclusion which goes against the mainstream opinion among Rabbi Ibn Ezra scholars who hold that the most conservative opinions that R. Ibn Ezra mentions are intended only for the masses.

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