

# DECORATIONS OF PRINTED BOOKS OF BALKAN JEWS (16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> c.)

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**Abstract:** The organization of Sofia State Archives possesses an extremely rich collection of Jewish printed books - about 10,000 copies. Most of the book production was published and owned by Jews who had inhabited the Balkan regions since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century after the expulsion from the Spanish Empire. The Bulgarian lands were central parts of the European territories of the Ottoman Empire during the considered period. Therefore, fusion of various cultural and artistic tendencies existing in the region is inevitable.

The paper traces the features and the appearance of title and other decorated pages in Jewish book editions dated in the period of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. As we are researchers in the fields of art and architectural history and theory, the presented study is focused on the motifs, geometric compositions and shapes, and ornamentation used in them. In parallel, we mark some visual connections of the graphic appearance of these editions with the nature of the books and documents of other ethno-confessional groups created in the region.

The results are in the field of history of applied arts and graphic design.

**Keywords:** Jewish printed books, 16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century, Sofia State Archives, Balkan region, decoration motifs, geometric composition.

## INTRODUCTION

The challenging theme of the current conference “SmartArt 2021 - Art and Science Applied: Experience and Vision” involves a wide range of artifacts and phenomena in a variety of temporal, regional and thematic context. In this regard, the Balkan lands are undoubtedly a valuable reservoir of authentic cultural and artistic artifacts – which corresponds with the rich historical heritage of the territory. One of the thematic fields of the forum called “History and Theory of Applied Arts” prompted us to the artistic and historical research of book illustration and graphics. The paper

is focused on the features and the appearance of title and other decorated pages in Jewish book editions dated in the period of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Today, the digitalization of museum and archival collections vividly expands the capabilities of the researchers and enhances the value of the existing information resources. The collection “Old Printed Jewish Books” of the State Archives Agency (SAA), Bulgaria<sup>1</sup>, part of which was the focus of our article, is also currently being digitized and made available to the public.

Book printing in general had been known to the Ottoman Empire since the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. “The first Jewish printing house was established in 1493 or 1494. In 1567 there was also an Armenian one”, writes Lyuben Otov<sup>2</sup>. The SAA collection contains editions from the cities of Amsterdam, Venice, Izmir, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Livorno, and Thessaloniki, printed from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A significant part of these books was owned by Bulgarian Jews, who inhabited the Balkan lands. Here we follow only the book production from Constantinople and Thessaloniki, as the two Balkan cities are well known and exemplary (comparable) cross-points of Southeast European and Orient (Ottoman) culture.

As historians and theorists of art and architecture, we mostly follow the character and composition of the decorative layout of pages. Here, we point out connections with traditional Jewish religious decoration and highlight common features with book production of other ethno-confessional communities in the Balkans.

To help the readers, we will now mention some popular facts about the Jewish cultural and religious heritage. It is well known that the Torah Scroll contains the five canonical books of the Old Testament (The Pentateuch). The Scroll is the center of religious life, rituals and actions. As an artifact, the Torah looks as a handwritten roll of leather (parchment), attached at both ends to wooden handles<sup>3</sup>, symbolizing the Tree of Life (Etz Haym)<sup>4</sup>. When being read, it is not to be touched with the hand of the priest, but only with the traditional pointer (yad)<sup>5</sup>. The scroll is kept in a ritual box covered with an embroidered decorated mantle (mappah) and a bandage. The upper part is decorated with selected (traditional) elements: a crown (Torah crown), located in the center, and rimmonims (Torah finials), adorning the wooden handles. A decorative plate (breas-plate, hoshen) is placed on the mantle<sup>6</sup>. Apart from being used in ritual readings and practices, the Scroll is often kept in a niche covered with a curtain (parochet) located in the temple, or in a special cabinet (Aron ha-kodesh)<sup>7</sup>.

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1 The site of the collection is available at <http://jewscollection.archives.bg/>. There, digital searches in different categories (year and place of publication, type of book, author, printer, etc.) are allowed. We would like to thank some of the institution collaborators - researchers Martin Cohen, Vanya Gezenko and Dr. Yordan Zhelev, who assisted us with the provided materials.

2 Отов, Л. *Ислямската култура през погледа на един европеец*, 2004, 675.

3 See one of the oldest Torah scrolls here: Cole, Diane. Carbon Dating Confirms World's Oldest Torah Scroll. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/130530-worlds-oldest-torah-scroll-bible-bologna-carbon-dating> [retrieved 17.05.2021].

4 Рошковска А., Лозанова, С. *Евреите и българската грагска култура*, 1998, 110-114

5 Jewish Virtual Library, 2021. Yad. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/yad>

6 Jewish Virtual Library, 2021. Torah Ornaments. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/torah-ornaments>

7 Fiedler, J. *Jewish Sights of Bohemia and Moravia*, Gefen Books, 1996, 211. Also see: Dolezelova, Jana, Alexandr Putik, Jirina Sedinova. *Jewish customs and traditions*, State Jewish Museum in Prague, Prague, 1992, 23.

It is the images of the Scroll of the Pentateuch, the corresponding decorations and the place of safe-keeping that were most often embedded in the decorative composition of the printed editions considered here. We will trace the images in three groups:

- Motifs representing the Holy Cabinet (Aron ha-kodesh or Heikhal)
- Motifs representing the Torah Scroll
- “Hybrid” images representing both the Cabinet and the Scroll

This division is conditional and is based on our (author’s) artistic and graphic perception. However, it makes it possible to systematize the presented material in a form and expression that is clear to the reader.

### **SAMPLES AND ANALYSIS: MOTIFS REPRESENTING THE HOLY APSE/ ARCH / CABINET (ARON HA-KODESH)**

For the period of 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe the concept of solemn, formal interiors (religious or secular), as well as the furniture which was used there, often borrowed visual motifs from the architectural decoration of known facades and the classical orders. Columns, arches, cornices, capitals, friezes, gables, etc. were used quite a lot in the interior items.

The Sacred Niche / apse / ark in the interior of the synagogues, was emphatically dignified, similar to the meaning of the Christian (Orthodox) altar and the Muslim mihrab. It was the center of ritual life and spiritual activities. Here we must recall the journey of the Sephardic Jews expelled from the Spanish Empire, arriving in the territories of the Ottoman Empire from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Traveling slowly through the Catholicism-dominated western and central Mediterranean lands, they also brought their own material and artistic culture. Thus, the overall appearance and decoration of the Jewish temples in the Balkans were also influenced by the European stylistic features of the era. (Although few in number, samples of synagogues from the 16<sup>th</sup> –18<sup>th</sup> centuries, are still preserved in Slovenia<sup>8</sup>, Croatia, Romania<sup>9</sup>, Greece and Turkey.) Sacred portable items and furniture (cabinets) also followed the typical Old Continent styles, such as Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Classicism.

The shape of the Torah cabinet (or of the sacred apse) could be found as a model of decoration in significant part of the book editions of Constantinople and Thessaloniki<sup>10</sup>. There, the silhouette of a richly decorated arch<sup>11</sup> often framed the text of the title page. It is not possible to tell for sure the specific reasons for choosing the layout of the page compositions. The choices depended on the traditions of decoration related to the text of the book itself, and on the cultural and artistic context of the region, the preferences of the printers, the technologies they used and more. However, we can note the presence both of

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8 See for example Premk, J. Maribor Synagogue: Between Facts and Reinterpretation. *Arts* 2020, 9, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts9010005>.

9 Streja, Ar., S. Lucian. *Synagogues of Romania*. Bucharest: Editura Hasefer, 1997

10 See the data on the Aron of Scola Catalana in Di Castro, D. *Treasures of the Jewish Museum of Rome, Guide to the museum and its collection*. Araldo de Luca Editore, Rome 2010, 88.

11 The semantics of the arches and their silhouette variations in history of architecture are a theme too large to be followed here. For a glimpse on some illustrations and samples of Triumphal Arches during centuries, see: Tasheva, Stela, Visual rethoric of architectural graphic between XV-XVII century, In: *Retorica del visibile. Strategie dell'immagine tra significazione e comunicazione*. 3. Contributi scelti, Aracne editrice, 2011, p 645-656



Fig. 1

oriental and Central / Western European motifs and decorations in the images of the pages. Thus, we see semicircular arches and flat, two-dimensional oriental decorations of the “columns” and “gables” in the samples from the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 1, left, center). In other editions, (like the one in Figure 1, Right) the “title” arch was depicted with a special mixture of “realism” and “stylization” (three-dimensional bases, capitals and pediment, two-dimensional columns). The character of the often used eastern (oriental) ornamentation, also makes a strong impression today. The repeating motifs sometimes completely filled the contour of the depicted arch (like in Figure 1 – left, center), or covered only the columns (see Figure 1 – right). But, the analogy (albeit to varying degrees) with the traditional geometric and floral motifs woven into carpets and textiles from the here considered period is obvious. (These carpet patterns were famous and widespread in the region – and beyond.)

Another group of title pages printed in Constantinople highlight formal features of the Italian architectural tradition. In fact, realistically recreated sculpted arches found wide application in the decoration of the Jewish printed editions of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. (We can see the trend even in the editions from Venice, preserved in Bulgaria – see Figure 2 left, center). Later on, baroque arches with rich relief decoration were used in some Balkan books in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, (like the one in Figure 2 – right). The arch was often crowned with an arched pediment, with a centrally located shell and symmetrical elements – commonly used sculptured vases, reminiscent of the place and shape of the rimmonims. And in some book editions, the arch is surrounded by additional bands and inscriptions. At that time, these kinds of huge stone arches had a symbolic meaning and were often applied in sacred interiors to denote the Torah niche / apse.

Architectural elements were greatly reduced and simplified in many other 18<sup>th</sup> century book specimens. Still, a recreation of the crowning part – the pediment, combined with a simple frame, was often used in the pages layouts (like in Figure 3 – left, center). In a number of title pages from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 3 – right) the architectural decoration became even more stylized and schematic, and sometimes only repeating simple signs were used to recreate the concept of the arch. It is logical to connect such a tendency with the influence of the strong march of classicism in European architecture and material culture.

We will make additional comments, regarding the other elements of the embellishment of the pages. The text inside was usually centered in the middle,





Fig. 2

and selected lines and words were often distinguished graphically (by font and size). The distribution in the conditional “space” of the Arch of these words and sentences was also notable.

Some text lines were fitted into other decorative elements, like “boards”, “cartouches”, “shields” (which had been widely used since ancient times in many ritual products and artifacts).

The paragraphs, shaped in triangular and/or arched figures were applied in the composition of the text field itself (Like in Figures 2 and 3). As explained by Lyuben Otov, this ancient tradition of geometrized (silhouette) design of the text can be traced back to ancient Roman manuscripts (poetry) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Subsequently, it was also found in the works of Islamic poets from the 11–12<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>12</sup>. Such graphic design of the text was also noted in both Christian books and Islamic models<sup>13</sup>.

In the title pages from Thessaloniki there are again both stylized (schematic) arches and richly decorated, intricate order compositions (Figure 4). We must note that they also reflect the evolving European styles of the 18<sup>th</sup> century – from Mannerism to Baroque and Rococo.

12 Otov, L. 2004, 236.

13 Psilaki E. *The Christian Art of Crete in Saint Catherine’s Museum*, 2016, 182, and Karolewski, Janina and Yavuz Köse, eds. *Wonders of Creation: Ottoman Manuscripts from Hamburg Collections*. Hamburg: manuscript cultures 9, 2016.

Fig. 3

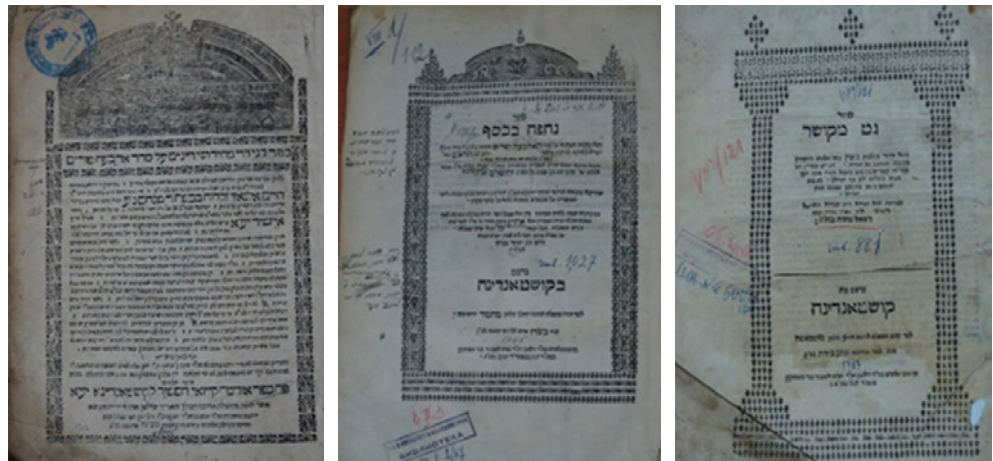




Fig. 4

### SAMPLES AND ANALYSIS: MOTIFS REPRESENTING THE TORAH SCROLL

The very shape of the Torah Scroll, together with the traditional decoration (rimmonims, crown, etc.), is also a common model for the layout of the title pages in many of the eighteenth-century religious printed books in Thessaloniki and Constantinople (Figure 5). We here mean the simple decorative rectangular composition, crowned with pointed geometric motifs (two side, symmetrical and one central). Although with varying degrees of conventionality, such a layout depicted the Scroll in its readable form. The silhouette and the general contours of the main ornaments were most often stylized through combinations of rectangular, rhomboid and triangular shapes. The lateral vertical elements represented both ends of the roll, and the central one was for the crown on the Torah. As in the stylized depiction of the Holy arch –Aron ha-kodesh above (Figure 3), the shapes of the roll are often depicted by grouping and repeating a miniature sign, letter or star symbol (Figure 5). Such repetitive decorative elements are found in older Jewish manuscripts and books, as well as in Christian and Muslim works parallel in time. So, it can be assumed that this type of ornamented text decoration is much more ancient.

Some variants of the title pages were associated with the image of the Scroll in a more detailed, decorated and elegant form. Our impression of the external decoration (mantle, crown, embossed elements and more) as “entering” and „embedding“ motifs into the unfolded Scroll in some Thessaloniki items (Figure 6 – left, center) is hardly a coincidence. The symbol of a hand (a wrist) with the pointing index finger (as directing and focusing the reading) was also visible as a miniature, repeatable decorative motif on some title pages. From a visual point of view, such elements, like the mentioned “hand” are small in size and their role in the composition of the page is not leading. However, it is logical that the used symbols had a different (higher) semantic load to devoted readers.

A more detailed and open mixture of “external” and “internal”, but now in architectural sense – of exterior and interior, can be found in several title pages from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, printed in Constantinople. Undoubtedly, the most impressive was the image of a sanctuary crowning the Scroll instead of a crown. (Figure 6 – right). This was supposed to be a variant (reconstruction) of the Temple of Solomon. The description of this building is included in the Old Testament and subsequently intrigued the religious thought of Jews and Christians for many centuries.





Fig. 5

The title pages with the temple were decorated with a combination of 2D and 3D graphics. There were schematic two-dimensional projections of the dome and the entrance elements and a rich three-dimensional (axonometric) projection of the silhouette of the building. At the same time, the very ends of the roll (Scroll handles) surrounding the building were also presented in a two-dimensional projection. Although printed in the “enlightened” 18<sup>th</sup> century, such a combination of different dimensions in one image has ancient origins. It could be found in many varying artifacts of Jews, Christians and Muslims with religious and secular functions.

### SAMPLES AND ANALISYS. „HYBRID“ IMAGES REPRESENTING BOTH THE CABINET AND THE SCROLL

Using the term „hybrid“, we mean a mixture of diverse graphical forms and decorations as well as stylistic and artistic features of different origins. It is about borrowing and interpreting the embellishment traditions of many products from the past – Jewish, Christian, Muslim. Thus, in the 1642 edition of AHAVAT OLAM in Constantinople, we see stylized floral ornaments, largely reminiscent of the borders of oriental carpets (Figure 7 – left). We can also connect it with ritual curtains, incl. covering the Torah Arch, and with the architectural decoration of wall and/or floor panels encountered in the era. In the example of title page of PRACHEY

Fig. 6





Fig. 7

SHOSHANIM (1734) (Figure 7 – center), the architectural “parallel” is now clear and full. There, a fusion of “embossed” sculpted order and zoomorphic motifs is applied.

In the book editions from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, printed in Thessaloniki, we could find variants of a composition reminiscent of oriental carpets, but combined with coats of arms and floral motifs, that were typical of many Western European ornamentation patterns. In the title pages of Thessaloniki, they were recreated according to the Jewish religious tradition. For example, a group of three crowns (Figure 7 – right) was often used as decoration. In this regard we have to recall the quote of Rabbi Shimon, II century AD: “There are three crowns: The crown of Torah, the crown of kehuna (priesthood), and the crown of Kingship; but the crown of a good name rises above all of them.”<sup>14</sup>

Title pages of some book editions from Constantinople (from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) were printed with stylized decoration that resembled both the appearance of the Arch/Apse and the Torah Scroll (Figure 8). In the title of MEGILAT SOFER from 1750, we see the use of (longitudinal) inscriptions in the “border” of the title composition. Such a graphic composition in turn, was also characteristic of both Eastern Orthodox religious items and Muslim manuscripts.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the simple, laconic decorative appearance of title pages was retained. The tendency for folklorized, conventionalized pages, reminiscent of the layout of manuscripts, was preserved. In parallel, the hybrid mixed decorative forms, the inscriptions in the frames and the “carpet” compositional stereotypes continued their existence (Figure 8 – center, right).

## CONCLUSION

Several lines of analysis were traced in our study. We will now summarize the found links and tendencies in the adornment of title pages of the considered Balkan Jewish books.

It is known that images of canonical religious motifs in stone, metal and glass products have been traditional for Judaism since the Hellenistic era and the time of Ancient Rome. Again, Jewish religious signs and symbols, and decorative compositions were used in the title pages of the followed Balkan editions. The themes of the books, the formed graphic traditions and the developed 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Jewishanswers.org 2021. <http://www.jewishanswers.org/ask-the-rabbi-3012/the-three-crowns/>





Fig. 8

century techniques of printing predetermine to a large extent the used pictorial tools. Special individual approaches and authentic templates of printers or authors can be identified in further, more detailed examination of the books.

But even now, we may note how the design trends of the book production from Constantinople and Thessaloniki included amalgam of architectural forms, symbol ornamentation and geometric figures and compositions. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional images were integrated. A fusion of oriental and European motifs was also applied.

The interrelationships between the book samples, presented in the text, and the book production created in Europe in parallel<sup>15</sup> deserve much more detailed analysis. Still we see that several decorative techniques used in the shown title pages of Jewish books were commonly used in both Christian (Orthodox) and Muslim manuscripts and printed editions.

Our text has presented just a small part of the preserved Jewish literary heritage in the Balkans. However, this excerpt reveals the richness of a regional visual culture that was developed over many centuries. Lots of the illustration tools and compositions are now used even by graphic designers creating today's book production.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

1: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Constantinople, printer Avraham Franko / Yaakov Gabay. MISHNAYOT by ITZHAK GABAY, 1644, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/12Г-3-01.

Center: printed in Constantinople, printer Avraham Franko. NETHIVOT MISHPAT, by CHAIM BEN AVRAHAM ALGAZI, 1669, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/12Г-2-05.

Right: printed in Constantinople, printer Avraham Franko. ZAAV SHIVA, by SHLOMO BEN AVRAHAM ALGAZI, 1688, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/12Г-3-02

Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Цариграду, штампар Аврам Франко / Јаков Габaj. МИШНА од ИЦАКА ГАБАЈА, 1644, ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-3-01.

Средина: штампано у Цариграду, штампар Аврам Франко. НЕТИВОТ МИШПАТ од ШАИМА БЕН АБРАХАМА АЛГАЗИЈА, 1669, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/12Г-2-05.

Десно: штампано у Цариграду, штампар Аврам Франко. ЗЕЕВ ШИВА од ШЛОМА БЕН АБРАХАМА АЛГАЗИЈА, 1688, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/12Г-3-02

2: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Venice, printer Di Gara. DIVREY RIBOT by ITZHAK BEN SHMUEL ADRABI, 1587, ЦДА, ф.08/03//0003,

Center: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Venice, printer Di Gara. RAV PENINIM by MOSHE BEN CHAYIM ALSHECH, 1601, ЦДА, ф.08/03//0003,

Right: printed in Constantinople, printer Yona Ben Yaakov Ashkenazi. BNEY YAAKOV, by YAAKOV BEN ISRAEL ITZHAK BEN HABA MARI SASON, 1715, ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-2-12

<sup>15</sup> Some examples are in the catalogue: Duda, E. *Pillars of Judaism. The Hebrew Bible Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, 2009.

Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Венецији, штампар Ди Гара. ДИВРЕЈ РИБОТ од ЈИЦАКА БЕН ШМУЕЛ АДРАБИЈА, 1587, ЦДА, ф.08/03//0003,В  
 Центар: Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Венецији, штампар Ди Гара. РАВ ПЕНИНИМ од МОШЕ БЕН ХАЈИМ АЛШЕХА, 1601, ЦДА, ф.08/03//0003,  
 Десно: штампано у Цариграду, штампар Јона Бен Јаков Ашкенази. БНЕЈ ЈАКОВ ЈАКОВА БЕН ИЗРАЕЛА ЈИЦАКА БЕН ХАБА МАРИ САСОНА, 1715, ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-2-1  
 3: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Constantinople, printer Yona Ben Yaakov Ashkenazi, BNEY CHAYA, by CHAIM BEN MENAHEM ALGAZI 1712; ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-2-10  
 Center: printed in Constantinople, printer Reuben & Nissim Ashkenazi. NECHIFA BAKESEF, by Yona Ben Chanon Navon, 1748; ЦДА, ф.1568К/13Г-3-27  
 Right: printed in Constantinople, printer Reuben & Nissim Ashkenazi. GET MEKUSHAR, by RAFAEL MOSHE BULAH; ЦДА, ф.1568К/13Г-1-07  
 Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Цариграду, штампар Јона Бен Јаков Ашкенази, БНЕЈ КАХАЈА, од ХАИМ БЕН МЕНАХЕМ АЛГАЗИЈА 1712; ЦДА, 1568К/12Г-2-1  
 Центар: штампано у Цариграду, штампари Рубен и Нисим Ашкенази. НЕХИФА БАКЕСЕФ, од ЈОНАХ БЕН ШАНОН НАВОНА, 1748; ЦДА, 1568К/13Г-3-2  
 Десно: штампано у Цариграду, штампари Рубен и Нисим Ашкенази. ГЕТ МЕКУШАР, РАФАЕЛ МОШЕ БУЛАХ; ЦДА, ф.1568К/13Г-1-0  
 4: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Betzalel Ashkenazi. YOSEF ELIAHU, by YOSEF BEN ITZHAK MONTEKIO, 1748, ЦДА, ф.1568К/16Г-1-12  
 Center: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Molcho – Nechama & Saadi Ha'levy Ashkenazi. KNESSET HA'GEDOLA, by CHAYM BEN ISRAEL BENVENISTI, 1794, ЦДА, ф.1568К/15Д-1-09  
 Right: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Molcho. TZEMAN TZADIK, 1801, ЦДА, ф.1568К/16Г-1-18  
 Слика 4. Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Солуну, штампар Безалел Ашкенази. ЈОСЕФ ЕЛИЈАХУ од ЈОСЕФА БЕН ЈИЦАК МОНТЕКИЈА, 1748, ЦДА, ф.1568К/16Г-1-1  
 Центар: штампано у Солуну, штампар Молчо – Неџама & Саади Ха'леви Ашкенази. КНЕСЕТ ХЕЈАГЕДОЛА, од ХАИМА БЕН ИЗРАЕЛ БЕНВЕНИСТЕ, 1794, ЦДА, ф.1568К/15Д-1-0  
 Десно: штампано у Солуну, штампар Молчо. ЦЕМАХ ЦАДИК, 1801, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/16Г-1-1  
 5: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Klay – Nachman. MAGEN GEBORIM, by DANIEL ISTRUSHA & DAVID BEN DANIEL ISTRUSHA, 1754, ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-3-14  
 Center: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Klay – Nachman. BEEROT HA'MAYIM, by ITZHAK BEN ELIAHU SHANGI, 1755; ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-3-17  
 Right: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Klay – Nachman. PRY HA'ADAMA IV, by MEYUCHAS BEN SHMUEL MEYUCHAS 1763; ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Д-1-19.  
 Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Солуну, штампар Клеј – Нахман. МАГЕН ГИБОРИМ од ДАНИЈЕЛА ИСТРОШЕ и ДАВИДА БЕН ДАНИЈЕЛ ИСТРОШЕ, 1754, ЦДА, ф. 1568К/14Г-3-1  
 Центар: штампано у Солуну, штампар Клеј – Нахман. БЕИРУТ ХА'МАИМ, ЈИЦАК БЕН ЕЛИЈАХУ ШЕНЕГИА, 1755; ЦДА, стр. 1568К/14Г-3-1  
 Десно: штампано у Солуну, штампар Клеј – Нахман. ПЕРСИ ХА'АДМА ЈАВ, МЕЈУХАС БЕН ШМУЕЛ МЕЈУХАС 1763; ЦДА, 1568К/14Д-1-1  
 6: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Betzalel Ashkenazi. BEYT DAVID I, by YOSEF DAVID, Chief Rabbi of Thessaloniki, 1740, ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-2-13  
 Center: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Betzalel Ashkenazi. DABER MOSHE III by CHAYM MOSHE BEN SHLOMO AMRELIO, 1750, ЦДА, ф.1568К/16Д-1А-07  
 Right: printed in Constantinople, printer Reuben & Nissim Ashkenazi. CHAYA OLAM, by RAFAEL MOSHE BULAH, 1752, ЦДА, ф.1568К/13Г-2-10  
 Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Солуну, штампар Безалел Ашкенази. БЕИТ ДАВИД И, аутор ЈОСЕПХ ДАВИД, главни рабин Солуна, 1740, ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-2-1  
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 7: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Constantinople, printer Avraham Franko. AHAVAT OLAM by SHLOMO BEN AVRAHAM ALGAZI, 1642,ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-2-01  
 Center: printed in Constantinople, printer Yona Ben Yaakov Ashkenazi. PRACHEY SHOSHANIM, by MOSHE BEN ELIYAHU, 1734, ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-4-04  
 Right: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Thalmud Torah. BEER ITZHAK by ITZHAK BEN ELIAHU SHANGI, 1735,ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-2-03  
 Насловне странице књига. Лево: штампано у Цариграду штампар Аврахам Франко. АХАВАТ ОЛАМ би СХЛОМ БЕН АБРАХАМ АЛГАЗИ, 1642,ЦДА, ф.1568К/12Г-2-0  
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 Десно: штампано у Солуну, штампар Талмуд Тора. ПИВО ИТЗХАК би ИТЗХАК БЕН ЕЛИАХ СХАНГИ, 1735,ЦДА, ф.1568К/14Г-2-0  
 8: Title pages of books. Left: printed in Constantinople, printer Reuben & Nissim Ashkenazi. MEGILAT SOFER by BENYAMIN KASIS, 1750, ЦДА, ф.1568К/13Г-2-20

Center: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Betzalel Ashkenazi. ZICHRON DVARIM by AARON BEN CHAYM AVRAHAM HA'COHEN FARCHI, 1753, ЦДА, ф.1568К/15Д-1А-32  
Right: printed in Thessaloniki, printer Klay - Nachman. TZEMAN DAVID I by YOSEF DAVID, Chief Rabbi Of Thessaloniki, 1785, ЦДА, ф.1568К/15Г-2-12  
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### ДЕКОРАЦИЈЕ ШТАМПЕНИХ КЊИГА БАЛКАНСКИХ ЈЕВРЕЈА (XVI–XVIII век)

**Резиме:** Рад прати карактеристике и појаву насловних украшених страница у јеврејским књигама штампаним у Цариграду и Солуну у периоду од 16. до 18. века. Књиге су део богате збирке Софијског државног архива, која је сада у процесу дигитализације. Студија је била усредсређена на мотиве, геометријске композиције и облике, као и на украсе који су коришћени на страницама. Изглед насловних страница анализиран је у три групе:

- Мотиви који представљају Свети ковчег (Арон ха-кодеш);
- Мотиви који представљају Свитак Торе;
- „Хибридне“ слике које представљају и ормарић и свитак

Интеграција дводимензионалних и тродимензионалних слика и амалгам архитектонских облика, орнаменти симбола и геометријских фигура и композиција често су се налазили у издањима књига. Запажен је и спој источњачких и европских мотива.

Резултати су из области историје примењене уметности и графичког дизајна.

**Кључне речи:** јеврејске штампане књиге, XVI-XVIII век, балканска регија, мотиви, геометрија.