Shlomit Menashe

Hebraic Section

African and Middle Eastern Division

July 1, 2021

**Title:** The Burgeoning Hebrew Printing Press in Constantinople

**Infographic Summary**

Seminal works published in 16th century Constantinople illustrate the significance of the Sephardic Hebrew printing press in the early modern period. Facing persecution and expulsion from Spain, many in the Jewish community emigrated from the Iberian Peninsula and sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire. Committed to maintaining their rich Sephardic Jewish customs and traditions, they cultivated a thriving Hebrew printing industry to preserve their own unique Jewish heritage.

**Infographic Transcript Content**

The Burgeoning Hebrew Printing Press in Constantinople

[Timeline]

[Left Bottom]

[*One inset image*: *“Portolan atlas of 9 charts and a world map, etc”, https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3200m.gct00001/?sp=14*]

Geography and Map Division

[*Year set over image:* 1492]

The Spanish Inquisition

The Spanish Jewish community is expelled from Spain, and many find their way to the Ottoman Empire.

[Left top]

[*Two inset images: First pages of the Sefer Abudarham introduction*]

First page of the Sefer Abudarham introduction. Hebraic Section, African and Middle East Division

[*Year set over images:* 1513]

*Sefer Abudarham*

The Printing of the *Sefer Abudarham* represents the Jewish community’s commitment to preserving Sephardic Jewish traditions and customs.

[Right Top]

[*One inset image: page from Gal Shel Egozim* (“A Heap of Nuts”)]

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[*Year set over image:* 1593]

*Gal Shel Egozim*

Doña Reyna Nasi, a member of the famous Nasi family, experienced the expulsion from Spain and many other travails in search of a new home before settling in Constantinople with her family. From her palace in Constantinople, Doña Reyna established a Hebrew printing press known to have printed less than a dozen books, among them this work of Biblical sermons, *Gal Shel Egozim* (“A Heap of Nuts”) Today, all these books are extremely rare.

[Right Bottom]

[*One inset image:* title page of *Toledot Adam ve-Havah* (The History of Adam and Eve”)]

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[*Year set over image:* 1515]

*Toledot Adam ve-Havah*

The intricately carved woodprint on the title page of *Toledot Adam ve-Havah* (The History of Adam and Eve”) first appeared in a Hebrew book printed in Spain and is an example of the cultural transfer wrought by the expulsion.

[Bottom left]

[*Inset image: Library of Congress logo*]

[Bottom right]

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Library of Congress Junior Fellow

Hebraic Section, African and Middle East Division