

Devlet'in Yahudileri ve "Öteki" Yahudi (The State's Jews and the "Other" Jew)

Rifat N. Bali, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003, 479 pp., TL20,000,000)



Rifat N. Bali's detailed research into the recent history of Turkey's Jews also sheds light on the social and political nature of the Republican era. Bali's book examines this period from a variety of different aspects. From a political perspective, the author's examination of the biographies of five prominent Jews – Gad Franko (lawyer), Samuel Izişel (police chief), Mishon Ventura (professor of Roman law), Salomon Adato (lawyer, and the Democrat Party's first non-Muslim MP) and Dr. Samuel Abrevaya (independent MP from the single-party era) – stands out. The biographies of these five men, all of whom were active proponents of the Turkification policies directed towards non-Muslims, shed further insight into the nature and effect of these policies. A section dealing with the reaction shown towards German Jewish scientists exposes the level of discrimination and xenophobia prevalent during the single-party era. The book also examines the dramatic story of the ships carrying Jews who had escaped the Nazi genocide and were trying to make their ways to British-administered Palestine. In the section titled 'Pages from the Archives' Bali deals with the role of Jews in the prostitution business of the early 20th century. The author also examines the much-debated issue of the *Sabatai* Jews.