Printing The Babylonian Talmud in the two printing presses ( 1834 – 1836)

The Babylonian Talmud is the fundamental Jewish creation and the most important in the world of traditional Jewish learning.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Talmud is composed of a huge number of volumes and printing it required complicated and multiple economic and technological means. Along the years many interpretations were attached to the Talmud, and the printers added them to the Talmud editions, therefore its printing turned to be more and more expensive and complicated. It’s important to note that more than a third of the tittles that were printed along the years at Shapira family were tractates of the Talmud, that to teach us how far printing the Talmud was important for the existence of the printing press. [[2]](#footnote-2) Already in the first years of its activity of the Shapira family printing press brought to light the printing of the Talmud (starting from the year 1800). This print was supported financially by the Rebbe from Chabad, Rabbai Shanior Zelman Ben Baruch Melyadi, and accordingly the profits were for most for the Hassidic leader and only the sixth were given to Shapira family. [[3]](#footnote-3)

After selling all copies of the first print Moshe Shapira received from the Rebbe the printing rights [[4]](#footnote-4) and between the years 1808 to – 1813 Shapira Family printing press brought to light an additional edition, which was more luxurious than its preceding one; of the Talmud, this edition was published twice in two adjacent prints( first print 1808 – 1813 , second print 1816 – 1822).

Upon the print of the Talmud in Shapira’s printing press, the two printing presses owners cared to collect authorizations from different rabbis, though them they preserved its copyright. The significance of the authorizations was the prohibition for other Jewish printers to print an additional publication of the Talmud for the period of twenty five year. A type of copyrights in the traditional world that is anchored with the Jewish Halacha, and in this case it was summed in the greatest of the righteous in Hasidism of these days, first of them was Rabbi Shanior Zelman Melyadi who placed the foundation of Chabad Hasidism. [[5]](#footnote-5)

1. Dolgopolski Sergey, What is Talmud? – the art of disagreement, Fordham: 2009.

   Jay M. Harris, Tamud Study, The Yivo Encyclopedia,

   https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Talmud\_Study [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Check: the digitized books treasure for books selling house Winograd – Rosenfeld. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Shanior Zelman Melyadi, Agarot Kudish, Brooklyn: 2012. Page Ramat – Reniv. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Shem, page Shana - Shanz [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. A long discussion of the authorization for the Talmud in the first editions in Slaveita print, check at Marven Hiller above, note 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)