

Introduction: The Holocaust in Greece

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The Holocaust in Greece involved multiple actors. The German invasion in spring 1941 established three occupation regimes: Germans in the strategic areas of central Macedonia, Athens, and Thessaloniki; Italians all over Greece apart from Crete; and Bulgarians in eastern Macedonia and Thrace. For the sizeable Jewish community, these occupations posed a mortal threat. Despite the lack of credible statistics, a generally acknowledged number for the prewar Greek Jewish population is between 72,000 and 77,000, with the Jews from the Dodecanese included, albeit as Italian citizens. Some 50,000 of them resided in Thessaloniki. The majority of these twenty-seven communities were of Sephardic ancestry, speaking mainly *Judezmo* (commonly referred to as Ladino), the rest being Romaniote, the ancient, Judeo-Greek-speaking communities in the Greek world. In 1945, only about 10,000 Jews remained, representing a survival rate of about 13–17 percent, the lowest in the Balkans and among the lowest in Europe.¹

Although Jews had lived in the Hellenic world for many centuries and were an integral part of the country's economic, social, and cultural life, the significance of their decimation stands in inverse proportion to the academic research and public attention it has attracted – until recently. Accordingly, the timing of this volume is no coincidence. The history of the Greek Jews and more specifically of their extermination has never attracted more public and academic interest, in Greece and internationally, as it has now.² This new trend has in fact constituted a scholarly field that did not previously exist despite the isolated

¹ Katherine Fleming, *Greece: A Jewish History* (Princeton University Press, 2009). An indicative list can be found in “The Jewish Victims by Country,” Anne Frank Guide, www.annefrankguide.net/en-US/bronnenbank.asp?oid=20747.

² Paul Isaac Hagouel, “State of Holocaust Research in Greece,” *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Academic Working Group* (November 2016): 4; Henriette-Rika Benveniste, “The Coming Out of Jewish History in Greece,” <http://anciensiteusagespublicsdupasse.ehess.fr/index.php?id=130>; Giorgos Antoniou, “Holocaust Remembrance in Greece, 1945–2004,” *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 24 (2015): 249–272.

efforts of some survivors, novelists and, eventually, scholars.³ Hitherto, the drama of this traumatic period in Greek history has centered on the various resistance struggles against the occupations: the suffering of the civilian population – about 150,000 died in the great famine of 1941 – and the civil war that engulfed the country until 1949.⁴ The Holocaust was treated as a topic among others, like the economy of the occupation or the German Greek policy. Knowledge of the historical facts of the Shoah was contained in studies on the Jewish community in general or ones that examined the Shoah as a part of the Second World War and the Axis occupation.⁵ The main survivor and camp narrative in general Holocaust literature came from the Ashkenazi world; the same is true for the European commemoration activities.⁶ Predominantly Sephardic, the Greek Jewish experience was difficult to integrate in the general view of the Holocaust focused on eastern European Jews and death camps in Poland.

As a novel and still marginal field in Greek historiography, academic research on the Shoah in Greece is relatively limited in quantitative terms, comprising mostly a few articles in international journals and even fewer collective volumes and monographs. The first doctoral dissertation dealing with the Holocaust in Greece submitted at a Greek university was defended only in 2017.⁷ Consequently, the comparatively small number of first-hand accounts (overall about fifty memoirs have been published) have been a crucial and unique source of information for all subsequent scholarly accounts of the Holocaust. These accounts of the genocide were memoirs or historiographical surveys written by the victims themselves, published mainly in the 1970s. Owing to the unpropitious social and political environment, they remained marginal until the 1990s – late compared with other European countries.

The Holocaust in Greece presents the latest research on the Greek Jewish genocide, and represents the first academic collective volume on that topic in the English language. The current volume addresses three long-neglected topics: (1) Jewish–Christian relations before and during the Holocaust; (2) the reestablishment of Jewish life in Greece after the Holocaust, including the restitution of Jewish property; and (3) historical memory and oblivion in dealing with a difficult past and present of Jewish–Gentile relations.

³ The most detailed account of Greek Holocaust historiography belongs to Odette Varon, “The Genocide of Greek Jews,” in *The Era of Confusion*, ed. Giorgos Antoniou and Nikos Marantzidis (Athens: Hestia, 2007), 289–343 (Greek).

⁴ Steven Bowman, *Jewish Resistance in Wartime Greece* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006).

⁵ Bernard Pierron, *Jews and Christians in Modern Greece* (Athens: Polis, 2004) (Greek).

⁶ A plaque commemorating Sephardic suffering was added in Auschwitz as late as 2002.

⁷ Leon Saltiel, “Reactions to the Persecution of the Jews of Thessaloniki, 1942–1943” (PhD diss., University of Macedonia, 2017).

Christian–Jewish Relations

The question of responsibility for the tragic fate of the Greek Jews, apart from that of the Nazis, haunts the subject. Why were Jewish people in Greece exterminated at higher rates than in most other European countries? What was the role of the local population, the Axis collaborators, and the Jewish community itself in this process of extermination? Was Greek society characterized by admirable solidarity towards its Jewish population as many like to suppose?⁸

The uneven distribution of Jewish communities in Greece makes generalization difficult. The Thessaloniki community comprised more than two-thirds of the total Jewish population and its annihilation represented a devastating three-quarters of Greek Jewish victims. While many communities in Greece were rescued at higher rates than European averages, the dire story of Thessaloniki, where no more than five families remained hidden in the city during the occupation, sets the tone.⁹ While assistance and concealment occurred in other cities and resulted in high rates of survival, Greek historiography still has not examined in detail the policies of the pro-Nazi government in Athens or its representatives in local authorities and services, and the armed collaborative groups that assisted the Nazis in various activities: from looting to executions and interrogations.¹⁰

The issue of antisemitism has also attracted increased interest with some scholars stressing that it was ubiquitous in Greek society. This recent trend interprets the extermination of the Greek Jews through the antisemitic sentiments of the Greek population, part of which turned to the Nazis as the *deus ex machina* that would facilitate the settling of old scores.¹¹ What was the nature of Greek prewar and wartime antisemitism? Is it fair to say that antisemitism accurately characterized Greek behavior towards Jews? Some of the authors of this volume stress the poignant traditional Judeophobia mixed

⁸ Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece: The Experience of Occupation, 1941–44* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1993), 259. His later book, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950* (New York: Knopf, 2004), sounds a more critical note about Greeks' treatment of Jews, although it underplays antisemitism in the view of historian Antony Molho. See his review in *Historein* 8 (2008): 145–151.

⁹ Michael Molho and Joseph Nehama, *In memoriam: Hommage aux victimes juives des Nazis en Grèce* (Thessaloniki: Nicolaidis, 1948); Andrew Apostolou “‘The Exception of Salonika’: Bystanders and Collaborators in Northern Greece,” *Holocaust Genocide Studies* 14, no. 2 (2000): 165–196.

¹⁰ USHMM oral collection on Greek Eye-Witnesses, with testimonies recorded in 2014–2016 illuminated the ambivalence in Christian responses to the deportations.

¹¹ The most extreme advocate of this position is Yorgos Margaritis, *Unwanted Compatriots* (Athens: Vivliorama, 2005).

with ethnic tension between Asia Minor refugees and the Jewish working-class population. This view stresses the religious, social, and economic tension between Christians and Jews and its expression in direct antisemitic actions in the interwar and wartime period.

Other authors connect the ambivalence of Christian responses (varying from solidarity to open hostility) with the repercussions of the nationalist agenda. In this view, Greek Jews threatened the aspirational homogenous nation-state, the Greek state's primary aim. The Second World War brought an opportunity to realize the long-desired monoculturalism (Hellenism) through the extermination (Jews), assimilation (Vlachs), evacuation (Chams, Muslims), and oppression (Slavmacedonians) of all kinds of ethnic, religious, or national minorities who had lived in the country for centuries. Despite the fact that levels of involvement and responsibility on behalf of the Greek state varied, these cases were perceived as necessary side-effects, or even positive steps in the national interest.¹²

The dominant views on the issue of responsibility were for years drawn from Jewish reminiscences. Early accounts yielded a popular interpretation of the Shoah that stressed the responsibility of the community's leadership, especially Rabbi Koretz in Salonica, for not resisting Nazi pressure and for failing to warn the people, or even for collaborating with the Nazis. The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki was obliged to remove Koretz's portrait from its collection as a result of bitter reactions by survivors. These views were partly reproduced in the few scholarly works.¹³ As elsewhere in Europe, Koretz and the Jewish Councils offered the perfect scapegoat on which other groups could pin the blame for the catastrophe. "The Jewish traitors are to blame" saga became the major Christian and Jewish narrative to explain what happened and why.

By contrast, the Christian majority avoided addressing its role in actively or indirectly facilitating the Holocaust. The monument in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, newly established in 2015, states vaguely that the ones to blame for the destruction of the Jewish cemetery were "the Nazi forces and

¹² For the Jewish case, see Joshua Eli Plaut, *Greek Jewry in the Twentieth Century, 1913–1983: Patterns of Jewish Survival in the Greek Provinces before and after the Holocaust* (London and Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1996). A synopsis of the intense debate on the Slavmacedonian minority can be found at Basil C. Gounaris, *The Macedonian Issue from the 19th to the 21st Century: Historiographical Approaches* (Athens: Alexandria, 2010) (Greek). Anastasia N. Karakasidou's book *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia, 1870–1990* (University of Chicago Press, 1997) was an influential historical ethnography that offered an analysis of nationalism and ethnic rivalry in Greek Macedonia.

¹³ A thorough and revisionist view on Koretz is Minna Rozen, "Jews and Greeks Remember their Past: The Political Career of Zvi Koretz (1933–1943)," *Jewish Social Studies* 12, no. 1 (2005): 111–166.

their collaborators,” which is for some a misleading statement given that the destruction was implemented by municipality workers. This topic is thoroughly covered in Devin Naar’s recent monograph and in recent articles.¹⁴ In an interesting reversal of collective memory, most mainstream Christian agents seemed to endorse the monument and its message, while some Jewish advocates protested against this “insulting” inscription.

Particular aspects of the above-mentioned questions are treated in this volume. As a southeastern European country, Greece represents a middle ground between what could schematically be called the “western type” and “eastern type” of Jewish Holocaust experience. For most western Jewish communities, the Holocaust was a series of well-organized and punctual deportation acts enforced by the organizational zeal and voluntarism of Nazi officers and their local quisling administrations. Local responses varied in each Greek city, but instances of direct mass violence against Jewish fellow citizens were limited and, mostly, incited or directed by the German occupiers. Although it proved ultimately to be of little significance, some local governments and officials did attempt to apply diplomatic pressure to save Jewish citizens from deportations – at least where the tradeoff between Nazi needs and local administration leverage favored the locals.¹⁵

By contrast, Thessaloniki Jews were deported with virtually no local resistance due to the prioritizing, as far as the Christian authorities were concerned, of Bulgarian territorial threats or, even worse, the local administration’s free-riding on the opportunity to profiteer from valuable Jewish assets. The destruction of the Jewish cemetery is a typical example of how the local authorities capitalized on the prospect of the Jewish catastrophe early in the occupation. Apart from the obvious real estate opportunity for the main beneficiary, Aristotle University, destruction offered the municipality enrichment through donations or selling of the precious marbles and bricks. Beneficiaries of a huge amount of this “construction material” included all leading institutions of the city, the Red Cross, various churches, the municipality, schools, and hospitals. More generally, eyewitnesses confirm and describe the incidents as partially orchestrated by the Nazis and partially spontaneous and extensive looting of movable and immovable Jewish property; obviously,

¹⁴ Devin E. Naar, *Jewish Salonica between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece* (Stanford University Press, 2016); Carla Hesse and Thomas Lacquer, “Bodies Visible and Invisible: The Disappearance of the Jewish Cemetery in Modern Thessaloniki,” *DINI* (2005) (Greek); Leon Saltiel, “Dehumanizing the Dead: The Destruction of Thessaloniki’s Jewish Cemetery in the Light of New Sources,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 42, no. 1 (2014): 11–46.

¹⁵ The failed attempt of a Thessaloniki attorney general to set up a network of forged adoptions of Jewish children was the only systematic attempt by city officials to rescue a group of Jewish fellow citizens. Despite this heroic effort, the plan was denounced and ultimately none of these children escaped deportation.

most of the looters presumed that no one would ever return to reclaim their property. A Jewish journalist reported in May 1946 that less than 5 percent of the 850 returning Jews of the city had been allowed to retake possession of their own homes.¹⁶

Communal Reconstitution and Property Restitution

The drama of survival, community rebuilding, and property restitution presents a set of new research questions. What were the main political, social, cultural, and economic dimensions of this restitution? How were survivors reintegrated to the radically different postwar social reality? How did local societies react to the returning Jews, and to what extent was this reaction related to the wartime attitudes and behavior of parts of local populations? More importantly, what was the fate of Jewish properties and what was the future of Jewish–Christian relations given that this relationship varied from open hostility through mutual distrust to peaceful coexistence?

The massive confiscation of Jewish properties remains the most sensitive issue for obvious reasons, and the postwar Greek state has done little to shed light on it. Restitution and compensation became a highly contested political issue in the immediate postwar years, although they were soon put aside. In certain cases, silence and amnesia about Jewish properties dominated, often for patently practical or political reasons. For instance, the Greek state compensated the Jewish community for the destruction of its large, central cemetery as late as 2011. Only after the legal dispute was resolved did the Aristotle University, which was constructed over the destroyed cemetery, decide to erect two monuments to commemorate the Jewish deportations and the cemetery's wartime destruction.

Other European experiences stress the importance of property confiscation to the overall ambivalence of local societies towards the return of Jews from the concentration camps, and regarding postwar Jewish demands for restitution and compensation. This issue is connected to the wider process of national homogenization during the Second World War, an innovation welcomed by many who were happy to be rid of minorities. The homecoming of Jews in Greece, as elsewhere, was often a transitional phase before they emigrated elsewhere, depending on the social, economic, and political situation they confronted upon return. The postwar reconstruction of Greece did not include any plan for relief and accommodation of the needs of hundreds of returning Jews. Indeed, the Greek state was willing to facilitate the exodus of the survivors and satisfy

¹⁶ As Hal Lehrman noted in his bitter report from Thessaloniki, "Greece: Unused Cakes of Soap," *Commentary*, May 1, 1946; the term referred to Jews returning from the camps.

the pressure groups and personal interests of wartime profiteers, now valuable allies in the anti-communist struggle.¹⁷

Most of the cities with Jewish communities adapted quickly to the Jewish absence after the deportations. This adaptation meant that the returning survivors were regarded as strangers and unwanted contenders for properties that no longer belonged to them as far as the locals were concerned. The Union of Jewish Properties Managers, that is, the people who acquired Jewish stores and apartments from Nazi authorities, with many collaborators among their ranks, numbered more than three thousand members in 1945. Its main purpose was to lobby the government not to implement the new law that promised the immediate return of Jewish properties to their rightful owners, a law never fully implemented. Overall, the postwar reality constituted a hostile environment for returning Jews; migration to Palestine became a priority even for communities with higher rates of survival. Zakynthos (Zante) is characteristic in that respect. Despite the local solidarity that rescued the whole community, the vast majority of Zante Jews gradually migrated to Palestine and other destinations. In Veroia, some 155 (about 25 percent of the prewar community) were rescued mainly by the resistance. Within fifteen years fewer than five families still lived there.¹⁸

Memory

As mentioned above, Greek collective memory held that Greek Christians were in general compassionate and generous towards Jews.¹⁹ The “myth of the good Christian” showing solidarity to Jewish neighbors persists until the present day. It is important, therefore, to deconstruct the layers of different post-Holocaust memories and strategies from the perspective of Jewish victims since the narratives of those rescued by Christian efforts overshadowed the silent majority of those who perished or who survived despite the lack of solidarity. This Christian and Jewish shared narrative served to allow postwar coexistence with returning Jews. Those who did not migrate and remained in Greece developed an identification with the Greek nation-state in order to rebuild communal and social life and avoid social conflict.

The questions of who was to blame for the disaster that befell the Jewish communities of Greece, the level of antisemitism in the country, and what

¹⁷ Yakov Schiby and Karina Lampsa, *Life Starts over Again: The Emigration of Greek Jews in Palestine (1945–1948)* (Athens: Alexandraia 2010) (Greek).

¹⁸ Yiorgos Liolios, *City's Shadows* (Athens: Eurasia, 2008) (Greek).

¹⁹ A dominant view in early Christian accounts of the topic as well. For example, see Polychronis Enepekidis, *The Persecutions of Jews in Greece, 1941–1944: Based on the Secret Archives of the SS* (Athens: Papazisis Publishers, 1969) (Greek).

happened to the returning survivors are present in both memoirs and academic works in a complex web of interaction in which silence plays a crucial role. The classic distinction between collective memory, scholarly research, and politics is blurred. All major places of memory of the Holocaust in Salonika have become a battleground in recent memory politics: the Jewish cemetery, Liberty Square, the Baron Hirsch ghetto area, and the train station whence the Thessaloniki deportations to camps took place. These are significant parts of the city's heritage within a new commemorative culture that strives to remember but, in many cases, also does not acknowledge the specific responsibility of any of the members of past and current authorities and institutions.

Local authorities and their complicity in the Holocaust are currently being reexamined, mainly in the public sphere, through the rise of Greek extreme right-wing radicalism that brings the long-forgotten skeletons of local collaborators out of the closet, a trend that increases the need to research this important topic.²⁰ Public memories, institutional politics, and individual responses of Jews and Christians create a unique opportunity to generate discussion that might produce a new commemorative culture based on the acknowledgement of all problematic dimensions of the disaster that hit the city during the occupation.

The Chapters

The first three chapters deal with the perpetrators and their policy. The opening chapter by Iason Chandrinos and Anna Maria Droumpouki provides a wide and detailed chronicle of the milestones of the Greek Jewish genocide. The authors examine the three occupational zones and the respective differences and similarities; they then provide an account of the destruction of the major Jewish communities. The chapter also examines issues such as the resistance rescue efforts and scrutinizes the existing statistics in terms of the prewar Jewish population and the death toll of the Holocaust.

Mark Levene then examines the Bulgarian policy towards the Jews living in occupied and annexed territory of eastern Macedonia and Thrace. He revisits the Greek Jewish experience and the general Greek response to Jewish expulsion and property expropriations within the context of the region's broader, post-Ottoman history of "unmixing." Levene sees behind the eagerness of Bulgarians to perform their part of the genocidal Nazi plan the wider landscape

²⁰ For example, the mayoral candidate of the self-proclaimed "radical left" SYRIZA party for Thessaloniki, T. Mitafidis, publicly removed the portraits of the two mayors who served the city during the Axis occupation in order to dishonor them as collaborators. In more or less the same period, Mayor Boutaris appeared in the municipality council with a yellow star on his chest to protest against the presence of a Golden Dawn member on the council.

of the ethnonational struggle for the region. The aim of his contribution is to consider how the Axis reach into the southern Balkans between 1941 and 1944 provided the pretext for a renewed bout of competitive, geopolitically aggravated, nation-state-building – only this time inspired by the ideology and methodology of the Nazi vision.

Anthony McElligott examines the tragic fate of Rhodes Jews, deported last from Greece in July 1944. This microhistory of the deportation from Italian soil is in retrospect part of both Italian and Greek Shoah historiography. With new archival material, McElligott illustrates the fundamental driving force behind the deportations. The timing of the deportation raises important questions in relation to contingency and ideology in providing the context and motive for the genocide. This chapter argues that by the summer of 1944, the factor of timing – and the lost war against the Allies – had become the driving force of destruction against the enemy within Germany's grasp: the Jews. This aspect provides the narrative framing for this chapter that also examines other overlooked factors, including intercommunal relations on the island and Greek Dodecanese nationalist aspirations.

The second part of the book is entitled "Collaborators and Victims." It examines the responsibilities of local authorities and the role of rescuers, bystanders, and eyewitnesses of the genocide. It took many decades for the realization to dawn that many "ordinary" individuals were variously involved in the genocide, and that their role was far more significant than previously thought. The next two chapters discuss the Greek administrative collaborators and their policies towards the Jews. Andrew Apostolou connects the course of the Second World War with the policies the Greek collaborationist governments practiced towards Greek Jews. His main point is that these governments sought to secure Greece's national interests, tailoring Jewish policy accordingly. It is the first scholarly attempt to examine the influence of the war on collaborator behavior, thereby granting visibility and agency to the Greek non-Jews. Apostolou's interpretation is confirmed by the significant differences between local authorities and their varying intensity in solidarity and rescue attempts towards their fellow citizens. As such, it restores some power to the hands of these governments and reverses their widespread treatment as the background scenery of the Greek Shoah.

The same approach to local-level agents as a relatively independent force of action is adopted by Leon Saltiel in his investigation of the policies of local elites in Thessaloniki towards the implementation of the "Final Solution." Saltiel highlights the role of local elites as paramount since a large part of the administrative implementation of the deportations passed through their offices. What did they know and what did they hope to achieve by playing an active role in the deportations? Inevitably, Saltiel's chapter raises the issue of complicity of the local leaders, a taboo issue in Thessaloniki to this day.

The next two chapters examine survival outside and inside the camps. Antoniou researches a rare case of a collective rescue of fifty-five Jews of Veroia by a local priest in the village of Sykia rather than by the resistance. Based on fieldwork research and oral history material, he narrates the tension between collaborators, fugitives, and rescuers, and insists that rescue stories are colored by a certain degree of moral grayness for all actors involved. It is this contradiction of the survivor experience that creates the ambivalence of their memories.

Paris Papamichos Chronakis examines the symbolic and social bonds Greek Salonican Jews created in the camps in a desperate attempt to survive. Katherine Fleming first analyzed the meaning of *Greekness* in the camps by studying the transformations of Jewishness and Greekness.²¹ This chapter explores group identity formation and the forging of social networks among Greek Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz-Birkenau, sustained by a preconceived notion of nationality. “Greece” became a boundary-marker, a central category of identification and differentiation inside the Jewish prisoners’ world. Part of a broader reading of the camp universe on the basis of nationality by perpetrators and prisoners alike, it was a self-ascribed group identity designating the group of Salonican Sephardi Jews.

The third part of the book deals with property. Three chapters treat aspects of this story. Maria Kavala has studied more than four thousand declarations of properties signed by Jewish families in 1943. These declarations provide detailed information on the economic status of each family and comprise a unique source for the analysis of social and economic stratification as much as they illuminate the hardships and calamities the community suffered from Nazi racial and financial policies. This study relates the persecution and the violent looting of Jewish property to the utilitarian practices of Nazi Germany, the perpetrators and the bystanders, the collaboration of the Greek state, and the overall functioning of the economy during occupation. It also suggests that Jewish gold seems to have “helped” the Greek economy significantly during the war. Moreover, in Thessaloniki the “Final Solution” and its economic parameters were also connected to “national issues”: Jewish properties fell into the possession of the Greek state but with the official excuse of a social policy to favor the Greek Christian refugees from eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

Stratos Dordanas scrutinizes the Holocaust as a business opportunity for local collaborators. He examines the careers and ideological and financial motivation of infamous collaborators involved in the Jewish deportations. In 1943, the Baron Hirsch quarter in Thessaloniki – chosen because it was located

²¹ Fleming, *Greece: A Jewish History*.

next to the train station – was transformed into a German transit camp where Thessaloniki's Jews were first forcibly enclosed and then deported. After the last deportation in August 1943, the camp was demolished and the materials auctioned off by both private companies and individuals after obtaining German approval. Greed extended to every possible source of profit for a large proportion of the Greek Christian opportunists.

Kostis Kornetis focuses on the social and symbolic dimensions of the appropriation of Jewish properties. He situates the Jewish properties' seizure in a tradition of property exploitation of national or religious "others." Destitution, poverty, and banditry led many Christian inhabitants to extortion, and even to feverishly tearing down the walls of entire buildings to find dowries and goods of social outsiders. Jewish shops, warehouses, and real estate assets across the city suffered the same fate. What happened to the material universe that was violently uninhabited and forcefully reinhabited, and what was the effect in terms of everyday social and economic life, is the subject of continuing research.

The last part of the book, "The Aftermath: Survival, Restitution, Memory," studies the aftermath of the deportations and the ambivalent memories of the destruction in both Christian and Jewish communities. How the community responded to that disaster, in terms of internal ideological and political orientation, is examined by Philip Carabott and Maria Vassilikou. They present the new type of community politics brought about by the involvement of the Jews with the resistance movement and the camp experience. Greek Jews had to reconcile their vastly different experiences of the war years, reconfigure their likewise different prewar identity markers, and strive to present to outsiders an image of unity in as much as the rebuilding of their communities rested on state support. The chapter examines the politics of Greek Jewry in the wake of the Shoah by focusing on property reclamation and relations with the state, the trial and punishment of Jewish collaborators, community reconstruction and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Joint), Zionism and emigration to Palestine, and antisemitism. Challenging the image of unity, the authors argue that the politics of Greek Jewry unfolded along two main strands of vision: the "New Men" called for the rebuilding of a dynamic and visible Jewish life on Greek soil; and the "New Jews" advocated emigration to Palestine ("Eretz Israel").

Devin E. Naar analyzes overseas assistance to the Jewish community of Thessaloniki from US diasporic Sephardic communities. Multiple identities of Salonican, Greek, Greek-American-Jewish, Sephardic roots competed and were recalled to mobilize humanitarian aid and raise interest in the prewar and wartime calamities that Salonican Jews suffered. The aftermath of the story had changed all parties involved. As Naar puts it, Jewish Salonica became the definitive homeland for all Sephardic Jews once it was wiped off the map.

Since then, it has remained a symbol of world Sephardism, despite the demographic and economic decline of the community in its postwar history.

Králová's chapter deals with a key topic of the postwar Holocaust legacy, namely the fate of the Holocaust survivors in the postwar period. Based on several video testimonies Králová analyzes the Jewish survivors' perceptions of identity, Greekness, and Jewish–Christian relations. Focusing on issues such as restitution, the impact of political cleavages in postwar Greece, and emigration, the chapter concludes with an analysis of the Jewish Greek identity that emerged, to a great extent, as a rational choice, during and because of experiences in the Second World War. Becoming mainstream Greek citizens was the best strategy to overcome prejudice and discrimination.

Carla Hesse and Thomas W. Laqueur update their classic article, published in Greek in 2005, which reconstructs the story of the destruction of the Thessaloniki Jewish cemetery in March of 1943 from two perspectives: that of the long history of the mutilation and displacement of dead bodies as a way of erasing or rewriting a past, and that of local Greek–Jewish relations that became increasingly fraught after 1912 when Macedonia became part of Greece. From a broader perspective, the destruction of the Jewish cemetery marks the destruction of the Jewish past of the city; the recent recovery of the memory of the cemetery and its commemoration on the site of the university represents a new stage in the history of both city and national memory, albeit largely relating to the resistance of various forces of oblivion within and outside the university campus.

This volume examines unexplored dimensions of the Holocaust in Greece. It builds on more than twenty years of new research into a previously neglected topic area, and aims to fill an important gap in Holocaust scholarship. Holocaust research on this case has reached a plateau. By addressing major gaps in the literature, such as the role of local administrations in the deportation and the property issues, as well as the return of survivors and rebuilding of Jewish life, the book presents the most current analysis and overview, in any language, of the Holocaust's many dimensions in Greece. The book authors partially revise the dominant line on the Holocaust in Greece, which held that Greek society was not complicit in the rounding up of Jews and the plundering of their assets. Taking into account the significant geographical, demographic, and historical differences between the Thessaloniki Jewish community and the rest of the country, critical investigations into Greek responsibilities and the deconstruction of the myth of the “good” Greek are now the new trend within Greek academia.