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THE IMPACT OF THE HOLOCAUST ON THE JEWS OF GREECE
AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR MUSIC AND LITERATURE

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree

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INTRODUCTION

More has been written about the destruction of Ashkenazic communities during the Holocaust than Sephardic ones, due, to some extent, to their geographical location, their sheer numbers, and the origin of the authors. The communities most often written about were situated in the cultural centers of Europe, and were able to produce scholars and historians who have attempted to interpret the events of the Holocaust. The Sephardim have their intellectuals and historians, but most were not university trained but generally self-educated. Their work, therefore, does not have the same appeal, publicity and impact on the Jewish people.¹

Part of the Nazi myth of world Jewry's attempt at domination was the idea that Jews would assimilate into the local culture in order to take over. However, the Sephardim maintained their own culture, even maintaining their own language or blending it with local dialects, rather than abandoning it altogether. Jews in the Balkans continued to speak Judeo-Spanish and not Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian or Croatian. Jews in Muslim lands often spoke French and Spanish rather than Arabic dialects. But they were Jews and therefore condemned by Hitler nonetheless.

Although the number of Sephardim who suffered the pains of the Holocaust was less than Ashkenazim, their destruction was almost complete. Their story demands retelling in order to heighten the

¹Solomon Gaon and M. Mitchell Serels, Sephardim and the Holocaust (New York: Jacob E. Safra Institute of Sephardic Studies, Yeshiva University, 1987), 5.

awareness that the Holocaust was aimed at all Jews. No Jew was excluded, for the Nazis condemned them all.

Both during and after the Holocaust, many felt the need to respond to the persecution. Various artistic genre were employed to tell their story and express their feelings. I have chosen to look at music and poetry written by Greek Jews who endured Nazi persecution in one form or another. Included is an historical overview, which provides a context of the music and poetry as well as a chronological description of a community of Jews often ignored by Holocaust research.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This section will provide a brief overview of the Jews of Greece from their arrival to Greece in the third century B.C.E. leading up to the German occupation of Greece in the 1940s, including the deportation of the Jews of Greece to annihilation camps in Eastern Europe. It is important to include this historical overview not only to gain perspective on the mindset of the Jews of Greece under German occupation and what influenced them to record their experiences in poetry and song, but also to learn about a Jewish community of which many people remain ignorant.

The first literary evidence recording a Jewish presence within the current national confines of the Greek state [see map in Appendix II] dates from the third century B.C.E. The first Greek Jew known by name is "Moschos, son of Moschion the Jew," a slave mentioned in an inscription dated approximately 300-250 B.C.E., found at Orupus, a small state between Athens and Boeotia. Further growth of the Jewish community probably occurred as a result of the Hasmonean uprising when a large number of Jews were sold into slavery.² During the Hasmonean period, the Jews spread to the important cities of the state. According to a list of cities in I Maccabees 15:23 (probably dated to the year 142 B.C.E.), it seems that Jews already lived in Sparta, Delos, Samos, Rhodes, Kos and Cyprus.³ Jews apparently arrived in newly-founded Greek cities, such as Salonica, from Palestine, Alexandria or Antioch.⁴

²Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Greece."

³Ibid.

⁴Nikos Stavroulakis, "The Jews of Greece," (Athens: The Jewish Museum of Greece, 1984), 2.

A Greek inscription from 140 B.C.E. states that Jews arrived to Salonica from Egypt. A Roman decree from 142 B.C.E. announces the renewal of a pact of friendship between the Roman Senate and the Jewish people of Rhodes, while a Greek inscription from 140 B.C.E. records the arrival of Jews to Salonica from Egypt.⁵ The oldest members of the Jewish community were the Greek-speaking Jews known as "Romaniotes."

"Greek identity" exerted a strong assimilative effect upon the many ethnic groups who entered into the Greek sphere of influence, often resulting in the abandonment of former ethnic identity. The Jews, too, adopted the Greek language, mores, and lifestyle, while simultaneously contributing to the development of Greek civilization through their particular skills. Contrary to other ethnic groups, however, they demanded the right to practice their ancestral religion and retain their own identity.⁶

Little is known of Jews living in Greece from the period stretching from the destruction of the Second Temple to the Middle Ages. After 70 C.E., Judaism entered a period of crisis that is reflected in the rapid growth of Christianity and a growing rift between Jews and gentiles as a consequence. What is clear is that Jewish communities existed in Greece and that they continued to be faithful to the tradition of Judaism.⁷ In the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela, a Spanish Jew, recorded observing Jewish communities during his famous journey through Greece. He not only mentions the names of specific communities but also provides details about conditions of life and the

⁵Martin Gilbert, The Holocaust: Maps and Photographs (New York: Braun Center for Holocaust Studies, and Martin Gilbert, 1992), 6.

⁶Stavroulakis, 2.

⁷Ibid.

economy.⁸ At that time, the Jews were mainly involved in textile production, especially silk. Three centuries later, in 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella expelled the Jews from Spain. The Sultan Beyazid II of Turkey invited the Jewish refugees to settle in the Ottoman Empire. Embracing his offer, thirty thousand Jews arrived in Salonica, while others settled in Adrianople, Constantinople, Smyrna and Rhodes. The Iberian Jews were so proud of their heritage that it was not long before they forced their Sephardic culture upon the Romaniote Jews. Along with language, the Romaniote Jews in these cities also came to adopt the Sephardic liturgical *minhag* and became, for all intents and purposes, Sephardim.⁹ Elsewhere, Romaniote Jews continued to live in their own communities, including Patras, Arta, Janina, Tripolis and Larissa. By the eighteenth century, however, Sephardic *minhag* came to replace *minhag* Romania almost everywhere in Greece.¹⁰

Under Ottoman rule (1453-1912), the Jews of Salonica enjoyed prosperity, and never assumed the scapegoat role typically ascribed to East European Jews. The port of Salonica became virtually a Jewish city whose businesses were even closed for the Jewish Sabbath. When the Greek Army entered Salonica in 1912 in order to take it over, King George of Greece declared that Jews and all other minorities were to have the same rights accorded the Greek population. Salonica, with a population of 60,000 Jews which outnumbered the Greeks, became an integral part of Greece. The Jews were not happy about Salonica's incorporation into the Greek state mostly for commercial reasons. They feared that the Greek boundaries into which Salonica was to be inserted

⁸Ibid., 4

⁹Ibid., 4

¹⁰Ibid., 6

would inhibit their freedom of trade activity. In addition, they opposed the idea of a Greek administration, supposing that their commercial expansion into the former Ottoman territories would be eliminated.¹¹

Between 1917 and 1935, Salonica experienced a mass migration of its Jewish population in the wake of several natural disasters and riots. In 1917, an enormous fire destroyed most of Salonica, leaving ten thousand Jews homeless and destroying thirty-two synagogues, as well as nearly every Jewish school, cultural center and library. Following this disaster, many Jews emigrated to Palestine, France and Latin America, so that by 1922, only half of Salonica's population was Jewish. In addition, between 1932 and 1934, nearly ten thousand Jews left Salonica to find new homes in Palestine. In spite of this decline in population, Jews continued to maintain a high stature in the economic activity of the city.

With the outbreak of World War II, Greece followed a policy of "practical neutrality," which meant that its neutrality would last until it was forced into conflict. However, from the start, its interests made it partial towards the Allies. Mussolini became interested in acquiring land in the Balkans for both historical and economic reasons. Acquiring land in the Balkans would complete Italy's unachieved war aims of 1915-1918; Italy would gain the copper and bauxite mines of Yugoslavia; and the acquisition of northern Greece would round out the Italian Empire in the Mediterranean. Germany continued to insist that Italy postpone its invasion of Greece because Hitler feared an Anglo-Russian alliance. When Germany invaded Romania without informing

¹¹Ariel Mihael, "The Jewish Community of Salonica: From Glory Days Under the Ottoman Empire to its Destruction in World War II," presented (ca. 1991), Special Collections, United States Holocaust Museum, Washington, D.C.

Italy, Mussolini became so furious that he secretly planned to invade Greece. Upon hearing of Italy's plan, Hitler decided to allow the Italians to move forward with their plans so long as Crete was included. In that way, he figured, Britain would be prevented from establishing a base from which to bomb the Romanian oil fields. When Italy ultimately failed, Hitler expressed his anger and unwillingness to help Mussolini.

Mussolini declared war on Greece in October, 1940 when the total Jewish population in Greece numbered approximately seventy thousand. Thousands of Jews, fulfilling their national duty as Greek citizens, marched to Albania to fight in the war and contributed to the defeat of Italy. As the historian Joseph Matsas maintains:

Jewish soldiers had a highly patriotic spirit and fought the invaders fiercely, fighting as Greeks for their country's defense and as Jews for the defeat of Fascism and anti-Semitism. Their fighting spirit and participation in dangerous missions earned them the admiration of their officers and shot down the myth, created by anti-Semites and fanatical bigots, that Jews were cowards in the face of war.¹²

There was no doubt that Jews were dedicated to the Greek state and were willing to sacrifice their life for its survival, despite the fact that they continued to identify themselves as a distinct religious group. One battalion of the 50th Regiment was even called "the Cohen Battalion" because of the numerous Jewish fighters who served in its ranks. It has been estimated that approximately four thousand Jews fought in the battles that took place in Albania. Jewish casualties were significant in number and a testimony to their bravery. Two hundred sixty-eight Jewish soldiers either fell on the battlefield or died in

¹²Joseph Matsas, "The Participation of the Greek Jews in the National Resistance, 1940-1944," presented at the cultural center of the Jewish Community of Athens, Athens, 2 October 1982, The Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora 17, no. 1, (1991): 56.

hospitals as a result of injury. Those mutilated as a result of bombings and, especially frostbite, numbered 138. All survivors of war were taken directly to the crematoria by the Nazis.¹³

In December 1940, Hitler issued orders for "Operation Marita," by which German troops would attack Greece from the Bulgarian border. On April 23, 1941, Greece surrendered to the Axis.¹⁴ The Germans proceeded with preparations for the final solution in the regions they controlled. They started with Salonica.

The Jewish community of Salonica was tightly organized. It maintained its own police, fire and sanitation departments, as well as schools, hospitals and philanthropic organizations. The delegates to the Community Council were elected by the community, and there was a separate Rabbinical Council in charge of religious affairs. Economically, the Jewish community was well balanced in that there was no excessive number of any single profession. Many Jews were petty shopkeepers, but the bulk of the community was as their ancestors had been, peddlers, craftsmen, and manual laborers. Therefore, it would seem that standard German propaganda used elsewhere in Europe about Jewish "influence" and "infiltration" had no relevance whatsoever in Salonica.

Anti-Semitism, as understood by the Germans, had no place in Greece. Rosenberg, Reich Minister of Occupied Eastern Territories, found in 1941, "for the average Greek there is no Jewish question. He does not see the political danger of world Jewry."¹⁵ An anti-Semitic

¹³Ibid., 56-7

¹⁴Mark Mazower, Inside Hitler's Greece: The Experience of Occupation, 1941-1944 (London: Yale University Press, 1993), 15.

¹⁵Ibid., 257-8.

movement existed only in Salonica. The National Union of Greece, an anti-Semitic movement, was responsible for an anti-Jewish pogrom in a Jewish neighborhood of Salonica in the 1930s. It was stimulated by economic rivalries dating back generations and by the language gap separating Ladino-speaking Jews from the Greeks. In large part, its popularity was limited and its actions were officially rejected by the King and the Greek political establishment. A possible reason for the lack of anti-Jewish sentiment in Greece was the fact that Salonican Jews blended into the new reality and did not create any problems for a Greek state which was desperately trying to find its national identity.¹⁶

On April 9, 1941 German units entered the port of Salonica. [see Appendix I for chronological overview of the Holocaust in Greece] In the first weeks of the occupation the Germans closed down all Jewish newspapers and encouraged local anti-Semites to paste anti-Jewish notices on cafes, taverns and shops. Jewish families were put out of their homes to make room for German lodgers.¹⁷ During these early days of German occupation, the Jewish community was disorganized because eight of its Council leaders and many others had been arrested. Yet for over a year nothing occurred to give any indication of the devastation to follow. Until July, 1942, no specific anti-Jewish regulations were enacted, though there were occasional cases of assault, arrest and execution of Jews, as well as economic distress. A false sense of security spread nevertheless.

Persecution began in a disguised form. On July 1, 1942, the Wehrmacht commander of northern Greece announced that he had

¹⁶Mihael, 11.

¹⁷Mazower, 238.

decided to mobilize the community's Jewish population for civilian labor, and ordered all adult males in Salonica between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to gather (ironically) in *Elefthena* (Freedom) Square on July 11 to register for work. As the Jews registered, they were deliberately humiliated in front of crowds gathering to watch. Ten thousand men were kept standing in the sun for hours. They were forbidden to wear hats (it was Saturday) and were forced to do physical exercises. Many collapsed from the heat and were then kicked, beaten and doused with water.¹⁸

The first group of two thousand workers was sent to various work camps in Greece to improve the roads and drain swamps, and to build fortifications. Their daily ration was ten ounces of bread, watery soup, and no meat or even salt. They did hard labor for twelve to fourteen hours each day in the heat of summer in mosquito-infested areas. They suffered from swollen feet, sunstroke, dysentery and malaria. Men died by the hundreds. The Jewish community tried to send food and clothes, but most of the supplies did not reach them. Women and children were left at home to deal with the deprivation and starvation that the Nazi restrictions and occupation had caused.

A joint commission formed, comprised of members of the Jewish Council, the Germans and the contractors. Exemptions from labor were granted for married men, disabled war veterans and elders; and German authorities issued guarantees that sanitary conditions would improve.¹⁹ The Jewish community then tried to ransom the men held captive for forced labor. After negotiations, the Germans initially set the price for

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 238-9.

¹⁹ David F. Altabe, "The Holocaust in Salonica," in Sephardim and the Holocaust (New York: Yeshiva University), 77.

release at two billion drachmas but then raised it to 3.5 billion drachmas - many times more than the community could afford. With the Jews unable to pay, the Germans offered the following solution: they would provide the Jewish community with one billion drachmas for the right to expropriate the Jewish cemetery, whose stones would be used for military purposes. The Rabbinical Council met and decided against using the cemetery in exchange for money. Ultimately, the Germans extracted 2.5 billion drachmas from the Jews by imposing a tax on the community and from contributions made by Salonican Jews living in Athens.²⁰ The Salonican Jews truly believed that the Germans would set their captives free if given the ransom money. Of course, the Germans never had any intention of releasing them.

Following the registration decree, Jews found support from all segments of the Greek population, ranging from resistance groups to ordinary citizens. Unlike the East European resistance groups who were either hostile or indifferent to the Jews, the Greek People's Liberation Army was ready and willing to help the Greek Jews. These resistance fighters were called *andartes*. They moved often, living in the forests, mountains, and fields of Greece. In May, 1943 there was estimated to be seventeen thousand *andartes*.²¹ Their activities included encouraging villagers not to turn over weapons to the Axis and not to fill food and grain orders. As well, they cheered British POW's as they passed by, hid and cared for British soldiers, and participated in sporadic acts of sabotage against their enemies' supplies and buildings. At first, the Nazis were not troubled by the *andartes*, but as they grew in number

²⁰Ibid., 78.

²¹Ibid., 85.

and power, the Axis started killing prisoners, burning villages, and shooting suspected members. The Germans, however, did not distinguish between guerillas and civilians. In October, 1941, for instance, the Germans shot a total of 488 civilian hostages and seized 164 in the German zone around Salonica.²²

Civilians helped Jews as well. Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens led a number of protests by Greek professionals against the puppet Greek government and the Nazis. He publicly called upon the Greek people to open their homes to their Jewish compatriots and thousands of Greeks responded, welcoming Jews into their homes and sharing their rations. Damaskinos himself was responsible for hiding 250 Jewish children in Christian homes. As well, he ordered priests to tell their congregations to help the Jews.²³ By in large, there was little outward support for Jews among the Greek population of Salonica. While some Salonican citizens endangered their lives in order to protect their Jewish friends and neighbors, the general attitude was indifference at best. This can be attributed mainly to the self-contained character of the Salonican Jews. While Jewry in southern Greece was more or less assimilated into the Greek way of life, the Jews of Salonica continued to retain most of their traditions and customs, setting themselves apart from the general population. They felt capable of resisting assimilation because of their large numbers and their ability to maintain good relations with the Greek political establishment. As a result, the majority of Salonicans resented them, and Nazi policies against Jews increased discord between Jews and Salonicans.²⁴

²²Ibid., 89.

²³Steven Bowman, "Jews in Wartime Greece," Jewish Social Studies XLVII, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 56.

²⁴Mihael, 17-18.

Although the Nuremberg Laws were not implemented until July, 1942, in the winter of 1941, twenty thousand Jews died of starvation in Salonica. Since the German invasion, food supplies had become scarce and the cost of basic necessities had risen sharply. Furthermore, the invasion had deprived Greece of its normal produce exchange of dried fruits, tobacco and olive oil for wheat. The German troops brought no food or living supplies with them. They took whatever they needed from offices, homes, and restaurants; and they lived in homes rather than camps. German businesses forced Greek companies to sell their warehouse stock and products at prewar or ridiculously-low prices. The alternative was to be charged with sabotage and have property confiscated.²⁵

Famine conditions prevailed throughout Greece. The islands, cut off from the mainland, usually acquired one-third of their food from fishing, and two-thirds from imports. But during the German occupation, fishing was prohibited, boats were sunk, and imports shrank to almost zero. Many Greeks believed that behind the starvation was a German plan to exterminate their entire race systematically. In reality, there was no deliberate German plan of extermination, but neither were the Germans prepared to help the starving Greeks. The Germans were concerned only with their own welfare and that of their expanding nation. Goods were still exported from Greece to help the Reich war effort, even during the worst months of famine.²⁶ The Nazis prevented Jews as well from receiving their share of food and medicine from shipments sent by the British. The Axis officials saw to it that as

²⁵Ibid., 23-25.

²⁶Ibid., 45-47.

little as possible was distributed to the Jews. In Salonica, Jews received only five percent of the share to which they were entitled.²⁷

From the onset of the invasion of Greece, there was conflict between Italy and Germany: Italy was completely opposed to the German policy toward the Jews. Berlin constantly demanded that Rome discipline the "Jew-friendly" officers in the field.²⁸ Mussolini responded with vague promises to visiting Nazi officials. However, when Mussolini learned of the true destination of the deported Jews, he signaled approval of the humanitarian behavior of his officers and diplomats, agreeing that the persecution and killing of Jews was "incompatible with the honor of the Italian Army."²⁹

Aware of Italy's opposition to the deportations, hundreds of Jews fled to the Italian-occupied zone with the assistance of Italian diplomats and soldiers. The Italians granted full equality to all residents under their control and extended special protection to those Jews who managed to escape from the Germans. They provided refugees with food and housing, and even organized schools and recreation for the children.³⁰ In 1943, when Italy surrendered to the Allies and the German troops took control of Greece in its entirety, Italian protection of Jews disappeared. When Italy surrendered, Italian troops helped the resistance movement by providing additional guns, men, arms and psychological encouragement.³¹

German operations against the Jews of Greece followed a different pattern than those in Eastern Europe. No single Jewish

²⁷Alexandros Kitroeff, "Documents: The Jews of Greece, 1941-1944. Eyewitness Accounts," The Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora XII, no. 2, (Fall 1985): 11.

²⁸Alfred Lipson, "The Overlooked Holocaust: Sephardim in Europe," Midstream (October 1993): 27.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Mazower, 148.

quarter was set up to house all the Jews, but several areas were marked off in those districts largely inhabited by Jews. Camouflaging their intent, the German authorities maintained the pretext that the new system would facilitate the reorganization of the Jewish community along somewhat autonomous lines, independent of the city. By the time the Germans arrived in Salonica, the Jews had maintained autonomy for many years. However, the Nazis disbanded this. While a Jewish mayor, Jewish chamber of commerce, and Jewish police force were to be organized, the real object of these new provisions gradually emerged to reveal something far from autonomy. In fact, it was thought that if the Jews were isolated, they could be despoiled with greater ease; and having been despoiled, they could be annihilated all the more easily.

Three ghettos were established in Salonica. [see Appendix II] One was ironically called Baron Hirsch, the name of the noted philanthropist who had supported Jewish colonization. Supposedly, the Jews of Salonica were being relocated to work in the fields of Poland. General Stroop issued a "solemn" promise that the Jews would not be harmed, but that for security reasons they would be transferred to the beautiful city of Krakow, where the Jewish community was "waiting to receiver them with open arms." In Krakow, they were told, they would be given spacious apartments and good jobs, but they would need Polish zlotys to get settled. The ruse worked. The Jews lined up for weeks to exchange their gold, jewelry and other valuables for the worthless Polish currency that the Germans had prepared.³² Of the forty-eight thousand Salonican Jews sent to Auschwitz, forty-five thousand were gassed there. Another fifteen thousand Jews from other Greek cities

³²Lipson, 26.

were killed at Auschwitz as well. The Nazis murdered ninety percent of Greek Jewry, which falls second to that of Polish Jewry.

In October, 1944, the Allied and Greek forces liberated Salonica. Greek records estimate that 1,950 Salonican Jews returned to find their homes taken over, their property looted, their synagogues demolished and their cemetery still used as a quarry. Jewish life in Salonica was devastated. The Jews' religious, educational, and cultural establishments were destroyed. Their rabbis, teachers and wealthy merchants were lost in the Holocaust. The survivors tried to rebuild their life anew on the scarce remains.

In 1991, there were a mere thirteen hundred Jews living in Salonica. The Monastiriotes Synagogue survived and is used as the main house of prayer. The Shaoul Modiano home for senior citizens, (founded in 1932) has been restored. An elementary school and a community center exist as well.³³ However, the old glory of Jewish Salonica is forever buried in the ashes of Auschwitz, Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen. With the surviving few now emigrating to Israel and the United States, Salonica -- once the center of European Sephardic culture, the "Mother of Israel," the "Jerusalem of the Mediterranean" -- will be gone forever.

Yet out of the ashes, creativity emerged. In the following section, I will mine the musical and poetic responses produced by that generation of Greek Sephardim affected by the Holocaust. Their artistic expressions offer an historical record in its own right -- one of beauty and pathos combined to enlighten future generations of this sad chapter in the Jewish past.

³³Mihael, 19.

ANALYSIS OF MUSIC AND POETRY

The frightening cattle cars, the endless files, the dying screams in the gas chambers, the burning fires in the open pits and crematoria, and the chimneys robbing the final resting place of the dead will remain forever engraved in the survivors' memories. No longer will the Jews be mute. They will transmit through literary compositions, painting, music, and other artistic means the message of the Holocaust in order to prevent the occurrence of more such catastrophes for Jews and gentiles alike.³⁴

Both during and after the Holocaust, Jews sought to express their feelings through artistic means of every kind. Traditionally, scholars have focused on the Ashkenazic experience, writing of the literary and musical remains of Jews of Eastern Europe to understand how Jews reacted to the horrors perpetrated against them by the Nazis. Here, I take a different tack. I seek to understand Sephardic Jews' artistic responses to the Holocaust, focusing in particular on the Jews of Greece.

In this section, I will examine five songs written by Greek Jews during the Holocaust; the melodies of all but one derive from pre-existing Judeo-Spanish or Greek folk songs. Also, I will study an additional song written as a response to the Holocaust in the years following the war. Besides music, I will analyze five poems written by Greek Jews; one of these poets writes from direct experience with the Nazi persecutions; the others were born in Salonica, but moved before the outset of World War II.

³⁴Isaac Jack Levy, And the World Stood Silent: Sephardic Poetry of the Holocaust (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 25.

ANALYSIS OF MUSIC

(See Appendix III for musical examples)

1. Sephardic Jews who composed songs in the concentration camps often set new words to old and familiar melodies. One such example is "A Little Jewess I Was." This melody derives from a Greek pastoral song "I Was a Little Shepherd."³⁵ The text is found in the book And the World Stood Silent by Isaac Jack Levy, and I learned of the melody by listening to Alberto Nar during a testimony interview recorded on a tape housed at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Alberto Nar claims to have heard the song from his mother, a native of Greece, who sang it at Auschwitz. According to Mr. Nar, the song was sung exclusively by women.

The author of the poem is recounting her story: forced to wear a yellow star of David, taken to Poland, shaved hair, "sanitized" in showers, forced labor and beaten. It is a story of fear and pain.

The melody is very simple and repetitive, which adds a plaintive quality to the whole. The lamenting quality of the melody seems to mirror the meaning and sadness of the text. This particular song falls into a genre of folk song called *Miroloyia*, laments for the dead. These songs are sung exclusively by women. The melodies are usually short and repetitive, the meters are never asymmetric and the fifteen syllable text lines are usually improvised.³⁶ This would seem to depict the dismal grayness of Poland for Jews during World War II. Today, the popular Greek pastoral is considered very nationalistic and may be heard regularly on Greek radio before the news. Perhaps, the use of a

³⁵Alberto Nar, interview by Gila Flam, March 1990. Tape recording, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.

³⁶Grove Dictionary of Music, 1980 ed., s.v. "Greece."

familiar melody conjured up happier times for the Jews in their Greek homeland. Another explanation for using the known melody was the irony involved in using an upbeat Greek folk song for telling such a horrible story. The Jews felt safe in Greece and their lives changed the moment the Germans entered Greece, and their Greek friends and neighbors did not help them at all.

2. Songs about historical events constitute a large portion of the repertory of the Greeks. Prominent among these are the Kleftic songs which tell of the heroic efforts of *Kleftas*, a group of resistance fighters who battled the Turks in the War of Independence (1821-1829). Kleftic songs were not sung by the *kleftas* alone, but also by the peasants. The *Kleftas* were in a power struggle with the authorities and transformed this into a moral conflict. This defiant attitude legitimized the unruly behavior of the *Kleftas* in the eyes of the peasants. Yet while the peasants feared and admired the *Kleftas*, they also recognized themselves in the songs to a certain extent.³⁷ Perhaps they were able to support the *Kleftas'* ideals without actually participating in acts of protest. The use of this genre in the context of the Holocaust thus seems itself to be a form of passive resistance against the Nazi persecutions. The *kleftic* songs were usually unmeasured, accompanied heterophonically by an instrumental ensemble of clarinet, violin and guitar.³⁸ One such Klefta song was arranged in Auschwitz by inmates from Salonica about their experience during the German occupation of Greece, and is found in the book And the World Stood Silent. It was given to the author by Dmitri N. Molfetas, the former President of American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece. Like "A Little

³⁷Riki van Boeschoten, "Myth and History in Greek Folk Songs Related to the War of Independence," in The Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora 13, no. 3-4, 131-132.

³⁸Grove Dictionary of Music, 1980 ed., s.v. "Greece."

Jewess I Was," the melody was sung by Alberto Nar in an interview found in the archives at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Pitch Dark is Our Life" is based on a Greek folk song called "The Song of Thieves."

The melody of "Pitch Dark is Our Life" is simple with an A B A B form. It is in a minor mode, which conforms to the common linking of minor mode melodies with sad themes or feelings. Its fast tempo is perhaps related to the fast-paced life of the resistance fighters and *Kleptas*. As well, it may also be related to the speed in which the Germans occupied Greece and took control, or the anxiety which many Jews felt under Nazi control.

The text of the original Klefta song and its innovative Auschwitz version have many similarities. The original Greek song described the Kleftas and their way of life: "How dark is our life. We eat bitter bread and we are always fighting." Likewise, the Auschwitz version is translated: "How dark is our life. We eat our bread in fear and we walk in fear." The Jews' words, unlike those of the *Kleptas*, evoke a sense of passivity. I believe that this poem is intended to be the voice of the Jewish people. They lived in fear of death, and they felt that their imprisonment was unjustified, as exemplified in the following lyrics:

"I didn't steal, didn't steal or kill."
 "A little Jewess I was; for this they jailed me and locked me up in
 Auschwitz."

Both versions appear in Greek. This is significant because it demonstrates just how immersed the Jews were in Greek life. Perhaps the women chose to compose in Greek because it reminded them of happier times in Greece. As well, speaking Greek may have been a way to distance themselves from the reality with the Nazis.

3. The Romance attained a place of prominence in the Spanish-Jewish communities as a musical genre. As Jews settled outside of Spain, it became one of the touchstones of Sephardic culture, revealing a continuous link to Spanish roots. In fact, the Spanish ballad was well-preserved in the literature of the exiled Jews.³⁹

A group of Sephardic Jews interned at Auschwitz wrote the poem "In Polish Lands" to the popular Judeo-Spanish romance song "*Arvoles Yoran Por Lluvia*." The poem is found once again in the book And the World Stood Silent and was given to the author by Salomon and Renee Bivas and Haim and Esther Rafael, members of the *Grupo de los Rescatados de los Campos de Alemania* (Group of Liberated Inmates from German Camps). This group, was known as Koro Saloniko during their internment in Auschwitz.

The melody is written in a major key and is melismatic, which is characteristic of the Spanish musical tradition. The major mode is often connected with cheerful themes. However, this text is very mournful. In fact, the original text is a lament for a lost love. The melody, although in a major key, takes on the mournful quality that the text exudes, which makes it a fitting choice for the Holocaust text. Congruent with the original text, the Holocaust version is also a lament, not for a sweetheart but for the poet's homeland. The Jews were very established in Greece. It is significant that the Jews of Greece longed not for Zion, but for Greece. They were obviously comfortably ensconced in their "new" homeland.

4. "*La Vida de los Djudios en 1944*" offers us one of the few examples of both an original poem and original accompanying melody composed by Sephardic

³⁹Shmuel Rafael, "The Judeo-Spanish Romance: The Characteristics and Uniqueness of the Genre in Salonica," Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Review 15, no. 2, (1993): 19.

inmates of German concentration camps. Violette Mayo Fintz, who was born on the Island of Rhodes composed "La Vida.." with her sister. It is included in Isaac Jack Levy's book And the World Stood Silent and was provided personally by Violette Mayo Fintz.

The text, written in Ladino, is story-like and gives a recounting of the horrific Greek-Jewish experience, recounting being forced from their homes and their experience in the concentration camps, with its accompanying hunger and death. The words are very blunt and harsh. They do not try to gloss over anything or make it easier for people to hear. The form of the poem is interesting because its repetition causes the reader or listener to picture a death march. The first line of each stanza is a repetition of the last line of the previous one.

The melody once again is very simple and takes an A B form. It is written in a major mode and, not surprisingly, is very mournful. One can almost hear the sadness pouring from the notes. The melody centers around the third in the key. This would make it more modal, which is a typical feature of Mediterranean music. The song is characteristic of a Mirololya folk song -- short, repetitive, and sung exclusively by women.

5. Another original composition--both melody and text--is "*Siete Dias*." David Chaim, a Holocaust survivor from Salonica who now resides in Tel Aviv, wrote "*Siete Dias*" while interned at Auschwitz. The melody is found in the collection "זר-של שירי עם מפי יהודי ספרד" ("Foreign Nationalist Songs of the Sayings of the Sephardic Jews"). The melody is very modal, possibly Phrygian, and follows an A A¹ pattern. The syncopated rhythm is very melismatic, which is characteristic of Mediterranean music. The syncopation adds much to the mournful melody, emphasizing certain words and syllables and giving

the melody almost a wailing quality. The tempo of this song, much like the others, makes it very mournful as well.

The text, also written by David Chaim of Salonica, is in Ladino. The original Ladino text and an English translation can be found in Isaac Jack Levy's book And the World Stood Silent. The poem is almost like a letter written to the author's family. Chaim seems to envy his mother for dying in her country, and he laments that his father died in the crematorium:

My dearest mother,
you were fortunate
in dying in your country
and not passing through the chimney.

My dearest father,
who would have told you
that you would come with your brother
to the crematorium of Auschwitz!

In the last stanza the author prays that he will survive the camps if only to say Kaddish for his family.

6. Songs confronting the Holocaust experience have been written and appeared following World War II. Decades after her family perished at the hands of the Nazis in Yugoslavia, Flory Jagoda began to compose poetry and melodies in order to preserve and pass on her family's tradition of Ladino music and songs. Flory Jagoda grew up in the Sephardic tradition in Sarajevo, Bosnia in a musical family. Of the entire Altarasa family, only she survived the Holocaust. Her family settled for short stints in Turkey and Greece on their journey from Spain before eventually settling in Sarajevo, Bosnia. Therefore, her music is included in this analysis. Her family's music was influenced by the sounds of Greece, and these sounds became a part of their history as well. Recently, Flory returned to her home in Sarajevo in an attempt to find out what happened to her family and community. She spoke with many who were

ignorant of what happened to the Jews and others who simply refused to speak with. She finally found a journalist to assist her. The journalist took Flory and her husband to an old farm on a hill to speak with the owner. The farm owner recalled a rainy day when his dog brought him several bones that appeared to be human. When the farmer went to investigate, to his horror he found a mass grave on his land. From this, Flory Jagoda surmised the fate of her family and relatives.⁴⁰

After her visit she wrote a song called "*Todos si Hueron*" ("They Are All Gone"). The song has a Spanish flair and is accompanied by the guitar, with very sparse notes. The whole song takes an A B A B pattern. The melody is very melismatic, much like the Spanish musical tradition. The last note of each phrase is the longest, and it is held while the guitar plays a melismatic pattern.

The text, written in Ladino, lists various daily activities, and questions how they will be performed with no one to do them. It conveys a sense of emptiness and solitude. The text repeats three times the line "where have they all gone?" and twice the line "they are all gone." It is as if the singer is slowly growing accustomed to this reality and so keeps repeating the lines to herself to try and make herself believe the horror of it. This repetition combined with the melody makes a very profound impact on the listener.

Irene Heskes writes in her book, Passport to Jewish Music:

The songs of the period are like old faded and torn photographs, dimmed and damaged likenesses from the past. They must be viewed in the context of their creative origins and the circumstances of expression, as symbols of unfinished lives and shattered continuities. In a sense, they

⁴⁰Ms. Flory Jagoda, interview by author, Tape recording, Falls Church, Virginia, 14 June 1995.

may also be viewed as a form of protest and an eloquent if muted echo of voices resistant to spiritual destruction.⁴¹

The songs studied in this section, represent the voices of the survivors as well as the victims. The survivors tell of their experience in order to preserve the memories of those who did not survive and also to tell of an horrific event in history so that future generations will learn from these stories in order, it is hoped, to prevent another Holocaust from occurring.

⁴¹Irene Heskes, Passport to Jewish Music: Its History, Traditions, and Culture (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994), 160.

ANALYSIS OF POETRY

(See Appendix IV for poetic examples)

Many Greek Holocaust sufferers and survivors chose poetry as their medium for expression. As the scholar Isaac Jack Levy writes:

The concern that dominates Holocaust poetry is the impassioned need of the survivors and of the authors to give expression to their inner conflicts. On the one hand, they long to forget the expulsion, dispersion, oppression, and extermination of their brothers and sisters. On the other hand, they feel a contradictory compulsion, as a sacred task, to tell those who were not part of that terrible inferno about the unimaginable crimes, lest the world forgets.⁴²

Each poet has a personal reason for writing about the Holocaust. As this section will show, Sephardim's primary motivations for writing Holocaust poetry derived from the need to warn humanity, to eulogize the victims, and to try to absolve and assuage the survivors' guilt for having endured where others had not.⁴³ In this section, I will analyze poems written by Sephardim to express their feelings. They tell the Sephardic story and memorialize Sephardic victims for generations to come. I will study five poems; one by a survivor and four by people who escaped the Nazi persecutions.

1. The first example "Listen My Brother," was written by Itzhak Ben Ruby. Itzhak Ben Ruby was born in Salonica and moved to Palestine before World War II. His poem "Listen My Brother," appeared in El Tiempo on April 4, 1962, col. 14, p. 3. Ben Ruby seems to be using the word "brother" as a metaphor for the human beings who stood by and let the Holocaust unfold. The sarcastic

⁴²Levy, 19.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 26.

tone of the poem suggests anger and bitterness for those who did not help,
including himself:

I call you my brother
because you are;
of lineage,
of blood,
of faith . . .
There is something I must tell you,
you, and no one else.
And I want you to listen,
my brother.
I beseech your attention
on this chill night
as cold as your heart.

Give me your hand and look.
Look with me
at what I am seeing:
there, over there, this child
seized by the feet
and hurled against the wall . . .
to fall to the ground
with a broken head.⁴⁴

The author continues coldly describing horrors of the death camp in the stanzas that follow. In the very last stanza, however, there is a sense of hope for a new tomorrow, a brighter future.

Stay.
I shall spend with you
this chill night . . .
But tomorrow,
oh, tomorrow!
A bright sun
will shine on your face,
and hand in hand,
with a firm step,
we shall walk together, my brother,
- shall we? -

⁴⁴Ibid., 65.

on the road
of human dignity
and liberty.⁴⁵

Ben Ruby seems to be consoling himself and the others who did not help the suffering Jews. Perhaps people knew at the time what was happening in Europe but it was just so horrifying that they could not believe it to be true. Each thought that someone else would help and "everything would be better in the morning." Since Ben Ruby was in Palestine during World War II, it is possible that he felt guilty for not helping his fellow Salonicans, or even for escaping the horrors himself.

2. "Salonika" is an example of a poet expressing his guilty feelings about surviving the Holocaust while so many people from his childhood memories perished. Chelomo Reuven was born in Salonica and moved to Palestine in 1935, where he lectured and wrote on national themes and the Holocaust. His poem, "Salonika," appeared in Judeo-Spanish newspapers in Israel. "Salonika" is very haunting. The poem begins with Reuven returning to the town of his childhood, where he realizes nothing is how he remembered it:

No. This is not the city where I first saw light;
These are not the men I knew in my infancy.
This is not the sun that shone then,
Nor this the sky that intoxicated me.

And I think that I live on another planet,
Where at every step I seem to see
Shadows parade in endless numbers,
And their sight moves me profoundly.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Ibid., 71.

⁴⁶Ibid., 179.

Reuven continues by expressing how he is haunted by the shadows of "countless elders, brethren, and friends" and the sound of their "excruciating laments."

He seems to feel a sense of guilt for not perishing with the rest of the Jewish community of Salonica. There is also a sense of anger directed towards the people and nations that did not help:

"Where was the world that is considered to be civilized?
Where were the nations that were fighting for freedom?"
When millions in their blazing torture
Vanished in smoke, victims of ferocity.⁴⁷

- In the very next stanza, he mournfully questions who will remember these Jews:

"Where is the artist who will paint the tragedy?
Where is the poet who will mourn us?"
The day begins, night falls, and a new day dawns,
And the world still waits for that voice,

The voice that will bemoan our fate and will demand
Vengeance for the crime that has no expiation;
That voice that, in its accounts, would include all the anxiety
And affliction that befell the martyred people of Israel.⁴⁸

Without answering these questions, Reuven concludes by affirming that Israel lives on (*hay vekayam*) and that no force will be able to destroy the Jewish people. As a poet, he takes on the responsibility of telling his fallen brothers' story.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., 181.

3. The third example is a poem of bitterness and of questioning God about Divine intentions. Enrique Saporta Y Beja is a native of Salonica who moved to Paris as a youth, where he studied the literature of his people the Sephardim. His poem, "What Has Become of Them? Questions and Replies," expresses rage, almost bitter, at what has become of his family and friends:

-What have they done with our brothers?
Tortured by fire and steel!

-What has happened to our sisters?
Violated by ravishers!

-What has become of our sons?
They have been made into soap!

-What has become of our daughters?
Knocked down like a set of ninepins!⁴⁹

Ultimately, the author pleads with God, "How have You allowed these cruelties?" Yet the final verse affirms his faith in God:

-But even though wounded in many places,
We have not lost faith in You.⁵⁰

Throughout his research, Isaac Jack Levy has studied survivors' faith in God during and after the Holocaust. In his book he writes:

While some Jewish writers have challenged the existence of God and have rejected Him for not fulfilling the Divine Promise, the Sephardic poets, with very few exceptions, have no doubt of God's greatness and of His presence in the daily activities of His people. Whether He is a silent God, whether He chooses to hide from His people, He is still the Savior, the one to whom His people turn in their hour of need.⁵¹

Many Ashkenazic Jews also believe that God was perhaps silent or hidden during the Holocaust. There are Ashkenazic poets that also express anger

⁴⁹Ibid., 185.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 29.

toward God at the failure to save the Jews from Nazi persecution. The difference in Sephardic poetry, I believe, is that the Sephardim may be angry at God, but in the end they affirm their faith in the Divine.

4. "But Who Knows?" expresses the author's anger towards those who believe that the Holocaust is a scheme that Jews invented. Henriette Asseo, the poet, is a descendant of Salonican Jews who emigrated to France. Both her Jewish education and the knowledge that she lost her father's family and practically all of her mother's stirred in her "a somewhat guilty nostalgia for what had been the life of those who vanished."⁵² Asseo's poem, "But Who Knows?" has a very sarcastic tone, expressing bitterness toward those who do not believe that the Holocaust happened:

The horror of the camps
should not be told.
Besides, it is of no concern
to anyone
since no one
died;
it was only done purposely
to annoy.⁵³

She concludes by saying that those who deny the Holocaust do not really have peace of mind and the "dead not honored haunt the sleep of the living." I believe that the author is claiming here that those who doubt that the Holocaust occurred might be unable to accept the fact that such a horror could ever occur, and thus deny it happened altogether.

5. The last example is a summary of all the ideas previously expressed. "Hanukah 5704" includes anger at the Nazis. It tells a story, questions and

⁵²Ibid., 53.

⁵³Ibid., 59.

pleads with God. Yehuda Haim Aaron HaCohen Perahia spent the war years in hiding in Athens with the help of his maid. His devotion to Judaism and to a better future inspired him to write poetry and prose. In his poem, he describes the conditions in Greece during the German occupation. Perahia laments for his people and pleads with God to help the Jews:

How long, compassionate God, will I go on lamenting?
 How long the tribulations of my people will I suffer?
 How long will my head be a cistern of water
 And my eyes running springs of bitter tears?⁵⁴

Perahia continues in anguish about the situation of his people and the fact that God has not helped them. In the very last stanza, the author offers a prayer of hope for the Jewish people, in keeping with the symbolism of the festival of Hanukah:

O blessed lights of Hanukah, symbol of hope for Israel,
 illumine our destiny and may Michael protect us,
 illumine the path of God's blessed children,
 Fill us with confidence as you have Hasmonay and his children,
 Soothe, soothe our souls that are greatly suffering,
 And in Your blessing anoint them with the consoling and life-giving balm.

Perahia seems to be praying to God for the welfare of the Jewish people. The author feels powerless and thus turns to God, the Savior of his people. Perhaps, in the spirit of Hanukkah, the author believes that God will help the Jews now, as God helped the Maccabees of old.

The tragedy of the Sephardim at the hands of Nazi Germany remains virtually unknown. In the voices of poets and composers their experiences will live on. Arthur A. Cohen states in his book The Tremendum.

⁵⁴Ibid., 143.

"The task of this literature was neither to astonish nor amaze, neither to exalt nor humiliate, but to provide a vivifying witness to the flesh of the dead..."

The witness speaks for the dead in order to preserve the past and protect the future.⁵⁵ Elie Wiesel believes that to listen to a witness is to be a witness. By hearing the horrible story of a survivor or witness to the Holocaust, the memory is being passed on to one more person, who will in turn pass it on to others. Thus, there will continue to be witnesses even after the survivors have passed on. It is hoped that this will insure that such an occurrence will never again take place.

The two genres of poetry and music have different yet similar effects on the listener. When hearing a poem, it is up to the listener to interpret it according to his or her understanding. When music is added to a poem, it adds a whole other dimension. The music enhances the poem, supplementing it with another aspect of interpretation. If the words and music are written by the same person, then the music is yet another way of expressing the author's intention. If the music was written by someone other than the poet, the listener understands the words through the lens of the musical composer. The music is an interpretation of the poem, and may or may not complement the original author's intention.

Poetry and music have different uses. They affect people in different ways, or they may even affect different people altogether. That is, a listener may be affected by music and not poetry, or vice versa. A listener may also experience one image when hearing a poem and when the music is added to that, it may increase the intensity of his or her experience or completely alter its meaning.

⁵⁵Ibid., 28.

CONCLUSION

In this paper I have attempted to present the experience of the Jews of Greece during the Holocaust and demonstrate that the Sephardim were affected by Nazi persecution and destruction as well as the Ashkenazim. By examining music and poetry of the Jews of Greece I have shown the ways which some have chosen to cope with their feelings of rage and guilt. Many felt a profound obligation to keep their memories alive.

Human beings employ art to assist them and others to confront issues surrounding the Holocaust: the loss of loved ones, the loss of their homeland and friends and neighbors, the loss both, of innocence and of a time when something as tragic as the Holocaust could not be imagined, the guilt of surviving when others did not, the anger against those who did not help the Jews, the wrath at God who was silent or absent, the bitterness toward those who deny that the Holocaust happened, and the profound tragedy and pain that survivors experienced during Nazi persecution. The list could continue infinitely for each individual has a singular connection to the Holocaust. So, why is it that so many people choose art for expression of these feelings?

For some people, art is a way of ensuring that people never forget what happened to the Jews. By creating music, poetry, paintings and sculpture to express themselves, they are passing their story on to future generations. Music and poetry are active forms of art. A poem must be read and music must be sung, played or listened to. It is similar to the difference between remembering and observing. If you are remembering the Holocaust, it is a cognitive act. You may think about

it. However, if you are observing, you are actively participating in something.

For other people, using art as a medium of confronting their Holocaust issues may be a form of therapy. During the Holocaust many felt utterly helpless, unable to aid themselves, their families and their fellow Jews. Creating art enabled them perhaps to feel as if they could do something to help the Jewish people. Art about the Holocaust is a means of reaching out to those who may not have otherwise known or cared what happened to the Jews during World War II. Having viewed their creations, someone may be moved to act if he or she witnessed anti-Semitic acts in his or her own time and community.

I was first drawn to this topic because Sephardic music has always appealed to me, differing from what I grew up with and was accustomed to. I have been interested in the Holocaust mostly because I am looking for a way to understand why it was allowed to happen. I chose Greece specifically because it is a country that I visited and found to be absolutely beautiful. By putting all three interests together I was able to research a very interesting and relatively unexplored subject.

From writing this paper, I have learned that my Judaic knowledge did not encompass the variety of cultures that make up the worldwide Jewish community. The Jewish world and Jewish history includes much more than the Jews of the United States, Israel and Eastern Europe. I realize I am not the only one who needs to expand his or her views. I must educate others about the Sephardim in general and specifically about their experience in the Holocaust. Music, poetry and other art forms can be very valuable in teaching not only the Holocaust but other topics in Judaism as well. Not only can they teach valuable

lessons on the surface, but they touch people in ways that can not be experienced through lecture or text books. I agree wholeheartedly with the sentiments of Violette Mayo Fintz as told to Isaac Jack Levy:

I cry over the fate of all Jews. I cannot forget the agony, I refuse to forget the sting of death in the camps. I shall always remember the faces of the thousands of innocent children, of our children. I want the world to know that the Sephardim were also martyrs and that we, too, saw our towns destroyed and our families vanish in the smoke.⁵⁶

⁵⁶Ibid., 83.

APPENDIX I

Chronology of Holocaust in Greece

1932 - 1934	10,000 Jews leave Salonica to find new homes in Palestine.
October 1940	Italy declares war on Greece.
October 28, 1940	Italian Army attacks Greece after occupying Albania. Greeks successful in repelling attack.
November 14, 1940	General Wilhelm Keitel tells Marshal Badoglio that Hitler desires the annihilation of Greece because it is becoming a British air and naval base.
December 1940	Hitler issues orders for Operation Marita, by which German troops attack Greece from Bulgarian border.
April 6, 1941	Germany comes to aid of Italy and subdues Greece. Western Greece occupied by Italy; Central Greece occupied by Germany; Eastern Greece (Thrace and Macedonia) occupied by Bulgaria.
April 9, 1941	German motorized columns enter Salonica. Jews slowly return to accustomed occupations. Newspaper publications cease.
April 12, 1941	German Army requisitions Jewish homes and apartments; Jewish hospital.
April 15, 1941	Eight leading officers and members of Jewish Council in Salonica arrested. Community records, typewriters, mimeograph equipment, etc. taken from offices of Council.
April 17, 1941	Other Salonican leaders arrested: President of B'nai B'rith, and dealers in typewriters and duplicating equipment. Offices of Zionist organization ransacked.
April 18, 1941	Greek Prime Minister shoots himself.

April 20, 1941

Sunday edition of newspaper founded by Germans, *Nea Evropi*, comes out with editorial blaming Jews for ruining Germany after WW I and affirming that after the war, there will be no more wars because the Jews will be eliminated from the political life of Europe. The same day Germans visit all of the synagogues to take inventory of all precious objects.

April 23, 1941

Greece surrenders to Axis.

April 27, 1941

Athens and Piraeus surrender without resistance from the two mayors and the commander of the Greek Army garrison in Athens.

April 29, 1941

Newspaper, *Nea Evropi*, informs Jews to turn in all radios.

May 1, 1941

Newspapers announce that all Jewish stores that still remain shut will be requisitioned by the Germans.

May 4, 1941

Germans requisition bookstores owned by Jews and arrest the owners.

May 12, 1941

Editors of *Nea Evropi* encourage the reorganization of an anti-Semitic Greek organization that had been banned by the Greek government in the 1930's.

May 17, 1941

Germans send Chief Rabbi of Salonica, Rabbi Dr. Koretz, to an internment camp in Vienna because of a sermon he delivers against the Axis powers.

May 22, 1941

Gestapo again visits synagogues and removes from one of them a Torah scroll dating from the 16th century.

July 11, 1942

All Jewish males in Salonica between 18-45 ordered to appear at the public square for forced labor. They are humiliated in public.

July 13, 1942

Jewish males in Salonica ordered to report to the square a second time.

September 14, 1942

German paper in Servia reports that all Jews in Salonica will be sent to ghettos on the island of Crete. They will have

- to leave all their possessions behind as punishment for "making Greece fight the Axis."
- October 16, 1942 Rabbinical council of Salonica meets to consider offer made by Germans to pay 1 billion drachmas for rights to expropriate the Jewish cemetery whose stones will be used for military purposes.
- November 1942 Germans confiscate Jewish property in Salonica for first time.
- November 9, 1942 German-run Greek Press headlines Hitler's claim that "international Judaism will disappear from Europe."
- December 6, 1942 Germans expropriate Jewish cemetery in Salonica and turn into a marble quarry. Use stones to line a swimming pool for the German troops.
- December 15, 1942 Jewish community of Salonica raises and pays the Germans 2 1/2 billion drachmas to release men from forced labor.
- February 1943 Alois Brunner and Dieter Wisliceny arrive in Salonica to begin the "Final Solution."
- February 6, 1943 Commission of S.S. arrives in Salonica to employ the racial laws issued in Nuremberg in 1935. All but foreign Jews are to be marked with arm bands and yellow stars and stores are to be identified as Jewish. First deportations.
- February 13, 1943 Further application of racial laws prohibit Jews from changing residence; using public transportation; appearing on street or public places after dark; using public telephones, private phones are to be turned in. Germans want to cut off all communication between Jews and outside world.
- February 25, 1943 Governor General of Salonica is informed that labor unions and professional organizations are to exclude Jews from membership.

Early March 1943

Rabbi Koretz notified that Eichmann wants to deport the entire Jewish community of Salonica.

March 1, 1943

Germans order Jews to declare all their possessions.

March 13, 1943

Germans issue proclamation forcing Jewish community to account for all property except household goods and other articles of the most simple description. Everything is to be transformed into cash and deposited in banks in a collective credit. 104 hostages are taken by Nazis to make sure that all orders will be carried out punctually.

March 14, 1943

S.S. orders Rabbi Dr. Koretz to assemble all Jews in the largest synagogue in ghetto in order to announce their forthcoming deportation.

March 15, 1943

First transport of 2,600 people leaves Salonica.

March 15, 1943-
May 9, 1943

Sixteen convoys carry 42,830 Jews from Salonica.

March 17, 1943

Delegation from Salonican community goes to Rabbi Koretz demanding an explanation.

March 25, 1943

All Jews have to move to two zones designated as ghettos.

April 20, 1943

First German tanks roll into Janina.

May 20, 1943

Hitler orders plans to be drawn up for a German takeover in the Balkans.

August 7, 1943

Last transport of 1,800 men who have survived the forced labor leaves Salonica. 46,000 Salonican Jews have been deported to Auschwitz/Birkenau.

August 20, 1943

Germans surround a Jewish neighborhood for first time, in Janina.

September 8, 1943

Italy surrenders to Allies. Jewish persecution begins throughout Greece.

October 3, 1943

Germans order Jews of Athens to register within five days on penalty

October 4, 1943-
March 1, 1944

of being shot, but very few do.

No incidents occur to alert Janina Jews that the Germans have scheduled their date of deportation.

March 1, 1944

Germans arrest four members of Jewish Council of Janina.

By July 1944

According to report of Greek government in exile, 879 villages have been totally destroyed, 460 in part.

October 1944

Salonica liberated by the Allied and Greek forces.

October 7, 1944

Greek Sonderkommando leads revolt in Auschwitz. Only revolt in history of Auschwitz.

October 12, 1944

Liberation of Athens.

APPENDIX II

Map of Greece



Source: Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Greece."

Map of Deportations from Greece



Source: Martin Gilbert, The Holocaust: Maps and Photographs.

APPENDIX III

"A Little Jewess I Was"



A little Jewess I was
I put on my little star
The wretches fell on us
And took us to Poland

To Poland we went
Oh! What we had to suffer
They shaved off our hair
And dressed us in men's clothes

In the morning at Auphsteen
We came out at Tzel-Apel
Always five in a row
(Oh! my sweet mother)
Always five in a row
(Oh! my precious mother)

They took us to the showers
they searched for lice
Thump, thump, our hearts went
Will they take us to the gas?

Off to work we go
Come wind or come rain
And if our work is slow
We feel the cane's blow

Έβραιοποιόλα ήμουνα
Τό άστερακι φόρεσα
Μάς πλακώσαν τά κοθωνία
Καί μάς πήσαν στην Πολωνία

Στην Πολωνία πήγαμε
Πώ. Πώ. Πώ. τί πάθαμε.
Μάς κουρέψαν τά μαλλία
Καί μάς ντύσαν άνδρικά

Τό πρωί στό Άουφστέεν
Βγαίναμε στό Τσέλ Άπέλ
Πάντα πέντε στη σειρά
(Άχ! μανούλα μου γλυκειά)
Πάντα πέντε στη γραμμή
(Άχ! μανούλα μου χρυσή)

Στό λουτρό μάς πηγαίνανε
Γιά ψώρα μάς κυττάζανε
Κι ή καρδιά μάς τίκ τίκ τίκ
Μήν τυχόν στό γκάζ μάς πάν

Στή δουλεία πηγαίνουμε
Μ' άνέμους και βροχές
κι άν σιγά δουλεύουμε
τό μπαστούνι βλέπουμε

"Pitch Dark is Our Life"



The phrases repeat in the following pattern: A A B A B B A B B A B B

Pitch dark is our life.
In fear we eat our bread; in fear we walk.

To the fountain, the fountain I cannot go.
The guard always warns me: "A prisoner you are held by the Germans."

I didn't steal, didn't steal or kill.
A little Jewess I was; for this they jailed me and locked me up in Auschwitz.

Bless, bless the English lads.
They will save us, they will liberate us, and deeper in they will push us.

Μαυρη μωρέ μαυρή εἶν' ἡ ζωὴ ποὺ κάτομε
Μὲ φόβο τρώμε τὸ ψωμί, μὲ φόβο περπατάμε.

Στὴ βρύση μωρέ, στὴ βρύση νὰ πάω δὲν μπορῶ.
Παιτοῦ μου λέει ὁ σκοπὸς "εἶσαι φυλακισμένη.
γερμανοκρατουμένη"

Δὲν ἔκλεψα μωρέ, δὲν ἔκλεψα οὔτε σκότωσα
Ἐβραιομούλια ἤμουνα, γιαντὸ μὲ φυλακίσαν, στὸ Ἀουσβίτς μὲ
κλείσαν

Χαλάλι μωρέ, χαλάλι στὰ Ἑγγλεζάκια μας
Αὐτὰ θὰ μᾶς γλιτώσουν καὶ θὰ μᾶς λευτερώσουν πὶο μεῖτα θὰ μᾶς
χωτουν.

"In Polish Lands"

Allegro
Voice

Ar - vo - les Bo - ran por - lu - vias
Y - mon - ta - ñas ay - re al res -
an - si Bo - ran los mis o - jos por
ti que - ri - da 'man - te an - si Bo - ran los
mis o - jos por ti que - ri - da 'man -
te Tor - no y di - go que va ser de mi
En tie - rras de Po - ña yo me vo - leo
mi re

Trees cry for rain
And mountains for air.
So cry my eyes
For you, dear Mother;
So cry my eyes
For you, dear Mother.

I turn and I ask what will become of me.
In Polish lands
I am destined to die.

White you are and white you wear;
White is your face.
White flowers fall from you,
From your beauty;
White flowers fall from you,
From Your beauty.

I turn and I ask what will become of me.
In Polish lands,
I am destined to die.

Arvoles yoran por luvias
I muntanias por ayre
Ansi yoran los mis ojos
Por ti kerida madre
Ansi yoran los mis ojos
Por ti kerida madre

Torno i digo ke va ser de mi
En tierras de Polonia
Me tengo ke murir

Blanka sos blanka vistes
Blanka es la tu figura
Blankas flores kayen de ti
De la tu ermozura
Blankas flores kayen de ti
De la tu ermozura

Torno is digo ke va ser de mi
En tierras de Polonia
Me tengo ke murir

"La Vida de los Djudios en 1944"

Andante (Sad)

De nues - tras ka - zas mos ki -
 ta - ron A l'a - via - sion ya mos en -
 tra - ron Nues-tros tre - zo - ros mos to -
 ma - ron Al va - por mos em - bar - ka - ron.

De muestras kazas mos kitaron,
 A l'aviasion ya mos entraron,
 Nuestros trezoros mos tomaron,
 Al vapor mos enbarkaron.

Al vapor ya entramos,
 Komo sardelas mos estefimos,
 Diez dias navegimos,
 A Pireos dezbarkomos.

A Pircos dezbarkomos,
 komo los peros arastimos,
 Munchos keridos aya pedrimos,
 Para Haydar prosegimos.

A Haydar ya arevimos,
 De haftonas mos konsomimos,
 Tres dias estovimos,
 De ansias mos abatimos.

Al tren ya mos entraron,
 Sin komer mos desharon,
 Katorze dias viajimos,
 A Auschwitz dezbarkimos.

In Auschwitz mos dezbarkaron,
 Kon nuestros keridos mos separaron,
 Al banyo mos entraron,
 Los kaveyos mos kortaron.

Los kaveyos mos kortaron,
 Dez mudas mos desharon,
 Los vestidos mos tomaron,
 Al bloko veinte mos mandaron.

A las tres de media noche,
 Al bloko veinte ya arevimos,
 Los apelos empesaron,
 I los frios mos aporaron.

From our homes they removed us,
 In the Airport² they put us,
 Our treasures they took from us,
 Onto the boats they loaded us.

Onto the boats we boarded,
 Like sardines we pressed together,
 Ten days we were sailing,
 In Piraeus we disembarked.

In Piraeus we disembarked,
 Like dogs we dragged ourselves,
 Many loved ones we lost there,
 And to Haydar we proceeded.

To Haydar we then came,
 From beatings we were worn out,
 Three days we spent there,
 With anguish we were afflicted.

Onto the trains they put us,
 Without food they left us,
 For fourteen days we traveled,
 In Auschwitz we descended.

At Auschwitz they put us out,
 From our loved ones they separated us,
 Into the baths they put us,
 Our hair they cut off.

Our hair they cut off,
 Naked they left us,
 Our clothes they took away,
 To Block Twenty they sent us.

At three o'clock in the morning,
 At Block Twenty we arrived,
 The roll calls began,
 And the cold wore us out.

"La Vida de los Djudios en 1944" cont.

A Auschwitz kon halrunas,
Al apelo mas i mas,
Bloko Vashuva kon kalamedad,
Mos arivaron sin piadad.

Yorando noche i dia,
Yamando siempre: "Madre mia!"
Mos fue dicho i asegurado,
Ke en el fuego fueron kemados.

En el gas asfiksiando
O en el fuego fueron kemados;
Las kreaturas sen pekado,
Al son de la muzika fueron kemados.

Dizgrasiado a Auschwitz,
Ke rovino muestras famiyas,
Ambizados a mucho i bueno,
Arastados sen manzia.

Los trasportes mos kavzaron,
En lage i lage mos rodieron,
A la fin de la trachedia,
Belsemor mos yevaron.

Belsen tomba umana,
Onde pedrimos muestras ermanas,
Se depedrieron munchas muchachas,
Por la ambre, la mala vida.

No ay tinta ne papel,
Para deskrivir la vida de Belsen;
Kashkara de rapo,
I agua en muerte a bever.

At Auschwitz battered we arrived,
The roll calls kept increasing,
For our misfortune to Waschstube Block,
They brought us pitilessly.

Weeping night and day,
Shouting constantly, "Mother dear!"
We were told and assured,
That they were consumed in the fire.

In the gas chambers asphyxiated,
Or burned in the fire,
Children without sin,
To the sound of music were burned.

Disastrous Auschwitz,
That ruined our families,
Who were used to the best in life,
Dragged off without compassion.

They put together trains for us,
From camp to camp they moved us,
At the end of the journey,
They took us to that Belsen bog.

Belsen, human grave,
Where we lost our sisters,
Great numbers of young women died,
From hunger and a wretched life.

There is neither ink nor paper,
To describe the life in Belsen,
Turnip peelings,
And at death water to drink.

"Siete Dias"

♩ = 66

-Sie-te di-as, en-ce-rra-dos en va-go-nes de be-he-más,
 שִׁיטֵּי דִּי-אָס, עֲנֵצֶרֶת מִסִּים עַבְדֵּי מוֹתֶה-ן בְּקָרְבָן מוֹתֶה-ן מִסִּים

u-na vez a los tres di-as mos qui-ta-ban al ai-re ar
 אֶחָד בַּיּוֹם אֶל הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים מִן הָאֵרֶץ מִן הָאֵרֶץ מִן הָאֵרֶץ

Seven days locked up
 in boxcars for animals;
 once every three days
 they would take us out for air.

My dearest mother,
 you were fortunate
 in dying in your country
 and not passing through the chimney.

My dearest father,
 who would have told you
 that you would come with your brother
 to the crematorium of Auschwitz!

Father and mother, brothers and sisters
 may you all be supplicants
 to the Master of the world
 to grant me health
 and remove me from these camps
 to recite for you the Kaddish!

Siete dias enserados
 en vagones de bemas
 ouna ves alos tres dias
 mos quitavan atrear.

Madre mia my querida
 ya touvites el zehout
 de mouerirte en tous tieras
 y non passates por el olouk.

Padre mio my cerido
 quien te lo iba dezir
 que vinieras con tou ermano
 al cramatorio de Auchvits.

Padre y madre ermanos y ermanikas
 saliendo todos redjadjis
 a el patron de el mouno
 que embie saloud amy
 que me quite de estos campos
 para vos etchar kadic!

"Todos si Hueron" (They Are All Gone)

Music and Lyrics
Flory Jagoda

TODOS SI HUERON

Laz kalejes son vaziyas
Laz kazas son sin alegrías
Laz ventanas son sin rozas
Karanfilis, kundjes ermozas
Laz guertas son sin enamurados
Nu ay maz Nonas kun tukadus
I laz mujeris kun laz kunas
Ke kantavan a laz kriyaturas
Onde si hueron?
Onde si hueron?
Onde si hueron?
Todos, todos si hueron
Todos, todos si hueron

I laz Hahamis ke muz maldavan
Laz oraciones ke paz muz davan
I laz bodas de luz fijikus
Ke muz balyavan kun luz panderikos
I laz Madris kun laz kunas
Ke kantavan a suz kriyaturas
Onde si hueron?
Onde si hueron?
Onde si hueron?
Todos, todos si hueron
Todos, todos si hueron

THEY ARE ALL GONE

The streets are empty
The houses are without happiness
The window sills are without rose buds
Carnations, beautiful roses
The gardens are without lovers
There are no Nonas with head covering
And the women with cradles
Singing to their children
Where have they all gone?
Where have they all gone?
Where have they all gone?
They are all gone
They are all gone

And the Rabbis who prayed with us
The prayers that gave us peace
And the weddings of our young ones
Dancing with tambourines
And the Mothers with cradles
Singing to their children
Where have they all gone?
Where have they all gone?
Where have they all gone?
They are all gone
They are all gone

APPENDIX IV

"Listen My Brother"

Escutcha mi hermano

Te rogo ke me eskutches,
mi hermano.
Es el uniko favor
ke rekalmó de ti,
en esta noche fria,
komo tu korazon!

Te yamo mi hermano,
Porke los sos;
de raza,
de sangre,
Je fey

I algo tengo a desirte
a ti, no a otro,
I keto ke me eskutches,
mi hermano,
imploro tu ater sion,
en esta noche fria
komo tu korazon!

Dame tu mano i mira,
mira kon mi,
lo ke yo esto viendo:
Ayi, ayi este tchiko
aferrado por los pies
i lanzado kontra la pared ...
para kaer al suelo
kon su kavesa rota!

Mira, mira.
Por favor, no te espantes ...
Tu estas trankilo
aki onde bives.
Mira, mira,
ayi, ves estas hijas
desnudas
ke temblan
komo ojas al viento?

Demonios
vomitados del infierno
lanzaron kontra eyas
perros-lovos,
ke apasiguaron sus sed
sexual
sovre sus kuerpos
martirizados!

Listen, My Brother

I beg you to listen,
my brother.
That is the only favor
I request from you
on this chill night
as cold as your heart.

I call you my brother
because you are,
of lineage,
of blood,
of faith

There is something I must tell you,
you, and no one else.
And I want you to listen,
my brother.
I beseech your attention
on this chill night
as cold as your heart.

Give me your hand and look.
Look with me
at what I am seeing:
there, over there, this child
seized by the feet
and hurled against the wall ...
to fall to the ground
with a broken head.

Look, look.
Please, do not be afraid.
You are at peace,
here where you are.
Look, look,
there, do you see those girls,
naked,
shivering
like leaves in the wind?

Demons,
spewed out from Hell,
set on them
bloodhounds
who quenched their sexual
thirst
on their martyred bodies

"Listen My Brother" cont.

No te espantes
 i mira mas ...
 ayi, ayi, al fondo,
 estas flamas
 ke suven al sielo
 komo un gemido
 de la Humanidad entera,
 la Humanidad
 lerida ...
 kuerpos humanos
 de raza,
 de sangre,
 de fey
 ke alimentaron el fuego!
 i mira mas ayi
 las mitraliosas ke krepitan,
 los kuerpos ke kayen,
 i los infernales
 angeles pretos de la muerte,
 arrojat estos kuerpos
 en fovas
 ke apresuradamente serran
 kon paletadas de tierra!

Mira, mira,
 Ayi la tierra tembla?
 se mueve?
 Entre los muertos
 enterraron
 viktimas ke todavia
 bivian ...
 a las kualas no dieron
 el golpe de gracia,
 ke la piedad ordena
 mismo para los kriminales!

I ansi murieron
 Dos, sinko, sech millones,
 de tus hermanos
 de raza,
 de sangre,
 de fey!

... I agora, vate,
 vate i yeva kon ti
 tu frio korazon
 komo esta notche fria!
 Tienes lagrimas a tus ojos?
 Ma les yoros no sirvieron!
 Vate, vate, mi hermano,
 de raza,
 de sangre,
 de fey!

Te kedas?
 Tu mano fria
 komo tu korazon
 buchka mi mano
 i la estretcha?
 Tus ojos mas no yoran,
 ma me miran i me avlan!

Do not be afraid
 and look further ...
 There, over there, in the distance,
 those flames
 that rise toward the heavens
 like a cry
 of all humanity—
 a wounded
 humanity—
 human bodies
 of your brothers,
 of lineage,
 of blood,
 of faith,
 that fed the fire.

And look still further:
 the machine guns that riddle,
 the bodies that fall,
 and the infernal
 black angels of death
 shove them
 into the holes
 that they hurriedly cover
 with shovelfuls of dirt.

Look, look.
 There. The earth shakes?
 Does it move?
 Among the dead
 they buried
 victims who were still
 alive ...
 to whom they did not grant
 the mercy stroke
 that compassion demands
 even for criminals.

And so they died,
 two, five, six million
 of your brothers
 of lineage,
 of blood,
 of faith.

... And now, leave,
 leave and take with you
 your heart, cold
 as this chill night.
 Your eyes, are they shedding tears?
 Alas. Crying was for nought.
 Leave, leave, my-brother
 of lineage,
 of blood,
 of faith.

You stay?
 Your hand, cold
 as your heart,
 reaches for my hand
 and holds it steadfast?
 Your eyes no longer cry,
 but look at me and speak?

"Listen My Brother" cont.

Kedate!
 Vo pasar kon ti
 esta noche fria ...
 Ma, maniana,
 Oh! maniana!
 Un sol resplandesiente
 iluminara tus karas,
 i mano a mano,
 kon pie firme,
 kaminaremos, mi hermano,
 verdad?
 en los kaminos
 de la dignidad humana,
 i de la Libertad!

Stay.
 I shall spend with you
 this chill night ...
 But tomorrow,
 oh, tomorrow!
 A bright sun
 will shine on your face,
 and hand in hand,
 with a firm step,
 we shall walk together, my brother,
 —shall we?—
 on the road
 of human dignity
 and liberty.

"Salonika"

Saloniko

No. No es esta la sivdad onde vide el dia
No son estos los hombres ke konosi en mi tchikes.
No es este el sol ke entonses ardia,
Ni es este el sielo ke me intchia de boratches.

I yo kreo bivar en una otra planeta
Onde en kada paso me parese a mi ver
Solombras ke defilan—en un numero sin kuenta
I sus vista me aze profundamente ezmover.

Entre eyas yo kreo ver las konosidas figuras
De mis viejos, mis ermanos, de amigos sin kontar
Entre eyas miles son las inosentes kriaturas,
—luzes puras ke las bestias no hezitaron a amatar.

Eyas me siguen en el dia, me presigen en la noche
Onde ke vaya, vo los veo sin ke otros los puedan ver
A mis orejas parviene sus djimido atrotche,
El mizmo ke antes anios no pudo ninguno ezmover.

"Hombrer! Onde estavas?" demandan eyos, "dimos kuando
Fuemos todos arastados en este mizmo lugar,
Kuando fuemos deportados, kuando los zonder-komando
Viejos i tchikos en los gazes nos izieron agor?"

"Dimos, onde estavas kuando, flakos i atemados,
Unflados por la ambre, aseados por la sed,
Fuemos rojados en los ornos i eramos ansi kemados
I los djilates degoyaron sin ninguna-merced?"

"Onde estava el mundo ke se dize sivilizado?
Onde estavan los pueblos ke geravaban por libertad?
Alora ke los millones en sus supliis embrazado
Desparesian en el umo—viktimas de ferocidad.

"Onde esta el pintor ke pintara la tragedia?
Onde esta el poeta ke endetchara por nos?"
Nase el dia, viene la noche i espunta un nuevo dia
I el mundo espera siempre ke se levante akeya boz,

Akeya boz ke djimira por nuestra suerte i vengansa
Demandara por el krimen ke no ay paga para el,
Akeya boz ke en sus notas piedra meter toda la ansia
I la angustia ke fue akeya del pueblo martiryo de Israel.

Ansi pasan las solombras en una fila longa i siento
Sus pasos sovre el asfalto i sus lavios palpar
I sus kecha estremisiente se konfonde kon el viento
Sin ke pueda el entanto sus djimido arestar.

I yo ando mi kamino sin topar una repuesta
A las kruela demandas i a la justa folor
En mi alma se despierta una violente tempesta
I yo siento ke mi kuerpo teterea de yelor.

Sovre las sinizas santas del malditcho Birkenau
Sovre las muntanias de guesos de los kampos de eksterminasion
Vente anios despues, grande es la luz del rayo
Ke espunto por afirmar la eternidad de la nasion.

Hay vekayam es Israel, bive i firme i nos konsola
de la horrivle perioda la sigureza de saver
Ke mas ninguna fuersa, ke mas ninguna ola
No piedra aravdonarnos, no mos ara despareser.

Salonika

No. This is not the city where I first saw light,
These are not the men I knew in my infancy.
This is not the sun that shone then,
Nor this the sky that intoxicated me.

And I think that I live on another planet,
Where at every step I seem to see
Shadows parade in endless numbers,
And their sight moves me profoundly.

Among them I seem to recognize the well-known faces
Of my countless elders, brethren, and friends;
Among them are those of thousands of innocent children,
Bright stars that the beasts did not hesitate to kill.

They follow me by day, they haunt me by night;
Wherever I go I see them when no one else can.
Their excruciating laments reach my ears;
Years ago they could not touch anyone's.

"Man! Where were you?" they ask. "Tell us:
When we were all arrested in this same city,
When we were deported, when the Sonderkommandos
Suffocated our old and young in the gas?"

"Tell us: where were you when, feeble and exhausted,
Swollen by hunger, dried with thirst,
We were hurled into the ovens and thus burned,
And the executioners slaughtered with no mercy?"

"Where was the world that is considered to be civilized?
Where were the nations that were fighting for freedom?
When millions in their blazing torture
Vanished in smoke, victims of ferocity.

"Where is the artist who will paint the tragedy?
Where is the poet who will mourn us?"
The day begins, night falls, and a new day dawns,
And the world still waits for that voice,

The voice that will bemoan our fate and will demand
Vengeance for the crime that has no expiation;
That voice that, in its accounts, would include all the anxiety
And affliction that befell the martyred people of Israel.

So the shadows pass in a long file and I hear
The steps on the asphalt and their lips palpitate,
And their terrifying laments mix with the wind,
The wind that is powerless to drown out the groans.

And I walk along without finding any answer
To the cruel questions and to the just rage.
In my soul a violent tempest awakes
And I feel my body shiver with cold.

On the blessed ashes of cursed Birkenau,
On the mountains of bones of the extermination camps,
Twenty years later, great is the light of the sunbeam
That dawned to affirm the eternity of the nation.

Hay vekayam³³ is Israel; it lives, it is unshaken, and it consoles us
For the time of terror. Secure, we know
That no other force, that no other wave,
Will be able to destroy us and make us vanish.

"What Has Become of Them?"

Que sont-ils devenus?
Question avec réponses

- Que sont devenus nos parents?
Ils ont été déportés en rangs!
- Que sont devenus nos pères?
De la chair que l'on opère!
- Que sont devenues nos mères?
Elles ont mangé des herbes amères!
- Qu'a-t-on fait de nos frères?
Torturés par le feu et le fer!
- Qu'est-il arrivé à nos sœurs?
Violées par les ravisseurs!
- Que sont devenus nos garçons?
On les a changés en savons!
- Que sont devenues nos filles?
Renversées comme un jeu de quilles!
- Que sont devenus nos hébés?
La vermine les a absorbés!
- Que sont devenus nos amis?
Massacrés par nos ennemis!
- Dieu du ciel, Dieu de bonté,
Comment as-tu permis ces cruautés?
Comment n'as-tu pas empêché
La solution définitive
Et avoir laissé faucher
Tant de Juifs et tant de Juives?
- Mais quoique blessés en plusieurs endroits,
nous n'avons pas perdu la foi en TOI.

What Has Become of Them?
Questions with Replies

(Translated by Rosemary Lévy Zumwalt)

- What has become of our parents?
They were deported in ranks!
- What has become of our fathers?
Flesh that is operated on!
- What has become of our mothers?
They have eaten bitter herbs!
- What have they done with our brothers?
Tortured by fire and steel!
- What has happened to our sisters?
Violated by ravishers!
- What has become of our sons?
They have been made into soap!
- What has become of our daughters?
Knocked down like a set of ninepins!
- What has become of our babies?
Vermin have eaten them!
- What has become of our friends?
Massacred by our enemies!
- God in Heaven, God of goodness,
How have You allowed these cruelties?
How have You not prevented,
The Final Solution
And have allowed the mowing down
Of so many Jewish men and women?
- But even though wounded in many places,
We have not lost faith in You

"But Who Knows?"

L'horreur des camps
 il ne faut pas la dire
 et puis ça n'intéresse
 personne
 puisque c'est personne
 qui est mort
 si c'est pas exprès
 pour embêter
 c'est le cadavre qui prouve le crime
 pas l'officier SS
 cela ne fait rien
 je saurai bien reciter le Kaddish enfiévé;
 au dessus des charniers inaudibles
 même si vos âmes occidées
 reposent en un sol si meuble
 qu'il a eu raison
 de vos millions
 d'ossements
 ils ne célèbrent
 que l'herbe de dessus
 ceux qui à présent vous nient
 croient ils ainsi trouver le repos?
 les morts non honorés hantent le sommeil des vivants

The horror of the camps
 should not be told.
 Besides, it is of no concern
 to anyone
 since no one
 died,
 it was only done purposely
 to annoy.
 It is the corpse that proves the crime,
 not the SS officer.
 It does not matter.
 I will be able to recite well the Jewish Kaddish
 on the silent ossuaries,
 even if your slain souls
 rest in such a loose soil
 that has triumphed over
 your millions
 of bones.
 They sing only the praises
 of the grass that sprouted,
 those who at present deny you,
 do they think they have found peace of mind?
 The dead not honored haunt the sleep of the living.

"Hanukah 5704"

Hanouka 5704

Sovré las ruinas de todos los bienes de mi Povevlo
Se assentaron los enemigos i cantaron sin yelo
Ellos rovaron todo nouestro aver i se enrekisiéron,
I los Dñidos deznoudos i croudos se estrémessiéron.

Triumphs de diélatés crouelés contra nanicos!
Triumphs de lénnés ambrientos contra ratonicos!
Triumphs de fouertes i potentes contra flacos!
Triumphs de baraganés armados contra dézarmados!
O dolor! O ijos kéndos de Israel persécoutido!
Como kedach gouadrados longé de la vista del énnemigo.
Temblando enteros vos vach coumiendo las ounias
La cavessa abocala como caminando bacho las luvias!

Cada día vangatérando i sokestrando nouestros bienes
Los entregadores son moutchos i se contan a siénés.
Nouestras rezervas de día en día se van apocando
Como Dio Santo azer fasés a los menesteres augmantando!

Louz! Non se vé. El énnemigo parésé aynda potente
Los salvadores tadian a venir. Ellos ya son fouertes
Ma el Dio non dirho aynda ya basta tanta angoustra
I solo en el, en sou salvation va toda nouestra féouzia.

Es ké Dio Santo, kedarémós hivos i sanos i salvos?
Es ké el énnemigo non mos aférata con sou mano de clávos?
Es ké las louzès de Hanouka non mos aréloumbraran mas?
Es ké Dio Rahman nouestras bocas non té alavaran mas?

Asta couando Dio clémanté conténouaré de estar dimuyendo?
Asta couando por los malos de mi Povevlo iré soufriendo?
Asta couando toda mi cavessa sera ouu depósito de agoua
I mis ouos touéntés courientes de lagrimas bien amargas?

O benditchos tiempos de folgoura i paz révénd a mozotros
Dizid a los démonios: Atras, non ay mas logar para vozotros
Dizid a los cativados: Rétornad con alegría a vouestras cazas
Alondjad vouestros souspiros i limounios, i vouestras ansias.

O louzès santas de Hanouka symbolo de espéransas para Israel
Réloumbrad nouestros destinos i ké mos protéjé Mihael
Réloumbrad los caminos, del Dio alto los ijos benditchos
Intchidinos de confiansa como lo izitech por Hasmonay i sus ijos
Conortad, conortad nouestras almas ké estan moutcho sofriendo
Etchad en eillas el balsamo consolador i aribividor en
bendiziendo.—

Athéna 25 Kis'ev 5704

22 Décembre 1943—Miercolés

A los Dñidos de Athéna

Hanukah 5704

On the ruins of all the wealth of my people
Sat the enemies and sang in cold blood.
They stole all our possessions and got rich,
And the naked and raw Jews trembled.

Triumphs of cruel giants against midgets!
Triumphs of hungry lions against little mice!
Triumphs of the strong and mighty against the weak!
Triumphs of armed ruffians against the unarmed!

O pain! O beloved children of persecuted Israel!
How you remain in hiding out of sight of the enemy!
Trembling, you bite your fingernails,
Your heads bowed as if you were walking in the rain!

Each day they are seizing and confiscating our wealth,
The informers are many and can be counted in the hundreds.
Our reserves from day to day are diminishing,
How can you, Holy God, prosper by increasing our needs?

Light? There is none. The enemy still appears powerful,
The deliverers delay in coming. They are already strong.
But God has yet to say: "Enough of this anguish."
In Him alone, in His salvation rests our felicity.

Could it be, Holy God, that we will remain alive, safe, and sound?
Could it be that the enemy will not seize us with his fist of iron?
Could it be that the candles of Hanukah will no longer shine
upon us?

Could it be, merciful God, that our lips will no longer praise You?

How long, compassionate God, will I go on lamenting?
How long the tribulations of my people will I suffer?
How long will my head be a cistern of water
And my eyes running springs of bitter tears?

O blessed times of comfort and peace, return to us!
Tell the demons: "Go back, there is no room for you."
Tell those in distress: "Return in happiness to your homes,
Discard your sighs and groanings, and all your anxieties."

O blessed lights of Hanukah, symbol of hope for Israel,
Illumine our destiny and may Michael protect us,
Illumine the path of God's blessed children,
Fill us with confidence as you have Hasmonay¹² and his children,
Soothe, soothe our souls that are greatly suffering,
And in Your blessing anoint them with the consoling and life-
giving balm.

Athens 25 Kislev 5704

22 December 1943—Wednesday

To the Jews of Athens

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