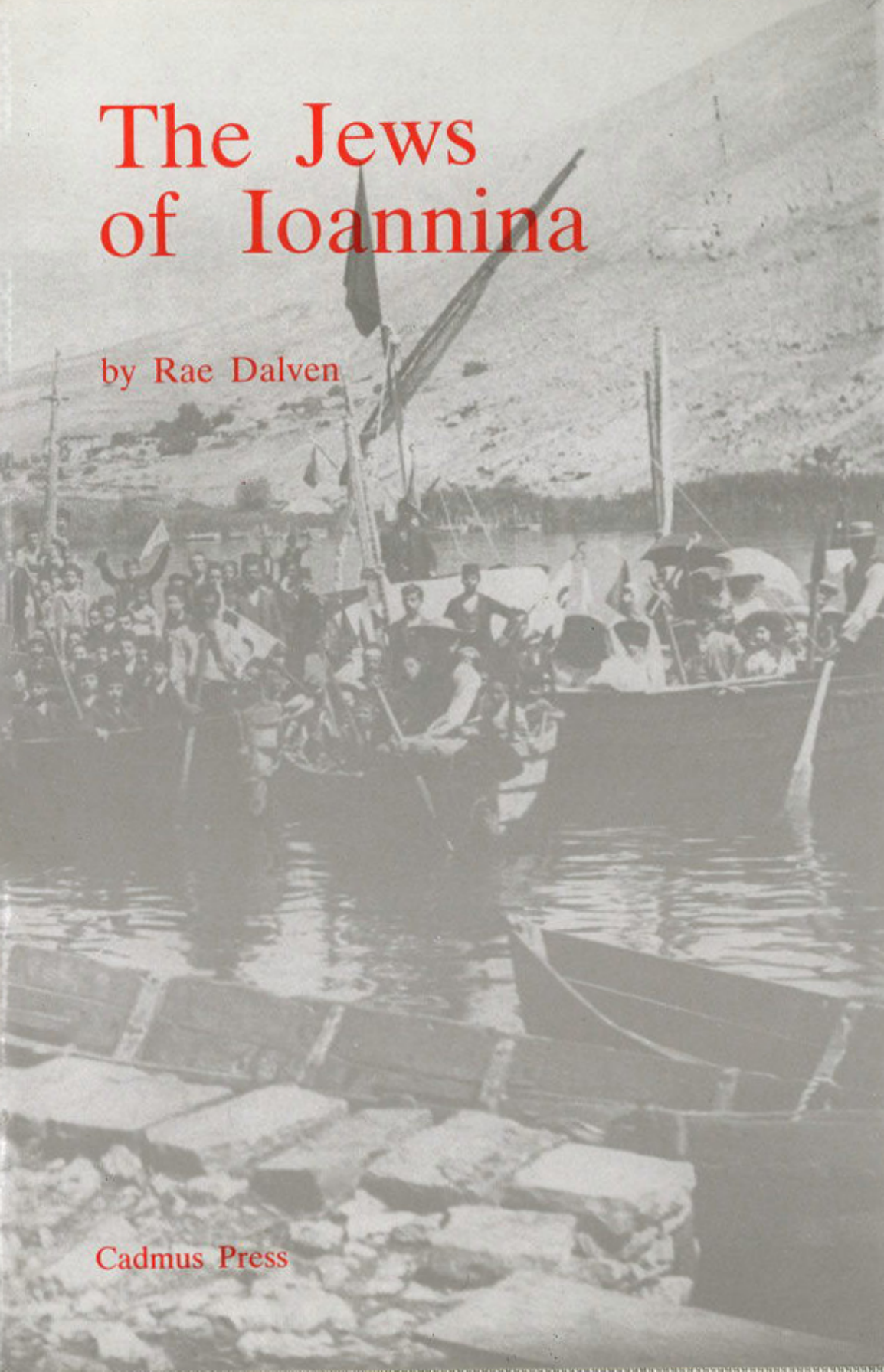
The Jews of Ioannina

by Rae Dalven



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In Ioannina, in northwest Greece, lives a small community of Jews virtually unknown in other parts of the world. They are Romaniotes (Greek speaking Jews), descendants of Byzantine Jews who have been living in Ioannina since the 8th century. From medieval times until the Holocaust, the Jewish community of Ioannina was one of the leading Jewish centers in the Levant. *The Jews of Ioannina* is a unique publication, bringing to light the world of a fascinating community.

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The Jews of Ioannina

by

Rae Dalven

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Foreword

Professor Rae Dalven's work on the history of the Jewish community in Ioannina, Greece, is a remarkable document. Born in Preveza, Greece, of Jewish parents from Ioannina, Professor Dalven has lived and experienced the culture and society of this ancient Jewish community whose history she has traced back to Byzantium and perhaps Alexandrian times. By virtue of her birth, education, and intellectual interests she has brought together precisely these elements which have allowed her to see both the vertical and horizontal sectors of a community which was at the same time ancient and modern. Further, she has been enabled thus to see the history and socio-cultural structure of the Ioannina Jews with empathy from within and with objectivity from without. Professor Dalven has made a precious contribution to a better knowledge of the history of the Jews in Greece as well as of the history of Greece itself.

Speros Vryonis, Jr.
Director
The Alexander S. Onassis
Center for Hellenic Studies

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I am indebted to Dr. Haham Solomon Gaon, chairman of the department of Sephardic Studies at Yeshiva University; the late Professor Cecil Roth of Oxford University; and the late Joseph Nehama, eminent historian of Salonika Jewry, for encouraging me to write a book on the life of my coreligionists in Ioannina, Greece.

In New York, I wish to thank the American Society of Sephardic Studies, under whose auspices I developed most of the chapters in this book. I also wish to thank Rabbi Stephen C. Lerner, former associate editor of *Conservative Judaism*, for publishing one of my articles in that magazine; I also wish to thank Dr. Joseph Dalven for publishing two of my articles in *The Sephardic Home News*. Rabbi Mitchell M. Serels of Yeshiva University was my chief consultant in Hebrew. The late Irving Isaacs, Ovadia Hametz, Max Joseph, and the late Sam Samuels, all natives of Ioannina, guided me in the Ioannina liturgy and their *piyyutim*. Professor Leonie Sachs translated German documents pertaining to the deportation of the Ioannina Jews. I am especially grateful to the American Joint Distribution Committee in New York for permitting me to examine their archives about the rehabilitation of the Ioannina Jews. The librarians of the Jewish Room of the Main Public Library in New York were most gracious in helping me locate sources. Recommendation by Rabbi Arnold B. Marans of Cederhurst Sephardic Temple enabled me to spend three months as a guest of Israel, where I was able to do considerable research.

In Israel, Professor Ezra Fleischer tracked down for me the origins of the *piyyutim* sung in Ioannina. Professor Zvi Ankori of Tel Aviv University and Mr. David Benveniste offered me valuable suggestions. Judge Samuel Cohen generously helped me with information about his grandfather, Rabbi Shemuel David. I also wish to thank the Ben Zvi Institute and the Department of Jewish Studies of Hebrew University for allowing me to use their libraries.

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In Ioannina, I am particularly indebted to the late Joseph Matsa, whose writings about and personal knowledge of the Ioannina Jewish community have been of invaluable help to me throughout this undertaking. I also wish to thank the widow of Dr. Dimitrios Salamanga for giving me a set of her husband's works, all of which pertain to Ioannina. Professors S. I. Dakaris and Evangelos Chrissos of Ioannina University generously shared with me their findings which pertain to this study. I also wish to thank the Library for Modern Greek Studies in Ioannina and the Ioannina University Library, where I did some of my research. Thanks are also due to the few survivors of the German occupation, who gave me first-hand accounts of the deportation of the Ioannina Jewish community.

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Introduction

In Ioannina, capital of the province of Epirus in northwest Greece, lives a small community of Jews virtually unknown in other parts of the world. They are Romaniotes, a term deriving from the Venetian name for Greece, Romania, which entered into Hebrew. The Romaniotes are not descendants of the Sephardim, the predominantly Spanish speaking exiles who found a welcoming haven in the Ottoman Empire in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. They were on Greek soil centuries before the arrival of the immigrants from Spain, Portugal, and parts of Italy (Apulia, Sicily, and Sardinia). They have been influenced by Greek culture, their spoken language is Greek, and until the 16th century their prayer book was the *Mahzor Bene Romania*.[1]

Much has been written about the Sephardim, but less has been written about the Romaniote Jews. A number of articles have been written on Romaniote communities no longer in existence.[2] Joshua Starr has written about several of these communities in his excellent book, *Romania*.[3] Several articles, some by this author, have been written on the Romaniote community of Ioannina.[4] Joshua Starr, Steven Bowman, and Andrew Sharf have published studies of Byzantine Jews on a broader scope, and the late Joseph Nehama devoted the first of his seven volume history of the Jews of Thessaloniki to the Romaniote community in that city, which probably first settled there around 140 B.C.E. Essentially, this has been the extent of scholarly attention to the Romaniote Jews. It is hoped that this book, a study of one of the two surviving Romaniote communities in Greece, will encourage further research on this indigenous, Greek-speaking Jewry.

The Spanish rabbi, Benjamin of Tudela, visited twenty-eight Romaniote communities in 1170.[5] Just before the Second World War there were four Romaniote communities in Greece: Chalcis, Arta, Patras, Ioannina.

Jews have been living in Chalcis, capital of the island of Euboea, east of Thessaly, since the first century of the common era.[6] Benjamin of Tudela found two hundred Jews living in the city.[7] A Hebrew inscription dated 5086 (1326 C. E.) on a gravestone set in the city walls at the entrance gate indicates that there was a Jewish community living in Chalcis in the 14th century.[8] In 1940 three

hundred and fifty Jews were living in the city. In October 1943, two hundred and thirty-eight were helped by their neighbors to escape; many of them went on to Palestine.[9] The Nazis deported ninety-two to Auschwitz and Birkenau. In 1947, one hundred and seventy Jews from Chalcis returned to Chalcis. Fortunately, their synagogue was not destroyed. Today, approximately one hundred Jews live in the city.

Benjamin of Tudela found one hundred Jews living in Arta, about forty miles south of Ioannina.[10] The community had the same dialect, customs, and liturgical practices as the Ioannina Jewish community.[11] Early in the 16th century there was an influx of Sephardic exiles who formed congregations of their own, established a Jewish Court of Justice (Beth Din), and a college. Language differences and conflicting customs caused many of the Sephardim to move to other, predominantly Sephardic communities.[12] Arta remained a Romaniote community. On March 24, 1944, the Germans arrested four hundred and eighty Jews in Arta. Most of the thirty who survived the war moved to Athens, Israel, or the United States.[13] Today there are no Jews living in Arta. The synagogue and the cemetery were destroyed and the land used by the municipality.

The Romaniote community of Patras, a port city on the northeast coast of the Peloponnesos, had a long and stormy history.[14] At the time of the Greek War of Independence, the Jews abandoned Patras; the community was not reestablished until 1905. In 1940 there were three hundred and thirty-seven Jews living in Patras. In 1943 two hundred and forty-seven of them fled to escape the Nazis; the rest were sent to concentration camps. In 1948 one hundred and fifty-two Jews from Patras who had survived the war returned to their native city, but by 1959 their number had dwindled to thirty-seven.[15] In 1967 only nineteen Jews were living in the city. Today there is only one Jewish family living in Patras.

The Jewish community of Ioannina, before the Holocaust, was the largest uniformly Romaniote community in Greece and was one of the leading Jewish centers in the Levant. As late as 1910, much of Ioannina's commerce was in the hands of the Ioannina Jews, whom Nikos Bees believed had created the city's financial and cultural importance.[16]

The Romaniote traditions of the Ioannina Jews continue to be observed outside of Greece. The Holy Synagogue of Ioannina (Kehila Kedosha Janina) is at 280 Broome Street on the lower east side of Manhattan in New York City. In 1964 the Mapleton Synagogue, founded by Joseph Josephs and Morris Cohen, two Romaniote Jews, now used by both the Romaniote and Sephardic communities, was erected on 65th street in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. Another Ioannina synagogue, the Beth Avraham and Ohel Sara, is in the Montefiore district of Jerusalem.

Introduction, notes

1. The *Mahzor Romania*, also known as *Grigos*, is the oldest compilation of prayers and *piyyutim* in Europe. It originated in the Byzantine Empire and was used for centuries in a "fluctuating" manuscript form by the Romaniotes until it was superceded by the Spanish rite early in the 16th century. *See* Daniel Goldschmidt, "The Mahzor Romania," in *Sefunot* (Jerusalem, 1964), Vol. 8, 21; Isaac Broyde, "Mahzor Romania," JE Vol. 8, 262; and Joseph Nehama, *La Communaute Romaniote* (Paris, 1935), 88.
2. Zvi Ankori, "Jews and the Jewish Community in the History of Medieval Crete" in *Proceedings of the 2nd Congress of Cretan Studies III (Athens, 1968), 312-367; "From Zudecha to Yahudi Mahallesi; the Jewish Quarter of Candia in the Seventeenth Century" in S. W. Baron, Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1974), 25-29.

   P. Argenti, "The Jewish Community of Chios During the Eleventh Century" in *Polychronion Festschrift Franz Doelger* (Heidelberg, 1966), 39-68; *The Religious Minorities of Chios, Jews and Roman Catholics* (Cambridge, 1970).

   Nikos A. Bees, "The Jews of Lacedaemon and Mistra" (Greek) in *Noumas III* (1905), 10-11.

   Steven Bowman, "The Jewish Settlement in Sparta and Mistra" in BNJ, 22 (Athens, 1979), 131-146; "Another Medieval Jewry: The Jews of Byzantium" in *Forum* 36 (Jerusalem, 1979), 131-141; "Hebrew Epitaphs of Mistra," edited with Daniel Spiegel in *Michael* VII (1981), 201-247; "Jewish Epitaphs in Thebes" in REJ CLXI (1982), 317-329; "Remnants and Memories in Greece" in *Forum* 2 (Jerusalem, 1976), 63-71.

   P. Christopoulos, "The Jewish Community of Naupaktos" (Greek) in *Epeteris Hetireias Stereoelladikon Meleton* I (1968), 277-300.
   Raphael Gioulis, "The Chronicle of the Jewish Community of Arta" (Greek) in *Skouphas* (Arta, 1957), 32-35.

   Andrew Sharf, "Jews, Armenians and the Patriarch Athanasius" in *Bar-Ilan Annual* (Ramat Gan, 1979), XVI-XVII (1979); "Byzantine Jewry in the XIII Century" in *Bar-Ilan Annual* XIV-XV (Ramat Gan, 1977), 61-72.

   Joshua Starr, "Jewish Life in Crete Under the Rule of Venice" in PAAJR (1942), 59-114.
3. Joshua Starr, *Romania* (Paris, 1949). This book also contains articles on other Jewish communities in the Levant after the Fourth Crusade: Modon and Coron, Patras, Thessalonica under the Hospitaliers, Chios under the Geneose, Cyprus.
4. Nikos A. Bees, "Ubersicht uber die Geschichte des Judentums von Janina (Epirus)" in BNJ, 11 (Athens, 1921), 159-167.

   Rachel Dalven, "Judeo-Greek" in EJ, Vol. 10, cols. 425-427; "The Marriage and Betrothal Customs of the Janina Jews" in *Annual* (Series 2, 1972-1973); "The Yearly Cycle of the Ioannina Jews" in CJ, Vol. 28, No. 2, Winter 1974, 47-53; "The Names of the Janina Jews" in SS series 3, 1979-78, 65-83; "Three Traditional Judeo-Greek Hymns and Their Tunes" (with Israel J. Katz) in SS series 4, 1979-82, 84-101; "The Jews of Janina: An Ancient Community in Greece" in *The Jewish People's*

Almanac (New York, 1981), 400-402; "The Holocaust in Janina" in JMGSA, May 1984, col. 87-103.

Simon Marcus, "Ioannina" in EJ, Vol. 8, col. 1436.

Joseph Matsa, *Ta Onomata ton Evraion Sta Yiannina* (Greek, Athens, 1935); *Yianniotika Evraika Tragoudia* (Greek), Ioannina, 1953).

5. Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, (New York, 1965)
6. *See* Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* (280-285) XXXVI (Loeb, 1971).
7. Adler, 10.
8. Simon Marcus, "Chalcis" in EJ Vol. 5, cols. 329-330. *See* also Deutsch and M. Caimi, "Chalcis" in JE, Vol. 3, 661 and William Miller, *Latins of the Levant* (London, 1908),79, 209-210.
9. Michael Molho, *In Memoriam* (Thessaloniki, 1974), 214, 326.
10. Adler, *see* note 5, above.
11. *Pirke Avoth* (Sayings of the Fathers) and the Midrash Version of *Shir Asherim* (Song of Songs) published in Salonika in the 19th century with a note on the title page *Kemin'hag Janina ve Arta* (According to the customs of Ioannina and Arta).
12. Abraham Danon, "Arta," in JE, Vol. 2, 143. *See* also Simon Marcus, "Arta," in EJ, Vol. 3, col. 645.
13. Gioulis, *see* note 2.
14. For evidence of a Jewish community in Patras in antiquity, *See* Simon Marcus, "Patras," in EJ, Vol. 13, col. 180. Benjamin of Tudela found 50 Jews in the city, *see* Adler, note 5 above. *See* also Starr, *Romania*, *op cit*, 73, 75.
15. Molho, 326. *See* also Marcus, op cit.
16. Bees, *op cit*. *See* also Simon Marcus, "Ioannina, in EJ, Vol. 8, col. 1436.

Part I

History

History

Settlement

The earliest documentary evidence for the existence of Jews in Ioannina appears in a chrysobull issued by the Byzantine emperor Andronikos II in 1319. Two students of Greek Judaica, however, Joseph Nehama and Nikos Bees, believed that Greek-speaking Jews settled in Epirus during the reign of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.E.).[1] Oral tradition in Ioannina maintains that the first Jews who settled in the area did so in 70 C. E., after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. According to the tradition, the Roman emperor Titus, after capturing Jerusalem in September 70, was transporting many Jews to Rome as slaves when his ship was driven by a storm onto the Albanian coast. Instead of throwing his captives into the sea, he allowed them to disembark, and they eventually made their way to the area in which Ioannina later was established.

The province of Epirus was under Roman rule from 168 B. C. E. to 375 C. E., when it came under Byzantine control. No specific mention was made by Josephus or any other writer of the Roman period of Jews living in Epirus during this period, but there may have been some. Strabo wrote that when Sulla crossed over to Greece in 87 B. C. E., "the habitable world was filled with Jews. This people has already made its way into every city, and it is not easy to find any place in the habitable world which has not received this nation and in which it has not made its power felt."[2]

The late Asher Moissis, author of many books on Greek Judaica, believed that the Jews emigrated to Ioannina from Nikopolis in the eighth century of the common era.[3] Perhaps this is so, for Ioannina first appeared as a bishopric under the Metropolitan of Naupaktos in 674 C. E. The presence of a bishop of Ioannina indicates that Ioannina already had a fortress and a permanent population. Ioannina was mentioned as a city in the seventh ecumenical council, held in Nicaea in 787.[4]

The earliest physical evidence of a Jewish presence in Ioannina is no longer extant. "Until the first years of the satrapy of Ali Pasha, a Jewish synagogue in the walled city showed the date of its construction on one of the sides of the building; it was nine hundred years

earlier, or at the end of the ninth century."[5] The synagogue in the walled city was probably not the first house of worship for the Ioannina Jews, so we may reasonably assume that a Romaniote Jewish community was living in Ioannina by the ninth century of the common era.

Jews Under Byzantine Rule

Up until the fourth century C. E., the Jews living in the Greek cities of Asia Minor and the Balkan peninsula enjoyed the same civil rights as their neighbors, and they also could "live according to the internal autonomy of the organized Jewish community in the Diaspora."[6] After Christianity was established as the religion of the state in 330 C. E., some Byzantine rulers took drastic measures to preserve and expand Orthodox Christianity throughout the empire. Justinian (483-565) forced the Jews to read scriptures in the synagogue in Greek translation, preferably the Septuagint, and prohibited the study of reinterpretation (deuterosis). Basil I (867-886) issued several anti-Jewish enactments. At first Basil I attempted to convert the Jews by inviting rabbis to defend their faith in debate, offering them honorable posts and special tax exemptions if they confessed defeat. Failing in this, he issued an edict in 874 ordering all Jews to convert to Christianity.[7] Ahima'az ben Paltiel, an 11th century chronicler, wrote that Basil I "sent couriers and horsemen to the provinces and all parts of the kingdom to force Jews out of their religion and made them accept his senseless faith."[8]

The "Vision of Daniel," an anonymous apocalyptic Hebrew source written in either the late 10th or early 13th century, states that Basil I "will set his face against the people of saints of the One on high, and baptize them against their will, with much suffering and compulsion. Afterwards he will sell their men and women into slavery. But he will die on his bed in great pain."[9] Basil I's son, Leo VI (886-912), repeated Justinian's ordinance forcing the Jews to read scriptures in the synagogue in Greek translation. His Novella 55, enacted sometime before 893, did not specifically revoke the older laws which had permitted Jews to live according to their own customs, "but it sharpened Basil's outlawry of Judaism."[10] Ahima'az ben Paltiel, however, wrote that Leo VI annulled the decree issued in his father's time and permitted the Jews to return to their faith.[11] In the first half of the 10th century, another imperial attempt to force the Jews to convert was made by Romanos I Lekapenos (919-944), causing large-scale emigration of Jews to Khazaria.[12]

According to the Greek historian Demetrios Constantelis, the Jews who kept their faith did so in part because of the efforts of the Church, which refused to accept forced converts, and in part because this imperial policy was not uniformly pursued. "The persecution (the Jews) suffered was rather sporadic and with few exceptions they

enjoyed undisturbed toleration, at least until the Fourth Crusade, which initiated a period of vicissitudes for Greeks and Jews alike."[13]

Foreign Incursions

The attitude of the Byzantine state toward the Jews was not always relevant to the Jews in Ioannina, however, for from the sixth to the eleventh centuries there was continued warfare between the Byzantine Greeks, Slavs, and Bulgars for dominance in the Balkan peninsula. In the first half of the sixth century the Slavs overcame Byzantine defenses and moved south. By the end of the century they occupied almost the entire Balkan peninsula, eventually forming the First South Slav (Sclavonic) Empire.[14] Unfortunately, we have no information about relations between Slavs and Jews during this period in the countries south of the Danube.

In the second half of the seventh century, the Balkan peninsula was invaded by the Bulgars, a people of Turkic origin, with whom the Slavs seem to have made common cause against the Byzantines.[15] One of the few specific references to Jews occurred during the reign of the Bulgarian czar Krum (802-814), when there were said to have been some Jews among the 30,000 prisoners the czar was reported to have removed from Thessaly in 811.[16] The Bulgarian state reached a plateau under the czar Symeon (893-927), after whom the Byzantine emperors Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (905-959) and Nicephorus Phocas (963-969) were successful in curbing Bulgarian expansion. The Bulgarian czar Samuel (976-1014), however, inflicted a series of defeats on Byzantine forces, bringing under his control much additional territory, including Epirus.[17] At least in the tenth century, the Bulgarian attitude toward the Jews was generally favorable.[18]

The Byzantine emperor Basil II (958-1025) fought several campaigns against the Bulgarian czar Samuel, of which the culmination was the battle in 1014 at Ochrida, where Basil earned the name Bulgaroktonos (Bulgar Killer). Samuel escaped but, after the battle, Basil had all the Bulgarian captives -- numbering, it was said, 14,000 -- blinded, except for one in every hundred who was left with one eye to lead the others back to the czar.[19] Samuel died soon after seeing this gruesome procession and by 1018 all Bulgarian territory had been incorporated into the Byzantine Empire.

After the death of Basil II the empire entered upon a long period of crisis. The Pechenegs, a Turkic people, invaded Thrace. The Uzes, another Turkic people, swept over Bulgaria, Thrace, and Macedonia, down to Greece.[20] The 1054 schism between the Pope and Constantine IX ended in the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches. The threatened disintegration of the empire was ended with the accession of Alexius Comnenus (1081-1118), founder

of the Comneni dynasty. During his reign there was great Messianic fervor among the Romaniote Jews of Thessaloniki, who reported signs announcing the coming of the Messiah. When Alexius learned of this, he exempted the Jews from taxes and encouraged them to leave for Palestine.[21]

We have no way of knowing if any Ioannina Jews joined in this Messianic movement.

1082 - 1430

In 1082, the year after Alexius I ascended the throne, Ioannina was captured from the Byzantines by Bohemund, son of the Norman prince, Robert Guiscard. Bohemund strengthened the city's fortifications, behind which he was able to bivouac his entire army, and the emperor Alexius was unable to recapture the city. [22]

The Normans, however, abandoned Epirus after Robert Guiscard died in 1082 of the plague. Bohemund returned to the Norman kingdom in southern Italy and the Byzantine Empire was free of Norman attacks for several years.[23] In 1096 Bohemund passed through Ioannina, apparently peacefully, on his way to Constantinople for the First Crusade.[24]

In 1153 Al Idrisi, an Arab geographer in the service of Roger, king of the Norman kingdom of Sicily, visited Ioannina, which he found to be "densely populated and prosperous."[25] The Normans, continuing their protracted struggle with the Byzantines, invaded Epirus in 1185 and captured Ioannina, which "they destroyed almost to desolation."[26] Asher Moissis believed that there were no Jews living in Ioannina in the twelfth century.[27] This is supported by the fact that Benjamin of Tudela, who was travelling in Greece in the 1170's, did not visit Ioannina, but it is not conclusive. Communications were poor, and Benjamin of Tudela did not visit all Jewish communities in Greece.[28] Furthermore, he seems to have followed the usual route from Italy to Constantinople, which did not include Ioannina.[29]

When Constantinople fell to the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the Latin victors divided the Byzantine empire among themselves. The Norman Crusader Baldwin was made Latin Emperor, with his capital in Constantinople and with territory consisting of northwest Asia Minor and several Aegean islands. The Republic of Venice claimed all the territory, including Albania and Epirus, from Dyrrachium in the north to Naupaktos on the Gulf of Corinth in the south. Thessaloniki was assigned to Boniface of Montferrat, the leader of the Crusade, who moved south to lay claim to as much territory as possible.

Byzantine refugees fled to three separate, and soon competing, centers: the city of Nicaea, in northeastern Asia Minor; the city of Trebizond, on the southeast coast of the Black Sea; and Epirus.

Each of these three Byzantine principalities sought to recreate the Byzantine Empire with Constantinople as its capital. Trebizond, awash in a sea of Turks, was never a serious contender. For a while it seemed that Epirus would succeed but, in the end, it was Nicaea which reestablished the Byzantine Empire.

Michael Comnenus Ducas (1204-1215), who initially had joined Boniface of Montferrat, the Latin King of Thessaloniki, soon appointed himself leader of the Greek inhabitants of Epirus against the Latins. With Arta as his capital, he ruled over the areas of Aetolia, Acarnania, Thesprotia, and Ioannina.[30]

Epirus had been allotted to the Republic of Venice, but Boniface of Montferrat also laid claim to it. In order to have a powerful ally in Epirus, in 1210 the Venetians asked Michael Comnenus Ducas if he would govern as their vassal.[31] Michael accepted and promptly captured Galaxidi, held in fief to Boniface of Montferrat. He then turned against the Venetians, capturing Dyrrachium and the island of Corfu. By 1214 he had brought all of Epirus under his control.

Michael created an imperial Greek principality in exile, a rival claimant to the Byzantine throne, which came to be known as the Despotate of Epirus. With Arta as his capital, he ruled from Dyrrachium in the north to the Gulf of Corinth in the south. Ioannina was his center of administration for the north, and he strengthened its fortifications. As described by Donald M. Nicol,

> Michael became "a second Noah" for the crowds of refugees fleeing from the Latin conquest. A large colony of these refugees was established in Ioannina, and emergency measures were taken to provide each family with land and property, as well as with shelter and protection according to the needs of their social status. The native inhabitants evidently regarded the newcomers with suspicion, and were jealous of the benefits showered upon them, but care was taken by Michael and his successors to ensure that their rights were respected. A later document confirming their privileges refers to Michael as "the founder, protector, and savior of Ioannina," who transformed it from a small town into a fortress.[32]

According to Baron, Michael Comnenus Ducas "seems to have maintained the status of Jews with few local changes."[33] Joshua Starr, on the other hand, believed that the restoration of Byzantine rule meant suppression of the Jews. "In the aftermath of the partition of the Empire," he writes, " the practice of Judaism was banned in the Despotate of Epirus and the Empire of Nicaea."[34]

Michael Comnenus Ducas was murdered in his sleep in 1215 by one of his servants and succeeded by his half-brother, Theodore I

Ducas (1215-1230). Theodore I had lived in the court of Nicaea, and went to Epirus at Michael's request only in 1207, after swearing an oath of loyalty to the emperor at Nicaea.[35]

Theodore I ignored his oath and made Epirus a major contender with Nicaea to recreate the Byzantine empire. He drove the Latins out of Thessaly and the Bulgarians out of Macedonia. In 1224 he captured Thessaloniki, making it his capital, putting an end to the Latin kingdom based there. He controlled territory from the Adriatic to the Aegean, including the original Epirotic state, Thessaly, and much of Macedonia.

According to a letter written in approximately 1270 by a rabbi named Jacob ben Elia to a relative and former pupil, Pablo Christiani, who had become an enthusiastic convert to Christianity, Theodore I

> was an enemy of our people [who] profaned our faith, seized their wealth, and despoiled them of their riches. And whenever a Jew came before him (no doubt to ask for justice), he would close his eyes.[36]

Starr conjectures that Theodore I's persecution of the Jews reflected the upsurge of Greek nationalism in the provinces remaining under Greek rule.[37] Bowman believes that Theodore I's actions were not an attack against Judaism but a means of financing the army. He also points out that this persecution can be dated to just before Theodore I's unsuccessful attack on the Bulgarian czar John Asen II and was probably limited to the area around Thessaloniki.[38]

The immediate result of Theodore I's attack in 1230 on the powerful Bulgarian czar, John Asen II, was Theodore's defeat and imprisonment. The territory from Dyrrachium to Adrianople now came under direct Bulgarian rule, and John Asen II styled himself "Emperor of the Bulgarians and the Greeks." Manuel, Theodore's younger brother, was installed by the Bulgarians as ruler of Thessaloniki, Thessaly, and Epirus.

According to Bowman, the Jews mentioned in John Asen II's entourage may have been refugees from Theodore's persecution, and John Asen may have ordered Manuel to mitigate the policy against the Jews.[39] This is consistent with Tamir's claim that John Asen II treated the urban Jewish population with a tolerance sharply contrasting with the persecution of the Jews by the Greeks.[40]

Initially, Theodore was treated mildly, but when he was discovered to be plotting to kill John Asen, he was blinded. From Jacob Elia's letter we learn that

> John Asen condemned him to have his eyes gouged and designated two Jews to carry out this punishment."Praise your Lord,

for Theodore, your foe, has fallen into my hands. Darken his eyes in their sockets. Take vengeance on him who has been captured in war."[41]

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Jews acted as executioners both for the Greeks and their Bulgarian neighbors. In this instance, however, the two Jews pleaded for clemency, whereupon John Asen had them both hurled to their death from a cliff. The czar then ordered two other men to put out Theodore's eyes, which they did.[42]

Theodore was succeeded in Ioannina by Michael II Ducas (1231-1268), an illegitimate son of Michael Comnenus Ducas, who had lived in exile since his father was murdered. After Theodore was captured by the Bulgarians, Michael returned to Arta and the people of Epirus and Thessaly acknowledged him as their ruler. Much of what is known about his early career was written in a late thirteenth century biography of his wife, Theodora, who came to be revered as St. Theodora of Arta.[43] It was he who brought the long contest with Nicaea to a head, finally losing the confrontation. During his reign the Jews, at least in his capital, Arta, prospered.[44]

In 1237, the blind Theodore I somehow escaped from his Bulgarian prison. In Thessaloniki he ejected his brother Manuel and installed his son John with the title of emperor in Manuel's place. In 1242 the emperor of Nicaea, John Vatatzes, forced John to forego the imperial title and accept the lesser rank of despot, and in 1246 John Vatatzes annexed Thessaloniki and the surrounding territory to Nicaea.

Theodore I retired to his castle on the border between the territories ruled by Epirus and Nicaea, from which he encouraged his nephew, Michael II, to move against John Vatatzes. Michael II had concluded a treaty of friendship with the Nicaean ruler, and in 1249 betrothed his son, Nicephoros, to John Vatatzes's granddaughter. Nonetheless, under Theodore's influence, Michael II occupied several Nicaean fortresses in Macedonia. John Vatatzes reacted swiftly and forced Michael II to submit to Nicaea. The elderly and blind Theodore was placed in a prison where he spent the rest of his days.

From Jacob ben Elia's letter we learn that, at the end of his long reign, John Vatatzes commanded the Jews throughout the empire "to worship according to his rite and uphold and take upon themselves his faith."[45] John Vatatzes began to persecute the Jews in 1253. Angold supposes that this decree "was caused by the growing xenophobia of the Greeks of the Nicaean Empire."[46] Jacob ben Elia recounts that, after the persecutions began, the emperor developed epilepsy, of which he died in 1254, after being seriously ill for more than a year. John Vatatzes was succeeded by his son, Theodore II

Lascaris (1254-1258). The new emperor of Nicaea continued his father's pressure upon the Jews to become Christian. He, too, suffered from a severe case of epilepsy and he died on 1258 at the age of thirty-six. The regent of his ten year old son was soon murdered, and the young heir was placed under the guardianship of Michael VIII Palaiologos, who became the ruler of Nicaea.

Michael II of Epirus refused to recognize Michael VIII Palaiologos and allied with the Franks against Nicaea, but their combined forces were soundly defeated in 1259 by a Nicaean army commanded by Michael VIII Palaiologos's brother, John. Michael II slowly rallied, however, for the people of Epirus preferred being ruled by him to being ruled by the distant Michael VIII Palaiologos, even when the Nicaean emperor, in 1261, reoccupied Constantinople. The issue was only settled in 1264 when Michael VIII Palaiologos brought a large army to Thessaloniki. Michael II was forced to submit, and married his son, Nikephoros, to Michael VIII Palaiologos's niece. Nikephoros was confirmed as despot by Michael VIII Palaiologos. Michael II died approximately two years later. Ioannina was turned over to the restored empire.

Jacob ben Elia, still our source of information about the Jews during this period, wrote,

> Palaiologos summoned a scribe and assembled all the sages of Israel throughout his kingdom and told them, "I know full well that Vatatzes oppressed you, therefore he did not prosper. Now go and worship your Lord, you, your sons, and your daughters. Keep His commandments and bless me also. Be you my friends and wish me well. I shall fight for you and you shall hold your peace."[47]

The greatest threat to the restored Byzantine empire was the rising strength of Charles of Anjou, brother of King Louis IX of France, who had become ruler of Naples and Sicily and who sought to recover Constantinople from the Greeks. Charles established bases in Albania and allied himself with the Latin principalities in Athens and the Peloponnesos. Michael VIII was seriously alarmed and sought to block Charles's progress by negotiating with the papacy to make the Greeks subservient to Rome. This was successful in that the pope ordered Charles of Anjou to stop his moves against Byzantium, but Michael VIII's Orthodox subjects were adamantly opposed to the union of the churches agreed by the emperor. Nikephoros of Epirus allied himself closely with Charles of Anjou against Michael.

Charles of Anjou pressed his campaign against Byzantium, but his successful progress was stopped in its tracks by a revolution in Sicily fomented by Michael VIII, known as the Sicilian Vespers, in

1282. Charles's fleet was destroyed and his army was thrown out of Sicily.

The successful Michael VIII did not long survive his greatest victory, for he died later in the same year. He was succeeded by his son Andronikos II (1282-1328), who promptly restored Orthodoxy throughout the empire. The restoration of Orthodoxy brought Nikephoros of Epirus back into the Byzantine fold, recognizing allegiance to Constantinople.

The first documentary proof we have of a Jewish community in Ioannina is the 1319 chrysobull of the emperor Andronikos II, confirming the charter of the Byzantine governor Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philanthropenos, who had been invited by the inhabitants of Ioannina to take possession of their city. The rights granted Ioannina were generous, and one clause stipulated that the Jews were to enjoy "freedom and not be molested."[48] This may have been done to attract Jews to the city.[49]

Freedom did not mean that the Jews were to be on an unqualified par with their Christian neighbors. The state would not employ Jews as public officials nor enlist them as soldiers. The Church condemned Christians who ate or bathed with Jews, or had recourse to Jewish physicians. Jews were not permitted to ride on horseback. These restrictions were not applied, however, uniquely to Jews, but to all persons who were not members of the Orthodox Church.[50]

Bowman maintains that there were two groups of Jews in Ioannina in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, one of recent immigrants and another of long-term residents who owed specific services to the Metropolitan of the Church of Ioannina. As Bowman interprets the last phrase of the second chrysobull concerning Ioannina by Andronikos II, issued in 1321, κατά τους λοίπους επίκους is synonymous with the older term μέτοικος (meaning a foreign settler) and refers to a resident who is not the holder of the ancient civil rights and privileges but rather settles in the city under special dispensation.

> With the loss of much of the surrounding area to the Serbians and Catalans, it is only natural to expect large numbers of rural inhabitants to have sought the protection of the strong walls of the seat of the governor. The Jews of Ioannina, whether of long standing or recent arrival, were accorded by statute the protection of the city, along with the new arrivals; however, they were not admitted to the local privileges of the veteran Greek community.[51]

The chrysobull of 1321 confirmed the Church of Ioannina in its possessions, which included three Jews. A man named Lameris and his sons David and Samarias swept the church in the cathedral of

Ioannina. They were required to render one day's service each week, an obligation which was to be continued by their descendants for five centuries. "From the context," writes Bowman, "it seems that these Jews (or more) in some way constituted the possessions' of the church and that they owed it certain obligations." We have no idea how this unusual arrangement originated.[52]

Another indication that the Ioannina Jews enjoyed religious toleration under the Palaiologoi is contained in the letter written by the Patriarch Athanasios to Andronikos II, in which he castigated the emperor for the "tolerance shown to the enemies of the faith - Jews, Armenians, and Turks - who have erected houses of prayer among the Christians." His protest indicates that this freedom was unusual.[53]

In the charter confirmed in 1319 by the chrysobull issued by Andronikos II there is no mention of a Jewry tax, although it was common under Byzantine rule. Doelger believes that Byzantine Jewry paid a special head tax (κεφαλετείον) regularly as a symbolic degrading tax. Charanis also believes that for the period of the early Palaeologoi the Jews of the empire were subjected to a special tax as Jews. Andreades comes to the conclusion that Jews were subject to a special tax on a par with their brethren in Islamic countries and in western Europe. Further, he believes that the Jewish taxes of capitation were in fact perceived uniquely on adult males. Starr believes that "the Jewry tax served not as a supplement but *in lieu of all other taxes*. At the sime time the symbolism of this tax, the relegation of the obstinate minority group to an inferior status remains indisputable." No historian has explained why the charter of Ioannina does not mention a Jewry tax.[54]

Unfortunately, the Jews of Ioannina did not long enjoy this religious tolerance. As the century advanced the Church underwent several major changes, and the Byzantine empire was increasingly threatened by Roman Catholicism to the west and Islam to the east. Polemics against the Jews were sharpened. The basic Byzantine attitude toward social issues can be seen in a compilation of secular and church rulings, known as the *Syntagma* by Matthew Blastares, in which Christians were warned against contact with Jews. The nephew of the emperor Andronikos II, also named Andronikos, wrote a treatise against Jews, as did the emperor John VI Cantakouzenos(1347-1354) from his monastic retirement.[55]

In 1345 the struggle between John Cantakouzenos and John Palaiologos (1355-1391), each fighting for the right to succession, enabled the Serbs, Turks, and Albanians to strengthen their positions in the Balkans. The Serbian ruler, Stephen Dushan (1331-1355) made successive attacks on Byzantine territory; by 1346 he controlled almost all of Epirus and most of Thessaly. In 1348 he captured Ioannina. Serbian rule in Epirus was extremely harsh, and the Jews

in Arta were persecuted.[56]

Stephen Dushan died in 1355, to be succeeded by his half-brother, Simeon Urosh, who ruled Thessaly and Epirus from 1356 to 1371. Albanian tribesmen, who had been filtering down into Epirus, now posed a serious threat to Ioannina, and the city requested a governor for their protection from Simeon. Simeon recommended his son-in-law, Thomas Preloumbos (1367-1384).

Now often described as the Ali Pasha of the fourteenth century, Thomas Preloumbos ruled Ioannina for eighteen years. At first, says the *Chronicle of Ioannina*, "Preloumbos wore a fox's skin, but he soon threw it off and put on that of a lion." In 1368 the bubonic plague devastated Ioannina. As soon as it was over, Preloumbos "raised taxes and imposed new levies increasing the price of wine, corn, meat, cheese, fish and vegetables. The sale of the necessities of life became a state monopoly exercised either by Thomas himself or by his complacent archons."[57]

For all the evil acts the *Chronicle of Ioannina* attributed to Preloumbos, he at least defended Ioannina against the repeated Albanian attacks. In 1379 a traitor led the Albanians into the fortifications from the lake, and the Albanians managed to gain control of a tower. Preloumbos led the counterattack, killing so many Albanians that he came to be known as *Albanoktonos* (Albanian Killer). In 1380 and again in 1382 Preloumbos was helped by the Ottomans to repel Albanian attacks. Preloumbos must have recognized the dangers of Ottoman assistance, for in 1382 he formally declared allegiance to Manuel II Palaiologos (1391-1425) who at that time was established in Thessaloniki. Preloumbos, had made himself so unpopular, however, that he was killed by members of his bodyguard in 1384.

Esau Buondelmonte, the Florentine ruler of Cephalonia, married Preloumbos's widow and became co-ruler of Ioannina. In 1386 Buondelmonte became a vassal of the Ottoman sultan Murad I (1326-1389), who sent an Ottoman force to lift yet another Albanian siege of Ioannina. After Murad I died, Buondelmonte went to Thessaloniki to become vassal of the new sultan, Bayezid I (1389-1401). He remained with Bayezid fourteen months, returning to Ioannina in December 1390 with Ottoman officers and troops who remained until 1396. During these seven years, the Turkish soldiers received the sultan's permission to marry Greek Christian girls. "As the girls came out of the church, the Turks grabbed seven of the loveliest and richest and led them to their camp where they married them."[58]

When Esau Buondelmonte died early in 1411, the people of Ioannina invited Carlo Tocco, Buondelmonte's nephew, to become their ruler, but Tocco was only able to hold off the Albanians by allying himself with the Ottomans. Nonetheless, he had close ties

with the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos who formally invested Carlo Tocco as Despot of Epirus in 1415. When Carlo Tocco died in 1429 he left most of his realm to his nephew, Carlo Tocco II, and a small portion to his three illegitimate sons. Two of the illegitimate sons contested this division of their father's realm and sought help from Sultan Murad II (1421-1451).[59] Murad sent Sinon Pasha, governor of the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire, who asked the people of Ioannina to surrender to avoid massacre. The threat was ignored and for a whole summer the walled city withstood siege. Then the sultan sent the defenders an imperial document known as *orismós* (order) written in demotic Greek urging them to surrender and pledging that the people of Ioannina

> need have no fear that they will be taken captive or their children abducted, that churches will be destroyed and turned into mosques. The bells of the churches will continue to ring. The Metropolitan [of Ioannina] will retain his judicial prerogatives and all other ecclesiastical rights, property and personal possessions will be guaranteed without question, and anything else you may ask for will be granted.

The leaders of Ioannina agreed to the sultan's conditions and sent a committee of four to Thessaloniki, who delivered the keys of the walled city and paid homage to the sultan as their lord.[60] The Turks entered Ioannina and, respecting the agreement, built their houses outside the fortifications. Ioannina surrendered on October 9, 1430 and remained under Ottoman rule until February 21, 1913. The Ottoman occupation of Ioannina lasted 482 years.

Ioannina Jews Under Ottoman Rule

Provided they paid their taxes and did not take up arms against the government, Jews living under Ottoman rule were allowed to worship in peace, engage in commerce, dispose of their money as they wished, dress as they liked, and do all the things that Christians of the Middle Ages prohibited.[61] In Ioannina the Jews sympathized with their Greek neighbors' desire to be free of Ottoman rule, but lived by the Talmudic principle that *the law of the land is the law*. In this period of Jewish history, Orthodox Jews would never have dreamt of insurrection. "For traditional Jews, nationalism of any kind was an impiety."[62]

People of the Pact (Ahl al-Dhimmi)

People conquered by Muslims but who did not embrace Islam were known as People of the Pact, *dhimmis*. They were to be

protected, free, and allowed to retain property in return for a payment by adult males of a head tax known as *jizya*. Jews were not to construct new synagogues nor raise existing ones higher than mosques. The most they could do was restore existing synagogues, but this ruling was not always applied. The New Synagogue (*Kahal Kadosh Hadash*) in Ioannina as well as a synagogue in Arta were built under Ottoman rule. Legally, the evidence of a *dhimmi* was not accepted against that of a Muslim in court. A Muslim who murdered a *dhimmi* did not receive the death penalty. A *dhimmi* man could not marry a Muslim woman. A *dhimmi* could not own a Muslim slave, although the converse was permitted. A *dhimmi* could not wear the same clothes as a Muslim. At the frontier, the *dhimmi* merchant would pay twice as much tax as a Muslim for the goods he was importing. Another burden on non-Muslims was that their houses could be used for billeting soldiers.[63]

There were also positive aspects to *dhimmi* status. Both Jews and Christians were respected by Muslims as monotheistic People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitaab*), people to whom divine books had been revealed. Although these books were considered to have been transmitted incorrectly, acceptance of them gave Jews and Christians a privileged position over members of other religions. In more practical terms, Jews and Christians were respected because they were useful. They

> possessed skills which the Muslims needed and which Muslims either did not possess or did not care to acquire . . . . These sometimes included such trades as precious metals, banking and diplomacy, i.e., dealing with foreigners, seen by strict Muslims as tainted and dangerous to the souls of those engaged in them.[64]

The Romaniote Jews felt their subordinate status keenly. However, their cultural and spiritual lives were dominated by rabbis who prudently weighed their *dhimmi* status against their freedom of conscience and their ability to live an orthodox Jewish life within the confines of their community, which Christians in many countries prohibited.

The Millet System

In 1455, two years after Constantinople was captured by the sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481), the Ottomans organized non-Muslims into ethnic religious communities called *millets*, whose highest administrative officer within each *millet* was the *Millet Bashi*. The *millets* had a large degree of communal autonomy and religious freedom. Non-Muslims could practice their religion without interference from their conquerors, so long as they did not insult Islam or seek to convert a Muslim. "No man was persecuted for his religion in

sixteenth century Turkey, when all over Europe, not only in Spain, Inquisitions were at work and the skies were reddened by the glare of the pyres in which thousands of unbelievers perished."[65]

The chief rabbi, or *Hakham Bashi*, was considered by the Porte the leader of the Jewish community. As spiritual leader, the *Hakham Bashi* chose the rabbis for the communities and fulfilled the functions of a judge. As temporal leader, the *Hakham Bashi* was the official representative of the government who supervised the paying of taxes, which he paid to the minister of finance. The Greek Patriarch fulfilled the same dual role for Orthodox Christians. "From the outset the principle was well established: the Muslims should be the ruling, and consequently the military and administrative portion of the population, while the non-Muslims should devote themselves to the economic upkeep of the country."[66]

Both the Greek Patriarch and the *Hakham Bashi* were members of the imperial council, or *divan*. However, Jews and Christians lived in their own communities, separate both from the Muslims and each other. This is not to say that the *millets* were some form of ghetto. Areas were not formally segregated. In the long term, this almost autonomous separation strengthened the group solidarity of the communities.[67]

Occupations of the Ioannina Jews

The Jews in Ioannina were active in virtually all sectors of the economy. Ioannina was the commercial center for all Epirotic Greece, with many banking houses, and some Jewish merchants in the city had large commercial dealings with Italy. Many Jews were engaged in the production of silk braid called *yaitan* and *chrysoyaitan*, which they exported throughout the Balkans. Some became highly skilled silversmiths and goldsmiths. Others made scarves, blankets (called *valenses*), slippers, gold and silver thread, and garments embroidered with gold for the Albanians.[68] There were Jewish cleaners and dyers (called *lagarides*), grocers, shoemakers, wine dealers, dairymen, dealers in notions, slaughterers (*schochetim*), and the butchers who sold kosher meat. Although Jews were not listed by name in the commercial guilds in Ioannina during Ottoman rule, many Jews "enjoyed membership jointly with Moslems in the industrial and commercial guilds."[69]

Taxation

The classic Islamic system required all *dhimmis* to pay both the *jizya*, a head tax, and the *kharadj*, a property tax. From the start of the reign of Suleiman the Great (1520-1566) *dhimmi* males fifteen years or older were obliged to pay the *jizya*, but public officials, synagogue beadles, cantors, and full-time teachers of the Torah were excused.[70] In lieu of the *kharadj*, Jewish communities paid a lump

sum decided on by the Ottoman rulers and the community councils.[71]

Franco writes that all non-Muslims had to pay eleven different taxes to the government. The Jewish community, in addition, had to pay an annual tax called *Rav Aqchesi* (the rabbi's asper) for the privilege of having a *Hakham Bashi* appointed and recognized by the Porte. This tax may have been paid in some communities for "the privilege of having a rabbi preside over their own affairs."[72] Another tax known as the *averid* was first imposed on all *dhimmis* in time of emergency, to defray expenditures of a military campaign, but became permanent. "In the seventies of the sixteenth century," writes Shohat, "things worsened, perhaps because of the war with Venice. Payments of the Cadi (judge), the Police Chief and the Governor of the city became officially recognized. In addition, it became necessary to pay bribes and gifts to officials, particularly to collectors and census takers." Moreover, *dhimmis* had to pay for the upkeep of hospitals and schools for the poor, and a tax imposed on certain foods, although the Jewish *dhimmis* were exempt from paying taxes on Passover wine and matzoth.[73] Jews had to pay a tax known as *gabella* on the kosher slaughtering of animals.

In addition to these taxes imposed by the state, the Jewish community imposed taxes upon its own members for community needs (*see* Philanthropic Societies, p. 147).

Arrival of the Sephardim

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Ottoman Empire continued to expand its territory in the Balkans, and during this period of growth official policy was tolerant. The immigration of Jews from Europe was encouraged to bring trade and wealth into the empire. During the reign of Mehmed II (1451-1481), so many Jews settled in the capital that, after the Muslims and the Greeks, they formed the third largest section of the city's population.[74]

In 1492 Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512) invited the Sephardim exiled from Spain and Sicily to settle in the Ottoman Empire. The sultan did not merely invite them, he formally decreed that all his governors should welcome the Jews and threatened death to anyone who maltreated them.[75] As a result, approximately one hundred thousand Jews found refuge in the Ottoman Empire; between fifteen and twenty thousand in Thessaloniki and between thirty and forty thousand in Constantinople.[76]

Many of these Sephardim were skilled craftsmen, artists, trained businessmen, physicians, as well as rabbinic scholars. They were experts in the manufacture of textiles and leaders in trade and commerce. Among them were linguists, scholars, diplomats, interpreters, and bankers. They carried on extensive commercial relations with Europe and the East by land and sea and established the

first printing press in the Ottoman Empire. In sum, they brought with them "financial, commercial, and political knowledge that was often useful to the sultans' administration and military, as well as to the empire's economy."[77] These skills, coupled with being free from suspicion of treasonable sympathies with the Christian powers, raised many Jews to privileged positions throughout the empire.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Hebrew learning was widespread. The Polyglot Bible was published in Istanbul in 1546. In 1576 a Judeo-Greek version of Job was published in Istanbul by Moses ben Elijah Pobian or Phobian. The Ioannina Jews used the Polyglot Bible and Job in their Talmudic school. Isaac Abravanel (1437-1508), who fled from Portugal toward the end of the fifteenth century to the island of Corfu, found a large group of exiles there who were men of learning. There, too, he found a copy of the lost manuscript of his unfinished commentary on Deuteronomy which he had written decades earlier and which he was now able to complete.[78] The relatively few Sephardim who settled in Ioannina (we know them by their names) were willing to assimilate with the Romaniotes. In time, they learned Greek and accepted the differences in the Romaniote liturgy.

Sephardim Romaniote Conflict

Most of the Spanish-speaking Jews, who both outnumbered the Romaniotes and were culturally superior, sought dominance over their coreligionists. One of my Ioannina informants, even as late as the last quarter of the nineteenth century, heard older relatives saying that the Sephardim of Thessaloniki did not believe the Ioannina Jews were Jewish because they did not speak Ladino. A saying current among the Ioannina Jews was, "God save us from the Turks of Ioannina, the Greeks of Arta, and the Jews of Salonica." On the other hand, many Romaniote Jews of Ioannina felt that the Sephardim should abandon the Spanish language because of what their ancestors had suffered from the Spanish Inquisition.

The fractious nature of the newcomers is well known:

> When the Sephardim came in turn to swell the numbers of the *millet*, they kept themselves aloof from their coreligionists, maintaining their own congregations with a distinctive ritual. They did not even form a solidary community themselves, but split into small bodies, each preserving the customs and regulations of the place from which its members had originally emigrated.[79]

> In the sixteenth century, the newly established communities in Turkey were often the scene of quarrels caused by attempts of the newcomers to gain control over them. The very fact that the

> Sephardim were split into different communities in the same town shows us clearly their quarrelsome nature and their inability to live in peace with people of another even Sephardi community. . . . All Jews of the Iberian peninsula were descendants of the nobility of Jerusalem while the Jews of all other countries derived from the remaining sections of the Jewish people.[80]

> One of the major evils which harassed the community of Salonika was the habit of congregations to indulge in acrimonious controversies with one another. . . . At times these controversies became so bitter that some members did not hesitate to call government police to aid them in expelling their rabbi or those who opposed their will. In one instance it was the rabbi who called upon police for aid in his fight with recalcitrant members.[81]

Rabbi Elijah Mizrachi and Rabbi David ben Judah Messer Leon state that:

> Whenever the Romaniote Jews prohibited something which the Sephardim permitted, it would have been incumbent upon the Sephardim also to prohibit it. The Talmudic principle is that Jews always adopt the prohibitions of the place they move to. However, the Spanish-speaking rabbis adopted the stance that wanderers from place to place may continue the practices of the country from which they came. The Sephardim adopted little from the Romaniote Jews. What aided the Sephardim in the matter of getting the Ioannina Romaniote Jews to accept their basic prayers was that the *Mahzor Romania* was hard to come by; they were compelled to use the Sepharad.[82]

However slowly, the two communities gradually came to terms. In the sixteenth century the Sephardic rabbi Joseph ben Caro tried to unite the Romaniotes and the Sephardim through his work, *Beit Yosef*, in which he recorded all applicable Jewish laws and showed their common origin in the Talmud along with different opinions of the various codifiers. In 1577 the two communities decided to formally remain separate, although they did accept the same basic prayers.[83] Credit must be given to the Romaniote Jews who recognized the higher Talmudic knowledge of the Sephardim and agreed to adopt the basic prayers of the Sephardim so that they could be united as Jews. Marriages between Romaniotes and Sephardim, which at first were regarded as outside the faith of each, gradually became accepted. The Greek-speaking Ioannina wife usually found it easier to adopt the language and customs of her Spanish-speaking

husband; the Spanish-speaking husband found it difficult to learn the Greek language of his wife. Fortunately, in their services the Ioannina Jews retained their *piyyutim*, unique melodies, and the Greek language. They also retained their own customs, many of which had been influenced through centuries of interaction with the Greek environment. These are the factors which make the Romaniote Jews of Ioannina uniquely *Yianniótikoi*.

Ottoman Decline

After the death of Sultan Suleiman the Great in 1566, the Ottoman Empire began its long, slow, decline. As the empire increasingly was forced back onto the defensive, the sultans hardened their attitude toward their non-Muslim subjects. When Sultan Murad III (1574-95) learned that Sephardic girls were wearing expensive clothes and jewels in public, he ordered all Jews throughout the empire to be exterminated. The order was revoked only through the intervention of the Grand Vezir, but a decree was issued that Jews had to dress differently, and Jewish women were forbidden to walk on the streets wearing silk gowns. Because of this, the rabbis issued a decree of their own forbidding women and girls from going out "wearing velvet garments and ornaments of gold and precious stones."[84]

In 1611, Dionysios, Bishop of Trikkala, known as the Dog Sophist (Σκυλόσοφος) raised a revolt in Ioannina. He and his followers killed the inhabitants of two Turkish villages and burned the Ottoman governor's house in Ioannina. Ottoman troops reacted violently, killing many Christians. When Dionysios was found hiding in a cave in Ioannina the Jews were accused of betraying him to the Turks. He was flayed alive, his skin filled with straw, and his body sent to Istanbul. The Christians were expelled from the walled city in which, thereafter, only Turks and Jews were allowed to live.

Nonetheless, generally speaking, the Christians were improving their position in the Ottoman administration. In the late seventeenth century, thanks to their knowledge of Western languages, the Phanariot Greeks (living in Istanbul near the lighthouse, φανάρι) gained important positions in the Ottoman state and economy. "From about the middle of the 17th century, and especially after the Peace of Carlovits, they (the Phanariote Greeks) set themselves against any attempt to overthrow Ottoman rule in favour of any foreign power: their aim became rather to improve their position in the state and ultimately to control it and convert it into a reborn Byzantine Empire."[85]

Jewish Population in Ioannina

Ottoman records do not list any Jewish taxpayers in the city, and Greek sources usually are silent about the Jews of Ioannina. Venetian archives, however, do mention Jewish merchants from Ioannina in a confusing account connected with an outbreak of a plague in August, 1555. In order to prevent the plague from spreading, the Ottoman authorities restricted travel, forcing several Jewish merchants from Ioannina who had gone to the island of Lazareto to remain there. Early the next morning a Spanish frigate came and took four Jewish hostages and property worth two thousand ducats. Other Ioannina Jews went later and begged to have them freed.[86]

A view of the Jewish population of Ioannina is provided by the Turkish traveller Evliyia Celebi (1610-1679), who visited Ioannina in 1670. Celebi found 1,900 stores, a flourishing silk trade, and a major community fair. There were 160 Jewish families in Ioannina employed in the manufacture of silk. Celebi despised all non-Muslims, but he was especially hard on the Jews of Ioannina for what he considered to be their fanataicism and their exclusiveness. He criticized them for refusing to sit down at table with or accept a drink from non-Jews. He accused them of fostering feelings of deadly hatred against all Muslims and used strong epithets against them. The only people he rarely scoffs at among the *dhimmis* are the Greeks.[87] In 1694 there were two rabbis officiating in Ioannina. The Chief Rabbi was Rabbi Hayyim, the son of Rabbi Yehuda, and the other was Rabbi Sabbetai, the son of Rabbi Yosef.[88] There were two Jewish quarters in Ioannina at this time, both outside the city walls. One was Siarava and the other was near Leivadioti.[89]

Visiting Rabbis

Despite the dangers of travel, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries links were maintained between the Jewish community of Ioannina and other Jewish communities by eminent Palestinian rabbis visiting the city to collect money for the four Jewish communities in Palestine; Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberius, and Safed. The Ioannina Jews considered it a privilege to help Jews in the Holy Land and they welcomed the rabbis, who were renowned for their learning and eloquence. Some of these visiting rabbis are listed below.

Moshe Halevi Nazir of Hebron, called Nazim Elohim by the Romaniote Jews, was in Ioannina from 1668 until 1671. Nazir, a renowned rabbi in Jerusalem, wrote a book entitled *Yedeh Moshe* (Hands of Moses). In 1694, Avraham Haver went to Ioannina as a missionary rabbi. That same year, Rabbi Nissim Rozillo, also a native of Hebron, who had been travelling from 1692 until 1697, visited Ioannina. Rabbi Itzhaq Yehudah Ha-Kohen of Safed was in

the city in 1702. Rabbi Joseph ben Avraham Guedalia, also from Hebron, came in 1705. In 1709/10 Rabbi Moshe Behar Yehouda was officiating in Ioannina. Rabbi David Ashkenazi from Tiberius visited Arta in the summer of 1762. In 1792, Rabbi Sabbetai, who had gone to Thessaloniki to have two manuscripts printed, visited Ioannina, as did Moshe ben Rabi Sheptai in 1799. Hayyim Shemuel HaLevi came to Ioannina in 1855.[90]

The Responsa

Our primary source of information about the Jews of Ioannina are the Hebrew *responsa*, written decisions given by eminent rabbis in response to halakhic queries addressed to them by local rabbis. These *responsa* were concerned in detail with many of the economic, social, and ethical problems faced by the Jewish communities. The *responsa* addressed to the community of Ioannina furnish abundant material about the day-to-day life in the community.

The local rabbis of Ioannina often were unable to cope with the problems they faced. "Because of the new immigrants, the whole nature of Jewish life in the Turkish empire was changing. The various inherited customs (*minhagim*), often differing considerably, came into head-on collision."[91] At such times, the Ioannina rabbis consulted other rabbis with a deeper knowledge of the Talmud, commentaries, and Jewish law. Generally, the Ioannina rabbis sent their questions to rabbis in Thessaloniki. There were at least a dozen Sephardi respondents to whom the Ioannina Jews addressed their questions during the years of Ottoman rule.

Several of the *responsa* noted below pertain to the Jews of Arta as well. Arta is about forty miles south of Ioannina and there was much commercial and social intercourse between these two communities. More importantly, they were closely related in dialect, customs, and liturgical practices. From one *responsum* we learn that the Jewish community of Arta consisted of three hundred families with heads of households. There were four synagogues, each representing a different place of origin. The oldest was the Romaniote Synagogue of the Natives (*Kehilah Toshvim*) and the other three were for the Calabrese, the Apulians, and the Spanish and Portuguese. The Apulian synagogue had less than thirty heads of households.[92]

The Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire often raised money to ransom Jews captured while travelling to or from Palestine and sold as slaves. One entry in the *responsa* of Joseph ben Ephraim Caro (1488-1575), famous for his *Shulhan Arukh* (Prepared Table) and his *Beit Yosef*, wrote that the Thessaloniki community sent a missionary named David Gevison throughout the Ottoman Empire to raise money to ransom Jews. With great difficulty, Gevison managed to collect fifty-five liras from the Jews of Arta but, because

of internal difficulties, this money was never sent to Thessaloniki.[93]

A *responsum* written by Rabbi David ben Hayyim Ha-Kohen (sometimes known as Radak, d. 1530), who was Chief Rabbi of Arta in the beginning of the 16th century, concerns a *Marrano* (a Jew who converted to Christianity under duress but adhered to Judaism in secret) who fled Spain only to be killed by bandits near Arta. His son, who also had escaped from Spain and had returned openly to Judaism, wrote Rabbi Ha-Kohen to ask if he could say kaddish for his father who was still an apostate when he was murdered. Rabbi Ha-Kohen replied that the son could certainly say kaddish for his father. Even though his father had sinned he was still a Jew; the son could earn merit and honor for his father, as mentioned in the Talmud.[94]

In his *responsum*, Rabbi Binyamin Ze'ev ben Mattathias, a contemporary of Rabbi Ha-Kohen who officiated over the four congregations in Arta and the Beth Din (Court of Justice) until 1527, mentions that the Jews of Arta visited the fair in Moskilar, on the border between Thessaly and Epirus. He went on to explain that, because Ioannina was the closest city to the fair, the Jews stopped in Ioannina to buy their kosher meat.[95] However, Rabbi Binyamin Ze'ev is known chiefly for his disputes, partly because of his puritanical views and partly because he often sought to enforce his decisions (*askamoth*) without consulting other rabbis well versed in Jewish law. In one *responsum*, he recorded the negative reaction to his decision forbidding mixed dancing. The abandonment of mixed dancing brought protests from local and even Constantinople rabbis.[96]

The most eminent halakhic authority and communal leader of Thessaloniki in the sixteenth century was Rabbi Samuel ben Moses De Medina (1506-1589), known by the acronym, Maharashdam.[97] One of De Medina's *responsa* dealt with an attempt by the Ioannina Jews to exclude other Jews from doing business in Ioannina. It seems that the Jewish merchants of Ioannina had caused a decree to be enacted excluding visiting Jewish merchants from competing with the merchants of Ioannina. The local Ioannina rabbi consulted De Medina about the decree's legality. De Medina declared the decree "both illegal and unfair," noting that the Ottomans did not prohibit Christian merchants from doing business in any part of the empire. Nevertheless, De Medina recognized that Jewish non-resident merchants might justly be excluded from selling their wares in Ioannina if, after being warned in advance that they would be required to "share with the residents in the local tax obligations in proportion to their earned profits," they refused to do so.[98]

In another *responsum*, De Medina reports that in 1587 a governor in Arta imprisoned and tortured several Jews for the seven days of Sukkoth until they promised to give him 3,000 florins as a

supposed loan. The entire Jewish community contributed to raise this money, but one man, a newcomer to Arta, refused to contribute even though he had been one of the men imprisoned. He refused to pay his share on the grounds that the money he possessed belonged to his mother. Rabbi De Medina, assisted by Rabbi Shemuel Kalai, compelled the new settler to contribute to the forced loan.[99]

Enough newcomers had settled in Ioannina that a new synagogue was built outside the city walls in approximately 1540. Relations between the Chief Rabbi, Joshua ben Ezra, and the new rabbi invited to officiate at the new synagogue were hostile. The new rabbi soon abandoned Ioannina, but before he left he issued a *herem* or ban on the new congregation offering prayers for the other congregation for a period of six years. Rabbi Joshua ben Ezra asked Rabbi De Medina about the validity of this *herem*, and Rabbi De Medina nullified it.[100]

Another De Medina *responsum* deals with eating non-kosher meat. In 1589 a man named Moshe Pazon was accused before the Ioannina Beth Din of eating non-kosher meat at a fair in Paramythia although kosher food had been available. The issue was brought before Rabbi De Medina, who ruled that any Jew caught eating non-kosher food could not testify in the Beth Din.[101] That there was kosher food available at the fair indicates that a considerable number of Jews were in attendance.

In another De Medina *responsum* we learn of the murder of three Jews by Turks reported to the Ioannina Beth Din.[102] The unfortunate men, booksellers who also collected funds for the community, were robbed on the road between Arta and Agrinion. The Turks were going to release them after the robbery when one of the three said he was from Preveza, under Albanian control at that time. The Turks feared being denounced, and killed all three.

Another halakhic authority and respondent in Thessaloniki to whom the Ioannina Jews appealed was Rabbi Solomon ben Joseph Amarillo (1645-1721).[103] In 1714 the three Ioannina rabbis, Rabbi Nahoum Gabriel, Rabbi Joseph Benveniste, and Rabbi Yehudah Eliassaf, wrote Rabbi Solomon ben Joseph Amarillo in connection with the murder of four Jews travelling to Arta.[104] The unfortunate men had embarked with some Turks in a small boat heading for Arta but the Turks demanded that the boat head, instead, for Makrinoro. When Yehudai Kalai, from Ioannina, protested, the Turks fired at him with a pistol. Yehudai Kalai jumped overboard but the Turks chased him and knifed him in the water, leaving him to drown. The other three Jews (Rabbi Simon Gomez Fatto, an emissary from Jerusalem, and his two assistants, Absolom and Sabethai Isaac) were killed when the boat arrived at Makrinoro. Members of the Arta Association Gemiluth Hassidim buried the three men who had been killed at Makrinoro in the Arta cemetery.

Rabbi Hayyim Moses ben Amarillo (1695-1748), the son of Rabbi Solomon ben Joseph Amarillo, also wrote *responsa* dealing with Arta. In one of them he dealt with a Jew from Arta named Eleazer Kaly who had been granted a divorce after swearing that he would return to Arta and pay his back taxes. Kaly, however, remarried in Ioannina and settled there without settling his accounts in Arta. The *responsum* obliged him to pay what he owed to the Arta community.[105]

We learn from another *responsum* by Rabbi Hayyim Moses ben Amarillo that, in 1722, some Jews in Arta, Ioannina, and Corfu had become accustomed to eating meat which had not been submitted to the proper examination (*nefiha*). The slaughterers were supposed to inflate the lungs of slaughtered animals to discover if air could pass through. If it did, then the meat was not considered fit. Several young merchants who travelled frequently asked for permission to eat meat from carcasses which had not been so examined, but Rabbi Moses ben Amarillo ruled that they could not do so.[106]

The last respondent included in this sample of *responsa* dealing with situations in Ioannina is Rabbi Hayyim Abraham Estrumza, also known as RabHaZaken, who officiated in Serres (d. 1824). In one of his collections of *responsa*, printed in Thessaloniki in 1815, we read the following:

> In 1800 Rabbi Isaac Attias asked Rabbi Estrumza about certain Jews who had lived in Serres for three years and returned to live in Ioannina once more. Since the Ioannina leaders knew that these returning natives had the means, they requested that they pay the (community) taxes for the three years they had lived in Serres. However, the Ioannina Jews stated that in accordance with an old custom in Ioannina, when someone was absent for three years, he was not obliged to pay taxes for those three years.[107]

From these examples (there are many more), we see that the Jews of Ioannina and Arta were a pious people who led ethical and simple lives. Dietary laws were meticulously upheld, as were all Jewish Holy Days. Rabbis sometimes differed in their interpretations of Jewish law and they often quarrelled among themselves as each sought to have his interpretation accepted as a decision. Some differences between rabbis were sparked by the hostility between Romaniotes and Sephardim. There are many instances of Turks murdering Jews without being brought to justice.

The Eighteenth Century

In general, the eighteenth century was "an unfortunate epoch for the Jews." On ascending the throne, the Ottoman Sultan Mustapha III (1757-74) restored the restrictive dress code for his non-Muslim subjects.[108]

The Venetian archives provide glimpses of civil chaos in Ioannina in the eighteenth century. In 1731, the governor, Topal Osman Pasha, responded to a challenge to his power from the local beys by executing the beys and burning several villages. In 1735 the city suffered a plague lasting from February to October. From sixty to eighty people died each day. In 1740, because of brigands, "the roads outside Ioannina were not safe. Business is paralyzed." For 1749 we read that robbery was rampant in Ioannina and Arta.[109] In 1750-52 Omer Pasha was rewarded for reducing the brigandage around Ioannina by being made Pasha of Ioannina, but brigandage in the area continued through the rule of Ali Pasha (1788-1822), stopping only with the arrival of Greek independence.

In the middle of the eighteenth century there were two hundred Jewish families in Ioannina, about 800 people.[110] Many Jews worked in the manufacture of silk. Although some Jews were members of the strong professional guilds into which the Ioannina craftsmen were organized,[111] relations between Jews and Christians deteriorated. In 1777 the Turks captured the Greek missionary Cosmas of Naupaktos. They accused him of being a Russian agent sent to Epirus and Albania to foment a Christian revolution, and they hanged him two years later without trial. The Jews were accused of betraying Cosmas.[112]

Ali Pasha

In the service of the Pasha of Roumeli, Ali policed the roads around Ioannina, becoming rich in the process. In 1788, after a series of intrigues, he became Pasha of Ioannina. Through cunning and brutality, Ali established a virtually independent state with Ioannina as its capital. By 1803 he was master of Epirus, Albania, Thessaly, and part of Macedonia, and his sons ruled over the Morea and Lepanto. He maintained direct relations with foreign powers, notably the French and the British. Ioannina became the major commercial center for Epirotic Greece and one of the most enlightened and attractive cities in the Ottoman Empire. A common expression was "Ioannina first in weapons, in groshen, and in letters."[113] Guilds, with both Christians and Jewish members, flourished.[114]

The French consul general in Greece, F. C. H. L. Pouqueville, who spent some time in Ioannina during the reign of Ali Pasha, wrote that there were five hundred Jewish families or about 2,500 Jews living in Ioannina.

> Two principal streets divide the town in length and breadth. The one begins at the gate of Bonila and leads to the bazar, the other goes from the bazar toward the lake; the latter is called the Jews' Street because it is principally inhabited by the people of the Jewish nation.

Pouqueville also tells us that Ali Pasha's treasurer was a Jew. Ali Pasha imposed a heavy tax on wealthy Jews. In contrast with the previous period, the Turks at this time were doing much more business with Christians than with Jews.[115]

Colonel William Martin Leake, who was British representative in Ioannina in 1809/10, has left us a dreary picture of Jewish life:

> A great part of the remaining space in the citadel (the walled city) is occupied by the Jewish quarter, which stands near the rampart of the land front, just within the gate. Of these houses, the greater part exhibit a picture of misery not to be exceeded in any part of Turkey, many families living all the year in this severe climate in apartments defended only on three sides from the open air. Ioannina contains two hundred Jewish houses . . . not less than four to each house upon an average. . . . The Jews have two synagogues in the citadel.

Leake adds in a footnote:

> It is not uncommon among the Turks to allow Jews to occupy their fortresses. This is no mark of respect, because a Jew is an object of greater contempt among them than a Christian; but they are less hated, they are less feared, and receive some favour because the Greek Christians are known to be particularly odious to them.

Leake also reports that during his visit to Ioannina he was told that Ali "has a Jew now in prison in Ioannina, from whom he had already extracted one hundred and forty purses, by threatening him with the loss of his head."[116]

Ali Pasha persecuted the people of Ioannina without cease, both robbing them and taxing them heavily. The citizens had no call for redress and if they wished to leave the city they were not permitted to do so.[117] Although Ali Pasha had many Jews on his council, the economic status of the Jews was low. Some Jews managed to escape Ioannina and settled in Avlona, but Ali Pasha gained control of Avlona also. After the tyrant was beheaded in 1822, these Jews returned to Ioannina.[118]

We get a vivid picture of the character of Ali Pasha and his treatment of the inhabitants of Ioannina from Lord Teignmouth, who described Ali Pasha as:

> the greatest of the Turkish viceroys and the most brutal barbarian of his age . . . one of those sanguinary despots who would deluge the world with blood and compromise every principle of honor or faith to accomplish the objects of his towering ambition, revenge and cruelty; treachery and cunning were his chief qualifications. In plain English, Ali Pasha was by far the worst unhung criminal in Europe.

"He himself," continued Teignmouth, "admitted to the French consul, during the last forty years I have caused thirty thousand persons to be hung and put to death in various ways,' adding with a burst of his wonted sardonic laughter, their hatred, however, will not affect my health.'"[119]

For all his tyranny, Ali Pasha contributed much to Ioannina. He developed the city's finances and strengthened local productivity. He built a carriage road from Ioannina to Preveza and drained the marshes north of Arta.[120] He also fostered education, and during his rule Ioannina became the Greek literary capital. Schools, colleges, and libraries flourished.[121] According to Miller, teachers from Ioannina went "throughout Greek lands, so that it would be said, 'to Ioannina Greece owes the resurrection of education' and that in the 18th century 'all Greek authors were either natives of Ioannina or pupils of the Ioannina school.'"[122]

Sir Henry Holland, another foreign visitor to Ioannina during Ali Pasha's reign, wrote of Ali Pasha's superior understanding and a degree of freedom from national and religious prejudices rarely found among Turkish rulers. About the Jews, he says:

> The Jews of Ioannina are to be found as dealers in the bazaars as artisans and some of them also with employments about the seraglio. They partake with the Greeks in the advantages of general toleration and are not, I believe, exposed to any particular privation. Their burying ground, for which they pay an annual sum, forms an open area in the midst of the city.[123]

Ali Pasha finally overstepped the bounds of Ottoman forbearance when he sent assassins to kill one of his enemies in Istanbul. The assassins were caught and an Ottoman army, commanded by Khurshid Ahmed Pasha, was sent to besiege Ioannina. Ali Pasha fortified himself inside the fortress and Khurshid Pasha set camp in Litharitsa, just outside. Ali Pasha employed all his skills of bribery and intrigue to encourage dissension among the Ottoman commanders. He even concluded an agreement of mutual aid with Greek rebels, thereby, ironically, facilitating the start of the Greek War of Independence. In order to ensure a clear field of vision, he burned that part of the Jewish quarter which extended outside the city walls

and the Christian quarter of Siarava, also outside the walls. When Ali Pasha saw that Ioannina was going to fall, he set fire to the city. On January 24, 1822, Khurshid Pasha's troops killed Ali Pasha in the Monastery of Panteleimon on the small island in the Ioannina lake. The next day his head, wrapped in a cloth embroidered with gold thread and set on a silver tray, was carried around the city in formal display before being sent to the sultan. His body was buried in the Fatiye Mosque in the northeast of the citadel. He had ruled for thirty-three years.

War of Independence

With the outbreak in 1821 of the Greek uprising against Ottoman rule, Greek Jewry suffered intensely at the hands of the Greeks because they were thought to be on the side of the Turks. Many Jews were closely associated with the Turks, but the fact remains that the Romaniote Jews were very much in sympathy with the Greek struggle for independence. Many of them, such as the Crispi and Cohen families of Chalcis, fought on the side of the Greeks.[124] On January 1, 1822, the National Assembly held at Epidaurus under the presidency of Alexander Mavrokordatos recognized the Jews of Greece as equal citizens of the Greek nation.[125]

Many Jews living outside of Greece participated in the great wave throughout Europe of public support for the Greek struggle for independence. The Jewish journalist, Georges Lafitte, stirred the Parisians with his articles asking for immediate help for the struggling Greeks. A number of Jews in Florence, including a rabbi named Sri Lipman, worked with the Greek Christian poet Andreas Kalvos to raise political support and money for the Greek rebels. Their activities offended the Florentine authorities, who deported them.[126] The Chief Rabbi of Westphalia, in northwestern Germany, sent an encyclical to all the Jewish communities in Europe, asking for money in support of the Greek cause.[127] Jewish architects and mechanics constructing public buildings in Vienna refused to work because Prince Metternich did not support the Greek uprising.[128] The Rothschild banking houses in London, Paris, Vienna, and Naples gave extensive financial assistance.[129]

The Jewish communities in the Ottoman province of Moldavia (Romania) were enthusiastically sympathetic "for the Greek Revolution. The matter has special significance because the Revolution first broke out in Moldavia, and then spread to other enslaved regions."

> When Alexander Ypsilantis raised the banner of the uprising in February, 1821, he found direct and undivided support from the Jewish element of Moldavia. . . . Greek troops were almost annihilated. Ypsilantis himself was in danger of being captured .

> . . but it did not happen. . . . Ypsilantis managed to escape to Austrian territory. [Moissis] Gaster [Dutch political agent in Bucharest], a friend of Ypsilantis and a fervent Greek Jewish philhellene . . . used all contacts to strengthen their [the Greeks'] efforts. Gaster did not help Ypsilantis because of personal reasons of friendship; he helped because he thought it was his duty, despite the dangers and consequences of being discovered, to do whatever he could to help.[130]

From the Execution of Ali Pasha to Independence

Reports vary on the number of Jews living in Ioannina during this period. In 1831 there were 212 Jewish families reported. In 1856 the number reported was 343, with an average of six to each family. During the first term of Rashim Pasha's governorship, from 1868 to 1872, there were 250 Jewish families in Ioannina. In 1876 there were 3,000 Jews out of a total population of 212,000 living in the province of Ioannina.[131]

The Jews of Ioannina kept within their synagogue oriented community, maintaining contact with other Jewish communities only through visiting rabbis from Safed or Jerusalem collecting money for the communities in Palestine.[132] During Rashim Pasha's reign all commerce was in the hands of Christians and Jews. Unfortunately, it became easy "to stir up Greeks and Jews against each other, by reason of the fact that the abandonment of trade to these two races had developed between them a strong economic rivalry."[133] Jews as well as Christians became members of the newly founded Ioannina Chamber of Commerce.

Under pressure from Britain, France, and Austria, the Ottomans issued firmans abolishing discriminatory measures against non-Muslims. Sultan Mahmud II (1808 - 1839) started his series of reforms by suppressing the Janissaries, whom he destroyed completely on June 15, 1826. This was a great boon to the Jews, who long had been harassed by these unruly soldiers. In 1838, Jews and Christians in Ioannina raised money to construct barracks, and thereafter Ottoman soldiers were no longer billeted in private homes.[134] In 1839 Sultan Abdul Mejid (1839 - 1861) inaugurated the so-called Tanzimat reforms, during which non-Muslims were placed on equal footing with Muslims.

Moshe Yehudah, who was rabbi in Ioannina when Ali Pasha fell from power, died in 1841 and was succeeded by the native born Gabriel Yehudah, who had studied for the rabbinate in Thessaloniki. When Gabriel Yehudah died in 1855, he was succeeded by Hayyim Shemuel HaLevi, who came to be known as Rabbi Hashmal. The probable year of Rabbi Hashmal's death was 1884.[135]

In 1850 there were ten government officials in Ioannina. The governor and three other Muslims were appointed by the sultan.

Three Muslims and two Christians were elected to the council, and they were joined by the Chief Rabbi.[136] This was a fair representation, for the Jews were in the minority.

An ugly incident, in which a Jew was killed, occurred in 1851, shortly after Easter:

> Four Jews were accused of throwing themselves on a preacher and spitting on the font which he carried. . . . A detachment of Turkish troops intervened, to no effect. It appears that the man who committed the murder was one Balomenos, a Greek citizen whom S. Rossetos, Greek consul in Ioannina, hid for a short while and later sent in flight to free Greece in order to avoid diplomatic frictions. . . .The Metropolitan and the Christian notables succeeded in throwing the blame on the Jewish community. Ismail Pasha, Governor General of the Vilayet of Ioannina at that time, yielded to the demands of the Christians and ordered the arrest and imprisonment of four Jews whom the Greek consul had named as instigators of the original episode.[137]

Rashim Pasha was governor of Ioannina twice, from 1868 to 1872 under Sultan Abdul Aziz and from 1878 to 1880 under Sultan Abdul Hamid II. During his first period of office he enriched the city with a national park, but he brought the Jews to despair. In July, 1869, he set the main marketplace on fire, allegedly to modernize it, because the bazaar was packed with old wooden buildings. The Greek - Turkish newspaper *Yianya* (Ioannina) reported that 107 buildings, 519 workshops, 29 inns, and 43 public ovens, bathhouses, cafés, casinos, clubs, and wine shops were destroyed. The total damage was estimated at 600,000 gold Turkish liras. Over 800 Jews were left homeless. There was another fire in the city two months later.[138]

In despair, the Ioannina Jewish community wrote the Jews of Alexandria for help, since many of them had come from Ioannina. A letter from Ioannina to the rabbis of Alexandria has been preserved:

> In 1869 on Tuesday night, the third month of Elul, a fire broke out from God in one of the stores and burned from 5:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. 1050 stores and homes were burned. All the stores of the Jews burned down. Of the 160 houses burnt, 137 belonged to Jews. 840 Jewish people were left homeless. Some people were able to save their property, others weren't. Old people, sick orphans, and widows, were begging for food and weren't getting any. The government gave 1/2 an oka of bread to all hungry people for ten days. How can 1/2 an oka of bread go far when people are starving? And afterwards they cut it down to 50 okas for 100 people. The poor people were screaming for

food - woe unto the eyes that have to see this - some had no clothing, no shelter. We need a large sum of money to restore the homes of the poor and provide a minimum of food and clothing for the children. Therefore we are writing to you for help.

On the one hand we have those who are dying of hunger, crying for bread; on the other, the rains have begun and the climate has chilled, and they can no longer live in tents - like the tents of Kedar. Many of them are becoming ill with colds and malaria, and our encampment in the desert needs a hastening of your wholehearted contribution. This is why the Talmud says in emergencies you hurry and do not delay, so that lives may be saved, and performing this commandment you will be spared from all anguish and trouble, and add days and years to your lives, and pour upon you boundless blessings and prosperity with wealth and honor.

The signatories here in the burnt and destroyed Ioannina on this 25th day of Ab in the year 1869, are David Mattathias Halevi, Moshe Arie Coffina, Shemuel Cohen, Eliyahu Menachem Coffina.

Verified by Rabbi Hayyim Shemuel HaLevi.[139]

On April 15, 1872, on the eve of Greek Easter Sunday, traditionally the most notorious time for anti-Semitic activity, Ioannina was the scene of bloody conflict. "The Christians were set loose and beat, massacred, and demolished the houses of the Jews . . . great was the fury of the Christians." One Jew was stabbed to death, and others were wounded. As reported in the Turkish newspaper *Yianya*, the Greeks wanted to massacre all Jews, but a military cordon of Turkish soldiers surrounded the Jewish quarter for four days to protect the Jews.[140] The next month there was another disturbance and in July yet another, in which one Jew was killed.

In December 1873, Moshe Halevi, the Hakham Bashi in Constantinople, wrote to the minister of religion asking for severe measures to prevent the April disturbances from being repeated. The Ottoman minister received the request graciously, replied favorably, and wrote a circular on the subject to the governors of all the provinces.[141]

On November 8, 1876, some Greeks from Ioannina and at least one Jew received titles from the Ottoman government. The Jew was David Mathew Levy (nicknamed Davitchon or Dov Jon Effendi, d. 1913) who was elected to the Ottoman parliament.[142]

In 1890 the main road between Ioannina and Preveza was

opened, making Preveza the chief port of Epirus. As the century drew to a close there was much commerce between Ioannina and Albania, but the route was infested with powerful bands of Albanian, Turkish, and Greek brigands, who took captives for ransom. In 1897 fighting broke out for a few weeks between Greece and Turkey. The Turks laid unsuccessful siege to Arta.[143]

Conditions were becoming increasingly difficult. The Jews of Ioannina, along with many other people of the eastern Mediterranean, were beginning to think of emigration.

The Twentieth Century

In 1904 the Alliance Israelite Universelle opened in Ioannina, offering education to all Jewish children, enabling them to reach out not only to the Christian world immediately around them but also to the world outside Greece. In the following year the community established Working for Zion (*Amale Zion*), the first solid indication in Ioannina of nationalist aspirations for a Jewish homeland.

Despite these positive developments, the century started ominously for the Ioannina Jews. Considerable social upheaval was caused by the conflicts between the Greeks, who sought to liberate the rest of their land, and the Turks, who sought to maintain their rule. One result of this upheaval was the presence of powerful and murderous brigand bands, which preyed on the roads around Ioannina. Several Jews were killed by these bands in the first years of the century, but the worst such case was the murder of twelve Ioannina Jews who had travelled together to a nearby village to buy cattle. Their ears were cut off and their bodies thrown into a nearby river. The ears were put into a bag and thrown into the sink of the New Synagogue in Ioannina. The community reported this to the Ottoman authorities, who captured and beheaded the brigands, displaying their heads on trees in the city.[144]

According to bulletins of the Alliance Israelite Universelle, there were 4,000 Ioannina Jews in 1904. They were so poor that the Greek Christians called them *spangoraménous* (tied with strings) because they used string for shoelaces.[145] In 1905 the community lost 500 of its members through emigration to Bucharest, Alexandria, Istanbul, Palestine, and America. In 1906, shipping agents travelled the area, proclaiming, "For three liras you can get passage to America," and in that year at least 1,000 Ioannina Jews left for the United States.

With the exception of part of Thrace, Ottoman rule in Europe was brought to an end by the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria opened hostilities against the disorganized Ottomans in October, 1912 and in November of the

following year Greece signed a peace agreement with Turkey extending Greece's northern border in Epirus to where it stands today.

The effect of the war on the Jewish community in Ioannina was considerable, as can be seen in letters written by M. Benveniste, director of the boy's Alliance, to the president of the Alliance in Paris. On January 21, 1912, he wrote:

> Numerous battalions arrive daily from all parts. All are requisitioned to billet the soldiers. The Jews had to house five hundred of them. The military commandant gave the order to seize the school. And one day several soldiers arrived to take possession of the place and dismantle the classrooms. My protestations were in vain. After long arguments, they decided to rent for three months in the Muslim quarter. Here went a supplementary tax of one thousand francs. But we have gotten rid of the nightmare.[146]

On March 18, Benveniste again wrote to Paris, this time telling about the robbing of Moise Samuel Moise:

> He was a merchant, apparently from one of our better families in our community. He was captured by brigands and taken to the mountains. He was on his way to Preveza. He carried a certain sum of money in his pocket. They escaped although a detachment of gendarmes pursued them.[147]

On November 7, 1912, Benveniste wrote of the deteriorating conditions:

> The economic situation of our city becomes more and more serious and has taken a disquieting turn. We are absolutely isolated; communications are interrupted everywhere. Greece is about to blockade the only road which remains open, that of Santa Quarante. Even the postal service, already so irregular for several weeks, threatens to cease completely, and I do not know if this letter will be permitted to leave; henceforth, it will be impossible for merchants to stock up; edibles have already reached the price of famine. Everything has quadrupled and even quintupled in price. Flour is lacking . . . four or five repetitions of this and we will be left without bread. Another grave consequence of the state of hostilities is the complete stagnation of affairs. The teachers have not received their salaries for the month of September; the third month is already gone and our chest has no more money.[148]

Ioannina was finally liberated on February 21, 1913, and Crown Prince Constantine entered the city the following day. The Jews were among those who greeted the crown prince at the city gates and they formally received him three days later in the New Synagogue. Salamanga, an eye witness, wrote that they gave him a hero's welcome, laying down a red carpet from the marketplace two blocks away to the synagogue and placed Greek flags along the route.

> The synagogue was most luxuriously decorated. The beautiful apse had written on it the biblical *Hosanna*, blessed in the name of the Lord. In devout concentration, Rabbi Yesoula Levy, dressed all in white, delivered his blessings in Greek.[149]

World War I

With Ioannina now incorporated into independent Greece, the Romaniote Jews were free to participate as equal citizens in the state. As most Greeks, the Ioannina Jews supported the Greek prime minister, Eleftherios Venizelos, in wanting Greece to support the Allies against the Central Powers, but King Constantine, brother-in-law to the German Kaiser, wanted Greece to remain neutral. The struggle was intense. One of the means used by the Allies to persuade Greece to side with them was a partial blockade, which caused food shortages in Ioannina. Italy was rewarded with major territorial concessions in Albania and Greece for joining the Allies, and Italy occupied Ioannina for three months in 1915. "Bread was unavailable," recalled an older member of the Ioannina Jewish community, "although meat and milk were plentiful."[150] The struggle between King Constantine and Prime Minister Venizelos was not settled until June, 1917, when the Allies "summarily expelled" King Constantine from Greece for his openly "pro-German sentiments."[151] Greece declared war on the Central Powers.

There are no official statistics on the number of Jewish officers and soldiers who fought in the Greek armed forces during World War I. The records of the Ioannina community, which would have given us the names of the Ioannina Jews who fought in the war, were destroyed during World War II. Mordechai Frizis, from Chalcis, who fought in World War I, the Asia Minor campaign, and World War II, is the best known. Other Jewish officers who were cited for their bravery in World War I were David Alhanati, Isaac Elia, Abram Matalon, and David and Behor Siaki.

The Asia Minor Campaign

Greece had long sought to include the large Greek population of Smyrna and the surrounding area within its borders. Italy also sought to control this territory and began landing troops near Antalya in March of 1919. Prime Minister Venizelos, supported by France,

Britain, and the United States, sent a Greek occupation force into Smyrna, thereby beginning a process which ended three years later in Greek military defeat before renewed Turkish nationalism led by Mustapha Kemal.

In 1920 all Jewish communities in Greece were legally recognized by the state.

Many Ioannina Jews served in the front lines during the Asia Minor War. Raphael Patas and Eleazar Hatzopoulos were killed in the Greek defeat at the Sakariya River on June 15, 1921. Joshua Samuel and Haim Bacolas were wounded, and Calef Negrin was held prisoner. Other Ioannina youths who participated in the campaign were Solomon Raphael Battino, Rahamim Hayyim Cohen, Michael Lagaris, Michael Hayyim Matsa, Nissim David Matsa, Solomon Hayyim Matsa, and Hayyim Moshe Yomtov. Nissim David Matsa, now living in New York, recalled:

> From Ioannina my regiment went through Rhodes. We went to an island named Porte Dikili. From there we walked for five days to a station called Karakeoo. There they brought the wounded to be taken to the hospital. The Turks tried to take the station, and we fought them for about two hours. Then we walked for another five days to Eski Sehir. On the road to Eski Sehir the Turks destroyed about four or five trucks full of Greek soldiers. We spent another two days before reaching Sendigazi. There the eighth division of Kemal Pasha attacked our Greek regiment. The Turks attacked on August 26 and entered Smyrna on 9 September 1922. Five days later, the whole city with the exception of the Turkish quarter was burned to the ground.[152]

Repercussions of the military disaster were felt throughout Greece, primarily through the exchange of populations negotiated in 1923. Approximately 380,000 Turks left Greece for Turkey and over 1,100,000 Greeks left Turkey for Greece. There were as well over 100,000 Greek refugees from Bulgaria and Russia. The absorption of these many refugees into a small country which had just ended ten years of war was an extraordinary achievement made at considerable national sacrifice.

The poverty-stricken Ioannina Jews resented the allocation of virtually all assistance to the newcomers. "Everything was for the refugees," one of them recalled.[153]

A new problem arose for the Jews of Ioannina in 1924 when the Greek government passed the Sunday Closing (*Kyriakí Argheía*) law, prohibiting stores from being open on Sunday. Before 1924, all Jewish stores in Ioannina were closed on the Sabbath and open on Sunday. The new law meant that Jews would either lose a full day of business or abandon their observance of the Sabbath. Most of the

Ioannina Jewish community succumbed to the economic pressure and opened their stores on the Sabbath, but one hundred of them emigrated to Palestine rather than abandon their religious practice.[154] Today, all Jewish stores in Ioannina are opened on the Sabbath.

During the following decade the world economic depression caused more Ioannina Jews to move to Athens, where they swelled the membership of the Ioannina synagogue on Melidoni Street.

When General John Metaxas (1936-1941) assumed control of the country, the leaders of the Ioannina Jewish community offered no opposition. As one member of the community observed,

> Perhaps this habit of accepting a regime fatalistically helped make them apathetic, and may explain why they also accepted without any resistance the German occupation a few years later.[155]

World War II

At 3:00 A. M. in the morning of October 28, 1940, the Italian ambassador to Greece presented an ultimatum to General Metaxas demanding, in effect, Greek submission to Mussolini's will. Metaxas rejected the Italian demands and Greeks throughout the country rose to defend their country.

General Alexander Papagos, chief-of-staff of the Greek armed forces, acknowledged the extent to which Greek Jews had joined their countrymen, writing, "The Greek Jews fulfilled their duty in full measure," and Jews from Ioannina were among the first defenders on the Albanian front.[156] Dr. Errikos Nissim Levy, who rose to the rank of colonel, became director of army hospitals and was honored with various decorations. Leon Dostis rose to the rank of major. Among the many wounded were Avram Hayyim Matsa and Matathia Avram Noikokir, who had to have both his legs amputated.[157]

Five Ioannina Jews were killed on the Albanian front: Haham Raphael Joseph Antzelou in the battle of Kalpaki on November 5, 1940; Shemos Moise Avram on November 21, 1940; Shemos ben Elia Attas on January 11, 1940; David Samuel Negrin on February 14, 1941; Uriel Negrin ben Solomon has been missing since November, 1940.

Even the non-combatants within the Jewish community of Ioannina contributed to the struggle in their heavily bombed city by taking care of hundreds of fighters returning from the front, nursing those whose wounds were not major. Annette Levy was one of the most active, serving in the Red Cross, but many other Jewish girls assisted her throughout the war.

Many Ioannina Jews fought in the Eighth Division's Aou

detachment, commanded by Mordechai Frizis (1894-1940), the Romaniote Colonel from Chalcis, who led the counterattack which drove back the Italian Julia Division. Colonel Frizis, always called by his men *our* Colonel, was one of Greece's most celebrated heroes of World War II. His practice of leading his men at the front while mounted upon a white horse cost him his life on December 5, 1940, near the village of Premetis just before the Greek advance reached its peak, when three planes made a low-level bombing attack on his detachment. His men jumped for cover, but he himself remained mounted on his horse. He was killed instantly. All the men of the division knew of the colonel's bravery.[158]

The Greeks not only halted the Italian advance but pushed forward into Albania - territory the Greeks consider northern Epirus - capturing the towns of Korytsa, Aghioi Saranda, and Argyrokastro, each with a sizable Greek population. However, in December the Italians rallied to hold the Greeks from further advances in the severe mountain winter conditions, and the situation became a stalemate.

The Holocaust in Ioannina

On April 6, 1941, the military stalemate on the Albanian front was broken by the invasion of German forces, whose overwhelming strength brought the whole of Greece under German control by the end of May. The country was divided into three occupation zones, administered by the Germans, Bulgarians, and Italians. Both Ioannina and Athens were under Italian administration.

There were 1,950 Jews (500 families) living in Ioannina in April of 1941, most of whom resided inside the walled city. Those few who lived outside the city walls had homes in Ioannina's newer suburbs - Megale Rouga, Leivadioti, Vakoufia, Boustania - and some lived near the lakeside mall. Most of the men were laborers, store employees, or itinerant peddlers; only about seventy were storekeepers. None of them had relatives in nearby villages who could help them economically or provide refuge. Many of the older members of the community lived on contributions sent by relatives or philanthropic organizations in America.

The majority of the Jewish community of Ioannina was particularly vulnerable to outside danger because of their insulated way of life, even within the community itself. Class distinctions were sharp; there was little communication between the classes for an exchange of opinion or the sharing of ideas. Social contacts with the Christian population were limited. The Jewish Council, the five member governing body elected to represent the community, had little contact with other Jewish communities inside or outside Greece. Very few Ioannina Jews were aware of the fate of Jews in other countries occupied by the Germans. According to Joseph Nehama,

eminent historian of Thessaloniki Jewry, after the Jews of Thessaloniki were deported the Jewish leadership in Ioannina "believed that the deportation had been motivated by divine anger because they (the Thessaloniki Jews) did not observe the Sabbath. 'God loves Ioannina,' they said. 'God has no reason to punish Ioannina.' When we advised them to seek refuge they sneered."[159]

Soon after the Italian occupation of the city, Dr. Moses Coffina and Sabethai Cabilli, president and vice-president of the Ioannina Jewish Council, visited the Italian officer in command to assess the Italian attitude towards the Jews. "As long as we are in authority here," the Italian officer assured them, "you have nothing to fear. You will have cause to fear only after the German SS arrives and Greeks start to collaborate with the Germans."[160]

According to Moissis Eliasaf, who had escaped deportation and was one of the leading members of the community, the Italians took no measures against the Jews and granted many permits to Jews who wanted to leave for Athens. Only about forty to fifty Ioannina Jews actually abandoned their shops and homes to hide with Greek friends in Athens, and some of them returned, thinking it safer to be in their native city.

Only one disturbing incident involving Ioannina Jews occurred during the Italian administration. Nissim Batish, one of the richest Ioannina merchants, often took trips to Athens with his son-in-law. On one of these trips Batish and his son-in-law were arrested and tried for smuggling gold liras out of the city. The Italian tribunal, however, which tried them found them innocent and set them free.

Some Ioannina Jews formed a resistance group, the United Panhellenic Organization of Youth, known as EPON (*Eniáta Panelladikí Orgánosis Neón*) and fought in the mountains with other partisans. Twenty-two others joined the communist led resistance movement, the National Resistance Front, EAM (*Ethnikón Apeleftherotikón Métopon*), or the EAM organized National Popular Liberation Army, ELAS (*Ethnikós Laikós Apeleftherotikós Stratós*). Others joined the rightist resistance group, the National Republican Greek League, EDES (*Ellinikós Dimokratikós Ethnikós Sýndesmos*). A group of young Jewish men from Ioannina who had escaped to Athens formed the National Organization of Jews, EOE (*Ethnikí Orgánosi Evraíon*). More Ioannina Jewish youths would have joined the resistance had family life in Ioannina not been so tightly knit. Solicitous of their parents, the youths feared leaving them alone.

The first German troops in Ioannina, who arrived on April 20, 1943, were members of the Adolf Hitler division. They stayed for twenty days, leaving the city once more under Italian administration. No incident occurred during these twenty days that had anything in particular to do with the Jews. Nevertheless, after the Germans

departed, President Coffina proposed that the Jewish Council advise more of their young men to join the resistance forces while flight was still relatively easy. Despite repeated, clear warnings, Vice President Cabilli was rigorously opposed to any Ioannina Jews joining the partisans, all of whom he regarded as communists.[161] Cabilli believed in the words of Exodus (14:14): "The Lord will fight for you and ye shall hold your peace" (*adonai yilachem lachem veatem taharishoun*).

Although Dr. Coffina was president of the Ioannina Jewish Council, Sabethai Cabilli had far greater influence in both the council and the community than Dr. Coffina, and the role he played was pivotal. Widely known in the business community through his dry goods store and his two small factories making kerchiefs and textiles, he was vice president of the Ioannina Chamber of Commerce. Although not an ordained rabbi, he led the services on the Sabbath and on all holy days. He was well read and knew several foreign languages. He knew Hebrew better than the rabbi and he taught Jewish Law in the Light of Life Society (*Orah Hayyim*). He was the most sought after circumcisor (*mohel*) in the city. He was actively involved in several philanthropic organizations. He maintained excellent relations with Metropolitan Spyridon of Ioannina as well as with the Greek civil authorities. Although wealthy, he lived a restricted and frugal life.

In June of 1943 the German occupation troops came out of Albania into Epirus. The new commander of the XXII Mountain Corps, now based in Ioannina, was Lieutenant General Hubert Lanz. Lanz was in Ioannina to demoralize the "nationalist" EDES in its bitter struggle with EAM and weaken their attacks on the Germans.

The operation against the Jewish community was undertaken by the SS Edelweiss Division, commanded by Von Stettner, which arrived in Ioannina in late July, 1943 and established headquarters in the Zosimaia School.[162] The Germans soon learned that the most influential Jew in Ioannina was Sabethai Cabilli, and Von Stettner, accompanied by a Greek (not from Ioannina) wearing a German uniform, visited Cabilli at his store.[163]

"You are not like the Thessaloniki Jews," Von Stettner began. "You are different." In saying this, Von Stettner wanted Cabilli to think that he considered Cabilli a Greek rather than a Jew because Cabilli spoke the same language at home as did the Greek Christians. Von Stettner assured Cabilli that the Germans were not going to molest the Ioannina Jews, and Cabilli was completely taken in. Cabilli spoke of Von Stettner from the pulpit, saying his word could be trusted. Cabilli warned all heads of households to urge their sons to avoid provoking the Germans. Most of the community, confident

that their leader would handle the Germans, did not alter their daily lives.

In an interview in Athens in 1947, Billy Gavrilides, a Jewish Athenian lawyer whose father came from Ioannina but who had resettled in Athens, recalled how Cabilli failed in his attempt to use his personal wealth to "buy" the safety of his coreligionists. "Sabethai Cabilli, who had business dealings with my father in Athens, sent his nephew to my father to get all the goods stored in Cabilli's warehouse in Athens and bring it to Ioannina so Cabilli could turn the goods over to the Germans. His nephew did this. He piled all the goods on a truck and drove back towards Ioannina. He got only as far as Agrinion, where the Germans seized the goods and killed the nephew."

The first indication in Ioannina of German plans for the deportation of the Jewish community took place three weeks after the Germans arrived in the city, and it was enough to persuade at least some members of the community to flee. At 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, August 20, the Germans surrounded the area outside the city walls containing the New Synagogue, the Alliance Israelite Universelle Schools, and many wealthy homes. They arrested two men, sixty-seven year old Isaac Lagaris and his brother-in-law, Hayyim Levy, and held them for two hours in the Zosimaia School. The experience convinced Isaac Lagaris that his children should flee. Two of them and three couples managed to get permits from the Italians, officially still in authority, to leave for Athens three days later. After many difficulties they reached Tel Aviv where they remained throughout the war. None of them ever saw their parents again.[164]

The effect in Ioannina of the Italian surrender to the Allies on September 8, 1943 was to leave the city under direct German administration. In September the SS General Jurgen Stroop, destroyer of the Warsaw Ghetto, was put in overall command of German forces in Greece.[165] On October 4 the Germans re-arrested Nissim Batish and his son-in-law, accused them of helping the guerrillas, and hanged them. Although this was done in Florina, the event was widely known in Ioannina.

Immediately after the hangings, the trustees (*parnassim*) of both Ioannina synagogues gathered their Torah Scrolls, the embroidered Ark curtains (*paroketh*), and the sacred vessels and hid them in the crypt in the Old Synagogue (*see* the Synagogues chapter, p. 73).

From October 4 until March 1, 1944, no further incident occurred to alarm the Jewish community in Ioannina. During this time some members of the community even wrote their friends and family members hiding in Athens, encouraging them to return to Ioannina. But the community's fate was sealed in March.

On March 1, 1944, the Germans arrested the president, Dr. Moses Coffina, and three other members of the Jewish Council. The

members were Dr. Errikos Levy, a physician and a lieutenant in the Greek army, and the merchants Shemo Cohen and Leon Mordechai. The vice president, Sabethai Cabilli, was not arrested.[166]

The arrest of four of its leaders was a staggering blow to the community. A delegation of young Jews, determined to learn why their leaders had been arrested, went to the Zosimaia School where the Gestapo told them that the arrested men had been sending food and medical supplies to the guerrillas. Sabethai Cabilli was now the only official spokesman for the community, and he went, alone, to the Zosimaia School to see what could be done to protect his coreligionists. The Germans assured him that the community would remain free if they provided the Germans with money and supplies.

Accordingly, after the next Sabbath services, Cabilli asked the young men of the congregation to come to the synagogue the following morning at 11:00 A.M. Approximately two hundred and fifty young men obeyed his call, filing in grimly and sitting quietly in their seats to hear what their most respected leader wanted of them. Cabilli told them of his visit to the Zosimaia School and what the Germans expected of them if they were to escape deportation.

"What is it you want of us?" asked Uriel Gerson.

"I want you men here to form two committees. One committee is to go to the homes of our coreligionists and take objects of value, silver, chairs, whatever. The other committee is to get donations of money we will give the Germans so they can purchase the things they want which we do not have in our homes. This way, they have given me their word that we will remain free. You know the fate of our Thessaloniki brothers."

"But this has been going on for at least four months," said Gerson.

"Things are difficult," replied Cabilli. "We will have to do our best to get along with the Germans."

"That week we really worked at this," Gerson recalled. "We supplied the Germans with articles and money. All the Germans had to do was ask for something and we supplied it to them immediately. The Germans were so satisfied with our services that they even moved into our homes, and we waited on them hand and foot. We kept hoping that our deeds would soften their hearts and spare us."

Cabilli next went to the parents of the twenty-two young men who had joined the partisans.

"Your sons are endangering the whole community," stormed Cabilli. "They have joined the communists and all of us will suffer. Get these boys to come back! Do you want all of us to go to our deaths?"

"How can we get them to return?" asked the mother of one of these boys. "Even we don't know exactly where they are."

"Find out where they are and get them to return," he ordered.

"You can imagine how these parents felt," Gerson reflected. "After all, they didn't want to endanger the lives of all of us. Well, they found ways to communicate with their sons and succeeded in getting eleven of them to return to their homes. Now Cabilli felt easier in his mind. We continued to supply the Germans with everything their hearts desired."[167]

In early 1944 it was rumored that a Jewish informer working for the Gestapo had come to Ioannina to help plan the deportation of the Jewish community there. He was reported to be using the pseudonym Christos Michaelides although his real name was said to be Daniel Cohen. The Jews were so mesmerized by Cabilli's assurances that they either regarded this story as a hoax or felt too trapped and numbed to be able to do anything. Shortly before the mass arrests, an SS seaplane carrying officers coming to plan the operation landed on the Ioannina lake. Most Ioannina Jews did not know of the plane's arrival and probably none understood its significance.[168]

Two weeks before the arrests, a Greek Christian went to each Jewish home to count the number of Jews living in each house, recording each name. Then he asked about relatives living in other cities, and some people gave the names of their relatives.[169]

On March 17, 1944, Dr. Moses Coffina, still imprisoned in the Zosimaia School, managed to smuggle a brief note out to his wife. He had concealed the note inside a piece of bread brought to him with some home-cooked food by his wife, which the Germans permitted. In the note he wrote that one of the guards had told him that he and the other council members had been arrested "because they would not cooperate" and that soon "the whole community will be arrested."

"Deliver this note to Cabilli," Dr. Coffina instructed his wife, Chrissy. "Don't delay. This is urgent."

Mrs. Coffina took the note to Cabilli immediately after leaving the prison. Cabilli read it at once, but told her, "We must say nothing about this to anyone."[170]

A week later, at 2:00 A.M on the Sabbath morning of March 25, 1944 (Greek Independence Day) German units commanded by an officer named Hopfer and accompanied by interpreters of the official collaborating police, awakened the Jews. The order was given by Lieutenant Hafranek of the Secret Military Police (GFP) and signed by Bergmayer, a non-commissioned officer. Just before the arrests, the Germans had put crosses on the doors of Christians homes, so as not to arrest any Christians.[171]

Jews who lived outside the city walls were ordered to meet at Mavilis Square by the Ioannina lake. The men were put in one group and the women and children in another. The Jews who lived inside the city walls assembled at the military hospital, where both men and

women were packed together in trucks. When Joseph Matsa returned to Ioannina from the mountains he learned that Father Athanasios had managed to give some Ioannina Jews false identity cards which helped a few to escape. The Christian people of the city were deeply moved on the day of the deportation.

"We were allowed to take with us forty kilos of anything we wanted," Nina Negrin told me, "so we had food, because we took food with us. March 25, 1944 was a bitter cold day. The snow kept falling steadily. It was pitiful to hear infants and little children crying. Old women were freezing from the cold."

Sabethai Cabilli, holding a bible in his hands and praying silently, was herded with his wife, sisters, their families, and the rest of the Jews who lived outside the city walls to Mavilis Square. The eleven young men who had been persuaded to return from the mountains also were there, as were the four council members who had been held in the Zosimaia School. As soon as Dr. Coffina saw Cabilli, he shouted, "You people are here only because of one person."

"What do you mean?" asked Uriel Gerson. "What person?"

"Sabethai Cabilli," he replied, pointing an accusing finger at Cabilli. "He is responsible for your capture. I sent him a note through my wife who brought me food in jail. I wrote to him that the Germans were planning to arrest you. I urged him to help you escape."

"Why didn't you tell us about this note?" shouted a youth who had returned from the mountains.

"Why didn't you show it to us?" shouted another.

"You will carry the responsibility for this tragedy," shouted Dr. Coffina. Several of the crowd wanted to strike Cabilli.

"I told you we were in a very grave situation," Cabilli replied. Their accusing eyes were riveted upon his; his own eyes could not avoid theirs. At this moment of intense anguish, he tore the words out of his heart: "*hatas eftaiksa*" (I am guilty of sin).[172]

There was no time to say anything more. One thousand eight hundred and seventy Jews were counted and forced into ninety-seven trucks waiting to drive them to the concentration camp at Larissa where they were transferred to railroad cattle cars for the trip to Auschwitz and Birkenau.

At 3:00 A.M. the Germans awakened some Greek Christians who had collaborated with them and instructed them to distribute any goods left in the stores of the deportees. The Germans also told these collaborators that they could occupy the now vacant Jewish stores and homes.[173]

"It took the Germans a whole day to drive us to Trikkala," Nina Negrin recounted. "It was still snowing and the trucks stuck in the snow. We had a horrible time of it. We had to stay packed together.

Our truck had two windows, but they were kept shut. We spent that night sleeping in the Jewish cemetery. We used the blankets we had taken with us as mattresses. We arrived in Larissa the next day with the loss of two old people. As soon as we reached Larissa we were packed into a large garage with a cement floor."

Once the deportees were in the garage, the Germans ordered that all gold and jewels be surrendered. Anyone who withheld anything would be shot.

"Each of us dropped our gold and jewels where we stood, so they would not be found on us. Then they forced us to pass in front of the Germans who stood on one side and searched us. A large sack was filled with gold and jewels. One woman managed to keep her jewels in a handkerchief tied with a thread and in this way she carried them to Poland."[174]

The captives were detained in Larissa for ten days, and during this time the soldiers in charge of the camp were Austrians and "not as strict. Every other day they allowed a few of us to get water for the rest of the captives. We agreed among ourselves that each time we went for water, one of us would not return to the camp. We erased the word Jude from our identity cards and that helped us in our escape. In one or two instances, we bribed the guards. One time we said we were members of the Red Cross, who used to bring us food. Nine of us escaped in this way. All nine joined ELAS and fought in the Peoples Army for the duration of the war. Those who chose not to escape with us were married men who did not want to leave their wives and children."[175]

"They locked fifty of us in each freight car and took us to Poland," Nina Negrin concluded. "It took us nine days to reach Auschwitz. Some old people died on the way. Every couple of days they opened the doors, so we could get water. We used an empty barrel as a toilet. We threw a blanket over it."

When the Ioannina Jews finally reached Auschwitz, Sabethai Cabilli was not selected for labor. He, his wife, and sisters were sent to the gas chambers with the rest of the older women and children on the day they arrived.

Evaluation. When one ponders over the loss of ninety-one percent of the Jewish population of Ioannina, there is no question that the immediate cause of this tragedy was the unintentional betrayal by a strong-willed and opinionated religious leader. Cabilli believed that if the Germans were provided with everything they requested, his coreligionists would be spared. There is no doubt that Cabilli's "cooperation" bordered dangerously upon collaboration. However, there were other causes which contributed to the deportation of the Ioannina Jews and explain in part why Cabilli was duped so easily by the Germans.

We must keep in mind that the German program for the "final solution" for the Jews was gradual, which deluded the Jews into relaxing their vigil during periods when they were calculatedly not troubled at all. Another factor which sapped Jewish resistance was the stripping of their economic wealth, to which, unfortunately, Cabilli himself had willingly contributed, to his great sorrow when his nephew was killed. Yet another factor was the attitude of many heads of households, who believed that the individual Christians who urged them to flee probably did so in order to take over their property, shops, and homes.

"Many a time in the concentration camp, suffering from beatings and starvation," Uriel Gerson told me, "I used to think of Cabilli with a good deal of bitterness, but now I realize that it was just as much our fault. How many of our coreligionists in Ioannina would be alive today if we hadn't bowed down to his money all our lives? And in the end all his money could not save his own life. Had he advised the Jews to leave while the Italians were still in authority, half of them would have been saved."

Then, too, although both EAM and EDES accepted as many Jews as took refuge in their territory and helped save them from danger, they did not take the initiative to organize the exodus of at least part of the Jewish population of Ioannina, as they had done in Athens, Volos, and Larissa. The only effort they made was to scatter leaflets advising the Jews to take their money and flee to the villages held by the partisans, but they left the Jews to find their own way. Perhaps they were too absorbed in their own disputes.

Another cause was the general indifference of the Christian inhabitants on the days preceding the pitiful event. Although the terrified Jews were lulled to sleep by Cabilli's appeasement policy, the Christians of Ioannina could see the danger threatening the Jews more clearly, but did little to help them.

Still another contributing factor was that some Greek Christians identified the Jews by their religion rather than by their nationality, which was the same as their own. This probably was aggravated by the fact that the Jews had chosen to live together in neighborhoods that were generally identified as *Ta Evraiká*. The Germans quickly detected this "vulnerable point" between Greek Jews and certain Greek Christians and exploited the local forces willing to cooperate with the invaders.

It was inevitable, of course, that personal friendships had developed through the years between Jews and Christians, but the clear-cut distinction between them was always present. This distinction appreciably reduced the help and protection the Jews of Greece received from the Greek Christian population.

The Greek Church, the Athens police department, and some state services helped some Jews by forging Christian identity cards.

Some Greek Christian families hid Jews in their homes although they were putting their own lives at risk to do so. *But this happened mainly in Athens.* The resistance forces in the capital helped find Christian homes for the Jews to hide in, and helped them escape to the mountains. But the German sanctioned Greek puppet government was opposed to the national resistance. They participated passively with the German invaders which, in the final analysis, amounted to collaboration.

It is unfortunate, although in keeping with what was happening to the Jews elsewhere, that the Allies ignored what was happening to the Jews of Greece. As Dr. Michael Matsas wrote in his illuminating article,

> It would have been extremely easy for the Allies to advise the Jews to hide through the resistance network that reached every city of occupied Greece. Nobody ever thought of this, although the Public Records of London, the National Archives in Hyde Park, contain over five hundred pages of documents about all anti-Jewish measures taken, while the American Consuls of Istanbul and Cairo sent detailed reports and recommendations for saving the Jews. These reports were filed away and were declassified in 1972, long after the people who so easily could have been saved were gone.[176]

And, finally, the Germans could never have succeeded in their mass arrest of the Ioannina Jewish community "without the aid of the Greek local police who collaborated with them."[177]

The late Isaiah Trunk evaluated the situation accurately in all countries occupied by the Germans when he wrote, "The Germans readily accepted help from the local populations . . . members of the indigenous auxiliary police were assigned to participate in killing the Jews."[178] "Without their assistance, it would have been impossible for the Germans to administer and dominate the occupied lands."[179]

Rehabilitation

Of the 1,950 Jews living in Ioannina in April, 1941, 1,870 were deported by the Germans. Only 112 survivors returned from the concentration camps. An additional 69 members of the community, some of them fighting in the mountains, had escaped capture throughout the Occupation, making the total number of Ioannina Jews who survived the war 181, 9.28% of the 1941 population. Of these 181, 17 emigrated, leaving only 164 Jews living in Ioannina in 1947.[180]

The returning Jews found their property had been systematically looted. One hour after awakening and arresting the Jews, the Germans had awakened a number of Greek Christian sympathizers

and told them that they could occupy the Jewish homes and stores and take whatever they wished.[181] The governor general of Epirus during the Occupation, Michael Tsimbris, formed committees to distribute whatever the Germans had not taken to hospitals, welfare societies, civil service workers, and individuals who had been particularly victimized by the war. The committees also distributed goods to collaborators, who were sent with ration books to the warehouses where the Jewish merchandise was stored.[182]

After the Germans left, in October 1944, ELAS units entered Ioannina and posted Jewish partisans to guard the warehouses containing what was left of Jewish merchandise and goods. EAM distributed thirty liras to every Jew present in Ioannina in October, 1944, before the survivors returned from the concentration camps or others returned from Athens or Palestine. EAM then took what it could of the remaining "fortune" to Albania.[183]

In 1945, Joseph Matsa, then secretary of the newly elected Ioannina Jewish Council, wrote to Israel Jacobson, the American Joint Distribution Committee representative in Greece, concerning the dire needs of the Jews of Ioannina:

> There are 164 members at present in the Jewish community, only thirty of whom can be said to be rehabilitated. We need to provide shelter for about 25 girls who have been left without families or relatives and must be fed. We need shelter and instruction in the Jewish faith for about 40 young men and economic assistance to help restore them to their occupations, so that they can begin to earn their living. We need economic help for the newly married and for those betrothed. We need money to establish offices for the Jewish community and for our religious needs. . . . All movable goods amounting to about two million gold liras were looted by individuals in the city which we consider it wiser not to mention. Only the immovable property, amounting to about 650 to 700 stores and houses, a part of which belong to the community, are left.[184]

The returnees also found their homes occupied. Many Jewish homes were occupied by squatters, who were reluctant to vacate their rent-free accommodations. Many other Jewish homes were commandeered by the Ioannina authorities to house refugees from the Greek civil war (1945-1948). Owners or the surviving relatives of the owners had to appeal to the courts for their property. This took time, even though laws had been passed to help the returning Jewish survivors.[185] In many cases, the courts supported Greek Christian claims to Jewish property. The sluggishness with which Jewish property was returned to its owners prompted the Minister of Religion to affirm his right to oversee the restitution of Jewish

property but, in fact, very little was done, and that slowly. A moratorium on rents nullified the provisions in the original restitution laws and prohibited the eviction of squatters.

The Greek government Committee for Shelter (*Epitropí Stégastos*) authorized Greek Christians to occupy one room in abandoned Jewish houses, on condition that they paid a small rent to the government. Joseph Cohen had to apply to this committee for permission to occupy his own home, or at least one room in his own home. Probably because he had been president of the Jewish Council and was well known in Ioannina, he was permitted to occupy his own home within a month, but others had to wait for months or even years before they could return to their homes. When I returned to Ioannina in 1947, many of the Jewish survivors were still trying to reclaim their property. Elias Lagaris, former vice-president of the Ioannina Jewish Council, was sharing the home of Albert Negrin until he could regain his own property. I, myself, heard an enraged Greek Christian, being pressured to leave by the Jewish owner of the house in which he was living, exclaim, "Why couldn't Hitler have killed all of you?"

The American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC). The American Joint Distribution Committee, formally known as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee for the Relief of Jewish War Sufferers, was a private organization established on November 27, 1914 by American Jews. Its first representative in Greece, Israel Jacobson, arrived in Greece on December 1, 1944. The AJDC is funded by the United Jewish Appeal in the United States and has received funds from the South African Jewish War Appeal in the Union of South Africa.[186]

From 1945, the AJDC shouldered the cost of rehabilitating the Jews in Greece. It instructed its European office to take all necessary steps to bring relief to the suffering Jewish population. During the first five months of 1945, the AJDC appropriated $ 500,000 for the relief and rehabilitation of all Greek Jewish communities. Medical care accounted for the largest single phase of the AJDC program in Greece. From January 1, 1945 until September of the same year the AJDC provided $ 800,000 to shelter homeless Jews, for orphanages, a summer camp, equipment for a medical dispensary, and special assistance to community institutions. The same year the AJDC provided $ 200,000 to finance the emigration of 239 people to Palestine, among them 95 Greek orphans younger than 17 years old and 77 younger than 13 years old.

For Ioannina, the AJDC paid for the transportation of Jewish deportees returning to their native city. It installed 105 bedrooms for the deportees, and provided a restaurant and medical facilities. The AJDC did not send direct financial support to Ioannina at this time

because each surviving Jew in the city had received 200,000 drs. worth of property (approximately $ 400) from the government and the community had received $ 1,000 from the Committee of Ioannina Jews in New York. In addition, most of the Ioannina Jews lived in Athens, where they were receiving relief funds.[187]

In 1951 the AJDC withdrew its American representative in Greece but, through Mr. Haim Benroubi, its honorary representative in Greece, the committee continued its valuable and generous assistance to Greek Jewry until December 31, 1974.

The Central Council of Coordination and Consultation. In March, 1945, the Jewish survivors in Greece took action for their own rehabilitation, forming the Central Council of Coordination and Consultation. The Central Council served mainly to channel the funds received from the AJDC and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (CJMCAG), but it also represented all survivors in their dealings with the government concerning the reconstitution of Jewish communities. Each community elected its own council and made provision for its own communal and religious administration, organizing assistance and providing as best it could for religious education.

The Central Board of Jewish Communities (Kentrikón Israelíton Symvoúlion, KIS). The Central Board of Jewish Communities and its subsidiary Central Relief Committee were established shortly after the liberation to work with the AJDC in Greece. There are eight members of the Central Board from Athens, three from Thessaloniki, and one each from Trikkala, Larissa, and Ioannina. Most of the Central Board's funds came from the AJDC. In 1945 the AJDC deposited $ 200,000 with the Central Board, to be spent in consultation with the AJDC. The Central Sephardic Community of America donated $ 2,000. In the winter of 1945/6 10,000 pounds sterling was donated by the Jews of Egypt and another 10,000 pounds sterling was donated by Jews of South Africa. The Central British Fund donated 25,000 pounds sterling.[188]

The Central Board is the highest administrative body legally constituted under Greek law dealing with the Jewish communities in Greece. The Central Board coordinated the rehabilitation efforts for the destroyed Greek Jewish communities. With one exception, AJDC assistance was distributed through the Central Board to all restored Jewish communities, large or small. The exception was the Jewish community of Thessaloniki, for the 1,250 surviving Jewish inhabitants now living in that city are the beneficiaries of the heirless property of 44,000 Thessaloniki Jews who perished in the death camps. The Central Board also seeks to unify the Greek Jewish communities, for it was the isolation of these communities before the

war which enabled the Nazis to destroy each one separately. To this end the Central Board interprets community problems to the other communities and promotes closer mutual identification with these problems.

The Central Board represents Greek Jewish interests before the Greek government as well as calling for assistance from various communities outside Greece. It is concerned with the restitution of property and with communal, religious, and educational matters. Major concerns were the Jewish Claims Conference and death certificates, which enabled the community to establish legal ownership of heirless property. The Central Board distributed AJDC funds for some administrative and religious expenses of various communities in Greece. On Jewish holidays these funds included salaries of rabbis who travelled to the more remote communities to conduct services. Local community leaders, in cooperation with their local relief committees, decided how these funds were allocated. In 1947 the Central Board received approximately 99% of its funds from the AJDC.

The Central Relief Committee. The Central Relief Committee, the religious arm of the Central Board, worked with the AJDC to gradually take over the administration of relief funds for the Jewish communities in Greece. The Committee received its funds from the Central Board, which in turn received funds from the AJDC and from the administration of heirless Jewish property. Each community submitted a budget for relief to the Committee. On July 9, 1946, the Committee received approximately $ 60,070 (300,353,000 drs.) for monthly stipends to about 1,000 Greek Jews for medical care, feeding children, assistance to widows and orphans, and medical aid to sufferers of tuberculosis. One man in Ioannina with tuberculosis received $ 20 (100,000 drs.) monthly. In 1945 thirty-eight tons of food, clothing, and shoes were sent to the Jews of Greece by the Jews of Argentina; the distribution of these goods was handled through the Central Relief Committee. The Committee brought people with medical problems which could not be treated in the provinces into Athens. From 1946 through the first half of 1950 Ioannina received approximately $ 11,945 (59,726,000 drs.) for medical care.[189]

The Organization for Rehabilitation and Training (ORT). The Organization for Rehabilitation and Training was founded in 1948 to assist the vocational rehabilitation of Jews in Greece. Its board of directors consisted of twelve members appointed by the AJDC. ORT received $ 200,000 from the AJDC to provide technical instruction for vocational training and workshop projects established by the AJDC. The AJDC provided financial support to enable ORT

students to attend school, in some cases providing clothing as well. Pupils from the provinces were housed free of charge and food rations were supplied. Jewish professionals whose occupational and economic situation had been cruelly affected during the Occupation were given long term credits at a very low rate of interest.

ORT established a vocational school to train young mechanics during the day and provide several courses during the evening. The evening courses included welding and technical drawing for men and sewing for women. The ORT program ran successfully until 1956 when it was closed for lack of students.[190]

The Loan Fund (Loan Kassa). The Loan Fund, a revolving fund of free loans established on December 1, 1944 by the AJDC with an initial capital of $ 105,000, granted free loans of up to $ 300 (1,500,000 drs.) to help Jews establish themselves in business. The Loan Fund was also known as the Loan Kassa, from the Greek word for "chest." The board of directors consisted of Greek Jews with banking and business experience and no need to borrow funds for themselves. Local committees were appointed to receive applications for loans. Members of the Ioannina committee were Marce Battino, Joseph Cohen, Haim Ezra, Sam Matsas, and Solomon Mordechai. The Loan Fund is generally recognized, along with support for emigration, as the most effective program carried out by the AJDC.

Loans were given clients who pledged repayment over a fifteen month period starting three months after receiving the funds. Thus, within eighteen months the loan was repaid and the Loan Fund was always able to make new loans. Loans were made to small manufacturers to equip their factories and to skilled workers to enable them to purchase tools for their trades. The Loan Fund granted more than 2,600 loans, 179 of them for Ioannina.

Organization for the Relief and Rehabilitation of the Jews in Greece (Organismós Perithálpseos kai Apokatastáseos Israelíton Elládos, OPAIE). The Organization for the Relief and Rehabilitation of the Jews in Greece was created by Royal Decree in 1946 (implemented only in 1949) in which the state relinquished all right to claim Jewish heirless property confiscated by the Germans and transferred this right to OPAIE. There were nine members of the board of directors of OPAIE, one for each 500 members of a Jewish community, elected by a congress of Jewish communities, provided that each community was partially restored. The board members served without pay.

The Royal Decree was the result of a protracted legal struggle. Lawyers for the Jewish community contested the Greek government desire to take over all the heirless Jewish property. The government

abandoned this claim but asserted a 50% tax on the value of all heirless Jewish property. Again, this was contested by Jewish community lawyers and the government finally reduced the tax assessment to 25% of the price at which heirless Jewish property was sold.

After the decree was promulgated but before it was implemented, the minister of finance tried to introduce unfavorable amendments, in particular a provision preventing any use of OPAIE income or assets for the rehabilitation of Jews now living outside Greek territory.[191] Greek government bureaucratic foot dragging about the distribution of Jewish assets to the Jewish community continued, so that as late as 1954 a great number of survivors were living at a "sub-human level" in crowded conditions on a "monthly subsidy of two to three US dollars."[192] As a result, more than half of the Jews who had returned to Ioannina moved away: 24 for Athens; 3 for Volos; 38 for Israel; and one each in Switzerland, Sweden, and Brazil.[193]

The two-fold aim of OPAIE was to clear property claims for the relatives of deceased Greek Jews and to administer the properties without heirs for the benefit of the surviving Greek Jews who had been living in Greece before 1939. Funds generated by these properties were used to help those who had been deprived of their occupation and income by creating vocational rehabilitation programs. Jewish properties were appraised on the basis of the value of the buildings during the years 1937-1939. OPAIE collected all the information about the heirless properties but could not sell any of it. Income from the properties went to the communities according to the needs of their members; the balance was turned over to OPAIE. Greek Jews living outside Greece were able to submit claims to Jewish properties in Greece until the end of 1949. In Ioannina there were 110 Jewish houses and 39 Jewish business establishments without heirs, valued at 3,184,000 drs.

The creation of the State of Israel and the intensification of the flow of Greek Jewish emigrants to Israel was taken into account. Greek Jewry decided that 30% of the proceeds realized from OPAIE administered property should be put at the disposal of Israel. OPAIE opened the way for Greek Jewry to become increasingly independent of foreign aid.

The Janina Relief Fund. The Janina Relief Fund, established in New York after the liberation, was headed by Morris Cohen and Joseph Josephs, two leaders of the Ioannina community in New York. In 1945 the JRF donated $ 50,000 to be administered by the AJDC for the benefit of Jews living in Epirus (Ioannina, Arta, Preveza) and those Jews who had come from Epirus but were then living in Athens. The AJDC matched the JRF contribution. Jews

from Ioannina received 70% of the funds and Jews from the rest of Epirus received 30%. $ 10,000 was used to make marriage possible for fifteen or twenty single women who could not marry because they did not have dowry funds. The money was used for dowries, furniture, and apartments, as well as to provide a small capital for the future husbands so they could maintain decent family lives. $ 15,000 was spent on providing vocational training. All Epirus applicants for vocational training were processed by the Epirus Rehabilitation Committee. $ 25,000 was allotted to the Loan Kassa, providing 171 loans to Jewish survivors in Epirus.

In 1945 the JRF sent five tons of matzoth flour to Ioannina. In 1946 the JRF donated between ten and twelve thousand dollars through the AJDC for clothing for Ioannina Jews living in Athens. Twenty-two tons of food and clothing were sent for the Jews of Epirus, supplying 232 people. For Passover relief, 700 pounds of matzoth flour were sent to Ioannina and 1,500 pounds were sent to Jews living in Albania, most of whom had come from Ioannina. (Some 80 Jews were living in Valona, one family was living in Argyrokastro, and two or three families were living in Tirana.)

In 1949, the JRF joined the AJDC in supporting the emigration of Greek Jews to Israel, offering to provide approximately $ 333 for any Ioannina Jew who wished to do so. In 1950, the JRF made a special allocation for Passover relief and for TB patients. In the same year, the JRF donated approximately $ 3,333 to the Jewish school in Athens to hire Hebrew teachers from Israel, the teachers coming from families from Ioannina. Unfortunately, Hebrew teachers were not needed in Ioannina because no school age Jewish children had survived in the city.

In 1951, Morris Cohen and Joseph Josephs used some of the money to provide Sepher Torahs for Israel. In March, 1953, the JRF again provided assistance to the Ioannina Jews living in Albania. In 1954 the JRF stopped making loans. Instead, the JRF assisted the Chief Rabbi of Volos, who was in dire need of funds, and aided the victims of the earthquake which ravaged the country that year. Morris Cohen and Joseph Josephs decided that providing dowries so young women could marry and helping widows and the aged were more worthy causes than supporting the Loan Fund. The AJDC considered this a most unfortunate decision and provided an additional $ 50,000 to the Loan Fund to compensate for the cessation of funds from the JRF. The JRF ended its services in Greece in July, 1957.

Although some of the above organizations no longer exist, the Central Board (KIS) and its subsidiary Central Relief Committee have remained in existence to coordinate life in all the surviving communities of Greece. The Central Board also maintains a Board of Coordination and Decision which performs five basic functions: 1)

provides scholarships (except to students from Thessaloniki, which has its own program), 2) gives student loans, 3) provides dowries, 4) provides funds each month to cover the community operating budgets, 5) provides funds each month to cover various community needs. The local community leaders determine how these funds will be distributed. KIS closely follows all Greek newspapers for any anti-Jewish article which may appear.

Thanks to the vision, understanding, and activity of the AJDC and the JRF, the Jewish survivors in Ioannina and throughout Greece have been rehabilitated, reestablished in their businesses and professions. They have reassumed their social and economic relations with their Greek Christian fellow citizens.

Ioannina Today

Today there are about eighty Jews living in Ioannina and its outlying districts, almost all of them middle-aged or older. They are storekeepers, dealing chiefly in textiles, household wares, notions, and food.

Family life has changed radically. Before World War II, girls did not leave home before they married. Today, parents send both sons and daughters to Athens, Israel, or the United States for higher education which, they hope, will also provide Jewish spouses.

Although study abroad brings chances for a fuller life, it also brings difficulties. The amount of money which may be sent out of the country to support study abroad is severely restricted, so the students have to find other means of support even though parents may be affluent. Young people who have pursued their education outside Greece are unlikely to return to live in the land of their birth. This is particularly hard on parents who hope to have their children and grandchildren near them in their old age.

Communal life has also changed radically. Most Jews living in Ioannina today have either sold or rented the houses they once occupied. They are now living in a modern apartment house on Joseph Eliyia Street, built with the assistance of KIS on land where the New Synagogue and the Boys' Alliance School were located before the Germans destroyed these buildings. Relations between Jews and Christians in Ioannina are cordial.

Religious life in Ioannina, once the pride of traditional Jews, is now at an extremely low ebb, although the relations between individual Jews and members of other Jewish communities in Greece are excellent. Most of the survivors living in Ioannina make regular visits to Israel, especially those whose children have married and settled in Israel. Even in those cases where Jewish young men and women find Jewish mates in Greece, they have modified their religious practices, as well as their Jewish customs, because of the drastic changes in their social and religious environment.

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Athens sends a rabbi to all functioning Jewish communities to celebrate all holy days and attend to their basic religious needs. In Ioannina the visiting rabbi officiates at the Old Synagogue within the walled city. On other occasions services are led by one of the members of the community. Those Ioannina Jews whose children are in Athens or other Greek cities usually travel to celebrate the major holy days with the families of their children.

Facing their situation realistically, the Ioannina Jews have, thanks to the Sisterhood of Janina in New York, restored the Old Synagogue. They are trying to maintain their cemetery in good condition so that their heritage of over one thousand years of uninterrupted life in Ioannina will not be lost. The culture and traditions of the Ioannina Jews are perpetuated by the émigrés who have resettled in Athens, Israel, and the United States.

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52. Ibid. *See* also MM V, 86; Baron, op cit., 14 and Starr, *Romania*, 59-62, note 44.
53. *See* N. Banescu, "Le Patriarche Athanase Ier et Andronic II Palaeologue etat religieux politique et social de l'Empire" in *Academie Romanie Bulletin de la Section Historique* XXIII, 1 (Bucharest, 1942), 35-36 and Peter Charanis, *Byzantion* (Boston, 1942-44), 285-311.
54. *See* Starr, *Romania*, 112 and JBE, 11-17; Baron, III, 191-193; F. Doelger, "Die Frage der Judensteuer in Byzance" in *Viertel Jahrschrift fur Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Vol. XXVI (1933), 1-24, quoted by Starr in *Romania*, 112; Charanis, ibid; Andreades, ibid, 18 and "Les Juifs et le fisc dans l'empire byzantin" in *Melanges Charles Diehl*, Vol. I (Paris, 1930), 17.
55. *See* Bowman, 30-31 and Donald M. Nicol, *Church and Society in the Last Centuries of Byzantium* (Cambridge, 1979), 54.
56. Harold V. Temperley, *History of Serbia* (New York, 1969), 74. *See*

also D. Salamanga, *Strolls Through Ioannina* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1965), 43 and Gioulis, 32-35.

57. *Chronicle of Ioannina*, quoted by William Miller, *Latins in the Levant* (London, 1908), 331. *See* also Donald Nicol, *The Despotate of Epirus* (Cambridge, 1984), 143-154.
58. Kostas Papageorgiou, *Epeirotikí Estía* (Greek), Vol. 37, May 1955, 421 and Aravantinos, 1, 166.
59. *Ta Giannena tou Lampridi* (Greek), 31. *See* also Nicol, 198.
60. *See* Nicol, 199; Papageorgiou, 422; and Vacalopoulos, *Origins of the Greek Nation* (New Brunswick, 1970), 149.

Ioannina Jews under Ottoman Rule

61. Moses Franco, *Moses Franco, Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours* (New York, 1897), 34; H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1957), Vol. 1, Part 2, 241; Abraham Galante, *Documents Officiels Turcs concernant les Juifs de Turquie* (Istanbul, 1931), 31.
62. Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East and the West* (Indiana University Press, 1967), 91. *See* also Claude Cahan, "Dhimmi" in EI^2 (London, 1965), Vol. 2, 227-231; Robert Olson, "Jews in the Light of New Documents" in JSS (Winter, 1979), 75.

People of the Pact (Ahl al-Dhimmi)

63. *See* Claude Cahan, "Djizya" in EI^2 (London, 1965), Vol. 2, 562-566 and "Dhimmi" in the same volume, 227-231; Roderic H. Davison, *Turkey* (New Jersey, 1968), 45; Abraham Galante, *Documents Officiels Turcs concernant les Juifs de Turquie* (Istanbul, 1931), 31; H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1957), Vol. 1, Part 2, 208; and Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire in the Classical Age, 1300-1600* (London, 1973), 150.
64. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (London , New York, 1982), Vol. 1, 9.

The Millet System

65. L. S. Stavrianos, *The Ottoman Empire. Was it the Sick Man of Europe ?* (New York, 1951), 24. *See* also, by the same author, "The Lack of Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire" in *Readings in World History* (Boston, 1962), 530-531, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York, 1958), 114, *The Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 1970), Vol. 1, 305, and Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, (London, 1968, 2nd ed.) 2.
66. Baron, Vol. 3, 161-162. *See* also Gibb and Bowen, Vol. I, Part II, 217-219; Moses Franco, *Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris, 1897), 32; Mary Montgomery,

"Turkey" in JE, Vol. 12, col. 279; Haim Zew Hirschberg/Hyman Campeas, "Turkey" in EJ, Vol. 15, col. 1460; Mark Epstein, "The Leadership of the Ottoman Jews in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries" in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. 1, 101-116.

67. Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire in the Classical Age, 1300-1600* (London, 1973), 151.

Occupations of the Ioannina Jews

68. C. Huart, "Janina" in EI[1], Vol. I (London, 1927), 572.
69. K. Mertziou, quoted by D. Salamanga, *The Guilds and Occupations Under Turkey in Ioannina* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1959), 18. *See* also H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, Vol. I, Part II, 219-220; Holland, Vol. 1, 195; D. Urquahart,44 *Spirit of the East* (London, 1938), Vol. 1, 198, 206; Viscountess Ann Strangford, *The Eastern Shores of the Adriatic in 1863*, (London, 1864), 28.

Taxation

70. Theodore Reinach, *Histoire des Israelites* (Paris, 1901), 225-6.
71. Bernard Lewis, "Notes and Documents from the Turkish Archives" in *Oriental Notes and Studies*, No. 3 (Jerusalem, 1952), 43 and "Studies in Ottoman Archives" in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (London University, 1954), XVI, # 3, 484. *See* also S. Emmanuel, *Histoire des Israelites de Salonique* (Paris, 1936), 124-125. A. Galante, *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul (Istanbul, 1941-42), 1, 5, 107ff and Recueil de Nouveau Documents Inedits Concernant l'Histoire des Juifs de Turquie* (Istanbul, 1949), 74ff.
72. Moses Franco, *Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris, 1897), 31.
73. Azriel Shohat writes that the rabbi's tax was instituted with the appointment of Rabbi Moshe Kapsali. *See* Azriel Shohat, "The Book of Greek Jewry, Vol. I" in *Sefunot* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1971-1977), XI, 21

Arrival of the Sephardim

74. Inalcik, 141.
75. Franco, 37.
76. *See* L. S. Stavrianos, *The Ottoman Empire. Was it the Sick Man of Europe?* (New York, 1957), 20 and, by the same author, *The Balkans Since 1453* (New York, 1958), 97.
77. Roderic H. Davison, *Turkey* (New York, 1968), 45. *See* also Franco, 39.
78. Benzion Natanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel, Statesman and Philosopher* (Philadelphia, 1953), 73.

Sephardim Romaniote Conflict

79. Gibb and Bowen, Vol. I, Part II, 219.
80. Rabbi Dr. H. J. Zimmels, *Ashkenazim and Sephardim* (London, 1958), 43-44.
81. Rabbi Morris Goodblatt, *Jewish Life in Turkey in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1952), 13-14.
82. S. Rosanes, *Divre Yeme Yisra'el be Thogarma I* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1930), 216.
83. Rosanes, ibid.

Ottoman Decline

84. Moses Franco, "Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours" (Paris, 1897), 72. *See* also Alexander Pallis, *In the Days of the Janissaries* (London, 1951), 55.
85. Gibb and Bowen, 238.
86. K. D. Mertziou, "The Archives of the Venetian State" (Greek) in *St. Mikra Ioanninon Chronographia*, 22-58. *See* also "Chronological Table of the Pashas in Ioannina" (Greek) in Epeirotiki Estia, Vol. 188, Dec. 1967, 449-450, 549-640.
87. Christos Soulis, "Journey of the Turkish Traveler in Epirus" (Greek) in *Epeirotika Grammata*, May, 1944, A. Vol. 5, 165. *See* also Alexander Pallis, 57, 59; F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (Oxford, 1929), 1-8 n. 3; Ritter Joseph Von Hammer, *Narrative Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa in the 17th Century* by Evliyia Efendi (London, 1834), 249.
88. S. Rosanes, 4, 7. 274-275.
89. P. Aravantinos, *Chronographia tis Epeirou* (Athens, 1856), Vol. II, 246. *See* also I. Lamprides, *Epeirotika Meletemata* (Athens, 1887), Vol. 1, 45-46.
90. This is not an exhaustive list of all the rabbis who visited Ioannina. *See Encyclopedia Letoldat Chacme Eretz Israel* (Hebrew), Vol. 2, 320-321 and Abraham Yaari, *Sheluhe Eretz Yisrael* (Hebrew), 424, 469, 484, 559, 861.

The Responsa

91. Solomon B. Freehof, *A Treasury of Responsa*, (Philadelphia, 1963), 134.
92. Binyamin Ze'ev, paragraph 437. 450 *responsa* by Binyamin Ze'ev were edited and published posthumously in Venice in 1539 by his son-in-law, Rabbi Shemuel Kalai, an eminent respondent in his own right.
93. Rabbi Joseph Ben Ephraim Caro, *Akbat Rokel* (The Powers of the Merchant), paragraph 124. The title is taken from the Song of Songs, 3:16. All the respondents in European Turkey wrote their *responsa* in the manner of Caro's *Shulhan Arukh* and, as in that work, numbered their *responsa*, by paragraph and classified them in four sections according to the subject of the query.

94. Rabbi David Hayyim Ha-Kohen, *Sheeloth u Teshuvoth* (Questions and Answers), *MaharDakh*, Vol. 1, paragraph 30. This *responsum* is found in Freehof, 145-148.
95. Binyamin Ze'ev, paragraph 323.
96. Binyamin Ze'ev, paragraph 308.
97. Samuel De Medina (1506-1589) was principal of the Talmudic College of Thessaloniki, and was officially known as Haham Ha Shalem (Full Sage). De Medina was the scion of a distinguished family formerly of Castille, Spain. There are 956 decisions (*askamoth*) written in Hebrew in Medina's legal writings. These are divided into four sections, only two of which were published in his lifetime. The other two were published posthumously by his son.
98. Samuel De Medina, *Hoshan Mishpat*, paragraph 417. *See* also Goodblatt, 57, 58, and 187-189 for an English translation of this *responsum*.
99. Samuel De Medina, ibid, paragraph 92.
100. Samuel De Medina, *Yoreh Deah*, paragraph 137.
101. Samuel De Medina, *Even Ha Ezer*, paragraph 50.
102. Ibid, paragraph 220.
103. Rabbbi Solomon Ben Joseph Amarillo (1645-1721) wrote a number of works which were published during his lifetime by his son Moses, who also edited his father's book of *responsa*, *Kerem Shelomeh* (The Vineyard of Solomon), published in Thessaloniki in 1719.
104. Rabbi Solomon Ben Joseph Amarillo, *Kerem Shelomeh. Even Ha Ezer*, paragraph 10. *See* also Rosanes, 4, 4, 274-275.
105. Rabbi Hayyim Moses Ben Amarillo officiated in Thessaloniki during the first half of the 18th century. He is the author of a collection of *responsa* entitled *Dever Moshe* (The Word of Moses), published 1742-1750. For the *responsum* discussed here, *see* Vol. 1, paragraph 4.
106. Ibid, paragraph 34.
107. Rabbi Hayyim Abraham Estrumza, *Yerek Avraham*, Vol. 1, paragraph 69.

The Eighteenth Century

108. Moses Franco, *Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours* (reprint, New York, 1973), 118.
109. K. D. Mertziou, "Chronological Table of the Pashas in Ioannina" (Greek) in *Epeirotiki Estia*, Vol. 188 (December, 1967), 449-450 and 544-555.
110. Ioannis Lamprides, "The Ioannina of Lamprides" in *Epeirotika Meletemata* (Greek) (Athens, 1887), 40-41.
111. D. Salamanga, *Guilds and Occupations in Turkocratic Ioannina* (Ioannina, 1959), 20.
112. George K. Gatos, *Istoria ton Ioanninon* (Greek) (Athens, 1965), 17-18. *See* also P. Aravantinos, *Chronographia tis Epeirou* (Athens, 1856), Vol. II, 268.

Ali Pasha

113. George K. Gatos, *Istoria ton Ioanninon* (Greek) (Athens, 1956), 18.
114. B. Kouyea writes that nine Jews, all of whom had workshops at home, are listed as guild members: Yehouda Cohen; his son, Kofoyesoula; Solomon Saor; the son of Baruch Goustis; Avram Cohen; the son of Hatzi Braha; the son of Tempesteni; the son of Aham Itzhak; Sabethias, the son of Rabbi Giuli. *See* B. Kouyea, *Epeirotiko Archeion* (Greek), 83.
115. F.C.H.L. Pouqueville, *Travels in Greece and Turkey* (London, 1820), Vol. 1, 368.
116. W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece* (London, 1835), Vol. 4, 137-138, including n. 1. For more information about life, including Jewish life, in Ioannina during the reign of Ali Pasha, *see* Thomas Smart Hughes, *Travels in Sicily, Greece and Albania* (London, 1820) Vol. 1, 471-72 and Vol. 2, 22, 331.
117. S. Rosanes, *Divre Yeme Yisra'el be Thogarma I* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1930), 5, 3, 190-191.
118. S. Rosanes, "Avlona" in *Encyclopedia Eshkol* (Berlin, 1929), cols. 189-90. At the end of Ali Pasha's reign there were 343 Jewish families in Ioannina. *See* P. Aravantinos, Vol. II, *Chronographia tis Epeirou* (Athens, 1856), Vol. II, 248.
119. Commander Lord Teignmouth, R. N., "A Splendid Scoundrel" in *English Review* (July-December, 1923), 373, 379.
120. Arthur Foss, *Epirus* (London, 1978), 40-41.
121. F.C.H.L. Pouqueville, *Voyage de la Grèce* (Paris, 1826) Vol. I, 154.
122. William Miller, *The Turkish Restoration in Greece 1717-1797* (London, 1922), 17. *See* also by the same author, *A History of the Greek People 1821-1921* (London, 1922), 10.
123. Sir Henry Holland, *Travels in the Ionian Isles, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia during the years 1812-1813* (London, 1819), Vol. I, 171.

War of Independence

124. G. D. Koromelas, "Tourkokrateia" in MEE, Vol. XI (1929), 701.
125. Moise K. Konstantini, *The Contribution of the Jews to the Liberation of the Greeks* (Greek) (Athens, 1971), title page.
126. Georgios Th. Zoras, "New Kalvos Note" in *Byzantine Library and Modern Greek Philology* (Greek) (Athens, 1970), n. 48.
127. Nikolaos Dragoumis, *Historical Recollections* (Greek), quoted by Konstantini, 13.
128. Spiridon Trikoupis, *History of the Greek Revolution* (Greek) (London, 1860), Vol. 3, 249.
129. Christoman Krimbas, *Jewish Review* (Greek), March 26, 1971.
130. Christoman Krimbas, "Moissis Gaster" in *Jewish Review* (Greek), 8. *See* also Konstantini, 9, 11, 13 and *Chronika*, Issue 12 (October, 1978), 5.

From the Execution of Ali Pasha to Independence

131. P. Aravantinos, Vol. II, 245, 247 and D. Salamanga, *As Liberty Dawned* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1963), 35. *See* also Isidore Loeb, *La Situation des Israelities en Turquie* (Paris, 1877), 2. Loeb says that there were 3,000 Jews in Ioannina in 1876. D. Salamanga writes that in the last 50 years there were 5,000 Jews in Ioannina. *See* D. Salamanga, *Strolls in Ioannina* (Ioannina, 1956), 46.
132. Jacob Moshe Toledano, *Sarid Palih* (The Refuge and the Torment) (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1945), 32. *See* also Cuyler Young, *Near Eastern Culture and Society* (Princeton, 1951), 23.
133. A. A. Andreades, "The Jews in the Byzantine Empire" in EH, III, No. 9 (January, 1934), 23.
134. P. Aravantinos, op cit., Vol. 2, 246-247.
135. Toledano, op cit, 32-35.
136. Basiliou Pyrsinella, *History of the City of Ioannina* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1959-60), 67.
137. Ioannes N. Nikolaides, "An Episode between Christians and Jews" in *The Diary of the Committee of Epeirotic Studies* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1979).
138. D. Salamanga, *As Liberty Dawned* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1963), 76.
139. Toledano, op cit, 32-35.
140. K. Photopoulou, "A Dramatic Collision between Christians and Jews" (Greek) in *Epeirotiki Estia* (March-April, 1969), Vols. 203-204, 156-160. This reference is taken from the books of G. K. Krystallis, cited in a book by Photopoulou.
141. Moses Franco, *Essai sur l'Histoire des Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris, 1897), 225-227. *See* also D. Salamanga, "Ioannina Historical Research 1866-1877" (Greek) in *Epeirotiki Estia* (January-April, 1963), 103.
142. Abraham Galante, "Les Juifs au Parlement et au Senat" in *Turcs et Juifs* (Istanbul, 1932), 124.
143. Some Turkish troops involved in this campaign were camped in Ioannina. In April 1897, during the week of Passover, my mother, then a teenager, was sitting down with her family for the seder service when Turkish soldiers knocked at the door, presented them with sacks of flour, and compelled them to bake bread for the troops.

The Twentieth Century

144. Conversations with Joseph Nehamá and other Ioannina Jews. I was also told of the following murders: In 1900 Hayyim David Battino was killed by one of these bands near Konitsa, a town near the present Albanian border. In 1910 Rahamim Zion, a graduate of the Alliance and a tutor for the family of a Turkish bey, was killed in a town just inside Albania. Rabbi Mihail was found dead outside a nearby village. Moshon Pappi was killed on the road to Metsovo. Moshon Liaslos and a man called Kloup were killed by Greeks for supporting the Jewish settlements in Palestine.
145. D. Salamanga, *As Liberty Dawned* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1963), 200.

146. Bulletin No. 37, Troisième Série.
147. Grèce II, No. 37, Ecoles 1911-1913.
148. Grèce III E, No. 37, Ecoles 1911-1913.
149. Salamanga, 200. *See* also Guy Chantapleure, *La Ville Assiegée* (The Besieged City) (Ioannina, 1912 1913), 200. Chantapleure is the pseudonym of Jean Violet Dussap, the French consul in Ioannina.

World War I

150. Max Joseph, interviewed by the author in New York.
151. Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece* (New York, 1979), 106.

The Asia Minor Campaign

152. Nissim David Matsa, interviewed by the author in New York in 1981.
153. Max Joseph, interview with the author.
154. *Grèce Paix et Droit*, No. 5, 11 and 12.
155. Joseph Matsa, interviewed by the author in Ioannina.
156. *Jewish Review* (Greek) (Athens, June, 1976)
157. Names given the author by the secretary of the Jewish Council in Ioannina in 1947.
158. Letter from Irakles Skandáli, who was with Colonel Frizis at the time of his death, published in the magazine *Avgí* (Dawn) November 16, 1978.

    A statue of Colonel Frizis stands adjacent to the small war museum at Kalpaki, 22 miles north of Ioannina, where the Greek army stopped the Italian advance.

Holocaust

159. Mr. Joseph Nehama, interview in Thessaloniki in the summer of 1947.
160. Mr. Shaemus Eliasaf, one of the leading members of the Ioannina Jewish community in 1947, told me of the events affecting the Ioannina Jews from the Italian occupation of the city until the Italian surrender on September 8, 1943, when he escaped to Athens. Mr. Eliasaf did not know the name of the Italian officer with whom Dr. Moses Coffina and Sabethai Cabilli met.
161. In Athens in 1947 I conducted several interviews. Rabbi Elias Barzelai, Chief Rabbi of Athens, told me he had written the Jewish Councils in all the Italian administered cities telling them what had happened in Thessaloniki and urging them to flee before the Germans occupied their cities. Victor Borbolis, a Ioannina native who was the cantor of the Ioannina synagogue in Athens, told me he had telegraphed, in code, the Ioannina Jewish Council, "The child is seriously ill. Urgent that you leave for Athens at once." Sion Bacolas, my first cousin and a Ioannina native, was an EOE leader in Athens. He made the dangerous trip back to Ioannina to urge Vice President Cabilli to help

their coreligionists escape. Cabilli sneered at the warning. "Chicks are now giving advice to the rooster," he told Sion.

162. The Zosimaia brothers, natives of Ioannina and well-known philanthropists during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, had donated the money for founding the school.
163. This account was told the author by Moissis Eliasaf, who worked with Sabethai Cabilli at the time.
164. The arrest was recounted to the author by Isaac Lagaris's son, Elias, in Ioannina in the summer of 1947.
165. In 1947 SS General Jurgen Stroop was condemned to death by the U.S. Military Tribunal at Nuremberg for atrocities committed in Warsaw and in Greece. He was extradited to Poland and hanged.
166. The four men were taken to the island in the Ioannina lake, where they were kept in isolation for two nights in a house requisitioned by the Gestapo from a man named Lappas. Then they were taken to the Zosimaia School where they were kept in a windowless basement for two weeks before being placed in a large hall with some fifty other prisoners until the rest of the community was arrested.

    This information comes from an interview I had with Dr. Errikos Levy, the only member of the Ioannina Jewish Council to survive Auschwitz, in the Jewish Center in Athens in 1964. He had settled in Athens and resumed medical practice.
167. Interview with Uriel Gerson, an Auschwitz survivor (# 182396), in Ioannina in 1947.
168. Interview with Mr. Ioannis Zois, journalist with the Ioannina newspaper *Morning Word* (*Proinós Lógos*).
169. Interview with Nina Negrin, a survivor of Birkenau (# 77160), in Ioannina in 1947.
170. Chrissy Coffina told about the note and Cabilli's reaction to it in Mavilis Square at the time of the mass arrests. Her statement was heard by Uriel Gerson, who reported it to me in Ioannina in 1947.
171. *See* English translation of German document in Appendix.
172. *Hatas*, sin, from the Hebrew *hatati*; *eftaiksa*, I was at fault, guilty, from the Greek root *ftaio*. These words were said in the Beth Din, when the accused admitted that he had sinned.
173. In 1947 I interviewed Anastasios Vlachopoulos, a Greek Christian from Ioannina, who admitted to me that he was one of the people awakened by the Germans at 3:00 A.M. When I asked him why the Germans had chosen him, he replied, "Well, you see, I was president of the chamber of commerce when Ioannina was occupied by the Germans."
174. Nina Negrin.
175. Interview with Avram Zvolis in Ioannina in 1947. The nine men who escaped at Larissa were: Solomon Cohen, Menachem Hadjopoulos, Jacob Gerson, Yeshua Massa, Avram Mihael Matathia, Solomon Matsa, Samuel Meir, Moisis Myonas, Avram Zvolis.
176. Dr. Michael Matsas, "How the West Helped Destruction of Greek Jewry" in *Jewish Week* (April, 1978), 13-19.
177. Interview with Uriel Gerson.
178. Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat* (New York, 1972), 27.
179. Ibid, 572.

180. These figures were given me in 1947 by Joseph Matsa, secretary of the newly elected Ioannina Jewish Council. The council was elected in March, 1946, with Joseph Cohen president, Simon Nachma vice-president, Joseph Matsa secretary, and Albert Gabai treasurer. Joseph Ganis, Samuel Hatzopoulos, and Samuel Matsas were members.
181. This information comes from a brief and uncomfortable interview I had in Ioannina in 1947 with Anastios Vlachopoulos, one of the men awakened by the Germans at 3:00 A.M. and informed that they could take over Jewish property.
182. This was told me by Uriel Gerson, an Auschwitz survivor (#182396), in 1947.
183. Letter from Dr. Michael Matsas to the author.
184. Letter dated July 15, 1945 from Joseph Matsa to Israel Jacobson, in the AJDC archives for that year.
185. Law Number 44 was passed on October 26, 1944, a month after the Germans left Greece. Law Number 337, passed on May 20, 1945, was concerned with the "abolishment of anti-Jewish laws and the restitution of Jewish assets." Law Number 808, passed on December 31, 1945, had "more detailed regulations." *European Jewry Ten Years After the War* (Institute of Jewish Affairs of the World Jewish Congress, N.Y. 1956), p. 172.
186. Archives of the American Joint Distribution Committee, files No. 456 and No. 457, August-December, 1945.
187. AJDC archives, file No. 457, July, 1945.
188. AJDC archives, files 457 and 465.
189. AJDC archives, file 465, 1945-1947.
190. *The History of ORT*, by Leon Shapiro (New York, 1980), 292. *See* also *Report on the Ort Activities*, March 1 - June 4, 1948, 151; also November, 1956, 54; also *Three Years of ORT Activity*, for the period of August 1946 - June 1949.
191. AJDC archives, file 465, 1945-1947.
192. *European Jewry*, 169.
193. Told me by Joseph Matsa, then secretary of the Jewish council of Ioannina. *See* also *European Jewry*, 175.

Part II

A. Religious Life



Entrance to the courtyard of the Old Synagogue Rae Dalven

Synagogues

Before World War II, communal life for the Jews of Ioannina and the surrounding area centered around the two large synagogues, the Old Synagogue (*Kahal Kadosh Yashan*) inside the walled city and the New Synagogue (*Kahal Kadosh Hadash*) outside the walled city. Each synagogue also had a small synagogue (*Minyan*), an "annex" built adjacent to the larger one. The small synagogues were used by worshippers who had to leave for work before the regular morning service in the large synagogues. Also, when attendance was large, such as for weddings and major holidays, the small synagogues were used for the overflow. The ritual to which the Ioannina Jews adhered was the Minhag Romania.

Each of the two large synagogues had seven boys who assisted during the service. The boys were known in Ioannina as *metzemirim* (from *Heb. mezamerim*) because they chanted the psalm section (*zemiroth*) at the beginning of the liturgy. Three sextons (*samasim*) and three cantors (*hazzanim*) assisted in the liturgy in the Old Synagogue. A trustee (*parnas*) collected funds for ransoming captives. The *gabbai*, a congregational official, was in charge of collecting contributions from the worshippers invited to the readers's desk to read the Torah. After Ioannina came under Greek rule in 1913 and Jews, for the first time, were allowed to serve in the army, those who served in the synagogue were exempted from military service.

The Old Synagogue (Káhal Kádosh Yáshan)

The Old Synagogue is on Justiniános Street, a narrow cobblestoned street just inside the city wall, near the Big Gate. The original structure probably dates to the Byzantine period. We do not know if it was erected on the site of an older synagogue or whether it was the first official house of worship for the Ioannina Jews. The Old Synagogue has been restored twice: in 1881 by Dov Jon Effendi, Moshe Zacharia Levy, Joseph Sides, and Moise David Dostis; and in 1987 with $ 10,000 donated by the Sisterhood of Janina in New York. Despite these restorations, the synagogue still preserves its original character.

The small synagogue (*Minyan Yashan*) beside it, built by a family named Abraham and known as the House of Abraham and Sarah (*Beth Avram and Ohel Sarah*), was burned by the Germans during the occupation. The Ioannina Jewish community does not have the money to restore it, and the shell remains standing as the Germans left it.

According to Salamanga, the Old Synagogue was outside the city walls in the tenth century.[1] When the circumference of the city wall was enlarged in 1204 by Michael Comnenus Ducas, the wall was

built around the synagogue, thus enclosing it inside the fortifications.

Today the synagogue property is surrounded by a high wall. You enter first into a courtyard. On the wall to the left is a sink where worshippers wash their hands. Also on the left, close to the synagogue, is a well, which supplies drinking water and is used during *tashlikh*, a religious rite of casting sins into water. Before World War II the well was used for *tashlikh* only when bad weather or other unfavorable conditions prevented the congregation from performing this rite at the lake. Now, however, the Ioannina congregants always perform *tashlikh* at the well.

Inside the synagogue, seats are all around the walls. There are three parallel rows of seats on either side of the wide middle aisle. Worshippers sit back to back on each row. A box behind each seat contains a prayer shawl, a prayer book, and phylacteries (*tefillin*), worn by the men during the morning service. Up to World War II, the women sat in a gallery (Gr. *yenikonítis*) behind a wooden lattice screen (*kafásh*, from the Turkish *kafes*, meaning netted banister)

The Old Synagogue Rae Dalven



which prevented them from being seen by the men in the congregation below. Access to the women's gallery was only by an outside door about half a block away from the main entrance. The few women who survived the Holocaust now sit downstairs on long benches on one side of the aisle. In times of danger, religious articles were hidden in the crypt, reached through an opening beneath one of the seats behind the main aisle. In the wall below the reader's desk are openings, in which congregants placed their donations, marked with the names of different charities.

Except for small squares of colored glass in the window over the reader's desk, plain glass windows are high up on the east, south, and west of the large hall. Several chandeliers lighted the synagogue by candlelight until 1926 when, thanks to contributions from Ioannina natives living in the United States, electricity was installed. From the center of the ceiling hung the most luxurious chandelier, made of crystal, which was very difficult to clean.

The Holy Ark (*Ehal Kodesh*), which contains the Sifrei (plural

Courtyard of the Old Synagogue — Rae Dalven



of Sepher) Torahs, is a reminder of the Biblical Ark of the Covenant. It is a semi-circular structure set on an elevated platform against the eastern wall so that worshippers, when turning toward the ark, face in the direction of Jerusalem. The ark is screened by a decorative velvet or satin curtain (*parokheth*) before the open face of the ark, containing the Torah Scrolls. The curtain is changed at every festival to be in accord with the holiday being celebrated. A special "exodus" curtain is used for Passover; a gold embroidered curtain commemorating the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem is used for Yom Kippur; a plain black curtain is used for Tisha b'Av, a day of mourning. The eternal light over the ark is lit with pure olive oil as prescribed in the Torah.

The Torah Scrolls are wrapped in a Torah binder made of silk or other fine material to prevent them from being scratched and housed in silver or wooden cases. They are placed behind a carved wooden door in front of which is hung the decorative curtain. The Torah Scrolls are supported by wooden poles (*Etz Haim*), generally topped with Torah Crowns (*rimonim*, silver crowns decorated with silver bells) when they are brought before the worshippers. When the Torah Scroll is opened on the reader's desk (*teva*) to the section to be

Interior of the Old Synagogue Rae Dalven

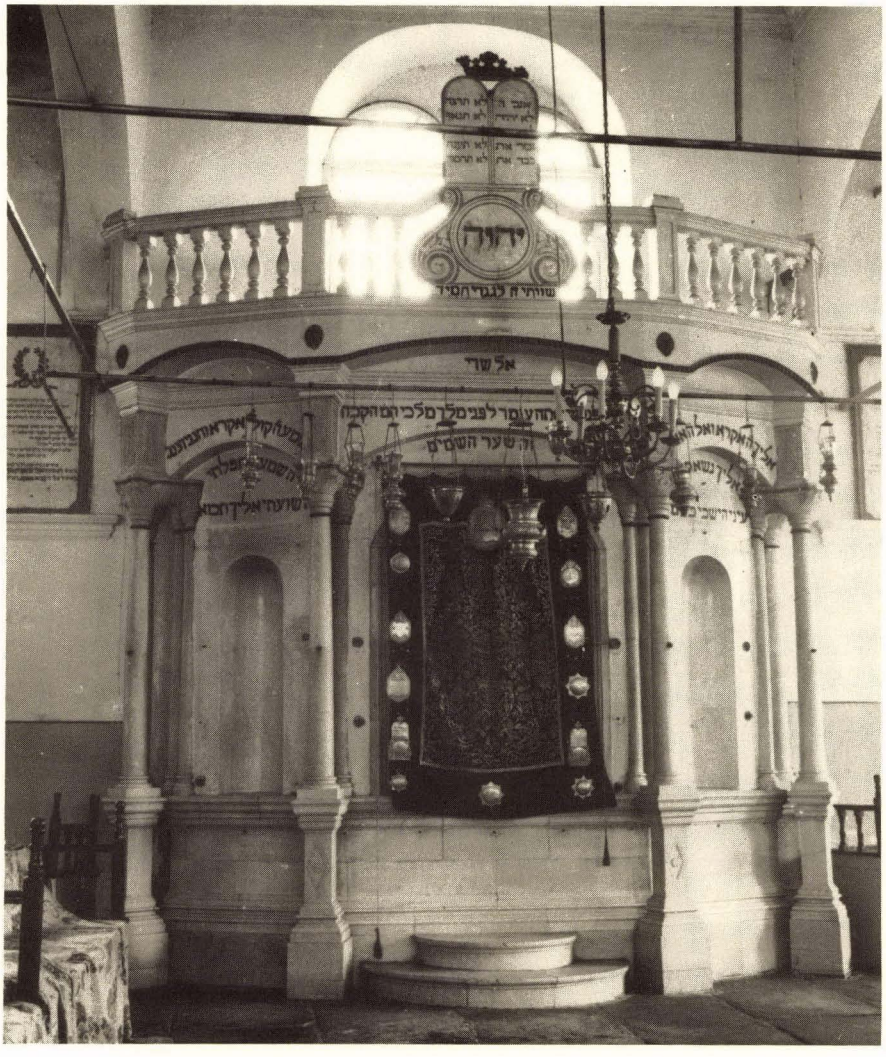


read that day, the Torah Crowns are removed and set aside. When the Torah Scrolls are returned to the Holy Ark, the Torah Crowns are returned to the wooden poles. All these religious items were donated by various members of the congregation.

The reader's desk, where the rabbis and cantors sit, is not, as is generally the case, in the center of the aisle, but is raised against the west wall. It can be reached by short flights of steps on either side.

Members of the community who attended the Old Synagogue inside the city wall were known as insiders (*mesinoí*), from the Greek adverb *mésa*, meaning inside). The Levy, Negrin, and Coffina

The Holy Ark — Rae Dalven





The Torah Scrolls in the Old Synagogue Rae Dalven

families worshipped in the Old Synagogue. A Kohen in the community was hired to serve as a cantor to ensure that a Kohen be present to conduct the priestly blessings. Aham Ben Zion, a Kohen, was one of those hired to serve as a cantor.

Outside, behind the synagogue, stairs led down to the *tevila* or *mikva* (pronounced *tivlá* and *mikvá* in Ioannina) where women took their ritual baths. Up to 1926, when electricity was installed, the women had to descend a dark flight of steps carrying lanterns or candles.

The Old Synagogue survived the German occupation thanks to Mr. Demetrios Vlachides, then mayor of Ioannina, who persuaded the Germans that the Greek people were going to use the building as a library. He also persuaded them that the Torah Scrolls and other sacred objects found in the crypt should be placed in the municipal museum. He returned them to the survivors after the war, an act of mercy the survivors commemorated by inscribing his name on a gold tablet set into the synagogue wall. The Germans, however, took all the furniture, chandeliers, and decorations. They also destroyed the small synagogue.

As an offering of thanks to God for the survival of their synagogue and for their lives, the Ioannina survivors sent one of their Torah Scrolls to the Holy Synagogue of Ioannina (*Kehila Kedosha Janina*) on the lower east side of Manhattan in New York and another, housed in its silver case, to the Beth Avraham and Ohel Sara Synagogue in Jerusalem.

The New Synagogue (Káhal Kádosh Hádash)

The New Synagogue, said to have been built in Italian architectural style, was outside the city walls on Joseph Ẹliyia Street (formerly Max Nordau Street). It was built in the approximately 1540 when the Jewish community of Ioannina was at its peak, with a population of more than five thousand.

The New Synagogue was narrower than the Old Synagogue, but much longer. Because the courtyard was much larger and it had a large stone bridal canopy (*huppah*) built over the synagogue entrance, marriages from both congregations were generally performed here. Water from the well in the right of the courtyard was piped to the school building.

The synagogue itself had six aisles and many pillars, from which oil lamps were hung. A large crystal chandelier hung from the center of the ceiling. Outside was the small synagogue (*minyan*) similar to the one outside the Old Synagogue. The school was adjacent to the small synagogue.

The Kohen, Matsa, Marcados, Cantos, and Battino families worshipped in the New Synagogue. In friendly contrast with the Old Synagogue congregation, they were known as outsiders (pronounced

oksinoí, the Ioannina pronunciation of the Greek έξω, outside, meaning here, of course, outside the city walls. The congregation had no Levys, so some Levites transferred from the Old Synagogue to the New, to assist in the ritual of the priestly blessing and participate in special readings of the Torah. David Mordechai Halevy, who lived inside the city walls, was one Levite who became an outsider to assist the Kohanim.

When Ioannina was liberated from Ottoman rule in 1913, the Jews received Crown Prince Constantine in the New Synagogue. They laid down a red carpet for him from the market place two blocks away along streets lined with Greek flags. D. Salamanga, who was present, described the scene:

> On Monday, the 25th, His Highness the Crown Prince visited the synagogue of the Jewish community, which prepared a hero's reception for him. The synagogue was most luxuriously decorated. The beautiful apse had written on it the biblical *Hosanna*, blessed in the name of the Lord. In devout concentration, Rabbi Yesoula Levy, dressed all in white, delivered his blessings in Greek.[1]

The New Synagogue, the small synagogue beside it, and the adjacent Alliance Boys' School were severely damaged during the occupation. The Germans used all three buildings as prisons. After the community was deported, the Germans used the doors, windows, and floors for firewood. Today, a long apartment building stands on the land where these buildings once stood. Most of the surviving Ioannina Jewish community live in this block-long building, which Greek Christians refer to as "The Jewish Quarter" (*Ta Evráika*).

Synagogues, notes

1. D. Salamanga, *Ioannina Historical Research* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1958), p. 14.

Circumcision

The birth of a male Jewish child in Ioannina was regarded as a blessing for the whole Jewish community. All congregants looked forward to the circumcision ceremony, which would once more mark the covenant of Abraham with God, the indelible seal of the faith guarding the infant son.

In the afternoon of the seventh day after the birth, the midwife who had delivered the baby visited the young mother and dressed the infant for the feast of celebration the father would give that evening in honor of his new born son. The midwife represented the mother, who was still physically unable to attend, but who was beautifully dressed in her bed. The birth certificate (*alef*) hung over the headboard of her bed adorned with gold coins and, to prevent the evil eye from harming the infant son, bulbs of garlic.

This dinner, given the night before the circumcision, came to be known as *salamatia* (probably from Gr., *s'álla mátia*, before the eyes of others) and was attended by the rabbi, relatives, and friends, who sang circumcision songs. The most popular of these, "The Sacrifice of Isaac" (*I Thysía tou Isaak*), is still sung today. Another hymn sung on this night was "Do Not Abandon My Soul" (*Mi M'aphínes tin Psychí Mou*). When dinner was over, the rabbi reviewed the miracle of birth as it is written in the Talmud.

On the morning of the eighth day, the father attended the synagogue with relatives for the morning prayer. The baby's cap was adorned with seven gold coins. Money was thrown into a large tray filled with fruit, cakes, nuts, and sweetmeats, which the midwife took home with her.

At the synagogue, Eliyia's Chair (Elijah the prophet, the angel of the Covenant) was decorated with silks, gold embroidery, flowers, myrtle branches, and a pair of Torah crowns (*rimonim*). The father returned from the synagogue with his phylacteries (*tefillin*) still wound around his arms and on his head. The man who would circumcise the baby (*moel*) had already visited the infant.

The circumcision always was performed at home in Ioannina. The parents and invited guests gathered around the rabbi and his assistants. The godmother carried the infant to the godfather, who presented the infant to the *moel*. While the circumcision was performed, the father recited verses from the scriptures in commemoration of the covenant of Abraham with God. The guests sang Hebrew songs not found in the Sephardic prayers. After the circumcision, the *moel* pronounced the child's given name.

The only celebration for the birth of a girl was the meeting, at home, of friends, relatives, and a rabbi who chanted a song and the baby girl was named.

Burial Customs

Four societies in Ioannina, governed by the Holy Society (*Hevra Kadosha*), ministered without discrimination between rich and poor to the burial of the Jewish community's dead. Two of these societies attended to the washing of the corpses: *Hevra Metaarim*, for washing the men, and *Hevra Mataaroth* for washing the women. The Society of Gravediggers (*Hevra Koverim*) measured the body for the wooden stretcher (mitzvah) and the grave. The Society of Escorters of the Body to the Cemetery (*Hevra Levaya*) accompanied the deceased to the graveside. Members of these societies were volunteers who considered their service an honor, and they proudly passed on their membership to their children. At first, members paid a life membership fee but, later, the funds were paid monthly.

When a Ioannina Jew died, the corpse was placed on the floor in the center of a room in his house, with one candle at his head and another at his feet. From this custom came the curse, "May I see you in the center of the room." The length of time the corpse remained on the floor depended upon the hour of death, but a corpse was never kept in a house for more than a day. While the corpse was in the center of the room, a member of the Society of Gravediggers came to measure the body for the wooden stretcher (*mitzvah*) and the grave. Also during this time, friends and relatives gathered around the body, keening laments (*kinot*). They wailed, tore their hair, and even lacerated their flesh as they sang well known laments, adapting them to fit the character of the deceased. Sometimes professional keeners, women renowned for their ability to intone Greek demotic laments, were hired.

When the lamentations were over, members of the societies for washing the corpse came to perform their task, known as ritual purification (*taharah*). This was always done in the house. The members of the society brought a cauldron with them to warm water, and they washed the corpse thoroughly with soap and luke warm water. They even flushed water through the alimentary canal until the body was completely clean. They trimmed the nails, combed the hair, and wrapped the corpse in a white linen shroud (*takhrikh*) sewn by the women and provided free of charge since the material was usually donated, along with a hat, if the deceased were a man.[1] When the corpse was ready to be carried out of the house, ten men made seven circuits around the body, each time reciting the prayer, "Please help with the might of Thy right hand" (*ana bekoakh*). They also threw coins, which were left in the house.

The shrouded corpse was then placed on a wooden stretcher (*mitzvah*), which had two handles at each end and two in the middle for the pall bearers, who would carry it on foot down the long road to the cemetery. A cloth embroidered with a Shield of David was then

spread over the corpse. Members of the Society of Escorters of the Body to the Cemetery (*Hevra Levaya*), along with the male members of the family, the rabbi, and the male members of the congregation, followed the stretcher in procession to the cemetery, chanting Psalm 91. Women were not allowed to join the procession.[2]

When the cemetery was reached, a cloth was spread on the earth and coins were thrown onto it. If the deceased had been a man of note, the stretcher was set on the ground and at least ten men made seven circuits around it, chanting psalms. The corpse was removed from the stretcher and placed in the bottom of the grave. If the deceased had been a prominent member of the community, the Chief Rabbi himself entered the grave to help set the corpse down into the earth. If the deceased had committed suicide, the corpse was set down six or seven yards from the grave and rolled over several times in punishment for the dishonor the suicide had brought to the community. To keep this dishonor in the minds of the living, anyone who took his own life was buried at the lower end of the cemetery.

A ledge five or six inches deep was cut on both sides of the grave just above the bottom to support planks placed loosely across the grave. These planks bore some of the earth's weight, and would let the earth fall gently and gradually on the corpse, since there was no casket. If the deceased had been a member of one of the two washing societies, a separate niche was dug to rest the corpse's head, for the deceased had served the community with honor.

After the corpse was covered with earth, the men plucked tufts of grass and recited a line from Psalms, "We are like the grass; it grows today and tomorrow it is gone."

When the mourners returned home, the sexton served the members of the immediate family a shelled, hard-boiled egg, the food of sorrow. Mourners were not permitted to shell eggs by themselves. As stipulated in Rabbi Joseph Caro's *Prepared Table* (*Shulhan Arukh*), which applies to Jews everywhere, friends and relatives provided the deceased's immediate family with food through the seven days of mourning. On each of these seven days the sexton escorted the male members of the bereaved family to the synagogue every morning and evening. The men in the mourning family did not shave for a month and they said *kadish* for all three services every day for a year. The women wore black for a year.[3]

Burial Customs, notes

1. Some people preferred to have their own shrouds made when they were still relatively young and well. This usually was done with a party to celebrate the making of the shroud. Another preparation, sometimes made years in advance, was to have some earth brought from Palestine.

The earth was stored carefully, and instructions were left that the earth be spread over their eyes when they were buried.

2. Women were not permitted at the cemetery for the burial. It is said that they wailed and keened so loudly that they disturbed the men from saying the prayers, so the women were barred from the cemetery on the day of burial. The women went to the cemetery later, by themselves or with friends.

3. Before a year passed from the day of a person's death, ten men, known as a *minyan*, met at the home of the deceased and read the Law of Moses. Towards the end of that reading, in commemoration of the person who had died, they said a memorial prayer for the dead (*haskavah*).

Cemeteries

The oldest Jewish cemetery in Ioannina was about three hundred yards from the city's main gate, near the marketplace. Nothing remains of this cemetery. Apparently, in 1892, another Jewish cemetery, where the Zosimaia School now stands, was desecrated by the Ottoman authorities. Later, the community had a cemetery in a neighborhood known as Kalkan. In 1922, the area of the Kalkan cemetery was used to build homes for refugees from Asia Minor. The community used a field, known as Gem, which had been purchased from Ali Pasha early in the nineteenth century, for their new cemetery. The bones of the dead were exhumed from Kalkan and carried to Gem.

The Gem field occupies almost eight acres, enclosed by a high wall, but only slightly more than half of the field is used as a cemetery. The remainder is used by a Greek caretaker, a shepherd who lives on the grounds with his sheep. Over the cemetery gate is the Hebrew inscription:

> The Almighty Who dwells among us has allowed us to erect a wall around this field so they (the deceased) may repose in the land of the living; for the consecration of the Society of the Righteous (*Hevra Hesed*) and with the notables of the day.

During the years of the Junta (1967-1974) the ruling colonels wanted to take over the field, in particular that part not used for graves. The deed of purchase had been lost and record of the sale could not be found even in the Istanbul archives. The attorney for the community was the late Asher Moissis. Dr. Errikos Levy, grandson of Dov Jon Effendi, testified that his grandfather had indeed purchased the land from Ali Pasha and bequeathed it to the community. This testimony was accepted by the court and the Jewish community of Ioannina won the case. Part of the legal decision was that, should the Ioannina Jewish community cease to exist, then the field will be turned over to the Central Board of Jewish Communities (KIS, *Kentrikón Israelíton Symvoúlion*) in Athens.

Regretfully, the cemetery is not well cared for. Only the inscriptions on a few stones can still be read.

Yearly Cycle

In their synagogue liturgy the Romaniotes use demotic Greek. Romaniote translators and commentators address their congregants quite naturally in demotic Greek, the language they use in all their day-to-day activities. Moreover, they draw on non-Jewish literature and ideas. In many of their original synagogal songs (*piyyutim*) and laments (*kinot*) they use the traditional fifteen syllable line of modern Greek poetry. Their subjects are Jewish, presented in Greek form.

The Romaniotes collected their prayers and synagogal songs in a compilation known both as *Mahzor Bene Romania* and *Grigos*.[1] This is the oldest compilation of prayers and synagogal songs in Europe. It was compiled during the Byzantine Empire and was used for centuries in a "fluctuating" form by the Romaniotes throughout the Byzantine Empire until it was superseded by the Spanish rite in the early sixteenth century. Since that time, the basic prayers in the Romaniote liturgy have been the same as those of the Sephardic rite created by the Spanish speaking Jews in Spain, Istanbul, and Thessaloniki. Nonetheless, some elements of the *Mahzor Bene Romania* are still found in the Ioannina rite, as well as in the rite of Chalcis, the only other surviving Romaniote community in Greece today. The rites of Ioannina and Chalcis have also retained some elements of the Italian rite, the *Minhag Bene Roma*, which was widely disseminated from Rome.[2] However, in their traditions, customs, synagogal songs, melodies, and Greek language, the Jews of Ioannina are distinctly Romaniote. The ritual to which the Ioannina Jews adhered was the Minhag Romania.

The holy days follow the Hebrew calendar. The Jewish men of Ioannina prayed in the synagogue three times a day, every day. On week days, the beadles (*shamashim*) from both synagogues went down every street where Jews lived at dawn, calling loudly, "It is time for morning prayer" (*óra yia shachrít*). On Friday afternoons the beadles again went through the streets, calling "It is time for the evening service" (*óra yia Sabbath*). This time, however, the two beadles went as well to the *kormánio*, the commercial center where the stores of the Ioannina Jews are still located, telling storekeepers to put out their lights and close up shop.

In the residential areas, the evening cries of the beadles alerted housewives to light their oil lamps. On Fridays and other holidays, after the Ioannina housewife had washed the tiled corridor inside the house, the courtyard, and the pavement outside the house, she added a cosmetic touch by painting a border of fresh whitewash, known as "eyebrows" (*phrýdia*), on the cobblestones outside the front door.

Sabbath

Sabbath is a day of rest required of the Jews by the Ten Commandments. The lady of the house began preparing for the Sabbath on Thursday evening, mixing the dough for the bread she would knead on Friday morning. While the dough was rising, she lit the oven and roasted pumpkin seeds, popularly known as "pass the time" (*passatémpo*). With mortar and pestle she ground dried chickpeas for the old people who had difficulty chewing their food, and added sugar. She prepared the Sabbath meal and the bread for the week on Friday morning. When this was done, she might bake other dishes, such as small cheese filled pies (*kaltsónia*), unsweetened cheese cakes (*kassátes*), round cookies (*karakanákia*), small ring shaped biscuits (*kouloúria*), unsweetened cakes with butter (*bouyika*), ground almond and sugar biscuits (*kourabiédes*), a custard pie (*galatópta*), or a spinach pie (*spanakópita*). In addition, she cleaned the house for Sabbath, bathed her children in huge cauldrons (there were no bath tubs), and got Sabbath clothes ready for the whole family. A few minutes before sunset she recited a blessing as she lit candles. She was not allowed to touch light after sunset.

With the return of the menfolk from the Friday evening service, the family was ready to welcome the Sabbath. After the father recited the blessing of the wine (*Kiddush*) each child, beginning with the eldest, kissed the hands of parents and grandparents and received a blessing from them. The blessing usually was to see the boy or girl happily married, the greatest concern of Jewish parents in Ioannina. Hands were then washed before the blessings over the bread.

The main dishes of the Friday evening meal were baked fish and beans. A delicacy not served on other nights was meat pie (*pastélla*) made of thin, flaky dough, tomatoes, and ground meat. The meat pie was so eagerly anticipated that a little rhyme was composed about it:

Sabbath without *pastélla*
Is like a lady without a *kopélla* (daughter)

After the Friday evening meal was over, the Ioannina Jews sang table songs (*zemiroth*). Some of these songs were sung in the original Hebrew and some were translated into Greek. Those sung in Hebrew dealt with religious topics, were aphoristic, and reflected profound attention to the Orthodox faith.[3] Two of the songs translated into Greek were "The Song of David" (*Mizmor le David*) and "God is King" (*Hashem Malach*).

On the Sabbath morning, a non-Jew would be called upon to put more coals in the brazier and perhaps to snuff out or rekindle the oil

lamps. Orthodox Jews were forbidden to touch light on the Sabbath.

At all three Sabbath services in the synagogue, the fathers sat next to their sons, each eldest son nearest to his father. The men and boys attended the morning service at 7:00 A.M., before breakfast. The women and girls came later to the women's gallery. The morning service lasted until about 10:00, after which the congregation returned home for breakfast. As a rule, after breakfast the men visited the home of some mourner where they recited psalms in rotation and said *kaddish* in memory of the deceased. They returned home for their midday meal. Discussions about the weekly selection (*parasha*) of the Pentateuch preceded the afternoon service (*minhah*).

Directly after the service, boys from ten to fifteen years old lined up on the center aisle of the synagogue and recited verses of the 119th Psalm, each boy reciting one or two letters of the alphabet, beginning with *aleph* and continuing to *tav*. They followed this by chanting psalms of ascents (*shir ma'aloth*), each boy singing two psalms until they reached the 134th Psalm, when they said *kaddish* for the dead, praising the Lord.

In fair weather, following the afternoon service, some men spent the rest of the afternoon promenading along the lake front, greeting their neighbors and stopping to drink black coffee or lemonade at the outdoor cafes. Others picnicked on the shore. Especially during the winter months, members of the Association of the Path of Life (*Hevra Orah Hayyim*) held discussions on Jewish Law (*halakhah*) in private homes. These discussions, of course, were conducted in the same vernacular Greek they spoke at home.

After the discussions, they ate their third Sabbath meal (*se'udah shelishith*). Judeo-Greek hymns were sung at this meal. One such hymn is "Ye Sons of Israel" (*Eseís, Paidiá tou Israel*), written by Shemuel Hanen, from Ioannina.[4] Another is "God is Great" (*Megálos Einai O Theós*), consisting of thirteen rhyming distichs, composed by Rabbi Mordechai Moshe Cantos, also from Ioannina.[5]

During bad weather, if ten male members of a congregation were present in a home, they constituted a quorum (*minyan*) and remained in the home for the evening service. This did not prevent the evening service being conducted in the synagogue. The women usually remained at home on Sabbath afternoon and evening, chatting in their courtyards with neighbors, relatives, and friends.

As the men emerged from the synagogue after the evening service (*arvith*), children called out "Light up!" (*anápste*); the lights could now be lit.

When the men returned home, the family said a prayer thanking God for separating the Sabbath from the rest of the week (*havdalah*) before eating the fourth Sabbath meal (*se'udah revii*). After eating they sang synagogal songs in both Judeo-Greek and Hebrew. A

favorite song was "Of King David" (*Tou Vasilia David*), written in Judeo-Greek. A popular Hebrew song was "Thy Hand Shall Guide Me" (*Yadekha tankeni*), which is not in the Sephardic prayer book but is in the Jerusalem Sephardic rite for Pesach, Shavuoth, and Sukkoth.[6]

Birkath Ha Levana (Blessing of the Moon)

The Ioannina Jews observed the Blessing of the Moon (*birkath ha levana*) at the beginning of every Jewish month. On some months, the Blessing of the Moon was observed for two days, in which case the first day was the last day of the preceding month. "They flocked to the courtyards of both synagogues," recalled a Ioannina native. "When it was time for the Blessing of the Moon, the overflowing crowds had to stand in the courtyard while the rabbi officiated."

Rosh Hashanah (New Year's Day)

Rosh Hashanah celebrates God's creation of the world. It is the Day of Judgment on which the deeds of humanity are weighed by God.

During the Ten Days of Penitence between Rosh Hashanah and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), a beadle from each synagogue went with a lantern through the streets two hours before dawn, calling "Time for penitential prayers" (*óra yiá selihoth*).

The customary dessert on Rosh Hashanah eve was *kóliva*, a mixture of wheat, honey, cloves, cinnamon, and coarsely chopped walnuts. The honey symbolizes sweetness of life for the year ahead. The wheat, burst open in the cooking, symbolizes the growth and sustenance of life.

An original synagogal song sung on Rosh Hashanah eve is found in the Romaniote prayer book and is not known to the Sephardim. This song, beginning "Faith of the Intelligent" (*emouna nevonim*), is written in four line stanzas and is about the blowing of the *shofar*, the ram's horn.[7] It is completed by both the cantor and the congregation with the words "the day when we blow the shofar" (*be yom teruah kerem*). A continuation of this song, beginning "Oh powerful king of the heights" (*melech adir ba meromim*) spells the name of the Almighty to the letter *tav*.

Before the blower (*tokea*) blows the *shofar* he says, "Because of the covenant of Abraham and the Sacrifice of Isaac" (*Zehouth berith Avraham ve akedat Yitzhak*), also found in the Ashkenazic prayer book. When the *shofar* is blown, the worshipper turns his thoughts to the Torah and asks God for forgiveness and guidance.

The Ioannina Jews also chanted a number of original songs during the morning Rosh Hashanah service. A song about the sacrifice of Isaac, beginning "We are still the sons of Thy servants" (*bene avadeha a yom*) is chanted after they say "Blessed is He whose

name is God" (*baruch shemo Adonai*), before the lifting of the Torah Scroll. As they take the Torah Scroll out of the Ark they chant a song beginning "How great art Thou" (*Ki Gadol Ata*), which is also chanted on Yom Kippur and the three festivals of Pesach, Shavuoth, and Sukkoth. As the Torah Scroll is raised they chant a special prayer which starts,

> Oh God, how beautiful is Thy love
> and how good for us are Thy sayings
> (*Adonai man ama a avathekha*)

Neither the prayer nor the song are in the Sephardic prayer book.

The Rosh Hashanah morning service lasted three hours. Sometimes the men returned home for a hot breakfast, especially during cold weather. Some favorite breakfast dishes were hot cornmeal mush garnished with bits of *féta* cheese (*kourkoút*); coarse wheat with milk, *féta*, or *kaséri* cheese added (*trachanás*); a bread pudding seasoned with cheese and olive oil (*panáda*); and cornmeal, occasionally with cheese and honey added (*boubanátsa*). Sometimes housewives served *salépi*, a drink made from the roots of wild orchids, ground and stirred into sweetened boiling water. Vendors sold salep on the streets during the winter months, calling out, "*Salépi*, *salépi*, piping hot, calling for a customer!" Salep, said to have medicinal value, probably was introduced by the Turks.

In the afternoon of the first and second days of Rosh Hashanah, after the midday meal, members of the Association of the Path of Life (*Hevrah Orah Hayyim*) met at a house in mourning and read from the Book of Psalms, half on the first day and half on the second day. One of the beadles who knew the Torah well used to meet in his home from one to three in the afternoon with the women and children who lived nearby and narrate to them the story of the holiday.

An old Greek synagogal song from Ioannina sung at home on Rosh Hashanah was "The Creation of the World" (*I Demiourghía tou Kósmou*), consisting of sixty-four distichs.[8]

As in the Sephardic and Ashkenazic rites, on the first day of Rosh Hashanah when the afternoon service was over, the Jews of Ioannina observed the ceremony of *tashlikh*, casting sins into running water. Usually this rite was performed on the nearby shore of the Ioannina lake, but when the weather was bad *tashlikh* was observed in the synagogue.

Three days after Rosh Hashanah, usually on the third day of the Jewish month Tishri (September-October), the Jews of Ioannina, as do all practicing Jews, observed a day of fasting in memory of Gedaliah, the Jewish governor of Judaea appointed in 586 B.C.E. by Nebuchadnezzar after the destruction of Jerusalem. Gedaliah was

assassinated in 582 by Ishmael, and his assassination completed the destruction of the first commonwealth of Israel.

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

On Yom Kippur man's fate is decided.

Before dawn on the day before Yom Kippur, which was called the Great Day, the Jews went to the synagogue for penitential prayers. Directly afterwards, they went to the cemetery and prayed at the grave of Rabbi Hashmal, an eminent rabbi who was active in the 1870's (*see* Personalities, p. 162). Boys then ran to homes with gardens and asked their owners to give them flowers to decorate their oil lamps (*kandílas*). Mothers decorated their sons' lamps with the flowers. The boys' lamps were colored; those of the adults were white. Around noon, every boy carried his lamp to the synagogue, where the beadles hung them close to the worshipper's accustomed seat. If the boy were an only son, the decorations on the lamp were more elaborate. Large candles (*lambádes*) made from pure beeswax were brought by members who had escaped from some danger, recovered from some serious illness, or wished to honor the memory of some member of their family. These large candles, which burned all day, were more than five feet tall and over two inches in diameter. They were set in a wooden stand in the center of the main aisle, each candle hung with a piece of paper on which was written the name of the person who brought it. In the Ioannina synagogue, Yom Kippur was not only awesome, it was colorful.

On the eve of Yom Kippur, before the beginning of the day-long fast (*tanith*), Ioannina housewives served tomatoes stuffed with meat, okra and chicken, string beans with meat, and squash stuffed with meat. For dessert they served a semolina cake with dried fruits, nuts, and syrup (*rivaní*) and small crescent shaped cheese or small meat pies (*kaltsounákia*) with wine. The wine was stored in large copper vessels in the cellar.

As Jews do everywhere, during the service on the eve of Yom Kippur, after chanting the All Vows (*Kol Nidre*), they recited the *Viduy Ha Gadol*, an alphabetical confession of sins. After the *Viduy Ha Gadol*, the rabbi announced the names of the two grooms of the Torah; the *Hatan Torah*, who symbolized the conclusion of the Torah, and the *Hatan Bereshith*, who symbolized the beginning of the Torah. Both men had to be married and esteemed for their knowledge of the Torah. During this service, prayers were recited for the souls of the distinguished rabbis of the community. Prominent Greeks and army officers attended Yom Kippur services to pay their respects to the Jewish community. Since the Holocaust, as in many other congregations, prayers are said for people who died in the concentration camps during World War II.

After the service on Yom Kippur eve, the large candles and oil

lamps were snuffed out by a non-Jew, who relit them the next morning.

A Judeo-Greek synagogal song from Ioannina, chanted during the Ten Days of Penitence, is "God is Near" (*Simotinos O Theós*). This is a plea to the faithful to sound the *shofar* to liberate the people from the enemy and awaken them to obey God.[9]

The morning service on Yom Kippur began as did the morning service on Rosh Hashanah. Before the Torah was lifted, the congregation chanted an original synagogal song, "The Voice of Jacob Calls" (*Kol Yakov Yikra*), which is not known to the Sephardim. The *shofar* is blown six times during the morning service.

During the afternoon Yom Kippur service, the Ioannina Jews read their own Judeo-Greek translation of the Book of Jonah.[10] The Sephardim translated the Book of Jonah into Ladino.

During the evening Yom Kippur service, the *shofar* is blown once. At the conclusion of this service, the men in the congregation carried the oil lamps out to the courtyard, where they stood while the rabbi recited the blessing. The oil lamps were then carried home and hung up until the oil in them was consumed.

After the fast, it was customary to eat something sweet and say "Many Years" (*chrónia pollá*) before eating lemon and egg soup, meat, and chicken. Something sweet, symbolizing a sweet year to come, was served for dessert. After the meal they visited relatives to wish them a good year.

Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles)

The principle of this holiday is to forsake our convenient home and live seven days in a hut (*sukkah*), commemorating the type of hut in which the Jews lived while wandering in the desert for forty years.

The day after Yom Kippur, the Ioannina Jews began preparing for Sukkoth, a harvest festival, which falls on the fifteenth of Tishrei (October). They built their *sukkoth*, temporary structures decorated with laurel, willow, myrtle branches, and ethrogim, a kind of citron, in their courtyards. Each synagogue built a *sukkah* in its courtyard. The *sukkoth* were used as dining areas during the harvest festival; some people even slept in them. People with no *sukkah* either brought food and dined with neighbors who had one or went to the *sukkah* in the synagogue where they performed the commandment (*mitzvah*) of sitting in the *sukkah* and were served bread and grapes. Several cantors served in each synagogue on Sukkoth.

After the morning service in the synagogue, two prayers were said in the *sukkah*: *Kiddush*, sanctifying the wine and a prayer blessing the *sukkah*. Grapes and bread were served to those who had no *sukkah* at home. The men then went to visit relatives and friends, and their wives went home to receive visitors. Either the lady of the

house or the eldest daughter of marriageable age served the men jelly, *rakí*, and hard boiled eggs. The usual sweet served on Sukkoth was *fnáro* (beaten eggs mixed with sugar and honey, boiled, and garnished with blanched almonds). It was an affront to refuse either the *fnaró* or the hard boiled eggs. The eggs were usually pocketed and taken home.

The men of the congregation made circuits inside the synagogue carrying palm branches (*lulavim*) on each of the seven days of Sukkoth. On the first day they made one circuit, on the second day two circuits, and so on. A synagogal song in the Romaniote prayer book sung on the first and second nights of Sukkoth and which starts "Abider in the shadow of the Horev-Sinai" (*Ethlonan Betzel Mehorev*) is inspired by Psalm 91:1. This is not sung by the Sephardim.[11]

Oshiana Rabbah, the seventh day of Sukkoth, celebrates God's forgiveness of our sins. The morning service began at 5:00 A.M. and lasted for about four hours. The men carried large candles and recited special penitential prayers. The service included seven circuits around the reader's desk (*teva*) as was done during the time of the Temple in Jerusalem. Small branches of the willow tree (*aravoth*) were distributed to the congregants, who took them home and used them to decorate the mezuzah. Blessings were said in the synagogue *sukkoth*, but no bread or grapes were served.

Another Romaniote synagogal song was sung on the following day, *Shemini Hag Atsereth*. This synagogal song, which begins, "This day I shall make happy those who believe in me" (*zeh ayom ashesh le emuni*), was also known to the Italian Jews, but it is not found in the Sephardic prayer book. It was sung before the evening prayer to express deep belief in God and the joy felt in assembling on this day.[12] On the day after *Shemini Hag Atsereth* the Ioannina Jews celebrated Simhat Torah (Rejoicing of the Torah), marking the end of the cycle of Torah readings. All Ioannina congregants went to the synagogue on that day. On the eve of Simhat Torah, the synagogue committee called for the *Hatan Torah* and the *Hatan Bereshith* and escorted them to special seats on either side of the Ark. The seats had velvet cushions embroidered with gold for this occasion. Before the service started, the collector of charitable contributions (*gabbai*) walked up and down the aisles, inviting friends and relatives to sit close to the *hatanim*.

During the Simhat Torah morning service the *Hatan Torah* was called to the *teva* to complete the reading of the Torah. The *Hatan Bereshith*, the cantor, and all the congregation chanted "Come up, come up, come up to lead, *Hatan Torah*" (*Yale, yale, yale, Hatan Torah le rosh*). After the *Hatan Torah* read, the *Hatan Bereshith* was called to the *teva*. The congregation called "*Yale, yale, yale, Hatan Bereshith*" and even followed him to the steps of the *teva*.

One very old and well-known synagogal song is a blessing for the *Hatan Torah* when called to read the Torah. This was also chanted by the Ashkenazim, but not by the Sephardim. It starts "With permission from Almighty God " (*birshuth ael ha gadol.*)[13]

The men of the congregation made seven circuits with the Torah Scrolls in their decorated cases, dancing and singing joyful hymns about Simhat Torah and found only in special Ioannina manuscripts. Relatives of the *hatanim* carried the first two Torah Scrolls and sang hymns. The rest of the Torah Scrolls were carried by those members of the congregation who had paid for the right to do so. At the end of the celebration, as the *hatanim* were leaving the synagogue, cantors and congregants chanted in a unique melody two lines from Isaiah (55:12) usually sung to a bridegroom:

For ye shall go out with joy
and be led forth with peace;
the mountains and the hills shall
break forth before you into singing
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

The Ioannina Jews had a repertory of Simhat Torah hymns, most of which were sung in one day since the synagogues were large and several hymns could be completed in one circuit. Most of these synagogal songs, although found in the Sephardic prayer book, are not sung by the Sephardim. "Lift Thy gates over their heads" (*seou shearim rashehem*), "Our God is One" (*ehad elohenu*), "Powerful is He who does not slumber or sleep and watches over Israel" (*adir lo yanum*), "Powerful art Thou in Zion" (*adir ata be Zion*), and the most popular, "Almighty, build the *Beth Hamikdash* speedily in our days" (*adir el bone beth hamikdash bimera be yamenou*) are all sung today by Romaniote Jews, both inside and outside of Greece. "All powerful build thy house" (*adir ben bethi*) is not known to the Sephardim.

With the completion of the seven circuits but before the Torah Scrolls were returned to the Ark, the rabbi read prayers for the congregation and the government. The *Hatan Torah* then invited the congregation to his home where he and his wife had prepared a feast. The following Sabbath, the *Hatan Bereshith* was the first to be called to read the Torah (instead of a Kohen). He read from Genesis. After the service, he and his wife invited everyone to a feast at their home. The following year he became *Hatan Torah* and another married man served as *Hatan Bereshith*.

Hanukkah (Feast of Lights)

Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Greeks in 165 B.C.E. Hanukkah begins on the twenty-fourth

day of the Jewish month *Kislev* (December) and lasts for eight days. Hanukkah is linked to the Talmud with the miracle of the one ritually pure cruse of oil, enough to last for one day's lighting of the Temple Menorah. Miraculously, the oil in the cruse lasted eight days, giving the Jews time to find other ritually pure oil. The Jews designated these eight days for giving thanks to God.

The Ioannina Jews celebrated Hanukkah with great joy. Throughout the eight days they recited *Hallel* (praise), giving thanks to God, Psalms 113-118. The Torah reading for each day is from Numbers. The synagogal song "Rock of Ages" (*Maoz Tzur*), originally an Ashkenazic hymn now sung by the Romaniote and Sephardim in western countries as well, is sung after the lighting of the Hanukkah lights. It recounts the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, and Syria. The *Al-ha-Nissim* prayer offers thanks "for the miracles Thou didst perform to our fathers in those days." The *Birkath-ha-Mazon* is a grace after all meals. In Ioannina Jews exchange gifts on Hanukkah.

Asarah B'Tevet

In addition to the holy days prescribed in the Pentateuch, the Ioannina Jews celebrated other minor festivals. The tenth day of the Jewish month of *Tevet* (December), a day of fasting, commemorates the besieging of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C.E. Throughout the day the Ioannina Jews read different selections from II Kings in the synagogue.

Tu B'Shevat

Tu B'Shevát (pronounced *Tu Bish'vát* in Ioannina), commonly referred to as the New Year for Trees, was observed on the fifteenth of Shevat (January-February), one month before Purim. In Ioannina the day was observed by collecting money for planting trees in Palestine. Friends and relatives met and sang hymns, rejoicing that the first day of spring in Palestine would see a new growth of trees, regarded as special gifts of God. They themselves celebrated by preparing a table with a variety of fruits.

Purim

Three days before Purim, Ta'anith Esther (the Fast of Esther) was observed to commemorate Queen Esther's fast before she went to plead with King Ahasuerus. The fasting began at daybreak and lasted until sunset. As on all fast days, the Torah readings in the synagogue were from Exodus. At the afternoon service, the *haftarah* read was from the Book of Isaiah.[14]

Purim commemorates the saving of the Jews from the massacre planned by the evil minister, Haman. They were saved by Queen Esther, who persuaded King Ahasuerus to spare her people.

A minor Purim was celebrated two days after Tu B'Shevat, on the seventeenth of *Shevat*. *Purimópoulo*, as it is known in Greek, or *Purim Katan* in Hebrew, was established in 1425 and was celebrated in Ioannina by the Siciliani, those Jews whose ancestors had come from Syracuse in Sicily.[15] The festival is often erroneously called *Purim Saragossa* and confused with Saragossa in Spain. In Ioannina, families celebrating this minor Purim were known as *Tsitsilliánoi*. The *Tsitsilliánoi* closed their shops for the day. They exchanged gifts and gave a dinner for the poor. In the synagogue they read from the Saragossa Scroll, which tells about the miracle that saved the Jews in Syracuse in 1352.[16]

Another holiday was celebrated in a unique way in Ioannina on *Rosh Hodesh Adar*, the first day of the Jewish month of Adar, two weeks before Purim, early in March. It came to be known as *Irtaman*, from the the first word of the song, "We Came and Found You Well" (*Irtaman kai kalós sas ívraman*). Apparently, this holiday was an expression of the Talmudic idea that when the month of Adar began they should multiply their joy, since this was the day Queen Esther saved the Jews. This song is still sung in Ioannina and Chalcis.[17]

A unique practice in Ioannina under Ottoman rule was the selling of artificial coins, known as *paphládes*, to members of the congregation for Purim. These *paphládes* were given to the poor who, in turn, redeemed them at the synagogue for real money.

On the first evening of Purim, the Ioannina Jews read aloud by candlelight from the Scroll of Esther (*Megillah Esther*). Candles were sold by the *gabbaim*, the synagogue wardens.

On Purim, boys from five to fifteen attended the morning service with an empty bag hanging from their necks. After the Torah Scroll was taken out of the Ark and held high, the boys ran out of the synagogue singing "We Came and Found You Well." They went from door to door collecting fruit and sweets. Some they took home to their parents and some they took to their Hebrew teachers. The children particularly enjoyed the *kokóna*, a small decorated statue of hard sugar. Sometimes the *kokóna* was filled with sweetened rose water, which the children drank with relish. If the children were small, relatives sent them home with a plate of round, flat, hard, cherry colored candies known as *írtaman*.

After the synagogue service, the lady of each house sat at her window with coins in her hand to distribute to the representatives of the several charitable organizations. In the afternoon, children in costume toured by horse and buggy throughout the town. In the evening, children walked on the streets calling out,

Madam, give us candles, madam, give us pine,
And if you haven't that, give us wine.

Purim was celebrated with much merriment and rejoicing. A parade was held in honor of Mordechai and Esther, both of whom were represented in festive costume. Mordechai rode on a white horse, and Haman was pulled behind him. The may pole dance was a major event, with dancers weaving braids around the may pole. Before World War II the Zionist Society held a children's dance in the afternoon at the Alliance Israelite Universelle. In the evening a dance was held for the adults.

An anonymous Judeo-Greek song from Ioannina, "The Song of Purim," which begins, "start to speak, O tongue" (*koiná glóssa na milísses*), was very popular and sung often during Purim.[18]

Ioannina women did a good deal of baking for Purim. The "ears" and the "teeth" of Haman, made of flour and eggs, were popular, as were the "eyes of Haman," hard boiled eggs cut in half and fried.

Pesach (Passover)

Pesach celebrates the exodus of the Jews from Egypt and their liberation from slavery under the pharaohs. Preparations began right after Purim. The women used special copper pots and pans, kept only for use during the eight days of Pesach.

Leavened bread (*hametz*) is not permitted in any orthodox Jewish home on Pesach. What is unique to Ioannina is that in the evening of the day before Pesach a member of the family hid pieces of bread in different parts of the house. Later that evening the head of the house searched very carefully with a lantern for all these hidden pieces (*biour hametz*). In the morning they were carried to the lake by a member of the family and thrown into the water, with the statement, in Hebrew, "Now there is no leavened bread." The Sephardim and Ashkenazim burn the leaven.

The community bought wheat which they ground into flour for matzoth made only with lake water. The water carrier brought lake water in two heavy, narrow-necked copper jugs (*dzkioúmia*), one on each arm. He walked into the water on a stone path set some distance into the lake to get clear water. He was not permitted to speak to anyone, coming or going. Young people brought water from the lake in small copper jugs (*koukmoúles*).

Special care was given to the baking in the community ovens of the matzoth for the seder dish (*kanístra tou houvá*). They put different incisions in the matzoth so the head of the household conducting the seder service could distinguish which to use for the different parts of the service. These matzoth were called, locally, *alél*, because the women sang Psalms 113-118, known as the "Alél" (*Hallél*), while baking them.

If a family wanted to bake matzoth with wine or egg, they did so in their own oven at home. Friends and relatives were invited to help knead the dough.

The community ordered large, cone shaped blocks of kosher sugar for Pesach from Austria and Czechoslovakia. This sugar, packaged and sold in Jewish grocery stores, was hung on display, heralding the arrival of Pesach. It was wrapped in four or five different layers of paper wrapping; the outside layer was blue, considered the strongest. Because it was used for a religious holiday, the sugar was not taxed. Storekeepers turned over what would have been the tax to provide the poor with matzoth, clothing, and shoes.

Ioannina Jews chant an old Palestinian song, "The Night of Vigil" (*lel shemourim*), at the beginning of the service on the eve of Pesach to commemorate the midnight when the Jews left Egypt, offering thanks to God for their liberation. It is also chanted by the Ashkenazim and the Italians, but is not found in the Sephardic prayer book.[19]

The Ioannina seder differs from that of the Ashkenazim or other groups. Ioannina Jews call the seder *houva*, which means obligation. As soon as the family sits down at the table, they all place their hands on the table and say in Hebrew, "This is the table before God" (*zehashulhan asher lifne adonai*).

There are two dishes which are particularly popular among Ioannina Jews for Pesach. One is *lahan*, made of matzoth meal, chopped spinach, chopped walnuts, and pieces of lamb. The other is a simple meat pie (*pastélla*) sandwiched between two layers of matzoth and baked to a crisp brown.

After the seder readings, the Ioannina Jews chant several stanzas of the Song of Songs (*Shir Hashirim*) in Greek set to their own music, published by Behoraki Noikokir in Thessaloniki in 1924. A series of Ioannina table songs are sung after the seder readings on both nights. Two of these songs, well known to all Jews, are sung in Greek; "One Goat" (*Had Gadia*) and "Who knows One" (*Ehad mi Yodea*).

During the morning service on the seventh day of Pesach, the Ioannina Jews sang a song beginning "God who ran with holiness" (*el ha'ratz bik dusha*,) referring to the parting of the Red Sea for the Jews to pass. In this song, the poet asks God to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. He also speaks of God's flock, persecuted by Esau (symbolizing Christians) and Ishmael (symbolizing Muslims).[20] This is not sung by the Sephardim.

On the last two nights of Pesach, the Ioannina Jews sing a synagogal song beginning "God sent His light" (*ya shalakh oro*). They ask God to deliver His people according to His word. The acrostic tells us that it was composed by a man named Yehoshua. This synagogal song was sung only in Ioannina and is not in the Sephardic prayer book.[21]

The "Song of Songs," translated into Judeo-Greek from the

Aramaic text of the Midrash, was chanted in the synagogue after the morning service on the last two days of Pesach. This resembles the translation in the Thessaloniki Sephardic prayer book in that it is not a lineal translation but a comprehensive complement based on the Midrash. In Ioannina, however, it was chanted differently. A cantor began by chanting a verse in Hebrew, to which the congregation responded in Greek. The cantor then chanted another verse in Hebrew, to which one member of the congregation responded in Greek. As many as ten members of the congregation did the same in turn, each chanting one verse in Greek.

At the end of Pesach, the Ioannina Jews purchased yeast from non-Jews to bake bread after dark that night or the next morning. Sugar, eggs, and wine were added to the dough of the first bread baked after Pesach. That night a fair was held in the community Jewish center. Boys spent hours at the confectionary shop tasting the sweets they had been denied for eight days.

A minor holiday observed in Ioannina was Lag b'Omer (originally a scholars' festival), thirty-three days after Pesach, on the eighteenth of Iyar (May). Lag b'Omer was celebrated as a day of joy, because on this day, according to the Talmud, a plague that had raged among the disciples of Rabbi Akiva was stayed. It is also the anniversary of the death in the second century of Rabbi Simeon ben Yoshai, who wrote the Zohar, the cabalistic commentary on the Torah.[22] Marriages were permitted to be performed on Lag b'Omer. The Ioannina Jews went to the synagogue for services and sang songs in honor of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai. Whoever had not observed seder could perform seder on the night of Lag b'Omer.

Shavuoth

Shavuoth commemorates the giving of the Torah, a compilation of moral, ethical, and ritual law, to Moses on Mt. Sinai, climaxed by the Ten Commandments. On Shavuoth, the Jews of Ioannina read the Book of Ruth, because the story of Boaz and Ruth took place at the harvest time of Shavuoth.

After the afternoon service on every Sabbath between Pesach and Shavuoth, pronounced *Savóth* in Ioannina, the Jews of Ioannina sing from the Sayings of the Fathers (*Pirke Avoth*) in Greek, one chapter per Sabbath starting after Pesach. At the last reading of the Sayings of the Fathers, they sang a song called Sabbath Bride (*Sabbath Kalla*) which announced Shavuoth. It starts with the words "Thus our teachers decided" (*kakh gazerou rabothenou*) and is not found in the Sephardic prayer book. According to Davidson, the beginning resembles the Italian version, but it probably originated in either Palestine or Babylon. It is taken from two texts; the first is a stereotype proclamation of the new moon or of a holiday. The continuation is sung only by Italian Jews.[23]

On the eve of Shavuoth, the *tevas* of both synagogues were decorated with flowers for Shavuoth, which the Christian Turks in Ioannina (*Turkoyiannótes*) called "The Holiday of the Flowers" (*Gioul Bairam*). On the eve of Shavuoth, the Ioannina Jews chanted a song, found only in the Romaniote prayer book, beginning, "God appeared in Sinai" (*el nigla besinai*), which gives the Ten Commandments in verse. This is not sung by the Sephardim.[24]

At the morning service of the first day of Shavuoth, before the congregants said "Blessed is He who spoke" (*baruch she'amar*), the Ioannina Jews chanted the Song of Moses to all Israel (*va yikra Moshe el kol Israel*). They continued this until they chanted the Ten Commandments. This is not sung by the Sephardim.

On the morning of the first day of Shavuoth, when the "divine precepts" (*mitzvoth*) were auctioned off, fathers would purchase the honor for their sons to chant The 248 Affirmative Commandments (*azaroth mitzvoth aseh*) for both the first and second days of Shavuoth. The Sephardim do not auction off this honor. After the Ioannina cantors sang the Readers' Songs (*hazzania*), which highlight God's preference for the person most suitable to receive the Torah and give it to Israel, the boys chanted The 248 Affirmative Commandments. This custom is also observed by the Sephardim, except that in Ioannina the boys were given the privilege of participating in the service and inviting their friends to join them at the *teva* with the rabbi and the cantors.

After reading the *ketubah*, a "marriage contract" between God and the Jewish people, the Ark was opened and the cantors and congregation gathered before it to chant a song of acceptance of the Law. This hymn, which start s "God spoke to me" (*bi el diber*), was composed by Joseph Gansho.[25] This hymn is not in the Sephardic prayer book, but the Sephardim of Rhodes and Los Angeles do sing one verse of this hymn.[26]

Another song on the acceptance of the Law not found in the Sephardic prayer book but sung by the Ioannina Jews on both the first and second days of Shavuoth before the raising of the Torah Scroll was composed by Meshullam ben Kalonymos.[27] This song begins, "He who went up to heaven" (*mi alla shemayim*).

Another long song for Shavuoth sung by Romaniotes (and Ashkenazim in Israel) was composed by the Ashkenazi Eleazer Kallir. It was sung before the boys chanted The 248 Affirmative Commandments of the afternoon service and starts with the words "God created me at the start of creation" (*kanani reshith darko*).[28] This is not in the Sephardic prayer book.

The afternoon service of the second day of Shavuoth began with the cantors singing the readers' songs again, after which the boys read the 365 Negative Commandments (*azaroth lo taaseh*). The congregants then sang, in Judeo-Greek, the second part of the story of Ruth. The first part was sung on the first day.

As with Jews everywhere, on these two days at least one meal each day, other than breakfast, consisted of dairy foods: custard pie (*cassátes*, open cheese patties, yoghurt, *féta* and *kaskaváli* cheeses. An interesting custom was the baking of bread shaped like a ladder, symbolizing, presumably, the climb Moses made up Mt. Sinai.

Tammuz

The Jews of Ioannina observed the seventeenth of Tammuz (June-July) as a fast day commemorating several events in Jewish history, principally the destruction of the First and Second Temples (586 B.C.E. and 70 A.C.E.). This day began three weeks of mourning, commemorating the tribulations and exile of the Jewish people, during which the Jews of Ioannina abstained from all festivities. At the synagogue services they read from the Book of Lamentations.

Tisha B'Av

Tisha b'Av, pronounced *Tsabiáth* in Ioannina, is known as the Nine Days. It commemorates the period when the Temple was under siege.

On *Shabbath Hazon*, the Sabbath before the fast of Tisha b'Av, the ninth day of the Jewish month of Av, the Jews of Ioannina read selections from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

On the eve of Tisha b'Av, the traditional food was lentils, eaten while sitting on the floor or on low stools such as those used during *Shiva'ah*, the week of mourning. They ate in their stocking feet or wore felt or rubber shoes as a sign of mourning. On Tisha b'Av the people gathered in the synagogue to hear their rabbi explain the significance of this day of mourning. They used their own translation of the Book of Job. They also read a hymn beginning, "I spoke to the prophets" (*ve debarti alha hozim*). This is not in the Sephardic prayer book in Athens. They recited laments (*kinot*) from the Book of Lamentations describing the destruction of Jerusalem. One lament sung by the Ioannina Jews starts "I'll open up with a lamentation" (*eftakh hekina*) and relates that the Jews would not cease mourning, day or night, for the multitudes who had been killed. Another lament was sung about the martyrdom of the son and daughter of Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha, who were sold into slavery. They also sang of the tragedy of Hannah and her seven sons, who killed themselves rather than bow down to the king.[29] This elegiac poem is also found in the Sephardic rite, as well as in a Corfiote manuscript translated into Judeo-Italian.[30]

Parents did not allow their children to go on excursions, swimming, or even to wander beyond the Jewish neighborhood on this day, lest some accident occur. The whole day was considered evil.

On this day of fasting, children were accustomed to suspend a fat pear and dry cloves around their necks, smelling them to stay their hunger. When, however, they could stand their hunger no longer, they ate the pear. At the end of the day, some families sailed to the island in the Ioannina lake where they broke their fast by dining with relatives and friends.

Yom ha Atzmouth (Independence Day)

Since the establishment of the modern state of Israel on May 14, 1948, the Jews of Ioannina have celebrated Yom ha Atzmouth (Independence Day). A special thanksgiving service is held, which includes the reading of the Messianic prophecies in the Book of Isaiah and the chanting of Psalms 113 - 118.

Yom Hashoah (Day of Remembrance)

Since World War II, the Jews of Ioannina have observed Yom Hashoah (Day of Remembrance) on April 26. The few remaining Jews in Ioannina gather in the synagogue for a memorial service, reciting penitential prayers and saying *kaddish* for all those who perished in the concentration camps.

Yearly Cycle, notes

1. The *Mahzor Bene Romania*, generally referred to as the *Mahzor Romania*, was printed for the first time in Venice in 1520. The second and third editions were printed in Istanbul during the 16th century. "The *Mahzor Romania* contains the prayers of the whole year - weekdays, Sabbaths and Holy Days - and presents a particularly rich collection of *piyyutim* for Holy Days and Special Sabbaths." Daniel Goldschmidt, "The Mahzor Romania" in *Sefunot* (Jerusalem, 1964), Vol. 8, 21. *See* also Isaac Broyde,"Mahzor Romania" in JE, Vol. 8, 262 and Joseph Nehama, *La Communuaute Romaniote* (Paris, 1935), 88.
2. Broyde, 262.
3. Joseph Matsa, *Yianniótika Evraiká Tragoúdia* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1953), 12.
4. Ibid, 48-49. *See* also Joseph Matsa, "Hashita Hayeoudit Beyevanit" in *Sefunot*, 15, 308.
5. Joseph Matsa, *Yianniótika Evraiká Tragoúdia*, 52.
6. Israel Davidson, *Thesaurus of Medieval Poetry* (New York, 1924). A. 238. Israel ben Moses Najara, who composed this *piyyut*, was born in Damascus and lived in Safed. His poems are distinguished by their religiosity, their references to Jewish suffering, and by his yearning for redemption. *See* also Max Seligman, "Israel ben Moses Najara" in JE, Vol. 9, 150-151.
7. Davidson, A. 5611.

8. Matsa, 41-44.
9. Philip Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts* (rev. ed. New York, 1975), 524-525.
10. According to Ioannina natives, they used their own Judeo-Greek translation of Jonah. There are, however, two other Judeo-Greek versions of Jonah extant. Number 1144 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, was found in Candia, Crete. It is a vernacular version dating to the 12th or 13th century and is said to be the oldest surviving prose text in modern Greek. Each verse is followed by the Greek translation of the Book of Jonah, both being provided with vowel points. The other translation is Number 3574 A in the University of Bologna. It was found in a *mahzor* in the oldest synagogue on the island of Corfu and dates to the 15th century. This version is written in the precise words of the Corfu dialect with no attempt at literary improvements. L. Modeno transcribed into Greek the first verses of Chapters I and III in his catalogue of manuscripts of Bologna which appeared in 1888. The details of a liturgical addition to this rite may be found in the Bodleian Library, mss. Number 1082. *See* Lazare Belleli, "Judaeo-Greek and Judaeo-Italian" in JE, Vol. 7, 310-313 and "Glossarion Evraeoellinikon Liturgy Prose" in BZ, Vol. 19, 1910-1911, 421-429.
11. Davidson, A 8910. (*Ethloanan betzel* - the root of *ethlonan* in Hebrew is *yithlonan*).
12. Davidson, Z 53.
13. Ibid, M 2473.
14. Philip Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts* (New York, 1975, rev. ed.), 651.
15. In Ioannina there were about twenty families who were descendants of *Tsitsilliánoi*: Aham Davos and his brother Elias David; the whole family of Isaac Dostis (nicknamed Biro Dai); Moissis Eliasaf, Michael Eliasaf, Shemo Eliasaf, Haham Michail Eliasaf; Moissis Eliezer (nicknamed Betchkas), his children Nahoum and Eliasaf Eliezer, his brother Joseph Eliezer; Eliezer Eliezer and three married children, David, Hayyim, and Nissim; Menachem Bessos; Isaiah Bessos; Moissis Nachmias; Hayyim, Avram, Samuel, Solomon, and Moissis Nachmias (all of the same family); Israel Laskos; Eliasaf Liaskas; Aham Mordechai Cantos and his brother Menachem and their families.
16. As written in the scroll (*megilla*), in the city of Syracuse in Sicily in 1352, the Jews were accustomed to parade with empty Torah cases every time the king visited the Jewish quarter because they felt it was sacrilegious to parade the actual Torah Scrolls. The Jews of Syracuse were betrayed by Hayyim Shami, a convert who changed his name to Marcus when he became the king's minister. The Syracusan Jews were miraculously saved by a dream which came to the sextons in all twelve synagogues warning them to put the Scrolls back into the cases, since the king was planning to visit their quarter to see if the Scrolls actually were in their cases. When the king saw that they were, he freed the Jews of Syracuse from paying taxes for the following three years. Thus, in Ioannina, anyone with the last name of Shami was never given the first name of Hayyim. The Ioannina Jews sing a song in Greek about this event, two lines of which are: "*Ton ekremasan ton Marko stin fourka/ san to skyli to zarko*" (they hanged Marcus like the naked dog).

17. This song is catalogue number 5472 in the British Museum. Joseph Eliyia wrote that the custom resembles the Christian *kálenda*, when gifts are exchanged. Eliyia, who wrote on the origins of this song in the MEE (Vol. 12, 388) explains that the song was sung in Epirus, Chalcis, and in other cities of Greece. *See* also Belleli, op cit.
18. Matsa, 21-26. Note: Irving Isaacs, a native of Ioannina, told me that Haman met with tragedy because he ignored the symbolic fact that Moses was born in the month of Adar and died in the month of Adar. According to him, this is recorded in the Daily Sabbath Prayer Book of the Sephardim. Evidently, other Ioannina Jews believe this.
19. Davidson, L 726
20. Davidson, A 238.
21. Davidson, I 1138.
22. Birnbaum, 305.
23. Davidson, K 239.
24. Davidson, A 3901.
25. Davidson, B 438. Joseph Gansho was a famous hymnologist in the 17th century. He was born in Bursa, Turkey, and emigrated to Jerusalem, where he died. He composed a book of *piyyutim*, of which only one complete copy remains, in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. This hymn is found in Deuteronomy.
26. Told me by Ovadia Hametz, a Ioannina native now living in New York.
27. Davidson, M 1242. Meshullam ben Kalonymos, often called "The Great," was a famous Talmudist who flourished in Rome in about 976. *See* Isaac Broyde, "Kalonymous" in JE, Vol. 7, 425-426.
28. Ibid, A 7694. Eleazer be rebi Kallir, greatest and most prolific of the early *paytanim* and one of the most influential of liturgical poets. *See* "Eleazer Kallir" in EJ, Vol 10, cols. 713-715.
29. Found in the Jewish Theological Seminary, Adler mss., number 726.
30. *See* Lazare Belleli, "Judeo-Greek and Judeo-Italian," JE, Vol. 7, 310-311.

Part II

B. Social Life

Judeo-Greek

In order to preserve their Hebrew historic and cultural identity and utilize the Greek they spoke, the Romaniote Jews of Ioannina translated Hebrew into Judeo-Greek, a demotic Greek written in Hebrew characters with an admixture of Hebrew and Aramaic words and expressions, including linguistic influences from various invasions. They were familiar with the more important Judeo-Greek writings of their Romaniote ancestors and used the Judeo-Greek section of the Polyglot Pentateuch printed in Constantinople on July 11, 1547;[1] a Judeo-Greek translation of Jonah, thought to be the earliest relic in Judeo-Greek; as well as the Judeo-Greek translations of Job (Constantinople, 1576). Judeo-Greek writings originating in Ioannina include many glossaries as well as the Passover guide found in the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (#4126).

Original Judeo-Greek hymns written by unknown poets are part of the Ioannina rite. They were collected by cantors into manuscript collections and were chanted only in Epirus on religious holidays, at family festivals, and dinners. All of them have their own melodies, obviously influenced by Epirotic folk songs. A valuable collection of sixteen of these hymns taken from two manuscripts (1853 and 1870) was published by Joseph Matsa, a Ioannina native who compiled and translated them into the Greek spoken today.[2] Three of these hymns are discussed in the appendix, Three Traditional Judeo-Greek Hymns. Most of the hymns in the Matsa collection are distichs with folkloric elements, and they have surprisingly few Hebrew words. The titles are in Hebrew, and biblical names are spelled as they are pronounced in Hebrew.

In his introduction to the collection, Matsa explains:

> The Jews of Ioannina constituted a Hellenized community with certain worshipping *minhagim* (customs) which were not seen in other communities except in Arta and Preveza. For example, in their religious services and in their family celebrations they chanted many hymns not contained in the prayer books supplied by the West (Venice, Leghorn, Vienna). These synagogal songs were the compositions of native rabbis who inserted them into the prayer books as manuscript leaflets. A distinctive characteristic was that the Ioannina Jews used their everyday vernacular Greek language in their hymns. . . . Worthy of note is the fact that the manuscript with the Hebrew hymns now preserved in the Municipal Museum of Ioannina is dated from the seventeenth century and has no Greek song in it. The manuscript where we find the Greek songs were written was dated 5613 (1853).

Because language is a living experience which changes with each generation, place, and time, no complete, precise analysis of oral or written Judeo-Greek can be given. Invading Normans, Slavs, Serbs, Albanians, and Turks have all left their linguistic traces on Greek spoken in Ioannina. By far the most dominant of these traces is Turkish.

The many Turkish words (including Arabic words incorporated into Turkish) which entered the Greek language added a colorful ingredient to the melodic vernacular Greek spoken by all inhabitants of Ioannina. Several of these Turkish words found their way into Judeo-Greek hymns.

There had been contact between Epirus and Italy since antiquity, and a number of Italian Jews settled in Ioannina at the start of the 19th century, so the Italian loan words in the Greek spoken in Ioannina (and in much of Epirus) are to be expected. The Venetian capture of Preveza in 1684 added Venetian words which are found in Judeo-Greek hymns. Judeo-Greek also has loan words from Albanian, French, Serbian, and Slavic.

Greek studies devoted to the linguistic characteristics of Ioannina give very few examples which apply only to the speech of the Jews of Ioannina. Demetrios Salamanga, a Ioannina native and local historian, gives a few examples which he describes as being used only by his Greek Jewish friends. According to him, the Ioannina Jews called the reception room in their homes *kamára di ritsevéri*, derived from the Italian. Another example he gives is *martsapádes*, from the Italian word *martsapane*, which has come into English as *marzipan*.[3] E. Bonga notes other Italian words which he claims were used only by Ioannina Jews: *carrotsa* (carriage), *levanta* (perfume), and *cassata* (cheese patty).[4] As far as I have been able to discover, *cassata* is the only Italian word used by Greek Jews and not by others speaking Greek, since they call the cheese pastries they bake *kassátes*.

The Greek historian P. Aravantinos writes that the Jews of Ioannina spoke the Ioannina dialect, as did all natives of the city, but pronounced some letters differently. For example, when the Greek letter *x* was followed by the long *e* sound (xióni - snow, xéri - hand, maxaíri - knife), they thickened the *x*. Also, they replaced the complex *ts* with *k*. The Turkish word for stockings (*tsourápia*), pronounced *tsourépia* in Ioannina, Aravantinos reports as pronounced *kourépia* by the Ioannina Jews. Perhaps, he adds, this reflects the influence of Hebrew.[5] My own observation does not fully agree with Aravantinos. The Greek Jewish women I knew pronounced *tsourápia* as tchourépia.

D. Salamanga claims that the Ioannina Jews pronounced the Albanian word *kastravetsi* (cucumber) as *kastraveki*.[6] I have heard the word pronounced *kastravetchi*. He also claims that the Ioannina Jews pronounced the Turkish *gkioumi* (clay jug) as *gkikhoum* or

gkiyoum.[7] I have heard Ioannina Jews pronounce this word the same way all the other Ioannina natives did.

What, then, are the unique characteristics of Judeo-Greek? If we discount the variants of northern Epirotic speech and the foreign elements used by all Ioannina inhabitants, the Judeo-Greek spoken by Ioannina Jews differs from the Greek spoken by their Christian compatriots only in the admixture of Hebrew and Aramaic words. For this reason, Judeo-Greek provides valuable evidence about the development and dialects of Greek. The earliest surviving Judeo-Greek texts, some of them original Ioannina compositions and all of them written in the local dialect, date from the twelfth century. In other words, the Jews of Ioannina used demotic Greek in their sacred writings centuries before the bloody riots between the adherents of demotic Greek and *katharévoussa* in Athens in 1900. They were consistent in their use of demotic Greek in both oral and written Judeo-Greek. In doing so, they helped spread demotic Greek, used by poets and prose writers, now taught in all schools throughout Greece and the official language of the land.

Oral Judeo-Greek

As I heard many of the older, unlettered Ioannina Jewish women speak with their coreligionists in social conversation, it sounded to me like a trailing drawl uttered in a sing-song manner, with a dissonant, even cacophonous ring. It was not like the melody used by the Greek Christians in Ioannina. Professor Nikos A. Bees was convinced that the melody of the Ioannina Jews resembled the melody of the Egyptian Jews, which led him to believe that the Jews of Ioannina originally emigrated from Egypt.[8] As education spread and Jewish women attended the Alliance, as well as Greek schools of higher learning, this sing-song quality diminished.

In spoken Judeo-Greek, the pattern of sound partly reflects Hebrew. For example, there is no way in modern Greek to spell the sound of the hard *g* between two vowels, as in the word *haggadah* (narration), which the Ioannina Jews pronounced *aggada*. The hard *g* reflects the Hebrew. In the case of the word *havdala*, marking the end of the Sabbath, which the Ioannina Jews pronounce *avdala*, we have the loss of the *h*. On the other hand, the Ioannina Jews pronounce *meggila* (scroll) and *tevilah* (complete immersion) as *migla* and *tivla* to conform to Epirotic speech.

Written Judeo-Greek

What are the linguistic peculiarities of written Judeo-Greek? The first thing one notices, of course, is the Hebrew characters. Most Greek consonants have Hebrew equivalents. The morphological and phonological differences in phonetics, grammar, semantics, as well as the vocabulary created by the Hebrew, give Judeo-Greek its

Semitic quality. Judeo-Greek writings often were vocalized, in order to facilitate Bible study. Judeo-Greek writers used the Greek pronunciation of their own time and city.[9]

The most noticeable difference between the Judeo-Greek writing of Ioannina and other Judeo-languages is in the relatively slight admixture of Hebrew and Aramaic words and expressions.[10] There are fewer Hebrew words and expressions in the anonymous Judeo-Greek hymns originating in Ioannina or in the Judeo-Greek section of the Polyglot Pentateuch, transcribed into modern Greek by D. C. Hesseling.[11]

I have divided the linguistic features of both oral and written Judeo-Greek into six categories and included a few examples to illustrate each:

1. *Words with Hebrew roots and Greek suffixes*. The menorah is called *khanukarya* in Judeo-Greek, from the Hebrew *khanukah* (Feast of Lights). *Talmiditou* (from the Hebrew *talmid*, student), has a Greek genitive suffix. Similarly, the Hebrew *sabbath* becomes *sabbathiou* in Judeo-Greek.

2. *Half Hebrew and half Greek phrases*. In the Judeo-Greek phrases *ma ton Adonai* (by God) and *ma to kal Nidre* (by the highest prayer), *Adonai* and *kal Nidre* are Hebrew and the other two words in each phrase are Greek. In the expression *me vríkan pollá tzaróth* (many woes have found me), only the last word is Hebrew; the other three words are Greek. In the expression *ton píre o Akadósh Baroukhoú* (The Holy One, blessed be He, took him; he died) the first two words are Greek and the last two are Hebrew. In the phrase *kaló moéth*, *kaló* (good) is Greek and *moéth* is the Hebrew *moed*, meaning holiday. The expression *ti makóth épathe* (what plague hit him, or her?) is used when one cannot understand a person's behavior. *Makóth* (plagues) is the Hebrew word familiar to us from the Passover seder service, here used figuratively. The first and last words are Greek. The expression *kalióras kai liahanavís* (May the prophet Elias be near you) is derived from the Greek *kalí óra* (good hour), the Hebrew name *Eliyiá*, and the Hebrew word *anávi*, meaning the prophet. In the phrase *i psychí't sto ganéden* (May his soul go to heaven), *ganéden* (garden of Eden) is Hebrew and the other three words are Greek. In the expression *kourbán na s'páou* (May I be sacrificed for your sake), only *kourbán* is Hebrew. In the phrase *hatás éftaiksa* (I am guilty of sin), said before a Beth Din by a culprit admitting he had sinned, *hatás* is the Hebrew *hatáti* (sin) as pronounced in Ioannina and *éftaiksa* (I am at fault, guilty) is Greek.

3. *Expressions with both Hebrew and Turkish (including Arabic) words*. A common example is *inshalláh na s'ríkso to taléth* (literally,

God willing, I will throw the prayer shawl on you; meaning see you get married). *Inshalláh* is Arabic, the next three words are Greek, and *taléth* is Hebrew for the prayer shawl. It is also used by the bride and groom during the wedding ceremony.

4. *Hebrew words and expressions incorporated into Judeo-Greek.* Most of these words are related to study, prayer, and worship, and do not readily lend themselves to translation. It will serve no purpose to list those Hebrew and Aramaic terms heard in all Judeo-languages, such as *shalom, shabbat shalom, mazaltov, tzedaka, besiman tov, barouch abah*, etc. Instead, I list here only a few of the Hebrew words heard in Ioannina which are not commonly heard in other Judeo-languages.

adará - memorial
álef - a birth certificate, placed over the bed of a mother who has just given birth to a son and kept there through the time of circumcision. It served as an amulet to protect the mother and the uncircumcised son.
amalék - a non-Jewish tribe, symbol of evil people for the Jews.
barminan - an Aramaic word meaning may it not happen to us.
bekotseryamim veshanim - a curse: may your years be shortened.
gedzira - an evil decree, from the Hebrew *gezira*
gerama - Aramaic word meaning the Talmud, used to express a very difficult problem.
hashehah - from the Hebrew word for darkness. The Ioannina Jews called a church *hasiha* because it was dark inside, an anti-Christian expression.
hayashem - by God; from the Hebrew *hashem*, euphemism for the name of the Almighty.
lashan ara - malicious gossip
mashithim - catastrophe
Mizraim - used in all Judeo-languages to mean Egypt. My father used the word to mean slavery, bondage, being hemmed in.
rifa selima - from the Hebrew *refua shelema*, meaning complete recovery; also used to mean rest, repose, relief.
sadai - *Shaddai* is one of the ancient names of the Lord. It was used in Ioannina as a plea for God's protection.
sahal - stupid fool
sekila serifa - death by stoning and death by burning
tsakai - pure, innocent in a moral sense
ya leman ashem - for heaven's sake
Yavan - Greek, a biblical name spelled Javan in the Bible, identified as the fourth son of Japheth, son of Noah (Gen. 10:1-2). By tradition, Jews have identified Yavan with the Greek people and their language.

yesh mammon yesh kavod - when you have money you have honor
yemáchshimo vizihró - a curse: may his name and memory be erased.

5. Greek words used metaphorically in Judeo-Greek for Hebrew concepts. In "The Creation of the World" (*I Dhimiourghía tou Kósmou*), a hymn written in Ioannina, the word *grámma*, meaning letter, is capitalized in the middle of a sentence to make the word mean Torah.

6. Predominantly Hebrew expressions used by Ioannina Jews when they did not want their Christian compatriots to know what they were saying. Here are a few examples:

ayin ara - literally, the evil eye
en emounah bagoy - you cannot trust a non-Jew
lassare kai mi s'apernes - don't say anything
lassare kai mi vatseris - don't do anything
le ayin ha am - literally, the public eye, said by one Jew to a fellow Jew to indicate that what he is saying is meant to impress the listener but is not the truth; it is said for the sake of appearances.
mamzer o dzes - he is a bastard (the article *o* is Greek)
mas gaidare o dzes - an expression used figuratively to mean "he's wise to us." *Mas* and *o* are Greek. *Gaidare* probably derives from the French *regarder* (to look). *Dzes* is from the Hebrew *ze* with the Greek suffix *s* added.
mi ditzers dibourim - don't speak, from the French *dire* (to say) and the Hebrew *dibour* (word). *Mi* is the Greek negative.
okher yeudim o dzes - literally, someone who uproots Jews; anti-Semitism. Except for the Greek article *o* and the *s* suffix, all the words in this phrase are Hebrew.
ten enáyin - literally, put your eyes on it, used in the marketplace to alert a Jewish vendor to keep a double watch, to guard his merchandise against theft.

A word must be said about Hebraisms in the hymns written in Ioannina. Throughout the centuries, translators of the Scriptures into Judeo-Greek have used a literal word for word, even morpheme for morpheme technique in translating phrases from the Bible and Talmud. A few of the most obvious Hebraisms found in the Ioannina hymns occur in proper names, holidays, and rules of worship. To give two examples, in "The Song of Purim," the names of Mordechai, Esther, and Haman are written in the Hebrew spelling. Some names are Hellenized. In the hymn "Ye Sons of Israel" (*Eseis Paidia tou Israel*) there are several Hebrew words: *seoudah* (meal or feast), *Massiakh* (Messiah), *hatzak* (strong), *tzehouth* (merit or divine grace), *mashithim* (catastrophe), *Gkeinam* (*Gehenna*, hell).

Probably the most concrete way to demonstrate the linguistic characteristics of Judeo-Greek is to analyze the first short paragraph of *The Sayings of the Fathers* (*Pirke Avoth*), translated into the oral Judeo-Greek of the late nineteenth century. *The Sayings of the Fathers* was chanted in the synagogue every Sabbath afternoon between Pesach and Shavuoth.

What was unique to Ioannina was that, after *The Sayings of the Fathers* was chanted, the person who chanted the Hebrew then chanted an expanded translation in Judeo-Greek with comments from the *Mishnah* for those Romaniotes who could not understand the Hebrew.

In the first paragraph of the *Sayings of the Fathers,* the Hebrew reads as follows:

> Moses received the Torah from Sinai and passed it to Joshua. Joshua passed it to the Elders, and they to the Prophets, who passed it to the men of the Great Assembly. They said three things: "Don't be hasty in rendering judgment, make your students independent scholars, and make a fence around the Torah."

Here is how the Ioannina Jews expanded this paragraph for their congregants in Judeo-Greek:

> Moses (Moshe Rabbenou) received the Torah from the Holy One, Blessed be He (Akadosh Baroukhou), on Mount Sinai as the verse (pasouk) states; and he said before Moses "Come up to me in the mountain and be there, and I will give you two stone tablets and the letter and the order as I wrote it down for you to show them." And Moses (Moshe Rabbenou) handed it down to Joshua (Yeochoua), one of his students (talmiditou) as it states in the verse (pasouk) and the servant Joshua (Yeochoua), a youth, son of Nun, would not budge from the tent, and Joshua [gave it] to the Elders and the Elders to the Prophets and the Prophets gave it to the Great Assembly. They said you should expect three fears: This Judgment (Din, meaning obligation) which comes before us, don't discharge it in a hurry, only expect the judgment; cultivate many students (talmidim) so that the Torah will grow, and be strong. Make a fence around the words of the Torah, so that one can be prevented from violating it. As the verse (pasouk) states: Take heed of my warning.

Several Hebrew words were not translated in the Judeo-Greek text. Words such as *pasouk*, *talmiditou*, and *talmidim* dealing with studying, learning, and reading, and *din*, were considered religious terms and were left in Hebrew. Proper names were retained in

Hebrew. The Greek genitive, as in the case of *talmiditou* mentioned above, was used when the words were too far from the Greek to fit the Greek syntax. The idiom used in this passage was that of Epirotic Greek. The expanded reading was dramatic, didactic, and easily understood by the congregants, especially the women, who did not understand Hebrew.

The Ioannina Jews no longer write Judeo-Greek as a means of private communication, although it is still spoken. In my recent trips to Ioannina I have heard fewer and fewer Hebrew words in the speech of the Ioannina Jewish survivors. They still, however, use their traditional Judeo-Greek hymns, both at home and in the synagogue, as well as the other Judeo-Greek translations, such as the Polyglot Pentateuch, Jonah, and Job.

Judeo-Greek, notes

1. *Historical Catalogue of Printed Bibles and Languages*, Vol. 11, *Polyglots Other than English* (London, 1911), 7. The Judeo-Greek section of the Polyglot Pentateuch is written in the dialect of Epirus and contains no Turkish words. This has led some scholars to conclude that it was written at least two centuries before its date of publication.
2. Joseph Matsa, ed., *Yianniotika Evraika Tragoudia* (Ioannina Jewish Songs), (Ioannina, 1953).
3. Demetrios Salamanga, *Strolls in Ioannina* (Greek) (B' ed. Ioannina, 1965), 20.
4. E. Bonga, *The Linguistic Idioms of Epirus* (Ioannina, 1964), 34.
5. P. Aravantinos, *Epeirotic Glossary* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1957), 11.
6. D. Salamanga, *Ioannina Miscellany* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1959), 79.
7. Ibid, 83.
8. Nikos A. Bees, "Ubersicht uber die Geschichte des Judentums von Janina (Epirus)" in *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbucher*, Vol. 22 (Athens, 1921), 134-146.
9. *See* R. Dalven, "Judeo Greek" in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 10, cols. 425-427.
10. *See* Joshua Starr, "Judeo-Greek" in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 6, 254 and Lazare Belleli, "Judeo-Greek" in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, 310-311.
11. D. S. Hesseling, *Les Cinq Livres de la Loi (Le Pentateuque)* (Leipzig, 1897).

Alliance Israelite Universelle

All Jewish boys in Ioannina attended the Talmud Torah Hebrew School, established in 1875, whether or not their fathers could afford to pay tuition.[1] One of the graduates described the curriculum:

> The Aham (rabbi) taught us Jewish history, Hebrew, and Greek. He also taught us the Pentateuch, some elements of *halakhah* (Talmudic Law), the *tamim* (melodies), the liturgy for all holidays and special occasions, Prophets, Proverbs, Commentary, and the two scripts, Rashi and Merubah. As required by law, we also studied Turkish.

In keeping with orthodox tradition, the girls did not attend Hebrew school, or any school at all. Those upper class Jewish parents who wanted their daughters to have some schooling sent them to Greek girls' schools.[2] These parents thought it important for their daughters to know how to read and write the Greek language they spoke at home, in society, and even in the synagogue.

Between 1881 and 1901, 156 Jewish girls attended Greek elementary schools in Ioannina. They were, however, expected to attend classes, writing as well, on the Sabbath, which violated the religious principles of the strictly orthodox Jewish community in Ioannina. Apparently, the Jewish girls who attended these Greek schools were either encouraged or obliged to learn Christian dogma as well. An article in *L'Univers Israelite*, 1901-1902 condemned the indifference of the Ioannina Jewish community to this plight of their Jewish girls.[3]

In 1903, a group of young Ioannina Jews, headed by Dr. Jacques Levi and including Behoraki Hanen Levy, Abraham Levy, and Israel Coffina, formed the United Brotherhood (*Agudath Ahim*) to establish a school in which the Jewish girls of Ioannina could be taught both Greek and Hebrew. The community responded warmly, and the Jewish School for Girls opened its doors in 1903 to 150 girls who had attended Greek schools. They were taught Hebrew, Greek, sewing, and embroidery. Apparently, they were not required by law to study Turkish.

Although the community had raised enough funds to open the Jewish School for Girls, the United Brotherhood (*Agudath Ahim*) successfully appealed to the Alliance Israelite Universelle in Paris, which had been operating schools in the Near East since 1873, to open schools in Ioannina, not only for girls but for boys as well. Most of the expenses for the Alliance schools in Ioannina would be paid by the Alliance headquarters in Paris. Hebrew teachers would be paid by the Ioannina Jewish community; Turkish and Greek teachers would be paid by the Ottoman government.



Ioannina lake excursion by the Alliance school

The Jewish Museum of Greece (Gift from the author)

In 1904, M. and Mme. Elie Carmona, both graduates of the teachers' seminary, the *Ecole Normale Israelite Orientale*, arrived in Ioannina to open the Alliance schools for boys and girls. Mme. Carmona was the daughter of Saadi Levy and the sister of Sam Levi, publisher of *Les Cahiers Sefardis*. Her husband was a descendant of the illustrious Carmona family from Constantinople, which had played leading roles in solving Ottoman fiscal problems. Both were experienced teachers who had taught in various Alliance schools in communities in the Near East.[4]

There was some resistance to the Alliance in Ioannina. Not all boys were immediately enrolled in the Alliance school and the Talmud Torah Hebrew School continued as a separate institution. After two years, however, the Talmud Torah Hebrew School was transferred to the Alliance and all Ioannina Jewish boys continued their Hebrew education at the Alliance.

When the Greek schools discovered that the Jewish girls who had been in attendance were now attending the Alliance school for girls, relations between Greeks and Jews cooled. Relations improved when it became known not only that the Greek language was included in the curriculum of the Alliance schools, but that it was taught with care.

Although the chief language of instruction at the Alliance schools was French, the purpose of the Alliance administration in subsidizing these schools was not *only* to disseminate French language and culture. The Alliance had three basic aims: 1) to work everywhere for the emancipation and moral progress of the Jews, 2) to give effective support to those who suffer because of their qualities as Jews, and 3) to encourage all publications to bring about these results.[5] One of the first regulations M. Carmona enforced was that all boys attending the school wear regular shoes. Many had attended the Talmud Torah Hebrew School wearing wooden sandals.

The Alliance clearly felt the responsibility "to give our students a Jewish formulation. To this effect we allow for an hour of Hebrew daily in each grade. This house is consecrated to the teaching of Hebrew, the Bible, sacred history in the lower grades, and Jewish history starting with the middle grades."[6]

A 1913 graduate of the Alliance Boys' School described the school:

> The Alliance had eight classes, starting with the lowest, or *huitième classe*, in which children were enrolled at five or six years of age, and advancing to the *première classe*, the highest class in the school.
>
> Our school year began in October. Our classes started at 8:00 A.M and lasted till noon. We had one hour for lunch, which



The Alliance 6th grade, 1932/33

Jewish Museum of Greece

> was supplied to us by the Alliance, and which we ate there. Our afternoon classes were from 1:00 to 6:00. We had one hour of Hebrew, one hour of Greek, one hour of Turkish, and one hour of physical exercise. The five remaining hours were devoted to instruction, in French, on science, art, mathematics, French language, French literature, and French history. Attendance in the synagogue on Saturday was mandatory. We were marked absent if we did not attend.

The same Alliance graduate added that, every morning, one of the boys in the *première classe* was selected to say a prayer in Hebrew as soon as he reached the top step of the entrance to the school. An additional prayer was said in Hebrew in the morning during periods of crisis. At the end of the school day, one student was selected to stand at the center of the synagogue and recite a short section of the afternoon service, which all boys were required to attend.

Another Alliance graduate, who after forty years still feels warmly indebted to the Alliance for his education, recalled with pleasure the competitive method used at the school:

> Good students received a *Bon Point* every month. After receiving ten *Bon Points*, the student received a *Billet de Satisfaction*. After receiving ten *Billets de Satisfaction* we received a *Billet d'Honneur*.

No tuition was required by the Alliance from students unable to pay, and textbooks were supplied without charge. The Alliance supplied poor boys with clothing and gave all boys a new suit of clothes once a year. Although students from wealthier homes preferred to go home for their midday meal, all pupils could eat a hot lunch provided at the school every day. Non-Jews who wanted to learn French were permitted to attend the Alliance schools on payment of a nominal fee, and every year recognition by the Ioannina community at large of the quality of the teaching methods used in the Alliance schools was demonstrated by the attendance of Christian and Muslim children of wealthy merchants and high officials.

Most of the expenses of the Alliance schools were paid by the Alliance in Paris. The rest of the money came from tuitions, individual donations, and community support raised by the United Brotherhood (*Agudath Ahim*) and the two synagogues. Until 1913 when Ioannina was freed from Ottoman rule, the Ottoman government paid the salaries of the Turkish language teachers. After the Greek liberation of Ioannina in 1913 the Greek government paid the salaries of the Greek language teachers. Turkish was dropped.

The principal interviewed each member of the graduating class to find out if he or she wanted further education. If so, the Alliance would finance his or her further studies. Those students who wanted to become teachers went to the teachers' seminary, the *Ecole Normale Israélite Orientale*. The seminary for boys was in Paris; the seminary for girls was in Versailles. Rarely did a girl avail herself of the opportunity to study abroad. Her parents were dead set against a girl leaving home before she was married.

Parents who wanted their daughters to continue their education in Ioannina beyond the Alliance sent them to the Higher Greek School for Girls (*Anotéron Ellinikón Parthenagogeíon*). Forty-one Jewish girls attended this school between the years 1901 and 1914. For the years 1914-38, only forty-eight girls attended. Thirty-five Jewish girls continued their education in the Ioannina Gymnasium.[7] Boys graduating from the Alliance could continue their education in Ioannina at the Zosimaia School, a Greek public high school. Boys wanting a higher Jewish education attended the Yeshiva in Thessaloniki.

During the years 1904-1907, when the Alliance schools in Ioannina were headed by M. and Mme. Carmona, 1,641 boys graduated from the school, 645 of them without paying tuition. During the same period 633 girls graduated, 122 without paying tuition.[8]

In 1905 the Alliance established, in addition to the schools, a series of workshops to provide boys with instruction in trades. These workshops were completely subsidized by the Alliance in Paris. All workshop teachers received their training in Europe.

Forty-five boys were trained in the workshops during the years 1905-1907: 18 as carpenters, 12 as blacksmith mechanics, 6 as watchmakers, 7 as mechanics, 1 as a wheelwright.

From 1908 through 1910, the Alliance schools in Ioannina were under the direction of M. and Mme. Lahana. During this period 1,460 boys graduated, 599 without paying tuition. From the Girls' Alliance 839 girls graduated, 231 without paying tuition. Twenty-five boys were trained in the workshops: 12 as carpenters, 6 as blacksmith mechanics, 3 as mechanics, 2 as printers, 1 as a blacksmith, 1 as a tinsmith.

During the years 1911-1913, the Alliance schools in Ioannina were headed by M. and Mme. Benveniste. These were the most turbulent years in the history of the Alliance in Ioannina because of the Balkan Wars; they had a frightful financial situation at the Alliance schools. At the start of the war and for the next three months it was impossible for the Alliance headquarters in Paris to communicate with schools in the area of hostilities. When communications were reestablished, the Alliance headquarters sent subsidies to all the schools which had been through this ordeal.

Thanks to the sacrifices made by the schools, they were able to keep their doors open, despite unbelievable difficulties. On January 19, 1912, they had 212 students. Of the nine non-Jewish students, seven were Christians and two were Muslims; only four girls attended. Regular classes resumed on February 12, 1912, M. Benveniste wrote to Paris, "thanks to the generosity of M. Behoraki Levy by a special authorization of the local authorities."[9]

The December 1912 armistice stopping the First Balkan War did not settle the many conflicting territorial claims in the area, and the political tension continued to affect the schools' operation. As described in the history section, the Ottomans garrisoned troops in Ioannina and the Greek army encircled the city. Ioannina was liberated in February, 1913. In the Sprinzer Building of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem I found a school plan from the Alliance Schools in Ioannina for the academic year 1912-13. On the page dated March 6, 1913, was written, in French, "Entry of Greek troops into Ioannina. Holiday." "We received the Greek army with joy," a former Alliance student recalled.

But the boys and girls did not have too long a holiday. The boys resumed classes on March 13 and the girls on April 1, 1913, but the school day ended at noon. To the boys' great joy, Turkish was dropped from the curriculum.

Despite the critical shortages and the Greek liberation, 936 boys graduated during the years 1911-1913, 409 of them without paying tuition. From the Girls' School 719 graduated, 226 without paying tuition. In 1911 there were 5 students in the workshops: 3 watchmakers, 1 blacksmith, 1 tinsmith. I could find no record of the workshops functioning during 1912 and 1913.

Late in 1913, M. and Mme. Sarfati were appointed as directors of the Alliance schools in Ioannina. Although directors usually were appointed for three year terms, because World War I followed on the heels of the Balkan Wars, the Sarfatis remained in Ioannina until 1919. During the latter part of their term they seem to have been assisted by M. and Mme. Levy, for the 1917 diploma of one of my informants is signed by A. Levy. M. and Mme. Levy remained at the Alliance schools in Ioannina until 1921.

At first, the Greek government approved of the Alliance schools. It recognized that the schools sought to educate Jewish children in the elements of Hebrew, that considerable room in the curriculum was devoted to teaching Greek and, most importantly, that the curriculum was not concerned with the country's politics. The Greek government appointed the Greek teachers at the Alliance. Nonetheless, the Greek government came to disapprove of the Alliance schools because the main language of instruction was French and because the schools were sponsored by a foreign organization. It is generally admitted that the boys in Ioannina did

not receive the same French education after the Greek liberation.[10]

During the years of the Sarfati directorship, from 1913 until 1919, 593 boys, 179 of them without paying tuition, graduated from the Boys' School. In the same period 263 girls, 119 without paying tuition, graduated from the Girls' School.

During the Asia Minor campaign (1919-1922) the military barracks in Ioannina burned down. A student at the Alliance at the time recalled that "the authorities took over the Alliance schools to house the soldiers and we had to hold classes in our *Minyan Hadash* (the small synagogue outside the New Synagogue) until the barracks were restored."[11]

M. and Mme. Aranias became directors of the Alliance schools in Ioannina in 1922. They, as well, remained longer than the usual three year term, staying until 1931. They fought a losing battle against the Alliance schools being brought under the jurisdiction of the Greek Ministry of Education. The Jewish community was very poor, unable, and perhaps unwilling, to support the schools.[12] "Ioannina does not offer many resources," wrote Mlle. Benrubi, assistant director of the Girls' School. "Outside of the school library, there are hardly any books. But it seems that there is a noticeable activity and an appreciable taste for study."[13]

In 1928 the Alliance schools were placed under the control of the Greek Ministry of Public Education. Henceforth, the schools were an integral part of the social and educational activities of the Greek government.[14] A number of Jewish parents sent their children to Greek public schools instead of the Alliance schools because they wanted their children to learn Greek well. French came increasingly to be taught as a foreign language and pressure was applied to eliminate the teaching of French altogether. All orders from the government were for the teaching of Greek.[15]

In 1932, M. and Mme. Mordechai Pitchon became the directors, and during their years in office the Alliance schools were gradually handed over to the local community. Correspondence between the schools and the Paris headquarters make it clear that the Greek government regarded the Alliance schools as foreign and hated the teaching of French. As far as I have been able to discover, M. and Mme. Mordechai Pitchon remained with the schools until the community was deported by the Germans to Auschwitz and Birkenau.

The schools continued to function despite Greek government displeasure. In 1937, there were 227 students and in 1939 there were 293. There were 301 students, 217 in the elementary school, in 1940.

The schools continued to function during the German occupation. Survivors report that, although the Alliance schools were under Greek government jurisdiction and the city was occupied by German troops, Hebrew was still being taught. Rabbi Benzion Cohen, the

Hebrew teacher during those frightful years, remained at his post at the school and died at Auschwitz.

In 1956, the tiny surviving Jewish community hoped to start a school for Jewish boys and girls at 56 Kountouriotou Street, where the Jewish community had its offices before the war. Hebrew was to be taught along with the standard Greek curriculum. The Greek government approved and offered to pay the salaries of the two Greek teachers for the lower classes and two for the older boys and girls on the condition that at least thirty children attend. Unfortunately, there were not enough children who had survived the Holocaust or had been born after the war for the school to open.

Critics of the Alliance schools in Ioannina charge that the schools lessened the dedication of Jewish boys and girls to their Hebrew heritage. To the contrary, Alliance graduates insist that their synagogue-oriented traditions were enriched because of their French education at the Alliance schools. Their education both broadened their horizons and significantly elevated the intellectual level of the community as a whole. It strengthened their Romaniote heritage and their knowledge of Jewish history and it changed their attitude toward European cultural values. "Although the Alliance had taken an anti-Zionist position at that time," recalled one graduate, "the instruction of biblical and post-biblical Jewish history, which was unknown to us until then, contributed to the development of a Jewish identity as well as a sense of pride and self-esteem among the young Jews of Ioannina."

I was surprised to discover two Alliance graduates now living in New York reciting prayers by rote they assured me they had learned at the Alliance forty years before. The five hours each day during which lessons were conducted in French did detract from the study of Hebrew, but the rabbis and parents of this strictly orthodox community never allowed Hebrew to take second place in the lives of their children. Above all, the Alliance helped to lift the Ioannina Jews out of their former *dhimmi* status and awakened their national consciousness as Jews.

Alliance, notes

1. D. Salamanga, *As Liberty Dawned* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1963), 56. Salamanga incorrectly rendered the Hebrew year 5635 as 1881 instead of 1875. The rules of the school were drawn up by the Hebrew Educational Committee, consisting of ten directors and five appointed members: Hayyim M. Battino, Barouch M. Zakar, Samuel I. Levi, Avraam El. Castro, Hayyim M. Levi. The purpose of the committee was to "correct, strengthen, and maintain" education for Jewish children "first in the Hebrew language, and second in the foreign tongue" (Greek).

2. Georges A. Oikonomou, *History of the Three Elizabeths Girls Schools in Ioannina under Turkish Domination, 1848-1913* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1957). The three Elizabeths were separate girls' schools, each built in a different period during the long years of Ottoman rule. The name Elizabeth, however, was retained for all three, in honor of the founder, Elizabeth G. Kastrisou.
3. "Lettre de Turquie" in *L'Univers Israelite* (57) 1901-1902, 179.
4. *Les Cahiers Sefardis*, October 1, 1948, 321-323. The *École Normale Israelite Orientale* was founded by the Alliance in Paris in 1867. *See* Andre Chouraqui, *L'Alliance Israelite Universelle* (Paris, 1960), 178.
5. Chouraqui, 38-39.
6. "Mission d'Education Juive" in *Les Cahiers d'Alliance Israelite Universelle*, No, 11, September-October 1957 (Paris), 62.
7. Oikonomou, 77-78.
8. Bulletins 29-32, *Troisième Serie*
9. Grèce II, E 37, Écoles, 1911-1913.
10. Bulletin for 1913, 108.
11. Max Joseph, interview with the author in New York.
12. Letter from M. Aranias dated September 13, 1923, in *Paix et Droit*, 1923, Grèce III, E 35, Carton 682. *See* also letters dated January 12 and May 25, 1924.
13. Grèce III, Écoles, No. 36 bis.
14. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 1, cols. 648-654.
15. Grèce III, E 36, carton 682. *See* also Grèce IV, E 54, Écoles 1931-1933.

Family Life

Up until 1940, middle class Jewish family life in Ioannina was patriarchal and biblical, steeped in the traditions of the past. The family was not limited only to the father, mother, and children. When a son married he was expected to bring his bride to live with him in his paternal home. Often, the paternal grandparents would also be living in the house, so it was not unusual for four generations to be living under one roof. In general, relations were harmonious and respectful. Children were taught to respect their elders.

The husband. The husband was master of the house. Usually, he was a conservative observer of tradition who ruled his family in harmony with the practices of the rabbis and notables who governed this synagogue oriented community. The family was united in their religious observances and in their sense of mutual respect and reverence. "All ritual ceremonies in the synagogue had their counterpart in the domestic preparations."[1]

The moral and religious training of his children was the father's main concern. He provided for his family's needs in the home, paying all household expenses without any of his children, in particular his daughters, having to work outside the home. He presided at the family Seder table on Passover. At the Sabbath eve meal he blessed his children, and they obediently kissed the hands of their parents. When the time came for his children to marry, he selected the mates for both his sons and his daughters. His was the last word concerning the amount of dowry his sons were to receive and the amount he would pay as dowry for his daughters.

The father's relations with his sons were closer than those he had with his daughters, particularly when the boys reached their teens. If he were a storekeeper, with a thriving business, he encouraged his sons to spend time with him at the store. In some cases, the father would send his son, especially during summer vacation, to another store to learn the ways of commercial dealings. Often this was done by giving the other storekeeper money to be paid the son as salary without the son knowing that payment had come from his father. This was a preliminary step in his plans to have his sons take over his business when he would no longer be able to work; his sons would provide for him in his old age.

The wife. The wife was mistress of the house (*beulath bayith*), and her chief concern was to please her husband. She rarely addressed her husband by his given name but instead used the title, Your Lordship (*I affendía sou*). Although her husband was the guardian of the faith, it was she who created the atmosphere of traditional piety. "Her greatest pride was to have sons learned in the



The Elia Marco Gani family, Ioannina, ca. 1900

The Jewish Museum of Greece

Torah."[2] She saw to it that her sons attended Hebrew classes regularly and became proficient in Hebrew. She supported her husband in upholding the prestige and honor of the family in the community, and was especially watchful over the decorum and good name of her daughters. She was expected to perform three good deeds (*mitzvoth*) according to the commandments: to light the candles on Friday evening, to perform the ritual bath (*tevilah kesherah*) periodically to keep herself pure, to give bread to the poor. She observed the dietary laws and prepared the home for the Sabbath and for all religious holidays. She took care of her children, her husband, and her household.

Before her marriage she had been instructed by her mother to anticipate difficulties with her mother-in-law and realistically accept the influence her mother-in-law would have over her husband. She had been taught that the best way to have amicable relations with her husband was not to argue with his mother but to accept her decisions, or eccentricities, in silence.

To better her subordinate position in her male dominated household, she did all she could to be a devoted helpmate, prepare excellent meals, attend to her husband's every whim, and provide him with a large family. As in the Middle East, "the servile situation of a young wife changed only when children were born to her. . . . Her prestige increased with the birth of each child, and especially with the birth of male children.[3] According to custom, she swaddled her children for several months, and nursed them for about a year.

The Ioannina Jewish wife seldom went out. She never left her house without her husband's knowledge or without proper attendance, although she might visit nearby friends. Her husband did the shopping, so she did not go to the market. She did attend certain religious festivals but, other than that, she was secluded in her own home. In contrast, her husband was actively involved in the community's business life. In the evenings he would go out either to a taverna or a coffee house where he would meet with his men friends and exchange opinions and ideas. The wife was so accustomed to this that she seldom asked her husband where he was going. If she were to ask, he probably would answer with a curt, "Out." Although she might run her household intelligently, even creatively, she took no part in her husband's intellectual life nor in the society of his men friends.

If a woman were barren it was considered to be her own fault, and if a woman gave birth only to daughters, this, too, was considered her fault. Often the Ioannina Jewish husband was so downcast over the birth of a daughter that he did not speak to his wife for weeks. Other male members of the family were so influenced by the father's attitude over the birth of a girl that they also regarded her birth as a family misfortune. "I was eleven years old,"

one Ioannina man told me with some amusement, "when my mother gave birth to my sister. When a relative met me on the street and asked me if my mother had given birth, I replied sadly, 'Another female.'"[4]

The wife deferred to the male members of her family. She fostered the feeling of male supremacy in her sons, imbuing each with the idea that "the female members of the family were there to serve him."[5] She was lenient with her sons, overlooking their faults and ready to indulge their whims, often at the expense of her daughters and herself. She hoped this would increase her sons' devotion to her, although the result was often the reverse. At meals, she always served the men first, in order of their status in the household (generally according to age), and in some cases she waited until the men had eaten before she herself sat down to her meal.

The son. Before 1913, when Ioannina was still under Ottoman rule, each male infant was given both a Jewish birth certificate (*alef*) showing the date of birth according to the Jewish calendar and an Ottoman birth certificate (Gr. *koupóni*) showing the date of birth according to the Muslim calendar. From his birth, the son was made to feel more important than his sisters. Before the school for Jewish girls in Ioannina opened in 1903, his sisters stayed at home while he, from the age of six, attended the Talmud Torah Hebrew school. At the same age he began attending synagogue with his father. The son would continue the line of his father; he would be the recipient of a dowry. If he were a first born, a *behor*, he helped his father select husbands for his sisters. In some instances, particularly if the father were old, he decided on the choice of husbands for them. As for himself, above all he was expected to marry a woman of his own social class who would serve him as his mother and sisters had served him in his father's home.[6]

The daughter. Under Ottoman rule, each girl born into the community received a birth certificate only from the state; unlike boys, she did not receive a birth certificate from the Jewish community. Before the Jewish School for Girls opened in 1903, Jewish girls received no formal education. Each daughter remained close to her mother, who taught her the domestic arts and a smattering of religious knowledge. Often, even in upper middle class families, girls up to eighteen years old were sent to other homes to learn the domestic arts. Seldom was she offered any opportunities for intellectual development. She attended religious services with her mother. She was under the guardianship of her father and her brothers, as she would be under the guardianship of her husband. She was never permitted to go out for a stroll unless she was properly escorted by her parents, one of her brothers, or other groups of girls. Neither she

nor her mother had the right to vote in communal elections. She worked on her trousseau for years, looking forward to marriage and motherhood as her only means of fulfillment and, perhaps, as her only escape from the oppressive servitude in her father's home. Usually, she obediently and meekly accepted the husband chosen for her.

Girls from middle and upper class families attended the Alliance School for Girls, but the purpose of this education was to make a good marriage, not to engage in a professional career. Seldom, if ever, did any woman from the Ioannina Jewish community consider pursuing a professional career of any kind. Until World War II, girls seldom left home before they married. Some married upper class women who had received a higher education served the community in such non-religious organizations as the Red Cross or the Zionist Society (*Hevra Amale Zion*) but, whatever her social class, up to 1940 it was still considered humiliating for a woman to work to earn her living. This was the extent of intellectual development among the Jewish women in Ioannina before they were sent to Auschwitz and Birkenau where most of them lost their lives.

Family Life, notes

1. Israel Abraham, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1969), 138.
2. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 5, 197.
3. Raphael Patai, *Golden River to Golden Road: Society, Culture and Change in the Middle East* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962), 99. *See* also *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 5, 724 and Abraham, op cit.
4. Max Joseph, a native of Ioannina, in an interview with the author in New York in 1980.
5. Patai, 100.
6. Patai, ibid. *See* also Milton Jacobs, *A Study of Culture, Stability and Change: The Moroccan Jewess* (dissertation abstract, Washington, D. C., 1956), 21.



Wedding, outside the New Synagogue, ca. 1900

Jewish Museum of Greece (Gift from the author)

Betrothal and Marriage Customs

Most of the Jewish betrothal and marriage customs, which go back to Talmudic and biblical times, are observed with rabbinical piety by orthodox Jews in all lands. In Ioannina, however, these customs were affected by the economic, social, and political conditions under which the Ioannina Jews lived as Ottoman and Greek subjects.

I have come to know the betrothal and marriage customs described here through several sources: first, through my parents, both of whom were born in Ioannina and whose families on both sides as far back as they could remember were from Ioannina; second, through relatives and friends in Ioannina where I attended a wedding shortly before World War II; third, through relatives and friends from Ioannina who are now living in Jerusalem or New York. These customs were practiced in the Jewish community in Ioannina until the German occupation of the city.

As with all orthodox Jews, and with Greek Christians as well, couples used to betroth their children during their early childhood,or even infancy. One of my Ioannina informants told me that he remembered a pregnant woman in Ioannina who was so sorry for a neighbor who had seven daughters that she promised to betroth the unborn son she hoped for to one of the neighbor's daughters.

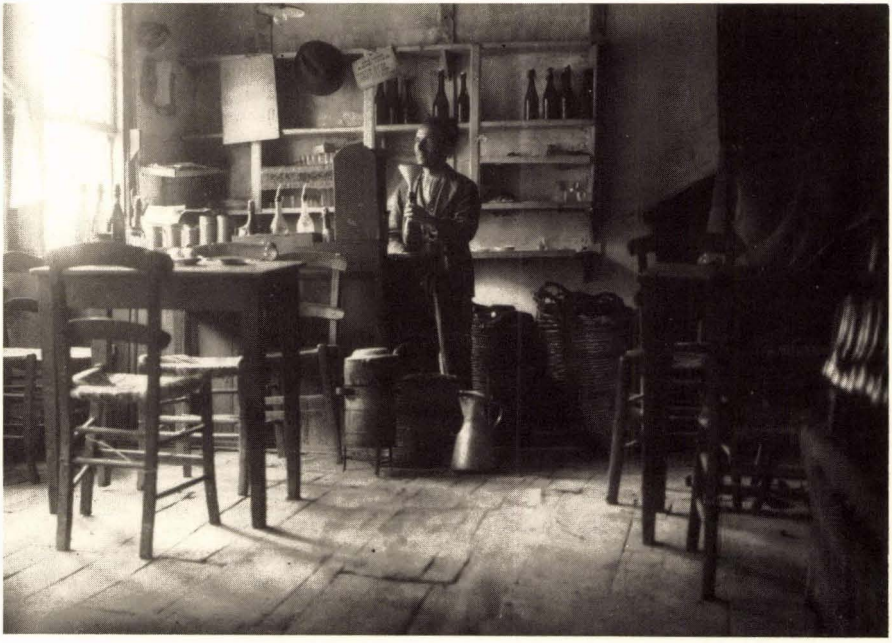
At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ioannina girls were married as early as the age of thirteen. By the end of the century, however, girls usually married between the ages of seventeen and nineteen. A girl who was not married by the time she was twenty was considered an old maid. Parents who had daughters to marry off kept a sharp lookout for a possible match. When they strolled along the lake shore on Sabbath afternoon they paid particular attention to the fathers who promenaded together with their sons; this meant that their sons had reached betrothal age. If boys strolled as a group, unaccompanied by a parent, they had not yet reached marriageable age.

Ioannina parents made every sacrifice to marry off their daughters before they reached twenty. There was no such restriction on a man, who often postponed his own marriage until his forties in order to raise the money needed for his sisters' dowries. Perhaps it was this situation which helped to foster the myth in Ioannina that a girl should marry a man many years older than she; older men, parents argued, were better able to provide for their wives. This belief was also held by the ancient Greeks, though not for the same reason. In a fragment of Euripides, we read, "It is highly wrong to join together two young persons of the same age; for the strength of man lasts longer while the beauty of the female body passes away more rapidly."[1]

It was the custom in Ioannina for Jews to marry within their own clan. An adage I often heard in my home was, "A shoe from my home town, even if it is patched." Parents knew the social and financial status of virtually all members of the community. They preferred a bride or groom from their own in-group to keep their children close to them and in this way the bride could be protected by her own relations. Thus it was quite acceptable for first cousins to marry; in some cases an uncle married a niece, especially if by doing so the family fortune was retained. Also, in this way the bride and the groom were social equals.

When the Sephardim settled in the Ottoman Empire, the Romaniote Jews of Ioannina did not accept them as spouses for their children. Neither did the Sephardim accept any marriages with the Romaniote Jews. Such marriages were considered by both groups to be marriages out of their faith. In time, however, some of the poorer young Jews from Thessaloniki trekked to Ioannina, often on foot, in search of brides, for the Ioannina girls were reputed to be beautiful and to make excellent housewives. Ioannina parents came to welcome these young suitors because they were not adamant about dowries. Visits by young Thessaloniki Jews became so frequent, and so welcome, that one Barba Yannis, a tavern keeper, kept suits

Barba Yannis, tavern keeper, ca. 1900



The Jewish Museum of Greece (Gift from the author)

neatly pressed and hung in his attic. He dressed these young Sephardim in proper clothes for them to be presented to parents of marriageable daughters. When the matchmaking was successfully completed, Barba Yannis received a commission from both the prospective groom and the parents of the girl.

One section of the Mishnah, a collection of Jewish law and ethics, is concerned with *kiddushin*, gifts symbolizing a pledge of marriage.[2] If a girl accepted a *kiddushin* from a man, it meant that she agreed to marry him. In Ioannina, a girl was not permitted to accept any gift from a man, no matter how trifling, without the sanction of her parents, for fear that the man might consider his gift a *kiddushin* and her acceptance of it a pledge of marriage. Such a case, which appears absurd to us today, occurred in Ioannina in 1565, when a young Jew holding a radish stood outside, at the threshold of a house where a young girl was standing. Apparently, the girl asked him for the radish, whereupon the young man answered, "I will give you the radish if you accept it as a *kiddushin*." The girl took the radish, although she had no intention of considering so trifling an object as a pledge of marriage. This incident was brought to the attention of the renowned rabbi, Samuel De Medina in Thessaloniki, who ruled that no *kiddushin* was valid unless it was given in the presence of ten men and a rabbi.[3]

Although recorded in the Beth Din (Jewish Court of Justice) in Ioannina, this and all other decisions were destroyed by fire, so no written decision was extant in Ioannina in 1578, when another incident concerning a *kiddushin* was brought to Rabbi De Medina's attention. A man named Joshua Kohen testified falsely that a widow, Mrs. Sareta, had accepted a gift from him but had no intention of marrying him. Rabbi Joshua ben Ezra, a rabbi in Ioannina at the time and a brother-in-law of the widow, advised Mrs. Sareta to appear before the Beth Din immediately and declare, in accordance with a decree by Rabbi Nessim Bar Reuben, that the only betrothal she would consider legal would be one made with the approval of her mother before the rabbi and ten other witnesses. Mrs. Sareta made her declaration promptly, before the gossip started. The Beth Din accepted her declaration and denied Joshua Kohen.

Joshua Kohen then bribed two witnesses to swear that his testimony was true, but the Beth Din refused to accept these witnesses. Kohen then bribed two Turks to become false witnesses and he went to an Ottoman court to impose a marriage contract, upon the unfortunate Mrs. Sareta. The Ottoman court rejected Kohen's case. A rabbi named Samuel Levy, who was probably a local rabbi, strongly condemned Kohen's conduct and stated that this was how Jewish girls became the property of villains.[4] Rabbi Adarbi also wrote harsh words about Kohen. "We must pronounce

herem (excommunication) on Kohen throughout the Diaspora to set him as an example before all others."[5] At first, Rabbi Samuel De Medina was lenient with Kohen but, when he learned of Mrs. Sareta's declaration invalidating Kohen's *kiddushin*, he freed the widow of all responsibility. Rabbi De Medina finished his *responsum* with words against Kohen and he blessed God that he had saved the woman from the villain.[6]

Another scandal occurred not long after, this time involving the daughter of the now recently deceased Rabbi Joshua ben Ezra and a young man named Sabethai Kohen. The young man claimed that the rabbi's daughter had accepted a *kiddushin* from him, but she did not fulfill her pledge. A decision then was made that no suitor in Ioannina or Arta could give a *kiddushin* to a girl unless she was accompanied by ten members of the synagogue and a rabbi. Anyone who violated this decision would be excommunicated.[7]

As in ancient Greece and in many other parts of the world, it was common practice in Ioannina to have a matchmaker (*proxenítis*) make the arrangements for the betrothal. The matchmaker was not paid. Matchmaking was considered a high honor, which a relative or friend willingly undertook. Often, however, the task turned out to be tiresome, requiring the matchmaker to make repeated visits to the home of the prospective groom to idealize the virtues of the girl in order to bring down the amount of the dowry his parents requested.

In 1939, the year of my last trip to Greece before World War II, it was still the custom for parents to select the mates for their children. After the two sets of parents had come to an agreement, generally through the matchmaker, the father announced the betrothal to his son or daughter as a *fait accompli*. One case reported to me concerned a young man who happened to be working in Arta when his father wrote him from Ioannina to inform him of his betrothal. The son wrote back, thanked his father, and added, "Although I am unable to be present at my engagement, I hope to be there at my wedding."

Conflicts occasionally arose between a girl and her parents when they selected a mate for her who was old enough to be her father. "This was rare," one of my Ioannina informants explained. "Generally, children were ashamed to admit to their parents that they did not desire the mate chosen for them." When I noted that I knew of no divorces in Ioannina, my informant replied, "They did not dare to ask for a divorce." From another Ioannina informant I learned that when the city was still under Ottoman rule there were some conversions of Jewish girls to Islam, either because they had fallen in love or, more likely, because their parents could not afford the dowry demanded by the parents of the Jewish boys they would have preferred to marry.

Marrying off a daughter in Ioannina was a great responsibility and a burden; parents denied themselves every comfort in order to meet the price of the dowry. There was also the expense of the many and varied entertainments which the girl's parents were obliged to tender to the in-laws during the betrothal period, which sometimes lasted for years. In the unpublished notes given me by the late historian, Joseph Nehama, he wrote that a rabbinical decision (*haskama*) was made in 1780 which imposed a reduction of the dowry because it was too much for the parents to raise. A similar decision was made in 1845 by Greek Christians in Zagorion, north of Ioannina.[8]

In selecting a bride for his son, a father gave highest priority to the girl's virginity. Although he was interested in her skills as a housekeeper, his second main concern was her family's social standing in the community. Class distinctions in Ioannina were sharp. It was possible for a young man from a middle class family to marry into an upper class home, if he came from a rabbinical family or was studying to be a rabbi. A girl from a middle class rabbinical family was also welcomed into an upper class family. However, a young man from a middle or upper class family rarely married a girl from the lower social class. If middle class parents had several daughters to dower, they were often compelled to accept as grooms men from the lower class who were not so inflexible about dowries. Also, a girl from such a family may have been compelled to marry a man considerably older than she was, even disabled, if he were rich. In either of these instances, the girl regarded her marriage as an embittering betrayal, which much affected the lives of her children.

Education for the girl was not considered significant, although after 1904, when the girls' school of the Alliance Israelite Universelle was established in Ioannina, girls of all classes from the community were educated there. Generally, there was no doubt about the prospective groom's education, for all boys attended the Hebrew School or, after 1904, the boys' school of the Alliance. The general attitude of the community was that "too much education is bad, especially for a girl." Seldom did any boy pursue an education after his years at the Alliance. The Jewish community of Ioannina was a mercantile community and usually a boy went into his fathers' business. A few sons of upper class families studied abroad. It has been only in very recent times that middle class parents have allowed their sons to pursue professional careers away from home. Up to World War II, so far as I have been able to discover, no daughter left home before she was married.

The marriage settlement, negotiated by the two families, was listed in detail in the marriage contract (*ketubah*). An upper class (known in Ioannina as "first step," *próti skála*) family had to pledge at least seventy gold napoleons, worth about $4.00 each during the



Ketubah (1866)
(Photograph by Timothy DeVinney)

The Jewish Museum of Greece
(Gift from the author)

Ioannina Marriage Contract (1866)*

With a good omen and with great *mazal*, for the groom and the bride and all of Israel, Amen. On Friday. . . 5626 [1866] according to the creation of the world and in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety eight of the destruction of the Holy Temple, may it be speedily rebuilt in our days and in the days of all Israel, according to the date which we are accustomed to count here, the *Kahal Kadosh* in the city of Ioannina, may the Most High guard it, which is situated near the waters of the wells, we the undersigned testify concerning the events described here, how the dear young man Mattathias (May God guard him for life), son of the honorable and eminent Michael Mattathias, of blessed memory, said to the beautiful, dear virgin, Miss Stamou, the daughter of the house of the honorable and eminent Elia Matsa (May God guard her for life): "Be my bride, according to the laws of Moses and Israel and I shall support thee." Miss Stamou, the virgin bride, agreed. She took upon herself to honor him and to serve him in purity and cleanliness, as is the way of all daughters of Israel who are proper and modest, who serve their husbands in cleanliness and purity. The dowry which the aforementioned bride brought from the house of her father to the house of her husband consists of coins, silver, clothing, and bedding, which are carried by Jewish men according to their needs. These are the outlines of the dowry:

of minted coins	120 groshen
coins which are a third of the gifts	380 groshen
coins for the first change of clothing	500 groshen
one gold embroidered handkerchief	20 groshen
bedding	40 groshen
chambray sheets	30 groshen
pillow embroidered with silk	75 groshen
white pillow case without wool	,6 groshen
striped quilt	50 groshen
six blouses	150 groshen
one silk blouse	60 groshen
one vest of Indian muslin	5 groshen
two marjoram colored waistcoats	100 groshen
under shirt	75 groshen
two *toman* (woman's pantaloon) of Indian muslin	35 groshen
one *toman*	80 groshen
one robe of Indian muslin	75 groshen

*In the Jewish Museum in Athens

one robe *gizi*	120 groshen
one silk robe	100 groshen
two marjoram colored aprons	200 groshen
a pair of *bouleki*, aprons, towels, a pair of shoes, five handkerchiefs, three pairs of stockings, three belts embroidered with gold	100 groshen
one chest	100 groshen

With all these gifts, and with the blessings of God, she will become rich. The total value being 2,635 groshen.**

The gift to the groom	60 groshen
Another gift for the groom	640 groshen

There remains the amount of the dowry, 1,935 groshen.

The aforementioned groom received the 1,935 groshen in the coin of the lord, the King Sultan Abdul Aziz, may God protect him . . . they agreed among themselves that all the conditions of this *ketubah* shall be in accordance with the edicts and agreements of our congregation, may the Almighty God guard it. Everything is exact, clear, and established.

Signatures: Mattathias Moshe David, Samuel Isaac.

Postscript added the next day:

Before us the witnesses signed below certify that the groom found the bride pure and modest as is the custom with all the daughters of Israel. May it be the will of our Father who art in heaven that they see children and have a long life, and that in their days and ours the redeemer will come and redeem us speedily and soon. May it be the will of God. Everything is exact, clear, and established.

Signatures: Mattathias Moshe David, Yehudah Moshe.

**The witnesses added incorrectly. The total is 2,356 groshen.

late Ottoman Empire; silver spoons; a scroll (*megillah*) in a gold and silver case; a silk prayer shawl (*taleth*); a velvet bag for the prayer shawl embroidered with gold thread; a gold watch; a silver cigarette case; and the bride's trousseau. Upper class parents also gave much more in cash, as well as in linens, household goods, and furniture, since money for this class was not a serious problem.

The middle class (second step, *défteri skála*) generally gave forty to fifty napoleons; a gold and silver encased scroll; silver teaspoons; a prayer shawl and its bag; a large copper water jug; a large copper baking pan; a copper cauldron; and the bride's trousseau.

The lower class (third step, *tríti skála*) was not expected to give money to the groom, although many families scraped together whatever money they could spare in order to be more generous. They had to give a scroll (*megillah*) in a silver case, a large copper water jug, a copper baking pan, a copper cauldron, a prayer shawl (*taleth*) and its bag, and the bride's trousseau.

When the arrangements were completed to the satisfaction of both sets of parents, the ketubah, which the groom would sign, was drawn up. In Ioannina, the ketubah was written in Aramaic except for the first two sentences and the itemized list of the trousseau, which were in Hebrew. The dates of the creation of the world and the destruction of the Second Temple were included. The bride's virginity was noted; also that she was to serve her husband in purity.

All the items in the dowry, jewels, wearing apparel, household furnishings, and cash were listed and the total value given. The sum the groom pledged to add to his bride's dowry was written down, as were his responsibility for all that he had received from his bride and his pledge to donate two percent of the dowry to the society which provided dowries for poor girls. If a young man broke his engagement without justification he had to pay a fine to the community because a broken engagement harmed a girl's reputation.

According to Jewish Law, when a wife dies, her dowry is returned to her family. An exception to this has come down to us in a *responsum* concerning a decree passed in Ioannina in 1539. It was renewed in 1585 and again in 1630. It states,

> With respect to the inheritance of a woman, if the wife dies before the husband and leaves a son, then the husband does not inherit whatever the wife leaves; everything goes to the son. However, if the husband has need of his wife's fortune in order to exist and if he is a good man, no one can take his wife's fortune away from him, but, if the son is a minor, the father is obliged to give him the amount of the marriage contract without the *tosefoth*.[9]

The *tosefoth* was an additional amount sometimes added to the

dowry by the husband in a special clause, written in Aramaic, in the marriage contract.[10] It was signed by two witnesses and assumes the validity of the rest of the contract.[11]

The marriage contract was a source of security for the woman; it discouraged husbands from rashly seeking divorces. If the wife were blameless, the dowry was returned to her. If the husband died, the dowry remained the property of the wife and children.

The betrothal was known as Going Up (*anévasma*). The term "going up" signified the elevation of the bride-to-be from the lower social status of girlhood. It was celebrated by the girl's parents welcoming the groom's family into their own. Gifts were exchanged. The girl's parents usually gave the groom-to-be a gold ring or a gold watch. The groom's family had many gifts for the bride: bracelets, a gold chain, a gold watch to hang around her neck, five lira gold pieces the size of a US silver dollar, and various small Ottoman gold coins (*doúpies* and *machamoudiédes*) which the bride set aside until she had enough to make a necklace. The betrothal period usually lasted a year; both families needed at least that long to prepare for the wedding. On the whole, the girl's parents preferred a short betrothal period so they could avoid some of the expenses needed to entertain their future in-laws. Sometimes, however, engagements lasted three to four years, especially if it was difficult for the girl's parents to raise the amount of the dowry stipulated in the marriage contract.

From what my mother told me, up to the start of this century, a girl seldom saw her husband before her wedding day. A Greek Christian woman from Ioannina told me that as late as 1910, a young man who had been betrothed occasionally stole out to catch a glimpse of the girl his parents had selected for him to marry. He never visited his fiancée during their betrothal period. As the century progressed this strict separation was somewhat muted, but not much. Up to World War II it was still unheard of for a betrothed couple to go out together unchaperoned. The young man could visit the home of his fiancée about once a week, but always when her parents were present. If the couple went out, they left accompanied by her parents, if not her whole family.

The parents waited until the girl had her menstrual period for the month before setting the wedding date. If she were late in having her period, her parents said that people were jealous of the bride. From the day the wedding was set until the actual wedding ceremony, the fiancé did not see his future bride. Once the wedding date was set, the parents of both the bride and the groom would take a large handkerchief or a sash about two inches wide from each, measure them about the waist of each, knot the two handkerchiefs together, and hide them carefully until the wedding day. The knot magic, as this custom was known, goes back to antiquity. The

Ioannina Jews believed that the act of tying the knot "bound" the two young people, casting a spell which would protect them from the evil eye of anyone who might try to prevent the marriage from taking place.

The bridal gown usually was a brightly colored dress of fine silk made by a dressmaker at the home of the bride. The bride wore no veil; instead, she wore a colored kerchief bordered with sequins and small Ottoman gold coins around her hair. The white dress and the veil were introduced in Ioannina after the turn of the century.

Long before the wedding ceremony, the bride's parents purchased the sheep's wool for the couple's mattresses. When the weather permitted, the bride's parents rented one or more rowboats, and the mother, along with friends and relatives, rowed across the Ioannina lake to the opposite shore to watch the washing of the wool. The bride did not go on this full day outing. The bride's parents hired a man to boil the wool in a copper cauldron until it was clean of sheep's blood. The mother of the bride supplied cakes and sweets for all who went along; she also hired violinists. This was another costly ceremony for the girl's parents to finance. Friends and relatives threw money and gold coins into the cauldron. After the wool was washed and dried at the lakeside, it was kept at home until two weeks before the wedding. The washing of the wool is also a custom of the Greek Christians in Ioannina.

All Jewish religious ceremonies in Ioannina were held during the first fifteen days of the month before the moon was full, referred to popularly as *yoms* (from the Greek γεμάτο, meaning full). This was considered the appropriate period for betrothals, marriages, washing the wool for the newlyweds' mattresses, and cutting the material for the bridal gown. No ceremonies were performed during the last fifteen days of the month, known as *has* (from the Greek verb χάνω, to lose), when there was a waning moon. In ancient Greece, also, the time of the waning moon was not chosen for marriage ceremonies.[12]

Furthermore, there were several periods when no marriages were performed. No marriages were performed from the first to the tenth of the month of Av; between Pesach and Shavuoth, except for the day of Lag b'Omer. Many marriage ceremonies were performed during Sukkoth, especially on the eve of Sukkoth. They could also be performed during the six day period of Rosh Hodesh in the month of Sivan.

Two weeks before the wedding, the groom sent a shoemaker to the bride's home to measure her feet for her wedding shoes. This custom, practiced among the Sephardim in Palestine, was a sign to the community that the wedding date had been set.[13] At about this time as well, a mattress maker was called to stuff the mattresses. He also filled the quilts with cotton.

On the last Sabbath before the wedding, the groom was called to



Dowry display, ca. 1905

The Jewish Museum of Greece

the *teva* to say the blessing on the Torah Scroll, thanking God for making it possible for him to marry. In the afternoon of the same day, the bride's girl friends gave her a party, known as "girl gathering" (*koritsomázoma*), similar to our bridal showers. Music lasted all through the night; the girls danced and sang Greek love songs. Boys hung around outside, watching the girls come in and out. It was a chance for them to see the girls and perhaps influence their parents about the girl they hoped would be chosen for them.

On the Wednesday before the wedding, the bride's trousseau was displayed in her living room. Two prominent heads of the community went to the bride's home to appraise the trousseau, to verify that its value was as stipulated in the marriage contract. Afterwards, friends and relatives were invited to see the trousseau, displayed on lines hung across the room or attractively placed on tables. When it was time for the personal belongings of the bride to be packed, friends and relatives threw gold coins, rice, and Jordan almonds into the chest. In the afternoon the trousseau was carried to the home of the groom, where the bride would be living with her husband's family. The trousseau was carried by hired porters, with violins leading the procession. Young boys, both of whose parents were still living, carried such items as embroidered sheets, pillow cases, and towels spread out on their arms, so that all who saw them as they passed would marvel at the fine work done by the bride. Porters were hired to carry the furniture on their backs. Sponge cake (known both as *zaharópsomo* and Bread of Spain (*pain de spáni*), provided by the bride's mother, was served when the trousseau arrived at the groom's home. The bride's mother also sent sweets, nuts, bread, baklava, and marzipan. Also on this day the lamb was purchased for the wedding feast. At the wedding I attended in Ioannina in 1934, the butcher carried the whole slaughtered lamb on his back from his butcher shop in the center of town a considerable distance to the groom's house. The groom's mother, relatives, friends, and hired help all helped to prepare the feast.

On Thursday, the day before the wedding, the bride's parents delivered the money agreed to in the marriage contract to the groom. The money was placed in a large handkerchief and covered with confetti. Witnesses went along to verify that the money had been delivered and they signed the marriage contract. The witnesses did not sign with surnames, but with patronymics, some of which went back three generations. On Thursday evening the groom invited his male friends and relatives from both families to have their hair cut at his expense. The barber went to the groom's house where they all met. From this custom came the saying, "The groom gets his hair cut last" (*sta sterná ksorízoune to gambró*), possibly because he had to make certain that he had enough money to pay for all.

As for the bride, on Thursday evening the bride was escorted by

women relatives and friends to the *mikva*, the ritual bath, to take the *tevilah kesherah* (literally, the ablution to become pure). In the last century, the *mikva* in Ioannina was constructed according to rabbinical requirements in a basement below the synagogue courtyard. The ritual bath was also a custom of the ancient Greeks. In the so-called tenth letter of Aeschines, an orator who lived in the 4th century B.C.E., we read, "in the district of Troas it is the custom for brides to go to the Scamander and bathe in it and utter the words sanctified by tradition: Take, oh Scamander, my virginity.'"[14]

After her ritual bath, when the bride was dressed and ready to leave, her companions saw to it that a little boy stood outside so that he would be the first person she would see other than her companions after her ritual bath. This was regarded as an omen for the bride to give birth to sons. If, as she came out, she first set eyes on a cat or a dog, she had to go through the ritual bath all over again.

There were no written wedding invitations; somebody was hired to go from house to house to invite each family to the wedding feast. He wore a red striped apron (*foutás*) to identify him with the wedding as he made his rounds. If the family neglected to invite someone who expected to be invited, they could always blame it on the person who had been sent to do the inviting.

Generally, the ceremony was performed in the courtyard of the New Synagogue (*Kahal Kadosh Hadash*) outside the walled city early on Friday afternoon. The guests of the bride and the guests of the groom gathered separately. Friends reminded both sets of parents to loosen the hidden magic knot. "Have you unknotted the bride?" they whispered, "Have you unknotted the groom?" The magic knot was then untied, for there was no longer any fear that the evil eye could prevent the marriage.

The bride's family escorted the groom from his home to the synagogue. Violins, paid for by the bride's parents, accompanied them. The bride's family, with the best man, entered the synagogue, but the groom remained outside. The groom's family then went to the bride's house to escort her to the synagogue, accompanied by the same violins. When the bride emerged from her house, people threw rice and, gently, Jordan almonds and coins at her. Boys were encouraged to gather around the bride, as a good omen for her to give birth to sons. As the bride approached the synagogue, the boys would shout, "The bride is coming, groom, give!" The groom and best men then went to the outer door of the synagogue courtyard to receive the bride. The groom threw coins on the ground for which the boys scrambled. All members of the congregation attended the wedding ceremony at the synagogue.

In my mother's day, the Ioannina Jews used the prayer shawl as a wedding canopy held *over* the heads of the couple by two people standing on either side of the bride and groom. In more recent times,

the wedding canopy is placed *on* the heads of the bride and groom.

During the ceremony, the best man and his wife stood next to the bride and groom and the parents stood behind. The best man and his wife had an honored position because they were in charge of the wedding reception. Attached to the rabbi's belt was a covered inkwell (*kalamári*) set on a narrow strip of wood containing a pen. The inkwell was filled with a special ink for signing the marriage contract. After the customary hymns and after the groom had placed the ring on the bride's right hand, the rabbi read the marriage contract. This was followed by the Seven Blessings, at the conclusion of which the groom broke the glass, a custom derived from the Talmud. Right after breaking the glass, the groom recited the passage from the Bible which begins "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning" (Ps. 137,5). Two members of the congregation who had witnessed the ceremony and who were not related to the bride or groom signed the marriage contract.

The whole congregation then went in procession to the groom's house, again accompanied by violins. Heading the procession was the cook, hired for the wedding week, who carried a small chest on top of her head. The chest was supposed to contain the bride's jewels, but often it was empty. On Friday evening the groom went to the Sabbath eve service, after which the two families dined together and sang songs to the bride and groom. The marriage was not consummated that night. That night, the wedding night, the bride slept with her mother in one room and the groom slept with some member of his family in another room. In Ioannina, marriages were not consummated during Sabbath.

The Sabbath morning service in the synagogue the day after the wedding ceremony was especially important for the newlyweds. The rabbi and friends went to the groom's house to escort him to the synagogue. The groom sat near the Ark in a special seat and leaned on a pillow embroidered in gold. About half an hour later, a delegation of women friends and relatives escorted the bride to the synagogue. The entire congregation chanted repeatedly, "Come, come, come, groom to the front" (*Yale, yale, yale Hatan Larosh*). As the groom carried the Torah Scroll to the *teva*, the members of the congregation threw rice and Jordan almonds at the *teva*. At the *teva*, the groom read one passage from the Torah in Hebrew and the cantor repeated it in Aramaic. After reading, he returned to his seat near the Ark with the Torah Scroll, which he held until all the friends and relatives (*aliyoth*) he had invited to the *teva* to read the Torah had finished. The congregation sang, "On the wedding day, the day of joy in his heart" (*Be yom hatunate uvyom simhat lebo*). This song, from the Song of Songs, was sung at Jewish weddings in antiquity.[15] At some time during the service, every member of the congregation greeted the groom personally.

After the service, relatives and friends escorted the groom to the courtyard, chanting, "For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace" (55:12). Directly after the service, the bride's family gave a breakfast to the groom and his family. At noon, the newlyweds distributed food to the poor members of the Jewish community. The wedding feast was celebrated after sundown that night. Greek music accompanied the feast and Greek dances and songs lasted all through the night.

The marriage was consummated that night. After it was consummated, because the bride was considered impure according to Talmudic law, the mother of the bride took her daughter away from the groom and the two women slept together. The mother was particularly concerned to see that the bride's undergarments were stained with hymeneal blood, proof of the girl's virginity. If there were no such proof, the groom could sue for divorce. The bride's mother guarded this proof carefully to show the groom's parents and the rabbi. After the witnesses saw the stained garment, they signed the marriage contract. The bride then kissed the hands of both her mother-in-law and her father-in-law. The marriage contract was kept by the girl's parents. On the seventh day after the consummation of the marriage, the bride took another ritual bath in the *mikva.* Blessings were offered by the attending women for the bride to have many children, especially sons.

The wedding week in Ioannina was observed in the tradition of Jewish Law which states, "One who weds a virgin should rejoice with her seven days, which are called The Seven Days of the Feast. During these days the groom does no work nor engages in buying and selling in the marketplace, but he eats and drinks and rejoices with her."[16] Throughout the wedding week, the groom went to the synagogue every day, escorted by relatives and friends. At home, relatives and friends sang Greek demotic nuptial songs to the young couple.

During this week, the bride and groom, with their steady stream of guests, played *zária*, a game of dice which was very popular with the women. In this game, three dice are tossed into a large copper pan. One of the dice had to show a five for the player to enter the game. If no five appeared, the player had to toss the dice until a five did appear. When it did, the sum of the numbers on the other two dice had to be topped by the next player in order to beat him. Three of a kind, called *fáklah*, won. Visitors were served sponge cake, *rakí* and various sweets, in particular *fnáro*, made of eggs, honey, and sugar boiled together to a delectable consistency and garnished with blanched almonds.

The newlyweds set aside one night of the wedding week to give a dinner in honor of the best man and his wife. On Tuesday, the bride cleaned the rice, her first chore as a housewife. Friends and relatives

threw gold coins into the rice. On Thursday night, a large bowl of flour was set before the bride for her to make the dough for the bread she would bake for the first time as a married woman. An egg was added to this dough so her house would be as full as the egg. Wine was added as a blessing and sugar, so the bride would be sweet. As she kneaded the dough, the groom's family and other friends and relatives threw coins into the dough. When the kneading was done, the bride's mother-in-law hid. The bride had to call her "Mother," loud and clear, before all the others, and request her to bring the cloth to cover the dough while rising. This ceremony was performed in the evening, so the male members of the family could be present. Traditionally, it was assumed that the mother-in-law would be hard to get along with. Friends and relatives teased the bride, saying "She did not say it," whereupon the bride had to call "Mother" even louder than before. Then the mother-in-law entered the room with the cloth on her arm and covered the dough. The bride would bake the bread in their oven the next day.

In Ioannina, the man of the house did the shopping, and on Friday of the wedding week the groom went out to do so. He returned with a live fish, which he tossed at his wife's feet so that she would be as afraid of him as she was of the fish wriggling at her feet. This was done with a good deal of laughter. During the Sabbath morning service, the groom was called to the *teva* for the third time, this time as a married man. This is the formal ending of the wedding week.

Most of these customs are no longer observed in Ioannina. Although there were 1,950 Jews living in Ioannina before World War II, only about sixty-five are living there today. The New Synagogue, outside the city walls, was completely destroyed by the Nazis. Now most of the Jewish parents in Ioannina send their sons and daughters to Israel for both higher education and to find Jewish mates. But for even those few Ioannina Jews who find Jewish mates in Ioannina or in any of the other fifteen Jewish communities in Greece, the betrothal and marriage customs have been modernized to fit the times.

1. Euripides (Frag. 24 TPG Nauck) cited by Hans Licht, *Sexual Life in Ancient Greece* (London, 1971), 42.
2. Philip Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts*, (rev. ed. New York, 1975), 427.
3. Rabbi Samuel De Medina, *Even Ha Ezer*, paragraph 50.
4. Rabbi Shemuel Kalai, *Mishpatah Samuel*, paragraph 68.
5. Rabbi Isaac Samuel Adarbi, *Divrat Ribot* (Polemics), paragraph 330.
6. De Medina, paragraph 220.
7. Rabbi Kalai, paragraph 83 and De Medina, paragraph 50.
8. D. Sarros, "Fixing of the Dowry in 1845 in Zagori" in *Epeirotika Chronika* (Greek), 300.
9. Rabbi Moses Ben Solomon Amarillo, *Devar Moshe*, Vol. 1, *Evan Ha Ezer*, 7.
10. Michael Molho, *Usos y Custumbro de los Sefardies de Salonica* (Madrid, 1950), 18, 21-22.
11. Birnbaum, 299.
12. Euripides, 42.
13. Hayyim Schauss, *The Lifetime of a Jew* (Cincinnati, 1950), 199.
14. Licht, 43.
15. Solomon Ganzfried, *Code of Jewish Law*, Vol. 4, 13.
16. Schauss, 133.

Philanthropic Societies

The Ioannina community founded an impressive list of philanthropic societies; the Ioannina Jews looked after their own. Most served without payment in a number of charitable societies, and school children were taught to help the poor by having them drop a five drachma coin in the synagogue Poor Box once a week.

Meals for the Poor (*Aruhath Aniyim*) supplied school lunches throughout the school year. After the Alliance Israelite Universelle opened for both boys and girls in 1904, girls also received these meals. Supporting the Needy (*Matanoth Laevionim*, a title taken from the Book of Esther) provided each boy with a new suit at Passover. Girls were supplied with the black smock uniform worn at the Alliance.

Charity (*Tsedeka*) was founded by Mordechai Sabethai Coffina (1864-1942) to provide food and money for the poor. Coffina, who lived inside the city walls but ran a large store of ladies apparel outside the city walls, also founded Visits to the Sick (*Bikkur Holim*), which provided medical help to the poor. For fifty years, up until the Holocaust, Coffina ran Visits to the Sick, and in his daily morning prayer he included the question, "Who is sick?" He was nicknamed Mordechai Birur, from the Hebrew word for "pure." He himself visited the sick, bringing food, medicine, and doctors. Visits to the Sick also assumed the responsibility of placing orphan children in foster homes. Money was raised each Friday for the society by two men selected by the synagogue committee (the *parnas* and the *gabbai*) going from store to store collecting donations. The amount collected and the names of those who had collected the money were announced in the synagogue Saturday morning.

The organization which provided the greatest economic support was Dowries for Poor and Orphan Girls (*Hevra Nosse Yetumoth*). Part of the money for this society came from all grooms, usually one percent of the dowry money they had just received. Funds were also raised by store to store solicitations for individual girls whose names were not revealed. Occasionally, American relatives would come to the rescue of some poor girl and supply her family with the money requested by the groom's parents.

Salvation and Pity (*Yeshuah Verahamin*) provided maternity assistance and a convalescent home for young mothers. The Society for Hostages (*Pidyon Shevuyim*) ransomed captives held by bandits. Secret Donations (*Matan Bassether*) helped the wealthy who suddenly encountered financial difficulties; their names were kept secret.

The Old Age Home (*Misgav Ladakh*) was founded in 1931 near the lake shore. In the following year its name was changed to the Home of Yeshua and Rachel (*Beth Yeshua ve Rahel*) after Joshua

Jacob (Behor Yeshua Solomon Yaakov) donated $ 10,000 to the home. For many years a manufacturer of ladies clothes in New York, he and his wife, Rachel, returned to live in the city of their birth. He and his wife lived frugally in their home at 19 Kountouriotou Street so they could continue to help the old age home. They were arrested with the rest of the Ioannina Jewish community on March 25, 1944 and died at Auschwitz. There was no school for training rabbis in Ioannina, and Joshua Jacob had wanted such a school to be established in his home after he died. The building in which the old age home was housed still exists, but there are no elderly residents in it. It is rented by the Ministry of Finance and the rent is paid to the Ioannina Jewish community.

Wheat for Pesach (*Hitah de Piskha*) helped members of the community to meet their obligations during the holidays such as Passover by distributing wine and matzoth.

Welcoming of Travellers (*Ahnassat Or'him*) was established in 1924 to help Jewish visitors to Ioannina, mainly by inviting them to homes where kosher food was served.

The *Hevra Talmud Torah*, an educational association, originally was an independent society; later it was taken over by the whole community for the payment of teachers.

The Zionist Society (*Hevra Amale Zion*) was founded in 1918 to raise funds for Israel. The society was run by Dr. Nissim Levy with the assistance of his niece, Annette Levy, both of whom died in Birkenau. The Ioannina Jews sent money to plant trees in Herzl Forest in Jerusalem.

In the early 1930's Leon Battino, who taught French at the Alliance, founded the Society of Mutual Aid (*Hevra Aniyim*). Leon Battino, along with Joseph Eliyia and the teacher Moishe Matsas, were among the first to advocate liberal ideas in Ioannina. The society's purpose was to decide how the extremely conservative community allocated funds collected for the poor. This society continued to function even during the years of the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1940) when all charitable organizations, regardless of religious affiliation, were forced to close.

The Young Israelite Club (*Israelitikí Léschi*), which had a library and held its meetings on the floor above Levy's drugstore on Kollari Street, was founded in 1932. The club was started by men, but soon women were invited. It was a social, intellectual and, above all, modern organization. One purpose of the club was to invite speakers to discuss issues of the day.

In Ioannina it was customary for the municipality to elect a congress every four years. The Jewish community of Ioannina was entitled to elect a twenty-member Board of Directors, responsible

for the political and economic relations between the Jewish community and the government. Generally, the board members were selected from the more affluent and respected members of the community. Five members of this board were chosen to constitute the Jewish Council, which represented the community in the local government. The president of the council sat in on local government meetings dealing with religious matters affecting the Jews. The council included the Chief Rabbi, who was authorized to allot the taxes in the community. The seal of the Chief Rabbi was recognized by the government. Five other members of the board of directors constituted the Religious Council, which was concerned with the social, economic, and religious needs of all members of the Ioannina Jewish community, both individually and communally. The Religious Council, in turn, appointed the, usually, five members of the Jewish Court of Justice (*Beth Din*), which decided all religious matters and disputes between members of the community.

During the Nazi occupation there were only five members of the Board of Directors, and these same five men were the members of the Ioannina Jewish Council: Dr. Moses Coffina, president; Sabethai Cabilli, vice president; Joseph Marcados, treasurer; Shemo Cohen; Dr. Errikos Levy.

Names of the Ioannina Jews

Probably nothing in the history of the Jewish Diaspora offers a more fascinating source of information about the origin, occupation, physical characteristics, and character traits of an individual Jew than his given name, his surname, and his nickname.

Male Given Names

The Romaniotes of Ioannina, like the Sephardim and unlike the Ashkenazim, name their children after living ancestors as well as those deceased. This is to make certain that the names of parents and grandparents be perpetuated. Longevity is not uncommon in the Ioannina community, so a son or daughter may pass child-bearing age while his or her parents are still alive. If children are not named after living grandparents, the names might not be perpetuated. This is also the Greek Christian practice.

As among orthodox Jews everywhere, the pattern for naming children generally is the same for both boys and girls. The first born son is named after his paternal grandfather, the second son after his maternal grandfather. The third son is named after his paternal uncle, the fourth son after his maternal uncle. The same order is applied for girls' names; the first daughter is named after her father's mother.

In some instances, however, Hebrew given names are not necessarily those of relatives, living or deceased. As Moissis points out, a son born during the month of Nisan (March - April), the month of miracles, is often named Nissim, which is the plural of *nes*, meaning miracle. If he is born during Purim he is generally given the name Mordechai; if a girl is born during Purim she is named Esther. The name Menachem (one who consoles) is often given to a boy born during the first nine days of the month of Av (July - August) to commemorate the period of mourning for the second destruction of the Temple of Solomon.[1] When a son is born after another happy family event, he may be named Simantov, meaning the lucky one. If a girl is born she may be named Matzaltov (good luck).

In some cases, if a son has survived a serious illness, the name given him at the circumcision ceremony is changed to Hayyim (Life) or Raphael (one who had been cured by God). This is done by a quorum of ten men offering a special prayer of thanks for sparing his life. The boy who has recovered is now considered another person.

In cases where a barren married woman finally gives birth to a son, the child is named Rahamim, meaning a son born of God's mercy.[2] If a woman, after many years of marriage, gives birth to her first son on Lag b'Omer, she "vows" to name her son Simon, after Simeon ben Yohai, a famous halakhist (interpreter of Jewish oral law) in the second century C.E.[3]

Whether the male given names celebrate events or holidays or perpetuate the names of forebears, it is the tradition of Ioannina Jews to give their sons Hebrew names. This is so both because the son is formally named at the ceremony of circumcision, performed in Hebrew, and because the parents hope that one day their son will be called to the readers' desk to read the Torah.

Only two Greek male names are listed in Matsa's compilation of Jewish names in Ioannina: Zois, meaning life, and Rizos, meaning rooted, or fixed.[4] What is unusual is that when these men were called to read from the Torah, they were addressed by their Greek names.

The name Shemo, known in Epirus and Corfu as far back as 1585, has an Italian ending. It is interesting to note that the Ioannina rabbis of old did not associate this name with Shemuel.[5]

It was customary for families with an only son to give him a pet name. Sabethai Cabilli, a prominent member of the community before World War II, came to be called Hyèrli rather than Sabethai, his Hebrew name. Hyerli is a Turkish word meaning good luck.

Male Hebrew names in Ioannina are often Hellenized to fit the spoken idiom, sometimes so radically that it is difficult to identify the Hebrew original. Some of the differences in spelling and pronunciation may be caused by the variants of northern speech in Epirus. For example, Aáron becomes Arón, Aronákis, Arós, Harós, Nákias. Avraám is transformed to Avrám, Avramákis, Avrámis, Avramís, Avramíkos, Avramoúlis, Avramoúlias, or the diminutives of this name, Moúlis, Moúlias, Míkos, Bámos, or Match. Match is the shortened form of Avromátch, which is how Avramákis is pronounced in Ioannina.[6] The endings "akis" and "atch" are added as terms of endearments. "Oulis" and "oulias" are diminutives.

Behór, which in Hebrew means first born son, is sometimes adopted as a given name and becomes Behoráki, Hor, or Behoratchoúli. The name Behorópoulos, meaning son of the first born son, with the final Greek ending "poulos," was adopted in Ioannina as a surname. In those cases where the title "behor" is not used, the boy is known by the name given to him at circumcision. On the day before Passover, all "behorim" are obliged to fast in commemoration of the day when the Egyptian first born sons were killed and the Jewish "behorim" were spared.

In Ioannina, David becomes Dav'dzón, Dzon, Davís, Dávos, Davópoulos, Davoúlias, Tchon, or Tchónias. Gavriél becomes Gavriíl, Gavrél, and Gavrilídes, which is adopted as a surname. In Greek, the ending "ídis" means "the son of."

My father's name was Israel, which my mother pronounced Yisrél or Yistrél. However, in Ioannina Israel may also become Yisraél, Télkos, or Télia. My mother's elder brother was named Jeoudhá. In Ioannina the name Jeoudhá was also rendered Yeoudákis, Yeoudoúlis, Yioudás, Yioúls, Gioúlis, or Gioúlias. My younger

brother was named Yesoulá, a name unknown to the Ashkenazim, which may be related to the name Yehoshua. We referred to him as Youslás, but other variations of the name in Ioannina are Las, Yousoúls, Yousioúls, and Giousoúls.

During the years of Ottoman rule, some Jewish boys were named Bíros. "Bir" is an Albanian word meaning son; the "o" is a diminutive.

Some male Hebrew names recently have been modernized. Avraám is now rendered Albértos. Hayyím has been changed to Victor. Yeshouáh has been changed to Salvatór. Yiakóv is now Jack. Jeoudá has become Leon.

Female Given Names

Many Ioannina girls are still given Hebrew first names. Most familiar are Ráchel, Esther, Sára, Hánnah, Simhá, Háva (also Havoúla), Rivká, and Tová. As with boys' given names, some of these have been Hellenized to fit the spoken idiom. My mother's name was Esther, Estír, but her siblings called her Ster, or Steroúla. My six maternal aunts were known to us as children by one or two variations of their names. My aunt Dina was called D'noúla. Another aunt was called Malkoúla, although in Ioannina girls with the same name are called Malká, Koúla, and Málko. My aunt Simhá was called Símhou. Another aunt was called Matzálou, which in Ioannina could become Matzaltóv, Mazaltó, or Tzoúla. My mother usually spoke of one of her younger sisters as Hanoúla, although the name may become Hánnah, Hanéshou, Hána, Anna, or Annéta. My mother called another of my aunts Réfkou or Réfkoula, but the name could also be rendered Revékka, Rífka, or Rívka. My sister Simhá was usually known as Símhou, although we called a paternal aunt with the same name only Aunt Simhoúla. My own name, Rachel, can be rendered Rahél, Rahíl, and Rahelína, the feminine *ina* diminutive ending added as a term of endearment.

Not all Ioannina Jewish girls were given Hebrew names. Some of them had Greek names. As Matsa points out, "in olden times, rabbis approved of Greek names for girls, providing these were translations of biblical or historical names. No Christian or Turkish names were sanctioned."[7] One girl's given name in his compilation is Sultána, from the Turkish, but this is an exception.[8]

Some of the Greek names were literal translations from Hebrew: Matzaltóv became Eftychía, Efthymía, or Kalomoíra, all of which mean good luck in Greek. We also encounter some old Greek names commonly used during the Byzantine Empire. Examples of these are Archónto (notable), Archontopoúla (daughter of a distinguished family), Chrysoúla (Golda), Polychróno (long life). Kyrá (lady), Kaloríni (good peace), and Miliá (apple tree) are others. Rízo is the feminine counterpart of Rízos, explained above. According to

Matsa, the name Stámo, meaning to stop, and Pérna, meaning to pass, are Greek names created to change an existing situation. In the case of Stámo, it appears that the mother hoped this baby girl would be the last of her many daughters and enable her to start giving birth to sons. Similarly, the name Pérna was given to a baby girl with the hope that this girl would help her mother "pass over" giving birth to girls and start giving birth to boys.[9]

The names Clára, Flóra, Fortúna, Falcóna, Fína, Grátsia, Rozína, and Róza can be either of Spanish or Italian origin.[10] Bímbo (child), Rigína (queen), and Tzoía (joy) are of Italian origin. Speránza (hope), Delícia (delight), and Diamánta (diamond) are of Spanish origin. Some Ioannina Jews are descended from Jews who emigrated from southern Italy. Although many of the Sephardim who settled in Greece did so in Thessaloniki and other Macedonian cities, a few remained in Ioannina and assimilated with the Romaniote Jews there. Nevertheless, they continued to give their children Sephardic names, offering us a clue as to their origin.

In the municipality register Matsa discovered some modern non-Greek names used by Jews in Ioannina. Élda, Joúli, Jeanétte, Jerusalím, Nélly, Leontína, Sándra, Sýlvia, Stélla, Mathílda, and Yiaphoúla.[11] Rebecca has now become Erriétta. Esther has become Roúla (from Estheroúla). The Hebrew Léah is now Louísa. Míriam is now Máry, Mirétta, or Miránda.[12]

Married women were generally addressed by their husband's first name with an added feminine ending. My mother was known as Yistrélina, which was the dialectal pronunciation of my father's name, Israel, with the feminine ending *ina*. She spoke of the wife of Behór as Behóra or Behórova. She addressed as Bélova a neighbor whose husband's first name was Béllo. The *a* and *ova* are Slav feminine endings for married women added to their husbands' given names.[13] The wife of Dr. Coffina, the last president of the Jewish council before the Holocaust, was called Coffínova. In her case, the feminine ending *ova* was added to their surname instead of her spouse's given name, probably to show her greater respect.

Surnames

At the beginning of the century, the only family names generally in use in the Ioannina Jewish community were Kohen and Levi. The name Kohen was originally given to the priests who were descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses. Levi was the son of Jacob. His name came to be used to identify the "Levites" who assisted the Kohanim in the Temple. For first names, Ioannina Jews were given the first names of their grandparents. For surnames, they were given a patronymic. For example, a man whose first name was Hayyím named his son Isaac, after the child's paternal grandfather. The son's full name became Isaac ben Hayyím, meaning Isaac the son of

Hayyím. If Hayyím had a daughter named Hannah, she would be known as Hannah bath Hayyím. When Isaac married and had a son, he, in turn, named the child Hayyím, whose full name became Hayyím ben Isaac. In some cases, the "ben" or "bar" (both meaning "son of") has been joined to the name to make a new surname, i .e., Benézra or Benzión.

Several Ioannina Jews have the same first and last names, such as Joseph Josephs, Isaac Isaacs, Ezra Ezra, and David David. This is probably because there are few family names among the Ioannina Jewish community. In some instances this occurred because, if a man died leaving his wife pregnant, the son would be given the deceased's father first name for both his first name and his surname.[14]

Rabbis in Ioannina were addressed by the title "Ahám," which is how the Ioannina Jews pronounce the Hebrew *haham*, meaning "sage." The word is commonly understood in Ioannina to mean "rabbi." The pronunciation *ahám* probably is the result of the Sephardic pronunciation, which drops the "h." Well known in Ioannina until the Holocaust were Ahám Avraám, Ahám Yesoulá, Ahám Yitsháq, Ahám Michael, and Ahám Dávos. They were not known by any other name.

The official register of the New Synagogue for the years 1880-1910 shows that two-thirds of the community already had surnames. The remaining one-third had patronymics, some of which could be traced back to the sixteenth century.[15] Surnames not derived from patronymics reveal a patchwork quilt pattern of origins, from many parts of Greece and from many other countries.

Surnames Originating in Other Lands. A number of Jewish surnames in Ioannina indicate Italian origin. Examples of these are Arkátos, Bacólas, Bellélis, Carráras, Cantós, Dóstis, Kalamáras, Kalónymos, and Mátsas. The name Bellélis was made famous by Lazarus Belléli, a polyglot philologist and writer born in Corfu in 1862.[16] Mátsas is the name of a city in lower Italy. Kalónymos is the name of a family originally from Lucca, Italy, which took a leading part for many generations in the development of Jewish learning in Germany.[17]

Many surnames among the Ioannina Jewish community are Spanish in origin. Albála probably comes from Albalag, with the *g* dropped.[18] Alcalaí, from Alcala, is the name of a prominent family of writers and translators in the late 18th and 19th centuries.[19] The name Kamónto recalls the name Comando, a prominent Jewish family of financiers and philanthropists of Spanish-Portuguese origin during the Ottoman Empire.[20]

Other names of Spanish origin in Ioannina are Confíno, from the Spanish *con fino*, meaning delicate or refined; Nahmías, a well-known Sephardic name which traces its origins to one of the most

ancient and prominent families of Toledo;[21] Negrín (black); Sarétas; Vidál (life); Merkádo (to pay ransom); and Roússo (red). The name Ashkenázi, associated with the German and French Jews of the medieval period, was the name of a Sephardi who had settled in Ioannina and assimilated with the Romaniote community.[22]

The name Tepelénis is of Albanian origin. The name Políts, common among Greek Christians as well as among the Ioannina Jews, usually is taken to indicate that the family came either from Constantinople or Adrianople, the Ottoman capital in Europe before Constantinople. *Polis* means city in Greek, and is generally used for Constantinople, the city *par excellence*.[23] However, the name Políts can simply derive from a man making repeated trips to Constantinople for business. Moissis states that the name Cabillí, well known in Ioannina, is related to Kabylia, a region in North Africa.[24]

Surnames of Greek Origin. One Jewish man in Ioannina was known as Kastorianós because he was a native of Kastoria. Another man, Vrahorítis, came to Ioannina from the town of Agrínion, which used to be known as Vrahóri. Vrahóri may have been derived from Evraiohóri, meaning a Jewish village. The name Kapsális comes from the town of the same name on the island of Kythera.[25]

A man who had visited the village of Katsanohória came to be known as Katsanós. Malakákis was the name of a man who had once visited the village of Malakási, near Ioannina. Metsovítis, who lived in Métsovo and came to Ioannina only on holidays, belonged to the Ioannina community because there were only two Jews living in Métsovo. A man named Kamáras lived in the neighborhood of Kamáras in Ioannina. Salaóras came from the village of Salaóra near Arta.

Surnames of Turkish Origin. Some surnames are derived from Turkish words. Hatzí, a Turkish word meaning pilgrim, was adopted as a surname by both Jews and Christians who had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Hatzópoulos, with the Greek ending *poúlos*, meaning "the son of," inherited the surname of a forebear who had been to Jerusalem. Hakím, another Jewish surname in Ioannina, comes from the Turkish word for ruler, governor, or judge. Kaplán, a Turkish word meaning tiger, is also a well-known Ashkenazi name.

Surnames of Hebrew Origin. A number of family names in Ioannina are of Hebrew origin. The name Abdala is the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew Obadiah.[26] It may also come from the word *havdalah*, indicating the end of Sabbath. Nahoúm (full of comfort), Nissím (plural of the Hebrew *nes*, meaning miracle), and

Matsíl (to save) were first names which became surnames. Sadók is from Zadók, meaning of priestly descent[27]; Háfetz (something desired) is also the name of a famous halakhist in the late tenth century.[28] Lel is the shortened form of Shemuel. Paríts is a Hebrew name with a number of meanings: squire, landowner, also violent, wild, cruel. Other names are: Zakár (Heb., male); Goudélia, from Gedaliah (meaning God is great); Yomtóv (holiday); Josaphát, from Jehosephat (God will judge); Johanná, from Johannan (God has been gracious); Shibbóleth or Shibólias (Heb., stacks of wheat); Hasíd (Heb., the pious one).

Nicknames

Despite the separate family names, much confusion resulted from the similarity of Hebrew patronymics, which were used legally as surnames. It became necessary to distinguish between people more distinctly. To meet this need, the Ioannina Jews adopted nicknames, a practice common throughout Greece. In many instances the nicknames were pleasing enough to be adopted as legal surnames. Nicknames derived from occupations, physical characteristics, and character traits.

Occupations. A man named Konduratzís was a shoemaker, from the Turkish word, *kunduraci*, for shoemaker. Joseph Matsa's father was nicknamed Pramateftís, a Greek word meaning tradesman. Another, unrelated, man named Matsa was nicknamed Galatás, meaning a seller of milk, because he ran a dairy. Both these families kept their surname Mátsa, but in the community they were known by their nicknames. The name Lagarís goes back to the polishers (*lagarídes*) of silver in Byzantine Greece. A man who made quilts was nicknamed Paplomatás, the Greek word for quilter. Mayiás must have had something to do with yeast (*mayiá*). The name Dragomános derives from *dragoman*, translator. The Kampanáris family must have had something to do with bells (*kampánes*). A man was nicknamed Plátonas because he ran a store under a plane tree (*plátanos*). The name Dalián, my family name in Ioannina (changed to Dalven in New York), comes from a Turkish word meaning fishnets or fish pond, and my forebears may have had something to do with fishing. Perhaps irrelevantly, Dalián was also the name of a river in southwest Asia Minor, bordering on the Aegean Sea.[29]

Several occupational Hebrew nicknames have been adopted as surnames in Ioannina. A baker was named Babóker, which in Hebrew means "in the morning," because he got up early in the morning to bake. The name Morénou means "our teacher" in Hebrew. Samás, meaning "beadle," and Samasoúlis, meaning "little beadle," are self explanatory. One family was named Patísh, the Hebrew for hammer. When Patísh was called to read the Torah, the rabbi who called him used the Hebrew name Héfetz, his former surname.

Physical Characteristics. Among the Jews of Ioannina, most of the nicknames given because of physical characteristics are Greek. Not all of them were adopted as surnames, but they remain vividly in the memory of Ioannina Jews now settled in New York. In many cases a man is remembered by his nickname, not by his legal surname.

A man dark as an Arab was known as Arápis. Galanós, meaning blue eyed, was my maternal grandmother's maiden surname. Gavomátis, meaning blind, is a blend of Romanian and Greek. Kókkinos, meaning red, a common name among Greek Christians, was adopted as a surname by a Ioannina Jew with bright red hair. The man named Katsíkas, from the Greek meaning goat, may have had a small pointed beard. Phrýdis, from the Greek for eyebrow, had bushy eyebrows. Kútchkos, from the Turkish *kucuk*, meaning small, must have been a very short man. Kapoúlias, from the Greek *kapúlia*, meaning the hindquarters of a mule, was the nickname of the poet Joseph Eliyia's family; no wonder he preferred Eliyia. A man with an obvious mark on his face was known as Balaménos, from the Greek for patched. Maraménos, from the Greek for withered, may have looked exhausted. The nickname Sakátis comes from a Turkish word meaning crippled. A completely bald man was nicknamed Gólios, from the Greek word meaning a bird without wings. A mute was easily identified by the nickname Vovós, the Greek word for mute.

There are a few Hebrew nicknames based on physical characteristics. Gadól was the nickname given to a man who was either tall or prominent. Meerá, from the Hebrew *mehera* meaning "fast," may have been given to a person who walked quickly.

Character Traits. The most amusing of the Jewish nicknames in Ioannina, most of which derive from Greek, are those which pertain to personal character traits. Anónios, an alteration of the Greek word *eonios*, meaning eternal, was the nickname of a man who boasted that he would live a very long life. The nickname Bidhavás, from the Turkish *bedavaci*, one who expects everything free, was given to a man who always expected things free or ridiculously cheap. Zárkos, which in Greek means naked, was the nickname given a man who always appeared under dressed. Daimónios was so named because he was as clever as a demon or, perhaps, the opposite.

A baker who once burned himself was thereafter known as Kaíkas, from the Greek word meaning to burn. Noikokíris, adopted as a surname, was reputed to be a good householder (*noikokíris*). Terlelídas was considered slightly mad. The Greek for mad is *trelós*, but in Ioannina the *r* is often transposed with *l*. A man who had been captured by bandits and branded with a cross before he was released

was called Stavrométos, meaning crucified in Greek. Svólis, the dialectal form of the Greek *bólos*, meaning clod or lump of earth, probably identified a stubborn individual. There are also Hebrew nicknames inspired by unusual character traits. One man was nicknamed Biroúr, which may derive from the medieval Hebrew *biyur*, meaning selected. We may be certain that the person nicknamed Gehinám, from *gehenna*, meaning hell, was never called so to his face. Hamétz (leaven) was discovered eating forbidden food during Pesach. He confessed that he had eaten hametz and the nickname stuck, later becoming a surname. One Ioannina merchant was nicknamed Tsabiáh, the colloquial rendering in Ioannina of Tisha b'Av. Some said he was given the name because he always appeared gloomy, others said it was because he would not eat breakfast until he had made his first sale. I was warned not to address him by this unflattering nickname which, of course, he never used. My mother's maiden name was Kalchamirá (spelled Colchamiro in the United States). The family explanation is that her father, a cloth merchant, used to examine material as closely as if he were searching for leaven (*hametz*). This was associated with the statement made the night before the eve of Passover, beginning *Kal hamira de ika birsht* (May all leaven in my possession).

There are also some Turkish nicknames in Ioannina. Lafazán, adopted as a surname, is the Turkish word for braggart. Beís is the Hellenized form of the Turkish *bey*. A man in Ioannina was dubbed Beiskákas because he presumed to be an aristocrat when his manners were crude. A peddler of roasted chestnuts came to be called Brakashá, from the Turkish words *brak* (put) and *asha* (down) which he shouted whenever a child tried to steal some of his wares. The most curious of all Turkish nicknames in Ioannina is Bakabis. The Turkish word is *bahabic*, meaning a person who bargains. In Ioannina, the man known as Bakabis had been discovered cheating the peasants from whom he bought eggs. When it became known the following ditty, which I have translated literally, was composed about him:

> Bakabis is the unlucky man
> without a *pentara* or *obol*.[30]
> He goes down to the horse market,
> finds himself a one-legged woman
> with a nose like a cup,
> her lips like an eggplant,
> and a mouth like a *cassata*.[31]

The few examples of names given here show that the Ioannina Jews kept piously close to their Hebrew origins. It was only natural for them to adopt some names and nicknames from both Greek,

which they have been speaking for two thousand years, and Turkish, with which they were in contact for five hundred years. Also, the names reveal that a considerable number of Sephardim settled in Ioannina. The strongest conclusion, however, is that the Ioannina Jewish community was a colorful community of many origins.

Names of the Ioannina Jews, notes

1. Asher R. Moissis, *Names of the Jews of Greece* (Greek) (Athens, 1973), 16, 18, 171. In letter to the author written on January 3, 1979, Professor Ankori wroted that, in late Hebrew, the month Av is actually callled Menachem-Ab. During Ab, the passage read in the synagogue in Ioannina is from the prophet Isaiah (40:1): "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people" (*Nahamou, Nahamou ami*).
2. *Rahamim* means mercy, but it also is the plural of *rehem*, meaning womb; the pun is obvious.
3. Max Seligsohn, "Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai" in JE, Vol. 11, 359-361. On Lag b'Omer people make pilgrimages to the tomb of Simeon ben Yohai in Meron, an ancient town in Galilee, because it is believed he miraculously stopped a plague. A first born child was also thought to be a miracle of God. *See* also Samuel Atlas, "Simon ben Yohai," UJE, Vol. 9, 540-541.
4. Joseph Matsa, *Names of the Jews in Ioannina* (Greek) (Athens, 1955), 97-98.
5. Ibid, 99, n. 1.
6. Ibid, 97.
7. Joseph Matsa, in a letter to the author in 1975.
8. Joseph Matsa, *Names of the Jews in Ioannina*, 100.
9. Professor Ankori does not accept this, since no statistical data on the efficacy of that method have been compiled. *See* "The Living and the Dead" in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, Vols. 38-39, 1972, 62.
10. Matsa, ibid.
11. Matsa, ibid, n. 1.
12. Moissis, 21.
13. Christians in Ioannina also used Slav endings to names.
14. In a letter to the author written on January 3, 1979, Professor Ankori writes that Avraam bar Avraam was a name usually given to converts to Judaism.
15. Matsa, ibid, 97.
16. Isidor Singer, "Lazarus Belleli (Menachem)" in *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, 662.
17. It is interesting to note that Benjamin of Tudela found a Rabbi Kalonymós (Hebrew pronunciation) at the head of the Jewish community in Narbonne (in France), whom he described as "the son of the great and illustrious Rabbi Todros of the seed of David whose pedigree is established." *See* Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin Tudela* (New York, 1969).
18. Isaac Albalag was a philosopher of the second half of the 13th century

who probably lived in northern Spain or southern France. *See* S. Horowitz, "Albalag," in JE, Vol. 1, 637-641.

19. John M. Shatesley, "Alkalai," EJ, Vol. 2, cols. 637-641.
20. M. Franco, "Comando," in JE, Vol. 3, 521-522. The late David Barocas, who came from Constantinople, told me that in the Galata area of the city there is a place called "La Scalera Comando."
21. Meyer Kayserling, "Nahmias," in JE, Vol. 9, 145.
22. *See* "Ashkenazi" in JE, Vol. 2, 192-193.
23. In a letter to me dated January 3, 1979, Professor Ankori wrote that *Kahal Poli* in 15th century Constantinople, known to us from Hebrew sources, was the community of Adrianopolitan Jews transferred by Sultan Mehmed II to the new capital.
24. Moissis. 14.
25. Moses ben Elijah Capsali (1420-1490 or 1497) was Hakham Bashi, Chief Rabbi of the Ottoman Empire, in the second half of the 15th century. Elijah Capsali (ca. 1483-1555) was a rabbi and historian in Candia, Crete, in the first half of the 16th century. Elijah ben Elkanah Capsali (1490-ca. 1555) was a talmudist, historian, and head of the Jewish community in Candia, Crete, in the first half of the 16th century. There were a number of other scholars in the same family. *See* Louis Ginsberg, "Capsali," in JE, Vol. 3, 559-61 and Cecil Roth in EJ, Vol. 5, cols. 152-153.
26. Hartwig Hirschfield, "Abdala," in JE, Vol. 1, 43.
27. *See* "Zadok" in EJ, Vol. 17, col. 914 (ed).
28. Louis Ginsberg, "Hafetz," in JE, Vol. 6, 315-316.
29. *Panlexikon* (Greek), Vol. 4, 3142.
30. *Pentara*, a coin worth five *lepta*. Since there are 100 *lepta* in one drachma, this was in infinitesimal amount. An *obol* was also a coin of small value.
31. A *cassáta* is an open cheese patty.

Personalities

For a relatively small community, the Jews of Ioannina had a large number of civic-minded leaders who did much to lighten the economic and spiritual lives of their coreligionists and keep them united as orthodox Jews. The names of many of the men who generously supported the synagogue, the Talmud Torah Hebrew School (later, the Alliance), and various philanthropic organizations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are engraved on marble plaques in the Old Synagogue.[1] G. A. Oikonomos, a local Greek writer, discovered the names of some later Jewish benefactors in the municipal records.[2]

However, the most powerful leaders in the community were the rabbis. It was they who sat on the rabbinical tribunals; they were responsible to the sultan and the pashas. Only a few of them are described below, although all of them played significant roles.

Chief among those rabbis still remembered and honored for their services to the community was Haham Shemuel David (1840-1902), generally known as the Great Rabbi (*Megálos Hahám*). Rabbi Shemuel David wrote exegeses on the Apocalypse and the Kabbala and several excellent sermons written in the Meruba script known as *hatsi kalmos* or *kallamos*. According to his grandson, Judge Samuel Cohen, to whom the manuscripts were bequeathed, the text is written in pure Hebrew, such as the script used in the Dead Sea Scrolls found in the Judean Caves.

Judge Samuel Cohen, whom I visited in Jerusalem, spoke animatedly of his grandfather's prophetic vision in the exegesis on the Apocalypse. For example, Haham Shemuel prophesied that Israel would be founded in the year 5708 (1948). He made this prophesy from the first book (Bereshith) of the Pentateuch, which the rabbi believed to contain 708 meanings. For those who understand Chen (*Het nun Hokhmah*) and mystical logic (*misterid*), it contains the freedom of Israel. "Israel was liberated seventy years after Rabbi Shemuel David had written it," Judge Cohen observed proudly. "Rabbi Shemuel David has sources which are rarely found anywhere else." Judge Cohen, who plans to publish his grandfather's manuscript, has studied it carefully and rewritten it in the Hebrew script used in Israel today. A Torah Scroll, written by Haham Shemuel in Ioannina, was donated by the Ioannina community to the Ioannina synagogue in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Shemuel David was renowned for his ability to heal by prayer (*yitima*), based on the Torah, which he used to heal not only Jews, but people of all religions. When Rabbi Shemuel died in 1902, people of all faiths in Ioannina closed their shops in respect. Greek Christians were heard to say, "You are not the only ones who have lost him."

Rabbi Hashmal was Chief Rabbi in Ioannina from 1870 until his death in 1884. Although his full name was Rabbi Hayyim Shemuel HaLevi, he was known in Ioannina as Haham Ribi Hayyim. He directed the welfare society to aid the sick, *Bikkur Holim*. Originally from Palestine, he was one of the first Jews to purchase land from the Arabs for the building of Israel. He visited Constantinople as a *shadar*, collecting money for Palestine, bringing with him earth from the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem because the earth there is fine and free of worms. He is said to have remarked, "I love to live in Jerusalem, but I prefer to be buried in Ioannina."

Rabbi Hashmal is buried in the Ioannina Jewish cemetery known as Gem. His gravestone is broken, but still identifiable. Older natives think he was about ninety years old when he died. On Yom Kippur eve, members of the congregation go to his graveside and pray to be forgiven for not sufficiently recognizing the greatness of this very learned religious leader.

Avram David was a very learned man, a cabalist of note, and a *shohet* - who saw to it that animals were slaughtered for food in the manner prescribed by Jewish law. He was the cantor of the small synagogue next to the Old Synagogue in the walled city. He was also a Hebrew teacher at the Alliance from 1904 to 1908, and a member of the Ioannina Jewish Council. For all these reasons, out of esteem, he was generally addressed as Rabbi Avramakis, although he was not a rabbi. He is remembered vividly for his fearlessness before authority. The long bearded Avramakis dared to tell Davitchon Effendi, President of the Jewish Council and a member of the Ottoman parliament (*see* below), to his face that he was not telling the truth. One Sabbath a policeman summoned him to the governor's office. "Today is Sabbath," he told the policeman, "I cannot come today. I will come tomorrow." When he went to the governor's office on Sunday the governor informed him that his rabbinical decisions would no longer be honored. Avramakis reported this to the Jewish Council, which came to his defense. On another occasion, Avramakis refused to accept a Sabbath invitation to attend the Ioannina celebration in honor of the sultan's birthday, for which the governor punished the entire community by denying them access to government offices. Avramakis wrote the Hakham Bashi Hanes in Constantinople and asked him to raise the matter with the sultan. The sultan responded by transferring the governor. In 1910, Avramakis quarrelled with the synagogue and opened a synagogue in his home, taking with him a Torah Scroll he himself had written. Differences were settled after a short while and he returned to the synagogue. He died in 1943.

Moshe Shabethai Rousso (1880-1944), known as Gadol, was a blind Hebrew teacher. He was an epileptic, and he had been blinded by falling into a lime pit during one of his seizures. His former



A Ioannina rabbi at the beginning of this century

The Jewish Museum of Greece (Gift from the author)

students remember him affectionately. "He knew the Torah by heart. He carried a cane and whenever any of us made a mistake, he would tap his cane on the floor." Gadol also was respected for his ability to interpret dreams. Gadol gave private Hebrew lessons, but he was so poorly paid that during Purim his pupils went from house to house collecting money for him. His trousers were patched, and he wore a khaki cape with a hood for the last thirty years of his life.

The best loved and most highly respected rabbi in Ioannina in this century was Aham Davos (1875-1943), a knowledgeable talmudist who had been taught by the renowned Shelomon Samuel of Iraq. (Ahám is the Ioannina pronunciation of the Hebrew *haham*, meaning "sage," commonly understood in Ioannina to mean "rabbi.") Of Sicilian (pronounced *Tsitsillianoí* in Ioannina) descent, he was a tall man with a full beard and resembled Abraham Lincoln. He was modest and hated ostentation. He taught several subjects at the Hebrew school and then at the Alliance. Students were literally mesmerized by his teaching.

Aham Davos had a great love for learning and was an avid reader of Hebrew. He taught Hebrew without charge to anyone who wanted to settle in Palestine. "All the older Jews who knew Hebrew well were taught by Aham Davos," said one of his former students. He taught himself French to be able to help his students. When Aham Davos died, every member of the congregation went to the funeral to pay their last respects.

Aham Mordechai Cantos (d. 1910), who worked as a shoemaker during the week, was a saintly man, highly learned in the Torah, the "finest Hebrew teacher in Ioannina," recalled one of his students. On the Sabbath he taught Hebrew in his home to approximately 30 adults. The only requirement was their desire to learn. He used to give money to promising young students to encourage them in their study of Hebrew. He wrote the hymn "God is Great" (*Megálos Eínai O Theós*), which is sung in Ioannina on the Sabbath. When he died, all the Jewish shopkeepers closed their shops to attend his funeral. He left two houses to his wife with the stipulation that, when she died, the houses were to be turned over to the synagogue.

Although not a rabbi, Dr. Moshes Coffina, who was active in Ioannina in about 1910, was a religious man of note. A fervent Zionist, he left his mark on the community, although during his lifetime he was regarded as an eccentric, if not an out and out lunatic. Like Diogenes, he carried a lamp with him in daylight and proclaimed he was looking for an honest man. He also collected coins to pay for planting trees in Palestine. He left Ioannina and settled in Volos, probably both because he was underestimated in Ioannina and because Volos was part of independent Greece. After marrying, he settled in Athens, where he was elected to the Greek parliament. He also became president of the Athens Zionist orga-

nization. In 1937 he led a group of settlers from Greece in establishing an agricultural settlement named after him called Zur Moshe (Rock of Moses) on Jewish National Fund land in the Sharon Plain in central Israel. Zur Moshe had about 400 inhabitants in the early 1970's. Coffina is buried in the settlement he founded.[3]

Among the laity, probably the most colorful, controversial, and reactionary member of the Jewish community in Ioannina was the wealthy David Matthew Levy, known as Davitchon or Dov Jon Effendi (d. 1913). He lived in a mansion near the lake, outside the walled city on Kountouriotou Street. As president of the Jewish Council and member of the Ioannina chamber of commerce, he played a leading role in the city during the last thirty years of Ottoman rule.

Older members of the Ioannina Jewish community have bitter memories of this powerful, conservative leader. "He objected strenuously to the opening of the Alliance schools; he held back the opening of the schools for five years," one elderly Ioannina native told me with some feeling. When I asked my informant why, he replied, "Because Davitchon Effendi did not want the people to be enlightened."

Davitchon Effendi was feared by all members of his community, and even by the Ottoman governor. He spoke Turkish fluently and could communicate easily with the authorities. Although not well educated, he knew the Torah. He was so devout that when he went through the marketplace on Friday afternoon, storekeepers closed their shops earlier than usual.

His influence extended well beyond Ioannina. He understood the workings of power well, and knew how to conduct himself with whatever group was in power. He got along so well with the Turks that he became a close friend of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), who gave him the rank of general in the Ottoman army with power equal to that of governor. He was elected to the Ottoman parliament.[4] All the Ottoman officials in Ioannina were reported to have visited Davitchon Effendi on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

During the Greco-Ottoman war of 1897, the Turks were victorious in a battle fought near Ioannina at Pentepigadia, capturing many Greek prisoners whom they wanted to behead. Davitchon Effendi advised the Turks against killing the Greek prisoners on the ground that their deaths would provoke reprisals against the Turks in Ioannina. The Turks heeded this advice and the sultan awarded Davitchon Effendi with the Osmanli Medal, the highest Ottoman honor conferred upon a non-Muslim. King George I of Greece also sent Davitchon Effendi a medal for intervening on behalf of the Greek prisoners.

Davitchon Effendi was also known for his harsh treatment of Abraham Ganis, a wealthy miller, whose generosity Davitchon

Effendi found embarrassing. Conflict between them erupted when Ganis asked Davitchon to join him in paying, on behalf of those poor Ioannina Jews who could not afford to pay, the tax required from all male Jews in lieu of serving in the army. Davitchon Effendi refused, and thereafter the two men were no longer on speaking terms. "Ganis was a kind-hearted man," recalled one Ioannina native. "On his birthday he invited all the rabbis to dinner. Every Passover he provided new shoes for all poor boys and clothing for all poor children. He gave money to the Hebrew school."

One year Ganis pledged a large donation for the poor, but during that year he lost a great deal of money in his business and could not make good his pledge. Davitchon made life miserable for Ganis and his family because the pledge was not kept, and in desperation Ganis sought advice from a Turkish lawyer. The lawyer advised Ganis that he could not be held responsible for the pledge if he were to convert to Islam, and Ganis followed this advice. On his deathbed, on April 26, 1902, he tried to return to Judaism. Some of his children, who were minors when their father converted to Islam, returned to Judaism in 1913; his other children returned to Judaism when they emigrated to America.

Dr. Nissim Davitchon Levy (1877-1944), a son of Davitchon Effendi, was prominent in his own right and very different from his father. After completing his medical studies in Switzerland, he returned to Ioannina and dedicated his services to the poor, visiting the sick without hesitation, day or night. Often, instead of charging a fee, he left money. He was a generous supporter of the Alliance Israelite Universelle and president of the Zionist Society. In 1944 he was sent with the rest of the Ioannina Jewish community to Birkenau. Since he was over sixty years old at the time he was not selected for labor and was sent to the gas chamber the day he arrived.

Annette Levy (1882-1944) daughter of Mattathia Levy, son of Davitchon Levy, was another member of this extraordinary family who, unlike her grandfather, was known for her compassionate dedication to her community. Annette studied at the Greek Institute of Higher Studies in Ioannina where she learned Italian, French, and the Greek classics. As did her uncle, Dr. Nissim Levy, she dedicated her services to the sick and the poor. She helped to dower poor girls. Annette was married to her uncle Abraham Levy, another son of Davitchon Effendi, and had two daughters, Yetty and Nelly. Yetty later married Asher Moissis, the lawyer from Trikkala who served as Israel's first diplomatic representative in Athens.

Annette's services extended beyond the Jewish community. During the Greek-Italian fighting in 1940-41 she was responsible for the care provided by the Greek Red Cross for the wounded returning from the Albanian front, so close to Ioannina. During

wounded. She was an unassuming, accomplished leader. On March 25, 1944, she was arrested along with the rest of the community. She first was sent to Auschwitz, then to Birkenau, where she died. Fortunately, Yetty escaped. The Red Cross awarded Annette posthumously with the Medal of Beneficence.

Joseph Eliyia

The most outstanding member of the Ioannina Jewish community was the poet Joseph Eliyia (1901-1931). His contribution to Greek letters extended far beyond both Ioannina and the Jewish community of Greece. His poetry and his translations from Hebrew into demotic Greek introduced a new dimension in both Jewish-Greek relations and Greek literature.

Joseph Eliyia was born in Ioannina on October 30, 1901, the only child of middle class parents. In the Boys' Alliance school he rebelled against the cautious, narrow point of view of his Hebrew teachers and was branded an "undisciplined and poor student." Though he later became an outstanding Talmudist, he showed no promise whatever in Hebrew. He did learn French well, but even here he alarmed the community leaders because of his interest in the romantic French writers, whose more modern, liberal views matched his own.

Eliyia had his first conflict with authority when he was sixteen years old and wrote a poem hailing the Balfour Declaration. The poem began, "My Zion country, I will shed my blood for thee." The director of the Alliance feared this would displease the Greek authorities, and he expelled Eliyia from the school for inciting the students against assimilation. The expulsion, however, did not last long. Eliyia graduated with his class and the Alliance hired him the following year to teach French.

In 1920, Eliyia was drafted into the Greek army, where he managed to spend much of his time writing or studying. One of his most moving poems, "Militarism," written at this time, was inspired by the drafting of his fellow citizens to fight the war in Asia Minor. The poem angered the authorities, who did not tolerate political criticism.

Militarism

The black city is mute and as if in meditation
vainly searching, they say, for the happiness that passed,
a wraith-like form stalks by, in khaki;
lightning slides snake-like into my heart's gloom,
and in silent squares and in silent alleys,
"tran, tran" echo the spurs.

Within the soul re-echo the winds of carnage;
in her desolated house the old woman recalls her son;
a mother squeezes her babe in her embrace and shudders,
as a passerby sings: "The Son of Psiloríti," *
and in silent squares and in silent alleys
"tran, tran," echo the spurs.

The heart restrains its tear and chills again from terror,
thick darkness in the soul and the boots threaten,
some laborer with drooped shoulder blasphemes;
a hoarse dog barks - barks -
and in silent squares and in silent alleys
"tran, tran," echo the spurs.

*"The Son of Psiloríti" was a Venezelist song. "Psilorítis" is the name of a mountain in Crete closely identified with Venezelos. The royalist song was "Son of the Eagle," referring to the king.

In 1921 Eliyia's father died and, because he was an only son, Eliyia was released from the army. For the next four years he taught at the Alliance and gave private lessons in French and Hebrew, living with his mother, whom he loved despite her constant nagging about his writing poetry.

During these four years he pursued his own studies in Talmudic and post-Talmudic philosophy and poetry. He studied cabala and eschatology; he devoted much time to studying the writings of the revolutionary Hebrew poets; he deepened his knowledge of the French romantic writers Verlaine, Lamartine, and Hugo. He turned his attention to the neo-Hellenic authors Varnalis, Drossinis, and Malakassis. He went further; he explored the teachings of Christ. The conservative Jewish community leaders feared this unorthodox climb to creative and intellectual fulfillment, and the Greek police began to look upon him as a "dangerous communist."

Eliyia began translating the Old Testament into demotic Greek, officially in disrepute, hoping thereby both to acquaint the Romaniote community (many of whom did not know Hebrew) with their own Hebrew heritage and to make the Old Testament available to his Christian compatriots in the language they could understand. He also published poems in local newspapers under the pseudonym Ioulios Singulieros.[5] All his poems exhibit a broad religious tolerance. The main burden of his struggle was to enlighten the timid, appeasing Jewish leaders so that his coreligionists would never again be persecuted. He sought to open their eyes to the existence of other faiths, to accept them and have friendly relations with them which, at the time he was writing, they could not or would not do.



Joseph Eliyia The Jewish Museum of Greece (Gift from the author)

In January 1925 the police, supported by Jewish community leaders, persuaded the director of the Alliance to fire Eliyia from the teaching post he had held for five years. Eliyia continued to give private lessons and write poems, but his private pupils dropped him, making his already strained financial condition considerably worse. In addition, he was jailed for one month because of an article printed the year before in which he had severely criticized a government official.

Eliyia moved to Athens in 1925 and began teaching French and Hebrew at the Hebrew School. Here, too, he was underpaid, and he was obliged to give private lessons as well. However, in Athens he enjoyed the companionship of the leading poets and writers of demotic Greek. All his poems were published in Athenian newspapers and periodicals (*Noúmas, Vígla, Néa Estía*), attracting the attention of major Greek writers such as Malakassis, Palamas, Varnalis, and Xenopoulos. He was commissioned to write articles for magazines and, on Hebrew subjects, for the *Large Greek Encyclopedia.*

In 1926 Eliyia's mother moved from Ioannina to live with him in the modest little house they rented at Nikomideías 4, near Váfis Square. This was the happiest period of his life, although life for him was, as he put it, "one continuous trouble."

In 1927 he returned for a short visit to Ioannina and wrote a long, nostalgic poem, "The Return," which was published in the *Epeirotikón Agón.* Part four of this poem is particularly poignant as the poet senses that he will never again visit his native city, never again see the young girls with whom he grew up, one of whom he might have married had his fate been different.

When Eliyia returned to Athens he entered the Ecole Francaise d'Athènes, attending classes at night, and graduated in 1930. While waiting for an appointment to teach in a state high school, he continued to write articles and poems. He also continued work on his translation of the Old Testament, especially the books of Isaiah, Job, Ruth, Esther, and Jonah, into demotic Greek. His translation of the Song of Songs is one of the sublime contributions to Greek letters. He wrote articles on cabala and eschatology. He introduced Hebrew writers to the Greeks through his translations of the medieval writers Judah Halevi and Ibn Gabirol and the modern writers Bialik, Tchernikovsky, Frishman, Peretz, and Shneur. He translated French lyricists into Greek, succeeding, as one critic put it, "in preserving the rhythm, precision, rhetorical force, and poetic taste of the original."

According to his friends in Athens, most of whom I interviewed during the summers 1936-1939, Eliyia had no critical sense of his own worth and was in constant fear of being deceived. When he could no longer bear his mother's doting care, he turned to Rebecca, whose

divine image was his ideal of womanhood. Eliyia is known as the poet of Rebecca.

Rebecca

How you dazzle my mind, panarchaic grandeur,
Resplendence, visions in biblical magic!

The servant was resting at the edge of the well,
And his laden camels were kneeling before him.
The evening was magic, the evening was sweet,
And slender Rebecca appeared with jug in hand,
The golden gates of Paradise opened wide,
"Daughter, pride of the house, tilt thy jug,
tilt it and give me a drop of water to drink."
And the daughter replied, "Stranger, God be with thee,
Drink and I will water thy camels."

And the evening was magic, the evening was sweet,
But sweeter yet was all-shy Rebecca of Bethouel,
But sweeter yet, the sun-beauteous wife of Isaac.

Eliyia accepted an appointment to teach in a state high school in Kilkis, a town in northern Greece near Thessaloniki, where he could spend his weekends studying in the Hebrew library. He did not mind being the only Jew in Kilkis, but the principal was anti-Semitic. He forced Eliyia to conceal his Jewishness and use the surname, Kapoúlias, with which he had been born. "Kapoúlia" means the rump of a horse in Greek, and Joseph had used the biblical Eliyia, his middle name, as his surname from an early age. He is known as a writer only by the name Eliyia. When the principal tried to proselytize him, Joseph stalled, saying to himself, "A Jew is forced to win his liberty in a mountain."

During the second half of the 1930-31 school year Eliyia became afflicted with typhoid. His request for sick leave was denied, and he was unable to seek treatment until July 15, when the school year was over. He returned to Athens and was rushed to the Evangelismos Hospital. He knew he was going to die, and on the last day of his life he asked his mother to send for "two representatives of God." Eliyia could read the Torah better than the two rabbis reading to him on either side of his deathbed so he asked them to hold the holy book while he, clutching an arm of each, read from the Bible until he died. He died on Friday, July 29, 1931, three months before his thirtieth birthday.

Eliyia wrote 256 poems, most of which were published in Ioannina and Athens. Ninety of his poems were translated into English and published by the Greek Jews of New York.[6] He wrote 209 articles on Hebrew subjects for the *Large Greek Encyclopedia*.

Many of Greece's most prominent authors (Tellos Agras, T. K. Dimaras, Kostes Palamas, Michael Peranthes, Takis Simopoulos, Kostas Varnalis, Gregory Xenopoulos) wrote about Eliyia's death. Christos Chrystovasilis, editor of the Ioannina newspaper *Eleftheria*, who knew Eliyia well and had published several of Eliyia's poems, wrote:

> His great metric translations of the ancient and more modern great Hebrew poets in the lovely Epeirotic vernacular, as well as his own finely conceived lyrical poems, full of beautiful Rebeccas and Sarahs, will live as long as immortal Greek literature. Both in his translations as well as in the original poems, Parnassus is embraced by Zeus, Athens by Jerusalem, Greece by the land of Canaan, and Homer by the prophet David.

Leon Rekanati, president of the Thessaloniki branch of B'nai Brith, to which Eliyia had left all his writings, organized the first memorial to Eliyia, which was held in Thessaloniki in 1934. On July 27, 1935, the Jewish Club of Ioannina held a literary memorial in Eliyia's honor, which was attended by his Jewish friends and distinguished Christians who knew him and esteemed him.

In Greece today, Joseph Eliyia is recognized as a sensitive lyric poet and Hebrew scholar, not only a Greek Jewish poet from Ioannina, but the only Greek Jewish poet of stature throughout Greece. In 1967 the Athenian publishing house Dodoni published most of Eliyia's poetry in one volume. In 1978, the Jewish community of Thessaloniki published Eliyia's *Jewish Studies* (*Evraiká Meletémata*), a collection of all his published articles on Jewish subjects. There is a fine bust of Eliyia in the Alsos Park in Ioannina. And the street on which the few survivors of the Holocaust now reside, formerly known as Max Nordau Street, is now known as Joseph Eliyia Street.

1. Most of the people named on these plaques lived in Ioannina during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Ioannina was still part of the Ottoman Empire:

   Menachem Avram; Eliasaf Hayyim Battino; Silomo Matsliach Battino; Solomon Jacob Battino; Yesoula Moshe Battino; Nissim Isaac Batish; Shemuel Sabethai Coffina; Jacob Ezra; Behor or Joshua Solomon Jacob; Rachel, wife of Joshua Jacob; Behoraki Hanen Levy; Joia Levy; Moshe Mattathia Levy; Avram Sielmo; Mazaltov Sabethai Solomon; Rachel Solomon Matsa, daughter of Behor or Zoe Matsa.
2. In 1915, Mair Solomon left money in his will to found a hospital to be known as Mair's Jewish Hospital. In 1936, Mazaltov Mattathia willed her home to the G. Hatzikosta Hospital. Joshua Solomon Jacob willed $ 1,000 to the same hospital, in his and his wife's memory. Menachem Moise willed his home to be used as a Jewish school; it is now used by the governor of Epirus. *See* G. A. Oikonomou, "One Hundred Forty Benefactors of the People of Ioannina" (Greek) in *Epeirotikí Estía*, Vol. 3, 1043-1044.
3. *See* "Zur Moshe" in EJ, Vol. 3, p. 288 and "Zur Moshe" in EJ, Vol. 16, col. 1243.
4. Abraham Galante, "Les Juifs au Parlement et au Senat" in *Turcs et Juifs* (Istanbul, 1932), 124.
5. *See* Lambros Malama, "The Visionary Humanist and Fighting Poet" (Greek) in *Elefthero Pnévma* (Free Spirit), April-May-June, 1980, 314. *See* also issue 37, July-August 1980, 316 and P. Laziridi, "A Biographical Study of Joseph Eliyia" (Greek) in *Epeirotikí Estía*, September-October 1966, 213.
6. Joseph Eliyia, *Poems*, translated by Rae Dalven. (Anatolia Press, N.Y. 1944) This publication also contains a biography of the poet.

Superstitions

The Ioannina Jews, especially the women, had an irrational fear of the unknown, especially in connection with religion. They sought protection in a series of superstitious beliefs, which they passed down from mother to daughter. Although most of these practices were performed by women, both sexes were deeply concerned about the evil eye, and many amulets, charms, and remedies were used for protection from the malignant effect of an eye that had the power to harm them. Most of these beliefs are a source of amusement to the younger descendants of Ioannina natives, but the older generation still believes in and follows some of these practices.

1. A popular form of fortune telling was to turn a demi-tasse cup of black coffee upside down after the person had drunk the coffee. The thick coffee remains would form several shapes on the sides of the cup or on the saucer. The fortune of the coffee drinker would then be read from these shapes.
2. When a shopkeeper saw a mouse in his shop, he believed that one of his workers was stealing from him.
3. A nail carried in one's pocket would avert the evil eye.
4. If a hearse carrying the corpse of a non-Jew passed by, the Ioannina Jew quickly held up some object made of iron to avert evil.
5. If a snake were seen in a garden, sugar would be thrown on it. This would sweeten the snake and he then would crawl away.
6. Olive oil was used to bless a person.
7. An egg symbolized the increase of wealth and prosperity.
8. Keys were not allowed to rattle lest demons be let loose.
9. When a pregnant women was ready to cut the swaddling clothes for her unborn child, she made certain that the woman she called to help her had children of her own and had both of her parents still living. Since she wanted the child she was carrying to be a boy, she cut the swaddling clothes during *yómisi* (from Gr. γέμιση, filling, therefore waxing of the moon), the first fifteen days of the lunar month. If the swaddling clothes were cut during *has* (from Gr. χάσιμο, loss, therefore waning of the moon) the last fifteen days of the lunar month, she would surely give birth to a girl.
10. Knots were considered magically potent, both dangerous and beneficial. If a mother did not want one of her children to be seeing a girl or boy of whom the mother did not approve, she would tie a knot in an article of her son's or daughter's clothing. As discussed in the chapter on betrothal and marriage customs knots tied in the sashes of a betrothed couple would block anyone trying to prevent the marriage.

Evil Eye

The ancient Greeks believed that anything undesirable was the result of someone's, usually a woman's, malignant look.[1] Belief in the evil eye was widespread among my Ioannina coreligionists while I was growing up. Whenever anyone expressed admiration, he or she would instinctively follow the words of praise with the word "Mashallah," meaning "going with God," "reflecting the notion that danger exists and protection must be sought by appeal to a higher power."[2] Another instinctive action was to spit, or feign spitting, after praising anyone, for spitting protects against the evil eye. Another protection is garlic. If the attention of the evil eye was thought to have been drawn toward anyone, either by unqualified praise or envy, the threat was nullified by saying, "Garlic in your eyes." Garlic, they believed, has the power to neutralize the evil eye.

Amulets

The Ioannina Jews used a number of amulets, charms, and remedies, some of which were uniquely their own, for prophylactic or curative power.

1. Amulets worn on a ribbon around the neck but outside the garment. The most widely used of these is known as the *Shaddai* (Heb. Almighty God), consisting of a piece of silver, gold, or other metal, shaped like a hand, a Star of David, or some other form of religious symbol, with the word *Shaddai* engraved in Hebrew letters on it.

2. Two kinds of amulets were worn around the neck but concealed beneath the garment. The *douga*, generally made of silver and attached to a string, contained the names of angels to protect the wearer from worry. The *kameakh*, which could be made from virtually any material, including parchment, was worn to protect the wearer from illness or accident. Inserted in the *kameakh* was the name of God, a prayer, or the names of angels.

3. Amulets worn outside the clothes or kept nearby. Garlic, or a piece of gold or coral, was sewn onto a baby's cap or put in a pocket in his clothes. When a man opened a new shop, or when his business was flourishing, he hung a string of garlic bulbs at the entrance to his shop.

4. Written texts from scripture (other than *tephillin*, *mezuzah*, and *tallith* used by all orthodox Jews). Printed blessings from various parts of the Torah were framed and hung at shop entrances. Psalm 67, written by a scribe in the form of a Menorah, was hung in the living room as an appeal to God for protection.

Charms

There were many charms, generally consisting of some words or an incantation, known as *yitima* (from the Gr. γήτεμα, to bewitch, charm), spoken as an exorcism.

1. A healing charm spoken by rabbis in the years when they enjoyed the authority of a physician, was known as *ksemátiasma* (Gr. ξεμάτιασμα, meaning neutralizing the evil eye). The rabbi would pour some salt into a glass of water, sprinkle some drops on the patient, and say, "By me exorcised, and by God cured, and may it leave you and go to the wild mountains." He also might say, "As long as the salt lasts in the water, so long may your illness last" (meaning as long as the salt was visible, until it dissolved). On one occasion a doctor was present, and asked the rabbi if he honestly believed the incantation would cure the patient. "I knew you were coming," the rabbi replied, "and I prayed to God to grant you the wisdom to understand the nature of the illness and prescribe the right medicine for the patient."

2. If anyone suspected that a person he passed on the street had cast an evil eye, he would take whatever small object he had in his pocket, throw it after the person, and say, "Let him take the evil eye and go!"

3. When a woman who had had several miscarriages became pregnant again, a charm would be performed for her by another woman. The woman performing the charm would give a lock and key to a young child and ask him to lock it. The woman would then say, "As the lock is closed, and is no longer open, so may your womb be closed and hold your baby until the day of delivery." When a woman was about to give birth, all the locks in the house were opened so she could have an easy delivery.

4. When a child was cutting his first tooth, his mother or some other close relative would put some wheat in his palm and say, "As the wheat breaks open, so may your teeth break through." When the first tooth appeared its arrival was celebrated by eating oats, which burst open when cooked. The first person to see the tooth had to bring a gift.

5. Milk from a woman who had breast fed her children mixed with milk from her grown daughter who was also breast feeding her own child was considered to have special power. The milk, perhaps mixed with some flour, was formed into little balls and sold to smooth relations between a betrothed couple, or between a husband and wife.

6) These charms were harmless, but the charm known as *alafró* (Gr., meaning light in weight, used euphemistically because it involved the use of lead) was prohibited by the rabbis as an impiety. It was a symbolic ceremony performed by older women to counteract misfortunes for which there seemed to be no logical explanation or solution. The most common use of *alafró* was to help a couple have children. The performers were not dissuaded by Leviticus 19:26, "thou shalt not practice divination or soothsaying" or Deuteronomy 19:10, which states that an enchanter, sorcerer, or charmer is

"an abomination to the Lord." The women had probably learned about *alafró* from Turkish women in Ioannina, and performing it lifted them out of their dull lives into specialists. They were much in demand, and some of them were said to earn their living only by performing the charm.

It took several hours to perform *alafró*. The afflicted person, one or more *alafró* specialists, and accompanying women and children would be rowed at dawn across the lake, usually to a deserted spot on the opposite shore. As they reached the region of a hollow stone, they disembarked and began the ceremony of *alafró* to relieve the ailing person of the sickness which tormented him or her. The first step was the passing of the ailing person through a cavity or hollow stone (*trypopérasma*) three times. The ailing person discarded his or her underwear and went through the hole in the stone three times, thereby leaving "behind him or her the infection or ailment and came out cleansed on the other side."[3] If there were no stone with a hole in it the sick person went around a rock three times. After going through, or around, the third time, he put on clean underwear; the underwear he had been wearing was discarded in the nearby bushes.[4]

A fire was then built on a nearby stone. The *alafró* performer melted lead and poured it into a special pot containing cold water. The lead solidified into various forms, which would reveal what caused the patient's disorder to the *alafró* specialist, who would then pronounce her exorcisms. If the solidified lead were black, the procedure had to be repeated. When the water cooled it was poured over the patient's head. When the water dried, the patient again went through the holllow stone, or around it. The person then had to walk over brambles, as Moses did.

If a couple wanted the *alafró* performed because the wife could not conceive, both the husband and the wife were supposed to participate. If the couple did not wish to do so, the parents could take some clothing belonging to each of them. The *alafró* specialist held the solidified lead over each article of clothing and delivered her incantations, predicting that now the woman would conceive.

7. There was a charm for a mother who had repeated miscarriages after the birth of a healthy first child. Such a first born child was known as a *zboúrko* if male, and as a *zboúra* if female. The term derives from the Greek *grousoúzis*, a bringer of bad luck. A bringer of good luck was a *gourlítis*. To prevent further miscarriages, the parents rowed with the performer of the charm and their only child to a lonely spot on the far side of the lake where the child was passed through a hollow stone and incantations were spoken predicting that the couple would have other healthy children.[5]

Remedies

The women of Ioannina had several home-made remedies, some of which are pharmaceutically effective and are still in use today.

1. To help her have abundant milk, a nursing mother was given a mixture called *thiáso* (from the ancient Greek Θύω?) consisting of ground almonds and sugar.

2. If a child had a stomach ache, ground nutmeg was rubbed over the child's stomach.

3. Another cure for stomach ache was to make a plaster of mastic by pulverizing it with a mortar and pestle and then putting the plaster on the stomach.

4. Camomile, cinnamon, hollyhock, and salep were boiled and drunk as teas to cure colds.

5. Cupping glasses (*ventoúzes*, from the Italian *ventosa*) were widely used in Ioannina to increase the circulation and help cure colds. Wet cupping (*kophtés ventoúzes*; *kophtés* is from the Greek *to cut*) involved making a light cut with a razor on the patient's back, causing blood to flow. A piece of cotton inside the cupping glass was burned, creating a partial vacuum and warming the glass. The cupping glass, placed over the cut, drew out some blood. The idea was that this would increase circulation and help cure the cold. Dry cupping (*aplés ventúzes*; *aplés* means simple, plain, in Greek) used the same, warmed cups, but the skin was not cut.

6. A woman with a severe headache would put lemon peels in a handkerchief and tie the handkerchief around her forehead, believing that the lemon peels would draw out the pain.

Superstitions, notes

1. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, 611.
2. Ibid, 609.
3. D. Salamanga, *Ioannina Miscellany* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1959), 34.
4. Ibid, 40.
5. Ibid, 39.

Modern Greek Proverbs, Judaic or Classic in Origin?

The proverbs used by my Romaniote family were also familiar to Greeks throughout the country. The published collections of modern Greek proverbs usually associate each proverb with the province in Greece where they are most commonly spoken, in a few cases limiting their studies to one particular province.[1] One compiler has a short collection pointing out parallels between modern Greek and classical proverbs.[2] Biblical proverbs have been set down by Archer Taylor.[3] A fine article about ancient and modern Greek proverbs with a short section on proverbs found in the Talmud was published in the 1868 American edition of the *Quarterly Review*.[4] One Greek author, Demetrios Loukatos, whose unpublished dissertation I have been unable to find, wrote, in French, on "The Bible in the Proverbial Speech of the Greek People."[5] Nicholas Politis, the best known and most comprehensive of all our Greek compilers of modern Greek proverbs, has only six references to Judaic parallels in his six volume work.[6]

I was astonished to discover parallels for all the modern Greek proverbs I know from my own home in the books of Proverbs, Job, Deuteronomy, Micah, and scattered in other books of the Old Testament. I also found parallels in several sections of the Babylonian Talmud; *Ecclesiasticus* by the Sage Ben Sirach, who flourished in Palestine in approximately 190 B.C.E.; and *Pirke Avoth* (The Sayings of the Fathers), which "deals with ethical principles established by the fathers of Jewish tradition who flourished over a period of nearly five centuries from the time of the last prophet to the end of the second century."[7] Do these parallels reflect Greek influence upon Jewish culture or Jewish influence upon Greek culture? Of course, influences were interactive, but which culture had the greatest influence upon the other?

Montefiore writes that "there is a curious parallel between the ideal of Sirach and the Rabbis, and that of Aristotle and some of the Greek philosophers."[8] The translators of the *Book of Sirach* staunchly maintain that the apparent traces of Hellenic influence are not really so, but independent parallels.[9] Other scholars stress the influence of Greek. Greenstone reminds us that the spoken language of the Jews of Palestine during the third to the fifth century of the common era, when the Jerusalem Talmud was compiled, had a substantial admixture of Greek words and phrases.[10] Saul Lieberman writes that "Greek penetrated into all classes of Jewish society in Palestine. The rabbis took whole sentences from Greek proverbs current amongst the people from Greek legal documents, literature, and other sources."[11]

However, the references these scholars cite to support their contention that it was ancient Greek culture which influenced

Hebrew culture do not square with the history of the exiled Jews who settled on Greek soil. The Diaspora Jews living in pagan Greece stayed closely attached to their monotheistic religion to help them survive as exiles, maintain contacts with Jewish communities in Palestine and in other parts of the world, and keep alive their hopes of returning to their homeland. It was to their Judaic heritage that the Diaspora Jews turned for their concepts, their moral principles, their inspiration to create.

Recent research has brought forth compelling arguments which show that the Diaspora Jews exerted a stronger influence on Greek than the other way around. The German philologist Ernst Robert Curtius writes that "Judaeo-Christian apologetics and, later, the Alexandrine catechumenical schools taught that the Old Testament was earlier than the writings of Greek poets and sages; that the latter had known the Old Testament and had learned from it. This led to the establishment of parallels between the teachings of the Bible and pagan myths."[12]

John Ashley makes a convincing case to show that it was Hebrew culture which influenced the Greek. "Now whatever Egypt and Phoenicia may have been for Greece," he points out, "and Greece in turn may have done for the world, upon proper examination *all* are found to be *debtors* to the Hebrew." He draws out of ancient Greek literary history an impressive list of writers to substantiate his conviction: The philosopher Thales of Miletus (640?-546 B.C.E.) visited Egypt and there learned from the Hebrews respecting the Supreme Being. Pythagoras, active about the same time, spent two years in Phoenicia, went to Egypt and from there to Babylon. One of his instructors was the prophet Ezekiel. Hermippus (5th century B.C.E.) says of Pythagoras, "he took a great many laws of Jews into his philosophy."[13] Eusebius (260-340 C.E.) reports that Aristobulus (fl. 160 B.C.E.), the Alexandrine Jew and Peripatetic philosopher, wrote that Homer, Hesiod, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato were all acquainted with a translation of the Talmud which had been made before the conquest of Egypt in 525 B.C.E.[14] Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.E.) is cited for borrowing directly from the prophet Ezekiel and Jeremiah.[15] The Egyptian Jewish author Eupolemos (2nd century B.C.E.) asserts in his book, *On the Kings of Judaea*, that "the Hebrews gave letters to the Phoenicians and the Phoenicians to the Greeks."[16] The Roman historian Tacitus (ca. 55-ca. 117 C.E.) states that "Hebrew books were written centuries before the Greeks knew the use of letters."[17]

Curtius calls our attention to what is probably the most telling reference concerning the influence of the Jews on the ancient Greeks; namely, that although the Greeks regarded the Phoenician Cadmus as the bestower of writing, the fact is that "they adopted letters from the ancient East: *alpha*, *beta*, *gamma*, *delta*, are Semitic

words. The Hebrew are *aleph*, *beth*, *gimmel*, *daleth*."[18] But the writer who dwells on the subject of Jewish influence on the Greek is Josephus (37?-100 C.E.). In *Against Apion*, he writes, "Pythagoras of Samos (580-500 B.C.E.), a person superior to all philosophers in wisdom and piety toward God . . . did not only know our doctrines, but was in a very great measure a follower and admirer of them."[19]

Some of the modern Greek proverbs I heard in my home, only a few of which will be included here, appear to be linked to the ancient Greek because of similarities in meanings and even in manner. However, when we examine the proverbs in Judaic sources which show similarities to the modern Greek proverbs spoken today, we discover situations related to religious concepts and different "literary coinage," which leads one to believe that these proverbs are independent parallels.

A modern Greek proverb I learned at home states, "One commits an act, good or bad, and another is blamed or rewarded." A variation is "Some dig and prune, others drink and get drunk." Many similar proverbs are in the classics. In his *Theogeny* (lines 597-604), Hesiod (750-700 B.C.E.) complains that the drones garner the hard work of the bees.[20] In his fable, *The Two Dogs*, Aesop (620-500 B.C.E.) has one dog boast to the other that his master taught him "not to work, but to eat what others work for."[21] Zenobius, a second century Greek sophist and rhetorician, wrote in one of his books of Greek proverbs, "Some do the work and others reap the profits."[22] In his "Hymn to Demeter," Callimachus (310-240 B.C.E.) has a proverb calling upon the goddess to "nurse peace, that he who sows may also reap."[23]

In Deuteronomy 19:15 and in Pessahim, a tractate from the Babylonian Talmud, there are several sententious remarks parallel to the ancient Greek examples given bove. In Pessahim 113b it is recorded that a person named Zigud went to a rabbi named Papa and told the rabbi that he had seen a man named Tobiah commit a sin. Rabbi Papa ordered that Zigud be flogged since the testimony of one witness is not admissable; apparently Zigud intended to hurt Tobiah's reputation. The proverb used in Babylon from this incident is "Tobiah sinned and Zigud is flogged." A variation appears in Midrash Rabbah Genesis 25:3 which states that "Shila sins and Jonathan is punished." This proverb also appears in the New Testament, in John 4:37, "One sows and another reaps."

Another popular modern Greek proverb is, "Drop by drop the water wears away the marble." The epic poet Choerilus (5th century B.C.E.) wrote: "By constant dripping a drop of water hollows out a rock."[24] In *Idyll II*, Bion (2nd century B.C.E.) wrote, "from the frequent drop, as the saying is, ever falling, even the stone is bored into a hollow."[25]

We find a parallel to this in Job 14:19: "The waters wear the

stones." Again, it is from a Judaic source that we learn of the legend which probably gave rise to this proverb familiar to most Greeks today. The story goes that Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph (2nd century B.C.E.) once noticed a stone at a well that had been hollowed out by the drippings from the buckets, whereupon he remarked, "If these drippings can, by continuous action, penetrate this solid stone, how much more can the persistent word of God penetrate the pliant, fleshly human heart, if that word be presented with patient insistency."[26]

There are many parallels in Hebrew and ancient Greek writings on the wisdom of a few words. In his drama, *Orestes* (line 638), Euripides (480-407 B.C.E.) has Meneleus say, "there are occasions when silence would be better than speech." In *Ajax* (line 293), Sophocles (496-406 B.C.E.) has Tecmessa say "Silence is the grace of women." In *Agamemnon* (line 548), Aeschylus has the leader of the chorus say, "Sole cure of wrong is silence, saith the saw." And the stoic Zeno (335-263 B.C.E.) is credited with saying, "The reason that we have two ears and only one mouth is that we may hear more and speak less."[27]

Turning to our Judaic sources, in the tractate Megilla 18a we read, "the best medicine of all is silence," and, again, "a word is worth a sela (coin), silence two selas." In Pessahim 99a we read, "silence is good for the wise; how much more so for the foolish." In *Ecclesiasticus* 20:5, Ben Sirach writes, "one keepeth silence and is counted wise, and another is despised for his much talking." My father expressed this as, "superfluous words induce blame." Occasionally he varied it by saying, "use a few words so that they will be of value."

Another modern Greek proverb my parents often applied to instruct us children is, "The camel cannot see its own hump," meaning that a man sees everyone's faults but his own. Euripedes wrote, "He healeth others but himself with sores is covered,"[28] which is very close to the proverb in the tractate Negaim 2:5 in the Babylonian Talmud, "A man may examine all leprosy signs except his own." We also find this in the New Testament, when Jesus says, "Physician, heal thyself" (Luke 4:23).

My father warned against quarrelling by saying, "Quarrels cause poverty," or, with more emphasis, "Strife causes either orphanhood or death." Phocylides (6th century B.C.E.), the Greek gnomic poet of Miletus, wrote (sent. 78), "Most helpful is persuasion, but strife begets strife." The ancient Hebrew parallels are many. In the tractate Sanhedrin 7a of the Babylonian Talmud we read, "Strife is like the aperture of a leakage; the aperture widens so the stream of water increases," and "Strife is the plank of a bridge; the longer it exists the finer it becomes." Elsewhere in the same section (102b) is, "He who gives vent to his wrath, destroys his house." In Proverbs

17:4 the parallel is, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention before the quarrel break out." In *Ecclesiasticus* 28:8, Ben Sirach writes, "Keep far from strife and sins will keep far from thee."

Another proverb, frequently quoted by Greek-speaking Jews and known to most Greek natives, is "My neighbor and not my brother," or "God and my neighbor." The closest parallel I found in ancient Greek is the anonymous, "Better is a friend at hand than a brother at a distance."[29] In Proverbs 27:10 it is stated more clearly, "Better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off."

Similar to this is the modern English proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," which has its modern Greek equivalent in "Better one in the hand than waiting for ten." In Aesop's fable, *The Nightingale and the Hawk*, the hawk tells the nightingale who begs him to spare his life, "I would be a fool if I let go the food on hand and went off after some I had never seen." In Hesiod's fragment 234 we read, "He is a fool who leaves a certainty to pursue an uncertainty." Theocritus (310-245 B.C.E.) wrote in *Idyll* 11:75, "Milk the cow that is near, why pursue the one that flees?" The ancient Hebrew parallel is in Ketuboth 83b: "A young pumpkin in hand is better than a full grown one in the field."

Once in Ioannina I heard Greek parallels to the modern English proverb, "Don't judge a book by its cover," delivered under tense circumstances. A Jewish father rebuked his eighteen year old daughter for refusing to accept the man, twenty-five years older than she, the father had chosen as her husband by saying, sharply, "Don't look at his crooked foot, look at his straight luck." He used another version to support his point, "The donkey is not a cripple because he has large ears." Aesop said to his master, "We must look to the mind, and not to the outward appearance."[30] The ancient Hebrew version is in *Pirke Avoth* 4:27, "Look not upon the flask but on what it contains."

The evils of an ubridled tongue are marked in the modern Greek proverb, "The tongue has no bones, yet it breaks bones." There are many ancient Greek equivalents. Menander (342-290 B.C.E.) rendered it, "The tongue hath many to destruction led."[31] Phocylides (6th century B.C.E.) wrote, "The tongue is a sharper weapon than the sword."[32] Theophrastus (372-287 B.C.E.), Aristotle's successor in the Peripatetic School, wrote, "Sooner trust an unbitted horse than an unbridled tongue."[33] The ancient Hebrew sources are closer to the modern Greek version. In *Ecclesiasticus* 28:17, Ben Sirach wrote, "The stroke of the tongue breaketh the bone," and in Proverbs 25:15 the version is, "A soft tongue breaketh the bone."

To encourage us to trust our own judgement, my mother often said, "Ask counsel of thousands, but do not abandon your own thoughts." Apollodorus (Epidcazonenos fr. 8), the Athenian

grammarian and historian who was active in approximately 190 B.C.E., wrote, "Of all my kin, I am my only friend." At approximately the same time; Ben Sirach wrote in his *Ecclesiasticus* (37:13), "Do thou also take knowledge of the council of (thine own) heart, for thou hast no one more true to thee."

Two modern Greek proverbs deal with the educational aspects of mishaps: "Once bitten by a snake, now he is terrified by a piece of rope," and "Burned with porridge, he now blows at yoghurt." In his *Agamemnon*, Aeschylus has the chorus say, "Men shall learn wisdom by affliction schooled." In Aesop's fable, *The Dog and the Butcher*, the butcher, after discovering that the dog had stolen some meat, says that from now on he will be more careful. In the *Iliad* (Book XVII, l. 32), Homer writes "By the event is even a fool made wise." The ancient Hebrew parallel is in Midrash Rabbah Ecclesiastes 7:1, in which Rabbi Ben Levi offers the sententious remark demonstrating that mishaps often become lessons.

There are many modern Greek proverbs about money: "Money gets you into trouble and money saves you;" "He who has money in his purse can have fresh fish even in the mountain;" "You have money, you have a tongue;" "Money talks, money sings, money converses." Older Ioannina Jews often prefer to say this proverb in Hebrew: *Yesh mammon, yesh kavod* (you have money, you have honor). Parallels can be found among the ancient Greek writers: Menander wrote (sent. 32), "When a man is in trouble, friends stand aloof." Theognis (6th century B.C.E.) states in one of his maxims, "If you are rich, you will have friends, but if you are poor you will have but few, and will no longer be the good man you were before."[34] Zenobius (2nd century B.C.E.) wrote "Boil pot, boil friendship" (IV, 12). In *Medea*, Euripides has the tragic heroine tell Jason (l. 554), "For well I know that every whilom friend avoids the poor." There are also ancient Hebrew parallels, of which Proverbs has two: "The poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich have many friends" (14:20) and "Wealth addeth many friends, but as for the poor, his friend separateth himself from him" (19:4). In Midrash Rabbah Esther 2:4 we read, "If you have not money, no one respects you."

Some of the modern Greek proverbs I heard at home and which are familiar to most Greek natives seem to be directly related to Judaic sources. One of these is: "As the mother, as the father, so the son and daughter," which sometimes is rendered: "Mother and daughter, a key and its chest." The ancient Hebrew version is in Ezekiel 16:44: "As the mother, so her daughter." There is another parallel in Ketuboth 63a: "One sheep follows the other, and a daughter follows the mother." The Ketuboth also has the legend which may have given rise to this proverb. Rabbi Akiba had married his wife, Rachel, when he was a poor shepherd, and their daughter

followed her mother's example by marrying Ben Azzai when he was unknown and poor. The Hebrew says, "Ewe follows ewe" (since Rachel means ewe), but the meaning is that "a daughter's acts are like those of her mother." What we generally hear in English is, "Like father, like son."

Another Greek proverb reflecting a Judaic moral principle is: "Do a good deed and cast it on the seashore." The Hebrew version is in Ecclesiastes 11:1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days."

Another modern Greek proverb found in a Judaic source is: "Don't ask the doctor, ask the sufferer." One of my Ioannina informants explained this proverb by saying that if, on a fast day, a doctor advises his patient to fast because there is nothing wrong with him but the patient still feels weak and ill, you listen to the patient and not to the doctor. The ancient Hebrew source is in the tractate Yoma 83a from the Babylonian Talmud: "A sick person is fed at the word of experts, and if no experts are there, one feeds him at his own wish."

A pithy statement found in Midrash Rabbah Kohelet 7:9, an interpretation of Ecclesiastes, evolved into a modern Greek proverb. The statement is, "If a man spits into the air, it will fall on his face." The proverb I heard at home is, "If you speak against your house, it will fall on you and crush you." I often heard the positive version as well: "If your house esteems you, the whole world esteems you."

Another modern Greek proverb which seems to be closely connected with a Judaic source is the question, "Why is your eye gouged out so deep?" The speaker answers his own question: "Because my brother took it out." A parallel proverb is found in Micah 7:6: "A man's enemies are the men of his own house."

Several folk expressions dealing with mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, familiar to all Greek natives, have parallels in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Judeo-Spanish. The version I heard most often is, "The groom cannot become a son, nor the bride a daughter." Another expression, probably used to avoid hurting the feelings of an in-law, is, "I say it to the window so the door will hear it," meaning the mother said it to her daughter so her daughter-in-law could hear it. The folk proverb spoken to deride this prejudice states, "All the cakes that come out wrong are made by the bride."

Several ancient Hebrew sayings about the evil eye are expressed in modern Greek proverbs. In Proverbs 23:6 we are warned, "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye." In Midrash Rabbah Leviticus 26:9 we read that Saul cast an evil eye upon David after he had dressed David with his clothes and seen that the clothes fitted David. In Midrash Rabbah Numbers 12:14, we read of a king who, when about to give his daughter in marriage, gave her an amulet and

told her, "Keep the amulet upon you so that the evil eye may have no power over you any more." At home I often heard the expression, "May no evil eye see you." We also say, "Spit so you will not be bewitched." Spitting has a superstitious connotation which neutralizes the power of the evil eye.

In *Ecclesiasticus* 33:21, Ben Sirach wrote, "For it is better that thy children ask of thee, than that thou shouldst look to the hand of thy sons." The modern Greek proverb is, "One father can feed seven children, but seven children cannot take care of one father."

A modern Greek proverb used to instruct children to prepare ahead of time is "Sensible children prepare their food before they are hungry." Other versions are: "Light your candle before night overtakes you" and "The good householder is seen in winter." The best known ancient Hebrew source is in Proverbs 10:5: "A wise son gathereth in summer," but there is another parallel in the Abodah Zara 3a, a tractate of the Babylonian Talmud, in the form of a question and an answer: "He who took trouble (to prepare) on the eve of Sabbath, can eat on the Sabbath, but he who has not troubled on the eve of the Sabbath, what shall he eat on the Sabbath?"

The English expression, "They are as like as two peas in a pod" is, in Ioannina, "The pot turned over and found its cover." In Midrash Rabbah Leviticus 36:1 Rabbi Simon bar Yohai stated that heaven and earth were created in no other manner than that of a pot and its lid.

The Ioannina Jews prefer to say a number of proverbs in Hebrew, which I include here to demonstrate, once again, that the Romaniote Jews most frequently refer to their Judaic sources. Our English expression, "Every dog has its day," has its counterpart in *Pirke Avoth* 4:3: "*ein davar sh'ein lo makom ve ein Adam sh'ein lo shaa*" (everything has its place and everyone has his day). Another proverb from *Pirke Avoth* (11:5) advises conformity to established custom: "*al tifrosh min hatsibur*" (separate yourself not from the community). This, as Dr. Cohen reminds us, was the advice of Hillel: "Do not be eager to be an exception," similar to Ketuboth 17a: "A man's mind should always be harmoniously attuned to that of his fellow creatures."[35] Another proverb Romaniote Jews prefer to say in Hebrew is in *Pirke Avoth* 2:6: "*en bur yere het velo am haretz hasid*" (an ignorant man is not afraid of sin, and an illiterate person cannot be pious). An alliterative and rhythmic proverb is "*bekiso, bekoso, bekaso*" (you can judge a man by his purse, his drink, and his wrath). "*Osnayim lakir*" (the walls have ears) derives from King Solomon's statement, "Don't curse the king in your mind, because walls have ears and your secret will be revealed." Another alliterative proverb is *tevet kai shevat, katse kamme rehat* advises us to rest during the months of January and February. (*Tevet* and *Shevat* are Hebrew for the months of January and February. *Katse*

kai kamme are Greek for "sit and do." *Rehat* is Turkish for "rest.") Usually business is slow during the winter months.

Many more parallels can be culled from the large storehouse of proverbs known by all Romaniote Jews, most of which are also known by Greek Christians. Clearly, both Jews and Greeks influenced each other, even from ancient times. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the Jews in Greece knew their Hebrew heritage well, and they clung to it with fierce and passionate love, which insured their survival as Jews.

If I am correct in assuming that at least some modern Greek proverbs derive from ancient Hebrew sources, then the Romaniote Jews have made a distinct contribution to Greek culture which Greek compilers of modern Greek proverbs ought to recognize. Even if my assumption is incorrect, the parallels do exist, and their existence is seldom noted in studies about Greek proverbs. Recognition of the relationship between these two cultures would create better understanding and respect between them.

Modern Greek Proverbs, Judaic or Classic in Origin? notes

1. N. G. Politis, *Studies on the Life and Language of the Greek People* (Greek), Vols. 1-6 (Athens, 1965). *See* also Ioannis Th. Kolitsara, *Proverbs of the Greek People* (Greek) (Athens, 1964), Vol. 1; Demetrios Loukatos, *Proverbial Fables* (Athens, 1972) and G. P. Savvantidi, "The Proverbs of the Partheniou Katziouli" in *Dodoni* (Greek) (Ioannina, 1972).
2. I. Ph. Beretta, *Collection of Modern Greek Proverbs with Parallels to the Ancients* (Greek) (Lamia, 1860).
3. Archer Taylor, *The Proverbs and an Index to the Proverbs* (Denmark, 1962), 52-61.
4. "Proverbs ancient and modern" in *Quarterly Review* (American Edition), July-October, 1868, Vol. 125, 113-129.
5. D. Loukatos, *La Bible dans le Parler Proverbial du People Grec* (unpublished dissertation, Paris, 1950), cited by R. Stromberg, "Greek Proverbs" in *Goteborgs Kungliga Vetenskaps-Ochs Vitterhets-Samhallet Handlinger Foljden*, 6, Ser. A. Band 4, No. 8 (1948-1953).
6. N. Politis, op cit.
8. C. G. Montefiore, "Notes upon the Date and Religious Value of the Book of Proverbs" in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1890, Vol. 11, 453.
9. *See* Introduction in the "Book of Sirach," translated by G. H. Box and W. O. E. Oesterly in *Bible and Old Testament Apocrypha*, in English, 1913 (Oxford, 1965), 269-270.
10. Julius H. Greenstone, "Popular Proverbs in *The Jerusalem Talmud*" in *Essays in Honor of the Very Rev. D. J. H. Hertz* (London, 1943), 187-201.
11. Saul Lieberman, "Greek and Latin Proverbs in Rabbinic Literature" in *Greek in Jewish Palestine* (New York, 1942), 154.

12. Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (translated from the German by Willard B. Trask) Bollingen Series XXXVI (New York, 1953), 219.
13. John Thomas Ashley, *Hebrew Influence Upon Civilization* (Brooklyn, 1894), 27-28, 30. *See* also Theodore Reinach, *Textes d'auteurs Grecs et Romains Relatifs au Judaisme* (Germany, 1963), 39, 40, 159.
14. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, 13:12, 1-16, quoted in EJ, Vol. 8, col. 300.
15. Ashley, op cit, 30.
16. Ibid, 32. *See* also *Encyclopedia Britannica Macropedia*, Vol. 10, 313c.; EJ, Vol. 8, col. 300; Ben Zion Wachalder, *Eupolemaus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Hebrew Union College, 1974), 82.
17. Ashley, ibid.
18. Curtius, 49.
19. Josephus, *Book I*, 893. *See* also E. Silberschlag, "The Earliest Record of Jews in Asia Minor" in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 52, part 1, April 1933, 67-71.
20. Hesiod, *Theogony*, translated by Richard Lattimore (Michigan Press, 1959), lines 597-604.
21. Aesop, "The Two Dogs" (Fable 92) in *Aesop Without Morals*, translated by Lloyd W. Daly (New York 1961), 133-134.
22. "Proverbs ancient and modern," *Quarterly Review*, American edition, July-October, 1868, Vol. 125, 117.
23. Callimachus, "Hymn to Demeter" (Hymn VI) in *Callimachus and Lycophron*, translated by A. W. Meir (Loeb, 1921), 135.
24. Choerilus, quoted by T. Benfield Harbottle in *Dictionary of Classical Quotations* (New York, 1958), 478.
25. Bion, "Idyll II," in *The Idylls of Theocritus, Bion, and Mosches*, translated by Rev. J. Banks (London, 1888), 176.
26. Ned Schechter, "Akiba in Legend," VI, 28, quoted by Louis Ginzberg in JE, Vol. 1, 308.
27. Zeno in *Diogenes Laertius* VII, 1, 19, 23, quoted in Harbottle (note 24, above), 407.
28. Euripides, fragment, quoted by Harbottle, 321. *See* also Aesop, Fable 78 (The Frog and the Physician).
29. Anonymous. Stobaeus Florilegium XVI, 151, in Harbottle, 407.
30. Aesop, in H. T. Riley, *A Dictionary of Latin and Greek Quotations*, 532.
31. Menander, cited by Hugh percy Jones, *Dictionary of Foreign Phrases and Classical Quotations* (Edinburgh, 1963), 140. *See* also Riley, 537 and Harbottle, 385.
32. Phocylides, in Harbottle, 441.
33. Theophrastes. *Diogenes Laertius* V, 2, 10, 39, in Harbottle, 358.
34. Riley, 534.
35. Hillel, quoted by Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud* (New York, 1949), 187.

Appendix

The following article by Rachel Dalven and Israel J. Katz was originally published in The Sephardic Scholar, *series 4, 1979-82, 84-101.*

Three Traditional Judeo-Greek Hymns and their Tunes

Among the Jewish communities of the Greek mainland, the least documented, musically speaking, are those of the Romaniotes or Greek-speaking Jews. Ioannina, the capital of the northeastern province of Epirus, remained the spiritual center of the Romaniotes throughout their history under the Romans (168 B.C.E.-330 C.E.); Byzantine Christians (330-1082); the Franks (1082-1204); the Byzantines from 1204-1328, followed by intermittent conquests of Bulgarians, Serbians, and Albanians until the Ottoman Turks conquered the city in 1431 and held it to 1913. Ioannina has continued to be the spiritual link for those who have survived the Nazi Holocaust.

However, a new dimension was added to Judeo-Greek history when, during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, thousands of Jewish exiles from the Iberian Peninsula settled along the eastern seaboard of the Ottoman Empire. There these Sephardim or Spanish-speaking Jews established a number of prominent communities, the most important of which was Salonika, a seaport in south central Macedonia, and Istanbul. The Jews of Salonika, whose total population outnumbered all the Romaniote communities in the Balkan peninsula, and whose cultural heritage was superior to the Romaniotes, succeeded in influencing the Greek-speaking communities to adapt the basic prayers of their own Romaniote liturgy to those of the Sephardic rite.

Leo Levi, an Israeli musicologist, has contributed what is perhaps the most recent attempt at a succinct overview of the Jewish musical traditions of Greece, i.e., Sephardic, Romaniote, and Italian. Along with Ioannina, he included such isolated communities as Trikkala, Arta, and Chalkis, where one could find traces of Byzantine musical and liturgical traditions. He also alluded to an indigenous hymnodic tradition among the Greek-speaking Jews "which developed independently during the 16th-18th centuries" (1971:col.882), albeit without offering any musical illustrations, notated sources, or additional bibliographical material. It appears more than likely that no such documentation for the Judeo-Greek musical tradition survived the many wars and invasions.

By coincidence, during the summer of 1970, two scholars visited Athens, where several Romaniotes - natives of Ioannina - were resettled in the capital. Both chanced to meet at the home of Victor

Borbolis, hazzan of the Ioannina Synagogue on Melidoni Street, where they simultaneously recorded several liturgical songs sung by him. One of them, Professor Rachel Dalven from New York, was gathering material for her forthcoming book, *The Jews of Ioannina*, while the other, Professor Amnon Shiloah of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, sojourned for the sole purpose of recording the extant sacred and secular musical traditions of the Romaniotes, Sephardic, and Judeo-Italian communities throughout the Greek mainland. Prof. Shiloah has already published some of the material which he obtained during that trip (1971, 1972a and 1972b), and he also produced an excellent recording entitled *Greek-Jewish Musical Traditions*, which includes but a sampling of the three aforementioned traditions.[1] Regretfully, he has provided us with only one recorded example of a Judeo-Greek item, namely, the hymn, "Ein addir kadonay," sung alternately in Hebrew and Judeo-Greek by the informant M. Cohen, a resident of the Romaniote community of Chalkis.

Before that memorable trip, Prof. Dalven was in possession of the book *Yianniótika Evraiká Tragoúdia (Ioannina Hebrew Songs)*, containing sixteen Judeo-Greek hymns transcribed, edited with critical notes, and published by Joseph Matsa (Ioannina, 1953). Matsa acquired the hymns from two manuscripts, whose dates were given as 5613 (1853) and 5630 (1870), respectively. The hymns, written in Hebrew characters, are characteristic of the Judeo-Greek dialect of that epoch, spoken by the Ioannina Jews at home and at work. Because the vocalization, i.e., vowel points, were missing in the first manuscript, Matsa took care to supply the accents according to the meter and pronunciation of the Ioannina idiom. He also transliterated the original hymns utilizing Greek characters for the Judeo-Greek and Latin for the Hebrew, which he then translated into Greek for Greek readers. This was indeed a most meritorious task, since the hymn texts were never before published.

According to Matsa, the hymns bore a threefold classification: (1) those whose verse and rhyme scheme followed the original Hebrew texts; (2) distichs which were purely Ioannina creations; and (3) hymns whose distichs alternate between Hebrew and Judeo-Greek (1953:12). Those hymns which exhibited the style of the liturgical poems by renowned poets of the Spanish Golden Age of Jewry (such men as Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Yehuda ha-Levi, and Abraham Ibn Ezra of the eleventh and twelfth centuries), Matsa regarded as the oldest (*ibid:*13). Some of the hymns are quite lengthy, comprising from four to six trochaic syllables, and employing the same rhyme scheme in each of their stanzas. However, Joseph Matsa maintains that the Ioannina Jews borrowed many folkloric elements from the Greek.[2] Moreover, he included an addendum, entitled *Epimetro*, four musical notations for three of the hymn texts (*ibid:*60-61).

Here indeed was a rarity: four melodies from the extant Ioannina tradition preserved in modern musical notation. At a glance, the melodies appear as hymn tunes, whose musical strophes carry not only metric time signatures with Italian tempi designations, but also their respective metronomical values, enclosed in parenthesis. Matsa shed no further light on the music, other than to mention their relationship to the demotic (vernacular) Greek poetry of Epirus.

Of the published melodies in Matsa's book, the first three hymns were sung by the late Anna Raphael, the last by Anna Matsa, Matsa's wife. All were notated by Anastaseos Remoundo. Yet, the only way to verify their hymn-like character was to seek out additional performances by other Judeo-Greek informants.

Fortunately, there reside in New York a number of Greek-speaking Jews, natives of Ioannina, three of whom we had the pleasure to record. From the outset it was extremely interesting to learn, upon interviewing our informants, that each could not recall tunes for texts other than those for which the musical notations were given in Matsa's collection. Thus, we were able to record additional renditions for the same three texts, and were afforded the opportunity to compare our transcriptions with the published notations, thereby gaining further insights into their performance, formal structure, the modal structure. Since we were not interested in obtaining variant texts, we provided each of our informants with the respective texts in question, recording only those for which they knew a tune.

What follows are some critical notes, a translation, and a musical analysis of the transcriptions of each of the three hymns in this study.

I. "Kína glóssa" ("Start to Speak O Tongue") (Matsa 1953:21-26)

This Purim hymn consists of fifty quatrains, which were derived from the Book of Esther. The hymn, known by its *incipit*, "Kína glóssa," was circulated widely, and young and old sang it at parties during the holiday of Purim. As Matsa explains (*ibid.*:), in olden days it was printed in a pamphlet with Hebrew characters; in more recent years it was printed in Greek, neither of which he was able to find. However, he made a more accurate transcription from a manuscript inserted in the pages of an old prayer book, preserved in the Municipal Museum of Ioannina. Both manuscript collections, from which these hymns were taken, are written in a clear hand, and have vowel points. Below is a translation of the first four quatrains.

Purim Hymn

Start to speak O tongue
of miracles unsung
awaken those who inertly recline,
make them inebriate with wine.

Eat, drink, in reveling delight,
in feasting and gladness and light,
forget not the All Highest,
make God's freedom manifest.

Forget not the poor brother,
send gifts to one another,
invite alike both rich and poor,
praise the Lord with voices pure.

Before Haman's blow could injure,
God himself prepared the cure,
and myrtle Esther reigned,
our liberty ordained.



Example 1: "Kína glóssa" (Matsa 1953:60)

A renotation (Ex.2a) of Example 1 provides a much clearer view of the formal structure, which is a quatrain strophe, ABCC. Each

melodic phrase is two measures long, and each carries its respective octosyllabic verse. The mode is unquestionably that of the Gregorian Hypomixolydian, based on the *finalis* ("final tone") *f*. By adding the major pentachord above the *finalis*, and the trichord below, the tune's *ambitus* ("range") equals a minor 7th. All but the initial phrase contain the characteristic cadence, comprising a descending Major 3rd (*a* to *f*); the initial phrase (A), although ending on *a*, appears to be linked gravitationally to the *finalis*, which is the initial tone of the succeeding phrase.



Example 2: "Kína glóssa"

Appendix

Mr. Sam Samuel's renditions of "Kína glóssa" (Exs. 2b and 2c) were recorded three weeks apart, i.e., on June 19 and July, 10, 1981, respectively. A closer glance at the musical transcriptions of each of his initial strophes bears out a similarity with the printed notation (Exs. 1 or 2a) in: 1) formal structure, with melodic variants in the third and final phrases; 2) modality, although with coloration on the third and seventh degrees in the third and final phrases; 3) *ambitus*, although Example 2c encompasses a minor 6th, since Mr. Samuel omits the lowest tone *d*; and 4) adherence to the basic cadential pattern.

It is also interesting to compare the metric schemes of both Samuel's renditions with the original notation (see Table 1).



Table I: Comparative metric schemes

While there is a significant difference in tempo, it is suggested that the metronomical designation for Example 1 (or #x. 2a) should be equivalent to an eighth-note rather than a quarter, as shown. The most striking feature of the comparison, however, is borne out by the ornamented melodic phrases in Mr. Samuel's renditions.

II "Yarabí" ("God") (Matsa 1953:45-47)

This hymn, which deals with the sacrifice of Isaac, is still sung in Greece today, and chanted during dinner given by the father in honor of the birth of his new born son, after the circumcision. The feast is called *salamatia* (possibly from he Greek phrase, *s'alla matia* "before other's eyes"). In the earlier manuscript, this hymn was found without vowel points; the newer manuscript has vowel points. The first verse of the hymn is the same as the Greek song in N. G. Politis's collection (Athens, 1914: Song 128).[3]

The Sacrifice of Isaac

God, You who dwell on the heights, and gaze on the earth below,
look not upon my sins, reckon not my sins to know.
Cast each of my transgressions into the bottom of the sea,
for the divine grace of Abraham who obeyed Thy decree.
Abraham underwent ten searching tests, these are not concealed,
to the seventy-two tribes his name is proudly revealed.
I will relate to you the tenth trial, a very harsh ordeal,
this is what happened to us, so very heartrending and real.
When Abraham was a very old man, God gave him a son,
he was a hundred years old, he loved the boy, his only one.
Thirty-seven years later, God ordered him to slay his son,
and he did not wish to alter God's wish, though he felt undone.
He rose up early in the morning, as it started to dawn,
he saddled his donkey, though miserably sad and forlorn.
And he loaded his dear son Isaac with the wood he had cleaved,
his mother's only dearly loved child, for whom now he grieved.
And he carried in his hand both the torch and the knife,
he led him up the mountain, said nothing of taking his life.
He also took two other young men with him; with his own young men,
who understood not a thing, they resembled the donkeys then.
He lifted his eyes upward, he looked all around,
he saw the spot in the distance, a fire shining on the mound.
He also asked Isaac, to find out if he had seen it too.
The boy answered him respectfully as he was wont to do.
"I see a fire in the mountain, and a canopied cloud,
there at the navel of the earth, a peak select and proud."
Then he took his son and they went off together as a pair,
he left behind his two young men and the donkey down there.
On the way Isaac asked, "Without the lamb where are we going?
I behold only the wood and fire, but no burnt offering."
To Isaac's question, Abraham heartbreakingly replied,
"Son, the lamb for a burnt offering, God himself will provide."
When Isaac and Abraham came to the spot God had selected,
he knelt the boy down at once, Isaac looked calm and collected.
Abraham was an old man, the boy, a brave and obedient lad,
he stood and bound his son, as if it was a ram he had.
He built the altar, laid the wood in order, to God's command,
laid Isaac on the altar, seized his knife, stretched forth his hand.
And just as he was about to slay his son, had marked his neck,
the angel of the Lord called out in terror his hand to check.
"Touch not the lad," he cried, "stretch not thy hand to take his life.
Do nothing whatever unto him, only throw down the knife.
For now I know for certain, since you have been put to the test,

you are a God-fearing man, offering thy son, you are blest."
Abraham lifted his eyes and beheld a ram caught
by his horns in the thicket, it was his to take he thought,
For the ram was also created at the end of Creation,
ready for Abraham to slaughter, a divine obligation.
And now the moment had come, and Abraham went for the ram,
but Satan had tied it to the trees, and held fast the ram.
As soon as he saw Abraham, he knew the ram was the one
brought there for Abraham to sacrifice instead of his son.
The ashes of the ram, and his two horns as well,
God the Master took them, placed them before him to foretell,
That these two horns of the ram would symbolize our salvation,
they were divinely preserved for our final liberation.
The one shofar was blown together with a lightning streak,
then at the time when our Torah was given at Sinai's peak.
And the other shofar is blown to make us totally free,
we supplicate God to see it soon, this is our fervent plea.
And the hide of the ram became the prophet Elijah's belt,
who will come one day soon, heralding the news that God had dealt.



Example 3: "Yarabi" (Matsa 1953:61)



Example 4: "Yarabí" (Matsa 1953:61)

Two rather intricate melodic verses are given for the hymn "Yarabí" (Exs. 3 and 4). A renotation of both melodies (Exs. 5 and 6) will prove useful in dissecting their internal strophic components:

Example 5 exhibits the formal structure, A(a + b) A(a + b) B(b'+ c + d) B'(b"+ c + e), in which the latter phrases B carry repetitions of the third and fourth verses, respectively, and which differ only in their cadences. The exponential motive b appears in all the phrases, and it can be seen that, in total, five motives are distinguished in the melodic structure. Inasmuch as the tune comprises a minor tetrachord, built on the *finalis a* and *beginning* on the subtonium *g*. The overall ambitus is a Perfect 5th.



Example 5: A renotation of Example 3



Example 6: A renotation of Example 4

Example 6, on the other hand, contains eight internal motives, with repetitions of b and d. The tune's structure, seen as a quatrain strophe, ABCD (Ex. 7a), agrees with Mr. Hametz's rendition (Ex. 7b; recorded on July 5, 1981), except that in the former tune the last two phrases are repeated, both melodically and textually.





Example 7:"Yarabí"

Both examples 7a (=Ex. 6) and b are based on the same *finalis f*, although Example 7a is in a mixed Major/Mixolydian mode as expressed by the tone *e*, notated both as a raised *subtonium* [*subfinalis*] and as a flattened-seventh degree. Example 7b comprises a Major hexachord. There is no doubt that both examples are related, particularly from the second through final phrases, where they also share the same cadential tones. Note also that Mr. Hametz's rendition is one-and-a-half times faster.

III "Mi m'aphínes tin psychí mou" ("Do Not Abandon My Soul") (Matsa 1953:55-56)

This hymn, which is appropriate for the night before the circumcision, is popularly known as the "Three Keys: Birth, Rain, and Resurrection." It is still sung today. Matsa explains that the technical motif of this hymn consists of fifteen-syllable trochaic verses similar to the fifteen-syllable rhyming verses. It is written in distichs followed by a Hebrew refrain. The acrostic reveals the name of the composer, Yitzhak Shemuel, who, it appears, was childless, and who longed to leave an offspring. Matsa found the hymn in both the first and second collections, as well as in a small eight-page pamphlet, which attests to the hymn's popularity. In the first collection, the Hebrew had no vowel points; in the second, they were included. The hymn was published by Abraham Danon under the title, "Un hymne Hébréogrec," in *Revue des Études Juives*, 75:89-92 (Paris, 1922).

Do Not Abandon My Soul

God of mine, You know that my desire is related to Thee,
Do not abandon my soul in this world, this is my plea.

Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
All my days, from my youth, sorrow and privation have found me,
I have overcome all, one sorrow alone still crushes me.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
Thy compassion will console me with an offspring at my side,
So my name will not be lost in this world where I am denied.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
I cried out loud from the depths of the earth, out of the dense dark,
God of mine, the three keys are in Thy hand, Thine the divine spark.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
You heard the cry of the barren woman, You opened her womb,
This is the first key, to bless her with child, and make her life bloom.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
From Thy heights, You will open for us Thy heavenly treasure,
Our rains in their season will pour down in plenteous measure.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
At the resurrection You will open the graves of the dead,
As the prophet predicted: then my spirit by Thee will be led.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
I believe in the Lord, in Moses and in his divine law.
Brought down to us from the skies, I read and reread it with awe.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.
Free us for Thy sake, and we will say Hallelujah to Thee,
God of mine, from Thee we await the day to be truly free.
Living and Merciful God, trustworthy King.



Example 8: "Mi m'aphines tin psychi mou" (Matsa 1953:60)



Example 9: A renotation of Example 8

Again, resorting to a structural renotation (Ex. 9) of Example 8, light can be shed on some interesting melodic relationships, in both the initial strophe and refrain. Taking g[underline] as *finalis*, the mode is clearly the natural minor, and the tune begins on the *subtonium*. Phrase A is repeated, phrase B repeats the text of phrase A, and phrase C carries the second textual hemistich, in the manner

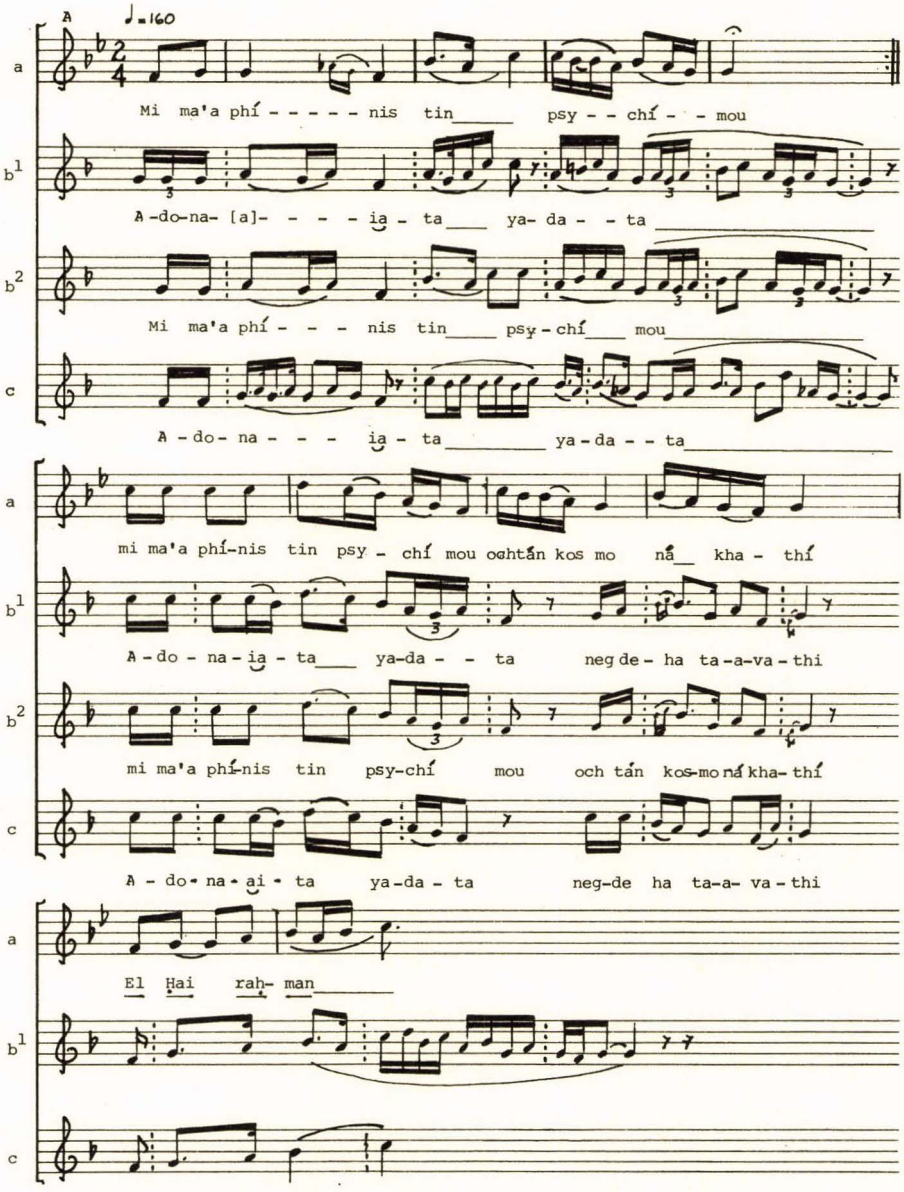
AABC
aaab

The initial strophe contains three basic motives (a, b, and c).

The Hebrew refrain, "El hai rahman melek ne'eman," is broken up in a somewhat similar manner, i.e., the text "el hai rahman" is repeated three times, followed by "melek ne'eman," whose scheme can be depicted as

DDEF
cccd

Also notice that the combined phrases E comprise four measures, while phrases E and F each contain two. Like the initial strophe, there appears to be greater ornamentation in the repeated phrases in contrast to the more condensed tune-text relationship in the latter phrases.


A
♩=160
a
Mi ma'a phí - - - - - nis tin psy - - chí - - mou
b1
A-do-na-[a]- - - - ia - ta ya- da - - ta
b2
Mi ma'a phí - - - nis tin psy-chí mou
c
A - do- na - - - ia - ta ya-da - - ta
a
mi ma'a phí-nis tin psy - chí mou ochtán kos mo ná kha - thí
b1
A-do - na-ia - ta ya-da - - ta neg de - ha ta-a-va - thi
b2
mi ma'a phí-nis tin psy-chí mou och tán kos-mo ná kha- thí
c
A - do- na - ai - ta ya-da - ta neg-de ha ta-a- va - thi
a
El Hai rah- man
b1
c



Example 10: "Mí m'aphínes tin psychí mou"

By comparing the renditions of Mr. Joseph (Ex. 10b; recorded on July 5, 1981) and Mr. Samuel (Ex. 10c; recorded on June 19, 1981) with the notated example (10a or 9), one will immediately notice how elaborate (highly melismatic) theirs are. They agree in their cadential tones with the textual stanza, although Mr. Joseph deviates considerably in the first cadential phrase (E) of the refrain, and somewhat in the second.

The most interesting feature of Joseph's and Samuel's renditions is their treatment of the bilingual text, Hebrew and Greek. Mr. Joseph alternates between the Hebrew [Heb.] and Greek [Gr.] text in the following manner, albeit his performance was not consistent.

ABCCBC	Refrain	AABCBC	Refrain	AABCBC	Refrain, etc
a a b a a b		c c c d c d		c c c d c d	
Heb. Gr.		Heb.		Gr.	

Mr. Samuel sang the hymn:

AABCABC	Refrain	ABCABC	Refrain, etc.
a a a b a a b		b c d b c d	
Heb. Gr.		Heb. Gr.	

The tempo designation given for the printed notation (Ex. 8 or 10a) is most doubtful in view of Joseph's and Samuel's renditions. In their performances, the initial phrases (A) were rendered somewhat rubato, the B and C phrases rather metrically strict, and the refrain strophe with drawn-out individual phrases.

In conclusion, had transcriptions been made of the entire performance of each of our informants, together with more detailed analyses, we would have been able to provide far greater insights concerning the Janina tradition in terms of oral transmission. What we have offered here is but a perfunctory glance at an important Diasporic tradition, one for which very few notated musical examples have been preserved. Yet we were most fortunate in being able to verify three tunes of three Judeo-Greek hymns, to witness that their continuation in oral transmission (performance) was indeed imbued with the characteristic ornamentations of generations past, together with an adherence to the melodic structure and cadences (an important element of modal structure), and with the assurance that the notations inscribed in Joseph Matsa's invaluable study were nothing more than skeletal.

Notes

1. Ethnic Folkways Records FE 4205 (New York, 1978). See I. J. Katz's review of this recording in *Ethnomusicology* 27(1) (1983), 143-53.
2. For an informative essay, rich in bibliography, concerning the borrowing of Greek folklore among the Sephardic Jews, see Samuel G. Armistead, "Greek Elements in Judeo-Spanish Traditional Poetry," *Laografia* 32:134-64 (Athens, 1979-81 [1982]). Prof. Katz identified a number of popular Greek melodies that were taken over as contrafact tunes by the Sephardic Jews in his paper, "Sephardic Balladry in the Context of Greek Folksong Scholarship," which he presented at the Modern Language Association Annual Meeting (San Francisco, 1979) and which he is preparing for publication.
3. Profs. Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman were most kind in allowing us to contrast the Greek version of *The Sacrifice of Isaac* with their translation of an unedited Judeo-Spanish version (collected from the informant Sra. Luna Farache, 78 years old, in Tetuán, Morocco on August 7, 1962):

God in heaven, Abraham,
God in heaven, worthy Isaac!
Nine tests did God give
to our father Abraham.
And to complete the ten,
a dread thing did he demand:
"Give me your son, Abraham,

give me your son, worthy Isaac.
You will make of him a sacrifice
on the mountain, as I command."
With all his heart and soul
Abraham did obey.
Now father and son depart,
to the wilderness they depart.
And Sarah followed after,
a league and a half they'd gone.
"Give us your blessing, mother,
to the wilderness we depart."
"You have my blessing, both,
may you come back safe and sound."
Now father and son depart;
the boy was loaded with wood.
And they went up the mount,
Isaac to his father spoke:
"Where is the ram, my father,
for I do not see it bound."
"You, Isaac, are the ram,
for that is God's command."
"If that is God's command,
then do not fail to obey.
Father, bind my feet,
and, father, bind my hands.
I do not wish to sin
at the moment of my death.
Father, cover my eyes,
so I do not see your grief."
With the cord of the kindling wood,
he bound him hand and foot;
and with a purple sash,
he covered up his eyes.
Now he's about to strike him,
but still he delays the blow.
He heard a voice from the heavens,
to Abraham it did call:
"Stop, Abraham, stop,
do not kill worthy Isaac!
For God of all the heavens
has tested you well enough."
A bearer of evil news
went off to speak with Sarah:
When Sarah heard this news,
She fell down in a swoon.
And the bearer of evil news
Went off to speak with Abraham:
"Abraham, if only you knew
what befell today through your fault.
Regarding Sarah, your wife:
she fell down in a swoon."

Appendix

Now father and son return,
shoeless, in hooded capes.
With a hundred silver marks.
they purchased for her a shroud.
And in the Hebron field,
there they laid her to rest.

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Abbreviations

BNJ - *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbucher*
CJ - *Conservative Judaism*
CMH - *Cambridge Medieval History* EJ - *Encyclopedia Judaica*
EORAE - *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*
GOTR - *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*
JE - *Jewish Encyclopedia*
JHS - *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JJS - *Journal of Jewish Studies*
JMGSA - *Journal of the Modern Greek Studies Association*
MEE - Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια (Large Greek Encyclopedia)
MM - Miklosich, F, and Muller, J., *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*
MPG - *Migne Patrologie Graeca*
PAAJR - *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
REJ - *Revue des Etudes Juives*
SP - *Speculum*
SS - *Sephardic Scholar*
THTR - *The Harvard Theological Review*

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Rae Dalven

Dr. Rae Dalven was born in Preveza, Greece to parents who were born and raised in Ioannina. This book draws upon her own family experience, her repeated visits to Ioannina (four of them before World War II), and her study of the Ioannina community for twenty years.

The Greek-speaking Jews of Greece, the Romaniotes, have suffered both neglect and indifference from modern scholars. Neither Ashkenazi nor Sepharadi, they have maintained traditions and customs stretching far back into antiquity. They are, in fact, a tangible contact with the world of Hellenistic Jewry, which was the matrix in which Christianity was born and developed and out of which great rabbis and scholars influenced Jewish life throughout the Balkans and even Europe in the Middle Ages. This fine work by Rae Dalven, herself a Romaniote, is a much needed initial work on not only the Romaniotes but on the life of the once quite significant Romaniote community in Ioannina. It is a little known and badly recorded world and one that has all but vanished into the past. One is hopeful that, through the work of Dr. Dalven, young scholars may be inspired to further study and document other Romaniote communities in Greece.

N. Stavroulakis, Director, The Jewish Museum of Greece.

