



**THE HOLOCAUST AS LOCAL HISTORY:**

**PAST AND PRESENT OF A COMPLEX RELATION**

Thessaloniki, Greece, June, 13-15, 2008

*An international conference organized by the Civil Wars Study Group and funded by the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, Paris*

The conference seeks to examine one of the most crucial aspects of the Jewish Genocide, the way in which it was implemented in specific local contexts and in interaction with local communities. The focus will not only be on the actual events of the Genocide but also on its aftermath. The conference will take place in Thessaloniki, Greece, a city of great symbolic importance to Sephardic Jewry.

Until recently, local contexts were a relatively understudied aspect of the Genocide. It took many decades to realize that many 'ordinary' people were involved –in a variety of ways- in the Genocide, and that their role was much more significant than previously thought. The Holocaust historiography has developed a broader agenda that looks into the role of actors such as collaborators, bystanders, local churches, resistance organizations, and others, in their diverse participation in the genocide or the rescue of Jewish populations.

Looking back at the Holocaust and dealing with its most immediate consequences proved to be a complicated endeavor in postwar Europe. National priorities, antisemitism, the Cold War, a multitude of local conflicts and interests, and the constraints of collective memory among others, complicated and even impeded the return of surviving Jews in the places they were expelled from. Furthermore, the public perception and collective memory of these events became fragmented, ambivalent, and selective. In certain cases, silence and amnesia seem to have been the decisive elements of the (non) recollection of the Jewish presence.

The conference invites original (i.e. not previously published) contributions dealing with these "local" aspects of the Holocaust. The organizers would especially like to invite papers from Eastern Europe and papers of interdisciplinary and comparative nature. Applicants

should send their 300-word abstract, a one-paragraph CV and any queries no later than the 1st of September of 2007, by e-mail in [salonica.conference@gmail.com](mailto:salonica.conference@gmail.com)

The conference languages will be English and Greek. Successful applicants will be notified to send their written version of the paper in advance. The conference organizers will cover all reasonable expenses of accommodation and travelling to Thessaloniki.

### Possible thematic clusters and panels:

- The role of Nazi administration and the Nazi policies in the local level.
- The role of local collaborators in the Genocide. The term collaborator is perceived in a wide way, varying from official puppet governments to local authorities and officers and to paramilitary armed groups. It also involves the ideological sympathizers and the pro-Nazi press.
- The role of bystanders, i.e. the neighbor/'neutral' population.
- The role of churches.
- The role of resistance movements.
- The 'other' as enemy: The role of antisemitism/anticommunism as a rhetoric and practice, as 'popular' and 'ideological' antisemitism/anticommunism.
- The 'other' as a friend: solidarity, rescues and local specificities.
- The importance of properties confiscation during and after the Holocaust. The local interests and the juridical fate of properties claiming.
- Problems of Jewish repatriation in postwar European local societies.
- The Holocaust historiography in western and eastern Europe: similarities and differences. The National historiographies and the Holocaust.
- The memory politics in international, national and local context. Ambiguities and discrepancies of local memories with official national and Holocaust narratives.

#### **The scientific committee**

Bartov Omer, Brown University

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Judt Tony, New York University

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#### **The organizational committee**

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