



Telling Histories

images, memories, narrations

Children after the Holocaust: The Formation of Jewish Identity in Postwar Greece

Children's experience of the Holocaust and its devastating consequences on their bodies and psyches has been the object of inquiry of mainly psychological scholarship. Yet, an investigation of the consequences of the Holocaust on children's subjectivity and of the specificities of childhood memories in constructing the history of the Holocaust has not received adequate attention in historical research. Children's lives were marked by the fear of living under the sentence of death and by the stigmatization of Jewish identity both by German anti-Semitism and by the widespread anti-Semitism in postwar Greece. Thus, the reconstruction of Jewish life was



Children's centre Thessaloniki. End of the 1940's

inextricably linked to a process of identity formation which had trauma at its heart. There were specific questions related to children's lives: How was it possible to be Jewish and not be persecuted? How was it possible for a positive conceptualization of Jewish identity to exist? Using oral testimonies conducted with child survivors, the presentation will explore the ways in which the experience and the incorporation of the Holocaust in

memory shaped distinct subjectivities in postwar Greece. Parameters such as age, family history, and geographical background created distinct biographical trajectories and histories. The study distinguishes three age-groups of children in order to analyze the mnemonic structures of the Holocaust and the creation of communities of memory formed by the interrelationship between memory, family and history.

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