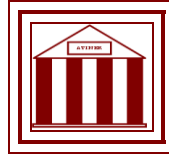


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**Thrice a Stranger: Hellenism,
Kemalism, Zionism**

**Saffo Papantonopoulou
PhD Student
University of Arizona
USA**

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Thrice a Stranger: Hellenism, Kemalism, Zionism

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Abstract

In a meeting of the high-ranking government officials held shortly after the 1967 war, Israeli Minister Ze'ev Sherf deployed the trope of "population exchange" to narrate both the massive migration of Iraqi Jews to Israel and the massive displacement of Palestinians in 1948. The 1923 Greek-Turkish population exchange was invoked as a precedent, and Prime Minister Levi Eshkol mentioned that he himself had been in Thrace in 1926 to witness the resettlement of refugees. In this paper, I explore the nexus of Turkish, Greek, and Israeli nation-state building through an exploration of the common logic of "population exchange." Focusing on the migration of Jews from Salonica to Israel/Palestine, I aim to trace some of the complex networks of displacement that produced the ethnic geographies of the present-day eastern Mediterranean. Drawing from literature in history, anthropology, media studies, and memory studies, I contend that seemingly antagonistic ethno-religious nationalisms in fact often agreed when it came to the relocation of people. These relocations simultaneously served to create ethnically homogeneous nation-states while also creating racialized class differentiations within each state which were necessary for the production of modern capitalist labor regimes. Resisting the logic of comparison inherent in most nationalist narratives of population exchange, I aim to uncover alternative forms of narration and memory which seek to respond to the trauma of mass displacement in ways which resist nationalism.

Keywords:

Introduction

Israeli historian Tom Segev describes a discussion on the subject of Palestinian refugees from 1948 held by high-ranking Israeli government officials a few days after the 1967 war:

“Minister of Industry and Commerce Ze’ev Sherf believed that Israel should begin quiet negotiations with foreign countries, with the aim of settling [Palestinian] refugees ‘overseas.’ ... [Prime Minister] Eshkol also favored the overseas solution. ‘There has been a *population exchange*,’ he said... ‘*We got population from Iraq: we got a hundred thousand Jews. They’ll get a hundred thousand Arabs. It’s the same language, the same standard of living, there’s water and there’s land.*’ ... When Minister Shapira objected ... Begin intervened: “*In Greece they took out Turks who were born there and that was as part of an agreement.*” Eshkol quickly agreed, adding that he himself had witnessed the resettlement. This had occurred some four decades earlier, in 1926, when Eshkol (then named Shkolnik) had traveled to Greece to learn about the resettlement of 600,000 Greek refugees from Asia Minor. *It was ‘an enormous and interesting project,’ he wrote at the time, and he assumed it could be instructive in the context of Jewish settlement in Palestine.*” (Segev 2007, 9, Emphasis Mine.)

In a footnote, Segev remarks that Prime Minister “Eshkol received letters from ordinary citizens demanding that he empty the territories of their inhabitants and reminding him of the population exchange between Turkey and Greece.” (*Ibid*, 20.)¹

The fact that the Greek-Turkish population exchange, as a kind of discursive trope, could be reassuringly invoked by Israelis, underlies the perniciousness of the nation-state model, in general, and its genocidal tendencies. It points to the larger hegemony of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, negotiated between Greece, Turkey, and the colonial powers, which officiated the “population exchange” between Greece and Turkey. The fact that Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol was there, and recalled the immense human suffering on both sides as an “interesting project,” speaks volumes. But so does the fact that individual Israelis would have been aware of said exchange, and would have viewed it as a model for Israeli state-building. It also underlies certain discursive commonalities between the Greek, Turkish, and Israeli nation-states. In this essay, I wish to explore the nexus of these two so-called “exchanges” of population—the Greek-Turkish population exchange on one hand, and the Nakba and mass migration of Mizrahi/Sephardi Jews to Israel on the other.

In the present essay, I draw from several secondary sources to discuss the discourses and practices of both so-called “population exchanges.” I contend that there are strong parallels to be drawn between Hellenism, Kemalism, and Zionism, although the bulk of the essay focuses on Hellenism and Zionism. In the first section, I draw from the work of Ella Shohat, writing about Mizrahi Jews in Israel, and argue that her framework can be a useful analytic lens for understanding some of the experiences of the refugees of the 1923 population exchange. I contend that the Greek, Turkish, and Israeli nation-states projects can all be seen as states which have been conceptualized as the “ingathering” of a diaspora. In the second section, I focus on the dispossession of

¹I would like to acknowledge my friend and colleague, Dr. Tom Pessah, for bringing this particular article—which inspired the writing of the present essay—to my attention. Without his help this paper would never have been written.

Salonican Jews after 1912, and their migration to Israel. I rely heavily from secondary research by Katherine Fleming on this subject.

Tracing these different paths of migration and displacement, one risks reproducing, historiographically, exactly the narrative structure which one seeks to deconstruct. I wish to compare without falling into the logic of “comparison” which has been used to justify forced displacement and ethnic cleansing. The risk of becoming implicated in the very discourse one is critiquing, is a risk that cannot be avoided in the present essay. Aware of the many risks of reduction associated with any simplistic attempt to compare what are, in actuality, *many* different histories of migration and displacement— some forced, some voluntary, many occupying a troubling place in between— for the purpose of this essay I choose to focus mainly on the production of discourse around displacement. I believe that the discourse of “population exchange” should be studied as a narrative trope— one which, often retroactively, seeks to interpellate different kinds of migrants and refugees into a narrative structure in which their displacement is counterposed with another's. Allow me to clarify that the material circumstances surrounding the different migrations discussed in this essay were very different, and I do not want to fall into the Zionist trap of “comparing” the Nakba with the migration of Arab and Sephardic Jews to Palestine/Israel. Suffice it to state that, while the present study does not focus on the Nakba, Palestinians represent the *only* group, of *all* those dis/relocated groups discussed in the present essay, who have endured over half a century of statelessness, ongoing dispossession, and unceasing military brutality at the hands of the Israeli state, which massacres Palestinians with impunity. The violence of Intra-Jewish racism within Zionism and the Israeli settler state must be understood as built upon a foundation of Palestinian displacement.

Thrice a Stranger

In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed between Greece, Turkey, and the colonial powers. Coming at the end of over a decade of war in Anatolia and the Balkans, the treaty was supposed to finally “settle” the conflict between Greece and Turkey. The “Turks” in Greece were to be “exchanged” for the “Greeks” in Turkey. Who was “Greek” and who was “Turkish,” according to the treaty, was to be defined on the basis of religion alone. Two exceptions were to be made— the Muslims of Western Thrace, and the Orthodox Christians of Istanbul, were to remain. Muslims from Greece and Eastern Orthodox Christians from Turkey who had already left were forbidden from returning. The result of the treaty was considered a “success,” by the imperial powers, while, for those who were “exchanged,” it was experienced as a disaster. The treaty would often be hailed by western powers as a model for the creation of coherent nation-states in the 20th century.

Drawing from this example, Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol, in the passage quoted earlier, narrates the migration of Iraqi Jews to Israel as an “exchange” in which, in return, Palestinian refugees would be relocated to Iraq. Instrumental to this notion of “exchange” is the reification of a Jewish/Arab binary— “Jews” were “exchanged” for “Arabs.” As Ella Shohat argues, it was through the “historical shift” of Zionist colonization that “Arab-Jews... suddenly became simply ‘Jews.’” (Shohat 2006, 205) In order for Zionists to narrate the dispossession of both Palestinians and Iraqi Jews as an “exchange”— hence, pitting the suffering of one group against another— Iraqi Jews had to be discursively positioned as part of a homogenous category of “Jews,”

while Palestinians had to be positioned as part of a homogenous category of “Arabs”: “It’s the same language, the same standard of living, there’s water and there’s land.” In other words, it shouldn’t matter to Palestinians whether they are in Palestine, Iraq, or any other Arab country; Arabs are Arabs, according to the logic of Zionism, and Jews are Jews. Similarly, the 1923 population exchange was carried out in the name of religion, with Turkish-speaking Christians defined as “Greeks” and Greek-speaking Muslims defined as “Turks.”

I believe that the work of Ella Shohat can be useful as a theoretical framework for making sense of the convergence of these two so-called “exchanges.” Shohat begins her 1999 essay, “The Invention of the Mizrahim,” with a reference to a 1998 news article which “claimed that the Institute for Biological Research in Israel was developing a biological weapon, a kind of ‘designer toxin’ or ‘ethnic bullet’ tailored to attack Arabs only.” According to Shohat, “The report, unconfirmed but relayed in the London *Sunday Times*, mentioned in passing that the research involved Iraqi Jews.” Shohat remarks that this “relatively ‘minor’ aspect of the article,” the apparent use of Iraqi Jews as research subjects for a racialized biological weapon, points to “some of the paradoxes of Arab Jewish identity in Israel.” As she argues, “On the one hand, the Israeli establishment regards Arab Jews as irremediably Arab— indeed, that Iraqi Jews were allegedly used to determine a certain toxin’s effect on Arabs suggest that for genetic/biological purposes, at least, Iraqi Jews *are* Arabs. On the other hand, official Israeli/Zionist policy urges Arab Jews... to see their only *real* identity as Jewish.” (Shohat 1999 5)

There were similar contradictions in the ways the refugees of the 1923 exchange were positioned in both Greek and Turkish society. Writing about the arrival of Mikrasiate refugees in Greece, Penelope Papailias (2005) writes that:

“Although automatically granted Greek citizenship upon arrival, [Mikrasiate] refugees were initially perceived as problematic citizens whose cultural difference, lack of a fixed home, and disconnection from local communities were potentially threatening to the social order. Indeed, for the first five years following the ‘Catastrophe,’ groups of refugees traveled restlessly around the country trying to decide on the best place to live. During the course of their resettlement... the refugees were gradually incorporated into the Greek state system. Many also would adopt Hellenized versions of their names ... to replace common Turkish suffixes with Greek ones (i.e., from –oglou or –li to –idis or –adis).” (129)

She documents the animosity against Asia Minor refugees, greeted as “Turkish seed,” or “baptized in yogurt.” (95) Attitudes such as this were common on both sides of the Aegean, as the “Greeks” who were kicked out of Turkey were greeted as suspiciously close to “Turks” when they arrived in Greece, while the “Turks” who were kicked out of Greece were greeted as suspiciously close to “Greeks” when they arrived in Turkey. Bruce Clark documents the, at times, bizarre nature of this interpolation into the nation-state— as villages in northern Macedonia switched from Greek-speaking to Turkish-speaking, as Greek-speaking Muslims were deported, and Turkish-speaking Christians were arriving (Clark 2006)

What Shohat (2006) identifies as a pinnacle of Zionist historiography, the “unidimensional categorization, with all Jews being defined as closer to each other than to the cultures of which they have been a part,” (which is vital to the notion of “ingathering”) and the “notion of the unique, common victimization of all Jews everywhere and at all times,” which produces a historiographic narrative of a

“morbidly selective ‘tracing the dots’ from pogrom to pogrom” and “hijacks the Jews of Islam from their own geography and subsumes them into the history of the European-Ashkenazi shtetl,” can also find its parallels in Greek nationalist narratives vis-à-vis Anatolian Christians. While, at the time of their arrival, “an intractable Greek-Turkish enmity was not yet seen as the ultimate cause of the crisis,” according to Papailias, this would change over the course of the 20th century, as, during the Greek civil war, and then the right-wing Junta, the refugees would be recast from “vermin” to “victim,” as a “public discourse on the so-called lost homelands... of Anatolia would finally emerge” as “the ‘Catastrophe’ had been recast as an archetypal story of *national* loss that opposed ‘Greek victims,’ stripped of undesirable signs of linguistic and cultural difference, to ‘Turkish subjugators.’” (Papailias 2005, 95-6) In Turkey, refugees, especially those who did not speak Turkish, were assimilated through campaigns such as the “Citizen, Speak Turkish!” campaign, and the exchange was “excised from national history.” (İğsİZ 2008 458)

Although the nationalist uses and abuses of history in the three states differ, I believe the notion of “ingathering”— whether real or imagined— is central to the production of national identity in all three nation-state projects. The violence of forced displacement, then, serves to hail individuals— as either Greek or Turk, Arab or Jew, belonging or non-belonging. The example provided by Ella Shohat— showing the ambiguity of the position of Arab Jews vis-a-vis Zionism— and the fact that refugees of the population exchange, on both sides, were hailed both as “Greeks” in Turkey and “Turks” in Greece, shows us some the ways in which lives were intersected by multiple, contradictory, nation-state projects. “Exchanged” people were hailed, multiple times over, by differing and contradictory ideologies. The *exclusion* of Muslims from Greece from the Greek nationalist project went hand-in-hand with their *inclusion* into the Turkish nationalist project, and vice-versa for Orthodox Christians from Turkey.

Population exchanges had the effect of creating a new privileged class in all three states— those who had an un-problematic relationship to place, i.e., Greek-speaking Greek Orthodox Christians from within the borders of the modern Greek state. Throughout the eastern Mediterranean, those whose religion, language, and geographical point of origin were *not* rendered somehow contradictory, became a new privileged class. We could call them the *non-relocated*. While in the case of Greece, the privileged class of the population exchange were those Greeks who were already in their “homeland,”— the *dopoi*, or locals— the opposite is true for Israel. The privileged class in Israel, those whose relationship to “belonging” in the settler-colonial “homeland” is the most uncomplicated, are European Jews, not Palestinian Jews or non-Palestinian Arab Jews, and certainly not (non-Jewish) Palestinians. As Shohat argues, “While for Jews from the Muslim world the Land of Israel/Palestine was continuous with their cultural geography, the Eurocentric construct of the State of Israel on that land required discontinuity.” (Shohat 2003, 58.) While in both Greece and Turkey, those who were *closest* were the most privileged (i.e., Greek-speaking Greek-Orthodox Christians from within the borders of the Greek state and Turkish-speaking Muslims from within the borders of the Turkish state), in Israel those who were the *furthest* were the most privileged (i.e., European Ashkenazi Jews.) This inversion is tied to the cultural-geographic “discontinuity” of Israeli settler colonialism, which rested upon the dispossession of Palestinians. Israel, as a settler-colony nation-state, could be called a “nation-state inside-out.”

The geographical transformations taken out in the name of colonization and nationalization in the three states all shared a certain relationship to the creation of

nationalist historiography. Zionism, Neohellenism, and Kemalism all represent the creation of modern “European” nation-states out of former Ottoman land. For this reason, it should not be surprising to find a parallel in some of the ways Ottoman history is related to in these different nation-states. Just as Zionism sought to de-Orientalize the Jew (Hochberg 2007), Neohellenism sought to de-Orientalize the Greek (Gourgouris 1996), and Kemalism sought to de-Orientalize the Turk. All three nation-state projects deployed a variety of techniques in creating a westernized/modernized space and national subjectivity out of former Ottoman lands, although the particularities of each project were rather different. The Kemalist project was faced with the particularly difficult project of constructing a new national past which was not Ottoman. The Zionist project was and is a settler colonial project which entailed the massive dispossession of the indigenous population of Palestine.

Greece and Israel, unlike Turkey, however, had certain advantages which resulted in certain commonalities between the Greek and Israeli nation-state projects which are not exactly paralleled in the Kemalist project. Greece and Israel had the advantage of being able to position themselves as a historical point of origin for the west—Hellas and Eretz Yisrael were both nationalist imaginaries which harkened back to a point of origin which the western powers could imagine as their own. Kemalism had to contend, much more directly, with western orientalism, and could not invoke an imagined western past the way Hellenism and Zionism could. Nonetheless, Kemalist projects such as the Turkish history theory or the Sun language theory could be compared with the imaginary of ancient Hellas or Eretz Yisrael in this respect.

Both Greece and Israel have deployed archaeology as a national practice, digging away the Ottoman/ Muslim/ Palestinian past in order to excavate an ancient (pre-Islamic) past (Hamilakis 2007, El Haj 2001). The de-Orientalizing of Zionist modernity involved the ethnic cleansing, and ongoing dispossession of Palestinians (combined with the exploitation of Mizrahi/Sephardi labor which has enabled the Israeli state to remain largely independent from Palestinian labor), while the de-Orientalizing of Neohellenism involved both de-Orientalizing the Greek (invoking a return to an ancient, pre-Islamic Hellenism, as admired by the West), along with projects of both assimilation and dispossession of ethnic and religious minorities in Greece. Zionism positioned both the Greek and the Turkish as oriental (although not as Oriental as the Arab), while Hellenism position both the Muslim and the Jew as oriental.

From Salonica to Palestine

One group which, in particular, experienced many of the contradictions implicated in *both* of these different nation-building projects, are the Sephardic Jews of Salonika. While the Greek-Turkish population exchange made no reference to Jews—in fact, in its equation of Greekness with Christianity and Turkishness with Islam, it literally writes them out of *both* states—it had a tremendous impact on Jews in both countries. It is towards Salonikan Jewish experience of these two “population exchanges” that I wish to turn now. For this section, I draw heavily from secondary research: in particular, Katherine Fleming's *Greece: A Jewish History*, in order to bring this work into dialogue with the writing of Ella Shohat.

In 1492, the Spanish crown banished the Jews of Spain. The convergence of the Reconquista of the Iberian peninsula, the beginning of Spanish colonialism in the Americas, and the beginning of the Spanish inquisition, has often been remarked upon

by historians and activists. The significance of “the other 1492,” as it is often referred to, in Jewish and Muslim historiography cannot be overstated. While many Spanish Jews would flee to the new Spanish colonies, many others traveled eastward, towards various destinations in the Mediterranean, and, especially, the Ottoman empire. Sultan Beyazid II seized upon this opportunity, and welcomed the Jews into the Ottoman empire. Salonika, a city which still had not recovered economically from the Ottoman invasion 62 years earlier, was an ideal site, and many Jews were resettled there, where they quickly became a significant part of the city’s economy. The Sephardic resettlement there also had the effect of assimilating the local, indigenous, and far less economically powerful Romaniote Jewish community. (Mazower 2006, Shohat 2006.) For centuries, Salonika would remain a thriving Sephardic city, earning the title “Jerusalem of the Balkans.” Salonikan Jews, for their part, had remained largely loyal Ottoman subjects. By the time of the 19th century, when the global rise of capitalism and nationalism radically transformed the ways in which notions of communal identity were expressed, leaders of the Salonikan Jewish community publicly identified strongly as *Ottoman* Jews, and did not, before the 20th century, think of themselves as “Greek.” This is in striking contrast to the indigenous, non-Sephardic, Greek-speaking Romaniote Jews (Fleming 2010.)

During the Balkan wars, “the [Sephardic] Jews had done what they could to resist the Greeks. Community representatives had told Kamil Pasha, the Ottoman commander, that Salonika’s Jewish banks would give generous financial assistance to the Turks if they would not give up the fight against the Balkan alliance.” (*Ibid*, 68.) Having prospered under Ottoman rule for centuries, Salonika’s Jews were rightfully wary of what life under either a Greek or Bulgarian state might look like for them. When support for the Ottomans did not work, as the empire retreated out of the Balkans, another idea was put forth: the internationalization of Salonika. This plan was supported by not only the Jewish community of the city, but also the Greek Orthodox and Dönme (Sephardic Jews who had converted to Islam in the 17th century as part of the Messianic cult of Sabbatai Zevi.) When this did not work:

“the defeat of the internationalization plan gave way to an interesting, if short-lived, Zionist hybrid... a new scheme: to create a politically neutral buffer state, with Salonika as its capital, that would ease tensions between Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia... This expression of ‘territorial Zionism’— the advocacy of the creation of a Jewish national home, but outside of Palestine— brought together multiple Salonikan factions, Jewish and not...” (*Ibid*, 69)

However, none of these projects could garner the support of international/Ashkenazi Jewish organizations, as Rena Molho remarks, “the paradox of asking the Central Zionist Organization to intervene on behalf of the Jews of Thessaloniki, and help them not to be the first to emigrate to Palestine,” fell on deaf ears. (*Ibid*, 70) Fleming remarks that “Just years after its invention, Zionism was already a movement paradoxically dependent on the misfortunes of Jews as much as responsive to them. Some Salonikan Jews, already for the most part opposed to Zionism, were bitter about the role it played in this penultimate attempt to free their city.” (*Ibid*, 69)

The worst was yet to come, however, as in 1917 there was a massive fire that destroyed a large portion of the Jewish quarter of the city, devastating a community already under serious economic strain. Adding insult to injury, following “the international urban modernization policies of the period,” using “as its template legislation passed following the San Francisco fire and earthquake of 1906,” the Greek

state forbade Jews from individually rebuilding their homes, as the Greek state wished to “Hellenize” the decidedly “‘Oriental’ and multiethnic” city. As a result, “During the brutal winter of 1918-19, 1,569 Jews died within a month.” (*Ibid*, 79) In other words, Jews were gentrified out of the city through the modernist project of “Hellenizing” the city following the disaster, and thousands died as a result.

The situation would deteriorate further a few years later, with the Greek-Turkish population exchange. The region of Macedonia in general, and Thessaloniki in particular, were chosen by the Greek state as a site to house the majority of the over one million Christian refugees from Turkey. As Papailias argues, “The influx of refugees proved such an important catalyst for Greece’s economic and demographic development and so transformed the political and cultural life of the country that many scholars consider 1922, not 1832, the real date on which the modern Greek nation was established.” (Papailias 2005, 93.) As the city took in the refugees, and deported its Muslim population, the balance of power shifted radically, as Jews and refugees found themselves economically pitted against each other. Both groups— Sephardim and Mikrasiates— were marginalized by the Greek state, and looked down upon by mainland Greek Christians. But mainland Greek Christians also singled out the Jews, blaming them for not showing enough hospitality towards the refugees. Meanwhile, the presence of the refugees in Thessaloniki had the effect of displacing the Sephardic hold over the city in which Sephardim had been economically hegemonic for centuries. In 1922-23, Jews were outright banned, by the city, from working in the port, and soon after “Ladino and Hebrew were banned from all public signs.” (Fleming 2010, 85.) This was made possible by the radical shift in the balance of power in the city, as a result Eshkol’s “enormous and interesting project” of forced displacement on an unprecedented scale, between the newly formulating Greek and Turkish nation-states. Meanwhile, many Sephardim migrated to either Turkey or Palestine/Israel. Fleming argues that the convergence of all of these factors, in the 20th century, resulted in turning the identity “Greek Jew” into a contradiction. I would argue that “Greek Jew” and “Turkish Jew” were made into contradictions by the exact same forces of nation-building which made “Greek Muslim” or “Turkish Christian” into outright impossibilities.

Where, exactly, was Zionism in all of this? The history of Zionist/Israeli involvement in the Aegean is older than the 1948 creation of the state of Israel, and even the 1923 official exchange itself. Soon after the 1912 Greek invasion of the city, Sephardic dock workers came to be economically displaced by Greek Orthodox workers. Katerine Fleming remarks that: “In response, Yitzhak Ben-Tzvi, the future president of Israel, traveled to Salonika to invite Jewish stevedores to come to work in the Jaffa port; Ben-Tzvi wanted to replace Jaffa’s Arab port laborers with Jews. About twenty took him up on the offer. Just as Greeks worked to establish dominance in the Salonika port, importing Greek stevedores to that end, Zionists, with similar motivation— to help establish Jewish control in Palestine’s ports— imported Jewish stevedores.” (Fleming 2010.) In other words, through the convergence of Zionism and Greek nationalism, the displaced became the displacers, and Jewish port workers found themselves “exchanged” from one former Ottoman port to another.

As Shohat demonstrates, it was in the early years of Zionist settlement of Palestine that the idea of importing Sephardic/ “Oriental” Jews into Palestine, to compete with (non-Jewish) Palestinian labor, became popular. According to Shohat, “in 1910, Shmuel Yavne’eli published in *HaPoel HaTzair* (The Young Worker, the official Organ of the Zionist Party of the Workers in Eretz Israel, later part of the Labor Party) a two-part article entitled ‘the Renaissance of Work and the Jews of the

Orient' in which he called for an Oriental Jewish solution for the 'problem' of the Arab workers." (Shohat 1988, 14). Yitzhak Ben-Tzvi's project of recruiting Salonikan Jews to relocate Palestinian dockworkers in Jaffa would have fit right in with this project. Ben-Tzvi would go on to become the Second president of Israel, and, "His interest in the Oriental Jewish Communities led to the foundation of the Ben-Zvi Institute at the Hebrew University, for the study of their history and literature." ("Izhak Ben-Zvi— 1884-1963: In Memoriam," 1963, 160.) In other words, while the convergence of Greek, Turkish, and Bulgarian nationalisms in the Aegean conspired to threaten the existence of the Jewish community of Thessaloniki, and while, for years, Ashkenazi-Zionist organizations declined to intervene in the Balkans on behalf of Salonikan Jews or other Balkan Jews (despite being urged to do so), Israel's Ashkenazi founders saw, in the plight of Salonikan Jews, an economic and political opportunity.

Hence, we can see a chain-reaction of displacement in the eastern Mediterranean— Muslims from Greece exchanged for Christians from Anatolia, Christians from Anatolia economically pitted against Salonikan Jews, Salonikan Jews relocated to displace Palestinians. What is remarkable about these historical convergences is the fact that, although mutually antagonistic as *discourses* (Greek nationalism as Islamophobic and Antisemitic; Turkish nationalism as anti-Christian; Zionism/ Jewish nationalism as Islamophobic and colonial), these nation-building projects seem to converge when it comes to rearranging people, especially those who find themselves living in the "wrong" country. The global hegemony of the nation-state model, combined with the colonial partition of the Ottoman empire, resulted in an abrupt and violent dismantling of the Ottoman system of religious co-existence which had existed for centuries.

As Fleming argues, Greek Jews in Israel have represented a kind of "in-between" racial category— between Mizrahi and Ashkenazi. But it was also in Israel that Sephardic Jews from Salonika *became* Greek. As Fleming demonstrates, it was only after 1912 that Salonikan Jews came to think of themselves as Greek. For a brief period— from 1912 until the Nazi invasion in 1941— there was a period of assimilation, in which the notion of a "Greek Jewish" culture began to emerge, despite the numerous hardships visited upon Salonikan Jews and other Jews in Greece. This brief period would come to a tragic end, however, as the vast majority of Salonika's Jews were exterminated in the Holocaust. Ironically, it was in the concentration camps, surrounded by Ashkenazi Jews, that Salonikan Jews came to be unproblematically "Greek" for the first time. One may see in the marginalization of Greek/ Sephardic Jews in Auschwitz (Fleming 2010, 147-165), one of the earliest material manifestations of what would become a regime of intra-Jewish racism. If Zionism is a colonial projection of European Antisemitism onto Palestine (Hochberg 2007), then perhaps it should not be surprising to see the beginnings of this Intra-Jewish racialization that would come to dominate Jewish Israeli society, in the death camps of Poland. It was through the "in-gathering" in both the Holocaust and then Israel that Salonikan Jews, along with other Jews from Greece, would become "the Greeks." Later, in the 1980s, Mano Avraham Ben-Yaakov, a Salonikan Jew who survived the Holocaust, would remark of the refusal of Ashkenazim to help Sephardim organized services for the high holidays of 1945, that it "was already then that the breach between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewry was forged." (Fleming 2010, 201-2)

In other words, in Greek Thessaloniki, it was Sephardic Jews' proximity to the Turk/Islam that made them unwanted in the new Hellenic state. As they were relocated, through a convergence of Hellenism and Zionism as national ideologies, in

Israel, it would be precisely their newfound Greekness that marks them as close to the Arab/ Islam. The *European* Greekness that had been denied to them in modern, Neohellenic Greece, would then turn into an *Oriental* Greekness that would racialize them in Ashkenazi-dominated Israel, in much the same way that Muslims in Greece were kicked out for being “Turks,” only to be called “Greeks” when they arrived in Turkey, and vice versa for Orthodox Christians in Turkey.

While, in theory, Greek nationalism, Turkish nationalism, and Zionism/ Jewish nationalism seem that they should be mutually antagonistic—and, certainly, Greek and Turkish nationalism, as discourses, are vitriolic in their disdain for each other—they each seem to converge when it comes to the relocation of people. There are certainly some major structural differences between the three, especially around the fact that Zionism, as a *settler* colonial project—unlike Neohellenism or Kemalism—was founded upon the genocide of the indigenous population of Palestine. However, all of these forces seemed to converge around the relocation of Salonikan Jews from Salonika to Palestine/Israel.

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