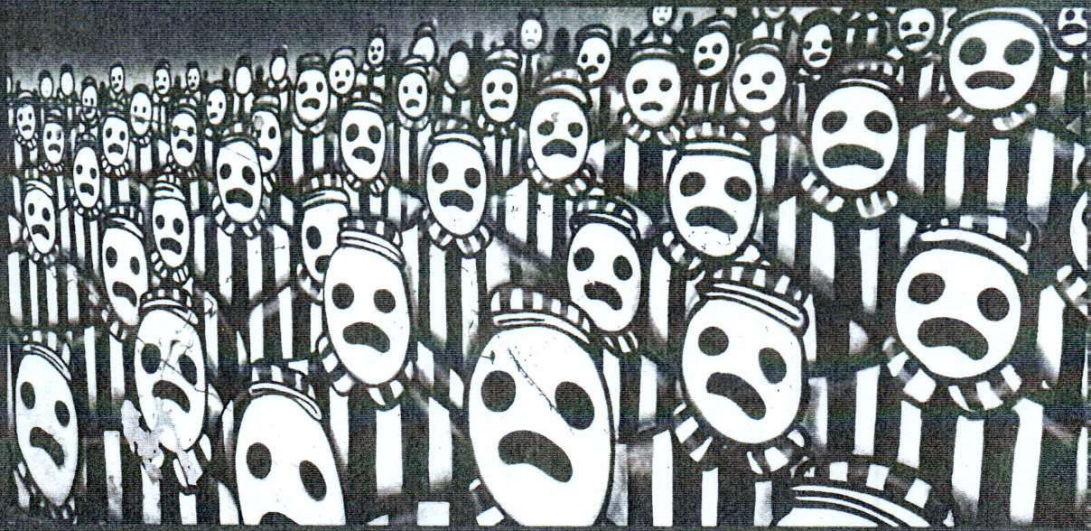Christian Voss / Sabina Ferhadbegović /
Kateřina Králová (eds.)

Memory Cultures
in Southeast Europe since 1945

SÜDOSTEUROPA-JAHRBUCH

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Memory Cultures in Southeast Europe since 1945

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Edited by
Christian Voss, Sabina Ferhadbegović
and Kateřina Králová

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Introduction

Memory studies as a multidisciplinary academic field has been growing over the last decades, not least due to the emancipation of oral history which as an alternative to traditional historical research in political and diplomatic archives picks up tabooed topics and the perspective of the deprivileged. In German-speaking countries, Lutz Niethammer's work on denazification in West Germany[1] as well as Aleida and Jan Assmann's memory research were ground-breaking for oral history. We interlace both lines of research in the contributions of this volume: on the one hand, various contributions take an approach that is not based on archival sources but empiric material derived from popular culture and field work, on the other hand, this volume offers a constructivist approach und highlights the socio-political contexts of memory production and medialisation.

Especially in the post-conflict communities of the former Yugoslavia, the competition of differing perspectives of the past becomes apparent in particular in the attempt, following Assmann[2], to transfer an inter-generationally formed communicative memory into a myth-building, canonical cultural memory of the public space. Widespread vandalism not only of street signs but also of memory sites and graveyards shows the clash of ethno-nationalist, nativist, post-communist and neo-national understandings of history in public debates.

Similar to the right-wing parties of East-Central Europe whose ethno-nationalist narratives of the post-reunification period claim higher numbers of Holocaust victims for their own nation than for the outgroups, most prominently Jews and Roma, Southeast European remembrance culture is formed by the wars of the 1990s and the renewed experience of ethnic violence, displacement and genocide. The post-Yugoslav discussion on war crimes of the 1940s as well as the 1990s reproduces the European discourse on the traumas of victims as well as perpetrators, and on both successful and failed reconciliation. Collective memory as a process creating a community reverts to the 19th century when the own nation was put on a pedestal and victimised at the same time.

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[1] Lutz NIETHAMMER, Die Mitläuferfabrik. Die Entnazifizierung am Beispiel Bayerns. Berlin, Bonn 1982. Lutz NIETHAMMER, Alexander VON PLATO, „Wir kriegen jetzt andere Zeiten". Auf der Suche nach der Erfahrung des Volkes in nachfaschistischen Ländern. Bonn 1985.

[2] Jan ASSMANN, Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen. München 1992; Jan ASSMANN, Communicative and Cultural Memory. In: Astrid ERLL, Ansgar NÜNNING (eds.), A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies. Berlin, New York 2010: 109-118.

Due to the right wing's success in the last years, the so far consensual reconciliation and negative culture of remembrance on World War II is also being undermined in Germany and "starting to disintegrate", as the then foreign minister Heiko Maas said on the occasion of Holocaust Memorial Day (27th of January) 2019. This populist tradition – Timothy Garton Ash spoke of "Berlusconization" in 2010[3], the discourse analyst Ruth Wodak of "Haiderization" in 2014 – is working all over Europe as a "politics of fear" and cultivating anti-immigration sentiments and Islamophobia.[4]

This, and the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, prompted us to organise the International Academic Week on Southeast European memory landscapes of the War and the Holocaust. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it could not take place in 2020 and was postponed to 4-8 October 2021 under the title of "Memory Cultures since 1945: German-Southeast European Entangled History" at the *Akademie für Politische Bildung* in Tutzing. In the event's programme the traditional hierarchisation of the guests as either speakers or listeners was dropped so that this volume also includes several first publications by young academics.

The first section consists of five contributions on the Holocaust's remembrance. Four of these have a micro-historical approach and reconstruct discourses in local milieus in Northern Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the contribution on Albania is devoted to schoolbook policy as the transition from a communicative to a cultural memory.

Esilda Luku summarises the results of her research stay as Humboldt Fellow at the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media in Braunschweig: The Albanian case study lends itself to political breaks and/or continuities. The author examines schoolbooks as "institutionalized collective memory objects" and the inter-generational implementations of narrative on the Holocaust. Luku is able to show that the memory of Albanian rescuers of Jews was only granted space after the educational reform in 2004. She chooses a qualitative approach ("the setting – the actors – the plot") and examines 90 history books from the 1980s, the transitional period and after the educational reform of 2004. While in the 1980s the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint is paramount in the depiction of the 1930s-1940s, the books of transition (1995-1999) place Hitler in the foreground and do not use the terms Holocaust or Shoah. Only the new textbooks (here 2017-2019) broach the topics of the Holocaust and biographies of Albanian rescuers of Jews.

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[3] Cf. Ruth WODAK, Majid KHOSRAVINIK, Dynamics of Discourse and Politics in Right-Wing Populism in Europe and Beyond: An Introduction. In: Ruth WODAK et al. (eds.), Right-Wing Populism in Europe. Politics and Discourse. London et al. 2013: XVII-XXVIII.

[4] Ruth WODAK, ‚Anything goes!' The Haiderization of Europe. In: Ruth WODAK et al. (eds.), Right-Wing Populism in Europe. Politics and Discourse. London et al. 2013: 23-38.

Kateřina Králová's contribution brings closer her field work on the Holocaust in Thessaloniki. She tells the story of the Baron Hirsch Quarter that lies next to the main railway station and was used by the Nazis as a transit ghetto for the deportations to Auschwitz in the spring of 1943. On the one hand, she depicts the quarter as a "city of ghosts" as Mazower called Thessaloniki in 2004, on the other hand, conversations on the ground show that Jews and the Holocaust do exist in the communicative memory of the local population. This official culture of remembrance is also ambivalent: Even though the Holocaust is made visible in an exhibition in the Jewish Museum in 2019 or as a large mural in 2021, the official discourse is still superimposed by the narratives of Greek suffering and innocence that competitively sets the Jews' victimhood against that of Greek non-Jews and ultimately reshapes the Holocaust into a Greek story.

Ioannis Stylianidis' case study in which he contextualises Greek populism and its xenophobia as an "antisemitism without Jews" yields similar results: He explains the larger political context of a local scandal about a memorial in the Northern Greek port of Kavala for the approx. 1,500 Jews that were deported and murdered in 1943 under Bulgarian occupation: When the memorial was uncovered in 2015, the mayor demanded the David Star to be removed (which it was not), then, a few weeks later, the memorial was vandalised. Stylianidis localises these events from May 2015 within the new governmental coalition of the left-wing extremist SYRIZA-party and the right-wing ANEL-party whose common denominator was the protest against the EU's austerity policy. He argues that there are historic discourse strands in the anti-communist agitation of the so-called *ethnikofrosyni*-politics after the Greek Civil War 1946-1949, but also in the confessional nationalism in Greece since the 19th century which has defined Orthodoxy and Greekness while excluding other religions.

Alexios Ntetorakis' contribution also deals with Northern Greece as he applies the concept of bystanders to the group of 50,000 people that fled from the Bulgarian occupied cities of Serres, Drama, Kavala, Xanthi, Komotini and Alexandroupoli to Thessaloniki in 1941. Ntetorakis used his status as an insider and carried out oral history with people from his hometown Xanthi in Western Thrace. Especially well-off people as well as the political and cultural elites were expropriated by the Bulgarians. These social elites used their networks and strong influence (e.g., in the Service for the Custody of Jewish Properties, YDIP) to be "compensated" with Jewish property in Thessaloniki which became problematic when the first Jewish survivors returned to the city in October 1944 and were soon after labelled as partisans and leftists, thus inner enemies non-worthy of restitution.

Michael Ilg examines the dynamics of the Holocaust remembrance by taking a look at the town of Brčko in the Bosnian corridor that was strongly contested in the 1990s. Since the town on the river Sava today officially belongs

to both Bosnian entities it serves as an excellent example for the break-up of remembrance-political consensus since the 1980s and its substiution with ethnonationally exclusive interpretations of history: Ilg shows this by means of six memorials for the massacres of local Jews committed by the Croatian Ustaše and the German occupiers in 1941. While the Tito-Yugoslav discourse of brotherhood and unity only spoke of ethnically anonymous "victims of fascism" per se, after the 1980s especially among the Serbs new discourses of victimisation became dominant that instrumentalise the genocide of European Jews and foregrounds the own ethnonational group as the victim.

The second part of this book deals with Yugoslavia and focuses on the mediality of everyday life in the production of loyalty: Popular music appears to be just as relevant as the work in veteran unions in the context of the Non-Aligned Movement or mass orchestrations such as sport events and collective hiking culture.

Claudia Mayr-Veselinović examines the popular music of (former) Yugoslavia which was far from unpolitical. Especially by reinterpreting old lyrics (such as from the old national anthem "Hej, Sloveni!", Engl. "Hey, Slavs!") references to the past are created when popular music was supposed to produce Yugoslav belonging. This holds true for the consolidation phase of Yugoslavia but also for the 1970s-1980s as the boom phase of Yugoslav pop and rock music. Bands such as *Bijelo Dugme* or Đorđe Belašević use the socialist partisan cult ("Comrade Tito, we swear to you", "Count on us", "Oh Yugoslavia", "The Yugoslav Woman") for a Yugoslav commitment free of irony which then becomes ironic in post-Yugoslav lyrics.

Vukašin Zorić places the founding myth of Tito-Yugoslavia (the common partisan battle of all Yugoslavs) in a new context, namely as an export product and ideological capital within the Non-Aligned Movement that was co-founded by Tito. Tito-Yugoslavia's self-image after 1944 was not the restauration of the inter-war period, but a revolutionary act. After the 1950s, it therefore lent itself as a postcolonial role model for public history, memorial and remembrance culture in India, Algeria, Ethiopia, but also for independence movements such as the PLO or the FRELIMO, the "Liberation Front" in Mozambique. The Tito-Yugoslav post-war experience was in demand not only as a remembrance narrative but also as a reproducible everyday practice in the Third World that was decolonising itself. The partisan union SUBNOR was an important pressure group in this context and as a foreign political player it was under the direction of Aleksandar Ranković himself, the third most powerful man in Yugoslavia.

Nataša Jagdhuhn also deals with the configuration of a monopolised and omnipresent remembrance culture of the partisan war under Tito. She shows aspects of media that made remembrance politics participatory and a physical

experience, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Hiking trails for the youth were prepared along partisan memorials, both for exercise purposes and to strengthen defence skills. Relay races through the entire country were organised for Tito's birthday. Important locations such as Sutjeska, the ultimate place for WWII partisan memory, were provided with the necessary infrastructure for education and recreation. Equivalent to democratic elements such as workers' self-management, this new culture of "pioneer marches" and "partisan routes" was supposed to create a new memory which then fell apart in the 1980s.

Roswitha Kersten-Pejanić uses the concept of banal nationalism to describe the nation state framework of contemporary Croatia. Based on her research of the semiotic landscapes in rural border regions and former war sites she argues that mindful and mindless symbolism should be considered just as much a part of everyday banal nationalism as other, more central state symbols and emblems.

The third section deals with conflicting perceptions of the past, coming to terms with taboos and the contestation of so far moral high grounds. The examples portrayed are set in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, as well as Greece and North Macedonia. When questioning the persisting narratives, right-wing and ethno-nationalist populism is a driving force today, as Törnquist-Plewa shows.

Anjeza Xhaferaj zooms in on the course of change in foreign policy under Enver Hoxha: How does the Albanian dictator portray the friendship respectively enmity to Tito-Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and China? Which role do World War II alliances play and how does the abstract interpretation of Marxism-Leninism correspond/correlate to the Albanians' cultural memory? Xhaferaj examines the Soviet-Albanian conflict until the break-up in 1960/61 in Enver Hoxha's works in which Hoxha describes Russia, the homeland of revolution, as decadent and revisionist and constructs small Albania as the well-fortified defender of real Stalinist communism.

Francesco Trupia takes a closer look at Bulgaria through the post-colonial paradigm and how there is still no consensus on dealing with the communist domestic policy as regards the Muslim minorities: Especially the 1960s-1970s resistance of Bulgarian-speaking Muslims (Pomaks) and the 1980s local resistance of the Turkish minority is suppressed and tabooed until today. The assimilation campaign of Muslims euphemistically called "Rebirth" attempted to implement a prohibition of Muslim names, escalating in the late 1980s with displacement to Turkey. Trupia outlines the continuity of the discourse on Orientalism from the late 19th century to the inter-war period and eventually throughout communism which stigmatised Islam as an obstruction to modernity. The retrenchment of cultural minority rights also implies the marginalisation of their memory culture so that in the Bulgarian case the Slavic and Christian-

Orthodox ethnocentrism can be placed in the trans-regional context of decolonised memories.

Barbara Törnquist-Plewa uses the examples of the authoritarian and right-wing populist governments in Poland and Hungary to show how their success – next to the simplifying division of the world into goodies (Us) and baddies (Them) – is built on historic identity and memory discourses in East Central and Southeast Europe: The remembrance policy of the Holocaust after 1989 shows how a cosmopolitan remembering and a mnemonic pluralism, a kind of litmus test for the EU accession candidates, was quickly replaced by a perceived competition of victimhood. This right-wing populism is based on discourses from the 19th century and the inter-war period regarding the own nation as the exclusive victim, an ethno-national myth apparently affirmed and reinforced during communism.

Grounded in urban and memory studies, Melinda Harlov-Csortán describes the culture of monuments on two central squares (Heroes' Square and Procession Square) in 20th century Budapest. She deals with the changeableness of these squares relating to aesthetic and memory-political messages as well as the highly ideological localisation of these monuments. On the one hand, the author shows the memory culture dedicated to fallen soldiers of WWI, the first Hungarian millennium (the anniversary in 1896), statues of Lenin and Stalin, World War II, before and after the Soviet invasion as well as after the resistance in 1956 as a top-down orchestration (especially the inaugurations), on the other hand, as practices of appropriation or rejection in the interaction with the inhabitants of Budapest.

Christian Voss analyses published memories of Slavic-speaking refugees of the Civil War from Northern Greece who were sent to the Eastern Bloc countries when the communist resistance collapsed in 1948-1949. Some of them returned to Yugoslav Macedonia in the 1950s. The loyalties of this group that was first subject to the Greek (and Soviet) Communist Party's cadre policy are diverse: While some of them identify as devoted communists, the film "Witnesses" (*Svedoci*) produced in Skopjė in the late Gruevski-era openly promotes hate speech against Greece and directly interferes with the name dispute on "Macedonia" with the neighbouring country.

The fourth section addresses the intersection of remembrance work and literature. Johanna Paul analyses the protests against awarding the Nobel Prize in Literature to Peter Handke in December 2019 as transnational memory activism which used the memories of victims of war and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina as resources of the mobilisation process. In her writing, Paul is not concerned with Handke overexpanding his artistic licence by openly denying the Srebrenica Genocide and siding with the (Bosnian) Serbs, but with the framing

and the protesters' motivations and strategies. Using the example of Swedish networks since the 1990s, she questions the negative interpretation of Western European diasporic Balkan communities' influence in the home countries. The protesters mainly argued against the political implications of genocide denial that runs contrary to Alfred Nobel's legacy. The continuing glorification of Serbian war criminals (such as murals of Ratko Mladić in the centre of Belgrade) unfortunately shows how right the protesters are.

Mihaela Gligor closes the volume with an analysis of a further text type with memory-political implications into consideration: She analyses so far unpublished private letters of prominent Jewish intellectuals from Romania, especially from the inter-war period. These sources stem from the correspondence between Theodor Lawi Löwenstein at the Center for Research on Romanian Jewry, Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The archive sheds a new light on how Romanian intellectuals were involved in fascism of the inter-war period (Iron Guard). Amongst others, she includes the famous historian of religion and philosopher Mircea Eliade who faced concrete accusations of antisemitism.

Berlin, Mainz and Prague in October 2022
The Editors

Antisemitism without Jews in Kavala during Populism

Introduction

Pfeifer and Günther point out that the destruction of cultural property represents a violation against the established order and that this act of violation extends to the cultural identities that are symbolically attached to a building, memorial or religious institution.[1] Following the rise of the nation-state, cultural heritage took on a new level of meaning and an awareness emerged of the "national ownership of cultural heritage" by the majority because of the power of cultural heritage to represent national identity.[2] But what would happen if a piece of a cultural heritage does not represent the national identity of the majority, especially when that identity is founded upon the ideology of a nationhood, religion and race? To ask these questions more precisely, this paper aims to examine why the Holocaust Memorial of Kavala (Greece) was vandalized during the period of the 2015 Greek referendum, an era which saw a sudden emergence of populism. It hereby aims to treat the above-mentioned case as a micro-study of a single unit, with the intention of understanding a bigger question, namely how antisemitism is expressed in Greece within a period of political crisis, such as during a referendum. According to Wahdan, during a referendum and in times of political protest acts of brutality and violence are committed in various aggressive ways, be it physical, symbolic, verbal, or online.[3] Therefore, the reason for studying this event is to show how antisemitism in Greece is expressed as an act of vandalism against the Jewish cultural heritage. In my approach antisemitism in Greece is the result of the ideological triangle of nationhood, religion and race, although in the examined event of the Holocaust Memorial in Kavala populism and the referendum played an important causal role at the time. If the event had not taken place during a period when populism was on the rise, this paper would

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[1] Hanna PFEIFER und Christoph GÜNTHER, ISIS und die Inszenierung von Kulturgüterzerstörung für ein globales Publikum, in: Gabi SCHKAG und Alex HECK (eds.), Visualität und Weltpolitik. Praktiken des Zeigens und Sehens in den Internationalen Beziehungen. Springer: Wiesbaden. 151-179, 153-154.

[2] Marie Louise Stig SØRENSEN and Dacia VIEJO-ROSE, Introduction, in: Marie Louise Stig SØRENSEN and Dacia VIEJO-ROSE (eds.), War and Cultural Heritage: Biographies of Place. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1-10, 4.

[3] Dalia WAHDAN, Singing the Revolt in Tahrir Square: Euphoria, Utopia and Revolution, in: Pnina WERBNER, Martin WEBB, and Kathryn SPELLMAN-POOTS (eds.), The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest: The Arab Spring and Beyond. Edinburg 2014, 53-66.

concentrate solely on the ideological triangle of nationhood, religion and race as a result of antisemitism in Greece. But, as populist politics was a reality in Greece during the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial, it is necessary to show how important this factor is in bringing about this microhistorical event.

Populism, as a political strategy, seems to increase the tensions within a society even more during the period of a referendum – a period which was dominated by protest and divided views on anti-austerity in Greece. The main reason for examining the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial of Kavala is to understand why Greece is characterized as the most antisemitic country in Europe and why this attitude seems to give rise to polarization in the populist era. This paper however is subject to two major limitations that could be addressed in future research. First, the study focused on antisemitism in Greece by examining the event in Kavala during the populist era, and in particular the period of the 2015 referendum, but it did not examine how the anti-semitic attitudes grew as a result of populism. It thus examines the consequences of populism by isolating a timeframe (or moment) of the expression of antisemitism in Greece. The second limitation concerns the fact that little scholarly attention has been paid to the relationship between populism and antisemitism. Thus, this paper will approach the topic based on the characteristics of populism to polarize the people and whip up socio-political and cultural division, taking into account the promotion of violence and acts that can be interpreted as an expression of antisemitism when aimed at the Jewish cultural heritage, such as a Holocaust Memorial.

My analysis will be based on online news articles in order to examine the event, as media are considered a field of scholarship and events presented there are detached from the locality of their origin.[4] In that way they become "transnational" or even "world" events.[5]

Methodology

The paper approaches the topic by drawing on the methodology of microhistory. Microhistory emphasizes the significance of single, often isolated, and often putatively "insignificant historical" events. Microhistory is typically focused on the individual rather than the group and on the "margins" of power rather than its center. As a result, microhistory does not function simply as local history, nor can its description be relegated to that of a case study, because microhistorians always look for answers to broader historical questions when studying individual

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[4] Theo JUNG and Anna KARLA, Times of the Event: An Introduction, *History & Theory* 60/1, (2021), 75–85, 77.
[5] Ibid.

incidents.[6] To put the point differently, microhistory is history placed in association with decisions, choices or even deeds that are involved at different levels from the international arena to the "grassroots" level.[7] Brown argues that microhistorical work aims to revive the "obscure" people and give them a voice within historical analysis.[8] By endowing a voice to "obscure" people of history, it seems that we also endow them with respect. In this vein, Zac and Bruttmann argue that "the microhistorical level also alters perspectives from the point of view of the victims".[9]

In this paper, we do not have a minority group of people or victims who, through analysis, can be given a voice, but a micro-historical moment: the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial in the city of Kavala. On this basis, the Holocaust Memorial seems to serve as a symbolic representation of pre-war Jewish life, the Holocaust past, and present-day remembrance in a particular region. But in addition, it is representative of the Jewish community of Kavala and every individual Jew of that pre-Holocaust community. Therefore, the vandalism of the Memorial, understood both symbolically and culturally, can be described as an attack on the symbolic past of the Jewish community of Kavala.[10] Throughout this analysis, I will attempt to show how the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial in Kavala – as an unobserved event on antisemitism in Greece – is expressed. As Levi points out, "…the unifying principle of all microhistorical research is the belief that microscopic observation will reveal factors previously unobserved... […] phenomena previously considered to be sufficiently described and understood assume completely new meanings by altering the scale of observation". [11]

Defining the Space: The City of Kavala

The city of Kavala is located in northeastern Macedonia, Greece. It is also known by two other distinct names: in antiquity, the name of the city was Neapolis (which in Greek means "new city") and during the Byzantine period it was

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[6] Julia Claire PUCCI, The First Italian Microhistory, *American Association of Teachers of Italian E,* (2019), Vol. 96, 461-489, 462.

[7] Claire ZALC and Tal BRUTTMANN (eds.), Microhistories of the Holocaust. New York 2016, 5.

[8] Richard D. BROWN, Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge, *Journal of the Early Republic 23.1* (2003), 1-20, 13.

[9] ZALC and BRUTTMANN, Microhistories of the Holocaust, 7.

[10] Christopher E. HUSBANDS, Racism and Racism Violence: Some Theories and Policies Perspectives, in: Tore BJÖRGO and Rob WITTE (eds.), Racist Violence in Europe. New York 2016, 113-127, 115.

[11] Giovanni LEVI, On Microhistory, in: Peter BURKE (ed.), New Perspectives on Historical Writing. Cambridge, 1991, 93–113, 97.

renamed Christo(u)polis ("city of Christ"). It is believed that the broader region around the city was the place where the apostle Paul first landed on his way to spread Christianity in Europe.[12] However, Kavala later became an Ottoman city where both Christians, Jews and Muslims cohabited.[13] In the middle of the 19th century Jews were involved in tobacco production, as the growth of the Jewish population in Kavala was connected with that industry.[14] On the eve of the Balkan Wars, the Jews of Kavala were estimated to number between 2300 and 2500 people, comprising almost 10% of the population of Kavala.[15] In 1918, following the end of World War I, many Jews were moved to Bulgaria and the neighboring town of Drama.[16] During the Second World War, Kavala was under Bulgarian occupation.[17] On March 3rd 1943, the Bulgarians rounded up the Jews in tobacco warehouses and transported them to Drama. From there they were transported by rail to the area of the Danube.[18] Many drowned in the river when the barges in which they were loaded overturned. The rest were taken to the camp and crematoria of Treblinka.[19]

The Event: The Holocaust Memorial of Kavala

In May 2015, the city council of Kavala cancelled the event scheduled for May 17th in which the unveiling of the Holocaust Memorial was due to take place. There was a strong reaction caused by this decision because the Star of David was engraved on the memorial.[20] According to the Central Jewish Council of Greece (KIS), the argument for the postponement of the unveilings was

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[12] Velika IVKOVSKA, An Ottoman era Town in the Balkans. The case study of Kavala. London/New York 2022, 7, 15.

[13] Ibid., 15-16, 134.

[14] Vasilis RITZALEIOS, Oi evraikes koinotites stin Anatoliki Makedonia kai ti Thraki apo ta mesa tou 19ou aiona mechri to B' Pagkosmio Polemo. PhD Dissertation Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Thessaloniki 2006, 22-23.

[15] Ibid., 25.

[16] Ibid., 34.

[17] Rena MOLHO, I exontosi ton Evraion stis voulgarokratoumenes perioches, at <https://independent.academia.edu/RennaMolho>, 14.08.2022.

[18] H Evraiki Koinotita Kavalas, *KIS*, at <https://kis.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=288&Itemid=111>, 15.08.2022.

[19] Shmuel SPECTOR and Geoffrey WIGODER (eds.), The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life Before and During the Holocaust, Vol. 2, New York 2001, 609, s.v. "Kavala".

[20] Kavala: Antidraseis gia tin anavoli ton apokalyptirion tou Mnimeiou Olokaftomatos, *Kathimerini.gr*, 16.05.2015, at <https://www.kathimerini.gr/society/815710/kavala-antidraseis-gia-tin-anavoli-ton- apokalyptirion-toy-mnimeioy-olokaytomatos/>, 16.03.2022; Thyella antidrason gia tin anavoli ton apokalyptirion tou mnimeiou Olokaftomatos stin Kavala, *iefimerida*, 16.08.2015, <https://www.iefimerida.gr/news/206947/thyella-antidrason-gia-tin-anavoli-ton- apokalyptirion-toy-mnimeioy-olokaytomatos-stin>, 16.08.2022.

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requested by the mayor on May 14th, i.e. three days earlier. It seems that the mayor requested the removal of the engraved Star of David on the memorial and that only a text with a commemorative message ought to be displayed.[21] Otherwise, the ceremony of the unveiling would have been cancelled. KIS expressed its disgust at this decision, which it describes as unacceptable in its announcement since the Star of David symbolizes the Jewish religion and culture. On the other hand, the municipality of the city argued in a statement that "[the city] … does not intend and does not wish to change the historical memory and the grim reality that its Jewish fellow citizens had experienced".[22] Among other things, this statement confirms that the unveiling of the Holocaust Memorial in memory of the 1,484 Greek Jews of Kavala ought to take place, in a central site of the city, with the honor appropriate to the memory of the fellow citizens who were lost, the presence of the relatives of the victims and with the necessary consent of the Central Jewish Council of Greece.[23]

As can be discerned from the above, the real reason for the demand of the removal of the Star of David is not clear as the official statement of the city of Kavala and the arguments of the KIS present two different perspectives on the issue. Nevertheless, what is clear from my research on different websites is that the entire controversy began with the argument that the symbol of the Star of David, which was originally engraved on the memorial, was considered to be very provocative. The political authorities in Kavala thus view a piece of insignia from the Israeli flag to be a provocation and desired its removal. The mayor proclaimed two days before the inauguration event that "…people are eager to protest for everything […] I tried to have the least reactions and to have social peace in the city".[24] Her statement was not clear, as she did not state concretely the main reasons for the city council's decision. The mayor's comments were disapproved by all political democratic groups in Greece, apart from Golden Dawn, following her decision to postpone the inauguration event[25]. After a

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[21] Zitisan apo tous Ellines Evraious tis Kavalas na vgaloun to "asteri tou David" apo mnimeio tou Olokaftomatos, *Orthodoxia.info*, 16.05.2015,
<https://orthodoxia.info/news/%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%84%CF%81%CE%BF-
%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%85%CE%B9%CE%B4-
%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B2%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%B1-
%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%85%CF%84%CF%89%CE%BC
%CE%B1/>, 16.8.2022
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Teliki lisi ala ellinika, *efsyn.gr*, 31.05.2015, at
<https://www.efsyn.gr/stiles/arheio/o-ios/28403_teliki-lysi-la-ellinika>, 16.08.2022.
[25] Golden Dawn (in Greek: Laïkós Sýndesmos – Chrysí Avgí) is a neo-fascist and ultranationalist political party in Greece. Political scientists have characterized Golden Dawn as a neo-Nazi, racist political organization. The party rose to prominence during Greece's economic crisis of 2009, becoming the third party in the Greek parliament in the January 2015

domestic and international outcry, the Holocaust Memorial was unveiled in Kavala on June 7th 2015 – a few weeks after the originally scheduled event. Thus, Kavala's victims finally received their recognition. Two weeks after its unveiling, on June 22nd 2015, the Holocaust Memorial was found vandalized by the city's institutions.[26]

Vandalism and Antisemitism

According to the 2014 global report published by the Anti-Defamation League, Greece is the most antisemitic country in Europe. The survey found that 69% of the Greek population agreed with antisemitic stereotypes.[27] The follow-up 2015 Global survey confirmed almost the same finding with an outcome of 67%.[28] Considering the fact that the Jewish community in Greece is relatively small, these results are perplexing. The most common expression of antisemitism in Greece involves vandalism followed by hate speech, Holocaust trivialization and conspiracy theories on social media and in the press.[29]

Scholars observe that the definition of vandalism is open to interpretation and that there is no general agreement on it.[30] The reason for this lack of consensus is the fact that vandalism does not refer to a single type of behavior, but the term rather describes a fuzzy concept that covers behaviors for which motivations are extremely different.[31] As a result, the psychological

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election. Its support has since then declined, and it failed to enter parliament in the 2019 election. See among others, Vasiliki GEORGIADOU, The Far Right in Greece, 1965-2018. Athens 2019; Antonis A. ELLINAS, Neo-Nazism in an Established Democracy: The Persistence of Golden Dawn in Greece, South European Society and Politics, 2015, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1-20, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2014.981379>; Gabliera LAZARIDIS and Mariangela VEIKOU, The rise of the far right in Greece and opposition to 'othering', hate speech, and crime by civil and civic organizations, Journal of Civil Society, 2017 Vol. 13, No. 1, 1–17,4, at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2016.1251032>

[26] Vevilosi Mnimeiou Olokaftomatos stin Kavala-antidrasi tou Kentrikou Israilitikou Symvouliou Elladas'', *Kavala News*, 23.06.2015, at < https://www.kavalanews.gr/2221-vevilosi-mnimeioy-olokaytomatos-kavala-antidrasi-   kentrikoy-israilitikoy-symvoylioy-elladas.html >, 16.08.2022.

[27] Anti-Semitism in Greece: A Country Report, *adl.org*, 01.07.2019, at <https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/anti-semitism-in-greece-a-country-report   >, 12.08.2022.

[28] Ibid.

[29] George ANTONIOU, Ellias DINAS, Spyros KOSMIDIS, Leon SALTIEL, Anti-Semitism in Greece Today. Thessaloniki 2017, 14-21.

[30] David CROW, Visible Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics in the Visual Arts. New York 2010, 111; Anna COLLINS, Graffiti: Vandalism or Art? New York 2018, 18.

[31] Gabriel MOSER, What Is Vandalism? Towards a Psycho-Social Definition and Its Implications in: Harriet H. CHRISTENSEN, Darryll R. JOHNSON, and Martha H. BROOKES, Vandalism: Research, Prevention, and Social Policy. Washington 1992, 50-59, 51.

characteristics of aggressive behavior need to be analyzed in order to determine the justification or otherwise of an act of vandalism.[32] The Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia defines vandalism as the "willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public and private property".[33] Feshbach defines vandalism as "an intentional hostile behaviour aimed at damaging environmental objects" and distinguishes between two types: targeted and untargeted.[34] Other scholars seem to agree that vandalism is a form of violence which arises from protests, political crises and authoritarian regimes.[35]

From the above it is clear that vandalism is a form of violence and aggressive behavior which can be viewed as an effect of a socio-political crisis. Therefore, the act of vandalism in our case is a clear expression of antisemitism, hostility against Jews, as well as desecration, as Holocaust Memorials are considered to be sacred spaces of the highest order in a civic society that symbolize the painful road to the Jews' national revival in the urban-secular sphere.[36]

According to the annual reports for "Acts against Religious Sites" in Greece, which is published every year by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, acts of vandalism in connection with Judaism are considered to be a common expression of antisemitism.[37] The event of Kavala cannot be excluded from this context, as antisemitism is a deeply rooted ideology in the country. Moreover, usually where there is antisemitism, there are likely to be other discriminatory ideologies and forms of bias. However, the Holocaust Memorial of Kavala can be said to be affected twice by an aggressive type of behaviour. The first expression was the demand of the local authorities to remove the Star of David, and the second was the act of vandalism after its unveiling. The first expression can be considered a "politically driven act", carried out by the political authorities of the city of Kavala, while the second expression, which

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[32] Ibid., 52.

[33] Merriam-Webster, s.v. "vandalism", at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vandalism>, 29.07.2022.

[34] Seymour FESHBACH, The Function of Aggression and the Regulation of Aggressive Drive, *Psychological Review 71*, (1964), 257–272.

[35] Betty DOBRATZ, Power, Politics, and Society: An Introduction to Political Sociology. London/New York 2012, 209-2014; Lyman G. CHAFFEE, Political Protest and Street Art: Popular Tools for Democratization in Hispanic Countries. Westport 1993, 27; Ten-HERNG LAI, Political Vandalism as counter-speech: a defense of defacing and destroying tainted monuments, *European Journal of Philopshophy* 28(3), 602–616, 613; Tao PAPAIOANNOU, Suman GUPTA, Media Representations of Anti-Austerity Protests in the EU: Grievances, Identities and Agency. New York 2018, 6.

[36] Jennifer HANSEN-GLUCKLICH, Holocaust Memory Reframed: Museums and the Challenges of Representation. New Jersey 2014, 18-19.

[37] Report: Acts against Religious Sites, *minedu.gov.gr*, at <https://www.minedu.gov.gr/gepo-menu-m/ekthesi-peristatika-eis-varos-xoron-thriskeftikis-simasias>, 20.08.2022.

is a true act of vandalism, is driven by the society. Nevertheless, both expressions of antisemitism seem to be rooted at the intersection of nationhood, religion and race.[38] Following Blümel, who has penetratingly analyzed the topic of antisemitism in Greece in the light of the above triangle, I will try to contribute to the discussion by examining the reasons behind the event in Kavala.[39]

Blümel seems to argue that antisemitism in Greece was founded at the intersection of religion/faith and secularization, as the Orthodox Church and the nation have coincided in the Greek conscience, which together synthesizes the concept of Helleno-Christian civilization.[40] The conceptual framework of this civilization is judged to be anti-Western, on the ground that it rejects the development of European Enlightenment by locating the roots of race in the Orthodox faith.[41] The hegemonic position of the church in Greece also contributes to this policy as the transformation of the church into a state authority has secularized the church's ideology into all spheres of social and political life.[42] As a result, a church-driven nationalism has developed, which discriminates against anyone who does not meet the requirements of fully belonging to the ideological triangle of the same race, religion and nationhood. Jews in Greece do not fully belong to this context, as practicing Judaism is considered to be "allogeneis". The question of Greekness is strongly connected with religious and racial (genos) identity. Based on this Tsitselikis argues that "…the ethnic/national homogeneity of Greece is built upon the elements of religion (Greek-Orthodox), language (Greek), national consciousness, and an ambiguous conceptualization of "Greek descent" which gives rise to a division among Greek citizens, as well as among aliens on grounds of descent. Thus there are the homogeneis (of Greek descent) and allogeneis (of non-Greek descent)".[43] It seems that this conceptual framework of "allogeneis" was constructed to prevent ethnic minorities (such as Jews, Turks, Vlachs and Armenians) living abroad from laying claim to Greek citizenship by contending that they did not have a

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[38] Tobias BLÜMEL, Antisemitism as political theology in Greece and its impact on Greek Jewry, 1967–1979, in: Katerina KRÁLOVÁ, Marija VULESICA and Giorgos ANTONIOU (eds.), Jewish life in Southeast Europe. Diverse perspectives of the Holocaust and Beyond. London/New York 2020, 26-47, 26.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 28-29.

[41] Ibid., 29-30.

[42] Evangellos KARAGIANNIS, Secularism in Context: The Relations between the Greek State and the Church of Greece in Crisis, *European Journal of Sociology* 50, (2009), 133-167, 145.

[43] Konstadinos TSITSELIKIS, Aspects of Legal Communitarianism in Greece: Between Millet and Citizenship, *Oñati Socio-legal Series*, (2012) 2 (7), 106-118, at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2050345>, 10.08.2022.

Greek consciousness or Greek descendants.[44] The policy behind this concept is thus designed to exclude those who are considered to be non-Greeks or anti-Greeks in terms of their religious affiliation and race. The first legal document which treats the citizenship criteria of "allogeneis" appeared in 1927 (decree of 13/15.9.1927) and only in 1998 was this provision abolished.[45] The decree of 1927 states that "a person of non-Greek ethnic origin who has left Greece with no intention to return, may be declared as having lost Greek citizenship".[46] Consequently, for almost 80 years the Greek state categorized citizenship criteria in terms of religion, race and inevitably nationhood.[47]

In addition to the above discussion, the triangular slogan of "fatherland, religion and family" should also be evaluated for a better understanding of Blümel's thesis. This slogan is strongly associated with the politics and propaganda of authoritative regimes, from Metaxas' dictatorship (1936-1941) up until the Junta (1967-1974).[48] Greece, as a state where education endorsed the concept of one nation/ethnos, one religion and one language, seems to adopt a monolithic and extreme conservative policy towards its non-Christian populations.[49] Similarly, the phrase "Greece of the Christian Greek" (Hellas, Hellinon, Christianon) mirrors the values of the Christian vast majority

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[44] Konstadinos TSITSELIKIS, Citizenship in Greece: Present challenges for future changes, in: Devorah KALEKIN-FISHMAN and PIRKKO PITKÄNEN (eds.), Multiple Citizenship as a Challenge to European Nation-States. Rotterdam 2017, 145-170, 153-4.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., 154-155.

[47] For the discussion of "allogeneis" see, Dimitris TZIOVAS, Greece from Junta to Crisis: Modernization, Transition and Diversity. London/New York 2021, 118-120; See also the context of "alllogeneis" for the Jewish prisoners in post-war Greece (the case of Salvator) and how it is ideologically connected with the Greek citizenship; Katerina KRÁLOVÁ, Being a Holocaust Survivor in Greece: Narratives of the Postwar Period, 1944–1953, in: Giorgos ANTONIOU and A. Dirk MOSES (eds.), The Holocaust in Greece, Cambridge 2019, 304-326, 319; Katerina KRÁLOVÁ, "Being traitors": post-war Greece in the experience of Jewish partisans, in: Katerina KRÁLOVÁ, Marija VULESICA and Giorgos ANTONIOU (eds.), Jewish life in Southeast Europe. Diverse perspectives of the Holocaust and Beyond. London/New York 2020, 108-125, 113. Additionally, see the context of "allogeneis" in accordance with "Greekness" and Orthodox millet in Leon SALTIEL, The Holocaust in Thessaloniki. Reactions to the anti-Jewish Persecution 1942-1943. London 2020, 8.

[48] Efie FOKAS, Greece: religion, nation and membership to the European Union, in: Haldun GÜLALP (ed.), Citizenship and Ethnic Conflict: Challenging the Nation-state. London/New York 2006, 39-60, 40-43.

[49] Domna MICHAIL and Konstadinos TSIOUMIS, From Nationalism to Pluralism: The emergence of a new Ideology for the Greek Nation-State, in: Othon ANASTASAKIS, Dimitar BECHEV, Nicholas VROUSALIS (eds.), Greece in the Balkans: Memory, Conflict and Exchange. Cambridge 2009, 207-218, 207-208.

indicating that the politics of nationalism goes hand in hand with the Helleno-Christian civilization.[50]

These aspects show how church-driven nationalism allows the politics of antisemitism and anti-Judaism to become more entrenched in Greek society. It is remarkable that in its statement the local church of Kavala (Metropolis of Kavala) argues how "…the Holocaust Memorial for the Jews in Kavala during the Second War became a contradictory issue… […] it is about the creation of a Memorial related to heinous and condemnable events that did not happen in our country. There is therefore no need, in this case, to invoke religious (freedom of religion and its symbols), ideological (Star of David), political (intolerance, anti-Semitism) and aesthetic or emotional reasons (unacceptable, immoral and offensive decision, unpaid debt, murder of memory and the like) to erect a Memorial in the center of the city, for the sadly-missed victims of the Jewish community of Kavala… the memory of the victims of Nazi atrocities is kept alive and without erecting columns in central public places".[51] In other words, the church's view is essentially that as the Jews did not die in Greece but beyond its territorial borders, there is no need to erect a Holocaust Memorial. Probably, the church considers that the Jews of Kavala were simply "allogeneis" or non-Greeks, when they were transported to Treblinka concentration camp, and lost their citizenship as they had no intention to come back.

All things considered, I conclude that the act of vandalism was allowed to happen because the local community did not succeed in managing the deeply rooted prejudices about Jews, which arise as a result of the ideological triangle proposed by Blümel. Probably for this reason, the political authorities demanded the removal of the Star of David as it was provocative according to public sentiment. What is remarkable in this case is that the church's official statement has much in common with the announcement of the city of Kavala. Both statements do not directly espouse antisemitism, but merely an anti-Judaist attitude. The church's statement argues that there is no reason to erect Holocaust Memorials, but they maintain that the memory of victims of Nazi atrocities (including, but not limited to, Jews) should be kept alive. Similarly, the city council's statement holds that the city does not intend to change the historical memory and commemorate the Jewish victims with honor, but they did not

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[50] Nicolas DEMERTZIS and Hara STRATOUDAKI, Greek Nationalism as a Case of Political Religion, *Historical Social Research 45*, (2020), 103-128, 106-107.

[51] Kavala: Mnimeio ochi mono gia tous Evraious alla gia ola ta thymata 40-44 zita o mitropolitis Filippon, *orthodoxia.info*, 22.05.2015, at <https://orthodoxia.info/news/%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B2%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%B1 -%CE%BC%CE%BD%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CF%8C%CF%87%CE%B9-%CE%BC%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%BF-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%82-%CE%B5%CE%B2%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%AF/ >, 10.08.2022.

explain why the inauguration event was postponed, even though the statement was considered to account for the postponement.

In summary, the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial after its unveiling is a crystal-clear act of antisemitism, which should be evaluated within the timeframe of populism in Greece, as a period of political crisis where extreme acts of violence during protests are more likely to take place.

Timeframe of the Event in Kavala: The Consequences of the Populist Era

The antisemitic vandalism sprayed onto the Holocaust Memorial in Kavala took place during the period of the Greek bailout referendum in the early summer of 2015. Therefore, the timeframe of the event of Kavala should also be considered in order to understand Greece's political climate. The question of the timeframe needs to be approached by understanding the temporal focal point, rather than paying attention to the ways in which society relates and reacts to its own time. Here, I regard the events of Kavala as a product of multiple and overlapping "timeframes" of populism which also includes the referendum, phases of polarization, protests, and a period of socio-political crisis.[52]

A referendum is by definition characterized as a period of political crisis and division which has consequences on any society.[53] The 2015 referendum in Greece was imposed by a populist government according to various scholars who work on the study of populism.[54] To be more precise, since 2015 Greece experienced the rise of populism through the election of a coalition government of SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left) and Independent Greeks-ANEL (extreme Right). As a matter of fact, Greece experienced the rise of both types of left and right-wing populism after the elections held in January 2015. On the one hand, SYRIZA advocates a radical left Eurosceptical populism and pursues an agenda of anti-elitism, alter-globalization and anti-austerity.[55] As an example

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[52] See how the authors understand the dimension of the historical reality of an event as a product of multiple overlapping processes of timeframe/timing, JUNG and KARLA, Times of the Event: An Introduction, 78-79, 82.

[53] Julien TALPIN, Referendums on European integration: crisis solving or crisis inducing?, in: Laurence MOREL and Mat QVORTRUP (eds.), Routledge Handbook on Direct Democracy and Referendums. London 2018, 388-404, 401-402; Marina PRENTOULIS, Left Populism in Europe. Lessons from Jeremy Corbyn. London 2021, 144.

[54] See among others, Cas MUDDE, SYRIZA: The Failure of the Populist Promise. Cham 2017; Giorgos KATSAMBEKIS and Yannis STAVRAKAKIS, Revisiting the Nationalism/Populism Nexus: Lessons from the Greek Case, *The Public* 24(4), (2017), 391-408; Marco DAMIANI, Populist Radical Left Parties in Europe. London/New York 2020; Takis PAPAS, Populism and Liberal Democracy. A Comparative and Theoretical Analysis. Oxford 2019.

[55] Emmanouil MAVROZACHARAKIS, Stylianos Ioannis TZAGKARAKIS, Dimitrios KOTROUANOS, Mediterranean Left-Wing Populism: The Case of SYRIZA, *European*

of their view, the populist agenda of SYRIZA criticized the European structure but at the same time promised that Greece would remain in the EU and the eurozone.[56] On the other hand, ANEL expresses extreme right-wing populism based on conservatism, anti-austerity and an anti-immigrant agenda.[57] Therefore, the coalition of ruling parties is based on the anti-austerity logic that both parties shared. According to Laclau, populism is a discursive strategy based on a political logic that appeals to both the left and the right.[58]

In June of 2015, the socio-political landscape in Greece was chaotic.[59] At this time Greece faced an unprecedented crisis of political legitimacy because of the eurozone debt crisis. Before the referendum, on June 29th 2015, the government was forced to close banks and implement controls on bank transfers. Hence, an ATM was limited to providing €60 per day for each account and banks would remain closed for almost 20 days. The creditors offered a proposal including austerity measures for a new loan. The prime minister, Alexis Tispras, announced a referendum on July 5th 2015 in which the citizens would vote either "No", to reject the proposal that had been to be negotiated with creditors, or "Yes", to accept the proposal and the severe austerity measures.[60] Here, it becomes obvious that in the period before the announcement of the referendum, the Greek society was divided into two groups.[61] Ethnic and national divisions as a consequence of referenda can also cause violence and conflicts. In fact, ethnic conflict can escalate into extreme violence and cause prolonged division in society.[62]

The Greek case of populism is, however, unique. Before embarking on our analysis of the consequences of this populist-political climate and its effects on the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial, we need to clarify what exactly we mean by populism since this concept has often been characterized vaguely and functions differently in different countries.

Populism is essentially the idea that society is separated into two homogeneous groups which stand at odds with one another – "the pure people"

Quarterly of Political Attitudes and Mentalities 6(2), (2017), 40-53, at <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-51465-9>, 18.08.2022.

[56] MUDDE, SYRIZA: The Failure of the Populist Promise, 3-25.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ernesto LACLAU, On Populist Reason. London 2005.

[59] Franklin L. HESS, Crisis and Changes in the Mediascape. Greece and the Globe, in: Eudoxios DOXIADIS and Aimee PLACAS (eds.), Living under Austerity. Greek Society in Crisis. New York/Oxford 2018, 143-180, 163-165.

[60] PAPAS, Populism and Liberal Democracy, 220-222.

[61] Ibid., 224-278.

[62] Matthew LANGE, States in the Global South Transformation and the Politics of the Development States, in Leibfried STEPHAN, Evelyne HUBER, Matthew LANGE, Jonah D. LEVY, Frank NULLMEIER, and John D. STEPHENS (eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Transformations of the State. Oxford 2015, 673-690, 683.

and "the corrupt elite".[63] The people are considered pure and authentic, while the elite is tarnished as a ruling opposite. Purity and authenticity are defined in moral terms by indicating that people do the right thing for all.[64] Populism understands "the people" as a homogenous group that is portrayed as being betrayed by elitism. Politics is itself conceived ideally as an expression of the general will of "the people".[65] Populism is described as a "thin" ideology or as a discursive frame, which is usually combined with "thicker" ideologies.[66] This means that populism is an ideology that borrows its content from other ideologies. Therefore, populism has a hybrid and chameleonic character and can be combined with other ideologies, such as nationalism.[67]

The 2010 global economic crisis hit Greece severely and forced the Greek government to implement severe austerity measures. Then in 2012, a number of small anti-establishment parties with competing anti-austerity agendas emerged from both the left and right spectrum after winning increased electoral support, including the Neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, the radical right Independent Greeks (Anel) and the Coalition of the Radical Left (Syriza).[68] Syriza was traditionally closely connected to social movements from its original roots and used them in its organizational capacity and experience to connect with social movements and protestors.[69] From 2012 to 2015, Syriza managed to increase its popularity and progressed from the grassroots to mainstream politics.[70] Syriza promised the end of austerity while guaranteeing that the country would remain in the eurozone. As a result, a populist discourse was adopted by Syriza by claiming that the "people" had been betrayed by the corrupt-political elites who were responsible for the socio-economic dissolution.[71]

For Syriza "the people" were being suppressed by the "corrupt elite", meaning the parties that imposed the austerity measures and the creditors (the European Union, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund). In other words, the "corrupt elite" in Syriza's eyes, acted as "enemies" and included both domestic and foreign actors. In this vein, Laclau argues that a

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[63] Cas MUDDE, Populism. An Ideational Approach in: Cristóbal Rovira KALTWASSER, Paul TAGGART, Paulina Ochoa ESPREJO and Piere OSTIGUY (eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Populism. Oxford 2017, 27-47, 20-30.
[64] Ibid., 30-31.
[65] Ibid., 31-33.
[66] Ibid., 30.
[67] Paul A. TAGGART, Populism. Buckingham 2000, 5-6.
[68] Vasilis MANAVOPOULOS and Vasiliki TRIGA, The 2015 Greek Bailout Referendum as a Protest Action. An Analysis of Media Representations of the 'Yes' and 'No' Campaigns'', in: Tao PAPAIOANNOU and Suman GUPTA (eds.), Media Representations of Anti-Austerity Protests in the EU Grievances, Identities and Agency. New York 2017, 117-42, 117.
[69] Ibid., 119-120.
[70] Ibid., 137.
[71] PAPAS, Populism and Liberal Democracy, 232.

populist project requires an "enemy" and of course a leader to fight against this enemy.[72] The whole concept of populism seems based on unifying "the people". The strategy of creating an enemy is evocative of the political philosophy of Schmitt who considered the distinction between friend and enemy as a basic concept of political theory.[73]

However, what is important to our research on the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial is the political climate of division and dichotomy. The ambiguous left and right-wing dynamics of populism that were introduced by a Syriza-Anel coalition government and the 2015 referendum, which marked the highest expression of its populism, fostered separation and division in the wider society.[74] During the period of the referendum, when the event of Kavala took place, this division was expressed between those who support the "Yes" and "No" vote. The key point is that populism perceives the division between the two groups to represent a moral disagreement.[75] Based on this, we may say that the political climate that developed during the referendum traumatized morality, enabled extreme violence and prolonged protests as a result of division. Polarization, as a result of the division that populism produces, rewards extreme positions and increases, even more destructively, the chasm between the two groups. The vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial coincided with the rise of populism in Greece, and especially with the period of the referendum. Populism thus allowed the conditions of division into society by widening tensions and struggles into conflict and violence.[76]

Additionally, the media played an important role in the reproduction of division and polarization. As mentioned in the introduction, during the referendum and in periods of political protest acts of brutality and violence were committed. The question of how the media represented the referendum is too large a topic to be discussed in this paper, but what is interesting to understand is the effect of the referendum's division through media. During the frantic week before the 2015 referendum, protests, rallies, riots, and ATM queues took place. The effects of polarization that are represented in the media contribute to increased fear among the people, promoting violence and aggression and in extreme cases fostering racism and cultural division among citizens.[77] Protesters were systematically accused of vandalism, aggressive behavior and a lack of

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[72] LACLAU, On Populist Reason, 90.

[73] Carl SCHMITT, Der Begriff des Politischen. München 1932.

[74] Cass MUDDE and Cristóbal Rovira KALTWASSER, Populism: A very short Introduction. Oxford 2017, 7.

[75] MUDDE, Populism. An Ideational Approach, 32-33.

[76] MUDDE, SYRIZA: The Failure of the Populist Promise, 5, 42, 82-82.

[77] Jaclyn SCHIKSKRAUT, News, representation, and effects on violent content, in: Matthew EASTIN (eds.), Encyclopedia of Media Violence. Los Angeles/London 2013, 272-275.

respect for the public good.[78] Even though the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial did not take place in Athens, where the most significant protests and riots happened during the referendum, but in Kavala, the effect of this socio-political climate as it was communicated through the media should be evaluated to complement the above analysis. According to the definition of media violence, the effects of its coverage extend beyond the individual viewer, especially when polarization and division are dominant factors in society.[79] As a result, the effects of this reality are reflected in the audience, and likely to make people more aggressive, as media often acts as a window on to that reality.[80]

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, one can conclude that antisemitism in Greece is deeply rooted in the ideological triangle of religion, race and nationhood. However, the event of Kavala seems to expose another angle of cynical irony that both political and church authorities of Kavala seem to share. Both authorities possess a contradictory stance on the postponement of the inauguration of the Holocaust Memorial for the Jews of Kavala, showing how they are unable to deal with the difficult past of a non-Christian population in a city without Jews, considering also the fact that for both authorities the Jews still seem to be "allogeneis". Vandalism, as a form of violence, stems from society and possibly reflects the contradiction that is expressed by political and church authorities in Kavala. Concerning the timeframe of the event, it seems that the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial at Kavala cannot be a result of populism, but a product of the whole "timeframe" that populism creates, such as the period of the referendum, polarization, division, protests, and socio-political crisis. Therefore, the act of vandalism took place because the "timeframe" of populism created the required conditions.

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[78] See for instance the article about socio-political climate during the referendum: Clashes with police erupt during rival rallies in Athens, *dw.com*, 03.07.2015, at < https://www.dw.com/en/clashes-with-police-erupt-during-rival-rallies-in-athens/a-18560658 >, 13.08.2022.
[79] Kostas FANTI and Marios AVRAMIDIS, Media Violence definition and Context, in: Matthew EASTIN (ed.) Encyclopedia Media of Violence. Los Angeles/London 2013, 246-249.
[80] Ibid.

Christian Voss / Sabina Ferhadbegović /
Kateřina Králová (eds.)

Memory Cultures in Southeast Europe since 1945

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, the International Academic Week in Tutzing in October 2021 attempted to describe the diverging and often conflicting memory cultures in the Southeast European post-conflict societies today: the canonical and cultural memory concerning World War II and the Holocaust on the one hand and inter-generationally formed communicative memories on the other. The post-Yugoslav debates on memory are conditioned by the renewed experience of ethnic violence, displacement and genocide during the wars of the 1990s. The sixteen contributions in the four panels "Holocaust and Antisemitism", "Memories of Tito's Yugoslavia", "Memory Wars in the National Discourse" and "Writing Memory Culture" use multidisciplinary approaches (archival sources, oral history, fieldwork, popular culture) to highlight the socio-political contexts and medialization of memory production.

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