

~~-TITLE-PAULETTE SEVI~~

~~-I\_DATE-~~

~~-SOURCE-SAN FRANCISCO HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT~~

~~-RESTRICTIONS-~~

~~-SOUND\_QUALITY-~~

~~-IMAGE\_QUALITY-~~

~~-DURATION-~~

~~-LANGUAGES-~~

~~-KEY\_SEGMENT-~~

~~-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-~~

~~-PERSONAL\_NAME-~~

~~-CORPORATE\_NAME-~~

~~-KEY\_WORDS-~~

~~-NOTES-~~

~~-CONTENTS-~~

:58 - 4 Start Interview - background given. Greek Jew from Salonika (Thessaloniki). She tells what it was like in her Jewish community.

4 - 8 She tell what languages were spoken in her community and at home, very large Jewish community, 50 or 60% - tells of anti - Jewish sentiment in her youth. Had just finished school when war broke out.

8 - 12 Tells how breakout of war affected her - families come together Germans collected Jews into ghettos, said Italian and Spanish governments protected Jews, gave them citizenship papers.

12 - 16 Family was protected by Greek family, traveled with Greeks to Athens. May 1943 some in her family were caught and sent to concentration camps in Salonika (Thessaloniki). Many children in convoys in camps.

16 - 20 From '39-'43 everything was fine (restricted but not bad), nobody knew what was going on, no radio, newspapers or even word of mouth. Thought Germans were going to pay them in camps. Salonika (Thessaloniki) 60,000 Jews, Athens 5,000.

20 - 24 When they were about to go to Athens, they went to Greek neighbors to get some belongings, Greeks said "What things?" Ever since then, she hasn't trusted Greeks. Tells of sister being taken, never heard what happened to them, Italian government issued papers of citizenship.

24 - 28 Most often, accent gave Jews away, not appearance. On train to Athens, she met other relatives also going. Money helped, had to pay their own way often, Walked to a small village.

28 - 32 Rented one room in village which was so small, couldn't bathe, village had never seen a car before villagers thought they were Greeks from the Greek underground sought by the Germans. They didn't know what Jews sounded or looked like.

32 - 36 Very simple life compared to her former life in Salonika (Thessaloniki), in village had to bake their own bread, eating only bread and olives. Family carried English gold Pounds (she shows one she saved and made into a ring). Villagers told them Germans were coming so they had to go higher up in the mountains. Stayed on the ground in the open with food they brought with them.

36 - 40 Spent over one and a half years in the village - from 1943 - 1944+. Tells of the family members she lost, 170 family members total.

40 - 44 Tells of how grandmother evaded the Germans by traveling around. Italians saved many people. praises the Italian government. Never left Greece. Went back to Athens, didn't want to go back to Salonika (Thessaloniki) for a long time.

44 - 48 In 1948 she went to Salonika (Thessaloniki) and met future husband. He asked her to movies, sent her flowers. Brothers protected her very closely. Within two months she was married. Her brother wouldn't let them go back to Athens alone without a chaperon, so they got married. Her husband lectured on Holocaust.

48 - 52 Never got any restitution. never asked for it. Her cousins whose families had been in concentration camps said no money could pay for the dead. No relatives that went to camps came back alive. "Life was hard, but when you're young, you don't realize the full situation."

52 - 56 Never came in contact with the Germans. Once saw Germans with horses and guns, marching thousands of Jews to camps at least five miles away. Never paid taxes to government. Paid Jewish Community Center. Helped poor, ran community.

56 - 60 Head Rabbi who ran JCC was a very good man. Germans told him to sweep the road, "my brother said, 'Let me do it.'" Rabbi said, 'No, the governed law is God's law...he went straight to the oven..' Poor Jews carried everything on their backs, ate bread, onions, olives and feta cheese. There were many of them.

60 - 64 Most Greeks were Anti-Semitic. They said, "It's too bad you survived, why didn't they make soap out of you?" She has strong contempt for Greeks. Greeks limited how much money could be taken out of banks. When they died, nobody could get their money, or even knew it was there at all. Switzerland kept it.

64 - 68 None of family had anything to do with Greeks. Brother's female friend married a gentile man and the family never talked to her again. Even before the war, Greeks were anti-semitic. "We called ourselves Jews not Greek, we never considered ourselves Greek".

68 - 72 Never knew about Kosher rules. Came to U.S. in 1956 after spending one year in Salonika (Thessaloniki). had some Greek friends after the war in Athens. Came to U.S. for the good of

their daughter. Feels Greeks will always be anti-semitic.

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72 - 76 Husband Isaac wanted to speak out on what had happened. They went right to Oakland. Still has relatives in Greece, two brothers, two sister-in-law. Never wants to go back to Greece ever since her husband died. Only knows of one survivor in the family, the rest of the family members who were captured were never accounted for.

76 - 80 Daughter was married to a non-Jew "It was very painful for us, thank God (or should I say it) they are now divorced. She's now going out with a nice Jewish boy. I hope they will get married." Tells of life with late husband.

80 - 81:46 Husband never wanted anything to do with anything German. Once made his sister cry for giving him a German made vase.  
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