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JUDEO-SPANISH AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY  
THESSALONIKI: ETHNIC LANGUAGE SHIFT IN THE MAINTENANCE OF  
ETHNO CULTURAL IDENTITY

A Dissertation in

Spanish

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to delve further into the relationship between language and ethnic identity. Given human social behavior that seeks to establish boundaries between differing groups of people and the indisputable role of language as a boundary marker and signal of ethnic identity, what happens to ethnicity when the language once associated with it is no longer used? Do other markers of ethnicity, both linguistic and non linguistic, emerge to sustain ethnicity? This research employs the case of Judeo-Spanish, the longtime associated language of the Jews of Thessaloniki, Greece, to examine these principle research questions. Participants include members of the Jewish community and are divided into three generational groups in order to establish trends and transformations based on generation. In conjunction with the historical, social and political considerations that frame this community, participant questionnaire and interview responses form the database from which the analysis and interpretation derive. The findings concur with claims linking language to the ethnic identity of a group so that upon the shift of said language, a group's self-conceptualization is transformed as is the nature of the link between language and identity. This shift also appears to effectuate a reprioritization of ethnic markers that serve to sustain social boundaries between the groups.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES* .....	vii
LIST OF TABLES* .....	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xii
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 Overview of the study .....	1
1.2 A Social History of the Sephardim of Thessaloniki .....	4
1.3 The Sephardic Community of Thessaloniki Today .....	18
1.4 The decline of Judeo Spanish .....	21
1.4.1 Alliance Israelité Universelle Schools .....	22
1.4.2 The Rise of Greek Nationalism in Thessaloniki .....	23
1.4.3 The Holocaust .....	31
1.5 Judeo-Spanish Today .....	32
Chapter 2 Ethnic Identity and Language .....	34
2.1 Overview .....	34
2.2 Jewish Ethnic Identity .....	35
2.3 Ethnic Identity and Language .....	45
2.3.1 Language as Essential: The Objectivist View .....	48
2.3.2 Language as Non-Essential: The Subjectivist View .....	54
2.4 Language Shift .....	60
2.4.1 Studies supporting an Objectivist View: I am no longer Xian if I don't speak Xish (Xian via Xish) .....	62
2.4.2 Studies supporting a Subjectivist View: I can still be Xian even if I don't speak Xish (Xian via Yish) .....	65
Chapter 3 Methodology .....	75
3.1 Objectives of the study .....	75
3.2 Sampling .....	75
3.2.1 Criteria used for selection of informants: a chain sample .....	76
3.2.2 Procedure used to recruit informants .....	77
3.2.3 Constraints of conducting fieldwork .....	77
3.2.4 Sample profile .....	81
3.3 Data Collection .....	82
3.3.1 Methods used for data collection .....	82
3.3.2 Languages Used During Data Collection .....	83
3.4 Treatment of Data .....	83
3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation .....	84

3.5.1 Language-Related Themes .....	85
3.5.2 Identity-Related Themes .....	85
Chapter 4 Presentation and Analysis of Language-Related Data .....	87
4.1 Overview.....	87
4.2 Attitudes and beliefs regarding the structure, origins and value of Judeo-Spanish .....	87
4.2.1 What do you call the language you speak? .....	88
4.2.2 Is Judeo-Spanish the same as Peninsular or Latin American Spanish? .....	94
4.2.3 Does Judeo-Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you?.....	100
4.2.3.1 Judeo-Spanish as a mixed language .....	104
4.3 Expressions concerning the shift of Judeo-Spanish.....	106
4.3.1 Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?.....	107
4.3.2 Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language? .....	109
4.3.3 Have you ever been embarrassed and/or uncomfortable to speak Judeo-Spanish in public?.....	114
4.4 Expressions of Judeo-Spanish Transmission.....	117
4.4.1 Do you want your child to speak Judeo-Spanish?.....	118
4.4.2 Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish? ....	121
4.4.3 Do you think Judeo-Spanish has any function in today's Thessaloniki?.....	126
4.4.4 Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?.....	130
4.4.5 Personal investment in language maintenance efforts.....	135
4.4.6 Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish in Thessaloniki?.....	138
4.5 Replace Expressions of the Impact of Judeo-Spanish on Identity.....	143
4.5.1 Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish? .....	144
4.5.2 Do you think of your parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?.....	147
4.5.3 Do you, your parents and/or grandparents feel nostalgic for the era of Jewish 'Salonik' and for Judeo-Spanish? .....	149
4.5.4 Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?.....	154
4.5.5 Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish? .....	162
4.5.6 How important is the language to you and to your culture?.....	165
4.6 Expressions of the impact of Hebrew on identity.....	169
4.6.1 Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew? .....	170
4.6.2 Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?.....	174
4.6.3 Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?.....	180
4.6.4 Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew? ....	184
4.6.5 Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?.....	188
4.6.6 Is Hebrew Part of Your Jewish and Sephardic Identities? .....	193
4.6.7 Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew? .....	198

4.7 Conclusion .....	200
Chapter 5 Presentation and Analysis of Identity-Related Data .....	206
5.1 Overview.....	206
5.2 Expressions of (having) identity vis-à-vis origin, ethnicity and nationality .....	206
5.2.1 Are you proud of your Jewish/Sephardic heritage? .....	207
5.2.2 Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions? .....	211
5.2.3 Do you feel a connection with Spain? .....	214
5.2.4 How would you describe yourself (use of adjectives of ethnicity and nationality)? .....	221
5.3 Expressions that distance Thessalonikan Jews from non Jewish Greeks (boundary making) .....	223
5.3.1 Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a Greek Christian in Thessaloniki today?.....	225
5.3.2 Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks?.....	229
5.3.3 Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today? .....	234
5.3.4 Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today? .....	237
5.3.5 Public ignorance with respect to historical and contemporary Jewish presence in Thessaloniki .....	240
5.3.6 Adversity and the Jewish experience in Thessaloniki .....	244
5.3.6.1 Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki? .....	244
5.3.6.2 Impact of national policy, nationalist rhetoric and the Church.....	248
5.3.6.3 The Holocaust .....	250
5.4 Conclusion .....	256
Chapter 6 Conclusion.....	259
6.1 Overview.....	259
6.2 Conclusion .....	259
6.3 Limitations of this study .....	265
6.4 Contributions of this study.....	266
6.5 Areas of future inquiry.....	267
REFERENCES .....	268
Appendix A Biographic Profiles of Study Participants .....	277

## LIST OF FIGURES\*

Figure 4-1: Is Judeo Spanish the same as the Spanish from Spain? A cross generational comparison.....	95
Figure 4-2 Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish from Latin America?.....	95
Figure 4-3: Does Judeo-Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you? .....	101
Figure 4-4: Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language? .....	107
Figure 4-5: Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language? .....	110
Figure 4-6: Have you ever felt embarrassed to speak Judeo-Spanish in public?.....	114
Figure 4-7: Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?.....	122
Figure 4-8: Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in Thessaloniki today? .....	127
Figure 4-9: Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?.....	130
Figure 4-10: Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish?.....	138
Figure 4-11: Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?.....	145
Figure 4-12 Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?.....	147
Figure 4-13: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish identity?.....	156
Figure 4-14: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic identity?.....	157
Figure 4-15: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish? .....	162
Figure 4-16: Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish? .....	175
Figure 4-17: Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish? .....	181
Figure 4-18: Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?.....	184
Figure 4-19: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew? .....	188
Figure 4-20: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Judeo-Spanish?.....	189
Figure 4-21: Is Hebrew part of your Jewish identity? .....	193

Figure 4-22: Is Hebrew part of your Sephardic identity? .....	194
Figure 4-23: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?.....	199
Figure 5-1: Are you proud of your Sephardic heritage? .....	207
Figure 5-2: Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions ...	211
Figure 5-3: Do you feel a connection with Spain? .....	215
Figure 5-4: Do you feel a connection with today's Spaniards? .....	215
Figure 5-5: Do you know what part of Spain your ancestors are from?.....	216
Figure 5-6: Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a non Jewish Greek? .....	225
Figure 5-7: Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks? .....	229
Figure 5-8: Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today?.....	235
Figure 5-9: Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today?.....	237
Figure 5-10: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish history of Thessaloniki? .....	240
Figure 5-11: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence in today's Thessaloniki? .....	241
Figure 5-12: Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki? .....	245

\*Note: Figures present the cross-generational comparisons of participant responses in percentages. For numbers of participants from each generational group, see Section 3.2.4



### LIST OF TABLES\*

Table 4-1: Distribution of nomenclature from each generational group .....	89
Table 4-2: Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish in Spain/Latin America? .....	94
Table 4-3: Does Judeo Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you? .....	100
Table 4-4: Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language? (n=33; G1-G3).....	109
Table 4-5: Have you ever felt embarrassed and/or uncomfortable to speak Judeo- Spanish in public?.....	114
Table 4-6: Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?.....	121
Table 4-7: Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in today’s Thessaloniki?.....	126
Table 4-8: Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo- Spanish?.....	130
Table 4-9: Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish? .....	138
Table 4-10: Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?.....	144
Table 4-11: Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo- Spanish?.....	147
Table 4-12: Nostalgia felt for ‘Salonik’ and Judeo-Spanish.....	149
Table 4-13: Nostalgia felt for ‘Salonik and Judeo-Spanish – affirmative responses...	149
Table 4-14: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?.....	156
Table 4-15: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish .....	162
Table 4-16: Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew? .....	171
Table 4-17: Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?.....	175
Table 4-18: Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?.....	180
Table 4-19: Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew? .....	184
Table 4-20: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew or Judeo- Spanish?.....	188

Table 4-21: Is Hebrew part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities? .....	193
Table 4-22: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?.....	198
Table 5-1: Are you proud of your Sephardic heritage .....	207
Table 5-2: Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions?....	211
Table 5-3: Do you feel a connection with Spain/today's Spaniards.....	214
Table 5-4: What adjective of nationality/ethnicity would you use to describe yourself? .....	221
Table 5-5: Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a non Jewish Greek?.....	225
Table 5-6: Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks? .....	229
Table 5-7: Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today? .....	234
Table 5-8: Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today? ...	237
Table 5-9: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence/Jewish history in Thessaloniki? .....	240
Table 5-10: Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki? .....	244
Table A-1: Generation 1 Participants' Place of Birth.....	277
Table A-2: Generation 2 Participants' Place of Birth.....	277
Table A-3: Generation 3 Participants' Place of Birth.....	277
Table A-4: Primary Education in Greek Language Only .....	277
Table A-5: Secondary Education in Greek Language Only .....	278
Table A-6: University Education in Greek Language Only .....	278
Table A-7: Generation 1 Participants' Most Proficient Language .....	278
Table A-8: Generation 2 Participants' Most Proficient Language .....	279
Table A-9: Generation 3 Participants' Most Proficient Language .....	279
Table A-10: Generations 1-3 Participants' Most Proficient Language .....	279
Table A-11: Language Generation 1 Participants Most Employ with the Following People.....	280

Table A-12: Language Generation 2 Participants Most Employ with the Following People.....	280
Table A-13: Language Generation 3 Participants Most Employ with the Following People.....	280
Table A-14: Language Other People Employ with Generation 1 Participants.....	281
Table A-15: Language Other People Employ with Generation 2 Participants.....	281
Table A-16: Language Other People Employ with Generation 3 Participants.....	282
Table A-17: Languages Used During Religious Events/Gatherings .....	282
Table A-18: Frequency of Participation in Community Events .....	282
Table A-19: Participants' Ability to Read Judeo-Spanish.....	283
Table A-20: Participants' Reading of Materials in Judeo-Spanish.....	283
Table A-21: Participants' Listening of Sephardic Music .....	283

\*Note: Tables present the results from the sample as a whole (N=33) and are presented in the form of raw numbers and percentages.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Overview of the study

What happens when a language ceases to be used by its speakers? The motivations for *language shift*<sup>1</sup> are highly complex and dependent on the idiosyncratic circumstances in which a language's speakers find themselves. Equally complex are the many and varied facets affected by language shift, and so in addition to describing the motivations and circumstances behind language shift, this study seeks to shed light on one of these said facets, that of ethnic identity, after a language shift has taken place. Is the ethnicity associated with a shifting ethnic language lost, weakened, or transformed? Do other markers of ethnicity, both linguistic and non linguistic, emerge to sustain ethnicity? To shed light on these principle research questions, I examine the role of Judeo-Spanish, an ethnic language in shift, in the maintenance of a Jewish identity among a group of Thessalonikan Jews residing in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The group in question, the Jews of Thessaloniki, had historically been a majority within an ethnically, religiously and linguistically pluralistic society until the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was distinguished from other groups based on lines of religion and language. However, the last century in Thessaloniki has seen far-reaching socio-cultural and political changes: demographically, the Jews are now a minority

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<sup>1</sup> The term *language shift* is understood as the speakers' shift of use of one language in favor of another.

surrounded by a homogeneous majority; politically, the society is heavily nationalistic; religiously, the Jewish community is heavily secularized; and linguistically, the group's ethnic language, Judeo-Spanish, is in a shifting state. Given these circumstances, is the outcome one of assimilation into the surrounding Greek Orthodox Christian majority or has the group in question maintained a distinct ethno-cultural group? In addition, how does Judeo-Spanish, given its shift, fit in a contemporary Thessalonikan brand of Jewry? I examine these questions by analyzing and interpreting participant questionnaire and interview responses that yielded the following various themes, divided under the major headings of *language* and *identity*. Language related themes generated by participant data are the following:

- Attitudes and beliefs regarding the structure, origins and value of Judeo-Spanish
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish shift
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish transmission
- Expressions of the impact of Judeo-Spanish vis-à-vis identity
- Expressions of the impact of Hebrew vis-à-vis identity

Identity related themes are as listed below:

- Expressions of (having) identity vis-à-vis origin, ethnicity and nationality
- Expressions that distance the Thessalonikan Jews from non Jewish Greeks

While the data analysis and interpretation benefit from reported language ability and use, participant attitudes and perceptions of the language's structure and value, and of participant and community identity, I have attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the topic of ethnic language shift and ethno-cultural identity formation by relying on historical, social and political considerations that are relevant to better comprehend the

relationship between Judeo-Spanish, its shift and the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. It is hoped that such an examination will enable me to draw out a report on the current relationship between Judeo-Spanish and this particular Jewish community.

The study is broken down in the following manner: Chapter 1 offers a historical profile of the community in question so as to color the experiences faced by the Sephardim in Thessaloniki both historically and contemporarily. Chapter 2 begins with a review of the theoretical frameworks that have inspired the analysis of the data. The frameworks treated are those that conceptualize Jewish identity, the link between language and identity, and the effect of language shift on identity. Chapter 2 concludes with a review of research conducted to establish the link between language and identity in general and language shift and identity in particular. Chapter 3 describes the steps taken to collect, analyze and interpret the data. Chapters 4 and 5 are presentations of language and identity related data along with data analysis and interpretations inspired from the discussions presented in chapter 2. The data are displayed in the form of tables and figures which present numerical results (raw numbers and percentages) to interview questions that deal with topics relating to language and identity. In addition, cross generational numerical results reveal the formation of trends from older to younger generational groups. Finally, interview narratives are presented for their additional explanatory value. In the final chapter, chapter 6, conclusions are made with respect to the question of language shift and Jewish identity as it is found in contemporary Thessaloniki. Demographic results, dealing with self-reported language ability and use, and language identification are found in the Appendix.

## 1.2 A Social History of the Sephardim<sup>2</sup> of Thessaloniki

This research examines the effects of ethnic language shift on the ethno-cultural identity of a minority group. The group in question, the Sephardim of Thessaloniki, Greece, can trace its presence in the region as early as the last decade of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, they were not the first Jews to call this region home. Although not always well documented, Jewish presence in Thessaloniki and other parts of Greece dates back to antiquity, after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D.<sup>3</sup> The Jews of the first Diaspora to reach Greek soil, the Romaniotes, distinguished themselves from non-Jewish Greeks by their Jewish religion and the practice of cultural and religious traditions flavored by the surrounding Greco-Roman and Byzantine civilizations. Language for them was never a distinguishing feature since both they and their non Jewish co-territorialists spoke Greek as a mother language<sup>4</sup>. Today, Greeks of Romaniotic descent in Greece and in the Diaspora have Greek surnames and identify Greek as being their spoken ethnic language (Alexiou 2007, Ikonopoulous 2007).

The Ashkenazim were the second Jewish group to arrive in Greek lands, at the time under Byzantium rule. Beginning in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, they migrated from Eastern and Central Europe in order to escape Christian persecution and, due to their

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<sup>2</sup> The term ‘Sephardic’ will be used synonymously with ‘Jewish’ since, in the Thessalonikan context and since the arrival of Spanish Jews in and after 1492, the Sephardim formed the majority that had quickly and completely absorbed and assimilated previously established Romaniotic and Ashkenazic populations.

<sup>3</sup> “Jewish presence in Greece is not well reflected in material or documentary evidence, a problem that, interestingly is paralleled in the study of medieval Greece in general back into Roman times. Wars, fires, indifference, and changes in economy, have all had their effects in creating lacunae that frustrate a balanced picture of this past. There is, however, a sufficient amount of reliable material to allow us to catch a glimpse of the Jew in this vast matrix (Stavroulakis 1997: 11).

<sup>4</sup> For a more in-depth comparison of the Romaniot and Sephardic communities during the Ottoman period, see Schoenfeld (2007).



small numbers, were quickly assimilated into the already established Romaniotic communities.

Beginning in 1492, the Sephardim became the most significant Jewish group of the now Ottoman-held Thessaloniki, and they quickly began to outnumber other Jewish and non Jewish groups alike. In addition to demographically overwhelming all other groups, their skills and ‘high Renaissance-like culture’ and urban lifestyle accompanying them from the Iberian Peninsula added to their social prominence and resulted in the linguistic and cultural absorption of the Romaniotic and Ashkenazic communities.<sup>5</sup>

The city of Thessaloniki was the destination for nearly 20,000 of the expelled Sephardic Jews as it was an important port city recently conquered by the Ottomans in 1430 A.D. As a way to attract settlers into newly Ottoman-occupied territory, the Ottoman sultan, Bayezid II<sup>6</sup> offered the Sephardim a place in which they could live free from the threat of the Inquisition. In an under populated and destitute Thessaloniki still recovering from the Turkish sacking of 1430, the influx of Sephardic Jews under Mehmet II and then his son Beyazid II, gave the city a new character, one that was disproportionately Jewish. The Sephardim, highly skilled in areas such as printing,

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<sup>5</sup> The Romaniot Jews were considered culturally backward by the newly arrived Sephardim who referred to their Romaniot coreligionists as *los gregos* even though the latter had financially assisted the Sephardim in their initial years after immigration into Ottoman Greece. Negative sentiment was also felt by the Romaniotim for having been so quickly outnumbered by the Spanish speaking newcomers. In addition, the tensions that existed between the two Jewish communities were augmented by Ottoman sentiment that regarded the Romaniot Jews as Greeks, and like the Greeks, as conquered peoples. (Stavroulakis 1997: 42). These tensions were furthered by differing religious, social and linguistic customs that at times drastically differed. Where the indigenous Jewish populations were regarded as conservative in their social mores, the Iberians were more socially ‘liberated’ and their behaviors were often regarded as scandalous in the eyes of the Romaniotim (Rivlin: 1997:444).

<sup>6</sup> Bayezid II, granting asylum to the Spanish Jews, is credited for having proclaiming “how foolish of the Spanish monarchs to impoverish their empire while enriching my own” (Stavroulakis 1997: 42)

cartography, textiles, medicine, banking, and weaponry quickly achieved higher social status in comparison to that of the other groups inhabiting the area.

Along with their high culture imported from the West, the Sephardim brought their Spanish language to their new home and after more than 500 years since their expulsion from Iberia, their language still survives, albeit in a now shifting state. While there is much tendency to romanticize such linguistic preservation, the language's survival can be explained in practical terms by the social reality in which the Sephardim and other Ottoman ethnic groups lived, one that not only permitted but facilitated the maintenance and transmission of language and religious and cultural customs. Historians credit the culturally pluralistic outlook of the Ottomans that allowed for differing ethnic, religious and linguistic groups to coexist alongside each other for as long as they paid their taxes and did not threaten the status and the religion of the Empire<sup>7</sup>.

Not only did ethnic languages survive under the Ottomans, but religions did as well. Although Ottoman ideology was religious, it did not attempt to forcibly convert Ottoman subjects, or *dimmis*, into the religion of the Empire, Islam.<sup>8</sup> Instead, they followed the premise that people of differing religions could worship and interpret religion in various ways (Balim 1996: 107). In fact, many credit the 'tolerant' policies of the Empire with the survival of Christian and Jewish edifices during Ottoman rule as the

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<sup>7</sup> In addition to the ethnic/religious/linguistic pluralism of Ottoman Thessaloniki dividing Jewish from non Jewish populations, there were demographic divisions within the Sephardic community based on Iberian/Italian origin, as illustrated by the names of the neighborhood synagogues: Mayorka, Provincia, Italia Yashan, Gueruch Sfarad, Kastlia, Aragon, Katallan Yachan, Kalabria Yachan, Sicilia Yachan, Mayorka Cheni, Apulia, Lisbon Yachan, Portugal, Evora, Estrug, Lisbon Hadach, Otranto, Teiana... (Molho, Rena. [www.jmth.gr/web/about.htm](http://www.jmth.gr/web/about.htm)). Such divisions allowed for the maintenance and transmission of idiosyncratic religious and cultural rites that characterized the differing Sephardic groups.

<sup>8</sup> Islamic law (Sharia), established as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century, maintained that 'non believers'/'dimmis' would be granted religious determination only because Shari'ah law could not be applied to non believers. Thanks to this law, 'dimmis' not only enjoyed religious freedom, but they also were granted a token amount of legal independence. (Stavroulakis, 1997: 35)

Ottomans regarded all religious constructions –churches, monasteries, synagogues, and mosques- to be sacred and thus untouchable.<sup>9</sup> While religious conversions were not enforced, they were indeed welcomed and rewarded with accessibility to higher social/economic/political standing as well as with the relief of a heavy tax paid only by non-Muslims<sup>10</sup>.

In an environment that showed more tolerance toward the Jews than what they had experienced of late in the Iberian Peninsula, the Sephardim of Thessaloniki flourished politically and economically:

...the Jews were the dominant element of the city and turned it into a first rate commercial center. The Sephardim distinguished themselves in the field of textiles, worked in the mines of Gallikos River and Sidirokapsa, founded the first printing house in Thessaloniki in 1520 and many distinguished themselves as rabbis, physicians, philosophers, poets, and law teachers. Thus, the fame of Thessaloniki spread all over Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. This is why Thessaloniki was given the honorary titles of “Mother of Israel” and “Little Jerusalem” (Jewish Community of Thessaloniki Web Site; [http://www.hri.org/culture97/eng/eidika\\_programmata/koinothtes/jewish\\_community](http://www.hri.org/culture97/eng/eidika_programmata/koinothtes/jewish_community)).

The success had by Thessaloniki’s Sephardic refugees in the 16<sup>th</sup> century attracted a second wave of Ashkenazic migration from Eastern and Central Europe. So prominent was the Sephardic presence in all aspects of political, economic and social life that

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<sup>9</sup> This view of Ottoman tolerance counters popular Greek historical narrative that points to the presence of “Secret Schools” (*κρυφά σχολεία*) in which Greek Orthodox priests transmitted Christian Orthodoxy and Greek language, history, and literature to ethnic Greek children. Today, these priests are commonly credited for the preservation of the Greek language, culture, and Orthodoxy and even for having mobilized the masses for rebellion and revolution. Nevertheless, the preponderant view among Sephardic-Balkan historians is that the Ottoman Empire was ‘tolerant’, perhaps only in contrast to the Inquisitory policies of the West and to the methods of linguistic and nationalistic assimilation employed by the new nation states in the Balkans and Turkey that emerged after Ottoman rule.

<sup>10</sup> The only mass conversions to Islam occurred among an enclave of Slavs in Bosnia Herzegovina and in various Albanian communities. In addition to the Slavic and Albanian converts who were motivated by upward social/economic/political mobility, the so-called “Donmes” were the only Jews en masse to convert in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Romaniotic and Ashkenazic Jews began to integrate themselves into Sephardic society. At first this assimilation was linguistic since knowledge of the Sephardim's language had become necessary if one wanted to participate in business dealings with the Sephardim who controlled much of the city's money flow. What followed, however, was an ethnocultural assimilation as the Romaniotim and Ashkenazim gradually began to adopt Sephardic cultural and religious patterns.

Along with the linguistic assimilation of the Romaniotim and Ashkenazim in Thessaloniki, Christian and Muslims were also said to have adopted Judeo-Spanish as a lingua franca for business conducted in the city. Even non-Balkan merchants recognized the necessity of Judeo-Spanish to conform to the lingua of Balkan business: "...a well educated British merchant named Sir Dudley North (1641-1691) who conducted business in the Balkans found it to his advantage in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to learn 'Balkanized Spanish' for handling commercial transactions with the Sephardim (Benardete 1953: 106, as cited in Harris 1979: 239).

The 16<sup>th</sup> century was, for the Jews, a Golden Era. Libraries, archives, Talmudic schools, Kabbala Centers, religious and secular academies drew the attention of world-wide Jewry who then began referring to Thessaloniki as "Little Jerusalem", "Mother of Israel", and "the Sephardic Republic" (Harris 1994:36). The superiority of the Jews was not just cultural, but economic as well: "...the Jews had taken charge of all the commercial traffic that the wealth and revenue of Turkey was in their hands" (ibid 37). Establishing Sephardic contacts in other Ottoman cities facilitated the monopolization of certain goods such as jewelry, diamonds, pearls, silk cotton, sugar and tobacco.

Apart from Jewish mercantile strength, the Jews stood out in the professions. Similar to those practiced in Iberia, banking, money-lending, silk and wool-weaving industries were predominantly Jewish. As custom officials, interpreters and Ottoman diplomats they were in the position to control the amount of goods both entering and leaving the empire. In their capacity as court physicians to the highest ranking Ottoman officials, it was not uncommon for the Jews to use their influence on the Ottomans to the extent that it would favor their community when necessary (Dias-Mas 1986: 60). In sum, in all spheres of life -intellectual, commercial alike- the Jews occupied the top tiers of Ottoman society during the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The next century witnessed a period of economic and social decline. In general terms, the social and economic well being of Thessaloniki Jews is said to have mimicked that of the Ottoman Empire. “Entrenched as they were in Ottoman life, and tied economically to the fortunes of the empire...” (Stavroulakis 1997:51), both the Sephardim and the Ottoman Empire in general began their slow economic decline in the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as the establishment of new seaports and sea routes began attracting commerce away from Thessaloniki.

During this time of economic depression, Jewish intellectual activity became isolated from the literary energy spurred by the Renaissance in Western Europe, and the use of Hebrew characters in lieu of Latin letters furthered the isolation from 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish and Portuguese intellectual progress (Harris 1994:40).

It was during this time of economic, cultural, and social decline that the community accepted the messianic prophecies of Sabbetai Sevi in the 1660's. While initially stirring the community with promises of a messianic return, Sevi ultimately had

the effect of further weakening the already battered Thessalonikan Jewry as their duties went in neglect amid the mass hysteria that he caused. The self-proclaimed messiah, with his ability to convince large numbers of people of his messianic power, generated fear of large-scale social unrest among the Ottoman rulers. When he was arrested by Ottoman officials and given the choice of death or conversion to Islam, he and 300 Jewish families converted much to the disappointment of the majority of his followers<sup>11</sup>.

The Sephardim, shattered economically, culturally and now spiritually as well, began to lose many of their posts to the autochthonous Greeks who for the first time resumed positions of authority over Jews and presented themselves as veritable competitors in certain markets.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century was a continuation of the economic and cultural decline of both the Ottomans and the Jews within the Empire. Western European nations, seizing the opportunity to press against the weakened and often unorganized Ottoman leadership, attempted to create more chaos in an already shaky environment. Nature also had a hand in debilitating the Sephardic community by a series of environmental fires (1754 and 1788) that virtually destroyed the city's center where Jews resided and worked.

During this time period, people struggled for mere survival and the once high cultured community was characterized by high levels of illiteracy: a great majority of the lower Jewish classes were unable to read and write, except for the occasional prayer. Women were considered only for homemaking and were typically denied access to education. Had it not been for their efforts to orally transmit Sephardic folk tales

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<sup>11</sup> These converted families became to be known as *Donmes* and were later forced to abandon Thessaloniki in the Christian-Muslim population exchange that took place in 1922 between the newly formed post-Ottoman nations of Greece and Turkey. Benadrete (1952) refers to the descendents of these converts now living in Muslim lands as Crypto-Jews whose traditions carry a Jewish flavor.

(*konsežas*), ballads (*romanzas*) and proverbs (*refranes*), these cultural remnants, the object of so much contemporary literary study, could very well have been lost (Harris 1994: 42).

The community began to recover from these difficulties only in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Ottoman Empire, in an attempt to follow the example set by a newly industrialized Western Europe and to attract commerce and foreign investments, took on various modernizing tasks such as expanding the city with new roads, lighting the city streets with electricity, installing electric cars in the city center, rebuilding the port, and constructing railroads that connected the city with the rest of Europe. It was during this time of revival that the *Alliance Israelité Universelle Schools* were funded and opened by French Jews as a measure to westernize their Ottoman coreligionists, now considered backward after the hardships of earlier years. Founded in Paris in 1860, the Alliance Israelité Universelle aimed to fight and safeguard the rights of Jews everywhere against anti-Semitic discrimination. Their goals were to “work throughout the world for the emancipation and the moral progress of the Jews”, “to help effectively all those who suffer because they are Jews”, and “to encourage all publications designed to achieve these results” (Rodrigue 1993: 7). Their desire to educate the eastern Jews culminated in the first Alliance school in Volos (central Greece) in 1864. Thessaloniki’s first Alliance school was later opened in Thessaloniki in 1873 and enjoyed high levels of enrollment until it was shut down in 1932. By 1910, all numerically significant Jewish Ottoman communities housed at least one Alliance school. The language of Jewish instruction was now French and Jewish pupils were exclusively educated in terms of Western European cultures, civilizations, and ideologies. It was during this time that the

Thessalonikan Jews were first introduced to the cultural and ideological trends of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, trends that would later inspire Balkan Zionist thought. While expressing gratitude to the efforts of the Alliance in modernizing and lifting the downtrodden Ottoman Jewry, Benadrete views the Alliance as a source of French cultural imperialism in that, at the expense of local Jewish culture and language, French language and mores were upheld as the ideal (1952: 12). The 19<sup>th</sup> century also gave way to mass publication of Jewish newspapers in Judeo-Spanish and in French. In 1865, the first newspaper of Thessaloniki, *El Lunar* was published. It was followed by the publication of more than 40 other Jewish papers, 35 of which were in Judeo-Spanish and five in French, the content of which varied from being satirical to political and Zionist (Molho 1988).

During this time period, renewed Jewish growth and dominance in the commercial sphere was evidenced by the fact that the streets of Thessaloniki were empty on the Sabbath and on other Jewish holidays. A fully functional community was established, including charity institutions and a welfare system of orphanages, hospitals, senior-citizen homes, more than 30 synagogues, chapels and parish schools. In addition, some of the first Zionist organizations appeared during this time of intellectual rebirth. One of the achievements of the local Zionist groups was to introduce the Hebrew language as a required subject in the schools of the Alliance as a means to muster popular Jewish support for the promotion of the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> While Thessalonikan Zionists did support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, this support did not necessarily translate into a desire to migrate there, as evidenced by the relatively small and inconsistent numbers of migrations to the *Terra Santa*.



The newly resurrected Jewish dominance in the city was not to last. For the Jews, the last decades of the Ottoman Empire coincide with the final decline from their once favored positions in Ottoman society. Fortification of groups with nationalistic ideologies debilitated the social standing of Jews in Greece as preference was granted to ethnic nationalists at the expense of many Jews. This time period stirred fear in the Jewish communities as their new status under Greek Christian rule was uncertain. As an initial reaction to the looming Greek annexation of the city and in a desire to protect Jewish property and business, the Jewish Community, along with the support of Zionist groups, drafted a letter to the Great Powers<sup>13</sup> suggesting that Thessaloniki be made into a self-governing international city<sup>14</sup>. While this solution was initially appealing to the Great Powers as it would guarantee them and the Austro-Hungarian Empire entryway and a ‘free zone’ into the Aegean Sea via Thessaloniki, it was later agreed that Thessaloniki be annexed by Greece. Subsequently, the community was persuaded to side with the Greek government who promised protection of Jewish rights in the Greek national state<sup>15</sup>. Thus, upon Thessaloniki’s liberation on October 26, 1912, King George I and the Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos vowed to safeguard the rights of the Jewish community of the newly expanded Greek state. To the surprise of many in the

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<sup>13</sup> Great Britain, France and Russia formed the basis of the Entente which sought to curtail the threat of German expansionism on the one hand and to strip the Ottomans of their Balkan territory on the other.

<sup>14</sup> For an in-depth description of the hypothesized ‘international city’, see Molho (1988)

<sup>15</sup> Some of the stated measures promised by the Venizelos government vis-à-vis the Jews were “exemption from military service in return for payment for a period of three years after the arrival of the Greek army without loss of voting rights; the preservation of the Sabbath in the city of Salonika; the right to participate in public administration; the right to continue keeping accounts in their own language; the freedom of Jewish press; the possibility of collaboration between civil veterinary officers and the specially-appointed *shochet*, ensuring the observance of Jewish dietary laws; government allocations of 1,200 drachmas to Jewish communities numbering more than 50 families, as well as government allowances to various exclusively Jewish associations, such as the athletic and Zionist Club Maccabe; and exemption from all taxes on imported unleavened bread used during Passover” (Saias 1919: 11-13, in Molho 1986: 115-6).

community, the new government kept its promises, and under Venizelos anti-Semitic violence perpetrated by Greek soldiers and Greek civilians was curtailed, the Jews were exempt from military service during a time in which two wars involving the Greek army were fought (the Balkan Wars and WWI), and high Greek government officials took public stances in support of the Zionist ideology for a future Jewish state. Such gestures enabled the Greeks to secure a small amount of Jewish trust and support that had previously not been present. Furthermore, the Greeks and Jews soon came to realize that cooperation for the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor and in the Middle East could bring the dream of both Greek and Jewish nationhood closer: the Greeks would reclaim Turkish-held territory in Asia Minor and the Jews would establish a Jewish state in Palestine, still occupied by the Ottomans (Molho 1986: 122-3). Thus, the initial years were satisfactory for Jews and Greeks alike in the newly-expanded Greek state. At the institutional level, there was a degree of acceptance among the Jews of their new national identity. Molho relates that this stance is evidenced in the proceedings published from international Zionist conferences in which Thessalonikan Jewish support for a Jewish state, both financially and ideologically, was apparent yet "...did not necessarily indicate their will to emigrate to this second future motherland, nor did it signify the incompatibility of their simultaneously Greek and Jewish national consciousness" (Molho 1988:397)<sup>16</sup>. However, the Great Fire in 1917 which destroyed

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<sup>16</sup> Regarding the issue of Jewish migration to Palestine at around the time of 1919, a one-time active member of a Thessalonikan Zionist organization recounted the popular response to suggestions of such migrations: "What Palestine? Palestine is here!" (Molho 1988: 398).

Jewish property, both private and community, left 53,000 Jews homeless<sup>17</sup>. In addition, the settlement of over 100,000 ethnic Greeks refugees from Asia Minor in 1923 brought about more economic and social hardship for all and diminished the demographic superiority of the Jews<sup>18</sup>. Where they once made up the largest ethnic group since the Sephardic migrations of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the arrival of Asia Minor refugees tilted the scale so that the Jews now constituted 20% of the city's total population. The difficulties suffered during this period sparked a wave of Jewish migration out of Thessaloniki to Palestine, the Americas and Western Europe.

In spite of the population losses of the first several decades during pre-World War II years, the community numbered more than 50,000. The occupation of Thessaloniki by the Nazis, however, dealt a devastating blow to the already debilitated community. As in other occupied European cities, the Nazis began to carry out anti-Semitic policies from the first days of their arrival on April 9, 1941: Jews were denied access to cafes, theatres, stores and other public places, community offices and Jewish libraries containing archives dating back centuries were burnt, community leaders were imprisoned, and the Jewish hospital as well as many private homes were confiscated for Nazi use. As an indication of future cruelty, the Nazis ordered all Jewish males between

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<sup>17</sup> Community property value was estimated at 6,505,000 Drachma before the 1917 Fire and at 750,000 Drachma after the fire, an 88.5% community loss. (Molho, Rena. JMT Website; <http://www.jmth.gr/web/about.htm>)

<sup>18</sup> The Asia Minor Greeks were part of a greater population exchange between the two new nation states of Greece and Turkey. Enacted by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, 1,300,000 Asia Minor Greeks were exchanged for 350,000 ethnic Turks living in Greece. The only populations excluded from the exchange were the Greek Orthodox of Constantinople and the Muslim Turks of Western Thrace and Macedonia who were granted special status and protection to remain in their homelands. Along with other territorial exchanges, the Treaty of Lausanne had the effect of making Greece more ethnically homogenous than it had ever been. With the removal of its largest national minority (the Turkish Muslims, except those of Thrace and Macedonia), the Jews, small enclaves of Slavic speakers in Macedonia, Albanians in Attica and Gypsies comprised the new nation's minority groups.

the ages of 18 and 45 years to gather at Eleftherios Square at the center of the city on July 11, 1942 and after publicly humiliating them, the men were forcibly taken to labor camps. The families of the men, in a desperate attempt to have their loved ones returned, paid a ransom of 2.5 million drachmas for their freedom. By the end of 1942, all businesses owned by Jews were seized and the 2,000-year-old Jewish cemetery was destroyed by looting. In February of 1943, the Nazis enforced all Jews to wear the yellow Star of David sewn onto their clothing and evacuated all Jews from their homes into ghettos. From this time on, those that were still working and collecting wages were prohibited from doing so and participation in community events, meetings and activities was strictly forbidden. Beginning on March 15, 1943, trains carried Jews to death camps in Auschwitz and Birkenau and within the next 5 months and 19 trains later, 98% of the pre-war community was lost. Most of these deportees were gassed upon immediate arrival to the camps while a minority was sent to labor camps. The few Thessalonikan Jews that were able to avoid deportation did so with the help of Christian friends who helped them flee the city and hid them in homes around the country. Many of the young men fought along the Greek resistance fighters, the *andartes* (the leftist EAM/ELAS groups), who would typically retreat into the mountains after attacks on Occupation Forces. Others who had evaded the death camps did so because they had heeded warnings of upcoming deportations and left Greece all together. Of those who left Greece, many spent the years of the war in Palestine and in other parts of the Middle East<sup>19</sup>. Upon Thessaloniki's liberation in October of 1944, many of these Jews returned and were later joined in 1945 by the few death camp survivors. Of the 1,908 returnees to

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<sup>19</sup> See Lewkowicz (2000) for detailed personal narratives of the Jews' escape into hiding.

be registered with the community in 1945, 1,229 were men and 679 were women. The majority of those who returned (1,465) were between the ages of 20 and 50 and were either unmarried or widowed (Lewkowicz 2000: 247). With the help of various international organizations, and the establishment of a Governing Committee, the community set about the arduous task of reclaiming Jewish property, a task complicated by the fact that many of these homes and businesses had either been partially or totally destroyed or had been taken over by rural Greeks settling in the city or by old neighbors who believed the deportations to be permanent. Harsh conditions due to an unstable political and economic climate, large portions of the city destroyed, homes, personal wealth and businesses lost, and the constant reminder of perished family members made living in the city unbearable for returning Jews<sup>20</sup>. These difficulties encouraged the migration of many to Athens, the United States, Latin America, and Palestine, thus reducing even more the already weakened post-war population. Nonetheless, those who remained after having returned to the city were financially aided by various international agencies such as the American Joint Distribution, the Conference for Jewish Material Claims against Germany and the Jewish Agency whose goal was to provide emergency relief and to help re-establish community offices and businesses (Plaut 1996: 14). The decade following the war is characterized by a boom in weddings, childbirths, and a concerted effort to rebuild community organizations, as well as educational opportunities for its young, some of which included the cooperation with two private primary schools to offer a Jewish-oriented curriculum to its Jewish students. The military coup in 1967

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<sup>20</sup> The country was driven into a bloody civil war from 1945 until 1949 due to the economic and political calamities immediately after Greece's liberation from the German Occupation: the leftist EAM/ELAS and the British-backed Greek right formed the two opposing sides. Ultimately, the Western-supported government, unwilling to see Greece fall under the curtain of the Soviets, was victorious.

produced some changes in the way in which the Jewish Community was allowed to function. Perhaps the most invasive changes were the restriction of Judeo-Spanish for the purpose of recording community minutes and the re-assessment of Jewish property.

### **1.3 The Sephardic Community of Thessaloniki Today**

In spite of increased awareness of the Jewish presence in Thessaloniki, there is still much public ignorance surrounding both Jewish history and the community's presence today. Most publications, such as history texts and tourist guides, make little or no mention of the city's Jewish history and its contemporary demographic situation. The Community's main office, synagogue, Museum, and a newly erected Holocaust Memorial in 1993 go unnoticed in spite of their central location in downtown Thessaloniki and surrounding suburbs. Most residents of the city are unaware of the fact that the city's university is built on one of the largest and oldest Jewish cemeteries in Europe, or that one of the city's plazas was rededicated to the memory of the Holocaust victims.

The Jewish community of Thessaloniki today is numbered at roughly 1,000 – 1,500 persons. The discrepancy in numbers is a consequence of mixed marriages and children of mixed heritage who may not have been officially registered in the community. The community's spiritual leader is a Chief Rabbi who oversees religious activity in the city's three synagogues, two of which are functioning. The establishment during post

WWII years of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki<sup>21</sup> allowed for the organization and management of the many community sectors such as the synagogues, the Jewish Cemetery, the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, The Saul Modiano Senior Citizen Home, the nursery and primary school “Talmud Torah Agadol”, the community welfare system and community real estate. In 1979, the community opened the “Talmud Torah Agadol” nursery and primary school which educates nearly 80 children. Instruction is in Greek and core courses are Hebrew, English, French, and Jewish religion and history, although there is a recent attempt to informally introduce Judeo-Spanish into the curriculum. The Community provides additional financial assistance in the form of scholarships and loans to those students wishing to continue in the private school sector for their secondary and university education. For children between the ages of 7 and 15, summer camps are organized by the Community and take place in various locations around Greece<sup>22</sup>. Attended by Jewish youth from Greece and abroad, the camps are led by Jewish camp teachers and youth leaders, many hailing from Israel (‘morim’). These camps provide Greek Jewish youth the opportunity to forge friendships with other Jews and to augment awareness of Jewish history and culture, both of the Diaspora and of Israel. The Youth Center was created to provide further recreational and cultural events such as dances, conferences, excursions to Jewish sites, and trips to Israel. Multiple social clubs were created for the adult members of the community: Brotherhood, Ladino Society, The Organization for Women, Maccabee, and the Greece-Israel Association. For the

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<sup>21</sup> A legal body under the Ministry of Public Instruction and Worship, The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki maintains financial independence under Law No. 2456/1920 and functions in manner resembling a republic of its own. The Community consists of 20 elected members, a council appointed President and a the religious head, the Chief Rabbi (Lewkowicz, 1994: 228).

<sup>22</sup> See Lewkowicz (1994) for a more detailed description of the summer camp experience.

community's elderly citizens, the Saoul Modiano Senior Citizen Home was opened in 1932 thanks to a donation made by a Thessaloniki Jew before his death in 1924. The home was temporarily shut down in 1943 during the Nazi Occupation when all of the home's occupants were deported to Auschwitz. It was not until 1974 that the Community was finally able to reopen the home thanks to the financial backing of the Community and from private donations. Today, the Saul Modiano Center is home to both Jewish and non Jewish residents alike.

In spite of its losses during WWII, there are various Jewish historical and cultural sites of interest. While the ancient Jewish Cemetery, once containing 500,000 tombs and once located where the University of Thessaloniki now stands, was looted and destroyed by the Nazis, surviving graves and tombs are now located in a new cemetery in the Stavroupolis neighborhood of the city. Other tombs or remnants of tombs have been transferred to the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki where they are on display. Tombs not relocated to the new cemetery and the Museum had been used to build post WWII structures. In fact, Lewkowicz recounts the experience of a community member who had entered a home to discover a stone staircase built of tomb remnants with names in Hebrew script still visible on each step (2000: 270). Within the borders of the new cemetery, a monument dedicated to the victims and survivors of the Holocaust now stands.

Housed in the same building that contained the offices of the Jewish newspaper, *L'Independent*, The Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki holds exhibitions of photographs and documents depicting the history of Jewish Thessaloniki. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century traditional Jewish costumes are also on display, as well as the striped garments of



surviving concentration camp deportees. Official letters written by Greek and German officials dictating the status of certain persons (letters that “excused” one from being deported because of his/her marriage to a non-Jew, for example), cultural and religious objects and finally, a library of books and archives not destroyed during World War II are also on display.

For continued research and diffusion of Jewish history, religion and culture, the Community also helped to establish The Hellenic House, located in the University of Jerusalem in Israel. The club Ladino Society seeks to promote and Judeo-Spanish language and Sephardic literature and culture. To this aim, they periodically host an internationally recognized scholarly conference in the city. The last conference held was in the fall of 2004.

#### **1.4 The decline of Judeo Spanish**

The decline of Judeo-Spanish in Thessaloniki is attributed to a multitude of social, political, and demographic considerations dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The factors that have advanced the shift of Judeo-Spanish to be considered here are the establishment of the Alliance schools, the rise of Greek nationalism in Thessaloniki, and the Holocaust and its aftereffects.

As it will be seen, the new realities forged by the above-mentioned conditions ultimately brought about a shift in language use affecting the community as a whole, all the while producing and being accompanied by negative attitudes that further advanced the shift away from Judeo-Spanish. Initially, while language change only affected the most outer layers of the speech community, it gradually gave way to deeper societal

penetrations that led to changes in the linguistic character even at the most intimate setting, the home. This in turn led to the condition in which the language is no longer being transmitted to new generations.

#### **1.4.1 Alliance Israélite Universelle Schools**

In the case of Judeo-Spanish of Thessaloniki, the decline of the language mirrors the economic and social descent of its speakers. It was during this period of 19<sup>th</sup> century economic and social decline that Judeo-Spanish first encountered linguistic rivalry, and it came in the form of the French language. The use of French had crept up among those who were educated in the French language Alliance Schools (beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century) and had become to be seen as the language of the intellectual elite, thus diminishing the importance of Judeo-Spanish for academic or ‘high’ use. From here negative attitudes vis-à-vis Judeo Spanish became internalized and its speakers began to regard it as a language of the uncouth and the uneducated. According to Harris (1979), Malinowski (1982), Mendes Chumaceiro (1982), we know that these negative sentiments still persist over a century later as found among many of their New York, Los Angeles and Israeli informants who indicate a concern of the language’s lack of terminology needed to talk about technological advancements and its inability to fulfill linguistic needs in contemporary professional spheres. In the Ottoman communities at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was not entirely uncommon for French to become the language of transmission between mother and child. Its effects could even be seen in the practice of naming children, as French first names rose in popularity (Harris 1982: 84). Judeo-

Spanish, once the only community language in and out of the home, in private, public and professional spheres, began to be viewed as impoverished and inadequate for modern life.

Altabev (1998) argues that the resonating ideologies being transmitted via French, that of the Enlightenment, secularism and emancipation, encouraged the community to latch on to the French language whose use became synonymous with contemporary and ‘elevated’ thoughts<sup>23</sup>. Likewise, the ideological discourse imparted and internalized by the use of Judeo- Spanish was that it was an impoverished and lame language unfit to communicate the elevated ideals that were transmitted via French. Thus, the driving mechanism behind the adoption of the French language among many in the middle and upper classes was not the language per se or even what its use could afford in the professional arena but rather for the ideals and values it conveyed. The appropriation of the language facilitated the appropriation of an alternate mode of thinking, one that was intended to deliver them from the intellectual, social and economic slump of the previous decades.

#### **1.4.2 The Rise of Greek Nationalism in Thessaloniki**

The rise of Greek nationalist sentiment<sup>24</sup> in Thessaloniki and in greater Macedonia during the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the ensuing incorporation of the

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<sup>23</sup> According to Saul, the decision to employ French as the means of instruction in the Alliance Schools was not motivated by “naïve ethnocentrism” but rather the desire to disseminate the French language as an accompaniment to western global power and imperialism at the onset of the colonial period (1983: 334).

<sup>24</sup> Greek nationalist sentiment, as it developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was invariably irredentist in nature: that is, along with other components of nationalism, the desire to regain Greek territories (those territories where Greek-speakers resided) was a guiding force.

city into the new Greek nation<sup>25</sup> in 1913 arguably played a prominent role in the decline of Judeo-Spanish. To better comprehend the mechanisms behind Greek nationalism and how it contributed to the waning use and transmission of Judeo-Spanish, a discussion of modern Greek identity development is merited.

As with the development of any national identity, no one single component can be said to make up Greek identity<sup>26</sup>. This discussion will focus on two central themes that account for much of the examination surrounding modern Greek identity: the Greek Orthodox Church stemming from its Byzantine heritage and the legacy of Hellenistic Greece from its Classical heritage, including in this the Greek language and the idea of a Greek ethnos.

Because the Ottoman Empire was a theocracy, religion was the basis upon which its subjects were organized into smaller, more manageable populations called *millets*. At the head of each millet was a religious leader, a *Millet-bashi*, whose function was to ensure that millet subjects remained loyal to the Ottoman Sultan, the absolute authority. The head of the *Millet-i Rum* (*Roman* millet named for all Christians in former Roman lands to which all Ottoman Christians belonged) was the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. In this position, his powers entered into the domains of both the religious and the political; this dual-sided governance of the Church, one religious and the other political, came across as being self-contradictory and hypocritical at times. On

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<sup>25</sup> After a war against the Ottomans between 1821-1832, the Modern Greek State came into being. In 1832, Greece included the entire Peloponnesian peninsula and the Attic region. Later expansions brought in the Ionian islands in 1864, Thessaly in 1881, Macedonia, Epirus, Crete and the Aegean Islands (Lemnos, Lesbos, Chios and Samos) in 1913, Eastern Thrace and Smyrna were temporarily awarded to Greece in 1920, Western Thrace in 1923, and finally the Dodecanese Islands in 1947. The *Megali Idea* or the “Great Idea”, that of regaining Asia Minor and its capital of Constantinople, was ultimately never reached.

<sup>26</sup> For in-depth discussions on the character of Greek nationalism, see Gallant (2001)

the one hand, because the Church was the central institutional force behind the teaching of both Greek and Christian traditions, it was often credited with their preservation. On the other hand, the Church was also bound to the Sultan to help subjugate the very people and way of life it intended to safeguard. Tied to its obligations to the Sultan of maintaining public order and stability within its millet, the Church was conservative and thus geared to repelling outside forces seeking to spread liberal, secular, democratic, and emancipating ideologies that had fed the French Revolution and were concurrently sweeping the West (Gallant 2001: 2). In an ironic twist, the Church was duty-bound to spurn those very ideological currents that had garnered inspiration from the Classical Hellenes, the people from which the Byzantines and the contemporary Orthodox clergy had descended.

In spite of the Church's efforts to evade foreign ideological influences, by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Diaspora Greeks were successfully filtering in these ideological trends back into Ottoman Greece in the hopes of mustering up fervor for an uprising against the Ottomans. Particularly dominant in the range of intellectual trends filtering into Ottoman Greece were the Enlightenment and the ideals sustained by the French Revolution. The biggest proponents of these classically-inspired doctrines were Adamantios Korais and Rigas Velestinlis. Living in Western Europe, both men had immediate access to the revolutionary trends of France and thus strove to propagate them in the East through their writings. Korais, a linguist and a classical philologist, sought to instill identification with a Classical inheritance among his contemporaries back in Ottoman Greece at the expense of the Byzantine legacy. Gallant hypothesizes that it was Korais' intense disdain for the Orthodox Clergy that fueled his motives to emphasize the

Classical over the Byzantine: “His emphasis on the need to resurrect Greece’s ancient glory stemmed in large part from his intense hatred of the Orthodox higher clergy – ‘monkish barbarians’ as he once called them- whom he blamed for the degraded state of the population” (10). Similarly, Gallant notes the work of an anonymous author entitled *Greek Rule of Law, or A Word About Freedom (Elliniki Nomarheia, iti Logos peri Eleftherias)* in which a detailed account of horrors suffered by Greeks at the hands of the Turks is kept. The author, however, does not place the Greeks above reproach for there were many who enriched their own lot upon collaboration with the Ottoman authorities. In doing so, he writes, these Greeks merely perpetuated their own subjugation. Like Korais, this author holds the high Orthodox officials accountable for prolonging Ottoman oppression and thus for this author, “...the war of liberation meant not only throwing off the yoke of Ottoman rule, but also the tyranny of the Orthodox Church...” (12).

While Rigas Velestinlis put less blame on the Orthodox Church for sustaining Ottoman oppression, he was also more geared to favoring the Classical Heritage over the Byzantine merely because the revolutionary ideologies to which he had prescribed in the West had themselves been bred from classical Hellenistic thought. His mission from the Diaspora was thus to transmit “the contagious creed of liberation to the Balkans”, the same creed of liberation that had fed the French Revolution. In Velestinlis’ vision of a Greek Republic, the geographical borders were to be those based on old Byzantium while its constitution was to be secular and democratic. He envisioned his Republic to be multi-ethnic, as were the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires: all peoples, regardless of ethnicity, language or religion, would be regarded as equal citizens, and being Greek did not designate ethnicity but rather citizenship to the Greek Republic (11).

In contrast to those who believed that ancient Athens and the Classical Era should form the basis of Greek identity and of the Greek revolution, other conceptions of a liberated Greece maintained that the Church, as the central institution for the Millet-i Rum, would be the only force poignant enough to inspire an uprising among the illiterate masses ignorant of their Classical heritage. Whereas the Classical model for a new Greece was secular and democratic, the Byzantine-inspired model was theocratic and monarchic; the proponents of each model claimed to represent the true legacy of the Greek people (68).

The reconciliation of these two competing stances came about in part by the writings of the historian Konstantinos Paparrigoloupos who in 1860 published a five-volume monograph entitled *History of the Hellenic Nation from the Ancient Times until the Modern*. In it, he proposed that Greek identity embrace both Classical and Byzantine legacies and the idea that Greek history could be traced and divided into three phases: the Classical, the Byzantine, and the Modern. Each phase made its own contribution to the creation of a highly complex character: “Greeks were neither eastern nor western, but both. They could legitimately lay claim to the pagan/secular and liberal legacy of ancient Greece as well as the ecumenical, Orthodox Christian one of Byzantium” (73). Although the Church was to be strongly linked with Greek identity, the idea of Greek nationality, at least in theory, was to be secular, albeit cognizant of religion and of religious minorities. Paparrigopoulos’ writings served as a model for the new Greek state whose aim it became to internalize this dual identity in the minds of the masses. This was done architecturally, linguistically, and institutionally. Architecturally, towns that were destroyed during the Revolution were rebuilt to reflect western urbanization, and

government buildings were erected in Neoclassical style. Towns and villages that had taken on non Greek names reflecting non Greek settlements were given Hellenic names. Linguistically, the spoken variety, *Demotiki* ('the language of the people'), was given a formal equivalent to be used in literary writing and in public discourse. "Cleansed" of the Turkish, Slavic and Albanian words that had been incorporated into Demotic Greek, *Katharevousa* ('purified language') took its lexical, morphological and syntactic inspiration from Ancient Attic Greek<sup>27</sup>. Institutionally, this new dual conception of Greek identity was transmitted via public schooling where the new curriculum centered on Greek history and nationality as told by Paparrigopoulos, Ancient Greek language and literature, and Christian Orthodoxy. These conceptions of Greekness motivated rebellions and revolutions that in 1824 culminated in the establishment of the Greek Republic. While to the south Greek unification was progressively gaining territorial ground, Macedonia and its capital of Thessaloniki would have to wait until the next century before it could claim independence and join the new Greek State already in existence since 1832. Nonetheless, the military successes had by the established Greek Kingdom in the south, the propagation of Greek nationalism and of irredentist ideology (*Megali Idea/The Great Idea*<sup>28</sup>) stirred in the minds of the Greek subjects in Macedonia and in its capital. The situation for the ethnic Greeks in Thessaloniki was positively invigorating at the turn of the century as it became clear that Thessaloniki and a great portion of Macedonia would soon be annexed by the Greek Kingdom; however, the same

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<sup>27</sup> Adamantios Korais is credited for developing the *Katharevousa* dialect in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century from his home in France. *Katharevousa*, for him, represented a linguistic return to the Classical, Pre-Byzantium Age.

<sup>28</sup> The ideology that sought to unite all Greeks in Ottoman lands within a single nation, from the Greeks in the far corners of Macedonia to those along the Black Sea and throughout Anatolia.



could not be true for the Thessaloniki's Jews who could not ethnically, linguistically, nor religiously link themselves to the newly adopted and propagated vision of Modern Greek identity.

Upon Thessaloniki's incorporation into the Greek Kingdom in 1913, the Jews became citizens of a new state under the authority of a people who had been in previous centuries their economic inferiors.<sup>29</sup> While the new government made promises to ensure equal rights for the Jews, the situation was tense and often directly and indirectly hostile toward the Jews who differed ethnically, linguistically, and religiously from the now romanticized Greek model. Certainly there were no efforts on the part of the Church to forcibly convert non Christians (as this would have contradicted theoretical claims of secular nationalism), but the omnipresence of the Church caused discomfort and uneasiness among the Jews. In anticipation of these disputes, Molho describes that the character of Greek identity was forced to evolve so as to accommodate Thessaloniki's ethnic minorities. While accepting Greek nationality, the Jews desired cultural autonomy and political equality; in turn, the Greeks sought a peaceful environment toward minorities so as to not attract meddlesome attention from foreign protector countries. Much in need of the support and approval of the Great Powers in the still highly disputable area of Macedonia, the Greeks realized that favorable treatment of its minorities would be positively regarded by the West. Moreover, having become accustomed to defending Greek minorities living in Bulgaria, Albania and Turkey, Greek officials were forced to regard their own minorities in the same light. Molho states that

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<sup>29</sup> Not only were Greeks economically inferior, they were considered to be culturally backwards as well. In terms of intellectual and artistic achievements, the four centuries under Ottoman rule produced very little in comparison to the advances made in previous historical stages. This time period is commonly referred to as Greece's 'Dark Ages'.

this symbiotic relationship between the Greeks and the Jews enabled a relatively smooth transition of government in the newly incorporated Thessaloniki, one in which the Jews accepted Greek nationality and Greeks granted the Jews cultural and religious autonomy and differentiation (1988: 398-9). Albeit this smooth political transition, Thessaloniki and region of Macedonia as a whole faced a linguistic dilemma: how to incorporate all non-Greek speaking citizens: Judeo-Spanish speakers, Slavic and Turkish speakers. Initiatives taken at the onset of the city's independence were minute, but they gradually intensified within the decade post-1912. Such measures taken by the Greek government, and all other new governments emerging after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, recognized early on the potential dangers of a multilingual constituency in that “whenever a people's language is different from that of the state, they will tend to feel disenfranchised or marginalized and hence, prone to political agitation” (Le Page, 1964: 42). Greece's solution in evading potential interethnic conflicts was to linguistically assimilate all non-Greek speaking peoples via an overriding nationalistic ideology that stressed speaking Greek for the demonstration of Greek patriotism and loyalty. Once Thessaloniki became part of the new Greek nation, Greek policies took aim at all non-Greek languages. One of the first policies enforced was the use of the Greek language in the carrying out of official affairs in the city. Certainly, Judeo-Spanish could still be heard in public places, but Greek was, for the first time, elevated to official status while Judeo-Spanish was demoted to a language of minority status whose use implied national disloyalty. By 1932, Greek became the only permitted language of instruction in both public and private primary schools and not long after, conscription into the Greek army was obligatory for all. These two acts did much to facilitate the propagation of Greek

identity and of the Greek language, and use of Judeo-Spanish was gradually restricted to those domains typical of most ethnic languages, that is, the home and very closed community functions. To advance the decline of Judeo-Spanish, in 1936, newspapers once published in Judeo-Spanish were restricted when all ethnic language publications were prohibited. Now mandated by public law, Judeo-Spanish was reduced to an ethnic language whose use was discouraged in public life. Social, educational and economic advantages rendered by the use of Greek gave way to necessary knowledge of Greek within Sephardic communities for the first time since their arrival over four centuries earlier.

Once levels of Judeo-Spanish/Greek bilingualism were reached, the Greek language began to gain terrain over Judeo-Spanish until the present day context in which the degree of Greek and Judeo-Spanish spoken can be correlated with age: the younger the speaker, the less Judeo-Spanish he/she will speak.

### **1.4.3 The Holocaust**

The human losses suffered by the community after World War II drastically decreased the number of Judeo-Spanish speakers, thus hastening its decline. Dorian's term *linguistic genocide* correctly applies to this context and from personal narratives we know that "No surviving family is without a list of vanished relatives that could run into eighty or hundred persons" (Stavroulakis 1997: 55). The tragedy of the Holocaust is not limited to the loss of human life; from a linguistic perspective, the loss of potential speakers and transmitters of the language to pass on the language to younger generations had they been alive to do so is equally devastating.

When American and Allied troops entered Jewish concentration camps at the end of the war, many of Greece's Jews slowly began to make their way home to Thessaloniki and to other parts of Greece. Much to their anguish, the city they returned to did not resemble their pre-war home. Nearly 98% of the city's Jewish inhabitants vanished or simply never returned, thus leaving behind homes, businesses and community-owned property that were quickly claimed by peasants pouring in from their own war torn villages or by neighbors who were eager to profit from the Jews' deportation. The city, rid of its Jewish element, was described by many in personal narratives as a ghost town. Many of those that did return after liberation picked up and left to start a new life in the Americas or in Palestine for they "could not bear the silence of the old neighborhoods" (Stavroulakis, 57). For those that did remain to marry and raise a new generation in a post Holocaust era, the need to assimilate, not for assimilation's sake but to remain unnoticed, was another motivation to abandon any obvious marker of Jewishness, one of which was the use of Judeo-Spanish both publicly and even in the home. The desire for parents to protect children from future acts of anti-Semitism drove many to consciously not transmit the language that had for so long been associated with Thessalonikan Jewry. Lewkowicz (1994) finds that this desire to remain unnoticed, which she refers to as "hidden Judaism", is one that persists even today among generations born after WWII.

### **1.5 Judeo-Spanish Today**

The linguistic situation of Judeo-Spanish today is characteristic of ethnic-language decay: many of the community's elderly population speak Judeo-Spanish to varying degrees, and all are also fluent speakers of Greek. Their children- born during or

within the first decade and a half after WWII- fall into one of two categories: those who virtually possess no linguistic ability in Judeo-Spanish and those with varying degrees of language ability, productive and receptive ability alike. The grandchildren of the oldest generation, born after 1960, are all first-language Greek speakers who possess limited knowledge of the Judeo-Spanish which is usually restricted to domain specific vocabulary such as names of foods and songs, terms of endearment, fixed expressions and proverbs, and kinship terminology. As with other communities in advanced stages of language shift, there is little or no intergenerational transmission of Judeo-Spanish, a principal factor in maintaining the vitality of the language (Fishman 1997: 161). Regardless of whatever official or institutional support that a language may enjoy, no long lasting effects will be seen unless the language is used for ordinary, everyday communications such as that which is used in the home. The use of Judeo-Spanish in Thessaloniki, consistent with the state of Judeo-Spanish in other communities, is restricted intimate social settings (the home and gatherings of community friends) and to a limited number of Sephardic liturgical functions and/or community events dealing specifically with the language. Those that do use the language in the latter contexts are in their majority elderly residents, born pre WWII. Additionally, the use of Judeo-Spanish, even in these contexts is sporadic and supported by frequent interjections of Greek. As it will be seen in the presentation of data, most critical to the situation of Judeo-Spanish in this particular community is the little or no intergenerational transmission of the language as a code of daily communication from parent to child.

## Chapter 2

### Ethnic Identity and Language

#### 2.1 Overview

Because ethnic identity in general and Jewish ethnic identity in particular- as it relates to language use and shift- is the primary concern of this study, this chapter begins with an in-depth discussion on the nature of Jewish ethnic identity at the ontological level going beyond the level of religious belief. Those theoretical frameworks espoused by Barth (1969), Herman (1977), Gans (1979), and Smolicz (1981) are introduced in this chapter and serve to inspire the data analysis and interpretation in subsequent chapters. The question of Jewish identity has long been examined by modern-world Jews who sustain the view that Judaism does not fit into any of the usual categories of nation or religion. Until the founding of the state of Israel, Jews were not a nation, at least not in the political sense, nor could they define themselves by their religion alone. De Langué (1988) and Meyer (1992) maintain that to study Judaism and all that pertains to it as one would study Christianity or Islam would be to only scratch the surface of what it means to be a Jew: “Hardly anybody could assert with any seriousness that Judaism was simply a religious belief such as Christianity” (Meyer 1992: 10)<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> This quotation appears in German in Meyer’s (1992: 10) text. The original is as follows: “Kaum jemand konnte ernstlich behaupten, das Judentum sei einfach ein religiöser Glaube wie etwa das Christentum”

As this study seeks to examine the question of language as a contending marker of Jewishness, a discussion of language and its relation to ethnic identity will also take its place in this chapter. Does language, in this case Judeo Spanish, form an integral part of Jewish identity in Thessaloniki today? In addition to the relationship between language and ethnic identity, the phenomenon of language shift as it relates to ethnicity maintenance will be visited. Inspirational to this discussion are those views put forth by Fishman (1966, 1977, 1985a, 1985b, 1989, and 1996) and Taylor, Meynard, and Rheault (1977) who regard ethnic language to be an essential ingredient in the maintenance of ethnicity, as well as opposing stances presented by Edwards (1977, 1984, 1985), Eastman and Reese (1981), Eastman (1984), Fishman (1985c), and Haarman (1986).

The chapter will conclude with a review of studies conducted on a variety of minority groups in dissimilar geographical settings yet similar sociolinguistic contexts (minority immigrant and indigenous groups, Jewish and non-Jewish alike) that examine the link between ethnic identity (maintenance) and ethnic language.<sup>31</sup>

## **2.2 Jewish Ethnic Identity**

In his discussion of the ethnic group as a social organization, Barth (1969) identifies self-ascription and identification by others as significant components of ethnic identity: an ethnic group is “a population which... identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order”

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<sup>31</sup> While I recognize that the socio-historical circumstances and contexts of immigrant groups differ greatly from those of indigenous groups, the similarity to which I refer points to the resulting sociolinguistic conditions to which both groups are subjected (i.e. minority group abandoning its ethnic language for that of the majority group).

(11). Even if the cultural context of group membership (dress, language, etc.) moves towards that of the majority group, the dichotomy between ingroup and outgroup can still be maintained as long as members identify themselves and are identified by others as belonging to the group. Thus, Barth contends that it is “the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (15). For groups undergoing change, Barth proposes the following:

...the cultural traits that single out the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed, indeed even the organizational form of the group may change- yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content (14).

At the macro-level<sup>32</sup>, conservation of boundaries is controlled by “a systematic set of rules governing inter-ethnic social encounter”, and at the micro-level by restricting “the kinds of roles allowed to an individual and the people with whom the individual interacts.” (16). Because these restrictions make up the nature of all social interactions, Barth maintains that the issue of ethnic identity cannot be evaded: “The constraints on a person’s behaviour which spring from his ethnic identity thus tend to be absolute and....quite comprehensive (17).

Even though Gan’s (1979) discussion of ethnic identity revolves around ethnics in the American context, I consider his notions of ethnic symbolism discussed below to be relevant to the identity formation of the Sephardim of Thessaloniki. Where Gans’ first generation ethnics (foreign born) were the first to be exposed to the processes of assimilation and acculturation, I view those born during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Interaction at the macro-level describes the correspondence between differing collectivities of people. At the micro-level, it is the interaction between individuals.



century (pre-WWII) as my first generation of Sephardic ethnics since they also were the first generation of Sephardim to experience the first several decades during which Thessaloniki was passed from Ottoman to Greek power.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, I regard Gans' second and third generation ethnics in the American context as being parallel to my own second and third generation ethnics. From Gan's point of view, what some have referred to as an ethnic revival in the U.S. in the 1960's and 1970's (Fishman et al., 1985; Alba, 1990) is actually a new phase of acculturation and assimilation taking place among third and fourth generation European ethnics. He labels this more visible model of ethnicity "symbolic ethnicity" (1). This new sort of ethnic involvement emphasizes concern with ethnic identity or the mere idea of coming from a distinct ethnic group. Gans posits that since third or fourth generation ethnics no longer necessitate the aid and guidance provided by ethnic organizations that had previously served the needs of earlier generations in the American context, they now make use of ethnic symbols to satisfy a desire to preserve some of that distinctiveness once so easily bestowed upon their predecessors. For the first and second generations of ethnics, ethnic identity was anchored to groups and roles and was never a matter of choice. Ethnics lived, worked, socialized, and were defined by their ethnicity, and so there was little need for them to be preoccupied with matters of their own ethnic identity. The third generation of ethnics, however, lives without the assumptions of a particular group and without the roles or

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<sup>33</sup> I remind the reader that Thessaloniki gained its independence from the Turks in 1912. The demographics of the city underwent drastic changes from this time until WWII. The Jewish population began its decline in the early 1900's with waves of migrations to the Americas, Western Europe and Palestine. Population exchanges between Greeks and Turks in 1922 brought in a flood of over 100,000 ethnic Greek refugees from Asia Minor and Anatolia making the Jews a minority for the first time since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The most drastic event affecting the city's Jewish numerical count came about in the form of Nazi deportations beginning in 1943 which reduced the Jewish population to a mere fraction of what it once was before the war.

labels that immediately link them to their ethnicity. In this generation, ethnicity can still be felt, but because it is far less visible, it must be explicitly expressed in ways that do not interfere with more practical aspects of their lives. Thus, ethnic behavior that hampers the fulfillment of more pragmatic concerns around family, career, and social life style will be avoided. Furthermore, since people are more concerned with the *idea* of ethnicity than with the actual cultural practices or group relationships associated with it, they are able to select any mode of expressing ethnic identity as long as it intensifies the feeling of being ethnic. Therefore, Gans contends that over time “ethnicity takes on an expressive rather than instrumental function in people’s lives, becoming more of a leisure-time activity and losing its relevance, say, to earning a living or regulating family life” (9). This expressive behavior makes use of ethnic symbols defined by Gans as the individual cultural practices borrowed from the older, sometimes pre-migratory ethnic culture: “They are ‘abstracted’ from that culture and pulled out of its original moorings, so to speak, to become stand-ins for it” (ibid). Gans characterizes symbolic ethnicity as a nostalgic allegiance to the old ways, which can be felt without being fused into an everyday way of life: the tight bounds holding together extended members of family, the traditional authority and respect paid to elders, or the “unambiguous orthodoxy of immigrant religion” (ibid). Whatever cultural patterns chosen to act as ethnic symbols, they must follow a pragmatic guideline: symbols must be visible, easily expressed and felt by all third generation ethnics. Gans provides the example of Jewish American symbols extracted from Jewish tradition. Hanukkah, traditionally a minor holiday in the Jewish calendar, has been elevated as an important popular practice to counter the effects of the Christian celebration of Christmas. Gans states that the exaggerated importance

placed on Hanukkah advances a sense of Jewish ethnicity on little children who might otherwise not perceive it in the context of a Christianized way of life in the U.S. Other ready sources for ethnic symbolism that are visible and easily expressed are eating ethnic foods and identifying with politicians or political issues of the 'old country'. The Kurdish struggle in Turkey, for example, can be taken up by ethnic Kurds living abroad as a manner of displaying ethnic pride. The case of the Jews is quite different. Gans contends that the 'old countries' (places from which Jews migrated during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) appeal very little as a source of symbolic ethnicity to Jews. Such would-be concern for an 'old country' is satisfied by concern for state of Israel, its formation and survival (10). Owing to the non-arduous, non-interfering nature of ethnic symbols, 'old countries' as identity emblems are ideal because their geographical distance does not allow them to make overly taxing demands on third generation ethnics. Gas states: "even sending large amounts of money is ultimately an easy way to help..." (11) and allows ethnics to exhaust an emotional need to link themselves with a homeland.

Historical memories or the fantasy of what life was like in the old countries before ancestral departure has proven to be an effective source of newly developed ethnic symbols. For historical events that carry a heavy emotional burden, such as the Holocaust for Jews, their emergence as symbols may be postponed until people can attend to it with less emotional susceptibility. This is seen in a study carried out in 1949-50 in which the issue of the Holocaust was not apparent among his participants due to the fact that they were too busy structuring their lives around more immediate and pragmatic concerns. He adds that it seems very likely that in the decade following the atrocity, people who had been directly involved, avoided it as an attempt to repress painful

memories, at least until it had become “a more historical and therefore a less immediately traumatic event” (ibid).

According to Smolicz, the nature of cultural identity comprises group- selected core values that represent “the heartland of the ideological system and act as identifying values which are symbolic of the group and its membership” (1981: 75). The selection of core values will vary from one group to the next in accordance with the surrounding social and historical circumstances; as noted by Conversi, adversity tends to have a powerful hand in determining what a group’s core value system will be:

If a particular aspect of one’s own culture, especially if it is already perceived as important, undergoes some process of proscription or forced marginalization, then the affections and the attention of the community coagulate with particular energy around it (1990: 52)

This can be seen in the case of many modern day Turks in Turkey who, after nearly ninety years of a secularized government that imposed restrictions on certain public displays of religious practice, have given religion new significance, as evidenced in the nation’s recent election in 2002 of the first religiously conservative administration since the secular establishment of Mustafa Kemal in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Like Barth (1969), Smolicz contends that the rules of interaction determine the beliefs and attitudes that minority group members will hold toward members of the majority community. When such rules of interaction are given the status of core value and act as an emblem of the minority group in question, they “exercise a co-ordinating and directive role over other cultural values” (86). Ethnic tenacity is defined as the desire of a particular group to maintain a certain degree of distinctiveness from the population surrounding it. Smolicz gives the example of Dutch immigrants in Australia as showing low ethnic tenacity since they appear to be more willing to engage in activities or adopt

behaviors that would hasten the pace of assimilation. This is shown empirically in a study in which many first generation Dutch parents were both able and willing to use English as the main medium of communication with their own children at the expense of Dutch. Other groups examined, such as the Latvians and the Greeks, show higher ethnic tenacity in that they are less willing to embrace behaviors that make assimilation more expedient. An examination of the position of an ethnic language in the core value system of a group allows predictions to be made with respect to ethnic language maintenance.

The core values of a minority ethnic group are in turn conditioned by the majority group's core value system. Smolicz explains that when the majority group society defines itself as multi-religious, minority groups who hold religion as a primary core value will be well received:

Under the benevolent gaze of the majority group which has grown accustomed to religious differentiation within itself, a religion-based ethnic group (provided it has the financial resources) can then continue to provide its members with materials for their ethnic system construction and development (87).

For this reason Jewish groups can successfully establish various community institutions (synagogues, schools, community centers) in plural societies like Australia, Canada and the U.S. but may encounter resistance from the majority population and social infrastructure in more homogeneous societies.

Differences of cultural accommodation are tied to the nature of the cultures themselves, their centers of gravity and the core values which secure their transmission, and their integrity and cohesion (87). For groups that hold language as a primary core value, language maintenance must be an ultimate concern since the loss of the group's language would ultimately lead to the loss of the group in a viable form. In the case where a language-centered minority group lives in the context of a linguistically

homogeneous society, the minority group will more than likely suffer rapid disintegration unless the minority group is able to reprioritize its core value system. In the case of Jewish groups, Smolicz states that Jewish ethnic identities have been perpetuated in the Diaspora for two millennia without the use of one single language that acts “as its carrier and preserver” (77). He gives credit to the “complex but extremely well integrated” value orientations upheld by Jews that are religion, peoplehood and historicity. The instruction of Mosaic religion is a religious teaching, but more importantly for the purpose of ethnic transmission, it is a review of national Jewish history that serves to reinforce concepts of peoplehood and historicity.<sup>34</sup> Smolicz remarks that as no other religion considers genetics a stipulation of insidership, the importance given to descent in the female line suggests that religion in itself is not enough to define a Jew. The absence of a proselytizing zeal in Judaism is yet another evidence of an ideology that stipulates that one is either born a Jew or one is not. While strict adherence to Mosaic religion is an imperative component of being Jewish for the Orthodox Jews, more liberal ideologies sustain the view that one can ‘belong’ and ‘be’ Jewish even in the absence of religious doctrine or a maternal Jewish inheritance:

...the Jew is not simply the believer in the God of Moses and the Torah, or the person born of a Jewish mother, but that individual who sees his identity as a cultural-historic being in the light of the history of the Jews such that those people are his people and the Jews of the future are his people (Bowen-Jones 1973: 15-16, as cited in Smolicz (78)).

Historicity, an element typical of groups deriving from ancient peoples, characterizes itself as “a sense of communication with one’s ancestors and their ways” and “a strong sense of approval for things past”. A 2,000 year trajectory of persecution and a

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<sup>34</sup> Mosaic religion refers to those beliefs pertaining to Moses and the laws, writings and teachings attributed to him.

reinforcing link with religion make the notion of a historical consciousness easy for Jews to grasp.

The concept of a nation-state through Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel have become another element of Jewish ethnicity. As a result, an ever-growing link with Modern Hebrew as the language of modern Israel has become an element of Jewish consciousness. While Biblical Hebrew had always been an important component of Jewishness as the language of highly ritualized activities relating to the synagogue and as the language of Jewish intellectual or philosophical pursuits, it had long ceased to be used for day-to-day communication until very recently in the modern era. Smolicz notes that an important principle that can be learned from the case of Hebrew in the modern state of Israel is that “ethnicity, when it has been preserved mainly through the means of core values other than language, may later cause the emergence or re-emergence of a special tongue associated with the group and culture concerned” (ibid).

This is attested in a study examining Hebrew language instruction at a U.S. university in which Morahg (1993) found that students responded positively to the idea of Hebrew being an integral component of their cultural heritage and an intimate element of their ethnic identity. Learning Hebrew allowed students to identify more intimately with their Jewish identity and to resolve any conflicting feelings they may have had about being American and Jewish at the same time. Because they regard Hebrew as a vital component and symbol of Judaism, their hope is that their sense of Jewishness will be heightened by the study of Hebrew. An additional factor motivating students to study Hebrew was their interest in Israel. Morahg posits that for secularized Jews pro-Israelism has supplanted religious practice as an outward method to express Jewishness. Lastly,

Morahg's students felt that their studies in Hebrew would better equip them to pass on a sense of Jewishness to their own children.

Like De Langue (1988) and Meyer (1992), Herman (1977) maintains that Jewish identity differs from other religious identities in that it is made up of inextricably interwoven components of religion and peoplehood. To pull any one of these components apart would weaken and distort Jewish identity. He notes that unlike Christianity, Judaism is more than a religion; it is a religious civilization of one nation, and it resides in the Jewish people and reflects its history. Furthermore, "...there is an indissoluble connection between the Jewish people, the land of Israel and the Torah" (36).

The way group members perceive group membership and their relationship with the majority around them determine the flavor of a particular group's identity (39). Diaspora Jews, as members of a minority, are cognizant of the differences that exist between them and the majority group and have a heightened awareness of their Jewishness precisely because they are living in a context in which the majority is not Jewish. The result of this is a reported feeling of alignment and interdependency with other members in their minority group:

....despite growing diversification of Jewish life, a core similarity- the common origin, the common religious tradition- always remains. ...the feeling of interdependence represents the widest and almost readily invocable basis for Jewish belonging.... It is the similarity which often gives rise to interdependence (1977:44).

This shared feeling of common history among Jews is timeless; the Jew sees himself aligned with other Jews of the present, past, and future.

Maintaining distinctiveness from other groups is an essential factor in preserving identity. For Herman, the loss of Yiddish among younger US born generations and the



adoption of the majority language for all instrumental purposes have contributed to the process of assimilation into mainstream society. In addition to language shift, secularization has advanced the decomposition of Jewish identity. He and Elazar (1995) both note that the secularization of Christianity has also sped up Jewish assimilation in that it creates a context in which it is more palatable for Jews to accept secularized Christian norms and thus abandon their own.

### 2.3 Ethnic Identity and Language

Most discussions of language and ethnicity across the disciplines accord language to be a significant component of ethnic identity. Early views of the relationship between language and identity suggest that ethnic attitude is derived from internalized language (Mead 1936): “we form our identity by taking on the attitude of the group we are born into” by means of internalizing linguistic symbols (Eastman and Reese 1981:109). In addition, Whorf<sup>35</sup> (1956) presents a view that our perception of reality is conditioned by language so that different languages represent different social realities: “It’s almost like putting on a special pair of glasses that heightens some aspects of the physical and mental world while dimming others” (Mesthrie 2000: 7). Both Mead and Whorf suggest then that a bilingual with two systems of meanings (=two languages) possesses two social

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<sup>35</sup> Whorf was inspired by the work of German poet, philosopher and literary scholar Johann Herder (1744-1803) who, as a reaction against French expansionism over all areas of German political, economical, cultural, and intellectual thought, laid forth a general theory of language and ethnicity that rejected integrative and language/ethnicity leveling policies for the benefit of an open, free-flowing market-driven society rooted in the tenets of the Enlightenment. For Herder, and later Whorf, if a group’s language is lost, so is the greater part of its “creativity, spirit, individuality, and genius” from which all of humanity could have benefited (Fishman 1985a: 135). Herder could thus be considered a precursor to Modern Objectivism. For an in-depth discussion of the Herderian and Whorfian contribution to cognitive linguistics, see Fishman (1982, 1985a).

realities (=two identities). That is, the acquisition of language implies the acquisition of ethnic identity, and a person speaking two different languages would identify with the ethnicity represented by each language. Likewise, Pool (1979) believes that “if different languages differently influence [or are influenced by] the thinking of their speakers...becoming a speaker of a different language would change the way one thinks” (1979: 6). These theories, which are based on the scientific/cognitive link between language and worldview, are embraced by language preservationists and activists who view language as an intimate and primary component of ethnic identity formation, as in the case of both Basque and Catalan language efforts in Spain (Woolard 1986, Urla 1988, Conversi 1990).

In the process of the investigation of the relationship between ethnicity and language, two viewpoints emerged. Based on Isajiw’s<sup>36</sup> (1974) treatment of ethnic identity and Ross’s (1979) understanding of the link between ethnicity and language, to consider ethnicity from an *objectivist* position would be to view membership to a particular group as being involuntary, taken for granted, and marked by birth as sharing the same lineage, culture, language, and/or religion. Those who embrace the objectivist viewpoint would consider the loss of an ancestral language to be equivalent to losing an essential and primary defining element of their identity. Without their language, they would not be the people that they are, they would not view the world as they do nor

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<sup>36</sup> Based on an examination of 27 definitions of ethnicity, Isajiw (1974) composed a list of the most frequently mentioned attributes of ethnicity. In order of most frequent to least frequently mentioned, they are the following: common nationality or ancestry; common culture; common religion; common racial characteristics; common language; a shared sense of “we-ness”; *Gemeinschaft* relations (face-to-face emotional relationships within a community); common values; having one’s own set of community institutions separated from outsiders; having either minority or majority status; and a common immigrant narrative.

perceive their relationship with each other and with outsiders in the way that they do. For objectivists, language is “part and parcel” of one’s being as is the “blood, bones, and tears” (Fishman 1989: 11; Weber 1968). Contrastively, a *subjectivist* approach to ethnicity relates to voluntary group membership being based on a group’s emotional belief of a common lineage regardless of whether or not an objective, putative blood relationship exists. In the subjectivist approach, language as well as other attributes (food, dress, religion, and race) may or may not be included in a subjectivist definition of ethnicity. As such, any one of these variables is disposable without disturbing the underlying sense of peoplehood shared among group members.

Both the objectivist and subjectivist approaches to examining the relationship between identity and language have their strengths and weaknesses. One commonly noted strength of the objectivist approach is that it allows for the quick and easy categorization of peoples based on clear-cut empirical variables in comparative examinations of differing ethnic groups, while a criticism of the objectivist approach is that it cannot account for the surviving sense of ethnicity that exists in groups where seemingly objective variables (language, cultural traditions, religion) have been lost over time. A strength of the subjectivist approach is that it may explain the how’s and why’s of a persisting ethnicity even in the face of the loss of an ancestral language, an associated religion, or a cultural practice. A drawback of this kind of approach, however, is that it may be subject to mysticism, romanticism, and obscure thought or speculation with regard to a group’s origin. In the absence of ‘hard’ evidence or data, such as a differing language, religion, or phenotype on which the objectivist relies to substantiate claims of ethnic differentiation, the subjectivist must depend on an often abstract and

vague notion of perceived shared peoplehood on which he must formulate his conclusions on whether common ethnicity does or does not persist within a given collectivity.

Taking the above approaches of ethnicity into account, any viewpoint that considers language to be an indispensable, inherent and inextricable component of identity maintenance will be termed *objectivist*. Conversely, those stances that center on the idea that language is not necessarily a sine qua non for identity maintenance will be classified as *subjectivist*.

Section 2.3.1 will discuss the major theoretical trends espoused by researchers who view language as an essential component in maintaining ethnic identity (objectivist view), while section 2.3.2 will present the subjectivist view embraced by those who regard language as an important component of ethnic identity but not necessarily as one without which ethnicity is lost.

### **2.3.1 Language as Essential: The Objectivist View**

In his discussion of ethnic identity and language, Fishman (1977, 1985a, 1989) lays forth three components of ethnicity: paternity, patrimony, and phenomenology. Paternity, the objective *being*, is “acquired with the mother’s milk”, learned naturally as it is transmitted generation to generation, and characterized with the putative characteristics of “ancestral perfection” (1989:16). It is the most primordial, ‘the blood and bones’ of his three components of ethnicity since it is derived from the ancestors and serves to give a group a sense of continuity and permanence that traverses time, beyond death. It establishes historical roots and promises future immortality. At the level of paternity,

ethnicity and language appeal to the spiritual and the ancestral. It “issues authentically from the body, it is produced by the body, it has body itself” (ibid). When taken as such, neither language nor ethnicity is mutable. At this level, the paternity link between language and ethnicity often complicates the state of interethnic communications in that, when ethnicity is heightened and mobilized, communication between two differing groups can become “painful”, “revolting”, and “physically obnoxious or unnatural” (ibid). Thus, bridging the gap between two differing linguistic groups who place language and ethnicity in the paternity dimension can, not surprisingly, be a delicate task.

The second component of Fishman’s conceptualization of ethnicity is patrimony, *the doing*; it is the learned heritage, the behavioral part of ethnicity manifested by cultural rituals and customs expressed by both linguistic and non-linguistic means. In contrast to paternity, which is inherited from the ancestors and bears the “stamp of ancestral perfection”, patrimony is learned and as such is subject to “human fallibility” and individual interpretation (1977:20). Because paternity is passed on from mother to child ontologically, its elements are quiescent, unchanging, stable, and static. Patrimony, on the other hand, is taught, allows room for individual negotiation and interpretation, and as such, is in “danger of inauthenticity” (ibid). In their abstract, theoretical forms, Fishman visualizes paternity and patrimony as constructs on two opposing poles of a continuum, but in practice paternity and patrimony often shift and mix. Often enough, he states, the distinction between traits of paternity and patrimony is not always clear. While one group may consider attributes such as language, religion, physical traits and temperament to be equal parts of paternity (that which is presumed to be inherited biologically), another group may consider these very same attributes to be part of its

patrimonial inventory (the learned, circumstantial, and expendable components of ethnicity). Ethnicity is more than a state of being (paternity); it is a behavioral code (patrimony). Paternity treats questions of how collectivities come into existence, and patrimony stipulates how these collectivities should behave in order to be recognized as a distinct group. An important resulting distinction arises here. From the paternity aspect, either one is born into a group and thus belongs, or one is not born into the group and so does not belong. Patrimony, on the other hand, allows for the choice to either adapt or eschew behavioral traits associated with one's birth ethnicity. As a result, "the patrimony dimension is suffused with moral implications, with judgments of good and bad..."(ibid).

The third dimension, phenomenology, is the intuitive *knowing* and is comprised of the native philosophy, historiosophy and cosmology. It is the meaning that one "attaches to his descent-related being and behaving" (23). Phenomenology is a group's worldview: the way in which a person makes note of an experience, reacts to it, and makes conclusive judgments about it are all determined by his phenomenology. The ability to understand another's phenomenology opens a window into the world of the 'other'. In intergroup relations, having an understanding of one another's phenomenological dimension of ethnicity allows access to the truly vital part of the ethnicity, that which informs a people's "... views of history, of the future, of the purpose of life, of the fabric of human relationships" (ibid). When grasping hold of these meanings of ethnicity, we grasp "something truly vital not only about ethnicity, but about a society or culture as a whole" (ibid). When it comes to ethnic language use or shift, only the understanding of a group's phenomenology will help outsiders understand how a group will react to its use or its shift in the various arenas of language use, in the official

and the unofficial, the public and the private. The link between ethnicity and phenomenology is such that it reveals how an ethnic language is characterized by its speakers. Phenomenology, like patrimony and unlike paternity, is open to transformation, interpretation, and inauthenticity. According to Fishman, language is a component of all three dimensions and carries the important task of transferring ethnicity to all three: “language is the recorder of paternity, the expresser of patrimony and the carrier of phenomenology” (25).

While Fishman (1996) acknowledges that a distinct ethno-cultural group may survive long past language shift, he emphatically takes an objectivist stance and defines the relationship between language and identity on the basis of two premises: first, language and culture are indexically related in that a group’s own language is the most apt in expressing even the most subtle nuances, over-tones, concerns, artifacts, beliefs, values, and interests of a people so that the loss of a language is equal to the loss of a culture’s “authentic greetings, its curses, its praises, its laws, its literature, its songs, its riddles, its proverbs, its cures, its wisdom, its prayers” (82); second, language and culture are symbolically related in that “language stands for the whole culture” and is able to “sum it up” for both speaker and outsider: “the whole economy, religion, health care system, philosophy, all of that together is represented by the language” (ibid). The power of this kind of symbolism is sometimes seen in instances where attributes of a language are linked to its speakers and vice-versa. A language of a disdained person may come to be disliked out of mere association between the two. A language that is described as ‘rough’ and ‘halting’ may lead an outsider to characterize speakers of that language in the same way. In more emotionally-laden terms, the loss of a heritage language would be

equal to losing an article of faith (as language is often described as something sacred), to losing kinship (as language is the common denominator between families)<sup>37</sup>, and to losing a commitment in life (as is the commonly expressed feeling of moral obligation toward the language's perpetuation), and as Fishman states, these “are not little things for people to lose or for a culture to lose” (83).

In support of Fishman's stance that language is a people's link to a sense of ethnicity traversing time and place, his 1985(b) study, which elicited beliefs regarding the link between ethnicity and language as conveyed by parents, teachers and administrators in mother-tongue schools, revealed that the link is perceived to be relating to the ‘ancient’ essence of the particular group. Its essence is expressed in metaphors that relate to the primordial elements of life: body, life, tears, blood, milk, bones, and heart. Thus, for these participants, language is hardly just a means of communication from one person to another. It is regarded as “a moral imperative” if the group's ethno moral traditions are to endure.

Fishman states that even in instances where an ethnic language is not used for day-to-day communication, ethnic language consciousness can be heightened so that it serves to mobilize ethnic movements by strengthening the message that a particular ethnic language is the true ancestral language. By establishing a primordial link to a people's ancestry, language symbolism can take on the rallying role for ethnic or

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<sup>37</sup> Borrowing from the field of sociology, Fishman often uses the term of *Geimenschaft* to describe the essence of small, intimate community interaction: the sense of belonging together, being responsible for one another, having commonalities with one another, etc. . . . He defines *Geimenschaft* as “the intimate community whose members are related to one another via bonds of kinship, affection and communality of interest and purpose” (2001: 458-9). *Gemeinschaft*'s antonym *Gessellschaft* is the impersonal society inevitably resulting from market-driven societies that favor the abandonment of other languages and small *Geimenschafts* that could impede the open exchange of goods between communities.



nationalist movements (1985d: 71-72). Edwards concurs and states that while the political power of an ethnic language can only be obtained if the language has retained at least some degree of communicative function, its symbolic power for ethnic group cohesion may very well be more important than its instrumental function (1984b: 48). Fishman (1966) attributes the ability of an ethnic group to survive as a cohesive and distinctive group in a majority context to the group's ability to adhere to the mere symbolic function of an ethnic language (invisible to the outer group) and thus remain 'under the radar'. When, however, a minority group attempts to sustain or revitalize a language in its communicative function (visible to the outergroup), the majority group may perceive this as a threat to their own cohesion and unification. He posits, thus, that the secret to perpetuating sidestream ethnicity is the ability of the minority group to linguistically integrate at the communicative level while maintaining its associated language at the symbolic level.

Taylor, Meynard and Rheault (1977) posit that the link between ethnicity and language is an undeniable one due to the conflict faced by minority groups when in a context in which the majority group language differs from their own. This conflict is fed by the anxiety of some minorities who feel the pressure to learn the majority language for the purpose of assimilation and/or upward socio-economic mobility. Thus, the competing dichotomy of reward or loss arises and the ethnic finds himself caught between a practical necessity to integrate and a personal demand to resist said integration. In many cases, minority language speakers choose to resist learning the majority language as a means to repel the threat of the majority culture and language on the existence of their own group identity. In this light, language is viewed as inseparable from identity.

### 2.3.2 Language as Non-Essential: The Subjectivist View

Proponents of the subjectivist view advance the notion that the maintenance and transmission of ethnic identity is not dependent on the existence and use of an ethnic language.

Although in section 2.3.1, I labeled Fishman as an ‘objectivist’, he does acknowledge the validity of a subjectivist viewpoint, as evidenced in the following:

The ethno cultural self-concept, the notion of group identity, can remain intact and unchanged far beyond any similar experience with respect to language. Indeed, in the case of language, detachments occur, and often consensually so, and yet the total ethno cultural experience-traumatized though it may temporarily be - can recover a sense of stability and continuity. Thus, I am not saying that the replacement of one language by another does not exact a huge price in terms of ethno cultural authenticity and continuity and in terms of social organization and stability as a whole. What I am saying is that the price is contingent on the degree of internal management and control of the change process and that ultimately, after the worst is over, a sense of basic ethno cultural continuity and authenticity can be recaptured, notwithstanding the overall ethno cultural innovation and melding that has transpired. (Fishman 1985c: 507)

For as long as a minority community can rely on non-linguistic markers of ethnicity and on supporting internal organization and infrastructure, its language can be changed and exchanged at a much more rapid pace than the total sum of all ethnic markers. In this context, language shift will not obligatorily induce loss of ethnicity.

Haarman states that while language is not a “necessary criterion of ethnicity” (1986: 38), it can serve a function of ethnic boundary marking. He conceptualizes ethnic identity as being a fusion of a variety of dominant and non-dominant features that form a network different from those of other groups. However, because these features are not examined “a priori” as dominant or non-dominant, the role of language in the construction and/or maintenance of ethnicity is unknown.

Haarman claims that as ethnic identity transforms, it undergoes one of two possible changes: assimilation/fusion or differentiation/fission. Within assimilation/fusion, there are three types of transformations. Conglomeration, the most common, is a partial fusion of attributes from one ethnic group with those of another and best illustrates the diversity found in Jewish communities: while linguistically fusing with their non Jewish coterritorialists upon adopting the host country's language as their mother tongue, they have been able to maintain association with the world Jewry by means of retaining religious observances and cultural rituals.

Eastman treats the question of "whether or not, in the face of language change, language is a proper vehicle for preserving ethnic identities" (1984: 259). Much like Fishman's *paternity* and *patrimony*, her conceptualization of ethnic identity consists of dual levels of ethnic identity: the primordial and behavioral. Where primordial ethnicity (the belief system as the *being*) accommodates beliefs about the origin of the group, ethnic behavior (food, dress, and speech as the *doing*) reflects group needs to either assimilate or distance itself from mainstream society (263). Ethnic behavior is further subdivided into social and language behavior. While social behavior relates to the cultural behavior of a group, language behavior is the actual use and knowledge of the ethnic language. An ethnic language gains the status of an 'associated language' when ethnic identity is maintained while the language- for communicative purposes- is not. That assimilation (change of dress, speech, food) leads to the downfall of ethnicity at the behavioral level is of little concern for Eastman. She regards language use, or any other component of behavioral ethnicity, as an insignificant manifestation of a cultural belief system and maintains that as long as the group safeguards ethnicity at the primordial

belief level, ethnic identity will be sustained. Because the primordial level of ethnicity involves a common set of long-standing attributes, such as a shared historicity, common origins, legends, and myths, the ethnic identity of a people is rarely lost. The loss of a group's ethnicity would mean the adoption of a new set of attributes at both the primordial belief and cultural behavioral level, and this only occurs over long periods of time.

Likewise, Edwards (1984, 1985) does not regard language as the primary factor of ethnic identity but is among one of "a multitude of markers", as are religion, age, gender, social class and geography (1985: 3). He maintains that while language is indeed an important component of identity, it is "non-unique" and should not be granted more consideration than other components. He further states that the dissolution of one marker, language for example, will not cause the erosion of identity. Take for example, Italian-Americans who have undoubtedly conserved a distinct identity within the larger society (Gambino 1975). This sentiment of *Italianess* survives even when the Italian language only serves as a symbolic cultural entity in most Italian communities. Also in accord with the views held by Edwards and Haarman, Wardhaugh (1987: 43) defines an ethnic group as a collectivity separated by boundaries consisting of one or more of the following symbolic elements: kinship patterns, language or dialect, tribal loyalty, religious affiliation, or any combination of these. Trudgill states that a simple equation of identity and language should be deemed inadequate since "the connection between language and ethnic group membership appears currently to be weakening" and that group consolidation can take place independently of a linguistic component (1983: 138).

Yet, while these subjectivists consider other ethno cultural elements and symbols apt enough to preserve ethnicity, they do recognize that mere association with an ethnic language can indeed play an important role and have a lasting effect in the survival of ethnic differentiation. In this vein, Edwards (1984) makes a distinction between public and private components of ethnicity. Communicative language (the language used for day to day communication) and dress are examples of highly visible public components of ethnicity. It is, however, their high visibility that makes them susceptible to change, and as a group assimilates, public components of ethnicity are generally rejected. However, private components, such as the symbolic function of language and aspects of domestic life and religious observances, are retained precisely because they are less observable and thus less prone to change from the demands of outside assimilatory forces. Over time, these private components of ethnicity gradually become “an emblem of groupness” (1985: 17). For Edwards, the natural selection between marked and unmarked ethnic signs is a “reflection of social adjustment” on the part of the minority group. Such inner group reorganization of ethnic signs tend to be voluntary in nature and are in response to group desires of intra-society movement and upward mobility and to simultaneously evade both segregation from and submersion into mainstream society (1984: 281). Unlike fervent language loyalists, Edwards views this process not as “the blind turning away from true origins, under pressure from an overarching majority” (ibid), but as an outcome of intra-group mixing that is both natural and welcomed by minority groups. Furthermore, ethnics who make selections as to what elements of ethnicity will be maintained (visibly or invisibly) and which ones will be discarded act in “good sense” and not as cultural repudiators (282).

In a discussion of the 'melting pot' view of ethnic assimilation in the United States, Edwards (1977) explains that the functions of ethnic languages seem to submit to different fates when encountering different groups. In its communicative function, the 'melting pot' metaphor applies: due to pragmatic needs to adopt English, U.S. minority groups have lost public communicative functions of their respective languages in an effort to have access to the benefits that active participation in the society at large provides. However, the 'melting pot' image falls short when considering the symbolic function of an ethnic language which still prevails in the American context. For symbolic purposes, ethnic languages have not simply 'melted' into one another. On the contrary, U.S. ethnic groups continue to employ their respective languages in very specialized and intimate inner-community functions. They have been able to maintain feverish loyalty among members of a given community, even when the members no longer speak the language. And, because the symbolic aspect of language is not as visible as the communicative function of language or other more observable aspects of ethnicity, it does not hinder the group's ability to actively participate in the society at large, nor does it pose a threat to the cohesion of the majority group surrounding it. Therefore, the symbolic function of language is better able to repel change, making a group's boundaries more stable, fixed, and long-term. This relates to Fishman's (1966) description of ethnic survival and the ethnics' ability to repel assimilation. The key to ethnic survival is the simultaneous ability to publicly blend and privately remain distinct. The strength and stamina of symbolic language allow for the perpetuation of group separateness, while the frail nature of ethnic language in its communicative capacity paves the path for societal integration.

According to Eastman and Reese (1981), the ethnicity of a group is associated with a specific language which they call an associated language. They define an associated language as “a set of shared lexical items” which may either involve just the name of the language associated with the group, or the “particular language used by all members of the group in all situations” (113). Thus, French speaking Canadians of Italian descent are native French speakers, Canadian nationals and self-ascribe themselves as Italian whether or not they speak Italian. Other groups may employ an associated language for intra-group communication only, as is the case in many U.S. Hispanic communities.

Eastman and Reese address the possibility of a group “to associate membership... with multi-languages” and multi heritages (114). Consider the case of descendents of Moroccan Sephardic Jews living in the U.S who may associate Hebrew with their ancient ancestors, their religion and the language of Israel, Judeo-Spanish as the language reflecting their Spanish heritage and customs, Arabic and/or French as the language(s) representing the post-expulsion era from Spain in Morocco, and English with the most recent chapter in their family legacy as members of the American Jewry.

Eastman and Reese also contend that when a community self-ascribes to a particular heritage language without the ability to speak it, they may seek ways to reaffirm their ethnicity by reviving the ethnic language. Such is the case with many Native American groups who seek to add culturally loaded vocabulary to their everyday English for emblematic purposes.

## 2.4 Language Shift

What is language shift? Following Edwards (1984: 49) and Weinreich (1974: 68), it is the change from the habitual use of one language to that of another in accordance with the social circumstances of its speakers.

Language shift may be due to a variety of causes from the most to the least dramatic. Kloss (1966) has outlined three ways in which a language may shift: 1) when its speakers die out, 2) when its community of speakers gradually shifts to another language, and 3) when a language is downgraded to that of a dialect and ceases to be used in its written form. Similarly, Campbell and Muntzel (1989) propose four types of language death: 1) sudden death (the language disappears because its speakers have died, 2) radical death (when speakers of a language suddenly stop speaking the language out of self-defense due to severe political and social oppression, 3) gradual death (the gradual replacement of one language by another, and 4) bottom-to-top death (speakers cease using the language in intimate settings and reserve its use for highly ritualized functions. Judeo-Spanish, in the course of its social history in Thessaloniki can be seen to have passed through all of the above scenarios of language shift, albeit at different points in time of its historical trajectory.

The motivations for community language shift are many and cannot be attributed to one single isolated cause. Language shift must be seen as the product of a chain of events. In some cases, the use of a mother language is restricted or discouraged by societal pressures. Whether these pressures are exerted by government or merely by peers, the result is the same, albeit at a varying pace. Such is the case with the Jewish Diaspora languages, Judeo-Spanish and Yiddish, in Israel. Both political and societal



pressures rendered the use of Judeo-Spanish and Yiddish redundant in an effort to create a linguistically cohesive Israel. The language shifts that have taken place in Israel are such that most grandchildren of Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish speaking immigrants possess virtually no productive ability in their heritage languages. Harris (1982), however, reports that in spite of the decaying state of the Judeo Spanish in Israel, there remains a nostalgic attachment to it. Trudgill (1983) describes the same phenomenon for ethnic Albanians of Greece, the Arvanites. He found that while attitudes with the heritage language were for the most part unfavorable in that it is not useful for practical purposes outside the home and is even discouraged by parents who realize its lack of pragmatic value in Greek society, community members nonetheless felt pride in Arvanite traditions (including language) and heritage. A study conducted by Fishman in 1964 showed that although heritage languages were no longer used among immigrants groups in the U.S., attitudes toward them were positive. Edwards states that this seems to be “general phenomenon in contexts in which languages are no longer transmitted, i.e. the reasons behind non-transmission are not related to some personal repudiation of the language but rather to pragmatic assessments of the likely utility of competing varieties” (1985: 51). Fishman’s term *attitudinal haloization*, the feelings of nostalgia when reflecting upon the ancestral language, describes the phenomenon common among descendants of speakers of a shifted or near-shifted language (in Harris 1994: 274). Such feelings may lead to the group’s voluntary association with a language even if the language has never been used for communicative purposes as is the case with Hebrew and American Jewry.

In the remaining two sections of this chapter, I provide a brief review of studies that attempt to either demonstrate or minimize the link between language and ethnicity, all in the context of language shift as experienced by minority groups.

#### **2.4.1 Studies supporting an Objectivist View: I am no longer Xian if I don't speak Xish (Xian via Xish)<sup>38</sup>**

What happens to ethnic identity when an ethnic language is lost?

As stated by Haarman, language serves a function of 'boundary-making' whose relationship to ethnicity is undeniable. However, it is not "a crucial criterion for the shaping of ethnic identity" (1986: 261). As language is not the only factor to be considered in the attainment and maintenance of ethnic identity, the quest for knowledge on this matter must extend to other variables. Of these variables, however, few have the "emotional poignancy" (Edwards 1984: 48) of language. Such sentiment is attested in Knight Julian who maintains that there is a primordial link between language and identity. He makes an emotional plea for the maintenance of Ulwa—a language spoken by the indigenous peoples in the Southern Atlantic Autonomous Region of Nicaragua.

He writes:

...all the inhabitants of the Atlantic Coast, be they Ulwa, Garfuná, Rama, Mestizo or Creole, all have their language. But if one of these groups will not be able to speak, they will be absolutely nothing, and it will be as if they are not human. They will be like a bird or something. Even if they have rights people won't give them to them. We believe that if this language of ours is lost, the Miskitu will dislike us. The Creoles do not think well of us either. The Spanish Mestizos the same (1998: 183).

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<sup>38</sup> Fishman's (1997) notational convention that designates the threatened language as X or Xish and its speakers as Xians, while Y or Yish is used to refer to the threatening language. Thus, "Xian via Yish" refers to those communities whose self-ascription does not correspond with the language they speak. Their cultural identity is transmitted in spite of the fact they no longer speak their ethnic language.

The idea that language is an outward sign of a group's peculiar identity and plays a significant role in insuring its continuation is attested in the above plea.

The Kurdish poet Ahmad Khani set out in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to prove to the Turkish and Arab speaking co-territorialists that his ethnic language was not unfit as a medium of high literary expression, as it had traditionally been thought. By using Kurdish in his poetry he makes a significant social statement to the effect that “that no matter what deficiencies the Kurdish language may have, it still is superior to other tongues simply by virtue of its being the Kurds' mother tongue and not an imported medium of expression” (Blau and Suleiman 1996: 156). The promotion of the Kurdish language as an undeniable marker of Kurdish identity and as the only language that could adequately express Kurdish uniqueness is a commonly used tactic to promote Kurdish political and social solidarity.

In the same vein, Woolard (1985) poses similar questions in his treatment of the role of a threatened language and its relation to ethnic identity. In response to political efforts to develop a merged Catalan-Castilian identity in Catalonia, the question emerges as to how Catalonia can retain its distinctiveness from the rest of Spain when it can no longer make use of Catalan as a symbol of ethnic differentiation. What then becomes of the language once it has lost this defining value of ethnicity? The survival of Catalan as a marker of Catalan ethnicity is met with urgency among language and ethnicity activists because its disappearance means a subsequent loss of a separate Catalan entity. Woolard identifies this case to be one in which language, as a symbol of ethnic identity, is given primacy over other markers of ethnicity since language may come to be the sole representative of “a number of perceived differences between groups of people” (1989:1).

Such instances of adversity, on the community or national level, often bring culturally emblematic markers to the forefront, as shown in the case of Catalan. The Catalans, in the face of cultural oppression, became keener on the power of symbolic language, especially when it could be used as “a political rallying element” (Conversi 1990: 57). According to Vilar (1979), nationalist movements first gained ground in Catalonia at a time when language was not yet perceived to be the most important marker of Catalan identity. However, because of the saliency of language and the ease with which it induces ethnic pride, it wasn’t long before Catalonian nationalists began to make use of Catalan to appeal to the public’s sense of ethnic pride. Vilar states that the ability of the Catalan people to preserve their ethno cultural distinctiveness resides entirely on the fact that they have been able to preserve their language and that “it is above all when they have felt this group consciousness with the most force that they have refused to forget Catalan” (75).

In a similar manner, Guboglo (1979) posits that linguistic assimilation is detrimental to preserving ethnic identity. In his study of ethnic identity groups in the Udmurt Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, he sought to determine an individual’s relationship with his/her ethnic group and language. Based on his findings, he argues that ethnic groups that have not maintained their ethnic language are more susceptible to assimilation. The danger of assimilation, he states, is that it commonly prompts a general lack of interest in preserving the cultural traditions specific to a group’s ethnicity.

The correlation between language and the retention of traditional practices is also acknowledged by Poll (1981). As language is the vehicle for assimilation, a group will adopt the language of the majority in order to enable interaction with speakers of the

majority language. In cases where the mother tongue is retained, interactions between minority and majority groups are limited; consequently, the rate of assimilation slows down. Using the Ultra-Orthodox as an example, he surmises that as long as a Jewish identity is maintained by Jews in the Diaspora, there will be a Jewish language (in addition to Hebrew) employed almost exclusively by Jews (1981:211).

In Peltz's (1991,1998) study of the use of Yiddish among elderly Jews in South Philadelphia, he found "that language is intimately intertwined with a feeling for place, a connection to tradition and religion, and above all a sense of self" (1998: 174). The term 'place' for Peltz's aging participants does not refer to a physical location, but rather to the Yiddish culture that can be found in the kitchen and on the street (1998). Employing Yiddish represented the traditional ways of the past and elements of Yiddishkeit (positive characteristics of Jewishness). He concludes that for these elderly residents, Yiddish is an essential element of ethnicity because it fully and accurately expresses Jewish identity in ways in which English falls short. This was the case in spite of the fact that most residents hardly ever use it on a daily basis, and others can claim no productive ability in it, aside from fixed expressions, proverbs, and expletives.

#### **2.4.2 Studies supporting a Subjectivist View: I can still be Xian even if I don't speak Xish (Xian via Yish)**

In light of the above discussion on the vital role of language in the attainment and maintenance of ethnic identity, a review of studies that demonstrate the opposing stance of the language debate is in order. The following studies will show that other markers of

ethnicity play a powerful role in the maintenance of ethnic distinctiveness even when the ethnic language is in the process of shift or has already been shifted.

Omar, in his work among Malaysian speakers of Kuala Lumpur who have shifted to English, states that “the cultural heritage of the ethnic group remains steadfast...no matter what language he speaks, for so long as the bilingual is surrounded by people of his group” (1991: 98). His view is that social networks, and not the ethnic language, are the essential factors in the maintenance of cultural heritage, and consequently the ethnicity of a community.

In Eriksen’s findings, the ethnic Indians of Trinidad continue to maintain a distinct ethnic identity from non-Indian Trinidadians in spite of the fact that English has nearly completely replaced the Indian language(s) once spoken. Eriksen stipulates that differences in physical make-up of Indians and religion aid in the conservation of a separate Indo-Trinidadian identity (1993: 86).

Khemlani-David found that the Sindhi language lost among the Sindhi Hindus (originating in Pakistan) of Malaysia does not effect the community member’s self-identification as a Sindhi and that language is merely one aspect of ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. The Sindhi language “is no longer a sine qua non for Sindhihood... For a community that has shifted away from its ethnic language, other markers of ethnicity may become more salient...” (1998: 75).

Benor’s (1999) study shows that a distinct Sephardic identity within the Jewish community of Seattle survives despite complete language shift to English. She points out that, despite complete linguistic assimilation, Sephardic culture has been able to survive by means of two variables: while their “Jewishness” differentiates them on a religious

basis from the non-Jewish majority, their “Sephardicness” ethnically and culturally sets them apart from Ashkenazic Jewry. This cultural distinction is observed in the uniquely Sephardic synagogue, school and home traditions. Benor states that “perhaps the fact that the Sephardim are a minority within a minority has both helped and hindered the maintenance of their ethnic identity.” (18) However, due to high intermarriage rates with Ashkenazim and non Jews, she fears a rapid decline and potential loss of Sephardic identification and recommends that the community continue to focus on Sephardic identity and to embark on “identity reconstruction” efforts by “continuing and expanding past and current Sephardic-themed programs” (19).

In an examination of the link between Sephardic identity and Judeo-Spanish language in Thessaloniki, Greece, Weiss (2000) found that while there is undeniable language loss among members of the Jewish community, Judeo-Spanish remains to be a marker of Sephardic identity, at least among the oldest participants. Weiss concludes that the community is still a living example of Judeo-Spanish culture in a Greek context. However, she predicts that in order for said identity to be preserved in the future, the community will have to depend largely on the help and support of international Sephardic organizations. As in the case of other Sephardic communities, Weiss anticipates that as the eldest members of the community pass away in the next decade or two, Judeo-Spanish will have completely been lost for the purpose of daily communication. Interestingly, Weiss found the presence of multilingualism to be a more appropriate marker of Jewish/Sephardic identity in Thessaloniki than the Judeo-Spanish language itself. This is the case, she notes, because of the community’s multilingual nature, both past and present, and because of the prestige given to other European languages, which

had the effect of reducing the status of Judeo-Spanish among the educated elite. The multilingual nature of Jews as a marker of identity is also treated in Bunis (1974), Matza (1990), and Sherman (1965) who point to the Jews' ability to learn the language of their host cultures and to wear the host culture like an "outer garment" (Sherman 1965: 123), while at the same time retaining their inner, more private expressions of Jewishness. The use of one language or another, it would seem, is as expendable as an outer garment and relies entirely on the pragmatic needs and pressures of the surrounding society.

Harris' (1979, 1994) study regarding Judeo-Spanish language use and attitudes among 91 Sephardic Jews (84% of whom were over the age of fifty) in Los Angeles, New York, and Israel reveals that although there are very positive nostalgic attitudes toward Judeo Spanish, most informants do not consider it to be a *sine qua non* for ethnic identification, nor does its vestigial use or non-use detract from the maintenance of a Sephardic culture and way of life. In spite of the positive and nostalgic attitudes found toward Judeo-Spanish, the majority of her respondents regard the language to be a jargon or mixed language not suitable language for outside the home. Her findings suggest three important points regarding ethnic language loss and ethnic maintenance. First, although an ethnic language can be completely replaced by a majority language for day-to-day communication, community members may still regard their ethnic language to be an important cultural and historical possession, even when the ethnic language is considered to have an inferior status with respect to other languages. (1994: 272). Secondly, in spite of positive sentimental attachments toward an ethnic language, such attachments rarely render increased use of the language or boost language revitalization efforts. Finally, the loss of an ethnic language should not be seen as a tragedy, "but as a natural result of



change” (274) of the social reality around any given community. As Edwards explains, “change and transition are social realities for most speakers. The alternative is a stasis which very few have been prepared to accept (Edwards 1985:97, in Harris 1994: 274). This last point made by Harris has received much criticism by Judeo-Spanish language loyalists who are not prepared to accept the suggestion that its loss is a natural result of change.

Malinowski (1982) discusses the effect of Turkish nationalism on language use and ethnic identification among the Sephardim of Istanbul. The earliest signs of Turkish nationalism began in 1839 with the Tanzimat Reforms whose goal was to foster greater allegiance and unification among all Ottoman subjects, Muslim and non Muslim alike. In the attainment of these goals, learning Turkish was subtly suggested and encouraged but not forcibly implemented and so little progress was made in the achievement of national and linguistic homogenization. It was not until 1923 with the establishment of the Turkish Republic headed by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) that a more rigorous language policy was put into effect. Much like the language policies executed in other newly formed Balkan nation states, the Turkish reforms strictly prohibited the use of minority languages in primary schools and in other public spheres. In contrast to the lenient implementation of the Tanzimat Reforms, those proposed by Kemal’s republican government “carried the full force of the law and...were swiftly and scrupulously carried out, achieving, in the face of often formidable obstacles, remarkable results in a relatively short span of time” (12). Minority language maintenance has since then become a challenge, and a fast-paced language transition has ensued since the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Kemal’s assimilatory reforms were not only successful in

triggering language shift at the individual and community levels, but the unifying message of ‘Turkish Brotherhood’ seems to have penetrated the Sephardic psyche. Malinowski notes among her respondents a sense of duty to speak the language of their host country even at the expense of their own ethnic language, so that respondents made frequent remarks such as “We are here, in Turkey. It is proper that we speak la lingua del pais [the language of the land]. In other parts of the world Jews speak the language of their homeland. Why shouldn’t we?” (18) The linguistic consequence of such attitudes is obvious: most respondents fifty-five years and under [at the time of data collection in 1971] understood little or no Judeo-Spanish, and even less were able to speak it. However, the use of Turkish and near total abandonment of Judeo-Spanish does not seem to pose any identity conflict for the Sephardim in Istanbul. Moreover, like Harris (1979, 1992), Malinowski found that while her respondents accepted the Turkish language as their own, there still remained an interest in maintaining Judeo-Spanish if only for cultural or intellectual pursuit. Furthermore, her respondents expressed feelings of pride for Judeo-Spanish because of recent international recognition of it being one of the many modern Spanish varieties worthy of learning since it could serve as a lingua franca with other Spanish speaking peoples in Spain and Latin America.

While to a great extent linguistic assimilation has been attained in Istanbul, homogeneous ethnic/cultural identification has not. Malinowski notes that many of her respondents employed expressions such as “mozotros los (e)spanyoles” and “eyos” when talking about the Jews and the Muslims of Istanbul and considered this an overt marker of the persistence of ethnic differentiation among the city’s Sephardim. Though Kemal’s unifying efforts certainly played a significant part in diminishing the use of Judeo

Spanish and creating a sense of a common nationhood among all peoples regardless of ethnicity or religion, it was not enough to eradicate awareness of a shared sense of ethnicity and historicity among only the Sephardim of Istanbul.

Mendes Chumaceiro's (1982) study of a centuries-old Sephardic neighborhood of Jerusalem provides us with another example of what happens to ethnic language when in conflict with social and political ideology as it pertains to nationalism. In the summer of 1971, she interviewed a selected group of 28 men born in the impoverished western Jerusalem neighborhood of Yamin Moshe between the years of 1893 and 1939, a time when it was almost exclusively inhabited by Sephardic Jews whose language was primarily "Spanyol". All 28 informants claimed Judeo-Spanish to be their mother language and the language almost exclusively used with their mothers and grandparents. With fathers, however, 9 of the 28 men reported using only some or no Judeo-Spanish. The variables for the study were age and socioeconomic standing. While there was no correlation found between age and ability and use of Judeo-Spanish among her informants, socioeconomic status proved to be a determining factor on whether or not the language was used for day-to-day interaction, transmitted to younger generations, and positively regarded. Belonging to the higher socioeconomic class could be characterized by several commonalities: more years of formal education; attending secularized learning institutions that promoted Israeli nationalism and whose student body was made up of Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and Oriental Jews; language instruction exclusively in Hebrew; employment in environments with mostly Ashkenazim or 'assimilated' Sephardim; higher rates of intermarriage with Ashkenazic women; social circles containing Ashkenazim or 'assimilated Sephardim'; and consequently, fewer or no

domains in which Judeo-Spanish was the language of choice. In this context, Hebrew language shift is nearly complete. Conversely, informants belonging to lower socioeconomic classes had fewer years of formal education, worked alongside other Sephardim of similar backgrounds, were more likely to be married to Sephardic women, frequented homogeneous Sephardic synagogues more often, maintained close ties with Sephardic childhood friends and extended family members, and employed Judeo-Spanish at home with either parents and spouses and to a less extent with children. In this context, Hebrew language shift is not as rapid. Mendes Chumaceiro concludes that while upward mobility (higher levels of education and higher professional status) didn't always translate into low usage of Judeo-Spanish, "a *lack* of social mobility almost certainly meant the maintenance of Spanyol by the Sephardim of Yamin Moshe, including the younger generation" (29). In spite of differences found with respect to socioeconomic status, Hebrew/Judeo Spanish use, reported emotional attachment and attitudes toward Sephardic cultural traditions and language, one commonality surfaced among all 28 informants, that of social and political ideology. In the context of Israel, this ideology called *mizug galuyot* ("fusion of the Exiles"), revolves around "the Zionist dream of the creation of one Jewish national culture and society, based on the Hebrew language, out of the many different Jewish communities scattered around the world" and as such, eschews any form of social, political, or cultural particularism (32). Social, political and cultural particularism could come in the form of favoritism/discrimination of one Jewish group over another, the creation of political parties based on ethnicity, or the teaching of any particular Jewish ethnic language or tradition (Yiddish/Ashkenazic or Judeo-Spanish/Sephardic) in public schools. From the most linguistically and culturally 'loyal'

participants to those who are least likely or least interested in maintaining Sephardic cultural traditions and language, all agree wholeheartedly on one thing: Israeli unity takes precedence over the perseverance and transmission of divisive ethnicity and language. Furthermore, and in direct contrast to Malinowski's group in Istanbul (1980), Mendes Chumaceiro's participants did not express sadness or regret for Sephardic language loss for the sake of attaining Jewish national unity<sup>39</sup>. We can attribute this to the dissimilar context in which each group finds itself. In Malinowski's Istanbul, the loss of Sephardicness could dangerously give way to assimilation with the surrounding non Jewish majority, while in Mendes Chumaceiro's Jerusalem, the failure to maintain and transmit Sephardic cultural traditions and language does not at all translate into a loss of Jewishness altogether, but rather an ethnic leveling of all Jewish groups; this would in fact be a desired outcome for advocates of the 'Zionist Dream'.

While Gilmer's (1986) treatise focuses almost exclusively on the linguistic correlates of language death found in the Judeo-Spanish of Izmir, Turkey, he pays some attention to language use and language attitudes held by members of his speech community vis à vis their heritage language. Gilmer's speech sample of sixty-six speakers, the youngest being seven years of age and the oldest in his eighties, was divided into three generational groups. His findings with respect to current language use are not surprising: the youngest members either displayed various levels of productive ability or none at all. The older the participant, the more likely he/she was to speak Judeo-Spanish to a better degree and to speak it more often in more social contexts

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<sup>39</sup> See also Malinowski (1979) for similar findings resulting from her 1979 dissertation on Israeli Judeo-Spanish and its current and future status in Israel. She interviewed 60 informants during the summer of 1977.

(except in public). In fact, Gilmer found that most of his participants in the oldest age group (sixty-one to eighty-five years of age) “were more fluent in Judeo-Spanish than in Turkish and spoke Judeo-Spanish among themselves” (26). For younger members, its use may arise at home with elderly family members or in public with other Jewish friends when they don’t want non-Jews to understand what they are saying.

Much like Harris (1979, 1994), Malinowski (1979, 1982), and Mendes - Chumaceiro (1982), Gilmer encountered negative attitudes toward the language, primarily from those that considered it to be a mixed language better referred to as a ‘jargon’. His research revealed that participants held positive attitudes toward the language and its continued use, and that most of these were instrumental in nature: participants felt that knowing Judeo-Spanish would help them learn other Romance languages, would allow them access to the many other Spanish-speaking peoples around the world, and finally, knowledge of Judeo-Spanish would simply make them well-rounded persons. The most surprising result of Gilmer’s attitude assessment is that most of his participants held more negative views than positive views with regard to the language. Gilmer mentions very briefly the effect of Turkish nationalism and relates a story of two young Turkish-Jewish girls who emphatically claimed that Turkey, not Israel, was their home. Other participants stated the importance and preference for them and their children to speak better Turkish than Judeo-Spanish. Because Gilmer also found a high degree of community involvement centered around the community center and synagogue, he concludes that in spite of the loss of the language, poor attitudes toward the language, and a high degree of Turkish national loyalty, Sephardic ethnicity and cultural heritage has been maintained.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Objectives of the study**

As stated in the introduction, the goal of this research is to describe the environment of the Jewish community of Thessaloniki in terms of the participants' sentiments, perceptions and circumstances regarding Judeo-Spanish, its shift, and its role as a marker of Jewish identity. To answer this main inquiry, I will engage in an in-depth exploration of a set of language related and identity related themes (see 3.5.2.1 and 3.5.2.1). In this chapter, I describe the selection of methods employed for the sampling, data collection, and data analysis and interpretation stages of the present study.

#### **3.2 Sampling**

The data collected in this study were obtained from a sample of members of the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. Unlike pure positivist research whose sample is random and representative of the population at large, the sample in this study was obtained based on a practical need to find participants in a limited amount of time. As a way to gather informants, Wölck's (1976, 1985) 'community profile' method was employed. Wölck's 'community profile' is comprised of three stages of development. In the first stage, the researcher makes contact with key members of a community who can act as 'community guides' and provide the researcher with additional community

information and assistance in making further acquaintances. In the next stage, the researcher determines specific issues relevant to the community, and an interview and questionnaire are developed. Wölck's third and final phase consists of spot-checking the data by recruiting voluntary members of the community to conduct member-checks. Also, any other additional information is obtained to confirm the researcher's interpretation of the data.

### **3.2.1 Criteria used for selection of informants: a chain sample**

The sample was composed of participants who were selected for their self-identification as a person of Sephardic descent, their willingness to participate, and their accessibility. The criteria in the selection of participants can be seen as the following:

- Age: no persons under the age of 18 were selected.
- Place of birth and/or upbringing. All persons were born and/or reared in Thessaloniki. At the time of data collection, all but two participants resided in Thessaloniki.

Ability of linguistic production in Judeo-Spanish was not a criterion for participant selection since one assumption was that presence or lack of it does not entail or preclude membership to this segment of Thessaloniki's population. In addition, the research revolved around participant perceptions of Judeo-Spanish and its role in the construction of a distinct ethnic identity. While participant use of the language- reported or actual- is considered in the analysis of data, it was not a requisite for participation in this study.



### **3.2.2 Procedure used to recruit informants**

Before the initiation of the study, several contacts were made whom I was able to personally meet during a week long trip to Thessaloniki several months before the commencement of the fieldwork. These first contacts acted as ‘guides’ and gave me an idea of what to expect demographically. Upon initiating fieldwork, the participant recruitment process began with these initial contacts who then introduced me to other community members and so forth. Attending community events and gatherings enabled me to introduce myself and my research, but as it will be discussed in the next section, this method of participant recruitment did not always guarantee willing participants.

### **3.2.3 Constraints of conducting fieldwork**

The limitations of conducting fieldwork in a small and somewhat closed community of which the researcher is not a member merit attention. According to Milroy (1987:80) the success of fieldwork is colored by the social attributes allocated to the researcher in terms of age, sex, ethnicity and any other socially significant features. This social role crucially affects one’s research goals, and as Milroy argues, “the closer the fieldworker is matched to subjects in terms of various social attributes, the more successful he or she is likely to be (ibid). However, not all is lost for the researcher who is an outsider of the target community. To mitigate the limitations of a researcher’s outsider status, he or she can develop relational links with community members through friendship, entrance in social networks, an adequate length of stay in the target community, and other factors such as age and gender (ibid).

As a female in my late twenties at the time of the research, I was perhaps more easily invited into the homes of single women than an unknown male researcher might have been. My ethno-religious and national background was both an advantage and a shortcoming in the task of gaining access to the community. I posit that my Greek descent and ability to speak Greek, as well as a shared love for the city of Thessaloniki served to establish important links between me and the participant. However, not being Jewish automatically situated me outside the boundaries of the community in question. Not only was I not Jewish, but I was of Christian Orthodox heritage- which was blatantly obvious by my first and last names. While a shared “Greekness” may have served to establish common links between me and my participants, it may have also generated hesitations on the part of the participants to expound any negative sentiment toward their Christian co-territorialists. As compensation for this, I speculate that my American nationality, use of English during conversational exchanges, and familiarity with things Jewish in the United States benefited me in two ways. First, it distanced me from my Greek background, and second, it helped establish commonalities with many participants who had strong ties to the U.S. because they themselves had lived and/or studied in the U.S. or had family members currently residing in the States. I also benefited from an academic background in Hispanic Philology, and for many community members this meant that I would possess linguistic ability in Spanish, a language to which many related. More importantly, I would be aware of the target community’s Spanish roots, its history, and presence in the city, something of which many non-Jewish Greeks are unaware. In many encounters, I found that my acknowledgment of the community’s presence and ethnic distinctiveness from the non-Jewish majority ‘broke the ice’ and

helped to facilitate a more open discussion. Owing to my dual American and Greek upbringing and my knowledge of things Spanish, I was able to make use of whatever cultural symbols and repertoires needed to break any barriers perceived by my participants.

Many community members were genuinely pleased to participate and spend hours on end discussing their lives as Sephardic Jews in Thessaloniki. During several interactions, I was thanked for taking interest in what they referred to as *muestra lingua* [‘our language’] or *muestro puevlo* [‘our people’]. There were members who spent additional time with me giving me ‘mini-tours’ of old Jewish sites in the center city, inviting me on family outings, home to meet elderly parents, or out to concerts or to a café for coffee.

However, it was at community events and gatherings that I was confronted with the reality of conducting field work- the reality that not everyone would find my study of particular interest or would be willing to take time to chat with a stranger and answer what might have seemed to be tedious questions about what languages their great-grandparents spoke or what primary schools they attended. This reality was further complicated by the fact that I was an unknown face bearing an unrecognizable name in the community, which in turn generated an amount of suspicion with regard to who I was and what I wanted. Thus, these community gatherings and events generated more negative responses than actual interviews. A far more effective way of obtaining interviews, in my experience, was on a contact-to-contact basis where one person would directly lead me to another. Being able to mention the name of a community acquaintance was exceedingly helpful. Another entity in the community, the Modiano

Home for the Aged, turned out to be an impenetrable wall in the attempt to recruit participants. In order to gain access to the residents of the home, I was asked to write a formal letter to the head of board of directors in charge of all affairs of the home, yet my request went ignored. The director of the home informed me that in recent years, the board had become very strict as to whom they allowed to have access to the home's residents. This recent policy, drawn to protect the elderly from painful memories, was put into effect as a result of a wave of researchers and reporters seeking to interview residents about their experiences during the Holocaust. After such visits, the nurses at the home noted that the residents were left in a state of depression upon having to recollect memories of lost loved ones and lost ways of life. Quite understandably, the board felt it necessary to exercise caution when allowing unknown persons in to potentially disrupt the tranquility of the elderly residents. However, since so many of them had lived through the various social, political and demographic changes experienced by the city in the last century, I consider inability to obtain narratives from these elderly residents a misfortune.

In addition, the international political atmosphere at the time of this research (late 2002) may explain what I sensed to be a degree of caution and hesitation among community members when approached by an unknown person. I speculate that the political strife in the Middle East and the Greek media's condemnation of both U.S. and Israeli policies (which at times manifested in public demonstrations at or near Jewish sites) ultimately had the effect of making the community less accessible than what it ordinarily might have been. Aside from the security check through which one must pass upon entering the Jewish Community Center, on at least one occasion I encountered an

additional set of armed security men guarding the entrance to the Community Center in anticipation of anti-U.S. demonstrations regarding its involvement in the Middle East and its ties with Israel.

After concluding my own fieldwork and having returned to the U.S., I contacted a member of the community who offered to distribute questionnaires and carry out additional recorded interviews. This study counts the participation of 33 community members.

### 3.2.4 Sample profile

The 33 participants were divided into three age groups that correspond to the already existing generational divisions of the community:

Generation 1: ten participants born before 1930

Generation 2: fourteen participants born between 1940 and 1956

Generation 3: nine participants born 1960 and after

GENERATION 1 born pre 1930	GENERATION 2 born 1940- 1956	GENERATION 3 born 1960 and after
N= 10	N= 14	N=9
Male (3)	Male (7)	Male (2)
Female (7)	Female (7)	Female (7)

Such division was made so that any correlations between age and issues regarding language and identity could be easily identified. All participants resided in Thessaloniki at the time of the research, except for two who lived in Athens. However, since they were born and raised in Thessaloniki and often traveled back to the city for family visits,

I considered their participation to be acceptable. Detailed demographic information regarding the sample can be found in the Appendix.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

#### **3.3.1 Methods used for data collection**

To reveal participant beliefs and attitudes relating to Judeo-Spanish, its shift and its role in the maintenance of a distinct ethno cultural identity in Thessaloniki, I employed a variety of methods. First, a questionnaire patterned after previous language use and language attitude surveys (Harris 1979; Vassberg 1993; Casad 1997; and Rivera-Mills 1999) was distributed. This questionnaire enabled me to obtain biographical information and yes/no type responses to questions dealing with language, language shift and identity. The biographical information was fed into tables so that general characteristics of the sample could be discerned. Responses to yes/no questions were quantified into raw numbers and percentages. In addition to the questionnaire, a standardized informal interview guided by open-ended questions was conducted. Although these questions were predetermined, they were framed in such a way that allowed the participant to delve further into the topic or to steer it into an entirely different direction. The expressions obtained on language and identity from the interviews underwent a qualitative analysis by means of content analysis in the hope that they would compensate for the limited explanatory value of the quantified results yielded from the questionnaires.

### 3.3.2 Languages Used During Data Collection

The questionnaires were prepared in Spanish, English and Greek and were delivered orally in those languages, with the occasional use of French with those who spoke it. Due to time and resource limitations at the onset of the study, no questionnaire was translated into Judeo-Spanish. The assumption was that speakers of Judeo-Spanish would understand the Spanish language questionnaire without difficulty, and this was indeed the case. However, soon enough I was able to improvise Judeo-Spanish by making the necessary phonological, morphological and lexical changes: /fižo/ instead of /ixo/ [‘son], (*e*)*skapí* instead of *terminé* [to finish], *meldar* instead of *leer* [to read], *ambezar* instead of *aprender* [to learn], etc. My research assistant carried out his interviews in Greek and Judeo-Spanish.

### 3.4 Treatment of Data

When given participant permission, interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed in the language in which they were conducted. My own comments to clarify a participant’s words are contained within square brackets. Also within square brackets are abbreviations indicating the language being transcribed. Thus, Greek is abbreviated as ‘Grk.’, Judeo-Spanish as ‘JSp.’, French as ‘Fr.’, and Turkish as ‘Trk.’. Translations into English follow participant expressions. Each narrative is further qualified, using square brackets, with notations that indicate in which generational group the participant belongs, his/her gender, and initials randomly assigned to each participant so as to provide them with a degree of anonymity.

### **3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

In conjunction with the quantifiable data used to establish generational trends, the researcher made use content analysis for the analysis of participant narratives yielded from the questionnaire and interview portions.

One concern of this study was to find a systematic method of handling a large body of data. The method of data analysis that I chose was content analysis. According to Weber (1990), content analysis may be defined as a research methodology that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message. Some of the important uses of this method are the generation of indicators reflecting patterns and trends of groups or individuals, such as beliefs, values, or ideologies.

To ensure the trustworthiness of inferences generated by means of content analysis, a consistent classification procedure must be developed. The rules used for coding must be clearly defined so that different people code the text in the same way, thus making the study replicable. In addition, an adequate classification procedure will also generate variables that are valid. According to Weber, a variable is valid “to the extent that it measures or represents what the investigator intends it to measure” (12).

The task of ensuring reliability in the classification of data was facilitated by the direct nature of the questions themselves. Because language and identity were the central themes of the research, any question posed to the participants was a direct offshoot of one of these central themes. Thus, questions dealing with language were separated from questions dealing with identity. The responses obtained from these questions were then closely examined so as to draw out other potentially relevant key words. As was



expected, this more in-depth analysis of the data yielded additional key words such as: *Judeo-Spanish, Greek, French, Hebrew, Judaism, Israel, religion, ethnicity, nationalism, Zionism, history, heritage, roots, family, death, loss, revival, discrimination, assimilation, migration, WWII, and the Holocaust.* Once the excerpts containing these key words were identified and marked, those that were relevant to the topic at hand were selected for further examination and exposition.

### **3.5.1 Language-Related Themes**

Review of the language-related questions and passages generated a list of coding labels that served to classify the data in the following manner:

- Attitudes and beliefs regarding the structure, origins and value of Judeo-Spanish
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish shift
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish transmission
- Expressions of the impact of Judeo-Spanish vis-à-vis identity
- Expressions of the impact of Hebrew vis-à-vis identity

### **3.5.2 Identity-Related Themes**

The coding labels used to classify identity-related data appear under the following headings:

- Expressions of (having) identity vis-à-vis origin, ethnicity and nationality
- Expressions that distance the Thessalonikan Jews from non Jewish Greeks

Once the data were organized into the above categories, I turned my attention to the unveiling of both explicit and tacit expressions of language and identity and to the delineation of the attitudes, perceptions, and circumstances that govern the position of Judeo-Spanish as a marker of Jewish identity among the three generational groups. In addition, I attempted to specify other influential non-linguistic elements in the formation and/or maintenance of a distinct entity in Thessaloniki. The exposition of these expressions and factors is included in Chapters 5 and 6 where the data results and discussions are presented.

## Chapter 4

### Presentation and Analysis of Language-Related Data

#### 4.1 Overview

This chapter is devoted to a discussion of language-related issues. Its data consist of yes-no type responses from the questionnaire that have been quantified into percentages, as well as excerpts from the oral interview. A review of the language-related questions from the questionnaire and interview served to classify the data under the following themes:

- Attitudes and beliefs regarding the structure, origins and value of Judeo-Spanish (4.2)
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish shift (4.3)
- Expressions of Judeo-Spanish transmission (4.4)
- Expressions of the impact of Judeo-Spanish vis-à-vis identity (4.5)
- Expressions of the impact of Hebrew vis-à-vis identity (4.6)

#### 4.2 Attitudes and beliefs regarding the structure, origins and value of Judeo-Spanish

According to Harris (1979, 1982, 1994), negative attitudes vis-à-vis an ethnic language stemming from ignorance of the language's origins, structure and relevance reinforce the shifting of a language that is already in a precarious state. To uncover participant attitudes and beliefs with regard to the origins, structure, and value of Judeo-

Spanish, I gathered responses from the appropriate yes-no questions from the questionnaire and collected excerpts from the interview portion. The questionnaire and interview questions gathered for this section were the following:

- What do you call the language you speak?
- Is Judeo-Spanish the same as Peninsular and Latin American Spanish?
- Does Judeo-Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you?

#### **4.2.1 What do you call the language you speak?**

Throughout this research, I employ the term Judeo-Spanish when referring to the language spoken by my participants in Thessaloniki. My reason for using this term is that it is the “neutral, self-explanatory, academic term preferred by Romance scholars to refer to the language of the Eastern Sephardim” (Harris 1994: 24). As discussed extensively by Harris (1979 1982, 1994), the use of this term has been met with disapproval by scholars (Birnbaum 1944 and Bunis 1978) because it is employed by researchers and not the speakers themselves. However, just as Harris’ participants in New York, Los Angeles and Israel, my own participants had no objection to my use of this term.

My findings as to what Thessalonikan Sephardim call this language corroborate those findings of Baruch (1930), Harris (1979, 1994), Malinowski (1979, 1982), and Mendes-Chumaceiro (1982): that speakers employ a whole array of terms to refer to the spoken language. In my research, *(e-)spanyol* was the most commonly used term, followed by *ladino*. The results can be seen in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Distribution of nomenclature from each generational group

Generation 1 (N=10)	Generation 2 (N=14)	Generation 3 (N=9)
(E)spanyol (5)	(E)spanyol (6)	Ladino (7)
Espanyol (2)	Ladino (5)	Espanyol (1)
Ladino (2)	Djidió (1)	No response given (1)
Judezmo and Ladino (1)	Djudeo-espanyol (1)	
	Espanyol and Djudeo-Espanyol (1)	

Among participants in G1, *(e)spanyol* was the most favored response:

Lo yamamos siempre ‘spanyol’, ‘espanyol’... Me parese ke [en esa epoka] no sabemos ke esta lingua ke ablabamos era el ladino [G1-F-MA] We always called it ‘spanyol’, ‘espanyol’...I think that [at the time] we didn’t know that the language we were speaking was Ladino.

Another participant stated that *ladino* was a term that became popularized only after WWII and that within her own family, *espanyol* was the preferred term while *Djudezmo* was never used:

Mozotros deziamos en mi famiya ‘espanyol’. No deziamos ‘djudezmo’. Y la palabra ‘ladino’ kreo es mucho mas reciente del tiempo d’antes de la guerra [G1-F-NB] We used to call it espanyol in my family. We didn’t call it djudezmo. And I think that use the word ‘Ladino’ is much more recent, from the time after the war.

As if to contradict what NB stated about *djudezmo*, another participant from G1 answers the question by stating that *djudezmo* was indeed the term used. However, like participant NB, this participant also pointed out the new popularity of the term *ladino*.

A tiempo lo yamavamos ‘djudezmo’, [ama] agora se fizo la moda de yamarlo ‘ladino’ [G1-F-JK] [At the time we called it djudezmo, but now it’s fashionable to call it Ladino]

G2 participants offered a greater variety in terms used to designate the language.

Six of the fourteen gave *(e)spanyol* as a response:

‘Spanyol’, ‘spanyol de Salonik’ [G2-F-SE] Spanyol, Spanyol from Salonik.

‘Espanyol’. [Anything else?] ‘Judeo-Espanyol’, which is the modern term for it”...Yo lo yamo ‘espanyol’ komo lo yamavan mis parientes [G2-F-EP] Espanyol. [Anything else?]. Judeo-Espanyol, which is the modern term for it... I call it Espanyol, just as my relatives called it.

Another five G2 participants responded that *ladino* was the term they employed to refer to the language:

Ladino. No se, ma kreo ke ladino es la mas pura, la mas al lado [G2-F-SG]  
Ladino. I don’t know, but I think that Ladino is the purest, the closest.

The view that Ladino is the “purest” and the “closest” to “real Spanish” mirrors Sephiha’s dichotomization of *ladino* (the written language free of foreign influences employed since pre-expulsion times) versus *djudezmo/djidio/(e)spanyol* (the spoken vernaculars laden with borrowings from French, Italian, Turkish, Greek and other Balkan languages (1986, in Harris 1994: 22)). That is, *ladino* designates the purest and most hispanized ‘version’ of Judeo Spanish since it is strictly used for translation and not for day-to-day communication and, as such, is less susceptible to foreign borrowings.

However, for another G2 participant, *ladino* was a term that was never employed to refer to the language that one spoke at home; rather, it was a scientific term that arose in the 1970’s. For this participant, the term *espanyol* was predominantly used, along with *djudeo-espanyol*.

‘Espanyol’ but never ‘Ladino’. Ladino is a scientific word of the 1970’s  
([G2-F-AK])

Only one participant from G2 claimed to use the term *djidió* and another *djudeo-espanyol*. One participant responded with a two-name response *espanyol* and *djudeo-espanyol*:

‘Espanyol’ komo lo yamamos de antes. ‘No favlas espanyol?’ dezia. O ‘djudeo-espanyol’. [G2-F-VB] Espanyol, like we called it early on. ‘Don’t you speak Espanyol?, one would say...or Djudeo Espanyol.

Within G3 responses, a trend preferring the use of *ladino* as the most common designation for the language appears. Of the nine total G3 participants, seven employed *ladino*, while only one responded with the term *espanyol*. One participant from this group failed to respond to the question.

To explain the variation of nomenclature among G2 and G3 participants and to point to the popularity of the term *ladino* among G3 participants, I turn to Bunis (1982) and his socio-economic explanation for the discrepancy of appellates used among the Sephardim both historically and today. While his conclusions are based on data taken from informant interviews from 1839 to WWII, his findings offer what could be an historical root to the vacillation found in the today’s nomenclature. His research shows that while the lower and lower middle classes commonly labeled their language as *djudezmo* or as *dzidió* in Sarajevo and parts of Turkey and Greece, the upper and upper middle classes ordinarily employed the terms *španyol/spanyol*, as well as *djudezmo* and *dzidió*. In addition, the “frankeados” (Sephardim educated in the French-speaking Alliance schools) disparingly called it *žargon* or *judio espanyol* under the influence of Western European philological terminology. *Ladino* was the term used by all classes to designate the calque variety used for literal translations from Hebrew and Aramaic texts, but as in the case of the vacillation of the spoken varieties, the calque variety also had alternative forms, such as those mentioned above.

Three notes should be made concerning the results to the question “What do you call the language you speak?” First, while most participants (29 of the 33) answered the question “What do you call the language you speak?” with a one-name response, only 3 responded that they employed more than one term to designate it. In practice, however, it was more common for participants to alternate between one term and another during the actual questionnaire and interview. The most common alternations were between *espanyol/spanyol* (among G1, G2 and G3 participants), *(e)spanyol/ladino* (among G1, G2 and G3), and *(e)spanyol/djidió* (among G1 and G2 participants only). Second, one explanation for the rise of the term *ladino* among G2 and more notably among G3 participants is that these younger participants (younger than G1), did not have the same kind of access to the language as did participants in G1. As evidenced in the biographical data found in the Appendix, G1 participants’ access to the language in their early years was through daily communicative use. While only some G2 participants had home access to Judeo-Spanish, the majority of G2 and G3 participants relied on other means of language accessibility to gain whatever linguistic ability they had in Judeo-Spanish. In other words, because they were less likely to hear and use Judeo-Spanish growing up, knowledge of the language stems from scholarly treatments of the language in which the term *ladino* is commonly used. Mendes Chumaceiro (1982) encounters the use of the term *ladino* among her participants and offers the explanation that participants use this term with outsiders only, while preferring *(e)spanyol* with insiders. This explanation could be valid for my own research (as I am an outsider) except that it doesn’t account for the fact that other terms were indeed employed as often as *ladino*. At this time, the



best possible explanation to this generational trend points to what one participant suggested earlier:

A tiempo lo yamavamos *djudezmo*, ahora se fizo la moda de yamarlo *ladino*. [G1-F-JK). At the time, we used to call it *djudezmo*, but now it is fashionable to call it *ladino*.

Finally, the discrepancy found in the nomenclature today is a remnant of the naming-practices of the past, as found by Bunis (1982). Furthermore, such variability in nomenclature is reinforced by a language's low prestige/low status and by its lack of a central unifying force to settle the issue of nomenclature among all speakers.

The data demonstrate a trend with regard to the naming practices among the three generational groups: for G3 participants, having limited or no communicative ability in Judeo-Spanish, it is a non tangible, symbolic linguistic remnant known to them only from what they heard from parents, grandparents and/or older community members. This exposure was at best in the form of lexical items denoting kinship terms, foods, terms of endearment, curse words and fixed expressions. Furthermore, the frequent use of the term *ladino* among the younger generationers speaks to the influence of scholarly activity surrounding the language and to the manner in which they are acquainted with the language. What is for previous generations tangible and real, for the younger generations whose exposure to the language was at best minimal, the language is a cultural and symbolic remnant breeding nostalgia at times and an object of study for linguists and historians.

#### 4.2.2 Is Judeo-Spanish the same as Peninsular or Latin American Spanish?

Harris (1979:149) reports that slightly more than half of her participants (52%) are aware that the language they spoke was “based on or related to Castilian Spanish”, while research from the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early20<sup>th</sup> centuries shows that this knowledge was virtually non-existent among Judeo-Spanish speakers in the Balkans. Among my own 33 participants, all expressed awareness of the common origin of Judeo-Spanish and Spanish:

Mozotros venimos d’Espanya ama la lingua es diferente agora  
[G1-Female-RN]. We come from Spain but the language is differnt now.

While awareness of Judeo-Spanish’s roots is commonplace among my participants, there are differing conceptions as to how similar the language is to Peninsular and Latin American varieties of Spanish. Table 4-2 shows the total percentages for G1-G3, while Figures 4-1 and 4-2 show the percentage of participants in each generation who responded YES to the question ‘Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish spoken in Spain/Latin America today?’

Table 4-2: Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish in Spain/Latin America?

Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish from Spain?	12%(4)	79%(26)	9%(3)	0%	0%
Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish from Latin America?	33%(11)	55%(18)	6%(2)	0%	6%(2)
<b>GENERATIONS 1-3 (N=33)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Ind.</b>	<b>Don’t know</b>

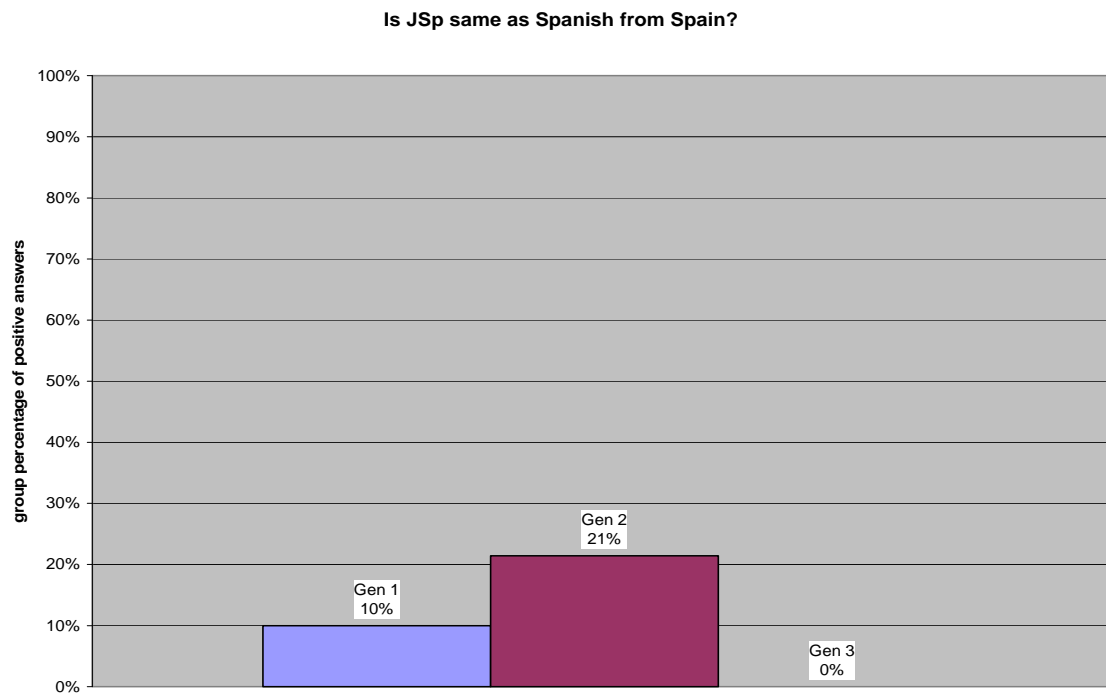


Figure 4-1: Is Judeo Spanish the same as the Spanish from Spain? A cross generational comparison

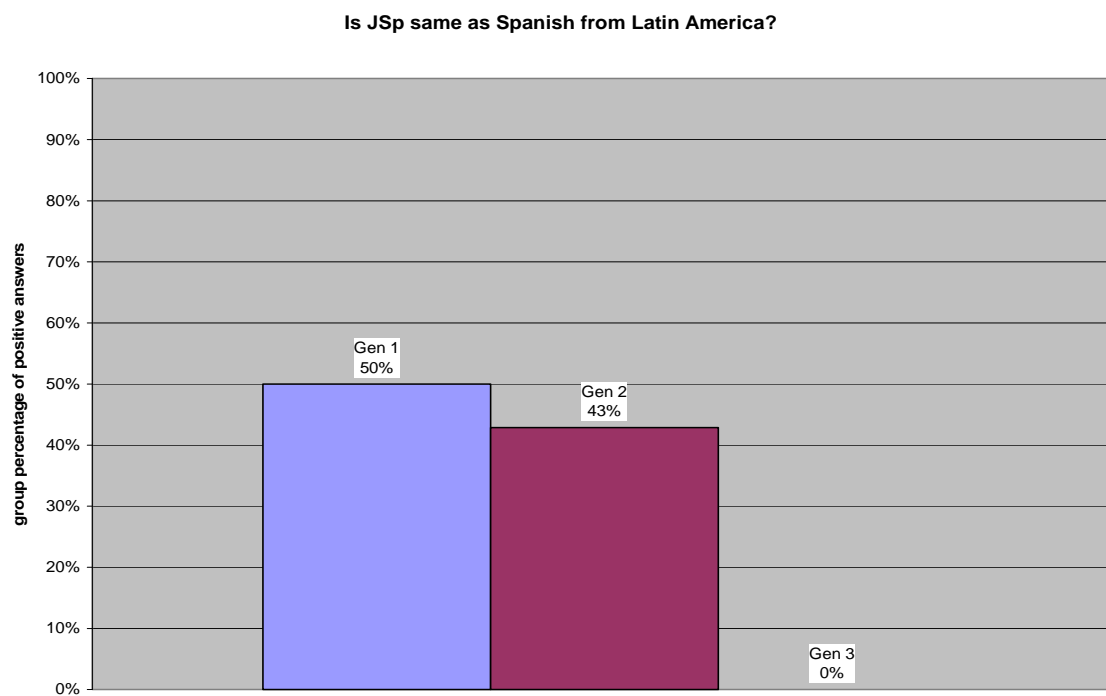


Figure 4-2 Is Judeo-Spanish the same as the Spanish from Latin America?  
A cross generational comparison

From Table 4-2 above, two notes should be made. First, most participants across the generations believe that Peninsular Spanish (79%) and Latin American Spanish (55%) are ‘not the same’ as Judeo-Spanish. The kinds of differences between Judeo-Spanish and Peninsular and Latin American varieties were noted by the participants to be lexical in nature, mostly made up of borrowings from Turkish, French, Greek and Hebrew:

Ay diferensias bastantes porke kon el tiempo entraron en la lingua espanyola ke mozotros favlabamos palavras turkas, fransesas, ispanizadas um poko. Porke, [komo] dishe, entraron siertas palavras turkas i frankeadas... devemos de fazer atension a ke ay las palavras turkas ke otros no tienen [G1-F-NB]. There are many differences because throughout the years Turkish and French words, that were slightly Hispanized, entered into the Spanish language that we spoke. Because [as] I said, certain Turkish and French words entered... we have to notice that there are Turkish words [in our language] that others [speakers of Peninsular and Latin American Spanish] don’t have.

Asemeja mucho ama hay palavras ke son, ke stan embrodiadas kon el grego, el turko, [segun] onde vivimos [G1-F-JK]. It [Judeo-Spanish] is very similar, but there are many words that are, that are mixed with Greek, Turkish, [depending on] where we lived.

Ladino is mixed with Jews, Jewish... mixed with many other languages. It’s something mixed, but very close to Spanish [G3-M-SE]

Some participants commented that while there were many notable differences, these differences didn’t deter mutual ability to communicate with speakers of Spanish.

Moreover, participants remarked how pleasing it was for Spaniards to hear them speak

“el spanyol ke se favla aki” [the Spanish that is spoken here] and that for speakers of

Peninsular and Latin American varieties, Judeo-Spanish sounds archaic and

Cervantinesque:

No puedo saber siguro, ma se es ke si enkontro espanyoles oy, puedo favlar con eyos, le vienon muy estranyo ke me sienten favlar... se alegran, se emocionan, ma puedo dar de entender una maraviya [G2-F-VB]. I can’t

know for sure [how close Judeo-Spanish is to Spanish], but I know that if I meet Spaniards today, I can talk to them, and it's very strange for them to hear me speak... they are happy, they become emotional, and I come to understand that it is a marvel [for them].

Asemeja mucho. Favli kon muchos kasteyanos y mos entendemos eno [Gr. 'however'] favli con otros y no mos entendiamos, los de otros lugares [G2-F-SG]. It is very similar [to Spanish]. I spoke to many Castellians [Spaniards] and we understand each other; however, I spoke with others and we couldn't understand each other, those from other places.

One participant from G1 remarks that when he was younger, it was thought that the language spoken by Thessalonikan Sephardim was the same variety of Spanish spoken concurrently in Spain and Latin America. The following is an excerpt of a dialogue that transpired between him and his wife:

Husband: Pensabamos ke era la lingua [Judeo-Spanish of Thessaloniki] ke ablan en Espanya, i era en realidad [la lingua] ke ablaban ay 500 anyos. Ama despues entraron palavras gregas, palavras turcas, franzezes o italianas... Pensabamos ke era la lingua ke ablaban todos los espanyoles. (G1-M-MA). We used to think that it [Judeo-Spanish of Thessaloniki] was the language they spoke in Spain, and it was in reality [the language] that they spoke 500 years ago. But afterwards many Greek, French or Italian words entered into the language.... We thought that it was the language that all Spaniards spoke.

Wife: No, ke avlavan los djudios de Salonik. (G1-F-MA). No, [you mean] that all the Jews of Salonik spoke.

Husband: Si, ama pensabamos ke [era] la misma lingua ke ablaban en Espanya, ke era [muestro] espanyol. Yes, but we thought it was the same language that they spoke in Spain, that it was [our] Spanish.

Wife: Si, [i] ke todos los djudios de Evropa avlaban esta lingua tambien. Yes, and that all the Jews of Europe spoke this language too.

Husband: Los djudios de Evropa? [Eos] eran ashkenazim i no ablaban el ladino. All the Jews of Europe? [They] were Ashkenazim and didn't speak Ladino.

Wife: No, los djudios de Evropa del sur. No, the Jews of Southern Europe.

Husband: Sefarad

The relevance of this dialogue is that it demonstrates that ideas about one's language across the course of a lifetime do not remain static. Quite the contrary, they are reformulated as experiences are gained and access to information is acquired.

A second interesting note to be drawn from Table 4.2 is that more participants responded that Judeo-Spanish is more similar to Latin American Spanish than it is to Peninsular Spanish:

Nai, isos miazoun pio poly. Den ksero yiati. [G2-F-TK]. Yes, they [Judeo-Spanish and Latin American Spanish] are probably more similar to each other. I don't know why.

No se, pero un poko mas serka [G2-F-EP]. I don't know, but a little bit closer.

Nai , poli pio konta [G2-M-LA]. Yes, a lot more similar.

Ine pio singeni [G2-F-TK]. They are more closely related.

De Mexico, sí. De muchos lugares de America Latina, sí. I de Chile [G2-F-VB]. [It's more related to the Spanish] From Mexico, yes. From many places in Latin America, yes. And from Chile.

Eh, es al lado. Mos damos de entender bueno [G2-F-SG]  
It's very close. We understand each other very well.

Most people have not been to Latin America so they would not know...I've been to Mexico and Cuba and, yes, our language is more similar to the Mexican and Cuban. For this reason, I feel closer to Latin Americans than I do with Spaniards. [G2-F-AK)

One participant notes that the only similarity between Latin American Spanish and Judeo-Spanish is the fact that they were both "created" at the same time (Jewish expulsion from Spain and the first arrivals of Spaniards to the New World), and that both had the value of being displaced or nomadic:

Si, en una manera deke se kreeron el mismo tiempo [G2-M-AK].  
Yes, in a way in that they were created at the same time.

Another participant insisted that there were no more similarities between Latin American Spanish and Judeo-Spanish than there were between Peninsular Spanish and Judeo-Spanish and that if there were two ‘varieties’ that were more similar to each other, it was Peninsular and Latin American varieties of Spanish. For this participant, Judeo-Spanish was not to be considered the same:

No, no, no... [Judeo-Spanish has] nothing to do [with Latin American Spanish]. In Latin America, they speak Spanish that they speak in Spain, though it has nothing to do with Ladino. There are some words that are similar, but still some differences. [G3-F-DK]

A cross-generational comparison reveals in Figures 4-1 and 4-2 that there is no G3 participant who believes Judeo-Spanish to be ‘the same’ as the Spanish spoken in Spain and Latin America today. I attribute this to the fact that the younger participants have had more access to Spanish speakers from Spain and Latin America due to travel, the Internet, and formal study of Spanish through the recent popularity of the Spanish language and the opening of Spanish language academies in Greece. One participant from G1 notes what seemed to be a sudden emergence of Spanish language academies in Greece, and specifically in Thessaloniki:

Mira, ay unos kuantos anyos, no egsistian aki scolas d’espanyol para ambezar la lingua espanyol... auta, pos ta lene auta... ‘frontistiria’, academias, ama tora exei arketa kiolas, den ipirxe oute ena yia ispanika... Eno eixe para polla agglika, germanika, yalika,.. oute ena ispaniko. Prin 10 xronia arxisan ta prota ta ispanika. I kori mas itan apo tis protes pou pige se ispaniko frontistirio. Apo to proto pou ixie aniksi edo... Cervantes [G1-M-MA]. Look, some years ago, there did not exist any Spanish schools to learn the Spanish language... these, how do we call them... ‘academies’, but now there are many, there wasn’t even one for Spanish... However there were always many English, German, French,... not one Spanish. About 10 years ago the first Spanish ones were opened. Our daughter was one of the first who went to the Spanish-language academy.

Several notes can be made from this section. Firstly, all participants express awareness of roots of the language as being from Spain and having evolved from Peninsular Spanish. Secondly, more participants perceive there to be more similarities between Judeo-Spanish and its Latin American counterpart than between Judeo-Spanish and Peninsular Spanish. Thirdly, the most commonly noted differences between Peninsular Spanish, Latin American Spanish and Judeo-Spanish were lexical in nature as Judeo-Spanish had incorporated words from Balkan regional languages, as well as from Turkish, French, Italian, and Hebrew. Finally, the younger the participant, the more likely it is that he/she believes Judeo-Spanish to be unlike both Peninsular and Latin American Spanish. I attribute this trend found within the G3 to be explained by the educational and travel opportunities afforded today that would provide greater access to both Peninsular and Latin American varieties of Spanish, and as well as to G3's more scholarly, albeit less authentic, orientation around Judeo-Spanish.

#### 4.2.3 Does Judeo-Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you?

Table 4-3: Does Judeo Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you?

Does it bother you when you hear JSp/Greek codeswitching?	3%(1)	91%(30)	0%	6%(2)	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=3)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?



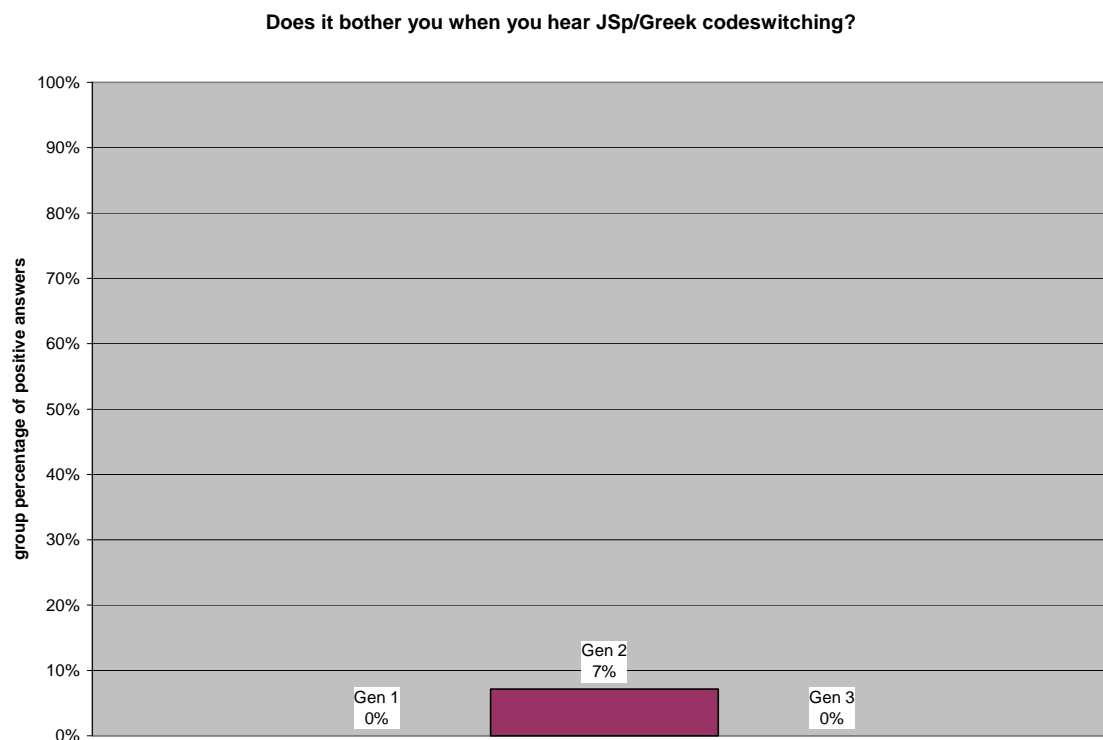


Figure 4-3: Does Judeo-Spanish/Greek codeswitching bother you?

The extent to which participants are ‘bothered’ by codeswitching practices between Judeo-Spanish and Greek can be seen in Table 4-3 and Figure 4-3. In Table 4-3, of the 33 total participants, only one G2 participant finds the ‘mixing’ of the two languages to be unappealing. However, she finds justification for it in that she sees it to be a consequence of language contact:

Si, es difichile, y yo la misma, lo mismo lo fago, ma es difichile...komo vivimos muchos anyos aki [G2-F-SG]. Yes, and I myself do it, but it’s difficult... since we have been living here many years.

Participant [G2-F-AK] responded that she was not ‘bothered’ when she heard people codeswitch between Greek and Judeo-Spanish and that when done with family members,

“it is cute”. However, when she herself speaks one language or the other, she makes efforts not to “mix” the two because to do so would be a sign that the speaker is uneducated<sup>40</sup>. Another participant made note of the difficulty of keeping the languages separate in the context of long-term language contact, although she stated that she were not at all ‘bothered’ by the habit:

Yeah, but you know before when they first came from Spain, they didn’t know any Greek. So they used Ladino. And later on they started using Greek words, and they mixed the two languages. So, that’s why it’s a common thing [G3-F-DK]

While not being bothered by codeswitches, this participant attributed its use to an attrited state of Judeo-Spanish, especially among people younger than her:

Yo lo faze... eh. Kreo ke los fizos ahora no saven djudeo-espanyol i se mesklan todo [G1-F-JK]. I do it [codeswitch]... eh. I think that our kids today don’t know Judeo-Spanish and they mix everything.

Another participant stated that codeswitching practices were what typified the Judeo-Spanish of Thessaloniki today and regarded such practices as the norm and quite desirable:

No puedo dezir ke me faze mal kuando favlalamos en grego *meta* [Grk. ‘afterwards’] en espanyol. Es muestra manera de favlar [G2-M-SE]. I can’t say that it bothers me when we’d speak in Greek and then in Espanyol. It is our way of speaking.

As noted by one participant, the use of Judeo-Spanish speech markers<sup>41</sup> was a method employed to sound “more Jewish”:

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<sup>40</sup> Altabez (1998) also reported finding Istanbul Jews who equated codeswitching practices with a lack of education.

<sup>41</sup> Speech markers “provide the receiver with information concerning the sender’s biological, psychological and social characteristics” and can be just as strong a sign of ethnicity as full communicative use of the language. Additionally, these markers “may often ably compensate for loss of ethnic identity when an outgroup language...is used” (Giles 1979: 259).

It's seldom [that we use Judeo-Spanish at all], but I like it, it's nostalgic and gives Greek an interesting flavor, a Jewish flavor, you can say [G1-F-EA]

G2-M-SE noted that such practices were a sign of linguistic evolution considered normal for all living languages if they are to survive in language contact contexts:

No me faze mal. Es una prova ke la lingua no ez una koza statika. Sé *i* (Grk. 'or') en turko , *i* [Grk. 'or'] en grego,... Oxi, den mou pirazi; etsi tin ematha [Gr.]! En grego, aki ay un akel [ke] desimos muchas vezes kuando ablamos en espanyol 'Abriremos el *psigeio* [Grk. 'refrigerator'] y kitaremos el *kotopoulo*' [Grk. 'chicken'], 'vamos al *charshi* [Trk. 'market', 'vamos al *deren* para djugar' [Trk. 'river'], 'vamos a *apopsikear* el *psigeio* [Grk. defrost the freezer] [G2-M-SE]. It doesn't bother me. It's evidence that the language is not a static thing. I can say it in Turkish, or in Greek... No, it doesn't bother me; this is how I learned it! In Greek, now here you have something we would say when we spoke in Espanyol: 'We'll open the refrigerator and take out the chicken', 'Let's go to the market', 'let's go to the river to play', 'let's defrost the freezer'.

This section illuminates participants' generally positive views regarding codeswitching practices. Participants consider them to occur for several reasons. First, as suggested by several participants, most don't know enough Judeo-Spanish to be able to speak it without having to rely on Greek to fill in the gaps. Second, it is viewed as being an inevitable consequence of long-term language contact. Moreover, Greek/Judeo-Spanish codeswitching typifies the way Judeo-Spanish was always spoken, at least in participant memory. Finally, for many, codeswitching affords the opportunity to add a desirable 'Jewish flavor' to spoken Greek; it is a tangible way to connect to a sense of Jewishness without having to revert to complete use of Judeo-Spanish, an unrealistic and overly taxing task for the majority.

#### 4.2.3.1 Judeo-Spanish as a mixed language

Altabez (1998), Bunis (1982), Harris (1979, 1994) and Malinowski' (1979, 1982) report that Judeo-Spanish was commonly referred to as “mixed language” made up of Spanish and other regional languages. My findings show similar expressions that classify the language as “jargon” or a language that has been “bastardizada” (“bastardized”) or “corrupted”. During one interview, I asked a participant to list the languages that he spoke. Given that he spoke Judeo-Spanish with high levels of fluency during most of the interview, I was surprised when he did not mention Judeo-Spanish. When I questioned him for not having included Judeo-Spanish, he responded that the Judeo-Spanish variety that he spoke (that of Thessaloniki) couldn't be considered a bona fide language as one would consider English, Greek, Spanish, and earlier forms of Judeo-Spanish which were free of foreign borrowings. Instead, he describes contemporary Judeo-Spanish of Thessaloniki to be a Spanish-based speech form composed of lexical items originating from many different languages:

...ama el ladino komo te dishi en Salóniko, el ladino ke ablamos en Salonik es un ladino bastadro....Tiene muchas palabras turkas, gregas, francezas ke se adoptaron en la lingua. No es el ladino orizinal. El ladino de Salóniko es ladino bastadro [G2-M-SE]. ...but the Ladino, like I said of Salonika, the Ladino that we speak in Salonika is a bastardized Ladino... It has many Turkish, Greek and French words that were incorporated into the language. It is not the original Ladino. The Ladino from Salonika is bastard Ladino.

I then asked him whether or not the Judeo-Spanish spoken in Thessaloniki was the same as the Judeo-Spanish in other parts of the world, to which he replied that it was not:

No, no! Es la mezma lingua, ma en kada lugar uvo una adaptasion de las linguas ke se ablavan, ay, ay, sto seguro ke los turkos tienen, tendrán palabras turkas en el ladino. Es lo mismo hizo en Salóniko, palabras turkas, fransezas, o italianas, un poko trokadas y se fi-hizieron lingua, palabras spanyolas. ‘*Kiushé*’ [Trk. ‘corner’]. ‘Te va a enkontrar a la

kiushé', 'I'll meet you at the corner'. Es turka. Sien por sien. [G2-M-SE] No, no! It's the same language, but in each place there was an adaptation of the languages that were spoken, there are, I'm sure that the Turks have, probably have Turkish words in Ladino. It's the same thing in Salonika, Turkish, French, Italian words, somewhat changed, and they became part of the language, [they become] Spanish words. 'Kiushé' [Trk. 'corner'], 'I'll meet you at the corner'. It's Turkish, 100%.

The fact that Judeo-Spanish was a language that was restricted to the most private of settings, the home and among close Jewish friends, was for another participant reason enough to dismiss it as not a 'real' language:

Our Spanish was something private, it wasn't a public language. We, the kids, did not want to use it in public, and we never did! It was [used] only in the homes, with family, and even then I used it only passively. In public we [the children] didn't use it because we were taught that it was rude [to speak Judeo-Spanish if there were others who didn't understand the language]. My grandmother, we called her 'nona', might speak to me in Spanish or in French, but I would answer in Greek. I don't think we considered it [Judeo-Spanish] to be a real language....It was not until my late elementary school years that I began to understand that if I were to travel to Spain or Mexico, I would be able to communicate there [G2-F-AK)

Given that the idea of Judeo-Spanish as a 'mixed language' was a common expression offered by participants, I asked another if she thought that this is what gave it its distinct flavor. Her response was similar: the Judeo-Spanish of today is not 'real Ladino':

No, no no. But the mixing of languages is not Ladino. Ladino is the old Jewish, the old Spanish language [G3-F-DK]

Rather, she added, the Judeo-Spanish spoken today is a result of a variety of factors such as contact with Greek (and other Balkan languages) and the attrition of Judeo-Spanish among the Sephardim. G3-F-DK's reference to the language as being a "Jewish language" reflects another corroborated finding (Harris 1979: 147) which equates Judeo-Spanish as a Jewish language "having Jewish associations and symbols" or "a Jewish language based on Spanish."

The general sentiment among participants is that the language of today is “mixed”, and in many ways not as legitimate as other languages. Factors that seem to propagate this view are that the language is restricted to home use or during only the most intimate of occasions with extended relatives and other Jewish friends, and it’s a language acquired without formal study. Although not articulated by participants, the frequent comparison of Judeo-Spanish with other national languages (Greek, English, Spanish, French, Turkish...) suggests that the lack of official recognition of Judeo-Spanish as a national language further diffuses the notion among its own speakers that Judeo-Spanish is not a “real” language. As for the “mixed” language labeling among participants, it should not come as a surprise that Judeo-Spanish in the contemporary context of Thessaloniki is classified as such by its own speakers. As Milroy states, when mixed codes are stigmatized, it is probably “as a consequence of underlying ideologies of linguistic purity” (1987: 186).

#### **4.3 Expressions concerning the shift of Judeo-Spanish**

To better understand the participants’ view on language shift, I assembled the responses from the following interview questions:

- Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?
- Do you feel saddened by the knowledge that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?
- Have you ever felt embarrassed or uncomfortable speaking Judeo-Spanish in public?

### 4.3.1 Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?

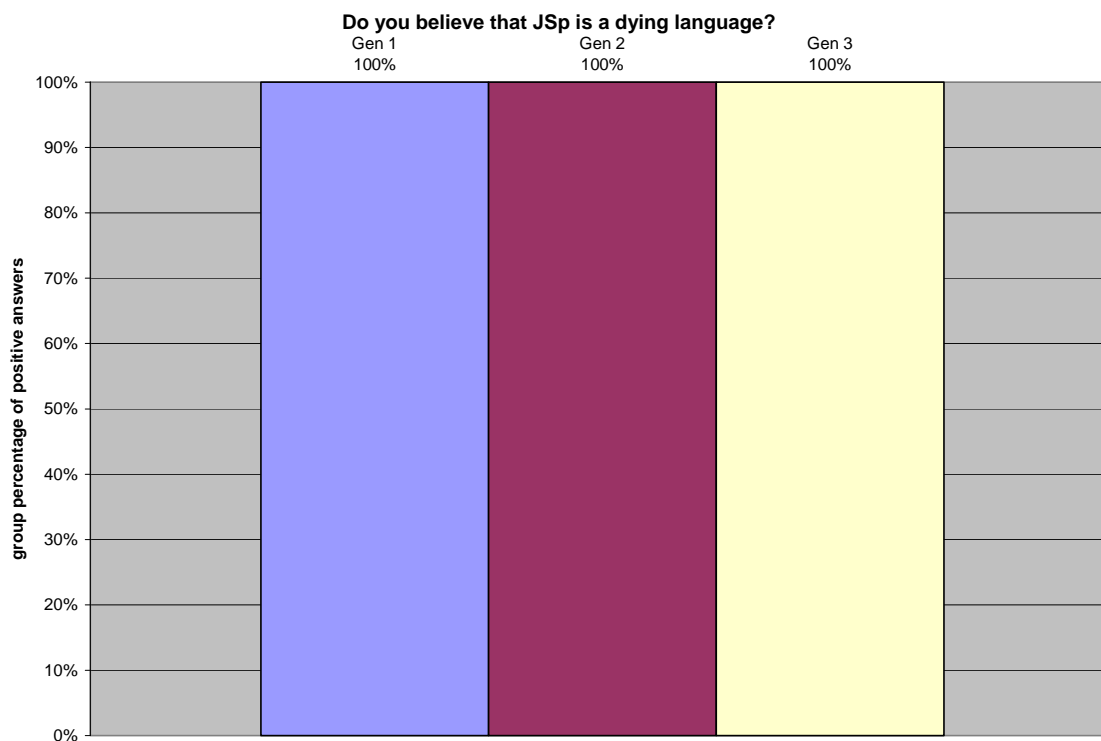


Figure 4-4: Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?

A cross generational comparison

All 33 responded affirmatively to the above question. The majority of these responses are further qualified with statements expressing sadness and regret that the language is being spoken by fewer and fewer people. Participant G3-F-DK below notes a generational decline in the ability to speak the language, and a conscious decision by even those speakers who *can* speak the language not to due to the fact that language shift has already occurred among the young :

I think so. There is no one to speak the language. I mean, there are people who *can* speak the language, but I don't think that they do. I think that Greek is their language. Maybe the generation of our parents and grandparents, and their parents, maybe these people always spoke Ladino.

I think that they did, but not now. You know, many of these people have died now [G3-F-DK].

The majority of the responses were colored by expressions of regret and sadness, as in the following:

Malorosamente [from Fr. ‘malheureusement’], si [G1-F-NB].  
Unfortunately, yes.

Si, desgrasiadamente [G1-F-JK]. Yes, unfortunately.

Several participants responded that this was something they did not want to admit to or believe, even though they recognized that it was indeed true:

No me plaze dirlo, pero si [G2-F-EP]. It doesn’t please me to say so, but yes.

No lo kiero kreer [G2-F-VB]. I don’t want to believe it.

As Harris (1979, 1994) found in her research, a stated desire to preserve the language and the sadness felt at its impending loss do not always translate into efforts to keep the language alive. However, one participant countered this question with optimism when he stated that although he believed the language was dying, efforts were being made across the community to preserve the language. This particular participant’s optimism is equated to the actual efforts he personally makes toward language preservation at the community level: along with three other community members, he teaches Judeo-Spanish weekly at the Jewish Community Center, he is an active member of the Ladino Society, and is involved with other Sephardic/Judeo-Spanish related affairs, both in Thessaloniki and abroad. His response signals optimism for the future of the language:

Si, ma se azen muchos esforsos para ke no muera, no se olvide. [G2-M-AK]. Yes, but there are many efforts being made so that it doesn’t die, so that it’s not forgotten.



However, not unlike other participants, efforts such as these are halted in that transmission of the language to his own child is not taking place. We are reminded by Fishman (1996) of the importance of parents to understand the nature of mother tongue acquisition, use, and transmission and how it differs from language learning in the school arena if transmission is to be successful. That's not to imply that institutional support is not important. Institutional support, such as language classes, is an important agency for particular aspects of language use, like literacy, versatility, or formality (87). Ultimately though, schools are not agencies of intergenerational language transmission; families are.

#### 4.3.2 Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?

Table 4-4: Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language? (n=33; G1-G3)

88% (29)	3% (1)	3% (1)	6% (2)	0%
Yes	No	Y/N	Indifferent	?

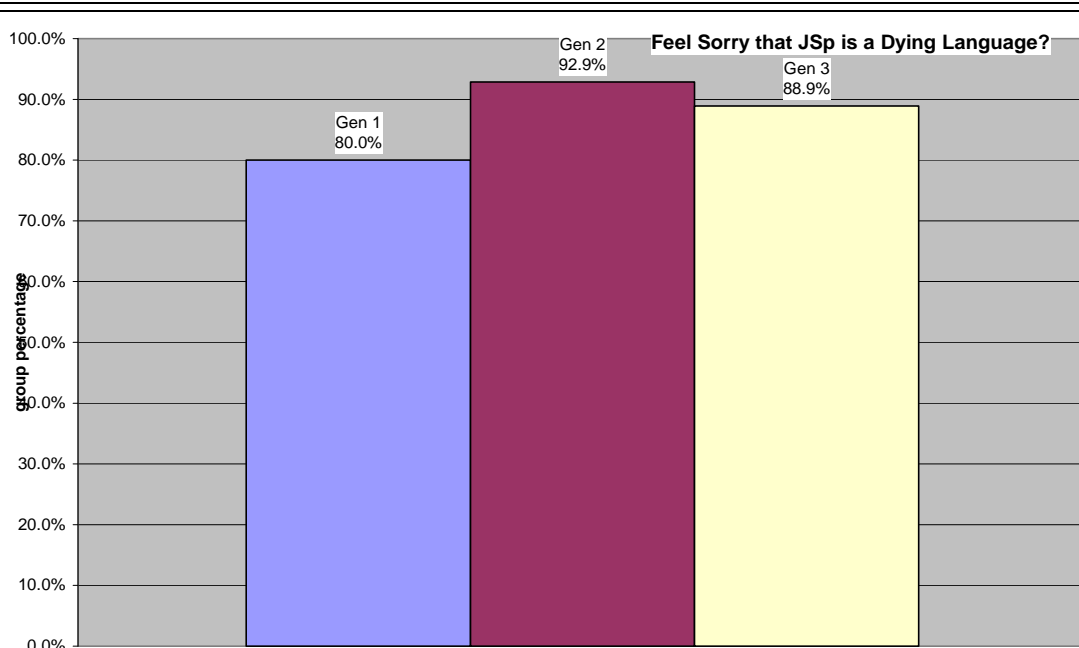


Figure 4-5: Does it sadden you that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language?

A cross generational comparison

As to be expected in conditions of language shift, there are many reported feelings of sadness and regret regarding the loss of a heritage language. Across the three generational groups, 89% of the 33 participants (Table 4-4) reported feeling saddened by the knowledge that the language was in a shifting state, as evidenced by the two following expressions:

Esto me da mucha tristesa [G1-F-NB]. This gives me much sadness.

Muncho, Muncho [G2-F-SG]. Very much, very much.

One participant articulated that the loss of the language is not merely a loss of a linguistic code, but rather a potential loss of paternity, patrimony and phenomonology. For participant G2-F-VB, the language represents her relatives she was never to know since they all had perished in the Holocaust. The language is also a symbol of a past way of life

that she was unable to experience because “Jewish Salonik” simply no longer existed after WWII. For this participant, the language represents family, but also tradition and historicity. While many of these elements exist only in memory, Judeo-Spanish serves to keep that memory alive. However, for this participant, the loss of the language could threaten even those memories:

Sí, spero ke no [se muera] y siguro sto triste. La lingua dzudea espanyola es los parientes ke no konosimos, es lo pasada ke no konosimos, es la istoria ke no konosimos y es muy importante para mozotros los saloniklis [G2-F-VB]. Yes, I hope [that it doesn't die], and it's certain that I am sad. The Judeo-Spanish language represents the relatives we never met, the past we were never to know, the history that we never knew, and it's very important for us, the Salonikans.

Another G2 participant who claimed to have very little receptive ability and almost no productive ability in Judeo-Spanish also reported deep sadness by its loss. When I prompted him to explain why - because until then, this participant left the impression that Judeo-Spanish played a near non-existent pragmatic or affective role in his life- he responded that it was the language of the past, and more specifically of *his* past, and when a language dies, “you lose something with it” [G2-M-IM). When he was coaxed to make more explicit what this ‘something’ was that was lost, he was unable to verbalize specific elements, and so he responded in more general but no less emphatic terms: there are some elements of one’s culture accompany that language, but when the language is gone, so is the culture and this saddened him. Another participant faced the fact with realism and a hint of resignation:

Si, ama es una realita agora en Salonik. Ninguno favla agora la lingua [G1-F-RN]. Yes, but it's a reality now in Salonik. Nobody speaks the language now.

As noted in the previous section, the sadness and regret felt by another participant compels him to become personally involved in community efforts to sustain the language

by holding Judeo-Spanish language classes for interested members, being an active member of Ladino Society, and taking part in other organized events given by the community. He may be considered a minority in that his feelings toward the language and its shift mobilize him to do something about it:

Si, [me da]mucha pena i es por esto ke sto dando lisiones de djudeo-espanyol a los ke kieren amberzarsen [G2-M-AK]. Yes, [it gives me] much sadness, and it's because of this that I'm giving Judeo-Spanish language classes to those who want to learn it.

Only two G1 participants reported feeling 'indifferent' toward the loss of the language:

I feel indifferent; perhaps I feel sad because it's a nostalgic language for me, but this is all. Apart from this, it's not important [G1-F-EA].

The only two G1 participants to report not feeling saddened by the loss of Judeo-Spanish were the husband G1-M-AA and his wife, G1-F-EA. I attribute the lack of a stated sadness expressed these two participants to both of their dual Jewish ethnicity of which Sephardic background was only half. Being that both fathers were Salonikan Sephardim who had learned German and both mothers were German-speaking Ashkenazim, German (and not Judeo-Spanish) became the language of the married couple and the language used with their children. I contend, thus, that since these two participants rarely, if ever, observed their parents speaking the language to each other or to the children, they are less likely to associate the language with them. I further contend that the 'indifference' felt by the husband in particular toward Judeo-Spanish is also a consequence of attempting to neutralize the differences between his two Jewish backgrounds. Since another common expression from this participant came in the form of references to Zionism and to Israel, it was not surprising that he expressed positive attitudes toward Hebrew throughout the interview, the language endorsed by Zionist discourse and the language which serves to bridge the gap between his Sephardic and his Ashkenazic heritages. In spite of the

expressions of nonchalance toward Judeo-Spanish shared by G1-M-AA and G1-F-EA (more so by the husband than by the wife), they demonstrated Jewish ethnicity in the display of Jewish art and objects around the house, they were two of the few to claim being religious in a highly secularized community, they articulated at various points during the interview that they felt pride for Israel and Hebrew (even though they don't speak it), and for the fact that one of their children had immigrated to Israel and was raising Israeli children. While pride was also expressed for Salonikan Jewry and history, there seemed to be little expressed attachment to the Judeo-Spanish aspect of that history.

From the G2 group, the only participant who responded not feeling saddened by the prospect of the language's shift seemed to view the process as a natural one. Even though she had reported having a paternal grandmother with whom she spoke and heard Judeo-Spanish while growing up, the loss of the language did not sadden her as it seemed to be an inevitable consequence and something that is relegated to a past that she never knew.

A cross-generational comparison shown in Figure 4-9 demonstrates that the difference between the three groups is inconsequential. Because of reduced language ability and diminished exposure and accessibility to Judeo-Spanish, it might be plausible to surmise that younger participants, particularly those in the G3 group, would respond feeling less saddened by the language's shift, but this apparently is not the case.

The loss of the language is felt by the majority of participants in each generational group. However, what is relevant from the above results is that while the language itself was not transmitted to G3 participants, sentiments of sadness regarding the loss of the language certainly were.

### 4.3.3 Have you ever been embarrassed and/or uncomfortable to speak Judeo-Spanish in public?

Table 4-5: Have you ever felt embarrassed and/or uncomfortable to speak Judeo-Spanish in public?

Felt embarrassed to speak JSp in Thess? Generations 1-3 (N=33)	6% (2) Yes	91% (30) No	0% (0) Y/N	3% (1) Ind.	0% (0) ?
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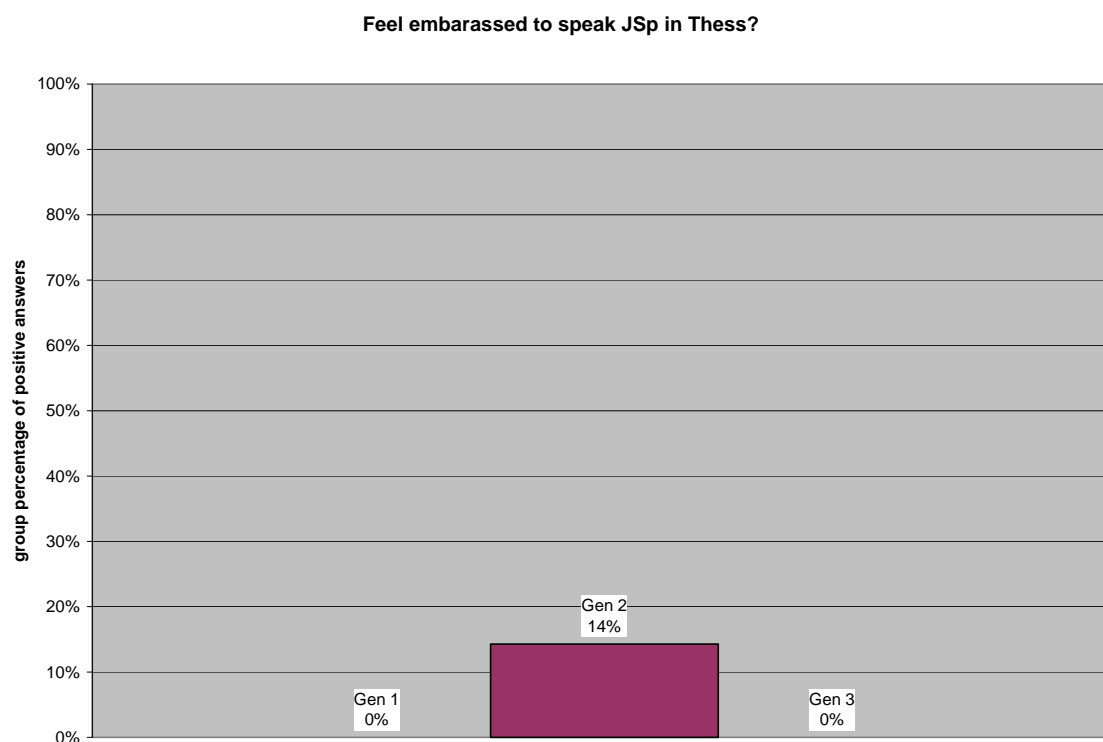


Figure 4-6: Have you ever felt embarrassed to speak Judeo-Spanish in public?

A cross generational comparison

Ninety-one percent of all G1-G3 participants reported never having felt ‘embarrassed’ or ‘uncomfortable’ to speak or to be spoken to in Judeo-Spanish during child- or adulthood. For those participants who claimed no knowledge of Judeo-Spanish, the question was posed as a hypothetical. Responses to this question came out

emphatically, sometimes even defiantly, such as the one given by G1-F-NB “Nunka!” [‘Never!’].

Of the 33 G1-G3 participants, two participants from G2 reported having felt embarrassed or uncomfortable to speak or to be spoken to in Judeo-Spanish. However, in both cases, it was only during childhood years that such embarrassment or discomfort was felt. One participant expressed that during childhood years, one was easily “preyed upon” by peers who would notice even the most subtle differences from “the norm” (i.e. Greek-speaking Orthodox Christian). At certain points in his childhood, this G2 participant also reported feeling embarrassed to be Jewish. Only one participant from the G3 group responded as being ‘indifferent’ but didn’t offer to expand on this.

By far the majority of participants responded very emphatically that they had never felt embarrassment or discomfort when speaking the language (or being spoken to) in public. A G3 participant reported not having felt embarrassed or uncomfortable to use Judeo-Spanish or to have it used with her because it was only used in a Jewish environment where non Jews were few in number or absent:

No, I didn’t [feel embarrassed] because I went to an elementary school with a lot of Jewish classmates<sup>42</sup>, and I went to Anatolia, an American college, that was more modernized, more open. I never felt any anti-Semitism until two years ago, when we had all the problems with the Palestinians [G3-F-DK].

As a response to the question, participant G2-M-AK stated that ‘Una lingua es un tesoro de kultura umana’ [‘Language is a treasure of human culture’]. For him, the language is

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<sup>42</sup> Lewkowicz (2000: 268) reports that after WWII Jewish children were sent exclusively to two different private primary schools in Thessaloniki. Arrangements were made with these schools for the children to receive additional instruction in Jewish religion and history and in Hebrew by teachers contracted by the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki. Several of my own participants remarked on the high percentage of Jewish classmates that they had while in primary school and how the feeling of being on equal grounds with Christian Greek classmates contrasted so starkly with life outside the classroom.

representative of Sephardic culture, an integral part of his cultural patrimony. He claimed to feel no embarrassment or discomfort even after having lived in a context that tended to minimize or, in some cases, deny the existence of non Greek Orthodox/Greek-speaking entities. For G2-F-VB, the use of Judeo-Spanish is a source of great pride and differentiation from the majority around her “No, al contrario” [‘No, quite the contrary’]. Similarly, another G2 participant derives pleasure in ‘showing off’ the language to her ‘Greek’ friends (Christian Greeks) who often encourage her to speak ‘Evráiká’ [Gr. “Hebrew”], the language that they erroneously believe to be Hebrew and not Judeo-Spanish:

No. Me plaze mucho. Y mis amigas, las gregas, me dizen ‘favla, favla’, me dizen. En Grecia tenemos el mal ke les parese ke es el ebreo ke stamos favlando. Ma los ke saven linguas, les plazen mucho. Y nunca tuvi problemas. Y mozotros deshimos cincuenta anyos pasar en deshndolos kreer.... [ke es ebreo lo ke avlamos y no el djudeo-espanyol] [G2-F-SG]. No. It makes me very happy. And my friends, the Greeks, tell me “talk, talk [in Judeo-Spanish]”. In Greece, we have the bad habit in that Greeks think that it is Hebrew that we are speaking. But, those who know languages find the language pleasing. And I never had any problems. And we have let fifty years go by allowing them [the Greeks] to believe...[that it is Hebrew we speak and not Judeo-Spanish].

Her expressed frustration and criticism of her own group [the Jews of Thessaloniki] for having permitted non Jewish Greeks this ignorance for so many years speaks to the extent to which she feels that this may have alleviated whatever popular anti-Semitism that exists in the city: Hebrew-speaking Jews are more closely aligned with Israel, a country which has received much criticism for its domestic policies concerning the Palestinians. The comment of the participant suggests that if Christian Greeks knew that the language was not Hebrew but rather a Western European language of Latin origin, any anti-Semitic sentiment could be dissuaded since Judeo-Spanish (the language of Thessaloniki’s Jews) would be one less association or perceived sign of alignment with Israel.



The overwhelming negative response to this question (that participants had never felt embarrassment to speak the language in public) speaks to the fact that Judeo-Spanish is not a socially stigmatized language from the community members' perspective. While there are mixed views on the actual linguistic structure of the language, it nonetheless enjoys positive attitudes. Based on the narratives solicited in this section, there is no indication that Judeo-Spanish is an externally stigmatized among non-Jewish Thessalonikans, mainly due to the fact that most Thessalonikans outside of the Jewish community are not aware of the community's presence and its associated language.

#### **4.4 Expressions of Judeo-Spanish Transmission**

The favorable attitudes toward Judeo-Spanish as expressed by participants demonstrate that the language holds a positive position among participants in this sample. However, the question remains whether positive sentiment translates into a desire to transmit the language to the next generation and to contribute to language preservation efforts.

In many cases, the desire to transmit a language depends on whether it is believed to serve a function for its users. Participant responses presented below help to identify the value that these participants place on Judeo-Spanish. The responses gathered from the following questionnaire and interview questions were reviewed to gain insight on participant views regarding language transmission and the future of the language:

- Do you want your child to speak Judeo-Spanish?
- Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?
- Do you think Judeo-Spanish has a function in today's Thessaloniki?

- Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?
- Would you be willing to personally contribute to language preservation efforts?
- Are you optimistic about the future of the Judeo-Spanish language in Thessaloniki?

#### **4.4.1 Do you want your child to speak Judeo-Spanish?**

The desire for one's children to speak a shifting language associated with paternity and patrimony does not always translate into actual transmission, especially when the constraints for language transmission are beyond the control of the community. According to Fishman (1991a), successful language transmission begins at home with the caregivers. Institutional support comes as a great help, but it cannot replace the language learning that must occur in the intimacies of the home. In the case of the Sephardim of Thessaloniki, language transmission of Judeo-Spanish is complicated by the demographic reality that most speakers (and future transmitters of the language) were lost during WWII, although language shift began earlier and in response to other societal conditions (see Chapter 1). G3 participants who speak the language today credit having a grandmother or grandfather to teach it to them, but for many of community members belonging to the G2 and G3 age groups, a marked absence of grandparents and other extended family members was the norm, and language transmission was to become a challenge. Additionally constraining language transmission was the post WWII fear of being identified as a Jew based on the language one spoke. One G2 participant recalls her own mother's recollections from 1944 when the participant's grandfather had advised his wife to remain silent in public for fear that her Judeo-Spanish and her broken and heavily accented Greek would give her away as a Jew as the Nazis would often identify a

Jew based on the way he/she spoke Greek. At that point in time, the participant's grandfather (a native Judeo-Spanish speaker himself) instructed the family that "we had better speak Greek from now on; after all, we are in Greece" [G2-F-AK]. The fear to transmit a language that might later prove dangerous to their children is manifested in actual linguistic practice as can be seen in the Appendix.

In spite of the fears held by many of the survivors to speak the language after the war, many did (if only in the most intimate settings) and the language was transmitted to another generation, albeit to varying degrees. The presence of Judeo-Spanish speaking grandmothers and grandfathers as being the source of Judeo-Spanish was a re-occurring theme among my participants. One mother from G1 answered the question "Do you want your kids to speak Judeo-Spanish" affirmatively and added that her children *did* speak it because they were raised by their grandfather and grandmother:

Si, ya favlan todos los dos porke mi fiza ya tiene, es grande, tiene 58 anyos y mi fizo tiene 48 anyos y tuvieron l'okasion d'ambezar en espanyol porke vivieron kon el nono y la nona [G1-F-NB]. Yes, both children speak [Judeo-Spanish] because my daughter is, is older, she's 58 years old and my son is 48 and they had the chance to learn Espanyol because they lived with their grandfather and grandmother.

Another participant from G2 recognized the need for family involvement when when transmitting a mother language:

We are trying as a family to help them understand the language [G2-M-SE].

This participant repeatedly stated that he, his wife, and his mother had made a conscientious effort to teach their now-grown children the language, realizing that the most successful type of language transmission is that which takes place in the home. The

participant stated very proudly that while his children might not be able to speak with great fluency, they at least understood all that was ever said in Judeo-Spanish.

Participant G2-F-VB, having lost her own grandparents during the war, gives credit to her monolingual Judeo-Spanish speaking mother-in-law with whom she lived during the first two decades of her marriage for teaching the language to both her and her first-born child. The participant remarks, however, that her second child did not acquire the language to the same degree as the first child simply because the grandmother had passed away earlier in the child's life. Another participant, G1-F-MA, reported that while her own grown daughter possessed listening skills thanks to access to a Judeo-Spanish speaking grandmother, the transmission came to a halt here:

Si, ama mi nieta no abla del todo. Tiene tredge anyos [G1-F-MA].  
Yes, but my granddaughter does not speak at all. She is 13 years old.

G2-F-TK who had self-reported having very limited speaking ability in the language stated very emphatically that she would like for her own children to speak the language. This was a common finding among participants in my sample: participants, regardless of whether or not they were self-reported speakers of the language, expressed a desire for their children to speak the language.

Participant G1-F-VB, who had previously expressed strong emotional ties to the language, stated that she supports Judeo-Spanish language transmission to her own children for its pragmatic value. This participant regards having knowledge of Judeo-Spanish as an advantage in that it opens up potential communication with other speakers of Judeo-Spanish and Spanish. For this participant, Judeo-Spanish, because of its similarity to Spanish, is an international language:

Si, prima de todo porke es una lingua internasional. Pueden darse de entender en todo el mundo. Es una *xrissi* [Grk. 'necessity'], komo se

dise... una lingua ke se les faze de menester [G2-F-VB]. Yes, firstly because it's an international language. They can understand and be understood all over the world. It's a '*xrisi*' [Grk. 'necessity'], how do you say... a language that is necessary to know.

All 33 participants in this sample responded that they would like their children to speak Judeo-Spanish regardless of their own speaking ability in the language. I submit that this desire is reinforced by two forces, one affective and the other pragmatic. Affectively, participants have an emotional stake in the transmission of a language that they regard to be symbolic of Thessaloniki's Jewry, both past and present, and as it will be seen, the language is closely associated to family members who had perished in the Holocaust. Along pragmatic lines, participants believe the ability to speak Judeo-Spanish, or any other language for that matter, will afford their children additional academic, professional and travel opportunities. Such pragmatic appeals for language transmission will also become more evident in the sections to come.

#### 4.4.2 Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-6: Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?

Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish? Generations 1-3 (N=33)	67% (22) Yes	30% (10) No	3% (1) Y/N	0% Ind.	0% ?
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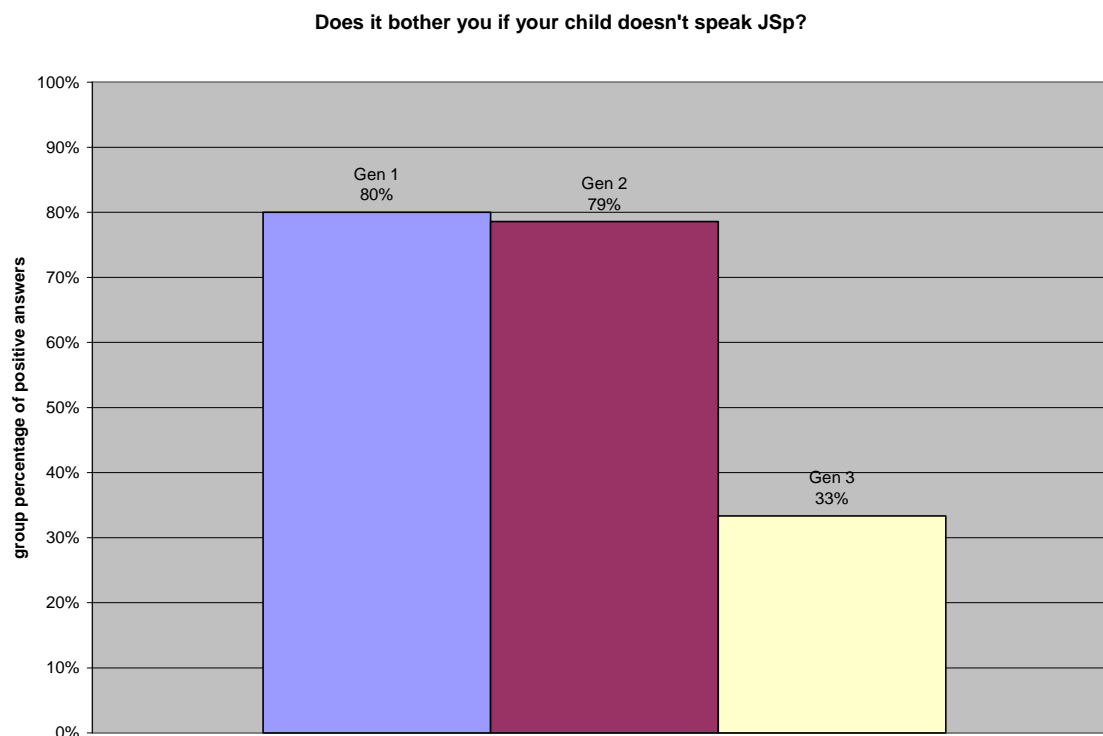


Figure 4-7: Does it bother you if your child is unable to speak Judeo-Spanish?  
A cross generational comparison

Taken as a whole (Table 4-6), the majority of G1-G3 participants (67%) responded that they would be bothered if their children did not speak Judeo-Spanish. Furthermore, for one participant the fact that her children speak the language was a great source of pride:

En esto te puedo responder ke so muy orguyosa porke mi fijo, ke es mas dzovene, y mi fijo ke es mas grande favlan en espanyol i kontinuan de seguir las kostumbres ke teniamos todos [G1-F-NB]. With regard to this I can say that I am very proud because my son, who is the youngest, and my [other] son, who is the oldest, speak Espanyol and continue to follow the customs that we all had.

For NB, speaking the language enables her children to preserve the same cultural traditions that were practiced by their ancestors before them. Her comment implies that speaking the language and following traditions go hand-in-hand.

A cross generational comparison of the numerical results shown in Figure 4-7 reveals that for G1 and G2 the majority of participants would be bothered if their children did not speak Judeo-Spanish. From G1, only two participants responded that they would not feel bothered if their children did not speak Judeo-Spanish. Interestingly, these two participants from G1 were the only ones to have been raised in a mixed marriage where their fathers were Thessalonikan Sephardim and their mothers German/Czech/Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim. These two also reported not speaking Judeo-Spanish with their own fathers even though Judeo-Spanish was considered the first language of both fathers. Also, both fathers employed German and Greek with their wives and Greek with their own children. What's more, these two participants had expressed a clear preference for Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish as a Jewish language. When I asked one of these participants why he would not be bothered if his children did not speak Judeo-Spanish, he responded that it was not realistic "because it is a dead language" (G1-M-AA). As I have earlier suggested, sentimental distance vis-à-vis Judeo-Spanish expressed by these two participants relates partly to their dual ethnicity (half Ashkenazic, half Sephardic) and to the fact that Judeo-Spanish was not a home language, or one that has parental association. In addition, the sentimental distance felt by these two participants reflects, what I contend, an attempt to reject any overly regional aspect of Judaism in favor of more universal forms that would unify their differing Jewish backgrounds.

From G2, only 3 participants responded that they would not be bothered if their children did not speak Judeo-Spanish:

Nai, entaksi. Min ta parakanoume kiolas. Tha ithela omos [G2-F-TK].  
Yes, ok. But let's not overdo it now. I would have liked it though.

Although participant G2-F-TK responded affirmatively, she retracted her response to suggest that while language transmission to her children would be ideal, it is certainly not a *sine qua non*. As if to explain her contradictory response to the question, she added that she could hardly expect her children to speak Judeo-Spanish when she herself had such limited ability to speak it. This sentiment was also expressed by another G2 mother:

Me siento mal por *mi* porke no les favli en dzudeo-espanyol [G2-F-VB].  
I feel bad because I did not speak to them in Judeo-Spanish.

Reviewing the cross-generational results as seen in Figure 4-7, a decline appears in G3 where only 33% of participants from this group responded that they would be bothered if their children did not speak Judeo-Spanish compared to the 80% and 79% of groups G1 and G2. The majority of G3 stated that they would not be bothered, and one participant floundered between answering 'yes' and 'no': her 'yes' response stemming from her desire to have this aspect of their heritage passed onto them and her 'no' from the realization that it's not a pragmatic language in Thessalonikan society today. While there is no perceived pragmatic value to Judeo-Spanish within Thessaloniki and Greece, another G3 participant considered how her son could benefit from knowledge of the language outside of Greece, and in particular in Spanish-speaking countries and even in the U.S. In spite of this, her initial response was that she was not bothered that her son did not speak Judeo-Spanish:

It doesn't bother me. I would like my son to learn Spanish because after English, it is very useful [G3-F-DK].



It should be noted that an interesting trend surfaces for most participants who responded ‘no’ to the question ‘Would you be bothered if your child did not/does not speak Judeo-Spanish?’ in that most qualified their negative responses by articulating that while they would not be bothered if their child did not speak the language, they would however like them to speak it, as stated by one G3 participant: “Why not?!” [G3-F-DK]. As discussed in section 5.4.1, the reasons for this vary from the affective to the pragmatic. Another noteworthy result is derived from a generational comparison of the results to the question, as seen in Figure 4-7. While the majority of G1 and G2 participants (80% and 79% respectively) responded feeling ‘bothered’ if their child did not speak Judeo-Spanish, only 33% of G3 participants replied in the same way. It would be tempting to account for this decline from G1/G2 to G3 by suggesting that fewer G3 participants are ‘bothered’ if the language is not transmitted to their children because they are more ‘emotionally-distanced’ from the language. However, previous results in section 5.3 and in 5.4 show that an emotional link to Judeo-Spanish is indeed present, even among those who claim no language ability in the language. A more suitable account for this decline from G1/G2 to G3 points to the idea that Judeo-Spanish in its communicative capacity is not, and can not be a requisite or an absolute for sustaining a sense of Jewishness among the young of Thessaloniki, most of whom have no linguistic ability in Judeo-Spanish. Rather, the ‘idea’ of Judeo-Spanish in its symbolic capacity might suffice.

#### 4.4.3 Do you think Judeo-Spanish has any function in today's Thessaloniki?

The functional value placed upon a heritage language often determines whether or not the language will be transmitted. According to Dorian, language loyalty remains for as long the social and economic realities are favorable to it, but when greater social and economic gain is obtained via another language, language shift occurs (1982:47). In the case of Judeo-Spanish in Thessaloniki, social and economic forces at work create a context in which Greek is the mandatory language of instruction in primary schools, is the only officially recognized language of the state, and is the only language employed in economic, political, and social affairs, both public and private. Because I had not clarified whether I meant pragmatic or affective function, it is difficult to discern what kind of function the participant had in mind when responding to this question in most cases. In other cases, however, expressions indicating the specific function of the language were garnered, and these are included in the section below.

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Table 4-7: Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in today's Thessaloniki?

Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in today's Thessaloniki?	30% (10)	64% (21)	6% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind	?

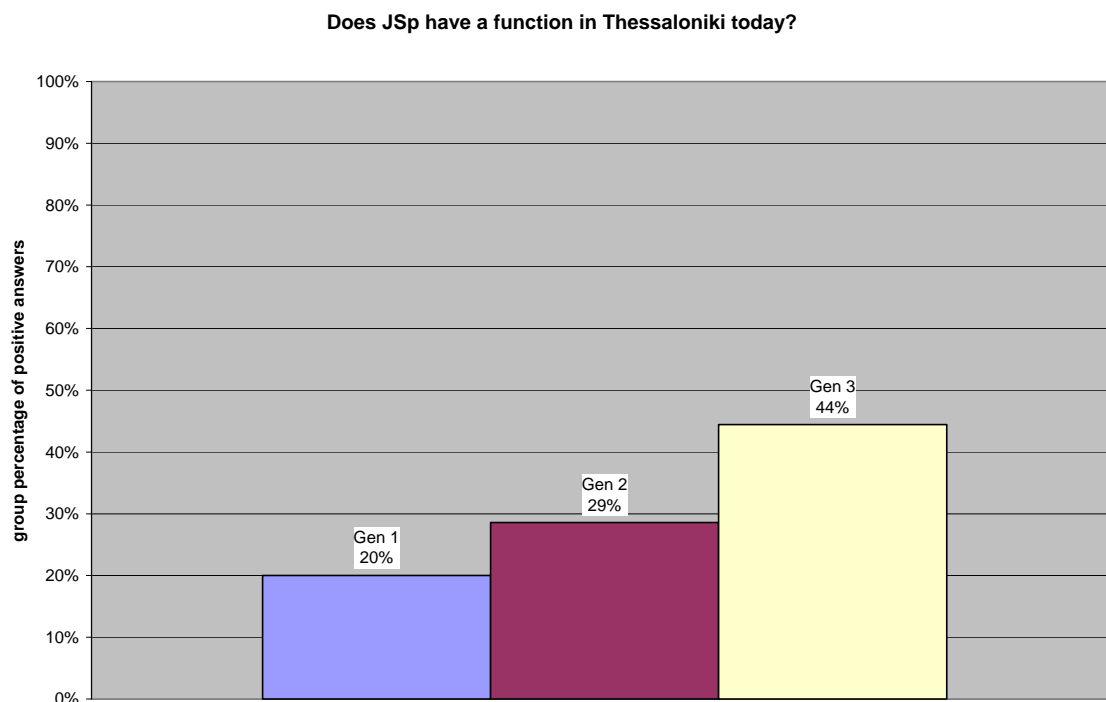


Figure 4-8: Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in Thessaloniki today?

Taking the sample as a whole in Table 4-7, the majority of participants (21/33) responded that Judeo-Spanish has no function in today's Thessaloniki, two participants floundered between yes and no, and 10 participants responded that Judeo-Spanish does indeed have a function in the city today. Of the 10 participants who responded 'yes' to this question, 8 of them regarded its function to be purely affective as relating to family, ancestry and Sephardic cultural traditions. This sentiment is seen in the some of the statements made below:

Naturalmente [no tiene funcion] kuando la lingua no la empleamos mas para kosas sofisticadas, ma seria bueno para konservar la lingua i de la favlar. Siempre es bueno de konservar uzos, i kostumbre i la lingua [G1-F-NB]. Naturally [it does not have a function] when we no longer use it [the language] to refer to sophisticated things, but it would be good to

conserve the language and to speak it. It's always good to conserve habits and the custom and the language.

Si, es la lingua de la famia [G1-M-IK]. Yes, it's the language of the family.

It just keeps the old aware that their ancestors spoke the language [G2-M-SE].

Si ya tiene-es parte de la istoria de la sivda [G2-M-AK]. Yes, it still has a function- it is part of the history of the city.

Si, kreo ke nuestro espanyol ofre una koza a Salonik [G2-F-SG]. Yes, I believe that our Espanyol offers something to Salonik.

Nai, prosferon se estimatika [Grk] [G2-F-GB]. Yes, it is useful in the sentimental/emotional sense.

Upon hearing this question, the next participant (from G3) asks the interviewer, “to diafano einai to ‘oxi’ [Grk. ‘Is the usual response “no”?], which is very suggestive in and of itself in that it reveals her expectations of how fellow community members might respond, which in turn reflects and reinforces community views vis-à-vis the language. After some coaxing by the interviewer to answer independently, she responds with a ‘yes’ and adds:

Nai, yiati einai ena meros tis paradosis mas kai einai kati pou mas xaraketerizi [Grk.] [G3-F-IN]. Yes, because it's a part of our culture and it's something that characterizes us.

For her, in addition to the importance of the language as a reflection and a reminder of Jewish heritage and of forebearers, it serves a differentiating function: one that sets boundaries between Jews and non-Jews in Thessaloniki.

Two of the ten participants who believe Judeo-Spanish to have a function in Thessaloniki today assign a pragmatic value to it. Specifically, having knowledge of Judeo-Spanish allows access to Sephardic communities around the world and to all other Spanish speaking peoples, Sephardic and non-Sephardic alike. With the former, the

instrumental function of the language as a lingua franca with Sephardim in other communities also shifts to becoming an affective function in that it creates solidarity and a sense of alignment with other Spanish-speaking Jews:

No, no es necesario de saber el djudeo-espanyol. Ma kuando veo personas venir de otros payesez, djidios, ke no so sus linguas, si son de Olanda, de America no se de onde mas, y yo puedo favlar kon eyos komo djidio kon djidio, ayi veo i entiendo ke kada importante es, komo djidia saver el djudeo-espanyol, es una lingua ke se favla en el mundo entero de los sefaradis, i esto para mi es muy importante. Me siento ke es una persona de mi famiya, una persona ajena, de mi famiya [G2-F-VB]. No, it's not necessary to know Judeo-Spanish. But when I see people come from other countries, Jews, and I don't know their languages, whether they are from Holland, from America or from wherever else, and I can talk to them Jew-to-Jew, that's when I see and understand how important it is as a Jew to know Judeo-Spanish. It's a language that is spoken throughout all the Sephardic world, and this for me is very important. I feel that [when speaking with another Jew in Judeo-Spanish] this is a person from my family, a distant person from my family.

Upon a cross-generational comparison of the numerical results to the question 'Does Judeo-Spanish have a function in Thessaloniki today?' an interesting result emerges, as seen in Figure 4-8. In spite of G1's greater language ability over G3 participants, they view the language as having less functional value. A greater proportion of younger participants regard the language as being 'functional', albeit mostly in affective terms. I attribute this result to a sense of nostalgia for that which one does not possess or for that from which one is/was forcibly distanced. G3 participants, having no tangible grip on the language, assign a sentimental value to Judeo-Spanish. The language for these participants is present in its abstract sense, yet it is beyond reach in its concrete and pragmatic sense.

A further finding from G2 and G3 responses supports the contention that language ability does not predict the perceived value its speakers will assign to the language. G2 and G3 participants who responded that Judeo-Spanish does indeed have a function in

today's Thessaloniki ranged from having varying degrees of productive ability (as self-reported), to mere passive knowledge or no knowledge of the language. Conversely, those G2 and G3 participants who responded that Judeo-Spanish has no function in today's Thessaloniki are equally divergent in self-reported or demonstrated language ability.

#### 4.4.4 Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-8: Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?

Community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?	91%	0%	0%	9%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	(30)	(0)	(0)	(3)	(0)
	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

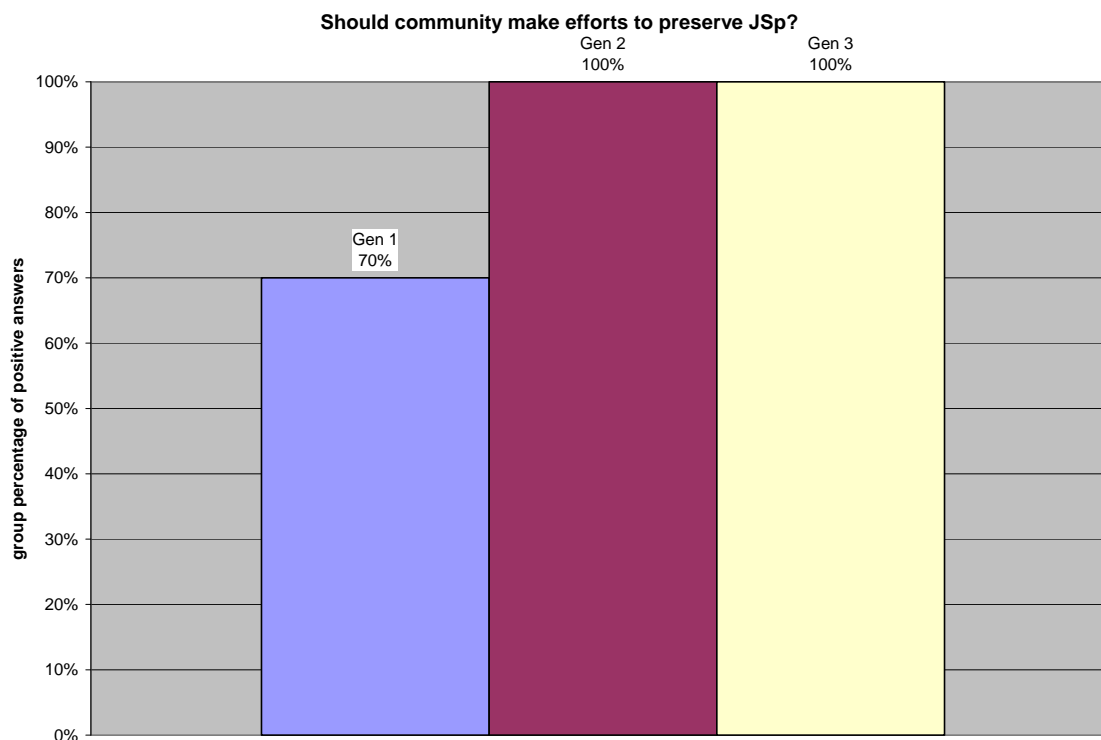


Figure 4-9: Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?

The question ‘Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish?’ generated the following responses. Taking the sample as a whole (Table 4-8), 30 of 33 participants stated that measures should be taken by the community to preserve the language for as long as possible. From the entire sample, only three participants responded that they were ‘indifferent’ to this issue. All three ‘indifferent’ responses came from G1. Their expressions of indifference were the following:

As long as we are in Greece, we should be Greek speakers [G1-F-EA]

It’s pointless. The language will never come back, it’s already near death. And why should we? We speak Greek [G1-M-AA]

Indiferente... porke la lingua se sta muriendo agora [G1-F-RN].  
Indifferent... because the language is dying now.

These three above responses relate a sense of resignation and futility in trying to maintain a shifting language. Moreover, the first two responses indicate that maintaining the language would be unpatriotic to Greece. Such a testament reflects the intended effect of assimilatory policies that aimed to make speakers feel guilty or unpatriotic for speaking a non-Greek heritage language, and said policies would have been more aggressively enforced during the time that these participants were children and young adults (during the first several decades of the new Greek nation state) and would have decreased in intensity as the ‘language problem’ was no longer such an issue<sup>43</sup>. This finding corroborates with Harris (1979, 1994), Malinowski (1982) and Mendes-Chumaceiro (1982) where their participants also expressed learning and using Turkish in Turkey and Hebrew in Israel as an expression of national duty and patriotism.

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<sup>43</sup> The high numbers of 3<sup>rd</sup> world laborers settling in Greece during the last two decades presents itself as another challenge for the state to linguistically assimilate its newest non-Greek speaking residents in a way that abides by EU regulations for the protection of minority rights.

It should be again noted that two of these G1 participants (G1-M-AA and G1-F-EA) who responded ‘no’ to the question “Do you think the community should make efforts to preserve the language?” are from mixed Jewish backgrounds (Thessalonikan-born Sephardic fathers and German and Czech-born Ashkenazic mothers) whose parents used German with each other and Greek/German with their children. It is my feeling that this particular couple, while being very proud to be Jewish and to retain Jewish cultural and religious traditions, displays, when compared to others, a weakened sense of language loyalty toward Judeo-Spanish and a diminished emotional connection to the language than others due to several factors, two of which are mixed parentage and the fact that neither participant employed Judeo-Spanish with parents. However, this contention finds contradiction in two other participants from G3 who also come from mixed parenthood and grew up in homes where the language was not spoken yet feel that the community *should* make an effort to preserve Judeo-Spanish as best as it can<sup>44</sup>. What seems though to be a motivating factor for the two G1 participants is an alignment of Zionistic ideology that appeared to be lacking in the G3 participants. It would seem, then, that for these G1 participants the combined affects of not having used the language at home because of mixed parenthood plus emotional pulls toward Israel and the unifying symbolism reinforced by Hebrew would result in a distancing from Judeo-Spanish and consequently as a diminishing desire to transmit a language from which they already feel distanced.

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<sup>44</sup> However, the responses from these particular G3 participants to the question can likewise be contradicted by the way they responded to other questions concerning language loyalty/attitudes. This apparent discrepancy demonstrates that contradiction, even among the same participant, is commonplace when dealing with complex and sensitive issues such as ethnicity and ethnic language retention. Self-contradictions become even more apparent when speakers have had little opportunity or interest to reflect upon ‘ethnic’ experiences and to articulate their feelings toward them.



Aside from the three ‘Indifferent’ responses from G1, the majority of participants (30/33 or 91%) responded positively to the community taking initiatives toward ethnic language preservation:

Me sto de akordo sien por sien [G1-F-NB]. I agree 100%.

Si, absolutement [G1-F-JK] (with French pronunciation). Yes, absolutely.

Some participants responded by saying that the community is already taking the initiative to preserve the language:

Y fazen cosas, organisen fiestas, actividades, reuniones komo ‘Kafé Djiko’ [G1-F-NK]. They already do things, they organize parties, activities, meetings, like ‘Kafe Dziko’.

Kreo ke si, ya faze kosas [G2-F-VB]. I think so, they already do things.

The community *is* making an effort. The last two years they have this Kafé Djiko, and they get together, and they try to talk in Ladino, and in Thessaloniki, we had a very nice celebration, we celebrated the 500 years after the Jews came here from Spain, and many people came from all over the world. This was two or three years ago. It lasted a week. They had speeches, different programs in different buildings [G3-F-DK].

Si, mucho mas esfuersos ke sta faziendo... Kreimos un club ke se yama Ladino Society, azemos kada 15 dias ‘Kafe Djiko kon Moabet’ kon istorias, kantigas, pisos teatrales, muzika en djudeo-espanyol. Tenemos lisiones de la lingua kada lunes i seminarios kon una maestra 2 vezes al mes. Preparamos kongresos internasionales sovre la lingua kon savios importantes de todo el mundo i avlamos djudeo-spanyol entre mosotros [G2-M-AK]. Yes, they are making many efforts... We created a club that is called ‘Ladino Society’, we get together every 15 days for ‘Kafe Dziko kon Moabet’ with stories, poems, theatre, music in Judeo-Spanish. We have language classes every Monday and seminars with a teacher twice a month. We prepare international conferences on the language with important experts from all over the world, and we speak Judeo-Spanish among ourselves.

Participant AK further explained that such community-based language efforts were vital in that they would teach future generations of Jews and non Jews alike the integral nature of the Jewish element in the city both historically and in contemporary times. The

language thus is both an intrinsic and indispensable component not just for the Jews but for the city in its entirety:

[La preservasion de la lingua es] la kontinuasion de la istoria de esta sivda [ke] es tanto natural komo de saver kuala era Thessaloniki [G2-M-AK].  
[The preservation of the language is] the continuation of the history of this city [that] is as natural as knowing what was Thessaloniki.

SG expresses a moral imperative of the community to engage in preservation efforts because so few speakers of the language are left, and because if the community doesn't do it, who will?

*Veve* [Grk. 'of course'], si de fazer mucho, los pokos ke kedimos. Si no lo faze la komunita, kien lo va fazer? [G2-F-SG]. Of course [Grk.], much should be done, by the few of us that remain. If the community does not do it, who will?

One participant, a self-defined secular Jew, stressed that the community should be very ambitious in promoting cultural [i.e. non-religious] aspects of the Thessalonikan Sephardism:

They should preserve cultural elements and promote activities relating to the cultural aspect, like teaching the language to children, promoting books, events, songs, food... These are things that they are already doing [G2-M-AA]

Aside from his preferred secularized way of life, the above participant believed that the promotion of religious aspects of Thessalonikian Sephardism would be badly received by the Jewish community that is, according to participant opinion, highly secularized and would catch the undesired attention of the Christian majority around them.

Another participant response relates the inability to separate the language from identity:

Si, porke es un elemento integral de nuestra identidad [G3-F-SS]. Yes, because it is an integral element of our identity.

For G2-M-LA, the language is seen to be a representation of the history and of the Jewish struggle both in recent and not-so-recent history:

[La komunita deve fazer esfuersos] Porke es todo ke pasimos por sinko, no, por mil kinientos siklos [G2-M-LA]. [The community must make efforts] Because it is for all that we went through for five, no, one thousand five hundred centuries.

Respondent G2-M-GK replied “Nai, fisika” [Grk. ‘yes, naturally’] to the question, suggesting an automatic and unquestionable obligation of the community toward the preservation of its linguistic heritage. He feels such efforts of ethnic language maintenance to be an imperative for the community; however, whether or not he feels this imperative applies to him and his personal daily life is questionable, and in his case, doubtful - at least not in this stage of his life as he admittedly made no effort to transmit the language to his child and rarely frequented community events.

Another participant responded that the community should make efforts to preserve the language but after some thought adds rather pessimistically:

...but how much longer will it [preservation efforts] last? In Israel, it [Judeo Spanish] is no longer used [G1-M-MA]

#### **4.4.5 Personal investment in language maintenance efforts**

The question ‘Would you be willing to personally contribute to language preservations efforts?’ was posed to participants directly following the previous question ‘Do you think the community should make an effort to preserve the language?’. Inspired by Gan’s concept of symbolic ethnicity (1979)<sup>45</sup>, the purpose of this question was to

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<sup>45</sup> Gan’s concept of symbolic ethnicity stresses that ethnics are inclined to engage in ‘ethnic’ activities only to the extent that these activities do not interfere with the day-to-day obligations.

obtain a general sense of whether or not participants thought they themselves should be part of a community movement toward language preservation. The next two responses are a reflection of Gan's concept in that they express a desire to participate in 'ethnic' activities for as long as these don't interfere with day-to-day life:

Si, si ay tiempo [G2-F-SG]. Yes, if there is time.

Si, si puedo haser algo [G3-F-SS]. Yes, if I am able to do something.

However, other responses show that much is being done on the part of participants to preserve the language as well as to promote the study of Jewish history to fellow community members. Some participants noted feeling an obligation to promote the language and the history of the community by making it known to the many non Jewish Greeks who are ignorant of the Jewish community's existence, both historically and in contemporary times. It should be noted that the high level of both participation and mobilization efforts shown by this specific sample is no doubt a result of the fact that many of the participants that took part in this research did so because they were referred to me by others who knew them as active community members likely to have an interest in participating in a study that treated Jewish ethnicity and Judeo-Spanish. However, even among participants who claimed to rarely frequent community events, there was a stated willingness, in theory at least, to attend an event that might prove interesting:

Si ay una kosa organizada, vamos a participar [G1-F-MA]. If there is an organized event, we will participate.

Si, kon los, la djente ke sta faziendo este esforso [G2-M-GK]. Yes, with the, the people making this effort.

Two G1 participants replied that their advanced age prevented them from being able to contribute to community efforts as demonstrated by the comment of JK:

A la edad ke tengo no puedo fazer mucho [G1-F-JK]. At my age, I can't do much.

However, the majority of participants from this sample demonstrated willingness, enthusiasm, and above all, initiative:

Ya esto partisipando tanto ke puedo [G1-F-NB]. I am participating as much as I can.

Nai, me megalo enthousiasmo [Grk.] [G2-F-RT). Yes, with much enthusiasm.

So miembro de Ladino Society i fago lisiones de lingua a los ke kieren ambezarsen [G2-M-AK]. I am a member of Ladino Society and I teach language classes to those who want to learn.

Ya stan, ya organizan emisiones, seminarios d'espanyol, de djudeo-espanyol, organizan unos kuantos lo ke yaman 'Kafe Dzikos de Moabet' onde se topan los ke avlan o los ke kieren sentir la lingua espanyol [G2-F-EP]. They already are, they already organize broadcasts, seminars of Spanish, of Judeo-Spanish, they organize things called 'Kafe Dzikos de Moabet' where those that speak the language and those that want to hear the language can be found.

[Laughing...] Si, sto prezidente de Ladino Society de Thessaloniki [G2-M-LA]. Yes, I am the president of the Ladino Society of Thessaloniki.

Fago todo ke puedo fazer... no puedo fazer mucho. Prokuro de ambezar a los ke kieren djudeo espanyol de lo ke se. Yo kon ti i kon otras personas ke prekuramos [G2-F-VB]. I do all that I can do...I can't do much. I try to teach [the language] from what I know to those who love Judeo-Spanish. I, with you, and other people, we all try.

Si. Ya lo sto faziendo de ke sto en la Kultural,... komo se dize.. de Ladino [G2-F-GB]. Yes, I am already doing that since I am in the Kultural,.. how do you say.... of Ladino.

For participant G2-F-TK, her personal contribution comes in the form of taking language lessons offered at the community center and suffices with being a member of one of the community's clubs:

Si, kon las leziones ladino. So miembro de la Ladino Society [G2-F-TK]. Yes, with Ladino language classes. I am a member of Ladino Society.

Participant G3-F-IN considers herself to be ‘in-training’ as an active community leader of the future:

Si. Tora den kano tipota. Aposxoloume sto mouseio kai prospatho yia mena na matho proto, kai meta na simetasxo stis drastiriotites. Doulevo stin Koinotita, kai epidi tora exo ksekinisi prospatho ligo na ‘familiarize myself’ [Grk.] [G3-F-IN). Yes. I don’t do anything now. I keep busy with the museum and I am trying to learn first so I can later participate in the activities. I work at the Community [Center], and I am trying to ‘familiarize myself’ since I have just started.

#### 4.4.6 Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish in Thessaloniki?

Table 4-9: Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish?

Optimistic about the future of J.Spanish? Generations 1-3 (N=33)	45% (15) Yes	48% (16) No	3% (1) Y/N	3% (1) Ind.	0% ?
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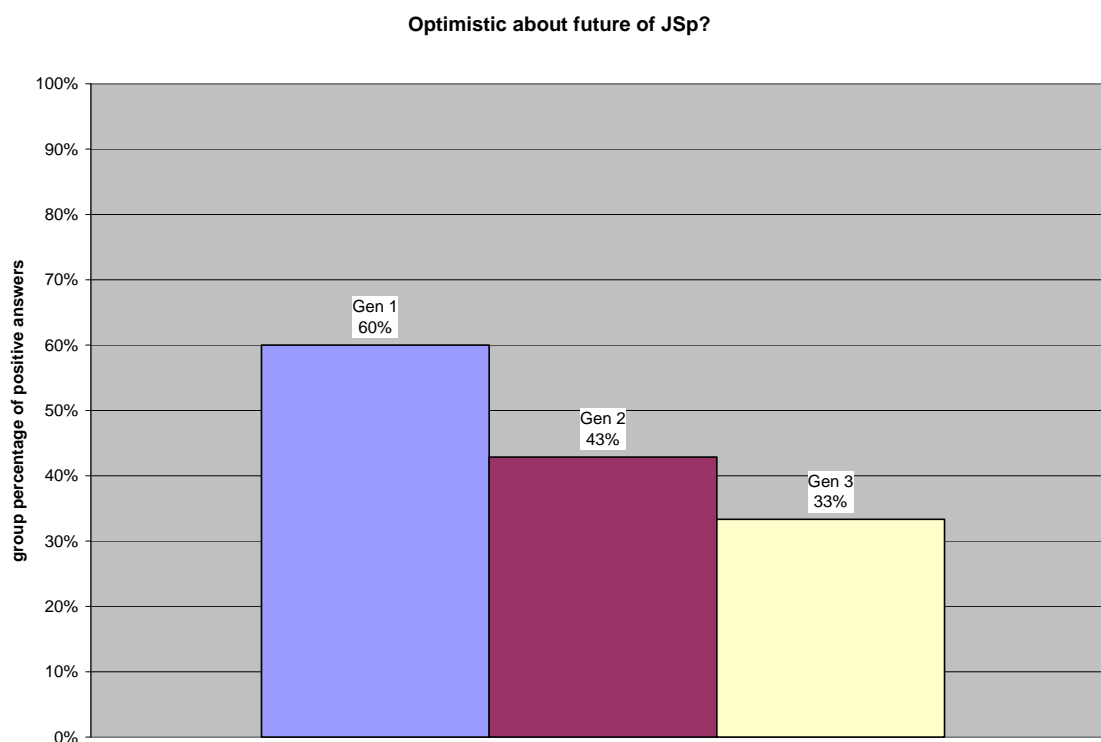


Figure 4-10: Are you optimistic about the future of Judeo-Spanish?

Cross generationally (Figure 4-10), G1 is most optimistic and G3 the least optimistic with regard to the language's future. I submit that this generational difference is the result of G3 participants already 'living' the shift of the language day-by-day in that 1) they themselves do not use it, 2) they are fully linguistically assimilated into Greek, as the preceding generation (G2) and even most of G1, and 3) they have not had the language transmitted to them and are not transmitting the language to their children.

Examining the results of all three generational groups together in Table 4-9, slightly less than half of the total group responded that they felt 'optimistic'. Of the 33 total participants, 15 (45%) responded feeling optimistic for the future of the language, 16 (48%) responded that they did not feel optimistic for the future of the language, one participant (3%) floundered between 'yes' and 'no', and another (3%) replied to be 'indifferent'.

These results can be examined from two perspectives. On the one hand, pessimistic stances vis-à-vis the future of the language reflect the social reality that leads them to believe that such efforts can only go so far. Members of the community do not live in an isolated bubble that inhibits them from perceiving the social reality around them; on the contrary, they are fully immersed in Greek society and are cognizant of the societal limitations and demands that to a great degree determine linguistic behavior and linguistic aspirations. Furthermore, it should be expected that participants feel some degree of pessimism for a language that is unquestionably in a precarious state. Answering 'no' to this question shows an acknowledgment of a reality that greatly limits the extent to which another language, other than Greek, can be transmitted in the Greek context.

Taken from a different perspective, the results can also be viewed as being surprisingly optimistic given the results for the question ‘Do you believe that Judeo-Spanish is a dying language’ in section 5.3.1 (Figure 4-4) where 100% of participants responded that they believed the language to be in a shifting state. That is, 100% of participants believe the language to be in a shifting state (Figure 4-4), yet 45% of participants responded feeling optimism for the future of the language in spite of its current shifting state. Where does the optimism for the future of the language come from when all participants reported recognizing its precarious state? In one case, defiance to the threat of language shift motivates participant G2-F-VB’s optimism “No se va a morir. No morira! [‘It is not going to die. It will not die!’]. In other cases, personal involvement in community initiatives engenders optimism for the language’s future. It does not come as a surprise that those individuals who are the most involved in community efforts to sustain the language were also the ones to express optimism for the future of the language. They are in the “trenches of language maintenance” (Fishman 1991), and in some cases language revitalization (in the language classroom with community members learning the language for the first time or refreshing knowledge of the language not heard since childhood when grandparents were still alive). For these participants, language maintenance/revitalization is a reality, albeit a small, enclosed reality restricted to the community center. The expression of optimism speaks to the hope these participants feel for the language’s future, but it must be stressed that the optimism directly relates to the level of personal involvement in language initiatives. Furthermore, the optimism expressed is one for sustained language association. Another source of optimism stems from contemporary enthusiasm toward the scholarly study of



the language (both in Thessaloniki and abroad), as attested by G2-M-GK who hopes that the recent emergence of interest shown by the community's youth will incite language maintenance efforts both now and in the future:

Nai, me tin kinisi pou yinetai tora apo orismenos neous anthropous me ena oreo.....inaudible... pou yimoryíthike, exw tin aisiodoksia oti tha diatirithi [G2-M-GK]. Yes, with the interest shown now from some of the younger people with a nice.... Inaudible....that developed, I have the feeling that it will spread.

Judeo-Spanish's similarity to Peninsular and Latin American Spanish is, in the expression offered by the following participant, its lifeline for maintenance:

Si, porke ay la lingua espanyol *veritable* [Fre. 'authentic', 'true'] ke asemeja al espanyol ke favlamos [G1-F-JK]. Yes, because there is an authentic [Fre.] Spanish language that resembles the Spanish that we speak.

Such a stance is reminiscent of Pulido (1905) and Besso (1970) who stressed that Judeo-Spanish language decay could be thwarted by the teaching of Peninsular Spanish.

For those 16 participants, or 48% of the total sample, who responded *not* being optimistic for the future of the language, sadness, regret and resignation accompanied many of their responses:

No, no so mucho optimista [G2-M-SE]. No, I'm not very optimistic.

[Grunt].... Next question!... Tha 'prepe na'eimai [Grk. 'I should be'] [G2-M-LA].

Oxi, katholou. [Grk.] [G2-M-IM]. No, not at all.

No. Kreo ke so mucho pesimista en viendo el mas chico fizo ke tengo... no, no, no tiene posibilidad, *eno* [Grk. 'while'] mi grande si tenia posibilidad [G2-F-SG]. No, I think that I'm very pessimistic when seeing that the youngest child I have... doesn't, doesn't, doesn't have the possibility [to learn the language], while [Grk.] my older [child] did indeed have the chance.

Ya kiria star optimista por esto, ma no se si se va a reushir. Puede ser si fue[se] mas djovenia podria fazer mas kon la lingua [de lo ke sto faziendo

agora] para dar la okasion de kontinuar de favlar en espanyol [G1-F-NB].  
 I would like to be optimistic for this, but I don't know if it will succeed.  
 Maybe it could if...[inaudible]... younger I could do something more with  
 the language [than what I am already doing now] to give rise to the  
 continuation of speaking Espanyol.

In keeping with the demographic features that typify speech communities of shifting languages, participant G1-F-NB attributes her advanced age and the advanced age of most of the speakers of the language as a significant deterrent to the language's transmission. Her pessimism must also be supported by her knowledge that even those who speak the language aren't necessarily transmitting it to their children and/or grandchildren.

That the language will never be revived as it once was, is a given in the community, and it's my impression that participants, albeit with stated enthusiasm, willingness, and initiative to promote language-related events, have no illusions that such revitalization can ever be achieved. However, maintaining even the current status quo of the language is unlikely as older community members pass away and the community is left with no mother-tongue speakers of the language. As the few remaining fluent speakers and even semi-speakers<sup>46</sup> die out, the efforts to maintain the language will remain in the hands of people who barely speak the language themselves. This begs the question 'what will this kind of language maintenance look like?' What is unrealistic is language maintenance in the communicative sense, as medium of day-to-day communication. A more reasonable hope for language maintenance in this community is one in the shape and form of symbolic language preservation. That is, the language can be preserved but only to its symbolic capacity as an associated language of Jewish

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<sup>46</sup> Semi-speakers are speakers of a low prestige language that continue to speak the language even though they speak it 'incorrectly' (Dorian 1980: 87)

heritage in Thessaloniki and of Sephardic heritage in contexts where Sephardic Jews mix with Jews from other cultural/linguistic backgrounds. With a concerted effort from younger community members, the transmission of Judeo-Spanish as a symbolic, associated language can take place. While transmission of the language in its communicative function is highly unlikely at this point, the most plausible surviving linguistic tokens will be limited to idioms, songs, names of food, expletives, and terms of endearment.

#### **4.5 Replace Expressions of the Impact of Judeo-Spanish on Identity**

The objective of this section is to explore the impact of Judeo-Spanish on the participants' sense of identity as Jews in Thessaloniki to the extent to which Judeo-Spanish could be considered a core value of Sephardic identity. Here I attempt to expose differing conceptions of Sephardic and Jewish identities that had become apparent during the research. To this aim, I posed the following questions:

- Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?
- Do you think of your parents and/or grandparents when you speak or hear Judeo-Spanish spoken?
- Do you, your parents/grandparents, and the community in general feel nostalgic for the idea of the old 'Jewish Salonik' and its language?
- Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?
- Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish?
- What importance does the language have for you and for your culture?

The first three questions posed (‘Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?’, ‘Do you think of your parents and/or grandparents when you speak/hear Judeo-Spanish?’, and ‘Do you, your parents and the community in general feel nostalgic for the idea of the old ‘Jewish Salonik?’ and for Judeo-Spanish?’) appeal to the participants’ sense of nostalgia for the language and for the era in which the language was commonly employed for the purpose of day-to-day communication. The questions move from the personal to the more general. Question 3 consists of three parts and is structured to expound participant perception on how *others* (parents/grandparents/community) regard the language. The remaining three questions (‘Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?’, ‘Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish?’, and ‘What importance does the language have for you and your culture?’ attempt to cast light on the role that the language plays on contemporary Jewish and Sephardic identities. In addition, participant expressions in this section reveal differing conceptualizing views on what it means to be Sephardic versus what it means to be Jewish.

#### 4.5.1 Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-10: Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?

Do you feel a personal connection with JSp?	94% (31)	6% (2)	0%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

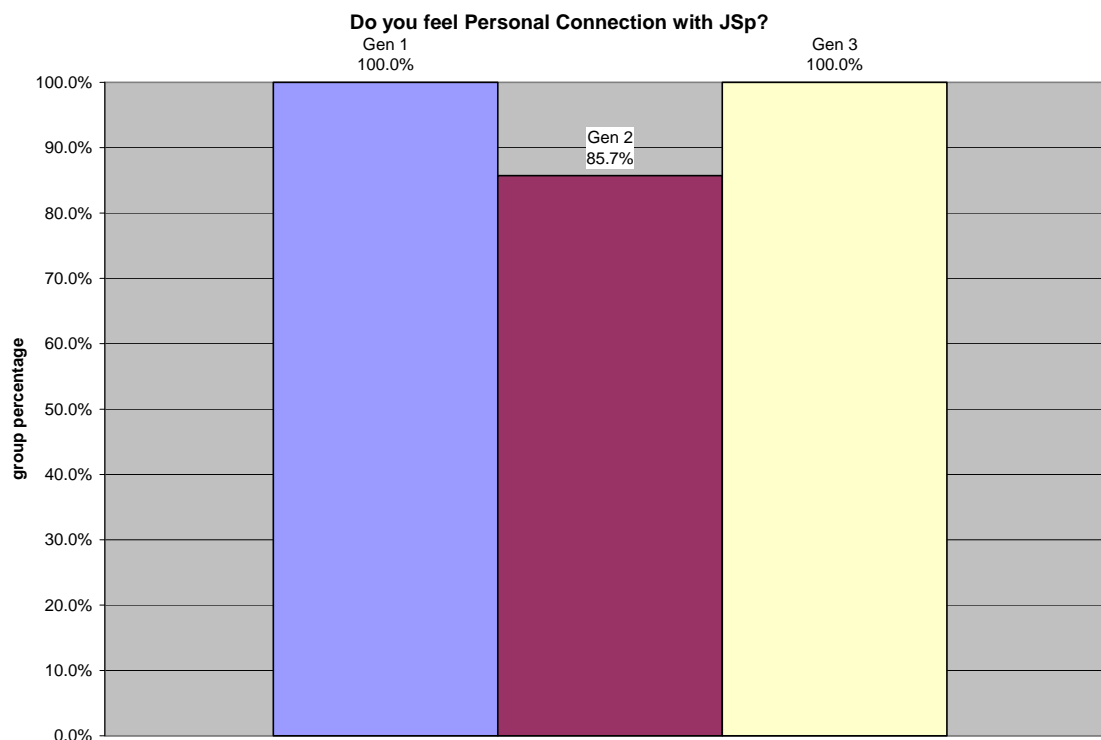


Figure 4-11: Do you feel a personal connection with Judeo-Spanish?

Taking the sample as a whole, Table 4-10 shows that 94% (31) of all 33 participants responded feeling a personal connection to the language. Cross-generationally (Figure 4-11), G1 and G3 each show that 100% of all participants felt a connection to Judeo-Spanish.

One participant from G1 added that she felt connected to the language because it was a language she grew up hearing, and as such, it pleased her:

Nai [Grk. ‘yes’], yo sto atada kon la lingua espanyola porke es una lingua ke me plaze, porke es una lingua ke la senti favlar, y agora lo sto favlando yo, y kiero ke kede despues de mi tambien [G1-F-NB]. Yes, I am attached to the Spanish language because it is the language that pleases me, because it is the language that I heard, and now I am speaking it, and I want it to live on even after me.

Her connection to the language, a connection that was transmitted to her just as the language was itself, motivates a desire to continue the transmission of the language to future generations. Her connection to the language is inherent, integral and unchanging; the use of the language provides continuity to life-eternal, so that in a sense, the speakers of the language live on. For participant G1-F-NB, her wish is that the language remain immortal, for in the language's immortality, its speakers, both present and past, live on.

Participant G2-F-VB follows up an affirmative response with the following:

No es necesario de saver el djudeo-espanyol. Ma kuando veo personas venir de otros payesez, djidios, ke no so sus linguas, si son de Holanda, de America no se de onde mas, i yo puedo favlar kon eyos como djidio kon djidio, ayi veo i entiendo ke 'kada' importante es, komo djidia saver el djudeo-espanyol, es una lingua ke se favla en el mundo entero de los sefaradis, i esto para mi es muy importante. Me siento ke es una persona de mi famiya, una persona ajena, de mi famiya [G2-F-VB]. It's not necessary to know Judeo-Spanish. But when I see people who come from other countries, Jews, and I don't know their names, being from Holland or from America or from wherever else, and I can speak to them Jew-to-Jew, that's when I understand how important it is, as a Jew to know Judeo-Spanish, it's a language that is spoken in the entire Sephardic world, and this for me is very important.

For G2-F-VB, Judeo-Spanish enables her to feel connected not only to family/ancestors, but also to both local and world-wide Sephardic communities. Her knowledge of Judeo-Spanish allows her to communicate with complete strangers who become like family members by mere association with her language. Here, an intimate sense of extended family, of obligation toward one another, and of familial solidarity and alignment is what this 'connection' with the language brings to G2-F-VB.

The only two participants (both from G2) who responded that they did not feel a personal connection to the language offered no explanation. However, it could be noted that at least one of these participants (G2-M-IM) had expressed little interest in Judeo-Spanish throughout the interview while making note of his dedication to Hebrew instead.

Also, both participants G2-M-IM and G2-F-DA self-reported low levels of linguistic ability in Judeo-Spanish and did not demonstrate any during the interview. However, I am unable to suggest that low linguistic ability in Judeo-Spanish leads to a lower likelihood of feeling connected to the language since all other self-reported low-level speakers reported feeling connected to the language in spite of their inability to speak it or at least to speak it well.

#### 4.5.2 Do you think of your parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-11: Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?

Think of parents/grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish? Generations 1-3 (N=33)	94% (31) Yes	0% No	6% (2) Y/N	0% Ind.	0% ?
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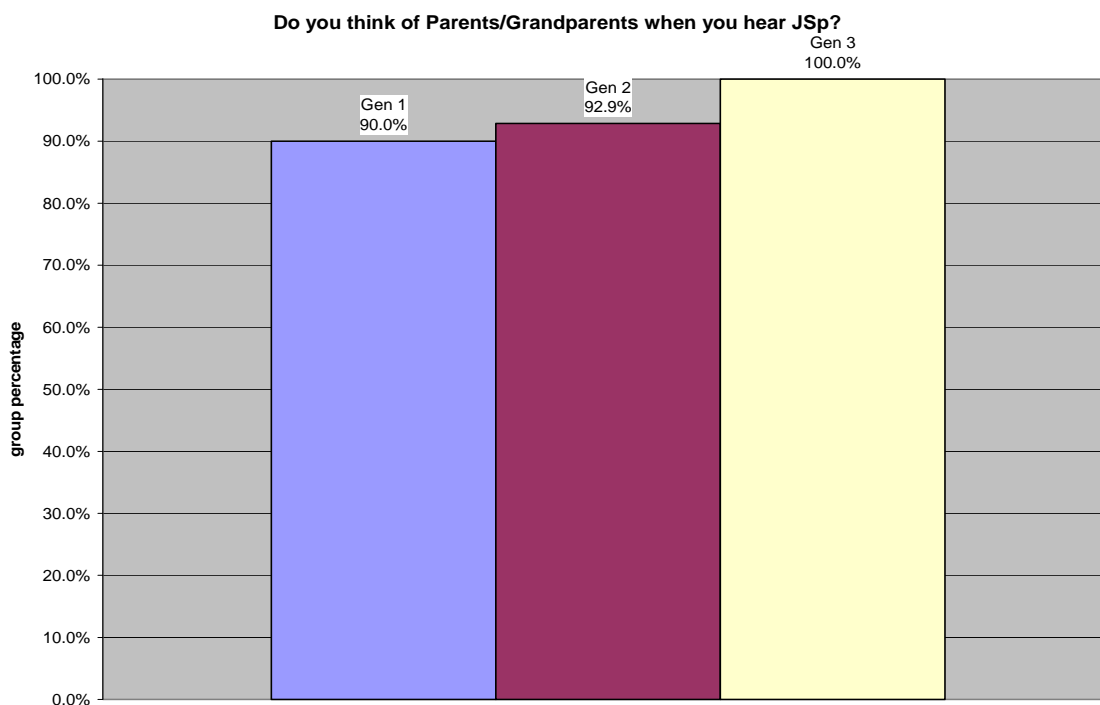


Figure 4-12 Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?

The extent to which this heritage language is associated with parents and grandparents can be seen by the findings for the question ‘Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear/speak Judeo-Spanish?’ The overwhelming majority of the total sample group, as shown in Table 4-11, responded that thoughts of parents and grandparents, and to a greater extent overall ancestry, are aroused when Judeo-Spanish is spoken or heard. Only two participants went back and forth between ‘yes’ and ‘no’, one from G1 and the other from G2. Participant G1-F-EA reported thinking of grandparents only when she heard Judeo-Spanish. Her own parents spoke German and Greek to one another since her mother was an Ashkenazic Jew from what is now the Czech Republic. Her father had learned to speak German due to his schooling in Germany, and so German, as well as Greek, formed the linguistic repertoire the pair employed with each other and their children. The second participant to respond ‘yes/no’ to this question [G2-M-AA] remarked that he does not associate Judeo Spanish with his own parents since it was not the language that they used. However, there is an association between the language and the grandparents he never knew. This association between his grandparents and the language is supported by having read many personal letters written in Judeo-Spanish by a grandparent or other relative, letters which left him “in awe” by their extensive use of Judeo-Spanish.

As stated above, for the majority of participants, positive feelings are conjured when speaking or hearing the language as it was clearly one that they associate with parents and grandparents. The following expressions were collected:

Nai [Grk. ‘yes’], naturalmente porke papa y mama favlavan kon el nono, el solo nono ke konosi, en espanyol. A mi me plazia sentir [G1-F-NB].  
 Yes, naturally because father and mother used to speak with grandfather, the only grandfather I knew, in Espanyol. I used to like hearing it.



Si, kuando penso en mi papou [Grk. ‘grandfather’]...de ke el no avlava en grego [G2-F-EP]. Yes, when I think of my Grandfather...since he did not speak in Greek.

If language is taken to be an aspect of paternity, then the association that participants make between a language and family strengthens the bond between language and identity, especially when the association is positive and conjures nostalgia.

#### 4.5.3 Do you, your parents and/or grandparents feel nostalgic for the era of Jewish ‘Salonik’ and for Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-12: Nostalgia felt for ‘Salonik’ and Judeo-Spanish

Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?
Do you feel nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and for ‘Salonik’	61% (20)	36% (12)	0%	3% (1)	0%
Do your parents/grandparents feel nostalgic for Judeo- Spanish and for ‘Salonik’?	82% (27)	6% (2)	0%	0%	12% (4)
Do you think the community in general feels nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and for ‘Salonik’?	97% (32)	3% (1)	0%	0%	0%

Table 4-13: Nostalgia felt for ‘Salonik and Judeo-Spanish – affirmative responses

A cross-generational view	G1 (N=10)	G2 (N=14)	G3 (N=9)
Do you feel nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and for ‘Salonik’	80% (8)	64% (9)	33% (3)
Do your parents/grandparents feel nostalgic for Judeo- Spanish and for ‘Salonik’?	70% (7)	86% (12)	89% (8)
Do you think the community in general feels nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and for ‘Salonik’?	100% (10)	93% (13)	100% (9)

A cross-generational view

Making a cross generational comparison for all three questions (see Table 4-13) shows that while all generational groups scored high for questions ‘Do your parents/grandparents feel nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish?’ and ‘Do you think the community in general feels nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish?’, much lower scores were obtained for the most personalized of the questions ‘Do you feel nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and for the old era in which Jewish Salonik existed?’ The results demonstrate a progressive decline from 80% of G1 participants responding that they felt nostalgic for the language and the memory of the Jewish city, to 64% in G2, and finally, to 33% in G3. For those G3 participants who had offered an explanation as to why they did *not* personally feel nostalgia for the language and for the idea of the old ‘Salonik’, most replied it was simply because they did not know the language well enough or at all and had never lived during the time when Thessaloniki was a predominantly Jewish city. This response is also given by G2 participants, although less frequently.

For G1 and G2, the majority of participants (80% and 64% respectively) report feeling varying degrees of nostalgia for the language and the idea of the old ‘Jewish Salonik’, a city in which the Jews were a majority:

Todos los dias mas, i yo ke se tantas kozas es porke tengo la edad ke tengo... i yo me engrandesi kon el espanyol [G1-F-NB]. Every day more, and I know as many things as I do because I am as old as I am.... And I grew up with Espanyol.

A participant from G1 points to an important factor to keep in mind when considering G1 parents/grandparents: they would have lived most of their lives in a context in which the city was still predominately Jewish and Judeo-Spanish was the most commonly heard and spoken language among the Jews. As such, the language or the idea of a Jewish ‘Salonik’ was a reality and thus not an object of nostalgic sentiment. G1-F-NB responds:

Yo kreo ke era diferente para eos [para los padres i nonos], porke eos vivian en el tiempo en ke todos favlaban la lingua. Sentian la lingua ahuera, i no solo en las kasas. Y no avia razon para... na nostalgoun ti glossa [Grk. ‘to feel nostalgia for the language’] [G1-F-NB]. I think that it was different for them [for our parents and grandparents] because they lived during a time in which everyone spoke the language. The heard the language outside, and not only in the home. And they didn’t have a reason to....to feel nostalgia for the language.

As far as the rest of the community feeling nostalgic, NB replies:

Los ke kedaron ke son arriva de sinkuenta anyos y ke si kieren un poko en sus kasas favlar,... [G1-F-NB]. Those that are left and are over 50 years of age and want to speak the language in their homes [feel nostalgic].

When another G1 participant was asked about community response, he gestured to the room full of community members that were present at a ‘Kafe Djiko’ meeting which I also had attended:

[Si]. Es por eso ke stamos aki pishin! [G1-M-IK]. [Yes]. This is why we are all here now!

Participant G2-M-SE responded that he was indeed nostalgic for the old ‘Jewish era’, and that the use of Judeo-Spanish gives him an instant connection with Thessaloniki, or more precisely with ‘Salonik’, the Turkish variant of ‘Thessaloniki’ commonly used among Judeo-Spanish speaking Jews. He states adamantly that he speaks ‘ladino de Salóniko’ [‘Ladino from Salóniko’].

Participant G2-F-EP states that “estamos unas kuantas personas” [we are a few people] from the community who feel ‘nostalgic’ for Judeo-Spanish and the old Jewish era. For this participant, these people are a minority as the majority go about their daily lives without giving too much thought to the heritage language or to the lost epoch in which Judeo-Spanish was commonly spoken in the city.

G2-M-LA responds pragmatically to the question ‘Do you feel nostalgic for Judeo-Spanish and the old ‘Jewish Salonika’:

Oxi, afou den tin gnorisa [Grk] [G2-M-LA]. No, because I didn't know it [Jewish Saloniki].

When asked whether his parents or grandparents felt this nostalgia, his response echoed that of G1-F-NB's above, that they didn't have to feel nostalgic for it because it was a language that was present in their everyday lives:

Oxi, yiati tin milisoune, itan pantote mia zontani glossa yia aftous [Greek]. No, because they spoke it, it was always a living language for them.

Participant G2-F-TK's matter-of-fact response shows that that while she may feel some nostalgia toward the language and the past, it was indeed 'history', a time that was over and done with: "Nai, eh... Entaksi, istoria itan" [Grk. 'Yes, eh... Ok, fine. But it's history now']. As for her parents, she responds that though she can't tell for sure because they are no longer living, they might have felt some nostalgic sentiment: "Nai. Den zoune, alla entaksi, mbori na to nolstalgoune" [Grk. 'Yes. They are not living, but ok, perhaps they felt nostalgic for it'].

Participant G2-M-GK replies that "tender" thoughts of Judeo-Spanish and the old city only enter his mind once in a while: "Nai, orismenes fores" [Grk. 'Yes, sometimes']

Participant G2-M-AK responded that beyond the nostalgia that he feels for the language and the old era of 'Jewish Salonik', he stresses a moral imperative and an obligation to recognize and teach others of the city's past:

Siento ovligasion de la istoria djudia Saloniklia [G2-M-AK]. I feel an obligation to the Jewish Salonikan history.

As for other community members, G2-M-AK states that only those who had lived the city's history feel nostalgia; that is, younger members born too late to have gotten a taste of the Jewish city, most probably don't feel any kind of emotional pull toward the memory of the city and the language that was once used:

Solo los ke konosieron Salonik del pasado[G2-M-AK]. Only those that knew the Salonik of the past [feel nostalgia for the language and for the idea of the old Jewish city].

Participant G2-F-VB replies that she would have liked to have lived during the time when the city was Jewish in majority. The essence of that city is something that, although it no longer exists as it once did, is still felt by this participant, and as she states, by many others as well. In addition to her reply, she offers one explanation as to the sudden halt of language transmission immediately after WWII<sup>47</sup>:

Si, ya kiria ke viviera kon una manera en akel tiempo. Es una kosa ke la sentimos ma no lo konusiamos muestra dgenerasion. Le ke me kedo es ke despues de la Guerra, despues de lo ke pasaron, kon el espanto ke les kedo, prekuravan de no favlar en dzudeo-espanyol porke... ke no sienten [los otros] ke semos djudios. Kreo ke en akel tiempo ke avia tantos ajenos en Saloniki ke vinieron de Kazanes, i de otrus lugares, ke nos savian lo ke sentian. Ma eyos [los djudios de Thessaloniki] prekuravan de favlar en grego ‘tuerto a bistohuerpo’ kon aksen djudeo espanyol, kantando komo los napolitanos ‘ke fizo’, ‘ke kometez en kasa?’, ‘ke komentez oy?’, i unas kosas ansina, ma en grego. Por siguro ke los ke kunusieron los djudios antes de la Guerra ya entendian de algun anyos de kamino ke eran djudios, ma eos [referent is unclear] favlaban en grego. I esto les kedo fino oy [G2-F-VB]. Yes, I would like to have lived in some way during that time. It’s something that we feel, yet our generation doesn’t know it very well. What I remember from back then is that after the war, after all that happened, with the fear that remained, they [the Jews] tried not to speak Judeo-Spanish because... so that they [the others] would not hear that we were Jews. I think that during that time there were so many ‘foreigners’ [people from outside of Thessaloniki] in Saloniki that came from Kazanes, and from other places, and they didn’t know what they were hearing. But they [the Jews of Thessaloniki] tried to speak in Greek ‘clumsily’ with a Judeo-Spanish accent, singing like people from Naples ‘what happened?’, ‘what did you eat in the house?’, ‘what did you eat today?’, and other things like this, but in Greek. Certainly those who knew the Jews before the war already knew from some time before that that they were Jews, but they [referent is unclear here] already spoke Greek. And this is what remained until today.

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<sup>47</sup> In additional consequence of the Holocaust was, according to several of my participants, the secularization of the community. Upon return from concentration camps or from hiding, surviving community members “...didn’t want to advertise that they were Jews” [G3-F-DK]. Lewkowicz (1994) discusses the origins and evolving nature of this “private Judaism”.

Participant G2-F-SG replies that she does feel nostalgic “si, me plaze mucho” [yes, it pleases me a lot] and that her parents felt this nostalgia as well:

Se sentian mucho, kuando avia mucho djidios en Salonik. Agora no hay. Y los fizos estan todos kon gregos [G2-F-SG]. It [Judeo-Spanish] was heard a lot, when there were many Jews in Salonik. Now there aren't any. And the children are all with Greeks now.

She notes, though, that this nostalgic sentiment, a love and yearning for the past, however, is no longer felt by the young as their friends/peers now are all ‘Greek’ (Christian Orthodox).

Other frequent expressions, as noted earlier, were that if no nostalgia were felt by the participant, it was simply because the past, as it once was, is unknown:

Oxi, den tin gnoriza [Grk.] [G2-F-GB]. No, I didn't know it.

Den tin exo zisei [Grk.] [G3-F-IN]. I didn't live it.

No, because I didn't speak it. Well, my father that spoke Ladino is dead, so it's hard to tell, but I think so because it is his language. [How about the community in general?] Oh yes, the community does, certainly [G3-F-DK]

#### **4.5.4 Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?**

Due to the Sephardim's demographic superiority over other branches of Jewish lineage within the city of Thessaloniki during Ottoman times and immediately after, there was little need to differentiate between Sephardic Jewry and non Sephardic Jewry. Within the context of Thessaloniki, to be “Jewish” was synonymous with being “Sephardic”. Outside of Thessaloniki and within the Ottoman Empire, distinctions were made (among the Jews) between the Sephardim and non Sephardic Jews, such as the Romaniotim and the Ashkenazim. However, for the average Thessalonikan Ottoman Jew,

few contacts were kept with Jews living outside their immediate locality, so that for a Sephardic Jew of Thessaloniki, all Jews were Sephardim and all Jews were speakers of Judeo-Spanish. The events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, I suggest, gave way to two trends in the way Jews conceived of other Jews. On the one hand, the Holocaust and the subsequent establishment of Israel led to a de-emphasis of regional Jewish identities in favor of a unified identity encompassing all Jewish groups. On the other hand, for a great many, the Holocaust and emigration to Israel brought about face-to-face contact between Jews of differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds for the first time. This contact with Jews from all part of Europe (during the Holocaust) and with world Jewry (in Israel) reconceptualized what it meant to be “Jewish” for the Thessalonikan Sephardim. In order to establish the position of Judeo-Spanish in a conceptualization of Jewish and/or Sephardic identities, I now introduce the dichotomy that had become apparent in my sample: that of being ‘Sephardic’ versus ‘Jewish’. While not all participants explicitly articulated said dichotomy, there is ample evidence from this research to suggest that it does indeed exist. As a non-Jew and outsider to this community, I could only make initial assumptions as to what this dichotomy consists of; beyond this, I’ve had to rely on the research findings to establish a conceptualization of what it means to be ‘Sephardic’ and ‘Jewish’ for Thessalonikan Sephardim today and where Judeo-Spanish fits in with these separate yet often overlapping conceptualizations. To this aim, I employed the responses obtained from the following questions:

- Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish identity?
- Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic identity?

Table 4-14: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?

<b>Generations 1-3 (N=33)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Ind.</b>	<b>?</b>
Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish Identity?	94% (31)	3% (1)	3% (1)	0%	0%
Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic Identity?	94% (31)	0%	0%	6% (2)	0%

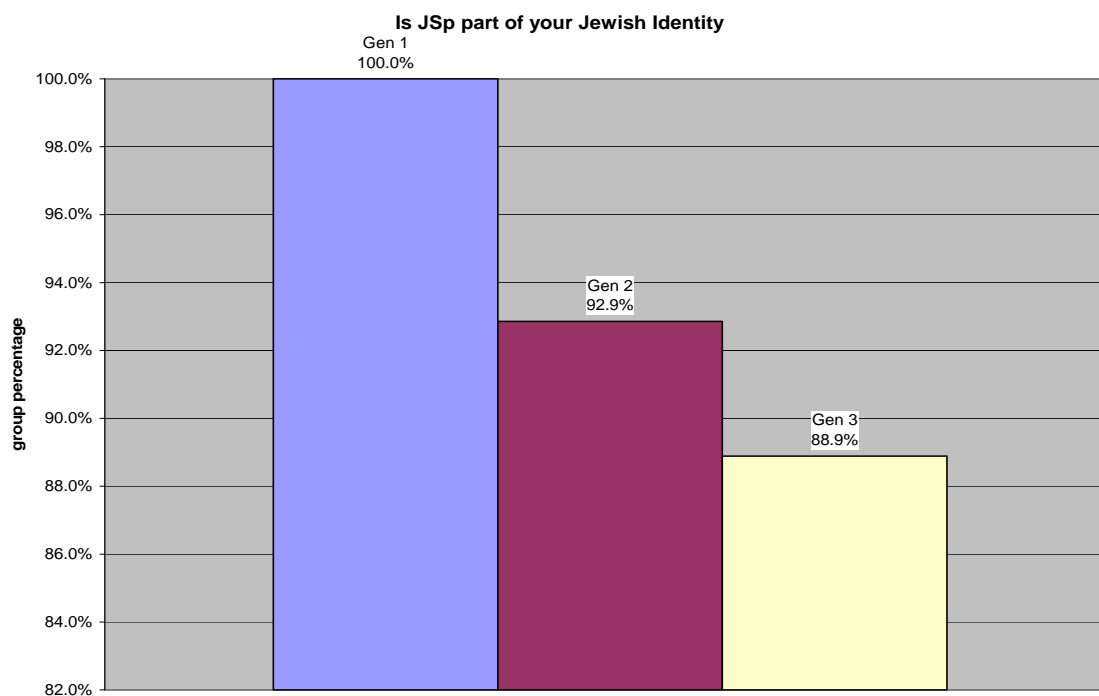


Figure 4-13: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish identity?



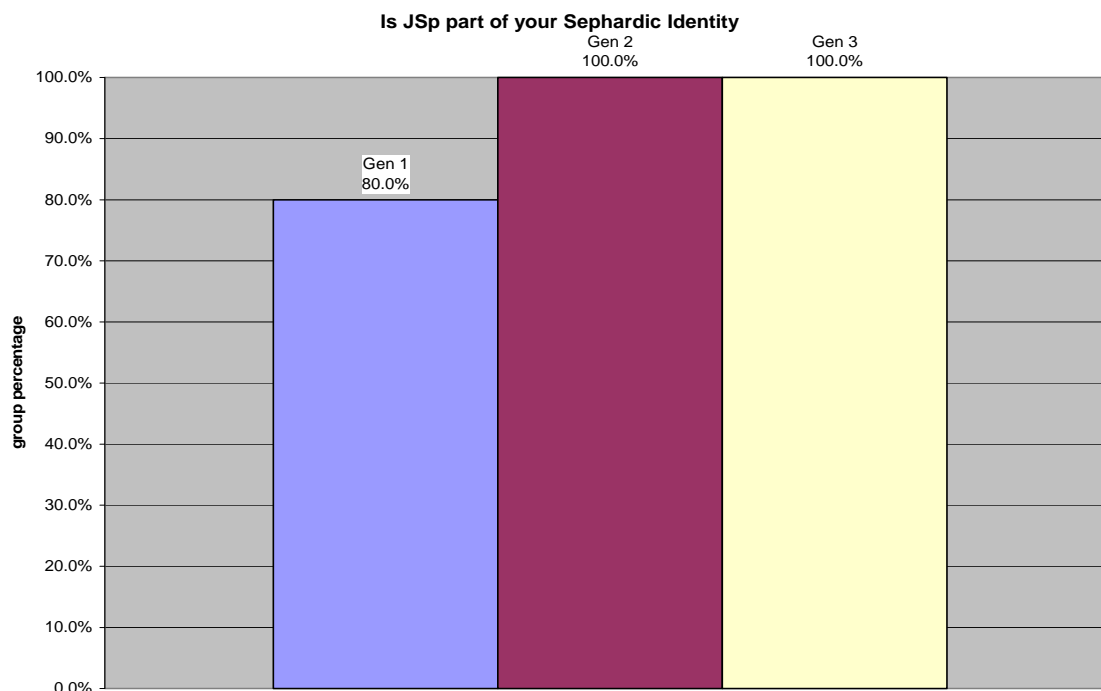


Figure 4-14: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic identity?

The results from Table 4-14 and Figures 4-13 and 4-14 show that the majority of each generational group as well as the total sample group believed Judeo-Spanish to be a part of both Jewish and Sephardic identities. I obtained a very telling response from participant G1-M-IK to both questions (he answered ‘yes’ to both). His statements articulate the role and functional distribution of the language for both Sephardic and Jewish identities. For this participant, Judeo-Spanish is part of Sephardic identity quite simply because it was the language spoken by the Sephardim themselves. Within this, the notion of ‘Salonik’ (the old Jewish city) emerges as it was the historically dominant Sephardic city in the Turkish Empire, and within the modern state of Greece, Thessaloniki boasted the largest number of Judeo-Spanish speakers and is the place where the language survived the longest. The relationship between Judeo-Spanish and

‘Sephardicness’ is interwoven and inextricably tied to Thessaloniki and in particular to the ‘old Jewish Salonik’. For this same participant (and for 30 of the 33 participants) Judeo-Spanish also fits in with a conceptualization of Jewish identity since it is the language, along with Hebrew, used during Jewish holidays and, like Hebrew and Yiddish, is a language associated with Jews. As evidence of the importance of Judeo-Spanish for the carrying out of Jewish traditions, he recalls the reading of *La Agada* in Judeo-Spanish during Seder dinners over Passover. Additionally, the relevance of Judeo-Spanish for Jewish identity is found in the way in which fellow Sephardic Jews would historically identify one another as ‘a Jew’, as explained by one participant: “te dezian ‘sos dzidió’, no ‘sefaradí’” [They would call you a ‘Jew’ and not a ‘Sefaradí’]<sup>48</sup>.

While the majority of participants on the whole and generationally responded that Judeo-Spanish was a part of both Sephardic and Jewish identities, the minority responses indicating that it was not coupled with expressions offered at different points of the interview lead me to contemplate that identity formation in Thessaloniki is in transition, and that this transition partly entails a redistribution of the place of Judeo-Spanish as a marker of identity. In Figure 4-13 (‘Is Judeo-Spanish a part of your Jewish identity?’) we see that one participant from G2 (G2-M-IM) responded that while Judeo-Spanish was an important part of his Sephardic identity, it was not important to his Jewish identity. When asked to elaborate on this distinction, he explained what many others had hinted at during the research: that Judeo-Spanish belonged to the realm of all that was ‘Sephardic’

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<sup>48</sup> During the historic time period to which he refers (pre WWII), all Jews in Thessaloniki were Sephardim or had at least been absorbed into the Sephardic community, thus eliminating the need to differentiate between Sephardic, Romaniotic or Ashkenazic Jew. If you were a Jew in Thessaloniki, you were a Sephardic Jew, and as such you spoke Judeo-Spanish. In contemporary times, and in situations where ‘mixing’ is apparent (outside Thessaloniki), the need to clarify the specific ‘type’ of Jew arises.

and ‘Salonikan’, and as such, didn’t as neatly fit into a conceptualization of a greater universal vision of Jewishness, one that embraced all kinds of branches of Jewishness (Romaniotic, Ashkenazic, Mizrahi...) and their corresponding languages, cultures, and communities. Being Sephardic and speaking Judeo-Spanish was something very specific to Thessaloniki, even though this participant acknowledged the fact that Judeo-Spanish was also closely associated with other cities/communities. If one is a Jew in Thessaloniki, one is automatically assumed to be Sephardic and thus Judeo-Spanish speaking or at least having ancestors who spoke Judeo-Spanish as a mother language. However, in a broader context (outside of Thessaloniki and Greece), being Jewish does not necessarily entail being Sephardic.

Although participants G2-F-EP and G2-F-VB responded that Judeo-Spanish was a part of their Sephardic *and* Jewish identities, their responses to a subsequent question (5.5.5 ‘Do you feel more Jewish if/when you speak Judeo-Spanish?') further exemplify the interwoven relationship between Judeo-Spanish, Salonik as the old Jewish city, and the notion of ‘Sephardicness’ and the apparent emerging rift between ‘Sephardicness’ and ‘Jewishness’. When asked if they felt more Jewish when speaking Judeo-Spanish, participant G2-F-EP exclaimed “I feel more Sefardita!” while participant [G2-M-AK] responds “Me siento mas Salonikli” [I feel more ‘Salonikan’]. That the participants responded this way to the question ‘Do you feel more Jewish when you speak Judeo-Spanish’ when they had previously stated that Judeo-Spanish *is* a part of both Sephardic and Jewish identities, reflects the emerging schism between the two and the transitioning conceptualizations of ‘Sephardicness’ and ‘Jewishness’ in contemporary Thessaloniki.

The only other participant from the entire sample to respond that Judeo-Spanish was not a part of her Jewish heritage was G3-F-DK. She elaborated that

...because I grew up with my Hungarian mother and she didn't speak any Ladino, but she kept the traditions, she was making the Kiddush Friday night, and lighting the candles every Friday night... She was more religious than all the other women of Thessaloniki. So, I didn't feel that by *not* speaking Ladino, we didn't keep the Jewish tradition [that] we had to keep. Ok, so maybe I didn't feel Sephardic. [I mean] I *felt* Sephardic, but I didn't speak the language. You know, my father couldn't speak [it] alone. [Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic heritage?] Yes, yes it is. [G3-F-DK]

For G3-F-DK, her non-Sephardic mother enters into her own conceptualization of what is 'Jewish', and since her mother did not speak Judeo-Spanish yet was very religiously and culturally Jewish, this participant finds it difficult to relate Judeo-Spanish with a more broad concept of 'Jewishness', one that includes her non Judeo-Spanish speaking/non Sephardic mother. However, for this participant, Judeo-Spanish is deemed to be a part of her Sephardic identity.

Judeo-Spanish is an important part of Sephardic identity for all but 2 participants, both from G1. In this case, those participants (both from G1) who had responded that it was not an important part of their Sephardic symbolic repertoire were those that were of mixed Jewish parentage whose parents spoke German and Greek/German to each other and to their children. One of these participants, G1-M-AA, had throughout the interview expressed a near nonchalant attitude toward Judeo-Spanish and Sephardicness in favor of a preferred wider vision of Jewishness, one that embodied the heritage of both his Sephardic father and German Ashkenazic mother. In addition, this participant expressed a strong allegiance toward the modern state of Israel and of Zionist ideology which, I propose, has had an effect on his negating of regional, national and linguistic Jewish differences in preference for a unified conceptualization of what a Jew is. Interestingly

enough, both of these participants responded that Judeo-Spanish was a part of their Jewish identity, a response that I would have not predicted. For all other participants (31/33), Judeo-Spanish is an integral part of Sephardic identity:

Si, porke es la lingua de muestros puevlos [G1-F-NB]. Yes, because it is the language of our people.

To summarize this section, while the majority of sample participants believe Judeo-Spanish to be a part of Jewish and Sephardic identities, there is slight generational decline in Figure 4-13 ('Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish identity') from G1 to G3. While this numerical decline may be viewed as inconsequential when examined alone, they in combination with participant narratives, speak to a movement toward a reconceptualization of what it means to be "Jewish" and "Sephardic": 'Jewishness' embraces the more universal characteristics of a world Jewry to which all Jewish peoples can claim membership. Encouraged by Zionist ideology and that of the modern state of Israel, the conceptualization of a world-Jewishness is all-embracing and any regional particularities, such as language, must be shed. 'Sephardicness', on the other hand, relates to all that is specific to the Judeo-Spanish speaking Jews of the old Salonik. Whereas 'Sephardicness' is exclusive, 'Jewishness' is inclusive and open to all peoples of Jewish descent regardless of their history, language and geographical origin. Moreover, the "Jewish" label unites all Jews victimized under the Nazis, a shared plight of genocide and expresses solidarity with all those who experienced either directly or indirectly. Although the results from Figure 4.13 show a very gradual decline that could be interpreted as inconsequential, I submit that this decline (albeit slight) in combination with statements made throughout the research foretell an emerging dichotomy between Sephardic and Jewish identities in transition and a redistribution of markers (Judeo-

Spanish as a marker of ‘Sephardicness’) that participants themselves may be unaware of or at least unable to articulate at this time.

#### 4.5.5 Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-15: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish

Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo Spanish?	52%	45%	3%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	(17)	(15)	(1)	Ind.	?
	Yes	No	Y/N		

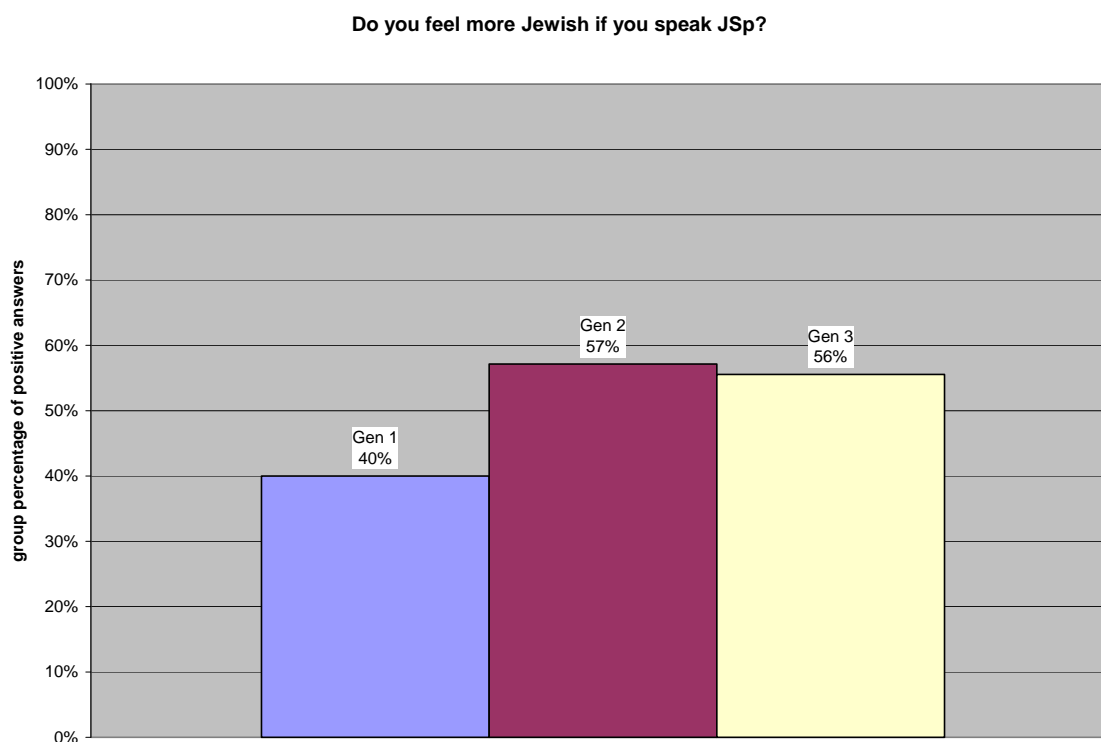


Figure 4-15: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish?

Looking at the results as a whole in Table 4-15, the responses are nearly split: 17/33 responded that they do feel more Jewish if they speak Judeo-Spanish, 15/33

responded that they do not, and one participant from G1 responded both ‘yes’ and ‘no’. Her explanation to her dual response was that since Judeo-Spanish was from a historical standpoint the language of the Sephardim in Thessaloniki, it does make her feel more Jewish when she speaks it. However, she states, that many younger community members are unable to speak the language today, yet she is sure that they still feel very Jewish. She suggests that the number of ‘younger’ community members that frequent community events should speak to the extent to which younger members felt or did not feel Jewish. While younger members rarely attend religious services (except for high holidays), they frequent the social clubs aimed at younger persons and many children and young adults take part in summer Jewish camps.<sup>49</sup>

Participant G1-F-NB, a fluent speaker of Judeo-Spanish responded that the use of Judeo-Spanish does not make her feel any more or less Jewish:

No kreo specialmente ke la lingua espanyola me faze sentir mas dzudia de lo ke se, ma estoy muy fiela de ser i dzudia i espanyola [G1-F-NB]: I don’t really think that the Spanish language makes me feel more Jewish than I am, but I am proud to be Jewish and Spanish.

Although NB does speak the language, she claims that her ability to speak Judeo-Spanish does not make her feel any more or less Jewish than she already is. Moreover, the distinction that she makes of being ‘Jewish’ and ‘Spanish’ (where being ‘Spanish’ equates being ‘Sephardic’) supports my contention of an emerging schism between the concepts of being Jewish and of being Sephardic.

As seen from Table 4-15, 52% of all participants *do* feel more Jewish with the ability to speak Judeo-Spanish:

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<sup>49</sup> See Lewkowicz (1994) for a more detailed description of Jewish youth life in contemporary Thessaloniki.

Si, kuando favlo dzudeo-espanyol, me siento mas dzudia [G1-F-JK]. Yes, when I speak Judeo-Spanish, I feel more Jewish.

A Jew that couldn't speak Spanish some years ago was called 'kristiano' even by Jews. 'kristiano negro, ke no ablas en spanyol?' ['dirty Christian, don't you speak Spanish?'] [G2-M-SE].

Oh, most definitely. Yes. I think I do feel more Jewish, or let us say that I *would* feel more Jewish if I spoke Judeo Spanish well". [Why?] It is the language that all of my Jewish ancestors spoke [G2-M-AA].

Other affirmative responses were the following:

Nai, isos [Grk.] [G2-M-GK]. Yes, maybe.

Si, seguro! [G2-F-VB]. Yes, definitely!

Si, kuando topo personas ke puedo favlar. Ma no ay [G2-F-SG]. Yes, cuando I find people with whom to speak. But there aren't any.

Nai, kata kapoion tropo, nai [Grk] [G3-F-AA]. Yes, in some ways, yes.

For participants G2-F-EP and G2-M-AK, the use of Judeo-Spanish does not fit as neatly into their conceptualization of being 'Jewish', rather it is an indication of a

Thessalonikan Sephardicness:

I feel more Sefardita! [G2-F-EP]

Me siento mas Salonikli [G2-M-AK]. I feel more 'Salonikan'.

These last two statements fit in nicely with the previous section that attempts to tie in Judeo-Spanish with an exclusive Thessalonikan 'Sephardicness' while suggesting an evolving separation of Judeo-Spanish from a more generalized and universal Jewishness.

In Table 4-14 (Section 4.5.4: Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?) we see that while 94% of all participants responded that Judeo-Spanish was a part of both Jewish and Sephardic identities, 45% (Table 4-15) of participants stated that speaking Judeo-Spanish would not make them feel more Jewish. Indeed, Judeo-Spanish is an important marker of Sephardicness and Jewishness (albeit to a lesser extent, as I



contend); however, the results indicate that there must be other markers of Jewishness and Sephardicness aside from language that come into play.

#### 4.5.6 How important is the language to you and to your culture?

Participants were asked to state what the language meant for them personally and for their culture. As for the personal significance of the language, responses related affective values of the language relating to its importance for Jewish/Sephardic paternity and patrimony, as a marker of who they are as Jews and as Thessalonikians.

Komo lingua, muy importante. Kiero preservarle a tanto ke es posible [G1-M-MA]. As a language, very important. I want to preserve it for as long as possible.

Grande. Muy grande importansia. Y fago todo lo ke puedo fazer para favlar y para konservar la lingua i para no la olvidar i yo [G1-F-NB]. Very. It's of great importance. And I do all that I can do to speak and to preserve the language and to never forget it myself.

Es la historia del pasado [G2-M-LA]. It's the history of the past.

Es una.. komo se dize 'tautotita' [Grk. 'identity'] de 'identity'? [G2-F-GB]. It's a... how do you say 'tautotita' [Grk.] of 'identity'.

Es la lingua de mis padres [G3-F-SS]. It's the language of my parents.

The language, as seen by one participant, is one marker of Jewishness/Sephardicness that has remained in spite of Nazi efforts to eradicate evidence of Jewish presence in the city, and even perhaps of Greece's efforts to deny the existence of ethnic and religious minorities:

Es lo ke mos kedo de ser djidios! [G1-F-JK]. It's what we have left as Jews!

Another participant attributed a scholarly value to the language in that it serves as a venue to historical, literary and linguistic study:

Istoriki, logotexniki kai glossologiki [simasia] [G3-F-RT]. [It's of] historical, literary, and linguistic importance.

In addition, the language served an important role of preserving boundaries between the minority and majority groups:

Eina i glossa tou propagou mou, pou mou characterizei... kai pou mou diakrinei apo tous allous, kai einai kati pou tha'thela na matho kallitera [G3-F-IN]. It's the language of my ancestors, that which characterizes me... and separates me from others, and it's something that I'd like to learn better.

Once again, the language is seen by one participant to be a marker of a specifically unique kind of Jewishness, that of a Sephardim from Thessaloniki. To this vain, the language, or specifically this particular variety of Judeo-Spanish, serves to uphold boundaries from Thessalonikian Jews and Jews elsewhere:

La lingua es para mi una representasion de mi kultura, de muestras tradisiones, de nuestros.... roots. [For me the language is a representation of my culture, of our traditions, of our.... roots]. It's always a part of me... Thessaloniki is such a Jewish city. For Saloniklis, even if you no longer know the language, you still connect with it. This is especially true of Sephardim from Thessaloniki, as opposed to Athens. [Why?] Because in Thessaloniki, the history, the Sephardic culture or feeling still exists. It helps that the city is also very small [G2-M-SE].

Finally, an instrumental value to the language was seen in Section 5.4 (Expressions of Judeo-Spanish transmission) in which participants believed the language to be a benefit in the professional realm due to its linguistic similarity to Modern Spanish.

The question of personal relevance of Judeo-Spanish was immediately followed by the question 'What importance does the language have for the culture?'

One participant responds that the extent of a language's impact on a particular culture is measured by its degree of use and/or presence:

Si la kontinuan, tienen una importansia [G1-F-JK]

This participant suggests that the language will only be relevant for as long as it is actually maintained. Within her suggestion, she implies that a culture is not necessarily destined to follow the path of its associated language should said language be shifted.

An interesting exchange took place between a husband and wife from G1:

Ma no ay kultura sin la lingua! [G1-M-MA]. But there is no culture without the language!

To this, his wife responds that there can be a perseverance of culture without the language for as long as the language is the focus of scholarly pursuit:

If you are a scholar, in a university for Sephardic Studies, it wouldn't be necessary to include the language [G1-F-MA].

For her, the desire for future language maintenance is satisfied with the scholarly inquiry of the language and its literature. Her husband still feels dissatisfied with the ability of the culture to survive without the language even in the realm of intellectual/academic study:

“Es muy difícil, sta kondanada. Es un pekado [G1-M-MA]. It's very difficult, it's condemned. It's a sin.

Participant G1-F-LP, like G1-F-MA above, makes reference to the language's scholarly contribution when she notes the cultural importance of Sephardic literary offerings:

Egsisten muchos manuskritos en ladino. Nai [Grk], es mucho importante [G1-F-LP]. There are many manuscripts in Ladino. Yes, it's very important.

Another participant expresses the importance of the language in that it allows solidarity to foster between speakers of the same language while at the same time establishing boundaries between the in- and out-group:

La importansia, devemos de fazer, de, komo se dize ‘chercher’ [Fre. ‘to look for’], de buskar kien asemeza kon mozostros en la lingua i en las

kostumbres [G1-F-NB]. The importance, we should do, how do you say ‘chercher’ [French ‘to look for’], [we should] look for he who is is similar to us by language and by custom.

The majority of participants, not surprisingly, attach great importance to the language for the preservation of Sephardic culture:

A basic role. Es el modo para preservar la kultura [G2-F-EP]. A basic role. It’s the way to preserve the culture.

Mucho grande. Solo ansina van a poder star un pokito al lado [G2-F-SG]. Very great. Only like this they’ll be able to be a little bit closer [to the culture].

Poly megali simasia se kathe epipedo apo episimoniko ews kai kathimerines zois [Grk] [G3-F-RT]. [It’s of great importance on every level from the scientific to everyday life.

The results from 5.5.1 (‘Do you feel a personal connection to Judeo-Spanish?’), 5.5.2 (‘Do you think of parents and/or grandparents when you hear Judeo-Spanish?’), and 5.5.3 (Do you, your parents/grandparents, and the community feel nostalgic for the idea of the old Jewish ‘Salonik’ and for the language?’) establish an undeniable link between the language and the participants on the one hand, and the language and the participants’ parents/grandparents on the other hand. Additionally, a demonstrated link between Judeo-Spanish and the idea of the old Jewish city, ‘Salonik’, surfaces. While the link between language and self, language and ancestry, and language and geography is strong, the progressive decline of participants from G1 to G3 to respond feeling nostalgic for the language and the old Jewish ‘Salonik’ (Section 5.5.3, Table 4-13) is suggestive: the younger the participant, the less nostalgia he/she will have for the language and the idea of ‘Salonik’ simply because it was not something he/she had previously lived.

While section 5.5.6 provides ample expressions of the importance of Judeo-Spanish for individuals and for the perpetuation of culture and Table 4-14 shows that for 94% of all participants, Judeo-Spanish was a part of both Jewish and Sephardic identities, nearly half of all participants ( 45% from Table 4-15) stated that speaking Judeo-Spanish would not make them feel more Jewish. That is, even though they don't speak Judeo-Spanish, they still feel Jewish. For this to be true, there must be other markers of Jewishness that come into play. The next section discusses another potential marker of Jewishness, that of the role of Hebrew as the national language of the Israeli state.

#### **4.6 Expressions of the impact of Hebrew on identity**

Gans (1979) asserts that when one marker of identity is in shift, another marker emerges to preserve a sense of group solidarity and to sustain group boundaries . The loss of Judeo-Spanish as a highly visible marker that once served to distinguish the Jews from non-Jews motivated me to consider that such loss may be compensated by the adoption of another identity marking feature. My interest in Hebrew was not so much to uncover attachments to it as the old liturgical language since I thought that these would be obvious<sup>50</sup>. Rather, I sought to examine whether a hypothesized shifting away from Judeo-Spanish motivated (or was motivated by) a movement toward the language of the modern Jewish state<sup>51</sup>. A significant component of Zionist discourse has been to embrace

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<sup>50</sup> See Weis (2002:115) for an account of the influence and role of liturgical Hebrew on Jewish identity since the Diaspora.

<sup>51</sup> Lewkowicz (2000: 268) notes that for post WWII survivors and after the 1948 establishment of the Jewish state, Israel was to become an important element of Jewish identity. Such an identity was cultivated during the first decades after the war among Jewish youngsters attending Jewish summer camps in which Israeli teachers were brought in: "...most interviewees also remember vividly the Israeli teachers (*morim*)

Hebrew as the only true Jewish language and to reject other languages (Judeo-Spanish and Yiddish, for example) as languages of the exile. To ascertain the position of Hebrew in my participants' conceptualization of their own Jewish and Sephardic identities, I posed the following set of questions:

- Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew?
- Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?
- Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?
- Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?
- Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?
- Is Hebrew part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?
- Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?

#### **4.6.1 Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew?**

To varying degrees, identification with Hebrew as the language of Jewish religion exists even among secular Jews. The question, however, that emerges from this research is whether or not there is an emerging identification with Hebrew as the language of the modern Jewish state. Does *any* identification with Hebrew (of the national and religious sort) supercede identification with Judeo-Spanish? The results from my participant sample in response to this particular question indicate that this has yet to take place. Of the 33 participants, 27 indicated that they identify more with Judeo-Spanish than with

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who were brought from Israel (with the help of the Jewish Agency) to work with children. The learning of Hebrew songs and Israeli dances enhanced the feeling of togetherness among children. Because of this socialization and the personal ties to Salonikans who had emigrated to Israel, Israel became an important source of identification. For the post-war generations, the community also encouraged young people to study in Israel, which many (especially the boys) did.”

Hebrew. However, 4 participants of these 33 stated that while they identified with Judeo-Spanish, Hebrew was nonetheless an important component for self-identification, and 2 participants stated identifying with Hebrew more than with Judeo-Spanish (see Table 4-16)

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Table 4-16: Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew?

Generation and number of participants who stated identifying more with Hebrew than with Judeo-Spanish	Generation and number of participants who stated identifying with both Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish, but for different purposes
G1 (1)	G1 (1)
G2 (0)	G2 (4)
G3 (1)	G3 (0)

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Reasons for identifying with Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew included association of the language with Sephardic culture and with a Thessalonikan brand of Sephardism, association with family and ancestors, and an unfamiliarity with Hebrew:

Con el espanyol porke so sefaradim [G2-M-LA]. [I associate with Espanyol because I am Sephardic.

Espanyol. La lingua de mi padre [G2-F-TK]. [With] Espanyol. The language of my father.

El espanyol. Esto ambezi de mis parientes [G2-M-GK]. Espanyol. I learned this from my parents/relatives.

[Me to] Ladino, yiati milousane para poly sto spiti mou [Grk] [G3-F-AA]. [With] Ladino. Because they spoke [it] a lot in my home.

El espanyol. Yiati eimai ispano-evrea. I gonis milousane kai milane tin ispano evraiki glossa, kai eimai Thessalonikiá [Grk] [G3-F-IN]. In Espanyol. Because I am a Spanish Jew. My parents spoke and speak the Judeo-Spanish language, and because I am a Thessalonikan.

El spanyol. No konosko el ebreo [G3-F-JK]. Spanyol. I don't know Hebrew.

El espanyol... en ebreo entiendo muchas kozas. Avia ambezado lisiones antes ke me kazara ama me kazi muy chika. [Me asosio kon el espanyol mas] porke lo konosko. No konosko el ebreo [G2-F-VB]. Espanyol... I understand many things in Hebrew. I had started [Hebrew] lessons before getting married, but I married very young. [I associate more with Espanyol] because I know it. I don't know Hebrew.

Beyond the response of YES or NO to this question, there were no explanations offered by those two participants who had stated identifying with Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish. However, based on other expressions made at different points of the interview, I attribute their association with Hebrew to a combination of factors. For participant G1-M-AA, the languages spoken in his home were German and Greek. His father was a Thessalonikan Sephardim and his mother was a German-born Ashkenazim. The language of communication between husband and wife and parents and children was primarily German with some Greek -but never Judeo-Spanish. This participant in other points of the interview had also expressed emotional ties with the state of Israel stemming from both his and his father's active involvement in Zionist associations. He reported feeling very proud that one of his children had migrated to Israel and that his grandchildren were native speakers of Hebrew. Even though this speaker reported speaking very little Hebrew himself, he nonetheless associated with Hebrew more. As I've mentioned earlier, I submit that his preference of Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish plays a neutralizing role that accomplishes two feats: first, it consolidates his dual Jewish ethnicity (one Ashkenazic and the other Sephardic) into one, and secondly, it goes hand-in-hand with his alliance to Israel as supported by a Zionist ideology first introduced to him by his father which was



later boosted by his own membership to Zionist associations and intensified with his son's migration to Israel<sup>52</sup>.

Participant G3-F-RT's personal identification with Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish is solely for religious purposes. In response to another question she had answered, her religiously motivated loyalty to Hebrew is apparent:

To prosefxi mou na ginetai [sta] evraika, opos graftike kai i Biblous. Thelo na matho ta evraika yiati i Biblous egrapse sta evraika... Einai i glossa tis Biblou... einai telios diaforatiko yia mena apo Ladino [Grk] [G2-F-RT]. My prayer should be in Hebrew, the way the Bible was written. I want to learn Hebrew because the Bible was written in Hebrew...It's the language of the Bible...It [Hebrew] is completely different for me than Ladino.

Four participants stated identifying with both languages. Their responses are valuable in that they reveal the distribution of functions, associations, and values attributed to each language. Participant G2-M-IM associates himself more with Judeo-Spanish (even though he was a self-reported 'poor speaker' of the language) merely because it is the language that his ancestors and "all the people" of Jewish Salonica once spoke. However, as this linguistic situation is now not at all the case, he regards Hebrew as the language of the future because it, unlike Judeo-Spanish, is now a "living language" for Jews, at least in Israel. Another participant, G2-F-GB, expressed dual identification for both Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew:

Mas al lado de mi? Eh, las dos linguas. Ya me plaze mucho favlar el djudeo-espanyol i ya lo sto ...I'm feeling it [Eng], komo se dize esto.. ya lo puedo sentir esto. Ama tambien, el ebreo... [G2-F-GB]. [Which language is] closer to me? Eh, both are. It makes me very happy to speak Judeo-

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<sup>52</sup> Israeli efforts to solidify a common sense of nationhood upon the state's inception in 1948 included measures to linguistically assimilate its immigrants by discouraging the use of immigrant languages as socially divisive, unpatriotic and very 'un-Israeli'. Thus, in the framework set up by Israel's founding fathers, to be truly patriotic, one must eschew all other languages brought to Israel in order to fully embrace Hebrew, 'the only true Jewish language' (Harris: 1982, Mendes-Chumaceiro: 1982).

Spanish and I am ... I'm feeling it [Eng], how do you say this...I can really feel it. But also, Hebrew...

Participant's G2-M-SE response is interesting in that he acknowledges that Hebrew plays a significant role as it is the sole language of Jewish religion, and even though he himself is religious, Judeo-Spanish is still of greater value to him:

Mas kon el spanyol porke es la lingua ke sentia mucho. Es la lingua de mi famiya. Pero el ebreo es la lingua de mi religion, ama no puedo dezir ke me identifiko personalmente kon ebreo, ama es la prima lingua para mi religion, i la religion es tambien mucho importante. Es todo [G2-M-SE].  
More with Spanyol because it is the language that I heard a lot. It's the language of my family. But Hebrew is the language of my religion, but I can't say that I personally identify with Hebrew, but it's the first language for my religion, and religion is also very important.

This section demonstrates identification of Hebrew with religion and as the national language of Israel, while Judeo-Spanish is the language closely associated with the self, with family members and with the history of Jewish Salonika. As the numerical results show, self-identification with Judeo-Spanish supercedes self-identification with Hebrew. Table 4-16 reveals no generational trend toward a personal identification with Hebrew.

#### **4.6.2 Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?**

The question 'Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?' was asked to see whether or not participants would place a higher value on Hebrew because of its associated importance to Jewish religion and Jewish statehood and because it is a language with national status in spite of personal valorizations for the preference of Judeo-Spanish. In other words, do participants, although they might personally value Judeo-Spanish for affective purposes, regard Hebrew as being 'more important' because of its relevance to the Jewish religion, to the state of Israel and to its official status? The

results indicate that overall, the majority of participants regard Judeo-Spanish to be more important. Cross generationally, a greater proportion of G1 participants responded that Hebrew was more important than Judeo-Spanish, as compared to the results for G3 participants.

Table 4-17: Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?

Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?	24%	67%	6%	3%	0%
	(8)	(22)	(2)	(1)	
Generations 1-3 (N=3)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

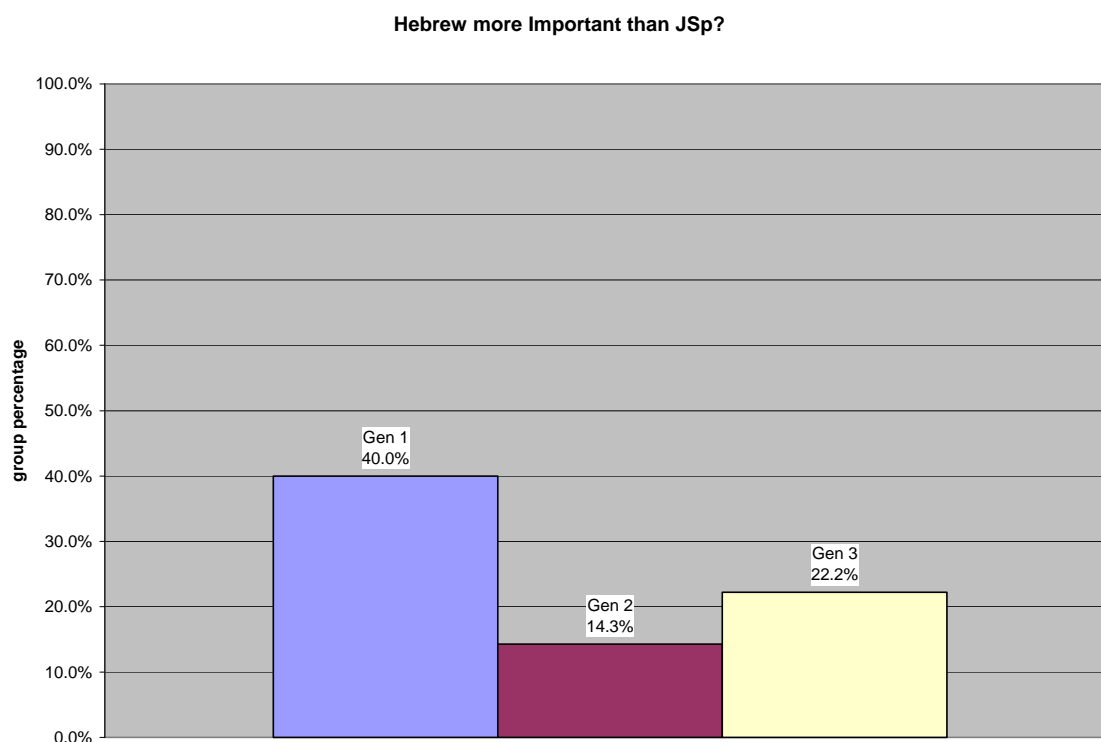


Figure 4-16: Is Hebrew more important than Judeo-Spanish?

Of the entire sample, 24% (8/33) regard Hebrew to be more important than Judeo-Spanish. Reasons for selecting Hebrew as being ‘more important’ than Judeo-Spanish were varied but could be generalized as 1) Hebrew is more important because it

is the language of the religion, 2) Hebrew is more important because it is that language of Israel, and 3) Hebrew is more important because it has national/official status (like Greek, Spanish, English...) while Judeo-Spanish does not.

Conversely, 67% (22/33) responded that Hebrew is not more important than Judeo-Spanish. It's important to bear in mind that answering "no" to this question did not necessarily infer that Judeo-Spanish was more important, but rather that both languages were equally important for different reasons. This view is evidenced in the two expressions below:

En kualo es mas importante? Si tomamos el aspekto de la religion, si klaro es el ebreo [ke es mas imporante]. Ama por otras kozas, no. Porke siempre ay la relasion de korazon kon el ladino, no ay duda de esto [G2-M-SE]. In what way is it [Hebrew] more important? If we take the aspect of religion, yes, of course it's Hebrew [that is more important]. But for other things, no. Because there is always the relationship between the heart and Ladino, there is no doubt about that.

A clear distribution of language function and disclosed value is easily derived from the above response where Hebrew is allocated for purposes of religion while Judeo-Spanish serves as an emotional link to this participant's culture, to Salonika, and to his family. Similarly, G3-F-RT responds that while Judeo-Spanish has become a romanticized language for her in that it is the language intimately associated with her ancestry and specifically of the people that perished during WWII, Hebrew's value is immeasurable as it is the language of the religion and the language in which the Bible was written:

To prosefhi mou na ginetai [sta] evraika, opos grafitike kai i Biblous. Thelo na matho ta evraika, yiati i Biblous egrapse sta evraika... Einai i glossa tis Biblou... einai telios diaforatiko yia mena apo ladino. Omos tha ithela na matho kai ladino. Einai i glossa pou milousan i gonis mou, afta pou akouga sto spiti mou... i papoudes mou, afti i anthropi pou den tous gnosira pote. Pigan xameni afti i anthropi, pou den iparxi oute enas tafos.

Kita poso anthropi. Afto einai yia mena, einai romantiko, poli romantico yia mena. Ala, ta ebraika einai allo pragma. [G2-F-RT]. My prayer should be in Hebrew, the way the Bible was written. I want to learn Hebrew, because the Bible was written in Hebrew...It's the language of the Bible...It [Hebrew] is completely different for me than Ladino. However, I would like to learn Ladino as well. It's the language that my parents spoke, that which I heard in my home...my grandparents, those people that I never knew. Those people were lost, [and] there is not even one tombstone. Look how many people. This is very sentimental for me, very sentimental for me. But, Hebrew is a whole other matter.

The notion of a direct linkage between Judeo-Spanish and family members killed in Nazi concentration camps was to be a common theme throughout many of the interviews and in many of my interactions with community members. Language shift of an ethnic language is most often colored with sadness and regret, but these feelings are intensified when it is the result of an event as traumatic as was the Holocaust to Thessaloniki's Jews. Its memory moved even the youngest of participants who never personally knew family members who perished in concentration camps nearly six decades earlier. Often enough, questions and conversations dealing with the use and/or shift of Judeo-Spanish carried a heavy weight because they inevitably alluded to lost relatives, to the destruction of entire families, to the loss of personal property and to the near dissolution of the Jewish community.

That the two languages are equally important but for different purposes is also expressed by G2-F-TK:

Oxi [i ebraiki glossa den einai pio simantiki], einai diafora, boro na po [G2-F-TK]. No [Hebrew is not more important than Judeo-Spanish], it's different, I can say.

For other participants, the importance of the language was location-dependent:

Oxi. Viviendo en Salonik, la lingua espanyola era mas importante porke hue la lingua ke se avlava. No konusiamos muy bueno el ebreo [G2-F-NB]. No. Living in Salonik, the Spanish language was the most

important because it was the language that was spoken. We didn't know Hebrew very well.

Para los Israelianos ebreo es mas importante ma para la istoria de los Sefaradis i spesialmente de los Saloniklis es el djudeo-espanyol [G2-M-AK]. For Israelis, Hebrew is more important, but in the history of the Sephardim and especially for Saloniklis ['Thessalonikans'], it's Judeo-Spanish.

The following response demonstrates that, although he thinks Hebrew should be more important due to its status in religion and in Israeli nationhood, the paternity, patrimony and phenomenology aspects Judeo-Spanish are more poignant for him:

Tha' prepe alla den einai! [G2-M-LA]. [Hebrew] should be [more important], but it is not!

Along pragmatic lines, participant G2-F-SG responded similarly but noted that Judeo-Spanish was more important because it was more practical for foreign travel than Hebrew because of its similarity to Peninsular and Latin American Spanish:

Seriya ma, no es porke la espanyola, me viene... me ayuda mucho kuando voy mucha ahuera [G2-F-SG]. It should be, but it's not because the Spanish [language], comes to me... it helps me a lot when I go abroad.

Similarly to section 5.6.1, a cross generational examination in Figure 4-16 shows no generational 'trend' that would suggest a movement toward Hebrew. A greater proportion of G1 participants rated Hebrew as being more important than Judeo-Spanish as did participants in G2 and G3. If I were to attempt to explain the quantified results of this question, I would suggest the following: First, the seemingly sporadic numerical results stem from the different ways in which participants interpreted the question. Potential misinterpretations could have been clarified by restating the question to "Is Hebrew more important *to you* than Judeo-Spanish?" or "Do you consider Hebrew to be a more important language than Judeo-Spanish as far as world status or significance in religion?" The comments made by only some of the participants indicate different ways

in which participants based the importance of language. Second, the higher percentage of G1 participants to regard Hebrew as being more important than Judeo-Spanish are influenced by negative attitudes toward Judeo-Spanish's linguistic structure and value (as a language without official status) as corroborated by results found in other communities among participants whose age would more closely approximate the age of my G1 participants (Altabev 1998, Harris 1979, 1994; Malinowski 1982; Mendes Chumaceiro 1982). While these negative attitudes can be generalized to all age groups because just as languages are transmitted, so too are attitudes toward them, it is possible that world experiences afforded by modern-day travel and access to speakers of Peninsular and Latin American Spanish, of which G1 had less of, could have served to balance out, abate or downplay unfavorable views regarding Judeo-Spanish's importance and structural integrity. It could be argued that G2 and G3's more frequent exposure to Spanish varieties and increased worldly encounters may lead them to ultimately affirm that Judeo-Spanish, in spite of its "mixed" and "jargon"-like nature, is a bona-fide language lacking nothing but national status. The heightened interest and scholarly activity of the last two decades revolving around all aspects of Sephardic culture, literature, and language also may have had a positive effect on perceptions of the importance of the language. Third, if Thessaloniki's Jewish community became highly secularized after 1945 (Weis 2002: 170), then G1 participants (although highly secularized themselves with few exceptions) would have been more likely to have been exposed to the linking of Hebrew to religiously motivated discourse before 1945 and after during a transitional period. Finally, the lower proportion of G2 participants that regard Hebrew as being more important than Judeo-Spanish may reflect the fact that many of the G2 participants are

the most active not only in community related events, but also in Judeo-Spanish related affairs in Thessaloniki and abroad. This higher level of activity among G2 participants is explained by age itself. G1 participants are less likely to be as mobile as younger participants, and G3 participants are at a point in life where they are more concerned with practical issues such as studying, establishing social lives and careers and raising young children. Aside from G2's higher level of activity in the community, several participants reported a 'revival' of Judeo-Spanish and all things Sephardic among participants in the G2 age group. In particular, G2-F-AK remarks that when younger she and her peers didn't feel a preoccupation for ethnicity, but now that they've have reached "a middle age" in which one realizes that life is finite, there are tendencies to begin to ponder and explore issues such as ethnicity and one's origin. To satisfy this need, this particular participant, for example, has taken up the task of developing and producing a documentary in which she records spoken narratives in Judeo-Spanish.

#### 4.6.3 Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-18: Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?

Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?	21%	76%	0%	3%	0%
	(7)	(25)		(1)	
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?



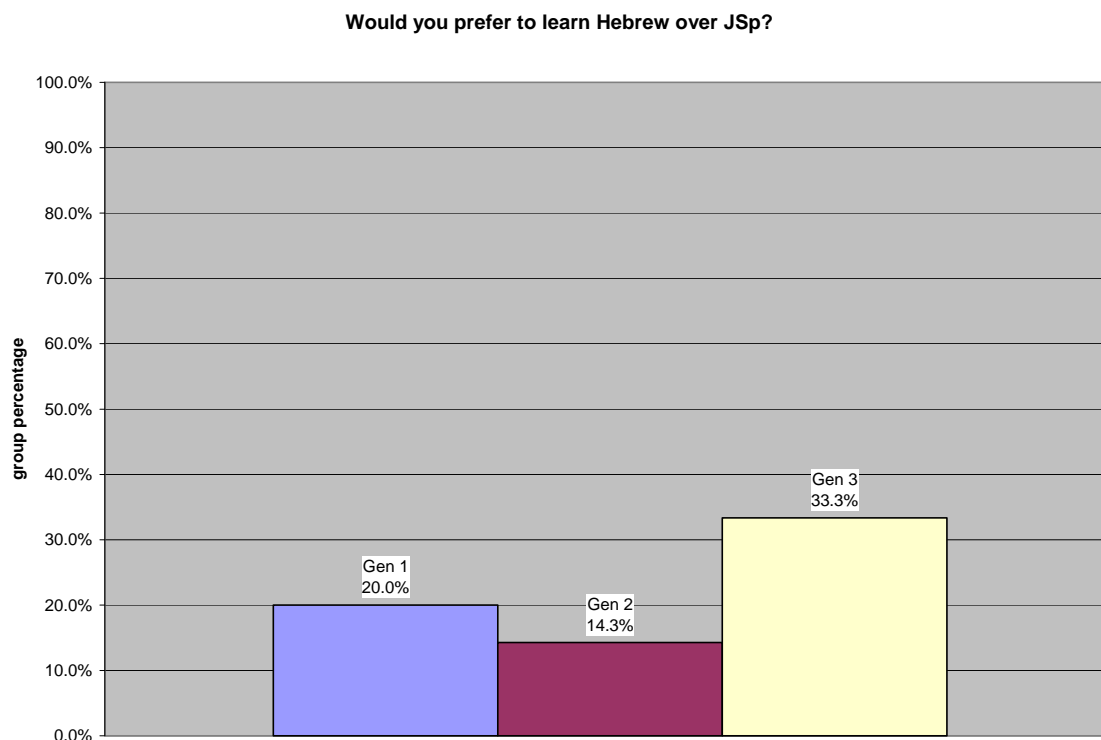


Figure 4-17: Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?

Table 4-18 shows that 21% of all 33 participants responded that they would prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo Spanish. Only two explanations were offered as to why participants would prefer learning Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish. First, participant G3-F-RT, whose response was highlighted earlier in sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2, provides us with a justification for her stated preference of learning Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish:

Nai. To prosefhi mou na ginetai evraika, opos graftike kai i Biblous. Thelo na matho ta evraika, yia ti i Biblous egrapse sta evraika. Omos tha ithela na matho kai ladino. Einai i glossa pou milousan i gonis mou. Afta pou akouga sto spiti mou. i papoudes mou, afti i anthropi pou den tous gnosira pote. Pigan xameni afti i anthropi., pou den iparxi oute enas tafos. Kita poso anthropi. Afto einai yia mena, einai romantico, poli romantico yia mena. Ala, ta ebraika einai allo pragma. Einai i glossa tis Biblou, einai telios diaforatiko yia mena apo ladino [G3-F-RT] My prayer should be in Hebrew, the way the Bible was written. I want to learn Hebrew, because the Bible was written in Hebrew...It's the language of the Bible...It

[Hebrew] is completely different for me than Ladino. However, I would like to learn Ladino as well. It's the language that my parents spoke, that which I heard in my home, my grandparents, those people that I never knew. Those people were lost, there is not even one tombstone. Look how many people. This is very sentimental for me, very sentimental for me. But, Hebrew is something else [has another kind of importance].

While this participant, a self-reported 'religious Jew', recognizes the affective value of Judeo-Spanish, a language that reminds her of her roots and of so many of its speakers, including her own family members, who died in concentration camps, she responds that the language of Jewish prayer is of primary importance. Her desire to read the Bible in Hebrew is backed up by weekly language and religious "*mathimata*" (Grk. 'lessons') with the community Rabbi.

Another participant who had earlier responded feeling 'indifferent' to whether or not Hebrew was more important than Judeo-Spanish, answered this question affirmatively:

Nai, tha ithela na matho *kai* ta evraika (G2-M-AA)

Because he is a self-reported secular Jew who is also a writer by profession, I regard his desire to learn Hebrew not for religious purposes but for all that can be gained culturally and intellectually from learning another language. Also, due to the way his response was phrased and the emphasis he placed on the conjunction 'and', I interpret his response to mean that he would like to learn Hebrew, just not necessarily *instead of* learning Judeo-Spanish.

For most participants who responded 'no' to the question 'Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?', pragmatism and level of difficulty were the most commonly stated explanation as to why they would *not* prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish:

Oxi. Yo prekuri d'ambezar el ebreo porke tiene menester en Israel y en Palestina de favlar en ebreo ma komo eos [aki] favlaban en espanyol, preferi favlar en espanyol [G1-F-NB]. No, I tried to learn Hebrew because it is necessary in Israel and in Palestine to speak in Hebrew, but since they [here] spoke in Espanyol, I preferred to speak in Espanyol.

A la edad onde esto, ladino [G1-F-JK]. At the age where I am, Ladino.

No. El dzudeo-espanyol es mas fachile para mi [G2-F-VB]. No. Judeo-Spanish is easier for me.

No. El espanyol es mas fachile [G2-F-SG]. No. Espanyol is easier.

To the question “Would you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish, only one participant answered with “indifferent”:

Ouf... I don't know. I'm indifferent. Es una lingua komo otra. Yo avlo las dos. Indiferente (G2-F-EP). Ouf... I don't know. I'm indifferent. It's a language like any other. I speak both. Indifferent.

This section shows that Hebrew is not the preferred language to be learned among the majority of participants in the sample and in each generational group. Of the three groups, G3 had the highest percentage (33%) of participants preferring to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish. Reasons for wanting to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish were not given among those G3 participants who answered the question affirmatively, except for G3-F-RT who is religiously motivated to prefer Hebrew. Given the lack of explicit explanations as to why G3 participants would rather learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish, I am unable to state with complete certainty the reason behind G3's greater proportion of participants responding 'yes' to this question. However, as I have alluded to earlier, I propose that this slight increase in affirmative responses from G1 to G3 reflects an emerging marker of identity for Hebrew.

#### 4.6.4 Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?

Table 4-19: Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?

Generations 1-3 (n=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?
Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?	67% (22)	24% (8)	6% (2)	3% (1)	0%
Do you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?	21% (7)	76% (25)	0%	3% (1)	0%

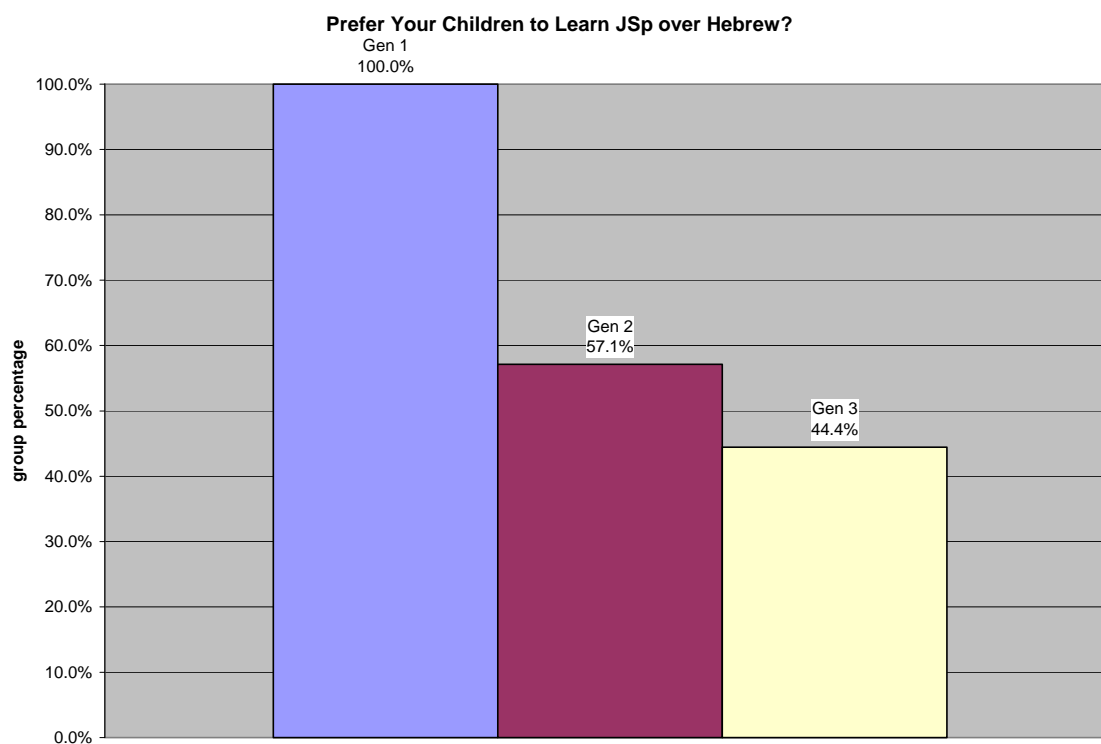


Figure 4-18: Do you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?

This question was posed to participants in order to determine if the priorities participants held for their children were different from those they held for themselves. To determine this, I refer the reader back to the previous question ‘Do you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish (section 5.6.3). For simplification of comparison, I have reproduced the results to this question here (as seen in Table 4-19). Comparing the

overall results for ‘Do you prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?’ with the overall results for ‘Would you prefer your children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew?’ we can see that participant responses are fairly consistent. Where 21% of participants reported that they would prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish, 24% responded that they would *not* prefer their children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew (i.e. they would prefer them to learn Hebrew over Judeo Spanish). Where 76% of participants reported that would *not* prefer to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish (i.e. they would prefer to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew), 67% percent responded that they would prefer their children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew. To summarize this result more clearly, the majority of participants prefer learning Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew for themselves *and* for their children.

The reasons for stating that it is preferable for their children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew vary once again from being pragmatically (due to its similarity to Spanish) to affectively motivated:

Si, porke [el espanyol] es mas praktico en el mundo [G2-F-SG]. Yes, because [Espanyol] is more practical in the world.

Another participant noted the importance of her children learning Judeo-Spanish for the sake of language and cultural continuity. She recognizes the ‘moral imperative’ to speak the language merely for the sake of language transmission:

Nai [Grk. ‘yes’]. Si, yo prefero porke, ke keda de la lingua despues? Los ke avlamos, favlamos dainda espanyol, devemos de favlar la lingua. Porke si no, la tradision se va a perder kompletamente [G1-F-NB]. Yes [Grk]. Yes, I prefer [my children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew] because what remains of the language afterwards [if they don’t]? Those of us who speak, who speak the language must [continue to] speak the language. Because if not, the tradition will be completely lost.

Participant G2-F-VB initially states that she'd like her children to speak both languages, but her next comment suggests that there is a stronger pull toward Judeo-Spanish because it is the language that is grounded in the history of city. For her, Judeo-Spanish is an integral and inextricable part of the city's makeup:

Si, ma preferava ke favlaran todas las linguas. Ma dzudeo espanyol es la historia de Salonik. Lo digo i lo kreo. Keria ke favlaran [G2-F-VB]. Yes, but I would prefer they speak both languages. But Judeo-Spanish is the history of Salonik. I say it and I believe it. I would have liked them to speak [it].

The sentiment that Judeo-Spanish is preferable to Hebrew on the grounds that it is simply the language of the Salonikan Sephardim is evident as well in the next two responses:

Si. Aki komo favlamos el dzudeo-espanyol, protimo [Grk. 'I prefer'] ke favlan [G1-F-JK]. Yes. Here since we speak Judeo-Spanish, I prefer that they speak [Judeo-Spanish].

Si, porke es la lingua de los djudios de aki [G1-F-RN]. Yes, because it is the language of the Jews from here.

Participants who were unwilling to choose one language over the other for their children were placed in the Yes-No category for the question 'Do you prefer your children to learn Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish?'. The value of participant G2-M-SE's dual response points to the previously noted distribution of Judeo-Spanish/Hebrew language function of Thessalonikian Sephardim today:

Los dos. El ebreo por razones de religion i el spanyol por razones de tradision [G2-M-SE]. Both. Hebrew for the religion and Spanyol for the tradition.

Another noteworthy finding from the results of these two questions is to be found in the way participant G2-M-LA responded: while responding that he would personally prefer learning Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew, he noted that he'd prefer them to learn both:

Tha protimouse na mathoun kai tous dió [Grk] [G2-M-LA]. I'd prefer that they learn both.

I suggest that his preference of both languages for his children (and Judeo-Spanish for himself) demonstrates that he recognizes that the younger generations will have a different social reality than that of his own and that he perceives a growing value attributed to the Hebrew language in Sephardic communities where Judeo-Spanish is in rapid shift. Another finding that corroborates my assertion is found in a cross generational examination, as seen in Figure 4-18. While 100% of G1 participants report preferring their children to learn Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew, 57.1 % of G2, and 44.4% of G3 participants replied 'yes' to the same question. This points to a progressive shift away from Judeo-Spanish when it comes to assessing which language might be more relevant and more useful in the lives of their offspring.

Upon first glance, the results from this section seem to pose a problem when comparing them with the results from section 5.6.1 ('Do you identify more with Judeo-Spanish or with Hebrew?') in which the majority of the sample and the majority from each generational group stated identifying more with Judeo-Spanish than with Hebrew. However, I submit that such discrepancy should be viewed under the consideration that there are slow moving shifts and transitions taking place in the community of which community members themselves are either unaware or still unable or hesitant to articulate. So, while the majority of participants from each generational group self identify more with Judeo-Spanish over Hebrew, the proportion of participants valorizing Hebrew over Judeo-Spanish for future generations increases from G1 to G3. I submit that this points to a slow shifting prioritization for language identification.

#### 4.6.5 Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?

Table 4-20: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew or Judeo-Spanish?

Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?	33%	58%	0%	9%	0%
	(11)	(19)		(3)	
Does it bother you if your child does not speak Judeo-Spanish?	67%	30%	3%	0%	0%
	(22)	(10)	(1)		
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

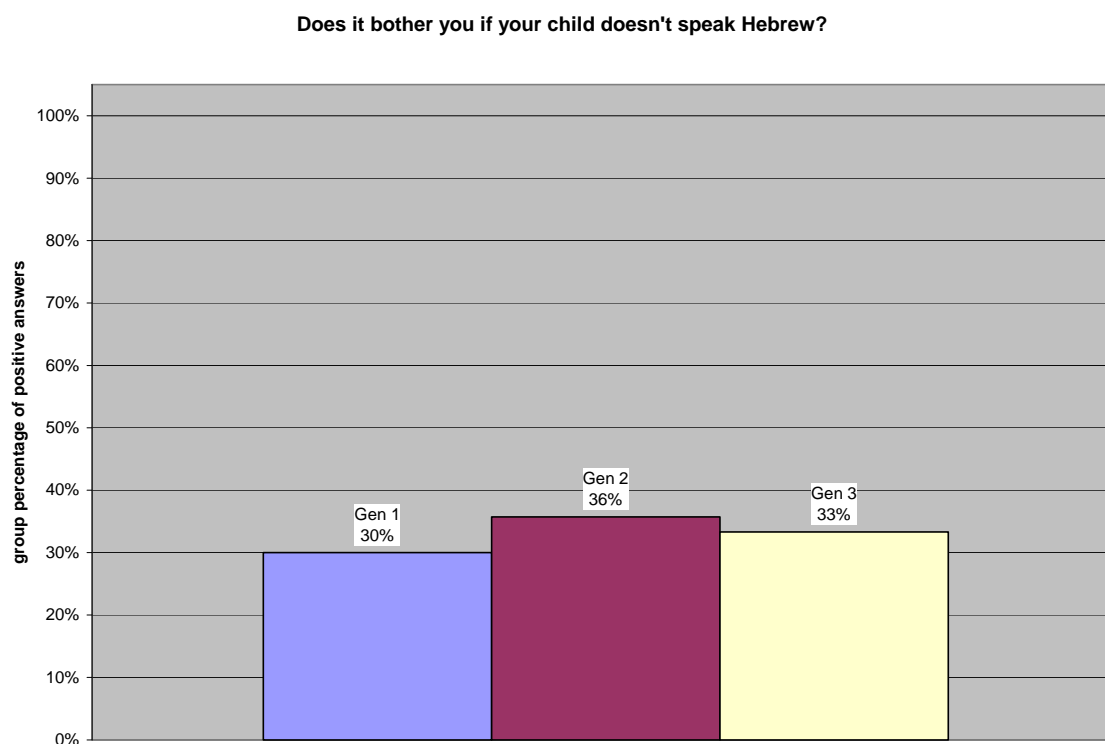


Figure 4-19: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?



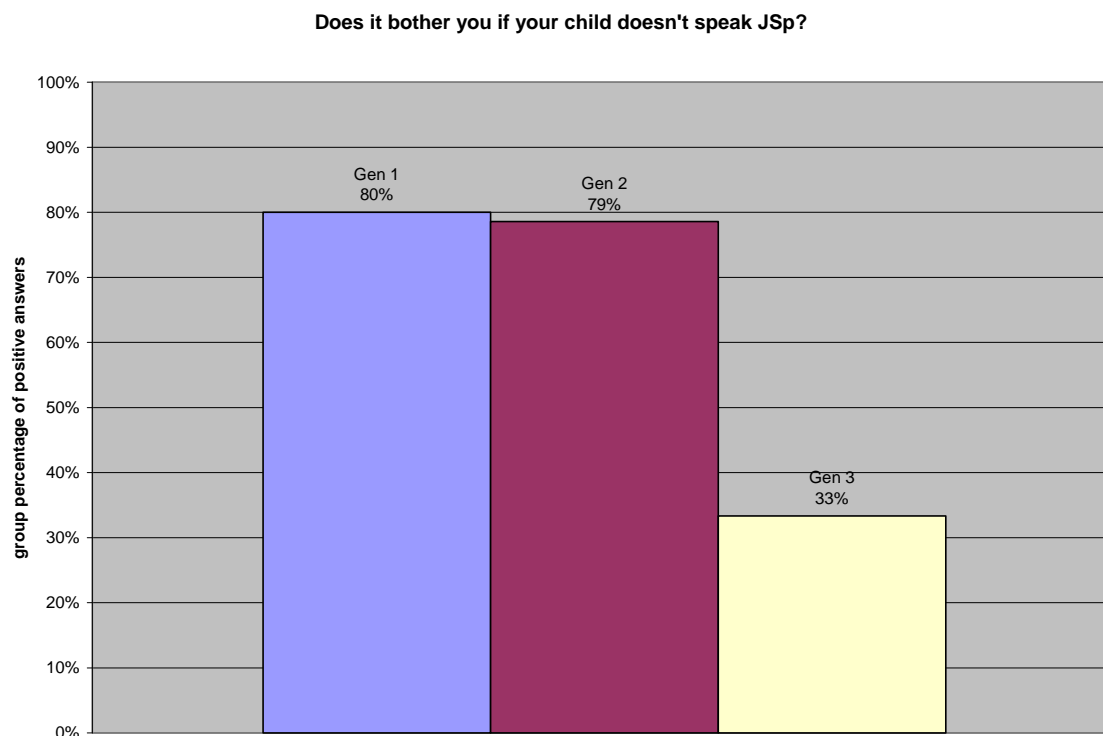


Figure 4-20: Does it bother you if your child does not speak Judeo-Spanish?

As evidenced in Table 4-20, 33% of the total sample reported being bothered if their children did not speak or understand Hebrew:

Si, me faze mal, ma se ke es una koza imposivle [G1-F-JK]

When participant G2-M-LA was first asked if he'd be bothered if his children did not speak or understand Judeo-Spanish, he responded 'yes', that he would be bothered. When asked about Hebrew, he responds 'Nai, kai afto' (Grk. 'Yes, and that [would bother me]'). He is an interesting case because while he stated no particular desire to learn Hebrew for himself, he apparently feels differently when it comes to his children. What could be regarded as an inconsistency in his responses could rather be taken as a reflection of the slowly emerging value of Hebrew for Jewish identity, and even as a

potential boundary marker between Jews and non Jews in Thessaloniki. Although, the given the current political atmosphere in Greece regarding Israel's domestic policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians, identification with Hebrew as the language of the Israeli state would prove to be dangerous for Thessaloniki Jews as it would more easily allow non Jewish Greeks to identify them with Israelis. It is unclear whether or not this identification is desired. In any case, because knowledge of Hebrew is rare among participants in this sample, said value and identification with Hebrew could only be symbolic in nature.

The reason behind another participant's being bothered by his child not speaking or understanding Hebrew is that such linguistic inability would complicate communication and ties between his children and relatives in Israel:

Yes, it's good for them. They have lots of family ties in Israel [G2-M-IM]

Whereas Judeo-Spanish traditionally served as a lingua franca between extended family members living in countries with different national languages as attested by several G1 and G2 participants who stated using Judeo-Spanish with cousins who lived in Turkey and Israel, the shift of this language leaves room for the emergence of another convenient lingua franca. While it seems that English is that language for the time being, there is potential for Hebrew to take over that role in future generations. Weis (2002) states that 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Sephardic and Ashkenazic traders in the Diaspora commonly employed whatever limited Hebrew could be mustered from religious studies as a means to communicate with one another. While immigration to Israel from Thessaloniki has been low in recent decades compared to what it was during the first five decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, maintained family ties engenders motivation for Hebrew language learning,

if only to be able to communicate with relatives. Thus, Hebrew, as a future familial lingua franca between relatives in Israel and Greece is a viable possibility as long as contact between family members is sustained and as long as opportunities to visit, study, and migrate to Israel are available to diasporic youth and encouraged by Israel. However, as long as Greek public discourse remains as anti-American and anti-Israeli as it is currently, identification with Hebrew, at least in the public sphere, might be constrained.

The majority of participants (58%) in Table 4-20 would not be bothered if their children did not speak or understand Hebrew. The reason for this was primarily because of the perceived limited pragmatic value of Hebrew outside of Israel:

Esto no puedo dezir porke el ebreo afuera de Israel avlan solo los muncho religiosos. Para mozotros ke no semos fanatikos no tiene importansia [G1-F-NB]

For participant G1-F-NB, the importance given to ability to speak Hebrew for non Israeli Jews translates into a fanaticism which she suggests is undesirable. Her use of the first-person plural subject pronoun ‘mozotros’ (‘we’) speaks to the popular sentiment that today’s Thessalonikian Jewry is heavily secularized and is at least not publicly Zionist, and that for non-religious and non Zionist Jews, the desire to speak Hebrew is still minimal. This being the case, and as the following sections will reveal, while explicit identification with Hebrew as the national language of Israel is minimal, a transition may become apparent in future generations. However, this transition, as it will be seen in Chapter 6, is mediated and curved by the process of assimilation and acceptance into Greek society at large. Part of this assimilation and acceptance might mean the adoption of popular Greek views which tend to disfavor Israel as a consequence of its alliance with the U.S.

To further understand the positions of Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew among participants, the numerical results from questions ‘Does it bother you if your child does not speak Hebrew?’ and ‘Does it bother you if your child does not speak Judeo-Spanish?’ were compared (see Table 4-20). While 67% of the total sample responded that they would be bothered if their children didn’t speak Judeo-Spanish, only 33% reported feeling bothered if their children didn’t speak Hebrew. Overall, and when it comes to language transmission, Judeo-Spanish is still the preferred language choice over Hebrew.

When we compare the results cross-generationally, we see that there is no compelling difference between the generations for question ‘Does it bother you if your child does not speak or understand Hebrew?’ (see Figure 4-19). The same is not true for Judeo-Spanish as seen in Figure 4-20 (‘Does it bother you if your child does not speak or understand Judeo-Spanish?’). A cross generational comparison of shows that 80% and 79% of G1 and G2 respectively are bothered if their children do not speak/understand Judeo-Spanish compared to the 30% and 36% of G1 and G2 participants who are bothered if their children do not have the same ability in Hebrew. Interestingly, G3 does not share the values as G1 and G2 with respect to children having knowledge of Judeo-Spanish. For G3, only 33% of participants stated that they would be bothered if their children did not speak Hebrew or Judeo-Spanish. What this ultimately shows is that while there is no compelling difference between the generations with respect to Hebrew, there is a progressive decline with respect to Judeo-Spanish. It appears that the younger the participant, the uncertainty of Judeo-Spanish transmission is met with less disapproval.

#### 4.6.6 Is Hebrew Part of Your Jewish and Sephardic Identities?

Table 4-21: Is Hebrew part of your Jewish and Sephardic identities?

Is Hebrew part of your Jewish identity?	64%	24%	6%	3%	3%
	(21)	(8)	(2)	(1)	(1)
Is Hebrew part of your Sephardic identity?	42%	42%	3%	9%	3%
	(14)	(14)	(1)	(3)	(1)
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

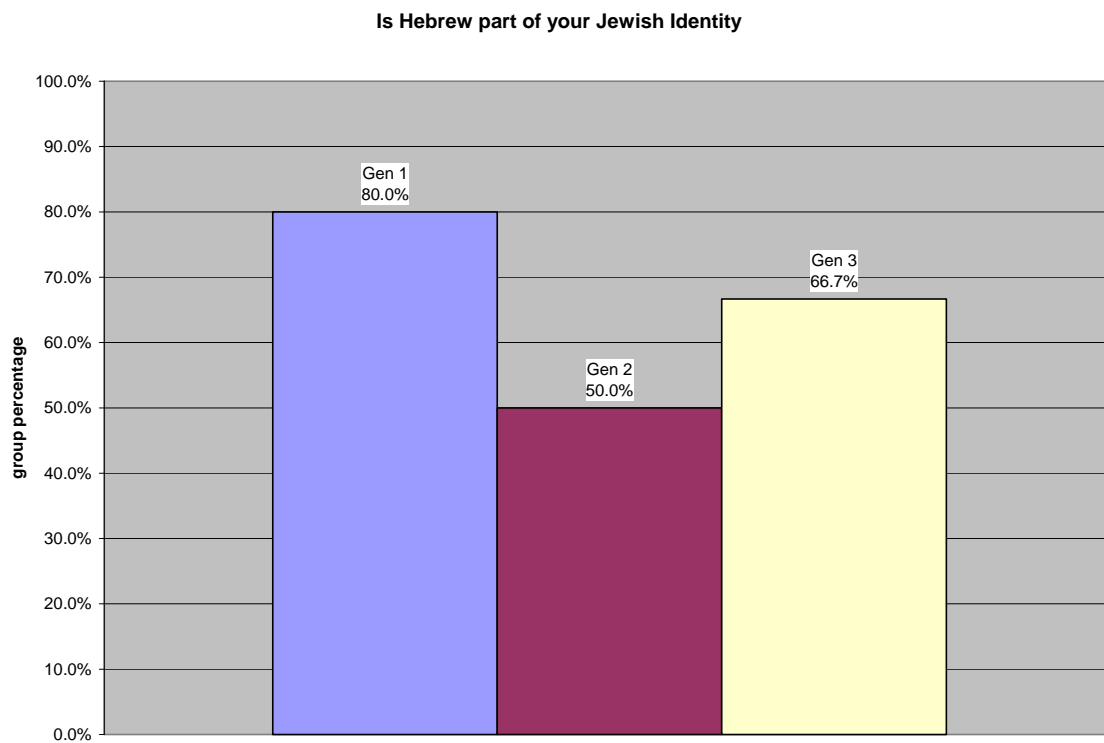


Figure 4-21: Is Hebrew part of your Jewish identity?

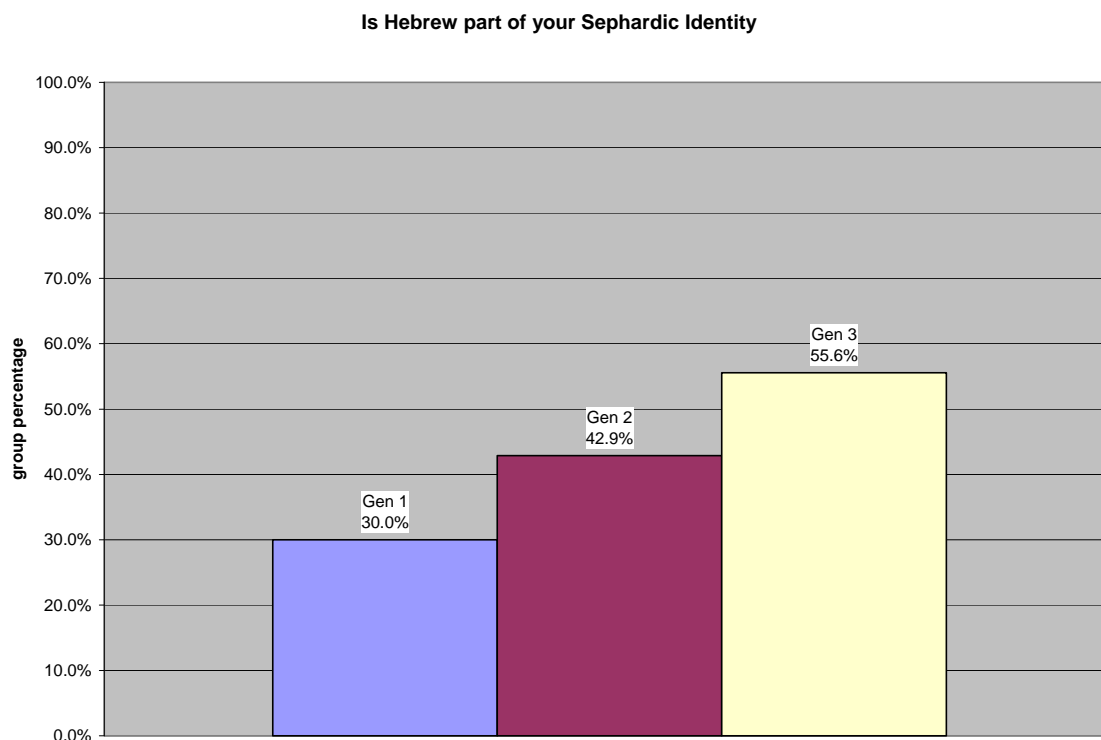


Figure 4-22: Is Hebrew part of your Sephardic identity?

Similar to the questions ‘Is Judeo-Spanish part of your Sephardic and Jewish identities?’ (Section 5.5.4), the questions ‘Is Hebrew part of your Sephardic identity?’ and ‘Is Hebrew part of your Jewish identity?’ were posed for three purposes: 1) to get an idea of the importance given to Hebrew for identity formation and maintenance in general; 2) to see what changes/shifts have taken place over the generations with respect to the value of Hebrew for identity formation and maintenance; and 3) to provide additional expressions that would in turn help me define what contemporary Thessalonikan Jewishness and Sephardicness is for my sample of participants and to support my contention of an emerging schism between what it means to be Sephardic and what it means to be Jewish.

The results of Figure 4-21 ('Is Hebrew a part of your Jewish identity?') are anticipated on the one hand (that most participants would regard Hebrew as a component of Jewish identity), and surprising on the other (that there appears to be substantial drop between G1 and G2, and conversely a slight increase between G2 and G3. The results from this question become more interesting when we compare them to those of the next question posed, as seen in Figure 4-22 ('Is Hebrew a part of your Sephardic identity?'). While more than half of each group regarded Hebrew to be a part of a Jewish identity, only G3 comes away with ratings over 50% for Hebrew as part of a Sephardic identity.

A comparison of G1 scores from both Figure 4-21 and 4-22 is telling: 8/10 participants (80%) state that Hebrew is a part of Jewish identity compared to only 3/10 (30%) of G1 participants who regard Hebrew to be part of a Sephardic identity. While the differences between G2 and G3 results from both figures are smaller (a difference of 7.1% for G2 between Figures 4-21 and 4-22 and a difference of 11.1% for G3), they still indicate that overall, more participants from each group consider Hebrew to be a greater part of Jewish identity than of Sephardic identity. A review of participant expressions helps to clarify numerical results presented for the questions 'Is Hebrew part of your Jewish identity?' and 'Is Hebrew part of your Sephardic identity?'. In addition, participant expressions cast light on the differing conceptualizations of what it means to be Sephardic and what it means to be Jewish and where Hebrew fits into these.

For G1-F-NB, Hebrew is less important for questions of Jewish identity because it was a language that she and others never learned, although it was a language she would have liked to learn:

[El ebreo es] Um poko manko [imporante ke dzudeo-espanyol a ke so dzudia] porke no lo ambezimos nunca. Yo tuve la oportunidad en un anyo

en Palestina, no era dainda Israel, i ansina me hui a la skola de noche i ambezimos poko en ebreo, ma malourazamente no favlo. [Hebrew is] A little bit less [important than Judeo-Spanish for my being Jewish]. I had the opportunity during one year in Palestine, it wasn't yet Israel, and I went to night school and we learned a little bit of Hebrew, but unfortunately I don't speak [it].

When asked about the importance of Hebrew for Sephardic identity, she states that

Hebrew only comes into play when considering the religious aspect of 'Sephardicness':

Si, porke las oraciones las fazian en ebreo, ama huera de la religion no es tanto importante, porke aki no se favla en ebreo, se favlava en espanyol [G1-F-NB]. Yes, because the prayers are made in Hebrew, but outside of the religion, it's not as important because here Hebrew is not spoken, Espanyol is spoken.

Participant G2-M-SE responds 'entre si i no' [between yes and no] when asked about Hebrew's importance for his Jewish identity. However, when asked if Hebrew played a role in his Sephardic identity, he replied without hesitation that it did not. For the question 'Is Hebrew a part of your Jewish identity?' participant G2-M-LA pauses before answering 'Tha'prepe!' [Grk. It should be!']. As for Hebrew playing a role in his identity as a Sephardim, he decisively responds 'no'. For participant G2-F-TK, Hebrew has no stated relevance as a component of her Sephardic identity; however, as part of her Jewish identity, she states that while she doesn't speak it at all, she feels it: 'Nai, den tin milaw, aplos tin estanome' [Grk. Yes, I don't speak it, I just feel it].

While participant G2-F-VB states that Judeo-Spanish plays a more notable role for her Jewish identity than does Hebrew, Hebrew is nonetheless important because she is afterall a Jew:

Seguramente, ma no favlamos en ebreo porke no ambezimos en ebreo sobre todo despues de la Guerra. No es tanto important komo la lingua espanyola. Ma no puedo desir 'si' o 'no'...Ma si, la lingua ebraa djuga un rolo importante a ke so dzudia. Surely, but we don't speak Hebrew because we didn't learn Hebrew especially after the war. It's not as important as the Spanish language [Judeo-Spanish]. But I can't say 'yes'



or ‘no’... but yes, the Hebrew language plays an important role because I am Jewish.

Hebrew as part of her Sephardic identity, however, is irrelevant:

No [el ebreo no no djuga un rolo importante a ke so sefaradita]. La lingua ebreo djuga rolo importante porke so djudia ma dzudeo-espanyol djuga rolo importante porke so sefaradim. No [Hebrew does not play an important role does not play an important role in my Sephardic identity]. The Hebrew language plays an imporante role because I am Jewish, but Judeo-Spanish plays an important role because I’m Sephardic.

For participant G3-F-AA, Hebrew does play a role in her Jewish identity, but does ‘not necessarily’ [Grk. ‘oxi idietera’] have a place in her conceptualization of a Sephardic one.

For G3-F-DK, the fact that she never learned Hebrew until she was old enough to attend the Jewish summer camps has an effect on the extent to which she considers Hebrew to a part of her Jewish heritage. Later, as a teenager and young adult, she began to learn the language in Jewish summer camps, and it was then and there that Hebrew began to play a bigger role in her conceptualization of what it means to be a Jew. Her comment reveals the power and influence of institutional support (as taught in summer camps and at a Jewish school by Israeli teachers flown in for the camp) in the effort to incite language loyalty, whether communicatively or symbolically. In this case, the institutional support to which G3-F-DK had access was intent on creating a bond between the Jewish child of the Diaspora and the Hebrew language, Israel and Israelis:

Well, I didn’t learn any Hebrew until I was old enough to go to the camp, and there I learned some Jewish songs, and some Jewish dances. But at that time that I was going to school [during her primary school years in Thessaloniki.], we didn’t have a Jewish school. So I learned what I learned from the Jewish camp, from the Jewish Club, and from some Jewish teachers that were coming from time to time to the city.

For the purpose of defining Jewish and Sephardic conceptualizations, the following conclusions can be drawn from this section. First, sample participants consider Hebrew

to be a greater part of Jewishness than of Sephardicness. Second, in a cross generational comparison, 50% or more of each generational group claim Hebrew to a part of Jewish identity. Third, with respect to Hebrew and its relation to Sephardic identity, a cross generational examination reveals that a greater proportion of G3 participants view Hebrew to be a component of Sephardic identity. The participant expressions provided above support the numerical results in that they reveal that Hebrew is a part of Jewish identity as it relates to the religion and to Israel. Less ce is given to Hebrew as it relates to Sephardic identity because of the inextricable ties that bind Sephardism to Thessaloniki, and in turn Thessaloniki to Judeo-Spanish.

#### 4.6.7 Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?

Table 4-22: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?

Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?	18% (6)	79% (26)	3% (1)	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y-N	Ind.	?

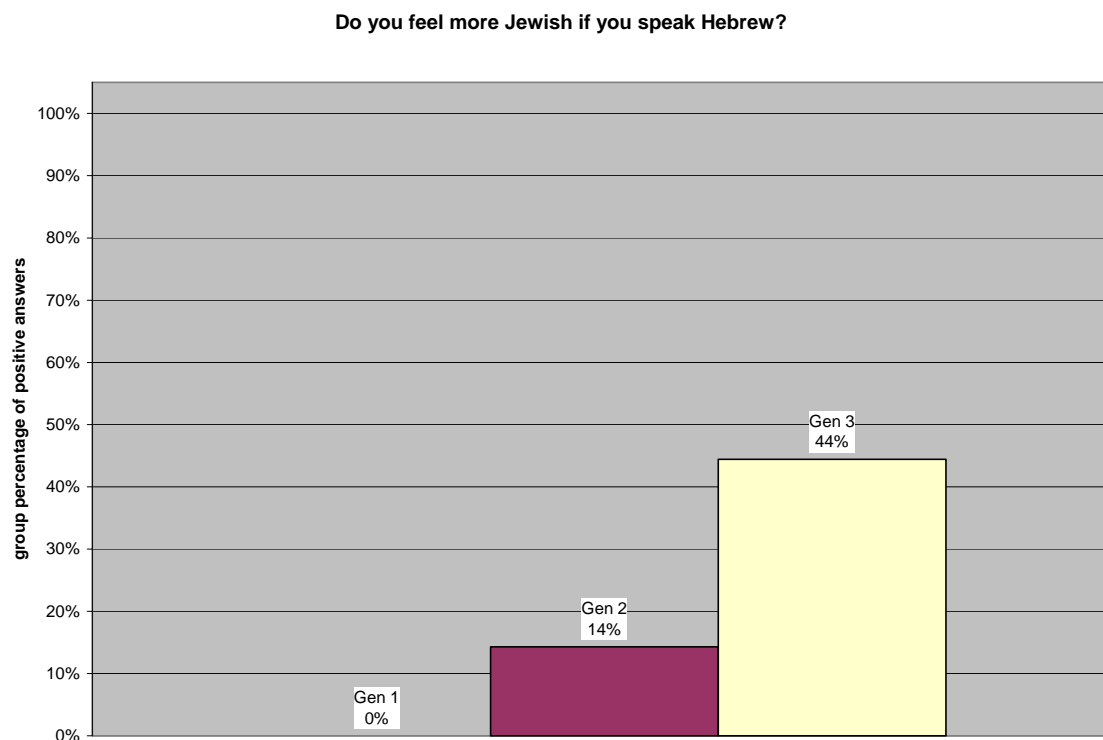


Figure 4-23: Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?

The numerical results of Table 4-22 show that, overall, most participants (79%) do not feel more Jewish with the ability to speak Hebrew as compared to 45% of participants who do not feel more with a Judeo-Spanish speaking ability (Section 5.5.5, Table 4-15):

No [No me siento mas dzudia si favlo en ebreo] mismo porke ya favlo un poko ivrit y nunca pudo fazerme sentir manko dzudia o mas dzudia [G1-F-NB]. No [I don't feel more Jewish if I speak Hebrew] mainly because I already speak Hebrew and it could never make me feel more Jewish or less Jewish.

Moreover, for participant G2-F-VB, not only does the ability to speak in Hebrew not make her feel more Jewish, but here she suggests that knowledge of the language would have nationalistic associations with the State of Israel:

Me siento mas isrealiana, no djudia! [G2-F-VB]. I [would] feel more Israeli, not Jewish!

Only 18% of all participants reported that they would feel more Jewish if they were able to speak Hebrew, compared to the 52% who responded feeling more Jewish with Judeo-Spanish speaking ability (see Table 4-15). A comparison of the numerical results from these two questions reveals two important findings: First, more participants (overall and from each generational group) feel more Jewish with the ability to speak Judeo-Spanish than with the ability to speak Hebrew, thus exemplifying that Judeo-Spanish still retains greater importance for Thessalonikan Jewish identity than does Hebrew. Second, there is an increase in the proportions of participants from G1 to G3 who report feeling more Jewish if they speak Hebrew. Finally, a comparison of the generational differences between Figures 4-15 ('Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Judeo-Spanish?') and 4-23 ('Do you feel more Jewish if you speak Hebrew?') reveals that there is a t increase in value placed on Hebrew for Jewish identity among G3 participants, as compared to G1 and G2 participants, while the value of Judeo-Spanish remains relatively constant between the three generational groups. Simply put, more or less 50% of each age group feel more Jewish with Judeo-Spanish language ability, while Hebrew language ability carries the same force for only G3 participants.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

Quite consistent with languages in shift, there is a variety of terms used to denote the language, but what is noteworthy from this sample is the increased use of the term *ladino* among younger participants. While, for many older participants, this term refers

to the literary calque variety, for younger members it is used- in conjunction with *espanyol/spanyol*- to refer to the vernacular of Jewish Thessaloniki. What this suggests, I have proposed, is the influence of scholarly work in all things Sephardic of the last several decades to which community members are exposed. Moreover, the use of the term *ladino* describes the nature in which younger participants are acquainted with the language. What is for older participants a spoken vernacular used for day-to-day communication is for younger sample participants an object of study. Whereas Judeo-Spanish is a concrete, tangible, real-life mode of communication for older participants, it is abstract and symbolic for younger participants.

In terms of the awareness that participants have of the language's origin, the data show that regardless of reported language ability, knowledge of Judeo-Spanish's Peninsular origins is widespread. This, in fact, differs from Harris' (1979, 1994) sample where only a portion of participants had any knowledge of the language's origins. Again, this points to a more academic-like acquaintance with the language among younger participants.

In general terms, Judeo-Spanish is thought to be more similar to Latin American Spanish than Peninsular Spanish, but with the addition of lexical borrowings from autochthonous Balkan languages. The use of Judeo-Spanish is also heavily marked with Greek/Judeo-Spanish codeswitching, which participants regard as a likely phenomenon in language-contact settings. Participants view codeswitching positively as it adds a desirable Jewish flavor to speech patterns and best typifies their particular variety of Thessalonikan Judeo-Spanish, which according to them, produces nostalgic feelings of the city's Jewish past. However, the amount of nostalgia produced upon hearing or

speaking Judeo-Spanish declines considerably the younger the generational group.

There, thus, appears to be a correlation between generational group, linguistic ability and the degree of nostalgia felt for the language. That is, the older the participant, the greater the language ability and the greater degree of nostalgia felt.

In addition to the nostalgia produced upon hearing or using Judeo-Spanish, codeswitching and the integration of Judeo-Spanish lexical items afford participants with the opportunity to display their ethnicity, when they desire to do so. The use of Judeo-Spanish among this study's participants is employed to establish boundaries with the outgroup and to signal group solidarity with other ingroup members. Participants can soften these boundaries by evading the public use of Judeo-Spanish when the desire is to integrate. Likewise, they can establish and fortify social boundaries by publicly employing or associating themselves with Judeo-Spanish when the desire is to set themselves apart from the Christian majority. In the latter case, the sprinkling of Judeo-Spanish into Greek is an easy, non-taxing way to display ethnicity, both in and out of the community. Although participants reported a private aspect of Judeo-Spanish language use in light of the discrimination faced during and post WWII, the last few decades of scholarly effort invested in their community and language have inspired many to shed a degree of discretion, and in fact, the linguistic behaviors employed by my participants fit perfectly within the confines of their particular social milieu: linguistic behavior attracting negative attention- as is the communicative use and the transmission of Judeo-Spanish (in a communicative function)- is evaded. This would not only be impractical, considering the already shifted state of the language, it would also be an obstacle to the speaker's integration into Thessalonikan society. In its communicative function, Judeo-

Spanish is an impossibility. In its capacity as a symbolic and an associated language, the use of Judeo-Spanish is much more palatable for participants and the majority society alike. Association with the language, expressed positive attitudes toward the language, feelings of regret and sadness at its shift, and the use and transmission of food names, kinship terms, terms of endearment, expletives, names of songs, proverbs, imitations of parents/grandparents, and jokes are all ways that satisfy the symbolic function of Judeo-Spanish.

Notwithstanding participant views regarding Judeo-Spanish as a “mixed” language, a “jargon”, or a “bastardized and corrupted” language of low prestige, it enjoys positive attitudes from all participants, and nearly all participants report feeling saddened by its loss. A telling result, however, is that the lack of intergenerational transmission is met with less disapproval among the youngest of participants, G3.

Participants view the function of the language with mixed feelings. Within the city, it has no pragmatic use. In the international arena, it proves to be useful as a *lingua franca*, both for communication with relatives in Israel and for contact with Spanish speakers in Spain and in Latin America. Affectively, the language holds greater value as an essential Jewish element of the city’s Jewish and, more specifically, Sephardic past. It is a language that elicits memories of family members who have passed away over the years and, more tragically, of those who were lost during in the Holocaust. As was stated by more than one participant, perished family members live on through the language. For younger participants who have no memories of their of the city’s Jewish past or of family members they were never to meet but heard so much about, the language is an integral part of their imagination of what once was.

Also in this chapter, I discussed the emerging conceptualization of diverging Jewish and Sephardic identities in which the role of Judeo-Spanish can be seen to be distanced from a conceptualization of a universal, all-inclusive ‘Jewishness’, while its presence is becoming increasingly interwoven with a definition of a very ‘Thessalonikan-brand’ of Sephardicness. In terms of generational differences, this dichotomy appears to be more poignant among G2 and G3 participants than among the oldest of the participants. There are various motivations behind the emerging dichotomy, the most powerful being the influence of Zionist ideology stressing a common Israeli language and culture at the expense of idiosyncratic, regional forms of Jewry. Moreover, the existence of the Jewish state post WWII has enabled Thessalonikan Jews, more than ever before, to be in close and intimate contact with Jews from all backgrounds. In this environment, whatever the Sephardim have in common with the Ashkenazim, for example, is in the realm of all things ‘Jewish’ (ancient Jewish historicity, Hebrew in its liturgical function, and as the official language of Israel, religion, adversity in the Diaspora, etc). Conversely, all that is regional, including Judeo-Spanish, belongs to the realm of that which is ‘Sephardic’, and in the case of my participants, purely Thessalonikan. However, following the previous discussion, while Judeo-Spanish still holds a formidable place in participants’ ‘Sephardic’ conceptualization, it is less poignant in G3’s construct of Sephardicness than it is for G1’s.

If what I suggest is true, that the role of Judeo-Spanish, even in its symbolic function, is in decline, there will be a lacuna seeking to be filled by another language for the purpose of establishing boundaries between Thessaloniki’s Jews and the non Jews. I argue that this role has the potential to be filled by Hebrew. While it is not the preferred



language (when asked to choose between Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew) among a greater percentage of participants from all generational groups, there are indications of a shift toward Hebrew as engendered by a Judeo-Spanish shift in conjunction with the existence of a Jewish state. However, this shift toward Hebrew is barely perceivable for two interdependent reasons. First, Hebrew, as it is associated with Israel, would not be well received by non Jewish Greeks already very critical of Israel and its policies. Second, Jews themselves, aware of the political dynamics in the society in which they live, are wary of the potentially harmful association between them and Hebrew/Israel. If there are indeed any associations with Hebrew, they must remain private so as not to jeopardize participant integration into Thessalonikan society, to the extent that they want to integrate. However, as Gans (1979) states, when one marker of identity is lost, another is usually gained in order to preserve boundaries between groups. Thus, I contend that presently, there are two competing forces at play: the first, as caused by the progressive (albeit slight) dis-association of Judeo-Spanish as a marker of Jewishness, is one in which Judeo-Spanish and Hebrew are both vying for the role as ethnic marker (with Judeo-Spanish still being the stronger of the two). The second force at play is driven by the majority group's core value system that mitigates the adoption of Hebrew as a marker of Jewish ethnicity. So, while the Greek value system would prefer that Greek- and only Greek- be the language for symbolic association of its minority Jewish community, if there is to be a non Greek language fulfilling this role, better it be Judeo-Spanish than Hebrew.

## Chapter 5

### Presentation and Analysis of Identity-Related Data

#### 5.1 Overview

This chapter is devoted to a discussion of identity related issues. The data in this section consist of the analysis of yes-no type responses from the questionnaire, as well as excerpts from the oral interview. A review of the identity-related questions generated a list of coding labels that later served to classify the data under the following themes:

- Expressions of (having) identity vis-à-vis origin, ethnicity and nationality (5.2)
- Expressions that distance the Thessalonikan Jews from non Jewish Greeks (5.3)

#### 5.2 Expressions of (having) identity vis-à-vis origin, ethnicity and nationality

To discern participant views vis-à-vis ethnic and national identity and heritage and to determine where notions of Jewishness/Sephardicness, Spanish, and Greekness lie, I gathered responses from the appropriate yes-no questions from the questionnaire and assembled related narratives. A cross-generational analysis will furnish age-related trends toward a reconceptualization of identity with respect to ethnicity and nationality. The questionnaire and interview questions gathered for this section were the following:

- Are you proud of your Sephardic/Jewish heritage?
- Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions?
- Do you feel a connection with Spain?

- Do you feel a connection with today’s Spaniards?
- Do you know what part of Spain your ancestors are from?
- How would you describe yourself (use of adjectives of ethnicity and nationality)?

**5.2.1 Are you proud of your Jewish/Sephardic heritage?**

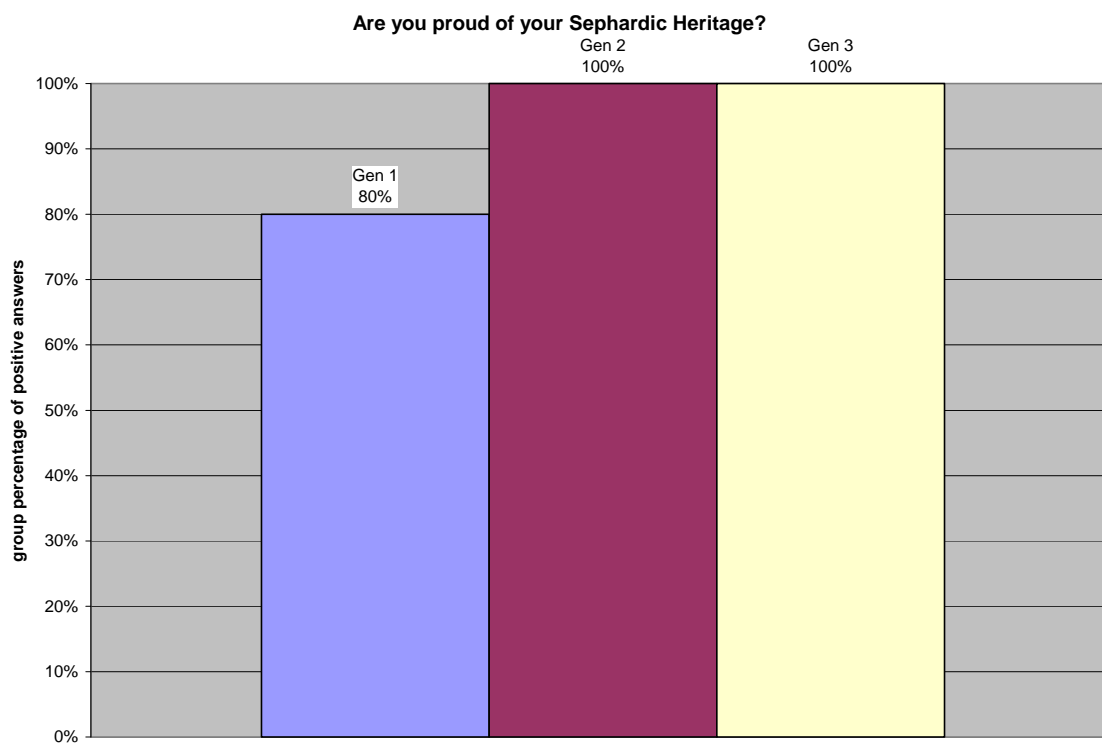


Figure 5-1: Are you proud of your Sephardic heritage?

Table 5-1: Are you proud of your Sephardic heritage

Are you proud of your Sephardic heritage?	94%	0%	0%	6%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

As might be expected, participants responded nearly unanimously that they were indeed proud of their Jewish/Sephardic heritages. Although I used both adjectives in my question “Jewish” and “Sephardic”, some respondents took it upon themselves to differentiate between the two, thereby further supporting my claim to the dichotomy between the two (see section 5.5.4). This is shown in the following excerpt from a G1 participant who makes reference to the differing cultural and religious mannerisms of the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim, the latter whom she views as being more tied down to religion and to some extent more fanatical, “los fanaticos, los Hasidim” of Israel [‘The fanatic ones, the Hasidim’].

Siempre fue fiela porke se dzudia i porke se dzidia de provenensia espanyola porke kreo ke los sefaradim semos mas emansipados de los ashkenazim [G1-F-NB]. I was always proud that I am Jewish and that I am Jewish of Spanish descent because I believe that the Sephardim are more emancipated than the Ashkenazim.

Another G1 participant, one of the only two to respond that he was not proud of his Sephardic heritage, emphasized that it was his *Jewish* heritage that made him feel proud: “I am proud of my *Jewish* heritage” [G1-M-AA]. It should be recalled that the above participant and his wife [G1-F-EA] were the only two to answer this question with a “no” response. The husband’s response above leads me to believe that his “no” response was in reference to his Sephardic background and not his overall Jewish heritage. As I have discussed earlier, this participant was of mixed Jewish descent, did not grow up speaking Judeo-Spanish with his parents, and was influenced by his own father’s ascription to and participation in Zionist ideologies and organizations. He frequently volunteered expressions that indicated his support for Israel. As such, and as I have discussed earlier, his conscious upgrading of an all encompassing, inclusive Jewish consciousness at the expense of a very region-specific and exclusive Sephardic heritage is his attempt to

consolidate his differing Jewish backgrounds (Sephardic and Ashkenazic) into one and to align himself with Zionist nationalism. In addition, his response marks the differentiation made between a purely Sephardic conceptualization of identity versus a Jewish one.

Another two participants, one from G1 and another from G2 noted that pride could not be something felt, as ‘being Jewish/Sephardic’ was not a conscientious choice that one makes, rather it is what one is born into:

To be Jewish is an ethnicity. I am a Jew. I’m not proud, but I’m not ashamed [G1-F-EA]

[Fiela] Porke so djudia? Porke se sefardiya? No lo pensi nunca esto...si. [G2-F-VB]. [Proud] because I am a Jew?... because I am Sephardic? I never thought of this before...yes [I am proud]

A noteworthy theme that emerged in the responses to this question was the undeniable link that participants held between being Jewish/Sephardic and the city of Thessaloniki. In this context, many participants referred to the city as “Salonik”, the Turkified version of the Greek “Thessaloniki” employed by the Jews during Ottoman times. The referral to the city as “Salonik” conjured feelings of great sadness as this variant of the name evokes a city that was once an important Jewish center and the home of tens of thousands of fellow Jews and family members who were deported to Nazi camps to never again return. Memories of a predominantly Jewish city and family members lost during the Holocaust are awakened for G1 participants:

[The name ‘Salonik’ is] sentimental and nostalgic and makes me think of a Jewish city where many people around us were also Jewish [G1-F-EA]

Todo lo ke tengo en el meollo es Salonik para mi. No me trava ninguna otra ciudad [G1-F-LP]. All that I have in my mind is Salonik for me. No other city pulls me [like Salonik].

[‘Salonik’ es] la vida entera muestra. [Es] una ciudad ke era de verdad una ciudad onde la mayorita eran dzidios i en akel tiempo no avio kasamientos mixtos... porke avia tantos dzidios ke no tenias menester de

kazar kon otros [G1-F-NB]. [‘Salonik’ is] our entire life. [It’s] a city that was truly a city in which the majority were Jews and in that time there weren’t any mixed marriages because there were so many Jews that you didn’t need to marry others.

[Kquando pienso en ‘Salonik’] Akodro munchas kozas de antes de la guerra porke [despues de la Guerra] no me kedo familia direct, komo madre, hermana, tias, suvrinas. M’akodro... el tiempo bueno [G1-F-JK]. [When I think of ‘Salonik’] I remember many things from before the war because [after the war] I was left without a direct family, like a mother, sister, aunts, nieces. I remember...a good time.

G2 and G3 narratives are highly romanticized as Jewish “Salonik” was never something they themselves had lived but was transmitted to them via nostalgic recounts of parents, other community members and historical publications:

Let’s say that it [‘Salonik’] sounds like ‘old times’, or what I know of old times. It’s nostalgic for me when someone refers to this city as ‘Salonik’; it tells me something, that he knows something more [G2-F-EP]

[‘Salonik’] Es komo Yerushalaim para los israelianos [G2-M-LA].  
[‘Salonik’] is like Jerusalem for Israelis.

Amor [G2-M-GK]. Love.

Viktoria: Emosion, tristeza, perifania [Grk. ‘pride’], komo es perifania,.. me siento muy... mira ke no me viene.... En ingles komo es? Pride [G2-F-VB]. Emotion, sadness, pride, how do you say ‘perifania’.... I feel very, very... it’s not coming to me now....How do you say in English? Pride.

Es la chita ke nasi i la chita ke toda la famia se mueron, d’aki los tomaron [G2-F-GB]. It’s the city where I was born and the city in which all the family died, from here they were taken.

Spiti gemato sefaradites [Grk] [G3-F-AA]. [‘Salonik’ makes me think of a] home full of Sephardim.

Es mi kasa... no se. Alguna koza familiar i amable [G3-F-IN]. It’s my home... I don’t know. Something familiar and friendly.

## 5.2.2 Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions?

Table 5-2: Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions?

Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish culture/traditions? Generations 1-3 (N=33)	88%	3%	0%	9%	0%
	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

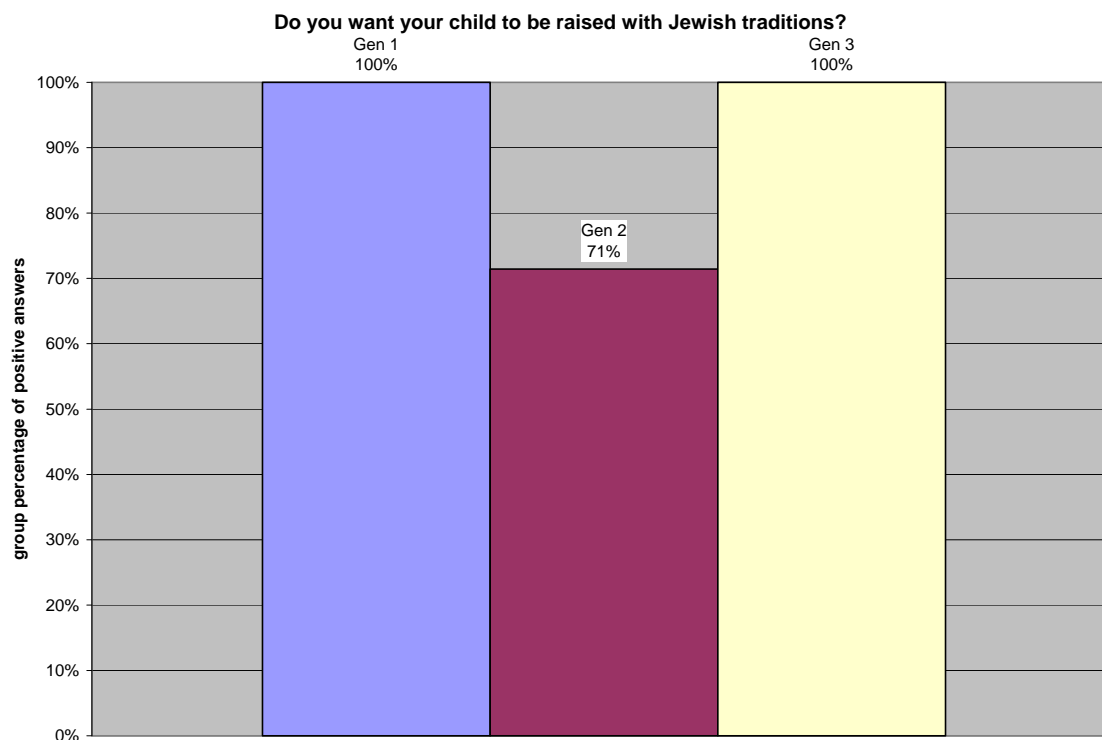


Figure 5-2: Do you want your child to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions

Taking the sample as a whole, the majority (88%) responded that they want their children to be raised with Jewish traditions. Some participants elaborated with narratives stating that they were in fact raising them with such traditions:

En esto puedo responder para mis nietos porke mis fijos ya se kazon. Los grandes son todos los dzudios. Mi fijo ez mas chiko se kaso kon grega ke se fizo dzudia y, los chikitikos, estan perkurando de los elevar de manera dzudia... Yo personalmente no kiero ke se piedran los uzos y kostumbres de los dzudios de Salonik porke las raises son mucho fondas,

para mi. [G1-F-NB]. Here I can respond for my grandchildren because my own children have already married. My older children are all Jews. My youngest son married a Greek who became a Jew, and their children, they are trying to raise them the Jewish way. Personally, I don't want them to lose the ways and the customs of the Jews of Salonik because the roots are very deep, for me.

Nai, kai megalounoun. [G3-F-AA]. Yes, and they are being raised [with the traditions.

We try to. We go to Jewish Club every Friday. We keep the tradition, every holiday we go to Larissa to his parents, the whole family gets together and there we follow our Jewish traditions. I like the tradition [G3-F-DK]

Owing to the community's predominantly secular nature, some participants explicitly stated that only those cultural or secular traditions are to be passed on and not necessarily the religious ones:

Too late! They weren't raised as such. They know they are Jews; they are just secular Jews following only some of the traditions for the culture's sake...si ay tradiciones, mijor ke sean dzudias [...if there are traditions to be passed on, it's better that they be Jewish ones] [G2-F-EP].

My daughter has a Christian mother, and neither [of us] is religious. But we like the cultural traditions. We don't bother with religious traditions [G2-M-AA].

Some participants note, with some resignation, the difficulty in raising children today as Jews:

Si, komo pudimos mozostros engradesimos. Sto viendo ke los maz djovenes no stan pudiendo [G2-F-SG]. Yes, like we were able to be raised. I'm seeing that the youngest ones are not able.

For those who did raise their own children as Jews, many note the difficulty in raising grandchildren as such due to mixed marriages in which the Jewish culture is not emphasized or the grandchildren are baptized as Orthodox Christians. The latter case is met with disappointment for the following two participants:



Los hijos ya son muchos grandes. Los nietos son kristianos [G1-F-JK].  
My children are already adults. The grandchildren are Christian.

My daughter is Jewish but my granddaughter is Christian! [G1-F-MA].

Noting the community's high levels of secularism, the above participant states what many fear: that when the older generations are gone, who will be left to teach the youth?

Oso zo ego [Grk], tanto ke sto viviendo yo, si [vo ambezarlos]. Ama kuando me vaya yo, kien los va a reposer? [G1-F-JK]. As long as I am alive [Grk], as long as I am living, yes, I will [teach them]. But when I die, who will raise them [as Jews]?

Another G2 participant notes her own secular lifestyle, and while being very active in the community, she admits to having raised her own children in a more relaxed manner due to the fact that she was too busy dealing with everyday issues such as her own employment, her marriage and the care of her children. However, she does recognize the importance of transmitting certain cultural values to younger generations as evidenced in her statement below:

Si, ma no puedo desir ke yo lo fago en grande, ma prekuro. Me faze mal si no agradesen kon el dzudezmo de Salonik porke ya pedremos todo. Savemos muy poko de lo ke fazian antes de la Guerra. Fazemos muy poko de lo ke se fazian antes de la guerra, ma komo es uzos y kostumbres lo fazemos para mantener los usos y kostumbres i no veramente por la religion [G2-F-VB]. Yes, but I can't say that I do it to great extents, but I try. It bothers me if they don't grow up with the Judaism of Salonik because we lose everything. We know so little about what they used to do before the war. We do so little of what they used to do before the war, but since it is traditions and customs, we do what we can to maintain the traditions and customs and not really for the religion's sake.

A G3 participant responds similarly in that without the traditions, one's roots are lost:

Si, mucho [me faze mal si piedren los usos]. Piedren sus raises [G3-F-SG]. Yes, very much [it bothers me if they lose the traditions]. They lose their roots.

Cross generationally, all participants in G1 and G3 responded that they wanted their children to be raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions. From G2, only 4 participants

responded either as being indifferent to the issue, “I wouldn’t care if they were or were not raised as Jews” [G2-F-EP], and one participant said that he would not want his children raised with Jewish/Sephardic traditions, although no explanation was given for this. However, I venture that his response refers to mere religious traditions based on his previous responses throughout the interview.

### 5.2.3 Do you feel a connection with Spain?

To measure the extent to which the ‘Sephardic’ label promotes feelings of association and identification with Spain and its people and to determine the extent to which knowledge of family origins from Spain are transmitted, the following questions were posed: ‘Do you feel a connection with Spain?’, ‘Do you feel a connection with today’s Spaniards?’, and ‘Do you know what part of Spain ancestors came from?’.

Table 5-3: Do you feel a connection with Spain/today’s Spaniards

Do you feel a connection with Spain?	73% (24)	24% (8)	3% (1)	0%	0%
Do you feel a connection today's Spaniards?	27% (9)	61% (20)	9% (3)	3% (1)	0%
Do you know what part of Spain your ancestors are from?	21% (7)	76% (25)	3% (1)	0%	0%
<b>Generations 1-3 (N=33)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Y/N</b>	<b>Indif</b>	<b>?</b>

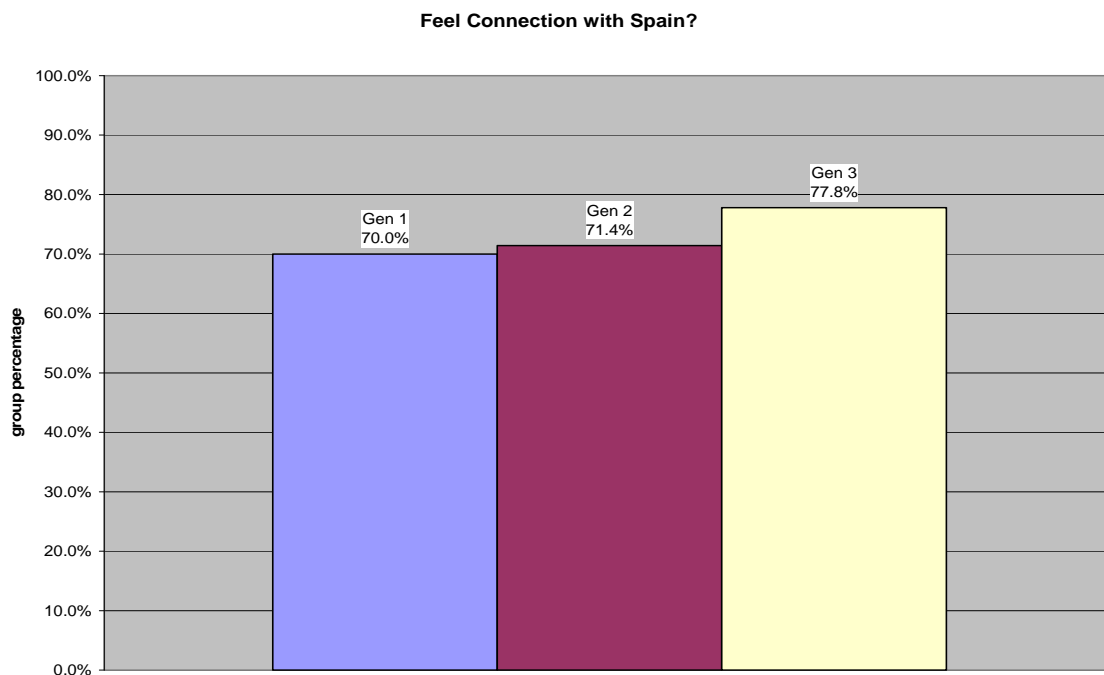


Figure 5-3: Do you feel a connection with Spain?

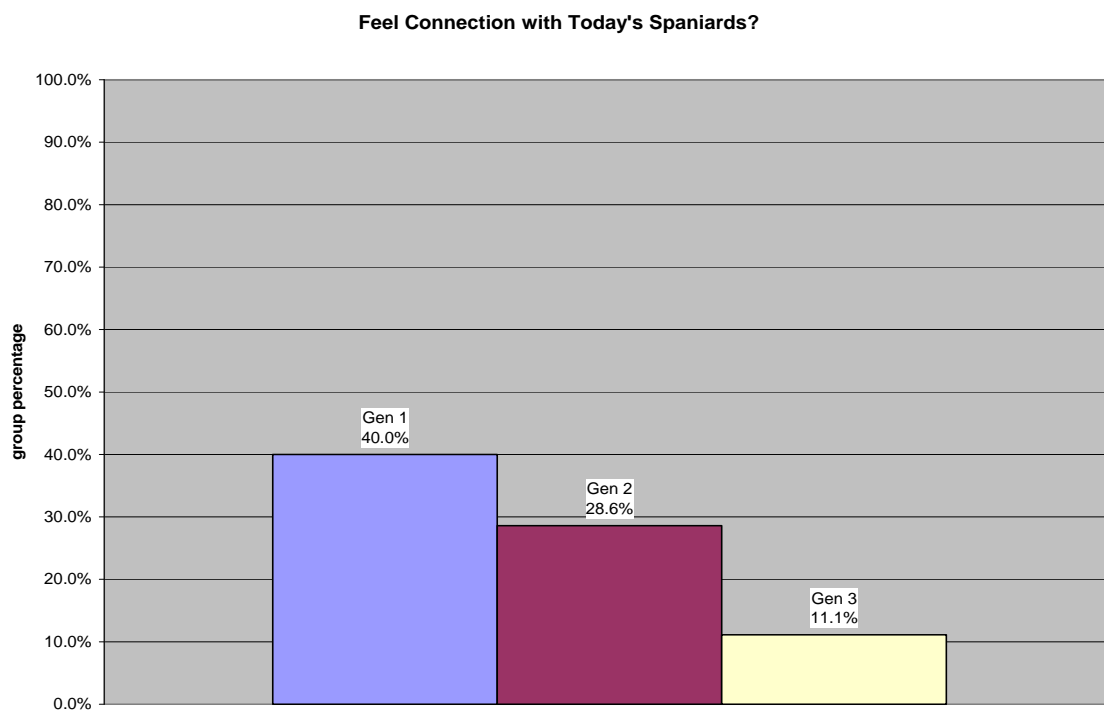


Figure 5-4: Do you feel a connection with today's Spaniards?

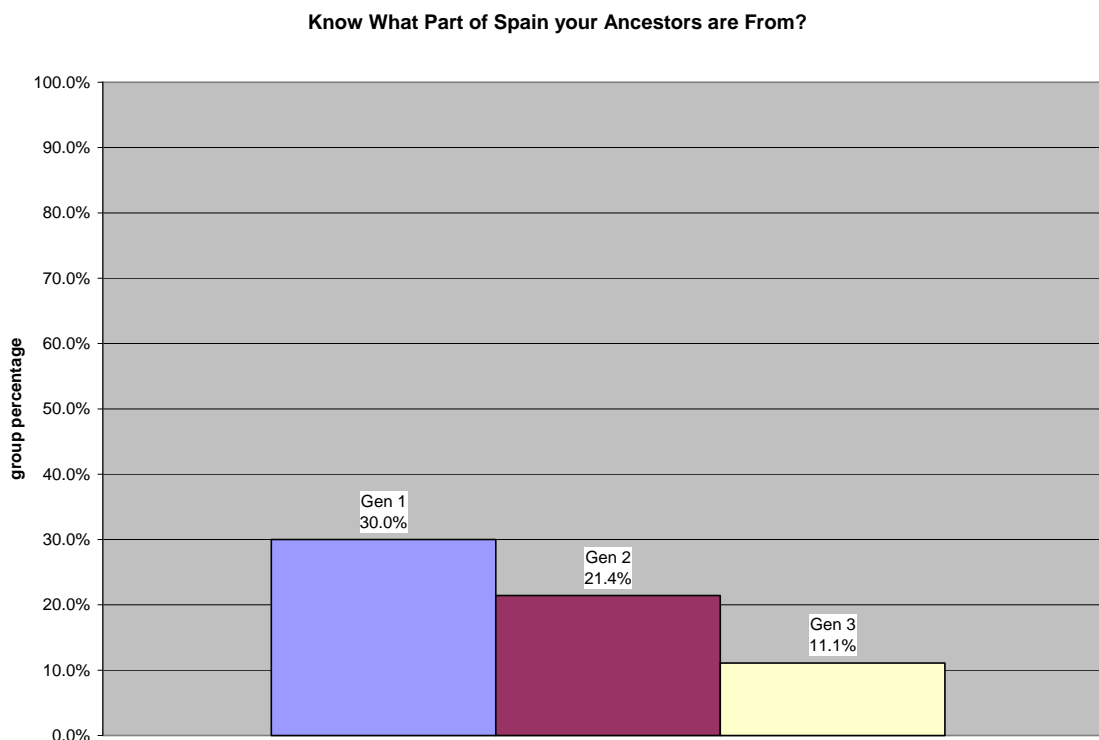


Figure 5-5: Do you know what part of Spain your ancestors are from?

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Taking the sample as whole, 73% of all participants (N=33) reported feeling a connection with Spain. The motivations behind this connection are varied as can be seen from participant excerpts. The dominant motive points to association with the country from which their ancestors originated:

A segun me kontava mi madre i mi padre es ke venimos de Espanya [G1-F-JK]. According to what my mother and my father told me, we came from Spain.

Si, kreo ke tengo L'Espanya adientro. No se porke [G3-F-SG]. Yes, I believe I carry Spain inside me. I don't know why.

Another theme that surfaced was the role that Spain played in accepting Sephardic refugees at a time when the Nazis were deporting Jews to the death camps. The notion

that Spain ‘saved’ many Jews, because those that carried Spanish passports were allowed to enter Spain and take refuge there until the end of the war, was a common theme:

Many Jews had Spanish or Portuguese nationality before the war. These were deported to Berkan Belgen; they were not gassed, they didn’t go to the.... Because Spain was neutral so their subjects were protected. There were quite a few Jews who had another nationality other than Greek. They were called ‘sujito’. Their governments (Italia and Spanish), gave them their nationality. They kept it from generation to generation. Well, they didn’t keep it from generation to generation. They ‘received’ it, maybe they had to pay something. Most of them were Spanish and Italian. These are the Jews that have been living here for 500 years. The only difference was that they [still] had a Spanish passport... [G1-F-MA].

Yo sto mucho atada kon la Espanya porke uvo una razon especial. Despues del kampo de konsentrasion, estuve kuatro mezes en Barcelona y senti muncho espanyol y.. [inaudible] ... sovre todo porke debo mi vida a la nasionalidada espanyola. Si no [la tuviera], estaria muerta kon los otros dzudios de Salonik [G1-F-NB]. Very much. I am tied to Spain due to a very special reason. After the concentration camp, I was in Barcelona for four months and I heard a lot of Spanish and... [inaudible]...above all because I owe my life to my Spanish nationality. If I didn’t have it, I would be dead along with the other Jews of Salonik.

The theme of having multiple identities, or in this case, multiple allegiances, arises among some participants. In the following statement, the participant notes his allegiance to the various countries and the different motivations for associating himself with each:

Si, [siento una konexion kon Espanya ma] la prima es kon Israel porke es kon la religion. La nationalita [espanyola] es mucha mucha vieja. [Es] Mas fuerte kon Israel” [G1-M-MA]. Yes, [I feel a connection with Spain but] the primary [connection] is with Israel because of the religion. The [Spanish] nationality is a lot older. [It’s] A lot stronger with Israel.

Of course. After Greece, Israel, the third is Spain [G3-M-SK].

Nai, oxi mono me tin Ispania [G3-F-AA]. [Grk] Yes, but not just with Spain.

I feel from three patrides [Grk. ‘motherlands’]! Greece, Israel, and America! I have an American passport from my first Hungarian-

American husband. We are a very international family. My brother is married to a girl from Argentina. When we get together, you hear many languages. You hear Greek, Spanish, Ladino, German, my mother, she speaks Hungarian and Yiddish [G3-F-DK].

A personal experience unrelated to motivations of roots and origins motivated the above participant to feel a connection with Spain:

Well, it's funny you should ask that. I met my husband in Spain. Somebody, an ambassador from Spain, came to Thessaloniki and told a person who is working in the Jewish committee to create a group of young people and let them come to Spain to see where their ancestors came from. So we took a trip to Spain and three people were from Athens, and one of them was my husband. And that's where we met. So yes, I feel a connection [G3-F-DK].

Of the total sample, 24% stated feeling no particular connection with Spain. As one participant stated, "No de vedra. Kinientos anyos son muchos" [G2-M-AK]. This answer was not entirely surprising as he had stated in several of our encounters that, along with a very strong identification with his Jewish background, he felt very Greek and felt quite at home in Greece. Another participant adamantly responded "no" to the question and was quick to restate the question as "I associate my heritage with *Greece*" [G1-M-AA].

A cross-generational comparison shows that at least 70% of each generational group identifies to some extent with Spain and the differences across the generations are int. I interpret this to show that the transmission of knowledge of historical origins (ancestors as having originated in Spain) is stable across the generations and that this is a trend that could be expected to continue for quite some time as there is no indication that it is decreasing from older to younger generations.

The next question posed to participants, "Do you feel a connection with today's Spaniards?", bore a different result. As can be seen, across the generations, 61% of the

total participant sample related feeling that they did not identify with modern day Spaniards. Another 12% were either indifferent or floundered between “yes” and “no”. The narratives that seem to best exemplify the main reason for not associating with modern day Spaniards are the following:

No puedo saver, porke no hue a Espanya. Ma de lo pasado de los espanyoles, por siguro [siento una koneksion] [G2-F-VB]. I can't tell you for sure, because I never went to Spain. But with Spaniards of the past, certainly [I feel a connection].

We didn't stay in Spain long enough to mix with the people. We only stayed 20 days. [Did you feel a connection with modern Spaniards growing up?] No, not with the people, but with Spain. Growing up we had no contact with the people of Spain. But we always had the idea of Spain, you see? [G3-F-DK]

We didn't have any experience with people [in Spain] [G3-M-SK]

As whole, it can be said that a lack of contact and personal relations with modern day Spaniards prevents participants from feeling any kind of association with them. Although many of the participants had never traveled to Spain, lack of first-hand contact with the country itself (from a historical standpoint) does not seem to hinder association with ‘the idea of Spain’. The case of association with the people of modern-day Spain is another story. As suggested by Gans (1979), association with an aspect of ethnicity is sustained as long as it does not interfere with the carrying out of everyday life. Those that do, will be avoided. Indeed, fostering and maintaining relationship between peoples is much more taxing and consuming than keeping up a psychological attachment to a place or an idea.

For the minority of participants (27%) who responded feeling a connection with modern-day Spaniards, a shared Hispanic culture and language was a motivating factor.

While there is no decline in association with Spain from G1 to G3 ('Do you feel a connection with Spain?'), the progressive decline revealed for 'Do you feel a connection with modern-day Spaniards?' from G1 to G3 is indeed noteworthy. I suggest that the decline here relates to the fact that G2's and G3's are much more likely to have traveled to Spain or have contact with Spaniards due to modern advances in technology allowing for more frequent travel and exposure to other peoples and to media and music from abroad. This exposure may have led to the illumination of differences, both cultural and linguistic, between the two peoples. As upcoming sections (see 6.3) will show, an additional explanation to G2 and G3's tendency to feel more removed from modern day Spaniards points to their progressive approximation or alignment with modern day Greeks which in turn speaks to the extent to which younger participants feel integrated into and accepted by Greek society.

The question 'Do you know what part of Spain your ancestors came from?' shows another progressive decline from G1 to G3. Looking at the raw numbers for this question (3/10 for G1; 3/14 for G2; and 1/9 for G3) indicates that few participants have knowledge of the specific place of origin within Spain. What this suggests then, when comparing these results to the question 'Do you feel a connection with Spain?', is that although there is still a prevalent association with the country in a generalized and broad sense, any detailed knowledge about family origins is obscure and non-specific. The decline from G1 to G3 points to a future trend in which specific knowledge of one's origin is less accurate and less likely to be transmitted to future generations.



### 5.2.4 How would you describe yourself (use of adjectives of ethnicity and nationality)?

Table 5-4: What adjective of nationality/ethnicity would you use to describe yourself?

Adjective of ethnicity/nationality	Jew	Greek-Jew	Spanish/Sephardic-Jew	Greek-Sephardic	Greek
<b>G1 (N=10)</b>	2	6	2	0	0
<b>G2 (N=14)</b>	1	10	1	1	1
<b>G3 (N=9)</b>	0	5	0	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

Taking the sample as a whole, the most common appellation is that of “Greek Jew”, while the least preferred form is that of “Greek Sephardic”. In any case, the tendency to use a hyphenated adjective is the most common, while only 3 and 4 participants prefer the single term of “Jew” and “Greek”, respectively.

The most interesting theme that emerged from the narratives was the tendency to select one of a variety of appellations, depending on what the context or the situation called for:

Grega. Grega dzudia... a sigun son las kozas. Digo ‘grega dzudia’, seguro. [I tus padres?] Dzudio [G2-F-VB]. Greek. Greek Jew.... Depending on the situation. I say “Greek Jew”, certainly. [And your parents?]. Jewish.

Yo digo ke so, ke se dzudia de descendencia espanyola porke nasi espanyola i kuando kiero dezir ke se grega tambien, porke mi marido servio en la armada grega sesh anyos en la guerra i en la civil... ansina podemos distinguir... semos i dzidios i gregos i spanyoles porke tuvimos pasaporte espanyol [G1-F-NB]. I say that I am, that I am Jewish of Spanish descent because I was born Spanish and when I want to say that I’m also Greek [I do so], because my husband served in the Greek army for 6 years during WWII and the Greek civil war... so in this way we can differentiate... we are Jews and Greeks and Spaniards because we had the Spanish passport.

Weis (2000) notes a tendency among her male Thessalonikan informants to lean toward the “Greek” label, especially when the discussion turns to military service. Service in the military created a feeling of Greek patriotism where one did not previously exist among the Jews and was only intensified as Jews returned from having served in two wars (WWII and the Greek civil war) and having fought alongside the Greeks against their new nations’ enemies. Weis considers the mandatory military service that enforced Jews to enlist as of 1923 (until then they had the option of choosing not to serve) as an effective measure in Hellenizing, both culturally and linguistically, non ethnic Greek subjects.

Cross generationally, a trend appears showing progressive preference for the the appellates “Greek Jew” and “Greek” while the appellates “Jew”, “Spanish/Sephardic Jew” fall into disfavor among participants from the older to younger generationers. As argued by Eastman (1984), re-ethnification only occurs after a very long period of time. In the case of my sample, I do not believe Jewish ‘de-ethnification’ to be occurring. The results from this question point to a transformation that does not reflect a loss of Jewishness but rather an addition of Greekness, as evidenced by the progressive preference of the labels “Greek Jew”, “Greek Sephardic” and “Greek” at the expense of “Jew” and “Spanish/Sephardic Jew”. The slight increase in the number of G3’s referring to themselves as “Greek” may be reflective of one of two possibilities. The first possibility is that Greek society, having been incorporated into the European Union, is undergoing a transformation in the way it defines what it means to be a Greek (from having a Greek ethnos/being Greek Orthodox/speaking Greek to having Greek nationality and loyalties regardless of ethnos, religion and linguistic background). If this is the case,

it is much more palatable for a Jew to self-identify as a Greek without having to feel that he is betraying or suppressing his own Jewish/non Greek Orthodox heritage. The second possibility is that Greek society's definition of what it means to be a Greek has not yet expanded to include non Greeks, thereby forcing ethnics to suppress any label that discloses non Greekness. This coping mechanism allows for the ethnic to integrate into a society that prefers homogeneity at the public domain, while maintaining a private ethnicity. My contention is that both scenarios are plausible and are being played out. Greece's entry into the European Union forces it to acknowledge the presence of minorities and to abide by EU policies established to protect the civil rights of minorities. In addition, modernization and contemporary Western thought brought about by influences from the European Union have had the effect of secularizing certain aspects of Greek society. Vehemently opposed by the Greek Church, one manifestation of this was the recent government decision not to include religion on national identification cards. The second scenario described above, that which requires the individual to publicly suppress any self-labelling that will repel one's full acceptance into society, is also tenable because just as groups of people are re-ethnicized only after long periods of time, societal ideologies and self-conceptualizations that define what it means to be a member of said society are also slow-changing.

### **5.3 Expressions that distance Thessalonikan Jews from non Jewish Greeks (boundary making)**

One mechanism of maintaining minority identity in the context of a majority group is for the minority group to remain separate from the majority group by

maintaining boundaries between themselves and others. These boundaries may be internally or externally enforced. Of the internally enforced boundaries, some are the selection of social categories that inform the rules of interaction between members of an in-group and those of the out-group. In the case of Thessaloniki Jewry today, rules of social interaction do not put constraints on the friendships formed, and most of my participants reported having many non Jewish friends. As a matter of fact, G3 participants reported having more intimate friendships with non Jews. Along the same lines, the various social clubs sponsored by the Community (those for adults, not children) are open to non Jews who openly and actively participate in their activities. Nor are boundaries of social interaction maintained in the professional sphere as non Jews are hired to work in Jewish run offices and institutions, such as the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Museum, the Senior Citizen Home, the Jewish primary schools, where some of the teachers (and students) are non Jewish, and in the summer camps for Jewish youth in which a non Jew has been employed as camp leader (Lewkowitz 1994: 228). However, in the intimate sphere of the home and within the institution of marriage that creates new homes, boundaries between the in and the out group are enforced, as can be seen in the presentation of results to the question of 'Is it acceptable for a Jew to marry a non Jew in Thessaloniki today?' (Section 6.3.1).

Externally enforced boundaries are those that the majority group imposes on the minority group, as is the illumination of religious, cultural and linguistic differences, ignorance of the minority group's history and presence, and discriminatory practices and sentiments toward the minority group (sections 3.6.3, 3.6.4, and 3.6.5).

### 5.3.1 Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a Greek Christian in Thessaloniki today?

Table 5-5: Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a non Jewish Greek?

Do you feel it's ok for a Greek Jew to marry a Greek Christian?	39%	55%	6%	0%	0%
Is it better for a Greek Jew to marry another Jew (even a non Greek Jew) than to marry a Greek Christian?	76%	21%	3%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

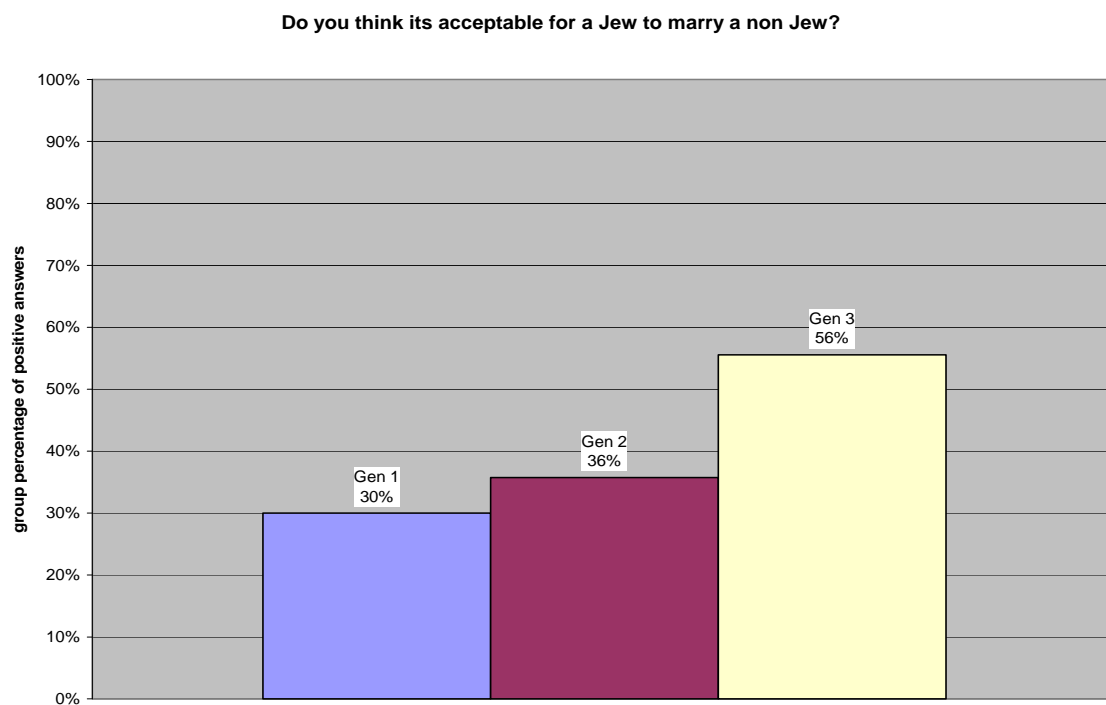


Figure 5-6: Is it acceptable for a Greek Jew to marry a non Jewish Greek?

The results from the total sample reveal that on the whole, the majority of participants (55%) find it unacceptable for Jews to marry non Jews in Thessaloniki. The results are not entirely surprising as mixed marriage taboos exist within many groups that live within a majority context. In the case of Thessalonikan Jewry, mixed marriage is

discouraged as it is the main motivation behind conversion and assimilation. As such, marrying a non Jew is discouraged at all levels of the community, from community groups to family circles. So delicate is the topic of mixed marriages that Lewkowicz (1994: 231) reported that she was unable to get exact numbers of mixed marriages that had taken place in Thessaloniki from Jewish Community office employees who appeared uncomfortable when discussing the topic, although her own participants affirm that “every other marriage is a mixed marriage”. My findings corroborate those of Lewkowicz in that the majority of my participants disapprove of mixed marriages, and in some cases, this is the sentiment of those who have married out of the community: a portion of G2 and G3 participants were married to non Jews. However, as I did not solicit this information during my interviews, I am unable to provide any exact figures.

Reasons for not approving of mixed marriages can be summarized as follows: 1) mixed marriages threaten the integrity of the Jewish community as they could lead to out-conversion and assimilation; 2) the Greek (non Jewish) heritage/Christian Orthodox religion and traditions are often emphasized and maintained at the expense of Jewish heritage/religion/traditions; and 3) problems and tensions arise as to how children of mixed marriages will be raised. These concerns are articulated by the participants as seen below:

This is not a good idea because when they marry each other, both groups sacrifice a part of their identity. In the case of Greece, it will always be the Jew who will lose the identity because we are so few here [G1-F-EA]

For the Jews to continue to survive here, Jew must marry Jew. As we said before, this is they only way the Jews can survive. If we begin to marry the others, in some years, the Jews will be no more. They will be the same as the others [G1-M-AA]

Siempre es bueno de tomar uno ke tiene la misma kultura. Es dificile para dos dzovenos ke se kieren...ke uno sea dzidio i ke el otro sea cristiano,

porke no es mas, ‘es grego’, [a la fin] gregos somos todos. Nasimos aki i aki mos engradesimos. Ma naturalmente es dificile tener religiones diferentes ma naturalmente kuando ay sentimientos, se te pasa los difikultades [G1-F-NB]. It’s always good to marry someone from the same culture. It’s difficult for two young people that love each other... when one is Jewish and the other is Christian, because [the Jewish culture] will be no more, [it will be] Greek, [in the end], we are all Greek. We were born here and here we were raised. But it’s difficult to have different religions but of course when there are feelings [of love] involved, difficulties can be overcome.

Seriya mizor [ke no se kasara kon un kristiano] ama se fizo normal agora [G1-F-JK]. It would be better [to not marry a Christian] but now it’s the norm.

It’s acceptable. Of course, it’s acceptable. But look, here we have the danger of what to do with the children. Are they Jews? Or are they not Jews? They will have mixed ideas. Where do they belong? We say in Greek ‘aftos pou exei figei apo tin patrida tou einai san to kserizomeno dentro’. This means, ‘he who leaves his country, or his traditions, is like the de-rooted tree’. You see, only for this reason it is a problem [G2-F-AK].

Nai, yia tin diatirisi tis ratsas... alla den iparxi allos logos pou mborei na yinei [G2-M-LA]. Yes [it’s better to marry another Jew], for the perpetuation of the race... but there is no other reason for this.

Es acceptable [ke se kase kon otro], ma... *ma*... [G2-M-SE]. It’s acceptable [to marry a non Jew, ‘in legal terms’] but... *but*...

Einai kalitera apo tin apopsi tis dietiriseis tis thriskias, alla den ksero kata poso einai kallitera yia tin eftixeia duo anthropon. [G3-F-IN]. It’s better [to marry another Jew] from the point of view of religious perpetuation, but I don’t know that it’s necessarily better for the happiness of the two people.

[Marrying a non Jew] is a problem. I know that better than anyone else because my family exiled me to America because I was in love with a Christian boy. It’s a problem with the community, with the family. But now, since the civil ceremony is recongnized, things are much easier for mixed marriages<sup>53</sup>. Even when couples are not religious, it’s still a problem, but it is easier now [G3-F-DK].

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<sup>53</sup> Civil ceremonies only became legalized in 1982. Prior to this, all couples had to have a religious ceremony either in the Church, the Temple or the Mosque. For mixed couples, this meant conversion from one religion to another.

Still, for some participants, even though mixed marriages may not be the ideal, it is acceptable because it's seen as an inevitable consequence of belonging to a minority group in which the 'other' is the majority. Therefore, the 'problem' of mixed marriages must be accepted and the best should be made out of the situation by transmitting Jewish ideals to grandchildren and being kind to non Jewish in-laws:

Mira, por siguro es problema. Ma es una problema ke nasio despues de la guerra i es, esta adientro de muestra vida, la devemos de akseptar, vivir kon esto i prekurar de fazer buenos djidios a nuestros nietos, nueras, o yernos, segun son las kozas [G2-F-VB]. Look, certainly it's a problem. But it's a problem that was born after the war and it's, it's a part of our lives, and we must accept it, live with it and try to be good Jews to our grandchildren, daughter and son-in-laws, according to the situation.

Other participants responded defiantly that mixed marriages are perfectly acceptable and should be regarded as valid as any other marriage. It might be tempting to reason that this reaction comes from participants who had already 'married out', but this was the case for only a few of those who had married non Jews:

Ke se kaze kon kien va se enamorar! Y los devemos de respetar como cualquier otro. [G2-M-AK]. Let him/her marry whom he/she loves. And we must respect them like any other [union].

Ke se kaze kon lo que kiere [G2-F-EP]. Let him/her marry whom he/she wants.

Another noteworthy result from this question is seen upon a cross-generational examination: a trend appears indicating the gradual acceptance of such intermarriages. While only 30% of G1 participants felt it to be acceptable, 56% of G3 participants felt at ease with the idea of mixed marriages. The lack of potential Jewish partners within the community plays a role in the increasing acceptance of intermarriage occurring among the younger community members. However, as the subsequent sections will show, an



increased sense of integration and acceptance into Greek society also contribute to younger participants' willingness to marry outside of the community.

### 5.3.2 Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks?

Table 5-6: Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks?

Feel culturally different from non Jewish Greeks in Thessaloniki?	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

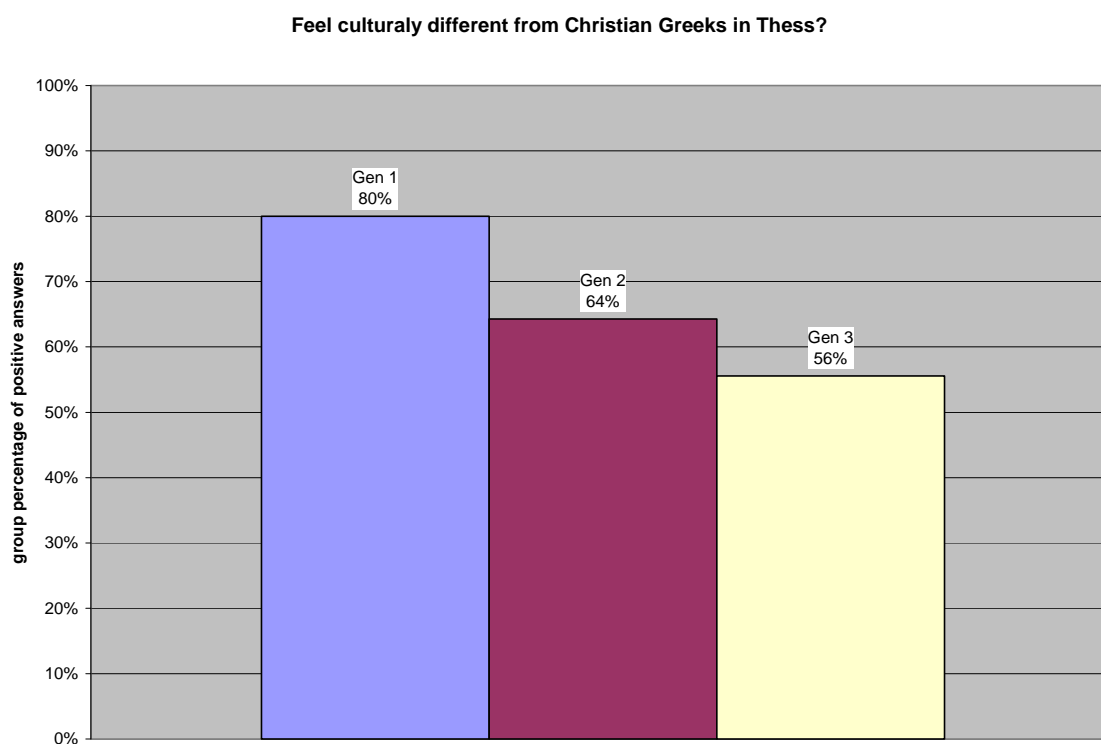


Figure 5-7: Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks?

The components that make up a group's identity are varied, some of which are self-ascribed (features that group members willingly ascribe to) while others are assigned to

members by the outgroup (De vos, 1975: 6). That is, how ‘others’ designate the group in question determines, to a great extent, how members of the group view themselves. The features adopted by the group in turn serve the often desired function of maintaining group boundaries between the group and the ‘other’ (the outgroup) that aid in group identity, as expressed by one G1 participant: “[I don’t feel different], but they [the Christian Greeks] make you feel different” [G1-M-AA]. A visible feature of Jewish identity that draws the curious attention of non Jews and immediately marks them as outsiders is the naming practices followed within the community. Of my 33 participants, only 3 (two G2’s and one G3) went by Greek first names and even these three participants claimed that these were merely second names and that their “real” birth names were Hebrew. All remaining 30 participants went by a Spanish or Hebrew first name. Thus names like David, Alberto, Alvaro, Solomon, Isaak, Samuel, Erika, Sol, Victoria, Mari, Anita, etc. abound. As if testifying to the influence of the French language and the Alliance Schools, two of the participants bore “Frenchified” first names. As far as surnames, all 33 participants bore either Spanish/Italian/Portuguese or Hebrew last names. These non Greek, “foreign-sounding” names often caught the attention of Greeks who would inquire as to the origin of the name. One G2 participant states having to identify herself first as a Jew and second as a Greek because she is always asked questions insinuating non-Greekness such as, “where is this name from?”:

[So] grega-dzudia...Ma kreemos todos ke un pokito podemos dezir ‘dzudia’ prima de todo, grega, espanyola. Lo digo i esto. Porke dizen ‘de onde este nombre?, el nombre ke tengo [G2-F-SG]. [I am a] Greek Jew... but we all believe a little that we can say “Jewish” before anything else, [before] Greek, [before] Spanish. I say this. Because they [non Jewish Greeks] say ‘where is this name from?’, this name that I have.

The numerical results from the question ‘Do you feel culturally different from non Jewish Greeks?’ corroborate the above excerpt: the majority of the total sample of G1-G3 participants (66%) feel different from non Jewish Greeks. In some cases, the differences felt are instigated by the majority group’s negative treatment of them. Several participants mentioned the difficulty of being Jewish during the Easter season, as explained by G1-F-EA:

It’s very difficult at Greek Easter time when all the villagers in their processions say that the Jews are the ones who are responsible for killing Jesus.

Another fabrication whose origins date back to medieval times is that every spring, the Jews kidnap a Christian child and drink his blood for ritual purposes. Thankfully, this is no longer as commonly disseminated but all Jews are nonetheless aware of its one-time existence. Benbassa (1993: 159) adds that these medieval libels resurfaced in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Christian Europe and spread throughout the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire, all the way to the Middle East. Its dissemination is blamed on “the relatively ignorant clergy” and the “poorly educated population deeply imbued with a popular Christianity” who had established the myth in popular imagination. Other sources of outgroup hostility toward the Jews originated from the perceived good fortunes of the Jews, a good fortune that in many cases was a myth. At times the source of hostility could be found in the need to find a scapegoat for one’s own difficult lot:

You know, sometimes it was jealousy. But the fact is that most Jews were also poor and had nothing. Only a few were wealthy, but most didn’t realize this. I think that they [the Greeks] would find the Jews to blame them because they [the Greeks] were also poor [G2-F-AK].

For another participant, the envy felt by Greeks was based on the truth of Jewish dominance in various spheres of public life, such as in education. The envy projected by Greeks is motivation enough to make her feel different from them:

Kreo ke tenemos un pokito de... mos parese a todos los dzidios ke estamos un pokito superior, no abasho...ay selos. [Los gregos] sienten un pokito inferior, eos, porke sienten ke los dzidios tienen...i la edukasion i esto les faze mal. No ay un dzidio ke no favla una o dos linguas, un pokito favla [G2-F-SG]. I think that we have a little bit of... it seems to all of us Jews that we are a little bit superior, not under... there are jealousies. [The Greeks] feel a little inferior, they, because they feel that the Jews have...education and this vexes them. There is no Jew who does not speak one or two languages, [he at least] speaks a little [bit of other languages].

Recognizing higher Jewish economic and intellectual standings in society, whether based on actual fact or mere perception, motivates the Greek to fear the Jew, according to another participant:

...les parese ke komo mos fazemos de...dar kon muestra inteligencia, muestra kultura, les parese ke semos i muchos y ke les podemos fazer danyo en los fechos, ma no es ansina [G1-F-NB]. ...it seems to them [the Greeks] that since we are... with our intelligence, our culture, it makes it seem that we are a bigger group and that we can hurt them by what we do, but it's not like this.

Another G3 participant responded feeling different based on different historical origins, but this is where the difference ends. Along 'human lines', which determine her essence and mode of thinking, she perceives there to be no difference between her and non Jewish Greeks:

Diafero os pros tin paradosis, oxi, pros pios anthropos eimai kai o tropos pou skeftomai [G3-F-IN]. I differ [from non Jews] with respect to heritage, but not with respect to the kind of person I am and the way I think.

Participant G2-F-TK's response merits attention:

Ean imoun mionotita, sigoura tha diafera [G2-F-TK]. If I were a minority, surely I would feel different [from the Greeks].

That fact that she speaks in hypothetical, contrary-to-fact terms, suggests that she does not regard herself as a member of a minority group. This particular participant is married to an Orthodox Greek and claims to only have used Greek with her own parents while growing up. Her statement could mean one of two things: 1) she doesn't consider Greek Jews have a minority status, or 2) she doesn't consider herself a member of the Jewish community. Based on her interview responses, the latter is not likely because she enthusiastically expressed how active she is in the community in that she attends services in the synagogue systematically and community events/activities on a weekly basis, she is taking Ladino classes at the Community Center, and she self-identified herself as a "Greek Jew". Thus, I am motivated to believe in the former of scenarios: her integration and the extent of integration she perceives other Jews to have in mainstream society is such that she no longer feels (or never personally experienced) a conflict between Jewishness and Greekness. For another participant, maintaining friendships with non Jews disintegrates any differences that she might otherwise have felt had she not had these friendships, or that she has these friendships precisely because there were no culturally-based obstacles that might have otherwise inhibited these friendships from forming. However, she warns that if and when her friends begin to speak against the Jews, she would 'put them in their place':

No specialmente. Porke siempre tenia amigos gregos. I alguna vez me dezian kozas ke no mos plazia, no me plazia a mi, les respondia komo se les devia de responder [G1-F-NB]. Not especially [do I feel different from non Jews]. Because I always had Greek friends. And when they would say things that didn't please us, that didn't please me, I would respond to them how they deserved to be responded to.

Much like the results from the previous section ‘Is it acceptable to marry a Christian Greek?’, the cross-generational findings from ‘Do you feel culturally different from Christian Greeks?’ reveal a similar trend. While 67% of the total sample responded feeling ‘different’ from non Jews, this view is more prevalent among older generations and decreases with age: 80% of G1 responded feeling different from non Jews, while only 56% of G3 participants responded the same way. This cross-generational response fortifies my contention of a gradual integration and alignment with non Jewish Greeks that is increasingly prevalent among younger participants.

### 5.3.3 Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today?

Table 5-7: Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today?

Hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki?	52%	45%	3%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind	?

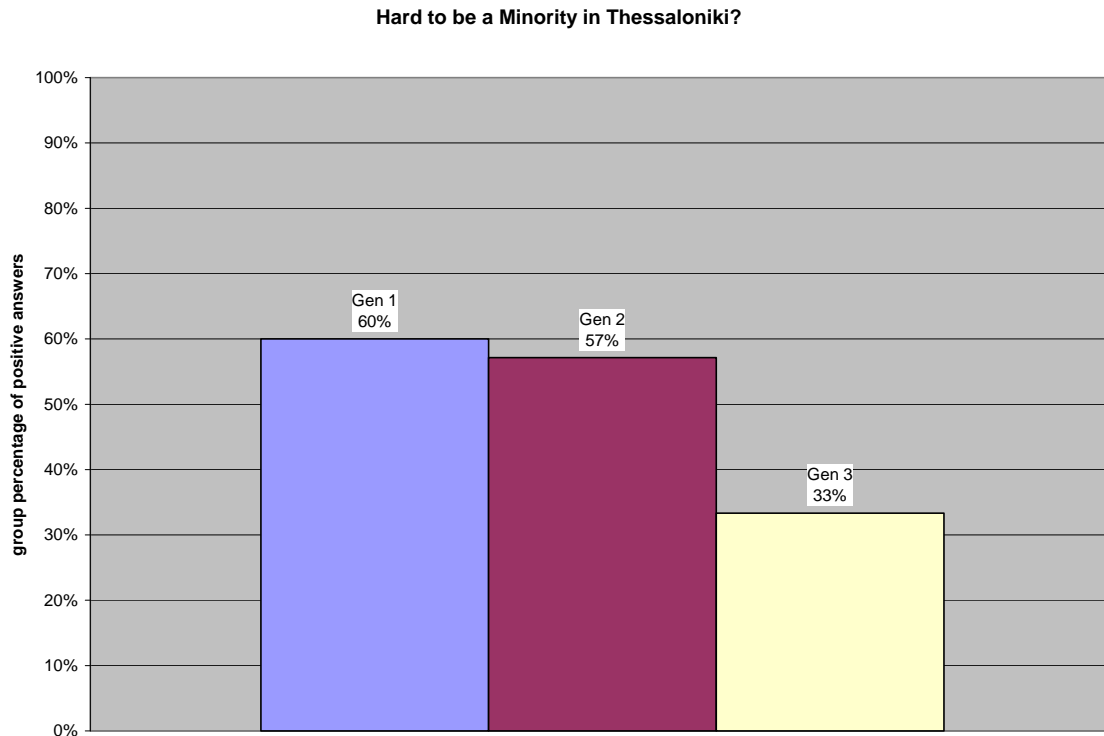


Figure 5-8: Is it hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today?

Taking the sample as a whole reveals that 52% of all 33 participants believe that it is hard to be a minority in Thessaloniki today. As one participant suggests, the Greek state's historical ambivalence to the existence of non-ethnic Greeks is the main source of any discomfort that is felt:

Yes, it is hard because they don't recognize you, they don't believe you are here, and maybe they don't like that you are here. But I am a Greek and I am a Jew [G1-M-AA].

For other participants, part of the difficulty results from belonging to a numerically inferior group. This difficulty is heightened when recognizing that the demographic inferiority characterizing the Jewish community today did not always exist. Thus, the

memory or at least the awareness of the group's numerical superiority augments the difficulty felt at being a minority:

Si, eso es verdad. Es difichile de ser una minorita. Kuando stavamos kompletamente dzudios, no era difichile porke stabamos cinkuenta mil. Ma ahora ke stamos menos de mil es difichile [G1-F-NB]. Yes, that is true. It's difficult to be a minority. When we were all Jews, it was not difficult because there were fifty thousand of us. But now that we are less than one thousand, it is difficult.

Es difichile? Si, secolojikamente si. Es una cibdad ke la sola lingua ke se sentia mas muncho de todas las linguas era el dzudeo-espanyol. Me siento triste [G2-F-VB]. Is it difficult? Yes, psychologically, yes. This is a city in which the language you heard above all other languages was Judeo-Spanish. I feel sad.

However, for another participant, being in Thessaloniki, a city so entrenched in its Jewish history, makes his minority status easier to live with:

En Thessaloniki no [es difichile ser minorita], por la istoria dzudia ke es una parte de la cibdad. [Es posivle ke] es difichile en otras partes de Gretcha [G1-M-IK]. In Thessaloniki no, because of the Jewish history that is part of the city. [It's possible] that it's difficult in other parts of Greece.

For participant G2-F-SG, the difficulty of being a minority is mitigated by the amount of friendships one maintains with members of the majority group:

Es difichile, si. Deves de tener muncho buenos amigos [gregos] para ke te kieren komo sos [G2-F-SG]. It's difficult yes. You must have many good friends who love you as you are.

While slightly more than half of the participant sample (52%) felt that being a minority in Thessaloniki is difficult, a cross-generational trend reveals that such an assertion decreases with age. That is, the younger the participant the less difficulty is perceived in living as a minority in Thessaloniki today. Factors such as the increased acceptance to marry non Jews, the decreased perception of cultural differences, and an increased level



of integration into Greek society at all levels allow for participants to exist as minorities with less difficulty and/or discomfort.

### 5.3.4 Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today?

Table 5-8: Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today?

Is there religious/ethnic/linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki?	64%	15%	21%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind	?

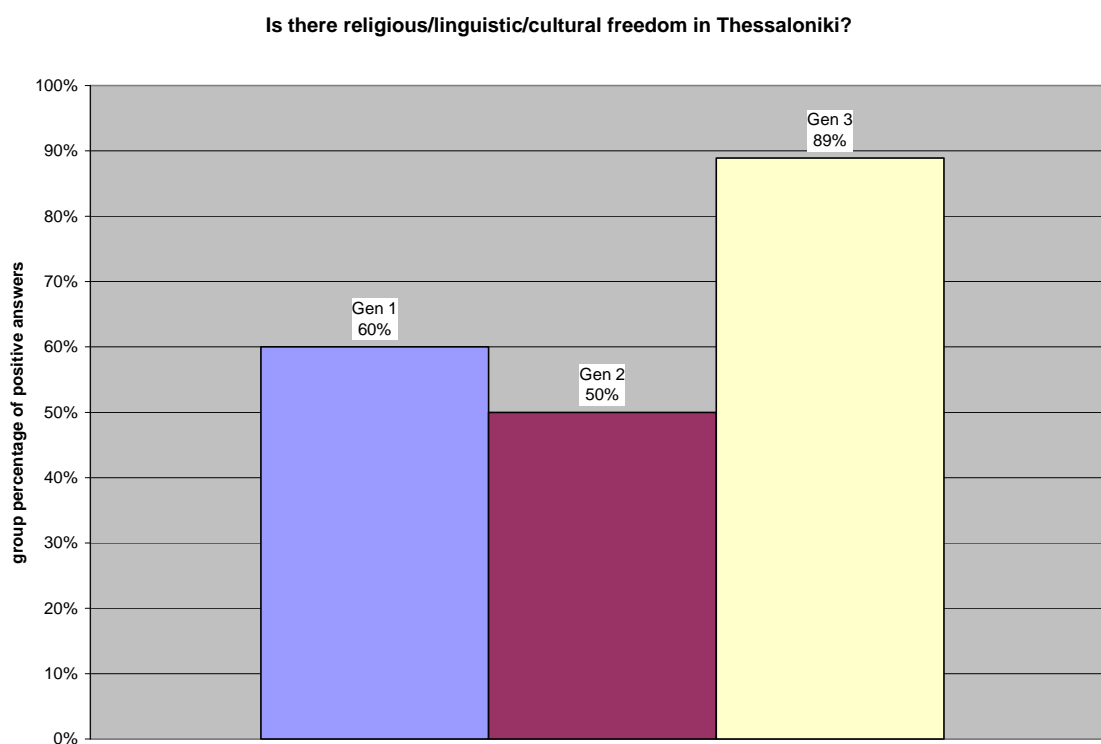


Figure 5-9: Is there religious, ethnic and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today?

While 52% of the total sample believed it is difficult to be a minority in today's Thessaloniki (section 6.3.3 "Is it hard to be a minority in today's Thessaloniki?"), 64%

responded that in spite of this difficulty, they perceived there to be religious, cultural and linguistic freedom in the city. One participant states that there is freedom of differing religious, cultural or linguistic backgrounds as long one does not have to live and work amongst the ignorant and uneducated:

No tuvimos ningun impedimento o diferentes... [ama] kuando tenemos ke hazer, fazer kon gente ignorante es entonses ke ay diferencias, ma kon gente instruida, se te pasan estas diferencias" [G1-F-NB]. We didn't have any impediments or differences...[but] it is when we have to deal with ignorant people that there are differences, but with educated people, these differences are overcome.

In response to the question "Is there religious, cultural and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today", additional expressions emerged dealing with the following themes:

1) the community does not experience difficulties living in the Greek context in Thessaloniki because it is highly secularized, 2) those community members that are religious tend to marginalize themselves from the majority group in order to maintain boundaries between themselves and non Jewish Greeks, and 3) a secular form of Judaism is preferred while religious Judaism is regarded as backward and undesirable. These themes are found in the following expressions:

Nai, eh oxi... ama theloun, nai [G1-F-LP]. Yes, um, no [religious Jews do not form a periphery in Thessalonikan society]...[but] if they want to [remain separate], they do.

...si son mucho fanaticos siertos dzidios no kieren integrarse en la sosieda grega, ma ahora la mayorita tienen relaciones buenas mismo kon no dzidios [G1-F-NB]. ...If they are very fanatic, certain Jews do not want to integrate into Greek society, but now the majority have good relations even with non Jews.

There are only 3 families religiosas [J.Sp. 'religious'] en Thessaloniki. They are not periphery. It doesn't come from the outside, it comes from the inside. If you feel different and put aside, then you are. So if you feel Greek and the same as anyone else, it doesn't matter [G2-F-EP]

Los mucho religiosos, si... son pokos. Semos muchos modernos aki [G2-F-SG]. The very religious, yes (remain separate from Greeks)... they are few. We are very modern here.

There are not so many religious Jews in Thessaloniki. Anyway, I don't like the very religious, the extreme, even in Israel I don't like these people. I think the extremes are not good [G3-F-DK].

A cross generational examination of the results to the question "Is there religious, cultural and linguistic freedom in Thessaloniki today?" reveal that the younger the participant is, the more likely he/she will perceive there to be religious, cultural and linguistic freedom in the city. Likewise, the older the participant, there will be less freedom to be religiously, culturally and linguistically 'different'.

The results thus far indicate that boundaries between the minority and majority groups still exist in that the community still maintains rules of social interaction that discourage intermarriage (or other social behaviors that could potentially lead to conversion). In addition, boundaries are conserved due to the discernible cultural differences between Jews and non Jews and to participants' perception that it is still difficult to culturally, religiously, and linguistically 'different'. However, an important and consistent finding thus far is that such boundaries appear to be softening as participant age decreases. What this suggests is that, due to the permeable nature of soft boundaries between in and outgroups, the likelihood of integration, assimilation and alignment with non Jewish Greeks from older to younger participants increases. The subsequent presentation of data dealing with the public's ignorance of Jewish presence in Thessaloniki, Jewish adversity, and participant perceptions of anti-Semitism will assist in determining the outcome of such trends.

### 5.3.5 Public ignorance with respect to historical and contemporary Jewish presence in Thessaloniki

Table 5-9: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence/Jewish history in Thessaloniki?

Are non-Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence in Thessaloniki today?	39%	48%	12%	0%	0%
Are non-Jewish Greeks aware of the Jewish history of Thessaloniki?	21%	61%	18%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?

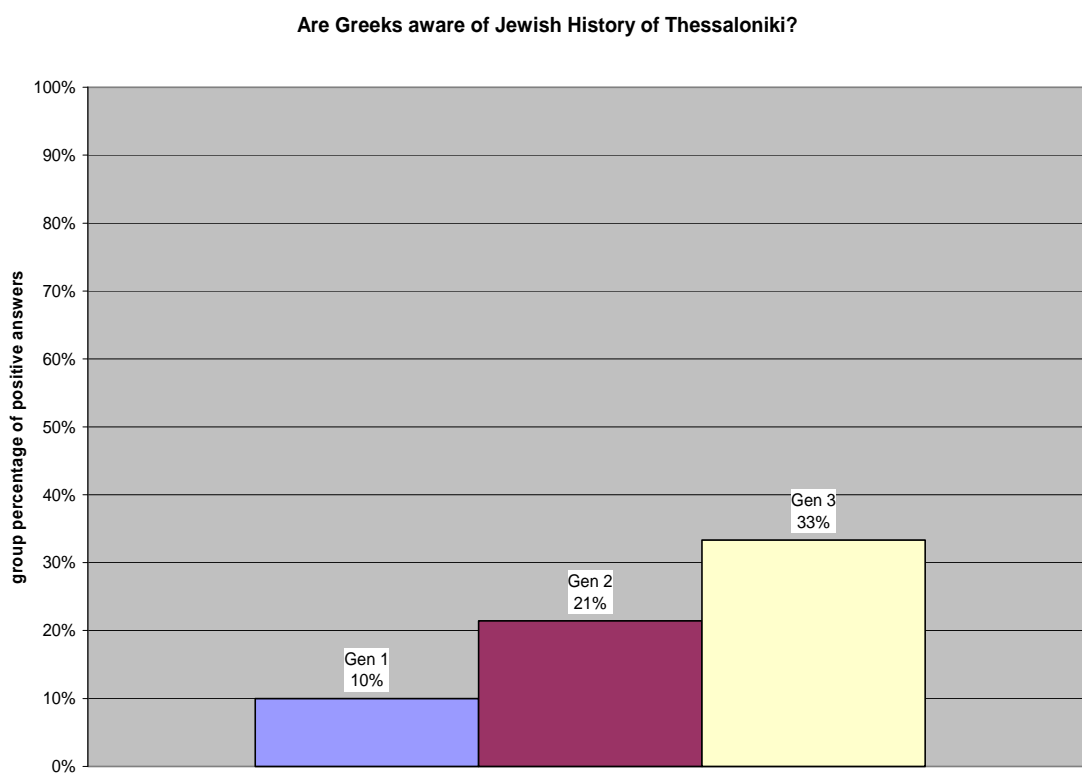


Figure 5-10: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish history of Thessaloniki?



Figure 5-11: Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence in today's Thessaloniki?

A shared frustration felt by minority group members because of a majority group's ignorance or denial of one's ce and presence, both historically and contemporarily, serves as another potential reinforcement for boundary maintenance between the in-group and the out-group. Participant narratives from the questions "Are non Jewish Greeks aware of Jewish presence both contemporarily and historically?" reveal that the majority of participants believed that only the older generations of non Jews were aware of Jewish presence in the city and that the younger people were either unaware or knew very little. Reasons for this ignorance among non Jewish youth can be attributed to one of the following: 1) the community is demographically too int; 2) the young people were not alive during the time when the city had an undeniable Jewish

flavor; and 3) Jewish history is not taught in schools and rarely mentioned in historical textbooks and in the media. These are better expressed by the participants themselves:

Only the older people are aware. Younger generations don't know or maybe they are indifferent. This is not an important issue for Greeks, you see. [G1-F-EA].

I have many friends who are not Jewish, and they know about the Jews in the city, they *remember* the Jews in the city, and if they forget, I remind them! For the younger people, it is not their fault; it is the media, the education... Here they don't teach about the Jews. Maybe they don't lie, but let us just say they don't teach all the truth. The young people don't know, they know only if they are Jewish and then it is their parents who teach them [G1-M-AA].

Los aidados [konosen la istoria dzudia de Thessaloniki], ma los dzovenes no saven nada, ni ke Salonik era una civdad kaji dzudia ni ke la majorita del pueblo era dzidio [G1-F-NB]. The elderly [know about the history], but the young don't know anything, nor [do they know] that Salonik was almost a Jewish city or that the majority of the people were Jewish.

Si [saben ke ay dzidios en Thessaloniki oy], ama kuando sienten kuantos son, dizen '*Solo? Solo?*'. [Konosimiento de la historia dzudia es] muy general, todos [solamente] saven ke avia muchos dzidios en Salonik. A las skolas no dize, ama en los textos de istoria tienen una referencia a los dzidios... Sometimes they [the Greeks refer to us as] 'Israelitiki kinotita', but this is wrong. We are 'Evréi', not 'Israelis!' [G2-M-SE]. Yes [they know that there are Jews in Thessaloniki today], but when they [non Jews] hear how few we are, they say '*Only? Only?*'. [Knowledge of Jewish history is] very general, everyone [only] knows that there used to be many Jews in Salonik. In the schools they don't say anything, but in history texts there is some reference to the Jews... Sometimes they [the Greeks refer to us as] the 'Israeli community', but this is wrong. We are 'Jews', not 'Israelis!'

Oy no, 60 anyos antes si. [De la historia?] Malorazamente no, ma speremos kon el museo dzudio de Salonik ke la van a konoser [G2-M-AK]. Today no, but 60 years ago, yes [they were aware of the Jews]. [And of the history?] Unfortunately no, but we hope that with the Jewish Museum of Salonik they will learn.

Los ke kieren saver por bueno por negro se konsienten esto, los ke no saven, no les importa, ni lo saven ni lo konsienten. [De la historia] Solo los ke kedaron, los ke eran Saloniklis i de eyos kedaron muy pokos porke se fizieron grandes y se murieron. No se si lo pasaron a los fizos, a sus nietos y me faze muy mal sentir ke las personas ke viven en esta civda i no

konosen la istoria. Prekuravan ke no la supieran los dzovenes, ma ya empezaron a ambezarla [la istoria] [G2-F-VB]. Those that want to know for better or worse, acknowledge it [Jewish presence today], those that don't know, don't care, they don't know and they don't acknowledge it. [With respect to Jewish history] Only those that remained, those that were Salonikans [as opposed to recent migrations into the city from the provinces], and of these there are very few left because they got old and died. I don't know if they passed [this knowledge] on to their children, to their grandchildren and it vexes me to hear that there are people in this city [who] don't know the history. They [the government, the schools, the media] tried to keep the youth from knowing, but now they've started to teach the it [the history].

No konosen *nada*. Solo kuando tiene algun amigo ke le kieren bien i ambezan i dicen 'esto es la istoria'. They know *nothing*. Only when [a Greek] has a Jewish friend whom he loves, they learn and they say 'this is the history' [G2-F-SG].

Although the numerical participant responses show that participants believe there to be a generalized Greek ignorance with respect to the Jewish history and present situation, participant narratives hint at the possibility of this not always being the case. For one participant, his hopes for societal recognition of Jewish history reside in the relatively new Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki. Another participant mentions the references made to Greek Jews in historical texts even though they are still not treated in schools. Lewkowitz (1994) reports that although the Jewish community since WWII has kept a very low public profile so as not to attract unwanted attention, this is beginning to change as evidenced by celebrations marking the 500 year anniversary of Sephardic presence in Thessaloniki in 1992 and subsequent public gatherings commemorating the unveiling of Jewish monuments and the achievements and contributions of Jews who fought for Greece during WWII and the subsequent Greek Civil War.

### 5.3.6 Adversity and the Jewish experience in Thessaloniki

Shared experiences of adversity serve to create links of solidarity among members of a group as well as to establish and strengthen boundaries that separate the in group from the outgroup. The common hardships endured between a people foment a feeling of “us versus them”, especially when these hardships are inflicted from external forces (the outside group). In the case of Thessalonikan Jewry, the trauma of the Holocaust (although not inflicted by Greeks) and a more generalized and less concrete form of anti-semitism (or anti-minority stance) as propagated by government policies, the media, and the Church have contributed to the perpetuation of an “us versus them” mentality. In this next section, participant perceptions regarding the presence of anti-Semitism and the forms in which it is manifested will be presented. In addition, participant narratives recounting the adversity experienced by Thessalonikan Jews will be displayed, with particular attention to the Holocaust and its impact on Jewish identity development.

#### 5.3.6.1 Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki?

Table 5-10: Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki?

Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki?	73%	21%	6%	0%	0%
Generations 1-3 (N=33)	Yes	No	Y/N	Ind.	?



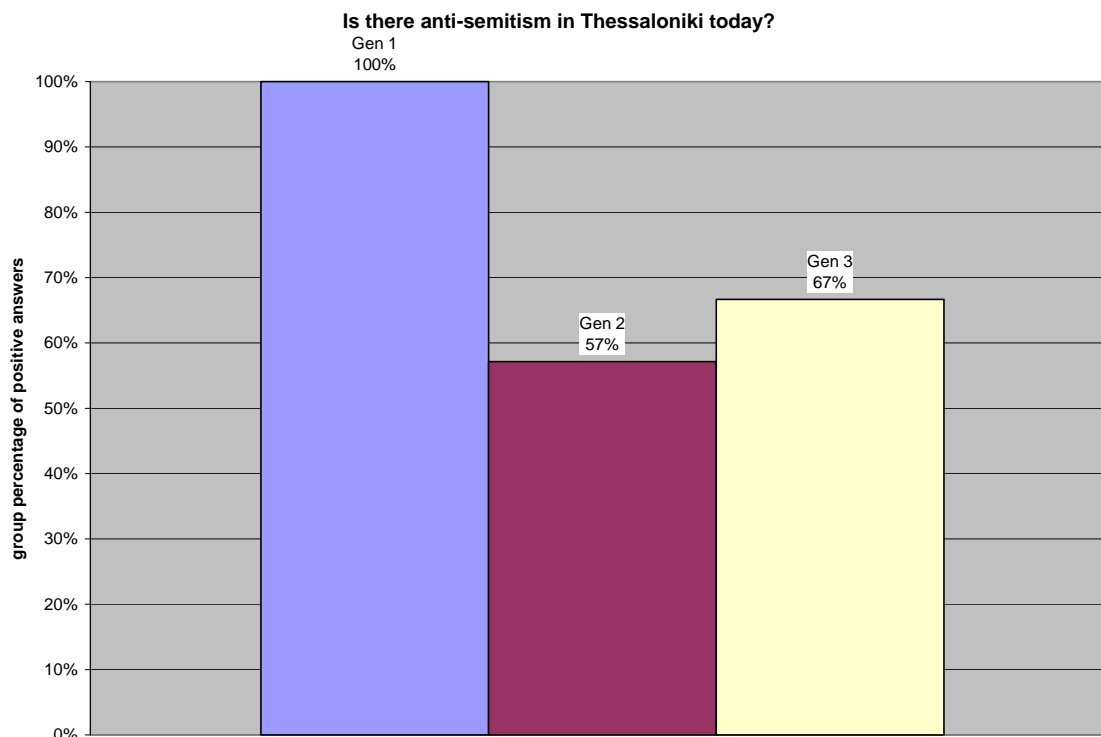


Figure 5-12: Is there anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki?

The total sample of G1-G3 participants indicates that 73% of all participants believe there to be anti-Semitism in Thessaloniki today and “not just in Thessaloniki, in all of Greece” {G2-M-AA}. Interestingly, of all the participants who responded “yes” to the question, no one volunteered to go into any detail of a personally-experienced anti-Semitic event, and in fact, a very common response was to say that although they had heard of anti-Semitism in the city, they themselves had never experienced any. This is attested in the statements below:

Nai, omos oxi apo prosopiki emberia [G2-F-TK]. Yes, but not from personal experience.

Well, people will talk, but I have never had any bad experiences [G2-M-IM]

Si, la vedra diremos siempre ay una kozika [ama] yo nunca tuvi problema. Senti de otros ke tienen problemas, yo no tuvi. Puede ser [ke] ser muzer es mas facile. Tengo *todas* amigas gregas [G2-F-SG]. Yes, the truth be told, there is always something [but] I never had any problems. I've heard of others having problems, but I never did. It could be [that] being a woman is easier. *All* my friends are Greek.

One participant offers her viewpoint of the source of Greek anti-Semitism. In her opinion, the kind of anti-Semitism is that which is disseminated by the media and is not felt by the general population. In addition, she makes reference to the Palestinian situation which often causes a stir in the Greek media and manifests itself in public protests:

I didn't feel it before, but two years ago with the Palestinians I began to feel it. But not from the people around me, from the media, from the newspapers [G3-F-DK].

Of the total sample, 21% of participants believed that there is no anti-Semitism. One G2 participant explains that what could easily be perceived as such is really just indicative of the often passionate 'essence' of the Greek character:

That's difficult. I would say 'no', although there are signs that anybody can see and hear but I don't see it's a true anti-Semitism. I think it's a Greek reaction as Greeks react all the time. They are enthusiastic for one period and then it drops. Greeks get excited about different topics depending on the crisis and the politics of the time and on what the media say. And then if it's calm and nobody talks about it, they forget it all [G2-F-EP]

As corroborated by Lewkowicz (2000) and Weis (2000), a look at the cross-generational results indicates a trend toward there being a decreased perception of anti-Semitism from G1 to G3. Where 100% of G1 participants believe there to be anti-Semitism, 57% of G2 and 67% of G3 respond that there is none. One explanation would be the effect having lived through the years preceding and immediately following the Holocaust, a time in which anti-Semitic sentiment must have been particularly acute.

While it was inflicted by the Nazis and not the Greeks (notwithstanding documented cases of Greek collaboration), these participants also experienced a form of anti-Semitism in their return to Thessaloniki from neighbors and from the general Greek public who in some cases demonstrated uncompassionate behavior vis-à-vis their Jewish co-territorializes and the crisis they had just endured. There are abundant testimonies recounting stories of Greeks confiscating personal property and either refusing to return it or claiming that it had been stolen (Benbassa 1993, Lewkowicz 2000, Weis 2000). Although G2 and G3's would have undoubtedly been touched by the retelling of these circumstances and their psychological and physical after-effects, they would have been less raw for them as it was not something they themselves had lived through. Another consideration is the effect of my being the interviewer on the participant. All knew that I was not Jewish and that I was of Greek heritage. This may have deterred some from "opening up" with me completely for fear that I would be offended. However, I am not so willing to adhere to this view since all G1 participants did not hesitate to respond that there was anti-Semitism regardless of how they thought I would react to their views.

Another possible explanation to the decrease in perceived anti-Semitic behavior in Thessaloniki can be more of a reflection of perception than of reality. If indeed G2 and G3's are more likely to feel integrated, more Greek, and more accepted than their G1 counterparts, they may be less likely to react to anti-Semitism, or more able and willing to rationalize it as something more reflective of the Greek character, as did participant G2-F-EP in the above narrative. This can happen only if the perceived boundary of "us" vs. "them" is softer in the younger participants than with the older ones for whom it may still be hard.

### 5.3.6.2 Impact of national policy, nationalist rhetoric and the Church

In Chapter 1, I described at length the various policies enforced by the government in the earliest decades of Thessaloniki's incorporation into the new Greek state beginning in 1912 and then escalating in 1923 with the influx of 150,000 Asia Minor refugees into the city. Such policies had the ultimate goal of Hellenizing all minorities by enforcing Greek language use and inscription into the Greek army for all males, to name a few. In addition, policies and taxes aimed at those of higher economic standing in the city, many of whom were Jews, attempted to weaken Jewish position in the Greek economy and to gain control over commerce, industry, and land that had been Jewish controlled for centuries. In addition to these policies affecting the language, the social and economic standing of the Jews, a less visible yet equally forceful nationalistic rhetoric begun in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had the effect of illegitimizing all other minority groups. The acknowledgment of their existence was seen as a threat to Greek identity as characterized by a homogeneous Greek ethnos deriving from Classical and Byzantine heritage, the Greek language, and Orthodox Christianity. Although the Greek idea of nationality did not intend to include the Greek Orthodox Church, as it was meant to be purely secular upon its inception (in the model of Western thought), the Church was nonetheless intimately linked with the idea of nation and peoplehood. It was, after all, (as the Church and the clergy would like history to show), the Church that had kept alive the Greek language, culture and religion under 400 years of Turkish oppression. Thus, minorities who did not fit under this definition of Greek nationality felt the strain in a new state that preferred a more homogeneous populace. The effects of this can still be felt

today in the way participants refer to themselves as “Jews” or “mosotros” [‘us’] and to Christian Greeks as “Greeks”, “los gregos” and “eos” [‘them’].

Although it was not intended by the creators of the Greek nation who had been heavily influenced by secular Western thought, the Greek Church became and is still is a t presence in Greek society. The omnipresence of the Church and its effect on non-Christians is best described by the following two participants:

The state religion of Greece is Christian Orthodoxy and [as such] the image of Orthodoxy is present. One feels alien, outsider. I don’t feel that I am always treated as an equal Greek [G2-M-AA]

It is something that you live with and you become accustomed with. It is true that Orthodoxy is everywhere you look, but this is normal, it is the main religion... If you go to Israel, you feel Judaism there. It must be uncomfortable for people who must live there and are not Jews. So, this is fact. I don’t really think about it. I am not forced to practice it, [so] this is not a problem for me [G2-M-IM].

As discussed earlier, the tales told every Spring of the Jews killing Jesus fortify the boundaries between Jews and non-Jews in Thessaloniki, as does the ever-present visibility of the Church. With respect to the libels spread in the villages regarding the death of Christ, one participant views the Church as partly to blame for not doing enough to dissuade its dissemination. Her view is that the Church might not be the source of the “rumor” spread every year, but they certainly could do more to speak out against it. In the best case scenario, their silence reflects the clergy’s nonchalance. In the worst case, the dissemination of said rumor is viewed to be in the Church’s interest.

### 5.3.6.3 The Holocaust

Any treatment of Jewish identity must include an examination of the effects of the Holocaust on the psyche of the people. Linguistically speaking, the impact of the Holocaust was tremendous in that it expedited an already existing process of language shift begun in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the annihilation of nearly an entire speech community, the language was subject to what can be called linguistic genocide. Aside from linguistic-related transformations, the post-war years also brought about massive changes affecting every sector of daily public life and all aspects of the individual and community psyche. This section serves to reveal some of the more visible and concrete changes that took place as well as the less visible and abstract transformations. The impact of these changes on post-war Jewish identity will thus be examined.

Although I did not include any specific questions regarding the Holocaust, as I was concerned what effect this line of questioning might have on the participants, especially on G1 participants, all G1 and G2 participants brought up the issue voluntarily. This was not the case among G3 participants, although three did make reference to it in one way or the other.

It is well documented that every aspect of practical daily life was impacted in one way or the other. Surviving Jews returned from Nazi camps and from hiding in the mountains to a city that did not resemble in any shape or form the city that they had left a short time earlier. Along with the destruction or confiscation of personal property (homes and businesses) first by the Nazis and then by Greeks (many of them Asia Minor refugees settling into the city in 1923) who had assumed that the Jews would not be returning, community-owned property was lost as well. On top of the trauma

experienced during the war itself, survivors had to deal with the additional shock of the city's new physical landscape that bore no resemblance to the heavily Jewish-flavored city of before. In practical terms, this meant for the great majority that there were no homes to return to, no work place or businesses in which wages could be earned, no community welfare offices to receive the returnees, no Jewish schools to take in surviving children, and no Jewish hospitals and homes to treat the sick and the elderly. In addition, community property of historic, sentimental and academic value also perished. This included the age old Jewish cemetery upon which the University of Thessaloniki was later built, synagogues, and community libraries containing centuries-old community archives, records, manuscripts, translations, other literary accomplishments. The burden of return to practical matters was further weighted down by the enormous psychological challenge of facing the city and life therein alone, without family members and friends. It was not infrequent for young adults to return alone in the hopes of finding other surviving family members, or for young wives or husband to return as widows and without their children, many of whom did not survive the harsh conditions of the camp. Thus, the impact of the Holocaust took an even greater toll on the psychology of the survivor whose consequence can be seen on the formation of a new post-war identity. Lewkowicz (2000) reports that at the individual level, survivors had to cope with such traumatic issues such as the loss of family network, depression from having to mourn the loss of loved ones, feelings of betrayal by the Greek people and government, and feelings of uprootedness, discontinuity and contingency that one's life could be "here today, gone tomorrow". Having to cope with the immediate practical and psychological issues addressed above resulted in what Lewkowicz presents as the two "most important

adaptation strategies” adopted by the returnees which have in turn informed the development of a post-war Jewish identity (271). At the individual level, survivors strived to re-create family networks by remarrying, having children (the years immediately after their return are marked by many group weddings and a t baby boom) and embracing *any* survivor that they came across in the street. Lewkowicz’s informants recall the happiness and relief felt when meeting another Jew on the street, even when this Jew had been complete stranger before the war. After the war, this stranger became like “a member of the family”. Her respondents report that they wanted to be with other Jews, “entre mosotros” [‘among us’], to laugh and cry and to share their experiences of survival. One respondent reports that because there were so few survivors, those who remained became one big family and so when there was a wedding or bar mitzvah, everybody was invited. What this meant for the children born immediately after the war was a very strong sense of community linkage with all the city’s Jews who became like members of an extended family. Today, my G2 participants report that the relationships formed during these initial post-war years and with people who had experienced the same emotional burden still persist today and enable them to deal with the ever present reminder that they don’t have their own blood-related extended family members, nor did they ever meet them. The sadness and regret of never having experienced this aspect of ordinary life is best expressed by the following participant who lost her father and all of his relatives in the war:

No konosi ningun pariente de mi padre, ni en foto, ni en sentir, a ningunos a ningunos [G2-F-VB]. I never met any relative of my father’s, not in pictures, nor from hearing about them, nobody, nobody.

Thus, it is not difficult to see how non blood-related community members would be so easily welcomed to fulfill this role. Among G2 participants, this feeling of extended



family persists until today and has been transmitted to the following generation as attested by a G3 participant who recalls that it was sometimes difficult to contemplate a romantic relationship with someone from within the community because he grew up feeling that every girl was his cousin and that every adult was his uncle or aunt. He jokingly states that this was the reason he always dated outside the community and ultimately married a non Jewish Thessalonikan woman. Aside from the re-creation of family networks, the generations who had survived the Holocaust and their children were also influenced by the existence of a Jewish state, a place where they could always go should another Holocaust occur. Thus, as Lewkowicz (1994) and Weis (2000) report and as my own research corroborates, Israel became a source of identification for these generations, especially for those born during the war and immediately after. Marking the role of Israel in the make-up of Jewish identity, one participant states that Jewish ethnicity could be expressed in the following manner:

Del alma, si kiere bien Israel, si save ke es dzidio, le plaze ke es dzidio  
[G2-F-GB]. From the soul, by loving Israel, by knowing that one is  
Jewish, by liking to be Jewish.

G2's (and G3's) contact with Israel came in the form of Israeli teachers (morim) who would come to teach Hebrew and Israeli songs and dances at the school and yearly summer camps. Further contact was achieved when men, in the years immediately following WWII and then women as well, received encouragement from the community to go and study in Israel. Of all 33 participants, all had traveled to Israel except for two, one G1 and another G3 participant. In spite of the popularity of traveling to Israel for study, for tourism or to visit family, none of my own participants expressed any interest in making the "aliyah" (permanent migration or settlement in Israel).

Although the presence of Israel in the upbringing and lives of G2 and G3 participants is apparent, not all participants expressed feeling a connection with it. This is best expressed by one G2 participant who describes his attachment with Israel as being “by default”. Another indication that Israel did not necessarily figure in as a top source of identification came when participants were asked with which country they related more, Spain or Israel. Less than half reported relating more with Israel, and a cross generational examination revealed that there was no increase in feelings of solidarity from G1 to G3. One G2 participant who had traveled multiple times to Israel for tourism and to visit family members responded to the question of “Do you identify with Israel?” with “No, del todo” [G2-F-AK]. The lack of identification with Israel among some of the participants could be interpreted as a measure to abide by Greek public opinion, which of late has been openly anti-Israeli and sympathetic to the Palestinians.

In addition to the re-creation of some semblance of family and extended family at the individual level, Lewkowicz points to a second type of coping strategy found at the level of the community. This came in the form of the re-creation of an even tighter and closed community whose immediate post-war role was to serve the needs of survivors and to safeguard and protect them against another possible Holocaust or act of anti-Semitism. This role of protector still persists today as access to a variety of Community institutions is strictly guarded, including entry into Community offices and school, and access to the elderly residing at the Community-owned senior citizen’s home. As I had discussed in Chapter 3, even after writing a formal letter to the powers that be and having a personal connection, I was still unable to get the permission needed to interview senior citizen residents residing in the community’s senior citizen home. During community

events at the Community Center, I came across security guards who searched my purse and questioned my reasons for wanting to attend the event. I was also met by what I interpreted as suspicion and reluctance to engage in conversation and participate in my study when introducing myself to community members.

With respect to the non Jewish majority around them, the community maintained a low public profile, or “private Judaism” as Lewkowicz (1994) calls it. This was, and still is to a great extent, the way in which survivors reckoned with their personal and collective trauma and with the non Jewish majority with whom there were times of social tension. Maintaining a low public profile meant for the Jews that their Judaism (religious, cultural and linguistic) was to be minimized and remain unacknowledged in public spheres outside the home and the confines of the community. A G2 participant recalls how this behavior influenced even linguistic habits. She recalls that it was just “a given” that one would not speak in Judeo-Spanish in public because, and although she did not recall fearing for her safety, it was an ingrained understanding that the language was for the home and not for use outside of the home, especially with non Jews. While their profile was low in the public sphere, the community’s profile was very high in the private sphere, among Jews, thereby accounting for the community’s deep involvement in all aspects of members’ lives from employment, community and individual welfare, the education of children, social networks of adults, to the care of the sick and elderly, and so forth. On the Jewish psyche, the effect of the Holocaust on the identity of the individual and the community who experienced it first hand is undeniable. The important note to make is that these sentiments and identity transformations have been transmitted to subsequent generations that still inform the thought processes, behaviors, and life

stances among those who had not experienced the Holocaust first hand. Thus, one can conclude that the collective experience of trauma and all of its after-effects, the shared sense of having been uprooted and having a personal history of discontinuity and vulnerability fulfill the dual purpose of simultaneously bolstering solidarity and alignment within the community while maintaining hard boundaries between it and the non Jewish population around them.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The results reveal that identification with Jewish ancestry and all that it entails very much persists in my participant sample among all generational groups. Expressed pride of being Jewish, the desire to transmit Jewish traditions to children, and the persistence of Spain as the “mother land” all contribute to the maintenance of desirable boundaries separating Jews from non Jewish Greeks in Thessaloniki which in turn serve to insure the persistence of Jewish identity. Cross generationally, there is no apparent trend toward the loss of said boundary markers from G1 to G3 participants. That is, identification with a Jewish ancestry, pride felt for being Jewish, desire to transmit Jewish traditions to children and a persistent identification with Spain as a place of origin have as strong an effect on the identities of G1 respondents as they do on those of G2 and G3 participants. The only cross-generational trends that appear among younger participants are a decreased connection felt with modern-day Spaniards, a less detailed awareness of specific places of origins pre 1942, and an increased use of the “Greek” label for the purpose of self-identification.

Boundaries serving to distance Jews from non Jews still persist among participants in all generational groups. These boundaries come in the form of preference for intramarriage for the perpetuation of Jewish identity, perceived cultural differences and the sensation of feeling 'different' from non Jewish Greeks, a sense of solidarity with other Jews for having shared the trauma of the Holocaust, and the shared adversity of having minority status in a homogeneous society. Cross generationally, a trend indicating a resolution of the conflict of being 'Greek' and 'Jewish' emerges as participant age decreases. While preference for intramarriage is still preferred among G3 participants, intermarriage is met with less disapproval among younger participants. In addition, there is a decreased perception of feeling culturally different from non Jewish Greeks, and G3's are less perceptive of anti-Semitism and of the difficulties of being a minority in Thessaloniki. Enabling Jewish identification to be equally persistent in all generational groups and leading to an increased sense of alignment with non Jewish Greeks and an increased use of a Greek label for self-identification among the youngest of participants, is the evolving nature of Greek society. It is my contention that, on the one hand, a more westernized Greek society has had to become more open to acknowledging the presence of minorities thereby expanding its notion of Greekness, allowing minorities to integrate to the desired extent without having to abandon certain markers of ethnicity signaling a differing heritage. On the other hand, Jews have also done their part to integrate into Greek society by eschewing those values that repel Greek acceptance while adopting others that encourage it (use of a Greek label for self-identification, a professed allegiance to Greece, the adoption and transmission of the

Greek language, a secularized form of Judaism, and a mitigated, or at least private, allegiance to Israel).

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

#### **6.1 Overview**

In addition to describing the historical, social and political motivations behind the shift of an ethnic language of a minority group, this research is guided by two central questions: first, given the link between language and identity, what happens to ethnic identity when its longtime associated language is in shift? Does said identity weaken when its associated language ceases to be used by its speakers? Second, in light of human social behavior that seeks to create and sustain boundaries between groups, do other boundary-making markers of identity emerge to compensate for the loss of an ethnic language? As a basis to treat these two research inquiries, I examined the role of Judeo-Spanish, an ethnic language in shift, in the maintenance of a Jewish identity among a group of Thessalonikan Jews residing in Thessaloniki, Greece.

#### **6.2 Conclusion**

That ethnic identity is lost when a group's ethnic language has shifted is an entirely simplistic if not dubious statement. A loss of ethnic identity is a very unlikely result of language shift, although this assertion would be met with disapproval by language objectivists who prioritize the role of ethnic language in the maintenance of an ethnic identity. For the loss of language to have this strong of an effect, we would have

to envision a context rid of all other variables and factors where only language and ethnic identity existed: a symbiotic relationship in which one would entail exactly the other, and vice versa. As examined in the present research, however, ethnicity is an amalgam of highly complex variables or markers of ethnicity (both linguistic and non-linguistic) that give resilience to ethnic identity so that the shift of one or another does not entail a loss or even a weakening of ethnic identity. That is not to imply that the nature of ethnicity, upon the shift of its ethnic language, does not undergo a transformation resulting from reorganization or reprioritizing of ethnic markers. In simplistic terms, the shift of one marker will be compensated by the emergence of another when such a loss leaves a lacuna in the whole network of ethnic markers. When, however, that network is hardy enough to sustain the shift of one marker or another, the emergence of a 'new' marker is unnecessary; instead, ethnicity relies on the reorganization or reprioritization of already existing markers.

Also governing the transformation of the nature of ethnicity when its language is shifted is the context in which said change takes place. A whole host of historical, political and social factors, more than the shift of the language itself, determines what components will make up that reprioritized or reorganized repertoire of ethnic markers. The selection and prioritization of ethnic markers reflects two human behaviors, one that seeks to preserve social boundaries by accentuating differences and another that allows for the social integration of groups by repelling or privatizing those markers that threaten intergroup cohesion. In the context of a majority-minority society, it is the minority group that determines which markers will be accentuated or repelled, but it does so only in accordance with the values of the majority society. In essence, the makeup of a given



minority group's network of markers is a reflection of not only its own value system but that of the majority society's.

All living things mutate and evolve over time to accommodate the changing circumstances of their environment. The link between language and ethnicity should thus be regarded as dynamic and extant in keeping with the ever-evolving social milieu in which it finds itself. This dynamic nature can be viewed both synchronically among differing generational groups and diachronically across the course of time. What this means is that what is true for one generation of speakers may not be for another. Depending on the particular stage of ethnic identity development in which a group finds itself, what is primordial for one group of speakers is expendable for another. Even within the same group, while one generation will regard its ethnic language as the blood and bones of its essence, another generation will appraise it as a component more easily exchanged for another.

In the context of contemporary Thessaloniki among the three generational groups examined in this study, the link between ethnic language and ethnic identity is in a state of vacillation. In general terms, while for the older generation the language is regarded as a primordial component of Jewish essence, this 'blood and bones' metaphor is lost on the younger generations who regard it as important but not obligatory. The fluctuating role assigned to Judeo-Spanish in the construction of Jewishness is occasioned by the changing social realities that each generational group has faced, is facing and will face. Indeed, the reality in which my participants live dictates that a primordial link between ethnicity and language (if that language is not Greek) is not favorable, and this is more poignant among younger generations than it is for older generations. For older

participants who grew up at a time when the language served a communicative function, was used publicly, and set them apart from non Judeo-Spanish speaking compatriots, language is assigned a greater primordial value as a marker of ethnicity (although not entirely primordial); conversely, younger participants for whom the language carries only symbolic value and is employed minimally in very private domains charge it with a subjective role. The language is present symbolically, but it is certainly not a *sine quo non* for Jewishness or even Sephardicness. That a Jewish identity still persists among all generational groups, even though its Jewish language (both communicatively and symbolically) is more present among some and less among others, substantiates subjectivist claims that language is merely one of many possible- and expendable- markers of ethnicity.

Given the expendable and subjective role of an ethnic language in the formation and preservation of ethnic identity and the ability for ethnicity to persevere with or without the ethnic language, the task remains to identify other markers, linguistic and non linguistic alike, that serve to mark Jewish identity among the participants in this sample. The fate of ethnic identity never rests on one single marker but rather on the intricate interplay of many. The components that make up Thessalonikan Jewish ethnicity are many, and in light of the above discussion, varied: linguistically, Judeo-Spanish serves a symbolic role that is satisfied by mere association with the language or by the use of Judeo-Spanish borrowings peppered into Greek. The types of borrowings most readily employed by speakers of an ethnic language regardless of linguistic ability are most commonly terms expressing endearment, kinship relations, expletives, names of food and dishes associated with the ethnicity, titles of songs, and proverbs. This type of linguistic

behavior, more symbolic than communicative, is a non-taxing method that enables speakers, even among those who possess low or no levels of linguistic ability, to fortify ingroup cohesion and solidarity and to signal group boundaries between the ethnic group in question and the majority society. In addition, this type of ethnic language use, limited and sparse, does not threaten the speaker's ability to integrate into the majority society.

A consequence of language shift is the reshuffling and reprioritization of the markers of ethnicity. For a group that for so long distinguished itself from others by means of a differing language, the loss of this language in its communicative function creates a linguistic lacuna that is open to be filled by another marker, both linguistic and non linguistic. Often, this linguistic need is satisfied with mere association with the ethnic language. Just as Judeo-Spanish, in its communicative function, marked Jewish identity in Thessaloniki a century ago, today it continues to signal Jewishness, but only symbolically. Because of the symbolic language's less visible nature, a group who wants to reaffirm boundaries between the in- and outgroup, may attempt to revitalize the symbolic language by means of language classes or community programs addressing the language. In Thessaloniki, I contend that the shift of Judeo-Spanish has erased desired boundary markers between Jews and non Jews and that speakers may find Hebrew a readily available marker serving to distance Jews from non Jews. By readily available, I mean that it is a language that has official national status (where Judeo-Spanish does not), it is a language in its own right (whereas Judeo-Spanish is a mere 'jargon'), it is a language that is fully transmitted to younger generations (whereas Judeo-Spanish is not), and for those influenced by Zionist ideology or Israeli nationalism, it is the 'only true language of the Jews'. To put it more simply, Hebrew has a future and Judeo-Spanish

only has a past. Even though Hebrew's presence in the repertoire of this sample's markers of identity is minimal and indeed inferior to Judeo-Spanish, for the reasons highlighted above, I submit that it has the potential to play a greater role in the future. This role, however, is currently (and may continue to be) mitigated by the value system of Greek society, to which the sample appears to be very sensitive.

Non linguistic markers of ethnic identity are many and varied. The most noteworthy markers are those that are employed as boundary markers between the minority and majority groups and those that promote solidarity, or sustained sense of *Geimenschaft* within the group. These can be viewed along the dimensions of paternity (shared origin and historicity, the sense of 'we-ness'), patrimony (the observation of religious rituals, even among the secular, giving children Spanish and Hebrew names, transmitting Sephardic cuisine, music and oral histories) and phenomenology (the attitudes, perceptions and interpretations with which they approach life). Indeed, groups who claim a shared historical authenticity dating back to ancient times, often rely solely on paternity to foster ethnic identification. Jews commonly invoke three thousand years of a traceable origin and two thousand years of shared adversity and the Diaspora. For the participants in this sample, this shared history and a 'feeling' of Jewishness, combined with the transmission of both patrimonial and phenomenological aspects of ethnicity ensure that, in spite of a communicative shift of its ethnic language, and even a slight weakening in its symbolic function, Jewish identity remains both resilient and resolute.

### 6.3 Limitations of this study

Some of the limitations of the study that I will discuss in this section are inherent in the research design whereas others are found in the execution of the study.

I was the primary researcher, but I was also able to employ an adult male who was an active member in the community. The effects of the age, gender, interview style, and community status of the interviewer are worthy of mention. It is plausible that the age and gender of the male interviewer may have intimidated or influenced the way in which younger female participants responded. I also suspect that my assistant's very positivist-like interview style may have discouraged participants to elaborate responses or to delve into more analytic examinations of the issues presented. Staying true to a positivist style of data collection, the nature of my assistant's interviews were very uni-directional. He asked the questions, and participants responded. There was no coaxing on the assistant's part for the purpose of obtaining more elaborate narratives. I view this as a shortcoming because many of the yes-no responses could have been supported by a greater amount of explanatory detail. My own style was informal. I attempted to make the interview bi-directional in nature, so that my own thoughts, viewpoints and perceptions of the topics discussed were given. It was my hope that this method would elicit richer and deeper responses, and it definitively did. It was also a method of ensuring a degree of accuracy in interpreting participant responses. This shortcoming could have been avoided had this been anticipated and by spending more time 'training' the assistant in conducting interviews to be used for a qualitative style analysis. In addition, the insider status of the assistant interviewer may have made the participant give responses based on what he/she thought the interviewer, a well-respected member of the

community, would want to hear. Likewise, my own outsider status, while giving the participant a sense of anonymity, could have also prompted untruthful responses if the participant felt constrained by my outsider status. In addition, the potential for researcher bias that I brought to the interpretation of the data was an inevitable risk of this kind of research.

In additional limitation of the study is that marked by issues of reliability and validity. Problems with reliability in content analysis stem from inconsistencies of text classification, which can be resolved by one of two methods: the use of more than one human classifier or the use of a computer software program. Both of these methods help to ensure that the coding rules are applied consistently. Because I employed neither of these methods, the degree of reliability may be compromised. However, this was offset by the very direct and straightforward nature of the questions that helped to eliminate a degree of ambiguity.

#### **6.4 Contributions of this study**

The strength of this study is that the link between language and identity and language shift and identity sustainment are examined in their historical, social, and political context revealing a multifaceted interplay of factors that contribute to said link.. In light of the theories of identity formation and maintenance in the face of language shift, these considerations enabled me to provide a rich description of the nature of this sample's identity, the transformations that it has undergone, and the role of the ethnic language and ethnic language shift in said identity and identity transformation.

### **6.5 Areas of future inquiry**

If language shift engenders transformations of how one conceptualizes his or her ethnic identity, then the adoption of another language should effectuate changes as well. An examination of the role of the Greek language in the evolving identities of this community is worthwhile. In addition, how might recent international interest in the community affect the symbolic value of Judeo-Spanish? Likewise, will the community's own renewed enthusiasm for all things Sephardic contribute to the strengthening of the symbolic value of Judeo-Spanish?

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## Appendix A

### Biographic Profiles of Study Participants

Table A-1: Generation 1 Participants' Place of Birth

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Participant born in Thessaloniki?	9	1	90.0%	10.0%
Father born in Thessaloniki?	9	1	90.0%	10.0%
Mother born in Thessaloniki?	7	3	70.0%	30.0%

Table A-2: Generation 2 Participants' Place of Birth

GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Participant born in Thessaloniki?	10	4	71.4%	28.6%
Father born in Thessaloniki?	12	2	85.7%	14.3%
Mother born in Thessaloniki?	13	1	92.9%	7.1%

Table A-3: Generation 3 Participants' Place of Birth

GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Participant born in Thessaloniki?	8	1	88.9%	11.1%
Father born in Thessaloniki?	8	1	88.9%	11.1%
Mother born in Thessaloniki?	5	4	55.6%	44.4%

Table A-4: Primary Education in Greek Language Only

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Primary Education in Greek only?	8	2	80.0%	20.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Primary Education in Greek only?	14	0	100.0%	0.0%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Primary Education in Greek only?	9	0	100.0%	0.0%

Table A-5: Secondary Education in Greek Language Only

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Secondary Education in Greek only?	0	10	0.0%	100.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Secondary Education in Greek only?	7	7	50.0%	50.0%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Secondary Education in Greek only?	4	5	44.4%	55.6%

Table A-6: University Education in Greek Language Only

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has university degree?	2	8	20.0%	80.0%
University education in Greek only? (n=2)	1	1	50.0%	50.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has university degree?	9	5	64.3%	35.7%
University education in Greek only? (n=9)	4	5	44.4%	55.6%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has university degree?	6	3	66.7%	33.3%
University education in Greek only?	2	4	33.3%	66.7%

Table A-7: Generation 1 Participants' Most Proficient Language

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	JSp	Greek	French	Other	Don't know	JSp/French	JSp/Greek
Paternal Great grandparents	30%(3)	0	0	0	70%(7)	0	0
Maternal Great grandparents	30%(3)	0	0	20%(2)	50%(5)	0	0
Paternal Grandparents	90%(9)	0	0	0	10%(1)	0	0
Maternal Grandparents	80%(8)	0	0	20%(2)	0	0	0
Father	90%(9)	0	0	0	0	10%(1)	0
Mother	70%(7)	0	10%(1)	20%(2)	0	0	0
Participant	0	60%(6)	10%(1)	0	0	0	30%(3)

Table A-8: Generation 2 Participants' Most Proficient Language

GENERATION 2 (n=14)	JSp	Greek	French	Other	don't know
Paternal Great grandparents	71%(10)	0	0	0	29%(4)
Maternal Great grandparents	71%(10)	0	0	0	29%(4)
Paternal Grandparents	86%(12)	14%(2)	0	0	0
Maternal Grandparents	93%(13)	7%(1)	0	0	0
Father	50%(7)	50%(7)	0	0	0
Mother	43%(6)	43%(6)	14%(2)	0	0
Participant	0	100%(14)	0	0	0

Table A-9: Generation 3 Participants' Most Proficient Language

GENERATION 3 (n=9)	JSp	Greek	French	Other	don't know	JSp/French
Paternal Great grandparents	56%(5)	11%(1)	0	0	33%(3)	0
Maternal Great grandparents	44%(4)	0	0	11%(1)	44%(4)	0
Paternal Grandparents	56%(5)	11%(1)	0	0	22%(2)	11%(1)
Maternal Grandparents	33%(3)	33%(3)	0	11%(1)	22%(2)	0
Father	11%(1)	78%(8)	11%(1)	0	0	0
Mother	0	89%(8)	0	11%(1)	0	0
Participant	0	100%(9)	0	0	0	0

Table A-10: Generations 1-3 Participants' Most Proficient Language

GENERATION 1-3 (n=33)	JSp	Greek	French	Other	Don't know	JSp/French	JSp/Greek
Paternal Great grandparents	55%	3%	0%	0%	42%	0%	0%
Maternal Great grandparents	52%	0%	0%	9%	39%	0%	0%
Paternal Grandparents	79%	9%	0%	0%	9%	3%	0%
Maternal Grandparents	73%	12%	0%	9%	6%	0%	0%
Father	52%	42%	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Mother	39%	42%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Participant	0%	88%	3%	0%	0%	0%	9%

Table A-11: Language Generation 1 Participants Most Employ with the Following People...

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	no contact
Paternal Grandparents	50%(5)	10%(1)	10%(1)	0	0	50%(5)
Maternal Grandparents	40%(4)	10%(1)	10%(1)	0	0	60%(6)
Father	60%(6)	60%(6)	40%(4)	0	20%(2)	10%(1)
Mother	70%(7)	60%(6)	60%(6)	0	20%(2)	0
Siblings	80%(8)	90%(9)	40%(4)	0	0	0
Spouse	70%(7)	10%(10)	40%(4)	0	0	0
Children	40%(4)	10%(10)	0	0	0	0
Grandchildren	20%(2)	70%(7)	10%(1)	0	20%(2)	0
Rabbi	30%(3)	10%(1)	10%(1)	0	20%(2)	60%(6)
Jews in Thessaloniki	80%(8)	90%(9)	30%(3)	0	0	0
Jews in Israel	40%(4)	30%(30)	50%(5)	10%(1)	40%(4)	10%(1)

Table A-12: Language Generation 2 Participants Most Employ with the Following People...

GENERATION 2 (n=14)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	no contact
Paternal Grandparents	21.4%(3)	28.6%(4)	0	0	0	71.4%(10)
Maternal Grandparents	21.4%(3)	14.3%(2)	0	0	0	71.4%(10)
Father	42.9%(6)	92.9%(13)	7.1%(1)	0	0	7.1%(1)
Mother	50%(7)	92.9%(13)	14.3%(2)	0	0	0
Siblings	21.4%(3)	85.7%(12)	0	0	0	14.3%(2)
Spouse	0	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Children	21.4%(3)	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Grandchildren	14.3%(2)	21.4%(3)	0	0	0	78.6%(11)
Rabbi	7.1%(1)	14.3%(2)	0	14.3%(2)	35.7%(5)	50%(7)
Jews in Thessaloniki	71.4%(10)	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Jews in Israel	64.3%(9)	57.1%(8)	21.4%(3)	35.7%(5)	78.6%(11)	0

Table A-13: Language Generation 3 Participants Most Employ with the Following People...

GENERATION 3 (n=9)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	no contact
Paternal Grandparents	44.4%(4)	55.6%(5)	0	0	0	33.3%(3)
Maternal Grandparents	11.1%(1)	55.6%(5)	0	0	0	44.4%(4)
Father	11.1%(1)	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Mother	0	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Siblings	0	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Spouse	0	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Children	0	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Grandchildren	0	0	0	0	0	100%(9)
Rabbi	0	0	11.1%(1)	11.1%(1)	33.3%(3)	44.4%(4)
Jews in Thessaloniki	22.2%(2)	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Jews in Israel	0	22.2%(2)	0	11.1%(1)	55.6%(5)	44.4%(4)

Table A-14: Language Other People Employ with Generation 1 Participants

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	No contact
Paternal Grandparents	50%(5)	0	10%(1)	0	0	50%(5)
Maternal Grandparents	40%(4)	0	10%(1)	0	0	60%(6)
Father	70%(7)	40%(4)	50%(5)	0	20%(2)	0
Mother	60%(6)	40%(4)	50%(5)	0	20%(2)	0
Siblings	80%(8)	90%(9)	10%(1)	0	0	0
Spouse	70%(7)	100%(10)	40%(4)	0	0	0
Children	30%(3)	100%(10)	0	0	0	0
Grandchildren	20%(2)	90%(9)	10%(1)	0	0	0
Rabbi	40%(4)	10%(1)	10%(1)	10%(1)	20%(2)	50%(5)
Jews of Thessaloniki	100%(10)	90%(9)	20%(2)	0	0	0
Jews of Israel	40%(4)	30%(3)	50%(5)	10%(1)	40%(4)	10%(1)

Table A-15: Language Other People Employ with Generation 2 Participants

GENERATION 2 (n=14)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	No contact
Paternal Grandparents	21.4%(3)	28.6%(4)	0	0	0	71.4%(10)
Maternal Grandparents	28.6%(4)	7.1%(1)	0	0	0	71.4%(10)
Father	57.1%(8)	92.9%(13)	7.1%(1)	0	0	7.1%(1)
Mother	57.1%(8)	92.9%(13)	14.3%(2)	0	0	0
Siblings	21.4%(3)	85.7%(12)	0	0	0	14.3%(2)
Spouse	14.3%(2)	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Children	0	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Grandchildren	0	21.4%(3)	0	0	0	78.6%(11)
Rabbi	7.1%(1)	14.3%(2)	0	14.3%(2)	28.6%(4)	50%(7)
Jews of Thessaloniki	71.4%(10)	100%(14)	0	0	0	0
Jews of Israel	64.3%(9)	42.9%(6)	21.4%(3)	35.7%(5)	78.6%(11)	0

Table A-16: Language Other People Employ with Generation 3 Participants

GENERATION 3 (n=9)	J-Spanish	Greek	French	Hebrew	Other	No contact
Paternal Grandparents	33%(3)	55.6%(5)	0	0	0	33%(3)
Maternal Grandparents	11.1%(1)	55.6%(5)	0	0	0	44.4%(4)
Father	22.2%(2)	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Mother	11.1%(1)	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Siblings	11.1%(1)	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Spouse	0	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Children	0	77.8%(7)	0	0	0	22.2%(2)
Grandchildren	0	0	0	0	0	100%(9)
Rabbi	0	0	11.1%(1)	11.1%(1)	33%(3)	44.4%(4)
Jews of Thessaloniki	22.2%(2)	100%(9)	0	0	0	0
Jews of Israel	0	22.2%(2)	0	22.2%(2)	55.6%(5)	44.4%(4)

Table A-17: Languages Used During Religious Events/Gatherings

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	J.Spanish	Greek	Hebrew	Don't Participate
	2 of 5	2 of 5	1 of 5	5 of 10
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	J.Spanish	Greek	Hebrew	Don't Participate
	6 of 9	5 of 9	4 of 9	5 of 14
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	J.Spanish	Greek	Hebrew	Don't Participate
	1 of 6	2 of 6	4 of 6	3 of 9

Table A-18: Frequency of Participation in Community Events

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never
	0	1	3	5	1
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never
	0	6	4	3	1
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never
	1	1	3	4	0
GENERATIONS 1-3 (n=33)	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never
	1	8	10	12	2

Table A-19: Participants' Ability to Read Judeo-Spanish

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Can read in Judeo-Spanish?	10	0	100.0%	0.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Can read in Judeo-Spanish?	13	1	92.9%	7.1%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Can read in Judeo-Spanish?	6	3	66.7%	33.3%
GENERATIONS 1-3 (n=33)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Can read in Judeo-Spanish?	29	4	87.9%	12.1%

Table A-20: Participants' Reading of Materials in Judeo-Spanish

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has read materials in Judeo-Spanish?	10	0	100.0%	0.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has read materials in Judeo-Spanish?	12	2	85.7%	14.3%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has read materials in Judeo-Spanish?	4	5	44.4%	55.6%
GENERATIONS 1-3 (n=33)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Has read materials in Judeo-Spanish?	26	7	78.8%	21.2%

Table A-21: Participants' Listening of Sephardic Music

GENERATION 1 (n=10)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Listens to Sephardic music?	8	2	80.0%	20.0%
GENERATION 2 (n=14)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Listens to Sephardic music?	13	1	92.9%	7.1%
GENERATION 3 (n=9)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Listens to Sephardic music?	7	2	77.8%	22.2%
GENERATIONS 1-3 (n=33)	YES	NO	YES	NO
Listens to Sephardic music?	28	5	84.8%	15.2%

## VITA

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