

**SUBVERTING MODERNITY: FRANCOIST SPAIN'S RESCUE OF SEPHARDIM IN
GREECE AND BUDAPEST DURING THE HOLOCAUST**

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Submitted to
Central European University
History Department

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Budapest, Hungary

2014

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Abstract

This thesis compares Francoist Spain's rescue operations of Jews in Greece and Budapest along the dual framework of "the list" as the ultimate symbol of modern bureaucracy and her relationship to the Sephardic Jewish community. Using a list of Sephardic Jews rescued by the Spanish Legation in Budapest during the Holocaust, this study focuses on and explores the provocative motif of "the list" as an instrument of power, control, and authority and as a historical source rooted in modernity to question the nature of Spain's assistance in Greece and Budapest. This thesis also explores Spain's relationship to the Sephardim in both contexts and problematizes what that marker of identity meant for the Jews being saved as well as for Spain's own self-image as a rescuer of Jews.

It is argued that in assisting Jews during the Holocaust, Spain subverted the ultimate form of modernity, the Nazi system of dehumanization carried out through the means of an efficient and rational bureaucratic system, which culminated in the Final Solution. In analyzing the nature of Spain's rescue of Jews through the lens of how the modern bureaucratic system allowed Spain to save Jews from the Holocaust on the one hand, and ascertain a leverage of power and authority with respect to the Jews she was rescuing, on the other, it is further argued that Spain ultimately remained a part of the very system which she was undermining. This study sheds an interesting light on how "the list," as a means to rescue Jews during the Holocaust, exerted a particular kind of power and authority strikingly similar to that of the Nazi system.

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Introduction

There are many instances where survivors of the Holocaust recall how their survival came about due to their name being placed on a certain list, which they had little to no idea about; yet the fact remains that this list, a piece of paper, ensured their survival. These stories conjure up a plethora of questions and issues concerning the broader and more complex mechanisms behind the operation of these lists as well as the experience of genocide itself. For example, who drew up these lists, and how did one manage to be placed on the list? From what point of view were the lists made and what does this say about the people on such lists? Lists that were produced during the Holocaust emerge as objects of fascination for the historian precisely because of the larger narrative that is shrouded in the names of people on the lists as well as the individuals responsible for their assembly.

This present study stems from the author's discovery in the archive of the Spanish Embassy in Budapest of a list of Sephardic Jews who were rescued by the Spanish Legation in Budapest during the Holocaust. On December 14, 1944, Francoist Spain's representative in Hungary, Ángel Sanz Briz, forwarded a report to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid from Bern, Switzerland on the scope and nature of rescue meted out by the Spanish Legation. This report included a list of 45 Jews identified as being Sephardic who received Spanish assistance during the dark months of 1944 in the form of ordinary Spanish passports that enabled their survival.¹ This particular document brings to mind a significant number of questions with respect to how it was constructed: how did the listed individuals manage to be placed on the list? What was the nature of their connection to the Spanish authorities? And how is this

¹ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest.

particular instance of rescue remembered in the narrative of Spain's role in rescuing Jews during the Holocaust in Budapest? Equally, the issue of Spain's relationship to the Sephardim is brought to the fore by the fact that these were Sephardic Jews. All of these questions and issues form an enigma when looking at Spain's assistance to Jews during the Holocaust in Budapest that has not been previously explored by historians and will be subsequently explored in this study.

The historiography on Spain's rescue operations of Jews during the Holocaust and the Second World War is posited between two camps: apologists of the Franco regime who praise and grossly exaggerate Spain's rescue activities during the Holocaust in order to conjure up the image of Francisco Franco as a modern-day Don Quixote; on the other hand, however, are scholars who have shown that Spain's role was limited by Franco's wish to keep Jews out of Spain as well as contingent on Spain's ambivalent relationship with both the Allied and Axis Powers. In particular, Spain's policies were paradoxical and she only rescued Jews in order to gain favor with the Allies towards the very near end of the war. Furthermore, Spain could have done a lot more to assist Jews. In terms of looking at Francoist Spain's role in Hungary, that is, the rescue operations of the Spanish Legation in Budapest during 1944, most recent works include this one particular case study in their larger analyses of Spain's rescue activities and assistance to Jews during the Holocaust.²

Although a lot has been written about the role of the Spanish Legation in Budapest concerning its efforts to rescue Jews during the Holocaust, specifically the actions of Spain's representative, Ángel Sanz Briz, little attention has been paid to the question and issue of

² These works constitute the main and dominant positions on Spain's role in the Holocaust and staunchly repudiate the apologetic literature: Avni, Haim. *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982; Lisbona, José Antonio. *Retorno a Sefarad: La política de España hacia sus judíos en el siglo XX*. Barcelona: Riopiedras, 1993; Rohr, Isabelle. *The Spanish Right and the Jews, 1898-1945: Antisemitism and Opportunism*. Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2007; Rother, Bernd. *Franco y el Holocausto*. Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2005.

Spain's relations with and policies toward the Sephardim, Jews who were expelled in 1492 and their descendants, within this specific context.³

Avni, Rother, and Rohr, the foremost historians to date to have studied Spain's position during the Holocaust, all explore to various extents the role of the Spanish Legation in Budapest and the initiatives of the young diplomat, Ángel Sanz Briz, as one small component of their larger explorations. Furthermore, with respect to the case study of Budapest, they all reach similar conclusions: all authors argue and point out that Spain assisted Jews in Budapest because of the timing, the fact that the Hungarian government was politically unstable; and because the assistance that Spain lent to Jews would not mean that these Jews would have to move to Spain following the end of the war; and because of Spain's desire to curry favor with the Allied powers. Moreover, they also reach similar conclusions about how Spain's role in Hungary is different from other instances where Spain also assisted Jews, namely, Hungary was the only instance where Spain went beyond simply lending assistance to Jews with Spanish citizenship; she also assisted Sephardim without Spanish citizenship as well as Hungarian Jews.

Although a substantial amount of work has been done on Spain's role in the Holocaust in Budapest, there are still some gaps that warrant further exploration. In particular, there is an enormous gap of knowledge with respect to who these Sephardim were, what their experience was, their connection to Spain, and how they are presented in official Spanish government correspondence between Budapest and Madrid. Therefore a deeper exploration of the Sephardim in the rescue operations of the Spanish Legation in Budapest would provide a new view of a topic that still needs to be explored and problematized in greater detail. In order to

³ Throughout this project, the term *Sephardim*, which is the Hebrew plural of the noun and adjective *Sephardi*, will be used to refer to those Jews whose ancestors were expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century. The term Sephardim or Sephardic is distinct from the term "Spanish Jews." Spanish Jews held Spanish citizenship and were Spanish citizens; the Sephardim did not.

answer these questions and raise new ones, this thesis will compare the case study of Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest with that of Greece along the axes of Spain's relationship to the Sephardim and the power of "the list" as a tool of the modern bureaucratic system that functioned during the Holocaust. In the course of this study, particular attention will be devoted to questioning Spain's relationship with and view of the Sephardim in both Greece and Budapest and how the elements of modern bureaucracy factored into Spain's assistance to Jews.

The guiding theories and methodology behind this study centers on the concept of the Holocaust as the most extreme realization of modernity. In particular, drawing upon the work of Zygmunt Bauman and Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, this study incorporates the view of the Nazi system as the ultimate form of modernity in the way in which power and control were utilized on a mass scale through the means of modern bureaucracy. This thesis will heavily incorporate and draw upon the notions of power, control, and authority and how they were implemented in the manner in which the Holocaust was carried out, namely, the modern bureaucratic system. Although there are obvious limitations with using this view of the Holocaust as the ultimate expression of the modern human experience, such as the perplexing issue of defining modernity itself or the role of technology and science in genocide, to name a few, its incorporation into this study allows for a new perspective to question the nature of Spain's assistance to Jews during the Holocaust in Greece and Budapest.

Therefore connecting Spain's rescue activities of Jews, and the way in which they were carried out, to the idea of "the list" as an instrument of power and control offers a new way to not only question and analyze the nature of Spain's rescue of Jews in Greece and Budapest, but to also shed light on the list as a historical source rooted in modernity. This allows for a provocative look at the role and nature of how modern bureaucracy not only functioned as a tool of dehumanization in the Nazi system, but was also used to assist and rescue Jews, thus

subverting modernity. This marked duality of the list as an instrument of rescue and mass murder lies at the center of this present study with respect to Spain's rescue operations of Sephardim in Greece and Budapest.

The first empirical chapter explores the narrative of rescue that was promulgated at the end of the Second World War by the Spanish government and problematizes that narrative with respect to the cases of Spain's relationship to the Sephardim in both Greece and Budapest. This section also offers a brief background on Spain's position during the war as well as a short summary of the nature of Spain's assistance to Jews during the Holocaust prior to Greece and Budapest. The second empirical chapter analyzes Spain's assistance to her Jewish citizens in Salonika and Athens, questioning Spain's relationship to these individuals and exploring how the nature of the modern bureaucratic system both precluded and enabled Spain's Jewish citizens to be rescued. In the third and final research chapter, this study focuses on the list of Sephardic Jews that was drawn up during the last months of 1944, retelling the story of Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest and how the rescue operation there were manifested on the invented story of being Sephardic. The conclusion argues that in rescuing Jews, Spain subverted modernity, the Nazi system of dehumanization, which was carried out through the means of modern bureaucracy, yet ultimately remained a part of that system through the ways in which the tools of bureaucracy gave Spain a leverage of power and control with respect to the Jews she was assisting.

Chapter One: Sources and Methodological Framework

Description of Sources

This thesis incorporates a wide array of sources, both primary and secondary, as a part of the comparison between Spain's rescue operations of Sephardim in Budapest and in Greece. The primary sources are broken down into three distinct categories. First and foremost, Spanish diplomatic correspondence from Spain's representatives in both Budapest and Greece to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid, in which lists of Jews who received Spanish assistance are also included. Secondly, Spanish government publications published immediately following the end of the war, which discuss Spain's assistance to the Jews; followed by two personal memoirs that deal with the rescue activities of the Spanish Legation in Budapest.

As for the secondary literature, this thesis covers the recent and dominant views on Spain's role in the Holocaust as well as all the relevant literature specific to Spain's role in Budapest and in Greece. In particular, the secondary literature is divided into two camps: apologetic literature of the Franco regime and more serious scholarly work that offers a more critical approach to analyzing Spain's role in the period of the Holocaust and the Second World War.

Methodology: Modernity and the Holocaust

In order to problematize and analyze the enigma of Spain's rescue in Greece and Budapest where lists of Jews were drawn up by Spanish representatives this study will focus on the relationship of the list to modernity, specifically how the list functioned as a part of the modern bureaucratic system that allowed the Holocaust to take place. The theoretical framework of this study draws heavily on the work of Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust*, in which he argues that the Holocaust and the bureaucratic means that allowed it to

occur is a product of modernity. Bauman argues that the Holocaust must be understood as a central event of modern history and not a mere historical regression to barbarism because it was based upon the technological and organization of an industrial bureaucratic society where moral responsibility was substituted for and subservient to organizational discipline and instrumental rationality.⁴

Situating the Holocaust within the framework of modernity provides a useful means of analyzing and questioning the extensive processes and figures that contributed to its fruition. This is true not only because the Holocaust occurred in a modern rational society but also because the very means by which it was carried out, i.e., the hierarchical chain of bureaucracy, technology, and science, are all modern phenomena. As a part of the modern bureaucracy that enabled the Holocaust machinery to run, the list as an object becomes an interesting document to analyze with respect to the aspects of power and control. Moreover, the list offers concrete evidence of murder and rescue and becomes an authoritative source in telling that story.

In discussing the relationship between the Holocaust and modernity, it is not the intention of this thesis to offer a new idea about the relationship between the two, but rather to shed an interesting light on the list as a historical source rooted in modernity. In order to substantiate the link between the list and modernity, this study will briefly discuss the theories and works of prominent scholars who have vigorously taken up this train of thought, exploring the dynamics of power, control, and rationality present within the Holocaust machinery in order to understand how modernity itself perpetuated Nazi Germany's annihilation of European Jewry. And here one must acknowledge that there is also another school of thought that sees the

⁴ Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 13-26.

Holocaust as anti-modern.⁵ However, that historiographical debate is beyond the scope of this study.

While using the case of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust to link the list to modernity, this thesis does not delve into the incredibly difficult question of Nazism's relationship to modernity. This is a complex issue precisely because the case of Nazi Germany presents a puzzling and ambiguous relationship with modernity. On the one hand, Nazism rejected many modern phenomena including modern art and modern music, and their ideals, above all, were not modern. Their hatred of homosexuals, Roma, Jews, and other minority groups as well as their warped view of women, who were basically seen as child-producing factories, attest to their anti-modernist tendencies. Yet the fact remains that Nazi Germany was a developed scientific powerhouse that perpetuated mass murder according to a rational bureaucratic form. This is what sets the Nazi agenda apart. Indeed hatred and the desire for murder are in themselves very barbaric yet the modern way in which Nazi Germany executed its plans is what made it problematic and difficult for people to comprehend. The fact that most of the world, including many Jews, could not understand the modern and rational means and methods behind Nazi Germany's destruction of European Jewry demonstrates the perplexities in Nazism's relationship to modernity.

The Holocaust can also be interpreted in many different ways with respect to modernity: as a gigantic pogrom stemming from Medieval hatred that was carried out with the efficiency of a modern bureaucracy, or a rapid departure from that past precisely because of the rationale

⁵ Yehuda Bauer, one of the most prominent historians of the Holocaust, argues that there is nothing inherently modern about genocide: the Rwandan genocide was not carried out with modern advanced technology, but was carried out with very low-tech machetes. See Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); American scholar Daniel Goldhagen also essentially dismisses the Holocaust as a modern event in his work, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, by focusing exclusively on the antisemitic character of the Nazis' views of Jews and avoiding any serious discussion about the bureaucratic means by which the Holocaust was carried out.

behind Nazism's characterizations of Jews according to distortions of Social Darwinism and scientific racism.⁶ Notwithstanding these different tendencies, the fact remains that the Holocaust is unique in Jewish history and world history in the way that power and control were utilized as a means to carry out mass murder. The drawing up of lists of Jews according to bureaucratic form was the way in which the Final Solution was carried out and is what sets the Holocaust apart from other episodes of anti-Jewish violence.⁷ Therefore exploring the rationale of power and control and how they are related to the list provides the link between the list and modernity and offers a new approach to looking at these objects, which not only sent Jews to the gas chambers, but also ensured their survival.

In *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Bauman argues that modernity provided the “necessary conditions” for the undertaking of the Holocaust.⁸ In the words of Bauman, the Holocaust was “not an irrational outflow of the not-yet-fully-eradicated residues of pre-modern barbarity. It was a legitimate resident in the house of modernity.”⁹ To support this claim, he suggests that the principles of rationality and efficiency of the modern era may have had, in the case of the Holocaust, some unintended consequences: “at no point of its long and tortuous execution did the Holocaust come into conflict with the principles of rationality. The ‘Final Solution’ did not clash at any stage with the rational pursuit of efficient, optimal goal-implementation. On the contrary, it arose out of a genuinely rational concern, and it was generated by bureaucracy true

⁶ The prominent interpretation that regards the Holocaust as a culmination of antisemitism and Medieval hate is most salient among the “Intentionalist” camp of scholars. Again, the work of Daniel Goldhagen comes to mind. See Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996). See also Moishe Postone and Eric L. Santner. *Catastrophe and Meaning: The Holocaust and the Twentieth Century* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago, 2003).

⁷ Prior to the Holocaust, anti-Jewish violence and destruction, most notably the pogroms in the Russian Empire during the nineteenth century or the mass violence during the Crusades of the Middle Ages, was often carried out sporadically and chaotically by angry mobs without a guiding order or method. This destruction often took the form of religiously inspired violence that saw Jewish communities targeted by blood libels or other accusations, in which Jews were massacred en masse and according to no systematic logic or order.

⁸ Bauman, *Modernity*, 13.

⁹ Ibid. 17.

to its form and purpose.”¹⁰ According to this view, modernity did not cause the Holocaust, but rather failed to prevent it. For Bauman, the question of the Holocaust’s relationship to modernity deeply problematizes his own view of modernity. While modernity did not necessarily cause the Holocaust, modernity’s relationship with that catastrophic event cannot simply be overlooked precisely because modernity provided a fundamental basis for it to occur.

In order to substantiate his claims, Bauman identifies rationality, efficiency, and bureaucracy as the defining characteristics of modern society and invokes support for his argument by drawing upon the Critical Theory of Horkheimer and Adorno. In “The Concept of Enlightenment,” from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno engage in a critique of The Enlightenment by highlighting its dominating tendency. In short, Adorno and Horkheimer see Nazism and Fascism as phenomena that stem from the destructive “dialectic of enlightenment” which caused The West to be taken over by instrumental rationality. According to them, fascist totalitarianism is the most extreme conclusion of Western Enlightenment. Thus in a sense, the Holocaust, a product of fascist totalitarianism, is a form of modernity. According to Horkheimer and Adorno’s argument, the main thrust of The Enlightenment is the human desire to conquer its fear of the unknown through the accumulation and acquisition of knowledge as well as turn towards rational thinking.¹¹ Within the context of modernity, this knowledge takes on the specific form of technology, which they define as “the essence of this knowledge. It aims to produce neither concepts nor images, nor the joy of understanding, but method, exploitation of the labor of others, capital.”¹² Therefore, technology, the knowledge inextricably linked to modernity, can be understood as a particularly inhumane form of power.

¹⁰ Bauman, *Modernity*, 17.

¹¹ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 2.

¹² Ibid.

This notion manifests itself in the Holocaust machinery, in which form, method, order, power and control, constituted the means by which Nazi Germany was able to execute its murderous drive against its perceived enemies.

From humanity's overarching desire to accumulate knowledge, which is characteristic of the Enlightenment, the concepts of power, control, and domination come to the fore. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, "power and knowledge are synonymous," and "what human beings seek to learn from nature is how to use it to dominate wholly both it and human beings. Nothing else counts. Ruthless toward itself, the Enlightenment has eradicated the last remnant of its own self-awareness."¹³ To understand nature, that is to explain it according to scientific terms, is therefore to control and exert power over it, and human beings are no exception from this desire to understand and control. In the words of Horkheimer and Adorno, "Myth becomes enlightenment and nature mere objectivity. Human beings purchase the increase in their power with estrangement from that over which it is exerted."¹⁴ However, as one gains control over nature in this way, at the same time they become distanced from it, resulting in a lessening in the importance attributed to individuality. This accounts for man's estrangement from nature as well as other human beings and their own selves. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, "not only is domination paid for with the estrangement of humans beings from the dominated objects, but the relationships of human beings, including the relationship of individuals to themselves, have themselves been bewitched by the objectification of mind."¹⁵ As a result of this estrangement, "individuals shrink to the nodal points of conventional reactions and the modes of operation objectively expected of them.

¹³ Horkheimer and Adorno, *The Dialectic*, 4.

¹⁴ Ibid, 6.

¹⁵ Ibid, 21.

Animism has endowed things with souls; industrialism makes souls into things.”¹⁶ According to this idea, one’s estrangement from nature renders one into a mere piece of a larger system where one is distanced not only from one’s self but one’s actions and their effects.

Bauman’s concept of moral distance, that is the notion of a rational adherence to bureaucracy without regard for consequences or effects that one’s actions have, is directly related to the views of Horkheimer and Adorno. Regarding humanity’s estrangement from nature, they write: “individuals define themselves now only as things, statistical elements, successes or failures. Their criterion is self-preservation, successful or unsuccessful adaptation to the objectivity of their function and the schemata assigned to it.”¹⁷ This estrangement has therefore led man to focus solely on his self, that is, one’s own degree of success or failure in relation to an arbitrary standard where nothing else matters except that of the targeted goal. As a part of this system, one’s actions are divorced from the broader effects they might have. One is then able to dismiss the moral and ethical considerations associated with one’s actions inasmuch as they do not impact their likelihood of success or failure. In doing so, one becomes virtually blinded to morality in that continually dismissing what one perceives as irrelevant ethical and moral obligations one is thus so far removed from them that one no longer sees them at all. This blindness to morality is precisely what allowed the Holocaust to take place. Under these exceptional conditions humanity committed the most heinous act: dehumanization of individual lives and mass murder. Drawing upon man’s blindness to morality and disregard for others, the Nazi system was able to perpetuate murder on a mass scale with the legitimacy and coordinated efficiency of modern bureaucracy and technology. In this sense, the enterprise that carried Nazi Germany towards its targeted goal, the bureaucratic means of control, shows how

¹⁶ Horkheimer and Adorno, *The Dialectic*, 21.

¹⁷ Ibid, 21-22.

genocide and man's domination of other human beings is in itself a product and form of the modern human experience.¹⁸

The List as a Form of Control and Power

The list, as an object, comprised one part of the larger bureaucratic chain that functioned in many different ways and according to different agendas and goals during the Holocaust. Indeed, the Nazi Holocaust enterprise (camp commanders, bureaucratic officials, etc.) utilized lists in order to familiarize themselves with Jewish communities, strip Jews of their German citizenship within the Reich and German-occupied countries, ghettoize them, and eventually deport them to the death camps in Poland. Lists were useful not only because of their efficiency in keeping the march to the gas chambers steady, they also fit the system in that they perpetuated the moral blindness and distancing from the victims that allowed the Holocaust to occur. Dehumanization, the key element of the Nazi system, allowed those processing the lists to carry out their duties without any moral qualms or regard for human life. In the words of Bauman, "Once effectively dehumanized, and hence cancelled as potential subjects of moral demands, human objects of bureaucratic task-performance are viewed with ethical indifference, which soon turns into disapprobation and censure when their resistance, or lack of cooperation, slows down the smooth flow of bureaucratic routine."¹⁹

Rendering victims to a set of names on a piece of paper, or even further, to a cluster of numbers or data allowed the human victim to be transformed into mere cargo and allowed those who processed that cargo to be relieved of all moral obligations and responsibility. This is especially true if one thinks of the *Judenrat* or the so-called Jewish councils established by the

¹⁸ For more authors on this subject see: Agamben Giorgio and Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Homo Sacer* Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998; Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966.

¹⁹ Bauman, *Modernity*, 103.

Nazis in countries under German-occupation. The members on these councils were forced to bear the responsibility of drawing up lists of Jews, conducting censuses, and collecting data in order for the Nazi authorities to carry out their agenda, thus relieving the latter of all responsibility.²⁰ Thus a sort of moral distancing between those constructing the lists and those being processed on and through the lists renders the object as the ultimate symbol of modern bureaucracy in the way that the list functioned as a tool of dehumanization. In the words of Bauman, “Dehumanization is inextricably related to the most essential, rationalizing tendency of modern bureaucracy.”²¹

Lists were and are symbols of the bureaucracy and dehumanization process, which were two key elements of the Nazi system and are thus not only powerful, but also represent a form of power. The list is inarguably a form of power and control because of the fact that it perpetuated the Nazi bureaucratic death machine, in which people’s very bodies and identities were processed by other supposedly “superior” human beings as a part of a larger social-engineering project. Those actors creating the lists and utilizing them to carry out the genocidal Nazi agenda exerted an unprecedented form of control precisely because the list gave them the power to direct, manage, and ultimately end individual human lives. As a part of the Nazi Holocaust enterprise that allowed human individuals to dominate other human beings and control their very bodies and identities, the list is thus rendered a part of the modern phenomenon and desire to exercise control on a mass scale. The notions of power and control also come to mind if one thinks about the list from a psychological perspective and its effects on both victims and survivors of the Holocaust. For the former, once one was on a deportation list or any other list drawn up by the Nazi authorities and their collaborators, it was virtually

²⁰ See Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: the Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), Chapter 8 “Administrative, Judicial and Police Duties.”

²¹ Bauman, *Modernity*, 103.

impossible to have one's name removed. Therefore the knowledge from being placed on a list of death such as that of the various deportation lists was bound to significantly alter one's state of being and the way one thought about his or her life, family, and future.

Furthermore, regardless of whether or not the list was a list of life or death, the mere fact of being placed on a particular sheet of paper had significant psychological effects for that individual because of the symbolic significance that this implied. Not only is power and control manifested in that the list has the ability to alter one's state of being, the physicality of the list is a powerful notion within itself. The fact that these were important bureaucratic and governmental documents that were prioritized and usually not destroyed adds to the psychological power dynamic behind those constructing them and those individuals whose names were entered on such lists. Being placed on a list altered one's mind and behavior because that meant one of either two things: life or death. Thus that knowledge is a powerful force that inevitably shaped one's outlook. Knowing that one's life or those of one's loved ones was saved due to being placed on lists drawn up on behalf of rescuers of Jews during widespread destruction had the power to alter one's deportment and thinking. In this instance, that meant hope for survival and hope for the future. Therefore the list acquires a deeper meaning of power and control beyond its connection with the Nazi Holocaust enterprise because of its far-reaching abilities to alter and affect those on both sides of the list.

A further striking feature of lists during the Holocaust, which is similar to the notions of power and control, is the relationship of the list to modernity. Like the notions of power and control, which scholars like Bauman have used to link the Holocaust to modernity and even see it as the highest expression of the modern human experience, the list is linked to modernity in that throughout Jewish history it was only during the Holocaust that the actual drawing up and preparation of lists of individuals was utilized as a pretext to perpetuate mass murder. Anti-

Jewish violence and mass murder prior to the Holocaust differed strikingly for not only the reasons that sparked the violence, that is, predominantly religious differences, but also the manner and methods according to which it was carried out. The list as a tool of power and control and mass murder on a highly organized scale lies at the heart of what distinguishes the Holocaust from the anti-Jewish violence of earlier periods. Furthermore, as a part of this essentially modern phenomenon, that is, the mechanized way and process in which the Nazi enterprise carried out genocide, the list becomes directly linked to modernity.

While lists, the ultimate symbols of modern bureaucracy, were utilized by the Nazi system to dehumanize Jews and render them mere objects to be processed, Bauman warns that one should be aware of the larger picture at play with respect to the nature of any bureaucracy rather than totally focusing on the horrors associated with Nazi Germany. He writes:

We associate dehumanization with horrifying pictures of the inmates of concentration camps - humiliated by reducing their action to the most basic level of primitive survival, by preventing them from deploying cultural (both bodily and behavioral) symbols of human dignity, by depriving them even of recognizably human likeness. These pictures, however, represent only an extreme manifestation of a tendency, which may be, discovered in all bureaucracies, however, benign and innocuous the tasks in which they are currently engaged. I suggest that the discussion of the dehumanizing tendency, rather than being focused on its most sensational and vile, but fortunately uncommon, manifestations, ought to concentrate on the more universal, and for this reason potentially more dangerous manifestations.²²

This leads into the phenomenon of how the nature of bureaucracy and its dehumanizing tendency can be looked at beyond the case of the Nazi system. Indeed as Bauman highlights, all bureaucracies affect in some measure some human objects, the adverse impact of dehumanization is much more common than the habit to identify it almost totally with its genocidal effects would suggest.²³ This is precisely what comes to mind when looking at how

²² Bauman, *Modernity*, 102.

²³ Ibid, 103.

elements of bureaucracy, the lists, were used in a different manner than that of the Nazi system, that is as elements of rescue. Indeed the same elements of distantiation can be seen when looking at how lists and other components of modern bureaucracy were used to save Jews from the Holocaust, in which those constructing and processing the lists are nevertheless still distanced from the people on such lists.

Subversion of Modernity: Lists as Objects of Rescue

While lists functioned as bureaucratic tools that kept the Nazi machinery rolling and were thus a useful and practical means of controlling people, broader moral implications can be drawn when looking at the list as a way of assisting and rescuing them. If lists were used to carry out Hitler's sordid agenda by reducing human beings to names and numbers transcribed on paper, lists of Jews were also drawn up on behalf of individuals, states, and governments who lent assistance to Jews during this period. Indeed, both lists of life and lists of death circulated during the Holocaust. One of the most well known is that of Oskar Schindler's, the German Nazi industrialist credited with saving the lives of over a thousand Jews through employing them in his factory.²⁴ Numerous neutral governments during the Holocaust also drew up lists of those whom they rescued and in doing so questions of authority, moral responsibility, and control come to the fore with respect to the power dynamic between the rescuer and the "victim." Lists register a marked duality, because lists allowed Nazi Germany to perpetuate mass murder at the same time that these symbols of modern bureaucracy were used to save Jewish lives, thereby subverting the aims of the Nazi system. Within the context of Spain's assistance to Jews in Greece and Budapest, some historical actors used lists to sentence

²⁴ Thomas Keneally, *Schindler's Ark* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982). This novel was later adapted into the successful film, *Schindler's List* directed by Steven Spielberg.

individuals to death while others used this modern technology to grant individuals life. It is precisely this ambiguity that is the focus of this study.

Spain's rescue operations of Jews during the Holocaust in Greece and Budapest are striking examples because she was an unlikely candidate for assisting Jews. Not only are these two instances unique and special due to the fact that Spain was a fascist-oriented state that actively supported Nazi Germany's war effort up until 1944, but also because of the fact that Spain lent assistance to Jews, most of who were members of the Sephardic community which has a long and thorny historical relationship to Spain. Looking at Spain's rescue activities and relationship to the Jews she assisted in Greece and Budapest from the point of view of the lists, and diplomatic correspondence and the power and moral dynamic behind these official documents, provides an interesting way to retell these stories. As a document on which human lives were sentenced to death or deemed deserving of life, the list presents a new lens through which to examine the nature of Spain's rescue.

Spain's rescue operations of Jews are just one small fraction of a larger picture of how lists functioned throughout the Holocaust. Indeed, other countries lending assistance to Jews throughout this troubling period also prominently employed lists. From the Kindertransport mission in the UK that saved the lives of nearly 10,000 refugee children to the individual actions of diplomats such as the often-overlooked Japanese hero Chiune Sugihara whose personal initiatives in Lithuania enabled thousands of Jews to reach safety in Japan being placed on a list guaranteed one's survival. Thus in the period of the Holocaust lists emerge simultaneously as agents of rescue and agents of mass murder, in which they are transformed into fascinating powerful tools that tell a particular story. The multi-faceted aspects and functions of the list are precisely what make them so interesting to study and engage with. Indeed, there are various factors at play that extend from the three points of view that the list is

serving, that is, the view of those constructing the list, the views of those processing the lists, and the view of those who are on the list.

While the case of Spain's rescue operations of Jews differs markedly from the way the list was utilized by the Nazi Germany in their destruction of European Jewry, the fact remains that lists were used to categorize and save Jews. Not only were lists employed, but official documents granting Jews protection were also distributed such as Spanish passports or the so-called letters of protection. All these official papers are a part of the modern bureaucratic system. Furthermore, this thesis draws heavily upon official diplomatic correspondence in order to analyze how Spain constructed its relationship to both Jews and Nazi Germany in the cases of her rescue operations of Jews in Greece and Budapest. Therefore the dynamic between the rescuer and the victim comes to the fore when looking at the lists as evidence for rescue in Spain's rescue operations. This study will draw upon the concepts of moral distancing and power attributed to the lists when analyzing the diplomatic correspondence in order to see how Spain viewed the Jews she was rescuing as well as to question the relationship that emerges between the two groups. In particular, how the nature of lists and bureaucracy facilitated indifference to mass murder even for those rescuing Jews. A specific focus will be given to how the Sephardim are presented within the official government documentation and the diplomatic correspondence between both Greece and Budapest to Madrid as well as how lists and the whole of Spanish bureaucracy were utilized in Spain's relationship to the Jews she was rescuing and the Nazi authorities.

Incorporation of Theoretical Material into the Study

The Spanish representatives in Athens and Budapest respectively drew up lists of Jews as a part of Spain's rescue operations in these two instances. Moreover, official government

documents were issued to the Jews rescued such as Spanish passports, transit visas, and in the case of Budapest, the so-called letters of protection. Moreover, Spain's representatives abroad communicated with the Spanish Foreign Ministry via telegrams, letters, dispatches and diplomatic verbal notes, all a part of the modern bureaucratic system. In looking at Spain's rescue activities in Greece and Budapest, the question then arises as to how the elements of this bureaucratic system played a role in and affected not only Spain's assistance to Jews, but also her view of Jews.

This study will draw upon the theoretical concepts that emerge from the lists as agents of the modern bureaucratic system by focusing on how the lists as well as the diplomatic correspondence factored into Spain's rescue and view of and relationship to the Jews she assisted. In particular, the dynamic that emerges between the rescuer and the victim when Jews are processed through the system of bureaucracy that enabled their survival. Through looking at the correspondence between Madrid and its representatives abroad in Greece and Budapest from the point of view of how the Jews are presented, viewed, and "processed," one will be able to see how the modern bureaucratic system which allowed individuals to assert authority over others as in the case of Nazi Germany, are used in a different yet strikingly similar way in Spain's rescue operations of Jews. For instance, the moral distancing between those constructing the lists and those placed on the list. In this instance, Spain and the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid, and the Jewish victim. Being placed on a list sent by Spanish representatives to the Spanish government in Madrid not only saved one's life, but also effectively rendered that individual to a mere name, a passport number, a faceless individual which Madrid only encountered through bureaucratic means while its representatives on the local level dealt directly with these individuals. Therefore the same distancing that allowed the

Nazi system to run its course is also present and can be applied to those who also rescued Jews in using lists and other elements of the modern bureaucratic system.

Furthermore, as a form of evidence the list is also a powerful tool because it narrates a certain story; in this particular instance, the list as evidence of Spain's rescue of Jews is powerful in that it enabled Spain to tell and promote a manipulated narrative of her relationship to the Jews during the Second World War and the Holocaust immediately during the post-war years. This interesting and thought provoking approach to the lists and correspondence will guide this study's analysis of the bureaucratic maze between the Spanish government in Madrid and its representatives abroad in Budapest and Greece in order to see exactly what sort of relationship was constructed vis-à-vis the Jews in Spain's rescue activities as well as to analyze the relationship between the Spanish Foreign Ministry and Spanish diplomats abroad. This will allow for the elucidation of the multiple points of views guiding Spain's relationship to the Jews and to the Nazi authorities.

Chapter Two: Background

The Spanish Narrative of Rescue

In 1949 the Diplomatic Information Office of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Madrid published an English-language pamphlet titled *Spain and the Jews*, which set out to expound the precise role Spain had played in assisting and rescuing Jews during the Second World War. This publication came as a direct response to the recently founded State of Israel's objection to Spain's accession to the United Nations during the 1949 UN General Assembly.²⁵

The pamphlet asserts:

During the last world war, the Spanish Government [. . .] dispensed a varied and generous assistance to the Jews. No distinctions were made – Spain did not stop to ask whether those who needed her protection were of Spanish origin or not. ALL those who called at our door in anguish were let in; no one was asked for his documents of identity. [. . . .] What other things could Spain do in favor of the Jews? Give them her own nationality – make them Spaniards? Well, even that was done. Who has been more liberal than Spain? What was the attitude of England herself during the period of persecution of Jews?²⁶

This government publication portrays Spain as a liberal benevolent savior of Jews during the Holocaust and positions that benevolence in opposition to the actions of the U.S. and the rest of Europe. Furthermore, Spanish protection of Jews, the pamphlet claims, did not stem from political motivations but was the result of “a cordial and general impulse of sympathy and friendliness towards a persecuted race, to which Spaniards feel themselves attached by traditional ties of blood and culture.”²⁷ In further characterizing Spain's relationship with and view of Jews during the Holocaust as stemming from familial ties, this publication cannot avoid raising complicated questions with respect to Spain's relationship to Nazi Germany on the one

²⁵ Spain Oficina de Información de Diplomática, *Spain and the Jews* (Madrid, 1949), 47; Consulted in YIVO Library Max Weinreich Collection (DX135.S7 A5) at YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York, NY.

²⁶ Ibid, 49.

²⁷ Ibid, 9.

hand, and the Jews she rescued, on the other. Not only is this a vexed message given that Spain was a fascist-oriented state during the Second World War, which actively supported Nazi Germany's war effort, but also because the problematic notion that Spain made no distinctions between the Jews she assisted is equally presented.

In the same year another Spanish government pamphlet was published by the Embassy of Spain in Washington D.C., titled *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*. This pamphlet focuses exclusively on Spanish rescue operations of the Sephardim, descendants of Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492, in different areas of Nazi-occupied Europe. The pamphlet states:

It would be impossible in a few short lines to describe fully everything Spain and its diplomatic representatives did on behalf of Sephardi Jews during the course of a war which brought death or destitution to millions of their less fortunate fellow communicants. The measure of success varied from country to country and according to circumstance but on the whole the number of testimonials originating in Sephardi thankfulness fully satisfied the Spanish people and its government that their efforts had not been in vain.²⁸

The fact that this publication sets out to highlight the efforts Spain lent solely to the Sephardim shows that the issue of making distinctions between Jews is one which is more complicated than is presented in the Spanish government pamphlets. The question thus arises as to why there was a specific need and motive to showcase Spain's assistance to the Sephardim.

These publications demonstrate Spain's desire to portray her rescue operations of Jew as an altruistic expression of solidarity with the Sephardim, in which Spain's assistance to the latter becomes the focal point around which a particular narrative is constructed. The narrative that has been fabricated is one on behalf of the Spanish government, which sought to grossly exaggerate Spain's rescue operations of Jews. In particular, the narrative claims that throughout the Holocaust Spanish diplomats in countries under Nazi occupation exercised their influence

²⁸ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews* (Washington D.C., 1949), 2; Consulted in American Jewish Historical Society Monographs (DS135.S7 S7) at Center for Jewish History, New York, NY.

as representatives of Spain to assist thousands of Sephardic Jews and save their lives while those Jewish refugees who escaped into Spain were generously assisted by the Spanish government.²⁹ The notion that Spain offered assistance to all Jews equally regardless of their connection to Spain lies at the heart of this argument.

This particular narrative, constructed immediately in the post-war years, continued to be promulgated and endorsed by Spain well up until the end of the twentieth century. Spanish journalist Federico Ysart's *España y los judíos en la Segunda Guerra Mundial* (Spain and the Jews during the Second World War), published in 1973, reiterates the same stance laid out in the government publications. That particular work was based on select archival materials provided by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and literally projects the image of Spain as a modern day Don Quixote with respect to her assistance to Jews during the Holocaust.³⁰ Like that of Ysart's, David Salinas' *España, los sefarditas, y el Tercer Reich: la labor de diplomáticos españoles contra el genocidio nazi* (Spain, the Sephardim, and the Third Reich: the Labor of Spanish Diplomats against the Nazi Genocide), published in 1997 by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presents a one-sided view of Spain's assistance to Jews by manipulating the sources used by selecting only ones that shed a favorable light on the Spanish government.³¹

These two instances show the Spanish Foreign Ministry's active involvement in dictating and endorsing a particular manipulated narrative of Spain's relationship with Jews

²⁹ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*; Spain Oficina de Información de Diplomática, *Spain and the Jews*.

³⁰ "Quijote frente a Hitler," (Quijote faces Hitler) Federico Ysart, *España y los judíos en la Segunda Guerra Mundial*. Barcelona: DOPESA, 1973. Spanish historian José Antonio Lisbona describes Ysart's work as "a white book written in and for the Spanish Foreign Ministry." See Lisbona, José Antonio. *Retorno a Sefarad: La política de España hacia sus Judíos en el siglo XX*. Barcelona: Riopiedras, 1993. (Return to Spain: Spanish Policies towards her Jews during the Twentieth Century).

³¹ David Salinas, *España, los sefarditas y el Tercer Reich, 1939-1945: la labor de diplomáticos españoles contra el genocidio nazi*. Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones E Intercambio Científico, Universidad De Valladolid; Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1997.

during the Second World War. This narrative is politicized and polemical precisely because the Sephardim are used as a way to exaggerate Spanish rescue operations and downplay the reality of Spain's ambivalent relationship to the Jews and Nazi Germany. Moreover, in trumpeting Spain's rescue operations vis-à-vis the "liberal" United States and the United Kingdom, this particular narrative comes across as moralizing in that it characterizes Spain's role in the Holocaust as unique with respect to the Jews she assisted and the way other countries responded. In castigating the behavior of the United States and the United Kingdom towards Jews during the war, the narrative attempts to admonish Spain's relationship to Nazi Germany and cast her position as exemplary and unique. This sentiment is accurately captured in Salinas' conclusion. "During the Second World War," he writes, "[Spain] was the only country that could negotiate with Nazi Germany about the Jews."³² The particular idea that Spain was somehow special vis-à-vis both the Jews and the Nazi authorities is indeed problematic for it offers a seemingly one-sided view of Spain's equivocal relationship with both parties and seeks to downplay the reality of Spain's connection with the Axis powers.

The reframing of the memory of Spain's assistance to Jews in the Holocaust continues to be a lively topic even today. Indeed, one recent work pins all the credit for the Spanish Legation's activities in Budapest on the initiatives of Franco, and in doing so, prolongs the very narrative stemming from the immediate post-war years.³³ However, if one looks at the interplay of the different sources and narratives that comprise the evidence for Spain's role during the Holocaust a broader and more critical picture can be drawn up. The diplomatic correspondence between Madrid and her representatives on the local level and the individual stories of these

³² Salinas, *Espana, los sefarditas, y el Tercer Reich*, 143.

³³ See Espada, Arcadi, and Cacho Sergio. Campos. *En Nombre De Franco: Los héroes de la embajada de España en el Budapest Nazi*. Barcelona: Espasa, 2013. (*In the Name of Franco: The Heroes of the Embassy of Spain in Nazi Budapest*).

representatives offer a more complicated picture of Spain's view of Jews as well as the nature of her rescue operations. Exploring instances where Spain rescued Sephardim under Nazi occupation allows for a more thorough elucidation of the ties between Spain, Nazi Germany, and the nature of Spain's views and protection of Jews. Spain's assistance to the Sephardim in Athens and Salonika in Greece and in Budapest in Hungary represents two such cases; both countries were occupied by Nazi Germany and present a puzzling picture of Spain's relationship to Sephardic Jewry during the Holocaust. What is interesting in these two cases is that the Spanish government's publications distort that history.

Strikingly, however, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews* hardly dwells on the cases of Greece and Budapest. The case of Spain's assistance to the Sephardim in Greece is only described in a few lines and is presented from the point of view of the actions Nazi Germany undertook with respect to deporting Jews in Greece. The complexities of Spain's relationship to Nazi Germany on the one hand, and the Jews in Greece on the other, is not touched upon at all. Therefore what emerges is a one-sided and manipulated narrative. What is even more surprising is the fact that Spain's rescue operations in Budapest, Hungary are entirely absent!³⁴ This brings to mind a number of questions: first, why are the cases of Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest and Greece omitted or downplayed in the Spanish pamphlets? And second, because the pamphlet does not discuss the latter two cases, the question of the relationship between the Jewish communities in both cases to the Spanish authorities and the relationship between Spain and Nazi Germany on the other hand is left unanswered. What then was the relationship between the Sephardim and the Spanish authorities in both Greece and Budapest, and how did Spain proceed in assisting Sephardim in both contexts? Moreover, how did Spain view the Sephardim they were assisting? Were distinctions made between Jews and if so, what might this imply

³⁴ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*, 4.

about Spain's relationship to both the Jews and Nazi Germany during this thorny period of the Second World War and the Holocaust?

Spain and Nazi Germany

In order to understand Spain's relationship to the Jews she rescued during the Holocaust it is important to consider the nature of Spain's behavior vis-à-vis Nazi Germany during the war and the reality of Spain's involvement in that conflict. At the start of the war, Franco declared Spain's neutrality yet Spain was closely oriented toward the Axis Powers, namely Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy, whose assistance had helped Franco win the Spanish Civil War. In June of 1940, Spain then updated its status from neutral to "non-belligerent" following the Nazi invasion of France.³⁵ Although Spain did not officially participate in the war, the *División Azul*, or Blue Division, a contingent of some 40,000 Spanish volunteers were sent to fight alongside Nazi Germany on the Eastern Front. During the latter half of 1943, Spain then changed its position and reverted to neutrality.³⁶ This back and forth stance of Spain's position in the war can explain in some way Spain's relationship to the Jews during the Holocaust. A supporter of Nazi Germany during the heyday of the war, and then reverting to neutrality once the tide of the war had turned; Spain's position more or less mirrors the nature of her assistance to and relationship with the Jews.

However, before turning to the case studies of Spain's rescue operations of Jews in Greece and Budapest it is important to understand the nature of Spain's assistance to Jews during the early years of the war and the policies and views that governed that assistance. This brief exploration will allow a more insightful view into how Spain's rescue efforts differed in

³⁵ Stanley G. Payne, *Franco y Hitler: España, Alemania, la Segunda Guerra Mundial y el Holocausto* (La Esfera de los Libros, 2008) (Franco and Hitler: Spain, Germany, The Second World War and the Holocaust), 53.

³⁶ Lisbona, *Retorno a Sefarad*, 121.

the latter cases where she assisted Jews, the majority of whom were Sephardim in countries under Nazi occupation during the last stages of the Second World War and the Holocaust. It is not the intention of this chapter to offer a definitive view and analysis of Spanish assistance to Jews prior to her rescue operations of Greece and Budapest during the later stages of the war. Rather, it will highlight the main policies that guided Spanish assistance to Jewish refugees from 1939 through the end of 1942 in order to better understand her assistance to and view of Jews, in particular the Sephardim, in Greece and Budapest.

Spanish assistance to Jews prior to Greece and Budapest

At the start of the Second World War Spain was a neutral country whose transit policies with respect to Jewish and non-Jewish refugees seeking to escape Europe allowed her to save Jewish lives from the grips of the Nazi war machine. Upon the capitulation of the French government in June of 1940 waves of Jewish and non-Jewish refugees flocked to the south of France in a desperate attempt to escape Europe via Spain and Portugal for the Western Hemisphere. Spain's initial response to these unfortunate travelers was, to quote Avni, "generous."³⁷ Throughout the summer of 1940 the Spanish government granted many transit visas that allowed thousands of Jewish refugees to pass through Spain and depart Europe from Portugal. Those who lacked the necessary documentation often opted to cross the Pyrenees on foot and enter Spain illegally. The situation in the early summer of 1940 was fairly lenient with Spanish border guards allowing refugees who arrived without the necessary entry stamp to obtain it in Port-Bou. These guards could also easily be bribed with cigarettes, money and food and other "luxury" items that were scarce in war-torn Spain.³⁸ Amid this backdrop of both legal and illegal entry into Spain, around 20,000 Jewish refugees passed through Spain on their way

³⁷ Haim Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1982), 73.

³⁸ Isabelle Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews, 1898-1945* (Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2008), 108.

to Portugal from the start of the war up until September 1940.³⁹

After this short-lived heyday of Jewish transit through the Iberian Peninsula, Spain reevaluated her policies for entrance, which subsequently affected the number of refugees that could enter Spain as well as the length of the waiting process. There is a disagreement on when the new Spanish regulation came into play with Avni stating November 11, 1940 and Rother and Rohr stating October 8, 1940. Regardless of the timing, these new orders from Madrid severely impacted refugees seeking to reach Portugal via Spain in more than one way. Spanish consuls abroad no longer had the authority to issue transit visas because the refugees' applications now had to be sent to Madrid for approval on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, the applicants were required to present to the consular proper travel documentation for the entire length of the journey before even being considered granted passage through Spain. Many were forced to wait anywhere from three weeks up to more than six weeks to hear a response thus intensifying their distraught situations.⁴⁰ This meant severe setbacks for many attempting to leave Europe. In the words of Rohr, "By the time the refugees had received the Spanish visa, their Portuguese visas or their visas to a final destination had generally expired."⁴¹

This legislation concerning refugees seeking to enter Spain in order to continue on to Portugal remained in place throughout the remainder of the war. Obtaining permission to enter Spain was difficult not only due to Spain's new regulations, but also because the border stations along the Pyrenees were closed periodically. Spain was not entirely alone in this deeply bureaucratic process; the ability of refugees to enter Spain was contingent on the French and Portuguese authorities as well. For example, Vichy France issued orders on June 20th and

³⁹ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 109.

⁴⁰ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 73; Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 109; Bernd Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto (Franco and the Holocaust)* (Marcial Pons Historia, 2005), 139.

⁴¹ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 109.

August 5th of 1942, which cancelled exit visas to French and alien Jews and thus prevented them from obtaining Spanish transit visas.⁴² Through this bureaucratic maze marked by countless paperwork, fees and officials, illegal entry into Spain emerged as a prominent alternative for many. Those who were captured by Spanish security forces usually found themselves in Spanish jails and were usually not sent back to France, which would have meant deportation to Germany. Women were held in regional jails and men were interned in the infamous Miranda de Ebro concentration camp, which had served as a holding place for political enemies of the Nationalist coalition at the close of the Civil War.⁴³

Avni initially characterizes these policies as a result of “a progressively declining liberalism” in matters concerning the granting of transit visas.⁴⁴ That is, the fact that the Spanish government over time made it increasingly more difficult for Jewish refugees to pass through Spain. In a later study, in which Avni compares Portugal and Spain’s attitudes towards Jewish refugees, he highlights Spain’s “state-sponsored” antisemitism as the primary reason for her differentiation from Portugal as well as her rejection of Jewish aid organizations to operate in Spain.⁴⁵ Spain did not allow any welfare agencies, international or private, such as the International Red Cross, the American Joint Distribution Committee or other organizations to operate in Spain and therefore many stateless Jews suffered immensely in comparison to others under Spain’s transit policies. Jewish organizations such as the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society as well as the Joint assisted Jews from their offices in Marseilles and Lisbon. The only exception to this was the small operation set up by the Portuguese Jewish national Samuel

⁴² Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 75.

⁴³ Ibid, 77.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 79.

⁴⁵ Haim Avni, “España y Portugal, su actitud respecto de los refugiados judíos durante la era nazi.” In Ignacio Klich and Mario Rapoport, *Discriminación y racismo en America Latina* (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1997), 269.

Sequerra in a Barcelona hotel during 1941. Sequerra served as an unofficial representative of the AJDC under the guise of the Portuguese Red Cross, whose activities the Spanish authorities turned a blind eye to.⁴⁶ In the words of Avni, “Spain’s tolerance was the only deviation with respect to the doctrinal opposition of the Franco regime to having any organized Jewish presence in Spanish territory.”⁴⁷

Spain was more or less willing to assist Jews during the first half of the war with the implication that these individuals were just passing through her borders. However, at the same time, Spain also consciously canceled its efforts to assist Jews. An example of Spain’s borderline indifference towards Jewish refugees occurred in September 1941, when the Spanish General Directory of Maritime Transport, on orders from the Interior Ministry, banned Jews from sailing on Spanish vessels bound for North America and Cuba. The reason was that some Jews who had previously sailed for New York had “claimed to the courts,” objecting to the outrageously high prices they were forced to pay in order to sail on Spanish ships.⁴⁸ In this instance, Spain’s anguish concerning how her policies toward Jewish refugees were received in the United States appears to have affected her decision to stop helping them.

Another chilling example of Spain’s unwillingness to assist Jews occurred in September and October of 1942, in which a large wave of Jewish refugees, mostly older individuals and families, clandestinely crossed into Spain, and were deported back to France until the American Embassy in Madrid on November 9th of that year was able to persuade the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs to stop these actions.⁴⁹ Spain essentially abandoned those refugees who were deported back to France. It is most likely that they met a terrible fate in the “East” considering

⁴⁶ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 79.

⁴⁷ Avni, “España y Portugal,” 262.

⁴⁸ Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 139

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 263-264.

the massive roundups and deportations that already took place that summer in Paris. This example sheds light on the broader theme of Spain's position vis-à-vis both the Axis and Allied powers and how Jews factored into that question. Around the time that the American Embassy was able to intervene on the behalf of the French Jewish refugees being deported back to France, the Franco regime was confronted by the Allies' military successes and attempted to safeguard its position by maintaining good ties with these powers as well as the Axis powers.⁵⁰

Spain's policies and attitude towards Jewish and non-Jewish refugees did allow a great number of Jewish refugees to escape the Nazi threat. That positive action on behalf of the Franco regime is in and of itself surprising. The figures for the number of refugees who were able to pass through Spain during the first half of the Second World War vary greatly. In contrast to Ysart's inflated figure of 70,000 refugees, Avni, the first historian to seriously study the topic suggests the number to be around 30,000 refugees while Rother's more thorough and recent analysis situates the figure to range from 20,000 up to 35,000.⁵¹

However, more could have been done on behalf of Spain to accommodate Jewish refugees. Spain's transit policies toward refugees thus reflect the regime's inconsistent and manipulative attitude toward the Jews as well as its attempt to maintain the good graces of the Germans and avoid clashes with the Allies. Portugal played a role in the passage of Jews through Spain and Rother highlights this point in his critique of Jewish refugees who passed through Spain: "But one also has to highlight that the essential motives [of Spain] were not humanitarian considerations or the rejection of Nazi policy, but also Portugal's readiness to welcome them."⁵² While Portugal's attitude towards Jewish refugees separate from that of Spain played a role in Jews' ability to escape from Europe, Spain's attitude was inconsistent

⁵⁰ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 123-124.

⁵¹ Avni, *Spain, the Jews*, 73; Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 158.

⁵² Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 156.

and was marked by indifference vis-à-vis the Jews' precarious situation. In the words of Payne, "It would be just to conclude that Spanish policies discriminated against Jews less than that of the majority of European countries, but there was no concrete plan to benefit them or help them."⁵³

During the first half of the Second World War Spain did allow a significant number of Jewish refugees to pass through her borders in order to escape the Holocaust. This in and of itself attests to the ambivalent relationship between Spain and Nazi Germany. However, in certain instances, Spain also reneged on its complicated "policies" vis-à-vis the Jewish refugees and either complicated their entry into Spain or denied it. This also highlights her complicated relationship to and view of the Jews. However, what is most important in looking at Spain as a transit point for Jews to North America, Palestine, or elsewhere, is the fact that Spain did not make distinctions between the individuals passing through her borders. Jews, whether they were of Ashkenazi or Sephardi background, as well as non-Jews were allowed to transit through Spain on their way to another destination. This is important for understanding Spain's later rescue operations in Greece and Budapest where she encountered Jews with Spanish citizenship and Sephardim and how those markers of identity affected Spain's rescue efforts.

Spain, the Sephardim, and the Question of Spanish Citizenship

Before discussing Spain's rescue operations in Greece and Budapest, where she not only encountered Sephardim but also Jews of Spanish nationality, it is important to understand how the question and problem of Spanish nationality played a role in Spain's assistance to the Jews. Following the end of the First World War, which saw the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, the system of capitulations that had existed under Ottoman rule, was abolished under the treaty

⁵³ Payne, *Franco y Hitler*, 340.

of Lausanne signed on July 24, 1923.⁵⁴ Under this system, European powers such as France and Spain had been allowed to have a system of protection of protégés abroad. In particular, Spain since the late eighteenth century, had under its jurisdiction and protection a significant number of Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire. Now that the Ottoman Empire was dissolved the states that emerged in the Balkans also did away with this system. This left the Sephardim in the Balkans and the Former Ottoman Empire in a desperate situation now that they found themselves without rights or protection in recently established countries.⁵⁵

In order to alleviate the limbo of these former protectees, the Primo de Rivera regime promulgated a Royal Decree in December 1924 that allowed the Sephardim in those countries a period of six years, from December 20, 1924 though December 31, 1930, to apply for Spanish citizenship. The wording of the decree extended the possibility of obtaining Spanish nationality to those “formerly protected Spaniards or their descendants and in general, individuals of families of Spanish origin that in any occasion had been registered in Spanish records in Spain’s consulates abroad.” While the word “Jew” or “Sephardi” was never stated in the decree, it was implied that those individuals who would benefit from this decree would be the Sephardim who had previously been registered with the Spanish authorities abroad under the stipulations of the capitulations system.⁵⁶

The regulations set forth in the decree dictated that those individuals who applied for Spanish citizenship did not need to come to Spain but could obtain citizenship by registering with the Spanish authorities abroad. For “special circumstances,” the Royal Decree justified that the beneficiaries would not have to come to Spain in order to receive Spanish citizenship, as was the law at that time. In order to “obviate the trip,” the Spanish government authorized

⁵⁴ Lisbona, *La política de España*, 36.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 37.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Spanish diplomats and consular abroad to grant Spanish citizenship in their residences by swearing of the constitution. However, as Lisbona and Rother discuss, many of the Sephardim who had previously been registered with the Spanish authorities automatically believed that they held Spanish citizenship and did not apply under the new regulations set forth in the decree so that by the expiration date, the number of Spanish citizens abroad was much less than the number of protégés who formerly held Spanish protection.⁵⁷ This can be seen in the case of Greece where the Jewish community was predominantly Sephardic but only a limited number actually held Spanish citizenship. This would have strong implications for Spain's later rescue operations in Greece where only Jews with Spanish citizenship were assisted and where Nazi Germany made distinctions among the Jews by allowing only Jews of foreign nationality the possibility of being repatriated to their countries of origin.

⁵⁷ Lisbona, *La política de España*, 37; Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 49.

Chapter Three: Spain's Spanish-Sephardic Legacy in Greece

During the Second World War, in 1941, Greece suffered the triple occupation by Italy, Nazi Germany and Bulgaria. The drama that played out in Greece was to have dire consequences for its large and predominantly Sephardic Jewish community that for centuries had been a prominent and important cultural center of Jewish life in the Balkans. The Jewish population of Greece numbered around some 77,000, of whom the majority were of Sephardic origin and lived mostly in Salonika. However, only a limited number of those Jews held Spanish citizenship and were registered in the Spanish consulate in Athens: approximately 510 persons who resided in Salonika and a smaller number in Athens.⁵⁸ From the moment the Germans invaded, Salonika remained under German occupation while Athens, initially situated in the Italian-occupied part of Greece, was under Italian jurisdiction until September 9, 1943 following her surrender to the Allies and Nazi Germany's subsequent invasion.⁵⁹

What initiatives then did Spain take with respect to assisting Jews in Nazi-occupied Greece and how were they carried out and to what ends? What sort of relationship did Spain construct with respect to her rescue of Jews and how did she view the Jews she was assisting? Furthermore, how did Spain proceed vis-à-vis the Nazi authorities governing Greece at that time and what sort of dynamic characterized their relationship in light of her assistance to Jews? Through analyzing diplomatic correspondence between Spain's representative on the local level in Athens, Sebastián de Romero Radigales and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stationed in Madrid, this chapter sets out to elucidate the nature of Spain's assistance to Jews as well as her relationship to that community. This will further allow not only an exploration of the

⁵⁸ Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 24; 32.

⁵⁹ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 148; 157.

internal workings of Spanish bureaucracy and the figures behind Spain's rescue of Jews, but also how the relationship between Spain and Nazi Germany is being constructed.

Spain's Reluctance to Assist Jews

In March 1943 a catastrophic turning point occurred for the Greek Jewish community with the commencement of deportations of Jews to Poland in the Nazi-occupied zone of Greece. By May 1943 more than 48,000 Jews had been sent to the death camps in Poland.⁶⁰ Up until this point, Nazi Germany discriminated only against Greek Jews and left those with foreign nationalities alone; the 510 Sephardic Jews with Spanish citizenship were thus safe for the time being. Nevertheless, on April 30, 1943 the German Embassy in Madrid informed the Spanish government that the Jews with Spanish citizenship, the Spanish Jews, would also be deported unless Spain evacuated them from Greece by the deadline of June 15, 1943.⁶¹ This ultimatum by Nazi Germany is what prompted Spain to take actions with respect to her Jewish citizens in Greece. Interestingly enough, the German authorities in Greece, as Radigales points out in a letter to the Spanish Foreign Ministry from May 6, 1944, were willing to work with Spain to see the evacuation of her Jewish citizens yet were ultimately convinced that "Spain [had]. . . washed its hands of its Jewish subjects in Greece."⁶²

The Germans' speculation about Spain's reluctance to assist her Jewish citizens appears to have been true. Prior to the ultimatum promulgated by the Nazi authorities in Greece, the Spanish government instructed its consulates and representatives operating in countries under Nazi occupation on how they were to proceed with respect to the "Sefarditas," the Jews who had previously been registered with Spanish consulates as protégés under the former

⁶⁰ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 148; Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 142.

⁶¹ AMAE R1716/4 3 "Expediente general de los Sefarditas Españoles" España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Archivo General; Consulted at the USHMM in Washington, D.C.

⁶² Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 142.

capitulation system and had acquired Spanish citizenship under the stipulations of the 1924 Primo de Rivera decree. On January 19, 1943, the Spanish General Director of Foreign Policy issued instructions concerning two distinct issues concerning the Jews with Spanish citizenship to its representatives abroad. The main points discussed in the dispatch deal with the following issues: one, Spain's response to the discriminatory measures taken against the Spanish Jews, and second, the desire of these Spanish Jews to move to Spain.⁶³ The report states:

The situation of the *Sefarditas* in countries under Nazi occupation is grave and they constantly present themselves in our diplomatic representations and consulates to complain about the measures taken against them by the German authorities or to apply for passports in order to come to Spain. Because it is difficult to establish a definitive and legal solution, the undersigned, gives for the moment, provisional instructions for how our representatives should conduct themselves.⁶⁴

The first interesting point that can be seen in this report is the mere language in how the Spanish Jews are referenced by the Spanish government. In contrast to later reports sent by Spain's representatives in Greece and Berlin to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, in which the Spanish Jews are referred to as "our Spanish Jews," here they are simply referenced as "the Spanish Jews" which perhaps implies a sense of indifference on behalf of the Spanish government or reflects the reality of the Spanish Foreign Ministry being physically distanced from its Jewish citizens in Greece. Nevertheless, the fact that the Spanish Foreign Ministry is responding to and instructing its representatives abroad about the situation of the Spanish Jews in countries under Nazi occupation demonstrates that Madrid was well aware of what was happening on the local level with respect to her Jewish citizens. The fact that these instructions are provisional also shows that the Spanish government was undecided with how it should

⁶³ AMAE R1716/3 "Instrucciones a los representantes de España en Europa sobre trato a los sefarditas" España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Madrid, Dirección General de Política de Exterior, Archivo General; Consulted at the USHMM in Washington, D.C.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

proceed vis-à-vis the Nazi authorities with respect its Jewish citizens. The instructions themselves meted out by the Foreign Ministry further reflect Spain's ambivalent, hostile, and even opportunistic view of her own Jewish citizens.

Spanish representatives abroad were instructed to inform the Nazi and local authorities that Spain viewed and considered her Spanish Jews abroad in the same light as Spaniards born in Spain and that their property should be respected considering that it belonged to Spanish citizens and, in a certain way, formed a part of Spain's national wealth. The question of race and religion, the reports states, is not important for Spain's representatives. Only the economic question and wellbeing of the Spanish Jews is important therefore Spanish representatives were also ordered, if necessary, to allow Jews to leave their property and wealth under the protection of Spanish consulates and diplomatic representation by having them registered.⁶⁵

However, regarding the desire of the Spanish Jews to move to Spain, the instructions stipulated a different view and even called into question the citizenship of the Spanish Jews. According to the argument set forth by the Spanish Foreign Ministry, Spain had protected and granted Jews Spanish citizenship under the former system of capitulations for the benefit of the Jews in order to offer them legal protection vis-à-vis the local authorities. However, this did not mean that they were the same as or could be compared to Spaniards who were born in Spain and raised and educated in the "spirit of Spain."⁶⁶ The Spanish Jews' desire to move to Spain

⁶⁵ AMAE R1716/3 "Instrucciones a los representantes de España en Europa sobre trato a los sefarditas" España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Madrid, Dirección General de Política de Exterior, Archivo General; Consulted at the USHMM in Washington, D.C. "En cuanto a este particular no es oportuno, por las corrientes de ideas del momento actual, alegar ante las Autoridades que siendo españoles son para nosotros de la misma condición que los nacidos en España. Eludiendo este aspecto conviene mas bien referirse a los bienes de los sefarditas pidiendo que sean respetados como pertenecientes a españoles y que forman, por lo tanto, en cierto modo, parte de la riqueza nacional española. De suerte que, soslayando la cuestión de raza y religión se apunte solamente a la cuestión económica evitando que sus bienes sean confiscados y requiriendo, si ello es necesario, que quedan bajo un patronato de administración presidido por el representante diplomática o consular de España."

⁶⁶ Ibid. La concesión de la nacionalidad se les hizo, pues, para beneficio suyo y para tener ocasión de poderles defender legalmente ante las autoridades locales pero sin que esto les equipara a los españoles nacidos en España,

was rejected on these grounds. In other words, the Spanish government's ambivalent definition of what it meant to be a Spanish citizen specifically regarding the Spanish Jews precluded the former from moving to Spain.

Spain viewed the Spanish Jews as Spanish citizens when it came to the question of safeguarding their property and wealth vis-à-vis the Nazi and local authorities. However, Spain was blatantly opposed to see them move to Spain and used the justification that they could not be compared to "real Spaniards" in order to prohibit her Jewish citizens abroad from physically moving to Spain. This demonstrates not only the opportunistic and manipulative views and motives guiding Spain's relationship to the Spanish Jews, but also sheds light on her relationship to the Nazi authorities. Justifying the Spanish Jews' Spanish nationality as a way to protect and become involved in the maintenance of their wealth and property vis-à-vis the Nazi and local authorities is not only manipulative with respect for the Spanish Jews, but is also a way for Spain to assert her sovereignty with regards to Nazi Germany. By playing on these Jews' connection to Spain, that is, their having Spanish citizenship and asserting that their wealth is a part of Spain's national wealth, Spain essentially manipulates the Jews as a way to assert authority over the Jews to the detriment of the Nazi and local authorities. However, in calling into question the Spanish Jews' citizenship as a way to prevent them from moving to Spain, the definition of what it meant to be Spanish is established in such a way that the Spanish Jews are rendered second-class citizens of Spain and on an unequal par with Spaniards born inside the peninsula.

Therefore when on April 30, 1943 Nazi Germany prompted Spain to either abandon or assist her Jewish citizens in Greece, Spain was confronted with a situation in which her view of

hijos de españoles y educados en el ambiente y en el espíritu de España, respecto a los cuales existe una gran diferencia que no permite compararles con los sefarditas.

and relationship to her Jewish citizens was not only guided by opportunistic motives, but also one in which her policies towards her Jewish citizens were not set in stone. This irresolute stance would have strong consequences for Spain's response to the German ultimatum of repatriating her Jewish citizens to Spain.

Repatriation of the Spanish Jews from Salonika

This perplexing situation marred by Spain's ambivalent view of the Jews who possessed Spanish citizenship as well as Nazi Germany's desire to see those Jews repatriated to Spain made a great impression on Radigales. During the early part of May 1943, he asked Madrid for instructions as to how he should proceed with respect to the Spanish Jews as well as with the German authorities. With the deadline less than a month away, Radigales wrote again to Madrid requesting that the Spanish Foreign Ministry allow him to authorize the granting of Spanish passports to those Jews under his tutelage who "had the undoubted right to obtain assistance." He emphasized the precarious situation in Greece for the Spanish Jews by writing that "[the] colony [of Jews] waits anxiously to obtain passports." In this note Radigales included a list of Spanish Jews with Spanish citizenship to whom he issued passports and were waiting to be repatriated.⁶⁷ This list was the first of many which were sent by Spain's representatives in Greece and Berlin to the Spanish Foreign Ministry. Not only does this highlight Radigales' readiness to facilitate the evacuation of Jews, it also forced the Spanish Foreign Ministry to "encounter" its Jews. The fact that names and passport numbers of Jewish citizens of Spain were sent to Madrid highlights the power of the list as an informative document. Rather than rendering the Spanish Jews as mere names and numbers, as in the case of the Nazi system, in

⁶⁷ AMAE R 1716: Nota Verbal dirigida por la embajada de Alemania en España al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores Francisco Gomez Jordana, Madrid 20 de Mayo in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 19.

this instance, the list provided the Spanish Foreign Ministry with concrete evidence about its citizens. Spain responded in a positive manner and informed Radigales that the Spanish Jews of Salonika would be repatriated to Spain and that the Spanish Embassy in Berlin under the authority of Ambassador Ginés Vidal would issue transit visas for those Jews who had fully documented Spanish citizenship.⁶⁸

However, on June 4, 1943 the Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Gómez Jordana informed Radigales via the Spanish Embassy in Berlin that it was impossible to facilitate the transportation of the Spanish Jews to Spain. The way in which Jordana views the situation and refers to the Spanish Jews in this instance highlights his hesitant and passive attitude towards assisting them. He ordered Radigales to refrain from any personal initiatives and retain a passive attitude with respect to the Jews. Moreover, he does not refer to the Jews explicitly but calls them “the interested party” and commands Radigales to inform them (the Spanish Jews) that Spain is actively engaged in resolving the difficulties on their behalf.⁶⁹ This particular instance showcases precisely how the nature of lists and bureaucracy facilitated indifference on behalf of the Spanish Foreign Ministry with respect to the precarious situation of Spain’s own citizens. Not only is the term “Jew” or “Sefardita” absent from this particular report, the Spanish Foreign Ministry effectively distances itself from the situation of its citizens through the means of bureaucracy. The “interested party,” that is, the Spanish Jews waiting to be repatriated to Spain, is ultimately placed in a bureaucratic limbo due at the behest of the Spanish Foreign Ministry. Jordana’s passive attitude and later blatant hostility to assisting the Spanish Jews play a large part in how Spain’s assistance to her Jewish citizens in Greece was carried out. This delay on behalf of Spain exasperated the German authorities who then

⁶⁸ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 149-150.

⁶⁹ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana al Embajador de España en Berlin in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 20-21.

informed Vidal that Spain would have until the end of June to repatriate her citizens before they would be deported to Germany. Moreover, the Germans demanded that Spain grant her citizens a collective passport in order to alleviate the complications and time stemming from moving a large group of people across multiple borders.⁷⁰

In the meantime, Radigales attempted to use his influence in Greece as a representative of Spain to alleviate the limbo that the Spanish Jews had found themselves in as a result of Madrid's prolonged delay in repatriating her Jewish citizens. He approached the Swedish representative in Greece about the possibility of transporting the Spanish Jews to Spain from Greece via Swedish boats, which were run by the International Red Cross. Vidal in Berlin relayed this message to Jordana in Madrid at the end of June and saw this as a reliable solution to the so-called problem of repatriation. In a telegram to Jordana he writes, "I suggest that we go the way of the former option which would then solve all the complications and delays that may stem from the process of obtaining transit visas from the numerous countries that they [the Jews] have to pass through, regardless of the transport itself."⁷¹ Regardless of Radigales' initiatives to see the swift evacuation of Spain's Jews, his actions fell on deaf ears in the Spanish Foreign Ministry. Moreover, Jordana actually impeded Radigales' efforts to bring about their repatriation to Spain as well as blatantly refused to comply with the German authorities' recommendation that the Spanish Jews be issued a collective passport, which would make their move to Spain a lot easier.

On July 1, 1943 Jordana informed Vidal of his prior instructions to Radigales, in which he instructed the latter to continue retaining a passive attitude and to not issue a collective passport for the Spanish Jews. Not only does this show his resistance to cooperating with the

⁷⁰ Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 22.

⁷¹ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 27.

German authorities where Spain's own citizens were concerned it also highlights the Spanish Foreign Ministry's negative attitude towards assisting Jews in which the relationship between Madrid and its representative on the local level is also called into question. Jordana is stern in his message concerning Radigales' efforts. He writes, "It is essential to neutralize the overzealous efforts of the Consul General of Athens [Radigales], paralyzing this matter that could create serious difficulties in Spain." In this same message he also ordered Radigales to greatly reduce the number of visas for the Jews who were to be repatriated.⁷² It is striking how Jordana frames the specific matter of Spain's own citizens abroad as something that could create serious difficulties for Spain should they be repatriated. Moreover, his reluctance to assist the Spanish Jews reflects this negative and back and forth relationship between Spain and the Jews, in which the position of Spain's representative on the local level in Greece differs starkly from that of the Foreign Ministry in Madrid. Therefore what emerges in the correspondence between Madrid and Greece and Madrid and Berlin is a complicated bureaucratic battle dictated by the Spanish Foreign Ministry with respect to Spain's assistance to and view of her Jewish citizens.

During the middle of July the true colors of the Spanish Foreign Ministry's view of assisting the Spanish Jews were revealed when Vidal on behalf of the Spanish Foreign Ministry informed Radigales on July 17, 1943 that Spain could not accept the repatriation of its Jewish nationals and that visas could only be granted in exceptional cases.⁷³ This abrupt change in Madrid's position elicited sharp responses from Vidal in Berlin and Radigales in Athens as well as from the Spanish Jews of Salonika whose fate hung in the balance. On July 20, 1943

⁷² AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana al Embajador de España en Berlin in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 27-28.

⁷³ AMAE R 1716/3. "Letter from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, Jordana, July 30, 1943 and August, 8 1943" España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Archivo General; Consulted at the USHMM in Washington, D.C.

Radigales informed Madrid via Vidal that with the exception of the Spanish Jews, all other foreign consulates in Greece had evacuated and repatriated their Jews.⁷⁴ Radigales tried to exert pressure on the government in Madrid by pointing out how Spain was the last country to repatriate its Jewish citizens, highlighting the grave repercussions this would have for those Jews. In this instance the Spanish government's position stood in stark contrast to that of other countries who also had Jewish nationals in Greece, namely, Switzerland, Turkey, Argentina, and Italy.⁷⁵ Vidal added his own opinions and suggestions concerning this precarious situation yet remained subordinate to the orders coming from Madrid. He writes,

I must communicate to you the extreme and critical situation in which "our Sefarditas" find themselves in, the great reason for their concern being their delayed repatriation. Their concern stems from the fear of the grave consequences stemming from the inability to gather a special train for their journey which will make it impossible for them to go to Spain. The German government is waiting, according to my reports, that the Spanish government orders the formation of said train. After canceling this repatriation there will come a day in which they will be deported and interned. I refrain from any intervention on compliance with orders received.⁷⁶

Like the prior instance where Spain refused to comply with German demands concerning the issuing of a collective passport, Spain also refrained from taking responsibility for the transportation of her Jewish citizens to Spain. This back and forth stance characteristic of Spain's reluctance to repatriate her citizens demonstrates the reality of her indifference vis-à-vis the Jews and ambivalence towards the Nazi authorities. In spurning German demands and refusing to repatriate her own Jewish citizens, Spain's actions ultimately signaled her reluctance to assist her own Jews and subsequently demonstrated that to the Germans, her Jewish citizens were not all that

⁷⁴ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 28.

⁷⁵ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 143.

⁷⁶ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 28.

important. In the words of Avni, “this in effect heralded Spain’s abandonment of its Jewish nationals in Salonika, which was tantamount to handing them over to the Germans. It seemed a dangerous gamble with Nazi patience.”⁷⁷

Distressed by the news of Spain’s refusal to repatriate her Spanish citizens and the impending German deportation of these Jews to Germany, Radigales attempted to do everything he could within his jurisdiction to reassure the Spanish Jews of Salonika about the current situation. He petitioned the German authorities to exempt among the Spanish Jews, children, the old, and the sick, from being deported. His initiatives were not successful. He then entered into negotiations with the Italian consulate about the possibility of moving the Spanish Jews from Salonika to the relatively safe haven of Athens, which was still under Italian control. The Italians were willing to assist Radigales in transporting the entire group of Spanish Jews in a special train to Athens, but yet again the German authorities also rejected this demand, refusing to allow the transfer of Spain’s Jewish citizens to the Italian zone of Greece. Nevertheless, some 150 Spanish Jews managed to escape from Salonika to Athens with the help of the Italian authorities on an Italian military train.⁷⁸

Two days following Radigales’ letter from July 20, 1943, Vidal again forwarded another letter from Radigales to the Spanish Foreign Ministry. This time Jordana was confronted with the plight of the Spanish Jews, who in writing, requested the Spanish government to be repatriated to the Italian zone of Greece, which was relatively calmer than that of the German-

⁷⁷ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 152.

⁷⁸ AMAE R 1716: Dispatch from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 31-34.

occupied zone considering Italy's opposition to deporting Jews.⁷⁹ Madrid was again informed twice on July 22nd and July 23rd about the tragic consequences that Spain's citizens would face if deported. Vidal informed Madrid that the Germans were ready to deport the Spanish Jews to Bergen Belsen in Hanover, Germany since the already extended deadline had expired. Not only does Vidal inform Madrid about the consequences the concentration camp in Germany would have for the Spanish Jews, he further attempts to impress the severity of Spain's inactions on Jordana by alluding to the possibility of these Spanish citizens being ultimately deported to Poland, which would be "tragic and definitive."⁸⁰ While Vidal had no definitive answer from the German government that the Spanish Jews would be deported to Poland, this added emphasis on the consequences of Spain's reluctance to assist her Jews demonstrates the readiness for Spain's representatives on the local level to see Spain repatriate her Jewish citizens.

News of the impending deportation of Spanish Jews from Salonika also elicited strong reactions from the small community of Spanish Jews dwelling in the Italian-occupied zone of Greece. On July 29, 1943 prominent members of this community drafted a letter to Franco in which they expressed their desire for Spain to intercede on behalf of their co-religionists in Salonika. The letter states:

We cannot relate to you the desperation of our Jewish brothers in Salonika. When they had the security that one day or another they would be repatriated to Spain, they received the notice that their entrance into Spain was prohibited and that they would be deported to Germany. We ignore the causes that have caused this change from our government, but it has profoundly surprised us, for you, who know us know that we are orderly elements and that our entry into Spain would not be detrimental but beneficial. Knowing your good heart please be good enough to intervene so that the Sephardim that will go to Germany receive

⁷⁹ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 29.

⁸⁰ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 29.

a humanitarian treatment and be quickly repatriated so that we are not abandoned if one day we also have the misfortune of being expelled from Greece.⁸¹

Highlighting their connection to Spain, that is their having Spanish citizenship, this group of Jews calls on Spain to assist them and is still hopeful that despite the reality of Spain's current position with respect to her Jewish citizens in Greece, Spain will assist them. This letter sheds an interesting light on the Jewish point of view of the events in Greece and showcases the severity of the situation because a certain sense of hope and trust in the Spanish government is maintained despite Madrid's blatant and open refusal to assist her Jews under Nazi occupation.

During the latter half of July Madrid received yet another response from one of its representatives abroad concerning Spain's refusal to evacuate her Jewish citizens in Greece. Writing from Berlin, an unidentified diplomat warned Madrid of the dire consequences that her abandonment of the Spanish Jews would have. He wrote:

If Spain refused to welcome those members of the Spanish colony abroad even though they possess Spanish nationality and have settled all formalities by our legislation, we condemn them automatically to death. This is the sad reality and we cannot conceal it to ourselves. I understand perfectly well that we do not want to see such a large number of Jews entrench themselves in Spain, even though they are in theory and practice Spanish . . . I cannot give up the belief that we can save them from the horrible death that awaits them.⁸²

This interesting dispatch showcases a complicated view of Jews that was being played out in Greece. On the one hand, Spain and her representatives abroad are quite aware of the consequences that Madrid's inactions will have on the Spanish Jews. And yet the idea of physically bringing Jews to Spain even though they are citizens is problematic for the government in Madrid. In assisting the Spanish Jews with whom they were in direct contact

⁸¹ AMAE R 1716: Letter sent from leaders of the Spanish Jewish community to Señor D. José M. Doussinague, Director General de Política Exterior, July 29, 1943, in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 30-31.

⁸² Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 143.

with it seems that Spain's representatives on the local level were caught between the wishes of the Spanish Foreign Ministry that wanted to keep Jews out of Spain yet at the same time did not want them to be killed

This train of thought is similarly expressed in a long and descriptive dispatch from Radigales to Foreign Minister Jordana on July 30, 1943. He writes, "Although surely there have been very important reasons that have motivated our government to allow the deportation of Spanish Sephardim to the concentration camps in Germany, it is my duty to tell you, Sir, that this fact has had a deplorable effect not only for our colony [the Spanish Jews] but also for the Greek and Italian authorities who do now know the reasons that govern our behavior."⁸³ Radigales then informs Jordana of the rapidly evolving situation on the ground with respect to the Spanish Jews' despairing situation in face of the impending deportation. In what seems a desperate attempt to persuade the Spanish Foreign Ministry to take any sort of action, Radigales suggests that if there were no other possibility, Spain could accept their repatriation and place them in a concentration camp at their own expenses, which they would willingly and gladly accept considering the present circumstances.⁸⁴ Finally, Radigales warned the Spanish Foreign Ministry about the consequences of Spain's abandonment of her Jewish citizens. This warning, however, raises a complicated question precisely because Radigales sees the possibility of "Jewish power" having an impact on Spain's international prestige. He writes, "Given the close solidarity which unites Jews worldwide, I must indicate to you, Sir, my fear that a deportation of such a high number of *Sefarditas* [Sephardim] will give place to a violent campaign of great

⁸³ AMAE R 1716: Dispatch from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 31-34.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

importance against our government given the enormous influence that the Jews have throughout the world's democracies.”⁸⁵

Notwithstanding these complicated views set forth by Radigales, that is, the assertion of Jewish power as a way to provoke Spain to respond to her Spanish citizens in Greece, his previous attempts to assist Jews in various instances where the Spanish Foreign Ministry was either silent or ordered its representative to retain a passive attitude highlight the stark difference between officials in Madrid and Greece with respect to the Spanish Jews. Perhaps by drawing upon this stereotype of Jewish power Radigales tried to provoke a response from his superiors whose silence and indifference prolonged the situation of Spain's Jews in Greece. Being on the local level where Radigales came into direct contact with the Spanish Jews and their precarious situation undoubtedly had more effect on him than the Spanish Foreign Ministry which only encountered its Jewish citizens through the correspondence, lists, and the bureaucratic maze that characterized the relationship between Spain and its representatives in Greece and Berlin.⁸⁶ For the Spanish Foreign Ministry these Jews that held Spanish citizenship did not represent flesh and blood individuals but were mere names on lists that had been sent by Spain's representatives in Greece and Berlin. Perhaps this distancing between Spain and her Jewish citizens abroad perpetuated by the bureaucratic maze in the form of lists of citizens, lists of transit visas, etc., that dictated Spain's ambivalent and even hostile attitude and view of Jews, is what allowed those dictating decisions at the top to proceed as they did because, unlike Radigales, they were not confronted with the reality of the situation at the local level in Salonika and Athens. This brings to mind how the nature of bureaucracy can effectively cancel

⁸⁵ AMAE R 1716: Dispatch from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 31-34.

⁸⁶ In many of the reports, telegrams, and dispatches sent to Madrid, Radigales describes the phone calls, letters from the Spanish Jews as well as the physical encounters with the latter presenting themselves at the Spanish Embassy in Athens and requesting Spain's assistance.

the relations and connections between those processing and constructing the lists and those on the lists.

However much impact the reports coming out of Greece and Berlin from both the Spanish representatives as well as the Spanish Jews made on the Spanish Foreign Ministry seems to have ultimately not altered Spain's hostility toward assisting her own citizens. For example, on July 24, 1943 Jordana again refused the repatriation of Jews to Spain and insisted rather that they be allowed only to transit through Spain on their way to Portugal or the United States.⁸⁷ This was the final straw that figuratively broke the camel's back. On July 29, 1943, after more than a month of delay on behalf of the Spanish authorities, the Germans in Salonika rounded up the 367 Spanish Jews and detained them in the Baron Hirsch suburb concentration camp. This group of Spanish Jews was subsequently deported to Bergen Belsen in Germany on August 2, 1943.⁸⁸ Not too long after the deportation of the Spanish Jews to Germany, Spain reneged on its previous stance and informed the Germans that Spain would indeed evacuate her Jewish citizens to Spain. On August 5, 1943 the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested that the Spanish Jews of Salonika who were currently detained in Bergen Belsen be repatriated in groups of 25 persons. However, Germany rejected this bizarre proposal and insisted that Spain repatriate its Jewish citizens in one group according to the quickest route possible.⁸⁹ Finally, an agreement was reached between Spain and Germany in early September which stipulated that the Spanish Jews would be repatriated to Spain in two groups of roughly 180 persons and in 15-day intervals.⁹⁰ On September 17, 1943 and October 3, 1943, Vidal in Berlin

⁸⁷ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 143.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ AMAE R 1716: Despacho dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana, August 12, 1943 and September 20, 1943 in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 40; 42.

⁹⁰ AMAE R 1716: Despacho dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana, September 13, 1943 in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 46.

forwarded two lists to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in which the group of Spanish Jews had been divided into two expeditions.⁹¹

What prompted this sudden change from the part of the Spanish authorities in Madrid? Avni demonstrates that an internal debate among the Spanish authorities in Madrid played out in which the question of repatriating Jews to Spain divided members of the government. The impasse was finally settled and Jordana ordered Vidal in Berlin to demand guarantees from Germany that the Spanish Jews should be “treated in a manner befitting Spanish citizens.”⁹² In light of Spain’s irresolute stance towards accepting her own Jewish nationals this demand that the Spanish Jews be treated as citizens of Spain comes across as manipulative vis-à-vis both the Jews and Nazi Germany. Perhaps this was a way for Spain to obtain a leverage of power with respect to Nazi Germany as well as a way to assert Spanish neutrality and sovereignty. In this instance the Spanish Jews become a perfect bargaining chip for Spain to use with respect to her relations with Nazi Germany. This further raises the question of how the Spanish authorities construed the definition of what being Spanish meant and how that was used to not only assist Jews but to also play out her policies vis-à-vis Nazi Germany. While Avni’s analysis of this particular episode is divorced from the broader international implications, Rohr goes beyond his scant analysis to show that indeed in this instance Spanish rescue of Jews was overtly exploited for the interest of Spain’s public relations. Spanish representatives in London met with leaders of the World Jewish Congress there in August 1943 and discussed with them the role that Spain had played in assisting Jews.⁹³ She writes, “To improve their image abroad, the Spaniards

⁹¹ Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 81-91.

⁹² Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 155.

⁹³ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 144.

began promoting the myths of the non-antisemitism of the regime and its extensive activities to rescue the Jews.”⁹⁴

While Spain was busy exploiting her assistance to the Spanish Jews of Greece abroad, the reality in which her Jewish citizens in Bergen Belsen found themselves stood in stark contrast to the image and message she was sending to the world. The initial positive response from the Spanish government proved to be a disappointment to the Spanish Jews interned in Germany because Spain now insisted that their repatriation to Spain was contingent on the evacuation of a group of Jews from France who had been allowed into Spain during August 1943.⁹⁵ This desire to keep Spain’s own Jewish citizens at bay had difficult repercussions for the Spanish Jews housed in Bergen Belsen whose stay was prolonged throughout the end of 1943 and through the early months of 1944. Finally after the group of Jews from France who had entered Spain in August 1943 was evacuated to North Africa in December 1943 Spain made the necessary preparation for bringing the Spanish Jews from Bergen Belsen to Spain.⁹⁶ The repatriation was carried out during February 1944 in two groups who crossed the French-Spanish border at Port-Bou on February 10th and February 13th respectively.⁹⁷ However, not all the Spanish Jews who had up to this point spent around a total of six months interned in Bergen Belsen made it to the safe haven of Spain. Salomon Moche Moche, Raquel Carasso Saltiel and Sara Saporta Saltiel, three Spanish Jews who had witnessed Madrid’s indecisiveness in responding to her own citizens, perished while waiting to be repatriated to Spain.⁹⁸

Nevertheless, Jordana seized on this opportunity to promote Spain’s image abroad by ordering

⁹⁴ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 144.

⁹⁵ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 155.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 157.

⁹⁷ AMAE R 1716: Despacho dirigido por el Embajador de España en Berlin al ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gomez Jordana, February 29, 1944 in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 97-99.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

the Spanish Ambassador in the United States, Juan Francisco de Cárdenas to publicize the arrival of the Spanish Jews to Spain.⁹⁹

Spain's unwillingness to assist her own citizens abroad and realize their actual repatriation to the peninsula not only confirms her ambivalent view of the Jews, but is further indicative of a broader policy of keeping Jews out of Spain based on the fear of their permanently settling in Spain. Whether or not the Foreign Ministry or Franco himself personally dictated this policy to Spain's representatives abroad is beside the point. What is clear, however, is that Spain viewed her own Jewish nationals as less than Spanish citizens, yet was disposed to assist them precisely because of the broader implications this would have on Spain's international image. This is accurately captured in the words of Jordana:

[. .]. . There are several hundreds of Jews with Spanish nationality who are in Europe right now who are either in concentration camps or bound for them. We cannot allow them to settle in Spain because it does not suit us nor does the *Caudillo* authorize it. Yet we cannot abandon them in their current situation and ignore the fact that they are Spanish citizens as this could bring about a major press campaign against us abroad, particularly in the United States and result in serious international difficulties. In light of the situation, we have considered bringing them in groups of more or less one hundred and only after one group leaves Spain – going through the country like light goes through glass, without a trace – do we allow a second group, which in turn would be evacuated to let others follow. With this system it is clear that in no way will we allow Jews to remain in Spain.¹⁰⁰

It is therefore clear that the reasons behind Spain's indecisiveness to repatriate and assist her own Jewish citizens abroad under Nazi-occupation were contingent on her mixed view of the individuals she was dealing with. Although these Jews were Spanish citizens, Spain viewed them as less than so and only assisted them because it was a way to promote a positive image

⁹⁹ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 148.

¹⁰⁰ AMAE R 1716/4 Letter from Spanish Foreign Minister Jordana to Señor General D. Carlos Asensio, Minister of War, December 28, 1943 in Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, Appendix.

for Spain abroad as well as to assert Spain's sovereignty vis-à-vis Nazi Germany. Thus her assistance to her own citizens stemmed from manipulative as well as opportunistic motives.

The way in which the Jews are viewed in this report raises interesting questions. In particular, the very language is striking with respect to how the Jews are referenced by the Spanish Foreign Ministry. While the term "Jew" is used in this report one can literally see the indifference as well as the distancing between Spain and its Jewish citizens. The repeated interchange between "Jew" and "them" in this text underscores that distancing. Furthermore, in doing so, the term "Jew" seems to lose its value and the "them," that is 'the other,' now becomes a label befitting of Spain's own citizens. Being reduced to a label of "them" the Spanish Jews in this particular instance lose their distinctiveness as Spanish citizens in the way in which they are referenced by the Spanish authorities. This highlights the power of the nature of bureaucracy to effectively undermine human individuals being referenced and processed by those in positions of power. While an assertion that the Spanish Jews were dehumanized in the way in which they are viewed and referenced by the Spanish Foreign Ministry in this report is perhaps an overstatement, this instance highlights the power of language in bureaucracy to effectively reduce the individuals being referenced and processed to technical terms, which relieve those in power of certain moral obligations. This is precisely the case because the labels of "them" and "Jew" effectively canceled these Spanish Jews connection to Spain from the point of view of the Spanish Foreign Ministry. In the words of Bauman, "It is difficult to perceive and remember the humans behind all such technical terms. The point is that as far as the bureaucratic goals go, they are better not perceived and not remembered."¹⁰¹

Repatriation of the Spanish Jews from Athens

¹⁰¹ Bauman, *Modernity*, 103.

In the meantime, following Italy's capitulation in September 1943, the small group of Spanish Jews who had previously escaped to Athens now came under the jurisdiction of the Nazi authorities. The Jews in this part of Greece remained relatively safe and secure up until March 1944 in which the German authorities began to roundup Jews and subsequently deport them. On the night of March 24, 1944 the Jews of Athens were rounded up and deported to Auschwitz; this roundup also included 155 Spanish Jews who were not deported to Auschwitz but detained and relocated to the camp of Haidiri six kilometers outside of Athens. The German authorities allowed Radigales to visit the Spanish Jews interned there where he unsuccessfully petitioned the Germans to exclude the sick, those of 80 years or older, and young children from the German plans to expel the foreign Jews from Greece.¹⁰²

Prior to this, Radigales had petitioned the Spanish authorities in August 1943 to see the repatriation of this group of Jews to Spain as well. Upon his recommendation, the Spanish Embassy in Berlin requested that the German authorities refrain from any action against the Spanish Jews who had escaped from Salonika to Athens and that with the assistance of Radigales, they be repatriated to Spain. The German authorities gave no reply therefore Radigales took initiatives into his own hands.¹⁰³ In view of the change in Spain's policies towards repatriating her Jewish citizens, Radigales was informed that he could organize repatriation of the Spanish Jews in Athens in groups of twenty five persons, but that each group could only be repatriated to Spain after the group before that had left Spain.¹⁰⁴ On August 31, 1943 Radigales responded that it would take more than two years to evacuate all of the Spanish Jews according to these guidelines considering the difficulties in transporting them across

¹⁰² AMAE R 1716: Dispatch from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 26, 1943 in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 101-102.

¹⁰³ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 156-157.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

multiple international borders as well as arranging for the transport itself. He then proposed the repatriation of the entire group utilizing all available means of transportation.¹⁰⁵ However, at the end of September, Radigales was informed that the Spanish Jews of Athens could not be repatriated to Spain without prior approval from the Spanish Foreign Ministry and he was asked to forward a list of the persons he intended to send.¹⁰⁶ Spain's dilatory policies with respect to assisting her Jewish citizens abroad, that is, her reluctance to have them settle in Spain, thus also had stark consequences for those who had managed to escape into the relatively safer zone of Greece.

The Spanish Jews of Athens were thus left alone until the deportations commenced in March 1944. However, after their brief stay in the Haidiri camp, the Spanish Jews were deported to Bergen Belsen by the German authorities on April 2, 1944. On April 9, 1944 Radigales forwarded a complete list of those Spanish Jews who had been deported to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid.¹⁰⁷ Throughout the summer of 1944 Spain was reluctant to see this group of Jews enter Spain and expressed the same reasons for delaying their repatriation that she had put forth for those Spanish Jews of Salonika: only after the group of Jews who had previously entered Spain left, would the next group be allowed in. At one point Jordana even instructed the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin to ask the German authorities that this group of Spanish Jews be allowed to travel to Turkey and Palestine on Swedish boats managed by Jewish organizations in Turkey and the International Red Cross.¹⁰⁸ It was only in

¹⁰⁵ AMAE R 1716/3. 23 "Dispatch from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, Jordana, August 31, 1943" España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Archivo General; Consulted at the USHMM in Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁶ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 157.

¹⁰⁷ AMAE R 1716: List of "Sefardíes" sent from Radigales, Spanish Consul General in Athens to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, Francisco Gómez Jordana, Athens April 9, 1944 in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 109-112.

¹⁰⁸ AMAE R 1716: Telegrama dirigido por el ministro de Asuntos Exteriores, Francisco Gómez Jordana al Embajador de España en Berlin in Morcillo, *Sebastián de Radigales*, 107.

June after the Spanish Jews of Salonika had been transported to the Fedala refugee camp in Morocco did Spain agree to their repatriation.¹⁰⁹

However, because of the way the war had turned against Nazi Germany with the recent Allied landing in France, transportation for this group of Jews to Spain was virtually rendered impossible and therefore they remained interned in Bergen Belsen until the Allied forces liberated the camp on April 13, 1945.¹¹⁰ The principle reasons that these Jews survived the war did not depend on Madrid's rescue policies; rather it was a mere stroke of luck that allowed them to survive. In the words of Avni, "Spanish citizenship thus saved the lives of this group of Jews until the eve of their liberation, despite the vagaries of Spain's efforts to rescue them. But only a miracle saved these 155 Spanish nationals from the fate that befell those who died during the last days of the war."¹¹¹

Conclusion

Spain's assistance to Jews in Nazi-occupied Greece allows one to see the various factors at play that structured her view of and relationship to Jews on the one hand, and her dilatory and ambivalent stance vis-à-vis Nazi Germany. In assisting Jews in Greece, Spain's representatives on the local level, Radigales in Athens and Vidal in Berlin, were faced with a different situation than that of the Spanish Foreign Ministry which in fact only encountered her Spanish Jews abroad through the mechanisms of bureaucracy, that is, the lists, transit visas, and diplomatic correspondence that were sent to Madrid from Athens and Berlin. Therefore the same distancing that is characteristic of the bureaucratic system used in the Nazi system can also be applied to the context of Spain's rescue in Greece. Not only was blatant moral indifference

¹⁰⁹ Rohr, *The Spanish Right*, 149.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 148.

¹¹¹ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 161.

facilitated through the nature of the lists and Spanish bureaucracy on the part of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, the way in which the Jews were referred to in the language of these reports emanating from Madrid highlight their hostile and opportunistic view of Spain's own Jewish citizens.

This certainly had an effect on Spain's attitude toward repatriating her citizens where Spanish representatives on the local level were more ready and willing to assist Spain's Jewish citizens while Madrid remained reluctant and even blatantly hostile toward repatriating them. In repeatedly delaying their repatriation to the peninsula and even formulating the policy that Spain's own Jewish citizens could not settle in Spain, but only pass through, Spain viewed her Jewish citizens as less than such and it was only the demands of the Germans and the initiatives of Spanish representatives abroad that allowed Spain's half-hearted assistance to the Spanish Jews of Greece to come to fruition. Spain assisted Jews in Greece albeit in a very reluctant manner precisely because the Germans forced the ultimatum of repatriating Jews of foreign nationalities upon the Spanish authorities. In the words of Avni, "Spain viewed repatriation as the consequence of German policy without which Spanish nationals could have remained undisturbed, so it did not feel obliged to assist in implementing such a policy."¹¹²

Therefore the relationship between Spain and Nazi Germany is indicative of how Spain was to proceed in assisting her own Jewish citizens in Greece and how she viewed them. This repatriation was not a Spanish initiative and thus Spain's reluctance to allow her own citizens to settle in Spain demonstrates the way in which the Jews became a manipulated pawn for Spain to assert her sovereignty and power vis-à-vis Nazi Germany. For example, in repeatedly shirking the German demands about how the repatriation of Spanish Jews was to be carried out and at certain times even demanding that the Spanish Jews be treated as Spanish citizens,

¹¹² Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 151.

Spain's relationship to Nazi Germany was construed through her manipulation of her Jewish citizens. Spain's unwillingness to comply with German demands demonstrates on the one hand, her desire to not only distance herself from Nazi Germany, but to assert and maintain a leverage of authority and sovereignty. In this instance, the Spanish Jews are a way for Spain to carry out her dilatory policy with respect to Nazi Germany.

However, Spain's reluctance to assist her Jewish citizens in Greece highlights her view of and relationship to the Jews. Not only was Spain indifferent to the Jews she was assisting, Spain was also reluctant to have them physically enter Spain. Nevertheless, there was also a usefulness that emanated from Spain's repatriation of the Jews. Through manipulating Spain's assistance to the Spanish Jews in Greece as a way to promote the image of Spain as a benevolent rescuer, the Jews were further used to conjure up a positive image of Spain with respect to Jewish organizations abroad. Therefore Spanish assistance in Greece was the consequence of an outside initiative and was carried out according to the manipulative aims of the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid.

Chapter Four: The Spanish Legation in Budapest: Assisting Jews on an Invented Story

While Spain expressed reluctance and indifference towards assisting its Jewish citizens in Greece during the height of the Holocaust, the last safe-remaining Jewish community in Europe at that time was that of Hungary. In comparison to European Jewry's suffering at the hands of Nazi Germany, the Jews of Hungary had been relatively safe up until 1944. However, on March 19, 1944 Nazi Germany occupied Hungary due to Admiral Miklós Horthy's attempt to disengage himself from the Axis Powers and the pro-Nazi government of Dome Sztójay was established under the patronage of the Germans.¹¹³ Up until this point the Spanish representative in Hungary was Miguel Ángel Muguiro who regularly dispatched reports to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid about the political changes taking place in Hungary. His reports offer a critical view of the antisemitic position of the Hungarian government, in which he devoted significant attention to the various policies enacted by the Hungarian government concerning the Jews. The legislation that targeted Jews, limiting their participation in the Hungarian economy as well as the laws that forced Jews to wear the yellow badge was all diligently noted in his reports to the Spanish Foreign Ministry.¹¹⁴ However, after a diplomatic dispute between the Spanish and Hungarian governments, in which the Hungarian representative in Madrid announced his refusal to recognize the new government in Hungary, a new Spanish *chargé d'affaires* was assigned to Budapest at the beginning of June 1944, Ángel Sanz Briz.¹¹⁵

What assistance then did Spain lend to the Jews of Hungary and how was it carried out

¹¹³ Doris L. Bergen, *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust* (Rowman and Littleman Publishers, 2009), 223-225.

¹¹⁴ AMAE 364, 45. Legación de España en Budapest al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 30 de Marzo de 1944; AMAE 368, 90. Legación de España en Budapest al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 13 de Mayo de 1944.

¹¹⁵ Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 171.

and to what ends? In assisting Jews, what sort of relationship did Spain construct with the former, and how did Spain view the Jews she was assisting? Furthermore, what was the relationship between the central government in Madrid and its representative on the local level in Budapest? And how did Spain proceed vis-à-vis the Hungarian authorities? This chapter sets out to analyze the nature of Spain's rescue to Jews in Budapest by exploring Spain's relationship to the small group of Sephardim in Budapest. Who were these individuals, how were they rescued, and what was their relationship to Spain? Through looking at the list of Sephardim in Budapest and how they factored into Spain's rescue operations, this chapter will retell the story of what happened in the Spanish Legation's assistance to the Jews of Budapest.

The Sephardim in Budapest: An Imagined Community

Since arriving in Budapest Sanz Briz regularly dispatched reports on the evolving political situation in Hungary to his superiors in Madrid, in which he closely followed the events and opinions regarding the Jews of Budapest. Some of the reports highlight his personal views and opinions with respect to the ever-changing situation for the Jewish population. On July 16, 1944 Sanz Briz forwarded a report on the Hungarian antisemitic legislation to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in which he discusses at length the precariousness of the internal political struggles plaguing Hungary. In this report he not only informs Madrid of the deportation of more than 500,000 Hungarian Jews, who were sent to a concentration camp near Katowice, Poland where it was rumored in Budapest that the deported had been killed by gassing, but also offers a critique on the internal dynamics of the Hungarian government which he sees as addicted to the Germans. He writes, "The authority of the [Hungarian] government can not be more precarious, as it is completely overwhelmed by the extremist elements addicted

to Germany.”¹¹⁶

Further reports from Sanz Briz throughout the summer of 1944 kept the Spanish Foreign Ministry informed of the disparate situation for Hungarian Jewry. At the end of July, Sanz Briz wrote again to the Spanish Foreign Ministry detailing the recent protests made to Admiral Horthy on behalf of the representatives of Sweden and the Vatican in Budapest.¹¹⁷ Similar reports from Sanz Briz continued into the autumn therefore the Spanish government was well aware, step by step, of the increasing critical nature of the situation facing the Jewish community in Budapest. However, it was only after an outside initiative, coming from the World Jewish Congress in October 1944, that Spain proceeded to assist Jews in Budapest. On October 20, 1944, just five days following the rise of Ferenc Szálasi and the fascist Arrow Cross Party to power, the Spanish Ambassador in Washington D.C. wrote to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, informing Madrid of a request made by a representative of the World Jewish Congress for Spain’s representative in Budapest “to extend protection to as many persecuted Jews as possible in the same way that Sweden had.”¹¹⁸ The Spanish Foreign Ministry then instructed Sanz Briz to assist the Jews of Budapest according to three different categories: first, Sephardic Jews of Spanish nationality were to be protected, followed by Sephardim without Spanish nationality, and lastly, if possible, a large number of the rest of the Jews.¹¹⁹ These instructions from Madrid to Sanz Briz in Budapest demonstrate that the Spanish government viewed the Sephardim in a particular way, that is, as a special category and pretext for rescuing Jews in Budapest.

¹¹⁶ AMAE 377, 174.o. “Caótica situación política interior de Hungría” Informe dirigido por la Legación de España en Budapest al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 16 de Julio de 1944.

¹¹⁷ AMAE 364, 75. “El Santo Padre y el Rey de Suecia intervienen en el problema judío en Hungría,” Legación de España en Budapest al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 29 de Julio de 1944.

¹¹⁸ AMAE 74, 107.

¹¹⁹ Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 370.

In the days following the Spanish Foreign Ministry's instructions, Sanz Briz obtained permission from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to extend Spanish protection to one hundred Jews. However, protection of these Jews was granted on the condition that Spain would recognize the new Hungarian government and that these Jews should leave Hungary for Spain by the date of November 15th. This wish by the Hungarian government under the leadership of Szálasi to receive international recognition not only by Spain, but other neutral countries with representatives in Budapest remained a constant point of contention between the Spanish Legation's ability to maintain its rescue operations and the wishes of the Hungarian authorities. In the days after having received permission from the Hungarian authorities to assist Jews, Sanz Briz was able to increase the number of protectees up to 352 persons. These Jews were issued provisional Spanish passports written in French, in which members from the same family were included so that the number of passports issued matched the number authorized by the Hungarian government. In this way, Sanz Briz was able to increase the number of Jews under Spanish protection while remaining under the guidelines set forth by the Hungarian authorities.¹²⁰

Similar to the initiatives of the other representatives in Budapest, Sanz Briz also issued a Spanish equivalent to the Swedish "schutzpass" the "carta de protección" or, letter of protection. Approximately 1,898 Hungarian Jews were issued Spanish letters of protection and in order to receive them, it was necessary to claim that one was either of Sephardic origin or that one had familial or business ties to Spain.¹²¹ Eva Lang and her family as well as Jaime Vandor and his mother and brother, non-Sephardic Hungarian Jews assisted by the Spanish Legation, all received letters of protection from Sanz Briz because they had family members

¹²⁰ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest; Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 371.

¹²¹ Ibid; Deaglio, *The Banality of Goodness*, 72.

living in Spain at that time. Lang had an uncle who was working in Spain and Vador's father, a Hungarian Jew, had immigrated to Barcelona in 1940.¹²² Connections like these allowed for a significant number of Jews to receive the letters of protection, however, later on anyone who approached the Spanish Legation seeking assistance was issued a letter of protection.¹²³

The last group of Jews assisted by the Spanish Legation was approximately 45 Sephardic Jews, who according to Sanz Briz, "had emigrated from the Former Ottoman Empire and had conserved their Spanish language [Judeo-Spanish]." These Sephardic Jews were issued full ordinary Spanish passports valid for three months in which whole families were included in the same passport so that the total number of passports issued was only 15. However, the number of Sephardic Jews can be listed at 44.¹²⁴ This particular group of Jews' connection to and relationship with the Spanish Legation in Budapest is a puzzling phenomenon not only because of the lack of information on them, but also because of the fact that the Spanish government prioritized them in their rescue efforts in Budapest and used this connection to Spain as the means to initiate that assistance. In using this connection to Spain based only upon the actual reality of a few individuals, not only was an invented narrative formed that allowed Jews to be rescued, but an imagined community of Sephardim was also established.

What little demographic information the list provides sheds light on where the small group of Sephardim was from as well as their occupations. Approximately half of these Sephardic Jews were born in Hungary, with fifteen in Budapest alone and six from elsewhere in

¹²² Interview of Eva Lang, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Oral History Project, 1990, Budapest, Hungary; Jaime Vador, *Al filo del Holocausto: Diálogos con un superviviente*, (Ediciones Invisibles, 2013), 32-33.

¹²³ Interview of Andrew Furst, Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, 1996, Hawthorn, Australia. Furst recalls how he and his father approached the Spanish Legation in December 1944 and requested letters of protection. However, because the Spanish safe houses were full, they were not placed in the International Ghetto.

¹²⁴ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest. Giorgio Perlasca, the Italian veteran of the Spanish Civil War who assisted Sanz Briz's rescue operations, is placed on the list of "45 Sephardic Jews" with a Spanish passport. See Deaglio, *The Banality of Goodness*

Hungary. The other half of these Sephardim were born in Turkey, Italy, Serbia, Transylvania or Czechoslovakia. Aside from one doctor, one chauffeur, and one student, the majority of their occupations are listed under the label of “merchant or trader.”¹²⁵ While this small amount of information provided by the list drawn up by Sanz Briz allows for a scant picture of this community, it is not clear if these individuals were registered with the Spanish Legation as protégés under the protocols of the former stipulation system that Spain maintained with Sephardim in the Balkans during the time of the Ottoman Empire. Sanz Briz maintains that he discovered this group of Jews yet it is unclear precisely when this occurred. In a report sent to the Spanish Foreign Ministry dated August 15, 1944, prior to the start of Spain’s assistance in Budapest, Sanz Briz informed Madrid about the death of a certain Olga Loewy who was deported from Hungary a few weeks following the German occupation of Hungary. In the report she is listed as the widow of Enrique Bela and mother of Enrique Bela Jr., one of the individuals placed on the list of Sephardic Jews rescued by the Spanish Legation.¹²⁶

Perhaps Sanz Briz “discovered” the Sephardim prior to receiving approval from Madrid to assist Jews. The fact that he informs the Spanish Foreign Ministry about a particular Jewish individual connected to the Sephardic Jews at such an early date perhaps also suggests that the Sephardim were actually registered with the Spanish authorities in Budapest or at least had connection to the Spanish Legation.¹²⁷ These can only be rendered as hypotheses since there are no documents in either the Hungarian Jewish archives, the Spanish Embassy in Budapest or the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that attest to these individuals being registered with the Spanish authorities. Nevertheless, this small group of Sephardim played an important role in the

¹²⁵ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest.

¹²⁶ Ibid, AMAE R 1716/3. “Viuda Enrique Bela” Report from Sanz Briz, Spanish charge d’affaires in Budapest to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, 15 de agosto de 1944.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

rescue operations of the Spanish Legation in Budapest because their connection to Spain was used as a way to negotiate Spain's rescue operations vis-à-vis the Hungarian authorities as well as to promote a positive image of Spain abroad in the American press.

Sanz Briz issued the Sephardim ordinary Spanish passports in order to avoid their internment in the International Ghetto and because of the fact that if they were placed there where the Spanish safe houses were located, their presence would jeopardize the Spanish operations considering that the number of protégés recognized by the Hungarian government did not match the actual number of persons in the Spanish houses and that Spain had not yet officially recognized the Szálasi government.¹²⁸ During the middle of November 1944, the Szálasi government had created the so-called International Ghetto located in the thirteenth district near St. István Park where Jews under the protection of foreign countries such as Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Portugal, were to be placed.¹²⁹

This was one of the reasons, Sanz Briz claimed, that prompted him to issue the Sephardic Jews ordinary Spanish passports. The other reason was that the Hungarian officials did not recognize these Jews as "true Spaniards." He then claims that these conditions as well as Spain's "traditional policies" toward the Sephardim are what motivated him to issue the small group of Sephardic Jews ordinary passports.¹³⁰ This raises a complicated issue precisely because Sanz Briz blurs the lines between real Spaniards and Sephardic Jews and yet uses these distinctions vis-à-vis the Hungarian authorities to maintain the rescue operations. On the list of Sephardic Jews forwarded to the Spanish Foreign Ministry the Sephardim are explicitly listed

¹²⁸ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest.

¹²⁹ Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary* (New York: Columbia UP, 1981), 971-976.

¹³⁰ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest.

as “protected persons in possession of Spanish passports.”¹³¹ Nowhere does Sanz Briz mention that these Sephardic Jews hold Spanish citizenship yet when dealing with the Hungarian authorities, the Sephardim are presented as “real Spaniards” or Spanish citizens.

Furthermore, when negotiating with the Hungarian authorities concerning Spain’s assistance to Jews, Sanz Briz inflates Spain’s relationship to the Sephardim as a way to justify Spain’s assistance as well as to legitimize it. Concerning the list of Jews protected by Spain, he informs the Spanish Foreign Ministry of his negotiations with the Hungarian government. He writes:

The great disproportion between the numbers of Jews whose protection by this Representation has been recognized by the Hungarian government and those that in practice have been saved has not passed unnoticed by these authorities. On repeated occasions they have signaled to me their intention of evacuating over 300 persons from the Spanish houses. In order to avoid this possibility I sent a note to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry in which I explained that the protection of Sephardim was a traditional policy by Spanish authorities and that the European countries where the Jewish problem had arisen had always respected this protection. Finally, I added that the German government itself, as an occupying power, had, on petition from the Spanish authorities, respected the Sephardic Jews, imposing the condition that they be transported to Spain.¹³²

In highlighting Spain’s “policies” of assisting the Sephardim in Nazi-occupied countries, Sanz Briz attempts to legitimize the rescue operations of Jews in Budapest in a way that places the Sephardim at the cornerstone of Spain’s assistance in Hungary. This shows the importance that this connection to Spain had in this delicate situation as a sort of bargaining chip for the Spanish

¹³¹ AMAE 477, 211.o. Legación de España en Budapest, Berna, al Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 14 de diciembre de 1944; Consulted at the Embassy of Spain in Budapest.

¹³² Ibid. “La gran desproporción entre el numero de judíos cuya protección por esta Representación había sido autorizada por el Gobierno húngaro y los que en la practica han sido salvados, no ha pasado desapercibida a estas autoridades, las que en repetidas ocasiones me han señalado su intención de evacuar de las casas españolas el excedente de 300 personas. Para evitar esta posibilidad envié una carta al Ministerio de Negocios Extranjeros en la que expuse que la protección de los sefardíes era política tradicional de las autoridades españolas; que dicha protección había sido siempre respetado por los países en los que se había planteado el problema judío. Por ultimo, añadí que el propio Gobierno alemán, en su calidad de potencia ocupante, había, a petición de las autoridades españolas, respetado a los judíos sefardíes, imponiendo como condición el que fueran transportados a Espana.”

Legation in Budapest to draw upon in order to realize its rescue operations with respect to the Hungarian authorities. Sanz Briz makes a silent reference to Spain's actions in Greece in his justification to the Hungarian authorities, which is problematic considering that only Spanish citizens had been protected there and in a begrudging manner. Yet, the emphasis on the broader relationship between Spain and the Sephardim based on the presence of this small number of Jews in Budapest is used as a way to structure the Spanish Legation's relationship to the Hungarian authorities. Being Sephardic then becomes in this case a powerful marker of identity that allows Jews to escape the horrors of the Holocaust as well as for Spain to assist Jews on a larger scale.

Since the Sephardic Jews were not housed in the Spanish safe houses, where did they go? It is possible that this small group of individuals was housed within the premises of the Spanish Legation itself. In a letter to Giorgio Perlasca from Sanz Briz in December 1945, Sanz Briz reminds Perlasca that the decision to place people in the premises of the Legation was his own initiative without the prior permission of Madrid.¹³³ Were these the Sephardic Jews? Perlasca, who posed as the Spanish representative in Budapest after Sanz Briz's departure to Switzerland at the beginning of December 1944, offers a different answer. According to Perlasca, the small group of Sephardic Jews were actually living in their own houses.¹³⁴ At a time when the Jews of Budapest were either housed in the International Ghetto, the Budapest Ghetto or were being viscerally murdered along the banks of the Danube, it seems hard to believe that these individuals would be allowed to live in their own establishments. Nevertheless this is the only bit of information that exists concerning where the Sephardic Jews were placed during the last dark months of the Holocaust in Budapest so Perlasca's words must

¹³³ Letter from San Briz to Giorgio Perlasca, December 4, 1945.

¹³⁴ USHMM 1995.A.0612 "To His Excellency" Giorgio Perlasca Collection.

be taken at face value. While the Sephardic Jews presumably were allowed to live in their own houses, the majority of the Jews under Spanish protection were housed in the so-called Spanish safe houses in the International Ghetto. These houses were deemed as extraterritorial property of Spain and had Spanish flags and other insignia over the entryways. Spain had eight such houses at the following addresses: Pannónia u. 44 and 48; Légrády Károly u. 33, 25, and 44; Szent István Park 35; Phoenix u. 5; and Návay Lajos u. 4.¹³⁵

The Spanish safe houses, according to Sanz Briz, came about due to the assistance of a group of Jews who assisted the Spanish Legation in renting various houses.¹³⁶ The dates of when the houses were established and begin to accommodate Jews are difficult to pin down. Perlasca claims that during the second half of October 1944 Jews under Spanish protection were already living in the Spanish safe houses; Sanz Briz on the other hand, offers no concrete information on when the houses were established.¹³⁷ However it is probable that the majority of the houses came into operation during November 1944, when the International Ghetto was established and the majority of Jews under protection of the foreign representatives in Budapest moved to that location.

Promoting Spain's Assistance in Budapest Abroad: The List as a Source of Authority

While the Spanish Legation in Budapest negotiated with the Hungarian authorities, conjuring up a romanticized image of Spain's relationship to the Sephardim during the last dark months of 1944, the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid in conjunction with the Spanish Ambassador in Washington D.C., were busy selling the story of Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest abroad. During the height of the Spanish rescue operations, on November 10, 1944,

¹³⁵ USHMM 1995.A.0612 "The Spanish Safe Houses" Giorgio Perlasca Collection.

¹³⁶ Isaac R. Molho, "Un hidalgo español al servicio de Dios y la humanidad en Budapest" In *Tesoro de los Judios Sefardies VII*, Jerusalem, 1964.

¹³⁷ USHMM 1995.A.0612 "The Spanish Safe Houses" Giorgio Perlasca Collection.

the Spanish Foreign Ministry instructed its ambassador in Washington D.C., Juan F. Cárdenas, to inform the World Jewish Congress of the protection being meted out by the Spanish Legation in Budapest.¹³⁸ The World Jewish Congress then publicized Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest in the American press, including the New York Times and other publications, highlighting Spain's assistance to the Sephardim and the Jews in general.¹³⁹

In this instance the list and reports sent by Sanz Briz to Madrid as evidence for Spain's rescue operations in Budapest acquire a powerful leverage of authority because it serves the purpose of promoting a certain image and narrative of Spanish rescue to the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C. which is then relayed to prominent members of the World Jewish Congress and on to the American press. The Spanish Foreign Ministry, in relaying the activities of the Spanish Legation in Budapest to the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C., repeatedly offers concrete numbers and data about the scope of Spain's rescue in Budapest. A copy of the final report which included the lists of Jews assisted by the Spanish Legation in Budapest that Sanz Briz sent to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in December 1944 was also sent from the Spanish Foreign Ministry to the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C.¹⁴⁰ On January 3, 1945, Ambassador Cárdenas sent a letter to Dr. Maurice L. Perlsweig, a leader of the World Jewish Congress in New York detailing the information drawn from the lists sent from Sanz Briz. In this letter, Cárdenas writes, "According to a cable just received by my government, the Spanish Legation in Budapest has issued 397 passports and 1898 letters of protection to as many Israelites in need of help. This has prevented their deportation and internment, providing as well

¹³⁸ AMAE 1716, 781 "Telegram sent from the Spanish Foreign Ministry to the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C." 10 de Noviembre de 1944.

¹³⁹ AMAE 1716, 781 "Telegram sent from the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C. to the Spanish Foreign Ministry" 3 de Diciembre de 1944.

¹⁴⁰ AMAE 1716, 781 "Sobre protección a los judíos realizada por la Legacion de Espana en Budapest" Spanish Foreign Ministry to the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C." 23 de diciembre de 1944.

a great improvement in their way of life.”¹⁴¹ In culling the very data from the list, that is the exact numbers of Jews protected as well as the nature of that protection, the list becomes the ultimate authoritative source for evidence of Spain’s rescue in Budapest for the Spanish authorities in Madrid and Washington D.C to use in their communication with Jewish leaders in the United States.

The promotion of Spain’s assistance to Jews in Budapest was a positive win for the Spanish government’s desire and agenda to not only distance itself from Nazi Germany, but to also present Spain as a rescuer of Jews in order to gain favor with the Allied powers as well as the Jewish community of the United States.¹⁴² On December 7, 1945, Ambassador Cárdenas wrote to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, informing Madrid of the “success” that this information had for Spain abroad in the American as well as the Canadian press. Referring to a resolution recently approved by the World Jewish Congress, he writes, “In this resolution, thanks is given to Spain and other countries for their protection of *Sefarditas* and other Jews, and as you, Sir, know, it was published in the press and radio of this country [United States] and Canada, and by the International News Service Agency.”¹⁴³ At a time when Spain was intent on restructuring its foreign policy during the war and presenting itself as a rescuer of Jews to Jewish organizations abroad, the case of Spanish assistance in Budapest centered on the rescue of the Sephardim there is transformed into a powerful political tool to realize this agenda. The list drawn up by Sanz Briz in Budapest then becomes the cornerstone around which this particular agenda is carried out and legitimized.

¹⁴¹ AMAE 1716, 3 “Rescue of European Jewry” Letter sent from Spanish Ambassador in Washington D.C., Juan F. Cárdenas to Dr. Perlsweig, January 3, 1945.

¹⁴² Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 377.

¹⁴³ AMAE 1716, 186 “Jewish thanks for Spain’s efforts” Telegram sent from Spanish Ambassador in Washington D.C., Juan F. Cárdenas to the Spanish Foreign Ministry, January 7, 1945 in Salinas, *España, los sefarditas y el Tercer Reich*, 136.

Memory and Silencing of the List

The initiatives realized by Sanz Briz on the local level in Budapest with respect to assisting Sephardim and other Jews allowed the Spanish Foreign Ministry to pursue its opportunistic agenda. Yet the memory of Spain's assistance to the Sephardim has been silenced in the post-war years. In the memory of Spain's rescue of Jews during the Holocaust, the list of Sephardim in Budapest has been forgotten and has remained in relative obscurity not only in Spanish government publications but also those endorsed by the Spanish Foreign Ministry.¹⁴⁴ In the immediate postwar years, specifically in 1949 when the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C. published *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*, which set out to inform the world of Spain's assistance to Sephardim during the Holocaust, the case of Budapest and Sanz Briz's assistance to the Sephardic Jews there is not mentioned at all. Another striking feature of this publication is the misleading way with respect to how the Sephardim are referenced. The text constantly moves between the terms "Spanish Sephardi" and "Sephardi," creating confusion for the reader of the identity of these two groups. In manipulating the language one reading this document is left with the impression that Spain assisted all Sephardim during the Holocaust because the identity between these two groups is blurred.¹⁴⁵ Why then is the case of Budapest and Spain's assistance to Sephardim overtly omitted?

The case of Spain's assistance to the Sephardim in Greece is also blatantly manipulated in the way in which *Spain and the Sephardi Jews* presents the scenario of Spain's assistance there. The only reference concerning the Greek case is presented as follows: "Spain approached

¹⁴⁴ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*; Spain Oficina de Información de Diplomática, *Spain and the Jews*; David Salinas, *España, los sefarditas y el Tercer Reich, 1939-1945: la labor de diplomáticos españoles contra el genocidio nazi*. Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones E Intercambio Científico, Universidad De Valladolid; Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1997.

¹⁴⁵ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*; Spain Oficina de Información de Diplomática, *Spain and the Jews*.

the German government repeatedly during World War II concerning the Sephardi Jews who had been deported from Salonica to various German concentration camps.”¹⁴⁶ This story is thus manipulated because the fact that the Spanish Foreign Ministry itself was opposed to assisting its own Jewish citizens in Greece during the Holocaust is omitted. This suggests that the reason for this silencing was due to Spain’s desire to negate the instances where her relationship to and view of Jews was characterized by not only indifference and half-hearted assistance, but also opportunistic motives as in the case of Budapest, thereby offering a distorted view to the world of her assistance.

The only instance where the list of Sephardim in Budapest has been discussed is in an interview with Sanz Briz from 1964. Even then, however, the memory and significance appears to also be reframed. Not only does Sanz Briz claim that the number of Sephardim assisted in Budapest was extensively higher—he states that he provided 200 Sephardim with Spanish passports—but also offers a romanticized image of Spain’s relationship to the Sephardim based on these individuals and subsequently attributes all efforts to assist Jews in Budapest on the initiatives of Franco. He states: “The ties that Spain has maintained throughout history with her “Sephardic sons,” served in the tragic moments to which I refer, [. . .] the possibility to “Christianly” save those unjustly persecuted by the folly of some misguided people. And this is all that I can tell, because I merely fulfilled the orders of my government and of General Franco.”¹⁴⁷ The question of what extent the initiatives of Spain’s assistance to Jews in Budapest can be personally attributed to Franco comes to the fore from Sanz Briz’s assertion. This

¹⁴⁶ Embassy of Spain, *Spain and the Sephardi Jews*; Spain Oficina de Información de Diplomática, *Spain and the Jews*.

¹⁴⁷ Isaac R. Molkho, “Un hidalgo español al servicio de Dios y la humanidad en Budapest” (A Spanish Nobleman in the Service of God and Humanity in Budapest) In *Tesoro de los Judios Sefardies VII*, Jerusalem, 1964. “Los lazos que España ha mantenido a través de la historia con sus hijos sefarditas sirvieron en los momentos trágicos a que me refiero para, sin analizar demasiado la procedencia de las personas, salvar cristianamente a los injustamente perseguidos por la locura de algunas gentes extraviadas. Y esto es todo lo que puedo contar, pues me limité a cumplir las órdenes de mi Gobierno y del General Franco.”

however, is a polemical issue that still exists today.¹⁴⁸ The fact that the list of Sephardim in Budapest was silenced and omitted by the Spanish government itself from the narrative of Spain's rescue to Sephardic Jews immediately following the war, coupled with Sanz Briz's later reframing of the memory of that list and the individuals on it as a tribute to Franco in 1964, suggests perhaps a larger political reason behind this. Did Sanz Briz attribute all initiatives on the activities of the Spanish Legation in Budapest to Franco for a specific reason? Could this be connected to Spain's foreign policy or internal affairs at that time? While this issue remains an enigma, which lies beyond the scope of this study, the memory and reframing of Spain's assistance to Sephardim in Budapest shows how this group of individuals, this list of Sephardim, factors into a broader polemical and politicized narrative.

Conclusion

In protecting Jews in Budapest, Ángel Sanz Briz undertook many localized and personalized initiatives with respect to the Hungarian authorities as well as to the Jews being assisted. Sanz Briz not only generously interpreted the directions for rescue coming from the Spanish Foreign Ministry by allowing for a greater number of Jews to be rescued by manipulating the number of passports, letters of protection, etc. issued, he also placed Jews within the premises of the Spanish Legation and procured eight safe houses where Jews were placed under the protection of Spain. While the majority of the Jews assisted in Budapest did not have any connection to Spain, the invented story of being Sephardic was used in order to realize an extensive operation of Jews. Furthermore, the relationship between Spain and the

¹⁴⁸ Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 370. As Rother discusses from his extensive investigation, neither in the Spanish Foreign Ministry archives nor in those of the Francisco Franco National Foundation are there any documents proclaiming a direct intervention of Franco in the case of Spain's assistance in Budapest. On the other hand, Arcadi Espada claims that the initiatives realized by the Spanish Legation in Budapest can be attributed to Franco. See Espada, Arcadi, and Cacho Sergio. Campos. *En Nombre De Franco: Los héroes de la embajada de España en el Budapest Nazi*. Barcelona: Espasa, 2013. (*In the Name of Franco: The Heroes of the Embassy of Spain in Nazi Budapest*).

Sephardim was invoked as a way to justify Spain's assistance to Jews in Budapest. In rescuing Jews in Budapest, the small number of Sephardim proved to be a useful tool to negotiate with the Hungarian authorities because they allowed Sanz Briz and the Spanish Legation to propagate a harmonious image of Spanish-Jewish relations, which in effect allowed for a large number of Jews to be rescued on an invented story and invented identity. In this instance being Sephardic became a sort of powerful marker of identity not only for the Jews being rescued but also for Spain's own image as a rescuer of Jews.

The list compiled by Sanz Briz not only saved those who were placed on it, thus subverting the aims of the Nazi and Hungarian authorities, but also proved to be a powerful source of authority and evidence for the Spanish government to draw upon it its propaganda campaign in the United States. This marked duality of the list, as an agent of rescue and as a source of evidence to initiate a certain opportunistic agenda on behalf of the Spanish government, renders the list as a powerful mechanism to be used in many different ways than beyond those of the Nazi system. It is precisely this ambiguity of the list as an agent of power and control, which renders a different view of their function during the Holocaust. In subverting the Nazi system, that is, rescuing Jews, Spain also used the list as a powerful source to promote an opportunistic agenda with respect to the very Jews she was assisting.

Conclusion

Comparing Francoist Spain's assistance to Jews in Greece and Budapest along the dual framework of the power of bureaucracy, in the form of "the" list, and the Sephardim, is illuminating because it allows for a deeper analysis of Spain's rescue and view of Jews during the Holocaust, and sheds an interesting light on how the tools of modern bureaucracy factored into that assistance. When looking at these two instances where Spanish assistance to Jews was meted out, three distinct issues arise: firstly, the nature of bureaucracy and how that played a role in not only shaping Spain's rescue of Jews, but also her view of Jews and the memory of that assistance. Secondly, the relationship between Spanish representatives abroad in Greece and Budapest to the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid, which was dictated through the modern system of bureaucracy. And lastly, how different markers and construction of identity factored into Spain's rescue of Jews. In this particular instance, how one's connection to Spain, either being of Sephardic origin or having Spanish citizenship, allowed for one to be rescued.

In assisting Jews, Spain subverted the highest expression of modernity. That is, the Nazi system, which utilized the ultimate symbol of bureaucracy, the list, as a powerful tool to dehumanize Jews and assert power and control over their very bodies and identities that culminated in the Final Solution. In saving Jewish lives from the throes of the Holocaust, Spain's actions went against the grain. Yet the way in which the tools of bureaucracy factored into Spain's rescue of Jews rendered Spain a part of the system albeit in a different manner than that of Nazi Germany. The lists of Jews that were drawn up and the correspondence between Madrid and her representatives on the local level, not only allowed Spain to rescue Jews, but also played a larger and powerful role in how the Jews were viewed and how that assistance was meted out, remembered, and manipulated in an opportunistic manner.

In Greece where Spain encountered the issue of repatriating her own Jewish citizens at the demands of the Nazi authorities, the Spanish representatives on the local level, Radigales in Athens and Vidal in Berlin, were more disposed to assist Jews. In stark contrast to those efforts, the Spanish Foreign Ministry viewed the Jews with indifference and hostility, which can be seen in the way in which the Jews are referred to and referenced. This particular case of Spain's rescue sheds an interesting light on how the mechanisms of bureaucracy allowed Jews to be rescued on the one hand, and reduced to second-class citizens, on the other. The lists drawn up by Radigales and the passports and transit visas issued to the Jews allowed their repatriation to Spain to occur. However, the nature of bureaucracy also facilitated indifference to mass murder, hostility, and a certain distance between the Spanish Foreign Ministry and the Jewish individuals in question when it came to meting out that assistance. At times the correspondence emanating from Madrid rendered Spain's own Jewish citizens as second-class citizens, calling into question their connection to Spain. In doing so, the Spanish government was effectively able to reduce its moral obligations to its citizens abroad.

Unlike Greece, however, the list as a powerful form of evidence was used in the context of the Spanish Legation's rescue of Jews in Budapest at the behest of the Spanish government to promote a manipulated image of her role in the Holocaust and the Second World War. The very list drawn up to save Jews in Budapest was used as a part of this campaign and shows a different side to the list as a bureaucratic tool: the dual power of the list to not only distort history and memory, but to also serve as an authoritative historical source of evidence for rescue. With respect to Budapest, the efforts of Sanz Briz were manipulated abroad in the United States by the Spanish government, which effectively used the list of Jews to sell a certain image of Spain's role in the Holocaust. In doing so, a certain leverage of power was exerted by the Spanish authorities in the way in which the Jews rescued in Budapest were used

to promulgate a distorted and politicized narrative. This in and of itself is striking and eerie considering that this leverage of power is very similar to the way in which Nazi Germany was able to carry out its agenda by exerting control over people.

While the Spanish government drew upon the operations realized by the Spanish Legation in Budapest to dictate its post-war narrative of rescue, the actions of Sanz Briz on the local level are what allowed this rescue to come to fruition. Not only did Sanz Briz generously interpret the instructions coming from the Spanish authorities in Madrid, he also procured houses where the Jews under Spain's protection were placed. This instance then sheds light on the nature of Spain's relationship with its representatives abroad, where in Greece and Budapest, Radigales and Sanz Briz came into direct contact with the Jews under persecution and assisted them. The Spanish Foreign Ministry only encountered these individuals through the medium of bureaucracy. This stark difference with respect to Madrid's relationship to the Jews essentially allowed the authorities at the top to proceed as they did because they were distanced from the very lives with which they were dealing with.

While Spain's assistance to Jews in Greece and Budapest showcases how the mechanisms of bureaucracy factored into Spain's view of and rescue to Jews, these two cases also demonstrate how the issue of one's identity factored into that equation. Spain only assisted the Jews in Greece who held Spanish citizenship yet, a mere year later in Budapest, used the pretext of Sephardic Jewish identity as a way to rescue Jews. In constructing different identities as a pretext for rescue, Spain made distinctions between the Jews assisted in Budapest and Greece based on their ties to Spain. This stands in stark contrast to the narrative of rescue promulgated at the end of the war. The case of Budapest juxtaposed to Greece is illuminating because it shows how the invented story of a historic tie to Spain, one's belonging to the Sephardic Jewish community, allowed for one to be rescued and figuratively become a part of

an imagined community. Aside from the 44 Sephardic Jews assisted by Sanz Briz, the presence of Sephardim in Budapest was virtually non-existent during the Holocaust. This particular list of Sephardic Jews continues to be an enigma precisely because the people on this list continue to remain shrouded in obscurity. It is still unclear as to what connection they had with the Spanish authorities in Budapest or how they managed to be placed on the list. The records of the various Jewish communities in Budapest do not specify one's Sephardic origin so it remains virtually impossible to track these individuals down whose existence in Budapest during the Holocaust played a large role on the part of Spain's press campaign in the United States. Perhaps these individuals weren't Sephardic at all. Nevertheless, their being placed on a list of rescue by the Spanish Legation proved to have a powerful effect as the list was evidence of Spain's rescue of Jews in Budapest that was subsequently publicized abroad and then later silenced by the Spanish government. This marked duality of the list, the power to tell a story and at the same to manipulate and silence history, renders the list as the ultimate symbol of bureaucracy which can be used in different ways and contexts outside of that of the Nazi system to exert authority and power.

This study's focus on how the power of lists and other tools of bureaucracy played a role in Spain's assistance to Jews in Greece and Budapest during the Holocaust brings to mind larger questions and issues which are beyond the scope of this study yet present themselves as topics for further exploration. One such issue would be to focus on the history of modern bureaucracy within Jewish history, exploring instances prior to the Holocaust of how bureaucracy functioned in the state's relationship to its Jewish citizens.

Another larger topic that stems from this study within the context of Jewish and Spanish history is the question of the role of Jews and the Jewish past within that of contemporary Europe, where Jews formerly lived and are a part of the country's past. The recent passage of

legislation in Spain that grants descendants of Jews forced into exile more than five hundred years ago from Spain the right to obtain Spanish citizenship raises provocative questions of identity, indemnification of historical loss, and Spain's own view and memory of its Jewish past. Perhaps a comparison to another country such as Poland, which like Spain is a Catholic nation that also historically had a large and prominent Jewish community, and today due to historic catastrophic circumstances, is now a former thriving center of Jewish life with a relatively minor Jewish community, would allow for an interesting and comparative view of how Jews and the Jewish past play a role in the image of both countries' histories.

Appendix: The List of Sephardic Jews

Relacion de las personas protegidas en posesion de pasaportes españoles,

No.de orden	N o m b r e	profesion	lugar de nacimiento	y fecha	No.del pasaporte
1.	Aronch Alberto	comerciante	Budapest	1914	55
2.	" Albertoné	-	"	1919	55
3.	" Isaac	comerciante	Constantinopel	1886	54
4.	" Isaacné	-	"	1891	54
5.	" Magda	-	Budapest	1924	55
6.	Bañal Jorge	chauffeur	"	1910	13
7.	Baruch Isaac	comerciante	Istambul	1885	66
8.	" Isaacné	-	Bratislava	1897	66
9.	" Eugénia	-	Budapest	1920	66
10.	" Péter	-	"	1924	66
11.	Behár Dant	comerciante	Constantinopel	1890	63
12.	" Dantné	-	Nagyvárad	1912	63
13.	" Lajos	comerciante	Constantinopel	1912	61
14.	" Lajosné	-	"	1908	61
15.	Catalan Santiago	comerciante	"	"	61
16.	" Santiagoné	-	Budapest	"	66
17.	Egri Iaréné	costurera	"	1900	"
18.	" Gladys	estudiante	"	1927	"
19.	Farkas y Astorga Zoltán	funcionario	Cinkota	1900	14
20.	Farkas Maria Teresa	-	"	1914	14
21.	Farkas Huan y Pitner	-	Budapest	1942	14
22.	Gabriel Julio	medico	Eger	1895	45
23.	Guerrero Alberto	comerciante	Constantinopel	1885	51
24.	" Albertoné	-	"	1893	51
25.	" Elena	-	Budapest	1912	51
26.	Lévy Abraham	comerciante	Zenica	1892	52
27.	" Abrahamné	-	Füzessgyarmat	1884	52
28.	Mavorach Azriel Nicolas	comerciante	Belgrad	1892	63
29.	" " "né	-	Tapióbske	1920	64
30.	" " Valéria	-	Budapest	1920	64
31.	Papo Nissim	comerciante	Constantinopel	1894	50
32.	" Nissimné	-	Budapest	1905	50
33.	" Alfredo	-	"	1927	50
34.	" Georg Tamás	-	"	1933	50
35.	Fape Antonio	comerciante	Roma	1912	48
36.	" Maria Lujza Barolini	-	Naples	1921	48
37.	" Fabricio	-	Roma	1940	48
38.	Parlasca Jorge	empleado	Como	1910	48
39.	Savy Dant	comerciante	Constantinopel	1891	62
40.	Somorjai Magdaléna	-	Aldódabas	1914	45
41.	Spitzer Antonio	funcionario	Budapest	1888	49
42.	Zala Kálmán	pensionista	"	1864	"
43.	" Kálmánne	-	"	1874	"
44.	" Terésia	-	"	1897	"
45.	Bela Enrique	funcionario	"	1894	"

44 "Sephardic" Jews listed.

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