



THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY

Michael Matsas



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The Story of the Greek Jews
During the Second World War

New Edition
Revised and Expanded



The Holocaust Memorial in the Jewish Cemetery of Athens



IOANNINA, GREECE

The town Michael and his family lived



Michael Matsas and his
family pictured 1945



LEON MATSAS 1920

Michael Matsas father while serving in the Greek army



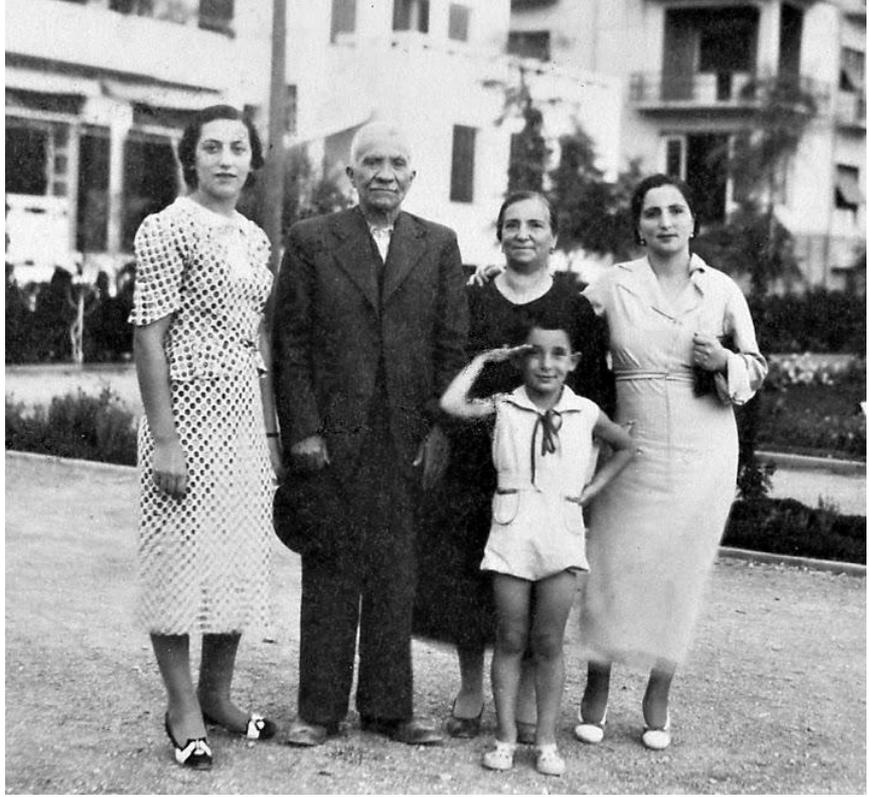


My grandparents Naoum and Sarina Matsas (seated) with their children in Ioannina, 1920. [Standing from left to right: Eliasaf, Leon (author's father), Raphael, Rosina, Yeshua, Elias and Michael. Seated in front: Rebecca.] This photo was found in the street after their house was looted during WW2. Elias died before the war from illness. Michael survived Auschwitz. Rebecca was living in Egypt during the war and then moved to Paris in the 1950's. Leon survived in the free mountains. All the others were murdered by the Germans.





GRACIA
KOHEN



With Grandparents in
Albania

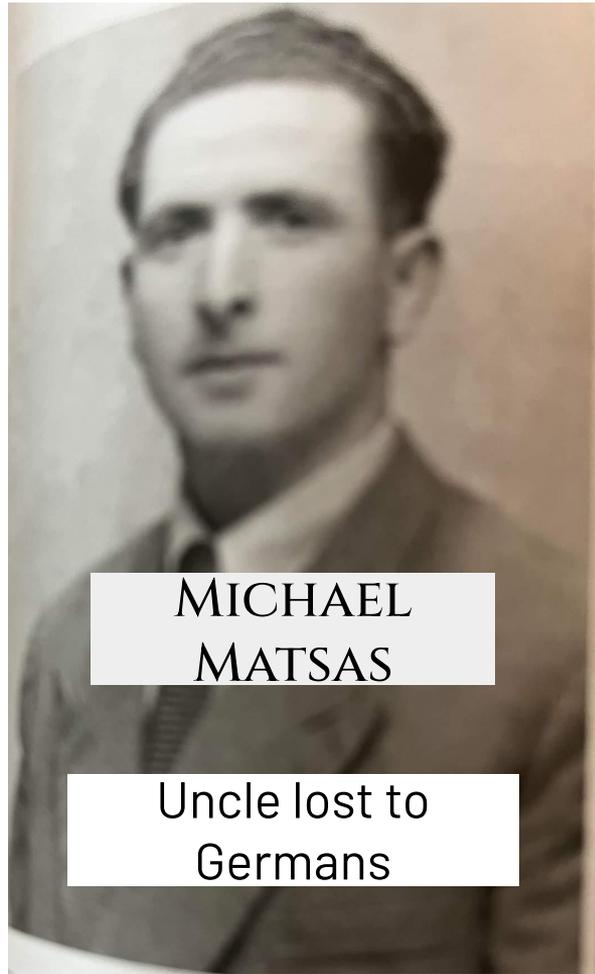
German archival photos of the arrest
and deportation of the Jewish
community in Ioannina, Greece.
March 1944





"I recognize the following family members: My cousin Sam Meyer (1), my uncle Dr. Nissim Samuel (2), great-uncle Eliasaf Matsas (3), and Michael Matsas (4).

—MICHAEL MATSAS



MICHAEL
MATSAS

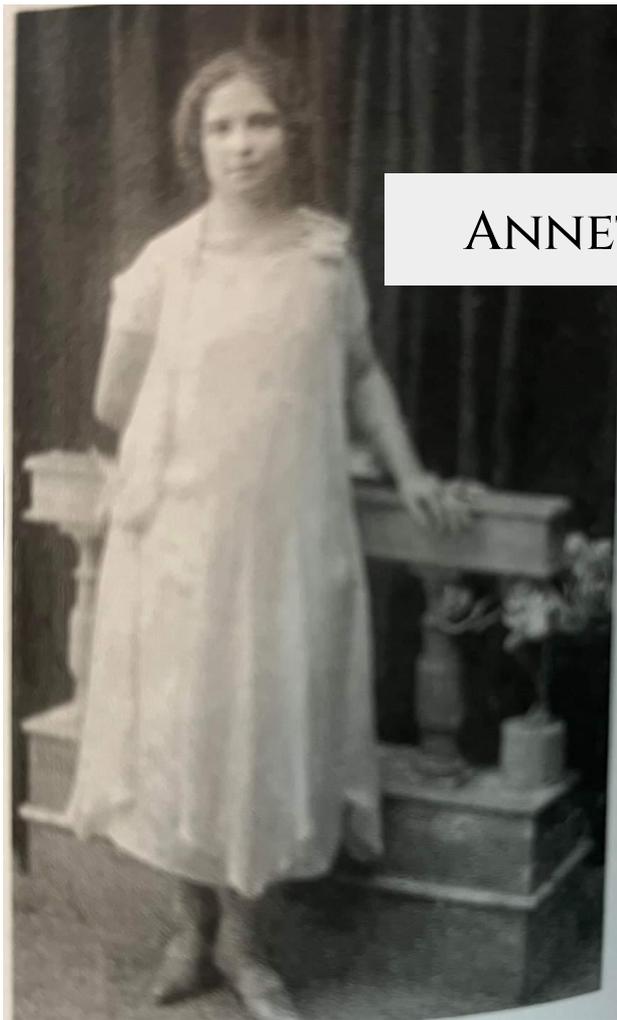
Uncle lost to
Germans



EFTYHIA

DR. NISSIM
SAMUEL

Aunt and Uncle
both killed by
Germans



ANNETTA

Aunt of
Michael



EMILIA

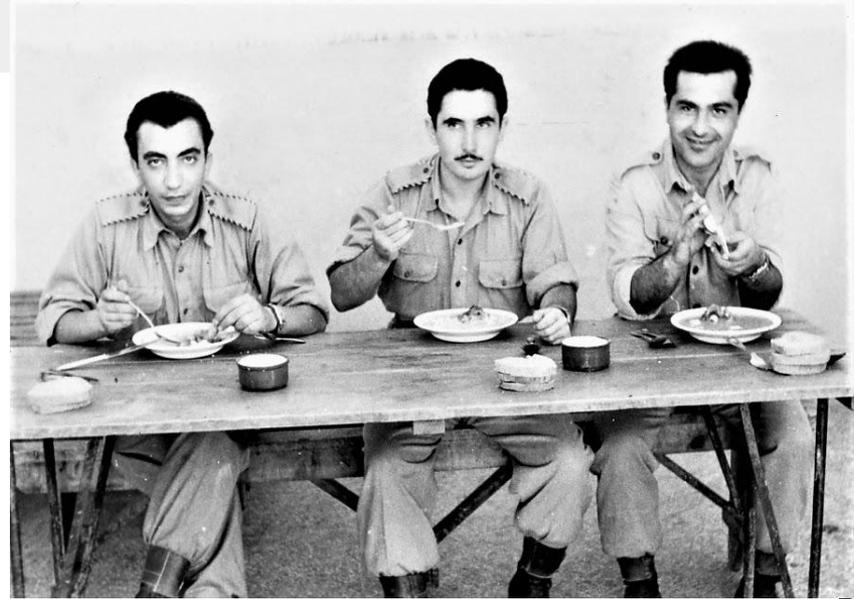
Beloved
Aunt and
Uncle

ELIASAF



My family while I was
serving in the Military
Academy of Athens
1956

In Chios during
infantry officers
training





Graduation as a
Dentist from
University of Athens

On board the "Saturria".
Arrival in NYC with Greek
Immigrants. I am first on the
Right 1956.



TRAVELS BACK TO GREECE



DR. PAPATHEODOROU AND HIS
WIFE WITH MICHAEL'S FAMILY
1976

MICHAEL AND DAUGHTERS IN 1976

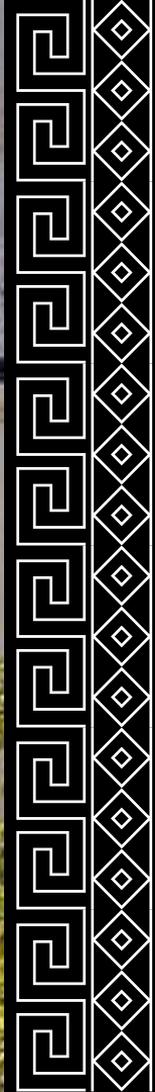


TRAVELS BACK TO GREECE

MICHAEL'S SISTER NINETTA IN
FRONT OF THE PSILOVRAHOS
HOME DURING HER 1991 VISIT



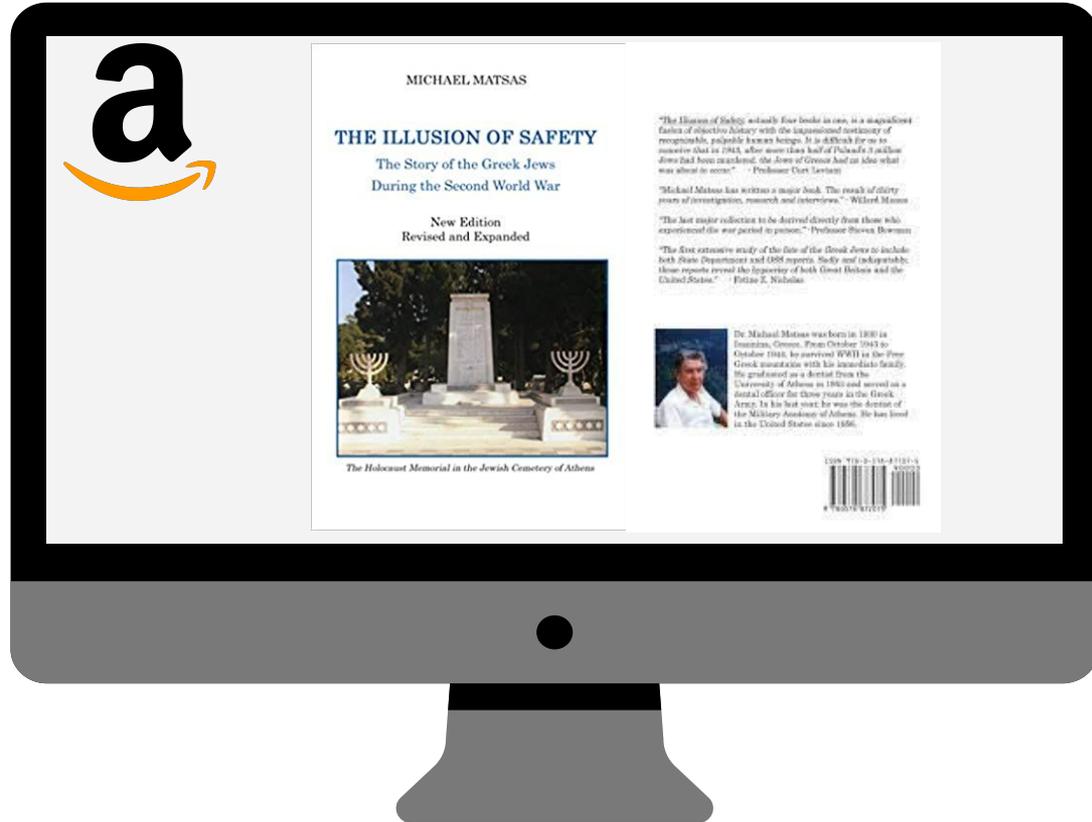
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL IN CORFU, GREECE



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"The Illusion of Safety actually has two books in one, in a sophisticated fashion of objective history with the impassioned testimony of recognizable, palpable human beings. It is difficult for me to conceive that in 1943, after more than half of Palestine's million Jews had been murdered, the Jews of Greece had an idea what was about to occur." — Professor Chai Levin

"Michael Matsas has written a major book. The result of thirty years of investigation, research and interviews." — Wilford Bruehan

"The last major collection to be derived directly from those who experienced the war period in person." — Professor Steven Bowman

"The first extensive study of the fate of the Greek Jews to include both State Department and OSS reports. Study and (independently) those reports reveal the ignorance of both Great Britain and the United States." — Fritzie E. Nishitani



Dr. Michael Matsas was born in 1913 in Louisa, Greece. From October 1943 to October 1946, he survived WWII as the Free Greek guerrilla with his immediate family. He graduated as a dentist from the University of Athens in 1950 and served as a dental officer for three years in the Greek Army. In his last years, he was the dentist of the Military Academy of Athens. He has lived in the United States since 1956.



CITATIONS

Matsas, M. (2021). *The Illusion of Safety : The Story of the Greek Jews During the Second World War*. Potomac, Maryland: Vraheri Books.