



Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum

September 2023 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

This year, the High Holiday of Rosh HaShanah ushers in the New Year of 5784, as Jewish families around the world gather for family dinners and wish each other "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year." The foods and languages may differ, but the thoughts and prayers are the same. The Shofar is blown; its plaintive cry serves as a call to repentance.

One of the more beautiful traditions in our Greek-Jewish community is the remembering of our dearly departed on Yom Kippur. On Erev Yom Kippur, we follow the centuries-old Romaniote custom of our people by reciting Hashkavoth (Memorial Prayers) and the individual names of our dearly departed during the Kal Nidre Yom Kippur Eve service. If you wish to honor your family members or friends in this very special way, please email their names as soon as possible to museum@kkjism.org. It is customary to include a voluntary donation of your choosing. The names and donations may be submitted via PayPal on our website www.kkjism.org or mailed to 418 Duncan Elder Drive, Greenlawn, NY 11740 or 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002.

Help us continue our cherished traditions and join us for High Holiday services.
View our full holiday schedule [here](#), and please RSVP to Amarcus@kkjism.org

תזכו לשנים רבות
Tizku Leshanim Rabot
Χρόνια Πολλά
Anyos Munchos i Buenos
May You Merit Many Happy and Healthy Years



This newsletter, our 174th will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website www.kkjsm.org.

We now reach thousands of households worldwide. What an accomplishment for a little synagogue on the Lower East Side of New York City. Our community of 'friends' continually grow with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at museum@kkjsm.org

We are open for Shabbat every Saturday morning starting at 9:30am. Please email amarcus@kkjsm.org if you would like to attend, and enjoy a traditional Greek kiddush lunch after services. Our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm. The Museum will be closed on the following Sundays in observance of the upcoming holidays: September 17-Rosh Hashanah, September 23- Erev Yom Kippur, October 1- Sukkoth, October 8-Simchat Torah. Our complete holiday schedule is included below in this newsletter. If you wish to sponsor a newsletter, contact us at museum@kkjsm.org.

Simchas

We celebrate the birth of Reece Visgauss born April 3, 2022. Reece is the son of Julia and Mik Visgauss, nephew of Jason Smart, brother of Coley Visgauss, grandson of Joan Colchamiro Langhamer and grandson of Oscar and Muriel Colchamiro. Another great-great-grandchild of Rachel and Jessula Mattathias Colchamiro!



We are dancing with joy on hearing of the engagement of Rachel Serwetz to Matt Esmaelzada. Rachel is the daughter of Laurie and Mark Serwetz, the granddaughter of Rose Eskononts and Murray Eskononts (of Blessed Memory), the great granddaughter of Mordechai Eskononts and Esther Cohen (both of Blessed Memory) and the great granddaughter of Dora Marash and Solomon Capon (both of Blessed Memory).

We celebrate the wedding of Josh Krinsky and Ariana Bader. Josh's father Clifford descends from the Askinazi family from Ioannina. The Krinsky and Bader family celebrated the upcoming wedding at a special Shabbat at Kehila Kedosha Janina on August 26, when it rained candy on the groom. Mazal Tov!



Passings

We mourn the passing of Philip L. Sherman, who circumcised thousands of babies. He passed on August 9th at the age of 67. A mohel who became a boldface name, he said his record in 45 years of performing the Jewish religious rite was 11 in a single day (including two pairs of twins).



Armed with only a scalpel, a clamp and a metal probe, Philip L. Sherman would routinely carry out his surgical mission in about 15 seconds, leave in as little as 10 minutes and hotfoot it to his car, which was probably parked illegally but perhaps spared a ticket by the inspired placard on his windshield: "Mazel Tov! Bris in progress. Please don't ticket."

Mr. Sherman, whose website (as well as his vanity license plate) was email.com, claimed to have performed some 26,000 ritual circumcisions, mostly in the New York metropolitan area, during his 45-year career. He was trained in the Jewish religious practice of brit milah — a profession generally spelled "mohel" in English and pronounced "moil."

His record, he said, was 11 in a single day, including two pairs of twins — a considerable scheduling feat, considering that the ritual is to be performed on the eighth day of the baby's life and during daylight. Mr. Sherman also performed circumcisions on Muslim and Christian infant boys, as well as the son of a man he had circumcised as an infant and the grandsons of two Israeli prime ministers. And he did so in all kinds of places, including Hong Kong, the Cayman Islands and a Manhattan bar on Third Avenue (for a family who lived upstairs). His services did not come cheap. "You pay \$800 for a steady hand and a good reputation," Scott Stringer, the former New York City comptroller, told *The Times* after his son, who was born in December 2011, was circumcised by Mr. Sherman. "It's not the kind of thing where you're looking to save money." But Mr. Sherman said he did not turn away families who could not afford his fee.

Philip Lloyd Sherman was born on April 26, 1956, in Syracuse, N.Y. His mother, Malvina (Jacobs) Sherman, was an English teacher. His father, Paul Sherman, was a factory worker. He was inspired to study brit milah by his maternal grandfather, Isadore Jacobs, who was a mohel and also a rabbi, a cantor, a dayan (a religious judge) and a shochet (a ritual slaughterer). After studying with Rabbi Yosef Hakohen Halperin, a renowned mohel, in Jerusalem, Mr. Sherman graduated in 1979 with degrees in music and Bible studies from a joint program run by Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

He served as a cantor at several synagogues in New York, including the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue in Manhattan from 1985 to 2019. He also occasionally worked as an actor. Mr. Sherman played a judge on the Netflix series "Orange Is the New Black" and appeared in an episode of the Amazon Prime show "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel." And he was cast in the 2011 Paul Rudd movie "Our Idiot Brother." "I played a mohel, but the scene was cut," he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "How ironic." He described himself as the only motorcycle-riding mohel in the Screen Actors Guild.

In the actual religious ceremonies over which Mr. Sherman presided, he not only starred; he also fed the supporting players their lines. "Let me tell you my secret," he routinely confided to new fathers, according to an interview with *The New Yorker* in 1999. "After it's over, be sure to thank your wife for doing a great job and giving you such a perfect son."

In addition to his daughter, Mr. Sherman is survived by two sons, Reuven and Elan, from his marriage to Naomi Freistat, which ended in divorce; his brothers, Steven and Martin; and six grandchildren. His marriage in 1994 to Andrea Raab ended in divorce in 2022.

Mr. Sherman performed the brises for his sons and his grandsons, pointing out that in addition to following the biblical injunction to Abraham (rather than deferring to a doctor and turning a religious ceremony into a strictly medical procedure), he had undergone a full year of training. Yes, he acknowledged, of course the baby feels pain during it. But, he added, "when it's done properly, only for a moment."

And, yes, he said, it was also true that sometimes even just by imagining the removal of the baby's foreskin, one of the parents or a guest might pass out. But, he suggested cheerfully, "usually at a bris, there's no shortage of doctors or lawyers."

When the actress and comedian Whoopi Goldberg told him that she hated attending a bris, Mr. Sherman offered her a suggestion. "The next time you go to one," he advised, "do what I do: Close your eyes." Just kidding, he added.

We mourn the passing of three "Women of Valor" from our community: Lynne Mazza, Lenore Lowe and Joyce Moser.

Lynne Mazza, age 74, of New York, New York passed away on Thursday, July 13, 2023.

Lynne's family and close friends are heartbroken to announce her passing on July 13, 2023, of complications of liver cancer. An independent music professional and writer on the arts, Lynne was Associate Artistic Director Emeritus of Music from Angel Fire, New Mexico. Previously, she served as Associate Artistic Director and Program Annotator for Ocean Reef Chamber Music Festival, Florida, Associate Artistic Director and Program Annotator at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival; and Programming Associate at Great Performers and Mostly Mozart at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.



Born to the late Ralph and Dora Mazza in Bronx, NY, she received a Bachelor of Arts in Music/Journalism at Hunter College, City University of New York; a Master's Degree in Musicology at the Graduate Center, City University of New York; and embarked upon doctoral studies in Musicology at Columbia University, NY, as well as earning a Diploma in Conducting at the G.B. Martini Conservatorio di Musica, in Bologna, Italy.

Lynne was the sister of the late Dr. Norman Mazza (Joan) and the late Michael Ralph Mazza. She is survived by brother Matthew Mazza; niece Rebecca Mazza Stafford (Scott); niece Melanie Mazza Bretts (Phil); great-nieces Ava, Zoe, Greta, Maya, and Sadie; and a legion of adoring friends worldwide of every conceivable age, gender, orientation, profession, and ethnicity, including the staff at the Chelsea Square Diner, across the street from her home, where she held court for decades. She had an uncanny knack for connection.

Joyce Lafazan Moser was born on January 21, 1931 in Detroit, MI and passed away on June 27, 2023 in Laguna Hills, CA.

Joyce was the daughter of Anna Lafazan (maiden name Coffina) and Nissim Lafazan. Joyce lost her husband, Henry Moser, in January 2021. Joyce is survived by her son, Ronald Moser, daughter Ruth Richardson, granddaughters Rachel Ayres (Moser) and Emily Davis (Moser) and grandson Nathan Richardson with one great grandchild on the way.



Joyce worked hard her whole life, led her family through good and tough times. She was very committed to her family, her heritage and her synagogue and will be very much missed by all who knew her.

We mourn the passing of Lenora Lowe, at the age of 97. Lenora was born in New York on May 7, 1926 and passed on July 3, 2023. She was a longtime resident of Pacific Palisades and leaves behind two daughters, Laurie Lowe McNulty and her husband Paul McNulty; Shelly Lowe and her wife Kathy Badertscher; two grandchildren Ryan McNulty and his wife Gina and Rebecca Contreras and her husband Moises; three great-grandchildren, Rocco and Bowen McNulty and Olivia Contreras.



Lenora was born in New York, the daughter of a Greek immigrant father and a Ukrainian immigrant mother. She moved to California with her parents and brother Eddie after World War 2 and had been a Los Angeles resident ever since. She married Harold Lowe in 1952. They were married for 52 years before he passed away in 2004.

Lenora was the daughter of Max Bakola and Sarah Shapiro, the granddaughter of Dinoula Colchamiro Bakola and Ezra Bakola. Dinoula passed before World War II but, unfortunately, Ezra and most of his family perished in the Holocaust. Max came to the United States and lived with members of the Colchamiro family, thus becoming one of the few survivors from the Bakola branch of the family.



Ezra and Dinoula Bakola

Lenora was a force to be reckoned with - fiercely intelligent, proud, and an active Democrat, a lover of design and visual art, and stubborn beyond measure. She also possessed beauty and style, which she radiated wherever she went. And she was strong: Olympic-athlete-caliber-strong in determination and sheer will to the very end of her 97 years. She will be missed and remembered always.



The family of Leon Colchamiro.
The man standing on the far right is Max Bakola

Visitors to Kehila Kedosha Janina ΔΙΚΟΙ ΜΑΣ / Los Muestros / Our Own

In the heat of a New York August, visitors continued to come to Kehila Kedosha Janina. Ima Lippman came from Brooklyn. Stephen Sinclair, a French Jew now living in New York, was a former Curator from the Louvre and is now writing a book on architecture, secular and sacred in New York.



Ima Lippman



Stephen Sinclair

Upcoming Events

Join us for the High Holidays at Kehila Kedosha Janina

Please RSVP to Amarcus@kkjism.org

2023

5784

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM
WISHES YOU A

HAPPY, HEALTHY, AND SWEET
NEW YEAR

תזכו לשנים רבות

Χρόνια Πολλά

ANYOS MUNCHOS I BUENOS

YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR SERVICES
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA - 280 BROOME ST NYC
OUR SEATS ARE FREE AND OUR HEARTS ARE OPEN

ROSH HASHANAH - SEPTEMBER 16, 17

YOM KIPPUR - SEPTEMBER 24, 25

PLEASE RSVP TO AMARCUS@KKJISM.ORG

VIEW OUR FULL SCHEDULE AT WWW.KKJISM.ORG

Kehila Kedosha Janina

**280 BROOME STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10002**

*The Officers and Congregation of Kehila Kedosha Janina cordially invite you to
Join us for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur Services*

*Kehila Kedosha Janina, at the same location on the Lower East Side for the past 96 years,
is the last remaining Romaniote synagogue in the Western Hemisphere conducting services in
the Judeo-Greek Romaniote Minhag (tradition)*

SUNDAY, SEPT. 10	SELICHOT SERVICES	7:45 A.M.
FRIDAY, SEPT. 15	EREV ROSH HASHANA	6:15 P.M.
SATURDAY, SEPT. 16	ROSH HASHANA (1ST DAY) ROSH HASHANA (MINCHA)	9:00 A.M. 6:45 P.M.
SUNDAY, SEPT. 17	ROSH HASHANA (2ND DAY)	9:00 A.M.
SATURDAY, SEPT. 23	SHABBAT TESHUVA	9:30 A.M.
SUNDAY, SEPT. 24	EREV YOM KIPPUR (KAL NIDRE)	6:15 P.M.
MONDAY, SEPT. 25	YOM KIPPUR MINCHA NE'ILA SERVICE	8:00 A.M. 4:15 P.M. 6:15 P.M.
SATURDAY, SEPT. 30	SUCCOTH (1ST DAY)	9:30 A.M.
SUNDAY, OCT. 1	SUCCOTH (2ND DAY)	9:30 A.M.
FRIDAY, OCT. 6	HOSHANA RABBA	7:30 A.M.
SATURDAY, OCT. 7	SHEMINI ATZERET (YISKOR)	9:30 A.M.
SATURDAY, OCT. 7	EREV SIMCHAT TORAH	6:30 P.M.
SUNDAY, OCT. 8	SIMCHAT TORAH	9:30 A.M.
SATURDAY, OCT. 14	SHABBAT BERESHITH	9:30 A.M.

*Prayer books and shawls are available at the synagogue
For additional information, please contact:
Marvin Marcus, President at info@kkjism.org*

Please RSVP for services to Amarcus@kkjism.org

*We Look Forward to Having You Join Us for the High Holy Days
Tizku LeShanim Rabot - Xronia Polla - Anyos Munchos i Buenos
L'Shana Tovah
Marvin Marcus, President*

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA

**HASHKAVOTH
MEMORIAL PRAYERS**

On Yom Kippur it is traditional to recite memorial prayers for the dearly departed. In many synagogues this ritual is observed by conducting a Yizkor service. At Kehila Kedosha Janina we follow the centuries-old Romaniote custom of our people by reciting Hashkavoth (memorial prayers) and the individual names of our dearly departed during the Kal Nidre Yom Kippur Eve service. If you wish to honor the memory of your family members or friends in this very special way, please email their names as soon as possible to Museum@kkjism.org. It is customary to include a voluntary donation of your choosing. The names and donation may also be submitted via PayPal on our website www.kkjism.org.

WISHING YOU GOOD HEALTH AND HAPPINESS
AS WE APPROACH THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

תזכו לישנים רבות

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NEW YORK, NY 10002
MUSEUM@KKJSM.ORG

**Sounds of Cyprus - Concert at Kehila Kedosha Janina
October 15, 2023 at 5pm**

Tickets \$20 in advance [online here](#) or \$25 at the door

SUNDAY OCT 15 AT 5PM

**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME ST NYC**



SOUNDS OF CYPRUS

**A PRESENTATION OF
TRADITIONAL CYPRIOT MUSIC**

ELENA CHRIS: CREATIVE DIRECTION - VOICE
PETER DOUSKALIS: MUSIC DIRECTION - LAOUTO/LOUD/GUITAR
ALEX TASOPOULOS: VIOLA
ERIKOS VLESMAS: BASS
STAVROS PAPADOPOULOS: PITHKIAVLI/NEY
MARK KATSAOUNIS: PERCUSSION

TICKETS \$20 IN ADVANCE, \$25 AT THE DOOR

[SOUNDSOFCYPRUS.COM/TICKETS](https://soundsofcyprus.com/tickets)



UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE CONSULATE GENERAL
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS



**Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network
Rosh Hashanah Seder & Dinner**



Greek Jewish & Sephardic
Young Professionals Network

Κοινότητα קהילה Komunita

Young Professionals

ROSH 'ASHANA SEDER & DINNER

**Saturday September 16
Holiday Services at 6:45pm
Seder & Dinner at 8:00pm
\$40 per person**

**Kehila Kedosha Janina
280 Broome Street New York, NY 10002**



Join us for a special Seder and Dinner on September 16 - the second night of Rosh Ashana! Celebrate the new year with a traditional array of symbolic foods, enjoy a delicious Sephardic dinner, meet other young community members, and learn more about our Sephardic and Romaniote customs.

Open to Jewish Young Adults in their 20s and 30s

**SPACE IS LIMITED. MUST RSVP TO
GREEKJEWISHYPN@GMAIL.COM AND PAY BY SEPT 10**

Generously supported by Michael Mintz

Upcoming Events in the New York Area

Community-wide Selihot Services

A SEPHARDIC GUIDE TO THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

4th Annual Community Wide Selihot

**SATURDAY NIGHT
SEPTEMBER 9 AT 12:30 AM**

**Sephardic Congregation of Fort Lee
313 Tom Hunter Road, Fort Lee**



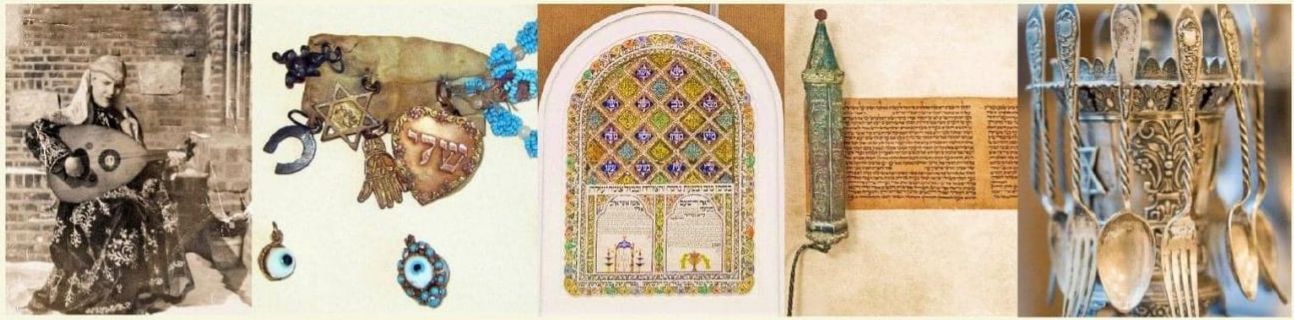
**Sephardic Congregation of Fort Lee
Benaroya Sephardic Center, Englewood
CBY Moroccan Minyan
Congregation Shaarei Orah, Teaneck
Congregation Zichron David of West Orange
Kahal Kadosh Baba Sale New Rochelle
Kehila Kedosha Janina
Sephardic Community of Fair Lawn
Sephardic Congregation of Paramus
Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America
West Side Sephardic Synagogue, NY**

* 12:00 am Meet & Greet with refreshments followed by Havdallah & Selihot



**The Sephardic Congregation of Fort Lee
313 Tom Hunter Avenue, Fort Lee, NJ 07024
betyosef18@gmail.com www.scflee.com**





The Sephardic Temple at Cedarhurst
and the Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation
invite you to an exhibit:

“Jewish Life on Rhodes”

Over a hundred original and treasured artifacts
presented by Aron Hasson, Founder of the Jewish Museum of Rhodes

Sunday, October 15, 2023 at 10 AM to 1 PM

The Sephardic Temple
775 Branch Blvd Cedarhurst, New York 11516

\$50/person with lunch
prepared by Genadeen Glatt Kosher Caterers

RSVP by October 9th

Contact: 516-295-4644; Email: admin@thesephardictemple.org



Sephardic Community Gala – December 17, 2023

Learn more at <https://www.sephardicbrotherhood.com/gala>

SAVE THE DATE
MORE INFORMATION TO
COME SOON

National Sephardic Community Gala

SUNDAY DECEMBER 17, 2023
6:00 P.M.

**MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE - A LIVING
MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST
NEW YORK CITY**

DESHAME ENTRAR, I ME AZERE LUGAR
LET ME ENTER, AND I SHALL MAKE A PLACE FOR MYSELF

News from Jewish Greece

Thessaloniki

Agora Modiano, a Next Generation Food Market in Thessaloniki Full article [here](#)

Agora Modiano, the largest food market in Thessaloniki, is a must-see destination shaping the new gastronomic face of the city. A history rich with drama and modern innovation are interwoven in the facility itself, introducing visitors to a novel concept of food hospitality.

Thessaloniki is known as a gastronomic center of attraction for true foodies. Vibrant, cosmopolitan, and welcoming, this city has assimilated the diverse cultures of various peoples, infusing it with their traditions.

The history of this market began a few years before its construction and is closely connected with one of the most dramatic events in the history of Thessaloniki, namely the great fire of 1917. The fire practically burned down the city center, including the Jewish Quarter. The flames destroyed the ancient synagogue of Talmud Torah, which was built in the 16th century. It was at this location where a new trading center for the city would be re-established from ashes.

Following a destructive fire, a blueprint was formulated for the reconstruction of Thessaloniki. The French architect Ernest Hébrard devised a scheme that envisioned the establishment of a bustling marketplace in this area. The project was undertaken by the engineer and architect Eli Modiano.

Eli Modiano was a member of one of the most prominent Jewish families in the city. The construction of a new market, which would later become the center of trade in Thessaloniki, began in 1922 and was completed only a few years later.

Modiano's time studying in Paris largely impacted his work on the Thessaloniki project. The interior of the new market with a roof made partially of glass was reminiscent of Parisian ones. The new trade center opened its doors to locals and visitors in 1930.

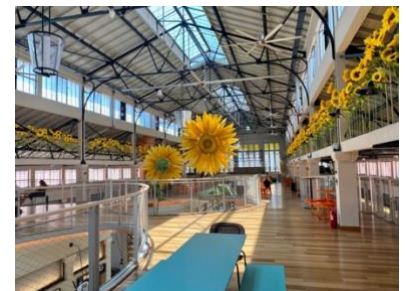


The building itself organically complemented the ambitious plan for the reconstruction of the city, becoming part of the public center around the new Aristotle Square. Over the decades, Agora Modiano has developed a reputation as the city's main market. More than one generation of residents bought goods here, and the building itself was included in the list of architectural monuments back in 1983. A little over a decade later, in 1995, Modiano was classified as a historical monument and an example of a covered market building.

After serving the city for almost a century, the market closed to undergo a complete renovation. It reopened in 2022. Thessaloniki has been crowned as a unique gastronomic place. It has been completely modernized but also maintains its original features.

A Modern Page of the Modiano Market

The basilica-shaped building can be accessed from two streets through the main entrances. Inside, there is a main pathway along with two others and there are about seventy-five shops with various local products. The interior is quite spacious with lots of light, and there are obvious historical elements, including the original mosaic on the floor.



Shops offer seafood, local ice cream with olive oil, nuts, spices, and cheeses. The shop owners and sellers are eager to share the history of various Greek products and offer their guests the opportunity to sample them. They also cook fresh pasta and bake bread, the inviting aroma of which attracts passers-by off the street.

Visitors can also sample dishes and food items from a variety of international cuisines. Italian, German, Greek, and Asian dishes along with an abundance of vegan options reflect the openness to experimentation found here. On the second floor, there is a recreation and dining area, which is decorated with modern art installations.

Furthermore, the market embodies the concept of responsible consumption. Bioclimatic architecture can be found here. The area's climatic attributes and natural characteristics are utilized to design comfortable, environmentally-friendly structures. In addition to this, the market of Modiano adheres to a zero-waste operation policy in an attempt to deal with overconsumption.

Lisa Pinhas: A Story of a Woman Survivor from Thessaloniki Full article [here](#)

Her Stories: Telling Jewish Women's Stories

She was 27, married, and running a fur shop in the Greek city of Thessaloniki when she was deported to Auschwitz in April 1943. Lisa Pinhas (1916-1980) lost over 100 relatives in the Shoah. Her pledge to save her younger sister, Marie, and to be a witness if she managed to escape from hell gave Lisa the power to survive. Auschwitz, Birkenau, death marches, Ravensbrück, Rechlin, Malchow, liberation in 1945, and then only to return to a city that had shed no tears for her and her co-religionists who had perished in the camps. In the postwar period, Lisa carried her trauma, anger, guilt and despair with dignity and wisdom as she took up leadership roles in the areas of Holocaust compensation, remembrance, and education. To learn is to remember was one of Lisa's credos. For 30 years, she wrote and re-wrote her memoir, an unadorned testimony of hell and the ways in which humanity was almost extinguished in the universe of the camps. Lisa's terrifying story – the slow extermination of detainees through hard labor, medical experiments, acts of sadism, sexual abuse, illness and starvation famine, while corpses of gassed victims were burned in the crematoria – is told conscientiously and courageously.



Lisa's Pinhas parents: Yeshuah Joseph and Mazaltov Mano. © JMG Collection

This account has a rare quality of moral honesty. Lisa tells the story of herself and millions of others, who fought to preserve their humanity while making painful compromises to keep themselves alive for one more day. Her appointment to the Kanada Kommando, a warehouse where the belongings of gassed Jews were sorted for shipment to Germany, was a mixed blessing. At the risk of death, Lisa stole and traded precious items for food and medication. In the 1980s, Lisa's niece, Nana-Mazaltov Moissi, deposited the unpublished manuscript in the museum's archive and her testimony is being published in three languages. In an era of increased antisemitism and racism, Lisa Pinhas' gripping account of the camps, as well as her postwar story, are indispensable and timely contributions to our understanding of the victimization, survival and postwar normality experienced by Jewish men and women. As the few remaining eyewitnesses pass away and the deeply troubling hatred against the Jews persists, a call Lisa made in 1970 – "REMEMBER... DO NOT ALLOW OBLIVION" – acquires a new meaning and urgency.

Ioannina

Celebration of Yom Kippur in Ioannina 2023 – Ceremony in Honor of the Late Moses Elisaf

The Jewish Community of Ioannina, in the context of this year's celebration of Kippur, will honor the late Moses Elisaf. KKJ Museum Director Marcia Haddad Ikonopoulou will be among those attending, representing Kehila Kedosha Janina and our community.

After the completion of the services that will take place in the Synagogue, an event has been scheduled in memory of the late Mayor and President of the Community of Ioannina, Moses Elisaf, who honored with his dynamic presence and his huge work the Jewish Community of Ioannina and left behind a legacy-mandate for the continuation of the celebration of Kippur in Ioannina with the presence of Romaniotes and visitors from all over the world. The participation in the celebration of Kippur in Ioannina will be a tribute and recognition of the great contribution of Moses Elisaf to the Community of Ioannina and Greek Jewry.

For more information, please contact the Jewish Community of Ioannina (tel.: 26510 25 195).



Rhodes

Sending you warm greetings and Shabbat Shalom from Rhodes. Photo of descendants from the Rhodesis who lived in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and now live in Israel, visiting Kahal Shalom synagogue in Rhodes last month.



Carmen Cohen was honored last month for her 25 years of service to the Jewish Community of Rhodes

Albania

HALC-The Greek Current The Beleri case: "For us, freedom is not self-evident."

On March 11, 2023, the night before municipal elections in Albania, the then candidate for mayor of Himare, the ethnic Greek Fredi Beleri, and his aide, Pantelis Kokavesis, were arrested by the police for allegedly attempting to buy votes. Months later, and while he has already been elected mayor, Beleri remains in pre-trial detention. Greece has monitored this case closely, stressing to Albania that, as a candidate for EU membership it must strictly respect Beleri's right to a fair trial.



Kosovo

Kosovo inaugurates 'Wall of Honor' statue for 23 Albanians who rescued Jews during the Holocaust Full article [here](#)

Pristina, Kosovo — A statue bearing the names of 23 Kosovo Albanians who rescued Jews from the Holocaust during World War II was inaugurated Wednesday in the capital, Pristina.

The “Wall of Honor” statue was placed in a park in Pristina in the presence of some of the rescuers’ descendants, political leaders, and the U.S. and German ambassadors.

Some 500 Jews lived in Kosovo, then part of former Yugoslavia, at the beginning of the war. Many were arrested, deported to nearby prisons or Nazi-managed camps and almost half of them died.

Local Albanians helped scores of Jews to escape, usually taking them to neighboring Albania.

Leke Rezniqui’s great-grandfather Arslan rescued Jewish physician Chaim Abravanel, who was working in Skopje, now in North Macedonia. Arslan Rezniqui sheltered him and worked with another Albanian, Arif Alickaj, to prepare false documents and take Abravanel safely to Albania.

“That shows only the example of the uniqueness of Albanian rescue,” Leke Rezniqui told The Associated Press. “He promised with the highest level of promise, the concept of the besa (‘trust’ in Albanian), that means that you never betray that promise, even though you would have to sacrifice your own family.”

In 2008 Arslan Rezniqui was the first Kosovar to be included in the “Righteous Among the Nations” list from Yad Vashem for rescuing Jews from the Holocaust.

Since 2021, Leke Rezniqui has lived in Haifa, Israel. Abravanel’s niece Rachel-Shelly Levy-Drummer helped him to emigrate and gain Israeli citizenship.

Nowadays, 56 Jews live in the western Kosovar town of Prizren.

The statue showed that “the remembrance of those who risked their lives to save their fellow human beings is a tradition that commemorates a rare, bright light in one of the darkest periods of human history,” according to Kosovar Prime Minister Albin Kurti.

Avner Shalev, former head of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, considered Albanians as “a unique case in the history of the Second World War.”

In every other European state, the Jews were fewer in number after the war or totally wiped out, he said. The only exception was “in the territories that Albanians used to live there were more Jews after the war than in the beginning of the war,” he said, adding that should be told to generations.

Kosovo and Israel decided to establish diplomatic ties at a Kosovo-Serbia summit held at the White House in September 2020 by then-U.S. President Donald Trump. Kosovo was



The Abravanel family with their rescuers



Rachel-Shelly Levy-Drummer



Leke

the first European country, and the first country with a Muslim majority, to establish its embassy in Jerusalem, following the U.S. and Guatemala. An opening ceremony was held in March 2021. Israel is the most recent country to have recognized Kosovo after Pristina's Parliament declared independence from Serbia in 2008, nine years after NATO conducted a 78-day airstrike campaign against Serbia to stop a bloody crackdown against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Most Western nations have recognized Kosovo's independence, but Serbia and its allies Russia and China have not.

For more stories of BESA and how ethnic Albanians saved Jews see Yad Vashem's page on BESA: <https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/besa/index.asp>

Interfaith Delegation from Israel Visits Albania, North Macedonia and Kosovo Article [here](#)

A Debate for Peace delegation featuring students and educators from four religions and ten cities around Israel traveled to three countries in the Balkans in July, learning about the history and culture of the region. Prior to the trip, a meeting was held at the Embassy of Kosovo in Jerusalem, where they learned about the concept of BESA, through which Jews were saved courageously during the Holocaust by Muslim and Christian Albanian families.



The group traveled first to Albania, where they visited southern Albania, including the Blue Eye nature preserve; UNESCO world heritage sites of Gjirokaster castle and Butrint archeological park, and the 5th century synagogue remains in Saranda.



Crossing into North Macedonia, the group stopped at Lake Ohrid, which straddles Albania and North Macedonia. Continuing on to Bitola (Monastir), the delegation visited the Jewish cemetery, stopping for a few minutes to clear weeds from some of the tombstones. In the city center of Bitola, the group was led by a local volunteer, Zoran, who told them about the Jewish history of the city, and showed them buildings that remained behind, like the Alliance Jewish school, after the devastating impact of the Holocaust. Later they stopped at the municipal museum, at the site where Kamal Atatürk once attended high school.

In Skopje the group went to the Jewish community center and synagogue, and heard about the local community. At the Holocaust Museum, one of the only dedicated Holocaust museums in the world, the students learned more about the Holocaust in Macedonia, where nearly the entire Jewish community had been deported and murdered. They also visited Mother Theresa's home.

Arriving in Prizren, Kosovo, the group celebrated shabbat dinner with the local Jewish community, as well as local youth. After a short explanation about Judaism and shabbat, kiddush was recited and the Israeli and Kosovan youth got to interact. The next morning the students visited the Roman Catholic Church, Sinan Pasha mosque, Halveti Suffi center, as well as the site of Jewish community center being constructed.

Concluding the trip in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, the delegation visited UNMIK, the UN peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, for a fascinating discussion on the diverse challenges faced in peacebuilding with a range of experts from the political affairs, media and communications, and human rights offices.

A planning session together with local youth under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport laid the groundwork for the third Kosovo International Model UN, scheduled for December 2023. Finally the delegation held two important meetings with Kosovo ministries. The first meeting was with the Minister of

Regional Economic Development, who is from the Turkish community in Kosovo, and who talked about his unique office and their work to advance economic development throughout the country. The final meeting was held with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Diaspora, who entertained questions from all of the students, and explained the direction of her office to the aspiring diplomats.

Debate for Peace extends its deep appreciation to the embassy of Kosovo in Jerusalem; key partner ICHAT in Pristina; the Jewish community in Prizren; UNMIK, the ministries of Culture, Youth and Sport; Regional Economic Development, and Foreign Affairs and the Diaspora, Dr. Shelly Drummer in Israel; Gentian in Albania; Zoran in Bitola; Ana and Maja from the Jewish community in Skopje; the Demiri family in Prizren, and Dr. Ilir in Pristina, for their assistance and hospitality throughout the delegation.

Cyprus

Turkish Cypriots attack UN peacekeepers

The UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) condemned an assault on its personnel and damage to its vehicles "by personnel from the Turkish Cypriot side" on Friday morning. Turkish Cypriots attacked UN peacekeepers who were blocking unauthorized construction work in the area. "Threats to the safety of U.N. peacekeepers and damage to UN property are unacceptable and constitute a serious crime under international law which will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," UNFICYP said in a statement. The violence constitutes a serious escalation of tensions not seen on the island in years. The assault was also condemned by Greece, the US, France, UK, and the European Union.

The Security Council condemned the assault on UN Peacekeepers.

Enclosed is the latest tweet by the Cypriot UN Ambassador Andreas Hadjichrysanthou:

Security Council: - stressed that this runs contrary to SC resolutions & constitutes violation of the status quo in UN Buffer Zone - condemned assaults against UN peacekeepers by Turkish Cypriots - attacks targeting peacekeepers may constitute crimes under international law.

Return of Bones of Those Who Died During Invasion of Cyprus

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — The rival leaders of ethnically divided Cyprus on Friday jointly appealed for information that could lead to the buried remains of people who vanished amid violence and war decades ago, a task with increasing urgency as eyewitnesses die.

Cyprus' Greek Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides and Ersin Tatar, the leader of the breakaway Turkish Cypriots, made the appeal in a symbolic move aiming to show that the purely humanitarian issue should stay above the complex and often bitter politics of the nearly half-century ethnic split.



It also sought to inject some fresh urgency into efforts to resume deadlocked peace talks. A deal has eluded Cypriot leaders since a 1974 coup aiming at union with Greece triggered a Turkish invasion that entrenched that division.

Both Christodoulides and Tatar toured the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) that has, since 2006, been tasked with locating, unearthing, and identifying the remains of individuals who vanished during clashes in the early 1960s and the 1974 invasion.

"This is a humanitarian issue; therefore this is something which is outside politics," Tatar told reporters.

"Whatever we can do to improve, as I saw the discovery of missing persons is something that we owe to the families."

Christodoulides echoed a shared commitment to collect more information, but added that progress on this issue would also send a "clear political message" about building trust between the two sides that haven't engaged in direct talks in six years.

Information is now at a premium, said Paul-Henri Arni, the U.N. appointed member of the tripartite committee that also includes a Greek and Turkish Cypriot representative.

Arni told The Associated Press that the CMP has found, identified and returned to relatives the remains of 51.5% of all missing persons.

But having the leaders nudge anyone with information to step forward is essential to resolving the most difficult remaining cases, in which individuals were killed at one spot and buried elsewhere without witnesses.

According to CMP figures, of 1,510 Greek Cypriots and 492 Turkish Cypriots who are missing, 769 and 200 respectively have not been found.

"The issue is access to new information at the moment where witnesses are passing away," Arni said. "And so we've discussed with the leaders ways they could help us through the own networks, also with specific former combatants."

Work is slow as the chance of finding remains at excavated sites currently stands at 10% -- far below the 50% when the CMP began work in earnest in 2006.

Arni said another key source of information are archived witness accounts which have been digitized for easier access, as well as sifting through 900,000 pages of U.N., U.K. and International Committee of the Red Cross archives which produced 3,740 documents of actionable data.

Christodoulides told reporters following the visit to the CMP premises that access to Turkey military archives is still restricted.

Some 80% of the CMP's 3.2 million euro (\$3.5 million) annual budget is funded by the EU and Arni said additional funding would enable the committee to augment its current number of seven excavation teams to speed up work on 65 new sites.

Christodoulides said it would be a "shame" for more information to become available but without additional teams to act on them, adding that he would formally ask the EU for more funding.

Jewish Presence in Cyprus

The Extinction of Jewish heritage in Northern Cyprus - Full article [here](#)

By Uzey Bulut from Arutz Sheva, November 4, 2021.

Cyprus has a special place in Jewish history. Jews are deeply rooted in this island country, whence they once obtained wine to soak some of the spices used in the incense used in the Temple (Jerusalem Talmud Yoma 4), possibly produced by Jews living there. Jews have lived in Cyprus for millennia, according to historical records. Hadassah Magazine reports:

"Cyprus and Eretz Yisrael had trade relations by the third century B.C.E., and Jews began to settle the island. In the first century B.C.E., the Roman emperor Augustus gave Herod, king of Judea, part of the management and revenue of the island's copper mines. Jews were among the miners and copper workers. After Herod's death, his granddaughter Alexandra married a Cypriot Jew.

"The community prospered, and synagogues existed in at least three locations: Golgoi, Lapethos and Constantia-Salamine. Some Cypriot Jews moved to Jerusalem, and the Talmud mentions imports of cumin, wine and dried figs from Cyprus."

The European Jewish Congress gives further information:

"In 142 BCE, Cyprus was one of the countries that safeguarded Jewish rights at the request of the Romans. Cypriot Jews seem to have participated in a rebellion in 177 CE against Emperor Trajan. After the revolt was crushed, Jews were strictly forbidden to set foot on Cyprus, but this prohibition did not last long."

"Jews returned to the island shortly thereafter," adds the World Jewish Congress. "Jewish community in Cyprus continued to thrive throughout the centuries, and between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, there were more Jews in Cyprus than on any other Greek island."

Cyprus today is a majority Christian country, and its patron saint is a Cypriot Jew: St. Barnabas, who, accompanied by Saul (Apostle Paul) and Mark, sailed to Cyprus to preach there (Acts: 13).

Today, the relations between Cyprus and Israel are thriving. "Throughout the history of Cyprus, Jewish people have always lived on the island," the project manager of the Jewish Museum of Cyprus, Skevi Philippou, said. "There has always been a bond between Israel and Cyprus, especially now between tourism and business cooperation. Being so close to the Holy Land, Cyprus is a popular place for Jews to visit or make their home. Today, there are over 6500 Jews living in Cyprus. Most are from Israel, UK, Eastern Europe and Russia."

The Chief Rabbi of Cyprus, Arie Zeev Raskin, has been officially serving the community since 2005. The rabbi and his wife, Shaindel Raskin, together with their four children, arrived in Cyprus in 2003. Five years later, their fifth child was born in the island country. The Chabad house – "Chabad of Cyprus" – was opened in 2005.

Today, the Cyprus Jewish Community Center in the city of Larnaca is open to serve the community all year around. And the Jewish Museum there raises awareness about the Jewish ties to the island. The museum's current exhibit is the "Nissen hut," an original WWII artifact.

According to its website, the museum aims to educate the public concerning the important role played by Cyprus and Cypriots "in assisting Holocaust victims escaping Europe after World War II as they made their way to Israel."

From 1878 to 1960, when Cyprus became independent, the island was under British rule. After the rise of Nazism in 1933, hundreds of Jews escaped to Cyprus. The British government then set up 12 detention camps there for Holocaust survivors who had immigrated or attempted to immigrate to the then British Mandate of Palestine. The camps operated from 1946 to 1949 and held over 53,000 internees. Once the State of Israel was established, most refugees moved there.

"Conditions in the camps were horrific," reported the newspaper Cyprus Mail. "But there was one ray of light for those on the long journey home: the local Cypriots who, for three long years, helped to feed, clothe and nurture the interned at their own expense. The brainchild of Rabbi Arie Zeev Raskin, the Chief Rabbi of Cyprus, the museum is the Jewish Community's way of thanking those who helped the interned."

"Rabbi Raskin felt an overwhelming need to thank the people he sees as heroes," Philippou said.

"Ordinary people – farmers, workers, people who barely had enough to feed their own families – gave food, water and medicine to the refugees in the camps. And the next generation of Cypriots must know and remember what their ancestors did, so that the cycle of kindness will continue.

"Those 53,000 Jewish refugees and their descendants owe their health and wellbeing to Cyprus and to the compassion of the Cypriots; by aiding those who were starting a new life, the Cypriots not only played an important role in assisting Holocaust victims escaping Europe after World War II, but they were also responsible for helping to promote the re-birth of Jewish life, culture, religious observation and Jewish heritage around the world."

Meanwhile, the tradition of opposing antisemitism is ongoing in Cyprus. In 2019, Cyprus endorsed the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. Then-Jewish Agency chair and current president of Israel Isaac Herzog praised the move, as did American Jewish Committee CEO David Harris.

Many Cypriot municipal leaders have also signed the American Jewish Committee's (AJC) Mayors United Against Antisemitism statement. More than 500 European and U.S. mayors, including 22 mayors from Cyprus, joined the initiative.

"The relations between Israel and Cyprus have never been stronger than today," AJC Jerusalem Director, Lt. Col. (Res.) Avital Leibovich, said. "They are not only based on mutual interest but also on strategic challenges and cooperation on many levels - from cultural to academic, tourism to startups. In a changing Middle East, such partnerships are important and cherished."

Since 1974, however, around 40 percent of the Cypriot territory in the north of the island nation has been illegally occupied by Turkey. That year, Cyprus was invaded by the Turkish military twice and exposed to an ethnic cleansing campaign which forcibly changed the demographic character of the island country.

Many crimes were committed by Turkish troops against indigenous Greek Cypriots. Civilian targets such as hospitals were bombed. Greek Cypriots, including children, were murdered. Civilians were arbitrarily detained by the Turkish military authorities and were put either in prisons or concentration camps. Some were made to perform forced labor. The European Commission on Human Rights documented the rape of women and children aged 12 to 71, including those who were pregnant or mentally retarded. The rapes were so widespread that the Church of Cyprus was compelled to relax its previous strictures on abortion.

Nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots were forcibly expelled from their homes by the Turkish invasion forces and were replaced by illegal settlers from Turkey and Turkish Cypriots. Lands, houses and other properties belonging to Greek Cypriots were seized, looted and distributed to Turks. As a result of this ethnic cleansing, northern Cyprus, which was for millennia a majority-Greek area until 1974, has been turned into a Turkish colony.

Historically, large Jewish population groups lived across coastal towns in Cyprus such as ancient Salamis in the city of Famagusta, which is today under Turkish occupation. Sadly, the invasion campaign has brought widespread destruction to all non-Muslim Cypriot historic sites.

To this day, the occupying forces continue to plunder and destroy the Cypriot cultural heritage, including the Jewish heritage of the occupied area. The Jewish cemetery there, for instance, has been destroyed. According to the 2012 report "The Loss of A Civilization: Destruction of cultural heritage in occupied Cyprus."



"The historic Margo Jewish Cemetery, a national monument for the Jewish people, southeast of Nicosia, has been desecrated and destroyed in the same way as Christian cemeteries in the area occupied by Turkish troops have been desecrated and destroyed.

"The Margo Jewish Cemetery is home to the graves of Jews of the diaspora of 1885 and of Jewish refugees who came to Cyprus after the Second World War.

"The cemetery is located in a strictly controlled military area and is guarded by an armed Turkish soldier. Jewish organizations and other groups have persistently petitioned for free access to the cemetery to conduct religious ceremonies, but these requests have not been granted by the occupying power and its puppet regime."

"We have visited the cemetery several times," Philippou confirms. "But we haven't been able to hold any religious ceremonies, just a quick visit under supervision. We would like to have it restored, but no permission has been given thus far."

Cypriot-Dutch author, cultural campaigner and activist Tasoula Hadjitofi became a refugee at age 15 when Turkish troops invaded Famagusta, the city of her birth, in 1974. For several decades, she has collected artefacts and other symbols of cultural heritage that has been looted and stolen to bring them back home to Cyprus. Referring to the liberation of prisoners from Nazi concentration camps in 1945, Hadjitofi said:



"Cypriots fought alongside the allies as British troops during the liberation of the Jews and other prisoners, for Cyprus was then a British colony. There are no poppies for those heroes on Holocaust Memorial Day in the United Kingdom or in Cyprus and little is known anywhere about them. Most of these forgotten heroes died quietly and took with them so many untold stories. Perhaps a handful are still around? Their stories must be told and their courage must be honored."

"The historical ties are strong between Israel and Cyprus," added Hadjitofi. "I do hope that our Jewish brothers and sisters worldwide are watching attentively the Islamization of northern Cyprus by Turkey, as well as the destruction of the Christian and Jewish sites in the occupied area. And for the sake of our shared heritage, historical and current struggles for freedom, as well as fundamental principles, they must do their best to stop them."

Uzay Bulut is a Turkish journalist and political analyst formerly based in Ankara.

A Permanent Bond between Israel and Cyprus - Full article [here](#)

If one man can change the world, that can be said of Prodromos Christou Papavassiliou, a Greek Cypriot.

Papavassiliou brought cheer and comfort to Holocaust survivors whom the British turned back from the Promised Land and incarcerated in barbed wire detention camps in Cyprus. From 1878 to 1960, Cyprus went from being a British protectorate, to a militarily occupied island to a British colony.

Papavassiliou, generally known as Papa, fought with the British Army during World War Two and met and befriended several Jewish soldiers from Palestine. After the war, he returned to his village near Famagusta. One day in 1946, he was approached by Charles Passman of the Joint Distribution Committee, who told him the British were about to set up detention camps in Cyprus for people they regarded as illegal immigrants.

Papa could not believe this. It was inconceivable to him that the British – who had liberated the death camps and forced labor camps – were placing traumatized Jews whom they had rescued into other camps. There, the conditions might have been slightly better, but the inmates were nonetheless denied freedom. When Passman asked for his help, Papa, who was disillusioned with Winston Churchill, whom he had mistakenly thought would grant independence to the Cypriots, unhesitatingly agreed. But that was not the only reason, said a number of speakers who had gathered on the Bat Galim seafront in Haifa on Monday just before twilight to inaugurate the recently established Papa Square.



The large crowd included sailors who had manned the ships carrying illegal immigrants; people who had been children on those ships; people born in or conceived in Cyprus between 1946 and 1949; members of the Haifa municipality; former Israel ambassadors who had served in Cyprus; representatives of shipping companies; Cypriot politicians and officials; members of the Israel-Cyprus Friendship Association; and three generations of the Papavassiliou family. Papa died at the age of 87 in December 2006.

But throughout the years, he maintained close contact with Israel, initially after the establishment of the state as a representative of Israel's ZIM shipping company, in clandestine intelligence operations, and in the opening of economic relations. He was a frequent visitor to Haifa, maintaining a relationship with the families that he had helped when they were in the detention camps. He had facilitated the escape of some 1,600 prisoners, and even personally brought some of them under cover of darkness to Haifa Port. Today, Haifa and Limassol in Cyprus are twin cities, and residents of each are on an almost regular commute, the distance being only 200 nautical miles.....

Moderator Bracha Sela, who told the story of the detention camps between official speakers and musical interludes, did so with conviction, because her mother was an internee in one of the 12 detention camps in Cyprus. Sela spoke with feeling, almost as if she had been there, of the unbearable summer heat, and the

freezing cold of winter, and of how Papa had put himself at the disposal of all the people in the camps. There were other Cypriots who also put themselves out to make life easier for the people who had been forced to live on their island, but no one could equal the kindnesses of Papa.

People at the dedication ceremony who didn't necessarily remember or know each other kept asking the same question: "Which camp were you in?" Altogether, there were between 52,000 and 53,000 Holocaust survivors in Cyprus, including 8,000 children, 2,200 of whom were actually born there.

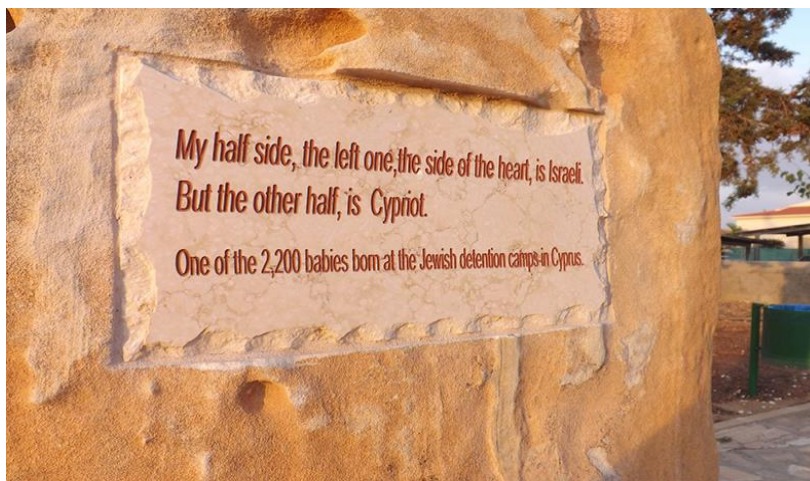
Papa had close relations with the JDC, the Hagana and the Jewish Agency and kept them informed of developments.

Prof. Yossi Ben Artzi of the University of Haifa Israel Studies Department headed the committee charged with finding a suitable site for a monument to Papa. He said that in view of the frequency with which Papa had come to Israel by boat, it was important to find a place by the sea. Bearing in mind the role that Papa played in the establishment of the state, the location also had to be close to the Clandestine Immigration and Naval Museums and to the National Museum, he said. Because Papa, a practicing Christian, had done so much for Jews, it was also essential to find a site symbolizing Haifa's demographic pluralism.

Once such a site was determined, the square was specially built where the Carmel Forest meets the sea, with the Stella Maris (Star of the Sea) Monastery above, in a section of Bat Galim inhabited by Jews, Christians and Muslims. There are three separate sections in the square explaining in Hebrew, English and Arabic who Papa was.

Park of Peace Created by Israelis in Larnaca to Thank Cypriots

Dedicated in 2017



Israel

Unearthing Israel's Ancient Past: The Stunning Mosaics of Huqoq [Full article here](#)

In the heart of the Lower Galilee, near the Sea of Galilee, excavations are taking place that are shedding new light on the rich and ancient history of the region. The dig site in Huqoq, home to an ancient synagogue dating back to the fifth century C.E., is revealing some of the most exquisite mosaics ever unearthed in Israel.



Huqoq is currently a kibbutz that was established in 1945. Its name is reminiscent of an ancient priestly town in the territory of the Asher tribe. In its prime, during the Talmudic and Mishnaic periods, Huqoq flourished as a hub for thousands of Jews and the 24 priestly families safeguarding Jewish traditions following the destruction of the Second Temple and the subsequent exile from Jerusalem.

Since 2012, American archaeologist, Professor Jodi Magness from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has been leading a team of students each summer to excavate at Huqoq. Her expertise lies in the archaeology of Israel and Jordan, with a focus on the Roman, Byzantine, and early Muslim periods.

Over the past decade, their efforts have brought to light several breathtaking mosaics portraying captivating scenes. The intricate details and vibrant colors of these images offer a vivid window into the past.

Some mosaics depict scenes of war and heroism. This image depicts a bearded soldier dressed in battle attire, leading a bull by its horns. He is trailed by more soldiers and elephants in protective gear. The soldier is shown meeting an older figure, gray-haired and donning a white tunic, who is accompanied by young men in ceremonial dress, their swords sheathed. This mosaic appears to showcase Alexander the Great encountering a Jewish priest, depicting a historical event dating back to 332 B.C.E. when Alexander launched his conquest campaign across the region, including Israel.

However, the narrative presented in this mosaic is questionable, as historical records indicate Alexander the Great was never defeated by rebel Jews, which the artwork implies. An alternative interpretation for this mosaic aligns with a renowned story from the Talmud, which tells of a man named Bar Kamtza delivering a blemished calf to the Temple on behalf of Emperor Nero, as part of a ruse to exact revenge on the rabbis — which incited the Jewish Revolt as a result. This context suggests that the events depicted in the mosaic took place around 65 or 66 C.E.



Biblical narratives also come alive in these mosaics, with the depiction of Samson, the hero from the book of Judges, tying two foxes by their tails.

Another mosaic depicts the Egyptians, led by Pharaoh, succumbing to their fate by drowning in the Red Sea. If you zoom in, you can see fish swallowing Egyptian soldiers.

In this portrayal of the story of Jonah, we observe Jonah being thrown overboard amidst a storm, only to be swallowed by a fish, which in turn is swallowed by another fish, and so on. As excavations continue at Huqoq, we eagerly wait to see what historical gems will be unearthed in the coming years. Through the diligent work of Professor Magness and her team, the ancient narratives and cultural richness of Israel are being revived, one mosaic at a time. Each discovery enriches our understanding of eras past and keeps history alive for future generations.



National Library of Israel – Greek Jewish Archives

In the National Library of Israel (under "the archive for the history of the Jewish people") there is a lot of archival material from Jewish communities in the world, and among them quite a few from Greek communities.

I entered the website of the National Library and there was a real treasure of the Thessaloniki community there: various community books from before World War II, including personal photos of members of the community (personal statements, birth records and civilian requests).
attached is an example page and a link to an episode of Greek Communities

You need to go downstairs and open the relevant folders where there are details of the topics. Where the subject appears in blue it means that the file has been scanned and found online on the website (can also be downloaded directly to the PC).

Access the archives here: https://www.nli.org.il/en/archives/NNL_CAHJP990043432690205171/NLI

Italy

Historical Archive of the Jewish Community of Rome (ASCER)

The ASCER is considered one of the most important archives in Europe for what concerns the history of the Jews. In 1981, the Ministry for Cultural Heritage declared it to be of "considerable historical interest". The ASCER mainly contains documents relating to the period between the beginning of the sixteenth century and the end of the nineties of the twentieth century for a total of 265 linear meters; the material is made up of more than 1300 folders and 1600 registers divided into two sections (according to the latest arrangement carried out in 1963 by Daniele Carpi): Medieval and Modern Archive (XVI-XIX century) rearranged to 80% and Contemporary Archive (19th-20th century) 100% rearranged. There is also a Photographic Archive (scanned and filed thanks to a grant from the Lazio Region) which includes more than 9000 images taken from the end of the 19th century to the present day, and a Music Archive (being inventoried by Maestro Claudio Di Segni) which preserves 740 scores dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries. The reorganization of this material takes place under the guidance of the Superintendence for Archival Heritage of Lazio, it is curated by Silvia Haia Antonucci, Claudio Procaccia and Giancarlo Spizzichino.



History of Jewish Music in Italy

The history of Jewish music in Italy is long, fascinating, and filled with contradictions. Its length is due to the very history of Italian Jewry, whose origins go back more than two thousand years. Fascination stems from the meeting of the music of the Jewish Diaspora, represented in Italy by an unprecedented interaction among distinct Italian, Ashkenazi and Sephardic traditions, with Italian musical culture and its innumerable cultural, regional and linguistic differences. The contradictions concern the thousand identities, visible and invisible, of the Jews of Italy: the secrecy of the ghettos, places of exclusion and also of explosive musical ferments emblematically represented in the works of Salamone Rossi (ca. 1570-1630); the conflicts and the hidden consonances between Judaism and Christianity, and the distance between the liturgy of the Church and that of the synagogue, at once brief and unattainable; the integration, and the cultural symbiosis, of Jews and Italy, and the shared feeling so beautifully expressed by Giuseppe Verdi's Nabucco (1842); the relentless liturgical modernization carried out during the Emancipation in the 19th century, which forever changed the "soundscape" of the Italian synagogue with the addition of choral repertoires and instrumental accompaniment

imitating the operatic styles of Gioachino Rossini and others; and the tragic character of the Fascist parable, ended in the Holocaust and the destruction of Italian synagogue life.

Following the Holocaust, Italian Jewish communities large and small have attempted to reconstruct their liturgical repertoires by constantly revisiting the musical structure of synagogue services, by staging public performances of cantors and small choirs, and by releasing commercial recordings featuring historical choral repertoires no longer included in the liturgy. This reconstruction, based on both oral and written sources, highlights the complex dynamics that characterize Jewish musical memory, revealing some intimate aspects of Jewish communal life. Oral sources come from the individual memory of culture bearers, handed down by oral tradition, as well as from the important field recordings made by Italian-Israeli ethnomusicologist Leo Levi (1912-1982), which documented the local traditions of twenty different Italian Jewish communities. Written sources include the transcription of local oral repertoires, most notably those published by Benedetto Marcello (of Venice, 1724-27) Federico Consolo (of Livorno, 1892), Abraham Zvi Idelsohn (of Ferrara, 1936) and Elio Piattelli (of Rome, Piedmont and Florence, 1967, 1986 and 1992), as well as thousands of manuscript music scores. Music manuscripts include 17th- and 18th-century compositions often connected with Kabbalistic representations (in Venice, Casale Monferrato, Pisa and Siena), and thousands of settings of liturgical texts in Hebrew (and at times in Italian) by a host of professional and amateur synagogue composers, Jews and non-Jews alike, kept in Jewish community archives throughout the Peninsula (including Turin, Venice, Padua, Mantua, and Rome), at the Bibliographic Center of UCEI (the Union of Italian Jewish Communities) in Rome and in the Music Department of the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem, and in the private homes of Italian Jews in Italy and Israel. The comparison between oral and written sources shows their inter-relations. While many written sources were created to record an ever-changing (or vanishing) oral tradition, original musical compositions often ended up influencing oral repertoires. Oftentimes, the music sung by today's synagogue cantors in a traditional solo-voice style and perceived by synagogue-goers as "ancient" and "authentic," is nothing but a "re-traditionalized" memory of 19th-century choral pieces, of which only the main melody (and not the choral parts, at times sung by female or mixed choirs, or the original organ accompaniment) has been preserved in oral form.



Salamone Rossi ca.
1570-1630

The musical repertoires of the community of Rome represent an emblematic case of interaction among the different layers of Italian Jewish musical memory. The peculiar history of this community is indeed reflected in its music. The traditional soundscape of Roman Jewry was forever changed in 1904, when the inauguration of a new, monumental synagogue (the "Tempio Maggiore"), de facto erased the pre-existing oral traditions kept in the "Cinque Scuole," the synagogue of the ghetto that preserved the rituals of several congregations according to their geographic origins (including Italy, Sicily, Castile, and Catalonia), by merging them into a unified ritual. The notion of unifying Italy's diverse Jewish liturgical rituals, an idea that goes back to the advent of Kaballah in 16th-century Venice, had been formulated in a Responsum (1841) by a leading 19th-century modernist Rabbi, Lelio Della Torre (1805-1871), a teacher at the Italian Rabbinical College in Padua. The process had already been tested out in Florence with the inauguration of the monumental synagogue of that city (1882), the merger of local Italian and Sephardic traditions, and the adoption of the Spanish-Portuguese liturgy of Livorno.



As it had already happened in Florence, the pre-existing oral traditions of the Roman community never completely faded from memory, and have since been kept alive by individual cantors and families, and inserted in the new ritual through the elaborate mixture of musical syncretism and cultural negotiation that characterizes each and every Italian Jewish community. These traditions, however, had not existed unchallenged before the opening of the new Roman synagogue. On the contrary, they had already been sharing the liturgical stage with a new musical repertoire, made of choral music, for at least half a century. This new music was initially imported from other Italian communities, especially Livorno – a thriving center of Jewish cultural innovation, and the birthplace of many of Rome's "Chief Rabbis" in the 20th century, including

David Prato (1882-1951) and Elio Toaff (b. 1915) – from where composers like Michele Bolaffi, David Garzia, and Ernesto Ventura had begun changing Italy’s Jewish sounds since the early 19th century. Starting in 1845, musical composition also became the domain of local composers and choir directors – including Settimio Scazzocchio, Saul Di Capua, Amadio Disegni and Salvatore Saya, among others – whose work was included in the liturgy. Their impact of synagogue music was tremendous, and their work began to be recorded in the Italian Jewish press. A report published in L’Educatore Israelita (a periodical issued in Vercelli, Piedmont), dated 1856, offers a vivid description of how choral music was influencing the culture of the Roman Jewish community, adopting an agenda inspired by modernization and interfaith dialogue (with the Catholic majority), in line with the development of the Jewish Reform movement in northern Italy and throughout Europe.

“In 1845, an association of young men, devoted to the uplifting of the decorum of the liturgy at least on the Sabbath and the major holidays, began studying music so that they could sing as a choir during said holidays, performing the Psalms and other texts. [...] Shortly thereafter, three of our synagogues had their choristers trained by distinguished Jewish music teachers. It was also decided to turn these teachers into composers, and they produced excellent works, as heard from Capua, Di Veroli, Disegni, and Scazzocchio.”
Less than a decade later, the modernizing effect of this music had already taken the lead, attracting not only Jews, but also Catholic synagogue-goers. The same periodical thus reported in 1862:

“During the nights of Passover [...] our synagogues were full of Catholics, who behaved with the utmost decorum. The synagogue most frequented by Catholics is the Scuola Catalana, since it is embellished by a choir of chosen young men, who truly honored the Festival with religious music, and on the last night [of the Festival] entertained both religious Jews and Catholic visitors with a new Yigdal, set to music by Settimio Scazzocchio, the young director of the choir.”

Francesco Spagnolo, Ph.D., is the Curator of The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1997, he founded the Jewish music archives in Milan, and between 1998 and 2002 was responsible for the preservation and publication of Italian Jewish sound recordings at the Ethnomusicology Archives of the National Music Academy in Rome and the National Sound Archives in Jerusalem.

Egypt

Egypt Unveils Restoration of Ancient 12th Century Egyptian Synagogue – Full article [here](#)

The synagogue was inaugurated after undergoing a massive renovation.

Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly inaugurated [Ben Azra Synagogue](#) in Cairo on Thursday, according to a statement made by the Egyptian cabinet. The synagogue, which is one of [the oldest in Egypt](#), was constructed in the 12th century but has just completed a new renovation. Madbouly, accompanied by a number of other government officials, had earlier in the day inspected other renovated archaeological and heritage sites in Cairo.



History of the synagogue: The synagogue was named after a Jewish biblical commentator and philosopher from the Middle Ages, Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra. The site [contains the Cairo Geniza](#), a collection of texts and scrolls that give an exclusive insight into the history of Egypt’s Jewish community.

Renovations made to the synagogue: The ceiling underwent a number of measures to help prevent its collapse, the Tourism and Antiquities Minister Ahmed Issa said in a statement. Additionally, the building was also provided with insulation, cleaning, and precious stones at the site received treatment. The lighting system was given an update, and copper and iron elements were given the necessary treatment to bring out their shine. The library was also heavily restored.

Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



On Rosh Hashanah, there is a widespread custom to go to a body of water and symbolically “shake off” one’s sins into the water. This little ritual is called *Tashlich*, its name coming from the Biblical Book of Micah 7:19, where the prophet declares that God will “cast away – in Hebrew *tashlich*’ - all the people’s sins into the depths of the sea”. The custom is performed by both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, and in many places, entire congregations, yeshivas, and other groups walk to the closest natural or manmade body of water to perform this ritual, shaking their pockets to symbolically “shake off” their sins, while reciting three the above verse and others. Yet as common as *Tashlich* has become, it is not as ancient as many might think, and nor was it universally accepted by all Jews, including some that are careful to avoid it altogether, even today.

A look through the sources reveals no ancient text, mystical or otherwise, that mentions *Tashlich*, whether the Zohar, the Talmud or even the “*Shulhan Aruch*”, whose Sephardi author Rabbi Yosef Karo does not even mention the custom. However, it is cited by the great Ashkenazi sage, the “Rama” (Rabbi Moshe Isserles, Cracow, c.1530-1572) in his glosses on the “*Shulhan Aruch*”, who notes that “we [Ashkenazim] go to the river to say the verse ‘you will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea...’”

The earliest source to mention the custom at all is the Ashkenazi ‘Maharil’ of Mainz, Germany (Hebrew acronym for “Rabbi Ya’akov Levi Moelin, c. 1365-1427). He explained that the reason for going to a body of water is to recall the famous Midrash about Abraham and Isaac on their way to the *Akedah- the binding of Isaac* (which took place on Rosh Hashanah), when Satan drew up a large river before them to stop them from fulfilling God’s command. Undeterred, they went into the torrential waters, praying to G-d to remove the obstacle, which He did, so they could continue on their journey. The Maharil held that the custom was quite ancient, starting no later than the 13th century, but only amongst Ashkenazi Jews.

Sephardim did not begin observing the custom until sometime in the 16th century, due to the influence of the great Kabbalist, ‘the Ari z”l” (Rabbi Yitzhak Luria, 1534-1572), a contemporary of the Rama, and whose overall influence on Sephardi ritual was profound. His father was Ashkenazi, but he was raised by his Sephardi mother and uncle in Egypt and came to the Land of Israel and Tzfat toward the end of his short life. The Ari z”l conducted his life entirely according to Sephardic norms, prayers, and customs, except on the High Holidays, when he followed the Ashkenazi rite, which of course included *Tashlich*. It was through his influence that *Tashlich* spread to the Sephardic and Mizrahi world, and later Sephardic Sages wrote about the custom’s importance and mystical implications, even composing supplementary prayers to be recited before and after the short verse from Micah.

On the other hand, since the custom could not be traced to a definitive Halachic or even major mystical source, there were prominent leaders and communities that opposed the custom. On the Ashkenazi side, the great Vilna Gaon and his followers did not perform *Tashlich* for this reason. As for non-Ashkenazic world, by and large, neither Yemenite nor Spanish and Portugues Jews adopted the custom, though over the centuries, many did begin practicing the custom, being influenced by the wider Sephardic world, which had, as stated, enthusiastically adopted the ritual. And despite the encouragement for the custom by the Ari z”l, many other early Kabbalists objected to *Tashlich* for fear that Jews might see the figurative casting away of their sins as replacing the need to truly repent and correct their transgressions.

Finally, there were communities in Europe that avoided reciting *Tashlich* over public rivers or lakes due to a real fear of arousing the ire of the non-Jewish population and accusations of Jews poisoning wells and water supplies, which did occur during the Black Plague in Europe in the 1300s. The horrible pogroms and slaughter of entire Jewish communities accused of poisoning the water and even causing the Plague, led to performing the ritual at *private* wells, or even *outside* the city, to reduce the chance of being accused of physically poisoning the wells or cursing the waters through magic incantations, like *Tashlich*.

Today, of course, *Tashlich* is done publicly and proudly by Jews everywhere. It is a simple and short ritual with a complex and fascinating history that encapsulates the very essence of the High Holy Days: to cleanse ourselves of sin and transgression and pray for G-d’s forgiveness, as we strive to repent and correct our ways, and be written in the Book of Life for another year. Shanah Tovah to one and all!



Rabbi Marc D. Angel
Eyes Open and Eyes Shut: Thoughts for Rosh Hashana
JewishIdeas.org

Paul Gauguin, the famous 19th century French artist, commented: "When I want to see clearly, I shut my eyes."

He was referring to two different ways of perceiving reality. With our eyes open, we see surface reality—size, shape, color etc. But with our eyes shut, we contemplate the context of things, our relationship to them, the hidden meanings.

With our eyes open, a dozen roses are 12 beautiful flowers. With our eyes shut, they may be full of memories and associations—roses given or received on our first date; roses at our wedding; roses growing in our childhood home's back yard; roses on our grandmother's Shabbat table.

How we see fellow human beings is also very different with open or closed eyes. With our eyes open, we see their physical features. With our eyes shut, we remember shared experiences, friendships, happy and sad moments. When we want to see clearly—comprehensively—we shut our eyes.

Mircea Eliade, a specialist in world religions, has written in his book, *The Sacred and The Profane*, about the pagan view of New Year. For them, human life is a series of recurring cycles, always on the verge of chaos. On New Year, people descend into this primordial chaos: drunkenness, debauchery, chaotic noise.

The Jewish view is radically different. For Jews, reality isn't a hopeless cycle of returns to chaos, but a progression, however slow, of humanity. Rosh Hashana is not a return to primeval chaos, but a return to God, a return to our basic selves. Our New Year is observed with prayer, repentance, solemnity, and a faith that we can—and the world can—be better.

The pagan New Year is an example of seeing reality with open eyes. Things really do seem to be chaotic when viewed on the surface. Humanity does not seem to improve over the generations. We always seem to be on the verge or self-destruction.

The Jewish New Year is an example of viewing reality with our eyes shut, of seeing things more deeply, more carefully. While being fully aware of the surface failings of humanity, we look for the hidden signs of progress and redemption. We attempt to maintain a grand, long-range vision. This is the key to the secret of Jewish optimism. While not denying the negatives around us, we stay faithful to a vision of a world that is not governed by chaos, but by a deeper, hidden, mysterious unity.

The problem of faith today is not how to have faith in God. We can come to terms with God if we are philosophers or mystics. The problem is how can we have faith in humanity? How can we believe in the goodness and truthfulness of human beings?

With our eyes open, we must view current events with despair and trepidation. We see leaders who are liars and hypocrites. We see wars and hatred and violence and vicious anti-Semitism. We are tempted to think that chaos reigns.

But with our eyes shut, we know that redemption will come. We know that there are good, heroic people struggling for change. We know that just as we have overcome sorrows in the past, we will overcome oppressions and oppressors of today.

Eyes open and eyes shut not only relate to our perception of external realities, but also to our self-understanding. During the season of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we focus on penitential prayers. We confess our sins and shortcomings. But as we think more deeply about our deficiencies, we also close our eyes and look for our real selves, our deeper selves, our dreams and aspirations.

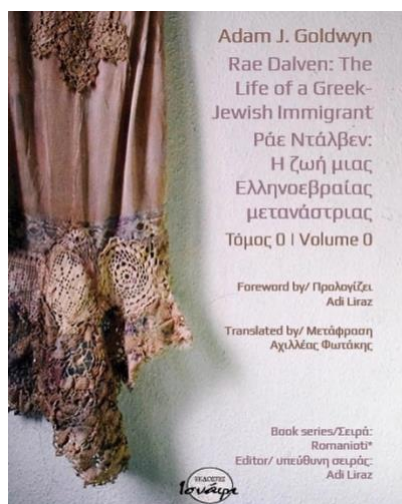
Rabbi Haim David Halevy, late Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, noted that the high holy day period is symbolized by the shofar. The shofar must be bent, as a reminder that we, too, must bow ourselves in contrition and humility. But shortly after Yom Kippur comes Succoth, with the lulav as a central symbol. The lulav must be straight, not bent over. The lulav teaches us to stand strong and tall, to focus on our strengths and virtues. The holiday season, then, encourages us to first experience humility and contrition; but then to move on to self-confidence and optimism. Our eyes are open to our shortcomings; but when we shut our eyes, we also can envision our strengths and potentialities.

Rosh Hashana reminds us to view our lives and our world with our eyes open—but also with our eyes shut. We are challenged to dream great dreams, to seek that which is hidden, to see beyond the moment. Rosh Hashana is a call to each individual to move to a higher level of understanding, behavior and activism. Teshuva—repentance—means that we can improve ourselves, and that others can improve, and that the world can improve.

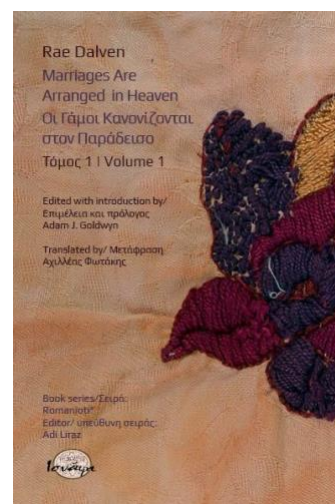
This is the key to Jewish optimism, the key to the Jewish revolutionary vision for humanity, the key to personal happiness.

New Books Available from KKJ

Kehila Kedosha Janina is proud to offer (at a special price) two recently published books related to Rae Dalven (author of *The Jews of Ioannina*). The first book is a biography and the second is one of Rae's plays, "Marriages Are Made in Heaven." The special price for each of the books is \$20 plus postage and handling (\$5 within the USA). If you order both books, the total price is \$47 (discount on P&H). Payment can be made by check made out to Kehila Kedosha Janina and mailed to the same at 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002. You can also pay online on our website www.kkjasm.org.



Rae Dalven: The Life of a Greek-Jewish Immigrant by Adam J. Goldwyn



Marriages are Arranged in Heaven by Rae Dalven

Google Doodle celebrates the Jewish designer of cat-eye glasses, Altina Schinasi

The Google Doodle for Friday, Aug. 4 features a cartoon image of a bespectacled woman peering out from one of the lenses of orange cat-eye glasses. The Doodle celebrates the 116th birthday of Altina "Tina" Schinasi, the Sephardic Jewish artist, inventor and New Yorker who devised the distinctive eyeglasses.



A trained sculptor, Schinasi designed the glasses in the late 1930s while working as a window display designer in Manhattan. Many major manufacturers rejected her designs, inspired by the Italian Harlequin mask, because they were too edgy. She pushed forward and partnered with a boutique optical shop called Lugene on Madison Avenue, where one of the first pairs was sold to writer Clare Boothe Luce. Schinasi's designs took off and she soon established her own eyewear company.

The "Harlequin"-style glasses, more popularly known as "cat-eye," became a hallmark of glamor in the late 1930s and were a dominant eyeglass silhouette through the mid-20th century, worn by the likes of Lucille Ball, Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn.

By the mid-1940s, Schinasi sold her eyeglasses company and moved out to Los Angeles, where she again focused on painting, sculpture and, later in life, filmmaking. Three of her paintings appeared in an exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Schinasi was born on this day in 1907 at her family's mansion at 351 Riverside Drive. She was the youngest of three daughters born into a wealthy Sephardic family. Her dad, Turkish-born Morris Schinasi, was an international tobacco businessman who made his fortune by inventing a cigarette-rolling machine and then selling his own brand of cigarettes.

Her mother, Laurette Schinasi, was born in Salonica (now Thessaloniki, Greece). The two met when Morris Schinasi was on a business trip to Salonica — Laurette was the granddaughter of his business partner. They married in 1903.

Upon Morris Schinasi's death in 1928, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that Schinasi left \$1.3 million (roughly \$23 million in today's dollars) to be allocated to several hospitals and Jewish charities, as well as to erect a hospital in Turkey and a new synagogue building for the Bual Zion Congregation (now the B'nai Zion Congregation), a Conservative synagogue in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The Schinasi Mansion was designed by William Tuthill, the same architect who constructed Carnegie Hall, in the early 1900s. It was declared a New York City Landmark in 1974 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. Currently owned by Goldman Sachs executive Mark Schwartz, it still sits on West 107th Street and Riverside Drive and is presently the largest single-family residence along Riverside Drive.

As a child, Tina Schinasi attended the Horace Mann School in the Bronx before beginning boarding school at age 12 at Dana Hall School in Wellesley, Massachusetts. A biography of Schinasi in an online Dana Hall encyclopedia states that Schinasi felt that "although she had many friends, she often felt isolated as one of the only Jewish students on campus and tried to hide that part of her identity from her classmates."

Upon graduating, Schinasi studied painting in Paris and decided to attend art school instead of college. In the late 1920s, she began to study painting with Samuel Halpert, a Russian Jewish immigrant, at the Nicholas Roerich Museum on the Upper West Side.

Schinasi's first job was designing windows for stores on Fifth Avenue, where she brushed shoulders with the Spanish artist Salvador Dalí. She and Dalí then went on to study under George Grosz, who had fled Germany in 1932 and Maurice Sterne, a Jewish sculptor and painter from Latvia.

In the late 1930s, Schinasi had her artistic breakthrough and achieved a lasting legacy through her patented design of the Harlequin eyeframe. Per Wikipedia, "A walk down the street occasioned this design breakthrough; finding herself underwhelmed by the lackluster frames in an optician's window, Altina set out to create a frame that conveyed whimsy, mystery and romance."

"Surely, there must be some way to design eyeglasses that could be attractive! What looks good on a face? What adds to a face? What could a woman wear on her face that would be romantic?" she wondered."

In 1939, she won the Lord & Taylor Annual American Design Award. She has been credited with transforming eyeglasses into a fashion accessory.

In 1960, she produced a documentary film about her former art teacher, the late Grosz, who, though not Jewish, was in exile from Germany and was active in anti-Nazi efforts. Titled "George Grosz' Interregnum," the 29-minute film was nominated for an Academy Award and won first place at the Venice Film Festival.

Also during the 1960s, Schinasi acquired the film rights for Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington. She commissioned a screenplay and met with King, Rosa Parks and other leaders of the Civil Rights Movement while on a trip to Alabama. All expressed excitement about the movie. However, Schinasi could not raise funding for the film and it was never made.

Married four times, Schinasi had two children, Terry Sanders and Denis Sanders, with her first husband Morris Sanders. Both of her sons became film directors. In 2014, her grandson Peter Sanders and her granddaughter Victoria Sanders produced and directed "Altina," a documentary about her life.

"My grandmother Tina was proud of her Jewishness, deeply affected by the rise of the Nazis and personally furnished 13 affidavits to enable Jewish refugees to enter the United States. But we were never practicing Jews in the religious sense," Peter Sanders told JTA at the time. The film relied on footage shot on the honeymoon of her first marriage in 1927 and 1928, as well as a two-hour interview filmed by her son in 1991.

Altina Schinasi died in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1999 at age 92.

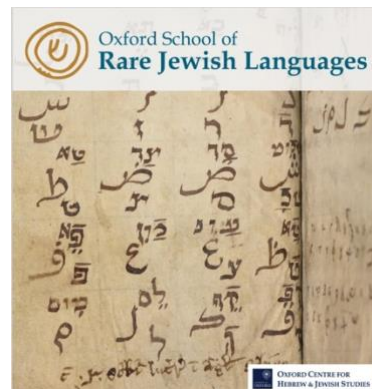
In a note from Google, the company wrote, "Happy birthday to the woman who was a visionary in more ways than one!"

Google also thanked Schinasi's son Terry Sanders for his contributions to the project. In a note, Sanders wrote, "Happy Birthday, Tina! Thank you for your courage, kindness and inspiration. Much love, always," and signed it on behalf of himself and Schinasi's seven grandchildren: Victoria, Juliette, Peter, David, Eve, Jessica and Brittany.

Free Online Classes in Rare Jewish Languages – Including Judeo-Greek

Applications are now open from Oxford University for free online classes to learn Judeo-Greek, Ladino, and other rare Jewish languages! The deadline to apply is September 5. Learn more and apply [Here](#)

Since 2021 the Oxford School of Rare Jewish Languages (OSRJL) of the [Oxford Centre for Hebrew & Jewish Studies](#), in collaboration with other institutions globally including ILARA, offers a range of free online classes, taught by leading academics, on 18 vernacular languages spoken and/or written by Jews from the Middle Ages until today. Contact osrjl@ochjs.ac.uk for any questions.



Looking for Our Help

Hi Marcia and Marvin,

Ke haber? I hope you both are well!

As part of my ongoing research about the Sepharadim in NYC in the 20th century, I have been looking into the active cafe culture on the LES. One of the main cafes on Allen street in the 1920s and 1930s was owned by Dan Meir Aroeste. I am trying to contact descendants of his in the hope that they may have documentation about the cafe and especially photos.

Looking online, I found the Aroeste family tree [here](#) which indicates that Dan Meir Aroeste, who owned the cafe, went by the name Aronesty. Among his descendants is a certain Michael Aronesty. On the KKJ homepage [here](#), I see that a certain Michael Aronesty is a life member. I am wondering if this Michael Aronesty is from the same family and if so - might you be able to introduce me? I would be very grateful!

Thanks for considering!

Saludes,
Professor Devin Naar

KKJ Archives – Photos to Identify

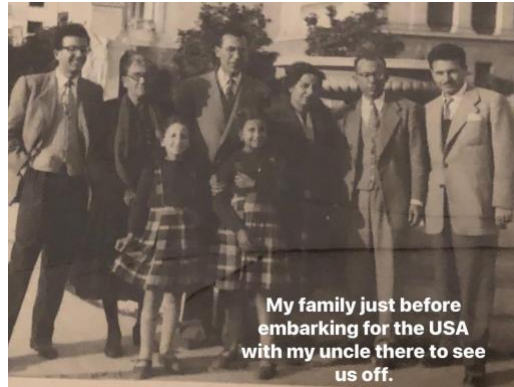
In reorganizing our archive of photos, we came across a number of photos where we could not identify those pictured, and are asking for your help.



Photos of the Month



Shirley and Morris Cohen



Steve Negrin and family leaving for America



Jews detained in British Detention Camps in Cyprus
Kehila Kedosha Janina continues to search for
names of Greek Jews who were detained

If you would like to make a contribution to Kehila Kedosha Janina, please send your check (in US dollars) made out to *Kehila Kedosha Janina*, to us at 280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002 (attention Marcia). Your donation will enable us to continue to hold services and preserve our special traditions and customs, and to tell our unique story through our Museum.

Some of our major donations have been generous bequests, which have enabled us to complete major work in our synagogue/museum. Do remember us in your will. Your legacy will be present in our legacy. **We need donations more than ever now. You can do this on line on our website: www.kkjsm.org accessing the donation link in the upper left hand corner.**

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