



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

November 2021 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

This year, from November 28 to December 6, Jews throughout the world will gather to celebrate Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. As we light our Hanukkah menorahs, let us remember how much we have to be thankful for and let us enjoy the presence of our family and friends, along with our special holiday foods (see recipes included in this newsletter). Happy Hanukkah!



Veria



Athens



Ioannina



Halkis

Hanukkah lamps from the Jewish Museum of Greece in Athens

This E-Newsletter is sponsored by Annette Binder in honor of her great grandsons,
and in memory of family members who have passed.

If you wish to sponsor a newsletter, contact us at museum@kkjmsm.org.

This newsletter, our 152nd 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 over 10,000 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 contact us at museum@kkjsm.org

We have returned to our regular schedule of weekly Shabbat services on Saturday mornings. Please email amarcus@kkjsm.org if you would like to attend. We will be following CDC guidelines, with masks and proof of vaccination required.

Our Museum will be open every Sunday from 11am-4pm. Reservations to museum@kkjsm.org are suggested; masks and proof of are vaccination required.

Simchas

It is our joy to wish Audrey Solomon a happy 90th birthday.



Passings

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our former Board of Trustees member, Len Neuhaus. Len would have turned 63 in January. He passed on October 30th after a courageous fight with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Beth, two children from a former marriage, Sarah and Steven. Len was the son of Annie Yohanan and Serge Neuhaus, the grandson of Joseph and Esther Yohanan, and the great grandson of Haim and Stamo Yohanan. He was pre-deceased by his son, Alexander (Zander). He will be mourned by the community of Kehila Kedosha Janina and many friends and relatives. May his memory be a blessing.



Our deepest condolences to Morris Solomon and family on the passing of Mollie Solomon. Wife, Mother, Grandmother. May her memory be a blessing. Our thoughts & prayers are with all of you.

We just recently learned of the passing of Irving Asser on January 6, 2021 at the age of 70. He was a member of the New Bedford Yannote community established there to supply textiles to relatives working in New York in the garment industry. He was born in New Bedford, a son of the late Manny E. Asser and Ruth (Goldstein Asser) Gaffin, and was a lifelong resident of the New Bedford area. After growing up in New Bedford, Irving graduated from Hope High School in Providence. He earned an associate degree in Journalism from Graham Junior College in Boston. Irv was a huge sports fan and the most loyal fan of the Red Sox and Celtics.



He is survived by his brother, Eliot Asyre and his wife Diane of Jacksonville FL; three nieces: Jill Weintraub and her husband Ben, Marlene and her husband Joe Schlesinger, and Kate Tucker; three nephews Benjamin, Mark and Manning Asyre and two grand nephews, Nathan Weintraub and Zee Tucker. Irv was close to all his cousins—the Assers, Lipps, Blumbergs, Mazzas, Epsteins and Goldsteins and more and was an active member of the Tifereth Israel congregation.

From Israel, we learned of the passing of Chaim Calderon. Originally from Thessaloniki, he was beloved by all. His shop was loved for its tastes of the Balkans.

With the establishment of the state, Calderon began to work as a lifeguard in Bat Yam. In addition, he worked with Haim Rafael (who founded a Turkish deli that bears his name in the Levinsky market). In the evenings, he was pouring drinks at the Bulgarian club *Ariana*, during performances of Aliza Azikri and Aris San together and alone, one of the first bartenders of Tel Aviv. In 1962, he founded the food kiosk "Calderon." The menu didn't need to be written down, simply because everyone knew what to eat: a scoop of yogurt with cucumbers and dill, crunchy prasa meatballs, fresh fried anchovies and of course - lightly baked fish sent after respecting a deep and short frying, the kind that leaves them juicy on the inside, crunchy on the outside and with minimal fat.



It was a kiosk that was founded by Bulgarian partners that he entered as a partner. Over the years, the boys also entered the business. Then the grandchildren, Meir and Rami also got into the business. "Grandpa Rejo used to make us arak and fry chicken liver with eggs for breakfast." The wave of Aliyah from Bulgaria, Turkey and Greece in the 1940s turned Jaffa and Bat Yam into the most Balkan coastal spot between Beirut and Rafah. With borekas and baklava, cold malabi stands in rose sauce, long kebabs and meatballs with soda water and clubs where the Ouzo and the Raki were poured as water, in Ladino, there is no doubt, Chaim Calderon, who came here from Greece was so much a part of it, making it feel like home.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Eleanor Weiser at the age of 80, a dearly loved member of the Yannote community in the United States. Eleanor was a member of the close-knit Naphtali family, the daughter of Abraham Naphtali and Lucy Menahem Moses and the granddaughter of Judah (Leon) Naphtali and Leah (Lula) Confino Naftali.



Eleanor was so proud of her Romaniote heritage and traveled with the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry to Greece in 2015. Eleanor was an educator and a brilliant orator with a sharp memory. She graciously shared the oral history, of her Naphtali ancestors. She adored her family. Eleanor leaves behind her sons, Adam and his wife Laura, grandsons Aden and Ethan, Keith and his wife Sharon, granddaughters Orly and Talia. Eleanor will also be greatly missed, by her sisters Arlene Naphtali Snyder and Vivian Naphtali Greenberg, her nieces, her cousins and her many friends. She loved everyone unconditionally and cared deeply about their lives and accomplishments. She was the widow of Burt Weiser. May her memory be a blessing.

Visitors Flock to Kehila Kedosha Janina

In October, we were honored by visitors from our extended community, always a joy. Irene Matza celebrated her Bat Mitzvah in October and brought many of the family guests to Kehila Kedosha Janina for a continued celebration. Harry and Michelle Gorban came from Massachusetts to reconnect with their roots. We had a lovely visit from members of the Assael family (origins Arta, now living in Israel). And, finally, to continue our traditions as an educational institution, we had a visit of students from Wagner College.



The children & grandchildren of Ruth Matza Goldstein



Michelle and Harry Gorban



Wagner College Students



Chloe Moissis & Claire Porter

Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network

Thank you to everyone who joined our recent nature hike! We enjoyed beautiful fall weather, picturesque views, and great company. Email GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com to sign up for future events, including an upcoming Hanukkah Party! We welcome young adults in their 20s & 30s with Romaniote or Sephardic heritage.

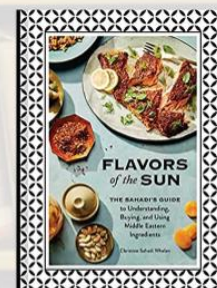
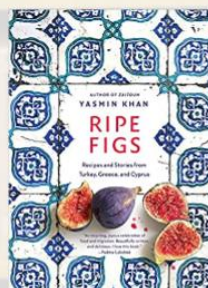
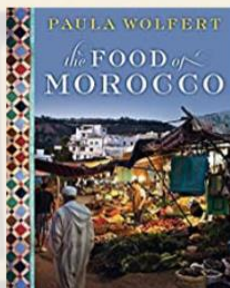
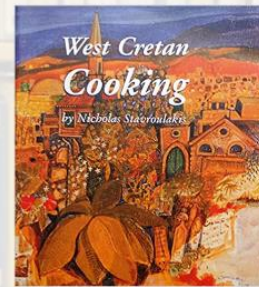
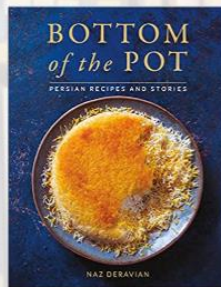
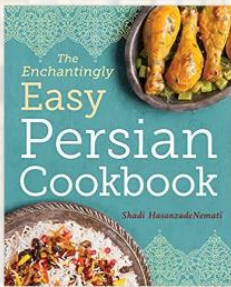
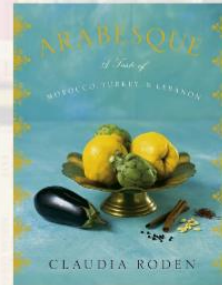
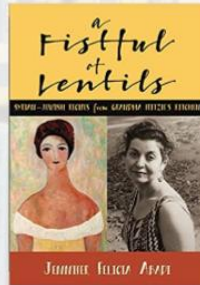
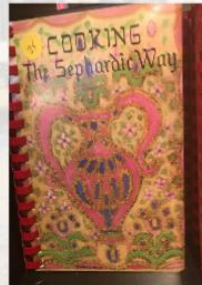
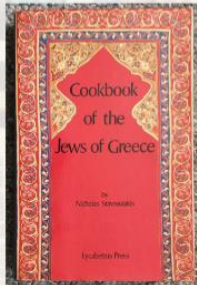


Upcoming Events

Join us for our **Special Holiday Cookbook Sale – November 21 from 11am-4pm**
More than 13 beautiful cookbooks available with excellent recipes. Great as holiday gifts!
Email museum@kkjism.org for more information or to place an order.

HANUKKAH IS COMING! AND KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA WILL BE HOSTING A HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

THE FOLLOWING COOKBOOKS WILL BE ON SALE



SUNDAY NOVEMBER 21 FROM 11AM - 4PM
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC

CONTACT MUSEUM@KKJISM.ORG FOR MORE INFO

15th Annual Kristallnacht Commemoration - Sunday November 14 at 9am (on Zoom)

Join KKJ as we take part in a special event with the New Haven Jewish community to honor Archbishop Damaskinos. This year, they will honor the conscience and heroism of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens, Greece, who risked his life by ordering the churches under his jurisdiction to distribute baptismal certificates to Jews fleeing the Nazis, thus saving thousands of Jews in and around Athens. For his deeds he was named "Righteous Among the Nations" by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center. All are welcome on Zoom. During the presentation, our own Sol Kofinas will be interviewed. Sol and his brother, Zino, of blessed memory, were saved as hidden children in Athens. **Register [Here](#)**



Archbishop Damaskinos
of Athens, Greece

"I have spoken to God, and my conscience tells me what we must do. The Church will issue false baptismal certificates to any Jew who asks for one. And you, as Chief of Police, will supply them with false identification cards."

Archbishop Damaskinos
of Athens, Greece

Please join us for our 15th Annual Community-Wide Kristallnacht Commemoration. This year, we will honor the heroism of Archbishop Damaskinos of Greece, who openly defied the Nazi regime by ordering the churches under his authority to distribute baptismal certificates to Jews, thus saving thousands from certain death. For his courageous, life-saving deeds, Archbishop Damaskinos was named "Righteous Among the Nations" by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- U.S. Senate Commendation presented by Senator Richard Blumenthal to the Archbishop's family
- Comments by survivors who were saved by Archbishop Damaskinos
- Comments by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America
- Comments by Lea Micha, Int'l School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem, & Marlene W. Yahalom, PhD, Dir. of Education, American Society for Yad Vashem

15TH ANNUAL Kristallnacht COMMEMORATION

**Sunday,
November 14, 2021
9-11 a.m.**

Congregation Or Shalom
Orange CT
(203) 799-2341
info@orshalomct.org
orshalomct.org

All are Welcome on Zoom
Register at
jewishnewhaven.org/RSVP



KKJ Reopening for Weekly Shabbat Services

We Need Your Help

Dear Friends,

If you are reading this letter, you are one of the many people who care about Kehila Kedosha Janina. We are proud to have such a large extended community, and we truly appreciate each and every person who has a family or personal connection to our Kehila.

The past 18 months have been a challenging time for all of us. Many have lost family members or friends, or suffered in isolation. For months we were unable to come together in our beloved Kehila and pray as a community. Slowly we adapted and began hosting services on a modified schedule, and we recently welcomed the new year with successful High Holiday services.

I am proud to share the news that Kehila Kedosha Janina will reopen for weekly Shabbat morning services starting October 2 - Shabbat Bereshit. We will continue to require masks and monitor all health guidance to ensure our community is safe. Like other synagogues, our Kehila is facing the challenge of bringing back community members on a weekly basis.

I am writing today to ask for your help. Kehila Kedosha Janina is the last Romaniote synagogue in the Western Hemisphere, and we serve as a center for the Greek Jewish community in the US. For nearly 100 years, we have prayed together on Broome Street according to our ancient Romaniote traditions. However, these traditions cannot continue without you.

We urge you to join us for services whenever you can. Bring your children, grandchildren, family, or friends, and share our beautiful heritage with them. We are particularly asking for commitments from people who may be able to join us on a recurring basis. Maybe you can attend services every Shabbat, maybe you can join us every few weeks, or maybe you can join us once a month. One of the beautiful facets of our Romaniote and Sephardic heritage is our inclusivity. We are proud to welcome people of all Jewish backgrounds. Regardless of your level of observance, we always do our best to make you feel at home. Even if you have not attended services in years, we truly welcome you and would be honored to have you join us.

We all feel a special connection to our Kehila. It is the place where our families first prayed when they arrived in this country; it is the place where we celebrated so many simchas; it is our communal home. Help us keep our Kehila a spiritual home for current and future generations.

Please reach out to Andrew Marcus at 347-204-9461 or amarcus@kkjasm.org if you are thinking about attending services. We will be happy to hear from you and honored to have you join us in person. In addition, join us after services each week for our traditional Greek kiddush lunch. We promise you will enjoy the experience of our community as much as we will appreciate seeing you.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year,

Marvin Marcus
President

Past Events

Our Museum Director, Marcia Haddad-Ikonomopoulos, was honored to participate in the annual OXI DAY commemoration hosted by the East Mediterranean Business Culture Alliance (EMBCA). In this presentation, the personal stories of Jews from Ioannina who perished on the Albanian Front in 1940-41 were highlighted.



May Their Memory Be A Blessing

Joseph Raphael	Died November 5, 1940
Moses Shemos	Died November 26, 1940
Shemos Attas	Died January 11, 1941
David Negrin	Died February 14, 1941
Jeuda Pitsirilos	Date of Death Unknown
Ouriel Negrin	Listed as Missing in Action since November 1940
Nissim Attas	Returned as an amputee. Deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Died in the Gas Chambers on April 11, 1943

Finifter Panel on Romaniote Greek Jews – Michigan State University

In case you missed it, watch this panel discussion on Romaniote Jews featuring our Museum Director Marcia Haddad-Ikonomopoulos, Moses Eliasaf, President of the Jewish Community of Ioannina and Mayor of the City of Ioannina, and Zanet Battino, Director of the Jewish Museum of Greece hosted by Michigan State University.

Watch on YouTube [Here](#)

The Michael and Elaine Serling Institute for Jewish Studies and Modern Israel
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

[Register here](#)



Finifter Panel on Romaniote/Greek Jews

Friday, October 1st 10:00am-12:00pm

The speakers will be available from 12-1pm to talk to students and faculty about research or internship opportunities related to Romaniote Jews. The Serling Institute offers Finifter Scholarships to cover the costs of these opportunities.



Zanet Battinou - *"The Jewish Community of Ioannina: A Journey in Time through the Collections of the Jewish Museum of Greece"*

This brief presentation by the Director of the Jewish Museum of Greece, archaeologist Zanet Battinou, will offer a journey through aspects of the Romaniote history and tradition of Ioannina, examining selected artifacts from the Museum's permanent exhibition and collections. The Jewish Museum of Greece was founded almost 45 years ago to collect, preserve, research, and present evidence of the history and culture of the Greek Jews and their centuries of presence in the southeastern corner of Europe.

Zanet Battinou is a native of Ioannina and of the local Jewish Community. She studied Archaeology and Museology. She represents the Jewish Museum of Greece in organizations such as ICOM and AEJM. She has been participating in the biannual meetings of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance since 2000 as a member of the Greek National Delegation, while since 2005, she has been serving as a delegate in the Museums & Memorials Working Group of the organization. Under her leadership, the JMG initiated Holocaust Education in Greece in 2001.



Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos - *"From the Cobblestone Streets of Ioannina to the Sidewalks of New York"*

From 1906 to 1924 over half of the Romaniote Jewish Community of Ioannina immigrated to the USA; for most the port of entry was Ellis Island in New York Harbor. Why did they leave? What was different about their experience, both in Greece and in New York? What institutions did they establish? What occupations did they engage in? What remains of the Romaniote presence in New York? This presentation will fill the void often felt by Romaniote Jews and explain how they are represented in mainstream studies.

Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos is Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina and President of the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry. As a former educator, writer, editor and translator, she has dedicated her life to telling the story of Greek Jewry. Ms. Ikonomopoulos was honored to be chosen as a member of the scholarly committee that reviewed, translated and microfilmed the Salonika Archives at YIVO, and which compiled the text and visuals for the USHMM's website on the Holocaust of Greek Jewry.



Moses Eliasaf - *"Romaniote Jewry: Past, Present and Future"*

This lecture will focus on the rich history and tradition of Romaniote Jewry, as well as a personal story of the challenges of being the first Jewish Mayor in Greece, especially during the pandemic.

Moses Eliasaf is Professor of Medicine and the President of the historical Jewish Community of Ioannina for the last 20 years. He is Mayor of Ioannina and is strongly committed to preserve the memory of the city and to make its rich multicultural past known.

This E-Newsletter is sponsored by Annette Politis Binder

Annette is sponsoring this month's newsletter in honor of her two great-grandsons, Jack Martin Binder and Dean Austin Binder. These two adorable young boys are the sons of Jeffrey and Kari Binder, the grandsons of Richard and Melissa Binder, the great-grandsons of Annette and Jerome (of Blessed Memory) Binder, the great-great-grandsons of Esther Joseph and Joseph Politis, the great-great-great grandsons of Leon and Sara Josephs and the great-great-great-great grandsons of Ezra Joseph and Chavoula Malta Joseph.

On the Politis side of the family, Jack and Dean are the the great-great-great grandsons of Isaac Politis and Anne Hefetz Politis, and the great-great-great-great grandson of Joseph Politis and Hanoula Barouch.

That is an awful lot of heritage for two young boys to carry. They are probably related to most Yanioetes! Sharing in the pride of their heritage are their aunt and uncle, Melissa and Justin Epstein, and their great uncle Michael Binder.



Isaac, Anne & Joseph Politis



Jack & Dean



Dean



Esther & Joseph Politis



Annette and Jerome's wedding



Binder Family



News from Jewish Greece

Ioannina

Mayor Elisaf welcomed Sid Ganis during his recent visit to Ioannina. Sid Ganis, one of the most famous and successful executives in the American film industry, as well as executives of the Hellenic American Union, was welcomed into his office by Ioannina Mayor Moses Elisaf.



Sid Ganis' family is from the Romaniote Community of Ioannina, and he was awarded the city medal.

Mayor of Ioannina Moses Eliasaf welcomed him to Ioannina, noting that his visit is a special honor for the region.

"This is a great personality of world cinema coming to Greece on the initiative of the Greek American Union. The purpose is to develop actions in Greece related to cinema. We want to thank them for the exemplary cooperation we have and for their visit to our region." Mayor Eliasaf said in his statements.

"Ioannina is my home and I'm currently happy because I'm at home," said Sid Ganis, who "knew" the city through the stories of his grandfather and grandmother.

"Now I'm here. It is a great pleasure to work with the Greek American Union and promote cooperation between Greece and America, especially in the field of culture. The cooperation between Greece and America is one of those with many advantages." he said.

The President of the Hellenic American Union Leonidas-Fivos Koskos praised the cooperation that has developed with the Mayor of Ioannina and the Municipality of Ioannina, with Sid Ganis' presence in the city.



Photo of former music school in Ioannina

Thessaloniki

Life for Greek Jews Under Occupation During WWII – Interview with Leon Saltiel Full article [here](#)

During the Second World War, a total of 43,000 Jews were deported from Greece for the industrialized death of the concentration camps. Of these, fewer than a thousand souls managed to return back. In the meantime, there were Christian neighbors who tried to help with self-denial and others who cooperated with the conqueror and exploited their properties. It is well known: many times history becomes inhumane.



But what was life like for the Greek Jews during the Occupation? How many things do we know or rather ignore about a thriving community that has been almost completely exterminated?

"On the day of departure, people infatuated burn documents, money, break their furniture with cries of wounded beasts, then abandoning the fruits of their work, they leave stacked like sardines in wagons for animals, and treat them with less respect than them," we read in a letter hosted in the edition *Don't Forget Me* (Alexandria ed.), edited by Leon Saltiel.

These are letters sent by three Jewish mothers from the ghetto of Thessaloniki to their sons in Athens, and his Doctor of Modern Greek History at the University of Macedonia, focusing on the Holocaust of the Jews of Thessaloniki, brought the light of light. Letters that the word "shocking" is not enough to describe.

So what did the eyewitnesses see just before they were led to the gates of the Holocaust? What does the extermination of the Jewish community mean for Greece and how did perhaps the most advanced nation in Europe reach this atrocity? The author of this excellent book solved all our questions.

How much did the loss of such an active community as that of the Jews affect Thessaloniki and other cities like Ioannina?

The Jewish community in cities in Greece, such as Thessaloniki and Ioannina, was numerous, active in many areas and very remarkable. Its members excelled in economics, politics, culture and letters. Many of the innovations in the country came through the Jewish community, such as typography, modern business, banking services and the labor movement.

With this in mind, the loss of 65,000 Greek Jews during the Holocaust dealt a heavy blow to our country. Greece has lost a very active part of its population, with a high level of education, international connections and a great sense of patriotism.

Essentially, the Jewish community was an integral part of the middle class that is in every society a carrier of progress and social reforms. In this respect, the Holocaust deprived the country of a population that would play a leading role in the economic and social development of the country in recent decades.

From the moment the Nazis set foot in Greece, how quickly did the systematic extermination of the Jewish population begin?

The Germans occupied Greece in successive phases, starting in April 1941, after coming to the aid of their Italian allies who were losing on the Albanian front. In the following period, the country was divided into three zones of occupation, which also decided the fate of the Jewish population in these areas.

The Germans kept some strategic areas for them, such as Thessaloniki, Piraeus, parts of Crete, some islands and a strip of Evros along the border with Turkey. Their Bulgarian allies occupied the area of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, which they annexed. The Italians took the rest of the country.

The Germans wanted to impose anti-Jewish measures throughout the country in a unified form, but they met with opposition from the Italians, as some important members of the Jewish community were Italian citizens. For this reason they were slow to begin the persecution of the Jewish population.

In fact, the first to arrest the Jews in the zones they controlled were the Bulgarians on March 1, 1943. Then followed the Jews of Thessaloniki who were deported by the Germans from March 15 to June 1943. The Jews of the rest of Greece begin to get into the eye of the Germans after the capitulation of Italy in September 1943, when they occupied the whole country and in the following months deported the Jews of all Greek territory.

In short, what was the everyday life of a Greek Jew like during the Occupation?

I will focus mainly on the case of Thessaloniki, where virtually most of the Jewish population lived. When the Germans entered, the Jews suffered as much as their fellow Christians. There was hunger, lack of goods, terrorism, executions, but without differentiation.

This has changed since the summer of 1942, with the concentration of the city's Jews in Liberty Square for forced labor, the destruction of the Jewish cemetery, and then the internment in the ghettos, the yellow star and finally the transfer to the death camps in Poland. During this time, the everyday life of the Jewish community has become a nightmare, anxious for their present and future.

Do you think the general public is aware of what happened then or has no idea?

From my research, it seems that the wider Greek society was aware of the drama of the Jews. The Jews lived in central areas of the cities, were active in many sectors of the economy, and worked closely with the local community.

So we are not talking about a population that lived in isolation or in some distant region. From the press reports of the time, correspondence and other sources, it is obvious that their neighbors are also eyewitnesses of these tragic events.

The people living in the Jewish ghettos of the time had an idea what awaited them at the end of the railway line they were sent. Yes or no?

The Jews, as well as their Christian neighbors, do not know that the ultimate destination of the deportation is the industrialized death in the extermination camps, although everything around them, the hunger, violence, the trains with 80 people in each wagon without food or hygiene, did not leave them many illusions about the real motives of the conqueror.

In general, did Christians help or not the persecuted Jewish population?

As in all of Europe, so in Greece we had many kinds of behaviors. Some who with great self-denial saved their fellow Jews, others who showed inertia or indifference and others who either attacked Jewish property or acted as persecutors or collaborators of the conquerors.

There is a strong historical rumor about Thessaloniki, which wants many of the city's great fortunes to have been erected on the properties of the Jews who perished in the concentration camps. What do you have to say about that?

It is true that a portion of the Jewish population of the city had a large fortune and intense business activity. After the deportation of the Jewish population, their properties were given by the Germans to Christian security guards, many of whom were attacked. From historical research there are several examples.

After all, is there any explanation for how perhaps the most advanced European nation went so far as to create Auschwitz, the most inhumane and horrific conception in human history?

Historical research continues and the answer to the question should take into account different interrelated factors.

Of course, we must not forget that anti-Semitism was at the core of the Nazi myth and propaganda, that is, various conspiracy theories that the Jews control the world or that they have insidious plans on which they built the necessity of war.

The Jews may have been the primary victims of the Germans, but let's not forget that the final victims of the war were around 70 to 80 million, with Greece losing around 500 to 800 thousand souls.

In October a new memorial was unveiled at the Lianocladi Station in memory of the Jews of Thessaloniki who were sent there for forced labor and tortured by the Nazis in the summer-autumn of 1942. The Greek Railway Organization and the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) on Thursday, October 14, 2021 unveiled the reconstructed column at the Lianokladi Railway Station, in the presence of the Minister of Transport, in memory of the Jews who worked and were tortured in the forced works of the Lianokladi-Karya railway before being deported by the Nazi occupation forces to Auschwitz.



Pfizer Opes Hub in Thessaloniki Full article [Here](#)

Pfizer's Centre for Digital Innovation (CDI) and Centre for Business Operations and Services have opened new facilities in Thessaloniki. Thessaloniki-born Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla opened the centres on Tuesday.



"We have expanded our footprint by bringing our operations center here," Bourla told the crowd. "Our country has human capital and a knowledge-based economy." The centres will contribute €650 million to the local economy, employ 700 workers, and cover nine thousand square metres of land.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis told the crowd that it was a "very special moment" for the city on Tuesday. "More than 50 young people, 15% of the staff [hired by the centre], are Greeks returning for work after several years," Mitsotakis said. He added that the company's expansion will "increase public wealth" in Thessaloniki. Mr. Bourla first announced plans for the hubs in December 2020.

Athens

On October 21-22, 2021, the President of the Parliament of Israel (Knesset), Mr. Mickey Levy, accompanied by a delegation of diplomats and Knesset officials, visited Athens to participate in the conference of Presidents of Parliaments of the Member States of the Council of Europe. During his stay in Athens he met with the President of the Hellenic Parliament, Mr. Konstantinos Tasoulas and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nikos Dendias.



On October 22, the President of the Knesset visited the Athens Church, laid a wreath at the Holocaust Memorial and was briefed by Gen. Secretary of KIS Mr. Victor Eliezer on the history and importance of the Holocaust Memorial and the Monument of the Righteous of the Nations.

Then the President of the Jewish Community of Athens, Mr. Albert Tarabous, welcomed the attendees of the Beth Shalom Synagogue, followed by the liturgy by the Rabbi of Athens, Mr. Gabriel Negrin. In his speech, the Knesset's President referred to how important the existence of the State of Israel is for all Jews and how it will always be a safe "home" for all.

In the evening of the same day, KIS hosted a dinner in honor of the President and the delegation of the Knesset, during which the guests were welcomed by the President and the General Secretary of KIS, Mr. David Saltiel and Mr. Victor Eliezer. During his address, the President of KISE referred to the history and work of Greek Jewry. Knesset's President thanked for the hospitality and referred to the close bonds of friendship between the two peoples. As part of the dinner, gifts were exchanged between the President of KIS and the President of the Knesset. Also, KIS gave all members of the delegation the commemorative series of stamps dedicated to the Holocaust of the Greek Jews.



The dinner was attended by the Ambassador of Israel to Greece Yoshi Amrani, the President of the Jewish Museum of Greece Mr. Makis Matsas, the President and the General Secretary of the Community of Athens Mr. Albert Taraboulous and Delia Alchanatis, diplomats of the Embassy of Israel, the member of the Board of Directors of KIS Mrs. Regina Kounio and the Director Mr. Elias Frezis.



Greek Court Annuls Permit for Kosher, Halal Slaughter Full article [Here](#)

A Greek court annulled a ministerial decision which allowed ritual slaughter without anesthesia being administered first.

The Hellenic Council of State, the top administrative court in Greece, ruled to ban kosher and halal slaughter on Tuesday, according to the Panhellenic Animal Welfare and Environmental Federation.

The federation had requested from the court that it annul a ministerial decision that exempted religious slaughter from a Greek law requiring animals killed in slaughterhouses to be anesthetized first. The Council of State ruled that the ministerial decision violated the Greek law requiring anesthesia and did not set a proper balance between the welfare of animals and the religious freedom of Jews and Muslims. The court ruled that the government should regulate the issue of slaughter in a way that ensures both the protection of the animals and the religious freedom of Jews and Muslims.

European Jewish Association (EJA) chairman Rabbi Menachem Margolin expressed outrage at the decision on Wednesday, saying that "Jewish freedom of religion is under direct attack across Europe from the very institutions that have vowed to protect our communities." According to the EJA, the ruling came following one by the Court of Justice of the European Union last December that allowed EU nations to ban kosher slaughter in order to promote animal welfare without infringing on the rights of religious groups.

The December ruling encourages member states to find balances between the issues of animal welfare and religious freedom. The EJA stated that "it is now clear" that a number of EU member states are "zealously" implementing bans, while ignoring the issue of religious freedom.

"As early as last December we warned about the dangerous consequences of the European Court of Justice ruling, and now we are seeing the result," Margolin said. "It started in Belgium, moved to Poland and Cyprus and it is now Greece's turn. These direct attacks come from many of those governments and institutions that have vowed to defend their Jewish communities."

"What we are witnessing is first-rate hypocrisy," he said. "When it comes to antisemitism, governments and institutions rightly stand behind us. But when our beliefs and customs are attacked right and left by laws, they are nowhere to be seen." The EJA leader stated that the organization would work immediately to demand answers from the highest levels of the Greek government, adding: "How can Jews live in Europe if you continue to legislate against us?"



Visitors from Krakow to Athens

The Athens Jewish Community welcomed a visit by Jonathan Ornstein, Director of Krakow Community Center along with his wife Kasia Leonardi. Krakow has one of the world's most active community centers and Mr. Ornstein is an organizer of the well-known Ride for the Living.

[Ride for the Living](#) is organized every year starting with bicycles from the hell gates of Auschwitz-Birkenau and ending up at JCC Krakow to honor the memory of the Holocaust alongside the regeneration of the Jewish community in Krakow, Poland. Mr. Ornstein and Mrs. Leonardi were guided by Athens Director Tally Mair, at the synagogues and monuments of the Holocaust and Law of Nations and exchange ideas such as the annual Holocaust Survivor Day which is organized to celebrate survivors celebrate, in addition to Holocaust Day. They committed to continuing communication and cooperation that has been ongoing for the last 6 years.



Artemis Alcalay presents Block 15 – Dimitris Semsis directs the Musical Work of Dimitrios Dimopoulos "No Borders (Secret City)" – Watch on YouTube [Here](#)

In the context of the "Ad Libitum" project of the Athens State Orchestra, the visual artist Artemis Alcalay, through her family and artistic experience, talks about Block 15 of camp Haidari – the place of absolute horror and martyrdom, during the German occupation and the National Resistance. The composer Dimitrios Dimopoulos is inspired by human rights, and composes the work "No Borders (Secret City)".

"No Borders (Secret City)" is a string septet. It was executed on the premises of the martyr block 15, and premiered on the C.O.A. YouTube channel, on 24.10.2021, the anniversary date of the founding of the UN in 1945.



At the beginning of the video "Ad Libitum – Block 15" Artemis Alcalay recounts the history of the camp, presents how Art captures this historical chapter, and gives the baton to the music "to continue the sacred debt of Memory, to tell us what cannot be said with words", as she characteristically points out.

The project "Ad Libitum", on human rights, is an initiative of the Athens State Orchestra and is part of the cultural activities of the Greek Presidency of the Council of Europe. The K.O.A. commissioned five young Greek composers, who have recently erupted their compositional course, but have already achieved international distinctions and recognition, to compose a chamber music work on human rights. The works were associated with historical landmarks of Attica, which are identified with human rights. Personalities who have left their mark in the fight for human rights experientially, academically, politically and through art, on the occasion of music, talk about these places of remembrance. "Ad Libitum" is under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Sports.

"No Borders (Secret City)": Conductor: Dimitris Semsis. Cast: Phaedon Miliadis - violin Triantafyllos Loukas - Violin Enkela Kokolani - Viola Manos Gouvelis - Viola Dimitris Gouzios - Cello Vania Papadimitriou - Cello Takis Kapogiannis - Double bass.

A Story of Rescue

How the 23-year-old Sam Nahmias was Rescued from the Forced Labor of Karyas Domokos

It was March 1943 when the Germans in their effort to increase the train traffic transported from Thessaloniki 500 Jews to the railway station of Karia Domokos. Their purpose is to "cut" the mountain in half in order to create a bypass line for the faster passage of trains.

Workers for 6 months under appalling conditions those who managed to survive were executed by the Germans and buried at that point. Very few escaped and managed to be saved. One of them was Sam Nahmias, the man who was saved from certain death thanks to the safe haven offered to him by a family from Lamia. An unknown story for most people that the descendants of its protagonists reveal to us today.



Sam Nahmia was 23 years old when he was transferred by the Nazis to work in the forced labor of Karyes. His injury during the work and his transfer to Lamia hospital proved to be a lifesaver. Knowing that on his return a

certain death awaits him, he sought help from a nurse. She felt sorry for him and took refuge in a patisserie in Lamia, seeking a refuge for the young Jew.

Her call did not meet with a response as fear of the Germans' reprisals stood in the way of the rescue of a young man. But fate had not said its last word. The then 16-year-old Epaminondas Morikis, listening to the nurse's appeal, conveyed the conversation to his father. Charalambos Morikis, a baker by profession and father of 7 children, who defied the danger and decided to hide the 23-year-old Sam. The family of Charalambos and Chrysana Moriki had another "child" and the 23-year-old Sam for a year and a half stayed hidden in the loft of the family's bakery in Laou Square. When at some point they managed with the help of a German to get him an identity card with the name Demosthenes Dimitriadis, Sam worked normally as an art worker.

Liberation will find Sam in Thessaloniki. He will rebuild his life, make a family and always speak with love for the Morikis family, nourishing a vast gratitude for the people who saved his life. Indeed, with his actions in the 80s, Charalambos and Chrysana Morikis and the youngest of their children Epaminondas received the title of "Righteous," a title awarded to those who helped Jews during The Second World War. 78 years later, the two families continue to be linked by bonds of friendship that the current descendants of the Morikis family and his grandson Sam Albert Sasson pass on to their children. Along with Sam Nahmia from the "hellhole" of Karia Domokos during those bleak years of occupation, humanity and solidarity towards our fellow man were saved. He may never have spoken to his family about what he experienced, but his descendants are now asking for is to preserve the memory of the sacrifice of the 500 Jews who were martyred in forced labor.

For the historical researcher Andreas Assael who brought to light the history of Karyes, this is the "Mauthausen" of Greece. "The severed mountain will always be there to remind of the sacrifice of these people who dug it with their hands", stresses Mr. Assael, who has been making efforts for years to declare the area a martyrdom. Watch a video [Here](#) with statements of the Historical Researcher Andreas Assael

Chalkis

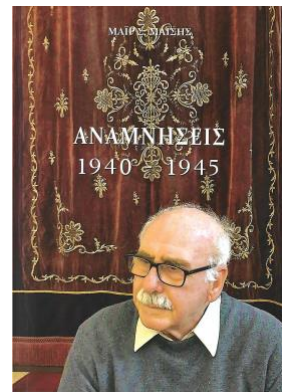
Mair Maisis, historian and folklorist of the Jewish Community of Chalkis, released his new book, entitled "Memories 1940-1945", where he records his memories and thoughts, as a child at the time, from the harsh period of the German occupation.

The experiences of a child, who at the end of the war turned 10 years old, his family - who was saved thanks to its "guardian angels", and his Community, through 14 independent stories, recreate the history of the Occupation and the drama of the persecution of the Jews in Chalkida and in the rest of Greece.

As the author characteristically writes in his preface: "the book basically describes the experience gained by a child who, instead of innocent toys, ... instead of reading fairy tales and learning letters, he goes so far as to see in the middle of the streets people who are ragged, hungry, skeletal from hunger and disease. Even more terrible is the experience of a child facing shooting, arson, beatings, hunger, nakedness, tears of fear and eyes full of terror, without the slightest sympathy. "I want to believe, to hope and to be optimistic, that one day I will see people respect each other's beliefs... and that the words fanaticism, anti-Semitism, intolerance will be completely lost from our vocabulary and peace will prevail in people's souls", concludes M. Maisis.

The book is prefaced by the lawyer, historian and author Thrasylvoulos Papastratis, who stresses that the book "is a historical legacy and a distillate of the author's soul, as it focuses on the most important historical period of modern Greek history that marked Greece and its people".

You can obtain the book by contacting its author at: pappou.chalkida39@gmail.com



General News from Greece

Crete

Greek island of Crete rocked by second earthquake in two weeks Full article [Here](#)
Underwater 6.3-magnitude quake released 'small tsunami' with warning to avoid coastal areas

A powerful earthquake, the second in just over two weeks, has rocked Crete, prompting "a small tsunami" in the south of the Greek island and an evacuation alert.

The quake, which was felt as far away as Cyprus in the eastern Mediterranean, had a magnitude of 6.3, according to the Geodynamic Institute in Athens. There were no immediate reports of casualties or injuries although rockslides were widespread.



"The quake was felt all over the island," Crete's deputy regional governor, Yiannis Leondarakis, told the state-run broadcaster ERT. "And it did cause concern because we are still feeling the aftershocks from the previous quake."

An hour after the underwater quake hit at 12:24pm local time, the Greek seismologist Gerassimos Papadopoulos released a graph depicting a tsunami off the island's southern shores.

"A small tsunami is under way in southern Crete," he wrote. "Keep away from coastal [areas]."

The quake was followed by aftershocks of 4.1 and 4.5 magnitude. Experts said the force of the quake – recorded at a sea depth of 2km, 14 miles east of the village of Zakros in eastern Crete – was intensified by its shallowness. Footage uploaded on social media showed people rushing out of their homes, office buildings and shops as it struck, with locals saying it jolted the island for at least 20 seconds.

Witnesses described the sea receding from the shoreline before the quake struck. "The sea was sucked in, the rocks appeared and then the quake happened," Alexandra Papathanasaki, a local community head told the news portal Newsit, citing a witness who saw the sea withdrawing from the coast.

The civil protection ministry, which had ordered hundreds of tents to be erected for about 2,500 people left homeless when a 6.0 magnitude quake hit Crete on 27 September, immediately dispatched emergency disaster response units.

Teams of first responders were deployed to inspect buildings, archaeological sites and other monuments. Although residents were ordered to evacuate government buildings, damage was reportedly limited to the region of Sitia where a church collapsed and antiquities in the local museum were damaged.

Crete has been rattled by numerous aftershocks since the September quake, described as the largest to have struck on land in more than 60 years and "a bolt out of the blue" by seismologists.

Experts said they did not believe Tuesday's tremor was related to the earlier quake, which caused extensive damage, killing one person, injuring scores and leaving countless homeless.



Deal Undone, But Greece Backs North Macedonia's EU Accession

ATHENS – Although North Macedonia hasn't completed all aspects of a deal which allowed its renaming, Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou said she supports that country's hopes of joining the European Union.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who was attending an EU meeting in Slovenia on the issue of Western Balkan countries' accession, had said he would first require North Macedonia to fulfill terms of the so-called Prespes agreement.

That was made by the former ruling Radical Left SYRIZA, whom he castigated for giving away the name of the abutting Greek province of Macedonia and other terms that let North Macedonia companies call their goods Macedonian.

North Macedonia's President Stevo Pendarovski came to Athens to meet Mitsotakis before the Premier left, after the session with Sakellaropoulou, who has mostly symbolic duties.

She said that, "I would like to reaffirm the importance we attach to the enhancement of bilateral relations and North Macedonia's European perspective. The full, consistent and good faith implementation of the Prespes agreement is crucial for the implementation of both goals," she said.



Greece will still require that while simultaneously giving North Macedonia the imprimatur it wanted, as she welcomed Pendarovski, the first head of state from his country to visit since independence from Yugoslavia in 1991.

Pendarovski agreed with Sakellaropoulou that there are pending issues to be settled and added that his country is "willing to implement the agreement to the letter," said Kathimerini.

Mitsotakis gave Greece's support for North Macedonia as well as the other five Western Balkan countries - Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia – to get into the EU despite runaway corruption and gangsterism in some.

EU Enlargement officials are more hesitant than Greece because some of those countries still have bitter differences, especially Kosovo and Serbia while Bulgaria and North Macedonia have been at odds.

The Associated Press reported that it saw a draft declaration in which EU members are expected to reaffirm their commitment to the enlargement process but stop short of providing a clear deadline as usual.

Sakellaropoulou said during an official dinner in honor of Pendarovski that, "As countries sharing borders, Greece and North Macedonia have an even greater responsibility before their peoples to collaborate and strengthen our bilateral relations based on respect of the principle of good neighborliness and international law, to the benefit of our countries and the region in general."

Greece now seems to be leaning more toward trade instead of political differences as she said that economic relations between the two countries is key to moving on.

Pendarovski said he was honored to be the first President from North Macedonia to visit Greece and that, "We had waited 30 full years for this visit, and have come as friends."

He said the Prespes Agreement signed three years ago, which resolved a complicated issue between the two countries, "was a difficult step for the two countries but we succeeded, to the benefit of our common future."

That opened the door – with Greece's support – for North Macedonia to get into NATO and edging toward EU membership even while not meeting the terms of the deal and occasional provocations over its name and references to being Macedonian, as the country's passports state.

Mitsotakis said it's been 18 years since the EU-Western Balkans Summit held in Thessaloniki in 2003, which he said, "opened the European gates to western Balkan countries for the first time."

"Time is running out," he underlined, "and if the European Union is absent from this region, there is no doubt that others will rush to fill the void."

An Historical Figure Worth Remembering

October 13, 1904

One of the Great Figures of the Macedonian Struggle was killed fighting heroically in a village outside of Kastoria. Pavlos Melas was born in Marseille in 1870, the son of the merchant Michael Melas. In 1874 the family of Pavlos Melas settled in Athens. He studied at the Evelpidon School and served in the Greek Army as an Artillery Officer.



He married Natalia Dragoumi, daughter of Prime Minister Stefanos Dragoumis and sister of Ion Dragoumis. Pavlos Melas, in collaboration with Ion Dragoumis, were the pioneers of the Macedonian Struggle, sending men and supplies. In 1904 Pavlos Melas along with other Greek Officers was sent by the Greek Government for a reconnaissance operation - a mapping of the current situation in Western Macedonia. Then, after the completion of the mission, Pavlos Melas visited Kozani and Siatista (a small village outside of Kastoria) where he took over as head of the Greek guerrilla forces. In August 1904 Pavlos Melas was appointed by the then newly established Macedonian Commandant as head of the Greek forces in Kastoria and Monastiri. As the head of these forces, Pavlos Melas attempted to oust the Bulgarians from the area of Macedonia that they had invaded. On October 13, 1904, Pavlos Melas with his forces attempted to meet with the forces of Kaoudis and Douro where he was attacked by a powerful part of the Ottoman Army. During the battle, Pavlos Melas was mortally wounded and died after a while. The body of Pavlos Melas was buried in Kastoria.

The death of the Macedonian fighter Pavlos Melas shocked the Panhellenic world and was the beginning of the public awareness of the Macedonian Struggle and the Macedonian Question.

Cyprus

Republic of Cyprus Celebrates Independence Day with Military Parade [Full article Here](#)

October 1st, Independence Day for the Republic of Cyprus, was celebrated with a traditional military parade today. It has been 61 years since the republic was established, after Cyprus finally won full sovereignty from Britain.

The day was celebrated with festivals at schools and a large military parade in the capital. The effective date of the London-Zürich Agreements was August 16, 1960, but the public holiday was moved to October 1 to avoid the summer heat and the bustle of the tourist season.



This year's Cyprus Independence Day military parade was described as impressive, both in terms of its organization and execution, as well as the military equipment presented.

Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades gave the traditional speech after the military parade in Nicosia to mark the day.

Anastasiades said he would be happier if Turkish Cypriots had also been present at the celebrations for Cyprus' 61st Independence anniversary. He expressed his wish that in the future such events be celebrated on a free and united island.

"Today we celebrate the 61st anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus, a state created because of the struggles to shake off the colonial yoke," Anastasiades said.

"It is well known that for 61 years we went through trials. We started as a poor colony, to become a modern European state today with structures, institutions, international relations, and a very strong foundation of international law to defend the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus," he added.

He expressed hope that Turkish Cypriots would soon realize how difficult the path is that they are on. A path which, he said, was not chosen by them, but by "those who want to turn the Republic of Cyprus into a Turkish protectorate."

Anastasiades also congratulated the Cyprus National Guard, and in general, the efforts made to strengthen the Republic's deterrent force. The president expressed his wish that soon, such celebrations will be held free from the occupation (of the northern part of the island) and from threats by Turkey.

The Greek government was represented by the Minister of National Defense Nikos Panagiotopoulos, who was accompanied by the Chief of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff, General Konstantinos Floros.

The President, and First Lady Andri Anastasiadou, held a reception at the Presidential Palace on the occasion of the Independence anniversary. Earlier, the president paid tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for the country's liberation.

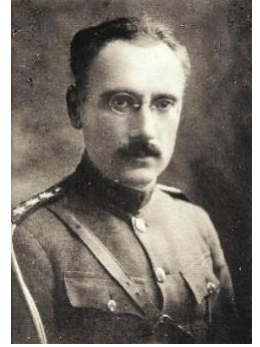
Accompanied by the members of the Council of Ministers, he laid a wreath at the Graves of the Imprisoned and attended a prayer in memory of the fallen during the republic's struggles and wars of the past 61 years.

The landmark occasions honored every year on Cyprus Independence Day are the 1955-1959 struggle for independence, the 1963-1964 bi-communal troubles, and the Resistance to the Turkish invasion of 1974.

Members of the public were allowed to attend this year following covid protocols, using their vaccination SafePasses and wearing a mask.

Mordechai Frizis
By Dr. Michael Matsas

Greek Colonel Mordechai Frizis, an Unknown Great Jewish Hero of the Second World War by Dr. Michael Matsas In October 1940, large Italian forces suddenly invaded Greece from Albania. The newspapers kept informing us of a "strategic retreat" until the day the Greek army stopped the enemy advance and pushed the Italian troops back. It was rumored that "enas Evreos Colonel" stopped them! That is a Jewish Colonel but it became "Hythreos" Colonel or a Colonel from the Island of Hythra because nobody could believe that the gallant officer Mordechai Frizis was a Jew!



The Greek army retreated in panic, except for the forces of the Jewish Colonel Frizis. Prior to the war, Frizis developed a plan to expel the enemy, which was approved by the Greek General Papagos. Frizis implemented his plan and thanks to his victory against the Italians, the Greek army counterattacked and occupied one third of Albania and stayed there until April, 1941. Colonel Frizis fell in battle while leading his troops on his horse in the front line. The Fascist Prime Minister Metaxas and General Papagos gave him the greatest honors and sent deep condolences to his family.

The Germans who wanted to attack Russia could not wait any longer. They attacked Greece on April 6, 1941. A British expeditionary force was stationed in Greece and in the Greek island of Crete. The conquest of Greece delayed the attack against Russia until June 22, 1941. The Germans were very successful in their conquest of Russia.

In the meantime, a Russian spy discovered that the Japanese army was issuing summer uniforms to the Japanese soldiers. He suspected that Japan was not going to attack Russia. He advised that Russian troops could be sent to defend Moscow against the rapidly advancing German army. Stalin placed General Giorgy Zhukov in charge of the defense of Moscow. By the time the Germans arrived in front of Moscow, it was winter and the German soldiers were still dressed in summer uniforms in the subfreezing weather.

The German army had to fight not only the Russians already there, but also the newly arrived fresh Siberian troops. The German army was defeated in this frozen environment and this was the beginning of the end of Germany in the Second World War. The Russian counteroffensive was successful, ultimately marking a turning point in favor of the Allies in the war in Europe. Because of Colonel Frizis' counter attack and Greece's occupation of one third of Albania, Germany spent precious time to conquer Greece, delaying its attack on Russia and putting Russia at a military advantage.

Supporting this idea, during the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, German Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel said, "The unbelievable strong resistance of the Greeks delayed by two or more vital months the German attack against Russia. If we did not have this long delay, the outcome of the war would have been different in the Eastern Front and in the war in general, and others would have been accused and occupying this seat as defendants today." (In my opinion, he implied that the Allied generals would be tried as war criminals.) In addition, the Greek historian Anastopoulos, in his book History of the Greek Nation, writes, "Frizis executed a defensive maneuver and then a tremendous counterattack, without which the victory of 1940 would not have been realized." Another Greek historian, Simopoulos wrote in his book, The Italian Division Julia in Pindos, "The honor of the most glorious victory, which basically put an end not only to the battle of Pindos and Smolika, but along the entire front, belongs to the military tactics of Colonel Frizis."

When I read these statements, one from an enemy general and the others from two historians, my admiration for Colonel Frizis rose to astronomical heights. They emphasize and describe the instinctive, military initiative put forth by Frizis on the front line. I am reminded of two lines of Chaim Nachman Bialik's famous poem, "Where is the fist that shall smite? Where the thunderbolt to avenge?" Frizis became the fist and the thunderbolt that helped defeat mighty Germany.

This is a unique case in history. The chief of staff of the German army attributes the defeat of Germany to the delay produced by the Greek army. The Greek historians credit this delay to Colonel Frizis. The unbelievable conclusion is that Frizis is elevated after his heroic death to the status of a mythical Greek hero and a great hero of the Second World War.

Greece was extremely proud of its victory in Albania and its contribution in the Allied victory of the Second World War. Colonel Mordechai Frizis was acknowledged as a heroic officer only by a few people every year on the October 28 Greek national holiday (which celebrates the Greek refusal to the Italian ultimatum of 1940). Due to anti-Semitism, the Greek governments did not officially honor him from 1945 until 2002.

The following is a moving account of how the family of Colonel Frizis survived the war. As told to me by Iakovos Frizis, son of the Colonel:

In Athens, an order was given for the Jews to register at the offices of the Jewish community. I went there with my mother and my two sisters. There were many desks with government employees, and people were lined up according to their last names. We went to the line for names beginning with the letter F. After my mother told the official our name, he asked, "Are you related to Colonel Frizis?" My mother said, "He was my husband." The man immediately got up, stood at attention, and with great emotion in his expression and in his voice he said, "I served under Colonel Frizis in the war. He was like a father to us. I cannot write your names in these German lists. Leave immediately!" We went home and, before entering our house, we discussed what happened with our next-door neighbor Mr. Vogiatzis. He said, "If you are not registered, the Germans will not come here to look for you. In case they do, do not open the door. Go up to your terrace, jump the little wall that separates our terraces, and come down to my house." He was a good man. The Germans never came looking for us.

The above is an excerpt from **The Illusion of Safety: The Story of the Greek Jews During the Second World War, (second edition, Vrahori Books, 2021) by Michael Matsas**. Dr. Michael Matsas was born in 1930 in Ioannina, Greece, and from October 1943 to October 1944, he survived WWII in the free Greek mountains with his immediate family. He graduated as a dentist from the University of Athens in 1953 and served as a dental officer for three years in the Greek Army. In his last year, he was the dentist of the Military Academy of Athens. **We are honored to sell Dr. Matsas' book at Kehila Kedosha Janina.**

Turkey

Restoration of Synagogues in Izmir

Izmir Jewish Heritage Project Aims to Revitalize City's Ancient Sephardic Synagogues by Kenan Cruz Çilli

The Izmir Jewish Heritage Project was launched in the Turkish city of Izmir to preserve the city's unique complex of centuries-old Sephardic synagogues. This major preservation project promises to establish a museum that will highlight and promote the city's rich Jewish history.

The port-city of Izmir, historically referred to as Smyrna, is located on Turkey's Aegean coast and is well known for its rich Jewish history and heritage. Jews have lived in this part of Anatolia for centuries, as attested to by the ruins of the largest known synagogue of antiquity, located in the nearby ancient Lydian city of Sardis. In Izmir proper, the relatively recent discovery of a 5th century terra-cotta oil lamp, adorned by a Star of David, further highlights the long-standing Jewish presence in the region. In more recent history, however, it has been the city's Sephardic community that has left its indelible mark on Izmir's urban landscape and culture.

Sephardic Jews began to settle in Izmir, and other Ottoman cities such as Istanbul and Salonica, following expulsions from the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the 15th century. In Izmir, the Sephardic community went

on to play a significant role in the development of the city as a major center for commerce and trade in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was also in this period that the Ladino-speaking community began to construct numerous synagogues in the city's old Jewish neighborhood - or djuderia - known by its Turkish name of Kemeraltı.

Despite migratory trends that saw many Jews move to newer quarters of the city in the late-Ottoman era, the neighborhood of Kemeraltı maintained its position as the center of Jewish life in Izmir for several centuries. It was within the confines of Kemeraltı for instance, that the notorious self-proclaimed messiah Shabtai Tzvi grew up in the 17th century. It was also in and around Kemeraltı that Izmirli Jews would traditionally gather to celebrate holidays such as Purim with large and vivacious street parties, much to the discontent of the community's lay leaders and rabbis. Active Jewish life continued in Kemeraltı until 1948, when in the aftermath of the establishment of the state of Israel, many of the city's Jews decided to emigrate. As a result, several of the ancient synagogues in the neighborhood became neglected and gradually fell into a state of disuse.

Several years ago, the local Jewish community initiated a conclusive project in collaboration with the Kiriatiy Foundation to rehabilitate and restore the synagogues of Kemeraltı, understanding the importance and cultural significance of Izmir's unique Jewish legacy. Inspired by the model of several European cities, such as Prague, that were able to successfully preserve their rich, historic, Jewish heritage by means of encompassing preservation strategies, the Jewish community of Izmir decided to launch the Izmir Jewish Heritage Project. This project has the overarching goal of transforming nine of the Sephardic synagogues of Kemeraltı into a Jewish museum, with the aim of becoming a major center for intercultural dialogue and a site for showcasing the long history of Muslim-Jewish coexistence in the city.

The synagogues of Kemeraltı, four of which are built back-to-back, constitute an unparalleled historical and cultural treasure in the heart of Izmir's bustling Ottoman-era bazaar. These synagogues are but a stone's throw away from the 17th century Kestanepazarı and Şadırvanaltı Mosques, serving as a historic window into the diverse urban fabric of Ottoman cities. The setting of the future museum within the synagogue complex will ensure that elements of Izmir's distinct Jewish culture, such as culinary and musical traditions, will be safeguarded alongside material elements such as the countless manuscripts, books, and parochets within the community's possession. As such, the museum will not only guarantee the conservation of these artefacts, but will also provide an exceptional venue for locals and tourists alike to learn about Izmir Jewish culture and traditions.

The future museum is set to be one of the most well-preserved Sephardic cultural complexes in the world, with permanent and temporary exhibitions presenting the tangible and intangible elements of Izmir Jewish culture to its visitors. The famous Polish-American architect, Daniel Libeskind, who is known for designing Jewish museums and memorials around the world, has already expressed his preliminary interest in the Izmir Project, and restoration works on some of the synagogues in the neighborhood have already been completed in recent years. These restorations took place in a major collaborative effort, bringing together multiple stakeholders, local and international, public and private, with the shared objective of safeguarding and revitalizing Izmir's invaluable Jewish cultural heritage.

The Izmir Jewish Heritage Project, financed by the European Commission, is the latest push in a series of conservation efforts that precede the establishment of the future Jewish museum. This leg of the project, launched in June 2021, will provide the necessary funding for the restoration of Kemeraltı's two remaining dilapidated synagogues - the Hevra and the Foresteros. Following the conclusion of this stage, the project will finally have the means to enter its final stage - the foundation and establishment of the Jewish museum.



"This is a very exciting and unique project in a Muslim majority society," remarks Nesim Bencoya, the coordinator of the Izmir Jewish Heritage Project and a native of the city. "Exposing and reviving Jewish life in the historical Jewish District of the city provides a source of pride for the Jewish community members as well as a strong presence in the society. It provides a new touristic destination for the city as well as a strong resource in fighting antisemitism" he concludes.

Overall, the Izmir Project is undoubtedly an inspiring and impressive undertaking for a Jewish community that today numbers less than 1000 members. It is a good example of how numerous stakeholders, including the local community, the European Union, civil society organizations, municipalities, and development agencies can coalesce to preserve vulnerable minority heritage in Turkey, highlighting its significance in the history of the country and recognizing its unique and distinct position in the urban fabric of Turkish cities.

Return of the Lost Tribe? 235 Indians who claim descent from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of ancient Israel land in Tel-Aviv to start a new life

235 people from the Bnei Menashe community, based in India's remote northeastern border states of Manipur and Mizoram, have immigrated to Israel.

The Bnei Menashe, or sons of Manasseh, are supposedly descended from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Biblical Israel sent into exile by the Assyrian Empire starting in 733 BC.



After the exile, the ancestors of the Bnei Menashe community lived in Central Asia and the Far East for centuries before settling along India's border of Burma and Bangladesh.

Throughout their exile, the Bnei Menashe continued to practice Judaism, including observing the Sabbath, keeping kosher, celebrating the festivals, and following the laws of family purity.

Since then, they have been practicing Judaism and hoping to one day return to Israel, reported the Jewish News Syndicate.

The move is supported by the Minister of Aliyah and Integration Pinna Tamano-Shata and the Jerusalem-based Shavei Israel organization.

"The olim [a Hebrew term for immigrants] who landed this morning join the more than 4,000 Bnei Menashe who already live in Israel and have been integrated into Israel society successfully, and I would like to congratulate each and every one of them for finally returning home," said Michael Freund, chairman of Shavei Israel, according to the Jewish News Syndicate.

"We still must not forget that 6,500 members of the community are still waiting in India and longing for the moment when they, too, will be able to come to Israel and it is our duty to do everything we can to make this happen," said Freund.



Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



Hanukkah will begin the night of November 28th with the lighting of the first of eight Hanukkah candles. And during the one or two Shabbatot that occur every Hanukkah, the Torah readings are always one or two of the portions ("Vayeshev" and/or "Miketz", Sefer Bereshit) of the story of Joseph and his brothers. This is not coincidental, because our Sages saw a deep connection between the challenges faced by both Joseph and the Maccabees in their respective eras.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik of blessed memory, in the book 'Days of Deliverance: Essays on Purim and Hanukkah' offers a beautiful insight on this connection. He first points out that Joseph's overall mission was similar to that of his father Jacob in proving that the covenant with Abraham could and would be maintained even outside the Land of Israel, and that "moral [Torah] laws were not contingent upon geography and chronology". However, there were also two distinct differences in his mission: Jacob "had to prove that the Torah is realizable in poverty and oppression," whereas "Joseph's mission was to demonstrate that enormous success, unlimited riches, admiration, prominence, and power are not in conflict with a saintly covenantal life." Second, Jacob lived a life of spiritual and religious heroism within a backward pastoral society, while Joseph "demonstrated his heroic action in the most advanced civilization of antiquity, Egypt." Joseph is the story of carrying forth the "banner of holiness under the most trying circumstances and of sacrificial action, heroic decisions and courageous plans".

Looking at the "Al Hanisim" prayer for Hanukkah, we can see that the Maccabees undertook very similar tasks: "In the days of Matityahu, the son of Yochanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Hellenic government rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will. But You, in Your abounding mercies, stood by them in the time of their distress. You waged their battles, defended their rights, and avenged the wrong done to them. You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton sinners into the hands of those who occupy themselves with Your Torah. You made a great and holy name for Yourself in Your world and effected a great deliverance and redemption for Your people Israel to this very day. Then Your children entered the shrine of Your House, cleansed Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, kindled lights in Your holy courtyards, and instituted these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and praise to Your great Name".

Like Joseph, "the Hasmoneans seized the initiative; G-d willed them to defend the sanctuary, to guard the honor of the Jewish women, the pride of the people and the grandeur of the Torah. They fought like lions, selflessly and with unqualified devotion." Like Joseph, God demanded of the Hasmoneans their total involvement and commitment, sacrificial action, heroic decisions, and courageous plans. In both cases God, ultimately assured our spiritual victory, but only after man had done his part, and at great personal sacrifice. But thanks to the actions of both Joseph and the Maccabees, God indeed stepped in and assured spiritual victory, and Jewish destiny and continuity were ensured in both the Land of Israel and the Diaspora.

And their actions and devotion resonate even louder today. God expects our initiative, complete devotion and determination in preserving the Jewish people's future, even if we must suffer and make many sacrifices along the way. When called upon today "to guard...the pride of our people and the grandeur of the Torah", we must heed the call and do our part, and only then God will step in and assure our triumph. All may be ultimately dependent on God's will, but we are tasked with initiating the process of redemption and the future of the Jewish People. Happy Hanukkah to one and all!



Rabbi Marc D. Angel
Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals
Thoughts on Hanukkah

The Shabbat of Hanukkah was observed among Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire as "Shabbat Halbashah", the Shabbat of providing clothing for the needy. Traditionally, the rabbi would deliver a sermon that day on the mitzvah of charity and lovingkindness. Beginning the following day, members of the community would bring clothing to the synagogue and it would be distributed among the poor on Rosh Hodesh Tebet, the sixth day of Hanukkah.

A practical reason for this custom is that Hanukkah occurs just as winter approaches. It is imperative that the community provide clothes for members who lack adequate clothing to keep them warm during the cold season. Moreover, Hanukkah celebrates the sense of unity that prevailed among those Jews of antiquity who fought against the Syrian-Greek oppressors, and who re-dedicated the Temple in Jerusalem. Just as our ancestors recognized their responsibility to each other and to God, so must Jews of each generation recognize our commitment to each other and to God.

A Judeo-Spanish proverb states: "el harto no cree al hambriento"--one who is full does not believe one who is hungry. When one lives in relative prosperity, it is not always easy to feel empathy for those who lack basic necessities. People become complacent. Or they say: I worked for what I have, let the others work for what they lack. Why should I give my hard-earned money to help others? The one who is satisfied might not feel the genuine hunger pangs of the poor, and might not respond eagerly or compassionately enough.

In his story, "Gooseberries", Anton Chekhov writes: "There ought to be behind the door of every happy, contented man some one standing with a hammer continually reminding him with a tap that there are unhappy people; that however happy he may be, life will show him her laws sooner or later, trouble will come for him--disease, poverty, losses, and no one will see or hear, just as now he neither sees nor hears others. But there is no man with a hammer...."

Shabbat Halbashah serves as a "hammer", as a reminder that we are all responsible for each other, that we need to provide for others just as they will need to provide for us if we should be in distress. The lesson surely applies to providing material support for those in need. But I believe it can be extended to spiritual, intellectual, cultural, communal life as well. The Jewish community sponsors a host of institutions dedicated to promoting Jewish life--synagogues, schools, cultural organizations, communal agencies etc. These institutions attempt to look after our spiritual lives, and to provide services and comfort to all of us. Just as we must be sensitive to the physical needs of the poor, so we must be sensitive to the spiritual needs of our entire community. It is so easy to say: let others support these institutions, let others pay for these needed services, let others take responsibility for a flourishing Jewish communal life.

Shabbat Halbashah serves as a "hammer", gently tapping on the wall, reminding us to become empathetic, involved, and sharing members of our community. There are so many challenges facing the Jewish community: each of us needs to play an active role in strengthening and advancing our goals.

As we observe Hanukkah, let us remember to provide sustenance to those in physical need, and to provide sustenance for the spiritual needs of our entire community--since all of us need and benefit from the institutions which foster Jewish life at its best.

Biden Nominates Greek-American for Ambassador to Greece

Washington – President Joe Biden announced plans last week to nominate George Tsunis, an influential Democratic fundraiser and well-known hotelier and Greek-American community leader, to be his envoy to Greece.

The son of Greek immigrants from Nafpaktos – James and Eleni Tsunis – Tsunis earned his bachelor's degree from New York University and his law degree from St. John's University and practiced law at Long Island's largest law firm before founding Chartwell Hotels. He continues to reside with his wife Olga and their three children in Long Island.



Besides his family connections to Greece, Tsunis travels to Greece regularly and had a very traditional Greek-American upbringing – going to Greek school, speaking Greek at home, and being active in the Church. He has been involved in major institutions in the community, including the Archdiocesan Council of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the Faith and Leadership 100 Endowments, the Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC), and the Hellenic Initiative. Beneficiaries of charitable donations made by Tsunis and his wife Olga have included Hellenic and other causes, with an emphasis on education.

According to a Stony Brook University release, that school received a "\$1.25 million gift from George Tsunis, \$500,000 from members of the Long Island and New York Hellenic Community, and matching funds from the Simons Foundation," which established "the George and Olga Tsunis Center in Hellenic Studies and The James and Eleni Tsunis Chair in Hellenic Studies at Stony Brook University, in honor of Tsunis' parents."

Sen. Robert Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat, strongly supports Tsunis' candidacy. Menendez, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has influence over the pace of confirmation hearings for ambassadorial nominees, which reportedly will be held early November. When the Hellenic Lawyers Association (HLA) honored Tsunis at its 2019 Gala held in the hotel Pierre, Sen. Menendez said that, "George James Tsunis is the personification of the American dream" and his story is "an extraordinary American success story."

Former Archbishop Demetrios awarded Tsunis the Saint Paul's Medal, the Greek Orthodox Church of America's highest recognition for a layperson. Tsunis has also received the Federation of Cypriot American Organizations 'Justice for Cyprus' Award, bestowed on him by former Cypriot President Dimitris Christofias, and the joint American Jewish Committee/HALC Athens-Wishner Award.

At a time when Greece is trying to attract more American investment, Tsunis' experience with Chartwell Hotels as well as his work as director for both Arbor Realty Trust and New York's Signature Bank – two publicly traded companies – give him very deep connections to the upper reaches of corporate America.

The nominee started his career in public service and worked as a staffer in the United States Senate. Over the last five years, he has led major public agencies in New York. He was the former chairman of the Nassau Health Care Corp., or NuHealth, the health system that operates Nassau University Medical Center, and currently serves as Chairman of The Battery Park City Authority. He was appointed to both positions by then-Governor Andrew Cuomo. Additionally, he is director of the New York Convention Center's (Jacob Javits Center) Operating Committee and director of the New York Convention Center's Development Committee.

As a political appointee Tsunis' political relationships will be particularly important for Greece. He has a long relationship with President Biden, having served as the chair of Greek-Americans for Obama-Biden in 2012, knows U.S. Secretary of State Blinken quite well, and is very close to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. He also enjoys other long-standing relationships with other Democrat and Republican Senators on the Foreign Affairs Committee. Now that the nomination has formally been made, Tsunis will proceed to a confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and assuming that the delays in confirmations by the full Senate are resolved, should be in place in Athens by the beginning of 2022.

Presidents on both sides of the aisle have rewarded donors and key supporters with a significant slice of sought-after ambassadorships. About 44% of Donald Trump's ambassadorial appointments were political appointees, compared with 31% for Barack Obama and 32% for George W. Bush, according to the American Foreign Service Association. The last Greek-American who served as Ambassador to Greece was the late Michael Sotirhos, noted interior decorator, who was appointed by President George H.W. Bush in 1989.

City Should Protect Lower East Side Heritage by Preserving 1939-Era East River Park Buildings

The following editorial was written by Richard Moses, president of the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative.

Last Friday, the City's East Side Coastal Resiliency team sent out its final report (i.e. Amended Programmatic Agreement) on the East River Park's historic Art Deco Track House and Tennis Center Comfort Station, two beautiful architectural gems that were part of the park's original construction in 1939. The team resoundingly rejected the proposal to restore and renovate the buildings, and instead confirmed that both would be demolished as part of the Park's upcoming reconstruction.

For the last two years, the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative (LESPI) has been imploring the City to reconsider this decision, based in part on the buildings' eligibility for the State and National Registers of Historic Places. With the assistance of the New York Landmarks Conservancy, we hired an independent team of architects and engineers to perform a preliminary assessment of the cost and scheduling implications of restoring, moving and re-using the buildings versus demolishing and building new. Their assessment, which included specifying all new interiors and designing additions sympathetic to the original structures, found that the structures were in good condition and, in light of the scope of the overall park reconstruction project, restoration would not significantly impact project cost or schedule.

Clearly, a full feasibility study of restoration versus new construction needs to be done. An independent preservation architecture firm, rather than the City's own team, must perform this assessment. This would be in the true spirit of the City's oversight responsibilities for these National Register eligible buildings.

The City's demolition plan will erase a significant link to Lower East Side history. These buildings, the only two of an original group of five, were designed especially for East River Park, as part of the overall plan that included a new East River Drive, this waterfront recreational area, and what was then leading-edge public housing along its border. This was the grand vision of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, with funding provided by New Deal programs.

The Track House and Tennis Center Comfort Station are unique on the Lower East Side, with their site-specific ornamentation referencing the waterfront and the area's maritime past. They will be replaced by structures that follow a standardized Parks Department design template. Why destroy something unique, that reflects the special character of our neighborhood? Should a project that's intended to battle climate change turn its back on the greener solution of restoration over new construction?

These two buildings are but a very small part of the massive ESCR plan. With the impetus to protect our heritage, the City must at the very least enlist an independent analysis before they are torn down.



Recipe for Hanukkah

Prasopita Thanks to Anna Garty

Although spinach and cheese pie are the most common pies, prasopita is also comparatively popular. The sweetness of the leek along with the feta cheese is a perfect combination and a nice break from the typical...

Ingredients

- *1 cup dill, finely chopped
- *1Kg leeks, washed and sliced into round slices
- *1 pack of phyllo
- *1/2 cup milk
- *250 grams of crushed Anthotyro or Mizithra cheese
- *200 g crushed feta cheese
- *1 onion, chopped
- *3 tablespoons olive oil
- *3 eggs
- *Salt
- *Pepper
- *Olive oil + 2 eggs for brushing



How to make it crispy

In a frying pan, heat the olive oil and sauté the leek and onion until softened. Remove from the heat and set aside

In a large bowl, add the leek-onion, dill, milk, anthotiro, feta cheese, eggs, salt and pepper to taste and stir to join.

Preheat the oven to 180C (350 Degrees Fahrenheit)

Brush the pan with olive oil and lay 1 sheet to cover the pan, leaving it to overcome the pan. Brush it with olive oil and continue with 1/2 of the remaining leaves.

**We love to highlight the achievements of our community
We are so proud of Stewart Nachmias**

Hi Everyone!

My animated piece Pulp Icons was chosen to be included in this great moving image show hosted by Cabrillo Gallery in Santa Cruz, California. This is a virtual show, and is now live and viewable. Click [Here](#) to watch the short video, and click [Here](#) to learn more.

Enjoy!

Stew

www.stewartnachmias.com



Bravo to our President, Marvin Marcus, who makes our presence known far and wide

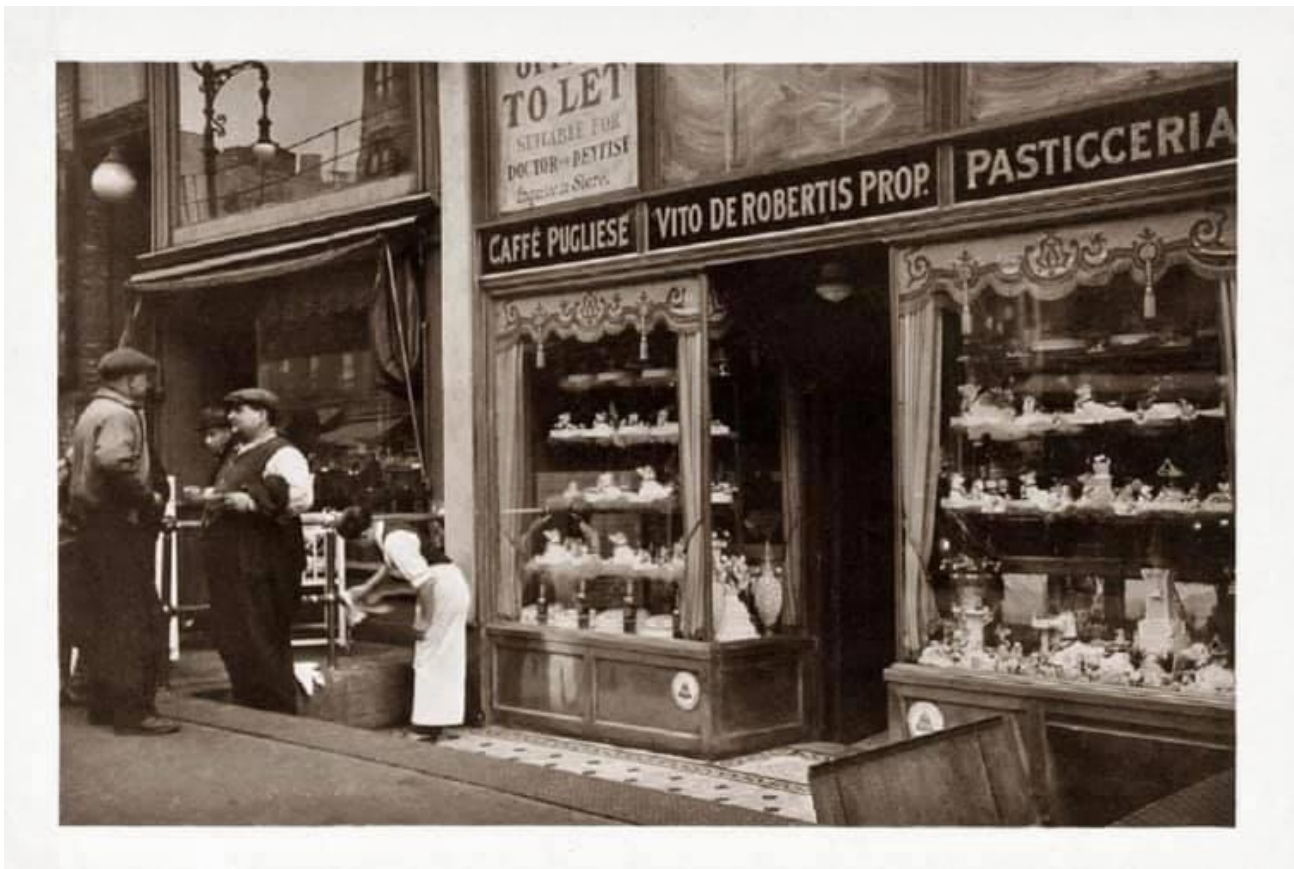


Marvin and Sheikh Mohammad bin
Abdulkarim Al-Issa, Secretary
General of the Muslim World League



Korean Festival

Photo of the Month



Italian Bakery on First Avenue, 1928

So many of you have applauded our efforts. We thank those who have sent in contributions.

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 online on our website: www.kkjsm.org click the donate button in the upper left corner.**

When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street. We are open for services every Saturday morning at 9:30am and all major Jewish holidays and our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm and by appointment during the week.



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