

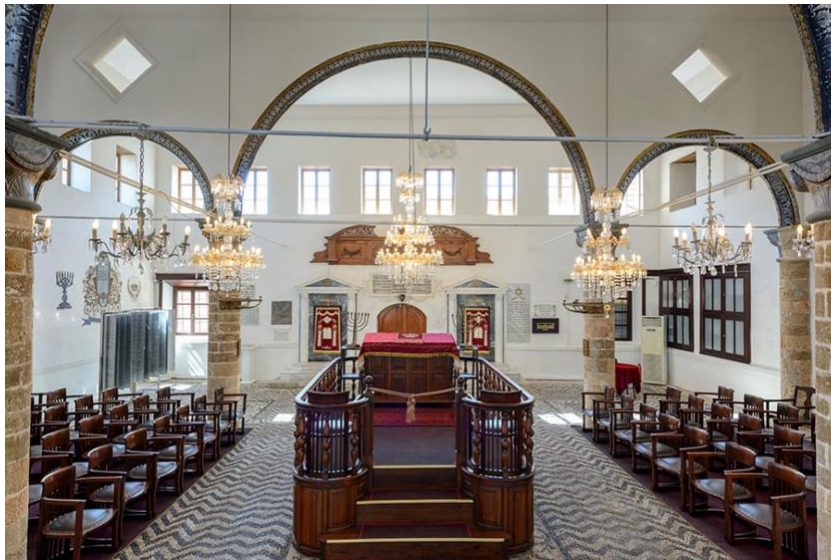


# Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum

## August 2023 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

This newsletter is dedicated to the Jewish Community of Rhodes who, this year, while remembering the 79<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the round up and the subsequent deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau, had to deal with fighting ravishing fires on the island. See articles below on the commemoration in Rhodes and Kos, and the fires in Rhodes.



Kahal Shalom Synagogue in Rhodes

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This newsletter, our 173<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.kkjsm.org).

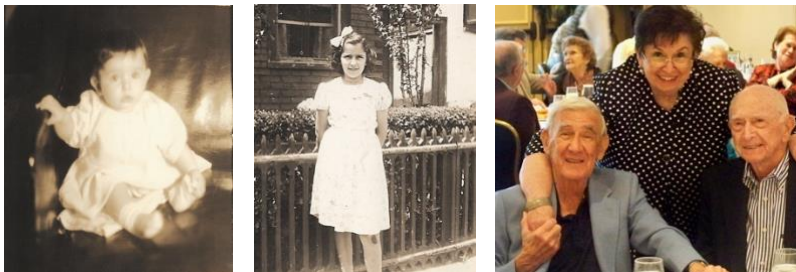
We now reach over 10,000 households worldwide. What an accomplishment for a little synagogue on the Lower East Side of New York City. Our community of 'friends' continually grow with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org)

We are open for Shabbat every Saturday morning starting at 9:30am. Please email [amarcus@kkjsm.org](mailto: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. If you wish to sponsor a newsletter, contact us at [museum@kkjsm.org](mailto:museum@kkjsm.org).

## Simchas

This month we celebrate the 89<sup>th</sup> birthday of Rose Eskononts, President of the Sisterhood of Janina, the 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday of Sami Modiano, the marriage of Alex and Michelle Gilman, and the marriage of John Corbett and Monica Dodge.

Rose Eskononts through the years.



Happy 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday to Sami Modiano. The President of Italy joined the world in wishing Sami Modiano a happy 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Born on the Island of Rhodes, Sami was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in July of 1944. He survived and often comes to Rhodes during the summer to tell his story to visitors in Kahal Shalom Synagogue.



The marriage of Alex and Michelle Gilman. Alex is the son of Eley Moses Gilman and Paul Gilman

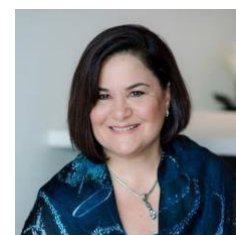
The Marriage of John Corbett and Monica Dodge. John is from the Bakola family and travelled to Greece with the Greek Jewish Young Professionals in 2022.



## Passings

Minos Matsas, the son of Solomon and Hope, has passed away in Greece. He was born on 06/06/1949 in Athens. He leaves behind his daughter Eppidas Matsa, her husband Nikolaos Giakoumidis and his grandchildren Iakovos-Sotiris and Katerina-Esther. He died on June 30th and is buried in the Jewish Section of the Third Cemetery of Nikaia.

We mourn the passing of Hilda Sofia Mitrani. Hilda passed away on July 14<sup>th</sup> at the age of 62. She leaves behind her daughter, Andrea Bennett Werner and her son, David, plus her mother, Esther, her brothers, Alberto and Jose, her son-in-law, Samuel, and her two grandchildren. She will be mourned by all her friends who adored her.



We mourn the passing of Marc J. Levy, a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, and brother. He is survived by his wife Helene; 6 children: Adam, Ingrid, Nikki, Kelly, Shawn, and Michelle; his 9 grandchildren, and beloved sister Lisa. He is predeceased in death by his loving parents Ben and Sally Levy.

**Upcoming Events**

**Join us for the High Holidays at Kehila Kedosha Janina**

2023

5784

**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA  
SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM  
WISHES YOU A**

**HAPPY, HEALTHY, AND SWEET  
NEW YEAR**

**תזכו לישנים 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@KKJSM.ORG](mailto:AMARCUS@KKJSM.ORG)**

**VIEW OUR FULL SCHEDULE AT [WWW.KKJSM.ORG](http://WWW.KKJSM.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)*

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

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

*Please RSVP for services to [Amarcus@kkjism.org](mailto: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*

**Sounds of Cyprus - Concert at Kehila Kedosha Janina**  
**Save the Date - 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

@SoundsOfCyprus  






Greek Jewish & Sephardic  
Young Professionals Network

Κοινότητα קהילה Komunita

# Summer Beach Day

**SUNDAY AUGUST 6 AT 12PM  
ROCKAWAY BEACH**

JOIN US FOR A FUN DAY TO HIT THE WAVES, GET SOME SUN, AND ENJOY GREAT COMPANY AS WE MAKE THE MOST OF THE SUMMER SEASON!

RSVP to [GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com](mailto:GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com)

EXACT MEETING LOCATION PROVIDED WITH RSVP. OPEN TO YOUNG ADULTS IN THEIR 20S AND 30S

## Young Professionals Tour of Jewish Turkey - Recap

Our first ever Young Professionals Tour of Jewish Turkey took place in July and it was an incredible experience! Twenty young community members joined us on the trip, with many of their families originating in Turkey and the former Ottoman Empire with names including Calderon, Camhi, Franco, Habib, Palachi, Nachajon, Sarfati, and Varon.

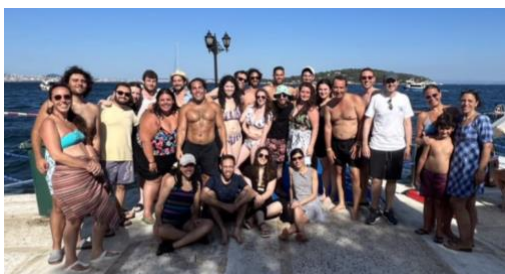
We started our tour in Izmir and visited the historic Sephardic synagogues and Jewish quarter with Nesim Bencoya and Tilda Koenka from the Izmir Jewish Heritage Project. It was so moving to walk the same streets where our grandparents and ancestors lived for centuries, and sit in the same synagogue seats where they prayed with our cherished Sephardic traditions. One especially touching moment occurred when we visited the synagogue of the famous Rabbi Haim Palachi, and one of our participants was actually a direct descendant of Rabbi Palachi. We strolled along the beautiful Izmir waterfront, which was very reminiscent of the waterfront in Salonica, had a lot of fun enjoying the city's nightlife. We also made sure to eat delicious boyoz and huevos haminados. In fact, boyoz have become a staple of Izmir - you can buy them on almost every street corner - although most non-Jews do not realize that boyoz originated from the Jewish community.



Our next stop was the picturesque beach town of Kuşadası. We stayed in an amazing hotel right on the water, swam in the beautiful Aegean, and explored the historic town that was packed with visitors and nightlife well past midnight. We traveled to nearby destinations including the ancient city of Ephesus, which was once the cultural and economic capital of the Roman Empire in Asia Minor. We also visited the ancient city of Sardis, which was once home to a large Jewish community. Amazingly, today there are still remains from an ancient Romaniote synagogue in Sardis dating from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, which is the largest synagogue known from antiquity. It was so special to gather together in this ancient Jewish space; two of our participants actually put on Tefillin, thus continuing this sacred site's legacy as a place for Jewish prayer and community.



As we approached the weekend, we made our way north to spend Shabbat in Istanbul with the Jewish community. We were honored to be hosted by Rabbi Nafi Haleva and the Jewish community at Ortaköy Etz Ahayim synagogue. We had an amazing Shabbat dinner together with other young Sephardic Jews in Istanbul, and some of our participants shared touching words on what it meant for them to visit their ancestral homeland for the first time. So many young Turkish Jews welcomed us and were eager to learn about our family connections, build new friendships, and explore potential business opportunities. Of course, we enjoyed borekitas, kashkaval, huevos haminados, azetunas, bizcochos, and other treats, along with plenty of raki! While in Istanbul we explored the numerous Jewish sites as well as the major tourist attractions of this magical city. We visited Neve Shalom, the Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews, Ahrida synagogue, Kal de los Frankos, Hafia Sophia, Blue Mosque, the Grand Bazaar, the Spice Market, Topkapi Palace, and much more.



We were lucky to have the opportunity to take a day trip to the gorgeous island of Büyükada, where we had a ton of fun at the Yildirim Sports and Beach Club. Another unforgettable moment occurred when the young Jewish women from the beach club started performing Israeli folk dances, and some members of our group actually knew the steps from their childhood and joined the dance circle. We were so touched to meet multi-generational families at the beach club and chat in Ladino about our communities and our family

traditions. Ladino is still a vibrant living language and it was inspiring to be able to connect using this shared language. The entire day was filled with smiles, swimming, and dancing, and everyone at the beach club was incredibly warm and welcoming.

Finally, we took a day trip to the city of Edirne where we saw the beautifully restored Kal Kadosh Gadol synagogue and met two local Jewish community members. We want to express our sincere thanks to all the participants who made the trip so memorable, and special thanks to the Jewish Community of Turkey, Berna Habib from Oasis Turizm, and our amazing guide Selim Puler for all their hospitality and hard work making this tour possible. It was truly a trip of a lifetime and we made new relationships and memories that we will cherish for years to come.





## Visitors to Kehila Kedosha Janina AIKOI MAS / Los Muestrros / Our Own

In the heat of a New York July, visitors continued to come to Kehila Kedosha Janina.



Amy Williams  
from Great Britain



Barth Family from  
Michigan



Andy & Michele  
Morris-Friedman



David & Jackie Fine. David  
is from the Attas Family

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Correction on Baby Naming for Sophie Lauren Katz:

*On July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Colchamiro clan will gather at Kehila Kedosha Janina to celebrate the baby naming of the adorable Lauren Sophie Katz, the daughter of Evan Katz and Ruth Weintraub, the granddaughter of Leon and Nancy Weintraub, the great-granddaughter of Stella Colchamiro and Isaac Weintraub, the great-great granddaughter of Leon Colchamiro and Joyia Mazza and the great-great-great granddaughter of Jessoula ben Matathias Colchamiro and Rachel Galanos.*

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### Sahadi's Comes to the Lower East Side

We are planning an event in late Fall 2023 highlighting the Jewish Community of Lebanon. We will be selling Sahadi's cookbook and treating our guests to Lebanese Jewish cuisine. As soon as we have a definite date we will let you know. In the interim, we are tempting you with this excellent article from the NY Times:

The Brooklyn Grocery Store That Feeds Nostalgia – full article [Here](#)

Sahadi's, on Atlantic Avenue, has specialized in Middle Eastern comfort food for the past 75 years. Now, with a second location and a lively cafe, the family-run market is courting a new following.

The flagship Sahadi's grocery store on Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue. The business is currently run by the fourth and fifth generations of the Sahadi family.



The figs are as big as a baby's fist at Sahadi's, the dates, plump, juicy and sweet. The venerable Middle Eastern grocery store on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn Heights also sells luscious blocks of halvah and honey-soaked baklava. Coffee beans are still stored in and sold from open barrels in the front of the store, along with bins and jars of nuts and dried fruits — cherries, mangoes, improbably green kiwis. Farther back, shelves display jars of tahini, pomegranate syrup and tiny, sweet peppers the color of marigolds. In a fridge are Lebanese sodas in mint and lemon or tamarind. The air is scented with coriander, cloves, cumin and za'atar, the spiky green herb usually mixed with sesame seeds, salt and sumac.

"I go to Sahadi's for manaqish (bread baked with za'atar), and to get a whiff of my childhood," says Bernard Haykel, a professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. "Chatting with the staff in Arabic is like being back in Beirut."

When César Chelala, a New York-based writer from Argentina, visits Sahadi's, he usually stocks up on feta cheese ("which ranges from creamy to salty") and pickled turnips and artichokes — his comfort food: "I grew up in a home where we ate Arabic food. I go to Sahadi's at least once a month to recharge my emotional batteries."

The day that Ron Sahadi showed me around the store, on a chilly Tuesday morning in February, he was clearly pleased to see customers drift into the shop. "Covid-19 taught us to adapt to much more online business or lose sales," he says. "But something is lost without the face to face. You're not just a customer, you're a friend."

Long before it opened on Atlantic Avenue in 1948, Sahadi's had established an emporium on Washington Street in downtown Manhattan, in the area then known as Little Syria. From around 1880 though the first two decades of the 20th century, immigrants poured into the city from the Middle East, many of them from Lebanon. (The country was still part of Syria at the time, and both were under the rule of the Ottoman Empire.) Among them was Abraham Sahadi, who set up a shop in 1895, calling it A. Sahadi and Co. Abraham's nephew Wade Sahadi joined him in the business in 1919, then later opened his own store, Sahadi Importing Co., a few doors down. In the 1940s, as Little Syria was torn down to make way for the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, Wade bought a building across the East River — at 187 Atlantic Avenue — in a neighborhood newly flourishing with a Middle Eastern community. Sometime later, he bought the two adjacent storefronts and combined the spaces. Sahadi's was always a family affair, and now the fourth and fifth generations, Ron; Christine and her husband, Pat Whelan; and their children, Caitlin and Michael, run it.



IN 2019, Sahadi's expanded into a brand-new, roughly 7,500-square-foot space at Industry City in Brooklyn's Sunset Park. The space is light, the ceilings high, the aisles stocked not only with the Middle Eastern favorites but everyday groceries — locals use it as a regular market. Large stone crocks on a dedicated bar contain an astonishing array of olives from Sicily, Provence, Lebanon and Morocco, among other places. The frozen foods section houses bespoke ice cream made by Crème and Cocoa: orange with apricot; vanilla with tahini and dates. In a kitchen at the back of the store, I watch four cooks busy at their stations. Along the walls are cooling racks of satiny eggplants ready to be turned into baba ghanouj, and fried cauliflower dusted with turmeric.

The fresh-bread section, in a corner of the store, is overseen by the lead baker Sofia Flores and aromatic with the scent of warm pita baking on a horizontal spinning grill. On the saj oven, dough that's been rolled into a thin, round disc is draped over a dome-shaped griddle and cooked. The resulting saj bread makes a delicious sandwich wrap. I like mine folded with lamb shawarma and Persian cucumbers inside.


Keen on diversifying, Sahadi's sells challah and smoked fish. Its lavish cheese department runs to fine European and American varieties, blues and cheddars, goat and cow, creamy and hard, sweet and stinky. In "Flavors of the Sun," Christine Sahadi's 2021 cookbook, she notes that her great-great-uncle Abraham would have been "dazzled by the array of imported goods" that Sahadi's now carries. "But he'd also be gratified to know our customers can still buy the same Turkish figs ... that we have been importing for more than a century," she writes.

The new Sahadi's feels thrillingly like a grand bazaar in the middle of Brooklyn. Lebanese wine is on tap at the bar, and there are mezze at the cafe. Just outside in a courtyard, at tables warmed by a fire pit, you can dine on harissa salmon and brownies flavored with tahini. On Friday nights, there is sometimes a salsa band. Salsa? "After all," says Pat Whelan, "you might also ask, 'What's an Irish Italian guy like me doing here?' This is New York."

## News from Jewish Greece

### Athens

We are happy to share information on the upcoming Greek e-learning classes for 2023-2024 hosted by the Jewish Community of Athens. Hosted for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, these Greek online classes are open to both adults and children. The teachers are native Greek speakers and possess extensive teaching experience. Lessons are conducted either in English or Hebrew. Sign up here by August 18: <https://tinyurl.com/Greekelearning23-24reg>



**e-Learning for adults  
and children living abroad**  
**GREEK LANGUAGE COURSES**

Wanting  
to learn Greek  
with a personal  
touch?

Would you like  
to maintain  
a Greek Jewish  
Connection?



Would you like  
to strengthen  
your Greek  
language skills?

Would you like  
to learn Greek  
by a native  
Greek speaker?

#### Course details

October 2023 – June 2024

1-2 times per week depending on the age group / Small groups

Yearly cost: €450 / \$502 / NIS 1823

Please register with the following form  
<https://tinyurl.com/Greekelearning23-24reg>  
and we will be in touch with you after the deadline  
as to the details of the date and times.

## e-learning

Registration deadline:  
**Friday 18th August 2023**

*Minimum class size is required for course  
to take place.*

For additional information please e-mail: [pmo@athjcom.gr](mailto:pmo@athjcom.gr) or call +30 210 220 5915

## **Actions of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) Zero Tolerance for Neo-Nazi Formations**

The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece expresses the strong conviction of Greek Jewry that the Greek government together with all the democratic forces of our country are vigilant and will not allow any neo-Nazi formation that reappears in the Greek Parliament to offend the values of humanism and democracy. They will not allow obscurantists to reinstate security battalions, swastika crosses, Nazi salutes and violence in Greece. And precisely because we do not forget that 6,000,000 of our co-religionists were brutally killed in the Nazi extermination camps, because our country, like the whole of Europe, suffered the persecution of the Nazi onslaught with millions of victims, we must all show zero tolerance to any attempt to subvert the prosperity and harmonious living of citizens regardless of color, race, gender or religion.

Athens, June 27, 2023

Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece

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### **Thessaloniki**

#### **Story of Saving Greek Jews in Thessaloniki during WWII** Full article from KIS [Here](#)

The story of the family that managed to survive the persecution and crimes of the Germans in Thessaloniki is told to Parallaxi by Andreas Assael, second son of Freddy Joseph Assael, chemical engineer, honors student of the Technical University of Athens and grandson of Markos Assael, merchant and producer.

On the occasion of the recent hundredth birthday of Janine, the only one still alive from the family of five who hid and managed to live from the torture of the Germans on the Jews of Thessaloniki, memories become words and describe a dark time for the city that, fortunately, recently began to take their place in history. The Assael family was middle-class, and they had a house, on Vasilissis Olgas Street, opposite Ascension. Corner of Olga and Karyotaki. They also had a smaller house right behind theirs, where they rented it.

"My grandfather made shoe polish and had things of home use that he traded. His shop was in Fragkon. The family belongs to the three families that were completely saved, hidden in Thessaloniki. The other two were the Algavas family, which after the war went to America and did not come back, and the Pardo family, where they also left and lived in Athens. Other people were saved in Thessaloniki but they were isolated."

Janine, one of the two daughters of the Assaels, is the only one from that time who is still alive, but due to her age it is now difficult to remember and talk about what she experienced with her siblings and parents.

However, about ten years ago, on an English radio show, she told her story and, fortunately, this historical document exists in its entirety here: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80017545>

Continuing the family's story, Andreas Assael mentions:

"As we know, when the Germans entered in April 1941, at first they did not bother or particularly hurt the Jews. They bothered them only as much as they bothered the Christian population. In fact, they had put an officer in my grandfather's house who lived with them, had a room in the house, because they did not have enough places to put the officers, and they placed them in Jewish and Christian homes. This officer one day said to my grandfather, "Marco, I'll tell you something, but that conversation never happened." Then my grandfather went into the room, the German closed the door and said, "Don't go with the family to Germany, they will hurt you. Take what I'm telling you seriously." This was a warning from the officer to the Assael family long before the call. That is, we have the period from the entry of the Germans in April '41 until the gathering of Freedom Square that took place on July 11, '42, which I will call in quotes, quiet period. There was some theft, some of them happened, but not so serious as to frighten the Jewish community. The big change is with the gathering of Freedom Square. Suddenly, in the newspaper Apogevmatini, there was an article saying that all Jews between 18 and 45 years old must report to Eleftherias Square and anyone who does not do so will be punished with confinement in a concentration camp. It was the first time that "concentration camp" was used as an expression in Greece. It had never been used before. Everyone was very

scared. My family also went to the Jewish community, but they were told not to be afraid and that it was not for anything bad...

My father was one of the first. It was there an hour and a half before call time and it was set up. He was standing with others who had arrived first, at the point where the OASTH bus passes today, opposite the old Ionian bank. At some point, the well-known traitor and collaborator of the Germans, Lascaris Papanauum comes from the Monastery and after seeing my father, he says "aren't you working in the factory of Xenakis?". My father worked before and after the entry of the Germans, at the oil production plant of Xenakis, which was located in the FIX area. His position was somewhat privileged because this factory was financially strong and the Wehrmacht took the oil for the food of its army, so Xenakis and his factory looked after him. "Yes, it's me," my father says. Then Papanauum takes him out of the row and starts kicking and punching, from the stop to the steps of the Ionian Bank, giving terrible blows to my father. He told me many years later about that day that he ate the wood of his life. Papanauum wanted to write my father first for forced labor and take him first. So that they undo it first. Lest any Jew be left in an advantageous position. But my father, one day at the factory, had an episode. Once two Germans, an Austrian and a Berliner who were responsible for taking the oil from the factory, came and mistakenly signed that they had taken more than they had actually received. All the workers in the factory then started "crazy dancing" because oil at that time was too expensive. My father said that it is enough for me to be Jewish, I will not contribute to this deception of the Germans and he calls them and tells them the mistake that was made. They came, took the rest of the oil and told him they wouldn't forget what he did. And indeed, they did not forget it. So when after Freedom Square my father went to the factory with a swollen head and blue eyes and a broken nose, those Germans saw him and asked him what happened. My father told them what happened and they told him that they would not let it become what Papanauum wanted and would not allow them to send him to the works. The joke was at the Koniordou Mansion, where he got a paper from Merten, who had just taken office, saying that he was useful to the economy and that he was exempt from projects and other sanctions. That's how my father got this paper, which he had a lot of power."



Assael Shop

"They were sent to forced labor..."

"They took them all after two weeks of the rally in Freedom Square. They were called to go to projects and sent to Halkidiki, sent to Katerini and put there to work in completely unsuitable conditions, with wood and without food. So many began to die. Then the elders, in order to save the workers who were close to 3,000, agreed with Merten to pay a ransom and indeed, so it happened in this ransom where it was an exorbitant amount in gold sovereigns, the Germans demanded that the area of the cemetery be included, supposedly for military purposes and so the Community gave permission to the Germans to use the cemetery.

As soon as the workers began to come back, exhausted and exhausted, in December '42, a month or two later, they began to impose regulations on the community, such as always wearing a star and various other instructions. But there were too many. As soon as one metre was over and the next was being prepared, they suddenly learn that Baron Hirsch's camp has been closed with planks and that its inhabitants will soon be deported. With these and other things, on March 15, the first train leaves with about 2500 Jews in the carriages, i.e. the inhabitants of Baron Hirsch. Soon after, he filled the Hirsch with Jews from other neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the Assaels felt better off than others, they felt safer because they had the paper from Merten and because my father worked in the factory.

His father and sisters always had very good Christian friends. One of them was Manolis Koniordos, scion of the well-known distillery, who lived in Sofouli at the time. His "hobby" was to save English soldiers who had been cut off by the rapid entry of the Germans into Greece. He would find them, hide them in his house or other houses nearby, and when a group would gather, they would talk to Cairo and he would come and take them on a submarine. In this way, Koniordos had saved many lives. He had built a network of safe houses and trusted people hiding them. So he loved my father's little sister, Lulu, who was very sweet, very beautiful and had a great sense of humor. So Koniordos told my father that he didn't want the family to leave, or even suggested

that he keep Lulu with him. The Jewish family, like the Christian family, is very close-knit. So they didn't want to let Lulu stay away from the family, while the grandfather's view was that they can't kill them, they haven't done anything. "There have been many displacements in history, but to kill us, this has never happened. And whatever happens to us, let us all suffer together and Lulu will come with us to Poland until the war is over," he said. But Koniordos insisted and every now and then returned to my grandfather, but he always got the same answer. Meanwhile, they were forced out of their homes and went into ghettos. So they left Ascension, from their home, and went to the area of Martiou, in a ground floor house with rent. It was then that Jews were forced into ghettos before the persecutions began. Before, there was no ghetto in Thessaloniki, so at that time they built three or four ghettos that also set targets from outside, Christian gendarmes and German guards. A large ghetto was in the March area where the Assaels went. The plan of the Germans was to restrict the Jews more and more, so that when they were to catch them they would know where they were...

My father met my mother, they got married and had two children. My mother was a Christian from Constantinople. Too bold for that time. My mother's parents had no problem with my father, while ours were not thrilled when she brought them a Christian. They wanted a Jew, but also where to find her and want then...

Mrs. Maria and Manolis Koniordos were honored by Yad Vashem for their actions during the occupation with the title of "Righteous Among the Nations". Mary was not alive when the ceremony took place, her daughter Mary came and got the medal."



Η μοναδική φωτογραφική απόδειξη του εβραϊκού συνοικισμού του Βαρόνου Χίρς που λειτουργούσε ως κεντρικό γκέτο των Εβραίων της πόλης

Entrance to Baron Hirsch Ghetto

Janine turned 100!

"Janine never returned to Greece permanently. She only visits very often. She always brought us the best games. They were a very nice couple. They also had a daughter who didn't want to deal with the family's past," Andreas Assael recalls of his aunt who recently celebrated her birthday.

Her hundredth birthday was celebrated a few days ago by Janine Assael, the last of the 5 Assaels, who ignored the orders to deport the Nazi occupiers of Thessaloniki and hid 1.5 years in the city to finally save themselves, thanks to the heroism of their Christian friends.

"My beloved Aunt Janine turned 100 years old. It is the last of the 5 Assaels who ignored the orders of deportation and hid for 1.5 years in the city. They were saved thanks to the heroism of Christian friends, I mention Manolis Koniordos, Maria Voudourogrou, the Athiridis family... Best wishes from Charles and Camilla," wrote Andreas Assael, who honors his family's history. This precious history that is inextricably linked to the history of Thessaloniki.

Source: parallaximag.gr, 20.6.2023

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## The History of Maccabi Thessaloniki from 1908 until Today

Email [Museum@kkjasm.org](mailto:Museum@kkjasm.org) for the full article, and learn more [Here](#).

We will refer to Thessaloniki and the Maccabee Gymnastic Club, also known as the Maccabi Gymnastic Club of the Jewish community, to describe its historical course. Apart from the archive of the team, our valuable interlocutor from the club was Mr. Tzakos Aruch, who describes to us the key points of the club's course. -When was the team founded and who were the first founding members of the Board.

The club was founded on December 12, 1908 as Agouda Leitalmud Makkavi, (Greek: Jewish Gymnastic Club of Maccabees) when Thessaloniki was still part of the Ottoman Empire, by H. Arditis, S. Frances, I. Cohen, L. Sides, I. Alvo, L. Pinhas, A. Matarrassos, M. Agostaris and S. Venesia. Maccabi, apart from sports activities,

maintained a choir, organized excursions and gave Hebrew language and history lessons to anyone who wished. After the great fire of 1917, Maccabi experienced a period of decline, the offices, the facilities of the association and almost the entire Jewish quarter of the city were destroyed. In 1917 it merged with the also Jewish sports clubs of Thessaloniki Max Nordau, Kadima and Bnei Chion into a club named Theodore Herzl. In November 1924, members of Maccabi left and founded Akoach, which also maintained several divisions and was, along with Maccabi, the two largest clubs in the Jewish community that competed in local leagues. In 1926 the members of Maccabi left the association Theodore Herzl and re-founded Maccabi. In 1930 he became a member of the international organization of Maccabi clubs and took part until today in the Maccabi. In 1930, when he joined the organization, he was invited to Sofia to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the local Maccabi. After an article in the Macedonia newspaper in 1931 claimed that the Maccabi representative took part in a Bulgarian nationalist event on Macedonia, nationalist organizations in Thessaloniki attacked and destroyed the association's offices and the Jewish quarter. The events became known as Campbell's Pogrom. In 1939 the statutes were amended and took its current name. During World War II, all athletic activities ceased. Most Maccabi members, as well as the city's Jews, were taken to concentration camps and perished there. In 1945 with the liberation those who survived tried to reopen the club, managed to do so for a few months and then it became inactive. In 1966 Maccabi reopened and continues to this day with fewer classes and athletes from outside the Jewish community.

### Boxing

The department was founded in 1935 and produced great boxers mainly then the three sports belonged to the same federation, in 1938 the Greek federation assigned to Maccabi the local championship. While it was the only pre-war section of the club that also had non-Jewish athletes. Great athletes are Dinos Uziel, a member of the national team, Jacob Razon, Salomon Arouch whose life was documented in a film (Triumph of the Spirit). Boxing was re-founded in 1967 and is one of the departments that the club has today....



Salomon Arouch

-Who are the emblematic figures of athletes in the history of Maccabi?

The most emblematic figures of the club are Leon Pasy (runner), national champion, Balkan gold medalist and later athlete of Maccabi Tel Aviv.

In boxing, Dinos Uziel, who is the most important figure in the history of the club and administratively, Jacob Razon, Salomon Aruch (for whom a film "Triumph of the Spirit" was made).

Useful bibliography: Zaikos Nikos, 2010, Makabi Gymnastic Club of Thessaloniki 1908-2010, Thessaloniki History Center

P.S. we thank Mr. Jacko Aruch for providing information.

Source: ertnews, 24.06.2023

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## **Anniversary of the "Black Saturday" of Thessaloniki - July 11, 1942**

From KIS (Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece)

When one of the darkest pages of world history was written in Eleftherias Square. It has been 81 years since Nazi troops rounded up thousands of Thessaloniki Jews in the center.

One of the best-known photographs of the Holocaust is at the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin. It is from Eleftherias Square in Thessaloniki and the so-called "Black Saturday" of 1942, a day with enormous symbolic weight. The public humiliation of the city's Jews was the first step in the dehumanization that followed in the Nazi extermination camps.

"On the first days of July 1942, an official announcement of the German Military Administration of Thessaloniki-Aegean was published in the newspapers of Thessaloniki. Through it, all Israelite males, aged 18-45, were invited to present themselves at Eleftherias Square on the morning of Saturday, July 12, at 3 o'clock in the morning, under threat of severe penalties. The German gendarmes of the Military Police (FG) are pouring bulldogs against some Israelis... Other Israelites who, tired of long waits, have been seated on the ground, the people of the Gestapo beat to the point of blood. Other Israelites are required to perform strenuous gymnastic exercises continuously and for hours under threat of beating."



The excerpt from the memoirs of Yomtov Yakoel, a lawyer of the IKTH, describes in a shocking way what contemporaries will never be able to do about that day, July 11, 1942, when in Eleftherias Square – the central square of the city that the current administration of the municipality of Thessaloniki saw in the future as a car park, gathering the arrows not only of the Jewish community but of any person who ever read what happened that morning – one of the darkest was written pages of history. Not only of Thessaloniki, but of our world as a whole.

"Finally, other groups of Germans compel Israelites to perform humiliating movements (somersaults) in the eyes of Christian curious and spectators. To complement the spectacle, photographs of the gathering were taken by Germans and photojournalists, which were immediately presented to the Greek press the next day with descriptions characteristic, to the detriment of the Israelites," continues Yomtov Yakoel.

However, his saddest recollection-observation that vividly shows how all the Holocaust, but also all large-scale crimes against people, happen because the "ordinary", the "normal" people, those next door, allow it. "It is noteworthy that in this adventure of mass registration and forced assembly for work of 8000-9000 Israeli Greek citizens, no reaction was expressed either by Christian society or by state and local authorities," Yacoel wrote.

Source: MACEDONIA, 11.7.2023

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**Correction:** Article on the Persecutions in Thessaloniki that appeared in our July E-Newsletter The Great Fire in Thessaloniki was in 1917 and there were 50,000 Jews as fire victims, not as victims who paid with their lives.

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### **Neo Orestiada**

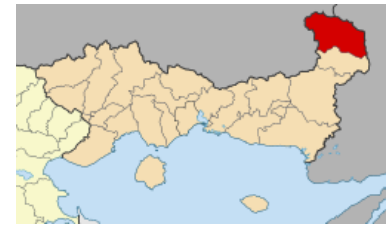
*The history of the Jewish community of New Orestiada was presented by the lawyer and historian Thrasyvoulos Papastratis during the Scientific Conference on "The multiculturalism of New Orestiada", which took place on June 30, 2023, at the Cultural Multicenter of Orestiada, within the framework of the 12th Panthrakida meeting.*

*The blog Boreas magazin published the following suggestion by Thr. Parastrata and photos from the event:*

"In that tragic and black summer of 1923, all over Greece was in turmoil and freezing, as everyone waited for the conclusion of the negotiations for the longed-for peace. For the inhabitants of old Greece, hearing of the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne meant relief, because the country was definitively disengaged from the war adventure of the last decade. For refugees living in camps and shacks, Lausanne meant certifying the end of their previous lives and the definitive loss of their old homelands and the right to return to them. Their future was bleak and difficult: storms and storms awaited them and a long struggle to rebuild their lives.



For the people of Karagač, however, the signing of the peace treaty meant something different: the beginning of the great adventure of refugees. Because it was they who had to pay the price of peace, or more accurately, their homeland was the price, because it was granted as compensation to remove Turkish economic claims. As early as May 27, 1923, the inhabitants of Karagač were informed of their city's fateful concession to Turkey, and Lausanne was nothing more than the official titles of the end of a three-thousand-year history.



Map showing location of Neo Orestiada

In those years there was a very large Jewish community in Edirne, whose large population even contributed to the election to the Greek Parliament of the Jewish MP of Adrianople in the elections of 1920, Solomon Mitranis. The exodus of Greeks from Edirne and then from the suburb of Karagač entailed a significant economic and cultural blow for the city. An active and large population group was forced to expatriate, leaving behind a long history and an irreplaceable void.

The decision of a significant portion of Greek Orthodox Karagatsians to create a new city at a very short distance from the old one, was a challenge and then an achievement, since Orestiada became a modern city with great potential and opportunities, which fulfilled the expectations of its founders.

The creation of the new city also had a positive impact on a group of Karagač Jews, who saw their old city deserted. The Exodus of the Greek Orthodox would also upend their own lives, since Karagač's trade and economy would de facto be paralyzed. These Karagatsian Jews had become Greek citizens, acquiring Greek citizenship ipso jure, as did all the inhabitants of Eastern Thrace, when it had been liberated by the Greek army and incorporated into the Greek state. So they decided to settle in the new city of Orestiada, building a new life there.

Their settlement and the creation of the Jewish Community of Nea Orestiada did not happen lightly. On the contrary, reactions were created, certainly not in the wider Greek Orthodox population of Orestiada, but in specific circles that saw their individual petty interests threatened. Hiding behind the Prefect of Evros Kalogeropoulos, they invoked the supposed border security that was supposedly threatened by the settlement of the Israelites. However, the Greek State did not listen to their protests and the Jewish Community of Nea Orestiada was officially recognized as a legal entity. The Jews remained in Orestiada. In 1925 they built their Synagogue on Evripidou Street, where today the Christian Home is located.

The attractiveness of the new city and the dynamic aura it exuded, attracted some more Jewish families from Didymoteicho, but also other areas, who settled in Orestiada, to the development of which they would contribute in the following years. Contrary to popular belief, these Jewish settlers were toilers, not tycoons. Among them were body makers, tsarouchas, sweepers, sandal makers, tailors, small professionals and employees, while there were also a few merchants of fabrics, glassware, flour and cocoons.

The Jewish Community of Orestiada continued its course until 1943. In 1934 it seems that a small number of Jews settled in Orestiada, who were expelled by the pogrom of the Turkish authorities in Eastern Thrace and especially in Edirne. These Jews found refuge in Greece and chose Orestiada because of its proximity to their old homeland and the existence of their relatives there.

The reactions to the presence of Jews in Orestiada did not cease to exist in the following years, from sclerotic circles, as shown by an article in the Alexandroupolis newspaper Proodos, according to which "Orestiada was flooded by Jews", which describes an anti-Semitic incident in the café of Ioannis Patelidis, between supporters of the anti-Semitic and fascist organization UGS and Jews of the city. centered on the Jewish singer of the center Stella. The newspaper proceeds to make anti-Semitic comments about the Jews of Orestiada, which it characterizes as "a parasite element, Masonic united, which enriches itself at the expense of the rural population, which raises the head insolently and wants to transform this struggle of Hellenism, Orestiada into Palestine". For this reason, due to the influx of Jews in the bazaar of Kastanies, it was necessary, according to the newspaper, to monitor their movements vigilantly, because it considered the presence of Jews at the border as dangerous and a barrier had to be put in place to their massive settlement in Orestiada. The official

state, however, as well as the vast majority of the citizens of Orestiada, had the opposite view and the Greek Jews of Orestiada continued their life in the city until the fateful May of 1943.

As the last written document, we meet in a professional Guide of 1940 the money changers – scavengers Mordo Calvo and Nissim Alcabes, the insurer Simanto Tzivre, the cereal and brood merchants Yeudas Calvo and Yeudas Tzivre, the leatherwriter Israel Khalfon, the ready-to-wear merchant Çelebi Tzivre, the carpenter Siamdo Mesulam, the grocers Pepo and Rafael Tzivre, the distillers Israel and Nissim Calvo, the tailor Mois Calvo, the sandal maker Ishak Kofi, the sweepers Samuel Ventura and Solomon Micatel, the scepter tailor Yeuda Kazes, the shoemaker Marco Tzivre, the textile and novelty merchants Çelebi Alcabes, Moses Loga, Solomon Menasse, Bohor Menta, Elias Nahmia, Mordo Rafael, Pepo Givre, Mois Benoun and Bohor Taranto, the bodybuilders David, Leo and Marco Miscalte and the convenience stores Rafael Tzivre, Rafael Moyaraf and Mois Benali.

This small Jewish Community of 200 souls did not consist merely of nominally Greek subjects, but of Greeks in conscience. That is why all the young people of the Community joined the Greek-Italian war of 1940-41, along with the rest of the Orestiadites. One of them, Jacques Taranto of Bohor, fell for the fatherland, whose name is written in golden letters on the Monument of Orestiada and on the sacred deltas of the Greek nation, while in the Sacred Company Solomon and Isaac Calvo fought.

In that painful May of 1943, twenty years after settling in the new city, the Jews of Orestiada were destined to perish. On May 5, the Germans arrested all the members of the Community, boarded them on the train and after joining the Jews of Didymoteicho and Soufli, the mission was led through Thessaloniki to the German death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau. In Thessaloniki they followed the 17th mission, which included a total of about 4500 Greek Jews. Of these, 3823 were immediately taken to the gas chambers. 677 people joined the workers' apparatus of the camps. According to the testimony of the Orestiadite Chaim Solomon Calvo, they were transferred to Yavorzno, only to die of exhaustion in the following months. About 20 Jewish Jews survived, three of whom temporarily returned to Orestiada, where they were unable to rebuild their lives and soon departed.

Chaim Calvo soon afterwards married the Alexandrian Emma Jacob Baloul and they settled in Israel. Two hunted pigeons joined the remains of two Jewish communities in Evros, leaving behind memories, tears and painful stories.

History plays strange games. If Karagatsian Jews had remained in Turkey and not chosen to settle in Orestiada, they would have suffered the anti-Semitic pogrom of 1934, but they would have escaped the Holocaust. But history is not written with assumptions. The Jews of Karagač chose to settle in the new city, Orestiada, identifying their fate with Hellenism, without knowing that this was how they signed their death sentence, 20 years later. To their eternal memory these lines are dedicated.

## Ioannina

**New Exhibit at Archeological Museum of Ioannina.** The museum is located in Litharitsa Park in the center of Ioannina, Greece. Address: 6, 25 March Str., Ioannina Square 45221



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### **Announcement of the University of Ioannina for a PhD Thesis on “Counseling and Antisemitism”**

The Department of Primary Education of the University of Ioannina is accepting applications/proposals from PhD candidates for the preparation of a doctoral dissertation for the academic year 2023 - 2024. The thematic areas offered include the topic "Counseling and Antisemitism" with Professor A. Brouzos. For this subject the University will accept one person. Learn more [here](#) for more details on the right to apply, as well as the deadlines for submission.

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### **Yom Kippur in Ioannina 2023**

The Jewish Community of Ioannina welcomes all to join for Romaniote Yom Kippur services. This year the services will honor the late Moses Elisaf, former President of the Jewish Community and Mayor of Ioannina.

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).

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### **The Printing Press in Ioannina**

This press has been printing Yanniote newspapers for over 120 years! Originally it belonged to the newspaper Gazzeta Jonica of the Ionian Islands and in 1869 it was brought to our city by the bilingual (in Greek and Turkish) newspaper Yanya (Ioannina). It was then used successively by the newspaper "Epirus" by Georgios Hatzis Peleren, the art printing house of Thomas Panagiotidis which printed the newspapers "Agonistis", "Ethnikos Agon", "Satanas", "Scream" and the books of Dimitris Salamaga and finally by the weekly newspaper "Patris" by Michalis Yiannen, which closed in 1993. The historic printing house is one of the 2000 exhibitions of the Typography Museum of the University of Ioannina.



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**Correction:** An article on the Jewish Community of Ioannina in our July E-Newsletter, first appearing in Ynet.news.com-an Israeli news source- written by Dr. Yoel Rappell. The article, unfortunately, was published in our last newsletter before being fully vetted.

- Documentation of Jewish presence only dates back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century (not 2000 years as stated in the article).

- The name Ioannina is in the plural (the city of the two Johns). We have no idea where the author got Aneni Na.
- "They spoke a dialect of Greek with letters that resemble ancient Hebrew" (not true).
- "The Romaniote synagogue in Jerusalem, which has since been taken over by a Sephardi community" (not true- the present Rabbi is Menahem Cohen who is Romaniote).
- "Ioannina's synagogue was built in the 8th century" (not true). The present synagogue dating from 1826 and is on the same site as earlier synagogues, possibly one going back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century.
- "To prevent passersby from mistaking it for a mosque, the dome was covered by a tiled roof, masking the unique purpose of the structure" (not true). (The domed roof was a common element of synagogues in the Diaspora).
- "Silver plates sewn" (were not sewn on, they were pinned on and easily removable) onto the ornamental curtain covering the front of the ark, they are the masterful work of a local artisans (many of whom were Jewish).
- "96% of the community was murdered" (91% of the Jewish community of Ioannina were murdered in the camps-87% of the total Jewish population of Greece was lost-the 96% more accurately describes the percentage in Thessaloniki).
- "The Nazis destroyed three of the city's synagogues and the fourth was saved thanks to the local bishop and mayor." (There were only 2 synagogues in the city. The one outside the Kastro walls was used as a stable by the Nazis and, therefore could no longer be used as a synagogue-the area was later used to construct apartments to house the returning survivors).
- Referring to an attempt to take over the cemetery: "But the few local Jews enlisted their neighbors to fight the initiative and succeeded" (it was the community back in the US-Kehila Kedosha Janina that worked to save the cemetery-finding in the Ioannina archives proof that the land was deeded to the Jews during the time of Ali Pasha).

As Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina, I take my job as an "educator" very seriously. Too often, our story is distorted. I, personally, cannot allow this to happen. - Marcia Haddad-Ikonomopoulos, Museum Director, Kehila Kedosha Janina

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## Magnesia

On Friday, June 16, 2023, a very interesting event was held at the Open Municipal Theater of Nea Ionia, entitled "80 years later..., the tragic memories of the Occupation in Magnesia with art as a navigator".

The "Network of Affected Martyr Villages of Magnesia" organized this exceptional event, supported by other organizations, with the aim of preserving and enhancing local historical memory, spreading historical heritage to the younger generation and strengthening the effort to identify other villages of Magnesia that were affected by the Nazi occupiers.



I feel the urgent need to congratulate both those who took the initiative to organize the event and those who implemented it, the institutions, the members of the Network, the municipalities of the region, the organizations and ordinary citizens.

The messages conveyed by this important event are timeless and relevant as ever.

He recalled the crimes of the German Nazis committed in Greece that led the Greek people to the tragedy of the Occupation.

It drew the attention of those who do not know (or do not know enough) and especially our young people, to what tragically happened, so that historical memory is not lost and continues to act as a bulwark against ideas and opinions that led to racism, anti-Semitism, intolerance and ultimately to the devastation of war and destruction.

To trouble sympathizers or adherents of neo-Nazi views, so that they consider their responsibilities, thinking about what their ancestors suffered at the hands of the German Nazis.

I extend my warmest congratulations to the contributors of this beautiful event, the director, the musicians, the narrators, the writers, the singers, for the emotion they managed to convey to the audience by conveying to the audience the tragic events of that time.

To Mr. Apostolos Voliotis, for his amazing performance as Avraam Hakim (who also happens to be my first cousin).

Finally, I would like to express my thanks and emotion -and especially to Mrs. Areti Katsageorgiou and Mrs. Antigoni Ioannou- for the honorary inclusion of the Jewish Community of Volos among the supporters of the event and for our excellent cooperation.

Such useful initiatives, embraced by institutions and ordinary citizens, are milestones for our city and region and should receive the widest possible support and appropriate continuity.

Source: magnesianews, 23.6.2023

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## Volos

### **Interreligious Meeting: "Following in the Footsteps of the Righteous to Protect the Future"**

The first interreligious meeting entitled "In the Footsteps of the Righteous to Protect the Future" took place on Tuesday, July 18, 2023, between the Volos Academy of Theological Studies and the Benjamin Ferencz Institute for Ethics, Human Rights and the Holocaust.



The meeting, organized by the scientific associate of the Academy, Archimandrite Filotheos Maroudas, was a continuation of Metropolitan Ignatius' speech in Dortmund, Germany, in 2019, on the relations between Orthodoxy and Judaism. On the Greek side, greetings were addressed by Metropolitan Dimitriadis, the director of the Academy of Theological Studies Pantelis Kalaitzidis, the archimandrite Filotheos Maroudas and the representative of the Jewish Community of Volos Victor Sakkis, who underlined the extremely friendly relations between the two communities in the region of Magnesia, which resulted in the rescue of most of the Jews of Volos (74%) during the difficult years of the Nazi occupation.

They praised the importance of integrating the Jewish element into the local community and stressed the many common elements that exist between the two religions. On the American side, the Director of the Ferencz Institute, Stacey Galin, and Rabbi Michael Pont took the floor, expressing their joy at the fraternal welcome and warm atmosphere they encounter in Greece, and awarded honorary diplomas to the Academy of Theological Studies, Metropolitan Ignatius, Archimandrite Philotheos and the Jewish Community of Volos.

The meeting took place at the Conference Center "Thessaly" in Melissatika, Volos, and then the delegation of the Ferencz Institute visited the monument of the Jews of Volos who fell victim to the Nazi occupation, the Jewish Synagogue of Volos, where it was guided by the representative of the Jewish Community, Victor Sakkis, and finally the exhibition "The Jews of Volos" that is currently operating at the Museum of the City of Volos.

Source: acadimia.org website, 21.7.2023

## Rhodes

### Commemorative Events in Rhodes, July 18-22, 2023 & Inauguration of Kos Synagogue, July 23, 2023

A historic moment for Greek Jewry, the reopening of the renovated Synagogue of Kos, was combined with this year's events of Remembrance of the Jewish Community of Rhodes. A week (18 – 23.7.2023) rich in cultural events and religious services, combining devotion with history, art, literature, cinema and songs.

All actions aim to honor the memory of the Jews of Rhodes and Kos, who from 23 to 25 July 1944 were deported from their native land and perished in the Nazi death camp Auschwitz. At the same time, the program of events in Rhodes and Kos highlights and revives their long history and cultural heritage.

The events in Rhodes began on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 and culminated on Saturday 22.7.2023, with the Remembrance ceremony at the Synagogue of Rhodes and the laying of wreaths at the Holocaust Memorial.



In Kos, the events took place on Sunday, July 23, 2023 and included a visit and memorial service at the Jewish cemetery, the inauguration ceremony of the renovated Kaal Shalom Synagogue of Kos, will concluded with a concert, offering gifts (books) to visitors and a buffet.

The program closed on Sunday afternoon 23.7.23, with the presentation of the books of the architect Elias Messinas, who undertook the renovation project of the Synagogue of Kos.

The events were organized by the I.K. (Jewish Community) of Rhodes, in collaboration with the Municipality of Rhodes. In Kos, the events were organized by KISE Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece), the Municipality of Kos and the Hippocrates Urban Society.

### Speech of Odette Varon-Vassar in Rhodes on the Deportation of the Jews of Rhodes and Kos 17 July 2023

At the end of July 1944, a new wind of optimism blew over Europe. On June 6, 1944, the Allies landed in Normandy, Allied troops advanced and liberated, Paris was liberated at the end of August, and the outcome of the war was decided: Nazi Germany now knew it would lose World War II.

The "Jewish question", i.e. the existence of Jews, has been "solved", with the "final solution" having completed its implementation, since all the occupied countries have exterminated the Jewish element to varying degrees in each one. The last country is Hungary, cradle of Ashkenazi Jewry, yiddishland, in Central Europe with 750,000 Jews, saw hundreds of thousands sent to Auschwitz between mid-May and early July 1944. The camp was flooded, the crematoriums were forced to work at a frantic pace. These would



normally be the last operations to deport Jews. Those Jews who had survived until then would be saved. But that was not the case.

In June 1944, on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean, for the only time in the history of the Holocaust, instead of trains, ships were recruited for the Jewish communities of the islands. In June from Corfu (9 June women and 14 June men) and Crete (7 June, from the port of Souda), almost all Jews are deported, regardless of gender and age, while the 275 of Zakynthos are spared at the last minute, in honor of Zakynthos, which became the island of the "Righteous". The 350 Cretan Jews on board the ship Tanais will be shipwrecked in the Aegean Sea off Santorini as their ship falls into a British torpedo. This now seems to be the last act of the drama. But there was another. And this last mission, beyond its drama, proves something tremendously important: how in Nazi logic the extermination of all Jews was an absolute priority, even if there were only a few forgotten on an island at the edge of the eastern Mediterranean. All and even up to one.

This is exactly what the last mission with the Jews of Rhodes and Kos signifies. One thousand six hundred and seventy-three people from Rhodes and 98 from Kos will board ships to Piraeus. But there is even more incredible: one of the boats will stop in Leros to pick up a single Jew. Was the one Jew on the edge of the Mediterranean really such a threat to the collapsing Reich? The answer is given by Saul Friedländer in his monumental work, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*. In his analysis of Nazism's exterminating fury against Jews, he explains that even the last living Jew poses a mortal and active threat to Nazism. That's why it was worth stopping the boat in Leros as well...

The Jews of Rhodes. But who were these 2,000 Jews who lived in Rhodes in 1941 and who maintained four synagogues? Only one of them, "Cal Shalom", survived, being today the oldest and perhaps the most beautiful synagogue in Greece, with its black and white pebble floor. The "Rodesli", as they defined themselves, were descendants of Sephardic Jews who migrated to Rhodes from Thessaloniki at the instigation of the Sultan after the conquest of the island by the Ottomans in 1522. Their neighborhood was organized inside the Castle, along with the Muslims, while the Christians, the rum millet, were forced to reside outside the Castle. A favorable legislation was applied here that allowed them to prosper for almost four centuries, making Rhodes a great commercial center and maintaining relations with the large communities of Thessaloniki and Constantinople. They thus created yet another cradle of Sephardic, that is, Spanish-speaking culture. At the turn of the 20th century, at their own request at the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris, they also acquired two AIU schools, in 1901 for boys and in 1902 for girls. There, many young men and women acquired a French education and a deep bond with France. The Jews of Rhodes became Italian subjects in 1912, they were Sephardic in origin, therefore Spanish-speaking, and many French-speaking, with progressive ideas and openness to modernity. Of the pre-war economic achievements, I will mention only the founding in 1928 of the Compagnia Agricola Industriale Rodi, which produces the famous CAIR champagne, the most renowned Greek champagne, which kept viticulture alive on the island. The Alhadev family, one of the most prominent in the community, played a decisive role in this company. The Rhodesians spoke Greek with their neighbors, with their customers, in all their dealings with the Greek element. They may not have been Greek citizens, but they left Athens on the last train to Auschwitz. Their memory began to be commemorated in 2002, with the erection in June 2002 of a multilingual column in the Jewish Martyrs Square of the Holocaust Memorial and the annual commemoration ceremony on the day of deportation.

Historiographically, their case fits into both Italian and Greek historiography of the Holocaust. Once again, the Jewish diaspora transcends national borders, when its history does not fit into ethnocentric perspectives, thus enriching and broadening the historian's perspective.

From the islands to Chaidari and Auschwitz

Many Jews had already left the island in 1936 due to the imposition of racial laws by Italian fascism, and this was their salvation. Of the 4,500 Jews living in 1912, about 1941,2 live in 000. From September 1943, with the capitulation of Italy, the Germans imposed their own occupation of the island and their own anti-Jewish laws. But nothing had been heard of deportation. But on July 18, 1944, a decision was announced by the German commander to gather all males over the age of 16 at the Air Force Headquarters, and by July 20, the rest of

the family members, women and children, all the Jews of Rhodes, had been summoned and arrested. Lucky were about forty families (about 200 people), whom the Turkish Consul Selahettin Ulkumen, who has been honored by Yad Vashem with the title of "Righteous Among the Nations", managed to save Turkish citizenship. And a few young people who managed to escape by illegal boats to Turkey at the risk of their lives. He will also save six people from Kos.

ON THREE CARGO SHIPS. On Sunday, July 23, 1944, 1673 boarded three cargo ships used to transport animals from island to island, according to the testimony of survivor Sami Modiano. He describes the horrific transport conditions and the endless journey. Everything is reminiscent of the conditions of death trains: excessive stacking of people without living space, lack of oxygen, food and water. Only the dead were thrown into the sea: 7 people have already lost their lives and never reached Piraeus. The boats will stop in Samos and from there they will pick up the 98 people from Kos, travel day and night and dock in Piraeus on July 31. The already impoverished human cargo will arrive at the camp of Haidari and will experience great martyrdom there for three days (deprivation of water and food, beatings, humiliations, terrorism), everything that inscribes Chaidari in memory of the Holocaust. Ten more people will take their last breath in this Greek camp. The rest would leave with the 22nd and last mission from Greece to Auschwitz-Birkenau on August 3, 1944. On the same overloaded train are 600 Jews who have been arrested in Athens after the major operation against the Jewish community of Athens on March 24, '44. They will arrive at the camp on August 16. This is certainly the longest journey that all the displaced people have made to get there, three whole weeks of martyrdom.

Of the displaced of Rhodes will survive 120 women and 30 men and of the displaced of Kos 12 people. Fewer than ten survivors will return and remain on the island, while the rest will follow new trajectories and enrich with their descendants collectives of Rhodian origin Jews from Argentina, Brazil and California to Rhodesia and Congo, not forgetting Italy, France and Belgium. Publications will be published in various countries and languages, such as "Ke haber?" of The Rhodes Jewish Historical Foundation, preserving the culture of the Rhodian Diaspora. Many are their descendants who even today, with impressive dedication, perform religious coming-of-age (bar mitzvah) and weddings on the island every summer or participate in the annual local memorial ceremony. The small local community was formed after 1950 by people born in other cities who migrated and settled in Rhodes.

LATE EMERGENCE. The memory of the extermination passed here, as everywhere in Greece, through the stages of silence and later of the difficult and late emergence. However, since 2002 in Rhodes it has made its presence felt on various occasions and especially on the local anniversary of July 23rd, which is honored by the Region and the Municipality. And it thus responds to the anti-Semitism of members of the local community expressed in frequent desecrations of the Holocaust memorial, as this wound does not cease to lurk in our societies.

\*Odette Varon-Vassar is a historian and author of "The Coming of Age of a Generation. Youth in Occupation and Resistance" (Hestia, 2009) and "The emergence of a difficult memory. Texts on the genocide of the Jews" (Hestia, 2013)

Source: TA NEA website, 17.7.2023



## Kos

On Sunday, July 23, 2023, the renovated Kaal Shalom Synagogue of Kos was inaugurated during a series of events organized by the Municipality of Kos, the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), the Civic Society Hippocrates and the Administrative Committee of the Jewish Community of Rhodes.

The renovation of the Synagogue of Kos, which was supervised by the Architect Elias Messinas, was made possible thanks to the cooperation of the Municipality of Kos, KIS and the Civic Society Hippocrates, following the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation, aiming at utilizing the Synagogue and upgrading its role in the life of the island as a religious place, but also as a place of remembrance, knowledge and culture.



The inauguration -which took place with everyone thinking of the fires affecting neighboring Rhodes - marked the re-opening of the Synagogue after 78 years since the deportation of the island's Jews by the Nazis in July 1944 and their extermination in Auschwitz.

At a visit to the Jewish cemetery, which preceded the opening, the Rabbi of Athens Gabriel Negrin delivered a memorial service in memory of the Jews of the island, in the presence of the Mayor Mr. Theodosios Nikitaras, the President of the Municipal Council and of the Hippocrates Civic Society Dionysia Telli, the Imam of the Muslim community Irfan Trampa and representatives Greek Jewry.

This was followed by the inauguration of the Synagogue, which began with the 'opening of doors' ceremony, recited by the Rabbi of Athens. Representatives of the local authorities and of the Greek Jewry entered the Synagogue accompanying the ritual entrance of the Sepher Torah -donation of the Athens Jewish Community- carried by Dimi-David Opsimoulis, a relative of the last Jew of Kos, Michel Menashe.

Subsequently, the mezuzot were placed at the main entrance, by the President of KIS David Saltiel, and at the doors of the Synagogue by the Rabbi of Athens and the President of the Jewish Community of Rhodes Claudia Restis.

The event was coordinated by the representative of Hippokrates Dr. Dimitris K. Geroukalis, who referred to the importance of the work and the ties that unite it with the Jewish Community, dedicating his own contribution to "his brotherly friend and classmate Aris Fornis who passed away prematurely".

Rabbi Gabriel Negrin chanted the prayers and blessings, followed by the greetings of the dignitaries. The Secretary General of KIS Victor Eliezer read a message from the General Secretary of Religious Affairs, of the Greek Ministry of Education, Mr. Giorgos Kalantzis, who was unable to attend due to flight delays. "The dual

use of the space, i.e. as a place of culture and a place of worship of G-d, is an excellent example that goes beyond the limits of the island, and of which we are all proud", noted the Secretary General of Religious Affairs in his message.

His Holiness the Metropolitan Bishop of Kos and Nisyros, Mr. Nathanael, in his speech emphasized the ties of the island with the Jewish community since ancient times, mentioning that the Apostle Paul preached in the Synagogue of Kos during his visit to the island in XNUMX AD. He also mentioned that "the relations of the Jewish Community with the Christian population of the island have always been so good that when the first Metropolitan Bishop of Kos Emmanuel arrived on the island -after the Integration, and because the Metropolitan House was destroyed by the earthquake of XNUMX, he was cordially and complimentarily invited by the Jewish owners of the famous Villa Menashe, to stay in it". Metropolitan Nathanael of Kos concluded his speech by congratulating all those who contributed to the restoration of the Synagogue."

The Mayor of Kos, Mr. Theodosios Nikitaras, among others, stated that the Municipality of Kos saved, maintained and protected the building complex of the Synagogue "out of a sacred obligation to our Jewish fellow citizens and the history of our society". He also emphasized that "The new function of the former Synagogue for religious and museum activities contributes to the upscaling of the property of our city. It highlights the historic building complex. It upgrades its function. It contributes to the touristic development of our island. This cooperation is beneficial for the Municipality and our society".

The President of KISE David Saltiel in his address emphasized that "the renovated Synagogue of Kos sends multiple messages: about the centuries-old history of the Jews of Kos, about the importance of preserving the Jewish cultural heritage, and above all about brotherhood. Because it is the unbreakable ties of friendship and the spirit of excellent cooperation with the Municipality of Kos and the Civic Society Hippocrates, which led us to the completion of the renovation project and to today's ceremony".

The President of the Hippocrates Civic Society, Dionysia Telli, said in her address, among other things: "Today's inauguration is a memorial dedicated to the memory of the Jews of Kos, it is a reminder of what the rampage of Nazism means and it is the starting point for interaction of cultures and respect of the 'Other'. As the president of the Board of Directors of HIPPOKRATES, I feel proud of our role in such an important project for the island".

Architect Elias Messinas, due to flight delays, arrived at the end of the event and it was not possible to make his speech which was focused on the history of the renovation project of the Synagogue. However, together with the Rabbi, the President of KIS and the scientific director of Hippokrates, Mr. Geroukalis, Elias Messinas installed the Synagogue's new Parohet and the fourth mezuzah, which he donated to the Synagogue.

After the speeches, Mayor T. Nikitaras and the President of Ippokrates D. Telli offered the anniversary album "Kos before the earthquake of XNUMX" , by the doctor and author Kostas Kogiopoulos, to the President of KIS David Saltiel, the Rabbi of Athens and the President of the Jewish Community of Athens Albertos Taramboulos.

The event ended with a concert by the soprano Mariangela Hadjistamatiou, who performed Jewish songs from the Romanian and Sephardic traditions together with the band "Pellegrinaggio al levante".

The opening ceremony was also attended by the Imam of the Muslim community Irfan Trampa, the Guardsman Commander of the 80th ADTE No. Kavarligos, the Commander of the Naval Station of PN Captain Geo. Stamatogiannis, the Honorary Head of GES Kon. Ginis and a crowd of people.

The first event in the renovated Synagogue of Kos took place in the afternoon of Sunday XNUMX, and included the presentation of Architect Elias Messina's books "Kaal Shalom: The Synagogue of Kos" (published by Hippokratis, Kos XNUMX) and "The Synagogue" (published by Infognomon, Athens XNUMX).

View the website of the Synagogue of Kos [Here](#)

## History of the Synagogue of Kos

A perpetual symbol

In 1747 Eliezer Tarcia built a small but impressive synagogue at his own expense, using proceeds he bequeathed from a neighboring house and two shops. In 1850 up to 40 families lived in Kos, which decreased to 25 in 1872. The Jews of Kos were engaged in viticulture and wine trade, exporting grapes and raisins and also trading metals and clothes. In 1901 there were only 10 families left in Kos, mainly engaged in trade. The members of the community lived in harmony, speaking Greek, Turkish and Judeo-Spanish. The size of the Community increased significantly during the Greco-Turkish War of 1918-22, especially with refugees from Anatolia-Smyrna.

In 1933 Kos was hit by a great earthquake, resulting in the loss of many lives and the destruction of important monuments, including the Synagogue. Immediately afterwards, a new one was constructed, the one that exists until today, very close to the port. The synagogue served 140 members of the Jewish community. After the capitulation of the Italians in 1943 and the occupation of the Dodecanese by the Germans, all members of the Jewish community were arrested and their properties confiscated. On July 22, 1944, all Jews from Kos and Rhodes were put on three cargo ships and sent to the port of Piraeus and then to Auschwitz. The Jewish community of Kos unfortunately did not survive the Holocaust, except for one person, who managed to return to the island. The Holy Synagogue of the Jewish community of Kos is located in the center of Kos town, very close to the port.

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## Kastoria

New Digital Exhibit and website on the Jewish Presence in Kastoria: <https://www.eran-jmk.com/en/>



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## Larissa

The Community Assembly of the Jewish Community of Larissa elected the new 6-member Board of Directors for a three-year term, which was constituted as follows:

President: Moses Manouach

Vice President: Nina Tarampoulous

General Secretary: Beatrice (Betty) Magrizou

Treasurer: Simeon (Simon) Magrizos

Controller: Albert Misdrachis

Member: Albertos M. Begas

Elections were held on 8/6/2023, in the presence of a judicial representative and a 3-member election committee, during which the members of the IKL elected the new 25-member Community Assembly, for a three-year term, which consists of the following people: Bega Samuel (President of the Community Assembly) Albala Iakovo (Vice-President of the C.S.) Venuziou Aaron (Secretary of the C.S.) Levi Alik and Arar David (members of the C.C. Presidium) and other members: Albelansi Rebecca, Calderon Chaim, Kabeli Elias, Cohen Abraham, Cohen Samuel, Magrizo Simeon, Magrizou Beatrice, Manouah Moses, Manouah Rebecca, Misdrachi Albert, Moussa Raphael, Bega M. Alberto, Nahmouli Sarina, Nahmouli Sami, Reitan Carolina, Russo Moses, Sason Sarita, Tarampoulous Nina, Fish Esther, François Isaac.

Source: [Larissa I.K. website](#)

## Corfu

**Britain's Forgotten European Empire:** Corfu became a laboratory of Victorian contradictions. Article [here](#)

When King Charles ascended the throne to the sonorous chants of a Greek Orthodox choir, the compelling fusion of British and Byzantine ceremony struck onlookers as a strange and mysterious novelty. But in one sense, it was the natural result of a now-disregarded byway of British imperial history. For half a century, British rule in the Ionian Islands off Greece's western coast created an appealing hybrid society with all the romantic unlikeliness of a Crusader kingdom. On holy days, red-jacketed British soldiers would escort Corfu's mummified patron saint through the streets in clouds of incense, with the garrison's senior commanders bearing the ceremony's giant candles. So impressed were locals by the spectacle that, even today, the island's village marching bands play Holy Week's funeral dirges in colourful uniforms and glittering helmets copied from the long-dead British garrison.

Even now, Corfu's crumbling rotundas and bandstands, its British barracks, hospitals and palaces, are monuments to a vanished imperial culture, as lost and romantically stirring as that of Rome. Yet recent research born from this faded grandeur is more than just romantic marginalia: it offers a certain nuance currently absent from Britain's own tiresomely propagandistic discourse on empire. As the Corfiot historian Maria Paschalidi notes, torn between strategic realpolitik and liberal idealism, "Britain suggested a variety of forms of government for the Ionians ranging from authoritarian... to representative... to responsible government." Yet none worked, creating a "failed colonial experiment in Europe, highlighting the difficulties of governing white, Christian Europeans within a colonial framework". But if things had worked out differently, Corfu might today be as British as Gibraltar. And the fact that it is not tells a micro-history of London's always-ambivalent attitude to the Empire.



Analysis of Britain's lost Greek empire opens up new and productive pathways for interpreting the imperial past, keenly studied by a young generation of Greek historians even as it is ignored in the former colonial metropole. As the historian Evangelos Zarokostas observes, the half-century Ionian interlude took place at a formative time, "a period of transition between the collapse of old structures and the establishment of new ones", in which "British officials were ambivalent about the place of the protectorate in the empire from its very beginning." From the very start, Britain ruled the islands as a crown colony, but under the legal fiction they were an independent state under British protection. This ambiguous settlement would prove fatal to British rule, but it also provided a template for later British governance in Cyprus, Egypt, Mandate Palestine and Iraq. The islands were a laboratory for later imperial adventures, and would soon prove just as onerous a burden. In this sense, the bloody and still-unresolved conflicts of today's Middle East were born on the verdant islands of the Ionian. Similarly, the failed Ionian experiment, abandoned just as Britain began to acquire hegemonic status, was to be Whitehall's first experience of decolonisation — a first draft, in colourful mid-Victorian style, of Britain's 20th-century decline.

In 1815, when Britain won the Ionian Islands from a vanquished Napoleon, the world looked very different. The island chain off Greece's western coast commanded the entrance to the Adriatic, and seemed to offer mastery of the Mediterranean. In the 20 years preceding the raising of the Union flag over Corfu's medieval fortress, the islands had rudely entered modernity after 400 years as a sleepy colony of Venice, passing from French to Russian hands and back to France again in a wearying succession of sieges and conquests. Desperately poor, they presented London with a complex society to govern centuries of Venetian rule had left a Greek-speaking peasantry living in feudal squalor, lorded over by an absentee class of Italian-speaking nobles. In the regional capital, Corfu Town, all classes spoke Italian of one form or another, including the many Jews, confined to their ghetto by the vigorous antisemitism of their neighbours. As European Christians for the most part, the islanders were an anomaly in Britain's expanding empire. How, then, were they to be governed?

The Treaty of Paris which granted them to Britain asserted that Whitehall's rule was merely a benevolent guardianship of the first independent Greek state since the Middle Ages. The reality was rather different: fresh from negotiating Haiti's handover to its new black rulers, the Ionian Islands' first British Lord High Commissioner, Sir Thomas Maitland, or "King Tom", ruled with a rod of iron. A Scottish nobleman, described by his new Ionian charges as "dirty" and "frequently drunk", Maitland began his decade as "conquistador" by erecting imposing monuments to himself, and ensured that, whatever the constitution said, absolute power rested with his own person. Feared by the locals as a volatile and abusive autocrat, whose secret police penetrated every level of Ionian society, Maitland's absolute rule established the basis for later British governance. An enlightened despot, and a devotee of Adam Smith's latest, fashionable theories, Maitland encouraged trade and imposed a sense of British order to Corfu's teeming, overcrowded streets. Finding the locals disinclined to work, Maitland imported Maltese labourers to build his imposing regency palace of St Michael and St George, in the process reviving Corfu's dwindling Catholic community. Correctly assessing the local nobility as easily swayed by glittering baubles, Maitland invented a chivalric order to dazzle them, still awarded today, in the absence of Greeks to bribe, to British diplomats — by themselves.

For a while, in the early decades of the 19th century, British rule was accepted by Corfiot society, if not by the more rebellious inhabitants of the southward islands. As Aggelis notes, there were even "popular demands from many Ionians to be 'modernised' by the British". So, with all the lost confidence of Victorian Britain, Corfu was duly gifted the Foucauldian novelties of a Panopticon prison in Benthamite style, and a high-walled lunatic asylum, still occupied today. New Macadamed roads, also still in use, linked the villages to the capital, and a sturdy aqueduct brought water to its population. The expansion of new law courts, coupled with stiff sentences for carrying knives — at the time the British arrived, the Ionians had the second-highest murder rate in Europe — transformed a previously violent society into the most pacific, if now litigious, in the region. Handsome villas, their sober Regency neoclassicism softened by pastel-coloured limewash, sprung up around the town and its prosperous new suburb of Garitsa to house the garrison's officers and their wives in British comfort. They are still lived in today by Corfu's upper-middle class professionals — indeed, Prince Philip was born in one, Mon Repos. Banks and stock exchanges, hotels and sewers, street lamps and bandstands transformed the medieval walled city into a Balkan simulacrum of Cheltenham.

The eccentric Lord Guilford — whose erratically-spelled name is still commemorated by Corfu's central square — founded modern Greece's first university on the island, after being dissuaded from situating it on a goat-haunted mountain peak on Ithaca. A network of "Lancastrian schools" provided public education, including the first ever schooling for girls; British sentries guarded the ghetto during Holy Week, ending the local custom of stoning Jews who dared venture outside. And amid all this reforming zeal, garrison life drifted along with a sleepy, romantic charm, where red-coated officers and their crinolined companions hunted scented paper in lieu of foxes, and enjoyed champagne and oyster picnics on the island's beauty spots, surrounded by peasants toiling in the olive groves. For Mrs Gaskell, imagining the life of an officer's wife, enjoying "music and dancing" in her "house with its trellised balcony," the daily round was one long summer holiday. For the ordinary squaddies, happily acquiring "local connections with women" and "local habits" and serving in the only British posting where wine was the ration drink, the only hazards were drunkenly falling from the ramparts or being snatched by sharks while swimming. A soldier's life here was distinctly less onerous than in the Empire's more spartan outposts.

But the holiday atmosphere would not last long. The outbreak of the Greek Revolution aroused nationalist passions which would ultimately make British rule untenable. The exiled Corfiot nobleman Ioannis Kapodistrias, Russia's foreign minister and a fervent opponent of British rule, complaining that the islanders were treated "like indians", became the new Greece's first head of state, complaining that the islanders were treated "like Indians", until he was assassinated by his volatile mainland charges. When a Turkish ship carrying Muslim refugees landed on Zakynthos, the passengers were murdered by the islanders, causing Maitland to impose martial law and disarm the Ionian population. Agrarian rebellions would rumble on in the southern islands, with British officials occasionally murdered, and reprisals exacted. The Ionians were the only British territory where the revolutionary fervour of 1848 was successful: the liberal Tory Lord High Commissioner Lord

Seaton, fresh from his experience governing Upper Canada, widened democratic participation and permitted a free press, recasting the Ionians as a white dominion fit for Canadian-style responsible self-government. Indeed, under Seaton the Ionian islanders were granted greater democratic rights than the people of Britain itself. When, the following year, British troops put down a peasant uprising in Kefalonia, burning villages and hanging rebels to the applause of the local nobles, his reactionary successor Sir Henry Ward blamed Seaton's naive idealism for the disturbances, proroguing the Ionian parliament and exiling journalists in an abrupt return to authoritarian rule.

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### Leon Saltiel's Speech at the UN

Dr. Leon Saltiel, representing the World Jewish Congress, spoke at the urgent debate, held on 11.7.23, in the framework of the 53rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council, on religious hatred and the burning of religious books. Mr. Leon Saltiel concluded his speech by stressing: "**Mr. President, the world does not need more book burning. It needs more people to read books.**" Read the full speech [here](#) and watch the video of the speech [here](#).



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### Two Day Conference Gen. Secretariat of Sports for Respect in Sport

Under the slogan "#SportsSpreadsRespect" (Sports teaches Respect), delegations from six countries (Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Montenegro, Greece), representatives of the Council of Europe and experts sent the message against hate speech in sport, at the two-day workshop organized by the General Secretariat A on 21 and 22/6 and hosted at SEF, in the framework of the European program "Combating Hate Speech in Sport".

During the event, the strategic objectives of the program were discussed, as well as the promotional actions that should follow to tackle hate speech in the field of sports, while the decisive role of athletes in this effort was highlighted. Present, with catalytic contribution, were the athletes-ambassadors of the program Ioannis Mellisanidis, Panos Triantafyllou, Evina Maltsi, Auri Laura Bokesa Abia who shared their personal experiences and submitted proposals for dealing with it.



The proceedings of the conference were opened by Gen. Secretary of Sports G. Mavrotas and together with the head of the Greek participation in the program, Anastasia Goufa, welcomed the head of the Directorate of Sports of the Council of Europe, Sophie Kwasny, the project manager of the Council of Europe, Gabriela Matei, the representatives of the partners-countries in the program and the experts. In his introductory speech, Mr. Mavrotas stated, among other things: "The aim of this program, which was launched about a year ago by the Council of Europe and the EU, is to tackle the phenomenon of hate speech in sports, a phenomenon that is the fertilizer for all forms of violence. And at the same time to use sport itself to tackle hate speech throughout society.

The fight against hate speech will be achieved through teamwork, as in order to combat it, a series of synergies of all stakeholders is needed, i.e. athletes, Federations, Mass Media, Sports Bodies, Clubs, the State, Law Enforcement Authorities, etc.

We must all together highlight the power of sport and its impact on young people and society, in order to reverse the situation that has been formed.

I believe that our best ambassadors in this grand plan are the athletes, who can convey the messages better than anyone else and be at the heart of the campaign against hate speech to reach wider and wider audiences."

Olympic gymnastics gold medalist Ioannis Melissanidis described the hate speech he faced 23 years ago at the Sydney Olympics by some of the press. "I felt in my skin what hate speech means! I was a young kid. I experienced unnecessary character assassination, when I had no way to defend myself! You see, back then we didn't have our own social media platforms that now have thousands of followers and give us the opportunity to showcase our own perspective." He said hate speech can lead to extreme situations and must "... We all, with all our strength, to confront this phenomenon. Sport has the power to change all this, and as such a tool we must use it."

International basketball player Evina Maltzi was on the same wavelength, saying: "Sports are a tool that can improve our lives if we manage it properly. I traveled and lived in other countries, I saw what it is like not to be welcome, through sports I realized that we are all equal and have the same rights. I'm here because I believe in this idea and I want to help. In my role as a coach at Antetokoubros Academy, I try to promote the concepts of good coexistence between children of different nationalities, to educate children to respect what is different, to motivate children who live in less good conditions and may have reduced opportunities to advance socially and competitively".

The Paralympic Fencing Champion, Panos Triantafyllou, for his part, referred to the catalytic role played by education. "It is important to lay the right foundations and we as athletes will help to transmit the values of sport and respect through various actions and visits to schools. Hate speech is not just verbal. For example, when someone deliberately deprives accessibility to people with disabilities, it is a form of exclusion."

Auri Laura Bokesa Abia (Spanish 400m athlete with participation in Olympic Games, World and European Championships) talked about the great difficulties she encountered as due to her mother's origin (from a colony in Spain) and her color, she was not accepted at first as Spanish. She noted that sports and her presence in the national team helped her integrate into society more easily.

The representatives of the countries then presented practices and examples, from their countries, for tackling hate speech in sports, followed by a discussion and exchange of views between the participants in order to come up with best practices for the organization of the campaign to combat the phenomenon by setting a specific framework and timetable.

The representatives of the Greek institutions who were dynamically present on the second day of the two-day conference, praised the work of the Council of Europe and the General Secretariat on this issue and expressed their willingness to jointly contribute to the actions that will be taken to tackle hate speech in sports.

In the context of their presence at the event, they referred with examples, experiences and incidents on issues related to hate speech, but also on the actions required to address them.

In the direction of creating a pan-European campaign to tackle hate speech, the exchange of views and ideas of representatives of Greek institutions with each other, but also with those of the countries participating in the event, was of particular interest. A common assumption was that education plays a key role in the effort, inside and outside sports.

The bodies that participated in the two-day conference were: the Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs, the Police (Subdirectorate for Dealing with Violence in Sports Venues), the Sports Prosecutor, DEAB, Super League 1, Super League 2, ESAKE, Volleyball League, HOC, EEC, EOPE, OHE, LTD, SEO, ESOA, SEP, PSAT, Panhellenic Federation of Sports Coaches.

Source: General Secretariat of Sports, 23.6.2023

## State of Greek-Jewish Relations with the Government of Greece

The meeting of the Presidium of the Union of Hellenic Police Officers of Central Macedonia with the President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki (JCC), David Saltiel, took place in a cordial atmosphere at the offices of the JCC in the city center.



As stressed in the relevant announcement of the Association, "with President Saltiel we share our love for the city of Thessaloniki and the willingness to offer to its citizens. Besides, his contribution and support to the Hellenic Police Corps aims to boost the sense of security of citizens and to upgrade the quality of their daily lives. The discussion that took place with the president of the Jewish Community and other members of the Jewish Community was extremely constructive. In fact, Mr. Saltiel showed great interest and enthusiasm for the various aspects of our Union's actions, as well as for its general course."

At the end of the meeting, the Union of Hellenic Police Officers of Central Macedonia, through its president Mr. Psarogiannis Ioannis, received a commemorative plaque of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, which was awarded to the Union by Mr. Saltiel.

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### Ambassador of Israel Meets Minister of Tourism

Tourism Minister Olga Kefalogianni had continuous contacts with ambassadors of countries that have a direct impact on the Greek tourism product. As she publishes on her social networks, she met with the Ambassador of Israel in Athens Noam Katz, with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Saad Alammari and the Ambassador of Serbia Dušan Spasojević.



With Israeli Ambassador to Athens Noam Katz, the subject of the meeting was Greece as a destination for tourism and tourism investments by the Israelis. The ambassador confirmed that Greece is Israel's first destination of choice. "We also talked about ways of further cooperation in the field of tourism and other initiatives in the framework of the trilateral cooperation with Israel and Cyprus," Kefalogianni noted.

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### Meeting of New Greek Minister of Education and Discussion of Ways to Combat Anti-Semitism

On 27.6.2023, the handover-acceptance ceremony was held to the new Minister of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports Kyriakos Pierrakakis, by the Caretaker Minister Prof. Christos Kittas, in the presence of the Alternate Minister responsible for Sports Yiannis Economou and the Deputy Ministers Zetta Makris and Domna Michaelidou.



"The future of the country will be judged by education", stressed the new Minister Kyriakos Pierrakakis during his speech at the ceremony, underlining that "this is the ministry par excellence that refers to the future, invests in the future, builds in the future, talks with the future. And essentially it is here in education that everything will be judged for our country for the next 10 years."

Among the issues referred to by the new Minister were actions to combat antisemitism, pointing out: "A priority axis here will be the preparation of the National Action Plan to combat Antisemitism and in this direction various actions and initiatives are planned."

See [HERE](#) the speech of the Minister of Education, Religious Affairs & Sports



Meeting of the New Minister of Education K. Pierrakaki with the President of KIS

On 25.7.2023 the Bureau of KIS moved to the Ministry of Education where the first meeting with the new Minister of Education took place Kyriakos Pierrakakis. The Minister of Education was warmly informed about the issues of Greek Judaism, while reassuring KISE representatives of the Ministry's commitment to the fight against anti-Semitism through education, an issue that he had also affected in his speech when assuming his duties at the Ministry's delivery ceremony.

Source: <https://kis.gr/index.php/eidiseis/teleftaia-nea/synantese-tou-neou-ypourgou-paideias-k-pierrakake-me-to-proedreio-tou-kise>

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## Fires in Greece and Help from Israel

Huge fires have broken out in Greece in the last month. The Greek government has asked Israel to send firefighting planes. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu decided to send 2 firefighting planes from Elad Squadron to help Greece for as long as needed. The government of Israel will stand by Greece as it fights the huge fires and appreciates Greece's contribution to extinguishing forest fires in Israel over the past decade." The Ministry of National Security, Israel's Fire and Rescue Service and Israel Police will send firefighting planes to Greece to help extinguish the fires. The fire brigade planes will take off on Thursday 20.7.2023 in the morning. The firefighting and relief operations will take place over the next three days.



The Ministry of National Security, Israel's Fire and Rescue Service and Israel's police will send firefighting planes to Greece on Thursday to help extinguish huge wildfires raging in two different regions of Greece due to extreme weather conditions, strong winds and temperatures that can reach 46 degrees. The planes are expected to take off tomorrow along with the professionals and accompanying equipment. The firefighting operations will begin with the arrival of the crews in Greece no later than 14:00 with an estimated return date next Sunday.

The assistance includes two Airtractor planes of the aerial firefighting squadron along with a team of four pilots, specialized ground crews and forest fire specialists and related equipment. The firefighting planes will be accompanied by an Air Force transport aircraft.

The assistance provided by the Ministry of National Security and Israel's Fire and Rescue Service is part of years of fruitful cooperation and mutual aid between Israel and Greece.

Minister of National Security Itamar Ben Gvir said: "In coordination with the Prime Minister's Office, I have ordered the take-off of firefighting aircraft, which these days are prepared for any scenario. The teams' firefighting operations will be joined by fire brigades on the scene. The rapid preparation of the teams was made possible thanks to the cooperation of all partners."

They cooperated in the aid operation: the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of National Security, Israel's Fire and Rescue Service, the Israel Police Air Unit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Israel Defense Forces, the Israeli Ambassador and the Greek Embassy.

Source: [iefimerida.gr](http://iefimerida.gr) website, 19.7.2023

## Meeting of Greek and Israeli Ministers of Foreign Affairs

"Greece is ready to take advantage of the positive climate that has been created with Turkey, in order to create conditions for dialogue on the basis, of course, of International Law and especially the Law of the Sea," Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis underlined, following his meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, who paid an official visit on 6.7.2023. in Athens.

As Mr. Gerapetritis pointed out, today's visit of his Israeli counterpart "seals our common will to expand our close strategic relationship, a strategic relationship based on common constants and values, such as the fight against antisemitism, the strong bonds of friendship between the two peoples, as well as our common vision for the consolidation of peace. security and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East".

### **G. Gerapetritis: "Violence is not a solution, the right of states to security must be fully respected"**

"We are following developments in the region and we are concerned about the escalation of violence," Gerapetritis said, adding: "We condemn terrorism in all its forms. It is clear that violence is neither a solution nor an answer and states' right to security must be fully respected." "Now it is necessary for calm and restraint to prevail by all in order to de-escalate the crisis," he noted, while reiterating Greece's well-known position "in favor of a mutually acceptable solution of the Palestinian issue, as we believe that this would serve the interests of both sides and peoples."



"Increasing bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, from economy and investment to tourism, high technology and defence, was discussed. We look forward to further strengthening this cooperation," he said. He recalled that in 2022 the volume of bilateral trade reached €1.4 billion. He added that there is great scope for further promotion of our trade relations, but also for Israeli investments in Greece. In the energy sector, he said, "Greece has taken important steps that transform the country into a reliable energy hub with a contribution to the diversification of European energy supply." Cooperation in international organizations was also discussed, with Gerapetritis thanking for the Israeli support of Greece's candidacy to the UN Security Council for 2025-26. He also reiterated Greece's active support to the Abraham Accords and their further expansion, as well as to the further deepening of EU-Israel relations, in particular through Israel's participation in EU programmes.

The trilateral cooperation with Cyprus and the next steps that can be planned, especially in view of the 9th Trilateral Summit in Cyprus, were also on the agenda. "We both stressed the importance of the 3+1 cooperation format with the US and the need to broaden and deepen various areas of cooperation. Greece, Cyprus, Israel and the US are states that I believe are united with common interests and common values," he said, adding: "We saw the will to promote other cooperation schemes, such as Greece-Cyprus, Israel and the UAE." Finally, he referred to Greece's "constant interest in preserving the multireligious and multicultural character of the Holy Land and protecting the privileges and property of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem."

### **Israeli Foreign Minister: "We support Greece's sovereign rights and territorial integrity"**

"Israel supports Greece's sovereign rights and territorial integrity," Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said. As he stressed, "the trilateral relationship between Israel, Greece and Cyprus is extremely important and is a source of stability in the Eastern Mediterranean." Cohen noted that he is honored to be the first foreign minister to visit Athens so soon after the government took office, adding that this underlines the important and strategic relations between the countries. "The strong relations between our countries are solid and growing. Our countries share common values: freedom, democracy and our relationship is based on them and on the importance of stability and prosperity in our region."

He underlined the political and military cooperation between the two countries and noted that they intend to proceed with the deepening of their defence cooperation. "Israel is particularly interested in preserving and expanding our long-term defense interests and advancing trade and technology relations." In the tourism

sector, he noted that there are more than 100 flights a week to Greece and more than 1.3 million visitors a year. "And my own family will be part of those visitors who will visit the country to enjoy its beauty and history," he added.

He also referred to the innovation center being built in Thessaloniki that began when he was economy minister and stressed Israel's desire to expand the relationship to other sectors. Referring to the military operation in Jenin, he mentioned Israel's position, noting: "We must make it clear that we are not at war with the Palestinians, but with terrorist organizations, which are fully funded by Iran." "We targeted 11 terrorists and not a single civilian has died during our operations. We made a great effort to achieve this [...] Iran is the No. 1 financier of terrorism and we want to cooperate with the Greek intelligence service to prevent any terrorist acts," he noted and concluded: "We will cooperate for the security of the region and our peoples." Finally, he underlined the importance of the Abraham Accords and referred to the opportunity for Greece's participation in them, in the joint project on energy and connectivity.

Source: [ANA-MPA, 6.7.2023](#)

Relatively: On the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [Statements by the Minister of Foreign Affairs G. Gerapetritis after his meeting with his Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen.](#)

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## Israeli Greek Relations

Interview of the Israeli Foreign Minister in Kathimerini: Our relations have taken off.

Greek-Israeli relations are taking off and not slowing down, notes in his exclusive interview with Kathimerini newspaper on Sunday (9.7.2023) the country's Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, who made his first official visit to Athens a few days ago. He speaks, in particular, of a tourism boom, as Israel rose this year to sixth place among the countries from which visitors to Greece come, while he talks about investments of more than €1 billion. in the tourism sector. He also talks about investments in defense, acquisitions and the prospect of even co-production of weapons systems. Cohen reiterated that the improvement of Israel's relationship with Turkey will not affect friendship with Greece, while underlining that the parallel channels between Jerusalem-Ankara and Athens-Ankara enhance regional stability. Cohen notes that the EastMed pipeline remains on the table, but its viability must be assessed by the business community, while he also describes the recent agreement between Israel and the Republic of Cyprus for the transport of Israeli gas to Europe via Cyprus.

Greece and Israel are in the process of taking their very good relations one step further. What do you highlight as a top priority right now?

Israel and Greece have a strategic partnership characterized by multidimensional cooperation in a wide variety of areas, such as defense, energy, tourism, trade, technology, innovation and culture. I would say that our aim would be to consolidate this partnership by deepening cooperation in all these areas. I would say that we need to pay particular attention to areas such as energy, innovation and technology. Israel and Greece also share similar views on regional challenges and opportunities, and therefore I would say that our common goal is to promote regional stability, security and prosperity. This is also the goal of our trilateral cooperation scheme with Cyprus and our regional frameworks in the Middle East.



Many Israeli officials have stated that improving the Turkish-Israeli relationship will not affect the dynamics of the Greek-Israeli relationship. However, we observed some slowdown in some processes that linked and/or strengthened synergies between our two countries, with the notable exception of defence. Do you see a renewal of bilateral cooperation and in which areas?

The strategic cooperation between Greece and Israel and our trilateral cooperation with Cyprus is stable and is not affected by external factors. Turkey is an important country in the region with which we would like to improve our ties, but this will in no way affect our strong friendship with Greece. I do not agree with you that there has been a slowdown in the processes or synergies linking our two countries. Quite the opposite. We are seeing a huge improvement in our relations in all areas. And it goes far beyond defense. In the last 10 years we have had huge Israeli investments, exceeding EUR 1 billion. dollars, in the Greek tourism industry. Israelis are one of Greece's largest tourist markets. There was a big increase compared to last summer's scheduled flights from Israel this year. This season they amount to 953,000 seats, up from 584,000 in 2022. Based on demand, Israeli tourists rank as the sixth most important foreign market for Greek tourism, after the UK, Germany, Italy, France and the Netherlands. Important business agreements are being made, such as the recent one between Greek Grid Telecom and Israel's Tamares Telecom for the construction of an undersea fiber optic telecommunications cable to connect Cyprus and Israel with Greece. Israeli companies have made investments in Greece, such as Tikun Olam's investment in medical cannabis in Corinth. Other companies are interested in making large investments in energy, including renewable energy in Greece. There is no slowdown. Our relations are taking off.

Could Israel facilitate a better Greek-Turkish relationship in some aspects?

Both Greece and Israel are now in the process of trying to improve relations with Turkey while strengthening their own ties. We both have direct channels of communication with Turkey, but certainly our efforts to improve relations with Ankara will help strengthen regional stability.

There are discussions about a pipeline connecting Israel with the Republic of Cyprus to help export Israeli gas (LNG) to Europe. At the same time there is the EuroAsia Interconnector. Can energy ties between the three countries become even closer than that? Do you see a possibility for a revival of EastMed?

Energy is one of the key components of our cooperation with both Cyprus and Greece. Recently, the energy ministers of Israel, Israel Katz, and Cyprus, George Papanastasiou, participated in a discussion on cooperation in the development of regional gas infrastructure, aimed at transporting natural gas through Cyprus to Europe, including Israel's natural gas resources. In any scenario, including EastMed, Greece would play an important role as it is a pioneer in tanker transport. We also support the EuroAsia Interconnector that will connect the Israel-Greece-Cyprus electricity networks and we are pleased to see that steps are being implemented for the Cyprus-Greece and Israel-Cyprus connections. Support for the EastMed pipeline is still on the table. But for a program like this you also need the business community. We will have to see the viability of this plan. And sustainability is under consideration. A limiting factor is the fact that Europe wants to move away from fossil fuels. We must therefore wait for the viability assessment of the project by the business community to be completed.

Greece has purchased from Israel some state-of-the-art weapon systems. At the same time, Israeli companies have increased their share of the local defense ecosystem. Is there space for cooperation or co-production of systems between Greece and Israel on Greek soil?

Defense is one of the pillars of Greek-Israeli relations. Our defense ties include a plethora of joint exercises and supplies. Our defence exercises contribute to our operational readiness but also create synergies. Milestones of our ties include the agreement for the International Flight Training Center in Kalamata to be operated by Elbit Systems of Israel. Another important deal is the recent acquisition of Intracom Defense (IDE) by Israel Aerospace Industries. The agreements and exercises prove that there is a growing intimacy in our defense relations. I certainly believe that there is room for further cooperation between our defence industries, which may even include co-productions.

We are concerned about the rise of the far right in Europe.

Israel has a longstanding view of the balance in the Middle East. However, the Abraham Accords created space for cooperation that did not exist before. As powers in the region seem to be distracted by traditional ties with actors such as the US (the example of Saudi Arabia and to some extent Turkey), how can Israel, whose security protection is guaranteed by Washington, navigate this new environment?

The Abraham Accords ushered in a new era of peace and prosperity with Israel and Arab nations such as the UAE and Bahrain. We have also achieved peace with Morocco and an initial agreement with Sudan. These relations are an important complement to the peaceful relations we have with our neighbours in Egypt and Jordan. These agreements have translated into increased trade, tourism, defence cooperation and people-to-people contacts that undoubtedly bring stability to the region. I am very optimistic that we will be able to expand our relations with more Arab and Muslim countries. However, we must also talk about the elephant in the room, which is none other than Iran. Iran's quest for nuclear weapons, its support for radicalism and terrorism in the Middle East have made it a major force for instability in the region and globally. It even supplied drones used in the war in Ukraine. The only way to counter this danger is to bring the international community together to put pressure on Iran. Israel has vowed to prevent Iran from acquiring military nuclear capabilities by any means. The recently planned terrorist attacks orchestrated by Iran in Greece and Cyprus, and fortunately prevented, show the widespread vicious activities of the Iranian regime. Israel will not hesitate to do whatever it takes to defend and protect itself.

Is the rise of the far right in Europe worrying your government, especially as anti-Semitism is on the rise?

The resurgence of anti-Semitism in Europe is certainly a cause for concern for any Israeli government. As the nation-state of the Jewish people, Israel will always be at the forefront of the fight against antisemitism worldwide. We believe it is our obligation. But it is not an Israeli issue. Countries in Europe should fight anti-Semitism and fascism because they pose a threat to their democracies. I am pleased that Greece has adopted the definition of antisemitism by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and organizes a series of Holocaust commemorations every year. I also believe that the construction of the Holocaust Museum in Thessaloniki will contribute to the promotion of memory and our common democratic values.

In recent years, Israel has experienced a very turbulent domestic political environment (five elections in three years and a very polarized atmosphere). Has it influenced foreign policy?

Israel currently has a very stable government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after many elections. Prime Minister Netanyahu is a statesman with vast experience. As you know, Israel is a living democracy. Despite the disagreements that may exist in Israel over policies, I believe that our democracy will emerge stronger. Our foreign policy remains consistent and very clear. We will continue to deter negative players like Iran, which seeks our destruction and destabilizes our region. We will seek to continue to extend the circle of peace with our neighbors by following the Abraham Accords and strengthening our relationships with our allies, such as the United States, and our strategic partners, such as Greece and Cyprus.

Source: Kathimerini website, 9.7.2023

## Memorandum of Cooperation between the Hellenic Open University and the Open University of Israel

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Hellenic Open University and the Open University of Israel was signed in Tel Aviv by the President of HOU Professor Ioannis Kalavrouziotis and the President Prof. Mimi Ajsenstadt, in the presence of Vice-Rector Prof. Guy Miron and Vice-Rector for Research Prof. Ofer Reany.



The collaboration will be at an academic and research level and will concern, among other things, the creation of joint academic Programs of Study and research cooperation between the faculty members of the two Universities. The meeting took place in an enthusiastic atmosphere and Israeli colleagues were invited to visit the HOU in the autumn, where a workshop will present the possibilities of further mutual cooperation.

The HOU President, on the occasion of his visit to Israel in the framework of the implementation of the Erasmus International program at Ben Gurion University, considered it appropriate to meet with the President and colleagues of the Open University of Israel and formalize the common agreement.

It is noted that HOU has recently proceeded to memoranda of cooperation with the Open Universities of Japan, Germany and recently with the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), the largest public university in Spain in terms of number of students and number of Study Programs.

Source: esos.gr, 10.7.2023

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## Holocaust Survivors Shipwrecked off of Greek Island in 1946

December 1946. None of the 785 passengers of the ship with the code name "Rafiah" sailing in the waters of the Aegean could imagine that instead of their destination, Palestine, where they would set up their new homeland, they would end up on an almost uninhabited rock island, Syrna near Astypalaia.

Nor how 77 years later a broken part of bronze binoculars, a comb, a toothbrush and two glass bottles that they had in their luggage, would rise from the bottom and take a place in the showcase of a museum on the other side of the Atlantic to tell not only the unknown story of the ship with the double name - "Athena/Rafiah" - and its passengers, but also a chapter of the History of 20<sup>th</sup> century: that of the immigration of the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust.

These five everyday objects, however, are the ones that brought back to the news the case of the wreck of the "Athena", the ship that sank twice in its more than half a century of life. And which has not only contributed to the writing of a chapter of the creation of Israel, but also of Greek shipbuilding, as when it was launched in Syros in 1893 it was the first iron steamship built in Greece. For 46 years he traveled in the waters of the Saronic and the Eastern Aegean until he sank in Piraeus.

However, it took on a powerful role in history after its recovery and repair and its purchase – after the end of the Second World War – by the Haganah Jewish organization whose goal was to transport Holocaust survivors to the region of Palestine. The "Athena" was chosen as an old ship that would not attract the attention of the British, who were opposed to the movement of Jews to Palestine, and was given the code name "Rafiah". She sailed from Piraeus with a crew of eight and arrived at Bakar, former Yugoslavia, to take on board Jewish refugees from Poland, Hungary and other Eastern European countries. After several deceptive passages in the Aegean, the crew was ordered to follow the original instruction and change crew at Sirna, despite the heavy seas, resulting in the ship smashing on the rocks.



Most of those on board survived with the exception of eight. They were then taken to a camp in British-occupied Cyprus, but eventually managed to reach, later, their original destination.

Descendants of the passengers returned in the 1950s to retrieve the bones of the eight dead who had been buried in Sirna.

### Borrowing in the USA

Exactly 73 years after the shipwreck, in December 2019, the divers of the Ephorate of Marine Antiquities dived and at a depth of 20 m. they encountered the stern of the ship, while its bow is at a depth of 38 m. lockout of the USA" in Washington for five years, in order to enrich its permanent collection which is in the phase of re-exhibition, and has received from 1993 until today about 35 million visitors.

The objects to be loaned will be returned to Greece when the Museum of Marine Antiquities opens in the old Silo of the PPA, as they are included in the museological study, unless more important objects have been picked up in the meantime, in which case the loan of the specific ones in the USA will be extended.

Source: in.gr website, 22.7.2023

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## Turkey

### Yasmin Levy to Perform in Turkey

Passionate voice of Ladino music, Yasmin Levy to perform in Istanbul. Full article [here](#)

The world-famous star Yasmin Levy, with her passionate voice and emotionally charged songs that touch the hearts of music lovers worldwide, will meet her devoted fans in Istanbul on Aug. 10.



As an exceptional interpreter of Ladino music, Yasmin Levy also incorporates Turkish melodies into her musical journey. On Aug.10, she will grace the stage at Turkcell Vadi with her years of expertise and perform her beloved songs, blending various genres of music, including Latin and Sephardic music, Andalusian flamenco, Turkish music, and Arab melodies, creating a unique and mesmerizing experience for her fans.

Yasmin Levy, who learned to play the piano at 6 and made her debut in front of an audience at 21, has received numerous accolades from some of the world's most prominent newspapers, such as The New York Times, USA Today, Boston Globe, The Sunday Times, The Times, and The Independent, praising her music.

She has also delivered outstanding performances at prestigious venues like the Sydney Opera House, London Barbican Center, and New York Carnegie Hall. Furthermore, her song "Me Voy," composed as a contribution to intercultural collaboration, won first place at the Anna Lindh International Song Lyrics Competition.

Recognized for her voluntary humanitarian efforts during the conflicts in the Middle East, Yasmin Levy was appointed as a "Child and Peace Goodwill Ambassador." Throughout her music career, she has released eight albums in Ladino, Spanish, and Hebrew languages, with her songs amassing over 150 million views on YouTube.

Yasmin Levy, who hails from a Sephardic family with roots in Türkiye's Manisa, incorporates Turkish musical influences profoundly into her music. With her frequent use of Sephardic and Latin melodies, she has also contributed to the soundtracks of popular series like "Kulüp," ("The Club") where her song "Addio Kerida" has been well-received.

## Bulgaria

### EJC Condemns Verbal Attacks on Bulgaria's Jewish Community

EJC Announcement, 26.6.2023: The European Jewish Congress (EJC) expresses its deep concern about growing nationalism and anti-Semitism in Bulgaria and condemns the attacks on the "Shalom" Organization of Jews in Bulgaria, which officially represents Bulgarian Jews and is a member of the EJC.

The statements of the head of the far-right nationalist party "Vazrazdane" Konstantin Konstantinov that the president of "Shalom", Professor Alexander Oscar, as well as members of Bulgaria's Jewish community are "Nazis and fascists" show the vilest form of modern anti-Semitism. Members of the Vazrazdane party have also voiced other forms of anti-Semitic rhetoric, including claims that Bulgarian Jews are disloyal to the country and prioritize foreign interests. Moreover, they refer to Bulgarian Jews as foreign citizens, implying that they should be careful about how they behave.

The European Jewish Congress stands in solidarity with its friends and colleagues, as well as with the Bulgarian Jewish community and calls on the Bulgarian government and relevant institutions to take immediate measures to stop these anti-Semitic attacks and actions that seek to marginalize and intimidate the community.

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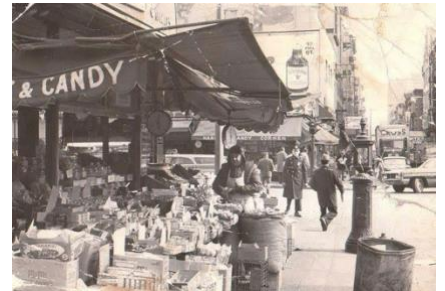
## News from Lower East Side

### Lower East Side corner named for Economy Candy founder

The corner of Rivington and Essex Streets on the Lower East Side has been co-named "Morris 'Moishe' Cohen Way" to honor the founder of New York City's oldest candy shop. After returning home from World War II, Cohen took over Economy Candy, which quickly became a neighborhood staple, serving candy, chocolate, nuts, and gift baskets. His family has pushed for the co-naming since Cohen's death at the age of 97 in 2015. After the City Council approved the naming earlier this year, the street corner was officially renamed in July.



Economy Candy began as a pushcart outside of a shoe and hat repair shop on the Lower East Side during the Great Depression. In 1937, the first Economy Candy storefront was established. After returning from serving in the war, Cohen and his brother-in-law took over and expanded the business. The Cohen family originally hailed from Salonica (Thessaloniki), Greece.



Over the course of its history, Economy Candy grew to become a New York City icon, attracting visitors with its huge selection of sweets and nostalgic treats. Morris's son Jerry took over the business with his wife Ilene in the 1980s and later passed the store down to their son Mitchell and wife Skye

To celebrate the street co-naming, Economy Candy hosted an all-day block party, offering visitors goodie bags filled with sweets, as well as items from other local vendors. The event was attended by members of the Cohen family, LES residents, and Council Member Christopher Marte.

In February, Economy Candy announced it would expand for the first time in its nearly 90-year history. The famed sweets shop opened a new location in Chelsea Market. The store, called A Taste of Economy Candy, is located off of the market's main concourse and is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



## Articles of Interest for Everyone

### Myth or Truth?

On July 20, 356 B.C.E. Alexander the Great was born in Pella, Macedonia. His parents were King Philip II of Macedonia and Princess Olympiad of Epirus. When he conquered Judea, he wanted to erect his statue in Solomon's Temple. Tradition says that the high priest of the Temple of Anania, after explaining to him that Jews are not allowed to worship any venerated image, suggested him another type of monument. Every male child born that year throughout Judea would be named Alexander. "So your memory will never leave us!" he told him. These words pleased Alexander, who signed a pact of friendship with the people of Judea and moved on to continue his conquests. Since then, the name Alexander has been included in the names given to Jews.



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### Ancient Palaces of Greece Full article [Here](#)

Magnificent Palaces Were the Centers of Power in Bronze Age Greece

Between c. 1400 and 1200 BC, impressive palaces were the focal points of power for the Mycenaeans in Bronze Age Greece.

The appearance of increasingly sophisticated palatial complexes in Mycenaean Greece coincided with the evolution of Bronze Age Greek society towards more stratified and hierarchical formats.

Although less is known about the Mycenaean period of Greek civilization than the later Classical and Hellenistic epochs of ancient Greece, the archaeological remains of several palaces as well as the decipherment of the Linear B language written by the Mycenaeans have helped historians and archaeologists to learn more about Bronze Age Greece.

The Mycenaean palaces of Bronze Age Greece

During the Prepalatial Period (circa 1750-1400 BC), the Mycenaean civilization expanded to encompass a network of competing, semi-autonomous regional political centers. Around 1400 BC, some of these centers emerged as dominant entities and evolved into organized states, establishing sophisticated palaces that marked the onset of the Palatial Era in Mycenaean society (circa 1400-1200 BC).



The most famous Bronze Age palace in Greece is undoubtedly Mycenae, after which the Mycenaeans are named by modern historians. It was also King Agamemnon's seat of power as told by Homer in the Iliad.

It was one of the major centers of Greek civilization as far back as the second millennium BC, with a military stronghold that dominated much of southern Greece, Crete, the Cyclades, and even parts of southwest Anatolia. Mycenae developed into a formidable power from 1550 to 1450 BC and is believed to have become the main center of all Aegean civilization through the fifteenth century.

Around 1350 BC, the fortifications on the Acropolis of Mycenae were rebuilt in a style known as Cyclopean because the blocks of stone used were so massive that they were thought in later ages to be the work of the one-eyed giants known as the Cyclopes. Successive monumental palaces were built inside these city walls — much of which can thankfully still be seen today. The final palace to be built, the remains of which are still visible on the acropolis, was constructed between 1400-1300 BC.



Mycenae may have been the most influential palace in Bronze Age Greece but it certainly was not the only center of power. There were also palace complexes at Pylos, Tiryns, Thebes, Midea, and Sparta.

## Mycenaean elites

The most prominent political figure within Mycenaean society was the “wanax,” who held authority over both the palace and the wider kingdom. The wanax’s power extended over various social classes, including the elites, craftsmen, and slaves.



The influence of the palace, under the control of the wanax, reached vast geographical regions, encompassing entire towns and villages. In addition to managing palatial affairs, there is evidence suggesting that the wanax occasionally participated in religious rituals, leading to the perception of the wanax as a priest-king.

Tablets discovered in Pylos provide details about a particularly wealthy wanax who had a well-documented retinue of royal administrators and craftsmen. References to royal textiles imply that the wanax had a distinct style of dress, further indicating their wealth and social superiority. The second-ranking figure in Mycenaean society was known as the “lawagetas.” Although the exact role of the lawagetas is not explicitly defined in the Linear B tablets, it is widely believed that they held responsibility for overseeing the state’s military forces.

Within the military aristocracy, there existed a group of men referred to as “hegetai,” who were closely associated with the use of chariots and served the wanax. The hegetai present at Pylos owned slaves and had the specific duty of monitoring the coastline, serving as a warning system against potential seafaring invaders.

In Greece, Bronze Age palatial states served as intricate administrative hubs, employing various officials to uphold bureaucratic functions. Among these officials were individuals known as “collectors,” who were identified by name in tablets but lacked official titles.

These collectors operated across different industries in the major Mycenaean states and were involved in acquiring and distributing goods. Royal craftsmen managed the palatial workshops that specialized in producing luxury items, including perfumes, ivory, and lapis lazuli, catering to the elite. It is probable that these workshop officials also possessed literacy skills, overseeing storage and documenting workshop inventories on tablets written by palatial scribes.

## Mycenaean warriors

The Bronze Age palatial complexes of ancient Greece were aesthetically impressive examples of architecture, complete with beautiful frescoes and eye-catching artworks. However, the palaces also served as fortresses for the warlike Mycenaean warriors.

In fact, a substantial number of Bronze Age-era frescoes and pottery depict warriors and scenes of battle, alluding to the high status of warriors in Mycenaean society. Masculinity and martial prowess were important values for the Bronze Age Greeks.

Mycenaean frescoes portray warriors adorned in tunics, greaves, and the distinctive boar tusk helmets that are characteristic of the era. These warriors frequently wielded figure-of-eight or tower shields for further protection. The discovery of the Dendra Panoply points suggests that higher-status warriors may have worn more intricate forms of highly protective bronze armor.

Commenting on the armor style of the Mycenaean warriors, modern-day Greek historical armorer Dimitrios Katsikis explains, “During the Mycenaean era practicality prevails, the armor follows a largely articulated development, sufficiently covers all parts of the body, and its form is monstrous.”

**Gershon Harris**  
**Hatzor Haglilit, Israel**



This year, Rosh Hodesh Elul is on August 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. The month of Elul serves as the month of spiritual preparation for the High Holy Days, as well as our desire to be favorably judged by G-d. In fact, the unique role of Elul is even embodied in its very name: The 4 Hebrew letters that spell "Elul" - Alef, Lamed, Vav, Lamed – form a Hebrew acronym of a beautiful phrase in the Biblical book "Song of Songs", chapter 6, verse 3: "אני לדודי ודודי לי" (*I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me*), which is an analogy for the close and intimate relationship between G-d and the Jewish people we try to cultivate in our efforts to repent our transgressions. As part and parcel of these efforts, it is customary during Elul to try and act kinder toward others, be more meticulous about our performance of mitzvot, give more charity and do more good deeds to help 'cleanse our souls', so to speak. And though Judaism clearly mandates that we behave this way throughout the year, Elul is considered an especially favorable time for repentance and self-improvement as we anticipate our upcoming judgment before G-d.

The special nature of Elul and our attempts to reach higher spiritual and moral heights gave birth to two specific and unique customs: the daily blowing of the Shofar after morning prayers and the recitation of Selichot, special penitential prayers and ritual poems composed by some of Judaism's greatest Sages and liturgical poets.

The purpose of blowing the shofar is to awaken us to repentance as we approach the coming days of judgment. Most Ashkenazi communities blow the Shofar after the morning prayers, while the Sephardic custom is to do so during the recitation of Selihot , prior to the morning service.

For their part, Selihot give expression to our remorse for our sins and our fervent hope that G-d will judge us favorably and inscribe us in the Book of Life. Interestingly, two distinct customs developed for recitation of Selihot. The normative Sephardic custom is to recite Selihot for 40 days, corresponding to Moshe's second 40-day sojourn on Mt. Sinai, to receive a new set of the Tablets of Stone, as well as plead for G-d's forgiveness of the Jewish people for the sin of the Golden Calf. Therefore, according to tradition, Moshe ascended the mountain on the first of Elul, and returned with the new Tablets of Stone and G-d's forgiveness of Israel on the tenth of Tishrei, meaning Yom Kippur, 40 days later. The Ashkenazi tradition, on the other hand, is to begin reciting Selihot only toward the end of Elul. This tradition is based on Midrashic sources that date the beginning of the creation of the world on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Elul, culminating in the creation of man on the first of Tishrei, meaning Rosh Hashanah. As such, Ashkenazim begin reciting Selihot on, or near, the 25<sup>th</sup> of Elul, approximately a week before Rosh Hashanah, and always on a Motzai Shabbat.

As for when Selihot are recited, there is universal agreement that they should be said only after the onset of full darkness, and preferably during the wee hours of the morning, which in Jewish tradition is an especially favorable time for prayer and penitence. Sephardic tradition indeed insists that Selihot be recited only starting from midnight, based on Kabbalistic sources. As a result, in almost every Jewish community, the synagogue beadle or other functionary would walk through the dark alcoves and alleys and ring a bell or knock on doors to awaken everyone for Selihot. And while technological tools have long replaced the loyal beadle, the custom of saying Selihot in the wee hours of the morning continues today in many communities, though it has become far more common to recite Selihot immediately before the morning prayers, when more people can attend. But whatever one's tradition, Selihot constitute an integral part of the very special nature of Elul in its unique role as preparation for the solemn days of awe and judgment.



**Rabbi Marc D. Angel**  
**Eternal Torah: Thoughts for Parashat Ekev**  
[JewishIdeas.org](http://JewishIdeas.org)

"And I took hold of the two tables and cast them out of my two hands, and broke them before your eyes" (Devarim 9:17).

In this week's parasha, Moses recounts the episode when he came down the mountain with the tablets of stone and found the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. He cast the tablets to the earth and shattered them.

A Hasidic gloss on this episode notes that the stone was smashed to pieces...but the letters floated in the air. Moses could destroy the physical tablets but their spiritual power endured.

This interpretation harks back to the Talmudic description of the death of Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon who was executed by the Romans (Avoda Zara 17b). During the Hadrianic persecutions, it was forbidden to teach Torah in public; but Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon continued to gather large crowds to impart the teachings of Torah. He was arrested and condemned to death. The Romans wrapped him in a Torah scroll and set him and the scroll on fire. But before he succumbed to the flames, Rabbi Hanina called out: "the parchment is on fire but the letters are floating in the air." It was—and is—impossible to destroy the spirit and meaning of Torah.

Over the centuries, and including our own time, the Torah has been subjected to vilification, desecration, and even threats of physical burnings. The enemies of Torah do not realize that the Torah will long outlast their evil. Any act against Torah is, in fact, against the best interest of humanity.

A source of anti-Jewish hatred, I believe, is the deep-seated feeling that Jews represent the ideals of Torah. The haters resent Jews who symbolize—knowingly or unknowingly—the commitment to righteousness, morality, respect for G-d and for fellow human beings. The haters of Jews—consciously or subconsciously—are also haters of G-d. They don't want to be held morally accountable to G-d. But whatever they do to Jews or to the Torah, the spirit of Torah will endure.

The great Victorian writer, Matthew Arnold, wrote appreciatively of the eternal message of the Bible and of the religious genius of ancient Israel. He believed that Israel taught the world the ultimate value of righteousness. That teaching, wrote Arnold, was essential to humanity for all time. In his book "Literature and Dogma" he asserted: "As long as the world lasts, all who want to make progress in righteousness will come to Israel for inspiration, as to the people who have had the sense for righteousness most glowing and strongest; and in hearing and reading the words Israel has uttered for us, cares for conduct will find a glow and force they could find nowhere else."

Arnold stressed the central role of righteousness in the teachings of the Bible. The Hebrew prophets left an impressive spiritual legacy, "and foresaw and foretold this inevitable triumph of righteousness."

The spirit of our Bible and biblical tradition is a source of eternal optimism for humanity. As bad as things sometimes seem, righteousness will ultimately prevail. Humanity will learn the virtue and happiness of living righteously, honestly, respectfully. As the prophet Amos taught: "Behold the days are coming, declares the L-rd G-d, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water—but for hearing the words of the L-rd" (8:11).

## Rhodes & Kos Memorial Event - Seattle



# Communal Hashkavah Memorial Prayer for the Jewish Martyrs of Rhodes & Cos

**Hosted at Congregation Ezra Bessaroth - Seattle, WA**

Please join us for Shabbat Morning Services, as we commemorate the nearly 2,000 Sephardic victims of the Shoah, from the islands of Rhodes and Cos



Shabbat Services - 8:25am

Taking Out the Sefer Torah - 9:30am

Rabbi David Benchlouch's Sermon - 10:15am

Memorial Prayer at Martyrs Monument - 11:20am

**SATURDAY AUGUST 19, 2023**  
**LIGHT KIDDUSH FOLLOWING SERVICES**

**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.

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