



Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum

April 2022 E-Newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Best wishes to all our readers who celebrate Pesah. In this issue you will find the traditional order of the seder (transliterated from Greek) in the Romaniote tradition. We also send best wishes to our non-Jewish readers who celebrate Easter, both the Greek-Orthodox tradition and in the western Catholic and Protestant traditions. April is a month of rebirth. The Jewish nation was redeemed from Egypt in "the month of spring." May the joy of the holidays give us hope for a future of peace. Let us be able to share the holidays with our family and friends, something many of us have missed for the past two years.



Pesah Haggadah translated into Greek by Avraham Moshe Nikokiri, 1940.
Published in Corfu, copy from Ioannina. Courtesy of the Jewish Museum of Greece

The E-Newsletter is sponsored by Gail Cohen Bassett and Esther Levy Symonds in memory of their families.
If you wish to sponsor a newsletter, contact us at museum@kkjism.org.

This newsletter, our 157th 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.kkjism.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@kkjism.org

We are open for Shabbat every Saturday morning starting at 9:30am. Please email amarcus@kkjism.org if you would like to attend, and enjoy a traditional Greek kiddish lunch after services.

Our Museum is open every Sunday from 11am-4pm. Please RSVP to museum@kkjism.org if you would like to visit. Proof of vaccination and masks are required.

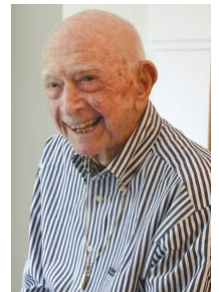
Simchas

It is with great joy that we announce the birth of a baby boy to Andrea Werner (from the Mitrani family) and Sam Werner.



Passings

Just as this E-Newsletter was going to press, we learned of the passing of one of the most beloved members of our Romaniote community. Elias (Hy) Eliasof passed away on Sunday, March 27th at the age of 101. Hy was born into a large loving Romaniote Greek-speaking family in Harlem in 1921, surrounded by many other Greek Jews. The family then moved to the Bronx, where they lived for many years. Hy's father, Michael, died in 1932 at the age of 48. Hy was only 11. Older siblings and close relatives helped Hy's mother raise the children. In the 1940 census Hy is recorded as 20 years old and working as a clerk in a garment factory. Most of the family worked with in garment manufacturing, a very typical occupation for the Greek-Jewish immigrant community.



Hy was especially proud of his military service. He enlisted in February 1942 and got married to his beloved Mickie in 1943. Hy had two daughters. His daughter, Diane, passed. His daughter, Lucie and his grandchildren Betsy, David, Benjamin survive him. Of his many accomplishments, he was Mayor of Closter and honored by the New Jersey House of Representatives. As recorded in the House Record of November 8, 2002:



"In Recognition of Elias M. Eliasof"

Hon. Marge Roukema of New Jersey in the House of Representatives - Friday, November 8, 2002

Mrs. Roukema. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate an outstanding member of our community and of northern New Jersey - Elias "Hy" Eliasof, who tomorrow will be honored for his contribution to one of New Jersey's most worthy non-for-profit organizations, the Spectrum for Living.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to list all of the contributions Hy has made to New Jersey as a public servant and philanthropist over the last three decades. Hy has served with distinction as the Mayor of Closter and as a Member of the Closter Council. He has chaired the Northern Valley Community Development Program, and served on the Board of Directors of the Community Center for Mental Health, the Pascack Valley Hospital, and the Family Counseling Service of Closter. Hy was the Founder and President of the Northern Valley Mayors' Association, is a Past President of the North Valley Lodge B'nai B'rith, and was a member of the New Jersey Regional Board of Directors of the Anti-Defamation League. Hy is the first recipient of the B'nai B'rith Youth Services Appeal Humanitarian Award, and shared with his wife Marion the first North Valley Hadassah Citizens Award for dedicated and significant contributions in education and community services. The residents of Closter have been well-served by Hy, as have the countless members of our New Jersey community who have benefited from his philanthropy and civic involvement.

On November 8, 2002, Hy will be honored for his dedication, support, and contribution to Spectrum for Living. Spectrum is a not-for-profit organization that provides barrier-free residential facilities, nursing, psychological, recreational, vocational/educational, dietary, psychological, social and therapeutic services for persons with physical and developmental disabilities. Spectrum serves hundreds of people with disabilities, providing an environment where they are respected as individuals and given the freedom, responsibility, and opportunity to face and meet life's challenges. Spectrum provides the physical and emotional support that every individual needs to achieve his or her full potential.

Hy's well-deserved pride in this honor is shared with Marion, their daughter Lucy, their grandchildren Betsy, David, Benjamin, and in the memory of their daughter Diane.

Mr. Speaker, through his decades of public service and good works, Elias "Hy" Eliasof exemplifies the American values that have made our country great. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Hy on his achievements, and thanking and saluting him for his dedication and contribution to so many members of our New Jersey community."

Hy was, also, a long time supporter of Kehila Kedosha Janina, giving multiple years to sponsor our Festival and other projects. All those wishing to make a donation to Kehila Kedosha Janina in Hy's memory, please use our donation button on our website www.kkjasm.org or mail donations to Kehila Kedosha Janina, 280 Broome Street, NY, NY 10002.

Hy, also, joined our 2007 tour of Jewish Greece, along with his cousin, Max Marshall (of Blessed Memory). He gave annually to support the Association and their projects to support Greek Jewry. Hy will be so missed. He was a loving, kind, generous and exceptional human being. He will be buried beside his beloved Mickie in the cemetery in Valhalla. May his memory be for a blessing.

We are saddened to report the passing of Daryl Kezin, son of Rifka Nachmias. October 12, 1963 - Dec. 11, 2021. Daryl was the grandson of William and Mollie Nachmias (Nissim Mordechai and Mazel Tov bat Moshe Calev Ha Levy), the great grandson of Mordechai and Rebecca (Mione) Nachmias. Daryl will be mourned by his family and friends.

We are saddened to report the passing of Martin Oppenheim, born June 20, 1938 and passed on March 19, 2022. He was the son of Anne Samuel Oppenheim and Harold Oppenheim. He was pre-deceased by his wife of over 50 years, Sandra. He is survived by his daughter, Elyssia (Lissie) married to Al Lipson, and his son, Robert Oppenheim (Sara), along with grandchildren, Lori and Kara Lipman and Sam and Adam Oppenheim. His son Robert is an Ophthalmologist. Martin was a Radiologist. Martin graduated from Alfred University as well as the University of Tennessee Medical School. His favorite hobby was photography and he loved music. He owned a home in the Berkshires and enjoyed the concerts in Tanglewood. His primary home was in Lynfield Mass. Martin was a Lieutenant in the Navy and was stationed in Peabody Mass. Martin and Sandra moved to Florida to enjoy their years after Martin retired.



Professor Rafael Karel passed in Israel on March 25, just short of his 84th birthday. He was born April 2, 1938. Professor Karel worked with Mor and was the pillar of the company's medical mediator. He was known for his uncompromising professionalism and the meaning of walking. Prof. Karel was a partner in the establishment of a Mor about fifty years ago and since then until recently served as a medical director. Prof. Karel contributed a lot to the development of the society and the medical services provided by it and to the promotion of public health as a whole. Rafael and his wife, Cynthia, joined us on our 2019 Tour to Jewish Greece and we were honored by his presence. May his memory be a blessing.



This E-Newsletter is sponsored by Gail Cohen Bassett and Esther Levy Symonds in Memory of their Romaniote Families

From Esther Levy Symonds:



Maternal Great Grandparents in Ioannina. Date unknown. Murdered in Holocaust



Great Grandmother in Istanbul



Paternal Granparents, Fanny & Victor Levy in Istanbul c. 1921



Material grandparents Esther and Abraham Cohen from Ioannina. Married in New York on 1921. Papoo Abraham helped build the KKJ building now on Broome Street. Nona Esther raised funds for the Sephardic Home for the Aged in Brooklyn with the slogan, "A dollar a brick."

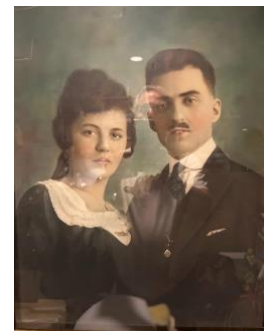
From Gail Bassett:



Cohen Family in Ioannina Greece before WWII. Many of those pictured here perished in the Holocaust. I believe of that group, only four survived.



The women of our extended Greek family taken about 10 years ago. My mother Phyllis Cohen is in the center with the red hair.



Paternal Koen Great Grandparents

Bertha and Ezra Cohen



My dad, Solomon Cohen(center), with his brothers, Joseph (right) and Murray (left).



Visitors Return to Visit Kehila Kedosha Janina

It is a joy to open our doors to visitors, both old friends and new friends. Once you walk through our doors, you are a welcomed friend. As always, there are those from our community, Los Muestrros, Δικοί Μαç (our own) who seek us out when they are in town. In March, we had neighborhood visitors and members of Andrea Assael's family (Andrea's roots are from Kastoria and Salonika), and Josh Rosenthal, the son of Renee Yomtov Rosenthal (Josh's roots are in Ioannina). We were also honored with the visit of Manuel Serrano Espinosa, (an old and welcome friend) the Greek Consulate in Alicante Spain.



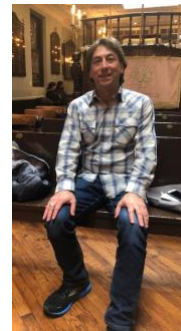
Amalya Megerman & Andy Mai



Andrea's family



Andrea's son Zachary



Josh Rosenthal



A neighbor, a new friend

Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network

The Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network hosted a very successful cooking class last month. Special thanks to guest chef Evan Zagha who descends from the Saba family. They had a fun and delicious time and can't wait to see everyone again soon! If you, your children, or your grandchildren are in their 20s or 30s, email GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com to join this network and learn more about upcoming programs.

Download the delicious recipes [Here](#)



Past Events in the Greek Jewish World

Purim at Kehila Kedosha Janina 2022

It was so joyous to be able to celebrate Purim together again in person. Thank you to everyone who joined us and special thanks to Paula Stevens for the delicious bourekas.



Purim Celebrations Elsewhere in Our World



Ezra Bessaroth Seattle



Sephardic Bikur Holim Seattle



Beth Shalom Athens Greece



Or VeShalom Atlanta



Temple Moses Miami



Jewish Community of Turkey



Ahavath Achim Portland

Holocaust Commemoration Event with the Consulate General of Greece in New York and the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece

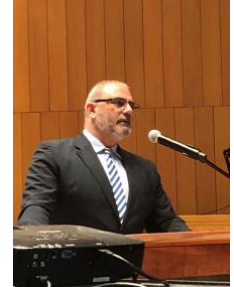
On March 2nd the Consul General of Greece in New York Dr. Konstantinos Koutras along with the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece commemorated the Holocaust at Hebrew Union College in NYC. The event was very moving and included guest speaker Professor Mark Mazower. The full program can be viewed on YouTube [Here](#)



Solomon Asser



Professor Mazower



Consul General of Cyprus in New York - Michalis Firillas

Celebrations of Greek Independence Day Around the World



Philadelphia



Chicago



Boston



Athens, Greece



Ioannina, Greece

As Greek Jews, there is always a conflict in our lives on March 25th. We cannot help but remember the tremendous losses in our communities, as the Germans rounded them up on March 25, 1944. This was the largest single deportation from Greece, as the trains carried over 5,000 Jews from Ioannina, Arta, Preveza, Larissa, Volos, Trikala, Florina, Kastoria, Patras, Athens, and Chalkis. May their memory be a Blessing.



Deportations of the Jews of Ioannina

Upcoming Events at Kehila Kedosha Janina

Passover At Kehila Kedosha Janina

Join us for morning services at 9:30am on April 16, 17 for the first two days of Pesah and April 22, 23 for the last two days of Pesah. Your attendance helps us continue our Romaniote tradiitons. Join us to hear our beloved communal melodies and celebrate this joyous holiday. View our full holiday schedule [Here](#). Please RSVP to Amarcus@kkjasm.org.



5782 2022

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM
WISHES YOU A

HAPPY PESAH
מועדים לשמחה
Χρόνια Πολλά
PESAH ALEGRE

YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR SERVICES ON
SAT APRIL 16 SHAHARIT 9:30AM
SUN APRIL 17 SHAHARIT 9:30AM

“THIS IS THE BREAD OF AFFLICTION WHICH OUR
ANCESTORS ATE IN THE LAND OF EGYPT...”
הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אַבְהַתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם

KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA 280 BROOME ST NYC
FULL SCHEDULE AT KKJSM.ORG
PLEASE RSVP FOR SERVICES TO AMARCUS@KKJSM.ORG

**Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day
Sunday April 24 at 12pm**

Please RSVP to Museum@kkjism.org

**KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM
INVITES YOU TO OUR ANNUAL**

**YOM HASHOAH
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY
CEREMONY**

**WITH A SPECIAL SCREENING OF THE FILM
“IN THE SHADOW OF THE ACROPOLIS”**

**SUNDAY APRIL 24 AT 12:00PM
KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
280 BROOME STREET NYC**

THIS YEAR WE FEEL FORTUNATE TO GATHER AGAIN IN PERSON. WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US TO REMEMBER ALL WHO PERISHED IN THE HOLOCAUST, ESPECIALLY THOSE WE LOST ON THE 78TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPORTATIONS OF THE JEWS FROM IOANNINA, ARTA, PREVEZA, VOLOS, TRIKALA, LARISSA, ATHENS, CHALKIS, FLORINA, PATRAS, AND KASTORIA.

FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY THERE WILL BE A SCREENING OF THE HIGHLY ACCLAIMED FILM “IN THE SHADOW OF THE ACROPOLIS” BY LAURA ZELLE (FROM THE AKKOS FAMILY). THE FILM IS BASED ON THE STORY OF LAURA’S FAMILY - THOSE WHO SURVIVED AND THOSE WHO WERE LOST.

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED
PLEASE RSVP TO MUSEUM@KKJISM.ORG**

Greek Jewish Festival – Sunday May 15

We are excited to announce the program for our seventh annual Greek Jewish Festival! Join us on Sunday May 15 from 12pm-6pm to celebrate our Romaniote & Sephardic heritage. Experience a feast for the senses including authentic kosher Greek foods and homemade Greek pastries, traditional Greek dancing and live Greek and Sephardic music, an outdoor marketplace full of vendors, arts and educational activities for kids, and much more!

See the full performance schedule and learn more at www.GreekJewishFestival.com

Volunteers needed! If you can help volunteer on May 15 we would love to have your assistance!
Please email Amarcus@kkjism.org to sign up now.



KEHILA KEDOSHA JANINA
SYNAGOGUE AND MUSEUM

PRESENTS THE
SEVENTH ANNUAL



**FREE
ADMISSION**

GREEK JEWISH FESTIVAL

**SUNDAY MAY 15, 2022
12PM-6PM**

280 BROOME ST BETWEEN ALLEN ST & ELDRIDGE ST
LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

DELICIOUS FOOD LIVE MUSIC KIDS ACTIVITIES

SYNAGOGUE TOURS DANCING VENDORS & GIFTS

- FESTIVAL SPONSORS -

Norris & Judith Wolff	Maurice & Lena Russo Family Foundation	Ike, Molly, & Steven Elias Foundation	Isaac Alhadeff Foundation	Joel & Laurel Marcus	Amelia & Richard A. Bernstein	Sephardic Temple of Cedarhurst		
 AFJMG American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece	 Philiou Partners	 United Brotherhood Good Hope Society of Janina	 The Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood of America La Ermandad Sefaradi	 American Sephardi Federation	 MISRAHI REALTY GROUP	 Halegua Family MD2 REALTY GROUP		
 Sephardic Jewish Center of Forest Hills	 Chesed v'Emeth Kastoryalis	 Association of Friends of Greek Jewry	 Sisterhood of Janina	 Recipiada	 Sephardic Jewish Center of Canarsie			
 GCC Realty 174 Orchard Realty Delta Realty Group East Village Realty The Sterling Group	 Sanford & Rhona Schneiderman	 LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL	 NYC Cultural Affairs	 NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY	 Council on the Arts	 Marla & Marty Genee & Family	 Eliasof Family	 David & Gail Baruch

- COMMUNITY PARTNERS -

 MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE	 TENEMENT MUSEUM	 EAST SIDE JEWISH CENTER	 SARAH AROESTE	 STROM CENTER SEPHARDIC STUDIES PROGRAM	 LADINO	 MUSIC DANCE	 Saint Barbara Creek Orthodox Church
 LOWER EAST SIDE	 LESPI	 LOWER EAST SIDE HISTORY MONTH	 Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network	 La Sepharadi	 PCC	 WOODWARD GALLERY	 WOODWARD GALLERY

GREEKJEWISHFESTIVAL.COM



10

Upcoming Events

Stories Survive: Solomon Kofinas at the Museum of Jewish Heritage 36 Battery Place NYC
Sunday April 10, 2022 at 2pm – Register [Here](#)

More than 80% of Greek Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. Among them were the father, sister, mother, and baby brother of Solomon Kofinas, a survivor from Athens and a leader of Kehila Kedosha Janina.



Sol was born in 1936 in Athens. After the Nazi invasion of Greece in 1941, Kofinas and his older brother fled to the outskirts of the city, where they hid with the help of Greek Orthodox Christians and later with distant family members. They never saw their immediate family again.

In 1955, Sol emigrated to New York, where he married another Holocaust survivor and started a family of his own. Now a grandfather and great-grandfather, he has served as a Gabbai and lay leader at KJ for more than 50 years. Join us at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Battery Park City for a program with Sol exploring his story of loss, survival, and rescue in Greece.

The 24th New York Sephardic Jewish Film Festival
Five Days, Six Pomegranate Award Honorees, & Six Premiere Films

The New York Sephardic Jewish Film Festival (NYSJFF) returns this year, celebrating its 24th anniversary, with movie premieres, award ceremonies, filmmaker Q&As, a fashion show with Elie Tahari, and live music! Learn more and order tickets here: <https://nysephardicfilmfestival.org/>

A promotional poster for the 24th New York Sephardic Jewish Film Festival. The background is a red-tinted photograph of a woman in traditional Sephardic attire, holding a cigarette. The text is in white and black. The top text reads: "NEW YORK SEPHARDIC JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL 24th EDITION — 3-7 APRIL 2022 AT THE MOISE SAFRA CENTER". The bottom text reads: "OPENING NIGHT SUNDAY, APRIL 3 FROM BAGHDAD TO BOLLYWOOD". In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for the American Sephardi Federation and the Moise Safra Center, which includes a Hamsa symbol and the text "MOISE SAFRA CENTER".

Hymns from Auschwitz: A Tribute to Viktor Ullman and Michel Assael
Special Memorial Concert at Carnegie Hall with Renan Koen

Wednesday April 20 at 8pm
Learn More and Order Tickets [Here](#)

Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County

presents

New Manhattan Sinfonietta



Hymns from Auschwitz
A Tribute to Viktor Ullman and Michel Assael

An Event Honoring Martin Elias
With Music Inspired by a
Holocaust Survivor's Story
To be Performed on This Night
for the First Time Ever

Renan Koen, Piano and Celesta
Güler Aykal, Conductor
Featuring Rabbi Nessim Elnecavé,
Hazan and Ilker Nahmias

Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall

(Entrances are located off the Box Office lobby on 57th and Seventh.)

Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 8 PM

In honor of Yom HaShoah, join us for a never-before-seen musical performance in memory of two Holocaust victims; one who survived; and one who was murdered.

New Manhattan Sinfonietta brings together soulful premieres. This meaningful concert includes "Hymns from Auschwitz" featuring hazans and a piano orchestral piece by Elcil Gürel Göçtü, a young student composer who worked with Renan Koen on her March of the Music initiative. The concert also includes Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor, K. 491 by W.A. Mozart, which Renan Koen will perform in memoriam of Viktor Ullmann. The performance will conclude with the debut of the Auschwitz Symphonic Poem written by Holocaust survivor Michel Assael. This poem was locked away and ultimately found by Dr. Joe Halio through his passionate research, and Renan Koen assisted in bringing this masterpiece to life.

This moving musical score was written by **Michel Assael**, a Jewish musician, and composer from Salonika, Greece. After surviving Auschwitz, Assael wrote this piece in memory of all that was lost. The piece was written in 1947 but has never been performed. It has recently been rediscovered and will be given its debut performance at this not-to-be-missed concert.

This event is also in memory of **Viktor Ullman**, a Silesian-born Austrian and renowned composer, and conductor who was sent to Terezin where he organized concerts and performed during the war. Ullman was ultimately deported to Auschwitz and was killed in the gas chambers.

We're proud to honor **Martin Elias**, a steadfast supporter of Holocaust and tolerance education. We thank Martin for his generosity and support in making this concert a reality.

Yom HaShoah Presentation at Congregation Shearith Israel

KKJ Museum Director Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos will be the guest speaker at Congregation Shearith Israel the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue on April 27th at 7pm commemorating the Holocaust in Greece.

Register here: <https://shearithisrael.org/yom-hashoah5782>



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

a **YOM HASHOAH** presentation

The Orphan Child of Holocaust Studies: The Romaniote and Sephardic Jews of Greece

Wednesday, April 27 | 7:00 pm

Presented by **Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos,**
Museum Director, **Kehila Kedosha Janina**

In partnership with The Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood & Kehila Kedosha Janina



Ms. Haddad Ikonomopoulos, an expert on Greek Jewry, will present the devastating story of the Greek Jews, close to 90% of whom perished in the Shoah.

These vibrant communities had a unique culture that was nearly eradicated.



The Sephardic Jewish
Brotherhood of America
La Ermandad Sefaradi

The survivors were determined to revive their language, music, cuisine, and family values, and do so with the support of institutions such as The Sephardic Jewish Brotherhood and Kehila Kedosha Janina.



Kehila Kedosha Janina
Synagogue and Museum

Register at shearithisrael.org/yom-hashoah5782

70th Street at the corner of Central Park West | shearithisrael.org | 212-873-0300

Young Professionals Tour of Jewish Greece – Sign Up Today before the Deadline!
July 10-20, 2022
View the full itinerary [Here](#)

If you are in your 20s or 30s, email GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com today to learn more and sign up!

Young Professionals Tour of Greece Summer 2022



The Greek Jewish & Sephardic Young Professionals Network
in partnership with The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry

Tour of Jewish Greece July 10 – 20, 2022

Includes Thessaloniki, Veroia, Kastoria, Ioannina, Athens, & Rhodes

Rediscover your heritage and connect with other young Greek Jews on this
once-in-a-lifetime experience

For more information email GreekJewishYPN@gmail.com

Tour of Jewish Greece Fall 2022 – Open to All Ages

There is still limited availability for the Tour of Jewish Greece Sept 23 - Oct 6, 2022.
Email Museum@kkjism.org to learn more and sign up.

Tour of Jewish Greece Fall 2022



The Association of Friends of Greek Jewry

Tour of Jewish Greece September 23 – October 6, 2022

Includes Rhodes, Mykonos, Santorini, and Ioannina

Reconnect with your heritage and experience Rosh Hashanah in Rhodes
and Yom Kippur in Ioannina

To register and learn more information email:
AssociationFriendsGreekJewry@gmail.com or Museum@kkjism.org

Online Classes for Passover

Preparing for Pesah – Class with Rabbi Dr. Elie Abadie
Tuesday April 5 at 12:30pm on Zoom
Register [Here](#)

SEPHARDIC DIGITAL ACADEMY

**PREPARING FOR A
SEPHARDIC PESAH**

COVERING THE BASICS OF SEPHARDIC TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS,
& PRACTICES FOR PASSOVER PREPARATIONS & THE SEDER

With Rabbi Elie Abadie
Tuesday April 5
12:30pm ET/9:30am PT

Online Streaming Via Zoom
Sign Up: tinyurl.com/PreparingforPesah



The Sephardic Jewish
Brotherhood of America
La Ermandad Sefaradi



Association of
Gulf Jewish Communities
איגוד הקהילות היהודיות במפרץ
رابطة المجتمعات اليهودية الخليجية

Sephardic Pesah Cooking Class with Chef Susan Barocas and Chef Sibel Pinto
Thursday April 7 at 12pm on Zoom
Register [Here](#)

SEPHARDIC DIGITAL ACADEMY

COOKING FOR A SEPHARDIC PESAH SEDER

A SPECIAL PRE-PASSOVER SEPHARDIC COOKING CLASS
WITH WORLD RENOWNED CHEFS

With Chef Susan Barocas &
Chef Sibel Pinto
Thursday April 7
1pm ET/10am PT

Online Streaming Via Zoom
tinyurl.com/SephardicCookingforPesah



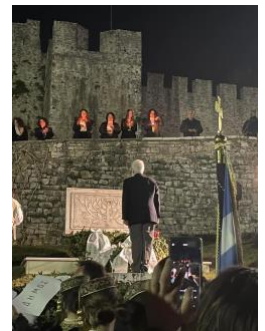
News from Jewish Greece

Arta

Holocaust Remembrance Day of the Jews of Arta 2022. Naming of Isaac Mizan Road - March of the Memory

The Municipality of Arta and the Music and Literature Association of Arta "Skoufas" honored in 2022 the day of the arrest of the Jews of Arta (March 25th) on March 26, that is, exactly 78 years after the massive loss of the Jewish Community of Arta. Within the framework of the program, Isaac Mizan Street was named in memory of the last survivor of the Holocaust from Arta.

The program included a walk through places of Jewish interest with Mr. Theocharis Vadivoulis, lawyer, researcher of the history of the former Jewish Community of Arta, the naming of a street in memory of Isaac Mizan, the last Jewish of Arta, survivor of Auschwitz, a Memorial Service at the Holocaust Memorial (Jewish Martyrs Square), Wreath laying, and the National Anthem. Immediately afterwards, a Remembrance March followed through the Jewish Quarter to Kilkis Square, at the point where the Nazi occupation forces gathered the Jews of Arta, before their deportation to the death camps.



Kastoria

2022: Commemoration for the Jewish Community of Kastoria. 78 years have passed since March 24, 1944, when about 1,000 Jews of Kastoria were arrested and imprisoned in order to be led to the Nazi death camps in Poland, erasing the traces of a thriving community that lived in harmony with Christians for a millennium.



Larissa

Larissa Law Students Paint Horror and Hope. Exhibition of works of a student painting competition on "hidden children. "

How greatness can the simple words of children hide and how much wisdom the pure way they think and experience reality... This was ascertained by those who were in the hall of the French Institute of Larissa, on Monday, March 21, 2022, at the opening of the exhibition of works of the student painting competition on "The hidden children. Stories of humanism in the horrors of the Holocaust."

"I wanted to capture the terror of the children" "I was touched by the story of the Righteous, those who saved children" "Thank you for the opportunity you gave me to learn and be inspired by these terrible stories" "Not to repeat the mistakes of history and learn from them" "For me today is a day of history and remembrance for the barbaric way in which so many innocent souls were lost"... These were just a few of the touching and hopeful things we heard from the students who were awarded for their works and were encouraged to talk about the topic that so touched them.

"When *Never Again* is expressed through the hands, the eyes, the voice, the heart of the children, it automatically acquires another meaning and gives a strong message", stressed the Director of the French Institute, Mrs. Chrysa Voulgaraki, in her welcome.

The competition was organized in the framework of this year's Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27th) by the Directorate of Secondary Education of Larissa, in collaboration with the Jewish Community of Larissa and the Region of Thessaly.

The Gen. Secretary of the ICL and "soul" of the initiative, Mr. Betty Magrizou, referred to its coordination in the now established in our city events of participation of the educational community in the anniversary of the Holocaust, which, for 10 years, amaze us, move us and fill us with hope, with the shocking tributes presented by children. This year, due to the pandemic, this way of raising awareness among young people was chosen. With material provided by the Jewish Museum of Greece and with the guidance of worthy teachers, the children studied stories of hidden children of the occupation. The response exceeded all expectations, as 178 children from 29 schools in the prefecture participated in their work! "We admired the sensitivity, the inspiration, the diligence, the originality, the talent of the students", said Mrs. Magrizou" and, although the evaluation committee had to award only some of them, we decided to exhibit them all, so that students and the public of our prefecture would have the opportunity to see and admire them"



Very important and the messages of the officials, who delivered to the winners (3 high school students, 3 high school students and 1 student of the Special School) the gifts offered by the Jewish Community and were 2 bicycles and 5 tablets. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Alexandros Coptsis, who honored the event with his presence, congratulated all the children, saying: "The moments of history that are recorded and shape us are not only the good ones, but they are also mainly the bad ones, such as those moments of horror that you captured with your paintings" In the same vein, the Regional Governor, Mr. Costas Agorastos, stated: "This collective work is a memory of culture. Culture is the prevalence of law in power, dialogue in monologue, persuasion in violence and we need culture, especially in these days."



The Deputy Mayor of Education and Lifelong Learning, Mr. Dimitris Deligiannis, addressed a big thank you to the Jewish Community of our city "that for so many years you remind us of things that unfortunately the younger generations forget" and continued "It is very difficult in times of war to talk about stories of humanism, but this is the essence of education: it may not change the world, but it changes people and they can then change the world."

Mrs. Vassiliki Ziaka, Regional Director of Education of Thessaly, pointed out that "Through such actions we try to teach our children to embrace all people with solidarity and love and this lesson is as relevant as ever", while the Director of Secondary Education of Larissa, Mr. Nikos Zervas, stressed "We have a great ideal to protect: that of Peace. I like to think that with such young people we don't have to fear anything."

The Rabbi of Larissa, Mr. Elias Sabettai, in a short speech, referred to the heinous crime of the Holocaust, which was based on unacceptable discrimination between people and said about the students' works that "they echo feelings of young people, express solidarity and reflect messages of optimism". Finally, the President of ICL, Mr. Elias Kambelis, thanked the entire team from the Secondary and the Community who worked on this exhibition, but also all the children "whose psychic world, as expressed through their works, shocks us".

In this message-filled event it would not be possible to ignore the war that is currently being waged in 21st century Europe, which is why Mrs. Magrizou ended the evening with the following words: "We believed and hoped, after the end of the Second World War, with the millions of victims, that there would be no more wars. And yet even now children do not sleep at night, children go down the stairs of shelters, children are killed, children take the path of refugees..."

Dear children, our dear ones, I am sorry that we, despite all our good intentions, we ordinary people, cannot stop this evil! May God give enlightenment and prudence to those who can do so. Let us keep in our hearts what the child - universal symbol, Anne Frank, wrote in her diary, even though she also lived for two and a half years in darkness and fear: "In the background I believe that people are not evil..."

The duration of the exhibition, originally scheduled for one week, was extended until April 8, as there is huge interest from schools to visit it. It's really worth it for everyone to do!

Update on the Restoration of the Larissa Synagogue

The project is still in process, therefore your interest about it gives us a great ray of hope!

With works carried out from January to July 2021, we managed to complete the reinforcement of the foundations and the surrounding walls of the Synagogue. We did so using the funds raised from private donations from individuals from Greece and other countries and sponsorships of the Greek Jewish communities.



The building is now safe from the possibility of collapse, however there is still much to be done to put it back into use. The budget of the project has been significantly increased for two reasons: Firstly, because during the execution of the works, hidden structural problems arose, that imposed different and more demanding solving techniques.



Secondly, because we were counting on two important sponsorships - from the Region of Thessaly and from the German State - that would cover a large part of the cost. However, these sponsorships were not achieved.

Therefore, the final budget, from the current situation until the completion of the project has been calculated at approximately € 500,000.

Our community continues its efforts with the fundraising campaign, by addressing to any possible sponsor, and especially to Institutions and Organizations.

Any help that can be provided to us will be a real benefit.

We remain at your disposal for any further information.

With warm regards,

For the Board of Jewish Community of Larissa

Ilias Kampelis – President, Beatrice Magrizou – Gen.Secretary

Contact museum@kkjism.org to see how you can donate from the United States.

Some past photos of the synagogue in Larissa to see what we may lose if this synagogue is not restored.

Corfu

How the few Jews left on the Greek island of Corfu hold onto their history by Yannick Pasquet [Here](#)

CORFU, Greece — The door of the Scuola Greca synagogue on the island of Corfu is painted emerald green with two Stars of David in the middle. When you push it open, the hallway leads to a low-ceilinged space where painful memories rest between the bricks: portraits of the island's Jewish Holocaust survivors adorn the walls.



One photograph is of Rebecca Aaron, sitting on a large armchair with a patched armrest, in a blue gown whose sleeve does not quite cover the faded ink on her arm from her time in Auschwitz. Aaron was the last of some 50 Holocaust survivors who returned to Corfu after the war; the island's daily newspaper, "Enimerosi" — Greek for "Information" — said her 2018 death concluded "the most tragic chapter of Corfu's modern history."

"Two thousand Jews lived here before the Holocaust — today there are only 60 of us left," Zinos Vellelis, a former clothing-shop owner and former president of the tiny community, told me at the beginning of our long

interview. "I got married here in 1993," he said, referring to the Scuola Greca synagogue. "Since then, only three weddings were held."

I am a French journalist who has worked for the past 20 years in Germany and Greece. I've spent many summers on Corfu, a jewel on the Ionian Sea with green olive trees, cobblestone streets and about 100,000 residents that is the setting for the British TV series, "[The Durrells in Corfu](#)." After walking past the synagogue many times, I wandered inside one day in 2015, shortly after the terror attack that killed four people in a kosher supermarket in Paris.

Inside, I found an old man, who shared his fear of starting over. He told me how nearly all of the island's Jews were exterminated during the Holocaust. When you live in Berlin like I do, you are obsessed with the history of the Holocaust, so I set out to understand the history of this small community. It turns out that Jews have lived here among the Greek Orthodox Christians for more than 800 years. During the Venetian period, between 1386 and 1797, Romaniote Jews — those who spoke Greek — lived in a ghetto alongside Jews who had been expelled from Spain or Italy. To this day, inhabitants of Corfu refer to the neighborhood as "Evraiki" or "Ovraiki," which mean Jewish in, respectively, mainstream Greek and the dialect spoken on the island.

Scoula Greca, which was built in the 17th century, is made of yellow stucco and Venetian in style, with the sanctuary on the second floor. It is the only one of the ghetto's four synagogues that has survived time. Next to it are the overgrown ruins of the Talmud Torah, which was damaged by bombs during World War II.

There are no rabbis on the island anymore. One from Athens comes for the high holidays and Passover, or to officiate at any major event. "We cannot provide a synagogue service on Saturday," Vellelis said. Vellelis, 68, paged through a book detailing the history of the Jews of Thessaloniki, a port city on the other side of the country that was sometimes called the Jerusalem of the Balkans. There were 56,000 Jews there before World War II; 1,950 after. Here in Corfu, the book says, 2,000 were deported to concentration camps, 187 survived.

Vellelis, himself the son of two of those survivors, recited the wretched figures in a sorrowful tone. "On my mother's side, nine people were deported and only two survived," he told me. "On my father's side, nine people were also deported and three came back."

The United States' Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington estimates that Greece lost at least 81% of its 60,000-70,000 Jews during the Holocaust, most of them exterminated at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The Germans occupied Corfu in September 1943. On June 9, 1944 — only four months before the Nazi withdrawal from Greece — all island's Jewish inhabitants were systematically ordered to meet in the "Kato Platia," the main square of the old town, before being taken to the old Venetian fortress nearby.

The German historian Diana Siebert, in a book on Corfu's history, says that about 1,800 Jewish men, women and children were transported on three boats to Athens between June 11 and 15. From Athens, they were taken by train to Auschwitz. Some unknown number of Corfu's Jews escaped this fate by being hidden by non-Jewish villagers on the island.

The French director Claude Lanzmann devoted a part of his 1985 documentary "Shoah" to the tragedy of the Jews of Corfu. Among those interviewed were Rebecca Aaron's husband, Armando, who was also a longtime leader of the community before his death in 1988.

"We arrived in Auschwitz on 29 June," Armando Aaron testified in the film. "Most of us were gassed during the night." According to the archives at Auschwitz, 446 men and 175 women, slightly more than a third of the total, instead were sent to the camps for forced labor.

At the end of the war, Vellelis told me, most of the survivors from Corfu went to Israel. Among them were his own father, he explained, but British soldiers at the Haifa port turned the boat back, and about 50 survivors from Corfu returned home. "My father was married to my mother's sister, but she died in Auschwitz," Vellelis noted. "He remarried my mother after that."

The main person responsible for the deportation of Corfu's Jews was Anton Burger, who managed to escape justice after the war. He was sentenced to death in 1947 in the People's Court in what is now the Czech Republic, but escaped from detention before the scheduled execution. He was arrested again — and escaped again — and survived under false identities until his death in 1991.

"Many of the Jews in Corfu today are children of survivors," said Lino Sousi, 73, a retired civil engineer and another former chairman of the Jewish community. "My mother was sent to Auschwitz with 35 members of her family." Only she and her three sisters survived. Sousi said his mother never spoke about her Holocaust experience. "My aunt told us about her ordeal, but we didn't ask many questions," he said. "Children and all those innocent people were murdered. Why? I still look for answers until this day without any luck." For the thousands of tourists who visit each summer, the history of Corfu's Jews remains largely unknown.

To keep the memory alive of those who survived the Nazi occupation, Vellelis has for decades kept the striped prisoner's shirt his father wore in Auschwitz hung on the wall of his clothing shop in the former ghetto, just a few yards from Corfu's synagogue.

"The striped shirt became a conversation starter with tourists from all over the world," said Vellelis, who retired in 2019 after 50 years running the shop. "It was one of those things that allowed me to share a common history with Jewish tourists from Brazil, Australia and everywhere else." Not far from the store and the synagogue, there is a small memorial in a sunny square in the old town, where Corfu's Jews were deported to their deaths. The bronze statue was placed in 2001 and shows a frightened couple with their son and a baby in his mother's arms, all nude.

"Never again for any nation," it reads.

There are a few other subtle reminders of the island's Jewish history for those who care to look as they walk through the alleys decorated with large flower pots on windowsills and colorful clothing hanging outside to dry. Albert Cohen Street honors the Swiss writer who was born on the island in 1895. There is also the "street of the Jewish victims of Nazism," a narrow lane off the town's main pedestrian walkway that connects to the old ghetto.



The island's 60 current Jewish residents remain close to one another and try to keep the Jewish spirit alive in the heart of this intimate island, even as the younger generation leaves Corfu to study abroad. And it's not only the island's relative handful of Jews who are holding onto the community's history. Inside another tiny clothing shop, a few steps from the synagogue, Giorgos Agiotatos keeps boxes of old photographs behind the cash register of his shop.

These photos portray moments of childhood, adolescence, celebrations, house parties, and memories of a time when the Jewish community was much larger. One of the faded images shows Vellelis's parents in the 1960s, at a summer party.

"I grew up with Holocaust survivors and their children," Agiotatos told me when I visited. "They are my friends and family and their agony is mine as well."

He keeps two Israeli flags in the shop as well, one by the box of the photos, the other behind it on a shelf. They are daily reminders that Corfu is a part of Jewish history.

Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki, A New Light in the History of the Jews

It is July 19, 1946. The Telegram of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the Israeli Community of Thessaloniki for a message of the "Military Mission in Berlin about items looted by the Germans" that are now safe in the "American Zone". The items are none other than the community records that the Nazi forces fled when they left Greece, explains Devin Naar, a professor of history and Sephardic studies at the University of Washington, who shows the telegram photo on his computer screen...



Of the 46,000 Jews from Thessaloniki who were transferred to the concentration camps, about 1,950 returned, many of whom found their property confiscated. "Many were sleeping on the synagogue benches," says Naar of his home in Seattle. However, it is explained in an online speech for the University of Frankfurt, the community, although decimated, made efforts to recover its valuable archives. But the files were eventually found scattered around the world. After the end of World War II and through different routes the archives ended up in the USA, Greece, Israel and Russia. The Moscow archives, a large volume of hundreds of files with thousands of administrative documents, are to be repatriated following the recent agreement between the leaders of Greece and Russia. "The material is huge; it is fascinating and to a large extent it has not been studied. "The question I would like to ask is what these records tell us about the history of the Jews in Thessaloniki," Naar told his online audience.

The first to break the Russian "ice" was the emeritus professor of Jewish History at the University of Haifa, Mina Rosen. The soul that prevailed in the Russian archives in the early 1990s was political as it had no heating but was not discouraged. After much negotiation, he managed to photograph all of them, that is, about half a million documents, for the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora research center at Tel Aviv University. "I have been studying these archives for the last 25 years and they are an important source for the new book I am writing," Ms. Rosen told us, but the only thing she revealed to us from its contents was that she was talking about the Jews of Thessaloniki in 1912. -1941 and that he was ready at the end of 2022., as in the organization of the community structure, in the education of the Jews, in the political path of the controversial Rabbi Korets.

Several years after Rosen, Devin Naar was also in Moscow looking for traces of his family history. Earlier he had completed Thessaloniki, the city of his distant origin, where he almost accidentally discovered and studied an unknown pre-war archive of the Jewish Museum. In the years that followed, he studied the community archives at the Washington Holocaust Museum, which include Russian. So, what do the records tell us? As Naar states a few hours after his speech, these mainly cover the period from 1917 to the Occupation and illuminate aspects of Jewish history in Thessaloniki, but also the fluctuations in Jewish-Christian relations that sometimes resulted in tension and violence. These are mainly administrative documents of the community organs and correspondence with the state administration, the Greek army, data on the serious political, economic differences, demographic data, for those who immigrated to Palestine, steps on everyday issues but also on much more, such as the destruction of the Jewish cemetery or pogrom in the Campbell settlement in 1931, supplemented by personal testimonies and press records of the time. "Especially for Campbell, we see how the community reacted and that it financially supported those who were left homeless. "It also seems that the settlements were in fact mixed, there are reports that among the victims there was a Christian baker", says Naar.

An important issue that is highlighted is the existence of a vibrant, strong community with its own institutions and members. "Something like a small town in the city," he says, but at the same time set the boundaries of Jewish-Christian relations.

Another issue that emerges is the debate about Greekness in the early 20th century. The archives, says the professor, overturn the prevailing view that the Jews “resisted” their integration into Greek society. “On the contrary, their leaders were trying to understand what it means to be a Jew and a Greek in Thessaloniki and did not consider religion or origin as the foundations of Greek society but language, patriotism, engagement with the public.” So, a part of the archives has been studied and made known, but this does not limit in the slightest their importance. After all, their volume is large. Researchers will be able to talk about the life of the community in more detail and with the “voula” of official documents, while it is unknown what new data may emerge. If, as Naar suggests, this data is placed on a digital map, then even so, the Jewish Thessaloniki and the city that will be more reconciled with its past will be revived. Maybe this is how a ghost hovers less in its sky.

Greek success in a diplomatic struggle that began in 1997

The recent news of the return of the Moscow archive is recorded as a Greek success in a diplomatic struggle that began in 1997 and has been described in great detail by “K” (“K”, 5/4/2021). The announcement was welcomed with great satisfaction by the Central Israeli Council of Greece and the Israeli Community of Thessaloniki. “It’s our history, our roots,” David Saltiel, president of the two institutions, told K, adding that the archives as a cultural asset would find their place in the Holocaust Museum in Thessaloniki. As historical evidence, he adds, it will be part of a large, modern digitization program to enable their study by more researchers. Their classification will also show the “gaps” that are almost certain to exist as, as it is known until today, most of the archives from 1912 were lost in the fires of Thessaloniki in 1917. Experts who monitor the issues pointed out in “K That this is the first time that the commitment to return the archive is expressed at such a high level, in the context of a meeting between Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Russian President Vladimir Putin and that is why they believe that it has reached the crew of the year. The same sources point out that the Russian move may facilitate the fulfillment of another request of the Jewish community, the return of religious objects (over 60) stolen by the Nazis from the Jewish synagogues in Thessaloniki and after the war ended up in Poland where they were identified and kept.

Hopes for the return of Jewish religious objects stolen by the Nazis.

Devin Naar, although optimistic about the repatriation of the archives, remains cautious. As a historian, he looks at the events of the past and reminds that the Greek request has not been fulfilled for 25 years. He does not forget that in 2005, in his family’s hometown, almost none of his peers knew about her Jewish past. In a speech he gave in 2016, during the period when Chrysi Avgi was in Parliament, he was obliged to circulate with 24-hour protection. But today things have changed, he says, and the timing of the return of the files could not have been more appropriate. “There is a new generation of researchers, Jewish and non-Jewish, who are growing up and trying to address the complex, complex, contradictory aspects of Jewish history in Thessaloniki and in Greece in general. Today there are Jewish courses, a seat of Jewish studies at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and if they return the archives that have rich material to study. “Until then, they can not see microfilm files in the Washington Museum or send me an email.”



Images from the book of Giannis Megas “Souvenir, from the Life of the Jewish Community-Thessaloniki, 1897-1917”.

The Memorial March "Never Again" in Salonika

The Memorial March "Never again, Thessaloniki – Auschwitz – 79 years since the departure of the first train" took place on 20.3.2022 in Thessaloniki, in the presence of the President of the Republic Katerina Sakellaropoulou, Greek and foreign officials, members of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki and citizens.

The March started from Eleftherias Square and ended at the Square of the Old Railway Station, where the greetings were made, and flowers and lit candles were placed in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

The historical knowledge and its transmission to the younger generations, the awareness of the suffering of the victims, the understanding and recognition of the Holocaust as a "universal historical heritage" allow us to arm ourselves "against a new onslaught of evil", stressed, visibly moved, the President of the Republic Katerina Sakellaropoulou, after the completion of the course of remembrance: "Never again, Thessaloniki – Auschwitz – 79 years since the departure of the first train", in which he participated, along with institutional actors and ordinary citizens, from Eleftherias Square to the Old Railway Station.

"Today, we honor the memory of the Greek Jews who were deported, tortured and killed in the German camps, and together with the memory of those who helped them escape from the ghetto, escape certain death. People from different political and social backgrounds, regardless of gender, race and religion, marched together in the footsteps of the Jewish martyrs, followed silently their last path", said the President of the Republic and, among other things, added:

"Only if we pass on historical knowledge to the new generations, if we preserve historical memory, if we feel as our own the pain and suffering of the victims, if we understand that the Holocaust is a universal historical heritage, will we equip ourselves against a new onslaught of evil, possibly in another form, but always threatening and abhorrent."

The President of Democracy, speaking at the event at the Old Railway Station, referred to the tragedy of the Jews of Thessaloniki, through the words of writers and holocaust survivors, but also to everything that preceded their annihilation by the Nazis, the application of the anti-Semitic laws of Nuremberg, the yellow star in clothes, the requisitions of houses and shops, the excruciating humiliation of the men of the Jewish community in Eleftherias Square on July 11, 1942, and sending many of them to forced labor in southern Greece and added:



"Now we know that most of our fellow Jews, afflicted by the journey, emaciated, sick, were led directly to the crematoria. Very few came back. Of the approximately 46,000 displaced persons, fewer than 2,000 returned, one of the lowest rates recorded in the whole of Europe."

"The displacement and annihilation of the Jewish community was a great social and cultural loss for our city", Ms. Sakellaropoulou continued and added:

"That is why it is very important that, in recent years, Thessaloniki has assumed its responsibilities for actions and omissions of the past, has recognized the historical trauma caused by the indifference, complacency, anti-Semitism of the interwar period and has condemned in the most emphatic way the Nazi and fascist ideology that feeds violence and racism. For oblivion, the "storage of the inconceivable in the freezer of history", as a great Jew, the writer Jean Amy, wrote, carries the danger of bringing back to the surface "whispers from hell"."



Concluding her speech, visibly moved, Ms. Sakellaropoulou pointed out the tribute to the victims, especially from Thessaloniki, saying: "I am sure that Thessaloniki, "this mother, the per, the maiko and the mantre, will never forget them, will not cover them with the soil of oblivion and anonymity", as George Ioannou writes, but he will exalt their memory through the centuries as an act of historical vindication and forgiveness."

"The message is painfully timely as some people distort history," said European Commission Vice-President Margaritis Schinas, after completing the memorial march "Never again, Thessaloniki – Auschwitz – 79 years since the departure of the first train", in which he participated.

As he added in a Twitter post, it is "unacceptable to call Nazis those who are fighting for the independence of their country."

"The History of the Jews of Thessaloniki is synonymous with the mutilation of the identity of our city", underlined in his speech the Deputy Minister of Interior (Macedonia - Thrace), Stavros Kalafatis, who participated in the commemoration march.

"Fifty thousand Jewish Greek inhabitants of Thessaloniki were forcibly transferred to the 'distant camps of insanity'. Today we honor their memory and share with our Jewish brothers, common pages of history", said Mr. Kalafatis and added: "The history of the Jews of Thessaloniki is synonymous with the mutilation of the identity of our city. It is at the same time the story reminiscent of what Nazism, totalitarianism, expansionism mean. It is the story that screams to all peoples and tones "Never Again." The deputy minister pointed out that the message is becoming more relevant today "as the Russian invasion of Ukraine is underway, where international law is being blatantly violated, thousands of lives are being lost, a humanitarian crisis is being caused" and added: "Today, here, in the silent march of remembrance for the victims of the Holocaust, we reaffirm our decision to keep the memory alive for the crimes against humanity. We send a message of brotherhood to the Jews of our city and beyond. At the same time, we are committed to complete, as soon as possible, in cooperation with the Jewish Community, the procedures for the creation of the Holocaust Museum, at the same point where the first train began. It is a duty to which we respond with respect to yesterday and a sense of responsibility for tomorrow.

Greeting of the Ambassador of Israel, Yossi Amrani

"We also participated for those who are not here with us, to raise our voices, to remember what happened, not to forget, this is the lesson we must learn from the past and pass on to future generations", stressed in his address, the Ambassador of Israel to Greece, Yossi Amrani and added: "Only in this way will we face evil. The words "Never Again" are important to be heard. But words are not enough, we have to put this into practice in our daily lives. Today this is particularly relevant in relation to what is happening in Ukraine. Once again human lives are being sacrificed on the altar of politics and vanity. Once again, we must not dwell on words as a terminology. The Holocaust is a unique event in world history, due to the ideology behind it. We must not forget what happened and how so many people were wiped out because of racism and hatred."

"We have a historical and moral duty not to forget, both collectively and individually. Our responsibility is not to forget, to stand by the victims, to save lives, to promise that it will not happen again. Because as a saying goes, whoever saves a life saves the whole world. So, our world today is the one we have to save," the Israeli ambassador added.

The Israeli ambassador referred to the presence of the President of the Republic, Katerina Sakellaropoulou, describing it as important both "for the recognition of the past" and for "the message to the future". He particularly dwelt on the fact of Ms. Sakellaropoulou's apparent emotion during her address, saying: "This is a human reaction. This is a leading reaction. Thank you for being here."

Finally, addressing the mayor of Thessaloniki, Konstantinos Zervas and the president of the Central Jewish Council and the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, David Saltiel, he did not hide his deep emotion for the "Kaddish", the Jewish prayer that was heard at the event and added that their responsibility is "not only for the past and for the present, but also for the future" and added: "That's why I hope soon to see the Holocaust Memorial and the Eleftherias Square Park become a monument for both memory and life and the future."

Greetings by K. Zerva, A. Tzitzikosta

"In 1943 the body of the city was mutilated", said the mayor of Thessaloniki, Konstantinos Zervas, in his speech and added: "This is a historical reality, which we must remember every day ... we must shout these two strong words: "Never Again" as an honor and as a lesson for generations to come."

Mr. Zervas stressed that "collective memory is the safest ark" and added: "This is what we keep and that's what we're going with. And of course we do not stay only in this, we proceed to the construction of the Holocaust Museum,

Eleftherias Square will become a park of remembrance of award and honor of law, there has never been and by no other thought, the creation of a walking route is planned as a memorial march, which will connect Eleftherias Square with the Old Railway Station". "Thessaloniki asks for the recognition by the Greek Parliament of March 6th as the Day of the Righteous of the Nations", added Mr. Zervas. He also pointed out that the presence of the President of the Republic pays due tribute and is an honor for everyone and concluded his speech by saying: "Never again totalitarianism, never again atrocities."

"Together united as never before, we erect an impenetrable wall against the repetition of any atrocity, against the modern supporters of hatred and violence", underlined the Regional Governor of Central Macedonia, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, and added: "And at the same time we are building a great bridge of solidarity and humanity to stand by those who are being severely tested on our fellow human beings who are so unfairly and overtly attacked in Ukraine.... We need to understand that tackling violence and hatred concerns us even when they are not directed directly against us."

Address by D. Saltiel

In the words of the late Jacques Menachem, a Holocaust survivor, the president of the Central Jewish Council and the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, David Saltiel, described the drama and atrocities experienced by the Jews of Thessaloniki by the Nazi occupation forces. "He was released in 1945, he had a weight of twenty kilos, he returned to Greece on foot", said Mr. Saltiel and continued: "In Thessaloniki returned a little less than two thousand people, who survived the Nazi persecutions". Mr. Saltiel underlined: "We are here because this is the day that the city itself chose to honor the memory of its own children... The citizens of Thessaloniki are here, the ones who really feel the gravity of the events and understand the importance that it has in our days".

The president of KISSE and the I.K. of Thessaloniki pointed out that "anti-Semitism is on the rise" and that it is directed not only against the Jews, but also against the whole of society, it is a "constant threat" to freedoms, to democracy and to human rights and continued: "We know very well that anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance did not end when the chimneys of Auschwitz stopped smoking, Nor, of course, were they born with the invasion of the Nazis. The seed existed. The Holocaust was built on words such as consent, cooperation, silence. It is the result of a lack of solidarity and a surplus of hatred and indifference. A balance in the soul of people, perhaps the most difficult that can be changed. Few were then who were the shining examples, few Righteous of the Nations, the everyday people who found the mental fortitude and helped the persecuted, risking many even their own lives... That's how we got to the tragedy. In a tragedy without catharsis. Because the wound of the Holocaust remains open. As long as anti-Semitism and intolerance remain phenomena that threaten societies, we cannot speak of catharsis."

Finally, Mr. Saltiel also referred to the events in Ukraine and wondered how it is possible "to remain unmoved by what civilians, women, elderly children, who are suddenly in the eye of the cyclone, are experiencing" and added: "We consider it our duty through international collaborations with international organizations to offer everything we can for the relief of the persecuted".

The event was also welcomed by the Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Nikolaos Papaioannou, the Rector of the University of Macedonia, Stylianos Katranidis and the President of the Steering Committee of the International University of Thessaloniki, Athanasios Kaissis.

The commemoration march and the events at the Old Station were also attended by MPs, local authorities, representatives of the city's institutions, foreign diplomats, who deposited flowers and lit candles in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

The events at the Old Station of Thessaloniki began with music from the string ensemble of the Department of Music Science and Art of the University of Macedonia, while before the greetings a minute's silence was observed for the victims of the Holocaust.

Source: Kathimerini, 20.3.2022

New Exhibit at the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki

The Minister of Culture Inaugurated an Exhibition at the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki

The series of exhibitions "In the Same City. Christians and Jews in Thessaloniki" inaugurated on Sunday afternoon 20.3.2022 at the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, the Minister of Culture and Sports Lina Mendoni. As Ms. Mendoni pointed out in her speech, the Jewish Museum and its collections will at least be the core of the collections of the Holocaust Museum of Thessaloniki, which the government's goal is to do as soon as possible.



"We want it to be done in order to house not only the memory, but also the very long history and the cultural identity of the Jewish community, because we owe it to our country, to Greece, to Thessaloniki, but mainly to the memory of all those who perished, because there were many who got on the train and never returned", said the Minister.

This series of exhibitions explores the atmosphere of Thessaloniki in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through unpublished photographs, documents and objects and includes three sections. In the first thematic cycle "Music, Theatre, Culture through the archives of the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki", which was inaugurated at the Jewish Museum, information is presented on the individual, social and geographical identity of hundreds of Jewish families in Thessaloniki, covering a period of 28 years (1915-1943), the period between the foundation of the Conservatory and the deportation of Jews from Thessaloniki. A second cycle will follow, on "Education and sports", which will be hosted in May in the Philanthropic Fraternity of Thessaloniki and a third one on "Institutions and operation of communities, trade, entrepreneurship, publications, press, personalities of Thessaloniki" that will take place in October at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki", said the president of the Central Jewish Council of Greece and the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, Mr. David Saltiel.

The series of exhibitions are co-organized by the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Georgios Konstantinidis Archive and the Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy. The exhibition was prepared by the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, the Georgios Konstantinidis Archive and the Chair of Jewish Studies at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, with the kind support of the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Thessaloniki and the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki. Source: Athens – Macedonian News Agency 20.3.2022

Kos

News on Cooperation of the Municipality of Kos on Synagogue

Interview of KISE Secretary General on the Memorandum of Cooperation between KISE and Kos Municipality Mr. Victor Eliezer, gave an interview on 22.3.2022 to the journalist Sandy Ladikou in the show "Everything in the Air" of the radio station "Radio Proto 91.5".

"Reactions and tension were noted at the meeting of the Municipal Council of Kos on Monday, March 22, 2022 on the occasion of the briefing of the body on the conclusion of a memorandum of cooperation between the Municipality of Kos and the Central Jewish Council of Greece (K.I.S.E.) for the exploitation of the building complex of the former Jewish synagogue.

In fact, on Tuesday morning, the general secretary of the Central Jewish Council, Mr. Victor Eliezer, the deputy mayor Mrs. Sevi Vlachos, as well as Mrs. Vasso Pi, municipal councilor of the Force for Change, spoke to Radio Proto 91.5 and Vima of Kos.

Mayor: The Central Jewish Council asked to buy back the former synagogue

The mayor of Kos, Mr. Theodosios Nikitaras, mentioned that he was offered a proposal to buy back from the KCI, something that the municipality of Kos did not accept and thus the proposal for cooperation with specific terms emerged.

G. Kyritsis: Timeless indifference to events – Insult to Kos the memorandum

The head of the Force for Change, Mr. George Kyritsis, in his statement, referred to the purchase proposal that he himself accepted and even stood in a phone call he received inadvertently, while he was not mayor, on the issue, while he did not reveal the content of the discussion, provoking the reaction of the mayor.

Mr. Kyritsis, demonstrating the 1986 contract, said that nowhere is the use of the synagogue as a religious site or museum forbidden. He dwelt on the recent renovation that took place and wondered why the Municipality of Kos wants to put a co-manager in its property.

"Over the years who asked to do events? Nobody. It is an insult to the citizens what you are going to do and to all the municipal authorities and the events that have taken place. We say no it's a disgrace to the local government what you're going to do."

I. Roufa: No to co-ownership with those who sold the former synagogue

Mrs. Ioanna Roufa, head of Vision and Action, said, among other things, that this action is an insult, while she agreed with the former mayor, Mr. Kostas Kaiserlis. "We bought the building and did our duty to the Jews. Will we co-own those who sold it to us and it now belongs to the municipality of Kos? Who forbids a ticket? Look for each other who is creating serious problems. I'm only indignant that you brought it up for information."

Mrs. Roufa stressed that the quality of life committee of the Municipality of Kos has only an advisory character while the issue came to the city council for information not for a vote.

V. Pi: Some changed course for the financial agreement with KSIS within 48 hours – The former synagogue was renovated in 2021

In her statements, Mrs. Vasso Pi referred to unanswered questions as the invitation wrote an update and not a vote on the issue. "Unanswered is the question of why a memorandum of cooperation is needed when for 30 years the contract provides that it can function as a religious space, exhibition and museum space. Never during our tenure as president of the Hippocratic civil society was I submitted a request for an event or a religious ceremony. The CCI was asked to purchase it by both Mr. Kyritsis and Mr. Nikitaras, where the latter entered into negotiations for co-management. There's no logic to that."

Mrs. Pi was also asked about the attitude of our fellow citizens descendants of Jews and people who record and deal with the history of the Jewish community in Kos, who until recently expressed their opposition to the conclusion of cooperation in economic terms.

"They passionately defended their position and expressed it. I don't know how they changed course within 48 hours, but their opinion is respected."

Ms. Pi also dwelt on the renovation that took place in the former synagogue in 2021, which she described as brave, as interventions were made both in the building and in the equipment.

The signing of the cooperation is not legitimate

Ms Pi said that the memorandum of understanding could not be signed. "It will practically have no legitimacy and will not be able to be implemented. It will suffer the same fate as the memorandum of cooperation with the University of Thessaly".

V. Eliezer G.G. KISE: Exploitation of the former synagogue of Kos for religious and museum activities

The general secretary of KISE Victor Eliezer spoke exclusively to Radio Proto 91.5 and Vima of Kos about the background of the case, the terms of the agreement and the reasons why the Jews of Greece want the synagogue of Kos to be highlighted.

Mr. Elyzer began by giving clues about the CCI. "The Central Jewish Council of Greece is a legal entity of public law representing the Greek Jews and is subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs."

He recalled that 2,500 Jews of Kos and Rhodes were deported to Auschwitz with Haidari as a stopover, while only one returned to Kos. "The Jews were a living cell of the cities. What remains to be remembered is the cemeteries and synagogues."

In 1986 the Synagogue was sold to the Municipality of Kos – In 2018 a repurchase proposal was submitted.

The general secretary gave the background to the case of the sale of the synagogue to the Municipality of Kos. "In 1986 it was decided to transfer it to the Municipality of Kos because 99% of the Jewish community of Kos was killed in Auschwitz. As soon as a man returned. All these years it was maintained by the Municipality of Kos and the urban company. The weather has changed. As we did in other areas where there were synagogues such as Chania, we decided to use the area of Kos as a place of worship and a place for transmitting history. We have no other intention."



Mr. Eliezer confirmed that in 2018 a purchase proposal was submitted by KISE to the municipality of Kos, but did not proceed because the two sides could not cooperate. "It is respectful that the local community did not agree to the purchase. We are not a profit-making association. We want to fund to shape the space to be functional. We discuss not only the economic exploitation but also the promotion. To have tourists the opportunity to celebrate. To become the point of transmission of knowledge so that people know that there was the center of the Jews, the synagogue, there."

As he explained, the issue for The Greek Jews has not only an economic dimension but also a spiritual one. "We feel proud that in Chania, priests from other religions attend commemorative events. Better now a partnership than ever before. The interest has now thrived because we have found common ground for cooperation and we are moving forward."

There are no plans to recapture the Synagogue.

Asked about the reactions of the municipal factions, he said: "I do not enter into political controversies. It is a matter for the local community. Only benefits can accrue. Those who think there are plans to recapture, of the synagogue or tricks, know that they are not in our intentions."

Finally, when asked about the future actions that have been planned, he said that he expects the KISE to sign the memorandum for the cooperation with the municipality. "We will proceed to the joint organization of events and it will become internationally known that in Kos there will be the possibility of holding religious ceremonies within the framework of cooperation."

S. Vlachou: The aim is to promote multicultural Kos

The deputy mayor Mrs. Sevi Vlachos on the issue gave a description of how the prospect of cooperation arose after the proposal of Alexandros Menasses for the promotion of the site. "This is a collaboration that will highlight multicultural Kos and the peaceful coexistence of peoples."

He described the ownership of the former synagogue as indisputable and non-negotiable, while he said that the conditions come to multiply the space.

The Cooperation Agreement shall provide for:

1. Inscription of the name "KAL SHALOM" (Synagogue of Peace) in three languages (Greek, English, Hebrew), brought by the synagogue before the deportation and extermination of the Jewish Community of the island of Kos.
2. Renovation of the interior of the synagogue in Kos, in order to acquire the style and functionality of a synagogue, but also to become a monument that will inspire the respect and historicity of the synagogue of the period 1930-1940. The project, with an indicative budget of 150,000 euros, will be funded by the Central Jewish Council of Greece.
3. Its function as a Museum, within the building complex of the synagogue.

Patras-Zakynthos

Mural Painting of Kleomenis Kostopoulos in Patras for Rescue of the Jews of Zakynthos

The story of the rescue of the Jews in Zakynthos, the only Jewish community in Greece that survived in its entirety from the extermination of the Nazis during the German occupation, which numbered 275 members, has inspired writers and directors alike. (Watch [Here](#) the documentary of Tonis Lykouresis)

This time, however, the amazing story of wartime solidarity was revived through a mural and the power of social media.

The last mural by Kleomenis Kostopoulos entitled "Solidarity", a collaboration between Artists 4 Israel and Art In Progress, was completed at 36, Zakynthos Street, Patras. The most shocking thing about this mural, however, is that a Jew saw via Facebook the post with the mural and recognized his family even himself, as they were photographed on the island of Zakynthos in 1953.

Cleomenes Kostopoulos said: "The trigger for me to create this work was a historical event that took place on the island of Zakynthos in 1943. When the whole island conspired to save 275 members of a Jewish community, who lived there and for whom an order was issued by the Germans, to surrender. This story is well known in Israel, generally in Europe and in the Jewish community, but unfortunately in Greece they did not know it so much. The interesting thing about this project is that with the post I had on FB there were some descendants of the depictees of the work that this is really touching, and I was shocked by the fact that a project of mine can create and continue the story.

The story in a few words: During the German occupation with the help of the Christian inhabitants of Zakynthos, the Jews fled secretly to distant villages in the mountains or temporarily hid in warehouses.



Certificates and identity cards were forged so that Jews could pass for Christians. Although all the inhabitants knew what was going on, no one revealed anything to the Germans. When the deadline expired, Metropolitan Chrysostomos and the then Mayor Of Karrer, handed over to the Germans the list of names and were not but from the 2 of their own. The Jews remained hidden until the liberation of the island in September 1944. This is how all 275 were saved.

As a token of gratitude, the State of Israel in 1978, honored Metropolitan Chrysostomos and mayor Luke Carrer for their self-sacrifice and heroic attitude towards the Holocaust. They were declared "Righteous of the Nations" and Zakynthos "Island of the Righteous". Today, the heroic act of the two men is taught in the schools of Israel. See in the video above what the artist and Mr. Moses Mordos said, a descendant of one of the families of the survivors, who is depicted in the mural, in the arms of his dad..

The mural depicts the Mayor of Zakynthos Loukas Karer, the Metropolitan of Zakynthos Chrysostomos and Ermandos Mordos with his wife Eftychia along with their four children, Rebecca (Becky), Samuel, Moses and Nina. Source: imerazante, 19.3.2022

US Holocaust Expert Interview with GRTimes

The special envoy of the United States of America for The Holocaust, Ellen Germain, referred to the importance that the US Department of State attaches to the issues of the Holocaust and to informing citizens about the suffering of the Jews during the Second World War, among others, in her interview on the WebTv show "SamTimes" of GRTimes.gr and the journalist Maria Samolada.



"Our mission is to seek Justice for Holocaust survivors and their heirs," Ellen Germain said, among other things, explaining why the U.S. State Department has a Special Envoy for Holocaust-related issues. She added: "We have two areas where we work. One is the area of Rehabilitation and Reparation", with the aim of encouraging governments to consider some procedures for claiming - from Holocaust survivors and their heirs - assets seized by the Nazis during World War II.

The second area that Ms. Germain's Department deals with is "accurate memory preservation and Holocaust Training." And this – as she pointed out – is very important because, "we are seeing an increase in anti-Semitism around the world, in the United States and in Europe, and an increase in the distortion and denial of the Holocaust."

Visit to Thessaloniki

The United States Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues also referred to her visit – which she recorded in GRTimes.gr – to Thessaloniki, and to the meetings she had with representatives of institutions and the Jewish Community. As she pointed out, she was informed about how Thessaloniki – which "was the center of Jewish life in Greece before the Second World War" – is already honoring the history of its Jewish population and what are its plans for the future. She said she was impressed after the briefing she had about the Holocaust Museum, but also about the plans for Eleftherias Square.

Impressive designs for the Holocaust Museum

"I am very impressed by the many plans for a new Holocaust Museum here in Thessaloniki", but also "for the plans to improve Eleftherias Square so that it becomes a place of remembrance, even though there is already a Holocaust memorial there," Ellen Germain said, adding: "I have seen photos of the project and they are all very impressive." He assured that he will follow with great interest the implementation of these plans which, as he stressed, "have an excellent chance of becoming a reality, because it seems that the city, the Jewish community, is all determined to carry them out. But, as is always the case, a big project like this takes a lot of time."

He also referred to the Holocaust Museum in Washington and the possibility of entering into a collaboration with the corresponding Museum of Thessaloniki for the exchange of ideas and know-how. "We have 16 great Holocaust Museums in the United States where we bring together educators, academics, museum curators to share our experiences and best practices, to explain how American Holocaust museums educate their audiences about the Holocaust and about human mass atrocities like this, so we can all work to prevent them in the future."

The Romaniote Community

Ellen Germain admitted that Americans don't know enough about Thessaloniki and its Jewish history. Even she herself, as she characteristically says, "until I came to Thessaloniki, I did not know about the Jewish community of The Romaniotes here, and I did not know that it existed here in Thessaloniki for more than 2,000 years". And she spoke of "a fascinating story" that shows how "inextricably intertwined between them are Jewish and Greek history. One is part of the other."

The State Department campaign

The US Special Envoy for the Holocaust also referred to the recent social media campaign that has as "protagonists" the employees of the US State Department who are descendants of Holocaust survivors.

"It was something that started from my Department, with the cooperation of embassies and consulates around the world, to find people who now work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose parents or grandparents are Holocaust survivors. It is our colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who talk about how this experience, the experience of their parents, the experience of their grandparents, helped them, motivated them to become diplomats, to serve their country," said Ellen Germain, who believes that one of the best ways to inform the younger generation about the Holocaust is to listen to the survivors – who are inevitably becoming fewer and fewer – and the her peers who are descendants of the victims of the Holocaust.

Interaction with three-dimensional holograms

This way, according to Ms. Germain, is "a very powerful tool to make the young generation understand the horrors of the Holocaust and why we all need to work together to prevent such events in the future. Training is the "key". But in addition to the importance of projecting video testimonies of Holocaust survivors, "some museums and organizations are now experimenting with creating three-dimensional holograms, three-dimensional videos—images of Holocaust survivors, so that an audience of students in 20 years can actually interact with this hologram of holocaust survivor and ask them questions."

To fight Anti-Semitism

Ellen Germain also referred to the need to combat anti-Semitism that is growing worldwide, but also to how her own Department is moving towards achieving this goal. "It is increasingly important to confront and combat anti-Semitism, as well as the distortion and denial of the Holocaust, which is also a form of anti-Semitism," he stressed, adding that "it is a difficult struggle, to which I have turned the most attention of my Department".

The yellow stars of... Covid-19

According to Ellen Germain, the emphasis should be on the education of students and adults, but also on the cultivation of critical thinking, so that they can actually distinguish fake news circulating through the internet – and not only – with anti-Semitic content, distorting the truth about the Holocaust. And he cited as a typical example, the yellow stars of... Covid-19 worn by the coronavirus vaccine deniers.

"Creating a false equivalent between the suffering of Jews during World War II and a measure such as vaccination taken to protect public health is a false comparison that downplays the tragedy of the Holocaust and the suffering of its victims," Ellen Germain stressed.

Athens

Holocaust Memorial in Athens Vandalized Once Again

A statement by the President of KISE, David Saltiel, on the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial of Athens was published in a tribute of the newspaper TA NEA (23.3.2022), edited by Maria Mourelatou, entitled "The monuments we love and hurt: Who and why erupt in the symbols – The six most vandalized in Athens". As the President of KISE characteristically stated: "The Holocaust Memorial of the Jews, next to the Synagogue of Athens, has been repeatedly vandalized with threatening graffiti and Nazi symbols. The adjacent inscription with the dedication of Eli Wiesel, is engraved repeatedly.



Such abhorrent acts indicate not only the lack of respect for the memory of the victims but also the fact that the supporters of hatred and anti-Semitism live among us. And here it is worth noting that in contrast to the past, the state, local government and active citizens are sensitized and react. This battle between the light of civilization and the darkness of barbarism is ongoing and we must all invest even more in education.

Source: Excerpt from TA NEA, 23.3.2022

Turkey

Israeli President Isaac Herzog Visits Turkey, Meets with Jewish Community

President Isaac Herzog prayed with the congregants at the Neve Shalom Synagogue in Istanbul on Thursday, ending his state [visit to Turkey](#). The synagogue gave Herzog an aliyah, the honor of saying the blessings over the Torah, as well as leading the recitation of the Mourners' Kaddish for those killed in multiple terrorist attacks on the synagogue in its history. Turkish Chief Rabbi Isak Haleva thanked Herzog for "bringing ties of peace and friendship for Israel and Turkey. This visit is a historic event, leaving a deep impression."



Herzog said the Jewish people "share joint responsibility and a shared destiny." The president said that he relayed a message of interfaith tolerance in [his meeting](#) with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan: "Members of all the religions in the Middle East can and must live in peace. I was happy to hear that he agreed.

"In a time of winds of war and terrible tragedy, we have to go in the way of the legacy of Abraham, of tolerance and fighting antisemitism, racism and xenophobia," he said. "Our world needs more peace and fewer wars and tragedies." Haleva spoke of the importance of Jewish unity, and prayed that Herzog will be protected by the legacy of his grandfather, former Israeli Ashkenazi chief rabbi Isaac Herzog.

The president and the chief rabbi recounted that Herzog's father, then-president Chaim Herzog, visited the synagogue in 1992, in a ceremony marking 500 years since the expulsion of the Jews of Spain, after which many Jews found refuge in the Ottoman Empire.

Many Jewish sages and prominent historic figures were among those who fled or their descendants, Herzog noted. The president also recounted that his grandfather visited Istanbul in the 1940s to try to help Jews escape Nazi Germany to Turkey. Herzog and the congregation said the prayer for the State of Israel, as well as a prayer for the Turkish government.

Israel

KISE's Condolences to the Ambassador of Israel for the Terrorist Attack on Beersheva

Following the deadly terrorist attack that took place in Beersheva , southern Israel, on 22.3.2022, KISE sent to the Ambassador of Israel to Greece, Mr. Yossi Amrani, the following message of condolence:

"We are shocked and devastated by the news of the recent stabbing and infiltration attack that claimed the lives of four Israeli civilian civilians and left two others wounded.

On behalf of The Greek Jewry, we express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and our best wishes to the injured for a speedy recovery.

The continuation of the cycle of blood and fanaticism causes great concern and sorrow in our community and in global Jewry. We stand in solidarity with the people of Israel and pray for the security of the State of Israel and for the peaceful coexistence of all citizens of Israel with its neighbors."

An Arab stabbed and killed at least four people in the southern Israeli city of Beersheva before falling dead from the bullets of a passerby, police and emergency services said.

This is one of the deadliest attacks on Israel in recent years.

So far, no organization has claimed responsibility. Israeli media reported that the perpetrator was an Arab citizen of Israel, a former high school teacher who had been jailed on charges of having ties to the Islamic State.



"It looks like he was an isolated terrorist," police spokesman Eli Levi told Channel 13 TV. "A civilian took the initiative, shot him and killed him," he added.

The Magen David Adom ambulance service reported that three women and a man were killed by the assailant who attacked them at a gas station and a shopping mall. At least two other people were injured and one of them is in critical condition.

Tensions are rising in Israel and the Palestinian Territories as the holy month of Ramadan approaches for Muslims, a period during which there have been violent incidents in the past. In East Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank there have been many knife attacks in recent weeks and some of the assailants have been shot and killed by Israeli forces.

Source: ANA - MPA

Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel



The Shabbat preceding Pesah is called "Shabbat Hagadol"- "the Great Sabbath". Like many other special Shabbatot, it is characterized by certain customs and a special Haftarah. However, and very unlike other special Shabbatot and their names, the origins and significance of "Shabbat Hagadol" are shrouded in mystery! In fact, the very source of the moniker is unclear, as it is not mentioned in either the Bible or the Talmud. Apparently, one of the earliest references to the name is found in the "*Mahzor Vitri*", written by a student of Rashi named Simha Ben Shmuel of Vitry, France from the late 11th and earlier 12th century. He writes that *'The people are accustomed to call the Shabbat prior to Pesah, "Shabbat Hagadol", though they don't know why'* (my emphasis). Apparently, though Shabbat Hagadol was already considered a special Shabbat in the early Middle Ages, no definitive source could be found regarding its origin! This led many scholars to conclude that the entire idea originated in 'Ashkenaz' (Germany) in the Middle Ages, but the fact that it was known and practiced in all Sephardic communities would suggest a more ancient and common source.

As such, various theories were offered by early and later commentators as to its name and significance: Rabbi Yakov Ben Asher, the author of the monumental Halachic work, "*Arba'at Haturim*" – 'The Four Pillars' – on which the "Shulhan Aruch" was based, wrote that "Shabbat Hagadol" received its name based on G-d's command to the Israelites in Exodus 12:3 to prepare for the Paschal sacrifice while still in Egypt: "*On the tenth day of this month [Nissan]... each man should take a lamb for the household, a lamb for each home ...*", to be offered as the Pashal sacrifice four days later, on the eve of the actual Exodus, which was the first Pesah in history. According to tradition, that year the 10th of Nissan fell on Shabbat, and despite Egyptian anger and shock that the Israelites were going to sacrifice a lamb, an Egyptian deity, and literally at their doorsteps, G-d performed a great miracle and prevented the Egyptians from attacking the Israelites that Shabbat, turning this Shabbat into "Shabbat Hagadol".

The "Pri Hadsah", the 17th century Italian-Sephardic commentator, Rabbi Hezkiya De Silva, also connects the name "Shabbat Hagadol" with G-d's command to the Israelites to take a lamb home on that Shabbat of the 10th of Nissan, but he sees the very fact that the Israelites obeyed G-d's command while still in Egypt, as being a "great" achievement, making that Shabbat, "Shabbat Hagadol".

Rabbi Moshe Sofer (Schreiber), known as, "the Hatam Sofer" from 18th century Frankfurt, wrote that on this Shabbat the Jewish people fully 'returned' to their commitment and faith in G-d, who is called "HaGadol", turning the Shabbat into "Shabbat Hagadol".

Another great Sephardic sage, Rabbi David Ben Yosef Abudraham of 14th century Seville, wrote that the moniker "Shabbat Hagadol", comes directly from the special Haftarah, like other special Shabbatot during the year. The Haftarah is taken from the Book of the Prophet Malachi, chapter 3, and in verse 23 it says: "*Hinei Anochi Shole'ah Lachem Et Eliyahu Hanavi Lifnei Bo Yom Hashem HaGadol V'hanorah,*" ("Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord"). Ergo: "Shabbat Hagadol". A far less esoteric but quite logical reason for the name "Shabbat Hagadol" is offered by the "*Shibolei Haleket*" – Rabbi Zedekiah Ben Avraham Anaw from 13th century Rome and Germany. In his view, "Shabbat Hagadol" takes its name from the lengthy sermon that was customarily delivered by almost every community Rabbi on the Shabbat before Pesah in order to review and teach the laws and customs of Pesah, which made Shabbat seem longer, drawn out and "*gadol*"!

Regardless of its origins, "Shabbat Hagadol" is part and parcel of pre-Pesah Jewish tradition, and various customs also developed around it. For example, some communities recite special hymns and *'piyutim* – ritual poems – in the morning services that revolve around the laws of Pesah; others read all 15 psalms (120-134) of the *"Shir Hama'a lot"* series. Another popular custom is to read parts of the Haggadah, both to commemorate the fact that the redemption began on "Shabbat Hagadol", as well as help children become familiar with the Haggadah's content in preparation for the Seder. In some Sephardic communities, it was customary to greet one another with *"Shabbat Hagadol Mevorach"* – "have a blessed Shabbat Hagadol". And to this day, it is still common for community Rabbis to deliver an annual "Shabbat Hagadol" sermon or lecture that includes practical laws and instructions for Pesah. Finally, many congregations organize community meals on "Shabbat Hagadol", which not only allow everyone to relax and enjoy Shabbat without worrying about any issues of hametz or cleaning the kitchen, but also provides a wonderful opportunity to experience the true spirit of Pesah: family and community. ***Hag Kasher v'Sameah to one and all!***



Rabbi Marc D. Angel
Angel for Shabbat, Parashat Tazria
Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals – JewishIdeas.org

How important is it to admit the truth when one is wrong?

In his book of sermons (Tokhahat Hayyim), Rabbi Hayyim Palachi of 19th century Izmir, opens his discussion of Parashat Tazria, with a reference to Uzziah, a generally successful king of Judah during the 8th century BCE. King Uzziah eventually became arrogant with power, and decided that he could serve as a priest (cohen) and bring an offering in the Temple.

Uzziah was warned by the priests and a prophet to desist from this flagrant violation of religious law, but the King proceeded in spite of the warnings. The Bible reports that King Uzziah was stricken with leprosy as punishment for his sinful arrogance. Although it was clear to everyone that Uzziah had acted wrongly, the King himself did not admit his sin. He lived the rest of his life with leprosy, never repenting for his error in judgment.

Rabbi Palachi cites the example of King Uzziah to stress the importance of admitting one's mistakes. Indeed, the wiser a person is, the greater the desire to adhere to truth.

In a remarkable passage, Rabbi Palachi wrote: "Anyone who comes to refute me in any of my teachings or rulings, whether something I wrote or spoke, let him refute and correct me with heavenly intent, to clarify the truth; he should not be ashamed or embarrassed [to disprove my teachings], for this is my wish and desire, especially for my children and students. They should not be concerned that I will take offense [at being proven wrong]; on the contrary, this is my honor." (p. 45).

Rabbi Palachi was emphasizing a vital concept: we must pursue truth; we must allow—and welcome—honest criticism and admit when we are wrong. Our goal must not be to promote our views at any cost; our goal must be to arrive at truth.

The search for truth entails several basic features. Diligence: one needs to pursue truth with single-minded devotion and thoroughness. Honesty: one must be as objective as possible and consider a range of facts and opinions. Humility: one must be willing to admit error.

Beware of those who propound views that are not factually correct or that are based on biased or faulty reasoning. Beware of those who insist on their views, without taking into consideration the valid criticisms against them. Beware of those who promote their ideas, even when their ideas and policies have been demonstrated to be misguided and wrong.

Arrogant and egotistical people are not essentially interested in truth. Rather, they engage in propaganda, mind-control, and stubborn adherence to their own opinions regardless of how erroneous, biased, or dangerous. Like King Uzziah, they would rather suffer than admit personal error.

Professor Daniel Kahneman, the Israeli Nobel Prize winner in Economics, has coined the phrase "illusion of validity." He points out that people tend to think that their own opinions and intuitions are correct. They tend to overlook hard data that contradict their worldview and to dismiss arguments that don't coincide with their own conception of things. They operate under the illusion that their ideas, insights, intuitions are valid; they don't let facts or opposing views get in their way.

The illusion of validity leads to innumerable errors, to wrong judgments, to unnecessary confrontations. If people could be more open and honest, self-reflective, willing to entertain new ideas and to correct erroneous assumptions—they would find themselves in a better, happier and more humane world.

The illusion of validity does not just affect arrogant and egotistical people, although it surely is most pronounced in such individuals. The problem affects all human beings, even the wisest and most humble. It is all too easy to become complacent with our "truths" and not maintain clarity of thought. Genuine seekers of truth maintain alert and critical minds; they are open to new ideas and new perspectives.

The Talmud at the end of tractate Berakhot teaches that Torah scholars have no peace, not in this world and not in the next world. Why not? Because they are always searching and growing, asking new questions and finding new answers. They are never content that they have mastered the whole truth and nothing but the truth. They go from one intellectual struggle to the next.

Rabbi Palachi taught that genuine seekers of truth are characterized by humility, the willingness to admit imperfection, the desire to learn and to grow. Those who follow the model of King Uzziah are destructive to themselves, their families and society.

New Italian Jewish Music and Liturgy Online Database

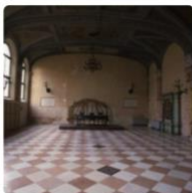
We are happy to share the news from our friends at Centro Primo Levi that they have recently launched a new database of Italian Jewish liturgy and music. It is a great, user-friendly platform where people can pick melodies for known and less known liturgy and incorporate them in their practice.

View the database here: <https://jewishitalianmusic.org/>

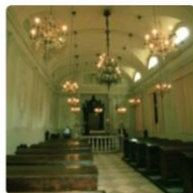
Firenze Tempio Maggiore



Ferrara Scuola Italiana



Ferrara Scuola Tedesca



Ferrara Scuola Spagnola



Casale Monferrato



Ancona sinagoga italiana



Venezia Scuola Spagnola



Preparing for Pesah – Romaniote Style

Order of the Passover Seder Transliterated in Greek

Thank you Lois Genee Ledner

- VANOMI TA CHERYAH APANO STIN TAVLA (TRAPEZI) KE LEMMI "VAYDABBER ELAI ZEH HASHULCHAN ASHER LIFNEH ADONAI"
- KADESH: LEMMI TO KIDDUSH. (SAVREH MARANAN.. ASHER BACHARBANU, KE SHE'ECHIANU)
- OORCHATS: NIVOOMASTI KE THEH LEMMI BERACHA. YIATI THEH LEMMI BERACHA? YIATI THEH LEMMI HAMOTZI.
- KARPAS: PERNOMI TO SELINO KE THITHOMI KATHI ENA ISA ME MIA ILYA, KE TO VOTAMI STO XITHI, KE LEMMI TO BERACHA, "BOREH PERI HA'ADAMAH".
- YACHATZ: PERNOMI TO METZINI TO MATZA MI TO THIO CHARAKIA (LINES OR MARKS) KE TI CHORIZOMI STI MESI (CUT IT IN THE MIDDLE). YIATI CHORIZOMI TUTTI TI MATZA, YIATI CHORITZI O HAKADOSH BARUCH HU TIN THALASSA TO SOOF SE THOTHIKA STRATIS, KE PERASSAN TA THOTHIKA SEFATIM (TRIBES). ETZI NA KAMI KE ISS IMAS K'ENA MAS V'GHALI APTO GALOOTH (TYRANNY) NA MAS PARI ISTO ERETZ YISRAEL..... AMEN.
TI MISI MATZA VANOMI ANAMESA THIO MATZOTH, KE TI MISI MATZA VASOMI THIA AFIKOMEN.
- MAGID: YOMIZOMI TA POTIRIA KE LEMMI TO HAGGADAH OSTO "GA'AL YISRAEL".
- ROCHTZAH: NIVOMASTI KE LEMMI BERACHA. YIATI LEMMI BERACHA? YIATI KANOMI HAMOTZI.
- MOTZI MATZA: PERNOMI TI MISI MATZA APO AFISAMAN ANAMISTA STIS THIO MATZOTH KE PERNOME TI MATZA MI TI MIA GRAMI (ONE MARK) KE THITHOMI ISA ME THIO ILYES, KE LEMMI TO BERACHOTH, "HAMOTZI LECHEM MIN HA'ARETZ".. KE " AL ACHILAT MATZA".
- MAROR: PERNOMI TO MAROR (ROMAINE LETTUCE) KE THINOME KATHE ENA ISA MI MIA ILYA KE TO VOTAMI STO CHAROSETH, KE LEMMI TO BERACHA, "AL ACHILAT MAROR".
- KORECH: PERNOMI TO MAROR (ESCAROLE) KE TI MATZA MI TA TRIA CHARAKIA (3 LINES) KE THITHOME SI KATHE ENAN ISA MI THIO ILYES, KE TO DELIGHOME (WRAP IT UP) KE LEMMI "ZECHER L'MIKDASH KEHILLEL...AL MATZOT UMRORIM YOCHLUHU".
- SHULCHAN ORECH: TAVLA (TRAPEZZI) ORIZMENO KE TROMI TA FAYIAMAS.
- TSAFUN: PERNOMI TI MISI MATZA PO VALAMAN APOKATO TIN TRAPEZZI YIA AFIKOMIN, KE THINOME KATHE ENA ISA MI MIA ILYA. TO TROMI KE LEMMI " ZECHER LAKOURBAN PESACH ANEH ECHAL ALASOBA".
- BARECH: YOMIZOMI TA POTIRIA KE LEMMI TO BIRKAT HAMAZON.
- HALLEL: YOMIZOMI TA POTIRIA KE LEMME HALLEL.
- NIRTZAH: LEMMI TO BERACHA ACHARONAH

Rae David's Recipe for Zucchini Cheese Pie

Kulakithromenu (pardon my spelling!) -- it's zucchini/cheese in a pie plate

Recipe by Rae David

1-lb green or yellow squash - peel and grate

1/4-lb cream cheese

3-tbsp matzo meal

1-egg

grated cheese

3/4-tbsp salt

Beat egg. Add salt, cream cheese and stir till fairly smooth. Add grated squash, grated cheese, and matzo meal. Turn into greased pie plate. Sprinkle grated cheese over top and dot with butter. Bake at 375 until done
I am not exact in measurements. When squash is a little over 1-lb, I use 2 eggs and 6 tbsp matzo meal



Picture of the Month



Cantos shop in Ioannina from 1960s-1970s

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

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

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

When you are in New York, visit us on Broome Street.



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Kehila Kedosha Janina

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Email: museum@kkjsm.org

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