

Earlier activities

Education

Earlier activities in this field, in chronological order:

1. *February 2007*: Greek representatives attended the ICHEIC program for Holocaust Education in Europe at Yad Vashem.
2. *May 2007*: A 3-day seminar organised by the Ministry of National Education in Thrace for educators of primary and secondary schools on the subject of: "Holocaust, Racism, Xenophobia".
3. *July 2006 and July 2008*: Greek teachers attended a special seminar for Greek educators at the International School of Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem.
4. *July 2008*: Greek representatives attended the Workshop of the Council of Europe "The Remembrance of the Holocaust and of the Roma Samudaripen" (Budapest) and the 6th International Conference on the "Holocaust and Education, Teaching the Shoah, Fighting Racism and Prejudice" at Yad Vashem.



5. Greek teachers have participated in training seminars organised by the Jewish Museum of Greece and the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs with the assistance of the ITF and international specialists. The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs also contributed financially to the realization of this project. The seminars have created a network of teachers who follow developments in the methods of teaching the Holocaust at all different levels from the 6th grade of primary school (at the age of 12) up to the 3rd grade of Senior High School (at the age of 18).
6. *December 2010*: A two days seminar entitled "Teaching the Holocaust" (the seventh in a row) was held in Athens on December 1-2, for Greek educators (project "Educate the Educators") at the Jewish Museum of Greece under the aegis of the Ministry of Education with assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
7. *May 2011*: The Department of Balkan Slavic and Oriental Studies of the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, in cooperation with the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, organised a competition for university students for the writing of a paper entitled "Jewish Places of Thessaloniki".

8. *March 2012*: A three-day seminar on the teaching of the Holocaust, co-organised by the Pedagogy Department of the School of Philosophy of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Jewish Community and sponsored by the German Consulate, was held in Thessaloniki, on 16t-18 March 2012. For the program of the seminar (in Greek) please visit <http://www.jct.gr/IKTH%20SEMINARIO%20HOLOCAUST%20programma.PDF>.
9. *May 2012*: A conference entitled "**The study of the contemporary history and the case of the teaching of the Holocaust**" was organised in Thessaloniki on 8th May 2012.
10. *May 2012*: A seminar by Professor Hagen Fleischer at the University of Athens, was held on 29th May 2012 and it was covered widely by the Greek media. For more details (in Greek) and pictures, please visit <http://donteunreadme.wordpress.com/2012/05/31/ho/>

Remembrance

1. *January 2008*: Greece signed an agreement with Polish authorities to create a memorial to honour Greek victims at the Auschwitz concentration camp in barrack No 18. The members of the Greek committee for the Auschwitz memorial are as follows:
 - Ph. Tomai - Constantopoulou, Head of the committee
 - M. Konstantinis, former President of the Central Jewish Board
 - M. Matsas, President of the Jewish Museum of Greece
 - H. Kounio, survivor of the Holocaust in the Auschwitz Camp and President of the Community Assembly of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki
 - The Director of the Technical Services of the MFA
 - The Greek Ambassador to Warsaw
 - M. Glezos, representative of the National Resistance Movement



-P. Voulgaris, film director.

2. *February 2009*: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a photo album book, edited by Ph. Tomai - Constantopoulou entitled "Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau".
3. *May-December 2009*: The Jewish Museum of Greece organised the exhibition "Jewish Neighbourhoods".

4. *May 2009*: From 27th until 29th May 2009, in Havana, Cuba, a congress entitled "Images of the Sephardic Jews in Cuba" took place. The congress was attended by members of Jewish organizations, foreign ambassadors and foreign delegations from Spain, Turkey and Greece. Greece was represented by the Director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou. Her discourse was entitled: "The long Jewish presence in Greece since the first Diaspora, the establishment of Sephardic Jews in Thessaloniki and the place of the Community in the modern society of the city". The discourse was complemented by an exhibition of 45 photographs on the life of the Greek Sepharadis (compliments of the Jewish Museum of Greece), the projection of the film "The Jews of Thessaloniki" (by V. Vassilikos and Sophianopoulos) and Sephardic music and songs by Savina Yiannatou.



5. *December 2009*: -On 17th December 2009 a human chain was formed around the Jewish Cemetery of Ioannina. The Cemetery had been earlier in the year vandalized, but the reaction of the authorities, and most importantly, by the citizens of the city was immediate. Many of them were gathered around the Cemetery forming a human chain in order to "protect the history of a city which has always been multicultural and which respects its citizens regardless of political parties, affiliations, religions



or other beliefs".

6. *January 2010*: The Greek Police arrested four persons accused of participating in two arson attacks in January 2010 targeting the historic Jewish synagogue in the city of Chania. Four of the five persons arrested are non-Greek nationals. The Greek Government and Prime Minister George Papandreou himself fiercely condemned the attacks stating, in a letter to the President of the Central Jewish Board of Greece, that: "the attack on the Etz Hayyim Synagogue not only constitutes an attack on one of the remaining Jewish monuments in the island of Crete, but also an attack against the history and the cultural heritage of our homeland, Greece. The Government, I personally as well as the entire Greek nation condemn this abominable act in the strongest possible terms. We have already taken immediate steps to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.[...] [W]e, once more, declare and reaffirm that phenomena such as anti-Semitism and racism are condemned and have no

place in the Greek society. I would like to assure you that my Government and I stand by the Greek Jews and firmly support their struggles for a better Greece." Moreover, the Greek Government undertook the obligation to restore the damages.

7. *January 2010:* On 28th January 2010 the Director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou presented in New York the publication of the Greek Foreign Ministry "Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau". The presentation was supplemented by an exhibition of photos by Viktor Koen from the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka. The ceremony also attended and addressed Archbishop Demetrios of North America, Rabbi Martin Cohen, Mrs Demetra Savelides, of the Argonauts Association and Mr. Solomon Asser, President of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece. The event was concluded with the projection of the documentary film "The Revolt of the Greek Jews".
8. *May 2010:* A new Monument of the Holocaust of the Greek Jews was inaugurated in Athens. The inauguration ceremony addressed the Greek Minister of State Mr. Ch. Pamboukis, the Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset Ms. Ruhama Avraham Balila, the Mayor of Athens Mr. N. Kaklamanis, the President of the Central Jewish Board of Greece Mr. D. Saltiel and finally the prominent Greek author and Mauthausen prisoner Mr. I. Kampanellis.



9. *June 2010:* On 14th June 2010, during a special ceremony, Mr. Heinz Kounio, a survivor of the Holocaust from Thessaloniki, delivered to the Yad Vashem Museum in Israel the



results of his project, which was to collect the names of all Greek Jews from Thessaloniki who were executed in the Auschwitz -Birkenau concentration camps. Mr. Kounio managed to collect 37.500 names, which will be added to the main database of Holocaust victims (Shoah Victims' Names). Mr. Kounio was honored by the President of Yad Vashem Mr. Avner Shalev, who dedicated a long speech to him as a prisoner in Auschwitz and later for his devotion to the memory of the Holocaust. Speeches were also delivered by Mrs. Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou, who supervised and encouraged the project and Mrs Mili Bilfeld-Saltiel, the daughter of President Saltiel as his representative.

10. *September 2010*: The President of the Greek Republic Mr. Karolos Papoulias inaugurated during a ceremony held in the city of Chalkida on Sunday 26 September 2010, the statue of Colonel Mordochai Frizis, who was killed during the Greek-Italian War in 1940. It is a 4m height equestrian statue, located at the Pirosvestikis Square, which will be renamed to Frizis Square, according to a decision of the Chalikida City Council. The ceremony was also attended by the Vice-President of the Greek Government Mr. Theodoros Pangalos, and speeches were delivered by the Mayor of Chalkida Mr. Athanasios Zempilis, the President of the Central Jewish Board of Greece Mr. D. Saltiel, the President of the Jewish Community of Chalkida Mr. Solon Maissis and the son of Colonel Frizis Mr. Iakovos Frizis. The statue is a donation of the "Friends of Col. Frizis" Committee, a Committee of Greek-Americans the President of which, Mr. Stephanos Mitsaras, also delivered a speech during the ceremony.
11. *October 2010*: On 4th October 2010 the Director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou presented in Thessaloniki the publication of the Greek Foreign Ministry "Greeks in Auschwitz-Birkenau". The event was organised by the Society for Macedonian Studies and its President Mr. Nikolaoas Mertzos, as well as the President of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki and President of the Central Jewish Board Mr. David Saltiel. Academicians, politicians and journalists were among the five hundred people, mainly young students from the city's Universities, who attended the ceremony.
12. *December 2010*: The Greek Government has unequivocally condemned the remarks made in December 2010 by Metropolitan of Piraeus against world

Jewry. The Greek Government stated that: "It is not the government's role to judge and comment on statements made by priests. However, it is the government's obligation to condemn the language of hatred regardless of who speaks it. It is its duty to stigmatise as unacceptable the language that denies the Holocaust, the biggest crime against humanity. Such views are marginal. They insult Greece. They insult our culture. They insult our own society, an integral part of which is the Greek Jewish community. Everybody must be aware that such views are unequivocally condemned by the Greek state and society.". The Holy Archdiocese of America also condemned the remarks, which it characterized as gravely offensive and totally unacceptable. Finally, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece declared that the Orthodox Church condemns all forms of racism and discrimination against any human being on grounds of race, culture, religion or any other differentiation. Moreover, the Greek Church has always shown its feelings of brotherhood towards Greeks of Jewish religion, as it did during World War II when it played a leading part and even risked in order to protect the Greek Jews from the Nazi troops.

13. *January 2011*: On the occasion the Remembrance Day for the Holocaust Victims and Heroes (27 January 2011), ceremonies took place in at least 4 cities around Greece. More specifically: **In Athens**, in the morning of January 27th wreaths were laid at the Monument of the Holocaust by, among others, the Prefect of Attica Mr. I. Sgouros, the Mayor of Athens Mr. G. Kaminis, the President of the Central Jewish Board of Greece Mr. D. Saltiel, representatives of the Greek Government and the Greek Parliament, foreign Ambassadors and others. In the evening of the same day a big ceremony was organised by the Prefect of Attica Mr. Sgouros and the Jewish Community of Athens at the Beth Salom Holy Synagogue of Athens. A memorial prayer was held by the Rabbi of Athens and speeches were delivered by Mr. Sgouros, the Mayor of Athens Mr. Kaminis, the President of the Jewish Community of Athens Mr. B. Albala and Professor H. Fleischer. **In Volos** on Sunday 30 January wreaths were laid at the Holocaust Memorial of the city and candles were lighted. Later at a special ceremony speeches were delivered by the Prefect of Thessalia Mr. K. Agorastos, the President of the Jewish Community of Volos Mr. Marcel Solomon, Professor D. Benekos, who referred to the activity of the German Consul in Volos during the War Scheffer for the rescue of the city's Jews and finally by the German Ambassador in Greece Dr. R. M. Wegener. The history of the Holocaust was presented by young students and the choir of the 3d High School of Volos. **In Thessaloniki** on Saturday 29 January a concert was held at the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception in honour of the Catholic nuns of the French School of Kalamaria (in Thessaloniki) who saved many Jewish children from the Nazi persecutions. On Sunday 30 January a prayer was held at the Holocaust Monument of Thessaloniki and speeches were delivered by representatives of the Greek Government, the Ambassador of Israel to Greece Mr. Mekel, the Prefect of Central Macedonia Mr. P. Psomiades, the Vice-Prefect Mr. A. Tzitzikostas, the Mayor of Thessaloniki Mr. I. Boutaris and the President of the Jewish Community of the Thessaloniki Mr. D. Saltiel. Later, representatives of the Government, the political parties, the Greek Army, the local authorities, the Jewish Communities and others laid wreaths at the Monument. Finally, **in Larissa** a ceremony was held at the Holocaust Memorial of the city on Thursday 27 January and later at the Holy

Synagogue of Larissa. The ceremonies were organised by the President of the Jewish Community of Larissa Mr. Maurice Magrizos and the Prefect of Thessalia. Speeches were delivered by the Prefect Mr. K. Agorastos, the Vice-Prefect Mrs. Rena Karalariotou, the Mayor of Larissa Mr. K. Tzanakoulis, the President of the Central Jewish Board Mr. D. Saltiel and the journalist Mr. Stelios Kouloglou. At the end of the ceremony the choir of the Music School of Larissa sang songs from the album "Mauthausen" by Mikis Theodorakis. Moreover, on Sunday 30 January two major Greek newspapers published articles on the Holocaust, written by Mrs. Photini Tomai - Constantopoulou, Director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More concretely, "Makedonia", the biggest newspaper of northern Greece and "Vima", the biggest and most popular Sunday newspaper in the country, published two articles that Mrs. Tomai-Constantopoulou wrote, dedicated to the Holocaust and the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

14. *January - August 2011*: The Jewish Museum of Greece, the Prefecture of Attica and the Jewish Community organised an exhibition entitled "The Memorial: 16 Artists Propose". The exhibition was inaugurated on Wednesday 26th January 2011 as part of a cycle of events dedicated to the occasion of the National Holocaust Memorial Day, 27th January 2011. This temporary exhibition held a special place among those presented by the Jewish Museum within the past years. It presented the proposals of 16 artists and the procedure that led to the establishment of the new memorial place in Athens within the urban landscape. The Jewish Community of Athens chose the Jewish Museum of Greece, as the place to organize and host the exhibition, as it is the foremost institution that deals with the education, the remembrance and the research of the Holocaust in the country. Accompanying the exhibition, the Museum offered educational programs and memorial events, in the form of museum programs, annual teaching seminars on the Holocaust, and related events regarding the WWII and the Holocaust of the Greek Jews, addressed to the interested public. In the exhibition "The Memorial: 16 Artists Propose" participated the following artists (in alphabetical order): Angelidakis Andreas, Georgiadis Giorgos, Ganis Maurice, Grammenos Kornelios, Gyparakis Giorgos, Dambassina Lydia, Demassieux François, Karachalios Georgios, Katzourakis Michalis, Korovessi Aggelika, Kratidis Anastasios, Liti Afrodite, Maganias Deanna, Baboussis Manolis, Haralambidis Nikos and Hadjimichalis George.
15. *March 2011*: By Law No. 3943 (art.45, par.10), voted by all political Parties in the Greek Parliament, the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki has been recompensed with the amount of € 9,943,697 for the confiscation during the Nazi occupation of land belonging to the Jewish Community where the historic Jewish cemetery of Thessaloniki was located for centuries. The cemetery was violently destroyed and desecrated by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II.
16. *September 2011*: By a new law (Law 4018/2011 (Government Gazette 215/A/30-9-2011) Greek Jews born before May 9, 1945, who fled to Israel

after the end of World War II, may apply to the Greek Authorities to restore their rights as Greek citizens.

17. *September 2011- December 2012*: On September 18, 2011 an exhibition entitled "The Jews in Thessaloniki. Indelible marks in space" was inaugurated by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education and the local authorities. The Exhibition is hosted in the main area of the Byzantine Museum in the framework of the 3rd Biennale of Contemporary Art and narrates with exhibits, photos, maps etc, all loans from the historic Jewish Community of the city, the longstanding life and activities of the Jews up to the time of the Holocaust. It was supposed to end in September 2012, but it was extended until the end of December 2012. For more information and pictures please visit <http://www.amth.gr/index.php/en/EKΘΕΣΕΙΣ/Temporary-Exhibitions/Οι-Εβραίοι-στη-Θεσσαλονίκη.-Ανεξίτηλα-σημάδια-στο-χώρο.html>
18. *October 2011*: The Director of the Service of Diplomatic and Historical Archives of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and now head of the Greek Delegation to the ITF, Minister A' Photini Tomai-Constantopoulou, was honored in Washington DC with the Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Zante award for her contribution in promoting the Memory of the Holocaust and combating Anti-Semitism.
19. *November 2011*: The restoration of the Tzivre Silk Factory in Soufli (Thrace), funded by the European Union and Greece, has started. Cost: € 550.000. The creation of a museum, a cultural centre and a library related to local Jewish heritage has been planned. For more information and a picture, please visit <http://www.archaiologia.gr/blog/2011/11/10/ /μουσείο-το-εργοστάσιο-μεταξιού-τζιβρ/>.
20. *November 2011*: A Week of Sephardic Cuisine was organised at the Excelsior Bistro in Thessaloniki (21-26 November 2011).
21. *January 2012*: On the occasion the Remembrance Day for the Holocaust Victims and Heroes (27 January 2012), ceremonies held by State authorities in cooperation with local Jewish communities took place in Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissa, Ioannina and Volos, attended by representatives of the Government and political parties, as well as the military and local authorities. Speeches were delivered and wreaths were laid at the Monuments of the Holocaust existing in the above cities. Moreover, in the city of Larissa, on the second day, primary school pupils participated in events organised at the Anna Frank square of the city, organised on the occasion of the Holocaust Remembrance Day.
22. *March 2012*: The University of Thessaloniki is cooperating with the School of Fine Arts of the Tel-Aviv University for the creation of a monument in the area where the old Jewish cemetery of Thessaloniki was located. A meeting of representatives from the two Universities took place in Thessaloniki on March 15th, 2012.

23. *March 2012*: The film "By-standing And Standing-by" on the Holocaust in Thessaloniki and the rescue of the members of the Jewish Community in Katerini was presented at the Thessaloniki International Film Festival on 11th March 2012.
24. *April 2012*: Guided tours at the Jewish houses of the Thessaloniki started in the city, organised by the Municipality of Thessaloniki. For pictures of the tours, please visit http://www.unitedreporters.gr/news/GR/reportage_S/reportage_C/Enas_axehastos_evra%CF%8Akos_peripatos_sti_Thessaloniki#prettyPhoto
25. *September 2012*: On 12th September 2012 a delegation from CRIF (Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France), the umbrella organization of the French Jewry, headed by its President Dr. Richard Prasquier met with the Greek Minister of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights Mr. Antonis Roupakiotis. The Greek Minister said: "*The Greek Jews paid a huge toll in blood during the German Occupation and we regard it our duty to defend not only the rights of the Jewish Community of this country, but also the memory of those who fell victim to Nazism and the Holocaust. The Ministry of Justice is already working on stricter legislation, as well as on other kinds of action against racism.*" The President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece Mr. David Saltiel, and the President of the Jewish Community of Athens, Mr. Benjamin Albalas, were also present at the meeting.

Research

1. *2006*: Participation in the international conference "Beyond Caps And Forced Labour: Current International Research On Survivors Of Nazi Persecution" (London 2006).
2. *February 2007*: Presentation of five documentary films on Greek Jews organised by the Group for the Study of the Jews of Greece (Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki).
3. *2008*: Presentation of papers on the Holocaust by three well-known European scholars of Holocaust issues, at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki.
4. *February 2008*: Meeting of Israeli and Greek historians (University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki).
5. *April 2008*: Presentation of new research on the Jews of Greece in the framework of the Master's program in History at the University of Thessalia (Volos).
6. *June 2008*: A four-day conference organised by the Network For The Study Of Civil Wars in collaboration with Yale University entitled "Holocaust as Local History" (University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki).
7. *June 2008*: Presentation at the European Parliament of a publication with Christian, Muslim and Jewish monuments of Xanthi, published by the Diocese of Xanthi in 2005.

8. *October 2008*: 4th International Conference on the Ladino language (Thessaloniki).
9. *October 2008*: Conference in Kastoria entitled "The Jews of Kastoria" (Technical University of West Macedonia).
10. *April 2010*: The Group for the Study of the History of the Greek Jews succeeded in establishing an agreement of cooperation with the Freie Universität in Berlin and the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki. Under this Agreement, researchers acquire free access to the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive from the libraries of the University of Athens and the University of Thessaloniki.



11. *October 2010*: The Group for the Study of the History of the Greek Jews was granted a sponsorship by the Latsis Foundation, for a project aiming at collecting over 500 testimonies of Greek Jews, survivors of the Holocaust, from state and private archives in Greece and abroad.
12. *February 2012*: A Two-day seminar entitled "Archives of Memory: The experience of Greek Jews in Audiovisual Testimonies" was held at the University of Thessaly (Volos, 24-25 February 2012). For the program of the seminar and a poster, please visit <http://gjst.ha.uth.gr/el/conference-programme.php>
13. *June 2012*: An international seminar on the life and activities of Jews of Thessaloniki in the period 1492-1950 was organised at the International Hellenic University in Thessaloniki on 25-26 June 2012. For pictures from the seminar, please visit <http://www.ihu.edu.gr/index.php/en/news/media-corner/photo-gallery/view/40.html>
14. *July 2012*: A seminar organised by the Embassies of Hungary, Sweden and Israel in Athens on Raul Wallenberg and his legacy was held in Athens on 2nd July 2012.
15. *August 2012*: The Metropolitan of Alexandroupolis (Thrace) Anthimos visited in early August 2012 a group of French Jews who spent a few days in Alexandroupolis and offered them as a gift a CD containing the Old Testament and having as introduction a text written by him. The Metropolitan of Alexandroupolis noted among other interesting remarks in this text: "*In our relation with God we all hide a Hebrew inside us. The Christian Church*

should not be forgetful of the Old Testament and to the Israel that they are characterized as tutors derived from Christ's bless. There were some extreme eras that Christian church has marginalized Old Testament. During that interval church acted not only against Christianity, but also inhumanly."