

# THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF GREECE

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## newsletter **58**

AUTUMN - WINTER 2010

This year's celebration of International Museums Day was of particular significance to the JMG, since the Greek Branch of ICOM decided to award the title of 'Honoured Museum of 2010' to the Jewish Museum of Greece in recognition of its intercultural work.

In 1977 the International Council of Museums (ICOM) established 18th May every year as International Museums Day in an effort to promote the role that museums play in modern society.

This year's anniversary was a call to, 'Make museums organisations of cultural exchange for the benefit of society as a whole, with a view to furthering education, mutual understanding and collaboration between different nations'. In response to this call, ICOM chose to make 'Museums for Social Harmony' the theme of the 2010 celebrations. In choosing this theme ICOM hoped to demonstrate the special role of museums in preserving the multifarious nature of culture and bio-diversity as our common world heritage. The future of the human race is closely tied to good envi-



### **ICOM Proclaims**

## ***The Jewish Museum of Greece Honoured Museum of 2010***

ronmental, economic and social management and stability. Museums can contribute to harmonious relations by promoting mutual respect and co-operation between different social groups, nations and cultures.

All museums waived admission fees on Tuesday 18th May and the main event in the celebrations took place at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art in Athens. Zanet Bat-

tinou, Director of the JMG, was among the speakers at this event and gave an overview of the Museum's intercultural work.

After speaking about the Museum's history, its permanent exhibition, its temporary exhibitions and its research projects, Mrs Battinou focused on its intercultural educational programmes. She drew attention to the fact that the

ICOM Proclaims the Jewish Museum of Greece Honoured Museum of 2010



JMG was perhaps the first museum ever to be opened in Greece with the purpose of representing a different religious community, and that it is the only museum to regularly hold seminars on Holocaust Education in this country.

Acting within this context, the JMG designs activities and programmes to help people, especially the young people who

Visitors' Comments

*Wonderful!  
I learnt things I could  
never have imagined! It is very moving  
to see work of this kind!  
Congratulations!  
Thank you for making it possible  
for us to see something of your  
culture and traditions!  
Keep up the good work!*

come to the museum, become more aware of issues such as human rights, the importance of mutual understanding, respect and acceptance of difference.

In bringing her address to a close, she made special reference to three of the Museum's intercultural educational programmes: The Oil Lamp; Pessach and Easter; and the Holy Books of the To-



ICOM Proclaims the Jewish Museum of Greece Honoured Museum of 2010



1. From the ICOM's celebration at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art
2. Snapshot from the guided tours in the permanent exhibition of the JMG
3. 7. 8. Snapshots from the celebration, which was held in Melidoni pedestrian street, with traditional music and traditional delicacies. The celebration was sponsored by the Jewish Community of Athens
4. The Director of the JMG, during her speech
5. The panel of speakers
6. The Director of the JMG, with the President of the Jewish Community of Athens and the President of the Board of Directors of the JMG

rah, the Qur'an and the New Testament. She also spoke about the newly-formed Network of Museums and Cultural Institutions of Athens Historical Centre, a project aimed at promoting good relations and co-operation between museums. When the addresses were over, a celebration was held in Melidoni Pedestrian Street, with traditional music and delicacies, sponsored by the Jewish Community of Athens.

On Wednesday 19th May, in celebration of International Museums Day, the JMG treated the public hourly to free guided tours of its permanent exhibition.



## The Fifth JMG Seminar for Teachers on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece

### Introduction

The Jewish Museum of Greece has already organised and conducted four seminars for primary schoolteachers, secondary schoolteachers and museum educators on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece. Three of these seminars were held in Athens (2004, 2006 and 2007) and one in Thessaloniki (2005). Not only were the seminars attended by large numbers of teachers, but also by people representing ministries, state organisations and bodies, and interested members of the public at large. The seminars have been widely acclaimed as extremely constructive and are known for their huge success.

### Overview

The fifth JMG educational seminar was held from 14th to 16th October 2009 at the Electra Palace Hotel in Athens. Once again it was under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Life-long Learning and Religion, through its General Secretariat for Youth, and enjoyed the support of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education Remembrance and Research. Twelve speakers with different areas of expertise took part in the seminar which was attended by a total of forty-two teachers. His Excellency Ambassador Alexandros Philon, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and head of the Greek Delegation to the International Task Force, and Mr. Makis Matsas President of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Museum of Greece addressed the opening assembly of the seminar on Wednesday 14th October. Lastly, a message from Mrs. Berry Nachmia president of the Association of Jewish Hostages in Greece and representative of Holocaust survivors was read out to the assembly, since she was unable to attend.

### Presentations

Professor **Maria Efthymiou** of the University of Athens Department of History and Archaeology, gave a short overview of the 2,300 year history of Jewish



*Mr. Alexandros Philon,  
representative of the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



*The President of the  
Board of Directors of the  
JMG, Mr. M. Matsas*



*The Director of the  
JMG, Mrs. Z. Battinou*

## The Fifth JMG Seminar for Teachers on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece



Snapshot from the Seminar's proceedings

people in Greece, focusing mainly on Hellenistic times and the arrival of Spanish Jews in 1492. In speaking on relations between the Greek and Jewish Diaspora through the centuries, she drew attention to the way the two nations normally lived side by side harmoniously, despite occasional difficulties, and to the historical processes through which Jewish people rose to financial and social prominence.

Historian **Iason Chandrinos** then spoke on Holocaust related events taking place in Greece from the time of the Italian invasion in 1940 until the early post-war years, when the few who survived were trying to build a new life. He used photographs and documents from the JMG's collection to shed light on aspects of this history. Some of these aspects were hardships such as the exploitation of property for financial gain and the deportations; some brought hope in the form of sacrifices people made to help save their Jewish fellow citizens; some were tragedies such as the vast number of communities that were totally wiped out; others

were acts of heroism, when Jewish people took part in the National Resistance Movement and acts of self-sacrifice in the camps themselves.

Lastly, legal expert and criminologist **Hara Galanou** addressed the assembly on the legal state of the terms 'genocide' and 'ethnic cleansing'. She analysed the reasons why the Holocaust is the supreme example of genocide. She also touched upon the volatile subject of Holocaust denial and reached the conclusion that the main aim of revisionists, irrespective of the type and scope of their denial, is always that the perpetrator should be allowed mitigating circumstances. Therefore, revisionism should always be unequivocally condemned.

The proceedings of the first day ended with a showing of the documentary *The Song of Life* by well-known director and producer **Tonis Likouressis**, who recorded the rescue of 275 Jewish people on his home island of Zakynthos, with deep insight and great sensitivity.

The Fifth JMG Seminar for Teachers on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece

(Left) Mr. I. Handrinos, Mrs. X. Galanou and Mrs. M. Eythimiou



(Left) Mrs. Odette Varon-Vassard, Mr. Alkis Rigos and Mrs. X. Koulouri



The second day's proceedings opened with an interesting review of the history of ant-Semitism in Greece given by **Alkis Rigos**, Professor of Political Science at Panteion University. He used a host of events spanning a very long time - from the preaching of Cosmas of Aetolus to the burning of the Campbell district in 1931 and the Holocaust - to show how the stereotyped picture of the Jew persisted through time and was always held up as a contrast to 'pure' modern Greek identity.

Historian **Odette Varon-Vassard** then spoke on the importance and the part played by Auschwitz in the collective conscience. In other words, how and by which processes of the collective memory during the decades following the end of the war in Europe this particular camp came to be synonymous with attempts to annihilate a whole nation, and why 27th January, the day it was liberated, was chosen as Holocaust Remembrance Day. Odette Varon-Vassard pointed out the difference between concentration camp and extermination camp and commented on the use of the term 'Holocaust' as opposed to 'Shoah' or 'Genocide'. She

stressed that it is important not to confuse Jews with victims of World War II in general.

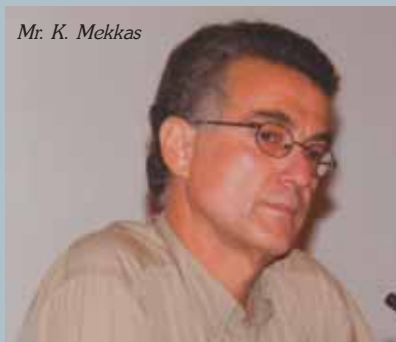
The next speaker was historian **Christina Koulouri**, who spoke on The Holocaust and Education. Teaching about the Holocaust is, she said, a real challenge for the history teacher since it is so closely linked to issues of political correctness, national identity, appreciation of differences and condemnation of bigotry. The gem of wisdom that constitutes her conclusion is that the lesson on the Holocaust is, as it should be, a lesson in civil behaviour and that, rather than resorting to some sort of manual or handout, the teacher should muster all her professionalism and skill to transform the lesson on the annihilation of the Jewish people into a valuable lesson against every sort of racism and discrimination.

Taking her cue from the discussion that followed the three announcements, director of the Jewish Museum of Greece Zanet Battinou gave a brief overview of what was in the file that had once again been handed out to partici-

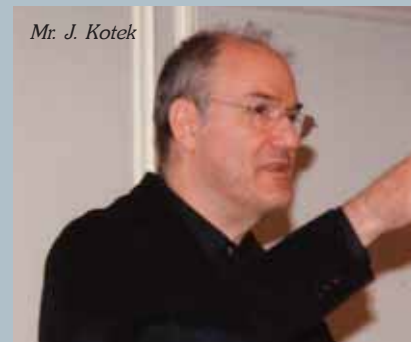
The film director  
Mr. T. Likouresis



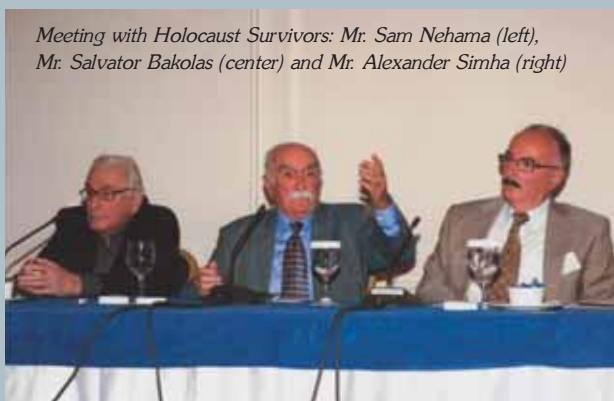
Mr. K. Mekkias



Mr. J. Kotek



The Fifth JMG Seminar for Teachers on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece



Meeting with Holocaust Survivors: Mr. Sam Nehama (left), Mr. Salvator Bakolas (center) and Mr. Alexander Simha (right)

and Buchenwald camps at the tender age of fourteen; Mr. Salvator Bakola, who was a member of the ELAS resistance in the mountains of central Greece; and Mr. Alexandros Simha, who survived as a young child by being taken in and hidden by Christian families in Athens.

The second day culminated in a reception held by the JMG for participating teachers and dignitaries. During the reception participants were able to wander around the Museum and see the temporary exhibition entitled Jewish Neighbourhoods of Greece.

pants so as to reinforce Holocaust Education, but primarily to show how important it is in this day and age. She spoke about the three practical guides that the JMG had translated, edited and published. The first of these was a translation into Greek of the ITF guides, which are also available on the organisation's website. The second, entitled Teaching about the Holocaust, was a modified translation of the greater part of a respective guide published by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It is a guide for teachers on how to approach the subject of the Holocaust through specific teaching techniques, and how to handle the difficult questions that are inevitably asked in class. The third, under the title Preparing for Holocaust Remembrance Day, is a modified translation of relevant suggestions for teachers published on the websites of Yad Vashem and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

The Thursday afternoon session was given to the moving accounts told by three survivors of that time: Mr. Sam Nehama, who survived the Auschwitz-Birkenau

The morning session of the third day began with an announcement by the representative of the Pedagogical Institute, **Konstantinos Mekkias**, who spoke on teaching about the Holocaust through modern school textbooks. He gave a detailed analysis of available options for Holocaust teaching using either a single resource or a combination of resources such as personal accounts and photographs. He stressed that the Institute's preferred method was still a multi-lateral approach using literary sources and personal accounts in conjunction with historical evidence, while the primary aim is, as always, to make pupils more aware.

Belgian historian **Joel Kotek** spoke about anti-Semitism from its beginnings to the present day and referred to the worldwide extent of the phenomenon. He displayed and spoke about related images, to give a clear picture of the anti-Semite culture that has marked European history for many centuries. His explanation of the great difference between 'anti-Judaism' and 'anti-Semitism' proved most useful. The first term applies to religious conflict that may turn into hatred, while the



Mrs. Y. Ingelstein



Mrs. N. Alcalay



Mrs. M. Decastro

The Fifth JMG Seminar for Teachers on Teaching about the Holocaust in Greece

second applies to hatred that resides in imaginary causes. It is a complex socio-political phenomenon that has taken many different guises and has employed every form of printed or painted propaganda from mediaeval iconography to 19th and 20th century picture postcards and advertisements, some of which were available for participants to see.

**Workshops**

**Yael Ingelstein** representing the Yad Vashem International School of Holocaust Studies opened the first workshop of the seminar. She led a complete model unit of 21st century Holocaust teaching as practised by Yad Vashem’s Department of Education. It is geared to the use of personal accounts supplied by Holocaust survivors. Everybody present, without exception, was most moved by the documentary *Let your Memory be Love - The Story of Obadiah Barouch* from Thessaloniki and this demonstrated the importance of recording a personal account on location.

The workshops went on with dance teacher and dance therapist **Nina Alcalay**, who divided the participants into three groups and gave out pictures of works of art and an abstract text, suggesting an alternative way to use material in Experiential Teaching of the Holocaust through Art. She then took the teachers through an experiential exercise so as to demonstrate that approaching the Holocaust through art - in this case through music, dance, drama and painting - can make a more direct impression on children than an ordinary historical-scientific approach. It therefore helps them appreciate what the people who lived through these experiences suffered and they can then transmute the experiential allusions through artistic expression.

The workshops were brought to a close by teacher and author **Marisa De Castro**, who presented a complete educational package based on Irish author John Boyne’s novel *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas*. The book, together with the accompanying workbook, is an excellent teaching tool for Junior High School pupils since in addition to the literary excellence which distinguishes it, it is also an exemplary marriage of history and literary art. This teaching is aimed directly at children’s feelings, which it is de-

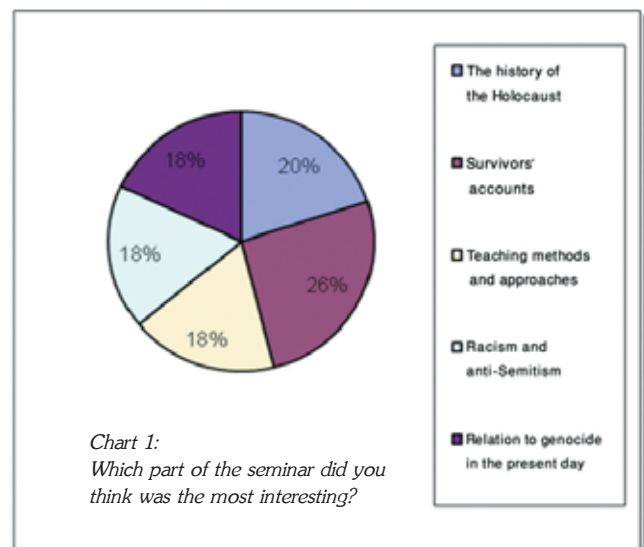
signed to arouse so as to help the children approach delicate issues like death, and timeless values such as friendship and companionship.

JMG museum educator **Orietta Treveza-Soussi** then presented one of the Museum’s new educational programmes entitled *Jewish Neighbourhoods of Greece - A Lost World*, which is based on the Museum’s temporary exhibition. She then showed the teachers a few of the Jewish Museum’s museum cases and entered into a discussion of this valuable teaching tool which takes museum issues into the school in a form that is suitable for presentation and easy for children to work on in class.

**Conclusions**

At the end of the seminar conclusions were drawn and briefly expressed. When all seminar proceedings had ended, participants filled in the evaluation questionnaire that had been distributed earlier with a view to improving these seminars and helping in designing related activities and events. Answers given indicated that opinions of the seminar organisation and content were most positive. Indeed, most participants made constructive suggestions and observations.

Many teachers expressed a desire to stay in touch with the Jewish Museum of Greece and to receive news about its educational projects in Greece and abroad, in addition to receiving information about this particular two-day annual educational event.



## Annual meeting of the Association of European Jewish Museums

The Jewish Museum of Greece, permanent member of the Association of European Jewish Museums (AEJM), hosted for the first time in **Athens (21–24 November, 2009)**, the annual meeting of the Association of European Jewish Museums. Fifty-four (54) members and associate members, directors, curators and representatives of thirty-four (34) Jewish museums and organizations attended the four - day conference, from nineteen (19) countries from Europe, U.S. and Israel. At the annual meeting of the AEJM, there were held lectures and discussions on issues related to the museums strategic planning and management, as well as presentations of new exhibitions, research projects, and educational activities organized by the various museums.

Participants had the opportunity on the first day, to visit the JMG premises, where they were given a guided tour through the permanent and temporary exhibitions of the museum by the Director of the JMG, Ms. Z. Battinou. The participant's contact with the treasures of the Greek Jewish history and tradition, gave rise to fruitful discussions the following days, in the form of workshops, relating to issues such as collections management, temporary exhibitions' design, preventive conservation, educational activities and research projects carried out by the JMG (e.g. the Corpus of Jewish inscriptions of Greece).

The JMG, among other events, planned a guided tour of the Jewish sights and monuments in Athens. The tour continued in Chalkis, where the participants visited the exhibition in the Castle of Karambamba - with three of the



*Members of the AEJM Board during the meeting's proceedings*

most important Jewish inscriptions on show - the Jewish cemetery and the synagogue. The visit to Chalkis was completed with lunch, offered by the Jewish Community of Chalkis.

The second day ended, with a guided tour at the New Acropolis Museum and a traditional dinner offered at the Cultural Center by the Jewish Community of Athens. On the third day, Ms. Lila de Chavez guided AEJM members and associate members through the permanent exhibition of "The Benaki Museum", while the evening closed with a reception, offered - in honour of the AEJM participants - by the Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece. Excursions and meals were, as usual, great opportunities for new contacts, exchange of ideas, collaborations and conversation among members of the AEJM. The annual meeting was completed successfully after four days of work on issues of common interest to the European Jewish Museums.



*From the reception - registration of the AEJM members at the JMG's premises*



*The director of the 1st Byzantine Ephorate guides the AEJM members through the Castle of Karambamba in Chalkis*



## Network of Museums and Cultural Institutions of the Athens Historical Centre

In November 2009 museums and cultural institutions in the Historical Centre of Athens, the JMG among them, decided to set up a Network of Museums and Cultural Institutions, with the idea of creating a common means of communication, exchanging expertise and working together in specialised fields of activity.

This initiative aims to give museums and cultural institutions a more prominent role in the Historical Centre of Athens and to make broader-based, multi-faceted programmes possible, thereby reaching a greater section of the public and helping them appreciate things cultural. The Network is seen as a tool in the service of Education and Culture that will make efficient and effective use of modern means.

The number of museums and cultural institutions taking an active part in the network is ever increasing and this demonstrates just how important this enterprise is. General information about every organisation in the scheme, news, events and educational programmes for adults, families, children and schools is available on the Network's website ([www.athensmuseums.net](http://www.athensmuseums.net)).

### **Erysichthon - A Modern Reading of the Myth - A Visual Arts Initiative at the JMG**

In celebration of Museum Day and Night in May, the Network of Museums and Cultural Institutions of the Athens Historical Centre organised its first large-scale joint event in the form of Art Walks through the galleries of its member museums where parts of the exhibition *Erysichthon - A Modern Reading of the Myth* were on display. The JMG was active in this event as it supports initiatives that reinforce cultural sustainable development and has welcomed two works by artist Aphrodite Liti, entitled *Leaf* and *Insect*, into the display area of its permanent exhibition.

The original inspiration and binding theme behind the exhibition was the myth of Erysichthon of Thessaly,

the mythical son of Myrmidonas or Triopas and grandson of the god Poseidon, preserved in the work of ancient authors including Callimachus. The myth tells of the suffering and punishment endured by Erysichthon for cutting down trees in a grove that the Pelasgians had made sacred to the goddess Demeter in order to build himself a palace. The myth is about greed and the uncontrolled exploitation of the earth's resources. It is particularly relevant to today's world since human beings at present insatiably and uncontrollably consume more than they actually need to the detriment of their children's future and the future of all nature's creations. The story of Erysichthon is a most eloquent statement of how the ancients understood the role of man versus nature. It is essentially a tale with an overt moral, but is also prophetic with regards to the relationship between modern man and the environment.



*"Leaf" and "Insect" - Aphrodite Liti*



**Judaica Europeana: 10 institutions in London, Frankfurt, Athens, Bologna, Budapest, Paris, Rome and Warsaw join forces to offer worldwide access to the treasures of European Jewish culture.**

Judaica Europeana, a groundbreaking digital project has been awarded a major grant by the European Commission eContentplus Programme to provide multilingual access to Jewish culture collections through Europeana, Europe's archives, libraries and museums online. It is one of only a dozen targeted projects co-funded by the EC for Europeana. Europeana is a flagship project of the European Commission that will provide a common point of access to millions of digital objects housed at Europe's museums, libraries and archives. A multilingual search engine will enable the users to find, view and compare cultural and scientific resources dispersed across the continent.

The Consortium of Judaica Europeana partners is led by the European Association for Jewish Culture in London and the Judaica Collection of the Goethe University Library in Frankfurt/Main. Project partners include the Alliance Israélite Universelle in cooperation with Paris Yiddish Centre — Medem Library, The British Library (London), Hungarian Jewish Archives (Budapest), Jewish Museum of Greece (Athens), Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage (MiBAC, Rome), Jewish Historical Institute (Warsaw), Jewish Museum London and Amitié (Centre for Research and Innovation, Bologna).

The Central Zionist Archive (Jerusalem) and Makash (Centre for ICT applications in education, culture and science, Jerusalem) are associate partners. More associate partners will be invited to join. Abundant Jewish cultural expressions are documented through hundreds of thousands of objects dispersed in many collections: documents, books, manuscripts, periodicals, audio recordings, pictures, photographs, postcards, posters

and films as well as through buildings, monuments and cemeteries all over Europe. Judaica Europeana will begin by digitizing millions of pages and thousands of other items selected from the collections of its partner libraries, archives and museums. The next stage will be to aggregate other digital collections on Jews in European cities — wherever they may be. The JMG participates actively supporting this initiative. Through its representatives, the JMG continuously take part in the official meetings of the Consortium Partners, which have been held in London, on 25–26th January and 10–11th May 2010.

During the meetings, the Judaica–Europeana partners, discussed issues relating to the process of digitization and dissemination of the project. Furthermore, the JMG participated in the Educational Seminar (training) – ATHENA, held on Monday 01/03/2010 by the Department of Informatics and Telecommunications (Ministry of Culture and Tourism) and the National Technical University at Athens, on the integration of digital cultural content in the content collection system of ATHENA.

The seminar was held at the National Technical University Campus in the ground floor of the Central Library – Multimedia Room. The educational activities of the JMG, through alternative modes of interpretation (experiential, theatrical play, museumcases), seeking to activate creativity, intercultural and inter-religious knowledge and treatment of issues like human rights and the Holocaust, reinforced the participation of the JMG in this program.

The contribution of the Jewish Museum of Greece in the European project Judaica Europeana is the broader knowledge and promotion of the cultural and historical context of the oldest European Jewish communities, which were founded in the 3rd century BCE / BC in Greece, making Greece the gateway to Europe for the Jewish people.

## Open Window – A Jewish Museum of Greece Art Exhibition dedicated to Etz Hayim Synagogue in Chania

Continuing its well-established exploration of the work of Greek-Jewish artists, the JMG held an exhibition of the work of Lydia Abastado in its dedicated Contemporary Art Gallery. The exhibition, entitled Open Window, was open to the public from 12th April to 3rd May 2010. This temporary exhibition, comprising twenty-five works of art, was the twelfth of its kind to be held in the JMG Contemporary Art Gallery since its opening. Lydia Abastado's work consists of a series of drawings in Indian ink and paintings in acrylic on the theme of Etz Hayim Synagogue in Chania. The use of black and white alongside a single primary colour is a feature of her work. Her technique focuses on portraying mass and shape and bringing in experiential features and symbolic allusions. As she herself says, 'I have used my own emotional and personal relationship with my subject matter as a springboard to create a series of purely narrative images. What I wanted to do was to display meanings and symbols in a way that went beyond the ordinary act of bringing them all together in a suitable framework that is dictated by the reality of the picture'.

It is through her own private look, sometimes secretive or furtive, that Lydia Abastado replicates niches and shapes of the Synagogue using a composite technique that unites features and materials, some from here, others from elsewhere, just like the Synagogue itself. Place is significant, a landmark, unforgettable for the young bride. It is a place of gathering, prayer, rapprochement, acquaintance, and female rituals. It is a place filled with spirituality and great importance, prompting the artist to approach it in a variety of ways. With tenderness and sensitivity she abandons herself to an exploration of her personal relationship with the Chania Synagogue and celebrates the singular role it has played in her life. The JMG joins her in celebrating this place which is so special to Greek-Jewish tradition; a place which recently suffered deliberate damage, but also one that enjoys people's solidarity and support. The opening of the Open Window exhibition took place on 12th April 2010 in the

Contemporary Art Gallery of the JMG and some of the artist's work was donated for the benefit of Etz Hayim Synagogue to help repair this monument that has played a unique role in the history of Greek Jewry.



*The exhibition "Open Window" at the JMG Contemporary Art Gallery*



*(Left) L. Abastado, Z. Battinou and Mr. A. Philon with his wife*



*The exhibition "Open Window" at the JMG Contemporary Art Gallery*

## Kyklonio

### The new Book of Poetry by Iossif Venturas

It was within the framework of events the Jewish Museum of Greece organises every year on the occasion of National Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27th January that Melani Publications and the Hellenic-American Union co-organised an event to launch Iossif Venturas' new poetical work *Kyklonio* in the theatre of the Hellenic-American Union on Thursday 11th February 2010.

The poet Nanos Valaoritis, Giorgos Kokkinos historian and professor at the University of the Aegean, the poet Kostas Koutsourelis and critic Vangelis Hadjivasiliou all spoke about Mr Venturas' book. The art-appreciative public of Athens embraced the event with enthusiasm and the sound of Yannis Papadopoulos on the violin made a fitting accompaniment to this wonderful evening.

## Holocaust Memorial for Greek Jews in Athens

Monday 10th May 2010 saw the Holocaust Memorial for Greek Jews in Athens unveiled by Nikitas Kaklamanis, Mayor of Athens and Benjamin Albala President of the Jewish Community of Athens. Scores of people graced the unveiling ceremony with their presence, among them were Minister of State Mr. C. Pampoukis, Vice President of the Israeli Parliament Rouhama Avraham-Balila, President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece Mr. D. Saltiel, and Representative of the Association of Greek Survivors of Nazi Concentration Camps Isaac Mizan.

The main speaker at the ceremony was academician and author Iakovos Kampanellis, himself a survivor of Nazi concentration camps. Several decades had to go by in silence and indifference before the countries and communities of Europe started preserving the memory of the Holocaust and paying tribute by erecting memorials. The city of Athens has now acquired its first ever memorial to the victims of Nazi savagery. The work is the creation of sculptor Diana Magania and was chosen from among nineteen praiseworthy entries that artists submitted in a competition.

The choice was made by a special panel convened by invitation from the Jewish Community of Athens; Mrs Battinou, Director of the JMG, was a member of the panel. Final approval came with the unanimous decision of the Municipality of Athens City Council on 30/01/2009.

The memorial is a marble representation of a dismembered Star of David, symbolising the injury that Greek Jewry suffered at the hands of the Nazis. The severed points of the star are scattered haphazardly a short distance from the central section which remains intact, symbolising the core that lives on to continue the historic course of Jewish Communities in Greece. Positioning the memorial where Melidoni Street meets Ermou Street and Euvoulou Street has obvious implications and is clearly symbolic.

It was here that on 24th March 1944 the Germans trapped and arrested the Jews of Athens. The work demonstrates calmly and simply the time-defying scope of that tragic event. It urges the passer-by to think long, deeply, and remember.



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## Images of Greek Jews – An exhibition of photographs from the Photographic Archive of the Jewish Museum of Greece

The Jewish Museum of Greece is holding a temporary exhibition entitled *Images of Greek Jews*, thereby giving access to its Photographic Archive that contains a large number of photographs covering every aspect of Jewish culture in Greece. The material in the Museum archive consists of original black and white photographs and printed copies made of them, as well as colour prints and slides. All this material has been sorted into approximately one hundred subject areas to facilitate access and filing.

The subject matter of the photographs is very rich and covers most aspects of the life of Jews in Greece from the late 19th century to the present day. The common denominator in the photographs chosen for this new JMG exhibition is their aesthetic perfection. Valuable historical information caught on camera is relegated to a secondary role since the primary aim of the exhibition is to please the eye and convey the feel and nature of an epoch. Photographer and photography professor Leonidas Papadopoulos, who is in charge of the JMG Photographic Archive, undertook the selection of the photographs and curated the exhibition.

As he himself characteristically says, 'Beyond the emotional relationship and significance of this archive with regard to the history and culture of Greek Jewry, there lies another aspect, the one I sought to reveal



1. The curator of the exhibition, Prof. of Photography Mr. L. Papadopoulos with the Holocaust Survivor Mr. S. Bakola in the exhibition's inauguration
2. Snapshot from the exhibition's inauguration

*General view of the temporary exhibition "Images of Greek Jews"*

in this exhibition, and that is the artistic quality of the images themselves. Some images stand out from the large number of photographs because they fulfil certain aesthetic criteria, and this puts them in a higher category; that of artistic photography. It is a happy union when the eye of the photographer, the subject, the moment and the final composition come together in harmony.'

The opening of the exhibition took place on Wednesday 30th June and was graced with the presence of distinguished guests of the JMG. The exhibition will remain open to the public until 20th September 2010. Exhibition products include the reproduction of selected photographs in the form of old-fashioned picture postcards and a digital exhibition to be held within the context of the European Union project *Judaica Europeana*, in which the JMG is a contributing partner.

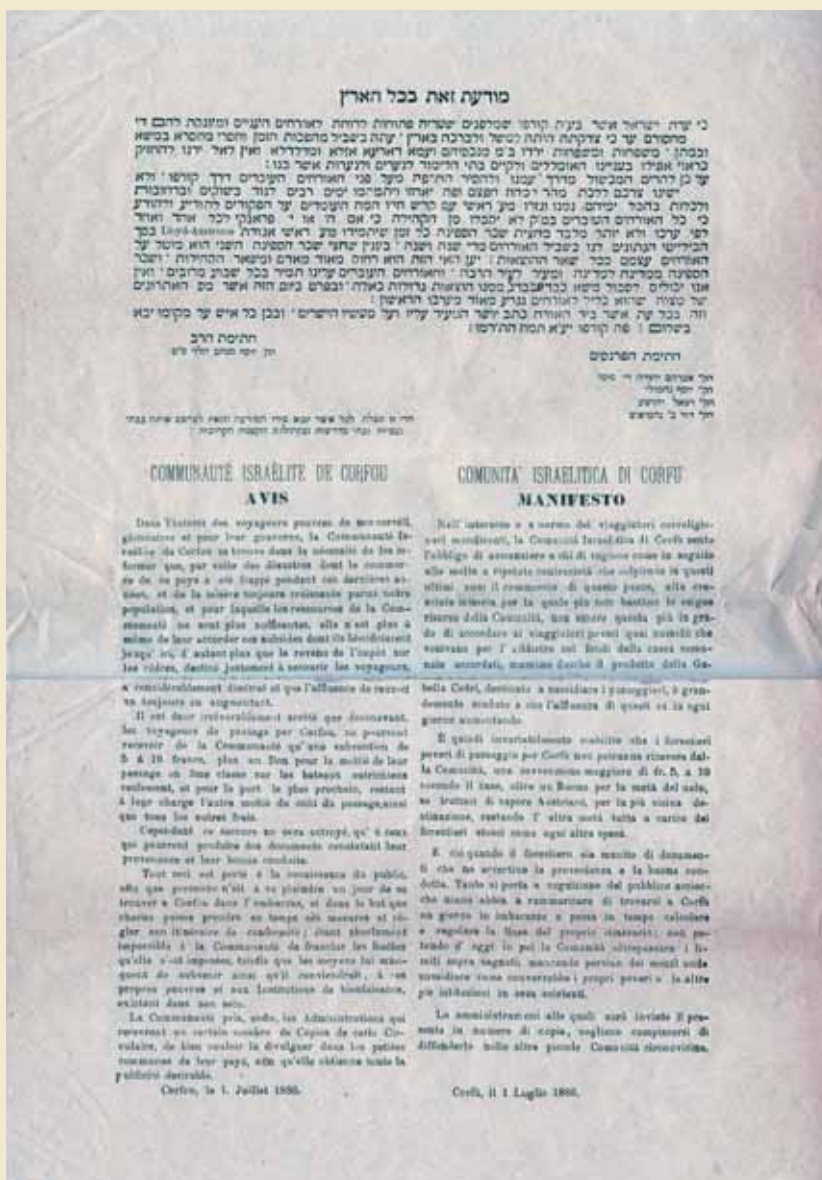
A rare 19th century document from the Jewish Community of Corfu augments the JMG collection

# A rare 19th century document from the Jewish Community of Corfu augments the JMG collection

The Jewish Museum of Greece has recently added an extremely interesting document to its collection, one whose study will greatly increase our knowledge of the history of Jewish Communities in this country.

The document is an announcement and is a rare and important historical source that will provide information about economic, social and political life in the Jewish Community of Corfu in the nineteenth century. More specifically, it is a circular letter issued by the Jewish Community of Corfu on 1st July 1886, addressed to Jewish Communities in other countries. It is written in three languages (Hebrew, French and Italian) which is indicative of the flourishing commercial activity and international links of the island's Jewish population. It is very formal in style and eloquently describes the financial problems that beset the Jewish Community of Corfu both at home and abroad.

easily jeopardise the well-being of the Island's Jewish population and the charitable institutions that the Community funded. The JMG whole-heartedly thanks Dr. Jacob Soussis for the most generous gift of the document which was obtained from an auction house abroad and then donated to the Museum's collection in memory of his parents, Perla and Moissis Soussis. The Museum hopes that others will follow his example, since acts like this contribute to the collection and study of important gems in the history of Greek Jews.



The announcement begins by mentioning the adverse state of the Community's economy brought on by a generalised slump in trade and worsening deprivation among the population, which led to a drop in the Community's economic resources. Even so, despite these economic difficulties, the Jewish Community of Corfu continued to support Jewish travellers and traders financially with five, and in some cases ten French francs, in an effort to help those who really needed it.

The apparent aim in doing this was to provide as much security as possible for the Community's coffers since the economic crisis could

## Children's Museum Educational Programmes at the JMG

It was within the framework of collaboration between the two museums that the Children's Museum conducted educational programmes for primary schoolchildren on the premises of the Jewish Museum on 17th and 19th March, and 15th April 2010 using the so-called 'historian's method', a teaching method that can achieve excellent results in museums of history.

The method uses essentially the same procedures as those used in problem-solving and the scientific method of recognising and identifying the problem, planning research, gathering information, processing data, analysing information and putting it all together (drawing conclusions, interpreting results).

The schoolchildren explored the JMG premises for interesting subjects that could occupy people in the Museum. They decided what they would like to focus on, split into groups and conducted their research by observation of their subject, and comparison of it with familiar objects and other sources such as Museum information boards. The groups presented their initial findings and said they thought it appropriate to continue their research using available books and websites.

By the end of the educational programme the children had acquired a large stock of new experiences and information about the history and customs of Jewish people in Greece. They made a publication of their own where they wrote what they thought about their visit to the Museum.

### **Fifth Graders of the Jewish Primary School of Athens visit the JMG**

Children of the fifth grade of the Jewish Primary School of Athens came to the Jewish Museum on Thursday 11th February 2010 to be shown round the museum and take part in an educational programme related to the Jewish Neighbourhoods temporary exhibition.



## Fifth Graders of the Jewish Primary School of Athens visit the JMG



The aims of the educational programme were:

- that the young visitors should discover what life was like for children of their age in the neighbourhoods of Greece before the War
- that through the exhibition material they should get to know the people who lived at that time and hear them speak
- that they should explore factors affecting Jews who live in the same society as people of other religions or even other nationalities and draw some general conclusions
- that they should appreciate the extent of the void left by Jews who were exterminated in the Holocaust and how vastly different the demographic make-up of cities is today
- that they should access lesser-known parts of the history of their city
- that they should think about their own neighbourhoods and pinpoint areas of similarity and difference between then and now.

#### The activity proceeded as follows:

The children were put into groups. Each group chose a file which contained a passage of general information about the city and the neighbourhood as well as excerpts from personal accounts and photographs. They then read the passages and excerpts carefully and found information in the JMG exhibition telling them what ordinary, everyday life was like in the neighbourhood. The children then took on the identity of a child, wrote their adopted names on name tags and pinned them to their clothes. The head of educational programmes co-ordinated the ensuing discussion, in which the children role played characters described in the passages.



The research and presentation of the stories put the children in touch with an aspect of the history of Greek cities that is largely unknown and this gave them a vivid picture of a way of life that was rich in customs and human relations, a world that the War destroyed forever.

The children then made colourful necklaces and bracelets using wooden beads painted with pictures of Jewish objects. They were given mementoes and JMG publications.

## Museum Diary 2009-2010

### EVENTS AND VISITS

#### **17th March 2009**

Baron David de Rothschild, world-famous banker and President of the Rothschild Group visited the Museum.

#### **20th May 2009**

A ceremony was held to mark the donation and acceptance of Mr. Konstantinos Anitsas' stamp collection. Mr. Anitsas donated to the Museum his collection of postage stamps dating from the founding of the state of Israel in 1947. The collection includes successive series of complete sets of postage stamps, first day of issue envelopes, stamps in blocks of four and franked stamps recovered from posted letters.

#### **16th January 2010**

A discussion took place with Mr. Stavros Zoumboulakis in the library of the Jewish Museum of Greece, prompted by the publication of Nikos Davettas' latest novel *The Jewish Bride*.

#### **14th May 2010**

His Excellency Daniel V. Speckhard, Ambassador of the United States of America visited the Museum with his wife, Dr. Anne Speckhard, and was shown round the permanent exhibition by JMG Director Mrs Zanet Battinou.

When his tour of the exhibition was over, Ambassador Speckhard had a short meeting with JMG President Samuel Matsas. They spoke about areas of common interest.

### SEMINARS AND MEETINGS

#### **21st to 23rd June 2009**

The JMG took part in the annual meeting of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research in Oslo, Norway, as a member of the Greek Delegation.

#### **11th and 12th December 2009**

The JMG took part in the 13th meeting organised by the Greek Branch of ICOM, the purpose of which was to provide information on the theme of



*Snapshot from the meeting - discussion in the JMG, prompted by the publication of Nikos Davettas' latest novel *The Jewish Bride*.*



*The Ambassador of the U.S.A. D.V. Speckhard with his wife, together with Mrs. Z. Battinou and Mr. M. Matsas (center)*

Education and Modern Greek Heritage. The focus of this meeting was on museums and how they relate to the adult public. With this in mind, talks concentrated on museum educational activities with this specific target audience and the part museums play in lifelong learning.

### **19th and 20th February 2010**

The JMG took part in a two-day seminar organised by the Directorate of the National Archive of Monuments in the amphitheatre of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The meeting focused on issues of centralised planning and co-ordinated substantiation and documentation, such as the substantiation, documentation and management of monuments that are immovable real estate and monuments that are movable, the management of archived material and indexing the country's monuments.

### **12th to 16th June 2010**

The director of the JMG took part in the International Conference on Holocaust Education organised by the Yad Vashem Institution in Jerusalem. Mrs Battinou then represented Greece on the Museums and Monuments Working Group of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research first annual meeting, held in Jerusalem, during this year's Israeli presidency of the organisation.

### **28th June 2010**

The Jewish Museum of Greece took part in a meeting held by the Greek Branch of ICOM on Using New Technologies in Museum Educational Activities. JMG director Mrs Battinou was among those who spoke at the meeting and she demonstrated the content and use of an interactive info kiosk on the subject of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Greece, one of the JMG's digital educational applications.

## The Association of Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece

The Jewish Museum of Greece has the great honour and pleasure of expressing its gratitude to all members of its Association of Friends for generously and promptly paying their annual subscription. It also takes great pleasure in welcoming new members of the Association whose practical support enriches this great cultural family and allows it to carry on its mission of supporting, in every possible way, the spread of a unique tradition in the Jewish Diaspora.

### FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM

Every benefactor is allocated a place, according to the contribution made, in the Ranks of Benefactors, detailed below, devised and established as part of the Fundraising Campaign for the future of the Museum:

**Great Benefactor** € 100,000.00 (+)

**Benefactor** € 50,000.00 (+)

**Great Donor** € 20,000.00 (+)

**Donor** € 10,000.00 (+)

**Great Supporter** € 6.000,00 (+)

**Supporter** € 2,000.00 (+)

## GREAT BENEFACTORS OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF GREECE

### ORGANISATIONS

The Ministry of Culture  
The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece  
The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki  
American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece

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Abravanel Errikos • Abravanel-Davari Liza  
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Kovo Dario • Mallat Alexander • Matsas Makis  
Recanati Harry • Resti Bella • Rose Daniel & Joanna  
Saltiel Maurice (Family)

## GREAT DONORS, DONORS, GREAT SUPPORTERS, SUPPORTERS 2009 & 1ST HALF 2010

The names of donors to the Museum - both private individuals and organisations - who honoured the Museum with their much valued support for its work during the 2009 financial year and the first half of 2010, and who have been allocated a place in the Ranks of Benefactors, are given in alphabetical order by category below:

### GREAT DONORS 2009

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### DONORS 2009

American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece  
Matsas Makis

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### SUPPORTERS 1st HALF 2010

Abravanel Angeliki • Abravanel-Davari Liza  
Benrubi Sam • Capuano Maurice • Fais Lucy  
Levis John - David • Mordeau Sergius • Pizante Victor

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