



Kehila Kedosha Janina

Synagogue and Museum

280 Broome Street, New York, NY 10002

November 2011 e-mail newsletter

Dear Friends of Kehila Kedosha Janina,

Our edifice has taken on new dimensions! We are now, in addition to a house of worship, a place of study, a repository of traditions and customs, and a living memorial to Greek-Jewish victims of the Holocaust, a venue for top quality entertainment.



Kol Dodi with Avraam Pengas at Kehila Kedosha Janina on August 21st. (See additional pictures on page 4)

This newsletter, our 46th will, as always, cover news regarding Kehila Kedosha Janina and news concerning Greek Jewry. We hope you find our newsletter interesting. Your feedback is of utmost importance to us. If you missed previous issues, they can be accessed on our website (www.kkjsm.org).

We now reach over 5000 households worldwide, with our community of 'friends' continually growing with each newsletter. If you know others who wish to be part of this ever-growing network, please have them contact us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net.

As always, you are all invited to attend our Saturday morning Shabbat services. Just give our Shamas, Sol Kofinas, a heads up (papusoup@mindspring.com) so we are sure that our Kiddush (traditional Greek Jewish Kosher foods) is sufficient. If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush for a special occasion or an Adara, contact Sol.

Passings

This month we lost 4 special women.

Dinah Hakim, age 96, was a regular member of our congregation at Kehila Kedosha Janina. Dinah's family was from Veroia and she was proud of her Greek-Jewish Sephardic background.

Molly Blau was born in Ioannina in 1926 and died in New York at the age of 85. She was the youngest child of Rabbi Israel Hametz. Molly was proud of her Yanniot roots and visited Ioannina twice, the first time in 1998 when she proudly stood in front of the house where she was born.



Molly Hametz-graduation

Ada Finifter passed at the age of 73. She was the granddaughter of Stella Colchamiro and Isaac Weintraub and the great granddaughter of Leon (Judah) Colchamiro and Julia Mazza (both born in Ioannina). Ada was a Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Michigan State University and the editor of a number of books (Alienation and the Social System (1972), Political Science: The State of the Discipline (1983), and Political Science: The State of the Discipline II (1993), and coeditor of The Encyclopedia of Democracy (1995).

Ada Finifter



Annie Menachem passed away peacefully in her sleep at the age of 93. Annie loved being a Yanniot, both sides of her family coming from Ioannina and was a life-long member of the Sisterhood of Janina. Annie was preceded in death by her husband Victor Menahem.

Aikoi Mas, Los Muestros come home



Ed Coffina of the Coffina and Barouch families



Judy and Gary Brown (Judy is from the Asser family)

As always, visitors continue to flock to Kehila Kedosha Janina



Visitors from Framington Massachusetts

Past Museum Events

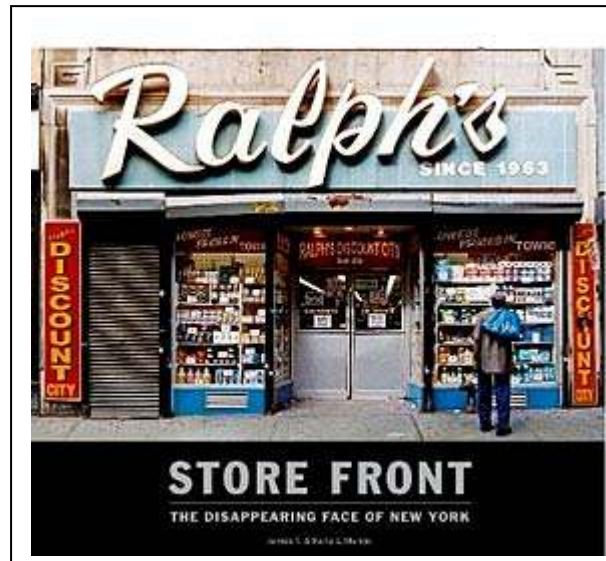
Pictures from the August 21st concert by Kol Dodi and Avraam Pengas at Kehila Kedosha Janina



Upcoming Museum Events

Join us on Sunday, November 13, 2011 at Kehila Kedosha Janina at 2:00 pm

Kehila Kedosha Janina is honored to host a book signing and lecture by James and Karla Murray, authors of *STORE FRONT: The Disappearing Face of New York*. Books will be available for purchase for \$20.



*James and Karla Murray are professional photographers, specializing in urban and low-light photography, and authors of the bestselling and critically acclaimed book, **STORE FRONT: The Disappearing Face of New York**.*

They have lectured extensively on the subject of the plight of New York City's mom and pop stores at venues including The New York Public Library, The Brooklyn Historical Society, The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.

Their work has been the subject of exhibitions at the New-York Historical Society and the Brooklyn Historical Society, and is part of the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, the New York Public Library and the Brooklyn Historical Society.

This event is open to the public. Free.

Refreshments will be served.

**Kehila Kedosha Janina
280 Broome Street
New York City, NY 10002**

For directions, access our website (www.kkjsm.org)

For additional information and to order signed copies of the book for mailing, e-mail us at kehila_kedosha_janina@netzero.net or call us at 516-456-9336

Upcoming Cultural Events in United States

The Jewish Woman of Rebetika with Carol Freeman

Saturday November 19 from 8-11



**Glen Echo Town Hall
6106 Harvard Avenue
Glen Echo, Maryland**

Songs and Stories of legendary Greek Jewish Singers Roza Eskenazi, Victoria Hazan, Stella Haskil, and Amalia Baka sponsored by the Folklore Society of Greater Washington

Featuring:

**Carol Freeman - Vocals
Beth Bahia Cohen - Violin
Haig Manoukian - Oud**

**Tickets: www.fsgw.org 301-717-4641 glen.echo@erols.com
Reservations strongly recommended**

Upcoming Museum Events of Interest elsewhere in the world



Free Seniors Day at the Rubin Museum of Art!

The Rubin Museum of Art, a cultural and educational institution dedicated to the art of the Himalayas, is pleased to announce FREE SENIORS DAY, a special initiative to welcome older adults to the museum on the FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH.

Seniors (65 and older) visiting RMA on Free Seniors Day enjoy FREE ADMISSION, a 10% DISCOUNT on select items at the Shop and Cafe, and a schedule of SPECIAL PROGRAMS.

Free Seniors Day Schedule

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Mahasiddhas in Himalayan Art . This program combines a theater and gallery experience, providing visitors with an in-depth look at the lives of yogis as expressed in Himalayan Art.

12:00-2:00 p.m. Auspicious Stitches-A fiber-arts workshop

1:00-2:00 p.m. A short documentary film screening exploring Himalayan art, culture, and religious traditions.

2:00-3:30 p.m. Senior Writing Workshop -A creative writing workshop encouraging participants to reflect on their personal histories and make art-to-self connections.

3:00-4:00 p.m. Taste of RMA-Guided visit through the galleries.

Reservations for group visits are recommended, and private tours of the galleries can be arranged by calling Group Visits at 212.620.5000 x 345 or emailing reservations@rmanyc.org.

The Rubin Museum is located at 150 West 17th Street (between 6th and 7th Avenues), and open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mondays. For more information, visit rmanyc.org, or contact Louise Brooks at 212.620.5000 x 328.

News from Jewish Greece

Fearing bankruptcy, Greek Jews ask brethren for help

By GIL SHEFLER

10/24/2011 16:30

Potential overseas donors insist on transparency and cutbacks, mirroring the relationship between Greece's government and int'l institutions.

The Jewish community of Greece might be unable to pay its bills by 2013, unless it receives aid from Jewish organizations abroad, local leaders have told The Jerusalem Post, in recent weeks.

Benjamin Albelas, the president of the Jewish community of Athens, said his organization has been hard hit by the deep recession afflicting the European nation and won't be able to meet its financial commitments a year-and-a-half from now in the current conditions.

"The financial situation, which as we know is very bad, has affected the Jewish community very much and the situation of the Athenian Jewish community in Athens – the largest in the country – is dire," said Albelas, whose organization runs a synagogue, a school and a museum that serve the city's 3,000 Jews.

David Saltiel, the head of the community in Thessaloniki, which has used its deeper pockets to support needy Jewish communities around the country since the onset of the financial troubles, confirmed the severity of the situation.



David Saltiel



Beth Shalom synagogue in Athens

"I'm afraid that if something does not happen to save all the Jewish communities in Greece we will be in a difficult situation," he said.

"Worst of all is not being able to support Jewish life, the synagogues, the schools and those in need."

Since the recession began last year revenues from Jewish assets and donations have dropped precipitously, making it increasingly difficult for communities around the country to pay for services rendered to its 6,000 members.

The biggest blow so far has been the new property tax.

The measure, passed by the government earlier this month in a bid to raise money to pay off its debtors, levies an additional 16 euros on every square meter.

Because the Jewish community's biggest source of income is real estate, its coffers have been particularly badly affected by the law.

"A lot of the property is either vacant because people cannot afford them, or the tenants are demanding rents reduced by 40 percent or they threaten to leave," said Albelas.

In order to avoid bankruptcy, Greek Jews have appealed to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), an international relief group based in New York City, for help.

The JDC, which has played a similar role in the past in places like Argentina, where it stepped in to bolster the local Jewish community in the wake of the collapse of the local currency in 2001, said it is in the process of considering the request.

"JDC is in close touch with leaders of the Greek Jewish community, examining the potential effect of the current economic situation on Jewish communal life and exploring ways of helping," a spokesperson said.

Albelas estimated a grant or loan of between 300,000 to 400,000 euros from the JDC was needed, whereas Saltiel said a loan of \$1 million returned over a five year period would prevent potential insolvency.

He said JDC's head, Steve Schwager, is expected to travel to Athens later this year for talks.

In the meantime, JDC will begin auditing the community's finances.

"As always, we are doing the due diligence necessary to make this a success and are currently waiting for additional financial information from Athens' Jewish community," said JDC.

The likelihood of the loan going through depends in part on the ability of Greece's Jews to balance their books, a process that would require painful cutbacks and layoffs.

In that respect the relationship between JDC and the Jewish community of Greece is similar to that being played out on a much larger scale between the Greek government and its lenders, the so-called Troika, consisting of The International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Union.

Anticipating such demands, Greece's Jewish leaders said they have begun introducing austerity measures, but complain about the difficult choices they face.

Albelas said he would introduce a 10% across-the-board cut in salaries and trim other expenses including closing summer camps for children.

The Jewish community in Thessaloniki – which is on sounder financial ground than the one in Athens because its proceeds from local real estate are greater – said it too was reducing expenditures.

"Those who arrive at the age of pension might have to be let go," said Saltiel, the head of the community.

"The curator of the Jewish museum will be outsourced and we are thinking maybe instead of having two rabbis, having only one. But we are trying very hard to keep our Jewish life – it's our life." •

Thessaloniki

Representatives of Aristotle University in Thessaloniki have been in discussion with the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki in order to agree on "how to repay the historic debt to the Jewish Community of the City" as stated by Rector John Mylopoulos.

"Now that the issue of compensation has been settled, it has opened the way for effective recognition by Aristotle University of historical truth that the University was built over the cemetery," said Mylopoulos. Access to audiovisual archives of the Shoah Foundation, which includes approximately 52,000 testimonies from Holocaust, has supported this initiative.

According to the Rector of Aristotle University, discussions with representatives of the Jewish community revolve around the erection of a monument or establishing a Jewish studies program- perhaps a home study.



Jewish cemetery after destruction 1942



Historical photo from Jewish cemetery

The Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Resources Management of the Municipality of Thessaloniki and a member of the Jewish Community Council, Chasdai Capon, assured that the City is ready to support any agreed attempt to showcase the cemetery and pay tribute to these people who are buried there.

Also, Mr. Capon reiterated the need to return the archives of the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki, presently located in Russia, so, he said, "they can be added to the audiovisual material now at the University and made available to researchers, so that we can truly understand pre-WWII Jewish Thessaloniki and what happened in the Second World War. "

More News from Greece

Germany owes Greece a debt | Albrecht Ritschl

Germany's ducking of the war reparations issue makes its attitude to the current Greek debt crisis somewhat hypocritical

Albrecht Ritschl • 21/06/2011 • guardian.co.uk

The Germans are not amused these days. Look everywhere from tabloids to the blogosphere, and it seems that the public mood has reached boiling point. Loath to shoulder another national debt increase and finance another bailout, the Germans have started questioning everything from the wisdom of supporting Greece to the common euro currency, or indeed the merits of the European integration project altogether. This might be strange for a country that is nudging ever closer to full employment, and which is about to recapture its position as the world's leading exporter of manufactured goods from the Chinese. But the Germans say they've had enough: no more underwriting of European integration, no more paying for this and that, and certainly no more bailing out the Greeks.

What is truly strange, however, is the brevity of Germany's collective memory. For during much of the 20th century, the situation was radically different: after the first world war and again after

the second world war, Germany was the world's largest debtor, and in both cases owed its economic recovery to large-scale debt relief.

Germany's interwar debt crisis started almost exactly 80 years ago, in the last days of June 1931. What had triggered it was Germany's aggressive borrowing in the late 1920s to pay reparations out of credit. A credit bubble resulted, and when it burst in 1931, it brought down reparations, the gold standard and, not least, Weimar democracy.

Having footed the resulting massive bill, after the second world war the Americans imposed the London debt agreement of 1953 on their allies, an exercise in debt forgiveness to Germany on the most generous terms. West Germany's economic miracle, the stability of the deutschmark and the favourable state of its public finances were all owed to this massive haircut. But it put Germany's creditors at a disadvantage, leaving it to them to cope with the financial aftermath of the German occupation.

Indeed, the London debt agreement deferred settlement of the reparations question – including the repayment of war debts and contributions imposed by Germany during the war – to a conference to be held after unification. This conference never took place: since 1990, the Germans have steadfastly refused to reopen this can of worms. Such compensation as has been paid, mostly to forced workers, was channelled through NGOs to avoid creating precedents. Only one country has challenged this openly and tried to obtain compensation in court: Greece. It may or may not have been wise to put the issue of reparations and other unsettled claims on Germany to rest after 1990. Back then, the Germans argued that any plausible bill would exceed the country's resources, and that continued financial co-operation in Europe instead would be infinitely more preferable. They may have had a point. But now is the time for Germany to deliver on the promise, act wisely and keep the bull away from the china shop.

News of Interest

Scholarships are being offered to Israelis (holding an Israeli passport) and a graduate degree from a foreign University in Humanities, Social & Political Sciences and have a basic knowledge of the Greek language. The candidate should NOT be above 40 years old. The scholarship's duration is 5 months and is offered for a special course in the Modern Greek Language and Culture organized in a Greek University. Courses start on 9th January 2012 and end on 8th June 2012.

The scholarship covers: - Free meals & accommodation (in University residence or in flats provided by the Greek University).

- Tuition fees and other relevant costs.

- Free medical care for emergency.

If you have Israeli relatives, friends or acquaintances that would be interested in this scholarship, please contact them and then contact us as the online application needs to be submitted by November 15 2011 and there is not much time left. Please contact us at your earliest convenience at 0030-210 6705513 or through email info@athens.mfa.gov.il .

It's Official: New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signs agreement to kick-start the rebuilding of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, the only house of worship destroyed on September 11, 2001.

<http://www.governor.ny.gov/press/10142011RebuildingSTNicholasGreekChurch>

NY Governor Cuomo today announced that he, joined by Port Authority Executive Director Chris Ward, representatives of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, and others signed the agreement that

permits the rebuilding of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church with a nondenominational bereavement center.



Running for a Mitzvah-ING New York City Marathon on Sunday-November 6th

Michelle Hersh of Camas, Washington, is literally running to take care of Holocaust survivors. For the third year in a row, Michelle will co-captain a team in the ING New York City Marathon running to raise money for Blue Card, a Claims Conference-supported organization that provides urgently needed cash assistance to needy survivors around the United States.

In 2009, the team raised \$135,000. In 2010, Michelle's team, which at 62 runners had almost doubled in size from the year before, raised \$200,000. Thanks to her initial efforts, Blue Card is now fielding teams in marathons around the world and is preparing a team of 70 runners for this year's ING New York City Marathon on Nov. 6.

"Survivors went through the absolute worst thing and now in their old age, to live in poverty is unacceptable," Michelle said. "I feel like we have got to do as much as possible, especially as Jews, so we don't look back and say we should have done more."

After New York, Blue Card is planning for marathon teams in Jerusalem, Atlanta, Miami, and Rome. "For us, it's not just how much money we raise but how many more people learn about us, and people they know who can be assisted by us," Elie said.

To learn more about Blue Card, visit www.bluecardfund.org. For more on Blue Card's marathon teams, including how to join or donate, visit <http://www.bluecardfund.org/INGMarathon.html>.

Shalom to one and all!

**Gershon Harris
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel**



Like millions of families all over the United States, American Jews will be celebrating the unique and quintessentially American holiday of Thanksgiving at the end of November. With virtually no intrinsic or formal religious symbolism per se, Thanksgiving has virtually no precedent in its appeal to Americans of all religious beliefs, not to mention its significance to every man, woman and child who understands the unique character of American freedom. And just like Sundays, the holiday is especially 'user-friendly' to Orthodox Jews, since it contains all the elements of a day of joy, family and happiness without any of the religious prohibitions attached to Shabbat, like driving, cooking and watching television. In fact, the holiday is so embedded in the American psyche, that even American 'expatriates' living in Israel (like myself) often organize and attend special private and public 'celebrations' of this distinctive American holiday right here in the Holy Land, though the traditional holiday menu is often adapted to local tastes and circumstances. Interestingly, it was not always so self-evident that Jews should, or even could, celebrate Thanksgiving according to Jewish law. And while this question might seem limited to Orthodoxy, since the process of "Americanization" of all immigrant groups involved many cultural, social and even ethical compromises and upheavals, Jews always presented a particularly complex case, since in its essence the Jewish religion and culture were always very different and distinct from the local non-Jewish majority wherever Jews lived, not to mention the restrictions and persecution Jews suffered for centuries even when they wanted to assimilate and blend in to the dominant culture. Some of America's most prominent and authoritative Rabbis from every Jewish denomination and stream continue to debate questions of how much Jews should or should not "adapt" and "adopt" from the non-Jewish world, which often go to the very core of what it means to be a Jew or Jewish in modern America.

The arguments against observing Thanksgiving are all based on Leviticus 18:3, which reads, "You shall not copy the practices of the land of Egypt where you dwelt, or of the land of Canaan to which I am taking you; nor shall you follow their laws." Besides the original Biblical mandate of avoiding the idolatrous and pagan rituals of ancient Egypt and Canaan, this verse is the source of a general prohibition for Jews to take on customs and ceremonies of non-Jewish origin, whether as a barrier to assimilation, to protect the unique character of Jewish life, or both. The strictest interpretations apply the prohibition to virtually any 'non-Jewish' practice or custom, whether of gentile religious or secular origin, which would include Thanksgiving and all its trimmings and traditions. As for those who permit and even encourage the celebration of Thanksgiving, they reject this more "purist" standpoint, and feel that given the overwhelming secular nature of Thanksgiving in the overall American context despite its nominally Christian pilgrim beginnings, there is absolutely nothing wrong with a Jew celebrating Thanksgiving like any other American family, or even scheduling weddings and other celebrations on that day, since obviously such plans are based on convenience and not in order to 'sanctify' the day in any way. Likewise the special holiday menu: Turkey was served at the first Thanksgiving meal because of its being a common and rather indigenous source of food in early America, with no religious significance whatsoever.

Ultimately, most Rabbinical authorities feel that there is certainly no technical Jewish legal impediment to celebrating the holiday, though many still have certain reservations about encouraging the practice. Others had no qualms at the outset about Jews celebrating

Thanksgiving just like everyone else, and were even surprised at the very question, since not only did the day have no real religious overtones that conflicted with Judaism, the pilgrims original reason for its celebration remains valid, and even especially poignant to Jew, that being the idea of showing appreciation and thanksgiving for the freedoms and opportunities America provided Jews fleeing the persecution and horrors of Europe in almost every age (despite some rather bumpy obstacles and pitfalls along the way).

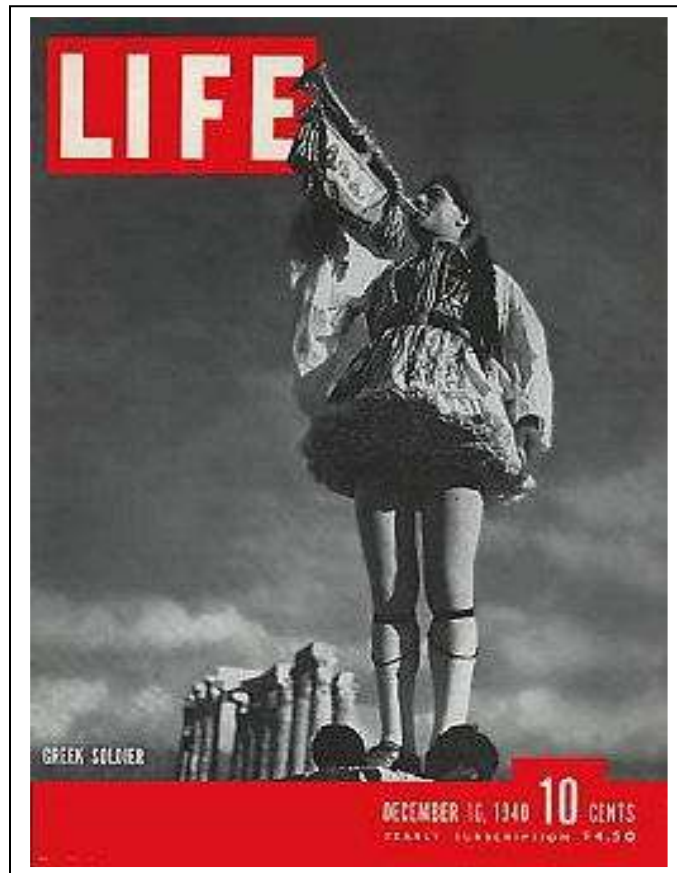
So pass the turkey, and Happy Thanksgiving to one and all!

Gershon Harris
POB 361
Hatzor Haglilit, Israel

We are happy to announce that we, finally, found the family of Abraham Matza, thanks to his neice Betty who visited us at Kehila Kedosha Janina. We are hoping to receive photos of Abraham and have passed on this good news to Jaime Longoria

Remembering

Cover of Life
Magazine
December 1940



October 28th was OXI Day, commemorating not only Greece's entrance into World War II but, also, Greece's resistance to the Fascist invasion.

Unfortunately, this year in Greece, events were marred by demonstrations:

Here in Greece, anger is running so high — especially toward Germany, whose Nazi occupation still leaves deep scars here and who now dominates the European Union's bailout of debt-ridden Greece — that National Day celebrations were called off on Friday in the northern city of Thessaloniki for the first time ever after crowds shouted "traitor" to the Greek president, Karolos Papoulias.

Cover of French magazine after Papandreaou's call for a referendum on accepting bailout.



"I was the one fighting the Germans," Mr. Papoulias, 82, said on national television. "I am sorry for those who cursed at me. They should be ashamed of themselves. We fought for Greece. I was an insurgent from the age of 15. I fought the Nazis and the Germans, and now they call me a traitor?"

Beyond populist talk, which ranges from euro-skepticism to anti-German demagoguery, experts say the concessions that Greece has made in exchange for the foreign aid it needs to stave off default — including allowing European Union officials to monitor Greek state affairs closely — are unprecedented for a member nation, making Greece a bellwether for the future of European integration.

The European superpowers Germany and France are trying to translate the new deal, to accept a loss on part of Greece's debt, into changing European Union treaties to give the union greater oversight of national budgets and to create tougher, more easily enforceable rules for countries that go astray.

After years of pay cuts and tax hikes that have pushed the Greek middle class to the breaking point, Greeks are not inclined to feel grateful to the so-called troika of foreign lenders — the European Union, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund — that demanded austerity in exchange for loans. Instead, they increasingly feel they have become a de facto European Union protectorate.

"If we weren't under the E.U., which is the only reason this loss of sovereignty may be justified, I'd have to say that Greece is an occupied country," said Nikos Alivizatos, a constitutional lawyer in Athens.

Such feelings run so deep that after reaching a deal in Brussels this week for banks to accept a 50 percent loss on the face value of their Greek bonds, Prime Minister George Papandreou took great pains to explain that a new agreement — a troika presence until 2020 — would only offer technical assistance and was not tantamount to Greece relinquishing control of its fate.

"Nothing in this deal sacrifices our right to take our own decision. On the contrary, it will pave the way for us to freedom from dependency," Mr. Papandreou said in a televised address.

But few Greeks agree. "Our politicians are just employees, simple employees," said Margarita Tripolia, 17, a high school student who marched in the National Day parade. She, like other students, turned her face away from representatives of the government, church and military outside Parliament in a silent protest against the austerity measures and the direction the country was going.

But the sovereignty question goes far beyond street protest.

One highly delicate, unresolved question, in negotiations between the European Union and banks over the Greek debt deal, is whether future Greek bonds would be governed by international law, not Greek law, which currently governs 90 percent of Greek bonds. Such a change — aimed at preventing Greece from changing its laws to the detriment of creditors — would be unprecedented for a European Union member country.

Some argue that greater oversight is needed for Greece to push through the structural changes it promised in exchange for foreign aid. They say some loss of Greek sovereignty is a small price to pay considering that the new debt deal and eventual recapitalization of some banks comes at the expense of taxpayers from other European countries.

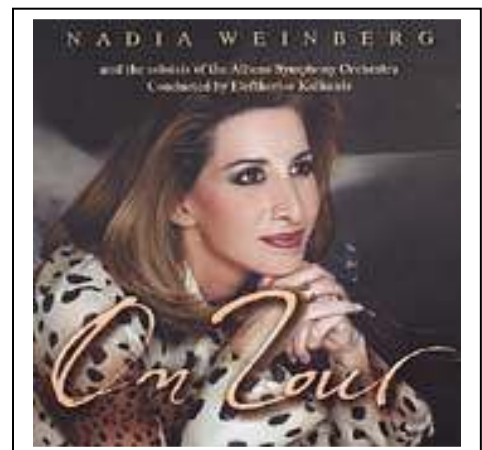
Internet links of interest

**Concert by Nadia Weinberg in Geneva, sponsored by the UN missions of Greece-Israel-USA.
Video including speeches by the 3 Ambassadors.**

Leon

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIHEPAh_pBg

Nadia Weinberg



Check our website for details on our upcoming trip to Greece (www.kkjsm.org)

New on our website: list of Occupations of Jews in Ioannina in 1938 (check under left link "Ioannina Archives")

So many of you have applauded our efforts. If you would like to make a contribution to Kehila Kedosha Janina, please send your check (in US dollars) 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.

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

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