

# European Textbooks: Greece Review

Editor: Madeleine Ferris



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# Executive Summary

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This study of the Greek curriculum examines how local Jewish history, the Holocaust, Judaism, Jews and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are addressed in textbooks. The examination of these textbooks was undertaken with the aim of evaluating the educational efforts in primary and secondary education to teach local Jewish history, the Holocaust and Judaism, while also underscoring the importance of Holocaust education and combating antisemitism.

Across primary, middle and high school education, eleven textbooks referenced Judaism, local Jewish history, the Holocaust, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Of these, four were modern and contemporary history books, four were religious studies books, and three were language books. Most are taught to Grade 6 primary school students, Grade 9 middle school students and Grade 12 high school students.

The main findings of the content analysis of these textbooks are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

- References to Judaism are informative, providing considerable detail about Jewish beliefs, practices, holidays, scripture, and important figures. Religious textbooks incorporate information concerning the main Jewish festivals, synagogues, and important aspects of the Jewish religion.
- Students learn about *Shabbat*, the Ten Commandments, the Torah, the Covenant with God, and the significance of Jewish memory and tradition. Major religious holidays including Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, Purim, and Hanukkah are explained in detail, including family rituals like the Passover Seder, with visuals of the Seder plate and the “Four Questions.”
- Religious Education textbooks portray Jews generally without using stereotypical language. Students are taught distinctions between “Jew,” “Israelite,” and “Israeli,” while recognizing Jewish communities in Greece and the State of Israel today.
- A Grade 9 History textbook includes a chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity – The Holocaust” in which there is informative content on the Holocaust, underlining its historical uniqueness, referring to the “Final Solution,” Nazi war crimes, concentration and death camps, including Auschwitz and the use of gas chambers.
- One history textbook includes a chapter offering Greek perspectives on the Holocaust, highlighting both the suffering of Jews and the efforts of Greek citizens and clergy who sought to protect Jewish communities. That said, the chapters would benefit from additional content on the extermination of the Jewish population and destruction of Jewish communities in many Greek cities.
- With the sole exception of the textbook mentioned above, the Holocaust is not presented as a distinct section in History textbooks, and the term “antisemitism” is not referenced in any textbooks.
- The curriculum positively highlights the Jewish community of Thessaloniki as integral, progressive contributors to Greece’s early labor and socialist movement, particularly in History textbooks. However, in general, local Greek Jewish history is largely absent from the national narrative.

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<sup>1</sup> Polyxeni Eleftheriou, “The Approach to the Holocaust in Greek School and Its position to Public History” (Doctoral Dissertation), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2021. <https://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/336422>. Some of the findings of this study, which constitutes a qualitative content analysis of the textbooks used in schools, are connected to the author’s qualitative and quantitative doctoral research on what educators teach regarding Jewish history and the Holocaust, as well as students’ knowledge of these historical subjects.

- The collaboration between Greek Christians and the German Nazis is not covered in textbooks, aside from some references to the collaboration of some Greek governments with the Nazi regime.
- The sole reference to the State of Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which mainly accused Israel and blamed the occupation for the suffering of Palestinian children, was recently replaced by a general text about the children in war zones, without reference to specific political entities. The removed text was criticized by Greek authorities for containing antisemitic elements (collective blame of “Jews” for violence against Arabs) and violating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (by depicting and presenting images of children with weapons).
- The establishment of the State of Israel and the emigration of the few Greek Jews who survived the Holocaust are omitted from the textbooks.

# Introduction

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## Overview of country and Jewish history

### Prewar local Jewish history

Although historical evidence is limited, it is generally believed that the first Jews to settle in Thessaloniki during the Hellenistic period came from Alexandria in 140 BC. The community members were concentrated around the city's harbor, with their synagogue, Etz Hayyim, being the center of their social and religious life. It is believed that the Apostle Paul preached for three consecutive Sabbaths in this synagogue before he was forced to leave the city. The Romans, who controlled Greece during parts of the Hellenistic period, granted autonomy to the Jewish community, whose members had settled in various parts of the city rather than solely around the harbor. They were traders, craftsmen, peasants and silk growers, led by a Rabbi, the senior leader of the community, who, with the help of six notables, addressed the daily needs and obligations of his members. During the Roman and later Byzantine Empires, the Jews of Thessaloniki adopted Greek names and spoke Greek, and became known as "Romaniotes."<sup>2</sup>

After the division of the Roman Empire in 395 AD, Thessaloniki became the second most important city in the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople. The Byzantine Emperors, in their attempt to "Christianize" their subordinates, were hostile to the Jewish communities within their territory, including the Thessaloniki community. This is exemplified in Constantine the Great and Theodosius II's imposition of anti-Jewish laws, and Justinian I banning the public fulfillment of "mitzvot" (religious commandments). He forbade the recitation of the *Shema* (daily prayer) and in the famous Justinian Code, the Jews are described as second-class citizens. Indeed, he issued a decree that *Pesach* (Passover) was to be celebrated after the Greek Orthodox Easter. Vassilios I the Macedonian and Leo the Sophos forced Jews to convert or to be exiled. One of the few emperors who treated the Jews favorably was Alexios I Komnenos, who during the First Crusade, lightened their burdensome taxes.

Despite the persecution suffered during the Byzantine period, the Jewish community of Thessaloniki flourished. Most of the Jews were traders, particularly involved in the silk trade. In 1165 AD, the well-known Jewish traveler Benjamin of Tudela visited Salonica and reported that at that time there was a prosperous community of 500 Jews, including the Chief Rabbi Samuel and his sons who were scholars. However, the suffering of the Jews continued during the Latin Empire, established by the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade (1204-1261 AD) and later under the rule of Theodoros Doukas, Despot of Epirus, who controlled Thessaloniki from 1224-1230 AD.<sup>3</sup>

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries many Jews were expelled from Spain, Portugal, Sicily, France and North Africa, and settled in Thessaloniki. The majority of them, approximately 20,000 individuals, arrived in Thessaloniki in 1492 CE, and established separate synagogues. These synagogues were named after the cities or regions from which they had come, such as Castile, Calabria, Catalonia, Aragon, Majorca, Lisbon, Sicily, Apulia, Provence, and others. By the mid-16th century, Thessaloniki had emerged as a major Jewish center in Europe, attracting Jews who had been persecuted elsewhere. Thessaloniki eventually became home to around 30 independent synagogues. In the mid-16th century, a center of Talmud Torah was established, initially serving as a religious school, and later evolving into a common administrative center for the city's diverse Jewish congregations.

<sup>2</sup> Yakov Benmayor, "The Jews of Thessaloniki," Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, <http://www.jmth.gr/article-20032014-oi-evraioi-tis-thessalonikis>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Thessaloniki became a renowned center of Torah learning, attracting students from across the Jewish world. The city was home to many prominent rabbis whose influence extended far beyond its borders. This vibrant and intellectually rich Jewish community came to define the character of Ottoman Thessaloniki, earning the city the distinction of being widely known as the “Jerusalem of the Balkans.” During the Ottoman period, especially from 1492-1912 AD, when Thessaloniki’s Jewish Community was the largest in the world, the city was known as “*Madre de Israel*” (Mother of Israel) to its Spanish Jewish residents and as the “Jerusalem of the Balkans” to non-Jews.<sup>4</sup> Thessaloniki had the largest Jewish population in the Balkans, most of whom were descendants of Jews who were expelled from Spain in the sixteenth century. They still spoke a form of Spanish known as Ladino or Judeo-Spanish (*Espanyol, Espanyol, inter alia or maestro casteyno*) and is based on Spanish (*Castilian*) and other Iberian languages preceding the Expulsion from Spain in 1492 AD, which from the onset included a strong Hebrew-Aramaic component.

According to Rena Molho: “Fallmerayer who visited Salonica in 1842, suggested it should be named Samaria, given that at the time there were 36,000 Jews among the 70,000 inhabitants. According to a Greek schoolbook of 1882 (G.K. Moraitopoulos), in 1870 Salonica’s population consisted of 50,000 Jews, 22,000 Muslims and 18,000 Orthodox Christians. In the first census conducted by the Ottoman government between 1882-1884, the city’s population numbered 85,000 inhabitants, among which 48,000 were Jews. But even in 1902, when the population increased, the second Ottoman census once again showed that among the 126,000 inhabitants, 62,000 were Jews. According to the first unpublished census conducted by the Greek government in 1913, the Jews represented less than 50% of the population, even though they remained the largest single group. It was reported that in a population of 157,889 souls, 61,439 were Jews, 45,889 were Muslims and 49,956 were Greek Orthodox Christians. There was also a small number of Bulgarians, Levantines and Armenians. Finally, as was reported in the newspaper *L’Independant* in 1919, in the census conducted by the Jewish Community after the Great Fire in 1917, in a population of 170,000 souls Salonica numbered 90,000 Jews. Salonica’s particularity during this time is better comprehended when compared with the 31 Jewish communities of other Greek towns. None had more than 2,500-3,000 members. Furthermore, in other important Ottoman urban centers such as Istanbul or Izmir, the Jews never rose above the 5-10% of the population.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1920, 55 synagogues and places of worship were recorded, with 265 names of religious officials.<sup>6</sup> Before the Holocaust there are records of around 59 historic synagogues and places of worship in Thessaloniki.<sup>7</sup>

Greek Jewish communities suffered from a significant amount of antisemitism; pogroms occurred in Greek cities against three different prewar Jewish neighborhoods, including the 1931 attack on the Jewish community of Campbell (Campbell Affair) in Thessaloniki by Greek Christian nationalists. On June 23, 1931, riots broke out downtown after a mob led by a racist organization attacked Jewish shopkeepers. Further large-scale attacks against Jews took place in the “6” and “151” neighborhoods between 24-27 June 1931, culminating in a wider attack on 29th June. Simultaneously, a mob of around 350 people rioted at the secluded, and predominantly Jewish, Campbell settlement, setting the barracks on fire, killing two men. The next day, the residents of Campbell, as well as other remote Jewish settlements, fled to the center of Thessaloniki, where they were offered accommodation in schools and synagogues. As a result, the Jewish community sold the Campbell settlement to Christian refugees from Turkey.<sup>8</sup> This episode is a strong example of Greek antisemitism in the prewar era.

4 Rena Molho & Hastaoglou-Martinidis, Vilma. *Jewish Sites in Thessaloniki*. Athens: Lycabettus Press, 2017.

5 Rena Molho, “The Jerusalem of the Balkans Salonica 1856-1919,” Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, [http://www.jmth.gr/cpanel/resources/rs\\_html/The%20Jerusalem%20of%20the%20Balkans%20by%20Dr.%20Rena%20Molho.PDF](http://www.jmth.gr/cpanel/resources/rs_html/The%20Jerusalem%20of%20the%20Balkans%20by%20Dr.%20Rena%20Molho.PDF).

6 Evangelos Hekimoglou (ed.), *Topography of Synagogues in Salonika* (1500-1940), Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki 2022.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

## World War II and the Holocaust of Greek Jews

One of the most traumatic events for Greek Jews during the Holocaust was known as the “Black Sabbath” in Thessaloniki.<sup>9</sup> In early July 1942, the Germans issued an order summoning all Jewish males aged 18–45 to assemble in Plateia Eleftherias (Freedom Square) to be enrolled for forced labor. On Saturday, July 11, 6,000–7,000 Jewish men were packed together and surrounded by soldiers armed with machine guns, who then publicly humiliated them, beating them and spraying them with water. Greek and German onlookers watched the spectacle from the balconies of surrounding buildings. The marginalization of Jews continued in the days that followed, without protest by professional, religious or academic groups. Two days later, the Jewish men were again assembled in Freedom Square, given work cards, and sent into forced labor in the countryside, regardless of their fitness for such work.<sup>10</sup> Many were immediately sent to malaria-stricken areas with very little food, and within ten weeks, 12 percent of those taken had died.<sup>11</sup> Around 2,000 men were sent for forced labor under the German army. By October, 250 had died, and the remaining workers were released after a ransom was paid to Dr. Maximilian Merten, the German military administration’s advisor in Macedonia. The Jewish communities of Thessaloniki and Athens contributed to the ransom, with additional funds raised through the transfer of Thessaloniki’s centuries-old Jewish cemetery to the municipality, which repurposed its gravestones for construction. A university was later built on the site of the destroyed cemetery.<sup>12</sup>

Another significant event was the destruction of the largest Jewish cemetery in the Balkans, located in Thessaloniki before the Holocaust.<sup>13</sup> In December 1942, this ancient cemetery, containing nearly 500,000 graves, dating back to at least the fifteenth century, was expropriated and became a quarry for the entire city. Tombstones of immense historical significance were removed indiscriminately, regardless of their age, and until recently, many could still be found repurposed as paving stones throughout the city. The demolition began on December 9, 1942, coinciding with the replacement of the Jewish community’s leadership by officials appointed by German authorities. The demolition was overseen by the General Administration of Macedonia, and continued until at least April 1943, due to the vast number of graves involved. According to municipal archives, the General Administration of Macedonia made the building materials gleaned from the demolition available for a variety of functions in Thessaloniki (school toilets, roads and churches). The strategy of utilizing demolition materials in other projects continued after the Occupation, the most significant example of which was the construction of the church of Saint Dimitrios, completed in 1948. In November 1943, the Occupation government issued an illegal administrative decree designating the Jewish cemetery as “municipal land.” Subsequently, in April 1945, the Council of Ministers enacted a resolution transferring this so-called municipal land to the University of Thessaloniki, on which the university campus was eventually constructed.<sup>14</sup>

In December 1942, a *Judenrat*, or Jewish council, was established in Thessaloniki, with Dr. Zvi Koretz, the city’s Chief Rabbi, appointed as president. He represented the Jewish community in negotiations with SS officers Dieter Wisliceny and Alois Brunner, who had been sent by Adolf Eichmann in February 1943 to supervise the deportation of Thessaloniki’s Jews. On February 6, 1943, a commission headed by Dieter Wisliceny and Alois Brunner arrived in Thessaloniki to enforce racial laws, such as the requirement for all Jews to wear the yellow Star of David, and mark their shops and offices similarly. A number of Jewish areas were designated as restricted zones, forcing Jews to live in ghettos. Jews were forbidden from being outside after nightfall, using the telephone, or riding the tram; any Jew who changed residence without permission was treated as a deserter and shot on sight.

9 Giorgos Antoniou & Dirk Moses (eds.). *The Holocaust in Greece*, London: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

10 Evangelos Hekimoglou, *The Book*, Thessaloniki: Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, 2017.

11 Benmayor, “The Jews of Thessaloniki”.

12 “Salonika” <https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/about/05991>

13 Leon Saltiel, *The Holocaust in Thessaloniki: Reactions to the Anti-Jewish Persecution, 1942–1943*, London: Routledge, 2021.

14 Hekimoglou, *The Book*.

Between March 15 and August 10, 1943, 19 trains carrying 48,533 Thessalonikian Jews, arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau.<sup>15</sup> The nineteenth train to Auschwitz-Birkenau carried laborers who had been transported to other locations and had survived. Most of the new arrivals were immediately gassed; 37,386 Greek Jews were led to the gas chambers upon arrival. Of the 1,200 who survived the initial selections, later died. Some of the women were used as subjects for pseudo-scientific sterilization experiments (see also Selection and Medical Experiments). Some Thessalonikian Jews were spared, particularly those holding foreign passports—Spanish, Italian, Turkish, or otherwise. This included 367 Jews granted Spanish citizenship who reached Spain via Bergen-Belsen, as well as several hundred aided by the Italian government, either through escape to Italian-occupied territory or by receiving Italian citizenship. These actions created tensions between the Italians and their German allies. In addition, some Thessalonikian Jews managed to reach Palestine with the help of Partisans.<sup>16</sup>

Professor Christina Koulouri explains that when anti-Jewish measures were introduced in Greece, various groups, including the Church, the Athens Police, and communist organizations, played active roles in helping Jewish citizens. The EAM, Greece's largest resistance organization, was particularly effective, publishing appeals for solidarity, helping Jews go into hiding or escape to the Middle East, and even recruiting them into its ranks. The Orthodox Church also intervened; Archbishop Damaskinos protested directly to the German authorities about the deportations in Thessaloniki.

Koulouri notes that Jewish survival rates varied depending on proximity to areas controlled by the Resistance, the strength of local anti-fascist movements, and levels of assimilation within Greek society. Jews who were more integrated, Greek-speaking and living among Orthodox neighbors, had a greater chance of receiving help. By contrast, the Jewish community of Thessaloniki, the largest in Greece and largely Ladino-speaking, suffered catastrophic losses, with most deported to Auschwitz. Ultimately, only about 17 percent of Greece's prewar Jewish population survived the Holocaust.<sup>17</sup>

Around 50 years earlier, Baron de Hirsch had funded housing near the railway station for Jewish refugees from Russian pogroms. On March 14, residents of the Hirsch quarter were ordered to gather in the synagogue, where Rabbi Koretz informed them of their deportation to Poland. The next day, they were marched to the station and packed into sealed train cars, overloaded beyond capacity. With the area emptied, it was prepared to receive the next group. In the following months, more convoys of Jews from various neighborhoods in Thessaloniki were sent to the Auschwitz and Birkenau extermination camps. The last convoy departed on August 7, 1943. A total of 43,850 Jews, representing 95 percent of Thessaloniki's Jewish population, were deported during these months. Only a small number of Jews from Thessaloniki found refuge in the surrounding countryside, with some joining the resistance, or in Athens, where a notable portion of the Jewish population was saved with the support of the Christian community.

15 Evangelos Hekimoglou, "The Chronicle of Thessaloniki Persecution," blogpost, <https://thefirsttraintoauschwitz.blogspot.com/p/the-chronicleof-thessaloniki.html>

16 "Salonika" <https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/about/05991>

17 Christina Koulouri, *Teaching modern Southeast European History. Alternative educational materials. Workbook 4 the Second World War, Thessaloniki*: Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), 2009, 101-102.

When Thessaloniki was reoccupied by Greek and Allied forces in October 1944, only a handful of Jews returned to their ancestral city. Most of their homes had been occupied, their belongings stolen and synagogues destroyed or repurposed. The ancient Jewish cemetery had been used as a marble quarry. From the outset, the reconstituted Jewish community, along with the affected individuals, focused on reclaiming shops and workshops that had been placed under the control of trustees appointed by either the German occupiers or the Occupation authorities. Two obstacles hindered progress in achieving this goal, and though they emerged consecutively they were nonetheless interconnected. The first obstacle was political: the reluctance of post-Occupation governments to confront the trustees, which allowed for continuous postponement. The second obstacle was the complexity of the legal framework; relevant applications referenced numerous interlocking laws that disproportionately disadvantaged Jewish owners or tenants. Even the simplest claim, constrained by space limitations, became entangled in excessive legal complexity and, consequently, incurred significant expenses.<sup>18</sup>

### Greek Jewish communities in the 20th and 21st centuries

Before the war, there were multiple Greek cities with Jewish populations, including Agrinio, Athens, Alexandroupoli, Arta, Veria, Volos, Didymoteicho, Drama, Zakynthos, Heraklion, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Kavala, Karditsa, Kastoria, Corfu, Komotini, Kos, Lagadas, Larissa, Nea Orestiada, Xanthi, Patras, Preveza, Rethymno, Rhodes, Serres, Trikala, Florina, Chalkida, and Chania. According to Greek law, Jewish communities are recognized in cities where more than twenty Jewish families reside. However, the above list includes cities where Jews did not legally constitute a community, due to the fact that fewer than 20 Jews reside in these cities.<sup>19</sup> Under Law 2456/1920 on Jewish communities, the Jewish community of Thessaloniki was granted the status of a public legal entity. The Community was structured around autonomous synagogue committees, independently administered foundations, an elected central board, an executive body, and a supporting administrative apparatus. During the interwar period, providing food and shelter to the poor were the main concerns of the Jewish community, an issue that arose after the city was rebuilt according to a new city plan following the great fire of 1917.

After the Holocaust and the mass murder of 65,000 Greek Jews in the death camps—mainly in Auschwitz—as well as the emigration of many survivors to Israel, the number of Greek citizens of the Jewish faith has significantly decreased, with the majority now residing in Athens. Cities containing a Jewish population after the war included Agrinio (not recognized as a community since it consisted of only thirty-two members), Athens, Arta, Veria, Volos, Didymoteicho, Drama, Zakynthos, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Kavala, Karditsa, Kastoria, Katerini, Corfu, Komotini, Larissa, Nea Orestiada, Xanthi, Patras, Preveza, Trikala, Florina, Chania (with very few members), and Chalkida. As of 2015, active Jewish communities in Greece include Athens, Thessaloniki, Volos, Ioannina, Corfu, Larissa, Trikala, and Chalkida. Inactive Jewish communities (with fewer than twenty families) include Veria, Kavala, Karditsa, and Rhodes. Today, the Jewish population of Greece is approximately 5,500. They are active in the private sector, sciences, arts, literature, and public administration, and are organized into eight Jewish communities located in Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissa, Volos, Chalkida, Ioannina, Trikala, and Corfu. Small numbers also reside in the inactive communities of Rhodes and Karditsa.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the following Greek Jewish communities were dissolved:

- Agrinio (Year of Dissolution: ~1949)
- Alexandroupoli (Year of Dissolution: 1972)
- Arta (Year of Dissolution: 1959)

<sup>18</sup> Evangelos Hekimoglou & Anna-Maria Droumpouki, *The Day After Holocaust*, Thessaloniki: Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Moses K. Konstantin, *The Israelite Communities of Greece After the Holocaust: From the reports of Kanaris D. Konstantinis – 1945*, Athens, 2015.

- Didymoteicho (Year of Dissolution: 1987)
- Drama (Year of Dissolution: 1970)
- Zakynthos (Year of Dissolution: 1970)
- Heraklion (Year of Dissolution: 1968)
- Kastoria (Year of Dissolution: 1972)
- Komotini (Year of Dissolution: 1958)
- Kos (Year of Dissolution: 1970)
- Lagadas (Year of Dissolution: 1958)
- Nea Orestiada (Year of Dissolution: 1970)
- Xanthi (Year of Dissolution: 1958)
- Patras (Year of Dissolution: 1991)
- Preveza (Year of Dissolution: 1958)
- Rethymno (Year of Dissolution: 1958)
- Serres (Year of Dissolution: 1957)
- Florina (Year of Dissolution: 1970)
- Chania (Year of Dissolution: 1958)

In the currently active communities, 11 synagogues operate to serve the religious needs of their members. In Athens, there are two synagogues; in Thessaloniki, three; in Larissa, one; in Volos, one; in Ioannina, one; in Trikala, one; in Chalkida, one; and in Corfu, one. In the inactive communities, three synagogues remain in operation in Rhodes, Kavala, and Veria. In Crete, the only functioning synagogue is the ‘Etz Hayyim’ Synagogue in Chania.

## Overview of Education System and Curriculum

In Greece, official teaching guidelines are defined by the national curriculum and corresponding school textbooks. Textbooks are developed and utilized in alignment with the curriculum’s objectives.<sup>20</sup> The term “curriculum” encompasses both traditional curricula, characterized by greater stability and longevity, with slower processes of renewal, and modern curricula, which feature more clearly defined components and allow for ongoing updates and improvements.<sup>21</sup>

The body responsible for curriculum development is the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP).<sup>22</sup> The department’s responsibilities include the study of various materials and data related to the operation of the educational system, as well as the issuance of opinions on the implementation of corresponding research and educational programs

20 Panagiotis Xochelis (ed.), *The Dictionary of Pedagogy*, Thessaloniki: Kiriakidis Editions, 2015.

21 Giannis Vrettos & Achilleas Kapsalis, *Curricula: Theory and Expertise in Design and Reform*, Thessaloniki: Art of Text, 1994.

22 This is an executive, scientific, and research organization that supports the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, and Sports, as well as the supervised bodies, on matters related to primary and secondary education, teacher training, the transition from secondary to higher education, post-secondary education, the reduction of educational inequalities, student dropout rates, and early school leaving—all aiming to ensure every child’s right to education. It issues opinion or proposes upon related query on the part of the Minister of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports or ex officio according to the law in force 3966/2011 (art. 2, par. 3, line a). Section B: Study Curricula and Educational Material belongs to the Scientific Section of IEP and engages with the elaboration of opinions and recommendations in accordance with the provisions in force, for the training and enhancement of study curricula and educational material regarding primary and secondary education. It particularly focuses on issues pertaining to: a. Primary Education b. Humanities and Social Sciences c. Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology d. The Arts, and e. Vocational Education.

in primary and secondary educational structures. Topics related to Jewish history and culture are addressed across various subjects within the curriculum. However, the primary subject in which the history of Jewish communities in Greece is specifically examined is the history course.

Research into Greek education has generally concentrated on textbooks of subjects considered particularly relevant for conveying ideological content to students, notably History, Language, and Literature. The first phase of analyzing Greek history textbooks at an academic research level was conducted by national institutions, such as the Research Center for Schoolbooks and Intercultural Education of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, which has been integrated into UNESCO's international network, and international organizations, such as the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe. The focus of the analysis is on the representation of the "Other," as history textbooks are considered to be reflective of official state diplomacy and international relations. After the 1980s, research began to focus on ethnocentrism and its consequences, such as prejudice against the "Other," and the narrative frameworks through which the national self is presented to students.

The second phase of academic analysis of History textbooks began in the 2000s when textbooks underwent changes.<sup>23</sup> This second phase encompasses the full range of subjects, learning objectives, content, instructional methodologies, and assessment practices applied at a specific level of education. The newer textbooks were more modern and engaging for students, incorporating multimodal texts, images, photographs, cartoons, works of art, advertisements, graphs, and more. Additionally, prejudice, bias, stereotyping, and images of the "Other" are central themes examined by Greek research. Particularly, the investigation of the image of the "Other" and its presentation in textbooks has become the most popular thematic focus. A significant development in the study and research of Greek school textbooks was the establishment of the Department of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in 1992, initiated by Professor Panagiotis Xochelis. This led to the creation of the School Textbook Research Unit, which later became the Center for Research on School Textbooks and Intercultural Education (K.E.S.B.I.D.E.).<sup>24</sup>

History curricula provide the institutional framework within which primary and secondary History lessons must be developed. More specifically, History curricula and textbooks were reproduced with minor variations during the post-dictatorship period (the dictatorship of the Colonels lasted from 1967 to 1974), with the edition of the 1980s being a characteristic example. Significant attempts were made by scientific writing teams during the 1990s and 2000s to present alternative educational approaches. In April 2024, the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs issued a Call for Expression of Interest for applications to participate in the evaluation and inclusion process of educational books in the Educational Books Registry and the Digital Library of Educational Books.<sup>25</sup> This initiative, undertaken by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Institute of Educational Policy, represents a significant step forward in improving the quality and relevance of educational materials.

The 2025–2026 school year will commence with substantial reforms in curriculum content, textbooks, and instructional practices, as outlined in the strategic planning of the Ministry of Education. As of September 2025, a considerable number of approved textbooks will be made digitally accessible to students via the Digital Library, while the distribution of printed materials has been deferred to the 2026–2027 academic year.

23 The term "*curriculum*" in the context of school education refers to the structured framework of educational planning and implementation.

24 Kyriakos Bonidis, *The Content of School Textbooks as an Object of Research Long-Term Examination of Related Research and Methodological Approaches*, Athens: Metaixmio editions, 2004.

25 The project's scope is as follows: a) The creation of the Educational Books Registry (E.B.R.) in accordance with Article 84 of Law 4823/2021. This registry will include all educational books that have been previously evaluated and approved by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, based on the recommendations of the Institute of Educational Policy b) The development of the Digital Library of Educational Books as specified in Article 84 of Law 4823/2021.

The proposed model grants educators the autonomy to select, for each subject, the instructional package (including student textbook, workbook, and digital resources) they deem most pedagogically appropriate. The new model is predicated on the availability of multiple approved instructional packages per subject, comprising:

- Student textbook
- Workbook
- Digital materials and resources

Educators will exercise professional discretion in selecting the package they deem most appropriate for their classroom context. This selection will be formally documented in the Teaching Books Registry. A total of 187 new book titles are planned to be published, spanning from Kindergarten through Grade 10 of *Lyceum* (high school).

According to Greek academic professors in History Didactics, the educational system in Greece remains centralized and tightly controlled by political actors. Over the past twenty years, public disputes over school textbooks and History curricula have intensified, becoming arenas for the most extreme ideological impulses.<sup>26</sup> Many school textbooks and readers have been withdrawn from Greek schools over the past 100 years, sparking intense debates in the public sphere. Leading educators have highlighted, through their research, the necessity of adapting education to the model societies of Western Europe by authoring new textbooks. Experts in the field advocate for the necessity of removing nationalism, xenophobia, social conservatism, dogmatic thinking, and moral indoctrination from education.

According to Greek historian Aggelos Palikidis, Associate Professor in History Didactics at the Department of History and Ethnology of Democritus University of Thrace in Greece, claims that the idea of a historically uniform Greek nation is one of the most significant distortions in school history education.<sup>27</sup> The Professor claims that textbooks often present a single, heroic national narrative stretching unbroken from antiquity to the present, celebrating a people who have endured through triumph and tragedy. However, he argues that this portrayal fosters exclusionary attitudes, encouraging the belief that defending a “pure” and eternal nation requires opposition to outsiders, refugees, immigrants, and non-believers. It also denies Greece’s long history of multicultural coexistence and exchange, which were central to its cultural development. The myth of unity portrays the nation as strong when united and weak when divided, leading to the rejection of ethnic, cultural, or religious diversity. In politically tense moments, even differing opinions or ideological dissent may be branded as unpatriotic, dividing citizens into patriots and supposed traitors.<sup>28</sup>

### **Government mandate of commemorating and teaching about the Holocaust**

The integration of Jewish history into public education in Greece occurred with considerable delay, as the inclusion of local Jewish history and the Holocaust in school textbooks had been virtually non-existent. In recent years, the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports—specifically the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs—has implemented significant educational changes to improve Holocaust education. These initiatives include specialized seminars and training programs, primarily in collaboration with the

26 Charis Athanasiadis, *The Withdrawn Books: Nation and School History in Greece 1858–2008*. Athens: Alexandria Publishing.

27 Aggelos Palikidis, “Five Harmful Stereotypes,” *To Vima News*, Aug. 31, 2023.  
<https://www.tovima.gr/print/nees-epoxes/pente-vlaptika-stereotypa>.

28 *Ibid.*

Jewish Museum of Greece in Athens. The General Secretariat for Religious Affairs, led by George Kalantzis, is responsible not only for Holocaust and genocide education but also for initiatives supporting religious freedom and fostering interfaith relations.

Since the 1990s, the Holocaust has gradually been incorporated into the history curriculum of Western countries. In Greece, the Holocaust is included in the teaching of World War II, with references—though very brief and problematic in relation to historical accuracy—in Language and History textbooks for Grade 6 of primary education; Religious Education in Grade 7 of secondary education, Modern Greek Literature texts in Grade 8 of secondary education; Modern Greek Language and History in Grade 9 of Secondary Education. In high school, references appear in Grade 9 History of the Modern and Contemporary World (General Education) of general high school. The approach to the Holocaust follows a pedagogical rationale directly related to the primary objectives of teaching history: political socialization, strengthening democratic consciousness, defending human rights, and cultivating critical thinking. Therefore, it is considered necessary not only to inform educators about this historical issue but also to provide them with continuous training in epistemology, historical science, specialized teaching methodology, and education sciences.

By Law 3218/2004, January 27 was established as the ‘Day of Remembrance for the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust.’ To corroborate this, in 2005, Presidential Decree 31 was issued, titled “Events for January 27th, Day of Remembrance for the Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust.” The first Holocaust Remembrance Day in Greece took place on January 27, 2005. Additional teacher training projects on the subject were prepared for 2006 in partnership with France and Israel. Poland suggested the preparation of a national school essay competition for schools on the Holocaust, modeled after a similar successful event organized in Poland by the National In-service teacher Training Center under the honorary patronage of the Polish Ministry of National Education in 2004 and 2005. The International Task Force on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) designed an educational resource that includes the following sections: a) Why teach about the Holocaust b) Guidelines for teaching the Holocaust (Shoah) c) Guidelines for educational visits to Holocaust-related sites d) How to approach the Holocaust in schools. This material has been translated by the Jewish Museum of Greece and is available along with audiovisual materials and museum kits.<sup>29</sup>

The teaching methods and content for Holocaust education in Greece were approved in 2006 by the ITF as part of Greece’s accession.<sup>30</sup> As a result, new textbooks that included more information about the Holocaust became available in 2006.<sup>31</sup> The teaching of local Jewish history and the Holocaust is primarily integrated into the instruction of World War II. Historically, school textbooks across all educational levels (Grade 6 of primary school, Grade 9 of junior high school, and Grade 12 of high school) have included problematic references related to this historical period. A notable example is the History textbook used during the 2006-2007 school year for Grade 6 of primary school. While the book was pedagogically innovative for Greek primary education, its treatment of the Holocaust was generally problematic, through equating historical events of differing significance and presenting confusing narratives regarding historical terminology related to the Holocaust.

29 Sakka & Kokkinos, “Curricula and Approaches”.

30 The Polish Chair of the ITF, which Poland chaired from March 2005 to March 2006, acknowledged the significant progress already achieved in Greece, particularly in the areas of teacher training and the revision of school textbooks.

31 For the official announcement-invitation for the writing and submission of school textbooks (published in Greek on Apr. 25, 2023) see [https://iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/GENERAL/Anakoinoseis/2023/2023\\_04\\_25-%CE%A0%CF%81%CE%BF%CC%81%CF%83%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B7\\_%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BB%CE%B1%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85CC%81\\_B%CE%B9%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%B9%CC%81%CE%BF%CF%85.pdf](https://iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/GENERAL/Anakoinoseis/2023/2023_04_25-%CE%A0%CF%81%CE%BF%CC%81%CF%83%CE%BA%CE%BB%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B7_%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BB%CE%B1%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%85CC%81_B%CE%B9%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%B9%CC%81%CE%BF%CF%85.pdf).

There are multiple internal timelines for the development, evaluation, and publication of school textbooks (both digital and printed). See “Multiple book: Internal IEP timetables” [in Greek], ESOS, Feb. 19, 2025.

<https://www.esos.gr/arthra/92107/pollaplo-biblioesterika-hronodiagrammata-toy-iep>.

In 2014, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs and the Jewish Museum of Greece, while in 2017, a Tripartite Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, the Jewish Museum of Greece, and the Yad Vashem Foundation. Within the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Jewish Museum of Greece, Ministerial Decision 42856/02/14-3-2018 titled “Student Competition – Educational Program for Teaching the Memory of the Holocaust in Greece” was published, which was later replaced by Joint Ministerial Decision 149452/02/3-11-2020 on the same subject. The protocol of circular 8481/02/25-01-2021 from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is sent every year to the schools across the country for Holocaust Remembrance Day, requesting that two school hours be dedicated to related events and activities. The General Secretariat for Religious Affairs collaborates with UNESCO, the *Mémorial de la Shoah*, the *Maison d’Izieu*, the Holocaust Memorial Center for the Jews, Centropa, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the EVZ Foundation, the *Yahad – In Unum* Organization and other international organizations to conduct seminars on Holocaust education and combating antisemitism.

The initiatives undertaken by the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs to raise awareness of antisemitism within the school community are of great importance, including film screenings and the offering of scholarships in cooperation with the Olga Lengyel Institute for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights (TOLI).

### **Legislation and partnerships for extra-curricular activities**

The Hellenic Parliament, through Law 3218/2004 (Presidential Decree 31/05, Official Gazette A' 12), established January 27 as the ‘Day of Remembrance for Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust.’ Additionally, during the twentieth session of the Permanent Conference of Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe, which took place from October 15-17, 2000, in Krakow, the proposal was adopted for the institutionalization of a Day of Remembrance for the Holocaust and the Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity in schools (Article 9 of the Ministers’ Declaration). Since 2004, it has been commemorated annually on January 27, in conjunction with Holocaust Memorial Day, to honor the memory of the thousands of Greek Jews who perished in Nazi concentration camps and to recognize the bravery of Greek Christians who, at great personal risk during the occupation of Greece, saved many Jewish fellow citizens from certain death. By directive of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs, the commemoration of January 27 is observed in schools.

Since 2005, Greece has been a member of the International Organization for the Cooperation, Study, Memory, and Research of the Holocaust, under the auspices of the United Nations, and is, therefore, required to adopt relevant practices. Furthermore, in 2005 Greece became a full member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), an intergovernmental organization with 35 Member Countries.<sup>32</sup> Greece’s membership highlights its determination to honor the martyrdom and sacrifice of thousands of Jewish Greeks in the Holocaust and is the springboard for a more thorough understanding of the past.

The first Greek educational seminar on the Holocaust was organized in 2004 in Athens by the Jewish Museum of Greece under the auspices of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. The educational seminars organized by the Jewish Museum of Greece have become an institution, extending to many cities across Greece, with the aim of highlighting local Jewish history. The thirtieth seminar of the Jewish Museum of Greece, and the inaugural seminar for librarians and archivists, titled “Deconstructing Antisemitic Myths in Europe: Jewish Communities in Greece, Germany, Poland, Serbia,” was held in Athens in 2022. The first seminar for Greek

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<sup>32</sup> “Greece”, IHRA, <https://Holocaustremembrance.com/countries/greece>.

educators organized by Yad Vashem took place in 2006, with a total of eighteen educators participating.<sup>33</sup> It should be noted that the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki conducts annual seminars for educators regarding the approach to local Jewish history and the Holocaust.<sup>34</sup>

In 2005, an annual memorandum was issued to the Regional Education Directorates across Greece entitled: “Day for the Remembrance of the Holocaust and the Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity.” Based on another relevant memorandum, issued on the Day of Remembrance for the “Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust,” the Ministry of Education called on schools to conduct events and educational activities for two educational/teaching hours. The objective of the events and activities was to educate students about the Holocaust, and included dialogue discussions, exhibitions, film screenings, or related educational materials, and the reading of texts and essays. These activities aim to:

- Enable students to understand what occurred during World War II in Greece and Europe.
- Educate them about the fate of the Jews and other Holocaust victims, using historical studies, photographs, and testimonies.
- Facilitate discussions on the ethical issues arising from the event and its connection to contemporary problems such as racism, human rights violations in modern societies, hate speech, and antisemitism.

On the Day of Remembrance for Greek Jewish Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust in 2006, the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs announced a National Student Essay Competition for high schools across the country. The theme of the competition was “Greek Jews and the Significance of Holocaust Remembrance.”<sup>35</sup> The same year, the Jewish Museum of Greece, in collaboration with Yad Vashem and the OSCE (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), presented guidelines for educators titled *Preparing Holocaust Memorial Days*.<sup>36</sup>

For the eleventh consecutive year, the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and Sports, in collaboration with the Jewish Museum of Greece, is organizing a student competition and educational program in remembrance of the Holocaust. For the 2024–2025 school year, the student short film (video) competition is themed “The Holocaust in the Collective Memory of the Greeks” and, for the first time, will also be held simultaneously in Cyprus.<sup>37</sup>

33 Jewish Museum.gr “Education portal”.

<https://education.jewishmuseum.gr/en/category/education/Holocaust-education/seminars-for-teachers/in-athens/>

34 Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.gr “Seminars for educators”.

<http://www.jmth.gr/page-seminaria>

35 Jewish Museum.gr “Education portal”.

<https://education.jewishmuseum.gr/mathitikos-diagonismos-dimiourgias-vinteo-me-thema-to-olokaftoma-2023-2024/>

36 In a virtual ceremony marking Greece’s assumption of the presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) for one year in 2021, the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Niki Kerameos, delivered a message emphasizing the preservation of Holocaust memory, unity, and the fight against intolerance and anti-Semitism. The ceremony was also attended by greetings from the Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the Deputy Prime Minister, Panagiotis Pikrammenos, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikos Dendias, and the new IHRA President, Ambassador Christodoulos Lazarides. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)—of which Greece has been a full member since 2005—issued a Manual in 2019 titled “Guidelines and Suggestions for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust.” The Ministry of Education has completed its translation into Greek and will make it available to the public shortly (source: <https://www.minedu.gov.gr/>).

37 This is being conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Cyprus, based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed on February 27, 2024, between the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports (General Secretariat for Religious Affairs) of the Hellenic Republic, the Church of Greece, the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, the Jewish Museum of Greece, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus, and the Church of Cyprus.

[https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2023/%CE%95%CE%9E%CE%95\\_-\\_143643\\_-\\_2024\\_.pdf](https://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2023/%CE%95%CE%9E%CE%95_-_143643_-_2024_.pdf)

In 2024, the non-profit historical institute, Centropa, actively organized professional development seminars and educational programs in Greece, specifically in Thessaloniki, involving Greek educators and focusing on Jewish history and culture in Greece. For example, Centropa held its thirteenth professional development seminar for Israeli and European Jewish schools in Thessaloniki in June 2024, where Greek educators participated and collaborated on cross-border educational projects. These seminars are described as fostering partnerships among educators and schools.<sup>38</sup>

Since 2017, the Olga Lengyel Institute (TOLI) has held annual seminars in Greece for 30–40 teachers, focusing on Holocaust and human rights education in collaboration with the Jewish Museum of Greece and under the Ministry of Education's auspices. These seminars emphasize unpacking identity, confronting prejudice, and exploring historical contexts such as the Jewish presence in Greece and the Holocaust. Through survivor testimonies, guided museum tours, and collaborative development of teaching methods, participants engage in reflective and experiential learning. The seminars balance emotional and cognitive learning, aiming to empower teachers with practical action plans and a supportive network to promote Holocaust and human rights education, grounded in a holistic, human rights-based pedagogical approach.<sup>39</sup>

More recently, in 2024, the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs coordinated with Diplomatic and Historical Archives Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and developed a program on the Holocaust in collaboration with the Arolsen Archives through the #StolenMemory campaign. Its aim is to locate the descendants of seven Greek prisoners who were held in the Neuengamme concentration camp, in order to return personal belongings of their ancestors that are preserved in the Arolsen Archives. In June 2024, eight envelopes containing the personal belongings of Greek victims of Nazi were given to their descendants.<sup>40</sup> These events are demonstrative of efforts to entrench Holocaust education in Greek society.

## Main Findings

The central question of this piece of research is whether, and to what extent, local Jewish history and the Holocaust are addressed and taught in primary and secondary education in Greece. Additionally, it explores how increased public engagement with this subject in Greece has influenced education, students' knowledge of the topic, their historical empathy, and political education. Essentially, the study examines how the public history of the Holocaust of Greek Jews interacts with historical culture and collective memory through its educational approach.

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38 Centropa Jewish Network, "CJN seminar in Thessaloniki (2024)", CJN, <https://cjn.centropa.org/seminars/professional-development-seminar-in-thessaloniki-greece/>

39 The Olga Lengyel Institute, "Greece", TOLI, <https://www.toli.us/teachers/international-seminars/greece/TOLIhasorganizedyearlyHolocaustMinistryEducationinGreece>.

40 "First mementoes returned to Greek family," #StolenMemory, June 28, 2024 <https://www.stolenmemory.org/en/mementoes-returned-to-greek-family/>.

In Greek schools, a two-hour session is dedicated to the commemoration and understanding of the Holocaust, with the objective of fortifying democratic values and humanitarian ideals. Activities for the Day of Remembrance may include discussions, digital exhibitions and applications, film screenings, the use of educational materials, and reading of texts or essays. Educators, in collaboration with school administrators, may design their activities in a way they deem appropriate. This practice originates from a decision made by the Education Ministers of the Council of Europe at the conference in 2000, where the teaching of the Holocaust was a focal point. However, recent research highlights the importance of examining how Greek educators perceive and implement these educational practices, and what their actual impact is in schools.<sup>41</sup> It is significant that institutional validation of the Holocaust has been achieved, ensuring that the inclusion of Jewish history is formally integrated into the Greek educational system.

More specifically, regarding the teaching of local Jewish history, Judaism, the Holocaust, antisemitism, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the following general conclusions can be drawn:

### **Jews and Judaism**

Where Judaism is explicitly referenced in Religious Education textbooks and more specifically, in Primary School (Grade 6) and in Junior High School (Grade 9), the material is very thorough and informative. The texts incorporate numerous references to Judaism's sacred texts, the development of worship practices (for instance, prayer and the Sabbath practices), the synagogue, holidays, beliefs, and figures. The Jewish faith is examined through extensive citations from religious sources, providing students with a substantial amount of information about various religio-political and social aspects. Renowned Jewish figures, such as the first century historian Josephus Flavius and the famous twentieth century philosopher Martin Buber, are presented.

Many Greek textbooks engage meaningfully with Judaism, offering students a broad understanding of its history, traditions, and continuing significance. Jewish festivals such as Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot, Purim, and Hanukkah are explained in detail, often highlighting family rituals like the Passover *Seder* in Religious Studies textbooks. One example presents a visual of a *Seder* plate, and an explanation of the "Four Questions" showing how Jewish families transmit memory and identity through ritual. Students are introduced to central practices like Shabbat, as well as to key elements of Jewish heritage such as the Ten Commandments, the Torah, and the Covenant with God. The curriculum also acknowledges the historic and enduring importance of Jerusalem, describing King David's establishment of the city as Israel's capital and King Solomon's building of the Temple.

Sacred sites such as the Western Wall are presented alongside those of Islam, helping students appreciate the shared and overlapping significance of holy places, and the importance of Jerusalem in Jewish belief and thought. Importantly, the texts make distinctions between terms like "Jew," "Israelite," and "Israeli," while recognizing Jewish communities in Greece and the State of Israel today. Altogether, these examples reflect a positive effort to familiarize students with Judaism's rich history, living traditions, and its place within interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

However, there are some misrepresentations in the portrayal of Jews and Judaism. In some cases, Judaism is described in the context of Christianity, rather than as a separate religion. For instance, Jewish Scriptures (i.e., the Old Testament) are primarily discussed in the context of affirming belief in Jesus and serving as a precursor to the New Testament.

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41 Eleftheriou, "The Approach to the Holocaust in Greek Schools and its Place in Public History".

Moreover, local Jewish history is not adequately covered in educational curricula, thus not presenting Jewish contributions to society, and Judaism as a whole, as part of Greek history. For instance, when describing the general role of rabbis or the synagogue in Judaism, no information is given about local synagogues or the Greek rabbinic history. This results in an incomplete understanding of the historical and social context and contributions of Greek Jewish communities in various regions. Students are thus ill-equipped to understand that the Jews of Thessaloniki were not a religious minority in the city, but, in fact, the dominant population group before Thessaloniki's incorporation into the modern Greek state in 1912.

### **The Holocaust and Antisemitism**

The Holocaust as a historical event is mentioned in Grade 6 History textbooks of Primary School, the Grade 9 of Gymnasium, and the Grade 12 of Lyceum. The most informative and detailed account of the Holocaust appears in a Grade 12 Modern History textbook (History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present)). In this interactive History textbook of the Grade 12 of Lyceum, there is a chapter titled: "War Crimes Against Humanity – The Holocaust." In this chapter, the outbreak and course of World War II are examined, along with the extreme acts of violence that followed, and the international response through the Nuremberg Trials. It describes the Holocaust as "one of the most tragic events of World War II" and recognizes the Jews as victims of genocide under the Nazi implementation of the "Final Solution." It also highlights the historical uniqueness of the Holocaust and warns readers that it "must never happen again."

Traumatic events, such as deportations of Jews, including thousands of Greek Jews, to concentration and death camps such as Auschwitz and Dachau are also acknowledged, as are Nazi extermination practices (such as mass executions and use of "Zyklon B" gas). The textbook also gives the total of 70,000 Greek Jewish victims. The experiences of Jewish children in the war are taught to students through the diary of Anne Frank. The textbook also devotes a discussion on the Holocaust and the Nuremberg Trials in the context of war crimes against humanity. There are also useful educational tools, such as a map of significant ghettos, concentration camps and death camps in Europe.

Cases of Greeks saving Jews persecuted by the Nazis are also referenced in the textbook. The Greek Church's protest of the Nazi deportations of Greek Jews is also presented through the account of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens. Another referenced account is that of two Greek officials from Zakynthos, dubbed as "the Island of Justice," for their "unprecedented" achievement of protecting the entire Jewish population of the Island. Textbooks make a concerted effort to highlight cases in which the Greek Church and lay Christians assisted Jews in escaping the Nazis.

However, while Jews are indeed described as the primary victims of genocide, most of the key historical events and pogroms that occurred in Greek cities (such as Thessaloniki), and the experiences of Greek Jewry, are lacking in context and description. For instance, photographs taken in the traumatic "Black Sabbath" events in 1942 are depicted but are not referenced or explained. A History textbook fails to explain the significance of images depicting the 1942 Black Sabbath, when 7–9,000 Jewish men in Thessaloniki were rounded up, humiliated, and beaten, marking the start of their forced labor in Nazi projects. The destruction of the largest Jewish cemetery in the Balkans, located in Thessaloniki before the Holocaust, is also not mentioned in textbooks. In addition, the collaboration between Greek Christians and German Nazis is often absent from the narrative, with some notable exceptions, which instead highlights cases of assistance by Greek Christians and the Greek Church. In addition, a map of the locations of significant ghettos and concentration and death camps in Europe fails to include those located in Greece. When teaching about Auschwitz, textbooks offer no information about thousands of Greek Jews who lost their lives there. For such reasons, the Holocaust remains, perhaps, a story of "others" and is not fully integrated into local and national history.

Furthermore, the concept of “antisemitism” as referring to hostility, prejudice, or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group is not mentioned in any textbook, leading to a lack of awareness about the historical and contemporary forms of antisemitism and their effects on Greek Jewish communities.

### **The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

Until July 2025, a modern Greek high school textbook featured a single reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, framed through an emotionally charged narrative that placed disproportionate blame on Israel. While the text’s stated educational goal was to foster dialogue on peace and war – “we will talk about peace and war, and we will think about how each of us, and all of us together, can work to prevent war and promote peace” – its portrayal of the conflict was skewed. It described Palestinian suffering under Israeli occupation while acknowledging that Palestinian children also perpetuate violence against Jews. However, it failed to contextualize the conflict historically, omitting key milestones such as the Balfour Declaration, the British Mandate, the establishment of Israel, and peace negotiations. The article’s omission of these events led to an oversimplified and biased depiction, neglecting Israel’s internationally recognized rights and presenting a distorted narrative.

The text further violated both ethical and legal standards by depicting children with weapons and linking “Jews” and “Arabs” as monolithic, opposing groups, implicitly holding Jews collectively accountable for Israeli state actions. This violated Greece’s adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Responding to these concerns, the Greek Ministry of Education removed the text and replaced it with an AI-generated article focusing broadly on the psychological effects of war on children, stripped of any reference to specific conflicts.

## **Methodology**

IMPACT-se’s research goal is to provide an accurate and comprehensive assessment of a national system’s school curriculum, by analyzing a large quantity of textbooks using international standards based on UNESCO and UN declarations as well as other international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance. During research, the textbooks are read thoroughly, and individual examples are selected on the basis of relevance to research and criteria. The examples are then analyzed as is, without interpretation or paraphrasing, by trained experts and linguists, in terms of both their content and their didactic significance. Finally, the examples are generalized to establish the examples’ significance in the overall narrative, determining the curriculum’s adherence (or lack thereof) to international standards of peace and tolerance education.

Textbook research is a highly effective means to understand how the “Self” and the “Other” in a given society are conceptualized through educational materials. Two established approaches to qualitative textbook analysis are generally employed: content analysis, which examines the text itself, i.e. what it says in plain terms; and discourse analysis, which examines the language, narrative and context of the text, while paying close attention to omissions, contradictions and assumptions embedded in the text. This latter method provides insight into coded or implicit messaging. Elements of historical, political and religious background are also considered when they are deemed to provide further context. IMPACT-se research uses both methods simultaneously and in a complementary manner, thus allowing to reliably uncover the significance of the text and how it may be perceived by the intended reader, i.e. the student, and minimize the observer bias on the part of the researcher.

The diverse nature of textual analysis necessitates clearly defined scope and parameters. As such, the methods of textual analysis mentioned above are employed with a focus on pre-defined topics and themes. To assess compliance with international educational standards, textbooks are approached with attention to the conceptualization of the “Self” and the “Other” in environments of conflict, and messages involving violence and incitement to violence; hate and intolerance; and peace and peaceful conflict resolution. These issues may be identified with the help of research questions, which serve as suggested leads and prompts for the researcher in exploring the context, aspects, significance and potential ramifications of a specific content example.<sup>42</sup> Also explored are issues that arise from the source material itself, such as culture- or nation-specific issues. For example, the identity of the “Other” differs from one society to another, and in many cases, there are multiple groups of people labeled as such; the “Other” may be ethnic, religious, racial, national, socio-economic, gender, sexual, or any combination of the above. As such, each corpus of textbooks requires a unique set of criteria for identifying and collating content examples.

To ensure accuracy, research is conducted while considering known limitations and constraints. Since the contents of school curricula are created by multiple individuals and inconsistencies may occur even within a single textbook, the sample of textbooks to be researched is generally aimed to be as large as possible, encompassing multiple school grades and subjects. Favoring large samples also allows for a more accurate analysis of discourse and narrative that can only be perceived on a macro level, to pinpoint gaps and oversights, reach meaningful conclusions and facilitate actionable recommendations. Textbooks are selected for research after a preliminary study, based on their verified use within the national education system and their assessed potential for relevance to pre-defined research topics.

In its assessment of educational materials, IMPACT-se employs UNESCO and other UN declarations, as well as international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance. The use of internationally-recognized standards allows for an objective, empirical and fair analysis of a wide range of educational materials from diverse societies, mitigating political, national or religious biases on the part of the researcher and preventing prejudice towards any particular group of people. The use of these standards for evaluating educational content has been endorsed by bodies of the European Union, among others.<sup>43</sup> These standards are as follows:

- 1. RESPECT:** The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the “Other,” his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.<sup>44</sup>
- 2. INDIVIDUAL OTHER:** The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the “Other” as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.<sup>45</sup>

42 Arnon Groiss, “Researching Schoolbooks of Societies in Conflict: Suggested Study Questions,” 2013. <https://www.impact-se.org/research-questions-2/>; also see suggested frameworks for the application of research questions in identifying violence and intolerance in textbook research: Georg Eckert Institute, “Inception Report for a Study on Palestinian Textbooks,” 12 April 2019, pp 20–21, deposited in UK Parliament Libraries 16 June 2020, ref. no. DEP2020-0322. <https://depositedpapers.parliament.uk/depositedpaper/2282265/files>

43 European Parliament, Resolution with Observations Forming an Integral Part of the Decisions on Discharge in Respect of the Implementation of the General Budget of the European Union for the Financial Year 2022, Section III – Commission and Executive Agencies (2023/2129(DEC)), 11 April 2024, item no. 198. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0228\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0228_EN.pdf)

44 As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

45 The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See Ibid., Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.

- 3. NO HATE:** The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.<sup>46</sup>
- 4. NO INCITEMENT:** The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.<sup>47</sup>
- 5. PEACEMAKING:** The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.<sup>48</sup>
- 6. UNBIASED INFORMATION:** Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers' guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.<sup>49</sup>
- 7. GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION:** The curriculum should foster equality, mutual respect, and should aim for equal representation between individuals regardless of their gender identity. It should also refrain from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles.<sup>50</sup>
- 8. SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.<sup>51</sup>
- 9. SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION:** The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.<sup>52</sup>

46 Based on *Ibid.*, Articles III.6, IV.7 and VII.39; and on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 18.2.

47 As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December 21, 1965. See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

48 Based on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 9; and on the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 5.

49 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

50 The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

51 Based on Resolutions 32/2 (adopted June 30, 2016) and 17/19 (adopted July 14, 2011) of the UN Human Rights Council, and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions expressing concern and condemnation of laws and practices around the world which target individuals based on their gender identity and/or sexual orientation for discrimination, violence, and even extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions—all of which contradict the most basic principles of the UN and have no place in education.

52 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing “systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance,” see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.

The abovementioned standards are applied by the researcher in conjunction with specific guidelines for textbook development promoted by UNESCO itself. These include the following:

1. Treating textbooks as a tool for facilitating teaching and learning processes that foster peace, equality and mutual understanding;<sup>53</sup>
2. The integration of human rights principles and pedagogical processes that teach peaceful conflict resolution, non-discrimination and other practices and attitudes for “learning to live together”;<sup>54</sup>
3. Incorporation of content that is free from harmful gender, religious and other stereotypes,<sup>55</sup> or generalizations that may oversimplify the representation of other groups or set one group against the other.<sup>56</sup>
4. Adherence to factual information on other groups in a manner that facilitates understanding, providing neutral information about controversies<sup>57</sup> and rejecting denial or distortion of proven historical facts;<sup>58</sup>
5. The promotion of peace, with attention to the emotive level of words, attitudes to different groups of people and nations, identifying and countering hate speech, and managing conflict through dialogue;<sup>59</sup>
6. The promotion of peace-building, that is, a broader concept of “positive peace” that is an expression of the fundamental dignity of and respect for life;<sup>60</sup>
7. The use of tools such as literature to foster tolerance and empathy, helping students to see the world from the perspective of other people and to experience how others feel;<sup>61</sup>
8. The incorporation of real-life examples in science and mathematics to promote sustainable development, discarding impertinent political, violent, or conflict-oriented messaging,<sup>62</sup> and employing STEM subjects to build bridges between communities and transcend frontiers;<sup>63</sup>

53 *Textbooks and Learning Resources: Guidelines for Developers and Users* (Paris: UNESCO, 2014), p. 12.  
[https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000226135\\_eng](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000226135_eng)

54 *A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials* (Paris: UNESCO, 2005), p. 11.  
[https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/UNESCO-Comprehensive\\_Strategy\\_for\\_Textbooks\\_2005.pdf](https://inee.org/sites/default/files/resources/UNESCO-Comprehensive_Strategy_for_Textbooks_2005.pdf)

55 Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, *Textbooks for Sustainable Development: A Guide to Embedding* (New Delhi: UNESCO, 2017), p. 29.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259932>

56 *Making Textbook Content Inclusive: A Focus on Religion, Gender, and Culture* (Paris: UNESCO, 2017), p. 13.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247337>

57 *Making Textbook Content Inclusive: A Focus on Religion, Gender, and Culture* (Paris: UNESCO, 2017), pp. 15–16.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247337>

58 *Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development* (UNESCO: Paris, 2023), p. 9.  
<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-education-peace-and-human-rights-international-understanding-cooperation-fundamental?hub=87862>

59 Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, *Textbooks for Sustainable Development: A Guide to Embedding* (New Delhi: UNESCO, 2017), p. 166.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259932>

60 *Textbooks and Learning Resources: A Framework for Policy Development* (Paris: UNESCO, 2014), p. 21.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232222>

61 Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, *Textbooks for Sustainable Development: A Guide to Embedding* (New Delhi: UNESCO, 2017), p. 175.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259932>

62 Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, *Textbooks for Sustainable Development: A Guide to Embedding* (New Delhi: UNESCO, 2017), pp. 37–42, 67–100.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259932>

63 *Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development* (UNESCO: Paris, 2023), p. 9.  
<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-education-peace-and-human-rights-international-understanding-cooperation-fundamental?hub=87862>

9. Combating sexism and unequal gender representation in textbooks;<sup>64</sup>
10. Appropriateness to age and the mental wellbeing of students.<sup>65</sup>

In addition, IMPACT-se takes the following two criteria into consideration when assessing educational materials' compliance with international standards:

1. Educational material should respect international law, relevant resolutions, previous agreements and obligations. This may include, for example, the principle of a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
2. Educational material should be void of antisemitic content, which is to be evaluated on the basis of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.<sup>66</sup>

64 Carole Brugeilles and Sylvie Cromer, *Promoting Gender Equality through Textbooks: A Methodological Guide* (Paris: UNESCO, 2009). [https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000158897\\_eng](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000158897_eng)

65 Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development (UNESCO: Paris, 2023), pp. 8, 10. <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-education-peace-and-human-rights-international-understanding-cooperation-fundamental?hub=87862>

66 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), Non-Legally Binding Working Definition of Antisemitism. <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>  
Endorsed by the European Commission, Council, and Parliament as a "useful tool, in particular for education and training purposes for teachers, NGOs, state authorities and the media"  
European Commission, "Definition of antisemitism", 2021; [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/definition-antisemitism\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/definition-antisemitism_en)  
European Parliament, Resolution on combating anti-Semitism (2017/2692(RSP)), 1 June 2017; [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0243\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0243_EN.html)  
Council of the European Union, "Fight against antisemitism: Council declaration," 6 December 2018. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/06/fight-against-antisemitism-council-declaration/>

# Local Jewish History (Prewar)

This chapter analyzes references to local Jewish history in school textbooks, which include only brief mentions of the Jewish communities in Thessaloniki, Epirus, and Crete. There is no historical analysis of the prewar Jewish community in Thessaloniki or any other city. While specific historical events related to Jewish history are referenced, the textbooks do not offer students the opportunity to study the Jewish communities that existed in Greece before the Holocaust.

## Example 1.

*Topics in Modern Greek History, High School Grade 12, (1999-2000), p. 46.*

This History lesson explores the early stages of the labor movement in Greece, with a specific example highlighting the connection between members of the Jewish community of Thessaloniki and the labor movement. It also examines their involvement in the Socialist Workers' Federation of Thessaloniki. Jews are portrayed as socialists with progressive ideas, emphasizing the positive contributions of the Jewish community members who were part of the Federation. However, the lesson lacks a detailed discussion of the decisive role played by the Federation and the Jewish community of Thessaloniki in its establishment. Notably, Abraham Benaroya, one of the founders of both the Federation and the KKE (Communist Party of Greece), is a significant figure in the history of the labor movement.<sup>67</sup>

Η κατάσταση αυτή κράτησε ως το τέλος των Βαλκανικών πολέμων. Η ενσωμάτωση της Θεσσαλονίκης στην Ελλάδα, μιας πόλης με σημαντικό –για τα μέτρα της περιοχής– βιομηχανικό υπόβαθρο και με κοσμοπολίτικο χαρακτήρα, αποτέλεσε σημείο αναφοράς για το εργατικό κίνημα. Η μεγάλη πολυεθνική εργατική οργάνωση της πόλης, η Φεντερασιόν, με πρωτεργάτες σοσιαλιστές από την ανοιχτή σε νέες ιδέες εβραϊκή κοινότητα της πόλης, αποτέλεσε σημαντικό δίαυλο για τη διάδοση σοσιαλιστικής και εργατικής ιδεολογίας στη χώρα.

*This situation persisted until the end of the Balkan Wars. The incorporation of Thessaloniki into Greece, a city with a significant—by local standards—industrial base and a cosmopolitan character, became a focal point for the labor movement. The large multinational labor organization in the city, the Federation, led by socialists from the open-to-new-ideas Jewish community of the city, became an important conduit for the dissemination of socialist and labor ideology throughout the country.*

<sup>67</sup> Hekimoglou, *The Book*.

The role of the multinational and cosmopolitan Thessaloniki of the early twentieth century was decisive in overcoming the provincialism of the labor movement in Southern Greece. In the early twentieth century, about 4,000 wage laborers worked in the factories of Thessaloniki together with 3,000 independent craftsmen. Most of the wage laborers were Jews. Within this working class, the 'Socialist La Federation' sprang up in 1909. Its founder and leader was Abraham Benaroya, while Alber Ardit, Shabetai Yona, Vital Dassa and others were considered to be some of its exceptional leaders. La Federation operated autonomously until 1918, when along with the rest of the Greek political left-wing formation, it became part of the Socialist Workers' Party of Greece. This was later renamed the Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

**Example 2.**

*Topics in Modern Greek History, High School Grade 12, (1999-2000), p. 49.*

The textbook excerpt frames the outcome of the Balkan Wars through a predominantly nationalistic lens, highlighting Greece's territorial and economic gains while portraying the presence of minorities, including Jews, as a "problem." The reference to Jews is brief and numeric – "a few thousand Jews in 1914" – but its placement is telling. It occurs within a paragraph that discusses the challenges posed by "strong minority groups," implicitly linking Jews to the broader idea of social or national disruption. This context suggests an assimilationist or exclusionary view in which ethnic and religious diversity is not valued as a cultural asset, but rather treated as an obstacle to national unity and progress.

The text does not treat Jews as Greek citizens, and they are instead distinguished as a separate ethnicity ("Jews"), and as an inhibitor to economic progress. Moreover, the size of their population is not recorded, unlike other religious groups. The author fails to mention Thessaloniki, where, until 1913 the Jewish population constituted 38.91 percent of the total population, (about 61,439 individuals) according to the census data. The city had been incorporated into modern Greece in 1912.<sup>68</sup> The Jewish communities of Ioannina, Arta, and Preveza before the Holocaust numbered approximately 2,484 individuals. Yet, there is no mention of the historic presence of Sephardic Jews—descendants of Jews from Spain (Sefarad in Hebrew, and Romaniote Jews). The Romaniote Jews, who settled in the Greek-speaking areas from the Hellenistic period (third century BCE) were known by that name during the Byzantine period, and formed the majority of the Jewish community in the region until the fifteenth century. Most Romaniote Jewish communities, except those mainly in Epirus, the Peloponnese, and Crete, were weakened by population movements and were culturally absorbed into the Sephardim, whose tradition prevailed.<sup>69</sup>

Το κόστος των Βαλκανικών πολέμων ήταν σημαντικό, δεν κλόνησε όμως την εθνική οικονομία, όπως συνέβαινε με τις στρατιωτικές κινητοποιήσεις του 19ου αιώνα. Επιπλέον, στην περίπτωση αυτή, η Ελλάδα βγήκε ιδιαίτερα κερδισμένη από τον πόλεμο. Ενσωμάτωσε πλούσιες περιοχές (Ήπειρο, Δυτική και Κεντρική Μακεδονία, Νησιά του Αιγαίου, Κρήτη) και εκατομμύρια νέους κατοίκους. Τα εδάφη της αυξήθηκαν κατά 70% περίπου (από 65.000 σε 108.800 τετρ. χλμ.) και ο πληθυσμός της κατά 80% (από 2.700.000 σε 4.800.000 κατοίκους). Το κυριότερο όμως ήταν οι νέες οικονομικές προοπτικές. Τα νεοαποκτηθέντα εδάφη ήταν ως επί το πλείστον πεδινά και αρδευόμενα, πράγμα που δημιουργούσε άριστες προοπτικές για τη γεωργική παραγωγή. Το κύριο πρόβλημα ήταν η παρουσία ισχυρών μειονοτικών ομάδων στις περιοχές αυτές. Στη σχετικά ομοιογενή Ήπειρο, για παράδειγμα, δίπλα στους 166.000 Έλληνες υπήρχαν, το 1914, 38.000 μουσουλμάνοι (αλβανικής κυρίως καταγωγής) και μερικές χιλιάδες Εβραίοι. Οπωσδήποτε όμως, η Ελλάδα έγινε υπολογίσιμη πλέον δύναμη και η εμπιστοσύνη που ενέπνεε στις αγορές χρήματος και πιστώσεων αυξήθηκε σημαντικά. Η χώρα ήταν έτοιμη να αφιερωθεί στο δύσκολο έργο της ενσωμάτωσης των νέων περιοχών, όταν ξέσπασε, το καλοκαίρι του 1914, ο Α΄ Παγκόσμιος πόλεμος.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

68 Evangelos Hekimoglou, *Thessaloniki, Turkish rule and Interwar period*, Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1996.

69 Jewish Museum.gr. "The Jewish Community of Ioannina – A Journey Through Time".  
<https://jewishmuseum.gr/en/psifiaki-ekthesi/the-jewish-community-of-ioannina-a-journey-through-time/>.

*The cost of the Balkan Wars was significant, but it did not destabilize the national economy as military mobilizations did in the 19th century. Moreover, in this case, Greece emerged particularly successful from the war. It incorporated rich regions (Epirus, Western and Central Macedonia, Aegean Islands, Crete) and millions of new inhabitants. Its territories increased by approximately 70% (from 65,000 to 108,800 square kilometers) and its population by 80% (from 2,700,000 to 4,800,000 inhabitants). However, the most important aspect was the new economic prospects. The newly acquired territories were mostly flat and irrigated, which created excellent prospects for agricultural production. The main problem was the presence of strong minority groups in these areas. In relatively homogeneous Epirus, for example, alongside 166,000 Greeks, there were 38,000 Muslims (mostly of Albanian descent) and a few thousand Jews in 1914. Nevertheless, Greece became a significant power, and the confidence it inspired in financial and credit markets increased significantly. The country was ready to dedicate itself to the difficult task of integrating the new regions when World War I broke out in the summer of 1914.*

**Example 3.**

*Topics in Modern Greek History, High School Grade 12, (1999-2000), p. 75.*

In a lesson about the decline of foreign powers during the period of constitutional monarchy, a history textbook describes the looting of the house of the British Jewish diplomat Don Pacifico in the mid-nineteenth century, but fails to underline the antisemitic context in which it transpired. Instead, it simply states that he demanded excessive compensation from Greek authorities, painting him in a negative light rather than that of a victim. The text implies that he was responsible for a serious diplomatic crisis, while omitting the fact that Pacifico sought Greek protection after a mob attacked him and his property in Athens during Easter in 1847. The mob believed Pacifico was responsible for the ban on the traditional burning of Judas by the authorities.

Additionally, the text describes the event as if it alone instigated the British aggression toward Greece, which resulted in a naval blockade that was only lifted after pressure from Russia and France. This interpretation overlooks the already strained relations between Greece, England, France and Russia in the broader historical context of the Crimean War.

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**ΥΠΟΘΕΣΗ ΠΑΤΣΙΦΙΚΟ:**

Τον Απρίλιο του 1849 αθηναϊκός όχλος λεηλάτησε το σπίτι του βρετανικής υπηκοότητας Εβραίου Δον Πατσίφικο. Αυτός απαίτησε υπερβολική αποζημίωση από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση και ζήτησε την παρέμβαση της βρετανικής πρεσβείας. Η βρετανική κυβέρνηση έκανε επίδειξη δύναμης και επέβαλε το 1850 ναυτικό αποκλεισμό της Ελλάδας, με την απαίτηση να διευθετηθεί η υπόθεση του Πατσίφικο και κάποιων άλλων βρετανών υπηκόων. Μετά από έντονη αντίδραση της Γαλλίας και της Ρωσίας σταμάτησε ο αποκλεισμός.

*In April 1849, an Athenian mob looted the house of the British nationality Jew, Don Pacifico. He demanded excessive compensation from the Greek government and sought the intervention of the British Embassy. The British government demonstrated its power and imposed a naval blockade on Greece in 1850, demanding that the case of Pacifico and some other British subjects be resolved. Following strong reactions from France and Russia, the blockade was lifted.*

**Example 4.**

**Topics in Modern Greek History, High School Grade 12, (1999-2000), p. 193.**

In a history lesson about the Cretan Question during the final period of Ottoman Rule (1869-1898), there is a misleading presentation of the influence of Jews in Crete,<sup>70</sup> as it suggests that they had the privilege of electing a representative despite being “only” 50 families. Moreover, there is a historical inaccuracy in stating that there were “only” 50 families living across the entire island. Historical archives indicate that in the city of Chania alone, there were 200 Jews in 1832, 60 Jewish families in 1837, and 217 “Israelites” in 1858. However, by 1881, the Jewish community of Heraklion numbered 57 individuals. The lesson fails to explain that the Ottomans had generally shown favor to the Jewish community compared to the Venetians. The Ottoman Empire provided Jews a unified space for living and activity across the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean.

**Ο**ργανικός Νόμος ίσχυσε για μια δεκαετία, ως τη νέα επανάσταση του 1878. Παρά τις θριαμβολογίες της Υψηλής Πύλης, που επιχειρούσε να παρουσιάσει τον Οργανικό Νόμο ως χειρονομία καλής θέλησης και ως απόδειξη παραχώρησης νέων προνομίων, ο νόμος αυτός ήταν στην πραγματικότητα φερόν. Η μεγάλη αδικία σε βάρος του χριστιανικού στοιχείου του νησιού φάνηκε αμέσως με τις διατάξεις για την εκλογή αντιπροσώπων στη Γενική Συνέλευση. Οι 250.000 του χριστιανικού στοιχείου εξέλεξαν 38 αντιπροσώπους, ενώ οι μόλις 70.000 του μουσουλμανικού 36. Ακόμη και οι Εβραίοι, που ήταν μόλις 50 οικογένειες σε ολόκληρη την Κρήτη, εξέλεξαν 1 αντιπρόσωπο. Έτσι, από την αρχή ο Οργανικός Νόμος έγινε αντικείμενο λαϊκής σάτιρας, που εκφράστηκε με πολύ ενδιαφέροντα στιχουργήματα, τα οποία κυκλοφορούσαν ανώνυμα και πολλές φορές τοιχοκολλούνταν σε κεντρικούς δρόμους των κρητικών πόλεων ως παράνομες εφημερίδες τοίχου. Η λαϊκή έκφραση «Τση Κρήτης ο Οργανισμός του ντοβλετιού ο στολισμός» αποδίδει την απέχθεια που ένιωθαν οι Κρητικοί για το νέο αυτό κατασκεύασμα της Υψηλής Πύλης.

*The Organic Law was in effect for a decade, until the new revolution of 1878. Despite the High Porte's triumphalist claims, which attempted to present the Organic Law as a gesture of goodwill and proof of granting new privileges, this law was essentially a sham. The great injustice against the Christian element of the island was immediately apparent in the provisions for electing representatives to the General Assembly. The 250,000 Christians elected 38 representatives, while the just 70,000 Muslims elected 36. Even the Jews, who were only 50 families throughout Crete, elected 1 representative. Thus, from the beginning, the Organic Law became the subject of popular satire, expressed through very interesting verses that were circulated anonymously and often posted on central streets of Cretan towns as illegal wall newspapers. The popular expression "The Cretan Organic Law is just a decoration of the government" reflects the disdain felt by the Cretans for this new contrivance of the High Porte.*

<sup>70</sup> Etz-hayyim-hania.org. "The History of the Jews of Crete".

<https://www.etz-hayyim-hania.org/the-jews-of-crete/the-history-of-the-jews-of-crete/>

N. Stavroulakis & T. D. Vinney, Jewish Sites and Synagogues in Greece, Athens: Talos Press, 1992; Iosif Ventoura, Ibbur: The Jews of Crete 1900-1950, Athens: Melani publications, 2018..

# The Holocaust

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This chapter will present all textbook references to the Holocaust.

According to the 2018 History Curriculum (in effect through the 2019–2020 school year), the Holocaust is included as a key historical event for developing historical thinking. It is used to promote understanding of the moral dimensions of history, recognizing that each era—and even different societies within it—possess distinct value systems and ethical codes. However, events like the Holocaust, genocides, and ethnic cleansing are seen as crimes that transcend historical moral frameworks. Teachers are encouraged to foster a coherent, multi-layered interpretive approach and stimulate ethical discussions in the classroom.<sup>71</sup>

As stated, the Holocaust is included as a historical event in the presentation of World War II, with more frequent references in Grade 6, Grade 9 and Grade 12 History textbooks. The Jews are depicted as the primary victims of the genocide, as reflected in the narrative of the texts and related references.

In Grade 12 high school History textbooks, there is an exceptional chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust.” This chapter offers the most detailed and informative coverage of the Holocaust. It describes this atrocity as “one of the most tragic events of World War II” and identifies the Jewish people as victims of genocide carried out under the Nazis’ “Final Solution.” The text stresses the Holocaust’s unique place in history and issues a stark reminder that it “must never happen again.” Students are informed about traumatic events such as the deportation of Jews—including thousands from Greece—to concentration and extermination camps like Auschwitz and Dachau. It also discusses Nazi methods of mass killing, including mass shootings and the use of “Zyklon B” gas, and notes the death toll of 70,000 Greek Jews. The experience of Jewish children during the war is introduced through the story of Anne Frank’s diary.

The chapter also discusses the Holocaust and the Nuremberg Trials, placing these within the broader context of crimes against humanity. It provides additional educational tools, including a map showing major ghettos, concentration camps, and death camps throughout Europe. Acts of Greek resistance to the Nazi persecution of Jews are also acknowledged. One notable example is the protest led by the Greek Church against the deportations, highlighted through the actions of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens. Another story centers on two officials from the island of Zakynthos, known as “the Island of Justice” for their “unprecedented” success in protecting the island’s entire Jewish community. In a Grade 6 Language textbook and the Religious Textbook for Grade 7, there are excerpts from Anne Frank’s Diary, a personal testimony of a hidden child during the war.

Educational approaches to the Holocaust vary widely. Some History textbooks focus extensively on the atrocities, while others do not adequately address its broader implications or impact on Greek Jewish communities. Notably, there is no reference to the term “antisemitism” in any of the textbooks. Aside from the abovementioned chapter for Grade 12 of high school, there is a general lack of focus on local history and events related to the extermination of Greek Jewry during the German occupation in Greece. The textbooks fail to connect the specific (e.g. the Jewish community of Thessaloniki) to the general (e.g. World War II and the Holocaust), which would provide a more localized understanding of the event.

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71 Greek Ministry of Education & Institute of Educational Policy (2018). *Ιστορία – Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών για το Δημοτικό και το Γυμνάσιο*. Athens: IEP. [www.iep.edu.gr](http://www.iep.edu.gr)

While occasional reference to the deportation of Greek Jews appears in some textbooks, the absence of an entire section dedicated to this chapter in history risks limiting students' understanding of the genocide and destruction of Greek Jewry, which is directly connected to modern Greek History. To be sure, the targeting of Greek Jews was not a limited phenomenon. In 1943, approximately 44,000 Jews, 95 percent of the Jewish population, were deported from Thessaloniki to Auschwitz-Birkenau. A small number of Jews in Thessaloniki found shelter in the countryside, by joining the resistance, or in Athens, where a large proportion of the Jewish population was saved. This occurred thanks to the help of the Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens and City Police Chief Angelos Evert, both of whom were later honored with the title of the 'Righteous among the Nations.' The omission of this element of Greek history is significant and highlights a clear gap in the curriculum.

Collaboration between Greek Christians and German Nazis is also absent from the narrative, which instead highlights cases of assistance by Greek Christians and the Greek Church. As a result, students are not confronted with the traumatic and controversial aspects of this history. Apart from rare cases of intervention, such as the Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens and officials from the island of Zakynthos, neither the Greek occupation government nor the overwhelming majority of social groups, scholarly institutions, or professional associations in Nazi-occupied Greece openly declared solidarity with the Jews. The histories of perpetrators of persecution, collaborators, and bystanders are not presented, which fosters the mistaken perception that all Christian Greeks aided the Greek Jews, and that the Holocaust was an unavoidable outcome of history.

**Example 5.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), pp. 131-132.*

In the chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust,” there is a historical source with the title: Zakynthos, the Island of Justice. The case of the rescue of all Greek Jews on the island of Zakynthos demonstrates how 275 Jews were saved, thanks to the philanthropy of two prominent figures of the island, described in the textbook as “courageous individuals” and most importantly, the help of all the island’s inhabitants. The rescue of the Jews of Zakynthos represents an exception rather than the rule in the history of the Holocaust in Greece, which is emphasized in the text with the phrase “Zakynthos represented a unique exception.” During the Italian occupation (until September 1943), the Jews of Zakynthos did not face significant problems. The Germans attempted to register them in December 1943, but due to the stance of the Metropolitan, the Mayor, and the island’s residents, the Jews of Zakynthos were not deported—a rare exception in occupied Greece.

In late 1943, under German orders to register Zakynthos’ Jews, Mayor Loukas Karrer and Bishop Chrysostomos falsely claimed most had fled, ultimately submitting only their own names, an act that highlighted the perilous choices facing Greek religious leaders, who risked their lives by safeguarding Jewish texts, offering support, or directly appealing to Nazi officers amid shifting wartime conditions.<sup>72</sup>

However, the textbook does not mention cases of Greek Christian collaboration and cooperation with the German occupiers, focusing instead on examples of saving Jews.

### Η Ζάκυνθος, το νησί των δικαίων

«Ενώ σε όλη την υπόλοιπη χώρα οι διώξεις και εκτοπίσεις Εβραίων διεξάγονταν από τους Γερμανούς αποτελεσματικά, η Ζάκυνθος αποτέλεσε μια μοναδική εξαίρεση. Δύο θαρραλέοι άνθρωποι, ο Μητροπολίτης του νησιού Χρυσόστομος Δημητρίου και ο Δήμαρχος Ζακύνθου Λουκάς Καρρέρ, πέτυχαν κάτι πρωτοφανές: θέτοντας την ίδια τους τη ζωή σε κίνδυνο, κατόρθωσαν να προστατέψουν ολόκληρο τον εβραϊκό πληθυσμό της Ζακύνθου από την τύχη των ομοθρήσκων τους σε άλλες περιοχές. Στα τέλη του 1943 ο Γερμανός Διοικητής της Ζακύνθου, Μπέρενς, κάλεσε τον Δήμαρχο στο γραφείο του και απαίτησε, υπό

την απειλή όπλου, κατάλογο με τα ονόματα όλων των Εβραίων του νησιού. Ο Δήμαρχος και ο Μητροπολίτης, αντιλαμβανόμενοι το τι σήμαινε η εντολή αυτή, προσπάθησαν να κερδίσουν χρόνο, αλλά ο Διοικητής ήταν αμετακίνητος, καθώς είχε διαταγές από το Γενικό Αρχηγείο. Μετά από πολλή σκέψη, καθώς βρισκόταν και οι ίδιοι σε θανάσιμο κίνδυνο, οι δύο άνδρες πήραν τη γενναία απόφαση να περιλάβουν στον κατάλογο μόνο τα εξής δύο ονόματα: Μητροπολίτης Ζακύνθου Χρυσόστομος και Δήμαρχος Ζακύνθου Λουκάς Καρρέρ. Ο Γερμανός Διοικητής έμεινε άναυδος. Μαζί με ένα γράμμα του Μητροπολίτη προς τον ίδιο τον Χίτλερ, στο οποίο αναλάμβανε ακέραια την ευθύνη για τη διαγωγή των Εβραίων του νησιού, τα δύο έγγραφα αποστάλθηκαν στο Γενικό Αρχηγείο, όπου πρέπει να έκαναν έντονη εντύπωση, γιατί η διαταγή της σύλληψης όλων των Εβραίων ακυρώθηκε. Παρ’ όλα αυτά, για κάθε ενδεχόμενο, όλοι οι Εβραίοι της Ζακύνθου διασκορπίστηκαν στα χωριά του νησιού, όπου χριστιανικές οικογένειες τους έκρυψαν και ανέλαβαν τη διατροφή τους. Χάρη στην επιρροή, το θάρρος και την αποφασιστικότητα των δύο ηγετών του νησιού, καθώς και του ντόπιου πληθυσμού, οι 275 Εβραίοι της Ζακύνθου επέζησαν χωρίς ούτε μία απώλεια, από έναν πόλεμο που εξολόθρευσε το σύνολο των ομοθρήσκων τους σε πολλές άλλες περιοχές».

Ο Δεύτερος Παγκόσμιος Πόλεμος και το Ολοκαύτωμα των Ελλήνων Εβραίων, 1941-1944. Εγχειρίδιο Μελέτης, Εβραϊκό Μουσείο Ελλάδος, Αθήνα 2005, σ. 26-27.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

72 “The Good Shepherds -Metropolitans and Chief Rabbis in the face of the Holocaust,” Jewish Museum of Greece. <https://jewishmuseum.gr/en/psifiaki-ekthesi/the-good-shepherds-metropolitans-and-chief-rabbis-in-the-face-of-the-Holocaust/>

**Zakynthos, the Island of Justice**

"While throughout the rest of the country, the persecution and deportation of Jews were conducted effectively by the Germans, Zakynthos represented a unique exception. Two courageous individuals, the island's Metropolitan, Chrysostomos Dimitriou, and the Mayor of Zakynthos, Loukas Karrer, achieved something unprecedented: by putting their own lives at risk, they managed to protect the entire Jewish population of Zakynthos from the fate of their co-religionists in other regions. In late 1943, the German Commander of Zakynthos, Behrens, summoned the Mayor to his office and demanded under the threat of a weapon, a list of all the Jews on the island was demanded. The Mayor and the Metropolitan, realizing the implications of this order, tried to buy time, but the Commander was adamant, having received orders from the General Headquarters. After much thought, with their own lives in grave danger, the two men made the brave decision to include only the following two names on the list: Metropolitan of Zakynthos Chrysostomos and Mayor of Zakynthos Loukas Karrer. The German Commander was stunned. Along with a letter from the Metropolitan to Hitler himself, taking full responsibility for the conduct of the Jews on the island, the two documents were sent to the General Headquarters, where they must have made a strong impression, as the order for the arrest of all the Jews was canceled. Nevertheless, as a precaution, all the Jews of Zakynthos were dispersed into the villages of the island, where Christian families hid and provided for them. Thanks to the influence, courage, and determination of the two leaders of the island, as well as the local population, the 275 Jews of Zakynthos survived without a single loss during a war that annihilated their co-religionists in many other regions".

*The Second World War and the Holocaust of Greek Jews, 1941-1944. Study Manual, Jewish Museum of Greece, Athens 2005, pp. 26-27.*

**Example 6.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 132*

In the chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity – the Holocaust,” there is a picture of a historical document: a forged Greek identity card with a Christian name, which was given to a Greek Jew. This serves as an important lesson about the bravery, magnanimity, and self-sacrifice demonstrated by some Christians who saved their fellow citizens, Greek Jews. It is a reliable source for teaching about the ‘Righteous Among the Nations’ from Greece.

Forgery saved the lives of thousands during the Holocaust, since a new identity could mean avoiding concentration camps. Angelos Evert, the Chief of the Athens City Police during the Occupation issued a large number of forged identity cards with Christian names for persecuted Jews. Along with Archbishop Damaskinos, Evert, police directors Dimitrios Vranopoulos, Michail Glykas, and Dimitrios Vlastaris, and the General Director of Administrative Services, Panos Haldez, were involved in providing Jews with identity cards bearing Christian names.<sup>73</sup> These were issued after baptism certificates had been granted and Christian names were registered in the records of the Municipality of Athens.

Οι ελληνικές αστυνομικές αρχές, σε συνεργασία με την Εκκλησία της Ελλάδος, εξέδωσαν σε όσους Εβραίους το επιθυμούσαν πλαστές ταυτότητες με χριστιανικά ονόματα, οι οποίες πιστοποιούσαν χριστιανικό θρήσκευμα, προκειμένου οι Εβραίοι να αποφύγουν τις γερμανικές διώξεις.



*The Greek police authorities, in collaboration with the Greek Orthodox Church, issued forged identity cards with Christian names to Jews who wished to obtain them. These cards certified a Christian faith, helping Jews to evade German persecutions.*

73 Fotini Tomai (ed.), *The Greek Righteous Among the Nations*, Athens: Militos PUBLICATIONS, 2015.  
<https://kis.gr/index.php/ellines-dikaioi-ton-ethnon>.

**Example 7.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 131*

The chapter on “War Crimes Against Humanity” includes a compelling account of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens and his appeal-protest against the German-occupied Greek government regarding the persecution of Greek Jews. It highlights the Christian Church's rejection of Nazi deportations of Jews and serves as an important teaching resource about the ‘Righteous Among the Nations’ from Greece. The excerpt describes the charitable actions of the bishop and the assistance provided by the Metropolis of Athens, which undertook positive measures to aid the Jews in 1943-44.

One example concerns a request by Archbishop Damaskinos and representatives of institutional organizations to Logothetopoulos, the prime minister of the German-appointed occupation government (December 2, 1942–April 7, 1943). In March 1943, they sought to halt the deportations of Jews from Thessaloniki to destinations outside of Greek territory: “We hope that you have indicated to the authorities that such harsh treatment of Greek Jewish nationals, as opposed to Jews of other nationalities in Greece, makes the implemented measure even more unjustifiable and, consequently, morally unacceptable.” This reference underscores the harmful policies enforced by the Nazi authorities against the Jews in occupied Greece and highlights how the Jewish community was viewed by the Christian community as their “suffering brethren.”

**Έκκληση-διαμαρτυρία του Αρχιεπισκόπου Αθηνών Δαμασκηνού, προσυπογραφόμενη από πολλές προσωπικότητες της ελληνικής πνευματικής, καλλιτεχνικής και οικονομικής ζωής, προς την ελληνική -διορισμένη από τον κατακτητή- Κυβέρνηση Κατοχής για τους διωγμούς των Ελλήνων Εβραίων**

«Κύριε Πρόεδρε

Ο ελληνικός λαός επληροφορείτο κατ' αυτές μετ' ευλόγου καταπλήξεως και οδύνης ότι αι γερμανικά και στρατιωτικά Αρχαί κατοχής ήρξαντο εφαρμόζουσαι εν Θεσσαλονίκη το μέτρον της βαθμιαίας εκτοπίσεως του ελληνικού ισραηλιτικού στοιχείου έξω των ορίων της χώρας και ότι αι πρώται ομάδες των εκτοπιζομένων ευρίσκονται ήδη καθ' οδόν προς την Πολωνίαν [...]

Έχομεν την βεβαιότητα ότι και η κυβέρνησις σκέπτεται και αισθάνεται καθ' ον τρόπον και πάντες οι λοιποί Έλληνες επί του προκειμένου ζητήματος. Πιστεύομεν επί πλέον ότι θα έχετε ήδη προβή εις τα αναγκαία διαβήματα προς τας Αρχάς κατοχής διά την αναστολήν του οδυνηρού και ασκόπου μέτρου της εκτοπίσεως του εν Ελλάδι ισραηλιτικού στοιχείου. Ελπίζομεν μάλιστα ότι θα υπεδείξατε προς τους ισχυρούς ότι η τοιαύτη σκληρά μεταχειρίσις των Ισραηλιτών Ελλήνων υπηκόων, κατ' αντιδιαστολήν προς τους εν Ελλάδι Ισραηλίτας άλλων υπηκοοτήτων, καθιστά έτι μάλλον αδικαιολόγητον και κατ' ακολουθίαν ηθικώς απαράδεκτον το τεθέν εις εφαρμογήν μέτρον. Εάν δε τυχόν προβάλλωνται λόγοι ασφαλείας προς δικαιολόγησιν αυτού, φρονούμεν ότι θα ήτο δυνατόν να προταθούν λύσεις και να ληφθούν προληπτικά μέτρα, οίον ο περιορισμός μόνον του εν δράσει άρρενος πληθυσμού (παρεκτός γερόντων και παιδίων) εις ωρισμένον μέρος της ελληνικής Έπικρατείας υπό την επιτήρησιν Αρχών κατοχής, εις τρόπον ώστε και η ασφάλεια τούτων να κατοχυρωθή -έστω και κατά κινδύνου υποθετικού- και η τάξις των Ελλήνων Ισραηλιτών ν' αποφυγή τα δεινά επακόλουθα της δι' ης απειλείται εκτοπίσεως. Ως εκ περισσού σημειούμεν ότι εις το ανωτέρω μέτρον ο υπόλοιπος Ελληνικός λαός θα ήτο διατεθειμένος, εάν ήθελε ζητηθή, να προσθήσθαι ανενδοιάστως ολόκληρον την εγγύησιν αυτού υπέρ των χειμαζομένων αδελφών αυτού [...]

Θ. Βερέμης, Φ. Κωνσταντοπούλου (επιμ.). Οι Έλληνες Εβραίοι. Στοιχεία της ιστορίας τους μέσα από διπλωματικά και ιστορικά έγγραφα του Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών, Καστανιώτης, Αθήνα 2000, σ. 266-268.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*An appeal-protest by Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens, co-signed by many prominent figures from Greek intellectual, artistic, and economic life to the Greek government—appointed by the occupier—regarding the persecution of Greek Jews.*

*Mr. President,*

*The Greek people were informed with reasonable astonishment and sorrow that the German and military occupation authorities had begun implementing in Thessaloniki the measure of the gradual deportation of the Greek Jewish population outside the country's borders, and that the first groups of deportees are already on their way to Poland [...]*

*We are confident that the government is thinking and feeling the same way as all other Greeks regarding this issue. We also believe that you have already taken the necessary steps with the occupation authorities to suspend the painful and futile measure of deporting the Jewish population in Greece. We hope that you have indicated to the authorities that such harsh treatment of Greek Jewish nationals, as opposed to Jews of other nationalities in Greece, makes the implemented measure even more unjustifiable and, consequently, morally unacceptable. If security reasons are being cited to justify this measure, we believe that alternative solutions and preventive measures could be proposed, such as restricting only the active male population (excluding the elderly and children) to a specific area of Greek territory under the supervision of the occupation authorities, so that both their security can be safeguarded—albeit hypothetically—and the Greek Jews can avoid the dire consequences of the threatened deportation.*

*We note additionally that the rest of the Greek people would be willing, if requested, to unconditionally provide full guarantees for the protection of their suffering brethren [...]"\*\**

*Th. Veremis, F. Konstantopoulou (eds.), The Greek Jews: Elements of Their History through Diplomatic and Historical Documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kastaniotis, Athens 2000, pp. 266-268.*

**Example 8.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present)*, High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 132

In the chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust,” there is an excerpt from the speech of the internationally renowned Greek-French academic Byzantinologist and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Greece, Helene Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, titled *The Holocaust and the Responsibilities of Ordinary Citizens*. The author begins her speech by referring to the literary work of writer Lili Zografou titled *Mikael*, acknowledging her shameful role in “allowing and leading [Jews] to Auschwitz,” noting that “the horror is vast, the suffering immeasurable, and the shame even more immense.”<sup>74</sup> This serves as a testimony to the extreme traumatic experiences endured by the Jews of Greece during the Holocaust. The excerpt emphasizes that the Holocaust is an event that concerns not only the Jews, as it was the first time in history when “man denied his fellow man not the identity of being a Jew, but the identity of being human.” The text thus highlights the historical uniqueness of the Holocaust and warns readers to be vigilant for it “must never happen again.”

την απειλή όπλου, κατάλογο με τα ονόματα όλων των Εβραίων του νησιού. Ο Δήμαρχος και ο Μητροπολίτης, αντιλαμβανόμενοι το τι σήμαινε η εντολή αυτή, προσπάθησαν να κερδίσουν χρόνο, αλλά ο Διοικητής ήταν αμετακίνητος, καθώς είχε διαταγές από το Γενικό Αρχηγείο. Μετά από πολλή σκέψη, καθώς βρίσκονταν και οι ίδιοι σε θανάσιμο κίνδυνο, οι δύο άνδρες πήραν τη γενναία απόφαση να περιλάβουν στον κατάλογο μόνο τα εξής δύο ονόματα: Μητροπολίτης Ζακύνθου Χρυσόστομος και Δήμαρχος Ζακύνθου Λουκάς Καρρέρ. Ο Γερμανός Διοικητής έμεινε άναυδος. Μαζί με ένα γράμμα του Μητροπολίτη προς τον ίδιο τον Χίτλερ, στο οποίο αναλάμβανε ακέραια την ευθύνη για τη διαγωγή των Εβραίων του νησιού, τα δύο έγγραφα αποστάληκαν στο Γενικό Αρχηγείο, όπου πρέπει να έκαναν έντονη εντύπωση, γιατί η διαταγή της σύλληψης όλων των Εβραίων ακυρώθηκε. Παρ' όλα αυτά, για κάθε ενδεχόμενο, όλοι οι Εβραίοι της Ζακύνθου διασκορπίστηκαν στα χωριά του νησιού, όπου χριστιανικές οικογένειες τους έκρυψαν και ανέλαβαν τη διατροφή τους. Χάρη στην επιρροή, το θάρρος και την αποφασιστικότητα των δύο ηγετών του νησιού, καθώς και του ντόπιου πληθυσμού, οι 275 Εβραίοι της Ζακύνθου επέζησαν χωρίς ούτε μία απώλεια, από έναν πόλεμο που εξολόθρευσε το σύνολο των ομοθρήσκων τους σε πολλές άλλες περιοχές».

Ο Δεύτερος Παγκόσμιος Πόλεμος και το Ολοκαύτωμα των Ελλήνων Εβραίων, 1941-1944. Εγχειρίδιο Μελέτης, Εβραϊκό Μουσείο Ελλάδος, Αθήνα 2005, σ. 26-27.

**Το Ολοκαύτωμα και οι ευθύνες των απλών πολιτών**

«Τι έχουμε τώρα να πούμε στα παιδιά μας; Θα θυμηθώ τα λόγια της Λιλής Ζωγράφου, η οποία στο έργο της “Μικαέλ” γράφει: “Όταν βλέπω έναν Εβραίο, εγώ που έρχομαι από το άλλο στρατόπεδο, από αυτούς δηλαδή που επέτρεψαν και που οδήγησαν στο Άουσβιτς, δεν έχω ούτε λόγια ούτε πια έρεισμα για την

περηφάνια μου”. Αυτά είναι τα λόγια που μπορούμε να πούμε στα παιδιά μας εμείς που ερχόμαστε από το άλλο στρατόπεδο. Γιατί η Σοά [: η εβραϊκή λέξη για το Ολοκαύτωμα] δεν είναι κάτι που αφορά μόνο τους Εβραίους. Η εβραϊκονία είναι το τέλος του ευρωπαϊκού πολιτισμού και του ευρωπαϊκού πνεύματος έτσι όπως έζησε αιώνες και αιώνες τώρα. Απέραντη η φρίκη, αμέτρητη η οδύνη και ακόμα πιο απέραντη η αισχύνη. Και ας μη βρίσκουμε δικαιολογίες ή αιτιάσεις για έναν καλύτερο ύπνο. Άλλοι λέγοντας ότι υπάρχουνε οι Χίτλερ [...] άλλοι αρνούμενοι την εβραϊκονία και άλλοι μιλώντας δεξιά κι αριστερά για γενοκτονίες, χωρίς να ξέρουν ότι η γενοκτονία, η Σοά των Εβραίων, είναι μοναδική και είναι μοναδική για έναν μονάχα λόγο, γιατί για πρώτη φορά στην ιστορία ο άνθρωπος αρνήθηκε στον συνάνθρωπό του, όχι την ιδιότητα να είναι Εβραίος, την ιδιότητα να είναι άνθρωπος. Αυτό έγινε μία φορά μόνο στην ιστορία και δεν πρέπει ποτέ να ξαναγίνει. Ας γρηγορούμε όμως, ας γρηγορούμε και ας μην ξεχάσουμε αυτό που ένας Γερμανός πάστορας έγραψε λίγο πριν πεθάνει, γιατί και ο Μπρεχτ το είπε: η κοιλιά της φρίκης είναι έτοιμη να παιδογονήσει και πάλι. Ο πάστορας είπε ότι, όταν ήρθαν να πιάσουν τον γείτονά μου που ήταν Εβραίος, δε διαμαρτυρήθηκα, αφού δεν ήμουν Εβραίος. Όταν ήρθαν να πιάσουν και τον άλλο μου γείτονα που ήτανε κομμουνιστής, δε διαμαρτυρήθηκα, αφού δεν ήμουν κομμουνιστής. Όταν λίγο πιο μακριά πιάσανε και κάτι καθολικούς Γερμανούς, δε διαμαρτυρήθηκα, αφού δεν ήμουν καθολικός. Όταν όμως ήρθαν να πιάσουν εμένα, δε βρέθηκε πια κανείς να διαμαρτυρηθεί! Αυτό δεν πρέπει ποτέ να το ξεχνάμε, γιατί για ποιον χτυπά η καμπίνα, χτυπά για τον καθένα μας και για όλους».

Ελένη Αρβελέρ, «Ημέρα Μνήμης», Χρονικά, έκδοση του Κεντρικού Ισραηλιτικού Συμβουλίου της Ελλάδος, τ. ΚΘ', τεύχ. 201, Ιανουάριος-Φεβρουάριος 2006, σ. 66-67.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

<sup>74</sup> Lily Zografou, *The Jews at one time*. Mikael, Bookshop of Estia, Athens, 1973.

*The Holocaust and the Responsibilities of Ordinary Citizens*

*“What do we have now to say to our children? I recall the words of Lili Zografou, who in her work ‘Mikael’ writes: ‘When I see a Jew, I, who come from the other camp, from those who allowed and led to Auschwitz, have neither words nor basis for my pride.’ These are the words we can say to our children, we who come from the other camp. For the Shoah [the Hebrew word for the Holocaust] is not something that concerns only the Jews. The extermination of Jews is the end of European civilization and the European spirit as it has lived for centuries. The horror is vast, the suffering immeasurable, and the shame even more immense. Let us not find excuses or justifications for a better sleep. Some say there were Hitlers [...], others deny the extermination, and others speak of genocides here and there without knowing that genocide, the Shoah of the Jews, is unique; and it is unique for one reason only: because for the first time in history, man denied his fellow man not the identity of being a Jew, but the identity of being human. This happened only once in history and must never happen again. Let us be vigilant, let us be vigilant and let us not forget what a German pastor wrote shortly before he died, for Brecht also said: the belly of horror is ready to bear children again. The pastor said that when they came to arrest my neighbor who was Jewish, I did not protest, because I was not Jewish. When they came to arrest my other neighbor who was a communist, I did not protest, because I was not a communist. When they arrested some Catholic Germans a little further away, I did not protest, because I was not Catholic. But when they came to arrest me, there was no one left to protest! This we must never forget, for whom does the bell toll, it tolls for each of us and for all.”*

*Eleni Arveler, "Day of Remembrance", Chronika, publication of the Central Jewish Council of Greece, vol. 30, issue 201, January-February 2006, pp. 66-67.*

**Example 9.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present)*, High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 133.

In the chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust,” the textbook acknowledges the Holocaust as a prime example of the word “genocide.” Altogether, this is a positive example of the Holocaust being clearly acknowledged as the genocide of the Jewish people. Students also learn that the term “genocide,” while rooted in the Jewish experience under the Nazis, can be applied to other crimes against humanity—encouraging both historical understanding and broader critical reflection..

**Ερωτήσεις**

1. Ο όρος «γενοκτονία» (genocide) χρησιμοποιήθηκε για πρώτη φορά το 1944 προκειμένου να περιγράψει την εξόντωση των Εβραίων από τους ναζί. Σήμερα ο όρος αυτός χρησιμοποιείται και για άλλα εγκλήματα στην ιστορία της ανθρωπότητας. Μπορείτε να αναφέρετε παραδείγματα;

*Questions*

1. The term "genocide" was first used in 1944 to describe the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis. Today, this term is also used for other crimes in the history of humanity. Can you provide examples?

**Example 10.**

*Modern and Contemporary History, Junior High School, Grade 9, 2015, p. 127.*

In a history lesson on the World War II, students are presented with a firsthand description of how thousands of Jews were murdered at the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp using gas chambers. Through this lesson, students are introduced to the terms “crematorium” and “gas chamber,” gaining insight into their horrific significance during the Holocaust. While the account offers students a vivid and direct narrative of life in Auschwitz through the testimony of Vrba and Wetzler, it misses an opportunity to connect this history more directly to Greek Jewish experiences and their central place in Holocaust history.

### **1. Πεθαίνοντας στο Άουσβιτς: το Ολοκαύτωμα των Εβραίων**

Οι Ρούντολφ Βρμπα και Άλφρεντ Βέτσλερ δραπέτευσαν, τον Απρίλιο του 1944, από το στρατόπεδο συγκεντρώσεως του Άουσβιτς. Δύο μήνες αργότερα δημοσίευσαν ένα κείμενο (Vrba-Wetzler Report) στο οποίο περιέγραφαν με λεπτομέρειες τη ζωή στο στρατόπεδο.

Το κρεματόριο περιλαμβάνει ένα μεγάλο θάλαμο, ένα θάλαμο αερίων και ένα φούρνο. Οι άνθρωποι συγκεντρώνονται στον μεγάλο θάλαμο, που χωρά περίπου 2000 άτομα. Εκεί υποχρεώνονται να βγάλουν τα ρούχα τους και δίνεται σε όλους ένα κομμάτι σαπουνι και μια πετσέτα σαν να πήγαιναν για λουτρό. Κατόπιν συγκεντρώνονται όλοι στον θάλαμο αερίων, που σφραγίζεται ερμητικά. Τότε άνδρες των SS, που φορούν μάσκες αερίων, διοχετεύουν στην αίθουσα αέριο από τρία ειδικά ανοίγματα. Μετά από τρία λεπτά όλοι είναι νεκροί. Τα άψυχα σώματα μεταφέρονται, στη συνέχεια, στο φούρνο με κάρα για να καούν.

Πηγή: [www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/)



*Dying at Auschwitz: The Holocaust of the Jews Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler escaped from Auschwitz concentration camp in April 1944. Two months later, they published a report (Vrba-Wetzler Report) detailing life in the camp. “The crematorium consists of a large chamber, a gas chamber, and an oven. People are gathered in the large chamber, which can accommodate about 2,000 individuals. There, they are forced to undress, and each person is given a piece of soap and a towel as if they were going for a bath. Then, they are all assembled in the gas chamber, which is hermetically sealed. At that point, SS men wearing gas masks release gas into the chamber through three special openings. After three minutes, everyone is dead. The lifeless bodies are then transported to the oven with carts to be burned.”*

**Example 11.**

*Modern Greek Language workbook, Junior High School, Grade 9, 2015 (revised edition), pp. 52-53.*

The topic of prejudice and stereotyping is taught using a propaganda image depicting the military events of the National Socialist German Workers' Party. The Nazi regime used propaganda effectively to mobilize the German population to support its wars of conquest until the very end of the regime. Nazi propaganda was likewise essential to motivating those who implemented the mass murder of the European Jews and of other victims of the Nazi regime.<sup>75</sup>

The image below depicts Nazi rallies, meticulously organized by architect Albert Speer and captured on film by Leni Riefenstahl. These mass gatherings, especially the grand spectacles in Nuremberg, are presented as striking examples of propaganda, designed to project the supposed power and superiority of the German nation—offering students a powerful lesson on the manipulative force of imagery and symbolism in history. One photograph, in the bottom-right corner, can also be analyzed as a visual source for understanding the indoctrination of Hitler Youth within the ethnonationalist state. The image depicts children wearing military helmets and playing with pretend weapons. The inclusion of this image helps students comprehend the extent and intensity of Nazi indoctrination, particularly its targeting of children.

The textbook further aims to stimulate children's critical thinking by posing reflective questions for instance, one question asks, "Which photograph does not depict any weapons? Does this make it less frightening?" This question directs students toward the understanding that massive parades can be equally frightening, even without weapons. Through these questions, students are encouraged to explore the similarities between the photographs and to understand the historical context of indoctrination by analyzing visual sources.

**Κείμενο 5 [Πόλεμος]**

πόλεμος

παρουσιάζεται μέσα από τις πιο απεχθείς τελετές και μέσα από την καθημερινότητα.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

<sup>75</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Nazi Propaganda." Holocaust Encyclopedia. <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-propaganda>

## ΕΙΡΗΝΗ - ΠΟΛΕΜΟΣ

- 1 Ποιο είναι το κοινό στοιχείο των τριών φωτογραφιών;
- 2 Ποια φωτογραφία σας τρομάζει περισσότερο; • Απαντήστε χρησιμοποιώντας αιτιολογικές προτάσεις.
- 3 Σε ποια φωτογραφία δεν απεικονίζεται κανένα όπλο; • Αυτό την κάνει λιγότερο τρομακτική;
- 4 Γιατί νομίζετε ότι ο συντάκτης έβαλε στην ίδια σελίδα και κάτω από τον ίδιο τίτλο τις τρεις φωτογραφίες; • Απαντήστε χρησιμοποιώντας αιτιολογικές και τελικές προτάσεις.
- 5 Φτιάξτε μια ανάλογη σύνθεση με θέμα την ειρήνη. • Εξηγήστε στους συμμαθητές σας τις επιλογές σας.

*War - It is presented through the most repugnant rituals of everyday life.*

PEACE-WAR

1. *What is the common element among the three photographs?*
2. *Which photograph scares you the most? Answer using explanatory statements.*
3. *Which photograph does not depict any weapons? Does this make it less frightening?*
4. *Why do you think the author placed all three photographs on the same page and under the same title? Answer using explanatory and conclusive statements.*
5. *Create a similar composition on the theme of peace. Explain your choices to your classmates.*

**Example 12.**

**Modern Greek Language—WORKBOOK, Junior High School, Grade 9, 2015 (revised edition), p. 31.**

A Greek Language lesson about prejudice and stereotyping features a poem by the well-known Greek poet Nikos Eggonopoulos, with pacifist content that poetically addresses the phenomenon of the violation of human rights. The poem is titled *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Essay on the Inequality of Human Races), a title borrowed from Arthur de Gobineau, who published his extensive work in France in 1853. Eggonopoulos's poem is accompanied by the subtitle "Forgotten is Adolf," referring to Adolf Hitler.<sup>76</sup> The poem refers to the significant number of Nazi persecutory policies stemmed from theories of racial hygiene, or eugenics.

Through their engagement with the poem, students are taught about Nazism and its symbols, and discuss the Nazi theories of eugenics, as presented in Eggonopoulos's text.<sup>77</sup> The poem contains references to Nazi beliefs and ideas about race that shaped all aspects of daily life and politics. Specifically, the Nazis embraced the false idea that Jews were a distinct and inferior race. This notion is known as racial antisemitism. The textbook includes a sketch of an individual tearing apart the swastika, a symbol tied to both Nazism and neo-Nazism, clearly conveying a message of rejecting and condemning these ideologies. This visual reinforces for students the importance of opposing hate and totalitarianism.



### Κείμενο 4 Ξεχνιέται ο Αδόλφος



Αλήθεια –των αδυνάτων αδύνατο–  
 ποτές δεν εκατάφερα να καταλάβω  
 αυτά τα όντα που δεν βλέπουνε  
 το τερατώδες κοινό γνώρισμα τ' ανθρώπου  
 –το εφήμερο  
 της παράλογης ζωής του–  
 κι ανακαλύπτουνε διαφορές  
 –γιομάτοι μίσος– διαφορές  
 σε χρώμα δέρματος φυλή  
 θρησκεία

Νίκος Εγγονόπουλος,  
*Στην κοιλάδα με τους ροδιώνες* εκδ. Ίκαρος, 1992

*Forgotten is Adolf*  
 Truth – impossible for the weak –  
 I have never been able to understand  
 these beings who do not see  
 the monstrous common trait of humanity  
 – the ephemeral  
 nature of its irrational life –  
 and instead discover differences  
 – filled with hatred – differences  
 in skin color, race, religion.  
 Nikos Eggonopoulos  
*In the valley of the rose gardens, Ikarios Publications, 1992*

<sup>76</sup> Between 1934 and 1937, five editions of Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* were utilized in the form of school textbooks in Nazi Germany. Asimakopoulou, Fotini. "The pure society from Gobineau to 21st-century Greece". In Efi Avdela et al. (eds.), *Racial theories in Greece*, Iraklion: University of Crete Press, 2017, p. 175-214. <https://cup.gr/book/fyletikes-theories-stin-ellada/>.

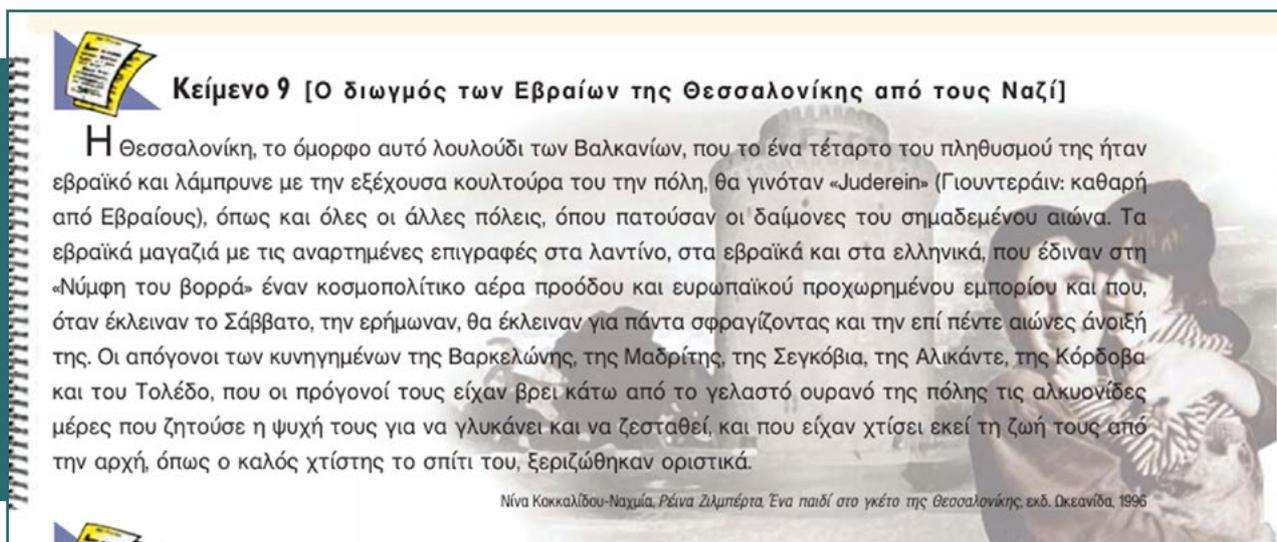
<sup>77</sup> "Why did the Holocaust Happen?," *The Holocaust Explained*, the Wiener Holocaust Library. <https://www.theHolocaustexplained.org/how-and-why/why/eugenics-and-antisemitism/>.

**Example 13.**

**Modern Greek Language, Grade 9, 2015 (revised edition), p. 58.**

A Greek Language lesson on prejudice and stereotyping features an excerpt from a novel written by a Jewish author from Thessaloniki,<sup>78</sup> describing the rescue of a young Jewish girl who lived in occupied Thessaloniki.<sup>79</sup> The text, written in a literary style, recounts the expulsion of the Sephardic Jews from Spain in 1492, their settlement in Thessaloniki, which evolved into a predominantly Jewish city, and the subsequent loss of its Jewish population during the German Occupation. The girl's story is supported by existing evidence and aligns with personal testimonies of the few surviving Thessaloniki Jews, including Reina Siaki-Zilberta, one of the few children to survive the Holocaust.<sup>80</sup> Notably, the text teaches that the Jews in Thessaloniki “adorned” the city with culture, clearly presenting them positively, and condemns the Nazis by referring to them as “demons.”

However, the selected text, entitled “The persecution of the Jews by the Nazis” describes the historical presence of Sephardic Jews in Thessaloniki, but omits the antisemitic measures implemented by Nazis when the city was conquered in April 1941. As a result, students learn about the Jewish presence in the city but are not informed about how the Nuremberg racial laws were applied in Thessaloniki, which included forced relocation to ghettos and the requirement to wear the Star of David on clothing.<sup>81</sup>



(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

78 The literacy book is written by Nina Kokkalidou-Nahmia and the book is titled: *Reina Zilberta. A child in Thessaloniki's ghetto* (Okeanida editions, 1996).

79 For suitable educational resources about World War II and Nazism in Greece:  
<https://ww2istories.gr/index.php/en/12-2015-03-16-21-04-19/92-children-s-voices-during-world-war-ii-and-the-holocaust>.

80 For more information about the personal story of Reina Siakki-Gilberta in:  
<https://jewishmuseum.gr/en/psifiaki-ekthesi/hidden-children-in-occupied-greece/>.

81 The Nazi SS team arrived in Thessaloniki and set in motion the machinery of the Final Solution. Of the 43,533 Thessaloniki Jews sent to the camps, from March through August 1943 nineteen trainloads of Jews left the city for Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they were murdered. Before the Holocaust, Thessaloniki had the largest Jewish community in Greece, with approximately 56,000 members. After the Holocaust, only 1,950 returned to the city, representing a loss rate of 96 percent. These traumatic events are not mentioned. References to the deportation of the Jews from Thessaloniki would provide students with the opportunity to realize that the Holocaust is not a distant event but is connected to people who belonged to their grandparents' generation and were part of the city's cultural heritage.

*The Persecution of the Jews by the Nazis*

*Thessaloniki, this beautiful flower of the Balkans, where a quarter of the population was Jewish and adorned the city with its distinguished culture, would become "Judenrein" (Yudenrein: free of Jews), like all other cities where the demons of the marked century set foot. The Jewish shops with their signs in Ladino, Hebrew, and Greek, which gave the "Bride of the North" a cosmopolitan air of progress and advanced European commerce and which, when they closed on Saturdays, left it deserted, would close forever, sealing its five centuries of spring. The descendants of those persecuted in Barcelona, Madrid, Segovia, Alicante, Córdoba, and Toledo, whose ancestors had found under the smiling sky of the city the halcyon days their souls sought to soothe and warm, and who had built their lives there from scratch like a good builder builds his house, were uprooted for good.*

*Nina Kokkalidou-Nachmia, Reina Zilberta, A Child in the Ghetto of Thessaloniki, Oceanida Publishing, 1996.*

**Example 14.**

**Religious Textbook *A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives*, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 9.**

In the chapter titled “The transition to a New School Community, a New Phase of Life,” an excerpt from Anne’s Frank diary is included to offer a glimpse into the personal story of this teenage Holocaust victim. Anne Frank, one of the hidden children during the Nazi Occupation, shared her feelings of uncertainty and disappointment as she began her new school experience. The chapter highlights Anne’s initial struggles to adjust to the new environment, underscoring the emotional challenges she faced. The historical context of Anne’s story is presented, noting that all members of her family were victims of the Holocaust except for her father, Otto Frank, who survived. A photograph of Anne from her final year of primary school in 1940 is also included. These testimonies are vital in conveying personal experiences of young children during the war, offering a humanizing perspective that deepens students’ understanding of historical events.

### iii. Από το Ημερολόγιο της Άννας Φρανκ



Πρόκειται για το ημερολόγιο που κρατούσε η Γερμανοεβραία Άννα Φρανκ στο Άμστερνταμ, όσο καιρό κρυβόταν με την οικογένειά της από τους Γερμανούς, κατά τη διάρκεια του Β΄ Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου. Η Άννα Φρανκ και η οικογένειά της συνελήφθησαν από την Γκεστάπο. Επέζησε μόνο ο πατέρας της, Όττο Φρανκ, χάρη στον οποίο εκδόθηκε το 1947 το ημερολόγιο. Έχει μεταφραστεί σε 30 γλώσσες.

*Την πρώτη μέρα στο Γυμνάσιο έβρεχε πολύ. Ένα μεγάλο πλήθος από παιδιά βρίσκονταν στο σχολείο: ομάδες αγοριών και κοριτσιών στέκονταν ολόγυρα κουβεντιάζοντας. Κάποιοι περιδιάβαιναν απ’ τη μια ομάδα στην άλλη αναγνωρίζοντας φίλους και γνωστούς και ρωτώντας «σε ποια τάξη πας;». Εκτός από την Λιζ, δεν ήξερα ούτε έναν που θα μπορούσε να είναι συμμαθητής μου κι αυτό δεν ήταν και πολύ ευχάριστο. Στην τάξη μας, ο δάσκαλος φώναξε και έλεγξε τα ονόματα των μαθητών, μας ενημέρωσε για το ποια βιβλία έπρεπε να παραγγεληθούν και κάποιες άλλες λεπτομέρειες. Για να πω την αλήθεια, ήμουν βαθιά απογοητευμένη. Περίμενα τουλάχιστον να δω το πρόγραμμα και να γνωρίσω τον διευθυντή του σχολείου. Όταν επέστρεψα στο σπίτι έκανα μια συναρπαστική περιγραφή των εμπειριών μου, αλλά για να λέμε την αλήθεια, δεν ήξερα για το σχολείο, τους δασκάλους, τα παιδιά και το πρόγραμμα τίποτε περισσότερο από όσα και πριν! Το σχολείο άρχισε μια βδομάδα αργότερα. Και πάλι έβρεχε. Μας χώρισαν σε ομάδες των είκοσι. Αυτό σήμαινε ότι θα ανήκα πια σ’ αυτή την ομάδα συμμαθητών.*

Από το Ημερολόγιο της Άννας Φρανκ

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

III. Here is an excerpt from *The Diary of Anne Frank*

*This refers to the diary kept by the German-Jewish Anne Frank in Amsterdam while she and her family were hiding from the Germans during World War II. Anne Frank and her family were arrested by the Gestapo. Only her father, Otto Frank, survived, and it was through him that the diary was published in 1947. It has been translated into 30 languages.*

*The first day of middle school, it was raining heavily. A large crowd of children was at school: groups of boys and girls were standing around, chatting. Some were moving from one group to another, meeting friends and acquaintances, and asking, "What class are you in?" Apart from Liz, I didn't know anyone who could be a classmate, and this was not very pleasant. In our classroom, the teacher called out and checked the students' names, informed us about which books we needed to order, and other details. To be honest, I was deeply disappointed. I had expected at least to see the timetable and meet the school principal. When I got home, I made an exciting description of my experiences, but, to tell the truth, I didn't know any more about the school, the teachers, the children, or the timetable than I did before! School started a week later. Again, it was raining. We were divided into groups of twenty. This meant that I would now belong to this group of classmates.*

*Here is an excerpt from *The Diary of Anne Frank**

## Example 15.

*Greek Language, Primary School, Grade 6, 2012, p. 74-76.*

A Greek language lesson in the educational unit “War and Peace” includes an excerpt from the diary of Anne Frank.<sup>82</sup> This unit aims to bridge personal testimonies with historical facts, helping students better understand and empathize with the experiences of individuals like Anne Frank within the broader context of the World War II. The excerpt describes the negative emotions experienced by a Jewish child during the war, conveying that she belongs to a particular group of war victim.<sup>83</sup>

The unit includes the following suggested questions, designed to facilitate students’ understanding of Anne Frank’s personal experiences and their connection to the Holocaust: Students are encouraged to analyze Anne Frank’s emotional response to the war and the evolution of her feelings throughout the diary entry. The questions focus on understanding specific impacts of the war as described by Anne Frank and prompt students to consider additional consequences of war in general. Moreover, the questions aim to help students identify how Anne Frank employs logical arguments and emotional appeals in her writing, enhancing their understanding of rhetorical techniques. Students are encouraged to explore the rhetorical function of Anne Frank’s questions and their purpose in her writing, helping them understand the use of rhetorical devices. Finally, the questions stimulate critical thinking about the causes of wars by prompting students to analyze various factors and perspectives, encouraging them to explore the complex reasons behind conflicts.

### Σκέψεις ενός παιδιού για τον πόλεμο

Στη διάρκεια του Δεύτερου Παγκόσμιου πολέμου, η 12χρονη Εβραία Άννα Φρανκ έγραφε τις σκέψεις της στο ημερολόγιό της, ενώ κρυβόταν από τους Γερμανούς κατακτητές.

**Τετάρτη 3 Μαρτίου 1944**

Είναι μια φοβερή εποχή. Γύρω ησασομανάει ο πόλεμος και κανένας δε γνωρίζει αν θα είναι ζωντανός την άλλη μέρα. Θυμάμαι που ζούσαμε όλοι μαζί στην πόλη και περιμένεμα από στιγμή σε στιγμή να την αδειάσουν ή να φύγουμε. Οι μέρες μας ήταν γεμάτες κανονίες και πυροβολισμούς και τις νύχτες μυστηριώδεις ήχοι έρχονταν από τα βόθρα. Αυτό συνεκίστακε έτσι καμιά βδομάδα, ώσπου ένα βράδυ μάς σκέπασε μια νύχτα που κρατάει ακόμη και σήμερα.

Θυμάμαι σαν τώρα εκείνη τη στιγμή. Πρέπει να ήταν αργά το βράδυ, όταν ακούστηκαν ξαφνικά τρομερές εκρήξεις. Το βάλλαμε στα πόδια όσο πιο γρήγορα μπορούσαμε. Παντού γύρω μας έτρεχαν άνθρωποι που φώναζαν. Τα σπιτία καίγονταν, έτσι ώστε όλα τα πράγματα φαινόταν πυρωμένα και κόκκινα. Δεν είναι δυνατό να πω πόση ώρα έτρεχα έτσι, πάντα με την εικόνα των σπιτιών που καίγονταν, των προσώπων που ούρλιαζαν παραμορφωμένα μπρος στα μάτια μου.



Ενότητα 17  
Πόλεμος και ειρήνη

Συνέχεια αναρωτιόμαστε απειλησμένα: «Γιατί πρέπει να γίνεται ο πόλεμος; Γιατί οι άνθρωποι δεν μπορούν να ζήσουν ειρηνικά; Γιατί όλη αυτή η καταστροφή;». Στο ερώτημα αυτό δεν είναι εύκολο να βρούμε απάντηση. Αλήθεια, γιατί φτιάχνουν ολόένα μεγαλύτερα αεροπλάνα με όλο και πιο βαριές βόμβες, ενώ την ίδια στιγμή χτίζουν τα κατεστραμμένα σπιτία; Γιατί σπαταλούν δισεκατομμύρια κάθε μέρα για τον πόλεμο, ενώ φαίνεται ότι δεν υπάρχει ούτε μια δεκάρα διαθέσιμη για τα φάρμακα, τους φτωχούς και τους καλλιτέχνες; Γιατί υπάρχουν άνθρωποι που πενούν, ενώ σε άλλα μέρη της γης έχουν τόσα τρόφιμα που τα αφήνουν να σαπίζουν; Μήπως οι άνθρωποι είναι τρελοί;

Δεν μπορώ να πιστέψω ότι υπεύθυνοι για τον πόλεμο είναι μόνο οι ισχυροί, οι πλούσιοι και οι πολιτικοί. Όχι, και οι απλοί άνθρωποι μπορεί να θέλουν τον πόλεμο, αλλιώς οι λαοί θα είχαν επαναστατήσει προ πολλού. Είναι το ένστικτο της καταστροφής που οδηγεί τους ανθρώπους στον πόλεμο, κι αν όλο το ανθρώπινο γένος, χωρίς εξαίρεση, δεν αλλιάξει, οι πόλεμοι δεν πρόκειται να σταματήσουν. Οι πολιτισμοί θα καταστρέφονται, ό,τι ωραίο χτίζεται θα γκρεμίζεται και η ανθρωπότητα θα αρχίζει ξανά και ξανά από την αρχή.

Έχω νιώσει πολλές φορές παγιδευμένη αλλά ποτέ απειλησμένη. Στο ημερολόγιό μου μιλάω για τις στερήσεις σαν να πρόκειται για κάτι διασκεδαστικό. Έχω πάρει την απόφαση να ζήσω μια ενδιαφέρουσα ζωή, διαφορετική από τη ζωή του απλού κοριτσιού και, αργότερα, από τη ζωή της απλής νοικοκυράς. Είμαι νέα και δυνατή. Είναι ανάγκη να επιβιώσω και αρνούμαι να κλείω όλη την ώρα. Κάθε μέρα ωριμάζω εσωτερικά και αισθάνομαι την ειρήνη να πλησιάζει.

Το ημερολόγιο της Άννας Φρανκ, εκδ. Ζαχαρόπουλος, Αθήνα, 1983 (διασκευή)

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

82 In Greece, many translations and reprints of Anne Frank’s diary have been published, which are categorized under children’s and young adult literature. In recent years, graphic novels based on Anne Frank’s diary have also been released in Greece. See: Ari Folman (adapter) & David Polonsky (Illustrator), *Anne Frank’s Diary: The Graphic Adaptation*, Athens: Patakis, 2017.

<https://www.patakis.gr/product/506923/vivlia-viografies--ntokoumenta-viografies-autoviografies/To-hmerologio-ths-Annas-Frank-Graphic-diary/>

Sid Jacobson (writer) & Ernie Colón (artist), *Anne Frank: The Graphic Biography*, Athens: Patakis, 2017.

<https://www.patakis.gr/product/505526/vivlia-paidika--efhrika-graphic-novels-komiks/Anna-Frank-H-viografia-se-komik-Se-sunergasia-me-to-Spiti-ths-Annas-Frank>

Sanchez Isabel Maria Vegara (adapter) & Dorosheva Sveta (Illustrator), *Little Girls with Big Ideas - Anne Frank*, Athens: Papadopoulos editions, 2019.

<https://www.epbooks.gr/shop/paidika-neanika-biblia/eikonografimena-biblia-gia-paidia/mikra-koritsia-me-megales-idees-anna-f/>

83 Approximately 12,000 children and adolescents were deported from Thessaloniki and met a tragic death at the Auschwitz death camp. See Stella Salem (prologue Toni Molho), *The Lost Children of Thessaloniki Were School-aged Children, Thessaloniki*: Epikentro publications, 2022. Pothiti Hantzaroula, *Child Survivors of the Holocaust in Greece: Memory, Testimony and Subjectivity*, London: Routledge, 2020.



**1. α.** Πώς αισθάνθηκε η Άννα Φρανκ με το ξέσπασμα του πολέμου; Ποια άλλα συναισθήματα φανερώνει στο τέλος του κειμένου;



**β.** Ποιες συνέπειες του πολέμου αναφέρει η Άννα Φρανκ στο ημερολόγιό της; Μπορείτε να αναφέρετε άλλες συνέπειες των πολέμων;

**γ.** Σε προηγούμενη ενότητα (ενότητα 6) είχαμε δει πως άλλοτε πείθουμε κάποιον λογικά και άλλοτε προσπαθούμε να τον συγκινήσουμε. Στο κείμενο, η Άννα Φρανκ χρησιμοποιεί και τους δύο τρόπους. Μπορείτε να βρείτε ένα παράδειγμα για τον καθένα;

**δ.** Στην 3η παράγραφο, η Άννα Φρανκ διατυπώνει συνεχείς ερωτήσεις. Νομίζετε ότι αυτές οι ερωτήσεις απευθύνονται σε κάποιον συγκεκριμένα; Ξέρετε πώς λέγονται αυτές οι ερωτήσεις και γιατί χρησιμοποιούνται;



Λέξεις... φράσεις... κείμενα  
**Γλώσσα**



**2.** Ποιους θεωρεί η Άννα Φρανκ υπεύθυνους για τον πόλεμο; Για ποιους λόγους νομίζετε εσείς ότι γίνονται πόλεμοι;

### Thoughts of a Child on War

During World War II, 12-year-old Jewish Anne Frank wrote her thoughts in her diary while hiding from the German occupiers. Wednesday, March 3, 1944

*It is a terrible time. The war rages around us, and no one knows if they will be alive the next day. I remember when we all lived together in the city and waited at any moment for it to be evacuated or for us to leave. Our days were filled with cannon fire and gunshots, and at night, mysterious sounds came from the depths. This continued for about a week, until one night we were enveloped by a darkness that persists even today.*

*I remember that moment as if it were now. It must have been late at night when suddenly there were terrifying explosions. We fled as quickly as we could. People were running around us shouting. The houses were burning, so everything looked red-hot. I cannot say how long I ran like that, always with the image of burning houses and distorted faces screaming before my eyes.*

*We kept wondering desperately: "Why must there be war? Why can't people live peacefully? Why all this destruction?" It is not easy to find an answer to these questions. Why do they keep making bigger airplanes with heavier bombs while at the same time rebuilding the destroyed houses? Why spend billions every day on war when it seems there is not a single penny available for medicine, the poor, and artists? Why are there people starving, while in other parts of the world there is so much food that it is left to rot? Are people insane? I cannot believe that only the powerful, the rich, and the politicians are responsible for the war. No, even ordinary people may want the war, otherwise the people would have rebelled long ago. It is the instinct for destruction that drives people to war, and if the entire human race, without exception, does not change, wars will not stop. Cultures will be destroyed, everything beautiful that is built will be demolished, and humanity will start again and again from scratch.*

*I have often felt trapped but never hopeless. In my diary, I talk about deprivations as if they were something enjoyable. I have decided to live an interesting life, different from that of an ordinary girl and later, from that of a simple housewife. I am young and strong. I must survive and refuse to cry all the time. Every day I mature internally and feel peace approaching.*  
*The Diary of Anne Frank, edited by Zacharopoulos, Athens,*

1. a. How did Anne Frank feel about the outbreak of the war? What other emotions does she reveal at the end of the text?  
b. What consequences of the war does Anne Frank mention in her diary entry? Can you list other consequences of wars?  
c. In a previous section (Section 6), we discussed how we sometimes persuade someone logically and other times try to evoke emotions. In the text, Anne Frank uses both approaches. Can you find an example of each  
d. In the 3rd paragraph, Anne Frank poses a series of questions. Do you think these questions are directed at anyone specific? What are these types of questions called, and why are they used?

2. Who does Anne Frank consider responsible for the war?

**Example 16.**

*Modern and Contemporary History, Junior High School, Grade 9, 2015, p. 132.*

A History lesson on the World War II includes a photograph of the traumatic events of the Black Sabbath in Thessaloniki during the German Occupation.<sup>84</sup> Students are given a brief account of the division of occupied Greece, reference to the government of Greek collaborators (traitors), the imposition of repressive measures, the humiliation of Greek Jews in Thessaloniki, the Nazi execution of Greek Jews, and the destruction of the prewar Jewish Communities.<sup>85</sup> The book's main text references how "the Jewish communities of Greece (Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Corfu, etc.) were exterminated by the Nazis." The lesson includes an image of the traumatic event of the Black Sabbath in Thessaloniki's Freedom Square from July 11, 1942, but offers no further description about the events of the Black Sabbath. Nor is the name "Black Sabbath" referred to explicitly. On the right, the textbook depicts one of the few Thessaloniki Holocaust survivors of Black Sabbath, Samuel Rouben, yet his name is omitted.<sup>86</sup>

### Κατοχή, Αντίσταση και Απελευθέρωση

**Η Κατοχή** Η κατεχόμενη Ελλάδα χωρίστηκε σε τρεις ζώνες, τη γερμανική (Κρήτη, Αττική, ορισμένα νησιά του Αιγαίου, το μεγαλύτερο τμήμα της Μακεδονίας), τη βουλγαρική (τμήμα της ανατολικής Μακεδονίας και Θράκη) και την ιταλική (η υπόλοιπη ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα, τα μη γερμανοκρατούμενα νησιά του Αιγαίου και τα Επτάνησα). Οι κατακτητές διόρισαν κυβέρνηση από Έλληνες συνεργάτες τους (δωσίλογοι) με πρωθυπουργό τον Γ. Τσολάκογλου, η οποία βασίστηκε, όσον αφορά τα πρόσωπα, στο καθεστώς Μεταξά.



1. Έλληνες Εβραίοι υφίστανται εξευτελισμούς από τους ναζί στη Θεσσαλονίκη.

Επίσης, επιβλήθηκαν μέτρα καταστολής (απαγόρευση νυχτερινής κυκλοφορίας, λογοκρισία, συλλήψεις, βασανιστήρια, εκτελέσεις). Στην Α. Μακεδονία, η πολιτική εκβουλγαρισμού που επιχείρησαν να εφαρμόσουν οι Βούλγαροι φασίστες προκάλεσε εξέγερση των Ελλήνων η οποία αντιμετωπίστηκε με μαζικές εκτελέσεις. Οι εβραϊκές κοινότητες της Ελλάδας (Θεσσαλονίκη, Ιωάννινα, Κέρκυρα κ.ά.) ξεκληρίστηκαν από τους ναζί.

Οι κατακτητές δέσμευσαν κάθε οικονομικό πόρο της

#### *Occupation, Resistance, and Liberation*

*The Occupation Occupied Greece was divided into three zones: the German-occupied zone (Crete, Attica, some Aegean islands, and most of Macedonia), the Bulgarian-occupied zone (part of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace), and the Italian-occupied zone (the remaining mainland Greece, non-German-occupied Aegean islands, and the Ionian Islands). The occupiers appointed a government of Greek collaborators (traitors) with Georgios Tsolakoglou as Prime Minister, which was based, in terms of personnel, on the Metaxas regime. Additionally, repressive measures were imposed (curfew, censorship, arrests, torture, executions). In Eastern Macedonia, the Bulgarian fascists' policy of Bulgarization led to an uprising by the Greeks, which was met with mass executions. The Jewish communities of Greece (Thessaloniki, Ioannina, Corfu, etc.) were exterminated by the Nazis. Greek Jews suffer humiliations by the Nazis in Thessaloniki.*

*Photograph's caption: Greek Jews suffer humiliation at the hands of the Nazis in Thessaloniki*

84 ww2stories.gr. "Stories about World War II Enriching our knowledge about World War II". <https://ww2stories.gr/index.php/en/?id=90>.

85 Evangelos Hekimoglou, "THE CHRONICLE OF THESSALONIKI PERSECUTION," <https://thefirsttraintoauschwitz.blogspot.com/>.

86 "A German corporal (Obergefreiter) leads three Jewish men in forced calisthenics on Eleftheria (Freedom) Square in Salonika". Collections. ushmm.org. <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1087226>.

## Example 17.

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 129.*

A chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust” underscores the pivotal role played by the United Nations in the Nuremberg Trials, connecting students to the relationship between historical science and the universal value of justice.<sup>87</sup> This chapter is significant because it introduces students to the administration of justice concerning crimes against humanity and the legal framework surrounding genocide. After describing the commission of the trials, the text concludes with the statement: “The crime of the Genocide of the Jews. The attempt at genocide of the Jews was characterized as a major crime against humanity.” This emphasizes the significance of the trials as a form of requital for the crimes of the Holocaust.

However, the text does not mention that trials of the Nazis continued both in Germany and in other countries, such as the trial of Adolf Eichmann, who was convicted and executed in Israel in 1962. In the case of Greece, Special Collaborationist Courts in Athens and administrative purges were established and implemented in the early postwar years (1944-1949), but these are not discussed in the text. The most significant trial in Greece, which continues to engage researchers today, is the trial of Max Merten. In February 1959, Merten, the Nazi war criminal who served in Thessaloniki from 1942 to 1944, was tried in Athens. The Merten case shook the political landscape at the time and led to prolonged controversies.<sup>88</sup>

## 5. ΤΑ ΕΓΚΛΗΜΑΤΑ ΠΟΛΕΜΟΥ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΤΗΤΑΣ - ΤΟ ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ

**Η δίκη της Νυρεμβέργης.** Η πρόκληση και η διεξαγωγή του Β΄ Παγκόσμιου Πολέμου υπήρξε πρόξενος ακραίων εκδηλώσεων βίας. Μετά τη λήξη των εχθροπραξιών μεικτή διεθνής επιτροπή υπό την αιγίδα του **ΟΗΕ** επιφορτίστηκε με τον εντοπισμό και την υποδειγματική τιμωρία των ενόχων. Ειδικότερα, κλήθηκαν να λογοδοτήσουν οι υπεύθυνοι: πρώτον, για την προπαρασκευή και την πρόκληση του πολέμου· δεύτερον, για τη διάπραξη εγκλημάτων πολέμου κατά παράβαση των κανόνων που οφείλουν να διέπουν τη συμπεριφορά των εμπολέμων· τρίτον, για τη διάπραξη εγκλημάτων κατά της ανθρωπότητας. Η ευθύνη για τις παραβάσεις αυτές βάρυνε κυρίως τη γερμανική πλευρά. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό εντάχθηκε η διεξαγωγή της δίκης της Νυρεμβέργης, μεταξύ Ιανουαρίου και Οκτωβρίου 1946, και της καταδίκης σε θάνατο των ηγετικών στελεχών, πολιτικών και στρατιωτικών, της χιτλερικής Γερμανίας. Παράλληλα, όργανα διεθνή, αλλά και εθνικά, επέβαλαν κυρώσεις σε βάρος εκατοντάδων υπευθύνων για καταστροφές και βιαιότητες που είχαν διαπραχθεί στη διάρκεια του πολέμου.

**Το έγκλημα της γενοκτονίας των Εβραίων.** Ως μείζον έγκλημα κατά της ανθρωπότητας χαρακτηρίστηκε η προσπάθεια γενοκτονίας των Εβραίων.

### Μαρτυρία ενός Έλληνα Εβραίου από τη Θεσσαλονίκη που επέζησε από το Άουσβιτς

«Μετά την άφιξή μας στο στρατόπεδο και την εξαφάνιση της γυναίκας μου και των γονιών μου, η μουσική ήταν αυτή που βοήθησε να μη βουλιάξω στην απελπισία. Γιατί ένας άνθρωπος απελπισμένος είναι ήδη ένας άνθρωπος νεκρός. Η μουσική μου επέτρεψε να υποφέρω το ανυπόφορο, αυτή την ανείπωτη φρίκη που ένιωσα από την πρώτη κιόλας στιγμή που μπήκα στο στρατόπεδο και έμαθα για την τύχη των δικών μου. Τα περισσότερα μέλη της οικογένειάς μου είχαν χαθεί [...]. Τότε, παρά τον πόνο που αισθανόμουν, κατάφερα να διατηρήσω το ηθικό μου, κι αυτό χάρη στη μουσική. Μου είχαν πάρει το βιολί μου, όμως μου είχαν δώσει σχεδόν αμέσως ένα άλλο. Εκείνη την πρώτη μέρα ήταν σαν να είχα δεχτεί ένα χτύπημα στο κεφάλι. Όμως, ακόμη και σ' εκείνη την κατάσταση, μου ζήτησαν να παίξω μουσική. Και έπαιξα. Το πρώτο αίσθημα απελπισίας που με είχε πλημμυρίσει μεταμορφώθηκε σε αίσθημα ελπίδας χάρη στα προφητικά εκείνα λόγια του Blockster, το πρώτο βράδυ που έφτασα στο μπλοκ: «Ελπίζω ότι δε θα πεθάνεις εδώ μέσα»».

Ιάκωβος Στρούμσα, *Διάλεξα τη ζωή. Από τη Θεσσαλονίκη στο Άουσβιτς*, Ίδρυμα ΕΤΣ ΑΧΑΪΜ/εκδ. Παρατηρητής, Θεσσαλονίκη 1997, σ. 55-56.

### Η τύχη των Εβραίων της Θεσσαλονίκης

«Οι Γερμανοί είχαν ζητήσει από τον Αρχιραβίνο της Κοινότητας, Ταβί Κόρετς, να τους παραδώσει κατάλογο με τα ονόματα όλων των μελών της Εβραϊκής Κοινότητας και εκείνος, πιθανώς ελπίζοντας ότι αυτό θα τους κατευνάσει, τον παρέδωσε. Το σκηνικό για τα όσα θα επακολουθούσαν ήταν τώρα έτοιμο: Το Σάββατο, 14 Μαρτίου του 1943 [...] 2.800 άτομα περίπου συνελήφθησαν και την επόμενη ημέρα εκτοπίστηκαν με τρένο στην Πολωνία, στοιβαγμένοι σε βαγόνια μεταφοράς ζώων, υπό αθλιότερες συνθήκες. Οι

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

<sup>87</sup> See Kokkinos, Giorgos, Kimourtzis, Panagiotis & Karasarinis, Markos (ed.), *History and Justice*, Athens: Asini publications, 2020

<sup>88</sup> Kateřina Králová, “Nazi Crimes, Max Merten and his Prosecution as Reflected in Greece and beyond”, *Journal of Modern European History*, Volume 22, Issue 2, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1611894424124144>.

### ***The Nuremberg Trials***

*The instigation and conduct of World War II led to extreme manifestations of violence. After the cessation of hostilities, a mixed international commission under the auspices of the UN was tasked with identifying and exemplarily punishing the guilty. Specifically, those responsible were called to account for: first, the preparation and instigation of the war; second, the commission of war crimes in violation of the rules governing the conduct of belligerents; third, the commission of crimes against humanity. Responsibility for these violations primarily lay with the German side. Within this context, the Nuremberg Trials were conducted between January and October 1946, resulting in the death sentences of the leading political and military figures of Nazi Germany. Concurrently, international and national bodies imposed sanctions against hundreds of individuals responsible for the destruction and atrocities committed during the war. The Crime of the Genocide of the Jews. The attempt at genocide of the Jews was characterized as a major crime against humanity.*

**Example 18.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World, Primary School, Grade 6, 2015, p. 210.*

In a history lesson titled “The German Offensive and World War II,” the textbook provides a succinct description of the Holocaust, detailing the Nazi regime’s implementation of the so-called “Final Solution”—a systematic plan aimed at the extermination of the Jewish people. The text references the traumatic events of the deportation of Jews, including thousands of Greek Jews, to “concentration camps” focusing on Auschwitz and Dachau, and the extermination of hundreds of thousands of Jews from across Europe. The Holocaust is defined as one of the “most tragic events of World War II.” Visual historical sources, primarily photographs, are predominant in the lesson.

Furthermore, the textbook includes several photographs portraying important historical events. One photograph depicts events from Black Sabbath, July 11, 1942, in Eleftherias Square in Thessaloniki, where approximately 7,000 to 9,000 male Jews, aged 18 to 45 were forcibly gathered, subjected to humiliations, and beaten. This event marked the beginning of Thessaloniki’s forced Jewish labor in various Nazi projects, including road and railway construction, bridge building, airport construction, and quarry work<sup>89</sup>.

The bottom right image relates to another dramatic historical event. In the small hours before dawn on March 25, 1944, the Final Solution was abruptly enforced in Ioannina. In the early hours of that snow-covered morning, 1,870 Romaniote Jews were forcibly uprooted. Residents outside the castle walls were gathered in Mavilis Square, while those within the castle walls were taken to the Military Hospital. They were transported in 97 covered lorries to Trikala, then Larissa, and finally, under appalling conditions, by train to Auschwitz. There, and in other death camps, 92 percent of the Jewish population of Ioannina were annihilated.<sup>90</sup>

The photograph on the left depicts children imprisoned in the Auschwitz extermination camp.<sup>91</sup> The majority were sent to die in the gas chambers after selection, though sporadically, teenage boys and girls were registered as laborers in the camp. While the inclusion of these images is important, the absence of further discussion surrounding these images and their portrayal of Greek history renders the textbook’s treatment of the Holocaust incomplete. Without the necessary historical context for the images included, students are unable to fully grasp the significance of this chapter in history.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

89 Yakov Benmayor, “The Jews of Thessaloniki”. <http://www.jmth.gr/article-20032014-oi-evraioi-tis-thessalonikis>.

90 Jewish Museum.gr. “The Jewish Community of Ioannina – A Journey Through Time”. <https://jewishmuseum.gr/en/psifiaki-ekthesi/the-jewish-community-of-ioannina-a-journey-through-time/>.

91 Children in Auschwitz behind barbed wire. The picture was posed for Red Army correspondents in April 1945 (covered behind a shoulder, S.f.l.: Marta Wise) (Photo by PAI-Foto.pl/ullstein bild via Getty Images). <https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/year-old-miriam-ziegler-81-year-old-paula-lebovics-85-year-newspphoto/>

## Ματιά στο παρελθόν

### Το Ολοκαύτωμα των Εβραίων

Στη διάρκεια του Β' Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου η ναζιστική Γερμανία έβαλε σε εφαρμογή το περίφημο σχέδιο της «τελικής λύσης», τον αφανισμό δηλαδή των Εβραίων. Στα στρατόπεδα συγκέντρωσης στο Άουσβιτς (φωτ. δίπλα), στο Νταχάου και αλλού συγκεντρώθηκαν εκατοντάδες χιλιάδες Εβραίοι απ' όλη την Ευρώπη, με σκοπό να εξοντωθούν. Ανάμεσά τους και χιλιάδες Εβραίοι της Ελλάδας (φωτ. κάτω). Το Ολοκαύτωμα των Εβραίων ανήκει στα τραγικότερα συμβάντα του Β' Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου.



#### *The Holocaust of the Jews*

*During World War II, Nazi Germany implemented the infamous "Final Solution," which aimed at the extermination of the Jews. Hundreds of thousands of Jews from across Europe were gathered in concentration camps such as Auschwitz (pictured above), Dachau, and others, with the intent to annihilate them. Among them were thousands of Jews from Greece (pictured below). The Holocaust of the Jews is among the most tragic events of World War II.*

**Example 19.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World, Primary School, Grade 6, 2015, p. 209.*

In a History lesson on “The German Offensive and World War II”, the Holocaust is referenced as being “among the most tragic moments of the war,” alongside the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and is referred to as “the extermination of a large number of people.”<sup>92</sup> Notably, no distinction between the different types of camps (concentration camps, forced labor camps, and extermination or death camps) is given.

Although these references are significant, the textbook omits key historical details of the Holocaust, including the forced labor and deportation of Thessaloniki’s Jews, the existence of over 1,000 Nazi camps (such as Haidari in Athens and Thessaloniki), and even excludes Holocaust education from the teacher’s guide objectives.

Ο Β΄ Παγκόσμιος Πόλεμος τερματίστηκε το 1945, με νίκη των συμμαχικών δυνάμεων. Οι καταστροφές ήταν για όλους ανυπολόγιστες. Προκλήθηκαν μεγάλες υλικές ζημιές ενώ εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι έχασαν τη ζωή τους. Από τις τραγικότερες στιγμές του πολέμου, το Ολοκαύτωμα των Εβραίων στα ναζιστικά στρατόπεδα συγκέντρωσης και η ρίψη ατομικής βόμβας στις ιαπωνικές πόλεις Ναγκασάκι και Χιροσίμα από τους Αμερικανούς για να εξαναγκάσουν την Ιαπωνία να παραδοθεί, προκάλεσαν φρίκη και συγκλόνισαν την ανθρωπότητα.

### Γλωσσάρι

**Φάλαγγα:** Στρατιωτικό σώμα με ιδιαίτερη οργάνωση.

**Ολοκαύτωμα:** Η εξόντωση μεγάλου αριθμού ανθρώπων.

**Στρατόπεδα συγκέντρωσης:** Χώροι αναγκαστικής εργασίας και εκτέλεσης αιχμαλώτων.

*World War II ended in 1945 with the victory of the Allied forces. The devastation was incalculable for everyone. Significant material damage was caused, and millions of people lost their lives. Among the most tragic moments of the war were the Holocaust of the Jews in Nazi concentration camps and the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima by the Americans to force Japan to surrender. These events caused horror and shocked humanity.*

*Glossary:*

*Phalanx: A military unit with a specific organization.*

*Holocaust: The extermination of a large number of people.*

*Concentration Camps: Places of forced labor and execution of prisoners.*

92 For the use of specific terminology when approaching the Holocaust in education, see Giorgos Kokkinos (ed.), *Approaching the Holocaust in Greek Scholl*. Athens: Taxideftis publications, 2007.

**Example 20.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present)*, High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 130.

In the chapter “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust,” a photograph of the entrance to Auschwitz-Birkenau is included with a caption noting that “numerous Jews and Roma were exterminated” there. The site is presented as being located in present-day Poland, highlighting camp’s continued existence as a place of remembrance that can be visited today. However, the example omits details of Greek Jewish victims and fails to address the Holocaust’s local dimension.

Χάρτης των κυριότερων ναζιστικών στρατοπέδων συγκέντρωσης στη Γερμανία και την κατεχόμενη Ευρώπη, όπου θανατώθηκαν εκατομμύρια κρατούμενοι. Ο χάρτης αναπαριστά την πολιτική δομή της Ευρώπης που είχαν επιβάλει κατά τη διάρκεια της κυριαρχίας τους οι κατακτητές.

Φωτογραφία από το γερμανικό στρατόπεδο συγκέντρωσης του Άουσβιτς της σημερινής Πολωνίας, όπου εξοντώθηκαν πολυάριθμοι Εβραίοι και Τσιγγάνοι. Στην είσοδο του στρατοπέδου διακρίνεται η επιγραφή «Arbeit macht frei» («η εργασία απελευθερώνει»).



[...] A photograph from the German concentration camp of Auschwitz in present-day Poland, where numerous Jews and Roma were exterminated. At the entrance of the camp, the sign “Arbeit macht frei” (“work sets you free”) is visible.



**Example 22.**

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present)*, High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 131.

In the chapter titled “War Crimes Against Humanity—The Holocaust,” the main methods through which the Jewish population were exterminated are summarized as part of the “Final Solution”. There is also mention of the Greek Jewish victims, whose numbers total 70,000, and the Warsaw Ghetto is described as a place “where 500,000 Jews were crowded and confined.” Historic examples of Nazi practices of extermination are included, such as physical extermination following painful confinement in ghettos or concentration camps, mass executions, and the use of poisonous gases like “Zyklon B” to cause mass deaths. That said, the phenomenon of antisemitism as an attitude and practice of the Nazis is not analyzed in depth, leaving students without a thorough understanding of historical events.

Υπό δίωξη στη Γερμανία από το 1933, οι τελευταίοι αυτοί είδαν τη θέση τους βαθμιαία να επιδεινώνεται, ενόσω οι ναζί επεξέτειναν την κυριαρχία τους στην Ευρώπη – ιδιαίτερα την Ανατολική. Η κατάληψη της Πολωνίας είχε ως αποτέλεσμα τη δημιουργία του γκέτο\* της Βαρσοβίας, όπου συνωστίστηκαν, υπό περιορισμό, 500.000 Εβραίοι. Μετά την εισβολή στη Ρωσία επιχειρήθηκε η καθολική πλέον εξόντωσή τους στην Ευρώπη. Προκειμένου να επιτευχθεί η «τελική λύση» του προβλήματος, το οποίο, κατά τους ναζί, προκαλούσε η εκτεταμένη διεθνής παρουσία του εβραϊκού στοιχείου, επινοήθηκαν και εφαρμόστηκαν από τον Χίτλερ και τους συνεργάτες του εφιαλτικές πρακτικές, πρωτοφανέστες στην παγκόσμια ιστορία: φυσική εξόντωση μετά από επώδυνη παραμονή σε γκέτο ή σε στρατόπεδα συγκέντρωσης, μαζικές εκτελέσεις, χρήση δηλητηριωδών αερίων –όπως το «Τσυκλόν Β»– προκειμένου να προκληθεί μαζικά ο θάνατος. Σε εκατομμύρια αριθμούνται τα θύματα της πρωτοφανούς αυτής τραγωδίας – μόνο από την Ελλάδα πάνω από 70.000. Στρατόπεδα όπως του **Άουσβιτς**, της **Τρεμπλίνκα**, του **Νταχάου**, του **Μπέλζετς** ή του **Σόμπιμπορ** έχουν γίνει συνώνυμα απανθρωπιάς και τρόμου.

*Persecuted in Germany since 1933, these individuals saw their situation gradually worsen as the Nazis extended their control over Europe, particularly in the East. The occupation of Poland resulted in the creation of the Warsaw Ghetto, where 500,000 Jews were crowded and confined. After the invasion of Russia, their total extermination in Europe was attempted. To achieve the “final solution” to the problem that the Nazis believed was caused by the widespread international presence of the Jewish people, Hitler and his collaborators devised and implemented nightmarish practices, unprecedented in world history: physical extermination following painful confinement in ghettos or concentration camps, mass executions, and the use of poisonous gases like “Zyklon B” to cause mass deaths. The victims of this unprecedented tragedy number in the millions—over 70,000 from Greece alone. Camps such as Auschwitz, Treblinka, Dachau, Belzec, and Sobibor have become synonymous with inhumanity and terror.*

## Example 23.

*History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School Grade 12, 2018 (revised), p. 131.*

The chapter on “War Crimes Against Humanity” includes a compelling account of Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens and his appeal-protest against the German-occupied Greek government regarding the persecution of Greek Jews. It highlights the Christian Church's rejection of Nazi deportations of Jews and serves as an important teaching resource about the ‘Righteous Among the Nations’ from Greece. The excerpt describes the charitable actions of the bishop and the assistance provided by the Metropolis of Athens, which undertook positive measures to aid the Jews in 1943-44.

One example concerns a request by Archbishop Damaskinos and representatives of institutional organizations to Logothetopoulos, the prime minister of the German-appointed occupation government (December 2, 1942–April 7, 1943). In March 1943, they sought to halt the deportations of Jews from Thessaloniki to destinations outside of Greek territory: “We hope that you have indicated to the authorities that such harsh treatment of Greek Jewish nationals, as opposed to Jews of other nationalities in Greece, makes the implemented measure even more unjustifiable and, consequently, morally unacceptable.” This reference underscores the harmful policies enforced by the Nazi authorities against the Jews in occupied Greece and highlights how the Jewish community was viewed by the Christian community as their “suffering brethren.”

Ἐκκληση-διαμαρτυρία του Αρχιεπισκόπου Αθηνών Δαμασκηνού, προσηγορούμενη από πολλές προσωπικότητες της ελληνικής πνευματικής, καλλιτεχνικής και οικονομικής ζωής, προς την ελληνική –διορισμένη από τον κατακτητή- Κυβέρνηση Κατοχής για τους διωγμούς των Ελλήνων Εβραίων

«Κύριε Πρόεδρε

Ο ελληνικός λαός πληροφορείτο κατ' αυτάς μετ' ευλόγου καταπλήξεως και οδύνης ότι αι γερμανικά και στρατιωτικά Αρχαί κατοχής ήρξαντο εφαρμόζουσαι εν Θεσσαλονίκη το μέτρον της βαθμιαίας εκτοπίσεως του ελληνικού ισραηλιτικού στοιχείου έξω των ορίων της χώρας και ότι αι πρώται ομάδες των εκτοπιζομένων ευρίσκονται ήδη καθ' οδόν προς την Πολωνίαν [...]

Ἔχομεν την βεβαιότητα ότι και η κυβέρνησις σκέπτεται και αισθάνεται καθ' ον τρόπον και πάντες οι λοιποί Ἕλληνες επί του προκειμένου ζητήματος. Πιστεύομεν επί πλέον ότι θα έχετε ήδη προβή εις τα αναγκαία διαβήματα προς τας Αρχάς κατοχής διά την αναστολήν του οδυνηρού και ασκόπου μέτρου της εκτοπίσεως του εν Ελλάδι ισραηλιτικού στοιχείου. Ελπίζομεν μάλιστα ότι θα υπεδείξατε προς τους ισχυρούς ότι η τοιαύτη σκληρά μεταχειρίσις των Ισραηλιτῶν Ελλήνων υπηκόων, κατ' αντιδιαστολήν προς τους εν Ελλάδι Ισραηλίτας άλλων υπηκοοτήτων, καθιστά ἐπι μάλλον αδικαιολόγητον και κατ' ακολουθίαν ηθικῶς απαράδεκτον το τεθέν εις εφαρμογήν μέτρον. Εάν δε τυχόν προβάλλωνται λόγοι ασφαλείας προς δικαιολόγησιν αυτού, φρονούμεν ότι θα ήτο δυνατόν να προταθούν λύσεις και να ληφθούν προληπτικά μέτρα, οίον ο περιορισμός μόνον του εν δράσει άρρενος πληθυσμού (παρεκτός γερόντων και παιδιών) εις ωρισμένον μέρος της ελληνικής Επικρατείας υπό την επιτήρησιν Αρχών κατοχής, εις τρόπον ώστε και η ασφάλεια τούτων να κατοχυρωθή –έστω και κατά κινδύνου υποθετικού- και η τάξις των Ελλήνων Ισραηλιτῶν ν' αποφυγή τα δεινά επακόλουθα της δι' ης απειλείται εκτοπίσεως. Ως εκ περισσού σημειούμεν ότι εις το ανωτέρω μέτρον ο υπόλοιπος Ελληνικός λαός θα ήτο διατεθειμένος, εάν ήθελε ζητηθή, να προσθέσῃ ανενδοιάστως ολόκληρον την εγγύσην αυτού υπέρ των χειμαζομένων αδελφών αυτού [...].»

Θ. Βερέμης, Φ. Κωνσταντοπούλου (επιμ.), *Οι Ἕλληνες Εβραίοι. Στοιχεία της ιστορίας τους μέσα από διπλωματικά και ιστορικά έγγραφα του Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών*, Καστανιώτης, Αθήνα 2000, σ. 266-268.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*An appeal-protest by Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens, co-signed by many prominent figures from Greek intellectual, artistic, and economic life to the Greek government—appointed by the occupier—regarding the persecution of Greek Jews.*

*Mr. President,*

*The Greek people were informed with reasonable astonishment and sorrow that the German and military occupation authorities had begun implementing in Thessaloniki the measure of the gradual deportation of the Greek Jewish population outside the country's borders, and that the first groups of deportees are already on their way to Poland [...]*

*We are confident that the government is thinking and feeling the same way as all other Greeks regarding this issue. We also believe that you have already taken the necessary steps with the occupation authorities to suspend the painful and futile measure of deporting the Jewish population in Greece. We hope that you have indicated to the authorities that such harsh treatment of Greek Jewish nationals, as opposed to Jews of other nationalities in Greece, makes the implemented measure even more unjustifiable and, consequently, morally unacceptable. If security reasons are being cited to justify this measure, we believe that alternative solutions and preventive measures could be proposed, such as restricting only the active male population (excluding the elderly and children) to a specific area of Greek territory under the supervision of the occupation authorities, so that both their security can be safeguarded—albeit hypothetically—and the Greek Jews can avoid the dire consequences of the threatened deportation.*

*We note additionally that the rest of the Greek people would be willing, if requested, to unconditionally provide full guarantees for the protection of their suffering brethren [...]"\*\**

*Th. Veremis, F. Konstantopoulou (eds.), The Greek Jews: Elements of Their History through Diplomatic and Historical Documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kastaniotis, Athens 2000, pp. 266-268.*

**Example 24.**

*Topics in Modern Greek History, High School Grade 12, 1999-2000, p. 254.*

This History lesson addresses the systematic extermination (genocide) of the Greeks of Pontus by Young Turks and the Kemalists, offering a comparison between this and the Holocaust. The act of comparison, however, may be perceived as trivializing the Holocaust; the scale and severity of the atrocities carried out by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust appear diminished. The field of victim-centered counter-memories could lead readers to downgrade the historical significance of the Holocaust by equating it with other war crimes in history. The historical terminology used in the lesson lacks explanations of key concepts such as “antisemitism,” the “Holocaust,” the “Shoah,” the different types of Nazi camps, and, most importantly, the historical concept of genocide. However, the textbook accurately states that the Holocaust was not a matter of religion but a racial issue, introducing students to the concepts of racism and eugenics. Despite the comparison, the textbook acknowledges the uniqueness of the Holocaust as a historical event, citing one of the first academic studies on the Holocaust by a Greek historian.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, by equating different forms of suffering, historical events, and violence, the lesson risks introducing a politically correct version of historical revisionism.<sup>97</sup>

Η φύση και η μέθοδος της εξαπόλυσης συστηματικών διώξεων κατά των Ελλήνων του Πόντου από τους Νεότουρκους και τους Κεμαλικούς, ενώ έχει πολλά κοινά χαρακτηριστικά με τη γενοκτονία των Εβραίων, έχει δύο βασικές διαφορές, κατά τον Π. Ενεπεκίδη. Δεν έχει καμία ιδεολογική, κοσμοθεωρητική ή ψευδοεπιστημονική θεμελίωση περί γενετικής, ευγονικής και αρίας ή σημιτικής φυλής. Εξυπηρετούσε μόνο τη συγκεκριμένη πρακτική πολιτική σκοπιμότητα της εκκαθάρισης της Μ. Ασίας από το ελληνικό στοιχείο. Οι εξορίες των κατοίκων ολόκληρων χωριών, οι εξοντωτικές εκείνες οδοιπορίες μέσα στο χιόνι των γυναικόπαιδων και των γερόντων –οι άνδρες βρίσκονταν ήδη στα τάγματα εργασίας ή στο στρατό– συνετέλεσαν ώστε πολλοί να πεθάνουν από τις κακουχίες<sup>47</sup>.

*The nature and method of the systematic persecution of the Greeks of Pontus by the Young Turks and the Kemalists, while sharing many characteristics with the genocide of the Jews, have two fundamental differences, according to P. Enepekidis. It lacks any ideological, cosmological, or pseudoscientific basis related to genetics, eugenics, or Aryan or Semitic race theories. It served solely the specific practical political purpose of clearing Asia Minor of the Greek element. The deportations of entire villages, the deadly forced marches through the snow of women, children, and the elderly—while the men were already in labor battalions or the army—resulted in many dying from the harsh conditions.*

<sup>96</sup> Polyhronis Enepekidis, *The Persecution of the Jews in Greece 1941-1944: Based on the Secret SS Archive*, Athens: Papazisi editions, 1979.

<sup>97</sup> Regarding the historical uniqueness and exemplary nature of the Holocaust and its comparison to any other genocide or mass extermination of people, Paul Ricoeur emphasizes in his work the incomparable uniqueness of the Holocaust due to the historical particularity that defines its non-comparability (Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, history, forgetting*. University of Chicago Press, 2004). Historians, such as Yehuda Bauer, Enzo Traverso and Dirk Moses examine the same issue from different perspectives. Yehuda Bauer, *The Holocaust and Other Genocides. An introduction*, Amsterdam: University Press, 2012. Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence*. New York: The New Press, 2002. Dirk Moses, “Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the Racial Century: Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, Institute for Jewish Polic Research, 36, 4 (2002), 7-36. For Greece, see: Giorgos Kokkinos, *The Holocaust. the management of traumatic memory by perpetrators and victims*, Athens: Gutenberg publications, 2015.

# Jews and Judaism in Christian Religious Contexts

Among the general aims of the Religious Education Curriculum for General and Vocational High Schools of 2020 is the “familiarization and communication with the ‘other,’ which aims at cultivating the ability for dialogue and respect towards difference.” Specifically, in high school, the title of the textbook is “Christianity and Religions.” The overall objective is “to recognize the need for coexistence, mutual understanding, reconciliation, and cooperation among people with different or no religious beliefs, according to the Christian Orthodox teaching.” Judaism is presented in a relevant chapter as one of the major religions. The expected learning outcomes are for students to: recognize the basic characteristics of the Jewish religion and its historical development, and to distinguish Judaism from Christianity.<sup>98</sup>

According to the Curriculum of the Religious Education course in Primary and Secondary School: “Specifically, the teaching of Religious Education in Primary and Secondary School aims to provide students, through distinct thematic units, with adequate training on the manifestations of the religious phenomenon—that is, the major and living religions of the world—insofar as these, within their context, are considered spaces for the expression of faith and a certain moral way of life, and in any case constitute sources of culture.”<sup>99</sup> This aims for thorough coverage of the world’s faiths in Primary and Secondary education.

In the Greek curriculum, Judaism is presented through the lens of Religious Studies textbooks, focusing on Jewish customs, scripture (referencing the Torah and the Talmud), major holidays (such as Passover, Pentecost, *Sukkot*, *Purim* and *Hanukkah*), and the synagogue as a sacred place. For instance, students learn about how the Sabbath helped preserve and protect Jewish identity, and significant points in Jewish history are highlighted such as “400 years in slavery.” A chapter on Judaism includes texts dedicated to Passover, recounting Jewish enslavement and subsequent exodus, and how this period in Jewish history is remembered in the modern day through the *Seder* and other symbolic traditions.

The Religious Education textbook for Grade 9 of Gymnasium features the distinction between the terms Israelite, Jew, and Israeli, as well as the mention of the multiculturalism of the State of Israel. Importantly, the official designation of Greek Jews as Greek Israelites is noted in the textbook. Notably, some examples were identified where the Jews and the “Judaizers” (Jewish converts to Christianity) are described as bigoted and discriminatory towards the Hellenist converts. The curriculum also discusses Judaism throughout history, teaching about Jewish tradition, the Ten Commandments, the Law of the Torah, referencing Israel as the “Promised Land” for Judaism, as well as significant figures such as King David and King Solomon, and the sacredness of Jerusalem. Textbooks also include a brief chapter on the role of the Rabbis in the Jewish community.

98 Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (2020) Decision No. 31603/D2: Curriculum for the subject of Religious Education in General and Vocational Upper Secondary School, Issue B, No. 699, 4, March. Athens: National Printing Office. <https://www.et.gr/> (Accessed: 11 August 2025).

99 Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic (2020) Decision No. 31585/D2: Curriculum for the subject of Religious Education in Primary and Lower Secondary School, Issue B, No. 698, 4 March. Athens: National Printing Office. <https://www.et.gr/> (Accessed: 11 August 2025).

There are numerous references to Judaism's holy books, mainly focusing on the relations between the Bible ("Old Testament") and the New Testament. Often, however, the textbooks do not mention Jews or Judaism as the religious group associated with the Bible. Judaism is analyzed with many references and sources from religious texts and students receive a wealth of information. It is evident that the Jewish Scriptures (i.e. the Old Testament) are not recognized as independently significant to the Jewish faith but are instead discussed primarily in relation to consolidating belief in Jesus and paving the way for the New Testament. For instance, a Grade 6 textbook teaches that "the entire Old Testament prepares us to accept Christ as the savior of the world." However, this can also be seen as an effort to acknowledge Jewish history within Christian education textbooks, offering a positive example of interfaith recognition and portrayal.

The educational material included in school textbooks comprises of explanatory texts, photographs of religious objects, synagogues, and the Jewish holy site of the Kotel, as well as engaging activities. This material can be utilized within the context of a classroom activity. The apparent aim is for students to become familiar with the major Jewish festivals, to understand their symbolism and customs through informative content, and to appreciate the significance of a biblical Jewish celebration through recreational activities. The texts essentially inform students about the main Jewish holidays, their meaning and significance; they explain the historical and religious reasons for their celebration, highlight the traditions, customs, and practices associated with each holiday, and foster understanding and respect toward the Jewish religion and culture. Furthermore, they encourage comparative reflection with other religions and festivals, thereby promoting interfaith dialogue and tolerance.

**Example 25.**

*We discover texts, monuments, places, and events, Primary School Grade 6, 2019, p. 43.*

In a Grade 6 lesson, students are introduced to the Old Testament, learning about Moses, the Prophets, and their connection to the Old Testament. One of the main objectives in the curriculum is for students to recognize the significance of the Bible for European culture.<sup>100</sup> The textbook explains that the Old Testament is considered to represent the will of God, as revealed to the prominent holy figures mentioned, and was written down. While Jews are not explicitly mentioned in this example, the reference to the Prophets teaching the Old Testament orally to “the people” highlights core Jewish beliefs about God and prophecy, offering an indirect yet meaningful acknowledgment of Judaism's traditions.

### Η Παλαιά Διαθήκη

Από τα πανάρχαια χρόνια, ο Θεός αποκαλύφθηκε στους Πατριάρχες, στον Μωυσή, στους Προφήτες και σε άλλα ιερά πρόσωπα της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης, τα οποία δίδαξαν τον λαό προφορικά. Θεώρησαν, όμως, χρήσιμο και να γράψουν όσα ο Θεός τούς αποκάλυψε, με τη βοήθειά Του. Τα βιβλία που γράφτηκαν, αποτέλεσαν την Παλαιά Διαθήκη. Πολλές φορές, μάλιστα, στα κείμενά της βρίσκουμε εκφράσεις όπως: «τάδε λέγει Κύριος» ή «λόγος Κυρίου», πού φανερώνουν ότι οι ιεροί συγγραφείς είχαν συνείδηση ότι δεν διδάσκουν δικές τους ιδέες, αλλά το θέλημα του Θεού που αποκαλύφτηκε σ' αυτούς.

#### *The Old Testament*

*From ancient times, God revealed Himself to the Patriarchs, to Moses, to the Prophets, and to other sacred figures of the Old Testament, who taught the people orally. However, they also found it useful to write down what God revealed to them, with His help. The books that were written formed the Old Testament. Often, in its texts, we find expressions such as “thus says the Lord” or “word of the Lord,” which indicate that the sacred authors were aware that they were not teaching their own ideas but rather the will of God, which was revealed to them.*

100 file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/thriskeytika\_dimotiko\_gymnasio\_0.pdf.

**Example 26.**

*We discover texts, monuments, places, and events, Primary School Grade 6, 2019, p. 46.*

This lesson on formative texts introduces Grade 6 students to the books that make up the Old Testament, such as Genesis, which narrates the creation of the world; Exodus, which tells of the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt; the books of Law; the Psalms; and the Book of Prophets. However, the lesson fails to recognize the independent significance of the Bible (Old Testament) to Judaism, and instead adopts a Christian perspective, teaching that: “The entire Old Testament prepares us to accept Christ as the savior of the world.” This framing presents the Old Testament not as a text of intrinsic importance to Judaism, but merely as a tool for consolidating Christian belief. The text recounts the Exodus story, describing the Israelites’ journey from Egypt to their future homeland, which affirms the historical connection of the Israelites to the land of Israel. While it does not explicitly mention Jews, this framing still provides students with a foundation to understand the deep roots of Jewish history and identity in the region.

**Τα βιβλία της Αγίας Γραφής**

Η Παλαιά Διαθήκη αρχίζει με τη *Γένεση*, που διηγείται τη δημιουργία του κόσμου. Έπειτα έρχεται η *Εξοδος*, που διηγείται τα γεγονότα από τότε που οι Ισραηλίτες έφυγαν από την Αίγυπτο, ώσπου να φτάσουν στη χώρα που θα γινόταν πατρίδα τους. Σε άλλα βιβλία καταγράφεται ο *Νόμος*. Ακόμη υπάρχει το βιβλίο των *Ψαλμών*, τα βιβλία των *Προφητών* και άλλα. Ολόκληρη η Παλαιά Διαθήκη μάς προετοιμάζει να δεχτούμε τον Χριστό ως σωτήρα του κόσμου.



Το πρώτο Κεφάλαιο και οι πρώτοι στίχοι της προς Εβραίους Επιστολής

*The Books of the Holy Bible*

*The Old Testament begins with Genesis, which narrates the creation of the world. Then comes Exodus, which recounts the events from the time the Israelites left Egypt until they reached the land that would become their homeland. Other books record the Law. There is also the Book of Psalms, the books of the Prophets, and others. The entire Old Testament prepares us to accept Christ as the savior of the world.*

*The first chapter and the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

**Example 27.**

***A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 11.***

In the chapter describing the encounter between God and Man through biblical narratives, the text describes “The Journey of Abraham from Ur to Canaan” written by József Molnár. The text accords with a Christian outlook on Scripture, presenting Abraham's journey as a link in the long chain that “reaches a climax with the Book of Revelation [the last book of the New Testament], continuing within the life of the Church itself.” Importantly, the inclusion of the story already affirms Jewish history within the curriculum, presenting core beliefs that are central to Judaism. While the text does not explicitly state that Jews, like Christians and Muslims, trace their lineage to Abraham, this omission still leaves room for teachers to highlight the common thread uniting the three Abrahamic faiths—a valuable opportunity for interfaith understanding. Interestingly, Abraham's story is juxtaposed to that of Odysseus, stating that while the latter “longs to return home,” Abraham left his ancestral idol-worshipping home and “opens up” to the unknown.



Το ταξίδι του Αβραάμ από την Ουρ προς την Χαναάν  
(József Molnár)

Η περιπέτεια ξεκινά με το ταξίδι του Αβραάμ, ο οποίος αποχωρίζεται την πατρική του εστία, και μαζί με τη γυναίκα του, τη Σάρρα του, «ανοίγεται» σε άγνωστα και ξένα μέρη, έχοντας μοναδικό όπλο την πίστη και την αφοσίωση σ' έναν Θεό, ο οποίος συνομιλεί μαζί του και εκείνος Τον αναγνωρίζει και Τον ευχαριστεί ως πρόσωπο μοναδικό και ανεπα-νάληπτο. Το Ταξίδι της Βίβλου φτάνει σ' ένα σημείο κορύφωσης με το Βιβλίο της Αποκάλυψης, για να συνεχιστεί μέσα στη ζωή της ίδιας της Εκκλησίας.

Πηγή: Σωτήριος Δεσπότης / Νικόλαος Παύλου / Αθανάσιος Στογιαννίδης,  
Θέματα από την Αγία Γραφή. Α' Εκκλησιαστικού Γυμνασίου (υπό έκδοση), σελ. 10.

**Ο Αβραάμ «ανοίγεται» στο Άγνωστο σε αντίθεση προς τον Οδυσσέα που νοσταλγεί να επιστρέψει στο σπίτι ο Αβραάμ μαζί με τη γυναίκα του και τον ορφανό ανιψιό του Λωτ εγκαταλείπει την πατρική εστία και τα «είδωλα» που λατρεύονταν εκεί.**

11

*The adventure begins with Abraham's journey, as he leaves his ancestral home and, together with his wife, Sarah, ventures into unknown and foreign lands. His only weapons are faith and devotion to a God who speaks with him, whom he recognizes and thanks as a unique and incomprehensible being. The Biblical Journey reaches a climax with the Book of Revelation, continuing within the life of the Church itself. [...]*

*The Journey of Abraham from Ur to Canaan (Jozsef Molnar)*

*Abraham "opens up" to the unknown, in contrast to Odysseus, who longs to return home. Abraham, along with his wife and orphaned nephew Lot, leaves his ancestral home and the "idols" worshiped there.*

**Example 28.**

*A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 18.*

The text commendably highlights the central role of the Old Testament, explaining its importance as the foundation for understanding Christ and the New Testament, and introduces students to the deep historical roots of the biblical tradition through references to the 'Israelite people.' While framed from a Christian perspective, the text presents a Supersessionist view by treating the Old Testament solely as a precursor to Christianity, 'completed' by the New Testament, rather than recognizing its ongoing significance within Judaism. This presents a valuable opportunity for educators to broaden discussion, drawing attention to the shared heritage at the heart of Judaism and Christianity while also affirming Jewish continuity and interpretation.

### ii. Η ενότητα Παλαιάς και Καινής Διαθήκης

Γιατί άραγε τα βιβλία της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης, οι ιερές δηλαδή γραφές του ισραηλιτικού λαού, είναι και για τους χριστιανούς ιερά; Γιατί περιέχονται στη χριστιανική Αγία Γραφή αχώριστα δεμένα με τα βιβλία της Καινής Διαθήκης;

Πρώτα πρώτα χρειάζεται να μην ξεχνάμε πού στηρίζουν την πίστη τους οι χριστιανοί: στο γεγονός ότι ο Θεός φανερώθηκε στον κόσμο για να σώσει τους ανθρώπους· δηλαδή να τους φανερώσει την αλήθεια, να τους θεραπεύσει από το κακό και να δώσει αληθινό νόημα στη ζωή τους. Αυτή η φανέρωση (= Αποκάλυψη) έγινε για πρώτη φορά στα πολύ παλιά χρόνια σ' έναν άνθρωπο, τον Αβραάμ.

Μ' αυτόν ο Θεός έκλεισε την πρώτη συμφωνία σωτηρίας (= Διαθήκη). Στη συνέχεια η Διαθήκη κλείστηκε όχι μόνο με τον Αβραάμ και τους απογόνους του, αλλά και μ' όλο το λαό που προήλθε απ' αυτούς, τον Ισραήλ (= Παλαιά Διαθήκη). Στον Ισραήλ ο Θεός έδωσε τις μεγάλες υποσχέσεις για τη σωτηρία των ανθρώπων. Και με τον Ισραήλ προετοίμασε τον κόσμο να δεχτεί και να καταλάβει τον Χριστό. Όλη αυτή η μακράιωνη πορεία και προετοιμασία περιγράφεται στα βιβλία της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης, απ' όπου προέρχονται τα φετινά μας μαθήματα. Μέσα στον ισραηλιτικό λαό γεννήθηκε και έζησε και ο Ιησούς Χριστός. Ο Χριστός έκλεισε μια νέα συμφωνία σωτηρίας με τους ανθρώπους (= Καινή Διαθήκη). Όχι πια μόνο με τον ισραηλιτικό λαό, αλλά με όλους τους λαούς της γης. Έτσι, η υπόσχεση του Θεού στον Αβραάμ για τη σωτηρία του κόσμου εκπληρώθηκε και η Παλαιά Διαθήκη ολοκληρώθηκε.



Ο Χριστός: το Φως του κόσμου!

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

### *Old and New Testaments*

*Why are the books of the Old Testament, the sacred scriptures of the Israelite people, also considered sacred by Christians? Why are they inseparably included in the Christian Holy Bible along with the books of the New Testament?*

*First of all, we need to remember where Christians base their faith: on the fact that God revealed Himself to the world to save humanity—by revealing the truth, healing them from evil, and giving true meaning to their lives. This revelation (or Revelation) first occurred many years ago with a man named Abraham.*

*With Abraham, God established the first covenant of salvation (the Old Testament). Subsequently, the covenant was not only made with Abraham and his descendants but with all the people that came from them, Israel (the Old Testament). To Israel, God gave the great promises for the salvation of humanity and prepared the world to receive and understand Christ. This long journey and preparation are described in the books of the Old Testament, from which this year's lessons are derived.*

*Jesus Christ was born and lived within the Israelite people. Christ established a new covenant of salvation with humanity (the New Testament). No longer just with the Israelite people, but with all the peoples of the earth. Thus, God's promise to Abraham for the salvation of the world was fulfilled, and the Old Testament was completed.*

**Example 29.**

***A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 19.***

A text about the Old and New Testaments presents the Old Testament as a “Christian book.” It explains that the New Testament does not exist independently but in relation to the Old Testament, comparing their relationship (and ergo Christianity and Judaism) to sunlight illuminating a “dimly lit room.” Just as sunlight brightens and transforms a dim room, Christianity is portrayed as bringing a new level of clarity and enlightenment to the spiritual understanding originally presented in Judaism.

From this analogy, one may infer that Christianity is portrayed as offering a fuller and more ‘illuminating’ revelation, yet it is notable that Judaism is still acknowledged for recognizing truths and messages within the Old Testament. This recognition is significant, as it highlights the textbook’s willingness to credit Judaism with an important role in conveying foundational religious insights, even as it frames Christianity as building upon them.

Στο σημείο αυτό χρειάζεται να εξηγήσουμε και κάτι άλλο. Ο Χριστός με τη διδασκαλία και τη ζωή του ερμήνευσε στους ανθρώπους τα γεγονότα της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης. Τους έκανε να δουν τα παλιά με καινούρια μάτια. Για να το καταλάβουμε καλύτερα αυτό, μπορούμε να φανταστούμε ότι καθόμαστε στο μισοσκότεινο δωμάτιό μας, που το γνωρίζουμε σπιθαμή προς σπιθαμή, και ξαφνικά μπαίνει μέσα λαμπρό το φως του ήλιου. Τα χρώματα ζωντανεύουν και μπορούμε να δούμε και την παραμικρή λεπτομέρεια.

Ταυτόχρονα, όλα μοιάζουν σαν καινούρια! Έτσι έγινε κι όταν ο Χριστός ήρθε στη γή. Η Παλαιά Διαθήκη «φωτίστηκε» από τη διδασκαλία Του και τη ζωή Του αλλιώς. Γι’ αυτό οι χριστιανοί μπόρεσαν να ανακαλύψουν στην Παλαιά Διαθήκη καινούριες αλήθειες και μηνύματα (πέρα απ’ αυτές που αναγνωρίζει ο Ιουδαϊσμός).

Ως χριστιανικό βιβλίο, λοιπόν, η Παλαιά Διαθήκη κατέχει σημαντική θέση στη λατρεία της Εκκλησίας. Στις ακολουθίες διαβάζονται κείμενά της. Πολλοί ύμνοι αναφέρονται σε πρόσωπα και γεγονότα που βρίσκουμε στις σελίδες της. Στην εικονογράφηση των ναών συναντάμε πολλά θέματά της.

Πηγή: Όλγα Γκριζοπούλου / Πηγή Καζλάρη, *Θρησκευτικά Α' Γυμνασίου. Παλαιά Διαθήκη. Προϊστορία του Χριστιανισμού*, σελ. 15.

*At this point, it is necessary to explain something else. Christ, through His teaching and life, interpreted the events of the Old Testament for people. He helped them see the old with new eyes. To better understand this, we can imagine sitting in our dimly lit room, which we know inch by inch, and suddenly the bright light of the sun comes in. Colors come alive, and we can see even the smallest details. Everything seems new! Similarly, when Christ came to the earth, the Old Testament was “illuminated” by His teaching and life in a new way. Thus, Christians were able to discover new truths and messages in the Old Testament (beyond those recognized by Judaism).*

*As a Christian book, therefore, the Old Testament holds a significant place in the worship of the Church. During the services, passages from it are read. Many hymns refer to people and events found in its pages. In the decoration of churches, we encounter many of its themes.*

*Source: Olga Grizopoulou / Pigi Kazlari, Religious Studies for 1st Gymnasium, Old Testament: The Prehistory of Christianity, p. 15.*

**Example 30.**

***A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 59.***

In the chapter “Opinions of People about Jesus Christ,” students encounter an excerpt from the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius (37–100 AD), also known as Yosef ben Matityahu. Born in Jerusalem, Josephus is highlighted in the text as a scholar, historian, and hagiographer of priestly and royal lineage, renowned as the first to write a comprehensive history of the Jews in his *Jewish Antiquities*. The passage highlights Josephus’s significance as a Jewish voice acknowledging Jesus, with the quotation “if indeed one ought to call him a man” subtly affirming Christian ideas of Jesus’s divinity. At the same time, the text notes how Jesus “won over many Jews,” underscoring both the interrelationship between Judaism and Christianity and the foundational presence of Judaism prior to Christianity.

**Ιώσηπος, *Ιουδαϊκή Αρχαιολογία*, Βιβλίο 18, 3, 63-64**

Εκείνη την περίοδο περίπου έζησε ο Ιησούς, ο σοφός άνθρωπος, αν βέβαια μπορεί κανείς να τον αποκαλέσει άνθρωπο. Ήταν εκείνος που έκανε απίστευτα πράγματα και ήταν ο δάσκαλος ανθρώπων που δέχονται την αλήθεια ευχαρίστως. Προσέλκυσε πολλούς Ιουδαίους αλλά και πολλούς Έλληνες. Ήταν ο Χριστός. Όταν ο Πιλάτος –αφού άκουσε να τον κατηγορούν άνθρωποι που είναι οι επιφανέστεροι ανάμεσά μας– τον καταδίκασε να σταυρωθεί, εκείνοι που από την αρχή τον αγάπησαν δεν έπαψαν να τον αγαπούν. Διότι εμφανίστηκε σ’ αυτούς την τρίτη ημέρα αναστημένος, όπως οι προφήτες του Θεού το είχαν προφητέψει μαζί με πολλά άλλα θαυμαστά πράγματα γι’ αυτόν. Ενώ οι Χριστιανοί, όπως ονομάστηκαν από αυτόν, δεν έχουν εξαφανιστεί μέχρι σήμερα.

Ο λόγιος Ιώσηπος Φλάβιος γεννήθηκε το 37 μ.Χ. στην Ιερουσαλήμ. Υπήρξε ο πρώτος ιστορικός που έγραψε την ιστορία των Ιουδαίων στο βιβλίο του *Ιουδαϊκή Αρχαιολογία*. Στο έργο του δίνει πληροφορίες για τον Ιησού και τους ανθρώπους του περιβάλλοντός του.

*In Jewish Antiquities, Book 18, Chapter 3, Sections 63-64, Josephus Flavius*

*At that time, there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Christ [Messiah]. When Pilate, upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing among us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had loved him at first did not cease to love him. For he appeared to them alive again on the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day.*

*The scholar Josephus Flavius was born in 37 AD in Jerusalem. He was the first historian to write the history of the Jews in his book Jewish Antiquities. In his work, he provides information about Jesus and the people around him.*

**Example 31.**

***A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 61.***

In the chapter “Opinions of People about Jesus Christ,” students are introduced to the Jewish and Zionist Austrian philosopher Martin Mordechai Buber, who is explicitly recognized as Jewish in the text. Until 1938, Buber was a Professor of Jewish Theology and Ethics at the University of Frankfurt before moving to Mandate Palestine, where he became an honorary professor of sociology at the Hebrew University. The excerpt presents Buber’s view of Jesus as “a great brother” who “holds a significant place in the history of the religion of Israel.” This acknowledges that influential Jewish thinkers have engaged with Jesus as an important historical and religious figure, while maintaining the Jewish perspective that he is not the Messiah or divine. The lesson also highlights Buber’s intellectual contributions, noting how his work reflects influences from Jewish mysticism, the Old Testament, modern psychology, and rationalism—an important recognition of Jewish contributions to modern European thought.

### Μάρτιν Μπούμπερ, *Οι δύο τύποι της πίστης*

Από τα νιάτα μου αισθανόμουν τον Ιησού ως μεγάλο αδελφό. Το ότι ο Χριστιανισμός τον θεωρούσε και τον θεωρεί και σωτήρα, μου φαινόταν πάντοτε ένα γεγονός μεγάλης σοβαρότητας, την οποία πρέπει να κατανοήσω για χάρη του και για δική μου χάρη. Αυτά τα αδελφικά και φιλικά αισθήματά μου δυνάμωσαν με τον χρόνο και έγιναν όλο και πιο αγνά, και σήμερα τον βλέπω με πιο δυνατή και πιο αγνή ματιά από ποτέ. Μου είναι πιο βέβαιο από ποτέ ότι του ανήκει μια μεγάλη θέση στην ιστορία της θρησκείας του Ισραήλ.

Ο Μάρτιν Μπούμπερ (1878-1965) ήταν Αυστριακός φιλόσοφος εβραϊκής καταγωγής. Στη φιλοσοφία του τόνιζε την αναγκαιότητα επικοινωνίας Θεού και ανθρώπου. Στο έργο του διακρίνονται επιδράσεις από τον θρησκευτικό μυστικισμό, την Παλαιά Διαθήκη, τη σύγχρονη ψυχολογία και τον ορθολογισμό.

*Martin Buber's work Two Types of Faith (original German title: Die Zwei Glaubensarten)*

*From my youth, I have felt Jesus as a great brother. The fact that Christianity regards and continues to regard Him as a savior has always seemed to me a matter of great seriousness, which I must understand for His sake and for my own. These brotherly and friendly feelings of mine have strengthened over time and have become increasingly pure. Today, I see Him with a stronger and purer vision than ever. It is more certain to me than ever that He holds a significant place in the history of the religion of Israel.*

*Martin Buber (1878-1965) was an Austrian philosopher of Jewish origin. In his philosophy, he emphasized the necessity of communication between God and humanity. His work reflects influences from religious mysticism, the Old Testament, modern psychology, and rationalism.*

**Example 32.**

***A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School Grade 7, 2020 (revised), p. 85.***

In the chapter “Christ Reveals a New World through Signs,” the Sabbath is recognized as the sacred day of the Jews. The text explains that it was one of the “signs” of “Jewish self-consciousness” during the Second Temple period (516 BC–70 AD), which allowed Judaism to “self-isolate” in an environment it considered “impure, dangerous, and threatening to its identity.” This allowed Judaism to preserve its distinctiveness in a challenging environment, consolidating and protecting Jewish identity and serving as a source of pride. This treatment is valuable in familiarizing Greek students with central Jewish beliefs and practices, offering insight into how the Sabbath functioned historically as a marker of resilience and continuity for the Jewish people, and highlighting Jewish historical markers such as “400 years in slavery.” While the lesson frames Judaism as exclusivist in its efforts to resist foreign influences, it nonetheless underscores the enduring role of the Sabbath in safeguarding Jewish faith and culture.

«Το Σάββατο ο Θεός ολοκλήρωσε τη διακόσμηση του Σύμπαντος που αναδύθηκε από το απειλητικό χάος και αναπαύθηκε. Την ίδια μέρα διέσχισε ο ισραηλίτης λαός την Ερυθρά Θάλασσα και απέκτησε μετά από 400 χρόνια δουλείας πολιτική και θρησκευτική ελευθερία (Δτ. 5, 15). Στα μεταιχμαλωσιακά όμως χρόνια η εφαρμογή του Σαββάτου, όπως και οι άλλες λατρευτικές διατάξεις που όριζαν τι είναι καθαρό από το περιβάλλον και τι όχι, είχαν γίνει «σημεία», συστατικά στοιχεία της αυτοσυνειδησίας του Ιουδαϊσμού, ο οποίος έτσι προσπαθούσε να αυτοπεριχαρακωθεί μπροστά σε ένα περιβάλλον, το οποίο θεωρούσε ως μιαρό-ακάθαρτο, επικίνδυνο και απειλητικό για την ταυτότητά του. Έτσι οι Ιουδαίοι περηφανεύονταν ότι ήταν οι μόνοι στον κόσμο που τηρούσαν την «ημέρα του ιερού Βασιλείου».

Απόσπασμα από το βιβλίο: Σωτήριος Δεσπότης, *Ο Κώδικας των Ευαγγελίων*. Εισαγωγή στα Συνοπτικά Ευαγγέλια και πρακτική μέθοδος ερμηνείας τους. Αθήνα: ΑΘΩΣ, 2009.



*"On the Sabbath, God completed the decoration of the Universe, which emerged from the threatening chaos, and rested. On the same day, the Israelite people crossed the Red Sea and, after 400 years of slavery, gained political and religious freedom (Deuteronomy 5:15). However, in the post-exilic years, the observance of the Sabbath, as well as other ritual regulations that defined what was clean from what was not, became 'signs'—essential elements of Jewish self-consciousness. In this way, Judaism sought to self-isolate in the face of an environment it regarded as impure, dangerous, and threatening to its identity. Thus, Jews took pride in being the only people in the world who observed the 'day of the sacred Kingdom.'"*

*Excerpt from the book: Sotirios Despotis, The Code of the Gospels: Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels and Practical Method of Their Interpretation. Athens: Athos, 2009.*

**Example 33.**

**Religion II – Gymnasium the Church: A Journey Through History, Junior High School Grade 8, 2020 (revised), p. 83.**

In the chapter describing the consolidation of the early Christian community, the Jewish converts to Christianity (“Judaizers”) are presented as exclusive, bigoted and discriminatory towards the Hellenist converts, thereby sowing problems and disunity within the Christian communities. The conflict between the Judaizers and the Hellenists was a significant issue in early Christianity, reflecting broader theological, cultural, and practical tensions. In early Christian texts, particularly in the New Testament, the Judaizers are often portrayed in a negative light for insisting that new Christian converts follow the Mosaic Law (such as circumcising Gentile converts), and for rejecting Hellenist “pagan customs and practices.” The textbook adopts common Christian tropes about the Judaizers, stating that they excluded the Hellenists because they considered the latter to be “morally inferior.” This one-sided narrative blames the Judaizers for introducing “discrimination, problems [...] and threatening Christian unity,” stating that the Hellenists felt marginalized and undervalued. Crucially, the text does not note the positive outcomes of this theological disagreement, such as the promotion of theological clarifications of core Christian beliefs, the solidification of Christianity’s connection to its Jewish roots, and its contribution to the perception of the New Testament as a continuation of the Old Testament.<sup>101</sup> Understanding this historical context illuminates the complexities of interfaith relationships and the ways theological disputes can influence perceptions of different religious traditions.

#### Το πρόβλημα που είχε να αντιμετωπίσει η Αποστολική Σύνοδος

Την πρώτη Σύνοδο στην ιστορία της Εκκλησίας τη συγκάλεσαν οι ίδιοι οι Απόστολοι στην Ιερουσαλήμ το 49 μ.Χ., για να αντιμετωπίσουν ένα σοβαρό ζήτημα που είχε προκύψει. Ποιο ήταν αυτό; Στις χριστιανικές κοινότητες που είχαν δημιουργηθεί υπήρχαν δύο ομάδες χριστιανών: οι Ιουδαίοχριστιανοί, δηλαδή εκείνοι που πριν βαφτιστούν ήταν Ιουδαίοι, γι’ αυτό και εξακολουθούσαν να τηρούν τα ιουδαϊκά ήθη και έθιμα, και οι Ελληνιστές, οι οποίοι προέρχονταν από άλλα έθνη, γι’ αυτό και είχαν ειδωλολατρικά ήθη και έθιμα. Οι Ιουδαίοχριστιανοί όμως αντιδρούσαν με την είσοδο των Ελληνιστών στην Εκκλησία, επειδή τους θεωρούσαν ηθικά κατώτερους. Μάλιστα, απαιτούσαν από αυτούς να τηρούν τον Μωσαϊκό Νόμο. Με τη σειρά τους, οι Ελληνιστές αντιδρούσαν και ένιωθαν υποτιμημένοι. Το αποτέλεσμα ήταν να δημιουργούνται στη ζωή των χριστιανικών κοινοτήτων διακρίσεις και προβλήματα, που κάθε μέρα αυξάνονταν και απειλούσαν την ενότητα τους.

#### *The Issue Addressed by the Apostolic Council*

*The first council in the history of the Church was convened by the Apostles themselves in Jerusalem in 49 AD to address a serious issue that had arisen. What was this issue?*

*In the Christian communities that had been established, there were two groups of Christians: the Judaizers, who were those who had been Jewish before their baptism and thus continued to observe Jewish customs and laws, and the Hellenists, who came from other nations and had pagan customs and practices. The Judaizers objected to the inclusion of the Hellenists in the Church because they considered them morally inferior. They even demanded that the Hellenists adhere to the Mosaic Law. In turn, the Hellenists felt marginalized and undervalued. As a result, discrimination and problems were arising within the Christian communities, growing daily and threatening their unity.*

<sup>101</sup> Stephen Baker, “Why were Judaizers such Big Problems in the Early Church?,” Christianity.com, Feb. 10, 2022. <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/christian-terms/why-were-judaizers-such-big-problems-in-the-early-church.html>; John Span, “The Judaizers: When almost right isn’t good enough,” *Journal of Biblical Missiology*, Jul. 3, 2012. <https://biblicalmissiology.org/blog/2012/07/03/the-judaizers-when-almost-right-isnt-good-enough>.

**Example 34.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 63.**

A section titled “6th Thematic Unit: Monotheistic Religions—Judaism and Islam” dedicates a chapter to teaching about these two major religions simultaneously. The image at the beginning of the chapter juxtaposes two sacred sites: the Western Wall (the *Kotel*, a remnant of the Second Temple and the holiest place where Jews are allowed to pray) and the *Al-Aqsa* Mosque (the third most-sacred site in Islam, after the *Ka’ba* in Mecca and the Prophetic Mosque in Medina.) Jews revere the temple Mount as the location of the two former temples, while Muslims believe that Muhammad travelled from the Great Mosque of Mecca to this site during the Night Journey. While attributing the sacred sites of both Judaism and Islam to a single location may not be historically precise and risks framing the relationship as competitive, it nevertheless reflects an effort to recognize the deep religious significance of the same place to two different faiths. In doing so, the text offers students a more sophisticated appreciation of the overlapping claims and shared spiritual geography of Judaism and Islam.

ΣΤ΄ ΘΕΜΑΤΙΚΗ ΕΝΟΤΗΤΑ  
Μονοθεϊστικές θρησκείες: Ιουδαϊσμός και Ισλάμ



**Example 35.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 64.**

A chapter discussing Judaism throughout history labels Jews and the people of “Israel” as “a wandering people.” Israel as a “wandering people” is usually presented in texts referring to the historical journey of the Jews, especially in the Bible and religious tradition, where the people of Israel experience wanderings, exiles, and diaspora before the establishment of the modern state. This framing, while somewhat reductive, is balanced by the chapter’s rich inclusion of core elements of Jewish tradition and history. The text emphasizes central tenets such as the Ten Commandments and the Torah, portraying them not only as religious foundations but also as shaping principles of human society. It recounts the Exodus, the Covenant with God, and the eventual arrival in the Promised Land, anchoring Jewish history in both divine promise and national identity. Importantly, it highlights the leadership of King David, who established Jerusalem as the capital, and King Solomon, who built the Temple—affirming the city’s sacred and enduring place in Jewish culture. The chapter even acknowledges that Jews worldwide continue to regard Jerusalem as the cradle of their culture. This presentation offers students a valuable understanding of Judaism’s spiritual continuity, historical depth, and the centrality of Jerusalem to Jewish identity, thus contributing positively to historical education on the importance of the State of Israel in Jewish thought.

### ι. Ισραήλ, ένας περιπλανώμενος λαός μέσα στην ιστορία

Η θρησκεία βρίσκεται στο κέντρο της ιστορίας του εβραϊκού λαού. Σύμφωνα με τα ιερά κείμενα των Εβραίων, ο ίδιος ο Θεός επέλεξε τους πατριάρχες Αβραάμ, Ισαάκ και Ιακώβ, για να διδάξουν στον λαό τους τη μονοθεΐα, δηλαδή την πίστη σε έναν Θεό. Σε αυτούς υποσχέθηκε ο Θεός τη δημιουργία ενός λαού από τους απογόνους τους και την κυριαρχία στη γη. Αρχικά επρόκειτο για την ιστορία μιας οικογένειας, της οικογένειας των πατριαρχών. Στη συνέχεια, η πείνα και οι δύσκολες συνθήκες έφεραν την οικογένεια στην Αίγυπτο, όπου βρήκε τροφή και καταφύγιο. Με την πάροδο των χρόνων, όμως, η οικογένεια αυτή πλήθυνε, η κατάσταση άλλαξε και οι Εβραίοι βρέθηκαν δούλοι των Αιγυπτίων, μέχρι τη στιγμή που, με ηγέτη και καθοδηγητή τους τον Μωυσή, ελευθερώθηκαν από τον ζυγό και ξεκίνησαν την πορεία τους μέσα στην έρημο, προς τη Γη της επαγγελίας, της υπόσχεσης. Εκεί, μέσα στην έρημο, οι Εβραίοι διαμορφώθηκαν ως λαός, ήρθαν σε επαφή με τον Θεό και παρέλαβαν τις 10 εντολές κι όλο τον Νόμο, τη λεγόμενη Τορά, που διέπει τη θρησκεία τους και θέτει τα θεμέλια των κοινωνικών αρχών οι οποίες μέχρι σήμερα εμπνέουν και καθορίζουν σε μεγάλο βαθμό τις σχέσεις των ανθρώπων στις οργανωμένες κοινωνίες. Εκεί στην έρημο, σύναψαν μια «Διαθήκη», δηλαδή μια συμφωνία, με τον Θεό: εκείνοι υποσχέθηκαν ότι θα υπακούν στον Θεό και θα τηρούν τον Νόμο του, και ο Θεός υποσχέθηκε ότι θα τους προστατεύει και θα τους θεωρεί λαό του. Μετά από περιπλάνηση 40 χρόνων οι Εβραίοι έφτασαν στη Γη της Επαγγελίας.

Στο πέρασμα των αιώνων, αναδείχθηκαν σπουδαίοι ηγέτες που οδήγησαν τον εβραϊκό λαό σε καιρούς ειρήνης και σε καιρούς πολέμων με τους εχθρούς του. Αναδείχθηκαν προφήτες που δίδασκαν τους Εβραίους να είναι πιστοί, όταν εκείνοι ξεχνούσαν την υπόσχεση που είχαν δώσει στον Θεό. Αναδείχθηκαν βασιλείς σοφοί και εμπνευσμένοι. Ο βασιλιάς Δαβίδ ήταν αυτός που καθιέρωσε την Ιερουσαλήμ ως πρωτεύουσα του κράτους και ο γιος του, ο βασιλιάς Σολομών, έχτισε εκεί τον φημισμένο Ναό (Ναό της Ιερουσαλήμ ή Ναό του Σολομώντα). Από τότε, οι Εβραίοι όλου του κόσμου θεωρούν την Ιερουσαλήμ ως ιερή πόλη και κοιτίδα του πολιτισμού τους. Για τους Εβραίους, η ιστορία τους αφηγείται την αγάπη και την παρέμβαση του Θεού σε κάθε πτυχή της ζωής τους.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*i. Israel: A Wandering People Throughout History*

Religion is central to the history of the Jewish people. According to the sacred texts of the Jews, God Himself chose the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to teach their people monotheism, the belief in one God. God promised them that He would create a nation from their descendants and grant them dominion over the land. Initially, this was the story of a family, the family of the patriarchs. Over time, famine and difficult conditions led this family to Egypt, where they found food and refuge. However, as time passed, this family grew in number, and their situation changed. The Jews became slaves to the Egyptians until they were freed from bondage by Moses, their leader and guide. They embarked on their journey through the desert toward the Promised Land. In the desert, the Jews formed themselves into a nation, encountered God, and received the Ten Commandments and the entire Law, known as the Torah, which governs their religion and lays the foundations for social principles that continue to inspire and shape human relationships in organized societies today. In the desert, they made a "Covenant" with God: they promised to obey Him and adhere to His Law, and God promised to protect them and regard them as His people. After wandering for 40 years, the Jews reached the Promised Land. Over the centuries, great leaders emerged who guided the Jewish people through times of peace and conflict with their enemies. Prophets arose who taught the Jews to remain faithful when they forgot the promises they had made to God. Wise and inspired kings emerged, such as King David, who established Jerusalem as the capital of the state, and his son, King Solomon, who built the renowned Temple (the Temple of Jerusalem or Solomon's Temple). Since then, Jews worldwide consider Jerusalem a sacred city and the cradle of their culture. For the Jews, their history tells of God's love and intervention in every aspect of their lives.

**Example 36.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 64.**

A chapter describing Judaism and the Jewish people makes an important distinction between the terms “Jew,” “Israelite,” and “Judean,” while also distinguishing religious affiliation from “Israeli” nationality. The text explains that the three first terms denote followers of the Jewish faith, whereas “Israeli” refers to a “citizen of the modern State of Israel,” who may not necessarily be Jewish. It also notes that the term “Greek Israelite” is interchangeable with “Greek Jew,” with the former being used in more formal contexts. The text appropriately acknowledges the State of Israel and its population of Jews, as well as the existence of Jews in Greece, referencing “official Jewish organizations in Greece.”

### Γύρω από τη σύγχυση των όρων που χρησιμοποιούμε για τους Εβραίους

Αν και καθένας από τους όρους Εβραίος, Ισραηλίτης και Ιουδαίος έχει τη δική του ιστορική προέλευση, σήμερα χρησιμοποιούνται με την ίδια ακριβώς σημασία. Δηλαδή, και οι τρεις χρησιμοποιούνται για να δηλώσουν αυτόν που κατά το θρήσκευμα είναι Εβραίος, ανεξάρτητα από την εθνική του καταγωγή. Αντιθέτως, Ισραηλινός ονομάζεται ο υπήκοος του σύγχρονου κράτους του Ισραήλ, ο οποίος μπορεί να μην είναι Εβραίος κατά το θρήσκευμα.

Ο επίσημος χαρακτηρισμός των Εβραίων Ελλήνων είναι «Έλληνες Ισραηλίτες». Ο χαρακτηρισμός αυτός χρησιμοποιείται και από το Ελληνικό Κράτος και από τα επίσημα όργανα του ελληνικού Εβραϊσμού. Οι όροι «Έλληνας Εβραίος» ή «Έλληνας Ισραηλίτης» είναι ταυτόσημοι, αν και ο πρώτος όρος έχει πιο ευρεία χρήση, ενώ ο δεύτερος χρησιμοποιείται σε πιο επίσημες περιστάσεις.

#### *Confusion Around the Terms Used for Jews*

*Although each of the terms "Jew," "Israelite," and "Judean" has its own historical origin, today they are often used interchangeably. All three terms are employed to denote someone who is Jewish by religion, regardless of their national origin. On the other hand, "Israeli" refers to a citizen of the modern State of Israel, who may not be Jewish by religion. The official designation for Greek Jews is "Greek Israelites." This term is used both by the Greek State and by official Jewish organizations in Greece. The terms "Greek Jew" and "Greek Israelite" are synonymous, although the former has broader usage, while the latter is used in more formal contexts*

**Example 37.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 65.**

A lesson on Jewish festivals introduces children to the ways they are celebrated by modern Jews. The chapter provides an overview of *Pesach* (Passover), *Shavuot* (Pentecost), *Sukkot*, Purim, and *Hanukkah*, as well as other aspects of religious Jewish life, such as scripture and *Shabbat* (Sabbath). The text is accompanied by a contemporary photograph of a Jewish family celebrating Passover.

Furthermore, the lesson includes some intercultural educational activities for students. One activity invites students to identify common elements between Christian holidays and those of other religions—focusing on calendar dates, customs, and traditions—to foster a broader understanding of the role of religious festivals over time. For example, one task asks students to explore the symbolic use of the lamp in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The chapter concludes with a series of intercultural educational activities designed to deepen students' understanding of Judaism. These include selecting a Jewish holiday to present its significance and historical background; analyzing photographs of contemporary Jewish life; researching the importance of Jerusalem to the three Abrahamic religions and defining the term “Abrahamic Religions;” exploring Jewish communities in Greece using the Jewish Museum of Greece website; and organizing a field trip to the Jewish Museum of Greece or the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.

The intercultural assignment appears designed to deepen students' awareness of the connections between Christianity and Judaism, while also encouraging them to identify shared customs across religions. It highlights key aspects of Jewish tradition, noting that when Jews celebrate, they “recall the events of their history and pass on the customs,” thereby emphasizing the role of ritual in preserving faith and cultural continuity.

### Γιορτές

Οι εβραϊκές γιορτές βασίζονται στον ετήσιο κύκλο των εποχών της φύσης και στις γεωργικές και κτηνοτροφικές εργασίες κατά τη διάρκεια του έτους. Με την πάροδο των χρόνων, αυτές οι γιορτές συνδυάστηκαν με τα μεγάλα γεγονότα που σφράγισαν την ιστορική πορεία του εβραϊκού λαού. Έτσι, όταν οι Εβραίοι γιορτάζουν, ανακαλούν τα γεγονότα της ιστορίας τους και μεταφέρουν στις νεότερες γενιές τις συνήθειες και τα νοήματα της κάθε γιορτής. Οι εορτασμοί τελούνται τόσο στη Συναγωγή όσο και στο σπίτι με όμορφες τελετές. Οι τελετές αυτές επικεντρώνονται κυρίως στα παιδιά, τα οποία μέσα σε αυτές τις ευχάριστες εμπειρίες των οικογενειακών συγκεντρώσεων αντλούν το μήνυμα της πίστης και γνωρίζουν την ιστορία του λαού τους.



(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*Jewish festivals*

*Jewish festivals are based on the annual cycle of the seasons and the agricultural and pastoral activities throughout the year. Over time, these festivals have become intertwined with the major events that have shaped the historical trajectory of the Jewish people. Thus, when Jews celebrate, they recall the events of their history and pass on the customs and meanings of each festival to younger generations. The celebrations take place both in the synagogue and at home, featuring beautiful ceremonies. These ceremonies primarily focus on children, who, through these enjoyable family gatherings, absorb the message of faith and learn about their people's history.*

**Δραστηριότητες**

1. Εργασία σε ομάδες: Χωρισμένοι σε ομάδες θα διαλέξετε μία από τις εβραϊκές γιορτές και θα παρουσιάσετε στην τάξη το ιστορικό γεγονός με το οποίο συνδέεται η γιορτή, εξηγώντας το νόημα που έχει για την εβραϊκή οικογένεια και την κοινότητα.
2. Συγκέντρωση φωτογραφικού υλικού από τη σύγχρονη εβραϊκή ζωή και παρουσίαση στην ολομέλεια της τάξης.
3. Ιστοεξερεύνηση: Περιπατώντας στη σύγχρονη Ιερουσαλήμ: Η πόλη-σύμβολο των τριών θρησκειών.
4. Επίλυση προβλήματος: Εξήγηση του όρου «αβρααμικές θρησκείες».
5. Εξερεύνηση στο διαδίκτυο και στον δικτυακό τόπο (site) του Εβραϊκού Μουσείου Ελλάδας με θέμα: «Εβραϊκές κοινότητες στην Ελλάδα».
6. Σε ομάδες ας προσπαθήσουμε να εντοπίσουμε πληροφορίες για το καντήλι στις 3 μονοθεϊστικές θρησκείες και να τις παρουσιάσουμε την επόμενη φορά στην ολομέλεια της τάξης.
7. Οργάνωση επίσκεψης στο Εβραϊκό Μουσείο Ελλάδος ή αυτό της Θεσσαλονίκης.

**Activities****Group Work:**

*Divide into groups and choose one of the Jewish holidays.*

*Present to the class the historical event associated with the holiday, explaining its significance for the Jewish family and community.*

**Photo Collection:**

*Collect photographic material depicting modern Jewish life and present it to the class.*

**Historical Exploration:**

*Explore the modern city of Jerusalem and discuss its symbolic significance for the three major religions.*

**Problem Solving:** *Explain the term "Abrahamic religions."*

*Internet Research: Research on the website of the Jewish Museum of Greece with the topic: "Jewish Communities in Greece."*

**Group Investigation:**

*In groups, find information about the menorah in the three monotheistic religions and present it to the class next time.*

**Museum Visit:**

*Organize a visit to the Jewish Museum of Greece or the one in Thessaloniki.*

**Example 38.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), pp. 65-66.**

In the section entitled “6th Thematic Unit: Monotheistic Religions— Judaism and Islam,” a chapter on Judaism includes a text dedicated to Passover. The text provides the historical context of Passover, recounting the story of the Jews’ enslavement in Egypt and their subsequent liberation. It also describes modern-day practices and highlights the tradition of transmitting the Haggadah from one generation to the next and notes the use of the Hebrew language. The text emphasizes how Judaism—a religion deeply rooted in remembrance—contextualizes its past within the present. The lesson notes specifically the ‘Four Questions’ section of the *Haggadah*, explaining that its purpose is for “parents to tell their children the story of the Jewish people and help them experience the journey of their ancestors out of Egypt.” A detailed presentation of the ‘Seder table’ is provided, presenting it as a central and detailed component of the Jewish Passover celebration, recognizing the Temple as an integral part of Jewish heritage. The text explains that the Seder, held on the first night of Passover, is not merely a meal but a ritual process that integrates food with readings, prayers, and symbolic actions. The text also presents the temple as an integral part of Jewish heritage.

**Πέσαχ**

Γιορτάζεται την άνοιξη, διαρκεί οκτώ μέρες και θυμίζει την Έξοδο των Ισραηλιτών από τη σκλαβιά της Αιγύπτου και την εκ νέου γέννηση του λαού τους. Είναι μια γιορτή που φέρνει κοντά όλα τα μέλη της οικογένειας και είναι επικεντρωμένη γύρω από το τραπέζι του Πέσαχ, όπου τελείται το **Σέντερ (δειπνο)** τις δύο πρώτες νύχτες της γιορτής. Το Σέντερ είναι τελετουργία αυστηρά καθορισμένη. Στη διάρκειά της όλοι διαβάζουν τα κείμενα που αφηγούνται την ιστορία της Εξόδου, τους ψαλμούς που δοξάζουν τον Θεό για τις σωτήριες παρεμβάσεις και για τα θαύματά του, και τραγουδούν τα τραγούδια που αναφέρονται στην ιδιαίτερη αυτή γιορτή. Μια κομβική στιγμή στην αρχή του Σέντερ είναι οι «τέσσερις ερωτήσεις», που τραγουδούν συνήθως στα εβραϊκά τα μικρά παιδιά της οικογένειας. Εξάλλου, όλη αυτή η τελετουργία έχει ως σκοπό να διηγηθούν οι γονείς στα παιδιά την ιστορία του εβραϊκού λαού και να τα βοηθήσουν να νιώσουν τις εμπειρίες των προγόνων που βγήκαν από την Αίγυπτο. Κάθε Εβραίος θυμάται τις ακόλουθες φράσεις που σημάδεψαν την παιδική



(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

του ηλικία μέσα στην γιορτινή και ζεστή ατμόσφαιρα της διευρυμένης οικογένειας: «Γιατί αυτή η νύχτα είναι διαφορετική από όλες τις άλλες; Διότι όλες τις άλλες νύχτες τρώμε είτε ζυμωτό είτε άζυμο ψωμί, αυτήν τη νύχτα όμως τρώμε μόνον άζυμο. Διότι όλες τις άλλες νύχτες τρώμε όλων των ειδών τα χορταρικά – αυτήν τη νύχτα όμως τρώμε μόνο πικρά χόρτα. Διότι όλες τις άλλες νύχτες δε βουτάμε ούτε μια φορά [τα λαχανικά στο ξίδι], αυτή την νύχτα όμως τα βουτάμε δύο φορές. Διότι όλες τις άλλες νύχτες τρώμε καθισμένοι, αυτήν τη νύχτα όμως είμαστε όλοι γεμμένοι αναπαυτικά. Και η ανάγνωση-αφήγηση συνεχίζεται από όλους όσους παρευρίσκονται στο τραπέζι.

Στο κέντρο του τραπέζιου είναι τοποθετημένος ο **δίσκος του Σέντερ**. Όλα όσα περιέχει συμβολίζουν κάτι διαφορετικό. Ένα καλά βρασμένο σφιχτό αβγό συμβολίζει τη θυσία που γινόταν στον Ναό σε κάθε γιορτή. Η κνήμη του αρνιού συμβολίζει τη θυσία του Πέσαχ, όταν θυσίαζαν αρνιά στον Ναό. Τα πικρά χόρτα παραπέμπουν στην πικρή εμπειρία της σκλαβιάς στην Αίγυπτο. Μια κρέμα από μήλα, ξηρούς καρπούς κανέλα και κρασί θυμίζει τη λάσπη που χρησιμοποιούσαν οι Ισραηλίτες σκλάβοι στην Αίγυπτο. Το σέλινο θυμίζει ότι το Πάσχα γιορτάζεται την άνοιξη και έτσι ευλογούνται όλοι οι καρποί της γης. Αλατισμένο νερό ή ξίδι συμβολίζει τα δάκρυα των Ισραηλιτών στην Αίγυπτο ή τη δύσκολη ζωή που περνούσαν εκεί. Τα άζυμα ψωμιά (ματσά) παραπέμπουν στα άζυμα ψωμιά της Εξόδου. Τέσσερα ποτήρια με κρασί αντιστοιχούν σε τέσσερις βιβλικές φράσεις που αναφέρονται στη λύτρωση των Εβραίων. Το ποτήρι του προφήτη Ηλία συνδέεται με την προαναγγελία και τον ερχομό του Μεσσία, την εποχή δηλαδή της απόλυτης ελευθερίας και ειρήνης για τον λαό. Σε όλη τη διάρκεια του Σέντερ υπενθυμίζεται ότι όλα αυτά δεν είναι απλώς γεγονότα του παρελθόντος. Το Πάσχα δεν είναι κάτι που τελείωσε. Είναι η «εποχή της ελευθερίας μας».

#### *Pesach*

*It is celebrated in the spring, lasts for eight days, and commemorates the Exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt and the rebirth of their people. It is a festival that brings all family members together and is centered around the Passover table, where the Seder (dinner) takes place during the first two nights of the festival. The Seder is a strictly defined ritual. During it, everyone reads texts recounting the story of the Exodus, recites psalms praising God for His salvific interventions and miracles, and sings songs related to this special celebration.*

*A key moment at the beginning of the Seder is the "Four Questions," usually sung in Hebrew by the young children of the family. The purpose of this entire ritual is for parents to tell their children the story of the Jewish people and help them experience the journey of their ancestors out of Egypt. Every Jewish person recalls the following phrases that marked their childhood:*

*The Passover Seder is celebrated in a festive and warm atmosphere with the extended family. One key part of the Seder is the recitation of the "Four Questions" by the children, which are designed to highlight the unique aspects of this night compared to others. These questions are: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights, we eat either leavened or unleavened bread; this night, we eat only unleavened bread. On all other nights, we eat all kinds of vegetables; this night, we eat only bitter herbs. On all other nights, we do not dip our vegetables even once; this night, we dip them twice. On all other nights, we eat sitting; this night, we eat reclining. This ritual continues with everyone at the table participating in the retelling of the story. At the center of the table is the Seder plate, which contains various symbolic items: A well-cooked hard-boiled egg symbolizes the sacrifice made at the Temple during each festival. The shank bone of a lamb represents the Passover sacrifice when lambs were offered at the Temple. The bitter herbs remind participants of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. A mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine recalls the mortar used by the enslaved Israelites in Egypt. The celery represents the spring season of Passover, and thus the blessing of all the fruits of the earth. Salt water or vinegar symbolizes the tears of the Israelites in Egypt or their difficult lives there. The unleavened bread (matzah) represents the unleavened bread of the Exodus. Four cups of wine correspond to four Biblical phrases referring to the redemption of the Jews. The cup of Elijah the Prophet is associated with the foretelling and coming of the Messiah, marking the time of ultimate freedom and peace for the people. Throughout the Seder, it is emphasized that these are not merely past events. Passover is not something that ended; it is the "season of our freedom."*

**Example 39.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), pp. 66-67.**

In the section “6th Thematic Unit: Monotheistic Religions—Judaism and Islam,” a chapter about Judaism describes major Jewish holidays that hold significant religious and historical meaning, namely *Shavuot*, *Sukkot*, *Hanukkah* and *Purim*. The text explains how *Shavuot* celebrates the receiving of the Ten Commandments; *Sukkot* commemorates the Israelites dwelling in the desert after their liberation from Pharaoh; *Hanukkah* marks the victory of the Maccabees over the Greeks; and *Purim* celebrates the salvation of the Jews in Persia from Haman’s plot to annihilate them. The textbook features a photograph of the nine-branched *Hanukkah* menorah (*Hanukkiah*), an important symbol in Judaism, offering a brief mention of the traditional seven-branched menorah, which holds broader historical and religious significance. The goal of the lesson is to introduce children to the major holidays of the Jewish religion, explaining their traditions and what they commemorate.

**Σαβουότ (Πεντηκοστή)**

Γιορτάζεται στην αρχή του καλοκαιριού και υπενθυμίζει την ημέρα που έφεραν την πρώτη σοδειά της χρονιάς προσφορά στον Ναό, καθώς και τη μέρα που ο Θεός έδωσε τις Δέκα Εντολές στο Όρος Σινά ως όρο της Διαθήκης του με τον Ισραήλ.

Διαβάζεται το Βιβλίο της Ρουθ, όπου περιγράφεται γλαφυρά ο καλοκαιρινός θερισμός. Έθιμο του σπιτιού είναι η κατανάλωση γαλακτερών τροφών που συμβολίζουν την Τορά (καθώς ο Νόμος παρομοιάζεται με το γάλα, που είναι θρεπτική και ωφέλιμη τροφή).

**Σουκότ (Σκηνοπηγία)**

Γιορτάζεται το φθινόπωρο, διαρκεί εννέα μέρες και υπενθυμίζει τις περιπλανήσεις των Εβραίων στην έρημο, μετά την απελευθέρωσή τους από την Αίγυπτο, όταν ήταν αναγκασμένοι να ζουν σε σκηνές, καλύβες ή παραπήγματα.

Όλα τα γεύματα στη διάρκεια του Σουκότ τρώγονται μέσα στη Σουκά, μια πρόχειρη σκηνή σαν καλύβα, που στήνεται στο προαύλιο, στον κήπο ή στην ταράτσα του σπιτιού. Μέσα στη Σουκά είναι αναμμένα κεριά. Με την παραμονή όλων στις πρόχειρες αυτές σκηνές καταργούνται οι κοινωνικές διαφορές, τονίζεται η ματαιότητα των υλικών αγαθών και ενδυναμώνεται η πίστη προς τη θεϊκή προστασία.

**Χανουκά**

Γιορτάζεται μέσα στο χειμώνα και διαρκεί οκτώ μέρες. Αφορά στη νίκη των Μακκαβαίων (Εβραίων πολεμιστών) το 167 π.Χ. ενάντια στους εχθρούς τους, οι οποίοι βεβήλωσαν τον Ναό του Σολομώντα και δεν τους επέτρεπαν να ασκούν τα θρησκευτικά τους καθήκοντα σύμφωνα

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

με τις παραδόσεις τους. Η λέξη «χανουκά» σημαίνει «αφιέρωση» ή εγκαίνια, καθώς γιορτάζεται η κάθαρση του Ναού και η αφιέρωσή του εκ νέου στον αληθινό Θεό. Η γιορτή επίσης ονομάζεται και **Γιορτή των Φώτων** για το φως των κεριών που ανάβουν σε ανάμνηση του λεγόμενου θαύματος του λαδιού: ένα μπουκαλάκι με μια ποσότητα λαδιού που επαρκούσε για το άναμμα της επτάφωτης λυχνίας του Ναού για μία μέρα κράτησε τη λυχνία αναμμένη για οχτώ μέρες μετά τη νίκη των Μακκαβαίων. Από τότε η εθιμοτυπία που επικράτησε είναι το άναμμα της Χανουκίας τόσο στη Συναγωγή όσο και στο σπίτι: ένα κερί για κάθε βράδυ της γιορτής.

Αυτήν την εβδομάδα γίνονται στα σπίτια οικογενειακές και φιλικές συγκεντρώσεις για τα παιδιά, μοιράζονται δώρα, καθώς και το «νόμισμα» της Χανουκά. Το πιο γνωστό παιχνίδι της γιορτής είναι αυτό που παίζεται με μια μικρή σβούρα.



### Πουρίμ

Γιορτάζεται η επέτειος της σωτηρίας των Εβραίων της Περσίας από τα χέρια του Αμάν, ενός αξιωματικού του βασιλιά που ήθελε να τους εξολοθρεύσει. Η λέξη σημαίνει «κλήρος» και αναφέρεται στις μηχανορραφίες του Αμάν, που έβαλε κλήρο για να αποφασίσει ποια μέρα θα διέταζε τη σφαγή των Εβραίων της Περσίας. Το σχέδιο του Αμάν δεν ευοδώθηκε και, αντί να σκοτωθούν οι Εβραίοι, ο βασιλιάς διέταξε να σκοτώσουν τον ίδιο.

#### Shavuot (Pentecost)

*Celebrated at the beginning of summer, Shavuot commemorates the day when the first fruits of the harvest were brought as an offering to the Temple, as well as the day when God gave the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai as part of His covenant with Israel. During Shavuot, the Book of Ruth is read, which vividly describes the summer harvest. A customary practice is to eat dairy foods, which symbolize the Torah (as the Law is compared to milk, which is nourishing and beneficial).*

#### Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)

*Celebrated in the fall, Sukkot lasts for nine days and commemorates the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert after their liberation from Egypt, when they were forced to live in temporary shelters like booths, huts, or shacks. All meals during Sukkot are eaten inside the sukkah, a temporary booth set up in the courtyard, garden, or rooftop of the home. Candles are lit inside the sukkah. By staying in these temporary booths, social distinctions are diminished, the futility of material possessions is highlighted, and faith in divine protection is strengthened.*

#### Hanukkah

*Celebrated in winter and lasting eight days, Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees (Jewish warriors) in 167 BCE against their enemies who had desecrated the Temple of Solomon and prohibited them from practicing their religious duties according to their traditions. The word "Hanukkah" means "dedication" or "inauguration," as it celebrates the purification of the Temple and its rededication to the true God. The festival is also called the Festival of Lights due to the candles that are lit in memory of the so-called miracle of the oil: a small jar of oil, enough to light the seven-branched menorah in the Temple for one day, miraculously lasted for eight days after the Maccabees' victory. Since then, the tradition has been to light the Hanukkah menorah both in the synagogue and at home: one candle for each night of the festival. During this week, families gather at home for celebrations, giving gifts, and sharing the Hanukkah "gelt" (coins). The most famous game of the holiday is played with a small spinning top known as a dreidel.*

#### Purim

*Purim celebrates the anniversary of the salvation of the Jews of Persia from the hands of Haman, a royal official who sought to exterminate them. The word "Purim" means "lots" and refers to Haman's scheme of casting lots to decide the day on which he would order the massacre of the Jews of Persia. Haman's plan was thwarted, and instead of the Jews being killed, the king ordered that Haman himself be executed.*

**Example 40.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 67.**

The lesson about Judaism explains its sacred scriptures, including the Torah and the Talmud. The description is informative and accurate, explaining that the term 'Torah' refers not only to the five books of Moses (Pentateuch), believed to be divinely revealed and completed by Moses, but also to the *Tanakh* and the broader corpus of Jewish teachings "from the beginning of the Bible to the present day." This provides a comprehensive understanding of Jewish books and religious belief. Likewise, the Talmud is described as the oral law, regarded as "the backbone of Jewish religion and tradition," with its transmission from one generation to the next, and its codification following the destruction of the Temples and the exile of the Jews. The reference to the Jewish temple and subsequent exile of Jews from the land is significant as it acknowledges Jewish connection to Jerusalem, and further, their history in the land of Israel.

## ii. Ιερές Γραφές



### Τορά

Η Τορά είναι ο νόμος του Θεού που ο Μωυσής έδωσε στους Ισραηλίτες, όπως του παραδόθηκε, σε πέντε βιβλία, την Πεντάτευχο. Η πίστη και η αναφορά στην Τορά αποτελούν ουσιώδη στοιχεία της εβραϊκής πίστης, καθώς θεωρείται η ολοκληρωμένη αποκάλυψη των εντολών του Θεού. Ένα από τα λίγα «δόγματα» του Ιουδαϊσμού είναι η πεποίθηση ότι η πηγή της Τορά είναι ο Θεός και ότι η Τορά οριστικοποιήθηκε από τον Μωυσή. Με τη στενή της σημασία η λέξη αναφέρεται μόνο στα πέντε πρώτα βιβλία της Βίβλου, την Πεντάτευχο. Συνήθως, όμως, η λέξη Τορά αναφέρεται σε ολόκληρο το περιεχόμενο της Βίβλου που την αποτελούν είκοσι τέσσερα βιβλία, γνωστά από τα αρχικά τους ως TANAK (αρκτικόλεξο). Ωστόσο, η σημασία της λέξης Τορά δεν περιορίζεται στη Βίβλο. Η Τορά αντιπροσωπεύει ολόκληρη την εβραϊκή διδασκαλία από την αρχή της Βίβλου ως τις μέρες μας.

### Ταλμούδ

Είναι ο λεγόμενος προφορικός νόμος και θεωρείται η ραχοκοκαλιά της εβραϊκής θρησκείας και παράδοσης. Η παράδοση διδάσκει ότι ο Μωυσής στο όρος Σινά παρέλαβε τον γραπτό Νόμο (Τορά) και τον προφορικό νόμο, τον οποίο μετέδιδε η μια γενιά στην επόμενη. Μετά την καταστροφή του Ναού και την εξορία των Εβραίων, προκειμένου να σωθεί ο προφορικός νόμος, άρχισε η καταγραφή του. Γι' αυτό, αν και αποκαλείται «προφορικός νόμος», το Ταλμούδ

## II. Sacred Scriptures

### Torah

The Torah is the law of God that Moses delivered to the Israelites, as it was revealed to him, in five books known as the Pentateuch. Faith in and reference to the Torah are fundamental elements of Jewish belief, as it is considered the complete revelation of God's commandments. One of the few "doctrines" of Judaism is the belief that the source of the Torah is God and that the Torah was finalized by Moses. In its narrowest sense, the term refers specifically to the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. However, the term Torah is usually extended to refer to the entire content of the Bible, which comprises twenty-four books, known by the acronym TANAK. Nonetheless, the meaning of the word Torah is not limited to the Bible. The Torah represents the entire body of Jewish teaching from the beginning of the Bible to the present day.

### Talmud

The Talmud is known as the oral law and is considered the backbone of Jewish religion and tradition. Tradition teaches that Moses received the written Law (Torah) and the oral law at Mount Sinai, which was transmitted from one generation to the next. After the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the Jews, efforts were made to preserve the oral law by recording it. Therefore, although it is called the "oral law," the Talmud is a collection and careful documentation of oral traditions and includes texts related to the interpretation of Mosaic law, as well as various other materials.

**Example 41.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), pp. 68-69.**

A text teaching about “How Should People Live?” in accordance with Jewish belief, discusses prayer, observing the Sabbath, and “Living according to God’s Law.” The text focuses on the general meaning of prayer as “an expression of supplication and gratitude.” It elaborates on the importance of the Sabbath, as a day of rest and “a day of sanctification,” explaining its origin in the story of creation and how observant Jews keep the Sabbath. Living according to God’s law is demonstrated by quoting verses from the Bible instructing believers to follow God’s laws, love Him, not oppress or exploit foreigners, lend money without interest, not spread false rumors, avoid lying for the sake of a person, not follow the crowd in doing wrong, and, in the case of a trial, do not testify by siding with the majority to distort justice. It also emphasizes not showing bias in a trial, even on behalf of a weaker party. The presentation of both Jewish belief and morality provides students with a holistic understanding of the religion.

### iii. Πώς πρέπει να ζουν οι άνθρωποι;



#### Προσευχή

Οι Εβραίοι πιστεύουν ότι ο Θεός ακούει τις προσευχές των πιστών και ότι πάντα ανταποκρίνεται σε αυτές, αν και όχι πάντα με τον τρόπο που περιμένουν οι άνθρωποι. Η προσευχή θεωρείται συνομιλία με τον Θεό, έκφραση ικεσίας και ευγνωμοσύνης.

#### Σαμπάτ

Σαμπάτ είναι η ονομασία της τελευταίας μέρας της εβδομάδας και η λέξη σημαίνει «διακόπτω την εργασία». Το Σαμπάτ όμως δεν είναι μόνο μέρα ανάπαυσης, αλλά και εξαγνισμού. Καθ’ όλη τη διάρκεια της μέρας αυτής, ο άνθρωπος πρέπει να αφοσιώνεται σε πνευματικά και θρησκευτικά ενδιαφέροντα. Η ιερότητα του Σαμπάτ παραπέμπει στην έβδομη μέρα της δημιουργίας του κόσμου η οποία διήρκεσε έξι μέρες. Την έβδομη μέρα της δημιουργίας, σύμφωνα με τη Γένεση, ο Θεός αναπαύθηκε. Γι’ αυτό, όποιος τηρεί το Σαμπάτ, δεν ασχολείται με τις καθημερινές του φροντίδες, απέχει από κάθε είδους εργασία, έτσι ώστε ο ίδιος, η οικογένειά του και οι άνθρωποι που δουλεύουν γι’ αυτόν, ακόμη και η φύση γύρω του να αναπαυτούν και να ηρεμήσουν. Η ευχή που ακούγεται την ημέρα του Σαββάτου είναι «Σαμπάτ σαλόμ», που σημαίνει «Να έχετε ένα ειρηνικό Σαμπάτ».

#### Ζωή σύμφωνα με το Νόμο του Θεού

Αν υπακούσετε πραγματικά στις εντολές που εγώ σας δίνω σήμερα κι αν αγαπάτε τον Κύριο, τον Θεό σας, και τον λατρεύετε μ’ όλη σας την καρδιά και μ’ όλη σας την ψυχή, τότε αυτός θα στέλνει βροχή στη χώρα σας στον κατάλληλο καιρό της, τη φθινοπωρινή και την ανοιξιάτικη, και θα έχετε καλή σοδειά στο σάρι, στο κρασί και στο λάδι σας.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*How Should People Live?*

*Prayer*

*Jews believe that God hears the prayers of the faithful and always responds to them, although not always in the way that people expect. Prayer is considered a conversation with God, an expression of supplication and gratitude.*

*Shabbat*

*Shabbat is the name for the last day of the week, and the word means “to cease from work.” However, Shabbat is not only a day of rest but also a day of sanctification. Throughout this day, individuals are expected to devote themselves to spiritual and religious interests. The sanctity of Shabbat refers to the seventh day of the world’s creation, which lasted for six days. On the seventh day, according to Genesis, God rested. Therefore, anyone who observes Shabbat refrains from daily chores and any form of work, so that they, their family, and those who work for them, as well as the nature around them, can rest and find tranquility. The blessing heard on Shabbat is “Shabbat shalom,” which means “Have a peaceful Shabbat.”*

### Ζωή σύμφωνα με το Νόμο του Θεού

Αν υπακούσετε πραγματικά στις εντολές που εγώ σας δίνω σήμερα κι αν αγαπάτε τον Κύριο, τον Θεό σας, και τον λατρεύετε μ’ όλη σας την καρδιά και μ’ όλη σας την ψυχή, τότε αυτός θα στέλνει βροχή στη χώρα σας στον κατάλληλο καιρό της, τη φθινοπωρινή και την ανοιξιάτικη, και θα έχετε καλή σοδειά στο σάρι, στο κρασί και στο λάδι σας.

Δτ 11, 13-15

Ξένον δεν πρέπει να τον καταπιέζετε ούτε να τον εκμεταλλεύεστε, γιατί κι εσείς ήσασταν κάποτε ξένοι στην Αίγυπτο. Χήρα και ορφανό δεν θα τους καταπιέζετε.

Εξ 22, 20-21

Όταν δανείζεις χρήματα σ’ έναν φτωχό συμπολίτη σου, μην του φέρεσαι όπως οι άλλοι δανειστές – μην του ζητάς τόκο. Αν πάρεις το πανωφόρι κάποιου για ενέχυρο, φρόντισε να του το επιστρέψεις πριν από τη δύση του ήλιου, γιατί είναι το μοναδικό του σκέπασμα, με το οποίο προστατεύεται από το κρύο. Με τι θα κοιμηθεί;

Εξ 22, 24-26

Μη διαδίδεις φήμες ψεύτικες. Μη δίνεις για χάρη ενός ανθρώπου αδίκου μαρτυρία αναληθή. Να μην ακολουθείς τους πολλούς στο κακό, και σε περίπτωση δίκης να μην καταθέτεις παίρνοντας το μέρος των πολλών για να διαστρέψεις το δίκαιο. Να μη μεροληπτείς στη δίκη ούτε για χάρη του αδύνατου διαδίκου.

Αν συναντήσεις το βόδι του εχθρού σου ή το υποζύγιό του να περιτλανιέται, πρέπει να το οδηγήσεις στον αφέντη του. Αν δεις το υποζύγιο του εχθρού σου να γονατίζει από το φορτίο του, μην τραβήξεις το δρόμο σου, αλλά να τον βοηθήσεις πρόθυμα.

Εξ 23, 1-5

Όταν θερίζετε τα χωράφια σας, μην κόβετε τα στάχια ως την τελευταία γωνιά του χωραφιού σας· και μη γυρίζετε πίσω, μετά το θερισμό, για να μαζέψετε τα στάχια που παρέπεσαν. Ούτε να γυρνάτε πίσω στο αμπέλι σας για να μαζέψετε τα τσαμπιά που έμειναν ή τις ρώγες που έχουν πέσει· να τ’ αφήνετε για τον φτωχό και για τον ξένο. Εγώ ο Κύριος είμαι ο Θεός.

Λευ 19, 9-10

Μην κρατάς πικρία στην καρδιά σου για τον άλλο· εξηγήσου μαζί του ανοιχτά, για να μη σε βαραινεί καμιά αμαρτία εξαιτίας του. Μην είσαι εκδικητικός και μνησικάκος απέναντι στους άλλους, αλλά ν’ αγαπάς τον πλησίον σου όπως τον εαυτό σου. Εγώ είμαι ο Κύριος.

Λευ 19, 17-18

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

*Living According to God's Law*

*"If you truly obey the commands I give you today, and love the Lord your God, and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, then He will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine, and olive oil."*

*Deuteronomy 11:13-15*

*"You shall not oppress or exploit a foreigner, for you were once foreigners in Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or orphan."*

*Exodus 22:20-21*

*"When you lend money to a poor fellow Israelite, do not treat him like a creditor—do not charge him interest. If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset, because that cloak is the only covering your neighbor has. What else will they sleep in?" Exodus 22: 24-26*

*"Do not spread false rumors. Do not help a wicked person by being a malicious witness. Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, and do not show favoritism to a poor person in a lawsuit.*

*If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it."\*\*\**

*Exodus 23:1-5*

*"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God."*

*Leviticus 19:9-10*

*"Do not harbor hatred against your brother in your heart; rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord."*

*Leviticus 19:17-18*

**Example 42.**

***Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 69.***

In the section “6th Thematic Unit: Monotheistic Religions—Judaism and Islam,” a brief section refers to the synagogue as a place of prayer, explaining its function, as well as its historic origins as a “house of assembly” during the Babylonian exile after the destruction of the Second Temple. The lesson also describes its design, including the Holy Ark contained within, the seating arrangements for men and women, and its symbolic decoration. The text further informs students that synagogues do not contain statues or images, adhering to the biblical injunction against crafting “a carved image” for worship—an addition that may help to distinguish synagogues from churches. By focusing on the historic context behind the development of the synagogue, the text highlights an important evolution in Jewish religious life.

The inclusion of an image of the Monastirion Synagogue’s interior in Thessaloniki is a valuable step in recognizing Jewish presence in Greece. Established in 1927 by Jews from Monastir (Bitola) and designed by Jewish architect Ernst Löewy, the synagogue stands as a living symbol of Jewish continuity and cultural contribution in the country. While the text does not provide its history in detail, the visual reference offers an opportunity to acknowledge the enduring presence of Jewish communities in Greece. That said, there is no mention of the historic synagogues of Thessaloniki or other Jewish communities in Greece. While an image of the Monastirion Synagogue’s interior in Thessaloniki is featured, its history is absent, failing to acknowledge the fact that synagogues existed and continue to exist in Greece. The Monastirion Synagogue was established in 1927 by Jews that came from Monastir (Bitola) and was designed by Jewish architect Ernst Löewy. During the German occupation, the synagogue was used by the Red Cross and was therefore spared. Its interior was renovated after the war, with the plain windows being replaced by elaborate stained-glass designs.<sup>102</sup> At the end of this chapter, there are two educational activities: “Exploration of the Jewish Museum of Greece’s website on the topic of ‘Jewish Communities in Greece’ and “Organizing a Visit to the Jewish Museum of Greece or the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki.” These activities create an awareness of the presence of Jewish communities and their history in Greece, and encourage students to engage with it directly.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

<sup>102</sup> Mentioning the pre-war history of the synagogues would provide a crucial lesson in understanding the cultural destruction caused by the Holocaust in Thessaloniki. Before the Holocaust, there were more than 70 synagogues and private prayer houses in the city, all of which were destroyed during and after the Holocaust. Additionally, there is no mention of the secular functions of the synagogues or the microhistories directly connected to local history. Topography of Synagogues in Salonika (1500-1940) Documents, images and Maps. <http://www.jmth.gr/article-13022023-topography-of-synagogues-in-salonika-1500-1940-documents-images-and-maps>.

### Η Συναγωγή

Η Συναγωγή, κατά κυριολεξία σημαίνει «Οίκος συνάθροισης». Η γένεση της συναγωγής ανάγεται στην εποχή της εξορίας στη Βαβυλώνα, το 586 π.Χ. - 537 π.Χ., διάστημα στο οποίο οι Ιουδαίοι είχαν στερηθεί τον Ναό τους. Έτσι δημιούργησαν τις συναγωγές, δηλαδή χώρους όπου συγκεντρώνονταν, για να προσεύχονται και να μελετούν τον Νόμο. Η εξέλιξη και εδραίωση της Συναγωγής σχετίζεται με την εποχή της καταστροφής του δεύτερου Ναού, το 70 μ.Χ., οπότε και οι Εβραίοι αναγκάστηκαν να προσεύχονται χωρίς την τελετουργία των θυσιών. Έκτοτε, Συναγωγές κτίζονταν στις πόλεις και στα χωριά όπου ζούσαν οι Εβραίοι, και οι θυσίες αντικαταστάθηκαν από την προσευχή: «αντί για ταύρους σου προσφέρουμε τις προσευχές μας» (Νοσ 14, 3). Αν εξαιρέσουμε τον αρχιτεκτονικό ρυθμό και τη διακόσμηση, που ποικίλλουν ανάλογα με τον τόπο όπου βρίσκεται η κάθε Συναγωγή, όλες παρουσιάζουν περίπου την ίδια διάταξη όσον αφορά την εσωτερική διαμόρφωση του χώρου. Προσανατολισμένη προς την Ιερουσαλήμ, στηριγμένη στον τοίχο που βρίσκεται στο βάθος και καλυμμένη με κεντητό παραπέτασμα, τοποθετείται η Ιερή Κιβωτός που περιέχει τους «κυλίνδρους του Νόμου». Μπροστά στην Ιερή Κιβωτό βρίσκεται κρεμασμένη από την οροφή μια λυχνία που παραμένει διαρκώς αναμμένη. Στη βάση της Κιβωτού υψώνεται το αναλόγιο μπροστά στο οποίο στέκεται ο ψάλτης. Στη μέση του κτιρίου της Συναγωγής ορθώνεται μια εξέδρα, από όπου διαβάζεται η Τορά, ο Νόμος. Οι θέσεις για τους πιστούς βρίσκονται διατεταγμένες γύρω από την



εξέδρα. Ειδικό μέρος της Συναγωγής είναι προορισμένο για τις γυναίκες, ο γυναικωνίτης.

Τα παράθυρα της Συναγωγής είναι κυρίως βιτρό με εβραϊκές επιγραφές και ιερά σύμβολα. Τα χαρακτηριστικά σύμβολα που χρησιμοποιούνται για τη διακόσμηση του χώρου είναι οι πλάκες του Νόμου, απεικονίσεις λιονταριών (σύμβολο της φυλής του Ιούδα και χαρακτηριστικό δύναμης), το στέμμα (σύμβολο της Βασιλείας του Θεού) και το Μαγκέν Νταβίντ (το άστρο του Δαβίδ). Επίσης, στις Συναγωγές βρίσκουμε απομιμήσεις της Μενορά, της επτάφωτης λυχνίας που έκαψε στην Κιβωτό της Διαθήκης, μαζί με τις πλάκες του Νόμου που δόθηκαν στην έρημο κι αργότερα μεταφέρθηκαν στον Ναό της Ιερουσαλήμ. Το φως της συμβολίζει το πνευματικό φως που θα πρέπει να φωτίζει ασταμάτητα όλη τη γη.

Στις Συναγωγές δεν υπάρχουν αγάλματα, εικόνες, απεικονίσεις παραστάσεων, προσώπων ή άλλες, λόγω της ρητής απαγόρευσης «Ού ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ εἰδωλον...» (Εξ 20, 4-5).

#### *Living According to God's Law*

*The Synagogue, literally meaning "House of Assembly," originated during the time of the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C. - 537 B.C.), a period when the Jews were deprived of their Temple. During this time, they created synagogues as places where they could gather to pray and study the Law. The development and establishment of the Synagogue are closely linked to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., when the Jews were forced to worship without the ritual of sacrifices. From then on, Synagogues were built in cities and villages where Jews lived, and sacrifices were replaced by prayer: "We will offer the fruit of our lips instead of bulls" (Hosea 14:3). Except for the architectural style and decoration, which vary depending on the location of each Synagogue, all of them have roughly the same layout in terms of interior design. Oriented towards Jerusalem, the Holy Ark, containing the "scrolls of the Law," is placed against the far wall and covered with an embroidered curtain. In front of the Holy Ark hangs a lamp that remains continuously lit. The lectern, where the cantor stands, is positioned in front of the Ark. In the center of the Synagogue building, a platform is raised, from which the Torah, the Law, is read. The seats for the congregation are arranged around this central space the platform. A special section of the Synagogue is designated for women, known as the women's gallery or gynaeceum. The windows of the Synagogue are primarily stained glass, featuring Hebrew inscriptions and sacred symbols. The characteristic symbols used for the decoration of the space include the Tablets of the Law, depictions of lions (symbolizing the Tribe of Judah and representing strength), the crown (a symbol of God's Kingship), and the Magen David (the Star of David). Additionally, Synagogues often feature replicas of the Menorah, the seven-branched lampstand that burned in the Ark of the Covenant, alongside the Tablets of the Law that were given in the desert and later placed in the Temple of Jerusalem. Its light symbolizes the spiritual light that should continuously illuminate the whole earth.*

*Synagogues do not contain statues, images, depictions of scenes, persons, or other forms of representation, due to the explicit prohibition: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image..." (Exodus 20:4-5).*

**Example 43.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), p. 70.**

A lesson about Judaism includes a brief chapter on the role of the Rabbis, who initially served as teachers with judicial responsibilities, and later became the spiritual leaders of the community. The lesson features a photograph showing traditional attire and sacred items, such as the Torah scroll, the prayer shawl, and the head covering for men.<sup>103</sup> References to the Rabbis' judicial roles demonstrate the impact of Jewish figures on the Greek community to students.

However, the text does not provide any information about Greek Rabbinic history. During the sixteenth century, Thessaloniki was home to many influential rabbis whose significance extended beyond the Ottoman Empire. Among the most prominent were Solomon Alcabetz, the creator of *Lecha Dodi* (a Jewish prayer); Isaac Adarbi, author of *Divrei Rivot* and *Divrei Shalom* (legal rulings); and Moshe Almosino, who produced many significant works. In addition, Samuel di Medina (*"RaSHdaM"*), wrote over 1,000 responsa (questions and answers on religious and everyday topics), and remains a highly reliable authority on both Jewish Law and daily practices.<sup>104</sup> Thessaloniki was also renowned as the center of *Kabbalah* (Hebrew mysticism), second only to Safed. In the sixteenth century, its rabbinical schools included a *Bet Midrash* (house of study) for *piyutim* (religious poetry) and song, as well as a *Bet Midrash* for cosmic studies, where subjects such as medicine, natural sciences, astronomy, and other cognitive subjects were taught.<sup>105</sup>

**Ραβίνοι**

Ο ραβίνος (=δάσκαλος) είναι ένας από τους κύριους λειτουργούς της εβραϊκής κοινότητας. Αρχικά, οι ραβίνοι ήταν δάσκαλοι. Οι πιο φωτισμένοι απ' αυτούς είχαν και δικαστικές αρμοδιότητες. Με το πέρασμα του χρόνου, οι ραβίνοι απέκτησαν και τις αρμοδιότητες του πνευματικού ηγέτη και του πρωτοστάτη των προσευχών. Μετά την καταστροφή του Ναού το 70 μ.Χ., το σώμα των ιερέων έπαψε να υφίσταται και υπεύθυνοι πλέον για τις θρησκευτικές ανάγκες της κοινότητας καθώς και για την επίσημη εκπροσώπησή της ήταν οι ραβίνοι.

*Rabbis*

*The rabbi (teacher) is one of the principal leaders of the Jewish community. Initially, rabbis were teachers. The most enlightened among them also had judicial responsibilities. Over time, rabbis gained roles as spiritual leaders and leaders of prayer. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, the priestly body ceased to exist, and from then on, rabbis were responsible for the religious needs of the community as well as its official representation.*

103 For an approach to local history, it would be worthwhile to mention the historical fact that during the sixteenth century Thessaloniki became a center for Torah learning (both the Old Testament and Talmud) and attracted many students from abroad. *Topography of Synagogues in Salonika (1500-1940) Documents, Images and Maps*. <http://www.jmth.gr/article-13022023-topography-of-synagogues-in-salonika-1500-1940-documents-images-and-maps>.

104 Benmayor, Yakov. "The Jews of Thessaloniki." <http://www.jmth.gr/article-20032014-oi-evraioi-tis-thessalonikis>.

105 It might be worthwhile to mention the significance of the rabbi's role as one of the leading religious leaders in pre-war Thessaloniki.

**Example 44.**

**Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School Grade 9, 2020 (revised), pp. 120-123.**

The lesson introduces the Sabbath as a core element of Jewish religious life, highlighting its dual significance: commemorating both the creation of the world and the Exodus from Egypt. It accurately describes key practices—such as refraining from work and attending synagogue—but presents them from an external, Christian-framed perspective, lacking deeper engagement with Jewish theological meaning. The student activity encourages empathy by imagining a devout Jew's feelings on the Sabbath, promoting intercultural awareness. However, without the text originates from a Christian ecclesiastical outlet, which overlooks the opportunity to incorporate authentic Jewish sources.

### Η ημέρα του Σαββάτου στον Ιουδαϊσμό

*Ας μελετήσουμε το παρακάτω κείμενο, σημειώνοντας δύο λέξεις ή φράσεις που παραπέμπουν σε συγκεκριμένο θρησκευτικό περιεχόμενο. Στη συνέχεια, ας καταγράψουμε σε ένα περίγραμμα ανθρώπου ένα συναίσθημα και μια σκέψη ενός πιστού Ιουδαίου, με βάση τις εξής προτάσεις: «Όταν γιορτάζω το Σάββατο αισθάνομαι...» (μέσα στο περίγραμμα), «Η μέρα του Σαββάτου σημαίνει για μένα...» (έξω από το περίγραμμα). Στο τέλος, ας διαβάσουμε στην ολομέλεια όλα όσα γράψαμε, συζητώντας γι' αυτά.*

### Η εορτή του Σαββάτου για τους Εβραίους

Η ημέρα του Σαββάτου (στην εβραϊκή γλώσσα Shabbat) παίζει αναμφισβήτητα σπουδαίο ρόλο στην καθημερινότητα των απανταχού Εβραίων, καθώς θεωρούν την τήρηση της αργίας και τον εορτασμό της συγκεκριμένης ημέρας αναπόσπαστο κομμάτι της θρησκευτικής τους λατρείας. Είναι η ημέρα που από τους αρχαίους ήδη χρόνους της ισραηλιτικής ιστορίας αφιερώνεται εξ ολοκλήρου στον Θεό. Σύμφωνα με τον εβραϊκό νόμο η τήρηση της γιορτής του Σαββάτου είναι αναπόσπαστο κομμάτι της καθημερινότητας κάθε πιστού. Ο νόμος αυτός ερμηνεύεται με δύο τρόπους:

α) το Σάββατο συμβολίζει τη θύμηση της δημιουργίας του κόσμου που διήρκεσε έξι ημέρες, ενώ την έβδομη ο Θεός αναπαύθηκε. Οπότε κάθε είδους εργασία απαγορεύεται στη θύμηση αυτού του γεγονότος, β) το Σάββατο συμβολίζει την ανάμνηση της απελευθέρωσης του υποδηλωμένου στους Αιγυπτίους Ισραηλιτικού λαού και την Έξοδο από την Αίγυπτο.

Η αργία του Σαββάτου ξεκινά στο Ισραήλ το απόγευμα της Παρασκευής και ολοκληρώνεται το βράδυ του Σαββάτου, δηλαδή έχει διάρκεια 36 ωρών κατά τις οποίες είναι ανεπίτρεπτο για τους Εβραίους να εργάζονται. Σύμφωνα με το τυπικό της γιορτής, ο άνθρωπος πρέπει να αναπαύεται καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ημέρας του Σαββάτου και να απέχει από κάθε είδους εργασία ή ακόμα και δημιουργία. Με αυτό τον τρόπο θεωρείται ότι ο άνθρωπος απαλλάσσεται από τις έγνοιες της καθημερινότητας και ασχολείται με την καλλιέργεια και την εξύψωση του πνεύματος.

Συνήθως το Σάββατο εορτάζεται στο χώρο της Συναγωγής, όπου συναθροίζονται οι πιστοί Εβραίοι και με τον ραβίνο ως διδάσκαλο προβαίνουν στην ανάγνωση των Γραφών και εν συνεχεία στο απαραίτητο κήρυγμα και την προσευχή.

Δημοσιεύτηκε στις 22/4/2016 στο Πρακτορείο Εκκλησιαστικών Ειδήσεων [www.dogma.gr](http://www.dogma.gr).

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

### *The Sabbath Day in Judaism*

Let's study the following text, noting two words or phrases that refer to specific religious content. Then, let's outline a human figure and write down an emotion and a thought of a devout Jew based on the following sentences: "When I celebrate the Sabbath, I feel..." (inside the outline) and "The Sabbath day means to me..." (outside the outline). Finally, let's read out loud everything we have written and discuss it in the plenary session.

#### *The Sabbath Celebration for the Jews*

The Sabbath day (in Hebrew, Shabbat) undeniably plays a significant role in the daily lives of Jews worldwide, as they consider the observance and celebration of this day an integral part of their religious worship. It is the day that has been entirely dedicated to God since the ancient times of Israelite history.

According to Jewish law, the observance of the Sabbath is an essential part of every believer's daily life. This law is interpreted in two ways:

1. The Sabbath symbolizes the remembrance of the world's creation, which lasted six days, and on the seventh day, God rested. Therefore, all forms of work are forbidden in memory of this event.
2. The Sabbath symbolizes the remembrance of the liberation of the Israelite people from the Egyptians and their Exodus from Egypt. The Sabbath begins in Israel on Friday afternoon and ends on Saturday evening, meaning it lasts 25 hours during which it is forbidden for Jews to work. According to the tradition of the holiday, a person must rest throughout the entire Sabbath day and refrain from any kind of work or even creation. In this way, it is believed that a person is freed from daily worries and engages in the cultivation and elevation of the spirit. Typically, the Sabbath is celebrated in the Synagogue, where Jewish worshippers gather with the rabbi as the teacher to read the Scriptures, followed by a sermon and prayer.

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# Jews and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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One example on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, appearing in previous textbooks, was removed. In the textbooks reviewed, until as recently as July 2025, the sole reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was a passage condemning the hatred and violence inflicted on Palestinian youth under occupation, while also lamenting the cycle of violence against Jews that is transmitted across generations of Palestinian children.<sup>106</sup> The passage appeared in a high school Modern Greek textbook, within a teaching unit whose stated objective was: “we will talk about peace and war, and we will think about how each of us, and all of us together, can work to prevent war and promote peace.” However, the article ultimately fostered a dichotomous view, portraying Israel as particularly blameworthy for occupying the “homeland” of the Palestinians, while ignoring Israel’s internationally recognized rights to the territory.

The example was presented without any of the essential historical context needed to understand it properly—such as the history of Jews in post-Ottoman Palestine, French and British colonialism, the Zionist vision, the Balfour Declaration, the British Mandate, waves of Jewish immigration to Mandatory Palestine, the establishment of the State of Israel, subsequent wars with Palestinians and neighboring Arab nations, peace talks, and the Intifadas. Without reference to these crucial milestones, students are left without the tools to grasp the complexity of this politically charged history.

Crucially, the article in question combined several deeply problematic elements that made its continued inclusion untenable. It depicted children with weapons, framed the conflict through divisive and reductive “Jews versus Arabs” language, and blurred the line between Jewish identity and the actions of the State of Israel. Each of these features contravenes international standards on education, children’s rights, and antisemitism, and together they justified the decision to remove the article from the curriculum, as confirmed by Deputy Education Minister Konstantinos Vlasis.<sup>107</sup>

Firstly, the article repeatedly used the term “Jews” (εβραίοι) as the group opposing the “Arabs.” Such phrasing risks conflating religious identity with political or military actions, unjustly attributing collective blame to Jews as a single, uniform group. This wording blurs the crucial distinctions between “Jew,” “Israelite,” and “Israeli,” creating confusion for students and fostering the misleading impression that Jews collectively—including Greek Jews—are responsible for the actions of the State of Israel. This form of collective ascription of guilt falls squarely within the parameters of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, which explicitly identifies as antisemitic the practice of holding Jews collectively accountable for the policies or actions of the State of Israel. Greece, among other states, has formally adopted this definition, underscoring its applicability in educational contexts. The persistence of such language within a school textbook, particularly in an environment meant to cultivate tolerance and critical thought, risks normalizing antisemitic stereotypes for a new generation of learners.

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106 According to Kateřina Králová, “Although Greece formally recognized the State of Israel in 1990, Greek public opinion in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict has remained consistently pro-Arab.” Kateřina Králová, “Hachsharot in Greece, 1945-1949: Camps or Vocational Centers?”. *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*, no 21, 2022: 75-102.  
[https://www.quest-cdejournal.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/3-Q21\\_06\\_Kralova-1.pdf](https://www.quest-cdejournal.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/3-Q21_06_Kralova-1.pdf)

107 Deputy Education Minister Konstantinos Vlasis speech confirming the decision to remove the article:  
<https://www.facebook.com/100008123220479/videos/1120247433291281>

Secondly, beyond the text's depiction of children role-playing the Intifada, the accompanying image of a child carrying a weapon heightens the pedagogical concerns. Without careful contextualization, such imagery risks normalizing violence and valorising child soldiers—directly contradicting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 19 and 38), which obliges states to protect children from violence and prevent their involvement in armed conflict. Presenting this material to adolescents without adequate safeguards may unintentionally reinforce, rather than challenge, associations between youth and militarized violence.

The justification for removal therefore lies not in denying the historical or political realities of the Middle East, but in recognizing how the text represents Jews and frames the conflict. A modern educational system cannot preserve material that, through oversimplification and lack of nuance, risks perpetuating prejudice and distorting complex geopolitical realities.

Reports from July 2025 state that the example was replaced with an AI-generated text, under the directive of the Institute for Educational Policy (IEP). In the new edition, the text deals with the psychological effects of living in war zones on children, without any reference to any geographical entities or disputes, effectively removing the focus from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Deputy Minister of Education Konstantinos Vlasis initially explained that the decision was made “exclusively on pedagogical, scientific and ethical criteria,” but later argued that “the decision also took into account a letter from the Central Jewish Council of Greece, which, with documentation, expressed concern that the passage in question may create confusion and harm coexistence.” He further noted the Ministry of Education’s “responsibility towards historical memory and protection from antisemitism.”

With the replacement of the content on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a more general and contextless text, it is clear that Israel and the conflict are effectively ignored in the curriculum. The absence of any reference to the conflict may derive from curriculum developers attempting to avoid controversial issues. The contested passage was pedagogically unsound, ethically indefensible, and inconsistent with Greece’s international commitments. It violated UNESCO principles on peace education by promoting prejudice and excluding dialogue, as well as the IHRA definition of antisemitism, by placing responsibility on Jews collectively for political issues. Despite the current absence of references to Israel in the Greek curriculum, the removal of the original article reflects a measured act of responsibility, aligning with contemporary educational principles and human rights obligations. This chapter will detail the specific example that was removed from the curriculum, illustrating the significance of this change.

**Example 45.**

**Modern Greek Language, Junior High School Grade 9, 2015 (revised edition), pp. 95-96;**

**Modern Greek Language, Junior High School Grade 9, 2025**

In the Grade 9 Modern Greek Language textbook, titled “Peace – War,” addressing issues of racism and inequality, there was an excerpt from a newspaper article (published in *Kathimerini*), titled: “A generation whose smile has been stolen...” The text, which was recently removed from the textbooks and sparked controversy, quoted a Gazan doctor lamenting the harsh reality of the tragic results of “the Occupation.” The text implicitly accused Israel (“the Occupation”) of contributing to “malnutrition, injuries, lost school hours, or missed opportunities in [the] life” of Palestinians, as well as stealing the “smiles” of an entire Palestinian generation.

Furthermore, the text portrayed Palestinian children as the exclusive victims of the conflict, without presenting the perspective of Jewish Israeli children. The children of Gaza were portrayed as enduring daily hostility from their Jewish Israeli neighbors and living under the constant shadow of war. While the perspective of Gazan children is clearly presented, there is little inclusion of the effect of war on Israeli children. Furthermore, the article concluded with a glossary explaining the term *Intifada* as “Palestinian resistance against the occupation of their homeland by Israel,” teaching that the land is exclusively the Palestinian “homeland,” with no recognition of Jewish ties to it. This description risked prompting students to foster a polarized and unnuanced narrative, where Israel’s claims for the territory—which is perhaps the main crux of the conflict—are unfounded.

The accompanying image shows a young girl holding a rifle, her yellow headscarf inscribed with Arabic script expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people and the “Martyrs Brigades,” the military wing of Fatah in the West Bank.

Notably, the author critiques the grim reality facing young Palestinians after the Second *Intifada*, observing that children now play “Jews and Arabs” instead of “cops and robbers,” choosing the role of the Palestinian “martyr.” This is contrasted with the pre-*Intifada* period, when children preferred playing as the “Jews,” since the Arabs were invariably cast as the losers. The text thus criticized the Palestinians’ glorification of martyrdom as the “ultimate power over life and death.” Moreover, the text acknowledged that some Israelis, such as former prime minister Golda Meir, condemned Israel’s enemies for compelling Israelis to kill Palestinians, asserting that it was time for Palestinians to denounce violence.

The revised textbook removes much of the earlier narrative, replacing it with an AI-generated passage that addresses the psychological impact of living in war zones on children, but without any mention of political or geographic entities. The text, titled “Children may grow up differently,” describes the sad results of war on children from the perspective of a psychologist. The arguments in the new text are strikingly similar to those in the original article, including the reference to “hunger” (cf. “malnutrition”), “injury” (cf. “injuries”) or “interruption of schooling” (cf. “lost school hours”). The text also notes that children’s role-playing games often “reflect fear and violence,” with some imitating “heroes who seem to have power and control,” while observing that over time these “images begin to change.” It appears that the authors employed AI software to neutralize the original text, stripping it of any direct references to specific conflicts and rendering it entirely general.

(See the continuation of the example on the following page.)

2015

**Κείμενο 6** Μια γενιά που της έκλεψαν το χαμόγελο...



[...]Ένας διακεκριμένος γιατρός από τη Γάζα μας είχε πει σε διεθνές συνέδριο που οργάνωσε η Παλαιστινιακή Αρχή «Πως το πιο τραγικό αποτέλεσμα της κατοχής για τα παιδιά της Παλαιστίνης να μην είναι ούτε ο υποσιτισμός ούτε οι τραυματισμοί ούτε οι χαμένες ώρες στο σχολείο ούτε οι χαμένες ευκαιρίες στη ζωή. Αλλά το γεγονός ότι, κάτω από τα μάτια μας μεγαλώνει μια γενιά που της έκλεψαν το χαμόγελο. [...]

Σ' όλο τον κόσμο, τα παιδιά παίζουν «κλέφτες και αστυνόμους». Δε θα σας προκαλέσει έκπληξη, αν σας πω ότι στην Παλαιστίνη παίζουν «Εβραίους και Άραβες». Εκείνο που ίσως σας φανεί απίστευτο είναι ότι τα πιο πολλά από τα δικά μας παιδιά προτιμούν να παίζουν τους... Εβραίους! Κι αυτό γιατί, στα μάτια τους, οι Εβραίοι είναι οι δυνατοί και οι Άραβες οι αδύναμοι, αυτοί που πάντα χάνουν. Κανένα παιδί δε θέλει να 'χει θετικό ήρωα εκείνον που πάντα χάνει. Αλλά μετά τη δεύτερη Intifada\*, η εικόνα άλλαξε. Τώρα, όλοι θέλουν να παίζουν τους Άραβες και μόνο οι

πιο αδύναμοι της παρίας την πληρώνουν και αναγκάζονται να παίζουν τους Εβραίους. Δεν ξέρω αν αυτό είναι καλό ή κακό.

Μερικές φορές τρομάζω όταν βλέπω πόσο δημοφιλής είναι σ' αυτά τα παιδιά η φιγούρα του «μάρτυρα», ειδικά εκείνου που είναι αποφορτισμένος να ανατιναχτεί με εκρηκτικά. Στα μάτια τους, ο καμικάζι έχει την απόλυτη ισχύ πάνω στη ζωή και στο θάνατο, είναι η απόλυτη δύναμη που κανείς και τίποτα δεν μπορεί να σταματήσει. Η πρώτη πρωθυπουργός του Ισραήλ, Γκόλντα Μείρ, είχε πει κάποτε ότι ελεγχόταν όχι τόσο γιατί οι εχθροί της σκοτώνουν Ισραηλινούς, όσο γιατί ανάγκαζαν τους Ισραηλινούς να σκοτώνουν. Τώρα είναι η δική μας σειρά να ποζάρω κάτι ανάλογο, από την ανάποδη. Πάντως, ένα είναι το σίγουρο: Ο φόβος, καιρό τώρα, έχει αλλάξει στρατόπεδο!

Πηγή: Παπακωνσταντίνου, περ. «Κ», σφμ. Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ, 2003

\* Intifada: ονομάζεται η αντίσταση των Παλαιστινίων ενάντια στην κατοχή της πατρίδας τους από το Ισραήλ. Η δεύτερη Intifada άρχισε τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2000.

*Text 6: A Generation Whose Smile Has Been Stolen...*

...A distinguished doctor from Gaza once told us at an international conference organized by the Palestinian Authority: "Perhaps the most tragic result of the occupation for the children of Palestine is not even malnutrition, injuries, lost school hours, or missed opportunities in life. Rather, it is the fact that, before our eyes, a generation is growing up with its smile stolen.

Around the world, children play 'cops and robbers.' You might not be surprised to hear that in Palestine, children play 'Jews and Arabs.' What might seem incredible is that most of our children preferred to play the... Jews! This is because, in their eyes, Jews are the strong ones and Arabs are the weak ones, those who always lose. No child wants to have a positive hero who always loses. But after the second Intifada, the image changed. Now, everyone wants to play the Arabs and only the most vulnerable among them end up playing the role of the Jews. I am not sure if this is good or bad. Sometimes, I am frightened to see how popular the figure of the "martyr" is among these children, especially one who is determined to blow himself up with explosives. In their eyes, the kamikaze represents ultimate power over life and death, an absolute force that no one and nothing can stop. Former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once said that she was enraged not so much by the fact that her enemies were killing Israelis, but because they were forcing Israelis to kill. Now it is our turn to make a similar statement, but from the other side. One thing is certain: Fear, too, has changed sides."

Petros Papaconstantinou, "K" Magazine, Kathimerini Newspaper, 2003

Intifada: The term refers to the Palestinian resistance against the occupation of their homeland by Israel. The second Intifada began in September 2000.

2025

**Κείμενο 6** Τα παιδιά μπορεί να μεγαλώνουν διαφορετικά.

Ένας ψυχολόγος που εργάστηκε με παιδιά από εμπόλεμες ζώνες περιγράφει σε διεθνές συνέδριο: πως το πιο θλιβερό αποτέλεσμα του πολέμου δεν είναι ούτε η πείνα ούτε οι τραυματισμοί ούτε η διακοπή της σχολικής φοίτησης. Είναι το γεγονός ότι μεγαλώνει μια γενιά παιδιών που δυσκολεύεται να γελάσει να παίξει, να ανιερυτεί.

Σε πολλά μέρη του κόσμου, τα παιδιά παίζουν παιχνίδια φαντασίας και ρόλων. Όμως, στις περιοχές όπου υπάρχουν πόλεμοι, τα παιχνίδια συχνά αντικατοπτρίζουν τον φόβο και τη βία. Και αυτό γιατί κάποια παιδιά μιμούνται ήρωες που φαίνεται να έχουν τη δύναμη και τον έλεγχο, συχνά μέσα από εικόνες που έχουν δει ή ζήσει.

Μετά από χρόνια έντασης, κάποιες εικόνες αλλάζουν. Μερικά παιδιά πιο επιλέγουν να μιμούνται αυτούς που αγωνίζονται για την ειρήνη, που βοηθούν άλλους, που ενώνουν αντί να διαχίζουν. Δεν ξέρω αν αυτό είναι απλώς μια διαφορετική περίοδος της ζωής τους ή κάτι βαθύτερο. Ξέρω, όμως, ότι ο πόνος και ο φόβος επηρεάζουν την παιδική ψυχή και καθορίζουν τον τρόπο που τα παιδιά βλέπουν τον κόσμο, γιατί μια καθημερινότητα γεμάτη ανασφάλεια γεννάει ερωτήματα. Και αυτά τα ερωτήματα δεν έχουν πάντα εύκολες απαντήσεις.

Κείμενο που δημιουργήθηκε μέσω εφαρμογής Τεχνητής Νοημοσύνης

*Text 6: Children may grow up differently.*

A psychologist who worked with children from war zones described at an international conference: Perhaps the saddest result of war is not hunger, nor injury, nor the interruption of schooling.

It is the fact that a generation of children is growing up who struggle to laugh, to play, to dream.

In many parts of the world, children play games of imagination and role-playing. However, in areas where there are wars, games often reflect fear and violence. This is because some children imitate heroes who seem to have power and control, often through images they have seen or lived.

After years of tension, some of these images begin to change. Some children now choose to imitate those who fight for peace, who help others, who unite rather than divide. I don't know if this is just a different phase of their lives or something deeper. But I do know that pain and fear affect the child's soul and shape the way children see the world, because a daily life full of insecurity gives rise to questions. And these questions do not always have easy answers.

Text generated using Artificial Intelligence software

# Conclusion

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This report analyzed how Jews, Judaism, the Holocaust and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are portrayed in the Greek educational curriculum focusing on 11 textbooks spanning from the Grade 6 of primary school to Grade 12 of high school (*Lyceum*). Overall, the curriculum demonstrates a strong effort to provide informative and respectful treatment of Judaism, its practices, and its role in world history. Religious Education textbooks provide unusually detailed coverage of Jewish festivals, beliefs, and traditions—such as Shabbat (Sabbath), the Torah, and the cycle of holidays including Passover, *Hanukkah*, and *Purim*. Students are introduced to Jewish ritual life in ways that avoid stereotypes and promote cultural understanding. While the curriculum contains many valuable and positive elements, a welcome addition could be the inclusion of discussions on topics such as antisemitism, its historical roots, analysis, and specific context within Greek history, which are currently absent from educational materials and textbooks.

In reference to the Holocaust, the General Education History textbook for Grade 12 high school students is exemplary, devoting a five-page independent chapter to the Holocaust. It provides balanced historical sources, survivor testimonies, and emphasizes the uniqueness of the genocide. This represents a valuable model of how Greek curricula can approach sensitive history with seriousness and depth. However, beyond this textbook, the Greek curriculum omits descriptions of pre-war Jewish Greek life. Many students are reportedly unaware of the historical presence of Jews in Greece due to the lack of coverage in History education.<sup>108</sup> Across other textbooks, the Holocaust is typically referenced within the broader context of World War II's traumatic events, rather than as a standalone event. Authors often use different interpretive practices, such as categorizing the Holocaust alongside other genocides and presenting it as a lesson for future generations.

Another approach emphasizes Nazi Germany's responsibility, portraying Hitler as the perpetrator of the genocide. There are some mentions of different Greek governments collaborating with the Nazi regime, yet individual Greek collaborators are not named. In general, nationwide resistance to the occupiers and the assistance provided to Greek Jews is emphasized, with individual Greek contributions to this effort being referenced. Significant historical events—such as the operation of concentration camps and forced labor in Greece, and the destruction of Europe's largest prewar Jewish cemetery are notably absent from Greek history textbooks. There are no references to instances of mass arrests and deportations of Greek Jews within the context of local history, preventing students from realizing that the Holocaust is an integral part of Greek history.

The recent decision to remove problematic, antisemitic material about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict shows that the Institute for Educational Policy is attentive to concerns of fairness and accuracy. The curriculum has previously included an example in a Grade 9 Junior High School language textbook, which referenced a newspaper article expressing concern over the violent upbringing of Palestinian youth within the context of the conflict. The example had been one-sided and painted Palestinians as the sole victims of the conflict; its removal and replacement therefore presents an effort to balance political perspectives in the curriculum.

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108 Xenia Eleftheriou, "Tracing the local Jewish history: The Holocaust in education and public history," Thessaloniki: Epikentro, 2025.

However, from the perspective of modern and contemporary history, Greek school curricula offer no substantive historical treatment of Zionism or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the founding of the State of Israel and the migration of Greek Holocaust survivors to the State remain outside the present curriculum, their introduction could serve as a welcome addition, broadening the historical context offered to students. There is therefore an opportunity for introducing balanced educational content about Israel and its historical context in the future.

Taken together, these strengths and gaps suggest that with modest improvements, the Greek curriculum has the potential to become a powerful tool for fostering historical awareness, intercultural respect, and a deeper appreciation of the Jewish contribution to both Greek and global history.

# Policy Recommendations

## Textbook Authors and Educators

Based on the study of the statutory documents published over the last twenty years by the Council of Europe, the following conclusions are drawn. The first pillar of the new philosophy for teaching history by the Council of Europe discusses how history lessons are now expected to converge and deeply engage with social and cultural studies. The transition was based on two undeniable observations: First, ethnocentric history cultivates monolithic identities, produces one-sided narratives, and imposes one-dimensional interpretations—resulting in silences, exclusions, and distortions of reality. Second, educational systems do very little to protect their students and future citizens from propaganda, manipulation, half-truths, prejudices, and stereotypes, which are directed not only against national ‘others’ but also within societies themselves, against religious, racial, linguistic, sexual, and cultural communities that deviate from the ‘norm’ of the dominant group. For these reasons, merely revising the style and content of traditional political-military narratives is insufficient. It is necessary to enrich history lessons with themes of social and cultural history, which illuminate the multiple facets, interactions, and more broadly, the diversity and complexity of past societies.<sup>109</sup>

The primary goal of cultivating fundamental historical skills in students for approaching the most controversial, sensitive, and traumatic historical issue of modern history—the Holocaust—is to ensure the effective use of historical sources in all school textbooks. This includes leveraging both the written and visual materials that accompany the narrative texts in these educational resources to address the issue. Historical understanding and critical thinking must be fundamental prerequisites for teaching local Jewish history and the Holocaust. According to the New Didactics of History, the historical sources in textbooks should be selected primarily for their ability to evoke empathy and their contentious nature, focusing on a multi-perspective approach. Students should be guided in analyzing conflicting sources, leading them to rational understanding and interpretation. The inclusion of primary historical sources is essential for a deeper understanding of the historical past. That said, the phenomenon of antisemitism as an attitude and practice of the Nazis is not analyzed in depth, leaving students without a thorough understanding of historical events. Additionally, the authors do not connect the genocide to Nazi ideology. For instance, although the Final Solution is referenced as a historical term, the textbook lacks a Holocaust timeline that would support the development of historical thinking. Such a timeline could illustrate the sequence of events leading up to the Wannsee Conference in January 1942 and the subsequent implementation of the plan to exterminate the Jewish population through the operation of six death camps equipped with gas chambers in Nazi-occupied Poland.

The goal is critical learning through the provocation of hope (hopeful trauma), which involves engagement with the traumatic traces of the past. To achieve this understanding, it is not enough to examine only the facts related to the Holocaust; one must approach the traumatic event through the past lives and events connected to it, as proposed by Freud. The commemoration of the Holocaust should be conducted through the experiences of others, incorporating continuous pedagogical questions to foster in students the activation of prior knowledge, cognition, emotions and motivations.

109 Palikidis, Angelos. “Oral History, Trauma, and Conflict in Historical Education: The Council of Europe’s Approach”. In *The MOG as a subject of study: Historiography, Traumatic Memory, Public History, Historical Education*. [https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/39972/MOG\\_Tagungsband\\_Konferenz%2028.05.2022.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/39972/MOG_Tagungsband_Konferenz%2028.05.2022.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

At the epistemological level, according to the New Didactics of History, there must be a shift towards Social History, Cultural History, and Microhistory, embracing a comprehensive approach of “history from below.”<sup>110</sup> Teaching guidelines should integrate the conceptual categories of subjectivity, collectivity, trauma, and memory, along with critical aspects of historical education such as historical justice and the ethical dimensions of history. Today, the Didactics of History emphasizes the need for students to become familiar with the tools of historical science and the methods of producing historiographical texts, so they understand that historical narratives and interpretations must be based on sources that have been verified for their validity. Firstly, heuristic and discovery-based teaching and learning methods should be applied, working primarily with bodies of historical sources. The aim is to develop analytical and critical thinking, observational skills, empathy, active sensitivity to community issues, cooperation, conflict resolution skills, openness to diversity, receptiveness, and consensually, particularly in our relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, anthropocentric historiographical fields and epistemological perspectives, such as Microhistory, Local History, and Oral History should be integrated into education. Within this framework are the conceptual categories of historical consciousness, memory, identities, and historical trauma—elements that have been central to discussions at the Council of Europe.

Most textbook sources do not follow the trend of contemporary human-centered narratives, that emphasize historical evidence and personal testimonies. The narratives of Greek Jewish survivors embody the personalization of history and would offer significant benefits if included in school textbooks. Personal testimonies from Greek Jewish Holocaust survivors would give students the opportunity to understand the extreme inhuman conditions of Nazism through the narration of real-life experiences. Greek Jews contribute to the multifaceted anthropology and human geography of narratives about World War II in Greece. The historical trauma they experienced is distinct and varies across each ethnic or social group, as each experienced the war’s traumatic events in different ways and with varying intensity. From the perspective of trauma and memory, the generation of the few surviving Greek Jews from the Holocaust represents a model case for scientific and pedagogical study.

Additionally, there is no emphasis on local history, and important visual sources, such as photographs, postcards, and local newspapers have not been accompanied by the necessary historical information, context, timelines, or analysis of specific vocabulary essential for historical understanding. Furthermore, historical sites, monuments, museums and synagogues related to local Jewish history and the Holocaust of Greek Jews are not discussed in detail. The immediacy provided by daily contact with a historical site and the tangibility of monuments and exhibits in Jewish museums in Greece (Thessaloniki, Athens, Rhodes) could “bring to life” local history and spark interest in investigation. Historical sites, monuments, and museums, along with their artifacts, are among the types of sources studied by contemporary historians and are used as educational material in History Didactics and Holocaust Education.

Local Jewish history should be taught according to the principles of teaching local history, while the Holocaust should be taught according to the principles of teaching controversial issues. Additionally, to foster empathy, it is important for students to engage with personal stories, or microhistory, as these tend to resonate more with children than abstract references to large numbers of victims. Such an approach helps avoid depersonalizing the victims and allows students to develop a deeper understanding of the events.

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110 Robert Stradling, *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: a Guide for Teachers*, Council of Europe, Germany 2003. <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680493c9e.pdf>.

It is essential to establish a history curriculum that includes a dedicated teaching unit on the local Jewish history of Thessaloniki prior to the war, given that it was home to the largest Jewish community in Greece and the Greek Jewish Communities after the Holocaust. Additionally, a comprehensive chapter on the Holocaust of Greek Jews should be incorporated across all grades in which modern and contemporary history is taught.

Particular emphasis should be placed on literature, written testimonies and oral history as sources for reconstructing places of memory, precisely because through their subjective perspective they “humanize” history. School textbooks often do not utilize access to open archives of oral testimonies of Greek Jews. The testimonies of Greek Jews reveal a broad spectrum of experiences, ranging from prewar daily life and living conditions in occupied cities and villages, to torture and forced labor in Nazi concentration and death camps, as well as the post war years. These personal accounts also shed light on the individual mental and psychological reception of these traumatic experiences, illuminating what is known as “history from below.” These personal testimonies constitute valuable sources of historical information and personal experiences that can enrich the understanding of the history and culture of Greek Jews. Unfortunately, the lack of these excerpts from personal testimonies in school textbooks means that students miss the opportunity to learn more directly and vividly about the experiences of Greek Jews. Incorporating oral testimonies into school textbooks could offer a richer and more multidimensional approach to history, encouraging students to understand the personal aspects and human dimensions of historical events. This could contribute to promoting tolerance, understanding, and respect for different communities and their experiences. The danger of not incorporating oral and written testimonies from surviving Greek Jews must be emphasized. Without these sources, students may turn to external sources of public history (primarily the internet) where they encounter dubious narratives often filled with distortions, stereotypes, and exclusions relating to the religious minority of Greek Jews.

Today, textbook authors and educators need to consider the “universality” of the Holocaust, the dominance of the “digital age” in teaching it, and the fact that witnesses and survivors are no longer available. There is a demand for the application of the “New Teaching” of History, which in Greece is promoted through CDRSEE, the Greek Society of History Educators (ΕΛΕΙΕ), and the Historical Education Group in Greece (Ο.Ι.Ε.Ε.). The goal is to move away from the old tradition in history teaching, the “Great Tradition,” characterized by General Didactics, and apply it to the teaching of the Holocaust. Additionally, it is necessary that new tools come from the scientific framework of the alternative tradition of New History and New Didactics. New History, with its core feature of active cultural transformation, seeks to connect the local with the national, the national with the European, and the European with the global.

To include the teaching of local Jewish history and Holocaust in school education while avoiding the risk of it being perceived as pointless or even dangerous, a fundamental prerequisite is that educators are initially sensitized and trained on the subject. Additionally, it is necessary to create a climate of democratization, a basic political consensus for meaningful dialogue and collective consultation. Historical perceptions can be redefined through school history, provided that historical education is freed from indoctrination and is not used as a mechanism for transmitting unquestionable and value-neutral truths. The public memory of the Holocaust must be historicized and incorporated into the core of history study programs. For example, it may be useful for students to learn more about the definition of the term “genocide.”<sup>111</sup>

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111 In 1947-1948, an international convention on genocide was established. Raphael Lemkin, born in 1900 into a Polish Jewish family, brought the term “genocide” before the newly established United Nations, where representatives from around the world negotiated the terms of an international law on genocide. On December 9, 1948, the final text was unanimously approved. The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide came into effect on January 12, 1951, after being ratified by more than twenty countries.

The Anne Frank's story could be enriched by including the website of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, which offers digital tours of the museum and promotes historical literacy. These digital resources can provide students with an immersive experience of Anne Frank's life and the Holocaust, further enhancing their understanding. Additionally, integrating personal stories of Greek Jews into local and national historical narratives can deepen comprehension of the past. It ensures the experiences of all communities are recognized and valued. A similar case to Anne Frank's, that of Rozina Asser-Pardo, a teenage girl who hid from the Nazis in a Christian Greek home in Thessaloniki, could also be shared. Rozina survived and later published her diary titled *548 Days with Another Name*. Including her story would contribute to a more complete and empathetic portrayal of history, acknowledging the diverse experiences of those who lived through the Holocaust. This addition would not only expand students' perspectives but also help preserve the voices of survivors from all communities, ensuring their stories are remembered and understood.

Regarding the teaching of religious studies, it is essential to create interfaith educational programs based on principles of intercultural education, utilizing experiential learning to explore the commonalities between Judaism and Christianity and to highlight their shared history. Visits to local Jewish museums can help students understand the religious traditions, customs, and practices of Greek Jews, as well as visits to synagogues in the geographical area where the school is located. It is important to include these elements in the study of the history and architecture of the late synagogues of Greece, which mostly belong to the Ottoman period of Greece (fifteenth to nineteenth century), modern Greece until the outbreak of World War II, and the German occupation. The study should focus on the geographic area of northern Greece (Macedonia and Thrace), with examples from other areas such as Central Greece, Epirus, the Ionian Islands (Corfu), the Aegean Islands (Aegina, Delos, Rhodes, and Kos), and Crete. Furthermore, students can explore common elements of the Passover (Pesach) festival and compare it with Christian Easter. In various religious and cultural traditions, traditional cooking recipes holds significant importance, particularly during certain festivals and rituals. Understanding the symbolism of lamb and the role of eggs in these religious contexts provides insight into how food is used to represent key aspects of faith and history. This exploration can highlight how diet contributes to cultural and religious celebrations around the world, helping to identify common elements between Christian Easter and Jewish Pesach. Students can also explore the Festival of Lights as it appears in different faiths, the tradition of wearing costumes during religious celebrations, or the preparation of traditional dishes. An additional educational objective could involve identifying both similarities and differences between the sacred texts of the three main monotheistic religions—the Torah, Quran, and Bible.

The lessons would have benefited students even further if it had featured educational activities designed to help students identify commonalities and differences between the three sacred texts of the three monotheistic religions—the Torah, the Quran, and the Bible. Activities that explore the contribution of each culture as presented through religious art would also expose students to the harmonious coexistence of these three religions. Students could also investigate the cultural contributions of each religion as reflected in works of religious art. Lastly, they could examine the ways these religions have historically coexisted harmoniously, offering insights into intercultural dialogue and mutual respect.

Referencing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the context of contemporary and modern history would support the pedagogical pillar of the Council of Europe, which aims to contribute to a holistic approach for shaping democratic citizens and fostering a democratic culture in European schools. In the new European reality, historians and history educators must continually demonstrate that the study of history plays a crucial role in shaping the socio-political identity of the new generation. Specifically, they must demonstrate that teaching history can promote democratic values, foster the management of socio-cultural diversity, and strengthen human rights, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable social groups. Terrorism, migration, the rise of the far-right and far-left, xenophobia, Islamophobia, antisemitism, the dominance of digital mass media and communication, the spread of conspiracy theories, the proliferation of public history sources, and the erosion of democracy all shape the everyday lives of Europeans. For these reasons, an extensive umbrella program titled *Competences for Democratic Culture: Living Together as Equals in Culturally Diverse Democratic Societies* was developed between 2014–2017. For high school students, a productive approach would be to explore excerpts from literary works by prominent Israeli authors who offer diverse perspectives, such as Amos Oz. His books have been translated into Greek and could be used in this context.

## Policy Makers

The primary educational goal for policy makers should be to enhance students' historical literacy. Schools in modern democracies must shape the identities of future citizens through historical self-awareness. To cultivate historical knowledge and empathy, it is essential to conduct numerous educational seminars focused on local Jewish history in all areas that had Jewish communities prior to the Holocaust. Additionally, organizing special memory walks and guided tours to places of Jewish significance (such as Jewish museums, synagogues, monuments, and places of memory) led by specialized guides would be valuable. These tours should be designed for educators of all levels, providing them with an experiential way to learn local Jewish history.

Thoroughly studying major traumas in Greek history, including the Holocaust of Greek Jews, is crucial. To support this, educators could be sent annually to memorial sites directly connected to the Holocaust, such as Yad Vashem, Jewish museums, Holocaust museums, and concentration camps like Auschwitz and Dachau. These trips should be accompanied by specialized academics and historical researchers who can provide in-depth education about these sites and draw connections to the Holocaust of Greek Jews. School textbooks should incorporate links to relevant museum websites and memory sites that educators can use as resources during lessons and school projects on the topic.

The creation of school libraries with the necessary books (new editions) and digital resources (such as films and documentaries) would enhance the intellectual toolkit of educators and provide them with the necessary tools to address all the above issues. Additionally, it is very helpful for educators to receive training on how to address conspiracy theories, so they feel more confident teaching Jewish history and the Holocaust without the fear of provoking antisemitic incidents from students or parents. It is imperative to conduct extensive educational seminars to combat potential negative stereotypes about Jews and covert forms of antisemitism that may exist among some Greek educators due to the adoption of extreme political beliefs. These seminars should be conducted by academics who are experts in Pedagogy and Didactic Methodology and should focus on antisemitism, intolerance, and discrimination. Regarding the students, it is equally important for them to understand that Jewish history is part of Greek history, and this can be achieved through visits to historical Jewish sites, such as synagogues, monuments, Jewish museums, and places of historical memory and martyrdom.

It would be helpful if these tours were conducted by specialized researchers or guides who would discuss Jewish history with the students while showing them around their own city. A significant innovation in the approach to these historical topics would be including films and documentaries of oral testimonies in the class curricula. These materials should be accompanied by expert presentations during school seminars.

- Websites developed by professional educators and historians who have produced educational materials for teaching these topics should be promoted: [Η Διεθνής Σχολή για τη Μελέτη του Ολοκαυτώματος | www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)
- [WW2 ISTORIES - Ιστορίες για τον Β΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο](#)
- [Ολοκαύτωμα Αποτελέσματα αναζήτησης | ΕΚΕΔΙΣΥ \(ekedisy.gr\)](#)
- [Εκπαίδευση • Μνήμες από την Κατοχή στην Ελλάδα - Erinnerung an die Okkupation in Griechenland \(occupation-memories.org\)](#)
- [Η Εκπαίδευση στο Εβραϊκό Μουσείο Ελλάδος \(jewishmuseum.gr\)](#)
- [Εισαγωγή στο Ολοκαύτωμα | Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Ολοκαυτώματος \(ushmm.org\)](#)
- [Ολοκαύτωμα \(schools.ac.cy\)](#)
- <https://iwitness.usc.edu/activities/8052?idiom=all>

The goal is to achieve historical understanding and documentation by collecting information, conducting historical analysis, conceptualizing, and making meaning of antisemitism and the Holocaust, while also connecting these events with other genocides. The historical trauma of the Holocaust, its management, the issue of forgetting, and the politics of memory need to be addressed in the classroom. Interaction between educators and students at sites of memory during historical memory walks can lead to cognitive dissonance, followed by reflection, historical understanding, and the development of historical knowledge. Specialized tours of these sites should be integrated into the learning process for a more immersive experience.

Despite the intention of curricula and textbooks to develop citizens with critical thinking skills, this objective is not achieved in the teaching of Greek Jewish History and Holocaust in schools. Although the History curriculum aims to foster historical thinking and awareness to ensure students become historically literate, research has shown that students fail to grasp basic historical concepts and have not been taught the Holocaust using alternative teaching methods or interdisciplinary materials.<sup>112</sup> Both teachers' and students' responses reveal that a diverse range of primary and secondary historical sources for a multifaceted approach to these traumatic events was not utilized. Furthermore, visual sources (such as photographs, maps, cartoons, and paintings) were not incorporated to promote visual and media literacy, and the genocide was not connected to local history. The study of Greek Jewish history and the Holocaust lacked academic, pedagogical, and experiential approaches.

Schools and civil society play a key role in reshaping Holocaust memory. Innovative education is needed to help new generations critically engage with history and strengthen collective remembrance of these traumatic events. "Memorial education" should be included in the Greek history curriculum to promote historical truth and justice by combating racism, intolerance, xenophobia, and antisemitism.

112 Xenia Eleftheriou, Tracing the local Jewish history The Holocaust in education and public history, Thessaloniki: Epikentro, 2025.

While the Jewish genocide has been officially recognized, unofficial and unpublished discourse still reflects persistent antisemitic sentiments and general indifference to the Holocaust of Greek Jews.<sup>113</sup> The findings of this study highlight the need for systematic teaching of local Jewish history and the Holocaust of Greek Jews at all educational levels (primary, secondary, and higher education). Attitudes change mainly “from below” and not through institutional sources of official culture (such as museums, monuments, Days of Remembrance).<sup>114</sup> Education is the only institution with the power to cultivate democratic thinking in the new generation, enabling them to critically examine human rights violations. Key concepts that should permeate all textbooks include cultural diversity, human rights, the rule of law, democracy, empathy, tolerance, and inclusion.

The inclusion of the history of the establishment of the State of Israel as a consequence of the Holocaust, along with references to the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, should be incorporated into the teaching of modern and contemporary history, based on the principles of historical science. In this context, the conceptual categories of historical consciousness, memory, identities, and historical trauma should also be addressed. Additionally, the issue of Greek Jewish emigration to Israel after the Holocaust, as well as prewar emigration to Palestine due to pogroms and antisemitism, are important topics for which educators need training. This training would enable them to effectively incorporate those controversial subjects into their teaching.

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113 Xenia Eleftheriou, *Public History as a controversial issue: the Holocaust of Greek Jews in the World War II*, Athens: Taxideftis (2019).

114 Xenia Eleftheriou, *Tracing the local Jewish history The Holocaust in education and public history*, Thessaloniki: Epikentro, 2025.

# Methodology

IMPACT-se applies methodological standards which are based on UNESCO and UN declarations, and international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance (see notes). Our methodology is designed to consider every detail within the textbooks; it does not paraphrase, rely on interpretations, or attempt to illustrate preconceived notions.

The following is an updated, condensed version of the IMPACT-se UNESCO-derived standards for peace and tolerance in school education:

## 1 RESPECT

The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the “Other,” his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.<sup>115</sup>

## 2 INDIVIDUAL OTHER

The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the “Other” as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.<sup>116</sup>

## 3 NO HATE

The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.<sup>117</sup>

## 4 NO INCITEMENT

The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

<sup>116</sup> The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See *Ibid.*, Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, and based on Articles III.6, IV.7 and VII.39; and on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 18.2.

<sup>118</sup> As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December 21, 1965. See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

## 5 PEACEMAKING

The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.<sup>119</sup>

## 6 UNBIASED INFORMATION

Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers' guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.<sup>120</sup>

## 7 GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION

The curriculum should foster equality, mutual respect, and should aim for equal representation between individuals regardless of their gender identity. It should also refrain from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles.<sup>121</sup>

## 8 SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.<sup>122</sup>

## 9 SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION

The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.<sup>123</sup>

119 Based on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 9; and on the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 5.

120 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

121 The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

122 Based on Resolutions 32/2 (adopted June 30, 2016) and 17/19 (adopted July 14, 2011) of the UN Human Rights Council, and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions expressing concern and condemnation of laws and practices around the world which target individuals based on their gender identity and/or sexual orientation for discrimination, violence, and even extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions—all of which contradict the most basic principles of the UN and have no place in education.

123 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing "systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance," see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.

# List of Textbooks

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## Primary School

- Grade 6
  1. History of the Modern and Contemporary World, Primary School, Sixth Grade, 2015.
  2. Greek Language, Primary School, Sixth Grade, 2012.
  3. Religious Studies, Primary School, Sixth Grade, 2019.

## Junior High School/Middle School

- First Grade (= Grade 7)
  4. Religious Studies. A Journey of Life: The Encounter of God and Man Through Biblical Narratives, Junior High School 1st Grade, 2020 (revised).
- Third Grade (= Grade 9)
  5. Modern and Contemporary History, Junior High School, Third Grade, 2015.
  6. Religious Studies: The Testimony of the Orthodox Church in the Modern World, Junior High School 3rd Grade, 2020 (revised).
  7. Modern Greek Language, Middle School 3rd Grade, 2015 (revised edition).
  8. Modern Greek Language–WORKBOOK, Middle School 3rd Grade, 2015 (revised edition).

## High School

- Second Grade (= Grade 11)
  9. Religious Studies, 2nd grade of High School: Christianity and Religions, General Education. High School 2nd Grade, 2020 (revised).
- Third Grade (= Grade 12)
  10. Topics in Modern Greek History, High School 3rd Grade, 1999-2000.
  11. History of the Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to the Present), High School 3rd Grade, 2018 (revised).