

Holocaust Commemoration in cold war and post cold war Greece

Giorgios Antoniou

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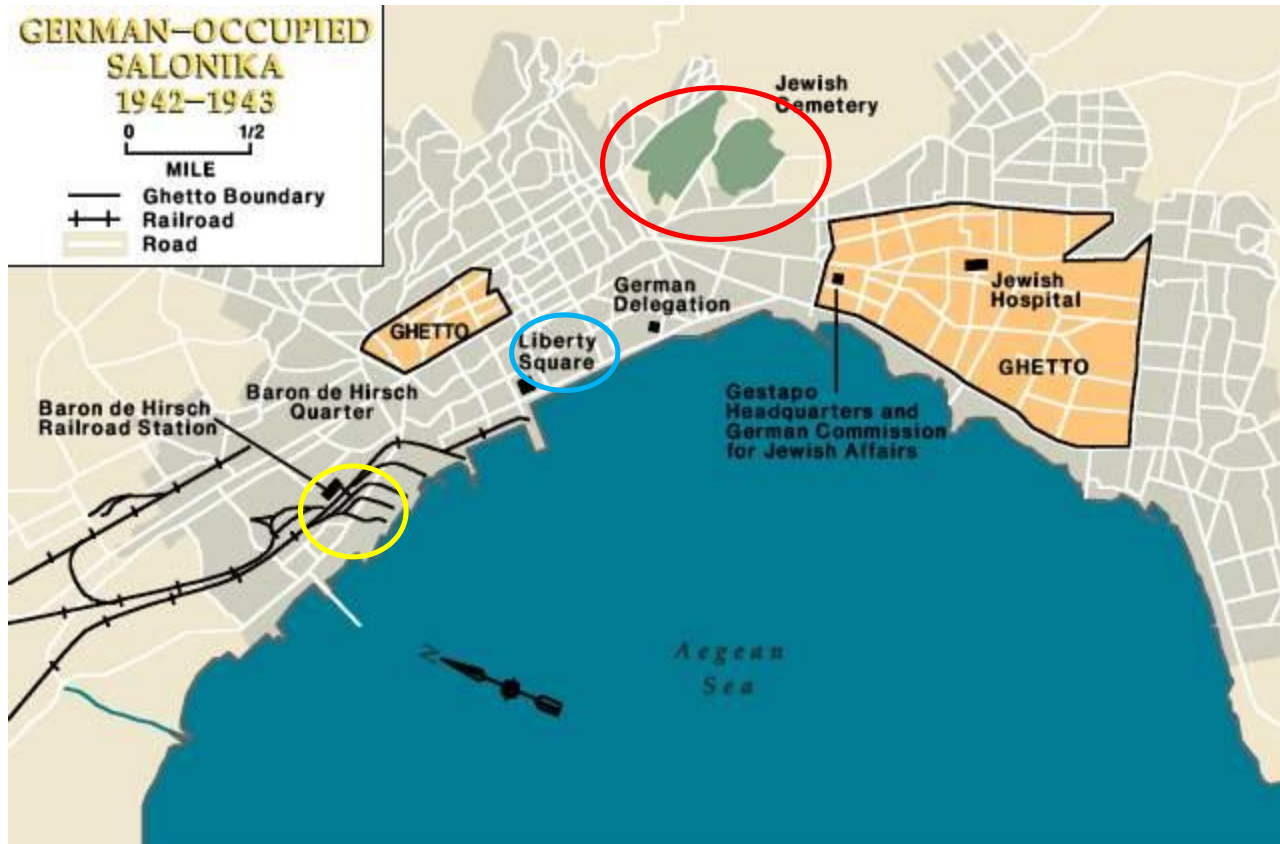
EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

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Outline

- Phase I: The years of silence
- Phase II: The struggle for visibility
- Phase III: the pros and cons of becoming a public topic

Salonica and the Holocaust



bystanders















Στους Χορτατζήδες.
Οι νέοι Άμλετ με το κρανίο στο χέρι, εύρημα από
τα κατεστραμμένα από τους Γερμανούς Εβραϊκά
νεκροταφεία (αρχείο Έφης Κουνουγέρη – Μανωλεδάκη).

The "new Hamlets" with the skull in hand, a finding from the [Salonika] Jewish cemetery destroyed by the Germans (published in the 90s)

Liberty Sq



Liberty Sq





Phase I: Silence (1945-1995)

- Memories of the Holocaust remain private
- Survivors do not seek or succeed to attract public attention; communities mourn silently and internally. (Yom HaShoah since mid 1950s)
- Urgent issues: properties, restitution, rebuilding of communities. Political and cultural obstacles
- Lost opportunities as the Merten Trial (1959) and the Ballad of Mauthausen (1965)

Max Merten (1959) and Adolf Eichmann (1961)



MIKIS THEODORAKIS

THE BALLAD OF MAUTHAUSEN

Six Songs

MARIA FARANDOURI

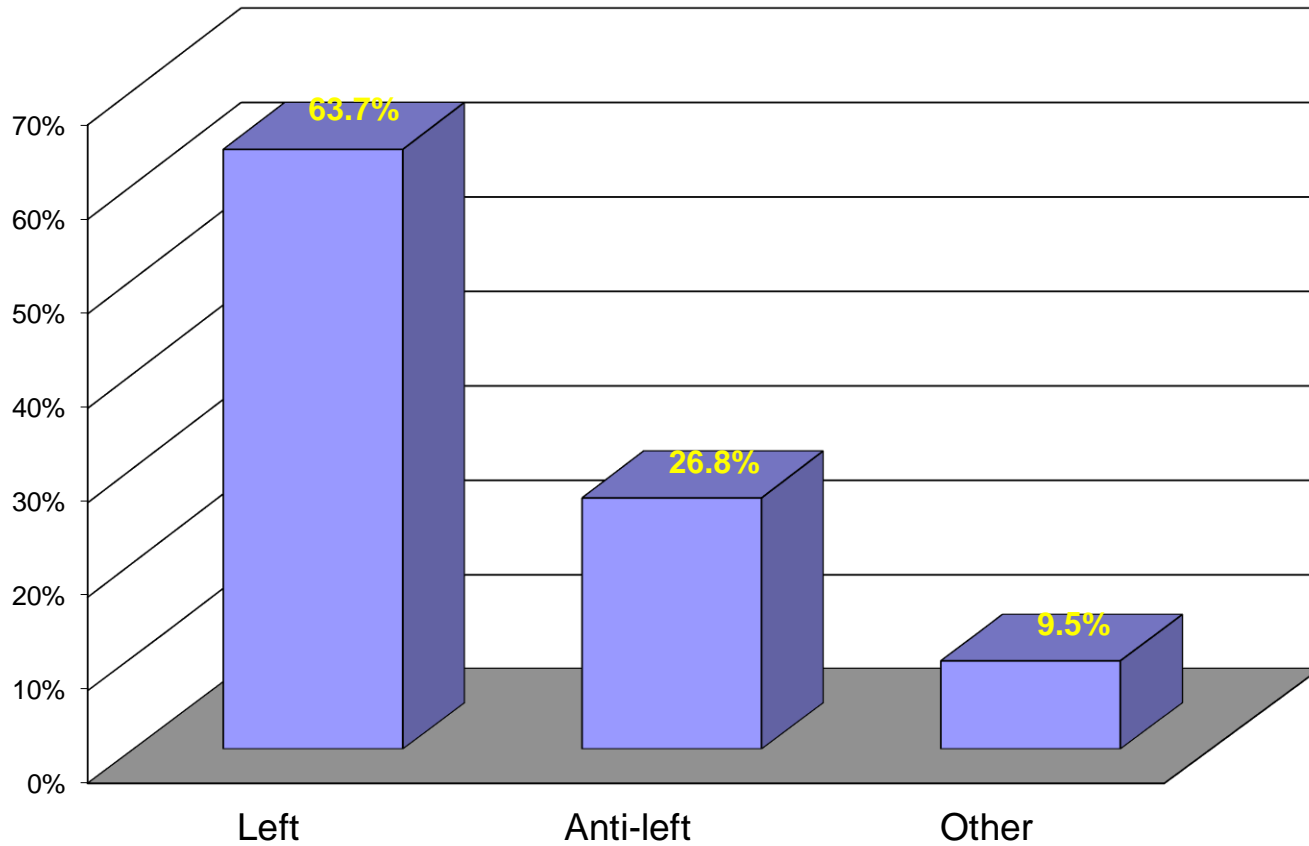
μικης Θεοδωρακης

ΜΑΥΤΧΑΟΥΣΕΝ

με την

μαρια φαραντουρη

The political bias: memoirs



Phase II: the struggle (1995-2010)

- **1995:** Auschwitz 50th anniversary- Greece declines participation
- **1997:** Thessaloniki memorial established with strong antisemitic reactions
- **2001:** Jewish Museum established
- **2006:** Memorial moves to Liberty Sq, a permanent demand by Greek Jews
- **2007:** city authorities deny naming the metro station near the cemetery as 'Jewish Martyrs metro station'
- **2008:** Thessaloniki declines being a candidate 'martyr' city since Jews were not 'indigenous' and were murdered 'away' from Thessaloniki...

Phase II: the struggle

- Jewish communities, American-Jewish organizations put pressure for recognition and commemoration activities. Civil society is almost absent.
- Gradually, Holocaust Monuments appear. In total only 14 monuments exist, all but one funded by the Jewish communities and est. after 1995 (with two exceptions). 9 cities where Jewish communities existed still don't have any monument at all.
- Desecrations by both right and left wing protests.

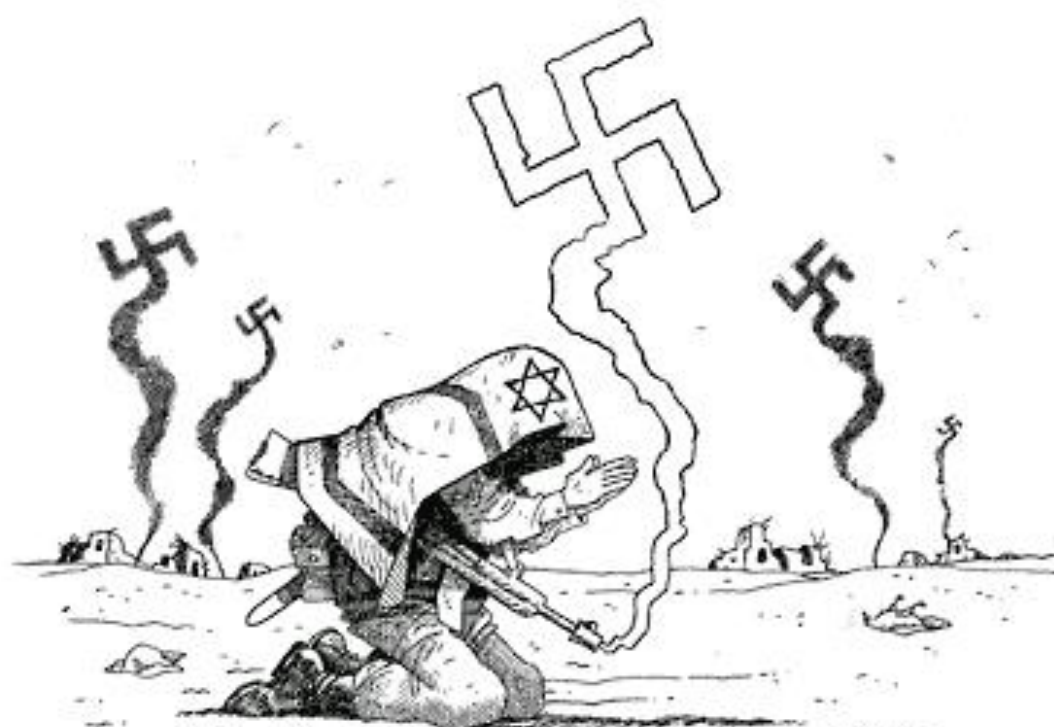
Thessaloniki Monument

- “I have met with the American Jewish Committee. The main practical point of reference was the Monument to the Jewish Holocaust in Thessaloniki which will be **an opportunity for the arrival of many delegations that are highly interested for this monument.**”
- Lobbying with the occasion of Salonica (1997) becoming the cultural capitol of Europe



01.02.2003





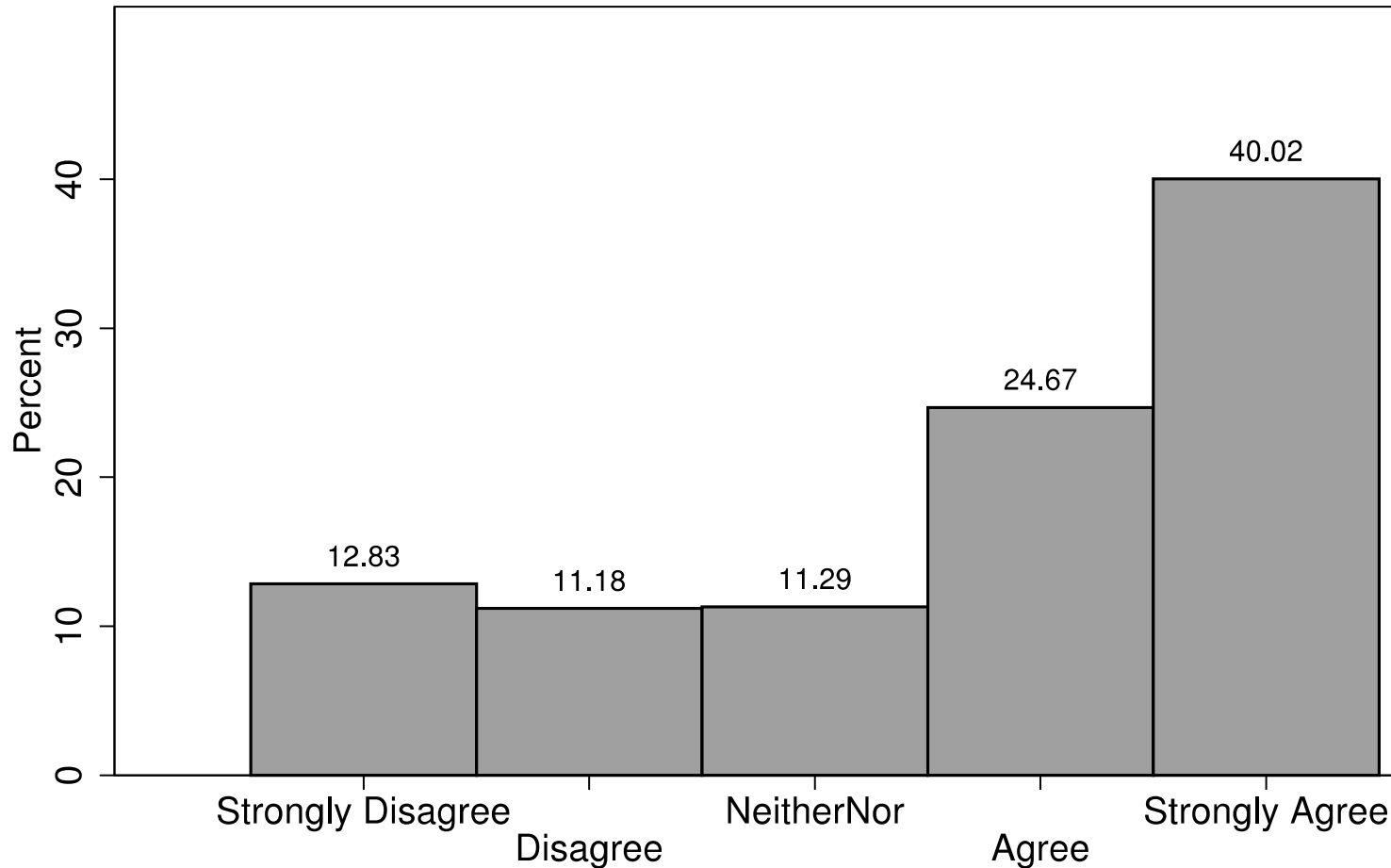
Ο ΤΡΟΜΟΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΑΒΑΙΟΤΗΤΑ ΤΟΥ Δ' ΠΑΙΧ...



Communist party after desecrating the monument

- “those who degrade the monument are those who remain silent, or support the atrocities of Israel and the imperialists against the people of the Middle East”
- 17% of the Greeks agree it is ok to desecrate a holocaust monument in order to protest for Israel policy

The Palestine Bias: Israel treats Palestinians the exact same way the Germans treated Jews



Small age/gender differences: [women and young people less likely to agree](#)

January 27 (lying to international community) 06.2003

- «**The Day of Holocaust Remembrance** and prevention of crimes against Humanity is commemorated on the specific day established for Remembrance commemorated at a regional level during which memorial services are carried out in combination with official commemorative ceremonies. Schools throughout the country actively participate in attributing honor to the victims of several massacres throughout Greece, while special attention is given to the atrocities against the Greek Jewish population of Thessalonika»

Letter to PM Simitis (Jewish community)

- We pose therefore this request to you, with the certainty that you would like to link your name with a historical decision, for which it is required to have the unanimous consent of the total of the political world of our country. At the same time, it would be **the only proper answer to whoever speaks on the reemergence of anti-Semitism in Greece**. Lastly, it will greatly contribute to the strengthening of historical memory and will honor the Greek Jews, who fell victims of a Genocide, which exceeded every previous historic experience.

January 27

- Memorial day of “Greek Jews Martyr and Heroes of the Holocaust”
- Voted in 2004
- Simone Veil, Elie Wiesel but also...Archbishop Christodoulos
- State and local authorities become the organizers together with Jewish communities. Do not appeal to the public, just to officials and authorities
- It does incorporate Jewish history to national calendar

Wreath laying order

ΣΕΙΡΑ ΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΝ

- 1) Υπουργός Μακεδονίας-Θράκης ^{ο Γεωργιάδης ο Υπουργός} κ. Νικόλαος Τσιαρτσιώσης
- 2) Υπουργός Μεταφορών Ισραήλ κ. Μείρ Σιζόριζ ^{και ο Μπέτσι ο Γραμματέας}
- 3) Υπουργός Εξωτερικών ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας} κ. Βασιλείδης ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 4) Υφυπουργός Εξωτερικών ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 5) Υπουργείο Παιδείας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 6) Νομάρχης Θεσσαλονίκης ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 7) Δήμαρχος Θεσσαλονίκης ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 8) Πρόεδρος Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 9) Κεντρικό Ισραηλιτικό Συμβούλιο ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 10) Ισραηλιτική Κοινότητα Θεσσαλονίκης ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 11) Πρεσβεία ΗΠΑ ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 12) Πρεσβεία Ισπανίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 13) Πρεσβεία Γερμανίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 14) Πρεσβεία Καναδά ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 15) Πρεσβεία Γαλλίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 16) Γ.Σ.Σ. ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 17) Πασόκ ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 18) Συνασπισμός της Αριστεράς ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 19) American Jewish Committee ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 20) Γραμματεία Νέας Γενιάς ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 21) Δήμαρχος Πανοράματος ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 22) Δήμαρχος Πυλαίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 23) Δημοκρατική Παράταξη Θεσσαλονίκης Πολιτών & Οικολογίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 24) Διοικούσα επιτροπή Νέας Δημοκρατίας ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 25) Νεολαία Συνασπισμού ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}
- 26) Δικηγορικός Σύλλογος ^{ο Βασιλείδης ο Υ. Παιδείας}

Public: Damnatio Memoriae





Phase III: Public (2010-)

- **2012**-Thessaloniki finally becomes a 'martyr' city
- **2013- March 15** becomes a new commemoration day/ memorial march from Liberty Sq to train station to honor the first deportation to Auschwitz-great appeal to the public. Very important for local memory
- **2013**-Eleftherias Sq architectural competition-ends up to a fiasco
- **2014**- two new cemetery monuments in Aristotle University.

Memory march







Why in 2014?

- The Greek state compensated (with Greek bonds...) the Jewish community for the destruction of its cemetery after a long legal dispute as late as 2011.
- Only after the dispute was resolved, did the Aristotle University, which was constructed over the destroyed cemetery, decide to erect two monuments to commemorate the Jewish deportations and the cemetery's destruction during the war.
- As the rector admitted “we were ordered by the ministry of Foreign Affairs not to erect a monument before the end of the dispute”
- The Inscription caused controversy :“**The cemetery was destroyed by the Nazis and their collaborators**” (the exact opposite happened)

Phase III: Public (problems)

- The public visibility and acceptance has increased but this also brought open antisemitic statements by many political parties.
- Holocaust fatigue argument; Trivializing the Holocaust; Victimhood competition
- Internal critics by Greek Jews. Consider discussion glamorous and in vain. 'Too little, too late' argument.

Holocaust fatigue

- 27% of Greeks believe its time to leave these events behind us (highest among EU countries, compares only to...Germany)

Jewish civil society:

- “we want to mourn, cry and remember. Please do not disturb us with these glamorous spectacles”
- “I will not be mourning 10 times a year in order for you Greeks to feel less guilty”

Trivializing

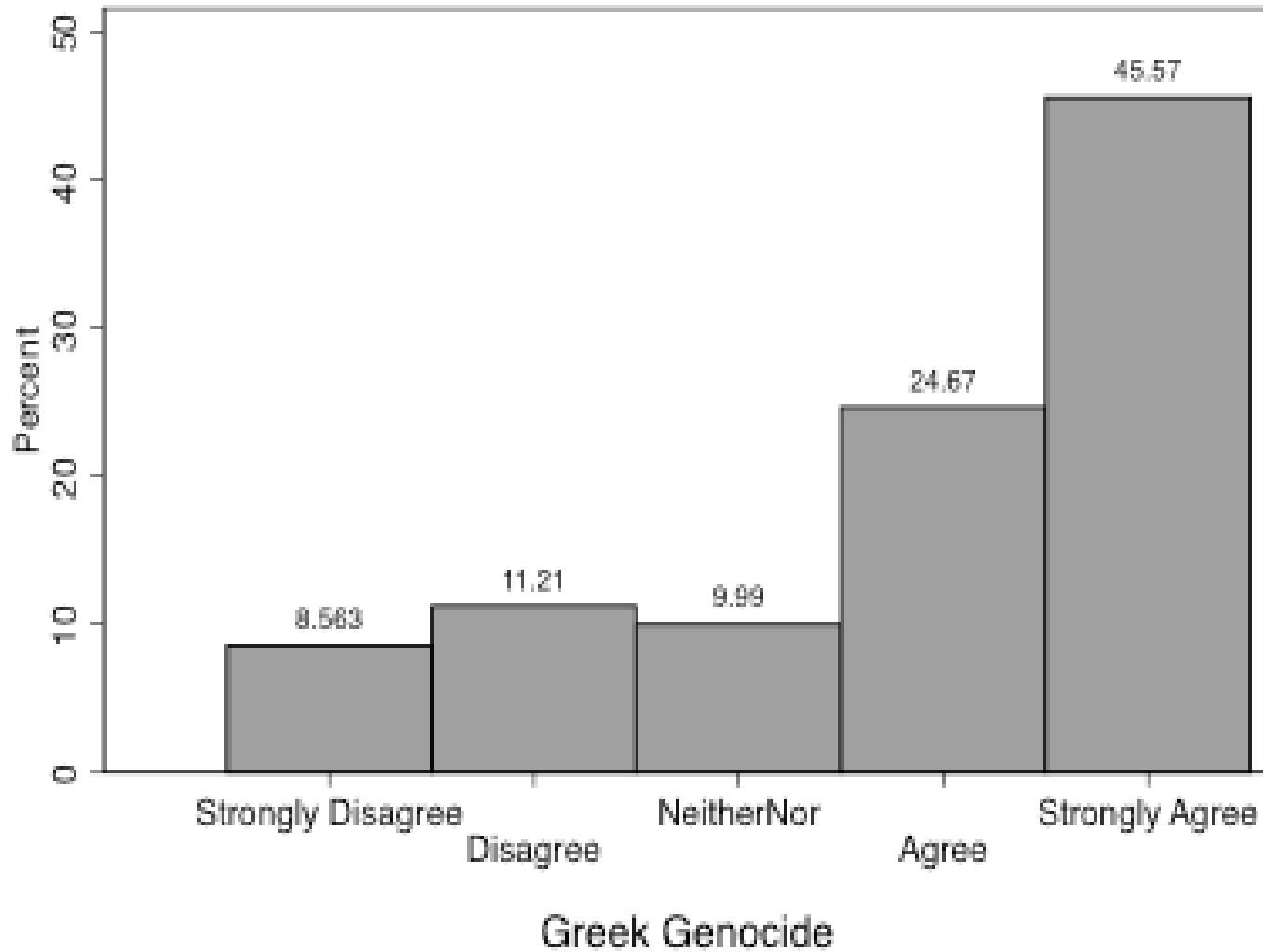


- "We insist on the soap from your fat ... we are willing to discuss fertiliser from your ashes," Schaeuble says in the cartoon under a caption reading: "Negotiations have begun".

Greek Parliament and victimhood priorities

- **1994**: Pontic Genocide (May 19)
- **1996**: Armenian Genocide (April 26)
- **1998**: Asia Minor Genocide (September 14)
- **2004**: 27th of January becomes the official Memorial Day (with Greek Jewish lobbying)
- **2012-2014**: Antiracist Bill, penalized denial of all four Genocides together after protests by 35 PM against penalizing only Holocaust denial.

Greeks have suffered worse Genocides than Jews





ΗΜΕΡΑ ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ ΣΤΟ ΛΕΧΟΒΟ 13072014

by Ράδιο Λέχοβο
8 months ago • 301 views

Με λαμπρότητα και κάθε επισημότητα τιμήθηκε σήμερα, Κυριακή 13 Ιουλίου 2014, η μνήμη του ολοκαυτώματος του...



Νεοναζι: Το Ολοκαύτωμα της Μνήμης

by TVXorisSinora
2 years ago • 15,708 views

Μια μέρα μετά τις εκλογές του περασμένου Μαΐου, η είδηση κάνει τον γύρο των τηλεοπτικών σταθμών: η Χρυσή...

HD



ΗΜΕΡΑ ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ ΣΤΟ ΛΕΧΟΒΟ 21072013

by Ράδιο Λέχοβο
1 year ago • 301 views

Με λαμπρότητα και κάθε επισημότητα τιμήθηκε η μνήμη του ολοκαυτώματος του Λεχόβου στις 23 Ιουλίου 1943 Φέτος...



'ΠΟΤΕ ΞΑΝΑ' ΠΟΡΕΙΑ ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ(TV100 - 160313)

by TV100THESSALONIKI
2 years ago • 903 views

Ήταν 15 Μαρτίου 1943, όταν αναχωρούσε από τον παλιό Σιδηροδρομικό Σταθμό της Θεσσαλονίκης το πρώτο τρένο του...



ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ ΝΑΟΥΣΑ -www.radionaoussa.com

by Apostolos Gantiris
1 year ago • 225 views

ΤΟ ΟΛΟΚΑΥΤΩΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΝΑΟΥΣΑΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥΣ ΤΟΥΡΚΟΥΣ - ΗΜΕΡΑ ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΙΜΗ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΝΑΟΥΣΑΙΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΤΙΣ ΗΡΩΙΔ...

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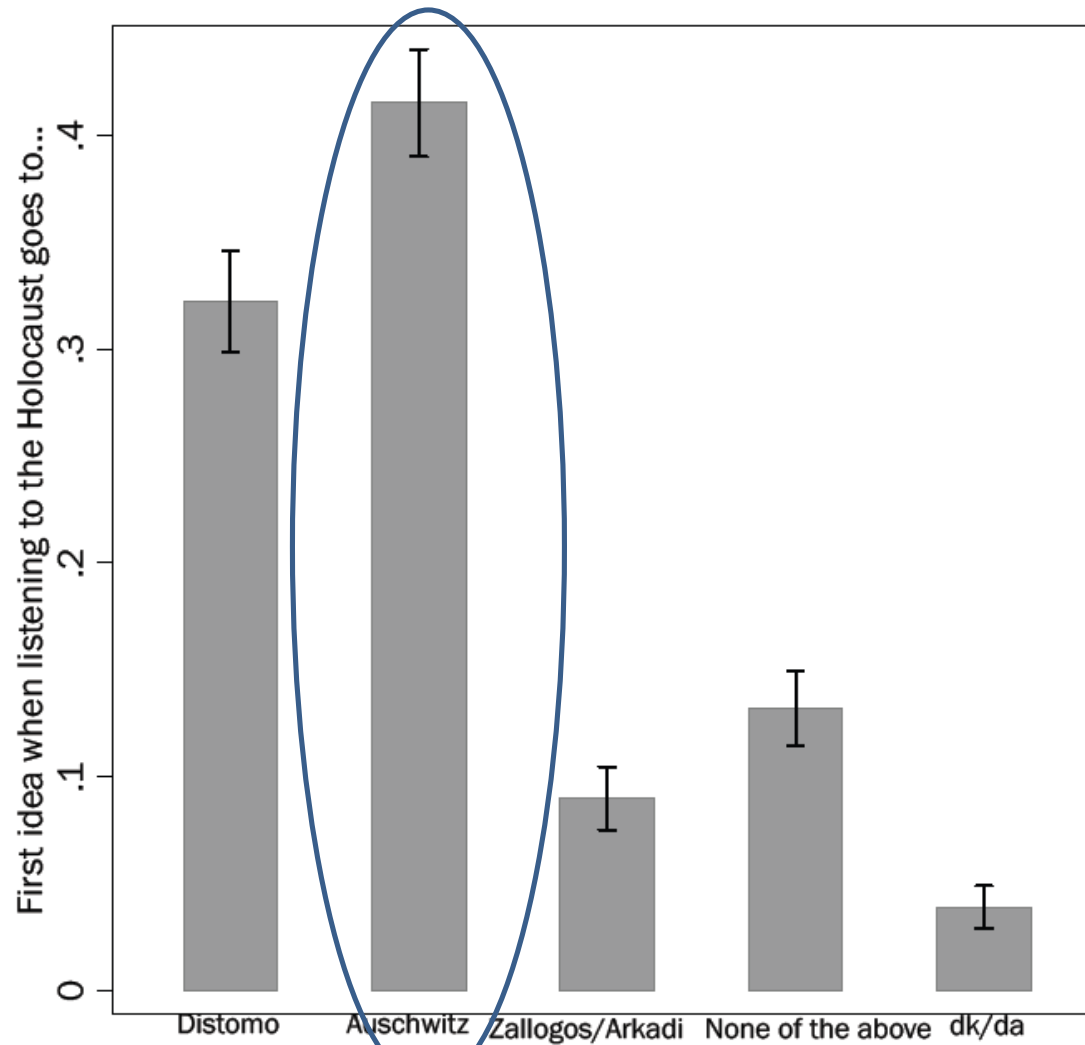
Ολοκαύτωμα 70 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΜΕΤΑ: Από τη Μαρτυρία στην Παιδεία

by ΓΙΑΝΝΗΣ Β. ΚΩΒΑΙΟΣ
2 months ago • 58 views

Από την εκδήλωση που διοργάνωσαν (2-2-15) η Περιφέρεια Αττικής & η Ισραηλτική Κοινότητα Αθηνών στο Ίδρυμα...

HD

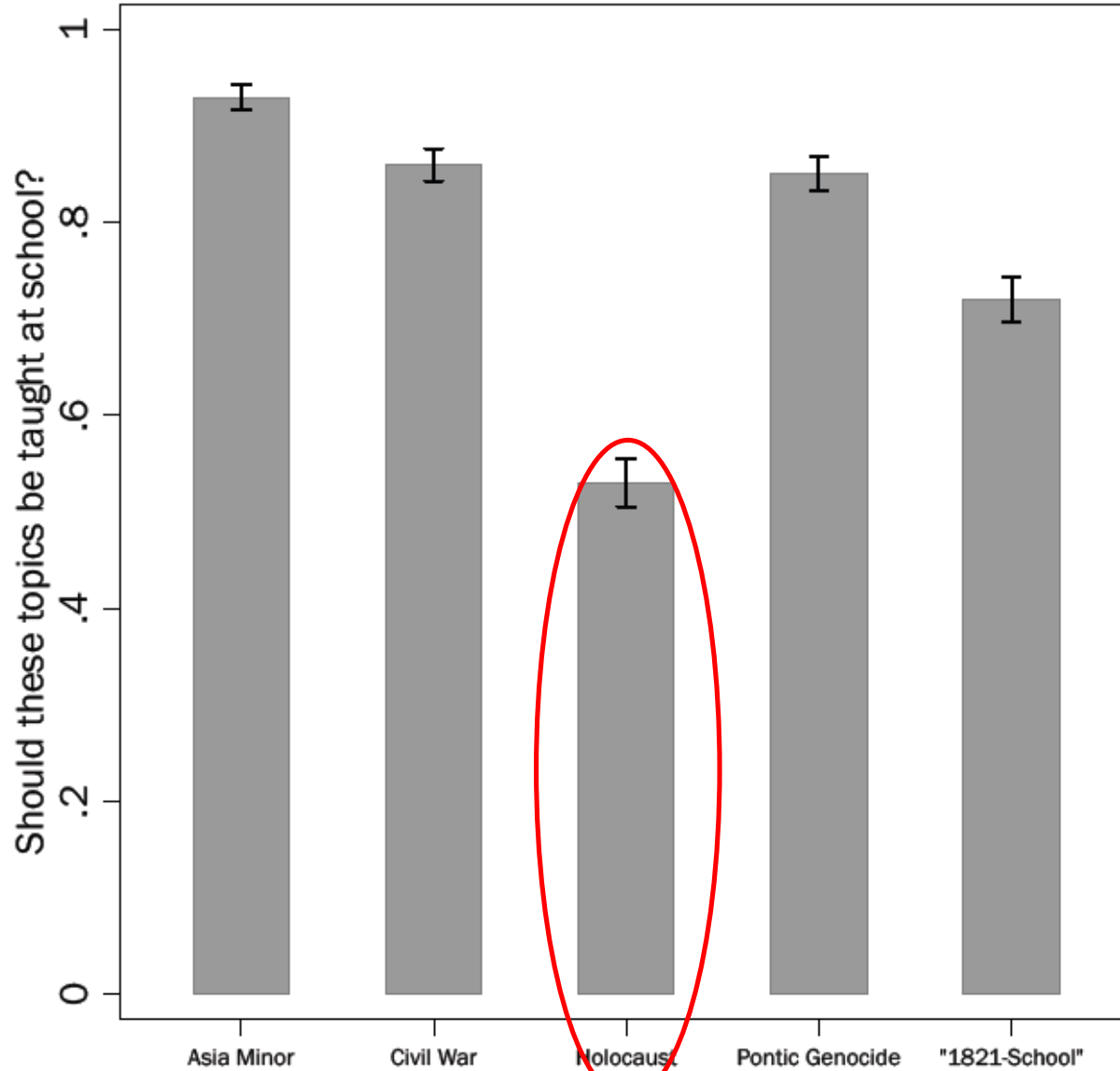
“Holocaust” term attribution



Press & Education

- Greece is member of IHRA since 2005
- No special actions take place in school
- Holocaust remains understudied, covered with 1-2 pages in each relevant textbook
- A lot of pressure from civil society for major changes in teaching methods.
- Media cover the day but mainly with minimum coverage

Should we teach it?



Conclusions

- Greece resembles Eastern Europe in terms of Holocaust commemoration: slow, externally oriented, and ambiguous public presence.
- Local commemoration comes late with strong resistance against it. It is the local not global meaning of the Holocaust that prohibits incorporation to national narratives and commemoration.
- At the same time, trauma and genocide competition also rule out global perception of the Holocaust as the 'moral universal' current societies are based upon.
- Institutionally is as advanced as possible; politically and socially, a lot of problems appear.

- Jewish communities until recently never received or claimed public or moral recognition or have incorporated their experiences into the Greek historical narrative and collective memory.
- Despite these cultural misinterpretations, these commemoration activities 'function as means for legitimizing the community's existence'. The Jewish Communities have been defining themselves through the Holocaust. The hesitant incorporation of it makes their position in Greek society still precarious and subject to antisemitic prejudices.