

Memory, Forgetting, and History Education in Greece: The Case of Greek Jews History as an Example of “Catastrophe Didactics”

Dimitris K. Mavroskoufis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Thessaloniki - Greece

Abstract

This article operates on two main levels: it utilizes the theoretical framework of memory studies in order to examine the place of Greek Jews in the context of contemporary social and cultural memory in Greece on the one level, and it studies the case of Greek Jews from the point of view of history education on the other. The study points out that the viewpoints and the reactions of contemporary Greeks to the past and the present of their Jewish compatriots are very contradictory. Besides this, the dominant ideology and the conservative perception of national identity seem to be exclusive of “otherness”. So, Greek Jews do not constitute a strong part of historical memory; their past and present, in contrast to the “official memory”, is very marginal. In consequence of this, contemporary Greeks, even student teachers, do not have sufficient knowledge about the roots of Jews in Greece, about their culture or about the Holocaust. History education is, from this point of view, an example of “deafening silence”, an example of how so-called “catastrophe didactics” can operate.

Key words: Greek Jews, History Education, History Didactics.

“Remembering and forgetting always proceed together. Without a connection of operations that allows the capture of identities and repetitions, there would not be anything to forget, but without the ability to neglect most of the details and all the particulars that deviate from the remembered identity [...] the faculty to remember would soon be overloaded” (Esposito, 2008: 182).

1. Introduction

It is a certain fact, documented from empirical research, that history teaching and learning in Greece has monolithic and ethnocentric characteristics, which serve the dominant ideology about Modern Greek national identity (Mavroskoufis, 2007: 229-241). The “big narrative” of national history regarding the continuity in time and the directness of line of Greeks from antiquity till now, as well as traditional teaching methods, give little space for methodological variety and topics that are not directly related to the history of the Greek people and state (Pingel, 2001: 210). So, the historical position vis-à-vis ethnic, religious, and cultural minorities retain a degree of ambiguity. In this context, the issues of memory and forgetting of the Greek Jews, especially of the tragedy of the Holocaust, are of great importance.

2. Historical Memory and Historical Consciousness

Over the last two decades, there has been a “memory boom”, in the sense of theoretical studies on memory and forgetting mechanisms, collective and individual, as well as of the emergence of the removed or fragmented memory and of its cultivation as a basic component of identity (Berliner, 2005; Gong; 2001, Klein, 2000)¹. This phenomenon correlates with the development of cultural studies, social anthropology, psychoanalytic theories, psychohistory, the postmodern turn in history, media studies etc. On a social and political level, this tendency is related to the emancipation of minorities, de-colonization, the emergence of forgotten identities, and globalization (Berliner, 2005; Crane, 1997; Klein, 2000).

Of course, the debate over the meaning of terms like “social memory”, “collective memory”, “cultural memory” etc, as well as of their connections with “historical memory” is still ongoing (Gedi & Yigal, 1996; Lloyd, 2002; Marcuse, 2007; Roediger & Wertsch, 2008).

There are many for whom the distinction between the different categories of memory is still strong, with the first category relating to the continuity and the functionalism of tradition, confined to the preservation of lived experiences and connected to the whole society; by contrast, the second is in regard to the external representation of the past and to the mediated work of historians (Halbwachs, 1992: 38-40 & 48-49; Nora, 1989; Yerushalmi, 1999). However, for many others, the present, as a “*gift*” but also as a duty to the next generations, is supposed to include a kind of consciousness which aims to transfer information, memories, values, identities and responsibilities (Crane, 1997; Poole, 2008). So, in that sense, historical consciousness not only does not stand in contradiction to social memory, but it could be a well organized form of it and almost equivalent to historical memory (Crane, 1997; Funkenstein, 1989; Philips, 2004: 90-91; Seixas, 2004: 8-10)². Besides this, according to Gadamer (1987), the appearance of historical consciousness constitutes, perhaps, the most significant revolution of modernity, because of the maximization of interest in the historicity of the present. Very important for the connection of collective memory with history is the approach of Ricoeur (2004: 16), who holds the view that the memory is under the “*duty of work*”, i.e. under the historiographical elaboration.

In this framework, the problem of forgetting is also being studied. According to Connerton (2008) for example, there are the following seven types of forgetting: “*repressive erasure, prescriptive forgetting, forgetting that is constitution in the formation of the new identity, structured amnesia, forgetting as annulment, forgetting as planned obsolescence, and forgetting as humiliated silence*”. The seven types have different forms and functions in societies. The agents for types 1 and 2 are states, governments, and political parties, especially ruling ones, for types 3 and 4 individuals, families or groups, for type 5 individuals, groups or whole societies, for type 6 mainly members of system of the economic production, and for type 7 the civil society.

Connerton highlights forgetting, particularly in its social versions, as an active rather than passive process, which produces emotions and meanings that affect a memory’s personal or cultural accessibility (Singer & Conway, 2008). But, an alternative conceptualization of forgetting from a psychological perspective concentrates on communalities rather than differences between the types of forgetting (Wessel & Moulds, 2008). The point is, if crucial or catastrophic events, such as genocides for example, function as “*historical removal*”³ or if there is an “*official memory*” that lays whole societies under “*systematic forgetting*” through the dialectic between memory’s space of experience and the horizon of expectation (Olick, 2008; Rüsen, 2005: 13-16). The second notion has major significance for history education, which usually follows mainstream historical works. Besides this, the memory and forgetting issues are shifting from governments to individuals, who often feel the strongest about national history’s most sensitive events (Gong, 2001).

However, memory cannot be modelled as a storage site that is located at a specific place in the brain, but it must rather be seen as the establishing of relevant cognitive structures which constitute order in the brain and synthesize human behaviour. This constructivist approach means that remembering (or forgetting) is a process of activating memory functions which needs occasions and it is selective. What is remembered and what is forgotten first of all depends upon the management of identity from the politics and dominant culture (Schmidt, 2008: 191-194). So, the memories are narratives, which are mediated from the practices of memory. Thus, “*an emphasis on practices, rather than objects or sites of memory, highlights the very active aspect (and hence the constructed nature) of memories*”, notes Sturken (2008: 74). If everyday cultural memory, which can be seen as the short-term memory of society, is guided by social memory, then the collective memory is very difficult to be under renegotiation (Welzer, 2008: 285).

3. Memory, Forgetting, and Greek Jews.

So, memory and history, even if they are parallel phenomena, have strong interrelations, because both belong to the historical culture by giving meaning to the past and its traces (Geary, 1994; Rüsen, 2005: 9). However, what and why societies remember or forget is something that is a matter of the policy, general political culture and cultural practices about identities, of the handling of values and of the designing of future (Meyer, 2008; Gong, 2001; Poole, 2008; Sturken, 2008). Between the loss and the preservation of memory is the decision as to what is worth preserving, a decision for which historians and history education are responsible (Crane, 1997). For, in addition to normal forgetting, there is also its perversion, constructed or systematic forgetting, which, because it makes human beings unable to connect themselves with the past, is a pathological phenomenon. Besides this, historical learning and knowledge is a vital experience which becomes a part of collective memory (Crane, 1997).

It must be noted, however, that forgetting is not necessarily the opposite of remembering. It is not only that memory can be constructed by others or be “*episodic*”, that is related to a past absolutely different from the present, even more to have the form of a categoric dictate, something which is a serious obstacle to history and which distorts historical consciousness (Berliner, 2005). There is also the finding that memory worship can coexist with the incapacity or the unwillingness to remember, since the exaggerated memory (hypermnnesia) leads to the industrialization and the consumerism of memory. The last, in turn, essentially produces social amnesia⁴ or comes to an absolutely imaginary reconstruction of the past, a hybrid, which could be characterized as “*mnemohistory*” (Huyssen, 2000). Besides this, memory and forgetting are, according to Freud, forms of the same mechanism, with the first –as ever selective and subjective– tolerant of the loss of other memories (Crane, 1997; Huyssen, 2000; Rüsen, 2005: 13-14).

Something like this seems to happen with the memory or forgetting of Greek Jews. For many decades after the World War II, they were an invisible minority among others. History education (curricula, textbooks, teachers, students) and society seemed to be ignorant of them. But in the early eighties, firstly in USA and later in Europe, emphasis was placed on the discourse on the memory of the Holocaust, a process which led gradually to the globalization of the discourse on this issue (Huyssen, 2000). The same line was followed in Greece too, especially since 1997, when Thessaloniki was *Cultural Capital City of Europe*. However, the establishment of Remembrance Day for the Holocaust (January 27), the building of monuments, the giving of names to squares and streets, the ceremonies, the exhibitions, the more recent researching projects, the publications and translations into Greek, the training programs for school teachers and the additional material on the Holocaust for schools carry the risk of leading to the ignorance of other views of the long-time presence of the Jewish population in Greek territories. Such perspectives would bring to light the historical context of the correlations between Jews and Christians, views of vulgar orthodox tradition about Jews, expressions of violent antisemitism, even cases of complicity in the application of the “*Final Solution*” (Mazower, 2004; Pierron, 1996: passim). However, the Jewish communities of Greece are very careful with these issues, though the recent years they are more severe on antisemitic symptoms, like vandalisms in cemeteries or on monuments (see, for example, Central Board of the Jewish Communities of Greece, Jewish Museum of Greece, Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, and Rhodes Jewish Museum)⁵.

The Greek State, demonstrating sympathy and interest in Greek Jews, especially for their tragedy, has recently established the 27th of January as “*Remembrance Day*” for the Holocaust of Greek Jews⁶. Official ceremonies, speeches by members of the government, of politicians and of local authorities, as well as other similar activities are on this day usual. But, even this belated official interest is very formal, limited and sometimes even controversial and on grounds of expediency. And, most important, it seems that the official position and behaviour has no effect on consciousnesses, especially of young people. Of course, the antisemitism in Greece does not seem to have the same tension or violence as in other European countries (European Monitoring Centre, 2004). However, a form of vulgar antisemitism, mixed with old traditional fantasies about Jews, or, in some cases, of supposed scientific origin, without doubt exists. There are many electronic sites and blogs, television shows, publications etc, articles or ‘*news*’ in newspapers, even in reputable ones, where the antisemitism is something usual⁷.

4. History Education and Greek Jews.

In history teaching and learning the principal goal is to encourage pupils to think critically, deeply and independently. Effective history teaching demands a high level of knowledge and skills, particularly as pupils learn in many different ways. However, lesson plans transmit a “*ready-made*” body of knowledge (facts and interpretations) from the textbook –written under aegis of the state authority and only one for each class– to the pupils who see it as their job to absorb as much of this information as they can. Here, an awareness of recent development in the field of research on teaching and learning can prove helpful in focusing attention, generating well-founded ideas and providing a wider framework for understanding what happens in a teaching/learning interaction. Moreover, teaching history in a contemporary classroom requires that the teachers possess the ability to question multiple perspectives, recognize alternative narratives of the past, work across differences, use information technology in their lessons, and find a common thread in analysis of whatever framework they choose to use. Only in these ways could pupils with different socio-cultural backgrounds, experiences, needs and interests be included in a historical community (Bruno-Jofré & Schiralli, 2002; CoE Recommendation, 2001; Stradling, 2000).

During the last decade the Greek educational system has been subjected to a great reformation. In this framework, financed by large European programs, new history curricula were released and new history textbooks were produced. The evaluation system, especially in upper secondary education, changed too. New principles and standards, as well as new models and forms of assessment, were improved to correspond with the new curricula and new textbooks. So, according to the Greek National Curriculum for History (MNERA, 1998 & 2003), the framework for the subject of history is as following:

a. The general aim of history teaching is the development of historical thinking and of historical awareness. As has been written in curricula and in instruction guidelines for teachers since the 1980s, *“The development of historical thinking involves understanding of historical events by examining their causes and effects. The development of historical awareness involves understanding of human behavior as it is expressed in specific situations and also adopting values and attitudes that account for the development of individual responsibility. Thus, through the teaching of History, pupils can realize that the modern world is the continuation of the world of the past, and also that contemporary historical events are directly connected with their lives. It can be inferred from the above that developing historical thinking and historical awareness is closely related with the general aim of education, which is to help individuals to develop into responsible citizens”*.

b. Specific goals of history teaching are, among others:

- the knowledge of the historical process of Hellenism from antiquity to nowadays, with references to worldwide history (Gymnasium, grades 7th – 9th) or the understanding of the interrelations between the historical process of Hellenism on the one hand and on a European and world level on the other (Lyceum, grades 10th – 12th),
- the understanding, by the study of the 20th century, of the contemporary world in its complexity,
- the knowledge of the dimensions of the historical process which have not been studied systematically at earlier school grades,
- the development of a positive attitude towards the need for actual participation in the historical process.

However, Greece is among the European countries in which the concept of interpretation is not applied in school history. On the contrary, there is a strong belief among many historians that an objective historical truth can be discovered through careful research. Because of this, the narrative of school textbooks could be characterized, according to the typology of historical narration by Rüsen (2005: 12-19), as traditional or exemplary: the first takes the concept of continuity as *“permanence of originally constituted forms of life”* and the second as *“validity of rules covering temporally different system of life”*. In such a context, the critical narrative, which gives space to *“otherness”*, to multiperspectivity, to alternative interpretations and to alteration of given ideas of continuity, is marginalized. The result is that authorized versions by well-known academics or even state-approved accounts are considered to be the true/national story of the past.

So, references to the Greek Jews in history textbooks are very brief and mainly in the context of the Holocaust. For example, in the textbook used today in the 9th grade⁸, which consists of 187 pages, there is only one photograph and two lines about the Greek Jews in regard to the Holocaust (p. 132), whilst in the textbook for the 12th grade⁹, which consists of 255 pages, there are only three written sources and two photographs on the Holocaust (pp. 129 & 131-132). Only in the *“Local History Guidebook for Teachers”* for the 9th grade are there references to the Greek Jews before the Second World War¹⁰, but it is common knowledge among teachers that these local history projects are marginal.

On the other hand, there are special training programs for history teachers as well as supplementary material (articles, photographs, maps, etc.) and lesson plans on the Holocaust in Greek. Most of them have been prepared by the *“Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research – ITF”* (<http://www.holocausttaskforce.org>), from the *“Yad Vashem. The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority”* (<http://www.yadvashem.org>), from the *“United States Holocaust Memorial Museum”* (<http://www.ushmm.org>), from the three Jewish museums in Greece (Athens, <http://www.jewishmuseum.gr>; Thessaloniki, <http://ijmth.gr>; and Rhodes, <http://www.rhodesjewishmuseum.org>), and from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – Department of Philosophy and Education (<http://holocaustseminar2012.blogspot.com/p/blog-page.html>).

Since 2004, four seminars for school teachers have been organized by the “*Jewish Museum of Greece*”, under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in which almost 200 teachers took part. Other seminars have been organized in Israel and other countries by the “*Yad Vashem Authority*” or by the ITF. Remarkable is also a book about the theoretical framework of the Holocaust and teaching approaches for it (Kokkinos et al., 2007), which is advocated to teachers by the official Greek Jewish communities. All these seminars and educational material aim at the systematic effort to teach Holocaust Education methodology to Greek teachers. The Jewish museums also offer educational programs beyond the Holocaust, for example about everyday life in Jewish families or Jewish customs.

The Greek State supports all these efforts and participates in international organizations for Holocaust Education, to which it sends official reports, although full of political rhetoric (MNERA, 2006). In particular, a few years ago, it announced a Pan-Hellenic competition for students of the 12th grade under the title “*Greek Jews and the significance of Holocaust Remembrance*”, offering also prize money¹¹. However, despite the sincerity of the official rhetoric or actions, the reality is rather disappointing. The history of Greek Jews is an unknown era for many students, not only at primary and secondary schools, but even at universities, where there are no courses about Greek Jews or about the Holocaust. In History Departments, for example, there are courses on Arabic civilizations and their relationships with Greeks or courses on the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, but nothing about Greek Jews¹². Even at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, in a city called by Jews “*Madre de Jerusalem*”, with a university campus situated on the old Jewish cemetery, which was destroyed during the Nazi occupation, the silence about Jews is heavy. Student teachers, who shall in a few years be in place at secondary schools, lack knowledge of the history of Greek Jews, of their long term presence in Thessaloniki, and Jewish cultural traces and memoirs, the relationships between Jews and Christians, whilst the attitudes of young people about Greek Jews are rather neutral (Mavroskoufis, 2008: 273-282).

5. Greek Jews and “Catastrophe Didactics”

The contradictory perspectives and feelings about the past and present of Jews in contemporary Greece are not enough to explain the almost total ignorance of Jewish history by students, even by student teachers. A significant contribution to the deeper understanding of this issue could be derived by studying them in the light of so-called “*catastrophe didactics*”. The original meaning of the term in English (Disaster Education) or in German (Katastrophendidaktik) demonstrates its relationship with the teaching of topics like natural disasters or methods and practices for the protection from them. However, the term is, according to my opinion, appropriate to describe the situation regarding history education on Greek Jews.

The meaning of the term “*catastrophe didactics*” may have the following three main versions:

1. Didactics on topics of disasters.

- a) One teaching approach to disasters, natural, national, social etc, is the suppression of them, by reasoning that the students must be protected from emotional pressure or from ideological and political controversies (Tasman, 2003). An additional reasoning behind this approach is the belief that teaching such a topic could operate as ‘*sedative*’, because the system that teaches the facing of disasters is the same one that produces them (Bickenbach, 1998 & 2005; Sloterdijk, 1989). Besides this, there is a belief that occupation with key-problems carries the risk of producing an atmosphere of panic, which could lead to religious fundamentalism, to nationalism or to moralizing behaviours. So, the content of the history syllabus is shaped not on the basis of real politics but of appeals for regression or repentance (Gagel, 1994; Hilligen, 1985: 107-112; Klafki, 1991).
- b) Another approach is the “*neutralization*” or rather the “*anaesthetization*” of disasters, mainly under the pressure of political correctness (Zagumny, 2005). In the same framework is being suggested the facing of different representations or interpretations of disasters on the logical basis of “*historical hybrid*”, which contains elements of the different interpretations but not their hard core itself (Ahn, 2005; Tasman, 2003). However, approaches of this kind are not reflective, for they have an ideological perspective which leads to the degeneration of didactics into a new type of moralistic teaching (Radkau & Henry, 2005). Besides this, such an approach may lead to the fact that the students ignore significant scientific elements, as well as the reasoning behind controversies (Sutor, 2002).

- c) A third method for the teaching of disasters is that of approaching the problems with strategies which will lead to critical analysis and to deep understanding of controversies and conflicts (Kahlert, 1990; Tasman, 2003). Of course, the emotional issues and the images of horror must be accompanied with careful handling of emotions, close examination of the meanings, alternation of perspectives between offenders and victims, moral judgments, multiperspectivity of sources and interpretations, freedom of thinking and expression, etc (Bridges, 1986: 23-27; Tasman, 2003). This approach for the understanding of disasters and conflicts has been put forward since the 1980s, when didactics started to take distance from the theoretical controversies, giving priority to a critical praxis of teaching (Sutor, 2002). Besides this, a challenging issue can lead to a lesson with an orientation towards politics, to the richness of historical consciousness and to the development of critical thinking, when the students are being motivated (Gagel, 1994; Klafki, 1990). This variation of “*catastrophe didactics*” also offers a good example of the fascination of narrative (Vekötter, 2005).

2. Didactics that destroy but construct new meanings too

This version of didactics, which has also two varieties, is on intimate terms with historical revisionism, political correctness, deconstructionism, and constructivism. The first variation is related to political liberalism and the “*New Left*”, which, in the context of decolonization, of feminism and of emergence of national, racial, social or humanistic movements, occupied itself mainly with the revision of the dominant historical perspectives as well as with the study of topics, groups, persons etc that were being excluded from official historical narrative (Black & MacRaid, 2000: 9-12 & 21-23). The second results from the conservative counter-attack, by which is being attempted the reversion of revisionism to the advantage of traditional values and established memory (Fuhr, 2005; Huyssen, 2000).

3. Didactics that must be destroyed.

Behind this version is the old teaching tradition, which is connected to the dominant values and the limited tolerance zone of the hegemonic ideology, as well as the patterns of the educational system. So, in a very centralized and bureaucratic system, where the historical teaching and learning methods are conventional and normative rather than inquiring and active, and where the subject contents and the teaching strategies have been consolidated under the influence of tradition and routine, it is almost idle for someone to believe that the reality could be changed easily and in depth (von Borries, 2006).

Of course, all versions of “*catastrophe didactics*” correlate with the manipulation of memory and forgetting. In a society with national fantasies and feelings of insecurity, the renegotiation of historical memory is equivalent to a national disaster, which breaks with the national normality, or to a big crisis, which threatens the social routine (Macano & Jöckel, 2006). In such situations, revulsions set in against the efforts for renewal of history education because of the “*culture of panics*” (Sloterdijk, 1989). All these are, serving as “*guardians of memory*”¹³, opposite to the revision of history education, so that the alternative narrations or the experiences and the perspectives of other groups of society are excluded. These “*guardians*” usually understand the collective memory as a moral obligation or a sacred duty towards to the heroic national past (Geary, 1994: 134-157 & 178). On the other hand, there are people who understand the collective memory as an ideological and social construction or as a psychological and psychoanalytic category, and recognize that the past is something like a “*foreign country*” for the young people¹⁴, who have to discover and explore it (Huyssen, 2000; Uğuz, 2006).

6. Conclusions

“*Collective remembrance is like swimming: in order to stay afloat you have to keep moving. It has its own, open-ended dynamic. This involves the ongoing circulation of acts of remembrance across different media, including monuments, whereby memories are continuously being refigured. It also involves the ongoing interplay between hegemonic and marginal memories in the shaping of public acts of commemoration with the help of these various media*”, notes Rigney (2008: 94). However, there are things about the past that must not be a matter under social negotiation and that must not be forgotten. Especially in the case of the Holocaust, it is normal to remember attitudes and actions that must never be repeated. Besides this, there are, according to Margalit (2002: 7-8), “*thin and thick relations*” with the people of the past.

In the first case, the memory is about people or places at a distance or foreign to the dominant ideology; in the second, the memory is about people or places about which the contemporary people have strong emotions. So, a kind of “*ethics of memory*” is created, which set the task of memory, especially in cases of a traumatic past (Bell, 2005; Margalit, 2002: 9-12; Thompson, 2009).

Unfortunately, the existent situation in Greece could be summed up by the very clever title of an article: “*I must remember to forget*” (Ebenshade, 1995). Shall we continue to deny to young Greeks their right to swim in the broad river of our past and to develop “*thick*” relations with it or shall we be reconciled to the plurality of memories and to the multiperspectivity of views and interpretations? We must bear in mind that at least “*we are whatever we forget*” (Leland, 2001).

Footnotes

¹ The publication of journals like “*History and Memory*” or “*Memory Studies*” is a good example for this “*memory boom*”.

² Of course, one has to take into account the different perspectives about this issue. However, the crucial point for our study is the dialectic connections between memory and history, as well as the politics of memory, see: Ricoeur, P. (2004). *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Translated by K. Blamey & D. Pellauer (pp. 9-10). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

³ The term “*historical removal*” refers to the Freudian analysis of remembering and forgetting process. See: Ricoeur, P. (2004), op.cit, pp. 14-16.

⁴ This term references to Russell Jacoby’s book (1975) *Social Amnesia. A Critique of Contemporary Psychology*. Edison, N.J.: Transaction Publishers. In his book Jacoby refers (pp. 3-4) to a “*general loss of memory*” and notes that “*society has lost its memory, and with it, its mind*”.

⁵ Among other activities, Greek Jews have established three museums, in Athens, in Thessaloniki, and on Rhodes Island, have constructed electronic sites with information and many links, and edit books and journals, like the “*Chronika*”, where there are many references to the Pre-War Greek Jewish communities, to the Holocaust, and to contemporary problems, like antisemitism. The site of The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece is like a portal, with links to the sites of Greek Jewish Museums etc. In the Pre-War times, about 77.000 Jews were living in 27 Greek cities, of whom only 10.500 survived. In Thessaloniki, for example, only 1.950 of the total Jewish population (56.000) survived. Today, about 5.000 live in eight Greek cities, where well organized Jewish communities function. See: The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, available in: <http://www.kis.gr>.

⁶ Act 3218, Government Gazette, No FEK 12/v.A/27-01-2004. The prizes for the students were set up by the Jewish Community.

⁷ See, for example, sites of nationalistic organizations, like “*Hellenic Front*”, “*First Line*”, “*Golden Aurora*”, etc, or ultra right newspapers, like “*Eleftheros Cosmos*” (“*Free World*”: a Cold War-era term, which was used in Greece by the State between 1947 – 1974] or “*Stochos*” (Target). For a general analysis of how the mass and digital media affects memory or forgetting, see: Kitch, C. (2008). Placing journalism inside memory – and memory studies. *Memory Studies*, 1 (3), 311-320; Van Dijk, J. (2008). Mediated Memories in the Digital Age. *Memory Studies*, 1 (1), 137-139; Van House, N. & Churchill, E. F. (2008). Technologies of memory: Key issues and critical perspectives. *Memory Studies*, 1 (3), 295-310; and Zelizer, B. (2008). Journalism’s Memory Work. In A. Erlil & A. Nünning (Eds.), *An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (pp. 379-387). Berlin – New York: Walter de Gruyter.

⁸ Louvi, E. & Xifaras, D. (2007). *Modern and Contemporary History*. Athens: Schoolbook Publishing Organization.

⁹ Koliopoulos, J., Svolopoulos, K., Chatzivasiliou, E., Nimas, T. & Scholinaki-Chelioti, C. (2006). *History of Modern and Contemporary World (from 1815 to nowadays)*. Athens: Schoolbook Publishing Organization.

¹⁰ Assonitis, S. & Pappas, T. (2007). *Local History*. Athens: Schoolbook Publishing Organization. One of the topics is the city of Thessaloniki (pp. 91-104), where references to the historical progress of the Jewish community of the city are included.

¹¹ Documentary No 126161/Γ2/10-11-2005 of the Ministry of National Education & Religious Affairs – Direction of Secondary Education Studies.

¹² A partial exception to the “*academic canon*” could be found at the University of Thessaly, Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, where the associate professor Ricky van Boeschoten was teaching about Greek Jews in a workshop on social history and memory, see: <http://www.ha.uth.gr>.

¹³ The phrase “*guardians of memory*” derives from Greek Mythology, according to which the Muses, daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, had the duty of preserving the old memories. The same phrase is used by the foundation “*Yad Vashem*” as a title of the campaign aiming to ensure that each life of every one of Soah victims’ names is remembered by one living person, see <http://www.guardianofmemory.org>.

¹⁴ The reference to the well known book of David Lowenthal (2005). *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (12th edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) is obvious.

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