

## MANOLIS GLEZOS & APOSTOLOS SANTAS



One of the most humiliating moments not only for Greece but for all humanity was when in April 27, 1941 the swastika was hoisted on Acropolis Hill, on the very cradle of democracy and Western Civilization. It was the day when the German troops entered Athens to take control of the surrendered city. The moment the Nazi flag flew in the sky of Attica marked the beginning of three and a half years of pain, hunger and death.

Yet, two young men, barely 18, made a heroic move which later proved to be the beginning of the great Greek resistance to the Nazis.



On 30 May 1941 Manolis Glezos and Apostolos Santas climbed on the Acropolis and tore down the swastika, which had been there since 27 April 1941, when the Nazi forces had entered Athens. It inspired not only the Greeks, but all subjected people, to resist the occupation, and established them both as two international anti-Nazi heroes. The Nazi regime responded by sentencing the perpetrators to death *in absentia*, but they did not learn who they were until much later.

**Manolis Glezos**, born 9 September 1922 is a Greek left-wing politician and guerilla, best known for his participation in the World War II resistance.



Born in Naxos, Glezos moved to Athens in 1935 together with his family, where he finished high school. During his high school years in Athens he also worked as a pharmacy employee. He was admitted to the Higher School of Economic and Commercial Studies (known today as the Athens University of Economics and Business) in 1940. In 1939, still a high school student, Glezos participated in the creation of an anti-fascist youth group against the Italian occupation.

At the onset of World War II he asked to join the Greek army in the Albanian front against Italy, but was rejected because he was underage. Instead, he worked as a volunteer for the Hellenic Ministry of Economics. During the Axis occupation of Greece, he worked for the Hellenic Red Cross and the municipality of Athens. Glezos was arrested by the German occupation forces on 24 March 1942 and was subjected to imprisonment and torture. As a result of his treatment, he was affected by tuberculosis. He was arrested on 21 April 1943 by the Italian occupation forces and spent three months in jail.

After the war he had a really active political career that spanned decades which ended with him being elected as a member of the European Parliament in 2014, aged 92.

**Apostolos Santas** (22 February 1922 – 30 April 2011), commonly known as Lakis, was a Greek veteran of the Resistance against the Axis Occupation of Greece during World War II.



Apostolos Santas was born in 1922 in Patras. His family moved to Athens in 1934. He completed his secondary education in Athens and was accepted to the law school of the University of Athens, completing his law studies after the liberation of the country from Nazi occupation in 1944. In 1942, he joined the fledgling National Liberation Front (EAM), and a year later the guerrilla force ELAS, with which he participated in several battles with the Axis troops throughout Central Greece.

After the Occupation, because of his leftist beliefs, he was sent into internal exile to Icaria in 1946 and then to the Makronisos island in 1948. He managed to escape to Italy, from where he went to Canada where he was granted political asylum. He lived in Canada until 1962, when he returned to Greece, where he spent the rest of his life. On 30 April 2011 he died in Athens, aged 89. Santas received numerous awards from various institutions in Greece and other Allied countries

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manolis\\_Glezos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manolis_Glezos)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostolos\\_Santas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostolos_Santas)

<https://greece.greekreporter.com/2019/05/30/the-day-two-teenage-greeks-took-down-the-nazi-flag-from-the-acropolis/>