Europe violently protests Jerusalem changes as Netanyahu visits the continent

By Adam Abrams

JNS

Anti-Israel and antisemitic demonstrations pervaded Europe over the December 10 weekend as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the continent days after the Trump administration’s December 6 recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. The civilian protests, as well as widespread opposition to the White House’s Jerusalem policy changes within the European political establishment, may serve to deepen the chasm between Israel and Europe.

Hundreds of anti-Israel protesters convened at the Place de la République in central Paris on December 9 ahead of Netanyahu’s arrival in the French capital; they chanted “Netanyahu war criminal” and called for the prime minister’s arrest. The French demonstrators also called for Palestinian terrorists Hassan Hamouri and Marwan Barghouti to be freed from Israeli prisons.

Anti-Israel protests also occurred in Sweden, Italy, Austria and Germany. Demonstrations in southern Sweden turned violent when a group of men hurled firebombs at a synagogue in Gothenburg. Pro-Palestinian protesters in Sweden chanted antisemitic slogans encouraging the murder of Jews.

“We have announced the intifada from Malmö. We want our freedom back and we will shoot the Jews,” demonstrators chanted, reported Sweden’s Sveriges Radio.

In Vienna, a violent anti-Jewish mob marched down the city’s streets screaming in Arabic, “Jews, remember Khaybar, the army of Muhammad is returning,” referencing the seventh century massacre of Jewish tribes in the town of Khaybar, in what is now Saudi Arabia.

Italian anti-Israel protesters marched with Palestinian flags and held signs calling Jerusalem “the eternal capital of the state of Palestine.” See “Protests” on page 11

BU Professor Jonathan Karp edits two volumes of Jewish history

By Reporter staff

Jonathan Karp, an associate professor of history at Binghamton University, notes that his scholarly interests center on Jewish cultural and economic history, and Jewish-Christian relations. His most recent work focuses on two unrelated eras of Jewish history as shown by the publication of “World War I and the Jews: Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America” edited by Karp and Marsha L. Rozenblit (Berghahn Books), which appeared in September, and “The Cambridge History of Judaism: Volume 7. The Early Modern World, 1500–1815” edited by Jonathan Karp and Marsha L. Rozenblit (Cambridge University Press), which will be published in January.

Karp believes that people underestimate the changes caused by World War I and that includes the way the Jewish world was transformed. “This is a neglected, but major, topic in modern Jewish history,” Karp said in an e-mail interview. “Understandingly, the First World War has been overshadowed in Jewish history by World War II and the Holocaust, which is one reason for its neglect. But another though less obvious factor is that there’s no simple, single takeaway that conveniently summarizes the war’s great importance.”

He sees World War I as a crucial event for several reasons. “First, it shifted Jewish populations from living under the protective umbrellas of multinational empires – the Ottoman, Austria-Hungary and (more dubiously) Tsarist Russia – into fighting to maintain their rights and identities in a host of newly created states that were based on the principle of ethnic nationality, which often made Jews appear even more anomalous and vulnerable than before,” he said. “Second – though conversely – in many cases the war gave Jews their first opportunity to demonstrate their readiness to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country and thus to dispel the canard that Jews were unpatriotic and unmanly shirkers.”

Karp notes that though other books have looked at how the war affected Jews in “World War I and the Jews: Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America” edited by Jonathan Karp and Marsha L. Rozenblit (Berghahn Books), he notes that though other books have looked at how the war affected Jews in

The Jewish Federation will hold a full board meeting on Wednesday, December 20, at 7:30 pm. The community is invited to attend. Those interested in attending should make a reservation by calling the Federation at 724-2332 so that enough materials will be available.

Federation board meeting open to community

Spotlight

Hillel Academy appoints new principal

Hillel Academy announced that Dr. Caleb Conklin will be the school’s new principal. Conklin received a master’s of science in counseling from Summit University in 2016 and a doctor of education in educational leadership from Bethel University in 2017.

“After a rigorous search, we are excited to welcome our new principal, Dr. Caleb Conklin,” said Dr. Daniel Sambursky, president of the school, in an e-mail. “Dr. Conklin’s responsibilities at Hillel Academy include – among others – supporting our teachers through training and enrichment, reviewing lesson plans and developing curricular mapping for all grade levels. He is highly motivated to continue the tradition of excellence in education at Hillel Academy – and will contribute greatly to the success of our students.”

Happy Chanukah

At right: Students from the Temple Concord Religious School gathered near the temple’s outdoor menorah to celebrate the opening of Hanukkah House Museum.

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At right: Students from the Temple Concord Religious School gathered near the temple’s outdoor menorah to celebrate the opening of Hanukkah House Museum.

New residents sought

Smaller towns and cities in Israel hope to attract olim to live in them rather than Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.

An American play in Yiddish

One writer thinks the play “Awake and Sing!” sounds more American performed in Yiddish.

Chanukah

Area synagogues announce their Chanukah celebrations; Chanukah in Budapest; and more.

INdEX INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Classifieds .....................................12

Legal Notices ...................................4

Health Care Greetings ..............5, 6-9

Book Review ....................................4

Special Sections

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Volume XLVI, Number 50
Year-end tax planning: time to act

By Steven Woolf
IEEE Central

From the Jewish Federations of North America: Year-end tax planning for donors may be more important this year than ever to meet with your advisors to review impact financial strategies and tactics. This makes it more important than ever to meet with your advisors to review your investment portfolio and consider before December 31. Changes may become clearer as year-end approaches but this will require you to be flexible and prepared to act in a short time frame. For example, you might want to send in all outstanding commitments to take advantage of any tax cut package. In 2017, Congress and the White House are negotiating tax rates (the rate you pay on “the next dollar” of income) so that Congress might have to slim down “tax cut package” is enacted, both marginal tax-rate (the rate you pay on “the next dollar” of income) or the effective tax rate (your average rate on all items of income and deductions) is likely to change. Current projecting is that the top rate tax of 39.6% will continue to apply for those with incomes in excess of $1 million. The mix of changes to specific deductions and credits by any tax reform plan will also have a dramatic impact on your overall tax situation.

Observation: It is expected that comprehensive tax reform will repeal the AMT for future years but it will most likely remain in place for 2017 and needs to be addressed in your calculations. In most tax reform plans, you can avoid paying any capital gains tax on the value of securities transferred to a Federation and may be able to receive a charitable contribution deduction for the full fair market value of the securities.

Observation: Remember that gifts of appreciated assets are fully deductible up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income. Again, you may consider moving your building and homes to a new location. People sometimes get new trials if they can prove they are not guilty. With the new trial, a person in power is not a storekeeper. They must think: an expert you pay actually being required to help them and the members of their synagogue if they would consider moving their building and homes to a new area. The reason for this is simple: When an area has been flooded three out of the past four years, people need to face reality and do something permanent.

Houston flood plan

Now that several months have passed since the flooding in Houston, I think it’s time for that Jewish community to consider moving out of the flood plain. I know there is a tight-knit community in Houston that wants to remain together. I understand and admire that. In fact, I’d be willing to help them and the members of their synagogue if they would move their buildings and homes to a new location. The reason for this is simple: When an area has been flooded three out of the past four years, people need to face reality and do something permanent.

End of year tax planning - time to act

I have received several phone calls and letters from people who are interested in preparing for the upcoming year-end tax planning. I have had several phone calls and letters from people who are interested in preparing for the upcoming year-end tax planning. However, I have not received any letters or calls from people who are interested in preparing for the upcoming year-end tax planning. I have not received any letters or calls from people who are interested in preparing for the upcoming year-end tax planning.

Social Security

In every paycheck I’ve received, a certain amount was deducted from my salary for Social Security. That money was given to the United States government in trust for when I retire. Despite what is being said now, Social Security is not a government handout. It’s something I paid for. The idea that the Federal government may raided Social Security to pay for anything else is horrific. If that does occur, I’ll be looking for a good lawyer to see the federal government for those funds. I did not donate that money to the government; it was given for a specific purpose. If that purpose is void, then the funds should be returned to the community and may be able to avoid paying any capital gains tax on the value of securities transferred to a Federation. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the kashruth of any advertiser’s product or establishment.

More information can be disbarred. Thinking of the good of others, especially those in power, now seems to think that something isn’t a crime unless you get caught. It’s OK not to list all your assets before taking a government job – unless someone figures this. It’s only right that you haven’t listed them correctly. Then it’s a “mistake.” Excuse me? Government work is a serious undertaking and, if you don’t follow the rules, then you should be in trouble, no matter what party you belong to. What is the Job of the FBI? I’m not going to discuss what we actually did during the conversations he lied about. That is still under investigation and debate. However, you would think that a person in his position didn’t know better than to lie to the FBI. The idea that he didn’t realize the FBI would be able to track his movements is really scary. This was the president’s national security adviser. This is a person who should have known what our intelligence communities can do. Instead, he acted as if he was above the law.

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specific countries, he believes his work is “the first to cover the topic broadly, dealing with Jews throughout Europe, Asia and North America.”

He also sees the latest volume of “The Cambridge History of Judaism” as a first: “It’s the first book to deal with the early modern period in Jewish history in a truly comprehensive fashion.” The work is comprised of 41 individual essays by 39 scholars. In addition to his editorial work, Karp co-authored the introduction and translated two of the chapters from Hebrew.

Karp notes that many people are unaware of what historians now call the early modern period. “The early modern is part of a new periodization scheme in general historiography,” he said. “There has long been uncertainty about how to categorize the period between the end of the Middle Ages and the French Revolution. It’s a period in European history that encompasses the Renaissance and Reformation, the scientific and commercial revolutions, as well as the 18th-century Enlightenment, the wide expansion of printed works by Jews, and the proliferation and popularization of Kabbalah, were experienced simultaneously by Jews across great distances.”

“The Cambridge History of Judaism” took 10 years to complete and Karp is now focusing on other interests. “It was a massive organizational effort, but I’m both relieved and proud that it’s finally completed,” he said. “I now have some time and space to focus on other interests. It was a massive organizational effort, but I’m both relieved and proud that it’s finally completed,” he said. “I now have some time and space to focus on other interests. It was a massive organizational effort, but I’m both relieved and proud that it’s finally completed,” he said. “I now have some time and space to focus on other interests. It was a massive organizational effort, but I’m both relieved and proud that it’s finally completed,” he said. “I now have some time and space to focus on other interests. It was a massive organizational effort, but I’m both relieved and proud that it’s finally completed,” he said. “I now have some time and space to focus on other interests. 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By Andrew Tobin

JERUSALEM (JTA) – Many Jews who move to Israel only have eyes for Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. Whether it’s Tel Aviv’s wealth of startups, sunny beaches and culture, or Jerusalem’s history and religious life, newcomers want to be where the action is. But neither city is cheap. Tel Aviv is one of the most expensive in the world and Jerusalem, increasingly crowded, isn’t far behind. Tel Aviv’s housing prices have risen faster over the past decade than any other city in the world.

So, nearly 400 new and newish immigrants, mostly religious Jews from North America, turned up at a recent Jerusalem conference to explore moving to Israeli cities and towns farther afield. Representatives of 40 locales offered spels and deals. The overarching message at the “communities fair” run by the Jewish immigration promoter Nefesh B’Nefesh was simple: Life is cheaper and better elsewhere.

“We did this in order to expose the aliya to the fact that there are numerous opportunities in Israel,” said Rachel Berger, Nefesh B’Nefesh post-aliya maven. “There is so much more, and it’s greater than what you know.”

Last year, 76 percent of the immigrants she organized worked settled with settled in the populace center of the country, with easy access “Move” on page 9
to try to protect themselves physically and emotionally, yet their clashes force both of them to reconsider what they need to do with their lives. The plot was absorbing and gripping, with unexpected twists and turns. This is a perfect book for book clubs looking for a moving, and tearful, experience.

“The Mandelbrot’s Magnificity”
Reality and fantasy collide in Lizzi Ziekiens's novella “Mandelbrot the Magnificent” (AToz.com Book). Vicky France is not the safest place for young Jewish Benoit Mandelbrot. Although his family successfully escaped from Warsaw, they worry because some of their French friends are left behind. Benoit escapes into the world of mathematics – formulas become more real than the world around him. In fact, when he is introduced to the mathematics of Kabbalah, he feels that he has entered a different dimension. That experience makes him wonder if it’s possible to protect his family through a connection to a new household maid, Akki. When Krebbs learns Akki is Jewish, he is forced rethink his belief in Hitler and his country. This conflict creates interesting dilemmas for an especially sensitive audience.

“The Kaiser’s Last Kiss”
Two disparate stories, from the plot in “The Velvet Hours” by Alyson Richmond (Berkley). One tells of courtesan Marthe de Florian’s rise from poverty to a rich life in France. The other is about a half Jewish woman living in a France on the brink of World War II. The connection between the women is family: Solange’s grandmother is Marthe’s illegitimate son; she was given up for adoption and only met her birth mother later in life. Although Solange’s father and grandmother never became close, Solange’s visit to her grandmother are more successful as the aging Marthe seeks someone with whom she can share her life in the few years she has left. Solange wants to learn more about the Jewish books her late mother kept as reminders of her former life. That leads her to a world she never knew existed.

While each story was interesting on its own, together they didn’t make a cohesive novel. Solange’s story felt underdeveloped, and many who read it might wonder why she herself would want to create a beautiful world for herself – will enchant some readers. In addition, what the two tales are romance: each woman learns how love can change a life.
A classic play sounds more American when it is performed in Yiddish

By Andrew Silow-Carroll

NEW YORK (JTA) — Everything I love about the playwright and screenwriter Clifford Odets is found in the opening line of his 1935 play "Awake and Sing!": "Where's advancement down the place?"

The line is said by Ralph, the thwarted son in a struggling Bronx Jewish family in the heart of the Depression, in that wonderful, weirdly Yiddishesque language Odets created for Broadway and Hollywood. It means something like "I can't get a promotion at work!" — but there's no music in a sentence like that.

So what happens to "Awake and Sing!" when you lose Odets' conceit, of characters speaking English as if they are speaking Shakespeare translated into Yiddish and then back into English.

"My experience I can give you in a nutshell, and I didn't dream it in a dream, either — dog eat dog," says Sidney Falco, the bustling PR man played by Tony Curtis. "In brief, from now on, the best of everything is good enough for me!"

And if it takes you a minute to figure out what a character like Ralph or Sidney is saying, that was part of the point: Odets created a version of English that sounded both familiar and alien because he wanted his working-class Jewish characters to sound both familiar and alien. Odets made his name in the '30s in the proudly left-wing Group Theatre writing kitchen-sink dramas that transformed his own poor Jewish upbringing into a universal call for justice and fair play. When plays like "Awake and Sing!" and "Golden Boy" opened on Broadway, they thrilled and scandalized audiences with their risk content and occasionally radical politics.

So what happens to "Awake and Sing!" when you lose Odets' conceit, of characters speaking English as if they are speaking Yiddish? That's the challenge of a new staging of the play by New Yiddish Rep at Manhattan's 14th Street Y, where a 1938 translation of the play by Chaver Paver is being staged through December 24. Performing Odets in Yiddish might sound both redundant and self-defeating, but it works. Thanks to an excellent cast and a sudden relevance for the play Odets couldn't have dreamed of, something is definitely gained in the translation.

I don't speak Yiddish, but know enough Hebrew and Leo Rosten that I can hear how a Yiddish sentence gets from here to there. (The New Yiddish Rep production is presented with English supertitles projected above the stage.) Characters wail, flatter, gripe, coo, criticize and crow in the mamlish. It's a music all its own.

"You do miss cockamamie Odets lines like "In life there's no justice and no memory aroused by its ancestral uses." The Bergers may speak Yiddish at home, but let you know they speak English out in the world. They'll lapse into English when they need to, as when Ralph is on the phone with a girlfriend, or when they want to, as when the conniving boarder Moe delivers his tag line, "Don't make me laugh!" An "insurance policy" is an insurance policy, and "Teddy Roosevelt" is Teddy Roosevelt. A younger character like the daughter Hennie toggles between Yiddish and English, and is reluctant to marry a "greenhorn" (or "говор" in Yiddish), an immigrant only three years off the See "Play" on page 11

The Jewish past is coded into Yiddish — not just because it is the language that Babbe and Zayde spoke, but because it is a river that swept up and grew swollen on the history of the Jews going back to the Israelites. When Jacob, the fiery Marxist grandfather in the play, slips from Yiddish to quote Isaiah (and gives the play its title), the Hebrew recalls how Cynthia Ozick once described a similar moment in Sholem Aleichem's Tseyve stories: "the six scant Hebrew syllables instantly call up... the full quotation, the tremor or memory aroused by its ancestral uses." The Bergers have always been a Jewish, if highly assimilated, family; the Yiddish reminds you how Jewish they are.

As for the present: No play about immigrants can avoid sounding topical in this age of travel bans and deportations. The Bergers may speak Yiddish at home, but let you know they speak English out in the world. They'll lapse into English when they need to, as when Ralph is on the phone with a girlfriend, or when they want to, as when the conniving boarder Moe delivers his tag line, "Don't make me laugh!"

"My experience I can give you in a nutshell, and I didn't dream it in a dream, either — dog eat dog," says Sidney Falco, the bustling PR man played by Tony Curtis. "In brief, from now on, the best of everything is good enough for me!"

From Colorado, Buffalo, rural PA and NYC... Our family wishes each & everyone A Happy Chanukah


Wishing Everyone a Happy Chanukah

Jonathan, Ulla & Juliana Kloss

We wish you and all of your family a year of blessings

Visit us on the web at www.thereportergroup.org
By Sonya Sanford

(The Nosher via JTA) – The Japanese word okonomiyaki is derived from two words: okonomi, “how you like it,” and yaki, “grill.” Okonomiyaki is a customizable Japanese savory vegetable pancake. Like a latke, it gets cooked in oil in a fritter formation. Unlike a latke, it’s usually made into a large plate-sized pancake comprising mainly cabbage.

Food historians have linked the rise in popularity of okonomiyaki in Japan to World War II, when rice was more scarce and this recipe offered a filling meal or snack with a wheat-based starch. Throughout Japan, there are regional differences and countless variations of okonomiyaki, but the most common form of the dish involves a batter made of flour, a variety of mountain yam, eggs, shredded cabbage, green onion, dashi and often the addition of pork belly. It gets topped with its own tangy sweet sauce, Japanese mayonnaise and bonito flakes (katsuobushi).

I first fell in love with okonomiyaki on a trip to Japan. You can find it there in restaurants that specialize in the dish, but it’s also something that is prepared in home kitchens. The cabbage gets slightly crisp, tender and sweet when seared in oil on a flattop or skillet, and then it gets generously slathered with an umami-rich sauce, along with a welcome drizzle of creamy mayo. The richness, sweetness and tanginess of these components all work perfectly together.

A few months after I returned from Japan, I ended up eating at Brooklyn’s Japanese Jewish restaurant, Shalom Sanford. I didn’t hesitate to order its Japanese-influenced spin on okonomiyaki. Shalom Sanford is known to top the dish with pastrami, or even corned lamb tongue and sauerkraut. It became clear there that okonomiyaki, with its base of humble cabbage and onion, is a perfect fit on a Jewish table. The fried pancake part of it all called out Chanukah.

I am a fan of all pancakes and fritters, and I set out to modify the classic Japanese version of a recipe for a dish that didn’t require access to a specialty food store and could be made with kosher ingredients. Full disclosure: My version lacks authenticity. If you’re going for the real deal, you’ll need a batter made with an okonomiyaki flour mix or nagaimo yam. This special kind of yam is added in powdered form to the flour mix or is grated fresh into the batter. The toppings should include bonito flakes, and the batter should be made with dashi. These ingredients can be found at most Japanese markets. Instead of nagaimo yam, my version uses a batter of flour and potato starch, and instead of dashi, I use water.

I’ve also included a recipe for homemade traditional okonomiyaki sauce that can be made simply with easy-to-find ingredients, but you can also buy a pre-made bottled sauce. You can make these pancakes large-sized and cut into wedges like the Japanese do, or slightly smaller a la a large latke. I wouldn’t go too small, as the vegetables tend to hold together better on massecake.

This recipe doesn’t need to be too exact, and it works as a blank canvas for additional vegetables like kale, mushrooms and/or daikon. In the spirit of Chanukah, these okonomiyaki get cooked in oil, but they are not heavily fried. The oil used to fry the okonomiyaki gives a loving nod to the miracle of the oil glowing in the Temple for eight days instead of one, but the heap of vegetables and addictive sauce make this a nutritious and satisfying addition to any Chanukah meal.

Okonomiyaki

For the pancakes:

qb cup all-purpose flour or gluten free all-purpose mix
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. kosher salt
2 large eggs
½ cup of water
½ shredded green cabbage, about ½ cup packed cups
3 green onions, sliced thin, plus more for garnish if desired
1 carrot, peeled and shredded
4-5 inches daikon, peeled and shredded (optional)
Oil as needed (i.e. sunflower, canola or peanut)
Sesame seeds, for topping (optional)

For the okonomiyaki sauce:

½ cup ketchup
¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
2 Tbsp. soy sauce
2 Tbsp. honey or agave syrup, or to taste

To make the okonomiyaki sauce: Combine the ketchup, Worcestershire, soy sauce and honey/agave in a bowl. Taste and adjust to your liking. The sauce should be tangy, savory and a little sweet.

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CHANUKAH GREETINGS FROM THESE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

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Happy Chanukah from
In Budapest, Chanukah comes out of the shadows and onto the ice rink

By Caana Lipshiz

BUDAPEST (JTA) – The outdoor ice skating rink—the largest in Central Europe—in Budapest’s city center has been part and parcel of Hungary’s Christmas tradition for nearly 150 years. Stretching across 3.5 acres between Heroes’ Square and Vajdahunyad Castle, the Budapest City Park Ice Rink draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from across the country each winter. They come for the Christmas market, the winter festival, and the promise of smooth ice and affordable skate rentals.

It’s an enormous and enormously popular attraction, so City Park Ice Rink is busy nearly every day with the Christmas revelers. Except, however, on the first night of Chanukah.

On that evening, the rink is populated with hundreds of Jews. They gather to sing Chanukah songs as they watch rabbis on skates light a large menorah built by EMIH, the local branch of the Chabad Hasidic movement. With help from a donor in Budapest, they rent the rink for $12,000, and distribute sufganiot and tea to holiday revelers who have pre-purchased tickets.

The City Park Chanukah celebration started just over a decade ago, and it is unusual in that it’s one of just a few key,” he added, because it made people leave the tradition.

“Chanukah used to be low key in Budapest, as was everything else connected to Judaism during socialism,” said Rabbi Boruch Oberlander, one of the early organizers of Budapest’s Chanukah on ice tradition. “Back then, Jews feared that practicing any religion—and Judaism especially—invited persecution.”

“But it’s not good for Judaism when things are low key,” he added, because it made people leave the tradition. Throughout the Soviet sphere of influence, decades of religious persecution compounded the Nazi-caused devastation. Unaware or ashamed of their Jewish identity, countless Jews in that part of the world assimilated, distanced themselves from Judaism and produced children that no longer regarded themselves as Jewish.

Against this background, Chanukah has a special significance in the post-communist world, said Oberlander, a Brooklyn-born rabbi who settled in Budapest 28 years ago as an emissary of Chabad. Oberlander isn’t just referring to public events at ice skating rinks—there’s also the longstanding practice of placing Chanukah menorahs on the windowsill, specifically for all to see. “Meaning, don’t be low key!” he told JTA.

Oberlander, 53, does not skate himself, he said, explaining he’s “not very good at it.” But in his community, the event is one of the most popular because of how it combines seasonal amusements, sports and religious ceremony in a fun, family-friendly setting.

His interpretation of how Jews should celebrate Chanukah is shared by many rabbis all over the world—Chabad rabbis, in particular—who stage large, public menorah lightings in central squares of major cities. New York, for example, boasts two such events: The Grand Army Plaza’s Chanukah celebration in Manhattan and Brooklyn have been in competition over which holds the title of World’s Largest Menorah.

Such displays inspired Jews to think big in Western Europe, ending decades in which communities traumatized by the Holocaust had shunned initiatives that advertise Judaism. Since 2013 in The Netherlands, for example, the chief rabbi has been lifted in a crane (along with the Israeli ambassador) to light the first candle of a 36-foot menorah built for the Jewish community by Christian Zionists who say it is Europe’s largest. In Berlin, a giant menorah is lit at the Brandenburg Gate monument. According to Oberlander, Chanukah in Budapest is “Europe’s largest.”

But in Budapest, Chanukah is shared by many rabbis all over the world—Chabad rabbis, in particular—who stage large, public menorah lightings in central squares of major cities. New York, for example, boasts two such events: The Grand Army Plaza’s Chanukah celebration in Manhattan and Brooklyn have been in competition over which holds the title of World’s Largest Menorah.

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Israeli archaeologists reveal Chanukah-related discoveries on eve of holiday

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Two archaeological discoveries with “highly symbolic value” dating back to the ancient Jewish kingdoms of Israel have been revealed on the eve of Chanukah. Israeli archaeologists the week of December 11 disclosed the discovery of an ancient inscription of a seven-branched menorah on a large stone slab in the northern Israel city of Tiberias.

According to archaeologists, the basalt block that features the engraving was originally used as a door to a Jewish tomb between the 2nd and 4th centuries B.C. The menorah-engraved stone was later used as the foundation for a pillar in a mosque, and then as a step in a Crusader-era sugar refinery.

Rabbi Slomo Koves, right, and an unknown participant at Chabad Hungary's Chanukah on ice event took selfies at Budapest's City Park Ice Rink on December 6, 2015. (Photo courtesy of EMHJ)

At right: On the eve of Chanukah, the Israel Antiquities Authority revealed the discovery of the pictured clay lamp that dates back 2,200 years, to the time when Judah Maccabee fought the Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes. (Photo by Israel Antiquities Authority)

“Imagine, if I have a son, because then he could be identified as Jewish,” she said. “She has no children, adding: “I have no thoughts of this kind, living a pretty comfortable Jewish life.”

Despite the generational gap it exposes, Fabriczki said she and her mother have bonded over the City Park Ice Rink Chanukah event. “It’s quite religious, but my mother is not, so the Chanukah on ice event is something we can share because she likes to ice skate and it’s important for me to observe all the Jewish holidays,” Fabirczki said.

For 16-year-old Sara Szalai, Budapest’s Chanukah on ice means quality time with her dad, Kalman, who is the managing director of the Jewish community’s Action and Protection Foundation – the local equivalent of the Anti-Defamation League, which monitors antisemitic incidents.

Neither are particularly concerned, she said, about self-identifying as Jews at the event. “Maybe there are people who think this way, but for us it’s not a big issue,” said Szalai, who added that she’s a “pretty good” skater.

“It’s usually pretty crowded there, so it’s a rare opportu- nity to really skate properly on Chanukah without worrying about bumping into people,” she said.

The event typically unites Jews across the religious-sec- tarian divide. Chanukah has fewer restrictions than other Jewish observances such as Shabbat or Yom Kippur, where observant Jews are not allowed to operate machines, travel or perform any action classified as work.

In Hungary’s “factions” Jewish community – where interdenominational tensions are rising and polarizing policies undertaken by the nationalist government – the Chanukah on ice event offers a rare armistice in which the secular, religious, local and Israeli Jews put aside their differences for a night of fun.

It’s also, Fabriczki noted, “a chance to see rabbis on skates.”

In Moscow, the Chanukah on ice event, which began in 2012, is eclipsed by what may well be the largest celebration of Jews at the State Kremlin Palace for an evening of dance and performances, as well as the bestowing of awards to communal VIPs. Organizers say the venue is important to them for symbolic reasons because it produced some of the world’s worst antisemitic policies after the fall of Nazi Germany.

In Budapest, the city’s summertime Jewish cultural festival and sesame seeds.

Budapest...

Like the massive menorah lightings, Europe’s growing Chanukah on ice trend – which this year can be observed in Budapest, Moscow and London – also started in the United States, where it is occurring this year in locations from Woolman Rink in New York’s Central Park, to Houston to San Mateo, CA.

In Moscow, the Chanukah on ice event, which began in 2012, is eclipsed by what may well be the largest celebration of Chanukah in Europe: the annual gathering of 6,000 Jews at the State Kremlin Palace for an evening of dance and performances, as well as the bestowing of awards to communal VIPs. Organizers say the venue is important to them for symbolic reasons because it produced some of the world’s worst antisemitic policies after the fall of Nazi Germany.

In Budapest, the city’s summertime Jewish cultural festival is also an example of Jews reclaiming their place in society.

But some say there’s something special about the Chanukah on ice event, which is held at an iconic location with strong ties to the holiday period for all Hungarians.

“I think it indicates a generational difference in which young people our age don’t think twice about participating in an event that celebrates, publicly, our Jewish identity,” Eszter Fabirczki, 30, a regular at the event, told JTA. “Holocaust survivors passed the fear element to their children, but not to their grandchildren.”

Against this background, Fabirczki said her father “is freaking out over my wanting to give my son a circumi-

Binghamton...

Judafest, which was held for the 10th consecutive year, draws thousands of Jews and non-Jews to the historically Jewish 7th District for sessions, activities and exhibitions connected to Jewish cooking, dancing and Yiddish.

“Another difference for a night of fun.

“I think it indicates a generational difference in which young people our age don’t think twice about participating in an event that celebrates, publicly, our Jewish identity,” Eszter Fabriczki, 30, a regular at the event, told JTA. “Holocaust survivors passed the fear element to their children, but not to their grandchildren.”

Against this background, Fabriczki said her father “is freaking out over my wanting to give my son a circumci-
access to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and 24 percent went to the more remote north and south. “Outside of the center of the country, you have less expensive housing. You have lots of green,” Berger said, “and you have a sense of community.”

In the lobby of a Jerusalem hotel, conference attendees moved among tables set up by representatives of the communities from across Israel and exchanged stories about life as an immigrant to the country. Many had landed in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem and were looking for more affordable places to start or expand families.

The conference was part of a joint initiative called Go Beyond by Nefesh B’Nefesh and Israel’s Jewish National Fund to promote Jewish settlement in the periphery as well as Jerusalem.

Katie and Joe, a North America-born couple in their late 20s, met and married in Israel several years ago. They said they plan to have children, and are just about fed up with their cramped apartment in this city. “We have a community in Jerusalem where like all our friends are there, but it’s just not sustainable because we all live in like two-bedroom apartments,” said Joe, who asked that he and his wife not be identified by their last name. “Nobody wants to live like that for the rest of their life.”

“I don’t know anyone who can afford to buy in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem,” Katie added. “Even to rent, everyone is trying to find a deal. It’s just hard.”

In Tel Aviv, the average three-bedroom apartment costs nearly $1 million, and the cost of housing has more than doubled in the past decade. And that’s in a country where the cost of living is already more than 50 percent higher than the average among the 35 countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and a home costs more than 12 years of pay on average.

But outside the big cities, and even more so in the north and south of the country, money goes a lot further. According to Nefesh B’Nefesh, homes can be had in Katrin, a town in the Golan Heights, or Arad, a small city near the Negev capital of Beersheba, for a fifth of the price per square foot in Tel Aviv, a fourth of the price per square foot in Jerusalem. Nefesh B’Nefesh and the government also offer special financial incentives to some who choose to live in Israel’s so-called periphery, or non-central regions.

While the community representatives, including many veteran olim, were quick to talk up their community’s affordability, they also touted what they said were other benefits of small-town life.

“Avigail Buki, a Montreal native, was representing Katrin. She said she and her husband paid just over $400,000 for a 1,500 square-foot-house with a backyard overlooking the Sea of Galilee. But she said what really drew them to the community was its tight-knit religious atmosphere, natural surroundings and good Orthodox Jewish schools for their children. “Had we chosen somewhere else, we would have to move because Katrin was exactly what we needed,” she said. “People don’t lock doors there.”

Buki’s husband, Yaron, acknowledged that there are also downsides to living in the periphery. He noted that it can be an hours-long commute to the center of the country, where many of the best jobs are based, and there are relatively few English speakers to talk to. Also, he warned, Katrin is one of the few places in Israel where he could be killed by wildlife. “If you want to die by a boar, come to Katrin,” he joked.

But he said the periphery is fast developing, thanks in part to government investment, and the unique skills of English-speaking immigrants are appreciated in communities where they are rare. For example, his wife is an English teacher at a local high school.

Asked if he saw the fact that the Golan Heights is outside Israel’s internationally recognized borders as a plus or minus, Buki said neither: “It’s all Israel.”

In fact, many of the communities represented at the conference sit beyond Israel’s internationally recognized border – in the Golan Heights, eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank. Although Jerusalem is the No. 2 destination for olim and the most populous city in Israel, it is also contested – some parts more than others. Both Israel and the Palestinians claim it as their capital, and it has a large Arab population in eastern Jerusalem.

“We’re based off what the government of Israel decided was a national mission,” a Nefesh B’Nefesh spokesman explained. For their part, Katie and Joe said they had their hearts set on a home in uncontented territory, a coming-soon neighborhood of the southern city of Kiryat Gat that is seeking to attract English-speaking Orthodox Jews like them. A four-bedroom, 1,200-square-foot apartment in one new building there goes for just over $300,000. Joe would be able to get to his marketing job at a Tel Aviv startup by train in just over half an hour, faster than his current commute from Jerusalem.

Katie enthused that they would live among people with similar backgrounds, but within a city that reflects the diversity of Israel. As she was speaking, she was interrupted by a real estate agent looking for young couples to come to Kfar HaVakov, a religious settlement in the West Bank.

“If you’re interested in moving to a good community, you should check us out,” he said. “It’s really diverse. Everyone’s religious, but it’s all different types.”

After politely hearing out the agent’s pitch, Katie confessed that she was not convinced. “I’m sure it’s a lovely community, I would love to spend Shabbat there,” she said.

“But I want my kids to be able to see a bunch of different people living in a bunch of different ways, not just the way we live. That’s really important to me.”

New immigrants attended a November conference in Jerusalem on affordable communities in Israel. (Photo by Yonit Schiller)
In this week's parshat Parshat Vayeshev, Joseph was sold by his brothers to Potiphar. After his purchase, Potiphar's wife attempts to seduce him. When Joseph refuses, she accuses him of attempting to淫 with her. Joseph is thrown into jail, and the text concludes with him being taken to Pharaoh's court. The parsha begins with a description of Joseph's life in Egypt, his rise to power, and his eventual fall from grace. It concludes with the story of his reunion with his family and his recognition of his father Jacob. The parsha highlights Joseph's strength of character and his ability to overcome adversity. It serves as a reminder to us to remain true to our values and to treat others with kindness and fairness.

Joseph and the journey of the ego

Rabbi Steven P. Nathan, Jewish Fellowship of HEMLOCK FARMS

In his newest book, "Joseph and the Journey of the Ego," Rabbi Steven P. Nathan explores the character of Joseph, the son of Jacob, as a symbol of the journey of the ego. Nathan argues that Joseph's story can serve as a guide for individuals on their own journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth.

The book begins with an exploration of the biblical story of Joseph, emphasizing Joseph's qualities of integrity, honesty, and wisdom. Nathan argues that these qualities are essential for a successful journey of the ego. The book then moves on to a discussion of the psychological aspects of Joseph's story, drawing on the work of Carl Jung and other Jungian analysts.

Nathan argues that Joseph's story can serve as a guide for individuals on their own journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth. He suggests that the story of Joseph can help individuals recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, and learn to use these qualities to their advantage.

Throughout the book, Nathan provides practical advice and exercises for readers to use in their own journey of the ego. He suggests that readers can use the story of Joseph to help them identify their own goals, values, and aspirations, and to develop strategies for achieving these goals.

Nathan's book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in exploring the journey of the ego. It offers a unique perspective on the story of Joseph, and provides practical advice and exercises for readers to use in their own journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth.
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Federica Mogherini, in Brussels on December 11. (Photo – Courtesy of The Jerusalem Post)

French President Emmanuel Macron, in Brussels on December 6. (Photo – Avi Ohayon/GPO)

It’s been the capital of the Jewish state for 70 years. We respect your history and your choices, and we know they are all rooted firmly in the ego. The virtues of compassion, tolerance, and the spirit of giving are the way to peace. We are together in this fight against barbarism and you’re a principle leader in that fight,” he told Macron. “Across the Middle East as well, your efforts in Lebanon are to be commended; your efforts to prevent the spread of Iranian aggression are to be commended.

The Israeli leader acknowledged that he and Macron don’t “agree on everything,” but “are working on it.”

Macron called Trump’s Jerusalem recent policy changes “regrettable” and said the city’s status should be determined through negotiations.

Mogherini has also agreed to work with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to pressure the U.S. to re-ease its recognition of Jerusalem.

“Paris is the capital of France. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. It’s been the capital of Israel for 3,000 years.

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a joint appearance with the European Union’s diplomatic chief, Federica Mogherini, in Brussels on December 11. (Photo – Avi Ohayon/GPO)

Ego

Continued from page 10

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Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a joint appearance with the European Union’s diplomatic chief, Federica Mogherini, in Brussels on December 11. (Photo – Avi Ohayon/GPO)
Abbas announces withdrawal from all peace agreements with Israel since Oslo

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said on Dec. 13 that the Palestinians are withdrawing from all agreements with Israel since the 1993 Oslo Accords. Abbas’ comments came during a special meeting of the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in Istanbul that was convened in response to U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. The P.A. president said he would not recognize any future U.S. involvement in the peace process and threatened that there will be “no peace or stability” in the region until Jerusalem is recognized as the Palestinian capital. “We will tell the Israelis that we are no longer committed to any agreement from Oslo until today,” he said, adding that the P.A. would push for full membership in the United Nations, where the Palestinians currently have non-member observer state status. “We agreed with America we would not join international institutions on the condition that America does not transfer its embassy, does not initiate any action against our office in Washington and orders Israel to freeze settlement building,” Abbas said.

Israel expects insufficient winter rainfall as Sea of Galilee nears historically low level

Israel’s Meteorological Service has forecasted that the country should anticipate insufficient rainfall this winter. The Israeli prediction – which is based upon assessments of December’s weather forecast as well as European weather models – comes as the Sea of Galilee (also known as the Kinneret), Israel’s largest freshwater lake and primary water source, approaches a historically low water level. Based upon weather models used by the European Center for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, the Jewish state has a 64.7-percent chance of insufficient rainfall during the country’s primary rainy season of December through February. Israel’s Water Authority warned in October that the Sea of Galilee is critically low and in danger of reaching its “lowest level ever recorded.” As of that month, the sea was 704 feet below sea level, just a few feet above the historical low of 705 below sea level measured in 2001 – beneath the water source’s so-called “black line.” When water levels in the Sea of Galilee cross below the black line, severe ecological complications can irreversibly contaminate the water and disrupt the lake’s fragile ecosystem. The situation in the Sea of Galilee has deteriorated in recent years as Israel’s north faces an ongoing drought. Israel has invested substantially in water conservation, reclamation and desalination technologies, allowing the Jewish state to “significantly reduce” its use of water from the Sea of Galilee.

Putin announces withdrawal of Russian troops from Syria

During a surprise visit to Syria on Dec. 11, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered Moscow’s troops to begin withdrawing from the war-torn nation. Putin made the announcement from Russia’s Hmeimim air base in Syria’s Latakia Province, officially concluding Moscow’s two-year military campaign in support of President Bashar al-Assad’s regime. “The task of fighting armed bands here in Syria, a task that it was essential to solve with the help of extensive use of armed force, has for the most part, been solved and solved spectacularly,” Putin said, commending the troops for ostensibly defeating the Islamic State terror group. Putin also reportedly stated that the Hmeimim air base and a Russian naval facility at the Syrian port of Tartous would remain in the country. In October, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited Israel for discussions on Iran and security coordination in Syria. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had told Shoigu that the Jewish state “will not allow” an Iranian military buildup in Syria.