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## EDITORIAL NOTE



It appears as if we've begun to dig ourselves out of the snow banks and soon spring, full of life and unpredictable, somewhat naughty and always unexpected, will come knocking at our door and all our hearts. Just like this issue. Alongside serious topics you will find a Jewish fairytale illustrated by Ilja Bereznickas. Find the time to read it to your children, grandchildren and for yourself as well! We also took a look at how members of the Lithuanian Jewish Community spend their free time. Interested? Turn to page 7.

We hope the News Roundup serves to recall the most important events of the last month of fall and of winter. We are already living in the aura of the upcoming holiday of Purim, probably the happiest and most colorful of Jewish holidays, and we and Dr. Lara Lempertienė invite you to learn about some of the literary parodies inspired by this holiday.

We present the serious topic of old Jewish cemetery conservation in an overview prepared by Rūta Anulytė of the Multidisciplinary European Jewish Cemetery Protection Conference. We also present a response from the chair of the Lithuanian Jewish Community to a controversial and widely discussed report by the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of the Residents of Lithuania on Jonas Noreika's activities during World War II.

We eagerly await your letters, notes, messages, suggestions and questions for the Lithuanian Jewish Community, which we will pass on to them and publish their answers in the next issue of the Bagel Shop magazine.

*Sincerely yours,  
Živilė and Radvilė*

# NEWS AT A GLANCE

**October 23, 2015** The Lithuanian Jewish Student Union joined the global Shabbos Project initiative and celebrated Sabbath along with like-minded groups around the world. Friday evening several dozen young people packed the kosher restaurant Rishon in Vilnius for the event.

**October 25-28, 2015** The Rothschild Foundation held a conference in Vilnius to discuss Jewish cemetery protection. Specialists from different European countries including scholars, genealogists, leaders of Jewish communities and federations, religious leaders, NGOs and cemetery policy-makers met and discussed the history of Jewish cemeteries and problems following the Holocaust. *Read more on page 4-5.*

**October 27-29, 2015** The Religious Studies and Research Center of Vilnius University hosted an international conference called "Emmanuel Levinas: A Radical Thinker in Time of Crisis". More than a memorial to an important intellectual, the organizers sought to present him anew as a radical thinker for our lives at a critical period in world history.

**November 2, 2015** The Sovereign Military Order of Malta and the Jewish communities of Munich and Lithuania held a concert and reception in Munich. Donations collected during the event went to support surviving rescuers of Jews.

**November 4-15, 2015** Tour by Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theater in Israel. Performed 11 shows of Mozart's Marriage of Figaro at the Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv.

**November 5-6, 2015** Lithuanian Minister of Culture Šarūnas Birutis visited Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. He met with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and cultural organizations and with expatriates. Lithuania and Israel have strong ties in the fields of musical drama, modern dance, jazz, cinema and other arts. Earlier in fall Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė visited Israel, followed by Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius's visit.

**November 8, 2015** A group of Kaunas Jewish Community members took a field trip to Vilkaviškis and visited mass murder sites and old Jewish cemeteries. Vilkaviškis Regional History Museum worker Laura Bartkienė accompanied them on the trip.

**November 12, 2015** Memorial plaque unveiled on the eastern wall, symbolizing the direction towards Jerusalem, of the former Jewish synagogue in Salantai, Lithuania, now the Salantai Cultural Center. Inscription: "In memory of the Jews of Salantai, 17th century—20th century. This building was a synagogue which was turned into a ghetto in June and July, 1941."

**November 13, 2015** The Margarita Rimkevičaitė Technical School of Panevėžys held a conference celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the famous medical doctor Shakhnel Abraham Meir. Born in Panevėžys, Meir studied medicine at Moscow University and worked as a doctor in Panevėžys from 1914 onwards.

**November 13, 2015** New book "Jews on the Lithuanian Map" presented in Biržai, Lithuania. Besides academic articles and tables of statistics, the book also contains rare photographs, a list of victims shot at Pakamponys, a new map of the old Jewish cemetery and a list of people buried there.

**November 16, 2015** Julijos von Heinz's film "Hanna's Journey" (2013) screened at the Tolerance Center of the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum to mark International Tolerance Day.

**November 18, 2015** The Lithuanian embassy in Tokyo hosted event to honor Japanese consul in Lithuania Chiune Sugihara who issued "visas for life" 75 years ago in Kaunas to Jews fleeing the Holocaust. Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community chair Faina Kukliansky spoke. The Japanese audience was told about the Lithuanian Jewish Community, the cultural and intellectual legacy of Litvaks and the Holocaust in Lithuania. Chair Kukliansky visited a synagogue in Tokyo and met members of the Japanese Jewish community. Hopes were expressed the contacts made would serve to celebrate the memory of Sugihara in Lithuania and the world by including Sugihara's visas in the UNESCO World Heritage List, and that these contacts would serve to strengthen cultural and social ties between Jews in the diaspora.

**November 25, 2015 Conference** "History of the Holocaust: A Bridge from the Past into the Future" held at the Rožynas Pre-Gymnasium in Panevėžys. Principal Aida Adiklienė said the topic of the Holocaust is one of the most complicated things to teach, and not all schools wanted to deal with it.

**November 27, 2015** Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius addressed the 15<sup>th</sup> National Prayer Breakfast held at his ministry in Vilnius, saying: "All the great world religions teach us to seek peace, to love our neighbors, to care about human rights and respect human dignity. We cannot stand by in apathy when we see attempts by terrorists to justify their crimes through religious convictions and set people of different faiths against one another." The topic for the prayer breakfast was "Do Religions Cause Conflicts and War?"

**December 1, 2015** Twenty-second meeting in the "Destinies" series of meetings, seminars and lectures held at the Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community. One of Lithuania's most famous conductors, Anatolijus Šenderovas, spoke about his memories and music to the rapt attention of the community. The composer's talk was followed by a performance of his music by Tomas Petrikis on viola and the FortVio trio includ-

ing Indrė Baikštytė on piano, Ingrida Rupaitė-Petrikenė on violin and Povilas Jacunskas on cello.

**December 3-6, 2015** Israeli artist Tanya Chernov presented her work at the Craft Vilnius 2015 arts fair. She makes jewelry from gold, silver and natural materials, and said she takes inspiration from forms and designs in nature.

**December 6, 2015** Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community members gathered at the Choral Synagogue in Vilnius to celebrate Hanukkah. Rabbi Samuel Daniel Izakson greeted the audience which included Israeli ambassador to Lithuania, H.E. Amir Maimon, Honorary Consul of the State of Israel, Vladas Algirdas Bumelis, members of Lithuanian Riflemen's Union and other honorable guests. LJC chair F. Kukliansky and ambassador A. Maimon lit the first two Hanukkah candles.

**December 11, 2015** The Kaunas City Council renamed a public square to honor famous existential philosopher Emmanuel Levinas who lived in Kaunas and who was a professor at the Paris-Sorbonne University.

**December 11-13, 2015** Mini Limmud educational conference held in Vilnius. The three-day program was intended to provide attendees with a deeper knowledge of the history, religion, traditions and culture of the Jewish people and Jewish current events. Conference speakers included Israeli ambassador A. Maimon and there were presentations of books, including Saulius Šaltenis's "Diary of a Jewish Princess," Solomonas Abramovičius and Jakov Zilberg's book "Saved in Sacks of Potatoes." Attendees also had the chance to meet Kama Ginkas, attend a lecture by Giedrius Jokubauskis and learn about Daumantas Todesas's memorable project "Last Known Address and the Shtetls."

**December 15, 2015** The Association Jewish Cultural Route (tourism itinerary) officially established during consultations at the Lithuanian Economics Ministry to promote Jewish tourism in Lithuania with a coherent itinerary. Association founders included the regional administrations of the districts of Ukmergė (Vilkomir), Kėdainiai (Keydan) and Joniškis (Yanishok), the Lithuanian Museum Association and the Center for the Study of the Culture and History of the Jews of Eastern Europe.

**December 16, 2015** "Hello, Israel! The Path of Litvak Artists" art exhibit opened at the Tolerance Center of the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum. The show included 24 Litvak painters and 37 works of art selected from the collections of the museum, the Lewben Art Foundation, the Lithuanian Diaspora Art Collection, the collection of the Valiunas Ellex legal firm and other personal collections.

**December 17, 2015** Busts of St. Christopher, the traditional awards bestowed by the Vilnius municipality, were awarded at



the Old Town Hall in Vilnius. There were ten recipients this year of the award for contributions to art, education, environmental protection, health care and learning. Miša Jakobas, the principal of the Vilnius ORT Sholom Aleichem Gymnasium, received a statue for contributions to education.

**December 18, 2015** The Shofar Gallery of the Jewish Culture and Information Center in Vilnius opened an architectural exhibit of three dimensional models called "Extinct and Disappearing Heritage: The Architecture of Wooden Synagogues." The exhibit was the work of the architect Aurimas Širvis.

**December 24-30, 2015** The fifth A Mehaye winter children's camp was held. The theme this year was Litvaks and 78 children attended. Organizers invited the children to engage in various activities and games and the children performed skits during the evenings, learning how to work together and express themselves while learning about their Litvak legacy.

**January 14, 2016** The Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community hosted an exhibit of work by photographer Irena Giedraitienė called "Echoes of Memory" which included a presentation of an album of photographs she compiled. The album and exhibit featured images of concentration camp survivors and rescuers of Jews and a retrospective of the best in Giedraitienė's corpus of work.

**January 17, 2016** The Kaunas Jewish Community and the Sugihara Foundation held a concert in the Great Hall at Vytautas Magnus University to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Vlad Varchik, a rescuer of Jews, humanitarian, teacher and violinist.

**January 20-22, 2016** The Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum held a three-day seminar for teachers called "The Holocaust, Collaboration and Mass Murder in Lithuania." Forty-four teachers from throughout Lithuania attended.

**January 22, 2016** Presentation of Dr. Aelita Ambrulevičiūtė's book "The Buildings Spoke: Sketches of German Street in the 18th Century" at the Jewish Culture and Information Center in Vilnius. The book tells the story of the building at Vokiečių Street (German Street) No. 32 and the story of its owners and the businesses which operated there.

**January 25, 2016** The Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum exhibit "Anne Frank: The Story Today" was loaned for exhibit which opened this day at the Dukstyna primary school in Ukmergė thanks to Ukmergė Jewish Community chairman Artūras Taicas. "The History of the Jewish Community of Ukmergė" by Julius Zareckas, published in 2015, was also presented at the opening. Israeli ambassador to Lithuania A. Maimon attended the event along with members of the Ukmergė Jewish Community, students from the upper classes, school teachers and guests.

**January 26, 2016** Writer Rūta Vanagaitė's book "Our Own People" about the Holocaust in Lithuania in 1941 was presented to the press and public in Vilnius. The book contains archival material including documents, case-files, interrogations of Holocaust perpetrators, archival photographs, research by Lithuanian historians and testimony from eyewitnesses.

**January 27, 2016** International Holocaust Remembrance Day was marked in Lithuania and worldwide. There was a reading of the names of Holocaust victims, kaddish for the dead and recollections by survivors at the Choral Synagogue in Vilnius.

**January 29, 2016** New book prepared by the Panevėžys Jewish Community called "You Won't Kill" was presented in Panevėžys containing information collated from the newspaper "Išlaisvintas panevėžietis" ["The Liberated Panevėžys Resident"] published in the first years of World War II. The newspaper articles allow the reader to re-create the scene as the Jews of Panevėžys were being murdered en masse.

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## Report from the Multidisciplinary European Jewish Cemetery Protection Conference

The Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) Europe and the Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community organized an international conference called the Multidisciplinary European Jewish Cemetery Protection Conference held on October 25 through 28 in Vilnius. The purpose of the conference was to bring together scholars, heritage protection specialists, epigraphists, archaeologists and representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the areas of Jewish cemetery protection, documentation, renovation and research from around the world, to learn of projects being carried out in Europe, to discuss current issues and to share both expertise and new challenges.

Lithuanian Jewish Community chair Faina Kukliansky and Rothschild Foundation Europe executive director Sally Berkovic welcomed conference participants. Participants gave presentations on successfully completed and ongoing Jewish cemetery restoration, protection and documentation projects. The accent was on the need to protect Jewish spiritual and religious heritage and making it significant for today, including not just the memorial aspect of these kinds of locations, but also their artistic, literary, scientific and historical aspects. There were discussions of issues surrounding Jewish cemetery documentation, scientific research and renovation, challenges faced and methods employed with a focus on using new technology in research on Jewish cemeteries. This is vital in honoring Jewish tradition and law which forbid any earth-moving work in Jewish cemeteries and at mass murder sites. Non-invasive technology such as GPR, LIDAR and others allow for both observing religious law and discovering new information locked in old Jewish cemeteries.

A holistic approach was prescribed for Jewish cemetery research: comprehensive studies of cemetery territory boundaries to ensure proper fencing, due consideration of historical documents and iconography, dating of sites and objects, compilations of lists of those buried, comparison with surviving integral burials to determine instances of disappearance and destruction of graves, and etc. This sort of comprehensive, multidisciplinary study of Jewish cemeteries is not merely a matter of importance for researchers and heritage protection specialists, but also serves the needs of community and family historians and genealogists.

Cultural heritage protection personnel and specialists represented Lithuania at the conference. Lithuanian policy on the protection of Jewish cemeteries

and mass murder sites and a project to document Lithuanian Jewish cemeteries were presented at the conference. Deputy Minister of culture Dr. Romas Jarockis presented an overview of Lithuanian policy on protecting old Jewish cemeteries, work accomplished in that field and plans for the future. One such plan is to mark every Jewish burial site. There are also plans for road signs and commemorative boards, which is a praiseworthy decision made by the country when compared to the prevailing situation in other countries of Europe. LJC chair Faina Kukliansky said the Lithuanian state is showing great favor for protection of the Jewish heritage and added she was impressed by the work done so far. Participants also had the opportunity to visit Jewish cemeteries in Vilnius, Pabradė, Švenčionėliai and Švenčionys.

Issues discussed also included those in connection with the protection and upkeep of European Jewish cemeteries and the dissemination of information about them, with stress on multidisciplinary research and cooperation with local Jewish communities. Famous British archaeologist and professor at Jagiellonian University in Cracow Jona-

than Webber gave a presentation about the restoration of the Jewish cemetery in Brzostek, a small Polish town, which succeeded in engaging local residents and community authorities, so that the Jewish cemetery's restoration became a major event in the community of the Catholic town which will now be responsible for future upkeep.

At the close of the conference participants offered suggestions and expressed their wishes, and emphasized the importance of educating and training specialists in the field and the need for creating a united European Jewish cemetery platform. There was also emphasis on the importance of making Jewish heritage topical and educating the public to appreciate its value. Issues regarding the worth of Jewish cemeteries and their adaptation for cultural tourism and education were discussed, as were directions in restoration, renovation and maintenance and the need for drafting a set of unified standards. It is hoped the conference will lead to better work in Lithuania and other European countries in protecting Jewish cemeteries, creating maintenance policies and training experts in the field.

*Prepared by Rūta Anulytė*



The Old Jewish Cemetery in Užupis, 1963-1965. Photo: R. Dichavičius.

***The Lithuanian Jewish Community reacted to a report from the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of the Residents of Lithuania dealing with the Holocaust-era activities of Jonas Noreika, also known as General Vėtra. Here's what the chair of the Lithuanian Jewish Community said in her response to Teresė Birutė Burauskaitė, director of Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of the Residents of Lithuania:***

November 6, 2015

**To: Teresa Birutė Burauskaitė, director  
Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of the Residents of Lithuania  
Didžioji Street no. 17/1, LT-01128 Vilnius**

cc: Office of the General Prosecutor of the Republic of Lithuania  
Rinktinės street no. 5A, LT-01515, Vilnius  
Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania  
Government of the Republic of Lithuania  
Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania

**RE: ACTIVITY OF CAPTAIN JONAS NOREIKA, OFFICER OF THE LITHUANIAN  
MILITARY, DURING WORLD WAR II**

Excerpts of a report by the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of the Residents of Lithuania (hereafter the CSGRRL) on the activity of captain Jonas Noreika, an officer of the Lithuanian Military, during World War II, have appeared in the media. The Lithuanian Jewish Community has repeatedly approached Lithuanian law enforcement institutions regarding the actions of this person but only received formulaic responses. We last attempted to do so following the publication by the journalist Rimvydas Valatka and a statement issued by a group of intellectuals. The prosecutor declined to open a pre-trial investigation of the deceased person (paragraph 7, article 3 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania).

The report by the CSGRRL states: "In summary it can be stated that during the period of German occupation Jonas Noreika did not participate in operations to exterminate Jews en masse in the districts of Telšiai and Šiauliai. Even so, the Nazi occupational regime succeeded in involving him as well as other officials of the Lithuanian civilian administration in ordering affairs connected with the isolation of Jews."

It appears to us, the Lithuanian Jewish Community, that this assessment of the actions of Jonas Noreika is very contradictory. From the linguistic perspective, one sentence contradicts the other, and from the legal perspective, imprisoning Jews in ghettos, or any other kind of "isolation," or "ordering of affairs connected with the isolation of the Jews," is nothing other than the extermination of Jews. Perhaps the CSGRRL might like to explain more fully what happened to those isolated Jews, where have they and their belongings gone? And, more generally, where did the Lithuanian Jewish Community isolated during World War II with all the homes where they lived and their property and so on disappear to? Is this not called a crime against humanity, genocide, a crime without statute of limitations? Do people deserve to be honored and have schools named after them in Lithuania for these kinds of "orderings of affairs?" And will the children studying at those schools also call imprisonment in ghettos "affairs connected with the isolation of Jews" and believe that people show receive awards as heroes for such deeds?

It also remains unclear to us why exactly Jonas Noreika was arrested and sent to Stutthof concentration camp, which orders from the German civilian administration did he fail to carry out?

We also perceive a contradiction in that some of the claims are based on the memories of separate individuals while others are based on documents.

In the final event, even if we admit that until now Jonas Noreika has not been convicted of a crime, is he a hero? The question is rhetorical of course. In these sorts of circumstances it is impossible to talk about the existence of Holocaust education. All we have now is "the ordering of affairs connected with the isolation of the Jews."

*Faina Kukliansky,  
chair of the Lithuanian Jewish (Litvak) Community*



## QUESTION FOR THE LJC

This time we ask LJC members and staff what they like to do in their free time, and whether they have any special hobby.



**Faina Kukliansky**, chair, LJC

I used to like a lot of things. Unfortunately, my free time is very limited now. I like to spend time with my grandchildren, to listen to music, read books, do athletics. I also like to cook, and to shop at the market.



**Simas Levinas**, director, LJC Social Center; chairman, Vilnius Jewish Religious Community

I have little free time. And I realize that's very sad and not good. Time passes much too quickly, but free time is the time when you can accomplish things, see things that are interesting and important. I really love Vilnius. Its beauty, coziness, history, its people help me recharge my energy, allow me to disengage from different problems which never seem so important after taking a break from them. Walking around Vilnius to my favorite places, unexpected meetings with ac-

quaintances and friends, that's my hobby, my free time, and sometimes my brief moments of happiness. I am completely certain Vilnius is my town.



**Maša Grodnikienė**, deputy chair, LJC

Work at the community is my main hobby and has been for more than twenty years now! It occupies my thoughts as well as my time. I also read a lot of memoirs and books about history. I have a special interest in the history of the Jews of Lithuania and their contributions in different fields, in the global context. I go to classical music concerts.



**Miša Jakobas**, principal, Vilnius ORT Sholom Aleichem Gymnasium

My wife and I adore good classic music, opera and ballet, and I also like woodwind music. We also collect statuettes from the Israeli company AMY.

We invite you to pose a question to LJC members, administration and staff. Send your query to Bagel Shop, Pylimo street No. 4, LT-01117 Vilnius or by email to [zivile.ju@lzb.lt](mailto:zivile.ju@lzb.lt).

## ILJA BEREZNICKAS: I Dream Much, I Work Even More, It Never Happens I Get a Chance to Stop

I am sitting in a room among endless pens and pencils, works of art, signs, diplomas, photographs and medals. A plush fox is watching me with interest from the corner of the room. Everywhere – on the shelves, under the table, under the chair, on the sofa – there are colorful moments from the life of Ilja Bereznickas. Up there is what seems to be a trophy section (Bereznickas is a professional rugby player and once represented Lithuania on the national team), a bit lower a photograph of him with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė (he was awarded the distinction "For Merit to Lithuania").



Ilja Bereznickas. Photo from personal collection.

From the edges of shelves, from pictures and books and magazine covers some sort of creatures are staring back at me, creatures I seem to know, or dimly remember having seen or imagined in childhood. I look around and see a French comic book about a rabbi and his cat, while Ilja Bereznickas is loudly discussing the birth of a new animation scene in the other room.

**Your illustrations for the Bashevis story are being published in the “Bagel Shop” magazine for the first time. For what publication were these illustrations created, and when and where were they published?**

I simply adore Bashevis, his stories for adults are fantastic. Here in Lithuania perhaps no one knows about this author's work, and even less about his stories for children. In 2007, a Lithuanian bank financed publication of a children's magazine called "Little Elephant Sampopas's Magazine". I was the artist of the magazine. My birthday happened then, so they wrote an article about me, and I suggested translating and illustrating the story "Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser." This is likely the first and the only Lithuanian version of this Bashevis tale. I haven't seen any others. I would like to illustrate a children's magazine now as well. Unfortunately, it's still hard to find a source of financing.

**You have been working for many years. What proportion of your art work is inspired by fairy tales? Do you often illustrate fairy tales for books, for such static and non-animated projects?**

How can such a thing be measured? You can't weigh it in kilograms. I illustrate very much, I do a lot of animation. It's simpler to illustrate, you draw it and it's done, but a lot of time is involved in making a film. I began by doing caricatures. Even now they comprise the larger part of my creative activity. It's not so simple to publish books, it's difficult

to find money for that. I learned production in Moscow under very famous Russian animators, one of them was Yuriy Norshtayn, and everyone knows his cartoon "Hedgehog in the Fog." So tales appeared back during my student years. Traditionally cartoons have been for children primarily. Now everything has changed, but the notion that there must be fairy tales remains with me. Although I am involved in many other sorts of projects as well. My book "The Art of Animation," for example, came out in 2014, and I work a lot with the Lithuanian Ministry for National Defense, in December we presented the booklet I illustrated called "What We Need to Know about Being Prepared for Emergencies Including During Time of War: Serious Advice Presented in a Joyful Way." Characters from the fairy tale I created called "Christmas Miracle Workers" were shown in 3-D projection outside in Klaipėda last Christmas.

**How do you choose projects? What does a fairy tale have to be for you to want to illustrate it or make a cartoon based on it? Do you have a favorite?**

It's not like that, I don't select projects specially. To tell the truth, I can't remember ever having turned something down. Each animated film or illustration job is interesting. And in the end I usually get to draw what I want. If they come to me, they already know my method and style. It's difficult to say whether I have a favorite story. Perhaps I am too old for that. Take my grandson, he's five. He's a

modern kid, he likes to watch the Celtic legends "Songs of the Sea" [an animated film by Ilja Bereznickas's son Danas]. But he also likes "Baubas." Baubas has already lost its novelty for me, I have done newer cartoons, but not one of them has been such a hit. I guess "Baubas" caused a sort of revolution, it was a new breeze. I have a really large collection of children's books at in the house. My grandson reads all sorts of books, including the tales I wrote about the little elephant Albert. I couldn't single out any Jewish tales.

**We would like to congratulate again on the Golden Gunnar Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to the Nordic-Baltic animation industry you won. What is the future of Lithuanian animation in your opinion?**

I have to admit the award was totally unexpected. My heart even sank when they announced my name. But only for a moment. I dream much, I work even more, and it never happens that I get a chance to stop. This award was no exception. Lithuania has talented young animators [Bereznickas's students are frequent recipients of awards, for example, Reda Bartkutė and Skirmanta Jakaitė received Silver Crane awards]. It happens that my the students that I teach at the Vilnius Art Academy and I do joint projects, but mostly I work with my son. Danas lives with his family in Belgium and works for Cartoon Saloon, an international animation and television studio. He's more of a technician, I'm more of an idea generator.

*Interviewed by Radvilė Rimgailė-Voicik*





Isaac Bashevis Singer was a Jewish American writer born in Poland in 1902. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1978 for his works in Yiddish. In the last issue of the Bagel Shop magazine we wrote about his wonderful translation of T. Mann's "Magic Mountain," and this issue we invite you to enjoy the tale of Bashevis, which Ilja Bereznickas translated to Lithuanian and illustrated.

## SHREWD TODIE AND LYZER THE MISER

by Isaac Bashevis Singer

In a village somewhere in Ukraine there lived a poor man called Todie. Todie had a wife, Sheindel, and seven children, but he could never earn enough to feed them properly. He tried many trades, failing in all of them. It was said of Todie that if he decided to deal in candles the sun would never set. He was nicknamed Shrewd Todie because whenever he managed to make some money, it was always by trickery.



This winter was an especially cold one. The snowfall was heavy and Todie had no money to buy wood for the stove. His seven children stayed in bed all day to keep warm. When the frost burns outside, hunger is stronger than ever, but Sheindel's larder was empty. She reproached Todie bitterly, wailing, "If you can't feed your wife and children, I will go to the rabbi and get a divorce."

"And what will you do with it, eat it?" Todie retorted.

In the same village there lived a rich man called Lyzer. Because of his stinginess he was known as Lyzer the miser. He permitted his wife to bake bread only once in four weeks because he had discovered that fresh bread is eaten up more quickly than stale.

Todie had more than once gone to Lyzer for a loan of a few gulden, but Lyzer had always replied, "I sleep better when the money lies in my strongbox rather than in your pocket."

Lyzer had a goat, but he never fed her. The goat had learned to visit the houses of the neighbors, who pitied her and gave her potato peelings. Sometimes, when there were not enough peelings, she would gnaw on the old straw of the thatched roofs. She also had a liking for tree bark. Nevertheless, each year the

goat gave birth to a kid. Lyzer milked her but, miser that he was, did not drink the milk himself. Instead, he sold it to others.

Todie decided that he would take revenge on Lyzer and at the same time make some much-needed money for himself.

One day, as Lyzer was sitting on a box eating borscht and dry bread (he used his chairs only on holidays so that the upholstery would not wear out), the door opened and Todie came in.

"Reb Lyzer," he said, "I would like to ask you a favor. My oldest daughter, Basha, is already fifteen and she's about to become engaged. A young man is coming from Janev to look her over. My cutlery is tin, and my wife is ashamed to ask the young man to eat soup with a tin spoon. Would you lend me one of your silver spoons? I give you my holy word that I will return it to you tomorrow."

Lyzer knew that Todie would not dare break a holy oath and he lent him the spoon.

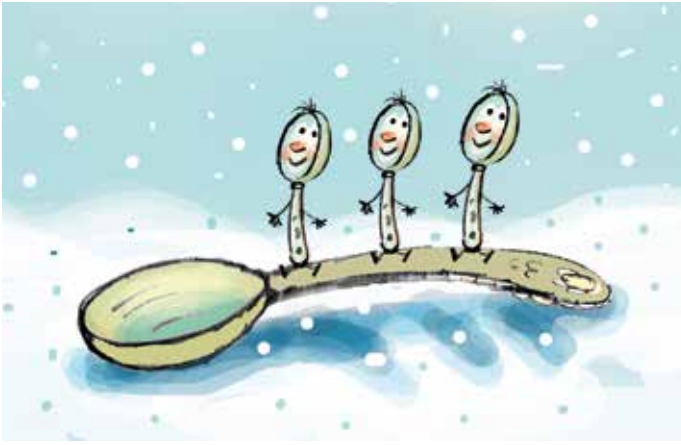
No young man came to see Basha that evening. As usual, the girl walked around barefoot and in rags, and the silver spoon lay hidden under Todie's shirt. In the early years of his marriage Todie had possessed a set of silver tableware himself. He had, however, long since sold it all, with the exception of three silver teaspoons that were used only on Passover.

The following day, as Lyzer, his feet bare (in order to save his shoes), sat on his box eating borscht and dry bread, Todie returned.

"Here is the spoon I borrowed yesterday," he said, placing it on the table together with one of his own teaspoons.

"What is the teaspoon for?" Lyzer asked.





And Todie said, "Your tablespoon gave birth to a teaspoon. It is her child. Since I am an honest man, I'm returning both mother and child to you."

Lyzer looked at Todie in astonishment. He had never heard of a silver spoon giving birth to another. Nevertheless, his greed overcame his doubt and he happily accepted both spoons. Such an unexpected piece of good fortune! He was overjoyed that he had loaned Todie the spoon.

A few days later, as Lyzer (without his coat, to save it) was again sitting on his box eating borscht with dry bread, the door opened and Todie appeared.

"The young man from Janev did not please Basha, because he had donkey ears, but this evening another young man is coming to look her over. Sheindel is cooking soup for him, but she's ashamed to serve him with a tin spoon. Would you lend me ..."

Even before Todie could finish the sentence, Lyzer interrupted. "Yon want to borrow a silver spoon? Take it with pleasure."

The following day Todie once more returned the spoon and with it one of his own silver teaspoons. He again explained that during the night the large spoon had given birth to a small one and in all good conscience he was bringing back the mother and the newborn baby. As for the young man who had come to look Basha over, she hadn't liked him either, because his nose was so long that it reached to his chin. Needless to say that Lyzer the miser was overjoyed.

Exactly the same thing happened a third time. Todie related that this time his daughter had rejected her suitor because he stammered. He also reported that Lyzer's silver spoon had again given birth to a baby spoon.

"Does it ever happen that a spoon has twins?" Lyzer inquired.

Todie thought it over for a moment. "Why not? I've even heard of a case where a spoon had triplets."

Almost a week passed by and Todie did not go to see Lyzer. But on Friday morning, as Lyzer (in his underwear, to save his pants) sat on his box eating borscht and dry bread, Todie came in and said, "Good day to you, Reb Lyzer."

"A good morning and many more to you," Lyzer replied in his friendliest manner. "What good fortune brings you here? Did you perhaps come to borrow a silver spoon? If so, help yourself."

"Today I have a very special favor to ask. This evening a young man from the big city of Lublin is coming to look Basha over. He is the son of a rich man, and I'm told he is clever and handsome as well. Not only do I need a silver spoon, but since he will remain with us over the Sabbath, I need a pair of silver candlesticks, because mine are brass and my wife is ashamed to place them on the Sabbath table. Would you lend me your candlesticks? Immediately after the Sabbath, I will return them to you."

Silver candlesticks are of great value and Lyzer the miser hesitated, but only for a moment.

Remembering his good fortune with the spoons, he said, "I have eight silver candlesticks in my house. Take them all. I know you will return them to me just as you say. And if it should happen that any of them give birth, I have no doubt that you will be as honest as you have been in the past."

"Certainly," Todie said. "Let's hope for the best."

The silver spoon, Todie hid beneath his shirt as usual. But taking the candlesticks, he went directly to a merchant, sold them for a considerable sum, and brought the money to Sheindel. When Sheindel saw so much money, she demanded to know where he had gotten such a treasure.

"When I went out, a cow flew over our roof and dropped a dozen silver eggs," Todie replied. "I sold them and here is the money."

"I have never heard of a cow flying over a roof and laying silver eggs," Sheindel said doubtfully.

"There is always a first time," Todie answered. "If you don't want the money, give it back to me."

"There'll be no talk about giving it back," Sheindel said. She knew that her husband was full of cunning and tricks—but when the children are hungry and the larder is empty, it is better not to ask too many questions. Sheindel went to the marketplace and bought meat, fish, white flour, and even some nuts and raisins for sweet pie. And since a lot of money still remained, she bought shoes and clothes for the children.

It was a very great Sabbath in Todie's house. The boys sang and the girls danced. When the children asked their father where he had gotten the money, he replied, "It is forbidden to mention money during the Sabbath."

Sunday, as Lyzer (barefoot and almost naked, to save his clothes) sat on his box finishing up a dry crust of bread with borscht, Todie arrived and, handing him his silver spoon, said, "It's too bad. This time your spoon did not give birth to a baby."

"What about the candlesticks?" Lyzer inquired anxiously.

Todie sighed deeply. "The candlesticks died."

Lyzer got up from his box so hastily that he overturned his plate of borscht.

"You fool! How can candlesticks die?" he screamed.

"If spoons can give birth, candlesticks can die."

Lyzer raised a great hue and cry and had Todie called before the rabbi. When the rabbi heard both sides of the story, he burst out laughing. "It serves you right," he said to Lyzer. "If you hadn't chosen to believe that spoons give birth, now you would not be forced to believe that your candlesticks died."

"But it's all nonsense," Lyzer objected.

"Did you not expect the candlesticks to give birth to other candlesticks?" the rabbi said admonishingly. "If you accept nonsense when it brings you profit, you must also accept nonsense when it brings you loss." And he dismissed the case.

The following day, when Lyzer the miser's wife brought him his borscht and dry bread, Lyzer said to her, "I will eat only the bread. Borscht is too expensive a food, even without sour cream."

The story of the silver spoons that gave birth and the candlesticks that died spread quickly through the town. All the people enjoyed Todie's victory and Lyzer the miser's defeat. The shoemaker's and tailor's apprentices, as was their custom whenever there was an important happening, made up a song about it:

*Lyzer, put your grief aside.  
What if your candlesticks have died?  
You're the richest man on earth  
with silver spoons that can give birth  
and silver eggs as living proof  
of flying cows above your roof.  
Don't sit there eating crusts of bread—  
To silver grandsons look ahead.*

However, time passed and Lyzer's silver spoons never gave birth again.



Title and inside pages of Tractate Purim. Book conserved at the Lithuanian National Martynas Mažvydas Library. Photos: Dr. L. Lempertienė

## BOOK INFORMATION

**Author** קלונימוס בן קלונימוס

Kalonymus ben Kalonymus

**Title** מסכת פורים מן תלמוד שכורים

גם הגדה לליל שכורים וגם שליחות לפורים

Tractate Purim from the Drunks' Talmud together with the drunks' evening questions and prayers for Purim forgiveness

**Publication location** ווארשא, דפוס נ. שריפטגיסער

N. Shriftgiser Press, Warsaw

**Year** 1885

Purim is the only holiday on the traditional Jewish calendar allowing costume-play, entertaining plays (Purim-shpiln), large consumption of alcohol and delirious fun. As with the Jewish people's miraculous salvation from destruction in ancient history, so on this day everything is turned on its head, and the development of the genre of parody in Jewish literature is connected with medieval parodies of the Talmud and other respected classical texts for the Purim holiday. One of the better known such is the "Tractate Purim from the Drunks' Talmud," written around 1320 by the scholar and writer Kalonymus ben Kalonymus in France and Italy. The text was initially published by Pesaro in 1527 and republished countless times. Other parodies followed the path it blazed, including the "Book of the Bottle," "Book of Contradictions," "Purim Testament" and others. As with the Talmud, the Tractate Purim is written in Hebrew and Aramaic in the style of Talmudic argument with commentary, and the structure of the publication and fonts conform to standard publications of the Talmud. Here is a passage parodying the questions asked on the evening of Passover: "How does this day differ from all others? Every day we work, and at breaks we eat, but this day we only eat and drink. Every day we drink either water or wine, but this day we only drink wine... Every day we eat to be full, and drink to slake our thirst, but this day we eat and drink too much..."

Of course it wouldn't do to interpret these parodies as documentation of the customs of the Jewish people, and as with all humorous literature it's full of exaggeration, because its purpose is to make the already happy holiday of Purim even more fun.

*Prepared by Dr. Lara Lempertienė  
Lithuanian National Martynas Mažvydas Library*



# BAGEL SHOP



א קלייט פון בייגל  
beigelių krautuvėlė

## WORKING HOURS

I-IV 11:00 - 20:00

V 11:00 - 17:00

VI SHABBAT/CLOSED

VII 12:00 - 17:00



## LJC SOCIAL CENTER STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Name, Surname	Title	Telephone
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Ninelė Skudovičiūtė	Information and general questions about documents	8 679 54 631
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Erma Jakobienė	Food program, heating bill compensation	(8 5) 261 1251
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Sandra Alpertaitė-Lokutijevska	Curator, Patronage services department	(8 5) 261 7244
Ugnė Gėgžnaitė	Curator, Patronage services department	(8 5) 261 7244
Sulamita Lev	Medical equipment, laundry and dry cleaning services	(8 5) 261 1736
Volunteer doctors	Medical consultations from 12 noon to 3:00 P.M.	(8 5) 261 4582
Geršonas Taicas	Lecture series	8 689 83 293

## LJC CLUB COORDINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of club	Coordinator	Telephone	E-mail
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Dubi Club	Margarita Koževatova	8 618 00 577	margarita.kozevatova@gmail.com
Ilan Club	Pavel Guliakov	8 674 28 613	p.guliakov@gmail.com
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Young Families Club	Julija Lipšic	8 659 52 604	julija.lipsic@gmail.com
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Abi men zet zich Club	Žana Skudovičienė	8 678 81 514	zanas@sc.lzb.lt
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## WRITE US!

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## MAZEL TOV

Warmest wishes and greetings to members of the community who recently celebrated birthdays. They included:

Šapsajus Cholemas – November 5  
Aleksandr Ševcov – November 7  
Abramas Starobinas – November 24  
Petras Zakroiskis – December 1  
Sara Ušpicienė – December 25  
Ana Rolnik – December 26  
Jocha Fraizinger – December 29  
Ana Nekrasova – January 12  
Vladimir Shevcov – January 16

## USEFUL INFORMATION

Schedule of services at the Choral Synagogue in Vilnius, Pylimo st. no. 39:

- ▶ workdays from 8:30 A.M. to 9:30 A.M.
- ▶ Saturday from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.
- ▶ Sunday from 9:00 A.M. to 11:30 P.M.

Guided tours of the synagogue are available daily from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. except on Saturdays

Telephone: (8 5) 261 25 23

Vilnius Jewish Cemetery (Sudervės way No. 28, Vilnius) open:

- ▶ workdays and Sunday from 9:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.
- ▶ closed on Saturday

Telephone: (8 5) 250 54 68

## CONDOLENCES

*Our condolences to the loved ones of members of the community who have passed away. They will remain in our hearts and memories:*

Abramas Lešč (1932 04 18 - 2015 11 12)  
Cilė Akura (1936 12 15 - 2015 11 15)  
Boris Miškin (1929 11 14 - 2015 11 06)  
Šmuelis Šragė (1925 05 03 - 2015 11 27)  
Vladimir Pisarskij (1933 11 23 - 2015 11 30)  
Rima Vaisman (1925 02 09 - 2015 12 01)  
Kęstutis Bytautas (1958 07 11 - 2015 11 27)  
Leonid Feldman (1933 07 29 - 2015 12 20)  
Jevgenija Korotkina (1927 05 13 - 2015 12 18)  
Gita Geseleva (1926 12 10 - 2015 12 24)  
Stanislav Šapiro (1934 01 11 - 2016 01 03)

## Mystery Photograph contest

### Winners of the Mystery Photograph Contest

A whopping five Bagel Shop readers recognized the back of the Choral Synagogue in Vilnius in the Mystery Photograph contest of the last issue! The winners were: Sofija Katėvūšnik, Julija Blažienė, Rūta Lukoševičiūtė, Vladimir Vachman and Antanas Grincevičius.

Congratulations to the winners whom we already sent prizes: books donated by the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum.

Well done!