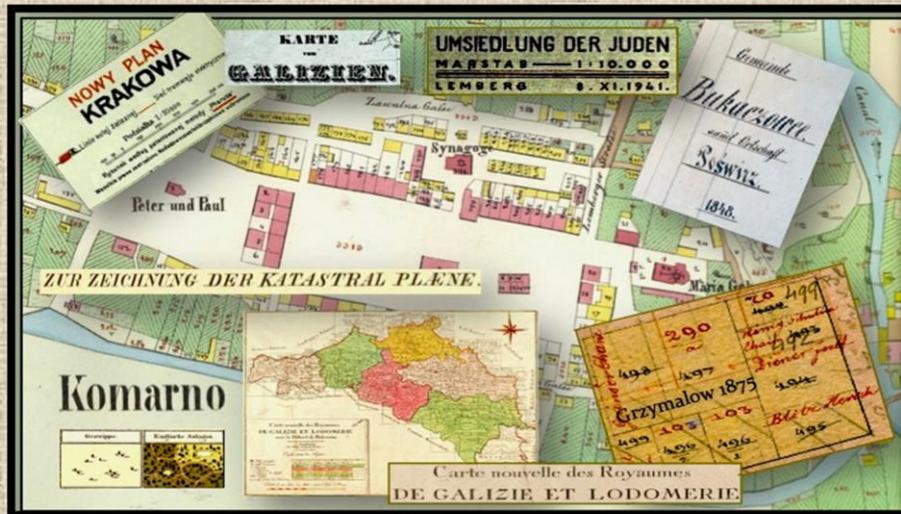


THE GALITZIANER

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Gesher Galicia

Gesher Galicia is a non-profit organization that promotes and conducts Jewish genealogical and historical research on Galicia, a province of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, which is today part of south-eastern Poland and western Ukraine.

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Submissions Policy

The *Galitzianer* accepts material broadly linked to Galicia, from 1772 to 1918, and may also include topics pertaining to earlier or later periods. The journal contains family stories, information about unique records, tutorials regarding genealogy research, articles on the history and geography of Galicia, book reviews, and more. The editorial committee reserves the right to revise or reject a submission or to defer its publication until a later date. For more detailed information about our submissions policy and author instructions, please consult the Gesher Galicia website at www.geshergalicia.org/the-galitzianer/#submissions.

From the Editor's Desk

This issue comes with much exciting news to share with our readers, starting with a leadership change at Gesher Galicia. After four years of extraordinary service, Tony Kahane has stepped down as chair of our organization. Much was accomplished during Tony's tenure, from increased membership to an expanded inventory of records to new partnerships with archives, museums, and academic institutions in Ukraine and Poland. We are grateful to Tony for his leadership and thankful that he will remain on the board and continue as research coordinator.

Tony's successor is Gesher Galicia member Steven S. Turner. In this issue, Steven introduces himself to our readers, shares his passion for Galicia, and outlines his goals for the future of the organization. He also discusses Gesher Galicia's impressive showing at the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) conference.

In other news, Gesher Galicia signed an agreement this summer to partner with Gratz College, the oldest independent and pluralistic college for Jewish studies in North America. Under the agreement, Gesher Galicia will provide Gratz with access to our archival expertise and database of Jewish records, while Gratz will make its collections available to us, along with the knowledge of its faculty. We may also partner in public education programs and other projects on Galician history, genealogy, literature, and more. In addition, Gratz will extend a 25% reduction in enrollment fees for online classes to active members of Gesher Galicia.

Finally, we close out this eventful summer with this very full issue of the *Galitzianer*. In addition to introducing Steven Turner to our readers, this issue includes a historical overview of the emergence of Austrian Galicia, as well as an examination of the political rights of Galician Jews. There's a profile of the life and work of Galician Jewish architect Józef Awin, and a riveting story of two brothers from Dynów and their very different experiences during World War II. We also provide information on Jewish records from Polish and Ukrainian archives and on new regional maps in the Gesher Galicia Map Room.

We hope you enjoy this issue and that you will encourage family and friends to take advantage of this and other benefits of membership by joining Gesher Galicia (*see* our special membership offer at www.geshergalicia.org/membership/). Your feedback on the journal and your suggestions for future issues are always welcome at submissions@geshergalicia.org.

Jodi G. Benjamin

Interview with Steven S. Turner

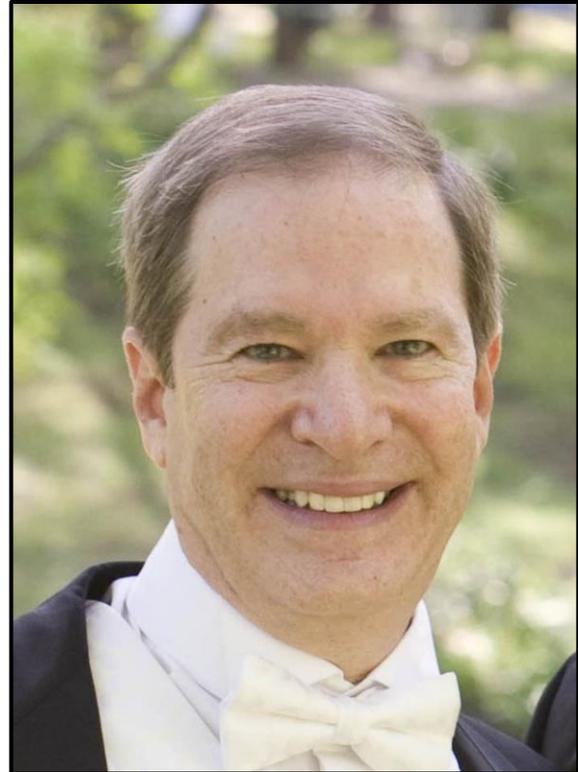
Gesher Galicia's New President

THIS SUMMER, the Board of Directors of Gesher Galicia selected a new president, Steven S. Turner. The Galitzianer caught up with our new president in early August for an interview, as a way of introducing him to our members. The edited text of that interview appears below.

The Galitzianer (G): Congratulations, Steve, on becoming the new president of Gesher Galicia. It's been a busy summer for you. In addition to assuming your new role, you just returned from the annual conference of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies [IAJGS] in Cleveland. How did everything go at the conference?

Steven: Things went very well. I have been attending these conferences for a few years now, and while there, I often get a sense of the vital and integral role that Gesher Galicia plays within the Jewish genealogical community.

At this year's conference, our programs, such as the one on Galician basics, taught by Shelley Polero and Renée Steinig, were quite well received. In addition, the Gesher Galicia Special Interest Group [SIG] meeting attracted a large crowd, with about 100 to 150 people in attendance, and the Gesher Galicia luncheon was completely sold out. During the conference, I also participated in productive meetings with representatives from other organizations, where we discussed the possibility of partnering on different projects. And, many people at the conference kindly wished me well on my new role as president.



Dr. Steven S. Turner

G: Before we dive into your interest in Galicia, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Steven: I grew up in New York City and live in Long Island, New York, with my wife, Devorah. I am a dentist with a practice in general dentistry and facial cosmetics. I also teach for the American Academy of Facial Esthetics. I have a son, a daughter, a stepdaughter, and four grandchildren—all girls. When I'm not working or busy with Gesher Galicia matters, I can often be found spending time with one or more of my granddaughters: Samantha, Mallory, Jillian, and Sari.

Roots in Galicia

G: What are your family connections to Galicia?

Steven: I have Galitzianers on both sides of my family: my father and his parents were from Galicia, as was my maternal grandmother. As a child, I developed a deep connection to Galician Jewish culture by attending the synagogue founded by



Devorah and Steven Turner with granddaughters Malory, Samantha, Sari, and Jillian

my mother's family in Brooklyn, New York. From the accented Hebrew to the prayers and melodies, from the Yiddish spoken to the food served, the Berriman Street Shul was run according to Galitzianer tradition. My sister and I loved going there because of its authenticity. The atmosphere was so joyful and warm that I became very attached to that old Galitzianer world. After my grandfather passed away, my grandmother moved, and the synagogue closed, I could never quite recapture that same feeling.

G: Is that how you became interested in researching your family's genealogical history?

Steven: Actually, no. Most of my research has focused on my father's side of the family because I didn't know much about that side. I knew my mother's family—they had arrived in the US in the early 1900s. In fact, I later learned that had I tried to focus my research on my mother's family, I would have struggled because of the dearth of records left in my grandmother's town of Sędziszów [now Sędziszów Małopolski, Poland], which was in western Galicia, near Kraków.

My research into my father's family started somewhat on a lark. My father, who was born in Nadwórna [now Nadvirna, Ukraine], had claimed that his original surname had never been changed—it was always Turner. About sixteen or seventeen years ago, the one cousin that I had left

on my father's side challenged this claim, so I decided to research it. I searched the name Turner and the town of Rohatyn, where my paternal grandfather was born. What ultimately popped up was the birth record for Solomon Herzl Turner—my grandfather—born in Rohatyn in 1877.

This experience piqued my interest; I wanted to learn more. I started working on my family tree. I also joined the Rohatyn Shtetl Research Group, where over time, I became an active member. However, during those early days, I could have never imagined that years later, in 2013, I would establish the Nadwórna Shtetl Research Group [see the March 2016 issue of the *Galitzianer*].



Morris Turner (1910–1996), his mother, Zissel Turner (1878–1943), and his sister Hellie Turner Kolb (1901–1942); photo from Vienna, August 1939, just before Morris and Zissel left for the US. Hellie and her husband and son were deported and murdered in 1942.

G: What is your father's story?

Steven: My father, Morris Turner, was a refugee from two world wars. When my grandfather was

in the Austrian army during World War I, my grandmother and her five children fled Nadwórna, which was close to the front. They became refugees, eventually settling in Vienna, where my father grew up. However, after the Anschluss in 1938, when Hitler annexed Austria, the conditions for Jews in Vienna became intolerable. My father, who was working as a furrier at the time, was forced to sign his business over to the Nazis. Although he was able to secure a visa to England, he chose not to go because he couldn't obtain a visa for his mother. Finally, my father and grandmother both managed to get visas to the US, and at the end of August 1939, they left on one of the last boats out of Europe before the start of the war.

Jewish Genealogical Organizations

G: How did you ultimately become involved in Gesher Galicia?

Steven: As my interest in my father's family history grew, I sought to learn more about Rohatyn, Nadwórna, and Galicia as a whole. Given the mission of Gesher Galicia, membership in this organization was a logical next step for me, once I learned about it from my friends Alex Feller and Marla Osborn from the Rohatyn Shtetl Research Group. I immediately joined, attended Gesher Galicia events—including a lecture by Andrew Zalewski in New York City—and assisted at the Gesher Galicia table at the IAJGS conferences. In 2017, I was invited to join the board.

G: What other Jewish genealogical organizations do you belong to?

Steven: As I mentioned earlier, I belong to the Rohatyn Shtetl Research Group, and I started the Nadwórna Shtetl Research Group, which now has over a hundred members. I also belong to the Sędziszów Małopolski Research Group, which focuses on my maternal grandmother's hometown. Finally, I'm a member of the Jewish Genealogical Societies of both Long Island and New York.

In addition to belonging to these organizations, I am a project administrator for several Jewish DNA projects on FamilyTreeDNA. I have also written about my early foray into genealogy as a blogger for the *Times of Israel* and for various genealogical publications.

G: How do you think Gesher Galicia is unique among the many other Jewish genealogical organizations that exist?

Steven: Many organizations are under the umbrella of JewishGen or the IAJGS; Gesher Galicia is independent. While we may partner with other groups on projects and initiatives, we have our own website, research journal, databases, and public education programs. Also, our work is not limited to genealogical research. We focus on the history and Jewish heritage of Galicia, and, thanks to our digital maps manager, Jay Osborn, we have an extensive and growing collection of Galician maps.

Most importantly, we are a group exclusively dedicated to all things Galicia. We are volunteers banded together doing our best to research and promote Galician culture and history. Our mission is critical because we focus on a land that no longer exists, other than in our hearts and souls, and we need to do whatever we can to retain its culture.

This brings me to something I said during the Gesher Galicia SIG meeting at the conference this summer. I talked about the book *East West Street* by Philippe Sands. One person who figured prominently in this book was Hans Frank, Hitler's personal lawyer and the governor-general of occupied Poland. Frank is quoted in the book as describing Galicia as the "primeval source of the Jewish world." In other words, from the Gentile perspective, Galicia was the source of Judaism and Jewish culture. The Nazis were particularly brutal to the Jews living in the former province of Galicia because they were intent on attacking Judaism at its core. Therefore, at Gesher Galicia, we have a

special responsibility to make sure that Galician Jewish culture continues to be remembered and rediscovered.

Goals for Gesher Galicia

G: Given that responsibility, as president, what goals do you have for Gesher Galicia?

Steven: I want to continue our strong presence in Galician research and maps. And with our past president, Tony Kahane, as research coordinator, and Jay Osborn as digital maps manager, I have no doubt that will happen. There are also a few areas where I hope to move the organization further: outreach to membership, involvement with DNA research, and partnerships to preserve Galician Jewish heritage.

G: Can you elaborate on these objectives?

Steven: When our ancestors emigrated from Galicia to other countries, they stayed connected by creating *landmannschaften*, organizations that provided for sick funds, cemetery plots, social events, and more. Since very few of these organizations still exist today, my hope is that our members will consider Gesher Galicia as the vehicle for staying connected to their ancestral Galician towns. To enhance this sense of connection, I would like to provide members with the opportunity for online, interactive, educational webinars several times a year. I also intend to connect with members more often via email and through a greater social media presence.

Regarding the DNA issue, as administrator of several Jewish DNA projects on FamilyTreeDNA, I know that much research is being done by academics on Ashkenazi DNA. My goal is to incorporate the data of interested Gesher Galicia members into the current research in this area so that our organization can help advance the science, and our members can uncover more matches and learn more about their heritage.

Finally, I recognize the value of partnering with other organizations to benefit our members and enhance our impact on preserving Galician Jewish culture and history. One example is our recent educational partnership with Gratz College. Another area of potential partnerships is in the Jewish heritage work being done on the ground in former Galician towns by groups working to preserve Jewish sites, such as synagogues and cemeteries. [See, for example, Steven Turner's article in the December 2018 issue of the journal and Deborah Schultz's article in the March 2019 issue.]

G: Fortunately, in working to achieve your goals, you can depend on the support of the Gesher Galicia board. How do you envision the other board members assisting you in your new role?

Steven: I am going to rely heavily on the board, in part because I have a day job, and in part because the board is made up of talented people with valuable and diverse skills, such as Andrew Zalewski's extensive historical knowledge and Tony Kahane's expertise as a researcher. All nine board members are extremely passionate and knowledgeable about Galicia and Jewish genealogy. And they all have a strong sense of volunteerism—these people have volunteerism in their blood.

G: Steve, as we end this interview, please feel free to take a moment to address the members of Gesher Galicia directly to share a message with them.

Steven: I want you to know that we welcome your thoughts and suggestions about Gesher Galicia. We want to hear from you and to interact with you. I encourage you to email me anytime at ssturner@geshergalicia.org or contact me through the Gesher Galicia Facebook page (www.facebook.com/GesherGalicia/), which I check regularly. I look forward to hearing from you and to working with you to continue moving Gesher Galicia forward.

Research Corner

Discoveries in the Archives

by Tony Kahane,
Gesher Galicia Research Coordinator

OVER THE PAST few months, Gesher Galicia has been busy doing research in the Polish State Archives in Przemyśl and the State Archive of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast (DAIFO). Our work has led to exciting archival discoveries: a trove of newly added Jewish records in Przemyśl and an interesting story emerging from the records in DAIFO. We have also made major changes to the archival inventories on the Gesher Galicia website, including content updates, as well as modifications to the format, layout, and functionality of our inventory tables.

Przemyśl State Archive

The branch of the Polish State Archives located in Przemyśl, close to the border with Ukraine, is an important one for Jewish Galician genealogical research. It is the only state archive in either Poland or Ukraine that contains a significant amount of Jewish material—vital records and Jewish community records—from both the western and eastern parts of former Galicia. Starting in late 2016, this archive has considerably restructured its Jewish fonds (sets of files, which could be a single bound volume or a collection of loose certificates and correspondence), and much material previously unknown to researchers has appeared and is now available.

Gesher Galicia has closely examined the archive's new inventories of Jewish material and created our own inventories, which are now online. While

the total number of Jewish fonds remains the same, at twenty-two, much has changed within some of these fonds.

For example, Fond 154 used to be a poorly assorted set of material of different types from many towns. It included a second part (known as IGW 102) with files that were not always well understood or that didn't fit elsewhere. Fond 154 is now a single fond containing seventy "files." The first sixty-eight are for specific Galician towns, primarily in eastern Galicia. Each of these town files has up to fifty subfiles or units. These subfiles may contain vital records (bound or in loose form) or various types of community records. File 50, for instance, consists of twenty-eight subfiles from Stanisławów. Subfiles 3 to 18 in this set are from the Stanisławów Ghetto, including a partial set of household registration cards from 1941 to 1942.

These town files are followed by File 69—a set of 573 bound volumes, most of which are index books of vital records from presently unknown towns. File 70 consists of loose certificates from sixty-six towns (none of them from the first set of sixty-eight towns), and each of them has a few subfiles, though only one of these towns contains more than three subfiles: Biecz, which has forty-four. In total, there are 1,039 subfiles in the multi-town collection that makes up Fond 154.

Fond 359 of the Przemyśl archive has also been expanded. It used to be a collection of school records from a single Jewish school in Przemyśl, but now it contains more material, including school records from eight other towns.

Each of the remaining twenty Jewish fonds in Przemyśl corresponds to a specific town. At this point, none of these towns appears elsewhere in Fond 154, but that is likely to change once the presently unknown towns in File 69 of Fond 154 are identified. The towns covered by the twenty remaining fonds are Dobromil, Jarosław, Jaworów,

October 2019, with further information to be announced shortly.

The image at the top of the previous page shows the first page of the first book in Fond 154, File 69—a marriage index book from 1817 to 1845 from an unknown town. Gesher Galicia members who have followed the record sets already uploaded to our database in 2019 should have no difficulty recognizing which town this book comes from.

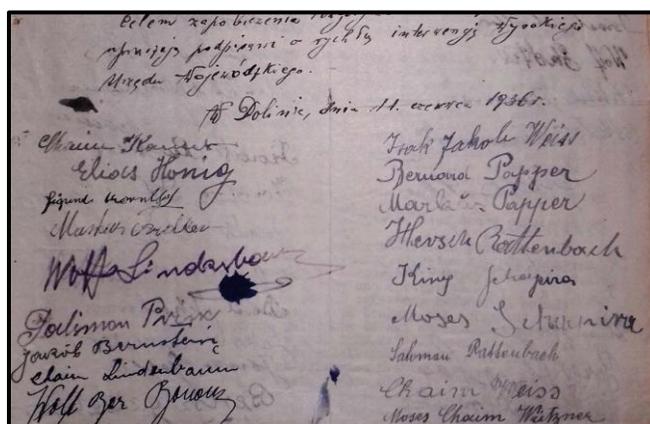
Inventories

Following the restructuring of the Jewish material in Przemyśl, Gesher Galicia has radically updated the contents of our own inventory of records from the Przemyśl State Archive. We have also changed how we display this information on our website in our newly expanded inventories section. In addition, we have updated our other inventories—particularly those for Fonds 300 and 424 at AGAD in Warsaw and for the Ukrainian state archives—and we are displaying them all in an improved format. For an overview of our archival inventories, go to the Gesher Galicia home page and click on the “Inventories of Records” tab on the menu bar. For the Polish and Ukrainian archives listed, you will find pages on our website with general descriptions of each archive’s holdings and inventories of the archives’ Jewish records.

For every inventory table on our site, you can click on the heading “Locality” to arrange the table alphabetically by town name. You can also filter out the entries for a specific town that interests you. For instance, if you go to the inventory at www.geshergalicia.org/inventories/fond-154/ for Fond 154 of the Przemyśl State Archive and type “droho” into the “Search this inventory” box just above the table, to the right, the table will populate a list of the Drohobycz files in that fond.

Split in the Dolina Jewish Community

In preparation for a talk at the international conference in Kraków on Jews in Galicia, we inspected two files from the State Archive of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast (DAIFO), dated 1935–1936 and 1938. Each file contains correspondence to and from the local district offices [*starostwo*] and the provincial [*województwo*] authorities relating to the religious communities in their town. The first file is largely concerned with the Jewish community; the second focuses exclusively on this group.



Signatories to the letter complaining about the appointment of Ksyel Juda Halberstam as assistant rabbi

An interesting side story emerges in the first file, from the town of Dolina, near Katusz. In June 1936, ninety-one men from the Jewish community signed a letter to the provincial authorities in Stanisławów complaining about the recent appointment of an assistant rabbi, thirty-two-year-old Ksyel Juda Halberstam. The senior rabbi at the time, Ozjasz Halberstam (relationship unknown), opposed the appointment of Ksyel Juda, who, it seems, had already been acting unofficially as assistant rabbi for some years. However, in allowing the Jewish community to make an official appointment and in approving the community’s budget, the *starost* (leader of the local district administration) had stipulated that there be an election for the post. The leadership of the community had

complied, and Halberstam, the only candidate, had been elected.

The signatories to the letter took strong issue with their own community leaders. They claimed that Dolina didn't need an assistant rabbi and that the community couldn't afford the 1,080 złoty for his salary, proposed by the Jewish leadership. Furthermore, they wrote, the election was invalid, as the process had been flawed, with random people on the street being asked to vote.

Writing in October to the voivodeship (provincial) office on the matters raised by the complainants' letter, the starost maintained that the leadership of the community had complied with the conditions laid down and had properly organized the election, which was valid. In addition, while Ksyel Juda Halberstam had falsified his school certificate in his application, the starost proposed that no action be taken because Halberstam enjoyed great respect among the Jewish community, spoke Polish, and was loyal to the state. The dispute between the parties over the assistant rabbi in Dolina continued until September 1938 when Halberstam was confirmed in his position with a ruling by the Ministry of Religious Communities and Public Enlightenment.

We do not know why so many community members took issue with the official appointment of Halberstam—whether it was purely an internal division within the Jewish community, or whether they resented the influence of the local district authorities. However, the fact that Halberstam was being excused for his misdeed because of his loyalty to the state is an interesting point. It relates to the wider issue during the late 1930s of systematic reporting by local authorities to a higher level of state authority on Jewish leaders' perceived popularity, moral behavior, and above all, loyalty to the state. This point will be developed further during the presentation at the Kraków conference this month.

Gesher Galicia at the Kraków Conference

2nd International Conference: Jews in Galicia
Jagiellonian University and Galicia Jewish
Museum, Kraków, Poland
September 10–12, 2019

We are pleased to announce the following presentations:

Wednesday, September 11

Tony Kahane, Gesher Galicia Research
Coordinator

*Institutional Antisemitism in the Territory
of the Former Galicia, 1935–1939*

Jacques Barth, Gesher Galicia Member
*Galician (Jewish and Polish) Presence in the
Netherlands, Ancient and Active Ties*

Thursday, September 12

Nina Talbot, Gesher Galicia Member
Does Place Have a Memory?

Gesher Galicia in the US

Sunday, September 22, 2019

Andrew Zalewski, VP, Gesher Galicia
*Medical Globetrotters and Persevering Women
from Galicia, 1:30–3:00 pm*

Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater
Washington, B'nai Israel Congregation
6301 Montrose Rd, Rockville, MD

www.jgsgw.org

Thursday, October 3, 2019

Andrew Zalewski, VP, Gesher Galicia
*Jewish Galicia: Living Together and Apart
12:15–1:45 pm*

Gratz College, 7605 Old York Road,
Melrose Park, PA

www.gratz.edu

Becoming Habsburg Galitzianers

by Andrew Zalewski,
Gesher Galicia Board Member

“HER MAJESTY HAS decided today to pass through me that you order as soon as possible the entry of our essential troops.” With these words, written on May 25, 1772, the Habsburg emperor Joseph II communicated the instructions of Maria Theresa, his mother-empress, to the president of the War Council (Hofkriegsrat) to initiate a military operation in the southern part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Seizing control of the royal salt mines and the city of Lwów seemed to be the most important goals, with Joseph II adding, “If these two places are taken by us, this will be advantageous before various representations could thwart or prevent us from doing that.”

The succinct order was the culmination of the past few years, replete with secret diplomacy, shifting international alliances, and recurrent troubles rocking the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Far from being a parochial affair, the events of 1772 not only embroiled Poland’s three immediate neighbors—the Habsburg Monarchy, Prussia, and Russia—but also other powers that had stake in the game, including the Ottoman Empire, France, and even England and Sweden.

With the imperial decision issued, Austrian Galicia would soon emerge. The circumstances of its appearance on the map and Jewish encounters with the new reality during the first two years of Habsburg rule are the focus of this article.

A Diplomatic Dance

For years, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was in disarray. A contested royal election and paralyzing political discord, aggravated by recurrent insurgencies, were the most visible signs of deeper problems.

From the east, Russia frequently intervened in the affairs of the commonwealth. Russian troops marched back and forth through a shared border, either propping up the Polish king or supporting his opposition, while keeping open the trading routes through Poland, which connected Russia with the rest of Europe. In the north, Prussia vied to expand its rule over a Polish province called Polish Prussia, which separated Prussia from other territory under its control. If Prussia’s intentions were realized, Polish trade on the Vistula River to the Baltic Sea would fall into Prussian hands. At first, Prussian ambitions amounted to no more than secret whispers. Powerful Russia was disinterested in partitioning Poland. By treaty, the Russian empress was obligated to protect the integrity of Poland’s borders, and Russia already controlled matters inside the country as well. In the south, the Habsburg Monarchy was at first a passive observer to the machinations over Poland’s fate—traditionally, Austria’s interests lay elsewhere.

In 1768, some of the Polish nobility began an insurgency, not only against their king, but also against Russian presence in the commonwealth. The insurgents, called the Bar Confederates after the town where their movement was formed, quickly sparked an international conflict. Evading Russian pursuits, they would slip into Ottoman or Habsburg border zones. Russia became embroiled in an all-out war with the Ottoman Empire, which aided the insurgents. Then, the Habsburg military seized control of small Polish enclaves (in the Zips district) surrounded by Hungarian territory, which was then part of the Habsburg Monarchy.

In 1770, the Austrians went farther, establishing a twenty-mile-wide cordon (around the towns of Nowy Sącz and Nowy Targ) north of the border with Poland, which was officially sanctioned to prevent the spread of the bubonic plague. Empress Maria Theresa, though, remained hesitant about recent gains, writing, “I have a very poor opinion of our titles.” Similarly, when Prussia tried again to coax Russia into agreeing to a joint Polish partition—this time under the pretext of compensating Russia for the war with the Ottomans—Maria Theresa was explicit. Speaking with an English ambassador in the summer of 1771, she said of Russia and Prussia, “They must realize, we will never

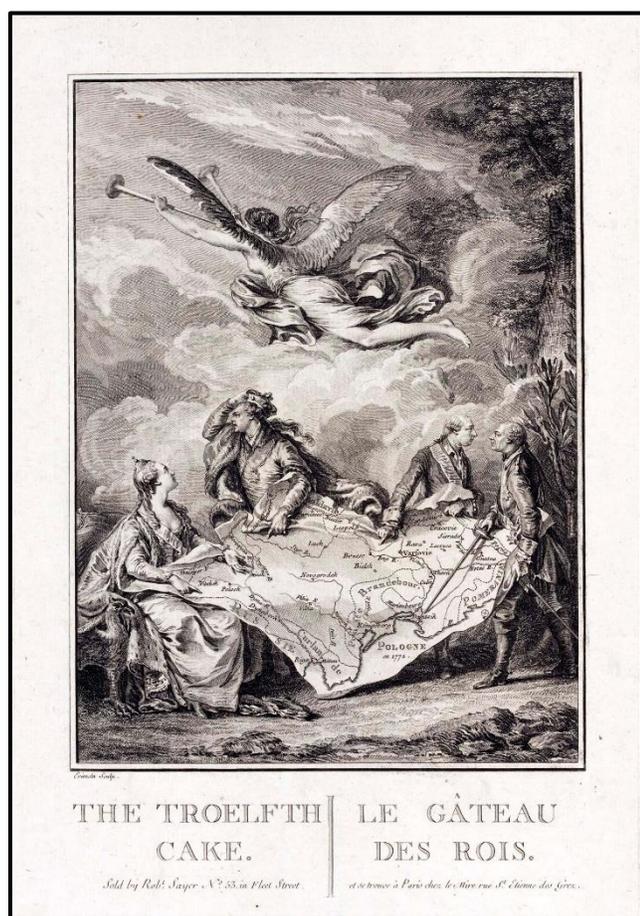
tolerate the idea [of partition]. For my part, I wish to retain no village that does not belong to me.”

But when in February 1772, Russia and Prussia agreed to the partition of different parts of Polish territory, with or without Austrian participation, Maria Theresa’s moral scruples took a back seat to the realpolitik advocated by her son Joseph II. The aggrandizement of the two local powers, with the Habsburg Monarchy sitting on the sidelines, was not an option in the game of maintaining the balance of power. Switching from doubts to firm resolve, Austrian ambassadors in Berlin and Saint Petersburg now demanded the largest slice that would be carved out of the troubled country.

Galician Campaign

In mid-May of 1772, a small unit of Habsburg forces entered the town of Dukla in western Galicia, barely eight miles from the border. The local population was warned in an announcement, read in German to the Jews and in Latin to the Poles, that any assistance offered to the Bar Confederates or Russian troops would be met with severe punishment. As to the purpose of the incursion, the major in charge would only say that new orders were expected in early June.

After this prelude, the main operations soon began. From the west, ten thousand men under the command of an Irish-born Habsburg general entered the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. By June 11, they were in possession of the Wieliczka salt mines—one of the goals of the operation—and they controlled the nearby town of Kazimierz, with its large Jewish population. From the south, other units of the Habsburg army, led by a Hungarian-born general, crossed through the passes in the Carpathian Mountains. They quickly reached Stryj in eastern Galicia, with more troops pouring in through the same route. By mid-July, the Austrians were already outside Polish Lwów, now referred to as Lemberg. Other Habsburg generals



“The Royal Cake,” an 18th-century French engraving, shows the rulers of Russia, Prussia, and Austria with the map of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The fourth person, with the crown slipping from his head, is the Polish king.

continued north, taking the areas even farther than had been initially envisioned. When on August 2, Prussian, Austrian, and Russian diplomats met in Saint Petersburg, the Austrian ambassador was in a strong position to secure for his country a desired share of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In Vienna, Joseph II relished the outcome, while his mother laconically wrote on the partition document "have signed." Two days later, Maria Theresa wrote to the president of the War Council:

The courier from St. Petersburg delivered the signed unfortunate partition agreement. Thank you again for this great success, if this is really one.... You designed a plan which would benefit the state, without going into the question whether it is justified or not.

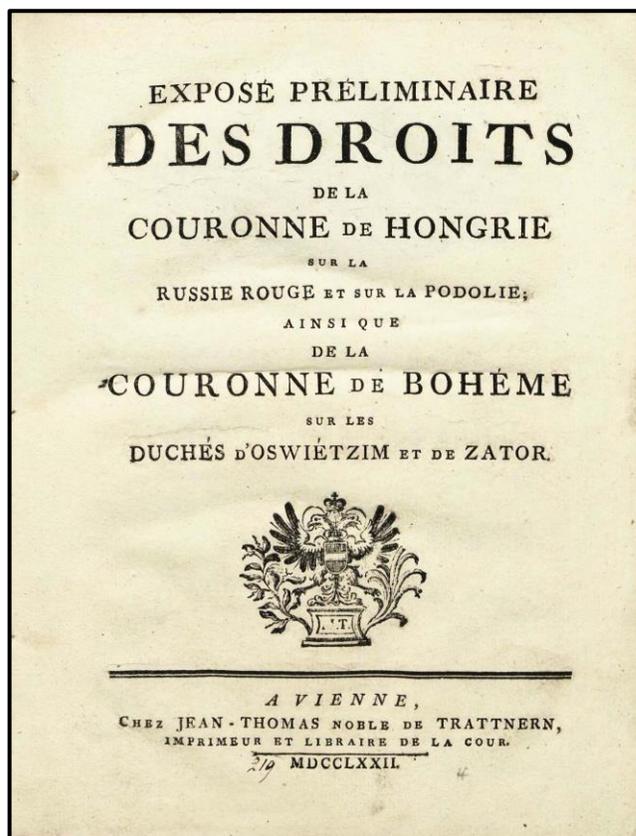
Yet the business of making the land an Austrian possession was far from finished. General Andreas Hadik, appointed by Joseph II to lead the entire operation, waited for his instructions at the gates of Lemberg. The emperor's memorandum from August 26 laid out the new orders: with the borders "settled," Hadik was to establish his authority when facing remaining Russian troops. Joseph was worried about havoc created by "overly enthusiastic actions on the part of [their] friends." Army officers were sent to erect border posts, mindful to follow the most advantageous line if ambiguity arose. Hadik was to gather details about the land, start the groundwork for civil administration, and expect the arrival of the first governor. Even Jews were mentioned: at a future date, the emperor noted, they were to be prohibited from selling alcohol and running inns and taverns.

On September 11, the imperial decree officially "reclaimed" the occupied territory under the name of the Kingdoms of Galicia and Lodomeria. When copies of the proclamation finally arrived at the outskirts of Lemberg, General Hadik and other senior military commanders rode through the city gate with their troops marching alongside. At the same time, the last Russian company stationed in the city for the past few years was hastily evacuating.

As such, Austrian Galicia, with its capital city of Lemberg, became the reality on the ground on September 15, 1772.

In Vienna, the printing presses were busy releasing a 102-page treatise, replete with tortuous arguments. To give legal cover to the seizure of Galicia, as if this really mattered under the circumstances, centuries-old and paper-thin claims to the area by past Hungarian and Bohemian rulers were invented. With Empress Maria Theresa crowned as the queen of Hungary and Bohemia, the document concluded:

After such a long delay...the House of Austria is well authorized in establishing and reclaiming lawful rights...to a very moderate portion of her real claims to the best provinces of Poland...; at the very time, when it was necessary to take the recourse by extraordinary means.



A treatise about the alleged rights of Maria Theresa to Galicia and other annexed territories, published by Johann Thomas Trattnern (the court's printer), Vienna, 1772

Encounters with Jews

For the arriving Austrians, it was impossible to miss the Jewish presence in Galicia. The sheer number of Jewish communities, the more than two hundred synagogues (when in Vienna, there were none), and the visible role played by Jews in the local economy made Galicia different from other Habsburg lands. Fewer Jews lived in western Galicia, where a handful of towns had municipal statutes prohibiting Jews from residing within their borders. Farther east, however, their numbers grew, with many places having Jewish majorities.



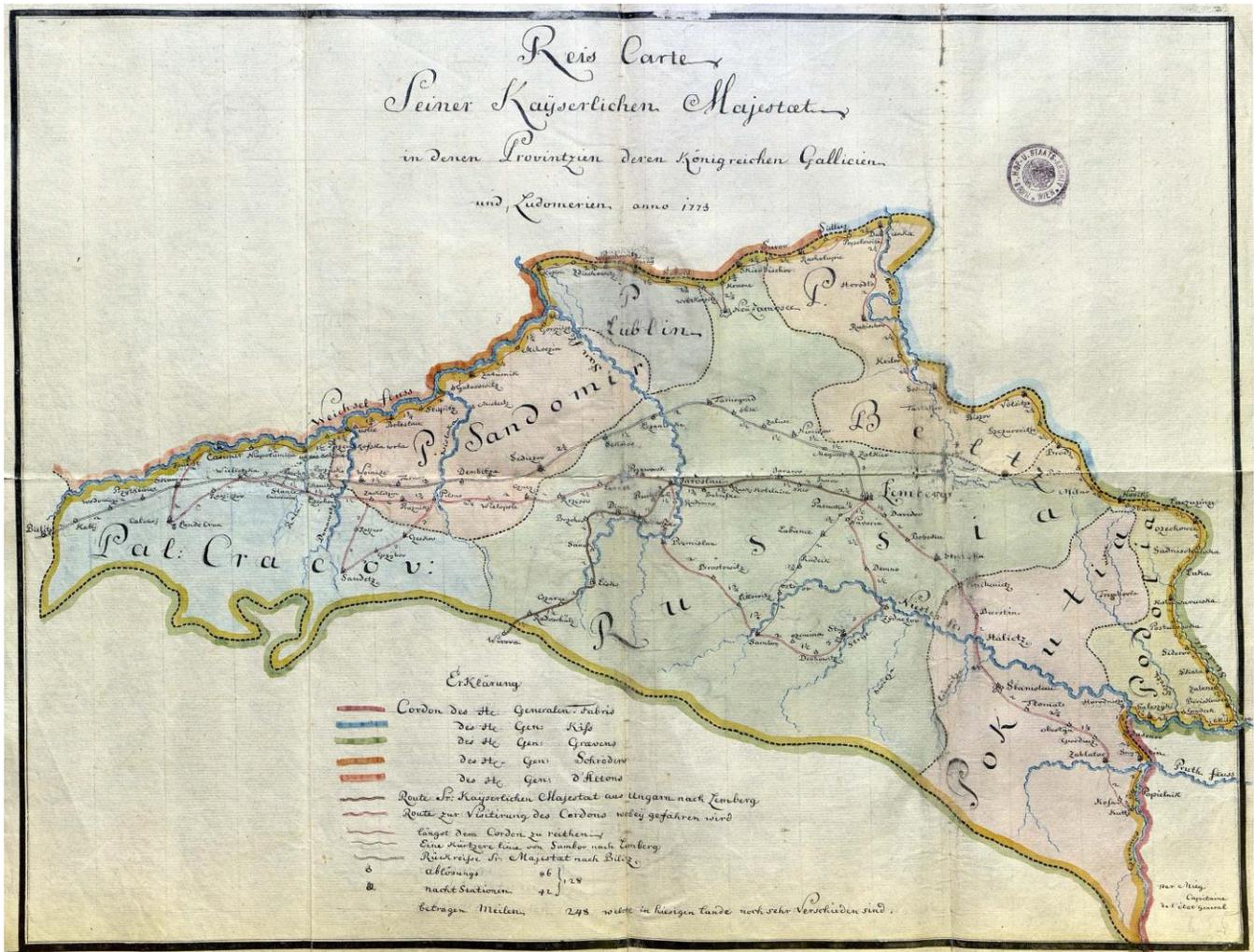
First encounters, as portrayed by Austrian travelers to Galicia (from Franz Kratter's book on Galicia, 1785)

Johann Anton Pergen quickly got a taste of the tension between the Jews and the Gentiles in Galicia.

A couple days before Pergen was installed as the first governor of Galicia on October 4, 1772, Lemberg's Christian merchants demanded that Jews be banned from all trades, alleging that they benefited from unfair commercial practices, causing others to suffer financial losses. The burghers threatened to abandon the city if their plea went unanswered. But Pergen remained unmoved and called their bluff, responding, "God bless, you are not very much needed [here]." In the end, no one abandoned the city and no ban on Jews was put in place, though the reality of Galician life always required careful maneuvering when interethnic relations were concerned.

Governor Pergen was quickly tasked by his superiors to produce a report on Galicia. Under a painfully long title, his exposé from August 1773 covered a range of topics: geography and natural resources, towns and villages, and a critical look at Polish nobility and Catholic clergy. The report ended with a section on Galician Jews.

While in the past, the governor reported, Jewish merchants had dealt mainly in the wholesale trades—such as cloth, cattle, leather, and wax—now Jews were found everywhere. They leased inns and mills, collected tolls, traded in salt, and controlled the lumber and flour commerce. According to Pergen, they also brought low-quality goods and counterfeit coins from Germany. Suspecting them of deceitful business practices, he seemed unaware of Prussian efforts to flood the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with devalued currency. In the villages, Jews were blamed for widespread peasant drunkenness. In the cities, Jews owned houses (some employing Christian servants) and worked in many crafts, and conflicts between Christian and Jewish artisans were common. Among his other observations, the governor noted a large Hebrew printing press in Żółkiew, the existence of Jewish barber-surgeons, and the tendency among Jews to marry at a young age.



Above, one of the first maps of Austrian Galicia, drawn in preparation for Joseph II's inspection tour in 1773 (Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien)

According to Perggen, Jewish communal bodies (kahals) were in financial distress, with the one in Lemberg having already been declared insolvent. Kahals no longer offered loans or high interest rates on investments, traditionally made by well-off nobles and Catholic clergy.

The government's initial actions were often colored by uncertainty about the size of the Jewish population. A detailed census of Jews was promptly ordered in December 1772. Soon, the Habsburg policy took a harsher turn, uniquely targeting

Galician Jews as a group. They were forbidden to marry without special permission from local authorities, with a couple's ability to pay the marriage tax becoming one of many requirements (March 1773). To help enforce the new law, Empress Maria Theresa decreed in Vienna that Galician rabbis would face penalties for ignoring the rules (June 1773). Nonetheless, for social and religious reasons, Jews would continue to marry in ritual ceremonies, ignoring the state-imposed marriage laws for a long time to come (see the *Galitzianer* from March and June 2017).

For all Jews, permission to reside in Galicia was quickly linked to their ability to pay other taxes. Now, kahals had to submit lists of indigent Jews

(*Bettlejuden*), who faced the threat of expulsion from the crownland (March 1773). In later years, the number of deported Jews would reach a thousand a year.

Sealing the Deal

Emperor Joseph II's first tour of Galicia was an act of endurance. Lasting from June 27 to September 8, 1773, it included a five-day stop in Lemberg, followed by a grueling journey through the country and along the new Galician borders. The imperial party moved in a few coaches, and when the roads were bad, on horseback. When a river mentioned in the partition agreement could not be found, the emperor settled the issue of the border on the spot and expanded Austrian Galicia eastward by some twenty miles, unable to contain his enthusiasm for the beauty of the fertile land there.

The trip was also an occasion to see the conditions within Galicia. The emperor's attitude toward the Jews was complex, ranging from insistence on coercive measures to remake them into loyal Habsburg subjects to support for enlightened policies in his later years. Despite such contradictions, he wrote to his mother from Lemberg, "The Jews here have as many synagogues as they ever want.... Toleration of these people is not harmful to the country." In Brody, the town with an overwhelming Jewish majority on the eastern fringe of the crownland, he visited the Great Synagogue, likely becoming the first Habsburg emperor to enter a synagogue on official business. Spending two nights in Kazimierz (then outside Kraków), a western Galician town sometimes referred to as "Jewish Town," he could not escape the sights of many synagogues and Jewish homes. By coincidence, he returned to Vienna on September 18, 1773, the same day the treaty of partition between his mother—the Austrian empress—and the Polish king was ratified by the Diet (Sejm) in Warsaw. With the annexation of Galicia now realized, Joseph II's journey through the land had not been a futile effort.

However, there was still one more formality to follow. The treaty between the sovereigns released the inhabitants of Galicia from their allegiance to the Polish crown. Now, everyone was ordered to pay homage to the new rulers, Empress Maria Theresa and her son, the co-regent of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II. On December 29, 1773, the oath of allegiance and the accompanying ceremonies took place in several towns. For the Jews, the oath was slightly modified by removing Christian religious references. As reported by the newspaper *Wienerische Diarum* in Vienna, Governor Pergen, surrounded by the military brass, presided in Lemberg over the ceremony in which the delegates of Polish nobility accepted the new rulers. Gold and silver medallions, minted for this occasion, were tossed into the crowds (*see below*). In Brody, Jews gathered in the main synagogue, which was brightly lit by oil lamps and hundreds of candles. After the elders took the oath on behalf of the community, the congregants spilled onto an illuminated square, while Jewish trumpeters rode around the town calling everyone to more ceremonies. According to the propagandized account reported in the Viennese press, more tributes and speeches were followed by good wines, sweets, and delicious Turkish fruits, with money being thrown into Jewish crowds. As the correspondent from Brody gushed, "true joy shone in everyone's eyes." Thus, the Jews of Galicia officially became Habsburg Galitzianers.



A silver medallion minted to commemorate the Austrian annexation of Galicia. Front: images of Joseph II and Maria Theresa; back: "...in good faith reclaimed 1773" (*Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien*).

Jewish Political Rights

Evolution in Participation

by Börries Kuzmany,
University of Vienna

THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES the development of the political representation of Galicia's Jewry. Until the mid-nineteenth century, even wealthy urban Jews, with very few exceptions, were not allowed the limited forms of political representation that their Christian counterparts had enjoyed for decades. However, for much of the period of Austrian Galicia, Jewish representation—and that of Gentiles too—largely meant representation for the elite. By the beginning of the twentieth century, an increasing number of people contested the representation monopoly of the upper strata. By then, conflict lines were not only found in the right-center-left political spectrum, but also along the larger question of acculturation and Jewish nationalism.

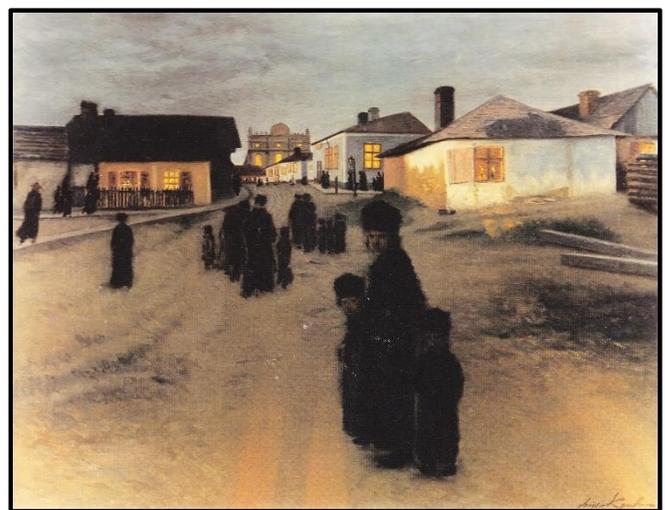
This article covers Jewish municipal rights; a subsequent article will review Jewish political participation on two other levels: the central state and the province (crownland). I will analyze Jewish representation with a focus on the decades after the revolution of 1848 until the beginning of the First World War.

Introduction to Galician Jewry

In 1772, the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and the Habsburg Empire agreed on the First Partition of their joint neighbor, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. (See an accompanying article on this topic on page 12.) Vienna's piece of the pie was an approximately 80,000-square-kilometer territory with two major urban centers, the royal city of Lemberg (in Polish, Lwów; in Yiddish, Lemberik)

and the trading city of Brody (in Yiddish, Brod or Brodi). Kraków (in Yiddish, Kroke) was not yet part of the empire. With over 6,000 members each, the Brody and Lemberg kahals were by far the most important Jewish communities in Galicia at that time.

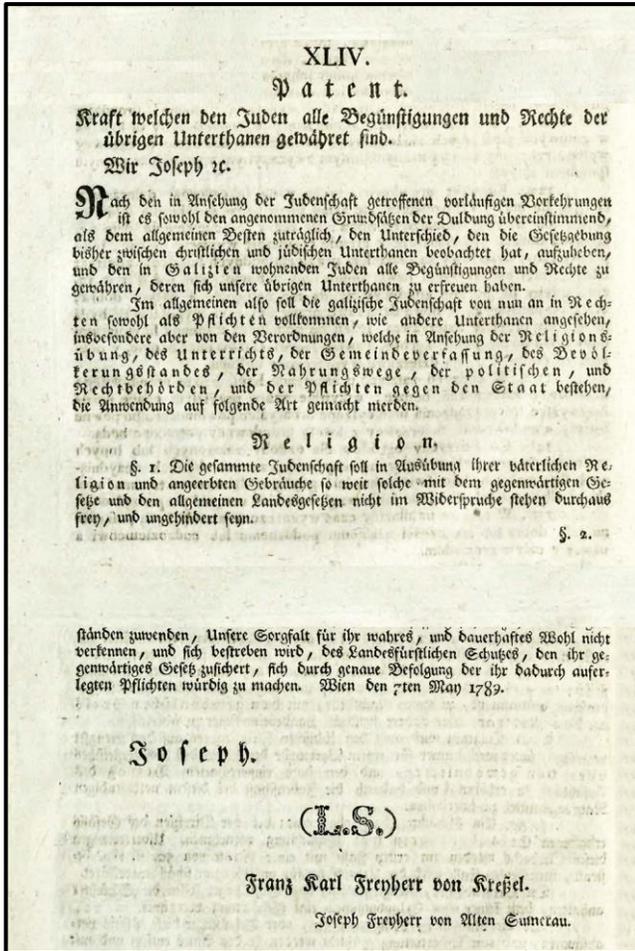
Vienna imposed a policy of complete reorganization on Galicia's Jews in order to increase their utility for the state. At first, the state approached its Jewish subjects in three intertwined ways: control, taxation, and limited social integration. Empress Maria Theresa abolished the hitherto existing autonomous Jewish communities, the kahals, in 1776, replacing them initially with a hierarchical structure with a state-paid chief rabbi at the top. Only nine years later, her son Joseph II abandoned this structure and limited the respective local Jewish communities to their religious duties. Many of his other regulations had a cultural effect as well, but were born out of the logic of better control: compulsory German-language schooling between 1782 and 1806, replacement of Yiddish or Hebrew bookkeeping in favor of German books in 1785, abolition of the rabbinic courts in 1785, and literacy examinations by the district officer in 1789 in order to gain permission to marry. The aim to



"Friday Evening in Brody," a traditional Jewish community in this painting by Isidor Kaufmann, 1904

Germanize Galicia's Jews was not intended as a nationalizing measure, but was born out of the conviction of contemporary Gentile and Jewish Enlighteners that the German language per se had a progressive and civilizing effect on people.

Collecting taxes was also a way to make Jews more "useful" to the state. Jews had to pay a per capita



The first and last pages of the Toleration Edict, as granted to Galician Jews by Emperor Joseph II in 1789

toleration tax, as well as taxes on kosher meat and Sabbath candles. They had to pay a fee for permission to marry, and beginning in 1788, each Jewish community had to offer a certain number of recruits to be drafted into the imperial army. Even though the taxes were considerable, all Jews, even those living in the countryside, continued to be

personally free and were not bound to landed estates like most of the peasant serfs.

Although the special tax obligations continued, the Toleration Edict of May 7, 1789, was a turning point in Galician Jewish history. It was aimed at the social and political integration of the Jewish population in the long run. This process reached its first peak during the 1848 revolution when the special Jewish taxes were finally abolished. In contrast to legal and political equality for Austria's Jews, which was proclaimed but later rescinded, the Jewish taxes were not reintroduced during Austria's neo-absolutist backlash in the 1850s. For full legal emancipation, Jews in the Habsburg Empire would have to wait until the December Constitution after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867. As I will show, legal emancipation did not prevent legal discrimination in the political representation of the Jews.

Emancipation also brought another crucial change for the empire's Jews. The Austrian constitution of 1867 recognized nine different national groups, largely defined according to the languages registered in the censuses. Whereas Jews were clearly considered a separate group before 1848, and vaguely continued to be viewed as such until 1867, the new constitution clearly defined them as solely a religious group. Hence, the Jewish national movement could claim neither linguistic rights for the promotion of Yiddish or Hebrew, nor political rights for their conceived nation.

Even though most of Galicia's Jews might have perceived themselves as a distinctive group over most of the 150-year timespan of Habsburg rule, Galician Jews were by no means a homogeneous population. They adhered to different religious and intellectual currents and loyalties. The largest group belonged to the Hasidic movement. By the end of the eighteenth century, the vast majority of Galician Jews, especially the lower strata, were Hasidic. A few but important exceptions were the

large and powerful communities in Lemberg, Kraków, and Brody that stayed attached to more traditional Orthodox Jewry. In addition, Brody was known throughout the world of Ashkenazim not only for its rabbinic scholarship, but also as one of the few strongholds—in addition to Lemberg and Tarnopol (in Yiddish, Tarnepol)—of the Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment movement. Conflicts among these groups were frequent, and the state was an unfair arbiter in strongly backing the Enlighteners, not least for their positive attitude toward state and cultural integration.

Cultural integration for many decades meant acculturation to the German language and dress, but certainly not assimilation or conversion. This pro-German orientation, popular among the Jewish elite, was challenged only after Galicia gradually extended its de facto autonomy during the 1870s. At that time, Polish-Jewish friendship associations like the Przymierze Braci (Union of Brothers), writers like Moritz Rappaport, and literary critics like Wilhelm Feldman favored a pro-Polish position. However, recurring anti-Semitic tendencies within Polish national associations and politics forced them to defend Jews as a group.

Despite the emergence of a Zionist movement in Galicia, assimilationist positions became dominant among educated people. In 1907, students formed the association Zjednoczenie (Union), which promoted Polish-Jewish culture and edited the weekly journal *Jedność* (Unity). Assimilation also simply continued to be a matter of fact. For the official decennial population censuses, 95 percent of Galician Jews by 1910 stated Polish as their language of daily use, while German had shrunk to a mere 3 percent, and Yiddish and Hebrew could not be statistically indicated. The Jewish national movement, which came into play by the early twentieth century, favored the use of Yiddish and Hebrew and proposed a national interpretation of Jewish identities.

While these competing cultural and political identification models strongly affected the Jewish elite and their political positioning, they hardly reached the strata of the Hasidic and Yiddish-speaking masses. The only Jewish organization in Austrian Galicia that might be called a mass movement was the Orthodox Makhzikey ha-Das (Upholders of the Faith). Founded by the Belzer rebbe Yehoshua Rokeach and Rabbi Shimon Sofer (also known as Schreiber) from Kraków in 1878, it soon had more than 40,000 members. Rabbi Sofer was successfully elected to the central parliament in 1879. He lobbied among Polish conservative circles at the central and provincial levels to prevent modernization of traditional Jewish education.

Thus, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Jews—albeit with very different political agendas—increasingly participated in the political life of Galicia. They tried to form new alliances with Gentile parties and activists in order to promote their vision of Galician Jewry. One of the arenas of activity was in the representative bodies on the local, provincial, and central-state levels, which gradually expanded participation to wider strata of society.

The Local Level: Before 1848

Before 1848, neither Galicia nor Austria in general disposed of any elected representative institutions. Cities that were under municipal law (*Stadtrecht*) could elect a so-called municipal council (*Stadtausschuss*). This council was not very powerful and was more of an advisory board. Still, it had a certain symbolic importance, and membership on the board was prestigious. In order to integrate the Jewish population in his enlightened state reform project, Joseph II enfranchised all Jewish citizens in the 1789 Edict of Toleration, providing them with the rights of their Gentile neighbors. The imperial decree of 1792 confirmed this idea; still, it linked the right to vote to formal local citizens (*Stadtbürger*). Since it was almost impossible

for Jews to receive the legal status of a communal citizen, they were de facto neither allowed to vote for the council nor be elected to it.

In Galicia, there were very few cities where isolated Jewish burghers had the right to vote, but there was one remarkable exception to this rule. Starting in 1799, Jews in Brody were not only enfranchised, they even accounted for half of the forty council members. Brody belonged to those Galician private towns that were under municipal law. To elect a municipal council, Christian and Jewish inhabitants of Brody had to be enfranchised, namely by owning a house in the city or by being a master craftsman—it goes without saying that this excluded most of Brody's population. This approach was unique in the Habsburg Empire, but it very much suited Brody's ethno-

confessional and social circumstances. Not only did Jews account for almost 80 percent of the total population, the Jewish mercantile elite was key in this most important Galician trading hub. The fact that Jewish and Christian council members concordantly defended this arrangement when the Galician governorate questioned its lawfulness in the 1820s proves that interreligious cooperation on the local level was possible. Many other Galician cities had an absolute or relative Jewish majority throughout the nineteenth century. Still, nowhere was the Jewish bourgeoisie as dominant and as

"New Market," the oldest picture of Brody, the city with a large Jewish community actively participating in the municipal council before legal emancipation; lithograph by Carl von Auer, circa 1837



well integrated as in Brody. This is also true for later communal regulations.

The Local Level: 1848–1867

The revolution of 1848 brought significant changes in the local political participation of the Jews. Liberal Jews entered the Polish national guard, claiming equal rights and autonomy for Galicia. They were part of delegations to the emperor that were set up in Lemberg, Kraków, Tarnów (in Yiddish, Torne), and Przemyśl. In Kraków, ten Jewish representatives from the Jewish suburb of Kazimierz were immediately added to the city council, consisting of thirty Gentile deputies; and in Lemberg, the city council allowed fifteen Jewish delegates among the one hundred representatives of the city. Some of the Jewish councilors even became members of the municipal government and administration, where they could actively articulate Jewish concerns.

Interestingly, the addition of Jews to these city councils occurred without a legal basis. The 1792 law linking the right to vote with formal local citizenship status was never abrogated, and municipal administrations in most cities continued to refuse to grant this legal status to Jews. During the neo-absolutist period of the 1850s and the early constitutional era in the beginning of the 1860s, wealthy Jewish burghers could participate in communal elections in the major Galician cities, albeit they could not become mayors or deputy mayors—except in Brody, which had a Jewish deputy mayor since at least 1855.

Finally, the year 1866 brought important legal regulations to organize Gentile-Jewish relations on the municipal level throughout Galicia. There were two models discussed. The city statutes put forward in Lemberg would have split voters into a Christian and a Jewish electoral body that would have been allocated 80 and 20 seats, respectively, in the city council. Furthermore, these statutes

proclaimed all municipal property issues to be Christian, unless they were explicitly Jewish. The Kraków model, on the other hand, enfranchised all city dwellers who belonged to the economic and social elite—thereby explicitly including priests and rabbis. It also integrated Jewish deputies into all general municipal affairs; for explicitly Jewish matters, a separate Jewish committee was created within the city council. Even though in both models, Jews were not allowed to serve as mayors or even deputy mayors, the Kraków model matched the liberal zeitgeist better and was finally approved by the emperor, whereas the Lemberg statutes were rejected.

Echoing the spirit of the Kraków model, the general Galician municipality law was ratified in 1866. It enfranchised urban inhabitants not according to their religious denomination, but according to their socioeconomic circumstances. However, it limited the number of Jewish deputies to one-third of the city council and disallowed Jewish mayors and deputy mayors. Here again, deputies from Brody successfully argued that Jews should be allowed to delegate up to 50 percent of all city councilors—to which the Galician Diet unanimously agreed in early 1867.

The Local Level: 1867–1914

The municipality law of 1866 already became obsolete one year later, when in December 1867, the Austrian part of the now Dual Monarchy fully emancipated its Jewish citizens. The earlier quotas for Jews were outlawed; only socioeconomic criteria would decide who was admitted to political participation. Some Jewish liberals rightly bemoaned that abolishing a fixed quota for Jewish representatives might lead to a reduction of Jewish councilors and favor Gentile candidates, as the elections did not follow proportional representation, but the principle of majority rules. In general, however, Galicia's tax-based electoral system for municipal councils disadvantaged Ruthenians far

more than Jews and led to a dramatic overrepresentation of Roman Catholics (mostly Polish speaking) and especially Protestants (mostly German speaking).



The Skarbek Theater in Lemberg, which housed the Galician Diet until 1880 and witnessed heated parliamentary debates on granting Jews municipal rights; watercolor by Tadeusz Rybkowski, 1900

Contrary to the spirit of Austria's liberal constitution of 1867, legal discrimination against Jews continued to exist in one important case, which astonishingly, was never brought before the Austrian Supreme Court. The statutes of Lemberg, enacted in 1870 and in force until the First World War, reserved a minimum of 80 percent of the seats in the city council for Christians; and in the hypothetical case that a Jew would have been elected mayor, the deputy mayor automatically would have to be a Christian. In Lemberg, Jews were particularly poorly represented and never even came close to the 20 percent that the statutes theoretically allocated to them. In 1874, for example, they accounted for 28 percent of the inhabitants but held only 5 percent of the council seats. Greek Catholics, who roughly could be equated with the Ruthenians, held 8 percent of the seats compared to a share of 16 percent of the urban population.

Lemberg was an especially complex terrain. It was not only Galicia's capital, but also a battleground in the Polish-Ruthenian national conflict and

therefore, an important symbol for the Polish political, economic, and cultural establishment. Certainly, large parts of the Jewish community were assimilated, or at least professed a pro-Polish orientation. Still, when it came to municipal power, Catholic Poles did not want to cede their dominant position.

Nevertheless, Jews—or Poles of the Mosaic faith as they were called—eventually were able to gain important positions in city administration. In 1909, Tobiasz Aszkenaze (1863–1920) became the first Jew to be elected deputy mayor in Lemberg, and he was later followed in this office by Leonard Stahl (1866–1929) and Filip Schleicher (1870–1932). In Kraków, the first Jewish deputy mayor was Józef Sare, who held this office from 1905 until his death in 1929. Similarly successful was the lawyer Wilhelm Hochfeld (1864–1932), who was Rzeszów's deputy mayor for most of his life after 1905. In general, Jews gained more representative power in most Galician towns during the decades up until 1914. In 1907, twenty-eight city councils had a majority of Jewish deputies, and in twenty-four of them, there was even a Jewish mayor. This largely corresponded with the expansion of Jewish representation at all levels, which was a consequence of the slow but steady democratization process in the Habsburg Empire—most obviously, at the central-state level, which will be discussed in the next installment of this article in the December issue of the *Galitzianer*.

Editor's note: *The above article has been adapted from Börries Kuzmany's original publication "The Rise and Limits of Participation: The Political Representation of Galicia's Urban Jewry from the Josephine Era to the 1914 Electoral Reform," East Central Europe 42 (2015), 216-248. Published with the permission of the author and the publisher.*

The Life of Józef Awin

Creator and Protector of Jewish Architecture

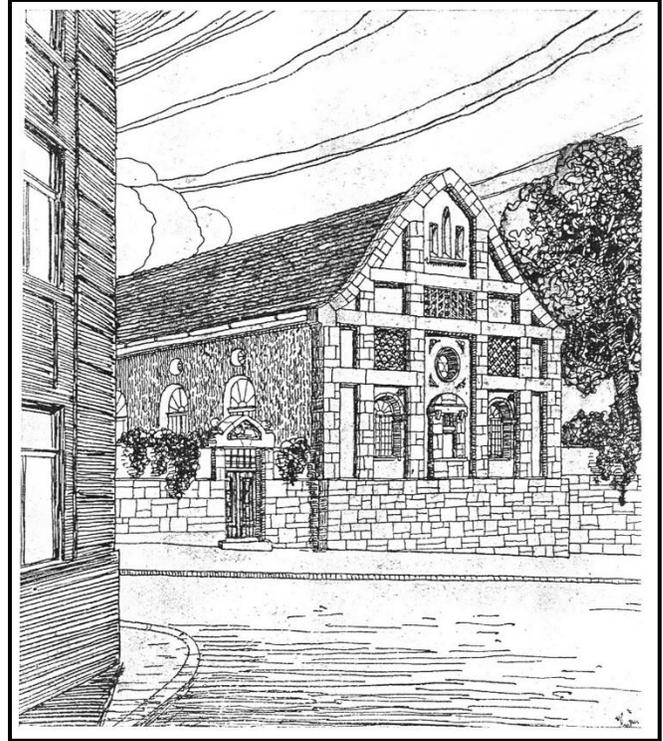
by Sergey R. Kravtsov, PhD,
Hebrew University of Jerusalem,
Gesher Galicia Academic Advisor

JÓZEF AWIN WAS a Jewish architect, building conservator, art curator, and theoretician, who constructed important buildings in Lwów (present-day Lviv, Ukraine) and beyond. In addition to his design work, he theorized about Jewish architecture and worked on many Jewish projects, including synagogues, tombstones, cemeteries, and schools. He was also dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Jewish buildings and monuments. Although Awin was brutally murdered during the Holocaust, a few of his family members managed to escape to the United States, where his great-granddaughter is currently serving in the United States Congress.

The Early Years

Józef Awin was born in Lwów in 1883 to a “patriarchal merchant’s family,” as stated in the *Jewish Almanac (Almanach Żydowski)* of 1937. His father, Aron Leib Awin, owned a fashionable clothing store near city hall. His mother, Jitta Katz Awin, was the daughter of a lace dealer.

Awin received his secondary education at the High Real School in Lwów. After studying architecture at the Polytechnic School in Lwów and the Technical University in Vienna, he completed his studies at the Technical University of Munich (1906/1907).



Józef Awin’s 1909 design of the Old Cemetery Synagogue in Lwów; Almanach Żydowski, 1910. Although this sketch remains, the building itself was destroyed by the Nazis.

As he began his career in Lwów, the emerging architect collaborated with Jewish and Polish colleagues, such as Henryk Salver, Ferdynand (Feiwl) Kassler, Borys Czaczkes, and Stanisław Olszewski. In the early commissions, Awin’s role was limited to installation and engineering, but soon afterward, he had sole responsibility for the design and construction of several important edifices. Most monumental were Henryk Barth’s tenement house at 2/4 Słowackiego Street (now Slovats’koho Street)—where Awin lived on the eve of World War I—and the Splendid Hotel at 6 Rzeźnicka Street (now Nalyvaika Street). He collaborated on both these projects with the sculptor Zygmunt Kurczyński. Awin also served the Jewish community, working on the reconstruction of the Old Cemetery Synagogue and, together with Kassler, on the Jewish Academic House on Św. Teresy Street (now Mytropolyta Anhelovycha Street).

Awin promptly made his way up to the professional elite of Polish-assimilated Jewish society. As a student, he belonged to the Circle of Art Lovers within the Jewish academic society Ognisko (Bonfire). And when he moved out of his parents' apartment, he headed for busy Sykstuska Street (now Doroshenka Street), where the Jewish business, cultural, and religious elite eagerly settled. His office at 16 Sykstuska was one of five design offices on this thoroughfare. Awin's closest neighbor and friend was Wilhelm Wachtel (1875–1952), a renowned artist involved in Jewish portraits and themes. Relatives and sponsors of another Jewish artist, Ephraim Moses Lilien (1874–1925), lived on this street as well.

Also located on Sykstuska Street was the office of the Polish-language Zionist weekly *Wschód* (East), which was edited by Leon Reich (1879–1929). Keenly interested in Awin's work and worldview, Reich published Awin's essay "On Our Esthetic Culture" in 1909. In his *Jewish Almanac*, Reich also published several of Awin's drawings: the design for the Old Cemetery Synagogue, a synagogue in a little Polish town, the gravestone of "Mr. K.," a decorative motif for the Jewish Academic House, and a competition design for the Hebrew Gymnasium in Tel Aviv. These works were commented on in the *Jewish Almanac* by the critic Oskar Aleksandrowicz (1885–after 1939).

Awin as a Jewish "National Artist"

During the early period of his career, Awin pursued a theory of Jewish architecture that belonged to a broader national-romantic trend. As he explained in his essay "On Our Esthetic Culture," he believed that genuine Jewish art, "featuring its distinct stylistics," had existed for centuries in the ghetto in a state of great isolation. It was the departure from tradition in the second half of the nineteenth century that led to architecture "where one can find hardly any Jewish motifs—everything is conventionally stylized in Baroque or

Gothic, or, if very religious, then Moorish," instead of with "good systematic development based on our eternal tradition."

Awin followed Martin Buber (1878–1965), the ideologist of cultural Zionism and idol of Jewish youth, who promoted the notion of a "Jewish Renaissance" in art. As portrayed in the book *The First Buber: Youthful Zionist Writings of Martin Buber* (Schmidt, Gilya G., transl. and ed.; Syracuse University Press, 1999), Buber believed that Jewish "national artists," whom he described as "cultural buds, artistic seeds" once covered by the "horrible desert sand" of the ghetto, will blossom in a liberal society, even before beholding the soil of the promised Jewish homeland.

For Buber, one of the fundamental elements needed for a national artist to evolve, was a "subconsciously inherited" national lineage, and Awin undoubtedly fit this criterion. Awin's emphasis was not on copying historical styles and patterns, but rather on the "Jewishness" subconsciously felt by the artist and transmitted to the viewer.

This approach was welcome in the Lwów professional milieu, and in 1910, Awin's works were invited to the Exhibition of Polish Architects. The exhibition reviewer, Prof. Witold Minkiewicz (1880–1961), shared a similar perspective on native expression in an article in *Czasopismo Techniczne* (*Technical Magazine*):

Assessment of what may be accepted as native belongs to the emotional sphere of the artist, which is as elusive, as the very concept of the native, and cannot be defined by any formula, although its existence is undeniable.

Although Awin was seeking a subconscious Jewish expression, he started photographing and drawing Jewish monuments, particularly tombstones, as early as 1912. He exhibited four works of Jewish ornament art among his thirteen

architectural works at the Spring Salon of 1914 in the Lwów Palace of Arts.

During World War I, Awin served as a reserve officer and was employed at a military site in Hungary. On a short leave, he went to Budapest, where he met Dr. Josef Patai (1882–1953), a Zionist intellectual and editor of the Jewish cultural journal *Múlt és Jövő* (*Past and Future*). Awin persuaded the editor to dedicate a special issue of the magazine to his good friend Wilhelm Wachtel.



Wanda Awin's grandfather, Bernard Goldman; photo by Józef Eder, circa 1880–1890, from the Abraham Schwadron Collection at the National Library of Israel

An essay authored by Awin in this issue describes Galicia as a place where “the whole host of undiscovered artistic monuments, created by Jewish hands and largely owned by Jews, is laying.” In this essay, Awin also proclaims the Zionist credo that he and Wachtel shared: “We are ‘passersby’ on the streets of metropolitan Europe, as we are in the narrow ghetto streets And we believe that one day we will behold the new spring in the Holy Land.” This article is significant because it reflects Awin's evolution from assimilation to Zionism.

Marriage and Family Life

After the war, Awin married Wanda Berger. Born in 1899, Wanda entered the Juliusz Słowacki Private Women's Gymnasium in 1909, where she was a brilliant student. For one school project, she dressed in an Indian folk costume and reported about her vacations in India and Ceylon, accompanying her presentation with a hundred glass slides. For another project, she lectured on the spread of organic life in the universe. She also painted, drew, played the piano, and spoke five languages fluently.

Wanda was from a highly respected Jewish family. Her father, Lieutenant Colonel Henryk Berger (1869–1930), studied medicine at Vienna University and served in the Austrian army as a military doctor. After World War I, he practiced medicine in Lwów and provided medical care for children in Jewish orphanages.

Wanda's mother, Julia Goldman Berger (1872–?), was the daughter of Bernard Goldman (1841–1901), a participant in the Polish January Uprising (1863), a lawyer and financier, and a member of the Galician Diet (1877–1901), the Lwów City Council, and the Jewish community board. Julia's mother, Ida Löwenstein Goldman (1847–1906),

was one of five daughters of Rabbi Bernhard Löwenstein (1821–1869), the chief rabbi of the Progressive Synagogue in Lwów. And, Ida's brother Nathan Löwenstein (1859–1929) was knighted in 1910.

As a young couple, Józef and Wanda Awin immersed themselves in the social and cultural life of the Jewish community. According to the Jewish daily *Chwila* in 1920, they participated in the literary and artistic sections of the Young Scene Society (Młoda Scena). Józef was also a board member of the Jewish Musical Society (Żydowskie Towarzystwo Muzyczne). In addition, both Awins took part in the exhibition held by the Circle of Friends of Jewish Art (Koło Miłośników Sztuki Żydowskiej) in 1920: Józef presented twelve designs and graphic works, and Wanda exhibited a watercolor and a pastel.

The Awins had three daughters: Ewa Ruth (1921–1942), Hanka (1922–1987), and Noemi “Malinka” (1928–1937). The family lived a decent and prosperous life, but it was overshadowed by Noemi's untimely death from complications following scarlet fever and by Józef's serious illness, the details of which are little known.

Awin's Work during the 1920s

The years of postwar recovery brought Awin, who was both an architect and a contractor, numerous private and public clients. His most significant commissions of the 1920s were the Byblos Press and Paper Factory, the Regional Court in Rawa Ruska (current-day Rava Ruska, Ukraine), his own residence and office on Pełczyńska Street (now Vitovs'koho Street), an apartment building on Na Bajkach Street (now Kyivs'ka Street), the interior of the Collegium Maximum of Jan Kazimierz University, and the private residence of Leon Reich, who subsequently headed the Jewish faction in the Sejm (Polish Parliament). Awin also designed Reich's tombstone, sculpted in 1930 by Bernard



Józef Awin with his wife, Wanda, and daughter Ewa Ruth in Lwów, 1923; courtesy of the Awins' granddaughter Sylvia Yoma Tarquine

Kober, as well as other memorials—all ultimately destroyed by the Nazis—for respected community members in Lwów: Mojżesz Frostig (1875–1928), Samuel von Horowitz (1836–1925), Abraham Korkis (1865–1921), and Gershon Zipper (1868–1921). Although Awin did not receive the commission to design a monument for the celebrated Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz (1852–1915) in Warsaw, he did win third place in the competition for this honor.

In addition to individual tombstones, Awin designed several collective graves and funerary



The interior of the Collegium Maximum of Jan Kazimierz University, designed by Awin in 1930; photo by Sergey Kravtsov, 2010

ensembles, including the graves of the victims killed during the Lwów pogrom of November 1918 and the New Jewish Cemetery in Kraków (prize-winning competition design, 1920). He also designed the New Jewish Cemetery in Stanisławów, which did not survive the Nazi invasion. In the 1920s, Awin readily took part in international competitions, like that for the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jerusalem (prize-winning design, 1922–23), the agricultural school in Nahalal, Palestine, and the Great Sephardic Synagogue in Sarajevo.

As a Zionist, Awin also sought to use his professional expertise to improve construction in British Mandate Palestine and to define the architectural identity of the Holy Land. He visited in 1924 and met with Richard Kaufmann (1877–1958), the head of the local architects' union (Agudat Adrichalim be-Eretz Israel), as well as with other colleagues. He also established a relationship between Agudat Adrichalim and the Lwów-based Union of Jewish Engineers Working for the Land of Israel.

In addition, Awin prepared a lecture for the congress of Agudat Adrichalim and published an article entitled "On Building Art in the Land of Israel" (*Binyan ve-haroshet* 3–4, 1927), in which he

advocated modern, rectangular shapes in the Jewish architecture of Palestine, but unlike contemporary European modernists, he also used national-romantic language in his argument. For example, he described the flat roof as "the folk shape of building in the Land of Israel," but also mentioned the need "to find ways to give our settlements a decent artistic shape, in keeping with the level of contemporary culture." In his construction projects of the 1920s, Awin tended toward a modernist form, though combined with sculpture and expressionist décor.

Preserving Jewish Architecture

Awin's interest in Jewish heritage deepened, although he gradually distanced himself from the idea of a new "Jewish national art." As early as 1909, in his publications in *Wschód, Mult és Jövő, Das Zelt, Chwila*, and *Menorah*, he described the miserable condition of artistic heritage in Jewish society and outlined the tasks for its protection. He created a proposal for a public body for the preservation of Jewish monuments in Lwów and its surrounding region. He promoted this proposal worldwide, appealing to, among others, Dr. Cyrus Adler of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Awin's activities laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Commission for the Preservation of Jewish Art in the Jewish Community of Lwów.

In 1925, the Lwów Jewish intelligentsia founded this commission, and according to an account by the historian Majer Bałaban (1877–1942), Awin was "its soul." The goals of the commission were documenting Jewish monuments, supervising their "rational conservation," "influencing society to elevate its artistic culture and establishing a bond with a rich artistic tradition."

The commission was headed by the lawyer Prof. Maurycy Allerhand, with the Progressive rabbi Dr. Lewi Freund as vice president. Separate sections of the board addressed Hebrew prints and

books, conservation efforts, education, and the preservation of synagogues and cemeteries. Responsible for the conservation activities of the commission, Awin was involved in the restoration of the Golden Rose Synagogue in Lwów, the wooden synagogue in Janów Trembowelski (current-day Dolyna, Ukraine), and the stone synagogue in Drohobycz (modern-day Drohobych, Ukraine). Outside the scope of the commission, Awin also restored the synagogue in the Galician town of Jazłowiec (now Yazlivets, Ukraine), which had been built circa 1600 and was severely damaged during the war.

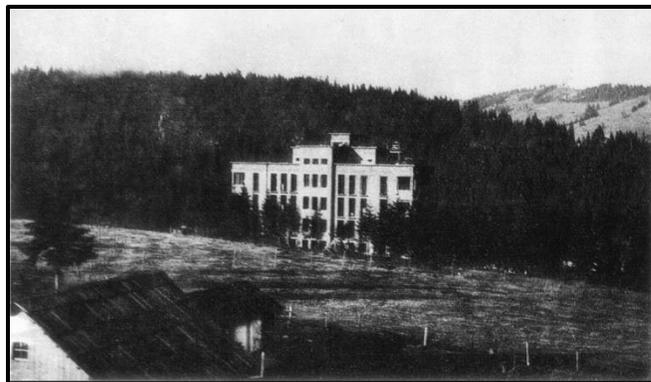
The creation of the commission was one step toward the foundation of the Jewish Museum in Lwów, which opened in 1934. Its holdings came from donations and acquisitions, as well as collections from the commission. Awin was one of the museum's founders and directors.



The Collegium Pharmaceuticum (Pharmacological College), designed by Awin; photo from 1932, courtesy of Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (the National Digital Archives of Poland)

The Shift to Full-Blown Modernism

Awin's works of the 1930s became increasingly modernist. His most prestigious projects in Lwów from that period were the apartment building of the Leon Silberstein Foundation, the Pharmacological College of Jan Kazimierz University, and the gym



The Jewish Health House, designed by Awin in Worochta.; photo appeared in the journal Dodatek Ilustrowany Chwili, 1930

of the Jewish Classical Gymnasium. In 1937–38, Awin also worked on the reconstruction of the Jewish classical school as a whole, but the outbreak of World War II derailed these plans.

Another one of his well-known projects was the Jewish Health House in Worochta (now Vorokhta, Ukraine), whose modernist design was criticized by a conservative reviewer as being done in a “crazy international sanatorium-barrack style” that was brutally introduced “into our native Carpathians” (*Wiek Nowy*, 1927). Responding to critics of his modernist approach by revisiting his previous ideas on “Jewish style,” Awin explained:

The national renaissance of art, which occurred in the early twentieth century, was only a short episode. Together with the changes that emerged in the cultural life of peoples after the World War, the folk elements are vanishing from art, and one can discern a collective effort by artists of all the peoples to find new means of expression in art. Presently, Jewish artists are also active on this path (*Nasza Opinia*, 1935).

Awin was a highly respected professional, and young architects eagerly apprenticed under his guidance. In the 1930s, he also dedicated much of his time to social and civic activities. He participated in many cultural, educational, and charitable associations, including B'nai B'rith (since

1923), the Jewish Intelligentsia Club, and the Jewish Museum board. He was also a member of the Lwów City Council from 1934 to 1939.

The Holocaust and Beyond

Everything changed after the outbreak of World War II. It is unknown whether the Soviets employed Awin during the period from 1939 to 1941. Under Nazi occupation, Józef and Wanda went into hiding, but their hiding place was ultimately disclosed to the Nazis. Józef was shot at the Janowska Road Camp during the “Great Aktion” of August 1942, and Wanda and their daughter Ewa Ruth were sent to Bełżec, where they were murdered in the gas chambers.

Meanwhile, the Awins’ daughter Hanka, her husband, Karol “Lolek” Jampoler, and her mother-in-law, Łucja Jampoler, obtained false identity papers from Rev. Józef Czapran, the St. Anthony’s parish vicar. On January 15, 1942, Hanka and Lolek had a son named Andrzej. In the summer of 1943, the young family moved to Warsaw with Łucja and her mother, Amalia Wilder, where they hid on the Aryan side. Given her non-Aryan appearance, Hanka could not leave the tiny apartment. Amalia, who could not bear being isolated in such a small space, left their hiding place undetected and committed suicide.

Meanwhile, Lolek was recognized on the street, and *szmalcownicy* (blackmailers) started hunting for the family. Lolek disappeared, and Łucja and Hanka left the baby in the church. The women surrendered to the Nazi patrol, and under false identities, they spent years of slavery on a pig farm in Germany. After the war, they found Andrzej and were able to persuade the adoptive family to give him back. (The details of this tragic story were recounted by Amalia Wilder’s granddaughter, Christine Winecki [Irena Wilder], in her book *The Girl in the Check Coat*.)

Łucja, Hanka, and Andrzej emigrated to the United States. In 1958, Hanka married Jaime Yoma and moved to Puerto Rico, where their daughters, Sylvia and Monica, were born. Sylvia Yoma Tarquine is a schoolteacher and a Holocaust researcher, and Monica Yoma-Awin is an attorney for a US government agency.

Andrew (formerly Andrzej) C.A. Jampoler graduated from Columbia University and joined the US Navy. A retired naval aviator, he has authored several nonfiction books on maritime history. Andrew and Susan Jampoler’s daughter Christina (Chrissy) M. Houlahan—the great-granddaughter of Józef Awin—is the most well-known family member. In addition to being an engineer, an entrepreneur, an educator, and a former US Air Force officer, she is a member of the US House of Representatives, serving as the first woman to represent Pennsylvania’s 6th Congressional District.

In addition to Awin’s family legacy in the US, much of his architectural legacy has survived in present-day Lviv. While some of his buildings and most of his cemetery monuments were destroyed by the Nazis, the holdings of the Jewish Museum have largely been preserved.

Editor’s note: *This article was adapted from the author’s article on Józef Awin in the book Ukrainian and Jewish Artists of Lemberg/Lwów/Lviv: From Ausgleich to the Holocaust, edited by Sergey R. Kravtsov, Ilia Rodov, and Małgorzata Stolarska-Fronia (Weimar: Grünberg Verlag, 2019). Published with permission of the author and the publisher. Sergey Kravtsov also wrote an article on synagogue architecture in the September 2017 issue of the Galitzianer.*

Map Corner

New Finds: Old Regional Maps

by Jay Osborn,
Gesher Galicia Digital Map Manager

REGIONAL MAPS OF GALICIA are a favorite target of acquisition by Gesher Galicia for our free online Map Room, because there are many ways they can be used in family history research. Perhaps most importantly, they visually define the changing borders of Galicia, as well as its *Kreise* (districts) and counties. Knowing on which side of a border an ancestral town or village falls can help define the archives where specific historical records may be found. In addition, many regional maps depict transportation routes in some detail and can help determine the evolving commercial connections between urban centers and the probable

emigration routes of our ancestors. Zoomed in to district levels, the maps can help identify nearby settlements, where additional research may reveal further family links, as well as the historical names of places that have been renamed since Galician times.

As of this writing, there are more than fifty historical regional maps in the Map Room, spanning the entire life of the Kingdom of Galicia, the brief but intense period of World War I, and the interwar period of the Second Republic of Poland, leading to the start of World War II. Many of these maps document Galicia's own borders, but overall, the maps scale from the full Austro-Hungarian Empire down to individual *Kreise*. Most of them document political boundaries, roads, and other details that existed in the year of the map's design and publication. A few of our regional maps illustrate Galicia's geography, climate, and other features.

In this article, I would like to highlight a few new additions to our collection of regional maps, first

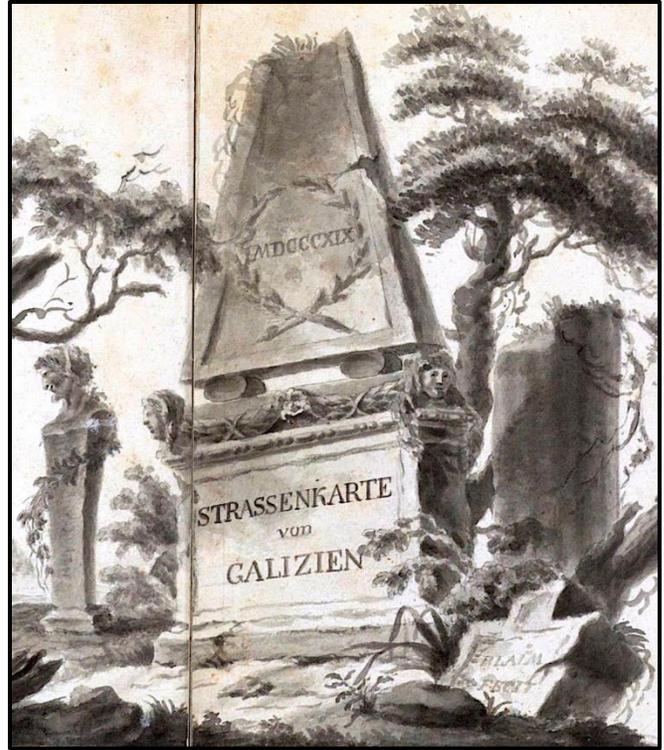
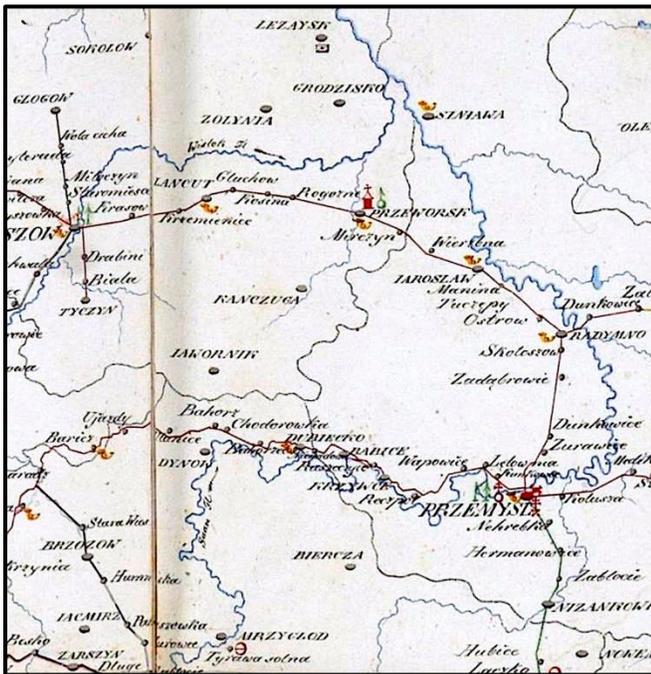


brought to our attention by a fellow enthusiast, Areta Kovalska, of the delightful cultural history and heritage website [Forgotten Galicia](#).

Franz Ludwig Güssefeld Map, 1775

The excerpt on the previous page is an eastern section from the earliest map of Galicia in our collection. One of more than a hundred maps created by the German cartographer Güssefeld, this example is notable for its utility: labeled and annotated in Polish, German, and Latin, the map includes hundreds of named settlements, three distance scales, and a trilingual legend explaining nine symbols and translating common elements of toponyms.

On the Güssefeld map, the relative locations of some towns are slightly off, perhaps to improve the clarity of noted place names. An early attempt was made to indicate topographical features, such as rivers, marshes, high hills, and the Carpathian Mountains. The map also includes a label for *Ziemia Halica [sic]*, "Land of Halych," the early historical region that gave its name to Galicia.



Johann Blaim Road Map, 1820

Two excerpts from an early road map of Galicia are shown on this page, created either by the hand or under the direction of Johann Blaim, an official of the "k.u.k. Galician Roads and Bridge-Building Directorate." As would be expected from the imperial office responsible for road building and maintenance, significant road variety is depicted (thirteen different types and gauges), but what is more remarkable from today's perspective is the actual *scarcity* of roads in between the major cities. Significant Galician towns, such as Leżajsk and Kańczuga, are shown with no official roads connecting them to any other places.

One feature of the map probably inspired some envy in Blaim's cartography colleagues. The irregular outline of Galicia left a large amount of white space at two corners, which Blaim filled with artistic renderings dedicated to the glory of the empire—and of himself. Two panels of the map depict a fanciful ruin, as shown above, carved with the map date, the state office, and Blaim's name.

Miczyński School Map, 1872

One of the more beautiful regional maps in our collection is the 1872 general map of Galicia designed by Władysław Miczyński, illustrated on this page in an excerpt of southeastern Galicia and northern Bukovina. Omitting the smaller villages from his annotations, Miczyński gave his map space to clearly depict the road, river, and rail connections between towns and cities, as well as a visual hint of the mountainous terrain which made up much of Galicia's southern border.

The map is also a clear indication of the empire's accommodation of rising national sentiments in the second half of the nineteenth century. Designed expressly for Polish-language schools, the map was created by a Pole and printed in both Vienna and Galician Rzeszów.

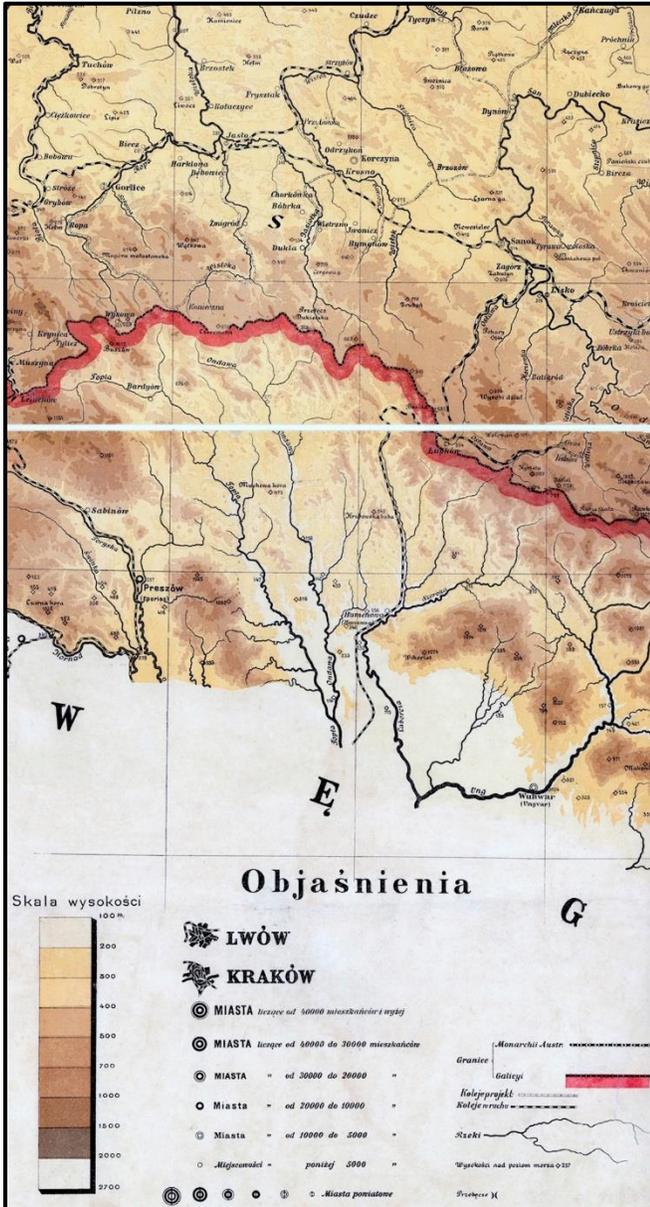
Students could learn a great deal about Galicia from this map—as can we. In addition to an outline of the founding dates of Galicia and a count of the

people and settlements within its borders, there are also tables that list several of the highest and lowest elevation points, key rivers and their principal directions of flow, and a summary of the civil administrative hierarchy within the Galician crownland, naming its cities and counties (*starostwa powiatowe*).

Stanisław Majerski Wall Map, 1894

Competing with Miczyński's school map for beauty and clarity, Stanisław Majerski used size and elegant design to convey the topography of Galicia, even at a glance from across a room. The map is very large, lithographed in Lwów in eight sections, spanning a total of five and a half feet wide by three and a half feet high (more than 1.6 m by 1.0 m). Primary roads, rails, and rivers are depicted conventionally, without obstructing the characteristics of the underlying landscape. Numerous mountain peaks, and even many towns, are annotated with their elevations above sea level.





As shown above, this map excels in its depiction of terrain relief. Majerski uses nine levels of relief shading to indicate elevation across the map, which includes the “far” side of the Carpathian Mountains, as viewed from Galicia, in what was then the Kingdom of Hungary. In the excerpt on this page, the elevation scale is shown along with a small slice of the full map of Galicia. Even in this excerpt, one can easily grasp both the terrain and the transportation routes that passed over or cut through the area.

More Regional Maps to Discover

All the maps excerpted here can be viewed in their full form and in far more detail in the [Map Room](#) on the Gesher Galicia website. Other regional maps are also available there, with a broad range of focus and purpose, featuring a variety of innovative cartographic methods. Many of the maps are also drawn and colored with great artistic beauty. We invite you to explore Galicia with us through these informative and artistic maps.

FACES of GALICIA



Itzak Leib Nussbaum (1886–1971) and his sister, Malke Nussbaum Sackler (1892–1975), both were born in Kozłów, Galicia, and died in the US. Photo taken in 1910 in Tarnopol and submitted by Diane Bark (Gesher Galicia member), Itzak Leib’s granddaughter.

Two Brothers: Parallel Lives and Divergent Paths

by Nina Talbot,
Gesher Galicia Member

THE FOLLOWING STORY is based on interviews conducted by Nina Talbot with two brothers, Betzalel (1929–2016) Wertenteil, a Holocaust survivor, and Jack (1921–) Wertenteil, a US Army veteran. Both men were born and raised in Dynów, Galicia, the town of Nina’s ancestral roots. In addition to her work with the Wertenteil brothers, Nina, a frequent contributor to the *Galitzianer*, has conducted a number of interviews with people from the Dynów area, two of which appear in prior issues of the journal (see June 2018 and September 2018). The story below was adapted from her book *Family Stories from Galicia*.

In 2013, I took my first trip to Dynów, where my grandmother was born, as well as many other members of my family. While there, I met a scholar who was gathering interviews of Holocaust survivors who were children at the time of the Nazi invasion of Poland. The researcher connected me with one of her subjects, Betzalel Wertenteil, whom I contacted after returning to New York. This phone call led to the first of many visits with Betzalel in his home in Queens, New York—and each time, he shared more of his story of survival with me. A couple months after our first meeting, Betzalel introduced me to his older brother Jack (Chaim Yaakov).



Betzalel Wertenteil at home in New York, 2013

Although separated by nine years, the brothers had parallel life experiences during early boyhood: the shtetl Dynów, where they both attended *cheder* (Jewish study house) and Polish primary school, the merchant and farming life of their father, the Yiddish life, the rebbe in Dynów, the apple trees, the church at the town entrance and the public school next to it, and the cherries growing wild near the narrow train track, the only reliable connection of the shtetl to the outside world.

After World War II, Jack and Betzalel again led parallel lives, this time within a few miles of each other in New York. But the decade in between, from 1939 to 1949, foisted circumstances upon the two brothers that changed the world, ended the lives of millions in Europe, and sent Jack and Betzalel on divergent paths. Jack was focused on adjusting to life in America and then returning to Europe as a member of the US Army; Betzalel was

focused on doing whatever he needed to do to survive with his family during the Holocaust.

Jack's Story

Jack went to primary school in Dynów in a building that still stands today and is now used by the town administration. Jewish children went to school together with non-Jewish children, and at the time, the Jewish students had to sit in the back of the classroom. In the afternoons, the Jewish boys went to cheder. Yiddish was Jack's first language, and he also spoke Polish and Hebrew.

Jack left Dynów at fifteen and went to study at the yeshiva in Tarnów. He considered himself lucky to have had good teachers, who were dedicated to passing on the traditions of Torah and Talmud. These traditions are still the centerpieces of his life today—as a ninety-eight-year-old man living in Long Island, New York. During his time as a yeshiva student in Tarnów, Jack used to come home to Dynów on *yom tov* (Jewish holidays), which is where he was for six months before immigrating to the United States by himself in 1937 at the age of seventeen.

Jack and Betzalel's mother, Tila, died of throat cancer in 1939 before the Nazi invasion of Dynów. After her death, the family burdens fell to their father, Duvid, who was widowed with six children to care for. Duvid and his daughter Chancha, who was sixteen at the time, held the family together.

Meanwhile, Jack was working in a hosiery shop on Orchard Street in New York's Lower East Side. After leaving Europe, he said, "It took a few years to undo the religion, 'to unplug,' and the army did the rest." He was drafted into the US Army in 1941, returning to Europe as an American soldier and serving in England, Ireland, France, Belgium, and Germany.

The War in My Shtetl

During one of our interviews, Betzalel explained:

In 1937, '38, '39, Jews had a rough time living in Dynów because Hitler came to power. All of Europe was threatened, especially Poland, which was the first victimized country. The Poles were the first people really fighting. Czechoslovakia gave up, so the Jews were the first victims. Are there people in Poland who believe there was no Holocaust, like they have in America? No.

The Nazis invaded Dynów during Rosh Hashanah in September of 1939. The Jews comprised one-third of the population of the town at the time, and on that day, about 400 Jews were killed. Most of them were rounded up and taken to two different locations where they were shot into ravines, including thirty-seven members of my family. Others died when the Nazis set fire to one of the shuls. Traumatized by that childhood memory, a friend of mine from Dynów, a Catholic man named Józef, told me that he recalled seeing Nazis pulling Torahs out of the shul and setting them ablaze in the *rynek* (town square). According to Józef, when an elderly rabbi tried to extinguish the fire by stamping on it, the Nazis tossed him into the burning synagogue. Among the dead in Dynów on that day were Jews from western Poland who had moved eastward to escape the Nazis, as well as Jews from neighboring towns who had come to shop, visit relatives, and attend Rosh Hashanah services at one of the three shuls located on the town square.

During our interviews, Betzalel shared his memories with me from September 1939. It was surreal listening to him, then in his 80s, recounting the most horrific events imaginable, as seen and comprehended by a nine-year-old boy. At one point during his description of the Nazi invasion, he said, "I didn't have a childhood."

After the Nazis arrived, Betzalel recalls running with his five siblings and his father through the back of the shul because the Germans were in front on the rynek. When the family got home, the Nazis were shooting, and the main road was full of soldiers, horses, cavalry, and wagons. The Nazis surrounded the town and sent up flares.

At one point during the Rosh Hashanah holiday, German soldiers came to Betzalel's house in search of Polish soldiers. Betzalel recalled that during that time, he was out playing in the train yard and saw German Luftwaffe warplanes flying overhead. He hid under a train parked in the yard and remembered seeing the German soldiers' black boots from his hiding spot. When the boots walked away, he scrambled up the hillside, back to his house. There was a drummer walking the streets—one method of making announcements to the townspeople—calling for the Jews to come to the rynek or they would be killed. At the time, nine-year-old Betzalel didn't understand, so he didn't tell his family. Then, he saw German militia with SS uniforms walk up the road from the family's house and turn the corner.

Betzalel remembered seeing Germans over the next few days celebrating while driving through town in their Mercedes. Meanwhile, once they occupied Dynów, they imposed a curfew on the residents. Betzalel said that his father was ordered to perform the task of picking up the bodies in the street of people shot dead for violating the curfew.

Soon after the invasion, Duvid took his six children and fled down to the San River, where they were able to cross on a raft to get to the Polish village of Bartkówka. The river was muddy, and people were trying to swim across. Many drowned—the elderly, mothers, and children. Betzalel said that after his family crossed, they stayed in a basement room, getting food from a soup kitchen set up to feed those fleeing from the Nazis.

Refugees from Death-Saturated Lands

For the next ten years, Betzalel's growth into manhood was not simply a path through the developmental stages as we now know them, but a struggle through history, political upheaval, sudden changes in governments, different languages, shifts in attitudes toward Jews, border crossings and trips of thousands of miles, with little more than rumor informing him of what lay at the next stop and what tragedy or challenge awaited him in the coming hours—or even moments.

After the massacres in Dynów, Jews who made it across the San River to Bartkówka found themselves in territory controlled by Russian soldiers. The Russians, who considered the Poles traitors, forced them out of the area. For the Wertenteils and other families, that meant a long journey by rail and by raft along a convergence of several rivers through the Gulag. Toward the end of the journey, the Wertenteils' raft headed downriver in the current, far beyond their designated landing spot, eventually running into a sandbar, where villagers pulled the family ashore.

Duvid and his four sons (Israel, Meilech, Leib, and Betzalel) and two daughters (Chancha and Ettel) ended up living in log cabins in the Siberian town of Bodaybo. During that time, his son Israel was arrested for getting an unauthorized bread ration card and was sentenced to seven months in the Gulag. Betzalel remembered that when his sixteen-year-old brother, Meilech, made the journey to bring food to Israel in prison, he "drowned" in the snow on his way back. Meilech was somehow rescued, brought back to the cabin, and revived by their father, but after a year and a half of illness, he died of pneumonia. When Israel finally returned from the Gulag, he lay in bed for six months with a stomach swollen from hunger.

On June 22, 1941, the Germans invaded Russia in Operation Barbarossa. With that turn of events,

the Poles in Russia were considered helpful resources in the fight against the Nazis. The people in Bodaybo were sent into the hills to chop wood and mine for gold. Duvid was assigned to work as a night watchman for a warehouse in the forest. Betzalel recalled his sister Ettel picking icicles off their father's face and beard after a work shift in the freezing cold.

As the war progressed and the Germans retreated, the Wertenteil family gradually moved westward. In 1944, getting closer to Poland, the family remained for a time in the Volga area of Russia. Chancha, who had become like a mother to her younger siblings, found work in the city of Mari-ental, home to a German colony that had existed in Russia for centuries.

Reencountering His People in Europe

That same year, Jack's unit landed in Normandy, eleven days after the invasion. He was stationed in an administrative post in a US military dental office in the city of Étampes, near Paris. During our interview, he described the scenes after the liberation of Paris in August 1944. He said that Jewish people were living in train stations all over France. They were refugees who could not go back to the places they had lived before the war because their homes had been destroyed or taken. He added, "When they got off the train, people screamed and hugged each other, [saying], 'I didn't know you were alive!'"

On Yom Kippur of 1944, Jack went to the Great Synagogue of Paris on Rue de la Victoire, which had been bombed by the Nazis three years earlier. Jewish Allied soldiers and a couple thousand Jews who had survived the camps packed into the sanctuary. Services were led by Rabbi Judah Nadich, the senior Jewish adviser to General Eisenhower, who was instrumental in getting Jews from the DP (displaced persons) camps into Palestine and the US. As Jack explained, "He helped Jewish people

who could not return to where they came from." Jack would never forget what he saw in the shul that day, nor would he ever forget the scenes in the train stations.



Betzalel and Jack's sister Ettel working as a seamstress in Siberia, circa 1942

There's No Going Home

While Jack *witnessed* refugees unable to return home, his father and siblings *were* refugees who could not go home. By 1946, Poland was under Russian control, and Polish citizens, including Jews, were given permission to return to their home country. But after the Kielce pogrom on July 4, 1946, when forty-two Jews were killed, the Wertenteil family was on the road again. Betzalel said he could "smell the hatred of Jews." It was easier to hide in the woods than stay in the towns.

The family eventually made it to the Czech border, where Betzalel remembered hiding for three days, awaiting the opportunity to cross. After arriving in Czechoslovakia, he recalled walking through fields, coming to Bratislava (now capital of Slovakia), and then taking a train to Austria. In Vienna, the family was brought to Admont, a DP camp near the Enns River in Linz, which Betzalel said consisted mostly of Jewish survivors from Hungary.

A few weeks later, they took a train to Munich and ended up in Feldafing, the largest DP camp in Germany, which was under the control of General Patton and was primarily made up of concentration camp survivors. Betzalel recounted the camp gained notoriety when Patton had it surrounded with German military police, fearing that the Jews would take revenge against the German prisoners of war within the camp population. But Eisenhower intervened and had the German police removed. Betzalel and his family also lived for a time in other DP camps, including Bamberg, Eichstätt, and Traunstein.

In July 1949, the family finally set sail from Hamburg to the US, arriving on July 14. They traveled on the S.S. Marine Shark, a military ship used for transporting survivors. Their passage, paid for by the Joint Distribution Committee, cost \$210 for the entire family—a lot of money at the time.

Brothers Reunited in America

When Jack returned to the US in 1945, he went back to work on the Lower East Side at the hosiery store where he had worked when he first arrived in New York City. He made \$50 a week, working six days a week. A few years later, he and a partner started their own hosiery business, which grew into a large company. Meanwhile, Betzalel adjusted to life in America and ended up pursuing a lengthy career as a satellite engineer at Lockheed Martin in New York.



The Wertenteil siblings, New York, 1994: Jack, Israel (1925–2001), Betzalel, Leib (1934–1995), Ettel (1923–2013), and Chancha (circa 1919–2014)

In 1954, Jack married a woman named Phyllis, whom he had met several years earlier. The newlyweds introduced Betzalel to Phyllis' friend Helen, a Holocaust survivor whose experience was very different from Betzalel's. Helen was born and raised in Antwerp, Belgium, and had been hidden in a convent during the war. Betzalel and Helen were married in May 1955.

The first time I met the Wertenteil brothers together was at the Bagel Boss restaurant in Roslyn, New York, in November 2013. By that time, they were both retired—Jack was ninety-three, and Betzalel was eighty-four. Betzalel passed away a couple years later in February 2016. He had been married to Helen for nearly sixty years, and the couple had four children and many grandchildren. Jack is now almost a hundred years old.

Despite the utter disconnect between the lives of the two brothers between 1939 and 1949, it was hard to believe that either of them had ever lived anything but the American Dream of the Galitzi-*aner* in the *goldene medina* (golden land). And those New York bagels, which we quickly devoured at that first gathering, proved it.

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