

International Conference

On the Edge of the Empire: The Cultural and Historical Legacy of Galicia and Bukovina



12-14 June 2022 | The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute | 43 Jabotinsky Street, Jerusalem



International Academic Committee:

Israel Bartal, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Semyon Goldin, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Yaroslav Hrytsak, Ukrainian Catholic University

Gershon David Hundert, McGill University

Rachel Manekin, the University of Maryland

Serhii Plokhii, Harvard University

Joshua Shanes, the College of Charleston

Adam Teller, Brown University

Sunday 12.06

16:30 – 19:00 Opening Session

Chair: **Gershon Hundert** (McGill University)

Greetings

David Wallach (Weizmann Institute of Science; Chair of Jewish Galicia and Bukovina Organization)

Eli Lederhendler (Chair of Leonid Nevzlin Research Center, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Keynote Addresses

Larry Wolff (New York University)

Galicia after Galicia: The Fantasies and Phantoms of the Galician Legacy

Israel Bartal (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Agnon's Complaint: Lushn ashkenaz, Imperial Language, and the Jews of halbasien (1772-1939)

19:00 Reception



Monday 13.06

9:30 – 11:00 *Facing Modernity: The Jewish Dimension*

Chair: **Michael Silber** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Joshua Shanes (The College of Charleston)
Political Modernization among Galician Jews

Rachel Manekin (The University of Maryland)
Modernization and Galician Jewry: A Gendered Perspective

Discussants: **Vladyslava Moskalets** (The Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv), **Andriy Zayarnyuk** (University of Winnipeg)

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00 *Geopolitical Boundaries and Changing Identities*

Chair: **Joshua Shanes** (The College of Charleston)

François Guesnet (University College London)
Between Communal Mandate and Political Opportunity: Jewish Intercession in Early Modern and 19th-century Europe

Discussants: **Gershon Hundert** (McGill University), **Israel Bartal** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 16:15 *Mosaic of Cultures*

Chair: **Maciej Janowski** (Central European University)

Dirk Sadowski (Leibniz Institute for Educational Media,| Georg Eckert Institute)
“There is hardly any school in Galicia where the teacher doesn’t have a noticeable Jewish accent...” – Habsburg’s Language Policy towards Galician Jewry, 1782–1806

Gershon Hundert (McGill University)
Portents of Change in the Writings of Dov Ber Birkenthal

15:00-15:15 Coffee break

Omer Bartov (Brown University)
Tales from the Borderlands and the Fictions of History

Andriy Zayarnyuk (University of Winnipeg)
Galicia's Contribution to the Formation of Modern Ukrainian Culture: A Reconsideration



16:15 – 16:45 Coffee break

16:45 – 18:00 Roundtable - open discussion:
Revisiting Perspectives: Historians' Galicia

Moderator: **Paul Robert Magocsi** (The University of Toronto)

Maciej Janowski (Central European University)

Michael Silber (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Larry Wolff (New York University)



Tuesday 14.06

9:30-11:45 *Literature and Society*

Chair: **Israel Bartal** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv)
The Galician Triangle in the Galician Literature: Case of the 1884 Boryslav War

Eugenia Prokop-Janiec (Jagiellonian University, Kraków)
Polish Literature in Galicia

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee break

Hannan Hever (Yale University)
R. Nachman Krochmal and the Study of Modern Hebrew Literature

Ofer Dynes (Columbia University)
Galicia and/or Ukraine in the Yiddish Mind

11:45 – 12:15 Coffee break

12:15 – 14:30 *"Meorei Galicia": Jewish Learning, 16th-20th Centuries*

Chair: **David Assaf** (Tel Aviv University)

Tamara Morsel-Eisenberg (Harvard University)
Rabbi Moshe Isserles and the Transformation of Ashkenazic Halakha in Poland

Roe Goldschmidt (The Open University of Israel)
Trends in the Development and Study of Kabbalah in Galicia

Benjamin Brown (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
Ta'amei Haminhagim Umekorei Hadinim: The book, its Directions, and its Place in the Development of Halakhah and of Hasidism

Iris Brown (Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies)
Between Hasidism and Neo-Orthodoxy: Sara Schenirer between Two Worlds

14:30 – 15:30 Lunch break

15:30-16:45 **Roundtable** - open discussion:
Religion and Society

Moderator: **Adam Teller** (Brown University)

Haim Gertner (Yad Vashem)

Gershon Hundert (McGill University)

Paul Robert Magocsi (The University of Toronto)

16:45 – 17:00 Coffee break

17:00 – 18:00 *Closing remarks*

19:00 Dinner (Angelica Restaurant, George Washington St 4)



ABSTRACTS

Keynote Addresses

Larry Wolff (New York University)

Galicia after Galicia: The Fantasies and Phantoms of the Galician Legacy

This lecture will consider the afterlife of Galicia following its "liquidation" at the end of World War I with the dissolution of the Habsburg monarchy. Galicia was first "invented" in the late eighteenth century, as a Habsburg province, at the time of the partitions of Poland, and then gradually acquired a provincial geopolitical reality and identity over the course of the nineteenth century, before entering the fictive realm of fantasies and phantoms, an imaginary existence, after 1918. The legacy of Galicia was shaped by the ways in which it was remembered across the twentieth century, and this lecture will consider the evolution of cultural memory and symbolic significance across several generations from 1918 up until the early twenty-first century.

Israel Bartal (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Agnon's Complaint: Lushn ashkenaz, Imperial Language, and the Jews of halbasien (1772-1939)

Galicia emerged as a defined geopolitical phenomenon following the late 18th century partitions of Poland to become over the long 19th century one out of several other provinces in the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire. Similar to Jewry in the neighboring empires, Galician Jewry, who constituted part of the Eastern-European wing of the Yiddish speaking Ashkenazi diaspora, had experienced drastic political, social, and cultural changes. Much of the imperial 'modernization' project focused on the state's efforts to co-opt the Jews into a regional German-speaking imagined community. The imperial attitude towards Yiddish, the Jewish vernacular, played a crucial role in shaping modern Jewish culture and politics in the region. The Nobel Prize Laureate Shmuel Yosef Agnon (1888-1970), a native Galician Jew, devoted some of his Hebrew prose writings to the role of the German language in making the *ostjuden* of the

province 'Jews of the Empire.' This lecture will present Agnon's overview of the Galician German-Yiddish ongoing encounter from 1772 Poland to early 20th century Germany and Palestine. Agnon's critical observations will be used as an outline for a revision of the outdated historian's galitziனர்

Facing Modernity: The Jewish Dimension

Joshua Shanes (The College of Charleston)

Political Modernization among Galician Jews

The political emancipation of Galician Jews in 1867 turned Galicia into an incubator of nearly the entire spectrum of modern Jewish politics. First Liberalism and Orthodoxy in the 1860s and 1870s, later Zionism, Socialism, and countless permutations in between them from 1880s and beyond. With the birth of mass suffrage at the turn of the century, and the growth of the capitalist economy, Galician Jewry's process of transformation into modern Jews leaped forward. This short talk will survey this process, with a particular interest in the extent to which nationalism did and did not serve as a key category of Jewish identity.

Rachel Manekin (University of Maryland)

Modernization and Galician Jewry: A Gendered Perspective

The historiography of the modernization of Galician Jewry generally focuses on areas from which women were seemingly excluded or, at best, marginalized, such as politics, religion, and literature. My talk will consider the agency of Jewish women, demonstrating how despite legal and social restrictions, women carved a place for themselves in almost every area of modern life.

Geopolitical Boundaries and Changing Identities

François Guesnet (University College London)

Between Communal Mandate and Political Opportunity: Jewish Intercession in Early Modern and 19th-century Europe

Defending the rights, interests and well-being of the members of an individual Jewish community was among the core tasks of its leadership. Looking at examples from the 16th to the 19th centuries, this lecture will probe the circumstances under which this

prerogative of intercession could be challenged or supplanted. It will argue that the different features of intercession reflect the loosening of corporate bonds from the mid-18th century and reflect shifts of Jewish communal authority and political legitimacy.

Mosaic of Cultures

Dirk Sadowski (Leibniz Institute for Educational Media: Georg Eckert Institute, Braunschweig, Germany)

“There is hardly any school in Galicia where the teacher doesn’t have a noticeable Jewish accent...” – Habsburg’s Politics of Language towards Galician Jewry, 1782–1806

One of the main goals of the Josephine reform policy towards the Galician Jews in the 1780s and 1790s was the "improvement of their moral condition" through the replacement of the Yiddish vernacular with the German language. Thus, the "purification" of the language was at the focus of the Jewish-German schools under the supervision of the Maskil Herz Homberg (1749-1841). My contribution provides an overview of the state’s efforts to eradicate the “Jewish accent” in the spoken language of Galician Jews and of the Jews’ everyday countermeasures against the Habsburg school policies that ultimately made these efforts so unsuccessful.

Gershon Hundert (McGill University)

Portents of Change in the Writings of Dov Ber Birkenthal

The two compositions written in Hebrew (preserved in manuscript and never published in full) by the Galician wine merchant, Dov Ber Birkenthal (1723-1805) provide a window into his era and the basis for a case study of the significance of “the challenges of modernity” in his own life. His writings refer at times, for example, to the French Revolution, the Bar Confederacy and the Partitions of Poland, the reforms of Joseph II, the rise of Hasidism, and, at great length, the movement named for Jacob Frank. I will emphasize the contrasts between the author’s professed conservatism and his actual behavior as evidence of the “small changes” that were afoot in his times. Birkenthal is certainly aware that changes are under way in his day; the question is

whether his clearly expressed confidence that the new challenges can be met should be taken more seriously than the underlying anxiety that gives rise to his self-assured declarations.

Omer Bartov (Brown University)

Tales from the Borderlands and the Fictions of History

This talk will present the gist of my forthcoming book, *Tales from the Borderlands: Making and Unmaking the Galician Past*, to be published by Yale University Press in June 2022. I shall first discuss my chosen approach of first-person history, which ends with an account of my own family's transition from Galicia to Palestine. I shall then provide several examples from the book of how myth and fiction have interacted with the perception of history in the past and the present. Among others, I shall refer to works by such writers as S.Y. Agnon, Nikolai Gogol, Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, and Karl Emil Franzos, all of whom both imagined the past and molded its future understanding in their own particular way.

Andriy Zayarnyuk (University of Winnipeg)

Galicia's Contribution to the Formation of Modern Ukrainian Culture: A Reconsideration.

Historians agree that the historical experience of Habsburg Galicia was profoundly important in the formation of modern Jewish, Polish and Ukrainian cultures and identities. In the Ukrainian case, however, Galicia's role seemed to be crucial. Generations of Ukrainian intellectuals and historians, starting with the end of the nineteenth century, reflected on this Galician contribution. Using findings from current scholarship on the subject, this paper will revisit and reconceptualize nineteenth century encounters between the Galician and the "Dnieper" Ukraines.

Literature and Society

Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University)

The Galician Triangle in Galician Literature: The Case of the 1884 Boryslav War

The Galician Triangle is defined as the relations between three local nations in the making: Jewish, Polish and Ukrainian. The most important venue of nineteenth century nation-building was literature, in particular *belles lettres*. The paper focuses on the very controversial incident of the 1884 pogrom in the Boryslav oilfields and how it was presented by Jewish, Polish and Ukrainian writers in their endeavor to create modern national identities.

Eugenia Prokop-Janiec (Jagiellonian University)

Polish Literature in Galicia

Polish literature in Galicia not only contributed to the national literary canon but also formed a peculiar regional literary output. The paper will discuss these very aspects of Galician writing: its connectedness and its relationship to the general rhythms of literary trends, as well as its distinctiveness rooted in local circumstances and determined by cultural, social, historical and political factors. Thus, mapping major literary centers, presenting main groups, programs and writers will be accompanied by an analysis of literary representations of Galicia and expressions of Galician identity.

Hannan Hever (Yale University)

R. Nachman Krochmal, and the Study of Modern Hebrew Literature

The talk will deal with Dov Sadan – the famous Galician literary critic and scholar of Hebrew and Yiddish Literatures – as a follower of Krochmal. The discussion will analyze Sadan's theory of Jewish literatures and the way he wrote about the Galician Hebrew Literature Nobel Laureate S. Y. Agnon.

Ofer Dynes (Columbia University)

Galicja and/or Ukraine in the Yiddish Mind

This talk will explore the Jewish geographical imaginary associated with the partially overlapping "Galicia" and "Ukraine," both in the traditional Ashkenazi context, as well as in modern Yiddish Literature.

"Meorei Galicja": Jewish Learning, 16th-20th Centuries

Tamara Morsel-Eisenberg (Harvard University)

Rabbi Moshe Isserles and the Transformation of Ashkenazic Halakha in Poland.

Rabbi Moshe Isserles was central to the development of Ashkenazic halakha in the sixteenth century in two ways: First, he was an important rabbi who led the community in Krakow, teaching in the yeshiva and answering responsa. Second, his addition of Ashkenazic glosses to the *Shulhan Arukh* made this halakhic code applicable to Ashkenaz, at once unifying multitudes of local customs into one pan-Ashkenazic *minhag* and placing the Ashkenazic law within a global halakhic legal order. This talk will explore these two roles and the intersection between them through two texts by R. Isserles: A responsum in which he justifies carrying out a marriage on Shabbat, on the one hand, and his gloss on the corresponding section of *Shulhan Arukh*, on the other.

The resulting picture invites reflection about the different forms of halakhic thinking represented in responsa versus codification and their respective roles. Moreover, it is a portrayal of R. Isserles' unique position and a pivotal moment in early modern Poland that would change the world of halakha forever.

Roe Goldschmidt (The Open University of Israel)

Trends in the Development and Study of Kabbalah in Galicia

Despite its centrality in Jewish culture, the varied, rich kabbalistic creativity in Eastern Europe, in general, and Galicia, in particular, has merited little attention in the modern scholarship. As a focal component of Jewish culture, Kabbalah received representation in the region's literature, sermons, custom, and art. Spanning the period from the generation of Rabbi Jacob Pollak of Krakow, the forefather of the Polish

yeshivot, to the nineteenth century, this lecture seeks to identify the varied influences on, and the different trends in, the development of Kabbalah in Galicia.

Benjamin Brown (*The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*)

***Ta'amei Haminhagim Umekorei Hadinim*: The book, its directions, and its place in the development of Halakha and of Hasidism**

In 1891, Avraham Yitzhak Sperling (1851-1921), a *shohet* from Lviv, published a modest book entitled *Ta'amei haminhagim umekorei hadinim*. The book collects various Ashkenazi customs, a good number of them hasidic, and offers short explanations of each. Its success was overwhelming, and already within the author's lifetime, six editions as well as a Yiddish translation were published. The author added new material in each edition, most enumerating more customs but some with more theoretical discussions about the general importance of *minhag*. The book's popularity increased even more in subsequent years. While it looks "innocent" at first glance, lacking polemic arguments, this work played an important role in the legitimation of hasidic *minhag*, the development of the hasidic perception of *minhag*; and the sanctification of *minhag* in the broader halakhic context – against the modernist forces that sought to diminish its normative status.

Iris Brown (Ono Academic College, Israel)

Between Hasidism and Neo-Orthodoxy: Sara Schenirer between Two Worlds

Sara Schenirer (1882-1935), the founder of the Beit Yaakov Girls' School in Krakow (1917), which already in her lifetime developed into the world's largest Jewish educational network, was born and grew up in a house of Belzer Hasidim. According to her own testimony, her motivation to create the school was inspired by the *Torah im Derech Eretz* ideology, the Neo-Orthodox trend of German Jewry. At least until her death, the school was run to some degree according to that ideology. However, along with its *Torah im Derech Eretz* foundations, the network, as well as Schenirer herself, added some hasidic elements to the enterprise, reflecting early influences on the founder's spiritual development. In this lecture I will examine the degree to which this hasidic ingredient was part and parcel of Schenirer's persona and the extent to which it coalesced with the Neo-Orthodox infrastructure of Beit Yaakov.



The conference is sponsored by the Jewish Galicia and Bukovina Organization.

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Jewish Galicia and Bukovina Organization (www.jgaliciabukovina.net) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the documentation, preservation and educational dissemination of the history and rich cultural heritage of the Jewish communities of Galicia and Bukovina. To this end, JGB Organization is engaged in different areas of activity:

supporting academic centers and individual researchers, developing online free resources that present the historical, cultural, and rabbinic heritage of Galician and Bukovinian Jewish communities, organizing annual expeditions that document Jewish cemeteries in Galicia and Bukovina and so on.

In 2021, JGB organization started an innovative and groundbreaking project: a wide-ranging historical atlas that characterizes the history of Galician and Bukovina Jewry from its inception until its destruction during the Holocaust, and beyond. The atlas will combine maps, general texts, and a variety of visual material, including illustrations, photographs, and diagrams.

We are keen on mobilizing leading researchers from various academic centers of the world to join forces in this project, along with young scholars.