*This issue contains articles about
the IAJGS conference in Chicago!*

ATSMI UVSARI

"My Bone and My Flesh"

עצמי ובשרי

Issue #20   Winter 2008

In This Issue

The 2008 IAJGS Conference

The 28th International Conference on Jewish Genealogy had more than 800 registrants who took advantage of the enormous program which included more than 200 events: lectures, computer workshops, films, SIG and Birds of a Feather meetings, Breakfasts with the Experts, sponsored luncheons with speakers, trips to local sites, and other functions.

At the Thursday night banquet, five awards were given in recognition of contributions to Jewish genealogy.

The "IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award" went to Howard Margol in recognition of his pioneering work in Lithuanian Jewish genealogy research. He created the American Fund for Lithuanian-Latvian Jews, which provides help to the Jewish community of the Baltic States. And he has served as president of the JGS of Georgia, president of the IAJGS, and chair of the Litvak SIG.

Steven Lasky received the "Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy Award" for the creation of an online virtual museum, The Museum of Family History, which contains a wealth of information of value to Jewish family history research.

The "Outstanding Project Award" went to Petra Laidlaw of England for creating the "Jewish Community in Mid-19th Century Britain" database.

The JGS of Great Britain won the "Outstanding Publication Award" for their collection of guidebooks comprising the "Jewish Ancestors?" series, focusing on various segments of Jewish genealogical research in Europe.

Finally, the Italian Genealogy Group located in New York received the "Stern Grant" to support their Brooklyn Brides Index for 1910-1930, which will add to the other 12 million records in their ongoing indexing project of vital and naturalization records of the New York City area.

The 2009 conference will be August 17-22 in Philadelphia.

Steve Lasky, Howard Margol, Steve Morse (awards committee chair),
Anthony Joseph (JGS Great Britain president), Michael Hoffman (receiving for Petra Laidlaw).

Chicago 2008: A First Time for Everything

by Banai Lynn Feldstein

My first time ever to Chicago was for the 2008 IAJGS conference. When I checked in at registration Saturday night, another first: inside my registration packet was a purple ribbon that said "Speaker". It was my fourth IAJGS conference but my first time attending as a speaker. I was scheduled for two sessions: a computer lab titled "Creating Your Family Newsletter" and a lecture I called "Szlepping Through Kalisz: A Journey of Researching Polish Families Using the Family History Library and JRI-Poland".

My computer lab was on Sunday afternoon. I hadn't attended any computer labs at previous conferences or I might have been better prepared for what awaited me. Each person in the lab was at a different level of computer literacy, making my job much more difficult, but I expected that. As I demonstrated how to do something on the computer, I wanted each person to also do the same thing at his or her computer. Unfortunately, following each task, I had to walk around the room to see if each person had succeeded and to try to help some of them figure out what I had just demonstrated. I was afraid that I might not have prepared enough to use the entire lab time, but instead I ran out of time.

From comments I received after the lab, it didn't go as badly as I thought. I learned a few things about teaching the lab. For instance, I was trying to teach in a logical fashion for putting together a newsletter, but the first task, while it started simple enough, ended in a slightly complicated move; everyone seemed to follow along until the very end. In the future, I'll begin with the easiest tasks. I also made some suggestions for future conferences. Sitting behind everyone, or setting up the network so I could monitor everyone's progress, I would have known exactly when my instructions became complicated and I could have stopped to try to explain better before too many people

were confused. Also, my introducer/helper was unfamiliar with the software and my lesson, so she could only help with some of the computer basics.

I then had until late Thursday morning to continue preparing for my other lecture, with last minute changes, adding more visuals to the presentation, and going over in my head all the things I wanted to say. The lecture seemed to go better than the computer lab. By the end, my introducer told me that I had a few more people in the room than when I started, and I could only recall one person leaving mid-session.

My lecture had two parts. First, I told the story of how I found and compiled my own family information from Polish records, first with an example of the success of my Kurlender family from Wizna, then moving on to the details of compiling my Szlepper family from Kalisz. The second half was a quick version of how to extract the vital information from the records in Polish and Russian; I spent most of the time on Polish since I assumed that most of the attendees were unaccustomed to reading Polish, let alone Cyrillic handwriting. A bit nervous, I tried not to ramble, as I told my audience, "I'll try not to ramble too much, 'cause we all know that when we start talking about our genealogy, we just go on and on and on." I was subsequently able to listen to the recording without cringing, and I think I did pretty well. I told a few jokes and I could even hear the laughter on the recording, especially after the story about my cousin, Ed, a pilot who offered to copy records for me at the FHL on his layovers before I moved to Salt Lake City, and how he stopped telling me about his layovers for a while after I sent him for Polish records the first time out.

All in all, it was an enjoyable experience. I learned quite a few things and I look forward to presenting more lectures at future conferences.

Advanced Googling for Genealogists

by Rochelle Kaplan

Matthew H. Marx, mhmarx@alum.mit.edu, presented this useful lecture. Marx, active in the Boston Jewish Genealogical Society, noted that there is a ten word limit on searches. The order of words matters! Putting genealogy Jewish yields different results than Jewish genealogy. And singular differs from plural. Google uses no punctuation. It has filters so there is no need to put AND, but you do need OR.

Marx gave a demonstration. Typing "Michael Marx" genealogy yielded 218 results. Adding the word Lexington yielded 32 results. Adding Kentucky yielded 3 results.

Here are his suggestions regarding basic searches:

- Jewish genealogy returns results with the words Jewish and genealogy.
- "Jewish genealogy" returns results with this exact phrase
- Archives France OR Germany returns results about archives in either country
- Archives Germany -Berlin returns results which leave out archives in Berlin
- Stop words, such as: and, in, of, the, for, from, about, etc. are ignored by Google (so omit these in search terms)
- Using a + sign before a word forces Google to include the word in the search.

He also discussed syntax, the key to focused searches:

Inurl: JewishGen	finds ONLY results with JewishGen in the URL
Intitle: JRI-Poland	finds ONLY results with JRI-Poland as part of title
Related: www.JewishGen.org	finds ONLY results with content similar to JewishGen
Site:www. Familytreemagazine.com	finds ONLY results within specified site
Site:domain	finds ONLY results in specified domain (e.g. gov)
Filetype: PDF	finds ONLY results of specified file type (e.g. PDF)
Link: www.jgsgb.org	finds ONLY results pages that include link to JGSGB
(This useful to find out what other sites are trying to link to that site)	
Date:	finds ONLY results limited to specified date or range
#...#:	finds ONLY results within given range of #s
Safesearch:	finds ONLY results without "adult" content
Intext: search term	ignores titles, URLS, links
Inanchor:	finds text behind buttons and icons
(This will yield hidden email addresses)	
Info: URL	finds info about this site
Tilde or Similar symbol: ~	searches for specified term and synonyms (e.g. car, automobile)
(The symbol on top, to the left of the 1 key)	
A*B	finds search terms A & B separated by one or more words

Fun Facts

In The Book of Useless Information, "Snow angels originated from medieval Jewish mystics who practiced rolling in the snow to purge themselves of evil urges."

Syntax for Google Groups:

Group:	finds ONLY results for specified group
Author:	finds ONLY results for group messages from specified author
Insubject:	finds ONLY results with specified term in message subject

Specialized Information Operators:

Define: term	will return variety of sources defining term
Phonebook	will return phone # for named search
Rphonebook	will return only residential phone #s
Bphonebook	will return only business listings
Weather:	type in weather and you will see box to put in city or zip code. Hitting enter will give 5 day weather forecast.

For more info:

www.google.com/help/cheatsheet.html	Google's own help page
www.googleguide.com	Interactive website with more Google tips

Google: The Missing Manual by Sarah Milstein et al, Pogue Press, 2005.

Marx also said that one can set individual preferences. Go to preference box. Select language English and you can exclude foreign languages. You can set results per page. Right now the default is 10. Marx sets his at 20. Save your preferences.

You can ask a question. If you type, Germany has * federal states, Google treats * as a question. You can use translation tools. On the left hand Google tool bar, click more. Then go to Communicate, Show and Share, click link to Translate. Insert in URL, the words you wish to translate, then click language from list of languages. Yiddish is not available; Hebrew is.

There is loads more. Ways to track a tracking number, to view maps, do calculations, track a flight. Google Images has a myriad of images. Typing in "German Jewish Genealogy" yields 1740 results. If you instead type in bookintitle: "German Jewish Genealogy", it yields 22 results. But if you type in range of years, 2002…2007, you get only one result.

City Directories: Unique Uses
by Rochelle Kaplan

Want to find consumer tips, state map, area codes, emergency phone numbers, government offices, voting information including a voter registration form, advertising, and community or municipality names for a city all in one book? You can, in a 2008 Salt Lake City phone directory.

Most people use city directories for addresses and phone numbers. Presenter Diane Freilich reported on other sources of information found in city directories, which were usually published annually from the mid-1800s on. The city directory resulted from public need and was usually published in early June, because leases commonly expired in May. The front of each city directory often includes a history of the town, places of worship, societies, and cemeteries. Sometimes religious leaders (pastors, rabbis) were listed. Often, spouse's occupations and employers were listed and sometimes, names of children. At times, if the party moved, that would be listed. I know I have seen cases in the New Haven Directory where a notation "removed to NYC" appeared next to a name.

If a death occurred in the previous year, that might be listed. This can be useful in trying to determine a death year. Sometimes, the note "widow or widower" appeared. A business directory is listed by business type. A list of names too late for inclusion in the directory appears at the beginning or end of the book, as does a list of section names refused (not listed). Advertising is included, and that provides visual treasures and historical costs and terms no longer used, such as dray. City directories listed workers in the city, so that even if a worker lived out of the city limits, you would find the person listed, with his or her residence.

The 1899 Detroit Directory showed street car lines, indicated if the streets were paved, and listed the number of books in the public library. It indicated which people were in the military and had not only synagogues, but also service days and times. It contained city attractions and number of newspapers.

Using directories, one can learn more about a town, track the movement of family members and increase or decrease in family size. Using cross-indexing, one can trace families on census data. Let's say you cannot find a family in the census. Using the census, you can look for neighbors at the same address you have for the family. Then find the correct census page and you might find your family. Diane uses a charting system when she uses directories. Her chart labels include year/name/trade/address/page/source. This helps her keep track of family members. She uses the chart as a timeline to trace families. Using directories can help you figure out the next resources to use, such as census records, newspaper archives, or cemeteries.

Some more unusual abbreviations found in directories are:

> do = ditto
> r = residence
> w = works at
> carp = carpenter
> mer = merchant
> prop = proprietor
> prov = provisions
> who = wholesale
> wid = widow
> rem = removed (moved).

Directories can be found in town libraries, state archives, historical societies, the Library of Congress, and Family History Libraries. Some years for some cities, sadly, are not available. You can contact Diane Freilich at dmf123@ameritech.net.

New York Times Articles of Interest to Jewish Genealogists

by Rochelle Kaplan

A December 5 article, "Gene Test Shows Spain's Jewish and Muslim Mix", notes that genetic testing of people in the Iberian Peninsula shows explicit evidence of the mass conversions of Sephardic Jews and Muslims to Catholicism in the 15th and 16th centuries, after Christian armies vanquished the Muslims who had conquered Spain. Twenty percent of the population in Spain and Portugal has Sephardic Jewish ancestry, and eleven percent of the people have DNA reflecting Moorish ancestry. The study, based on Y chromosome analysis, used a Y chromosome signature for Sephardic men by studying Sephardic Jewish communities in places where Jews moved once they were expelled from Spain. The scientists characterized Y chromosomes of the Arab and Berber army that invaded Spain in 711 based on data from people living in Western Sahara and Morocco. The new study, reported in the American Journal of Human Genetics, indicates a high level of conversion among Jews. The test is not definitive for individuals.

The article recounts that since most of the Y chromosome remains unchanged from father to son, the proportions of Sephardic and Moorish ancestry found in the present population is likely the same as those just after the 1492 forced exiles. Dr. Jonathan Ray, a professor of Jewish studies at Georgetown University, said that Jews formed a very large part of the urban population up until the great conversions. Biologist Francesc Calafell of the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, suspects Sephardic roots in his past; his surname is from a town in Catalonia and Jews undergoing conversion often took surnames from place names.

I had a Hispanic student in New York City, Candy Fiorentino, and my brother's good friend in medical school was Mike Catalano. Both of these folks, I suspect, may have Sephardic roots somewhere in their family histories. Catalano is a male from Catalonia in Spain; Fiorentino is a male from Florence. This study lends credence to geneticist Emanuel Yakobson's assertion that many more people have Jewish roots than they are aware of.

An October 30 article, "Find of Ancient City Could Alter Notions of Biblical David", claimed that archeologists in the Valley of Elah in Israel are unearthing a 3,000 year old fortified city that may reshape views of the period when David ruled the Israelites. Five lines on pottery appear to be the oldest Hebrew text ever found. The dig's leader, Yosef Garfinkel of Hebrew University in Jerusalem, has found so far two burned olive pits dating from 1050 and 970 B.C.E. The writing on the pottery, using charcoal and animal fat for ink, is in proto-Canaanite script and seems to be a letter or document in Hebrew. If more writing is uncovered, it suggests a way for events to have been recorded and passed down centuries

before the Bible was written.

The tenth century B.C.E. is controversial because it is then, according to the Old Testament, that David united the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, setting the stage for his son Solomon to build his great temple and rule over a huge area from the Nile to the Euphrates Rivers. For Israel, evidence of the biblical account has tremendous symbolic value.

"The fortification," Mr. Garfinkel says, "required 200,000 tons of stone and probably ten years to build. There were 500 people inside. This was the main road to Jerusalem. If they built a fortification here, it was a real kingdom, pointing to urban sites and a centralized authority in Judah in the tenth century B.C." The Philistines had a huge city, Gath, just seven miles away, but the pottery found there is distinct from the pottery at this new site. Perhaps the David and Goliath story is an allegory abut a battle between these two cities. Some 96% if the site remains to be uncovered.

A third article from July 6, "Ancient Tablet Ignites Debate on Messiah and Resurrection", states that a three foot tall tablet with 87 lines of Hebrew dating from decades before the birth of Jesus, may speak of a messiah who will rise from the dead after three days. If that is the case, the story of Jesus's death and resurrection would have to be recognized as a Jewish tradition at the time. The tablet was found near the Dead Sea and it has ink writing on it, across two neat columns, like those found in a Torah. Because the stone is broken and the writing is faded, much of what the stone says is open to debate. Daniel Boyarin, a professor of Talmudic culture at the University of California at Berkeley suggested that Jesus could best be understood through a close reading of the Jewish history of his day. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered sixty years ago, still generate much controversy regarding their authors and meaning. The tablet appears to be a Dead Sea Scroll on stone.

The stone was found about ten years ago and bought from a Jordanian antiquities dealer by an Israeli-Swiss collector. An Israeli scholar wrote about it last year. A good part of the text, a vision of the apocalypse transmitted by the angel Gabriel, draws on the Old Testament, especially the prophets Daniel, Zechariah, and Haggai. No one doubts the stone's authenticity. A scholar at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Mr. Israel Knohl, says that the tablet's writing "shows that Jesus' mission is that he has to be put to death by the Romans to suffer so his blood will be the sign of the redemption to come. To shed blood is not for the sins of the people but to bring redemption to Israel."

Mark Your Calendar: UJGS Meetings

Our meeting schedule for 2009 is as follows:

> 20 January
> 21 April
> 21 July
> 20 October

We meet at 7pm at Congregation Kol Ami. The address can be found on our web site, http://ujgs.org/.

Future IAJGS Conference Schedule

The current schedule for future IAJGS conference locations and dates is as follows:

- 2009 Philadelphia, August 2-7
- 2010 Los Angeles, July 11-16
- 2011 Washington, DC, August 14-19
- 2012 Paris (tentative)
- 2014 Jerusalem (tentative)

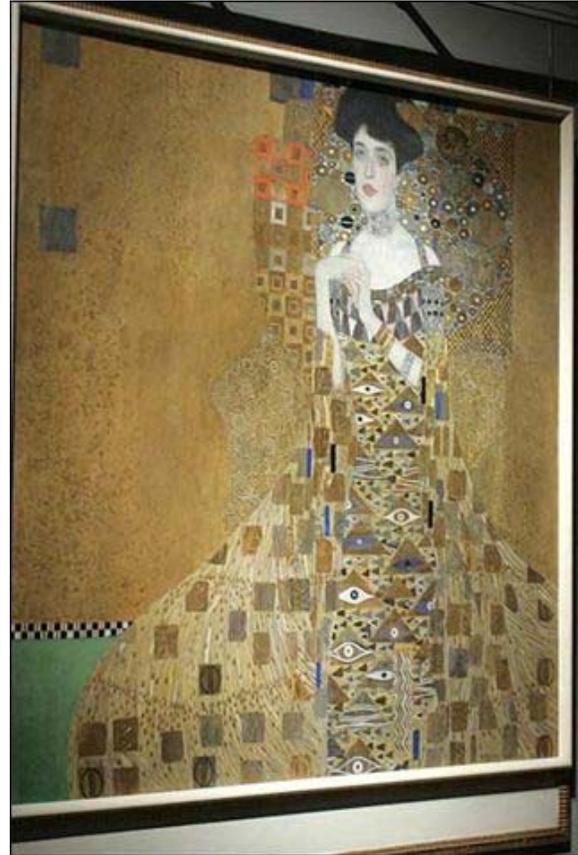## Recovering Nazi-Looted Art: A Genealogist's Tale

by Rochelle Kaplan
adapted from an article by Schelly Dardashti

E. Randol Schoenberg, grandson of the famous composer, was the keynote speaker of the 2008 IAJGS Conference. He presented "Recovering Nazi-Looted Art - A Genealogist's Tale", describing how his genealogy skills facilitated his successful pursuit of Nazi-looted art cases.

His family research was crucial in his legal work since he was aware of available genealogical resources that could be used as supporting. Schoenberg's passion for genealogy began with a third-grade assignment. By age 11, he had a 12-foot family tree, with over 300 people. When he was bored in school, he would practice writing out the family tree from memory.

Cases highlighted in the presentation included the Republic of Austria v. Altmann (involving the return of Gustav Klimt paintings) and others involving Nazi-looted Picasso and Canaletto paintings. The film, *The Rape of Europa*, documents the case of the stolen Klimt paintings and other looted art.

An attorney with the Los Angeles firm of Burris, Schoenberg & Walden, he has litigated several prominent Nazi-looted art cases, including Republic of Austria v. Altmann. Altmann is the niece of Ferdinand Bloch, a pre-WWII Czech sugar magnate whose vast properties in Austria, including the paintings in question, were taken by Nazis in the aftermath of the 1938 "Anschluss" of Austria by Nazi

Gustav Klimt painting recovered.

Germany. Pursuant to his last will, Mr. Bloch left his entire estate to Mrs. Altman and another niece and a nephew. The U.S. Appeals Court for the Ninth Circuit ruled in December 2002 that the law suit could proceed.

Who We Are

The Utah Jewish Genealogical Society is a non-profit organization which provides a forum and assistance to members researching their Jewish ancestors. Our goal is to bring together all Utahns interested in pursuing their Jewish genealogy, regardless of faith.

UJGS meets quarterly at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday of the month at Congregation Kol Ami in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Prior to filing the lawsuit in the United States, Mrs. Altmann had filed and abandoned a complaint in Austria due to very high litigation costs. In the U.S. district court, Austria moved for dismissal arguing, *inter alia*, the lack of subject matter jurisdiction and the *forum non convenies* doctrine. The district court denied the motion, holding that the jurisdiction was rooted in the 1976 Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA), which in its view applied retroactively to the events of the late 1930s and 1940s.

The Ninth Circuit upheld the district court's retroactive application of the FSIA, holding that statutes that confer or oust jurisdiction, such as the FSIA, or change procedural rules, "may be applied in suits arising before their enactment without raising concerns about retroactivity" because they do not take away any substantive rights but merely change the forum where the claim is being heard. The Ninth Circuit further held that in determining whether the FSIA may properly be applied turns to the question whether Austria "could legitimately expect to receive immunity from the [U.S. executive branch] for its complicity in and perpetuation of the discriminatory expropriation of the Klimt paintings." The Ninth Circuit concluded that Austria could not have had "any expectation, much less a settled expectation", that the U.S. executive branch would have recommended immunity as a matter of "'grace and comity'" for the wrongful appropriation of Jewish property. The Ninth Circuit also ruled that the facts advanced by Mrs. Altmann "fall squarely" within the FSIA's expropriation exception to sovereign immunity because they demonstrated that the Klimt paintings had been wrongfully and discriminatorily appropriated in violation of international law. As to the *forum non conveniens* defense advanced by Austria, the Ninth Circuit opined that the "requisite foreign travel, coupled with the significant costs of litigating this case in Austria, weigh heavily in favor of retaining jurisdiction in the United States."

After persuading the U.S. Supreme Court that Maria Altmann could sue Austria for return of six Gustav Klimt paintings, Schoenberg agreed to arbitrate the dispute in Austria. In January 2006, the arbitration panel decided that the paintings, valued at more than $325 million, should be returned to Mrs. Altmann, a good friend of his mother, and his grandparents. In Austria, Schoenberg argued his client's case in German.

Here is a summary of the 2004 case, which Schoenberg won 6-3 in the U.S. Supreme Court, despite long odds. Describing his first appearance before the Justices, Schoenberg described a convoluted question by Justice Souter. Schoenberg responded that he did not understand the question. The justices laughed knowingly, because of Souter's past history of long questions. After that, Schoenberg and the justices relaxed.

Schoenberg also won a unanimous Austrian arbitration ruling ordering the return of an $8 million Viennese building confiscated during the Nazi era; a $6.5 million settlement for a Nazi-looted Picasso painting; and a $3 million settlement for a Nazi-looted Canaletto painting.

He serves as coordinator, moderator, and co-founder of the Austria-Czech SIG, is author of the "Beginner's Guide to Austrian-Jewish Genealogy" and "Getting Started with Czech-Jewish Genealogy" (co-authored with Julius Muller). For two and a half years, he has served as board president of the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust.

Schoenberg won another case for Maria Altmann involving 200 shares of her uncle's stock. In that case, Altmann and her relatives were awarded 22 million dollars.

UJGS Meeting Highlights
October 2008

by Rochelle Kaplan

21 October 2008

Six people attended.

- Rochelle Kaplan used her genealogical skills to find two beneficiaries of a will who previously could not be found. Rabbi Fred Wenger, the will's executor, authorized a $250 reward to the UJGS for her assistance.

- Rochelle Kaplan was asked to be on the IAJGS nominating committee for the Stern Prize, which she accepted.

- Steve Burton of gave a presentation about FamilySearch. The purpose of FamilySearch is to discover and preserve the family of mankind, to introduce individuals to their ancestors through the widespread access of records, and to work with others who will assist in this purpose. Their biggest challenges include access to records and language issues, cultural differences, and digitizing and indexing the information. For example, some cultures don't have surnames; places like Ethiopia have oral genealogies.

  His PowerPoint presentation included one slide of the six rooms in the FHL vaults in Little Cottonwood Canyon, which hold 2.4 million rolls of microfilm, or 3 billion record images, which is the equivalent of 132 Libraries of Congress. The vaults date from 1938. There are 4000 Family History Centers worldwide.

  Microfilm is the longest-lasting record, but FamilySearch hopes to digitize older films and to capture digitally. FamilySearch has over 250 people and 145 cameras operating worldwide, capturing 800,000 images per week.

FamilySearch is looking for partners in their indexing project and UJGS could provide volunteers. Steve is in collection management, which means that he looks at the records and decides what is most in demand and most significant. The number of registered users continues to grow enormously.

- Khalile Mehr gave a presentation similar to the one he gave at the IAJGS conference in Chicago this summer. He noted that in 1850, 72% of the world's Jews lived in Eastern Europe. Khalile work in Collection Management of FamilySearch; his goal is to prioritize records. He recently visited Ukraine and noted that there are nine archives in seven cities. The LDS Church looks at church and civil records, but is focused on Church ancestry. Khalile looks at the state of records (preservation) and assesses acquisition efforts.

  The archives in Ukraine serve primarily scholars and governments. One difficulty is getting permission to film in the archives. Another problem is that records are often kept in poor storage conditions. There are Jewish records from 1815-1945. Currently, 45% of Ukraine's records have been captured on film. Khalile showed maps with the provinces and archives, mentioning various places with Jewish records in Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Little success has been obtained in Latvia (which is digitizing its own records), Romania, Albania, and Bulgaria.

- The next meeting will take place Tuesday, January 20 at 7pm at Kol Ami.

Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine

by Rochelle Kaplan

At the Chicago conference, I attended a talk by Omer Bartov, a European History Professor at Brown University. The slide show lecture described his most recent book, Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine. Bartov, who grew up in Israel, had hoped to take his Buchach-born mother to Galicia, but she died before they could make the trip. Bartov subsequently made several trips to Western Ukraine in hopes of enhancing his understanding of the Holocaust. In Erased, the author writes about twenty towns he visited.

Because my maternal grandparents came from Sambor (now Sambir) in Galicia, and Bartov writes about that shtetl, I read that portion during the conference when I bought the book. Erased includes useful maps of Galicia in 1815, 1910, 1939-44, 1972, interwar and postwar Poland, and independent Ukraine, and many recent photographs. Bartov reviews Galicia as a borderland, between the old Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the empires and marauders from the east and south, and more recently, at the edge of East Central Europe, imbued with Polish, German, and Austrian cultural influences, but open to western Russia and Asia. To be a Galitzianer denoted folksy backwardness and at times petty mercantile mentality and moral shiftiness.

Now that I have completed the work, I can summarize Bartov's main points. The author claims that since Ukraine's independence in 1991, the ethnically cleansed, anti-Semitic population is recreating its past by suppressing and erasing its Jewish past. Worse, monuments are being erected to "Ukrainian patriots" that glorify leaders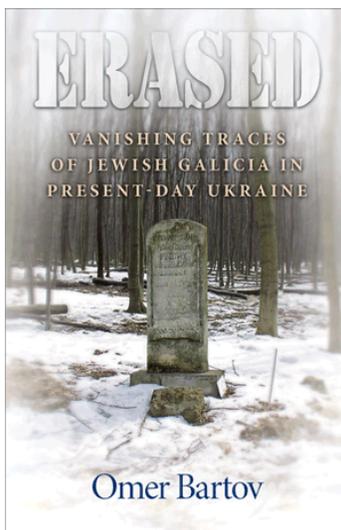 who collaborated with the Nazis in the murder of Jews, such as Stepan Bandera. Ukrainians, in a nationalistic fervor, now paint themselves as victims, of Poles and Jews, of Nazis and of Russians. In Bartov's words, "Today's inhabitants of the former Eastern Galicia have little memory of its complex, rich, and tortuous past. This land is in the throes of creating a single national narrative of events, people, institutions, culture, and politics, an undertaking of massive simplification that not only distorts its past but threatens to impoverish its future... Since the early 1990s, the Soviet distortion of the past has been rapidly replaced by, or combined with, the previously suppressed nationalist narrative." In Sambor, for example, the Ukrainian Jewish community began construction of a memorial park at the site of an old Jewish cemetery and Holocaust massacre site. Ukrainian nationalists, with local official help, erected crosses on the site to mark the victims of Christian victims of Nazi terror there. Jews opposed the use of crosses on the site; Ukrainian nationalists opposed Jewish symbols or Hebrew in the memorial. A cross-like statue remains. Bartov writes, "This is obviously an attempt to conflate Nazi and Soviet crimes and Jewish and Ukrainian victims by linking them all to the very same site." Bartov repeatedly notes the alteration or removal of Jewish symbols, such as the Star of David, at various formerly Jewish sites, and the differing translations at memorial sites, with the Ukrainian signs omitting any mention of Jews.

The most moving part of Erased is the introduction, a deeply personal, sensitively written statement of purpose.

"This little book has deep biological roots. It is also the first modest fruit of a long journey that began many years ago and has not yet ended. While it is not about its author, I cannot deny being more invested in it than in any of my previous historical writing. This is a story of discovery of what there once was, what has remained, and what has been swept away. This discovery was my own because when I began this journey I knew very little. Others who knew much more could no longer speak, or would not tell, or, most commonly, told only their own tales. I traveled into what was for me a white space on the map; there was a sense of adventure in this undertaking akin to what I felt when I read as a child about the great explorers of previous centuries. But it was also a journey into a black hole that had sucked in entire civilizations along with individual and never-to-be-met family members, making them vanish as if they had never existed, just as those explorers of old ended up transforming the white spaces on their maps into colonial hearts of darkness.

I spent much of my childhood and youth in a small neighborhood in northern Tel Aviv. Israel of the 1950s was poor, provincial, and isolated from the rest of the world. On a nearby hill stood the remnants of a Palestinian village whose inhabitants had fled during the fighting of 1948. It as populated by Jewish refugees from North Africa who had been expelled from their homes by Arabic regimes. My own neighborhood was soon inhabited by Jews expelled from Poland by the anti-Semitic postwar Gomulka regime, mostly survivors of the Holocaust and their children. Polish could be heard everywhere -- at the

"This is a sobering book. A reminder that history is too often written by the victorious, not by the vanquished."

grocers, the barbershop, the bank, and the post office. In my own home, only Hebrew was spoken with the children. My father was born in Mandatory Palestine; my mother came from Poland as a child in 1935. But Yiddish was always an alternative, whether it provided expressions that Hebrew lacked or because it allowed grown-ups to speak about forbidden issues in front of their children. And because my mother's family came from Galicia, there was also Polish, Ukrainian, and some Russian, all blended together into a soft, foreign, but intimately familiar sound that still echoes in my head.

My generation, born in the 1950s, rejected this foreignness. We were socialized into a new Israeli society; our language was hard, direct, crisp Hebrew. We had no patience for the endless storytelling and punning of Yiddish, which seemed to us to be all about rhetoric and never about action, always observing reality by analogy and responding to events by recalling the past. As for Polish, it was the language of plump aunts with too much lipstick and rouge and of powerful vodka-drinking gentiles with Jewish blood on their hands. For us, enclosed in a narrow land surrounded by barbed wire and sea, the opening to the world was English: the language of pop music, long hair, and sexual liberation. It carried no echoes of ghettos, pogroms, and exile. Yet the sounds implanted in a child's mind rarely vanish; at some point in one's life they return, gently prodding, subtly directing the now middle-aged man to look back and listen to the inner voice of his past, to ask the questions that had never been posed: where, when, why, how?"

Omer Bartov gives explanations for the historical amnesia in present-day Galicia.

*(**Erased**, continued from page 14)*

Current town residents have no or few personal memories or transmitted memories of the mass killing in their town and of its former identity as a Jewish shtetl. Many of the town's inhabitants and their ancestors came from elsewhere -- from the surrounding countryside or from the Soviet Union's interior. And the people whose lives were erased cannot protest. Furthermore, the Jews have come to be seen not as a permanent aspect of Galician life (though their history goes back many centuries), but as transients who had little to do with the essence of Ruthenians/Ukrainians long in the area. Ukraine, Bartov asserts, is still uncertain about its own national identity. Both Ukrainian nationalists and former Soviet apparatchiks agree that the fate of Ukrainian Jewry during WWII is a topic both are happy to avoid. Moreover, in creating a new Ukrainian myth glorifying the OUN and UPA (whose leaders were deeply complicit in murdering Jews), it would be unhelpful to associate these leaders with collaboration in the murder of Jews.

This is a sobering book. A reminder that history is too often written by the victorious, not by the vanquished.

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