

GALLERY 6: ON THE JEWISH STREET, 1918–1939

G6



The Street

ON THE JEWISH STREET

Enter a multimedia street. This lively environment is inspired by the bustling city life of the Second Polish Republic – most Polish Jews lived in cities and towns – and by the expression “*af der yidisher gas*” (on the Jewish street), which is a metaphor for the Jewish world. Despite economic hardship and antisemitism, this was a period of great political energy and cultural creativity in →**Yiddish**, →**Hebrew**, and Polish. Entrances on each side of the street lead to thematic areas devoted to politics and culture.

Go left from the film about the First World War and then right to an archway leading to the Street.

GALLERY 7: HOLOCAUST, 1939–1944

G7



Warsaw ghetto

WARSAW GHETTO

The Warsaw ghetto was the largest of the more than 600 ghettos in occupied Poland, not only in size but also in population, with 450,000 Jews trapped there over the course of its existence from October 1940 until May 1943. Adam Czerniaków and Emanuel Ringelblum, whose diaries are quoted on the walls, are your guides. Czerniaków was the chairman of the Judenrat, the Jewish Council, which the Germans created to run the ghetto and carry out their orders. Ringelblum, a historian, created a secret archive, Oyneg Shabes, to document every aspect of the struggle to survive in the Warsaw ghetto. Those documents, which were created on the spot and in the moment, are the basis for presenting the Warsaw ghetto.

Pass through the first three sections of the Holocaust gallery – outbreak of war, occupation, and separation and isolation of Jews – to the entrance to the Warsaw ghetto area, which is defined by its sloping grey walls.

GALLERY 8: POSTWAR YEARS, 1944 TO THE PRESENT

G8

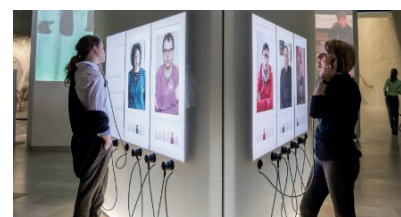


Monument to the Ghetto Heroes

MONUMENT TO THE GHETTO HEROES

Nathan Rapoport's Monument to the Ghetto Heroes was unveiled on the rubble of the destroyed ghetto in 1948 on the fifth anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising. The creation of this monument is shown through documents, photographs and original objects from POLIN Museum's collection. A 1948 newsreel film captures the unveiling of the monument before thousands of witnesses and dignitaries in Poland and from abroad. Memorializing the tragedy, restoring dignity, and seeking justice were of utmost importance to survivors of the Holocaust. POLIN Museum faces the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes.

On your left, as you enter the gallery, is a wall of “registration forms.” Straight ahead and to your right are a large photomural, posters, projected newsreel, and showcases related to the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes.



Polish Jews today, video interviews

RENEWAL OF JEWISH LIFE

Since the fall of communism in 1989, there has been a renewal of Jewish life on a small scale and great interest among the Polish public in Jewish history and culture. In video interviews, Jews living in Poland today answer six questions: Is there antisemitism in Poland? What does Israel mean to you? Who creates Jewish culture and for whom? Is there a future for Jews in Poland? Did you always know you were Jewish? What does it mean to be a Jew in Poland?

Last section of the exhibition

From the collections of: Beit Hatfutsot: Museum of the Jewish People, Filmoteka Narodowa, Jewish Historical Institute, Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, St. Mary's Church in Kraków, Yad Vashem, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.



Wspólna instytucja kultury



Wsparcie udzielone z funduszy norweskich i EOG przez Islandię, Liechtenstein i Norwegię



Główni partnerzy merytoryczni:



Visit the Resource Center for materials on history, genealogy, and Jewish communities. We offers workshops and consultation with specialists. Open daily except Tuesdays, 10 AM – 6 PM.

One Hour, Eight Highlights

GALLERY 2: FIRST ENCOUNTERS, 965–1500

G2



Bracteate, interactive presentation

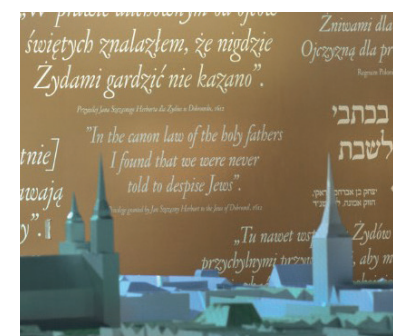
BRACTEATE

This coin, which dates from the early 13th century, is the oldest object in POLIN Museum's collection. Its →**Hebrew** inscription is an indication that Jews were involved in minting coins and in developing medieval Poland's monetary economy. Explore these early coins and even design one of your own at the stronghold. Known as bracteates, these coins were usually one-sided.

Walk to the wooden stronghold and round bracteate table, with a showcase for the original coin and two round interactive screens.

GALLERY 3: PARADISUS IUDAEORUM, 1565–1648

G3



Kraków and Kazimierz, multimedia model

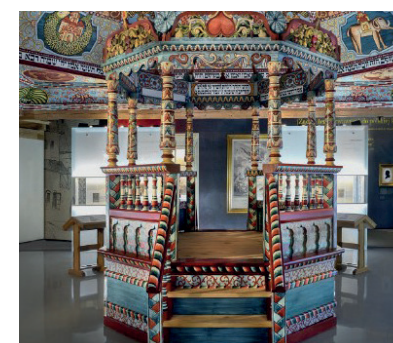
KRAKÓW AND KAZIMIERZ MODEL

The story of the most influential Jewish community in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1772) is presented in a panoramic film and dramatic scale model of Kraków and nearby Kazimierz. King Jan Olbracht had moved Jews from Kraków to Kazimierz in 1495 – the Jewish neighborhood is highlighted on the upper right of the model. However, some Jews continued to do business in Kraków, and several even served at the royal court as physicians and bankers. Become a walker in the city at touchscreens along the model, where you can tour the Jewish community and its institutions, visit six →**synagogues**, all of which still exist, meet →**Rabbi** Moses Isserles and other luminaries, and explore Christian-Jewish relations.

The model is in the very center of the gallery.

GALLERY 4: THE JEWISH TOWN, 1648–1772

G4



Reconstructed wooden synagogue ceiling and bimah

GWOŹDZIEC SYNAGOGUE

The →**synagogue** is at the center of Jewish communal life. The original Gwoździec wooden synagogue was built around 1650. Its interior, which was covered with hand-painted prayer texts, zodiac signs, animals, and flowers, was renovated in 1729. The central →**bimah**, the platform from which the public reading of the →**Torah** scroll takes place is typical of Polish synagogues. This synagogue was destroyed around 1914, but in 2011 and 2012, a team of 300 volunteers and experts, led by Handshouse Studio, reconstructed the roof and magnificent painted ceiling using traditional materials and tools. There were once more than 150 wooden synagogues in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. None of them have survived.

On entering the gallery, turn right and walk straight through the Marketplace to the synagogue.

GALLERY 5: ENCOUNTERS WITH MODERNITY, 1772–1914

G5



Portraits of three rulers

PARTITIONS

The rulers of Prussia, Austria and Russia look down from their massive portraits on the empty throne of the last Polish king. Between 1772 and 1795, they partitioned the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which disappeared from the map, and inherited the Jews living there. Jews are now individual subjects of absolutist monarchs. Sit at a throne and explore the laws that now regulate many details of their everyday life, while surrounded by maps illustrating a geopolitical reality that will last until the First World War.

Exit from the synagogue, turn left, and follow the corridor to the three large portraits.